



MONMOUTHSHIRE MOTH & BUTTERFLY GROUP

NEWSLETTER No 90 March/April 2013.

A monthly newsletter covering

Gwent and Monmouthshire Vice County 35

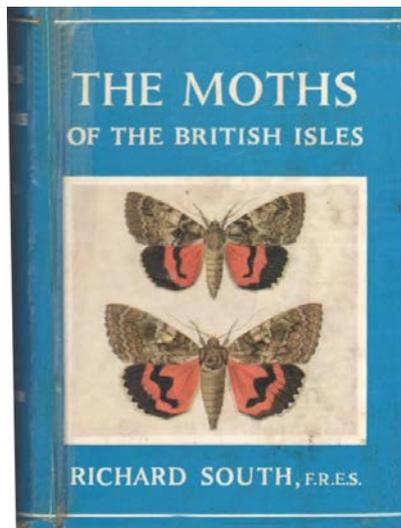
Editor: Martin Anthony

Neil Horton Records – What's In A Name?

In the last newsletter (issue 89 Feb 2013) I reproduced some of Neil Horton's moth trap lists from 1966. I commented how some of the vernacular (English) names were surprising, old versions and not always readily assigned to present day equivalents. Thanks to help from Ray Barnett (Bristol City Museum) and Mark Parsons (Butterfly Conservation) most of the identities have now been sorted out, but it got me thinking about how and why the vernacular names differ.

Most of the names in current use were established in 1908 when Richard South's classic two-volume *Moths of the British Isles* was published. After numerous reprints, a new edition appeared in 1961, following extensive revision and updating of the original by Edelman, Fletcher and Collins. These volumes were part of the highly regarded *Wayside and Woodland* series published by Frederick Warne. Most of the current identification guides, such as those by Waring and Townsend or Skinner, have stayed very close to the vernacular names used in new edition South.

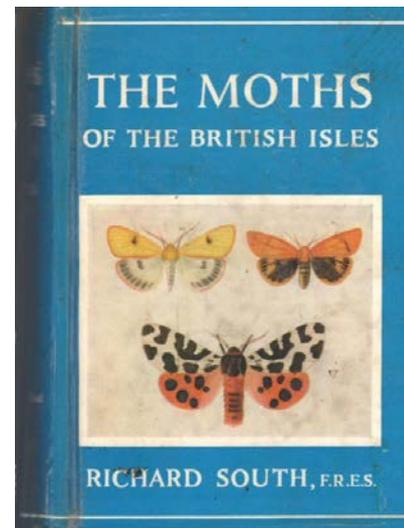
However, a number of entomologists were never happy with the names used in 1908 South. There were some obvious mistakes, such as the use of Satin Carpet for what is now known as Satin Lutestring, a member of a very different family to the "Carpet" moths. Also, a criticism often levelled was that there was no common theme showing that species belonged to a particular family.



*1961 edition of
South's book*

Volume 1

Volume 2



Two major attempts were made to introduce more systematic vernacular names for British moths, coincidentally within a few years of each other in the 1940s during World War II. In 1943, the Amateur Entomologists Society published *A New System of English Naming for British Lepidoptera*, a leaflet by Beowulf A. Cooper and A.F. O'Farrell. This worked on a system of each name having two parts, surname plus descriptive name, similar to surname and forename for people. In 1945 *Check-list of the British lepidoptera with the English name of each of the 2299 species* by I.R.P. Heslop (also known for his work on the Purple Emperor butterfly) was published which in its 1947 second edition expanded to *2313 species*. Heslop assigned English names to all British moths and butterflies even when none had existed before as well as trying to

introduce a “family” portion to each name. A revised and shortened version of Heslop’s list appeared in 1961 as a leaflet, *A New Label List of British Macrolepidoptera*, reprinted from *Entomologist’s Gazette*. It was Heslop’s 1961 list which Neil Horton used initially, with names such as Sulphur Thorn, before joining the large majority of lepidopterists using the new edition South, published soon after Heslop’s list.

Heslop’s leaflet was the first to give each species a number, but his checklist was superseded by later lists of Kloet and Hincks (Royal Ent. Soc. 1972), which did not give vernacular names, limiting its usefulness, Bradley and Fletcher (1979) and J.D. Bradley (1998). Bradley and Fletcher introduced the numbering system commonly used today, the principle being that whilst names may be revised the species number could remain constant. John Bradley was a close friend and nothing companion of Neil Horton.

Revisions to the taxonomic (scientific) names are even more frequent than to the vernacular names. In his original 1908 preface, Richard South perceptively commented “Both classification and nomenclature are always under revision, and we are probably a long way from hearing the last word concerning either”. This rings true even more so today and, with a major classification revision of the British macromoth list in the pipeline, big changes are on the way.

The following table shows a selection of species with their vernacular names from different sources. Confusing and how.....

Bradley & Fletcher No.	Taxon	Modern Name	South 1908	AES 1942	Heslop 1961
1656	<i>Tethea fluctuosa</i>	Satin Lutestring	Satin Carpet	Satin Lutestring	Greater Satin Lutestring
1657	<i>Tethea duplaris</i>	Common Lutestring	Lesser Satin	Common Lutestring	Least Satin Lutestring
2033	<i>Lymantria monacha</i>	Black Arches	Black Arches	Arched Lutestring	Black-arched Tussock
1906	<i>Opisthograptis luteolata</i>	Brimstone	Brimstone	Thorn Sulphur	Sulphur Thorn
2051	<i>Lithosia quadra</i>	Four-spotted Footman	Four-spotted Footman	Large Footman	Large Footman
2437	<i>Polychrysis moneta</i>	Golden Plusia	Golden Plusia	Monkshood Gem	Silver Eight
1955	<i>Cabera pusaria</i>	Common White Wave	Common White Wave	Lined Chalk	White Waved Silver
1875	<i>Asthena albulata</i>	Small White Wave	Small White Wave	White Ripple	White Waved Carpet
1959	<i>Bapta distinctata</i>	Sloe Carpet	Sloe Carpet	Sloe Chalk	Carpet Thorn
1877	<i>Hydrelia sylvata</i>	Waved Carpet	Waved Carpet	Waved Ripple	Sylvan Waved Carpet

Martin Anthoney

Recent Highlights

With winter very reluctant to forgo its icy grip, March and April 2013 provided depressingly few butterfly or moth records. I managed to set a personal record of going six months without seeing a single butterfly! Surprisingly, as the following table shows, many 2013 dates for first records are not out of line with recent years, but the number of individuals recorded is abysmally low. Several walks on calm sunny days failed to produce a single butterfly (and little bird song), particularly above about 400 feet; memories of Rachel Carson’s *Silent Spring* .

Then in the last week or so of April species started to appear – at first in the warmer lower-level south-east corner of the county, slowly spreading north-westwards.

Dates of first records:

Moths	2013	2012	2011	2010	2009	2008
Spruce Carpet	03 rd Jan	30 th Apr	19 th Apr	15 th May	25 th May	06 th May
Pale Brindled Beauty	20 th Nov & 05 th Jan	22 nd Dec & 23 rd Feb	02 nd Feb	31 st Jan	21 st Nov & 19 th Feb	30 th Jan
Winter Moth	06 th Jan	30 th Dec & 10 th Jan	02 nd Jan	31 st Jan	19 th Feb	30 th Jan
Hebrew Character	08 th Jan	27 th Dec & 07 th Jan	11 th Feb	25 th Feb	19 th Feb	07 th Feb
Chestnut	08 th Jan	02 nd Jan	25 th Jan	27 th Jan	30 th Jan	20 th Jan
Early Grey	08 th Jan	24 th Feb	09 th Mar	15 th Mar	26 th Feb	09 th Feb
Early Moth	10 th Jan	28 th Jan	18 th Jan	05 th Feb	17 th Feb	14 th Mar
Dark Chestnut	11 th Jan	19 th Jan	17 th Jan	22 nd Jan	25 th Feb	23 rd Jan
Double-striped Pug	04 th Feb	27 th Dec & 16 th Mar	15 th Mar	19 th Mar	18 th Mar	14 th Mar
Dotted Border	14 th Feb	12 th Feb	11 th Feb	26 th Feb	17 th Feb	05 th Feb
Common Quaker	16 th Feb	08 th Jan	17 th Feb	05 th Mar	19 th Feb	30 th Jan
Grey Shoulder-knot	28 th Feb	27 th Feb	23 rd Feb	15 th Mar	19 th Feb	21 st Mar
March Moth	28 th Feb	28 th Feb	11 th Feb	01 st Mar	01 st Mar	23 rd Feb
Satellite	06 th Mar	22 nd Dec & 18 th Mar	19 th Feb	26 th Feb	19 th Feb	07 th Mar
Oak Nycteoline	06 th Mar	19 th Mar	18 th Mar	06 th Apr	07 th Aug	06 th May
Twin-spotted Quaker	06 th Mar	29 th Feb	23 rd Feb	17 th Mar	02 nd Mar	29 th Feb
Clouded Drab	06 th Mar	23 rd Feb	11 th Feb	12 th Mar	25 th Feb	23 rd Feb
Small Quaker	14 th Mar	11 th Jan	23 rd Feb	15 th Mar	07 th Mar	20 th Feb
Tawny Pinion	18 th Mar	24 th Feb	24 th Mar	23 rd Mar	02 nd Mar	28 th Feb
Yellow Horned	18 th Mar	01 st Mar	24 th Feb	19 th Mar	-	14 th Mar
Brindled Beauty	20 th Mar	19 th Mar	17 th Mar	28 th Mar	02 nd Apr	02 nd Apr
Oak Beauty	20 th Mar	16 th Feb	24 th Feb	26 th Feb	22 nd Feb	20 th Jan
Early Tooth-striped	05 th Apr	10 th Mar	12 th Mar	29 th Mar	16 th Mar	04 th Apr
Frosted Green	05 th Apr	20 th Mar	14 th Apr	05 th Apr	-	26 th Apr
Early Thorn	08 th Apr	13 th Feb	12 th Mar	05 th Apr	28 th Mar	29 th Feb
Brindled Pug	10 th Apr	28 th Feb	12 th Mar	05 th Apr	30 th Mar	15 th Mar
Red-green Carpet	11 th Apr	21 st Mar	01 st Apr	28 th Apr	20 th Apr	26 th Apr
Engrailed	14 th Apr	28 th Feb	12 th Mar	05 th Apr	18 th Mar	02 nd Apr
Shoulder Stripe	15 th Apr	25 th Feb	24 th Feb	21 st Mar	18 th Mar	03rd Apr
Herald	16 th Apr	24 th Mar	06 th Apr	22 nd May	09 th May	06 th Feb
Brimstone	20 th Apr	16 th May	02 nd Apr	27 th Apr	02 nd May	22 nd Apr
Streamer	20 th Apr	13 th Mar	25 th Mar	09 th Apr	11 th Apr	03 rd Apr
Mottled Grey	25 th Apr	30 th Mar	15 th Mar	13 th Apr	13 th Mar	-
Water Carpet	29 th Apr	01 st Mar	20 th Mar	18 th Apr	15 th Apr	16 th Mar
Red Chestnut	02 nd May	11 th Mar	15 th Mar	19 th Mar	24 th Mar	26 th Mar
Pine Beauty	02 nd May	30 th Mar	17 th Mar	09 th Apr	21 st Apr	03 rd Apr
Angle Shades	03 rd May	30 th Mar	22 nd Apr	06 th May	18 th Mar	14 th Jan
Nut-tree Tussock	05 th May	30 th Mar	08 th Apr	06 th Apr	21 st Apr	07 th Mar
Purple Thorn	07 th May	30 th Mar	08 th Apr	27 th Apr	30 th Mar	03 rd Apr
Mottled Umber	-	02 nd Jan	02 nd Jan	22 nd Jan	-	-
Red Sword-grass	-	20 th Mar	06 th Apr	08 th Apr	04 th Apr	03 rd May
Square Spot	-	30 th Mar	16 th Apr	10 th Apr	02 nd May	18 th May
Spring Usher	-	16 th Feb	12 th Feb	05 th Feb	-	-

Butterflies	2013	2012	2011	2010	2009	2008
Red Admiral	09 th Jan	11 th Jan	12 th Mar	13 th Mar	20 th Feb	27 th Jan
Small Tortoiseshell	05 th Mar	25 th Feb	17 th Mar	05 th Mar	17 th Mar	01 st Feb
Brimstone butterfly	05 th Mar	10 th Mar	13 th Mar	08 th Apr	15 th Mar	01 st Mar
Small White	19 th Mar	21 st Mar	25 th Mar	20 th Apr	05 th Apr	22 nd Apr
Large White	20 th Mar	24 th Mar	06 th Apr	23 rd Apr	22 nd Mar	16 th Apr
Comma	06 th Apr	11 th Mar	17 th Mar	13 th Mar	17 th Mar	03 rd Apr
Peacock butterfly	17 th Apr	11 th Mar	17 th Mar	28 th Mar	16 th Mar	27 th Jan
Orange-tip	20 th Apr	23 rd Mar	05 th Apr	13 th Apr	29 th Mar	03 rd Apr
Green-veined White	20 th Apr	27 th Mar	06 th Apr	09 th Apr	08 th Apr	03 rd Apr
Holly Blue	23 rd Apr	19 th Mar	06 th Apr	09 th Apr	19 th Apr	03 rd Apr
Speckled Wood	01 st May	24 th Mar	07 th Apr	10 th Apr	10 th Apr	02 nd Apr

- 28th Feb Grey Shoulder-knot to light at Melbourne Way, Newport (Roger James)
- 5th Mar Brimstone butterfly at Cuckoo Wood, Llandogo (Gail Reynolds)
- 6th Mar Satellite, Oak Nycteoline, Clouded Drab and Twin-spotted Quaker to light at Melbourne Way, Newport (Roger James)
- 18th Mar Tawny Pinion and Yellow Horned to light at Melbourne Way, Newport (Roger James)
- 19th Mar Small White butterfly at Penallt (Ian Rabjohns)
- 20th Mar Large White butterfly at Penallt (Ian Rabjohns)
- 20th Mar Oak Beauty, Brindled Beauty and Small Quaker to light at Melbourne Way, Newport (Roger James)
- 6th Apr Comma butterfly at Chepstow (Nick Felstead)
- 8th Apr Early Thorn to light at Melbourne Way, Newport (Roger James)
- 10th Apr Brindled Pug to light at Risca. (Martin Anthony)
- 11th Apr Red-green Carpet at Haisbro Avenue, Newport (Sheila Dupé)
- 12th Apr The micro *Mompha divisella* to light at Chepstow. Only the fourth county record. (Nick Felstead)



Mompha divisella

(Nick Felstead)

- 14th Apr Engrailed moth to light at Ochryth (Richard Clarke)
- 15th Apr Shoulder Stripe to light at Risca (Martin Anthony)

16th Apr Herald moth at Wye Bridge, Chepstow (Shelley Cross)

17th Apr Peacock butterfly at Penallt (Ian Rabjohns)



19th Apr A female of the micro *Philedonides lunana* disturbed from among bilberry on the southern slopes of the Sugar Loaf. A new species for VC35, and only the second record south of Radnorshire for this northern tortricid (the other being a 1906 record from Merthyr Tydfil). (George Tordoff)

Philedonides lunana
(George Tordoff)

20th Apr Green-veined White butterflies at Risca and Cwmbran (Martin Anthony & Bob Roome)
Orange-tip butterfly at Llandogo (Gail Reynolds)
Brimstone Moth to light at Melbourne Way, Newport (Roger James)

23rd Apr Streamer to light at Ochryth (Richard Clarke)

25th Apr Emperor Moth, Lunar Marbled Brown and Mottled Pug to light at Melbourne Way, Newport (Roger James)

29th Apr Water Carpet to light at Ochryth (Richard Clarke)

1st May Speckled Wood flying in the grounds of Caldicot Castle. (Martin Anthony & Roger James)

2nd May Pine Beauty at Haisbro Avenue, Newport (Sheila Dupé)

5th May Nut-tree Tussock and Small Phoenix to light at Melbourne Way, Newport (Roger James)

Silurian Update

Between 21st April and 8th May George Tordoff and Russel Hobson, staff from Butterfly Conservation (Wales), together with several volunteers, searched for larvae of the Silurian moth.

A search on Hatterall Ridge on 21st April produced only two of the caterpillars, both very small (10-12mm), showing how the cold winter and spring had slowed their development. The bilberry foodplant was still tightly in bud. By this date in previous years the larvae were nearly fully grown (30-35mm). However, one of the larvae was about 1km to the north of previous records and is the most northerly British record, though just over the border in Herefordshire. On 8th May, 5 Silurian larvae in one small area (SO306273) extended their range on Hatterall Ridge southwards by a few hundred metres, possibly the southern limit of their distribution as no larvae were seen further south. The larvae were larger than the April ones but still not fully grown and the bilberry buds had started to unfurl, making feeding easier.

In between, on 25th April a search was made at a different locality, the Sugar Loaf mountain, but failure to find any Silurian larvae, together with previous unsuccessful attempts to find adults by summer light-trapping, strongly suggests Silurian is not present on the Sugar Loaf. Several other larvae were found, including the first county larval records for the Anomalous moth.

Gwent Distribution Maps

Accompanying this newsletter is a file containing the second batch of distribution maps for Gwent macro moths. Plotted on a 2km basis, black squares indicate records for 2000 onwards, whereas open squares indicate sites where pre-2000 records exist but no post-2000 records. Historical records which were too vague to be assigned at the 2km level have been omitted.

Martin Anthony

Dates for your Diary 2013

- Friday 31st May Moth trapping session in the grounds of Caldicot Castle, as part of the bioblitz being held the next day.
10pm to 11.30pm. ST485884
- Saturday 8th June *Go Wild Show*. 11am to 4pm. This year at Harold Finch Memorial Park (the grounds of Pontllanfraith Council Offices).
- Friday 28th June – Tuesday 2nd July Silurian Moth Trapping, Black Mountains
Dave Grundy (West Midlands) will be organising several nights of moth trapping for Silurians on the Hatterrall Ridge, Black Mountains. Trapping will require staying out all night as Silurians do not come to light until late in the night. The ridge is very exposed and warm and waterproof clothing are essential. A vehicle may be available to transport equipment and trappers to the ridge; if not then a steep climb will be required from a car park in the valley. Dates are liable to change depending on weather and will be finalised nearer the time. If you are interested, please contact Dave Grundy via email <dgcountryside@btinternet.com>.
- Thursday 8th Aug to Sat 10th Aug National Moth Night 2013. Two events are planned:
Thursday 8th August Moth trapping session at Aberbargoed NNR Education Centre.
9pm onwards. ST166996
- Saturday 10th August Moth trapping session at GWT Magor Marsh Reserve.
9pm onwards. ST425867
An appropriate venue since Gwent Wildlife Trust is celebrating its fiftieth birthday this year and Magor Marsh was its first reserve.
- Saturday 19th October Butterfly Conservation (S Wales Branch) AGM and Members' Day.
Kenfig NNR Visitor Centre.

MMBG – Contact Names and Addresses.

Secretary: Kevin Dupé
44 Gaer Park Lane
Newport
NP20 3NE

Phone 01633 216599
e-mail the.dupes@virginmedia.com

Treasurer: Sheila Dupé
18 Haisbro Avenue
Newport
NP19 7HY
Phone 01633 256475

Newsletter Editor & Recorder for
Butterflies & Macro Moths
Martin Anthoney
23 Malvern Close
Risca
Newport
NP11 6QY

Phone 01633 612272
e-mail martin@chemlep.demon.co.uk

Chairman: Roger James
44 Melbourne Way
Newport
NP20 3RF

Phone 01633 263374

e-mail smallranunculus@btinternet.com
or in case of problems
julia.james@btinternet.com

Recorder for Micro Moths
Sam Bosanquet
Dingestow Court
Monmouth
Monmouthshire
NP25 4DY

e-mail sam.bosanquet@naturalresourceswales.gov.uk