

## Robberfly *Eutolmus rufibarbis* (Meigen, 1820) (Asilidae) extending in distribution and habitat association

Martin C. Harvey (kitenetter@googlemail.com)

The Golden-tabbed Robberfly, *Eutolmus rufibarbis*, has always been confined to southern and eastern England, with the largest proportion of records coming from Surrey. There is evidence of a spread in range in recent years, and in 2023 alone records have been reported from one new vice-county (Buckinghamshire) and eight new 10 km squares (so far!).

It has been regarded as a species “confined to sandy districts” (Stubbs and Drake 2014), but the new Buckinghamshire records are from chalk grasslands. On 1 July 2023, the Buckinghamshire Invertebrate Group held a field trip at Kings Barn Farm, Medmenham (SU8185). This is a large area of chalk grassland and woodland which is being managed to restore grassland biodiversity. We were pleased to find large numbers of *Eutolmus rufibarbis*, which was flying alongside Downland Robberfly, *Machimus rusticus* (Meigen, 1820) (which in the males can look confusingly similar).

On 23 July 2023 another Buckinghamshire site was reported on iRecord, when Andy Spragg photographed an individual at Chairborough Local Nature Reserve, High Wycombe (SU8492). This site is a relatively small area of chalk grassland and scrub, entirely surrounded by housing and commercial buildings. Further specimens were found at the same location when I visited two weeks later.

*Machimus rusticus* is also spreading in range, so do take a close look at any large, dark-legged robberflies you find on chalk grasslands. Thanks to all who have sent in records to the Soldierflies and Allies recording scheme, keep them coming!

Specimens exhibited: male and female *Eutolmus rufibarbis* and male *Machimus rusticus* from the Kings Barn Farm site, Bucks, 1 July 2023

