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## Rare daddy longlegs fly in Sherwood Forest reveals value of ancient woods

Maybe when Robin Hood was thieving from the rich and the Sheriff of Nottingham was firing his arrows, the rare and strikingly coloured daddy longlegs fly, *Ctenophora ornata*, was a common sight. But for well over a hundred years this crane fly has disappeared from England to the extent that there have only been six sightings of the insect since the 1960s in just two areas, and the latest has just been confirmed to be from a new site - Sherwood Forest.

Bug enthusiasts 48 year old Trevor Pendleton and his wife Dilys, spotted the crane fly on the trunk of a veteran tree in Nottinghamshire County Council's Sherwood Forest National Nature Reserve.



**The striking looking rare crane fly caught on one of Sherwood Forest's ancient oaks.**  
*Photo by Trevor Pendleton*

The lifelong wildlife enthusiast couple had never seen this particular species of crane fly in the forest before and suspected it was *Ctenophora ornata*. This rare species can only be found in **Windsor Great Park**, and the **New Forest** in Hampshire.

Former gardener and printer Trevor and Dilys recently made their insect hobby (entomology) a full-time career by setting up their family business, **TDP Invertebrate Surveyors and Consultants Limited** in Warsop – which involves collecting important data about insects.

Trevor said: "*Ctenophora ornata* has been in decline across England since the early 1900s and there have only been six UK sightings of the bug since 1960. I was very surprised to see it in Sherwood Forest. We spotted it in 2009 but only recently got confirmation from the National Crane Fly Recording Scheme.

"It just goes to show that Sherwood Forest National Nature Reserve is one of the top places in Europe for its insect diversity. Collecting data about insects there is very important because it leads to the discovery of new species all the time."

Our other rare Sherwood Forest insect findings include the hazel pot beetle (*Cryptocephalus coryli*). The Welsh Clearwing moth (*Synanthedon scoliaeformis*) was found by Sherwood Forest Park Ranger Gary Joynt.

Gary Joynt, Nottinghamshire County Council Country Park Ranger, said: "Trevor and Dilys are well known and respected by the rangers at Sherwood because of the dedication and professionalism they have toward the recording and promoting of insects in the Forest. Their recent finds including the crane fly and the hazel pot beetle, shows the importance of ancient woodland and all the plant and animal species that live in it."

Nottinghamshire County Council is working in partnership with Natural England and Thoresby Estates and Sherwood Forest Trust, to enhance the woodland and preserve its veteran oaks and all the wildlife in the area.

**GOVERNMENT U-TURN ON WOODLAND SALE - BUT BRITAIN'S ANCIENT FORESTS STILL NEED PROTECTION**



**British Prime Minister David Cameron (centre) listening to Woodland Trust boss Sue Holden. The Trust is hoping the Government will also be listening to their concerns about ancient forest protection.**

Whilst welcoming Government abandonment of plans for disposal of public forests, the campaign to protect and restore England's ancient forests must go on, warns the Woodland Trust.

Commenting on the decision, Sue Holden chief executive of the Trust said, "Whilst we welcome the removal of threats to public access, there is still an acute need for better protection of Ancient Woodland, our equivalent of the rainforests, and restoration of ancient woods planted with conifers.

"Even if there are no sales of publicly owned forests, the worst of all worlds would be for there to be no change to the loopholes that have allowed 850 ancient woods to be threatened by built development over the past decade.

Sue Holden says that Ministers have made strong commitments over the past few weeks to increase protection for ancient woods, and The Woodland Trust will be holding them to these commitments.

"Our campaign will continue and we urge everyone to continue to sign our online petition and transfer their passion about who owns England's public woods to ensuring that all of England's woods survive in the future," she says.

#### LINKS

The Woodland Trust:

[www.woodlandtrust.org.uk](http://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk)

National Crane Fly Recording Scheme

[www.dipteristsforum.org.uk/t5-Cranefly-Recording-Scheme.html](http://www.dipteristsforum.org.uk/t5-Cranefly-Recording-Scheme.html)

Sherwood Forest National Nature Reserve

[www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/home/leisure/countryparks/sherwoodforestcp.htm](http://www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/home/leisure/countryparks/sherwoodforestcp.htm)

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