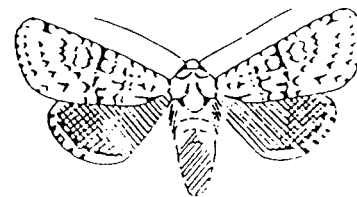


The Glamorgan Moth Recording Group

Founded 1995

President: Steve Moon
Recorder (West): Barry Stewart
Recorder (East): Dave Gilmore
Field Meetings Sec./Newsletter Editor: Mike Powell
Treasurer: Stefan Golaszewski



Dichonia aprilina

NEWSLETTER No. 26- NOVEMBER 1998

INDOOR MEETING, WEDNESDAY 11th NOVEMBER

A reminder that the Autumn indoor meeting takes place at 7.30pm for 8.00pm at the Reserve Centre, Kenfig NNR. All members and guests are very welcome.

The member's weekend mentioned in the last newsletter now looks likely to be at Portland, Dorset on either a late June or early July 1999 weekend. If you are unable to attend the meeting, but wish to book a provisional place, pending more details, then please advise Mike Powell ahead of the 11th November. Agenda for the meeting is enclosed.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Dave Slade has changed his address to 180, Woodville Road, Cathays, Cardiff, CF2 4NW, telephone (01222) 640753.

Barry and Sandra Stewart have changed their telephone number to 01792 539447.

RECENT REPORTS-OCTOBER 1998

Ian Tew recorded Scarce Bordered Straw on 1st October at Mount Pleasant whilst Barry & Sandra Stewart recorded Delicate, Pearly Underwing, Neglected Rustic and 28 Dark Sword-grass at Overton the following night. Stefan Golaszewski, Mike Powell and Dave Gilmore continued the survey at Draethen during October and on 8th recorded Red-green Carpet, Brick, Yellow-line Quaker and several *Epirrita* sp. (November Moth sp.) On 15th Mike & Dave recorded 17 species in the Cwrt-yr-Ala/Dinas Powis/Lavernock area with the highlights being Satellite and Green-brindled Crescent at Cwrt-yr-Ala Wood and Brick and Figure of Eight at Lavernock. The generally poor weather during October resulted in little of interest reported from the various Cardiff garden traps, with the best reported being Blairs Shoulderknot on 3 dates in Llanishen and Green-brindled Crescent on 15th in Roath.

Jeff Williams had a surprise when he pulled into Culverhouse Cross, Cardiff for petrol on 17th, a Merveille du Jour awaited him on the pump! This was the first post 1980 record for ST17.

Highlights at Kenfig NNR during September and October were Spruce Carpet [4th site record], Currant Pug [3rd site rec.], Dusky Thorn [2nd site rec.], Vapourer [9th site rec.], Feathered Gothic [7th site rec.], Blair's Shoulder-knot [2nd site rec., first being 14.10.92], Large Ranunculus [2nd site rec.], Large Wainscot [9th site rec.], Vines Rustic, Yellow Belle & Feathered Ranunculus. Migrants recorded included Scarce Bordered Straw, Gem, Pearly Underwing and Dark Sword-grass.

MIGRANT NEWS

More *Convolvulus* Hawkmoths have been reported in West Glamorgan. An adult was at Penmaen Workshops but a larvae found at Oxwich Point was only the second larval record in the county ever. The first was as long ago as 1898 in Penarth. This year has been the best ever for this species in Glamorgan with four records, one in August & three in September.

The second Vestal of the year was reported from the Gower, the first records since 1995 and finally a belated record of a Humming-bird Hawkmoth from Corntown Quarry in August.

Eight single Scarce Bordered Straw were reported during a 7 day period at the end of September as follows, 27th September, Kenfig and Pilton, 29th, Nash Point, 30th, Gorseinon, 1st October, Rest Bay, Mount Pleasant and Pilton, 3rd, Pilton. Again this is the best year ever for this rare migrant species, beating the four records in 1996.

BRISTOL & DISTRICT MOTH GROUP

Bristol & District Moth Group are holding their Winter indoor members meeting on 23rd November at Ashton Court Visitors Centre, Ashton Court Estate, Long Ashton Nr. Bristol.

OVER THE BORDER

During a trip to Kent on 16th October to see a Sociable Plover, a rare wader from the Steppes of Russia, Mike Powell and Dave Gilmore dropped into the Bird Observatory at Sandwich Bay.

The assistant warden happily showed us the contents of the previous night's catch still in the Robinson trap. Nothing too rare but a couple of local specialities, namely Dusky-lemon Sallow & The Mallow. Other interesting species that would not have looked out of place in the Kenfig NNR trap were Shuttle-shaped Dart, Green-brindled Crescent, Feathered Ranunculus, Beaded Chestnut and Large Wainscot. The trap is run on most nights, so if you find yourself in the area, drop in to see if anything of interest was caught the previous night. The Observatory is on the right hand side of the approach road to the Sandwich Estate, about 1.5 miles east of Sandwich town, follow signs for the golfcourses.

BRITISH WILDLIFE Vol.10 No.1 OCTOBER 1998

The latest issue of BW has an excellent 10-page article by Peter Marren entitled The English Names of Moths. He provides an insight into the history of how many species acquired their rather curious names. Most were named due to their appearance during the larval stage. For example, the oldest English name for any particular species is the "walbode" or woolly bear, the furry caterpillar of the Garden Tiger, probably named by Mouffet in the 16th century. Another naturalist, Albin named The Lobster Moth such due to the "resemblance of a crustaceous fish", he only ever saw the caterpillar! Albin also penned the name Hawkmoths, so named because they "are very swift of flight", though perhaps the hovering ability of some species reminded him of a Kestrel.

James Petiver coined the first English names on record from 1695 onwards but virtually none of his names are currently in use. Try to work out the modern names of the following 6 species [answers at the end of this newsletter] :

- 1 Scarlet Royal Leopard
- 2 Semicolon Moth
- 3 Great Reddish Moth Drone

- 4 Tilman Bobart's Straw Moth
- 5 Mottled Nettle Moth
- 6 Hackney Broom Moth

The article then looks at the works of other great entomologists of the 1700's such as Benjamin Wilkes who provided many familiar names, often based upon foodplants, and looks at the Aurelian influence around 1730. Many members of the Aurelian Society were poets, artists as well as skilled craftsmen and took inspiration from everyday 18th century objects resulting in the quakers, rustics, satins and silks. The 1775 Aurelian's Pocket Companion by Moses Harris lists 362 moths, most by their present-day name and for the first time bars, borders, beauties, burnets, ermines and highfliers appear in print. Noctuids tended to be named after distinctive wing patterns or textures thus "brindled" refers to flakes of a contrasting colour on a buff background, "brocade" is a fabric with raised patterns, "darts" having a distinctive sharp black streak and "shears" having a pair of curved lines like simple 18th century gardening implements. The grainy wings of "wainscots" apparently reminded people of wooden panelling now back in fashion. Modest little brown moths with not a lot going for them were called clays, quakers or rustics!

Pugs it seems were named by A.D.Haworth due to the splayed hindwing being shorter than the forewing, just as the lower lip of a pug dog is shorter than its upper lip. Now you know.

The author then goes on to explain how moths such as Clifden Nonpareil, Mother Shipton and Yellow Tussock amongst others were named plus some nonsensical ones such as Horse Chestnut, Fern and Viper's Bugloss that were named after the wrong foodplant.

The appendix lists alphabetically all 15 of the great personages commemorated in the English names of moths from Ashworth to Webb sadly none of them Welsh.

British Wildlife is published bi-monthly and is available by subscription of £17.95/annum from BW Publishing, Lower Barn, Rooks Farm, Rotherwick, Hook, Hants, RG27 9BG although single back copies are available at £3.50/each.

PORTABLE GENERATORS

The advert alongside recently appeared in the Western Mail. The company are able to offer a range of units suitable for running a moth-trap, and have offered the EG650 model at £400 plus VAT (£470), down from £499 plus VAT.

More information on other models will appear in a future Newsletter.

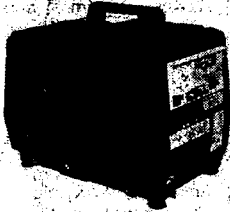
ORDNANCE SURVEY EXPLORER SERIES

The OS Pathfinder series will be familiar to everyone, but they are due to be replaced by 2003 by the new Explorer series. Explorer maps (they have orange covers) will eventually cover the whole of the country, completely replacing the old red covered Pathfinder series. They have geographically-based lines wherever possible with tourist information added and cover up to 800 sq.km. and priced at £5.25. So far around 120 have been produced with Explorer 151, Cardiff & Bridgend, 165, Swansea, 166, Rhondda & Merthyr and 10 (to be re-numbered), Gower covering Glamorgan.

The detail, as you would expect is a significant improvement over the Pathfinders, but to achieve this the maps are double sided.

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MY GARDEN

Atropos run an occasional feature on gardens around the country that have, by way of position or habitat, produced great rarities or high totals of species recorded. We cannot all be lucky enough to have a site in that league on our doorstep, but any garden, no matter where it is situated, can produce some interesting records, improve identification skills, and add records to the county moth database.

My own garden is situated in north Cardiff, roughly 3 miles from the city centre, and measures approximately 30ft wide x 50ft long. Its greatest asset from a mothing point of view is that it backs onto a heavily wooded railway embankment which also contains a small stream.

My original attempts at trapping involved standing under our patio spotlight with a net catching anything that was lured in, and occasional experiments with wine ropes, but the acquisition of a Heath trap in mid 1997 enabled me to trap regularly for longer periods, and remain on speaking terms with my wife!

The trap is placed on the (flat) roof of our shed, which, although not recommended, does elevate it above the fence line and into the wooded area.

Although many of the moths caught are of the commonest species such as **Brimstone**, **Large Yellow Underwing** or **Square-spot Rustic**, it has also produced some less common species such as **Double Lobed**, **Old Lady** (which is particularly attracted to wine ropes), **Oak Nycteoline** and **Round-winged Muslin**.

The garden macro moth list currently stands at 155, among which 15 species are categorised as of local status including **Pale Pinion**, **Peacock Moth**, **August Thorn**, **Scarce Silver-lines**, **The Gothic** and **Vine's Rustic**.

My family's and neighbours' interest in moths has been whetted by the more ostentatious species - **Lime**, **Elephant** and **Poplar Hawk-moth**, **Large Emerald** and **Swallow-tailed Moth**.

A great benefit of garden trapping has been the opportunity to improve my i.d. skills, as new or unusual specimens can be brought indoors and examined under good light with the benefit of a guide. 36 of the species caught have been completely new to me at the time. I have also discovered the subtleties of species such as **Black Rustic** and **Pale Tussock** which can be lost among the large numbers of moths caught at some GMRG meetings.

I live in hope of species such as Red Underwing, Garden Tiger and Merveille du Jour which should occur in the area. Perhaps I need to increase the power of the light - now where is that entomological catalogue!!

Stefan Golaszewski

What about your garden? Let's hear from you. Submit articles to Mike Powell for publication in a future newsletter.

OLD MOTH NAMES

- | | |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1 Scarlet Royal Tiger | Garden Tiger |
| 2 Semicolon Moth | Drinker |
| 3 Great Reddish Drone Moth | Broad-bordered Bee Hawkmoth |
| 4 Tilman Bobart's Straw Moth | Brimstone Moth |
| 5 Mottled Nettle Moth | Small Magpie |
| 6 Hackney Broom Moth | Frosted Yellow |

**GLAMORGAN MOTH RECORDING GROUP
INDOOR MEETING, WEDNESDAY 11th NOVEMBER
RESERVE CENTRE, KENFIG NNR.**

AGENDA

- OPENING ADDRESS STEVE MOON
- TREASURERS REPORT STEFAN GOLASZEWSKI /
STEVE MOON.
- FIELD MEETINGS, 1998 MIKE POWELL
- FIELD MEETINGS, 1999 MIKE POWELL
Friday 23rd or Saturday 24th April
Friday 21st or Saturday 22nd May
Friday 4th or Saturday 5th June
*Friday 25th or Saturday 26th June
*Friday 9th or Saturday 10th July
Friday 30th or Saturday 31st July
Friday 20th or Saturday 21st August
Friday 10th or Saturday 11th September
- RECORDING HIGHLIGHTS, WEST GLAM. BARRY STEWART
- RECORDING HIGHLIGHTS, MID/SOUTH GLAM. DAVE GILMORE
- PROVISIONAL ATLAS DAVE GILMORE
- MEMBERS WEEKEND TO PORTLAND MIKE POWELL
Friday 18th/Sunday 20th June or
Friday 25th/Sunday 27th June or
Friday 2nd/Sunday 4th July or
Friday 9th/Sunday 11th July or
Friday 16th/Sunday 18th July.
- 1999 CONSTANT EFFORT SITE, COG MOORS DAVE GILMORE /
NEAR COGAN / MID WEEK MEETINGS. MIKE POWELL
- NEWSLETTER, REQUEST FOR ARTICLES MIKE POWELL
- ANY OTHER BUSINESS ALL