



**Lancashire and Cheshire Entomological Society
Newsletter**

Incorporating



The Cheshire Moth Group Newsletter

April 2002

Welcome!

Welcome to the new look LCES newsletter incorporating issue 6 of the Cheshire Moth Group Newsletter. Hopefully those of you primarily interested in moths will find something of interest in the articles on other orders, while those of you primarily interested in other orders will forgive the moth bias of this issue. Contributions on any order are always welcome. If your favourite group is not represented then why not put pen to paper and send me a contribution for the next issue! Having combined the LCES newsletter with the Cheshire Moth Group newsletter we are also biased towards moths in Cheshire. Contributions regarding other areas are more than welcome. With your help we can make the next issue more representative of both the orders and the geographical areas of interest to the society. We plan to produce around four issues of the newsletter per year – April, June, September and Christmas. Contributions in Microsoft word are preferred, but if not type written articles are also OK.

Hopefully you have all received a copy of the Cheshire *Lepidoptera* report for 2000 launched in early March. If not, let us know and we'll put a copy in the post to you. We would like to get the 2001 report out as soon as possible. If you have records and haven't sent them in yet, please let us have them asap. We can then ensure that the report is as accurate a reflection of the 2001 season as possible.

For those of you who haven't discovered mapmate yet, we have an introduction to the package in this issue. In addition, there are a number of distribution maps from the package illustrating various articles. If you have a PC it's well worth thinking of investing in a copy of this program.

Spring is well underway, and the first of the new season's field trips have already taken place – reports are included. Having lost virtually the whole of the early season in 2001 this year gives us an opportunity to

catch up for lost time. My first moth of the year was a Winter Moth in early January, followed by Spring Usher on the 20th. This moth is under recorded in the county due to its very early flight period.



Spring Usher in the editor's garden in Anderton, 20th January 2002

Field Trips – 2002 Meetings

A number of this year's trips include a day light component. These day light trips provide an ideal opportunity to survey for all insect orders. Hopefully we will be joined by as many of you as possible. The day flying moths are probably under recorded within the county and we will try and address this problem with these field meeting. In particular, the visit to Little Budworth in July will hopefully include work on Solitary Wasps and Hoverflies as well as the more usual moth work. Why not come along and learn something about these fascinating groups.

4th May 2002: Pym Chair/Goyt Valley

This trip will target some late spring species. Meet at 2:00pm for an afternoon of searching for daylight flying moths (including the Emperor). Meet 700pm for the evening light trapping session.

26th May 2002: Farndon

"In search of the Club-tailed Dragonfly". Join members of the Cheshire Odonata Biodiversity Action Group in a search for exuvia of Club-tailed Dragonfly along the River Dee at Farndon. Further details from Paul Hill.

29th May: Norton Priory

Meet at 8pm. Contact Steve McWilliam on 01928 573697 for details.

1st June 2002: Pym Chair/Goyt Valley

This time we will be searching for some of early summer species including the Striped Twin-spot Carpet, Light Knot Grass and the Glaucous Shears. Meet 8:00pm in the Pym Chair Car Park.

15th June 2002

National Moth Night

**Marbury Country Park, Northwich
SJ 652 763**

Meet 8.30pm on 15th and/or 9.00am on 16th. Organised by Cheshire County Council and The Cheshire Moth Group For details, contact Paul Hill 01565 722938 paul@papilio.co.uk

Venue: TBA

Butterfly Conservation (Cheshire and Peak District) and Cheshire Moth Group Shane Farrell

Wigg Island, Widnes SJ 535 843

Survey for estuarine species organised by The Lancashire and Cheshire Entomological Society. For details contact Steve McWilliam 01928 573697

22nd 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.

29th June 2002: Ashton's Flash

Meet at the new Wittton Mill car park (SJ663747) at 2:00pm. The afternoon will be spent at Ashton's Flash, Anderton Lime Bed and Dairy House Meadows. Meet

8:30pm for the evening light trapping session at Ashton's Flash. This site yielded a new VC58 record last year (*Ectoedemia arcuatella* - see the last issue of the newsletter) and has only been trapped on one previous occasion. Creeping Willow is common and the site which could lead to the presence of some interesting species.

**6th July 2002: Little Budworth
Country Park**

Meet 8:30pm in the main car park (the one with the toilet block).

20th July 2002: Pym Chair/Goyt Valley

Again meet in the Pym Chair car park at 8:45pm as we survey for some high summer species. We hope to locate Scarce Silver Y, Grey Mountain Carpet, Red Carpet and Ling Pug amongst other species. We will also target the spruce plantations for Satin Beauty.

**2nd August 2002: Jackson's Brickworks,
Higher Poynton**

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

**31st August 2002: Pym Chair/Goyt
Valley**

Meet at 2:00pm for a search for daylight flyers that should include Small Autumnal Moth. Meet 8:00pm for evening light trapping for species such as the Golden-rod Brindle.

Field Trip Reports

**7th September 2001: Goyt Valley
(SK011735)**

This one was missed from the last newsletter – apologies for it's late appearance. We assembled in the Pym Chair car park on an evening on which it

was hard to stand up yet alone set moth traps. The wind really was that strong. Consequently we moved into the more sheltered Goyt Valley and set traps both in the wooded stream valley and in the quarry where the stone walls proved some shelter. By the time we turned the traps on the gale force winds had been joined by heavy rain – who says moth trappers are mad! Despite the absolutely atrocious conditions we still managed to catch a few moths, including a number of interesting species. Haworth's Minor, Grey Chi and Autumnal Rustic were all good records, as were a number of Flounced Chestnut and Northern Spinach and a single Small Wainscot. A total of 19 species were recorded. However, the moths which ventured out proved more hardy the moth trappers – we packed up at 10:00pm and headed home to try and dry out after a very memorable evening. This area has great potential and is the target of a number of moth group events this year. Why not come along and experience the wonderful scenery and try and catch some of the upland species that are rare in the county. The weather is not always as bad as it was on this trip!

9th March 2002: LCES Exhibition Meeting Frodsham Community Centre

OK, not a field meeting but an excellent outing and a chance to meet other entomologists from the area. The meeting attracted a number of interesting exhibits of moths, butterflies and other orders and, as usual was an opportunity to chat about last season and the prospects for the season ahead.



9th March 2002: Delamere Forest

Following the exhibition meeting we held are first field meeting of the year. These events should probably be renamed the 'ice breaker' – both figuratively and literally!

Those who attended the first meeting last year at Lindow common will remember the cold weather we experienced on that one. Well, this one was even colder. One moth was attracted to light, but flew straight through with out stopping! We did managed to find a single Dotted Border together with a few mines of *Stigmella aurella*. Mind you, we all felt better to be back out in the field again after the winter lay off. Things can only get better!

29th March 2002: Pym Chair/Goyt Valley

This field trip was cancelled due to the cold and frosty weather over the Easter period. The hazard of early season field trips!

13th April 2002: Little Budworth Common



The Heath at Little Budworth

This was a combined daylight session looking at beating and sweeping, together with an evening light trapping session. During the afternoon, the weather clouded over, although we did manage to locate 2 Common Heath while sweeping produced both *Coleophora pyrrhulipennella* and *C. juncicolella* while searching of tree trunks successfully located *Taleporia tubulosa*. The evening light trapping session produced 15 species of moth including large numbers of Twin-spotted Quaker, both Early and Purple Thorn and an early Lesser Swallow Prominent. The cloud

cover keep temperatures up, until the sky

Orthoptera of Cheshire

Paul M Hill

Cheshire Orthoptera Recorder

In 2001, whilst sweeping the heathland for invertebrate recording at Little Budworth Common. I came across several species of orthoptera. These included Mottled Grasshopper and Common Groundhopper, species I am familiar with in the south of England

These finds caused me to ask the question “What species of Orthoptera are to be found in Cheshire?” Chats with Steve McWilliam showed that there are very few records of Orthoptera for the county held by rECOrd. Also there was no “dedicated” Orthoptera recorder for Cheshire. This led to my volunteering to be the Orthoptera recorder for Cheshire, and trawling through my old notebooks for Orthoptera records.

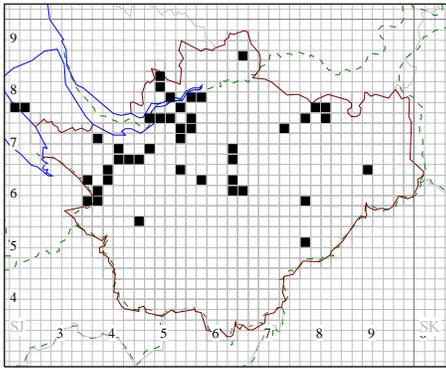
To date it would appear that nine species of Orthoptera have been recorded in Cheshire. These can be broken down into three groups detailed in the accompanying table.

There are records for species in the first and second categories on the rECOrd database. Examination of the distribution charts in Marshall and Haes (The Grasshoppers and Allied Insects of Great Britain and Ireland) shows that a further two species have been recorded since 1961 – Oak Bush Cricket,

leared just after 11:00pm.

Mole Cricket – although further details are still awaited. There are also pre-1961 records of Dark Bush Cricket. There are currently no records held for these the species at rECOrd. Of the six species for which there are currently records on the rECOrd database only Meadow, Field and Common Green show a wide distribution, with just a hundred records between them. There are nine records of Bog Bush Cricket (with a further two waiting to be entered!) two for Mottled Grasshopper and three for Common Groundhopper (again a couple of more records awaiting entry). The lack of records for the last three species is not unexpected. Bog Bush Cricket records come from Abbott’s and Shemmy Mosses in Delamere and from Holcoft Moss. No doubt the species will also be found at Risley Moss given time and effort. Mottled Grasshopper has been recorded from the Delamere area, but I have also recorded the species on the limebeds around Northwich. These latter records have not been entered into the database yet and I intend to carry out more survey work on the sites in 2002 and 2003. Common Groundhopper has only been recorded from Delamere. Whilst Cheshire is never likely to produce the variety of Orthoptera species as say Dorset or Cornwall, I feel that several species are under-recorded. I would therefore ask all members to send any Orthoptera records to

Species with wide distribution	Species with a restricted distribution	Species with no records held for the previous 10 years
Meadow Grasshopper	Mottled Grasshopper	Oak Bush Cricket
Field Grasshopper	Common Groundhopper	Mole Cricket
Common Green Grasshopper	Bog Bush Cricket	Dark Bush Cricket



Meadow Grasshopper
Photo Courtesy of Paul Hill

me. We can then build up a more accurate picture of our grasshoppers, groundhoppers and crickets. Who knows, Roesel's Bush Cricket could turn up on the Wirral or the Dee or Gowey Meadows!! Records for the Orthoptera can be sent to me via email at orthoptera@biota.co.uk or by snail mail to 1 Clive Cottage, London Road, Allstock, Knutsford, Cheshire, WA16 9L

More Scarce Silver Y's for VC58

As reported in issue 4 of the newsletter, the record of Scarce Silver Y, *Syngrapha interrogationis*, from Arnfield reservoir (20th July 2001) on a Cheshire Moth Group event was thought to be a first for the vice county. In the last issue we reported on an earlier record (by a little matter of 150+

years!) making the Arnfield record a second for the vice county. Dave Poynton has now contacted me and says: 'I recorded *Syngrapha interrogationis* here in Prestbury on 7.viii.1997. The grid reference here is SJ 894769 which I believe is in VC 58'. Dave's record now takes pride of place as the second for the VC and the Arnfield record moves back another place to third!

Round-winged Muslin in East Cheshire

Steve Hind

This marshland species is rare and local in Cheshire and was thought to be restricted to a few sites in the centre and south of the county. Rutherford, 1994, gave its occurrence in six 10km squares SJ44, 46, 54, 56, 64 & 65. A further site was added when one was flushed from the edge of Bagmere in SJ76 on 14th July 1997. It is

said not to fly in windy conditions, remaining among the vegetation, so the capture of one in my garden trap at Higher Poynton SJ98 on 10th July 2001 was not only a good 20 miles from its nearest known locality, but was also during a night of strong westerly winds. Had this individual been blown across from one of these sites on the Plain, or is there a nearer, so far undiscovered colony, in East Cheshire?

Cnephasia's in Cheshire:

A Request

Jon Clifton

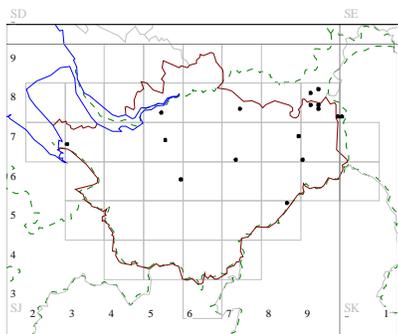
Cnephasia's are a drab, mainly dark micro moth belonging to the Tortricoid family. Due to their similarities they can be quite tricky to identify in the field and usually you have to resort to examination of the genitalia for positive identification.

There are nine species that occur in Britain of which seven have been recorded in Cheshire (although three of those are pre-1990 records). *Cnephasia incertana*, *C. stephensiana* and *C. asseclana* are fairly common and scattered over the county,

albeit widely. *C. conspersana* having just one post 1956 record (from Thurstaston Country Park in 1998) *C. longana* has no record since 1954, *C. pasuiana* was recorded by B Hardwick as local but there are no recent records and *C. communana* has one un-checked record from 1982.

I have been examining this group for about four years now and have found that not all my initial identifications were as I thought. After dissection some specimens that appeared to be *stephensiana*'s were found to be large *asseclana* and visa versa. I have also found some all dark *C. longana* that resemble drab *stephensiana*. I have also found in Norfolk and Suffolk, where most of my samples have been taken, that *C. genitalana* (just a hand full of records from these two counties and possibly spreading) is a very drab, worn looking *Cnephasia* and one I would normally discard and not take a second look at! *C. communana* is one particular moth I would like to find. It is one of the earliest *Cnephasia*'s to fly (on the wing from May) but I have not found it anywhere despite requests in East Anglia and it is doubtless in decline.

With the setting up of the Cheshire Moth Atlas I thought this a good time to try to have a look at the current distribution of this group so please send any specimens to me (see contact section) with the site, grid reference and date caught. Specimen tubes can be returned if wished.



We have few records of even the common members of this group. Your records can clearly help us to establish a fuller picture of their distribution.

Quick guide to identification

C. stephensiana: Usually quite large with broad forewings, dark or light background colour with strong dark cross markings.

C. asseclan: (previously known as *interjectana*) is smaller than *stephensiana* and usually having very dark brown/black cross lines and background colour. Confused with small *stephensiana*'s.

C. incertana: A small *Cnephasia*, as small as *asseclana* but usually much paler.

C. conspersana: About the size of *stephensiana* but paler in ground colour, on the pinned specimen the apex of the forewing is quite pointed.

C. longana: One of the more distinctive *Cnephasia*, having unicolorous, pale ochreous, long narrow forewings.

C. communana: Remember, the earliest of this group to fly. Any records in May please forward them on to me!

Eana incanana: A confusion species, resembling a washed out *stephansiana*, known as the bluebell tortrix and found in old woodland. Rare in Cheshire so forward them on please!

Tawny Shears, *Hadena perplexa* A Request

The Tawny Shears is a very variable moth, and currently two subspecies are recognised. The darkest form known as the Pod Lover, subsp *capsophila* is largely a coastal insect occurring in Ireland and the Isle of Man. However, Skinner states that the darkest specimens of Tawny Shears from Cornwall and Wales are indistinguishable from the Pod Lover. It would be interesting to see what colour forms occur in Cheshire. If you catch Tawny Shears this year please check the ground colour carefully and if you have a dark form please either photograph it or, if

possible, retain the specimen. To illustrate the differences I have included a photo of a typical south eastern form from Snettisham Country Park in Norfolk (lower) and a specimen of the Pod Lover bred from larvae obtained on the Burren in Ireland (upper). These specimens were exhibited at the LCES meeting in February, and it appears from comments during that the meeting that the dark forms may occur in VC58. Keep your eyes open.....



Belted Beauty on the Wirral
Photos: Courtesy of Jeff Clark

Jeff visited this insect's English stronghold on the Wirral in early April. As it is the LCES logo, and it is topical, I couldn't resist the temptation to include his excellent photos illustrating the male and female of this charismatic species.

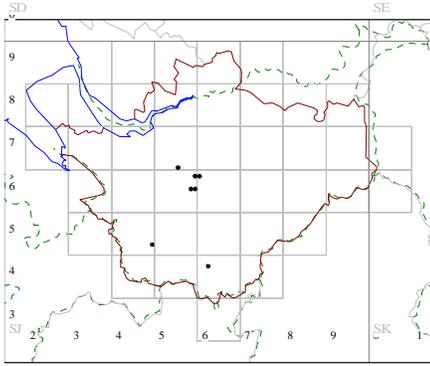


More Things To Try
Micro's in the spring

If you are out and about in woodland in the next month or so, keep your eyes open for the cases of *Taleporia tubulosa*. The insect is said to favour woodland with little undergrowth and the larvae feeds on lichens, decaying plant material and even other insects. The cases are distinctive and large. MBGBI gives the case size as 14-20mm. In practice, the cases are easily spotted at a distance of several yards and at first site resemble bird droppings! Typically they are between knee and waist height. If you find the case, please let us know so we can fill in the distribution maps.



Taleporia tubulosa case on birch at Little Budworth Common



A Note From The Cheshire Moth Group Data Manager

Shane Farrell

I would, first of all, like to thank anyone and everyone that has sent or is going to send records in to the CMG. *Your records really do count and really are appreciated.*

This has never been more important that right now. We are in the early stages of creating a new atlas for all species in VC58 and every record we receive will go towards making this the success we all hope it will be. We can receive records in any format whatsoever, be that paper based, electronic (please note my email address shane.farrell@ntlworld.com) or even verbal. However, the biggest single contribution that recorders can make is to use the recording program that many of the Cheshire recorders are already using – Mapmate.

This program is the one upon which the records for the atlas will be maintained and entered and the main reasons for this are as follows:

- Records are entered by the recorder themselves and can only be altered by them
- Records are entered quickly and easily
- The ease and variation of the retrieval of information is superb

- Reports and summaries can be produced at the touch of a button for county, recorder, site, date – the possibilities are almost endless
- Maps and flight period charts (see examples below) can be produced with amazing simplicity
- Recording data can be exchanged VERY easily between recorders
- The exchange of records is an effective ‘back-up’ of your own records
- In addition you can ‘back up’ your records to the Mapmate server

This exchange of data means that you can obtain the whole database, just maintain your own records or do a combination of the two. The fact that recorders are entering their own data means that the load is shared and this means that the problems experienced in the past with a lack of response from County Recorders should be just that – a thing of the past! In fairness though, this has been due to a lack of time – imagine having thousands of records to enter, assess and sort each year!

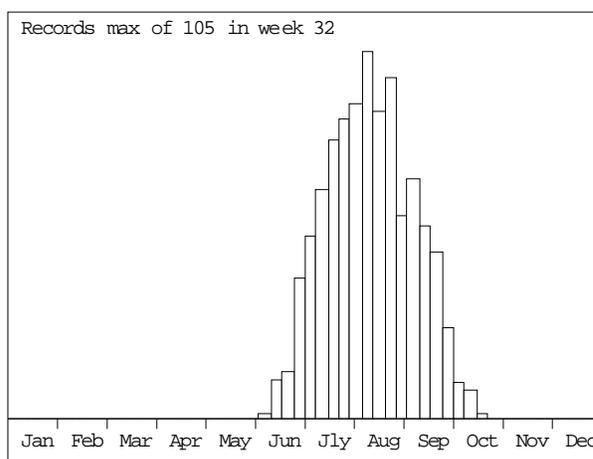
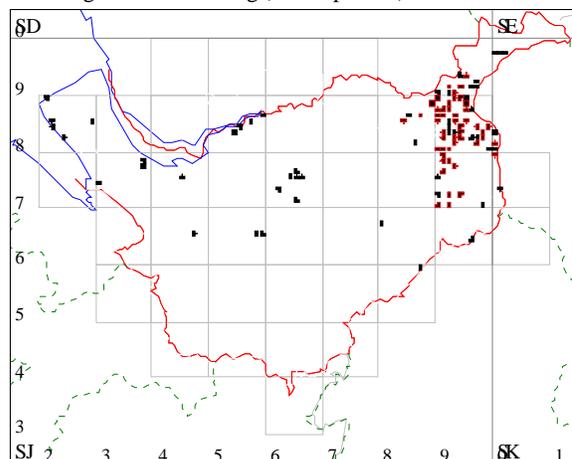
The quality of the maps is excellent and to top it all, the program is only £10 (with free upgrades off the website). Please take the time to have a look at this option as it will not only help ‘the cause’ but will also mean that your own data will be both more easily entered and the retrieval of reports and summaries will be made so much easier.

Further details can be obtained from the website www.mapmate.co.uk or you can send a cheque or P.O. for £10 (payable to Teknica Ltd.) to: Teknica Limited, The White House, Montacute Road, Stoke Sub-Hamdon, Somerset, TA14 6UQ: Remember to enclose your Name and Delivery Address.

Finally, please do not take this ‘hard selling’ of Mapmate to mean that records not in this form are of any less value. It is essential that all records are sent in and I assure you they will all be permanent and

valued additions to the data already to hand.

2107 Large Yellow Underwing (*Noctua pronuba*)



Example of a Map created automatically by Mapmate Dots are updated when records are entered and by clicking on the dots you can trace the records back and obtain details retrospectively.

Example of a 'periodicity graph' created by Mapmate from records on the system. This again updates itself from the records as they are added.

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>
- **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 for Cheshire (VC58) should preferably be submitted to the Cheshire Moth Group Data Officer, Shane Farrell or via snail mail at 15 Westover, Romiley, Stockport, Cheshire SK6 3ER
- Records of macro moths in Cheshire can also be sent to Steve McWilliam at:
stevemc@consult-eco.ndirect.co.uk
- Records of micros in Cheshire can also be sent to Steve Hind at:
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
- Submission of all biological records can be made to **rECOrd** at:

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 or via snail mail at Paul M Hill Natural History Services, 1 Clive Cottage, 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 or by snail-mail at 16 Bramhalls Park, Anderton, Northwich, Cheshire, CW9 6AH