

E-moth Update November 2022

Welcome to the new look E-moth update! We hope that you enjoy the new format and would welcome your feedback about it so that we can further improve E-moth in the future.

It's been an amazing and exciting year with lots of migrant moth activity. There have been several new moths for Britain discovered, including *Pseudozarba bipartita*, of which there have been two sightings, at Titchfield Common, Hampshire on 25 October and in North Essex on 29 October. Daniel Blyton shares his story of finding the second sighting of this moth in this edition of E-moth.

Social media was also buzzing with the joy of "Blue Underwings" in September. There were numerous reports of Clifden Nonpareil across much of the southern half of Britain. In this part of the world it is of course difficult to know if the moths are migrants or expanding residents, although coastal sightings or those away from known colonies are more likely to be migrants. There have been a few sightings in Scotland - on iRecord there are details of two sightings, one near Aberfoyle, west Perthshire on 17 September and another near Grantown on Spey, Moray on 20 September. The Scottish Moths group also reports a worn and tatty Clifden Nonpareil from Stobo, Scottish Borders on 18 September.

There have also been bumper numbers of Striped Hawk-moth, Convolvulus Hawk-moth and Death's Head Hawk-moth reported this year. Several other scarce migrants have been reported, including *Uresiphita gilvata*, *Antigastra catalaunalis*, *Dialectica scariella*, *Spoladea recurvalis* and Dark Mottled Willow.

Crimson Speckled has been another migrant moth filling the social media airwaves over the past month or so, with over 100 sightings reported recently. Our very own Richard Fox was one of the lucky ones, finding two Crimson Speckleds in Devon, the first he's ever seen. Richard said his "heart was pounding" upon discovering one of these beautiful moths in the grass next to his trap and then another one inside! It is moments like these that remind us that moths and moth recording is simply superb and you never know what will turn up!



Crimson Speckled (Robert Thompson)

National Moth Recording Scheme update

The National Moth Recording Scheme database now holds 32.9 million macro-moth records and 5.5 million micro-moth records. Many thanks to the County Moth Recorder network and their Verification Assistants for their efforts in collating and verifying local datasets for submission to the NMRS, it is much appreciated.

We have received up-to-date macro-moth datasets (including 2021 records) from 45 vice-counties (Figure 1). There are a few further gaps where we are yet to receive 2020 records as well as 2021 records. Fortunately, the major backlog in records from 2017 to 2019 has been plugged, although there are a few outstanding datasets namely Westmorland and Cumbria and the Channel Islands. We will be actively chasing up all missing datasets over the winter months.

The vast majority of macro-moth records (79%) in the NMRS are for 2000 onwards. In some areas the total is much greater, for example in VC85 Fifeshire, records from 2000 onwards make up 98% of the total number of records. This contrasts with VC104, North Ebudes (Rhum; Canna; Eigg & Muck) where 30% of records are from 2000 onwards and Surrey with 43% of records for 2000 onwards.

The Vice-counties with the largest datasets in the NMRS are VC11 South Hampshire (1,321,923 records), VC58 Cheshire (1,142,393 records) and VC9 Dorset (1,090,680 records). On average the County Moth Recorders in these VC's receive around 42,000 records each per year. The three smallest datasets are VC112 Shetland (11,384 records), VC74 Wigtownshire (15,861) and VC99 Dunbartonshire (17,036 records). On average the County Moth Recorders in these VC's receive around 476 records each year! These examples clearly demonstrate the extremes in County Moth Recorder workload.

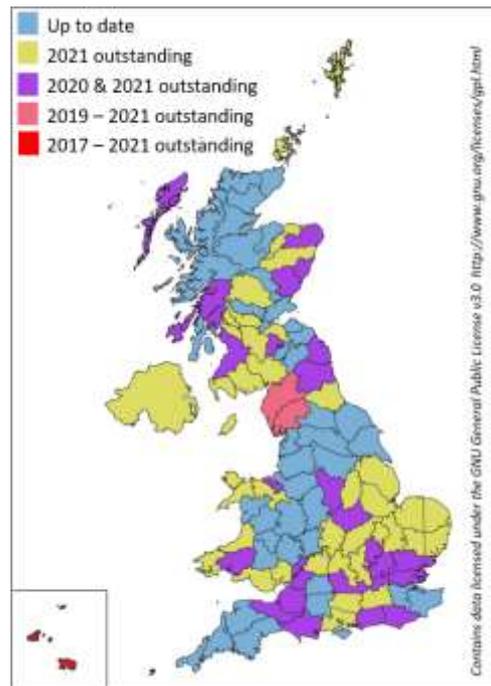


Figure 1: Map showing the status of vice-county datasets in the National Moth Recording Scheme as of 26 Oct 2022

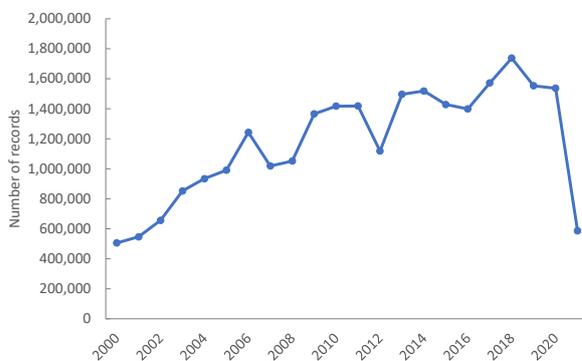


Figure 2: Number of records in the National Moth Recording Scheme per annum from 2000 onwards

The number of macro-moth records per annum has generally increased since the turn of the century (Figure 2). The NMRS has a total of 505,186 macro-moth records for the year 2000, which climbed to 1.2 million records by 2006, an increase of 69% on 2000. The number of records for 2007 dropped by 18% from 2006, but then increased annually until 2012, when there was a reduction of 21% on the number of records compared with 2011. The greatest annual increase was seen in 2013 when 1,495,916 records were received, up 34% on 2012. The greatest number of NMRS records for a single year

to date was in 2018, with 1,737,141 records, which represents a 244% increase compared to the year 2000.

It's been widely discussed how the Lockdowns of 2020 affected how people observed nature that year. [Lepidoptera records in iRecord increased by 97% from 2019 to 2020](#). On the mothing front there were reports of moth traps being out of stock and moth recording was experiencing a boom. As more 2020 datasets have come in, it is now possible to assess the impact of the 2020 lockdown on moth recording. Comparing the number of records in datasets for 2019 and 2020 datasets there are some remarkable increases. In total, 44% of VCs assessed show a year-on-year increase greater than 25%, whereas only 6% of VCs assessed show an annual decrease greater than 25%.

The following VCs experienced an increase above 100% in the number of records from 2019 to 2020; VC25 East Suffolk; VC76 Renfrewshire; VC81 Berwickshire; VC83 Midlothian; VC105 West Ross; VC106 East Ross and VC107 East Sutherland. Interestingly all of these VC's with

the exception of East Suffolk are in Scotland. Conversely, there were several areas where the number of records decreased in excess of 20%; VC29 Cambridgeshire; VC52 Anglesey; VC53 South Lincolnshire; VC56 Nottinghamshire; VC72 Dumfriesshire and VC82 East Lothian.

UK Moth Recorders' Meeting 2023

The UK Moth Recorders' Meeting will be held virtually, via Zoom, on Saturday 28 January 2023. The programme for the day has been finalised and can be seen [here](#).

The following speakers are lined up: Dr Zoë Randle who will provide the usual update on the National Moth Recording Scheme, Dr Jamie Alison from Aarhus University, Denmark, and the UK Centre for Ecology and Hydrology will be speaking about the remarkable discoveries being revealed by automated camera surveillance of pollinators; the Kent's Magnificent Moths team will provide a rundown of some of the exciting finds of rare moths that have been made by the project, and future plans, and Durwyn Liley will be sharing the story of the rediscovery of the Speckled Footman. We also have Professor Eric Warrant, from the University of Lund, Sweden, speaking about the collapse of the Bogong Moth in Australia.



Advance booking is essential, you can book your place [here](#).

We would ideally run this meeting as a hybrid event but the costs are prohibitive. We plan to hold the 2024 UK Moth Recorders' Meeting as an in-person event.

#MothsMatter campaign

Butterfly Conservation has been celebrating moths with our #MothsMatter campaign. If you follow social media you will have seen moths being highlighted and promoted across all of our channels. Butterfly Conservation staff were interviewed about their work and their passion for moths as part of the campaign. You can read the blogs here: [George Tordoff](#), [Phil Sterling](#) and [Zoë Randle](#).

You can find out more [here](#).



Elephant Hawk-moth (Rachel Scopes)

Supporting Science

From our consultation with County Moth Recorders (CMRs) we are aware of the future risks presented by some local data management systems. In some cases, these systems are reaching capacity, may not be supported long-term, or will be difficult to handover on retirement. We are also aware of the increasingly challenging number of records from multiple sources that CMRs receive which requires more support for existing CMRs, and training of future volunteers and new team support. The Supporting Science project aims to address these needs by further understanding the issues and providing improved local data management solutions and associated resources or training.

To advance future data skills and team support, the Supporting Science collaboration with the Field Studies Council is proving enormously successful and promising. Our self-led, online courses; Identifying Distinctive Moths and Identifying Distinctive Butterflies have to date, been completed by 541 and 559 people respectively. Feedback has been positive, 98-99% of course completers said they had increased their skills and knowledge and had enjoyed the course. Over 150 of these learners applied to take part in the iRecord Verification course which is currently underway; training existing County



Poplar Hawk-moth (CC0)

Recorders, Verification Assistants and 25 potential new verification volunteers. 100% of those who have already completed the course (19 participants) said they would recommend the course for Verification Assistants. We are now looking forward to supporting these newly trained people to avail of verification volunteering opportunities within the existing network of County Recorders.

To improve systems, we are also working with UKCEH to develop significant improvements and new features in iRecord, where much of Butterfly Conservation's online data are shared and available for verification by County Recorders or their teams.

We have adopted a 'user research' approach to this project so that we are designing changes with clear insights from the community of users. Martha Henson of Tech Works For Us has led us through the major research phase of this, interviewing 12 County Recorders or Verification Assistants about their verification process and sense checking the thematic findings with a further group of County Recorders and the project team.

We have now defined a roadmap for the development. Headlines include improving the process for communicating with recorders via the system; allowing for better local customisation of useful tools; providing for secure and private upload of additional local datasets. We're progressing the different identified areas of work in parallel and we will be working with the volunteer user community on testing as development unfolds



DECIDE: The Datasets Dream

As the DECIDE project reaches near end, the creative arts meet biological recording in a collaboration between artist Bryony Benge-Abbott, poet Thomas Sharp and scientists from the UK Centre for Ecology & Hydrology. This collaboration is called [The Dataset's Dream](#). It ran from 2 – 4 December from 15:30 - 18:30 in the Woodlands at Orleans House Gallery, Twickenham, TW1 3BL.

In a winter-dark Twickenham wood, the UK's butterfly and moth database is having its first dream - as imagined in a newly commissioned sound, light and spoken word installation. The Dataset's Dream invites us to consider the importance of both cataloguing the natural world and of touching it with our imaginations. If data could talk, what would it say to us in this Time of declining populations of our beautiful butterflies and moths? Seeded throughout the woods of Orleans House Gallery, The Dataset's Dream is an unguided dusk experience featuring a series of illuminated glass 'casket-cocoons' encountered while listening to spoken word audio through headsets. The narrative takes us on a surreal journey into the world of big data and animism, sorrow and hope. The Dataset's Dream ponders on our relationship with nature in a highly digitized world; what happens when we turn nature into digital data and what might the real-world impact of absences within the data be?



The Datasets Dream (Ewelina Ruminska)

Poet Thomas Sharp commented *"I think I fell in love a little bit with our dataset as its narrative emerged. Its non-linear, questioning, dark-wood dream is the journey the world is beginning to take – a journey that begins with regarding nature as something 'other', something that can be reduced to its constituent parts, and moves beautifully towards a merging"*

The Dataset's Dream is in part inspired by [DECIDE](#), a new tool developed by scientists at UKCEH in partnership with Butterfly Conservation and six other organisations. Volunteer wildlife recorders contribute millions of valuable records each year, but existing butterfly and moth records typically come from nature reserves or areas near to where recorders live, leaving other parts of the country under-recorded. DECIDE 'nudges' these citizen scientists to step off the beaten track by highlighting the places where new records are most needed. There has never been a more urgent need to build an accurate picture of the natural world around us. Biodiversity is essential for human life and yet a recent report has set out a stark picture of the UK as one of the most biodiversity depleted countries in the world. Over the past fifty years, three-quarters of butterflies have declined and the abundance of the larger moths has declined by 33%, primarily due to habitat loss and changes in land use. Accurate data, recorded by volunteers, is crucial for decision-making, enabling us to identify locations that are particularly rich in biodiversity or are home to threatened species.

Dr Michael Pocock, lead scientist on the DECIDE project commented: *"For us, collaborating with artists was valuable to open new ways of engaging with people about our science, but the process of collaboration also gave us, as scientists on the project, new insights into our work. We're excited to see the ways in which audiences will reflect on their relationship with nature and the value of digital biodiversity data by engaging with The Dataset's Dream."*

Although the installation has been and gone (for now) the Dataset's Dream narrative can be listened to [here](#). You can find out more information about the DECIDE project [here](#).

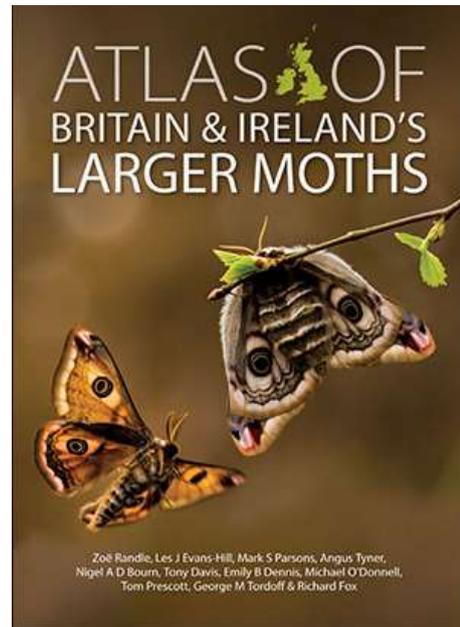
Atlas of Britain and Ireland's Larger Moths – on offer!

In the dark about what to get your favourite moth-er for Christmas? Look no further! The *Atlas of Britain and Ireland's Larger Moths* will be on offer until 31 December, at the discounted price of £30 from [NatureBureau](#).

The atlas is beautifully illustrated with over 800 colour photographs and displays distribution maps showing current and historical records for 893 species. Distribution trends and abundance trends are presented along with the IUCN Red List status for Great Britain and for Ireland. Phenology charts have been produced for 866 species, the majority of these compare the flight period of the moth in the 1970s with 2000 to 2016.

These provide some interesting insights into how some species are responding to climate change by changing their phenology, for example by flying earlier in the year, or by being able to have a second generation much further north than was possible in the 1970's.

This book is a great companion to the field guides and comes highly recommended by many County Moth Recorders and grass-roots recorders alike.



Illuminating tales from the trap

The recent warm weather has caused a huge stir amongst the UK mothing community. South-westerlies have arrived in the UK from North Africa bringing a plentiful supply of migrant moths, including some more unusual species. For the week or so of these ideal mothing conditions all I could do whilst holidaying in Wales with my family (without a moth trap) was read the many posts coming in on social media with interest, an interest tinged with a small amount of jealousy!

I am in my fourth year of moth trapping and have become completely intoxicated with this hobby, especially as I have a broad interest in invertebrates and there are all manner of non-moths (or moth trap intruders) attracted to the light of moth traps, or to prey on those attracted to the light.

The end of the warm nights happened to coincide with my return from Wales, so with little thought I eagerly set up both my moth traps (a Robinson with 125MV bulb and a Skinner with 20W actinic bulb and 22W synergetic green ring bulb), one near the house and one down towards the back of the garden. This was possibly the last chance to join in the 'migrant mayhem'.

The traps were switched on around 6.30pm, the Robinson set up first, then the Skinner. In the time it took me from switching on the Skinner lights, walking back to the greenhouse in the middle of the garden (a modest sized garden, not a country estate!) to collect some eggboxes and then return to the Skinner trap to place the eggboxes around the outside of the trap, a small interesting moth had landed on one of the Perspex lids. At this stage I wasn't sure if it was a special moth or not, and a bungled attempt to pot it in the awkward position it had landed didn't overly concern me. I trooped back to the Robinson trap to add eggboxes around the outside of this one too, then sauntered back to the Skinner trap. The moth had returned!

This time it was easier to pot and I was able to look at it properly. It was also at this point that my mind went into overdrive...maybe it's a rare migrant, I was thinking.

I knew this moth was not familiar to me but with limited experience trapping in Essex only, mainly at home, but also at a few nature reserves and the like, I started my research into this moth using my Manley guide book. With no success and my heart racing, I took some photos and popped one into an app. I don't rely on this app but it has certainly helped point me in the right direction. And in this case, it provided an ID, with a vaguely high-level of certainty, of

Pseudozarba bipartita, a name that meant nothing to me and which I imagined initially would be one of the wild identifications that was not even an insect let alone a moth. But a quick search on the internet led me to confirm this identification and I realised it was not a native UK moth. Finding no evidence of any records on the NBN Atlas sent my heart racing to dangerous levels, though thankfully I soon learnt after posting my photographs on a social media moth group that whilst the identification was correct, this was actually the second UK record, the first being from a specimen taken to light in Hampshire four days previously.

This lovely little Noctuid moth was a very active one and the end of the story was that in trying to transfer it from the petri dish I use for photographing through back into a pot, so better photographs could be taken the following day in daylight, it escaped in my lounge and was never seen again... bringing me well and truly back to Earth!

Contributed by Daniel Blyton, moth recorder, Essex



Pseudozarba bipartita (Daniel Blyton)

The quest to save the Silver Shade

Whilst the article title may sound like the latest release in the Indiana Jones film series, it actually refers to efforts to conserve one of the UK's rarest micro-moths. The Silver Shade *Eana argentana* is a unicolourous brilliant silver-white moth only known in the UK from Glen Tilt, near Blair Atholl in Perthshire. Originally discovered there by Buchanan White in 1875, it occurs on steep, south-facing, flower-rich upland grassland and rocky scree slopes and was reported as being found over several miles of this long glen. However, the few sightings since 1986 have all come from one very small area extending over only around 400m of the glen. Since 2019, BC Scotland staff and volunteers have been making an annual pilgrimage to the glen to help further our understanding of the moth



Eana argentana (David Hill)

The moth readily comes to light and this year's plan was to deploy an arsenal of moth traps over several nights. The trip coincided with the July heatwave and some very warm nights which resulted in vast numbers of True Lover's Knot entering the traps. 1000+ moths per trap was not uncommon so picking out the Silver Shade moths proved tricky!



Eana argentana eggs (Tom Prescott)

The Silver Shade is also fairly easy to find by day in the right habitat with moths easily disturbed from the vegetation. Between moth trapping and daytime finds a total of 34 were seen this year, the highest count in recent years. The fieldwork this year was also successful in extending the range of the moth both to the north and south of the known patch, roughly trebling its extent along the glen.

However, the major breakthrough of the trip was successfully obtaining eggs from two females which is believed to be the first time the early stages have been observed in Britain. The eggs, which were laid in small batches, were distributed

amongst five lepidopterists to rear. On emerging the tiny larvae disappeared into supplied vegetation and soil and have not fed suggesting they may not feed until the spring. This matches the only source of information available, a 1957 German account by Heddergott.

The larvae will be offered various foodplants present in the glen in the hope that they show a preference to help determine when and how to find them in the wild. This will greatly aid our understanding of their ecology and enable appropriate conservation action to be undertaken, if required.



Glen Tilt fieldwork (David Hill)

Contributed by Tom Prescott and David Hill, BC Scotland

2022 highlights from VC 105 West Ross



Frosted Orange (Les Evans-Hill)

The data analysis necessary to monitor and interpret population change is, of necessity, carried out centrally, but it is nevertheless worthwhile to look out for possible signs of change at a more local level.

In this context, it was an interesting year for VC 105 (West Ross). In March, the first VC records (four) of Pale Pinion occurred including two at Inverewe. This was followed in September by a very fresh, presumably recently emerged, specimen at the same site suggesting that this apparently new arrival had stayed to breed.

March and April brought only the second VC records for Oak Beauty and Brindled Beauty respectively, and the first VC Bordered Straw was found at Applecross in June. The same month saw the first VC evidence of north west range extension of the Ringlet butterfly. The



Scallop Shell (Dave Green)

species appeared in the Braemore Junction area and several subsequent sightings suggest that this was not a one-off event.

August provided evidence of another species known to be expanding its range, with the first VC records of Buff Footman (four) found in Inverewe Gardens. A fifth moth was found in the Gardens in September.

The year moved into autumn with an unusual number (for VC 105) of Convolvulus Hawk-moth sightings.

At least six were counted, staying

for several nights feeding. At Durnamuck, 40+ Silver Y moths were found emerging from chrysalises under netting protecting a carrot crop and close by, on 11 September, the first VC record of Frosted Orange appeared.

The final word on hints of range extension in VC 105 must, inevitably, go to the locally much-publicised Scallop Shell story. The first record was from the Gairloch area in 2016, followed by four in 2020, five in 2021 and three in 2022. The sites now range from Strathcarron in the mid-south to Durnamuck in the mid-north of the VC. Few records, but perhaps a species on the move in the north west?

The VC is blessed with decades of RIS records from various sites, but even measured against that data bank, none of these examples can be taken as firm scientific evidence of geographical population change. However, this kind of local data inspection can pique and maintain the interest of the many local volunteers who rigorously collect data in the expectation that their efforts will make a real contribution to understanding critical environmental issues. Climate change looms large as the obvious “influencer” of lepidopteran change.

Contributed by Barry Blake, County Moth Recorder, West Ross

Interesting moths in Notts in summer and autumn 2022

A Cypress Carpet recorded at light in a Warsop garden was a new record for the county, whilst a Scarce Vapourer larva seen near Retford in May was the first to be recorded in Nottinghamshire since 2000.

Scarlet Tiger, Cypress Pug, Tree-lichen Beauty and Toadflax Brocade are all continuing to colonise, with several new sites for each recorded during 2022.

Normally scarce immigrants have included, to date, four Convolvulus Hawk-moths, three Dark Crimson Underwings, and four Clifden Nonpareils – two of the latter having been recorded in one trap near some large poplar trees, which may indicate local breeding. This moth was first recorded in the county in 2017, and again in 2020. One of the 2022 moths was caught near a large Black Poplar tree in the same village as the 2020



Scarce Vapourer larva (Kevin Clarke)



Dark Crimson Underwing (Dave Green)

specimen – which may be further evidence of local breeding of this impressive species.

Both Scarce Bordered Straw and Bordered Straw have also been recorded in Notts this autumn

Contributed by Dr Sheila Wright, Nottinghamshire Macro-moth recorder

Landmark year for Alderney's moths

Alderney is a special location to observe moths, given its close proximity to the continent and the habitat diversity which supports so many species. As far back as the 1930s, naturalists have been waking up to discover what their light traps have attracted overnight. This year we have managed to update the records for the island to include observations from the last seven years and restart a comprehensive programme of moth research.

Continuing the long-term dataset created by various recorders allows for the creation of abundance and distribution trends. These are vital for the understanding how our moths are faring in relation to other places around the world.



Spanish Carpet (Alderney Wildlife Trust)



Privet Hawk-moth (Alderney Wildlife Trust)

We owe much to David Wedd, the previous County Moth Recorder for his expertise and dedication to the role. During his tenure, the Alderney moth list was expanded from 258 species to 565 and we now know a lot more about the emergence periods and local status of species. He still supports us with identification and keeps us on our toes, as I look to continue his legacy as the new County Recorder.

Being that bit closer to Europe than most other recording areas in the UK, we are fortunate to see some species that haven't been recorded there for many years or are rarely seen. When checking the identification guides, we often see 'widespread and frequent in the Channel Islands' as a comment on the distribution of species that are scarce in UK. Some like the Spanish Carpet haven't been seen in the UK since 1996 but are a regular presence in the

traps later in the year. Other such as the Orache are sparse immigrants to the UK (formerly breeders) but are still common in the summer months on Alderney.

Opening the trap with members of the public has been a real joy this year and we have enjoyed teaching each other about the different species and what people see in their gardens. Some of the children in particular have amazed us with their knowledge and it is always fun passing a *Convolvulus* or Privet Hawk-moth around for them to see up close. Everyone has their own affectionate names for moths like the 'Rhubarb & Custard Moth', *Oncocera semirubella* (Rosy-striped Knot-horn) and enjoys a good laugh when learning some of the quirky names like Old Lady, Shark & Chocolate Tip. We look forward to updating readers in the future about how the UK's moths are faring 'down south'!



Oncocera semirubella (Alderney Wildlife Trust)

Contributed by Daniel Whitelegg, County Moth Recorder, Alderney Wildlife Trust

BC Symposium 2023

Butterfly Conservation's ninth International Symposium makes a welcome return after five years. This event will be held at Wyboston Conference Centre, Bedfordshire from 13 - 16 April 2023, with the theme: Conserving Lepidoptera in a Changing World. The latest science on the ecology of moths and butterflies, and how to conserve them and their habitats, in light of the of the numerous drivers of change will be featured. Several keynote speakers are confirmed including; Professor Nick Haddad from Michigan State



BC Symposium 2018 (Jim Asher)

University, author of *The Last Butterflies*, which describes his research into some of the US's rarest and most threatened butterflies, Dr Eva Knop from the University of Zurich, a leading researcher into artificial light at night and the ecosystem services Lepidoptera provide society, Professor Dr Josef Settele, from the Helmholtz-Centre for Environmental Research (UFZ), Leipzig, Germany. Josef has worked tirelessly within the EU on the interface between science and policy and will be presenting on intergovernmental and other science-policy processes and their relevance for the conservation of insects, and Professor Toke Thomas Høye from Aarhus University, Denmark will be presenting on his pioneering work involving new technology in Lepidoptera research. Further keynote speakers will be announced in due course.

The programme provides opportunities for Butterfly Conservation members to present talks or posters on practical conservation work and contributions will be welcomed. The Symposium will end with a field visit to the Chequered Skipper re-introduction site, which is close to the venue.

You can find out more and book your place [here](#).

Tribute to David Victor Manning (14 Dec 1936 - 30 Sept 2022)

When David started studying British moths, he quickly realised that most moth books covered only the larger moths, only about a third of the British species. This was triggered when he took a Small Magpie, *Anania hortulata*, to the Bedfordshire County Moth Recorder at that time for identification as he did not have it in his books. He was told “oh that is a micro-moth – we don’t do them”. This annoyed David as it was to him as if in bird recording only birds the size of a Blackbird were recorded and anything smaller was ignored!

With this in mind he decided to study the micro-moths, in time he became a recognised expert on the micro-moths, which led him to becoming the county recorder for Bedfordshire in 1986 and Northamptonshire in the late 1980s. David retired as the Northamptonshire micro-moth recorder on 31st December 2015 and the Bedfordshire micro-moth recorder in March 2016. He was co-author of the comprehensive work *The Butterflies and Moths of Bedfordshire*, published in 1997. As part of his moth expertise, he helped set up the British leaf miners website.



David first presented moth records to the Bedfordshire database from his Sharnbrook garden in June 1973 and continued to do so until his last trap night on 30th August 2016. He became the Bedfordshire micro-moth recorder in 1986, a new position for the Bedfordshire Natural History Society as previously they only had a recorder for the macro-moths. David is first mentioned in the Bedfordshire Naturalist, the annual report for the Bedfordshire Natural History Society, in 1974 when Wally Champkin, the then macro-moth recorder says “Several interesting records were received from David Manning who runs a M.V. trap in Sharnbrook”. In the 1977 report Vic Arnold, now the macro-moth recorder, includes a short section on micro-moths in Bedfordshire written by David and this constitutes the first formal report on the micro-moths for Bedfordshire. David’s first report as the Bedfordshire micro-moth recorder was for the 1985 season for publication in 1986 and his final report was for 2015 published in 2016. In the Bedfordshire moth database there are over 30,000 records with his name as recorder and thousands more where he is the determiner – often by dissection at which he was very adept. David was also a very good artist and several of his meticulous pen drawings of tiny micros appear in the Bedfordshire moth book.

I don’t remember exactly when I first got to know David, but it was sometime around the mid to late 1980s. As we were both interested in the micro-moths we were soon comparing notes and going on field trips together, David mostly coming to Huntingdonshire, so he could visit sites new to him such as Little Paxton Pits LNR, Woodwalton Fen and Monks Wood. As e-mail became more common David and I started to exchange notes by this method rather than trying to explain various items by phone and as we became more proficient we then exchanged photographs of genitalia dissections asking each other for their opinion on problematic dissections and if we were both unsure John Langmaid, who sadly passed away in March 2022, was always willing to put us right. I spent many happy hours with David either in the field or at my or his house. Mostly we met in Sharnbrook when we had research to discuss and micro-slides to compare. These sessions often lasted for several hours; however, Sylvia, David’s wife, kept us going with her home-made muffins and coffee.

I have missed David since the time he became unable to continue with his micro-moth research and will continue to do so now that he has passed on.

Contributed by Barry Dickerson, County Moth Recorder, Huntingdonshire

Moth Night 2022

Moth Night, the annual celebration of moths and moth recording, organised by Atropos, Butterfly Conservation and the UK Centre for Ecology & Hydrology, took place on the nights and days of 19 May – 21 May this year. The theme was woodlands.

So far 4,216 records for 429 species have been submitted. Please enter your Moth Night records via the online system on the [Moth Night website](#). Data submission is open until 30th November 2022.



UK Centre for
Ecology & Hydrology

Sign up to Science News

Butterfly Conservation publishes a twice-yearly email newsletter that explores the wide range of science that we are involved in and explains how we are applying this to our conservation projects. The valuable data that you collect is our evidence base and is used to inform our conservation action. We work in collaboration with universities and other organisations around the world to produce scientific research to undertake conservation action. You can find out more or subscribe to Science News [here](#).



Rosy Footman (Patrick Clement)

Of particular note regarding moths in the latest edition, is our article about habitat configuration and moth range shifts by Lisbeth Hordley and Zoë Randle, also available from the BC [blog](#).

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