

# ESSEX MOTH GROUP

ANNUAL NEWSLETTER

2017

COMPILED BY DOUGAL URQUHART



GARDEN TIGERS (D.U)



CREAM-SPOT TIGERS (D.U.)



JERSEY TIGER (R.SMITH)



RUBY TIGER (D.U.)

**ESSEX MOTH GROUP**  
**ANNUAL MEETING AND EXHIBITION**  
**THE GREEN CENTRE, WAT TYLER COUNTRY PARK**  
**SUNDAY 12<sup>TH</sup> FEBRUARY**  
**2017 PROGRAMME**

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

DONATION £7, PAY ON ARRIVAL

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

DOUGAL URQUHART, MOTH GROUP COORDINATOR

11.00.....**DAVE GRUNDY** – MOTHING EXPLOITS AROUND THE UK.

- IN SEARCH OF MIGRANTS AND SCARCE SPECIES

12.00.....**STEVE ROLLS** – ESSEX MICROS, LEAF-MINERS AND MACROS

12.30.....**IAN TURNER** – MOTHING MEDLEY FROM ESSEX AND BEYOND

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

2.00.....**DR CHRIS GIBSON** – MOTHS TO WATCH OUT FOR WITH CLIMATE CHANGE.

- POTENTIAL COLONISTS FROM THE PYRENEES

2.30.....**RICHARD GERUSSI** – MOTHS & OTHER INSECTS OF CURRY FARM, BRADWELL

3.00.....**CINDY LAWES** – MOTH RESEARCH ON GRASSLANDS AT BLUE HOUSE FARM

3.30.....**RICHARD DENNISON** – MOTHS AROUND THE UK & SEARCH FOR DAY-FLYERS

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** AND MOTH LAMPS SWITCHED OFF

**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 21st year since first starting up in 1996. This is the fourth 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 meeting on a Sunday for the first time this year, as we can't use the Green Centre on Saturdays. 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 it 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 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, 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](mailto: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](mailto:essexmoths@dsl.pipex.com); Reg Fry at [reg.a.fry@btinternet.com](mailto:reg.a.fry@btinternet.com); or Tony Prichard at [tony.prichard@btinternet.com](mailto: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](http://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](mailto:grayspeterharvey@gmail.com);

There was the sad loss during 2016 of Ian Rose who passed away on 26<sup>th</sup> June aged 85. Ian lived in Mistley in north Essex and was one of the founder members of the Essex Moth Group which held its first meeting at his house in 1996. Ian was a very knowledgeable all round naturalist having inherited the gene from his wildlife photographer father Charles. Ian was well known for his expert knowledge of fungi as well as moths and butterflies. He had devoted a lot of time over the years to studying the life cycles of many species of moths and got to know their distinctive features through rearing up the caterpillars at home. Together with Joe Firmin, who passed away two years earlier in 2014, both contributed huge amounts to our knowledge of Essex moths going back several decades. They mothed regularly together and there was never a quiet moment watching over the trap, as both exchanged moth anecdotes and reminisced about previous moth adventures. They complemented each other with their double-acts, witnessed at many Essex Moth Group annual meetings when they did dual presentations with their old slides from the good old days!



**IAN ROSE** (right) with Joe Firmin, mothing at Hugh Owens, Langenhoe 2009. (Pic - D.U.)

**LES STEWARD** – Bradwell Obs 2002  
(Pic – Bob Pease)



There was the recent sad news to many wildlife enthusiasts during January, that Les Steward had died. He had discovered last summer that he had an aggressive form of cancer and that the prognosis for recovery wasn't good. He kept his illness to himself, so his passing came as a unexpected shock to friends. Les made a huge contribution to watching and recording all kinds of wildlife in Essex especially as county bird recorder for over 20 years. He was a member of the Essex Moth Group and did most of his trapping in and around Wat Tyler Country Park. When the Moth Group began holding the annual meetings on his home turf in 2014, it was fitting that Les enlightened us with a talk sharing his knowledge and passion for his local moths. I first met Les in the mid 1980's and he was always very relaxed, easy to talk to and very knowledgeable. My more frequent visits to the Green Centre over the last four years meant I got to have more chats with Les on his local patch and to hear about his mothing and birding news. He will be sadly missed. His funeral is on 22<sup>nd</sup> February at Pitsea Crematorium.

## ESSEX MOTH GROUP ANNUAL MEETING 2016



Sharon Hearle, Butterfly Conservation's regional conservation officer for East Anglia was the main speaker at the EMG meeting at Wat Tyler in February 2016.

We heard about the new conservation strategy drawn up by Butterfly Conservation and some of the conservation projects being carried out for the Priority species in the region.

Other speakers in 2016 included Roger Payne on the Gypsy Moth, Chris Lewis on Moths of Foulness, Tim Harris on Moths of Wanstead, Tim Gardiner on Seawall Management and Dougal Urquhart on Ten years of Mothing at Cudmore Grove CP.



Lunchtime and the tea breaks gave the fifty or so members a good opportunity to chat and have a look at one or two of the displays in the room.

(Pictures Peter Harvey)

## ESSEX FIELD CLUB EXHIBITION AND SOCIAL 2016



The annual EFC exhibition and social in the Green Centre at Wat Tyler in December 2016 was very well attended. Steve Rolls, right, showed pictures of some of the moths he'd seen in the county.

The Essex Moth Group stand, right, was manned for the fourth year by Dougal.



## **MOTH COURSES**

Dave Grundy ran a very enjoyable Moth ID course for nine participants in the East Mersea Village Hall on 16<sup>th</sup> August 2016. Half of the attendees travelled from outside Essex. This was an opportunity to expand their knowledge of coastal and saltmarsh moths.



Dave brought along a very impressive library of moth ID books stuffed into his little van. The morning's presentation about coastal moths was then followed by an afternoon of examining a selection of live moths trapped the previous evening at Cudmore Grove CP.

Some of the more interesting moths that were caught at Cudmore Grove ahead of the course were **Ground Lackey**, **Archers Dart**, **Sandhill Rustic**, **Twin-spotted Wainscot** and **Webb's Wainscot**.

Dave pictured right, an early August morning on the Cudmore Grove beach



## **FORTHCOMING FSC MOTH COURSES FOR 2017**

18<sup>TH</sup> March – **IDENTIFYING SPRING MOTHS** – Flatford Mill

3<sup>rd</sup> June – **FOCUS ON MICRO-MOTHS OF EPPING FOREST** – Epping Forest

17<sup>th</sup> June - **IDENTIFYING SUMMER MOTHS** – Flatford Mill

7<sup>TH</sup> – 9<sup>TH</sup> July – **IDENTIFYING MOTHS AND BUTTERFLIES** – Flatford Mill

11<sup>th</sup> – 13<sup>th</sup> Aug – **WETLAND MOTHS** – Flatford Mill -with Dave Grundy

14<sup>th</sup> Oct – **IDENTIFYING AUTUMN MOTHS** – Flatford Mill

ALSO

Sat 8<sup>th</sup> July – **COASTAL MOTHS** – East Mersea – with Dave Grundy

## **FORTHCOMING SUMMER MOTHING SESSIONS 2017**

Simon Wood and Colchester Borough Council ranger Carla Davis, have arranged some dates this coming summer for running moth traps on the Colchester reserves that Carla is responsible for.

These are

**TUES 13TH JUNE.....WESTLANDS COUNTRY PARK**

**TUES 27TH JUNE.....LEXDEN PARK LOCAL NATURE RESERVE**

**MON 10<sup>TH</sup> JULY.....LEXDEN SPRINGS LOCAL NATURE RESERVE**

**TUES 18<sup>TH</sup> JULY.....HILLY FIELDS**

**TUES 25<sup>TH</sup> JULY.....SPRING LANE NURSERY MEADOW**

**TUES 29<sup>TH</sup> AUG.....GOSBECKS ARCHAEOLOGICAL PARK**

If anyone in the EMG wishes to come along, either with or without traps, please let Simon know.

Final details will be given nearer the time. These are not public events.

### **OTHER SESSIONS PLANNED so far....**

**FRI 21<sup>ST</sup> JULY.....CUDMORE GROVE COUNTRY PARK**

**WED 26<sup>TH</sup> JULY.....TIPTREE HEATH**

These are the usual open trapping evenings as in previous years and anyone is welcome.

Dougal will be the main contact for these two evenings. More details about timings to follow.

David Barnard who has organised the mothing evenings over the last few years in the Colchester area is standing down as age catches up with him. We thank David for all his time and energy spent staying up late in the fields and woods around Colchester, having taken over the reins from Joe Firmin a good few years back.

Right – EMG meeting Cudmore Grove CP July 2016.  
(Pic D.U.)



The following report is a summary of moth lamp sessions carried out by a small group of moth enthusiasts who operate in the Colchester area. Several of the meetings are arranged in conjunction with the Ranger Service of Colchester Borough Council to provide species records for sites within the borough.

The CBC site at Buntings Meadows (TL979256) provided the location for the first lamp session on 21 June with 2 lamps operating. This grassland site usually provides a good mix of species and we were fortunate to visit at a time when the **Ghost Moth** *Hepialus humuli* was flying. Many males were drifting across the tall grass and the lamps attracted these together with the odd female in the early part of the evening. A total of 46 species were recorded including, **Small Elephant Hawkmoth** *Deilephila porcellus* and **Cream-bordered Green Pea** *Earias clorana*.

The annual visit to Tiptree Heath (TL884148) on 27 July proved a great success with 5 lamps operating and a total of 119 species recorded with a few additional micro's identified later. Some good local specialties included *Anania verbascalis*; **True-lovers Knot** *Lycophotola porphyrea* and **Olive** *Ipimorpha subtusa*. This event is always well supported by the local community and this year proved no exception.



GHOST MOTH



MOTHING AT TIPTREE HEATH



TRUE LOVERS KNOT (D.U.)

A return visit to the CBC site at High Woods C.P. (TL999270) on 11 August did not produce the usual numbers with only 27 species recorded. Only one lamp was operating close to the pond and this may have restricted the usual range of species normally encountered. Those recorded, included **Tree-lichen Beauty** *Cryphia algae*; **Bulrush Wainscot** *Nonagria typhae* and **Scarce Silver-lines** *Bena biclorana*.

The last visit of the season was on 30 August to the CBC site at Spring Lane (TL973256), which runs alongside the River Colne. This is a small site which has been used in the past as a 'nursery' for growing black poplar, but in recent years is now unattended grassland which is cut twice a year. 4 lamps were in operation and close to 60 species recorded. These included *Nephopterix angustella*; **Burnished Brass** *Diachrysia chrysitis* and **Coronet** *Craniophora ligustri*, including an unusual 'green' specimen.

A full record lists of the above lamp sessions are available on request.

## MOTHING AT FRINTON 2016

BARBARA LOCK

For several years now moth numbers in my garden seem to be dropping especially in some common species. Last year, 2016 was no exception.

It was a very strange year, with only a few highlights. It made an early start with my first moth of the year, an *Epiphyas postvittana* arriving on 3rd January. The first macromoth came on 23rd January, and surprisingly it was a **Brimstone Moth**, a common visitor to my garden, but one which usually did not appear until May, and never previously before April. **Silver Y** and the **Wainscots** were very lacking in numbers, as were **Large** and **Lesser Yellow Underwings**. **Diamond backs** and **grassmoths** were also very low in numbers in spite of the great influx of diamond backs in some areas.

From October numbers dropped off almost completely and there was a final fling on 15th November when there were four moths, 1 *Udea ferrugalis*, 1 **Silver Y**, 1 **Shuttle-shaped Dart**, and 1 **December Moth** (the only one of the year). That was the end of my moths for the year 2016.

There were a few highlights during the year with the arrivals of three new entries for my garden species list. These were **Centre-barred Sallow**, **Festoon** and **Gypsy Moth**. Another very welcome visitor was a **Leopard** moth. I first had this species in 2001 after 8 years of mothing. The second one came in 2013, and since then I have had one in 2015 and 2016 so I am now hoping that it will become a regular visitor.

I'm keeping my fingers crossed for a better 2017 but I haven't seen a moth yet!



David Scott found the wings of what appeared to be a **Death's Head Hawk-moth** in one of his fields at Brightlingsea on 18<sup>th</sup> September 2016. David suggested "there must now be a very fat bat somewhere!"

**WIGBORO WICK FARM, ST OSYTH**

**CLIVE ATKINS**

As in previous years, 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 2<sup>nd</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> August.

**Sloe Carpet** *Aleucis distinctata* made a welcome reappearance after a blank 2015 with 3 records between 14<sup>th</sup> April and 3<sup>rd</sup> May. Species notable by their absence were **Bordered Straw** *Helicoverpa peltigera*, **Small Mottled Willow** *Spodoptera exigua* and **Humming-bird Hawk-moth** *Macroglossum stellatarum*. The undoubtable highlight of an otherwise slow season was a single **Jubilee Fan-foot** *Zancognatha lunalis*, the third for Britain on the night of 21<sup>st</sup> July.



**JUBILEE FANFOOT**



**RED-NECKED FOOTMAN**



*Brachmia inornatella* (C.A.)

The first **Willow Emerald Damselfly** *Chalcolestes viridis* appeared on 16<sup>th</sup> July, with the last seen into the third week of October, this species is now established at four separate sites on the farm. The most surprising *Odonata* record was the discovery of two male **Southern Migrant Hawker** *Aeshna affinis* on 31<sup>st</sup> July. Subsequent visits to the site provided a maximum of four males at one time, the only female observed was ovipositing in tandem with a male on 28<sup>th</sup> August, the last male was seen on 31<sup>st</sup> August.



**OBSCURE WAINSCOT**



**SOUTHERN MIGRANT HAWKER**



**Phalonia affinitana (C.A.)**

Monthly totals for the more regular immigrant species were as follows:

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	T
<b>Diamond-back Moth</b> <i>P. xylostella</i>	0	0	0	0	11	1775	148	0	3	0	0	0	<b>1937</b>
* <b>European Corn-borer</b> <i>O. nubilalis</i>	0	0	0	0	0	2	3	0	0	0	0	0	<b>5</b>
<b>Rusty-dot Pearl</b> <i>U. ferrugalis</i>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	9	0	1	0	<b>10</b>
<b>Rush Veneer</b> <i>N. noctuella</i>	0	0	0	0	1	0	24	0	62	0	1	0	<b>88</b>
<b>Convovulus Hawk-moth</b> <i>A. convolvuli</i>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	<b>2</b>
<b>Vestal</b> <i>R. saccharia</i>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	<b>1</b>
<b>Gem</b> <i>N. obstipata</i>	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	<b>2</b>
<b>Silver Y</b> <i>A. gamma</i>	0	0	0	0	2	51	1	0	3	0	0	0	<b>57</b>
<b>Scarce Bordered Straw</b> <i>H. armigera</i>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	<b>1</b>
* <b>Tree-lichen Beauty</b> <i>C. algae</i>	0	0	0	0	0	0	10	0	0	0	0	0	<b>10</b>
<b>Dark Sword-grass</b> <i>A. ipsilon</i>	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	5	0	0	0	<b>7</b>

\*Records likely to be associated with local breeding populations.

Other national species of interest:

**Crociosema plebejana** 8 in September

**Evergestis limbata** 1 on 23<sup>rd</sup> July, new for site

The main local highlights of the season were as follows:

**Brachmia inornatella** 2 on 12<sup>th</sup> June, new for site.

**Caryocolum fraternella** 1 on 25<sup>th</sup> July

**Green Hairstreak** *C. rubi* 1 on 26<sup>th</sup> May, new for site.

**Latticed Heath** *C. clathrata* 23 on 3<sup>rd</sup> September

**Red-necked Footman** *A. rubricollis* 1 on 14<sup>th</sup> July

**Toadflax Brocade** *C. lunala* 2 larva on 10<sup>th</sup> September

**Tawny Pinion** *L. semibrunnea* 1 on 29<sup>th</sup> April

**Feathered Brindle** *A. australis* 1 on 25<sup>th</sup> September, 1 dark form *ingenua* 26<sup>th</sup> September

**L-album Wainscot** *M. l-album* 1 on 19<sup>th</sup> June, 13 in September

**Obscure Wainscot** *L. obsolete* 4 in June

**Kent Black Arches** *M. albula* singles on 14<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> July

2016 was the third year of mothing in my garden at Bulmer. Unfortunately I was only able to trap on 17 occasions and this was only a half of the number of the previous year. My total of species this year was 67 micro-moths and 117 macro-moths. This brought the garden species totals to 141 micro-moths and 236 macro-moths.

This year I had 10 new species of micros and 10 new species of macros for the garden. The pick of these micros were *Aspilapterix tringipennella*, *Palpita vitrealis* and **Yarrow Plume**. The pick of the new macros, although not rare, were **Black Rustic**, **Lobster**, **Oak Beauty**, **Peach Blossom**, **Small Ranunculus**, **Vapourer** and **Varied Coronet**. I was also pleased to see two of my regular annual visitors, namely **Beautiful Hook-tip** and **Merveille du Jour**.



Small Ranunculus



Palpita vitrealis



Varied coronet (Hugh Owen)

It was not a good year for me for migrants with the counts being - **Diamond-back** (22), **Rusty-dot Pearl** (1), **Rush Veneer** (3), **Silver Y** (5) and **Dark Sword-grass** (1). It was another reasonably good year for **Hummingbird Hawkmoths** with 10 sightings from June to September although I suspect that the same specimen was returning on some consecutive days.

## ORANGE UNDERWING NORTH-ESSEX

GEOFF EMPSON

The first **Orange Underwing** picture was taken at Cockayne's and Villa Woods on 14th April at about 1045. I was there with Kevin Marsden. There is an area near the weighbridge of birch saplings up to about 4ft tall. It was quite warm and the moth lively as it flitted among the saplings and we eventually managed a reasonable photo suitable for ID purposes - it proved a little difficult with much referring to Waring and to Manley and several e-mails crossed before we settled on **Orange Underwing**. On checking with the Friends of Cockayne's it seems that it is the first recorded for the site.



A few weeks later on 10th June, my wife, Isabel, and I were at Fingringhoe and crossing the heathy area going to Kit's Pond when she spotted what we both thought was a Large Skipper. We eventually caught up with it and I was able to identify it as a **Burnet Companion**. Taking the photo was not easy as it would not settle for more than a second or two, so the picture was snatched and is a bit blurred.



## CUDMORE GROVE MOTH HIGHLIGHTS 2016

DOUGAL URQUHART

Another full season of mothing was done at Cudmore Grove Country Park during 2016 with at least one trap operating on 78 nights between mid-March and the end of November. From those nights 260 macro species were recorded which equalled the previous highest tally over the last ten years from 2013. Several nights were multi-trap sessions with up to nine traps in use on some nights around the park, brought in by visiting moth-trappers.

The moth season produced a few of the usual highlights and after a cool and wet spring, the summer months warmed up and were more productive. The autumn was dry with mothing quite average while the early winter period was quiet.

The first highlight of the spring were the **Blossom Underwings** which were noted on five nights between end of March and mid April with a peak count of four on the first night. A **Dotted Chestnut**, **Northern Drab** and a **Pale Pinion** were the highlights from April while Chris Williams had a **Sloe Carpet** on 6<sup>th</sup> May, there was a **Fox Moth** on 28<sup>th</sup> May. June's highlights were from National Moth Night on 9<sup>th</sup> June when **Pine Carpet**, **Sand Dart** and **Beautiful Hook-tip** were outshone by a record haul of 14 **Cream-spot Tigers**, pictured on newsletter front cover.



**FOX MOTH**



**ROSY FOOTMAN**



**LARGE THORN**

(D.U.)

The main session in July was the annual Moth Group meeting on 22<sup>nd</sup> July held jointly with the British Entomological and Natural History Society when 14 attendees peered into eight different traps at the park. By dawn the next morning 95 species of macro and 30 species of micro had been identified – the latter group thanks to Steve Rolls. Highlights included two **Garden Tiger**, **Oak Eggar**, **Tree-lichen Beauty**, **Archers Dart**, **Leopard**, **Poplar Hawkmoth**, **Festoon**, **Fen Wainscot**, **Kent Black Arches**, **Rosy Footman**, **Scarce Silver lines** and also the first park record of **Boxworm Moth**.



**BOXWORM MOTH**



*Oncocera semirubella*



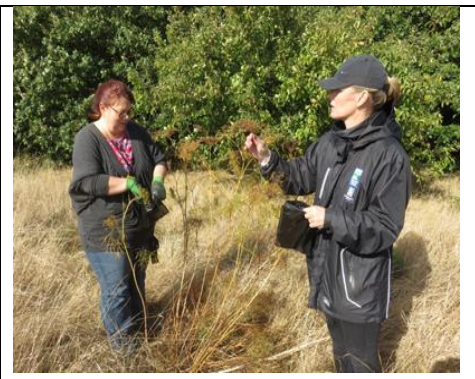
*Dioryctria sylvestrella* (D.U.)

Towards the end of July the first **Sandhill Rustic** was noted and continued into the latter part of August. The first **Red Underwing** was on the side of the buildings as usual on 14<sup>th</sup> August while a **Coronet** and **Tree-lichen Beauty** were in the trap. The first record of the colourful *Oncocera semirubella* was seen on 5<sup>th</sup> August – a second one appearing on 7<sup>th</sup> September. We welcomed Dave Grundy twice during mid-August period who sited his six traps near the beach and seawall. Other August highlights included **Twin-spotted Wainscot**, **Poplar Kitten**, **Pine Hawkmoth**, **Saltern Ear** and **Webb's Wainscot**. Early September produced several **Large Thorns** with four being logged on 4<sup>th</sup> and then 7<sup>th</sup> during an EMG session. Also on the 7<sup>th</sup> **Cypress Pug**, **Orange Sallow** and *Dioryctria sylvestrella*. A **Merveille du Jour** appeared on the 28<sup>th</sup> September during a big emergence of **Lunar Underwings** which peaked on the 29<sup>th</sup> with 100 individuals. Up to four **Autumnal Rustics** and eight **L-album Wainscots** in early October were the autumnal highlights.



Left - Dr Zoe Ringwood along with Rebecca Perry of Colchester Zoo and a couple of volunteers, check the Hogs Fennel plants at Cudmore Grove in August 2016.

Right – Volunteers from Colchester Borough Council Homes collect seeds from Hogs Fennel plants for growing on.



## ASSORTED MOTHING SESSIONS

DOUGAL URQUHART

The only organised **Sloe Carpet** session was held at RSPB Old Hall Marshes on 1<sup>st</sup> May led by Dave Grundy and proved successful with three individuals being noted in total. Two of the moths came to a trap placed close to a flowering blackthorn bush. Numbers of all moths seemed low with the night being quite breezy. A **Northern Drab** and **Water Carpet** were of note in my trap.



**OLD HALL MARSHES**



**SLOE CARPET**

(D.U.)

A trapping session at my Firs Chase garden in West Mersea on 7<sup>th</sup> June was memorable for a big influx of 200+ **Diamond-backed Moths**, part of the big influx across southern England in early June. Of the 24 other species a couple of **Elephant Hawk-moths** and a **Least Black Arches** were of interest.

The trap was back in the Firs Chase garden on a muggy night on 16<sup>th</sup> July with 33 macro species of 130 individuals with **Leopard**, **Silver- Y**, **Marbled Beauty**, **Elephant Hawk-moth** and **Scarce Silver Lines** being the ones of interest.

At the EMG meeting at Tiptree Heath on 22<sup>nd</sup> July on the open part of the heath, 59 species of macro were noted from two traps with five **True Lovers Knot** being a local heathland speciality. Also 3 **Oak Eggars**, **Small Rivulet**, **Sallow Kitten** and **White Satin** were some of the highlights.

Next stop was to the EWT Fingringhoe Wick NR meeting up with Richard Dennison and Ian Turner we set up 6 traps around the two main car park areas. The target was **White-spotted Pinion** and we were successful with three individuals, two of which were in the regular corner of the visitor centre car park. I think these were the only records of this species in Essex in 2016.

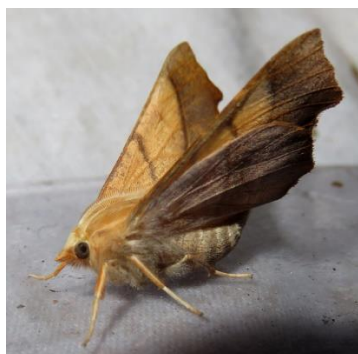
(right **White-spotted Pinion** – R.Dennison)



Other moths noted on the breezy and clear night were **Sharp-angled Peacock**, **Coronet**, **Silver-Y**, **Twin-spot Wainscot**, **Lesser-spotted Pinion**, **Canary-shouldered Thorn**, **Small Seraphim**, **Cream-bordered Green Pea**, **Peach Blossom** and **Small Rufous**.

A partially clear night at Firs Chase provided 32 species of macro with 2 **Sandhill Rustics** of note along with **Coronet**, **Tree-lichen Beauty** and **Twin-spotted Wainscot**.

The evening of 18<sup>th</sup> August was a clear night in Chalkney Wood resulting in a poor showing of moths with only 36 individuals of 15 species in the first couple of hours. Six **Black Arches**, **Small Phoenix**, **Maidens Blush** and a **Pebble Hook-tip** were of interest.



Several EMG members met at CBC's Spring Lane nursery on a cool and clear night resulting in a heavy dew before midnight. **Small Waved Umber**, **Silver Y**, **White Point**, **Coronet**, **Old Lady** and a **Dusky Thorn** pictured left, were a few of the highlights.

I seem to have less to report this year, but I'm not clear whether this represents a dearth of moths or a lack of effort on my part!

Trapping in the garden produced few highlights, although much of the first half of the year was a washout. I did catch my first **Sloe Carpet**, **Toadflax Brocade** and *Recurvaria nanella* for the site on 7th and 27th May and 21st July respectively, the latter a Nationally Scarce species associated with fruit trees. There were also further records of *Metalampra italica*, *Prays ruficeps* and **Coronet** from the moth trap. The greenhouse produced my first record of *Endothenia oblongana*, a species with very few records in Essex.



First record of **TOADFLAX BROCADE** for the Rowhedge garden on 27th May 2016

Nearby a morning's hard work on our Rowhedge allotment on 28th May was rewarded by the presence of the beautiful Gelechid *Chrysoesthia drurella*



Out and about, **Kent Black Arches** left, and *Oncocera semirubella*, at Grays Chalk Quarry on the 2<sup>nd</sup> August are notable as the species' food plants, Dewberry and Bird's-foot Trefoil respectively, are both present on site and so breeding colonies are likely.

(Pics. Neil Harvey)

*Metriotes lutarea* was found during some daytime beating along the edge of the old woodland at the Abberton Reservoir Nature reserve

At Vange, on a former water treatment works site that includes unimproved grassland and chalk sludge lagoons, **Toadflax Brocade** (surely no longer deserving of its Red Data Book status) was recorded. Also present, on the unimproved grassland, were males of the rarely recorded *Epichnopterix plumella*, a delightful black, case-bearing micro-moth with a flightless female. There are relatively few records of this Nationally Scarce moth in Essex, and they are broadly focussed on the coast.

Among the leaf miners, *Ectoedemia argyropeza* on Aspen at Stour Wood, *Ectoedemia heringella* on Holm Oak at Fingringhoe Wick and *Stigmella catharticella* on Buckthorn at Grays Chalk Quarry add to the few Essex records of each of these species.

2016 was a year of quality rather than quantity for me, I doubt I managed more than a dozen light trapping sessions but I did spend a significant amount of time in my local woods in Tiptree and at work in Braintree looking for Micro Moths and their feeding signs.

In June I found a *Coleophora siccifolia* larval case on Whitebeam in Braintree which I believe is the first time this host food-plant has been recorded for this particular species.

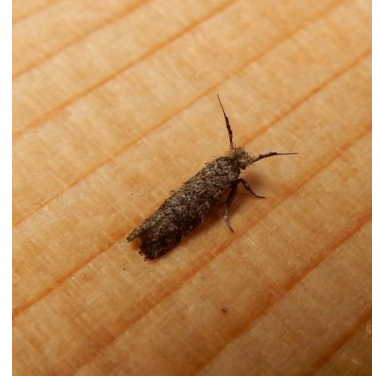
Having lost my extremely productive Point Clear trapping site I have to settle for running a 15 watt Actinic in a garden in Brightlingsea, this produced a *Pempelia genistella* in July and a *Zeiraphera griseana* in August which is rare in Essex.



*Prochoreutis myllerana*.



*Acleris literana*



*Ochsenheimeria taurella*.

July also produced an *Apotomis lineana* from Mersea and good numbers of *Monochroa cytisella* from Tiptree Heath. My polytunnels were in good form in August with 3 examples of *Ochsenheimeria taurella* and an *Acleris literana*.



*Zeiraphera griseana*



*Monochroa cytisella* (Pics S. Rolls)

A leaf-mine of *Caloptillia cuculipennella* was a good find in Braintree on August 9th.

September was not very productive but a *Prochoreutis myllerana* was a notable find in Braintree on the 4th. My year finished on a high in October with the discovery of some *Psychoides filicivora* mines and cases on Harts-tongue Fern in Brightlingsea, I managed to rear an Adult to confirm identification.

The 2016 spring here in Boreham was quite a challenge with either cold nights or persistent rain. I started trapping on the 3<sup>rd</sup> April and continued until the 9<sup>th</sup> September for a total of 89 nights. From mid-May the weather started to improve with the first NFS *Pseudoswammerdamia combinella* on the 28<sup>th</sup> May.



REST HARROW



CONVOLVULOUS HAWKMOTH



BROWN SCALLOP

(G.EKINS)

During 2016 eighty-one species were added to the Boreham garden moth list and the total as of 31<sup>st</sup> January 2017 stands at 684. Of the new additions all but seven were Micros, they were **Obscure Wainscot** *Mythimna obsoleta*, **Ear Moth (GD)** *Amphipoea oculea*, **Large Twin-spot Carpet** *Xanthorhoe quadrifasiata*, **Rest Harrow** *Aplasta ononaria*, **Maple Pug** *Eupithecia inturbata*, **Cypress Pug** *Eupithecia phoeniceata* and **Convolvulous Hawkmoth** *Agrius convolvii*, the latter found by Evie resting on her blackcurrant cage. Other interesting records included the 3<sup>rd</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> records of *Anarsia lineatella* (**Peach Twig Borer**), there were records from Kent and Herts the same week and the recent split *Cnephasia pumicana* (**Cereal Tortrix**) from *C. pasiuana*. On the 29<sup>th</sup> June I recorded 9 **Cypress Carpets**, this was a new species as recently as 2014. The **Tree-lichen Beauty** increase continued with another record total of 11 on the 27<sup>th</sup> July. The same week saw two **Waved Blacks** *Parascotia fuliginaria* and my second **Gypsy Moth** *Lymantria dispar* for the garden. New scarce or rare Microlepidoptera included *Cochylis nana*, *Scoparia basistrigalis*, *Recurvaria leucateella*, *Coleophora albitarsella*, *C. amethystinella* (*fuscicornis*) *Metzneria lappella* and *M. metzneriella*.



Anarsia lineatella



Cochylis nana



Coleophora albitarsella (G.EKINS)

The **Rest Harrow**, **Cypress Pug** and **Convolvulous Hawkmoth** arrived during a significant period of arrivals from the 24<sup>th</sup> to the 26<sup>th</sup> August. Cumulative totals of other presumed migrants between the 9<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> August were *Udea ferrugalis* 20, *Nomophila noctuella* 23, *Plutella xylostella* 82, **Scarce Bordered Straw** *Helicoverpa armigera* 1, **Vestal** *Rhodometra sacraria* 1, **Small Mottled Willow** *Spodoptera exigua* 1 and **White-point** *Mythimna albipuncta* 11. I also had exceptional (for me) numbers of **Latticed Heaths** *Chiasmia clathrata* 93, 25 and 36 on the 24<sup>th</sup> to 26<sup>th</sup> August and 72 on the 28<sup>th</sup> August. I also had high counts of **Setaceous Hebrew Character** *Xestia c-nigrum* over the same period with 3 nights of over 90.

Additionally there were high counts of **Maiden's Blush** *Cyclophora punctaria* with peak numbers coinciding with presumed migrant arrivals. As in past years the migrants arrived a day later than the peak counts on the south coast. During a period of NE winds in August weeks 3 and 4 both **Saltmarsh Plume** *Agdistis bennetii* and **Sandhill Rustic** *Luperina nickerlii* were recorded mirroring what happened in 2015. Overall W/NW winds tend to be the least productive for me here in Boreham.



**Scoparia basistrigalis**



**Metzneria metzneriella**



**Recurvaria leucatella (G.EKINS)**

For me the most interesting part of 2017 was the huge arrival of *Plutella xylostella* (**Diamond-back Moth**). The cumulative figures per week for moths inside my traps from May week 1 to September week 2 were as follows:

**Numbers of Plutella Xylostella in Boreham garden moth traps**

<b>Nos of P. xylostella</b>	0	0	1	38	93	60	56	11	18	22	72	12	62	35	5	42	12	14
<b>Month 2016</b>	<b>May</b>	<b>May</b>	<b>May</b>	<b>May</b>	<b>June</b>	<b>June</b>	<b>June</b>	<b>June</b>	<b>July</b>	<b>July</b>	<b>July</b>	<b>July</b>	<b>Aug.</b>	<b>Aug.</b>	<b>Aug.</b>	<b>Aug.</b>	<b>Sept.</b>	<b>Sept.</b>
<b>Week</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>

The arrivals from the Baltic States were concentrated in June week 1 and 2. My figures were very similar to the peak counts on the coast from Yorkshire down to Suffolk. A spell of E/NE winds in weeks 3 and 4 in July resulted in a further, smaller peak. It is not clear if this was further immigration or post-arrival dispersal. It is also just possible that some of these were progeny from the initial arrival.

Interesting species of other taxa trapped in 2016 included from the middle of July 136 species of Diptera, all were ably identified by Del Smith, two were new for Essex, they were *Setacera micans* (<10 national records on NBN Gateway) and the *Chironomid*, *Orthocladus rubicundus*. In addition in August I trapped the rare *Reduvius personatus* (Masked Hunter or Fly Bug) and an *Acheta domesticus* (The House Cricket), this southern species is rare away from rubbish tips like Pitsea.

2016 has been my busiest trapping year so far since starting in 2013 helped by both my retirement and the acquisition for a donation of an unwanted generator from the CNHS for which I am very grateful. In all I managed 97 sessions, of which 69 were in the garden (between Great Leighs and Boreham, NE of Chelmsford) mainly with my 125MV Skinner but also for the first time day mothing, leaf mine searching and sugaring. The small Choppings Wood opposite the house was also visited 6 times in the daytime with a net and stout stick. Of the away sessions 15 were in Essex, 5 in East Herts (with the Herts and Middlesex Moth Group) and 2 slow, wet sessions at Lake Windermere for a 2-3 of hours whilst on holiday (which turned up nothing not seen in Essex).

In general the year got off to a slow start, mainly due to cool nights but in total 572 species were seen by myself in 2016 (189 of which were new to me), with 376 from the garden (219 macros, 157 micros, 94 new to the garden). Netting during the day turned up micros generally and leaf mine identification was much harder than I had anticipated but yielded previously hidden species in the garden such as **Firethorn Leaf Miner**. In all I managed to identify 15 species from mines but many I could not be sure of, some indeed were most likely not moths at all.

Highlights for me from the garden were **Peach Twig Borer** (a total of 4 on 3 different nights), my first **Peach Blossom**, **Bordered Beauty**, **Dotted Chestnut**, **Small Yellow Underwing** (day netting), **Kent Black Arches** and **Seraphim**. **Case-bearing Clothes Moth** turned up in the house and I stand accused of luring them in with my activities, I didn't dare mention to anyone in the house about the **Common Clothes Moth** from the Skinner one night.



DOTTED CHESTNUT



BORDERED BEAUTY



PEACH BLOSSOM (A.R.)

Sugaring mix was regularly painted onto several trees and posts in the garden throughout the year and I also constructed a small sugaring board to take out on away trips. The results were pretty disappointing against both the cost of the ingredients and the constant effort of re-applying with best results in the spring (**Satellites**, **Chestnuts**, **Common Quakers**) and virtually nothing in the summer and autumn. The flowering ivy turned out to be far more productive in Sept/October with perhaps 10 species resting/nectaring on warm evenings.



MOCHA



PEACH TWIG BORER



KENT BLACK ARCHES (A.R.)

Away from home highlights in no particular order were, from Marks Hill Reserve, near Basildon with Rod Cole and his merry band of moth-ers, **Waved Black** and **Mocha** (probably my moth of the year), **Fishers Estuarine Moth** at Beaumont Quay on one of the evening surveys there, **Large Thorn** and **Garden Tigers** at Cudmore Grove CP, **True Lovers Knot** at Tiptree Heath **Sloe Carpets** at Old Hall Marshes RSPB reserve and from just over the county border in Herts, **Great Prominent** at Broxbourne Woods, and **Reed Dagger** and **Jersey Tiger** at Rye Meads RSPB Reserve.

2016 clearly had the potential to have been another excellent year for immigrants but sadly unfavourable conditions prevailed throughout most of October just as numbers should have been building up. In contrast, an alarming collapse in the populations of many resident species is a matter for great concern. December 2015 had been unbelievably warm and although conditions had begun to change by the turn of the year, January started well enough. Two **Silver Y's** and a **Dotted Border** were in the trap on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and an **Oak Beauty** came in on the 4<sup>th</sup>. By day an egg-laying **Silver Y** was noted on the 12<sup>th</sup>, a male **Brimstone** on the 25<sup>th</sup> and a **Peacock** on the 28<sup>th</sup>.

A **Red Admiral** was flying on 2<sup>nd</sup> February, an incredibly early **Brindled Pug** was in the trap on the 4<sup>th</sup> and on the 19<sup>th</sup> the first **Small Tortoiseshell** was about. Interestingly, the first **Small White** appeared on 25<sup>th</sup> March continuing the trend towards much earlier dates in recent years, but generally March was not an inspiring month. The first **Rush Veneer** of the season arrived on 12<sup>th</sup> April and our second ever record of **White-marked** came the following night.



Pale aberration **ORANGE-TIP** -26/5/16



Pale aberration **SMALL COPPER** -22/8/16 (S.D.)

A very pale female **Orange-tip** was photographed on 26<sup>th</sup> May but June was only notable here for repeated flooding caused by no less than 151.6mm of rain falling during the month.

On 9<sup>th</sup> July a **Striped Wainscot** appeared here for the first time since 1960 together with our third and fourth ever records of *Catoptria verellus* occurring the very same night.

During the latter part of August a considerable influx of immigrants was clearly underway. 10 **Small Mottled Willows** appeared during that period, **Clouded Yellow**, **Bordered Straw**, **Scarce Bordered Straw**, **Rest Harrow**, **Vestal** and large numbers of **Rusty-dot Pearls** were also now about.

This immigrant theme continued unabated throughout September with a total of four **Dewick's Plusia's**, three **Western Conifer Seed Bugs** (*Leptoglossus occidentalis*) on 13<sup>th</sup>, a superb **Clancy's Rustic** on 21<sup>st</sup> and a male **Plumed Fan-foot** on 26<sup>th</sup> being the highlights of the month.

As previously mentioned unfavourable conditions persisted throughout October, but a few unusual immigrants did come through. This time three worn **Golden Twin-spots** on 6<sup>th</sup> and a **White-speck** on 23<sup>rd</sup> were undoubtedly the highlights of the month.

After a lull of a couple of years a huge queen hornet appeared in the trap on 14<sup>th</sup> November. As late light trap records go I wonder how many recorders can better that!

This late theme continued into December with **Cypress Carpet** and **Blair's Shoulder-knot** in the trap on the 9<sup>th</sup>, a **Red-line Quaker** on the 12<sup>th</sup> and two **Rusty-dot Pearls** on 18<sup>th</sup>. On 25<sup>th</sup> two **Red Admirals** and a female **Brimstone** were active and the next day a single **Red Admiral** was about. Remarkably, only 6.1mm of rain fell in December and out on the reserve on Christmas Day morning it really felt like the amazing warmth of December 2015 might just be coming back.

At the Cambridgeshire and Essex branch of Butterfly Conservation, we encourage people to add any day-flying moth species to their butterfly reports that are either submitted to our website sightings page or recorded directly into the online UK Butterfly Monitoring Scheme. Most species are very common, but as they do not all come to light, it is worthwhile reporting them to the Group.

There was a **Brindled Pug** disturbed at the foot of an Oak tree at Hadleigh Great Wood on 12<sup>th</sup> March, but then a large gap in sightings until an early **Silver-Y** appeared at Ramsey Marsh on 8<sup>th</sup> May. An **Orange Footman** was disturbed from Birch at Mill Green Common on the 13<sup>th</sup> along with a **Small Yellow Underwing** at the same site and another at Dagenham Chase the following day. All of the common dayfliers began to emerge in the second half of May, with **Mother Shipton** and **Burnet Companion** in the south of the county, the first **Cinnabar**, **Silver-ground Carpet** and **Brown Silver-line**. At Backwarden, Danbury, Graham Smith saw 4 **Speckled Yellows**, usually a heathland specialist in Essex, but also found in some old workings near the Thames where Wood Sage is present. Bob Seago features with the remaining May species, with perhaps the first migrant **Latticed Heaths** and more **Silver-Ys** on the north-east coast and a **Cream-spot Tiger** and the 'local' **Yellow Belle** at Colne Point. The latter species was also seen at Ramsey Marsh (Steeple).

Virtually all of these species persisted into June and were joined by the first **Hummingbird Hawkmoth** on the 7<sup>th</sup> at Bulmer, seen by Martin Peers. In the last week of the month, the first **Shaded Broad-bars** and **Straw Dot** appeared on grassland sites along with **Barred Straw** and **Yellow Shell** along the hedgerows.

Species richness was maintained in July, with **Cinnabar**, **Shaded Broad-bar** and **Latticed Heath** still on the wing, joined by **Dusky Sallow**, **Clouded Border** and the iridescent Burnet moths, although, unusually, only the widespread **6-spot Burnet** was recorded. There were the manic-flying male **Oak Eggar** moths seen at Ramsey Marsh, Parkeston, Dovercourt and Belfairs Nature Reserve, and migrant **Rush Veneers** first appeared on the 17<sup>th</sup> July at Harwich. A **Small Emerald** was photographed on Colin Schiffman's front door in Purfleet and a **Magpie moth** surfaced at Tylers Common, Upminster on transect.

On the 1<sup>st</sup> August, I had the curious sight of a **Black Arches** roosting on my office window behind Ingatestone High Street. August saw the addition of a **Red Underwing** at Great Holland Pits, persisting into September, thanks again to Bob, and some home-bred **Silver-Ys** showed in these two months. A **Peacock moth** was disturbed at Mill Meadows, Billericay.



We had several reports of **Jersey Tiger** in mid-August, with 2 seen in a Bow garden (Middlesex), 1 in Ilford, 2 separate sightings from Harlow, and I saw my first ever, with 2 at Barking Riverside, along with a **Lime-speck Pug**. The Essex Field Club website also has a **Jersey Tiger** sighting at Manuden, Uttlesford which compliments the one seen at nearby Berden in 2015. This moth certainly seems to be spreading away from its metropolitan strongholds. August also saw the second brood of **Common Carpet** and a **Brimstone moth**.

(Picture Rob Smith)

The male **Vapourer** moths were busy in September and on 7<sup>th</sup> October, I had the privilege of joining Zoe Ringwood and many others searching for the **Fishers Estuarine** moth along the sea wall at Beaumont Quay. There were only 2 seen, but 10 had been counted a fortnight previously and this represents a very good total for the site. On our return, we observed several **Herald** moths hibernating with groups of Peacock butterflies in the old Kiln near the quay. I believe the corresponding **Fishers Estuarine** counts on Skippers Island were 156 and 22.

The only micro-moths of note were 2 *Epichnopterix plumella*, a national rarity, but relatively common on the Essex sea walls. One was seen at Ramsey Marsh, and the other at The Saltings, Hullbridge, a new hectad for the species.

I have been trapping and recording moths in my garden at Magdalen Laver since 1996 and regularly since 2004. My main trap is a 125W Skinner, but when time permits I also use a 125W Robinson pattern trap and/or a twin 24W T5 actinic Skinner pattern trap. I also record moths found by day and actively search for early stages both in the garden and local area. Recording effort varies depending on time away and has been significantly reduced since Summer 2013, so it is difficult to make valid comparisons between years. The table below shows the annual species totals, number of records, total moths recorded and new species added.

Year	Species	Records	Total Individuals	New Species
2004	442	5,460	22,067	155
2005	460	5,333	23,101	76
2006	458	6,287	32,010	47
2007	419	5,026	16,637	22
2008	417	5,218	21,915	15
2009	469	6,598	31,222	33
2010	493	6,136	27,849	43
2011	494	6,588	18,849	39
2012	400	4,035	10,004	11
2013	518	7,071	19,432	21
2014	420	3,698	13,943	2
2015	407	3,492	12,128	10
2016	395	3,531	13,597	11

Although similar to the two preceding years in terms of records and individuals recorded, 2016 represented the lowest species count since I began recording regularly in 2004 with just 395 species seen during the year and the first time under 400 species have been recorded. However, during 2016 my garden list went past the 800 mark with 11 new species being added to make a total list of 801.

### **New species for my Garden in 2016**

Four of the eleven new garden species were leafminers recorded as mines representing a more concerted effort to record these species both in the garden and surrounding areas. Another suspected new species is still to be formally identified but is likely to be 17.006 *Ypsolopha horridella*. This specimen came to the Skinner trap on 6<sup>th</sup> September.

**04.055 *Stigmella hemargyrella*** - 30th October . Several vacated mines on a beech hedge in the garden. There seem to be few Essex records of this generally widespread species.



**04.063 *Stigmella roborella*** - 30th October. Tenanted mines found on young oak tree.

### **15.049 *Phyllonorycter spinicolella***

30<sup>th</sup> October. Numerous mines, several tenanted, on small leaves on a low blackthorn hedge.



**15.093 *Phyllocnistis xenia***

12<sup>th</sup> September. One leaf on a sapling white poplar with multiple vacated mines.



**20.021 *Argyresthia pruniella* (Cherry Fruit Moth)**

A first appearance in the garden of an adult of this fairly widespread and common species in the 125W Skinner on 5<sup>th</sup> September.

**49.043 *Exapate congelatella***

An adult in the 125W Skinner trap on 14<sup>th</sup> December is possibly just the fourth Essex record of this late autumn flying tortricid and the first for VC19. Previously recorded from Chingford (2 in 2001) and Maldon (2003).



**62.026 *Dioryctria schuetzeella***

An adult of this spruce-feeding pyralid was recorded in the garden 125W Skinner trap on 13<sup>th</sup> July.

**73.010 *Macdunnoughia confusa* (Dewick's Plusia)**

11<sup>th</sup> August. My first UK record of this immigrant species that appears to be turning up more frequently in recent years. First recorded in the UK in 1951 at Bradwell-on-Sea and named after its captor, there are approximately 14 previous Essex records in the database.



**73.300 *Mythimna l-album* (L-album Wainscot)**

Single specimens were trapped on 5 occasions between 24<sup>th</sup> September and 7<sup>th</sup> October. This would appear to indicate local breeding of this double-brooded species well away from its usual breeding areas on the east coast and in the extreme south of the county.



**73.302 *Leucania obsoleta* (Obscure Wainscot)**

Another new species of Wainscot in the same year turned up in the Skinner trap in the shape of an Obscure Wainscot on the 30<sup>th</sup> June. This species is quite widespread in the county but is usually encountered in wetland areas.



**73.354 *Xestia stigmatica* (Square-spotted Clay)**

A very worn specimen was found freshly dead in the garden trap on 12<sup>th</sup> August 2016 (probably killed by wasps). I suspected it to be a Square-spotted Clay. I have never seen this species before, so it was duly dissected and its identity confirmed. Apart from 3 records from Hainault Forest and Thorndon Park in the 1970's, all recent records have been in the north-west of the county with the furthest south being Little Canfield.



Records of other notable species are summarised below.

**35.060 *Apodia bifractella*.**

For the second year running, a single adult was found on 14<sup>th</sup> August on a flower head of the larval food plant, fleabane.

**52.002 *Sesia apiformis* (Hornet Moth)**

Daily early morning checks of a row of hybrid poplar trees during the emergence period revealed 4 specimens – single freshly emerged males on 10<sup>th</sup> June and 12<sup>th</sup> June and a mating pair on 12<sup>th</sup> June.



**63.054 *Cydalima perspectalis* (Boxworm Moth)**

Two specimens of this impressive crambid were recorded on 2<sup>nd</sup> August - one in the Skinner trap and one at an outside light. Subsequent feeding signs were discovered on a box bush in the garden, but no larvae were found. One previous record in July 2013.



**70.083 *Thera cypressata* (Cypress Carpet)**

The 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> garden records on 25<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> September.



**19.014 *Acrolepia autumnitella***

Mines containing feeding larvae were found on Woody Nightshade in the garden on 4<sup>th</sup> June and 13<sup>th</sup> August. Adults were reared for confirmation and an adult was netted at dusk in the garden on 16<sup>th</sup> May. Interestingly, a specimen of *Scrobipalpa costella* also emerged from the rearing container – another species reliant on Woody Nightshade.



**72.047 *Eilema caniola* (Hoary Footman)**

Two records of this apparently increasing species were made in 2016. A larva found indoors on the kitchen wall was reared and emerged on 20<sup>th</sup> July (confirmed by dissection). An adult to an outside light on 13<sup>th</sup> August represented the 7<sup>th</sup> garden record.



**72.004 *Hypena rostralis* (Buttoned Snout)**

A fully grown larva was beaten from hop (Golden Promise) in the garden on 6<sup>th</sup> August. There was extensive feeding damage, but only the one larva was found.



**73.243 *Orthosia miniosa* (Blossom Underwing)**

My second only garden specimen was recorded in the Skinner trap on 14<sup>th</sup> April.



## Records of Early Stages and Leafmines

I made an effort to record more larvae and leafmines in 2016. The year started off in early January with records of several winter larval records: *Stigmella aurella* and *Coptotriche marginea* mines on bramble, *Phyllonorycter leucographella* on Pyracantha, *Endothenia gentianaearana* in Teasel seedheads and *Metzneria lappella* and *Metzneria metzneriella* in Burdock and Knapweed seedheads respectively. Another winter species common as larval spinings on the underside of both *Viburnum tinus* and bramble was *Carcina quercana*. Spongy oak galls collected in late January later produced a series of *Blastobasis adustella*. In March, overwintering cocoons of the tortricid *Pammene regiana* were found under Sycamore Bark and collected distorted catkins of Birch produced *Argyresthia brockeella*, *Argyresthia goedartella* and *Epinotia ramella* and Alder catkins, *Epinotia tenerana*. Reedmace seedheads collected in late March were found to contain numerous larvae of *Limnaecia phragmitella* which were later reared to adults. In late October, enthused and educated after a field trip with Graeme Smith, Colin Plant and members of the Herts Moth Group, I set about discovering the leafmines in my local patch. Over two weekends, I managed to record 50 species, many of which were new to me. Of note were *Stigmella tiliae* on Lime, *Stigmella betulicola* on Birch, *Stigmella catharticella* on Buckthorn, *Stigmella obliquella* on White Willow and *Stigmella hemargyrella* on Beech. A full list of species and host plants is shown below. Larval feeding tubes of *Gypsonoma dealbana* were found on oak and hybrid Black Poplar.

Log Book	Species	Host
04.004	<i>Stigmella tiliae</i>	Lime
04.005	<i>Stigmella betulicola</i>	Birch
04.008/9	<i>Stigmella alnetella</i> / <i>glutinosa</i>	Alder
04.010	<i>Stigmella microtheriella</i>	Hazel
04.012	<i>Stigmella aceris</i>	Norway Maple
04.012	<i>Stigmella aceris</i>	Field Maple
04.014	<i>Stigmella catharticella</i>	Buckthorn
04.015	<i>Stigmella anomalella</i>	Rose
04.018	<i>Stigmella ulmivora</i>	Elm
04.026	<i>Stigmella oxyacanthella</i>	Hawthorn
04.026	<i>Stigmella oxyacanthella</i>	Apple
04.032	<i>Stigmella floslactella</i>	Hazel
04.034	<i>Stigmella tityrella</i>	Beech
04.035	<i>Stigmella salicis</i>	Sallow
04.038	<i>Stigmella obliquella</i>	White Willow
04.039	<i>Stigmella trimaculella</i>	Black Poplar Hybrid
04.042	<i>Stigmella plagicolella</i>	Blackthorn
04.043	<i>Stigmella lemniscella</i>	Elm
04.045	<i>Stigmella aurella</i>	Bramble
04.054	<i>Stigmella perpygmaeella</i>	Hawthorn
04.055	<i>Stigmella hemargyrella</i>	Beech
04.063	<i>Stigmella roborella</i>	Oak
04.094	<i>Ectoedemia angulifasciella</i>	Rose
10.003	<i>Coptotriche marginea</i>	Bramble

15.019	Acrocercops brongniardella	Oak
15.028	Parornix anglicella	Hawthorn
15.029	Parornix devoniella	Hazel
15.039	Phyllonorycter quercifoliella	Oak
15.040	Phyllonorycter messaniella	Beech
15.043	Phyllonorycter oxyacanthae	Hawthorn
15.046/7	Phyllonorycter blancardella/hostis	Apple
15.049	Phyllonorycter spinicolella	Blackthorn
15.052	Phyllonorycter corylifoliella	Hawthorn
15.052	Phyllonorycter corylifoliella	Apple
15.054/6	Phyllonorycter salicicolella/viminella	Sallow
15.054/6	Phyllonorycter salicicolella/viminella	White Willow
15.063	Phyllonorycter maestingella	Beech
15.064	Phyllonorycter coryli	Hazel
15.065	Phyllonorycter esperella	Hornbeam
15.074	Phyllonorycter schreberella	Elm
15.075	Phyllonorycter ulmifoliella	Birch
15.078	Phyllonorycter tristrigella	Elm
15.079	Phyllonorycter stettinensis	Alder
15.080	Phyllonorycter froelichiella	Alder
15.081	Phyllonorycter nicellii	Hazel
15.082	Phyllonorycter klemannella	Alder
15.084	Phyllonorycter acerifoliella	Field Maple
15.085	Phyllonorycter joannisi	Norway Maple
15.089	Cameraria ohridella	Horse Chestnut
15.090	Phyllocnistis saligna	White Willow
21.001	Lyonetia clerkella	Birch
21.001	Lyonetia clerkella	Apple
21.004	Leucoptera laburnella	Laburnum



34.004 *Limnaecia phragmitella* in reedmace

Larva.



04.004 *Stigmella tiliae*  
Lime

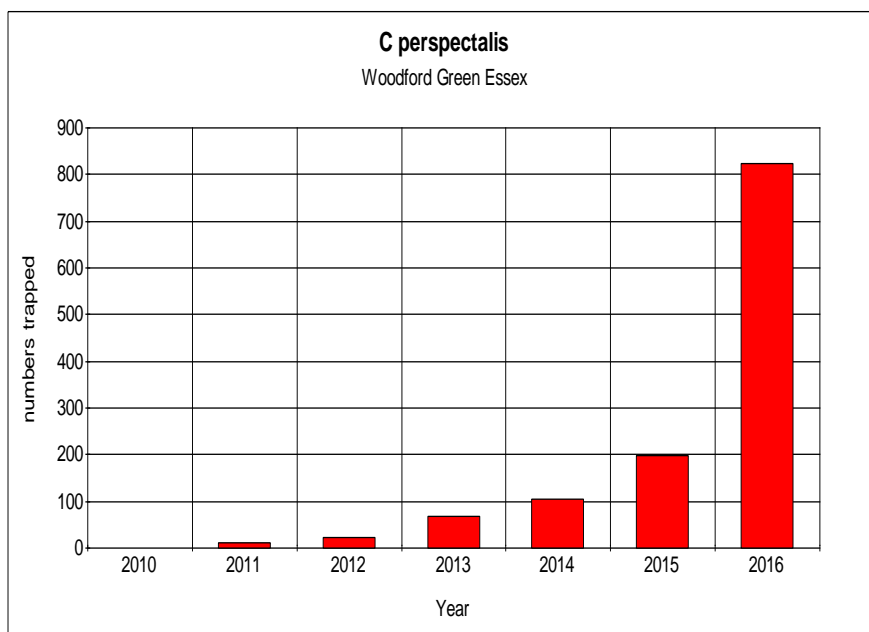


04.014 *Stigmella cartharticella*  
Buckthorn



04.005 *Stigmella betulicola*  
Birch

The most surprising feature of 2016 was the massive increase in the number of **Boxworm moths** (*C.perspectalis*) especially as much their food plant was eaten away during 2015 and lead to some neighbours replacing box hedges with other plants. The adults again occurred in 2 generations with the first peak in late July and second late August with overall range 2 June – 28 Oct.



This moth was the second most recorded species in my garden during 2016 with **Large Yellow Underwing** being the most common.

For interest the top 5 species were -

<b>Large Yellow Underwing</b>	955
<b>Boxworm</b>	823
<b>Setaceous Hebrew Character</b>	505
<b>Pale Mottled Willow</b>	274
<b>Willow Beauty</b>	230

**Jersey Tigers** also increased again with 38 taken between 24/7 and 25/8 and **Gypsy moths** again increased to 6 males between 26/7 – 11/8.

Several new species were recorded including **Cypress Pug** (at long last), **Yarrow Plume**, **Kent Black Arches**, **Buff Footman** and although there was again a decrease in lichen feeders.

I have several micros to further identify which may be of significant interest.

## LEPIDOPTERA REPORT – FOULNESS 2016

CHRIS LEWIS

Trapping occurred on 6 nights between 4<sup>th</sup> June and 30<sup>th</sup> October. The traps were mostly sited on the Bennetts Butt road (TR042943).

216 species were recorded, 9 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 597.

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](http://britishlepidoptera.weebly.com).

Scarce species recorded in 2016 are shown in bold in the cumulative list presented below:

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**



**Figure 1: *Coleophora amethystinella***

37.079 *Coleophora aestuariella* – 1 on 01/08/2015 – saltmarsh in SE.England (possibly only the 3<sup>rd</sup> 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 7<sup>th</sup> record for Essex); **1 on 11/06/2016**



**Figure 1: *Eucosma metzneriana***

70.296 *Aplasta ononaria* (Rest Harrow) – 1 on 09/08/2015 – breeds very locally in Kent, occasional migrant (possibly 5<sup>th</sup> 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) has left me in doubt. **2 on 13/08/2016**

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.



Figure3: *Nemophora fasciella*



Figure 4: *Nemophora fasciella*

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.

**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 - 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**

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

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** – 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**

**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** - S&SE coasts



**Figure 2: Convolvulus Hawkmoth**

During 2017 I plan to continue my effort to document the lepidopteran fauna of Foulness.  
Chris Lewis - 06/02/2017

More common species new to Foulness in 2016

- 16.003 *Yponomeuta malinellus* (Apple Ermine)
- 32.026 *Agonopterix kaekeritziana*
- 45.010 *Amblyptilia acanthadactyla*
- 49.154 *Orthotaenia undulana*
- 69.004 *Agrius convolvuli* (Convolvulus Hawkmoth)
- 70.013 *Idea biselasta* (Small Fan-footed Wave)
- 73.119 *Helotropha leucostigma* (Crescent)
- 73.160 *Apamea scolopacina* (Slender Brindle)

An eminently productive evening, despite the rains of the previous 24 hours: the vegetation around one's feet was still wet, but the breezes had cleared the monster droplets from the overhanging trees, and life was not too soggy. We had an energetic and excited crew, not least on account of Gary Staples bringing all the youthful enthusiasm and enquiry of his grandchildren: Teddy, Harry and Katie, in ascending order of age. Andrew Raybould motored over from Chelmsford to add another generator and lamp, to set up camp by Nore View Crescent and demonstrate, quite inadvertently, that that part of the reserve must be host to a hornets' nest, judging by all the goings-on inside and around his light-trap. Other souls involved were Marlene Bradshaw, Denise Rowling, John Wiggins, Fred Burgess, Peter Furze and Rod Cole. Despite a worried frown and mutterings about whether the makings would stretch that far, Fred nevertheless spirited beverages and biscuits, once again, to the assembled gathering, inspired, perhaps, by the parable of the loaves and fishes – or was it that I overheard him commenting on all the fish in Peck's Pond these days?

A single hornet turned up in a trap on Gladstone Road as well, just to ensure that Andrew didn't get all of the excitement. Bats swirled among the trees, levying their toll of the goings-on. Do they eat hornets? They certainly appeared to be accounting for some of the moths and other creatures (we had scorpion flies, caddis flies and oak bush-crickets in our midst as well). It took a passing wayfarer to spot the one reported glow-worm of the evening. The dusk-time flock of crows swirling around the treetops prior to roosting is now a regular fact of life in this woodland complex, and so too, fortunately, is the wood-owl which later on was given to commenting on our disturbance of his realm.

The following list tells all. Many thanks to Peter Furze for his painstaking dissections of problematic items. His attention to detail renders the Marks Hill records particularly impressive and valuable.

Seventy-seven species were recorded of which 34 were micros. The six new species for Marks Hill were *Caloptilia robustella*, *Scythris picaepennis*, *Celypha rivulana*, *Crambus perlilla*, **Sloe Pug** and **Flounced Rustic**. Other species of interest included **Maple Pug**, **Wormwood Pug**, **Gypsy Moth**, **Coronet**, **Tree-lichen Beauty** and **Waved Black**.

#### Update on the records:

The total number of moth species recorded in Marks Hill Wood as of 2<sup>nd</sup> August now stands at 436.

The total number of species on the overall Langdon list as of 2<sup>nd</sup> August now stands at 703.

What started as a slow evening gradually livened up as time wore on, to the degree that we were absolutely delighted with the outcome. One particularly beautiful woodland species had long eluded our efforts to locate it at Marks Hill – dating back to 2009, indeed – but it finally turned up, sitting demurely on the sheet beside Andrew Reybould's light-trap. You might just about guess which species this was.

Those who beheld this wonderful creature were Peter Furze (who shot it), Denise Rowling, Fred Burgess ("So that's the little sod!"), Andrew Reybould (glowing with pride), John Wiggins, Colin Humphrey and the author. Fred's comment testifies to the frustrations over the years, hoping for this moth to turn up, and for it to happen on his watch. But he can't have it his way all the time, even though he shows a penchant for encountering **Mocha** moths (although it was Denise who cornered the first one). Your author meanwhile has the quiet satisfaction of having excavated the **Black Rustic** from its particular egg-box.

The species encountered were as follows:

**Acleris sparsana** - 3  
**Rhomboid Tortrix** - 3  
**Acleris emargana** - 2  
**Common Plume** - 2  
**December Moth** - 2  
**Red-green Carpet** - 1

**Common Marbled Carpet** - 2  
**November Moth** – 15+  
**Feathered Thorn** - 2  
**Figure of Eight** – 15+

**Black Rustic** – 1 NEW TO MARKS HILL  
**Green-brindled Crescent** – 12 or so  
**Merveille du Jour** – 1 NEW TO MARKS HILL  
**Satellite** - 1  
**Barred Sallow** – 5 or so  
**Copper Underwing** – 1



(Merveille du Jour, Black Rustic & Satellite – Pic Rod Cole)

However, there was more excitement to be had from other creepy-crawlies:

White-legged Snake Millipede (*Tachypodoiulus niger*) – several of these were out and about, not least on the recently-laid brushings of the dead hedge in Albemarle Crescent. False Widow Spider (*Steatoda nobilis*) – male. Walnut Orb-web Spider (*Nuctenea umbratica*) - immature - sometimes referred to as the Flat-bodied Orb Spider. *Drapetisca socialis* - male & female - sometimes referred to as the invisible spider. All three species of spider were found on the trunks of Hornbeam.

Nor was that all. We were the object of attention from a Fox and at least one Tawny Owl, while the shining of a bright light into the trees alongside the northern section of Gladstone Road generated quite a commotion among the Carrion Crows roosting therein.

Moreover, a brief excursion into the section of ancient Hornbeam coppice woodland that is due for re-coppicing this winter gave some cause for observation, for at least one of the fine-grown oaks therein is a Sessile Oak (and probably others are as well). It is also interesting to note the amount of Wych Elm growing among the Hornbeam stools – while there is also Wild Service and Goat Willow in that section. All the signs are that this is a fragment of the Wildwood – probably never ploughed. Quite humbling, really – the sort of woodland to have a **Merveille du Jour**, you might think.

## PRITTLEWELL, SOUTHEND

NICK GASH

I first recorded **Plumed Fan-foot** *Pechipogo plumigeralis* in my garden trap on 23/06/14. That was the only record for 2014. 2015 brought records from 5 nights of 7 individuals, between 28/06/15 and 19/07/15 and a single record of a second brood on 10/09/15. Records increased noticeably in 2016 with 26 individuals trapped over 20 nights. The first brood was between 02/07/16 and 12/08/16 with the highest count of 3 on 23/07/16 and 29/07/16. The second brood was between 06/09/16 and 03/10/16 being just 3 records all singletons.



It would appear that a healthy population has established somewhere nearby. I'm looking forward to seeing what 2017 will bring. I have come to think of **Plumed Fan-foot** as one of my common garden moths, I've even disturbed them during the day in my greenhouse.

**Plumed Fan-foot**

(Nick Gash)



**Buccalatrix maritima**



**Crocidesema plebejana**



**Cryptoblabea bistriga**



**Eucosma tripoliana**



**Enarmonia formosana**



**Lathronympha strigana**



**Limnaecia  
phragmitella**



**Morophaga choragella**



**Nephopterix angustella**



**Phycitodes binaevalla**



**ROSY FOOTMAN**



**Scheckensteinia  
festaliella**



**Sitochroa palealis**



**THISTLE ERMINE**



**Tinea semifulvella**



**Ypsolopha scabrella**

Once again we had a generally poor early start to the year due to poor weather conditions at night. This seemed to progress into the start of the summer with reduced numbers of species and individual moths. Thankfully things eventually picked up by mid-summer, although I missed the peak season when on holiday for a fortnight in mid-July. We had drought conditions for much of the latter part of the summer, principally from late June until the end of October with only a few light showers evident during this period. The unseasonably warm weather in late August and September helped to improve moth numbers, but the ground was rock hard and would not have helped our already beleaguered wildlife. Below is a summary of the highlights for the 2016 season in south-east Essex. I had only four new macro species for my Rayleigh garden, although two of these were completely new to me. The following is generally in date order of their first appearance.

### MACRO SPECIES FOR RAYLEIGH

**Sloe Carpet** - 8<sup>th</sup> May - the only one seen last year. In previous years I've had up to 5-10 in a single night. **Toadflax Brocade** – total of five singletons noted on the following dates: 1<sup>st</sup>, 20<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> May; 9<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup> July. Also found a single full-grown larva on purple toadflax in our front garden. The plant was mostly hidden under a shrub so I hadn't noticed it until putting the bins out one evening. **Seraphim** – Noted on 10<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> May

**Puss Moth** – My first garden record, a female on 7<sup>th</sup> June. **Flame Carpet** – Usually a regular visitor, with one on 7<sup>th</sup> June, and then a nice surprise to find three on 23<sup>rd</sup> August. **Buttoned Snout** – Generally appears most years, here turning up on 7<sup>th</sup> June. **May Highflyer** – Not seen for some years in Rayleigh, this one on 16<sup>th</sup> June. **Dotted Fan-foot** – Another regular, with different insects on 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> July. **Festoon** – Total of nine insects between 6<sup>th</sup> and 31<sup>st</sup> July. All singles and males, except for 3 on 7<sup>th</sup> July when one of these was a female. **Pine Carpet** – Only my second garden record, and third for south Essex. This one on 7<sup>th</sup> July. **Ruddy Carpet** – Appears most years, here on 9<sup>th</sup> July. **Kent Black Arches** – Another regular, with two singles on 24<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> July. **Leopard** – Not seen for several years here, noted on 25<sup>th</sup> July. **White Satin** – Rather scarce nowadays, but one pitched up 26<sup>th</sup> July. Strangely I found one in the corridor at Southend Hospital the previous day. These were definitely different moths! **Wormwood** – One of the best moths of the year to grace my garden, although I almost missed it as it was sitting tight against adjoining fence panels. Only previously noted at Canvey Wick many years ago. **Slender Brindle** – Usually quite regular, this year occurring on 26<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup> July. **Hoary Footman** – A totally new species for me, and hopefully it may be colonising new territory locally. Of the four new macros recorded in the garden, this was the only one actually in or on the trap! Recorded on 13<sup>th</sup> August.

**Olive** – Always a nice moth to see, on 13<sup>th</sup> August. **Cypress Pug** – Appears to be extending its range and recorded in greater numbers these past few years. Total of four seen, on 18<sup>th</sup>, 22<sup>nd</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> August (2 on 28<sup>th</sup>). **Hummingbird Hawk** – Observed for about a minute feeding on verbena at 20.00 hrs. on 25<sup>th</sup> August. **Pale Eggar** – Remains a regular visitor to the garden, with moths in August on 24<sup>th</sup> (2), 28<sup>th</sup> (4), 31<sup>st</sup> (1) and 2<sup>nd</sup> September (1).

**Dark Spectacle** – Another that appears most years, with moths in 2016 on 31<sup>st</sup> August and 3<sup>rd</sup> September. **Gem** – A virtually mint condition male on 13<sup>th</sup> September. **Large Ranunculus** – Believe it or not, this was my first ever sighting of this lovely moth, sitting proudly on the garage wall. Quite scarce in my corner of the world it seems, but very pleased to find one at long last. **Scarce Bordered Straw** – A nice pristine individual of this migrant species on 7<sup>th</sup> October. **Cypress Carpet** – The only record was on 11<sup>th</sup> October, as completely missed the insects from the first brood.

### MICRO SPECIES FROM RAYLEIGH

*Anarsia perlucidalis* – One noted on 22<sup>nd</sup> June, a very muggy but wet night. *Platyptilia gonodactyla* – Only my second record of this plume species, here on 4<sup>th</sup> August. *Syncopacma larceniella* – On 13<sup>th</sup> June. 'Gen det' by P. Furze. *Anarsia lineatella* – This adventive species is almost certainly breeding locally due to the

regularity of the records in my garden. Probably missed the peak emergence as on holiday in mid-July. Singles noted on 7<sup>th</sup> July and 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> August. *Acleris aspersana* - 31<sup>st</sup> August. *Aproaerema anthyllidella* - 26<sup>th</sup> August and 6<sup>th</sup> September. *Phtheochroa inopiana* - 4<sup>th</sup> August. *Anania crocealis* – Total of five between 24<sup>th</sup> August - 7<sup>th</sup> September. *Archips crataegana* – total of four between 16<sup>st</sup> June – 4<sup>th</sup> July. *Monochroa cytisella* – 23<sup>rd</sup> June. *Capua vulgana* – 23<sup>rd</sup> June. *Phycitodes maritima* – 28<sup>th</sup> May (gen det). *Nematopogon schwarziellus* – 7<sup>th</sup> June. *Recurvaria nanella* – 29<sup>th</sup> July. *Coleophora anatipennella* – 29<sup>th</sup> July (gen det). *Coleophora hemerobiella* – 26<sup>th</sup> July (gen det). *Eana incanana* – 25<sup>th</sup> July. *Ypsolopha horridella* – 23<sup>rd</sup> August. *Crociosema plebejana* – 15<sup>th</sup> September. *Mompha propinquella* – 26<sup>th</sup> August.

### RECORDS FROM CANVEY WICK SSSI

Two visits were made to Canvey Wick in the Thames estuary, the first on a National Moth Night on 11<sup>th</sup> June, and the second on 24<sup>th</sup> August. These were both with Don Down.

More notable records from 11<sup>th</sup> June:

Macros - **Light Brocade** 10; **Flame carpet** 1; **Cream-spot Tiger** 2; **Puss Moth** 1; **Seraphim** 2; **Sharp-angled Peacock** 10 +; **Obscure Wainscot** 1;

Micros - *Anania perlucidalis* 1; *Donacaula mucronella* 5+; *Bactra furfurana* 1+; *Homoeosoma* sp 1

Records from 24<sup>th</sup> August:

Macros - **Webb's Wainscot** 6; **Twin-spotted Wainscot** 1; **Sharp-angled Peacock** 20+; **Star-wort** 2; **Reed Dagger** 1

Micros - *Aphomia zelleri* 5+; *Platytes alpinella* 15+;

*Pyrausta despicata* 30+; *Oncocera semirubella* 2; *Calamotropha paludella* 5; *Anania crocealis* 8;

Also noted two **Great Silver Diving Beetles** arriving to the lamps on 24<sup>th</sup> August.

### RECORDS FROM HOCKLEY WOODS, PRIVATE WOODLAND SITE.

Two visits made to this site in 2016, although have been here over a hundred times since 2003 and recorded a number of rare and localised species.

Records from 10<sup>th</sup> June - **Red-necked Footman** 1; **Lunar Thorn** 1; *Triaxomera parasitella* 1; *Telechrysis tripuncta* 1; *Strophedra weirana* 1; *Pseudatemelia subochreella* 1.

Records from 21<sup>st</sup> September - **Oak Lutestring** 2; **Beautiful Hook-tip** 1 (second brood)

I made several visits to a private Nature Reserve near Hadleigh where the landowner has given me a key to enter the site. He is very keen to discover what wildlife inhabits the site and has taken a great interest in the Lepidoptera recorded there. I intend to make several more visits during 2017.

More notable macro species -

**Little Emerald** 9<sup>th</sup> June; **Common Lutestring** (7+) 30<sup>th</sup> June; **Kent Black Arches** 30<sup>th</sup> June; **Blackneck** (3) 30<sup>th</sup> June; **Festoon** 30<sup>th</sup> June; **Dusky Thorn** – a good year locally for this species: 2<sup>nd</sup> August (6), 23<sup>rd</sup> August (6), 6<sup>th</sup> September (13); **Tree-lichen Beauty** (10) 2<sup>nd</sup> August; **Slender Brindle** 2<sup>nd</sup> August; **Phoenix** 2<sup>nd</sup> August; **Barred Rivulet** 23<sup>rd</sup> August; **Twin-spotted Wainscot** 23<sup>rd</sup> August; **Cypress Pug** 6<sup>th</sup> September.

Notable micro species -

*Elegia similella* 30<sup>th</sup> June; *Archips crataegana* (10+) 30<sup>th</sup> June; *Oncocera semirubella* 2<sup>nd</sup> August; *Roeslerstammia erxlebella* (5+) 2<sup>nd</sup> August; *Metzneria metzneriella* 30<sup>th</sup> June; *Phthochroa inopiana* 30<sup>th</sup> June + 2<sup>nd</sup> August; *Epinotia demarniana* 30<sup>th</sup> June; *Anacampsis populella* 2<sup>nd</sup> August; *Hypatima rhomboidella* 2<sup>nd</sup> August; *Coleophora hemerobiella* 2<sup>nd</sup> August; *Epermenia falciformis* 23<sup>rd</sup> August.

**SOUTH-EAST ESSEX**



PALE TUSSOCK melanic

**MOTH SELECTION**



SERAPHIM



Phycitodes maritima

**GRAHAM BAILEY**



Pseudotelphusa paripunctella



MAY HIGHFLYER



WORMWOOD



PUSS MOTH



WHITE SATIN



GEM



CYPRESS PUG



DINGY FOOTMAN stramineola



LARGE RANUNCULUS



Scarce Bordered Straw



LITTLE EMERALD



Archips crataegana



Oncocera semirubella



RED-NECKED FOOTMAN



OAK LUTESTRING



Triaxomera parasitella



Anacampsis populella



Ypsolopha alpella



Ypsolopha horridella



PHOENIX



Platyptilia gonodactyla

