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**The rediscovery of
Dicyphus pallidus (HERRICH-SCHAFFER, 1835) in Belgium
(Hemiptera, Heteroptera, Miridae, Dicyphinae)"**

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Summary

In material collected by sweepnetting on 25. V/1.1987, two males of Dicyphus pallidus (HERRICH-SCHAFFER, 1835) were discovered. This bug species was only known from two very old records from 1882 and 1886 respectively. However, because of the widespread distribution of its host plant, Stachys sylvatica, it is most probable that Dicyphus pallidus is much more common as is the case in The Netherlands.

Key words: *Dicyphus*, Hemiptera, Miridae, distribution, rediscovery.

Introduction

During recent decades, our knowledge of the distribution of Belgian Heteroptera has increased significantly. Different researchers have produced overviews of the known distribution localities of all families occurring in our country except the Miridae. A bibliographic survey which summarizes this research was published by BOSMANS & MIMCKEN (1989).

Recently we identified material from the Houthulst forest in the Province of Western Flanders, a well investigated area for several invertebrate groups. The material contained amongst other interesting species, two males of *Dicyphus pallidus* (H.-S., 1835), a species not cited since 1886.

Observations and discussion

Heteroptera were collected by sweep netting on several occasions in the forest of Houthulst. This exceptional forest, located in the southern part of the Province of Western Flanders, still has a high ecological value thanks to many years of 'isolation' as a military area. Some aspects of its history and ecological significance have been discussed by ALDERWEIRELDT *et al.* (1993).

The material of *Dicyphus pallidus* was collected by sweepnetting on 25.VII.1987 by M. POLLET. Two males were found. B. AUKEMA (Wageningen, The Netherlands) was so kind to check this identification.

Dicyphus pallidus is only known from two very old records from the previous century. The distribution of the subfamily Dicyphinae has recently been reviewed by BOSMANS & CHÉROT (1995). LETHIERRY (1882) cites the species for the first time for Belgium, however without adding a capture locality. The specimen is preserved in the collection of the Royal Institute of Natural Sciences (KBIN/IRScNB) at Brussels (collection WESMAEL) (see also LETHIERRY, 1892). Hereafter, FOKKER (1886) found the species in Marche-les-Dames (Province of Namur). The material of this record is probably lost.

Our capture at Houthulst, 110 years after the last citation, thus confirms the presence of *Dicyphus pallidus* in Belgium. *Dicyphus pallidus* is a midsize bug measuring approximately 5-7 mm. Wing development is dimorphic. Adults are usually found between July and September. Hibernation occurs in the egg stage (WAGNER, 1952; WAGNER & WEBER, 1964).

The species lives on *Stachys sylvatica* (Bosandoorn, Epière des bois), a plant species which is common and widespread in Belgium (see distribution map in VAN ROMPAEY & DELVOSALLE (1979)). It is therefore surprising that so few records exist of *Dicyphus pallidus* in Belgium.

Data from The Netherlands indicate that the species is common there (B. AUKEMA, personal communication). Records exist from almost all provinces except for the northernmost areas (Friesland, Groningen, Overijssel, Flevoland) (AUKEMA, 1989). This is in agreement with the Central-European distribution indicated by WAGNER (1952). The species is abundant all over Germany and citations exist from all over Central-Europe to the Balkan in the east and Italy in the south.

These data suggest that *Dicyphus pallidus* is most probably also common in Belgium. It is therefore the more surprising that so few previous records exist. This conclusion indicates the poor state of our knowledge of Belgian Heteroptera.

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