

ON THE BLACK NEMASTOMA (OPILIONES) SPECIES

OF THE BRITISH ISLES

by J.MARTENS.

In a recently published paper, GRUBER & MARTENS (1968) demonstrated that the correct name of the black species of Nemastoma occurring in the British Isles is N.bimaculatum (FABRICIUS 1775) and not N.lugubre (MÜLLER 1776).

Both species are distinctly separated by the following characters: a) the morphology of the male chelicerae (bimaculatum: medial apophysis deeply excavated, with a little spur dorsally; lugubre: rounded apophysis), b) the morphology of the male palps (bimaculatum: dorso-basic side of the tibia with granulated bump; lugubre: without this bump), c) the male genitalia (bimaculatum: glans penis with 8 teeth on each side; lugubre: 1 great spur on each side of the glans). d) size of the body (bimaculatum: 2.0 - 2.15 mm; lugubre: 1.6 - 2.05 mm.).

All material from the British Isles studied by the authors belongs to the species N.bimaculatum (FABRICIUS) and there is at present no evidence that N.lugubre also occurs in Britain.

The distribution of both species is mostly vicarious: N.bimaculatum occurs typically along the atlantic countries of Europe, from the northern mountains of Spain (Picos de Europa), Pyrenees, France almost to the Mediterranean coast, but not east of the river Rhône, the British Isles, Belgium and a little part of northwest Germany (Bonn region). The distribution of N.lugubre is more continental: it joins the area of bimaculatum and occurs mainly in eastern, central and northern Europe. In parts of Belgium and Germany (Bonn region) both species settle the same biotop ("syntopic").

In spite of good diagnostic characters (even macroscopical by size) the two species are mixed by all modern authors, following ROEWER who has combined the names to "N.lugubre-bimaculatum".

The authors give many drawings and distribution maps for all species of the reclassified genus Nemastoma C.L.KOCH.

References.

- Gruber, J. & Martens, J. 1968. Morphologie, Systematik und Ökologie der Gattung Nemastoma C.L.KOCH (s.str.) (Opiliones, Nemastomatidae). Senckenbergiana biol., 49, (2): 137-172, 74 figs. French summary.

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