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THE LARGER INVERTEBRATE FAUNA OF THREE RABBIT CARCASSES

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(With 2 Figures in the Text)

During a university entomology course held at the Juniper Hall Field Centre, Dorking, in 1951, daily investigations were made for two weeks by a group of students* on the larger invertebrate fauna of three rabbit carcasses. In the evening of 4 July three freshly killed rabbits were put out in places separated by approximately 30 and 40 m. Carcass (A) was placed just inside a small shrubbery with no undergrowth and amongst partly rotted leaves. This habitat was generally dry and in deep shade. (B) was placed on cinders in loose sward under a large plane tree; this habitat was more subject to early morning dew than (A) and was exposed to light. (C) was situated in thick grass near the open verge of a meadow. Each carcass was covered with wire-netting pegged down at the corners to prevent disturbance by foxes and dogs. During examination this netting was removed and the carcass in each case was disturbed. Daily observations were made between 0800 and 0830 h G.M.T., 5–18 July inclusive. In many cases it was necessary to collect specimens for identification. In only a few instances did specimens escape unrecorded, and these represent only a fraction of the fauna present on examination. Not all specimens seen or caught have been fully identified, but specific determinations have been undertaken where possible. Grateful acknowledgement is made to the members of the staff of the Brit. Mus. (Nat. Hist.) who came to our aid with the more difficult species.

LIST OF SPECIES OBSERVED

MOLLUSCA

Pomatias elegans Mull. and other
species.

ARACHNIDA

Araneida
Acarina

ISOPODA

Armadillidium sp. and other species.

INSECTA

DERMAPTERA

Forficula auricularia L.

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