

drawings for the latter are quite good for such an elementary book but those of the former are extremely crude. Nevertheless, just one illustration, that for the strange elevated heads of the small linyphiids aroused an interest which had me wondering where I could borrow a microscope. About the same time when I was still at school, the Oxford University Press published T.H. Savory's 'British Spiders': a slim volume of some 180 pp., a much better and more readable book which had lots of information for a mere beginner. Best of all it included an excellent bibliography and a compact glossary (even O. Pickard-Cambridge (1879) failed to provide this although he provided abbreviated references for synonyms in 'Spiders of Dorset').

The spider nomenclature of these early books is now completely outdated and the beginner is well provided for by more recent literature. The early publications were useful in their day and it is interesting and sometimes amusing to browse through them again. Perhaps it is not inappropriate to end this article with that 'yarn' about the worthy pipe smoking fisherman which Savory quoted from 'Le Chasseur Francais' (1913) which, for those who do not know it, is best repeated in its original language:

'Un brave pecheur consacrait tous ses moments de loisir a fabriquer lui-même les mouches qu'il employait pour pêcher la truite. Une après-midi, il avait réussi à faire trois mouches parfaites. Tout content de son travail, il va chercher sa pipe pour payer une bonne bouffarde et se récompenser des ses peines. A son retour, les mouches qu'il avait laisse sur la table avaient disparu. Il regarde partout, cherche et aperçoit une araignée qui s'en etait emparée et les entraînait vers son trou. J'oubliais de dire que le fait se passe Amerigue'.

#### ABOUT EPEIRA SILESIACA FICKERT 1876

by Rudolf Braun

The identification of the palearctic species of the Araneus cucurbitinus -group auct. (= Araniella Chamberlin & Ivie 1942) causes some difficulties, partly because of the often schematic drawings of the copulatory organs in the determination literature, but also because of the undoubted near relationships amongst them.

These species are: alpicus (L.Koch 1869 sub Epeira alpica), crispulus Tullgren 1952, croaticus Kulczynski 1905, cucurbitinus Clerck 1757, displicatus (Hentz 1847 sub Epeira displicata = <f. Locket, Millidge & Merrett 1974: 69> westringi <Thorell 1856 sub Epeira Westringii>), inconspicuous (Simon 1874 sub Epeira inconspicua), opisthographus Kulczynski 1905 sub Araneus cucurbitinus opisthographus (1), proximus (Kulczynski 1885 sub Epeira proxima) and silesiacus (Fickert 1876-sub Epeira silesiaca) (2).

Simon (1929:763. Note) supposed that Epeira silesiaca was a synonym of E. alpica L. Koch (3). But, in the description of the only female he found (near Breslau: today Wroclaw), Fickert expressis verbis mentions a number of different characters to distinguish between E. silesiaca and alpica and he calls alpica an 'äuBerst nahe stehende Art' (= a very closely related species). Except differences in colour and markings he notes: 'Der Nagel . . . ist nicht länger als breit, ohne jede Querrunzelung.' (= The scape of the epigyne is not longer than broad, without any transverse wrinkles. - - The interspacing is from Fickert himself). This description of the epigyne has caused Wiehle (1931:112) (as previously Kulczyński 1905: 233) to write: ' . . . (ist)mit aller Wahrscheinlichkeit anzunehmen, daß er (Fickert) ein unreifes ♀ von A. alpica vor sich gehabt hat . . . ' ( . . . it can be assumed with all probability that he (Fickert) had an immature ♀ of A. alpica before him). Wiehle continues (loc-cit.): 'Die Art wird hier aber nochmals zurückgewiesen, weil sie Reimoser in seinen Katalog (1919:48) aufgenommen hat' (= The species is rejected once more although Reimoser (1919:48) mentions it in his catalogue). Nevertheless Bonnet (1955:598) took up the species Araneus silesiacus as a valid one (and

it is remarkable that he uses Wiehle's note as a document for the individuality of this species). The catalogues of Roewer (I, 1942:781) and Prószyński and Starega (1971: 76) give silesiaca as a synonym of alpica (sub Araniella). Yet in spite of the authority of Kulczyński, Simon and Wiehle, in my opinion this synonymy is not established with certainty.

Firstly the size-data given for silesiaca female by Fickert are clearly higher than those noted in the literature for alpica (= alpicus), namely: prosoma length = 3.5mm and opisthosoma length = 6mm. With regard to alpicus (= alpica) Lessert (1910: 320) gives only 7mm entirely, Roewer (1928 : 115) for the cth. 2-2.5mm, Wiehle likewise for the cth. 2.5 and the abdomen 5mm, Locket & Millidge (1953: 149) give for the alpicus-♀-length only 'about 6mm', Miller (1971 : 210) for the cth. 2-2.5 and Tyschenko (1971 : 199) entirely 7.5mm (4). Moreover there is a remarkable similarity between Fickert's spider and The Araneus crispulus Tullgren 1952 (: 168, 170; fig. 15a-b) which seems to be found likewise in 1♀ (from Enslöv, prov. Halland, SW- Sweden). This specimen was ca. 7mm long only, but has some characters of markings in common with silesiaca: whilst alpicus (like cucurbitinus, opisthographus, displicatus and proximus) has no folium upon the abdomen, crispulus possesses one (Tullgren: 172, 170), and Fickert seems to describe such one in silesiaca too. But the most notable things are the epigyneal characteristics shared by both crispulus and silesiaca (see also above): The scape is no longer than broad, stout vaulted, without transverse wrinkles, with bristles on the upper margin (Fickert: 27, Tullgren: 170). At the end of his description Fickert emphasizes: 'durch die Form der Epigyne ganz entschieden von den übrigen Arten der cucurbitina-Gruppe (unterschieden)' (= silesiaca is definitely separated from other species in the cucurbitina-group by the size of the epigyne).

So it seems to be possible that Epeira silesiaca is a good (valid) species (Araneus silesiacus), perhaps a closely related species or even an elder synonym of the Araneus crispulus Tullgren.

(1) In this paper Kulczyński designates this 'form' in a varying manner: 'A. cucurbitinus (subsp.) opisthographa' ' A. cucurbitinus opisthographus' or only 'A. opisthographus'. Further he writes on 23 places 'opistho-', once (p. 232) 'ophistho-', once (p. 247) 'opitho-' and once (p. 249) 'ophisto-'. Without doubt the philological correct spelling 'opistho-' is intended and the other versions are misprints. The spelling 'opisto-' fide Bonnet (1955:480) at first employed by Drensky (1928) - Kulczynski has never been used. It has to be considered as incorrect too, although used by some modern authors. - Chrysanthus (1955) demonstrates the species-rank of this 'form'.

(2) The 'forms' A. cucurbitinus maderianus Kulczyński 1905 and A. cossoni (Simon, 1885) from North Africa should be disregarded.

(3) Simon dates erroneously Fickert's first description in 1874. In this year indeed Fickert published (amidst other papers) 'Verzeichnis der schlesischen Radspinnen (Orbitelae Latr.)', but therein the description of E. silesiaca is missing. The diagnosis is first published in 1876 in 'Verzeichnis der Spinnen Schlesiens' (so on the title-page and cited in Roewer <I, 1942: 26>) with the heading on page 2 'Verzeichnis der schlesischen Spinnen' (so in Kulczyński <1905: 233, fn 2> and Bonnet <I, 1945: 351>).

(4) I thank Mr G.H. Locket for the reference to the fact, that the data of the entire body length takes no account of the considerable over lap (of the prosoma upon the opisthosoma) that occurs in the females of these species. I also want to thank Mr Locket and Mr J.R. Parker for reviewing and for corrections to my English text.

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SPIDERS FROM HAMPSTEAD HEATH, LONDON

by A. Russell-Smith

Between March and September 1972 I made a number of collections of spiders on Hampstead Heath, on one occasion accompanied by M. Ritchie. Since a fair proportion of the species collected are not recorded for the London area in Locket, Millidge and Merrett, 1974 a brief account of the findings are given here. The heath, which is under heavy recreational pressure particularly in the summer months, includes three major habitat types. The largest area is covered by coarse grassland mainly on heavy clay soils and dominated by Dactylis glomerata and Agrostis ssp. The whole area of which is dissected by many small streams which in places form marshy areas dominated by Juncus ssp. Finally much of the heath is under mixed deciduous woodland varying in age from relatively young birch scrub on sandier soils to the fully mature Oak and Beech woodlands of Kenwood.

During the collecting period a total of 84 species were recorded of which 30 are not recorded from the London area in British Spiders Vol. III and which are listed below. The richest area for spiders were the marshes (perhaps as a result of a lower level of disturbance than in the surrounding grassland) and in such areas the following species were abundant. Pirata piraticus, Antistea elegans, Hypomma bituberculatum, Gnathonarium dentatum, Lophomma punctatum, Diplocephalus permixtus, Leptorrhoptrum robustum and Bathyphantes approximatus. In the grassland areas such species as Pardosa amentata, Oedothorax fuscus, Tiso vagans, Gongylidiellum vivum, Pocadicnemus pumila Bathyphantes gracilis and Lepthyphantes ericeus were widespread but species normally swept from grass were noticeably absent with the sole exception of Xysticus cristatus. The fauna of the ground layer of the woodlands was very impoverished but included occasional specimens of Monocephalus fuscipes, Microneta viaria and Lepthyphantes zimmermani. Some of the more unexpected species included Ceratinella brevipes and Centromerus expertus from marshy areas, Walckenaera melanocephala and Pelecopsis parallela from short grass on a sandy ridge and a single female of Araneus gibbosus swept from a hawthorn