

***Palloptera muliebris* (Diptera: Pallopteridae): a rare Scottish occurrence**

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On 15th September 2018, I came across a specimen of *Palloptera muliebris* (Harris, [1780]) in a covered stairway at High Street station, Glasgow (NS598651). The sinuous markings on the wings are distinctive, and the fly was displaying the "wing-waving" characteristic of members of the superfamily Tephritoidea.

This species (Fig. 1) seems to be rather rare in Scotland: there are no records north of Carlisle in the National Biodiversity Network (NBN) Atlas for the U.K. and Ireland (National Biodiversity Network, 2018), nor were any Scottish records known to the relevant national recording scheme (D. Clements, pers. comm.). However, there are records from Bridge of Allan (Rotheray & Lyszkowski, 2012) and subsequently from Dunblane (G.E. Rotheray, pers. comm.; date not given).



Fig. 1. *Palloptera muliebris* (female). Scalebar = 5 mm. (Photo: S. Falk; all rights reserved; see Falk, 2018)

Often "new records" turn out to reflect under-recording rather than previous absence, in this case perhaps because the fly, although distinctive, is rather small, being about 5 mm in length (Fig. 1). Rotheray describes difficulties in capturing adult *Palloptera* species, however, which would suggest that they may be genuinely under-recorded (Rotheray, 2014). The question also arises as to why *P. muliebris* might appear indoors in central Glasgow. The larvae of *Palloptera*

species are probably mostly saprophagous (Rotheray, 2014), and the larvae of *P. muliebris* have been reported in association with beetle larvae, possibly feeding on detritus in the beetle tunnels or under bark (Séguy, 1934), although it has also been suggested that they may actually be predatory on bark-beetle (Scolytidae) larvae themselves (Chandler, 1991). Adults of the species frequently occur indoors, however, where they may be feeding either on the detritus or larvae of carpet beetles (Dermestidae) (Jones, 2016; D. Clements, pers. comm.). There is a woodland strip along the railway east of High Street station, which might generate suitable substrates for saprophagous larval feeding. More likely scenarios include the possibility that larvae were imported with plant material used in landscaping a nearby building development - rosemary beetles *Chrysolina americana* (Chrysomelidae) occurred in an earlier planting there (pers. obs.) - or that the adult may simply have been blown in on the strong winds that had occurred shortly before the sighting.

The sighting is now on the NBN Atlas as the only Scottish record.

I am grateful to Geoff Hancock for verifying the identity of the specimen, to Graham Rotheray for details of the previous Scottish records, and to David Clements for background information. The specimen has been added to the Hunterian Museum collection.

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