



Lilac Beauty, Sherborne St John (25th June 2010) © Nick Montegriffo

NUMBER 12 - July 2010

Wallblings...

Welcome to the 12th Hantsmoths newsletter, as usual containing a round up of the mothing scene across the counties of Hampshire and Isle of Wight during June. It was a much warmer month, which saw many interesting catches across the two counties, and I hope we've caught the main events. As ever, please let me know if there are any errors or major omissions.

In July's edition I plan to include a review of Hampshire Moth Weekend which took place on 2nd to 4th July, and a round-up of the social evening organised by Glynne Evans at the Testside Lakes complex in Leckford. It may be subject to a slight delay in coming out though as I'm away in France for two weekends in August. Please keep the news coming in, either to me directly at mike AT hantsmoths.org.uk, or via the Hantsmoths yahoo group. It

Until the next time,

Good mothing!

Mike



Dave's June 2010 Weather Review

The theme of high pressure continued in June, as it has done for most of this year. It has already been well publicised that this has been the driest start to a year for 80 years for parts of the UK and June was very dry down here with rainfall amounts at around 50% of normal. The location of high pressure was the variable factor affecting our conditions. It didn't bring much heat until the Azores High, a weather feature that extends towards the UK in many summers, took hold in the latter half. The result is to push warm moist air in from the tropical Atlantic on south-westerly winds and that manifested itself in a prolonged spell of good temperatures, locally reaching at least 24°C each day from the 21st to the month end. However, the warmest day for me was the 5th in a brief warm spell when temperatures reached 28°C. As for night temperatures, there were a number of cool ones, as can often be the case with clear skies. The coldest was overnight on the 19th/20th when it fell to a very chilly 5.4°C.

With thanks to Philip Eden at:-

<http://climate-uk.com/>

Dave Owen



JUNE 2010 SUMMARY

Please note that in accordance with the usual convention where referring to overnight light-trapping the evening date not the morning date is used.

Although June started cool, a plume of warm air around the 5th/6th resulted in a few interesting sightings, while more consistently warm weather in the final third of the month produced some good species counts, especially in the north of the county. Several notable species seem to have a good month, with widespread reports of Satin Lutestring *Tetheella fluctuosa*, Festoon *Apoda limacodes*, Great Oak Beauty *Hypomecis roboraria*, Brussels Lace *Cleorodes lichenaria*, Rosy Marbled *Elaphria venustula*, Cream-bordered Green Pea *Earias clorana*, Rosy Wave *Scopula emutaria* and Lilac Beauty *Apeira syringaria*.

Noteworthy records in the first two thirds of the month included the following:

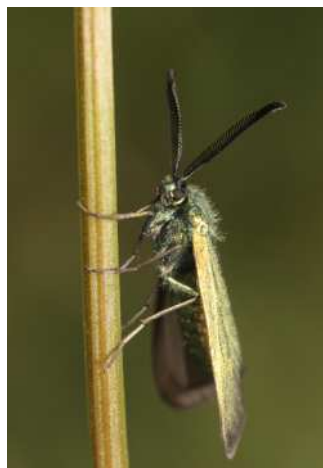
- Dinky Mocha *Cyclophora pendularia* at Brockenhurst on the 3rd (RBW - right);
- Lunar Yellow Underwing *Noctua orbona* at Blashford on the 5th (RAC - below);
- *Phtheochroa sodaliana* and *Pammene germmana* at Sherborne St John on the 5th (NJM);
- Gem *Orthonama obstipata*, plus six Silver Y *Autographa gamma*, at Normandy Farm on the 6th (PRD);
 - Two Scarce Merveille du Jour *Dichonia aprilina* and Buttoned Snout *Hypena rostralis* at Brockenhurst on the 6th (RBW);
 - *Lobesia reliquana* and *Pammene albuginana* (new 10km record) at Ashurst on the 6th (KG);
 - *Telechrysis tripuncta* at Blashford on the 8th (RAC);
 - *Agonopterix yeatiana* in Basingstoke on 4th (MJW) - first site record;
 - *Enarmonia formosana* (new 10km record) at



Sherborne St John on the 9th (NJM);

- Little Thorn *Cepphis advenaria* continued its good 2010 with another in Brockenhurst on 14th (RBW);
- *Platyedra subcinerea* and *Argyresthia pygmaeola* at Stubbington on the 17th (DPH).

MJW had a busy first half of the month, first trapping at Foxlease Meadows, near Fleet on 3rd (with GJD/Elliott Fairs/Dave Jewsbury), the night returning 56 spp on a cool night, including *Glyphipterix forsterella*, a 3rd record for North Hampshire (right), Figure of Eighty



Tethea ocellaris, Small Dotted Buff *Photodes minima* and a Silver Hook *Deltote uncula*. Figure of Eighty is a species seemingly having a reasonable year, with others in



Basingstoke on 4th and 30th. A visit to the northern part of Odiham Common on a baking June 4th was a personal highlight of the year, with a minimum of 192 Forester *Adscita statices* (left) counted, and no less spectacular were the numbers of Burnet Companion *Euclidia glyphica*.

An impromptu field trip for a couple of hours with JRL and IRT on 5th while the rest of the family enjoyed the environs of Portchester Castle saw a good list of some 30+ lepidoptera species, including *Biselachista scirpi*, *Coleophora follicularis*, *inulae* and *spinella*, and *Bactra robustana* was frequent in the rushy ditches bordering the seawall. That evening, over 120 species were recorded in Morgaston Wood to two lights, including *Argyresthia laevigatella*, *Assara terebrella*, *Phalonidia manniana* and *Bucculatrix cidarella*, all of which were new 10km records. Good numbers of Orange Moth *Angerona prunaria*, Map-winged Swift *Hepialus fusconebulosa* and *Cryptoblades bistriga*, the latter one of 33 new site records; however *Tortrix viridana* was notable by its absence. When MJW/NJM re-trapped the same area one week later on 12th, the latter was abundant - a mass emergence had obviously been triggered in a short period of time, by far the commonest of 69 species recorded on the night.

Also on 12th, TJN took the photo shown right of a White-barred Clearwing *Synanthedon sphecoformis* coming to pheromone lure on Silchester Common. In Sholing, Red-belted Clearwing *Synanthedon myopaeformis* was recorded at MYO on three occasions during the month, and Yellow-legged Clearwing *S. vespiformis* was attracted to VES in Sholing on 17th, and to the same lure, two Orange-tailed Clearwing *S. andrenaeformis* were seen on 27th; at Swanwick HIWWT NR, the exceptional total of 60 Six-belted Clearwings *Bembecia ichneumoniformis* were seen coming to API on the 26th (ARC). A further seven Orange-tailed Clearwing were recorded at VES in Sherborne St John on the 28th (NJM).



With temperatures increasing from the 20th until the end of the month following several very unproductive nights, notable records in the final third of the month included the following:

- Grass Rivulet *Perizoma albulata* at Wickham on 21st (JRDS);
- *Grapholita caecana* at Sherborne St John on 21st, the first for vc12 (NJM - below left);
- *Elachista triatomea* (right) on Portsdown Hill on 21st (SB);
- *Eana osseana* (below right) in Southsea on 23rd (IRT);





- *Grapholita lobarzewskii* and Juniper Webber *Dichomeris marginella* at Stubbington on the 25th (DPH);
- Mathews Wainscot *Mythimna favicolor* at Normandy Farm on the 25th (PRD);
- Channel Islands Pug *Eupithecia ultimaria* at Sholing, Southampton on the 26th (ARC);
- *Opostega salaciella* and *Pammene albuginana* at Ashurst on the 26th (KG);
- *Donacaula forficella* and three Blue-bordered Carpet *Plemyria rubiginata* at Stubbington on the 27th (DPH);
- *Assara terebrella* and *Ptycholomoides aeriferanus* at Grayshott on the 28th (RTu);
- Double Line *Mythimna turca* at Brockenhurst on the 29th (RBW); and
- *Cosmopterix orichalcea* at Ashurst on the 29th (KG - right).



On 20th, a trip to the local junior school's annual fete in Oakley was enriched by finding a Iron Prominent larva feeding on silver birch in the playground (MJW - right)

On the 26th and 27th, further sightings of Shoulder-striped Clover were made in the northern New Forest, at the same site as they were recorded last year (various observers - example shown below © TJN). **While detailed records are requested of sightings for the county database, it would be appreciated if localities are not publicised, due to the vulnerability of this specialist species to collecting pressure.**



Things really kicked off around Basingstoke on the 24th, when in excess of 200 species were recorded to eleven lights in Pamber Forest (GJD et al). Highlights included 40+ Common Fan-foot *Pechipogo strigilata*, 30+ Bilberry Pug *Rhinoprora debiliata*, 20+ Lead-coloured Pug *Eupithecia plumbeolata*, 40+ Great Oak Beauty *Hypomecis roboraria* and many hundreds of Blotched Emerald *Comibaena bajularia*. The rarest moth was the first North Hampshire (VC12) record of the psychid *Epichnopteryx plumella* (shown right © MJW).



GCE ran a trap near Harewood Forest on 24th and recorded over 30 Common Fan-foot, and more exceptionally, one near Stockbridhge Common the following day - this species is evidently having a good year where it occurs.



Nearby at Sherborne St John (NJM), on a slightly smaller scale, 124 species at one light on the 25th, including Blue-bordered Carpet (shown right), Scallop Shell *Rheumaptera undulata*,



Sloe Pug *Rhinoprora chloerata*, (shown above left), *Hedya salicella*, *Phtheochroa sodaliana*, and 50+ *Aleimma loeflingiana*; the latter was three times the previous maximum for this species at this site, and across the county *loeflingiana* was appearing to have an exceptional year.



Back at Pamber Forest on the 26th, no repeat capture of any Common Fan-foot, but much of interest, including *Apotomis sauciana* (very few previous vc12 records), *Pseudosciaphila branderiana*



(shown above left © MJW), *Cydia coniferana* (previously widespread in north-east Hampshire, but with very few recent vc12 records - shown above right © NJM), *Choristoneura hebenstreitella*, Beautiful Snout *Hypena crassalis*, Great Oak Beauty, Lead-coloured Pug, Maple Pug *Eupithecia inturbata*, Shaded Pug *E. subumbrata*, Bilberry Pug (left © MJW) and Small Black Arches *Meganola strigula* (GJD, MJW, NJM). At Sherborne St John on

the 29th, much of the interest centred on micros, with three new species for the garden: *Eudonia delunella*, *Archips crataegana*, *Argyresthia pruniella* and *Ethmia dodecea* (NJM).

The month closed with another record of Small Ranunculus *Hecatera dysodea*, the fourth for the county, in Cheriton for Dave Shute on 29th (right). It will be a surprise if this isn't a common insect across Hampshire in five or so years' time. Trapping near Leckford on 29th, GCE was surprised to find no less than 38 Small Elephants *Deilephila porcellus* in one trap.



Nick Montegriffo / Mike Wall



FAREHAM MOTH GROUP JUNE OUTINGS

During June the group made three of the four Fridays with between three and five members present. The third Friday saw three of us arrive at Hen Wood only to be rained off at that precise hour (the only time we

have seen any appreciable rain this month!!) and by the time we arrived home it had practically dried up. However the other three dates provided us with plenty of interest.

Friday 4th June: The first week KC, RJD, DPH, MLO and KW attended Hen Wood nr West Meon for what was then the best night of the year so far with in excess of 500 moths of 87 species. Highlights included a Map-winged Swift, which seems to be relatively scarce in our area, *Incurvaria praelatella*, Satin Lutestring *Tetheella fluctuosa*, four Rivulet *Perizoma affinitata* and two Brown Rustic *Rusina ferruginea*.

Other sightings included a minimum of 60 Orange Footman *Eilema sororcula* and 50+ Clay Triple-lines *Cyclophora linearia* among the usual woodland fare at this time of year.

Friday 11th June: This week KC, RJD, MLO and KW visited Whitelands Wood, a privately owned woodland near Butser Hill with five lamps with increased numbers again consisting of approximately 750+ moths of 122 species.

Highlights included *Pammene herrichiana*, *Udea ferrugalis*, *Plutella xylostella*, two Red-necked Footman *Atolmis rubricollis*, Shark *Cucullia umbratica*, 10 Brown Rustic, Rosy Marbled *Elaphria venustula*, and a good collection of hawk-moths: Privet *Sphinx ligustri*, Poplar *Laothoe populi*, Elephant *Deilephila elpenor*, Lime *Mimas tiliae* and Small Elephant.

Others included two pristine Green Arches *Anaplectoides prasina*, five Light Brocade *Lacanobia w-latinum* and six Silver Y.

Other insects included the beautifully marked longhorn beetle *Pogonocherus hispidulus*

Friday 18th June: Rained off.

Friday 25th June: This week saw a return to Hen Wood by KC, RJD, DPH and KW with three lamps. The weather was superb as was the catch with easily in excess of 750 moths of 138 species with still heavy activity at shut down approximately 0300.

Highlights included *Epinotia demarniana*, *Synaphe punctalis*, Satin Lutestring, Mocha *Cyclophora annularia*, Ruddy Carpet *Catarhoe rubidata*, Grass Rivulet *Perizoma albulata*, Haworth's Pug *Eupithecia haworthiata*, Shaded Pug *E. subumbrata*, Great Oak Beauty, Green and Grey Arches *Polia nebulosa* and Double Lobed *Apamea ophiogramma*. Again in excess of 30 Clay Triple Lines among the more usual fare.

Other insects included a Lesser Stag Beetle *Dorcus parallelipedus*, Dusky Cockroach *Ectobius lapponicus* and Dark Bush Cricket *Pholidoptera griseoptera*.

FUNTLEY MOTHS IN JUNE

Being of idle hands for a few hours I thought I would do a little exercise with my June results.

I live on the edge of Fareham, 100metres north of the M27 motorway in the village of Funtley. The rear of the property is gardens backing onto the estate built upon the old brickworks ground. To the front are open fields running parallel to the motorway (soon to be filled with houses from the proposed new development in 2016).

I use a 125W MV Robinson trap and a 40W actinic Skinner trap in next doors garden most of the time apart from Garden Moth Survey night when only the Robinson is used.

During June I ran both traps 19 nights and one trap on a further four nights, making 23 nights total. I caught 4395 moths of 263 species (79 micros, 29 Pyrales, 2 Plumes and 153 macros). For this garden it averages 191 moths per night catch which for this year is not too bad although many others will no doubt be much better.

Among the micros of note were *Throdia citrana*, *Epinotia rubiginosana* on 5th, *Coleophora anatipennella* on 16th, *Glyphipterex thrasenella* on 17th, *Pammene germana*, *Stigmella salicis*, *Recurvaria leucateella* and *Caloptilia populetorum* on 21st. *Dichromis marginella* on 25th, *Pleurota bicostella* on 28th.

Macros included Bordered White *Bupalus piniaria* (unusual here) on 1st and 24th, Mullein Wave *Scopula marginepunctata* 12th, both forms of Burnished Brass *Diachrysis chrysitis* (f. *juncta* 21st and f. *aurea* on 30th), Rosy Marbled, Privet Hawkmoth and Vapourer *Orgyia antiqua* on 24th, Varied Coronet *Hadena compta* and Lilac Beauty 25th, and Pine Hawk-moth *Hyloicus pinastri* on 30th.

Pyralids included *Synaphe punctalis* and European corn-borer *Ostrinia nubilalis* on 30th.

Maurice Opie



Butterflies

The first Marbled White *Melanargia galathea* made its appearance on 18 June at Portsdown Hill (TD). On the following day the first sightings of Dark Green Fritillary *Argynnis aglaja* were made at Martin Down and in the new Forest. Here the Silver-studded Blue *Plebejus argus* was having a very good year and Small Tortoiseshell *Aglais urticae* was also doing well - a welcome return from several years at a very low ebb.

Four White-letter Hairstreaks *Satyrion w-album* were noted in the elms at IBM Cosham on 21 June (TD) and White Admiral *Limenitis camilla* was seen at Alice Holt Forest (RP) on the same day. Silver-washed Fritillary *Argynnis paphia* and White Admiral continue to be seen in very good numbers up till the present time (19 July).



Silver-washed Fritillary (© AT)



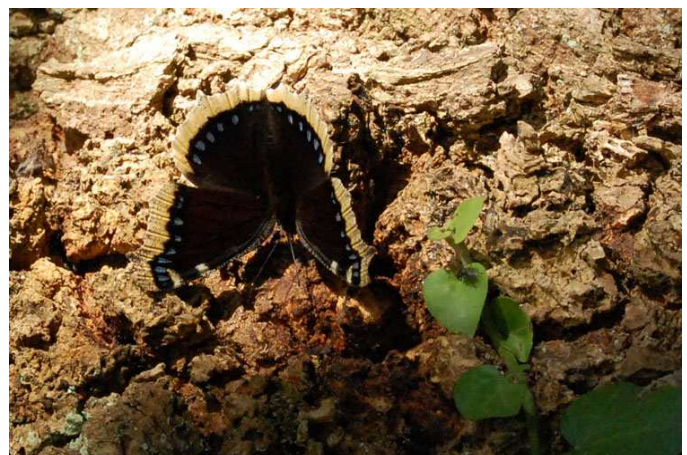
On 1st July ACM reported the first Grayling *Hipparchia semele* at Browdown North, Gosport, Chalkhill Blue *Lysandra coridon* were seen on the two BC reserves at Magdalen Hill Down and Yew Hill (PDF, BF) and the first of a very good numbers of Purple Emperor *Apatura iris* were seen at Alice Holt (RSy).

Purple Emperor (© RCr)

Another interesting observation made at this time, also in Alice Holt was of a Long-tailed Blue *Lampides boeticus* nectaring on bramble (PO).

While watching Dark Green Fritillary on the 6th nectaring on Musk Thistles on High Down, loW a Hummingbird Hawk-moth *Macroglossum stellatarum* was seen doing the same. Many more were noted in our area over the next couple of weeks.

The origin of a Glanville Fritillary *Melitaea cinxia* (below left) seen by SJ at Bentley Station Meadow BC reserve on 9th is not known, and neither is the Camberwell Beauty *Nymphalis antiopa* seen on the outskirts of Ringwood on 12th (BS - below right).



Tim Norriss



Lobster Moths



For the past 30 years I have read, and re-read, the description in South of rearing Lobster Moth *Stauropus fagi* larvae. Finally, this year, I had a chance to see things for myself. As you might expect from South, broadly speaking the descriptions are spot-on. Towards the end of May, TJN very kindly gave me a female Lobster Moth and she laid eggs the following night.

I painstakingly separated each one (they were mostly laid on muslin) and stuck them (with spit) onto pieces of paper and placed them in separate

pots - Tim had warned me about the possibility of cannibalism in their early stages. After 8 days the eggs began to acquire a purplish patch that covered roughly a quarter of their surface at first; this gradually increased in size and intensity and three days later, with a bit of imagination, the outline of the larva inside could be seen



using intense LED backlighting. On day 11 the eggs hatched. Each larva ate its own egg shell and did very little apart from wander occasionally for 2-3 days (depending on individual). They then rested for a day and then moulted, after which they began to 'graze' on the cuticle of the beech leaves on which they had been placed. If agitated or disturbed they behaved exactly like an ant - in fact the tail-end looked more 'ant-like' than the front.

After a week or so they moulted again and the 2nd instar looked and behaved rather like the first, except that it began eating whole leaves.

A week or so later, they moulted again, and became more like miniature mature larvae: they were much less ant-like and if agitated behaved like enraged spiders, waving the second and third pair of true legs around while the



first pair were presented as would-be fangs.

Thanks again to Tim for allowing me the privilege of rearing these fine creatures. A life's ambition achieved!

Paul Sterry

(all photos © PS)



Postscript

The moth was caught at Rotherlands LNR, Petersfield and is the first female Lobster that I ever recall seeing although males come to light in some numbers. Readers may be interested in the following musings from the past:

Vere Temple wrote "To combat the ichneumon menace, the caterpillar of the Lobster Moth has devised an effectual weapon. It ejects in the face of its enemy a spray of formic acid which is death to the fly and would, I think, blind the eyes of a bird. This caterpillar certainly looks capable of anything. It is a most evil-looking object, humped, wrinkled, with long waving forelegs resembling those of a crustacean whose name it bears."

And a further fascinating insight comes from P.B.M Allen in *A Moth Hunter's Gossip*. "Lobsters are kittle cattle. You never know where they are going to turn up.... In the New Forest I found him in one beech-wood and not in another a mile away. I now live in a country as *fagi* ought to like: but for years he refused to visit me.... I once found a female on a telegraph pole in June, but she had laid all her eggs before I came on the scene and departed this life a sadly bedraggled old lady.

And this reminds me that if you ever should be so fortunate as to find a freshly emerged female *fagi* roosting high out of your reach on a telegraph pole, you had best make for the nearest telephone box and summon the Post Office engineers. For telegraph poles are the property of His Majesty's Post Office, and on no account must you saw one down in order to obtain a moth. You must quote the number of the pole, which you will find on small metal plate affixed to it, and you must use all your ingenuity to get the engineers there, with their motor van and ladders, as quickly as possible. When they arrive, you must begin playing ostentatiously with half-crowns. And if you have a persuasive tongue, and a sufficiency of half-crowns, you *may* go on your way with a female *fagi* in your possession.... *Fagi* worried the old entomologists a good deal. Aldrovandus thought he was half spider. Muffet (1634) described him as a worm of marvellous shape and put him in the same class as the devil's coach-horse beetle....

Yet *fagi* larvae do not appeal to me very much, and I doubt if they appeal greatly to anybody, save as curiosities. They are easy to rear, if you can keep them from killing each other, but they are too grotesque to be interesting. There is too much of the creepy-crawly about them for my liking, and I cannot imagine any boy making a pet of them. He is, in fact an ugly beast and not sufficiently like a caterpillar to inspire affection. One breeds him once, for the experience and to obtain a series. One may possibly breed him twice to obtain melanic forms. But I never heard of anybody breeding *fagi* for the fun of it.

He is a silly insect too. His larva has evolved, for his youth, a resemblance to an ant which must assure him protection from many insect predators. In his last instar he abandons procrystis for anticrystis, becoming a large and fearsome spider when alarmed. Yet he goes and pupates in the mops absurd way - between two dead leaves lying at the foot of the tree, a prey to every wandering mouse and insect-eating bird of the woodlands. No wonder he is always rather a scarce moth.... I have actually made a movement to flick a baby *fagi* from the edge of a leaf, thinking that *formica* had found a way into the cage. So if in July, when you are searching the lower branches of oak or beech, you see an ant standing motionless on a leaf or leaf-stalk, look twice."

Tim Norriss



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RJD	Richard Dickson	MP	Maurice Pugh
TD	Tim Doran	JRDS	John Shillitoe
PRD	Pete Durnell	BS	Ben Sparks
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PDF	Patrick Fleet	AT	Alan Thornbury
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And with thanks to everyone who posts on the Hantsmoths Yahoogroup and uses the Hantsmoths and BC branch websites!

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Contributions and ideas for articles are always welcome. I would also like to be made aware of any errors and omissions for correction.

For more information on moth recording in Hampshire, please contact the county moth recorders, either Tim Norriss (tim@kitsmail.com) (Macros) or myself (micros), or see www.hantsmoths.org.uk/recording.htm

Mike

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