

CARMARTHENSHIRE MOTH & BUTTERFLY GROUP

NEWSLETTER No 17

Summer 2013

Editor: Ian Morgan

INTRODUCTION

It has been a peculiar year, with a very cold spring which both depressed numbers of moths and butterflies as well as discouraging those of us who started trapping in late March and April. Reference to various moth group websites and blogs show that this situation was widespread throughout Britain. Even as late as June, it seemed that we might be going to experience another summer of mediocre levels of sunshine and general gloomy outlooks. However, in July especially, temperatures soared and moth numbers responded positively with many of us having generous numbers in our traps. In terms of precipitation, rainfall levels have been low, thankfully contrasting with the sodden year of 2012.

The year so far was noteworthy in that a blogsite was established and we sincerely thank Colin Jones for his enthusiasm and efforts on this matter. Readers are urged to post interesting sightings or photos on the blog so that our existence as a group will be more widely known; currently only a few `regulars` are mostly posting. We also need new members to ensure better coverage, as Carmarthenshire has a lot to offer in terms of habitat and moths and there`s much to be found out! Hopefully too, some lapsed recorders will re-start trapping as well as new enthusiasts – we need your help.

It is intended to bring the next Newsletter out sometime in the winter period and that issue will summarise interesting records from August to that date. A selection of some moth records made so far this year is given below, and I apologise if any noteworthy records have been missed from the account. Please note that the period under review in this newsletter is to the end of July and that all Moth Night highlights will appear in the winter edition.

Anyone willing to write contributions for future issues of the Newsletter –even short notes- will be welcomed, otherwise the newsletter will again be almost a `one man show`! Thanks to Dave Bannister for his butterfly contribution below.

Some Moth Highlights 2013 (to 31st July)

- Ian Morgan

NB. Scientific names are only given at the first mention of the species. Similarly, grid references are only given at the first use of a locality. Thanks to various recorders for use of their photographs: any un-attributed photos (and records) are otherwise mine.

As mentioned above, there was a very slow start to activity in Spring 2013, and comments appearing on the newly installed Carmarthenshire Moth and Butterfly blogsite reflected on the very low numbers of moths. Mat Ridley (MR) had the honour of being the first member to use the blog, with his records of typical early spring species, **dotted border** *Agriopis marginaria*, **chestnut** *Conistra vaccinii* and **pale brindled beauty** *Philagia pilosaria* at his home trap site at Bryn Llinos, Carmel 22/589164 on 8/3. The next record of interest (to me at least, as I`ve never trapped this species!), was Chris Handoll`s (CH) **grey shoulder-knot** *Lithophane ornitopus lactipennis* at his home at Maenol, (north of Pencader 22/449382) on 22/3. I personally did not start trapping until 1/4, due to `the Arctic weather`, as I put it at the time. On the 3rd of April, moderate sunshine tempted me to venture up to Cencoed-uchaf, a farm NW of Llanelli where **orange underwings** *Archieras parthenias* are usually to be had on invasive young birches colonising the entrance-field to the farm 22/485032, but I only managed to see one individual. A few days later (8/4), MR had a **satellite** *Eulipsia transversa* at Carmel, a moth that is seemingly rather sparsely distributed in low numbers in

the county. Sam Bosanquet (SB) was evidently `on guard` for moths at a wedding reception at Danygraig, Llanllawddog 22/468285, as he spotted an **orange underwing** overhead. This, and the afore-mentioned Cencoed-uchaf record, was the only one made this year. Sam had **white-markeds** *Cerastis leucographica* at his home, Cnwc y Llwyn (near Brechfa 22/515311), on 1/5 and on 6/5, as well as an **emperor moth** turning up in his bathroom on 2/5!

Nothing was carrying on very slowly throughout May, but MR was pleased to have his first **puss moth** *Cerura vinula* at Carmel on 21/5, and Colin Jones (CJ) was perhaps even more pleased to have a **lime hawk-moth** *Mimas tilae* at his home trap site at Troserch Woods 22/553033 on 8/6; there are several records from the south-east of the county, such as Tyrwaun, Pwll 22/469013, but this is the first record for SN50, I believe. Jon Baker has also had it at Johnstown, Carmarthen in a previous year.



The Carmel puss moth: Mat Ridley



.....and the lime hawk-moth caught by Colin Jones at Troserch

It was good that Steve Lucas (SL) at Betws 22/642121 resumed some trapping this year and he reported 5 **double lines** *Mythimna turca* on 6/6; it was to prove seemingly a good year for this moth.



Double line (a Pwll specimen)

On the other side of the Aman Valley, a **lead belle** *Scotopteryx mucronata* ssp. *umbrifera* was netted in daytime at Waun y Ddraenen 22/750153 on the southern flank of Mynydd Du 22/750153, 6/6 (IKM).



The Upper Twrch Valley, not far from the lead belle sighting

On 8/6 Barry Stewart trapped at the Wildfowl & Wetlands Trust's Centre at Penclacwydd (21/53-98-), south-east of Llanelli. He had a successful night, recording 79 species including **yellow-barred brindle** *Acasis viretata* x2, the aspen-feeding **seraphim** *Lobophora halterata* x2, **dark sword grass** *Agrotis ipsolon* x1, **dog`s-tooth** *Laconobia suasia* x30 and **Vine`s rustic** *Hoplodrina ambigua* x3; several micros of interest were also recorded and some photos are included below.



Mompha locupletella at WWT Penclacwydd – Barry Stewart



Caloptila syringella, another superb photo by Barry Stewart



Seraphim at WWT Penclacwydd – Barry Stewart

Isabel Macho (IMa) continued her trapping at Hafan, Cilycwm 22/753400 this year and was rewarded by some good records on 18/6; they included a **common lutestring** *Ochropacha duplaris*, **pale-shouldered brocade** *Lacanobia thalassina*, **beautiful golden y** *Autographa pulchrina* and an early migrant **silver y** *Autographa gamma*. Steve Lucas had some more **double lines** at Betws on that date too. The next night, Sally Hall at Nant y Garreg, Saron 22/372365 had her first **privet hawk-moth** *Sphinx ligustri*, an **oblique carpet** *Orthonama vittata*, **lobster moth** *Stauropus fagi* and **alder** *Acronicta alni*, amongst other species.

MR ventured out with his trap on 28/6, setting it up at Maesquarre (SN653233, NE of Ffairfach) in the flower-rich and wood edge garden of Geoff and Mary Williams, and was rewarded by the capture of a **Blomer`s rivulet** *Discoloxia blomeri*, an attractive wych elm feeder (as a caterpillar).



Blomer`s rivulet: Mat Ridley

The next night, CH had his first (of the year) **double dart** *Graphiphora augur* at Maenol, a scarce Carmarthenshire species that he gets regularly, sometimes in good numbers; I've only seen this moth once or twice (a wet field at Pontnewydd near Kidwelly was one), so it shows that each of our home trap sites may have its special moths.

It was not until 30/6 that I came out of my personal stupor and started trapping away from home, having wasted a couple of spring months in the process – black marks for me! I went to trap at Morfa-uchaf, Ferryside 22/370123, a potentially good area of sand/saltmarsh habitat at the edge of the Afon Tywi. The results were a bit disappointing however, with no saltmarsh specialities. But, no doubt encouraged by his first `away-from-home trap` at Maesquarre, MR turned his attention to another locality – Felin y Coed, Taliaris 22/643267 (N of Llandeilo) on 2/7, when he recorded 26 **Brussels lace** *Clerodes lichnaria*, 15 **double lines** and many more. Well done, Mat!

The next night I had more luck at Pembrey Burrows 21/412995, where I noted 7 **shore wainscots** *Mythimna litoralis* and 4 **sand darts** *Agrotis ripae* in the actinic trap set amongst the dunes.



Sand darts and l-album wainscots at Pembrey Burrows

A couple of other good records made at this period were CH's **gothic** *Naenia typica* at Maenol on 5/7; my **waved carpet** *Hydrelia sylvata* at Cwm Dulais (Stradey Woods, 22/487036) on the same date; a **four-dotted footman** *Cybosia mesomella* by CH on 6/7 and his **July belle** *Scotopteryx lurida* ssp. *plumbaria* and no less than 14 **double darts** counted by him on 7/7.

The same night at Tyrwaun, Pwll 22/469013 yielded a **poplar grey** *Acrionicta megacephala*, **miller** *Acrionicta leporina* and **silky wainscot** *Chilodes maritimus*, with (on 8/7) another **poplar grey** at Kymer`s Canal Pond 22/403062, and yet another **gothic** at Glan Lan yr Afon LNR 22/398069 (both

near Kidwelly). A **double line** and **small elephant hawk-moth** *Deilephila porcellus* turned up at Tyrwaun the next night (all IKM), whilst CJ was pleased to have a **scallop shell** *Rheumaptera undulata*, new to his trapping site, at Troserch, again on 9/7.

I was lucky to flush a **smoky wave** *Scopula ternata* from heather and bilberry atop the Millstone Grit ridge 22/583158 near Garn-big, SW of Carmel village on 10/7, as this is a rarely recorded moth of NE Carmarthenshire`s uplands. Thanks to SB for confirming the identification. Quite a few of us were trapping on 12/7, as the nights were becoming good for moths, with high temperatures both by day and night. That night, I was at Morfa-uchaf, Ferryside, where I had 15 **lackey moths** *Malacosoma neustria* in one trap, as well as 7 **round-winged muslins** *Thumata senex*; CH had a good night at Maenol where he had a **cloaked carpet** *Euphyia biangulata* and some moths that he had not had for some years, such as **privet hawk-moth** and **sandy carpet** *Perizoma flavofasciata*. Over at Nant y Garreg, Saron, Sally Hall (SH) had a **double line** and **green silver lines** *Pseudoips prasinana*. MR at Carmel had a bumper number of **double lines** (x16), **coronets** *Craniophora ligustri* (x10) and **burnished brass** *Diachrysa chrysitis* (x11) amongst other species. On 15/7, CH also had good numbers of **double darts** (x12) and also a **lilac beauty** *Apeira syringaria*. A **poplar grey** turned up again at Tyrwaun, Pwll (IKM) and another at the other end of the county –at Cilycwm – for Isabel Macho. Mat Ridley was back at Maesquarre in the Tywi Valley, where he had two localised wych elm feeders – another **Blomer`s rivulet** and a **clouded magpie** *Abraxas sylvata* and also a wandering **four-dotted footman** and 6 **double lines**. At Tyrwaun, Pwll on 16/7, an immaculate **phoenix** *Eulithes prunata* graced the trap.



Phoenix at Tyrwaun, Pwll.

There were really big numbers of moths in traps left overnight on Pembrey Burrows on 17/7, with one positioned in young dunes having no less than 21 **garden tigers** *Arctia caja* (mostly on vegetation around the trap) and 12 **shore** and 26 **smoky wainscots** *Mythimna impura* inside, as well as other species such as 19 **scarce footmen** *Eilema complana*, 14 **brown-line bright-eyes** *Mythimna conigera* and 7 lackey moths. The plume moth *Maraesmarcha lunaedactyla* was abundant over the dunes at dusk and with lesser numbers at dawn. Most of these species were also seen in another nearby trap at SN418002 (in a different 10km square).



The plume moth M.lunaedactyla, which feeds on rest-harrow



Scarce footman – not infrequent on the sandy coast

SB started `moth trapping proper` on 18/7 and he was rewarded by a **waved carpet** as well as some good micros, a couple of which at least are thought to be new to Carmarthenshire. A photo of *Ptycholmoides aeriferanus* taken by Sam is shown below.



Ptycholmoides aeriferanus at Cnwc y Llwyn, Brechfa: Sam Bosanquet.

My overnight actinic traps left out east of Burry Port 22/454003 on 19/7 were again full of moths on 19/7, with one on the coast having an **l-album wainscot** *Mythimna l-album* (scarce localised coastal

species in Carmarthenshire) and a **dingy shears** *Parastichtis ypsilon* (mostly a rare species of SE Carmarthenshire), amongst a backdrop of many commoner species.



Dingy shears, caught on the coast, east of Burry Port

The other trap, positioned overlooking a reedbed/fen at Dyfatty Marsh 22/457009, had **silky wainscots** and a wandering **sand dart**, the latter being particularly nicely patterned and coloured (see photo below).



The prettiest sand dart in Carmarthenshire?

All of us were having good moth numbers in our traps during the July hot spell; with Sally Hall, for example, having a very healthy 83 macro species in her Saron trap on 20/7! These included another **gothic**, a **striped wainscot** *Mythimna pudorina* and **small rufous** *Coenobia rufa*. Maenol had **northern spinach** *Eulithis populata*, **waved carpet**, **lilac beauty** and **cloaked carpet** as pleasing highlights of CH's trap on 20 & 21/7.

A few days` later (22/7), one of my actinics was down at Kymer`s Canal Pond near Kidwelly Quay, where a **crescent** *Celaena leucostigma* was perhaps the most interesting moth, whilst over at Glan yr Afon (on the opposite side of the Gwendraeth Fach river) frequent **bird cherry ermines** *Yponomeuta evonymella* were probably part of an immigration that had been noted elsewhere in southern Britain. The tortricid micro *Endothea quadrimaculata* was also collected (det. Barry Stewart). An **Archer`s dart** *Agrotis vestigialis* turned up in my home Tyrwaun trap on 23/7 whilst

Steve Lucas had a **scarlet tiger** *Callimorpha dominula* in his Betws trap on 24/7. About the same period, Isabel Macho caught a **gothic** in her Cilycwm garden trap.

A visit to Allt Rhyd y Groes and the Pysgotwr valley on 26/7 has been already described in some detail on the blog site, with moth highlights including confirmation of the survival of **chimney sweeper** moths *Odezia atrata* at a meadow site (22/764481) where it had been last noted in July 1997, and a sighting of **scarce silver y** *Syngrapha interrogationis*, with one observed at very close range near Cribyn Du 22/752491 before it flew off and a possible second individual seen later on. **Northern spinach** moths were also amongst the bilberry swaths. The uplands are certainly deserving of more `mothy exploration`! (all IKM).



Chimney sweeper at Allt Rhyd y Groes, 26.7.13



Landscape at Cwm Pysgotwr in the under-explored uplands

Another upland area that was subject to exploration was around the Usk Reservoir, the trip being a daytime venture as the locality, on the border with Breconshire, is simply too far away to leave traps overnight and to return the next day. Amongst the plantations that encompass the reservoir there are many open areas that were floristically diverse and I am sure that there are many moths of significance to be found by the intrepid `moth explorer`. Plenty of immigrant **silver y`s** were seen, as well as a **red-necked footman** *Atolmis rubricollis* that was out in daytime, as this species sometimes does. Mynydd Du, north of the Aman Valley, is just about in range for me to trap and the upland ridges, both north and south of Brechfa, may entice other enthusiasts.



The unexplored uplands: Usk Reservoir

MR had another **Blomer`s rivulet** on 26/7, this time at Carmel and SB had some interesting records at Cnwc, Brechfa on 27/7 – a **bordered sallow** *Pyrrhia umbra* (unusual away from the coast) and another **waved carpet**. Sam also had **vestal** *Rhodometra sacraria* (the only record this year, so far, of this migrant) at Henfryn, Pentrecwrt 22/381390 on the same date, and a surprise find of a **meal moth** *Pyralis farinalis*, a distinctive pyralid species in a bakery shop at Llandeilo 22/632227 on 30/7. The same date had a **hummingbird hawk-moth** *Macroglossum stellatarum* briefly visited to nectar at lavender at Tyrwaun, Pwll. A male **four-spotted footman** *Lithosia quadra* turned up at Troserch for Colin Jones on 31/7 and another male was at Tyrwaun, Pwll on the same date.

Brief Notes on Butterflies, March – July (inclusive) 2013

- Ian Morgan

These are necessarily short notes, mostly using only those records known to me or via the Carmarthenshire Moth and Butterfly blog, and I would encourage butterfly recorders to put any records of interest onto the blogsite. Grid references are only shown when provided by recorders. Dave Bannister has kindly provided additional notes below this summary.

Brimstones were late in appearing, due to very cold weather with the first (a male) in my garden at Tyrwaun, Pwll on 2/4 (normally they are usually out in early March), with others seen on subsequent dates (the last being a female on 19/6). **Holly blues** were seen E of Burry Port 22/455008, 20/5 and at Tyrwaun on 7/6 whilst George Tordoff reported both **grizzled** and **dingy skippers** from Pembrey Forest 22/394018- on 21/5.



Grizzled skipper in Pembrey Forest: George Tordoff.

Much good information can be gleaned from the excellent (and recommended) `Frits About` e-newsletter that is compiled and circulated by Richard Smith. **Marsh fritillaries** were seen at the Butterfly Conservation reserve at Median Farm/Caeau Ffos Fach near Gorslas (c22/57-12-), with some 65 counted on 8/6. The same date saw 15 individuals at the Wildlife Trust`s reserve at Rhos Cefn Bryn (SE of Llannon, c22/556071) on the same date and no less than 41 **marsh fritillaries** were counted at Cwm Gors (on the Carms side of the Nant Gors) on 10/6 and thirty individuals were seen near Taliaris by Julian Friese and Colin Jones the previous day. Other sightings came from the `Butterfly Ride` in Pembrey Forest 22/394018 (George Tordoff), where 6 were noted on 7/6 (with the same number of **small pearl-bordered fritillaries**), and Dave Bannister had both species at the Plantlife Reserve at Cae Blaen Dyffryn (near Lampeter) on 10/6, when he saw 5 **marsh frits**. A quick `over the hedge` glance by George Tordoff at Cynheidre 22/492071 yielded two **marsh fritillaries** on 5/6 but a visit by IKM to Pant y Gino farm (near Five Roads, 22/476049, and Cencoed uchaf to the south west (22/485032) on 19/6 sadly produced no fritillaries of any species.



Good habitat at Pant y Gino near Five Roads, Llanelli, but no fritillaries!

Whilst unimproved flower-rich habitat remains at both sites, there is only tightly mown *Sucissa* (devil`s-bit scabious, the food plant) on one field at Pant y Gino (and very little in another less tightly-grazed –but good- field), whereas at Cencoed uchaf, the `entrance field` is badly overgrown with birch scrub (good for orange underwings but not for the more important marsh frits!), whilst other nearby fields are very tightly grazed. When I was a teenager, I remember **small pearl-bordered, marsh fritillaries** and **pearl-bordered fritillaries** at this latter farm, though pearl bordered were even then (mid-1970s) rare, though I have memorable recollections of good close-up views of their distinctive underwing patterns.

Sam Bosanquet saw a **clouded yellow** flying along the Cothi Valley, south of Brechfa on 18/7, the only sighting in the period under review (to the end of July) and the next day, Colin Jones and Julian Friese recorded 4 **silver-washed fritillaries** by the old Three Horseshoes PH (now a private dwelling) in the Sawdde Gorge 22/728245 south of Llangadog. They later also noted another alongside the Afon Cothi near Brechfa. A couple of small blues at a meadow 22/764481 within the Allt Rhyd y Groes NNR near Rhandirmwyn on 26/7 was unexpected as this species is extremely rare inland in Carmarthenshire.

We are all aware of the ongoing decline in our county of certain fritillary species, but two butterflies that I seem to see less of these days are **the grayling** and the **wall brown**. The former used to be common on the coast (dune grassland and some dry urban brownfield sites, as well as inland on the southern rockier flanks of Mynydd Du), whilst the wall liked sunny lane banks and localities such as Mynydd Llangyndeyrn 22/483133, which it shared with graylings. It may be worth us being on the `look-out` for these species.

Some older records... Tony Braithwaite contacted me recently and reminded me of some older records he had made when he was living at Nant-y-llyn, N. of Ffarmers. He had seen small blues at (approximately) 22/671493 on 31.7.1999 and `two or three` chimney sweepers `just where the Nant Fawr crosses the mountain road to Llanddewi Brefi` (22/677501) on 8.7.2000. The Nant Fawr is the boundary with Ceredigion (Cardiganshire vc46), so possibly they occur close by in that county too?

Dave Bannister writes:

Every week I do a mile-long transect for the Butterfly Monitoring Scheme in the woods behind my house in Brechfa 22/504306. My first walk was during the week commencing the 6/5 (should have started w/c 1/4, but was I away for April) with a grand total of just 4 records, all **Peacocks**, the rest of May followed a similar pattern with only three species **Large White**, **Small White** and **Peacock** recorded and no more than ten butterflies in total. June started the same way, with only **Large** and **Small Whites** until the 9/6 when I saw my first **Green-veined White** and then only **Whites** until the 26/6 when I saw my first **Small Heath**. A small colony has existed (no more than 10 seen at any one time) for a number of years on some rough ground at the end of the transect – so I was glad to see they had survived, but sadly, I saw no more.

Things improved in early July with my first sightings of **Speckled Wood** and **Ringlet**. Whilst numbers of **Ringlet** remained high on the transect, numbers of **Speckled Wood** have remained very low. This species is normally the one I record for the most number of weeks. The 12/7 saw my first records for the year of **Silver-washed Fritillary** when I saw four. The numbers were higher than during previous years for the rest of the summer (they are still around as I write on 14/8), and have been found in all transect sections for the first time, with peak numbers of 13 on the 26/7. On 12/7 I saw my first **Meadow Browns**, a species that remained in good numbers as have **Large Skippers**, which I first saw on 18/7. A late afternoon walk on the 26/7 enabled me to see four **Purple Hairstreaks** on the top of some old oaks. I guessed that a colony exists there as I have seen them basking on younger oaks nearby and have also had one in my moth trap. The 26/7 also gave me my first records for the year of **Small Tortoiseshell** and **Gatekeeper**. The transect will continue until the end of September, so more details in the next newsletter.

I also record in my garden and this year has had smaller numbers of **Small Copper**, **Speckled Wood** and **Orange Tips** with no records of **Holly** or **Common Blues** but with numbers of more common species quite reasonable.

A **Painted Lady** was at the National Botanic Garden of Wales on 21/6 (noted by myself) but I have not received many records yet this year but one may be of interest (and further to Ian's comments above), a **Grayling** at Wharley Point c 22/341093 near Llansteffan (SN535094) seen by Theresa Greenaway on the 2/8. As a result of the **Brown Hairstreak** egg survey, I was asked to do a survey along the Gwili Railway between Bronwydd Arms 22/418243 and Llwyfan Cerrig 22/406258, which I carried out on the 11/7. This produced large numbers of **Meadow Browns and Ringlets** and approximately ten **Silver-washed Fritillaries** near Llwyfan Cerrig. One memorable sighting of a common butterfly was of 100's (perhaps more) of **Ringlets** in a friend's meadow near Brechfa that was full of Whorled Caraway.

NB. With grid references, 22/ =SN, 21/ =SS. It would help if recorders would please provide grid references for `new sites`. Please also take care with place-name spellings and certainly give grid refs for those not on OS maps – thanks.

PYRALID MOTHS OF CARMARTHENSHIRE PART 4

A Review – by Ian Morgan

This is the final part of the review of the Pyralidae of Carmarthenshire, with parts 1- 3 expertly written by Jon Baker, appearing in the newsletters of July, August and September 2007. It is hoped that this final part will be of use to current and future moth enthusiasts in the county, as there is much to be discovered regarding the distribution of pyralid moths in our county and certainly there are species awaiting discovery. This account is based on a list of those species not covered in earlier accounts, together with their 10km square distribution in the county, which was supplied to me by Jon Baker in March 2013. The style of this summary deliberately follows that used by Jon, to help ease of use. Unfortunately, it has not proved possible to include photographs as in the earlier articles, but readers are instead referred to Sterling & Parsons (2012), Goater (1986) and Manley (2008); there are also other texts available.

In the following list, where the larvae feed on wax or honeycomb etc in hymenopteran nests, on miscellaneous stored material or refuse or on fungi, the title `Foodplant` is given in inverted commas.

1413 *Hypsopygia costialis* Gold Triangle

National Status: common

Foodplant: stored plant materials

Habitat: wide ranging

Main Flight Period: April-mid November, double-brooded.

County Status: probably widespread

10km squares recorded: SN32, SN40, SN52, SN53, SN61, SN74, SS59

1416 *Pyralis lienigialis*

National Status: rare but may be overlooked

Foodplant: unknown

Habitat: rests by day on walls etc, but occurs within buildings

Main Flight Period: late June- September

County Status: just the one record of this national rarity, found by Arnold Johnson at Bronwydd Arms on 12th July 2004. Determined from a photograph of the dead specimen by JSB. Not recorded in Glamorgan or Pems.

10km squares recorded: SN42

1417 *Pyralis farinalis*

National Status: common

`Foodplant`: stored cereals, refuse etc

Habitat: typically in outbuildings

Main Flight Period: late April- October

County Status: under-recorded

10km squares recorded: SN31, SN40, SS49, SS59

(NB. also recently (30/7/13) recorded by Sam Bosanquet at Llandeilo SN62)

1421 *Aglossa pinguinalis* Large Tabby

National Status: local

`Foodplant`: stored cereals, seeds, animal feed etc

Habitat: outbuildings

Main Flight Period: June- September

County Status: one record only, Ian Morgan in a garden shed at Tyrwaun, Pwll on 11th July 2009.

10km squares recorded: SN40

1424 *Endotrichia flammealis*

National Status: local

Foodplant: greater bird's-foot trefoil, then decaying leaves

Habitat: woodland etc

Main Flight Period: June- August

County Status: mostly coastal and seemingly local.

10km squares recorded: SN10, SN20, SN30, SN74, SS49, SS59

1425 *Galleria mellonella* Wax Moth

National Status: common

Foodplant: honeycomb

Habitat: in beehives and other hymenopteran nests

Main Flight Period: June- October

County Status: probably local

10km squares recorded: SN40, SN50

1426 *Achroia grisella* Lesser Wax Moth

National Status: local

Foodplant: old wax

Habitat: beehives

Main Flight Period: June- August, occasionally later

County Status: local

10km squares recorded: SN32, SN51, SN52

1428 *Aphomia sociella* Bee Moth

National Status: common

Foodplant: old cells and debris

Habitat: bumblebee and wasp nests

Main Flight Period: early April - October

County Status: widespread

10km squares recorded: SN30, SN31, SN32, SN40, SN50, SN51, SN53, SN61, SN62, SN62, SN64, SN74

1432 *Anerastia lotella*

National Status: local

Foodplant: grasses

Habitat: dry habitats such as dune grassland

Main Flight Period: late May to August

County Status: records currently limited to the coast, though could occur inland in appropriate habitat.

10km squares recorded: SN30, SS49

1433 *Cryptoblabes bistrigia*

National Status: local

Foodplant: oaks, occasionally alders etc

Habitat: oak woodland

Main Flight Period: late April – mid September

County Status: presumably under-recorded

10km squares recorded: SN32, SN53, SN74

1436 *Acrobasis repandana*

National Status: common

Foodplant: oak leaves

Habitat: oak woods

Main Flight Period: mid June – early September

County Status: a single record from Rhandirmwyn in 1980.

10km squares recorded: SN74

1437 *Acrobasis consociella*

National Status: common

Foodplant: oak leaves

Habitat: oak woodland, esp. young saplings

Main Flight Period: late May - August

County Status: under-recorded

10km squares recorded: SN30, SN40

1439 *Trachycera advenella*

National Status: common

Foodplant: hawthorn occasionally rowan

Habitat: hedgerows etc

Main Flight Period: June - September

County Status: widespread

10km squares recorded: SN12, SN30, SN31, SN32, SN40, SN51, SN53, SN61, SN64, SN74, SS49, SS59

1440 *Trachycera marmorea*

National Status: local

Foodplant: usually blackthorn but also hawthorn and rowan

Habitat: hedgerows, woodland edge etc

Main Flight Period: late May – mid September

County Status: perhaps under-recorded

10km squares recorded: SN20, SN30, SN40, SS59

1442 *Pempelia palumbella*

National Status: local

Foodplant: heather and sometimes other plants such as milkworts.

Habitat: heath and moorland

Main Flight Period: late May- mid September

County Status: two records only from one site – a remnant raised bog SW of Ty-llwyd (near Pont Abraham) on 28th June and 10th July 2009 (Ian Morgan). Possibly occurs at other `quality` bog sites such as Cors Goch Llanllwch near Carmarthen.

10km squares recorded: SN50

1445 *Rhodophaea (=Pempelia) formosa*

National Status: local but spreading

Foodplant: elms

Habitat: hedgerows etc

Main Flight Period: late May - September

County Status: recorded at Tyrwaun, Pwll on 27th June 2009, (Ian Morgan, mature elms grow close by). It should be looked for elsewhere along the elm-rich coastal belt. Recorded in Monmouthshire but not in Glamorgan or Pembs.

10km squares recorded: SN40

1451 *Matiella (=Pyla) fusca*

National Status: local

Foodplant: heather

Habitat: heath and moorland

Main Flight Period: May - September

County Status: probably widespread in appropriate habitat.

10km squares recorded: SN20, SN30, SN51, SN52, SN53, SN74,SS49

1452 *Phycita roborella*

National Status: common

Foodplant: oaks and also crab apple, pears and hazel

Habitat: woodland, hedgerows etc

Main Flight Period: June - October

County Status: widespread

10km squares recorded: SN10, SN30, SN31, SN32, SN40, SN51, SN52, SN64, SN74

1454 *Dioryctia abietella*

National Status: common

Foodplant: various conifers

Habitat: plantations, parks and gardens etc

Main Flight Period: June - October

County Status: probably throughout the county within appropriate habitat.

10km squares recorded: SN22, SN30, SN40, SN53, SN61, SN74, SS49

1454.5 *Dioryctia sylvestrella*

National Status: local, recently established in UK

Foodplant: conifers, especially pines.

Habitat: plantations, parks and gardens etc

Main Flight Period: June – early October

County Status: a large and well-marked species, recorded on 3d July 2006 in Pembrey Forest (Jon Baker).

10km squares recorded: SN30, SN40

1455 *Dioryctia simplicella*

National Status: local

Foodplant: pines, feeds on living bark in cavity next to bark wound

Habitat: plantations, parks and gardens

Main Flight Period: late April - September

County Status: eight records from Pembrey Forest 2003-2006 (Jon Baker).

10km squares recorded: SN30, SN40

1457 *Hypochoalcia ahenella*

National Status: local

Foodplant: not known

Habitat: dry habitats such as sand dunes

Main Flight Period: May - August

County Status: Pembrey Burrows June 2003 (Jon Baker & Sam Bosanquet) and July 2012 (Ian Morgan), when it was also caught at the northern arm of the burrows in SN40. It is likely to also occur at other sand dune sites.

10km squares recorded: SN40, SS49

(NB – also recorded at Pembrey Burrows in 2013 by IKM)

1458 *Myelois circumvoluta*

National Status: common

Foodplant: mainly various thistles

Habitat: open habitats such as wasteground, pastures etc

Main Flight Period: May – mid September

County Status: probably widespread.

10km squares recorded: SN30, SN31, SN32, SN40, SN50, SN61, SS49, SS59

1462 *Pempeliella dilutella*

National Status: local

Foodplant: thyme growing on ants` nests

Habitat: typically dry grassland

Main Flight Period: mid June – mid September

County Status: probably local due to infrequency of appropriate habitat away from the coast.

10km squares recorded: SN20, SN30, SN40, SN52, SS49

1467 *Ancylosis oblitella*

National Status: very local

Foodplant: usually common fleabane

Habitat: dry habitats dunes, wasteground, forestry tracks etc

Main Flight Period: May – mid October

County Status: only the one record – caught at Rhydcymerau on 13th September 2006 by Martin Lovell (identified from photo by JSB)

10km squares recorded: SN53

1469 *Euzophera cinerosella*

National Status: very local

Foodplant: various mugworts *Artemisia*

Habitat: wasteground and other open habitats

Main Flight Period: May – mid August

County Status: one record from SS59, SE of Llanelli – a wanderer caught in the WWT Penlacwydd gift shop by Barry Stewart in 2004, thought likely to be a wanderer from urban wasteground, with much *Artemisia*, at Trostre (site now built over with a rugby stadium).

10km squares recorded: SS59

1473 *Ephestia elutella* Cacao Moth

National Status: local

Foodplant: stored produce

Habitat: typically synanthropic, in buildings

Main Flight Period: January - November

County Status: a single record of one found in Carmarthen Antiques, Carmarthen.

10km squares recorded: SN42

1474 *Ephestia unicolorella* ssp *woodiella* (=parasitella)

National Status: local

Foodplant: possibly dried material

Habitat: gardens, grassland and other open habitats

Main Flight Period: May- September

County Status: one record from Rhandirmwyn.

10km squares recorded: SN74

1479 *Plodia interpunctata* Indian Meal Moth

National Status: local

Foodplant: stored products

Habitat: another synanthrope, in buildings

Main Flight Period: February - November

County Status: once more, the observant Barry Stewart caught one in the WWT Penclacwydd gift shop on 16th September 2007, and there is a second record by Sam Bosanquet from Cnwc y llwyn, Brechfa on 27th February 2008.

10km squares recorded: SN53, SS59

1481 *Homoeosoma sinuella*

National Status: local

Foodplant: ribwort plantain

Habitat: dry grassland

Main Flight Period: May – mid September

County Status: seemingly mostly coastal, though this could be just a factor of recording effort.

10km squares recorded: SN20, SN30, SN40, SN50, SN74, SS49, SS59

1483 *Phycitodes binaevella*

National Status: common

Foodplant: various thistles

Habitat: wide-ranging, usually open habitats

Main Flight Period: late May – mid September

County Status: some 28 or so records, with many from Pembrey.

10km squares recorded: SN22, SN52, SN74, SS59

1484 *Phycitodes saxicola*

National Status: common

Foodplant: various composites

Habitat: open habitat, typically coastal

Main Flight Period: May – October, possibly two broods

County Status: four records reported from Rhandirmwyn in the 1980s; it would be helpful to confirm this species' presence in Carmarthenshire.

10km squares recorded: SN74?

1485 *Phycitodes maritima*

National Status: local

Foodplant: composites eg yarrow, ragwort etc

Habitat: coastal

Main Flight Period: May - October

County Status: more focused recording will probably yield more coastal records.

10km squares recorded: SN40, SS49

1486 *Apomyeolis bistriatella*

National Status: very local

Foodplant: feeds on *Daldinia concentrica* (‘King Alfred’s Cakes’) fungus on burnt gorse

Habitat: open areas with gorse

Main Flight Period: mid May - September

County Status: probably under-recorded in urban edge areas and elsewhere where gorse is periodically burnt. Two recorded in the Llanelli area by Barry Stewart in 2004/5.

10km squares recorded: SN50, SS59

References

Goater, B. (1986) – *British Pyralid Moths: a Guide to their Identification*. Harley Books.

Manley, C. (2008) – *British Moths and Butterflies: a Photographic Guide*. A & C Black Publishers Ltd.

Sterling, P. & Parsons, M. (2012) – *Field Guide to the Micro-moths of Great Britain and Ireland*. British Wildlife Publishing.

Some Interesting Historical Pyralid records

E. Kaye recorded *Diasemia reticularis* (= *litterata*) at Laugharne in 1870, publishing his record in *The Entomologist*. This rare species was once resident on the coasts of S.Wales (there are also records from Pembrokeshire and Glamorgan at the time) in the 19th Century. It is now only a rare migrant in British Isles. Kaye also recorded the migrant *Diasemiopsis ramburialis* at Laugharne.



Diasemia reticularis: without doubt **the** highlight of **Moth Night 2013** in Carmarthenshire, caught by Chris Handoll at his home at Maenol, Pencader on 9.8.13. (More information on the Moth Night will appear in the next newsletter).

POTENTIAL PYRALID MOTHS THAT MAY OCCUR IN CARMARTHENSHIRE – Ian Morgan

It may be useful to consider which species of pyralid could possibly occur in Carmarthenshire. The following pyralids have occurred in Glamorgan (G) or Pembrokeshire (P) with information gleaned from the following sources.

The Moths of Glamorgan by Gilmore, D.R.W., Slade, D.J. & Stewart, B. (2013, in press).

Pembrokeshire Lepidoptera: Annotated List of Pyralid & Plume Moths recorded in Pembrokeshire (vc45). R. Elliot (July 2005). In the latter online account, there are some records, such as *Crambus ericella* and *Eudonia alpina*, which are only found in northern Britain, that seem implausible or unlikely and they are consequently not included in the following summary.

Readers are also recommended to view the sources given in the accompanying Part 4 of the *Pyralid Moths of Carmarthenshire* for illustrations or photographs of the species concerned.

1289 *Euchronius ocellata* GP

Notes and comments

This is a distinctive and rare migrant species that could occur anywhere in the county.

1330 *Donacaula mucronellus* G

Notes and comments

July and August. Elsewhere found in larger coastal reedbeds etc, where it feeds in the lower stems of common reed, reed sweet grass and greater pond-sedge. It is only found in the western part of adjacent Glamorgan so the transitional coastal reedbeds in SE Carmarthenshire (such as Llangennech or Ffrwd Fen) might hold this species.

1360 *Hellula undalis* P Old World Webworm

Notes and comments

A rare migrant with one Pembrokeshire record at Lamphey in Sept 1987.

1368 *Loxostege* (= *Margaritia*) *sticticalis* G

Notes and comments

A migrant, feeding on mugwort abroad. Only one Glamorgan record but periodic influxes make this species a future possibility.

1369 *Uresiphita gilvata* (= *polygonalis*) GP

Notes and comments

Migrant. Two Glamorgan records.

1373 *Paratalanta* (= *Microstega*) *pandalis* G

Notes and comments

June. Scarce species of S. Britain, feeds on wood sage, marjoram, goldenrod. Two old and one modern Glamorgan record. It can be disturbed by day amongst its foodplants.

1375 *Ostrina nubilalis* GP

Notes and comments

Once only a migrant established and most frequent (but still local) in SE England. Also reported from the Newport area of Mons vc35, so it may be in the process of colonising south Wales. Feeds on mugwort *Artemisia vulgaris* and other plants. As always, much useful information is given in the recommended British Pyralid Moths by Barry Goater (1986). He states that the larva bores in the stem, `upwards from an entrance hole near ground level. Full-fed in autumn, overwintering in the

burrow and pupating in May`. He also notes that adults can be seen flying amongst mugwort at nightfall. Flies in June and July.

1379 *Mutuuraia terrealis* P

Notes and comments

This is a rare species of west coast Britain, whose caterpillars feed from July to September, on goldenrod *Solidago virgaurea`in a loose silken web beneath a leaf or amongst the flowers`* (Goater, 1986). Perhaps a possibility on the Marros-Pendine coast in Carmarthenshire.

1391 *Udea decrepitalis*

Notes and comments

Feeds on narrow buckler-fern *Dryopteris carthusiana*, a localised plant of bog edge transitions. This fern whilst local is not uncommon where it occurs, and *Udea decrepitalis* has been reliably recorded in Breconshire, so it should be considered for Carmarthenshire. Otherwise known from Scotland. Goater (1986), states that it *`feeds in July and August in a slight web on the underside of a frond of narrow buckler fern...and probably other ferns`*. I would suggest that the hybrid *Dryopteris x deweveri* (the cross between narrow and broad-buckler ferns) is also a contender as it often occurs in conjunction with *carthusiana* eg between the Talley Lakes and Mynydd Figyn.

1400 *Antigastra catalaunalis* G

Notes and comments

This is another migrant species that may eventually be recorded.

1402a *Diasemia accalis* P (1876)

Notes and comments

There is one old Pembs record from 1876. An adventive species that has subsequently only been rarely recorded in Britain.

1403a *Duponchelia fovealis* G

Notes and comments

Adventive – feeds on houseplants; also a rare migrant.

1404 *Hymenia recurvalis* G

Notes and comments

Again, an adventive, feeding on houseplants and, like the last species, could theoretically turn up almost anywhere.

1438 *Numonia suavella* G

Notes and comments

July- early September. Feeds on blackthorn*, with most records from SE England. In Glamorgan only found in the east, so perhaps likely in coastal Carmarthenshire.

* *`spinning a dirty whitish silken gallery close to the branches under the leaves, rendered conspicuous by presence of frass`* (Goater, 1986)

1443 *Pempelia genistella* G

Notes and comments

Another species that ought to occur in Carmarthenshire. The larvae feed on gorse*. Noted once (as a larval record) on Gower in Glamorgan, but perhaps overlooked.

* *`inhabiting a thick silken web spun in the branches close to the ground; hibernates in silk tube within the web`* (Goater, 1986).

1450 *Metriostola betulae* G

Notes and comments

The previous comments for *P. genistella* equally apply to this birch feeder*. However, it is a scarce and perhaps elusive species.

*`feeds in May and June in a web on the upper side of leaf of birch` (Goater, 1986).

1456 *Epischnia banksiella* GP

Notes and comments

July. Feeds on golden samphire *Inula crithmoides* growing on coastal cliffs. Unfortunately, the only (small) stands of *Inula* that I know of in Carmarthenshire, grow on saltmarshes (Morfa Bacas near Bynea, Pembrey Saltings and below Craig Ddu/Wharley Point near Llansteffan). Therefore, perhaps an unlikely contender.

1461 *Assara terebrella* `Dark spruce knot-horn`

Notes and comments

Mostly June-July. Not recorded in Glamorgan or Pembrokeshire, but has been in Cards. and Monts. Feeds on Norway spruce and is stated to be rare and local, but quite widespread in southern England.

1465 *Nephropteryx angustella* G

Notes and comments

The larvae feed on spindle berries, often spinning two adjacent berries together*, so the native stands of this shrub at (eg) Pembrey Forest or inland on the Carboniferous limestone should be checked. Decorative plantings of this shrub in urban areas may also host this pyralid.

* there is a good photo illustrating this on p356 of Sterling and Parsons (2012).

1475 *E. kuehniella* G

Notes and comments

Feeds on stored wheat flour etc. Synanthropic.

1476 *E. cautella* G

Notes and comments

Feeds on dried fruits etc; again synanthropic.

1482 *H. nimbella* GP

Notes and comments

A rare species whose larvae feed on various Asteraceae. Just old (1800s) records for Pems.

Acknowledgements

I thank Sam Bosanquet for his valued comments on the first draft of this short note. I also thank Barry Stewart for sight of the section on pyralid moths in the imminent Moths of Glamorgan.

Information regarding pyralids in Pembrokeshire was obtained from online lists at:

<http://myweb.tiscali.co.uk/vc45leps/reports/PyralidaeChecklist2005.pdf>

ERRATUM: I've noticed a typing error in *Newsletter No.14* (Summer 2012). On page 3-4, the date for the cypress pug record at Tyrwaun, Pwll should read 12.9.10 and not 12.3.10.



Dawn, mid-summer at Morfa-uchaf, Ferryside – the trap awaits the weary moth`er!

THE NEXT NEWSLETTER will appear sometime in the winter period. Gratitude is offered to all those who have communicated their interesting records, either directly or via our blogsite (thanks again to Colin Jones for his initiative in setting it up). I would also like to thank Sam Bosanquet and Barry Stewart for their help and advice on identification matters. We hope to hold an indoor meeting (probably at Llandeilo) in the autumn, to discuss the future of moth recording in the county; all our contributors will be contacted in advance with regard to a date and time.

Planning Ahead? Moth Night 2014 is on 3-5 July whilst 2015 is on 10-15 September!