

# GLOUCESTERSHIRE MOTHS

## 2005 Newsletter 3

There were so few moths flying in the early part of the season that it was barely worth putting a trap out never mind going elsewhere to do some trapping. For the last two weeks or so the situation has reversed so that anyone using a MV trap can have been inundated with far more moths than can be counted. To record the species is hard enough but to count them too has been virtually impossible. I will try to mention the most important highlights since the last newsletter.

The **Drab Looper** has been recorded from several more sites. Chase End Hill (Mike Bradley); Parkend Walk (Guy Meredith); Vallets Wood and Cannop Valley (myself); and Iron Mills Common (6+) (John Martin). The last is a new site for this species.

So far few migrants have turned up. There have been a few reports of **Humming-bird Hawk-moth**, one **Vestal** at Cambridge (Steve Chappell) and a small number of **Silver Y** and that is all so far.

The first of several trapping sessions since the last Newsletter was at Beechenhurst (cycle track) on 4<sup>th</sup> June where I was hoping to record the **Common Fanfoot**. This was a public event organised by RSPB. We did not see that moth but saw a number of interesting species including **Red-necked Footman** (this seems to be more frequent than usual this year), **May Highflyer**, *Oecophora bractella*, *Epinotia demarniana* and *Crassa tinctella*.

On the 10<sup>th</sup> June I trapped in the Greathough Brook Valley near Brierley, being the night before the GNS Bughunt. Highlights here were **Devon Carpet**, **May Highflyer** and **Beautiful Snout** (3).

Paul Chapman recorded **Scarce Hook-tip** (3) at James's Thorns on 11<sup>th</sup> June, **Satin Lutestring** (8), **Alder Moth** (3) and **Dark Spectacle**. This is the first record of this species for 12 years.

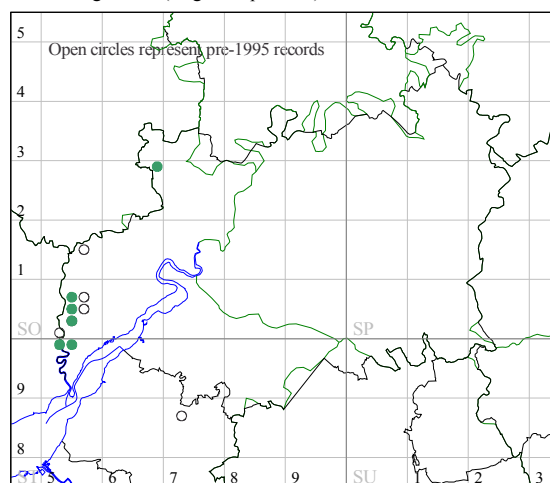
Recording the Scarce Hook-tip at such a height above the river inspired me to have another go for this species at Beechwood House near here on 16<sup>th</sup> June. Again I was unsuccessful but there are always compensations this time in the form of **Orange Moth**, **Northern Spinach** and best of all *Dichomeris ustalella* a very handsome gelechid recorded for the first time in the county last year by Mark Parsons at Shorn Cliff.

Mike Bradley with Michael Harper (the Herefordshire Recorder) ran a trap at Betty Daw's Wood on 19<sup>th</sup> June. They recorded **Orange Moth**, **Lead-coloured Pug**, **Poplar Lutestring**, **Scarlet Tiger** (3), *Argyresthia glaucinella*, *Spatalistis bifasciana*, *Pseudatemelia subochreella* (a new county record) and *Morophaga choragella*. The last was recorded the previous night in an actinic trap.

Angus Moir and Nick Hardiman trapped at Black Morgan's Wood on 21<sup>st</sup> June. They saw **Scarce Hook-tip**, **Mocha** and **Orange Moth** (20) among many

others. As the Orange Moth seems to be having a good year here is a map to show the known distribution in the county.

1924 Orange Moth (*Angerona prunaria*)



We are in the clearwing season. So far I have had records of **White-barred Clearwing** from Woorgreens as usual. Also a **Currant Clearwing** from Dowdeswell Wood and **Six-belted Clearwing** from Oakridge (Guy Meredith). I have been unsuccessful so far this year and as I used my lures first in 2002 it may well be that they have lost their effectiveness.

Robert Homan has been busy with some micros. He has found cases of *Coleophora limosipennella* on elm, and *Coleophora alnifoliella* on alder. Both species were photographed. He has also found larvae of *Epermenia chaerophyllella* on hogweed in several places. A tenanted mine taken at Woorgreens produced *Eriocrania salopiella* only the second county record. Perhaps the most exciting record was of the pretty *Chloroclysta lineella* found on limes in the middle of Cheltenham.

Guy Meredith has been busy too with mostly micros. These include *Phyllonorycter hilarella* from Edge Common; *Incurvaria praelatella* from Lineover Wood; *Elachista gangabella* on Charlton Kings Common; *Lampronia corticella* in the Greathough Brook Valley; *Micropterix aureatella* on The Park, Tidenham Chase and over the road **Little Thorn** on Poors Allotment; *Micropterix mansuetella* from Wetmoor and lots of other useful records.

At Cinderford Liz and Roy Radcliffe continue to turn up some good records which include **Fox Moth**, **Beautiful Brocade**, **Small Elephant Hawk-moth**, **Alder Moth** and **Rustic Shoulder-knot**. The last is the first west of the Severn for 15 years.

Mark Parsons has had **Puss Moth** at Hilcot End, **Cistus Forester** on Rodborough Common and Birdlip (there have been several other records of this species) and mines of *Acrocercops brongniardella* also on Rodborough Common.

Steve Chappell recorded **Confused** and **Gold Spot** at Cambridge, and **Golden Plusia**, **Red-necked Footman** and **Eyed Hawk-moth** in Dursley.

Gordon Avery has had a lot of records again at Hempsted including **Small Elephant Hawk-moth**, **Eyed Hawk-moth** (3), *Bactra furfurana* and *Nephoterix angustella*.

Peter Hugo has also been inundated with moths at Thrupp. He has had **Netted Pug**, **Wood Carpet** and **Galium Carpet**, and five different Hawk-moths on 24<sup>th</sup> June. He left a trap at Chedworth Primary School overnight and delighted the children with a **Privet Hawk-moth**. There were also nineteen **Large Nutmeg** in the trap.

Roger Wasley, at Gretton, found an egg on a small poplar grown in a pot and reared this splendid **Poplar Kitten** larva.



Denis and Val Jackson at Tidenham Chase had **Blomer's Rivulet**, **Small Elephant Hawk-moth** and **Gold Spot**. The latter is quite a surprise as there have been no previous records from this area.

Here at St Briavels I dissected a pug taken on May 27<sup>th</sup> and found that it was a male **Pauper Pug**. I have also had since then **Beautiful Hook-tip**, **Beautiful Snout**, **Orange Moth**, **Green Arches** (10), **Elephant Hawk-moth** (18), **Dark Brocade**, **Blomer's Rivulet**, *Teleiodes luculella* and *Cryptoblabes bistriga*.

A word of caution. Anyone recording **Cream-bordered Green Pea** should check that they haven't got *Tortrix viridana*. There are one or two records where I suspect that this may have been the case.

Future Programme.

Saturday July 2. Trapping at Coombe Hill Canal and Long Pool Meadows. Recording is taking place at these reserves on both Saturday and Sunday. I have agreed to run a moth recording session there on the Saturday night. All are welcome. If you intend to bring any traps please let me know as I would like to be able to plan the deployment of our traps. Apparently there will be a 4WD vehicle available all weekend for the movement of equipment where and as this is necessary. GWT are giving this event a lot of publicity and are hoping to record 500 species from all groups.

Saturday July 9. National Moth Night and Day. The target species are **Dusky Clearwing**, **Welsh Clearwing**, **Double Line** and **Chalk Carpet**. Those with pheromones might like to read up about the two clearwing species and have a go. Neither is on the Gloucestershire list.

Sites for **Chalk Carpet** are the Avon Gorge, Cleeve Hill, Selsley Common (a 1992 record), Stinchcombe Hill and Breakheart Hill Quarry. Weather permitting I hope to visit the last two sites in the daytime when it can be disturbed. Later it comes to light.

There has been one recent record of **Double Line** from a garden at Pilning, however it is thought that a possible site could be at Lower Woods. Mike Bradley will be running a meeting there under the auspices of Butterfly Conservation. Meet at Lower Woods Lodge ST746881. Mike's phone number is 01531 822315.

Although there is little prospect of either target species at The Park, Tidenham Chase I will be trapping there to see what is around on this restored heath-land site. We will meet at the car park at ST559992. My phone number is 01594 530475.

Roger Gaunt, St Briavels, 28<sup>th</sup> June 2005.  
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