

A modern Atlas of Nottinghamshire Woodlice

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Introduction

Despite the near certainty of at least two species of Woodlouse being present in every single square kilometre of the county, the recording of these particularly common and easily accessible invertebrates in Nottinghamshire has always been limited.

Even when the great Victorian naturalists were at their peak, collecting and recording our local invertebrate fauna over a century ago, virtually none of them seemed to have any real interest in Woodlice and there were just eight species on the Nottinghamshire list by the turn of this century.

This Atlas attempts to produce up to date distribution maps of all the Woodlice recorded in the county over recent years.

We have not used any historical records in the maps, but have listed all the species we can trace as having been recorded in the county. Waterlice (*Asellidae*) have not been included, but *Asellus aquaticus* is abundant in most water bodies throughout Nottinghamshire.



Oniscus asellus

Porcellio scaber

Androniscus dentiger

Nottinghamshire's historical Woodlice records

With a general lack of interest in Isopods remaining until 2013, J.W. Carr's book "*The Invertebrate Fauna of Nottinghamshire*" published in 1916, was all we had available to us, from which to source records for a county atlas of Nottinghamshire Woodlice.

As prolific as most of the Victorian naturalists were, it seems that only C.E. Pearson and J.W. Carr himself, actually did any Woodlice recording in the county. Pearson provided Nottinghamshire's only record of *Porcellio dilatatus* from a Chilwell greenhouse, while both naturalists also recorded the county's only records of *Porcellionides pruinosus* from Chilwell, Lowdham and Sherwood Rise in Nottingham. Both species are not presently illustrated.

Between them, Carr and Pearson recorded *Armadillidium vulgare* (Common Pill Woodlouse), *Oniscus asellus* (Common Shiny Woodlouse), *Philoscia muscorum* (Common Striped Woodlouse), *Platyarthrus hoffmannseggi* (Ant Woodlouse), *Porcellio dilatatus*, *Porcellio scaber* (Common Rough Woodlouse) *Porcellionides pruinosus* (Plum Woodlouse) and *Trichoniscus pusillus* (Common Pygmy Woodlouse) in Nottinghamshire.

Recent Woodlice recording in Nottinghamshire

Aware that no naturalists had made any recent attempts to record Woodlice, we began to make efforts to record them in 2013. Within just a few months, we had added both *Androniscus dentiger* (Rosy Woodlouse) and *Armadillidium depressum* as being new to Nottinghamshire in 2013. It must be considered likely, that more species are awaiting discovery.

Porcellionides pruinosus* and *Porcellio dilatatus

A search of the NBN Gateway, provided recent records for both *Porcellionides pruinosus* and *Porcellio dilatatus* from over the Nottinghamshire border in Leicestershire at Normanton (Daws, J.), but our research provided no modern Nottinghamshire records. In suitable habitat, *Porcellionides pruinosus* is probably widespread over much of Nottinghamshire, but *Porcellio dilatatus* may prove to be more difficult to find. *Porcellio dilatatus* often associates with *Porcellionides pruinosus* and the two species are characteristic Woodlice of farms, often found in well-established manure heaps, but also under stones and other farm debris/rubbish.

Species photographs



Androniscus dentiger



Trichoniscus pusillus



Philoscia muscorum



Platyarthrus hoffmannseggi



Oniscus asellus



Porcellio scaber



Armadillidium depressum



Armadillidium vulgare

Species accounts

Androniscus dentiger (Verhoeff, 1908)

A small (4-5mm) Woodlouse which is found under logs and stones. This beautifully coloured species turned up under well rotted former railway sleepers on the site of the former Bevercotes and Warsop Main Pit Tops in April 2013. Likely to be widespread across Nottinghamshire.

Trichoniscus pusillus (Brandt, 1833)

An extremely common and very small Woodlouse, with a length of just 4mm at maximum. These are often found under logs in damp woodland habitats, but it is found in a wide variety of sites, including urban gardens. Almost certainly widespread over most of Nottinghamshire.

Philoscia muscorum (Scopoli, 1833)

A common Woodlouse, usually found in more vegetated areas and regularly encountered on low foliage after dark. A fairly fast moving and well marked species, which has turned up in urban and suburban gardens.

Platyarthrus hoffmannseggi (Brandt, 1833)

A small, but regularly encountered white Woodlouse, which is far more widespread in the county than our distribution map would suggest. It spends its entire life underground in ant nests, with *Lasius niger*, *Lasius flavus* and *Myrmica rubra*, being the commonest host species for this 3-4mm long Woodlouse.

Oniscus asellus ssp. asellus (Linnaeus, 1758)

A very common Woodlouse, which is probably present in every single Km square in Nottinghamshire. It is found in all habitats including urban gardens and is one of our most familiar species.

Porcellio scaber (Latreille, 1804)

An extremely common Woodlouse across the whole of Nottinghamshire and probably present in every square Km of the county. It is found under logs and stones etc, often in large numbers.

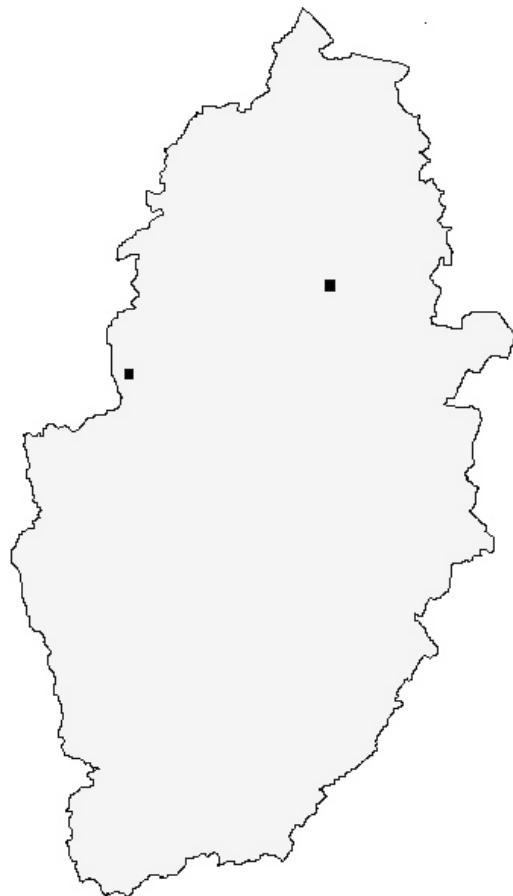
Armadillidium depressum (Brandt, 1833)

A large Woodlouse with the ability to roll into a slightly open ball when threatened. This characteristic is a useful technique in helping to determine identity, but should not be used alone when confirming identification. *Armadillidium depressum* was a surprise find on the wall of Carr Bank Park, on Bath Lane in Mansfield, when found tucked into a small eroded piece of stonework and measured 18mm in length. Has been recorded at the same location since. Generally a Woodlouse of the south-west UK.

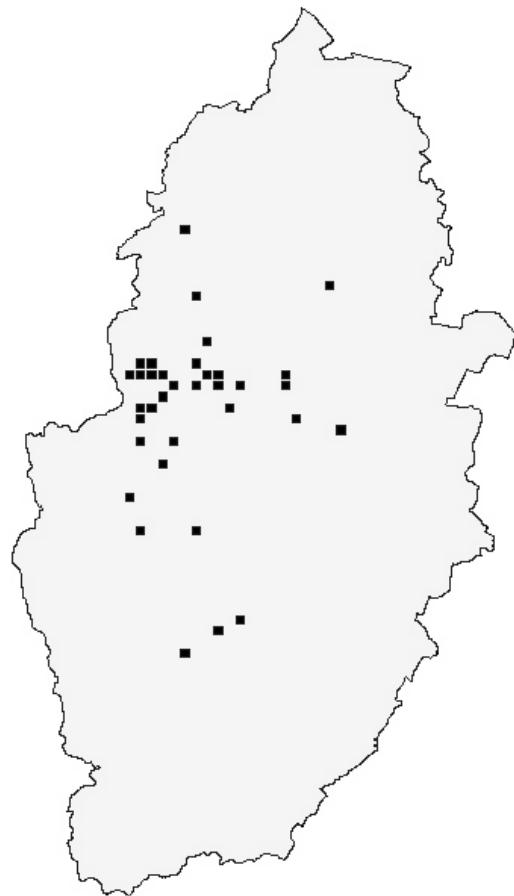
Armadillidium vulgare (Latreille, 1804)

A common Woodlouse which could easily be mistaken for the Pill Millipede (*Glomeris marginata*). It is usually found under logs or stones, but does not seem to be widespread in the county. However, it can be found in small numbers at Warsop Main Pit Top and at many other sites in the Mansfield area.

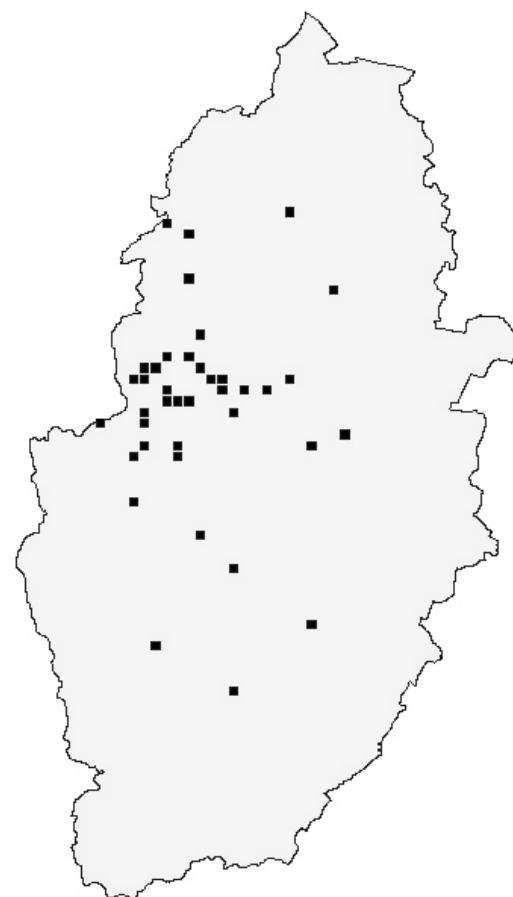
Androniscus dentiger



Trichoniscus pusillus



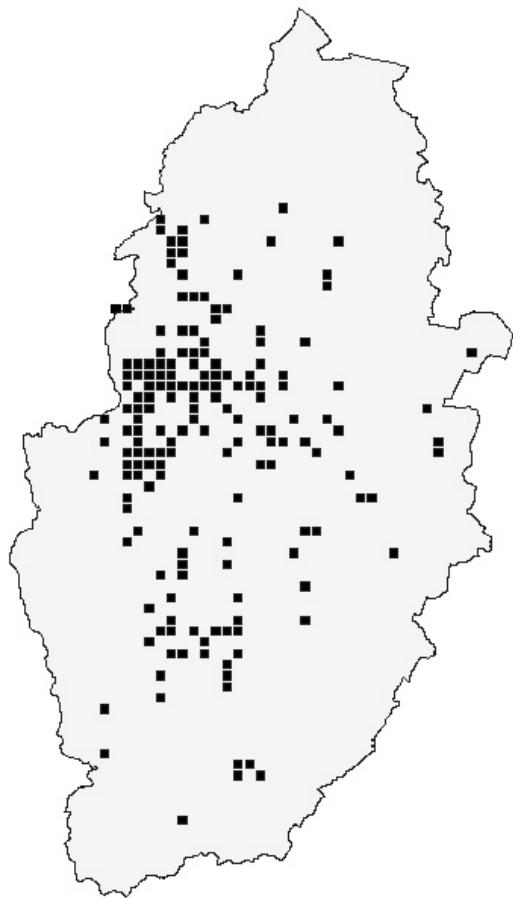
Philoscia muscorum



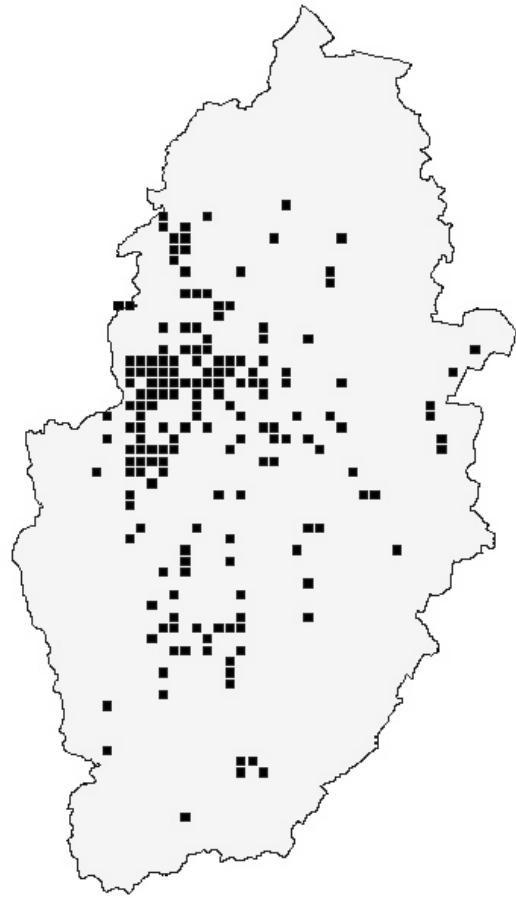
Platyarthrus hoffmannseggii



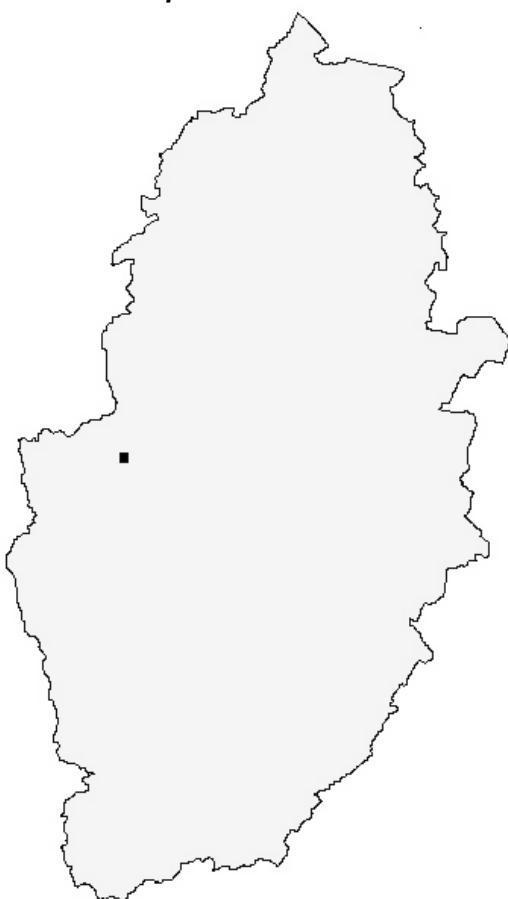
Oniscus asellus ssp. *asellus*



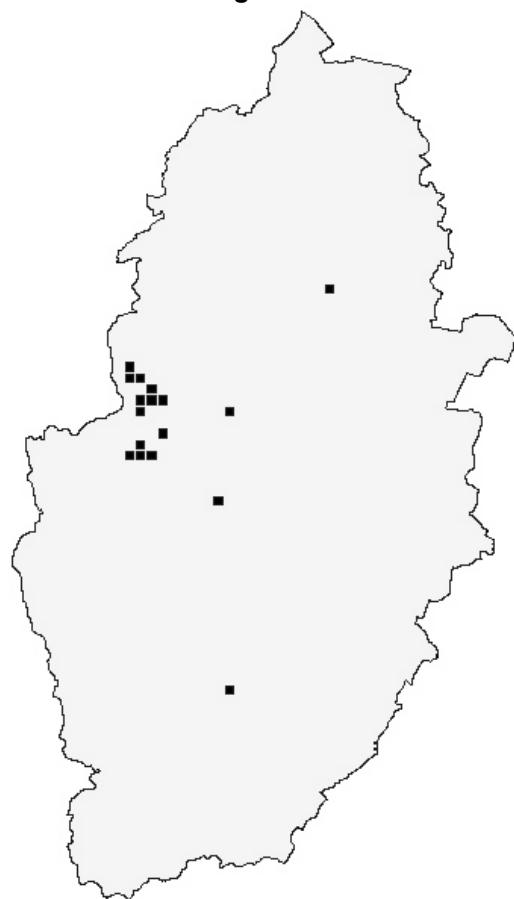
Porcellio scaber



Armadillidium depressum



Armadillidium vulgare



References:

- Carr, J.W. (1916) The Invertebrate Fauna of Nottinghamshire. Nottingham: J.& H. Bell Ltd.
Carr, J.W. (1935) The Invertebrate Fauna of Nottinghamshire. Supplement. Nottingham: J.& H. Bell Ltd.
Gregory, S. (2009) Woodlice and Waterlice (Isopoda: Oniscidea & Asellota) in Britain and Ireland. Field Studies Council/Centre for Ecology & Hydrology.
NBN Gateway