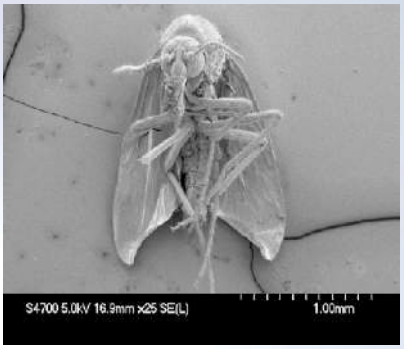
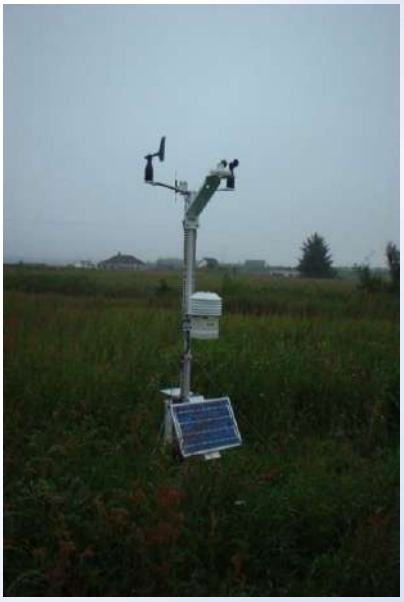
Case Study: Midge Project

The 'Biting Midge Research Group' at theUniversity of Edinburgh has been investigating the ecology and behaviour of biting midges in Scotland since the early 1990's. These insects have the potential to wreak havoc on a day out in the Highlands during the summer-time, particularly during the early evening as holiday-makers are thinking of BBQ's and campers are setting up camp for the night. Midge biting activity can also seriously interfere with outdoor industry, including forestry and agriculture.

Edinburgh's research group (led by Dr Alison Blackwell), is researching novel means of midge control and for any method to be effective, it is essential to understand how the midge interacts with its environment and in particular, how climate affects the midge's activity. A MiniMet Automatic weather station from Skye Instruments has been integral to this research for a number of years. It is hoped that the data will allow accurate predictions of midge activity depending on meteorological conditions, assisting with targeted management activities and also, enhancing the quality of life and 'visitor experience' for those both living in and visiting the Highlands of Scotland.



Data is collected by the MiniMet logger from RH and air temperature, solar radiation and wind speed and direction sensors. The weather station is remote linked via GSM cellular phone modem for easy, regular access to the weather data. This remote link also saves the group from standing next to the MiniMet system downloading via a laptop, whilst being bitten by the very midges they are studying!



Acknowledgements and Contacts

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