

***Diaperis boleti* (Linnaeus, 1758) (Coleoptera, Tenebrionidae) new to Bredon Hill and the English Midlands**

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Introduction

Diaperis boleti (Linnaeus, 1758) is a Nationally Scarce relatively large (five millimetres or so in length) distinctive tenebrionid beetle that colonises degrading sporophores of arboreal fungi. Löbl & Smetana (2008) recognise *D. boleti* in 30 European countries, extending into North Africa and Asia. In Britain, according to Fowler (1891): “It has not been found for many years but it is quite possible that it may again be discovered.” In the past 20 years *D. boleti* has made something of a resurgence especially in Surrey and Hampshire and this has been placed in context by Dodd & Denton (2008) who emphasise the relationship between *D. boleti* and the fungus *Piptoporus betulinus* (Bull. ex Fr.) Karst on birches *Betula* spp. on the Surrey heathlands. The periodicity of *D. boleti* is annual and adults may overwinter in the decaying heartwood of trees; there is scope for that at Overbury and on Bredon Hill. On Mt Ainos, Kefallinia, Greece, adult beetles were found under the bark of Grecian Fir *Abies cephalonica* Loudon on 15 May 1996 at an altitude of 1580 m a.s.l. (Whitehead, 2005). *Diaperis boleti* appears to have no British fossil record.



01. *Diaperis boleti* (Linnaeus, 1758), Overbury, Worcestershire, 8th October 2022. Paul Whitehead.

Discussion

An adult *D. boleti* (01) was located on the dip slope of Bredon Hill in Overbury Civil Parish, Worcestershire on 8 October 2022 deep in the somewhat crumbly degraded stem base of a sporophore of the polyporous fungus *Meripilus giganteus* (Pers.) Karst. (Polyporales, Meripilaceae), together with one or two examples of the related mycophagous tenebrionid *Eledona agricola* (Herbst, 1783). At this site it is new to the entomofauna of Bredon Hill (Whitehead, 1996) and there are no recent English midland records. There are old records from Sherwood, Nottinghamshire and Dalston, Cumberland, both before 1891. If *D. boleti* is now establishing a toe-hold in better

quality environments in Worcestershire, the monitoring of *Piptoporus betulinus* may produce additional regional records noting that the beetles become active at night. The use by *D. boleti* of *Meripilus giganteus* is evidently hitherto unrecorded.

References

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Image

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