



MONMOUTHSHIRE MOTH & BUTTERFLY GROUP

NEWSLETTER No 77

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*A monthly newsletter covering
Gwent and Monmouthshire Vice County 35*

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Silurian Moth – New Site Discovered

Discovered as a British species by Neil Horton in 1972, until now the Silurian moth has been known in Britain only from its original site on Coity Mountain in Blaenau Gwent. Breeding was confirmed in 2005 when larvae were found in the wild for the first time. For further details see the articles in MMBG newsletters 17 (July 2004) and 24 (April 2005).

On the evening of Monday 4th July I was fortunate to be invited to join Dave Grundy (West Midlands) and Robin Hemming (Herefordshire) on a mothing trip to Hatterall Ridge, which forms the boundary between Wales and England to the east of the Llanthony Valley. We were very lucky, and extremely grateful, that Clive Williams (BB National Park Warden) volunteered to act as driver and guide.

Two weeks earlier (21st June) Dave Grundy had caught a Silurian at Black Darren, on the eastern side below Hatterall Ridge. As another individual had been caught a few miles away in July 1999, it was suspected that the Silurian might be breeding somewhere on the high ground of the Ridge. On 4th July, Clive drove us and our equipment along Offa's Dyke path to a point on Hatterall Ridge (590m), above Black Darren, where the vegetation resembled the grassy mounds with bilberry growing through (see picture) characteristic of the Silurian's known locality at Coity Mountain. The difficult journey had to be done in daylight and our return had to await daybreak next morning.

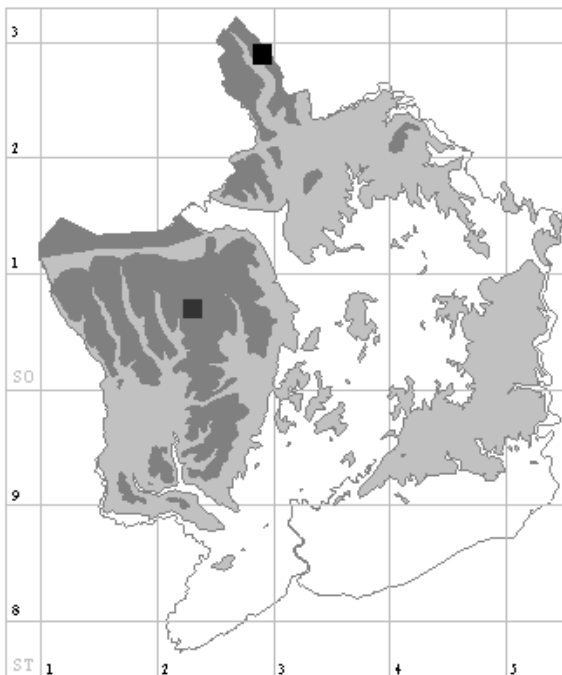
Ten MV traps were set up covering both sides of Offa's Dyke. Though it was a fairly warm, partially cloudy, night, an annoying wind limited the moths caught to eleven macro species and three micros. However, excitingly, a total of eleven Silurian moths, all males, came to light. The first one arrived just after 1am and by about 3.30am four had come to traps on the Gwent side (three traps) and seven to traps on the Herefordshire side (seven traps). Hence in one evening both a second Welsh (Gwent) site and a first English (Herefordshire) site for the Silurian were established!



*Silurian Moth
(Eriopygodes imbecilla)
trapped on
Hatterall Ridge*



*Hatterall Ridge – unloading equipment on Offa’s Dyke path.
Left to right Robin Hemming, Dave Grundy and Clive Williams.*



Two Gwent Silurian Sites

Thanks are due to Dave Grundy, who was responsible for organising the trip, to Clive Williams for transporting and guiding us and staying out overnight, to Robin Hemming and to Norman Lowe and Brecon Beacons National Park for their help in the organisation.

Martin Anthony.

Recent Highlights

July continued the weather of June, a very average month, with the occasional short warm spell, but temperatures mostly close to average. We missed much of the rain and heavy showers, but many days seemed to be dry but cloudy, with the cloud breaking during the day to produce clear and thus cooler evenings. The influence of a warm, dry, spring could still be seen with early first emergence dates, but apart from five Humming-bird Hawk records and a single Clouded Yellow sighting there was little evidence of immigrants.

- 1st July Blomer's Rivulet and Sharp-angled Carpet amongst 40 species to light at Wyndcliff.
(Martin Anthoney & Roger James)
- Small Clouded Brindle to light at Melbourne Way, Newport. (Roger James)
- Slender Brindle at Penallt (Stephanie Tyler)
- Scarlet Tiger at Llandogo (Simon Phipps)
- 2nd July A very early Grayling butterfly at Aberbargoed Grasslands. (Bill Jones)
- 3rd July Dark Green Fritillary and Marbled White at Cwm Clydach NNR. (Bill Jones)
- Humming-bird Hawk at Gaer Park Lane, Newport. (Kevin Dupé)
- Pinion-streaked Snout at Llandogo (Simon Phipps)
- 4th July. 11 Silurian moths on Hatterall Ridge (see earlier article)
(Dave Grundy, Rob Hemming & Martin Anthoney)
- White Admirals at Panta Arches and Ravensnest Wood in the Angiddy Valley. (Bill Jones)
- Humming-bird Hawk and Beautiful Snout at Beacon Farm, Trellech. (Ray Armstrong)
- Brown-tail to light at Newport Wetlands (Redhouse Farm), the site where the first county record occurred last year. The species definitely seems to be established on the coast now.
(Kevin Dupé)



Beautiful Snout
(Ray Armstrong)

- 5th July Double Line and July Belle to light at Risca. (Martin Anthoney)
- 6th July Empty pupal case of Red-belted Clearwing found on an apple tree at Mitchel Troy.

		(Paul Whitehead)
7 th July	Pinion-streaked Snout at Newport Wetlands (Uskmouth)	(Kevin Dupé)
9 th July	Painted Lady at Penhow Woodlands.	(Martin Anthoney)
	Black Arches to light at Risca.	(Martin Anthoney)
11 th July.	Silver-washed Fritillary and Humming-bird Hawk at St Pierre's Great Wood near Chepstow.	(Martin Anthoney)
	Another Silver-washed Fritillary at Cockshoot Wood, Chepstow.	(Martin Anthoney)
	Grayling at Silent Valley Reserve.	(Tom Eyles)
	Lunar-spotted Pinion at Home Farm, Caerleon.	(Kath & Chris Jones)
14 th July	At least 6 Dark Green Fritillaries at Mynydd Du and Blaen-y-Cwm (Grwynne Fawr)	(Martin Anthoney & Roger James)
	Silver-washed Fritillary at Penallt.	(Ian Rabjohns)
	Mocha, Oak Nycteoline, Muslin Footman and Orange Footman amongst 51 species to light at Penhow Woodlands.	(Martin Anthoney & Roger James)
15 th July	15 Dark Green Fritillary at Blaenserchan.	(Rupert Perkins)
16 th July	Cloaked Carpet to light at Llanishen, near Trellech	(David Hathaway)
17 th July	1 Essex Skipper at Llandegfedd Reservoir	(Steve Williams)
18 th July	55 eggs and 10 larvae of Small Ranunculus at Goldcliff.	(Kevin Dupé)
	Humming-bird Hawk at Abertillery	(Jeremy Richards)
19 th July	Brown-veined Wainscot at Newport Wetlands (Uskmouth)	(Kevin Dupé)
	Satin Lutestring to light at Risca	(Martin Anthoney)
21 st July.	White Letter Hairstreak butterfly at Duffryn, Newport.	(Richard Smith)
	Mocha to light at Risca. A new site for this species.	(Martin Anthoney)
22 nd July.	Purple Hairstreak at St Mellons. Recorded for the next eleven days, with a maximum of 5 seen.	(Michael Field)



Purple Hairstreak
(Michael Fielding)

- 23rd July Silver-washed Fritillary at Llanellen, near Abergavenny (Graham Harris).
Another Silver-washed Fritillary at Wentwood. The first time I have seen this species in over 30 years of visiting Wentwood. (Martin Anthonye)
Humming-bird Hawk at Lower Ochrywth. (Richard Clarke)
- 25th July 12 Essex Skipper at Cwmbran (near Craig-y-Felin). A new site. (Rupert Perkins)
Purple Hairstreak at Coed Cwraig in the north of the county. A new site. (Martin Anthonye & Roger James)
30 Grayling butterflies at Blaenserchan. (Rupert Perkins)
Double Lobed moth to light at Newport Wetlands (Redhouse Farm). (Kevin Dupé)
- 26th July. Immigrant Clouded Yellow butterfly at Newport Wetlands (Uskmouth). The first sighting for two years (Kevin Dupé)
An early Red Underwing moth in Newport (Hollybush Close) (David Meyer)
Scarce Silver-lines and Bulrush Wainscot at Llanishen, near Trellech. (David Hathaway)
- 27th July Grayling butterfly and a second generation of the micro *Pyraustra cingulata* at Ochrywth. (Martin Anthonye & Roger James)
- 28th July. 1 Small *Ranunculus* larva in Newport (Spytty Road). Two days later, 20 more larvae were found in the same area. (Kevin Dupé, Roger James & Julis James)
Six-belted Clearwing at Marshalls, Newport. (Roger James)
- 29th July. Grayling at Bedwas tip. (Richard Clarke)
Northern Rustic to light at Rassau. (Rodney Morris)
- 30th July. Grass Emerald, Gold Spangle, Clouded Magpie and Oak Nycteoline amongst 55 species to light at Hafod Farm, Brynmawr. (Martin Anthonye, Nicholas Beswick, Roger James & Rodney Morris)

Newport Report

Moths

First Newport records for 2011 during July:

- | | | |
|----------------------|----------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1 st July | Goldcliff
Melbourne Way | Common Footman, Flounced Rustic, Small Fan-footed Wave
Small Clouded Brindle, Grey Pug, Rosy Footman |
| 2 nd July | Gaer Park Lane | Small Emerald. |
| 3 rd July | Gaer Park Lane | Humming-bird Hawk |

4 th July	Melbourne Way Goldcliff	Rosy Rustic Brown-tail
11 th July	Goldcliff Home Farm	Cloaked Minor Lunar-spotted Pinion
12 th July	Haisboro Avenue	Gothic
14 th July	Melbourne Way Penhow Woodlands	Black Arches Large Emerald, Muslin Footman
15 th July	Melbourne Way Gaer Junior School	Dotted Clay, White-spotted Pug Vapourer
18 th July 19 th July	Goldcliff Uskmouth Goldcliff Goldcliff & Haisboro Avenue	Small Ranunculus larvae Brown-veined Wainscot Magpie Least Yellow Underwing
20 th July	Melbourne Way	Wormwood Pug
21 st July	Haisboro Avenue	Copper Underwing
22 nd July	Melbourne Way	Slender Brindle
25 th July	Goldcliff	Double Lobed
26 th July	Haisboro Avenue	Marbled Green, Triple-spotted Pug
27 th July	Melbourne Way Goldcliff Uskmouth	Olive Small Waved Umber Small Wainscot
28 th July	Marshalls (Corporation Road)	Six-belted Clearwing
30 th July	Melbourne Way	Little Emerald, Golden-rod Pug, Lesser Broad-border, Orange Swift

Thanks to the recorders:

Home Farm Caerleon	Kath & Chris Jones	Haisboro Avenue	Sheila Dupé
Uskmouth, Goldcliff	Kevin Dupé, Sheila Dupé, Fiona Illing		
Melbourne Way	Roger James	Marshalls	Roger James
Penhow Woodlands	Martin Anthony & Roger James.		
Gaer Park Lane	Kevin & Max Dupé		

Small Ranunculus

On 28th July Kevin visited a derelict site between Spytty Pill and the Sinclair Volkswagen garage. He found a third instar Small Ranunculus caterpillar on Prickly Lettuce. On 30th July, Julia and I visited the site and discovered approximately 20 larvae (first to third instar), and in the B&Q car park directly opposite we found a further 10 larvae (first to final instar).

Marshalls site

Newport CC has opened a new river walk between Marshalls (Corporation Road) and the Transporter Bridge on the east bank of the Usk. This area is one of the best brownfield, tall and short ruderal, sites in Newport. Trevor Evans, Colin Titcombe, Dave Green and myself have recorded over 70 plant species there, amongst which is Kidney Vetch, the foodplant of the Small Blue butterfly. The butterflies I recorded were large numbers of Meadow Brown, Large White and Gatekeeper, together with small numbers of Speckled Wood, Red Admiral, Common Blue and larval webs of Small Tortoiseshell. Many larvae of Cinnabar and Mullein moths were also noted. A nice surprise was a single Scarlet Tiger adult directly opposite the colony in Newport Docks.

Solutia Meadows Gwent Wildlife Trust Reserve

On 3rd July Julia and I walked a five-field transect of this reserve lasting 1½ hours. We counted 545 butterflies, mostly Meadow Brown and Ringlet, plus nine other species including 86 Marbled White.

Roger James

Dates for your Diary 2011

Saturday 15th Oct. Butterfly Conservation (South Wales Branch) Members' Day and AGM.
Kenfig NNR Visitors' Centre.

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