

E-moth

Moths Count Update January 2011

National Moth Recorders' Meeting 2011

Places are still available at our first UK-wide National Moth Recorders' Meeting on Saturday 22nd January 2011 at the Birmingham and Midlands Institute. The exciting programme for the day can be found in this E-moth update. The meeting is open to everyone with an interest in moths and moth recording. Atropos, Bioquip and Pemberley books will be in attendance so you can stock up on equipment and books for the coming recording season – don't forget your wallet! This is a free event (including buffet lunch, tea, coffee and biscuits) although advance booking is essential. To book your place please contact info@butterfly-conservation.org or phone 01929 400209.

Hot off the Press – Provisional Atlas

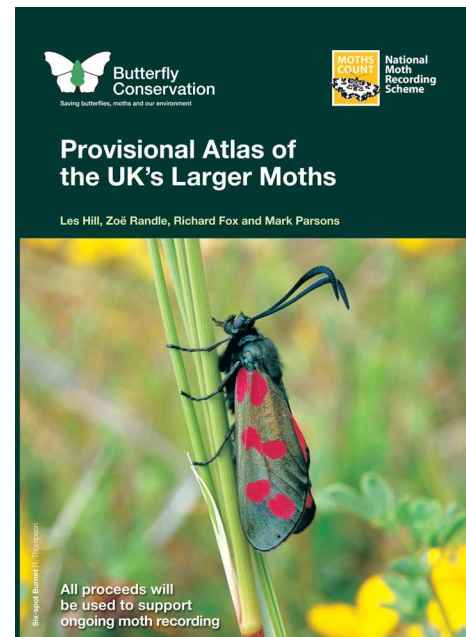
The Provisional Atlas of the UK's Larger Moths is available **NOW!** This long awaited publication is the first of its kind for almost 30 years. Up-to-date distribution maps for over 850 macro-moth species have been generated from the National Moth Recording Scheme (NMRS) database. The maps show both historical (pre 2000) and current (2000 onwards) records.

A huge amount of effort from County Moth Recorders, Record Collators and the Moths Count team has been undertaken to produce the atlas, which runs to 455 pages! Without the support of the network of County Moth Recorders, moth recorders on the ground and our financial and in-kind supporters this milestone could not have been reached. Many thanks to everyone involved.

The atlas is the culmination of four and a half years of the Moths Count project and NMRS but only the first step towards helping our declining moth fauna. We are already working on analyses of the data, taking account of the changing recording effort over time. You can help as well. The Provisional Atlas maps indicate under-recorded areas and species that you could target this year. Targeted recording improves our knowledge of moths and ultimately their conservation.

The recommended retail price of the Provisional Atlas is £20 (plus P&P). All proceeds will be used to support ongoing moth recording. To get your copy please phone 01929 400209 or order online by clicking this link www.butterfly-conservation.org/shop

You can also make a donation to the Moths Count appeal by visiting:
www.butterfly-conservation.org/mothscountappeal



National Moth Recording Scheme

The NMRS is ongoing and now's the time to sort out all your 2010 moth records and send them to the appropriate [County Moth Recorder](#)(s), if you haven't already. After checking, the records will be added to local datasets and, in due course, forwarded to the NMRS. Some 2010 records are already in the NMRS, but we'll be undertaking a major refresh of county datasets during the spring.

Just before Christmas an update of the NMRS database was sent to the National Biodiversity Network (NBN) Gateway. This has now been implemented so the online distribution maps have been updated. All of the county datasets submitted to the NMRS by 10th December 2010 are incorporated in this latest refresh to the NBN. This includes two vice-counties, Dorset and Anglesey, that were previously unrepresented on the online maps, and 45 updated datasets. The NMRS remains the single biggest dataset on the NBN Gateway, with 11.4 million records. We will continue to refresh the online dataset every six months.

Moth-ers pot National Awards

Several moth recorders were recognised recently in the annual awards at the Butterfly Conservation Members Day held in Cambridge on 20 November 2010. Roy Leverton received the prestigious *Marsh Award for Lifetime Achievement in Lepidoptera Conservation*. Roy is perhaps best known as the author of the book *Enjoying Moths*, as well as numerous published articles in entomological journals. However, Roy plays an important role supporting moth recording in Scotland, not least as a County Moth Recorder, but also through the informal help and guidance he provides to countless other moth recorders. His award is richly deserved.

In addition, six *Outstanding Volunteer* awards were also presented. Four of the six awardees are keen moth recorders; Duncan Davidson, Roy McCormick, Mike Ridge and Frank Banyard. Both Duncan Davidson and Roy McCormick are County Moth Recorders, for Fife and Devon respectively, who have played pivotal roles in recording and promoting moths. Mike Ridge runs regular moth nights and is currently working, with colleagues, on a moth atlas of Somerset. Frank Banyard has been heavily involved with Butterfly Conservation's Holtspur Bank nature reserve and, thanks to his input, moths such as the Striped Lychnis thrive at the site.



Congratulations to all the award recipients!

Flagging unverified or dubious records for the NMRS– a plea!

During the production of the recent Provisional Atlas, about 2,000 records were found to be dubious and/or unverified and therefore not included in the production of species maps for the atlas. This constitutes just 0.02% of the NMRS database, which for a database of its size is a remarkable achievement!

However, 2,000 unverified records roughly equate to about 2 erroneous records per species. While for common and ubiquitous species like Large Yellow Underwing, this may not be considered much of a problem; it is indeed a problem for scarcer species with limited distributions.

Some records were forwarded to the NMRS as unverified by County Moth Recorders; other data were found to be such after much verification and checking, dialogue and agreement to ensure the greatest degree of accuracy possible for the atlas.

At present, over 30 phrases embedded in the Comment field of a record are identified as being used by County Moth Recorders in order to draw attention to a record as being unverified. It is highly likely some phrases used by recorders have been overlooked by the NMRS. These identified phrases are checked against every record in the NMRS database to look for records that are unequivocally

unverified in order to automatically 'flag' that record as such. This then enables us to query and map data excluding unverified data.

Unfortunately, there is no easy way for moth recorders to properly flag or audit trail a moth record unless recording software like JNCC's Recorder 6 is used. In order to get around this, a comment is made on an unverified record and that record remains (generally speaking) in the main dataset. Ideally these data should be stored away from the verified dataset; however, it is recognised that this may not always be possible.

To this end, it would be a great help to the NMRS if County Recorders could use an unambiguous phrase i.e. either Unverified record or Dubious record in the Comment field of any such record, taking care of spelling! When these data are submitted to the NMRS they will be easily traced and flagged accordingly. Many thanks in advance.

Half Price Membership Offer

Throughout January 2011 Butterfly Conservation is offering a special **HALF PRICE** membership offer if you join us on line via www.butterfly-conservation.org/januarysale. The moth recording community is currently under represented within Butterfly Conservation's membership. A greater number of the UK's moths are of conservation concern compared to butterflies, therefore your support is vital to help us halt the decline in these magnificent insects. As a member you will receive *Butterfly* three times a year. This fully illustrated magazine, exclusive to our membership, is full of information about moths, butterflies and the work that we do to promote and protect them.

Moths Count Contacts

General enquiries info@butterfly-conservation.org 01929 400209

Richard Fox Project Manager rfox@butterfly-conservation.org 01626 368385

Les Hill Database Manager lhill@butterfly-conservation.org 01929 406008

Zoë Randle Moth Recording Co-ordinator zrandle@butterfly-conservation.org 01929 406006

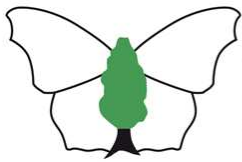
www.mothscount.org



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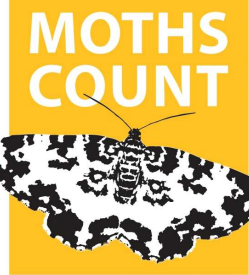
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**Butterfly
Conservation**

Saving butterflies, moths and our environment



NATIONAL MOTH RECORDERS' MEETING 2011

**Lyttelton Lecture Theatre, Birmingham and Midland Institute, Birmingham
Saturday 22 January 2011**

- 10.00 am Arrival and coffee
- 10.30 am Welcome
Maurice Avent, Chairman of Butterfly Conservation
- 10.40 am Moths Count: the end of the beginning
Richard Fox, Butterfly Conservation
- 11.00 am An update on the National Moth Recording Scheme
Dr. Zoë Randle, Butterfly Conservation
- 11.30 am Discussion session
- 11.50 am Climatic and other changes in Monmouthshire Lepidoptera
Dr. Martin Anthoney, County Moth & Butterfly Recorder for Monmouthshire
- 12.10 pm Moth Recording in Hampshire and Isle of Wight
Mike Wall, Micro-moth Recorder for Hampshire
- 12.30 pm Lunch**
- 2.00 pm** Moth conservation in Scotland
Dr. Mark Young, Aberdeen University
- 2.30 pm Turf stripping and tree planting: conserving threatened moths in Eastern England
Sharon Hearle, Butterfly Conservation Regional Officer for Eastern England
- 2.50 pm International perspectives: The state of the Dutch macro-moth fauna
Dr. Dick Groenendijk, De Vlinderstichting
- 3.10 pm Discussion session**
- 3.20 pm Tea**
- 3.50 pm In search of the White Prominent in Ireland
Dave Allen, Allen & Mellon Environmental Ltd
- 4.30 pm Discussion session
- 4.40 pm Closing remarks
- 4.45 pm Close of meeting

