

Ceromya flaviseta (Villeneuve) (Diptera, Tachinidae) new to Britain

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Introduction

In 1995 and 1996 Malaise traps were set in Burnham Beeches NNR, Buckinghamshire. The Tachinidae were identified by the author using the recent Handbook (Belshaw 1993). Two specimens of Siphonini could not be determined from the Handbook but were identified using Andersen (1996) as *Ceromya flaviseta* (Villeneuve).

In Belshaw's Handbook the species ran in the key to genera to the genus *Actia*. In the key to species of *Actia* and related genera (p.38) the species runs to couplet 5, having setae on veins R_1 and R_{2+3} but will not key to species since it has a combination of vein Cu without setae, anal vein not reaching the wing margin, yellow legs and no katepisternal hairs ventral to the main setae. In Andersen (1996) the specimens ran to *Ceromya flaviseta*, except for some minor differences. The first flagellomere of the antenna is paler than in Andersen's description: orange on the inner surface and orange-brown on the outer surface, paler basally, not "Antennal segment 3 mainly blackish-brown" as described by Andersen. The abdomen of the female lacks the central dark line described by Andersen and the male has a weakly formed dark line on the base of the abdomen. These differences are probably not of specific importance and the specimens have been examined by Dr Andersen and confirmed as *C. flaviseta*.

Key to species

The following couplets should be inserted in the key to *Actia* and related genera in place of couplet 5 of Belshaw's Handbook. The figure and page numbers refer to the Handbook.

- 5 Legs uniformly darkened, very dark red to black, katepisternum (fig. 332) with a line of hairs below the bristles [Abdomen black, vein R_1 with hairs confined to the apical part, anal vein disappearing well before the wing margin, thorax with 4 postsutural dorsocentral bristles] *Actia infantula* (Zetterstedt) (p. 100)
- Legs yellow, katepisternum without a line of hairs 5a
- 5a Abdomen black, vein R_1 with hairs confined to the apical part, anal vein reaching the wing margin although becoming very thin (fig. 157), thorax with 4 postsutural dorsocentral bristles *Aphantorhaphopsis verralli* (Wainwright) (p. 102)
- Abdomen black with an extremely narrow yellow posterior margin to tergites 1+2 - 4, vein R_1 with hairs on entire length, anal vein disappearing well before the wing margin, thorax with 3 postsutural dorsocentral bristles *Ceromya flaviseta* (Villeneuve)

Material examined

1 male, Buckinghamshire, Burnham Beeches National Nature Reserve, 21.vi.-5.vii.1995, Malaise trap, heath, J.W. Ismay; 1 female, same data but pasture woodland.

Habitat

The Malaise trap on the heath at Burnham Beeches was placed at grid reference SU 9540 8460 in an open position close to a large juniper bush and near to birch and oak trees. The open position

meant that the trap could have collected insects from a wider area than the cleared heath. The Malaise trap in the pasture woodland was at SU 9460 8475 in beech woodland with old pollards and birch and holly understorey. It was in a shaded position on the edge of a small clearing and any insects caught would have most likely come from the immediate vicinity.

Conservation status

The species was described by Andersen as "A very rare European species" known from Denmark, Switzerland, Hungary, Poland and Ukraine. It should probably have Red Data Book status in Britain, although Tachinidae are under-recorded and it may prove to be more widespread.

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References

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- Belshaw, R.M. 1993. Tachinid flies. Diptera: Tachinidae. *Handbooks for the Identification of British Insects*, 10 (4a (i)), 1-170. Royal Entomological Society, London.

Acartophthalmus bicolor Oldenberg and *Meoneura neottiophila* Collin (Diptera, Acartophthalmidae and Carnidae) on *Pleurotus* caps

- As part of a survey of the Ashridge Estate for the National Trust carried out in 1997, I visited Aldbury Common, Hertfordshire on 14 July. A number of fallen branches from one of the pollard beeches (*Fagus*) were found to bear fresh growth of fruiting bodies of the fungus genus *Pleurotus*. On close inspection a large number of small dark coloured flies were observed to be running about on the caps of these fruiting bodies. These flies were evidently of two species.

Several individuals of *Acartophthalmus bicolor* Oldenberg (Acartophthalmidae) taken from the caps comprised about equal numbers of both sexes. They were observed to be wing waving, presumably as part of a courtship display. Although accorded RDB3 status (Falk and Ismay in preparation), *A. bicolor* is in my experience quite widespread and may be found in numbers about colonies of lignicolous fungi. At Gwendraeth Wood, Cornwall on 7 July 1983 I found it around *Polyporus squamosus* and at Ebbor Gorge NNR, Somerset on 3 July 1985 it was around a *Mycena* species on a stump. It is also recorded as a visitor to carrion and the larval biology is unknown.

The smaller species present was found to be *Meoneura neottiophila* Collin (Carnidae), which has been reared from bird's nests and belongs to a family not usually associated with fungi. The nine individuals taken for examination were all males, but it cannot be certain that no females were present. It was concluded to be most likely that these flies, like *A. bicolor*, were using the fresh fungus caps as a site for courtship although this cannot be confirmed - PETER J. CHANDLER, 43 Eastfield Road, Burnham, Slough, Berks SL1 7EL.

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