

Some time ago I already noticed that almost every specimen, which according to the shape of the third antennal segment clearly could be reckoned to the species *Sympycnus desouteri* Parent, was a male. The shape of this segment is the only feature, on the strength of which Parent separated his species from *S. annulipes* (Meigen). With the males this difference at first seems to be obvious: third antennal segment long and pointed with *annulipes*, short and blunt with *desouteri*. With females the difference is less obvious, although Parent's figures show a distinct difference in length and shape of the antennal segment. All females determined from these figures evidently belonged to *annulipes*, with the exception of a few ones remaining questionable, whereas in a large part of the Netherlands almost only males with short antennae were to be found. Further examination of length and shape of the antennae with tens of males have led me to the conviction that variation is so great, that it is impossible to hold standing two species on the strength of only this feature. The figures (fig. 1-9: ♂, fig. 10, 11 and 12: ♀) in my opinion show that there exists a fairly gradual transition from the extremely long and pointed type (fig. 1) to the extremely short and blunt one (fig. 9). Emeis (1964) uses the term "Artenpaar" and in vain sought to ascertain a distinction in ecological behaviour; in his opinion *annulipes* appears sooner in the year than *desouteri*. From my own notes it appears that both species could have half May as their earliest date of appearance, and the last of September / the beginning of October as their latest date. Collin (1940) states that only *desouteri* occurs in England; further he argues that *Dolichopus pulicarius* Fallén, 1823 is an older name that ought to replace either *annulipes* or *desouteri*. He, too, knows of no other difference but the shape of the antennae already mentioned. In his check-list of the Danish Dolichopodidae Rald (1978: 90) has only one of the two species under the name of *S. pulicarius* (Fall.) (= ? *S. annulipes* (Meig.)).

From all this I conclude that we have to do with only one species having a third antennal segment of a variable shape. This species deserves the name of *Sympycnus pulicarius* (Fallén, 1823).

For the time being it cannot be settled with certainty whether in this species one could distinguish between true subspecies. This can only be ascertained when larger samples from many localities can be compared.

LITERATURE

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RUPSEN VAN CUCULLIA SCROPHULARIAE (DENIS & SCHIFFERMULLER) ETEN BRANDNETEL! (LEP., NOCTUIDAE). In mijn tuin heb ik een flinke plek begroeid met Knopig helmkruid (*Scrophularia nodosa* L.). Elk jaar tref ik omstreeks half juni 10-tallen rupsjes aan van *C. scrophulariae*. Daar deze echter sterk geparasiteerd worden door een kleine sluipwesp, heb ik verschillende jaren de eitjes, als ik die op de planten zag zitten, met plantedelen overgebracht in een kweekkast.

In 1979 deed zich nu het volgende voor. Naast de rupsenkast staat ook Brandnetel. Een 40-tal eieren had ik in de kast op Helmkruid beplaatst. Ik zette er flink wat van de voedselplant op water bij en ging toen met mijn vrouw een week uit logeren. Toen ik acht dagen later thuis kwam bleken de rupsjes flink gegroeid te zijn. Al het eetbare van het Helmkruid was verdwenen en de rupsjes waren nu bezig met het oppeuzelen van de brandnetelbladeren. Ofschoon ik genoeg Helmkruid buiten in de tuin had, heb ik de rupsen tot de verpopping met Brandnetel gevoerd, wat zonder enig verlies verliep.

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