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MOTH NEWS

FOR DERBYSHIRE - 2024

Derbyshire Moths Facebook Group (DMFG)



VC57

March Moth News - From the DMFG pages.

Throughout this bulletin and future bulletins, English names for micro-moths will be as per the second edition of, **A Field Guide to the Micro-moths of Great Britain and Ireland** by Sterling, Parsons & Lewington.

Before I start the March Moth News, this seems like an ideal opportunity to issue a press release regarding the current position on Derbyshire Moth Recording.

During the past twelve months or so, myself and Steve Thorpe have been working closely with DaNES (Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire Entomological Society) and DWT (Derbyshire Wildlife Trust), to try and find a suitable framework in order to put Derbyshire Moth Recording back on the map. Since the sad loss of Dave Budworth, Derbyshire was left without any formal moth recorder, and sadly, it was proving to be very difficult to find a successor.

After numerous discussions, with DaNES and DWT, we managed to formulate a team of like-minded and experienced moth enthusiasts, to act as a joint county moth recording unit. We all felt that to carry on with a single county moth recorder, would be folly, as this method has historically proven to be a huge task and responsibility, for just one person to under-take.

Finally all parties are in agreement, and we are pleased to announce that Derbyshire has an official **Joint Derbyshire Moth Verification & Recording Team** (or **"The Recording Team"** for short). In recent months, the team has been actively involved in the verification process of Derbyshire moth records. As well as clearing up a back-log of over 40,000 historical records, they have also verified over 30,000 new ones. This achievement, in a relatively short space of time, has helped to put the county's moth records back to a much healthier position. However, there is still more to do, and the team are moving along in the right direction. To end of March 2024 there are now 96,200 Derbyshire moth records on the iRecord gateway.

We would also like to mention that Tony has kindly volunteered to be editor, and put together the long awaited **Derbyshire Macro Moth Report** for the years 2019-2023. A publication that is well overdue, and one that will bring Derbyshire Macro Moths right up to date. The last one that covered years 2013-2018, was in the **DaNES Journal Number 168 Part 1**. Once this report is published, all being well in the autumn of 2024, the intention will be to release an annual Macro Moth Report moving forward. So, we would request that any macro moth records that recorders may have for 2019-2023, please get in touch, we need your records.

Tony Davison & Steve Thorpe.

A formal notification has been released by DaNES, DWT & DMFG confirming the new procedures relating to Derbyshire moth recording, with effect from April 2024.

March Moth News - continued.

With the arrival of the month of March, the 2024 moth season is well underway. During the first two weeks of the month, many light traps, belonging to Derbyshire moth recorders, were up and running, and a good selection of spring species were being reported via the DMFG.

Common Quaker, Hebrew Character, Oak Beauty, Clouded Drab, March Moth, Pale Brindled Beauty and **Dotted Border** were all being recorded in reasonable numbers for early spring.



March Moth - Melbourne - Tony Davison



Oak Beauty - Melbourne - Tony Davison



Clouded Drab - Melbourne - Tony Davison



Hebrew Character - Belper - Dave Evans

On the 7 March, Sid Morris ran several light traps at Markham Vale, 78 moths of 13 species, with highlights of 20 **Yellow Horned**, six **Chestnut**, 11 **Clouded Drab**, and singles of **Water Carpet**, **Diurnia fagella** and **Acleris hastiana**. On the 10 March, from his garden light trap in Findern, Brian Hallam recorded a **Herald**, his earliest ever, from 10 moths of four species.

Also on the 7 March, from Belper, Dave Evans recorded the first **Grey Shoulder-knot** of the season, and Steve Thorpe recorded a **Pale Pinion** from his light trap in Breaston. Dave also recorded a **Ypsolopha ustella** from the bird hide at Wyver Lane NR, Belper on 5 March.

March Moth News - continued.

On the 11 March from his garden light trap in Melbourne, Tony Davison recorded a **Twin-spotted Quaker**, NFY amongst four species. Whilst Martin Roome recorded another **Grey Shoulder-knot** from his Chaddesden garden, also on 11 March. In 1986 the Grey Shoulder-knot was thought to be extinct in Derbyshire. It was re-discovered in 2002 and now seems to be well established in the county, particularly in the South.

The 11 March was turning out to be a red-letter moth night, as Dave Evans had a **Brindled Beauty** from his Belper light trap, along with an **Early Grey**, from 13 moths of 10 species.



Brindled Beauty - Belper - Dave Evans



Early Grey - Belper - Dave Evans

On 12 March Clive Ashton recorded 18/9 including the first **Shoulder Stripe** of the year, two **Satellite** and a **Pale Pinion** as highlights. Whilst Steve Thorpe, also on 12 March, from his Breaston garden light trap had an *Acrolepiopsis assectella*, or to use its common name, the **Leek Moth**. Emily Louise Milnes recorded 12/9 from her Sandiacre garden light trap, also 12 March, including a **Shoulder Stripe**, **Oak Nycteoline** and a **Pale Pinion**.



Shoulder Stripe - Cromford - Clive Ashton



Twin-spotted Quaker - Melbourne - Tony Davison

March Moth News - continued.



Satellite - Cromford - Clive Ashton



Pale Pinion - Cromford - Clive Ashton

Dave Evans had a bumper result from his Belper garden light trap on 13 March, recording nine species, including a **Pine Beauty**. From Cromford on 13 March, best were **Early Grey** and **Twin-spotted Quaker**, from Clive Ashton's garden moth trap. John Turner at New Mills on 13 March, recorded seven species including **Yellow Horned**, *Diurnea fagella* and **Early Grey**. Another **Brindled Beauty** was discovered by Emily Louise Milnes in building works at her house in Sandiacre on 15 March.

Brian Hobby from Kirk Hallam recorded 32 moths of 10 species for the Garden Moth Scheme on 14 March. He mentioned that the temperature was a balmy 10deg! Highlights were **Grey Shoulder-knot**, **Early Grey**, **Early Thorn** and four **Twin-spotted Quaker**.



Pine Beauty - Belper - Dave Evans



Double-striped Pug - Belper - Dave Evans

March Moth News - continued.**Acleris cristana** - Breaston - Steve Thorpe**Chestnut** - South Wood - Martin Roome

By far the most impressive moth trap of the year so far, came from Will Soar, who ran his garden light trap at Kings Newton on 13 March and tallied no less than 101 moths of 21 species! Highlights were two **Oak Nycteoline**, **Early Thorn**, **Pine Beauty**, **Shoulder Stripe**, **Herald**, an early **Eudonia angustea (Narrow-winged Grey)** and the third county record of **Calybites phasianipennella (White-marked Stilt)**.

Martin Roome ran a field light trap at South Wood on 17 March and produced 21 moths of eight species, including a **Yellow Horned** and two **Chestnut**.

**Yellow Horned** - South Wood - Martin Roome

Martin Roome's super photos of one of my favourite moths, the Yellow Horned, clearly show why it gets its name. The strikingly coloured yellow/orange antennae.

**Yellow Horned** - South Wood - Martin Roome

March Moth News - continued.

On 17 March Graham Finch attracted 48 ***Pammene giganteana* (Early Oak Gall Moth)** to lures, 20 at Spring Wood, 11 at South Wood and 17 at Calke Park. Recognisable by the "Horseshoe" shaped mark on the dorsum. On 17 March, Steve Orridge recorded a **Grey Shoulder Knot**, only his 4th garden record at Buxton.

***Pammene giganteana*** - Graham Finch**Grey Shoulder Knot** - Steve Orridge

Clive Ashton's light trap at Cromford attracted an **Engrailed** overnight 17 March, and Steve Thorpe also ran his garden light trap at Breaston on 17 March pulling in a superb ***Acleris literana***, along with two **Pale Pinion, Yellow-barred Brindle, Dotted Border** from 30 moths of 13 species.

***Acleris literana*** - Steve Thorpe**Pale Pinion** - Steve Thorpe

Sid Morris set-up another field trapping session at Markham Vale on 18 March. Final result was 37/10, with **Water Carpet, Yellow Horned** and a ***Caloptilia*** species, possibly ***elongella/betulicola***. Clive Ashton had 20/10 to his light trap at Cromford on 18 March, with an **Oak Nycteoline, Shoulder Stripe** and an **Early Thorn** being the main highlights.

March Moth News - continued.

The range of species was certainly improving towards mid-March, and despite cold spells from time to time, this didn't seem to affect moths from appearing in the regular recorders light traps.

Dave Evans had another good session from his Belper garden light trap on 18 March with **Tawny Pinion**, **Red Chestnut**, **Shoulder Stripe** and **Small Quaker**. Dave also recorded an **Orange Underwing** at Wyver Lane NR, Belper on 19 March.



Red Chestnut - Dave Evans



Tawny Pinion - Dave Evans

Steve Moores ran a trap at Darley Bridge on 19 March, recording two each of **Water Carpet** and **Early Thorn**, along with *Diurnea fagella* (**Early Reveller**). Angie Seymour recorded a smart looking *Caloptilia* on 16 March from Whaley Bridge. As with most of these species, they are tricky to identify, and often require further detailed examination in order to identify to species level.

On 21 March Dave Evans struck gold again, with the second record of **Frosted Green** since 1913. This species was presumed extinct in the county, until Dave recorded one in 2023. With two individuals from the same site in consecutive years, there may well be a small population nearby to Dave's trapping area, and another remarkable record.



Frosted Green - Dave Evans - April 2023



Frosted Green - Dave Evans - March 2024

Further highlights from Dave's catch on 21 March were, **Oak Nycteoline**, **Brindled Pug**, **Early Grey** and **Pale Pinion**.

March Moth News - continued.



Brindled Pug - Dave Evans



Early Grey - Dave Evans



Oak Nycteoline - Dave Evans

Nadine Snowhill reported from her Darley Moor H. Robinson trap on 21 March, with four **Hebrew Character** and two **Small Quaker** during a windy night with 7 degree minimum temperature.

Brian Hallam from Findern recorded an **Early Thorn** from his garden light on 20 March.

The theme for the end of the month was much the same, with regular catches of **Early, Grey, Common Quaker, Small Quaker, Brindled Beauty** and **Clouded Drab**.

Brian Hobby from his Kirk Hallam garden light trap on 25 March recorded 25 moths of six species, with a **Red-green Carpet** being NFY. Also on 25 March Matt Leedell from his Belper garden light trap had 15 moths, including **Clouded Drab** and **Early Grey**.

A few leaf mines were also reported during the month, in particular ***Stigmella aurella* (Golden Dot)**, which is reasonably common on Bramble. Mark Radford recorded examples from Follow Ponds on 25 March.



Brindled Beauty - Martin Roome

Steve Thorpe fired-up his Breaston garden moth trap on 29 March and a really smart looking ***Caloptilia stigmatella*** found its way into his moth trap, along with **Early Grey, Common Quaker** and **Hebrew Character**.

March Moth News - continued.**Caloptilia stigmatella (Willow Stilt)** – Steve Thorpe

Alan Kidd from Hathersage recorded an **Acleris cristana (Tufted Tortrix)** from his overnight garden moth trap on 29 March, which was a new species for him. It just goes to show how much enjoyment and excitement Moth Trapping can bring, you never know what's going to be in the trap.

The final light traps of March produced nothing new for the year. Brian Hallam from his Findern light trap recorded a very nice **Shoulder Stripe** from 11/6. Brian Hobby from Kirk Hallam recorded an **Early Thorn** and a **Brindled Pug** from 25/8 and Tony Davison recorded two **Early Grey** and a single **Small Quaker** from his Melbourne garden light trap which were both NFY.

**Early Grey** - Tony Davison**Shoulder Stripe** - Brian Hallam

Steve Thorpe's **Caloptilia stigmatella (Willow Stilt)** brings the total moths recorded, so far this year, by the DMFG to **58 species.**

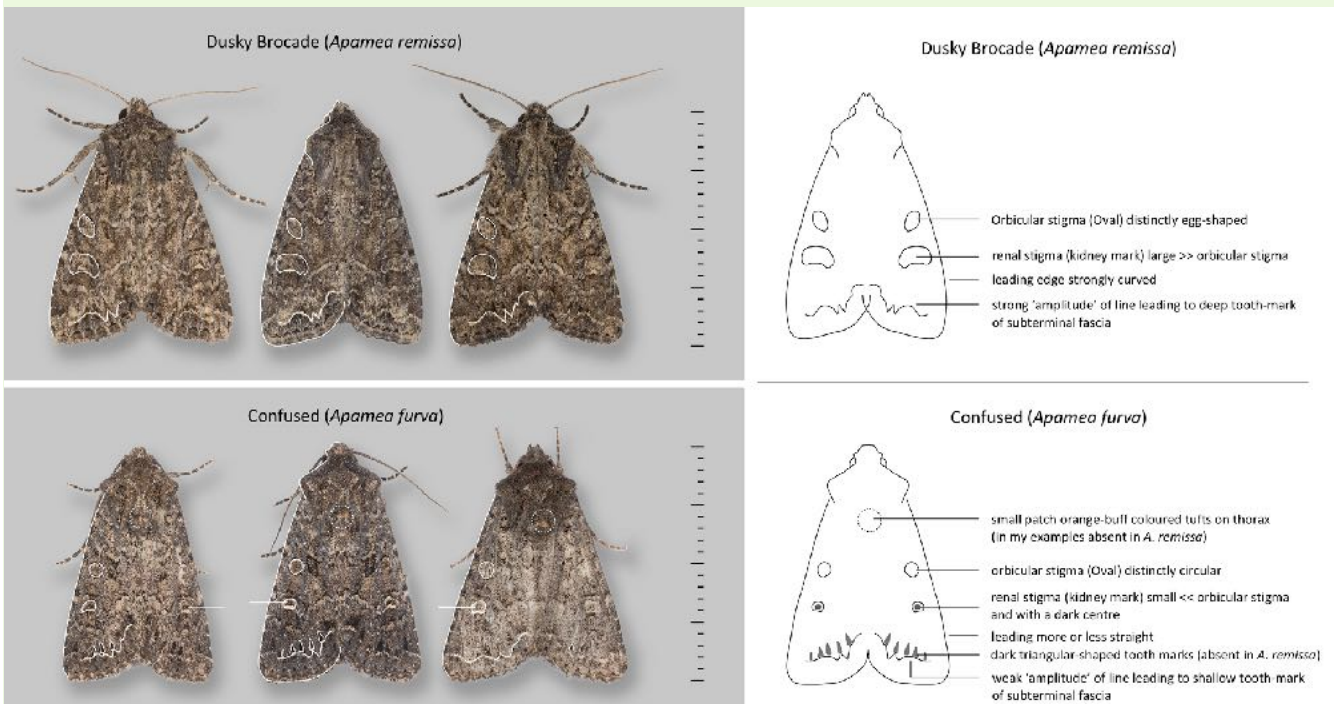
Looking forward to what's in stall during April! **Good "Moth-ing"** - *Tony Davison*

To finally conclude the March Moth Bulletin, I have mentioned on several previous occasions, if anyone would like to contribute any articles, stories, and features, then please do get in touch.

I've discovered that there are some very talented people out there, and I am sure that the bulletin can be improved upon. The following is just the type of information that I am looking for, and what can be achieved with the right article.

My thanks go to **Christian Heintzen** for his approval to use the following image set, showing the differences between **Dusky Brocade** and the **Confused**. A unique way of highlighting the critical identification detail for both species.

Christian has very kindly allowed the use of some of his wonderful images to enhance the forthcoming **Macro Moth Report - 2019-2023**. He has also been supporting my website with numerous photographs of moth species from the upland moorlands of Derbyshire. He is truly a very talented photographer and clearly a very knowledgeable Lepidopterist.



Christian Heintzen© - **Identification pointers to Dusky Brocade & The Confused**

Please note that all photographs remain copyright of the photographers. All photographs bear the name of the photographer. I am very grateful to their support for allowing me to use the many images that are published in these bulletins throughout the year.