Happy New Year
One of the first butterfly sightings of 2021 a Small Tortoiseshell spotted by Dave Gregory on the 3rd January in his garden. Derriford near Plymouth.
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IMPORTANT

– NEWSLETTER PREFERENCES - ACTION IS REQUIRED –

Devon Branch Committee

Devon Branch produces a newsletter like this one, three times a year this is distributed either by post or email. Most members have opted for an electronic version and thus receive an email to advise them that the newsletter is available on the website to download. The public health situation made 2020 a difficult year and it was not possible to produce a printed version of the June and October newsletters. Furthermore we are aware that some members who had opted for an electronic version did not receive their email notification about the October newsletter. Staff at Head Office have migrated membership details into new software. They had some data transfer glitches that were responsible for the latter problem. These problems should now be sorted out and you should have received either a printed copy or an email notification of this newsletter, but not both. We hope what you receive is what you are expecting.

To change preference please email; branches@butterfly-conservation.org or if you do not have email you can phone 01929 400209. Please use email if possible.

For those of you who are currently receiving paper copies, we urge you to reconsider and strongly recommend opting for an electronic copy. There are various advantages to this:

* If there are unforeseen circumstances in the future which prevents printing, you will still get your newsletter.

* It saves money and time, enabling more of your subscription to go towards saving butterflies and moths. In July Devon Branch donated £5,000 to Head Office and over previous years we have donated several thousand pounds to the All the Moor Butterflies Project. Much of this was possible because of savings made by distributing the majority of newsletters by email notification.

* It is more environmentally friendly, saving on the planet’s resources.

* You can save your newsletters in a folder on your computer and use the computer’s search facility to find an article from the past even when you cannot remember which newsletter it was in.

To change to an electronic version of the newsletter please email your request to: branches@butterfly-conservation.org
There are more than 60 enthusiastic volunteers taking part in the Brown Hairstreak winter egg survey. I am one of them, maybe you are too?

The survey is part of the Saving Devon’s Treescapes project which is being run by Devon Wildlife Trust. The aim of the project is to provide hope and action in the face of the alarming changes that are already affecting our precious treescapes. It will provide support for local communities across the county to plant and nurture thousands of replacement trees. These won’t be ash trees, but they will be of other native Devon species including oak, field maple, aspen, lime, beech, birch, and hazel. The project will enable people to care for and celebrate our treasured treescapes, supporting local action for wildlife and climate change.

The survey is going well and lots of recording sheets have already been sent in by email, post and via the app. Well done everyone and don’t forget it is important to record both positive and negative surveys as they will help to build up the knowledge of the distribution of Brown Hairstreaks in the County.

Brown Hairstreak butterflies are important for us to monitor and record because they rely on well connected, high quality treescapes for all stages of their life cycle. Devon is also one of the last national strongholds of this scarce butterfly.

I have been out surveying my square in the village of West Ogwell. Despite my close inspection of every small white speck with my loupe, I am yet to find any eggs. Ever the optimist I am sure to find some soon, especially if I look in enough places.

Well done to A and C Crase who took these pictures during their egg survey, they were found on Blackthorn in East Devon and show just how tiny the eggs are.
Every year the UK sees migrant insects arriving on our shores from various parts of the world. Sometimes we see moths and butterflies from eastern Europe, usually we get them arriving from southern Europe and North Africa, and just occasionally from the Atlantic including Madeira, Canary Islands and even the USA. Different species are generally associated with different points of origin so every year is different depending on weather patterns and the time of year.

This autumn, from the end of August right up to late November we have seen quite a range in the South West. Most records come from coastal locations such as Isles of Scilly (IOS), Portland Bill, where the bird observatory (PBO) records moths as well as birds, Prawle Point in Devon and the Lizard in Cornwall. Early records from these locations often presage records from further inland with some species going on to the northern counties and even the Scottish isles, such as in the case of very strong flyers like the Convulvulus Hawk-moth Agrius convulvuli.

At the end of August one of our rarer migrants, the Slender Burnished Brass Thyssanoplusia orichalcea turned up at PBO on 23rd with another from Devon on 24th, from Dorset on 25th and another two at the end of the month in Cornwall. Interestingly there was a much later record from IOS on November 18th, could this be a home bred example? Around the same time another scarce moth, the Scar-bank Gem Ctenoplusia limbirena was seen in Devon, Dorset and Cornwall and on 2nd September one from the Lizard. Another very rare migrant member of the Plusiinae, Tunbridge Wells Gem Chrydodeixis acuta was reported from Yeoford. The Delicate Mythimna vitellina is a more frequent migrant and early arrivals often go on to breed here. As a result they can turn up right through the autumn as locally bred moths emerge as well as further waves of immigration topping numbers up. This now may be true of a moth that until recently was a rare migrant, but now may manage to breed here at least in some years; Radford’s Flame Shoulder Ochropleura leucogaster This species started to appear at the end of August in Cornwall and was subsequently recorded off and on from IOS to Dorset right up until November 22nd with a significant gap in the records during much of September which does indicate possible home-bred moths.

Convulvulus Hawk-moths were seen from summer right through to the end of September as were Humming-bird Hawk-moths Macroglossum stellatarum which were fairly often seen nectaring during the day throughout the area. Perhaps the most noticeable by the very unusually large numbers seen this year was the Pyralid moth Palpita vitrealis, otherwise known as the Olive-tree Pearl. As the name suggests this is an inhabitant of the Mediterranean area where olives abound. A
very glamorous looking species it also first arrived at the end of August and was seen, sometimes in numbers (40 or more some nights) right through to the end of November. Whether some of these bred here is not certain but the larvae will feed on Privet and would be worth looking out for. The exceptionally mild October and November 2020 must have helped this and other migrants to get larvae through this year.

At the very end of August there were a couple of records of Rosy Underwing *Catocala electa* from Dorset and in early September another from St. Germans, Cornwall. Close relatives Light Crimson Underwing *Catocala promissa* and Dark Crimson Underwing *Catocala sponsa* were also seen well away from the known colonies in the New Forest. The latter has recently undergone a huge expansion in the near continent, especially in Holland, so it looks as if these species are making the most of warmer climatic conditions and may well be regularly seen in Devon in the coming years.

A magnificent Oleander Hawk-moth *Daphnis nerii* was found in the Lizard on 2\textsuperscript{nd} September which is a very rare migrant indeed. Early September also saw the first of several Crimson Speckled *Uetheisa pulchella* which were seen in 2020 on the Isles of Scilly. Further examples were not seen until October 19\textsuperscript{th} again on IOS with four more reported from Cornwall on 22\textsuperscript{nd} one more on 23\textsuperscript{rd} and one from Scilly on 31\textsuperscript{st}. This spectacular moth is one of our rarer migrants and usually seen in the far South West. The Portland Ribbon Wave *Idaea degenaria* is more often seen in the eastern parts of our region and was seen on 28\textsuperscript{th} August in Dorset but was seen in Cornwall on September 9\textsuperscript{th} and again on 20\textsuperscript{th} back in Dorset.

A strong wave of migrant moths arrived in the south west from September 11\textsuperscript{th} to 16\textsuperscript{th} along with many butterflies. The only notable butterfly sighting prior to this was a Long-tailed Blue *Lampedes boeticus* in St. Austell on 1\textsuperscript{st}, the only other record of this species coming six weeks later from Berry Head on 23\textsuperscript{rd} October. On 14\textsuperscript{th} there were also several records of Western Conifer Seed-bug along with rare moths such as *Uresiphita gilvata*, Dewick's Plusia *Macdunnoughia confusa*, and a Death's Head Hawk-moth *Acherontia atropos* which was seen at Prawle Point. Another Death's Head Hawk-moth was found on a boat in Cornwall on 16\textsuperscript{th}. There were several records of the rapidly expanding Box-tree moth *Cydalima perspectalis* of a dark continental form. Other more typical September immigrants started to be seen widely including Bordered Straw *Heliothis peltigera* Scarce Bordered Straw *Helicoverpa armigera* White-point *Hyphilare albipuncta* and White-speck *Pseudaletia unipuncta* the latter two species now at least temporarily established on southern coasts. Some arrived in large numbers with 82 Vestal *Rhodometra sacraria* in one Cornish trap with further examples seen during
the daytime as well as at light throughout the area. Often arriving alongside Vestal, the **Gem** *Nycterosea obstipata* was not seen in any numbers this year with just the odd specimen here and there and very few in later influxes in October and November. **European Corn-borer** *Ostrinia nubilalis* was recorded in all the counties in the SW but never abundantly. Other rarities at this time were singles of *Uresiphita gilvata*, *Antigastra catalaunalis* and *Euchromis ocella*.

More warm nights extended the records of many of these moths into the last week of September with the additional first arrivals of **Cosmopolitan** *Acantholeucania loreyi* and **Sombre Brocade** *Dichonioxa tenebrosa*, the latter at Prawle. Cosmopolitan was seen in Abbotskerswell on October 10th and then widely into late November. There were far fewer **Diamond-back moth** *Plutella xylostella* than in recent years and the same went for the **Rush Veneer** *Nomophila noctuella* neither species being seen in any numbers this year. There were also more sightings of **Clouded Yellows** *Colias croceus* which flew on into October when a male **Pale Clouded Yellow** *Colias hyale* was seen at Lincombe Devon on 15th with a number of Clouded Yellows.

Mid October saw another mass arrival as winds once again became southerly. **Golden Twin-spot** arrived in this wave with two from Dorset and there were further records of Cosmopolitan and Antigastra catalaunalis and a single *Diasemiopsis ramburialis* in S.Devon. **Pearly Underwings** *Peridroma saucia* continued to be seen quite regularly as did **Silver Y** *Autographa gamma* which had a good year overall, likewise **Rusty-dot Pearl** *Udea ferrugalis* and **Dark Sword-grass** *Agrotis ipsilon* which also carried on into late November. There was an anomalous record of three **Four-spotted Footman** *Lithosia quadra* in Dorset on October 20th which seems to be only one so far of this occasional migrant but now resident moth. Also at this time there was a Devon first record of **Blair's Wainscot** *Sedina buettneri* from Ide and a record of the rare migrant Plume moth *Oxyptilus laetus* from Abbotskerswell.

The number of migrants in November was much higher than usual due to continued very warm nights often 16-17°C. **Small Mottled Willow** *Spodoptera exigua* began to be seen as well as examples of the Tree-Mallow feeding Pyralid *Crocidosema plebejana* which is not a noted migrant but appeared in many places often well away from the foodplant in November. Two more late Golden-twin Spot were seen in Dorset on 6th and 7th and there were still plenty of Delicate, White-speck, Rusty-dot Pearl, Silver Y, Pearly Underwing and Dark Sword-grass. Standout over the period were the exceptional numbers of Radford's Flame Shoulder, Cosmopolitan and Olive-tree Pearl. Far fewer of the commoner migrants Diamond-back moth, Rush Veneer, Bordered Straw, and Gem who seemed to lose out this year. The first Devon records of Blair's Wainscot was an obvious highlight,
but was it a migrant or does it exist in some damp meadow in the Exe valley? All the above records are not the whole story as there will no doubt be further records coming in from other sources and recorders as the year comes to an end.

Thanks to Barry Henwood and Atropos Flight Arrivals and Dorset Moth Group.

Dear readers,

Are you someone who enjoys using social media and you have a Facebook account, why not head over to the Devon BC page and follow us there too?

https://www.facebook.com/ButterflyConservationDevon

Here we share news about upcoming BC Devon work parties, links to news and information from other conservation organisations in the Devon area, general things of interest and from time to time, some of the wonderful pictures that supporters of the page send to us on there

Thank you to those who already 'Like' the page and please keep your sightings coming!

For more information you can contact Amy, Branch Secretary on amy.amy@me.com

From what I can gather butterflies seem to 'do' mud-puddling in order to gather liquid nutrients. This behaviour is most often seen among males who are seeking minerals including sodium which are then used in the reproductive process.
Believe it or not there are some Comma butterflies hiding in this picture, how many can you spot?

The Commas are over-wintering at Decoy Park in Newton Abbot and are showing just how effective their amazing camouflage is. They spend winter in a dormant state. Other species of butterfly that over-winter as dormant adults include Brimstone, Small Tortoiseshell and Peacock.

Turn the page for a clearer look...

**Volunteers Needed**

We are looking for some volunteers to help us record butterflies and moths on our County Wildlife Sites over the South West in 2021. These sites include Burrator reservoir, Fernworthy reservoir, Roadford lake, Wimbleball lake, Porth reservoir, Siblyback lake, Drift reservoir and Upper and Lower Tamar lake. We have some fantastic habitats and known species, our aim is to build our database with Butterfly Conservation and the local record centres, helping to inform our management. If you are interested in recording on our sites please send me an email so I can give you more information.

Emma Scotney, Ecologist  South West Lakes Trust

escotney@swlakestrust.org.uk
Here is the same group of Commas but this time the photo has been taken with a flash. Can you see all three butterflies now?

They have been seen on this tree in previous winters so they clearly feel safe amongst the dead leaves caught up in the twigs.

Comma photos: Amanda Hunter

Request for help

We have received a request for help to monitor butterflies on land at Sandford near Crediton where a new meadow is being created. Mr Peter Byles says “One of the fields (8 acres) will be converted into a species-rich meadow with wide verges and a mown path around it. This would be suitable for an interesting study. It would be ideal for a monthly transect monitoring every summer to record the effect of local habitat management” He is calling for any lepidopterists in the area who might be interested in recording the butterflies to get in touch with him.

Telephone: 01363 84529
Email: peterbyles37@gmail.com
Never Underestimate the Power of Zinnias

When thinking about what to plant in the garden this year, have a think about scattering some Zinnia seeds. They are easy to grow, add a vibrant splash of colour to your garden, they do well in a sunny spot. Zinnias come in a wide range of colours and butterflies seem to love them!

![Zinnia with butterfly](image1)

We know gardening for wildlife is more important than ever, an increasing number of our wild spaces have been taken over by urbanisation and farming. This has meant a loss of habitat and the resulting decline in species. If you have a garden you may consider setting aside an area that can be used to provide food, shelter and breeding habitats for wildlife.

There are lots of ways to make sure your garden is attractive to bees, butterflies, birds and a host of other creatures. You can make a lot of small changes that will persuade wildlife that your plot is a nice place to call home, and once the creatures have arrived they provide huge benefits for both flora and ourselves, we can enjoy seeing the garden buzzing with life. Gardening with butterflies and moths in mind is one of the most rewarding things you can do in your own backyard. Have a look at the Butterfly Conservation website gardening tips by following the link below.

https://butterfly-conservation.org/how-you-can-help/get-involved/gardening

![Zinnia with butterfly](image2)

All the butterflies on this page were photographed on Zinnias. The Zinnias all belong to Liz Mallinson who captured them all in her garden located on the edge of the Blackdown Hills in East Devon. What a beautiful reminder of last Summer.

Top: Painted Lady
Middle: Small Copper
Bottom: Brimstone
Roger played a huge role in improving knowledge of Devon’s butterflies. He had a long-standing passionate interest in butterflies and one of his early achievements was finding Small Skipper (when he was aged 14) new to Derbyshire in 1953. Once he moved to Devon in 1982, he began making a huge impact on our knowledge and conservation of these beautiful insects.

Roger was one of three people involved in setting up the Devon Branch of Butterfly Conservation and he served on its committee for many years, including five years as Chairman and a few years as newsletter editor. Most notably though, Roger was the Devon County Recorder of butterflies for an incredible 35 years from 1985 until shortly before he died. This was a significant task, involving receiving records, verifying them for accuracy and incorporating them into the database. In the early years the number of records was probably relatively small compared with what it was latterly. The records were kept on a computer database and by the time Roger passed this on to his successor, he had amassed over 329,000 records of which over 11,000 were attributable to himself. This is a truly enormous number and must have consumed countless hours of Roger’s time.

Early on in his time as County Butterfly Recorder, Roger teamed up with Dave Bolton from the Royal Albert Memorial Museum and they were able to produce distribution maps. Roger had a plan to produce a book and in 1993 Devon Butterflies was published in collaboration with Dave Bolton and Simon Mitchell. Roger’s own recording was important too, especially for the Brown Hairstreak in mid-Devon – he found eggs of this species in so many different sites that the distribution map for Devon had a very large cluster of dots near his home. As if that wasn’t enough, Roger often manned a Butterfly Conservation stand at events and gave numerous talks at garden club and WI meetings raising both awareness and funds for Devon BC. In 2018, all of this hard work was recognised when Roger was presented with Butterfly Conservation’s Outstanding Volunteer Award.

Roger, who had a long career as a geologist, was an incredibly busy person and was still involved with geological and archaeological research nationwide up until his death. He was also prominent in the Sabine Baring Gould Appreciation Society (disbanded in 2018) which aimed to search out and publish the polymath Baring Gould’s forgotten manuscripts and letters.

Roger was a real globetrotter both with his job as a geologist and travelling for pleasure. When working in Ecuador and Trinidad he did pioneer studies on night-flying Owl Butterflies and published a number of Papers on them. On a personal
level, Roger was very likeable, approachable and helpful – it was never too much trouble to dig into the butterfly records to respond to requests for data. His time and effort involved in arranging the AGM and Members’ Days in Crediton lasted over many years and led to the very successful format that we have enjoyed.

Butterfly Conservation and the butterflies of Devon owe him a huge debt of gratitude.

Roger Bristow who sadly passed away in September 2020.

Many, many thanks to all who have contributed a memorial donation to honour Roger Bristow. To date, the sum of money has risen to over £1200 and all at Devon Butterfly Conservation are extremely grateful. Careful consideration is being given as to the most fitting way to use the gifts.

**Transect and WCBS news**

from Jenny Evans, co-ordinator

Jenny says “thank you” to all those who walked transects last year. It is possible this year that Covid 19 restrictions could affect the weekly transect walks starting on April 1\(^{st}\). If weeks have to be missed, she encourages walkers to just do the walks when they can. It won’t be a disaster if some of the early weeks can’t be walked. Data from transects with missing weeks will still be useful. Recording last year was erratic for the same reasons but the records have gone into the system and will have value.

Many people did much more recording in their garden last year and there is still this option for casual records for this year if travel is restricted again.

For the Wider Countryside Butterfly Survey (WCBS) the core 2 transect walks, one in July and the other in August perhaps may be more secure, being later in the season. Additional walks can be done in other months but are optional. This scheme involves devising and walking a route consisting of two separate 1km lines, preferably parallel ones, within a given 1km square. There are around 30 WCBS transects in Devon but new random squares are available for anyone who would like to be involved – please contact Jenny: jennifer.evans@lineone.net
A square may be available near your home.

Jenny intends to list the available squares in the June newsletter.
Chudleigh Knighton Heath and Pearl-bordered Fritillary
Pete Hurst

Pearl-bordered Fritillary (PBF) is only found in a few limited areas around the Heath with the best numbers always seen along the footpath from Dunley crossroads going towards Bradley Pond and Bovey Tracey. Smaller numbers have been seen on the other side of the B3344 from the old sports field and heading towards Dunley Lane in the direction of Hennock. Other sightings have been made on the edge of the clay quarry and in coppiced areas of the old railway line at the south-eastern tip of the reserve.

In 2020, I was a little disappointed that PBF nos. only peaked at 4 on the best day that I visited in spite of some good ground clearance work done by Devon Wildlife Trust (DWT) and BC Devon branch.

The maximum daily count for the last 6 years is shown below.

**MAXIMUM DAILY COUNT OF PEARL-BORDERED FRITILLARY AT CHUDLEIGH KNIGHTON HEATH**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Date</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9th May</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>13th May</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>13th May</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2018</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>17th May</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2019</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>11th May</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2020</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>10th May</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Pearl-bordered has had a boost in the past when the power company has done a major coppice beneath the high-voltage power line at Dunley Cross. This was last done in the autumn of 2014. By Spring 2017 the ground was regenerating well with plenty of violets, the larval foodplant, and a good showing of nectar-rich herbs for the adult butterflies to nectar on and some remaining areas of bare ground creating a lovely warm habitat. The highest count of 20 was made in that year. By 2020 however, breeding opportunities for the butterfly in this area had greatly reduced with much scrub regeneration. Some Devon BC and DWT conservation work in a couple of glades nearby however still provided habitat for the PBF and this was where most PBF’s were seen.

In the last couple of years, I have been alarmed to see Wood Ant nests springing up in the PBF breeding areas. I immediately wondered about the impact on the larval stage of PBF as I know that the ants will pick clean a large area around the nest.
seizing any invertebrates that they can find. The ants can even be seen searching around bushes a metre or two above ground and probably even higher. Having met John Walters on the Heath recently, he also agreed that Wood Ant nests had suddenly increased of late and concurred that it would impact on populations of butterfly larvae.

Strangely, if Wood Ants are contributing to fewer PBF’s emerging at Chudleigh Knighton Heath, the larvae of Brown Hairstreak, which is also found in the same area as PBF, might not be so vulnerable. A 2020 autumn egg count for Brown Hairstreak was a very respectable 79 in just under 2 hours when searching in the Dunley Cross area, which is an excellent count and shows the butterfly is doing well here.

Puss Moth *Cerura vinula*

The Puss moth is a large sized moth with a greyish white furry body, it has a cat like appearance which has contributed to its common name. It can be found on the wing between May and July. The caterpillar is cryptic at rest but when disturbed displays a scary defence mechanism. It shows off its red face and extrudes red filaments from its tails (modified anal claspers) and can even squirt very pungent formic acid from a gland on the first thoracic segment.

Larvae feed on willows and poplars and can be found in a variety of inland habitats from July to September. When fully fed it makes a cocoon from silk and chewed up bark or wood which then becomes very hard. Here it will overwinter before emerging as an adult in the spring. The moth secretes a substances to soften the pupae at the time of emergence.
Moth report 2019 Barry Henwood
This report refers to 2019 as the 2020 data is still being analysed. I must thank all of you who have submitted records during 2019. The task of verifying the large number of records submitted has been shared with Phil Barden and I thank him for his help with this and mentoring members that are new to recording. I am very grateful for help received from Darryl Rush in digitalising handwritten records from a tiny number of recorders who do not have a computer. Thank you to Phil Dean who has provided help in various ways with manipulation of data on spreadsheets, which has saved me a huge amount of time. Thank you to Kim Leaver for helping members with identifications and for dealing with records gleaned from iRecord. Bob Heckford has stepped back from casting his eye over all the micro-moth records, freeing up time to write his excellent papers. Nevertheless, he is there to provide the best opinion possible on the rare occasions that I need it.

The records will all be sent to Devon Biodiversity Records Centre and the National Moth Recording Scheme (NMRS) run by Butterfly Conservation. Records of immigrant moths are submitted to Sean Clancy who produces a report on the immigration of Lepidoptera each year, which is published in The Entomologist’s Record and Journal of Variation.

The table below gives a breakdown of the 87,471 records received over the course of the year. They are categorised as butterflies, macro-moths, micro-moths and as to whether they are from 2019 or previous years. The map on the facing page shows the geographical coverage of the 2019 records at 2km grid square (tetrad) resolution.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>pre-2019 records</th>
<th>2019 records</th>
<th>Total submitted in last year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Butterflies</td>
<td>156</td>
<td>123</td>
<td>279</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Macro-moths accepted including aggregates</td>
<td>6,051</td>
<td>62,513</td>
<td>68,564</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Macro-moths rejected</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>139</td>
<td>181</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Macro-moths total</strong></td>
<td><strong>6,093</strong></td>
<td><strong>62,652</strong></td>
<td><strong>68,745</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Micro-moths accepted including aggregates</td>
<td>1,329</td>
<td>16,613</td>
<td>17,942</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Micro-moths rejected</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>494</td>
<td>505</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Micro-moths total</strong></td>
<td><strong>1,340</strong></td>
<td><strong>17,107</strong></td>
<td><strong>18,447</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total all groups</td>
<td>7,589</td>
<td>79,882</td>
<td>87,471</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Coverage of 2019 Devon records at 2km x 2km square scale (594 squares)

There were four species recorded new to Devon. They are *Ectoedemia heringella* at various sites around Exeter, *Parectopa ononidis* at Sidmouth, *Monochroa palustrellus* at Brendon and *Cochylidia implicitana* at Teignmouth.

There were five new vice-county records, all from North Devon, VC4 as it is relatively poorly recorded compared with South Devon VC3. They were *Stigmella samiatella* at Knightshayes, *Metalampra italica* at Sampford Peverell, *Coleophora otidipennella* at Meeth, *Meganola albula* Kent Black Arches at Southole and Braunton Burrows. *Catocala fraxini* Clifden Nonpareil continues its colonisation of the county. There had never been more than two records a year until 2017 when there were 10, followed by 21 in 2018 and 27 records have been received for 2019. This includes a spread into North Devon with five records. A fully fed larva was found for the first time in Devon at Totnes.

There were plenty of other interesting records, examples of some of which are given below. *Nemophora cupriacella* was photographed at Andrew’s Wood, Loddiswell, making it the third Devon record. The larvae feed on Devil’s-bit Scabious. Only females are known and so it is thought to be parthenogenetic. *Hyles gallii* Bedstraw Hawk-moth was recorded in August at Chudleigh and Seaton and in October three larvae were found in an Exmouth garden feeding on Fuchsia. *Idaea ochrata* Bright Wave was recorded in Totnes. This was the second Devon record and a presumed migrant individual. *Cyclophora ruficiliaria* Jersey Mocha, is a species rapidly colonising Devon from the continent. It was first recorded in 2011 and then seen annually since 2015. In 2018 there were 35 records which were more twice the total for all previous years and now in 2019, 46 records were received. *Cepphis advenaria* Little Thorn was recorded from four sites - Plymouth, Ham Wood; Ausewell Wood; Loddiswell, Aveton Wood and Bere Alston, Leigh Wood. Previously in Devon there had been one record in 2009, two records in 2017 and four in 2018. All these records are spread over widely separated woods, so its colonisation of Devon is pleasing and surprising. A single *Hecatera*
Small Ranunculus was found in a subway in Exeter. This is the first modern day record for this species in Devon. Nationally it had virtually disappeared by 1914 with just six further records up to 1939. It began re-colonising from south east England in 1997. Searches for larvae on *Lactuca serriola* Prickly Lettuce were unsuccessful, but it seems highly likely that the species will be seen more frequently in Devon from now on.

*Hadena albimacula* White Spot is one of Devon’s Special Species – a species of conservation concern where Devon has a particular responsibility for it. A survey was conducted in early July to look for patches of its foodplant Nottingham Catchfly between Beer and Branscombe. Several patches were located at the cliff top and evidence of larval feeding within the seed capsules was noted. Some scrub clearance is to be carried out with the kind cooperation of the landowner. A few seeds were collected and plants grown on so that seed could be collected and distributed in suitable places. This is a case of a rare moth dependent upon a rare plant.

The above is a very brief account of the immense amount of recording that took place in 2019. If anyone would like to learn more about Devon’s moths I recommend joining Devon Moth Group which produces an annual report. The 2019 report ran to 52 pages including a list of all species recorded by vice-county and the number of records for each. Additionally there is an article showing how the database has been used to investigate whether there have been changes in phenology (times of appearance) of selected species in the last 50 years, sometimes with dramatic results.

**The last word from your editor….**

I hope you are all managing to stay safe and well during this pandemic. I hope that you have seen signs of spring and are looking forward to the forthcoming year with optimism, safe in the knowledge that the seasons will remain the same and the wildlife we see in our gardens, parks and hedgerows will continue on its cycle. That you will find comfort and a space to breathe while enjoying nature in all its bountiful forms. For myself ‘the garden project’ continues apace and is providing me with focus, joy and more importantly something to do! Most recently I have planted a variety of native trees and shrubs in the hope of providing a wider variety of habitats and food plants. I will share a picture with you in the next edition as things are looking decidedly muddy out there at the moment.

Please remember to send me your stories, pictures and articles, I would love to hear from you and to know how you are getting on.

Emma
# Committee members

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## Non-committee posts for Devon BC:-

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</table>
Lackey moth Larvae
Pete Hurst

Cephis advenaria
Barry Henwood

Puss moth caterpillar
Colin Sargent

Red Admiral
7th January 2021
Dave Gregory