# Atlas of Nottinghamshire Harvestmen 2023

*Platybunus pinetorum*
(C.L. Koch, 1839)

*Platybunus triangularis*
(Herbst, 1799)

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## Introduction

This modern Atlas of Nottinghamshire Harvestmen, broadly follows the same format as used in our publications of this type. Its aim once again, is to provide an up to date and reasonably accurate atlas of Nottinghamshire's *Opilione* (Harvestmen) fauna, including short accounts on range, distribution and habitat of the now 22 species recorded within the boundaries of VC56 Nottinghamshire.

There is a steadily increasing number of Harvestmen found in the UK following some recent additions. Of these UK species, around two thirds have been reliably recorded in Nottinghamshire since the turn of the present century and there is the distinct possibility that at least two species are already present in the county and awaiting discovery.

Since the last edition of this atlas, only *Platybunus pinetorum* (showed below) has been added to the county list (May 2020) and following further surveys the following year, was ultimately found at a number of sites within the Sherwood Forest/Clumber Park and Rufford areas. Nottinghamshire probably now has more records of this attractive Spring Harvestman than any other county across the UK and a more detailed account of this discovery is given later in this publication.

Only two species (*Lacinius ephippiatus* and *Paroligolophus meadii*) are again not illustrated in this publication, but their corresponding distribution maps are provided and based on records made available to us. Both species have been looked for over the years, but have continued to avoid the author(s).

## Recording Harvestmen

Recording Harvestmen offers the urban-based naturalist, the chance to find a range of species. One advantage of undertaking their study and identification is that they are commonly found around human habitation, so it is not always necessary to travel any distance to find them. Few Harvestmen are confined to specific habitat types and several species will easily be found in most gardens over the course of a year.

In recent years, Dilys and myself devoted a considerable amount of time and effort recording the Harvestmen found within Nottinghamshire (VC56) being unexpectedly rewarded in 2009 with the discovery of the UK's first record of the still scientifically un-named *Leiobunum* sp. A. Found (of all places) on the wall of a modern terraced house in the middle of a Worksop housing estate, it remains a fine example of how the unexpected should always be expected, especially when dealing with invertebrates. Its often remarkable as to what occurs where and from my own small terraced house garden, there have been a number of unexpected first county records over the years. So the chances are that the next new Harvestman to be recorded new to the county, may well turn up in some suburban garden.

# Harvestmen (Opiliones) species list for Nottinghamshire (VC56)

The following list of species are all confirmed as being recorded from Nottinghamshire as of January 2023. There are post-2000 records for all the species listed, although there have been no recent records of both *Lacinius ephippiatus* and *Paroligolophus meadii.*

**NEMASTOMATIDAE**

MITOSTOMA Roewer, 1951
*Mitostoma chrysomelas* (Fabricius, 1775)

NEMASTOMA C.L. Koch in Hahn & C.L. Koch, 1836
*Nemastoma bimaculatum* (Hermann, 1804)

**PHALANGIIDAE**

DICRANOPALPUS Doleschall, 1852
*Dicranopalpus ramosus* (Simon, 1909)

LACINIUS
*Lacinius ephippiatus* (C.L. Koch, 1835)

LOPHOPILIO Hadži, 1931
*Lophopilio palpinalis* (Herbst, 1799)

MEGABUNUS Meade, 1855
*Megabunus diadema* (Fabricius, 1779)

MITOPUS Thorell, 1876
*Mitopus morio* (Fabricius, 1779)

ODIELLUS Roewer, 1923
*Odiellus spinosus* (Bosc, 1792)

OLIGOLOPHUS C.L. Koch, 1872
*Oligolophus hanseni* (Kraepelin, 1896)
*Oligolophus tridens* (C.L. Koch, 1836)

OPILIO Herbst, 1798
*Opilio canestrinii* (Thorell, 1876)
*Opilio parietinus* (De Geer, 1778)
*Opilio saxatilis* (C.L. Koch, 1839)

PAROLIOLOPHUS Lohmander, 1945
*Paroligolophus agrestis* (Meade, 1855)
*Paroligolophus meadii* (O.P.-Cambridge, 1890)

PHALANGIUM Linnaeus, 1758
*Phalangium opilio* (Linnaeus, 1758)

PLATYBUNUS C.L. Koch, 1848
*Platybunus pinetorum* (C.L. Koch, 1839)
*Platybunus triangularis* (Herbst, 1799)

**incertae sedis** (A taxon, or a group of taxa, whose relationship with others is currently unknown or undecided)

LEIOBUNUM C.L. Koch, 1839
*Leiobunum blackwalli* (Meade, 1861)
*Leiobunum rotundum* (Latreille, 1798)
*Leiobunum* sp. A (Schönhofer & Hillen 2008, Toss 2009, Wijnhoven et al. 2007)

NELIMA Roewer, 1910
*Nelima gothica* (Lohmander, 1945)

## Potential new Nottinghamshire species

One of the joys of invertebrate study, coupled with the trend for increasingly warmer Summers and considerably milder Winters, is that the likelihood of new species arriving in the UK through accidental importation or other means, has substantially increased over recent years.

This is very well illustrated by those new Harvestmen discovered in some southern coastal counties and one north-western county over the past decade, so it seems only logical that we should expect more species to turn up. The changes to our apparently warming climate which we have experienced in recent decades, will very likely present those species arriving here (probably from continental Europe) with an ideal opportunity to gain a foothold and potentially increase in range over time.

All this means that there could be some exciting discoveries over the coming years for those willing to take up the recording of Harvestmen. So here's four species which could turn up in Nottinghamshire …. or in the case of the two *Dicranopalpus* species, may already be here.

*Anelasmocephalus cambridgei* (Westwood, 1874)
*Dicranopalpus caudatus* Dresco, 1948 sensu stricto (post 2015)
*Dicranopalpus larvatus* (Canestrini, 1874)
*Leiobunum limbatum* (L. Koch, 1861)

## Calendar of Harvestman activity in Nottinghamshire

| | **Body length** | **Adult season** | **VC56 status** |
|---|---|---|---|
| *Mitostoma chrysomelas* | 2.5 mm | All year | Rare |
| *Nemastoma bimaculatum* | 3.0 mm | All year | Common |
| *Lacinius ephippiatus* | 5.5 mm | Spring and Summer | Uncommon/rare |
| *Lophopilio palpinalis* | 5.0 mm | Summer and early Winter | Uncommon |
| *Megabunus diadema* | 5.0 mm | All year | Uncommon |
| *Mitopus morio* | 8.5 mm | Summer and Autumn | Common |
| *Odiellus spinosus* | 11.0 mm | Late Summer and Autumn | Uncommon |
| *Oligolophus hanseni* | 5.0 mm | Late Summer to Winter | Uncommon |
| *Oligolophus tridens* | 5.5 mm | Summer and Autumn | Common |
| *Opilio canestrinii* | 9.0 mm | Summer to Winter | Common |
| *Opilio parietinus* | 9.0 mm | Summer and Autumn | Common |
| *Opilio saxatilis* | 6.0 mm | Summer and Autumn | Uncommon/rare |
| *Paroligolophus agrestis* | 5.0 mm | Summer to Winter | Common |
| *Paroligolophus meadii* | 4.0 mm | Summer and Autumn | Rare |
| *Phalangium opilio* | 9.0 mm | Spring to Autumn | Common |
| *Platybunus pinetorum* | 7.0 mm | Spring and early Summer | Uncommon |
| *Platybunus triangularis* | 7.0 mm | Spring and early Summer | Common |
| *Dicranopalpus ramosus* | 6.0 mm | Late Summer to Winter | Common |
| *Leiobunum blackwalli* | 6.0 mm | Summer to early Winter | Common |
| *Leiobunum rotundum* | 6.5 mm | Summer and Autumn | Common |
| *Leiobunum* sp. A | 9.0 mm | Late Summer to early Winter | Rare |
| *Nelima gothica* | 4.5 mm | Summer and Autumn | Rare |

# Species accounts

## Nemastomatidae

***Mitostoma chrysomelas*** (Fabricius, 1775)
A small, rather leggy Harvestman with a body length of around 3mm. This is an inconspicuous species and at first glance may give the impression of a juvenile *Leiobunum*. The adults can occasionally be found under logs, discarded rubbish, or in leaf litter.

This is generally an uncommon Harvestman in Nottinghamshire, which is rarely recorded in personal experience. Records are usually of casual occurrence and it has never been found annually, although there have been seven records since 2013 attributable to regular recording.

There are pre-2000 records from Sherwood Forest in 1978 (BAS survey team) and from Bunny Old Wood in 1986 (per Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust), with records this century from Sherwood Heath in 2013, then three records from Clipstone Old Quarter in 2013, 2016 and 2018 (all Pendleton, T. A. and Pendleton, D. T.). The most recent records have come from King's Wood in 2019 and from Haywood Oaks and Sherwood Forest CP in 2021 (all Pendleton, D. T.).

***Nemastoma bimaculatum*** (Hermann, 1804)
A small black species with two roughly kidney or hour-glass shaped cream patches towards the front of the body. These patches can occasionally be absent on some specimens, but this is something we never recorded despite seeing this species commonly over many years.

*Nemastoma bimaculatum* is recorded under logs and within leaf litter from many woodland sites, especially in the in the Sherwood Forest and Clumber Park areas, but it is resent in many wooded habitats throughout much of Nottinghamshire. However, it is by no means confined to being a woodland specialist as it is often recorded under logs or stones on agricultural land well away from woodland and there are a surprising number of records from sites along the Trent Valley and occasionally from suburban locations (parks, allotments and old, established gardens) in Nottingham and Mansfield.

It's small size, coupled with the fact that they often do not move for several minutes when disturbed, means that they can easily be missed.

## Phalangiidae

***Lacinius ephippiatus*** (C.L. Koch, 1835)
Not illustrated. This remains a seemingly uncommon, or indeed possibly rare Harvestman in Nottinghamshire and despite much recording since 2008, is a species the authors never encountered. All of the Nottinghamshire records we are aware of have occurred since 1977, when it was recorded from at least two areas of the Sherwood Forest NNR (Buck Gates and Sherwood Forest CP) by a survey team from the British Arachnological Society. It has not been recorded from anywhere within the NNR since 2002, again after a survey by the BAS.

There are other recent county records from Annesley Woodhouse Quarry in 1999 (Williams, H.), the Idle Valley Nature Reserve in 2000 (Williams, H.) and Misson Carr in 2006 (Williams, H.).

***Lophopilio palpinalis*** (Herbst, 1799)
Nottinghamshire records of *Lophopilio palpinalis*, suggest that this is largely a Harvestman of deciduous woodland, with all but one of the county's records coming from the Sherwood Forest area.

There is an isolated 1990 record from Bunny Old Wood (per Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust) although the recorder is unknown and there are relatively few county records of this Harvestman. All of the most recent records have come from the Buck Gates and Sherwood Forest CP areas of the Sherwood Forest NNR between 2002 and 2021.

***Megabunus diadema*** (Fabricius, 1779)
This Harvestman is perhaps the most well marked and distinctive of all our native species, but is relatively small (3mm body) in size. Its cryptic markings also mean that it is often well camouflaged when sat on the trunks of lichen and moss covered trees it favours although it is fairly easy to spot from a distance with practice.

For a number of years, we searched many Nottinghamshire woodlands for this elusive Harvestman, before eventually finding it in an area of coppiced woodland at Wellow Park in 2012 and Gamston Wood near Retford in 2013.

Further surveys have proved *Megabunus diadema* to be easiest to find on the smooth trunks of coppiced Ash with a diameter of at least four to six inches, growing along small woodland paths that allow the sun to come through from time to time.

This is also a fast moving species which can be difficult to approach at times, but they are quite distinctive when sat openly on tree trunks anywhere from around three to six feet off the ground.

Although the habitat requirements of this Harvestman are now well known in Nottinghamshire, it does not appear to be found widely, even where the habitat seems ideal. Then again few are looking. But either way, *Megabunus diadema* does not appear to be widespread.

The only recent records and sites are Wellow Park, from where it is recorded annually, Dukes Wood and Gamston Wood. All these woods are rich in areas of coppiced Ash *Fraxinus excelsior* and lie on generally heavy clay soils. But there is a single record from Sherwood Heath in 2006 (Godfrey, A.) which somewhat goes against the findings of the authors in terms of habitat preferences and despite spending many hours looking for this species on the trunks of trees and fence posts around the NNR, we never recorded it.

***Mitopus morio*** (Fabricius, 1779)
A common Harvestman, usually found in well vegetated sites and woodlands. It is widespread across Nottinghamshire, being especially well recorded from the Sherwood Forest and Clumber Park areas, but really anywhere west of the Trent Valley. There are few known sites close to, or east of the River Trent, but this may be down to a bias in observer coverage, rather than this species not occurring there.

***Odiellus spinosus*** (Bosc, 1792)
A large bodied and relatively short-legged species with strong synanthropic* tendencies, *Odiellus spinosus* is most often found in gardens and low on the walls of houses and other buildings in urban areas. All but one of the county's records have indeed come from such habitats, with records from all the major Nottinghamshire towns apart from Retford, where it undoubtedly occurs.

There are currently records from Worksop, Edwinstowe, Market Warsop, Mansfield, Southwell and from several sites around Nottingham. There is a solitary record from Sherwood Forest CP in 2002.

***Oligolophus hanseni*** (Kraepelin, 1896)
When the first edition of this atlas was published back in 2015, this species was regarded as being uncommon in Nottinghamshire. But with the increase in surveying came an increase in the number of records of *Oligolophus hanseni* and it was found to have been considerably overlooked previously. There is potential confusion between this species and the similarly sized *Paroligolophus agrestis* and the two are likely to be found occupying the same habitat.

Both are commonly found resting by day on walls, gravestones and the trunks of trees, but *Oligolophus hanseni* is most often among greater numbers of *Paroligolophus agrestis* found by beating the lower branches of trees on heathland. Still thought to be quite widespread in Nottinghamshire, yet the current distribution map suggests mostly a Harvestman of the sandy soils of the Sherwood Forest area. The most northerly record on the distribution map is from the Idle Valley NR near Retford.

* Synanthropic:- a species which lives in close association with people, buildings etc, often benefitting from their surroundings and activities.

***Oligolophus tridens*** (C.L. Koch, 1836)
Generally common and widespread throughout Nottinghamshire and found in a variety of habitats which includes suburban areas. The majority of the county's records are from the northern-half of Nottinghamshire, but this is undoubtedly down to recording effort and bias. However, there are very few records from the Trent Valley area, which seems surprising considering its wide range in other parts of Nottinghamshire.

***Opilio canestrinii*** (Thorell, 1876)
*Opilio canestrinii* is an invasive species which arrived in Nottinghamshire as recently as 2010, when recorded from a house wall in Worksop (Pendleton, T. A. and Pendleton, D. T.) but had obviously been present in the county for a number of years. It is often found in gardens and on the walls of buildings and is certainly commonest in urban areas although in the past few years it has turned up at a number of rural locations, most especially woodland. It has apparently been claimed that in some parts of the UK, *Opilio canestrinii* seems to have replaced *Opilio parietinus* from its former haunts, but we have still to record any real evidence of this in Nottinghamshire and the two species can still be found sharing the same wall. Annual records from a terraced house at Market Warsop and Worksop Priory have proved quite interesting and the totals in the columns below, relate to the number of records rather than the number of individuals.

**Site 1. Sheltered, south-facing wall of terraced house in Market Warsop**

| | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 | 2021 | 2022 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| *Opilio canestrinii* | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 4 | 2 | 3 | 14 | 0 | 5 | 8 | 1 |
| *Opilio parietinus* | 1 | 0 | 0 | 4 | 2 | 4 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 4 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |

*Opilio parietinus* has always been noted for some 30 years on the walls of a terraced house at Market Warsop, although recording didn't commence until 2009. *Opilio canestrinii* first appeared in 2014 and has been recorded in varying numbers ever since. There were an unusually high number of records in 2018, but most years tend to produce just a handful of records. Records of *Opilio canestrinii* outnumber those of *Opilio parietinus* here by around a third (40 compared to 27), but on the whole, there is no real evidence of *canestrinii* pushing *parietinus* out.

**Site 2. South-facing stone wall of Worksop Priory**

| | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 | 2021 | 2022 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| *Opilio canestrinii* | NR | NR | NR | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 |
| *Opilio parietinus* | NR | NR | NR | 4 | 2 | 1 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

At Worksop, the walls of Worksop Priory have proved good for Harvestmen over the years, being particularly famous as a site for *Leiobunum* sp. A., which itself is regarded as being a very invasive species. *Leiobunum* sp. A., appears to be a strong influencing factor affecting the number of records (and ultimately populations?) of both *Opilio canestrinii* and *Opilio parietinus* at Worksop Priory and there has been an obvious decline in both Harvestmen since the discovery of *Leiobunum* sp. A. at Worksop Priory in 2012. As a result, there has been just a single record of *Opilio canestrinii* from there in the past five years to the end of 2022.

Back in 2015, *Opilio canestrinii* was described in this atlas as being 'less widespread than *Opilio parietinus*' in Nottinghamshire, but during those intervening years, there has been a considerable change in both range and the number of records. It is now found widely over much of western Nottinghamshire, but records remain concentrated to the larger towns and the city of Nottingham, although it is by no means confined to synanthropic habitats and is now more regularly turning up in woodland and farmland.

***Opilio parietinus*** (De Geer, 1778)
A large bodied and long-legged Harvestman which appears to be strongly synanthropic and almost always found resting on the walls of buildings. Most records are from urban areas in the Mansfield and Worksop areas, but it will sometimes occur on isolated buildings (petrol stations etc) well away from towns and villages.

*Opilio parietinus* is thought to be species in serious decline, following the arrival of the invasive *Opilio canestrinii* (see above account for that species).

It's present UK status seems largely unknown, but is believed by some authorities to possibly become extinct at sometime. However, there is currently no indication of this in Nottinghamshire.

***Opilio saxatilis*** (C.L. Koch, 1839)
Generally uncommon in Nottinghamshire and seemingly restricted to predominantly dry, sandy soils. The number of recent records has increased through greater coverage given over to Harvestmen from a small number of recorders, with records from Market Warsop, New Ollerton Cemetery, Mansfield, Church Warsop and along the Southwell Trail at Farnsfield (all Pendleton, T. A. and Pendleton, D. T.)

Other recorded sites include Mapperley Park and Nottingham Trent University's Brackenhurst Campus at Southwell (Skinner, M.), Attenborough NR (Andrews, L.), Harrison's Plantation near Eakring (per Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust) and Clumber Park (Godfrey, A.). The most recent records are from Thieves Wood and Wollaton Hall (Pendleton, T.A.) in 2021 and 2022 respectively.

***Paroligolophus agrestis*** (Meade, 1855)
A very common and fairly small Harvestman which is found in a wide variety of habitats. The range of habitats for *Paroligolophus agrestis* includes urban gardens, where it is usually found within the ground layer, or accumulations of leaves or plant debris and occasionally on walls.

In more rural locations, it will occur on tree trunks, low vegetation and under logs etc, but is perhaps most easily found by either beating the foliage of trees and shrubs during the day, or by searching the trunks of trees with a torch after dark.

Adults are hardy and can often be found in leaf litter samples well into January and February during mild Winters.

***Paroligolophus meadii*** (O.P.-Cambridge, 1890)
Not illustrated. The only Nottinghamshire records are from Sherwood Heath SSSI (Godfrey, A.) in 2006 and from Rainworth Heath (Williams, H.) in 2010. *Paroligolophus meadii* has been looked and surveyed for each year since, but despite a great amount of effort, it has not been found and may now be lost as a Nottinghamshire species, as well as perhaps declining nationally.

***Phalangium opilio*** (Linnaeus, 1758)
A large common and widespread Harvestman regularly found on the walls of buildings in urban areas, but it does occur in other habitats. Very often, *Phalangium opilio* is the commonest harvestman of sandy heathland sites within the Sherwood Forest and Mansfield areas, where males can regularly be seen walking across bare areas of ground during the day and this is probably the best habitat to see this species with any degree of certainty in Nottinghamshire.

There are a small number of records from the lower Trent Valley (Netherfield Lagoons, Stoke Bardolph and Gunthorpe) but records east of the River Trent are very few. Again, this is probably down to recorder coverage as there are widespread records of *Phalangium opilio* from the entire length of the county.

***Platybunus pinetorum*** (C.L. Koch, 1839)
Unknown in the UK until first recorded from a Sheffield garden in 2010. It was then found at Glasgow and Aberdeen in Scotland, Northern Ireland and elsewhere in the UK at Yorkshire, Northampton and a number of other towns.

Found for the first time in Nottinghamshire at Holborn Hill Plantation Gleadthorpe in May 2020 (Pendleton, T.A.) and recorded from the same site again the following year. Targetted surveys conducted over the course of Spring 2021, showed it to have a much wider range in the area of the initial record. More extensive surveying found this species in some twelve 1km grid squares within the Clumber, Sherwood Forest, Rufford and Mansfield areas. Most sites were Beech woodland situated close to main roads.

This is a Spring species and one of the first to appear. Sub-adults and adults (only females are known in Nottinghamshire and virtually the whole of the UK) are easily found by searching the smooth trunks of Beech and Sycamore. Juveniles have been found to overwinter in leaf litter, but can be found by sieving leaf litter samples during the Winter months.

There is more on the discovery of *Platybunus pinetorum* in Nottinghamshire in Appendix 2 and 3.

***Platybunus triangularis*** (Herbst, 1799)
One of only a few Harvestmen to be found as adults during the Spring and early Summer, *Platybunus triangularis* (formerly *Rilaena triangularis*) is a species of woodlands and well vegetated sites.

It is widespread and common throughout Nottinghamshire and although has been found occasionally in suburban gardens, does not tend to be synanthropic and is more at home in woodland, where it rests on the trunks of trees and especially along woodland rides on low foliage such as Nettles.

Found across Nottinghamshire, it ranges at many sites and is found commonly along the Trent Valley, but again, as with a number of other Harvestmen, has rarely been recorded east of the River Trent though the lack of coverage in the eastern areas of the county.

As with the previous species, juveniles overwinter in leaf litter, but can be found by sieving leaf litter samples during the Winter months.

## incertae sedis

***Dicranopalpus ramosus*** (Simon, 1909)
*Dicranopalpus ramosus* is another relatively new species to the UK, being first recorded in the 1970's (Davidson, 2019). Of Mediterranean origin, it rapidly increased its UK range and is now found as far north as Scotland. Nottinghamshire's first record seems to have been from Sherwood Forest CP in 2002 (Denton, M. L. et al) when recorded during a British Arachnological Survey of the area.

This is now an extremely common species found throughout the county and it is certainly one of our most widespread Harvestmen. But in recent years, the ease of identification of *Dicranopalpus ramosus* has changed and specimens can no longer be immediately assigned as being *Dicranopalpus ramosus*. The reason for this is due to the publication of a paper by Wijnhoven and Prieto in 2015, who provided the evidence to revalidate *Dicranopalpus caudatus* as a species, rather than a synonym of *Dicranopalpus ramosus*.

*Dicranopalpus caudatus* has yet to occur in Nottinghamshire, but is thought extremely likely to be here and so any suspected male *caudatus* specimens should be checked under a microscope.

***Leiobunum blackwalli*** (Meade, 1861)
Male and female *Leiobunum blackwalli* are sexually dimorphic, with both sexes bearing strong similarities to male and female *Leiobunum rotundum*.

Although not as widespread as *Leiobunum rotundum* in Nottinghamshire, *Leiobunum blackwalli* is still common in woodlands and along woodland edges, where adults can often be found on fence posts or low vegetation either singly, or in pairs. But this Harvestman will occur in some suburban gardens and it has occurred in the Mapperley Park, Mapperley and Bestwood areas of Nottingham and the more built up parts of Mansfield. There are no records from the Trent Valley (where it must surely be overlooked) and once again, there are no records from anywhere lying east of the Trent Valley.

***Leiobunum rotundum*** (Latreille, 1798)
Undoubtedly one of our commonest Harvestmen, being wide-ranging over the western half of Nottinghamshire away from the River Trent. It is found in a range of habitats and similarly to *Leiobunum blackwalli*, it does occur in suburban areas where it can be found on walls, the trunks of trees etc. At more rural sites, it is most often found on low vegetation or on the trunks of trees, but can occasionally be found in loose aggregations of a dozen or so individuals on the more sheltered sections of buildings sited in wooded areas.

***Leiobunum* sp. A** (Schönhofer & Hillen 2008, Toss 2009, Wijnhoven et al. 2007)
This large *Leiobunum* Harvestman first appeared in The Netherlands in 2004 and still remains scientifically unidentified to species level. It is an invasive species, quickly forming large aggregations on the shaded walls of buildings. Such aggregations can sometimes reach into the hundreds.

*Leiobunum* sp. A is believed to have been introduced into Europe via importation, but the exact country of origin is unknown, though considered likely to have been somewhere in South America. Following its arrival into Europe in 2004, it was subsequently recorded from Germany, Switzerland and Austria over the following years. France's first record was in 2009, which was the same year we found the first ever record for the UK, on the wall of a terraced house in Worksop (Pendleton, T.A. and Pendleton, D.T.).

However, for three years our specimen remained frustratingly unidentified.

We never published photographs of it online at the time and all efforts to find anything looking remotely similar to our male specimen on the internet, proved fruitless until three years later, when one evening a match was found and the identification was quickly confirmed as being the unnamed *Leiobunum* sp. A.

It was then found by Paul Richards on a factory wall in Barnsley, Yorkshire in September 2012, before we were finally able to locate this Harvestman again on the walls of Worksop Priory in October 2012.

Currently (January 2023) there are seven recorded sites for *Leiobunum* sp. A in Nottinghamshire, with established populations at probably six of these. There are still good numbers annually on the walls of Worksop Priory, although there was a huge drop in numbers during the hot, dry Summer of 2022. Elsewhere in Worksop, developing populations have been found on Bridge Street, close to its junction with Newcastle Street since 2020 (Michalek, L.) and at B&Q on Sandy Lane since 2021 (Pendleton, T.A.).

In 2019, the first record of *Leiobunum* sp. A from Nottingham, came from Stanley Drive at Bramcote (Campbell, J.) and most recently from Shakespeare Street in the centre of Nottingham in 2022 (Harrison, O.). There is a solitary record of a male from a garden centre near Oxton in 2018 (Heeney, W.), with no further records suggesting this was an obvious arrival via the transportation of plants.

*Leiobunum* sp. A. is a dark, extremely long-legged species, much larger than most other *Leiobunum* Harvestmen in the UK, with a leg span of around 100mm. They can be looked for on the shaded walls of houses, Churches and factories etc, where numbers can reach hundreds. They are nocturnal hunters, that could possibly have an affect on some of our native species. Adults can remain active well into December and rarely January.

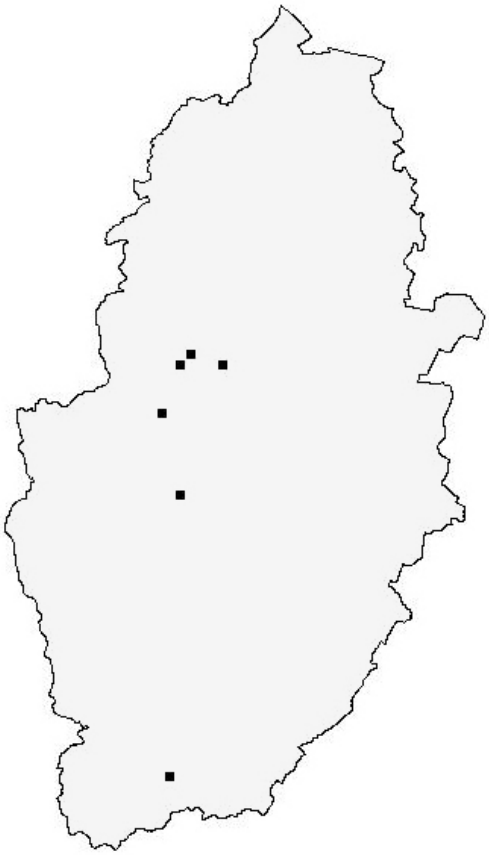
There is more on the discovery of *Leiobunum* sp. A in Nottinghamshire in Appendix 1

***Nelima gothica*** (Lohmander, 1945)
Rare in Nottinghamshire, with few reliable records. Very similar to a *Leiobunum* type Harvestman, but obviously smaller and with pale trochanters and a lighter leg colour. The specimen shown in the photographs is darker than that often depicted in books or on the internet. Specimens tend to become darker late in the year.

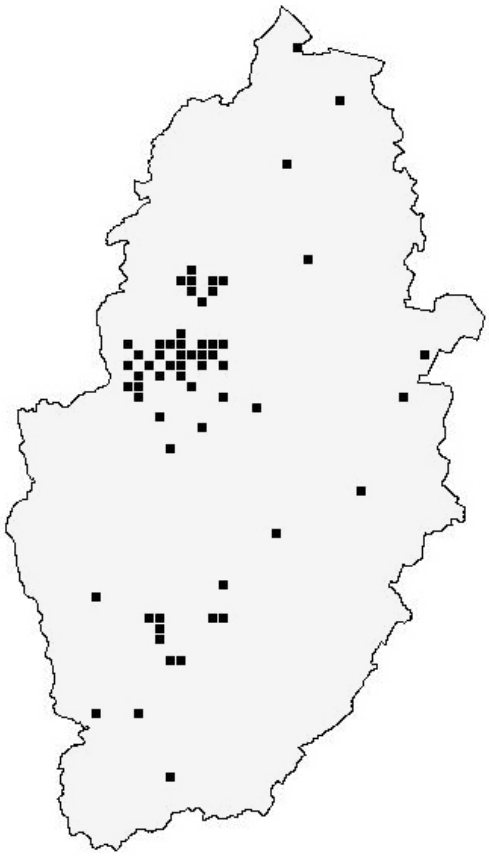
Post -2000 county records have come from Rainworth Heath in 2010, Carlton-in-Lindrick in 2012 and Hannah Park Wood in 2014 (all Williams, H.), from Worksop Priory in 2015 (Pendleton, T.A. and Pendleton, D.T.), three records from Nottingham in 2015 (Skinner, M.). Not recorded in Nottinghamshire since one found at Mansfield in 2016 (Morris, D.).

# The Nottinghamshire distribution maps

***Mitostoma chrysomelas***



***Nemastoma bimaculatum***



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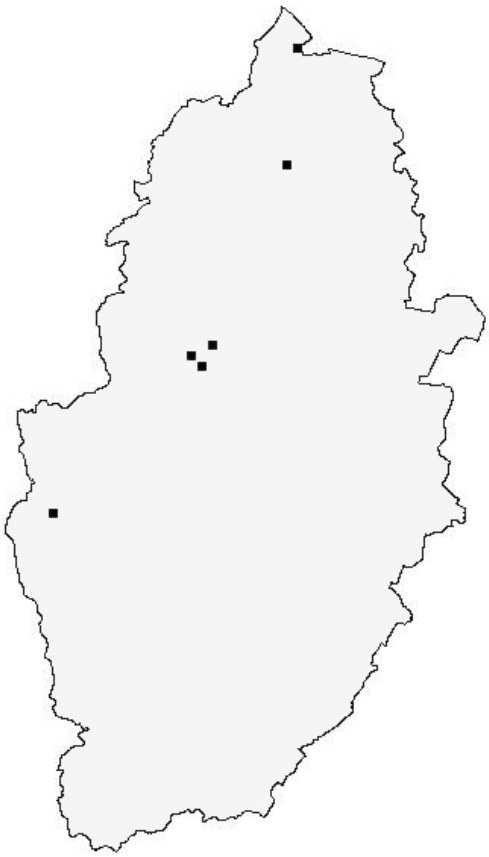

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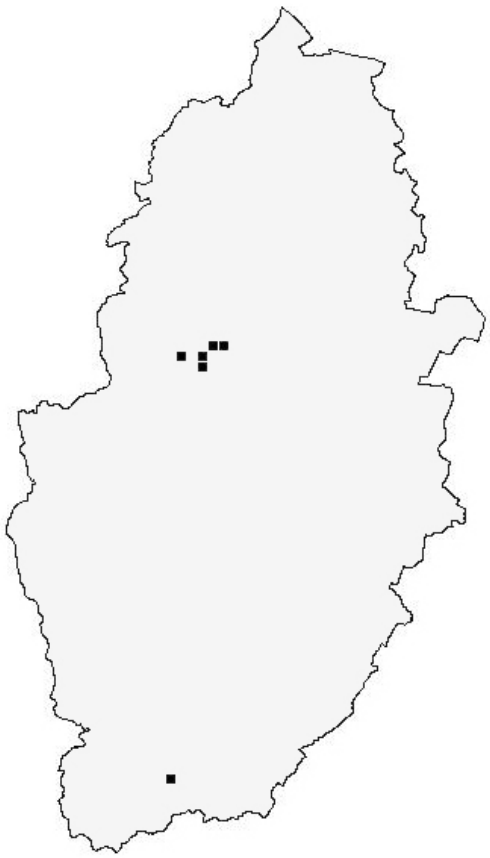

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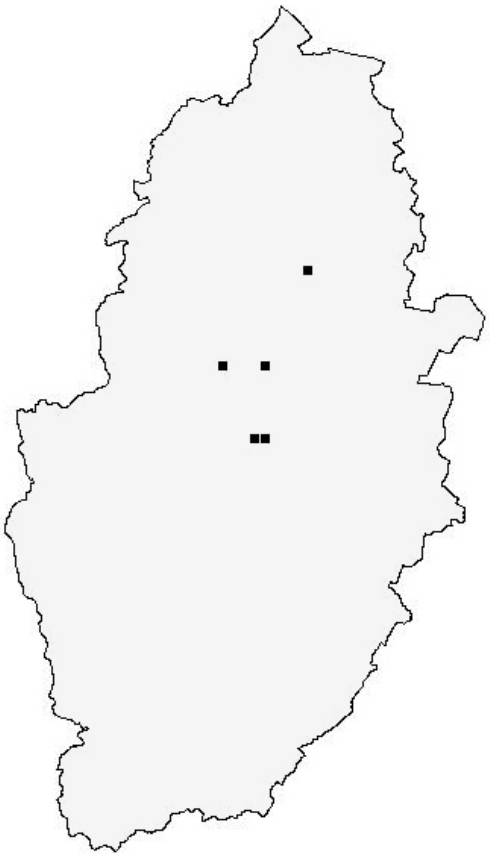

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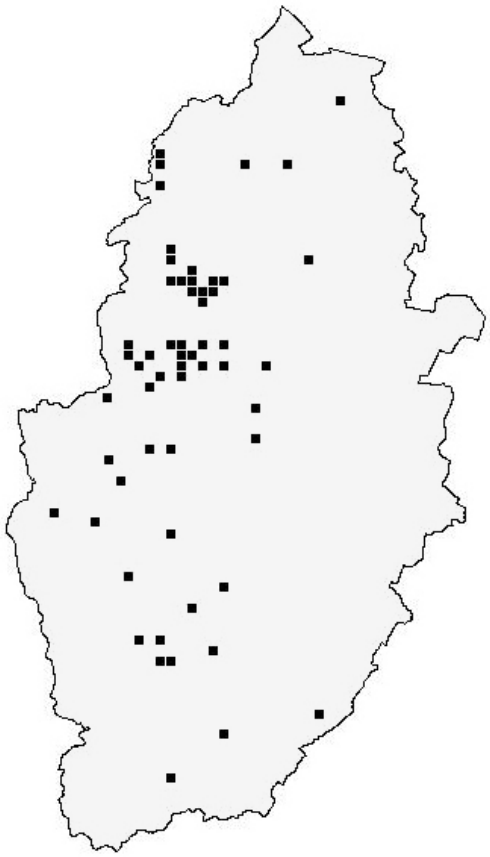

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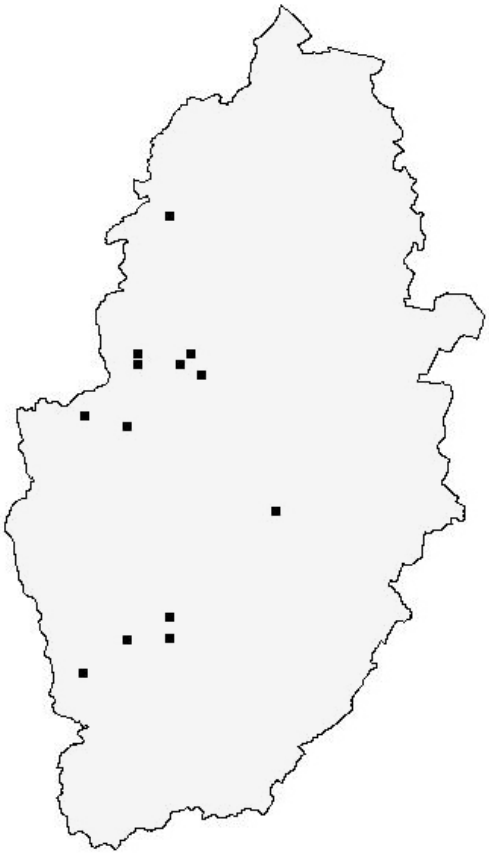

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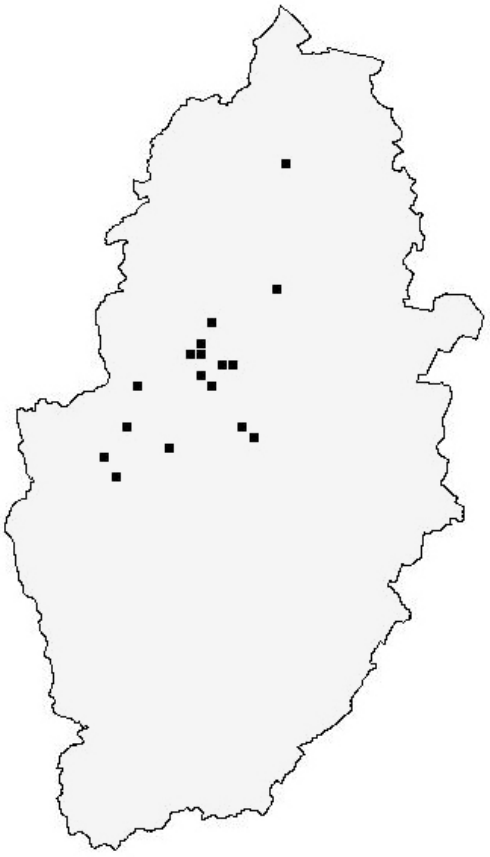

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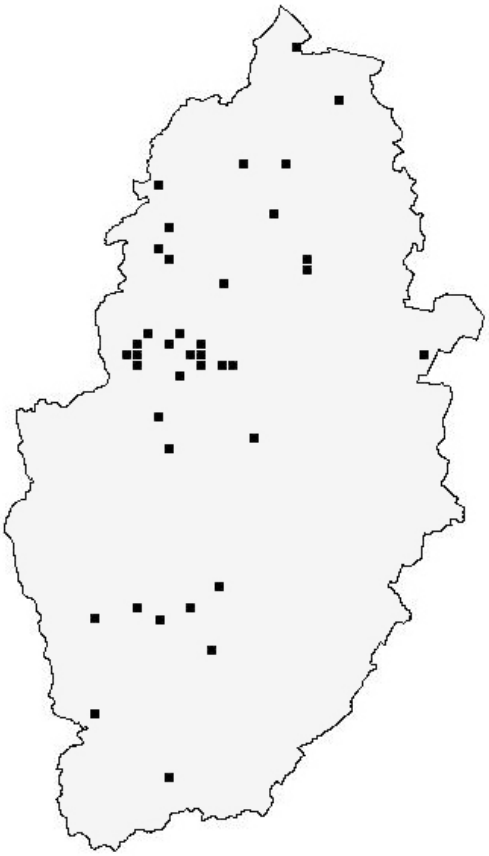

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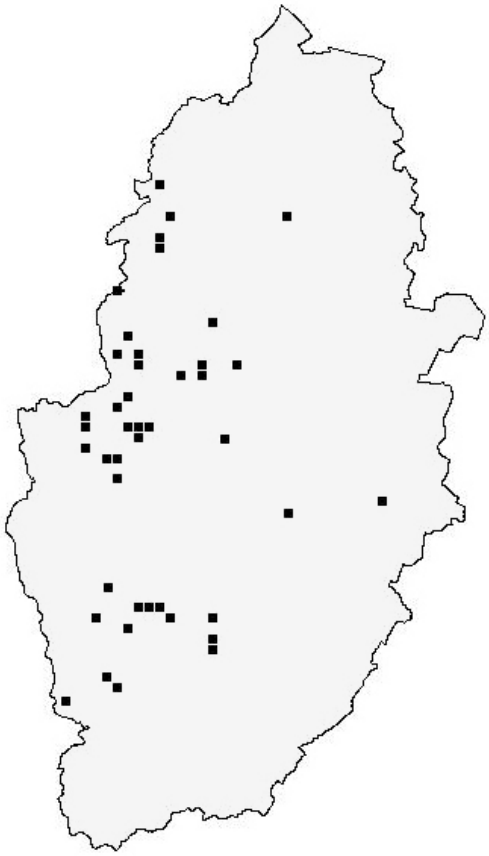

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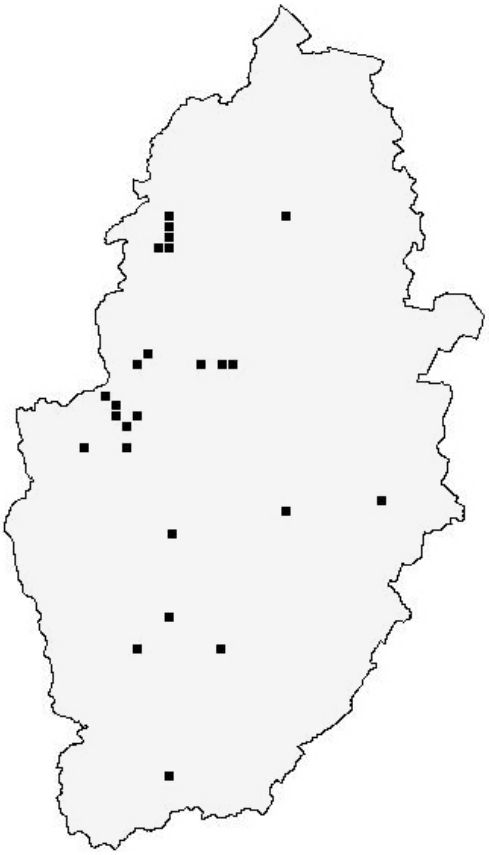

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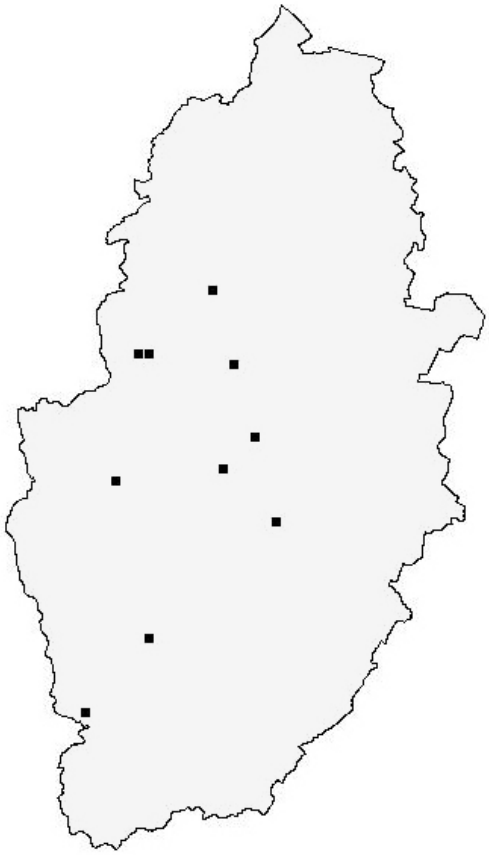

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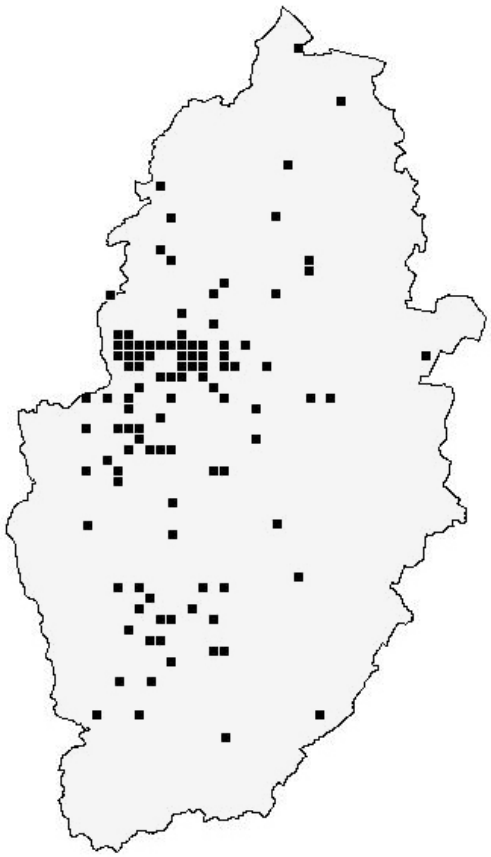

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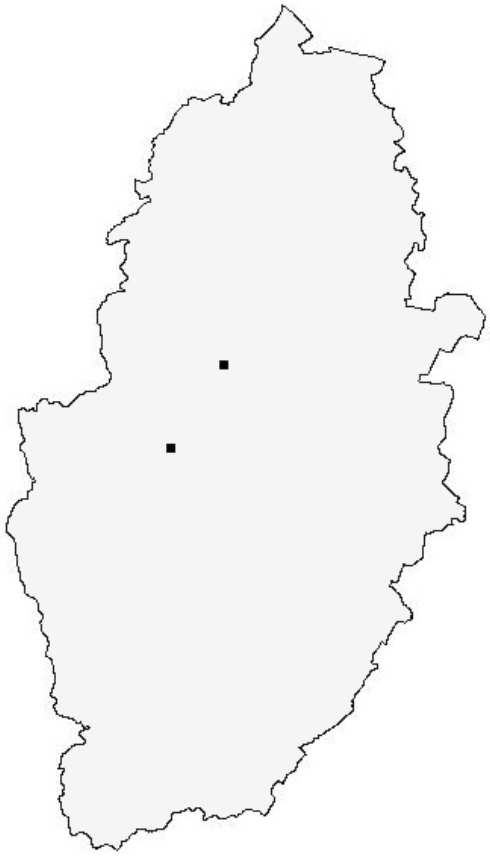

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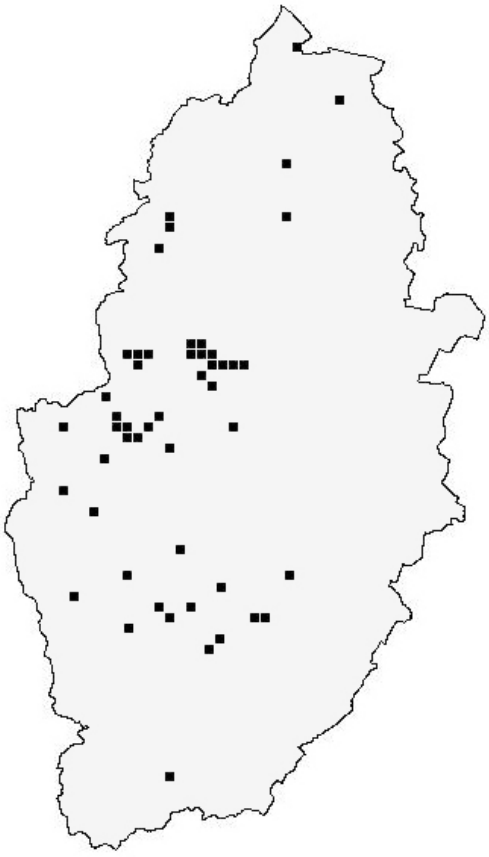
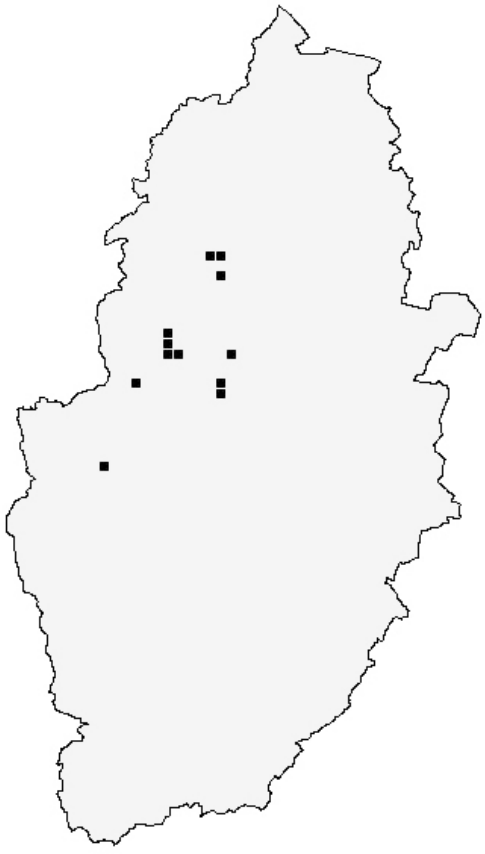


***Platybunus pinetorum***



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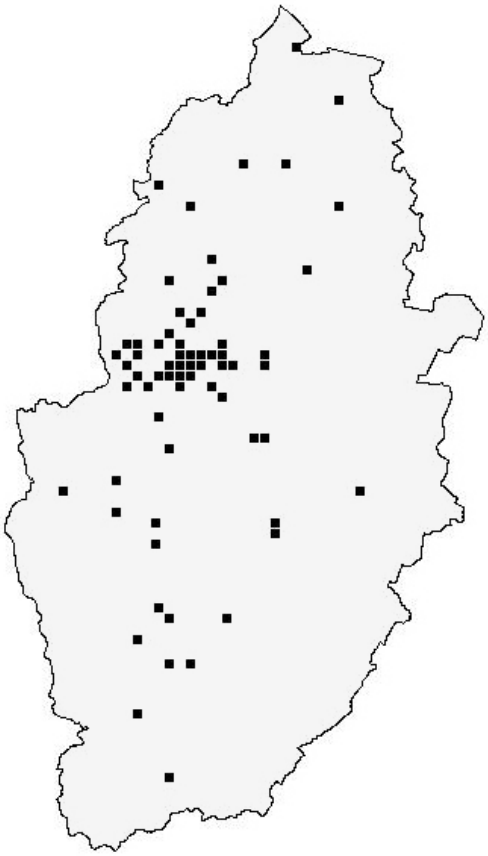
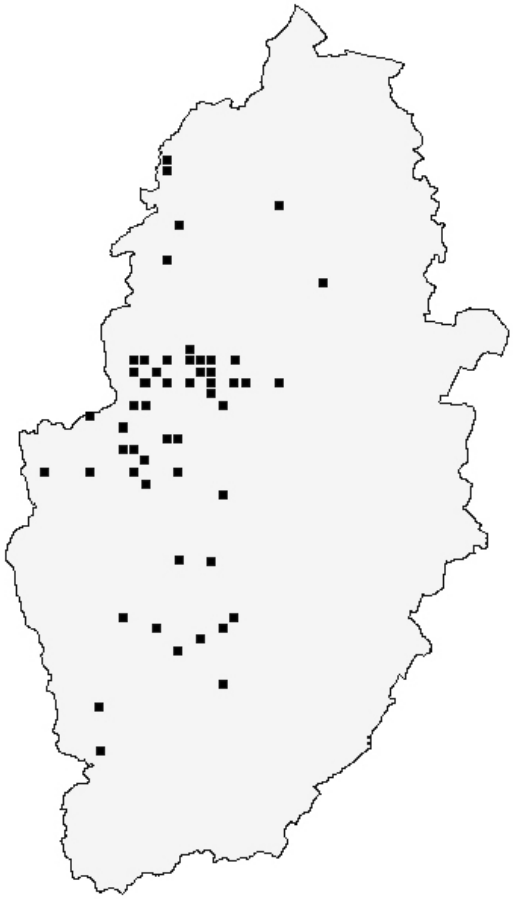
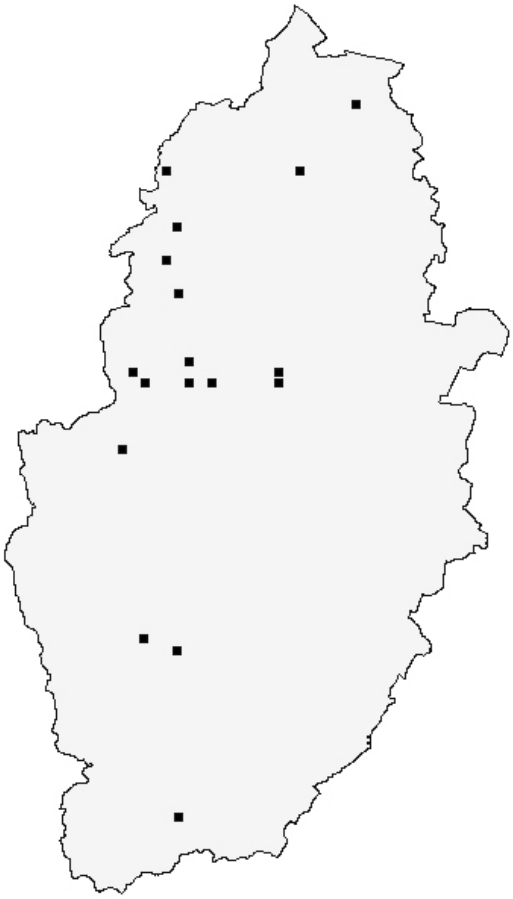


***Dicranopalpus ramosus***



***Leiobunum blackwalli***



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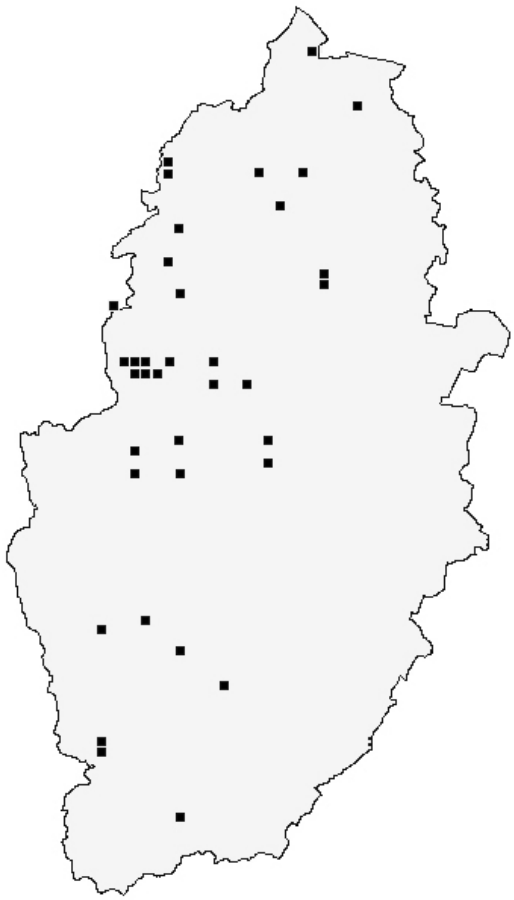
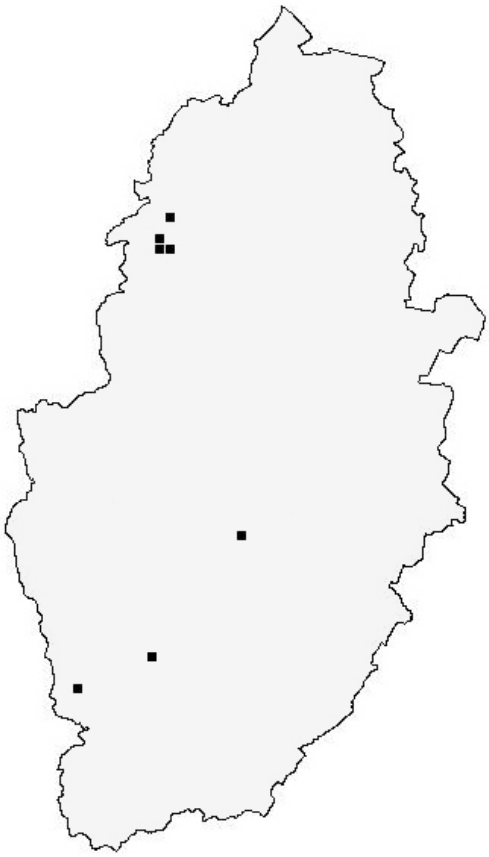


***Leiobunum* sp. A**



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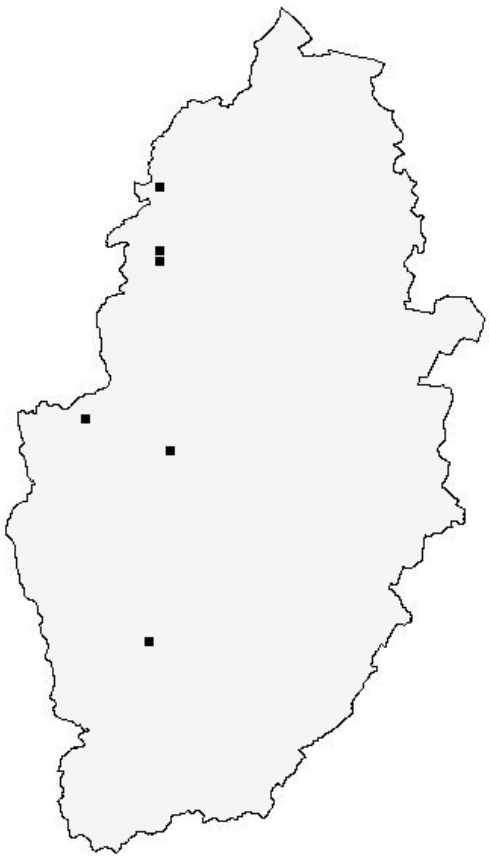


## Species photographs


*Mitostoma chrysomelas*


*Nemastoma bimaculatum*


*Lophopilio palpinalis*


*Megabunus diadema*


*Mitopus morio*


*Odiellus spinosus*


*Oligolophus hanseni*


*Oligolophus tridens*


*Opilio canestrinii* (male shown above left and female above right)


*Opilio parietinus* (male showed above left and female above right)


*Opilio saxatilis*


*Paroligolophus agrestis*


*Phalangium opilio* (male shown above left and female above right)


*Platybunus pinetorum*

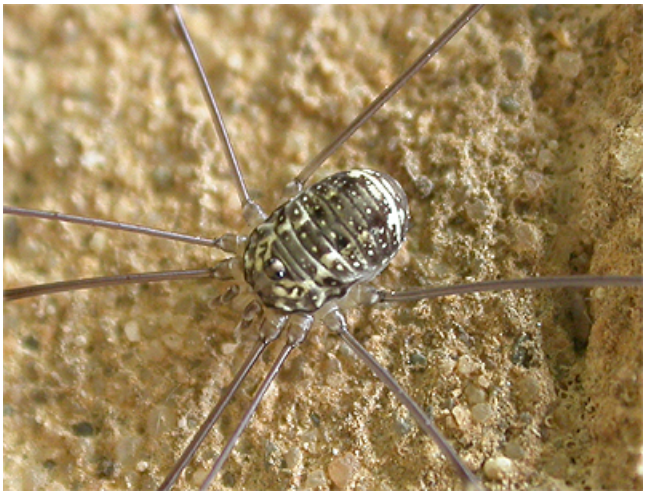

*Platybunus triangularis*


*Dicranopalpus ramosus*


*Leiobunum blackwalli* (male shown above left and female above right)


*Leiobunum rotundum* (male shown above left and female above right)


*Leiobunum* sp. A (immature male above left and mature male above right)




*Leiobunum* sp. A (immature/sub-adult shown above left and mature female above right)


*Nelima gothica*

# Appendix 1

## A Harvestman new to the UK – *Leiobunum* sp. A at Worksop in 2009

It remains important at this time, to again document (on paper or as a pdf file) the discovery of *Leiobunum* sp. A, at Worksop in 2009. At the time it represented the first ever record of this Harvestman for the UK, so quite a record.

### The history of *Leiobunum* sp. A in Europe

The first records of a large, dark *Leiobunum* Harvestman came from near Nijmegen, The Netherlands in October 2004. Experts using Martens 1978 key, could not identify it as being any north-western or central European species, nor were they able to assign it to any European representative of the genus known to date.

Many more additional records were obtained from several localities near to Nijmegen during 2005 and 2006. First records from other European countries are Germany and Austria (2006) Switzerland (2007) and from France in 2009.

It is believed that this Harvestman arrived in Europe via importation. Efforts by Wijnhoven, Schönhofer & Martens to contact several specialists, saw them concentrate on Spain and Northern Africa, and then Mexico and the southern parts of the United States, in order to determine it's origin. All their efforts have so far drawn a blank.

### Circumstances of the Worksop record

The specimen was found on the wall of a Worksop house on the Prospect Estate at approximately SK59226 80970. This is situated off Gloucester Road, immediately north-west of Bassetlaw Hospital. The house is situated in a row of terraced town houses built in the 1970's, with small gardens facing east at the front and west at the back. Both gardens are enclosed, well planted with mature shrubs and conifers and sheltered by fencing. It is a typically designed estate of it's time - a maze of paths and cut grass areas etc. Houses are arranged in short rows facing different directions.

Despite being part of an urban estate, this small garden had previously supplied us with numerous interesting invertebrate records and with a healthy list of Harvestmen including *Odiellus spinosus*, *Oligolophus tridens*, *Opilio canestrinii*, *Opilio parietinus* and *Paroligolophus agrestis*. Surprisingly, we never recorded either *Leiobunum rotundum* or *Leiobunum blackwalli*, two common, long-legged Harvestmen.

Being familiar with many of Nottinghamshire's Harvestmen for a number of years, a very dark bodied, extremely long-legged *Leiobunum* type Harvestman found on October 13th 2009, immediately stood out as being very different from anything else we had seen before. The Harvestman was found resting on a shady, north-west facing wall in the rear garden of the property, in a quite open position relative to the Ivy growing up the same wall. It was collected and taken home for photographing before being released.

### Background of the 2009 Worksop record

Recording and photographing invertebrates, occasionally throws up something obviously very different from what you have seen before, but still remains unidentified despite a great deal of research. The result is that the images get put into the 'unidentified folder' and often sit there for months or even years. Images of this *Leiobunum* type Harvestman taken at Worksop in October 2009 did exactly that. Yet the inability to identify it, probably niggled us more than any other species and the 'unidentified folder' was subsequently opened several times in the intervening period.

In November 2011, a possible breakthrough came whilst searching for images of *Platybunus pinetorum*, a recent addition to the UK species list discovered by Paul Richards at Sheffield in June 2010. Images found during a Google search for the similar looking (to the Worksop specimen) *Leiobunum tisciae*, turned up images of an invasive and unknown *Leiobunum* found in parts Germany, Switzerland, The Netherlands and Austria.

Further research quickly led us to the excellent paper "*An unidentified harvestman Leiobunum sp. alarmingly invading Europe*" (Arachnida: Opiliones) by Hay Wijnhoven, Axel L. Schönhofer & Jochen Martens and published in December 2007. There is a link to this paper at the bottom of this page. One particular image of a male in the paper, seemed to match the Worksop specimen perfectly, so we emailed images of the Worksop specimen to Jochen Martens and Paul Richards for possible identification and confirmation. Both replied back with the conclusion that this was indeed *Leiobunum sp*.

Jochen replied "*Certainly, it is the Leiobunum species presently extending it range within central and now even to NW Europe. Very amazing that it reached the British Isles with so short delay. I understand that only this male was present. This is unusual because in most cases the local population enlarge quite rapidly and form the mass aggregation of which you certainly have seen photographs. But, locally, this may be only the beginning. So, please, keep an eye on the further development and ask around. According to my knowledge, this is the first record in the U.K. Many thanks for informing me (and hopefully so on further records to come)".*

## Description and images of the Worksop male *Leiobunum* sp. A

A very large male *Leiobunum sp*. Size difference from *Leiobunum rotundum* and *L. blackwalli* extremely obvious at a glance. Maximum leg span of the Worksop specimen measured at 100mm, compared to an average sized male *Leiobunum rotundum* of 66.0mm. Body length 5.0mm.

A large species, much longer-legged and robust than other *Leiobunum* Harvestmen found in the UK. The body appears dark, almost blackish, but is noticeably dark metallic green, with only a few light markings. There is only minor dimorphism in colouration and dorsal pattern within males and females. Ventrum and Coxae of the legs are warm pale yellowish to pale light brown, strongly contrasting with the dark Trochanters, legs and dorsum. The legs are conspicuously long and slender, dark brown to black. Females have conspicuous white tips to the tibiae, which darken through age.

## The rediscovery of *Leiobunum* sp. A at Worksop in 2012

We had thought that after two years since we first recorded *Leiobunum* sp. A, it would now be sat on most house walls in the area of the original record. In late September 2012 we briefly tried searching the Prospect Estate again and still had no luck. Fine weather over the weekend of October 6-7th 2012, meant that conditions were again suitable, but despite several hours searching Bassetlaw Hospital and Worksop Priory Gatehouse each day we returned home failing to get the target species.

We made another visit to the area on October 13th 2012, a date which was already significant, as it marked the date on which we had first found *Leiobunum* sp. A back in 2009. We actually only realised the closeness of the date when researching and starting to write up the results of our Harvestmen surveys from the previous weekend on October 12th 2012, but it suddenly became an amazing coincidence when we returned to Worksop for one more search.

The weather forecasters had predicted showers on the day, but after being cloudy and dry all morning, the sun began to break through and we thought of going back up to Worksop for another survey and hopefully to find our elusive quarry.

Our first stop was a roadside wall on an industrial estate on Sandy Lane, that we had drove past the week before. We hoped that *Leiobunum* sp. A had possibly originated from one of the units there via importation. Unfortunately, the wall turned out to be devoid of any Harvestmen at all and so we moved on.

Next it was on to Bassetlaw Hospital and then across the road to the Prospect Estate. Again, very thorough coverage of all shaded walls and potentially suitable resting places were searched and although we did find plenty of Harvestmen, none were *Leiobunum* sp. A. By now, we had started to give up hope and looked for somewhere new to search. We tried a couple of old brick built factories on Priorswell Road, before going to have another look on the walls of Worksop Priory and Gatehouse. The Gatehouse once again held a few examples of *Phalangium opilio* and *Opilio parietinus*, but then we found a male *Leiobunum blackwalli* by the door to Worksop Priory.

Not having many photographs of *L. blackwalli*, I took the opportunity to try and obtain more and it was thanks to the extra time spent taking photographs, that Dilys found a much larger Harvestman further along the wall. It was instantly recognisable as being *Leiobunum* sp. A and after much effort, we had finally been rewarded with our target species.

Some documenting photographs were taken, before we carried out a more detailed search of the Priory walls we could access. We were immediately successful and went on to record a total of 13 males and nine females along the southern wall of the Priory. All the *Leiobunum* sp. A we found were more or less at eye level, with only one female found about 20 feet up and they clearly preferred the vertical joints or tight recesses built along the southern side of the Priory walls.

# Appendix 2

*Taken from the website www.eakringbirds.com*

## *Platybunus pinetorum* - A Harvestman new to Nottinghamshire in 2020

On a personal level, one of the overwhelming joys of invertebrate recording has always been the uncertainty of each trip out. Yes, admittedly with a degree of preparatory research and a degree of knowledge, it can be possible on most occasions to have an accurate expectancy as to what species are likely to be found at a site.

But add in the unknown factor, a factor for which invertebrate recording is notoriously capable of adding, and a 'routine' morning's recording, can suddenly be turned on its head. The incredible changes to our national and local climates (easily noticed by anyone older than 30 years old) has led to modern entomologists and naturalists being witness to remarkable changes in our fauna.

The changes seem to be ever increasing, no doubt highlighted by the ease and immediacy at which news regarding the latest sightings can be put out via social media. The days us older entomologists can remember, when the latest information dropped through your letterbox already about four months out of date, are (fortunately) very long gone.

## Social media and invertebrate recording

What technology has done for invertebrate recording is difficult to appreciate. Whilst it has undoubtedly created greater awareness and interest in our invertebrate fauna, the downside seems to be an increased tendency to ask the identity of something, without even attempting to identify it yourself.

But some invertebrate Orders have benefitted enormously from the greater exposure via the internet and social media. Once considerably neglected and much under-recorded, there has been a dramatic increase in interest shown towards Centipedes, Millipedes, Woodlice, False Scorpions and Harvestmen.

Harvestmen (Opiliones) have done well for new arrivals in the past ten or so years, with a number of new species turning up. While many of these new species have originated from southern counties, those of us living in the northern-half of the UK have by no means been left out and with worldwide plant importation to your local garden centre, there's every chance of finding something new to the UK in any part of the UK.

Three recent Harvestmen with 'northern roots' include the still un-named Leiobunum sp.A (Schönhofer & Hillen 2008, Toss 2009, Wijnhoven et al. 2007) from Worksop, Nottinghamshire in 2009, Leiobunum limbatum (L.Koch, 1861) from Colne, Lancashire in 2019 and *Platybunus pinetorum* (C.L.Koch, 1839) from a garden in Sheffield, Yorkshire in 2010.


## Background history of *Platybunus pinetorum* in the UK

Fortunately, the Sheffield garden in which *Platybunus pinetorum* was found belonged to Paul Richards, who himself has done much to promote and actively encourage the recording of UK Harvestmen over the past number of years. It was Paul who eventually found the second UK site for *Leiobunum* sp. A in Barnsley, after Dilys and I had found the UK's first in a small Worksop garden in 2009.

For a number of years, *Platybunus pinetorum* was recorded by Paul (continuing to this day) and then other records began to turn up elsewhere, including locally in Sheffield. Over the next few years, records came from Glasgow and Aberdeen in Scotland, in Northern Ireland and in the UK at Yorkshire, Northampton and a number of other towns. Unfortunately, most of these records have so far failed to find their way on to the NBN Atlas.

So after a number of years promoting Nottinghamshire's Harvestmen on this website and then following the excitement of finding a species new to both the UK and Nottinghamshire, Dilys and I were always on the look out for others and Platybunus pinetorum was probably at the top of our list, although we always suspected that the hard to find (and small) *Anelasmocephalus cambridgei* (Westwood, 1874) lurked in a local woodland somewhere.

Many of the *Platybunus pinetorum* records appeared to come from urban locations, so it was along any wall or fence that casual searches were made whenever the opportunity came along. Like the similar *Platybunus triangularis*, *P. pinetorum* is one of few Harvestmen to be found as adults during the Spring. *P. triangularis* is a common species of woodlands and other well vegetated sites, but it has proved to be common at a range of sites and we have recorded it from urban gardens around Nottingham. On the whole, we have found it to be widespread throughout Nottinghamshire, though with few records from sites east of the Trent Valley, which is (without doubt) entirely down to recorder effort.

## The Gleadthorpe find

Coincidentally, it was having *Anelasmocephalus cambridgei* in mind, that I decided to have a wander up to Holborn Hill Plantation on May 16th 2020. Holborn Hill Plantation is an area of mature Beech woodland, which is difficult to come by in Nottinghamshire and we'd always had it down as being a potential site for *A. cambridgei.* So I thought it would be worth just having a wander and bringing back some suitable leaf litter to sort through later.

After parking the car, I began walking and occasionally stopping to photograph the odd thing, mostly as a reminder that I'd seen it and it saves taking a notebook out. I then cut off the main track and began heading towards the Beech woodland, but slowed to have a casual glance before entering the wood, for anything sat sunning itself on the low foliage. As I walked I spotted a Harvestman sat on a Hogweed leaf in typical *P. triangularis* fashion.

I was going to carry on and just put it down to *P. triangularis*, then thought best to take a reminding record photograph. I never even considered the habitat as being suitable for *P. pinetorum*, really being swayed by the jealousy-inducing photographs on Facebook, from someone wanting to know if this 'is *Platybunus pinetorum* stuck on the side of their house'? As I approached to get a photograph, I was immediately struck by the chestnut brown occularium (eye area). To me this was an obvious feature, noticeable even from a meter away. Then noticing the generally darker colouration of this specimen, I knew that I had somehow, accidentally stumbled on the county's first *Platybunus pinetorum*.

A pleasant surprise was finding it to be very approachable and unlikely to bolt. I thought it would (as most inevitably do) and so I did all I could to reduce the chance of it escaping into the vegetation. In the end I never needed to and it remained on the leaf, while I detached the leaf from the stem to get some less shaky photographs and it spent a few days in captivity, before being released back at the original location.

# Appendix 3

*Taken from the website www.eakringbirds.com*

## Surveying and recording the Harvestman *Platybunus pinetorum*

For those who find Harvestmen (Opiliones) an interesting field of study, the past few years have been something of a bonus, or maybe that should be 'bunus' in view of the subject? Within the past ten years, the UK has seen five new species of Harvestmen reach these shores

.

The five include *Leiobunum* sp. A (Schönhofer & Hillen 2008, Toss 2009, Wijnhoven et al. 2007) from a Worksop garden in 2009, *Platybunus pinetorum* (C.L.Koch, 1839) from a Sheffield garden in 2010, *Scotolemon doriae* (Pavesi, 1878) from a Plymouth cemetery in December 2017 (Bilton, 2018a), *Leiobunum limbatum* (L.Koch, 1861) from Colne, Lancashire in 2019 and *Dicranopalpus larvatus* (Canestrini, 1874) from Guernsey in 2020.

As is well known and publicised across this website, Dilys and I had recorded *Leiobunum* sp. A, new to the UK from the wall of a Worksop house back in 2009. So after Paul Richards found *Platybunus pinetorum* in his own garden in Sheffield, Yorkshire and then a few years later the same species started to turn up at other sites around the UK, we definitely had another species to look out for in Nottinghamshire.

## The first record of *Platybunus pinetorum* for VC56 Nottinghamshire

Holborn Hill Plantation is a superb area of mature Beech woodland situated about half a mile east of Meden Vale. In Nottinghamshire, decent sized areas of Beech woodland is difficult to come by and soon to become even rarer. Unfortunately Holborn Hill Plantation and the adjacent Hangar Hill Plantation are both marked up for felling, probably to take place late in 2021 or early 2022. I decided to have a wander up there on May 16th 2020, at the time thinking it would be worth just going and bringing back some leaf litter to sort through later.

Parking the car at Gleadthorpe, I began walking towards Holborn Hill Plantation, occasionally stopping to photograph the odd insect as a reminder that I'd seen it. Its a preferred practice of mine, as it just saves taking a notebook out.

I then cut off the main track heading towards the plantation, but slowed to have a casual glance for anything sat sunning itself on the low foliage. As I walked I spotted a Harvestman sat on a Hogweed leaf in typical *Platybunus triangularis* fashion and to be honest that is exactly what I thought it was. But on close approach, I could see the distinct chestnut-coloured occularium, easily noticeable even from a metre away. Then noticing the generally darker colouration of this specimen, I knew that I had accidentally stumbled on the county's first *Platybunus pinetorum*.

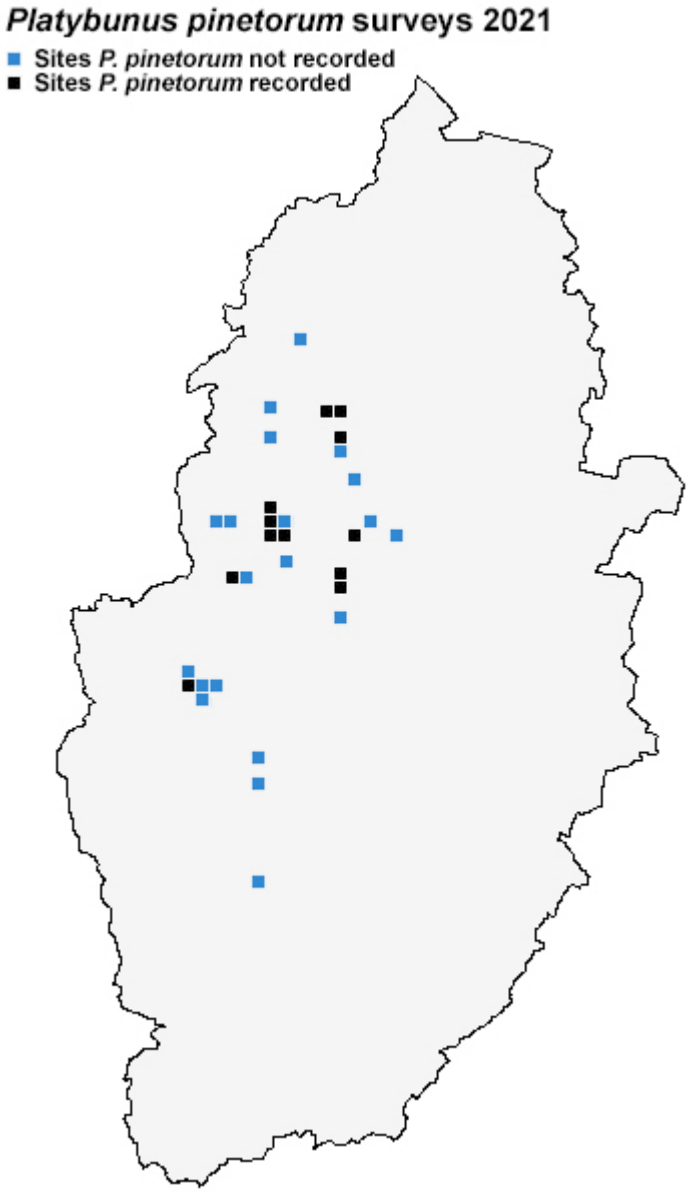
## Refound in 2021 and survey results

On March 21st 2021 and with the weather being fairly mild, I made a first visit of the year to Gleadthorpe and Holborn Hill Plantation areas, in the thin hope of finding P. pinetorum. The search proved unsuccessful, but a return to the area on March 30th was met with almost immediate success, finding a specimen about two feet up the trunk of a Beech and no more than 50 metres away from the location of the original record.

I next visited on April 17th, with conditions pleasantly warmer and seemingly ideal. Surprisingly, the individual present on my last visit was still on the same tree and further searching revealed two more specimens on other Beech trunks nearby. All three P. pinetorum were recorded resting between two and four feet from ground level.

During a follow-up visit to the site on May 4th, I initially found just the one specimen, which was the individual first found on March 30th. It was still on its favoured Beech and had now moulted to adult. There was no sign of the other two individuals found on my previous visit to the site, but conditions were windy where they had been located and I presumed too exposed and cold this time.

So I decided to try another area close by, which (especially today) was considerably more sheltered. Within a minute or so, I'd found a single specimen and then four more and all on the same Sycamore. Once again, all five were situated between three and five feet from ground level. Additionally, there was another individual on a Sycamore little more than five metres away. A total of seven P. pinetorum was more than I'd ever expected on a single day.




May 7th and I returned to Holborn Hill Plantation for yet another survey. This purpose this time, was to check which individuals (if any) were still present from May 4th and to survey the area much more extensively. In view of the future tree-felling on this site, I wanted to start and determine its range locally.

I walked south along the tarmac track and away from the area of the 2020 record and within a few minutes found my first *P. pinetorum* of the day. This already meant that I'd already extended the range on site, so now it was a case of by how much it could be extended. Another specimen was found five feet up a Beech trunk at the top of Holborn Hill Plantation, so I continued to follow the edge of the woodland till I reached Hangar Hill Plantation.

By this time it had become increasingly windy, due to a nearby passing shower and conditions weren't as good as they had been a few minutes earlier. But some twenty metres into Hangar Hill Plantation and I'd found another, which was moving round to find a more sheltered side of the trunk it was on.

I found no more until I reached the southerly edge of Hangar Hill Plantation, and was very surprised to find three more individuals in quick succession, one of which was found feeding on the leaf mining moth *Phyllonorycter maestingella*.

These were the last I found, although I continued to search eastwards to the edge of Budby South Forest.

With a lack of smooth barked trees to easily check, surveying was more difficult and much slower, but the targets set out at the start of surveying were more than reached during the visit. There's obviously a healthy population of *Platybunus pinetorum* here, but it's already under threat through loss of habitat via felling and timber extraction, with extraction being the most destructive part of the process. Should as many *P. pinetorum* be located to somewhere safe? Its a tempting proposition, but the big problem in Nottinghamshire, is finding anywhere that's safe for release.

On May 14th I went further afield, although not setting out with the proviso of looking for Platybunus pinetorum. However, the decision was quickly determined as being a good one.

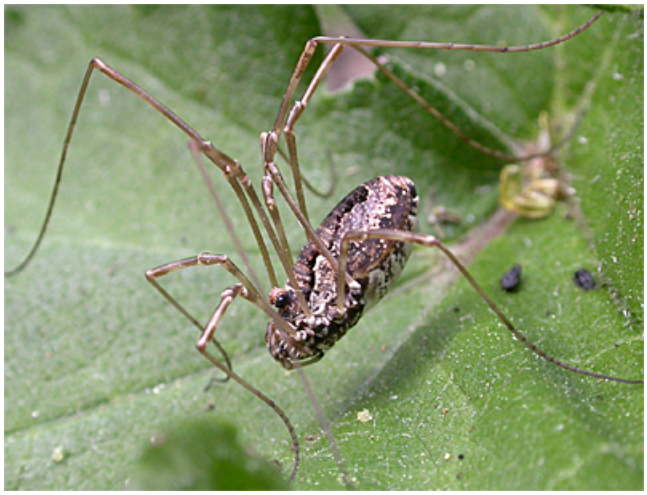
I drove a couple of miles north up the A614 and decided to look at a narrow roadside plantation of Beech, Sweet Chestnut and Pine, as it was an area we had never looked at before. I was met with immediate success and within half an hour, had recorded a staggering 104 adult and near adult *P. pinetorum*. This was very much a minimum count, as I didn't cover the whole area and just stopped counting, as now I wanted to try other locations nearby, to determine the range here locally.

All individuals as seen before, were recorded on the trunks of trees at heights between one and eight feet (just one) from ground level. Several trees had counts of five individuals and certainly three to a tree was common. I recorded very few trees without any *P. pinetorum* on it. As has always been the case so far, all those found have been well distanced from each other, usually well over a foot apart. Only once have I seen two individuals within touching distance and they certainly don't group in the way *Leiobunum* Harvestmen often do.

| Site | Grid Ref | Year | Notes |
|---|---|---|---|
| Gleadthorpe | SK597700 | 2020 and 2021 | One on 16/05/20 and one present from 30/03/21 to 04/05/22 |
| Holborn Hill Plantation | SK597698 | 2021 | Two on 17/04/21 |
| Holborn Hill Plantation | SK597693 | 2021 | One at this location on 07/05/21 |
| Hanger Hill Drive | SK598697 | 2021 | One on 07/05/21 |
| Hangar Hill Plantation | SK594691 | 2021 | One on 07/05/21 |
| Hangar Hill Plantation | SK597687 | 2021 | Three at this grid ref on 07/05/21 |
| Clumber Park | SK648752 | 2021 | Count of 104 on May 14/05/21 |
| Appleyhead Wood | SK647776 | 2021 | Five on 14/05/21 |
| Ollerton | SK652686 | 2021 | 28 recorded on 16/05/21 |
| Clumber Park | SK638776 | 2021 | One recorded on 16/05/21 |
| Mansfield Woodhouse | SK565655 | 2021 | Four on16/05/21 |
| Rufford CP | SK641647 | 2021 | Two at different locations just off the A614 on 18/05/21 |
| Vexation Lane | SK642655 | 2021 | One recorded on 18/05/21 |
| Sherwood Forest | SK605686 | 2021 | Three on 23/05/21 and one in the same area on 11/06/21 |
| Sherwood Forest | SK603685 | 2021 | One on 11/06/21 |
| Thynghowe | SK600684 | 2021 | One recorded on 11/06/21 |

Leaving this location, I drove north for another mile or so and stopped to try suitable looking habitat at Appleyhead Wood, close to the A614 and A1 junction and across the road from the entrance to Clumber Park. After a couple of minutes searching, I'd located a single *P. pinetorum* about seven feet up a Beech, then went on to find a further four more. This site does hold some very old Beech with wide girths, but none were found to hold any *P. pinetorum*. Two days later on May 16th, I surveyed a private area of Thoresby Estate woodland containing some Beech, Pine and Sycamore, which is adjacent to a large and frequently used lay-by.

This site also lies on the A614, but is situated close to a large traffic island at Ollerton and is a few miles south of the Clumber sites surveyed previously. *Platybunus pinetorum* was again found to be present here, with a total of 28 counted. A couple of other locations in the area were surveyed, including Boughton Brake which lies about half a mile east of the A614. No *P. pinetorum* were found here, so I headed north up the A614 and turned left on to the A57 towards Worksop.



The A57 marks the northern boundary of Clumber Park and a small strip of Sweet Chestnut woodland looked promising and eventually paid off with a single *P. pinetorum* despite a great deal of searching. After returning home, I made a check on two local woodland sites which seemed potentially suitable. To my surprise, four more *P. pinetorum* were found in Beech woodland on the A6075 Peafield Lane near Market Warsop, making this a discovery in another completely new area.

May 17th and 18th. So after finding *P. pinetorum* well away from it's recently discovered Clumber sites, the aim now was to try and determine the extent of its range.

With the Peafield Lane site being something of a local dumping area (in general line with most of the county's lay-bys) was the county's road system a key factor in helping *P. pinetorum* colonise Nottinghamshire? or had it been here at very low population levels all along and remained undetected? Only Howard Williams, Dilys and myself, had done any long term recording of Opiliones in the county, but we had never recorded it, even after having visited a sites *P. pinetorum* has since been recorded from. So is it likely that it has gone undetected over the years?

In Nottinghamshire, that must be considered as doubtful, as through mapping the distribution of *Psychidae* moths in the county, we'd spent many hours in the field (and at all of the sites on the above map) over the past 13 years, looking at tree trunks for larval cases of *Psychidae* moths and recording Harvestmen and other invertebrates at the same time. Certainly we'd never seen it before.

But if it is as recent an arrival into the UK as records seem to suggest it is, then the speed of range increase is great. Nottinghamshire's woodland records seem quite unique, as virtually all other UK records of *P. pinetorum* are casual records from urban or suburban locations. But then again, is anyone making any attempt to check woodland sites in their county? It seems not and that may be because recorders deem it as being a waste of time, perhaps on the basis of the largely singular, urban nature of most county's records.

So it was decided to check sites along the A614 closer to Nottingham, but suitable habitat at Gravelly Hollow near Calverton (containing Sycamore) and a small plantation of Beech on Longdale Lane near Papplewick, both proved negative. However, I eventually met with success at Rufford CP further north on the A614 and after a while searching mixed woodland at the site of the road, I finally found a single *P. pinetorum* at the entrance barriers. Now Rufford is less than a mile from the Ollerton site where I recorded *P. pinetorum* a day or so before, so it was not unexpected here. I then found an additional specimen a hundred yards away on a signpost and when I cross over the A614, I soon found it to be present at on a Sycamore at Vexation Lane.

On May 23rd I tried a small area of Beech woodland lying just on the edge of the Sherwood Forest NNR, at the south-west corner of Budby South Forest and the north-west corner of the Sherwood Forest CP. Once again, most of these trees are marked for felling (presumably later in 2021) and includes some mature Beech and some younger trees. Three *P. pinetorum* were found in total, so another site for this most handsome and beautifully marked Harvestman. Two small groups of mature Beech covering just a few square metres within Seymour Grove (a belt of mostly Scot's Pine separating Budby South Forest from Sherwood Forest CP) were also checked.

There were no further surveys until June 11th when I again returned to the Budby South Forest area. One female was soon found at SK605686, where three were found on my previous visit. Continuing on, I located another female about a hundred yards or so slightly further west and finally found another on Beech next to Thynghowe at Hangar Hill Plantation.

## 2021 Winter records

One of the unknowns (at least personally) was the overwintering location/habitat of *P. pinetorum* juveniles. Within leaf litter was suspected, so in early December, I returned to the Clumber site alongside the A614. The aim was to collect some leaf litter samples to take home and sort through, but the first carrier bag full proved fruitless, but the sample did contain the Pseudoscorpion *Neobisium carcinoides*.

I tried the same sampling method at Meden Vale on December 4th, despite there being no record of *Platybunus pinetorum* from the location. There were two juvenile *Platybunus triangularis* in that sample, but no *P. pinetorum*, but it was worth checking and was at least very useful in giving me an idea of what sort of size *Platybunus* juveniles were in early December.

On December 7th 2021, I returned back to the Clumber site again and took another carrier bag of leaf litter home for sorting. The sample was taken from under some discarded carrier bags, half-covered with leaves. This time I was successful in finding two *P. pinetorum* juveniles (right) both turning up in the same handful and the mystery of overwintering location was known, though in all honesty, it wasn't any surprise.

## 2022 survey results and mapping

On March 18th 2022 and with the temperature being mild, I went to the Clumber site along the A614 for a first survey of the year. The weather was cool and there was a fairly strong breeze, but I was hopeful that at least one *Platybunus pinetorum* may have made the transition from leaf litter to tree trunk.

After a search of as many Beech trunks as possible within the time available, I found one juvenile/sub-adult on the trunk of a young Sycamore next to the road, which was already minus two legs. I returned again on April 8th and in a short search, soon found seven sat head down on the trunks of several Beech. The temperature was cool and there had been a light frost overnight, so numbers at this site should gradually build from now on.

| Site | Grid Ref | Year | Notes |
|---|---|---|---|
| Clumber Park | SK648752 | 2022 | One on 18/03/22 |
| Clumber Park | SK648776 | 2022 | Seven sub-adults on 08/04/22 |
| Holborn Hill Plantation | SK597698 | 2022 | Two on 23/04/22 |
| Sherwood Forest | SK605686 | 2022 | Singles at SK604685 and SK601682 on 23/04/22 (Brownley, N. and Brownley, S.) |
| Clumber Park | SK645746 | 2022 | One close to the A614 on 28/04/22 |
| Clumber Park | SK648776 | 2022 | Seven adults on 30/04/22 |
| Sherwood Forest | SK601680 | 2022 | One on 01/05/22 |

The first *Platybunus pinetorum* of the year at Holborn Hill Plantation, were two found low down on the Beeches on 23/04/22 and two were also reported from nearby at SK604685 and SK601682 by Nick and Samantha Brownley. Both these locations were close to where the species was recorded in 2021, but the grid ref of SK601682 does represent a new location.

On the last day of April, I again revisited the A614 Clumber site on 30/04/22 and after expecting a high count, was somewhat disappointed to find just seven *pinetorum* in the northern half of the roadside woodland and concluded that peak numbers are a week or so away.