

Arachnids – Spiders

One Day Spider Survey on 8th October 2019

Survey completed by Francis Farr-Cox and James McGill (*British Arachnological Society*)



Survey Summary

The sites visited were the garden of Marechiaro including the edge of Mill Meadow, the paddock and part of the garden of Ham Manor and Spring Wood. Sadly the Mill Pond site wasn't surveyed as by then it was raining hard!

36 species of arachnid were identified in total made up of 31 spider species, 4 harvestman species and 1 pseudoscorpion species. Most of these require microscopic examination to determine the species and scientific names are used as very few have English names.

The most interesting find was the spider, *Cryptachaea blattea*, which has not been previously recorded in Somerset. This small spider belongs to the family Theridiidae (the comb-footed spiders) and is native to Africa though it is now considered global. It is closely associated with human habitation and is often found under things like plastic garden furniture. The surveying team had searched some likely habitats at Ham Manor with no luck and the specimen they found was at the bottom of the garden of Marechiaro in nettles next to the River Sheppey. Although this is a first for Somerset it was not entirely surprising; the species seems to be spreading and was already known from Devon and Gloucestershire.

The largest number of arachnids found was in the paddock of Ham Manor but the diversity of species wasn't so extensive when identification was complete. There were large numbers of several species of small money spider. Unsurprisingly one of these, *Cnephalocotes obscurus*, was also found in abundance elsewhere in old tussocky grassland - the dominant habitat in the paddock. Spring Wood produced the tiny Trogulid harvestman *Anelasma cephalus cambridgei*. Unlike other harvestmen which are marked by their long thin legs, the members of the family Tragulidae have short legs and secrete a sticky substance over their bodies so they are covered in tiny soil particles making them very difficult to spot. Unlike other harvestmen they are specialist predators of small snails. Ham Manor also produced several individuals of *Pachygnatha clercki*. This species is normally found in more damp habitats and the surveyors speculated about the presence of flushes or springs here which weren't obvious during their visit.

A proposed follow up during 2020 was cancelled due to Covid-19.

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The -ae endings indicate the family and the other names in a larger font indicate the higher classification.

The locations are as follows:

- * Marechiaro (M),
- * Mill Meadow (MM),
- * Ham Manor— paddock (H),
- * Ham Manor— plastic chairs (HC),
- * Spring Wood (S)

ARACHNIDA			
ARANEAE (Spiders)		MIMETIDAE (Pirate spiders)	
		Ero cambridgei	H,S
AMAUROBIIDAE (Laceweb spiders)		Ero furcata	M
Amaurobius ferox	M		
Amaurobius similis	M	PISAURIDAE (Nurseryweb spiders)	
		Pisaura mirabilis	H
ARANEIDAE (Orbweb spiders)			
Araneus diadematus	H	TETRAGNATHIDAE (Long-jawed orbweb spiders)	
Nuctenea umbratica	M	Pachygnatha clercki	H
Zygiella x-notata	M	Pachygnatha degeeri	H,S
CLUBIONIDAE (Sac spiders)		THERIDIIDAE (Comb-footed spiders)	
Clubiona terrestris	S	Cryptachea blattea	M
LINYPHIIDAE (Money spiders)		OPILIONES (Harvestmen)	
Bathyphantes gracilis	H		
Cnephalocotes obscurus	H	TROGULIDAE	
Diplocephalus permixtus	H	Anelasmacephalus cambridgei	S
Erigone atra	S		
Gongylidium rufipes	S	NEMASTOMATIDAE	
Labulla thoracica	M	Nemastoma bimaculatum	M
Lepthyphantes leprosus	M,HC		
Lepthyphantes minutus	M,HC	PHALANGIIDAE	
Linyphia triangularis	M	Oligolophus tridens	H
Maso sudevalli	MM	Paroligolophus agrestis	M,H
Meioneta rurestris	M		
Micrargus herbigradus	M	PSEUDOSCORPIONES (Pseudoscorpions)	
Monocephalus fuscipes	S		
Neriene clathrata	M,H,S	CHTHONIIDAE	
Palliduphantes pallidus	M	Chthonius ischnocheles	M,S
Porrhomma pygmaeum	S		
Tenuiphantes flavipes	M,S		
Tenuiphantes tenuis	M,H,S		
Tenuiphantes zimmermanni	M,MM,H,S		
Walckenaeria antica	H		