Further information

There is plenty of help to identify moths, and other information, on the Moths Count website at www.mothscount.org, which also has links to further courses. The local moths can provide identification guides to local moths. Some books are good identification guides:

- British Moths (second edition): A photographic guide. Manley, C. 2015 (Bloomsbury)

Butterfly Conservation is working to save butterflies, moths and their habitats. Why not become a member? More information at www.butterfly-conservation.org

The ongoing Moths Count project is supported financially by Butterfly Conservation, Natural England, Natural Resources Wales, Scottish Natural Heritage, Northern Ireland Environment Agency, The Royal Entomological Society and many individual donors, as well as business partners Nectar Creative and Watkins & Doncaster.

www.mothscount.org
Manor Yard, East Lulworth, Wareham, Dorset, BH20 5QP
Phone 01929 400209
info@butterfly-conservation.org

Text by Susan Anders.
Photographs by Robert Thompson, Roy Leverton, Shane Farrell, Dave Green, Chris Harlow, Les Hill, Ian Kimber, Mike Lawrence, Mark Parsons and Paul Pugh.

Butterfly Conservation
Company limited by guarantee, registered in England (2206468)
Registered Office: Manor Yard, East Lulworth, Wareham, Dorset, BH20 5QP
Charity registered in England & Wales (254937) and in Scotland (SCO39268)
Printed on 100% recycled stock using vegetable based inks.

Garden Moths
Some Common Species

Your garden is home to many beautiful moths which have important roles in the garden ecosystem.
Moths and gardens

Gardens are important for moths. While most butterflies, birds and other wildlife just visit to look for food, our gardens provide a year-round home for many moths, throughout their life-cycles. Moths are also important for gardens. They are a vital part of the garden ecosystem, pollinating flowers and providing food for other garden wildlife like birds, bats, toads and hedgehogs. For example, each brood of Blue Tit chicks will eat about 15,000 moth caterpillars!

Many of the UK’s 2,500 species of moths can be found in gardens. In general, gardens with a greater mix of plants and more diverse structure (i.e. shrubs and trees as well as grass and flowers) will support a wider variety of moths. This is because some moth caterpillars only feed on tree leaves, some on grasses, and others on herbaceous plants. Many trees and shrubs are especially good for moths, even if they’re pruned to limit size.

You can also increase moth numbers through simple, sensitive gardening practices such as reducing chemical use, having plenty of flowers, providing food (such as wild fruits and nuts), and not mowing up at dead plant matter at the end of the year. Transplanting and using other techniques here. Even a small garden can really support a wide-furred species, and you may find many more plants and species if you cultivate gardens with a greater mix of plants. This is because many species of moths are adapted to the vegetation they feed on. For example, some species of moths are adapted to feeding on tree leaves, while others are adapted to feeding on grasses or herbs.

Many moths, including garden species, are in serious decline. For example, Garden Tiger numbers have decreased by 92% since the late 1960s. Butterfly Conservation has established the Moths Count project and its National Moth Recording Scheme to raise awareness and improve knowledge and conservation of UK moths. You can contribute to this work by keeping a record of the moths you see in your garden. Records from gardens are very important to help build a picture of which moths are doing well and which are in decline. For more information about moths, moth recording and the Moths Count project visit www.mothscount.org

Blood-vein

May-Nov

Species illustrated are relatively common and most are widespread in Britain and Ireland. They are not to scale. Flight periods are given for guidance but may vary to the north and south.

Early Grey

Mar-May

Flame Shoulder

Apr-Sep

Chinese Character

Apr-Sep

Spectacle

May-Sep

Heart & Dart

May-Sep

Drinker

Jul-Aug

Eyed Hawk-moth

May-Jul

Merveille du Jour

Sep-Oct

Foxglove Pug

May-Aug

Willow Beauty

Jun-Oct

Light Emerald

May-Sep

Garden Tiger

Jul-Aug

Frosted Orange

Aug-Oct

Flame

Apr-Sep

Mint Moth

May-Aug

Swallow-tailed Moth

Jun-Aug

Common Footman

Jul-Aug

Common Swift

May-Jul

Common Rustic

Jul-Aug

Dot Moth

Jun-Aug

Setaceous Hebrew Character

May-Oct

Green Silver-lines

May-Jul

Herald

Mar-Nov

Dark Arches

Jun-Nov

Red Underwing

Aug-Oct

Green Carpet

May-Sep

Lackey

Jul-Aug

Garden Carpet

Apr-Sep

Pale Tussock

May-Jun

Brimstone Moth

Apr-Oct

Snout

Jun-Oct

Riband Wave

Jun-Oct

Yellow Shell

Jun-Aug

Peppered Moth

May-Aug