

**Preliminary evidence for the ground beetle *Agonum sexpunctatum* (L., 1758) (Coleoptera, Carabidae) and records of other invertebrates at Trench Wood, Huddington, Worcestershire, during 2016.**

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On 6 August 2016 Mr Andrew Curran visited Trench Wood, Worcestershire and obtained images (01) of a carabid beetle, evidently *Agonum sexpunctatum* (L., 1758), on foliage by the pond (52°22'N 2°11'W SO9259). I was asked to identify this insect on the basis of those images and whilst I accede to little doubt about its identity I felt that a specimen or further well-resolved images were desirable. I visited the site on 17 August 2016 but failed to find any evidence of *Agonum sexpunctatum*.



01. Female *Agonum* sp. evidently *Agonum sexpunctatum*, Trench Wood, Worcestershire, 6 August 2016. Andrew Curran.

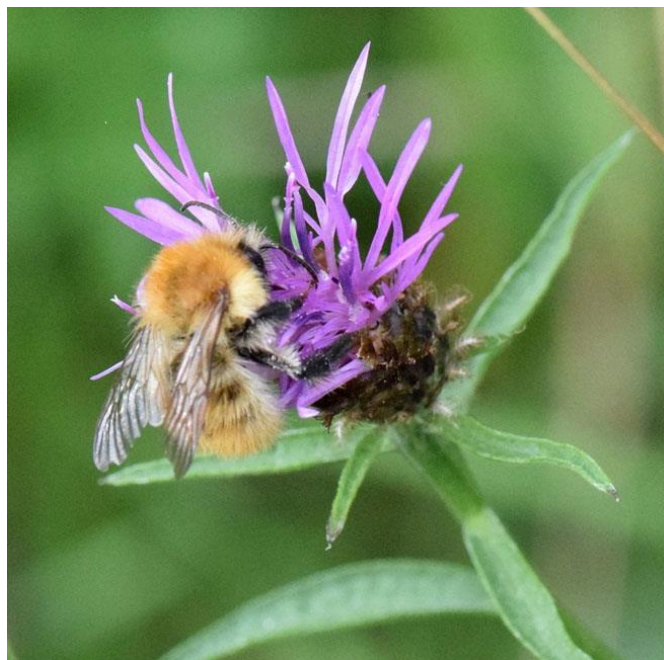
The purpose of this contribution is to alert visitors to Trench Wood to the possibility that a population of this rare distinctive British insect may exist there and to detail some further observations at the site. In continental Europe *A. sexpunctatum* is widespread and I have observed it on several occasions. The beetle is capable of flight and I have records of it in montane woodland in the Slovakian Carpathian Arc at over 1200 metres altitude. In Poland it occurs in insolated, humid, sheltered clearings and fringes in southern submontane woodlands in marked climatic continentality. This is not so unlike the habitat at Trench Wood and it would be of considerable interest if Trench Wood harboured a relict population of *A. sexpunctatum* as seems feasible (the word 'Trench', of Anglo-Norman origin, was certainly in use before A.D. 1400) given the presence of the relict leaf-rolling rhynchitid beetle *Byctiscus populi* (L., 1758) (Lane, 2011). Elsewhere, for example in Latvia (Barševiskis, 2003), *A. sexpunctatum* is reported from forest edges, roadsides, parks, gardens and the fringes of watercourses. Most probably it has a predilection for humid sunny sheltered places; Andrew Curran's image appears to show the insect basking in sunlight.

A basic overview of the setting and wildlife of Trench Wood was provided by Green & Westwood (1991); its Lepidoptera fauna is moderately well-known but other groups require more detailed study. On my visit of 17 August 2016 I was able to identify a number of significant invertebrates. After a lapse of 40 years, the snail *Columella edentula* (Draparnaud, 1805) (Stylommatophora, Vertiginidae) was confirmed. Examples of shells of the aquatic Ramshorn Snail *Planorbarius corneus* (L., 1758) (Basommatophora, Planorbidae) from the area of the pond are thought to result from accidental introduction with aquatic plants after the pond was created during 1964 (G.H. Green, *in litt.*, 21.8.2016). In south Worcestershire *P. corneus* is largely diagnostic of richly vegetated floodplain drains in the valley of the River Avon as it is elsewhere in Britain.

The recently expansive bug *Eurygaster testudinaria* (Geoffroy, 1785) (Hemiptera, Scutelleridae) was first observed at Trench Wood during 2008 (John Partridge, personal observation) and it was noted how in sheltered rides this species is now abundant and using Meadowsweet *Filipendula ulmaria* (L.) Maxim. as a host plant.

*Anaspis thoracica* (L., 1758) (Coleoptera, Scrautiidae) is a scarce scrautiid beetle limited in Worcestershire to sites with an extended woodland continuum such as Bredon Hill (Whitehead, 1996a), the Kemerton Estate (Whitehead, 1996b), Longdon Marsh (Whitehead, 2002; 2004) and Wyre Forest (Whitehead & McGee, 2003) together with several traditional orchards but not up to now at Croome Park (Lott, Alexander, Drane & Foster, 1999).

*Bombus pascuorum* (Scopoli, 1763) (Hymenoptera, Apidae). Trench Wood, Worcestershire, 17 August 2016. Pale bleached examples (02) can be difficult to identify and can complicate the use of dichotomous keys.



02. *Bombus pascuorum* (Scopoli, 1763) (Hymenoptera, Apidae). Trench Wood, Worcestershire, 17 August 2016. Pale bleached example. Paul Whitehead

The finding of *Athalia scutellariae* Benson, 1880 (Hymenoptera, Tenthredinidae) associated with Skullcap *Scutellaria geniculata* L., commonly occurring in Trench Wood, is more problematic. Benson (1952) regarded this species as widespread in Britain but it appears to be highly localised and this observation is likely to constitute a new regional record for a species which is easier to identify as a larva (03) than as an imago.



03. Larva of *Athalia scutellariae*, Trench Wood, Worcestershire, 17 August 2016. P.F. Whitehead.

#### Acknowledgements

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#### Images

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