

# ANNUAL REVIEW:

## Moth Reports - Annual Review 2003

### Shropshire Moth Report 2003

Shropshire Moth Group newsletters now reach 30 or so recipients and have helped publicise moth recording in the County. Amongst the highlights reported in recent months were **Orange Footman** at Dudmaston from Adrian Miles, both **Drap Looper** and **Common Fan-foot** in the Shropshire part of the Wyre Forest courtesy of Dave Grundy during May. I found **Argent & Sable** several times at Fenn's, Whixall & Bettisfield Mosses NNR during May & June, whilst Jenny Joy found it at its other known Shropshire site. Jenny later found larvae at this site also.

Stephen Lewis found **Forester Moths** at the Bog Mine, Stiperstones in good numbers in early June, Adrian Miles and myself had **Red-necked Footman** at Dudmaston and Whixall respectively. Adrian also had **Clay Triple-lines** from Linley, whilst later in June I had **Marbled White-Spot** and **Beautiful Snout** - both new to Whixall.

Howard Davies recorded the migrant **Pearly Underwing** at home near Craven Arms in July. Also during that month Godfrey Blunt (Shropshire's new micro moth recorder) found the pyralid moth *Perinephela lancealis* at Ironbridge, the first time it has been recorded outside the Wyre Forest, also the tortrix moth *Epinotia subocellana*, the first time that this

moth has been found away from Whixall in the County. He also asked whether recorders in Shropshire could supply status details for the **Firethorn Leaf-miner** *Phyllonorycter leucographella*?

The pick of August's records were **Manchester Treble-bar** from Whixall by Nick Greatorex-Davies, **Blomer's Rivulet** and **Cloaked Carpet** by Howard Davies, **Cloaked Carpet**, **Dingy Footman** and **Buff Footman** at Earl's Hill by Ian Cheeseborough and myself.

I would remind anyone with macro moth records for Shropshire to please send them to me (my address is on the back cover) whilst anyone with micro moth records please send them to Godfrey Blunt, 8 Holmes Orchard, Alveley, Bridgnorth, WV15 6NX or A.G.Blunt@wlv.ac.uk.

◆ Peter Boardman

*P.S. I would like to thank everyone within the West Midlands and Warwickshire branches of BC who helped me during my brief spell of contract work for BC over the summer. In particular I would like to thank Jenny Joy, Richard Southwell, Mike Slater, Chris Johnson and David Brown.*

### Herefordshire moth report 2003

After a cool spring, the first noteworthy species to Mercury vapour light in Ledbury was a male **Scarce Prominent** (*Odontotia Carmelita*) on 25 April 2003. This very scarce moth was last seen in 1995, eight years ago and also here in Ledbury. It still presumably survives here in South-east Herefordshire but in low density. Another rarity in the County is the **Grass Rivulet** (*Perizoma albulata*). A single female was recorded in Ledbury at m/v light on 7 June 2003 after several years of absence. The food plant is hayrattle, now a rare plant in pasture and hay meadows.

June continued to show some interesting moths at light including the exotic **Eyed hawkmoth**

(*smerinthus ocellata*) which has been rare in recent years. Also the **Pale-shouldered Brocade** (*Lacanobia thalassina*), the **Rustic-shoulder Knot** (*Apamea sordens*) and the **Dusky Brocade** (*apamea remissa*) have reappeared after about ten years disappearance.

Of interest is also was the appearance of the **Red-necked Footman** which was seen in Ledbury on four different nights in June with many more seen in woodland in the Woolhope Dome by Mark O'brien, and I saw one flying in day sunshine in Credenhill Wood, near Hereford City, on 26 June 2003 flying amongst conifers. To complete this amazing movement of these

lichen feeding footman moths over the last few years was a single worn **Orange footman** (*Eilema sororcula*) here in Ledbury on 24 June 03, a new County record.

On the 11 July 03, two fresh specimens of the **Double Line** (*Mythimna turca*) appeared at m/v light in a small wood within the Woolhope Dome by Mark O'Brien. This is a National Notable B species and is a surprising record considering the last record was seen around the latter half of the nineteenth century in Stoke Wood which is inside the same 10km square. I feel fairly certain these moths have bred here but have been overlooked for over 100 years.

Moving on to the micro-moths, the local tortrix moth *Endothenia ustulana* was seen at light in Wigmore Rolls in the north-east of the County. This was only the second moth seen (in 2002) after a long gap (1987). A fleeting glimpse of two other tortricid moths out of the foliage of a very old veteran Maple tree in Ledbury Park on 17 July 03 of the rare *Pammene trauniana* was an important record also, and gives confirmation to the single record in Ledbury in 1991. *Pammene suspectana* was another species of this difficult group of moths seen in Ledbury at light on 10 August 03. This small tortrix is apparently very scarce with only a few records for the whole Country although we have had another singleton from Worcestershire in 1979.

On 10 September 2003, in a well-known supermarket car park in Hereford, three tenanted mines on a single leaf of the London Plane Tree were found. These were a species of *Phyllonorycter* belonging to the very recently discovered *p. plataui*. First found as recently as 1990 in London, the species has spread north and west slowly to other urban sites.

◆ Michael Harper

## Worcestershire Moth Report 2003

Last year, with its long hot summer, was a highly successful one, with increasing numbers of recorders having their own moth-traps, and with the continuing regular recording programmes of Rosemary Winnall's Wyre Forest group and Butterfly Conservation's county "mothers" group. Many of our recorders are becoming increasingly experienced in identification and are tackling the more difficult groups such as the pugs and waves, and some of the microlepidoptera. The use of digital cameras has made the keeping of specimens less necessary and provided confirmation of the identification of many records. There will be even more recorders this year which is a very healthy trend compared with only a few years ago, when at one time older entomologists such as myself seemed to be seriously declining and becoming as endangered as some of our lepidoptera!

### Macrolepidoptera

There were three new species of larger moth in VC37 last year. Firstly, following on from its arrival in the Salop part of Wyre Forest in 2002, a **Devon Carpet** (*Lampropteryx otregiata*) came to light at a "mothers" group session in Monk Wood on 31/5/2003 and Jeff Rush saw two in the Worcs. part of Wyre Forest by the old railway line near Lodgehill Farm on 8/8/2003. It is clearly spreading and may turn up elsewhere this year. Mike Southall rang me to say he had caught a **Cream-bordered Green Pea** (*Earias clorana*) at light on his farm at Crossway Green on 7/6/03. This is the first confirmed county record, although there have been a few unconfirmed ones in the past. Then I had one at light at Bransford on 31/7/03, and when I was recording at Hawford with Jeff Rush we had another, presumably of the second brood, on 6/8/03. I understand this moth has been spreading in Gloucestershire over the past two years, and now seems to be resident in Worcs.

**Vine's Rustic** (*Hoplodrina ambigua*) was a species I was expecting to reach us soon as it has been spreading up from the south-west and has occurred in Herefordshire. Jeff Rush recorded two at Stoke Prior, on 25/8/03 and 31/8/03, one of which was a female which laid eggs.

When we were recording at Monk Wood on 31/5/03 we were very excited by the arrival at the light of a beautiful fresh **Orange Footman** (*Eilema sororcula*) which followed on from single specimens at Bredon Hill in 2001 and West Malvern in 2002. It had last been recorded in Monk Wood in 1902! However this is clearly part of a reinvasion of the county confirmed by Richard Southwell recording another near Stourbridge on 6/6/2003. It is another species which may occur elsewhere this year. Other species continuing to increase and spread were **Barred Hook-tip** (*Watsonalla cultraria*), **Clay Triple-lines** (*Cyclophora linearia*), **Dwarf Cream wave** (*Idaea fuscovenosa*), **Pine Carpet** (*Thera firmata*), **Juniper Carpet** (*Thera juniperata*), **Ochreous Pug** (*Eupithecia indigata*), **Satin Beauty** (*Deileptenia ribeata*), **White-pinion Spotted** (*Lomographa bimaculata*), **Dingy Footman** (*Eilema griseola*), **Light Brocade** (*Lacanobia w-latinum*), and **Sycamore** (*Acronicta aceris*).

2003 was a good year for the rarer migrants as might be have been expected from the long lasting and often very hot summer weather. There were also fairly good numbers of commoner migrants such as **Silver Y** (*Autographa gamma*), **Dark Sword-grass** (*Agrotis ipsilon*), and the Pyralids *Nomophila noctuella* and *Udea ferrugalis*, although comparatively not as many overall as in some past years. Rarer migrants as follows:

**Convolvulus Hawk-moth** (*Agrius convolvuli*) one seen feeding in a West Malvern garden on 14/8/2003 (P. Garner), another at dusk at Hanley swan on 12/9/03 (M. Skirrow), one to light at Bransford on 16/8/2003 (ANBS), and three to light at Crossway Green on 16/8/2003, 22/8/2003, and 4/10/2003 (M. Southall).

**Humming-bird Hawk-moth** (*Macroglossum stellatarum*) has been fairly common this year, with widespread records from all over the county.

**Striped Hawk-moth** (*Hyles livornica*) one seen in the second week of September at dawn at Hayslads Spring on the Malverns by G. Byford (record per P. Garner). I had omitted this species from the first volume of the atlas in error. There have been previous VC37 records from near Worcester, Malvern Link Common, and Offenham in the VCH, but this is the first record since 1900. There were also records of larvae from Herefordshire in 2003

**Vestal** (*Rhodometra sacraria*) Stoke Prior three on 21/9/2003 and one on 12/10/2003 (J. Rush), Crossway Green one on 8/8/2003, two on 3/10/2003, and one on 18/10/2003 (M. Southall), Bransford two on 16/8/2003 (ANBS), Bliss Gate one on 18/7/2003 (R. Winnall).

**Gem** (*Orthonama obstipata*) a female at Stoke Prior 25/8/2003 (J. Rush).

**Small Mottled Willow** (*Spodoptera exigua*) Stoke Prior 25/8/2003 and 31/8/2003 (J. Rush), Crossway Green 12/8/2003, 16/8/2003, and 23/8/2003 (M. Southall), Bransford four between 12/8/2003 and 28/8/2003 (ANBS),

**Scarce Bordered Straw** (*Helicoverpa armigera*) Crossway Green 9/8/2003 and 12/8/2003 (M. Southall), Bransford 12/8/2003 (ANBS).

**Bordered Straw** (*Heliothis peltigera*) Crossway Green 11/7/2003 and 12/7/2003 (M. Southall), Bransford 30/6/2003 (ANBS), Stoke Prior 26/6/2003 (J. Rush), Stourbridge 17/9/2003 (R. Southwell), Malvern Wells 15/9/2003 (P. Holmes), Hall Green 5/8/2003 and 13&14/8/2003 (A. Prior & V. Weston).

### Other significant records:

**Red-belted Clearwing** (*Synanthedon myopaeformis*) Droitwich: Briar Hill 22/6/2003, St. Nicholas St. 28/6/2003, Copcutt Field 29/6/2003, and on the south Malverns at the Gullett 29/6/2003, all to pheromone lure (N. & C. Gregory).

**Mocha** (*Cyclophora annularia*) one at Wythall in June (G. Fellows) was an unusual ? local migrant well away from any known woodland sites.

**Lesser Cream Wave** (*Scopula immutata*) at Hawford 21/6/2003 (J. Rush).

**Ruddy Carpet** (*Catarhoe rubidata*) at Willow Bank, Bliss Gate 26/6/2003 (R. Winnall)

**Sharp-angled Carpet** (*Euphyia unangulata*) at Crossway Green 12/7/2003 (M. Southall).

**Dark Umber** (*Philereme transversata*) at Areley Wood 18/7/2003 (R. Winnall et al).

**Blomer's Rivulet** (*Discoloxia blomeri*) at Shrawley Wood on 24/5/2003 and 31/7/2003 (J. Rush), and thirty at Areley Wood 18/7/2003 (R. Winnall et al).

**Clouded Magpie** (*Abraxas sylvata*) twenty nine at Areley Wood 18/7/2003 (R. Winnall et al).

**Peacock Moth** (*Macaria notata*) at Crossway Green 8/8/2003 (M. Southall).

**Great Oak Beauty** (*Hypomecis roboraria*) one at Stoke Prior 9/6/2003 (J. Rush) was probably a

local migrant, possibly from the Chaddesley area where it occurred in the 1960's.

**Alder Kitten** (*Furcula bicuspis*) at Crossway Green 16/5/2003 (M. Southall) is a rare moth now away from the Wyre Forest where it is still fairly common.

**White Satin** (*Leucoma salicis*) at Redditch 1/7/2003 and 12/7/2003 (Gill Rush).

**Red-necked Footman** (*Atolmis rubricollis*) a larva on a dead tree-stump at Shrawley Wood 3/7/2003 confirms that this species is now a breeding resident in the county (E. & J. Rush).

**Garden Dart** (*Euxoa nigricans*) near Stourbridge 25/8 and 3/9/2003 (R. Southwell).

**Archer's Dart** (*Agrotis vestigialis*) at Crossway Green 8/8/2003 (M. Southall).

**Heath Rustic** (*Xestia agathina*) one at Stoke Prior 27/8/2003 (J. Rush) was probably a local migrant from Hartlebury Common.

**Light Brocade** (*Lacanobia w-latinum*) at Crossway Green 24/5/2003 (M. Southall), Willow Bank Bliss Gate three between 26 and 29/5/2003 (R. Winnall), Stoke Prior 16/6/2003 (J. Rush), near Stourbridge 28/6/2003 (R. Southwell). This species seems to be becoming more common and widespread in the north of the county.

**Hedge Rustic** (*Tholera cespitis*) at Halesowen 25 and 29/8/2003 (G. Sturman). An uncommon and infrequently recorded species nowadays.

**Obscure wainscot** (*Mythimna obsoleta*) 6 in reedbed at Hawford on 21/6/2003 (J. Rush) is the second county site for this local species.

**Dusky-Lemon Sallow** (*Xanthia gilvago*) one on 12/10/2003 at West Malvern (P. Garner), and five at Stoke Prior between 30/9/2003 and 14/10/2003 (J. Rush).

**Sycamore** (*Acronicta aceris*) at Droitwich 25/5/2003 and 30/5/2003 (N. & C. Gregory), Hall Green five between 4/6/2003 and 6/7/2003 (A. Prior & V. Weston), Stoke Prior 6 between 18/6/2003 and 6/7/2003 (J. Rush), Bransford 3 between 6/6/2003 and 12/6/2003 (ANBS), one on oak trunk at Mill Rough Drakes Broughton 2/7/2003 (K. McGee)

**Angle-striped Sallow** (*Enargia paleacea*) 8 at Shrawley Wood 3/7/2003 (J. Rush).

**Suspected** (*Parastichtis suspecta*) near Stourbridge 26/8/2003 (R. Southwell).

**Crescent** (*Celaena leucostigma*) at Hawford 19/7/2003 and 6/8/2003 (J. Rush).

**Twin-spotted Wainscot** (*Archanara geminipuncta*) at Crossway Green 9/8 and 12/8/2003 (M. Southall), and Stoke Prior four between 5/8/ and 12/8/2003 (J. Rush).

**Large Wainscot** (*Rhizedra lutosa*) at Stoke Prior 5/10 and 20/10/2003 (J. Rush), and at Redditch 8/10/2003 (Gill Rush).

**Small Rufous** (*Coenobia rufa*) three at Stoke Prior 5/8/2003 (J. Rush), Areley Woods one 18/7/2003 (D. Grundy). Only previously recorded at Wilden Marsh.

**Silky Wainscot** (*Chilodes maritimus*) in reedbed at Hawford 19/7/2003 (J. Rush).

**Gold Spot** (*Plusia festucae*) at Stoke Prior 16/8/2003 (J. Rush), and Redditch 9/8/2003 (Gill Rush).

**Dark Spectacle** (*Abrostola triplasia*) at Halesowen one 30/5/2003 and three 6/6/2003 (G. Sturman), Hall Green 9/6/2003 (A. Prior & V. Weston), Crossway Green 4/7/2003 (M. Southall). This species seems to be making a recovery although there are still no recent records in the south of the county.

## Microlepidoptera

Smaller Moths part 2 of the Herefordshire and Worcestershire Lepidoptera Atlas covering the remaining species (Families Tortricidae, Pyralidae, and Pterophoridae) will be coming out in July. There were five new species of smaller moths recorded in VC37 last year.

*Ectoedemia decentella* (H-S) one in light trap at Bransford 9/8/2003 (ANBS). This Sycamore feeder is known from the Birmingham area, and is a not unexpected new arrival.

*Morophaga choragella* (D&S) one at light at Hall Green 13/6/2003 (A. Prior & V. Weston). A surprising suburban record of this dead wood/fungus feeder which one expected might be found in ancient woodland as in Herefordshire rather than on the edge of Birmingham!

*Argyresthia trifasciata* Staudinger Bewdley 1/7/2003 (M. Flack). The first record of this nationally spreading garden juniper feeder, but I have seen a number of bushes with dead shoots suggesting *Argyresthia* feedings in and around Worcester City this year and it may already be more widespread.

*Calamotropha paludella* (Hb.) I had one at light at Bransford on 14/7/2003 but then I discovered Jeff Rush had recorded three at Stoke Prior on 20/6/2003, and then he took two on 19/7/2003 and

three on 6/8/2003 at Hawford. This *Typha* feeding species has been spreading in southern and eastern England and has now obviously colonised the Severn and Lower Teme valleys.

*Hellinsia osteodactylus* (Zell.) one caught at light on 25/7/2003 by Jeff Rush at Stoke Prior was identified by Colin Hart. This species does occur locally in ancient woodland in Herefordshire feeding on Golden-rod, but this Worcs. specimen must I feel be a new arrival feeding on Ragwort, bearing in mind the habitat around the site of its capture. There is some Golden-rod around the Lickey Hills to the north but probably too far away to be the source of this record.

### Other significant 2003 records:

*Nemophora cupriacella* (Hb.). In Vol. 1 of the atlas there were no recent confirmed records mapped, but mention was made of a photo probably showing a female at rest on teasel in Tiddesley Wood on 19/7/1998. The same recorder (K. McGee) photographed a definite female specimen on an umbellifer flower-head nearby at Deerfold Wood on 29/6/2003 confirming his first record, and Rosemary Winnall showed me a photo and produced a late worn female specimen from Willow Bank, Bliss Gate on 3/8/2003

*Caloptilia populetorum* (Zeller) Hall Green 26/3/2003 (A. Prior & V. Weston), and Ribbesford Wood 16/5/2003 (J. Rush).

*Eidophasia messingiella* (F. von R.) Hawford 21/6/2003 (J. Rush) was the second county site, again from a wet low lying area near to the river and canal.

*Acrolepiopsis assectella* (Zeller)= Leek moth one at light at Droitwich on 27/4/2003 (N. & C. Gregory) was the second county record and suggests it may possibly now be resident.

*Mompha locupletella* (D&S) one at light at Wissets Wood on 19/9/2003 (D. Grundy). Only previously recorded at Redstone Marsh, Areley Kings.

*Tachystola acroxantha* (Meyrick) at Hall Green on 15/6/2003 (A. Prior & V. Weston) following on from first records in Harborne and Balsall Heath in 2002, showing it is spreading in the Birmingham area

*Semioscopis avellanella* (Hb.) recorded at Ribbesford Wood (J. Rush) and in Wyre Forest (D. Grundy) where it may be feeding on birch.

*Carpatolechia decorella* (Haworth) Ribbesford Wood two on 17/4/2003 and one on 24/4/2003 (J. Rush) has otherwise only been found in Wyre Forest. *Cochylis atricapitana* (Stephens) continues to increase and spread with records from Ribbesford Wood and Hawford (J. Rush), and Bliss Gate (R. Winnall).

*Archips crataegana* (Hb.) Stoke Prior 16/6/2003 and 2/7/2003, and Gannow Wood an extraordinary

forty plus on 18/6/2003 and two on 5/7/2003 (J. Rush). A widespread but usually rare resident of ancient woodland and parkland.

*Exapate congelatella* (Clerck) one at light at Stoke Prior on 1/11/2003 (J. Rush). Only second modern county record.

*Pseudosciaphila branderiana* (Linnaeus) twenty plus at Gannow Wood on 18/6/2003 (J. Rush).

*Apotomis capreana* (Hb.) one at Hawford 7/2003 (J. Rush).

*Pammene obscurana* (Stephens) 1 at light at Shrawley Wood on 24/5/2003 (J. Rush) was the second county record.

*Nymphula stagnata* (Donovan)= Beautiful China-mark first modern records from Droitwich on 26/6/2003 (N. & C. Gregory) and Wissets Wood on 29/8/2003 (D. Grundy).

*Phlyctaenia perlucidalis* (Hb.) Hawford nineteen between 17/6/2003 and 6/8/2003, and at Stoke Prior on 18/6/2003 (J. Rush).

*Pempelia palumbella* (D&S) one in Wyre Forest on 21/6/2003 (T. Davis & D. Grundy) was first record since when it was recorded from Hartlebury Common between 1904-10.

*Euzophera cinerosella* (Zeller) at light at Balsall Heath on 22/7/2003 (D. Grundy).

*Phycitodes maritima* (Tengstrom) Stoke Prior 7/2003 and Hawford 19/7/2003 (J. Rush).

◆ Tony Simpson

This document was created with Win2PDF available at <http://www.daneprairie.com>.  
The unregistered version of Win2PDF is for evaluation or non-commercial use only.