

## GLOUCESTERSHIRE MOTHS

### 2009 Newsletter 4

At the time of writing this it is hot and humid and conditions are ideal for moth recording. Indeed, working or retired, most recorders are inundated at present. As a result there is plenty to report and I am sure more to come.

#### Species seen

I have had several reports of **Humming-bird Hawk-moth** and one of **Bordered Straw** (Steve Chappell at Dursley on 20<sup>th</sup> June) however by far the most outstanding migrant is a new one for the county. Peter Cranswick trapped a **Rannoch Looper** (below) at Horsley on 2<sup>nd</sup> June. This species is resident in part of Scotland but can also be a migrant from the continent. This year there appears to have been a 'fall' and a full report is being prepared for publication in *Atropos*.



While I was preparing this newsletter, Guy Meredith telephoned to say that last night (29<sup>th</sup> June) in Lineover Wood he trapped a **Feathered Beauty**. Hopefully he will be able to obtain good photographs of the features that separate it from Willow Beauty. This is a possible immigrant but as this is ancient woodland with some old Norway Spruce it is possibly resident. Yet another new macro species for the county!

I had two field meetings at Cinderford Linear Park planned for this month. The first on 6<sup>th</sup> June was rained off, but the second on 27<sup>th</sup> June was largely successful in locating the target species. Unfortunately only four people turned up to join me at what I consider to be one of the most interesting sites in the Forest of Dean. The first target to be seen was **The Forester**, now a BAP species. Two and possibly three were seen at Laymoor Quag and another later in the day at the southern end of the park. This is very encouraging as the species was only discovered there last year and there must be a good population spread along the park. Next on the list was **Clouded Buff**. I managed to net one, again at Laymoor Quag, and another was seen fleetingly by one of those present.

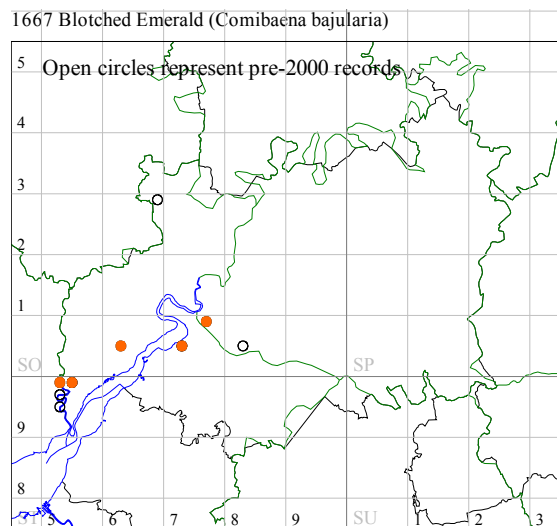
In the afternoon we moved to the southern end of the park. On the grassy banks where heath bedstraw is present we found no fewer than four **Small Argent and Sable**, a species that eluded us last year. We failed in one respect as our pheromone lures did not attract any clearwings.

It is my intention to run this meeting again next year as the three target species that we saw are all rare in the county and it is a chance for recorders to get the 'jizz' of the species.

The **Clouded Buff** has also been seen on Gorsty Knoll (near Coleford) by Susan Dewsbury on 13<sup>th</sup> June. This is the first record from here since 1996 and as one was seen near Speech House last year, it is encouraging to realise that a population is being maintained in the Forest.

**Drab Looper** is quite common in the Forest of Dean though a BAP species nationally. I have had several records, the most important being one seen in Newent Woods by Simon Barker on 24<sup>th</sup> May. This is the first record ever from this part of the county and this 10 km square.

The Lower Woods complex is being targeted on a regular basis by Peter Hugo with support from others. This enormous reserve must still hold many secrets as access is quite difficult to many parts. Bristol and District Moth Group have recorded there in the past, but Peter and company are already adding more species to the list. The best record so far is that of **Blotched Emerald**.



NB The dot for the new record is not yet in place and will be at approximately ST 7488.

Guy Meredith ran a trap in the Cannop Valley on 24<sup>th</sup> June approximately 500 m north of the site where the species to be named have been recorded in recent years. He was very pleased to have **Great Oak Beauty** (4), **Common Fan-foot** and 1384 ***Phlyctaenia stachydalis***. When recording takes place regularly at the same site to confirm the presence of a given species it does not add anything to the known distribution so it is good to extend the known range of these species.

Guy has many micros still to identify, but here are a few:-

- 132 ***Incurvaria praelatella*** Buckle Wood 26/5/09
- 135 ***Lampronia luzella*** Greathough Brook Valley 29/5/09 and NE of Yorkley on 1/6/09
- 1119a ***Ancylis diminutana*** Lower Woods 30/5/09
- 1118 ***Ancylis uncella*** Crabtree Hill 1/6/09

Peter Hugo has had 1380 *Phlyctaenia perlucidalis* and 1348 **Ringed China-mark** at Great Rissington and **Garden Dart** at Greystones Farm.

Steve Chappell has been trapping at Ryall's Lane, Cambridge and had **ObscureWainscot** on 2/6/09 and **The Lappet** on 25/6/09. The last record is the first for this species since 1998.

Turning to garden records Liz Radcliffe at Cinderford has had **Broad-barred White, Tawny Pinion, Devon Carpet**, 1176 *Epiblema trimaculana* and 469 *Eidophasia messingiella*. I am extremely grateful to Liz for taking my place at a Dean Heritage Museum event, enabling me to accept an invitation for a long weekend in Brittany.

Things are picking up for Gordon Avery at Hempsted. He has had 1501 *Platyptilia gonodactyla* and **Cream-bordered Green Pea**.

Roger Ward at Charlton Kings has had **The Spinach** on 13<sup>th</sup> June and also several 1474 *Ephestia parasitella* and a single 473 **Leek Moth**.

Roger Pearce has had a pair of mating **Scarlet Tiger** in his Gloucester garden.

Paul Wilkins at Brockweir has had **Alder Kitten, Red-necked Footman** and **Blomer's Rivulet**. He also has seen three **Wood Tiger** on Painswick Beacon.

Robert Homan has had **Toadflax Pug** at home in Cheltenham. He has also been checking poplars for **Hornet Moth** evidence and results are awaited. From a pet shop in Cheltenham two 1473 *Ephestia elutella* were recorded one of which was dissected to confirm identification.

Here at St Briavels I have seen several moths that do not often come my way. These include **Beautiful Brocade, Eyed Hawk-moth, The Olive, Beautiful Carpet** and 1446 *Salebriopsis albicilla* (pRDB2). The latter was a male and as I noted in my book, he has the intriguing habit of waving his antennae in a very distinctive manner.

#### Website

The web site (Glosmoths mentioned in newsletter 1) is serving a useful purpose in putting people in touch for trapping and also helping with identification. The latter is very helpful from my point of view as more and more people are taking more and more photographs!

As there is so much to do in this fine weather, I will close hoping that all recorders are doing their best to take advantage of the present weather conditions.

Roger Gaunt, St Briavels, 30<sup>th</sup> June 2009.

