

Suffolk Moth Group Newsletter

Issue 42 - Spring 2007

Edited by Tony Prichard

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Editorial

The start of this year has been rather a mixed bag with either sunny days and cold nights or more lately wet weather. Night-time field work has been rather limited this year so far. I can count on one hand the number of nights we have been out with the lamps so far this year. Some early reports of Humming-bird Hawk-moths at scattered locations around the county hints at the possibility that this species may be over-wintering with us now.

The indoor meeting at Bucklesham Village Hall was reasonably well attended this year and appeared to be well received by those attending. A good variety of talks were given this year and I would like to thank those people who put in the effort to bring along exhibits and/or give talks on the day. The venue seems a good one and is likely become the regular venue for the event in the future.

The National Moth Recording Scheme has now been officially launched and further details about the recording scheme can be found at the www.mothscount.org. One of the activities

currently underway is a consultation exercise with the county moth recorders. Once I have some more information, I will provide some further feedback in the newsletter on how this affects the moth recording community in Suffolk. The main point to take note of at the moment is that moth records should continue to be sent to myself. The moth recording scheme will be built upon the existing network of county moth recorders which will probably mean some extra volunteer work.

Colin Plant mentioned in a recent email that Volume 4 of the Microlepidoptera of Europe series, covering Evergestinae, Scopariinae and Acentropinae of the Pyralidae, contains some mistakes in the illustrations. Plate 2 of the book has some incorrectly numbered moth illustrations as follows:

40 should read 39c

41a should read 40

41b should read 41

The caption page and text are correct, it is only the numbers on the plate itself that need changing.

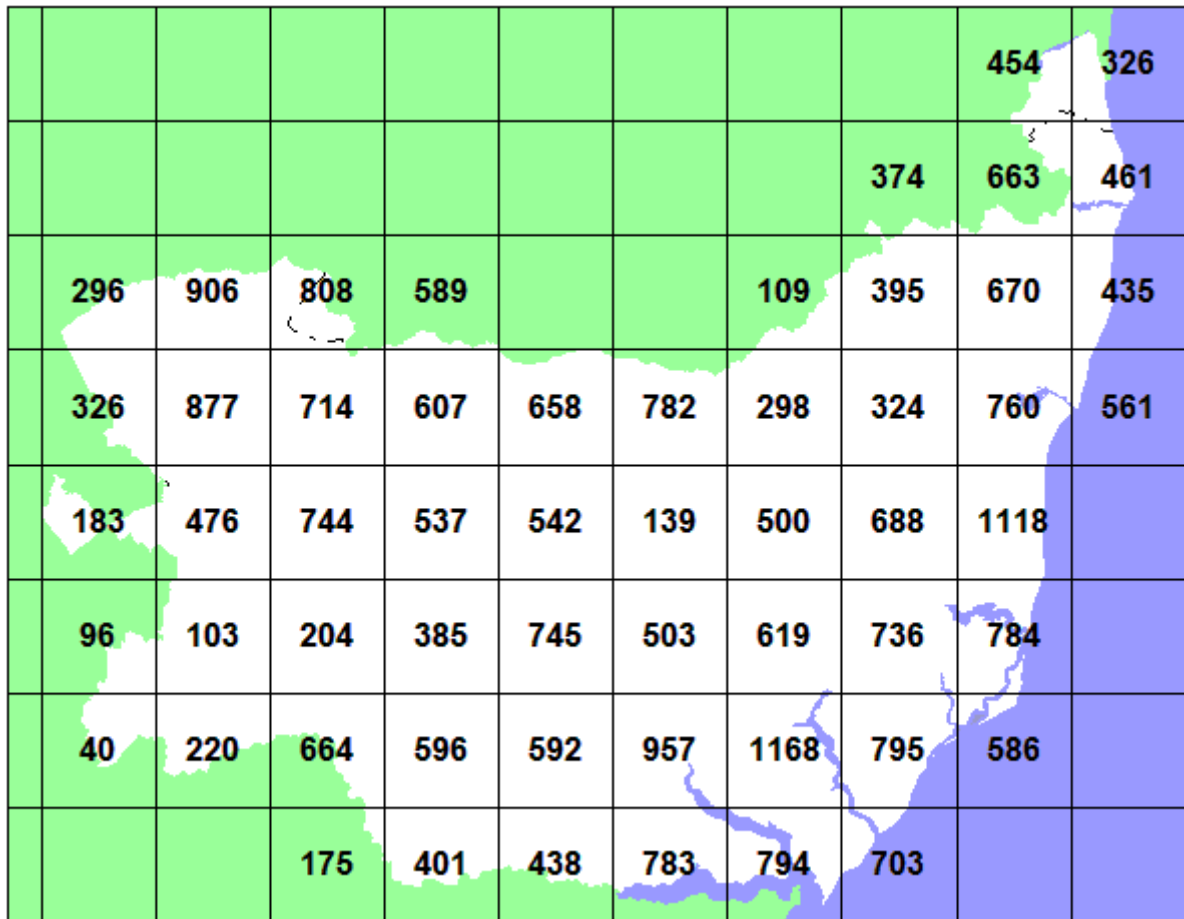
Brian Goodey has handed over the Essex county moth recorder role to David Allen. I have David's contact details if anyone would like to get in touch with him but until I have checked with him I will not be publishing them on the web site.

Indoor Meeting 2007 - Tony Prichard

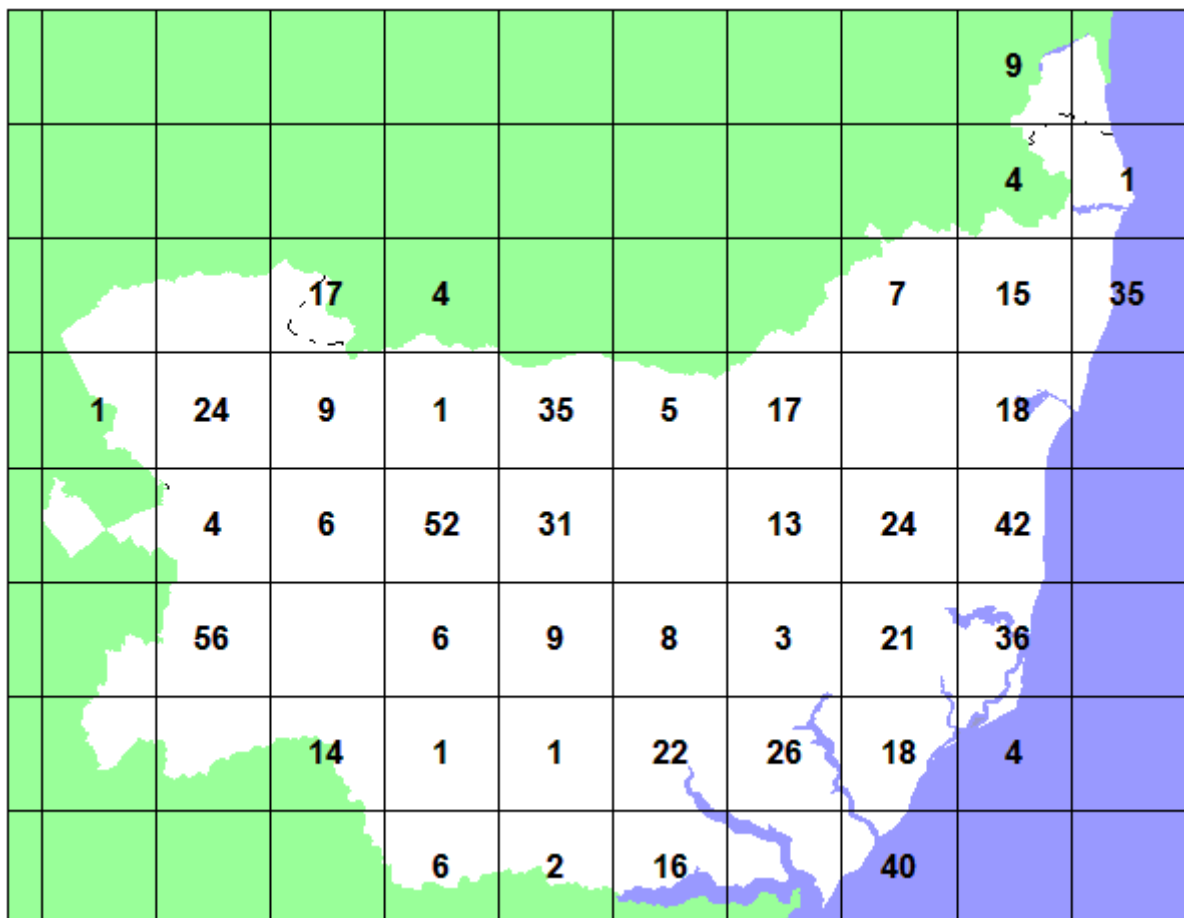
I gave a slightly abbreviated report this year but I have included below some of the slides from the presentation that might be of interest to those who were not there.

At the time of the meeting the county moth database had a total of 335,551 records, with some 2006 records still to be entered. The number of records received per year continues to go at a rapid rate with over 50,000 records received for 2006. This compares with average annual figures below 10,000 during the 1990's.

Recording coverage of the county continues to improve, with the exception of the south-west of the county where relatively little recording has been done.



Species counts per 10km at end of 2006



New Species Per Ten Km in 2006 (so far)

Name changes for Microlepidoptera species - Tony Prichard

It has been a while since we last had to go through the confusion of changed scientific names of micro-lepidoptera. A couple of years ago John Langmaid and David Agassiz published a list of changed names, species splits and new British microlepidoptera species in the Entomologist's Record [Langmaid & Agassiz, 2005]. As most members do not subscribe to this journal I have included a summary of the information provided in the article, the newsletter and web site have been largely changed to use the new terminology. Further details about these name changes can be found in the original article.

This first table lists those species where the names have been changed, for varying reasons.

Name changes		
B & F	Old name	New name
135	<i>Narycia monilifera</i>	<i>Narycia duplicella</i>
180	<i>Diplodoma herminata</i>	<i>Diplodoma laichartingella</i>
182	<i>Bankesia douglasii</i>	<i>Bankesia conspurcatella</i>
183	<i>Bacotia sepium</i>	<i>Bacotia claustrilla</i>
343	<i>Phyllonorycter quinnata</i>	<i>Phyllonorycter esperella</i>
441	<i>Paraswammerdamia lutarea</i>	<i>Paraswammerdamia nebulella</i>
564	<i>Coleophora obscenella</i>	<i>Coleophora virgaureae</i>
617	<i>Elachista megerlella</i>	<i>Elachista obliquella</i>
672	<i>Depressaria pastinacella</i>	<i>Depressaria heraclei</i>
873	<i>Blastobasis lignea</i>	<i>Blastobasis adustella</i>
874	<i>Blastobasis decolorella</i>	<i>Blastobasis lacticolella</i>
875a	<i>Blastobasis wolffi</i>	<i>Blastobasis rebeli</i>
1075	<i>Phiaris olivana</i>	<i>Phiaris micana</i>
1119	<i>Eucosma catoptrana</i>	<i>Eucosma rubescana</i>
1255	<i>Cydia succedana</i>	<i>Cydia ulicetana</i>
1284	<i>Dichrorampha gueneeana</i>	<i>Dichrorampha vancouverana</i>
1369	<i>Uresphita polygonalis</i>	<i>Uresphita gilvata</i>

This second section lists new species that had been added to the UK list of micro-lepidoptera at the time of publication. Other species have been added since. Note also that 257 *Leucoptera orobi* has been restored to full specific status.

New species	
B & F	Name
24a	<i>Ectoedemia hannoverella</i>
36a	<i>Ectoedemia heringella</i>
203a	<i>Infurcitinea captans</i>
311a	<i>Dialectica scalariella</i>
366a	<i>Cameraria ohridella</i>
601a	<i>Elachista nobilella</i>
642a	<i>Metalampra italica</i>
847a	<i>Syncopacma albifrontella</i>
875a	<i>Blastobasis rebeli</i>

896b	<i>Cosmopterix pulchrimella</i>
898a	<i>Pyroderces argyrogrammos</i>
990a	<i>Dichelia histrionana</i>
1454b	<i>Dioryctria sylvestrella</i>
1466a	<i>Ancylosis cinnamonella</i>

The final table details some species that have now been split into more than one species.

Split species				
B & F	Name		B & F	Name
593	<i>Elachista regificella</i>	is comprised of	593	<i>Elachista regificella</i>
			593a	<i>Elachista geminatella</i>
			593b	<i>Elachista tengstroemi</i>
1062	<i>Acleris emargana</i>	is comprised of	1062	<i>Acleris emargana</i>
			1062a	<i>Acleris effractana</i>
1200	<i>Eucosma hohenwartiana</i>	is comprised of	1200	<i>Eucosma hohenwartiana</i>
			1200a	<i>Eucosma parvulana</i>
			1200b	<i>Eucosma fulvana</i>

References

Langmaid, J. & Agassiz, D. J. L., 2005. Changes in the Names of British Microlepidoptera. *Entomologist's Record and Journal of Variation*. **117**: 143-147

Field reports - Tony Prichard

14th October 2006 - Leaf-miner Recording Day at Herringfleet Hills and Somerleyton -

This event attracted quite a few people, which is rather surprising given the lack of interest in other daytime meetings that the group holds. I suspect that the pub lunch between the morning and afternoon sessions may have something to do with it. The morning session was held at Herringfleet Hills, part of the Somerleyton Estate with an area of woodland running down to the wet meadows and marshes bordering the River Waveney. Fifty-six species were recorded in the morning, which was a reasonable number given the restricted habitat and limited variety of trees. Some of the more interesting species recorded were *Ectoedemia argyropeza* on aspen, both *Parornix finitimella* and *Deltatornix torquilella* on blackthorn and *Phyllonorycter rajella* and *P. kleemannella* on alder and an adult *Acleris logiana* was also spotted as rest. The hedgerow outside the car park also produced some species of interest with *Leucospilapteryx omissella* mines on Mugwort and *Coleophora lineolea* cases on Black Horehound.

After lunch we had a wander rounds the lanes in the Somerleyton area and managed to pick up a list of fifty three species. These included *Acrocercops brongniardella*, *Pexicopia malvella*, *Cameraria ohridella*, *Diurnea fagella* (larva), *Stigmella viscerella*, *Phyllonorycter schreiberella* and *Stigmella tiliae*.

In all it was an interesting day with a variety of species found and most people seemed to enjoy the day. Our thanks go to Keith Knight for organising the venues and most importantly selecting a good pub for lunchtime.

17th March 2007 - Moth Night at Wolves Wood

After a cold start to the year we finally managed to get a window of warm weather, when we could dust of the traps and get out in the field for the first time this year. Not too surprisingly given the time of year we only managed to record 15 species. The usual collection of spring-time moths were on the wing with Common Quaker, Small Quaker, March Moth, Clouded Drab, Brindled Pug, Hebrew Character and *Tortricodes alternella*. Species more restricted to woodland included Small Brindled Beauty and Yellow Horned. Surprisingly the amount of aspen nearby there was no sign of any Lead-coloured Drab.

6th April 2007 - Moth Night at Raydon Great Wood

A similar night to the previous one at Wolves Wood. This time we did manage to pick up Lead-coloured Drab and a few other spring-time species were starting to put in an appearance - Early Thorn, Oak Beauty, Red Chestnut and Frosted Green.

13th April 2007 - Moth Night at Lower Hollesley Common

A rather cool night at this heathland site with low moth activity around the lights. A short species list with species of interest including Red-green Carpet, Birch Mocha, Great Prominent, Red Chestnut and Pale Prominent.

28th April 2007 - Moth Night at Groton Wood

An ancient woodland site with a history of recording by the moth group. A rather cool night again but the season was showing signs of progressing. A total of 21 species was recording including *Semioscopis steinkellneriana*, Water Carpet, Lunar Marbled Brown, Lime Hawk-moth, Streamer, Orange Footman, Maiden's Blush, Coxcomb Prominent and Pebble Prominent.

Reports from Recorders around the county

Records reported in this section have not been checked by the Suffolk Moth Panel. Many thanks go to the recorders who provide write-ups and records for this section.

Moths at Bawdsey, July to December 2006 - Matthew Deans

July

This hot and sultry month with night time temperatures often in the high teens/low twenties produced a fantastic number and variety of moths with many rare immigrants recorded.

The third *Ethmia terminella* for the site (all this year) was trapped on 7th. At this time of year some of the coastal pyrales are particularly evident: *Platytes alpinella* (taken six times), *Anerastia lotella* (4th and 7th) and *Gymnancyla canella* (taken nine times, first ever records) were the highlights. The pyrale *Sciota adelphella* put in a good show with seven recorded this month between 2nd and 20th.

Macros worthy of note included Lackey (12th and 19th), Tawny Wave (3rd July), Rosy Wave (4th and 13th), Balsam Carpet (4th), Many-lined (17th - first site and third County record), Phoenix (19th and 20th), Feathered Beauty (4th - third County record), Round-winged Muslin (17th first site record), Red-necked Footman (4th), Dotted Footman (16th, 18th and 24th), Pigmy Footman (12th and 18th), Scarce Black Arches (19th - second site record), Sand Dart (4th - first site record), Langmaid's Yellow Underwing (five between 19th and 31st), Minor Shoulder-knot (10th), Tree-lichen Beauty (two on 25th and one on 26th), Slender Brindle (two on 24th), Silver Barred (singles on 4th and 6th) and Scarce Silver Lines (7th).

The L-album Wainscot was trapped seven times between 2nd and 19th – a slightly better showing than in 2005.

Regular migrant totals for the month were 782 *Plutella xylostella* (Diamond-back), 14 *Ostrinia nubilalis* (European Corn-borer), 16 *Nomophila noctuella* (Rush Veneer), one Gem, 28 Dark Sword-grass, five Small Mottled Willow, two Bordered Straw and 1000 Silver Y.

August

This month was not quite as manic as July, however it was busy with immigrants including a notable arrival of Scarce Bordered Straw.

Some interesting micros included *Aphelia viburnana* (1st and 2nd), *Cryptoblabes bistriga* (8th) and *Ancylosis oblitella* (1st and 7th).

Noteworthy macros for Bawdsey were Dark Spinach (18th and 31st), Cypress Pug (14th – third County record), Large Thorn (22nd), Striped Hawk-moth (one on 19th was a long awaited addition the site list), Square-spotted Clay (four this month), Great Brocade (two on 15th), Cosmopolitan (24th – second County record), Suspected (17th), Reed Dagger (6th and 16th), Langmaid's Yellow Underwing (one on 2nd), Tree-lichen Beauty (singles on 8th and 16th – the tenth and eleventh individuals ever taken at Bawdsey), Bulrush Wainscot (18th), Webb's Wainscot (17th), Gold Spot (6th), Scarce Silver Y (13th) and Pinion-streaked Snout (16th).



Striped Hawk-moth © Matthew Deans



Scarce Silver Y © Matthew Deans

One of the highlights of the month was the appearance of large numbers of Humming-bird Hawk-moths. They were seen almost daily nectaring on Buddleia with peak counts of 10 on 11th and seven on both the 16th and 21st.

Regular migrant totals for the month were 116 *Plutella xylostella* (Diamond-back), 28 *Udea ferrugalis* (Rusty-dot Pearl), 194 *Nomophila noctuella* (Rush Veneer), one *Convolvulus* Hawk-moth, 143 Dark Sword-grass, 8 Pearly Underwing, 26 Small Mottled Willow, 53 Scarce Bordered Straw, 22 Bordered Straw and 776 Silver Y.

September

This month was the most exciting period of the year with many quality immigrants arriving – including some from the tropics.

A specimen of *Euchromius ocella* (29th) was the most exciting micro and was new to the County. Then there was another tropical pyrale – *Antigastra catalaunalis* – which arrived on 15th – this was the second for Suffolk following one a few days previously at Dunwich Heath. A *Palpita vitrealis* on 24th was only the second ever site record and a specimen of *Oncocera semirubella* the first site record on 21st.



Euchromius ocella © Matthew Deans

Highlights amongst the macros were Vestal (a long awaited first site record on 24th), Large Thorn (11th and 16th), August Thorn (11th), Dotted Footman (singles on 13th and 14th), Four-spotted Footman (9 on 14th, 5 on 15th and 5 on 16th - part of a record influx into Suffolk), Dotted Clay (16th), Large Ranunculus (two recorded), Dusky-lemon Sallow (three recorded), Clancy's Rustic (one on 18th was the second County record), Porter's Rustic (one on 16th - second for Suffolk) and Beautiful Hook-tip (22nd). The pride of place though went to the

Beautiful Marbled taken on 21st – a stunningly beautiful addition to the Suffolk list.



Nine Four-spotted Footman © Matthew Deans



Beautiful Marbled © Matthew Deans

Second-brood L-album Wainscot appeared from 11th and 47 were recorded through until the month's end peaking at 10 on 24th.

Regular migrant totals for the month were 72 *Plutella xylostella* (Diamond-back), 18 *Ostrinia nubilalis* (European Corn-borer), 19 *Udea ferrugalis* (Rusty-dot Pearl), 435 *Nomophila noctuella* (Rush Veneer), one Vestal, one Gem, 15 Convolvulus Hawk-moth, one Humming-bird Hawk-moth – first ever trapped, 104 Dark Sword-grass, 109 Pearly Underwing, 21 Delicate, 15 Small Mottled Willow, 113 Scarce Bordered Straw, 3 Bordered Straw and 138 Silver Y.

October

Another warm and dry month with a good haul of immigrants dominating the headlines. Some exceptional trap counts were achieved right up until the end of the month.

Numbers of micros dwindled but still included some good ones most notably *Acrolepiopsis assectella* Leek Moth (27th), *Tachystola acroxantha* (13th), *Crociosema plebejana* (noted three times) and *Palpita vitrealis* (17th and 29th).

Macros were represented by Juniper Carpet (25th), Streak (13th), Red-headed Chestnut (one of ab. *glabra* on 12th), Dusky-lemon Sallow (5th), Golden Twin-spot (five between 17th and 29th) and Clancy's Rustic (12 between 10th and 30th).



Red-headed Chestnut ab. *glabra* © Matthew Deans



Clancy's Rustic © Matthew Deans

The L-album Wainscot second-brood continued right through until 28th with 41 trapped during the month.

Regular migrant totals for the month were 49 *Plutella xylostella* (Diamond-back), 138 *Udea ferrugalis* (Rusty-dot Pearl), 503 *Nomophila noctuella* (Rush Veneer), 7 Gem, 3 *Convolvulus* Hawk-moth, 134 Dark Sword-grass, 95 Pearly Underwing, 100 Delicate, 3 Small Mottled Willow, 79 Scarce Bordered Straw and 511 Silver Y.

November

A poor month with the highlights being a few late immigrants and several late examples of resident species.

A Lesser Yellow Underwing was recorded on 16th, Dark Arches on 15th with a Large Wainscot on 5th.

Regular migrant totals for the month were 3 *Plutella xylostella* (Diamond-back), 18 *Udea ferrugalis* (Rusty-dot Pearl), 1 *Nomophila noctuella* (Rush Veneer), 4 Dark Sword-grass, one Pearly Underwing, one Delicate and 46 Silver Y.

December

The trap was only run twice with single *Plutella xylostella* (Diamond-back) and Pearly Underwing taken on 11th and two December Moths taken on 14th.

Moths at Ipswich Golf Course, October 2006 to February 2006 - Neil Sherman

October

October 2006 was another very mild month, following on from the warm September. Despite some night time temperatures being over 12 degrees, very few moths were seen in the traps. 70 species were caught (48 macros, 22 micros) from 14 nights trapping; in fact this is a lower total than 2005 when 82 species were seen. There was lots of excitement on the coast with plenty of immigrants appearing, but very few of these seemed to filter inland. At the site, a Gem (10th), 2 Dark Sword-grass (25th) and 5 *Udea ferrugalis* were the only migrants of note.



Gem © Neil Sherman

Other macros of possible interest included the following. The Red-green Carpet had appeared in good numbers at the end of September, this continued into October. 36 were seen, this being record numbers at the site. Maximum on one night was 11 on the 9th. Other moths in good numbers included Streak (21 seen), Blair's Shoulder-knot (16 seen, mostly in the garden trap) and Chestnut (200+ seen on one clump of flowering Ivy on the 11th). There were also records of Merveille du Jour (27th), Large Ranunculus (15th) and Dark Chestnut (3 records).

Three species appeared that were a bit more unexpected, with their normal flight periods occurring during the summer, although in recent years this phenomena is becoming more common. Double -striped Pug (17th, latest ever), Rosy Footman (16th) and Buff Footman (5th and 16th) were all seen.

Micros of possible note were *Diurnea lipsiella* (10th), *Eudonia angustea* (9th) and *Amblyplitia acanthadactyla* (2 records, 11th and 12th for the year). On the 7th, three mines of *Leucospilapteryx omissella* were found on Mugwort in the garden, this being a new site record.

November

Trapping was only attempted once in November, on the 14th. 7 species were caught, including another Red-green Carpet, 1 *Udea ferrugalis* and 1 Silver Y amongst the commoner winter species. A daytime observation of interest for the site was an *Agonopterix ocellana* flushed whilst coppicing gorse on the 13th, the 3rd site record.

On the 24th, a quick search by torchlight at night at one of the Lunar Yellow Underwing breeding sites on the course produced a count of 12 larvae in five minutes of looking. Good numbers of Winter Moth (40+ including several mating pairs) were also seen on oak tree trunks, along with a few Scarce Umber and a singleton Northern Winter Moth.

December

No trapping took place in December, and very few moths were seen at all. There were single daytime sightings of both *Acleris logiana* and *Agonopterix umbellana* on the 13th, both flushed while coppicing gorse. Other moths noted included Winter Moth and *Emmelina monodactyla* both seen by day on the 19th, and a Pale Brindled Beauty, seen on the clubhouse wall under the security lights on the 29th. This is the 3rd December sighting of this species at the site.

Here is a brief summary of the trapping year at the golf course – 696 species were recorded, 353 macros and 343 micros. This was a better total than 2005, when 669 species were noted. Of those 696, 38 were new species (25 micros and 13 macros). With these numbers added to the overall list for the site, the total now stands at 1039 Lepidoptera (1009 moths).

January

First moths of the New Year were seen on the 19th, when a trap left on in the garden overnight caught Spring Usher (2), Chestnut (3), Early Moth (1) and *Tortricodes alternella* (2 - equal earliest ever date). This was despite a gale-force wind picking up in the early hours of the morning! Nothing else of note was seen until the end of January, due to continuing very windy and sometimes cold weather. The last few days of the month were very mild for the time of year, and a trap was put out on the 31st. This produced 4 Spring Usher, Chestnut, Pale Brindled Beauty, 2 March Moth and a larva of a Lunar Underwing!



Female Spring Usher © Neil Sherman



Tortricodes alternella © Neil Sherman

February

Mild conditions were prevalent during the month, but it was often wet and windy too so little trapping was undertaken. Lights were operated on 3 nights, mainly in the middle week. Most of the usual early spring species were noted, but not in large numbers, possibly because emergence took place over many nights rather than just one or two warm ones, a phenomenon that has occurred in previous seasons. Moths noted were Pale Brindled Beauty (peak 20 on the 19th), Spring Usher (peak 6 on 15th), March Moth, Chestnut, Dotted Border and *Tortricodes alternella* (peak 9 on the 15th). Other scarcer species seen included *Ypsolopha ustella* (16th), *Acleris logiana* (one on the house window on the 1st) and Small Brindled Beauty (5 on the 19th were the first for the year).

A Common Quaker was noted in the garden trap on the 16th – this is the earliest site record for the species.

There were a couple of interesting daytime observations. A singleton *Amblyptilia acanthadactyla* was noted while coppicing gorse on the 6th – this species seems to be increasing in the area. A female Spring Usher was found at dawn on the 26th on an oak tree trunk – this is the first time this sex has been noted at the site.

A Woolpit winter and a stranger indoors - Paul Bryant

As September faded into notebook memory the month of October saw a distinct down turn in the number of moths attracted to the garden trap. It all started off quite well with eleven species noted on the 10th. These included a superb Merveille du Jour, a Barred Sallow and three Pale Mottled Willows. Just a few days later, and the count was down to five. And so it continued until the month end, albeit with a slight reprieve on the 17th when I recorded nine species. The pick of the months moths were Scarce Bordered Straw (6th and 21st), Large Wainscot (16th &

17th), Feathered Thorn (four dates late month) and single Silver Y and *Plutella xylostella* (27th) and an *Udea ferrugalis* (28th).



Scarce Bordered Straw © Paul Bryant



Large Wainscot © Paul Bryant



Merveille du Jour © Paul Bryant

When I packed the trap away at the end of October little did I realise that that would be it for the rest of the year. A brief mild spell on the 29th January tempted me to trap again. The reward for my efforts was a single Chestnut. However, the prize for the first Woolpit moth of 2007 went to a Double-striped Pug that was found indoors on the 3rd.

February was a write-off but trapping started again in early March as and when conditions have permitted. So far it's just been the odd Small or Common Quaker, Hebrew Character or Clouded Drab although a Grey Shoulder-knot on the 8th and Twin-spotted Quakers on the 8th and 16th have helped perk things up a little.

However, the biggest piece of news to come out of Woolpit stems not from the trap but from the lounge curtains. A strange place to look for moths you might think? It all dates back to the 21st October when I stumbled across a rather strange looking moth sitting on the mat below said curtains. It looked nothing like any moth I had ever seen before. It was duly photographed and the image sent to a few group members who were equally stumped. Anyway, to cut a long story short, the moth was exhibited at the BENHS Exhibition in London where at first it generated little interest. That was until someone suggested that it could be a 'micro' moth from Asia or Australasia. Martin Honey from the Natural History Museum was invited to have a look and he recalled having seen something similar but couldn't place it. After a quick chat both the moth and pupal case were donated to the NHM in the hope that a positive identification could be secured.



South African moth? © Paul Bryant

That evening I tried to think of anything unusual that had been in the house. All I could come up with was a somewhat 'woody' bouquet of flowers that had been given to my wife a few weeks before hand. Further investigation the next day revealed that the flowers had come from Marks & Spencer's where they had been sold under the name of 'Cape Flora'. The news was quickly relayed to Martin who replied by saying that he had already come to the independent conclusion that my moth was, indeed, South African in origin. Further more, he had narrowed it down to a species of *Cryptolechia* (a rather large family of micro-moths).

Sadly, that's where the story ends at the moment. Martin's still waiting to hear back from colleagues in South Africa and I still don't know whether I have an 'adventive' first for Suffolk and the UK. All I can say is "Stay Tuned Folks".

As always, happy trapping.

Paul

Eye Moths, November 2006 to March 2007 - Paul Kitchener

November

Although night time temperatures held up quite well for most of the month only thirteen species were recorded which is about the average for the six autumns I have now trapped at this site.

Only two "migrants" showed up, the last *Plutella xylostella* of the year was seen on the 13th and a Silver Y was trapped on the 12th.

Orthopygia glaucinalis on the 5th was the second latest site record and *Acleris sparsana* on the 10th was the first I've recorded in November. Strangely, December Moth is a scarce species in Eye, in the ten years prior to 2006 I had caught only ten individuals so the two this autumn was double the average! Four Sprawler this autumn is also quite good; the first was at the end of October and the last in December.

December, January and February

The six species trapped in December included a very late Dark Arches on the 2nd and a Silver Y on the 14th. Only two Winter Moth have been seen, both in December and for the second consecutive winter/spring no Early Moth have appeared.

The first moth of the New Year was a Pale Brindled Beauty on the 13th January, a very

welcome sight not just for that reason but for the fact that I saw none at all last year. The remainder of the winter period produced nothing more than the odd Dark Chestnut and Chestnut.

March

For numbers of species and individuals recorded last March was my worst March on record, so hopes were high that this year just had to be better. As it turned out it was, with most species appearing on cue and in good numbers, especially Common Quaker, the numbers of which, by the month's end, had already exceeded those of the entire spring of 2006. The first was trapped on the 7th with Hebrew Character following the next day (the first ones last year were on the 26th and 30th respectively, by far my latest ever).



Lead-coloured Drab © Paul Kitchener



Diurnea fagella © Paul Kitchener

A Red Chestnut on the 8th was my earliest ever record and four *Diurnea fagella* were seen, the last at this site was in 2003. Another species seen here for the first time since 2003 was Lead-coloured Drab, a single being trapped on the 26th. The last day of the month produced an *immaculata* form of Twin-spotted Quaker, rarely seen here, but more surprising was a Tawny Pinion, a site first and "lifer".



Twin-spotted Quaker f. *immaculata* © Paul Kitchener



Tawny Pinion © Paul Kitchener

So, a better start to the mothing year than in 2006, but will it continue? The first half of 2007 cannot be worse and the second half cannot be better, surely?

Moths at Rendham, July to December 2006 - Matthew Deans

July

The hot and sultry conditions experienced during the month certainly meant that nothing was busy.

Pick-of-the-bunch amongst the micros included *Mompha ochraceella* on 2nd, *Epiblema foenella* and *Ostrinia nubilalis* European Corn Borer on 5th, *Pyralis farinalis* Meal Moth on 11th and *Euzophera pinguis* on 20th.

A single Leopard Moth was taken on 5th – recorded most years at Rendham. Both the Large and Small Emerald were trapped on 2nd. Amongst the pugs, two specimens of Yarrow Pug were identified on 20th and 25th – and a Narrow-winged Pug on 25th - the first garden records. The Magpie Moth was also trapped on both the 20th and 25th with Orange Moth on 2nd and 5th.

The White Satin peaked at three on 25th and a Rendham speciality the Muslin Footman appeared on 5th when two were trapped. The Olive was caught on two occasions, Lunar-spotted Pinion on three nights and Fen Wainscot on 20th. Both Plain and Beautiful Golden Y were trapped several times during the first half of July. One of the highlights of the month was the Beautiful Hook-tip trapped on 20th – the second garden record after the first last year.

August

Another hot and humid month produced some fantastic new garden records.

The micro *Scrobipalpa costella* was identified for the first time in the garden on 10th. Otherwise micros were pretty much run-of-the-mill with *Agriphila selasella* on 8th, *Elophila nymphaeata* Brown China-mark on 10th, *Parapoynx stratiotata* Ringed China-mark on 8th and *Nephoterix angustella* on 16th about the most noteworthy in garden terms.

Amongst the geometers a Maiden's Blush on 8th, Flame Carpet on 22nd and Small Phoenix on 10th were all scarce visitors to the garden trap.

The Humming-bird Hawk-moth was recorded nectaring at Buddleia in the garden on 22nd and 29th – these were the first confirmed garden records. However pride-of-place went to the pristine Spurge Hawk-moth trapped on 16th – most certainly the moth-of-the-year at Rendham and very well received. It was discovered perched on the perspex of the Skinner trap and had arrived some time between 2am and dawn as the trap had been inspected at 2am.



Spurge Hawk-moth © Matthew Deans

Still a nice moth of see, despite its relegation from the UK BAP species lists, is the Square-spotted Clay. This year singles were trapped on 8th and 16th.

Other noctuids of interest included Feathered Gothic on 30th, Bulrush Wainscot on 16th and two Scarce Bordered Straws trapped on 8th.

September

It was to be another exciting month for mothing – particularly for migrants. Night time temperatures fortunately held up and produced some very interesting results.

As to be expected the micro numbers tumbled although a *Hypatima rhomboidella* on 28th was welcome. A scattering of *Nomophila noctuella* Rush Veneer arrived during the month and singles of *Orthopygia glaucinalis* and *Nephopterix angustella* on 27th.

A single Vestal was the third garden record on 26th – incredibly this species is more regular at Rendham than at Bawdsey which only has one record! The Bordered Beauty is a wonderful moth – this year one was taken on 16th.

An amazing seven *Convolvulus* Hawk-moths were trapped between 20th and 28th including two on 21st and three on 23rd. These were the first records for Rendham and part of a wider influx into Suffolk and indeed the UK as a whole. Another species which was subject to a large influx into Suffolk was Four-spotted Footman – one male was taken on 15th – another new garden record.

The Pearly Underwing does not appear in the garden annually – the specimen on 21st was the first since 2004. Even rarer in garden terms was the Heath Rustic taken on 16th – the first garden record since 1999. Two different specimens of The Delicate were caught on 27th and 28th – new for the garden. A Feathered Brindle was a garden second and first since 2003 and Black Rustic on 21st was yet another first!

National Moth Night on 23rd produced two new macros for the garden – Small Mottled Willow and Blair's Wainscot – the latter was also new to the County and totally unexpected. Three Scarce Bordered Straws also arrived the same night along with the *Convolvulus* Hawk-moths already mentioned above.



Blair's Wainscot © Matthew Deans

A Dusky-lemon Sallow was another addition to the garden list on 27th – this species appearing to have a good year county-wide.

October

It was rather an anti-climax here at Rendham after the fabulous summer.

November Moths appeared from 16th (six trapped) and a few Mallow and Feathered Thorn persisted.

Four specimens of Merveille du Jour and an Orange Sallow on 17th brightened up the catch and six Brown-spot Pinions were trapped throughout the month.

Singles of Dark Sword-grass and White-point together with three Silver Y on 17th hinted at migration but nothing more exciting could be found.

November and December

No trapping was undertaken due to the poor conditions.

Contact details

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Essex County Moth Recorder : David Allen

The Newsletter

This is the newsletter for the Suffolk Moth Group. It is available for download from the Suffolk Moths website and subscribers can receive email notification when new issues are produced. Paper copy are available at a £2 per annum subscription. It is usually intended for three to four issues to be produced a year although the precise time of production varies. I am always on the look out for articles that will be of interest to moth recorders in Suffolk, although field and site reports should be topical. Please contact me for publication deadlines as this varies with each issue and tends to be flexible.



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