

***Alopecosa cuneata* (Clerck, 1757) (Araneae: Lycosidae) new for Worcestershire.**

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01. *Alopecosa cuneata* (male) at Dropping Well Farm, 24.04.2021. K.McGee.

A spider photographed and collected from Dropping Well Farm (SO804742) on 24.04.2021 was later identified as a male *Alopecosa cuneata*, one of the wolf spiders in the family Lycosidae. John Partridge kindly confirmed my initial identification from my image, and also confirmed it as the first record for Worcestershire. This is a scarce species with a conservation status of Red List GB Post 2001. John also confirmed that the nearest records are from Kinver, Staffordshire, on 01.05.1994, and Highgate Common, Staffordshire, on 02.05.1995. A second record for Worcestershire came to light at a site nearby when Brett Westwood, along with John & Denise Bingham, found three males and a female in a disused sand bunker on the former Stourport golf course (SO808732) on 07.05.2021.

Alopecosa cuneata is closely associated with old grasslands and dunes and most records are from suitable habitats in southern counties and coastal regions: there are less than 100 confirmed records on the NBN Atlas distribution map. Most spider species cannot be identified with certainty from a photograph, but males of *A. cuneata* have distinct and obvious swollen dark-coloured tibiae on the front pair of legs (01). Males of *A. cuneata* are only active during warm weather in April and May. The record from Dropping Well Farm would indicate that this species must be present at the neighbouring Devil's Spittleful but has gone unnoticed, and the record from Stourport golf course suggests that it may be more widespread on sandy grasslands in the Kidderminster region generally.

References

Bee, L., Oxford, G. and Smith, H. (2017). *Britain's Spiders, a Field Guide*. Princeton University Press, Woodstock.
Roberts, M. J. (1996). *Field Guide to the Spiders of Britain and Northern Europe*. HarperCollins Publishers Ltd, London.
NBN Atlas *Species search* [on-line] <http://www.nbnatlas.org/> [Accessed 01.08.2021]

Images

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