

This may help to explain why *M. pulicaria* is almost confined to woodland in Kent while *M. micans* occurs in a much wider range of more open and frequently drier habitats in the county. In this respect the habitat spectrum of these two species seems to mirror that for *Tenuiphantes zimmermani* (mainly woodland) and *T. tenuis* (mainly open habitats) in southern Britain.

Clearly, this report covers just a small sample from one corner of the country and it will be fascinating to see whether the habitat separation for the two species holds true for other regions, particularly in the cooler and wetter North and West where *Micaria pulicaria* may prove to occur in a wider range of habitats.

Reference

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1 Bailiffs Cottage, Doddington, Sittingbourne, Kent ME9 0JU.
E-mail: mrussellsmith@btinternet.com

***Rugathodes sexpunctatus* (Emerton, 1882) (Araneae: Theridiidae) - new records in 2019**

by Mike Davidson & Chris Cathrine

The spider *Rugathodes sexpunctatus* was first identified in Scotland in July 2012 (although a 2009 specimen was subsequently discovered), collected from ivy overhanging retaining walls in the historic Glasgow Necropolis (Davidson 2012). Subsequent surveys showed that it was abundant throughout the site, particularly on the ivy-clad rock-faces of the former quarry which forms part of this extensive graveyard. This North American, coniferous forest, spider was fully described by Davidson & Merrett (2014) and in Scotland has been found in large numbers on ivy and conifers (i.e. evergreen vegetation) but also in litter.

Around Glasgow *R. sexpunctatus* was found in the Botanic Gardens, on ivy and conifers, and at various places along the River Kelvin valley. Beyond Glasgow *R. sexpunctatus* was found (down the River Clyde) at Dumbarton Rock, again on ivy-clad rock faces. In November 2019 Mike Davidson found a large population on the ivy growing down the rock-face of the former Levensgrove Quarry, north of the River Leven at Dumbarton (see Figure 1 on facing page). A large number of spiders were extracted from the ivy with just a few shakes. The catch consisted of adult females and juvenile males and females. As would be expected at this time of year none of the females had egg sacs.

During surveys of Hamilton Low Parks Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), two female *R. sexpunctatus* were collected in August 2019 by Niall Currie using a vacuum sampler (Cathrine & Currie, 2020). Specimens were collected in woodland habitat, dominated by yew (*Taxus baccata*). The surveys were targeting other invertebrate taxa, and it is possible that the population is more abundant than these incidental records may suggest. This is a previously unknown site for this species, however it is adjacent to the River Clyde and so

this may represent a link with other known populations. Hamilton Low Parks SSSI also adjacent to Hamilton Mausoleum and Hamilton Low Parks Museum.

Another new site for *R. sexpunctatus* was found on an estate in Clackmannanshire, where single female specimens were collected from two locations during vacuum sampling in July and August 2019, by Niall Currie. These specimens were collected from low vegetation (heath and rough grassland) adjacent to woodland habitats (oak and Scots pine dominated respectively), and it is possible that more substantial populations exist within the woods. This Clackmannanshire estate is the first known site for *R. sexpunctatus* away from the River Clyde and not obviously linked to other populations in Scotland.

The Scottish population of this spider is very variable (see Figure 2 on facing page) with specimens with pale abdomens showing the nominal six black spots through to those with completely black abdomens.

It is possible they arrived in imported goods (e.g. timber) to the Clyde ports or perhaps plant material brought to the Botanic Gardens. An alternative source might have been plants brought in for the Glasgow Garden Festival, which was held on the banks of the Clyde from April to September 1988 and covered an area of 120 acres and had 4.3 million visitors (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Glasgow_Garden_Festival).

It is most likely spreading by ballooning on the prevailing south-westerly winds and the recent record from Clackmannanshire, to the north-east is consistent with this. Its ability to spread south, against prevailing winds, will depend largely on human transfer, on vehicles and with cargoes.

We welcome further records (from around the core area and elsewhere) and encourage people to search for it by shaking ivy and beating conifers and check any tiny Theridiids. Other under-recorded species use this habitat so put down that eVac and get beating!

Acknowledgements

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References

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mike.davidson55@btinternet.com

chris.cathrine@caledonianconservation.co.uk



Fig. 1. Ivy clad cliffs at Levensgrove Quarry, Dumbarton. Photograph © Mike Davidson

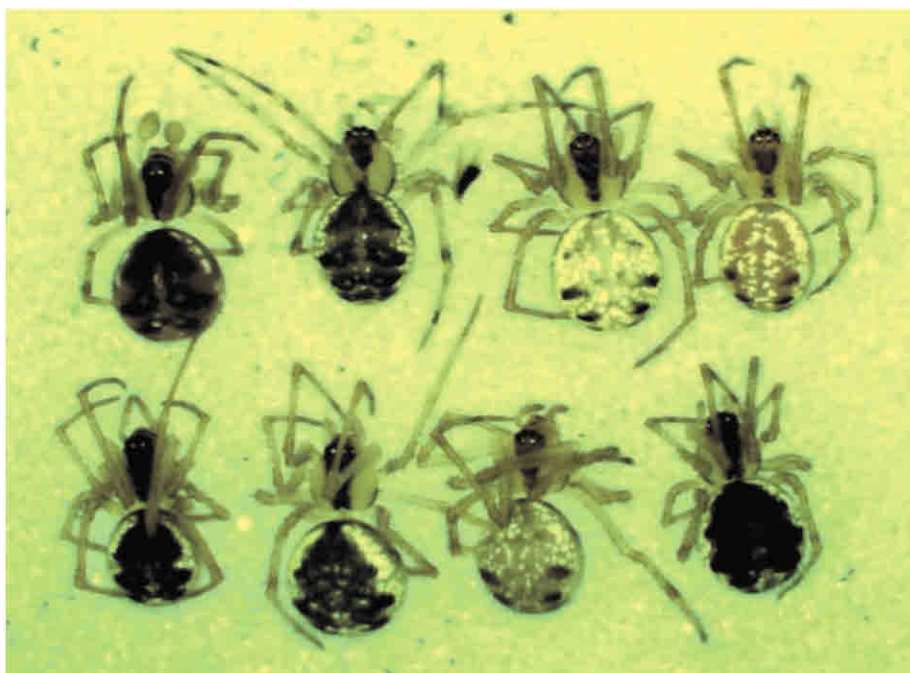


Fig. 2. Variation in Scottish specimens of *Rugathodes sexpunctatus*.
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