



Thysanoptera of Great Britain: A revised and updated checklist

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Abstract

An annotated list is presented of 176 species of the Order Thysanoptera that have been recorded from Great Britain; of these, 19 species are known only as non-established incursions (isolated populations, usually in glasshouses, known only to have survived for a short time). A list of a further 52 non-native species that have been found by the plant health authorities of England and Wales during quarantine inspections on imported plant material is also presented.

Key words: Thysanoptera, Great Britain, checklist, non-established incursions, quarantine interceptions

Introduction

The fauna of Great Britain (England, Scotland & Wales) is perhaps the best documented on the planet. Professional faunistic and taxonomic work has been complemented by a national tradition of amateur interest in natural history that has extended back at least a couple of hundred years. And although amateur entomologists do not, on the whole, tend to pay much attention to thrips, historical documentation of the Thysanoptera in Britain has still been good. Indeed, it was an entomologist from Northern Ireland, Alexander Haliday, who, working in Britain, first characterised the Thysanoptera as an Order in its own right, separating it out from the Hemiptera (Haliday, 1836). That initial list of species, together with the later catalogue of thrips species present in the collection of the British Museum (Haliday, 1852) provided the first *de facto* Thysanoptera checklists of any type predominantly, but not exclusively, based on British material.

Nevertheless, most of our understanding of the thrips fauna of Great Britain dates from the twentieth century, with the major contributions made by just three workers. The first of these was Richard Bagnall, who produced papers on thrips between 1907 and 1936. Bagnall published the first genuine British checklist (Bagnall, 1911) in which he listed 74 species (representing 61 currently accepted species once adjustments are made for modern taxonomy and nomenclature). He was a prodigious field entomologist and taxonomist who described some 577 species of Thysanoptera worldwide, though many were later synonymised. Bagnall was active in an age when thrips identification was dependent on superficial and variable characters such as colour and size differentials. He also sometimes worked from dry specimens mounted on cards, hence the high rate of synonymy (Mound, 1968). Since Bagnall was active, however, there have also been numerous and major changes to our understanding of the taxonomy and systematics of the Thysanoptera, based on both an improved understanding of the anatomy and variability of thrips species and on improved techniques of microscope slide preparation and optical apparatus. Guy Morison (active between 1924 and 1976) also published extensively and laid the foundations of the modern understanding of British thrips (Shaw, 1978). His first checklist of British thrips (Morison, 1949) listed 178 species as British but uncertainty was expressed concerning the validity of 24. A later revision (Davies & Morison, 1964) listed 159 species plus a further 8 that were regarded as “extinct or doubtful”. Morison was based at the North of Scotland College of Agriculture, Aberdeen, for most of his professional career. As a result, within Britain, understanding of the Thysanoptera fauna of the north east corner of Scotland is second only to that of the south east of England.