



Butterfly Conservation



factsheet

Black-veined Moth

Siona lineata

Conservation status

Priority Species in UK Biodiversity Action Plan.

Fully protected under Schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981).

The English name for this species describes the dark veins that are visible against the white or pale cream wings. The species name *lineata* again refers to the dark lines or veins on the wings of this moth. The moth has always been restricted to southern England, but now is only found on a very few sites in Kent.

Foodplants

The larvae feed on Marjoram *Origanum vulgare*, Black Knapweed *Centaurea nigra* and Bird's-foot Trefoil *Lotus corniculatus*, but are probably not restricted to these. The adults obtain nectar from a number of flowers including bird's-foot trefoil *Lotus* spp. and bramble *Rubus* spp..

Habitat

The surviving colonies are found in open areas on slopes, on tall, infrequently grazed or ungrazed chalk downland dominated by Tor-grass *Brachypodium pinnatum*, but with herbs such as Marjoram and knapweeds.

Life cycle

The species is single-brooded. The eggs are laid in June, either singly or in lines of up to six, usually on grasses. The larvae spend most of the year, including winter, stretched out on dry grasses against which they are cryptically coloured. The species pupates in May to early June in a spindle-shaped yellow cocoon. The adults fly in late May and June and occasionally early July, depending on the site and season. Adults fly mainly at dusk, but are also active during the day.

■ Larval record 1999 to 2004
● Adult record 1999 to 2004



	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Egg						■						
Larva	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Pupa					■	■						
Adult					■	■	■					

Habitat management for the Black-veined Moth

The overall aim is to provide substantial areas of variable turf, 10-25cm tall, on chalk downland with abundant Tor-grass and frequent Marjoram and knapweed. Overgrazing is a serious threat to this species.

- ◆ The best method of maintaining good breeding conditions is to graze open downland with cattle at a low stocking rate during autumn and winter. This may need to be on a compartmental basis. Livestock should be removed between March and the end of the flight period (early July), as the larvae need to feed on the new spring plant growth to complete their development.
- ◆ Sheep are not suitable as they may selectively graze out the herbs, including the larval foodplant.
- ◆ Some scrub control, by cutting or small scale burning, can create suitably open conditions on overgrown chalk downland.

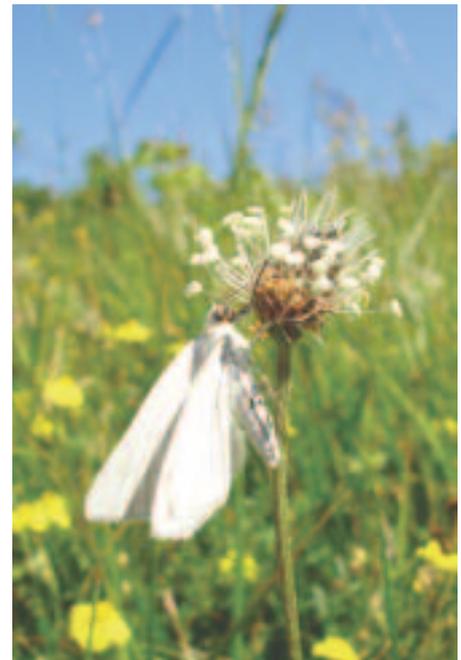
Please contact Butterfly Conservation and English Nature if the species is suspected to be present on a site.

How to survey/monitor

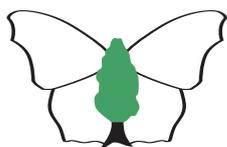
The best method is to watch for patrolling males at dusk during June. Adults may also be disturbed from resting among grasses during the day and will also fly of their own accord during hot weather. A licence will be required to search for this species.



above Chalk grassland with patches of scrub
below Ideal tall grassland sward



above Female Black-veined Moth



Butterfly Conservation

Saving butterflies, moths and their habitats

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