



## MONMOUTHSHIRE MOTH & BUTTERFLY GROUP

**NEWSLETTER No 170      March and April 2021.**

*A monthly newsletter covering*

*Gwent and Monmouthshire Vice County 35*

*Editor: Martin Anthoney*

### **March 2021**

March was a cool but fairly dry month. Butterflies fared badly, with records of only nine species (Brimstone, Comma, Holly Blue, Large White, Orange-tip, Peacock, Red Admiral, Small Tortoiseshell, and Small White). Numbers were small. Although many nights were cold and clear, a few short, cloudy, warm spells had a dramatic effect on moth totals at light traps, with a surprising new March record total for Gwent of 44 macro moth species, together with some staggeringly large catches. Surprisingly, the most abundant species was Small Quaker, which outstripped its close relative, Common Quaker.

### **April 2021**

April was a cold month. Though dry until the last three days with plenty of sunshine, there was a frost on ca 20 nights, leading to a paucity of moths at light traps. Twelve species of butterfly (the same nine as March plus Dingy Skipper, Green-veined White and Speckled Wood) was the lowest April total for three years. A total of 55 species of macromoths was the lowest for eight years, well down on the April 2020 total of 136 species.

A selection of March and April records follows, including the first 2021 record for each species:

- |                      |  |                    |
|----------------------|--|--------------------|
| 1 <sup>st</sup> Mar  | Early Thorn at Great Crwys, Hendre   | (Wendy Tyler-Batt) |
| 4 <sup>th</sup> Mar  | First appearances of Comma butterfly at Llandogo (Gail Reynolds), Newport (Kevin Dupé) and Tintern (Hazel Mitchell)                |                    |
| 9 <sup>th</sup> Mar  | Red Admiral at Llandogo  | (Gail Reynolds)    |
|                      | Tawny Pinion to light at Melbourne Way, Newport, the first of 3 during March.  | (Roger James)      |
| 10 <sup>th</sup> Mar | Twin-spotted Quakers at Risca (Martin Anthoney) and Newport (Roger James).   |                    |
| 14 <sup>th</sup> Mar | Brindled Pug at Catbrook   | (Richard Clayton)  |
|                      | 3 Red Chestnut at Tintern  | (John Dawson)      |
| 15 <sup>th</sup> Mar | Brindled Beauty at Tintern (Hazel Mitchell) and Pontypool (Rupert Perkins)   |                    |
|                      | Early Tooth-striped at Catbrook  | (Richard Clayton)  |
|                      | 2 Pale Pinion at Melbourne Way, Newport.   | (Roger James)      |
|                      | Shoulder Stripe moths at Catbrook (Richard Clayton), Penallt (Stephanie Tyler), Tintern (John Dawson) and Tintern (Hazel Mitchell) |                    |
| 16 <sup>th</sup> Mar | Waved Umber at Great Crwys, Hendre.  | (Wendy Tyler-Batt) |

- 18<sup>th</sup> Mar A remarkable light-trapping night at Tintern. In total there were 882 moths of 16 species, including 704 Small Quaker, 107 Common Quaker, 15 Brindled Pug, 12 Twin-spotted Quaker, Small Brindled Beauty, Shoulder Stripe, Yellow Horned and Engrailed. (Hazel Mitchell)
- Another Engrailed, Water Carpet and Powdered Quaker at Great Crwys (Wendy Tyler-Batt)  
Mottled Pug and Double-striped Pug at Tintern (John Dawson)  
Herald moth to light at Blackwood, with another on 30<sup>th</sup> (Kevin Hewitt)



*Tintern 18<sup>th</sup> March. 882 moths of 16 species (Hazel Mitchell)*

- 20<sup>th</sup> Mar White-marked to light at Tintern, the first of four during March. (Hazel Mitchell)
- 24<sup>th</sup> Mar White-marked at Great Crwys (Wendy Tyler-Batt)  
An early Broom-tip moth at Melbourne Way, Newport (Roger James)
- 26<sup>th</sup> Mar Oak Nycteoline at Melbourne Way, Newport. (Roger James)
- 30<sup>th</sup> Mar Frosted Green at Tintern (Hazel Mitchell) and Great Crwys (Wendy Tyler-Batt)  
An early record of Common Swift at Haisbro Avenue, Newport (Kevin Dupé)  
Red Sword-grass at Newport Wetlands. (Kevin Dupé)  
Tawny Pinion, Purple Thorn and Herald at Tintern (John Dawson)  
Muslin moth at Penallt. (Stephanie Tyler)  
Oak-tree Pug at Abergavenny (Mike Hoult and Val Deisler)  
Pine Beauty at Blackwood (Kevin Hewitt)
- 31<sup>st</sup> Mar A few more butterflies appeared on the last day of the month:  
2 Small White butterflies at Newport Wetlands (Kevin Dupé)  
Another Small White at Abergavenny (Mike Hoult and Val Deisler)  
3 Peacock at Beacon Hill and 1 at Penallt (Stephanie Tyler)  
1 Peacock at Rogiet Country Park (Martin Anthoney and Roger James)

31<sup>st</sup> Mar (cont) 1 Peacock at Clydach

Frosted Green moth to light at Cwmyoy

Lunar Marbled Brown to light at Tintern

Yellow Horned, Oak Beauty at Pentrepiod

(Mike Hoult and Val Deisler)

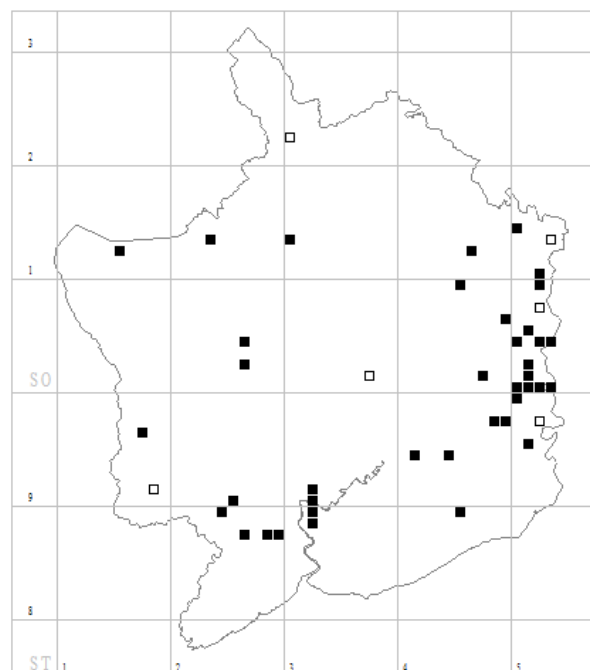
(Christine Knights)

(Hazell Mitchell)

(Rupert Perkins)



*Yellow Horned (Rupert Perkins)*



*Yellow Horned distribution*

1<sup>st</sup> April First immigrant Dark Sword-grass to light at Melbourne Way, Newport.  
2 Streamer moths to light at Risca

(Roger James)

(Martin Anthoney)

4<sup>th</sup> April Red Admiral at Haisbro Avenue, Newport  
Small Tortoiseshell at Ladyhill, Usk  
Red-green Carpet to light at Risca.

(Kevin Dupé)

(Martyn Evans)

(Martin Anthoney)

7<sup>th</sup> April Scarlet Tiger caterpillar at Newport Wetlands

(Kevin Dupé)

15<sup>th</sup> April First 2021 Green-veined White at Tintern

(John Dawson)

16<sup>th</sup> April Holly Blue at Haisbro Avenue, Newport

(Kevin Dupé)

17<sup>th</sup> April Iron Prominent, Least Black Arches, Nut-tree Tussock and Spring Usher at  
Melbourne Way, Newport  
Pebble Prominent at Tintern

(Roger James)

(John Dawson)

18<sup>th</sup> April Emperor Moth to a pheromone lure at Monkswood.  
Speckled Wood at Cwmbran

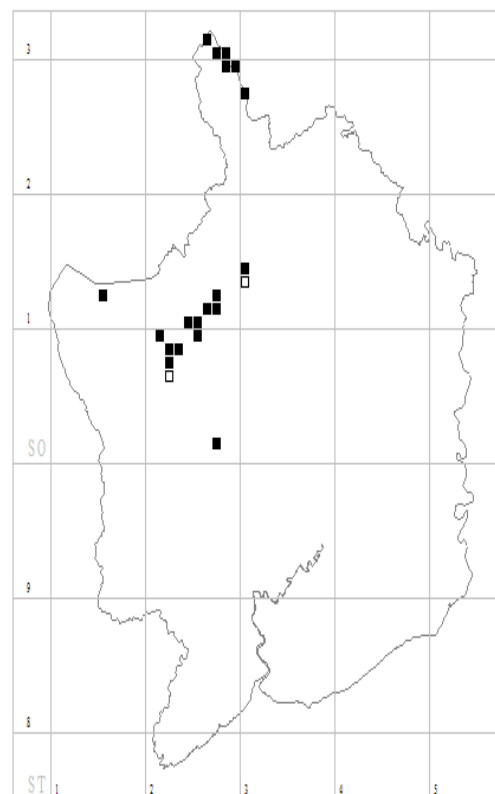
(Joff Elphick)

(Bob Roome)



20<sup>th</sup> April Great Prominent (with another on 27<sup>th</sup>) and Clouded Border at Tintern (Hazel Mitchell)  
Chinese Character at Newport Wetlands. (Kevin Dupé)  
Swallow Prominent at Catbrook) (Richard Clayton)  
Knot Grass at Blackwood) (Kevin Hewitt)  
Flame Shoulder and Shuttle-shaped Dart at Abergavenny (Mike Hoults and Val Deisler)  
Dotted Chestnut, Purple Thorn, Pebble Prominent and another Swallow Prominent at  
Great Crwys, Hendre. (Wendy Tyler-Batt)

21<sup>st</sup> April 3 Silurian larvae found during an evening search at Blaentillery Gulley.  
(George Tordoff and Andrea Rowe)



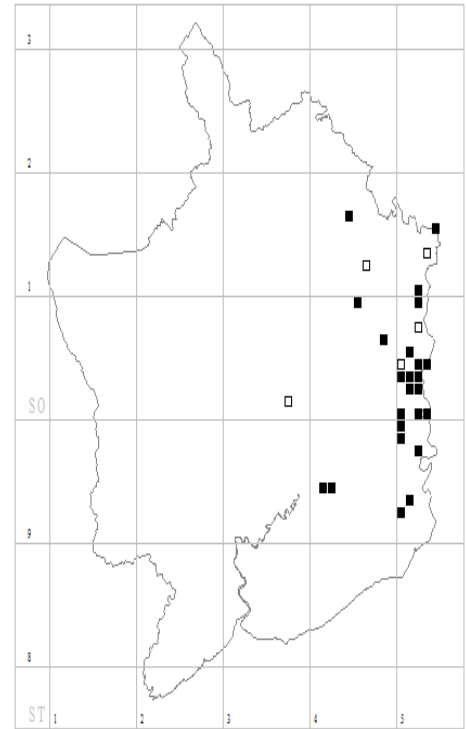
*Silurian distribution in Gwent*

*Silurian larva (George Tordoff)*

22<sup>nd</sup> April 10 Brimstone, 8 Green-veined White, 7 Large White .7 Orange-tip, 5 Peacock and 1 Holly Blue  
butterflies at Pont Lawrence Rees, Cwmfelinfach. (Martin Anthoney and Roger James)  
3 Orange-tip, 2 Peacock and a holly Blue on Skirrid Fawr (Hazel Mitchell)

24<sup>th</sup> April Red Admiral at Newport Wetlands (Kevin Dupé)  
Great Prominent at Catbrook (Richard Clayton)  
Spectacle at Penallt (Stephanie Tyler)  
Coxcomb Prominent at Great Crwys. (Wendy Tyler-Batt)

26<sup>th</sup> April A Dingy Skipper, 7 Peacock, 7 Large White, 2 Orange-tip and 2 Speckled Wood butterflies at  
Blackrock Quarry (Clydach) (Martin Anthoney and Roger James)  
4 Emperor moths on Skirrid Fawr. (Hazel Mitchell)  
Brimstone Moth at Melbourne Way, Newport. (Roger James)

*Great Prominent**Great Prominent distribution*

### **Monmouthshire Moth and Butterfly Group (MMBG)**

Kevin Dupé has reminded me that April 2021 was the 21<sup>st</sup> anniversary of the formation of MMBG. 2021 is also my 26th year as County Recorder and my 19th year as newsletter editor. The work load has increased enormously in this time and I am not getting any younger, so I would like to wind down my computer work and spend more time on fieldwork.

MMBG has been very successful: in its first full year, 2000, there were 505 butterfly records and 1680 macro-moth records submitted for Gwent. In 2020 there were 6,785 butterfly records and 23,936 macro moth records received. After talking to a number of people, as a start I propose to reduce the number of issues of The Silurian newsletter to four or five per year. I will continue to enter up butterfly and macromoth records from regular recorders, and Sam Bosanquet will receive VC35 micros. Not having to combine individual records' lists so often should save some time., though replies to e-mail queries will probably take a bit longer. So the next issue is likely to cover May and June. After speaking to Dave Slade of SEWBRc, the local records centre, SEWBtReC can collect casual records for the time being from other sources such as websites. Dave is also trying to find resources to set up an MMBG website under the auspices of SEWBRc similar to the Glamorgan Moth Group one.

I will try these changes for a few months to see if it helps reduce my workload!

Comments or suggestions are welcomed.

I have just finished producing updated 1km distribution maps for Gwent butterflies and macromoths. The files are quite large, so we need to sort out the best way of distributing them.

Martin Anthoney

## **Dates for your Diary 2021**

Keep up to date with the MMBG blog/ website

<http://gwentmothing.blogspot.co.uk/>

- 8<sup>th</sup> July      The Moth Night team has announced the dates and theme for the next Moth Night, which will take place over the three nights of 8th - 10th July 2021. The theme of this year's Moth Night event is reedbeds and wetlands, which provides a wonderful opportunity to showcase the importance of these habitats for insects at the height of the summer. They hope to encourage participation from as many nature reserves, country parks and wild places as possible. Details at the Moth Night website [Welcome to Moth Night 2021 - Moth Night](#)
- 16<sup>th</sup> Oct      Provisional date for S Wales Branch of Butterfly Conservation Annual Members Day and AGM.

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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 (SEWBRc). 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.