

Suffolk Moth Group Newsletter

Issue 26 - Summer 2002

Edited by Tony Prichard

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Editorial

This issue of the newsletter has been running a bit late so apologies for that.

The season seems to have got off to a very average start with poor weather conditions and most moth night meetings suffering from at least one of either wind, rain during the day, more rain during the day or cold temperatures. As a result moth numbers and species recorded at the meetings would appear to be down on previous years. A few species including Red Chestnut and Grey Arches seem to have been having a good year. The Orange Footman continues to be recorded from new and existing sites within the county including; Lower Hollesley Common, Sizewell Belts, Kings Forest, Staverton Thicks, Minsmere, Clare and Barnhamcross Common. Least Black Arches which has been doing rather well in recent years was not as frequently recorded this year.

Neil Sherman and myself carried out some further surveying for Light Orange Underwing earlier in the year. Two separate searches of the privately-owned Raydon Great Wood revealed a large number of

mature aspen trees bearing flowers but we were unable to spot any adults - even after kicking the trunks of the trees - a technique which worked well at Wolves Wood in dislodging the resting adults from the tree tops. Ramsey Wood near to Wolves Wood only appeared to have a few aspen trees and not a hint of the moth.

A wave of migrants in late June included several Bordered Straw around the county and a few sightings of Humming-bird Hawk-moth. J Higgott has also reported a Red-necked Footman from Ipswich recently that is presumably a migrant.

The group's field meetings have been reasonably successful so far this year considering the weather - attendance at the moth nights attracting similar numbers of people as in previous years. Although interesting macro records have been a bit short on the ground, some scarce micro-lepidoptera have been recorded. This year has also seen several visits from people out of county coming along to the group's moth nights and the feedback after the night from these people has been very positive and a credit to the group.

The group's members directory has also been completed (at last and after a bit of prompting of people) and will be distributed to those members who signed up to it. If you missed the boat and want to have your name on the directory then contact me and I can add your name to the list.

Lunar Yellow Underwing larval survey update - Tony Prichard

Following the rather negative update on the Lunar Yellow Underwing larval survey in the previous newsletter we had a bit of an upturn in our fortunes. Our first success was during a visit to Ipswich Golf Course on the 17th March when we located a single larva of Lunar Yellow Underwing on the back of a bunker.

The best result however was at Rendlesham Forest on the 21st March. Here we had been given directions to the best area of acid grassland in the forest. On driving past the area to set up some lights in another part of the forest we were not very impressed as the grass looked rather rank and rabbit-grazed and it seemed likely that we were in for another blank night. On returning to the area of grassland when night had fallen we were rather surprised to find a Lunar Yellow Underwing larva almost straightaway, followed by over twenty more larvae as the searching continued. The larvae were largely found amongst the taller clumps of grass growing around the bases of bramble plants. The areas in between the clumps being largely rabbit-grazed. Areas where bracken was present amongst the grass had very few larvae.



Rendlesham site of Lunar Yellow Underwing

Neil Sherman subsequently found a further singleton larva at Ipswich Golf Course on the 22nd March at the same location.

One thing common about both the sites is that the larvae were not found on particularly fine grasses which the textbooks state the larvae prefer, although a search of particularly rank grass at another site in Rendlesham yielded no Lunar Yellow Underwing larvae at all.

Thanks to those who helped with the survey this year. I think its rather too early to draw any conclusions from the limited results we have had so far. No doubt the survey will continue next year, so if you are interested in coming along then drop me a line.

***Dioryctria sylvestrella* - a new species to look out for - Tony Prichard**

For those people who do not subscribe to Atropos and maybe unaware, a new species of the *Dioryctria* (Pyralidae) has been discovered in Britain - *Dioryctria sylvestrella* (Ratzeburg) [1]. Since the initial article in Atropos people have been re-examining *Dioryctria* in their collections and the earliest record discovered to date for the species is 1995 in Kent by Tony Rouse. Examination of specimens taken by Tony Butcher at Tunstall in 2001 at BENHS meeting has ascertained that the species has occurred in Suffolk. The second Atropos article [2] suggests that *D. sylvestrella* may be resident in the Suffolk area given the suitable habitat that the moth was found in.

Some of the *Dioryctria* can give problems with identification, notably *D. simplicella* and *D. abietella* due to their variability and similarity of genitalia. Fortunately, it appears that *D. sylvestrella* should be readily identifiable. *D. sylvestrella* tends to be the largest of the *Dioryctria* and is most likely to be confused with *D. abietella*. The feature to look at to distinguish the two is the sub-terminal line on the forewing; this is smoother in *D. sylvestrella* but in *D. abietella* is rather dentated in its more dorsal portion. In addition, the sub-terminal line approaches the dorsum almost at a right-angle in *D. sylvestrella* whereas in *D. abietella* the sub-terminal line approaches the dorsum at an angle.

Further details can be found in the Atropos articles listed below :

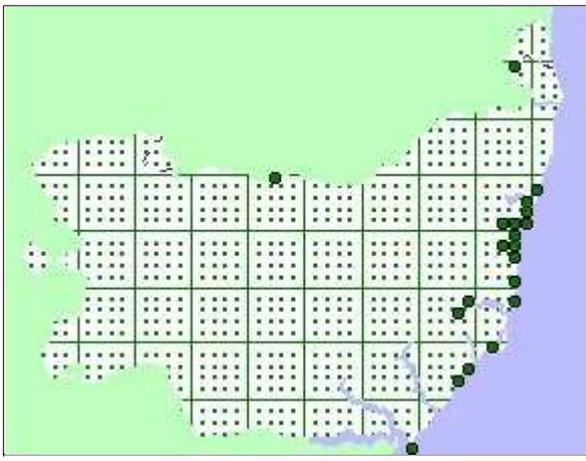
[1] Parsons, M. & Clancy, S. (2002). *Dioryctria sylvestrella* (Ratz.) - New to Britain and Ireland, and the Identification of the British *Dioryctria* Species. Atropos. **15** : 16-18

[2] Clancy, S. (2002). Further British Records of *Dioryctria sylvestrella*. Atropos. **16** : 78

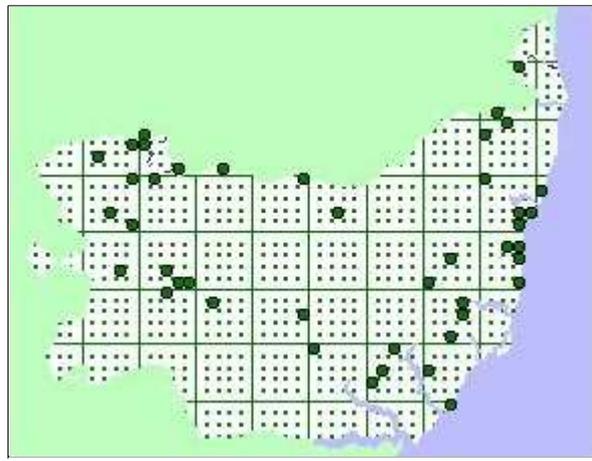
The Large Ear in Suffolk - Tony Prichard

Brian Goodey in Essex wrote an article in the Entomologist's Journal and Record of Variation a while ago documenting the discovery of Large Ear in Essex [1]. The Large Ear has previously been thought to have a largely north-westerly distribution in Britain, so not something you might expect in Suffolk. Mike Hall, prompted by Brian's article, sent a couple of specimens of 'Ear' moth from Diss and Landguard to Brian Goodey for confirmation of their identity. Both of these moths turned out to be Large Ear. So the moth occurs in Suffolk but currently we know little of its distribution in the county - is it a migrant or resident in the county? To gain a better understanding of the species' distribution can recorders please retain any 'Ear' moths found outside the known areas for Saltern Ear or Ear Moth in the county for confirmation of their identity.

For reference the two maps below show the distributions for the Saltern Ear and Ear Moth records that we have for Suffolk.



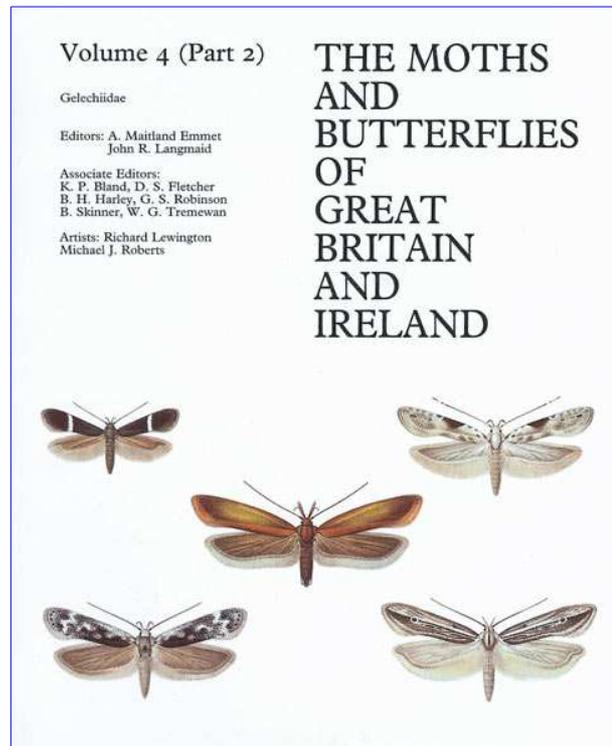
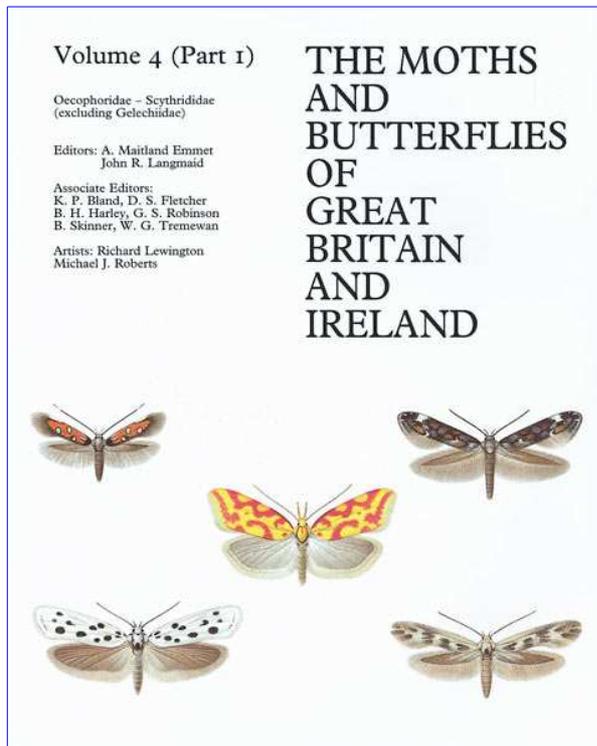
Saltern Ear



Ear Moth

[1] Goodey, B. (2000). Is the Large Ear *Amphipoea lucens* (Freyer) (Lep.: Noctuidae) resident in south-east England?. *Entomologist's Rec. J. Var.* **112** : 106

Volume 4 of Moths and Butterflies of Great Britain and Ireland - Tony Prichard



For those people who are familiar with this series Volume 4 carries on where Volume 3 finished off. It seems like it has been a long wait for this volume but one that has been worthwhile, judging by the quality and the thickness of the books. For those who are not this is the 'fourth' volume in a series of ten intended to be a standard reference work covering all the lepidoptera of both Great Britain and Ireland. The first volume in the series was published in 1976 and volumes have appeared periodically since. The existing seven volumes cover the butterflies, the macro-lepidoptera excluding the geometrids and the microlepidoptera families up to the Gelechiidae. Volume 7 part 2 also includes a life history chart covering the whole of the lepidoptera for Great Britain. The plates in the earlier volumes were of rather poor quality but in later volumes Richard Lewington has produced the plates and some of the other drawings and these are of the high quality we have come to expect.

As this series has been produced the volumes seem to have got thicker and with Volume 4 the amount of material to be included led to the decision to publish the volume as two parts. Part 1 covers the families; *Oecophoridae*, *Ethmiidae*, *Autostichidae*, *Blastobasidae*, *Agonoxenidae*, *Batrachedridae*, *Momphidae*, *Cosmopterigidae* and *Scythrididae* with an introductory chapter on 'The Ecology and

Evolution of Lepidopteran Defences against Bats'. Part 2 covers the family of *Gelechiidae* only. Existing literature for these families has been rather limited and it is hoped that this work will increase interest in these previously poorly recorded families.

As I'm no expert on the families covered by Volume 4 I cannot really comment on the technical accuracy of the text. The authors who wrote the systematic sections include many notable and familiar names so I'm expecting they've got it right. The format of the systematic section follows that in previous volumes with detailed descriptions of the adults, life history, distribution and a vice-county distribution map for each species. Checklists and keys to the adults are provided for each of the families covered and there are genitalia drawings of both sexes for each species. The impression I get on reading the various species accounts is that there is more useful information on how to locate the species in the field than in previous volumes, with interesting aspects of life history included where appropriate. The text reads well considering the high density of information present - there's a huge amount of information contained in these books!

If you are interested in microlepidoptera then this book is a must-have. If not then may you'll be tempted to start having a go at some of these families when you've seen this book.

Details for Part 1 : 324pp., including 13 colour plates, 95 text figures and 146 species maps; and for Part 2 : 280pp, including 6 colour plates, 63 text figures and 161 species maps.

The paperback version of this volume (which is expected to be available 1st September) is being offered for £82.50 for the two volume set or £44 for single volumes. The hardback volumes are available at £150 for the two volume set and £80 for single volumes.

A list of corrections found since publication is being produced and can be obtained by sending a SAE to the publishers. This list will be included with the paperback version when it is released.

Harley Books (B.H. & A. Harley Ltd.) can be contacted at Martins, Great Horkesley, Colchester, Essex CO6 4AH. Telephone 01206 271216. Web site at www.harleybooks.com. Email : harley@keme.co.uk

Corrections to Razowski's Die Tortriciden Mitteleuropas- Tony Prichard

Since the last issue of the newsletter several errors have come to light with this recently published book that I know several people in the group have bought and are using to help identify tortrix moths. John Langmaid published a list of errors to the ukmoths email list a while ago and some were also mentioned in a review of the book in the latest issue of Atropos.

The following lists the currently known errors

- misidentification of *Loxoterma siderana* as *Loxoterma lacunana* on the back cover
- both male and female genitalia of *Acleris notana* and *A. ferrugana* are transposed
- plate 2, the figures of *A. notana* and *A. ferrugana* are the wrong way round i.e figs. 28, 28a - 28d are *A. notana* and figs. 29, 29a-29c are *A. ferrugana*.
- on page 136 the figures of the male genitalia for *Pseudhermenias abietana* and *Piniphila bifasciana* are transposed.
- plate 2, figs 30 and 30a (*A. qurecinana*) are actually *A. ferrugana*.
- plate 4, the identity of fig. 65 (*Gynnidomorpha luridana*) is in doubt
- plate 4, fig 67 (*G. minimana*) is *G. manniana*
- plate 4, fig 69 (*G. alismana*) is *G. minimana*
- plate 8, fig 171a does not show the form *sauberiana* of *Archips podana*
- plate 8, again, fig 171b is a male
- plate 10, fig 212 *Isotrias rectifasciana* is a female
- plate 12, fig 257 (*Apotomis semifasciana*) is *A. infida*.
- plate 12, fig 258 (*A. infida*) is *A. semifasciana*
- plate 12, fig 259 (*A. lineana*) is *A. semifasciana*
- plate 12, fig 264 (*A. sororculana*) is *A. turbidana*
- plate 12, fig 278 (*Celypha rosaceana*) is *C. rufana*

- plate 15, fig 344 (*Epinotia sordidana*) is not an *Epinotia* and is probably a form of *Epiblema sticticana*. fig 344a is correct
- plate 17, fig 405 (*Eucosma balatonana*) is *E. obumbratana*
- plate 19, fig 436 (*Epiblema cnicicolana*) is *E. obscurana*
- plate 19, fig 439 (*E. costipunctana*) is *E. cnicicolana*
- plate 19, fig 442 (*E. confusum*) is *E. costipunctana*
- plate 20, fig 474 (*Cydia succedana*) is *C. intexta*, fig 474a is correct
- plate 21, fig 512 (*Grapholita difficilana*) is *G. internana*
- plate 21, fig 513 (*G. internana*) is *G. difficilana*
- plate 21, fig 513a (*G. internana*) is *G. nigrostriana*
- plate 21, figs 516 and 516a (*G. lunulana*) are both *G. orobana*
- plate 22, fig 522 (*G. nigrostriana*) is *G. internana*
- plate 22, fig 526 (*G. molesta*) is *G. herrichiana*
- plate 22, fig 537 (*Pammene insulana*) is *P. ignorata*
- plate 22, fig 538 (*P. suspectana*) is probably *P. albuginana*
- plate 23, fig 558 (*P. albuginana*) is *P. suspectana*
- plate 23, fig 559 (*Strophedra nitidana*) is *S. weirana*
- plate 23, fig 560 (*S. weirana*) is *S. nitidana*
- plate 24, fig 589 (*Dichrorampha flavidorsana*) is *D. alpinana*
- plate 24, figs 590 and 590a (*D. alpinana*) are both *D. flavidorsana*

The Horse Chestnut Leaf Miner, *Cameraria ohridella* Deschka & Dimic - Tony Prichard

This moth has been causing quite a stir on the continent in the last few years due to its rapid spread across the continent, the unsightly effects of its feeding and the concern that the high population densities it can achieve on a tree may be harmful to the host, *Aesculus hippocastanum*, horse chestnut.



© S. Binner

Tree showing extent of leaf discoloration due to mines



© J. Metzger

Leaf showing high density of mines per leaf

The species is a member of the Gracillariidae and was first recorded and described in Macedonia in 1985. The moth then appeared in Austria in 1989 (with a suspicion that it was an escapee after a moth collector was breeding the species). Since then it has spread rapidly across Europe, east and west, and is now present in France, Belgium and Holland. It would seem to me that given the rapidity of this

species' spread across Europe and the fact that it is just across the Channel from us then it is only a matter of time before this species appears in the UK.

In line with most other Gracillariids the larvae of this species are internal leaf-miners, starting with a sap-feeding instar moving onto tissue eating from the second instar. The pupa is formed within the mine. The mine is brown in colour and quite obvious on the leaf. As there may be up to several hundred mines per leaf the effect on the appearance of the tree is marked and affected leaves tend to drop early from the tree.

The species has been reported from other species of *Aesculus*, including *Aesculus pavia*. Where *Acer pseudoplatanus*, sycamore, is found to be growing under horse chestnut trees it has also been found to attack the leaves of this tree as well.

In the warmer European climates the moth may have up to five generations a year, although in Germany it only manages three. Once established the moth population increases rapidly within one or two years.



© Th. Lohrer

Shows brown fungus (*Guignardia aesculi*) on the left with a leaf mine to the right of it



© Klaus Hellrigl

Adult moth

The identification of the mine on the tree is relatively easy as there are few species which feed on horse chestnut. The tree suffers from a brown mould (*Guignardia aesculi*) which may lead to some confusion but the presence of a larva, pupa or frass within the mine should readily distinguish the mine from the mould.

If you are passing any horse chestnut trees then it might be worth keeping an eye out for the mines - there's always the chance it could turn up in Suffolk first.

Some web links

For those who like to keep a weather eye out then www.weather.co.uk provides a ten day forecast which appears to have the same accuracy as most of the other weather web sites. This site differs from the others in two ways; firstly it gives a ten day summary forecast and also it will give an hour by hour forecast of the weather in eight hours periods.

Increasing numbers of moth groups have web sites and the Lancashire Moth Group was one I came across recently at www.lancashire-moths.org. It is not the easiest sites to navigate around and does not appear to have been updated for some time but does have some interesting articles to read.

For those interested in conservation the UK Biodiversity web site may be of interest. The site gives a background to biodiversity conservation, has online versions of the species action plans for the UK and various other sections including; news, research, contacts and a search facility. I suspect that the action plans will be of most interest to moth recorders although the facility to search for an organisational contact may also come in useful. This site can be found at www.ukbap.org.uk

Reports from recorders around the county

Records reported here have not yet been verified by the Suffolk Moth Panel.

Moths at Ipswich Golf Club - March to May 2002 - by Neil Sherman

March and April

Spring finally arrived in March, with moths appearing in the traps in reasonable numbers. Lights were put out on 5 nights when weather allowed. Along with the usual selection of Orthosias, some moths of possible interest appeared.

The Yellow Horned was noticeable in its abundance – the highest count coming on the 17th when 22 were caught. Also regular was the Small Brindled Beauty, with a maximum of 16 appearing on the 4th before tailing off as the month progressed. This moth seems to have been increasing in recent years here. Oak Beauty is always nice to see – the 10 caught on the 17th was the highest count. Early Grey (17th), Red Chestnut (21st, 31st) and Early Thorn (21st, 31st) all appeared on time. However, 2 species seen were out of season (going on previous records at this site): Water Carpet (a fresh one on the 17th with another on the more normal date of 31st) and Frosted Green (on the 21st).

On the micro front, very little was seen apart from the numerous *Tortricodes alternella* and *Diurnea fagella*. Of possible interest were *Ypsolopha ustella* (2 on the 17th) and *Alucita hexadactyla* (3 trapped on the 21st). The first of what will be many *Eriocrania subpurpurella* of the year appeared on the 31st.

One of the main activities I have been involved in this month has been nocturnal searches for the Lunar Yellow Underwing larva. One of the various heathland sites searched has been the golf course (although the first attempt on the 16th was a washout, as all that were present will remember well!). Single larvae were found on the 17th and the 22nd, in the same area of the site (an area of fine leaved acid grassland, on the back of a bunker!), confirming this BAP species breeds here. Habitat management is already in place to increase the amount of acid grassland present so hopefully the moth will increase in the future. Several other types of caterpillars were also found: Square-spot Rustic (common everywhere – even in my garden), Yellow Shell, Lunar Underwing, Lesser Yellow Underwing, Large Yellow Underwing (all feeding on various types of grasses) and Small Angle Shades (found on Broom).

An unusual sighting occurred on the 11th – a female Pale tussock was found in the tea shed! It must have pupated inside last year and hatched out as it was warm inside.

Towards the end of the month, the Orange Underwing was noted on its daytime flight around silver birches (maximum of 4 seen on the 18th) on sunny afternoons. Also found during the day while lifting turf was a Lime Hawk-moth pupa – this has been retained so the rest of the greenstaff can see the imago.

April 2002 will be remembered as being one of the warmest in recent years. It was also very dry, with rain only appearing at the end of the month. To begin with, nights were cold and clear but towards the latter few weeks temperatures were well above average. A few moths normally out in May appeared, joining the usual suspects at this time of year. Lights were run on 6 occasions, which along with daytime observations produced a list of 12 micros and 46 macros for the month.

Normal April macros included: Lunar Marbled Brown (max. 28 on 25th), Brindled Beauty (1 on most nights), Frosted Green (max. 20 on the 18th), Muslin (appearing in the latter part of the month), Least Black Arches (21st), Purple Thorn, Shoulder Stripe (3rd), Early Tooth-striped (25th) and March Moth (1 on 25th). Prominents also started to appear, with Lesser Swallow, Swallow, Iron and Great being recorded. One of my favourite moths, the Chocolate-tip was also seen (25th).

More unusual (for the time of year) were: Grey Birch (3rd), Cinnabar (21st), Maiden's Blush (21st), Dwarf Pug (also on the 21st), Grey Pug (22nd) and Orange Footman (22nd also).

The most common micro during the period was *Eriocrania subpurpurella*, with c.400 appearing on the 22nd. This species is the second most recorded moth for the site (1386 records - top of the list is *Tortrix*

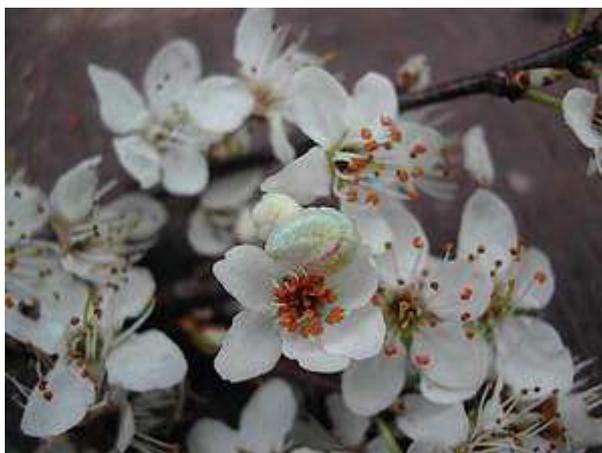
viridana with 1806 records). *Epinotia immundana* also appeared, but not quite in such numbers! Another very common sighting during the day were the swarms of *Adela reaumerella* flying at all levels around Oak trees – impossible to count!

On the 10th, whilst walking past the Leylandii hedge next to the clubhouse, I noticed quite a few small green larvae hanging off silken threads attached to the bushes. After collection they pupated and were passed to Tony Prichard. When the adults emerged they turned out to be *Argyresthia cupressella*, an adventive species first discovered in Suffolk a few years ago (1997 was the year - TP).



© Neil Sherman
Grey Birch

A check of the bat boxes on site on the 10th revealed no bats but 5 larvae of the Centre-barred sawfly had taken up residence in one box – this total is higher than the number of times the moth has been seen here in 8 years (only twice!). The Sloe Pug was also confirmed as a breeding species when a larva was found by beating flowering blackthorn on the 9th. Another pug larva, this time found by searching, was seen on the 18th – the Green Pug, hidden inside its spun up crab apple flower.



© Neil Sherman
Sloe Pug larva on blackthorn

A daytime search of wood sage in the breeding area for *Capperia britanniodactyl* revealed the first larva on the 24th. The feeding signs are quite distinctive once known as they bite partially through the top part of a stem, causing it to wilt. The larva then hides within this shelter. Also flying around at this spot were several Common Heaths.

The Lime Hawk-moth pupa collected last month hatched at the end of the month, and was much appreciated by all the staff who saw it. Just wait until the Privet Hawk-moths appear, I told them. They are even bigger!

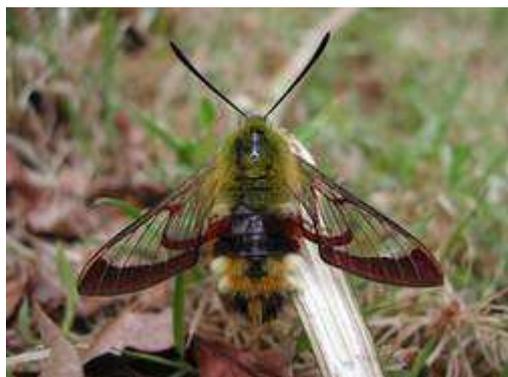
May

May was a good month for recording at the site, with the traps now starting to fill up with more of a variety of moths. Lights were run on 6 occasions, producing an impressive list of 131 species for the month, including daytime observations and larval records (94 were macros). Best night was the 18th, when although it was a bit breezy the temperature was warm – putting the traps in sheltered spots produced a list of 76 species.

Of possible interest were: May Highflyer (first of the year on the 18th), Currant Pug (also on the 18th), Dwarf Pug (another record on the 16th after previous ones last month), Broom-tip (16th), Brindled Beauty (having a good year appearing regularly), Brindled White-spot, Orange Footman (another species having a good season with the highest count of 22 on the 18th), Alder Moth (one of this smart moth on the 19th), Green Silver-lines (first for the year on the 30th) and Buttoned Snout (the second site record on the 18th).

Micros also increased in numbers and variety. Species of note included: *Monopis obviella* (19th), *Tinea trinotella* (18th), *Phtheochroa rugosana* (a worn individual on the 19th), *Epinotia subocellana* (18th) and *Nemophora degeerella* (with its impressive long antennae on the 30th).

A female Emperor moth was found by the Course manager on the 2nd, on the flowerbed next to the clubhouse where larvae were seen last year – it impressed all onlookers before flying away, most golfers who saw it not realising that such big moths occur in this country. Other interesting daytime discoveries included: Pine Hawk-moth (first of the year) on the clubhouse wall (20th), Flame Carpet (10th) and a Broad-bordered Bee Hawk-moth that was trapped in the polytunnel containing our stocks of gorse plants (21st - only the third sighting of an adult moth on the site – larvae are found commonly every year on honeysuckle). An unusual form of the Green Carpet was seen on the 19th – most of the dark markings across the centre of the wing were missing, with there only being 2 circular dots. This made the moth almost entirely green in colour.



© Neil Sherman

Broad-bordered Bee Hawk-moth



© Neil Sherman

Buttoned Snout

A few caterpillars have been found this month with the Drinker (on the 27th) being the most impressive. Also seen were Pale Brindled Beauty, Twin-spotted quaker and Hedge Rustic.

The first migrants of the year also appeared during the month, with 2 sightings each of *Plutella xylostella* and the Silver Y.

Dunwich Heath National Trust Reserve - - Mark Cornish - May to June 2002

Mark has started regular trapping at the reserve this year and has already had some interesting species this year; White-point, Emperor, Beautiful Yellow Underwing, Powdered Quaker, Narrow-winged Pug, Fox Moth, Cream-spot Tiger and Flame Wainscot in May and Star-wort, Grass Wave, Shore Wainscot, Water Ermine, Dark Sword-grass, Hummingbird Hawk-moth and plenty of Silver Ys in June.

Minsmere RSPB Reserve - Alice Parfitt - January to May 2002

A mercury vapour lamp has been run outside the volunteer's chalet at Minsmere RSPB reserve for a number of years. Although it is situated in our yard, the area is surrounded by mixed woodland, grassland and scrub. And of course the reedbed and heath are not that far away either.

This year, the season got off to a very slow start with no moths recorded during January and February. The trap was put on just 5 times during March, with one night recording no moths at all. Just a handful of species were recorded, 10 in fact, with only small numbers of each being seen. However Dotted Border, Hebrew Character, Common Quaker, Small Quaker, Early Moth, March Moth, Engrailed, Clouded Drab and Early Grey were all recorded. A single Yellow Horned was spotted by one of our volunteers on the outside of the chalet on the 7th.

April was not a productive month, not surprising as the trap was only put on twice. However, Oak Beauty and Pine Beauty were added to the list.

May has been much more productive with the trap run on average twice a week. However, the number of species caught in one night has not yet exceeded 20. The start of the month was particularly noteworthy for the amount of Brindled Beauties turning up. These faded by mid month, though the occasional one still puts in an appearance. A male emperor moth was brought in to the visitor centre on the 5th, apparently found along one of the trails. It was later returned to the spot it was taken from. Plenty of Great Prominents have been seen. The 12th saw Chocolate-tip, Scorched Wing, Bird's Wing, Dark-barred Twin-spot Carpet, Yellow Belle, Heart and Dart and lots of Lesser Swallow Prominents. The 20th also proved to be a good night. The first hawk-moth turned up – a Poplar Hawk-moth, as well as Tawny Shears, and plenty of Brown Silver-lines and Treble Lines. The end of the month saw yet more species added to the year list including Cream-spot Tiger, Fox Moth, Buff-tip, Common White Wave, Silver-ground Carpet and Light Brocade.

Eye - Paul Kitchener - January to May 2002

Paul in Eye reports some early spring records with first records for April of the following species; Green Carpet, Common Pug, Scorched Carpet, Lunar Marbled Brown, Pale Tussock, Buff Ermine, Least Black Arches. Other species of interest include; a second record of Orange Footman and second and third records for Buttoned Snout. Early Moth also put in an appearance this year after being absent last year.

News from the Thurston Recorder – Paul Bryant - January to June 2002

In common with many it was a slow start to the year with the trap not seeing the dark of night till mid-February. Congratulations must go to my wife for actually finding the first moth of the year, a Dotted Border on the spare room window - obviously intrigued by what she was doing on the computer!

Regular trapping started in earnest at the end of March with the highlight being a Pine Beauty on the last day of the month. Little did I know, but this was the start of what has turned out to be a good run as thirty-five new species have been added to the garden list so far this year. Generally, however, catches were small and mostly consisted of the odd Early Grey, Common Quaker or Hebrew Character. The only other highlight was a single Early Thorn trapped on the 30 March.

Things definitely started to pick up during April and May. The first Shuttle-shaped Dart appeared on the 17 April but, judging by the records since, it's going to be another race between Heart & Dart and Buff Ermine to see which species becomes the commonest garden visitor in 2002. Currently the money is on Heart & Dart. A Mullein trapped on 22 April (another new species) was the prelude to what must go down as one of my better days this year. Trapping two nights later produced only thirteen species (seventeen moths in total) but no less than six of these were new – *Esperia sulphurella*, Brindled Pug, Waved Umber (seen again at the start of May), Lunar Marbled Brown, Nut-tree Tussock and a superb Herald (sorry no pictures folks). Spruce Carpet and Coxcomb Prominent also joined the party during May as well as the more usual species on the wing at this time of the year. On the other hand micro's were generally conspicuous by their absence – the highlight being a *Nematopogon swammerdamella* on 27 May, a species with an apparently poorly known distribution in the county.

June has been very productive, probably helped by the use of my MV trap on more than one occasion. Trapping on at least three nights with my MV drew in a total of thirty-six, thirty-eight and forty-four species. Not to be outdone the actinic mustered at least twenty plus species on two nights and an impressive thirty-six on 24 June. With so much to choose from I shall try to pick out a few highlights. New micro's included *Monopis obviella* and *Telioides luculella* (2nd), *Gypsonoma dealbana* (24th) and *Dichrorampha petiverella* (26th) as well as *Epinotia abbreviana* on the latter date. Of the macro's Eyed Hawk-moth has finally been lured to the trap. Two were caught at the end of the month (26th), the same night that I had my first Hornet (the big, stinging variety) in the garden. Other newcomers included The Shears, Light Brocade and Clouded-bordered Brindle on the 6th, a female Ghost Moth and a Bordered White on 16th and a Plain Golden-Y on the 19th. Backed up by a good smattering of the more expected species, including a mixture of pugs and carpets, the good old Thurston Wave (sorry, Treble Brown-spot), Swallow-tailed Moth, Flame, Green Silver-lines and Spectacle to name but a few, it has been an enjoyable end to the first half of the year.

So, with the garden list currently standing on 282 species (and with a few micro's still awaiting identification) will I make it to the 300 species mark by the end of the year. A cold and wet start to July might not bode well but who knows – stay tuned folks!!

Field reports

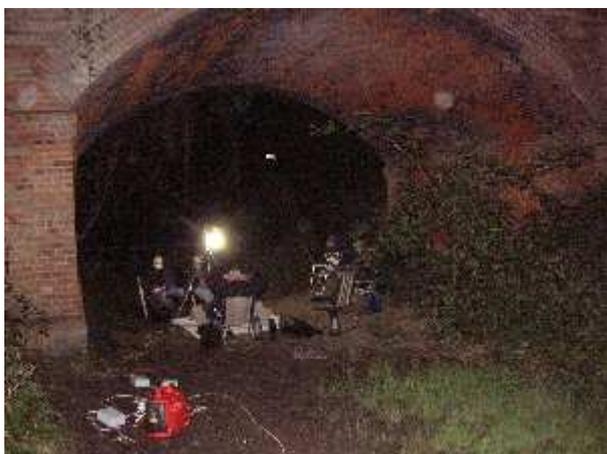
SMG Larval Hunt - Lower Hollesley Common - 12th April 2002

Results were rather disappointing at this year's night-time larval hunt; as with most sites we've searched for larva at recently Square-spot Rustic larva were abundant and there was the odd Yellow Shell larva thrown in. A single small Scalloped Oak larva was found on birch but that was about it.

More of interest was to be had at the lights with some spring species recorded; Lunar Marbled Brown, Frosted Green and Red Chestnut. Large numbers of *Agonopterix umbellana* were noticed flying in the vicinity of the gorse bushes as we searched by torchlight for larvae.

SMG Moth Night - Lavenham Railway Line Reserve - 3rd May 2002

This was the first official moth night of the year for the group and what a cold night following a day of rain. Seven species recorded with nothing out of the ordinary (apart from watching Matthew trying to photograph the few that did turn up using his new digital camera); Green Carpet, Small Waved Umber, Brimstone Moth, Waved Umber, Flame Shoulder, Common Quaker and Hebrew Character.



A good place to put the sheet when rain looks likely



Matthew and Lee showing their better sides

Moth Night - Lower Hollesley Common - 6th May 2002

A rather more successful night than the previous event at this regularly recorded heathland site. Out of the 43 species recorded of possible interest were; female Emperor Moth, Clay Triple-lines and Orange

Footman with the prominents starting to put in an appearance with Iron Prominent, Great Prominent, Lesser Swallow Prominent, Swallow Prominent and Lunar Marbled Brown.

SMG Moth Night - Sizewell Belts - 10th May 2002

This regularly visited site offers marsh, heath and wet woodland habitats. It seemed rather a slow night at times although in the end the species count was quite reasonable with 49 species recorded by the end of the night. Species of interest included; *Agonopterix arenella*, *Metendothenia atropunctana*, Scalloped Hook-tip, Orange Footman and Clouded-bordered Brindle.

Moth Night - Redlingfield Wood - 11th May 2002

Another moth night following a day of heavy rain that certainly seemed to put a dampener on the numbers of moths at the lights. Only 15 species recorded at light and as larvae with nothing remarkable to note.

SMG Moth Night - Kings Forest - 17th May 2002

The intention this year was for the group to do some recording along Chalk Lane, which I gather is under some pressure to be opened up as a public byway. There had been extensive clearance of some of the pine plantations since I last visited the site and the first part of the track is now much more exposed than in the past. As it was a windy night we decided to relocate from the wind-swept area of Chalk Lane to the nearby picnic area seeking some shelter amongst the trees.

The sheet was in a rather exposed position as it turned out and did rather poorly. Fortunately we were saved again by having some traps in more sheltered areas.

Species of note included; Clay Triple-lines, Red-green Carpet, Cream Wave, Pale-shouldered Brocade, Red Chestnut, Marbled White-spot, Nut-tree Tussock, Large Nutmeg and Orange Footman. Orange Footman seems to be going from strength to strength in the county in recent years and this year would appear to be continuing the trend.

SMG Daytime meeting - Wherstead Woods - 18th May 2002

This daytime meeting was originally planned for Kenton Hills and Sizewell Belts but due to the uncertainty of the weather was re-located to Wherstead Woods where the weather stayed mostly fine for the afternoon. As usual the meeting was attended by Neil and myself. Beating for larvae was rather productive and a good selection of larvae were identified including; Brindled Pug, Yellow-tail, Satellite, Mottled Umber, Copper Underwing and Brindled Green with some still awaiting identification. Adults on the wing included Cream Wave, Speckled Yellow, female Muslin Moth, Small Yellow Underwing, *Hysterophora maculosana*, *Micropterix calthella* and *Eulia ministrana*

SMG Moth Night - Great Martins Wood - 24th May 2002

Great Martins Wood, a privately-owned wood, is largely given over to blocks of sweet chestnut coppice but there are some interesting areas of mixed woodland, alder carr and wet meadows on the site. In keeping with this year's trend this was another night following a day of rain that did not promise a great deal. Considering the conditions we didn't do too badly with 39 species recorded, including; Peacock Moth, Marbled Brown, Grey Birch, Brindled White-spot and Buff-tip. Most notable species was Nut-tree Tussock - a rather unusual species to find in this part of Suffolk, with most of our records coming from the Brecks.

Moth Night - Dunwich Heath - 25th May 2002

A rather windy night saw us seeking as much shelter as we could on this heathland site. In a sheltered picnic area we did better than I thought we would at the start of the evening with 50 species recorded

including; *Cryptoblabes bistriga*, Cream Wave, Narrow-winged Pug, Cream-spot Tiger, Alder Moth, Flame Wainscot, Least Black Arches, Birch Mocha and Great Prominent.

SMG Moth Night - Staverton Thicks - 31st May 2002

This was the third visit that the group had made to this well-known site with large numbers of pollarded oaks and old holly trees. Results were rather disappointing for a change given the weather conditions with a lower number of species recorded than one might expect at this time of year in a wood. Buff Ermines were out in force and must have been the commonest moth of the night, other species recorded included; *Ptycholoma lecheana*, Brindled White-spot, Orange Footman, Clouded-bordered Brindle and Cream-spot Tiger.

SMG Daytime meeting - Spouses Grove - 1st June 2002

This SWT reserve offers a mosaic of habitat, with alder carr in the valley and ancient woodland interspersed with open areas (largely dominated by scrub and bracken) on the hillside. Beating for larva did not produce as good results as at the previous meeting at Wherstead. However, there were a few items of interest with both *Micropterix aruncella* and *M. calthella* recorded at buttercup flowers. Another micro-lepidoptera recorded which seems of localised distribution was the pretty *Alabonia geofrella*. A larva of Streak on broom was the only macro-moth species of interest. A sighting of Scarce Chaser by Neil Sherman is apparently of interest if you are interested in that sort of thing and for those of a reptilian persuasion a grass snake was seen on our return to the cars.

Moth Night - West Stow Country Park - 1st June 2002

This country park offering heathland, acid grassland and riverine habitats in the Brecks has been visited in the past and produced some interesting results. The conditions on the night were rather poor so expectations were not great. Not long after dark we were joined by some 'Anglo-Saxons' who's initial remark to us was 'I thought we were weird'. After a hard day's work in the forge at the nearby Anglo-Saxon village they appeared to have overdone the fluid replacement.

Moths of note recorded included; Fox Moth, Clouded Buff, True Lover's Knot, Pale-shouldered Brocade, Shoulder-striped Wainscot, Clouded-bordered Brindle, Small Clouded Brindle and May Highflyer

Moth Night - Minsmere RSPB Reserve - 2nd June 2002

Last year we visited Minsmere in the hope of recording Pauper Pug as there are plenty of lime trees along the roads approaching the reserve It was rather a cold night and not surprisingly we didn't record the moth. Conditions were more favourable this year and we did record several individuals of the moth. Minsmere is quite a distance from its other known sites in the centre and west of the county so I suspect that other sites with larger stands of lime may have this species if it is looked for.



© Neil Sherman
Pauper Pug

Other species recorded include; *Monopis monachella*, *Neofaculta ericetella*, Orange Footman, Lunar Yellow Underwing, Broom Moth, White-point and Marbled White-spot

Moth Night - Lakenheath Fen - 6th June 2002

This was our first visit this year to this four mile long RSPB reserve, where the reed-bed creation scheme is progressing well, with water levels have being raised. Lights were positioned in two areas where reed-beds are being created and on the edge of Botany Bay. Eyed Hawk-moths have appeared at light in reasonable numbers here in the past and again on this night.

Other species of interest were; *Endothenia quadrimaculana*, *Evergestis extimalis*, *Sitochroa verticalis*, *Nascia ciliaris*, Grey Carpet, Pale-shouldered Brocade, Dog's Tooth, Reed Dagger, Small Clouded Brindle, Large Nutmeg, Cream-bordered Green Pea and White Colon,

SMG Moth Night - Redgrave Fen - 7th June 2002

Weather conditions were not as favourable as when we visited this site last year so it looked as though the record 190 species total on a night was in no danger. Matthew committed a bit of faux pas when he positioned one of his traps across the river on the Norfolk side but the good moths found in that trap had probably been drawn across from the Suffolk side of the river so it wasn't a complete waste of time.

One hundred species record on the night with *Epinotia subocellana*, *Phlyctaenia perlucidalis*, *Nascia ciliaris*, Small Seraphim, Purple Clay, Ingrailed Clay, Bird's Wing, Clouded-bordered Brindle, Small Clouded Brindle and Miller being of most interest.

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SMG Email Discussion Group: <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/suffolkmothgroup>

Essex County Moth Recorder : Brian Goodey, 298 Ipswich Road, Colchester, Essex. CO4 0ET.
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The Newsletter

This is the newsletter for the Suffolk Moth Group. It is distributed free to those with email and at a £2 per annum subscription for paper copies. Four issues are produced per year, in March, June, August and November. I am always on the look for articles which will be of interest to moth recorders in Suffolk, although field and site reports should be topical. Articles should arrive by the end of the month preceding the month in which a newsletter is produced, eg. the deadline for articles for the March newsletter is the end of February.

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