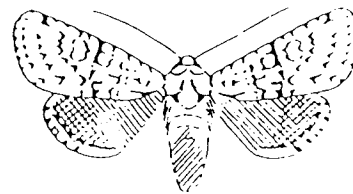


The Glamorgan Moth Recording Group

Founded 1995



Dichonia aprilina

President/Treasurer: Steve Moon
Records Secretary: Dave Gilmore
Field Meetings Sec/Newsletter Editor: Mike Powell

NEWSLETTER NO. 15 - DECEMBER 1997

AUTUMN INDOOR MEETING

23 members, guests and friends attended the meeting at Kenfig NNR Centre on 19th November.

Steve Moon briefly outlined the group's finances. Mike Powell gave a review of the field meetings held and Dave Gilmore updated everyone on the Atlas.

A book list was made available and this is enclosed with the newsletter for those who were unable to attend.

The highlight of the evening was the excellent slide show by Barry Stewart. Of particular interest was the superb shot of Sloe Pug but also Devonshire Wainscot, Feathered Brindle and Silky Wave.

NEW BOOKS

Only just published, by Viking, is the companion book to Bernard Skinner's *Moths of the British Isles*, *The Colour Identification Guide to Caterpillars of the British Isles* by Jim Porter. At £40 it is a little pricey but well worth the money.

The explosion in moth recording and identification over the last 15 years has been almost entirely attributed to the publication of Bernard Skinner's book. The same will almost certainly be true now that Jim Porter's book has been published. The book illustrates over 850 species of Macrolepidoptera (including butterflies), all photographed in natural situations upon the relevant food plants and covers all but 10 of the resident or regular migrant species occurring in the U.K. If you have the slightest interest in the identification of larvae, this book is a must.

Also due for publication by Harley Books in the early part of 1998 is *British Pug Moths - a Guide to their Identification* by Adrian Riley and the late Gaston Prior at £22.50.

This new work describes all of the 52 species occurring in Britain and Ireland illustrated with a series of superb colour photographs. This book will be most welcome in helping to sort out this most troublesome group.

PROVISIONAL ATLAS

At the indoor meeting Dave Gilmore produced some sample pages for records available of the Geometridae and 6 species of Wainscot. These are enclosed with the newsletter.

The key to the maps is as follows:-

- Filled circle : Common species, present in 10Km square.
Filled circle with number : Rare or local species present, with the number of records since 1980.
Open circle : Historical record with no known date.
Open circle with year : Historical record with year recorded.

FIELD MEETINGS 1998

At the indoor meeting it was agreed that the group would run 8 field meetings during 1998 with a mix of both Friday and Saturday evenings. There would be two meetings in both June and July and the following venues have been provisionally suggested:-

April	24th	Castell-upon-Alun
May	23rd	Kenfig NNR (joint meeting with BENHS)
June	6th	Llynfi Valley
June	26th	Cwrt-yr-Ala/Cwm George Woods
July	11th	Gower for Silky Wave
July	24th	Crymlyn Bog (joint meeting with Butterfly Conservation)
August	14th	Bargoed
September	5th	Coed-y-Wenallt

Full details will be made available early in 1998.

MAITLAND EMMET

Maitland Emmet visited the county recently, accompanied by David Slade, looking for micro-lepidoptera new for Glamorgan. Of particular interest were the leaf-miners, several of which proved to be new. A full list of species recorded will be published in a future newsletter.

NEW MEMBERS

Two new members have joined since the last newsletter.

Roy Jones, 31 Drummau Road, Birchgrove, Swansea.
Paul Parsons, 1st Floor Flat, 99 Picton Street, Maesteg.

Welcome to both of them.

Also,

Neil Jones, 31 Drummau Road, Birchgrove, Swansea, has re-subscribed.

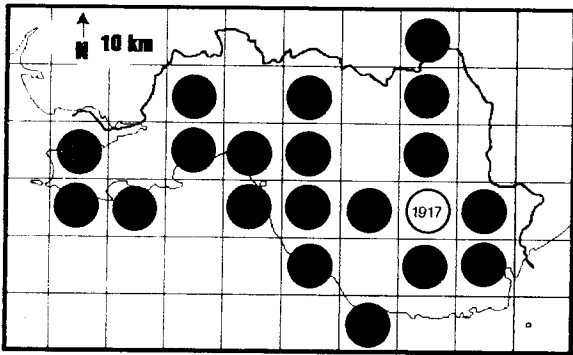
This takes the total membership to 45.

RECENT REPORTS

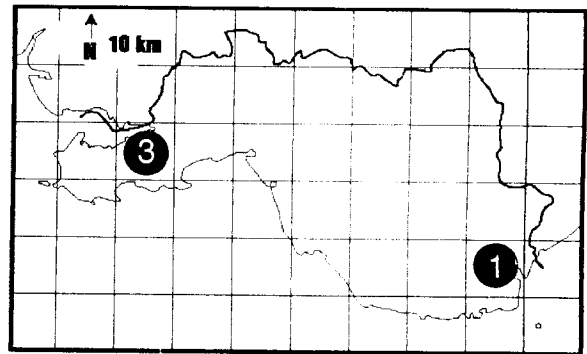
Steve Moon recently recorded *Choreutis pariana* (Apple-leaf Skeletoniser) in his Porthcawl garden. David Slade recorded *Anarsia lineatella* (Peach-twig Borer), an imported species found on Peaches. It is certainly the first record for Glamorgan and possibly for Wales.

The only other records are all from November in the Whitchurch, Cardiff area, with The Gem on 17th, Feathered Thorn on 23rd and November Moth on 26th.

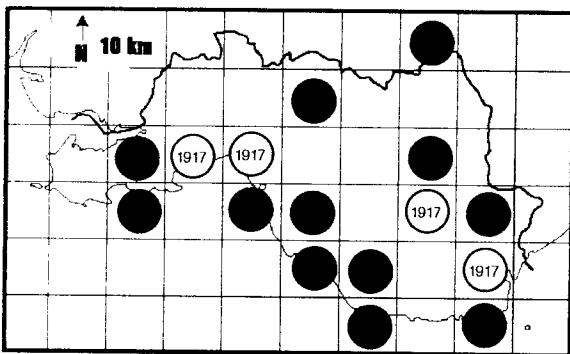
GEOMETRIDAE



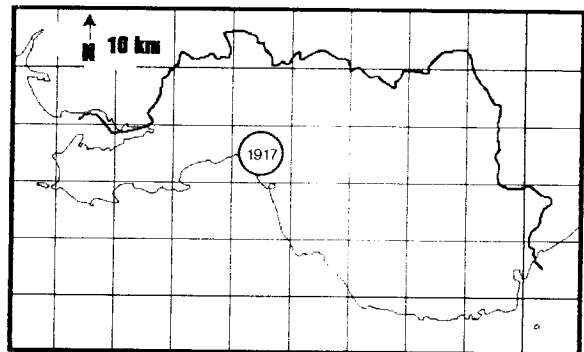
1858. The V Pug.
Chloroclystis v-ata [Haw.]
GB:Common



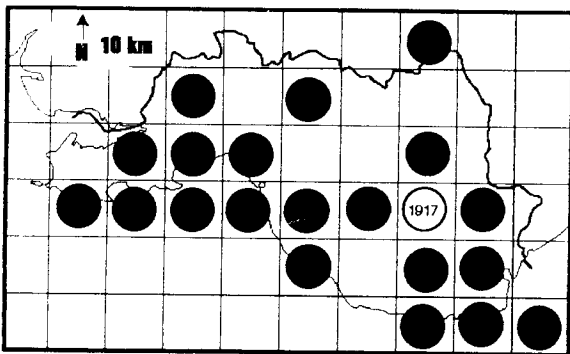
1859. Sloe Pug.
Chloroclystis chloerata [Mab.]
GB:Common



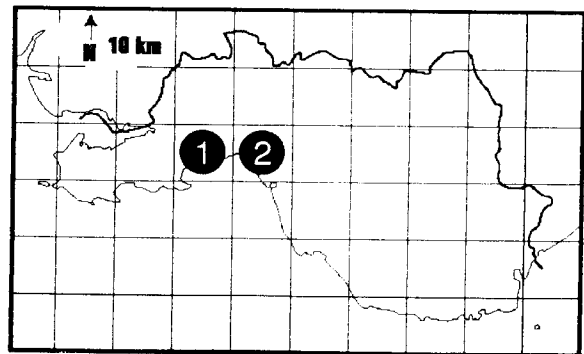
1860. Green Pug.
Chloroclystis rectangularata [Linn.]
GB:Common



1861. Bilberry Pug.
Chloroclystis debiliata [Hb.]
GB:Notable Na

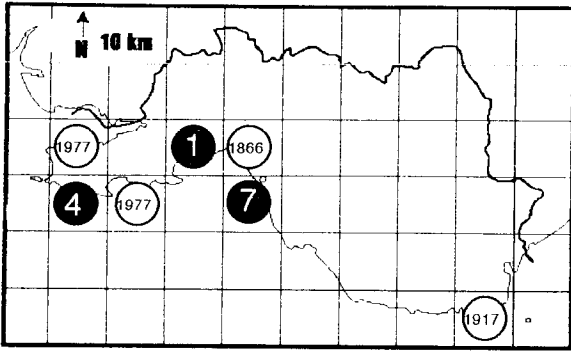


1862. Double-striped Pug.
Gymnoscelis rufifasciata [Haw.]
GB:Common

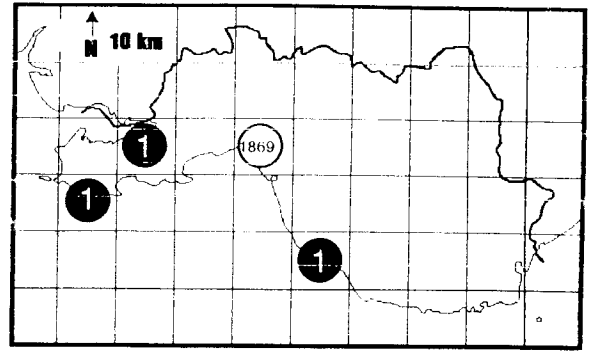


1863. Dentated Pug.
Anticollix sparsata [Treit.]
GB:Notable Na

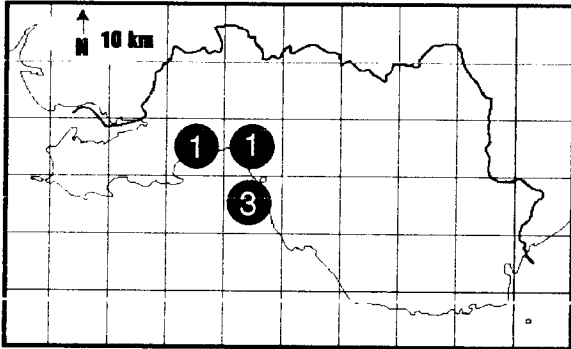
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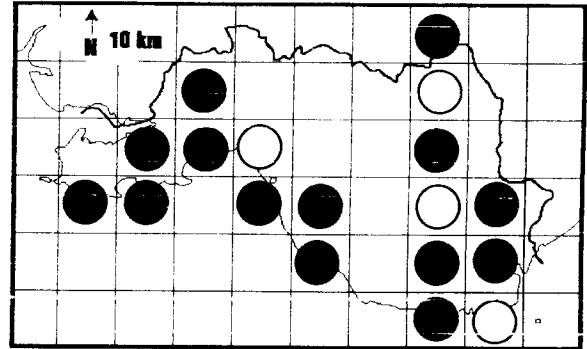
2201. Shore Wainscot.
Mythimna litoralis [Curt.]
GB: Notable Nb



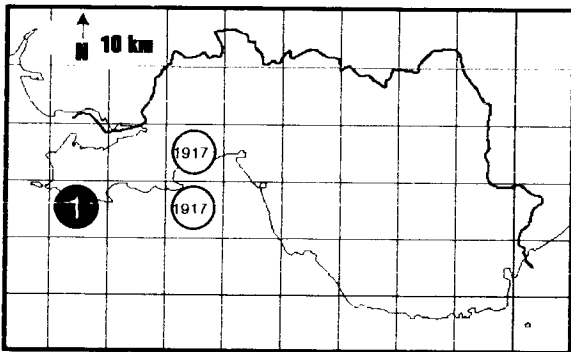
2203. White Speck.
Mythimna unipuncta [Haw.]
GB: Migrant



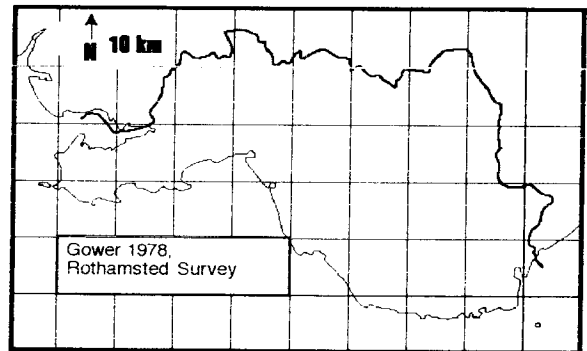
2204. Obscure Wainscot.
Mythimna obsoleta [Hb.]
GB: Local



2205. Shoulder-striped Wainscot.
Mythimna comma [Linn.]
GB: Common



2206. Devonshire Wainscot.
Mythimna putrescens [Hb.]
GB: Notable Na



2209. Flame Wainscot.
Senta flammea [Curt.]
GB: Notable Na

Modern Moth Recording in Glamorgan

A Personal View

My interest in moths dates back to when I was a small boy, seeing these funny little butterfly things bashing themselves on our living room windows in the summer. So I decided to find out. Having saved up my pocket money, I went out and bought the Observer's Book of Larger Moths for the astonishing price of half a crown [twelve and half pence] in 1964. This, along with the Observers Book of Birds still hold pride of place in my library. By the seventies my interest waned a little, due to sex, drugs and rock and roll. Come the eighties though, it was back on track and picking up momentum. Each autumn we go on our annual pilgrimage to the Isles of Scilly in search of rare birds. On occasions migrant moths make a pleasant change from birding and sometimes they hit the headlines there, then its over to the Post Office on St. Agnes and see what little delights were caught the night before. This really whetted my appetite again for moths and it wasn't long before I wanted to see what was really in my own county, Glamorgan.

In 1992 I found out that they had a mercury vapour light trap at Kenfig. I spoke to Steve Moon, who was the Warden there at the time, about letting me use it. This, Steve willingly agreed to do, as he had run the trap periodically there since 1976 and was more than pleased to help. I set my first trap on the 10th of June and Wow!, I was well and truly hooked. This was marvelous stuff, I couldn't believe it all these moths packed into this trap, ticks galore. From then on it became a regular thing every week, sometimes twice if Kath, my wife [a devout moth hater] would let me out to play.

It soon became necessary to record all this data on a more scientific basis. I asked Steve if there was a Kenfig moth list. All there was he said, were dates next to names in their Bradley & Fletcher Logbook. This Steve agreed was not very satisfactory and we both set about finding all the old records and listing them into a format that would be user-friendly to all visiting entomologist's who would require such information in the future.

To this end we must thank Carol Newbury who basically sat down and listed all the moths ever trapped at Kenfig, which took up weeks of her placement there.

I then wondered if there was a Glamorgan moth list I could refer to, and to my utter astonishment I found that the last list ever compiled for the lepidoptera of the county, was by Norton & Hallett, published in the Natural History of Glamorgan, 1936. Before that, there was Hallett's list to be found in the Transaction's of the Cardiff Naturalists' Society published way back in 1917. This, I thought, was not really good enough for the most diverse and populated county in Wales. Having spoken to Steve, he suggested I contact Nigel Ajax-Lewis at the Glamorgan Wildlife Trust to see what he had on file. This turned out to be the lead I needed. To his credit Nigel had put down on archive all the moth records he could lay his hands on, which was all Hallett's list and quite a lot more besides.

I decided the obvious choice was to follow on from Hallett and use his list as the basis for any modern recording. Then add to it all the species that have been recorded in Glamorgan since 1936. This was partially achieved by going to National Museum of Wales and digging through records there. Then chasing up the Biological Records Centre, which just to awkward debanded in 1982 and the Rothamsted Survey, which was set up by Ministry of Agriculture to monitor pest species of moths found in their

traps. This last avenue proved to be brilliant source of records, adding many new species to county list.

With all the trapping now taking place in Glamorgan and the ever growing band of county "mothers" we decided to set up our own moth group. This was done in the autumn of 1995, when we founded the Glamorgan Moth Recording Group. This now has a membership of over forty people, countywide. The main object of the group was to record and monitor moth species and populations within Glamorgan, then to put that information onto a database for future generations to access. We then thought how this would best be achieved. To this end we all agreed that the taking and killing of specimens was not what the club was really about, as the vast majority of species could, with the aid of all the modern literature now available be indentified successfully purely on wing formula, size and shape. As for moths that need to be killed, to determine them to species and sex we were acutely aware that this would cause a probelm and it was decided that it if a moth had to be killed, it was to be done as discreetly as possible, as not upset members of the group who totally disagree with the collecting of moths for specimens. I for one know, that if a moth cannot be identified, which thankfully now is few and far between especially when on moth group evenings there is usually someone on hand who can identify it. Failing that Barry Stewart, Martin White or myself will take the moth home, study and photograph it, then release it either back at the orignal site or somewhere similar.

This method, in some circles is not considered the correct way to record lepidoptera, and for truly scientific purposes, certain moths need to taken and killed as to retain a voucher specimen for future entomologist's to determine their authenticity. This, we in the club know and do appreciate, but as this goes against the general feeling within the group it was agreed that this was to be the extreme example and not the rule.

You certainly wouldn't consider shooting a rare American warbler just to see if it was a female Bay-breasted or Chestnut-sided for two reasons, one, I like to think that were now past that mentality and two, you would be lynched by a lot of very angry birders.

Since the inception of the club, we have produced a moth list for both the macro and micro moths of Glamorgan [the first since 1936], and at present we are well on the way to producing a Provisional Atlas of the macro-lepidoptera of Glamorgan, which will be published sometime next year, hopefully late summer. This task hasn't been easy, as over twenty thousand records have been processed sofar by either Nigel, Barry and myself, and before this project is finished I estimate over fifty thousand records will have been sorted. The vast majority of these have been collected over the last five years by members of our group, whose contributions however small, have increased our knowledge of moth recording within our county.

I still get a real kick out of emptying a moth-trap either after a warm barmy night in July or a rather nippy autumnal evening in September. I often think that moths are a much maligned group of animals, seen only as fluttery things that scare females, and quite a lot of men too, I may add. Because, if you only look closely at some of these creatures you will be amazed at just how beautiful they can be. Take our embelm; the Merveille du Jour, I rest my case.

David Gilmore.

CURRENT BOOK LIST

- | | | | |
|----|---|---|--------------------|
| 1. | Fowles, Adrian | (1988) The Moths of Ceredigion | £ 6.00 |
| 2. | Goater, Barry | (1986) British Pyralid Moths, A guide to their identification,
Harley Books,
ISBN 0-946589-08-9 | £22.50 |
| 3. | Heath, John & Emmet, A. Maitland, The Moths and Butterflies of Great Britain and Ireland, Harley Books. | | |
| | | <u>Hardback</u> | <u>Softback</u> |
| | Volume 1 | Micropterigidae to Heliozelidae | £55.00 £27.50 |
| | 2 | Cossidae to Heliodinidae | £60.00 £30.00 |
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| | 9 | Sphingidae to Noctuidae | £55.00 £27.50 |
| | 10 | Noctuidae and Agaristidae | £55.00 £27.50 |
| 4. | Horton, G.A. Neil | (1994) Monmouthshire Lepidoptera,
The Butterflies and Moths of Gwent
ISBN 0-9513977-5-3 | £26.75 |
| 5. | Pittaway, A.R. | (1993) The Hawkmoths of the Western Palearctic,
Harley Books,
ISBN 0-946589-21-6
(Special Offer via Subbuteo Books | £49.95
£36.00) |
| 6. | Porter, Jim | (1997) The Colour Identification Guide to Caterpillars of the
British Isles, Viking Books,
ISBN 0-670-87509-0 | £40.00 |
| 7. | Skinner, Bernard | (1984) Colour Identification Guide to Moths of the British Isles,
Viking Books,
ISBN 0-670-80354-5 | £40.00 |
| 8. | Young, Mark | (1997) The Natural History of Moths, Poyser,
ISBN 0-85661-103-4 | £25.00 |

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