

**Records of note from the Devil's Spittleful, Kidderminster. 2017.**

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**ACULEATE HYMENOPTERA**

*Sphecodes gibbus* (Hym; Halictidae). (01) One female was collected from a steep sandstone bank along the access track into the reserve from the west on 22.04.2017. This is a cleptoparasite of *Halictus* and *Lasioglossum* bees (BWARS, 2017). Females are most commonly found on bare ground on steep banks where they search for nest-sites of their hosts (BWARS, 2017). This is my first record for this species at Devil's Spittleful, and a species I rarely encounter. A female *Lasioglossum morio* was collected from the same location during the same day indicating that this may be the host species here.



01. *Sphecodes gibbus* (female) at the Devil's Spittleful on 22.04.2017. K.McGee.

*Anthophora furcata* (Hym; Apidae). (02) One male was observed visiting the flowers of Black Horehound *Ballota nigra* close to the railway bridge at the western site entrance on 09.07.2017. This is my first record for this species at Devil's Spittleful.



02. *Anthophora furcata* (male) on Black Horehound flowers. K.McGee.

*Astata boops* (Hym; Crabronidae). (03) Three were present alongside a bare sandy track close to the boundary with Bewdley Safari Park on 09.07.2017. This is my first record for this localised digger wasp at Devil's Spittleful. Females collect the nymphs of

various shield bug species which they take back to their burrows in the ground to provide food for their developing larvae (BWARS, 2017).



03. *Astata boops* (female) at the Devil's Spittleful on 09.07.2017. K.McGee.

*Chelostoma campanularum* (Hym; Megachilidae). (04) One female of approximately five was collected from the flowers of Harebell *Campanula rotundifolia* at a steep sandstone bank along the access track into the reserve from the west on 09.07.2017. This is my first record for this small easily overlooked species at Devil's Spittleful, I have also recorded it from similar habitat at Hartlebury Common (04.07.2008).



04. *Chelostoma campanularum* (female) on harebell flowers at the Devil's Spittleful on 09.07.2017. K.McGee.

*Hedychridium ardens* (Hym; Chrysididae). One female was collected from flowers of Sheeps-bit *Jasione montana* close to the Severn Valley Railway line on 09.07.2017. This is my first record for this species at Devil's Spittleful.

*Hoplitis claviventris* (Hym; Megachilidae). Notable B. (05) One rather worn male was collected close to the boundary with Bewdley Safari Park on 09.07.2017. This is my first record for this species at Devil's Spittleful. Adults construct nest cells inside the dead stems of various plants and woody shrubs in a wide variety of habitats (BWARS, 2017).



05. *Hoplitis claviventris* (male) at the Devil's Spittleful on 09.07.2017. K.McGee.

*Andrena fuscipes* (Hym; Andrenidae). (06) Approximately five were observed visiting flowers of Heather *Calluna vulgaris* on 26.08.2017. This species is exclusively associated with flowers of Heather (BWARS, 2017) and is therefore one of the specialities of Devil's Spittleful during the late summer period.



06. *Andrena fuscipes* (female) on heather flowers at the Devil's Spittleful on 26.08.2017. K.McGee.

*Epeolus cruciger* (Hym; Apidae). (07) One female was observed at a steep sandstone bank along the access track into the reserve from the west on 26.08.2017. This is my first record for the species at Devil's Spittleful. This species is a cleptoparasite of *Colletes succintus*, a bee I have not yet recorded it at Devil's Spittleful although it is known to be present (Trevis & Winnall, 2013).



07. *Epeolus cruciger* (female) at the Devil's Spittleful on 26.08.2017. K.McGee.

*Harpactus tumidus* (Hym; crabronidae). (08) This small digger wasp is easily overlooked as females hunt for adults and nymphs of froghopper species to provision their nest cells (BWARS, 2017). One female was collected with her prey from a steep sandstone bank along the access track into the reserve from the west on 26.08.2017. This is my first record for this species.



08. *Harpactus tumidus* (female) with a froghopper species at the Devil's Spittleful on 26.08.2017. K.McGee.

*Nysson dimidiatus* (Hym; crabronidae). Notable B. This is the cleptoparasite of *Harpactus tumidus* (BWARS, 2017). One female was collected from the same steep sandstone bank on 26.08.2017. This is also a small easily-overlooked wasp most often collected by sweep-netting sparsely vegetated banks where the host is known to occur (BWARS, 2017). This is my first record for this species.

#### DIPTERA

*Gonia picea* (Dip; Tachinidae). (09) Four were observed flying low over the ground during warm sunshine on 25.03.2017. Females search for the larvae of various noctuid moths that feed on grasses and grass-roots (NBN Atlas, 2017); one of the most likely hosts at Devil's Spittleful is the Antler Moth *Cerapteryx graminis*.



09. *Gonia picea* at the Devil's Spittleful on 25.03.2017. K.McGee.

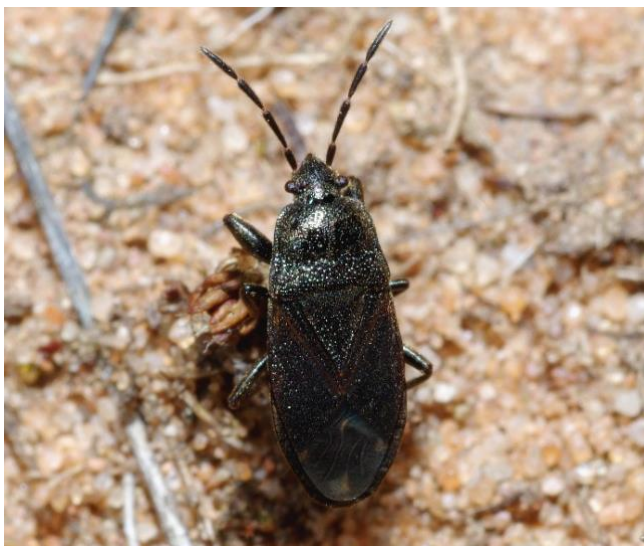
*Thereva nobilitata* (Dip; Therevidae). (10) One female was photographed on the sandy track leading into the reserve from the west on 09.07.2017. This is the commonest of the stiletto flies, however, I rarely encounter any stiletto flies at all during my field trips in the midlands. This is my first record for this species at Devil's Spittleful although I have also recorded the rare *Thereva plebeja* at the site (12.05.2009). Larvae of stiletto flies develop in detritus in the upper surfaces of light sandy soils (Stubbs & Drake, 2001).



10. *Thereva nobilitata* (female) at the Devil's Spittleful on 09.07.2017. K.McGee.

**HEMIPTERA; HETEROPTERA**

*Megalonotus dilatatus* (Hem; Lygaeidae). Notable B. (11) One was collected from leaf-litter beneath Heather *Calluna vulgaris* on 22.04.2017. My first record for this scarce species associated with sandy heaths (British Bugs, 2017).



11. *Megalonotus dilatatus* at the Devil's Spittleful on 22.04.2017. © K.McGee.

*Trapezonotus desertus* (Hem; Lygaeidae). (12) One was collected from leaf-litter beneath Heather *Calluna vulgaris* on 22.04.2017. This species is also associated with heathland (British Bugs, 2017) and is my first record for this species at Devil's Spittleful.



12. *Trapezonotus desertus*. K.McGee.

**REPTILIA**

Grass snake *Natrix natrix*. One adult approximately 0.75 metres in length was disturbed while basking in warm sunshine in a clearing among dense gorse and heather close to the Severn Valley Railway on 22.04.2017.

**References**

British Bugs *Species search* [on-line] <http://www.britishbugs.org.uk/> [Accessed 01.10.2017]  
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 Trevis, G. & Winnall, R. 2013. Aculeate hymenoptera of the Devil's Spittleful and Rifle Range Reserves at Kidderminster. *Worcestershire Record*. 35: 39-42.

**Images**

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11. *Megalonotus dilatatus* at the Devil's Spittleful on 22.04.2017. © K.McGee.
12. *Trapezonotus desertus*. K.McGee.