

Shark hunting in the Borders

There are two moths with the name 'shark' - the Shark and the Chamomile Shark. Both are widespread across Britain, but the Chamomile Shark appears to be much more restricted in Scotland, with records coming mainly from the central belt and the east coast. In the Borders, until recently, the Chamomile Shark was considered rare with only a few old records near the Berwickshire coast.

Although the adult moth comes to light, a more productive way to find it is to search for the caterpillars, which feed during the day on the flower heads of Scentless Mayweed (*Tripleurospermum inodorum*), Chamomile (*Chamaemelum nobile*) and other related plants. Once you have got your eye in, the caterpillars' curled up, snake-like posture becomes quite conspicuous. The foodplants grow commonly on disturbed ground, e.g. arable field corners, and searches across Berwickshire in 2010 by Barbara and Barry Prater yielded great success. The caterpillars were found at thirteen new sites, one being almost 40km from the coast, and the moth is now confirmed in nine 10km squares. It just shows that you shouldn't believe all that you read in field guides!



The Chamomile Shark moth

Mark Parsons

The inspiration for this shark hunting came from Duncan Davidson in Fife, who started searching in 2009 after we were contacted by Deep Sea World to help survey their land! So in July why not check out the Chamomile and Mayweed flowers near you? It's very exhilarating finding sharks that look like snakes - and you will probably put some new dots on the map.

Inverness in 2004. In 2007 two adults were caught about 14km to the west, near Kiltarlity, with six more adults in the same location in 2008.

Pine-tree Lappet

Pine-tree Lappet is a rare immigrant to England and the Channel Islands, but was recorded unexpectedly for the first time in Scotland on the outskirts of



Pine-tree Lappet

Tom Prescott

In parts of Europe the moth is occasionally a serious pest and this has led Forestry Commission (FC) to treat the moth as a potential pest, especially as climate modelling indicates that future conditions in the Moray Firth area could promote outbreaks. However, we believe it is possible that the Pine-tree Lappet may not become a problem in Scotland, and may even be an overlooked resident, as it occurs in a relatively poorly-recorded part of the country. DNA analysis undertaken by Forest Research has shown that the Scottish moths are generally most similar to each other and most closely

Barry Prater



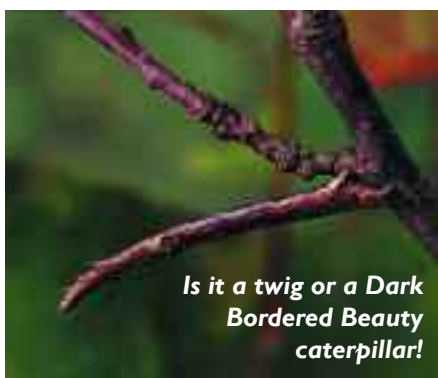
More like a snake than a Shark! A Chamomile Shark caterpillar

related to populations in Eastern France and Italy. Despite this, a possible route for the Pine-tree Lappet to have naturally colonised the UK has been identified.

Survey work using light and pheromone traps in 2009 and 2010 has resulted in the moth being recorded at twelve sites, with confirmed breeding at five. Currently, all the sites lie within 7km of Kiltarlity, with no records at the original Inverness site. To date the moth has only been found in even-aged commercial pine plantations. Volunteers are needed for further survey work in 2011, particularly over the weekend of 25th/26th June. Please contact Tom Prescott (contact details on back page) if you can help. We will continue to work closely with FC and others as it is in everyone's interest to try to ascertain the moth's true status.

Dark Bordered Beauty

Butterfly Conservation and RSPB have been working together for several years to conserve the beautiful and the very rare Dark Bordered Beauty moth, known from only three UK sites - two in the Cairngorms (where it feeds only on Aspen) and one in Yorkshire. One of the objectives of the recovery plan for this species is to increase the number of sites where it is found. To this end, approval had been given to translocate eggs or larvae to the RSPB's Insh Marshes reserve in 2011, where, despite the existence of suitable habitat, several years of light-trapping had not recorded the moth. A small captive breeding population was established from larvae collected in 2009 from the nearest known site, and was boosted by wild-caught adults in 2010.



Is it a twig or a Dark Bordered Beauty caterpillar!

Roy Leverton



Roy Leverton

At the same time, Robin Wynde, on sabbatical from RSPB, undertook detailed vegetation monitoring at Insh Marshes to identify the best release sites within the reserve, where he also regularly ran a moth trap. Amazingly, on the last day of his study, Robin located a population of the moth on the reserve, catching 15 individuals, indicating a very healthy population. Overnight the number of known UK sites jumped from three to four! In addition, 19th century specimens labelled from Sutherland have recently been discovered in the Natural History Museum. So maybe a fifth UK site awaits discovery in 2011!

Our work on the Dark Bordered Beauty is part-funded by RSPB, Cairngorms National Park Authority and Scottish Natural Heritage. We are also very grateful to all the landowners for their support and co-operation, and to all the many volunteers who are helping with the project, which involves monitoring, surveys, practical habitat management, and even growing Aspen. Please contact Tom Prescott (see back page) if you would like to help.

Moth check-lists

It can be a comforting reassurance when you finally identify a moth, to know that someone else has found the same moth from the same area before you! County check-lists provide an invaluable reference source which put your records into context, not just whether the moth is known from the area, but how common or widespread it

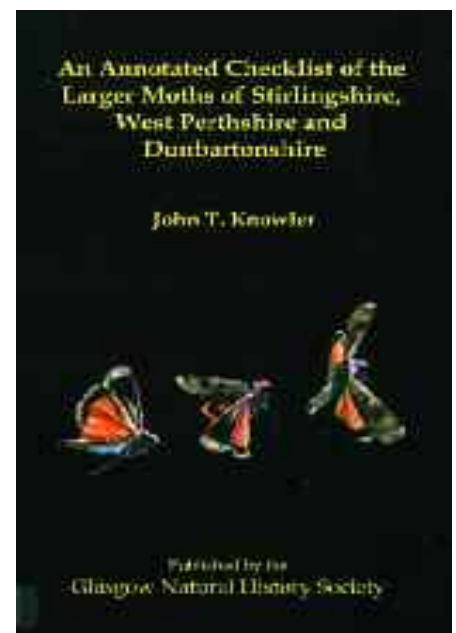
is. There are now two check-lists for Scotland, and we look forward to more being produced.

Easter Ross

(VC 106) Barbara & Brian Ballinger. Send cheque for £2 made out to 'Brian Ballinger' to Upper Flat, Station House, Fearn Station, By Tain, Ross-shire, IV20 1RR.

An annotated checklist of the larger moths of Stirlingshire, West Perthshire & Dunbartonshire

(VC86, 87 & 99) John Knowler. Published by Glasgow Natural History Society. "Well structured and easy to read format...an invaluable tool", Les Hill, Butterfly Conservation. £15 incl p+p from our Stirling office.



A garden for everyone



Our Butterfly Conservation Scotland stand in a rare quiet moment!

Shona Greig

The 'Living Garden', at Gardening Scotland where we take a stand every year has gone from strength to strength. In 2010 our theme was 'Biodiversity is Life' and our Silver Award-winning show garden, stands and workshops all linked into this theme, to support the International Year of Biodiversity.

The garden, designed by BTCV's Heath Brown, reflected five important aspects of Scotland's biodiversity, with an imaginative mix of native and garden plants to create a wildlife pond, vegetable plot, annual meadow, mini woodland and a bug garden. Workshops during the three days covered everything from garden ponds and soil fauna to willow weaving. A beautiful star-shaped awning shaded us from the sun and the log benches helped create a small oasis of calm in the midst of a very well-attended show. With over 30,000 visitors we had a very busy three days!

This year our show garden theme is the 'Community Garden', and we will have raised beds, a vegetable plot, a nectar-rich wildflower area for butterflies and bees and a seating area. Please do get in touch if you would like to help with our

stand for a morning or afternoon on any of the three days of the Show (3rd to 5th June) at the Royal Highland Centre, Ingliston, Edinburgh, and we can offer you free entry as a heartfelt thank you!

Please contact Shona (contact details

on back page) if you are interested. The 'Living Garden' is a partnership project supported by Scottish Natural Heritage and the Scottish Government. For more information visit

www.gardenforlife.org.uk and www.gardeningscotland.com



A mix of native and garden plants created an oasis of calm in the midst of the hubbub of Gardening Scotland 2010

Heath Brown



Tentsmuir National Nature Reserve in Fife is a great place to see butterflies and moths

Countryside Trust, Scotia Seeds Ltd and SNH. For a free copy please send a large SAE to our Stirling office. All of our identification guides are on the web at www.butterfly-conservation.org/scotland

Join us!

You can support Butterfly Conservation in the vital work we do by becoming a member today. As a member you will receive a new member welcome pack, our exclusive magazine *Butterfly*, three times a year plus membership to your local Branch. Our Branches run over 700 public butterfly and moth events throughout the year and you could be part of them. You can become a member online at www.butterfly-conservation.org or alternatively call us on 01929 406015. Join by Direct Debit and receive 15 months membership for the price of 12.

A gift for ever

Please help us ensure there will always be many butterflies and moths in Scotland. The income Butterfly Conservation receives from legacies helps us to achieve our conservation objectives throughout the UK. If you would like to learn how a gift in your will can make a difference in Scotland, please contact our Head of Fundraising, David Bridges on 01403 256175, or email dbridges@butterfly-conservation.org, or by post to him in confidence at Butterfly Conservation HQ, Manor Yard, East Lulworth, Wareham, Dorset BH20 5QP.

big butterfly count
14th - 31st July

Many thanks if you took part in Big Butterfly Count last year. The survey was launched in 2010 to mark the International Year of Biodiversity and is supported by Marks & Spencer. Butterflies react very quickly to changes in their environment which makes them excellent biodiversity indicators. That's why counting butterflies can be described as taking the pulse of nature. The count will also identify trends in species that will help us understand the effects of climate change on wildlife. Taking part is easy! Simply count butterflies for 15 min during bright (preferably sunny) weather from 16th to 31st July. We have chosen this time of year because most butterflies are at the adult stage of their lifecycle, so more likely to be seen. Records are welcome from anywhere: parks and gardens, fields and forests.

For Scotland last year, the results were:

1. Small White
2. Large White
3. Green-veined White
4. Small Tortoiseshell
5. Meadow Brown
6. Ringlet
7. Scotch Argus
8. Speckled Wood
9. Red Admiral
10. Common Blue

This year we're encouraging schools, particularly primary schools, to get involved. A new area of the Big Butterfly Count website will give teachers suggestions for activities, as well as offering free packs for schools. The latter will be allocated



on a first come first served basis so keep your eyes on the Big Butterfly Count website for details of how to register for a pack.

www.bigbutterflycount.org

Events

To find out what's on in your area, please visit www.butterfly-conservation.org/scotland, or our Branch websites (see back page). You will also find moth events at www.mothscount.org

Latest 'Where to see' guide out now

Butterflies and Day-Flying Moths of Tayside and Fife is the latest in our series of identification guides, covering the 29 butterflies that might be seen in the area, plus five common day-flying moths. It also includes flight periods and a gazetteer of 12 sites where the various species can be found. The booklet is free and was kindly funded by the Tayside Biodiversity Action Fund, Perth & Kinross Council, Fife Coast and



Robert Thompson

Butterfly Conservation is the UK charity dedicated to saving butterflies, moths and our environment.

Butterflies and moths are important because they respond quickly to change, revealing the health of the countryside. Seven out of ten butterfly species are in decline. Four butterflies and over 60 moths became extinct last century. This early warning to all wildlife cannot be ignored. We advise landowners, managers and other organisations on conserving and restoring important habitats in the countryside, towns and cities. We carry out surveys, monitoring and research, manage nature reserves and promote wildlife friendly gardening. With your support we can help struggling butterflies and moths recover and thrive.



Dark Green
Fritillary

Keith Warrington

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Scottish Government

Scottish Natural Heritage

RSPB

Tayside Biodiversity Action Fund

The Blair Foundation

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The Mackintosh Foundation

The Mitchell Trust

The Russell Trust

To find out more, subscribe to our quarterly e-newsletter by contacting Shona Greig

www.butterfly-conservation.org/scotland

This newsletter has been compiled by Paul Kirkland with contributions from David Bridges, Katie Cruickshanks, Shona Greig, Sandra Muldoon, Barry Prater, Tom Prescott, Daisy Shepperd, Alex Hogg and Zoë Randall.

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