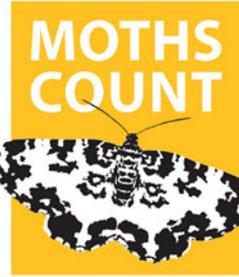


# Butterfly Conservation

Saving butterflies, moths and their habitats



## E-moth

### Moths Count Update December 2009

#### English Moth Recorders' Conference 2010

The 3<sup>rd</sup> English Moth Recorders' Conference will be held on Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2010 at the Birmingham and Midlands Institute in central Birmingham. We have an exciting and varied range of speakers including both amateur moth recorders and professional ecologists and it promises to be every bit as informative and interesting as previous conferences. We will also have stands selling moth recording equipment, books etc. The event is free (including tea, coffee and buffet lunch) and open to anyone interested in moths and moth recording, but booking is essential and places are limited. To secure your place please contact Laura Wiffen on [nmrs@butterfly-conservation.org](mailto:nmrs@butterfly-conservation.org) or 01929 406009 as soon as possible. The draft programme for the day is available on the final page of this newsletter (although it is subject to change).

#### National Moth Recording Scheme

In excess of one million moth records have been added to the NMRS database since the last E-moth update in September. The national scheme now holds some 7.7 million moth records from 98 vice-counties. The most recent additions are datasets from Sussex, Kent, Cambridgeshire, Lanarkshire, East Lothian and Shetland, as well as important updates from Lancashire and Norfolk. The current coverage is illustrated by the distribution map of Common Marbled Carpet records (*right*). Further datasets are expected over the coming months. Once again many thanks to County Moth Recorders who undertake the essential role of record collation and validation. We also give additional thanks to individual moth recorders who submit their records to their County Recorders and ultimately to the NMRS. Without the efforts of the moth recording community the amazing progress of the NMRS would not have been possible.



As reported previously, for the first time in over 20 years provisional distribution maps of macro-moths are now available to the public. The maps can be viewed at [www.mothscount.org](http://www.mothscount.org) at a 10km square resolution and more detailed (2km square resolution) maps can also be accessed. A recent development is that the data from the NMRS database are also now accessible on the National Biodiversity Network Gateway and within species accounts on the UK Moths website. The NMRS data underlying all of these maps are only updated every few months, so the most recently received county datasets are not shown at present. We plan to refresh the online data in the New Year.

As an aside, the NMRS database can also be considered as a valuable additional back-up repository. If a County Recorder loses his/her local database due to system failure or similar disaster, the records can be supplied back from the NMRS to aid recovery.

### **Moth appeal**

As you'll be aware, in September we launched an appeal for funds to support the National Moth Recording Scheme. There has been a fantastic response so far, but it is certainly not too late to contribute either a one-off donation or a monthly pledge by direct debit (see [www.mothscount.org](http://www.mothscount.org) for details). So far we've received donations amounting to over £11,500 and ongoing monthly direct debit pledges totalling £3,500 per annum. A huge thank you to all of you who have supported the appeal and the National Moth Recording Scheme to date!

### **National Moth Night 2010**

National Moth Night 2010 will take place on Saturday 15 May 2010 and the theme will be Moths and Bats. This will enable us to stress the importance of moths and highlight the links between these two groups of much maligned creatures, both of which are in decline. Joint moth and bat events would also be highly appropriate. As usual it will be jointly organised by Atropos and Butterfly Conservation (through the Moths Count team), but we will also be joined for NMN2010 by the Bat Conservation Trust. You can record moths as usual for NMN, but if you are organising an event for family, friends or the public, you could incorporate bat recording as an added feature. You can make contact with local bat groups via [www.bats.org.uk/bat\\_group.php](http://www.bats.org.uk/bat_group.php).

### **Moths Count training workshops and UK Biodiversity Action Plan moths**

Moths Count has helped to conserve UK BAP priority moths by training recorders in identification, survey techniques and appropriate habitat management. The Moths Count project runs events across the UK, Isle of Man and Channel Islands and a third of the training workshops during 2009 were focussed on UK BAP moths.

Many different moths were targeted in these 12 workshops; adults and larvae, day-flying and nocturnal. The first of the season was Colin Plant's workshop in Essex where the Sloe Carpet was attracted to light. Twelve Heart Moths were recorded in Windsor Great Park, Berkshire, during a workshop led by Martin Harvey and two new colonies of the day-flying Slender Scotch Burnet were found during a survey of the islands of Ulva and Gometra in Scotland, led by Tom Prescott. Scarce Pug larvae were recorded by Jon Clifton during a search of salt marsh at RSPB Titchwell, Norfolk.

Those who attended the Welsh Clearwing training day (photos below) led by Dave Green at Sherwood Forest, Nottinghamshire, were treated to views of four adult moths attracted to pheromone lures, as well as finding exit holes in the trunks of mature silver birch. Dave also

managed to bring his experience and luck with him to the Straw Belle workshop at Darland Banks, Kent, where 16 Straw Belle and 27 Chalk Carpet were recorded.



Welsh Clearwing workshop in Sherwood Forest. Searching suitable habitat (above) and a camera frenzy for an adult moth (circled) (right). Images by Dave Green.



In a true test of any moth-er's enthusiasm, a determined group led by Paul Waring persevered through torrential rain to find the elm-dependent White-spotted Pinion at its only known location in Bedfordshire. Paul also led a successful Marsh Moth larval survey training day at Saltfleetby National Nature Reserve, Lincolnshire, for the second year in succession. The 2009 event was a great success with 75 larvae found in 12 piles of cut vegetation, including 17 larvae in one pile – a new record! The group also carried out a translocation of larvae to a different part of the reserve.

Although there were a few workshops where the target moth eluded the moth-ers, we hope that the participants at all of the Moths Count training workshops gained invaluable experience to help with surveys, monitoring and management for UK BAP moths in the future. We'd also like to take this opportunity to thank the leaders of all the Moths Count training workshops during this year, whether named above or not.

### **Butterfly records**

If you have any butterfly records for the period 2005-2009 lurking in your notebook or database, please pass them on now to the national butterfly recording scheme, Butterflies for the New

Millennium. Records from this five-year period will be used to update national distribution maps for all species and to undertake a new assessment of the state of our butterfly fauna. Records should be sent to the appropriate County Co-ordinator, details at [www.butterfly-conservation.org/text/251/recording\\_contacts.html](http://www.butterfly-conservation.org/text/251/recording_contacts.html). Many thanks in advance.

#### **Diary dates**

**23 January 2010** English Moth Recorders' Conference. Birmingham and Midland Institute, Birmingham.

**24 April 2010** Butterfly Conservation Scotland Recorders' Gathering. Battleby Centre, Redgorton, Perthshire.

**15 May 2010** National Moth Night [www.nationalmothnight.info](http://www.nationalmothnight.info)

**21-27 June 2010** National Insect Week [www.nationalinsectweek.co.uk](http://www.nationalinsectweek.co.uk)

There will be a small number of additional Moths Count training events during 2010, see the Moths Count website [www.mothscount.org](http://www.mothscount.org) for details.

#### **Moths Count Contacts**

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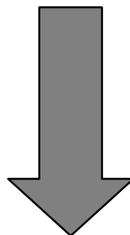
**Les Hill** Database Manager [lhill@butterfly-conservation.org](mailto:lhill@butterfly-conservation.org) 01929 406008

**Zoë Randle** Moth Recording Co-ordinator [zrandle@butterfly-conservation.org](mailto:zrandle@butterfly-conservation.org) 01929 406006

**Laura Wiffen** Project Assistant [lwiffen@butterfly-conservation.org](mailto:lwiffen@butterfly-conservation.org) 01929 406009

Laura Wiffen is the first point of contact for project enquiries.

See page below for draft programme of the English Moth Recorders' Conference



## Draft programme for the English Moth Recorders' Conference 23 January 2010

Book your place now with Laura on 01929 406009 or [nmrs@butterfly-conservation.org](mailto:nmrs@butterfly-conservation.org)

- 10.00 am Arrival and coffee
- 10.30 am Welcome  
*Maurice Avent, Chairman of Butterfly Conservation*
- 10.40 am Moths Count: past, present and future  
*Richard Fox, Butterfly Conservation*
- 11.00 am An update on the National Moth Recording Scheme  
*Dr. Zoë Randle, Butterfly Conservation*
- 11.30 am Discussion session
- 11.50 am Changing moth distributions in the heart of England  
*Adrian Russell, County Moth Recorder for Leicestershire & Rutland*
- 12.10 pm The Sandhill Rustic in Britain and Ireland - survival at the sea's edge and occasionally underwater  
*Dr. Adrian Spalding*
- 12.30 pm Lunch**
- 2.00 pm Extreme mothing  
*Dr. Paul Waring*
- 2.30 pm A landscape-scale study of woodland moths  
*Dr. Eleanor Slade, Wildlife Conservation Research Unit, Oxford University*
- 2.50 pm *Speaker to be confirmed*
- 3.10 pm Discussion session
- 3.20 pm Tea**
- 3.50 pm *Speaker to be confirmed*
- 4.20 pm Discussion session
- 4.30 pm Closing remarks
- 4.45 pm Close of meeting



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