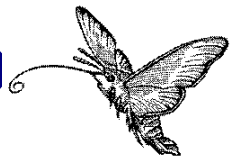


Cornwall Moth Group



Newsletter No.4 - May 2004

Welcome to our fourth newsletter. 2004 has been a busy year for the moth group and the season hasn't even started in earnest yet! We have plenty more events planned and we hope to have something to suit everyone. Don't forget to check our diary at the back of this issue for lots of butterfly and moth events going on throughout the county.

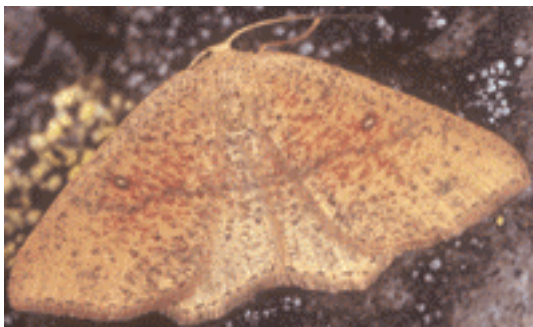
Jayne Herbert (Webmaster and newsletter editor)



National Moth Night is one of the most important dates in our calendar and we will be holding events on both Saturday 22nd and Sunday 23rd May this year!

We have organised this joint weekend together with ERCCIS and the Cornwall Wildlife Trust's junior group Fox Club.

For those of you who are night owls we will be doing some intensive mothing on Saturday night at Allet followed by two simultaneous events on Sunday for all those early birds out there. We will be opening a trap up especially set for children to look at. We will also be inviting and encouraging people to bring along the moths they caught themselves to look at, identify and record.



False Mocha *Cyclophora porata*
Photo from www.nationalmothnight.info

Phil has kindly volunteered to do the Saturday night identification and Richard Marsh and Nick Taylor will be keeping the children busy. I'm still looking for some more volunteers for the 'show and tell' bit though, so if

you are prepared to help out, please contact me as soon as possible?

If you can't come along, please still make the effort to record the moths you do see and send your results to Phil. We will publish them on our website as we get them.

A couple of species to especially look out for this year are the False Mocha *Cyclophora porata* a Nationally Scarce species which has a preference for woodland and heathland where oak is present and the day flying Narrow-bordered Bee Hawk-moth *Hemaris tityus* which resembles a bumblebee.



Narrow-bordered Bee Hawk-moth *Hemaris tityus*
Photo from www.nationalmothnight.info

Assistant Count Moth Recorders Report By Phil Boggis

Since our last newsletter some very interesting developments have taken place.



Pellitory-of-the-wall

Firstly I received news from John Gregory that Phil Sterling and Dave Pearman from Dorset were examining some Pellitory-of-the-wall (*Parietaria judaica*) outside the hotel at Portloe on the 1st January this year and discovered some leaf mines belonging to *Cosmopterix pulchrimella*, this tiny moth is new to the British Isles and first found at Walditch, Bridport, Dorset, during the autumn of 2001 by Mark Parsons. Since then it has been reported from the Channel Isles, and now Cornwall. All records have been found in coastal localities, with the most recent from West Bay, Dorset, where the larvae were also found feeding in mines on Pellitory-of-the-wall. John Gregory (amongst others) has bred out the moth from Pellitory

taken at Portloe on the 11th January 2004. He also discovered leaf mines at Fowey, Cornwall during January but so far nowhere else in the county.

If you live near the coast and have Pellitory-of-the-wall, look out for the small blotch mines that this moth is responsible for. In Europe the larvae of this moth are said to feed on *Parietaria officinalis* - (Riedl, 1969, Parenti, 2000 and Krenek, 2000) and *P. diffusa* (Mineo, Sinacori, Rizzo and Massa 1997).

During late January and early February the country at large experienced some exceptionally mild weather coming up from N. Africa, however I was told that during this time the eastern Mediterranean countries such as the Greek Isles were experiencing heavy snowfall on the flank of a northerly wind circulating around a large anticyclone. This may account for some exceptional migrant activity. I had reports of the Dark Sword-grass - *Agrotis ipsilon* (Huf.) and Rush Veneers - *Nomophila noctuella* (D&S) all through the first ten days of February culminating in some surprising catches by George Davis at Maenporth between the 10th and 13th February 2004. These included Levant Blackneck - *Tathorhynchus exsiccata* (Lederer) on the 10th, the Ni Moth - *Trichoplusia ni* (Hüb.) on the 12th and what I believe to be an Eastern Bordered Straw - *Heliothis nubigera* (Herrich-Schäffer) on the 13th February. The strongly indented subterminal line looks about right, however the tornal dot looks reminiscent of the Bordered Straw! I will report further on the identity of this moth when further opinions have been sought. These must surely rank amongst our earliest and most rare migrants! Well-done George.



The Ni Moth - *Trichoplusia ni* (Hüb.),
Maenporth, 12th February 2004 at mv.
Photo © G. Davis by kind permission.

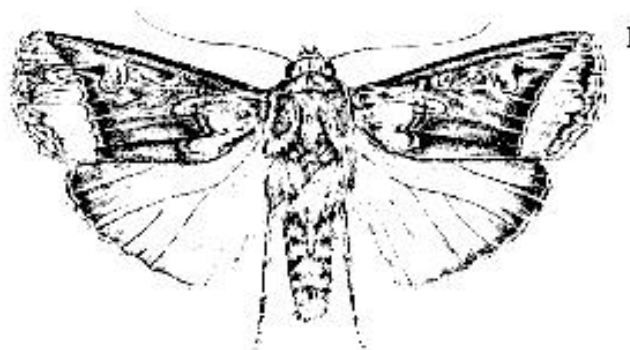
Bill Birkett has sent a photo of *Pyrausta aurata* (Scop.), which he has taken in his garden at Callington. This moth feeds on mint (*mentha spp.*) and marjoram (*Origanum vulgare*), calamint (*Calamintha spp.*) and clary (*Salvia spp.*). This moth has regularly turned up in Leon Truscott's garden at Torpoint and at Marjorie Parfitt's garden at Hatt. It has not been reported from elsewhere in the county.

Finally, The Cornwall Moth Group has been asked to take the lead in continuing to organise surveys for the Orange Upperwing, Scarce Merveille du Jour along with the White-spotted Pinion and the Argent & Sable -

Rheumaptera hastata hastata (Linn.). These are all Cornish BAP species to be targeted in the next four years.

We are in the process of negotiating access to a private wood on the Helford River where the *Moma alpium* (Osbeck) - Scarce Merveille du Jour may still be present. If we get permission to survey this wood, details will be published so that a concerted effort to try and find another site for this moth other than the Looe valley can be made.

Another targeted species is the *Cosmia diffinis* (Linn.) - White-spotted Pinion - an Elm feeder whose larvae probably prefer the epicormic growth (the side-shoots growing straight from the trunk of mature trees). The moths appear in August and several elm sites have been proposed namely Poltesco, Pendower and elm woodland at the Devil's Frying Pan near Coverack. The dates for these will be announced later in the season.



Dark Sword-grass - *Agrotis ipsilon*

The Argent and Sable - *Rheumaptera hastata hastata* (Linn.). This day-flying moth frequents two types of habitat, namely birch woodland in the south of England and boggy moorland in Scotland although some conforming to the northern race have been found in N. Wales and Ireland and also Yorkshire where bog myrtle (*Myrica gale*) can be found. There is a site in Mid Cornwall, which incorporates both birch and bog myrtle at Rosenannon (SW958663). The larva can be found on young birch in July. The date for a daytime meeting at Rosenannon sometime in late May or early June, will be announced.

This year's events so far

We started off the year with a visit to the Royal Cornwall Museum in Truro. We had a lot of interest in this event and unfortunately had to turn some people away. Sarah Chambers from the museum kindly arranged for us to view part of one of the lepidopterist collections they have in store. The particular one on display was nearly a hundred years old but in incredibly good condition. We hope to be working closely with the museum with a view to identifying and

recording the collection. We also hope to be organising another viewing in the near future.



Browsing through the collection

On the morning of our identification workshop I was rather dismayed when I woke up to see that it had been snowing overnight. Especially as Roy McCormick, our guest speaker had to come all the way from Devon. Fortunately everyone arrived safely and thanks to Roy, Phil and Ian Bennallick from the Records Centre, we had a very interesting and informative day.

Cornwall Butterfly Conservation and Cornwall Moth Group were invited to put up a joint display in Truro Cathedral for their Eisteddfod. Between Barry Ofield, Phil and myself I think we managed to put together something, which looked pretty, had lots of information and was of interest to the general public.

Phil and I also attended a meeting with Sarah Myles (Manager) and Ian Bennallick (Recorder Support Officer) at the Environmental Records Centre for Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly. This was to discuss how best to progress with the exchange of data, verification of moth records and the best way of making them accessible to other interested parties, including local moth recorders. Jayne will be working closely with them this year to publish data via the Internet.

Mothing at Buryas Bridge **by Laurie and Helen Oakes**

My wife Helen and I run a light trap at Buryas Bridge near Penzance, having been inspired when we saw the catch from a light trap at a Cornwall Wildlife Trust meeting in 1999. Some beautiful moths were caught which I had not seen since I was a child and I thought had probably been lost through changes and loss of habitat. I went home and lashed up a trap based on four 8-watt sunlamp tubes and a reflector from a car boot. This trap has worked well to date. I am lucky in that Helen is as keen as I am on the moth catching and the pleasure of beautiful moths and new species is shared, although I must admit that we do not always agree on the defining markings of moth identification! We are fortunate in having a good variety of shrubs,

mature sycamores and ash and extensive 'rough' cover/unkept Cornish countryside on the side of a valley running from Drift Reservoir down to Newlyn. This, together with considerable shelter from the prevailing winds, makes it, we feel, quite a good mothing site. We have had a little over 300 species of macros so far and our patch does produce a good catch of the Four Spotted Footman. Last year's total for July and August was 122. Our nearest claim to fame is perhaps the Blomer's Rivulet, 3 recorded here. February this year brought some real surprises. Between the 2nd and 5th with minimum temperatures of between 8 and 11°C., we had 5 Dark Sword-grasses, 4 Small Mottled Willows and 3 Rush Veneers. All migrants that we suspected may have been brought in by the very strong southerly winds.



Four Spotted Footman

I checked on Steve Nash's migrant moth website and found these species had been recorded all along the South coast as far as Kent during this period, including Painted Ladies which we also saw in the Penwith area. We continued trapping but as temperatures dropped we were back to normal with Early Thorns, Quakers, Hebrews Characters and Dotted Borders etc.

Highlights of 2003 **By John Cooke**

In the hopes of encouraging other recorders to tell us about their sites and how they fared in what has been an excellent season, I submit my own experiences.

The acre garden has a $\frac{3}{4}$ acre paddock attached. The latter was bought five years ago when the surrounding farmland changed hands. I planted a 100m mixed deciduous hedge - all good larvae food- and lots of wild flowers among slow growing grass. We now have five sp. of butterfly and Five Spot Burnets breeding. The paddock is exposed- we can see The Manacles, the Cornish Alps and the wind farm at Threeburrows - but the garden is surrounded by mixed trees to counter the winds. The surrounding land is intensively cropped with wheat or beans and the few hedges mercilessly trimmed. There is a small, mainly Oak wood some 600m away and some small, recent plantations around the farm. Two traps are run, both Skinner, the garden one has double actinic tubes; the paddock a 125 MV light. The actinic one is run most days of the year depending on the weather while the MV one produces

results only from March to November because of the exposure.

By kind permission of Cornwall Wildlife Trust I also trap in Devichoys, a 40 acre ancient Oak wood at Perranarworthal. Here I run two Skinner traps, again with double actinic tubes and light sensors, from batteries. For better visibility they are mounted on 1 metre high stands the interval between trappings is about three weeks.

Significant records for 2003 follow. Please note that species that may be common in VC2 are sometimes very scarce in VC1. Other species may have early or late dates. To save space, B&F numbers and vernacular names are used if possible.

February:

Devichoys:

1932 Spring Usher
1883 Yellow Barred Brindle
2237 Grey Shoulder Knot

March:

Mylor: Earliest migrants:

464 Diamond-back moth
2091 Dark Sword-grass

May:

Mylor:

285 *Caloptilia azaleella*
656 *Tachystola acroxantha* (also in July, Aug, Sept. Oct.)
1228 *Pammene argyrana*
1397 *Mecyna asinalis*
1735 Ruddy Carpet (also July, Aug.)
2043 Orange Footman
2236 Pale Pinion
2385 Small Mottled Willow (first of dozens through the Summer)

Devichoys:

1882 Small Seraphim
2043 Orange Footman

June:

Mylor:

1403 *Diasemiopsis ramburialis* (also Aug, Sept. Oct.)
2327 Clouded Brindle

Devichoys:

1403 *D. ramburialis*
1949 Square Spot
2422 Green Silver Lines
2476 Beautiful Snout (also July, Aug.).

July:

Mylor:

658 *Carcina quercana*
770 *Carpatolachia proximella*
1205 *Spilonota ocellana*
1233 *Pammene aurantiana*
1716 Vestal (first of many)
1876 Small Yellow Wave
1940 Satin Beauty
2051 Four-spotted Footman
2360 Ear sp.

Devichoys:

1452 *Phycita roborella*
1942 Dotted Carpet

2051 Four-spotted Footman
2391 Silky Wainscot

August:

Mylor:

1084 *Hedya ochroleucana*
1357 *Evergestis extimalis*
1375 European Corn Borer
1408 *Palpita vitrealis* (also Sept., Oct.)
1720 Gem
1990 Striped Hawk-moth

Devichoys:

871a *Oegoconia caradjai*
2423 Oak nycteoline
2482 White-line Snout

September:

Mylor:

1759 Small Phoenix (P. gen.)
1769 Spruce Carpet
2281 Alder (2nd.gen.)
2423 Oak nycteoline (also Oct., Nov.).

October:

Mylor:

2208 Cosmopolitan
2247 Merveille du jour

November:

Mylor:

1797 Autumnal Moth
2229 Brindled Ochre
2237 Grey Shoulder-knot
2256 Satellite
2478 Bloxworth Snout (Found in shed).

December:

Mylor:

On 19th
1395 *Udea Ferrugalis*
2441 Silver Y (late arrivals!)

In addition to the above there are fifteen specimens awaiting genitalia determination, among them, several which could be interesting. Total number of species seen at Mylor this year 349, at Devichoys 166 in eight nights.

2003 - will we see it's like again? Let's hope so!

In the public eye

We currently have nearly a hundred members belonging to the Cornwall Moth Group, we also have over fifty members belonging to our Cornwall Moth Internet Community and since the New Year our website has attracted over thirteen hundred people.

We have done very well so far this year as regards to the media too. Cornwall Wildlife Trust members should have seen our full colour two-page article in the spring edition of Wild Cornwall, plus Phil's picture of the Cream-bordered green pea in the article about leisure development in Cornwall. If you would like a copy please send a stamped addressed envelope to Jayne at Cornwall Wildlife Trust, Five Acres, Allet, Truro TR4 9DJ.

We also had a couple of mentions in the local press. The West Briton highlighted our identification

workshop a fortnight before the event, followed up by a very eye catching, quarter page article, with some really nice colour photos by Phil and Duncan Davidson.

Our first book

As some of you may know I am keen for the Cornwall Moth Group to build its own resources in the way of books and equipment to loan to members and groups.

Thanks to the generosity of Peter Fleming we already have our very first book! This is a paperback copy of the new field guide published last year, Field Guide to the Moths of Great Britain and Ireland by Paul Waring, Martin Townsend, Richard Lewington.



Our first book

Through our website we are continuing to earn commission from books sold in conjunction with Amazon.co.uk. We should receive our first book voucher quite soon.

In the New Year I submitted in an application to Butterfly Conservation for their "Moth Group of the Year award". First prize being a brand new Skinner trap, donated by Anglican Lepidoptera. I believe there were quite a few applications but you never know we may be lucky!

Devon Moth Group

If you are interested in finding out what is happening across the border in Devon, why not join the Devon Moth Group?

Membership subscription helps to cover the cost of materials and postage and includes an Annual Report and approximately four newsletters a year.

Send your cheque or Postal Order (£6.00 for single member or £9.00 for a family), made out to Devon Moth Group, to Roy McCormick, Devon Moth Group, 36 Paradise Road, Teignmouth, Devon, TQ14 8NR.

Devon will also be day-time recording and evening moth-trapping for National Moth Night on the 22nd May at Knowstone Outer Moor. Especially looking for the elusive Narrow-bordered Bee Hawk-moth in the afternoon, popping off to the pub for an evening meal

then returning for a late night session. For more details contact Roy McCormick on (01626 779543).

Internet newsletters

Anyone with access to the Internet might also be interested in receiving 'UK BAP Priority Moths E-mail Newsletter' for up-to-date news of national reports on what's happening. Contact Tony Davis at Butterfly Conservation by email (tdavis@butterfly-conservation.org) to be put on the mailing list.

Another newsletter called 'Gelechiid Gossip' is also available through email by contacting Graham Irving at ga.irving@ntlworld.com.

Frank Johns' list of notable migrants for 2003

April

Blossom Underwing (1)
Silver Y (4)
Dark Sword Grass (4)
Painted Lady Seen At Trevergy (1)

May

Rush Veneer (2)

June

Rush Veneer (112)
Small Mottled Willow (22)
Dark Sword Grass (43)
Humming Bird Hawk Seen At Windmill Farm (1)
Humming Bird Hawk, Seen At Trevergy (4)
Diamond-Back Moth (3)
Silver Y (58)
Delicate (1)
Bordered Straw (7)
Rusty Dot Pearl (7)
Gem (1)
Pearly Underwing (1)
White Speck (6)
L-Album Wainscot (1)
Vestal (1)
Striped Hawk (1)

July

Rush Veneer (189)
Striped Hawk (4)
Humming Bird Hawk, (Seen At Trevergy) (6)
Silver Y (242)
Dark Sword Grass (34)
Small Mottled Willow (9)
Diamond-Back Moth (8)
Rusty Dot Pearl (4)
Vestal (2)

August

Silver Y (147)
Rush Veneer (453)
Four Spotted Footman (8)
Dark Sword Grass (53)
Small Mottled Willow (42)
Bordered Straw (3)
Rusty Dot Pearl (129)
Vestal (16)

Convolvulus Hawk (12)
White Speck (25)
Scarce Bordered Straw (3)
Striped Hawk (2)
Red Admiral (1)
Palpita Vitrealis (2)
Diasemiopsis Ramburialis (1)
Delicate (1)
Pearly Underwing (4)
European Corn Borer (4)
Red Underwing (1)

September

Dark Sword Grass (55)
Rush Veneer (291)
White Speck (82)
Silver Y (34)
Convolvulus Hawk (12)
Vestal (36)
Pearly Underwing (3)
Scarce Bordered Straw (13)
Rusty Dot Pearl (7)
Delicate (4)
Palpita Vitrealis (2)
Striped Hawk (2)
Four Spotted Footman (1)
Diasemiopsis Ramburialis (1)
Uresiphita Polygonalis (1)
Small Mottled Willow (2)
European Corn Borer (1)
L Album Waiscot (1)
Red Admiral (1)

October

Rush Veneer (5)
White Speck (1)
Clouded Yellow (18)

November

Rush Veneer (2)
Rusty Dot Pearl (4)
Vestal (1)
Gem (2)
Clouded Yellow (1)

December

White Speck (1)
Rusty Dot Pearl (1)

John Gregory looks back over his lepidopterological notes for 2003

Though I was successful in rearing for the first time during the year several very interesting livestock batches of non-Cornish origin, I am restricting these notes to a selection of items which have some relevance to our local "Cornwall Moth Group".

2003 was an excellent year for "nothing", and during the year I noted many exceptionally early and exceptionally late records. Most of these were of moths which were attracted to my lighted windows at home, which is near "Eden Project", though a few were day-flying in my garden or in various other parts of Cornwall. On comparing my notes from previous years with my notes for 2003, it is clear that there is an

ongoing trend for some species to continue to extend their flight season, both early and late, when conditions are favourable. From about 460 species recorded during the year in the natural wild state, and not counting any of my numerous records of the immature stages such as leaf-mines and larvae, I recorded extreme early and/or extreme late dates for over 100 species. (I have kept extreme-date records from 1988 onwards).

2003 was such a good year that in compiling the following notes, I have found it difficult to decide what to include and what to omit, but I hope this selection of items will be of interest.

On 23rd March I recorded *Nycteola revayana* (Oak Nycteoline) at my lighted window, and then another turned up on 14th April.

On 25th March I recorded *Conistra rubiginea* (Dotted Chestnut) at my window, a species which I rarely see here.

12th April, the "National Moth Night", was a bit of a disappointment, with only 11 very common species turning up at the MV light set up in my garden. With the exception of *Orthosia gothica* (Hebrew Character) and *Orthosia cerasi* (Common Quaker), both of which were numerous, there were only ones and twos of the other species, though these did include an early record of *Agrotis puta* (Shuttle Shaped Dart) and a record of *Scoliopteryx libatrix* (Herald).

14th April was the date of my first ever record of *Tachystola acroxantha* at my lighted windows, and was only my second Cornish record for this species, though four further specimens came to my windows as the year progressed, these being on 29th May, 18th June, 9th October, and 13th October.

On 7th May I netted a day-flying *Grapholita compositella* near my home, and in the weeks which followed I noted many others until the last one on 1st August. Clearly this species has established a thriving local population here, the larvae probably feeding on Greater Bird's Foot Trefoil. Despite its small size, this is a beautiful little species with black forewings marked with a white dorsal blotch which is intersected by three fine black lines.

On 12th May another first record for me was the emergence in captivity of a little moth, *Scrobipalpa obsoletella*, reared from a larva on Babington's Orache which I had found the previous autumn at SX-01,40 Cadythew Rock. The larva was pale greyish green, with a pattern of purplish pink markings.

On 14th May the butterfly event at SX-05,60 Breney was led by Lee Slaughter, and the records made that afternoon included larvae of *Gortyna flavago* (Frosted Orange), and flying adults of *Ematurga atomaria* (Common Heath), *Coenonympha pamphilus* (Small

Heath), *Boloria selene* (Small Pearl Bordered Fritillary), and *Perizoma albulata* (Grass Rivulet).

17th May was the date set for the butterfly event at SX-11,67 Bunny's Hill West, but unfortunately it was cancelled due to inclement weather. However, despite the weather, during a short walk on the site some *Boloria euphrosyne* (Pearl Bordered Fritillary) were seen flying.



Bunny's Hill

On 24th May, the butterfly event at SW-93,59 Gaverigan attracted very few people, but some records of day-flying Lepidoptera were made, including *Erynnis tages* (Dingy Skipper), *Euclidia glyphica* (Burnet Companion), and a single specimen of *Glyphipterix fuscoviridella* which is probably more common in Cornwall than records indicate. I took a small sample of the Teasel seedheads from the site, and successfully reared some *Endothenia gentianaeanana* moths from them a few weeks later.

On 25th May, a moth was successfully reared from a small green larva which I had found in a sample of Scurvy Grass which I had collected three weeks earlier during a visit to SW-39,35 Rose Valley. I suspected that the larva would turn out to be *Rhigognostis annulatella*, and this proved to be correct. Though this species is not particularly rare in Cornwall, it was a personal first for me.

On 28th May I was delighted to receive from Frank Smith a few small larvae of *Infurcitinea argentimaculella*, which he had found at Perranporth. They were feeding in silken tubes among their lichen food, *Lepraria incana*. They were rather slender, dull pale brownish grey, and had blackish heads and prothoracic plates, and the moths emerged in June. Despite their small size, only about 8mm wingspan, the forewings of this species are attractively marked with fine whitish streaks on a dark brown background.

On 7th June at SX-17,70 Colliford Dam & Penkestell Moor the blackish larvae and vacated feeding-places of *Agonopterix kaekeritziana* were found plentifully on Knapweed plants, and numerous silken webs on Dwarf Gorse contained pupae of *Scythris grandipennis*. A single larva of *Anarsia spartiella* found in a Gorse shoot later proved to be parasitised.

Several *Callophrys rubi* (Green Hairstreak) and *Scopopteryx mucronata* (Lead Belle) were flying.

In the afternoon of the same date, at an event led by Tony Davis at SX-21,73 Langdon & Ninestones, I recorded 22 species of Lepidoptera, including a batch of *Agonopterix angelicella* larvae in a typical spinning of untidily bunched up leaves of Angelica, several *Euphydryas aurinia* (Marsh Fritillary) flying, numerous larvae of *Aphelia viburnana* feeding on Devil's Bit Scabious, various grasses, and other plants, (the identification of these being later confirmed by rearing some of them through to the moth stage), and a single diseased larva of *Plusia festucae* (Gold Spot).

28th June was the date of the advertised butterfly event at SW-77,55 Gear Farm and SW-77,56 Penhale Sands, led by Lee Slaughter and Phil Boggis. Some of the Lepidoptera recorded that day are *Mompha epilobiella* larvae in bunched up shoots of Great Hairy Willowherb, some *Callimorpha dominula* (Scarlet Tiger) flying around Hemp Agrimony plants, several *Opsitotys fuscalis* flying near their usual foodplant which is Yellow Rattle, a larva of *Aproaerema anthyllidella* in a mined leaf of Kidney Vetch, several specimens of a little plume moth *Stenoptilia pterodactyla* flying and at rest on a patch of Germander Speedwell which is the larval foodplant, two flying *Pyrausta despicata*, a single specimen of *Pempeliella dilutella* netted when flying low over patches of Thyme which is its foodplant, *Plebejus argus* (Silver Studded Blue) which were abundant on the site, and two specimens of *Pyrausta cingulata*.

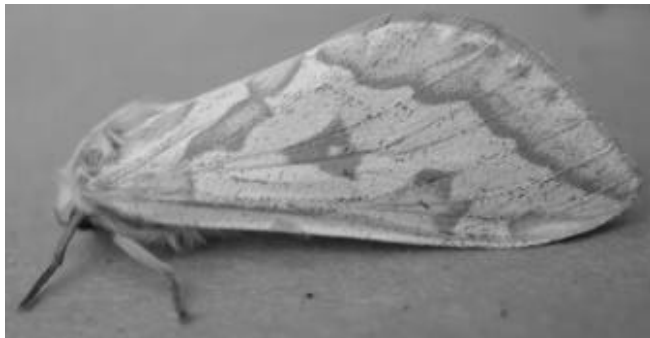
On the same date, at a moth-night with Phil Boggis at SX-23,54 Watergate, 37 species were attracted to the lights, including an interesting little plume moth, *Amblyptilia punctidactyla*.

On 30th June I discovered a new site for *Stigmella speciosa* when vacated leaf-mines were found on Sycamore at SX-07,54 Middleway & Tywardreath Marsh. Then on 7th September I found many more vacated mines at SW-76,26 Treath and SW-77,26 Bosahan Cove. The first record for this species in Cornwall was as recently as 1990. It seems to be extending its range, and is now well worth looking for in summer and autumn on any sites where Sycamore trees grow.

4th July was the date of a very good moth night led by Paul Wakelin at SX-12,65 Leball, the light being set up in the parking area next to the entrance to Cabilla Wood. 122 species were recorded at the light that night, including *Pandemis cinnamomeana*, which is recognisable by the white head of the moth, but would otherwise be easy to overlook or misidentify among the specimens of *Pandemis cerasana* and *Pandemis heparana* which were also present at the light. Some of the other very good records for that night were *Mythimna turca* (Double Line), *Pseudatemelia josephinae*, *Dioryctria abietella*, and *Cydia fagiglandana*.

On 15th July, with perfect weather for "mothing", no less than 131 species were attracted to the MV lights which were set up at SX-01,43 Portmellon with Barry Ofield, some of which were first ever records for me. Just a few of the very good records for that night are *Euproctis chrysorrhoea* (Brown Tail) which was almost certainly a migrant, *Yponomeuta evonymella* (Bird Cherry Ermine) of which several other specimens turned up later in other parts of Cornwall, two specimens of *Cyclophora punctaria* (Maiden's Blush), *Dolicharthria punctalis* which I had not seen for many years, *Mythimna putrescens* (Devonshire Wainscot) which was my first record since 1996, *Parapoynx stratiotata* (Ringed China Mark) of which there are very few previous records for Cornwall, *Apamea ophiogramma* (Double Lobed) of which several examples turned up from an apparently resident colony in that area, *Euzophera pinguis* which seems to be a first record for Cornwall, several specimens of *Orthotelia sparganella* which were for me a personal first record for Cornwall, and *Nephoterix angustella* which appears not to have been seen in mainland Cornwall for over a century, and interestingly, two further specimens of this species turned up later at my lighted windows at home, one on 16th September and the other on 17th September.

On 25th July the moth night at SX-06,66 Bodmin Beacon was a successful event, with 77 species being recorded at the light. These included *Hepialus humuli* (Ghost Moth), *Eupithecia icterata* (Tawny Speckled Pug), *Furcula furcula* (Sallow Kitten), and a little plume moth *Stenoptilia bipunctidactyla*.



Ghost Moth (*Hepialus humuli*)
Photograph by Duncan Davidson

On 2nd August, on a visit to SW-44,34 Tredinnick & Ding Dong, and on examining Jayne Herbert's moth-trap catches from the previous night, I recorded many common species including *Aphelia paleana* and what is probably the most westerly mainland record for *Blastobasis lignea*.

On 20th August I noticed a very small moth on my lighted window, and on close examination it turned out to be *Buccatrix ulmella*, my first record for this species. The specific name of this species is rather misleading, as the larvae feed on Oak, not Elm. This is an easily overlooked species, which may be more plentiful in Cornwall than records indicate.

On 21st August 57 species were attracted to MV lights at SX-06,52 East Crinnis, which is part of the designated Carlyon Bay area now destined shortly for legalised vandalism and total destruction as a wild-life habitat. Just a few of the species recorded that night are *Camptogramma bilineata* (Yellow Shell), *Phyllonorycter ulmifoliella*, *Pheosia gnoma* (Lesser Swallow {Prominent}), *Argyresthia goedartella*, *Epirrhoe galiata* (Galium Carpet), *Epinotia nisella*, and *Spodoptera exigua* (Small Mottled Willow).

28th August was the "open day" at SW-79,48 Allet, CWT headquarters, and many human visitors were present at the opening up of Jayne Herbert's moth traps which had been set up the previous night. A few of the interesting species found in the traps were single specimens of *Cilix glaucata* (Chinese Character), *Pheosia tremula* (Swallow Prominent), *Chortodes pygmina* (Small Wainscot), *Ipimorpha subtusa* (Olive), *Epermenia chaerophyllella*, and *Argyrotaenia ljugiana*.

On 29th August a fresh-looking migrant, *Mythimna unipuncta* (White Speck) turned up at my windows.



White Speck

30th August was the date of the moth night at SW-69,15 St.Helena & Windmill Farm. Some species which I had not recorded in Cornwall in recent years turned up at the lights, and of special interest to me were *Xestia sexstrigata* (Six Striped Rustic) of which there were many examples, and *Hepialus sylvina* (Orange Swift) for which I have very few personal records.

On 4th September I received from Phil Boggis a few ova of *Earias clorana* (Cream Bordered Green Pea), from the Carlyon Bay population. Sadly, the whole of this unique area is due to be totally destroyed in the near future when the controversial development of the site begins. I successfully reared most of the resulting larvae on Sallow, and the moths emerged in October.

On 5th September a specimen of *Anania verbascalis* was attracted to my lighted window, and is probably the first record for this species in mainland Cornwall. It may have been a migrant from the Channel Islands.

On 6th September the Lepidoptera leaf-mine event at SX-13,65 Bellasize & Cabilla Wood was attended by a small group of interested people. Many occupied and vacated lepidopterous leaf-mines were found and identified, though all were of common species, and almost all of them had already been recorded there on previous occasions. The new leaf-mine records for that site included *Phyllonorycter messaniella* (on Oak, small brown mines on the undersides of the leaves), *Emmetia marginea* (on Bramble), and *Stigmella ruficapitella* (gallery-type mines on Oak). A partly grown brown form of the larva of *Melanchra persicariae* (Dot Moth) was also found, and an almost fully-grown larva of *Hypena crassalis* (Beautiful Snout) was seen on its usual foodplant, Bilberry.

On 28th November I received from Jayne Herbert some calyces from locally purchased pomegranates, and on 28th December one of them produced a moth, *Cryptoblabes gnidiella*. There appear to be no other Cornish records for this species, but as the pomegranate was probably imported from Spain, it can be a matter of opinion as to whether this moth qualifies as a genuine Cornish record. At the time of writing this no other moths have appeared among the several batches of pomegranate calyces which were supplied by Jayne.

On 17th December two specimens of *Poecilocampa populi* (December Moth) arrived at my windows, and a third turned up the following night. After an apparent 12-year absence these were the first specimens of this species I had seen since 1991.

24th December is a very late date for *Udea ferrugalis* (Rusty Dot Pearl) to be still flying, but two specimens came to my windows that evening.

Leaf mines to watch out for

John Gregory's has suggested that the following target species would-be good to keep an eye out for this year:

Firethorn Leaf Miner (*Phyllonorycter leucographella*) - look for whitish blotch like mine on the upper side of pyracantha (Firethorn) leaves. Mature mines fold leaves upwards to form a "pod".

Cameraria ohridella - makes a brown blotch-like mine on *adesculus hippocastrum* (horse-chestnut, conker tree), probably several mines in the same leaflet.

The above species are recent additions to the British list, and could spread eventually to Cornwall.

Apomyeloides bistriatella - look for larvae/pupae inside *daldinia vernicosa* which is a black fungus which grows only on dead wood of burnt gorse. Both Frank Smith's Book and Goater state "*Daldinia Concentrica*" but that is not correct. *D. Concentrica* does not grow on gorse. *Apomyeloides bistriatella* is known to occur in

Cornwall but maybe more widespread than records indicate.

Any doubtful specimens can be sent to John for checking, preferably in fresh condition.

National Moth Recording Scheme

They already have a web site in place at www.mothrecording.org.uk but they are a long way off actually getting the funding needed for such a project.

Cornwall Moth Group wholly supports this initiative, but can members still send all their records to Phil as usual. We can then pass them on in one go.

Special offer

Cornwall Moth Group members can still receive 10% off marked prices on any book listed by Atropos if you are able to collect them.

Call Mark Tunmore on (01326) 290287 for more details or pay a visit to their web site at www.atroposuk.co.uk.

Cornwall Moth Group Membership Form

Please enrol me as a member of the Cornwall Moth Group. In keeping with the Data protection Act, I agree to my membership details being held for group purposes only on paper and in computer files that will be accessible only to committee members, and will not be generally distributed or released.

Name(s):

Address:

Telephone:

E-mail:

I would also like to join the Egroup: Yes No

Please return this form to:

Phil Boggis, Assistant County Recorder
Cornwall Moth Group
6 Tremena Gardens, St Austell, Cornwall PL25 5QH or Email:
phil.boggis@btinternet.com



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