

## GLOUCESTERSHIRE MOTHS

2008 Newsletter 6

August was mainly wet in this wettest of summers. However with generally cloudy conditions temperatures remained on the mild side so that trapping between the rainstorms produced some quite good numbers for those not put off by the weather.

### Species seen

Perhaps the most successful trapping session was held at Slimbridge on 29<sup>th</sup> August when Neil Woodward, Steve Chappell, Roger Ward, Alan Prior and Val Weston combined forces all night in 'perfect' conditions. The biggest surprise was the trapping of two **Oblique Carpets** at different traps. This is the first record in Gloucestershire since 1973. Other records were 282 *Caloptilia elongella*, 388 *Prochoreutis myllerana*, 1465 *Nephtopterix angustella*, 1485 *Phycitodes maritima*, **Garden Dart**, **Pearly Underwing**, **Small Rufous** and **Pinion-streaked Snout**. Altogether 1771 moths were recorded of 119 species. My thanks to Roger Ward for collating the records.

Guy Meredith and I started trapping at Crabtree Hill on 26<sup>th</sup> August but all four traps we were operating attracted **hornets** in numbers. We had to pack up and move about half a mile down to Kensleyridge Enclosure. This was a pity as I was trying to trap on the heathland restoration. Nevertheless I managed to trap 39 species using just one trap for under two hours. **Devon Carpet** was common at both sites and I also had 282 *Caloptilia elongella*. Guy's list is awaited.

Jon Brock has continued his programme of regular trapping at Littleworth Wood (east of Stanton in the north of the county). In two visits in August his records include **The Tissue** and **The Annulet** again.

I left two Heath traps overnight at The Park, Tidenham Chase on 27<sup>th</sup> August and counted ten **Heath Rustic**. This and Poors Allotment over the road are the only known county sites for this species which was first recorded there in 2001. I also recorded 1451 *Pyla fusca* with an intriguing *Oecophorid* to be determined.

In daytime visits Robert Homan has had 78 *Stigmella incognitella* – the first confirmed record for many years. He found an occupied mine in apple at Forthampton on 7<sup>th</sup> August. The next day he found a vacated mine of the same species in Cheltenham. Three occupied mines of 87 *Stigmella svenssoni* were found in Hay Wood on the 4<sup>th</sup> August. One produced a caterpillar which has pupated, another one was dead in the mine and the third had a parasite. All 3 mines were photographed. On the same day in Hay Wood he found a leaf mine of 327 *Phyllonorycter cydoniella* on Wild Service Tree and has subsequently reared the moth. Folds of 302 *Parornix fagivora* were found in two places in Cranham Woods on 11th August. Finally he found a mating pair 19 *Bohemannia quadrimaculella* at Stanway on 24<sup>th</sup> July (pictured on the next page). They were beaten from a smooth leaved willow growing on the sunny edge of a small copse in which there are some alders. This record predates that of Guy Meredith mentioned in the last newsletter and is now the new county record.



Guy Meredith has continued to visit many parts of the county and I have picked out a number of his recent records. 1212 *Rhyacionia pinivorana* from south of Brierley on 16th June (gen. det.), 272 *Bucculatrix cidariella* vacated mine on alder Dowdeswell Wood on 12<sup>th</sup> August and on the same visit 498 *Coleophora alnifoliae* (Nb) cases one of which was feeding. After three more dissections he found 603 *Elachista subnigrella* and 915 *Scythris picaepennis* from Cranham Common and 1274 *Dichrorampha alpinana* from Sheepscombe Common on the 17<sup>th</sup> June.

I have been informed that the annual search for **Barberry Carpet** larvae at Westonbirt in early September was successful with two 2<sup>nd</sup>/3<sup>rd</sup> instar larvae found.

Roger Pearce has had 481 *Epermenia falciformis* again at Ringhill Farm.

Turning now to garden traps, Paul Taylor has had a probable **Large Ear** and two **Cypress Pugs** at Stone.

Gordon Avery (Hempsted) had a good night on 21<sup>st</sup> August when he had **Old Lady**, **Cypress Pug**, 966 *Cochylis atricapitana* and 964 *Cochylis dubitana*.

Peter Cranswick (Dursley) had **Satin Lutestring** on 28<sup>th</sup> July, 936 *Cochylimorpha straminea* on 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> August and 481 *Epermenia falciformis* on 19<sup>th</sup> August.

Roger Wasley had **Waved Black** and **Oak Eggar** at Gretton on 26<sup>th</sup> July.

Roger Ward (Charlton Kings) had **Barred Rivulet** and **Dog's Tooth** on 7<sup>th</sup> August, and has also had the **Leek Moth** and 1207 *Clavigesta purdeyi*.

I have made contact with Sten Grendon who lives near Brimscombe and has been recording for some time. I have had a long list from him having been able to identify some of his doubtful records from photographs. He had up to five **Puss Moth** larvae during July this year, the first record of larvae I have had for seven years.

Juliet Bailey had also had two nice larvae in her garden at Little Haresfield, those of **Eyed Hawk-moth** and **Vapourer**.

Robert Homan had 656 *Tachystola acroxantha* in his garden on 6<sup>th</sup> August and also a female **Oak Eggar** which laid eggs on 25<sup>th</sup> July. Larvae hatched on 12<sup>th</sup> August.

## Moths to look out for – ‘The Sallows’

This time of the year can be a bit depressing when we say goodbye to summer, but don't put your moth traps away yet. The Sallow family (*Xanthia* sp.) are particularly attractive as the moths use autumn colours for their camouflage.

## Diary

4<sup>th</sup> October    Moth trapping at Byfords Farm. Between Huntley and Newent.  
Contact Peter Hugo 01453 882134 or 07789 361874 8pm.  
Target species – everything, as this site is very much under-recorded.

15<sup>th</sup> November    This is another chance to see the Plumed Prominent in one of its few known sites. Meet at Chedworth Village Hall at 3 pm to share lifts because there is limited parking. **Please contact Peter Hugo at least three days beforehand** to establish viability. Phone numbers above.

I am forwarding separately details of ‘Worcestershire Entomology Day’ for those who may be interested.

Roger Gaunt, St Briavels, 15<sup>th</sup> September 2008.