

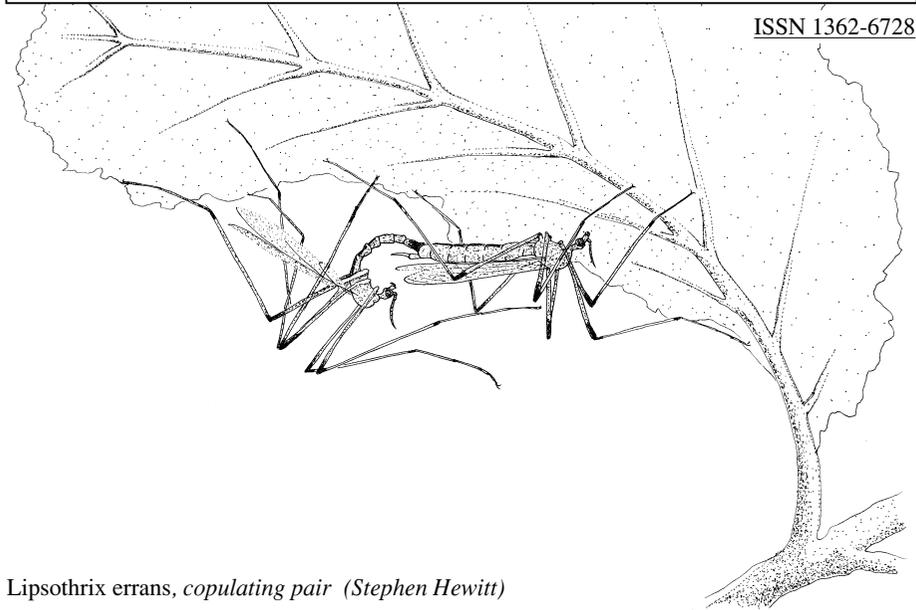
# The CARLISLE NATURALIST

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*Lipsothrix errans*, copulating pair (Stephen Hewitt)

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### From the Editor

Pressures on the Editor this year have severely disrupted the production of the present and succeeding issues (volumes 14.1 and 14.2: 2006). My apologies to all contributors and readers who have suffered the consequences of these delays.

In this and the next issue we are, unusually, publishing articles which have first appeared elsewhere – both because of their connections with the Society, and to provide wider access to significant local work: Steve Hewitt and John Parker's joint article on the cranefly genus *Lipsothrix* appears in this issue.

*Society Matters*: we were saddened to learn of the death in March this year of Joyce Brown, who had been a long-serving member, and sometime member of the Society's Council. We intend to purchase a book for the Society's library in her memory: this will probably be Derek Ratcliffe's last completed work – *Galloway and the Borders* (Collins New Naturalist) – which is due for publication early in 2007.

David Clarke

### Museum News

Geoff Naylor and Tony Tipling continue their never-ending task of inputting records of wildlife sightings from Cumbria onto the wildlife records database. Tullie House is playing a key role within the Cumbria Biological Data Network in collecting, collating and dissemination species information for the county. Jenny Bruce, our biological data officer, has moved on to a job nearer home in Dumfries and we wish her very well and thank her for the great work she has done for us over the last 18 months. Her contribution has moved things forward significantly in the development of a fully functional Local Records Centre for Cumbria.

The Virtual Fauna of Lakeland website ([www.lakelandwildlife.co.uk](http://www.lakelandwildlife.co.uk)) has been updated with additional data added to the database over the last year. There are also new pages dealing with the shieldbugs of the county alongside the groups already covered. Dorothy Iveson, John Read and Tony Tipling are working on project '*Insecta Cumbriensis*'. This project is supported through the North West Museums' 'Hub' to develop wider access to the information on our insect collections through the internet. Dorothy has been working on our hoverfly collections and John on the beetles collections, checking identifications and gathering the data which Tony has been putting onto computer. All this information will be included in a new element to the web site later this year.

Peter Harris has been sorting and cataloguing our collections of mosses and liverworts. Geoff has subsequently databased the information on computer. The collections data are complimented by information from record cards collated by Clara Winsome Muirhead here at Tullie House in the 1940s and 50s and by Derek Ratcliffe more recently, which Geoff has also computer databased. This has enabled us to generate a reasonably comprehensive checklist of the Bryophytes of Cumbria from the information we have on computer. Malcolm Stott generously gave his time to draw up a checklist of the birds of the county together with the year of the most recent record and their local status. These checklists, along with others for various wildlife groups in the county, will be made available through the website in the near future.

Stephen Hewitt

As the period covered is mostly during the winter months, there were few sightings of anything other than birds. Also, since the last meeting of the Society was early in March, records since then are mostly my own observations.

Waterfowl included a **Slavonian Grebe** at Silloth on 23<sup>rd</sup> January and an American **Ring-necked Duck** at Grasmere in late January (various observers). Talkin and Tindale Tarns shared a few less rare, but still noteworthy, species such as **Gadwall**, **Smew**, a female **Red-crested Pochard** and an often-reported **Black Swan!** A **Shoveler** at Talkin on 21<sup>st</sup> March was very unusual for that water.

Birds of prey included a **Rough-legged Buzzard** at Denton Fell, near Brampton in late January (FJR *et al.*) and a **Red Kite** near Bassenthwaite on 11<sup>th</sup> January (BP). There were two reports of **Merlins** on the Solway Plain in January and February. Possibly the most unusual bird of the period was a **Grey Phalarope** on Windermere in late January (FJR *et al.*).

**Little Owls** are scarce in north Cumbria so single birds at Burgh-by-Sands on 2<sup>nd</sup> January (R & SG) and a fellside bird at Park Head, Kirkoswald, 10<sup>th</sup> April (DC) were good finds. **Green Woodpeckers** too seem to be getting harder to find but in late February there were birds near Keswick, and at Bassenthwaite and Swindale (GH), and one at the upper end of Mardale on 10<sup>th</sup> March (DC).

Amongst passerines, the winter specialities were scarce. **Snow Buntings** were seen on Branstree and Grassmoor in January (SMH); the only **Bramblings** reported were at Crosscannonby on 13<sup>th</sup> January (FJM) and January **Waxwings** comprised 23 at Warnell Fell on 12<sup>th</sup> (IA) and one in Etterby Street, Carlisle on 9<sup>th</sup> (PW). A **Black Redstart** at Kirkbride airfield on 11<sup>th</sup> February was more unusual (FJM) and the only report of wintering **Blackcap** came from Etterby Street on 17<sup>th</sup> January (DA1). **Ravens** are now seen increasingly in lowland areas and, in January, single birds included sightings at Scaleby (RL), Burgh Marsh and two at Abbeytown (both RA).

Other reports of interest were up to 8 **Yellowhammers** in a Dalston garden (GH); up to 17 **Tree Sparrows** in a Heads Nook garden (AAr), a flock of 150 **Twite** at Anthorn on 28<sup>th</sup> January (AA) and an unusually large gathering of 9 **Jays** in Geltsdale on 22<sup>nd</sup> January (R & SG).

In the unusually long period of cold spring weather, bird migration was rather slow and variable with some summer visitors arriving early (to little insect food!), and others late. Most flowers and insects were much delayed, with little evidence of butterflies before late April.

Recorders: Anne Abbs (AA); Allen Arnsby (AAr); Ian Armstrong (IA); Roy Armstrong (RA); David Clarke (DC); Russell and Sara Gomm (R & SG); Stephen

Hewitt (SMH); Geoff Horne (GH); Dorothy Iveson (DAI); Richard Little (RL); Frank Mawby (FJM); Bernard Parker (BP); Jeremy Roberts (FJR); Peter Wilson (PW).

Geoff Naylor

### Reports on Field Meetings

#### 6<sup>th</sup> May: Gelt Woods and Jockey Shield – bird song identification

Leader: Geoff Naylor

It was a very pleasant May morning when five of us met at the Lower Gelt car park at 8.30am. Geoff quickly drew our attention to the calls of the Wood Pigeon, Robin and Chaffinch, closely followed by a Grey Wagtail which we then tracked down to its perch on the roof of the nearby farmhouse. The woodland was carpeted with patches of Wood Anemone, Wood-rush and Golden Saxifrage; the Bluebells were yet to come fully into flower. The song of the Coal Tit was coming from a group of conifers and in the distance the call of the Willow Warbler. Chiff-chaff was soon heard, followed closely by Great Tit, then a Great Spotted Woodpecker (which we heard also a little later drumming). One of highlights of the morning for me was the sight and call of a Goldcrest from a Scots Pine. A Blackbird song was followed by the dry call of a Wood Warbler, and then a Pied Flycatcher. We had good views of Nuthatch, a bird which although a common sight in these woods today, has only been seen here from the early 1990s. As we took the turning off towards Unity Bog we heard the song of the Blackcap.

We visited the damp hummocky area of Unity Bog with the hope of seeing Green Hairstreak butterflies, but unfortunately it was too cool and early in the day. While we were standing in this more open area amongst the Bilberry and Ling we again heard the song of a Willow Warbler.

We headed back toward the wood and the river. A Tree Creeper was heard and a Dipper was seen flying along the river. Swifts were flying overhead. The piping of a Bullfinch was followed by sight and calls of Long-tailed Tit. A strong scent of garlic alerted us to a patch of Ramsons nearby which was yet to come into flower. A Jay calling with a strange Buzzard-like call puzzled us all until we located it at the top of a tall tree. As we arrived back at the car park Geoff drew our attention to the cooing of a Stock Dove coming from the nearby barn.

Having spent about two hours in Gelt Woods we got back into our cars for the drive up to Jockey Shield. On the walk down to the river we heard Tree Pipit. Patches of Town-hall Clock (Moschatel) were seen on the side of the path. Having crossed the river we took the right-hand path up through the area of trees and

scrub and heard both Garden Warbler and Blackcap. As we reached the open area we had a good view of a Black Grouse in flight. At this point the weather started to take turn for the worse and it started to rain. We decided to call it a day and started to retrace our steps to the cars. On the way back we heard the long bubbling trills of the Curlew in the distance and had excellent views of a Tree Pipit perched on the overhead wires.

We all thanked Geoff for an interesting morning that has encouraged us all to listen to birdsong a lot more closely in future.

Marie Saag

#### 10<sup>th</sup> June: Sedge workshop

Leader: Jeremy Roberts

While the England football team prepared for their opening World Cup Finals match against Paraguay in Frankfurt, 'coach' Jeremy Roberts was taking his team into a 'game of two halves' involving the glumes, bracts, spikes, stigmas and stomata of sedge identification.

The 'first half' was spent indoors making sure that we knew when a sedge was a true sedge and not a grass, a spike-rush, a club rush or a member of any other non-*Carex* group of long, green spiky plants.

Jeremy's thorough preparation ensured that we very quickly moved on to the business of identifying individual sedge species from representative groups and habitats. By lunchtime we had handled and examined more than a dozen common and rarer plants. We were provided with an excellent, easy to use introduction to 27 of the county's commonest species with notes on rarer sedges not covered in the key.

After lunch we moved into the 'second half', which took place in glorious sunshine and a pleasant cooling breeze in Cumbria's north-east border country. Gowk Bank is well known to botanists, in particular for its range of orchids and other spectacular meadow flowers and we quickly located Small White Orchid, Heath Spotted-orchid, Frog Orchid and Common Twayblade. We admired the Globe Flowers which were at their best, and were introduced by Jeremy to the small white eyebright *Euphrasia rostkoviana*, a rare plant restricted to north-west England, Wales and southern Scotland.

Turning our attention to the main purpose of the day we found, and were able to identify most of the sedges that we had been presented with during the morning's workshop. These included: *Carex echinata* – Star Sedge; *C. panicea* – Carnation Sedge; *C. viridula* – Yellow sedge; *C. caryophylla* – Spring Sedge; *C. pulicaris* – Flea Sedge; *C. hostiana* – Tawny Sedge; *C. acutiformis* – Lesser Pond Sedge; *C.*



Flea Sedge and Tall Bog Sedge (Sara Gomm)

*rostrata* – Bottle Sedge and *C. pilulifera* – Pill Sedge.

Moving on to Churnsike Bridge, we crossed into Northumberland, the better to view plants growing in the very reduced flow of the river Irthing which forms the county boundary at this point. Here we saw Common Club-rush (*Scirpus lacustris*) and Water Horsetail (*Equisetum fluviatile*), with Water Sedge (*Carex aquatilis*) and Bottle Sedge again.

The day was still fine and we retraced our steps into Cumbria where we found that the surface of Butterburn Flow was dry enough to walk over without difficulty. Nevertheless Frank Mawby's long experience and local knowledge enabled him ably to demonstrate to us that there were still one or two wet holes on the site! We enjoyed both Round-leaved and Long-leaved Sundews (*Drosera rotundifolia* and *D. anglica*) and we were impressed with the beauty of the Tall Bog Sedge (*Carex magellanica*), a rare plant of *Sphagnum* mires, as it nodded gracefully in the breeze.

We were now approaching the final whistle, and as we went into the last minute or so of extra time, with arms raised and a cry of delight Jeremy produced a sedge to crown the day: Few-flowered Sedge (*Carex pauciflora*) is another rare plant of *Sphagnum* bogs and it was a privilege to see it flowering in its only known Border Mires locality.

It had been a delight to spend a day with a real expert and it was clear that much of Jeremy's enthusiasm had rubbed off onto the team, who will all be looking forward to putting their refreshed and new gained skills into practice.

Russell Gomm

## 17th June: Maryport area: Coastal Wildlife Leader: Geoff Naylor

Only five members turned out for this meeting, as opposed to the 20 or more last year. Although the weather was far from perfect – with a cool wind and occasional rain – we managed to find most of the plants, insects and birds we were hoping for.

Beginning at Maryport Harbour, the sought-after Small Blue butterflies performed well, although they were less numerous than in 2005. Other Lepidoptera comprised Small White, Small Heath, Common Blue and Large Skipper butterflies, the scarce Grass Rivulet moth and a Silver-Y moth. A single Ringlet butterfly was seen by one of the party.

The special plants of the area included Purple Broomrape (*Orobanche purpurea*), which was in good numbers and in good condition, but we could only find a single spike of Lesser Broomrape (*O. minor*). There were lots of Northern Marsh (*Dactylorhiza purpurella*) and Pyramidal (*Anacamptis pyramidalis*) Orchids and a handful of Common Spotted Orchids (*D. fuchsii*). Added to these, other plants of interest were Horseshoe Vetch (*Hippocrepis comosa*), Bloody Crane's-bill (*Geranium sanguineum*), Sainfoin (*Onobrychis viciifolia*) and the lone Medlar (*Mespilus germanica*) bush – which was still in flower. A complete surprise, however, were two flowering plants of the Yellow Horned-poppo (*Glaucium flavum*), very much a coastal specialist.

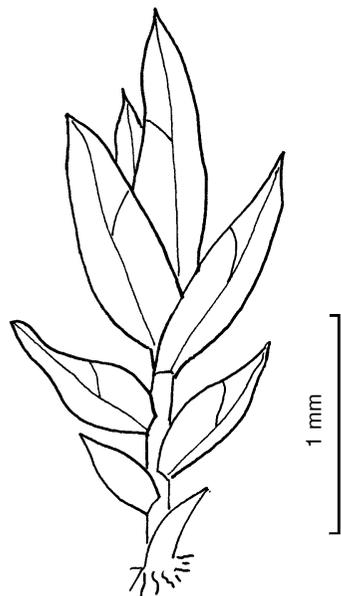
We then moved north along the coast to Mawbray where last year we had found six flowering spikes of Bee Orchid (*Ophrys apifera*). I had made a preliminary visit and found a healthy thirteen, but on the day, the group surpassed that with a count of 30-35. A walk along the beach gave us rather distant views of two Little Terns and a Ringed Plover.

To round off the afternoon, we visited the dunes south of Silloth. Here, the target species were Sea Spurge (*Euphorbia paralias*), Portland Spurge (*E. portlandica*), Tassel Hyacinth (*Muscari comosum*), Dusty Miller or Hoary Mugwort (*Artemisia stelleriana*) and Sickie Medick (*Medicago sativa*). All of these were found but the last two were not quite in flower. The only butterfly here was Small Heath and we found both Yellow Shell and Cinnabar moths to complete the day's list.

Geoff Naylor

## Notes & records

### The moss *Fissidens exilis* Hedw. at Watchtree Reserve, Great Orton



*Fissidens exilis* (Peter Harris)

While visiting Watchtree Nature Reserve (NY311542, alt c. 70 m) last year (11<sup>th</sup> May 2005), bryophytes were recorded in one of the small areas of established woodland. Among the mosses observed were two species of *Fissidens*, both growing on exposed soil. On close examination, the larger of the two proved to be *Fissidens bryoides* Hedw. – a species widely recorded throughout Britain. The smaller, with shoots less than 3.0 mm in length exhibited features characteristic of *Fissidens exilis*, namely, a limited number of leaf pairs (maximum of four per shoot), crenulate leaf margins and absence of any differentiated borders to the leaves (Smith 2004). Confirmation of the identification was kindly provided by Tony Smith (A.J.E. Smith) and the record has been accepted as the first for VC 70.

Voucher material will go to the herbarium of the British Bryological Society at Cardiff Museum. It should be added that *Fissidens exilis*, in the absence of any capsules, is an inconspicuous moss and is easily overlooked in the field. The species is not uncommon nationally (Smith 1992) and a very restricted distribution in VC 70 seems unlikely.

### References

- Smith, A.J.E. (1992) in: Hill, M.O., Preston, C.D. & Smith, A. J. E. (Eds). *Atlas of the Bryophytes of Britain and Ireland*, Volume 2. Colchester: Harley Books.
- Smith, A.J.E. (2004) *The Moss Flora of Britain and Ireland*, 2nd edn. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Peter Harris, 3 Sandath Gardens, Penrith CA11 8B3G

### The solitary bees *Melitta haemorrhoidalis* (Fabricius) and *Anthophora furcata* (Panzer) in a Natland garden

I published an article: ‘Instant *Anthidium*, or Grow your own Carder bee’ in the Autumn 1999 issue of the *Carlisle Naturalist*, describing the arrival of the Wool-carder Bee *Anthidium manicatum* in our garden at Natland, 3 km south of Kendal. Every summer since then we have had a male and several females visiting the same clump of Lamb’s-ears (*Stachys lanata*), but I have never seen the wool-gathering performance again. They still come for nectar and pollen, but evidently have found somewhere else to collect their cell-building material.

However, this summer, on 20<sup>th</sup> July, I was surprised to see a female and a male of the solitary mining bee *Melitta haemorrhoidalis* visiting the *Siddalcia* ‘Elisabeth Heugh’ in the same rockery next to the Lamb’s-ears. This bee is widespread but local in the south of England, scarce in the north. It was first recorded in the north west by A.E. Wright in 1945 on the embankment near Holme Island at Grange-over-Sands, and I re-found it at this location in 1996. Since then I have found it at Rampside, Sandscale and Haverigg, and Stephen Hewitt found it at Holmwrangle sandpit, so it is probably more widespread than had previously been realised, but evidently very local. It was a particular surprise to see it at *Siddalcia* as its favourite forage flower is Harebell (*Campanula rotundifolia*), but I have learned that it has been seen visiting Malvaceae in the south. As Harebells are becoming less common in the countryside, if this bee adapts to garden flowers it may become more common (or more commonly seen).

On the same day I also found a female of the solitary bee *Anthophora furcata* visiting Purple Toadflax (*Linaria purpureus*) next to the *Siddalcia*. Like the *Melitta*, this is the only member of its genus which comes so far north, and it is similarly scarce. It is one of the long-tongued ‘flower bees’, but may be overlooked because it looks like a small dark bumblebee. I have seen it at one or two places around Natland and at Sandscale, and Liverpool Museum surveyors found it at Drumburgh Moss, so like the *Melitta* it is probably widespread but very local.

I discovered a useful trick which enabled me to get (digital) photos of both these bees on their flowers. I had netted and tubed the *Melitta* to be sure of its identification. If one removes the stopper and tries to release a bee back onto a flower it normally makes a quick escape. This time I pushed the flower from which I had taken the bee (still on the plant), into the tube with the bee. It immediately batted onto the flower and resumed foraging, while I carefully slid the tube off. It then continued from flower to flower as though nothing had

happened. The same dodge worked with the *Anthophora*. I shall certainly continue to try this in future!

Neil A. Robinson, 3 Abbey Drive, Natland, Kendal LA9 7QN

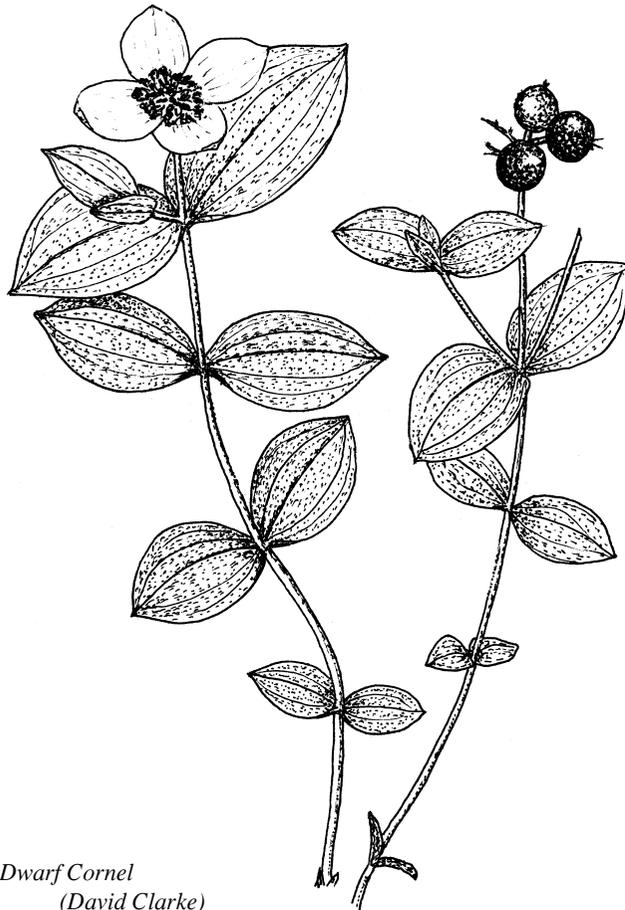
### Dwarf Cornel in Cumbria: a new county record

In October 2005 I was surprised and delighted to discover Dwarf Cornel (*Cornus suecica*) growing high in a gully on Great End at the top of Borrowdale.

Great End forms the northernmost part of the Scafell massif and is split by a number of prominent gullies. Inspired by the 1950s records of Derek Ratcliffe

(especially one for Alpine Cinquefoil (*Potentilla crantzii*) at Great End) I have made a number of visits to Great End and the well-known Skew Gill nearby. The Borrowdale Volcanic rock here is quite acidic but the gully lines often have a more diverse flora associated with lime-rich conditions. I had therefore been working up and down the gullies looking for any sign of species such as Rose-root (*Sedum rosea*) which are a good indicator of a richer flora.

I found that the main gullies on Great End are botanically poor compared to a typical Lakeland gill or gully line. However I wanted to return to look at a few



Dwarf Cornel  
(David Clarke)

*Potentilla* plants growing in south-east gully (they all turned out to be Tormentil (*P. erecta*)). About 100 metres up the gully line I suddenly spotted 10-15 shoots of Dwarf Cornel. I was quickly joined by friends Paul Glading and Jean Johnston. We knew that this plant was not recorded in Cumbria, but having seen the plant in Scotland were fairly confident that we were correct in our identification. Geoffrey Halliday later confirmed the record from photos and specimens.

It was difficult to judge on that occasion whether the shoots were from one plant or several and there was no sign of flowering. However, a visit on 11<sup>th</sup> July 2006 when the plant was fully developed revealed 112 shoots, with seven in fruit. The plants were growing amongst mossy vegetation, with heather and bilberry; Common Cow-wheat (*Melampyrum pratense*), Goldenrod (*Solidago virgaurea*) and Tormentil grow in the vicinity. The ledge is not easily accessible to sheep and did not appear grazed. The grazing pressure in the top end of Borrowdale has recently been reduced by English Nature agreements with the tenant at Seathwaite. Considering how thoroughly the Victorians must have searched the hillsides and crags for mountain flowers it is pleasing that one slipped the net. Dwarf Cornel often grows under the canopy of heather or bilberry and unless you catch sight of the attractive white flowers is not very conspicuous. The location is difficult to access and I can only think that it has been safely hidden there for thousands of years. Any passing climbers either did not see it or did not recognise it.

I am sure there are other new records out there, just waiting to be discovered. The High Fells of the Lake District do seem under-recorded and recent stock-reduction agreements signed between English Nature and hill farmers means that plants that have been hanging on for years may well now be prominently flowering.

If you do plan to go and have a look at Dwarf Cornel in its only Cumbrian location be aware that south-east gully (named from the winter climbing guide) is not for the faint-hearted. Above you are many loose boulders (a helmet is essential) and the ground is more or less vertical. A rope and climbing skills would be prudent.

Simon Webb, Natural England  
Juniper House, Murley Moss, Oxenholme Road, Kendal LA9 7RL

### Some new county and vice-county records of beetles from Bowness-on-Solway Nature Reserve and Newton Reigny Moss, 2005

The Water Ladybird (*Anisosticta 19-punctata*) is rare in Cumbria, with only four post-1980 records noted in Cumbrian Ladybirds (Hewitt, 2004). These mostly

near the south and west coast. It is associated with Bulrush (*Typha latifolia*) and Common Reed (*Phragmites australis*) and over-winters in the leaves and stems of *Typha*, preferring sites where this is growing in mud. A large stand of *Typha* at Bowness-on-Solway N.R. (NY2061) is usually inaccessible, but on 21<sup>st</sup> August 2005 the large pond was dry and I was pleased to find eight examples of this ladybird on the plants. This site is apparently the most northerly in Britain for this species, though I doubt whether it is a recent arrival. It does not occur in Scotland, and is much commoner further south. I found it on 23 occasions in Gloucestershire before 1989 and my friend David Iliff reported it at Leighton Moss (VC60) in the summers of 1950 and 1991. (This stand of Bulrush had previously yielded, in 2004, the tiny cryptophagid beetle *Telmatophilus typhae*, previously recorded at just a few sites in the county (Atty 2002, Read 2003).

Also on 21<sup>st</sup> August, a single specimen of the ground-beetle *Bembidion assimile* was swept in its typical habitat - dense vegetation in marshes, by a half dried-out shady pool on the Reserve. With only one previous Cumbrian record (VC69: North Walney, 1993), this is the first record for VC70, and is also the farthest north in Britain.

On 20<sup>th</sup> September 2005 I visited Newton Reigny Moss in search of water-beetles. There was no standing water anywhere on the Reserve that day, but a few clumps of *Typha* were discovered in a dried-out area (NY4730). F.H. Day had taken a short series of the Water Ladybird on the Moss in August 1932, then the first and only old record for Cumbria. Searching the leaf-axils, the only two ladybirds I found were the recently spreading 14-spot (*Propylea 14-punctata*) and a 10-spot (*Adalia 10-punctata*). Better luck next year, perhaps. However, the few beetles recorded that day did include two species new to Cumbria: the fungus beetle *Enicmus rugosus* (Nationally Scarce) and the fen staphylinid *Philonthus fumarius* (also Nationally Scarce).

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 Hewitt, S. (2004) *Cumbrian Ladybirds*. Tullie House Museum, Carlisle.  
 Read, R.W.J. (2003) The beetle *Telmatophilus typhae* Fallen on Bulrush in Cumbria. *Carlisle Naturalist* **11**(1), p.10.

David Atty, Beckhouse Mill, Embleton, Cockermouth, CA13 9TN

[It is worth mentioning that another Water Ladybird (almost as northerly as David's)

was swept by John Parker from a marshy area by the R. Petteril in Upperby (NY4153) on 31<sup>st</sup> August 2005. The specimen was identified by John Read. – S.M.H.]

## The thick-legged flower beetle *Oncomera femoratum* (Fabricius) (Coleoptera: Oedemeridae) in Cumbria, and other notable beetles in the N.L. Birkett collection

Recently I have been going through the beetles in the N.L. Birkett collections of insects that were donated to the Tullie House Museum, Carlisle in 2003. Amongst some of the more interesting species that I discovered in the collection was a small series of *Oncomera femoratum*, which had been collected by Dr. Birkett himself. Altogether there were seven card-mounted specimens which had the following hand-written data: 'S. Westmorland 23.3.1950 at willow' [4 specimens]; 'Slackhead, Cumbria VC69 5.10.1957 SD49.96' [2 specimens]; 'Arnside, Cumbria VC69 23.3.1950 on willow' [1 specimen].

This beetle has not previously been recorded from Cumbria and this is the first record for VC69 Westmorland. According to Hyman & Parsons (1992), *O. femoratum* is graded as a Nationally Scarce (Nb) species and is widespread, but very local in Britain. It has been recorded mainly from southern England, and in the past from Scotland and parts of Wales. Little is known about the ecology of this beetle, but it is probably associated with wooded areas and hedgerows. The adults have been recorded from the blossom of willow and ivy: the larval biology is unknown.

Other Cumbrian specimens of note in the Birkett collection include the following Nationally Scarce species:

- Haliphus apicalis* (a crawling water beetle), Burgh Marsh [NY36], 28<sup>th</sup> April 1928.  
*Octhebius marinus* (a small water beetle), Holme Island saltmarsh [SD47] 6<sup>th</sup> August 1960, NLB (= N.L. Birkett).  
*Hippodamia variegata* (Adonis' Ladybird), Sandcastle [SD17] 14<sup>th</sup> September 1970, NLB.  
*Paraphotistus impressus* (a click beetle), Orton [NY35], 6<sup>th</sup> June 1953, NLB.  
*Cantharis obscura* (a soldier beetle), Witherslack, 20<sup>th</sup> May 1948 and 14<sup>th</sup> June 1951, NLB.  
*Melandrya caraboides* (a false darkling beetle), Rousdsea [SD38], 18<sup>th</sup> June 1946 and 7<sup>th</sup> June 1947, NLB.  
*Pyrochroa coccinea* (Black-headed Cardinal Beetle), Winster [SD49], 28<sup>th</sup> June 1964, NLB.  
*Cassida prasina* (a leaf beetle), Kendal Wood [SD59] 1<sup>st</sup> May 1977, NLB.

*Cryptacephalus aureolus* (a leaf beetle), Kendal [SD59] 3<sup>rd</sup> July 1947, NLB.

Whitbarrow [SD48], 26<sup>th</sup> May 1974, NLB. Meathop [SD48], 23<sup>rd</sup> May 1946, NLB.

*Meloe violaceus* (an oil beetle), Eskdale [SD19], 14<sup>th</sup> May 1950, NLB.

*Polydrusus molis* (a weevil), Witherslack, 6<sup>th</sup> May 1948, NLB.

*Magdalis carbonaria* (a weevil), Meathop Moss, 3<sup>rd</sup> June 1947, NLB.

*Rhynchites cupreus* (a leafroller weevil), Witherslack [SD48] 20<sup>th</sup> May 1948, NLB.

*Cryptorhynchus lapathi* (Withy Weevil), Silecroft [SD18], 1<sup>st</sup> July 1950, NLB.

*Ellescus bipunctatus* (a weevil), Witherslack, 20<sup>th</sup> April 1953, NLB. Meathop, 20<sup>th</sup> April 1953, NLB.

*Byctiscus betulae* (Hazel Leaf-roller Weevil), Witherslack, 16<sup>th</sup> May 1949, NLB.

And also the Nationally Rare:

*Donacia aquatica* (a reed beetle), Rather Heath [SD49], 16<sup>th</sup> June 1964, NLB.

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*John Read, 43 Holly Terrace, Hensingham, Whitehaven, Cumbria CA28 8RF*

#### ***Peritrechus geniculatus* (Hahn) – a ground bug new to Cumbria**

On 26<sup>th</sup> of June 2005 I found two specimens of this ground bug at the base of low plants at St Bees (NX91). This is a first record for Cumbria. The species is found on open ground in southern Britain and is regarded as nationally Local. There are specimens in the collections at Tullie House from the Isle of Wight, Essex, Sussex and Hertfordshire. The National Biodiversity Network (NBN) Gateway website shows records only to the south of a line from the Humber Estuary to South Wales. I wish to thank Stephen Hewitt for kindly identifying the specimens for me and providing information regarding its distribution.

*John Read, 43 Holly Terrace, Hensingham, Whitehaven, Cumbria CA28 8RF*

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#### **Craneflies of the genus *Lipsothrix* Loew (Diptera, Limoniidae) in Cumbria and their value as indicators of high quality sites for dead wood lying in water-courses**

*Stephen Hewitt\* & John Parker*

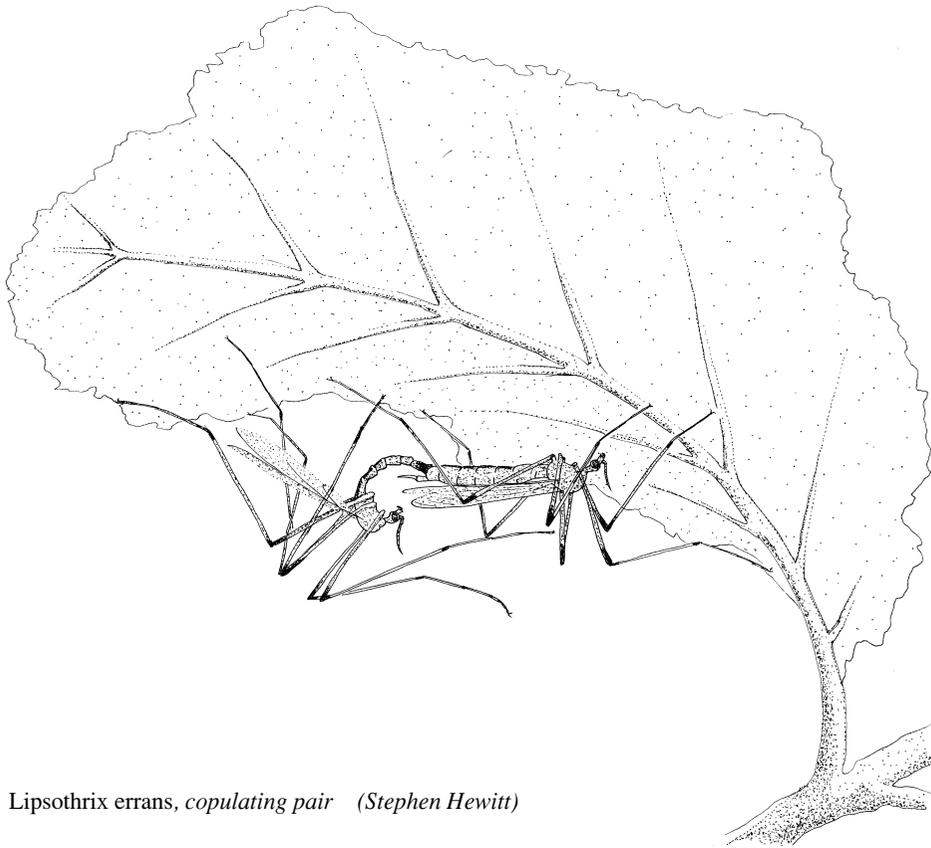
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#### **Introduction**

The value of fallen dead wood lying in water-courses, frequently referred to as Coarse Woody Debris (CWD), has been rather neglected in Britain. Until recent years stick-piles and log-jams were routinely removed from water courses as they were considered a potential flood risk and perceived as obstacles to Salmon and Trout migration. However, studies in north America and elsewhere have shown that CWD plays an important role in enhancing the geomorphology and wildlife value of river systems. Log piles and debris dams alter the flow of the river, creating pools and riffles, affecting the deposition of shingle banks and producing multiple channels. In short, CWD increases the diversity of the river structure and thereby creates a wider range of niches available to riverine wildlife, from invertebrates to fish and Otters.

Log-jams can reduce flooding downstream as they slow the speed of the current. They can also raise water levels immediately upstream, creating valuable wetland habitat for wildlife. Debris-dams also act as filters, removing sediment from the water and thereby producing cleaner gravel beds downstream, used as spawning grounds by a number of fish species, Freshwater Pearl Mussels, etc. Studies have shown that debris dams rarely restrict salmonid migration as the fish run during periods of high flow when they can often swim or leap over the dams or find a way under or through them. Furthermore the invertebrates associated with CWD provide food for the fish and the stick-piles, pools and riffles provide them with shelter, feeding and spawning grounds. The Centre for Evidence Based Conservation at Birmingham University reviewed 137 studies of the impact of CWD on salmonid stocks and concluded that 'Available evidence suggests that CWD does increase the population abundance of salmonids.' Stick piles are also used as shelters by Otters and have been shown to be important habitat for White-clawed Crayfish (both are Priority Species identified in the UK Biodiversity Action Plan).



*Lipsothrix errans*, copulating pair (Stephen Hewitt)

Godfrey (2003) lists 147 species of invertebrate associated with CWD. Many of these species are opportunistic in their use of CWD but others are dependent on this habitat. Craneflies of the genus *Lipsothrix* require CWD in their larval stage, when they live in and feed on the soft, waterlogged, decaying wood. The adults are generally relatively weak fliers and so these species are dependent on a continuous supply of CWD in the sites where they occur. These characteristics make them useful indicators of the quality and continuity of CWD habitat.

Five species of the cranefly genus *Lipsothrix* occur in Britain. All are associated with the larval habitat of water-logged dead wood in streams and flushes. Adults, which are on the wing in spring and early summer, are distinctive in being yellow with varying amounts of black on the legs and body. One species, *Lipsothrix remota* (Walker), is widespread and common. The other four species are listed in the UK Biodiversity Action Plan as indicators of high quality wet woodland

habitats and coarse woody debris lying in running water. A considerable amount of work has been done on *Lipsothrix* species on the English/Welsh border (Godfrey, 2000; 2001a; 2001b and 2002) and on *L. ecucullata* Edwards in Scotland by the Malloch Society (Rotheray, 2000; Hancock, 2002). As a result of Godfrey's work, the suggested synonymy of the European *L. nobilis* Loew with the British *L. nigristigma* Edwards (Soos & Papp, 1992) has been confirmed (Godfrey, 2001a).

Before 2003, only *L. remota* had been recorded in Cumbria, with adults captured at one site in 1995 and larvae reared from Beech sticks at another in 2002. Given the known distribution of *Lipsothrix* species it seemed likely that other species would occur in the county. In 2003 a pilot survey for *Lipsothrix* was conducted at several wet woodland sites across Cumbria. The results were promising, with both *L. errans* (Walker) and *L. nobilis* being discovered in the county, and greater survey efforts were made in 2004 with support from English Nature and the Environment Agency.

### Methods

Sites with suitable wet dead wood habitat were sampled for larvae/pupae and/or adults between January and June 2003 and between February and June 2004. Sample sites were spread across the county (see figures 1-4).

Larvae and pupae were collected with a small amount of substrate and placed in clear plastic containers measuring 70mm in diameter by 100mm deep, with perforated snap-on lids. The containers generally retained sufficient moisture to allow the larvae to complete their development without the need to add water. The containers were checked every day or two and emergent adults were removed together with their empty pupae which were obvious as they protruded from the substrate. The adults were then identified and voucher material deposited in Tullie House Museum, Carlisle.

Between one and ten samples were collected from each site covering a range of wet wood originating from different tree species and lying in a variety of situations – from log-jams in the main river channel to wood lying in backwaters, small side streams and seepages in woodland.

In addition, hatched pupal cases were collected from some sites and identified using the draft key in Godfrey (2001a) and by comparison with reared material. Adults were collected later in the season by sweep-netting around wood debris lying in running water.

## Results

53 sites were visited in 27 different hectads in Cumbria during 2003 and 2004. Four species of *Lipsothrix* were recorded from 51 sites during the survey. The RDB1, UK BAP *L. nobilis* was discovered new to Cumbria from eight sites, the Nationally Scarce, UK BAP *L. errans* was discovered new to Cumbria from 12 different sites and the RDB3, UK BAP *L. ecucullata* was discovered new to England (and Cumbria) from two sites. Table 1 gives details of the sites and presents data on larval rearings of the UK BAP species. Figures 1-4 present the Cumbrian distributions of the four species encountered in the survey.

### *Lipsothrix remota* (Walker)

Larvae, pupae and/or adults of this species were found at 47 (89%) of the sites visited in a broad range of wet woodland situations across the county. Immature stages were found in wet wood of various sizes from sticks of just 30mm to logs of over 300mm in diameter, lying in woodland seepages and streams up to 6m wide. Dead wood of Alder (*Alnus*), Ash (*Fraxinus*), Birch (*Betula*), Oak (*Quercus*) and Beech (*Fagus*) was utilised by the larvae of this species. Sites ranged in altitude from 10 m to 350 m above sea level, with a mean altitude of 133 m. Figure 1 shows the Cumbrian distribution of *L. remota*.

### *Lipsothrix errans* (Walker)

*L. errans* was found at 12 sites in upland areas of the county. Adults were reared from larvae collected from Alder and Ash wood.

*L. errans* pupae and/or larvae were collected from wet wood lying in small streams and seepages at ten woods in the Lake District National Park within the Cumbria Fells and Dales Natural Area. Most of these sites are flushed valley side woods, often with an open canopy and scattered trees generally of Alder but also including Ash, Birch and Oak. Several are old park woodlands. At Glenamara Park, Patterdale, adults were found in numbers in mid-June, and several hatched pupae were found protruding from a wet Alder log lying in the wet peaty bank of the beck. Two additional sites were found in the Border Fells Natural Area in rather different habitat. Here the larvae were in wet wood in streams and rivers flowing through closed canopy gorge woodland at Gilsland Gorge SSSI and Lyne Woods SSSI.

Rather surprisingly, the species was not found in the North Pennines Natural Area despite the presence of apparently suitable habitat. Sites holding *L. errans* ranged in altitude between 80 m to 350 m. The mean altitude was 179 m. Figure 2 shows the Cumbrian distribution of *L. errans*.

### *Lipsothrix nobilis* Loew (= *L. nigristigma* Edwards)

Adults reared from larvae collected from a wet Alder log lying in an overflow channel of the River Irthing at Kellwood on 19<sup>th</sup> March 2003 provided the first record of this species in Cumbria. The larvae were in seams of soft wet decay, beneath loose bark in some cases but not exclusively so. The log was c.200mm in diameter. It lay just above the surface of the water but was wet and clearly received frequent soaking by rising water levels. On 25<sup>th</sup> May 2003 the original log was found to have been washed away. However adult females were found ovipositing on another log in the vicinity and at another four small stick piles on the same 200 metre-long overflow channel.

In 2004, teneral adults and hatched pupae were observed at Kellwood on 11<sup>th</sup> May. In addition, larvae were reared from Alder sticks and logs at six other sites on the Irthing/Lyne catchment. They were generally found in larger pieces of wood, firmly lodged in backwaters or small side streams. All sites are in densely wooded river valleys except for Mollen Woods – a more open area of upland wet alder wood. Teneral adults were noted at Lyne Woods on 29<sup>th</sup> May and an ovipositing female was observed on the Carwinley Beck the same day. Figure 3 shows the Cumbrian distribution of *L. nobilis*.

In Cumbria this species is essentially restricted to the boundary of the Border Uplands Natural Area (the Cheviot hills massif) with the Solway Basin Natural Area, in the north-east corner of the county. *L. nobilis* was found at seven sites on the rivers Irthing and Lyne and their tributaries and at one site on Carwinley Beck, a tributary of the River Esk during the survey. Sites ranged in altitude from 35 m to 170 m, with a mean of 88 m above sea level.

### *Lipsothrix ecucullata* Edwards

Found new to England and Cumbria at two sites in the north-east of the county. The sites were at altitudes of 60 m and 115 m. Figure 4 shows the Cumbrian distribution of *L. ecucullata*.

A male and female were reared from larvae found in an Alder stick lying in a seepage in closed canopy Alder woodland at Hell Beck on 11<sup>th</sup> April 2004. Another male was reared from a larva collected from a large fallen branch (probably of Elm) lying in a backwater channel of the River Irthing at Lanercost Holmehead the same day.

## Discussion

The survey has revealed distinctive distribution patterns of different species of *Lipsothrix* in Cumbria. The precise causes of these distributions are not clear but potential factors are discussed below. Further work is needed on the habitat

preferences of each *Lipsothrix* species in the county. However some differences do seem to be indicated. Godfrey (2003) refers to areas of England of particular interest for Coarse Woody Debris. On the evidence of our work in Cumbria, the catchment of the rivers Irthing and Lyne in the Cumbrian part of the Border Uplands Natural Area merits inclusion in that list.

### Habitat preferences

No *Lipsothrix* larvae were found in log-jams in large river channels, possibly because the faster flow washes away the soft decay required by the larvae. Alternatively it may be that *Lipsothrix* larvae were present further into the more sheltered, and inaccessible, centres of the stick-piles. Larvae of most species were found in wood debris from a variety of broad-leaved tree species, with no obvious preferences indicated. Alder provided the most commonly identified larval substrate, probably because this is the most frequently occurring tree in wet and riparian woodland.

*L. nobilis* larvae were generally found in larger diameter dead wood (100-500 mm) lying in backwater channels or small side streams in well-wooded, sheltered river valleys. The need for shelter may be reflected in the lower altitudinal range (35-170 m) recorded for this species.

Most of the larval samples of *L. errans* came from wet, dead wood lying in seepages and runnels or stream banks in more or less open canopy valley-side woodland in the Lake District National Park. Sticks of c. 50-100 mm were frequently utilised. The two sites in the Border Uplands Natural Area were anomalous in being closed-canopy woodland in steep-sided narrow river valleys.

In Scotland, *L. ecucullata* is generally associated with seepages in wet woodlands. The Hell Beck site is in just such a situation and appears similar to several of the sites in which larvae of *L. errans* were collected during the survey, although perhaps more densely shaded. The second site, in a large log in a backwater channel of a river, is much more typical of *L. nobilis*, which was indeed found at the same site.

The common and widespread *Lipsothrix remota* is clearly utilising a broad range of habitats, watercourses and larval substrates across a broad altitudinal range.

### Distribution patterns

*Lipsothrix nobilis* has a very distinctive and restricted distribution in Cumbria, being confined to the north-east of the county. Looking at this pattern of distribution it seems likely that this species will be found across the border in

Scotland, where tributaries of the Esk would be obvious places to search. It may also occur in Northumberland although *L. nobilis* has never been recorded in eastern Britain. The steep-sided, narrow, wooded valleys of the Irthing and Lyne catchment appear similar to the descriptions of other locations for the species in Shropshire and Lancashire. The absence of the *L. nobilis* from the rest of Cumbria might be explained by climate, geology, topography or, perhaps more likely, habitat continuity both geographically and temporally. Lunn (2004) states that some habitats survived in the Border Uplands in late Medieval times and beyond as a result of depopulation caused by centuries of cross-border raiding and it is tempting to speculate that continuity of *Lipsothrix nobilis* habitat may also have occurred as a result.

*Lipsothrix errans* is a Nationally Scarce species associated with northern and upland areas and is previously recorded from Scotland, Wales, Durham and Shropshire. The data from this survey, with an altitudinal range between 80-350m, support the accepted upland distribution of this species. The lack of any records of this species from North Pennine fellside woodlands south of the River Irthing is surprising as a number of sites appear suitable. However these areas of wet woodland are isolated and, assuming that the species is genuinely absent from this area, it may be that there has been a break in habitat continuity in these woods, resulting in the local extinction of the species and that recolonisation has not been possible due to their isolated nature.

*Lipsothrix ecucullata* was discovered for the first time in England during the survey. This species has a northern distribution in Europe and work by the Malloch Society has shown it to be reasonably widespread in the Scottish Highlands and as far south as Stirlingshire (Rotheray 2000, Hancock 2002).

*L. errans* and *L. ecucullata* appear to have similar habitat preferences and it seems odd that *L. ecucullata* has not been found in the Lake District National Park where *L. errans* is obviously widespread. *L. errans* is considered infrequent in Scotland (G. Hancock pers. comm.) and it may be that there is a difference in the climatic preferences of the two species.

### Acknowledgements

We are pleased to acknowledge the assistance of English Nature and the Environment Agency in funding this survey. Some of the Lake District sites were visited in 2003 as part of a wider study of woodland invertebrate sites in the Lake District supported by the Lake District National Park Authority. Glenamara Park was visited in 2003 as part of a general survey of the insects on that site on behalf of the National Trust. We are also grateful to Geoff Hancock of the Hunterian

Museum at the University of Glasgow and Graham Rotheray of the National Museums of Scotland for helpful comments on a draft version of this article.

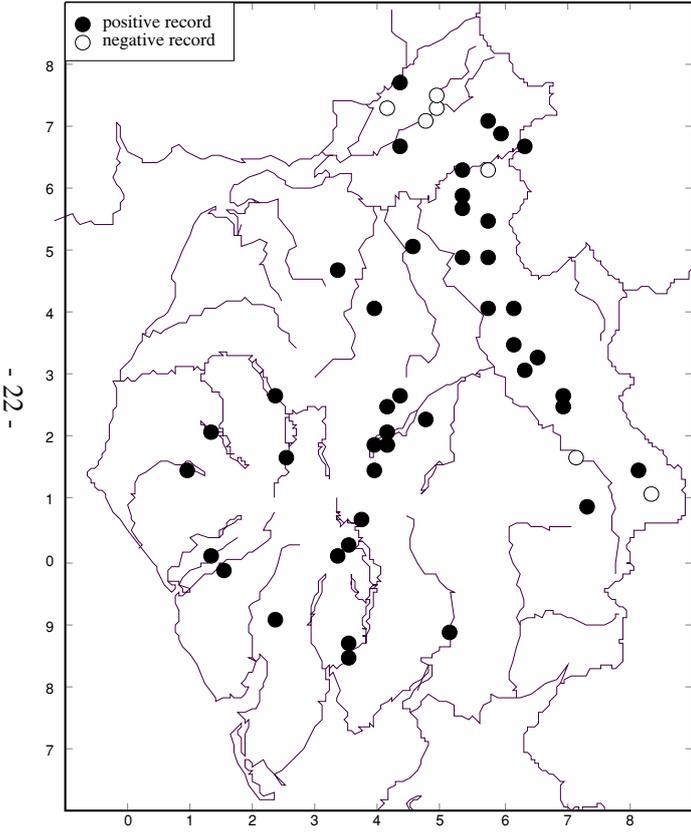
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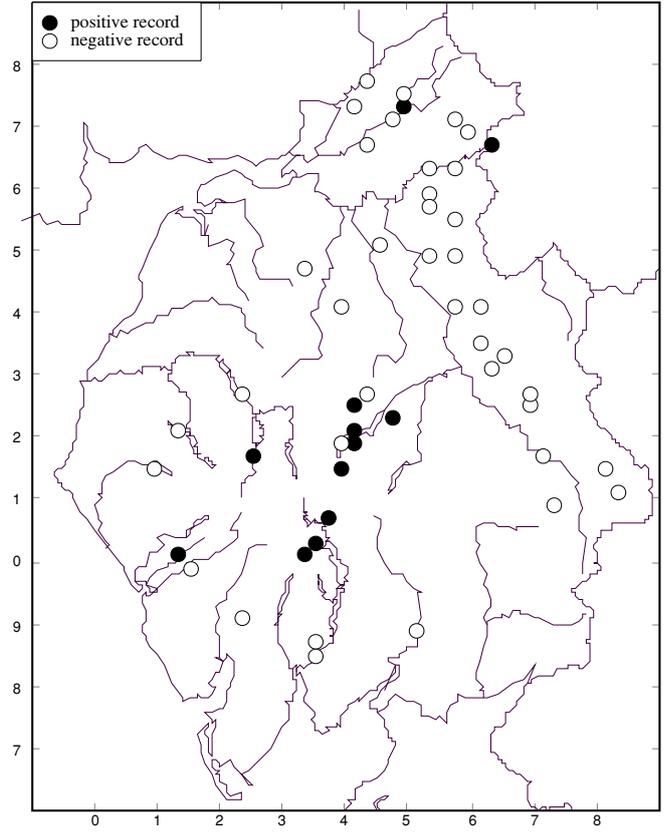
**Table 1: Records of larval habitat of UK BAP *Lipsothrix* spp.**

Scientific name	Site name	Grid ref.	Date	Stage	Habitat	Substrate species
<i>Lipsothrix ecucullata</i>	Hell Beck Woods	NY538577	11 Apr 2004	larva	Sticks lying in beck and seepage in wet alder wood	<i>Alnus glutinosa</i>
	Holme Head, Lanercost	NY572637	11 Apr 2004	larva	Large tree limbs partially submerged in backwater of river in wet woodland	? <i>Ulmus</i> sp.
<i>Lipsothrix errans</i>	Barton Park	NY4622	21 Mar 2004	larva	Sticks and branches in small streams & seepages in wet valley-side park woodland	<i>Fraxinus excelsior</i>
	Dobbin Wood	NY41562098	2003	larva	Stick in seepage in open valley-side alder wood	<i>Alnus glutinosa</i>
	Gilsland Gorge	NY633678	11 Apr 2004	larva	Stick piles in main river & side stream in wooded gorge	
	Glenamara Park, Grisedale	NY3815	06 Jun 2003	pupa	Branches in wet margin of beck in open woodland	<i>Alnus glutinosa</i>
	Grange-in-Borrowdale	NY2517	22 Feb 2004	larva	Stick in seepage on edge of willow carr	<i>Quercus</i> sp.
	Great Mell Fell	NY405255	18 Apr 2004	larva	Sticks in seepage in open alder woodland	<i>Alnus glutinosa</i>
	Irton Park	NY121011	01 Apr 2004	larva	Sticks in seepages and beck in wet alder woodland	<i>Alnus glutinosa</i>
	Lyne Woods	NY494735	11 Apr 2004	larva	Stick pile in side stream of wooded river gorge	<i>Alnus glutinosa</i>
	Old Close Wood	NY324007	01 Apr 2004	larva	Sticks & branches in woodland stream & seepages	
	River Brathay	NY352033	01 Apr 2004	larva	Sticks & branches in wet woodland stream	
<i>Lipsothrix nobilis</i>	Rydal Park	NY367071	30 Mar 2003	larva	Sticks in stream in open woodland	
	Scalehow Wood	NY413193	07 Mar 2004	larva	Wood debris in wet woodland stream & seepages	
	Carwinley and Whisk Woods	NY407732	29 May 2004	Ovipositing	Log lying in channel of wooded beck	
	Gilsland Gorge	NY632678	11 Apr 2004	larva	Stick piles in main river and side stream in wooded gorge	
	Holme Head, Lanercost	NY5763	11 Apr 2004	larva	Large tree limbs partially submerged in backwater of river in wet woodland	
	Kellwood	NY5363	19 Mar 2003	larva	Stick piles in backwater channel in wet alder woodland	<i>Alnus glutinosa</i>
	Lyne Woods	NY494735	11 Apr 2004	larva	Small stick pile in side stream of wooded river gorge	
	Mollen Woods, High Park	NY565713	11 Apr 2004	larva	Small stick piles in beck in open wet alder woodland	<i>Alnus glutinosa</i>
Whiteclose Wood	NY466712	11 Apr 2004	larva	Fallen tree periodically submerged in beck in woodland		

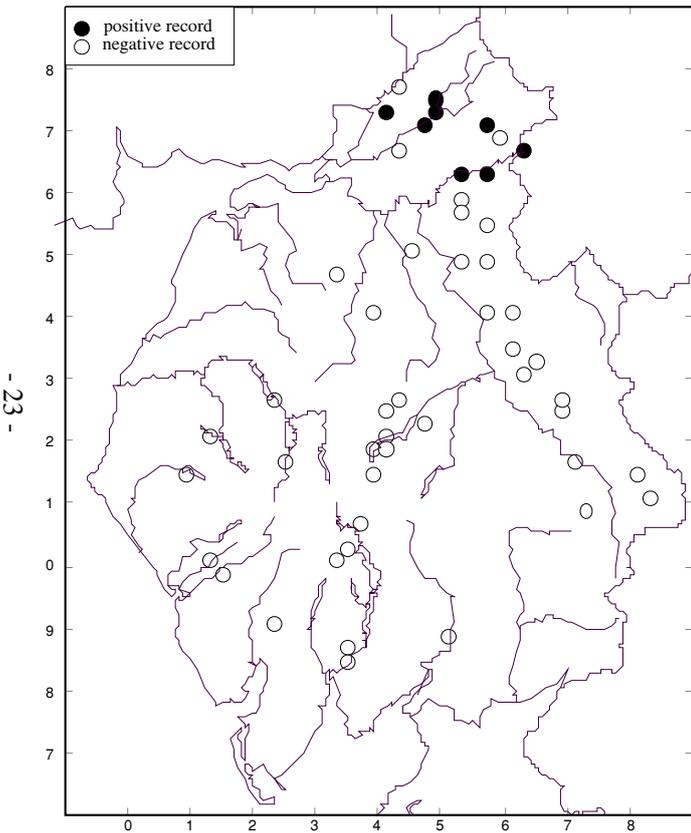
**Figure 1** *Lipsothrix remota*



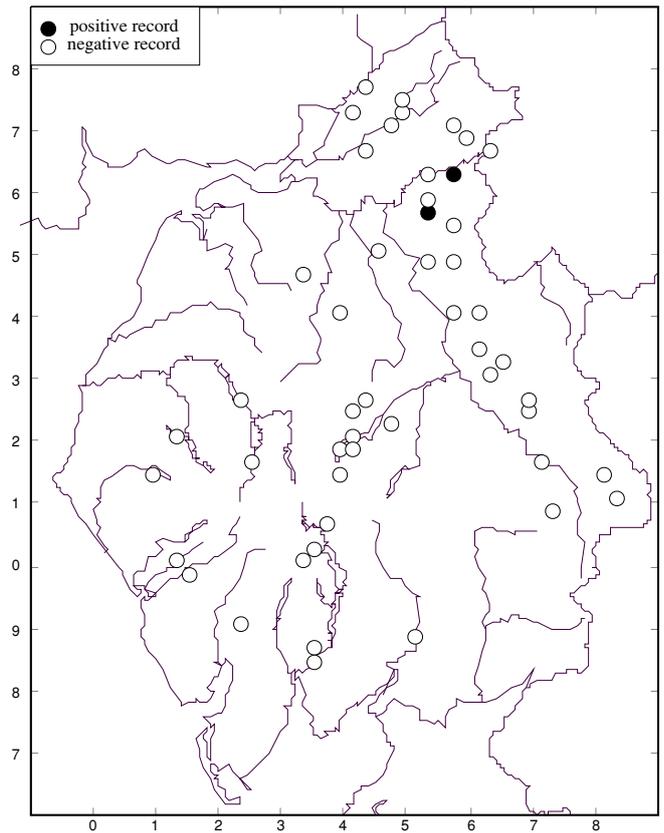
**Figure 2** *Lipsothrix errans*



**Figure 3** *Lipsothrix nobilis*



**Figure 4** *Lipsothrix ecucullata*



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BAP: Biodiversity Action Plan; VC: Vice-county.

For Conservation status definitions (e.g. Nationally Scarce, etc) consult:  
[www.jncc.gov.uk/species/Species\\_Status\\_Assessment/hierarchyoflists.htm](http://www.jncc.gov.uk/species/Species_Status_Assessment/hierarchyoflists.htm)

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### **Field Meetings and Workshops 2006**

#### **April 1st: Workshop – Mammal Signs and Tracks**

Leader: Stephen Hewitt. 10 am at Tullie House; local field visit in afternoon. Lunch not provided.  
Numbers limited -- please book via Tullie House Box office, 01228 534664. (Free to CNHS  
members.)

#### **May 6th: Gelt Woods and Jockey Shield – bird-song identification**

Leader: Geoff Naylor. 8.30 am at Lower Gelt Woods car park (NY520591). NB: we are going straight  
to venue – not meeting at College: phone 07767-888-619 the day before if needing transport.

#### **June 10th: Workshop – Sedges: an introduction**

Leader: Jeremy Roberts. 10 am at Tullie House; local field visit in afternoon. Lunch not provided.  
Numbers limited – please book via Tullie House Box office, 01228 534664. (Free to CNHS  
members.)

#### **June 17th: Coastal Wildlife**

Leader: Geoff Naylor. 9.30 am at Carlisle College or 10.30 am at Maryport (car park by Netherhall  
School, NY044369).

#### **July 1st: Foulshaw Moss and Witherslack (south Cumbria): butterflies, dragonflies and more**

Leader: David Clarke. Meet 9.30 am at Carlisle College.

#### **August 5th: Borrowdale wildlife: flowering plants, lichens, birds etc.**

Leader: Jeremy Roberts. Meet 9:30 am at Carlisle College, or 10:30 am at Great Wood carpark  
(NY272214). NB: parking charges may apply in Borrowdale.

#### **August 19th: Mothing evening, using light traps**

Leaders: Richard Little/Mike Clementson. Meet 9 pm at Sam's Wood, Wreay (NY439487).

#### **October 14th: Red Deer Rut at Martindale**

Leader: Geoff Horne. Meet at Carlisle College at 12:30 pm, or 1.30 pm at Martindale Old Church  
(NY434184).