

# Cheshire Moth Recording Group Newsletter

Issue 5

Christmas 2001

## Welcome!

Welcome to issue 5 of the Cheshire Moth Group Newsletter. I'll begin by wishing one and all 'a merry Christmas and a happy New Year'.

There have recently been a number of exciting developments concerning moth surveying in the county, which are detailed later in this issue. Principle amongst these is a plan for a new Cheshire Lepidoptera Atlas. This will entail lots of fieldwork over the next few years – let's get mothing!

In addition, we have recently finalised guidelines concerning the level of detail requested for submitted moth records and have established a moth verification panel – again details are included in this issue. Moth recording forms have also been prepared and can be used if you wish. Sample copies are attached to this newsletter. The forms can also be downloaded from the rECOrd web site.

Various training activities have been planned as Moth Group events. Why not come along and learn some new skills. The first of these is a session on larval working (beating and sweeping) planned for April. Other sessions are planned including a field meeting devoted to leaf mines in the autumn and an indoor session on genitalia work. More details next time. If there are other topics you'd like sessions on, let us know and we'll try and arrange something.

The future for the moth group looks very exciting, but at the end of the year, it is worth looking back at what we have achieved so far. The 2001 season has been one of mixed fortune. The early part of the year was ravaged by foot and mouth restrictions that curtailed many planned activities. However, overall, the first full year of the moth group has been very

successful, thanks to your efforts. Many, many thanks to everyone who has come along and participated in field meetings, and made these meetings such enjoyable events. Two new macros have been added to the VC58 list on moth group events (at Arnfield Reservoir) and a number of other interesting and localised insects have been found. Even well known sites have turned up surprises such as a discovery of Neglected Rustic at Little Budworth County Park. Let's hope that 2002 is as successful and exciting in terms of the quality and variety of moths we catch.

## Field Trips – 2002 Meetings

A few field meetings have already been arranged. A full listing of next season's meetings will appear in the next issue of the newsletter, due late April 2002. All field meetings are open to everyone – come along and join in the fun!



*Members of the Moth Group at the Rivacre Country Park Field Meeting 2001. This was an unsuccessful survey for White-spotted pinion (*Cosmia diffinis*).*

*Photo: Courtesy of Paul Waring*

## 9<sup>th</sup> March 2002: Delamere Forest

We are still negotiating access for this one, but hopefully we will obtain permission to trap in Delamere Forest. This is a known site for Small Brindled Beauty, which will be the principle target of the evening. Why not combine the evening with a trip to the LCES exhibition meeting at the Frodsham

Community Centre during the afternoon. If you want to come along, let either Paul or Adrian know, so we can keep you informed as access arrangements progress.



**Lancashire Moth Group**



*Annual Social  
and  
Belted Beauty Search*

**Saturday 6th April 2002**

*Timetable*

08.30 Heysham Nature Reserve Hut, Lancashire (SD407397) Depart to locations by 09.00 latest

09.00 - 12.30 Visit various locations in Sunderland/Heysham area for signs of Belted Beauty (last recorded in 1980s). If numbers permit, the group will be split to cover different coastal sites.

14.00 - 17.00 Unitarian Hall, Scotforth, Lancaster (SD479593) Lancashire Moth Group Social and talk by Paul Waring: **Rare moths and the Biodiversity Action Plan in NW England**

19.00+ Evening light trapping at suitable location/s for Belted Beauty (weather permitting)

### **13<sup>th</sup> April 2002: Little Budworth Country Park**

Meet in the main car park at 11:00am. This will be a workshop on beating and sweeping for larvae and will be followed by an evening moth trapping session. We should hopefully find a range of Coleophora as well as various macro larvae. Bring a good pair of shoes and a packed lunch. During the afternoon we should also be able to see Orange Underwing *Archiearis parthenias* (binoculars useful). We will probably visit a nearby hostelry for dinner before commencing trapping activities!

### **22<sup>nd</sup> June 2002: Venue TBA**

Following the discovery of Currant Clearwing, *Synanthedon tipuliformis*, in central Cheshire this year (see the last issue of the newsletter for details) we will hold a daylight visit to one or more fruit farms in central Cheshire to survey for further sites

for this beautiful and under recorded insect. This will involve the use of pheromone traps. If you purchased a set of traps last year, please bring them along. More details next issue.

### **2<sup>nd</sup> August 2002: Jackson's Brickworks, Higher Poynton**

Following on from the success of this years moth session, Pat Hilton, warden at Jacksons Brickworks, Higher Poynton, is organising another moth evening with the New Mills Nats., on 2<sup>nd</sup> August 2002, to which the general public will be invited. She would again welcome the attendance of anyone from the Cheshire or Lancashire Moth Groups.

## **Field Trip Reports**

### **20<sup>th</sup> July 2001: Arnfield Reservoir**

The record of Scarce Silver Y reported in the last issue of the newsletter now appears to be a first record for VC58. The record of this specie in Rutherford's book refers to a specimen that was taken in a part of modern Cheshire that is actually in the VC57 (Derbyshire). In addition, the record of Lempke's Gold Spot has now been confirmed via examination of the genitalia. Two new records for VC58 in one night!

### **National Moth Night – 11<sup>th</sup> August 2001 Ridd Wood, Etherow CP SJ974922 Shane Farrell**

This session had been organised for some time and was undertaken in conjunction with National Moth Night (NMN) 2001. Butterfly Conservation Field Trips were at a premium this year due to the terrible Foot and Moth Disease crisis but as the park was fully open and permission had been granted to operate the lights and generator as long as we were not too far off the beaten track, we decided to proceed.

Paul Greenall and I were joined by Steve Hind, the Cheshire micro-moth recorder, Ben Smart, and four BC branch members (Martyn Stanyer, Phil Kinder and Mr & Mrs Bullock). Two 125w MV Skinner traps

were run from a generator at two sites approximately 100 yards apart and separated by thick woodland. We had a very mild night and whilst there was a fairly stiff southerly breeze early on in the evening this died down as the night progressed. There was not too much rain until we decided to pack up at about 2am.

Everyone thoroughly enjoyed the evening and hopefully one or two present are now 'hooked on moths'! The full catch was one of the best that I am aware of for the North West of England on NMN 2001. For me, personally, the moth of the night had to be **Large Emerald** (*Geometra papilionaria*) as this was the one moth that really got my pulse racing and was a stunning looking thing. This is the one species I will really remember from the night. 91 species was really an amazing tally given the conditions throughout the country and we were lucky to be there to record them.

#### **Late Autumn Trips 2001:**

##### **Little Budworth Country Park**

A number of late season visits have been made to Little Budworth Country Park during October, November and December 2001 (advertised via the nwmoths e-mail list). These have resulted in records of good numbers of Mottled Umber, *Erannis defoliaria*, and a couple of Scarce Umber, *Agriopsis aurantiana*, together with large numbers of Northern Winter Moth, *Operophtera brumata*. Particular highlights were observations of the flightless females of both Scarce Umber and Northern Winter Moth.

##### **Cheshire Moth Atlas**

###### **'A mothing we will go!'**

Just under twenty people attended the meeting of the Cheshire Moth Group at Risley Moss to discuss the proposed Moth Atlas project. Everyone present agreed that the time was right to produce an updated account of the Lepidoptera of the County, by which we mean VC58. The last account of the county's macro moths was published in 1994, and has proved to be an invaluable

resource for moth trappers in the county ever since.

One of the frequently asked questions about the Cheshire Moth Group and the Atlas project is our relationship with the Lancashire and Cheshire Entomological Society (LCES). It was unanimously agreed that the Cheshire Moth Group would now be affiliated to the LCES. They will be fully supporting the Group and the Atlas Project. It was also agreed that the group should have a formal structure and the following posts were filled:

- Paul Hill as Chairman
- Sean Farrell as Data Manager
- Adrian Wander as Newsletter Officer

The three existing County recorders (Steve McWilliam for Macros, Steve Hind for Micros and Barry Shaw for Butterflies) will, of course, continue with their roles.

The task of compiling a County Lepifauna is by no means an easy one, especially when you consider that we intend to include all Lepidoptera - butterflies macro and micro moths. The target date for publication is five years time. This will allow us four years to undertake (note I do not say complete) the enormous amount of survey work that will be needed, and a year to prepare the Atlas.

'Atlas' is perhaps an unfair title, as it is unlikely that we will map every species. Given the ambitious nature of the project, and the rather severe space limitations we are liable to face, maps will not be provided if an adequate description of the range can be written. This will probably apply for the very widespread species such as Large Yellow Underwing and also our rarer more localised specialist species such as Sandhill Rustic and Belted Beauty. However, the decision on what, exactly, will be mapped has been postponed until we have the data!

One of our first tasks is to find out what information we already have. Steve McWilliam holds lot of data on Recorder,

whilst latterly many members of the Group have been inputting their data into Mapmate. In addition many recorders have supplied paper copies of their notes which will also be fed in to the database for collation and mapping. Even before we have started the recording in earnest, potential new species for the county are turning up. Elsewhere in this issue are accounts of two new micros, while corresponding about the Atlas Project has unearthed a record of Large Thorn on Merseyside last year and Beautiful Hook-tip from the Wales/Cheshire border. Obviously the records remain to be verified, as they have yet to be submitted, but it goes to show that there is probably a whole wealth of data just waiting to be put to good use.

Updates on the Atlas progress will appear in this newsletter as well as on the soon to be launched Cheshire Moth Group website and via the nwmoths discussion group.

The recording efforts over the next four years present us with an exciting challenge. Lots of moth trapping sessions with lights and sugar are planned and hopefully you will come along and join in with the fun! In addition, there will be opportunities to take part in various training days: larval work (beating and sweeping detailed in this newsletter), leaf mining (planned for next autumn) and a course on dissections and genitalia identification (date to be announced). If there is a skill you would like to learn then let us know. There is almost certainly some one within the group who can arrange a training session. There will also be plenty of opportunity for those of us who haven't already done so, to broaden our horizons beyond the Macro's as well.

If you have any questions about the Atlas project let us know and we'll do our best to answer your queries.

### **Moth Recording in Cheshire**

In order to ensure the accuracy and validity of Cheshire Moth records it is suggested

that we should all use the following protocols where possible. However, if recorders have insufficient time to comply with these requests please send in your records any way. We would rather receive a simple species list for a given year at a given site than no data at all.

The four essential items that are requested for all submitted moth records are;

1. The name of the species recorded. Scientific names are acceptable for all species. Common names may be used for the macro-lepidoptera. Common names for most micro-lepidoptera are not commonly used so it is preferred if these are avoided.
2. The date on which the species was recorded. For light trap records the date should refer to the night on which the trap was turned on. E.g. a trap is run overnight from the 19<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup> October. All records should be submitted as referring to the 19<sup>th</sup>.
3. The name of the recorder and contact details (eg address, telephone number, email address)
4. The grid reference at which the record was made (at least 4 figure, preferably 6 figure) along with a site name. Ordnance Survey maps give instructions on how to work out grid references. For daylight observations a 4 figure reference may be more logical. For fixed survey positions (such as light traps) a 6 figure reference is preferred.

This information will enable us to plot distribution maps for species, establish flight periods and to check back with the recorder if there are any queries regarding the record.

Other information is also very useful and should be supplied if possible:

1. The stage of the insect (e.g. larva, adult, pupae or ova)
2. The method used (e.g. MV trap, actinic trap, sugar, leaf mine, searching etc).
3. Numbers of each species recorded .

4. Who determined the species identification if different to the recorder.
5. For certain species requiring examination of the genitalia observers should indicate if this was performed and by whom.
6. A habitat description of the site recorded .

Note: much of this information only needs to be submitted once. Once we have the details of a recorder and site in the database, subsequent records from the same site need not repeat the information, unless any details have changed.

Submitted records in the form of species lists for sites and dates are simpler to enter into the computer than lists of sites and dates for individual species. It also helps data entry if the species lists are sorted alphabetically or by Bradley & Fletcher number.

A new recording form has been prepared (and is attached) to simplify the task of recording species. In future it is requested that all moth records should be sent to the Data Officer for the Cheshire Moth Group:

Shane Farrell, 15 Westover, Romiley, Stockport, Cheshire SK6 3ER

They will then be entered into the system and passed to the rECORd centre for long term storage and archival.

### **The Cheshire Moth Panel and Validation of Cheshire Moth Records**

A Cheshire Moth Panel (CMP) has now been established to ensure that data entered into the 'official record' is as accurate as possible. The panel's purpose will be to validate and accept/query records that are received by the County Moth Recorders. The intention behind the formation of the panel is to ensure that the Cheshire moth records we hold can be trusted as a reliable source of information by future generations. It is intended that in the normal run of things the panel will meet

twice in the early part of the year to validate records received over the previous year. The members of the panel will not be experts in all moth matters and will consult people outside the panel for expertise and comments where required. The initial composition of the panel is Steve McWilliam, Steve Hind, Adrian Wander, and Kevin McCabe.

All the moth species have been split into 4 main categories. Attached is a draft recording form that will be made as widely available as possible. A box is provided for recorders to either tick or enter a number of individuals. In addition, the form provides details of the status of each species. This will provide recorders with information regarding the level of detail that may be required for each species at the time of observation. Recorders will then be aware of which records are likely to be queried and should preferably retain voucher specimens of the species where required. Moth records should be submitted to the new Moth Group Data Officer (Shane Farrell). The records will then be entered and passed to the CMP who will then contact observers if further information (or voucher specimens) need to be submitted. Where possible, specimens that may require verification should be retained in the fridge and one of the panel should be contacted. We will then try to view the live specimen as soon as possible. Contact details are provided at the end of these notes.

The following outlines the categories that have been set up with some explanation of each category. Records of moth species falling into categories 1 and 2 will normally be accepted without validation by the CMP whereas records of moth species falling into categories 3 and 4 will be vetted by the CMP at their annual meeting and confirmation of these records may be sought.

## Categories of Moths for Recording Purposes

### Category 1

This category includes macro-moths that are widespread and abundant, are readily identifiable and already on the Cheshire Checklist. Simply noting the presence of the species on the given date will suffice (although numbers are preferred if possible). Examples include Large Yellow Underwing, Heart and Dart, Light Emerald and Common Carpet.

### Category 2

This category includes macro-moths which although they may be readily identified and already be on the Cheshire Checklist are of restricted distribution or occurrence so we would like to collect as much information about them as possible. We would like to know numbers recorded and who determined the species. This category also includes all but the most common of migrants.

### Category 3

This category covers moths that are not readily identifiable and may be confused with other species. This category also includes species that are on the Cheshire Checklist but are scarce enough for the CMP to want to monitor the records that we receive. This notably includes rare moths which may be easily confused with commoner species. Records of some of these species as adults will need to indicate that the genitalia has been examined (eg Dark Dagger to distinguish from Grey Dagger). In this case a G is appended to the status number. For those unable or unwilling to do genitalia preps or to hold voucher specimens for checking, records may be sent in as aggregates (e.g. Grey/Dark Dagger, Common/Lesser Rustic).

### Category 4

This category basically covers everything else! Moths which are not on the current

Cheshire Checklist plus a few on the Checklist for which we have only a single or a few records. The species may be hard or easy to identify, localised or rare. Voucher specimens will nearly always be required for the acceptance of these records although high quality photographs may suffice in some instances.

### Contact Details for the Moth Panel

Steve McWilliam, rECOrd Centre, Chester Zoological Gardens, Upton, Chester, Cheshire, CH2 1LH. Tel: 01244 383749

Steve Hind, 32 Carleton Road, Higher Poynton, Stockport, Cheshire. SK12 1TL. Tel: 01625-859504

Adrian Wander, 16 Bramhall's Park, Anderton, Northwich, Cheshire, CW9 6AH. Tel: 01606 783371

Kevin McCabe, 29 Reigate Road, Flixton, Greater Manchester, M41 6PT Tel: 0161 7486429

### Another Scarce Silver Y for VC58

Following on from the first VC58 record of Scarce Silver Y from Arnfield Reservoir on 20<sup>th</sup> July 2001, Steve Hind writes 'Harry Beaumont came over from Yorkshire in August and trapped at Tintwistle, which is the next village along from Arnfield. This is still in VC58. He caught another Scarce Silver Y. I guess that they are probably not uncommon in that area'.

If you live in the east of the county keep you eyes open for this active moth.

### New Leaf Mines for Cheshire (VC58) and S. Lancs (VC59)

#### Steve Hind, VC58 Micro Recorder

*Stigmella assimilella*. A vacated leaf mine was found on White Poplar at Rivacre Country Park, on 22nd August. This species appears to be slowly spreading northwards. Following its discovery on the Lancs. coast at Formby and again along the Mersey Valley at Flixton during the past couple of years, it was only a matter of time before it was found in the county.

*Ectoedemia arcuatella*. A tenanted mine was found Ashton's Flash, Northwich on the 9th September. The larva was mining Creeping Cinquefoil, which was growing over one of the many anthills on the site. Normally associated with both Wild &

Barren Strawberry, it has been found on Creeping Cinquefoil at a few sites recently. As this species is said to favour chalk downland, it was not one I had expected to see in Cheshire, although the lime waste deposits at Ashton's Flash are probably the nearest we will ever get to that type of habitat in the county. It is to be hoped that the site does not become overgrown and lose its undoubted richness, which has been allowed to happen at Plumley Lime Beds.

Following the Cheshire Atlas meeting at Risley Moss on Saturday a few of us spent the afternoon in search of leaf mines. The highlight being a tenanted mine of *Ectoedemia intimella* on one of the sallows at the entrance to the reserve. This was the first record for South Lancs. VC59.

The only Cheshire VC58 record is from Cotterill Clough in 1951, yet the following day I found another tenanted mine on a sallow at Clive Green in the Weaver Valley.

There are few records on the National Leaf Mining Scheme database for *E. intimella*, which would suggest that it is rarely found elsewhere in the country. Most of the national records are from November, so if it usually feeds so late in the year this may explain why it is rarely found, as normally by this time of year sallow leaves will have dropped. This year's mild autumn and lack of strong winds and frosts have kept the leaves on the trees far longer, allowing us a brief opportunity to see how rare it actually is.

Following up on these thoughts, I spent 20 minutes one lunchtime checking the sallows at work and found several mines on each bush, so maybe it's not that rare!

### **Things to Try**

#### **'An Easy Introduction to Micros'**

**Adrian Wander**

If, like me, you have concentrated on the macro moths, then thinking about starting with the micros is a daunting prospect. OK,

*pyralids* are not too bad, as we have Goater's book available, but beyond that it is all very, very confusing.

Obviously, the Atlas project is going to require a lot of fieldwork on the micros as well as on the macros. How can we get involved?

Why not try the following. Collect the seed heads of Burdock and of Black Knapweed. This can be done any time this winter, but you may get better results if the seed heads are collected in the spring. Obviously, collect the seed heads responsibly – don't decimate whole areas of the plant! Personally, I use plastic pint glasses as storage. These retail for about a pound for 10 from the supermarkets. Fill a pint glass with the seed heads of one species of plant, cover with a piece of cloth and an elastic band, and place the pot in your shed (or similar) location. Don't forget to label the pot with details of the location from which the seed heads were collected (preferably a six-figure grid reference).

In April/May, you should see a number of things start to emerge – mainly various *diptera*. Then, in June and July, moths should emerge. Burdock heads will produce *Metzneria lappella* while Knapweed will yield *Metzneria metzneriella*. If you do manage to breed the moths out, don't forget to send in the details.

That's it, you're now recording micros, but beware – it can become addictive!

### **Moth Trapping and the Rain**

**Jon Clifton**

With so many newcomers to moth trapping over the last year or so I thought it might help if I make a few comments on trapping in the rain as such questions occur over and over again.

Light rain can increase the catch considerably especially in summer, ideal conditions can be warm and muggy with light rain.

We are also asked about protection of the bulb in rain and of course this is vital at times. My advice is that in times of 'cold' rain i.e in spring and autumn the bulb should be protected if rain is forecast. MV bulbs will withstand quite a lot of rain, but at these times of year damage could easily occur. I never protect mine in summer unless thunder is forecast.

There are quite a few ways in which you can protect the bulb, Pyrex dishes can be upturned over the bulb as can coffee pots (caffetieres) but remember that glass will filter out your ultraviolet light that is so important for attracting the moths and the efficiency of the bulb will be lessened if glass is used. I am aware of quite a few moth trappers leaving glass pots over the bulb even in summer when no rain is forecast.

The best way I find of protecting the bulb is by suspending a piece of perspex (about 10" X 10") over the bulb, several inches above it so it will not melt, either on thick pieces of wire or wood pushed into the light board. This will then stop the majority of rain falling onto the bulb and still let it perform to its maximum output.

It is also worth mentioning that blended bulbs and black MV bulbs (not actinic light as they run cool and need no protection from rain) run at a far higher temperature than standard 125/80w bulbs and therefore are very prone to damage.

### **Species Profile: The Vapourer** **(*Orgyia antiqua*)**

**Shane Farrell**

(Previous published in the local Butterfly Conservation branch (Cheshire and Peak District Branch) newsletter)

The Vapourer is a member of a family called Lymantriidae, which includes the group known as the 'Tussocks'. They are so-called due to the fact that the larvae have large groups of hairs, which resemble small shaving brushes, usually along their backs. The larvae are also rather colourful.



This is a resident species and the male normally flies by day but is sometimes also attracted to light traps in the manner of most macro-moths. The wingspan is normally between 35-38mm, perhaps making it comparable in size to a Purple Hairstreak in flight. The reason I use this species as a comparison is that the very erratic flight of The Vapourer could possibly be confused with that of a Hairstreak species but generally the habitat would be unsuitable for the latter and the flight is more rapid. They can be seen on the wing during July to September and there is an occasional and partial second brood in October.

If you get a chance to see an adult male at rest then the opportunity to study it carefully should be taken. They are a very attractive little moth having rusty red fore- and hindwings with the most noticeable feature being a prominent white mark shaped a little like a fat comma in the tornal area (rear outer 'corner' of the open wing) of the forewing. There are usually two dark wavy lines across the forewing, which run almost perpendicular to the costa (leading edge). The hindwing is normally hidden when at rest. The front legs are extremely long and when the moth is totally settled they are stretched out almost like a cat.

The antennae are fairly short but bipectinate (like a double comb). The reason for these strange looking antennae is that the females are apterous (flightless) and rely upon pheromones to attract the males. This habit is the reason for the moth's unusual name. Like most butterflies the scent 'organs' of many moths are also situated in the antennae and the male can be

attracted to a box which either contains a female, has previously contained a female or has the pheromone of a female inserted inside. I once read that a male Vapourer could locate a fertile female in a box inside a room full of tobacco smoke! This method of 'pheromone trapping' is sometimes used to catch males where the larvae have become a pest, for example on fruit trees.

As mentioned above the female does not fly and spends almost the whole of her life on or near the cocoon from which she emerges. She does have vestigial wings but they are only a few millimetres long and therefore totally useless for flight. Being just less than an inch long she resembles an egg-filled barrel and after she has attracted a male they will mate and she then almost immediately lays a large number (several hundred) of brownish coloured eggs directly onto the cocoon. These quite large batches remain as eggs until the next spring and are sometimes found upon tree-trunks, fences and even under window ledges and many people that find them wonder what on earth they are!

As soon as the leaves appear on the foodplant the larvae hatch and feed from May through to August growing to about 40mm long in the larger females. As referred to above the Vapourer's caterpillars can become a pest problem, particularly in orchards, as they feed upon the leaves of Apple and other orchard species as well as a wide variety of other trees and shrubs. Interestingly though, in Scotland the larvae seem to feed almost exclusively upon Birch. Despite the fact that they are attractive to the eye, this hairy and multi-coloured larva is one which you should avoid direct contact with as, like many hairy caterpillars, it can cause a rash to sensitive human skin.

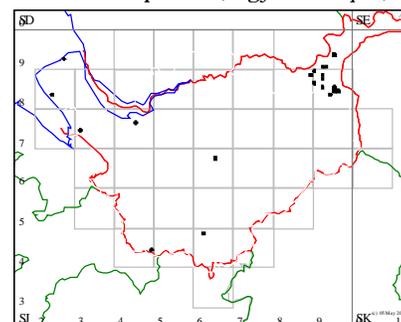
One puzzling problem for this species is one of larval dispersal. As the female is flightless and never moves far from the site of emergence, how does the species spread? One suggestion I have recently heard is that the first instar larvae of some

lepidoptera species may adopt a method utilized by many spiders. This is to spin a long length of silk (many species have the ability to produce silk from glands within the mouthparts) and then allow this to rise in the air allowing them to be picked up by air currents and distributed. Whilst there is, to my knowledge, no direct evidence of this it does seem a perfectly plausible theory especially for polyphagous species like The Vapourer.

Eventually the larva will pupate and forms a glossy black pupa within a small silken cocoon in crevices of bark, under eaves and on fences.

This moth is generally distributed throughout the UK and is often seen commonly in suburban gardens. It can be very common in the south of England. The distribution in Cheshire is also fairly extensive and I have included a map (taken from the Mapmate Recorder program being used by many of the Cheshire Moth recorders), which shows that records have been lodged from various areas of the county. Please bear in mind that the majority of the people using this program do live in the area of highest density (at the base of the old Cheshire Vice-county 'panhandle'). This suggests to me that the moth is probably common in most areas and if the number of people recording the then the spread of records would also increase substantially. As always any records of moths will always be gratefully received.

2026 The Vapourer (*Orgyia antiqua*)



A closely related species, The Scarce Vapourer (*Orgyia recens*), is unlikely to be

found in the Cheshire County as it is confined to a few small areas mainly in south Yorkshire and Lincolnshire. The main differences are that the male is much darker, being a chocolate brown colour and female is also slightly larger and darker (but still flightless). Their main emergence is in July but there is usually a second emergence in August. In this species the over-wintering stage is as a larva unlike The Vapourer. This has a problem 'attached' to it as many of the larvae of this species are attacked by parasitic ichneumon

flies, which lay eggs within the body with obvious disastrous consequences for the larva. Some readers may have seen similar problems experienced by Large White caterpillars.

Thanks to Paul Greenall for his superb drawing of this species and also to Paul and Steve Palmer for reading this report to help iron out any flaws and make suggestions.

## Migrants in 2001

There was considerable migrant activity in the area this autumn. Sightings reported so far (excluded small counts of Silver Y and Rush Veneer) are:

Taxon	Vernacular	Site	Quantity	Date	Recorder
Macroglossum stellatarum	Humming-bird Hawk-moth	Higher Poynton	1	04 Jul 2001	SH Hind
Macroglossum stellatarum	Humming-bird Hawk-moth	'South Cheshire'	1	25 or 26 July 2001	G Lightfoot
Macroglossum stellatarum	Humming-bird Hawk-moth	Allstock	1	26 July 2001	PM Hill
Orthonama obstipata	Gem	Cheadle Hulme	1	20 Aug 2001	G Lightfoot
Agrotis ipsilon	Dark Sword-grass	Bramhall	1	21 Sep 2001	A Charlton
Udea ferrugalis		Heald Green	1	26 Sep 2001	BT Shaw
Autographa gamma	Silver Y	Allstock	15	28 Sep 2001	PM Hill
Rhodometra sacraria	Vestal	Marbury CP	1	29 Sep 2001	PM Hill
Agrotis ipsilon	Dark Sword Grass	Allstock	1	13 Oct 2001	PM Hill
Rhodometra sacraria	Vestal	Marbury CP	1	13 Oct 2001	PM Hill
Udea ferrugalis		Heald Green.	1	14 Oct 2001	BT Shaw
Rhodometra sacraria	Vestal	Anderton	1	14 Oct 2001	A Wander
Agrotis ipsilon	Dark Sword Grass	Allstock	2	14 Oct 2001	PM Hill

There was clearly an influx of Hummingbird Hawks in July. In addition, there appear to be two clear peaks of migrant activity in the Autumn – one in late September and another in mid October. If you have data that will help us complete this picture, please let us know!

## Contacts and Web Sites

- Steve McWilliam's web site on Cheshire Moths can be found at:  
<http://www.consult-eco.ndirect.co.uk/entomol/chmoths>
- The Lancashire and Cheshire Entomology Society (LCES) can be found at:  
<http://www.consult-eco.ndirect.co.uk/entomol/lces>
- The Underwings (The junior section of the LCES) can be found at:  
<http://www.consult-eco.ndirect.co.uk/entomol/underwng>

- **rECOrd** – The Local Records Centre for Cheshire, Halton, Runcorn, Warrington and the Wirral can be found at:  
<http://www.record-lrc.co.uk>
- All records of macro and micro moths should preferably be submitted to the Moth Group Data Officer, Shane Farrell e-mail [shane.farrell@ntlworld.com](mailto:shane.farrell@ntlworld.com) or via snail mail at 15 Westover, Romiley, Stockport, Cheshire SK6 3ER
- Records of macro moths can also be sent to Steve McWilliam at:  
[stevemc@consult-eco.ndirect.co.uk](mailto:stevemc@consult-eco.ndirect.co.uk)
- Records of micros can also be sent to Steve Hind at:  
[steve@hind1.fsnet.co.uk](mailto:steve@hind1.fsnet.co.uk)
- Records from Shropshire should be sent to Peter Boardman, 7 High Street, Weston Rhyn, Shropshire, SY10 7RP or e-mail at [peperouda@btinternet.com](mailto:peperouda@btinternet.com)
- Submission of all biological records can be made to **rECOrd** at:  
[manager@record-lrc.co.uk](mailto:manager@record-lrc.co.uk)
- Butterfly Conservation can be found at:  
<http://www.butterfly-conservation.org>
- Paul Hill can be contacted via email [paul@papilio.co.uk](mailto:paul@papilio.co.uk) or via snail mail at Paul M Hill Natural History Services, 1 Clive Cottage, London Road, Allostock, Knutsford, Cheshire, WA16 9LT
- The Lancashire Moth Group now has a web page at <http://www.lancashire-moths.org>
- Jon Clifton can be contacted via Kestrel Cottage, Hindolveston, Norfolk, NR20 5DE
- I can be contacted regarding field trips, items for the next newsletter etc. at: [a.wander@dl.ac.uk](mailto:a.wander@dl.ac.uk) or by snail-mail at 16 Bramhalls Park, Anderton, Northwich, Cheshire, CW9 6AH