

GLOUCESTERSHIRE MOTH REPORT – 2009

Following two rather wet years, 2009 followed more normal patterns with generally mixed weather conditions in the summer, including a hot humid spell at the end of June, followed by a fine autumn.

There continue to be a good number of active moth recorders contributing to our knowledge of the county's moth fauna. So far 13000 records have been received and more are expected.

MACROLEPIDOPTERA

There were two new county records, if one ignores a century old reference to 'Gloucestershire' linked to the **Small Ranunculus**. This species was recorded by Gordon Avery in Hempsted on 3rd July. It was considered extinct in Britain for many years (Skinner 1984) but reappeared in Kent in 1998, Newport (Mon.) in 2001 and since then in Bristol and Hereford among other places so the arrival with us was not unexpected.

The other new county record was of a **Rannoch Looper** recorded by Peter Cranswick at Horsley on 2nd June. This is a migrant though resident in part of Scotland. There was an influx this year and this moth was recorded in several English counties.

Two new vice-county records for VC33 was those of **Round-winged Muslin** recorded at Swillbrook Lakes in the Cotswold Water Park by Nick Adams on 3rd July and **Small Rufous** at the same site on 24th July.

Three notable moths not seen for a number of years were recorded. Our last **Barred Tooth-striped** was seen in 1958 so when Matthew Oates trapped one at Culkerton on 31st March this was a pleasant surprise. This is Notable Na and a BAP species.

The **Silver Cloud** Notable Na has been giving some concern as records had dried up so one recorded near Cambridge by Steve Chappell on 7th May was a relief.

A **Red Sword-grass** Notable Nb recorded by Guy Meredith in Cheltenham on 14th October was the first since 2001.

The continued presence of **Barberry Carpet** (RDB) at Westonbirt was confirmed by Peter Hugo who found larvae by beating on 12th September. Other sites for the food-plant *Berberis vulgata* have been searched in vain.

Monitoring of the **Silky Wave** (RDB) in the Avon Gorge continues – this is one of only three sites in the British Isles for this species.

The BAP species **Drab Looper** is well established in the Forest of Dean and parts of the Cotswolds. A record from Simon Barker of one in Newent Woods is from a new area and 10km square.

A rarer BAP species the **Common Fan-foot** was recorded by Guy Meredith a few hundred metres north of the last sighting in the Cannop Valley. More work needs to be done on determining the present status of this moth in the Forest of Dean.

Robert Homan has continued to find evidence of the **Hornet Moth** mostly in the Cheltenham and Deerhurst area.

The **Lappet** was recorded by Steve Chappell near Cambridge on 25th June, the first record since 1998.

Apart from the Rannoch Looper above, other macro-moth migrants included five **Humming-bird Hawk-moths** and the following:-

Striped Hawk-moth photographed nectaring at Viper's Bugloss on Swift's Hill on 28th June by Mike McCrea.

Convolvulus Hawk-moth Culkerton 18th September Matthew Oates

Bordered Straw St Briavels 8th August Roger Gaunt, Highnam 15th August John Wells, NE Bristol 4th June Neale Jordan-Mellersh, Cinderford 12th June Liz Radcliffe and Dursley 20th June Steve Chappell.

Pearly Underwing Thrupp 4th September Peter Hugo and Culkerton (2) 18th September Matthew Oates.

Scarce Bordered Straw Lower Woods 29th August Peter Hugo and Peter Cranswick.

Small Mottled Willow Bishop's Cleeve 14th September Jon Brock.

A field meeting I held at Cinderford Linear Park on 27th June yielded three rare species all targets for the meeting. They were **Clouded Buff**, **Forester** and **Small Argent and Sable**. **Clouded Buff** was also recorded by Susan and David Dewsbury on Gorsty Knoll.

There was little recording on the heathland restoration sites in the Forest of Dean but high hopes are held for the 'new' site at Edgehills. The best record was of **Heath Rustic** at Crabtree Hill on 12th August after I left two traps overnight. This has extended the range from the previous sites on Tidenham Chase.

MICROLEPIDOPTERA

The following list shows all the new county records and vice-county records in check-list order. (Recorders' initials given below).

22	<i>Ectoedemia lousella</i>	Ley Park, 12.ix.09, GM; mine, new to Vc34
25	<i>Ectoedemia intimella</i>	Queen's Wood, 19.xi.09, RH; mine, new to Vc33
30	<i>Ectoedemia arcuatella</i>	Horsley Wood, 28.ix.09, GM; mine, new to Vc34
86	<i>Stigmella roborella</i>	Serridge Green, 18.viii.09, GM; adult, new to Gloucestershire
101	<i>Stigmella pyri</i>	Gwen & Vera's Fields, 10.ix.09, GM; mine, new to Vc34
285	<i>Caloptilia azaleella</i>	Fishponds, Bristol, 24.v.09, N JM; adult, new to Gloucestershire
352	<i>Phyllonorycter schreberella</i>	Highnam Woods, 4.ix.09, GM; mine, new to Vc34

401	<i>Argyresthia laevigatella</i>	Lineover Wood, 29.vi.09, GM; adult, new to Vc33
403	<i>Argyresthia glabratella</i>	Lineover Wood, 2.vii.09, GM; adult, new to Vc33
502	<i>Coleophora trigeminella</i>	N of New Beechenhurst, 24.vi.09, GM; adult, new to Gloucestershire
535	<i>Coleophora ibipennella</i>	Swindon Village, 3.ix.09, RH; case, new to Vc33
583	<i>Coleophora tamesis</i>	Edgehills, 18.viii.09, GM; case, new to Vc34
660	<i>Pseudatemelia josephinae</i>	Siccaridge Wood, 4.vii.09, GM; adult, new to Vc33
673	<i>Depressaria pimpinellae</i>	Pilning, 12.vi.09, JM; adult, new to vc34
734	<i>Argolamprotes micella</i>	Lower Woods, 4.vii.09, PC and PH; adult, new to Gloucestershire
801a	<i>Gelechia senticetella</i>	Cheltenham, 24.vii.09, RH; adult, new to Gloucestershire
818	<i>Scrobipalpa atriplicella</i>	Cheltenham, 25.v.09, GM; adult, new to vc33
974	<i>Argyrotaenia ljugiana</i>	Cheltenham, 15.ix.09, RH; bred ex larva, new to Vc33
1209	<i>Pseudococcyx turionella</i>	Lower Woods, 9.v.09, GM; adult, new to Gloucestershire
1210	<i>Rhyacionia buoliana</i>	Hempsted, 28.vi.09, GA; adult, new to Vc33
1228a	<i>Pammene ignorata</i>	Lineover Wood, 2.vi.09, GM; adult, new to Vc33

The recorders were Guy Meredith (GM), Robert Homan (RH), John Martin (JM), Gordon Avery (GA), Peter Cranswick (PC), Peter Hugo (PH) and Neale Jordan-Mellersh (N JM).

As the list indicates there has been a lot of recording of micromoths and it is difficult to highlight particular records. There are however a few that I should mention.

Pammene ignorata in the table above was first recorded in Wetmoor in 2006. The two records that year were the second and third British records. Subsequently I believe that it has been recorded elsewhere. This record from Lineover Wood suggests that it may well have been overlooked as genitalia examination is required.

Caloptilia hemidactylella (pRDB1) was recorded at Daneway in 1954 and 1955 and these constituted the only certain British records, apart from century old records from Northamptonshire. Guy Meredith found and photographed a specimen in Siccaridge Wood on 7th October. The identity was confirmed by dissection. This was found within 1 km of the old records.

Pselnophorus heterodactyla (pRDB1) is a plume moth that has been known from the Cranham area for many years and has one of the few British populations there. The larvae feed on *Lactuca muralis* and the distinctive feeding signs, once recognised, have enabled Guy to extend the known range within the area. It is now known from three 10 km squares and the population may be considered a strong one.

Celypha woodiana (pRDB2) otherwise known as the Mistletoe Marble is another BAP species. The larvae mine in mistletoe and Gloucestershire is a stronghold for this species. Most records are of mines however an adult was trapped by Steve Chappell when 10 traps were run near Cambridge on 11th July.

The full list of recorders is below however I must mention separately the amount of work done by a number of individuals. Guy Meredith has set himself the task of recording every Gloucestershire moth as well as others that might be expected. He is systematically working through the various habitats throughout the county at different times of the year and has I believe recorded 750 species in 2009. Robert Homan is pursuing various lines of enquiry with particular rare species and in some cases finding they are not as rare as was thought. Peter Hugo has continued to scatter traps far and wide east of the Severn returning in the morning to count the results. A particularly concentrated effort on the Lower Woods Reserve has been supported enthusiastically by Peter Cranswick.

The following have sent in more than one record and I am grateful to them all for their contributions.

Nick Adams, Paul Attaway, Gordon Avery, Juliet Bailey, Philip Barden, Simon Barker, Rick Benson-Bunch, Michael Bradley, Jon Brock, Steve Chappell, Patrick Clements, John Coates, Peter Cranswick, David Cross, George Davis, Susan Dewsbury, Jeremy Doe, Alastair Driver, Peter Fitchett, Simon Glover, David Haigh, Michael Harper, Ken Heron and Jenny Jones, Robert Homan, Peter Hugo, Val Jackson, Neale Jordan-Mellersh, Leslie Kent, John Knowler, Richard Maisey, John Martin, Martin Matthews, Mike McCrea, James McGill, Guy Meredith, Richard Morris, Joan Oakley, Matthew Oates, Steve Owen, Mark Parsons, Roger Pearce, Tony Perry, John and Viv Phillips, Luke Phillips, Ben Pollard, Vic Polley, Alan Prior, Hilary and Hugh Purkess, Liz Radcliffe, Bob Smith, Eric Soons, Tony Taylor, Chris Tracey, Richard Tyler, Roger Ward, John Wells, Val Weston, John Widgery, Paul Wilkins, Robert Woods, Neil Woodward.

Roger Gaunt, St Briavels, February 3rd 2010.