



MONMOUTHSHIRE MOTH & BUTTERFLY GROUP

NEWSLETTER No 155 August 2019.

A monthly newsletter covering

Gwent and Monmouthshire Vice County 35

Editor: Martin Anthoney

Recent Highlights – August

Gypsy Moth (*Lymantria dispar*)



A worn male Gypsy Moth (*Lymantria dispar*) which came to Keith Jones' light trap at Undy on the night of 19th August was a new species, number 586, for the VC35 macro moth list and the third Welsh record.

In mainland Europe the species can reach pest proportions, feeding on many deciduous trees and bushes, and accidental introductions, possibly as eggs, have produced breeding populations in the London area this century. The original British sub-species was a fen resident but became extinct in 1907.

Immigration from continental populations is well known, almost entirely made up of male specimens since the females do not normally fly. A solitary, worn, male immigrant such as this individual offers negligible threat as a pest.

*Gypsy Moth (*Lymantria dispar*)*

(Keith Jones)

Bedstraw Hawk (*Hyles gallii*)

Following the third county record of Bedstraw Hawk on 31st July, when an individual came to the light trap of Kevin Hewitt at Blackwood (see the July newsletter no 154) a fourth county specimen came to light at Sam Bosanquet's Dingestow trap four days later on 4th August. An immigrant, Bedstraw Hawk is resident in southern France and eastwards throughout most of Europe north to Denmark and Scandinavia.

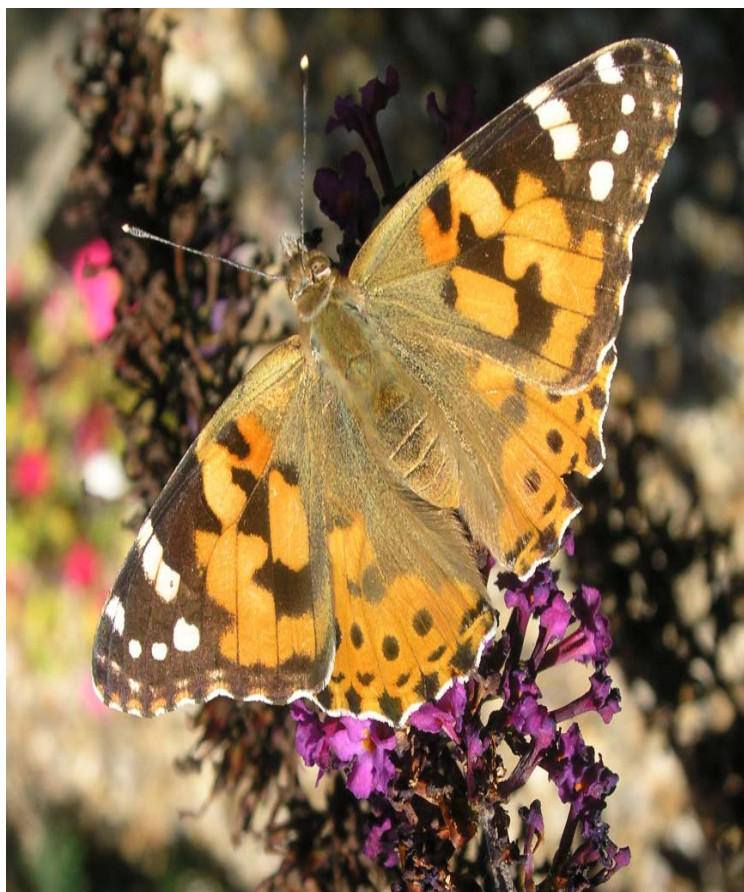
*Bedstraw Hawk
(*Hyles gallii*)
(Sam Bosanquet)*



Painted Lady Bonanza

In its best year since the “Painted Lady summer” of 2009, August 2019 has seen a memorable influx of the Painted Lady butterfly (*Vanessa cardui*). Congregating particularly around small clusters of flowering buddleia bushes, 154 records submitted so far for Gwent in August produced a total count of 1172 individuals. The highest counts so far have been

119 Painted Ladies at Penhow Quarry on 26 th August	(Nick Felstead)
105 at Rogiet Country Park on 13 th August	(Martin Anthoney and Roger James)
98 at MoD Caerwent on 28 th August	(Martin Anthoney and Roger James)
87 at Penllwyn Grassland, Pontllanfraith on 8 th August	(Martin Anthoney and Roger James)
50 at Penallt on 13 th August	(Ian Rabjohns).



Painted Lady
(*Vanessa cardui*)

The condition of the butterflies ranged from very fresh (the majority) to worn, suggesting there is a mixture of new migrants and the offspring of earlier migrants. Results from previous months confirm earlier, smaller migrations in June that might have bred to produce the August population.

2019 months v Painted Lady counts in Gwent

<i>Month</i>	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug
<i>Count</i>	1	1	1	0	54	31	1172

The pattern is confirmed by the UK-wide Big Butterfly Count, run by Butterfly Conservation from 19th July to 11th August, where Painted Lady was the commonest species in all the UK countries, with more than double the count of the second commonest butterfly, the Peacock.

Big Butterfly Count 2019 Results		Abundance	% change from 2018
1	Painted Lady	420,841	2498%
2	Peacock	207,814	235%
3	Small White	179,715	-42%
4	Gatekeeper	161,987	95%
5	Large White	138,671	-42%
6	Meadow Brown	110,858	87%
7	Red Admiral	81,146	138%

Other Highlights

The first three weeks of August were predominantly bright and showery, and a few depressions also brought bouts of wet and windy weather. It turned hot and sunny from the 23rd to 27th over the bank holiday, but the last few days were much cooler with rain at times. The mean temperature, rainfall and sunshine were all a little above average for the month.

24 species of butterfly were recorded during August (for comparison, Aug 2018 was 23 and Aug 2017 22 species). As mentioned above, Painted Lady was the predominant species, with Large White also common. Only 1 Clouded Yellow immigrant has been reported.

220 species of macromoth were recorded in August (compared to 230 in Aug 2018, 214 in 2017 and 241 in 2016), Even more abundant than usual, Large Yellow Underwing dominated light trap catches to the point of becoming a pest! The only migrants were 1 Bedstraw Hawk, 7 Dark Sword-grass and 1 Vestal

1 st Aug	First of five Four-spotted Footman during August at Tintern	(Hazel Mitchell)
	Maple Pug at Abergavenny	(Andrew and Janet Cormack)
2 nd Aug	Broom Moth and Narrow-winged Pug to light at Blackwood	(Kevin Hewitt)
	Satin Lutestring and second generation Clay Triple-lines to light at Catbrook.	(Richard Clayton)
	Dark Spectacle at Tintern. The first of 10 at this site during August.	(Hazel Mitchell)
	Dusky Sallow at Llandogo	(Gail Reynolds)
	Ear Moth, Straw Underwing to light at MoD Caerwent	(Martin Anthoney and Roger James)
	Silver-washed Fritillary at MoD Caerwent.	(Martin Anthoney and Roger James)
	Silky Wainscot at Caerleon	(Sheila Dupé)
3 rd Aug	Three Jersey Tiger to light at Haisbro Avenue, Caerleon. The first record of more than one Jersey Tiger in the same night.	(Sheila Dupé)
	Olive and Broad-barred White moths to light at Melbourne Way, Newport	(Roger James)
	Dingy Shell at Tintern	(Hazel Mitchell)
	Ear Moth agg to light at Hendre (Great Crwys)	(Wendy Tyler-Batt)
	Narrow-winged Pug to light at Risca	(Martin Anthoney)
4 th Aug	Second Bedstraw Hawk moth of 2019, this time to light at Dingestow, four days after one was recorded at Blackwood	(Sam Bosanquet)
	Clouded Magpie to light at Tintern. For some reason, records of this species have been thin on the ground this year. Also, Scalloped Hook-tip and the first of five second-generation Mocha moths at this site during August	(Hazel Mitchell)
	4 Sharp-angled Carpet, the first of 19 during August, at Penallt	(Stephanie Tyler)
	Small Ranunculus larvae on prickly lettuce in Newport: 13 in Nash Road, 61 on the west bank of the Usk cycle path and 8 near Sainsbury's supermarket.	(Kevin Dupé)

The first of 11 Southern Wainscot in August at Newport Wetlands. (Kevin Dupé)
Purple Hairstreak butterfly near Cwmbran Dowlais Brook (Bob Roome)

5th Aug A Vestal immigrant and Bordered Beauty to light at Tintern. Also a White Admiral butterfly (Hazel Mitchell)
Leopard Moth, Sharp-angled Peacock and second generation Dog's Tooth to light at
Melbourne Way, Newport (Roger James)

6th Aug Brown-line Bright-eye at ERC, Ebbw Vale (Jane Corey)
46 Small Ranunculus larvae near the M48, Chepstow. (Nick Felstead)
Toadflax Brocade to light at Risca, a new site for this spreading species (Martin Anthony)
The first of 20 Silver-washed Fritillaries during August at Llandogo (Simon Phipps)

7th Aug First Feathered Gothic of the season at Risca (Martin Anthony)
Sharp-angled Peacock at Newport Wetlands. (Kevin Dupé)
Remarkably, an adult Orange-tip butterfly at Llandogo. Presumably a second generation
(Juliette Phipps)

12th Aug Latticed Heath at Newport Wetlands, Uskmouth (Kevin Dupé)

14th Aug Oblique Carpet to light at Newport Wetlands (Kevin Dupé)

15th Aug Double Kidney moth to light at Blackwood (Kevin Hewitt)

Heath Rustic to light at Risca (Martin Anthony)

17th Aug Lesser-spotted Pinion to light at Tintern. Much less common than its close relative, the
Lunar-spotted Pinion (Hazel Mitchell)



Lesser-spotted Pinion (Hazel Mitchell)



Heath Rustic

Pale Eggar to light at Hendre (Great Crwys) with another 3 on 28th Aug. (Wendy Tyler-Batt)

18 th Aug	Blomer's Rivulet to light at Llandogo	(Simon Phipps)
23 rd Aug	Nutmeg to light at Blackwood	(Kevin Hewitt)
	2 Oak Lutestring at Crumbland Plantation, Llanishen	(Nick Felstead)
24 th Aug	Centre-barred Sallow, Brindled Green, Cypress Pug to light at Melbourne Way, Newport	(Roger James)
25 th Aug	Adult Small Ranunculus at Chepstow	(Nick Felstead)
	Toadflax Brocade caterpillar at Caerleon	(John Sorrell)



Toadflax Brocade larva
(John Sorrell)



Small Ranunculus larva
on prickly lettuce



Brown-tail larvae

26 th Aug	Four-spotted Footman to light at Risca	(Martin Anthony)
	Jersey Tiger to light at Caerleon	(Chris Jones)
	Immigrant Clouded Yellow butterfly at Sluice Farm, Wentloog. The only record so far this year.	(Dave Gilmore)

- 27th Aug Approximately 100 larval webs of the Brown-tail moth near the Second Severn Crossing. The webs extended along the sea wall and concrete track for approx. 500 metres westwards from the sea wall, although one or two webs were later found on bramble inland on the approach to the sea wall. The webs were very dense in places and exclusively on bramble, whose leaves had died around the webs. (Chris Hatch and Colin Titcombe)
- Cloaked Carpet to light at Tintern (Hazel Mitchell)
- First Red Underwing of the season at Caerleon (Chris Jones)
- 28th Aug Mocha to light at Hendre (Great Crwys) (Wendy Tyler-Batt)
- 29th Aug First Frosted Orange of the season at Wonastow (Heather Colls)
- Hedge Rustic to light at Risca (Martin Anthony)
- 30th Aug Mullein Wave at Llandevenny (Nick Felstead)
- 31st Aug Anomalous moth to light at Buckle Wood (Angidy Valley). Also 18 Oak Lutestring (Nick Felstead)
- Another Anomalous at Risca (Martin Anthony)



Mullein Wave



Oak Lutestring

Dates for your Diary 2019

26th-28th September National Moth Night 2019. Theme is *Migrants*. <http://www.mothnight.info/>

Two moth trapping events have been arranged:

Friday 27 September – meet at the Blaenavon World Heritage Centre car park at 8.00 pm for moth trapping at Garn Lakes.

Saturday 28 September – Meet at the layby in Warwick Road, Brynmawr, NP23 4HW at 8.00 pm for moth trapping at Parc Nant-y-Waun

For details of both meetings, contact: Nicholas Beswick 07776 252998

Saturday 19th Oct

Members Day and AGM of Butterfly Conservation South Wales Branch,



**Butterfly
Conservation**

South Wales Branch Members Day

**Saturday 19th October 2019 at Kenfig NNR Visitors Centre
Kenfig, Bridgend CF33 4PT**

10.30am to 4pm; non-members welcome.

Programme

10:30 Tea or coffee, biscuits

10.55 Welcome & introduction to the day

Norman Lowe

11.00 The new macro-moth Atlas

George Tordoff

11:45 Leafminers and Casebearers – the fascinating lives of the smallest of moths
Andy and Melissa Banthorpe

12.30 A demonstration of Aderyn for butterfly and moth recorders

Dave Slade

13.15 to 14.00 Lunch Break.

Bring your own food or there are outlets within 5 minutes' drive. Teas/coffees will be available at centre.

14:00 Branch AGM, including brief reports.

14.15 All the Moor Butterflies - conserving rare fritillaries in the South-West of England
Simon Phelps

15.00 Tea break

15.15 50 years of Butterfly Conservation

Russel Hobson

End 16.00 approx.

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