



MONMOUTHSHIRE MOTH & BUTTERFLY GROUP

NEWSLETTER No 161 April 2020.

A monthly newsletter covering

Gwent and Monmouthshire Vice County 35

Editor: Martin Anthoney

April 2020

.April 2020 was a remarkable month. Weatherwise, three weeks of largely unbroken sunshine were accompanied by clear, cooler nights. Only in the last four days of the month was there any significant rainfall. This produced one of the sunniest (130% above average), warmest (3⁰C above average) and driest (50% below average) Aprils on record.

The “lockdown” consequences of the coronavirus pandemic restricted recording to people’s homes, workplaces and immediate vicinities, with many important sites going unrecorded. Nevertheless, we are fortunate in having a core of regular recorders geographically spread over much of Gwent with a range of habitats. During April 2020, 27 recorders produced a list for Gwent of 17 butterfly species and 136 macro moth species. This compares well with the “normal” 2019 April figures of 15 butterflies and 125 macro moths and is the best April since 2011 (16 butterflies and 152 macro moths).

Most frequent among the butterflies were Peacock (241 records), Orange-tip (177), Speckled Wood (63), Green-veined White (56), Holly Blue (54), Small Tortoiseshell (44), Small White (38), Large White (34), Brimstone (32) and Comma (26). The unusually warm weather produced a number of very early first dates for the year among both butterflies and moths.

A selection of the more interesting April records follows:-

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|--------------------------|---|--------------------|
| 10 th January | A late, and surprising, record from early in the year. A Painted Lady butterfly was seen flying in the northern uplands Gaer Fort area above Partrishow | (Stephanie Tyler) |
| 1 st April | Satellite moth at Caerleon | (David Brooks) |
| 2 nd April | Speckled Wood butterfly at Cwmbran | (Bob Roome) |
| | Streamer moth to light at Catbrook | (Richard Clayton) |
| 4 th April | Muslin Moth at Chepstow | (Nick Felstead) |
| | Red Chestnut at Great Crwys, Hendre. | (Wendy Tyler-Batt) |
| 5 th April | Frosted Green to light at Tintern. With 33 Gwent specimens in April, a good season for this species. .Also a Yellow-barred Brindle. | (Hazel Mitchell) |
| | Red Sword-grass to light at Monmouth | (Malcolm Schuyll) |
| 6 th April | Dotted Chestnut, V-Pug and Oak Nycteoline to light at Melbourne Way, Newport.
The first of six Gwent Dotted Chestnut specimens during April. | (Roger James) |

7 th April	Oak Nycteoline at Great Crwys, Hendre. Oak-tree Pug to light at Abergavenny	(Wendy Tyler-Batt) (Andrew and Janet Cormack)
8 th April	Waved Umber and Common Carpet at Melbourne way, Newport Ruby Tiger at Caerleon Herald Moths at Caerleon (Chris Jones) and Whitson (Lance Hutchings) Lunar Marbled Browns at Penallt (plus Nut-tree Tussock) (Stephanie Tyler), Llandogo (Gail Reynolds) and Melbourne Way, Newport (Roger James)	(Roger James) (David Brooks)
9 th April	Chocolate Tip to light at Whitson. The first of nine Gwent specimens during April. Great Prominent to light at Tintern, the first of a remarkable 71 specimens at this site in April. Knot Grass at Haisbro Avenue, Newport. Lobster Moth, Square Spot and Least Black Arches to light at Penallt. 41 Gwent Least Black Arches specimens in April for another species having a bumper season. Small Phoenix at Catbrook	(Lance Hutchings) (Hazel Mitchell) (Sheila Dupé) (Ian Rabjohns) (Richard Clayton)
10 th April	Chamomile Shark and Mottled Pug to light at Melbourne Way, Newport Chinese Character to light at Whitson Dark Sword-grass to light at Great Crwys, Hendre. Mottled Grey and Heart and Dart at Llandogo	(Roger James) (Lance Hutchings) (Wendy Tyler-Batt) (Gail Reynolds)



Scarce Prominent (Hazel Mitchell)



Dotted Chestnut (Lance Hutchings)

- 11th April Dotted Chestnut, Swallow Prominent and Narrow-winged Pug at Penallt (Stephanie Tyler)
Maiden's Blush to light at Tintern (Hazel Mitchell)
- 12th April Scarce Prominent and Broom-tip moths to light at Tintern, (Hazel Mitchell)
with a second Broom-tip on 16th April .
Sallow Kitten at Melbourne Way, Newport. (Roger James)
- 14th April An early date for the first Common Blue of the year at Whitson. (Lance Hutchings)
Also a Silver Y
Emperor Moth flying by day at Blaenserchan. A second specimen was (Rupert Perkins)
obtained the following day using a pheromone lure.
Spectacle at Melbourne Way, Newport (Roger James)



Emperor Moth (Rupert Perkins)

- 15th April Day-flying Common Heath at Blaenserchan (Rupert Perkins)

- 16th April Buttoned Snout to light at Caerleon after hibernation. Also Pebble Hook-tip. (David Brooks)
 Iron Prominent at Great Crwys, Hendre. (Wendy Tyler-Batt)
 Lead-coloured Drab at Haisbro Avenue, Newport (Sheila Dupé)
 Mullein Moth to light at Melbourne Way, Newport (Roger James)
 Orange Footman to light at Tintern (Hazel Mitchell)
 Pale Prominent to light at Whitson (Lance Hutchings)
 Spruce Carpet at Llandogo (Gail Reynolds)
 Puss Moth at Newport Wetlands (Kevin Dupé)
- 19th April A very early Meadow Brown butterfly at Hendre (Wendy Tyler-Batt)
 Scorched Carpet at Llandogo (Gail Reynolds)
 Poplar Hawks to light at Catbrook (Richard Clayton) and
 at Whitson (plus a Pebble Prominent) (Lance Hutchings)
- 20th April Green Carpet at Llandogo (Gail Reynolds)
- 21st April Alder Kitten to light at Monmouth. Six Gwent specimens during April suggest a really early
 season for this species. (Malcolm Schuyll)
 Pale Tussock to light at Whitson (Lance Hutchings)
 Peppered Moth at Catbrook (Richard Clayton)



Alder Kitten (Hazel Mitchell)



Sallow Kitten

- 22nd April 10 Peacock, 4 Orange-tip, 3 Green-veined White, 1 Brimstone and 1 Speckled Wood at Cwm-fagor Plantation, Wolvesnewton (N) (Nick Felstead)
- Bright-line Brown-eye moths to light at Risca (Martin Anthoney), Caerleon (Chris Jones) and Whitson (Lance Hutchings)
- White Ermine, Dwarf Pug and Brown Silver-line at Penallt (Stephanie Tyler)
- Lychnis to light at Cwmbran (Bob Roome)
- Dotted Chestnut to light at Abergavenny. (Andrew and Janet Cormack)
- Lime Hawks to light at Abergavenny (Mike Hoult and Val Deisler) and at Melbourne Way, Newport (Roger James)
- Puss Moths at Chepstow (Nick Felstead) and Caerleon (David Brooks)
- 23rd April Buff Tip, Buff Ermine, Coxcomb Prominent and a Lime Hawk at Great Crwys, Hendre. (Wendy Tyler-Batt)
- and another Lime Hawk on the same night at Blackwood (Kevin Hewitt)
- Scalloped Hazel to light at Tintern (Hazel Mitchell)
- White-spotted Pugs at Undy (Keith Jones), Caerleon (Chris Jones) and Great Crwys, Hendre. (Wendy Tyler-Batt)
- 24th April Glaucous Shears to light at Monmouth (Malcolm Schuyt)
- Cinnabar moths at Whitson (Lance Hutchings) and at Caerleon (David Brooks)
- Also a Nutmeg and a Seraphim at Whitson and a Lime Hawk at Caerleon.
- Broken-barred Carpet to light at Rogerstone (Arthur Pitcher)
- Buff Tip to light at Pontypool (Rupert Perkins)
- Clouded Border at Penallt (Stephanie Tyler)
- Poplar Grey, Poplar Kitten and Tawny-barred Angle to light at Penallt (Ian Rabjohns)
- Flame Carpet to light at Catbrook (Richard Clayton)
- Little Thorn, Small White Wave and Peach Blossom to light at Tintern (Hazel Mitchell)

Little Thorn
(Hazel Mitchell)



Glaucous Shears
(Malcolm Schuy)



- 25th April The first Dingy Skipper butterfly of the season, 2 Small Copper and a surprising
12 Green Hairstreak at Blaenserchan. (Rupert Perkins)
- Alder Moth and Dotted Chestnut to light at Whitson. (Lance Hutchings)
Barred Umber to light at Tintern. (Hazel Mitchell)
- Cream Wave at Llandogo. (Gail Reynolds)
- Grey Dagger and Nutmeg at Melbourne Way, Newport (Roger James)
- Lime Hawks at Risca (Martin Anthoney) and Haisbro Avenue , Newport (Sheila Dupé).
- Nine Lime Hawks in 5 days during April must be a record early season!
- 26th April Glaucous Shears to light at Abergavenny (Mike Hault and Val Deisler)
- Golden-rod Pug at Abergavenny (Andrew and Janet Cormack),
with another the next night at Whitson (Lance Hutchings)
- Treble Lines at Caerleon (David Brooks)
- Grey Birch, Scorched Wing and Marbled Brown to light at Tintern (Hazel Mitchell)

27th April An immigrant Clouded Yellow butterfly at Llandogo. A surprisingly early date.
 (Gail Reynolds)

A Chamomile Shark to light at Whitson (Lance Hutchings)
 Grey Pine Carpet to light at Risca (Martin Anthony)
 Pale-shouldered Brocade at Catbrook (Richard Clayton)
 May Highflyer to light at Cwmbran (Bob Roome)
 Pale Mottled Willow at Caerleon (Chris Jones)
 White-pinion Spotted at Pentrepiod, Pontypool (Rupert Perkins)

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6th May Rupert Perkins photographed a Narrow-bordered Bee Hawk moth nectaring on the apple blossom in his front garden at Pentrepiod, Pontypool. Only the third Gwent record and the first since 1933.



Narrow-bordered Bee Hawk
 (Rupert Perkins)

Dates for your Diary 2020

27th – 29th August National Moth Night, with the theme *the various "Red" Underwings*

Saturday 24th October S Wales Branch of Butterfly Conservation annual Members' Day and AGM, Due to the closure of Kenfig NNR's visitor centre, the meeting will be at a new venue.

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