

***Mangora acalypha* in VC55**

by Alan Cann

Mangora acalypha is quite common in the south of England but it was first recorded in VC55 (Leicestershire & Rutland) in a garden just outside Leicester in 2021 (Fig. 1). In 2022 it was recorded on Gorse at a second site just a few miles away from the first site. However the 2023 season (to date – August) has seen a remarkable spread with this relatively distinctive spider being recorded on shrubs and grassland in all corners of the vice-county (11 records from 9 sites) (Fig. 2). It seems that *Mangora acalypha* has joined the legions of species currently undergoing a north-westerly range expansion.



Figure 1. *Mangora acalypha*, female specimen.
© Alan Cann.

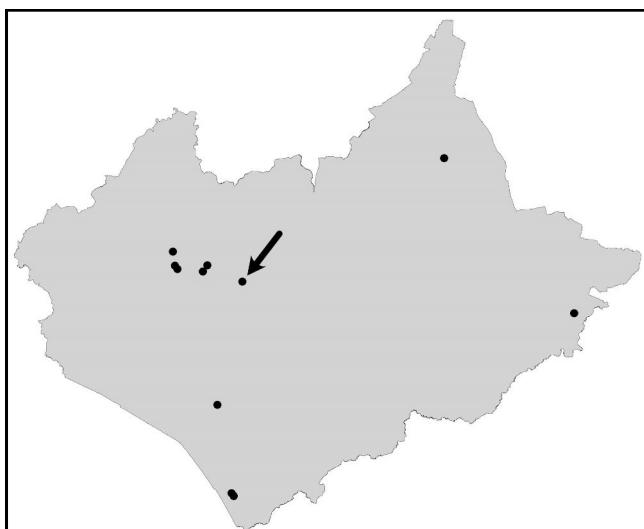


Figure 2. VC55 distribution of *Mangora acalypha*.
Original recorded location indicated by arrow. © Alan Cann.

E-mail: alan.cann@gmail.com

***Badumna longinqua* (L. Koch, 1867) an Australian Spider Established Outside in Britain**

by Richard Gallon

Garden Centres have become popular places for recorders to visit. Previously they were the go-to place to find *Uloborus plumipes* and *Parasteatoda tepidariorum*, but diligent recorders are now observing a growing number of non-native spider species at these locations. Many of these finds are of single specimens which fail to establish breeding populations. However a few have been more successful and are now turning up more regularly. Many of these are hot-house species which are climatically constrained to living within heated buildings and glasshouses, so are currently unlikely to become established outdoors in the UK climate. However, *Badumna longinqua* (L. Koch, 1867) the Grey House Spider is a notable exception.

Badumna longinqua is native to eastern Australia, but has been accidentally introduced to New Zealand, USA, Hawaii, Mexico, Brazil, Uruguay, Chile, Argentina, South Africa, Germany, Holland and Japan (Nentwig *et al.*, 2023, World Spider Catalog, 2023). In Holland and Germany it is still considered a hot-house species.

Badumna longinqua appears to have been first recorded in Britain in ~2021 with observations from Nottinghamshire (Eakringbirds 2023) and Plymouth, both associated with garden centres. Records have since been made in Sussex, Cornwall, Newcastle, Sunderland and Neath (T. Berry, G. Lyons, J. McGill, G. Tansley pers. comms.). These recent records have demonstrated that *B. longinqua* is no longer a hot-house species in Britain and is fully capable of living outside in the UK climate as a synanthropic spider.

I first observed this spider, or at least its distinctive web (Fig. 1), in Exeter (SX91949199) on 23rd December 2022. The web was slung across a metal lamp post, and I took James McGill and Nicola Bacciu to see it the following evening. They both agreed with the identification based on their familiarity with the species at its Plymouth location. James described the *Badumna* web as looking like laddered tights or an *Amaurobius* web suspended in midair – which is a very good description.

Guy Tansley recently (15th August 2023) visited the Newcastle population and took photos of the webs. He told me it was extremely common in the garden there,



Figure 1. *Badumna longinqua* web in Exeter.
© Richard Gallon.



Figure 2. *Badumna longinqua* webs on a bird box and metal bracket outdoors in a Newcastle garden.
© Guy Tansley.



Figure 3. *Badumna longinqua* female, Newcastle.
© Guy Tansley.



Figure 4. *Badumna longinqua* female, Newcastle.
© Richard Gallon.

with webs festooning fences and wooden garden structures (Figs. 2–5). The garden's owner also mentioned that this spider is present at her mother's garden in Sunderland.

Newcastle and Sunderland are considered particularly cold parts of England, so it is highly likely that *B. longinqua* will become a ubiquitous synanthropic spider across lowland Britain in time.

Please look out for this species and submit your records to the SRS. Tylan Berry reckons this species could already be well established across Britain, so it's time to pay more attention to those '*Amaurobius*' webs!

References

- Eakingbirds 2023. Online at <http://www.eakingbirds.com/eakingbirds3/arachnidsinfocusbadumnaalonginqua.htm>
- Nentwig, W., Blick, T., Bosmans, R., Gloor, D., Hänggi, A. & Kropf, C. 2023. Spiders of Europe. Version 11.2023. Online at <https://www.araneae.nmbe.ch>, accessed on 20/11/2023. <https://doi.org/10.24436/1>.
- World Spider Catalog 2023. World Spider Catalog. Version 24.5. Natural History Museum Bern, online at <http://wsc.nmbe.ch>, accessed on 20/11/2023. doi: 10.24436/2

E-mail: rgallon47@gmail.com



Figure 5. *Badumna longinqua* web slung across an outdoor wooden bird table in a Newcastle garden.
© Guy Tansley.

Book now for the 2024 BAS Field Weekend to mid-Wales

by Richard Gallon

The BAS is delighted to announce that we'll be holding our next annual field weekend at Gregynog near Newtown in mid-Wales (Friday 31st May to Sunday 2nd June 2024).

Mid-Wales has traditionally been a poorly recorded part of Britain. With hardly any resident arachnologists the few recent records from the region have largely been made by visitors passing through.

Gregynog is an attractive timber-framed mansion set in ancient parkland. With ample recording opportunities on site and within close proximity to the venue we are bound to find some interesting species.

Venue

Gregynog
www.gregynog.org

Dates

31st May (Friday late afternoon) to 2nd June (midday Sunday) 2024

Cost

£245.40 (a £50 deposit paid to the BAS Treasurer is required by 1st April 2024 to secure your place). The price includes your accommodation and evening meals (Friday and Saturday nights), breakfast (Saturday & Sunday), packed lunch (Saturday & Sunday). There is a bar and events room on site. Microscope identification sessions, evening lectures and fieldwork are planned.

Railway

The nearest railway station is at Newtown, 7 km south of the venue. We can arrange lifts to-from the railway station for those traveling by train.

Parking

There is carparking on site, including two charge points for those with electric vehicles.

Please visit Gregynog's website for more details about other facilities (Gardens, Cafe, Library).

We are currently limited to 20 places (although we might be able to increase this if needed, but I'd suggest you book early to secure your place).

To book onto the BAS Field Weekend please contact Richard Gallon (rgallon47@gmail.com), stating your dietary requirements (vegetarian, vegan etc.) and any allergies you need to make catering staff aware of.

Remember we also have BAS grants available to help fund the attendance of student members etc., so please consider applying should you need financial assistance to attend. Please contact BAS Secretary Geoff Oxford (secretary@britishspiders.org.uk) if you wish to apply for such a grant.