

LAPWG's Beetle Day in Stara Woods. April 28th 2019.

Sadly a rather damp and grey day, no warm sunshine to encourage any basking but even so there were sixteen of us at the start and beetles were found!

Ian McClenaghan and Paul Gainey were the more knowledgeable amongst us and Pauline Penna from the Cornwall Fungus Group joined in as well (and added several more species to the list of Stara's fungi).

We were confident about the Violet Oil Beetles and the Dor Beetles (but which one exactly...?).



Smaller and fast ground beetles (*Nebria brevicollis*?) were scuttling through the leaf litter and Tony found, not unsurprisingly, a bark beetle (*left*) under some bark.

Gill's metallic copper beetle (*right*) found just off the path could have been another kind of ground beetle but needed to be examined under a microscope to ascertain which one, of two species, it could be.

So naming proved slightly frustrating but I was gently reminded that a pocket book on insects containing just 101 pages on the Coleoptera, can hardly do them any justice at all. Volume 4 of the Beetles of Britain & Ireland was published last year for nearly £100 and how many more volumes will there be. We are merely scratching the surface.



Off topic but a nice discovery was a patch of *Sibthorpia europaea*, the Cornish Moneywort, growing alongside some Tunbridge Filmy Fern on the side of Shales Brook.

Photo right, R. Millar



Beetle larva, *left*. Rotting tree stump, *below left*, perfect for beetles.



And just out of interest~

The Dawn Chorus meeting at Stara on May 11th was a perfect dawn and at least 23 people turned up including some relative youngsters which was good.

The chorus proceeded in typical order with Robin at 4:42am followed by Blackbird, Wood Pigeon, Tawny Owl and Song Thrush. The background fizzed with the calls of Goldcrest up in the conifers and Willow Warblers sang from solitary trees at the top. Mistle Thrush joined in from across the valley and a Heron sped up river as we walked back to the bridge at 6:30am when the Dippers were seen.

Breakfast was our reward at Upton Cross!

Thank you to Anne for the breakfasts & Derek for the birds...



Violet oil Beetle, *R. Millar*