



MONMOUTHSHIRE MOTH & BUTTERFLY GROUP

NEWSLETTER No 171 May and June 2021.

A bimonthly newsletter covering

Gwent and Monmouthshire Vice County 35

Editor: Martin Anthoney

May and June 2021

Most of May in Wales was cool and unsettled, with spells of very wet and at times windy weather. It was particularly cold during the first week. Settled weather only arrived during the course of the final week. Mean temperatures for the month were provisionally 1.4 °C below average.

The first part of June was mainly sunny and warm. The remainder of the month saw fluctuations in temperature either side of average, with some fine weather and also a few wetter days, but generally few notable falls of rain. Mean temperatures for the month were provisionally 1.0 °C above average and it was a notably dry month across Wales. In SE Wales sunshine was slightly below average.

Butterflies fared badly in the cool May, with only 15 species recorded compared to 22 species in 2020. Numbers picked up in the second half of June, with the June total of 26 species only just below the 28 recorded in 2020. However, several species were notably late in appearing.

A similar pattern emerged for macro moths, with only 143 species recorded in May, the lowest total for ten years and well below the May 2020 figure of 238 species. As with the butterflies, numbers picked up in the second half of June such that the June total of 260 macro moth species was not far below the June 2020 figure of 266 species.

Large Nutmeg (Apamea anceps)



A specimen which came to light at Kevin Hewitt's Blackwood garden on 30th June was the first confirmed Large Nutmeg record for Gwent (VC35), bringing the county list up to 590 macro moth species.

The larval foodplants are a number of grasses, initially feeding on the flowers and seeds, and later on the leaves. Associated with dry grassland in a range of situations. ID guides give it as very scarce in SW England and Wales. It has been recorded from several other Welsh counties, but its heartland seems to be the English midlands.

*Large Nutmeg
(Apamea anceps)
(Kevin Hewitt)*

Statistics Update

The following tables update those from newsletter 137 (Nov 2017) with details of records for VC35 unitary authorities.

Local Authorities to Dec 2020

Authority	Butterfly Records	Species	Macro moth Records	Species
Total (Gwent)	55,148	50	223,016	589
Blaenau Gwent	3,025	32	10,332	384
Caerphilly (VC35)	6,945	33	30,575	485
Cardiff (VC35)	866	28	1,816	218
Monmouthshire	28,169	49	108,396	579
Newport	10,974	37	61,169	500
Torfaen	7,394	41	10,743	405

2019 figures for size and population

	Gwent	Monmouth shire	Newport	Caerphilly (VC35)	Torfaen	Blaenau Gwent	Cardiff
Size (km²)	1403	850	190	148	126	109	20
Population	505,000	94,590	154,676	75,534	93,161	69,862	

Updated Distribution Maps

We are grateful to Richard Clarke for setting up and looking after the Gwent Mothing Blog
<http://gwentmothing.blogspot.co.uk/>

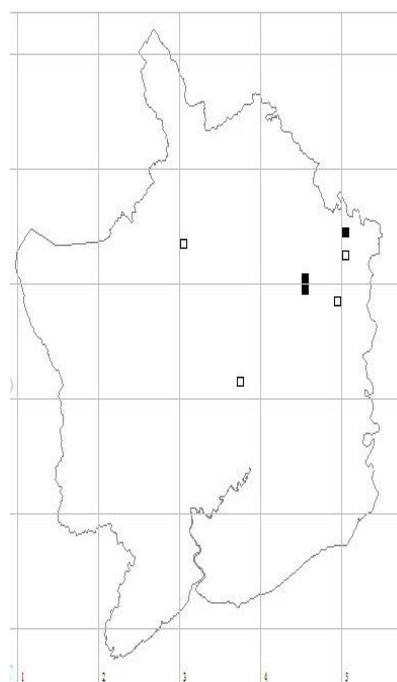
Richard has been working on a system recently to make up-to-date 1km scale distribution maps available on the blog. Most of the butterfly maps are now available to view and work continues on the macromoth maps.

May and June Highlights

- 1st May Mullein Moth to light at Newport, Melbourne Way (Roger James)
- 9th May First Lobster Moths of the season at four different sites: Llandogo (Gail Reynolds)
Penallt (Ian Rabjohns), Tintern (John Dawson) and Tintern (Hazel Mitchell)
- 10th May Pine Beauty to light at Abergavenny. A declining species, possibly due to conifer
felling due to disease (Mike Hoult and Val Deisler)
- 18th May Lunar Thorn to light at Penallt (Ian Rabjohns)
- 19th May First 2021 Burnet Companion at Rogiet Country Park (Martin Anthoney and Roger James)
- 26th May Little Thorn to light at Llantarnam Abbey Wood. A new site for this species. (Bob Roome)
- 27th May Dog's Tooth to light at Newport Wetlands (Kevin Dupé)
Brindled White-spot to light at Penallt (Ian Rabjohns)
- 28th May Buttoned Snout to light at Llandogo, with another on 5th June (Gail Reynolds)
- Coronet Moth to light at Abergavenny. The first record of a species which has been widely
abundant this season. (Mike Hoult and Val Deisler)
- 29th May Silver Cloud to light at Great Crwys, Hendre, Only the second county record since 2008
for a species which has always been confined to north east Gwent. (Wendy Tyler-Batt)
Two Fox Moth at Penallt (Stephanie Tyler)
First Grass Rivulet record for 2021 at Risca (Martin Anthoney)



Silver Cloud (Wendy Tyler-Batt)



Silver Cloud distribution

30th May Yellow-legged Clearwing to pheromone lure at Tintern, with another specimen on 4th June (Hazel Mitchell)
 Satin Lutestring and Common Wainscot to light at Llandogo (Gail Reynolds)



Red-tipped Clearwing
Two Clearwings to pheromone lures at Tintern (Hazel Mitchell)



Yellow-legged Clearwing

31st May A Buttoned Snout to light at Tintern, with another on 2nd June. Also a Dark Spectacle. (John Dawson)
 Mocha to light at Tintern (Hazel Mitchell)
 A Small Pearl-bordered Fritillary at Blackrock Quarry, Clydach (Martin Anthoney and Roger James). 4 were present on 4th June (Mike Houlton and Val Deisler)

The first Elephant Hawk of 2021, which is having a remarkable year. More than 150 recorded and still counting! (Sheila Dupé)

1st June 2 Small Pearl-bordered Fritillary at Ebbw Vale (Aneurin Bevan Stones) (Martin Anthoney and Roger James)
 First Green Silver-lines of 2021 at Great Crwys, Hendre (Wendy Tyler-Batt)
 Obscure Wainscot to light at Newport Wetlands, The first of 115 individuals recorded at the Wetlands NNR during June. Also the first Silky Wainscot (Kevin Dupé)

2nd June Blomer's Rivulet to light at Tintern (John Dawson)
 Pauper Pug to light at Tintern (Hazel Mitchell)
 Chamomile Shark to light at Haisbro Avenue, Newport (Sheila Dupé)
 Broad-barred White to light at Blackwood (Kevin Hewitt)

- 4th June Painted Lady at Tintern (John Dawson)
A bad year for Painted Lady continues, with only ten individuals recorded in June.
- 5th June First Eyed Hawk of the season at Blackwood (Kevin Hewitt)
Mother Shipton at Blaentrophy Farm (Stephanie Tyler)
Sharp-angled Carpet at Penallt (Stephanie Tyler)
- 6th June An immigrant Striped Hawk and a Chamomile Shark to light at Risca. Unfortunately, as I was gently transferring the hawkmoth to a jar, a house sparrow flew on to my arm and tried to take the moth. I beat the sparrow away, but the hawkmoth was so startled it took off at great pace and disappeared into the distance. Still, at least it did not finish up as a sparrow's breakfast! (Martin Anthoney)



Striped Hawk (previous specimen)



Toadflax Brocade

- 8th June Toadflax Brocade to light at Caerleon (John Burns)
- 9th June 20 Small Pearl-bordered fritillary, 6 Dingy Skipper, 2 Green Hairstreak at Blaenserchan (Rupert Perkins)
Oak Hook-tip to light at Abergavenny. A much declined species. (Mike Hoult and Val Deisler)
Red-tipped Clearwing to pheromone lure at Tintern. (Hazel Mitchell)
- 10th June Sharp-angled Peacock to light at Newport Wetlands. (Kevin Dupé)
Day-flying Small Yellow Underwing at Newchurch (Stephanie Tyler)
- 11th June 2 Peacock Moth to light at Tintern (John Dawson)
Poplar Lutestring to light at Llandogo (Gail Reynolds)



Peacock Moth



Sharp-angled Peacock Moth

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| 12 th June | 30 Marsh Fritillary, 4 Small Pearl-bordered Fritillary, 5 Chimney Sweeper and Six-spot Burnet moths flying at Aberbargoed Grasslands | (Rupert Perkins) |
| 13 th June | Buff Footman, Red-necked Footman and Square Spot to light at Penallt
Obscure Wainscot and Scalloped Hook-tip to light at Tintern. | (Ian Rabjohns)
(Hazel Mitchell) |
| 15 th June | 2 Small Pearl-bordered Fritillary at Cwm Bwchel, Llanthony
Another 18 Small Pearl-bordered at Blaenserchan
Lesser Cream Wave to light at Tintern
Oblique Carpet to light at Abergavenny | (Nicola Davies)
(Martin Anthoney and Roger James)
(John Dawson)
(Mike Hoult and Val Deisler) |

- 16th June Bordered Beauty to light at Tintern (Hazel Mitchell)
 Pinion-streaked Snout at Newport (Haisbro Ave) (Sheila Dupé)
- 17th June Clouded Magpie to light at Tintern. The only record so far this year of what used to be a
 widespread species. Also a Green Arches. (Hazel Mitchell)
- Double Line, Striped Wainscot and Pale-shouldered Brocade to light at Newport Wetlands
 (Kevin Hewitt)
 Humming-bird Hawk flying at Melbourne Way, Newport (Roger James)
- Scarlet Tiger to light at Risca (Martin Anthoney)
- 18th June Beautiful Brocade to light at Blackwood. (Kevin Hewitt)
 Another Scarlet Tiger, this one to a new site at Wonastow. (Heather Colls)
- 20th June A Mocha to light at Penallt (Ian Rabjohns)
- 25th June July Belle to light at Risca (Martin Anthoney)
- 28th June Blotched Emerald to light at Tintern (Hazel Mitchell)
 Cypress Carpet to light at Risca (Martin Anthoney)
 Dingy Shell at Blackwood (Kevin Hewitt)
- 29th June Two Blackneck flying by day at Newport Wetlands. Also a Brown-tail moth and
 a Southern Wainscot. (Kevin Dupé)
- Scarce Hook-tip to light at Tintern (John Dawson)
- Toadflax Brocade to light at Newport, Melbourne Way (Roger James)
- 30th June First Dark Green Fritillaries of the year at Blaenserchan (Rupert Perkins) and at Slade
 Wood (Martin Anthoney and Roger James). A very late date for Dark Green to appear.
 6 Silver-washed Fritillary flying near Wentwood Gate. Unusual for Silver-washed to appear in
 numbers before Dark Green. (Martin Anthoney and Roger James)
- Another Blotched Emerald and a Great Oak Beauty to light at Great Crwys, Hendre .
 (Wendy Tyler-Batt)
 Large Nutmeg (see earlier note) and Double Line to light at Blackwood. (Kevin Hewitt)

Dates for your Diary 2021

Keep up to date with the MMBG blog/ website

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

16th July to 8th August **Big Butterfly Count**

See (www.bigbutterflycount.org) for details

16th Oct

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