

ESSEX MOTH GROUP

ANNUAL NEWSLETTER

2018

COMPILED BY DOUGAL URQUHART



CLIFDEN NONPAREIL – CURRY FARM, BRADWELL

Stephen Dewick – 3/10/17

ESSEX MOTH GROUP
ANNUAL MEETING AND EXHIBITION
THE GREEN CENTRE, WAT TYLER COUNTRY PARK
SATURDAY 10TH FEBRUARY
2018 PROGRAMME

10.30.....**RECEPTION / REFRESHMENTS**

DONATION £7, PAY ON ARRIVAL

10.45....**WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

DOUGAL URQUHART, MOTH GROUP COORDINATOR

11.00.....**LES EVANS-HILL – LARGER MOTHS ATLAS**

12.00.....**GRAHAM EKINS – BOREHAM INLAND MOTH MIGRATION**

12.30.....**ANDREW HOPPIT – THE OAK PROCESSIONARY MOTH**

1.00.....**LUNCH – CHANCE TO CHAT WITH FRIENDS**

2.00.....**ANDREW RAYBOULD – A WEEK IN THE LOT, FRANCE**

2.30.....**ZOE RINGWOOD – FISHERS ESTUARINE MOTH UPDATE**

3.00.....**GRAHAM BAILEY – SOUTH ESSEX MOTHS**

3.30.....**ROB SMITH – MILL GREEN COMMON**

4.00.....**DISCUSSION SESSION – CHANCE TO TALK OR ASK QUESTIONS**

4.30.....**LAST REFRESHMENTS AND A CHANCE TO CHAT WITH FRIENDS**

5.00.....**CLOSE OF PLAY – PARK GATES GET LOCKED**

THANKYOU FOR YOUR CONTINUED SUPPORT AND GOOD LUCK
WITH THE NEW MOTHING SEASON!

Welcome to the annual meeting of the Essex Moth Group, now into its 22nd year since first starting up in 1996. This is the fifth meeting to be held at the Green Centre at Wat Tyler Country Park after the switch of venue from Lawford in the north of the county. We are indebted to the Essex Field Club for helping to subsidise the cost of hosting this annual meeting. It would be much more expensive for members if the meeting was held anywhere else in the county.

We thank Peter Harvey of the Essex Field Club for arranging that the Group are able to meet here in the Green Centre, and also for arranging the buffet lunch with the caterers and all the other logistics. Also a big thankyou to Peter and Martin Heywood and the Essex Field Club for enabling the newsletter to be printed off and copies available for members at the meeting.

The annual meeting and the newsletter are important to the Essex Moth Group. They both demonstrate the important moth recording work that members carry out across the county of both the common species and the scarcer species too. The annual meeting is the only day-time opportunity where members can meet up with fellow moth enthusiasts to share their experiences and sightings. The newsletter also allows other members to share their account of the previous mothing season, share their sightings as well as their moth images too.

As group co-ordinator, a big thankyou to all those members who have either put together a talk for the meeting, compiled an article for this newsletter, or just attended the meeting at Wat Tyler – in some cases some kind folk have helped with all three! Maybe under the duress of arm-twisting and succumbing to some gentle persuasion, the meeting has a full programme and the newsletter is the usual detailed account. The support has been great and much appreciated throughout the year.

The moths of Essex will appreciate our time and attention!

I trust members will find this newsletter an interesting read. The articles have had very little editing and are read as they were sent in. As chief collator, I've tried to keep the articles compact whilst including the many images sent in and to help keep the length of the whole newsletter down to a minimum number of pages. I've tried to include as many images as possible and apologise if not everyone has been shown. All images have been credited, usually to the right-hand side of the page and sometimes with the initials only. I also apologise for any spelling or grammar errors especially with the scientific names. I also apologise for any perceived relaxing of the usual scientific report writing protocol!

If you want to share any other ideas about the Moth Group, you can contact me – Dougal Urquhart as the Moth Group coordinator on 01206 383868 or at – dougal.urquhart@essex.gov.uk; There is an email Yahoo Group on Essex Moths where moth sightings and other topics are posted. To join this you can either email Brian Goodey at – essexmoths@dsl.pipex.com; Reg Fry at reg.a.fry@btinternet.com; or Tony Prichard at tony.prichard@btinternet.com; One of these moderators will then invite you onto the email forum.

Information about the Essex Moth Group can be found on the Essex Moth Group website at www.essexfieldclub.org.uk/portal/p/Essex+Moth+Group. Help is needed with keeping these pages updated.

At present the moth County Recorder for Essex is Peter Harvey and whilst Peter is more than happy to continue to deal with records, we need a moth specialist to come forward to manage identification requests and organise and promote recording in the county. Contact Peter at: grayspeterharvey@gmail.com;

ESSEX MOTH GROUP FACEBOOK PAGE

The Moth Group Facebook page was started in July 2017 by Simon Wood and has been well used and visited by many members and other moth enthusiasts. Plenty of moth pictures have been posted both of known and unknown identity, providing opportunities for discussion – which is exactly what it is there for.

As of February 2018 the Group had 108 members who had joined.

This is an informal discussion group relating to all things mothy within Essex, UK, VC18 and VC19. All sightings and identification queries are very welcome. When posting a photograph, it would be most helpful to have an idea of the size of the moth, whether at rest or wings-span and of course a date and location for the record.

ESSEX MOTH GROUP ANNUAL MEETING 2017

Around forty members attended the annual meeting at Wat Tyler on 12th February 2017. Held on a Sunday for the first time as the Green Centre wasn't available on any suitable Saturdays.

The main speaker was David Grundy who travelled from Birmingham to tell members about his mothing exploits around the UK, in the search for migrants and scarce species.

Other speakers were Steve Rolls on Essex micros and leaf-miners, Ian Turner with a medley of moths from around the country, Dr Chris Gibson telling us what moths to watch out for with changes in climate and other potential colonists from the Pyrenees, Richard Gerussi with moths from mid Essex, Cindy Lawes on her moth research carried out at Blue House Farm and Richard Dennison on his moth travels in the UK.

ESSEX FIELD CLUB EXHIBITION AND SOCIAL 2017

The annual EFC exhibition and social took place in the Green Centre at Wat Tyler CP on 2nd December 2017. The Essex Moth Group stand was manned for the fifth year by Dougal, looking as startled as a lost migrant moth at his Gardiner moth trap!

The EFC exhibition continues to grow with 60 different exhibits, more than the previous year, and was attended by just over 200 people. There was a good array of foods laid out for lunch and as usual it was a good chance to socialise.



So, now we're into the new year of 2018 then why not book to come on a moth course with me this summer? I've increased the number of courses I'm running with the Field Studies Council (FSC) to 8 in 2018 and these are based at Bishops Wood in Worcestershire, Preston Montford in Shropshire, Juniper Hall in Surrey, Flatford Mill in Suffolk, Slapton Ley in Devon or Orierton in Pembrokeshire. Subjects covered this summer are highlighting the new demand for more micro-moth courses at 3 different exciting centres (if you attend all these courses it would nearly turn you into a micro-moth expert in one year, with micro-moths being very different in East Anglia, Worcestershire and Pembrokeshire!). Also exciting in the programme are a brand new Moths of the Devon Coast course (with stunning coastal scenery) and a Daytime Moths course in Shropshire where we will definitely see more moth species by day than we see butterflies (and it will introduce you to the varied techniques that can be employed to search for these by day). Moth Dissection and Chalk Grassland Moths of the Surrey Downs are returns of old favourites. Moth Dissection is vital for verifying quality records of moths and currently we just don't have enough people able to do this in Britain - can you help us out? The chalk grasslands surrounding Juniper Hall are just stunning for moths and are of national importance because of their incredible botanical diversity - so you will definitely see a wonderful variety of moths in stunning scenery. So why don't you consider booking for one or more of these and the sooner you book the better. (a couple of my courses are nearly full - so it's important you book up fast!)

Full details of these courses are out on the Field Studies Council (FSC) website - so book now to avoid disappointment. As usual I try to keep courses fresh by swapping subjects for different field centres and this year for the first time I am running two one day courses at the excellent Bishops Wood FSC centre in Worcestershire on micro-moths. This midland centre is easy to get to from most parts of Britain and is surrounded by excellent ancient woodland and grassland habitats where the live moths for the course will be trapped.

Details of the courses are at this website address: <http://bit.ly/1AjD5CJ> (and do check out the other excellent moth and butterfly courses which are run by other experts for FSC such as David Brown, Martin Harvey and Sheila Wright - I have heard many moth enthusiasts saying how brilliant courses were that were run by these national experts.) My favourite courses that I run are always the residential courses at FSC centres because they give me more time to get to know people and more time to get involved with the subject. However you might also like to come on one of my one day courses which are run at various locations across the Midlands and further afield. These will not be advertised until early February 2018 when you will be welcome to start booking for them. If you have any ideas on locations or subjects for moth courses for 2018 then please let me know as soon as possible and I will see what I can squeeze in. The only thing I can tell you so far about my courses is that I will be trying to run 2 adjacent courses the same weekend at Wicken Fen and in nearby Breckland habitat. Also I am trying again to finalise plans for another weekend of moths training in the North Pennines AONB - if you've never been before then make sure you book to visit this wonderful part of the country. And finally by popular demand, as I haven't managed to squeeze in a leaf-mine course with FSC in 2018 then I will definitely be running a one day leaf-mines course at a site somewhere in the Midlands. If you would like me to run a particular course in 2018 then let me know which one day courses you would like me to run as soon as possible and following that I will circulate my full training course programme for 2018 as soon as possible.

So, what are you waiting for? - get those bookings in now before the courses are full up!

Best wishes - Dave (Grundy)

NB- as early as May this year I need to start looking at residential courses for 2019, so if you have a particular favourite you would like to see in 2019 then start lobbying me now! If you know of any other people out there who might be interested in attending one of my courses then please feel free to pass on my course details to them.

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Colchester has a wide and varied selection of Public Parks, Local Nature Reserves and Open Spaces, six of which are the management responsibility of Colchester Borough Council (CBC) Countryside Ranger Carla Davis. Being keen to increase the amount of biological recording on these sites she asked the CNHS/EFC to carry out moth trapping at the following locations -

Westlands Country Park, Stanway Green

Created on the site of the former Shrub End landfill, this 16ha site comprises of woodland and grassland, planted up after the closure of the landfill in 1998. The grassland is managed on a rotational cut.

Trapping here took place on 13th June, a relatively still and cool night with some long clear periods with little cloud. A total of four MV lights were used. Several Noctule Bats *Nyctalus noctula* gave a marvelous display over the tree tops here as it got dark.

Lexden Springs Local Nature Reserve

The first Local Nature Reserve to open in Colchester, the site comprises 1.8ha of unimproved meadows, rich in locally scarce wild flowers and a pond served by a year-round natural spring.

Trapping here took place on 13th July, a warm, muggy and overcast night with a total of three MV lights.

Hilly Fields Local Nature Reserve

This 32ha site is designated both a Local Wildlife site and Scheduled Ancient Monument. There is a great diversity of habitats at Hilly Fields. The four MV lights were located close to the area of acid grasslands towards the east end of the site.

The weather on the trapping night, 18th July, was warm but very breezy although this abated as the evening went on. Storms skirted round until mid-night after which we beat a hasty retreat.

Spring Lane Nursery Meadow

A 2.3ha site comprising damp woodland and semi-improved grassland on the edge of the River Colne and prone to flooding. Here trapping took place on 25th July using four MV lights, a particularly clear, damp and cool night that seemed to favour the massed army of slugs over the Lepidoptera!

Lexden Park Local Nature Reserve

The lower part of this 7ha reserve mainly comprises a species-rich flower meadow with the remainder of the site being mature oak-dominated woodland. Trapping here on 22nd August was under heavy, oppressive skies which eventually led to light rain falling and a curtailed end to the trapping. Three MV lights were used.

Gosbecks Archaeological Park

Approximately 65ha of flat grassland and farmland designated a Scheduled Ancient Monument for its important Iron Age and Roman monuments. Trapping on 5th September, using three MV lights, took place under heavy clouds with an increasing breeze that brought rain that curtailed the evening.

All of the sites are on the edge of the built-up areas of Colchester and some form important "green lungs" and wildlife corridors for wildlife in and around Colchester. Four sites around Lexden (Park, Springs, Spring Lane and Hilly Fields) are within 0.6km of each other with the remaining two sites (Gosbecks and Westlands, which are almost contiguous) a further 1.8km from the closest Lexden site (Park).

Despite the summer being very dry, the moth-trapping evenings consistently managed to coincide with wet, inclement weather, such that only two of the originally set nights went ahead; the other four had to be rearranged but did at least go ahead.

In all an impressive total of 300 species were identified over the six meetings, with individual totals for each meeting being shown in the table below together with a breakdown of the number of scarcer species at each site. The percentage figure in brackets is the number of scarcer species as a percentage of the total number of species at each site.

Table 1.

	Species	ERDB species	National Nb species	Nationally local species
Westlands	134	5 (3.7%)	3 (2.2%)	17 (12.7%)
Lexden Springs	139	6 (4.3%)	3 (2.2%)	18 (12.9%)
Hilly Fields	117	9 (7.7%)	6 (5.1%)	17 (14.5%)
Spring Lane Nursery	77	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	8 (10.4%)
Lexden Park	74	1 (1.4%)	0 (0.0%)	9 (12.2%)
Gosbecks	47	3 (6.3%)	2 (4.3%)	7 (14.9%)
All sites	300	17 (5.7%)	12 (4.0%)	49 (16.3%)

Breakdown of species numbers

Notes

Nationally Scarce B (Nb) – recorded from 31-100 10km squares in Great Britain since 1st January 1980

Nationally local – 101-300 10km squares in Great Britain since 1960

Essex Red Data Book (ERDB) – qualifying criteria are quite complicated and I would suggest those interested refer to the Essex Field Club website for a detailed explanation -

<http://www.essexfieldclub.org.uk/portal/p/Essex+Red+Data+List+-+criteria+for+inclusion>

In essence each species is considered a rare county resident!

The table below identifies how many species were reported from just one site, two sites, three sites etc. Over 50% of all the species were recorded at just one site and just three species (**Latticed Heath**, **Brimstone Moth** and **Flame Shoulder**) were recorded at all six sites

	One site	Two sites	Three sites	Four sites	Five sites	Six sites
No. of species	154	63	41	27	12	3
ERDB species	12	3	2	0	0	0
National Nb species	8	2	2	0	0	0
Nationally local species	32	10	4	2	1	0
Migrants	1	0	1	2	0	0

Table 2. Occurrence of moth species

Of course, there is currently just one year's data available and timing of trapping greatly affects species' lists for each site, particularly those surveyed from August onward (Lexden Park and Gosbecks) when moth diversity declines quickly.

Notable species

Essex Red Data Book species

The lists below follow the *Checklist of the Lepidoptera of the British Isles* by D. J. L. Agassiz, S. D. Beavan and R. J. Heckford (2013). Species that are not only ERDB species but Nationally Scarce B listed too are identified with (Nb) at the end of the species text.

4.062 *Stigmella samiatella* One at Hilly Fields. This species is also a proposed national RDB3 species but more study in recent years has confirmed that it is more widespread than realised, so I suspect the proposal will be dropped.

28.020 *Esperia oliviella* One at Hilly Fields. (Nb)

35.073 *Monochroa palustrella* One at Westlands.

35.157 *Recurvaria leucatella* One at Hilly Fields. (Nb)

49.367 *Pammene fasciana* One at Hilly Fields.

- 53.001 *Apoda limacodes* **Festoon** The most widespread of the ERDB species with a total of about 15 recorded from Westlands, Hilly Fields and Lexden Springs. (Nb)
- 62.101 *Elegia similella* One at Westlands. (Nb)
- 62.032 *Nephoterix angustella* Two at Lexden Park. (Nb)
- 63.075 *Eudonia pallida* Recorded at Westlands, Lexden Springs and Gosbecks in small numbers. (Nb)
- 63.079 *Calamotropha paludella* Single-figures recorded at Westlands.(Nb)
- 63.102 *Catoptria falsella* Small numbers at Hilly Fields and Lexden Springs.
- 63.109 *Pediasia contaminella* One at Hilly Fields and several at Gosbecks. (Nb)
- 70.146 *Eupithecia haworthiata* **Haworth's Pug** Two at Lexden Springs.
- 70.148 *Eupithecia inturbata* **Maple Pug** Three at Hilly Fields.
- 70.186 *Eupithecia millefoliata* **Yarrow Pug** Two at Lexden Springs. (Nb)
- 73.151 *Archanara sparganii* **Webb's Wainscot** One at Lexden Springs. (Nb)
- 73.344 *Noctua orbona* **Lunar Yellow Underwing** One at Hilly Fields and two at Gosbecks.(Nb)



Elegia similella



Dasycera oliviella

(S. Wood)

Other nationally scarce B species (Nb)

62.070 *Synaphe punctalis* Over 100 individuals at Hilly Fields; clearly an important site for this moss-feeding pyralid.

Nationally local species

Recorded from five sites

72.043 *Eilema depressa* **Buff Footman**

Recorded from four sites

70.036 *Codonia punctaria* **Maiden's Blush**, 73.047 *Craniophora ligustri* **Coronet**

Recorded from three sites

63.075 *Eudonia pallida*, 70.004 *Idaea rusticta*, **Least Carpet**, 72.046 *Eilema complana* **Scarce Footman**, 73.099 *Hoplodrina ambigua* **Vine's Rustic**

Recorded from two sites

62.048 *Euzophera pinguis*, 63.028 *Ostrinia nubilalis* **European Corn-borer**, 63.102 *Catoptria falsella*, 70.208 *Ligdia adustata* **Scorched Carpet**, 72.009 *Leucoma salicis* **White Satin Moth**, 72.010 *Lymantria monacha* **Black Arches**, 72.035 *Miltochrista miniata* **Rosy Footman**, 73.105 *Dypterygia scabriuscula* **Bird's Wing**, 73.213 *Ipimorpha subtusa* **Olive**, 74.009 *Nycteola revayana* **Oak Nycteoline**

Recorded from one site

62.074 *Aglossa pinguinalis* **Large Tabby**, 62.065 *Ephestia parasitella*, 63.005 *Pyrausta despicata*, 63.111 *Platytes cerussella*, 63.121 *Donacaula forficella*, 69.007 *Sphinx pinastri* **Pine Hawk-moth**, 69.017 *Deilephila porcellus* **Small Elephant Hawk-moth**, 70.023 *Calothysanis marginepunctana* **Mullein Wave**, 70.055 *Xanthorhoe quadrifasiata* **Large Twin-spot Carpet**, 70.102 *Idaea trigeminata* **Treble Brown-spot**, 70.112 *Euchoeca nebulata* **Dingy Shell**, 70.146 *Eupithecia haworthiata* **Haworth's Pug**, 70.148 *Eupithecia inturbata* **Maple Pug**, 70.160 *Eupithecia tripunctaria* **White-spotted Pug**, 70.189 *Eupithecia subumbrata* **Shaded Pug**, 70.200 *Acasis viretata* **Yellow-barred Brindle**, 70.224 *Plagodis dolabraria* **Scorched Wing**, 70.230 *Angerona prunaria* **Orange Moth**, 70.300 *Comibaena bajularia* **Blotched Emerald**, 70.302 *Hemistola*

chrysoprasaria **Small Emerald**, 71.010 *Drymonia dodonaea* **Marbled Brown**, 71.022 *Ptilodon cucullina* **Maple Prominent**, 72.012 *Euproctis chrysorrhoea* **Brown-tail**, 72.037 *Thumatha senex* **Round-winged Muslin**, 72.049 *Eilema sororcula* **Orange Footman**, 73.039 *Acronicta aceris* **Sycamore**, 73.107 *Mormo Maura* **Old Lady**, 73.157 *Apamea anceps* **Large Nutmeg**, 73.215 *Ulmia affinis* **Lesser-spotted Pinion**, 73.263 *Lacanobia w-latinum* **Light Brocade**, 73.294 *Mythimna straminea* **Southern Wainscot**, 74.007 *Bena bicolorana* **Scarce Silver-lines**.



Cydia amplana



Lunar Yellow Underwing (S.Wood)

Migrant species

It was a poor showing for those moths typically considered to be migrants to the UK.

49.343 *Cydia amplana* One caught at Hilly Fields was only about the fourth Essex record of this vagrant, although the species appears to be increasing in occurrence across southern Britain.

73.015 *Autographa gamma* **Silver Y** Singles recorded from just three sites. A very poor showing for this normally common and abundant migrant.

73.082 *Cryphia algae* **Tree-lichen Beauty** Although thought of as a migrant, this is in fact now both a resident and a migrant in Essex, the species status having changed markedly over the last decade in southern England. Records came from three sites with double-figure counts from two.

73.297 *Mythimna albipuncta* **White-point** Another species that is now best considered a resident and migrant in Essex, particularly in the east of the county. Recorded from four sites.

Conclusion

The six sites managed by CBC appear to hold a rich Lepidoptera fauna. Hilly Fields stands out particularly as holding a significant variety of scarce or rare residents. Ironically, it has a low level of protection, as a Local Wildlife Site, and I cannot help wonder, given its importance for other invertebrates, such as Stag Beetle (*Lucanus cervus*), Minotaur Beetle (*Typhaeus typhoeus*) and Bee Wolf (*Philanthus triangulum*), and its acid grassland (the flora of which includes Early Hair-grass *Aira praecox*, Sand Spurrey *Spergularia rubra*, Changing Forget-me-knot *Myosotis discolor* and Lesser Chickweed *Stellaria pallida*) which has virtually disappeared in Essex, why it has never been designated an SSSI? Gosbecks, somewhat surprisingly, also had a high proportion of rare species, despite the trapping being late in the season when moth numbers have fallen away significantly.

It is intended that further moth survey nights will be carried out in 2018. Details will be published in due course.

If anyone would like a full species list then please email me at simon.wood27@gmail.com

More site information can be found on the Colchester Borough Council website at <http://www.colchester.gov.uk/article/11794/Country-Parks-and-Local-Nature-Reserves>

Acknowledgements

I would particularly like to thank David Barnard for his help and advice. David has for a number of years organised the Colchester Moth sessions and has decided to hand the reins over...I would also like to thank all those who bought along traps or assisted on the various evenings - Andrew Raybould, Ian Turner, Gerry Slater, David Barnard and Dougal Urquhart. And of course, thank you to Carla Davis for inviting us along.

Several members of the Essex Moth Group met up with Friends and volunteers of Tiptree Heath on 26th July for the annual mothing evening. Six traps operated by Dougal Urquhart, Graham Ekins and Ian Turner were spread out beside the scrub, wood and heath close to the main car park. The breezy conditions proved challenging in some places and those traps performing the best were more sheltered. Despite the breeze, over 100 species of moth were recorded, comprising 38 micros and 66 macros, making it a very productive evening.



Anania verbascalis (G.E.)



Argyresthia alibstria (G.E.)



Epiblema foenella (D.U.)

Scarce Essex micros of note included *Dasycera oliviella*, *Monopsis monochella*, *Argyresthia alibstria* and *Anania verbascalis*, as well as the common but attractive *Epiblema foenella*. The main macro of note was the heathland speciality **True Lover's Knot**, also recorded were **Festoon**, **Pine Hawkmoth**, **Maple Pug**, **Coronet** and the **Olive Moth**.



TIPTREE MOTH EVENING – JULY 2017

(D.U.)

A garden breeding record

Nemophora fasciella is a scarce and somewhat local, day-flying, species found principally in southern and south-east England. It is a UK BAP species. The larval foodplant is Black Horehound (*Ballota nigra*).



(PICS – S.WOOD)

My garden is a small semi-urban one located between the Chelmer and Blackwater Canal and the seawall of the Blackwater estuary at Heybridge. It is managed entirely with wildlife in mind and to that end I have a small, healthy stand of Black Horehound in a warm sheltered corner. On 12th June, a pleasantly warm day that reached temperatures of 20C, I was sitting watching solitary bees feeding on the horehound blossom when my attention was drawn to what was clearly a long-horn moth. It was not one I was entirely familiar but after quick reference to books, an identity was easily confirmed.

Keen to get some photos, I settled down and observed. It appeared to be carefully working over the leaves close to the top of the plant. Using its antennae almost like feelers it seemed to be looking for something. I then noticed that it stopped still for a while and then arched its abdomen downwards and towards the stem of the plant. It was egg-laying. Unfortunately, despite taking many photographs I was not able to get a photo of the eggs and I did not want to disturb plant or moth to obtain these, but you can see from one of the photos the abdomen being held in such a way as to locate the eggs close to the stem of the plant.

In all I watched the moth for around ten minutes before I realised that time was pressing and less important matters pressed! I did not see the moth again on subsequent days, despite searching. The Black Horehound patch I have left for 2018 and am hoping for the best.

WIVENHOE WATCHING WILDLIFE WATCHING MOTHS IN 2017 – or at least trying to! GREG SMITH

When Dougal first approached me to provide an update on Wivenhoe Watching Wildlife's community mothing activities in 2017, my immediate reaction was to say "Mothing to see here. Move along please." But I relented and, given that last year scientists revealed a massive decline in the abundance of invertebrates on nature reserves in Germany, it seems somehow fitting to be writing this report. In short, it has been a poor year for community moth-watching here in Wivenhoe, but it wasn't the community who let the side down. They turned out in good numbers, high spirits and (for one of the sessions at least) fine weather, with cakes and a wee dram to keep our collective spirits up. No - it was the moths that did for us. Or rather didn't. Where were they?

In 2016, we had had a couple of tough sessions in the church yard of St Mary's church at the heart of the town – part of a year of bio-blitzing which revealed the unsurprising conclusion that, if the Town Council regularly mow the grass from wall to wall and spray glyphosate on any bits they can't reach with the mower, then you will not find yourself blessed with an abundance of wildlife of any sort. In contrast, the previous year we had been to the 'old cemetery' on Belle Vue Rd whose (largely) 'leave well alone' management has created a lovely range of mature habitats and where, among a host of other species, we were festooned with festoons. The one bit of good news from last year was the Town Council's decision (on the back of our evidence to them) to dispense with the herbicides and implement new, wildlife friendly management on many of the public spaces it looks after.



Pics via G.Smith

So, after our dismal mothing evenings in 2016, we decided to try some more promising locations in 2017: first, a lawned garden in May where the cold and rain saw us take only three moths before cutting our losses. We were so unimpressed that I didn't even make a note of the species! We did manage a nice barbecue, though, so it wasn't a complete wash out.

So our mothing year hinged on our event for the National Moth Night weekend (13 October). For this, we moved to the delightful wildlife garden on the edge of the King George V playing fields – where local community endeavour has created a tiny haven of nectar-rich flowers, a small pond, a bug shack and an elm hedge, all overseen by a monumental pedunculate oak tree. Surely the perfect spot for a bit of autumn mothing? The weather was ideal, still and mild and the community again turned out in good numbers to share the hoped for excitement, lured by some online pics of the marvellous **Merveille du Jour**. The session started oddly with one of our two 150 watt MV traps being invaded by 7-8 angry hornets (which Glyn Evans kindly rescued) and young and old alike were delighted to come face to face with frogs and a large toad among the pond weed. But, once again, the moths failed to perform. Six hours of mothing and all we had to show were 8 species (**Lesser** and **Large Yellow Underwings**, **Common Marbled** and **Red-green Carpets**, **Setaceous Hebrew Character**, **Yellow-line Quaker**, an unseasonal **Turnip** and *Ypsolopha sylvella*).

We'll be running a couple of events for the local community again this year but let's hope they continue to be understanding if the moths fail to live up to the promise. So, if the evidence of our year in Wivenhoe is anything to go by (which, if I'm honest, it probably isn't), it's not just in German nature reserves that invertebrate populations are in retreat.

A single 125W MV Robinson trap was run throughout the season, with an additional 125W MV and single 15W actinic traps operated from the beginning of May until the end of October. No traps were operated from 21st to 27th August.

Highlights included *Psammotis pulveralis*, a county first in July, **Striped Hawk-moth** *Hyles livornica* in May and **Silver-striped Hawk-moth** *Hippotion celerio* in November.

One noticeable absentee from the year was **Feathered Brindle** *Aporophyla australis*, normally encountered annually in single figures.

Table 1. Monthly totals of the more regular immigrant species at St Osyth.

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	T
Diamond-back Moth <i>P. xylostella</i>	0	0	0	0	23	31	26	10	1	1	0	0	92
*European Corn-borer <i>O. nubilalis</i>	0	0	0	0	0	5	4	0	0	0	0	0	9
Rusty-dot Pearl <i>U. ferrugalis</i>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	8	2	8	0	0	10
Rush Veneer <i>N. noctuella</i>	0	0	0	0	0	1	6	1	2	0	0	0	10
Convovulus Hawk-moth <i>A. convolvuli</i>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Hummingbird Hawk-moth <i>M. stellatarum</i>	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	2	2	0	0	0	5
Vestal <i>R. saccharia</i>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	4	0	0	5
Gem <i>N. obstipata</i>	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	2	3	0	0	5
Silver Y <i>A. gamma</i>	0	0	0	0	6	3	64	10	1	5	0	0	89
Bordered Straw	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	3
Scarce Bordered Straw <i>H. armigera</i>	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	4	2	0	0	0	7
*Tree-lichen Beauty <i>C. algae</i>	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	1	0	0	0	0	4
Small Mottled Willow <i>S. exigua</i>	0	0	0	0	0	1	5	2	0	1	0	0	9
Pearly Underwing <i>P. saucia</i>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
Dark Sword-grass <i>A. ipsilon</i>	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	5	0	0	0	7

*Records likely to be associated with local breeding populations.



SILVER-STRIPED HAWKMOTH



STRIPED HAWKMOTH

(C.ATKINS)

The main local highlights of the season were as follows –

Agonopterix curvipunctosa singles on 1st April and 16th June.

Depressaria daucella 1 on 1st July.

Anarsia innoxia 1 on 25th June was new for site.

Brachmia inornatella 1 on 1st June.

Aroga velocella 1 on 30th August.

Scrobipalpa obsoterella 1 on 1st August.

Crociosema plebajana 3 in July.

Festoon *A. limacodes* 1 on 16th June.

Rosy-striped Knot-horn *O. semirubella* singles on 24th June, 3rd July, 1st August and 20th September.

Ancylosis oblitella 1 on 12th August.

Psammotis pulveolis 1 on 19th July. New for site.

Evergestis limbata singles on 3rd and 4th September.

Pediasia fascelinella 1 on 31st July, 1 on 12th August.

Pediasia contaminella 1 on 10th July, 1 on 15th August.



Psammotis pulveralis



Pediasia contaminella



Pediasia fascelinella

(C. Atkins)

Striped Hawk-moth *H.livornica* 1 on 17th May, new for site.
Silver-striped Hawk-moth *H.celerio* 1 on 3rd November, new for site.
Rosy Wave *S.emutaria* 6 in June.
Latticed Heath *C.clathrata* 234 on 11th August and 308 on 20th August likely to be associated with immigration.
Sloe Carpet *Aleucis distinctata* 10 from 30th March to 20th April.
Rest Harrow *Aplasta ononaria* 1 on 1st August, 1 on 15th August.
Jersey Tiger *Euplagia quadripunctaria* 1 on 17th August was new for site.
Hoary Footman *Eilema caniola* 1 on 14th August.
Shaded Fan-foot *Herminia tarsicrinalis* 1 on 30th June.
Plumed Fan-foot *Pechipogo plumigeralis* 1 on 6th July, 1 on 26th September.
Blackneck *Lygephila pastinum* 1 on 16th June new for site.
Ni Moth *Trichoplusia ni* 1 on 4th June.
Dewick's Plusia *Macdunnoughia confusa* 1 on 17th July.
Toadflax Brocade *Calophasia lunula* 9 larva on Common Toadflax *Linaria vulgaris*.
Delicate *Mythimna vitellina* singles on 2nd, 3rd, 15th and 25th October.
Obscure Wainscot *Leucania obsoleta* 7 in June.
Cosmopolitan *Leucania loreyi* single on 25th October was new for site.
Kent Black Arches *Meganola albula* 10 between 21st June and 9th July being the highest annual count for site.



SHADED FAN-FOOT



COSMOPOLITAN



SOUTHERN EMERALD (C.Atkins)

After the discovery of **Southern Migrant Hawker** *Aeshna affinis* at the site last year, it was pleasing to see the first male appear nearby on 7th July. Sightings continued until 20th August with a maximum of 4 males in 3 different areas, interestingly a male appeared at a 15W actinic trap on 13th July.

More exciting was the discovery of a male **Southern Emerald Damselfly** *Lestes barbarus* on 7th July with a different individual at the same site on 9th July. There was a single record of an interesting bug taken at a light trap, the plant hopper **Asiraca clavicornis** on 14th October..

Trapping was carried out at Cudmore Grove Country Park at East Mersea on 64 evenings during 2017 resulting in 233 species of macro. This is much less than last year's total and from fewer nights too, however it is an average total compared with the twelve year period of trapping here. Trapping started in mid-March and continued mainly till mid-November with one night in mid-December.

A **Dotted Chestnut** and a **Blossom Underwing** on the 22nd March were the first moths of interest in the spring. While April was disappointing with lots of cold and clear nights, weather improved in May with warmer nights with some cloud. The first park record of **Seraphim** was found on 11th and again on 14th while the first **Camomile Shark** was recorded on the 16th, the same night as a **Fox Moth**. **Cream-spot Tigers** were recorded on seven nights between 24th May and 10th June, with a peak count of 5. **Coronet** and **Saltmarsh Plume** were noted at the end of May while **Beautiful Hook-tip** was noted on 1st and 13th June.

Warmer summer nights delivered better conditions for mothing with a **Festoon**, **Maple Prominent**, **Rosy Footman** and **Dark Spectacle** on 5th July. A multi-trap session on 7th with Chris Williams involving nine traps around the country park produced just over 100 species through the warm night. By dawn there was the only **Garden Tiger** of the year, the first **Clouded Magpie** and first **Alder Moth** for the site, also 10 **Festoons**, **Peach Blossom**, **Orange Moth**, **Leopard**, **Ground Lackey**, **Sand Dart**, **Kent Black Arches**, **Starwort**, **Coronet**, **Tree-lichen Beauty**, **Fen Wainscot**, **Beautiful Hook-tip** and three **Boxworm Moths**. A **Phoenix** on 19th was a new record with 4 **Tree-lichen Beauties** and 2 **Sandhill Rustics** that same night. The annual meeting of the Essex Moth Group took place on 21st July on a breezy night and with the additional traps from Graham Ekins and David Barnard, some highlights of the 84 species being **Ground Lackey**, **Oak Eggar**, **Tree-lichen Beauty** and a **Boxworm Moth** and the ERDB species of *Bryotropha terrella* and *Recurvaria leucatella*.



MOCHA

GYPSY MOTH

CLOUDED MAGPIE

(D.U.)

During August the first **Gypsy Moth** for the site turned up on 11th along with a peak count of 150+ **Latticed Heaths** and another **Coronet**. Two **Maple Prominents**, **Sandhill Rustic** and a **Goldspot** were of note on the 15th. The real star of the summer was a **Mocha** on the 21st – a new record for the site and well away from the nearest woodland breeding sites in Essex. A pinkish **Vestal** on the same night was the first record here for over ten years. The following night on the 22nd 70 **Latticed Heaths** were still filling the trap, also a **Scarce Bordered Straw**. The latter part of August and early September saw **Scarce Bordered Straw** recorded on four nights. Also in this period a **Large Thorn** on 23rd August, **Beautiful Hook-tip** on 1st Sept, **Archers Dart** on 2nd and 6th, **Orange Sallow** on the 2nd, **Old Lady** and *Evergestis limbata* on 6th Sept.

A few things of interest in October were a **Flounced Chestnut** on 10th October, **Pine Carpet** and **Autumnal Rustic** on 13th, a **Merveille du Jour** on 15th, **Dusky-lemon Sallow** on the 17th and 24th and a **Streak** on 24th and 25th.

Towards the end of the year there was a sizeable gathering of 78 **Winter Moths** early one evening around the lit office and toilet windows at the country park.



200 HOGS FENNEL PLANTS WERE PLANTED AT CUDMORE GROVE COUNTRY PARK IN FEBRUARY 2007. ZOE RINGWOOD AND ALAN ROSCOE HELPED SURROUND EACH PLANT WITH WIRE NETTING TO PREVENT RABBIT DAMAGE. A FURTHER 200 PLANTS WERE PUT IN A COUPLE OF YEARS LATER.

TWENTY WRITTLE COLLEGE STUDENTS HELPED TO PLANT 600 HOGS FENNEL PLUGS IN NOVEMBER 2015 TO BRING THE TOTAL NUMBER AT THE PARK UP TO 1000 PLANTS.



VOLUNTEERS HAVE HELPED TO CUT BACK INVADING SCRUB AND ALSO TO COLLECT SEEDS OF THE HOGS FENNEL TO HELP WITH THE SPREAD OF MORE PLANTS.

HOGS FENNEL PLANTS IN THREE AREAS OF THE PARK HAVE FLOURISHED OVER THE TEN YEARS. THE MAIN AREA OF PLANTS LIE IN A GRASSLAND MANAGED UNDER A HIGHER LEVEL STEWARDSHIP AGREEMENT WITH NATURAL ENGLAND



THE HOGS FENNEL HAVE BEEN MONITORED EVERY SUMMER FOR SIGNS OF LARVAL ACTIVITY AND ALSO THE HEALTH OF THE PLANTS. PICTURED ARE VOLUNTEER SURVEYORS WITH REBECCA FROM COLCHESTER ZOO AND ZOE RINGWOOD



AN INFORMATION BOARD AT THE PARK INFORMS VISITORS ABOUT THE FISHERS ESTUARINE MOTH PROJECT



ELEVEN BLADES OF GRASS, EACH LADEN WITH MOTH EGGS AND FIXED TO A CANE, WERE BROUGHT FROM COLCHESTER ZOO IN MARCH 2017. SIGNS OF FEEDING LARVAE WERE FOUND IN PLANTS IN AUGUST 2017 BUT NO ADULTS YET – DESPITE ONE EVENING SEARCH IN EARLY OCT 2017.

(PICS - D.U.)

With a house move and a new job I have had very little time to spend trapping Moths in 2017, but with a spare weekend in August I did manage to spend some time searching in the Brightlingsea area hoping to see something new.

I ran my 15 watt actinic overnight Friday and trapped an *Anania perlucidalis* along with a **Toadflax Brocade**, both of which were new to me, Saturday night was less interesting but I did get a **Large Thorn** which was also a first for me.



Anania perlucidalis



Great Green Bush-cricket



Ochsenheimeria urella (S.ROLLS)

Just along the coast from Brightlingsea lies the Essex Wildlife Trust reserve of Howlands Marsh which has proved very productive for Insects over the last 10 years for me so I thought I would spend a few hours wandering the site to see what I could find, A **Great Green Bush-cricket** was a nice surprise but the best find was discovering good numbers of *Ochsenheimeria urella* flying around some long grass in the afternoon sunshine.

My next search of the weekend involved a trip to a local Garden Centre, often productive for new to me species, the first creature I spotted was the Spider *Uloborus plumipes*, apparently common in Garden Centres, I spotted some Citrus plants for sale and checked them over for *Phyllocnistis citrella* mines, most showed the leaf mines of this species so I collected a few leaves and took them home hoping to rear a few Adults, they duly appeared a couple of weeks later along with another Moth that was completely unknown to me, a quick google search revealed it to be a *Prays citri*.



Phyllocnistis citrella



Prays citri



Uloborus plumipes (S.ROLLS)

A final walk around Brightlingsea on Sunday afternoon also proved interesting, I found a dead *Sirex noctilio*, I will have to check the local Pine Trees for this species in case its taken up residence.

2017 was an excellent year for immigrants and many residents clearly benefitted from the warm and very dry spring. Overall though rainfall was only slightly below the long-term average, with May, July and December all being particularly wet.

January was very disappointing with no butterflies seen for the first time since 2010. However, things were about to change; a **Red Admiral** was active on 2nd February and by the 19th both **Peacock** and **Comma** were also about. The following day brought exceptionally warm weather and no less than three **Brimstones** were flying. On 13th March a **Large Tortoiseshell** was photographed and earliest ever records were broken by **Speckled Wood** on the 27th and **Green-veined White** on the 29th. The warm southerly winds also resulted in the arrival of another 'earliest', a small and very active **Humming-bird Hawk-moth** on the last day of the month.

Only 5.1mm of rainfall fell in April and yet more records were broken with two **Orange-tips** on the 2nd, **Green Hairstreak** on the 9th, **Small Copper** on the 17th and **Small Heath** on the 20th. On 11th May another **Large Tortoiseshell** was about. In the trap, single **Grass Rivulets** appeared on 25th and 26th May, our first since 1987. An **Oblique Carpet** on the 29th was our first since 1983 and even better, on the 31st an entirely new species to Bradwell, **Little Thorn**, was found inside the trap.



LARGE TORTOISESHELL



OBLIQUE CARPET



LITTLE THORN (S.DEWICK)

The 'earliest evers' continued into June, **Ringlet** on the 11th and **Gatekeeper** on the 25th and once again a **White Admiral** was seen. There were 13 male **Four-spotted Footman** between 14th June and 29th September (our best since 1951) and on the 21st June **Satin Beauty** was added to the Bradwell list. July highlights included single male **Gypsy Moths** on the 22nd and 29th and a **Ni Moth** on the 31st. Further **Gypsy Moths** followed on the 13th and 17th August and two late broods of **Peacock** larvae were observed. Quite uncharacteristically for **Peacock** one of these was located under trees, close to the north wall of a barn where the sun could barely reach. Amongst the immigrants, **Scarce Bordered Straw** was the dominant species in August with numbers that have been bettered only in 2006. However by late September a considerable variety of species were arriving, **Dewick's Plusia**, **Delicate**, **Plumed Fan-foot** and *Palpita vitrealis* amongst the best.



CLIFDEN NONPAREIL



DEATHS-HEAD HAWKMOTH (S.DEWICK)

As October began the excitement grew still further with a magnificent female **Deaths-head Hawk-moth** on the 2nd and a **Clifden Nonpareil** the very next night.

A very large and unusually late influx of **Vestals** occurred around the 23rd and the rare immigrant pyralid *Antigastra catalaunalis* came in on the 21st. On the 26th an exceptionally late **Ni Moth** was in the trap. Immigrant activity waned rapidly early in November and the month was most notable for the strange array of late residents that appeared. On the 14th, immaculate **Dark Arches**, **White-point** and **Merveille du Jour** were all inside the trap. **Red-line Quaker** appeared on 4th December and even by the 22nd **Brick** was still flying – How rare an occurrence is that?

GARDEN MOTHING 2017

ALAN SIBLEY

2017 was to be a very different year here at Sible Hedingham, as I decided not to go away for an annual holiday other than short UK breaks, I would instead attempt to run traps in my back garden on a continuous basis throughout the year. normally I am in Wales from mid-June to mid-July. I have also been concerned about the light pollution from extensive security lights at the adjacent secondary school and local properties combined with the loss of several large trees including my own Scots Pine has resulted in a drop in my returns.



Waved Black *Parascotia fuliginaria* 2475 10/07/2017

WAVED BLACK



Small Scallop *Idaea emarginata* 1712 10/07/2017

SMALL SCALLOP



Paraswammerdamia nebulosa 441 08/07/2017

Paraswammerdamia nebulosa (A.Sibley)

I was to run trap(s) on 169 nights, 135 nights with twin 30w tubes, 12 nights with 12v Heath and 24 nights with both systems. 31 nights drew a blank May 1st 4c last at start of year and 20th Oct 8c first at year end Being on site over the June/July period has made my finding difficult to compare with returns going back to 2010. What I can say is that numbers were up some 18% and species up 30% when compared with the best previous yearly figures.



Mompha propinquella 888 08/07/2017

Mompha propinquella



Blastodacna hellerella 905 01/07/2017

Blastodacna hellerella



Ypsolopha parenthesella 460 08/07/2017

Ypsolopha parenthesella



Duponchelia fovealis (A.S.)

For most members I guess this is all a tad mundane it lacks the thrill of say a Fisher's Estuarine Moth or a Sloe Carpet following a visit to a local hot spot, but hey there is always expectation and the motivation to continue and with the back up support of people such as Stephen Rolls, Brian Goodey and Peter Williams the latter I was to meet in Wales and remain in regular contact Bring it on.

The photos from this mid year period are all either lifers or new to the relevant month.

The Pyralid *Duponchelia fovealis*, usually found in the Mediterranean and pictured lower right was found in the Sible Hedingham house on 5th Feb 2018 and is thought to have arrived from the continent via a house plant.

At home (between Boreham and Great Leighs) the garden trap was set up 37 times (69 in 2016) including 2 non-successful tries for **Sloe Carpet** under the flowering Blackthorn in the adjacent paddocks in April. 323 species (2016-374) were recorded of which 28 were previously unrecorded. The Garden list now stands at 560 with that for Essex at 662.

New additions in the garden are always exciting and included, **The Coronet** (26th Aug), **Vestal** (14th Oct), **Box Tree Moth** (14th Oct), **Cypress Carpet** (20th Sept & 14th Oct), **Waved Black** (10th July), **Pretty Chalk Carpet** (16th May & 26th Aug), a stunning *Acleris literana* (8th March) and **Ni Moth** (26th Aug).

Most numerous were *Chrysoteuchia culmella* this year with 150-200 on some days/nights in June with a count of 125 **Setaceous Hebrew Character** on 20th September in and around the trap. Other counts of 100 or more on a single night were **Latticed Heath** (26th August) and **Common Footman** (3rd July). 80 **Common Quaker** (30th March) on one of my **Sloe Carpet** attempts was also noteworthy.



PRETTY CHALK CARPET



NI MOTH

(A. RAYBOULD)

Unlike 2016 I did not sugar at all having had disappointing results but did some daytime mothing particularly having travelled to Whixall Moss in Shropshire on Dave Grundy's excellent one day course on finding daytime moths. One of the bonuses of that day was that I managed to net an **Argent and Sable** whilst there. Choppings Wood over the road from where I live produced *Adele rufimitrella*, *Nematrogon swammerdamella* and *Tischeria ekebladella* in May during the day, all of which were new for me.

Along with the Colchester Natural History Group I visited 4 sites for evening sessions in the Colchester area and also the Chatham Green Project near Little Leighs as part of the Essex Field Club's survey there with Rob Smith in May. Notable for me was my first ever **Mullein Wave** at Spring Lane Nursery just off the A12 at Colchester on a very damp and cold night (25th July) and Simon Wood seemed to get into the habit of producing **Lunar Yellow Underwings** every time he set up a session resulting in the habit spreading and getting one in the garden (20th Sept).



VESTAL



ACLERIS LITERANA (A.RAYBOULD)

I also ventured over the border again and joined the Herts and Middlesex Group at Millenium Wood (7th July, Little Hadham, 93 species in 2 hours) and at Broxbourne Woods (30th June) where I caught up with my first **Minor Shoulder Knot**.

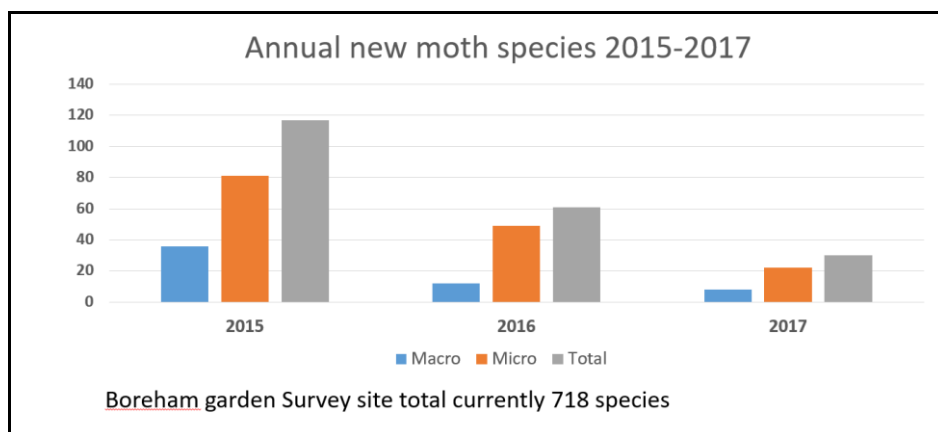
I attended moth ID courses at East Mersea, Wicken Fen and at Minsmere with Dave Grundy and saw some specialities of the coast, fenland and reedbed including first ever **Starwort**, **Sand Dart** and **Small Marbled** (all East Mersea 7th July), **Reed Leopard**, **Reedbed Plume**, **Chevron**, **Marsh Carpet**, **Small Chocolate-tip** and **Mere Wainscot** (all Wicken Fen 16th July), 9 different **Wainscots** and **Pinion-streaked Snout** (Minsmere 29th July). There were plenty of micros as well to keep us occupied.

A trip to Las Descargues (www.lasdescargues.com) in the Lot Region of France for a week at Robin Howard's excellent property in mid-June produced 394 moth species, 51 butterflies and 16 dragonflies (at least those we managed to id). It was a great week if you like going through hundreds of moths many of which are rarities/do not exist in Essex, stalking butterflies through meadows which teem with insects, sitting out in the evening sun, relaxing in the pool and checking out the local cuisine and alcohol. Tough, tough, tough.

BOREHAM MOTHS

GRAHAM EKINS

Due to commitments elsewhere I concentrated on trapping between April week 4 and October week 1. I was not disappointed with 30 New for Site (NFS), 8 of these being macros. The number of new species has been steadily decreasing year on year but this was to be expected. The Boreham moth list currently stands at 721 species (January 2018).



Pride of place here in Boreham goes to a first for Essex in a beautifully marked little Micro, *Bisigna procerella* trapped on the 20th June 2017. This species is widespread on the continent and is suspected of breeding near Hamstreet in Kent. There are a few additional records in Sussex and in 2017 in N. Kent. Suffolk also has one coastal record. Larvae feed on Lichens on tree trunks and so it could colonise Essex.

Another unexpected find on the 7th July was **Dingy White Plume**, (*Merrifieldia baliodactylus*), a nationally scarce species. I am grateful to Brian Goodey for confirming the id. The adults are associated with calcareous soils and larvae feed on Wild Marjoram, there is one other Essex record. I also trapped on the 7th July *Ypsolopha vitella*, classed nationally as Local, there is just one other Essex record.



Bisigna procerella



**Merrifieldia baliodactylus,
DINGY WHITE PLUME**



**Ypsolopha vitella
(PICS -G.EKINS)**

2017 was an unusual migrant year with for example just 15 *Nomophila noctuella*, 5 *Udea ferrugalis*, 51 **Silver Y**, no Bordered Straws and 4 **Small Mottled Willow**. However, this was more than compensated by 19 **Scarce Bordered Straw**, with records from mid-June through to early October, I normally expect just 2 a year. The variations in colour forms was interesting, possibly suggesting origins from widely scattered areas of the continent. In addition I trapped 7 **Vestal**, I normally expect just 1 or 2 a year. In addition singles of *Ethmia bipunctella*, *Palpita vitrealis* and 2 **Dewick's Plusia**, all 3 species were NFS.



2017 was an exceptional year for Scarce Bordered Straws
SCARCE BORDERED STRAWS



VESTAL



DEWICK'S PLUSIA



Ethmia bipunctella (Pics -G.EKINS)

Amongst the new species trapped were five Essex RDB, they were **Kent Black Arches**, *Monochroa palustrellus*, *Ethmia bipunctella*, *Apotomis lineana* and *Acleris cristana*. Other scarce new species not mentioned above included the tiny coastal *Gymnidomorpha vectisana*, *Orthotelia sparganella*, *Vitula biviella* and *Pempelia genistella*.

It was also a great year for species that appear to be on the increase with 22 **Tree Lichen Beauty**, 5 **Boxworm Moth**, 6 of *Anarsia innoxia*, recently split from the much rarer *Anarsia lineatella*, 10 **L-Album Wainscot**, 6 **Fen Wainscot** and 32 **White-point**, amongst several other wetland/reed bed species. Macro species that have shown a noticeable decrease here in Boreham have included **Frosted Orange**, **Beautiful Golden Y**, **Peach Blossom**, **Puss Moth**, and **Burnished Brass**.

2017 was another record year for **Latticed Heath** with over 1200 trapped over a 2 week period from late July when winds were from the SE. I also trapped the impressive looking dark form *alboguttata*.



Pempelia genistella



Palpita vitrealis



Vitula biviella



LATTICED HEATH form *alboguttata*

Light N/NE winds in late July into August brought the expected coastal species with my 5th examples of **Salt-marsh Plume** and the third **Sandhill Rustic**. In the same catches I also had **Round-winged Muslin**, **Buff** and **Dingy Footman**, **Hoary**, **Webb's**, **Fen** and **Southern Wainscot**. These may well have originated from the same area of coastal grassland or wetland in NE Essex or SE Suffolk.



FEN WAINSCOT



SOUTHERN WAINSCOT

(Pics – G.EKINS)



BUFF FOOTMAN



ROUND-WINGED MUSLIN (G.EKINS)

It was also an interesting year for other insects attracted to the moth traps. This included an additional 38 species of Diptera bringing the site total to 169 over the last 2 years. One, *Fannia pruinosa* is a new UK species and arrived with a number of migrant moth species in late September. Another species, *Nileia hortulana* is new for Essex. It has been great working with Del Smith on this group.

PRITTLEWELL, SOUTHEND ON SEA TQ872879

NICK GASH

2017 was a very enjoyable mothing year for me here in Prittlewell, Southend-on-Sea. I run a 125MV Robinson in my back garden on as many nights as weather and work permit between early March and early November. Winter trapping is a waste of time for me here, catches are zero or if I'm lucky a couple of *Epiphyas postvittana*.

My garden is small, laid to lawn with some bushes and is surrounded by other small gardens similarly planted. The nearest 'natural' habitat is several miles away, Belfairs Woods to the east, Hockley Woods to the north and saltmarsh to the east and south west, so it's fair to say that my location is pretty urban. My garden list obviously isn't going to be huge, I'm in the 400s at the moment after 9 years of running the trap but nevertheless many interesting moths visit my garden, with a fair number of wanderers and migrants, but the majority are probably born and bred "Sarfenders" like me. At the height of the season a good night would be 200 moths of 60 species which is as much as I have time for.

Moth of the year for me believe it or not was my first ever **Heart and Club** *Agrotis clavis*, closely followed by my first ever **Tawny Speckled Pug** *Eupithecia icterata subfulvata* (I gave an involuntary whoop of delight when I saw that in the trap ☺). Other notable moths were a **Small Purple-barred** *Phytometra viridaria* on 13/07/17 (the first modern Essex record I was informed by Peter Harvey) and Essex' second *Bisigna procerella* on 02/07/17 (Graham Ekins beat me by a couple of weeks), *Ptocheuusa paupella* on 21/08/17 and **False Codling Moth** *Thaumatotibia leucotreta* on 15/07/17. A **Box-tree Moth** *Cydalima perspectalis* was trapped on 03/09/17 and this species was pretty regular from then on until the end of the autumn with both forms seen.

My garden 'speciality' **Plumed Fan-foot** *Pechipogo plumigeralis* had another good year though the first generation, 16 moths on 11 nights between 17/06/17 and 18/07/17 with 3 on 18/07/17, was somewhat curtailed by the wet weather in July. The second generation produced 10 moths on 9 nights between 25/08/17 and 13/10/17. **Privet Hawkmoth** *Sphinx ligustri* had a good year, recorded on 14 nights with up to 3 on some nights after only 13 records between 2009 and 2016. Similarly **White-point** *Mythimna albipuncta* was recorded on 16 nights after only 15 records between 2009 and 2016. The autumn was notable for large counts of **L-album Wainscot** *Mythimna l-album*, 20 on 20/09/17 being the highest count, and **Feathered Ranunculus** *Polymixis lichnea* peaking with 32 on 03/10/17. An **L-album Wainscot** was also recorded on the very early date of 01/04/17.

Migrants included my first **Clancy's Rustic** *Caradrina kadenii* since 2013 on 10/10/17 and *Antigastra catalaunalis* on 23/10/17.



SMALL PURPLED-BARRED



BUTTONED SNOUT



BEAUTIFUL HOOK-TIP



GRASS RIVULET (N.G.)

New for the garden in 2017 were:

- 16/03/17 **March Moth** *Alsophila aescularia*
- 26/03/17 **Shoulder Stripe** *Anticlea badiata*
- 29/03/17 **Twin-spotted Quaker** *Orthosia munda*
- 30/03/17 *Caloptilia semifascia*
- 16/05/17 *Ectoedemia decentella*
- 16/05/17 **Oak Tree Pug** *Eupithecia dodoneata*
- 22/05/17 **Orange Footman** *Eilema sorocula*
- 24/05/17 **Grass Rivulet** *Perizoma albulata*
- 24/05/17 **Buttoned Snout** *Hypena rostralis*
- 28/05/17 **Treble Lines** *Charanyca trigrammica*
- 30/05/17 **Green Silver Lines** *Pseudoips prasinana*
- 31/05/17 **Beautiful Carpet** *Mesoleuca albicillata*
- 01/06/17 *Homoeosoma sinvella*
- 07/06/17 **Variiegated Golden Tortrix** *Archips xylosteana*
- 08/06/17 *Phtheochroa rugosana*
- 08/06/17 **Pea Moth** *Cydia nigricana*
- 09/06/17 *Argyresthia pygmaella*
- 13/06/17 **Beautiful Hook-tip** *Laspeyria flexula*
- 14/06/17 **Common White Wave** *Cabera pusaria*
- 14/06/17 **Heart and Club** *Agrotis clavis*
- 17/06/17 **Maple Prominent** *Ptilodon cucullina*
- 17/06/17 **Oak Nycteoline** *Nycteola revayana*
- 18/06/17 *Rhyacionia pinivorana*
- 18/06/17 *Acleris hastiana*
- 02/07/17 *Bisigna procerella*
- 04/07/17 *Synaphe punctalis*
- 04/07/17 *Phyllonorycter nicellii*

- 07/07/17 **Scorched Carpet** *Ligdia adustata*
- 07/07/17 *Chilo phragmitella*
- 08/07/17 **Pebble Hook-tip** *Drepana falcataria*
- 08/07/17 **Small Fan-footed Wave** *Idaea biselata*
- 13/07/17 **Dog's Tooth** *Lacanobia suasa*
- 13/07/17 **Small Purple-barred** *Phytometra viridaria*
- 15/07/17 **False Codling Moth** *Thaumatotibia leucotreta*
- 27/07/17 *Bactra lancealana*
- 07/08/17 **Marbled Green** *Cryphia muralis*
- 07/08/17 **Tawny Speckled Pug** *Eupithecia icterata*
- 21/08/17 **Frosted Orange** *Gortyna flavago*
- 21/08/17 *Ptocheuusa paupella*
- 21/08/17 **Leek Moth** *Acrolepiopsis assectella*
- 22/08/17 *Cochylis hybridella*
- 22/08/17 *Ancylosis oblitella*
- 24/08/17 **Peacock Moth** *Macaria notata*
- 27/08/17 **Six-striped Rustic** *Xestia sexstrigata*
- 27/08/17 *Anania angustella*
- 03/09/17 **Box-tree Moth** *Cydalima perspectalis*
- 24/09/17 **Summer Fruit Tortrix** *Adoxophyes orana*
- 28/09/17 **Mallow** *Larentia clavaria*
- 11/10/17 **Yellow-line Quaker** *Agrochola macilenta*
- 14/10/17 **Green-brindled Crescent** *Allophytes oxyacanthae*
- 23/10/17 *Antigastra cataulaunalis*

Most of the above are I know common, regular moths for some of you in other parts of the county but it's taken 9 years for them to turn up in my trap here in Southend and I was thrilled to see every last one of them.



Box-tree moth – dark form



CLANCY'S RUSTIC



MARBLED GREEN



ORANGE FOOTMAN (PICS – N. GASH)



Antigastra catalaunalis



Argyresthia pygmaeella



Bisigna procerella



FALSE CODLING MOTH



OAK NYCTEOLINE



Phtheochroa rugosana



Ptocheuusa paupella (Pics- N.G)

LEPIDOPTERA REPORT – FOULNESS 2017

CHRIS LEWIS

Trapping occurred on 8 nights between 18th March and 28th October. The traps were mostly sited on the Bennetts Butt road (TR042943).

233 species were recorded, 12 of which were new for Foulness. This brings the total number of species of Lepidoptera for which I have a record of occurrence on Foulness to **609**.

As for last year, 3 Red Data Book species and 7 Nationally Scarce species were recorded this year.

I have a photographic voucher for nearly all the species listed. These and others are presented on my moth website britishlepidoptera.weebly.com.

Scarce species recorded in 2017 are shown in bold in the cumulative list presented below:

Status Uncertain:

35.0191 *Anarsia innoxia* – 1 on 24/06/2017

This species was confirmed to be British, in a paper published in March 2017, based on a specimen from my garden in Westcliff-on-sea, trapped on 01/07/2015, and presented on my moth website – more information at <https://britishlepidoptera.weebly.com/0191-anarsia-innoxia.html>



Figure 1 *Anarsia innoxia* (male)

Red Data Book species (Nationally Endangered, Vulnerable or Rare)

35.082 *Eulamprotes immaculatella* – 1 on 05/08/2012 – S England & N Scotland – FIRST FOR ESSEX

37.047 *Coleophora amethystinella* – 1 on 08/05/11 – previously only known to occur in North Essex (and 1 record from Hampshire), this is the first Essex record South of the Blackwater. At least 10 netted by day from grasses in the Bennets Butt rides on 22/05/2016 and at least 20 on 04/06/2016; **6 on 27/05/2017**

37.079 *Coleophora aestuariella* – 1 on 01/08/2015 – saltmarsh in SE.England (possibly only the 3rd record for Essex)

49.271 *Eucosma rubescana* – 1 on 08/06/2008 – saltmarsh in Kent, Essex & Suffolk

49.274 *Eucosma metzneriana* – 1 on 27/06/2015 – recent colonist, possibly breeding in Kent (possibly 7th record for Essex); 1 on 11/06/2016; 1 on 24/06/2017

70.296 *Aplasta ononaria* (Rest Harrow) – 1 on 09/08/2015 – breeds very locally in Kent, occasional migrant (possibly 5th record for Essex)

73.027 *Deltote bankiana* (Silver Barred) – 1 on 13/06/2009; 1 on 10/07/2010; 2 on 30/06/2013; 1 on 07/06/2014; 1 on 04/07/2015

73.131 *Luperina nickerlii* (Sandhill Rustic) – 2 on 15/08/2015. I have suspected this species before and it should occur on Foulness, but its similarity to *L.testacea* (Flounced Rustic) had previously left me in doubt. 2 on 13/08/2016; **1 on 26/08/2017**

Nationally Scarce A (found in 30 or fewer 10km squares of the National Grid)

07.004 *Nemophora fasciella* – 1 on 11/06/2016 – S&E.England (potted by day on New England Island at ~TQ973906)

35.029 *Brachmia inornatella* – 1 on 13/06/2015 – fens & marshes in SE.England

38.043 *Elachista scirpi* 1 on 14/07/2013 – saltmarsh in England and Wales

66.004 *Malacosoma castrensis* (Ground Lackey) – 1 on 10/07 and 31/07/2010; 1 on 19/08/2012 - Saltmarsh in SE England

70.201 *Trichopteryx polycommata* (Barred Tooth-striped) – 1 on 03/04/10 - prefers areas with chalky soils.

Nationally Scarce B (31-100 10km squares of the National Grid) or

Uncommon in Essex (UE):

04.012 *Stigmella aceris* 1 on 22/09/2013. UE and probably NS-B but status uncertain. This tiny moth with forewing length 2.2mm was first recorded in Britain in 1949, second record 1971, several subsequent records and now seems to be spreading but still scarce. It is on the Essex Field Club's Red Data List, which shows 14 previous Essex records.

32.044 *Depressaria douglassella* (NS-B) 2 on 26/08/2017

35.073 *Monochroa palustrellus* (NS-B) 3 on 14/07/2013, 1 on 21/07/2013; 2 on 12/07, 1 on 19/07/2014, 2 on 27/06/2015, 2 on 04/07/2015, 2 on 15/08/2015, 1 on 16/07/2016

37.003 *Coleophora limoniella* (NS-B) 1 on 14/07/2013 – saltmarsh in SE England

37.091 *Coleophora deviella* (NS-B) 1 on 23/07/11; 1 on 19/07, 1 on 26/07/2014 – saltmarsh in SE England

37.104 *Coleophora adspersella* (NS-B) 1 on 05/08/2012 – S.England

49.219 *Thiodia citrana* (NS-B) 2 on 28/06/2008, 1 on 01/07/2008, 2 on 04/07/2009, 4 on 14/07/2013, 2 on 21/07/2013, 2 on 27/06/2015

49.380 *Pammene gallicana* (NS-B) 1 on 19/07/2014

52.002 *Sesia apiformis* (Hornet Moth) (NS-B) 1 on 25/07/09, 1 on 11/06/2011 – SE England

62.053 *Ancylosis oblitella* (NS-B), 1 on 31/07 and 07/08/10; 1 on 06/08/2011; **1 on 26/08/2017** - Saltmarsh

63.014 *Sitochroa palealis* (NS-B) 1 on 23/07/06, 1 on 05/08/07, 1 on 12/08/07, 1 on 20/07/08, 2 on 19/08/2012; 3 on 19/07, 3 on 26/07/2014 – S England and East Anglia

63.109 *Pediasia contaminella* (NS-B) 1 on 30/07/11, 1 on 01/08/2015 – S England

63.110 *Pediasia aridella* (NS-B) 1 on 27/06/2015 – saltings S&E England

63.112 *Platytes alpinella* (NS-B) 2 on 19/07/2014 – coastal dunes and shingle beaches S&E.England

66.012 *Gastropacha quercifolia* (Lappet) (UE) 1 on 5,19/07/08; 4 on 03/07/10, 6 on 10/07/10, 1 on 17/07/10, 2 on 31/07/10, 2 on 21/07/2013; 10 on 12/07, 10 on 19/07/2014, 8 on 04/07/2015, 8 on 16/07/2016; **12 on 24/06/2017**

70.028 *Scopula emutaria* (Rosy Wave) (NS-B) – 1 on 13/06/09; 2 on 03/07/10; 2 on 03/09/2011; 2 on 30/06/2013, 1 on 14/07/2013; 1 on 30/08/2014; 1 on 13/06/2015, 2 on 27/06/2015, 1 on 04/07/2015; **1 on 29/07/2017, 2 on 26/08/2017**

70.057 *Catarhoe rubidata* (Ruddy Carpet) (NS-B); 1 on 27/06/2015

70.186 *Eupithecia millefoliata* (Yarrow Pug) (NS-B) 1 on 26/07/2014 – coastal from Dorset to Essex; 1 on 16/07/2016

70.232 *Ennomos autumnaria* (Large Thorn) (NS-B) 2 on 01/09/08, 1 on 13/09/2008, 1 on 02/09/2012 – SE England

72.021 *Spilosoma urticae* (Water Ermine) (NS-B) 1 on 21/06/08 - coastal areas in SE England

73.035 *Simyra albovenosa* (Reed Dagger) (NS-B) 2 on 26/07/08; 1 on 31/07 & 07/08/10 - reeds

73.055 *Cucullia asteris* (Star-wort) (NS-B) 1 on 30/06/07, 1 on 05/07/08, 2 on 26/07/08, 1 on 04/07/09; 1 on 22/05, 10/07 & 17/07/10; 1 on 30/07/2011, 2 on 05/08/2012; 10 on 14/07/2013, 6 on 21/07/2013; 1 on 12/07, 8 on 19/07, 4 on 26/07, 2 on 16/08/2014; 2 on 27/06/2015; 1 on 16/07/2016; **3 on 24/06/2017, 2 on 29/07/2017** – saltmarsh

73.082 *Cryphia algae* (Tree-lichen Beauty) (Rare migrant, currently breeding in SE.England) 1 on 13/08/2011, 2 on 18/08/2012, 3 on 26/07/2014

73.087 *Spodoptera exigua* (Small Mottled Willow) – 2 on 04/07/2015, 1 on 01/08/2015, 2 on 15/08/2015 – an uncommon migrant that had a bumper year in 2105

73.151 *Globia sparganii* (Webb's Wainscot) (NS-B) 1 on 07/09/2008 – S&E coasts

73.161 *Apamea oblonga* (Crescent Striped) (NS-B) 1 on 05/07/08, 1 on 04/07/09; 1 on 10/07/10; 3 on 23/07, 1 on 30/07/2011; 1 on 21/07/2013; 1 on 12/07, 2 on 19/07, 2 on 26/07/2014; 4 on 27/06/2015, 10 on 04/07/2015 – saltmarsh

73.183 *Cirrhia gilvago* (Dusky-lemon Sallow) (UE) 1 on 06/10/07

73.248 *Orthosia opima* (Northern Drab) (UE). 3 on 14/04/07, 1 on 21,28/04/07; 3 on 26/04/08; 1 on 10/04/10, 2 on 24/04/10, 13 on 01/05/10

73.292 *Mythimna favicolor* (Mathew's Wainscot) (NS-B) 1 on 28/06/08 – saltmarsh; 1 on 03/07/10, 2 on 10/07/10; 2 on 27/06/2015

73.300 *Mythimna l-album* (L-album Wainscot) (NS-B) 1 on 15,22,29/09/07, 3 on 21/06/08, 2 on 05/07/08, 2 on 20/09/08, 1 on 13/06/09, 1 on 19/09/09; 1 on 03/07, 17/07, 31/07, 18/09, 02/10/10 and 3 on 09/10/10; 1 on 11/06, 03/09, 10/09, 2 on 17/09/2011, 12 on 16/09/2012; 1 on 22/09/2013; 2 on 03/10/2015; 2 on 24/09/2016; **2 on 24/06/2017**

74.002 *Meganola albula* (Kent Black Arches) (NS-B) 1 on 07/07/07; 3 on 04/07/09; 2 on 26/06/10, 3 on 03/07/10, 2 on 10/07/10; 6 on 14/07/2013; 1 on 12/07, 1 on 20/09/2014; 1 on 27/06/2015, 6 on 04/07/2015; 4 on 16/07/2016; **3 on 24/06/2017** - S&SE coasts

Scarce Migrants

73.076 *Helicoverpa armigera* (Scarce Bordered Straw) – 4 on 26/08/2017



Figure 2: Scarce Bordered Straw

More common species new to Foulness in 2017

- 16.019 *Paraswammerdamia albicapitella*
- 28.014 *Crassa unitella*
- 29.001 *Diurnea flagella*
- 35.094 *Aroga velocella*
- 49.158 *Hedya ochroleucana*
- 49.279 *Gypsonoma dealbana*
- 70.251 *Biston strataria* (Oak Beauty)
- 70.268 *Hypomecis punctinalis* (Pale Oak Beauty)
- 73.307 *Peridroma saucia* (Pearly Underwing)

During 2018 I plan to continue my effort to document the lepidopteran fauna of Foulness.

MOTH REPORT FOR SOUTH ESSEX FOR 2017

GRAHAM BAILEY

Another varied and interesting year for those of us moth recording in Essex, with the usual ups and downs due to the weather giving predictable effects on our Lepidoptera. We had some excellent conditions in early spring, only for it to go downhill for much of May. The very warm weather in mid-June and through much of July especially was certainly a bonus for our moth fauna and some more unusual species put in an appearance at this time.

The highlight of the season for me was the finding of the migrant moth the **Shining Marbled** (*Pseudeustrotia candidula*) amongst the egg cartons of my garden trap on the morning of 22nd July. This is possibly a first for Essex, and I believe there are only about a dozen or so British records, although several more were noted in 2017. This moth inhabits parts of Eastern Europe and if enough of them make it to our shores then perhaps it may become established here as the larval food plants include sorrel and bistort.

Unfortunately I never made it out to Canvey Wick for any trapping sessions in 2017. I'm sure mid-June in particular would have been fantastic out there, not just for the abundance of species, but also for the sheer number of individual moths that fly to the lamps. I had a single overnight trapping session at a privately owned section of Hockley Woods on 18th June and was rewarded with some more unusual species such as *Agnoea josephinae*, *Olindia schumacherana*, **Olive Crescent**, **Waved Black** and **Red-necked Footman**.

My principal trapping site away from my Rayleigh garden was a private Nature Reserve near Hadleigh, only a short drive from my home. The landowner has kindly loaned me a key for the site and I managed a number of visits through the season from late March until the end of September. Highlights from my trips to this lovely location include **Purple Clay**, **Beautiful Carpet**, **Blackneck**, **Coronet**, **Lilac Beauty**, **Obscure Wainscot** and **Bordered Beauty**.



ACLERIS BERGMANNIANA



ACLERIS LITERANA



ACLERIS LOGIANA



AGNOEA JOSEPHINEA



BLACKNECK



BORDERED BEAUTY



CLAY TRIPLE-LINES



DARK SPECTACLE



EPICHNOPTERIX PLUMELLA



GOLD SPOT



PALE PINION



RIBAND WAVE - MELANIC



SHINING MARBLED



STRATHMOPODA PEDELLA



VESTAL

The lists below show the more important or localised species that I recorded during 2017.

RAYLEIGH GARDEN HIGHLIGHTS 2017

Acleris cristana – 3rd March and 23rd July

Acleris literana - 8th March

Pale Pinion - 10th March

Frosted Green - total of 7 on 4th April

Sloe Carpet – 4th April (2), 9th April

Powdered Quaker – not seen in my garden since 2011, then a total of 8 moths from 9th April.

Toadflax Brocade – Singles on 30th April, 25th May, 28th May and 29th July.

May Highflyer – 27th May

Choristoneura hebenstreitella - 29th May (2)

Bactra robustana – 29th May

Acleris bergmanniana – 1st June

Ancylis mitterbacheriana – 1st June

Monopis imella – 2nd June ('gen det')

Anania perlucidalis – 2nd June

Schoenobius gigantella – 8th June (female), 23rd June (male)

Buttoned Snout – 9th June

Cypress Carpet – 13th June and 26th October

Festoon – 16th June (2), 22nd June (4), 29th June (2)

Brown Scallop – 16th and 21st June

Dotted Fan-foot – total of 5 between 16th and 22nd June

Blackneck – 16th and 22nd June

Syncopacma larseniella – 17th June ('gen det')

Epinotia signatana – 17th June ('gen det')

Small Emerald – 19th June

Coronet – 22nd and 29th June

Riband Wave – 22nd June. Melanic example of this common moth

Strathmopoda pedella – 22nd June

Coleophora deauratella – 23rd June

Dark Umber – 26th June

Phoenix – 26th June

Dark Spectacle – Singles on 15th and 26th July and 29th August

Cydia fagiglandana – 18th July ('gen det')

Oncocera semirubella – 19th July

Silky Wainscot – 19th July

Dog's Tooth – 19th and 23rd July

Lesser Wax moth – 21st July

Shining Marbled (*Pseudeustrotia candidula*) – 21st July. Migrant species, possibly new to Essex.

Clay Triple-lines – 25th July

Nephoterix angustella – Total of at least 4 noted – 28th July, 14th and 26th August and 4th September.

Resident species and also a migrant.

Mompha propinquella – 1st August

Ysolopha horridella – 7th August

Scarce Bordered Straw – 11th and 16th August

Gold Spot – 16th August

Ptocheuusa paupella – 18th August, 20th, 26th August

Cypress Pug - total of 6 between 25th August and 28th September

Pale Eggar – total of 7 between 25th August and 1st September (4 on 29th August)

Oegoconia caradjai – 26th August

Latticed Heath – 29th August. Total of at least 97 moths counted, with several pairs in-cop.

Beautiful Hook-tip – 1st September. Second brood.

Apraerema anthyllidella – 1st and 6th September

Box-tree moth – 23rd September, 24th September (2), 26th September (5). The first I had seen in Essex since September 2009 which at the time was possibly the first record in the county of this adventive species.

Merveille du Jour – 28th September and 7th October

Vestal – 23rd October

Acleris logiana – 3rd November

Also noted probable second brood of **Mother of Pearl** on 21st September and *Endotricha flammealis* on 10th October.

Local Nature Reserve, Hadleigh, Essex

Brindled Beauty – 30th March

Semioscopis skeinkellneriana – 21st April (3)

Noted on 14th June – overnight

Archips crataegana – 40+; *Elegia similella* (2); *Spatalistis bifasciana*; *Eana osseana*; *Metzneria metzneriella*; **Coronet**; **Beautiful Carpet**; **Slender Brindle** (2); **Festoon**; **Purple Clay**; **Blackneck**; **Lilac Beauty**; **Lunar Thorn**.

Noted on 24th June – overnight

White Satin; **Blackneck** (6); **Coronet** (4); **Slender Brindle** (5); **Purple Clay**; **Kent Black Arches**; **Festoon**; **Obscure Wainscot**; **Beautiful Carpet**.

Noted on 4th August

Nephoterix angustella; **Bordered Beauty**.

Noted on 22nd August

Ysolopha sylvella

Hockley Woods – privately owned section

18th June - overnight

Archips crataegana 50+; *Spatalistis bifasciana* (4); *Agnoea* (= *Pseudatemelia*) *josephinae* (3 - 'gen det'); *Olindia schumacherana*; *Parachronistis albiceps*; **Olive Crescent** (4); **Grey Arches** (5); **Festoon**; **Waved Black**; **Red-necked Footman**.

One other notable sighting was the finding of a torpid **Humming-bird Hawk-moth** on an inside stairwell of the multi-storey car park at Southend Hospital on 24th November. I managed to retrieve the insect and found that it was very much alive when it took flight around our conservatory a few days later! I re-captured the moth and released it on a fairly mild day shortly afterwards, and it quickly took to the air within about five minutes. Not sure if this was a late migrant to our shores or perhaps it was a home-grown individual that had emerged some days or weeks earlier.

I as usual trapped every night with actinic light and 2017 was an average year for the usual common moths. A few new species were trapped including a **Gem**, 15 Oct, **Oak Processionary** 7 Oct and *Argyresthia cupressella* on 20 May. It was also great see my 2nd only **Small Elephant Hawk** in 20yrs and 3rd **Vestal** since 2013.

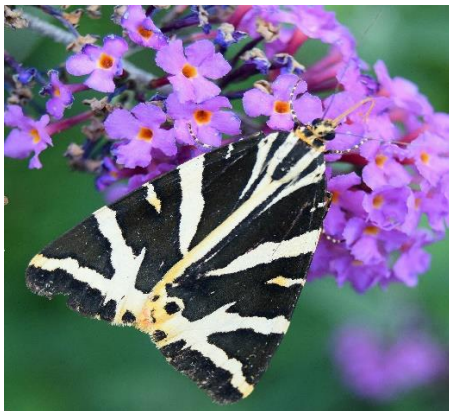


GEM



BOXWORM MOTH

The **Boxworm Moth**, *Cydalima perspectalis*, was down to only 250 from 823 in 2016 when it was the second most common moth taken behind Large yellow underwing. I did however trap the Black form which is the only one of 1476 trapped here since they first appeared in 2011.



Jersey Tiger - I was also pleased to see another annual increase up to 57 from 38 in 2016 with many flying in late afternoon sun.

Gypsy Moth – There was a very dramatic increase up from 6 in 2016 to 40. They first appeared here in 2013 with just a few caught from 2013-2015. I have retained quite a few of these so if anyone would like them for DNA comparison with Continental/British specimens they may be useful.

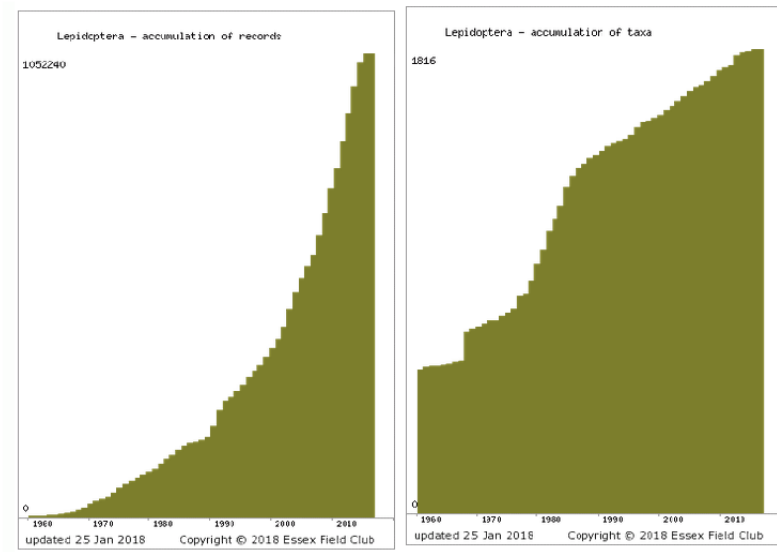
(PICS – R.BARFOOT)



Tachystola acroxantha also seems to be increasing here.

Essex moths in research projects - Following a request via this moth Group I volunteered to collect samples for a couple of organisations. **Brimstone Moths** for a National Isoscape project organised by Scottish Universities Environmental Centre and also Garden and **Red-green Carpets** for University of York who are studying genetic diversity. The moths are now with the researchers and I have been promised copies of their final reports.

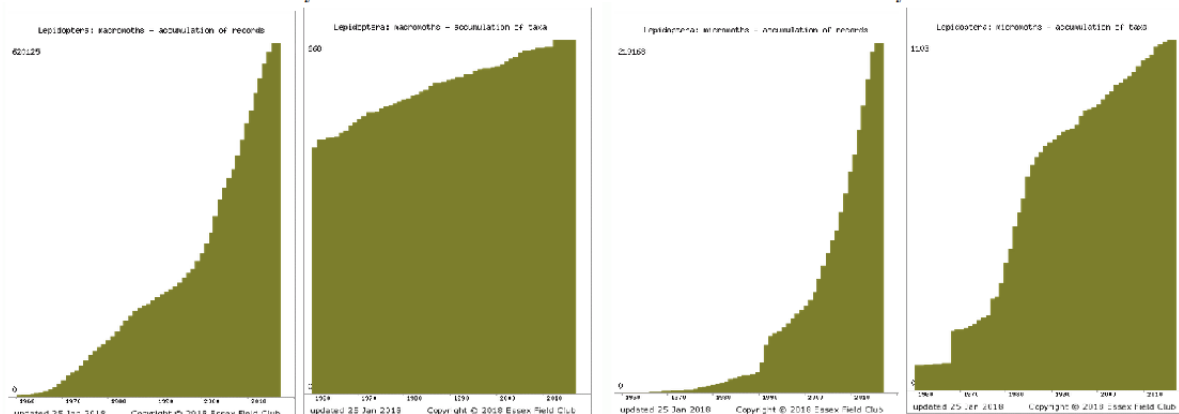
Numbers of Lepidoptera records and taxa for the county at end Jan 2018



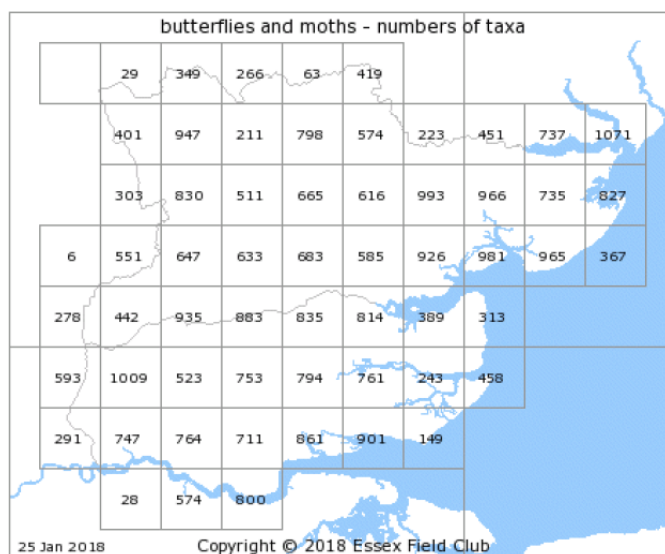
butterflies: 214,375 records for 45 species
 larger moths: 621,532 records for 668 species
 micro-moths: 219,920 records for 1,103 species

Macromoth county data since 1960

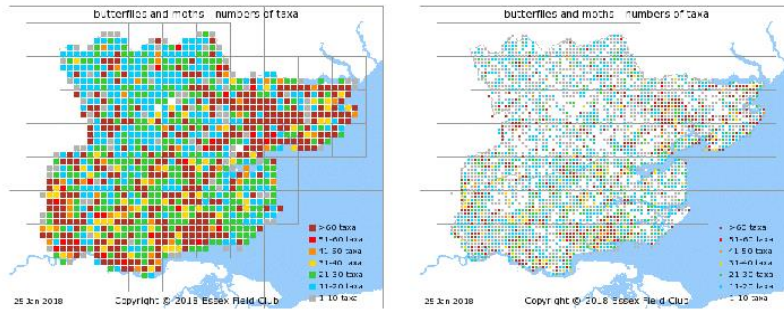
Micromoth county data since 1960



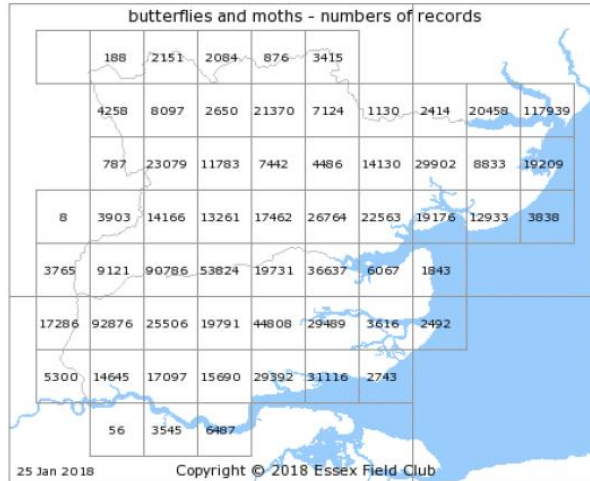
Coverage: numbers of species recorded per hectad



Coverage: numbers of species recorded per tetrad and monad

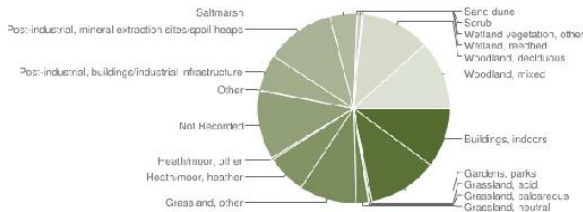


Numbers of records submitted per 10km square

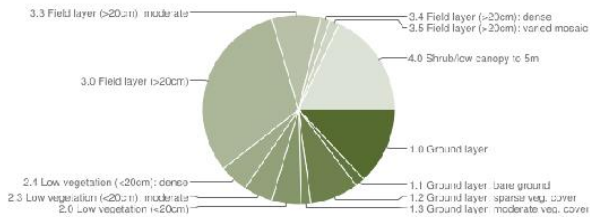


Habitat data:

Broad Habitat Data for: *Lepidoptera: macromoths* based on 52,085 records and 377,441 individuals

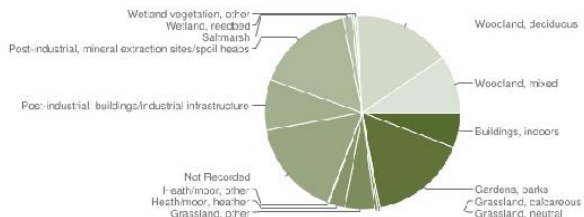


Structural Habitat Data for: *Lepidoptera: macromoths* based on 61 records and 103 individuals

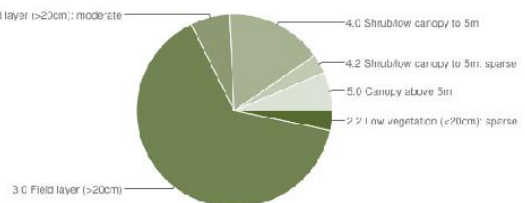


Habitat data: micromoths

Broad Habitat Data for: *Lepidoptera: micromoths* based on 23,556 records and 145,733 individuals



Structural Habitat Data for: *Lepidoptera: micromoths* based on 31 records and 66 individuals



A PLEA TO SUBMIT YOUR DATA IF YOU HAVE NOT ALREADY DONE SO. AND DO YOU USE ESSEX MOTH DATA?

Everyone can see the latest Essex distribution maps, phenology charts, habitat and other autecological information which has been provided to the County Recorder by recorders on the Essex Field Club website. Essex Moth Group members who provide records can also ask to be given access to the record data behind the dots on the maps, so that clicking on a dot then reveals the details of the records involved (ask Peter Harvey, grayspeterharvey@gmail.com).


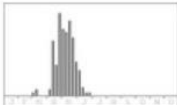
If you use these maps or any information provided by the county records but do not provide your own data, please be aware that this is unhelpful - information in the database comes from those who provide data, not from people who do not, and it is unreasonable to expect to use information if you are not prepared to provide your own.

Species Account for *Esperia sulphurella*

[Previous species](#) | [Next species](#)


Esperia sulphurella | Fabricius, 1775
 Lepidoptera: Microlepidoptera: Oecophoridae

National status: Common
 Saprophytic species
 Essex: Saprophytic Species





[Additional Phenology Data](#)

Images
Esperia sulphurella



[upload a new image](#)



Map produced by MapInfo®. Data courtesy Copyright © Essex Field Club 2016.
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Click on dot to query records
 Taxonomic group: microlepidoptera (Lepidoptera: microlepidoptera) - County data
[Esperia sulphurella on UK Moths website](#)

Click on ID for detail of record below table

ID	Location site	Quantity	Recorder	Determiner	Date
1	Greys, 32 Lodge Lane (garden): TQ624793	1	Harvey, P.R.	Harvey, P.R.	09 May 2016
2	Greys, 32 Lodge Lane (garden): TQ624793	1	Harvey, P.R.	Harvey, P.R.	20 Apr 2013
3a	Greys, 32 Lodge Lane (garden): TQ624793	1	Harvey, P.R.	Harvey, P.R.	23 Apr 2014
4	Greys, 32 Lodge Lane (garden): TQ624793	1	Harvey, P.R.	Harvey, P.R.	12 Apr 2014
5a	Greys, 32 Lodge Lane (garden): TQ624793	1	Harvey, P.R.	Harvey, P.R.	16 May 2014
6	Greys, 32 Lodge Lane (garden): TQ624793	4	Harvey, P.R.	Harvey, P.R.	08 May 2014
7	Greys, 32 Lodge Lane (garden): TQ624793	4	Harvey, P.R.	Harvey, P.R.	08 May 2014
8	Greys, 32 Lodge Lane (garden): TQ624793	4	Harvey, P.R.	Harvey, C.W.	07 May 2014

Detail for selected record:

ID: d5a0wzgv
 Taxon: *Esperia sulphurella*
 Quantity: 1
 Sex:
 Stage: Adult
 Location: Greys, 32 Lodge Lane (garden)
 Position: TQ624793
 VC: JS
 Hectad: TQ67
 Tetrad: TQ67J
 Recorder: Harvey, P.R.
 Determiner: Harvey, P.R.
 Method: Field record / observation
 Year: 2016
 Date: 09 May 2016
 Habitat: Gardens, parks
 Str. habitat: Not recorded
 Comments: On outside window of kitchen above box of old wood.

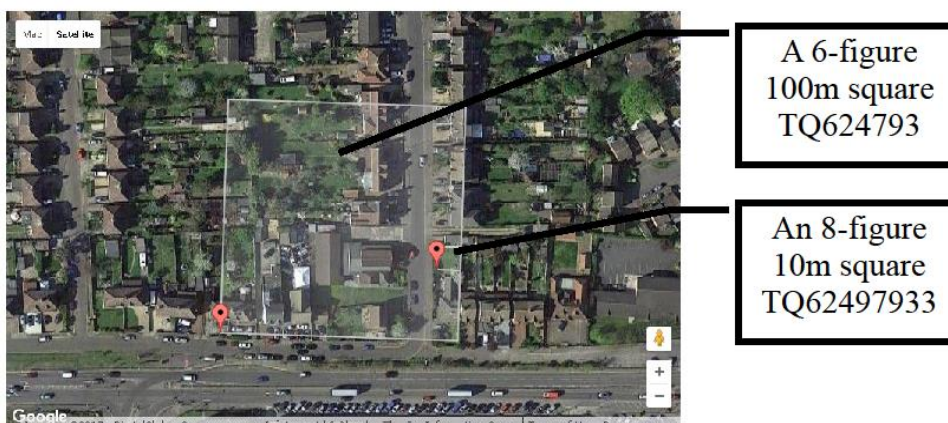
SUBMITTING YOUR RECORDS

Biological records provide information on the location, species and date of the observation. A species record consists of a minimum of:

- WHO made the observation? (the *Recorder*) and WHO identified the observation (the *Determiner*, often the same person as the recorder)
- WHAT species was recorded? (the *Taxon*)
- WHERE was the species recorded? (the *Site* - a place name and grid reference)
- WHEN was the observation made? (the *Date*, preferably the day date)
- It is also useful to have information on numbers, sex (male or female), stage (adult or not), structural & broad habitat, etc.

GRID REFERENCES

A grid reference should **define the grid square within which a record has been made**. Please remember that a ten-figure GR means that the species was found **WITHIN A SINGLE SQUARE METRE**. There is little point in defining the location of a mobile species to a single square metre (10 figure grid reference) or even 10 square metre area (8 figure grid reference). The only exception would be for very rare species which are confined to very localised areas or if traps are used at fixed locations over a time period. For most invertebrate and moth records, a 6 figure (100m square) accuracy is most sensible unless the species is very rare and the population is clearly confined to the small area concerned. Below is an example of a 6 figure (100m square) and an 8 figure 10 square metre area contained within this for my own back garden. My small house, front and back garden would cover four whole 8 figure 10 square metre areas and about 500 ten figure one metre square areas. It would be silly to record all these as separate sites.



Using MapMate and the sync process, or using an Excel record template provides much the best way to submit records. The template below illustrates the template available to download from <http://www.essexfieldclub.org.uk/portal/p/Providing+Moth+Records>

This is an Excel file which includes a reference taxon list and drop-down entries for some MapMate fields where consistency will help make use of the data in structured analyses. Your taxon entry is done by entering the 4-digit Bradley number or the "new" decimal-style 2013 checklist number* - this helps ensure that typos are not created and that importing the records is a relatively painless process. This now includes a new column for last year recorded in Essex that also provides a direct link to the Essex Field Club Species Account page with map etc. This template will need to be updated at intervals to accommodate changes in taxon names.

Please make sure you are using an up-to-date template. The 2018 one should be ready soon.

Taxon No	Family	National Status	Essex Status	Last recorded	Common name	Taxon	Site	Gridref	VL	Recorder	Determiner	Date	Quantit
1908	Geometridae			2018	Emmonea Moth	Cephalographa Lueclata	Mashbury	TQ624793	10	Harvey, P.R.	Harvey, P.R.	02/24/2018	
1937	Tortricidae			2018		Agapetahana							

Taxon date entry
Enter Bradley or 2013 checklist decimal-style number here to enter your record taxon