

## Suffolk Moth Group Newsletter

Issue 32 - Spring 2004

Edited by Tony Prichard

### In this issue

- [Editorial](#)
- [Indoor Meeting - 2pm, 27th March 2004 - Alder Carr Farm](#) - Tony Prichard
- [2004 Field Events Programme](#)
- [Ectoedemia hannoverella confirmed](#) - Tony Prichard
- [Bits and Pieces Quiz - The Answers](#) - Neil Sherman
- [Moth Recording Coverage in the County](#) - Tony Prichard
- [Request for metallic green Coleophoras and Cnephasias](#) - Jon Clifton
- [Lunar Yellow Underwing Survey Update 2003-4](#) - Tony Prichard
- [Ray Society Tortrix Volumes on CD](#) - Tony Prichard
- [Field Reports](#) - Tony Prichard
- [Reports from Recorders around the county](#)
  - [Eye Moths - January to mid-April 2004](#) - Paul Kitchener
  - [Moths at Ipswich Golf Club - December 2003 to March 2004](#) - Neil Sherman
  - [Grundisburgh - Spring 2004](#) - Martin Hough
  - [Moths at Bawdsey - January to mid-April 2004](#) - Matthew Deans
  - [Moths at Rendham - January to mid-April 2004](#) - Matthew Deans
  - [The Virtues of DIY](#) - Paul Bryant
  - [Moths of the Long Melford area - January to April 2004](#) - Darren Underwood
- [Contact details](#)
- [The Newsletter](#)
- [Adverts](#)

### Editorial

Many thanks to the contributors who have sent in reports for their area of the county for this issue. This time of year can be a bit quiet before the season gets under way and they have managed to provide some interesting write-ups. It would appear that the start of this season has been a bit slow (or possibly back to normal after the run of early springs). Most of the Quakers and other early spring moths seem to have been particularly low on the ground based on the results at lights we have run out and about this year. In the last week or two the late spring species have been appearing and we at last seem to have entered the 'large fluffy moth' season. Will they appear in lower numbers as well?

Following on from the success of the winter indoor meeting this autumn/winter there will be another indoor meeting. This will take the form of a workshop covering the setting of moths and how to perform

genitalia dissections. Jon Clifton has kindly agreed to come along and run the dissection workshop. Details will be sent out when they are firmed up. If you come across any 'Ears', Grey/Dark Daggers, Minors or non-descript Pugs during the summer that you would like confirming then I would suggest keeping them and bringing them along to the meeting.

The next issue of the newsletter should be out around August time.

## **Indoor Meeting - 27th March 2004 - Alder Carr Farm, Needham Market - Tony Prichard**

This was the third indoor meeting for the group and we were trying a new venue at Alder Carr Farm. This site is a bit more central and accessible than the museum in central Ipswich. As I had not arranged for any formal speakers an afternoon only meeting of three hours seemed enough time for some waffle from myself and for others to show a few slides. That turned out to be an example of poor estimating. As SMG meetings go this was particularly well attended - I think I counted over twenty-five people at one stage.

There was quite a selection of exhibits including some live ones (see *Caloptilia azaleella* later on). After the usual coverage of recording in 2003 by myself it was onto the more enjoyable moth picture slide shows, with presentations from Neil Sherman, Bryan Goodey, Matthew Deans and myself. It was all a bit of a rush at the end as we ran out of time. Many thanks to all those who brought exhibits and slides along - without them it would not have been much of a meeting.

The general impression I have had so far was that the event was enjoyed by people but that it was not long enough and the proceedings were rather rushed. I would really like to get some more feedback on how members thought the meeting went, otherwise I will assume everyone is extremely happy and arrange a similar but longer meeting next year.



## **2004 Field Events Programme**

The 2004 Events Programme was sent out with the last newsletter. At the time there were still some events that were awaiting confirmation. These have now been confirmed and will go ahead as detailed in the distributed programme.

A correction needs to be made to the programme originally sent out - the daytime meeting at Priestley Wood in May that was originally shown as Sunday 29th May should read Sunday 30th May.

## ***Ectoedemia hannoverella* confirmed - Tony Prichard**

I mentioned in the last newsletter that we were trying to rear through some leaf-mines to determine whether they were a new species to Britain (*Ectoedemia hannoverella*) or mines of a known species (*E.*

*turbidella*) in a new foodplant. At the time I think I may have put my money on the latter. Since then some mines from East Suffolk VC reared through by Neil Sherman and Jon Clifton have hatched and been confirmed as *E. hannoverella* after genitalia examination. Externally *E. hannoverella* is normally indistinguishable from *E. turbidella*, but they have quite distinctive features in the genitalia that enable determination. Some mines from West Suffolk VC that I have been rearing have just hatched so with any luck these too should be confirmed as *E. hannoverella*. I would not be surprised if this species turns out to be not that scarce in Suffolk - so it might be worth keeping an eye out for mines in fallen poplar leaves in the autumn.



Adult *Ectoedemia hannoverella* © Neil Sherman



Mine in black poplar hybrid © Rob Edmunds

### Bits and Pieces Quiz - The Answers - by Neil Sherman

This seemed quite a popular item in the last newsletter with those getting the colour web version at an advantage. I think I'll be after Neil to do another one next year. Here are the answers.



01 Common Quaker



02 Burnished Brass



03 Drinker (larva)



04 Lilac Beauty



**05 Treble Bar**



**06 Rosy Footman**



**07 Great Prominent**



**08 Blood-vein**



**09 Streak**



**10 Frosted Green**



**11 Pale Prominent**



**12 Nut-tree Tussock**



**13 Peach Blossom**



**14 Early Thorn**



**15 Mottled Umber (larva)**



**16 Barred Sallow**



**17 Scallop Shell**



**18 Sprawler (larva)**



**19 Oak Beauty**



**20 Alder Moth**



**21 Archer's Dart**



**22 Feathered Gothic**



**23 Iron Prominent**



**24 Oak Hook-tip**

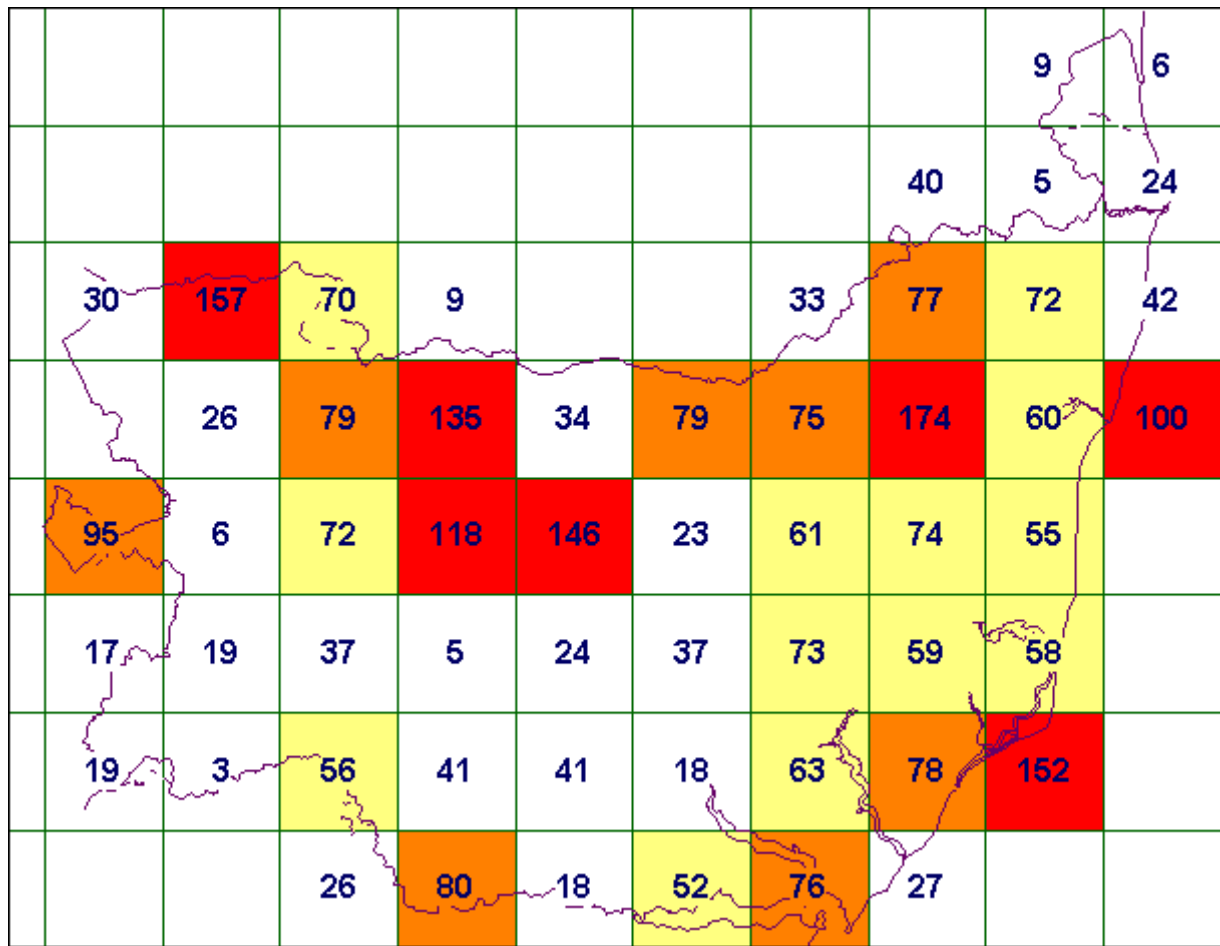
## Moth Recording Coverage in the County - Tony Prichard

After the indoor meeting I was asked by a few people to put some of the slides from the presentation into the next newsletter so here are what I hope are the most relevant and interesting. If there was one that you particularly wanted to see but I have missed then let me know.

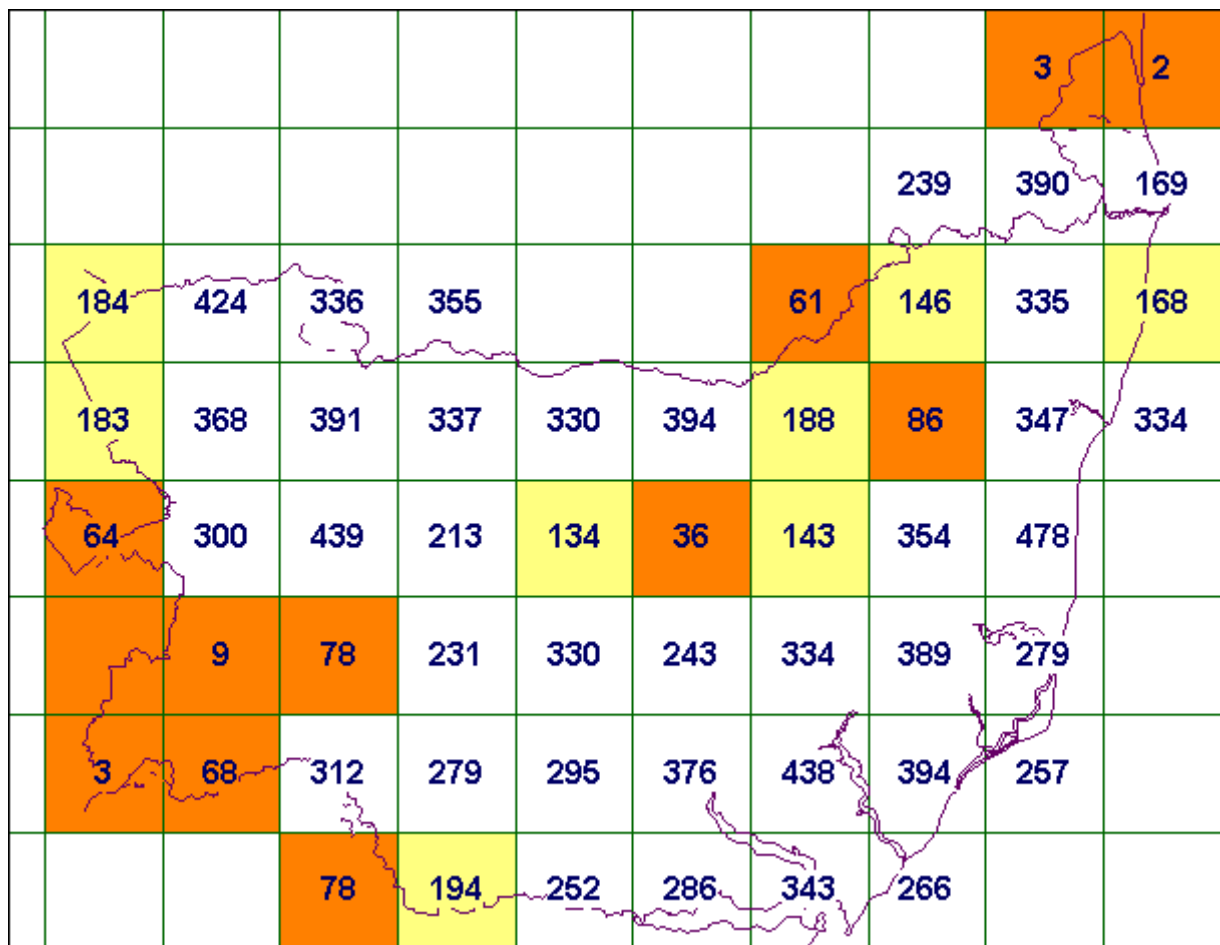
									55	43
								347	513	259
	278	752	714	583			106	208	511	310
	289	630	599	547	536	690	252	214	608	412
	137	359	665	379	248	106	235	551	841	
	18	47	166	344	526	399	549	617	482	
	21	117	557	570	539	675	941	640	437	
			156	340	377	500	632	407		

Moth species count per ten km square

The number of squares with less than 200 species recorded in that ten km square continues to decline. Field trips in 2004 are targetted at some of these under-recorded squares. I would very much like to hear about possibilities for new recording sites in any of these under-recorded squares.

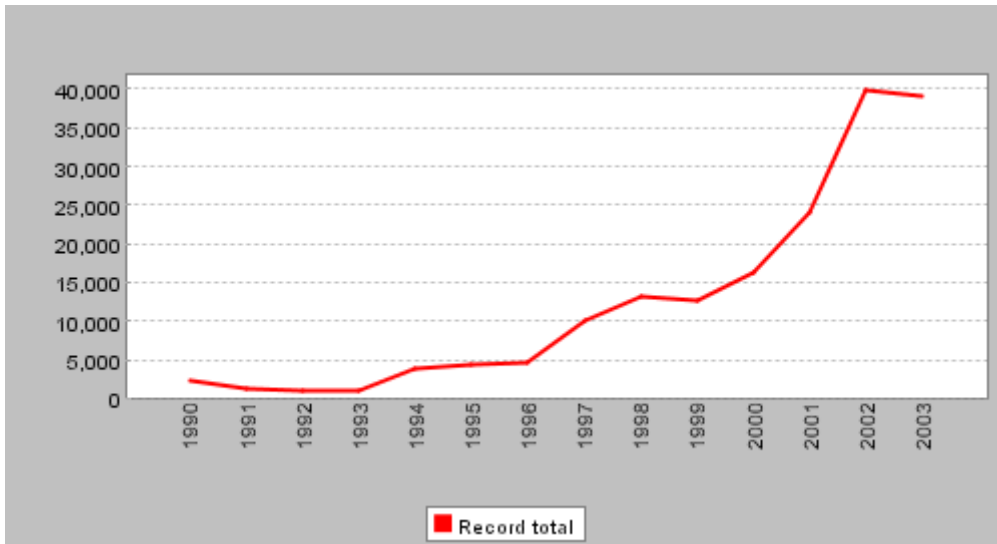


Increases in moth species counts per ten km square in 2003



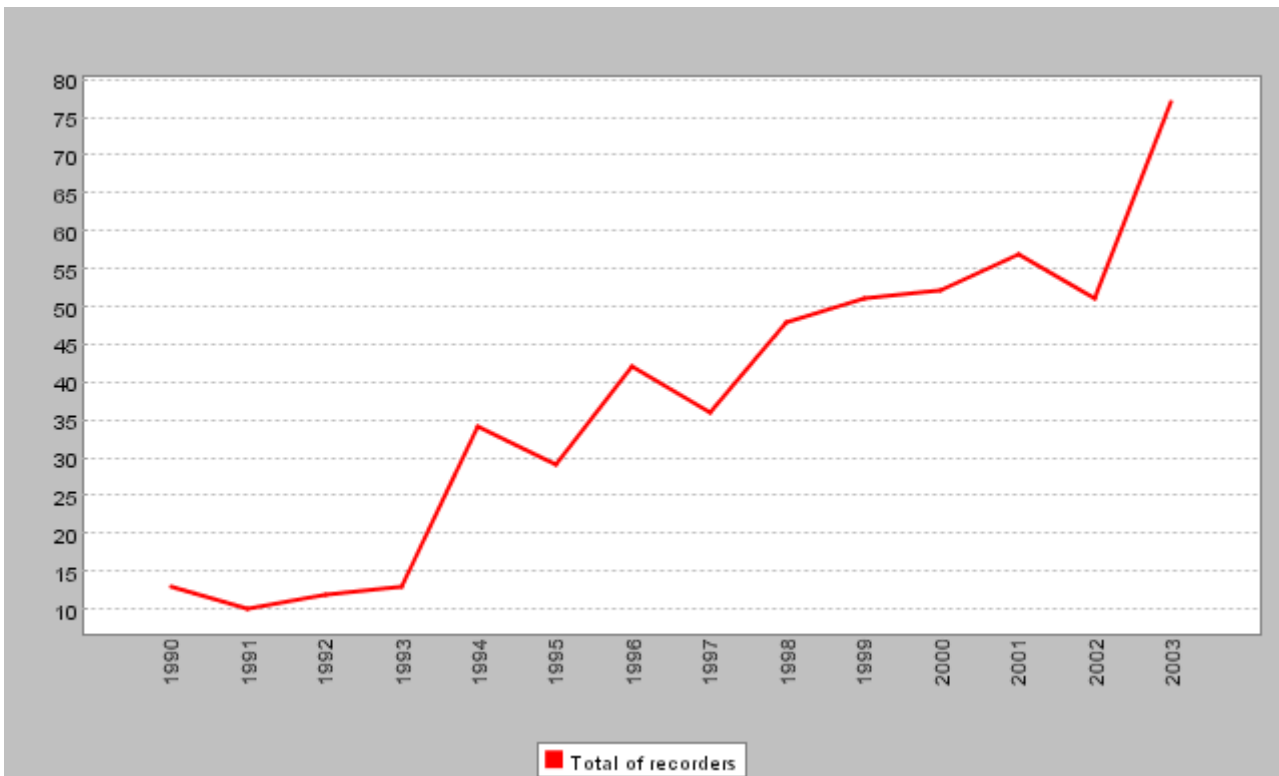
Macro-moth species count per ten km

Any ideas for suitable moth trapping venues in any of these under-recorded areas would be much appreciated or if recorders would carry out their own recording even better.



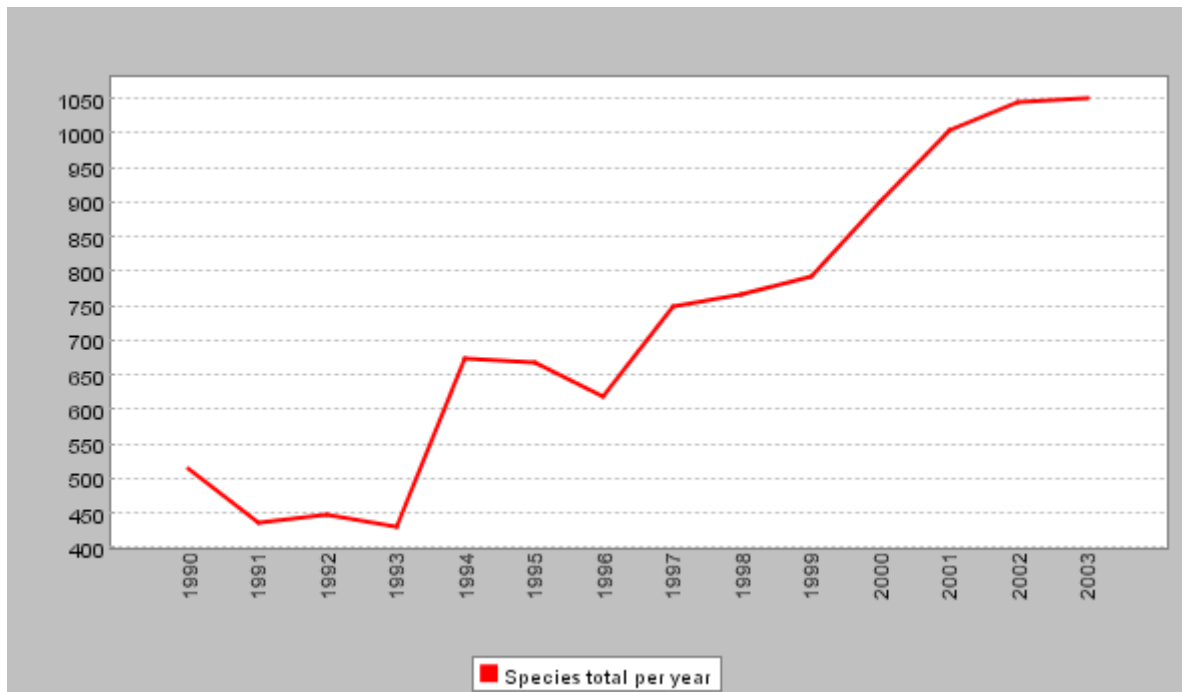
Records received per year

The number of records received per year continues to increase. Some late records received since the meeting have now pushed the 2004 figure past 2003's. It will be interesting to see what impact the National Macro-Moth Recording Scheme (NMRS) has, if and when it gets under way..



Number of recorders submitting records per year

The general trend for moth recording in the county would appear to generally be on the up. Another figure to keep an eye on during the early days of the NMRS.



Number of species recorded per year

Figures prior to the mid-1990s lack Arthur Watchman's records so the figures for that period are rather lower than they should be. Macro-moth species totals recorded per year have shown a slight increase in recent years but tends to remain in the 450 - 510 range. The increase in the overall total of species recorded shown above is largely down to increasing interest in and identification of micro-lepidoptera.

### Lunar Yellow Underwing Survey Update 2003-4 - Tony Prichard

This survey came to a conclusion during mid-April as larval numbers dropped significantly and larvae became hard to find. This is only the second year that we have been monitoring this species in the Sandlings so not too much data for comparison. We managed 44 site visits this year between January and mid-April - more than last year and a bit of surprise to myself as we did not manage to start surveying till early January. Periods of milder weather this year have allowed us to do more survey work in March and April, although I suspect that this later period data is not as good for assessing populations as the data gathered earlier in the survey period.

In the main larval numbers would appear to be down on the previous year. One of the objectives this year was to look into larval behaviour on the 'lawn' sites. This was not achieved as larvae seemed to be keeping to the more clumpy areas of grass at the edges of these sites and few larvae were found out on the 'lawns' this year. Further sites within Rendlesham Forest have been found for the species. A trip to a Walberswick site to look at an area of Wavy Hair-grass was made as we do not see much of this grass in the southern Sandlings. This area turned up a reasonable number of Lunar Yellow Underwing larva, not too surprising as the larvae have been found to use this grass in the Brecks.

On the 28th March we were surveying in the Upper Hollesley areas and noticed in our torchlights a few geometers flying around. With containers in hand (no nets ready to hand) we managed to pot up a couple and discovered that these were Mottled Grey - a species that we normally associate with the Brecks. It has previously been recorded further up the coast but does not appear to have been previously recorded in this area of the Sandlings.



Mottled Grey © Neil Sherman

## Request for Metallic-green *Coleophoras* and *Cnephasias* - Jon Clifton

Amongst the *Coleophora* there are six metallic-green species known as the *trifolii* group. In this group two are large species, *trifolii* and *fuscicornis*, and four smaller moths, *mayrella* (which has distinctive black and white ringed antennae), *deauratella*, *alcyonipennella* and *frischella* - the latter with only a handful of records due to confusion with the genitalia figures in Moths and Butterflies of Great Britain and Ireland volume 3.

I would like to make a request for any recorders catching the latter three species to send them to me (address below) for critical examination to determine which species they are. This will help us gain a better understanding of their distribution and abundance. They may occasionally visit mercury-vapour lamps but are more often encountered whilst sweeping a net through grass on sunny days from May onwards.

I would also like to request any *Cnephasia*, a rather nondescript tortricoid moths, to be sent to me as part of an ongoing study, particularly those caught between May and early June and from mid-July onwards.



*Coleophora mayrella*  
Photo by Charles Baker



*Cnephasia genitalana*  
Photo by Jeff Higgott ([www.ukleps.co.uk](http://www.ukleps.co.uk))

Jon Clifton  
Kestrel Cottage, Station Road, Hindolveston, Norfolk, NR20 5DE  
[jon.clifton@btinternet.com](mailto:jon.clifton@btinternet.com)

## Ray Society British Tortricoid Moths Volumes on CD - Tony Prichard

The tortrix moths are quite a popular family of microlepidoptera but books on them could be in short supply. The standard reference books in use by most people for this family appears to be 'British

Tortricoid Moths' by Bradley, Tremewan and Smith, published by the Ray Society. A more recent alternative is 'Die Tortriciden Mitteleuropas' by J. Razowski but this contains several errors in the plates, German text and a limited number of photographs of species subject to variation. This book has been re-issued in English as 'Tortricidae of Europe' Volume 1 & 2 but as far as I am aware still contains the same errors as the German version.

Pisces Conservation have now produced the two Ray Society volumes on CD. The cost is £55, slightly cheaper than the £350+ prices paid recently for second-hand versions of the Ray Society volumes. Overall I would say that a fair job has been done of digitising the books. The scanned book comes as a PDF document (and an Acrobat reader if you do not have one already). The scans of the colour plates appear to be quite clear, at a reasonable resolution and match the colours of the plates quite well. The parts of the text that I have read appear to have converted well, although there is the odd slip up in line spacing between headings. If you do not have the Ray Society books already then I would recommend buying this CD - the text contains a huge amount of useful information, there are drawings of field signs to look for when searching for the immature stages and the plates tend to give a bit more idea of the variety of forms of some of the species. On the negative side due to the time elapsed since the books were published the species distributions can be a bit out of date in certain cases.

## **Field reports - Tony Prichard**

### **Moth Night - Tangham Valley - 17th March 2004**

Although I've included this within the field reports section this was really a night when we were targeting Lunar Yellow Underwing larvae but we did put some MV light traps out and recorded 15 species at the lights or flying around while we were searching. Yellow Horned appeared in good numbers (100+) and a reasonable selection of other springtime species - March Moth, Pine Beauty, Common and Small Quakers, Chestnut and Hebrew Character.

### **Night-time larval search for Lunar Yellow Underwing - 19th March 2004**

This was the first official field meeting of the programme and was an opportunity to see how a few of the group spend quite a bit of time during the winter. Only one member of the moth group outside the normal surveyers turned up. This is obviously a subject of great interest to other recorders but I'll carry on regardless. The group visited a couple of the sites where we are establishing regular monitoring of Lunar Yellow Underwing within the Sandlings. At this time of year the larvae are getting reasonably large although numbers are also dropping. At the two sites visited we picked out 15 larvae of Lunar Yellow Underwing and the other species recorded were Straw Underwing, Square-spot Rustic, Lunar Underwing, Large Yellow Underwing, Autumnal Rustic and Lesser Broad-bordered Yellow Underwing.

### **Search for Barred Tooth-striped - Exning - 2nd April 2004**

This BAP species, as far as I am aware, has not been previously recorded in Suffolk although it has been recorded in Norfolk. Its larval foodplant is privet and as there are some reasonable stands of this in the west of the county we thought we would have a look for the species. The textbook method of looking for this species is to search at night by torchlight for the adults amongst the foodplant. A search of the site at Exning where a good number of privet bushes line a disused track did not produce any of the target species. Other species noted during the torchlight search included Shoulder Stripe, Engrailed and *Agonopterix heracliiana*. The keen eyes of Neil Sherman spotted a Square-spotted Clay larva feeding on nettle just as we nearing the cars on our return leg. The location of this larva was of interest as it was feeding on nettle growing under the edge of a bramble clump. Previous work by others on the larva of this species has suggested an association with elm trees and nettles and in particular nettles growing under the drip line of elm trees. With this Exning larva there were no elm trees noted in the direct vicinity of the larva and it would appear to be a 'No' vote for the elm tree - nettle association.



Square-spotted Clay larva © Neil Sherman

### **Night-time larval search - Great Martins Wood - 16th April 2004**

For once the weather conditions for the night of the annual night-time larval search were rather favourable and seven members of the group turned up for the event. Not one to waste an opportunity we set up some light traps in the wood to have a look at on our return. Great Martins Wood lies on rather light soil and has some areas of heathland. I think I am right in saying that the majority of the wood is under sweet chestnut coppice with rides passing through areas of birch and oak scrub and with some more fenny areas at the western end of the wood. Searching with torchlight along one of the rides produced some of the more usual larvae to be found - Lesser Broad-bordered, Lesser and Large Yellow Underwings, Double Square-spot and Square-spot Rustics. A Grey Arches larva beaten from honeysuckle and two Oak Eggar larvae raised the most interest amongst the group.

The traps produced reasonable results as well - Water Carpet, Nut-tree Tussock, Twin-spotted Quaker, Shoulder Stripe, Swallow Prominent, Frosted Green and Early Tooth-striped.

### **Moth Night - Butley River Valley (Friday Street) - 17th April 2004**

This was a surprisingly quiet night at the lights. Weather conditions seemed reasonable apart from a bit of a breeze blowing and the traps were placed in sheltered positions - but only a few moths. A Sloe Pug larva was beaten from blackthorn at the meeting area before we moved off to set up the traps. As the lights were performing so poorly we moved off to beat for larvae. This proved a bit more productive with Grey Arches and Mottled Beauty being beaten from honeysuckle. Adults of note at light included Early Tooth-striped and Frosted Green.

### **Moth Night - Ickworth Park - 23rd April 2004**

A site that the group has not previously visited and new sites always raise a bit of interest. This is a large site overall and would appear to have some good potential - quite large oaks dot the central parkland landscape and blocks of old secondary woodland lie along the boundary. This visit concentrated on some woodland areas around one of the reed-fringed lakes. Twenty-one species were recorded in all with those of most interest being Purple Thorn, *Semioscopis steinkellneriana*, Twin-spotted Quaker, Frosted Green, Dwarf Pug, Streamer and Chocolate-tip. A couple of individuals of Pebble Prominent with a quite unusual colour form appeared in a couple of the traps. The end of the forewings looked as though they had been 'dipped in ink' - a very dark brown in colour, almost black.

### **Moth Night - Tangham Valley - 24th April 2004**

Another visit to this site! It's not a particularly well recorded area and the site has produced some good

species lists at previous visits. Twenty eight species of moth were attracted to the five MV lights. As well as the usual *Orthosias* the following species were thought to be of interest - Powdered Quaker, *Agonopterix ocellana*, Shoulder Stripe, Early and Purple Thorns, Brown Silver-line, Great Prominent, Emperor Moth, Lime Hawk-moth, Early Tooth-striped, Pebble, Swallow and Lesser Swallow Prominents and *Caloptilia elongella*.

## Reports from Recorders around the county

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

### Eye Moths - 1st January to 12th April 2004 - Paul Kitchener

As usual, things have got off to a very slow start and on most nights moths have been very hard to come by. The same period last year was far from impressive and this year has been even worse in terms of both numbers and the species recorded.

The following have not been seen at all yet, but were recorded in one or both of the last two years (in the same period, up to 12 April): *Caloptilia stigmatella*, *Diurnea fagella*, *Agonopteryx arenella*, *Alucita hexadactyla*, Brindled Beauty, Early Moth, Spring Usher, Double-striped Pug and Pine Beauty.

One moth was, however, seen for the first time, a single *Ypsolopha mucronella* on 3rd April.



*Ypsolopha mucronella* © Paul Kitchener

The expected *Orthosias* arrived up to two weeks later than last year and in spite of some very mild nights in early February, when temperatures dropped to no lower than 10°C on two occasions, this was the first year in eight that none have appeared before the beginning of March. The numbers of the *Orthosias* have also been down on last year (except for Clouded Drab), but hopefully the second half of April will produce a late flurry. I usually record Common Quaker and Hebrew Character well into May (and once into June) so, given this year's late start, it's far too soon to predict a local population drop.

Only 21 species have been trapped, up to 12 April, so I shall list them all, with this year's total of individuals compared to last year's for the same period. *Ypsolopha mucronella* (1/0), *Agonopteryx heracliata* (24/16), *Agonopteryx alstromeriana* (1/2), *Emmelina monodactyla* (13/7), March Moth (11/25), Shoulder Stripe (6/2), Early Thorn (1/0), Pale Brindled Beauty (1/4), Dotted Border (3/4), Engrailed (1/0), Red Chestnut (3/6), Small Quaker (24/40), Common Quaker (100/130), Clouded Drab (70/47), Twin-spotted Quaker (5/6), Hebrew Character (88/95), Early Grey (11/13), Satellite (1/1), Chestnut (4/2), Dark Chestnut (4/3) and Herald (2/1).

### Moths at Ipswich Golf Club - December 2003 to March 2004 - Neil Sherman

The 2003 mothing season wound down in December with the usual December Moths, Winter Moths and Mottled Umbers appearing in the trap and under the clubhouse security lights. Moths of possible note for the site seen were: Red-green Carpet (flushed while coppicing Gorse on the 1st), Northern Winter Moth (a single in the trap on the 3rd) and *Scrobipalpa costella* (2 in the trap also on the 3rd).

The first moth of 2004 was an *Agonopterix heracliana* flushed on the 9th January whilst clearing up leaves. Winter Moths and Mottled Umbers continued to appear at the clubhouse, with the first Pale Brindled Beauty of the year seen here on the 12th. The night of the 20th was very mild for the time of year - one of the traps went out then for the first time in 2004. This produced an impressive count of 60 Spring Ushers and 5 Pale Brindled Beauties. The total for that one night is higher than all the other records put together that I have for Spring Usher in 10 years recording at the site!

The mild conditions continued for the first half of February, with a combination of Robinson and Heath traps being put out on the 2nd, 4th and 11th. This produced some impressive counts of some of the commoner moth species here, including 37 Pale Brindled Beauty, 25 Spring Usher and 13 Chestnut all on the 2nd. There were 14 Dotted Border on the 11th (12 of these being caught in the actinic Heath trap) and 41 *Tortricodes alternella* also on the same night.

The first Small Brindled Beauty for the year was trapped on the 2nd, this being the earliest record for the site (previous earliest was 11th February in both 2002 and 2003). 18 were trapped on the 11th (4 in the Heath trap). Other moths of possible interest at this site were Early Moth (2 on the 11th in the Heath trap - none in the Robinson not too far away) and an *Acleris logiana* (on the 4th)



Spring Usher © Neil Sherman



Small Brindled Beauty © Neil Sherman

Recording then stopped as winter returned with a vengeance for the rest of the month.

March was a bit better for moth recording, with occasional mild spells when there were some very good catches of moths, but as usual at this time of year the weather was mainly indifferent. Lights were run on 9 nights, with the best catch being 22 species on the 31st. With daytime observations and larval records as well as light trapping results 47 species were noted for the month.

Moths seen in the traps of possible note included Small Brindled Beauty (9 seen with the last on the 15th). Oak Beauty was in good numbers, with a maximum of 10 on the 16th. There has also been some interesting colour forms of this moth, with a melanic one (my first sighting of this type) as well as a very pale one with virtually no brown coloration. Yellow Horned was also around in good numbers for a very brief spell, with a maximum of 18 on the 15th. Brindled Beauty, Pine Beauty (2) and Early Thorn all appeared for the first time in 2004 on the 31st. Micros included *Agonopterix umbellana* and *Agonopterix scopariella* (both as singletons on the 15th and 31st).

As usual at this site, around mid March the Orange Underwing can be seen flying high round Birch trees. The first were seen on time on the 16th, but more interestingly this year one was seen at low level basking on my polytunnel for growing Heathers on the 29th - a lovely sight.



Orange Underwing © Neil Sherman



melanic Oak Beauty © Neil Sherman

Another daytime observation not once but twice were pupae of the Pine Hawk-moth - found while weeding around the base of Corsican pine trees in the Clubhouse gardens at the end of the month.

On the evening of the 16th, I undertook a nocturnal larval survey to record Lunar Yellow Underwing caterpillars on some of the acid grassland areas on the site, to add to the results from other surveys undertaken at other Sandlings sites. I managed to locate 7 Lunar Yellow Underwing caterpillars, along with larvae of Yellow Belle, Lunar Underwing and Autumnal Rustic.

### **Grundisburgh - Spring 2004 - Martin Hough**

The species list in my Grundisburgh garden for this year is still languishing at a dismal ten- March Moth (*Alsophila aescularia*), Oak Beauty (*Biston strataria*), Red Chestnut (*Cerastis rubricosa*), Small Quaker (*Orthosia cruda*), Common Quaker (*Orthosia cerasi*), Clouded Drab (*Orthosia incerta*), Twin-spotted Quaker (*Orthosia munda*), Hebrew Character (*Orthosia gothica*), Grey Shoulder-knot (*Lithophane ornitopus lactipennis*) and Early Grey (*Xylocampa areola*).

For me the most interesting item on this unspectacular list is the Grey Shoulder-knot, which for many years was quite an unusual moth (at least, on my previous West London beat) but has recently become much more numerous. This was a beautiful fresh specimen, too- they are supposed to emerge in the autumn and overwinter as adults, but this seemed to be in too good a nick to have had so long a life.

But as usual, the best story is of the "one that got away". This was a beautiful dark red hook tip, with a green stripe that shone like a neon tetra fish, which came to my sheet on the night of March 3rd. Perhaps, though, I should mention that this was in the forested hills above Chiang Mai, in Northern Thailand, on my annual escape from the soggy British Winter. I allowed my friend John Moore to attempt to photograph it, and in the subsequent fumbling it saw its chance and escaped.

If you also feel the yearning for warmer weather and teeming moths during our dreary damp spring, take an electronic trip to John Moore's website at [www.thaibugs.com](http://www.thaibugs.com). Secondhand entomology can be very enjoyable

### **Moths at Bawdsey - January to mid-April 2004 - by Matthew Deans**

#### **January**

On New Year's Day six Winter Moths and a single Mottled Umber were attracted to security lights starting the year's moth list off. A new micro for the site was an *Acleris hastiana* recorded on the 5th. The mild night of 22nd was notable with four species recorded: two Mottled Umbers, three Winter Moths, three Early Moths and a single Chestnut. It was a lean month for Winter Moths with just 20 recorded compared with 53 recorded in January 2003.

## February

Only three Pale Brindled Beauties were recorded this month (two on 1st and one the following night). Four Early Moths along with single Winter Moth and Satellite were noted up until mid-month. Two Dotted Borders appeared on 17th and were the first of many recorded this spring. Overall a very quiet month with the only other species recorded another new micro for the site: *Tortricodes alternella* on 29th.

## March

The last Early Moth of the season was seen on the 3rd. With mild conditions single Chestnut were noted on 3rd and 14th and Satellite on the 3rd and 4th. Hebrew Character first appeared on the 16th and was a regular feature from then on. The first Clouded Drab showed up on the 21st. The March Moth was low in numbers with just three for the whole month. The night of the 28th was good for micros with two *Diurnea fagella*, *Agonopterix heracliana* and two plumes recorded: *Emmelina monodactyla* and *Amblyptilia acanthadactyla* - the latter a new site record.

Whilst walking around the estate in the sunny conditions on the 29th I flushed up a moth in front of me, which fortunately landed on a nearby tree and proved to be a very early Garden Carpet. The month ended with a Shoulder Stripe on the night of the 29th.

## April - to mid-month

*Emmelina monodactyla*, Dotted Border and the year's first Common Quaker were recorded on the 1st of the month. Other species recorded included *Diurnea fagella*, March Moth, Engrailed and Hebrew Character but conditions were generally dire with cold windy nights. The 15th was a red-letter day with Bawdsey's second saltern-form Northern Drab recorded (the first was on May 1st 2003). A Twin-spotted Quaker also appeared that night. A new macro for the site was a Grey Shoulder-knot which was noted on the 18th. The second Streamer (following one last spring) was recorded on 19th together with two Red Chestnuts. The Bawdsey site list now stands at over 140 species - mostly attracted to security lights and without a single trap ever being operated!



Northern Drab © Matthew Deans

## Moths at Rendham - January to mid-April 2004 - by Matthew Deans

### January

The first moth of the new year was a single *Agonopterix heracliana* found indoors on the 6th. Two nights later on the 8th a Winter Moth appeared attracted to the garage light. As I was out of the country for a week during a mild spell, the only other species noted was an Early Moth on 20th attracted to house lights. Altogether it was a pretty dire month.

### February

The Skinner trap was run for the first night of the year on the 1st, luring three Spring Ushers and a Pale Brindled Beauty to light. Six more Spring Ushers were recorded this month (three on 2nd and three on 5th). I previously only had one garden record. This species seems to be appearing earlier each year.

The mild night of the 5th was notable for the early appearance of both Dotted Border and Hebrew Character. Other species recorded that night were *Emmelina monodactyla*, Early Moth and Chestnut. A very early Common Quaker appeared on the 13th (with nearly a month passing until the next on March 8th).

## March

During the first week of March the Dotted Border was very evident appearing at house lights on three evenings.

The trap was operated on the 8th producing the first March Moth, Clouded Drab and Small Quakers of the year.

Mid-month was dominated by unseasonably high overnight temperatures with a minimum of 10-12 degrees some nights! It was during this period that five Lead-coloured Drab were trapped - a new species for the garden.

Satellite and Shoulder Stripe were recorded on 14th amongst the commoner species, with Engrailed, a record 12 Dotted Borders and Grey Shoulder-knot the following night.



Shoulder Stripe © Matthew Deans



Lead-coloured Drab © Matthew Deans

However it was the night of 16th that broke all records. It was my best ever March night with 289 moths of 15 species trapped: 5 Twin-spotted Quaker, 182 Common Quaker, 26 Small Quaker, 49 Hebrew Character, 13 Clouded Drab, two Lead-coloured Drab and single Oak Beauty and Shoulder Stripe being the pick of the bunch.

More Oak Beauties appeared on the 26th and 29th - only the third and fourth garden records. Why this species is so scarce with several mature Oak trees in the garden is anyone's guess!

In contrast with the early emergence of some species this year, the Red Chestnut was a long time coming but just snuck-in on the 31st - the final night of the month! An impressive 703 moths of 23 species were recorded during the month.

## April - to mid-month

The trap was run on the first - April Fool's Day with a Pine Beauty trapped - the fifth for the garden and first since 2002. An impressive six Shoulder Stripe were trapped the same night and an attractive 'white-striped' *Acleris cristana*. Early Grey and Red Chestnut became more evident as the month progressed with a few Double-striped and Brindled Pugs around.

The second new macro for the garden appeared on the 15th in the form of an immaculate Streamer found resting on a shed illuminated by the M.V. lamp all night. Two Powdered Quakers - the fourth and fifth garden records and the first since 2002, were recorded on the 15th and 17th.



Powdered Quaker © Matthew Deans



Streamer © Matthew Deans

## The Virtues of DIY - Paul Bryant

As most of you will know by now we have been slowly refurbishing our house at Woolpit and have at last reached the stage when we can 'camp out' overnight in some degree of comfort. This is good news on two counts. Firstly, it means that we are at last making progress in turning the house into a home and secondly it means that I get to run my trusty actinic trap knowing full well that I will be there early next morning to inspect its contents. Unfortunately, things have been pretty quiet with only small numbers of Hebrew Character, Clouded Drab, Common and Small Quaker being recorded. The highlights so far are single Pine Beauty and Early Thorn on 31st March and a Scarce Tissue on the 15th April. I am keeping my fingers crossed that the nearby streetlights won't prove to be too much of a hindrance and that species numbers will pick up as the season progresses.



Scarce Tissue © Paul Bryant

So what does all this really have to do with DIY? Well, the various Suffolk stores have done rather well out of Ann and I these past few months and it was whilst wandering around Homebase in Newmarket that I decided, on a whim, to go and see what the garden centre had to offer. In amongst the rows of varied pot plants and evergreen shrubs I found what looked like the feeding signs of *Caloptilia azaleella* on an evergreen azalea sp. Remembering the e-mails that had done the rounds last year I was fairly sure that this was an important record and, for the sake of £3.50, decided to purchase the plant with a view to showing this at the indoor meeting.



early mine *Caloptilia azaleella* © Paul Bryant



fold mine of *Caloptilia azaleella* © Paul Bryant

The big day duly arrived and after giving the plant a bit of a clean up to remove an aphid explosion the plant was duly displayed amongst the dozen or so excellent exhibits that had been bought along by other group members. After some deliberation it was finally agreed that I had indeed found the tell-tale feeding signs of *Caloptilia azaleella* - an apparent vice-county first. All this just goes to prove that there is a lot more to mothing than running a light trap. What about an annual meeting to do the rounds of a selection of DIY stores and garden centres to see what we can find!

Happy mothing

Paul Bryant

P.S. The story doesn't quite end there. After the indoor meeting I stayed over at Woolpit as we had planned to get on with a few jobs on Sunday. Not wanting to take everything out of the car, and because I had been told that in all probability that any adult moth would be long gone, I left the plant uncovered in the car. When I finally got back to Hopton on Sunday evening I put the plant indoors whilst I carried on with the task of unloading the car. Ten minutes or so later my thoughts returned to the azalea plant. As I bent down to pick it up I noticed that there was something sitting on the side of the pot. At first I thought it was just a bit of dead leaf or a small spider and was just about to brush it off when alarm bells started to ring - waving antennae, tripod stance, brown and yellow wing markings - \*#@t, where are my pots! Amazingly enough the moth stayed there long enough for me to find a pot. Excellent, I had found the mine, seen the fold and now I had the adult moth. It was just a shame that it hadn't emerged 48-hrs earlier. Of interest, I have since found the feeding signs on at least three more plants at Homebase in Newmarket and on two or three plants at a DIY store in Bury St Edmunds.



adult *Caloptilia azaleella* © Paul Bryant

So what next, Golden Plusia on cultivated delphiniums anyone.

Oh, I almost forgot the Emperor Moth pupae. Two females emerged on the 15th April, followed by two males and two females four days later and a fifth female on the 20th April. Best of all, I was there when it happened.



female Emperor Moth © Paul Bryant



male Emperor Moth © Paul Bryant

## **Moths of the Long Melford area - January to April 2004 - Darren Underwood**

The majority of the sightings in this brief summary relate to moths either trapped in the garden, here at Long Melford, or found resting by security lights at the village hall (a very useful locality that attracts more than my garden trap at this time of year!), plus records from a couple of trapping sessions in nearby woods.

The year began well enough with a Winter Moth at the village hall on January 1st. A male Mottled Umber was then found there on 6th and was followed by Dark Chestnut on 17th and Early Moth on 24th. Thus ended a quiet month!

Into February and 2nd saw the Heath trap being run in the garden for the first time this year. Although just a single moth was trapped, it was a Spring Usher; a new species for the garden list and worth the effort. Common Quaker and *Emmelina monodactyla* were trapped on 4th and the first Hebrew Character of the year was trapped on 13th. After a quiet spell at the village hall, both Pale Brindled Beauty and Dotted Border appeared there on 16th (the first of several of the latter species).

Very few moths were then recorded until mid-March, when a Shoulder Stripe was at the village hall and an Engrailed was found at rest on a Cricket Bat Willow near Lineage Wood on 17th. The evening of 21st saw seven interested members run traps at Arger Fen LNR in an effort to record some early species at the site. Of the 13 species recorded, highlights included Twin-spotted Quaker, Satellite, Oak Beauty, Water Carpet, Chestnut, Small Quaker and *Diurnea fagella*. Early Grey and Clouded Drab both but in appearances in the garden trap on March 26th and a single March Moth was seen at the village hall on 28th, followed by Brindled Pug there the next day.

April then began well with an Early Thorn at the village hall on 3rd and a Red Chestnut to m.v. light in the garden on 11th (another new species for the site). The 11th also saw Stuart Read and I go trapping in Groton Wood SWT Reserve. A total of 12 species was recorded at three traps; two Frosted Greens being the main species of interest, along with 35 Small Quakers, Twin-spotted Quaker, Engrailed, Early Grey, Shoulder Stripe etc. The first Streamer of the year was at the village hall on 21st (with three there on 27th). Returning home during the early hours of 25th, a moth that followed me in the back door turned out to be a Buttoned Snout - the mothing highlight of the period and probably somewhat overdue here - whilst the night of 25th produced Scarce Tissue and Shuttle-shaped Dart at the garden m.v. trap. Near the end of the month and Water Carpet and Brimstone were found at the village hall on 27th, whilst a Scorched Carpet came to the kitchen window on 29th. What seemed to pass by as a very quiet first quarter of the year did produce three new macros in the garden, so perhaps it wasn't as quiet as it seemed?

### **Contact details**

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

3 Powling Road, Ipswich, Suffolk IP3 9JR

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 although the precise time of production varies. 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. Please contact me for publication deadlines as this varies with each issue and tends to be flexible.

## Adverts

---



***Anglian Lepidopterist  
Supplies***

**Specialising in  
moth traps and  
related equipment**

---



ALS Range of nets



ALS Range of traps

- Full range of Moth traps
- Clearwing Pheromone lures for the 2004 season (book now)
- Light weight batteries for portable equipment
- Electrical kits from £37.00
- Full range of Butterfly/moth Nets starting at £8.00
- Large stock of Specimen pots
- Honda EU10 Generators (13kg). Contact us for offers
- Microscopes, dissecting equipment and chemicals
- Store Boxes and pin-boards

Visit us at our web site for full details or send a SAE to ALS, Station Road, Hindolveston, Norfolk, NR20 5DE.

For friendly advise phone us on 01263 862068/01606 783371 or  
e-mail [jon.clifton@btinternet.com](mailto:jon.clifton@btinternet.com)  
Proprietors: J Clifton & A Wander

[www.angleps.btinternet.co.uk](http://www.angleps.btinternet.co.uk)