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A Strategy for Scottish Invertebrate Conservation

by Michael Davidson

For those with an interest in Scottish Invertebrates, the launch of a Strategy for Scottish Invertebrate Conservation on 20th January 2009 was an important event.

The European Strategy for the conservation of invertebrates was published in January 2008. That strategy identified the problems faced by terrestrial invertebrates in Europe and provides guidance to decision makers, land managers, scientists and teachers so that they can raise awareness of invertebrates and promote conservation action for them in countries throughout Europe.

The Scottish Strategy is being supported by a wide range of individuals, voluntary organisations and public bodies, including Scottish Natural Heritage (S.N.H.), Forestry Commission Scotland, Scottish Environment Protection Agency (S.E.P.A.), R.S.P.B. (Scotland), Scottish Wildlife Trust, Buglife – The Invertebrate Conservation Trust, Butterfly Conservation Scotland, Bumblebee Conservation Trust and the John Muir Trust.

Over 1400 Scottish invertebrate species are considered significant to UK biodiversity because they are confined to Scotland. Many others have populations centred in Scotland. Scotland has the best representation of upland species in the UK and is a refuge for species becoming rare or extinct elsewhere in the UK and Europe.

The strategy covers all invertebrates from the sea to mountain tops. The vision of the strategy is for a Scotland in which invertebrates are valued and conserved for their key roles in a healthy environment and for their potential to bring people together to better use, understand and appreciate the natural world. This vision will be achieved through: mobilising expertise and data to ensure important habitats, sites and endangered species are recognised and conserved; and by highlighting through publicity and education the importance of Scottish invertebrates and the conservation issues they face.

The strategy aims to develop a strong and vibrant invertebrate recording community in Scotland through the delivery of workshops on selected invertebrate groups and opportunities to network and learn from others. Protocols

will be developed to ensure that invertebrate information is made available wherever possible, whether through the N.B.N., local record centres or recording schemes and societies. The conservation needs of invertebrates will be promoted through a programme of talks, events and workshops and invertebrate interests will be represented on relevant fora.

The Strategy Document can be accessed via:
www.buglife.org.uk/News/newscottishstrategy.htm

For more information or to request a copy of the strategy please contact: Initiative for Scottish Invertebrates, c/o Buglife Scotland, Balallan House, 24 Allan Park, STIRLING, FK8 2QG. Tel: 01786 447504; e-mail: craig.macadam@buglife.org.uk

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Some Brief Spider Observations from a Recent Trip to Panama

by Ray Gabriel

A specimen of a *Cupiennius* species was observed hunting a *Nephila* species in its web (Fig. 1). The *Nephila* was thought to be aware of the presence of the *Cupiennius* sp. because it was sitting low down near the edge of its web, unlike other *Nephila* specimens which were always observed in the centre of their webs at night.



Figure 1. *Cupiennius* top-left, stalking a *Nephila*, bottom-right, in its web. © Ray Gabriel.

On the same Panama trip a hummingbird was noticed acting strangely around some tall grass near a vertical break in the soil level. On closer inspection some damaged spider web from an undetermined species was found. It is thought that this hummingbird was collecting silk for its nest.

An unidentified pompilid species was observed on the ground under a makeshift shelter in open pastureland. As the pompilid remained in the same area, rather than wandering around, it was thought that this specimen was burying its prey as opposed to the frantic wandering