



MONMOUTHSHIRE MOTH & BUTTERFLY GROUP

NEWSLETTER No 162 May 2020.

A monthly newsletter covering

Gwent and Monmouthshire Vice County 35

Editor: Martin Anthoney

May 2020

May 2020 continued the fine weather of April, with record high sunshine, record low rainfall and temperatures well above average.

The “lockdown” consequences of the coronavirus pandemic continued to restrict recording, with a seemingly arbitrary limit of five miles from home being imposed in Wales, leading to many important sites going unrecorded. As in April, coupled with the fine spring weather, a core of regular recorders geographically spread over much of Gwent and covering a variety of habitats produced an impressive list of butterflies and macro moths for May. During May 2020, 29 recorders produced a list for Gwent of 22 butterfly species (equalling the previous highest May count in 2015 and 2018) and 238 macro moth species, beating the previous record of 226 species in 2017. I have so far entered nearly four thousand May 2020 records for Gwent. Coupled with a deluge of e-mails, the workload has led to a delay in producing this newsletter and in replying to many requests, for which I apologise.

Most frequent among the butterfly records were 169 Small Pearl-bordered Fritillary and 95 Small Heath (both the result of high counts at two or three sites), Dingy Skipper (45), Common Blue (37), Peacock (34), Small Tortoiseshell (33), Orange-tip (32), Small White (29), Speckled Wood (21), Green-veined White (20), Meadow Brown (18), Large White (14), Green Hairstreak (13), Brimstone (9), Holly Blue (7), Large Skipper (7), Small Copper (5), Red Admiral (4), Painted Lady (2) and singletons of Brown Argus, Small Skipper and Comma. 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 May records follows, including first 2020 records:-

- | | | |
|---------------------|---|-------------------|
| 1 st May | 9 Dingy Skipper at Blaenserchan | (Rupert Perkins) |
| 2 nd May | Currant Pug, May Highflyer to light at Cwmbran allotments. | (Bob Roome) |
| | Lychnis to light at Catbrook | (Richard Clayton) |
| | Spectacle to light at Whitson | (Lance Hutchings) |
| | Ochreous Pug at Blackwood (Kevin Hewitt) and Rogerstone (Arthur Pitcher). | |
| 3 rd May | Chamomile Shark to light at Blackwood | (Kevin Hewitt) |
| | Little Thorn to light at Penallt | (Ian Rabjohns) |
| | Marbled Brown, Common White Wave at Tintern | (Hazel Mitchell) |
| | Foxglove Pug at Catbrook | (Richard Clayton) |
| | Lime Hawk at Catbrook (Richard Clayton) and Penallt (Ian Rabjohns). A good season for Lime Hawk, with 37 adults recorded by the end of May. | |

6th May

As mentioned under “Stop Press” in the April newsletter, 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.

George Tordoff (Butterfly Conservation) comments that three new sites in South Wales this year, spread across VCs 35, 41 and 42, two in gardens and one at RSPB Cwm Clydach near Swansea, suggest this species' recent upturn in fortunes is continuing.

Rupert and his wife have uploaded a video to youtube:-

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oGj0wYhkbj8>



Narrow-bordered Bee Hawk

(Rupert Perkins)

Common Blue butterfly at Llandogo

(Gail Reynolds)

Freyer's Pug to light at Caerleon

(Fiona Illing)

Treble Brown Spot at Melbourne Way, Newport

(Roger James)



Buttoned Snout (Hazel Mitchell)



Speckled Yellow

- 7th May Buttoned Snout at Tintern, with a second specimen the following night. (Hazel Mitchell)
- Small Copper butterfly and Marbled Brown moth at Llandogo (Gail Reynolds)
- Rustic Shoulder-knot and Dark-barred Twin-spot Carpet at Blackwood (Kevin Hewitt)
- Sharp-angled Carpet and Grass Rivulet at Penallt. Nearly all Grass Rivulet records this May (13 out of 15) seem to be concentrated in the Penallt and Catbrook areas. (Stephanie Tyler)
- Speckled Yellow at The Graig (Wendy Tyler-Batt)
- Treble-bar at Catbrook (Richard Clayton)
- 8th May 4 Green Hairstreak butterflies at Cwmsychan (Chris Hatch)
- and a further 2 at Blaenserchan together with 5 Small Heath (Rupert Perkins)
- Coronet to light at Tintern (Hazel Mitchell) and Penallt (Ian Rabjohns).
- Little Thorn at Tintern (Hazel Mitchell), Catbrook (Richard Clayton) and Penallt (Ian Rabjohns). Another species having a good season.
- Glaucous Shears, Ochreous Pug at Dingestow (Sam Bosanquet)
- Riband Wave at Wilcrick Moor, Llandevenny (Nick Felstead)
- Square Spot to light at Penallt (Ian Rabjohns)
- Tawny Speckled Pug at Catbrook (Richard Clayton)
- Small Eggar larval web at Llanwern (Routes View) (Barbara Allen)



Small Eggar larval web

(Barbara Allen)

9 th May	Meadow Brown butterfly at Llandogo	(Gail Reynolds)
	Blomer's Rivulet and Beautiful Carpet to light at Tintern	(Hazel Mitchell)
	Campion moth to light at Caerleon	(David Brooks)
	Clouded-bordered Brindle to light at Blackwood	(Kevin Hewitt)
	Common Wave at Melbourne Way, Newport	(Roger James)
	Dog's Tooth, Limespeck Pug and Gold Spot to light at Whitson (Moorbarn Cottage)	(Lance Hutchings)
	Marbled White-spot, Marbled Brown and Small Rivulet at Penallt	(Stephanie Tyler)
	Mocha at Great Crwys, Hendre	(Wendy Tyler-Batt)
	Small Dusty Wave at Caerleon (David Brooks) and Great Crwys, Hendre (Wendy Tyler-Batt)	
	Sycamore to light at Blackwood	(Kevin Hewitt)
14 th May	Toadflax Brocade to light at Melbourne Way, Newport.	(Roger James)



Toadflax Brocade



Small Pearl-bordered Fritillary (Kevin Dupé)

- 15th May 20 Small Hesth at Byrgwm Hill north of Blaenserchan (Chris Hatch)
- First Small Pearl-bordered Fritillary of the season at Blaenserchan,
rising to 15 by 20th May. (Chris Hatch)
- Two more Small Pearl – bordered Fritillary at The British and another two
at nearby Pant Glas Slip. (Chris Hatch)
- 16th May Double Square-spot to light at Tintern (Hazel Mitchell)
Heart and Club at Melbourne Way, Newport (Roger James)
Shoulder-striped Wainscot to light at Great Crwys, Hendre (Wendy Tyler-Batt)
- 17th May Brindled White-spot to light at Tintern (Hazel Mitchell)
- Satin Lutestring and Triple-spotted Pug at Penallt (Ian Rabjohns)
- Eyed Hawk, Light Brocade and Common Wainscot at Whitson (Moorbarn Cottage)
(Lance Hutchings)
- 18th May Buttoned Snout, Mottled Rustic at Llandogo (Gail Reynolds)
Another Eyed Hawk, Fox Moth and Small Angle Shades at Catbrook (Richard Clayton)
- Cream-spot Tiger to light at Whitson (Moorbarn Cottage), with a second on 26th May.
(Lance Hutchings)

19 th May	Both Elephant Hawk and Small Elephant Hawk to light at Risca. 37 adult Elephant Hawks have been recorded in Gwent by the end of May: it could be a bumper season for this species. Also Pale-shouldered Brocade.	(Martin Anthony)
	Figure of Eighty, Sandy Carpet at Tintern	(Hazel Mitchell)
20 th May	Lunar Thorn at Tintern, with another on 30 th May	(Hazel Mitchell)
	5 Obscure Wainscot, 3 Silky Wainscot and a Burnished Brass to light at Newport Wetlands	(Kevin Dupé)
	Chamomile Shark at Melbourne Way, Newport	(Roger James)
	Fox Moth and Middle-barred Minor at Penallt	(Stephanie Tyler)
21 st May	A very early Small Skipper butterfly at Llandogo	(Gail Reynolds)
	Pauper Pug, Poplar Lutestring and Barred Hook-tip to light at Tintern	(Hazel Mitchell)
	Brindled White-spot, Clay Triple-lines, Larch Pug, Small Yellow Wave and Yellow Shell to light at Penallt	(Ian Rabjohns)
	Another Larch Pug at Great Crwys. Also Plain Golden Y and Purple Bar.	(Wendy Tyler-Batt)
	Dark Brocade at Pentrepiod, Pontypool	(Rupert Perkins)
	Dotted Chestnut at Melbourne Way, Newport	(Roger James)
	Glaucous Shears at Blackwood	(Kevin Hewitt)
22 nd May	Glaucous Shears to light at Risca	(Martin Anthony)
23 rd May	Mottled Beauty, Rivulet at Tintern	(Hazel Mitchell)
24 th May	Large Skipper and Meadow Brown butterflies and Burnet Companion, Mother Shipton and Small Yellow Underwing moths at St Arvans	(Nick Felstead)
	Small Ranunculus, Uncertain and Rustic to light at Chepstow	(Nick Felstead)
	Painted Lady at Pontypool	(Chris Hatch)
	Eyed Hawk at Blackwood	(Kevin Hewitt)

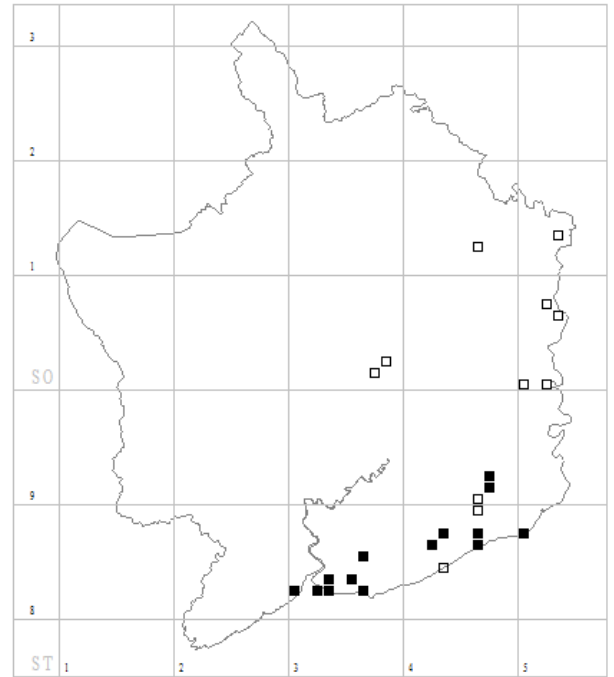


Small Ranunculus (Nick Felstead)



Brown Argus (Michael Field)

- 25th May Brown Argus and Brimstone butterflies at St Mellons (Michael Field)
 At least 50 Small Pearl-bordered Fritillary and 5 Dingy Skipper at Blaenserchan (Rupert Perkins)
- Two Small Pearl-bordered Fritillary at The British together with the only adult
 Comma record during May and Burnet Companion moth, (Chris Hatch)
 and another two Small Pearl-bordered Fritillary at nearby Pant Glas Slip. (Chris Hatch)
- Two Dingy Skipper at Cwm Sychan old reservoir. (Chris Hatch)
- Dingy Skipper, 4 Small Heath and Common Blue at Nine Mile Point, Cwmfelinfach (Martin Anthony)
 Sycamore to light at Abergavenny (Mike Hoult and Val Deisler)
- 26th May Blomer's Rivulet, Eyed Hawk, Dusky Brocade, Miller and Buff Footman at Penallt (Ian Rabjohns)
 Mother Shipton at Kingcoed Meadows. (Wendy Tyler-Batt)



*Cream-spot Tiger and
its Gwent distribution*

- 27th May Cream-spot Tiger to light at Undy. This species has retreated to the coastal fringe. (Keith Jones)
- L-album Wainscot, Wormwood Pug to light at Chepstow (Nick Felstead)
- Burnet Companion at Llandogo (Gail Reynolds)
- Short-cloaked moth at Haisbro Ave, Newport. (Sheila Dupé)
- Sharp-angled Peacock, 8 Silky Wainscot, Dark Spectacle, Dog's Tooth and Champion moths to light at Newport Wetlands (Kevin Dupé)
- Common Lutestring, True Lover's Knot and Little Emerald at Catbrook (Richard Clayton)
- Clay Triple-lines at Blackwood (Kevin Hewitt), Chepstow (Nick Felstead) and Catbrook (Richard Clayton)
- Day-flying Speckled Yellow moths at The Little Skirrid (Mike Houlton and Val Deisler)
- 28th May 40 Small Heath butterflies at Blaenserchan (Rupert Perkins)
- Cypress Carpet and Broad-barred White to light at Melbourne Way, Newport (Roger James)
Another Cypress Carpet at Home Farm, Caerleon (Chris Jones)
- Peacock Moth to light at Tintern (Hazel Mitchell)



Blotched Emerald (Wendy Tyler-Batt)



Cypress Carpet

29 th May	Blotched Emerald to light at Great Crwys, Hendre	(Wendy Tyler-Batt)
	Scarlet Tiger at Llandogo	(Darryl Reynolds)
	Broad-barred White to light at Risca	(Martin Anthony)
30 th May	Broom Moth at Abergavenny	(Mike Hoult and Val Deisler)
	Mullein Wave at Pontypool	(Rupert Perkins)
	Light Arches and Sycamore at Melbourne Way, Newport	(Roger James)
	Burnet Companion, Satin Wave at Penallt	(Stephanie Tyler)
	Fan-foot moth to light at both Catbrook (Richard Clayton) and Pontypool (Rupert Perkins). Also Ghost moth and Green Silver-lines at Catbrook.	
31 st May	Two Small Pearl-bordered Fritillary and a Painted Lady at Garn Lakes	(Chris Hatch)
	Small Copper and 30 Small Pearl-bordered Fritillary at Blaenserchan	(Rupert Perkins)
	Green Silver-lines to light at Risca	(Martin Anthony)
	Square Spot to light at Tintern	(Hazel Mitchell)

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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Unless you tell us otherwise, the records you submit may be collated and disseminated manually or electronically, including via the internet, for conservation, environmental decision-making, education, research and other public benefit uses in accordance with Butterfly Conservation's data access policy. Records are added to Butterfly Conservation's UK butterfly and moth recording schemes (BNM and NMRS) and to the South East Wales Biodiversity Record Centre (SEWBReC). Names and contact details of recorders will be used for administration and verification purposes only. Your name and contact details will not be passed to other parties without your consent, whilst your name will form part of the record that is collated and disseminated in accordance with Butterfly Conservation's privacy policy.