Exochomus quadripustulatus (L.) (Coleoptera: Coccinellidae) as a host of Dinocampus coccinellae (Schrank) (Hymenoptera: Braconidae). – During an extended study of mortality of pine ladybirds Exochomus quadripustulatus (L.), mainly in Sheffield, the bulk of parasitoids that emerged from the ladybird pupae, were identified as the chalcid Aprostocetus neglectus (Domenichini) (Hymenoptera: Eulophidae). In early May, 2004 a pine ladybird imago was observed in a crack of bark on a sycamore tree in Millhouses Park (VC 63, SK3383) which was immobile for at least a week. It was removed on 18th May and seen to be attached to the tree by a cocoon. Kept in a fairly warm place, a wasp emerged on 24th May which appeared to be a small Dinocampus coccinellae (Schrank). This was confirmed by Dr Mark Shaw.

Majerus (1997, Br. J. Ent. Nat. Hist. 10: 15–24) detailed his observations of the parasitoid Dinocampus coccinellae predating various British coccinellid species. This parasitoid, which develops within the ladybird imago and pupates below it, was not observed on c. 3000 specimens of E. quadripustulatus nor any other members of the sub-family Chilocorinae. Majerus quotes the non-inclusion of any of the British chilocorines as hosts of the braconid in the list of Hodek (1973, Biology of Coccinellidae, Junk/Academic Press). Neither do Klausnitzer & Klausnitzer (1977, Marienkafer, Westarp Wissenschaften, Magdeburg) include chilocorines as hosts. However, Hodek does include a record of D. coccinellae parasitizing Exochomus concavus Fursch in Transvaal, South Africa. This therefore appears to be the first record of E. quadripustulatus as prey and possibly the first palaearctic record from any chilocorine.

I thank Dr Shaw for his advice. The organisms and cocoon are deposited in the Royal Museum of Scotland. – Paul R. Mabbott, 49 Endowood Road, Millhouses, Sheffield, S7 2LY. mabbott@blueyonder.co.uk

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