

Knoll Gardens Moths - Summer-Autumn 2020

Here are some of the highlights from 'moth-ing' surveys at Knoll Gardens (August-October 2020). All trapping was undertaken at the edge of the 'Events Marquee'.

Three nights trapping during late summer/early autumn caught a **total of 30 moth species**. The **best 'haul'** was at the end of August with **20 species**. There were also several night flying 'interlopers' including 14 European Hornet (*Vespa crabro*) in the October trap!

The fantastic diversity of plants and habitats at Knoll is reflected in the range of moths recorded: 13 species were associated with grasses & herbaceous perennials, 12 with trees (including lichens) and 2 with ponds. Both Ringed China Mark & Small China mark have aquatic larvae, with the latter is found in duck weed.



Ringed China Mark



Common Wainscott

The **biggest 'catch'** was **8 Common Wainscott** (*Mythimna pallens*) at the end of August. This is a common British species with adults and caterpillars living in and feeding on **grasses**! Its not surprising that this species is doing well at Knoll!



Black Rustic

Other species 'enjoying' the **grasses** include the appropriately named Grass Veneer. These micro-moths are easily disturbed during the day often flying up in 'surprise'. The caterpillars overwinter deep amongst the bases of grasses.



Grass Veneer



Square Spot Rustic (faded specimen)



Flounced Rustic

More moths which utilise grasses for food and shelter include: Flounced Rustic (*Luperina testacea*), Square Spot Rustic (*Xestia xanthographa*) and Black Rustic (*Aporophyla nigra*).



Oak Hook Tip



Black Arches

Its not just the grasses which are providing shelter and food for moths. Knoll's **trees** are important hosts for several stages of their life cycle. Caterpillars of Figure of Eight (*Diloba caeruleocephala*), Oak Hook Tip (*Watsonalla binaria*) and Black Arches (*Lymantria monacha*) munch on the foliage of various trees such as oak, birch, chestnut, hawthorn and blackthorn.



Figure of Eight



Rosy Footman

Lichens, often found harmlessly growing on the bark of trees, are a vital food source for larvae of Scarce footman (*Eilema complana*), Dingy Footman (*Eilema griseola*) and Rosy Footman (*Miltochrista miniata*).

The range of **herbaceous perennials** in the gardens provide nectar for many moths and are food and shelter for the larvae of: Shuttle Shaped Dart (*Agrostis puta*), Setaceous Hebrew Character (*Xestia c-nigrum*), Large Yellow Underwing (*Noctua pronuba*) and Small Square Spot (*Diarsia rubi*)



Setaceous Hebrew Character



Shuttle Shaped Dart



Large Yellow Underwing



Small Square Spot



Compiled by Mitch Perkins. With thanks to George Green for helping with surveys and to Alistair Homer, Nick Hull, Tracy Standish & Paul Harris for help with IDs.

Results Aug-Oct 2020

| Common Name | Latin name | 4th August 2020 (Bioblitz) | 23rd August 2020 | 15th October 2020 |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------------|------------------|-------------------|
| Black Arches | <i>Lymantria monacha</i> | 2 | | |
| Black Rustic | <i>Aporophyla nigra</i> | | | 1 |
| Buff Footman | <i>Eilema depressa</i> | 1 | | |
| Caddis spp | | | 10 | |
| Chestnut | <i>Conistra vaccinnii</i> | | | 1 |
| Common Wainscott | <i>Mythimna pallens</i> | | 8 | |
| Cranefly | | | | 3 |
| Dingy Footman | <i>Eilema griseola</i> | 1 | 1 | |
| Flounced Rustic | <i>Luperina testacea</i> | | 1 | |
| European Hornet | | 1 | 2 | 14 |
| Figure of Eight | <i>Diloba caeruleocephala</i> | | | 1 |
| Grass Veneer | <i>unknown</i> | 1 | | |
| Grass Veneer | <i>Crambus lathoniellus?</i> | | 1 | |
| Knot Grass | <i>Acrionicta rumicis</i> | 1 | | |
| Large Yellow Underwing | <i>Noctua pronuba</i> | | 1 | |
| Light Emerald | <i>Campaea margaritaria</i> | | 1 | |
| Maiden's Blush | <i>Cyclophora punctaria</i> | | 1 | |
| Micro | <i>Cydia splendana</i> | 1 | | |
| Micro | <i>Metalampra italica</i> | 1 | | |
| Oak Hook Tip | <i>Watsonalla binaria</i> | | 4 | |
| Ringed China Mark | <i>Parapoynx stratiotata</i> | 1 | | |
| Rosy Footman | <i>Miltochrista miniata</i> | 2 | 2 | |
| Rosy Rustic | <i>Hydraecia micacea</i> | | 1 | |
| Scarce Footman | <i>Eilema complana</i> | 1 | | |
| Setaceous Hebrew Character | <i>Xestia c-nigrum</i> | | 1 | |
| Shuttle Shaped Dart | <i>Agrotis puta</i> | 1 | 2 | |
| Small China Mark | <i>Cataclysta lemnata</i> | | 1 | |
| Small Square Spot Rustic | <i>Diarsia rubi</i> | | 1 | |
| Square Spot Rustic | <i>Xestia xanthographa</i> | | | 1 |
| Straw Dot | <i>Rivula sericealis</i> | 1 | | |
| Knoll Micro A | <i>Blastobasis adustella</i> | | 1 | |
| Knoll Tortrix A | <i>Cochylis atricapitana</i> | | 1 | |
| Unid wasp | | | 2 | |
| Vines Rustic | <i>Hoplodrina ambigua</i> | | 2 | |