



MONMOUTHSHIRE MOTH & BUTTERFLY GROUP

NEWSLETTER No 164 July & early August 2020.

A monthly newsletter covering

Gwent and Monmouthshire Vice County 35

Editor: Martin Anthoney

July and August 2020

July was a generally dull and unsettled month with westerly winds. Brief ridges of high pressure brought drier brighter weather from the 10th to 12th and 19th to 21st, and a brief southerly incursion brought hot sunny weather to much of the country on the 31st. The mean temperature for the month was 0.9 °C below the long-term average. Rainfall was 124% of average and sunshine was just 79% of average, Rainfall was just below normal. Early August continued the heatwave, with temperatures frequently above 30°C. Lepidoptera responded in both numbers and quality, so I have extended this newsletter to include the highlights of early August.

With the Wales five-mile travel limit as part of the coronavirus “lockdown” being removed at long last, recording was possible at many more sites. Since the beginning of July I have entered nearly five thousand butterfly and macro moth records on to the Gwent database. However, the poor July weather reduced the variety of species and only 25 species of butterfly and 270 species of macro moth were recorded in Gwent during July, lower than recent years: July 2019 had 28 butterflies and 279 macro moths and 2018 had 26 butterflies and 305 macro moths. It will be interesting to see what effect the heatwave had on the August figures.

Three new species have been added to the Gwent VC35 list recently:

1 Fen Wainscot (*Arenostola phragmitidis*)

Kevin Dupé had a specimen of this reed-feeder come to light at Newport Wetlands NNR on 16th July. It is mainly a species of eastern England, but a colony was found in west Glamorgan (Crymlyn Bog) over twenty years ago. It is also known from north Somerset. Given the abundance of the foodplant, it was probably only a matter of time before Fen Wainscot found its way to Newport Wetlands.



Fen Wainscot
(*Arenostola phragmitidis*)
(Kevin Dupé)

2 Tapestry Moth (*Trichophaga tapetzella*)

Petra Mitchard found four adult specimens of this black and white micro moth on a dog bed at Magor Marsh visitor centre on 10th August. The species used to be found indoors, where it would feed on carpets, curtains, clothing etc. The use of artificial fibres and central heating in houses has led to the Tapestry Moth becoming scarce: Sam Bosanquet confirms it is new for VC35 and there seem to be just a couple of previous Welsh records and very few recent GB records even!



Tapestry Moth

(*Trichophaga tapetzella*)

(Petra Mitchard)

3 Dark Crimson Underwing (*Catocala sponsa*)

A worn specimen of Dark Crimson Underwing came to Martyn Jones' light trap at Marshfield, between Newport and Cardiff, on 18th August. A first record for Gwent and a first for Wales. The species, which feeds on pedunculate oak and possibly other oaks, is resident in a small area of southern England (New Forest, Hampshire, Wiltshire) but is also known as an uncommon immigrant. It brings the Gwent VC35 list to 589 macro moths.



Dark Crimson Underwing

(*Catocala sponsa*)

(Martyn Jones)

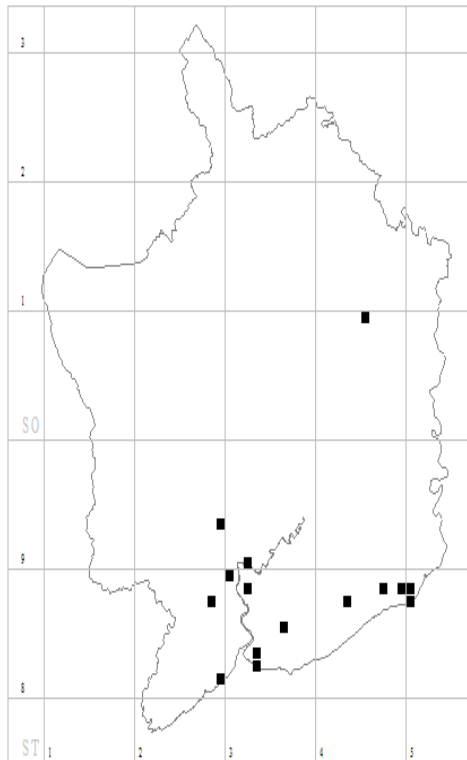
Other Highlights

Immigrants included Clouded Yellow butterfly at Penallt and Newport Wetlands, three Humming-bird Hawks (Sugar Loaf, Hendre and Dingestow), Small Mottled Willow and Pearly Underwing.

Notable among resident species was Jersey Tiger. It first occurred in Gwent in 2011, but this year sixteen individuals have been recorded between 26th July and 17th August. It is well established in the south of Gwent, to such an extent that it is more common than Garden Tiger (7 records), though way behind Scarlet Tiger (48 records)

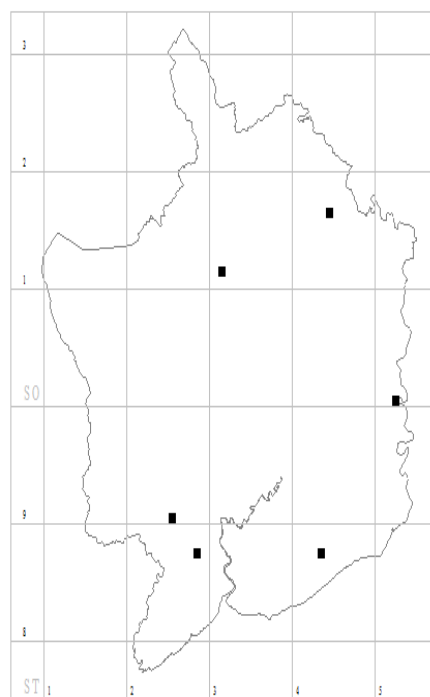


Jersey Tiger (Kevein Hewitt)



and its distribution in Gwent.

Two more Clifden Nonpareil mean that the species has now occurred in Gwent for three successive years. We live in hope that it might become our next resident!



Clifden Nonpareil and distribution of its records

1 st July	Double Line moth to light at Llandogo	(Gail Reynolds)
	Double Lobed moth to light at Penallt	(Ian Rabjohns)
2 nd July	Round-winged Muslin Footman and Eyed Hawk at Great Crwys, Hendre.	(Wendy Tyler-Batt)
3 rd July	2 Silver-washed Fritillary flying at Whitelye Woods	(Richard Clayton)
5 th July	White-letter Hairstreak at Dixon Embankment Reserve, with a further two the following day at the same site	(Rupert Perkins)
	The first of three Double Lines during July at Blackwood	(Kevin Hewitt)



White Letter Hairstreak
(Rupert Perkins)



Pearly Underwing

6 th July	Brindled White-spot to light at Slade Wood	(Nick Felstead)
	Immigrant Pearly Underwing to light at Risca	(Martin Anthoney)
	Scallop Shell to light at Cwmbran	(Bob Roome)
	The first of 10 Silky Wainscot during July at Haisbro Ave, Newport	(Sheila Dupé)
9 th July	Immigrant Small Mottled Willow to light at Newport Wetlands	(Kevin Dupé)
12 th July	Olive moth to light at Blackwood.	(Kevin Hewitt)
	L-album Wainscot to light at Chepstow	(Nick Felstead)
	Satin Wave to light at Blackwood	(Kevin Hewitt)
14 th July	The first of 3 Four-spotted Footman at Tintern during July.	(Hazel Mitchell)

15 th July	First Canary-shouldered Thorns of the year at Llantarnam (Bob Roome) and Newport Wetlands (Kevin Dupé)	
	Dog's Tooth and L-album Wainscot to light at Goldcliff Pill	(Kevin Dupé)
	Obscure Wainscot to light at Haisbro Avenue, Newport	(Sheila Dupé)
16 th July	Fen Wainscot at Newport Wetlands. See headlines above.	(Kevin Dupé)
	A Silver-washed Fritillary at Cefn Mawr Wood, Monkswood	(Nick Felstead)
	Brown-tail to light at Tintern. A new site. Also Cloaked Carpet.	(Hazel Mitchell)
	Another Cloaked Carpet to light at Risca.	(Martin Anthoney)
17 th July	Essex Skipper at Pentre Village	(Nick Felstead)
	Four-spotted Footman to light at Llandogo	(Gail Reynolds)
	Little Thorn to light at Penallt	(Ian Rabjohns)
	Scallop Shell to light at Tintern	(Hazel Mitchell)
	A Suspected moth to light at Blackwood, with a second on 29 th July. A new site for this species.	(Kevin Hewitt)
19 th July	2 Silver-washed Fritillary at Hendre Wood	(Wendy Tyler-Batt)
20 th July	2 Dark Green Fritillary and 2 Grayling at Blackrock Quarry, Clydach (Mike Hoult and Val Deisler)	
	5 Silver-washed Fritillary in the area of Wentwood Gate and 1 at Cuhere Wood. (Martin Anthoney and Roger James)	
	2 Silver-washed Fritillary at Broad Meend, Trelleck	(Gail Reynolds)
	Little Thorn at Lower Martridge Wood, St. Arvans	(Nick Felstead)
21 st July	Kent Black Arches to light at Newport Wetlands. Another recent colonist? (Kevin Dupé)	

(Kent Black Arches)



21st July (cont)

2 Lunar Hornet Moths to a pheromone trap at Tintern. Two further individuals were attracted the following day. A moth is just visible on the right edge of the yellow trap below (Anglian Lepidopterist Supplies Ltd). 8th to 11th Gwent records. (Hazel Mitchell)



Lunar Hornet Moth (Hazel Mitchell)



Pheromone trap

22 nd July	Dark Green Fritillary at Central Valley, Ebbw Vale	(Jane Corey)
	Oak Nycteoline to light at Melbourne Way, Newport	(Roger James)
	Juniper Pug to light at Pentrepiod, Pontypool. An uncommon species in Gwent.	(Rupert Perkins)
23 rd July	3 Straw Underwing to light at Penallt	(Stephanie Tyler)
24 th July	Four-spotted Footman to light at Penallt	(Ian Rabjohns)
	Round-winged Muslin Footman at Melbourne Way, Newport	(Roger James)
25 th July	5 Essex Skipper at Dixon Embankment reserve.	(Rupert Perkins)
	Broom-tip Moth to light at Broad Meend, Trellech	(Nick Felstead)

26 th July	2 Dark Green Fritillary on the Bloreng	(Ian and Janet Cormack)
	A new site for Jersey Tiger at Cwmbran	(Bob Roome)
	Orange Moth to light at Slade Wood	(Nick Felstead)
	Small Rufous at Blackwood (Kevin Hewitt) and Melbourne Way Newport (Roger James). A good season for this small moth	
27 th July	Brown-line Bright-eye to light at Blackwood	(Kevin Hewitt)
	Jersey Tiger found at rest at Portskewett	(Chris Stone)
	A Mouse Moth to light at Blackwood. Previously common, this species has become a rarity in recent years.	(Kevin Hewitt)
28 th July	.Clouded Yellow butterfly at Penallt	(Ian Rabjohns)
	Second generation Chocolate Tip to light at Risca	(Martin Anthoney)
29 th July	2 Brown-veined Wainscot, 2 Double Lobed, 2 Mullein Wave, Oak Eggar and 2 Brussels Lace to light at Newport Wetlands	(Kevin Dupé)
30 th July	Grayling on the Bloreng (Lamb and Fox)	(Martin Anthoney and Roger James)
	2 Silver-washed Fritillary at Hendre King's Wood	(Stephanie Tyler)
	Wood Carpet to light at Llandogo	(Gail Reynolds)
31 st July	Chocolate Tip to light at Melbourne Way, Newport	(Roger James)
1 st Aug	Grayling at Blaenavon	(Ian and Janet Cormack)
2 nd Aug	Cream-bordered Green Pea to light at Marshfield	(Martyn Jones)
7 th Aug	Clouded Yellow at Newport Wetlands	(Fiona Illing)
	1 Silver-washed Fritillary at Blackrock Quarry, Clydach	(Mike Hoult and Val Deisler)
	2 Silver-washed Fritillary at Trellech	(Martin Anthoney and Roger James)
9 th Aug	Jersey Tiger found at rest at Caldicot	(Shelley Cross)
10 th Aug	The first of 8 Jersey Tiger to light at Melbourne Way, Newport during August.	(Roger James)
11 th Aug	The micro moth <i>Palpita vitrealis</i> to light at Blackwood. Sometimes referred to as the Olive-tree Pearl or Jasmine moth, it is a migrant from southern Europe where it is widespread	(Kevin Hewitt)
13 th Aug	4 Jersey Tiger to light at Newport Wetlands visitor centre.	(Kevin Hewitt)



Palpita vitrealis (Kevin Hewitt)



Clouded Yellow (Ian Rabjohns)

- 14th Aug Clifden Nonpareil found at rest on a wall at Melbourne Way, Newport (Julia James)
- Scarce Hook-tip to light at Tintern. The latest date ever recorded for this species in Gwent.
(Hazel Mitchell)
- 15th Aug Adult Lobster Moth at Tintern. Another latest date recorded for a Gwent species.
(Hazel Mitchell)
- 17th Aug Jersey Tiger found by day at Christchurch Road, Newport (Alison Smith per Kevin Hewitt)
- 18th Aug Dark Crimson Underwing at Marshfield. See earlier headlines. (Martyn Jones)
- 22nd Aug Clifden Nonpareil to light at Risca. Unfortunately, a magpie caught the moth before I could, leaving me with two brightly coloured and unmistakeable hindwings.. (Martin Anthoney)

Dates for your Diary 2020

- 17th July to 9th August **Big Butterfly Count.** Visit the website for details
<https://bigbutterflycount.butterfly-conservation.org/about>
- 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,
Meeting postponed due to coronavirus restrictions.

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