

GLOUCESTERSHIRE MOTHS

2010 Newsletter 1

After the coldest winter for many years things have started moving at last. Several recorders have already been trapping away from home and a number of garden traps have been operating.

Species seen



This rather undistinguished looking moth was bred out of a tomato by Robert Homan in early January. He did some research and found that it is something of a pest called *Tuta absoluta*. As it had not at that time been officially recognised as a British species, Robert, with approval from John Langmaid, has given it the code number 825a.

The status of moths discovered in this way can be questioned. The feeling is that they need to be recognised as part of our fauna as they can well become established in the future.

Turning to our resident species, the **Small Brindled Beauty** has had a good year. These two appeared here at St Briavels on 12th March. Two were recorded at Swillbrook Lakes the following night by Nick Adams, Peter Hugo has recorded it at Lower Woods and Guy Meredith in Dymock Woods where he also recorded **Yellow Horned**.



Susan Dewsbury reported a **Tawny Pinion** in her Milkwall near Coleford house on 10th February. It probably was hibernating in their woodshed and came in with the logs.



Jon Brock is targeting Hailes Wood this year and has made two visits so far leaving 6 watt Heath traps overnight. On March 17th he recorded 16 species among them three **Dotted Chestnut**, one of which is shown here. I have checked my 48 records of this species and this is the first where three have been recorded. John Martin has had this species for the first time at Pilning.

Two **Orange Underwing** have been reported from Corndean Hall on 18th March by Leslie Kent. This species is still worth looking for on a warm sunny day flying around silver birch.

Jon Brock had twenty **Pale Brindled Beauty** at Hailes Wood on February 24th. John Wells had two of this species in his Highnam garden on 14th February.



This is a mine in mistletoe of *Celypha woodiana* found by Robert Homan at Coombe Hill on 26th February. What is interesting about this is that the larva is only at the stage of development normally found in early January. This is another effect of our cold winter. Gloucestershire is a stronghold for this RDB species.

Maps

Guy Meredith has been making good use of the poor recording weather and has developed a most impressive map that will show a lot of information about any given species. We have had a trial with a subset of my records and it works well. The next step is to get all my records into the system and then our intention is to have this map accessible from the Butterfly Conservation and Gloucestershire Naturalists' websites. Watch this space!

National Macro-moth Recording Scheme

Most of you will know about this scheme – website www.mothscount.org – but may not know that lottery funding ceases this year. It is hoped that the scheme will continue with reduced funding. In the meantime all county moth recorders have been asked to transfer their records into the scheme by 30th April so that Les Hill and his team can produce a national atlas in the late summer. Most of my records are with the scheme already but I have all the 2009 ones to send and also I plan to add to my database some old published records of species that are of historical interest. This will include species such as **Striped Lychnis** which is no longer found in the county.

Dates

Saturday 15th May. National Moth Night. One event fixed so far – Bats and Moths at Chedworth Nature Reserve with Peter Hugo.

Saturday 26th June. Day Field Meeting at Cinderford Linear Park when I hope to 'produce' The Forester, Clouded Buff and Small Argent and Sable again.

Full details of these and other meetings will appear in later newsletters.

Roger Gaunt, St Briavels, March 24th 2010.

