

Garden Moth Scheme

2009 South West report

Here are the headlines

1/ More recorders filled more spreadsheets. We now have 53 recorders who filled 40 complete spreadsheets.

2/ Comparing the lists for 2008 and 2009, but excluding this year's additions, the average garden recorded 31% more moths in 2009. In 2008 our average garden recorded 1352 moths and in 2009 - 1773 moths. If the new additions for the 2009 list are included 1831 moths were recorded in the average garden.

We can safely say that 2009 was better than 2008 but we must wait for a lot more recording to find out whether we could say that overall the numbers of moths were even average. Before giving more detail I would like to emphasise that ALL the data is valuable whether from small or giant gardens and whatever the light source.

THE TOP 30

SPECIES	2009 Garden Av.	RANK	2008 Garden Av.	RANK
Large Yellow Underwing	211	1 st	253	1 st
Setaceous Hebrew Character	156	2 nd	59	3 rd
Flame Shoulder	87	3 rd	65	2 nd
Heart & Dart	71	4 th	47	4 th
Small Square-spot	48	5 th	26	13 th
Hebrew Character	46	6 th	32	8 th
Light Brown Apple Moth	42	7 th	42	6 th
Lesser Broad-bordered Y/U	39	8 th	43	5 th
Straw Dot	38.7	9 th	18	20 th
Common Marbled Carpet	37	10 th	23.3	14 th
Brimstone Moth	36.8	11 th	37	7 th
Dark Arches	29	12 th	28	10 th
Buff Ermine	28.4	13 th	23	15 ^{th=}
Common Quaker	27.8	14 th	17	22 nd
Common Footman	24.5	15 th	27	11 ^{th=}
Silver Y	24.5	15 th	28.5	9 th
Dingy Footman	24	17 th	23	15 ^{th=}
Riband Wave	23.7	18 th	16	23 rd
Square-spot Rustic	22	19 th	27	11 ^{th=}
Flame	21.5	20 th	10.4	-----
Snout	20	21 st	13.8	24 th
Bright-line Brown-eye	19	22 nd	11.4	-----
Willow Beauty	17	23 rd	19	19 th
Shuttle Shaped Dart	16.2	24 th	21	17 ^{th=}
Lesser Yellow Underwing	15.7	25 th	21	17 ^{th=}
Rush Veneer	15	26 th	0.25	-----
Four Spotted Footman	13	27 th	13.3	25 th
Spectacle	12.7	28 th	8.7	-----
Mother of Pearl	12.4	29 th	7.3	-----
Buff Footman	12.1	30 th	Not on list	-----

Species that had a good year in the SW were Setaceous Hebrew Character, Straw Dot, Flame, Bright-line Brown-eye, Snout, Mother of Pearl, Heart and Dart and Small Square Spot. Rush Veneer raced in to the top 30 partly, perhaps mainly, due to better coverage in areas with a lot of migration – eg the Scillies. We do not have as yet enough data to draw any firm conclusions for moth trends however it is interesting to compare with one's own experiences in the garden; for example - in my garden, compared to the last seven years, 2009 did have good above average numbers of Setaceous Hebrew Character but Flame numbers were only 30% of the average of the last six years.

Some moths fared poorly even in a year when total moth numbers improved. Some examples are given below. We need to remember one bad year does not mean the moth is in decline. Last year I commented that Coxcomb Prominent had a poor year; this year in the GMS the SW garden average increased from 0.19 per garden to 1.4; 12 gardens recorded the moth – certainly a better year. For Common Swift however the numbers in my garden have declined inexorably for 4 years – that is beginning to be a concern it having declined by 90%. It is interesting that the GMS numbers showed further significant decline but Common Swift is still present in 42% of garden records. Perhaps with such a wide distribution it will find it easier to stage a comeback.

EXAMPLES OF MOTHS FOR WHICH 2009 WAS POOR.

SPECIES	2009 GDN AV.	2009 GDN FR.	2008 GDN AV	2008 GDN FR.
Common Swift	0.875	42%	1.25	44%
Single Dotted Wave	2.6	67.5%	4.1	81%
Garden Carpet	9.6	92.5%	14.8	100%
Green Carpet	6.4	87.5%	14.4	87.5%
Double Striped Pug	4.7	70%	9.8	93.75%
Swallow Prominent	1.3	35%	2.4	50%
Scarce Footman	1.6	35%	4.8	37.5%

How did our new selections for 2009 fare? We increased the list because we felt, after discussion, that some common widespread moths were not on the list. The table below gives their average per garden and garden frequency. In the case of Buff Footman it was the 30th most 'common' moth in number. It is interesting that even though many of the moths could not be called common in terms of numbers they were widespread – an example being the Phoenix.

NEW SELECTIONS

MOTH SPECIES	GDN AV	GDN FR.	MOTH SPECIES	GDN AV	GDN FR.
Orange Swift	0.75	27.5%	Mullein Wave	0.93	25%
White-shouldered House-moth	0.9	25%	The Phoenix	0.88	40%
Carcina Quercana	0.6	25%	Grey Pine Carpet	2.73	45%
Acleris Variiegana	2.1	45%	Spruce Carpet	4.33	42.5%
Chrysoteuchia culmella	6.4	47.5%	Cypress Pug	0.43	27.5%
Agriphila straminella	5.0	50%	Buff Footman	12.1	52.5%
Agriphila tristella	5.3	62.5%	True Lover's Knot	4.9	40%
Agriphila geniculea	2.8	37.5%	L-album Wainscot	1.83	27.5%
Eudonia angustea	4.0	55%	Marbled Green	0.2	12.5%
Oak Eggar	0.3	20%	Straw Underwing	1.18	20%
Maiden's Blush	0.5	27.5%	Dark Spectacle	1	25%

There were a few of our 'common moths that barely put in an appearance at all. This may be because of scarcity or perhaps that gardens are not the moth's habitat where it is ever likely to be recorded.

THE MOST UNCOMMON GMS SOUTH WEST GARDEN MOTHS.

MOTH	NO.MOTHS ALL SW.	GDN FR.	MOTH	NO.MOTHS ALL SW.	GDN FR
Lunar Spotted Pinion	0	0	Vapourer	5	10%
Pine Hawk-moth	1	2.5%	Mouse Moth	6	10%
Minor Shoulder Knot	1	2.5%	Leopard Moth	7	12.5
Mullein Moth	2	5%	Gold Triangle	8	10%
Red Underwing	2	5%	Marbled Green	8	12.5%
Hedge Rustic	3	5%	Figure of Eight	9	5%
Feathered Gothic	4	10%	Green Oak Tortrix	9	15%
Spinach	4	7.5%	Pale Eggar	9	12.5%

CHANGES FOR 2010

One of the main changes for 2010 is the establishment of the core list. This list of 193 species and four aggregate is the same across all the regions. The rest of the moths we count are ones we have chosen as common in our area. The effect is to increase the list size by a small amount. There is discussion at present about the format of the national feedback newsletters so there may be changes in this during the year.

REMINDERS

1/The Summer GMS starts on March 5th.

2/Please feel free to contact me with any problems on 01326250171 or by email on frandavis@lineone.net .

3/If you do not belong and want to join the chat-site where there is help with ID, photographs etc please get in touch.

4/Freezing the panes is a good help for working the spreadsheet. Instructions below.

To change to freeze panes:

1. Open GMS Spreadsheet **and then move/make sure cursor on bottom is to the left and on the right side to the top.**
2. Click "Window" on top toolbar.
3. Click "Remove Split" from small drop-down menu.
4. Place cursor in cell D9 (ie Column D, Row 9).
5. Click "Window" again.
6. Click "Freeze Panes"

5/If you change your email address during the year please let me know!

Lastly can I wish everyone enjoyment with their moths and hope for a bumper year in 2010.

George Davis