

E-moth

Moths Count Update October 2013

The 2013 moth recording season got off to a very slow start, moth abundance and species richness was poor during the protracted cold spring. However, this situation changed during late June and early July when temperatures soared across most of the UK, increasing both the number of individual moths and breadth of species recorded, much to the delight of moth recorders.

Then, after the abundance of the summer, the weather did us moth recorders another favour, bringing a strong influx of moths from continental Europe during September and October. The general consensus is that this autumn's migration is the best since 2006 in terms of abundance and diversity of species. Scarce migrants such as the Clifden Nonpareil and Crimson Speckled have been seen in increasing numbers over the past few weeks across several southern counties. This autumn has also seen an unprecedented three sightings of the very rare migrant Rosy Underwing in Dorset and another in Cornwall. Prior to this, Rosy Underwing has only been recorded on ten previous occasions in Britain.



Clifden Nonpareil (Dave Green)

Although all of the records are yet to be collated it is possible that autumn 2013 will prove to be the biggest immigration ever into the UK for the Crambid *Uresiphita gilvata* and the Vestal. The latter was seen in large numbers in southern coastal counties, but also spread far inland and reached right up into northern Scotland (e.g. two reported on the Isle of Skye).



The Vestal (Roy Leverton)

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National Moth Recorders' Meeting

Our fourth National Moth Recorders' Meeting will be held on **Saturday 25th January 2014** at the Birmingham and Midland Institute, central Birmingham. We have a great line-up for the day which includes both amateur moth recorders and

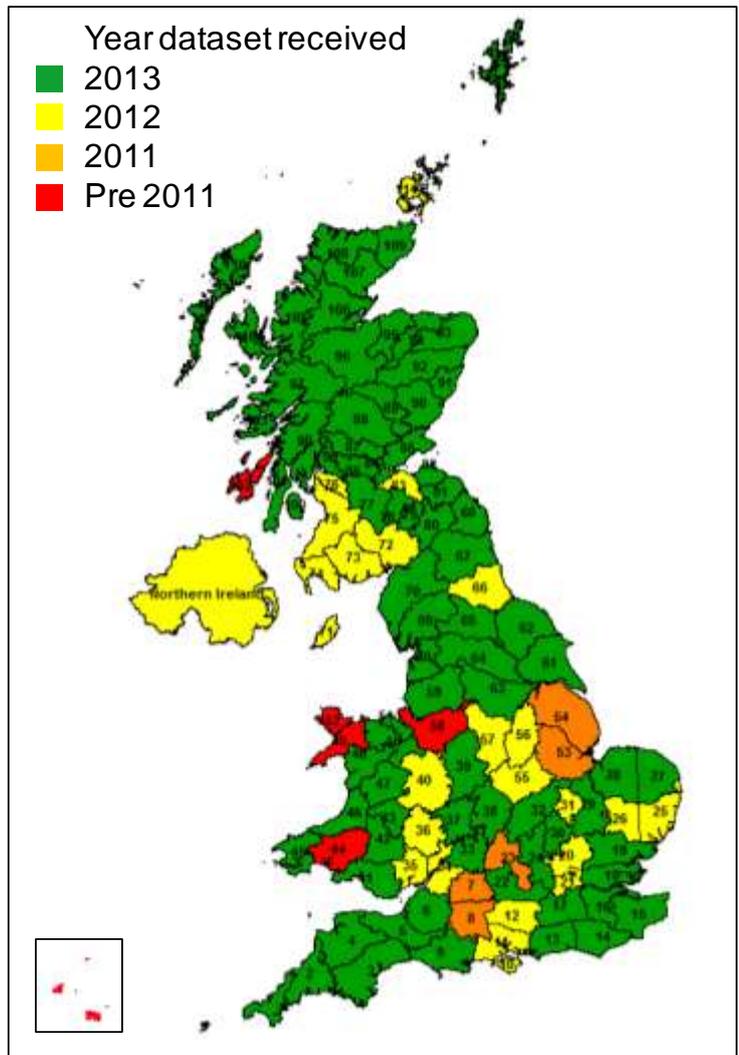
academic researchers. Atropos and Pemberley Books will be in attendance, so bring your purses and wallets to stock up on natural history books. The programme for the day is included at the end of this newsletter. As usual, there is a £5 per person registration fee for attendees, payable on the day. This includes morning and afternoon tea/coffee and a buffet lunch all subsidised from Butterfly Conservation budgets. **Advanced booking is essential, to book your place please contact info@butterfly-conservation.org or telephone 01929 400209.** We hope to see you there.

National Moth Recording Scheme update

The National Moth Recording Scheme (NMRS) database now holds in-excess of 16 million moth records. Over the past year we have received refreshed datasets from 82 vice-counties which comprised of 1.2 million new moth records. The online distribution maps (www.mothscount.org) will be updated in due course. Many thanks to the County Moth Recorders, Local Record Centres and Record Collators who have contributed and of course to the 'grass-roots' moth recorders who submit their moth records.

The winter is approaching and this is traditionally the time when County Moth Recorders (CMRs) start to collate and verify their vice-county (VC) datasets. We encourage all recorders to submit their records to their CMR as soon as possible so that the CMRs have plenty of opportunity to refresh their datasets with the NMRS by the annual deadline on **31st March 2014** to guarantee 'same year' upload of data to refresh our online-maps.

There are several VC's for which we have not had data refreshes for several years (see map right). The reasons for this vary from county to county; however, we are hoping to receive updates for these VC's over the coming months.



Some moth conservation highlights 2013

A note on the apparent status of *Agonopterix atomella* (a UK Biodiversity Action Plan Priority Species) appeared in the Entomologist's Record and Journal of Variation (125: 111-113) in early summer highlighting the surprising result that, from 2000 onwards, the species had only been found at five sites covering three vice-counties (South Somerset, North Wiltshire and Dorset). This finding stimulated additional survey effort with the moth being recorded new to South Northumberland and being re-discovered in Oxfordshire. Other sites were also visited, with the moth being found at three sites in Dorset.



Grapholita pallifrontana (Oliver Wadsworth)

Grapholita pallifrontana, another UK BAP Priority micro-moth, has also been the focus of survey effort. During 2013, it was refound in both Berkshire and Somerset, the latter being the first records for the county since the 1950s. It is now thought to be breeding on c.16 sites over the country from 2000 onwards. Both these species are likely to be under-recorded and further survey is encouraged.

In Wales, two woods along the Wye Valley were surveyed for the Scarce Hook-tip (Section 42 NERC Act, 2006), with the moth located at one of these. This encouraged survey across the border into Gloucestershire, with the species found at three sites.

It was a mixed picture this year in Scotland for two of the country's most iconic species. Kentish Glory had an excellent year particularly at its two most well-known sites, with 24 recorded at Culbin Forest on the Moray Coast and 19 at Granish just outside Aviemore, on the 5th and 6th May respectively. However, the cold spring meant that the first recorded Kentish Glory in 2013 was exactly five weeks later than that in 2012 highlighting the difficulty in knowing the optimum date to look for them. The moth was also recorded at Craigellachie National Nature Reserve for the first time in a number of years and at Inshriach Forest for the first time. In contrast, to date, no records have been received of Small Dark Yellow Underwing in 2013, despite targeted recording, thereby increasing concerns over the future of this spectacular day-flying moth.



Kentish Glory (Tom Prescott)

Moth Night 2013

Moth Night is the annual celebration of moths and moth recording, the event is organised jointly by *Atropos* and Butterfly Conservation with online recording hosted by the Biological Records Centre. Moth Night provides the perfect excuse to go moth trapping outside of your usual patch and involve friends, family and the general public.

For the first time in several years the weather was favourable across most to the UK for Moth Night 2013 which ran from 8th to 10th August. The theme of Tiger Moths was very popular with the general public and media, enabling moths to be portrayed in a positive light. The online data entry system has at the time of writing received 27,069 records for a total of 956 species. This is a dramatic improvement on Moth Night last year, held on three wet days and nights in late June, when the total record count was 6,246 for 523 species. The minimum moth count is also up from 13,441 individuals in 2012 compared to 106,965 this year. A full report of Moth Night 2012 results can be found in *Atropos* number 49. To ensure that your Moth Night 2013 data are included in the full *Atropos* report next year please submit your Moth Night data via the online system (www.mothnight.info) by **Sunday, 1st December 2013**. All records received will also be forwarded to the appropriate County Moth Recorders.

Moth Night 2014 will run from 3rd to 5th July 2014. The theme will be *Woodland Moths* - so it will be a great opportunity to run public events in the woods or to go and run a trap in an un-recorded woodland. However, as always, Moth Night is what you make of it and you do not need to follow the theme. Further details can be found on the Moth Night website (www.mothnight.info) and please remember to add details of any public events that you are running to the website so that they appear on the national events map.

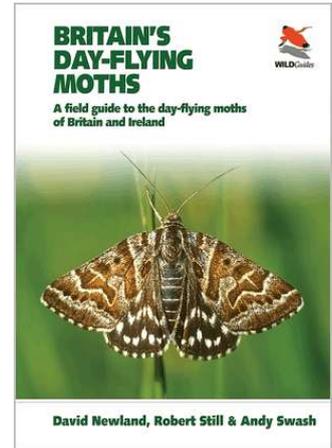


Lepidoptera Conservation Bulletin Number 13

The latest edition of the Lepidoptera Conservation Bulletin (number 13) is now available to download from our website www.butterfly-conservation.org/3537/Lepidoptera-ConservationBulletin.html. The Bulletin summarises the work carried out by Butterfly Conservation and our partner organisations over the course of 2012. Conservation efforts for a broad selection of highly threatened moths and butterflies across the UK are described and other articles include updates on Lepidoptera recording, Butterfly Conservation reserves and Butterfly Conservation Europe. There is also a selected Bibliography covering publications of interest in 2012. Please pass on the report, or its location on our website, to anyone you feel would be interested.

Books

A new book *Britain's Day-flying Moths: A Field Guide to the Day-flying Moths of Britain and Ireland* by David Newland, Robert Still, & Andy Swash is now available. It is a concise photographic field guide detailing accounts for 155 species including information about status, life history, caterpillar foodplants, flight periods and habitat. This book provides a great introduction to day-flying moths, general naturalists and seasoned moth recorders will want a copy of this concise guide – “a ‘must have’ for the field naturalist!” Les Hill



Moths Count Business friends

Recently Nectar Creative and Watkins and Doncaster renewed their business sponsorship with us. The Moths Count team and Butterfly Conservation are extremely grateful for this continued support of the Moths Count project and National Moth Recording Scheme.

Moths Count Contacts

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NATIONAL MOTH RECORDERS' MEETING 2014

Lyttelton Lecture Theatre, Birmingham and Midland Institute, Birmingham
Saturday 25th January 2014

- 10.00 am Arrival and coffee
- 10.30 am Welcome
Dr Martin Warren, Chief Executive of Butterfly Conservation
- 10.35 am National Moth Recording Scheme Update
Dr Zoë Randle, Butterfly Conservation
- 10.55 am Moth-ing Gems from the Emerald Isle
Andrew Crory, Northern Ireland Macro-moth Recorder
- 11.20 am New discoveries in Gloucestershire
Neale Jordan-Mellersh, West Gloucestershire County Moth Recorder
- 11.45 am The new British checklist, why was it needed and what went into it?
Dr David Agassiz, Scientific Associate, the Natural History Museum
- 12:05 pm Discussion session
- 12.30 pm **Lunch**
- 2.15 pm General decline of moths in the Netherlands: towards a preliminary Red List
Dr. Ties Huigens, De Vlinderstichting
- 2.45 pm The importance of hedgerows for moths in intensive farmland
Emma Coulthard, University of Northampton
- 3.10 pm Shedding light on moths- the potential impacts of light pollution
Robin Somers-Yeates, University of Exeter
- 3.35 pm **Tea**
- 4.20 pm Control and Management of Oak Processionary Moth
Andrew Hoppit, Forestry Commission
- 4.45 pm Discussion session & closing remarks
- 5.00 pm Close of meeting