

**Biodiversity Duty:
Arachnida (spiders and harvestmen) Survey of
National Wool Museum, Drefach.**



Araeoncus humilis: (body length approx. 2 mm) A small linyphid spider is as Vulnerable in a recent conservation review.

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Introduction

From 1 October 2006, all public authorities in England and Wales have a duty to have regard to the conservation of biodiversity in exercising their functions (Section 40 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006). As part of the Museum's response to this legislation, biodiversity audits are being carried out at all of its sites. In this report, a list of species of arachnid (spiders and harvestmen) is presented from a survey of the grounds of the National Wool Museum, Drefach site during September 2009. However it must be remembered that most species of spider are seasonal and that they also have a wide range of lifestyles. Thus this brief survey can only provide an indication of the species present on the site.

Methods

The Wool Museum site survey was carried out over a single visit on the 24/09/2009. Areas for sample collecting were identified using the Phase 1 habitat survey (Rich 2009). Samples were collected using vacuum sampling (Stewart and Wright, 1995) and were visually sorted in the field where all arachnids were removed and preserved for later identification. Collecting focused on the wood margins and on the main area of the semi improved neutral grassland with its associated marshy areas. Species were identified using the keys of Roberts (1985 and 1987) for the spiders and Hillyard (2005) for the harvestmen.

Results

This brief survey identified 27 species of arachnid on the site. Table 1 lists the species found with brief notes as to their status and their typical habitats. Most of the species found were common and typical to the main habitats found at the woollen museum although a few species of some note were found;

- *Araeoncus humilis*: A widespread but patchy UK distribution. Found in a variety of habitats including grassland litter. Listed as vulnerable (VU) in a draft of the conservation review of British Spiders by Dawson *et al* (2008).
- *Oedothorax agrestis*: A local species associated with wet habitats.
- *Episinus angulatus*: Generally an uncommon species which was found in some numbers in the Hawthorn hedge by the carpark on the SW side of the building.

Table 1: List of species found.

Class/Family	Species	Notes
Araneae		
Linyphiidae	<i>Araeoncus humilis</i>	Local. Variety of habitats. VU (vulnerable)
	<i>Bathypantes gracilis</i>	Common. Grassland and undergrowth
	<i>Erigone atra</i>	Common. Ground level on low vegetation
	<i>Lepthyphantes tenuis</i>	Common. Variety of habitats
	<i>Lepthyphantes minutus</i>	Common. Broad leaved woodlands
	<i>Lepthyphantes zimmermanni</i>	Common. Variety of habitats
	<i>Lepthyphantes flavipes</i>	Common. Variety of habitats
	<i>Linyphia triangularis</i>	Common. Low bushes and vegetation
	<i>Neriene clathrata</i>	Common. Variety of habitats
	<i>Oedothorax gibbosus</i>	Common. Wet habitats
	<i>Oedothorax agrestis</i>	Local. Wet habitats
	<i>Savignia frontata</i>	Common. Variety of habitats
Lycosidae	<i>Pardosa palustris</i>	Common. Open habitats
	<i>Pardosa pullata</i>	Common. Open habitats
Tetragnathidae	<i>Metellina segmentata</i>	Common. Variety of habitats
	<i>Metellina menzei</i>	Common. Variety of habitats
	<i>Pachygnatha degeeri</i>	Very common. Variety of habitats
	<i>Tetragnatha montana</i>	Common. Trees, bushes and low vegetation
	<i>Tetragnatha extensa</i>	Common. Grasses and low vegetation
Theridiidae	<i>Episinus angulatus</i>	Generally uncommon. Variety of habitats
	<i>Theridion varians</i>	Local in West Wales area. Mainly on trees and shrubs
Thomisidae	<i>Xysticus cristatus</i>	Common. Variety of habitats
Opiliones		
Leiobunidae	<i>Leiobunum rotundum</i>	Common. Variety of habitats
Nemastomatidae	<i>Nemastoma bimaculatum</i>	Very common. Variety of habitats
Phalangidae	<i>Megabunus diadema</i>	Widespread. Commonest in wetter and upland areas
	<i>Oligolophus tridens</i>	Common. Variety of habitats
	<i>Paroligolophus agrestis</i>	Common. Variety of habitats

Discussion

The species found reflected the main habitat areas sampled, and tended to be common and widespread. Spider diversity is likely to increase as the main meadow area develops provided scrub and invasive plant species are controlled.

References

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