Observations on the water bugs (Hemiptera: Corixidae) of some peat bog ditches over the period 1971-81

The corixid populations of eight peat bog ditches in the area to the north-east of Tampere were investigated over the period 1971-81. Comparisons were made between the species compositions of the various ditches, in which acidic, dystrophic conditions prevailed, while the history of each ditch respecting its corixid fauna was recorded. A total of nine species of water bugs was taken. One of the ditches became choked with Sphagnum moss to such an extent that it was soon no longer able to support corixid populations. A second ditch became almost entirely choked with sedge clumps, Sphagnum and algae and it also failed to produce bugs during the later part of the study. Two ditches supported populations during the early 1970s, after which there was a lapse of several years before new populations put in an appearance. The other ditches still held bug populations at the termination of the study period. Factors affecting corixid populations appeared to include the weather, the amount of water in a ditch and the place in which the ditch was situated. Simple tests performed on water samples taken from each ditch indicated a great deal of similarity. Sigara nigro-lineata represented the dominant species in many localities: in one, more distant, locality, however, S. semistriata was the dominant corixid. Callicorixa wollastoni was often sub-dominant and in almost all cases occurred in larger numbers than the related C. paeustra. S. fossarum and Hesperocorixa sahlbergi were common adominant species, H. linnei being rare among captures. C. bensdorfii was of spasmodic occurrence. S. distincta occurred only once in a ditch, while a single specimen of S. falleni was taken during a year of relative corixid abundance. Comparisons were made with certain other aquatic habitats in the Tampere district. Peat bog ditches gave similar results to the main study ditches. Two major habitats investigated were a river near Orivesi and a pool at Lielanti, on the western border of Tampere. Corixid populations in the river (pH= 6.0) were dominated by S. falleni and S. distincta. In the pool (pH= 7.0), in contrast to the peat bog ditches in general, C. paeustra was dominant to C. wollastoni, while S. semistriata was dominant to S. nigro-lineata. There was no evidence of successional stages in the peat bog ditches investigated.