

## Suffolk Moth Group Newsletter

Issue 30 - Autumn 2003

Edited by Tony Prichard

### In this issue

- [Editorial](#)
- [National Recording Scheme for Macro-moths Web Site](#)
- [Buttoned Snout Survey update](#)
- [Just like that](#)
- [Suffolk Moth Tourists in France - Neil Sherman](#)
- [Field Reports](#)
- [Reports from Recorders around the county](#)
  - [Grundisburgh - Martin Hough](#)
  - [Eye - Paul Kitchener](#)
  - [Rendham - Matthew Deans](#)
  - [Bawdsey - Matthew Deans](#)
  - [Ipswich Golf Course - Neil Sherman](#)
  - [Mendlesham - Steve Woolnough](#)
  - [Stonham Aspal - Jim Foster](#)
  - [Bungay - Leigh Davis](#)
- [Contact details](#)
- [The Newsletter](#)
- [Adverts](#)

### Editorial

This has been rather a bumper season for moths across the county. As well as being a good year for resident moths migrants have been out in force with some very unusual species turning up at various sites and most notably the Landguard traps. I seem to have been inundated in Hummingbird Hawk-moth and Convolvulus Hawk-moth records and reports of the latter are still coming in.

Some of the surveys carried out by the group this year have not gone as well as they might have so we will be continuing with these next year. If anyone has any ideas for moth group meetings for 2004 then pass on the ideas as I will shortly be thinking of putting together the events for next year. Under-recorded areas of the county are of particular interest.

The new field guide to moths by Waring, Townsend and Lewington was published this year. One of its key selling-points appears to be that it shows the moths in their natural resting postures. My initial impressions of the book were a bit unfavourable but I am mellowing a bit in my opinion. Some of the

artwork certainly captures the 'gizz' of the moths whereas other pictures do not. The text is probably the best feature of the book from my viewpoint, giving useful tips on identification and distribution information that appears more up to date than Skinner (not surprisingly). My major grumble is in the organisation of the book as groups of plates are scattered throughout the book and there is no initial key based on appearance to guide the user to the correct set of plates to look at. I suspect that initially readers will spend a bit of time flicking through trying to find the correct set of plates. Some of the oddities like Straw Dot and Oak Nycteoline where they do not conform the standard shape of the family may prove awkward to track down. The book also introduces a new set of terms to describe the features on moth wings. I have heard already that some recorders prefer these new terms but I suspect some confusion is going to arise as moth recorders now describe moths to each other using differing terms. The final grumble before I shut up is why were hardback versions not included in the pre-publication offer. Hardback copies have since been seen on sale so they have been produced - very annoying. If anyone, especially those who feel reasonably new to moth recording, would like to provide some feedback on their opinions of the book I would be interested in including their views in the next newsletter, especially as it would appear that the book is particularly aimed to appeal to people new to moth recording.

The long awaited Pug book from Harley should be available very shortly (early November) - can anyone remember when publication of this book was first mentioned. We managed to see copies of the book at the recent AES show and it looks like a very good book - certainly worth having a look at.

The end of the year is now fast approaching and we will be continuing with larval survey work of the Lunar Yellow Underwing during the winter. If anyone is interested in helping out with this survey work in the Sandlings region then please get in touch. The survey work last winter turned up some interesting behaviour and habitat usage and this has led to questions that we hope to seek some answers for this year.

Over the winter we intend to produce an update to the 2000 checklist so I would appreciate if recorders could send their records in sooner rather than later. Otherwise new species may not make it into the list.

Finally, many thanks to those recorders who have sent in reports of their recent moth trapping results. The next newsletter is likely to be out in December so any further reports from the tail end of the year would be much appreciated.

## **National Recording Scheme for Macro-moths Web Site**

This web site is now up and running at <http://www.mothrecording.org.uk/>. The site contains details of the regional conferences being held as part of the planning phase of this project. The conference in England is due to be held at Warwick University on Saturday 10th January 2004 and recorders are invited to attend, details can be found on the web site.

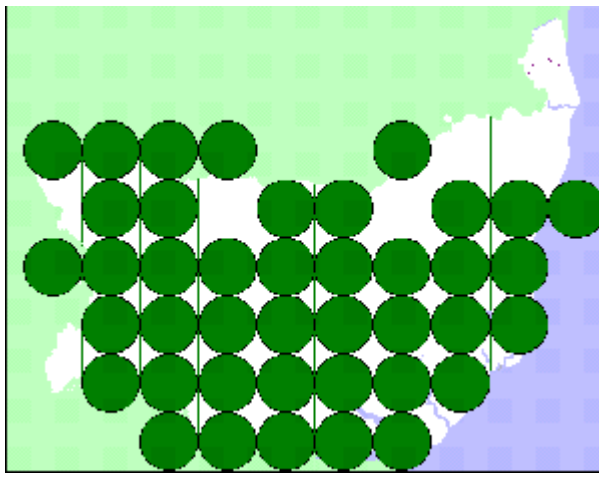
The web site also has a questionnaire that the organisers would like all moth recorders to complete. The information provided by completed questionnaires I would expect to form a key part of the outcome of the planning phase so please find the time to fill one in for yourself if you have not already done so.

## **Buttoned Snout Survey Update**

This survey has turned out to be one of the more successful activities this year. After burning up a lot of petrol and getting my car stuck in a run-off on a roadside verge the picture of the moth's distribution in the county has changed considerably since the start of the year. There were a few 10km squares visited this year that did not yield larvae but as I was in a bit of rush when I visited these particular areas (normally before moth nights in the area) I still think it likely that the larva may occur in these areas. Further survey work will probably take place in 2004 to pick up those areas not covered this year.

Thanks to Sharon Hearle, Andy Musgrove and Neil Sherman for additional records of the larvae that have put a few more dots on the map.

The map below show the known distribution of the moth as it currently stands in Suffolk.



The information provided confirms our impression that the moth is not that rare in the county - it would seem widespread and occurring at most places where its foodplant occurs. Combined with larval surveys in other counties the evidence would suggest to me that this species probably no longer justifies remaining as a BAP species.

### **Just like that...**

A man walks into a dentist's surgery and says, "Excuse me, can you help me. I think I'm a moth."

Dentist: "You don't need a dentist. You need a psychiatrist."

Man: "Yes, I know."

Dentist: "So why did you come in here?"

Man: "The light was on..."

### **Suffolk Moth Tourists in France - Neil Sherman**

In June 2003, I went on holiday with Graham Bull to France, to sample the delights of mothing abroad. We went to the Lot area in the south of the country, staying in the hamlet of Las Descargues. Our accommodation was at Robin Howard's house, the Cornish moth recorder and the only recorder living outside of the UK. He runs moth and wildlife holidays based at his home – see his website if this article tempts you to go!

Robin runs a Robinson trap most nights in his back garden, supplemented by other traps put out in the surrounding area of hills and valleys covered in woods of Sweet Chestnut, Oak, Ash, Birch and Walnut, plus smaller amounts of grassland, scrub and heathland. We also travelled to other sites in the local vicinity during the day, covering other habitats such as limestone grassland and wildflower meadows.

In total, we recorded over 300 species of moths over the 4-day stay, including over 200+ species in the garden Robinson trap on the first day! (The temperature that night didn't fall below 25 degrees). The only problem with this first successful night was the large numbers of moths involved. They had been constantly flying round within the trap all night, disturbing each other and hence becoming worn, which was a real shame for us when we wanted to see new species in good condition! The following nights were cooler temperature-wise, so there were less moths (still over 150 species each night though!) but at least they were in better condition!

The number of new or notable species for the week is very long, so only a few highlights are listed below. If you want to find out more, you will have to attend the SMG indoor meeting where hopefully I will be giving a talk showing more of what we saw!

Some of the macros of note were: Festoon (very common), Black V-moth (appeared most nights), Latin

(again present most nights), Alchymist (one caught on the first night), Orache (2-3 every night), Waved Black (found in my room!), Feathered Beauty (common), Three-humped Prominent (2 on 2 nights), Scarce Merveille du Jour (one appeared on the first night only – one I really wanted to see), Striped hawk (3 recorded – the only hawks seen at light), Hummingbird Hawk-moth (common everywhere, including 20+ feeding at lavender in the airport car park!), Light Crimson Underwing (one), Heart Moth (appeared most nights but all were worn unfortunately), Pine-tree Lappet (one only) and Four-spotted Footman (common).

A small sample of the micros (mostly pyralids) seen were *Agrotera nemoralis* (seen most nights), *Oncocera semirubella* (again present most nights, a browner form than the British race) and *Elegia similella* (common).

While out hunting butterflies during the day, we also discovered some day flying moth species, including Pale shoulder (one seen in the Cele valley wildflower meadow), Four Spotted (few seen at several sites), Spotted Sulphur (quite common in wildflower areas), Bright Wave (again commonly disturbed in wildflower areas) and Clay Fan-foot (commonly disturbed in woodland areas).

With excellent food, wine, weather (over 30 degrees and sunny most days) wildlife (including Edible Dormouse, Hoopoe, Honey Buzzard and lots of Wall Lizards – a small sample of what we saw) and company I will certainly be returning in future, this time to try and see the Great Emperor Moth, Europe's largest species which Robin catches in the garden!



Four-spotted Footman © Neil Sherman



Pine-tree Lappet © Neil Sherman



Las Descargues © Neil Sherman

## Field reports

### SMG Moth Night at Minsmere - 4th July 2003

Away from the publically accessible areas of the reserve lies quite an extensive area of fen and reed-bed, surrounded by mixture of woodland, sallow carr and heathland. Initial impressions of the site were favourable and that some interesting moths were going to turn up at the lights. Of the six lights

operated four were on the fen with the sheet light on the edge and a single Skinner trap operated up on the heathland. Although moths appeared a bit slow at times coming to the lights we managed to clock up 141 species of which Valerian Pug and Double Dart were of most interest. Valerian Pug appears quite restricted in its distribution in the county, previously known mainly from the fens along the Waveney valley. Following discovery of a larva during a visit earlier in the year it was good to see the a singleton of the adult Lunar Yellow Underwing.

Other species of interest included; *Epinotia cruciana*, *Calamotropha paludella*, *Scoparia basistrigalis*, *Eudonia pallida*, *Ostrinia nubilalis*, *Phlyctaenia perlucidalis*, *Nascia ciliaris*, *Pempelia palumbella*, Chevron, Orange Moth, Grey Arches, Striped Wainscot, Suspected, Dingy Shears, Small Rufous, Cream-bordered Green Pea, Blackneck, Shaded Fan-foot and Dotted Fan-foot.

Thanks to Ian Hawkins of the RSPB for coming along for the evening and helping us out.

### **Suffolk BC - Barnhamcross Common - 5th July 2003**

This was a meeting intended to introduce Butterfly Conservation and Suffolk Naturalist Society members to the moths that can be found during the day. With rather overcast weather conditions were not ideal. This Breck grassland site seems a good place to see the Forester and a few were seen during the day. Neil Sherman and beating tray disturbed a few moths from the oak trees but no False Mocha larvae.

### **Moth Night - Dunwich Beach - 5th July 2003**

This site offers vegetated shingle and reed-bed habitats and on this occasion had attracted a couple of campers to put up their tent in an area where we normally set up lights. A while after setting up and switching on a couple of policemen were attracted to the light - they had had a tip off for an illegal rave in the Dunwich area. Close-up it must have been obvious that we did not fit the profile of a couple of prospective ravers as they seemed happy to leave us to it. The evening was interspersed by further visits from police cars to the car park although we saw or heard nothing of the rave. With 88 species from four lights we didn't do too badly with species of possible note including; *Monochroa palustrella*, *Brachmia blandella*, *Stathmopoda pedella*, *Aethes tesserana*, *Celypha rosaceana*, *Lobesia abscisana*, *Eucosma obumbratana*, *Schoenobius gigantella*, *Sitochroa palealis*, *Nyctegretis lineana*, *Marasmarcha lunaedactyla*, Twin-spot Carpet, Garden Tiger, Water Ermine, Kent Black Arches, Striped Wainscot, Reed Dagger and Dotted Fan-foot.

### **SMG Moth Night at RAF Barnham - 11th July 2003**

This was a slightly warmer meeting at this Breck site than the previous visit to the site with the BENHS. Moths seemed few and far between despite clocking up 140 species. It seems that we've not fared too well with conditions this year when we've visited Breck sites. Species of note recorded included; *Coleophora pennella* (gen. det. JC), *Pleurota bicostella*, *Aroga velocella*, *Anarsia spartiella*, *Aethes beatricella*, *Thiodia citrana*, *Pammene fasciana*, *Sitochroa verticalis*, Plain Wave, Oblique Striped, Royal Mantle, Clouded Magpie, Lobster Moth, Four-dotted Footman, Bird's Wing, Slender Brindle and Nut-tree Tussock.

### **SMG Daytime - West Stow CP - 12th July 2003**

This was a daytime visit to look for the larvae of the False Mocha amongst the scrub oaks on the site. Although no False Mocha larvae were found Rob Parker managed to flush from the vegetation the first of some Purple-bordered Gold. As we thought there might be some hop along the riverside we headed back to the cars along the river path and managed to beat several larvae of Buttoned Snout, so at least the meeting was not a complete loss.

### **SMG Moth Night - Lakenheath Fen - 18th July 2003**

The group has visited this fenland site in the north-west of the county several times now and subjected

their cars to the drive along the rough track to Botany Bay. This meeting however was aimed at trying to find the Marsh Carpet. It was decided to concentrate the lights close to the areas where Meadow Rue is found in the newer (and nearer to the car park) parts of the reserve. Some of the areas that were surveyed for the larvae last year would appear to have become rampant with hemlock and I would think that this cannot be benefiting the Meadow Rue much. No Marsh Carpet were found, which was a bit disappointing especially as an adult was recorded in the area in the previous year. A good selection of moths did turn up to the light and amongst the 133 species recorded were; *Epiblema foenella*, *Eucosma campolilliana*, *Sitochroa verticalis*, *Ostrinia nubilalis*, Dark Spinach, Dark Umber, White-spotted Pug, Clouded Magpie, Canary-shouldered Thorn, Chocolate-tip, White Satin, Garden Tiger, White-line Dart, Archer's Dart, Dog's Tooth, Reed Dagger, Olive, Double Lobed, Small Dotted Buff, Brown-veined Wainscot, Crescent. A couple of Wormwood were found in the last trap to be shutdown in amongst the poplar plantation and this would probably be rated moths of the night.

### **Moth Night - Aldringham Walks - 19th July 2003**

This heathland site has previously been the curse of the moth group, each visit being dogged by poor weather with frost forming on the traps on one particularly cold night. Conditions finally came good and plenty of moths were seen in between the showers of rain as thunderstorms and lightning could be seen on the horizon. The first of this season's *Dioryctria sylvestrella* was not too much of surprise although the sea-pea feeding *Pima boisduvaliella* was considered a bit unusual as it must have wandered a distance from the coast. Amongst the 140 species recorded the following species were of note; *Plutella porrectella*, *Pleurota bicostella*, *Anarsia spartiella*, *Brachmia blandella*, *Argyrotaenia ljugiana*, *Piniphila bifasciana*, *Pediasia contaminella*, *Pempelia palumbella*, Lackey, Common Lutestring, Grass Emerald, Chevron, Dog's Tooth, Beautiful Yellow Underwing, Broom Moth, Miller and Shaded Fan-foot.

### **SMG Moth Night at Tangham Valley - 25th July 2003**

This is the first year that the group has made regular recording visits to this area of Rendlesham Forest. Results from a visit earlier in the year had proved very productive considering the time of year and this night provided the longest species list for a meeting in 2003. A singleton Tissue was most unexpected given the relative lack of its foodplant in this part of the county. Considering the habitat of wet woodland, coniferous woodland and heathland most of the other 169 species were not too unexpected and these included; *Aspilapteryx tringipennella*, *Cedestis gysseleliella*, *Monochroa cytisella*, *Metendothenia atropunctana*, *Epinotia brunnichana*, *Clavigesta purdeyi*, *Calamotropha paludella*, *Anania verbascalis*, *Dioryctria sylvestrella*, Grass Emerald, Small Scallop, Plain Wave, Flame Carpet, Chevron, Twin-spot Carpet, Magpie, Dotted Clay, Broom Moth, White-point, Slender Brindle, Small Rufous and Shaded Fan-foot.



Tissue © Neil Sherman

### **SMG Moth Night - Easton Broad - 1st Aug 2003**

This was the first of the moth group's annual searches for White-mantled Wainscot. It seemed likely that the species would occur at this site as it occurs at Walberswick to the south and Benacre to the north.

Unfortunately we were not able to record in the area originally planned and had to make do with second-best. No White-mantled Wainscot were recorded and Brown-veined Wainscot seemed rather low on the ground as well. A melanic Yellow Belle caused a bit of excitement as a rather strange looking moth until it was potted and closely examined. Although no White-mantled Wainscot were found we did manage to attract Fenn's Wainscot and this should really be treated as of more significance due to its more limited European distribution. Of the other 114 species recorded the pick of the bunch included; *Monopis monachella*, *Hypatima rhomboidella*, Garden Riger, Reed Dagger, Lesser-spotted Pinion, Crescent and Twin-spotted Wainscot.

### **Moth Night - Minsmere Fen - 2nd Aug 2003**

Having seen this fen site at the July meeting it was decided that it would be worth returning to the site to check for the possible occurrence of White-mantled Wainscot. The planned second visit to the fen later in the month seemed a bit too late in the month to provide the best opportunity to look for this particular moth. However, our lack of success with White-mantled Wainscot this year continued and we did not manage to record the species, although the habitat would appear suitable and the area is not far from where the moth is known to occur. A record of Phoenix on the night would appear to be a new site macro-record. Other moths of interest included; *Orthotelia sparganella*, *Ptycholomoides aeriferanus*, Oblique Carpet, Flame Carpet, Chevron, Archer's Dart, Dark Sword-grass, Dog's Tooth, White-point, Olive, Fenn's Wainscot, Crescent, Bulrush Wainscot, Twin-spotted Wainscot, Webb's Wainscot, Pinion-streaked Snout. In all 138 species were recorded.

Many thanks to Robin Harvey of the RSPB who helped us out on the night. Without the use of a 4x4 this site requires kit to be carried too far for comfort.

### **Moth Night - Dunwich Forest - 6th Aug 2003**

This was a mid-week visit to part of Dunwich Forest where there are good stands of elm in the hope of recording White-spotted Pinion. Poor luck continued and yet again the target species failed to make an appearance. To make up for this several hornets put in an appearance at the traps to liven up the evening's proceedings. With 107 species it was still an interesting evening with *Athrips mouffetella*, *Brachmia blandella*, *Cochylis hybridella*, *Metendothenia atropunctana*, *Evergestis extimalis*, *Evergestis pallidata*, *Dioryctria sylvestrella*, Rosy Wave, Flame Carpet, Clouded Magpie, Buff Footman, Dotted Clay, Lesser-spotted Pinion and Twin-spotted Wainscot being among the more noteworthy species.

### **SMG Moth Night - Havergate Island - 8th Aug 2003**

This was an overnight visit to the RSPB Havergate reserve, previously visited by the group in July 1997. The site is rather limited in the habitats that it offers; saltmarsh and lagoons with odd pieces of reed-bed; but it's rather interesting habitat. On this visit we managed to spread the lights a bit further on the reserve thanks to the use of a tractor. In all 80 species were recorded from a total of 8 MV lights. With the highlights on the night including; *Phalonidia affinitana*, *Pima boisduvaliella*, *Agdisitis bennetii*, Ground Lackey, Dark Sword-grass, Dog's Tooth, White-point, Crescent Striped, Sandhill Rustic and a Mother Shipton larva. Jon Clifton took away some Coleophoras for dissection and these turned out to be *Coleophora alcyonipennella*, *C. salinella*, *C. salicorniae* and *C. clypeiferella*.



On the beach after unloading the kit



Off to look at the traps

Many thanks to the reserve warden, Ian Parradine, for ferrying us about, helping move kit and putting us up for the night.

The current intention is to return to the reserve for another visit next year, during June probably.

### **Moth Night at Barnhamcross Common - 9th Aug 2003**

This Breck grassland site on the outskirts of Thetford seems to be under a temporary reprieve from the developers but the group continues to visit the site to build up our knowledge of the moth fauna. One of the reasons for visiting the site this time was with the hope of looking for False Mocha, although this time of year is a little early in its second flight period of the year. Of the 98 species recorded the following were of interest due to their restricted distribution or because they were new to the site; *Tinea trinotella*, *Ypsolopha parenthesella*, *Teleiopsis diffinis*, *Eudonia truncicolella*, *Pyrausta purpuralis*, *Nomophila noctuella*, Tawny Wave, Oblique Striped, Dark Spinach, Dingy Shell, Peacock Moth, White-line Dart, Archer's Dart, Twin-spotted Wainscot, Vine's Rustic and Dark Umber.

### **SMG Moth Night - Howlett Hills - 15th Aug 2003**

A further visit to this SWT reserve with a small area of fen and mixed woodland on the edge of the conifer plantations near Lakenheath airbase. We didn't achieve as high a species count as our previous visit with only 85 species but with 46 new site records the trip was certainly worthwhile. Species of note included; *Stenolechia gemmella*, *Aroga velocella*, *Psoricoptera gibbosella*, *Lobesia abscisana*, *Elophila nymphaeata*, *Parapoynx stratiotata*, *Cataclysta lemnata*, Narrow-winged Pug, Canary-shouldered Thorn, Buff Footman, Dog's Tooth and Frosted Orange.

Many thanks to Nick Gibbons of Forest Enterprise for providing alternative access to the site while the main track remained blocked from windfall trees.

### **Moth Night - Walberswick - 16th Aug 2003**

This was a moth night organised to target the White-spotted Pinion at a site where the moth has been seen in recent times. The area of elm tree and hedge we were looking at was adequately covered by the available lights and there were some to spare so these were placed out on the reed-bed. No White-spotted Pinion made their way to the lights and conditions seemed good so its status at the site remains a bit uncertain. I personally experienced the problems of this being one of the local dogs' toilets. With 107 species recorded the night was still successful and notable species included; *Ypsolopha vittella*, *Aroga velocella*, *Cochylis hybridella*, *Evergestis pallidata*, Magpie, Dark Sword-grass, Dog's Tooth, White-point, Reed Dagger, Saltern Ear, Frosted Orange, Twin-spotted Wainscot, Gold Spot and Red Underwing.

### **Moth Night - Westleton Heath - 20th Aug 2003**

The group has previously visited this heath in the past but only really skirted its borders or been there on

very cold nights. As myself and Graham Bull had the week off we decided to squeeze in this mid-week session to pick up some more records for this site. With the sheet next to a bit of woodland we received a constant stream of hornets to the light until the night got too cold for them. A Scarce Bordered Straw put in an early appearance at the sheet but of more interest personally were the pretty black and white tineid *Monopis monachella* and the pyralid *Dioryctria sylvestrella*. Beautiful Yellow Underwing, Hedge Rustic and White-point being other species of note from the 78 species recorded. I'll probably be organising a group visit to this site earlier in the season next year.

### **SMG Moth Night - Minsmere - 22nd Aug 2003**

This was originally planned as a second visit to the inland fen area that the group had first visited in July. As we had slotted in an additional visit to that area three weeks previously it was decided to concentrate on other areas of the reserve for this meeting. Setting up in the area of south of west hide and on the dunes allowed us to place a couple of actinic lights amongst the marshmallow plants, just on the off chance of Marshmallow Moth. A Scarce Bordered Straw was one of the first visitors to the sheet and with White-point were the only migrants of note. Species more characteristic to the area included *Agdistis bennetii*, Dog's Tooth, Reed Dagger, Crescent, Bulrush Wainscot, Twin-spotted Wainscot, Webb's Wainscot, Silky Wainscot and Dotted Fan-foot. *Epermenia falciformis*, *Aroga velocella*, *Cochyliomorpha straminea*, *Lobesia abscisana*, Currant Pug are also probably worthy of mention. A Red Underwing managed to make it into ALS actinic heath trap and there seems to be indications that actinic lights are more effective at attracting this species. In all 136 species recorded on the night.

### **Moth Night at Tangham Valley - 23rd Aug 2003**

This was our our third visit to this locality for moth trapping this year and it continued to produce a good species list and species of interest. Both Peacock and Sharp-angled Peacocks were present in good numbers and the opportunity was taken to spend some time comparing the relative features. Of the 114 species recorded the following were probably of most interest; *Epermenia falciformis*, *Evergestic pallidata*, *Phlyctaenia perlucidalis*, *Dioryctria sylvestrella*, *Agdistis bennetii*, Clay Triple-lines (2nd brood), White-point, Dark Spectacle and Pinion-streaked Snout. And surprisingly no hornets.

### **SMG Moth Night - Groton Wood - 29th Aug 2003**

A rather disappointing night given the weather conditions on the night but only 33 species recorded - was this a sign that the season was about to finish rather abruptly? A bit of leaf-mining before the lamping began turned up a couple of new records for the site *Ectoedemia albifasciella* and *Callisto denticulella*. Of the few moths that made it to the light the following were the most noteworthy; *Eudemis profundana*, *Epinotia nisella*, Orange Sallow and Oak Nycteoline.

## **Reports from Recorders around the county**

Records reported in this section have not been checked by the Suffolk Moth Panel.

### **Grundisburgh - Martin Hough**

I have been recording moths in West Middlesex for over forty years, watching a steady decline in numbers and variety as traffic and pollution increased, and the sodium glow in the sky became ever brighter. The last twenty of those years I was based in Uxbridge, where I had a 70 ft garden with a delightful little river running alongside it. Unfortunately, on the other bank was a gasworks. The Gas Board was obviously extremely proud of it, because soon after I moved there they installed floodlights, so that it could be an eyesore by night as well as by day. The haul in my moth trap dwindled by about sixty per cent. I nevertheless persevered, coming out into the garden in the early mornings to sit on the bench and sift through whatever heroic moths had managed to battle their way into my trap. And then one morning I came out and found that the garden bench had been stolen. I kind of lost heart, after that.

I've now retired, and bought myself a bungalow in Grundisburgh. This lovely Suffolk village, six miles

north of Ipswich and four miles west of Woodbridge, is surrounded by arable land; but the habitat is enhanced with woodland, gardens and marshland close by. My garden backs on to a public field, so the MV lamp can shine out joyously without disturbing anyone's sleep. Surveying a new site is always exciting- a totally unfamiliar place may always deliver something special. When it's your own new home, there's an added piquancy.

I would say my nightly haul is about twice what I would expect in poor old Uxbridge. In just four months I have clocked up over two hundred species It's hard to know, really, what to report here. You Suffolk types have probably become jaded, and greet something that delights me with a hearty ho hum. However, please don't curl your lip when I confess that the following, which have all turned up here in my Grundisburgh trap, are species that I had never seen before:

1357	<i>Evergestis estimalis</i>	31st July 2003
1395	<i>Udea ferrugalis</i>	18th August 2003
1688	Tawny Wave ( <i>Scopula rubiginata</i> )	23rd July 2003
1924	Orange Moth ( <i>Angerona prunaria</i> )	19th June – 5th July (four records)
1962	Barrred Red ( <i>Hylaea fasciaria</i> )	21st June 2003
1968	Yellow Belle ( <i>Semiaspilates ochrearia</i> )	22nd August 2003
1976	Privet Hawk-moth ( <i>Sphinx ligustri</i> )	3rd June – 15th July (eleven records)
2043	Orange Footman ( <i>Eilema sororcula</i> )	3rd June 2003
2108	Lunar Yellow Underwing ( <i>Noctua orbona</i> )	15th July 2003
2131	Square-spotted Clay ( <i>Xestia rhomboidea</i> )	5th August 2003
2157	Light Brocade ( <i>Lacanobia w-latinum</i> )	3rd June 2003
2352	Dusky Sallow ( <i>Eremobia ochroleuca</i> )	5th – 23rd July 2003 (four records)
2373	Webb's Wainscot ( <i>Archanara sparganii</i> )	6th August 2003
2493	Dotted Fan-foot ( <i>Macrochilo cribrumalis</i> )	8th July 2003

Meeting Tony Prichard and the Suffolk Moth Group has been a real pleasure, and I appreciate their help and support while I familiarize myself with my new hunting-ground. I will continue to share the records that have excited me: hopefully over time my reports will become more relevant to the Suffolk norm.

Martin Hough  
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## Eye - July to August 2003 - Paul Kitchener

### July (266 species)

An exciting month with good numbers and several unexpected species including two that may not have been seen in the county for more than fifty years (I am sure I will be told if they have!) namely the gelechiid *Sophronia semicostella* (5th) and the pyralid *Assara terebrella* (20th). Also of note were two individuals of *Sciota adelphella* (5th and 6th), one in Norfolk about a week earlier was the first for that county (ref. The Norfolk Moth Survey).

Other moths of interest, at least as far as Eye goes, were *Aspilapteryx tringipennella* (21st), *Prays fraxinella* (two, 4th), *Plutella porrectella* (23rd), *Orthotelia sparganella* (16th), *Agonopterix subpropinquella* (20th), *Scrobipalpa costella* (4 on three dates), *Brachmia blandella* (5 on four dates), *Helcystogramma rufescens* (on two dates), *Cochylis dubitana* (eight on seven dates), exceptional numbers of *Clepsis consimilana* (total of 38), *Eucosma obumbratana* (16th), *Calamotropha paludella* (on two dates), *Schoenobius gigantella* (on two dates), *Perinephela lancealis* (17th), *Udea ferrugalis* (24th), a total of 25 *Nomophila noctuella*, *Aglossa pinguinalis* (27th), the plume *Oidaematophorus*

*lithodactyla* (20th). Common Lutestring (first Eye records, on two dates), Blue-bordered Carpet (4th), Scallop Shell (second Eye record, 12th, the first record only last month), Brown Scallop (first Eye record, 9th), Spin-spot Carpet (first Eye record, two, 4th), Haworth's Pug (10th), Narrow-winged Pug (second Eye record, 17th), Dingy Shell (30th), Bordered Beauty (on two dates), Chocolate-tip (on two dates), Brown-tail (sixth Eye record, 18th), White Satin (a best ever total of eleven), two individuals of the ab. *stramineola* form of Dingy Footman, Garden Tiger (first Eye record since 2000), Dark Sword-grass (23rd), Least Yellow Underwing (the best year ever, with 55 this month), True Lover's Knot (first site record, 10th), Gothic (10th), Knot-grass (four on two dates), Olive (on four dates), Dingy Shears (a total of sixteen on six dates), Lesser-spotted Pinion (on two dates), Slender Brindle (first Eye record, 8th), Double Lobed (on two dates), Small Rufous (first Eye record, 28th), Marbled White Spot (third Eye record, 5th), Scarce Silver-lines (19th) and Red Underwing (first July record, 28th).



*Sciota adelphella* © Nigel Whinney



*Sophronia semicostella* © Nigel Whinney

### August, up to 27th (175 species)

Exceptional numbers of many species were trapped, with well over one thousand individuals on several nights in the second half of the month. Particularly abundant was Setaceous Hebrew Character (2656 this month compared to 606 for the entire year 2002). Others of note included (total for August '03/total year 2002): Cabbage Moth (340/39), Lesser Broad-bordered Yellow Underwing (454/162), Nutmeg (40/17), Common Wainscot (344/80), Flame Shoulder (1028/796), Shuttle-shaped Dart (515/306) and Vine's Rustic (124/18).

Although the main feature of the month was the numbers, several species of note for Eye were also recorded: *Tischeria ekebladella* (7th), *Leucoptera spartifoliella* (15th), *Epinotia nisella* (2nd), *Clavigesta purdeyi* (on two dates), *Enarmonia formosana* (7th), *Calamotropha paludella* (on two dates), *Udea ferrugalis* (5 on four dates), *Nomophila noctuella* (a total of 112, maximum 34, 7th), *Nephopteryx angustella* (on two dates), *Plodia interpunctella* (to MV light, 13th and 22nd), Figure of Eighty (first ever August record, 7th), Maiden's Blush (fifth Eye record, 6th), Bordered Beauty (on two dates), Large Thorn (eighth Eye record and the earliest, 18th), Humming-bird Hawk-moth (13th), White Ermine (the first time that a second brood moth has been seen, 23rd), White-line Dart (fifth Eye record, 7th), Heart and Dart (latest ever record, 27th), Dark Sword-grass (5 on four dates), Antler Moth (first Eye record, 14th), White-point (7 on four dates), Knot Grass (on five dates), Olive (2, 6th), Red Underwing (6th) and Buttoned Snout (first autumn record, 13th).

Paul Kitchener  
Eye  
29 August 2003

### Rendham – April to August 2003 - Matthew Deans

#### April

National Moth Night on the 12th produced 31 moths of 10 species, which included an Early Thorn,

Dotted Border and Herald. Single Red Chestnut, Twin-spotted Quaker and Satellite came to light on the 14th. I was away in Brazil during the second half of the month.

## May

Highlights during the first week included the first Poplar Hawk-moth of the year on the 3rd. Always nice to see is the Chocolate-tip which appeared on the 8th – a night on which Pebble, Swallow and Pale Prominents were also recorded. Immigrants included single Dark Sword-grass and *Plutella xylostella* on the 18th.

## June

Beautiful Golden Y and Large Nutmeg were regularly recorded throughout this month. The night of the 11th saw Eyed, Lime and Poplar Hawk-moths trapped together with a White-point, Dark Spectacle and a *Phlyctaenia perlucidalis*. The colourful Orange Moth appeared on the 16th with two Privet Hawks and a Plain Golden Y.

## July

The month opened with Blue-bordered Carpet, Garden Tiger and White Satin recorded on the night of 2nd. Peach Blossom, Swallow-tailed Moth, Brown-tail and a Muslin Footman arrived on the 8th. The night of the 10th was a bumper one with 100 species recorded! This included two Pine Hawk-moths (only recorded as singletons before), Large Twin-spot Carpet, Short-cloaked Moth, Rosy Footman (rarer than the next species here), two Muslin Footman, Olive and two garden firsts: Clouded Magpie and Small Dotted Buff.

A Dusky Brocade on the 14th was also new for the garden, Black Arches is rare here so was welcome the same night. A single August Thorn graced the trap on the 20th and another garden rarity was a Fen Wainscot. Rendham 'moth of the year' so far was The Butterbur trapped on the 24th – a new moth for me and many Suffolk moth'ers alike!

The last night of the month saw the year's first Square-spotted Clay – and very fresh it was. Twin-spotted Wainscot and Marbled Beauty were also recorded.



Butterbur © Matthew Deans



Red Underwing © Matthew Deans

## August

With superb mothing conditions continuing, the trap was run regularly throughout the month starting on the 1st! An impressive 44 Silver Y were trapped that night with a single White-point and four *Nomophila noctuella*; with the pick of the resident species being Bordered Beauty, Gold Spot and Dark Spectacle. Dusky Thorn was first recorded on the 3rd and proved to be regular throughout.

A worn Figure of 80 was trapped on the 17th – a night good for immigrants including two Dark Sword-grass, eight White-point, three *N. noctuella* and a single *Plutella xylostella*. The following night saw Flame Carpet – new for the garden; Maple Prominent, Red Underwing and a single *Udea ferrugalis*.

A new garden pyralid and possibly an immigrant was a single *Evergestis extimalis* recorded on the 26th. Many of the autumnal species were very much in evidence later in the month with Centre-barred Sallow, Frosted Orange and Six-striped Rustic having a good year.

## **Bawdsey - April to August 2003 - Matthew Deans**

All sightings relate to moths attracted to security lights, no traps were operated at this site.

### **April**

A single Mullein Moth on the 27th was an exciting find – appearing on the same night as a The Streamer and a Frosted Green.

### **May**

Regular sightings of Least Black Arches were made during the month. The species was absent this year at Rendham, so gave me a good chance to see them. The first night of the month produced a single Northern Drab – a truly coastal species in Suffolk along with a Dotted Border, Yellow-barred Brindle and Maiden's Blush. The White-pinion Spotted was recorded on the 8th and 18th.

### **June**

Several Treble Brown Spot were found during the month. The Treble Bar was seen on the 12th. The pyralid *Myelois circumvoluta* was noted on the 22nd.

### **July**

An immigrant European Corn-borer was the month's highlight on the 21st. A Small Yellow Wave appeared on the 16th. A single Pine Hawk-moth was a nice surprise on the 20th. Nine Least Carpets were recorded on the 22nd - proving to be a very regularly occurring species. However, the very early and fresh Red Underwing – possibly the earliest ever in Suffolk also on the 22nd was most unexpected. A single Poplar Hawk-moth was found on the 27th with a Bordered Pug and two Marbled Green the following day.

### **August**

The Mullein Wave was obvious this month with records most days. On the 14th, 35 *Agriphila tristella* were noted – this being by far the commonest of the micros on site. A single Treble Bar was found on the 25th. Both Garden Carpet and Light Emerald were very regular throughout. Several *Nomophila noctuella* and Silver Ys appeared but nothing else in the way of migrants.

## **Ipswich Golf Course - Neil Sherman**

### **July**

July 2003 was one of the best months for moth recording at the Golf Course ever, even better than the mid 1990's as back then I didn't record too many micros. As the nights were so warm, light traps were operated on virtually every night during mid – week (being out on the SMG meetings at weekends prevented recording then). 15 nights of recording were undertaken, this producing a record 368 species (184 macros) for the month.

With the vast amount of data produced, this is only going to be a brief look at some of the highlights. Macros of possible interest included Gold Swift (6th), Festoon (8 individuals on 3 dates), Oak Eggar (20th, 22nd (2) and 24th (3) – all females leaving plenty of eggs in the bottom of the trap!), Least Carpet (best year so far with records on the 10th, 20th (2) and 22nd). Flame Carpet is a regular at this site with 7 recorded on 3 dates. Blue-bordered Xarpet (singleton on the 8th) is a good record for here, Ling Pug (or is it a form of Wormwood!) appeared on the 21st with another 3 on the 31st. V-pug also appeared (3 records). The pretty Bordered Beauty was recorded on 2 occasions, along with Maple Prominent (10th and 2 on the 14th). The Black Arches again had a good year at the site with a high count of 30 on the 22nd. It is still being recorded at the time of writing (August). The BAP Lunar Yellow Underwing was seen on 2 dates (6th + 8th) before it disappeared to aestivate. The Beautiful Yellow Underwing was seen on 6 occasions, mainly during the day nectaring at bell heather. Grey Arches appeared once (20th) – this hasn't been as numerous as last year at the site. Southern Wainscot (2 on 20th) Suspected (3 records), Olive (15th), Small Rufous (22nd) and Scarce Silver-lines (8th) were all recorded on single dates. The 4th site record of Webb's Wainscot was trapped on the 30th, well away from its known

breeding spots on the site. The Herald put on a good show this year, with records on the 15th and 2 on the 22nd. The RDB3 Shaded Fan-foot also did well, with 17 on 5 dates.



Festoon © Neil Sherman



Least Carpet © Neil Sherman

The micros were very numerous – it has certainly been an excellent year for them at the site. Of possible interest amongst the many species recorded were: *Monopis weaverella* (22nd), *Cedestis gysseleeniella* (10th), *Orthotelia sparganella* (8th) and *Phtheochroa inopiana* were all new for the site. *Acleris holmiana*, one of my favourites, appeared on 3 dates, *Epinotia solandriana* appeared on 3 dates (5 individuals). Also of note were *Lathronympha strigana* (20th), *Scoparia subfusca* (2 records), *Evergestis extimalis* (15th and 20th), *Pempelia palumbella* (10th), *Nomophila noctuella* (18 individuals recorded – best numbers since the mid 1990's), though all of these have been recorded before here. *Dioryctria sylvestrella* was recorded on the 20th, with it also being noted at other sites across the county with pine trees at around the same time.

Daytime discoveries have also been of interest. A Fox Moth larva was discovered on the heath while pulling bracken on the 16th, the only record this year (so far). Beating hops as part of the Buttoned Snout county survey produced 3 larvae of that species along with 3 Currant Pugs. A Lunar Marbled Brown larva was discovered on the 14th, feeding on a low oak bough. The first leaf mines were also noted, with *Enteucha acetosae* (on Sheep's sorrel) found on the 18th and *Acrocercops brongniardella* (on oak), a new site record, found on the 2nd. Another new species was seen on the 8th – Ipswich Golf Club's first burnet moth – a Narrow-bordered Five-spot Burnet.

Another moth species normally recorded on or near the coast was trapped on the 20th – a Saltern Ear (second site record), to go with the Mathew's Wainscot seen last month.

Not a moth, but a large beetle, aroused some interest on the 22nd. The very impressive large longhorn the Sawyer beetle (*Prionus corianius*) was caught in one of the traps. This beetle was at least 4cm long and very broad with long segmented antenna. According to David Nash, the county Beetle recorder, this is a Nationally notable A species, feeding as a larva in tree roots.



Dioryctria sylvestrella © Neil Sherman



Sawyer Beetle © Neil Sherman

## August

The excellent season continued on from July, with warm and dry conditions for most of the month. The moth total for August was 257 species (123 macros), the highest ever for the site in that month – this has beaten the previous best of 237 species seen last year. Lights were run on 12 nights, with the best night being the 10th, when, with stormy conditions around 116 species were seen. Unfortunately, the weather took a turn for the worst in the final week of the month, with some colder weather. Species numbers dropped as well, with only a total of 44 recorded on the 27th. It will be interesting to see how the dry weather affects the moths next year, as a lot of the foodplants have suffered due to the lack of rain – the golf course resembles a prairie at the moment with lots of brown grass and dust blowing about!

As mentioned above, the 10th was the best night of recording, but it could have been even better! I had put out 3 MV traps, but one unfortunately must have been placed right near an ant's nest as in the morning they had cleaned it out! The ant was a large black ant variety, and there were thousands in the trap in the process of dismembering the contents, including what few moths were left as well as 4 Hornets!

Macros of possible interest included Oak Eggar (another one on the 4th after last month's records). The Maiden's Blush second brood was very common this year, with up to a dozen each night early in the month. Chinese Character was also up, a trend that has been noted at the SMG nights as well. Tawny Wave appeared twice, but more unusually a Satin Wave appeared on the 5th, the first time I have seen it as a second brood. Dark Spinach appeared on the 10th, one of the only moths still alive in the ant trap! Scorched Carpet was seen on the 2nd – this is only the second site record. Ling Pugs were noted on 4 dates after the first ones at the end of last month. Another second brood moth appeared on the 26th – the pretty Lilac Beauty. Hawk-moths continued right up until the end of the month, with odd appearances from Poplar and Pine Hawk-moths. White-line Dart was notable by its abundance this year, with more being seen than last year. One Garden Dart was picked out on the 4th, a welcome record as none were seen last year. This was also the case with the Six-striped Rustic seen on the 17th. A single Lunar Yellow Underwing was trapped on the 12th, but more will appear later in the year. A singleton of another BAP species was seen on the 5th – the Square-spotted Clay. From mid month onwards, both Hedge Rustic and Pinion-streaked Snout were recorded regularly.

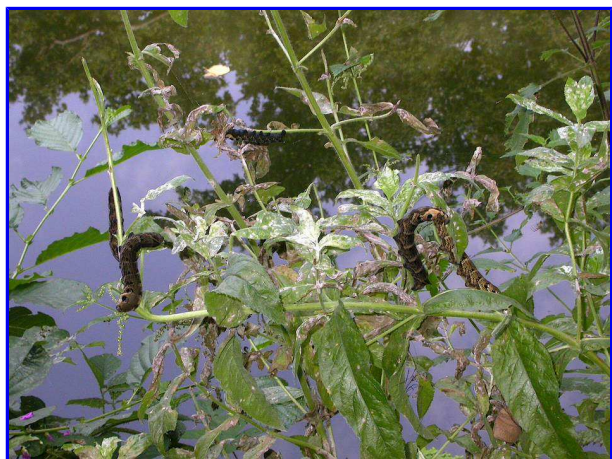
A few migrants appeared with Dark Sword-grass (3 on 2 dates) and White-point (16 on 7 dates) being of note. The Turnip, another partial migrant, was common along with its other vegetable namesake the Cabbage. This species has been found commonly everywhere I have been mothing this year, and other moth recorders have also noted good numbers.

Micros have also continued in good numbers, with the following of possible interest. *Caloptilia populetorum* was seen on 2 dates. *Prays fraxinella* (ab. *rustica*) was seen on the 24th, and, being all dark took some identifying! Also in the same group was a *Ypsolopha nemorella* on the 5th. Both *Epermenia falciformis* (17th) and *Eupoecila angustana* (2 on the 4th) were both new species for the site. Pyralids included *Agriphila latistria* (27th), *Platytes alpinella* (2 records), *Dioryctria sylvestrella* (2 records) and *Achroia grisella* (Lesser Wax Moth) on the 5th (a new site record). Another new species,

*Adaina microdactyla*, was seen on the 17th. This species has been searched for many times at the site around its foodplant, hemp agrimony, without success so it is perhaps beginning to colonise. Another plume, *Agdistis bennetii*, was seen on the 3rd and goes with both the record from last year and the records of the 2 coastal macros seen in previous months (Saltern Ear and Mathew's Wainscot).

2 Migrant micros have been notable this year – *Nomophila noctuella* has been common (with a maximum of 18 on the 17th) and *Udea ferrugalis* (3 records – only one before this year).

At least 8 Elephant Hawk-moth larvae were found early in the month, with a notable count of 6 on one small patch of willowherb! I have also seen 2 in my garden at home, and there have been several reports in the press about the caterpillars, so there could be good numbers next year. Another Hawk-moth larva was given to me on the 27th – a Pine Hawk-moth. The Course manager found it in his garden at the Golf Club, crawling on the bird table! Not the best place for a larva to find itself!



Elephant Hawk-moth larvae © Neil Sherman



White-line Dart © Neil Sherman

## **Mendlesham - August and September - Steve Woolnough**

Steve has recently started recording in the Stowmarket area and is in an under-recorded ten km square.

Recent records for his garden trap have included; Small Emerald, Large Thorn, Dusky Thorn, Feathered Thorn, Garden Dart, Hedge Rustic, Merveille du Jour, Brick, Brown-spot Pinion, Frosted Orange, Centre-barred Sallow, Barred Sallow, Yellow-tail, Rustic and Hummingbird Hawk-moths.

## **Stonham Aspal - August - Jim Foster**

The following are some records I have received from Jim for August; Dark Sword-grass, Dusky Thorn, Lime Hawk-moth (11 on the one night), Small Square-spot and Square-spotted Clay.

## **Bungay - June and July - Leigh Davis**

Here are some records of Leigh's that I received earlier in the year; Fern, Magpie Moth, Buff Footman, Pearly Underwing, Ingrailed Clay, Campion, Dingy Shears, Dusky Sallow, Crescent, Plain Golden Y.

Leigh's daytime records from Ilketshall St. Margaret include *Pyralis farinalis* (Meal Moth) and Hummingbird Hawk-moth.

## **Contact details**

Please send any Suffolk moth records, moth articles or other queries to myself (preferably via email) at :

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Email : [tony@suffolkmothgroup.org.uk](mailto:tony@suffolkmothgroup.org.uk)

**Suffolk Moths web site** (home of the SMG): <http://www.suffolkmothgroup.org.uk/>

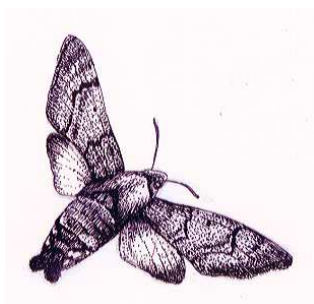
**SMG Email Discussion Group:** <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/suffolkmothgroup>

**Essex County Moth Recorder** : Brian Goodey, 298 Ipswich Road, Colchester, Essex. CO4 0ET.  
E-mail: [essexmoths@dial.pipex.com](mailto:essexmoths@dial.pipex.com)

## The Newsletter

This is the newsletter for the Suffolk Moth Group. It is distributed free to those with email and at a £2 per annum subscription for paper copies. Four issues are produced per year, usually in March, June, August and November. I am always on the look out for articles that will be of interest to moth recorders in Suffolk, although field and site reports should be topical. Articles should arrive by the end of the month preceding the month in which a newsletter is produced, eg. the deadline for articles for the March newsletter is the end of February.

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