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Biology Curators Group Newsletter

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BOOK REVIEWS

The Moths and Butterflies of Great Britain and Ireland, Volume 2. 460pp including 12 colour plates, 2 monochrome plates and 123 text figures. Edited by J. Heath and A. M. Emmet. Publ. Harley Books, Essex. Price £45.

This is the fourth volume to be published in the series of eleven and includes the families Cossidae to Heliodinidae. The same format is continued with keys to species, illustrations, genitalia details, distribution maps and descriptions and summaries of the biology of each species. Ten different authors have contributed and all are acknowledged experts in their field. The introductory section about the genus Zygaena is especially exhaustive.

Additional useful keys are included to species of Phyllonorycter pupae, species of Zygaena cocoons, Gracillaridae leaf-mines and to families of the sub-order Ditrysia, which include most of our Lepidoptera. This last key very sensibly avoids the use of wing-venation except where absolutely necessary.

Many of the families included have not had up-to-date details published about them for over thirty years; more with some; and the distribution maps of microlepidoptera will be the first details of this kind which most people have seen.

Finally, mention must be made of the fascinating chapter about British Aposematic Lepidoptera by Miriam Rothschild. The discussion of a wide range of defensive colours, chemicals and other strategies is not only very readable, but is packed with facts and ends with an extensive reference list.

I found this to be the most interesting volume yet published due to the inclusion of much new information on little-known families and I look forward to the next volume.

S. P. Garland
25.10.85

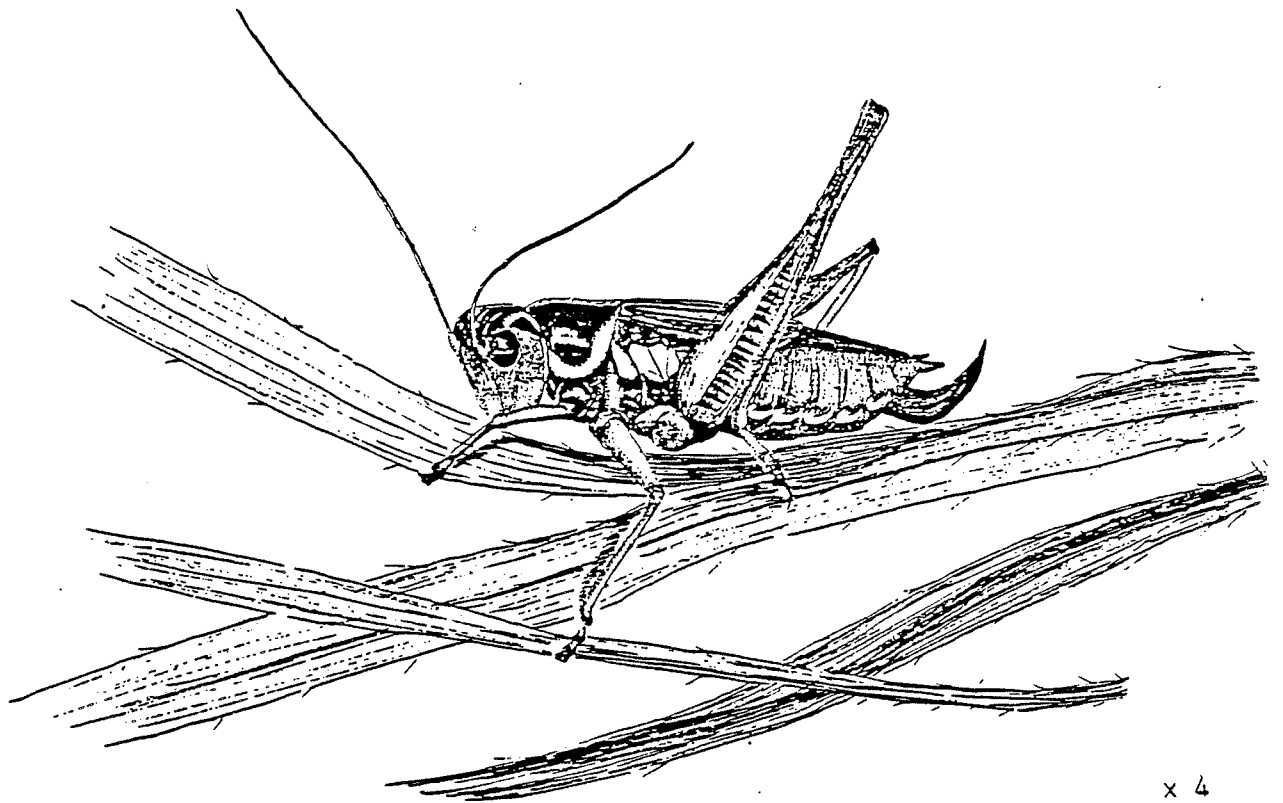
Grasshoppers and Crickets of Essex - A Provisional Atlas
Essex Biological Records Centres Publication No. 3.
Compiled by Alan Wake. A4 size 26 pp.

Yet another useful publication from the Essex group. 10 km² maps and text for each species, and a very useful key to Orthoptera found wild in Essex. Many illustrations, often with pointers to diagnostic identification characters.

The publication as a whole, forms a compact ready reference to the current status of Essex Orthoptera combined with guidance and incentive to record further.

It should appeal to anyone interested in the natural history of Essex, or Orthoptera; and certainly to the general naturalist wishing to get to know this group.

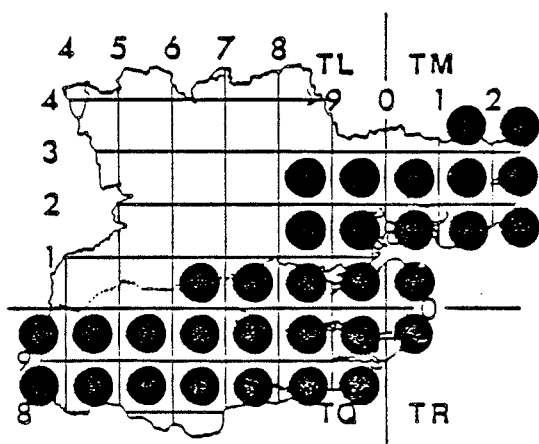
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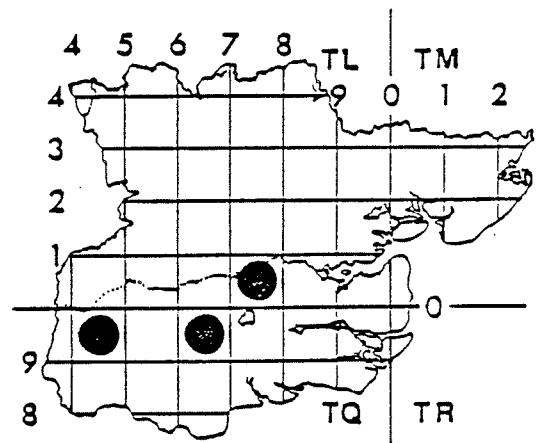
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Metrioptera roeselii - Roesel's Bush Cricket

A medium sized insect with shortish wings and a mixture of green and brown colouration with a yellow underside. There is a long winged (macropterous) form (f. diluta) which does occur in Essex. Prefers long grass in moist areas and is particularly abundant near the sea. It is a very restricted insect in Britain with few records outside north Kent, Essex, Suffolk and Cambridgeshire. Well distributed at least in the eastern half of the county but few records from the north-west.



All Forms



Form Diluta