

*Neocnemodon brevidens* (Egger, 1865) Diptera:  
Syrphidae) New to Britain

By ALAN STUBBS \*

Examination has recently been made of the Parmenter Collection at the British Museum (Natural History), prior to it being incorporated within the main British Collection. Among a short series standing under *Cnemodon vitripennis* (Meigen) there was a specimen of *Neocnemodon brevidens*, a species which has not previously been recognised in our fauna.

The specimen, a male, has been identified using the key to north-west European species by Speight and Smith (1975), this work being based upon a revision by Deluchi and Pschorn-Walcher (1955). They established that our fauna comprised four species. The key (to males only) also includes two further European species which could be found in Britain, a very useful act of foresight.

The fly readily keys to *brevidens* (Egger, 1865). It lacks keels or protuberances on the sternites, the front basitarsi bear a flap and the face is white haired. Unfortunately the genitalia are missing, but there seems no room for doubt over the placing of the specimen. The flap on the front basitarsus is easily seen as a dark projection mid way along the posterior surface, the whole of the ventral surface being shallowly excavated (in fact almost flat). The mid basitarsus is deeply excavated and bears a dark flap near the tip on the posterior surface (Smith and Speight simply refer to a notch behind, but material was not available to them). The mid tibia is inflated to form an elongate tubercle on the antero-ventral face, this tubercle bearing dense minute black bristles. Speight and Smith discuss the nature of *micans*, which may be a separate closely related species with violet colouration and black tibial hairs; however, the British specimen does not fit this description and is thus considered to be *brevidens*.

Parmenter's specimen bears the number 29518 which relates to an entry in his notebooks 'Mitcham — Willow Lane, Surrey, 24 April 49, visiting Marsh Marigold'. The notebook identification was given as *Cnemodon vitripennis*. Willow Lane runs from Mitcham Common down to the River Wandle, traversing a built up area in between. Parmenter visited Mitcham Common on a number of occasions with very good results but it would be pure speculation to say where Marigold, *Caltha palustris* L., might have been growing in 1949. However, the fact that Willow Lane is mentioned, rather than the Common, does suggest that the banks of the River Wandle may have been the source of the eight species of flies with a similar entry in his notebook.

*Neocnemodon* are very elusive in the field, though easily overlooked as small 'difficult' black hoverflies. The very slender build of the male is a good initial clue to identification, con-

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firmation being relatively easy since the downward projecting spurs on the hind trochanters are easily seen with a hand lens. The males are most easily found on flowers. The females are currently not identifiable with certainty since pairs *in cop* are required as a basis for a revisionary study. The short rounded antennae with a patch of orange beneath the third antennal segment distinguishes this genus from other Pipizini. The females are sometimes found flying low among grasses, being difficult to see and recognise as hoverflies. The peak period for *Neocnemodon* is the second half of May. It is, therefore, interesting to note the very early date of Parmenter's *brevidens* since few dipterists are actively looking for hoverflies in late April, let alone looking for *Neocnemodon*. It is thus possible that more specimens will be recorded once hoverfly specialists fully wake up to the fact that the whole of April is an essential period for collecting a number of very early species.

Deluchi and Pschorn cite records for *brevidens* from Holland, Belgium and Italy. Speight and Smith give the distribution as central and southern Europe.

### References

- Deluchi, V. and Pschorn-Walcher, H. Z., 1955. Les espèces genre *Cnemodon* Egg. (Dipt. Syrphidae) prédatrices de *Dreyfusia (Adelges) piceae* Ratzeburg (Hemiptera, Adelgidae), 1, Révision systématique et répartition géographique des espèces du genre *Cnemodon* Egg., *Zeit. angew. Ent.*, 37: 492-506.
- Speight, M. C. D. and Smith, K. G. V., 1975. A key to males of the British species of *Neocnemodon* Goffe (Dipt. Syrphidae). *Entomologist's Rec. & J. Var.*, 87: 150-153.

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METRIOPTERA ROESELII (HAGENBACH) f. DILUTA (CHARPENTIER) (ORTHOPTERA: TETTIGONIIDAE), A RECORD FOR KENT. — On 12th August 1979, I took a female specimen of this rare, macropterous form of *M. roeselii*, at Seasalter near Whitstable. I found it on tall grass in a disused field on flat, alluvial land. It is easily distinguishable from the normal form, having forewings which extend beyond the hind knees, whereas in the normal form the forewings are short and leave part of the abdomen exposed when viewed from above.

This is apparently the first discovery of f. *diluta* in Kent, no Kentish specimen existing at Maidstone Museum or (previously) at the BMNH (my thanks to Mr. Eric Philp and Dr. D. R. Ragge for this information). My specimen is now at BMNH. — R. H. CUMMING, 9 Essex Street, Whitstable, Kent.

LATE DATE FOR EUMICHTIS LICHENEA (HUEBNER). — On the morning of 30th November 1979, hopefully searching the egg cartons inside the M.V. trap, 24 hours after the deposit of brown dust, said to be have been brought in from the Sahara by the prevailing Southerly air stream, I was surprised to find a male *Eumichtis lichenea* in good condition. The species is fairly common at M.V. in the district, every year in September: this specimen no doubt being a delayed emergence, prompted by the recent mild spell. — J. BRIGGS, 5 Deepdale Close, Slackhead, Beetham, near Milnthorpe, Cumbria.