



# Huntingdonshire Moth & Butterfly Group

Newsletter No 12

September 1999

Sightings, rumours of sightings, sales, wants and exchanges should be sent to :—  
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## Poorest year in living memory

1999 has proved a disappointing season nationwide, particularly for moth trappers, with even fewer species coming to lights and in even lower numbers than in the wet summer of 1998. As 1999 has been on the whole warmer and drier than last year, we can presume that to some extent the moth populations are still suffering from last year's deluges.

However, a few notable records have turned up in the latter stages of the summer, notably a **Vestal**, recorded in Brampton Wood (during the daytime) on August 31st. This is a migrant moth that arrives each year in variable numbers, and is a new record for the site. A further 2 were found in a trap in Great Staughton on September 3rd. This location also had

a **Bordered Sallow** and an **Oak Eggar** on July 9th, with another **Oak Eggar** turning up at Bluntisham on the 23rd.

Butterflies too have been generally scarcer, though towards the end of August and into September there has been some improvement, with **Small Tortoiseshells** out in reasonable numbers, and even a few **Painted Ladies** here and there. Unusually, a batch of **Peacock** caterpillars were found on stinging nettles at Little Paxton Pits on September 5th. They had just reached the final instar, and will presumably give butterflies later in the month or in early October. The **Peacock** is normally single brooded in this country, and the larvae are more usually found in May and June.



## Monk's Wood

The moth trapping evening on July 17th proved a success, with no less than 13 lights being run in the wood until dawn. A mild evening helped persuade the moths out, with a total of 123 macro species being taken altogether. According to the organisers of the national moth trapping night, this is, provisionally, the longest list in the country. Sadly, there is no prize for this achievement.

## Subscriptions

The annual subscriptions for Hu.M.B.G. membership are due at our first Winter meeting on October 6th. Unfortunately, they have had to be increased to £5.00 (or £6.00 for joint membership) to cover the increased cost of producing the annual report.

## Surrey

Hu.M.B.G.'s visit to Surrey on July 25th, a day of blazing sunshine and temperatures in the 80's, proved satisfying for all who attended. The three sites visited yielded sightings of, amongst others, **Silver Washed Fritillary**, **White Admiral**, **Silver Studded Blue** and **Purple Emperor**. This last butterfly was a first for some of us. A full account will appear in the next report, published as usual in April.

## Winter Meetings — Update

Wednesday October 6th 1999: An evening with our chairman.  
Wednesday December 1st 1999: Peter Rowlings - Butterflies of Europe  
Wednesday February 9th 2000: Paul Waring - Woodland Moths  
Wednesday April 12th 2000: Members evening and quiz.  
All meetings start at 8pm, and will be held, as previously, at Woodhurst village hall.

Thanks to all those who have supplied information for this newsletter.

## Don't Forget...

The Amateur Entomologists' Society meeting at Kempton Park Racecourse, on October 2nd. Doors open to visitors at 11.00am.

● This is the last newsletter for 1999. The first for 2000 is due for publication in April. Information should be sent to the address at the top of the page.