

More on *Oedemera* spp. (Col.: Oedemeridae)

Since there have been four contributions in our pages on this subject – one of them by me – I hesitate to add to them, but a few further points may be made. In my experience, whereas *O. nobilis* is now clearly nowhere near to being as general in south-eastern England as it seems to have been in former times, the supposedly local *O. lurida* has for long – at least since the later 1930s – been common over at least the London and probably all the south-eastern districts. It occurs even in the rougher suburban gardens, but a favourite habitat is a field-edge or wayside where yellow-flowered composites of the cat's-ear or hawkbit type (in whose stems, I suspect, the larvae develop) grow freely. But in the south-west, where *nobilis* can be common along hedgerows on umbellifers, I have not seen *lurida*, though it probably occurs.

I would here emphasise the part played by long-term fluctuations in frequency or abundance of a species. Such population changes over time are common among insects, but their causes are seldom clear. When of long duration, they probably account for the discrepancy often noted between present overall frequency and the indications given in the older books. I suggest we may have an example here, and that in the 19th century *Oedemera nobilis* really *was* commoner and less local and *O. lurida* less common or more local, than is the case today. The very recent increase or spread of the former in these parts may be a short-term phenomenon; it is far too early to say. – A. A. ALLEN, 49 Montcalm Road, Charlton, London SE7 8QG.

***Gastrophysa viridula* Degeer (Col.: Chrysomelidae) new to West Sussex**

Although *Gastrophysa viridula* is common throughout much of England and Wales, this distinctive little leaf-beetle is virtually absent from the south-east. It occurs sporadically in Surrey, vice-county 17. Although it is common at Wisley, grid reference TQ 0658 (A. Salisbury, pers. comm.), it is rare at the very well recorded Bookham Common, TQ 1256 (M. Barclay, pers. comm.). In Kent, it was recorded from the Medway Valley, near Snodland, during the 1890s by J. J. Walker and recorded so in Fowler's 1908 list in the *Victoria County History*. It was not recorded there again until 1982, when Chuter found it at Headcorn, TQ 8244 (*Coleopterist* 9: 42-43), and it has since been found in the same river valley, at TQ 8443, in 1997 (E. Philp, pers. comm.)

It was discovered new to East Sussex, vice-county 14, when I swept a single specimen from redshanks *Polygonum maculosa* (= *P. persicariae*), at the edge of the Lewes Levels, TQ 4109, on 10.vi.1975. A small colony was also present at Powdermill Reservoir, TQ 7919/8019, during the 1990s (N. Heal, P. J. Hodge, R. Booth). I was surprised, therefore, to find two specimens in the collection of my father, A. W. Jones, recently. They were both swept in a marshy clearing, north of North East Hook Wood, Coldwaltham, West Sussex, TQ 016178, on 29.v.1999. This is apparently the first record for vice-county 13. – RICHARD A. JONES, 135 Friern Road, East Dulwich, London SE22 0AZ (E-mail: bugmanjones@hotmail.com).



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