

Keep an eye out for extraordinarily long-nosed weevil *Rhopalapion longirostre*

Oliver Wadsworth

The weevil *Rhopalapion longirostre* has been spreading from the south east of England since it was first discovered as an established population in Surrey in 2006, where it is thought that it was introduced in imported plants. The species is known to feed on various Malvaceae, especially Hollyhocks *Alcea rosea* (Duff 2016).

Both sexes have a black body covered in pale hair-like scales, orange legs and in the case of the unmistakable female, an insanely long rostrum (01) as the name suggests.

During 2024 it has made a jump in distribution: there are new records from Stratford, Nottingham and South Wales and I have just found it on the Hollyhocks in the churchyard here in Childswickham VC33, within sight of the Worcestershire VC border.

It is certainly worth inspecting Hollyhocks to see if it has reached Worcestershire. There are other weevils that feed on Malvaceae including *Aspidapion radiolus* (02), which are similar to *R. longirostre* (02), but *A. radiolus* is less obviously hairy and has black legs. *Pseudapion rufirostre* has orange legs but has a band of thick, pale hair-like scales along the side of the body (03), and the male has a rufous rostrum (04).



01. Female *R. longirostre* have an insanely long rostrum. Oliver Wadsworth



02. Male *R. longirostre* (above, top) don't seem to be fussy! One shown here attempting to copulate with a confused *A. radiolus*! Oliver Wadsworth.



03. *P. rufirostre* female. Gary Farmer.



04. *P. rufirostre* male. Gary Farmer.

Reference

Duff, G.D. 2016. *Beetles of Britain and Ireland Volume 4: Cerambycidae to Curculionidae*. A.G.Duff Publishing, Norfolk.

Images

01. Female *R. longirostre* have an *insanely long rostrum*.

Oliver Wadsworth.

02. Male *R. longirostre* (above, top) don't seem to be fussy! One shown here attempting to copulate with a confused *A. radiolus*!

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03. *P. rufirostre* female. Gary Farmer.

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