

Sitticus distinguendus* (Simon, 1868) in Britain (Araneae: Salticidae)*Peter R. Harvey**32 Lodge Lane,
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here. Notes on the habitat, distribution and phenology are also given. All measurements are in mm.

Sitticus distinguendus* (Simon, 1868) (Figs. 1–5)Attus distinguendus* Simon, 1868: 540 (descr. ♀).*Sitticus frigidus*: Simon, 1937: 1188, 1256, fig. 1872 (♂).*Attulus histrio*: Simon, 1937: 1198, 1258, figs. 1894–1895 (♂♀).*Sitticus distinguendus*: Miller, 1971: 138, pl. 19, fig. 28, pl. 20, fig. 5 (♂♀); Heimer & Nentwig, 1991: 518, fig. 1390.1–4 (♂♀); Žabka, 1997: 88, figs. 319–324 (♂♀); Roberts, 1998: 214, figs. (♂♀); Metzner, 1999: 85, fig. 50a–h (♂♀); Logunov & Marusik, 2000a: 270, figs. 26–27, 29, 32–33 (♂♀).

For a complete list of taxonomic references see Platnick (2006).

Summary

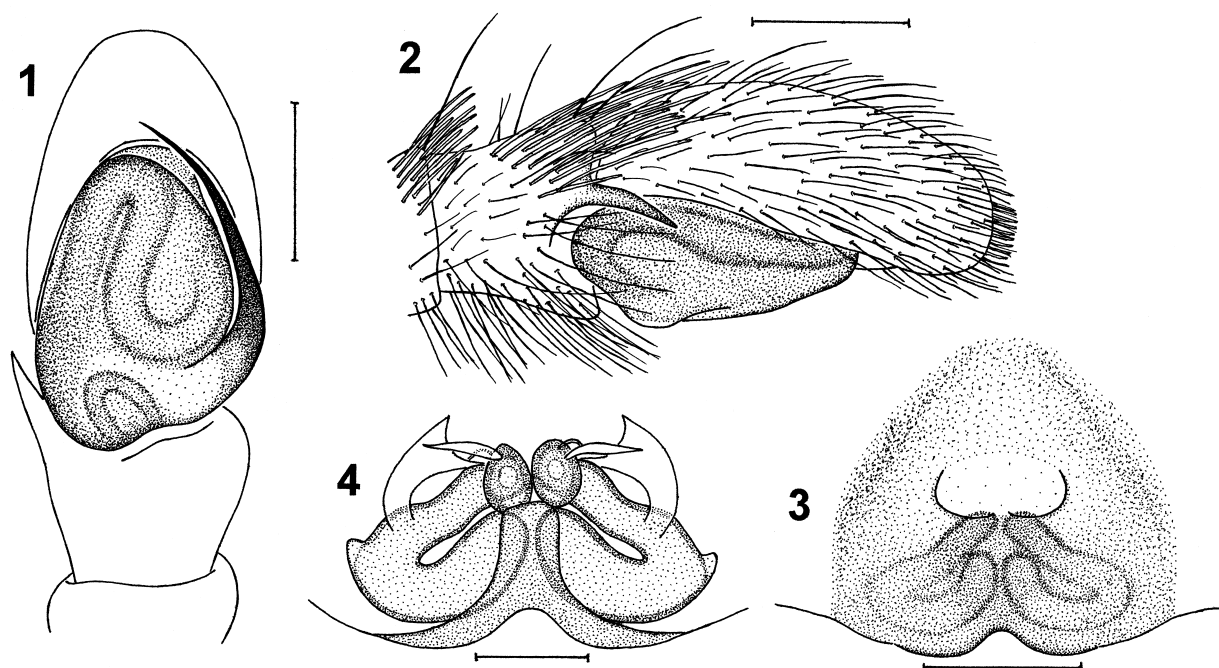
Both sexes of *Sitticus distinguendus* (Simon, 1868) are described from British material, and notes on its habitat, distribution and phenology are given.

Introduction

The occurrence of *Sitticus distinguendus* (Simon, 1868) in Britain was first described by Harvey & Russell-Smith (2005) from West Thurrock, Essex in September 2003 and April 2005, and from Swanscombe Marshes, Kent in June 2004. Since then there has been no further survey work done at the West Thurrock site, but a casual visit for other purposes on 14 September 2006 produced a single adult male and numbers of immatures in the original area. Extended survey work during 2006 at a site with apparently suitable habitat, near Tilbury about 7 km east of the West Thurrock site, failed to find the spider.

Both sexes were described by Roberts (1998) in the Dutch edition of his field guide, but as the species was not included in the English edition a description and drawings of the male palp and epigyne are presented

Description: Female: Total length 5.5. Carapace length 2.1, width 1.65. Carapace dark brown with some black markings, especially on cephalic region and around eyes. Cephalic region thickly clothed with long, coarse black hairs, all of carapace except posterior end thickly clothed with white appressed hairs, forming tufts between posterior and lateral eyes. Long white hairs also covering clypeus and around ventral half of AME. Sternum dark brown, with white hairs around margins. Chelicerae brown, lighter than carapace and sternum. Abdomen dorsally dark brown, thickly clothed with black and white appressed hairs, forming an obscure pattern of light spots and darker areas, very variable. Paler laterally. Venter pale brown with pair of ill-defined darker longitudinal stripes laterally. Legs pale brownish yellow, with variable dark brown markings or annulations on all segments, especially marked distally on femora and proximally and distally on tibiae. Covered with black and white hairs. Tibia I with 3 pairs of ventral spines, metatarsus I with 2 pairs. Tibia IV twice as long as tibia III (Ti IV 1.3, Ti III 0.65). Palp pale yellow, thickly clothed with white hairs and some long black ones, especially on tibia and tarsus. Epigyne



Figs. 1–4: *Sitticus distinguendus*. **1** Right male palp, ventral view, hairs omitted; **2** Ditto, retrolateral view; **3** Epigyne, ventral view, hairs omitted; **4** Vulva, dorsal view. Scale lines=0.2 mm (1–3), 0.1 mm (4).

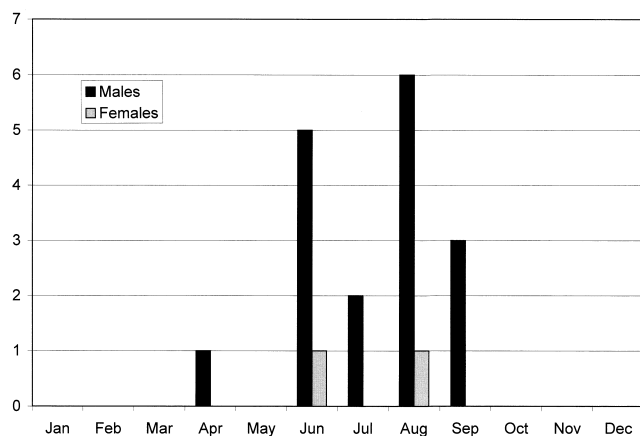


Fig. 5: Phenology of *Sitticus distinguendus* in Britain. Total numbers of adult males and females recorded each month.

(Figs. 3–4): A roughly triangular flat plate, with deep median notch on posterior margin and broad, shallow semi-elliptical cavity in middle. Wide ducts and spermathecae form a dark, flattened U-shape, partly visible through the integument.

Male: Total length 3.6–3.7. Carapace length 1.8–1.9, width 1.45–1.5. Coloration similar to female, but lacking dense white hairs on clypeus, and abdominal pattern sometimes virtually absent. Venter uniformly pale brown. Legs with dark markings more extensive, especially on femora; femur I almost completely dark brown. Ti IV 1.1, Ti III 0.55. Palp (Figs. 1–2): Femur, patella and tibia yellow-brown, strongly marked with dark brown, cymbium dark brown. Patella, tibia, distal end of femur and base of cymbium covered with long white hairs dorsally, cymbium also thickly covered with long black hairs, with tuft of short white hairs distally. Tibia with short, thin, pointed retrolateral apophysis. Tegulum flattened, embolus starting proximally on prolateral side and tapering smoothly to distal point.

Diagnosis: Close to *S. saltator* (O. P.-Cambridge) in general appearance and in structure of male palp and epigyne, but in *S. saltator* tibia IV is about 3 times as long as tibia III (twice as long in *S. distinguendus*). The male palp of *S. distinguendus* is close to that of *S. saltator* in ventral view, but the tegulum is relatively broader basally, and in lateral view the tibial apophysis of *S. distinguendus* is slightly curved and tapers smoothly to a point, whereas in *S. saltator* it is broader at the base and narrows abruptly to a fine stiletto-like point (see Roberts, 1985: fig. 53a and 1995: 201, fig.). The dark cymbium of *S. distinguendus*, contrasting with the paler tibia and patella, is also distinctive (uniformly pale in *S. saltator*). The course of the ducts in the tegulum, seen ventrally, differs markedly from that of the other British species of *Sitticus*, except *S. saltator*. The epigyne of *S. distinguendus* is similar to that of *S. saltator* in the shape of the ducts, but *S. distinguendus* differs by having a prominent notch in the posterior margin of the epigyne and a broad, semi-elliptical cavity anterior to the ducts.

Sitticus distinguendus is also similar in general appearance to *S. pubescens* (Fabricius), but the legs are paler and the abdominal pattern very variable, and the palp and epigyne are distinctly different.

Material examined: West Thurrock PFA, Essex, UK, grid ref. TQ 586771, 2♂ 1♀, 29 April 2005, sparsely vegetated ground close to saline areas, leg. P. R. Harvey.

Habitat: The habitat in Britain and elsewhere in the Palaearctic is described in some detail by Harvey & Russell-Smith (2005). In addition to their comments, Metzner (1999) described it from Greece from gravelly areas, and from stony, sandy, and marshy areas along rivers, which is in general agreement with the habitats described in Logunov & Marusik (2000b).

Distribution: The range of *S. distinguendus* extends across the Palaearctic temperate region from France to eastern Siberia, northern China, Korea and Japan. It is widespread in northern and central Europe, and extends into the Balkans, but is apparently scarce and patchily distributed in some countries. The occurrence of the species in Britain is not unexpected.

Phenology: The phenology of all adult specimens recorded in Britain is shown in Fig. 5. The main maturity period would appear to be from June to September, which is in general agreement with the records given in Metzner (1999).

Acknowledgements

We wish to thank Dr Dmitri Logunov for his helpful comments on an earlier draft of the manuscript.

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