

## OBITUARY

### **'The Great' Cedric Collingwood: an appreciation**

By Simon Hoy (SH), Phil Attewell (PA), Torstein Kvamme (TK) and Jonathan Hughes (JH)



It was with much sadness that BWARS reported in its last Newsletter the death of world-renowned ant expert Cedric Collingwood. Cedric died on 11<sup>th</sup> September 2016 following injuries sustained in a fall at his home in Skipton. He had reached the age of 97 but his passing still came as a shock to many of his friends who had an, albeit unrealistic, sense of him going on forever.

In Cedric's library was subsequently found a copy of the book 'The Hundred-Year Old Man Who Climbed out of the Window and Disappeared' (by Jonas Jonasson, 2009). It is a shame that Cedric did not quite make that milestone as he still had so much to give, not just to the world of myrmecology but to his many friends and family. Despite failing mobility and eyesight, which bothered him because he found identifying ants more difficult, Cedric's memory and intellect remained formidable and he was still drafting papers on ants up until last year. He also continued to travel widely, having only recently returned from visiting his son Ben and family in Japan.

Cedric was born in Lewisham in 1919 to his English father, Lawrance Arthur Collingwood (CBE), a composer and respected conductor, and his Russian mother Annie. Cedric had three siblings, Andrew, Marianna and Francesca and he is survived by a number of nieces and nephews - as well as by Ben and his granddaughter, Mio.

Whilst he was christened Cedric Alexei Collingwood, partly in respect of his Russian ancestry, Cedric's middle name was often shortened to Alex. Later in life Cedric also found his first name abbreviated to the familiar 'Ced' by those close to him, although he never used this himself. Cedric fondly attributed his cast iron constitution to a certain 'hybrid vigour' but he probably did inherit good genes from his parents who both lived into their 90s.

Cedric grew up in Middlesex and later in Surrey. As with many young myrmecologists he developed an early interest in the ants (and beetles) living in his garden and the surrounding heaths and woodlands. Cedric's long life meant that he had memories of many of the classic names of British myrmecology; he often recalled some of the early pioneers such as Derek Wragge-Morley and Horace Donisthorpe - with whom he corresponded.

If ever Donisthorpe had a worthy successor as the doyen of British myrmecology, then Cedric must surely have been that. Partly through Cedric, each of us was also afforded early introductions to many of the other notable experts in the field, such as Mike Brian, Barry Bolton and Graham Elmes.

Cedric's interest in the natural world, and ants in particular, clearly stayed with him and influenced his education and career. He followed a scientific path, gaining a first class Diploma in Pest and Diseases in Agriculture followed by a BSc in Plant Pathology from London University in 1941. He became an Assistant Entomologist at Harper Adams Agricultural College from 1941 to 1946, then joined the Ministry of Agriculture Fisheries and Food as an entomologist working for their National Agricultural Advisory Service (NAAS). Cedric stayed with NAAS, moving around various regional offices, then lastly on to Lawnswood in Leeds where he worked as Regional Entomologist for the Agricultural Development and Advisory Service. He retired in 1982 as a Principal Scientific Officer and took up a Senior Research Associate position at the City Museum, Leeds. Cedric was very grateful for his Civil Service pension which provided him with sufficient funds to enable the pursuit of ants around the world.

Cedric's work with NAAS had offered the opportunity of travel and wherever he found himself, Cedric set about investigating the local ant fauna. There were few if any parts of the British Isles that Cedric had not explored for ants at some point. His recollection of where he'd seen particular species was amazing and this often proved invaluable when trying to rediscover them later. Along with numerous works on agricultural pests, Cedric produced some of his earliest papers on ants in the 1950s, for example:

Collingwood, C. A. (1950). *Formica sanguinea* Latr. in the Forest of Dean. *Entomologist's Record*, 62: 91.

Collingwood, C. A. (1951). The distribution of ants in north-west Scotland. *Scottish Naturalist* 63: 45-49.

Collingwood, C. A. (1953). Ants in Galloway. *Entomologist's Record*, 65: 297-298.

Collingwood, C. A. (1955). Ants in the South Midlands. *Entomologist's Gazette*, 6: 143-149.

Collingwood, C. A., Satchell J. E. (1956). The ants of the South Lake District. *Journal of the Society of British Entomology*, 5: 159-164.

Once Cedric started writing papers there was clearly no stopping him and he normally produced between two and six short articles or longer ant reports every year and in every decade from the 1950s right through to the 2010s. He also started exploring further afield for example:

Collingwood, C.A. (1956). Ant hunting in France. *Entomologist*, 89: 105-108.

Collingwood, C.A. (1958). A survey of Irish Formicidae. *Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy*, 59 (B): 213-219.

Collingwood, C.A. (1959). Scandinavian ants. *Entomologist's Record*, 71: 77-83.

Collingwood, C.A. (1961). Ants in Finland. *Entomologist's Record*, 73: 190–195

Collingwood, C. A. (1963). Three ant species new to Norway. *Entomologist's Record*, 75: 225-228.

These last papers indicate a developing and ultimately long-lasting connection that Cedric had with Scandinavia and its ant fauna. One of his crowning achievements was the subsequent publication of:

Collingwood, C. A. (1979). The Formicidae (Hymenoptera) of Fennoscandia and Denmark. *Fauna Entomol. Scand.* 8: 1-174.

Despite a few taxonomic revisions since 1979, this became one of the standard European reference keys as it also covers most of the British and northern European species. Cedric often used to visit his good friends Colin Wheatley in Sweden and TK in Norway. TK recalls many wonderful days spent collecting ants with Cedric, as well as his general conviviality. Cedric was an easy person to get along with and to share an evening of good food, good wine (or whisky) and long stories - always with good humour.

Cedric's knowledge of ants soon extended well beyond Europe; in 1960 he wrote:

Collingwood, C. A. (1960). The third Danish Expedition to Central Asia, Zoological Results 27: Formicidae (Insects) from Afghanistan. *Vidensk Meddr. Dansk Naturh. Foren.* 123: 9-79.

This was followed by:

Collingwood, C. A. (1970). Formicidae (Hymenoptera: Aculeata) of Nepal. *Himalaya Khumbu Himal.* 3, 371-388.

Collingwood, C. A. (1976). Ants (Hymenoptera: Formicidae) from North Korea. *Ann. Hist.-Nat. Mus. Natl. Hung.* 68: 295-309.

Collingwood, C. A. (1982). Himalayan ants of the genus *Lasius* (Hymenoptera: Formicidae). *Syst. Entomol.* 7: 283-296.

One of Cedric's work assignments was to lead the International Cocoa Capsid Research Team in West Africa (Ghana and Nigeria) from 1968 to 1971. Whilst in Ghana he met fellow myrmecologist Barry Bolton with whom he collaborated on early studies of African ants, particularly those living in cocoa plantations. Cedric's final post from 1993-94 was as a Senior Research Associate at North Carolina State University which enabled him to explore the nearctic ant fauna in more detail.

In retirement Cedric went on to write papers on ants from around the world, including the Balkans and China, but two areas that took his particular interest were Arabia and Iberia. Here he increasingly collaborated with other researchers, producing a number of notable works including:

Collingwood, C. A. (1985). Hymenoptera: Fam. Formicidae of Saudi Arabia. *Fauna Saudi Arab.* 7: 230-302.

Collingwood, C. A., Van Harten, A. (1994). A general guide to the ants of Yemen. *Sana'a: Yemeni-German Plant Protection Project*. 39 pp.

Collingwood, C. A., Agosti, D. (1996). Formicidae (Insecta: Hymenoptera) of Saudi Arabia (part 2). *Fauna Saudi Arab*. 15: 300-385.

Collingwood, C. A., Agosti, D., Sharaf, M. R., Van Harten, A. (2011). Order Hymenoptera, family Formicidae. *Arthropod Fauna of the UAE*. 4: 405-474.

Sharaf, M. R., Collingwood C. A., Aldawood A. S. (2015). Notes on the ant genus *Cataglyphis* Foerster, 1850 (Hymenoptera, Formicidae) in the Arabian Peninsula with description of a new species and a key to the species of the *C. pallida*-group. *ZooKeys*. 545: 101-117.

One interesting new species described in the 2011 UAE paper by Collingwood & Van Harten was *Lepisiota elegantissima* and Cedric would often remark on its aptly named elegance (see Fig. 11).



Fig. 11: *Lepisiota elegantissima*, Collingwood & Van Harten, 2011. (Photo Phil Attewell)

On the Iberian fauna, Cedric first collaborated with another British myrmecologist, Ian Yarrow, to produce:

Collingwood, C.A., Yarrow, I.H.H. (1969). A survey of Iberian Formicidae (Hymenoptera). *Eos*, 44: 53-101.

This was then followed by a number of keys and guides, including:

Collingwood, C. A. (1978). A provisional list of Iberian Formicidae with a key to the worker caste (Hym. Aculeata). *EOS. Rev. Esp. Entomol*. 52: 65-95.

Collingwood, C. A. (1991). Especies raras de hormigas del género *Lasius* en España (Hymenoptera, Formicidae). *Boletín de la Asociación Española de Entomología*. 15: 215-219.

Collingwood, C. A., Prince, A. (1998). A guide to ants of continental Portugal (Hymenoptera: Formicidae). *Bol. Soc. Port. Entomol. Supl*. 5: 1-49.

Many subsequent collaborations followed on Iberian ants, particularly with Andrés de Haro and Xavier Espadaler. At their 'Taxomara' conference in 2007, Cedric was honoured for his contribution to descriptions of the Iberian fauna by the Asociación Ibérica de Mirmecología (AIM). It is currently still possible to witness the warm welcome Cedric received in the many photos of this occasion on the AIM web forum at: [www.lamarabunta.org/viewtopic.php?f=1&p=255635](http://www.lamarabunta.org/viewtopic.php?f=1&p=255635).

Despite its paucity of ant species, the one part of the world that Cedric never failed to appreciate was Great Britain. He had a particular love of Scotland (where he had a cottage and some of his family had moved), the Lake District and Yorkshire - which he made his true home. Indeed one reason he chose to finally settle in Skipton was because of its accessibility to the Dales, Moors, Lake District - and because it was "half way to Scotland". Whilst his friends and relatives were scattered the length of Britain, Cedric was famously intrepid in his travels. He thought nothing of jumping in his car at short notice and driving for hours over very long distances to see people, or simply to take visitors on ant-hunting trips. Car journeys with Cedric were always a slightly hair-raising and legendary experience and maybe its as well that he finally gave this up in his 80s. However, he would still catch a bus, train or plane to travel anywhere in the world - often with few belongings but his woolly hat, walking stick, some collecting pots and a hand lens.

It was on one such trip to Scotland that the new world of myrmecology opened up to a ten-year-old JH as he stared at wood ants through Cedric's hand lens and was fascinated by his explanations of their key role in Caledonian pinewood ecology. Ten years later JH co-authored his first ever scientific paper with Cedric on ants in Yorkshire:

Collingwood, C. A., Hughes, J. 1987. Ant species in Yorkshire. *The Naturalist*. 112: 95-101.

In no small part, these early introductions to the natural world and landscapes around Cedric's cottage at Loch Tay in Perthshire led eventually to JH becoming Chief Executive of the Scottish Wildlife Trust. He remains deeply indebted to Cedric for his transformational influence as a lifelong mentor, friend and father-figure.

For further memories, see the article 'Bitten by Ants' available at: [http://www.jamiemurraygrant.co.uk/articles/bitten\\_by\\_ants/](http://www.jamiemurraygrant.co.uk/articles/bitten_by_ants/)

Cedric wrote his first key to British ants in 1964, the second part of which was co-authored with Keith Barrett - original co-ordinator of the Biological Records Centre's national ant recording scheme and 'Ant Atlas':

Collingwood, C. A. (1964a). The identification and distribution of British ants. 1. A revised key to the species found in Britain. *Transactions of the Society for British Entomology*. 16: 93-114.

Collingwood, C. A., Barrett, K. E. J. (1964b). The identification and distribution of British ants. 2. The vice-county distribution of indigenous ants in the British Isles. *Transactions of the Society for British Entomology*. 16: 114-121.

Subsequently Cedric renewed his collaboration with Barry Bolton to produce:

Bolton, B., Collingwood, C. A. (1975). Handbooks for the identification of British Insects.

Hymenoptera, Formicidae. *Handbooks for the Identification of British Insects*. 6( 3(c)): 1-34.

He was still writing such keys late in life, revising an earlier 1971 paper in 2012 with...

Collingwood, C. A. (2012). The Formicidae of North Europe. *Entomologist's Monthly Magazine*. 148: 1-13.

These keys became an entry point in to the study of ants for us (PA & SH) as budding myrmecologists. It was when trying to fathom some of the comparative characters used in them that a keen but clueless undergraduate SH went to meet Cedric at his home in Skipton, copy of Bolton & Collingwood in hand - not knowing what 'longer', 'shorter', 'more rugose' actually meant. He was sent off with a much better understanding of ant taxonomy, a small reference collection of British ants - and a new friend for life.

PA had first corresponded with Cedric in 1969 regarding his earlier ant key. He treasures one memory of a foray together with Cedric at Gore Heath, Dorset, in May 2011. This site was notable for having been the last known British locality of *Formica pratensis* and Cedric, by then 92, was keen to see a wood ant nest there which displayed '*pratensis*-like behaviour'. A favourite photo of Cedric shows him standing over that nest on Gore Heath, in characteristic upright pose, smartly-dressed and with trusty stick in hand (Fig. 12).

Fig. 12: Cedric Collingwood at Gore Heath, 2011. (Photo Phil Attewell)



The references included above are just a snapshot of the many articles and papers on ants (around 130) that Cedric wrote or contributed to - see links below. This is along with over 50 papers on agricultural/horticultural pests or pesticides and 13 papers or collecting notes on British Coleoptera. In all of Cedric's myrmecological papers, you can tell that they are written by someone who was a true naturalist and who understood the ecology and behaviour of ants - not just their taxonomy. Cedric would often discuss the many taxonomic revisions and uncertainties which are a constant feature of myrmecology. Even with common and supposedly well known species of *Lasius*, *Formica* and *Myrmica*, Cedric sometimes had to acknowledge that things weren't always as we once thought, yet he would gracefully tread a fine line between the 'lumpers' and the 'splitters' of taxonomy. Although very much a morphological taxonomist, Cedric was equally

fascinated by modern techniques of allozyme and genetic determination and what new or crypto species it could reveal. He had a well learned maxim of never assuming anything, especially where ants were concerned, and you could always be guaranteed a lively debate by asking him; "So Cedric, what in your view IS a species exactly?" In particular, the taxonomy of the familiar wood ants (*Formica rufa* and its affiliates) was something Cedric would often raise as a perpetual problem. He was though, always very happy to receive the thoughts and clarifications of co-workers such as Bernhard Seifert on such matters. On hearing of his death, Bernhard recalled with great appreciation how Cedric had supported him in East Germany during the long years of isolation before the Iron Curtain was drawn.

Along with his interest in ants, Cedric retained a love of the classical music which his father had instilled in him. He was also fond of trips to see an opera or stage play and he joined a local choral group. Cedric was a supporter of many entomological and natural history societies, amongst others he was a Fellow of the Royal Entomological Society (FRES), member of the International Union for the Study of Social Insects (IUSSI), the British Entomological and Natural History Society (BENHS), the Yorkshire Naturalist's Union (YNU) and, of course, the Bees Wasps and Ants Recording Society (BWARS).

Often though, Cedric would like nothing more than a game of chess and some stimulating conversation. Even though we had each known him for over 30 years, Cedric always had the air of an elderly gentleman. Having been around for so long, he'd seen a lot of life and was never short of a story to tell. He was indeed a gentle man, a charming man and surprisingly modern and liberal in his outlook and beliefs. He was a committed humanitarian who thought himself lucky to have enjoyed a comfortable upbringing and he regretted that, through no fault of their own, many did not have the same opportunities to realise their potential. Cedric was generous (occasionally to a fault), loyal and always looked for the best in others - from whatever background.

He took many under his wing to at least try and show them a different life or simply to encourage a love of the natural world. His warmth to others was reflected in the many close friends he had all over the world. Although most of us got to know Cedric initially through a shared interest in ants, he became someone you would happily just ring up for a chat and to share your tribulations and successes with. In keeping with his humanitarianism was a sincerely felt pacifism and Cedric had been a conscientious objector during WW2, for the most genuine of reasons. He was though, occasionally possessed of an abrupt and direct manner and acerbic wit, and he could be scathing of world figures and politicians who he felt were less than caring of people and society.

Above all Cedric will be remembered for his inspiration as a mentor and as a friend, and for his devotion to others and to the little insects that he loved. Ants weren't his only life - but they were a very big part of it. He had a long and productive retirement and as Cedric said himself: "Ants are my life blood - they keep me going".

Cedric sometimes quipped, tongue in cheek, that he fancied being known as 'The Great Cedric Collingwood, perhaps in memory of his Russian heritage! Whether or not he will be remembered as one of the world's greatest myrmecologists will rest with the turns of history. However, in terms of the inspiration he has been to so many others, it will always be a fitting epitaph.

### **Cedric's publication references and reference collection**

Whilst not complete, most of the myrmecological notes and longer papers that Cedric wrote or co-authored can be found (often as .pdf files) through a number of websites, for example.

Ant-Wiki: [http://www.antwiki.org/wiki/Collingwood,\\_Cedric\\_A.\\_\(1919-2016\)](http://www.antwiki.org/wiki/Collingwood,_Cedric_A._(1919-2016))

Wikispecies: [https://species.wikimedia.org/wiki/Cedric\\_A.\\_Collingwood](https://species.wikimedia.org/wiki/Cedric_A._Collingwood)

Also by using 'Collingwood' as a search term in <http://antbase.org/> or the related Hymenoptera Online Database: <http://hol.osu.edu/>

Cedric's main ant reference collection is now housed at the World Museum, Liverpool. Stephen Judd from the museum has said how much they enjoyed a long and close working relationship with Cedric. The museum is very keen for people to know that his collection is in Liverpool and is readily available to be consulted (the only difficulty might be interpreting Cedric's notoriously spidery handwriting, although many labels have been re-printed). Cedric assembled an extensive research collection of ants, comprising over 60,000 dry-mounted and spirit-stored specimens, which he donated to the National Museums, Liverpool in 1997. He continued to acquire additional material after this date and a further 1,200 specimens were donated in 2016. Over 1,600 Palaearctic species are represented in his collection and there is exceptional coverage for many taxa such as *Myrmica* and *Formica*. Other ant species from around the world are also present and there is also a small collection of other British insects. The collection can be consulted by contacting: [www.liverpoolmuseums.org.uk/wml/contact/index.aspx](http://www.liverpoolmuseums.org.uk/wml/contact/index.aspx).

### **Tapinoma nigerrimum (Nylander) and other ants at a plant nursery in West Sussex**

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Searches made over a number of years at a plant nursery near Ashington, West Sussex yielded non-native ants including *Tapinoma nigerrimum* (Nylander). The nursery specialises in exotic hardy plants, some of which are imported from Spain and elsewhere. Quantities of big plants such as palms and olive trees are kept outdoors in pots. I have not found exotic ants at the nursery since 2009, perhaps because of their intolerance to the low temperatures that occurred during the 2009/2010 winter. My records are as follows:

#### *Tapinoma nigerrimum* (Nylander)

This ant was seen over a period of several years: 23.iii.2005, 25.iv.2007, 2.vi.2007, 14.v.2008. On several occasions, workers were found running over the soil surface in large plant pots kept outdoors that contained olive trees imported from Spain. On 2.vi.2007 numbers of workers were seen emerging from under an embedded railway sleeper, suggesting that a nest had become established in the grounds of the nursery.

#### *Tapinoma erraticum* (Latreille)

Single worker collected outdoors 13.ix.2006 from a nest in pot containing an imported palm tree.

#### *Plagiolepis taurica* Santschi

Queens and workers were found 25.iv.2007 on and below the soil surface of a potted olive tree outdoors, imported from Spain in 2006. Workers beaten from *Pinus nigra*, 8.ix.2007.

#### *Linepithema humile* Mayr

Found 14.v.2008 in numbers inside a greenhouse on the foliage of an imported palm tree. Identification was made with reference to Wild (2007).

*Lasius* sp.