

GLOUCESTERSHIRE MOTHS

2009 Newsletter 3

At long last the weather has improved and catches are better than they have been for some time but still only average.

Species seen

Blossom Underwing was recorded by Mike Bradley at Pool Hill and by Steve Chappell at Dursley, the latter on the 24th April.

The first **Pinion-spotted Pug** reported in the county since 1996 came to Robert Homan's Cheltenham garden on 1st May.

The **Silver Cloud** had not been reported since 2006 so I was pleased to hear that Steve Chappell had one on 7th May at Ryall's Cottage, Cambridge (Glos).

Gordon Avery has struggled to find anything of interest to report – perhaps his best record to date is that of the **Dog's Tooth** on 4th May.

Paul Wilkins has had **Poplar Kitten** at Brockweir. He has also sent me a photo of Swallow Prominent and Lesser Swallow Prominent side by side which shows clearly the difference between the species.



Luke Phillips is working for the RSPB this summer and has been doing some recording at Nagshead RSPB Reserve. I sent him a species list for the reserve and he has already managed to add a useful number of species to the list. These include **May Highflyer**, **Seraphim** and **Alder Kitten**. The first two species mentioned in the last sentence seem to be having a good year. I have recorded all three here at St Briavels and I don't see them very often.

Guy Meredith continues to work mainly on the micros and is producing a steady stream of good records. I can only offer a sample here. The pRDB1 plume moth 1516 *Pselnophorus heterodactyla* is only known in this country from a limited area south of Cranham where the food-plant wall lettuce grows. Guy has found a number of new sites and uses the fact that larval feeding causes a leaf to droop in a distinctive manner to find where the larvae are at work. A case of 555 *Coleophora follicularis* was found at Westridge Wood on 29th April, larvae and mines of 267 *Bucculatrix maritima* on sea aster at Lancaut on 1st May, larvae on birch in Hay Wood of 11 *Eriocrania cicatricella* on 3rd May and 3 *Micropterix aureatella* in Greathough Brook Valley near Brierley on 23rd May. On the same day 1252 *Grapholita lunulana* in Cinderford Linear Park was recorded.

A marathon session in Lower Woods last Saturday saw Peter Hugo, Peter Cranswick, Joff Elphick and Guy Meredith recording. There are many micros still to be determined but to give some idea of numbers there were at least 850 moths of 70+ species. The macros included **Pale Oak Beauty** (2), **Mocha** (29), **Poplar Kitten** (15), **Brindled White-spot** (7) and **Poplar Lutestring**. Their meeting was arranged on the Glosmoths website mentioned in this year's Newsletter 1.

There have been several records of **Little Thorn** including three in Heath traps that I left at Clanna overnight on 27th May.

Dates

6th June Cinderford Linear Park. Meet opposite the Winner Garage at SO 644151 at 10.30 am. There are some interesting records of day-flying moths from this important site. These include The Forester, White-barred Clearwing, Clouded Buff and Small Argent and Sable. Of course nothing is guaranteed. There may well be Small Pearl-bordered Fritillaries too. The morning will be spent looking round the northern part of the park and after a picnic lunch the afternoon will be spent in the southern part. My phone number is 01594 530475.

27th June As above. The reason for having two meetings is that I will be away for two weeks in between and the flight period for any of these moths could include either date depending on the season.

4th July Peter Hugo is running a training event at Lower Woods primarily aimed at GWT volunteers showing them how to operate recently acquired traps. Three MV traps and six portables will be run until midnight. Peter's phone numbers are 01453 882134 (home) and 07789 361874 (mobile). Anyone is welcome to join in.

Roger Gaunt, St Briavels, 2nd June 2009.