Fain, A. 1982. Révision des genres *Thyreophagus* Rondani, 1874 et *Michaelopus* Fain & Johnston, 1974 (Acari, Acaridae) avec description de neuf espèces nouvelles. *Bulletin de L'institut Royal des Sciences Naturelles Belgiques Entomologie* **54** (7): 1–47.

Fain, A. 1987. Notes on the mites living in the flowers of *Espeletia* spp. (Asteraceae) in Colombia. II. *Espletiacarus andinus* gen.n., sp.n. (Hemisarcoptidae) and *Michaelopus incanus* sp.n. (Acaridae). *Entomologische Mitteilungen Zoologischen Museum Hamburg* **9** (130): 34–47.

Fain, A. & Johnston, D. 1974. Three new species of hypopi phoretic on Springtails (Collembola) in England (Acari: Acaridae). *Journal of Natural History* **8**: 411–420.

Fain, A. & Lukoschus, L. S. 1986. *Michaelopus tridens* spec. nov (Acari, Acaridae) from a North American rodent. *Bulletin de L'institut Royal des Sciences Naturelles Belgiques Entomologie* **56**: 55–57.

Klimov, P. 1998. *Michaelopus longiretinalis* sp. nov. (Acari, Acaridae), a new species of mite associated with beetle *Onthophagus lenzi* (Coleoptera, Scarbaeidae) from South Korea. *Acarina* **6**: 17–19.

Mahunka, S. 1974. Auf Insecten lebende Milben (Acari: Acarida, Tarsonemida) aus Afrika. IV. *Acta Zoologica Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae* **29**: 367–402.

Michael, A. D. 1885. Notes on the life-histories of some little known Tyroglyphidae. *Journal of the Royal Microscopical Society, ser* **2**. vol. v. 27–31, pl. iii, figs 1–14.

Michael, A. D. 1903. *British Tyroglyphidae*. Vol. II. The Ray Society. London. pp. 183.

Nannelli, R. & Turchetti, T. 1989. Preliminary observations on the association of some species of corticolous Acari with *Cryphonectria parasitica* (Murr.) Barr. *Redia* **72** (2): 581–593.

Portus, M. & Gomez, M. S. 1980. *Thyreophagus gallegoi* a new mite from flour and house dust in Spain. *Acarologia*, **21**, 477–486.

Sevastyanv, V. D. & Kivganov, D. A. 1992. Review of the genus *Michaelopus* (Acari, Acaridae) of the world fauna with description of new species. *Vestnik zoologii* **2**: 25–30.

Zachvatkin, A. A. 1941. Tyroglyphoidea (Acari). *Fauna of the U.S.S.R.*, Arachnoidea **5** (1): pp. 573. English translation, Washington.

Zachvatkin, A. A. 1953. Investigations on the morphology and postembryonic development of tyroglyphoid mites (Sarcoptiformes, Tyroglyphoidea). In: A. A. Zachvatkin. *Shornik nauchnykh rabot. M.S.* 19–118.

SHORT COMMUNICATION

Grass-mowing machinery, an important cause of stag beetle mortality in a south London park.—Those of us living in south-east London are fortunate enough to find stag beetles, *Lucanus cervus* L. (Coleoptera: Lucanidae), regularly most years. Here, this supposedly nationally scarce species (notable B, Hyman & Parsons, 1992) is common and widespread, in parks, gardens, woods and verges. It is often noticed by non-entomological friends and neighbours who, awed by the male's wondrous antlers, are concerned to seek expert advice on its potential pest status or desperate assistance against what they fear may be a dangerous animal.

The beetle's distribution was recently the subject of the "great stag hunt", a nationwide survey drawing on records from the general public as well as from entomologists (Anon, 1999; Napier, 1999; Frith, 1999). Apart from live specimens found crawling on logs and tree trunks or seen flying in early evening and the larvae found under logs, the clearly recognizable remains of dead specimens are often discovered; these remains in particular demonstrate just how widespread this magnificent creature is in the area.

Occasionally more-or-less complete dead specimens are found, of either sex, some apparently without injury and some, the victims of cars and lorries, completely crushed on roads, but more usually odd broken parts are seen. Typical

Fig. 1. Remains of at least 10 stag beetles, thought to comprise 6 males and 4 females, found at the edge of a mown playing field where it met woodland, Forster Memorial Park, Catford, south London, 17.vi.1999. They are thought to be the victims of tractor-drawn grass-mowing machinery. Scale bar = 30 mm.

fragments to be found are single elytra and loose head capsules. However, on 17.vi.1999, while visiting a south-east London park a large number of broken remains were found in an extremely limited area, suggesting that some unusual agent had been at work.

Forster Memorial Park, in Catford, south London (TQ387723), is a mixture of what seems to be old, even possibly ancient woodland, around the edge of utility-mown playing fields. On the visit in question, the first find of the day was a large whole female stag beetle, dead on a narrow footpath, seemingly crushed under foot. A short distance away a single elytron was the first of at least 10 dead specimens, thought to comprise 6 males and 4 females (Fig. 1), found within 20 minutes along a 10-metre stretch of playing field where it abutted the woodland (Fig. 2). All were within 3 metres of the woodland edge. A zig-zag walk across and around the entire playing field failed to produce any other specimen.

Finding the beetle remains in one place at first suggested that a predator had been at work, and sure enough a magpie, a bird species implicated as a major predator (Anon, 1999; Napier, 1999), was seen walking in this area. But the

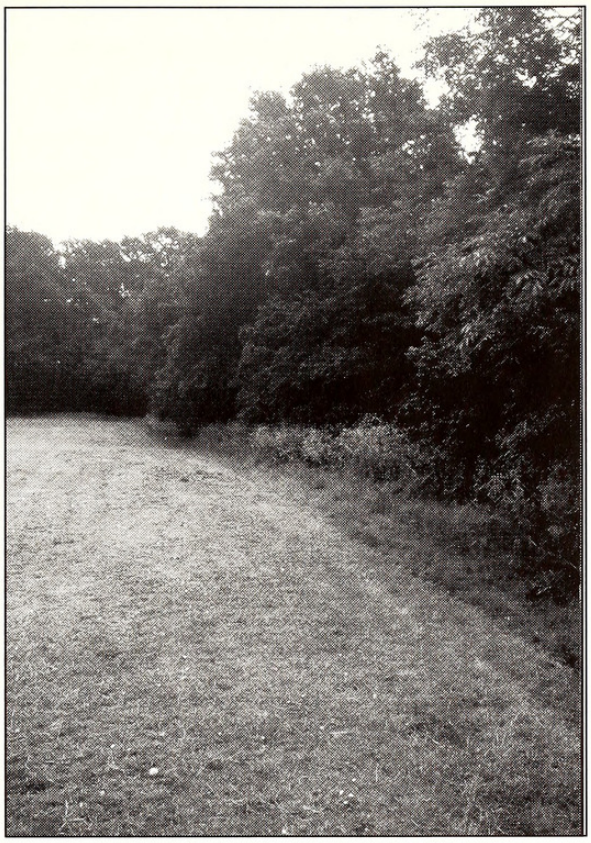

Fig. 2. Woodland edge of Forster Memorial Park, Catford, showing the freshly mown grass and small piles of grass cuttings.

discovery of two still-living (barely) half beetles inside small mounds of fresh grass cuttings implied another explanation—that the beetles had been mangled by the passage of tractor-drawn grass-mowing machinery. The grass cuttings were fresh, less than 24 hours old, and the field was probably mown earlier that same day; it is quite conceivable that the dismembered insects could survive for this short period.

Further examination of the collection of beetle remains showed more evidence of extreme cutting force: several elytra cut in half and the large male antlers cleanly cut right through (Fig. 1, bottom left specimen). It is difficult to conceive of a bird or animal attack which would result in the last-mentioned damage.—RICHARD A. JONES, 135 Friern Road, East Dulwich, London SE22 0AZ. (bugmanjones@hotmail.com)

REFERENCES

Anon. 1999. *National Stag Beetle Survey Update*. London: People's Trust for Endangered Species.

Frith, M. 1999. A survey of the stag beetle *Lucanus cervus* in south London during 1997. *London Naturalist* **78**: 125–133.

Hyman, P. S. & Parsons, M. S. 1992. *A review of the scarce and threatened Coleoptera of Great Britain. Part 1*. UK Nature Conservation Number 3. Peterborough: Joint Nature Conservation Committee.

Napier, D. 1999. The 1998 National Stag Beetle Survey—preliminary findings. *Antenna* **23**: 76–81.