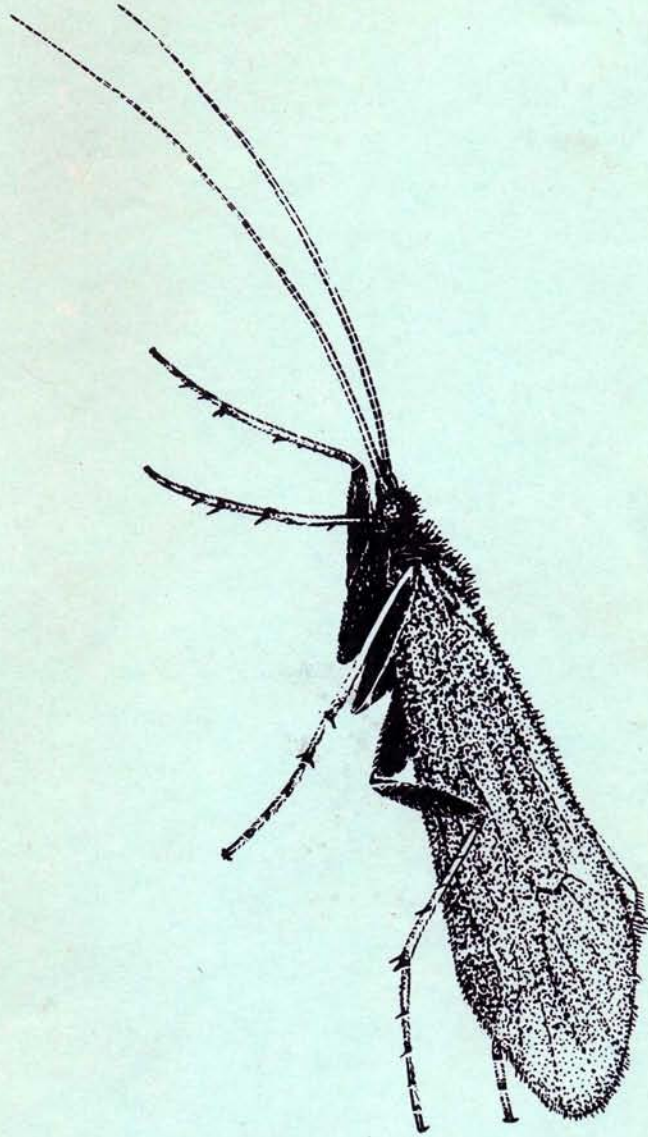


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PORBEAGLE SHARK *LAMNA NASUS* (BONNATERRE, 1788)

During July 1990, a juvenile specimen of porbeagle shark *Lamna nasus* was captured by the MFV 'Utopia' (Skipper: Mr Michael O'Connor, Dingle) while trawling in Dingle Bay, Co Kerry. The specimen measured 71.0cm T.L. and weighed 3.29kg. The stomach contained unidentifiable fish remains.

Although *L. nasus* is present in European waters all year round, it becomes more common in summer and autumn, probably due to migration northwards (Wheeler 1969) and/or inshore. In European waters mating occurs during late autumn and pregnant females have been taken during most of the year, except July through September (Compagno, L. J. V., 1984 *Sharks of the World*. FAO Fisheries Synopsis No. 125, 4, Part 1. UNDP/FAO, Rome), suggesting that the pups are born then. Indeed, young sharks of about 76cm long have several times been taken in the English Channel during the autumn (Wheeler 1969). The porbeagle is ovoviviparous; litters are small (1 to 5) but the newly-born are large (50-75cm T.L.) (Compagno 1984).

An analysis of the French long-line fishery centred off Yeu Island in the Bay of Biscay for porbeagle shark (Lallemand-Lemoine, L. 1991 *ICES CM 1991/G:71.*), indicated a frequent drop in landings during the period May-June. During this period, porbeagles were seen at the surface of the sea but did not bite the hooks. It was suggested that this behaviour could be related with spawning which takes place during the same period. Interestingly, the mean weights of the porbeagles increased from January to July, but decreased dramatically between July and August before increasing again. This pattern seems to be correlated with growth in adult weight, followed by spawning, and then recruitment of young sharks to the fishery during August.

The discovery of the current juvenile specimen in Dingle Bay would seem to confirm that *L. nasus* reproduces in Irish inshore waters during the summer months. According to Des Brennan (1965 *The sea angler — afloat and ashore*. Adam and Charles Black, London), a number of very small porbeagle have previously been taken in Irish inshore waters.

The current specimen has been donated to the National Museum of Ireland (NMI 76.1990).

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FIELD RECORDS — INSECTS

DICRANOPALPUS RAMOSUS (SIMON) (ARACHNIDA: OPILIONES), NEW TO IRELAND

Dicranopalpus ramosus (Simon) (Arachnida: Opiliones)

Co Wexford: Enniscorthy, S970409, 11 October 1994, about 20 specimens on house and garden walls. Associated harvest-spiders were *Paroligolophus agrestis* (Meade), *Opilio saxatilis* Koch and *Leiobunum blackwalli* Meade.

Dicranopalpus ramosus is an introduced species, native to parts of the western Mediterranean, and first recorded from Great Britain in 1957 (Sankey, J. H. P. & Storey, M. W. 1969 *Entomologist's mon. Mag.* **105**: 106-107). It now occurs widely in south-east England and along the south Welsh coast, especially in parks and gardens (Sankey, J. H. P. 1988 *Provisional atlas of the harvest-spiders (Arachnida: Opiliones) of the British Isles*. Biological Records Centre, Huntingdon). Its spread in Great Britain has been linked with the dumping of garden cuttings (Sankey pers. comm.).

Naturalists visiting south-east Ireland should keep a look out for this conspicuous harvest-spider, which adopts a very characteristic resting position, well illustrated in Jones (D. 1983 *The Country Life guide to spiders of Britain and Northern Europe*. Hamlyn, Feltham). In this way any increase in range can hopefully be monitored.

Thanks to Mr J. H. P. Sankey, who confirmed the identity of one specimen. Voucher material has been deposited at the National Museum of Ireland (NMI I. 1995).

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