

## Poplar Hawk-moth *Laothoe populi* (Linnaeus)

The Poplar Hawk-moth is a large (wingspan 72-92mm) distinctive species and is the most widely distributed and frequent hawk-moth in the British Isles, being recorded from all counties on mainland Britain. Typically flying at night, this moth can occasionally be found at rest by day, for example on tree trunks or fences.



Photograph Emily Funnell/Butterfly Conservation

The Poplar Hawk-moth's wings are patterned in shades of brown and grey and the moth typically rests with the hind wings projecting forward, in front of the forewing.

This serves to break up the typical triangular shape of the moth that some predators recognise, providing the Poplar Hawk-moth with a means of camouflage.

The Poplar Hawk-moth flies from May to July/August and is frequently attracted to light. The moth can be found in many habitats including, parks, gardens, woodland and heathland. The caterpillars feed on poplars, sallows and willows and can be located, by looking for their droppings (similar to small rabbit droppings) on pavements underneath the foodplants! When full grown they are typically finger-sized yellowish-green caterpillars and possess the tail hook that is characteristic of the Hawk-moth caterpillars.