

Appendix C Beetles of the Stretton Wetlands

Central GR: SO450930

Caroline Uff PhD MCIEEM

Stretton Wetlands refers to a group of low lying fields privately owned by different land owners on the southern edge of Church Stretton, covering an area of around 11 ha. It has come to the attention of various groups interested in wildlife as it appears to be a diverse wetland/swamp habitat, with the potential for interesting species and possibility of qualifying as county wildlife site. This type of habitat is unusual in South Shropshire. Recently, Strettons Area Community Wildlife Group, with support from the Environment Agency, negotiated access for surveys on all parts of the land (single visit only 21/7/2016). This report focusses on the Coleopteran interest of the site.

Thirty three species of beetle were recorded, 17 of which are known to be specifically associated with wetland habitats. Of these, 8 species are uncommon in Shropshire (table 1) and are significant at a county, and in one case national level. These species were found either in the main body of the wetland, or in the seasonal (dry) pool with reed mace. This pool is a very important feature of the site as it is the only known location in Shropshire for the Nationally Notable ground beetle *Anthracus consputus*. It was present in good number and likely to be breeding here. Within Shropshire, the wetland beetle community here most closely resembles that found in the Meres and Mosses.

Table 1: Locally significant wetland beetles recorded from Stretton Wetlands

<i>Anthracus consputus</i> A ground beetle	A Nationally scarce (Nb) species with a local south eastern distribution in UK. Under stones on edge of standing water especially seasonal pools. Not known from any other Shropshire sites.
<i>Bembidion doris</i> A ground beetle	Widespread but local in UK, found in habitats that are constantly wet such as swamps/marshes. Only known from one other Shropshire site, Hencott pool (2008)
<i>Stenolophus mixtus</i> A ground beetle	South-eastern distribution in UK on damp habitats such as marshes and pond edges. Only 3 other Shropshire records - Brown Moss (1982) and 2 wetlands nr Oswestry(2015)
<i>Trichocellus placidus</i> A ground beetle	An eastern UK species of marshes/fens. Not known from any other Shropshire sites.
<i>Phyllobrotica quadrimaculata</i> A leaf beetle	Widespread in the UK in a variety of open damp habitats. It is associated with skullcap which was abundant on the site. In Shropshire it is known from meres and mosses and one other site, Berrington Pool (2012)
<i>Plagioderma versicolora</i> A leaf beetle	South-eastern distribution in UK in wet places on willows. The only other known Shropshire site is Hencott Pool (2008).
<i>Prasocuris phellandrii</i> A leaf beetle	Widespread in various wetland habitats across the UK. It is only known from one other Shropshire site, Brown Moss (2014)
<i>Telmatophilus typhae</i> A silken fungus beetle	Widespread in UK and associated with Typha (reed mace) which was present on the site. Only known from 2 other Shropshire sites- Aston Locks (2015) and Benthall Hall (1924)

Of the other species recorded, 9 were widely distributed wetland species and are listed in table 2 below.

The only non-wetland species worthy of note was the Four-banded Longhorn Beetle, *Leptura quadrifasciata*, a saproxylic species locally distributed across UK and only recently down-graded from Nationally Notable status.

Although there is not enough evidence here for the site to qualify for wildlife site status on beetles alone, it is likely that when assessed in conjunction with other invertebrate species, or if further visits were made, it would do. It is clearly an important site locally for wetland beetles.

Table 2: Other, more common, wetland beetles recorded from Stretton Wetlands

All of these species are relatively widespread albeit often local, both in a National in a County context.

- *Acupalpus dubius* (a ground beetle)
- *Aphthona nonstriata* (Iris leaf beetle): specifically associated with yellow flag
- *Galerucella sagittariae* (a leaf beetle)
- *Cyphon coarctatus* (a marsh beetle)
- *Stenus junco* (a rove beetle)
- *Cantharis nigra* (a soldier beetle)
- *Cantharis thoracica* (a soldier beetle)
- *Coccidula rufa* (a ladybird)
- *Anisosticta novemdecempunctata* (water ladybird): associated with reedbeds