

The following account is paraphrased from Tristan Bantock's paper for **The Coleopterist**.

***Symbiotes gibberosus* (Lucas, 1846) (Endomychidae: Anamorphinae) new to Britain**

On 7th April 2018 Tristan Bantock sieved a single example of a small (1.75mm long) orange beetle from a litter pile in chalk grassland at Banstead Downs SSSI, Surrey (VC17) (TQ2561). On closer examination the specimen keyed out to *Symbiotes Redtenbacher*, but did not match the single British species known from this genus, *S. latus Redtenbacher*, 1849. Its identity was tentatively established as *S. gibberosus* (Lucas, 1846) and this was confirmed with reference to material held at the Natural History Museum, London.

Of the five *Symbiotes*, *S. gibberosus* is the most widespread, occurring throughout most of Europe as far north as Denmark, and has been introduced elsewhere as a result of human activity (Shockley et al., 1999). *Symbiotes* species feed primarily on the spores of fungi (Shockley & Tomaszewska, 2007). Recently published records report an association for *S. latus* with the cavities of overmature trees, the beetle feeding on fungi characteristic of heartwood decay (Brown, 2012; Stenhouse, 2014).

The relative abundance *S. gibberosus* in central Europe compared to *S. latus* suggests that it is likely to be less ecologically specialised, perhaps feeding on a greater range of fungal species. Certainly its discovery in a litter pile composed only of mouldy grass cuttings and thin woody twigs would suggest this.

Tristan writes that it is difficult to speculate how *S. gibberosus* might have arrived in Britain, but given its presence in numerous parts of the world which are well outside its native range, accidental introduction seems most likely, possibly via some kind of horticultural produce.

This is one to look out for elsewhere in the LNHS area. Thanks to Tristan for sharing this find and for permission to paraphrase segments of his **Coleopterist** paper.

References:

BROWN, A. 2012 Coleoptera of note in the Kidderminster area, winter 2011-2012. Worcestershire Record 33: 12-19.

SHOCKLEY, F. W., TOMASZEWSKA, W. & MCHUGH, J. V. 1999. An annotated checklist of the handsome fungus beetles of the world (Coleoptera: Cucujoidea: Endomychidae). Zootaxa 1-113.

SHOCKLEY, F. W. & TOMASZEWSKA, W. 2007. First larval description for *Symbiotes gibberosus* (Lucas) (Coleoptera: Endomychidae). Annales Zoologici 57(4): 751-755.

Joe Beale 17/04/2018