

# GLOUCESTERSHIRE MOTHS

2005 Newsletter 1

With the exception of a handful of nights, the weather so far this year seems to have been either cold, wet or windy or some combination of these. I have recorded the usual species at home but perhaps only on one or two occasions.

One night I checked my trap at about 9.30 pm and was pleased to find a **Pine Beauty** not a moth that I see every year. Imagine my dismay when checking the trap an hour or so later I found only its wings. Keeping watch the next night, I found that I have a nocturnal wren! This is very difficult to deal with, so I have reconstructed my old 20 watt actinic trap, not so conveniently placed as the Skinner just outside the French window, and even now I'm not sure if the wren can't get into that.

After an indoor meeting of the Conservation Committee, run by Forest Enterprise here in the Forest of Dean, we went to visit a site at Cannop where an old mine tip may be landscaped to form a sort of adventure playground for cyclists. As we stood in the sun looking at the site I was delighted to see two **Orange Underwings** flying by the birches. Later the same afternoon further down the Cannop Valley I saw the same species again. A few days later, in similar conditions, I saw several on opposite sides of Poors Allotment, a new 10km square. A number of other sites were visited in the same warm spell, but without success.

I have had very few records from other recorders so far. David Armstrong has recorded **Pale Pinion** at Clifford's Mesne and Roy and Liz Radcliffe have had **Dotted Chestnut** on the outskirts of Cinderford. Peter Hugo has had the same species at Thrupp for the first time. Peter has also used his contacts with the Rothamsted Research Station to enable me to obtain the complete moth records from the trap at Westonbirt Arboretum. I did have some records from there but only for a few years. The Excel file had over 58000 lines! There are a number of important records that I will mention in another newsletter after I've had a second opinion on some of them.

I have had several requests for some sort of programme for the coming season. I have also had requests from a number of organisations. Below I will give some dates and locations with more detail later. I also hope to get out in addition when the conditions are good, but such trapping sessions will be at short notice.

Sunday May 15 (daytime) BC meeting at Hailey Wood, Cirencester Park. Mainly for Pearl-bordered Fritillary but also Drab Looper. (Clashes with GIG meeting at Bourton-on-the Water).

Saturday June 4. Near Beechenhurst, trapping for Common Fanfoot.

Friday June 10. Trapping at Greathough Brook Valley, near Brierley, prior to the GNS Bughunt on the following day.

Saturday June 18 (daytime). GIG meeting Clearwell Meend and Gorsty Knoll (FOD).

Saturday July 2. Trapping at Coombe Hill Canal in conjunction with the GWT. This is a big recording weekend for the reserves when it is hoped to record over 500 species. We should be able to produce at least 100 moths.

Saturday July 9. National Moth Night (and day). Details later.

Saturday August 27. Trapping at Crabtree Hill (FOD) for heathland species.

Roger Gaunt, St Briavels, 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2005.

