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Please use the contact details below to get in touch!

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Large Skipper - Iain Cowe

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# Dates for your Diary

## Scottish Autumn Gathering

### Hold the date!

Our annual Scottish Autumn Gathering will be held at the Soutar Lecture Theatre in the AK Bell Library in Perth on **Saturday 19th October**. Once again we will be streaming the talks live via zoom for anyone who cannot attend on the day. Booking will become available via the BC website in due course.

## Events

### East Scotland Branch Area

#### Aberdeenshire

**Aberdeenshire Council Ranger Service is organising the following events in association with BC, all are/will be available for booking here: [Aberdeenshire Council Ranger Service Events](#)**

**Thursday 11th July** - Hunting Micro Monsters, Houghton Country Park, Alford (family event including promoting Big Butterfly Count)

**Wednesday 17th July** - Marvellous Moths, Forvie NNR (morning moth trap opening in partnership with NatureScot)

**Thursday 18th July** - Butterflies, Bumblebees & Day-flying Moths, St. Cyrus NNR (pollinator-themed ramble in partnership with Nature Scot during Big Butterfly Count)

**Wednesday 24th July** - Winged & Watery Wonders, Burnett Park, Banchory (family event including promoting Big Butterfly Count)

**Saturday 3rd August** - Moths & Bats at Burn o'Vat, Muir of Dinnet NNR (evening moth trapping & bat walk in partnership with NatureScot)

#### Aberdeen

**Aberdeen City Council Countryside Ranger Service is organising the following events in association with BC, all are/will be available for booking here: [Aberdeen City Council Countryside Ranger Service Events](#)**

**Saturday 6th July** - A Wild Night Out at Den of Maidencraig Local Nature Reserve (including moth trapping & bat walk)

**Wednesday 17th July** - Big Butterfly Survey, Scotstown Moor Local Nature Reserve

**Tuesday 23rd July** - Big Butterfly Survey, Den of Maidencraig Local Nature Reserve

**Saturday 27th July** - A Wild Night Out at Kincorth Hill Local Nature Reserve (including moth trapping & bat walk)

#### Perthshire

**Tuesday 23rd July** - Moth morning near Aberfeldy, 9am - noon at Keltneyburn (near Aberfeldy)

### Highland Branch Area

**Wednesday 17th July** - Kentish Glory Larval Surveys at RSPB's Lynachlaggan trail to the east of Insh village. Contact Tom Prescott via [tprescott@butterfly-conservation.org](mailto:tprescott@butterfly-conservation.org)

**Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> July** - Moth morning at Culloden Battlefield 09:30 am until 1pm. Come see if we have found any exciting moths in our trap! We will then have a short wander around the battlefield to see if we find any butterflies wing. Meeting place: NTS Culloden Battlefield Visitor Centre. Grid ref: NH7463444954. What3Words: livid.toddler.grading  
Contact Tracy Munro Mob: 07485372232 Email: [tmunro@butterfly-conservation.org](mailto:tmunro@butterfly-conservation.org)

# Dates for your Diary

## Events continued

### *Highland Branch Area*

**Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> July** - join Tracy Munro for the **Sutherland Agriculture Show** and see the grand unveiling of our tapestry panel depicting all six of our SotE, East coast species.

**Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> July** - Dark Bordered Beauty Monitoring at 10am near Kingussie

Description: There are currently only three locations in Scotland (and one in England) where Dark Bordered Beauty moth is found. RSPB Insh Marshes is one of them. The moths are monitored annually through light trapping. Come and join us as we look through live-catch moth traps. There should be plenty of species to see in the traps, some of which will be nationally scarce, but Dark Bordered Beauty moth is expected to be star of the show.

There's no need to contact the leader beforehand – just turn up on the day.

Meeting place: RSPB Insh Marshes car park. 2 miles out of Kingussie on the B970 (past Ruthven Barracks). NN775998 (OS map 35 – Kingussie). What3words: lorry.sized.vipers

Approx duration: To lunchtime.

What's needed: Midge repellent (just in case). Also, you may want to bring a packed lunch and explore the RSPB reserve in the afternoon.

Leader name: Pete Moore Contact details: E-mail: [tonuptwitcher@gmail.com](mailto:tonuptwitcher@gmail.com) Tel: 07590 589533

**Saturday 3 August** - Moth trapping with Abriachan Forest Trust near Inverness (09.30am until lunchtime)

Description: We'll have a look through a couple of moth traps run overnight. Weather permitting, there should be an amazing array of moths, of all colours, shapes and sizes, to be seen up close and personal!

Meeting place: Abriachan Forest Trust car park at NH 540 353 (What3words: cutaway.outhouse.closed). Leaving the Inverness to Drumnadrochit Loch Ness-side road, follow the minor road through Abriachan and around the north shore of Loch Laide. Just after the loch, take a track to the left into an area of woodland. Just along here to your left, you will find the Abriachan Forest Trust car park. There are toilets available.

What's needed: Bring midge repellent just in case! There are several lovely walks starting at the car park so consider bringing a packed lunch and making a day of it.

Leader name: Pete Moore

Mob: 07590 589533 email: [tonuptwitcher@gmail.com](mailto:tonuptwitcher@gmail.com)

### *Glasgow & Southwest Scotland Branch Area*

**Saturday 31st August** - Creative Writing Event from 10.30am - 3pm near Appin, Argyll

Come and join us for a day of creative writing, a lovely way to connect with your environment, support your well being and improve your identification skills. The Marsh Fritillary butterfly; one of the target species for the Species on the Edge project lives here, thriving on the herb rich grassland. Open to all, no experience of creative writing needed. Lots of advice, support and materials provided.

**For our latest Scottish Events please visit our [Events page](#) on our website**

## Coul Links Update

The latest news from Coul Links is that a date has been set for an inquiry into hugely damaging plans for an 18-hole golf course development on the protected nature site in the Highlands.

After Highland Councillors narrowly decided to grant permission for the planning application last December, over 11,000 people sent messages to the planning minister urging him to call-in the decision given the site's national and international importance. The minister called-in the decision and appointed Reporters from the Scottish Government's Planning and Environmental Appeals Division (DPEA) to examine the case.

The DPEA has been considering what further evidence it requires to compile a report on the case and make a recommendation to Ministers. A Pre Inquiry Meeting (PIM) was held on the 13<sup>th</sup> May to outline the procedure including the specific aspects it will cover. We were represented at this meeting via the Conservation Coalition, which includes Buglife, RSPB Scotland, Plantlife Scotland, Marine Conservation Society, National Trust for Scotland and Scottish Wildlife Trust, by an Advocate to present our case. Evidence for the DPEA to help make their recommendations will be made at Hearings, a process where the Reporters ask experts for and against the proposal questions to better understand the key issues. These will be less adversarial than the Public Inquiry held for the original application and are due to take place over the week beginning 11th November. We are extremely fortunate that Dr Mark Young, a former BC trustee and whom many of you will know, has agreed to stand again as our expert witness supported by Dr Phil Sterling, again another weel-kent face to us in Scotland having delivered talks at our gatherings and published the go to micro-moth and caterpillar field guides. This will be at a session that specifically gathers evidence on the effects of the development on the invertebrate assemblage. The Reporters will then recommend to Scottish Ministers whether to grant or refuse permission. All of this means a final decision is unlikely until 2025.



**Coul Links supports an important population of Northern Brown Argus due to patches of abundant Common Rock Rose.**

**Photo by Andrew Weston**

## Coul Links Update (cont.)

Our reasons for fighting this proposed development have not changed and are outlined below:

**We've been here before.** A previous, very similar, proposal was refused by Scottish Ministers in 2020, due to significant adverse impacts on the nationally and internationally protected sites for nature. The developers have failed to learn lessons from that clear rejection. These proposals at this location are still completely unacceptable. A reminder of what Scottish Ministers said in 2020 is [here](#).

**The strength of public and professional concern is clear.** There were over 700 objections to the planning application (only half that number wrote in support of it), and over 11,000 people across Scotland and the UK wrote to Planning Minister Joe FitzPatrick urging him to call-in the application. The application was recommended for refusal by The Highland Council's own planning professionals after they had considered all the details of the proposal, including the advice and objection from NatureScot, the Scottish Government's own advisors on nature.

**This is the wrong location for a development.** The site is so important for nature it is part of three legally protected nature sites, the Dornoch Firth and Loch Fleet Special Protection Area (SPA), the Dornoch Firth and Loch Fleet Ramsar site, and the Loch Fleet Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). The Applicant seems determined to pursue this development as they have said in the documents supporting their application that its success rests on its links location. There are other less sensitive locations in the area.

**Claims about economic impact are a distraction.** As has been shown with the previous application, the claimed economic benefits wouldn't outweigh the damage that would be caused to wildlife. And no matter who the developer is, this is the wrong place for development.

**Improving the condition of the site doesn't require a golf course development.** It would be great if the condition on the site could be improved so it is even better for nature. The landowner has a current management agreement with NatureScot aimed at improving the site; this is already in place and has several years yet to run. It doesn't need a golf course. That would be like arguing that to restore an old masterpiece you need to rip holes in the canvas! Under the new national planning framework, developments must demonstrate how they will enhance biodiversity; this proposal will very clearly cause damage.

**Tom Prescott**  
Head of Conservation Scotland

## Traineeship opportunity

Later this year we hope to be advertising an exciting opportunity for a trainee to join us at BC Scotland as part of the [Species on the Edge](#) programme. The year-long role will be based in Argyll and be focussed towards Biological Recording. The trainee will have the opportunity to learn recording techniques for butterflies and moths, get involved with conservation activity for species including Marsh Fritillary and Transparent Burnet as well as becoming a valuable member of team BC Scotland. If you are 18-26 and might be interested (or know someone who fits the bill) then please watch this space!

**David Hill, Conservation Manager**  
[dhill@butterfly-conservation.org](mailto:dhill@butterfly-conservation.org)

# News

## Scottish Entomological Gathering - Gairloch June 2024 - A short review of a very wet and cold weekend!

Well what can we say other than thank you to the attendees who braved what must have been one of the most miserable June weekends in years! The temperature on arrival in Gairloch on the Friday afternoon was 8 Celsius and it barely improved all weekend. Moth traps set carefully to avoid the raging blustery winds unsurprisingly produced low catches (some were lucky to average one moth per trap!) and day-flying insects were hard to come by. Only those dabbling around in ponds and watercourses for aquatic macro-invertebrates fared a little better. Things were so bad at one point several moth'ers were overhead discussing at length the attractive merits of Brown Rustics!



A rare moment without waterproofs! © Tracy Munro

There were still some nice finds to be had though including a lovely Scottish form of Broken-barred Carpet. Dr Mark Young found four new micro-moths for the vice county including *Coleophora milvipennis* and *Chrysoesthia sexguttella*. Our visit concluded on Sunday afternoon with many attendees heading up Beinn Eighe in search of the beautiful but extremely rare and specialised *Aethes rutilana*, a micro-moth with a taste for Prostrate Juniper growing on windswept quartzite hillsides. Unfortunately the sunshine and brief warmth at the bottom of the path soon became driving wind and rain and we were forced off the hill after only a brief search.



Broken-barred Carpet form *albocrenata* © David Hill

Thank you to all the attendees for being such good sports, providing plenty of cheer and humour as well as sharing their wonderful knowledge. Arrangements for SEG 2025 will be announced in due course, fingers crossed we pick a weekend with better weather!

If you are interested in attending, or would like to hear about future SEGs, then please let one of the David or Tom know, so we can send you more details and add you to the SEG distribution list.

David Hill [dhill@butterfly-conservation.org](mailto:dhill@butterfly-conservation.org)

Tom Prescott [tprescott@butterfly-conservation.org](mailto:tprescott@butterfly-conservation.org)

## The Big Butterfly Count is back!

This year's Count will launch on Friday this week (12 July) and will run until Sunday, 4 August. Please join us!

The annual citizen science survey attracts tens of thousands of people out into their garden, local green space or the countryside to spend 15 minutes counting butterflies and helping to inform our conservation work. And this year's Count comes after a study that we published with the University of Derby earlier this year proved that counting butterflies is good for mental health, reducing anxiety by almost 10 per cent on average! [Read more here.](#)

Dr Zoë Randle, Senior Surveys Officer at Butterfly Conservation, said: "We need as many people as possible to take part in this year's Big Butterfly Count to help us see what's happening with our butterflies and moths. We're getting reports that although many species have been seen early this year, likely due to the very warm early spring, sightings are actually down, which is probably a result of the very wet and windy weather. So people getting out and counting will be invaluable in helping us to gauge what's going on!"

Butterflies are indicators of a healthy natural environment, and with half of Britain's butterfly species already threatened or near threatened with extinction, it's never been more important to understand how our insects are responding to the changing climate and to take action to protect them.

Butterfly Conservation's Big Butterfly Count is the largest citizen science project of its kind and is a positive way that everyone can help. As well as contributing to important scientific data collection, taking part in the Count is a great way to enjoy time outdoors, connect with nature and have fun.

For more information visit [www.bigbutterflycount.org](http://www.bigbutterflycount.org) or download the free Big Butterfly Count app from the app store.

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## Volunteer awards - more Scottish success

Volunteers from Scotland have been honoured for helping save endangered butterflies and moths by BC at its 2024 Volunteer Awards.

This year's awards, sponsored by Marsh Charitable Trust, were announced as part of a Butterfly Conservation Volunteer Celebration Day at London Wetland Centre in June.

The winners from Scotland were:

Newcomer Award: **Stuart Cathro**, Glasgow & Southwest Scotland

Special Recognition Award: **Mark Cubitt**, East Scotland

Mentor Award: **Helen Rowe**, East Scotland

**Iain Cowe**, East Scotland was also recognised as runner-up in the Community Engagement Award and Highland Branch chair **Pete Moore** was runner-up for the Volunteer Impact Award.



## Volunteer awards - more Scottish success (cont.)

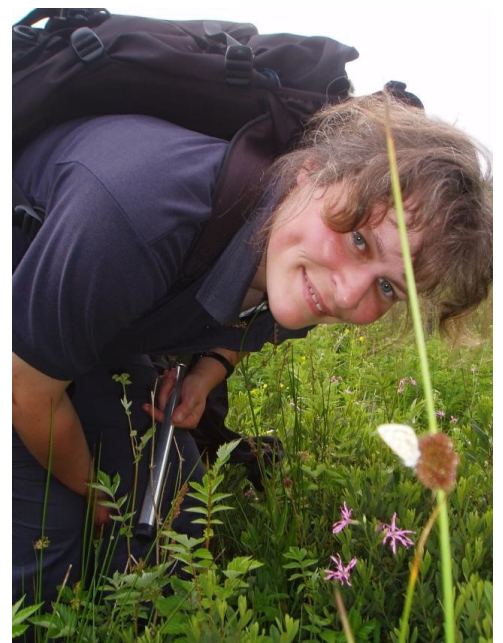
**Stuart Cathro** from Menstrie in Clackmannanshire is a retired auxiliary nurse and now volunteers with Butterfly Conservation's Bog Squad, helping maintain peat bog habitats for butterflies, moths and other wildlife. He has only been volunteering with Butterfly Conservation for a year but has also done valuable butterfly transect counts and surveys, in particular for Large Heath, Northern Brown Argus and Pearl-Bordered Fritillary. For his enthusiastic work he has been presented with the Newcomer Award. Asked why he enjoyed volunteering with Butterfly Conservation he said: "A healthy environment equals a healthy body. I've always been an avid hill walker and am very passionate about the environment and nature. "By volunteering with Butterfly Conservation I would like to think that I am doing a little bit so that future generations can enjoy the natural environment, and learning about different aspects of the environment. It's good for the body and soul - and I also love meeting other people who are interested in nature."



**Mark Cubitt**, 61, from Linlithgow in West Lothian, has been volunteering with Butterfly Conservation for 16 years and also picked up a Special Recognition Award. The retired IT architect is County Moth Recorder for three vice counties across the Lothians but also helps with habitat management and makes moth traps to loan to new recorders. He invented a new tool for dam installations in peat bogs, is website manager for Butterfly Conservation's East Scotland Branch, runs moth identification Facebook and email forums and provides software tools for Butterfly Conservation's Supporting Science project to assist butterfly and moth county recorders. He said: "I enjoy activities that I feel are worthwhile and make a positive impact. With butterflies and moths I get a sense of achievement from either directly contributing to knowledge about them and their conservation or providing information and tools that assist others in doing so."



**Helen Rowe**, 52, from Aberdeen, works as a Countryside Ranger for Aberdeenshire Council, but has also volunteered with Butterfly Conservation for more than 20 years. She is currently East Scotland Branch Aberdeen area organiser and South Aberdeenshire VC92 County Moth Recorder and helps to teach less experienced volunteers. She has been presented with the Mentor Award. She said: "I've always loved moths and butterflies and enjoy sharing my knowledge to help others understand their important roles in ecosystems, appreciate them more and do what they can to conserve them. I also enjoy the teamwork with likeminded recorders on surveys and those who assist with events."





## Second Scottish site for rare Scottish micro-moth discovered!

This spring BC Scotland was encouraging people to look out for the Currant Shoot Borer moth *Lampronia capitella*. This tiny but delightful micro-moth was only known from one woodland near Peebles and nowhere else in Scotland. Further south in England, there are only a handful of known colonies. The moth inhabits patches of redcurrants, blackcurrants and gooseberries where the caterpillars have distinctive feeding activities within 'wilted shoots' which can be spotted during April. Formerly more widespread, the moth appears to be in decline, like many other currant-feeding moths. However, we were confident there would be more Scottish colonies out there as new sites has been discovered in England in recent years following search efforts.



BC volunteers visited 23 prospective sites across Scotland this spring to search for the larval feeding signs. Sites from the Solway coast to the Cairngorms were searched but alas nothing concrete was found. With the adults being more retiring, despite their eye-catching appearance, it was thought we'd have to wait until at least 2025. Until Jo Davis in Lanarkshire came up trumps! Having searched himself along the Clyde looking at every currant bush he could find, it was in his own garden currant patch where the moth popped up! [Read the full story here](#). Congratulations to Jo and we'll approach surveys in 2025 with renewed enthusiasm!

**David Hill, Conservation Manager (Scotland)**

## County Recorders Plea

We are looking to fill the following voluntary roles in our county butterfly and moth record verifier network. If you think you could help out by collating and/or verifying records, or by managing local datasets, then please get in touch with Zoe Randle [zrandle@butterfly-conservation.org](mailto:zrandle@butterfly-conservation.org) and/or Tom Prescott [tprescott@butterfly-conservation.org](mailto:tprescott@butterfly-conservation.org)

County Butterfly Recorders are required for:

- Dunbartonshire
- Inverclyde & Renfrewshire
- Ayrshire

County Moth Recorders are required for:

- Dunbartonshire
- Caithness

[Click here for role adverts and more information on what is involved](#)

# Project Updates

## New projects in Highland Perthshire

We have been fortunate to secure funding for two new projects in Highland Perthshire, one of our priority landscapes for conservation work!

The first is funded by Scottish Government's Nature Restoration Fund (NRF), which is allowing us to undertake a project working on the area's most threatened butterflies (Pearl-bordered Fritillary and Northern Brown Argus) and the Kentish Glory Moth. This phase of the project is focussed on conducting surveys for these species and assessing their habitats, then working with landowners to create management plans to help these species. Through the project we have already found two new colonies of Pearl-bordered Fritillary in Highland Perthshire!

The second project is funded by SSE's Community Fund. Through this project we will be working with communities around Aberfeldy, Kenmore and Grandtully to engage people in the world of butterflies and moths. This will include volunteer training, 'moth mornings', purchasing of moth traps for community use and much more.

Volunteers are needed to help with both of these projects. For more information contact Anthony McCluskey on [amclluskey@butterfly-conservation.org](mailto:amclluskey@butterfly-conservation.org)

**Anthony McCluskey,**  
**Conservation Manager (Scotland)**

## Species on the Edge - Argyll & Inner Hebrides

### A Creative June

Whilst the weather may have been wet and wild here on the west coast of Scotland it hasn't stopped the creative people of Mull coming out to learn all about the burnet moths and share the joy of nature through a creative approach. At the start of June, we had a visit from the lovely Apithanny Bourne to run a Nature Journaling workshop. The sun finally showed its face for an afternoon of nature observation, sketching, painting and all things colourful.



Nature Journalising on Mull © Kieran Playfair

Later in the month a trip to the burnet sites on the Glengorm estate produced some lovely non-fiction written work. Led by a local Mull writer, the group explored the habitat of the Slender Scotch Burnet, guided through a series of writing exercises to get the creative process flowing, towards a personal piece about the experience and the nature around them. Here's a couple of examples of writing from the session.

***Red on Black***

***Delicate yet tough***

***Elusive and rare***

***Mull's very own***

***Slender Scotch Burnet***

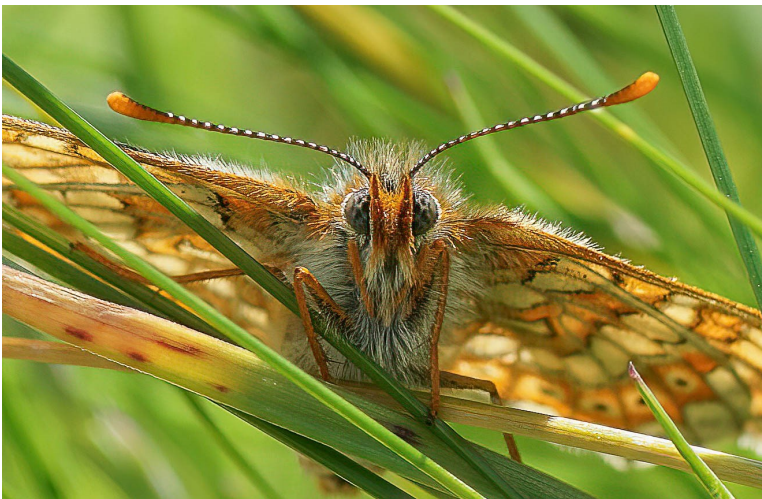
# Project Updates

## *The Rocky Knoll*

*Tucked away behind the pines, sheltered from the worst that the weather brings, four rocky knolls lie quietly slumbering. On looking closer we quickly find a miracle of teeny tiny life. Hugging the ground, sprawling across the rock and bare soil, flowers of every hue. Towering above purple plumes and hard conical flowerheads of grasses, showy, flower laden orchid spires thrust through bright splashes of purple and white.*

*Hidden in plain sight, clinging precariously to slender stems are the 'rocky knolls' ultimate treasures – jewel bright flashes of red on black, furry, fluffy bodies, spindly brown legs. Delicate antennae quivering in the breeze. The rarest of rare creatures. This is the home of the Slender Scotch Burnet.*

The events have proved very popular and have resulted in a widening audience for the Species on the Edge programme as well as new volunteers to be involved in the future. More events are planned over the summer and next year. Including willow insect making and a discussion on the flora and fauna of herb rich pastures and another creative writing day with a focus on the Marsh Fritillary.



The Mull Camera club have also been joining our Project Officer Liz out and about in the field practicing their macro skills taking these cracking shots of Marsh Fritillary and Slender Scotch Burnet.

Looking ahead to the rest of the summer and into the autumn, you can find the Species on the Edge team at several local shows including:

- The Round the World Clipper Race when it visits Oban – 16th & 17th July
- Salen show on Mull – 8th August.
- Appin show – Argyll – 17th August

Come and say hello.

**Liz Peel**

**Argyll & Inner Hebrides Project Officer, Species on the Edge Project**

[epeel@butterfly-conservation.org](mailto:epeel@butterfly-conservation.org)

# Project Updates

## Species on the Edge - East Coast

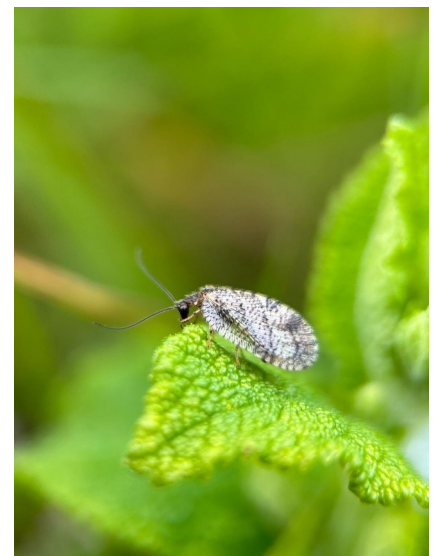
The Species on the Edge team on the East Coast have had a busy start to survey season, with lots of trampling over sodden dunes and cliffs in search of Small Blue. Some sites such as RSPB's Culbin Bar and Ballchraggan Wood (formerly known as Logie Quarry) have shown well with over 100 adults being counted on several visits. Since then though hail, thunder and torrential rain has hampered surveys efforts somewhat, with the team having to resort to lots of egg hunting instead. The change in weather unfortunately also coincided with Small Blue week but our hardy volunteers still put on a show helping to run a variety of events across the country. The final day was lovely and sunny, over 20 folks enjoyed our butterfly walks, with several going on to join BC so a great effort from our walk leaders.



The final training day of the summer held at Old Shandwick in June provided the perfect opportunity to allow some of the volunteers to see at first hand the results of their hard **Purple Oxytropis** © Tracy Munro work during habitat management in March. Both the Purple Oxytropis and Common Rock-rose were already reappearing from beneath the cleared scrub, once again demonstrating the effectiveness of our amazing volunteers.

Keep everything crossed for us that the weather improves for the imminent Northern Brown Argus (NBA) survey season. We are still looking for NBA volunteers to survey some colonies along the stunning Easter Ross and Black Isle coast lines, as well as slightly inland at Rogart. Please do get in touch if you would like to help out with NBA surveys - [our interactive survey map can be found here](#) And finally some exciting news from further south on our east coast where Buglife's Project Officer Caitlin has found her first Bordered Brown Lacewing!! What an amazingly patterned and delicate looking insect it is.

**Tracy Munro**  
East Coast Project Officer, Species on the Edge Project  
[tmunro@butterfly-conservation.org](mailto:tmunro@butterfly-conservation.org)



**Bordered Brown Lacewing** © Caitlin McLeod



*"Species on the Edge is a partnership project of eight organisations, funded by the National Lottery Heritage Fund. The partnership consists of Amphibian and Reptile Conservation, The Bat Conservation Trust, Buglife, Bumblebee Conservation Trust, Butterfly Conservation, NatureScot, Plantlife and RSPB Scotland".*

# Project Updates

## Wild Spaces Perth and Stirling

Engagement time is in full swing with the Perth and Stirling Wild Spaces project! We have had some great experiences over the past few months, helping people start their butterfly and moth journey of appreciation, and getting stuck into some fantastic activities with different communities. With so much going on its difficult to keep this update short and sweet! So, here are some of our activities from the past couple of weeks....

### Allan's Primary- Stirling

One of the areas in Stirling I wanted to engage was Mercat Cross/ City Centre. After speaking with the community they suggested that they would like their primary school to benefit from time and resources from the project. So, we made some new Wild Spaces within the school grounds, with donations of some of the biggest planters I've seen from Stirling Council! Pupils spent some time learning about our native species, planted up caterpillar foodplants for some of their favourite species, added lots of adult feed plants and created some quite shelter spaces throughout the school grounds. Pupils led a butterfly hunt from the school down to the Smith Museum, where they found some Orange-tip eggs. To round off activities the pupils made some lovely posters to display in Central Library, showcasing what makes a Wild Space and hints and tips for supporting butterflies and moths in your garden! Later, the pupils joined us for a consultation of the local play park. Where they were super keen to show off their Wild Space knowledge and ensure butterflies and moths were catered for in the park updates!

### Scone Palace Garden Fair

Perth and Stirling Wild Spaces project attended both days of the garden fair this year. It was lovely to meet so many of our members and records throughout the weekend! This year the event welcomed over 6000 visitors, so a great opportunity to have people think about butterflies and moths in their garden planning. Massive thank you to Cathy for supporting!

A quick thank you to other organisations who have worked with us lately... Perth and Kinross council staff have created Wild Spaces as part of their DO sessions. ESOL Perth kindly allowed us to join their annual football tournament, where we chilled out with butterfly walks after games. North Muirton have hosted us at several community events, from lunches to frontline worker activities. Raploch Community Campus included us in their Pocket Garden competition. Bridge of Allan/ Cornton have hosted us for butterfly walks. Stirling's Youth Climate Ambassadors have created several new Wild Spaces across different school grounds and community spaces. Stirling Community hospital invited us for some Wild Space planting. We attended Perth Biodiversity fair and delivered some online workshops as part of the festival.

### What's coming up?

Our next activities include more community fairs and Big Butterfly Count activities with Perth Housing and with Stirling Libraries. We have an opportunity to create a nice showcase Wild Space within North Muirton. If you would like to get involved please do get in touch. At the moment its all hands on deck to weed and tidy the space before we start anything! Dates are; 16th July, 23rd July and 3rd August. We will round off the work with engagement activities at the summer community day on 11th August. If you are interested contact: [akenny@butterfly-conservation.org](mailto:akenny@butterfly-conservation.org)

**Alice Kenny**

**Wild Spaces Project Officer, Perth and Stirling**

[akenny@butterfly-conservation.org](mailto:akenny@butterfly-conservation.org)



# Project Updates

## Bog Squad



Bog Squad is back, as our new round of funding came through from Peatland ACTION at the start of June. This is great news after achieving a decade of the project this year! We still have more money to raise for our 11th year and will be launching a Bog Squad Fundraising appeal shortly.

Over the coming months we will be putting together the autumn schedule of Bog Squad work parties. This will include a new monthly Wester Moss work party on the second Saturday of each month, starting on Sat 14th Sept until March 2025. So do get these in your diary. Other work parties will be happening and these will be advertised in the next Enews in September. However, if you would like to be added to our Bog Squad mailing list, which alerts people to our work parties, please contact [pPhillpot@butterfly-conservation.org](mailto:pPhillpot@butterfly-conservation.org)

Our Large Heath butterfly survey is running again on priority lowland raised bogs, with the addition of upland surveying at a range of 1km<sup>2</sup> squares across Scotland. So if you are off on holidays over the next month, do take a look at our map of priority sites where we are keen to find out more about the Large Heath and the condition of its habitat.

For more information on our Large Heath survey, training videos, guidance and survey form head to our Large Heath webpage. If you have any questions about the survey and want to get involved, do contact Polly at [pPhillpot@butterfly-conservation.org](mailto:pPhillpot@butterfly-conservation.org)

Lastly, I'd like to extend my congratulations to two stalwart Bog Squad volunteers who have recently been awarded Marsh Charitable Trust Volunteer Awards 2024: Newcomer Award Winner Stuart Cathro and Special Recognition Award Winner Mark Cubitt.

Many thanks for all your hard work, ingenuity and unwavering support to the Bog Squad, which I know is only part of the overall volunteering you do for BC.



Large Heath butterfly at Offerance Moss, Stirlingshire. © Polly Phillpot



Stuart Cathro (left) and Mark Cubitt (far right). Photo © Polly Phillpot

**Polly Phillpot**

**Peatland Restoration Project Officer**

[pPhillpot@butterfly-conservation.org](mailto:pPhillpot@butterfly-conservation.org)

The Bog Squad project is supported by [Peatland ACTION](#).

# Moth Survey News

## Barred Tooth-striped

In Spring 2024, BC Scotland undertook a targeted survey for Barred Tooth-striped moth across much of its known Scottish range. The moth is believed to be reliant on ash in Scotland as its other known UK caterpillar foodplant, Wild Privet, is not native to Scotland. With ash trees under severe pressure from ash dieback (chalara), we are concerned that the moth faces an uncertain future north of the Border. We therefore wish to determine its current status and to better understand its habitat requirements. We also believe it is under recorded and thus new colonies may await discovery.

The 2024 survey made use of pheromone lures which are designed to attract male moths by mimicking the 'scent' given off by female moths looking to attract a mate. Lures for Barred Tooth-striped have been trialled particularly successfully in North Lancashire, Cumbria and Yorkshire. The lures are used in conjunction with a pheromone trap and hung around 1 metre above the ground and left out overnight. The traps are checked early the following morning and the moths released unharmed. For the survey, we targeted known Barred Tooth-striped sites and also woodlands with a significant proportion of ash within the known range, but which had no previous records.



Pheromone trap deployed in woodland and a successful haul of Barred Tooth-striped © David Hill

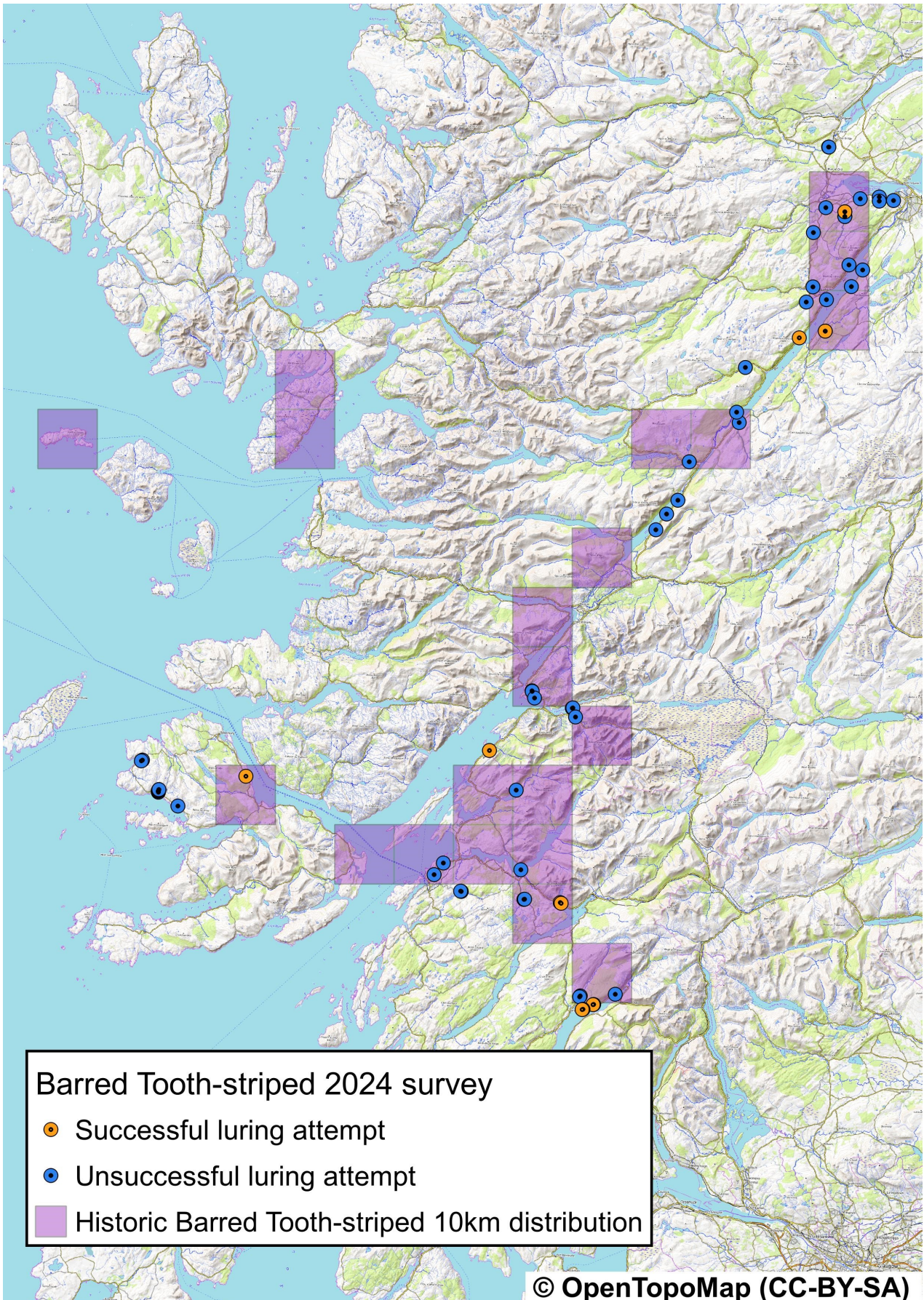
In total 64 surveys were carried out, with Barred Tooth-striped presence confirmed at only 11 sites. This sounds worrying, but there is a strong caveat that the spring weather did not play ball and many surveys were carried out in below-average temperatures for the time of year. Experiences in the north of England previously showed that night-time temperatures were a significant factor in successful luring of Barred Tooth-striped. Additionally a mix of pheromone trap types were used in our 2024 Scottish survey with one type of trap significantly outperforming the others, successfully capturing either Barred Tooth-striped or Early Tooth-striped (which is also attracted to the lure) on nearly 50% of the occasions it was used, compared to a capture rate of 25% overall.

The survey did detect the moth at five previously unknown sites, including records in three new 10km squares. Moths were also caught in reasonable numbers at some sites where trees are obviously heavily affected by ash dieback, including significant defoliation, demonstrating that the moth has some powers of survival in such situations which is encouraging.

For 2025 we will be aiming to repeat the survey throughout the range, including extending it to areas not covered in 2024, and we hope to obtain more of the pheromone trap type that was significantly more successful than the others. We also hope for better spring weather!

Finally, a big thank you to all those who helped with the survey in 2024.

# Moth Survey News



David Hill  
Conservation Manager  
[dhill@butterfly-conservation.org](mailto:dhill@butterfly-conservation.org)



# Moth Survey News

## Yellow-ringed Carpet update

Recent searches for Yellow-ringed Carpet in the Cairngorms have focused on looking for the larvae on saxifrages growing adjacent to mountain burns. The caterpillars tend to hide themselves deep within the foodplant. On plants that are overhanging rocks or growing on steep slopes it is possible to tickle them out into a net held beneath. However, it is only possible to do this on a proportion of plants. On plants growing more prostrately then one option is to use a bug vac. However, carrying a bug vac into some of the remote haunts favoured by the moth is not for the faint hearted so a compromise is to use a small handheld 12Volt car vac. These have their own rechargeable battery but can also be run from a small power pack.

So armed with this and the best tickling technique Yellow-ringed Carpet caterpillars were found at a well know haunt just off the A9 in Perthshire and also in Glenfeshie and at two sites in the upper reaches of neighbouring Glentromie. The Feshie and Tromie sites were all new locations for the moth. Twelve larvae were found in total at the three locations, eight on Yellow Mountain Saxifrage and four on Mossy Saxifrage. Unfortunately, none were sucked up with the car vac, but other larvae were including Twin-spot Carpet, Dark Marbled Carpet and other as yet unidentified species. In many situations the occupied plants were growing in surprisingly very wet conditions including immediately adjacent to waterfalls and overhanging the fast-flowing dynamic rocky burns.



Hand-held car vac © Tom Prescott

However, we have two sub-species of the moth in Scotland with the moths seemingly having different flight times and larval foodplant preferences. On the west coast, the moth is associated with stonecrop and is double brooded flying mostly from mid-May to mid-June and again in August and September – see Scottish flight histogram below. The saxifrage feeding population is focused on the Central Highlands and flies from mid-July to mid-August.



Classic upland Yellow-ringed Carpet habitat up Glens Feshie & Tromie in the Cairngorms © Tom Prescott

# Moth Survey News

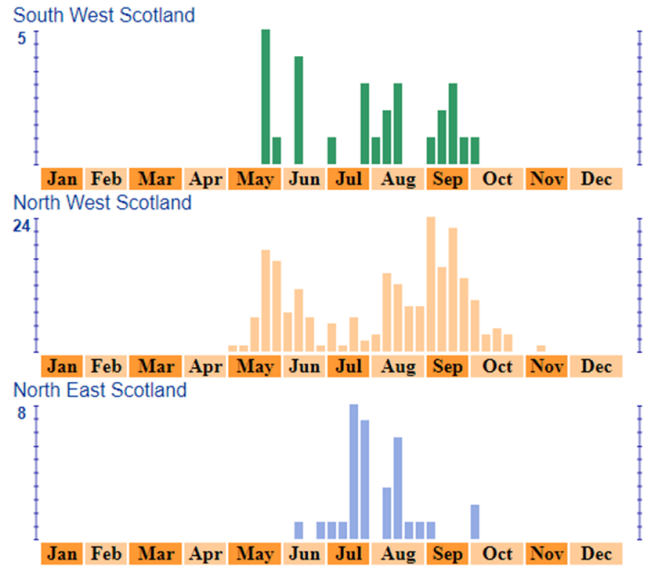
The next challenge is to look for larvae of the double brooded population on stonecrop, as well as record adults of both populations, easier said than done. The moth is attracted to light, but obviously it can be difficult running traps in some of the remote locations favoured by the moth. However, they also sit extremely well camouflaged on rocks though readily take flight if disturbed, but ideally you will need a net at hand to catch any to confirm identification due to similarities with the more widespread Grey Mountain Carpet.

We therefore would like to encourage any intrepid mothers to get out and record this intriguing species as either a larva or an adult. It will take you to some amazing landscapes and locations.

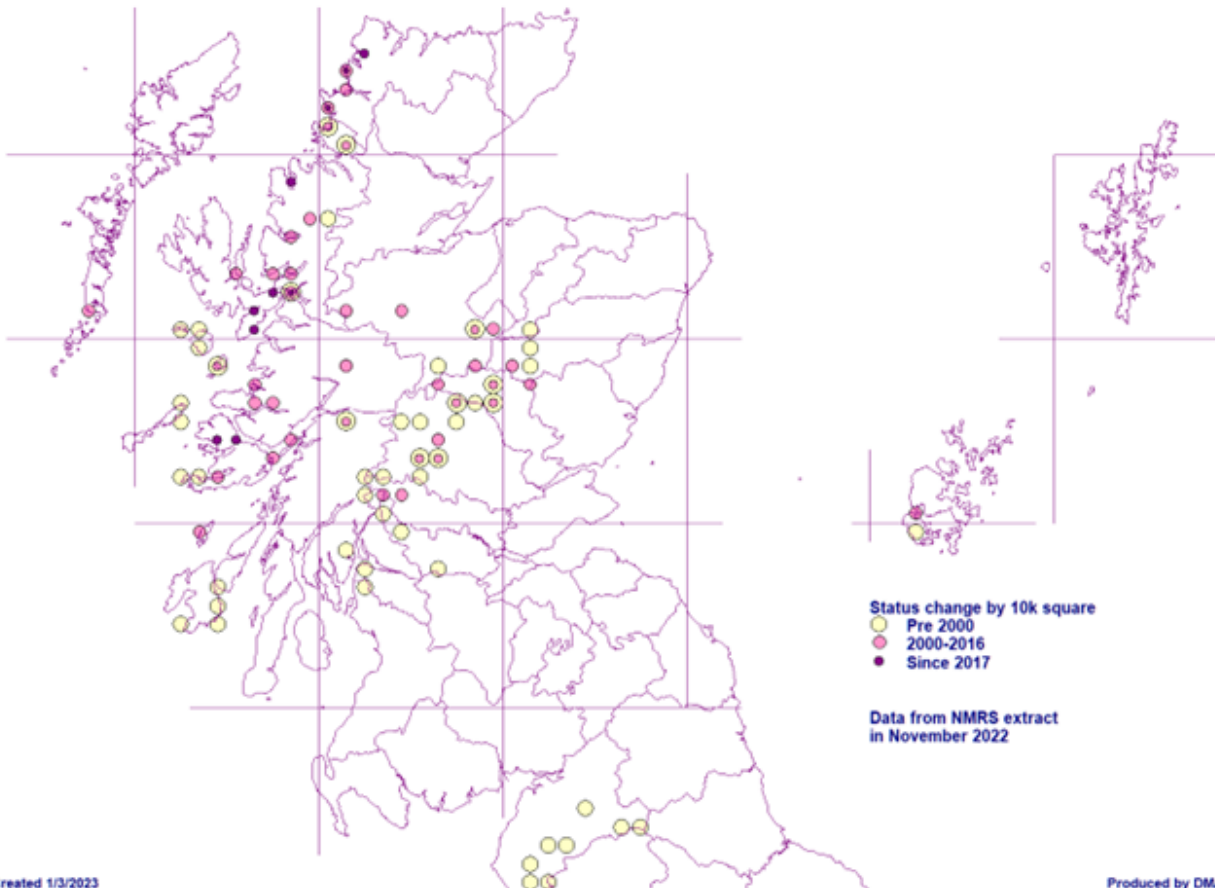
If you want more information please contact Tom [tprescott@butterfly-conservation.org](mailto:tprescott@butterfly-conservation.org) 07979 785665

**Tom Prescott**  
**Head of Conservation Scotland**

## Species: 70.071 Yellow-ringed Carpet



## Yellow-ringed Carpet



# Moth Survey News

## Small Dark Yellow Underwing

Despite heaps of encouragement and several articles over the years including ones like this in previous editions of Enews to target recording of this striking day-flying Bearberry dependent species, the number of sightings and records we receive remains very low and this year, to our knowledge, we have only received one positive sighting. It is difficult to know whether this truly reflects the status of the moth being rare, or if it just highlights how difficult it is to record.



Small Dark Yellow Underwing © Tom Prescott



Rochelle in action with the Bug Vac © Tom Prescott

We have therefore turned our efforts to looking for larvae by purchasing a large bug vac, well cordless leaf blower that has a vacuum function. Using this, Rochelle Kennedy, a PhD student at SRUC who is on a short studentship with Butterfly Conservation Scotland, has been sampling Bearberry at sites in Deeside and Badenoch and Strathspey. Over the course of around a fortnight Rochelle sampled around 150, 1m square quadrats with Bearberry growing in different conditions, using the bug vac for 1 minute at each location. The samples, or debris, of which there were large amounts, was then carefully checked for larvae.

Many of the caterpillars that were collected were very small and will have to be reared through to conform their identity, but we are confident that at least one Small Dark Yellow Underwing caterpillar has been found, making it probably only the second time the larvae have been found in the wild in Scotland. The first time was using the same technique at a site near Carrbridge. A handful of Netted Mountain Moth caterpillars, that also feeds on Bearberry, were also sampled, as well as an adult *Coleophora arctostaphyli*.

Rochelle now has the challenge of rearing through the caterpillar as well as writing up her fieldwork to see if she can ascertain any clues as to the patches of Bearberry that these Bearberry feeders prefer.

**Tom Prescott,**  
Head of Conservation Scotland  
[tprescott@butterfly-conservation.org](mailto:tprescott@butterfly-conservation.org)

# Moth Survey News

## Heath Rivulet

This very small upland moth is probably very under-recorded being easily overlooked due to its diminutive size. The larvae feed on the flowers and seeds of Eyebright but the moth appears to be far more restricted in its distribution than its foodplant.

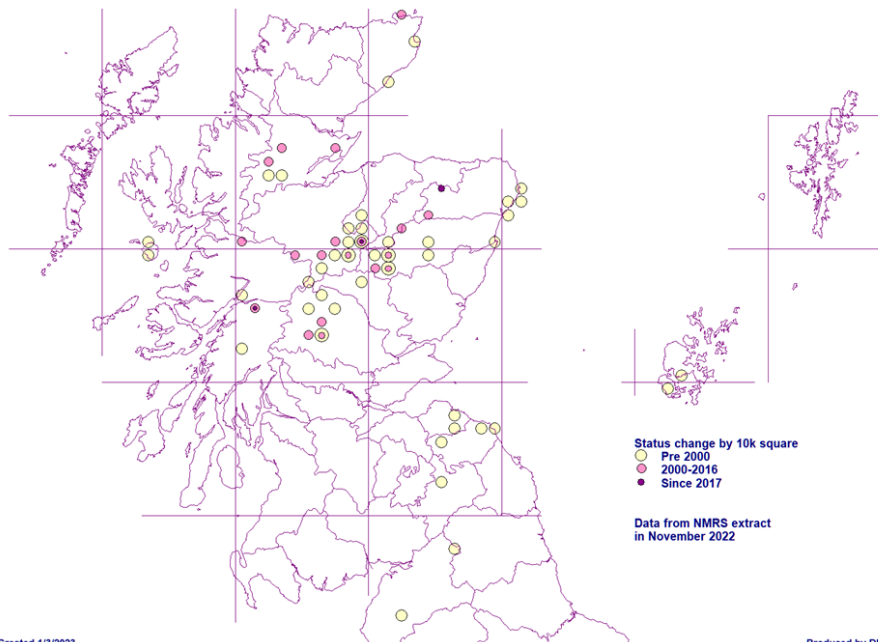
It can be found during the day being disturbed from vegetation into flight as well as flying actively in warm conditions. However, it often requires netting to confirm its identity as it is rarely approachable, though can be found on rocks. It also flies at night being attracted to light. The moth is on the wing in July and August.

So a species to keep an eye out for in areas of Eyebright in upland locations.



Heath Rivulet © Tom Prescott

## Heath Rivulet



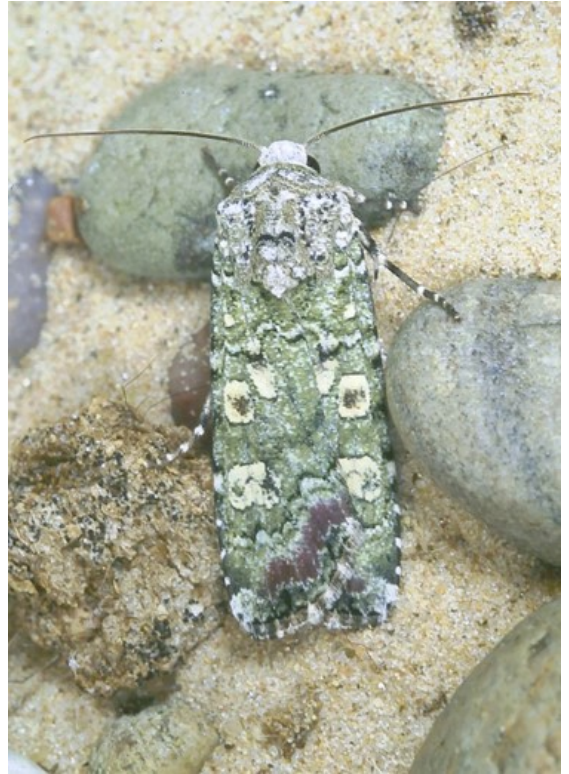
# Moth Survey News

## Portland Moth

This beautiful, greenish-brown, distinctive moth is primarily a dune specialist. Its striking orange, black and white stripey caterpillar is thought to feed predominantly on Creeping Willow but will also use other dune plants growing in a sandy substrate. It feeds at night, hiding by day beneath the sand.

The moth is principally on the wing in August but there are records in late July and early September. The adults are strongly attracted to light, but can also be found soon after dusk nectaring on Ragwort, heathers and other duneland plants, and it also comes to 'sugar' and wine-ropes.

It is predominantly a coastal species (see map below) that has become very scarce in recent years, although it was recorded as an adult on the Feshie gravels in the Cairngorms last year. Adult moths have also been recorded in the last couple of years along the Moray Firth at Fort George and parts of the dunes off Culbin Forest, and East of Tain, as well as at Tentsmuir, in Fife.

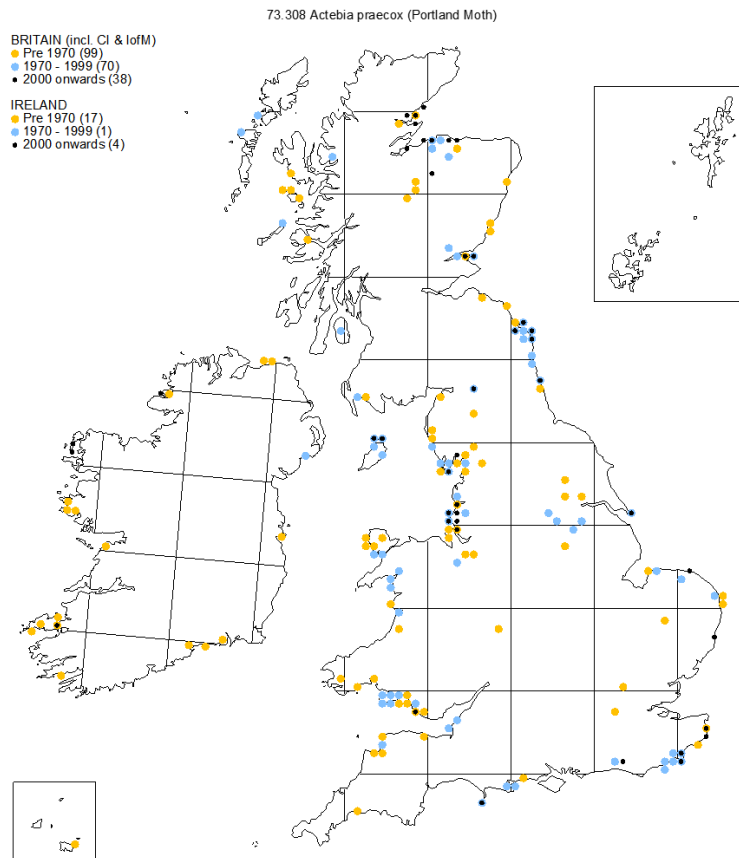


Portland Moth © Roy Leverton

We would like to encourage further targeted recording of this moth, so if you would like to get involved, or for more information please contact Tom.

Email: [tprescott@butterfly-conservation.org](mailto:tprescott@butterfly-conservation.org)

Tel: 01540 661469. Mob: 07979 785665



Portland Moth Distribution Map – as published in *The Atlas of Larger Moths*

# Butterfly Surveys

## A volunteer's perspective by Ian Folly

I've been interested in butterflies for as long as I can remember. I recall as a kid, raking around the countryside with a butterfly net, fascinated by these colourful insects, netting them for a better look to aid identification.

I have been surveying a WCBS square for four years, but after attending this year's excellent BC Highland Branch Spring meeting in Inverness, realised there was probably more I could do to support butterfly monitoring.

There are many old records (mostly 10 years or more) for a number of species whose true distribution is unclear; Pearl-bordered Fritillary (PbF), Small Blue and Chequered Skipper amongst them. Studying the map for PbF, I realised some of the old records were within easy reach of where I live, so I agreed to go and have a look. I was sent all the relevant information regarding the previous records, given a free, online, training session and the assurance that I just needed to ask if there was any further support I needed.



Pearl-bordered Fritillary © Ian Folly

The aim of the surveying was to establish whether the target species were still present at the previously recorded sites and, if they were, to make a note of how many I'd seen. All that was needed was some decent weather and a bit of time – I did most of my visits on fine evenings on the way home from work, which was quite a nice way to unwind from the working day.

My first sighting of a Pearl-bordered Fritillary at one of the sites was a truly exhilarating moment, especially as it was the first time I had seen the species. As a keen amateur photographer, I got some decent photos, and this allowed the project officer to confirm the record; several additional sites also revealed the ongoing presence of PbF. However, in the interests of balance, I have to say that other locations proved to have no butterflies and this discovery was tinged with disappointment.

There is paperwork to do and photographs to take but I found this straightforward. You can take all the pictures you need on a mobile phone, and it is reassuring to know that there is support available via email, if there is any uncertainty.



Small Blue © Ian Folly

I have committed to doing some surveys for Small Blue too and this has provided yet more excitement as I have discovered a couple of sites where there have been no previous records.

If you have time to sign up for surveying, I heartily recommend it and I will certainly aim to do more of the same next year. The time commitment is as much as you want it to be, BC staff ensure you are well-supported, and it is a very satisfying way to add value to what you may already be doing – looking for butterflies!

**Ian Folly**

# Species News

## Marsh Fritillary Monitoring in Scotland

Marsh Fritillary monitoring in Scotland is going from strength to strength, thanks to the efforts of volunteers and site managers across Argyll and Lochaber. In 2023 a total of 54 individual larval web counts were carried out for the species, a dramatic increase from a few years ago. Data is now being collected from across the species range including major populations on Islay, Mull and various peninsulas on the mainland.

If you're interested in reading more about how the species fared in 2023 the monitoring newsletter is available to read on this webpage [here](#) (note it's at the end of the page!).

This year we are looking to expand the monitoring network further and will be holding an online workshop about the species and how to monitor it on the **6th August at 7pm**.

If you're interested in taking part please get in contact with Patrick.

**Patrick Cook**

**Butterfly Conservation Ecologist**

[pcook@butterfly-conservation.org](mailto:pcook@butterfly-conservation.org)



Marsh Fritillary © Iain Leach

**Finally, as always, we'd like to acknowledge financial support from NatureScot which helps us work on many of our threatened species and priority landscapes.**

