

## E-moth

### Moths Count Update April 2012

#### 3<sup>rd</sup> National Moth Recorders' Meeting

Please make a note in your diaries for next year's National Moth Recorders' Meeting which will be held once again at the Birmingham and Midland Institute, central Birmingham on **Saturday 26<sup>th</sup> January 2013**. Further details will be revealed in due course.

#### National Moth Recorders' Meeting

In January this year we held our 2<sup>nd</sup> National Moth Recorders' Meeting at the Birmingham and Midland Institute, central Birmingham. It was a fabulous day with almost 200 people attending (double the number compared to last year.) As in previous years participants travelled from across the UK and Republic of Ireland to listen to the talks and network with friends and colleagues.



A range of topics were covered in the talks including 'grass roots' moth recording, the National Moth Recording Scheme, moth conservation in action, research findings from studies on moth migration, discoveries in the 'evolutionary arms race' between moths and bats, moth record verification and validation and the forthcoming field guide to micro-moths. The Moths Count team would like to thank everybody that came and for contributing to the success of the day and of course the speakers for presenting engaging and interesting talks.

#### National Moth Recording Scheme

The National Moth Recording Scheme (NMRS) is now officially a teenager and holds 13.5 million moth records, 2.2 million more than published in the Provisional Atlas of the UK's Larger Moths. This is a fantastic achievement and huge thanks go to the entire moth recording community and especially the County Moth Recorders. Approximately 8 million records from 62 vice-counties were submitted to us by the 30<sup>th</sup> November deadline last year. As a result of the volume of records submitted to us and the amount of time required processing these data at our end the refresh to the National Biodiversity Network (NBN) Gateway was delayed. However, I am pleased to report that the refresh has now taken place. Keep your eyes peeled for the updated online maps ([www.mothscount.org](http://www.mothscount.org)) in due course; it is a considerably time consuming task for the NBN to refresh our dataset with them due to its size. Details of the refreshed vice-county datasets will be given on the information 'metadata' page of the NBN Gateway once the refresh has been implemented.

As stated in the last E-moth (January 2012) for practical reasons we have moved to an annual data submission to the NMRS from County Moth Recorders, the deadline being **31<sup>st</sup> March**. Please ensure that your moth records reach your County Moth Recorder well in advance of this deadline to enable them to verify and validate your records prior to submission to the NMRS.

The Moths Count website ([www.mothscount.org](http://www.mothscount.org)) is a great resource for moth recorders. For example the Moth Recorders' Handbook is excellent for beginners and provides information on how to embark upon your new hobby. The regularly updated definitive list of County Moth Recorders' can also be found in two formats, VC and County on the website. If you've not checked out the website recently please take a look.

### **NBN Record Cleaner**

As introduced on the NBN website...

"NBN Record Cleaner is a new, free software tool to help people improve the quality of their wildlife records and databases. Whether you are an individual recorder [or County Moth Recorder] or work in an organisation such as Local Record Centre or a Recording Scheme, the NBN Record Cleaner is designed to help you spot common problems in your data. The goal is to aid the process of data cleaning and ensure the quality of any datasets you pass on to others. It is designed to access biological records stored in a wide variety of formats such as text files (CSV, tab delimited, etc), Excel spreadsheets and databases - including those in biological recording packages such as Recorder and MapMate. It also allows you to check that your dataset is in the NBN Exchange Format prior to submission to the NBN Gateway."

It is available to download (~70Mb) along with the User Guide from the NBN website:

<http://www.nbn.org.uk/Tools-Resources/Recording-Resources/NBN-Record-Cleaner.aspx>

**NBN Record Cleaner does NOT change or alter your original data!** It simply highlights potentially erroneous records that may require further investigation. The programme runs on Windows XP/Vista/7 but note that to install and run on Windows Vista/7 you must "Run as administrator". The excellent User Guide describes all aspects of using the software to best effect. Moth rules designed by using data from the NMRS database are downloaded once the product is installed and are updated periodically by notification. The rules can then, if required, be used as a base to create your own local moth rules as necessary. For those who wish to write their own rules, the Recorder Cleaner Rule Guide is also available from the website.

As County Moth Recorder for Dorset (VC9) Les Hill says "I have found the Record Cleaner an invaluable addition to my data validation and verification tools, saving me both time and frustration. The tool can take some time to setup, especially with matching species names, but the effort is worthwhile and you'll wonder how you managed without it!"

### **The Patsy Wood Moth Conservation Challenge Fund - '*Saving the UK's rarest moths*'**

Thanks to the kind generosity of the Patsy Wood Trust, Butterfly Conservation has been able to establish a Challenge Fund to contribute towards the cost of developing and running projects that will help reverse the declines in the UK's rarest moths. BC will receive an annual grant from the Trust over the next three years, and with the possibility of two further years beyond that.

This Challenge Fund will provide some of the essential partnership (contributory) funding that is needed to 'unlock' the larger grants that are available from a variety of other funders for moth conservation work at key sites throughout the UK. Several moth projects are already in development.

However, although this is a fantastic and vital start, we do need to build on this Challenge Fund. If you would like to contribute towards the Challenge Fund, please visit our Just Giving page at <https://www.justgiving.com/patsy-wood> or send a cheque, made payable to Butterfly Conservation, in an envelope marked 'Patsy Wood Challenge Fund' to Butterfly Conservation, Manor Yard, East Lulworth, Dorset BH20 5QP. The proceeds will go to supporting moth conservation work throughout the UK.

### **Somerset Moth Group Macro Moth Atlas 2011**

The Somerset Moth Group has now published an updated macro moth distribution atlas for South and North Somerset (VCs 5 & 6). There is a date-banded map (pre 1990, 1990 – 1999, 2000 – 2009, 2010 onwards) with a flight periodicity histogram for each of 650 species.

Much has changed since the first Atlas for Somerset was published in 2000 – on the negative side, habitat loss due to urban and industrial development, changed agricultural practices, loss of gardens to car parking – on the positive side, a great increase in recording and conservation effort. Climate change appears to be bringing in species new to Somerset and the new publication reflects all these developments.



The Group is grateful to Somerset Environmental Records Centre (SERC) for financial support for the publication.

Copies can be obtained from John Bebbington (macro moth recorder for VCs 5&6), Quantock View, Newtown, LANGPORT, TA10 9SE, cost £18 plus £4 p&p. There will be no increase in p&p after 30 April.

### **Yorkshire Moths Online**

For the first time the 1.5 million moth records on the Yorkshire Naturalists' Union MapMate database have been made available online. Maps show records to tetrad resolution and status for all the species recorded in the five vice-counties (61-65) that make up Yorkshire. Species accounts and photos are being added daily, and the site compliments the BC Yorkshire website and the Yahoo Groups Forum. For further details visit <http://yorkshiremoths.info>

### **Micro-moth Status Review**

Tony Davis has completed a comprehensive review of the status of all species of microlepidoptera in Britain. The review can be found on the reports page of the Butterfly Conservation website, just follow this link <http://www.butterfly-conservation.org/text/46/reports.html>.

### **Lepidoptera Conservation Bulletin Number 12**

The latest edition of the Lepidoptera Conservation Bulletin (number 12) is now available to download from our website [www.butterfly-conservation.org/lepidopteraconservationbulletin](http://www.butterfly-conservation.org/lepidopteraconservationbulletin).

The Bulletin summarises the work carried out by Butterfly Conservation and our partner organisations over the course of 2011. Conservation efforts for a broad selection of highly threatened moths and butterflies across the UK are described and other articles include updates on Lepidoptera recording, Butterfly Conservation reserves and Butterfly Conservation Europe. There is also a selected Bibliography covering publications of interest in 2011.

### **Moth Night 2012**

Moth Night (formerly National Moth Night) is the annual celebration of moth recording run by Atropos ([www.atropos.info](http://www.atropos.info)) and Butterfly Conservation, in association with the Centre for Ecology & Hydrology ([www.ceh.ac.uk](http://www.ceh.ac.uk)). It retains the familiar combination of moth recording by enthusiasts with local events aimed at raising awareness of moths among the general public.

Moth Night 2012 will take place on **21 – 23 June 2012** and recording of moths can take place on any one or more of these days and nights. The theme this year is the moths of brownfield habitats (such as old quarries, disused railway lines, reclaimed coal tips, gravel and clay workings etc.),

and Moth Night 2012 is the perfect excuse to go out and record moths somewhere new or to organise a public event. You don't have to follow the suggested theme, but whatever you do please submit your sightings via the new, easy-to-use online recording system at [www.mothnight.info](http://www.mothnight.info). As well as vastly improving the efficiency of handling the many thousands of records received each year, this new system will give participants immediate feedback about the event. The full findings will continue to be published in the journal *Atropos*.

Public events are a major part of Moth Night helping raise awareness of moths and moth recording. If you are planning a Moth Night public event in your area, please email details of date[s], start time, finish time, location name, Ordnance Survey 6-figure grid reference (preferred), parking details and any other pertinent information to [enquiries@mothnight.info](mailto:enquiries@mothnight.info) and your event will be posted on the Moth Night website.

Why not join us on Twitter by following @mothnight or Facebook [www.facebook.com/pages/Moth-Night-21-23-June-2012/364739063557542](http://www.facebook.com/pages/Moth-Night-21-23-June-2012/364739063557542) to keep up-to-date with the latest news from Moth Night 2012!

If you have any queries with respect to Moth Night 2012, please email [enquiries@mothnight.info](mailto:enquiries@mothnight.info).

### **Moth Training Courses**

Dave Grundy will be running a series of moth training courses in 2012. The programme has been put together to give recorders from Herefordshire, Worcestershire, West Midlands, Shropshire and Staffordshire an opportunity to start up or to improve their knowledge of moths and moth recording. Courses are aimed at varying levels of ability. Please see the final page of this newsletter for more details.

### **Moths Count Contacts**

**General enquiries** [info@butterfly-conservation.org](mailto:info@butterfly-conservation.org) 01929 400209

**Richard Fox** Surveys Manager [rfox@butterfly-conservation.org](mailto:rfox@butterfly-conservation.org) 01626 368385

**Les Hill** Data Manager [lhill@butterfly-conservation.org](mailto:lhill@butterfly-conservation.org) 01929 406008

**Zoë Randle** Surveys Officer [zrandle@butterfly-conservation.org](mailto:zrandle@butterfly-conservation.org) 01929 406006

**Acknowledgements:** The ongoing Moths Count project is supported financially by The Redwing Trust, Natural England, Countryside Council for Wales, Northern Ireland Environment Agency, Royal Entomological Society, Scottish Natural Heritage and many other individuals and partners.

[www.mothscount.org](http://www.mothscount.org)

## Dave Grundy's Moth Training Courses

Advanced booking with Dave is essential, firm bookings for courses will only be accepted on receipt of a cheque for £20 per person per day. To book a place, please contact Dave Grundy, by phone, post or preferably email;

DGCountryside, 5, Melrose Avenue, Woodfield Road, Sparkbrook, Birmingham, B12 8TG. Tel: 0121-446-5446 or Mobile: 0777-898-0924 or Email: [dgcountryside@btinternet.com](mailto:dgcountryside@btinternet.com)

**May 14th, Monday – An Introduction to Moth Trapping for Beginners** - Introducing moth identification of easier moths, moth traps and books – how to get started with moths! At Severn Valley Country Park, Alveley, Shropshire, (grid ref SO754840) 10am to 4pm. (Maximum of 25 participants – booking essential)

**June 10th, Sunday – Woodland Moths for Intermediates** - Moth identification training course for intermediates only, looking at woodland moth species caught the night before. At Woolhope Village Hall, near Haugh Wood, Herefordshire, (grid ref SO611358) 10am to 4pm. (Maximum of 15 participants – booking essential)

**June 18<sup>th</sup>, Monday – Grassland Moths for Beginners** - Moth identification training course for beginners and intermediates, looking at grassland moth species caught the night before. At Severn Valley Country Park, Alveley, Shropshire, (grid ref SO754840). 10am to 4pm. (Maximum of 15 participants – booking essential)

**July 29<sup>th</sup>, Sunday – Dove Dale Limestone Grassland Moths for Intermediates** - Moth identification training course for intermediates only, looking at upland limestone grassland moth species caught the night before. At the National Trust's Ilam Hall Learning Centre, Staffordshire (grid ref SK131507). 10am to 4pm. (Maximum of 15 participants – booking essential)

**July 31st, Tuesday – Micro Moths for Intermediates** - Moth identification training course for intermediates only, looking at micro-moth species caught the night before in the Wyre Forest. At the new Wyre Forest Community Discovery Centre, Worcestershire (grid ref SO750740). 10am to 4pm. (Maximum of 15 participants – booking essential)

**August 14th, Tuesday – Heathland Moths for Beginners** - Moth identification training course for beginners and intermediates, looking at heathland moth species caught the night before. At the John O'Leary Centre, Marquis Drive, Cannock Chase, Staffordshire (grid ref SK006153). 10am to 4pm. (Maximum of 15 participants – booking essential)

**See below for additional courses run by Dave Grundy, outside the West Midlands:**

**Wetland & Wainscots Training Courses – Sunday July 22nd, or Tuesday July 24th at Hickling Broad National Nature Reserve, Norfolk** - These courses will be jointly run with local Norfolk moth expert Jon Clifton. They are aimed at people with intermediate moth identification skills, who want to learn more about the speciality reed-bed species of this exceptional site. The courses will be held at Hickling Broad NNR classroom next to the Visitor Centre, near Stalham, Norfolk (grid ref TG428222). 10am to 4pm on each date, with a chance to examine the speciality reed-bed species caught on the reserve, from the night before. (Maximum of 20 participants – booking essential). The booking fee for these events is £25, book with Dave as above.

**Butterfly Conservation cannot be held responsible or liable for any of these events.**