



Butterfly Conservation



factsheet

Silky Wave

Idaea dilutaria

Conservation status

Priority Species in UK Biodiversity Action Plan.



- Larval record 1999 to 2004
- Adult record 1999 to 2004

The species name '*dilutaria*' comes from *dilutus*, meaning 'washed-out', in reference to the pale colour and faint wing markings of this small and delicate moth. The species has been recorded from a small number of sites in Wales and western England in recent years, namely the Great Orme, Caernarvonshire, the south Gower coast, Glamorgan, and the Avon Gorge near Bristol.

Foodplants

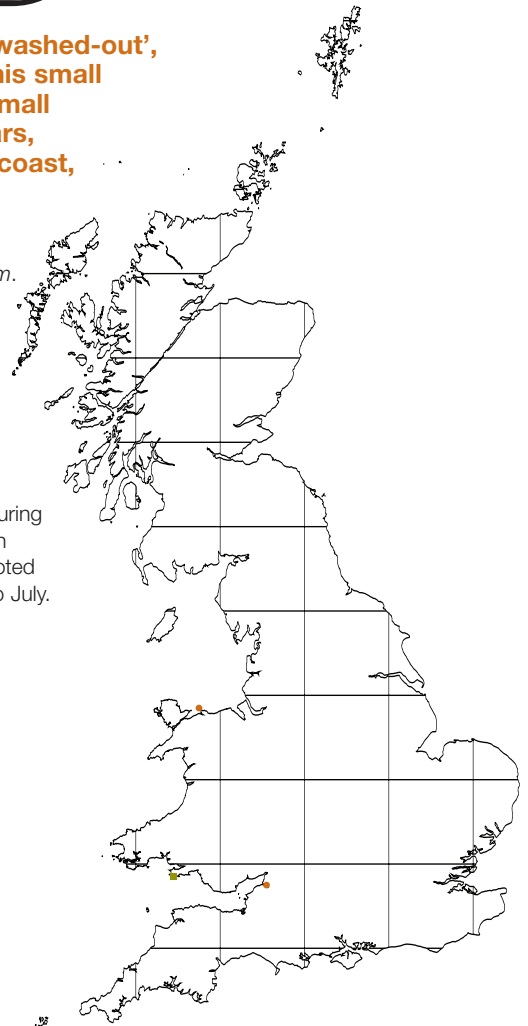
The larvae been found feeding on Common Rock-rose *Helianthemum nummularium*.

Habitat

The species is associated with ungrazed or very lightly grazed calcareous grassland, often with rocky outcrops or broken soils, primarily on south or south-west facing slopes. Suitable sites also have some longer vegetation or low scrub, which the adults use as shelter.

Life cycle

The species is single-brooded. The eggs are laid in July, with the larvae hatching during August and overwintering when only part-grown. The larvae become active again in spring and complete their development, pupating in June. The adults have been noted flying at dusk but can be readily disturbed from vegetation by day from late June to July.



	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Egg							■					
Larva	■	■	■	■	■			■	■	■	■	■
Pupa						■						
Adult						■	■					

Habitat management for the Silky Wave

The overall aim is to maintain a mosaic of diverse vegetation structure, with abundant Common Rock-rose, some bare patches and scattered low scrub.

- ◆ Any grazing should be very light or occasional to allow good growth of the foodplant.
- ◆ Occasional scrub removal may be necessary to maintain open conditions. This should be undertaken on rotation, leaving some low growing scrub as resting sites for the adult moth.
- ◆ Although this species tends to occur on slopes, some ground disturbance may be required to encourage suitable conditions for the foodplant.
- ◆ Small-scale burning trials have been conducted on the Gower and appear to have created suitable habitat in subsequent years, but the use of burning requires great caution and careful monitoring. Any burning undertaken must be in common with 'The Heather and Grass Burning code'. This Code can be found at www.defra.gov.uk/corporate/rds/hgbc.pdf

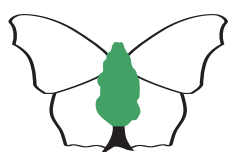
Please contact Butterfly Conservation if the species is suspected to be present on a site.

How to survey/monitor

The best method is searching for adults which are readily disturbed from vegetation, including low scrub, during the day.



left Suitable habitat within the Avon Gorge, Bristol
below Typical habitat on the Great Orme, Caernarvonshire



Butterfly Conservation

Saving butterflies, moths and their habitats

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The scheme includes Higher Level Stewardship, which supports management for targeted butterflies, moths and other biodiversity.