Shropshire Earwig Species by David W. Williams

Three species of earwig are found in Shropshire. The below photographs of males indicate their relative sizes:



Common Earwig Key Features

Abdomen colour: dark burgundy Wings: hind wing-tips protrude visibly beyond wing-cases Forceps (male): broad, flat basal part is much shorter than narrow, curved distal part

Lesne's Earwig Key Features Abdomen colour: chestnut

red/brown *Wings:* no visible wing-tips *Forceps (male):* broad, flat basal part approx same length as narrow, curved distal part

Lesser Earwig Key Features:

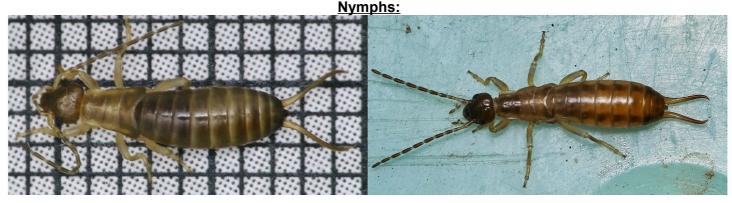
Head: dark / almost black Wings: hind wing-tips protrude visibly beyond wing-cases Forceps & tip of abdomen: strongly reddish Size: much smaller than other species

common earwig Forficula auricularia

Lesne's earwig Forficula lesnei lesser earwig Labia minor



Female earwigs resemble males except in the shape of the forceps, which in all species are straight, with incurved tips. **Left: Lesne's earwig.** Viewed from this angle, female *F. lesnei* have fatter, more 'barrel-shaped' abdomens than *F. auricularia.* Note the lack of visible wing-tips and bright chestnut colouration. **Right: lesser earwig.** Note dark head, visible wing-tips & red forceps



The key features of nymphs are the very slender forceps & the 'w' shaped wingbuds of later instars. I believe the left-hand photograph is a common earwig & the right-hand Lesne's earwig, but identifications are uncertain & I would not expect records based on identification of nymphs.