

ARTHIPODS FROM ROMAN AND POST-ROMAN DEPOSITS AT 199 BOROUGH HIGH STREET,
SOUTHWARK, LONDON

Maureen A Girling
Ancient Monument Laboratory

Arthropods recovered from samples collected during the excavation of 199 Borough High Street were submitted to the Ancient Monuments Laboratory. The deposits were mainly pit infills but ditches, earth spreads and wells were also sampled. The earliest deposits are from pre-early Flavian Romano-British contexts dated to about 50-70 AD. Medieval and post Medieval layers were also collected, the most recent material dated at about 17th or 18th Century.

The arthropods are preserved either as almost intact cuticle, as in the case of all Coleoptera (beetles) and some of the Dipterous puparia (fly maggots), or as partially replaced calcium carbonate fossils. The latter group includes all Isopoda (woodlice), Diplopoda (millipedes) and many of the puparia. Calcification is an important process in hardwater districts as it leads to the preservation of relatively soft bodied arthropods, particularly isopods, which do not survive under normal conditions. The replacement of arthropods by CaCO_3 has been discussed elsewhere by the author (Girling 1979).

The list of species from these samples is based upon Kloet and Hincks 1977 for Coleoptera, and totals for each taxon are based upon a minimum count of common skeletal elements. Calcification is denoted by an asterisk. A list of arthropods occurring in each context is given as an appendix.

Species List

INSECTA

COLEOPTERA

Carabidae	
Dromius sp.	1
Hydrophilidae	
<u>Cercyon unipunctatus</u> (L.)	1
<u>Cercyon</u> spp.	3
Leiostomatidae	
<u>Choleva</u> or <u>Catops</u> sp.	1

Species list Continued

COLEOPTERA CONTINUED

Staphylinidae	
<u>Anotylus</u> sp.	1
<u>Quedius</u> sp.	3
Scarabaeidae	
<u>Onthophagus</u> sp.	1
Cetoniinae <u>indet.</u>	1
Elateridae	
Gen. et sp. <u>indet.</u>	1
Throscidae	
<u>Trixagus</u> sp.	1
Anobiidae	
<u>Anobium punctatum</u> (Deg.)	1
Lathridiidae	
<u>Enicmus minutus</u> group	1
Bruchidae	
<u>Bruchus</u> sp.	1
Chrysomelidae	
<u>Plateumaris</u> sp.	1
Gen. et sp. <u>indet.</u>	1
Apionidae	
<u>Apion</u> sp.	1

DIPTERA

* <u>Puparia</u> <u>indet.</u>	numerous
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DIPLOPODA

*Polydesmidae <u>indet.</u>	6
*Diplopoda <u>indet.</u>	38

ISOPODA

Oniscidae	
* <u>Oniscus asellus</u> L.	1
Porcellionidae	
* <u>Metoponorthus pruinus</u> (Brandt)	1
* <u>Porcellio scaber</u> Lat.	10
Armadillidiidae	
* <u>Armadillidium vulgare</u> (Lat.)	3
* <u>Armadillidium</u> sp.	3
*Isopoda <u>indet.</u> (juvenile)	4

FISH

Misc bones

Faunal Implications

In most cases the list of taxa occurring in each sample is too limited to be of value in environmental interpretation. The presence of puparia in most of the samples, and their high numbers in samples 57 and 60 (infills of medieval and/or post medieval pits) suggests the presence of rotting organic matter. This pabulum is further suggested by the beetle fauna from sample 57, which also includes an example of Anobium punctatum, the woodworm. The millipedes and woodlice found in the samples occur in a variety of habitats including decaying vegetation and under bark and stones. The woodlice species are fairly synanthropic and are frequently associated with dwellings or the surrounding disturbed ground (Sutton 1972). The early record of Metoponorthus pruinosis is significant as it is thought to be a naturalised species. Its occurrence in Roman Britain might suggest that it is native to this country although the species could be an accidental Roman import perhaps carried in animal bedding.

References

- Girling, MA (1979) Calcium carbonate - replaced arthropods from archaeological deposits. Journal of Archaeological Science. (in press).
- Kloet, GS and Hincks, WD (1977) A Check List of British Insects. Coleoptera and Strepsiptera. (Rev Pope 1977) Royal Entomological Society: London.
- Sutton, SL (1972) Woodlice. Ginn and Co: London.

APPENDIX

Sample 18, XXI 19 Fill of ditch 3, mid C1

COLEOPTERA

Carabidae

Dromius sp.

Elateridae

Gen. et sp. indet.

Trixagidae

Trixagus sp.

Scarabaeidae

Onthophagus sp.

Chrysomelidae

Plateumaris sp.

Curculionidae

Apion sp.

Sample 29, III 21 Primary fill of ditch 4, mid C1

INSECTA

DIPTERA

Puparia 12

ISOPODA

Porcellio scaber 1

Metoponorthus pruinosis 2

Oniscus asellus 1

Sample 35, I 29 Fill of mid C1 pit

INSECTA

DIPTERA

Puparia 19

Sample 38, I 14 'green layer' mid C1 earth spread

INSECTA

DIPTERA

Puparium 1

Sample 39, I 44, Fill of ditch 2, mid C1

INSECTA

Scarabaeidae

Cetoniinae indet. 1

Chrysomelidae

Gen. et sp. indet. 1

Sample 80, III/XIV 30 (XIV) Well silt, mid C1

INSECTA

DIPTERA

Puparia 22

ISOPODA

Armadillidium sp. 1

Sample 64, XII 47 Well silt (different layer from 80), mid C1

DIPTERA

Puparia 2

Sample 65, XI 17 Fill of ditch 2, mid C1

DIPLOPODA	
Polydesmidae indet.	2
INSECTA	
DIPTERA	
Puparia	11

Sample 70, XXI 11 Fill of C13 chalk-lined cess pit

DIPTERA	
Puparia	219

Sample 25, VIII 5A Fill of C14 pit

ISOPODA	
<u>Porcellio scaber</u>	1

Sample 66, VII/VIII 3 Fill of C14 pit

INSECTA	
DIPTERA	
Puparia	14

ISOPODA	
<u>Porcellio scaber</u>	2

DIPLOPODA	
Polydesmidae indet.	1

Sample 75, VIII 5^c Fill of C14 pit

INSECTA	
DIPTERA	
Puparia	8

ISOPODA	
<u>Porcellio scaber</u>	6
<u>Armadillidium vulgare</u>	2
<u>indet. juvenile</u>	1

DIPLOPODA	
Polydesmidae <u>indet.</u>	2
Diplopoda indet.	5

Sample 57, XVI 17, Fill of C14 pit

INSECTA	
COLEOPTERA	
Hydrophilidae	
<u>Cercyon unipunctatus L.</u>	1
<u>Cercyon spp.</u>	3
Silphidae	
<u>Catops</u> or <u>Choleva</u> sp.	1
Staphylinidae	
<u>Anotylus</u> sp.	1
<u>Quedius</u> sp.	2
Lathridiidae	
<u>Enicmus minutus</u> group	1

Sample 57 continued

Anobiidae	
<u>Anobium punctatum</u> (Deg.)	1
Bruchidae	
<u>Bruchus</u> sp.	1
DIPTERA	
Puparia	82
DIPLOPODA	
Polydesmidae <u>indet.</u>	1
ISOPODA	
<u>Gen. et sp. indet.</u>	1

Sample 69, XXIII 43 Medieval pit

DIPTERA	
Puparia	1

Sample 56, XVI 23 Fill of early brick-lined cess pit

INSECTA	
DIPTERA	
Puparia	29
DIPLOPODA	
<u>Gen. et sp. indet.</u>	1

Sample 60, XV 2/4 Fill of Medieval or Post Medieval pit

75-1-60	
INSECTA	
COLEOPTERA	
Staphylinidae	
<u>Quedius</u> sp.	1
DIPTERA	
Puparia	10
ISOPODA	
<u>Armadillidium vulgare</u>	1

Sample 67, XV 9 Post medieval pit, probable C17-18

DIPTERA	
Puparia	4

Sample 72, XXI B2

DIPLOPODA	
<u>Gen. et sp. indet.</u>	2