

The non-native flatworm, *Kontikia andersoni* Jones 1981 (Seriata, Geoplanidae) in Scotland

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On the 31st October 2014, a specimen of the non-native flatworm *Kontikia andersoni* Jones 1981 was found by the author in moist leaf litter at Martnaham Wood (NS392170) in Ayrshire. A second specimen from Ayrshire was found on the 3rd January 2016 in a similar situation at Coilsholm Wood (NS452243). *K. andersoni* is readily distinguished from other British flatworms by the presence of three dark dorsal stripes running lengthways on an otherwise pale brown body (Jones, 2005). Unfortunately, both specimens dried out whilst in captivity and were not retained. However, digital photographs were taken of the specimen from Coilsholm Wood and submitted to Brian Boag and Hugh Jones (Fig. 1) of the Terrestrial Flatworm Recording Scheme for confirmation.



Fig. 1. Specimen of *K. andersoni* from Coilsholm Wood, Ayrshire (NS452243).

K. andersoni was first described as a species new to science based on specimens collected from Antrim, Northern Ireland in 1976 (Jones, 1981). It has since been recorded from scattered locations in Ireland,

Isle of Man and western parts of the British Isles (Isles of Scilly, Cornwall, Somerset and Colonsay) (Hugh Jones, pers. comm.). The origins of British and Irish populations are unknown but it is likely the species is native to the Indo-Pacific region based on shared affinities with a species group restricted to this area (Jones, 1981; Anderson, 1986).

The only other record of *K. andersoni* in Scotland relates to a specimen collected from under dead wood in the formal gardens of Colonsay House on the Isle of Colonsay, Argyll in 2005. The formal gardens have actively imported plant material from the southern hemisphere since at least the 1930s and it is probable the flatworm arrived within associated soil. The garden also hosts other antipodean flatworms including the New Zealand flatworm *Arthurdendyus triangulatus* (Dendy) and *Kontikia ventrolineata* (Dendy) (Hancock, 2006).

The two records of *K. andersoni* from Ayrshire are curious for their occurrence in the wider countryside. Studies of the New Zealand flatworm in Scotland suggest that gardens and nurseries were colonised first since their arrival in 1965 and only more recently did they spread into the wider countryside (Boag and Yeates, 2001). If *K. andersoni* followed a similar invasion pattern then we might expect more records from formal gardens and nurseries than is currently the case. It is likely the species has been overlooked and as yet there are too few records to elucidate its invasion trends in Britain. Therefore, naturalists are invited to submit records of *K. andersoni* and other flatworms to the Terrestrial Flatworm Recording Scheme <http://www.brc.ac.uk/scheme/terrestrial-flatworm-recording-scheme>.

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