WICKEN FEN REVIVAL

Wicken Fen is renowned for its beetle fauna, with 1,463 species from 72 families. The first edition of a new series of a Wicken Fen newsletter includes records of Berosus affinis Brullé, Hygrotris confluens (Fab.) and Enochrus nigrurus (Sharp), the former two significant because they have colonised newly created habitats on more recently acquired land – also Haliplus laminatus (Schaller), the first record for 40 years, depressingly the previous one being the editor’s when a skinny student. This newsletter can be obtained from s.warrington@nationaltrust.org.uk; it gives information on how to obtain permits and so on.


CAIRNGORMS


The Cairngorm is the massif between Glen Feshie and Braemar in north-east Scotland. The area, about 6,500 km², five of Scotland’s ten highest peaks, rising to 1,309 m asl on Ben Macdui. This tome is also a massif, 444 pages of high quality paper with superb colour photographs and remarkably good value at £20. About 25 pages are devoted to invertebrates including a listing of species by habitat. The list is only for Nationally Rare species, defined as known from 1-15 10 km squares. The water beetles listed are Donacia aquatica L., Ilybius wasastjernae (Sahlberg) (as an Agabus) and, scraping in as a hydrophiid, the deer dung specialist (horse dung in Gloucestershire) Cercyon alpinus Vogt. D. aquatica gets by if the grid square is based on recent records only, but, if it is not, then the missing species are Laccornis oblongus (Stephens), Acilius canaliculatus (Nicolai) and Hydrochus brevis (Herbst). The overall analysis in chapter 23 reveals that 32 per cent of the nationally important species are invertebrates, with 169 species of fly outstripping 93 species of beetle.

THOSE RED CARS AGAIN - HERE COMES THE SCIENCE

Latissimus doesn’t often get cited in Proc. Roy. Soc. B so thanks Manfred! And read on to know how to be more environmentally friendly! Red and black horizontal plastic sheets are attraction to aquatic insects but yellow and white ones are not. The reflection-polarisation patterns of black, yellow, red and white cars were measured in the red, green and blue parts of the spectrum. In blue and green the degree of linear polarisation of light reflected from black and red cars is high, and the direction of polarisation from roofs, bonnets and boots (trunks) is nearly horizontal. Horizontal surfaces are highly attractive to red-blind beetles. It follows that if you want to avoid killing such insects inadvertently have a yellow or white car, but if you want to catch them…… You’ll need a colour copy of this paper to see what the beetles see.


AUSTRALASIAN HYDROCANTHUS

Five species of Hydrocanthus are reviewed including two species, balkei from Irian Jaya and pederzani from NE Queensland. The total number of known species is 53.