

E-moth

Moths Count Update April 2011

The moth-ing season is upon us again and the usual suspects (Oak Beauty, Hebrew Character, Early Grey and those little brown jobs (Quakers)) are frequenting the Head Office moth trap in good numbers. Since the last E-moth in January, the Heritage Lottery Funding for the Moths Count project has ended. The project and, in particular, the National Moth Recording Scheme continues though and thanks to Butterfly Conservation's own resources and other funding three members of the project team have been retained, for the next year at least.

Difficult Species Guide

The new book *British and Irish moths: an illustrated guide to selected difficult species (covering the use of genitalia characters and other features)* has been produced by the Moths Count project with funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund, John Spedan Lewis Foundation and others. Focussing mainly, but not exclusively on genitalia characteristics, it provides the next step for those wishing to make definitive identifications of 72 species of difficult macro-moths such as dark and grey daggers, ear moths, copper underwings and the november moth group.

Copies of the Guide are available from Butterfly Conservation www.butterfly-conservation.org/shop or 01929 400209 and from specialist retailers. The recommended retail price is £20, but it is available at a special initial offer price of £15 plus £2 post and packaging to UK addresses. All profits received by Butterfly Conservation will be used towards ongoing moth recording.



Those who have already bought the book, as well as those considering purchase, should be aware that Figure 48 (female Satin Beauty *Deileptenia ribeata*) on p.41 is incorrect and, as a consequence, the key on p.40 is also incorrect. A corrected version of pp.40-41 is available at http://www.mothscount.org/text/104/guide_to_difficult_species.html. If you cannot access this correction online, please contact Butterfly Conservation on 01929 400209 or info@butterfly-conservation.org.

National Moth Recording Scheme

The National Moth Recording Scheme (NMRS) database continues to grow as vice-county datasets are refreshed. Since the production of the Provisional Atlas, 43 vice-county refreshes have been received, many of which have been imported into the database, and eight of them were included in the last refresh to the National Biodiversity Network (NBN) Gateway in December 2010. Another refresh of the whole NMRS database to the NBN Gateway is planned in the summer using vice-county data

submitted by the end of March. Remember, if you want your records included in the NMRS please submit them to your County Moth Recorder who can verify and forward them to us.

We are now concentrating on expanding the NMRS database temporally. If any of you have historical moth records hidden in notebooks etc please do computerise them. We are also appealing to County Moth Recorders to verify and incorporate the historical Rothamsted Insect Survey and Biological Record Centre records supplied previously into local datasets and pass them on to the NMRS. These records are vitally important as they provide a baseline upon which analyses of species range changes can be assessed. At the moment 60% of the records in the NMRS database are recent records (2000 onwards).

We are also continuing to support the network of County Moth Recorders. In recent months three new County Moth Recorders have been appointed; Peter R. Harvey, South and North Essex (VC's 18 & 19), our very own Les Hill for Dorset (VC9) and Julie Stoneman for Mid Perthshire (VC88), They will be continuing the great work of their predecessors, David Allen, Peter Davey and Dan Baker (respectively).

Another ongoing aspect of the project is the development of online recording for moths. The online system will include both macro and micro-moth species. A date for the system to 'go live' has not yet been set as we need to do some extensive testing prior to launch. This is not an alternative to the County Moth Recorder network; its aims are to increase the number of people recording and computerising their own records, thus saving others from doing data input. Records of macro-moths entered online will not enter the NMRS directly. Instead, all the online records (both macros and micros) will be passed to County Moth Recorders to enable them to verify records and incorporate them into their local datasets.

Moth recorders living in or visiting Scotland, will be interested in some excellent new web resources developed by Mark Cubitt, County Moth Recorder for West Lothian (VC84), using the NMRS data for Scotland. These include species' distribution maps, phenology charts and species' richness and recording maps. To check out these great pages visit <http://www.eastscotland-butterflies.org.uk/index.html> and follow the Moth Records links.

Moth Recorders' Meetings

The first UK-wide National Moth Recorders' Meeting was held at the Birmingham and Midland Institute on 22nd January 2011. One hundred and twenty people were treated to informative and stimulating talks. For example, Dick Groenendijk from *De Vlinderstichting* (Dutch Butterfly Conservation) highlighted the plight of moths in the Netherlands, the trends being similar to those in the UK and Dave Allen gave an entertaining talk on the rediscovery of the White Prominent in Ireland. A National Moth Recorders' meeting is planned for **28th January 2012** at the Birmingham and Midland Institute. Further details on how to book a place will follow in due course.



Catching up over lunch at the first UK-wide Moth Recorders' Meeting (R. Fox)

Butterfly Conservation Scotland also held a very successful Recorders' Gathering on 26th March at the Battleby Centre, Redgorton. In excess of 80 people attended from the length and breadth of Scotland. As always the talks were fascinating, crowds gathered for the moth trap unveiling at lunchtime and a great day was had by all.

Provisional Atlas of the UK's Larger Moths

The first print run of the Provisional Atlas of the UK's Larger Moths was made available at a special offer price and sold out rapidly. The interest in this publication was rather overwhelming hence a second print run has been produced. Copies are now available at the recommended retail price of £20 (plus £5.00 P&P). All profits will be used to support ongoing moth recording. To get your copy please order online by clicking this link www.butterfly-conservation.org/shop or phone 01929 400209. The Atlas has received good reviews in several of the entomological journals. The Moths Count team are extremely proud of the Atlas and are greatly appreciative of the efforts of County Moth Recorders and the moth recording community who helped to make the publication of the Atlas a reality.

Lepidoptera Conservation Bulletin Number 11

Butterfly Conservation's Lepidoptera Conservation Bulletin for 2010 is now available. The Bulletin includes updates on conservation efforts for a broad selection of highly threatened moths and butterflies across the UK. In addition further articles about Lepidoptera recording, Butterfly Conservation reserves, Butterfly Conservation Europe and National Moth Night are included. There is also a selected Bibliography covering publications of interest in 2010.

In order to reduce production costs and help us maximise funds for conservation work, the Bulletin is primarily being distributed electronically (it can also be downloaded from www.butterfly-conservation.org/lepidopteraconservationbulletin). To make it easier to read on screen you should be able to use the contents page to navigate around the report. Please pass on the report, or its location on our website, to anyone you feel would be interested. We do have a very limited number of paper copies available upon request.

We hope you agree that the Bulletin is an invaluable opportunity to provide feedback on a wide range of projects and we hope you find it of interest. If you have any comments on the overall content and usefulness of the Bulletin we would be interested to hear your views at lepconsbulletin@butterfly-conservation.org

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

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