



## **SPECIAL 15<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY ISSUE**

### **WARWICKSHIRE BRANCH MOTH EQUIPMENT**

**2018 - A Legacy of Inspiration**



### **Alan Prior**

**Moth Photographs by Martin Kennard, Pete Smith & Alan Prior  
Cover Photograph by Alan Prior**



682 *Depressaria chaerophylli* (Martin Kennard)



1015 *Eulia ministrana* (Pete Smith)



1290 *Chilo phragmitella* (Martin Kennard)



1303 *Agriphila selasella* (Martin Kennard)



1358 *Evergestis pallidata* (Alan Prior)



1371 *Sitochroa verticalis* (Martin Kennard)

## **Introduction**

The year didn't get off to the best of starts (see January). The early part of the year was generally cold with periods of snow now and again. This limited opportunities for making the effort to get out and record. Yet again, it was a year with no discernible spring, but summer did arrive and stayed with us for a good long while. It was the most sustained period of summer weather since 2006, and what a lot of us had been waiting for since then. There was a noticeable difference though. This year the winds were generally from the north or northeast. That kept many of the migrants away from the Midlands and so what we managed to record were almost exclusively "our" moths. Most of us were totally out of practice counting so many moths and got the feeling some nights that even putting a single trap out was one too many! It became relentless and I had decided to stop doing quite so much by the start of August. I was "mothed out!" Thankfully others fulfilled the commitments we had on the schedule and I was able to take some time out. It was a memorable year for many different reasons. Read on...

## **January**

I knew this would be the difficult bit. The beginning of 2018 was both happy and sad. Val finally decided she'd had enough and departed on the last day of the month. However, she did it after fulfilling the last commitment in her diary, which was how she wanted it. The moth recorder's social night that she had organised for around a decade was to be her last outing. As always, she was full of laughter that night and had a great time with everyone that attended. It was a very fitting way to go out. Three days later she passed away peacefully after waiting for me to get up and give her one last kiss on the forehead. It was a bittersweet moment, as I was happy she didn't have to struggle anymore, but sad that I'd lost my better half. But we'd both taken things as far as we could and Val had an absolute ball over the past couple of years. As ends go, it was about as good as it could have been. So, it was difficult to be sad and every time I think of her it just makes me smile and I know that's exactly how she'd want it. All of you who were lucky enough to know or meet Val should try and do the same. That would make her extremely happy.

## **February**

There was a brief window of opportunity in the middle of the month to get the recording year underway. Martin Kennard suggested making a visit to Sun Rising to try and find some of the species missing from the list. Chris Johnson, Steve Chappell and the Pete's, Beasley and Smith managed to join him and nine traps were set up around the site. Unfortunately, I couldn't join them as that was the evening I had a catering meeting for Val's upcoming Celebration Service or FUN-eral, as she called it! (More on that in March.) It proved to be a reasonably mild evening, although by the end the northerly breeze was increasing. However, by then the objective had been achieved and four species were newly recorded for the site. They were ***Mompha jurassicella***, **Pale Brindled Beauty**, **Early Moth** and **Satellite**. So it was a successful start to the year and well done all for following Martin's lead and taking a chance on the weather.

## **March**

Thankfully the snow had melted enough by the day that everybody got their chance to say farewell to our Val. It was astonishing to see how many people were waiting at the Crematorium when I arrived. Val had arranged everything herself and my job was just to see it all went like she wanted. I'm happy to say that it all went as planned and was a true celebration of Val's life with plenty of her favourite things included - laughter. I can never thank Anna Ryder and Brad Marr enough for singing a couple of Val's favourite songs live. Anybody who was there will probably never forget their fantastic performances or the afternoon itself. It was a brilliant reflection of an amazing life lived and hopefully everybody left with a smile on their face, like she wanted. Thanks to everyone who managed to cram into the Crematorium and our house afterwards it was a pretty 'Magical Monday'. Well done and thank you Val.

Near the end of the month Martin made a solo visit to Fenny Compton Tunnels to assess the viability of future moth nights there. It is located in an under recorded part of the county and so could prove valuable. Generally an open site the weather would certainly be a consideration when visiting though. Martin was fairly successful with 11 species recorded. Amongst them were ***Agonopterix heracliana***, ***Acleris hastiana***, **March Moth**, **Oak Beauty** and all the common *Orthosia*'s.

## **April**

I finally managed to get out and see some moths myself at the beginning of April. It was far from a normal moth night though. I went down to Jean and David Cholerton's place near Bidford-on-Avon. I persuaded Jean to put a couple of traps out for the first time this year before heading off to my destination for the evening. I was off to see some friends play a gig in Evesham and said I would pop in on the way home to see what she'd got. After the gig I got chatting with the band until almost 1 am! I'd told Jean that I should be back around midnight. Whoops! So when I realised the time I made a sharp exit and went back to Jean's where she was just about ready to give up on me. However, after me apologising, Jean managed to stave off the tiredness and we had a look in the two traps. Despite it being quite a cool night they'd done pretty well and in the end 87 moths had been counted of nine species. Jean was very happy that I'd suggested putting the traps out. I was happy that I'd just managed to get back in time for her to see what she'd caught. Amongst the species found were ***Diurnea fagella***, **Shoulder Stripe** and **Lead-coloured Drab**.

After I cancelled the scheduled visit to Weethley Wood the previous day the weather decided to change its mind and was going to be quite good. Martin first let on that it wasn't going to be as we'd expected and so I suggested taking a trip down memory lane and going to Chaddesley Wood for the first time in almost 2 years. Everyone who was going to Weethley ended up going to Chaddesley instead, which was good. So, as well as me, the night's recorders would be Chris, Martin and the Pete's. We all drove up to the shed and parked before having a good wander round to see what had been going on over the past two years. It seemed there had been some random chopping down of Pine trees with no actual sense of a plan, fairly typical these days. Anyway, we eventually decided to concentrate the traps in the shed area. It was cloudy and amazingly mild considering what we've been through in this never-ending winter. For me it was just nice to be out somewhere again. With the traps on the 'tea shop' was set up by the shed and we all had a catch up chat about everything and nothing. We had a nice surprise as Rose Needham had walked up from the gate to come and see us. She'd brought with her a Barn Owl willow sculpture that she'd made and presented it to me. That was a lovely thought, wasn't it? After a cuppa, Rose said it was time for her to head home and I walked down to the gate with her. Everyone else started on a round of the eight traps. I managed to catch up with them and there were plenty of moths with interest being kept up all the time. After another tea break it was decided to start counting up. That took quite a while and it was after 2 am before the last light (mine!) went off. It had been a fun night and lovely to see some moths again. Over 700 moths of 29 species were recorded and it was a good start to finally getting my year underway properly. Some of the species recorded were ***Eriocrania sangii***, ***Eriocrania semipurpurella***, ***Semiscopis avellanella***, ***Acleris literana***, **Yellow Horned**, **Early Tooth-striped**, **Pine Beauty** and **Oak Nycteoline**. The most amazing thing today was that there were no roadworks at all in the Bromsgrove area and I had a good journey there and back!

I had to make a slight detour on the way to the next moth night. I had to pop in to the Army Base at Kineton and see if I could make contact with the new person there, so we can continue going later in the year. That done, it was only a short trip across to Sun Rising. It was nice to have enough time to wander round and see all the changes since I was last there back in August 2017 and also to find Val's plaque that Emma and David have put up for Val down near the pond. I saw a Hare bounding about at the top of the field too. I'd just finished the tour round when Peter arrived. There was a slight southeasterly breeze and so the traps were set in their normal sheltered spots by the hedge and the hut. Just as everything was set up Emma and David arrived for a short visit. It was great to see them too after so long. Just after they went home we switched on. It was a clear but mild night. Unfortunately the breeze was playing a significant part in why not too many moths were showing up and when it got stronger and switched to more of an easterly we was decided to call it a night. However, it had been productive, as we'd managed to get two new species for the site recorded amongst the mediocre return. They were **Water Carpet** and **Herald**. It was just nice to be back at Sun Rising though and so I didn't mind not having too many moths to count. Seeing Val's plaque alone would have made it all worth it. The weird part was when I got home there was no wind at all and the garden trap was very busy. It included a new species for the garden, as a lovely **Streamer** welcomed me home. All in all it was a good night, mainly because we weren't freezing for a change!

Martin then made another solo trip, this time to the under recorded area around Warmington and a small bit of accessible habitat near the church. It proved quite successful with 16 species recorded. They included **Double-striped Pug**, **Purple Thorn**, **Engrailed** and **Chestnut**.

The last trip of the month was to Wolford Wood. Peter managed to join Martin on a reasonably mild night. However, a thunderstorm didn't help matters and a fair while was spent sheltering in vehicles until it passed. But it was a productive night despite the deluge and the four traps attracted over 500 moths representing 44 species. Amongst them were ***Eriocrania unimaculella***, ***Eriocrania salopiella***, ***Agonopterix ocellana***, **Brindled Beauty**, **Grey Birch**, **White-marked** and **Nut-tree Tussock**.

## **May**

Early in the month I managed to join Scott Hackett at the Nature Reserve at Temple Balsall. He had already arrived and had loaded up a wheelbarrow with his mothing stuff. He then wheeled it over to where the Reserve begins and then gave me a tour round. It was nice to finally get here after hearing Scott talk about it so often. There was a place quite near the car that I liked the look of and I said I'd stick a trap there. By this time Adrian Smith and Peter Beasley had arrived. With trapping locations agreed we started setting up. I had just finished one trap and was coming back for the other when a couple of locals arrived and it was decided that they could plug into me and so I didn't need the second trap, but we did need the cable as they didn't have much. They only had a light and a sheet and Scott gave them an extra couple of egg boxes. With everything up and running it was catch up time at Peter and Adrian's 'tea shop' tonight! The evening had begun cloudy and there was no wind. Things looked promising, but by the time a round of the traps was done the skies had cleared and the temperature had started to plummet. There was still no wind, which was the upside. There were moths in every trap, but not many and things were slow. However, with the site list being so terrible we felt sure there would be something new amongst the things we had managed to record. After another stop at the 'tea shop' the locals decided to pack up. With conditions not improving the rest of us decided to do the same. However, we had waited long enough for the usual late arrivals to appear and we ended up with a list of 27 species. Not too bad considering the conditions. So a worthwhile venture, and amongst the species recorded were ***Epinotia immundana***, **Dark-barred Twin-spot Carpet**, **Waved Umber**, **Chocolate-tip** and **Muslin Moth**.

The following evening I had a good journey down to Weethley Wood, but arrived to find a pile of carpet had been fly-tipped in the entrance. I moved it and put a lot of it down the ruts and so had a very smooth journey through the gate! We had a wander round and saw that some excellent management work had been going on and that should make the track a lot drier in future. I was just returning from my wander when Peter arrived. Once trapping spots had been decided it was a little wait to switch on. With the lights finally on it was time for refreshments and chat. It was a mild night (especially for Weethley) despite the lack of cloud. There was a slow but steady stream of moths arriving at the traps and the list slowly grew. In the end it amounted to a very respectable 38 species including a couple of new ones for the site. We also managed a quick glimpse of the first **Silver Cloud** seen at the wood since 1990. Shame it didn't hang around for Peter to get a better look, as it was a new moth for him. We finally packed up and headed for home about 3:30 am. Some of the species recorded were ***Incurvaria mascullella***, ***Parornix finitimella***, ***Pammene argyrana***, **Devon Carpet**, **Seraphim**, **Coxcomb Prominent** and **Alder Moth**.

I set off early tonight, as I didn't know what sort of journey I'd have down to Sun Rising. As it turned out, it was OK. Steve Chappell was already there when I arrived. He'd had a wander and was looking at some moths he'd caught. I went off to find Emma & David who were at the new car park at the top of the field. After a chat I wandered round the bit of Sun Rising I hadn't since my first ever visit. I saw some Yellowhammer's flitting around the hedge. That was nice, as I haven't seen them for a long time. I also saw a Green Woodpecker, which would have pleased Val. I went and visited her plaque as I passed the pond before returning to the car. By this time the Pete's had arrived and we got to sorting out trapping spots, as there was a slight breeze. It was a shame that a cold front had passed through this afternoon as although it was lovely evening, we expected the night to get cold. I wandered up with Pete to the top again and had another chat while Emma & David burned some Ash dieback before getting back to set up our traps in the usual spots. Chris had now arrived and he decided to head out into the unknown! With the lights on and the 'tea shop' being set up Emma & David came by and said goodnight on their way home. As expected, due to the clear skies the temperature went down with the sun, although the wind also disappeared. It was a slow night, but there were some bats flying around, so that gave us a little hope. Considering the conditions a reasonable list of 25 species had been amassed by the end, of which 5 were new for the site. They were ***Nematopogon swammerdamella***, ***Parornix devoniella***, ***Elachista apicipunctella***, ***Mompha subbistrigella*** and **Least Black Arches**. It was a relatively early switch off due to that cold and after a chat with Chris I set off for home.

Next it was back down to Jean's and I and arrived to find the others were somewhere along the railway line deciding where to set up. I bumped into David first and he was just trying to finish his dinner. Then Jean showed up and gave me a nice warm welcome. With Jean's, Martin's and the Pete's traps being set up I didn't really want to run one myself, as I have a long day tomorrow. Thankfully nobody pressured me into doing one and so I just took some photos on the tour of the traps. The last recorder Sarah Shuttleworth was a 'newbie' and she had some complicated title with Warwickshire Wildlife Trust and/or Council. She was enthusiastic and eager to learn. The weather was reasonable and after some initial refreshment there was always something to see in each trap on the first tour round. After more refreshment another tour was undertaken. It was just after that was completed that the news filtered through that two **Silver Cloud** had just arrived and so I had to see them before we headed for home. It made me about an hour later than I wanted to be, but I may not see **Silver Cloud** again this year, so it was worth it. Although not a particularly busy night a dozen new species were added to the site list amongst the 39 recorded. Some of them were ***Parornix anglicella*, *Coleophora alticolella*, *Syndemis musculana*, *Cnephasia communana*, Ochreous Pug, Scalloped Hazel and Iron Prominent.**

Just in case you are wondering the following day's early start for me was due to driving up the dreaded M6 to see a Rugby League match at Warrington!

Tonight it was one of the longer journeys within the county for a moth night. I was doing OK until getting stuck behind a truck for miles. Amazingly it turned off when I least expected it and so I arrived at Wolford Wood a few minutes early instead of being late like I was expecting. The Pete's were already there and had found loads of caterpillars for Martin to ID! We had a wander to see what work had been done and it all looked really good. When we got back Martin had arrived and so we sorted the car parking arrangements out and got to setting up. With everything switched on we all retired to the 'tea shop'. It was about the nicest night we'd had so far this year, as it had been a warm day and the starting temperature was high. There was no wind, but also no clouds. However, the temperature only went down slowly and there were plenty of moths to see, as well as all those caterpillars! A nice little list was being built on the first round of the traps and even some moths expected in May were putting in an appearance! After another refreshment break a second round was undertaken and this was when Marcus, the woods owner and crew, plus dogs showed up. Luckily we had a Poplar Hawk-moth to keep the 'crowd' entertained and they all went on their way happy with that. One last cuppa and it was tally time. It made a change that we did actually have some moths to count and it was almost the first all-nighter of the year. It was getting light as we all started the journey home just after 4 a.m. With more species now starting to appear thanks to better weather the species count reached 80. Amongst them were ***Carpatolechia proximella*, *Hysterochroa maculosana*, *Eulia ministrana*, *Eucosmomorpha albersana*, Peach Blossom, Cream Wave, Little Emerald, Mottled Pug, Lobster Moth** and both **Clouded Drab** and **Hebrew Character** were still around.

My word for tonight was "eventure"! It all started calmly enough as I had a good journey down to Kineton and was first to arrive for a change. I got signed it etc. and went off to the missile to wait for Martin and Peter. They arrived a little while after and then we all trooped over to the Police Post to sign in. As there was a potential threat of thunderstorms later Martin asked about a radio and if we should we have one. The soldier thought it would be a good idea and so Martin took charge of that. We'd arrived in enough time to have a good look round some bits that we hadn't before and considered where to put the traps. The wind was a major annoying factor and so the traps needed to be sheltered behind hedges out of it. Eventually locations were sorted and everyone got to setting up. There was about a mile spread between Martin's two spots with Peter and myself in the middle-ish! After I'd set up I waited a while to make sure everything was working OK before driving down to the 'tea shop'. I found the other two in a bus shelter munching and gulping. The moon was still clearly visible and so after I had my lunch we set off on a round of the traps. It was going OK with something of interest at each one. As we drove down to the last one I saw lightning in the sky and noticed that it had clouded over. A slight change in the wind direction had also taken place. While we were at Martin's furthest actinic we heard over the radio that there was an "amber warning" about an approaching storm. A few seconds later that had gone up to a "red warning" and we were "invited" to leave our trapping area. First however, everyone rushed back and put umbrellas over the traps before evacuating the area. Just as we were about to head out of the 'danger zone' a soldier drove up to check we had heard the message and we were shifting. I told him we were just on our way. I went and parked in the missile car park and wandered over to the Police Post to see if I had to go any further. Thankfully, I was OK where I was. The soldier told me there had been over 1,500 lightning strikes in the area since the storm had arrived less than half an hour ago.

It wasn't long before Martin and Peter joined me and they had a discussion about whether to go for a cuppa or not. Eventually they did and as I thought there was only enough room under Peter's car boot for two, I stayed in my car. The storm got more and more powerful and intense and it was spectacular. The almost continuous lightning and frequent heavy downpours were quite amazing. We hadn't seen anything like this in a very long time. It was an extraordinary experience being out there in such a storm and I took some bits of video of it from the car. After two hours the storm had finally passed far enough for me to persuade the soldier to let us go back to our traps and pack up. We told him it would take around an hour and we couldn't really do it any quicker. When we got back we found all the umbrellas still over all the traps and so we'd done really well to site them where we did. There was still the odd spot of rain as we started to count up, but that soon stopped. An hour after our return I'd just finished loading the car when Martin drove up and we both set off for the exit not knowing if Peter had already gone or not. We found he was still packing up, as there was no sign of him at the Police Post. However, it was only a few minutes before he made his way out too. All of us were safe and we'd had one noisy night's mothing. We even got some new moths for the site amongst the 82 species we recorded. After signing out we all headed on the soggy journey home. Some of the new species for the site were ***Nemophora degeerella***, ***Phyllonorycter harrisella***, ***Notocelia trimaculana***, **Figure of Eighty**, **Purple Bar**, **Pale-shouldered Brocade**, **Green Silver-lines** and **Dark Spectacle**.

I made a return visit to Jean and David's at Cranhill today and persuaded Jean to only run one trap tonight. I thought that would be plenty, as there was another storm on the way. We then all had a chat while Jean got my dinner on! It's lovely coming here, as I always get fed! After dinner I said thank you and goodbye for the moment. I then had the five miles left to go to get to Evesham for the evenings gig. I hadn't seen "My Girls" or Tequila Mockingbyrd as they are collectively known, since last August and will never forget how they helped me out of a tight spot by taking Val to a gig while I was out mothing. While the gig had been going on the storm had duly arrived. It wasn't as intense as last Saturday or Sunday's, but there was still a lot of thunder and lightning with occasional deluges of heavy rain. It had pretty much passed by the time the gig was over. The time just flew by and it wasn't until just before 2 am before I realised the time and said my farewells. Then it was back to Jean's and a telling off from Jean again because I was so late. However, we were soon looking at moths in the trap and counting up an awful lot of them! It took over an hour before we were done and we were both pleased that only one trap had been switched on. So, it was about 3:30 before I was finally on my way home to another load of moths to count in the garden trap. Jean's trap had produced 65 species and another batch of new species for the site. Amongst them were ***Argyresthia cupressella***, ***Cochylis nana***, ***Anania fuscalis***, **Grass Rivulet**, **Tawny-barred Angle** and **Orange Footman**.

## June

The first trip of the month was the first of a few long nights this year at Hodnell Farm. John Finlay, Chris and the Pete's joined Martin this time. I was unable to attend, as I had a previous commitment with "My Girls"! Summer had arrived and so had the moths. The first 100 species count of the year and also the first to top 1,000 individuals too. This is the first proper year of recording at this site and so being in an under recorded area almost everything was either new for the site and/or the hectad. They included ***Argyresthia glabratella***, which was also new for Warwickshire. Amongst the other species recorded were ***Elachista argentella***, ***Rhyacionia pinivorana***, ***Platyptilia gonodactyla***, **Spruce Carpet**, **Mottled Pug**, **Pale Oak Beauty**, **Cabbage Moth**, **Marbled Minor** and **Beautiful Golden Y**.

The following night Martin joined David Brown for a visit to Piles Coppice and he reports "There was quite a large turn out for this, as half the attendees were from the 'Friends of' group. I managed to see 12 traps that were split between 7 recorders. The two in 'Redland Meadow' were almost empty with clear skies above, however those of us in 'Piles Coppice' were kept busy with a good selection of moths. Apart from the clear sky, another reason for not trapping in the meadow was that the mozzies were particularly vicious early on! I must have seen at least 7 **Pauper Pugs** (I had 5) and both David and I had **Lobster Moths** plus Alec caught a **Valerian Pug**. So targets achieved. The 'Friends of' group were hoping the records of **Pauper Pug** might help protect some of the mature Limes and I would certainly hope so. There was a nice selection of micros including ***Narycia duplicella***, ***Triaxomera fulvimitrella***, ***Teleiodes luculella*** and ***Choristoneura hebenstreitella***. Some of the other 'larger' moths recorded were **Common Lutestring**, **Brindled White-spot**, **Marbled Brown** and **Obscure Wainscot**."

I had arranged to go and see friends in Cirencester before the next scheduled moth night. However, we carried on chatting just a bit too long and I didn't leave there for the moth night until just before 8 pm. Oops! Luckily, I had a great journey and arrived at Highfield Farm in Honington only ten minutes late. I joined Martin, Chris and the Pete's and we still had enough time to be taken on a tour of the place by Farmer Tom on the back of his pickup truck. The place was huge and we had some fantastic views of the Cotswolds and its valleys. We were spoilt for choice as to where to set up the traps, as it was all great habitat. However, I ended up surrounded by barns and agricultural machinery like normal! Chris was on the front lawn, the Pete's were across and up from me and Martin was bravest and borrowed Farmer Tom's truck to take his equipment to the far reaches of the farm. We never actually got to his traps, as there's not a great deal of darkness at this time of year. With everyone set up it was 'tea shop' time until it was decided we ought to do a round of the traps. Despite the clear sky and mediocre temperature there was no wind and the traps were reasonably busy. A decent list was built before a return to the 'tea shop' was made. Then Martin decided it was time to drive back to his traps and we all started to tally. That took a fair while, but we still had quite a wait before Martin to arrived. We'd guessed that he would have done very well and had a lot to count. With no sign of him arriving back at the barns Chris decided he ought to head for home. Farmer Tom joined us just as I was about to empty my last trap and so I was able to show him my haul. Finally the wanderer returned and Martin had plenty of new species to show us. We finally managed to head for home just before 5 am. The final tally of almost 1,500 moths counted representing 128 species wasn't bad for such a cool night and said more about the quality of the habitat than anything. Amongst them were ***Coleophora deauratella*, *Scrobipalpa atriplicella*, *Grapholita lobarzewskii*, *Stenoptilia bipuncidactyla*, Blotched Emerald, Broken-barred Carpet, Small Elephant Hawk-moth, Shears, Miller** and most numerous of all was **Large Nutmeg**.

National Moth Night was upon us once again and the venue for the first night was Oversley Wood, as the target was Pyralids. However, the weather was decidedly mediocre and so we weren't expecting a mega night. I had a journey I didn't really require, as the road I needed to use was closed and there wasn't an alternative, so they shouldn't be allowed to close such roads should they? I ended up on a lot of little roads and went through some Warwickshire villages I'd never seen before. Thankfully my inbuilt compass got me back on the road I should have been on and we arrived only a few minutes late. Martin and the Pete's were just unlocking the gate and I pulled up behind Sarah, as she'd just arrived too. There was some discussion about where everybody was going to set their traps before we drove in so we could get all the vehicles in the right order. That done, off we went. I had volunteered to do the crossroads and it was nice to be back there after so long. There were some mountain-bikers there and I asked them which track they used most, so I didn't set a trap on it. They soon disappeared anyway and the setting up was soon finished. I was just having a sit down and waiting for darkness when a couple came wandering passed. They were really interested in what we were doing and had a long chat with me before going on their way. After switching on I wandered up to the 'tea shop', where I found everybody else except Martin. He arrived shortly after and joined in the chat. One of the first moths in Peter's trap was a **Pine Hawk-moth** and that wowed a few, as they hadn't seen one before. That kept everyone amused for a while and a round of the traps was begun a little while after. However, it was time for my lunch so I went back to the car and had that. When that was done I wandered back and found everybody still at Pete's first trap, so we hadn't missed much. The tour of the traps was completed after a long trek out to Martin's, which everyone questioned if it was still in the wood! There had always been something of interest at all the traps and so it took quite a while to get round. By the time we had got round Sarah decided to head for home and we went back to start counting up. That took a while, but not quite as long as Martin, as he'd also put one up the hill amongst the Lime's. However, I found him just packing up his last trap and it wasn't long before everyone had swopped "new" moths and we were heading out of the wood and on our way home. As it was 5 am I hoped for a better journey back and thankfully I got that. It was a decent if not spectacular night, but you can always rely on Oversley for producing some quality moths. Amongst the 155 species recorded were ***Taleporia tubulosa*, *Coleophora milvipennis*, *Alabonia geoffrella*, *Pseudosciaphila branderiana*, *Scoparia basistrigalis*, Satin Lutestring, Small Emerald, Green Arches and Brown Rustic**.

For the final National Moth Night we were heading back down to Jean's, as she'd offered to host us all again this year. I went down after dinner, but earlier so as to avoid the damn road being shut again. I set up my trap in the front garden, as nobody had done that before. So I was ready when the others arrived at around 8:30. Martin, Chris, the Pete's and Sarah all set up more traps along the railway line before retiring to the conservatory for tea, cakes and the usual fun banter. It had been very breezy when I arrived, but that had dropped by the time the traps were switched on.

It was another steady night of chat and moths and quite a list was being built again, just like at Oversley. I knew Jean had a couple of sausage rolls stashed away and asked if I could have them. So while the others went to start the count I had them, so I didn't make anybody jealous! Sorry Peter! It was another long night and I was last to leave around 5:15 am, just as the odd raindrop was leaking out of the sky. It was another highly enjoyable night of fun, food and moths and the National Moths Night's are done for another year. As we weren't far from Oversley it shouldn't be surprising that the counts were very similar. Amongst the 155 species were ***Ectoedemia subbimaculella*, *Argyresthia curvella*, *Phtheochroa rugosana*, *Epinotia signatana*, *Sitochroa verticalis*, *Assara terebrella*, Pine Carpet, Sloe Pug, Eyed Hawk-moth, Grey Arches and Dusky Brocade.**

I had a return trip to Sun Rising for the next scheduled moth night. The weather was OK and it was mild, but a bit breezy. I had a bit of a worry on the way, as while I was on the M40 the red battery light lit up on the dashboard. Nothing felt wrong and we couldn't let anyone know that we wouldn't be there if we stopped, so I decided to carry on and thankfully we made it. Steve Chappell was in the car park already, despite us being half an hour early! Then the Pete's arrived and finally Chris. We all decided to set the traps in the same places as last time and once that was done we all met at the 'tea shop' to wait for dark. David came and said "Hello" to us all and stayed a little while chatting before heading for home. When the lights went on it was a steady night with the continuous arrival of moths to the traps. There was plenty to keep everyone busy and entertained. After one round of the traps and some more refreshment it was decided that as the traps were busy we should begin counting up. That took quite a while and it was light by the time we'd all finished. Despite most of the night having clear skies the temperature had stayed up well for Sun Rising. Almost 2,000 moths had been counted and we managed to find one more species than on the two National Moth Nights (156). More than a dozen new species for the site were found amongst them and included ***Argyresthia spinosella*, *Coleophora anatipennella*, *Aphelia unitana*, *Rhodophaea formosa*, Blue-bordered Carpet and Cream-bordered Green Pea.** Now it was decision time for me, as I hoped the car would start and I would be able to get home. It did and I did, but not without continuous concerns as that red light was on all the way. However, I made it and thanked Val for looking after me when I got in. Phew!

Thankfully I got the car back in time, as it was only a fan belt that needed replacing and so this evening I was able to go on the scheduled moth night to Abbey Farm. I arrived to find Peter chatting with Farmer Jon. Soon after, Martin arrived and a surprise attendee was Ieuan Blackmore for the first time this year. Chris also came along, but wasn't putting up a trap. It had been a warm day, but it would be clear overnight and so the temperature was expected to plummet as usual. With trap locations settled everyone got to work setting up. Once that was done we retired to the barn to wait for darkness and switch on time. We found all the guests from the B & B were in residence and we all had a long and amusing chat with them before they disappeared to sleep and we switched on. The rest of the night was business as usual, as we sat around in the barn chatting away. It did finally get cold enough and that got us to move and do a round of the traps. They were reasonably busy, but nowhere near overwhelming, as the temperature had indeed gone down a lot. It was decided to call it a night relatively early, as the temperature had dipped below 5°C and not too much was flying. My generator started to play up and kept switching the lights off, which was very annoying when trying to count. I persevered and at least got some figures. I asked if Martin could take it and have a look at it for me, as I hadn't got the time to take it to get a proper service. I was very grateful that Martin agreed to have a look for me. So it was a rare slow night and only 93 species were recorded, but five new species for the site were found. They were ***Lozotaenia forsterana*, *Pterophorus pentadactyla*, Large Emerald, Currant Pug and Privet Hawk-moth.**

I headed down to Jean's yet again today. I arrived just before 5 pm and as usual received a warm welcome. It was a lovely day and we sat in the garden for a while and I even got a good look at a Marbled White basking on one of the trees. That was nice, as I don't see them very often. Things followed a familiar pattern as after dinner I made my way down to Evesham to see "My Girls" play a gig. Lessons had been learned from the past and so I told Jean not to wait up this time, as I didn't want to get shouted at (in a whisper) for being late again! In the end, I thought time was getting on a bit and I better get back and count Jean's moths for her. I said goodbye to the girls and set off just before 3 am. I arrived to find Jean had left all the gates open for me, but she was nowhere to be found. I guessed she was still sleeping and so I just got on with counting the moths. There were plenty and it took almost an hour before the one trap was counted. On the way back I took the plug out and left a **Blackneck** and a **Lilac Beauty** with a note for Jean saying everything was counted. I shut all the gates and was finally on my way home shortly after 4 am.

68 species was a good return for the trap and apart from those mentioned above amongst the others recorded were ***Epinotia abbreviana***, ***Notocelia rosaecolana***, **Thistle Ermine**, **V-Pug**, **Elephant Hawk-moth** and **Spectacle**.

Tonight I joined David Brown on one of his moth nights. I arrived in the overflow car park at Farnborough Hall, which is not far from Kineton but on the other side of the motorway, to find Steve waiting for somebody to arrive to confirm he was in the right place! He was grateful to see me. Shortly after me David arrived and then Martin and Sarah. There was also another family who were going to run a trap and lastly we had the surprise of seeing Jason Hawkes show up too. With the usual chat and the a reccy of a site we weren't familiar done, trapping locations were finally sorted and everybody got to work setting up. A tea break was taken before switching on and when it was time for my lunch a round of the traps was started. I caught up with everyone at my trap, as they'd all had plenty to see. David took his 'disciples' briefly around Martin and Sarah's traps before disappearing to his and the others traps. I took a little more time, as we record all the moths! Sorry David, couldn't resist it! I managed to catch everyone else up and see the furthest flung traps. Not long after the tour of the traps had been completed David packed up and his decision to go home was greeted by a spectacular firework going off! The Mum with the family was having major trouble getting their posh car to go in reverse. It was an automatic and had far too much technology for any of us to cope with that was apart from Jason, who with patience and some thought of method managed to solve the riddle. After that, everybody else had left except for the usual hard core and we decided to start counting up. However, being a public car park there had been various comings and going throughout the evening and night and unfortunately one such showed up just as I was about to start the count. I couldn't concentrate and so decided to keep a watch on the car park in case of any bother. After a while Sarah showed up and we started chatting. This seemed to encourage the occupants of the car to make the decision to leave, which was a great relief. So I finally got back to counting. It had put me way behind and so I was last to finish. It hadn't really helped that the clouds had rolled in and new species for the night kept arriving either. Finally the light went off around 4 am and we were all on our way home about half an hour later. In the end a good list was made with almost all the micros being new for SP 44. So a successful if, on occasion, stressful night came to an end. A final total of 131 species were recorded with some of them being ***Stigmella tityrella***, ***Carpatolechia fugitivella***, ***Dichrorampha alpinana***, ***Catoptria falsella***, **Common Emerald**, **Small Blood-vein**, **Clouded Silver**, **Yellow-tail**, **Heart & Club** and **Southern Wainscot**.

The following night I went on the annual trip to Focus Optics near Corley. I arrived to find Keith and Tim chatting away. I was pretty exhausted after last night and so got my seat out early and joined in the natter. Eventually, Chris and the Pete's arrived to add traps to the night's recording effort. I did my usual spots in the orchard and by the birch tree. Keith was in his usual spot, as was Peter. With no Martin tonight it was Chris who just edged into the field. Pete went down the track opposite Peter. Nigel also put in a rare appearance and a couple, who were quite new to mothing, completed the attendees. With everything set up and switched on the 'tea shop' was in full swing before all but three started on a tour of the traps. The three were the wife of the newbie moth-er, Chris and me. We left Nigel and Pete in charge of identifying everything while relaxing in the tearoom. Finally after I had finished my lunch I went and looked in my traps to get an initial list. With the others not back yet, I went and found them all at Chris's trap. Once that was completed we wandered back to the tearoom and the 'newbies' headed home, as did Nigel. It was good to see him out and about for a change! He'd also brought me a generator to temporarily replace mine, which Martin still had. After some more refreshments it was tally time. That wasn't too bad, but still took a while and I was glad when it was done and I could say my farewells with everybody else and head for home. It had been the usual fun night in good company, but two nights in a row had taken its toll. 150 species had been recorded with 25 being new for the site. Some of them were ***Tischeria ekebladella***, ***Argyresthia retinella***, ***Archips crataegana***, ***Gypsonoma aceriana***, **Phoenix**, **Swallow-tailed Moth**, **Short-cloaked Moth**, **Slender Brindle** and **Small Dotted Buff**.

## **July**

I made a late decision to go out tonight. An email from Keith Warmington helped me decide and a tricky tortrix that I'd got stuck on ID-ing. Added to that, I thought it might be the best night for mothing of the year so, it was a no-brainer! On the way I dropped in at Nigel Stone's so I could pass on the tortrix. After that I headed over to Ryton Meadows where Val now resides. After getting the gates open I was soon on my way up Alan's Lane to Val's Hill. It was brilliant to be here again and back with my beloved Val.

She hadn't been idle, as the place had grasses 4 foot high with willowherbs and she'd even sneaked a few teasel spikes in too. (Don't tell Mike!) I said "hello" and hoped she was glad to see me. I put the traditional trap up by the dead birch tree. I couldn't get the other trap up in the same area, as the vegetation was too tall, so I took it onto the hill and set it up out in the open. The weather was very good with just a very slight warm Easterly airflow. As it slowly got dark I decided to switch the traps on. It wasn't long before they were starting to get busy and they didn't stop all night. Val certainly had no intention of letting me get home early! The list grew and grew and after I had something to eat I thought it was best to start counting up. That was at 1:30 and I only had the two traps! I was right though, as the last light didn't go off until 3 hours later, that was except for the brief interruption of having to more petrol in the genny, as it ran out half way through counting the trap near the birch. Val had done her best to keep me there as long as she could and even let us know she was around, as a **Herald** showed up just long enough for me to get a pic before it disappeared. Whilst loading the car the Hawker Dragonflies were already on the hunt zooming around the tips of the grasses. A Green Woodpecker announced that Val was happy for me to go home and he would keep her company. A couple of Ravens echoed the sentiment as I locked the final gate. Val had just made me count the most species I'd ever had on my own in just two traps, a whopping 193 species and 1,200 moths! That included 10 new species for the site! Amongst them were ***Coleophora ibipennella*, *Blastodacna hellerella*, *Aethes rubigana*, *Piniphila bifasciana*, Brown Scallop, Toadflax Pug and Coronet.**

Tonight I finally got to Hodnell Farm after the aborted attempt last year and missing the first visit this year. I stopped at a lay-by and chatted to Peter for a while, as we were both early. Then when we set off we found that I had given Peter the wrong directions and he missed the turn. I did too, but stopped well before Peter and then just hoped he'd arrive at some point. Chris was waiting at the farmhouse and Martin, Sarah and I joined them to wait for Peter. With no sign of him I joined Martin on a bit of a reccy to work out where to put the traps. When we got back Peter had arrived safely and I apologised to him for the wrong directions! It was decided to be a one trap each night and as nobody had been down to the big lake (because nobody knew about it until the end of the last visit), we all drove down the hill to check it out. On the way I stopped at my chosen spot before walking to the lake. On the way I had a staring game with a Roe Deer in a cornfield! That was fun. I found Martin and Sarah deciding where to set their traps after having had a look at the lake. Unfortunately, it appeared to be mainly a fishing lake and so not as good as it could have been, but they were going to give it a go, as there were a variety of trees around it. I then walked back to my spot and played the same game with the deer as on the way. I could see Peter setting up on the hill next to a spinney. He looked miles away and was just a speck on the landscape! When I got back I disturbed another Roe Deer on the track where I was going to put the trap. It kept barking for a while before accepting my presence. I got to work setting up the trap and then I waited for it to get dark enough to switch it on. As I only had the one trap I was unlikely to run out of petrol, so it went on a bit earlier than normal. With the trap on I drove up to the 'tea shop' and joined Chris who was already munching! Not long after, everyone else arrived and we settled down for a chat and a laugh. It was a warm night despite the lack of cloud and just as everybody else had decided to go and look in Chris's trap in the farmhouse garden it was time for my lunch, so I stayed behind. I was just about to join the others when a pack of dogs appeared with the farm's owner Rebecca. I introduced myself and explained why I wasn't with the others yet. Chris's trap was unsurprisingly busy and confirmed it was the correct decision to run only one trap each. After finishing the rummage through his trap we all ended up in the farmhouse kitchen where Rebecca provided a cup of tea and some carrot cake for everyone. Eventually, it was decided to go and have a look at the other traps and so we drove down to Martin and Sarah's first. We drove passed mine and I wasn't very happy with the number of moths I saw in it on the way. It was heaving! Martin and Sarah's weren't quite as bad, but bad enough. It was decided to start counting around 2:30 am and so everyone headed back to their own traps. Mine was ridiculous and it would take 2½ hours for me to finally throw my hands in the air and call it quits! Half an hour later I'd finally got rid of all the moths and loaded the car. I then headed back up the hill to the 'tea shop' to exchange new and tricky species. With that done, I was finally on my way home at just after 6 a.m. Thankfully, I had a good journey, but the garden trap was still very busy too, despite it having gone off and that would take another hour to count. It turned out my effort in counting my trap at the farm resulted in over 1,000 moths being recorded and over 150 species. Crazy! Between us all over 3,000 moths representing 225 species were recorded. **Common Footman** was by far the most numerous, totalling over 450 individuals. Amongst the other species were **Leopard Moth, *Prochoreutis myllerana*, *Coleophora saxicolella*, *Phalonidia manniana*, *Ptycholomoides aeriferana*, *Endothenia quadrimaculana*, *Zeiraphera ratzeburgiana*, *Dichrorampha vancouverana*, Dwarf Cream Wave, Muslin Footman, Scarlet Tiger, Olive, Double Lobed and Fen Wainscot.**

I set off for Sun Rising for the regular monthly visit to Val's Plaque oh...and to do some nothing. Peter had already arrived when I pulled into the car park. I went on my usual reccy and when I got back Chris had arrived and discussions about where to set the traps was undertaken. With another one-trap strategy agreed we got to work setting up. After that was done there was time to watch the glorious sunset before finally switching on. Then it was time for retiring to the 'tea shop' or the back of Peter's car, as it was this time! The car park was the windiest place it seemed and so after a while it was decided to do a round of the traps. They were busy despite the breeze and mine was the busiest, as it was most sheltered. It looked like I would spend another long time counting later on. Peter had always said he wanted to have a go at rolling one of those 'sausage rolls' like hay bails, but of course it was Chris who had a go! He did move it a bit too! After some final refreshments it was decided to start counting up. It took well over an hour and by that time each of the three traps had at least one **Garden Tiger** in it. So that was a result. We all thought we would have cracked the 100 species despite the breeze and the temperature getting much lower than it had been for ages. It did mean a much more respectable leave time of just after 4 am. A much more manageable 122 species were recorded with 11 of them being new for the site. Amongst them were ***Tinea trinotella*, *Elachista maculicerusella*, *Cnephasia longana*, *Acrobasis suavella*, Small Scallop, Dark Umber, Wormwood Pug** and amazingly **Dun-bar!**

It hadn't rained for weeks and the car was covered in layers of dust from all the tracks I'd been on recently and so I haven't even had that to help clean the dust off it. But I wasn't complaining though as my last visit to Alderminster was a rather damp and cold one. I found Peter waiting in the churchyard car park and a short while later Martin showed up. We discussed where to put the traps, as there was going to be only the three of us and it was Peter who would stay in the churchyard whilst Alan would head back to the horse stables at the farm and Martin went up the hill into the old orchard. We had a visit from the farm owners before we switched on. It was nice to finally meet them. Once I'd switched on everything went off again and so I had to put some oil in the genny before I could set off back to the churchyard and join Peter. Martin and I agreed to start counting up at 2 am, but until then we identified everything arriving at Peter's trap and hoped for no repeat of the "Mug of Doom" incident! I did come up with a couple of other names for things like the "Wall of Attraction", as the back of the church was lit up by the trap and the "Bench of Bereavement" for when somebody accidentally sat on a moth where the 'tea shop' was set out. Thankfully that didn't happen! A steady stream of moths came from all over the place, as there was no wind. The skies had cleared, but the temperature didn't drop too much and by the time the church bell boomed out for 2 o'clock Peter had a list of approaching a hundred species! Martin and I headed back to the farm to begin our counts. The first trap took 1½ hours and had a lot of interesting stuff in it. I then had my tea before embarking on the second. I was half way through and just taking a short break by packing up the first trap when Martin appeared. I couldn't believe he'd been that quick. He helped me with the remaining count and packing up before we returned to meet Peter in the churchyard. After doing the usual showing of things we hadn't had earlier, it was finally time to head for home. It had been another long night with almost 2,000 moths representing 197 species recorded. Plenty of them were newly recorded for the hectad and some of them were ***Euspilapteryx auroguttella*, *Paraswammerdamia albicapitella*, *Depressaria chaerophylli*, *Recurvaria nanella*, *Gelechia rhombella*, *Grapholita janthinana*, Lesser Wax Moth, Barred Rivulet, Black Arches** and **Campion**.

Well we had finally arrived at the date I had chosen to do a Moth Night in Val's honour and memory. I hoped it wasn't as busy as it had been a couple of weeks ago! I'm sure Val would have something to say about that comment! As I was a bit early I drove up Alan's Lane to Val's Hill and put up the sign I'd made declaring to everyone that "THIS IS VAL'S HILL". It looked great on the dead Birch tree and I was happy with it. It was a nice surprise when Keith and Heather arrived, as I hadn't seen them for ages. I was just wandering down to the gate when I saw the Pete's followed by John Sirrett driving up the Lane. I needed John to come up, but not the Pete's, as they would be trapping down by the bund. As I wandered back up to get them all sorted I tried to go down the hill again and that's when Chris drove up the track! Doh! He was going to have to drive down again too. When I finally managed to show them where their traps should go Martin appeared. He wasn't going to run a trap himself, but would do a round before going home. With everything finally organised we had the biggest surprise visitors of the evening in Ros and Steve Smith. That was lovely, as none of us see them very often at all. I had got all the wine, cider and pop out of the cool bag and stuck it on the car roof, so everyone could raise a glass and toast Val on her hill. It was also a way of getting rid of a few more bottles of this and that. It was a nice little group and there was lots of fun as usual. With everyone setting off on a round of the traps it was time for my lunch, so I didn't join them for a while. Martin was doing a good job of identifying everything anyway. By the time I'd got down the hill they were having a tea break.

After looking in the three traps down by the bund and car park Martin, Keith and Heather decided to head for home. It was good of them to come. The rest of us made our way up the hill and looked in John's trap before Ros and Steve decided they'd had enough and started their journey home too. It was a nice surprise to see them and to have them stay for so long. Before I started counting up I again had something to eat, as I expected it would take a while. I wasn't wrong and it was 4:30 am again before the light went off. John had finished around the same time and so that was good, as everything could be switched off. The star moth was a **Mere Wainscot**, which was a new one for everyone else. The five traps produced records for 183 species and so I got my wish that it wasn't quite as mad as last time! Some of the other species caught were ***Ypsolopha horridella***, ***Ypsolopha vittella***, ***Cochylis hybridella***, ***Evergestis pallidata***, ***Endotricha flammealis***, **Large Emerald**, **Latticed Heath**, **Sallow Kitten** and considering the occasion, the appropriately named **True Lover's Knot**. With everything loaded in the car, including my refurbished generator that had worked perfectly, thank you Martin, it was time to say goodbye to Val and trundle down to the gate. Chris locked up the final gate for me and I was on my way home. We hope Val welcomed all the company and seeing everyone enjoying being on her hill.

Yet again the timing wasn't convenient for me to make it to Feldon Forest Farm for the scheduled Moth Night. Thankfully, Chris, Martin and the Pete's did. Unfortunately the skies did go clear and the temperature dropped a bit, but they had another good night recording 177 species. The list again featured plenty of new species for the hectad. Amongst them were ***Monopis laevigella***, ***Calybites phasianipennella***, ***Yponomeuta rorrella***, ***Scrobipalpa costella***, ***Batrachedra praeangusta***, ***Cochylis dubitana*** and ***Chilo phragmitella***. Some of the larger moths recorded were **Oak Hook-tip**, **Maple Pug**, **Least Yellow Underwing**, **Dot Moth**, **Lunar-spotted Pinion** and **Small Rufous**.

I knew it going to be a long night as I made my way over to Stoughton to help with Sue Hastings and Anna Ryder's Mothify Project. I managed to remember the way to Sue's and I arrived to find her, Anna and a few others munching dinner. Everyone appeared pleased to see me, but it was then that I was informed that they'd gone completely mad and put four traps out! That meant it was going to be hard to manage. However, a plan was put in place and after Anna had a quick look in a couple of traps she headed for the camper van and sleep. It was a very warm night with a southerly breeze. The moths weren't slow in arriving and after getting an initial list for the two MV's I stopped for a well-earned break and my lunch. I got to thinking about when I should start to try and count and decided that when the church clock struck two that's when I'd start. First I did the actinic by the pond and then the one in the pines. After a short break I headed down to the MV in the spinney and finally the one in the garden. I managed to get some sort of figures for all four and called it a night around 4:30 am. Thankfully I didn't have to empty them, but just cover them and put the two MV's out of the sun. I'd managed to record 135 species, which included ***Parornix betulae***, ***Orthotelia sparganella***, ***Coleophora lineolea***, ***Cochylis roseana***, ***Eudemis profundana***, **Small China-mark**, ***Hypsopygia glaucinalis***, **Drinker**, **Golden-rod Pug**, **Ruby Tiger**, **Clay** and **Gold Spot**. I was on my way home around fifteen minutes later and was extremely happy not to have any enforced diversions home like regularly happens. It had been a really tough night, as I'm not used to counting four traps! I heard later on that Anna and Sue were extremely grateful for my efforts and the Mothify event had been a well-attended success. So it was all worth it.

I arrived to find Keith waiting near the gate at Alvecote Wood and he said I was the first to arrive. It was a bit sad tonight, as we had come to pay our respects to Sarah Walters who had done so much wonderful work in the wood she owned with her husband Steve. Sadly, Sarah is no longer with us. So it was to be another Memorial Moth Night for one of our favourite people. I left Keith after a brief chat and drove down to Betty's Wood to check out the conditions. Chris was next to arrive, then "the Pete's" and finally Martin. As the meadows had already been cut and baled we could drive anywhere. The southerly wind wasn't quite as bad as expected and so there were plenty of options. As it turned out "the Pete's" went in Alvecote Wood with the 'tea shop' in case it rained and everybody else was spread out in Betty's Wood. I did the bench near the entrance to the wood like normal. It was very warm despite the breeze and so another big night was expected and with seven traps out I didn't need to run any more than one trap myself. Chris plugged in to me and had his trap on the last remaining hay bales! There was plenty of time to chat before it got dark and while we were doing that Steve showed up, that was welcome, as we didn't expect to see him. After a while he got in a long conversation with me about how we were coping etc. Thankfully, Martin managed to switch on my generator, as I didn't want to interrupt the flow of chat. Eventually Steve said his farewells and it had been a lovely surprise to see him. The others had begun the tour of the traps a long time ago and I needed my lunch before I joined them. In the end I never did see "the Pete's" traps in the wood, but managed to look in all the others.

By the time I came to count up my bench trap it was in a really breezy spot, which meant it didn't take too long to count and I could have my tea before the others were ready to leave. It had been another big night with 185 species being recorded. After the final show of new moths near the gate, everyone said "thanks" to Keith for opening and locking up and headed for home. It had been a good, but sad in part, nights mothing and we're really glad we were able to do it. Some of the species recorded were **Roeslerstammia erxlebelli**, **Anacampsis blattariella**, **Mompha raschkiella**, **Agapeta zoegana**, **Acleris cristana**, **Gypsonoma oppressana**, **Agriphila selasella**, **Wax Moth**, **Bordered Beauty**, **September Thorn**, **Gothic**, **Angle-striped Sallow**, **Twin-spotted Wainscot** and **Silky Wainscot**.

## **August**

Tonight we made our second and last visit of the year to Weethley Wood. I was first to arrive and it didn't appear anybody had been since we last came, as all the carpet I had put in the ruts was still there! After parking I went on a short wander to see how things looked. Martin and Sarah were next to arrive, closely followed by Jean and then Scott. We were still one missing from the expected line-up, but John Finlay did finally make it from Devon before we started agreeing where the traps should go. With that decided everyone set to work before retiring for some well-earned refreshments. It finally got dark enough to switch on and once that was done it was back for some chat to give things a chance to arrive. A busy night was expected, as the weather was still good. A highlight for some was the excellent views that we had of a **Brown Argus** that had been attracted to one of the traps. There was only time for one round of the traps before final refreshments and tally time. Martin had stuck one out in the field as usual and so we went and did that one first. Then I helped Jean with her trap while the others did theirs. I'd finished helping Jean just as Martin and Sarah had finished and as I hadn't even started mine yet, they decided to head for home. I finished just after Scott and John and so we were ready to leave together. It had been a busy night with another 163 species recorded with plenty of new ones for the site. So it was a very successful trip to Weethley. Amongst the species recorded were **Aspilapteryx tringipennella**, **Epermenia falciformis**, **Elachista bisulcella**, **Stenolechia gemmella**, **Nephopterix angustella**, **Euzophera cinerosella**, **Sandy Carpet**, **Tawny-barred Angle**, **Dark Sword-grass** and **Bulrush Wainscot**. The garden trap was still pretty busy when I got home despite it being after 6 am and I was exhausted again by the time I eventually got to bed. I had decided before this night that I couldn't do this pace anymore and needed a break from such regular trips out "in the field".

Martin made one of his impromptu visits to Warmington and managed to record 46 species in a relatively short time. Everything is a help in such an under recorded area. Amongst the species he recorded were **Cnephasia genitalana**, **Cydia fagiglandana**, **Garden Pebble**, **Yellow-barred Brindle**, **Scorched Carpet**, **Rosy Minor** and **Lesser Common Rustic**.

On the same night I had arranged a very special trip. I was going to see Val's Nephew Gavin's new house like Val and I had promised him a long time ago. It's a real shame that Val didn't get to see it in person, but we know she'll be around somewhere. It has been a real labour of love and struggle for him to get it built, but with the scaffolding finally down... It has been a very long time since I'd been out that way and on the journey it wasn't hard to notice that they do like a bend and a hill in that area of the country! The house looked amazing, although there's still a lot of stuff to be done inside. At least it was looking like a home. I was very pleased to be there and was made extremely welcome. I had a nice tour of everywhere and the chat flowed. After dinner it was time to set up the trap ready for switching on later. Gavin's wife Jenny and their daughter Vita went to bed early, even before the trap was switched on, which left Gavin and I to continue having a good old chinwag. The trap got switched on at some point and then it was just a case of waiting for things to arrive. That didn't take too long and as Gavin knew one of his neighbours was going to pop in on his way home from the pub we decided we better go and find out if there was much to see. Of course there was and when Paul arrived he was amazed at the variety in and around the trap. Paul was 'escorted' home by Gavin after half an hour or so before returning to see all the new arrivals. He stayed up as long as he could, which was after the first **Poplar Hawk-moth** and **Rosy Rustic** had arrived, so well done Gavin. It had been a busy start, but after a cloudy cold front had passed through it got very chilly, but with no light pollution the starry sky was amazing. Some of the more 'chunky' moths were still flying, but I decided to start to count up. That took quite a while and it was getting light by the time I had finished and put a sheet over the trap, so that Gavin could open the trap with Vita when they woke up. 60 species had been recorded and amongst them were **Yponomeuta plumbella**, **Bactra lancealana**, **Udea lutealis**, **Clay Triple-lines**, **Maggie Moth**, **Canary-shouldered Thorn** and **Pale Prominent**. I then retired to the lodge next door for some sleep. This would open shortly after my visit as a self-catering establishment for paying visitors and I was a bit of a trial guest.

I would heartily recommend it. Coming from the big city, my biggest problem was not being used to such complete silence and it took me a while to drop off. So if you like the quiet life and are in the Ludlow area I suggest the Little Hare Lodge is the place to grab a slice of the tranquillity and also some of Jenny's delicious home made cake! Gavin and Vita may even put a moth trap out for you too. (More on this in a while.)

Martin went on another David Brown Moth Night and this had the more normal weather expected at such an event! This is how he saw it. "A very select band of hardy (or foolish) souls decided to attend Brandon Marsh on a rather wet and windy night, but at least it was mild. The automatic gate had broken, so it had to be physically maneuvered before we could get on site. Once on site, four of us followed David to Newlands Reedbed only for everyone but me to try and do a three (or nine) point turn and return closer to the Centre! So having set up two traps under umbrellas I walked back to the Centre to find out if the others were still there or had gone home! Luckily after setting up we had a few hours when the wind and rain died down between fronts, so at least conditions had improved. There were six additional traps to mine and that helped to boost the species list.

I had good numbers of **Crescent** but nobody caught the elusive **Webb's Wainscot**. I also saw a large *Chilo*-type Pyralid briefly, but the wind blew it away from my trap never to be seen again, so I could not confirm this. Shame conditions weren't better, as the location I was 'abandoned at' looked great." Sounds like hours of fun that one doesn't it? Overall, 82 species were recorded by the hardy bunch and included the **Rabbit Moth** (*Ypsolopha sequella*), **Bramble Shoot Moth**, **Ringed Chin-mark**, **Tawny Speckled Pug**, **Dingy Shell**, **Swallow Prominent** and **Southern Wainscot**.

I had to make a return trip over to see Gavin, Jenny and Vita as I had forgotten so many important things that I needed regularly. Both Gavin and I know this was down to Val interfering, as the last thing Gavin and I had discussed before I left last week was me giving him a moth trap to use when he wanted. So while I had to go and pick up all my belongings, I took a little heath trap to give him in return. I was greeted just as warmly as last time and after all the usual catch up chat it was fun all the way, as Vita continually tried to trick me with this or that. I showed them all my Moth Faces Presentation and they loved it, and as I'd hoped they came up with some funny names before the real one was revealed. After dinner the trap was presented to its new owners. They were all delighted and it ended up in the same place as last week. Vita was allowed to stay up for the big switch on and then had to say "goodnight" as she headed for bed. Gavin stayed up as long as he could again and after one look in the trap he then headed for bed as well and I retired to the lodge for an hour or so. I had my lunch and then had a final look in the trap before starting the journey home. It was a lot cooler this time and so there weren't so many moths, but amongst the 21 species were **Agriphila tristella**, **Pyrausta aurata**, **Willow Beauty**, **Flame** and **Flounced Rustic**.

The following night Martin ended up making a solo trip to Alderminster on a very decent night and he did very well up in the old orchard at the farm. Over 500 moths representing 75 species was the result of his efforts. They included **Stigmella hybnerella**, **Phyllonorycter corylifoliella**, **Elachista consortella**, **Grapholita compositella**, **Agriphila geniculea**, **Chinese Character**, **Nutmeg** and **Vine's Rustic**.

Well, it was back to going out for a moth night and the scheduled trip to Sun Rising. I arrived to find Emma and David already there and watering some of the memorial trees. I went over to say "hello" and filled Emma in on what I'd been up to. 'Glory mothers' for the night, Martin and Sarah were next to arrive and finally Peter. Chris had to cancel because of car trouble, which was a shame as this might be the last good night of the year, you never know. Just before switching on the lights Emma and David said their farewells and with everything up and running everyone retired to the 'tea shop', or the back of Peter's car again. I had my back to the light from my traps and suddenly Martin told me everything had gone off and so I had to take a leisurely stroll to see what was up. After repositioning the generator I started it again and all seemed to be well. However, it wasn't long before the lights went out again and so it was obvious that the genny needed some oil. I eventually went and sorted it out and it ran fine for the rest of the night. We did a tour of the traps with Martin and Sarah before they said their farewells too and so it was down to the usual hard core for Sun Rising of Peter and I. Peter had a lot of hornets and they were most time consuming to deal with. My traps had some too, but nowhere near as many. The sky was clear all night, but the air mass was warm and so the temperature didn't drop below 12°C. With no noticeable wind that meant the moths kept on coming. After a final round of the traps it was decided to have one last lot of refreshments and then count up. I counted my trap by the roundhouse first and Peter joined me for that, before we started on the remaining traps separately. That worked well and we finished at the same time. After getting his figures I said "Thank You" to Peter for coming and headed for home. It had been a busy night, but fairly typical of August with a lot of brown stuff.

We managed to get over 60 species with a few new ones for the site, so it had been a successful return to "the field". Some of the species recorded were ***Eulamprotes atrella***, ***Aethes cnicana***, ***Acleris rhombana***, **Pale Eggar**, **Yellow Shell**, **Shark** and **Pink-barred Sallow**.

## September

I had no idea what I was going to do today when I finally surfaced. There were a few things to choose from and I thought about it for a while before making a decision. It was a lovely day and I thought I don't mind the drive. I also felt that Val would have wanted me to go and see some friends I hadn't seen for ages. So around 4:30 pm I loaded the car and set off in a southerly direction. I was amazed to have a trouble free journey and arrived at Chieveley services very early at just after 6 pm. As I was munching my dinner I noticed Robin Hemming arrive and so after finishing eating I went and found him. A short while later Les and Martin Finch, closely followed by Martin and Sarah arrived too. The last to arrive was a friend of Robin's called John. I was designated to be at the rear of the convoy as I knew where we were going and had to make sure everybody went the right way. There were no problems and everyone arrived at Snelsmore Common Country Park safely. Les opened the gates and we all drove in. We then found Paul Black (the local mother) and another local guy called Keith, who was a bit of a 'newbie'. There was many a discussion about where to set the traps. I had only brought one and stuck it behind some gorse bushes, as I didn't want to catch too much. Once everything had been switched on for a short while Paul arrived from the back of beyond and had netted a rather large moth flying round Martin's 'palace' trap as he wandered passed. It would make everyone happy, as it was the target moth for the night that most people had come to hopefully see. The **Clifden Nonpareil** or Blue Underwing. Sarah had brought cake and so everyone tucked in satisfied that the night's objective had been achieved so early, which made it taste all the sweeter. Robin was very happy as he had another in one of his traps later and there followed a ridiculous sight of stupidly large cameras surrounding the moth as they tried to get pictures. I couldn't be bothered joining the fray, but did enjoy laughing at the others! With the job done it was decided to count up. I went and helped Les and Martin F with their micros before returning to count my own trap. We found out after I'd counted my trap that a moth had flown into Martin K's ear and he couldn't get it out. He could hear it fluttering in there. That must be weird and very annoying. We all felt for Martin and hoped he would be OK driving back up the A34. With everything packed up and loaded we all said our farewells and headed for home around 1:30 am. Amazingly all the roads were open and I was happy to be back home just after 3 am. It had been a good decision to go and everyone was really pleased I'd gone, which was lovely. Around 70 species were recorded and apart from the big blue thing **Orange Swift**, ***Mompha miscella***, ***Acleris emargana***, ***Eudonia truncicolella***, ***Pempelia palumbella***, **Birch Mocha**, **August Thorn**, **Autumnal Rustic**, **Neglected Rustic**, **Feathered Gothic**, **White-point** and **Red Underwing** were some of the others.

The mystery of what moth had entered Martin's lughole was solved 36 hours later, as the nurse at the hospital in Oxford he stopped at on the way back from Snelsmore was "useless!" A trip to Warwick Hospital did the trick and it turned out to be, no not an **Ear Moth** or a **Wax Moth** or a **Lesser Wax Moth** or a **Double Lobed**...it was a dull old **Square-spot Rustic**! At least Martin got his hearing back! So after last year's "Mug of Doom" this year we had the "Ear of Doom"! Ha! Ha!

It was the annual trip to the River Arrow Local Nature Reserve next. However, we have never been at this time of year so were hoping to add to the site's list of moths. I arrived just after 7 pm and found Jean and Peter waiting. As usual Peter's parking was not great and I had to get out of the car and open the gate wider so I could get onto the playing fields. The good news was that both gates were unlocked tonight and so we had free access to the reserve! Hurrah! Martin German appeared to say that Mary and Mark Preston were at a film in Bidford and would be along later. Martin K. was next to arrive and I showed Peter around the place before we agreed trapping locations. Jean and I did the normal spots while Peter and Martin went into North Meadow. With everything up and running everyone retired to the 'tea shop' and we sat in the back of Jean's car and had some home made biscuits and cake! Yummy! I looked over the fence into Jean's trap and saw a few hornets were in it. However, it didn't prepare me for what I saw in my trap, as I appeared to have most of the nest in there. A tour of the other traps produced only one or two more hornets, so I decided to sacrifice my trap so the others could remain mostly hornet free. Unfortunately, on the tour Jean tripped up a step and fell, jarring her back. Jean was upset by the stupid trip and I tried my best at calming her down and making sure she was OK. I found some Neurofen in the car and so gave them to her and that seemed to help a lot. Scott arrived with his dog Cody. This was a bit of an experiment and I still feel that dogs and moth traps are not a good mix. Mary and Mark arrived in time for a proper tour of the traps before everyone retired to the 'tea shop' again for refreshments. It was getting very cold, as there wasn't really enough cloud to keep the temperature up.

As not much seemed to be flying it was decided to pack up on the next round of the traps. After seeing the traps I hadn't already, I returned to mine to see if I could add to the four species that had been seen at it. As it had got so cold the hornets were generally settled and so I could at least look at the egg boxes. Amazingly, there were intact moths inside and I got quite a decent list for the trap in the end. It took quite a while for me to pack up, as I had to be careful with so many hornets about. I managed not to get stung at all. Result! Thankfully, everyone helped Jean pack her trap up so she didn't have to do too much. Everybody finished about the same time and by 1:30 we were on our way home after a pretty successful night considering the conditions. Almost half the 37 species recorded were new for the site, so that was a good job done. Amongst the new species were ***Epinotia nisella*, *Agriphila geniculea*, Small Dusty Wave, Cypress Pug, Dusky Thorn, Brindled Green** and **Frosted Orange**. It was just a shame about the hornets.

Martin then made another visit to Warmington and recorded 26 species. Included amongst them were ***Prays fraxinella*, *Acleris sparsana*, Gold Triangle, Flame Carpet, Light Emerald** and **Centre-barred Sallow**. Another worthwhile visit completed.

Tonight I went on my last moth night for a while. Luckily it was the nearest one I've done to home all year, and so I didn't rush to get there, as I wanted to keep up the tradition of whoever lives nearest arrives last. So when I arrived at Peastockings Meadows and found Keith, his telling me that I was first to arrive was a bit disappointing! I had heard on the radio that there might have been hold ups on the roads for both Martin and Peter, the other expected arrivals. Keith phoned Jenny to see if Peter had left and he had, so it was a fair bet he was stuck in traffic. We went and parked and then wandered back to the original gate and found Martin and Peter waiting. Keith had left the gate open and some dogwalker had wedged it shut again and so they thought they couldn't get in! Anyway, we were all soon in the meadows and deciding on trapping spots. Once that was done everyone got to setting up before switch on and then refreshments at the 'tea shop'. After that it was time for a hornet check. Unfortunately, Keith seemed to have most, but every trap had some. However, they weren't quite on the same scale as last week. I was left to deal with Keith's hornets so he could go through his trap safely. We had cloudy skies, which was unexpected and so there were a few moths arriving at the traps. We weren't expecting a deluge at this time of year, but there were enough to keep interest going at each stop on a tour round. Martin's actinic was amazing, as we'd never seen so many **Autumnal Rustic** in one night, let alone in one trap! That was nice. A good list was slowly being built, but then the skies cleared and it got very cold. During a visit to the 'tea shop' Peter "did a Chris", as when throwing the dregs from his mug of tea away he suddenly realised he'd thrown them all over his own bag! That was hysterically funny and we all fell about laughing for a while. We had another surprise when we looked up as we had some cloud drifting back in and the temperature went up again. It was decided to start to pack up anyway, but it took a while, as there were a few new arrivals during the process. By about 1 am everyone had just about done and a list of just over 50 species had been assembled. That was a pleasing return for a fairly mediocre night and there were plenty of new species for the site amongst them, which was the objective. So as we all left around 1:30 am satisfied with a job well done. Some of the species recorded were ***Hypatima rhomboidella*, *Pandemis cinnamomeana*, *Eudonia angustea*, Red-green Carpet, Dusky Thorn, Brown-spot Pinion, Lunar Underwing** and **Sallow**.

With me now in 'turn house into hotel' mode, as I had quite a few touring rock bands coming to stay over the next month, I was unable to make a return visit to Hodnell Farm. However, Martin, Chris and the Pete's did. They had a very good night too, so I was sorry to have missed this one. It was mild with cloud coming and going and barely any wind, so the traps were fairly busy. An impressive 67 species was the final tally for their efforts. Amongst them were ***Agonopterix alstromeriana*, Garden Rose Tortrix, *Eucosma obumbratana*, Lime-speck Pug, Heart & Dart, Black Rustic, Mouse Moth, Frosted Orange** and **Pale Mottled Willow**.

Yet again fate seems to play its hand and stopped me from getting to Feldon Forest Farm. With my imminent arrivals being preceded by a long drive to Norwich, I had no option but to miss it again. Martin, Sarah, Chris and Peter did make it and they did pretty well. A total of 30 species were recorded, plus a lot of leafmines thanks to Martin. Some of the adults seen were **Diamond-back Moth, *Approerema anthyllidella*, *Emmelina monodactyla*, Deep-brown Dart, Brick, Beaded Chestnut** and **Mottled Rustic**.

## October

With a crazy month of traveling the country and being a bed & Breakfast for around 20 members of various rock bands now over, I made a late decision to try and go to the scheduled moth night at Sun Rising that Martin had kindly taken charge of. It was so late that there was no way I could get any of the moth equipment out, as it had been packed and hidden so well! So I decided I'd go as photographer only. David had left just before I arrived, which was a shame. While Martin and Peter were setting up I had a wander down to see Val's Plaque as usual. Once everything was switched on Martin went with Peter to the chippy in Kineton, while I stayed and hoped for the odd moth to arrive. They were gone about half an hour and I'd managed to find one **Barred Sallow** in that time. However, they'd done better in the chip shop, as they found three species in there! David had left the key for the hut, so we consumed our dinner in relative luxury. All very civilised! They were lovely chips too. Eventually, it was decided to do a round of the traps and thankfully some moths had now arrived. We weren't expecting that much as we had a clear sky overhead, but there wasn't a breath of wind. Martin's first trap provided the relief of the night, as the target species had already arrived. **Figure of Eight** isn't very common anymore and we knew it would be new for the site, so we could all relax after that was found. The good news was that another appeared at a different trap! Not a bad list was being built as the four traps were investigated. Martin and Peter headed back for a refreshing cuppa while I decided to take the opportunity to get some photos. Not too much had been added by the second round and so it was decided to pack up. It had been more successful than expected and five new species for the site were found. Surprisingly the **Barred Sallow** was one of them, as well as **November Moth** and **Green-brindled Crescent**. I had a great journey back and was home for half past midnight. Job done.

## November

Martin made one last trip down to Warmington and managed to record 8 species of adult in addition to 6 as mines. So it proved a productive few hours. **December Moth**, **Feathered Thorn** and **Sprawler** were three of the adults species found. Well done Martin for taking on Warmington this year (No, not you Keith!). Your efforts have certainly made a difference to that particularly under recorded bit of the county.

## Summary

From such a sad beginning it turned out to be an extraordinary year. The shock of actually getting a summer and the sheer exhausted state I ended up in almost got me to end up with Val! It was a relentless period. Because of the mediocre or poor weather over recent years had made me forget how hard it can be to keep recording on a 3 or 4 day cycle. The actual doing of a moth night, then the collation of records and photos from one night left me no time to recover before doing it all over again. I was only thankful that I did realise I could not carry on with that pace and had the courage to stop doing quite so much. The third year of focusing on the under recorded parts of the county continued and paid off handsomely. Everyone has contributed majorly to this effort and we have now reached a point where there are few of the more common smaller moths still to be recorded in the various hectads of Warwickshire. So there is only the odd 'loose end' to try and get tidied up in 2019. For the most part it was wonderful to have some reliable weather for such a long period, despite the struggle it was to cope at times. It just shows what a wealth of moths we still have if conditions are right for them (and us) to enjoy their splendour. Thank you to everyone who contributed to the recording and helped me through what could have been a very difficult year. Thankfully, it was so busy I didn't have time to dwell on anything but what Val told me to do. She told me to, "Keep on recording the moths, looking after the bands and have a fun life". Those are the inspirational words I shall carry with me always.

## Clarification

All species mentioned in the text have been adults. No leaf-mines or cases etc. have been included unless specified. Difficult to identify species will have been confirmed by dissection.

## Further Information

For information on Moth Nights or Butterfly Walks in Warwickshire see the Butterfly Conservation web site at: <http://www.warwickshire-butterflies.org.uk>

Or contact David Brown on 01789 840295 or Keith Warmington on 01827 715873

## Moth Nights 2018

<b>Date</b>	<b>Site</b>	<b>Traps</b>	<b>Species</b>	<b>Individuals</b>
19/02/2018	Sun Rising NBG, Warwickshire	9	7	54
26/03/2018	Fenny Compton, Warwickshire	3	11	89
05/04/2018	Little Haven, Cranhill, Warwickshire	2	9	87
07/04/2018	Chaddesley Wood, Worcestershire	8	29	734
17/04/2018	Sun Rising NBG, Warwickshire	3	10	43
19/04/2018	Warmington, Warwickshire	1	16	111
21/04/2018	Wolford Wood, Warwickshire	4	44	515
04/05/2018	Temple Balsall NR, Warwickshire	6	27	77
05/05/2018	Weethley Wood, Warwickshire	3	38	187
08/05/2018	Sun Rising NBG, Warwickshire	8	25	80
12/05/2018	Little Haven, Cranhill, Warwickshire	7	39	133
19/05/2018	Wolford Wood, Warwickshire	7	80	484
26/05/2018	DSDA Kineton, Warwickshire	6	82	366
31/05/2018	Little Haven, Cranhill, Warwickshire	1	65	222
01/06/2018	Hodnell Farm, Ladbroke, Warwickshire	7	100	1,019
02/06/2018	Piles Coppice, Warwickshire	12	87	249
09/06/2018	Highfield Farm, Honington, Warwickshire	8	128	1,429
14/06/2018	Oversley Wood, Warwickshire (NMN 1)	8	155	1,337
16/06/2018	Little Haven, Cranhill, Warwickshire (NMN 3)	9	155	1,152
19/06/2018	Sun Rising NBG, Warwickshire	8	156	1,957
22/06/2018	Abbey Farm, Wolvey, Warwickshire	6	93	671
23/06/2018	Little Haven, Cranhill, Warwickshire	1	68	258
29/06/2018	Farnborough Hall, Warwickshire	8	131	858
30/06/2018	Focus Optics, Corley, Warwickshire	7	150	1,128
04/07/2018	Ryton Meadows, Warwickshire	2	193	1,204
07/07/2018	Hodnell Farm, Ladbroke, Warwickshire	5	225	3,010
10/07/2018	Sun Rising NBG, Warwickshire	3	122	1,051
13/07/2018	Tithe Farm & Churchyard, Alderminster, Warwickshire	5	197	1,918
17/07/2018	Ryton Meadows, Warwickshire (Val's Memorial Moth Night)	5	183	1,262
20/07/2018	Feldon Forest Farm, Frankton, Warwickshire	6	177	1,202
23/07/2018	Stoughton, Leicestershire (Mothify Project)	4	135	924
27/07/2018	Alvecote Wood, Warwickshire (Sarah's Memorial Moth Night)	7	185	1,725

Date	Site	Traps	Species	Individuals
04/08/2018	Weethley Wood, Warwickshire	7	163	1,305
07/08/2018	Richard's Castle, Shropshire	1	60	265
07/08/2018	Warmington, Warwickshire	1	46	132
11/08/2018	Brandon Marsh, Warwickshire	8	82	213+
16/08/2018	Richard's Castle, Herefordshire	1	21	54
17/08/2018	Tithe Farm, Alderminster, Warwickshire	3	75	550
21/08/2018	Sun Rising NBG, Warwickshire	3	61	691
01/09/2018	Snelsmore Common CP, Berkshire	15	70	800+
07/09/2018	River Arrow LNR, Warwickshire	5	37	174
11/09/2018	Warmington, Warwickshire	1	26	100
13/09/2018	Peastockings Meadows, Warwickshire	5	51	181
15/09/2018	Hodnell Farm, Ladbroke, Warwickshire	7	67	630
21/09/2018	Feldon Forest Farm, Frankton, Warwickshire	6	30	150+
20/10/2018	Sun Rising NBG, Warwickshire	4	21	71
05/11/2018	Warmington, Warwickshire	1	8	27
TOTALS	*Note: (Species is average per night)	247	*84	30,879

### **Species Mentioned In Text Index**

B&F	Species	Page	B&F	Species	Page
<b>8</b>	<i>Eriocrania unimaculella</i>	3	<b>301</b>	<i>Parornix betulae</i>	11
<b>10</b>	<i>Eriocrania salopiella</i>	3	<b>303</b>	<i>Parornix anglicella</i>	4
<b>12</b>	<i>Eriocrania sangii</i>	2	<b>303</b>	<i>Parornix anglicella</i>	4
<b>13</b>	<i>Eriocrania semipurpurella</i>	2	<b>304</b>	<i>Parornix devoniella</i>	3
<b>15</b>	Orange Swift	14	<b>308</b>	<i>Parornix finitimella</i>	3
<b>38</b>	<i>Ectoedemia subbimaculella</i>	7	<b>315</b>	<i>Phyllonorycter harrisella</i>	5
<b>77</b>	<i>Stigmella tityrella</i>	8	<b>332</b>	<i>Phyllonorycter corylifoliella</i>	13
<b>99</b>	<i>Stigmella hybnerella</i>	13	<b>388</b>	<i>Prochoreutis myllerana</i>	9
<b>123</b>	<i>Tischeria ekebladella</i>	8	<b>403</b>	<i>Argyresthia glabratella</i>	5
<b>130</b>	<i>Incurvaria masculinella</i>	3	<b>409b</b>	<i>Argyresthia cupressella</i>	5
<b>140</b>	<i>Nematopogon swammerdamella</i>	3	<b>414</b>	<i>Argyresthia curvella</i>	7
<b>148</b>	<i>Nemophora degeerella</i>	5	<b>415</b>	<i>Argyresthia retinella</i>	8
<b>161</b>	Leopard Moth	9	<b>417</b>	<i>Argyresthia spinosella</i>	7
<b>175</b>	<i>Narycia monilifera</i>	5	<b>428</b>	<i>Yponomeuta rorrella</i>	11
<b>181</b>	<i>Taleporia tubulosa</i>	6	<b>440</b>	<i>Paraswammerdamia albicapitella</i>	10
<b>225</b>	<i>Triaxomera fulvimitrella</i>	5	<b>447</b>	<i>Roeslerstammia erxlebella</i>	12
<b>228</b>	<i>Monopis weaverella</i>	11	<b>449</b>	<i>Prays fraxinella</i>	15
<b>247</b>	<i>Tinea trinotella</i>	10	<b>456</b>	<i>Ypsolopha horridella</i>	11
<b>294</b>	<i>Aspilapteryx tringipennella</i>	12	<b>462</b>	<i>Ypsolopha sequella</i>	13
<b>296</b>	<i>Calybites phasianipennella</i>	11	<b>463</b>	<i>Ypsolopha vittella</i>	11
<b>297</b>	<i>Euspilapteryx auroguttella</i>	10	<b>464</b>	Diamond-back Moth	15

## Species Mentioned In Text Index

<b>B&amp;F</b>	<b>Species</b>	<b>Page</b>	<b>B&amp;F</b>	<b>Species</b>	<b>Page</b>
<b>470</b>	<i>Orthotelia sparganella</i>	11	<b>925</b>	<i>Phtheochroa rugosana</i>	7
<b>481</b>	<i>Epermenia falciformis</i>	12	<b>926</b>	<i>Phalonidia manniana</i>	9
<b>496</b>	<i>Coleophora milvipennis</i>	6	<b>938</b>	<i>Agapeta zoegana</i>	12
<b>519</b>	<i>Coleophora deauratella</i>	6	<b>962</b>	<i>Cochylis roseana</i>	11
<b>522</b>	<i>Coleophora lineolea</i>	11	<b>964</b>	<i>Cochylis dubitana</i>	11
<b>533</b>	<i>Coleophora anatipennella</i>	7	<b>965</b>	<i>Cochylis hybridella</i>	11
<b>535</b>	<i>Coleophora ibipennella</i>	9	<b>968</b>	<i>Cochylis nana</i>	5
<b>565</b>	<i>Coleophora saxicolella</i>	9	<b>971</b>	<i>Pandemis cinnamomeana</i>	15
<b>584</b>	<i>Coleophora alticolella</i>	4	<b>979</b>	<i>Archips crataegana</i>	8
<b>602</b>	<i>Elachista apicipunctella</i>	3	<b>983</b>	<i>Choristoneura hebenstreitella</i>	5
<b>609</b>	<i>Elachista maculicerusella</i>	10	<b>986</b>	<i>Syndemis musculana</i>	4
<b>610</b>	<i>Elachista argentella</i>	5	<b>987</b>	<i>Ptycholomoides aeriferana</i>	9
<b>623</b>	<i>Elachista bisulcella</i>	12	<b>990</b>	<i>Aphelia unitana</i>	7
<b>632</b>	<i>Elachista consortella</i>	13	<b>1002</b>	<i>Lozotaenia forsterana</i>	7
<b>652</b>	<i>Alabonia geoffrella</i>	6	<b>1015</b>	<i>Eulia ministrana</i>	4
<b>663</b>	<i>Diurnea fagella</i>	2	<b>1016</b>	<i>Cnephasia longana</i>	10
<b>682</b>	<i>Depressaria chaerophylli</i>	10	<b>1018</b>	<i>Cnephasia communana</i>	4
<b>688</b>	<i>Agonopterix heracliana</i>	1	<b>1023</b>	<i>Cnephasia genitalana</i>	12
<b>695</b>	<i>Agonopterix alstromeriana</i>	15	<b>1041</b>	<i>Acleris sparsana</i>	15
<b>701</b>	<i>Agonopterix ocellana</i>	3	<b>1042</b>	<i>Acleris rhombana</i>	14
<b>731</b>	<i>Eulamprotes atrella</i>	14	<b>1048</b>	Garden Rose Tortrix	15
<b>755</b>	<i>Stenolechia gemmella</i>	12	<b>1053</b>	<i>Acleris hastiana</i>	1
<b>757</b>	<i>Recurvaria nanella</i>	10	<b>1054</b>	<i>Acleris cristana</i>	12
<b>770</b>	<i>Carpatolechia proximella</i>	4	<b>1061</b>	<i>Acleris literana</i>	2
<b>772</b>	<i>Carpatolechia fugitivella</i>	8	<b>1062</b>	<i>Acleris emargana</i>	14
<b>774</b>	<i>Teleiodes luculella</i>	5	<b>1079</b>	<i>Piniphila bifasciana</i>	9
<b>800</b>	<i>Gelechia rhombella</i>	10	<b>1088</b>	<i>Pseudosciaphila branderiana</i>	6
<b>818</b>	<i>Scrobipalpa atriplicella</i>	6	<b>1104</b>	<i>Endothenia quadrimaculana</i>	9
<b>819</b>	<i>Scrobipalpa costella</i>	11	<b>1111</b>	<i>Bactra lancealana</i>	12
<b>843</b>	<i>Aproaerema anthyllidella</i>	15	<b>1113</b>	<i>Eudemis profundana</i>	11
<b>854</b>	<i>Anacampsis blattariella</i>	12	<b>1136</b>	<i>Epinotia immundana</i>	3
<b>858</b>	<i>Hypatima rhomboidella</i>	15	<b>1138</b>	<i>Epinotia nisella</i>	15
<b>878</b>	<i>Batrachedra praeangusta</i>	11	<b>1144</b>	<i>Epinotia signatana</i>	7
<b>883</b>	<i>Mompha raschkiella</i>	12	<b>1150</b>	<i>Epinotia abbreviana</i>	8
<b>884</b>	<i>Mompha miscella</i>	14	<b>1163</b>	<i>Zeiraphera ratzeburgiana</i>	9
<b>890</b>	<i>Mompha jurassicella</i>	1	<b>1167</b>	<i>Gypsonoma aceriana</i>	8
<b>892</b>	<i>Mompha subbistrigella</i>	3	<b>1175</b>	Bramble Shoot Moth	13
<b>905</b>	<i>Blastodacna hellerella</i>	9	<b>1176</b>	<i>Notocelia trimaculana</i>	5
<b>924</b>	<i>Hysterophora maculosana</i>	4	<b>1177</b>	<i>Notocelia rosaecolana</i>	8

## Species Mentioned In Text Index

B&F	Species	Page	B&F	Species	Page
<b>1202</b>	<i>Eucosma obumbratana</i>	15	<b>1508</b>	<i>Stenoptilia bipunctidactyla</i>	6
<b>1212</b>	<i>Rhyacionia pinivorana</i>	5	<b>1513</b>	<i>Pterophorus pentadactyla</i>	7
<b>1217</b>	<i>Eucosmomorpha albersana</i>	4	<b>1524</b>	<i>Emmelina monodactyla</i>	15
<b>1228</b>	<i>Pammene argyrana</i>	3	<b>1572</b>	Brown Argus	12
<b>1241</b>	<i>Grapholita compositella</i>	13	<b>1631</b>	DECEMBER MOTH	16
<b>1245</b>	<i>Grapholita janthinana</i>	10	<b>1632</b>	PALE EGGAR	14
<b>1249</b>	<i>Grapholita lobarzewskii</i>	6	<b>1640</b>	DRINKER	11
<b>1259</b>	<i>Cydia fagiglandana</i>	12	<b>1646</b>	OAK HOOK-TIP	11
<b>1274</b>	<i>Dichrorampha alpinana</i>	8	<b>1651</b>	CHINESE CHARACTER	13
<b>1284</b>	<i>Dichrorampha vancouverana</i>	9	<b>1652</b>	PEACH BLOSSOM	4
<b>1290</b>	<i>Chilo phragmitella</i>	11	<b>1654</b>	FIGURE OF EIGHTY	5
<b>1303</b>	<i>Agriphila selasella</i>	12	<b>1656</b>	SATIN LUTESTRING	6
<b>1305</b>	<i>Agriphila tristella</i>	13	<b>1657</b>	COMMON LUTESTRING	6
<b>1309</b>	<i>Agriphila geniculea</i>	13,15	<b>1659</b>	YELLOW HORNED	2
<b>1316</b>	<i>Catoptria falsella</i>	8	<b>1663</b>	MARCH MOTH	1
<b>1334a</b>	<i>Scoparia basistrigalis</i>	6	<b>1666</b>	LARGE EMERALD	7, 11
<b>1340</b>	<i>Eudonia truncicolella</i>	14	<b>1667</b>	BLOTCHED EMERALD	6
<b>1342</b>	<i>Eudonia angustea</i>	15	<b>1669</b>	COMMON EMERALD	8
<b>1348</b>	Ringed China-mark	13	<b>1673</b>	SMALL EMERALD	6
<b>1354</b>	Small China-mark	11	<b>1674</b>	LITTLE EMERALD	4
<b>1356</b>	Garden Pebble	12	<b>1677</b>	BIRCH MOCHA	14
<b>1358</b>	<i>Evergestis pallidata</i>	11	<b>1681</b>	CLAY TRIPLE-LINES	12
<b>1361</b>	<i>Pyrausta aurata</i>	13	<b>1690</b>	SMALL BLOOD-VEIN	8
<b>1371</b>	<i>Sitochroa verticalis</i>	7	<b>1693</b>	CREAM WAVE	4
<b>1386</b>	<i>Anania fuscalis</i>	5	<b>1705</b>	DWARF CREAM WAVE	9
<b>1388</b>	<i>Udea lutealis</i>	12	<b>1707</b>	SMALL DUSTY WAVE	15
<b>1413</b>	Gold Triangle	15	<b>1712</b>	SMALL SCALLOP	10
<b>1415</b>	<i>Hypsopygia glaucinalis</i>	11	<b>1722</b>	FLAME CARPET	15
<b>1424</b>	<i>Endotricha flammealis</i>	11	<b>1725</b>	DARK-BARRED TWIN-SPOT CARPET	3
<b>1425</b>	Wax Moth	12, 14	<b>1742</b>	YELLOW SHELL	14
<b>1426</b>	Lesser Wax Moth	10, 14	<b>1746</b>	SHOULDER STRIPE	2
<b>1438</b>	<i>Acrobasis suavella</i>	10	<b>1747</b>	STREAMER	2
<b>1442</b>	<i>Pempelia palumbella</i>	14	<b>1750</b>	WATER CARPET	2
<b>1445</b>	<i>Rhodophaea formosa</i>	7	<b>1751</b>	DEVON CARPET	3
<b>1458</b>	Thistle Ermine	8	<b>1752</b>	PURPLE BAR	5
<b>1461</b>	<i>Assara terebrella</i>	7	<b>1754</b>	PHOENIX	8
<b>1465</b>	<i>Nephoterix angustella</i>	12	<b>1760</b>	RED-GREEN CARPET	15
<b>1469</b>	<i>Euzophera cinerosella</i>	12	<b>1766</b>	BLUE-BORDERED CARPET	7
<b>1501</b>	<i>Platyptilia gonodactyla</i>	5	<b>1767</b>	PINE CARPET	7

## Species Mentioned In Text Index

<b>B&amp;F</b>	<b>Species</b>	<b>Page</b>	<b>B&amp;F</b>	<b>Species</b>	<b>Page</b>
<b>1769</b>	SPRUCE CARPET	5	<b>1910</b>	LILAC BEAUTY	8
<b>1773</b>	BROKEN-BARRED CARPET	6	<b>1912</b>	AUGUST THORN	14
<b>1791</b>	BROWN SCALLOP	9	<b>1913</b>	CANARY-SHOULDERED THORN	12
<b>1792</b>	DARK UMBER	10	<b>1914</b>	DUSKY THORN	15
<b>1795</b>	NOVEMBER MOTH	16	<b>1915</b>	SEPTEMBER THORN	12
<b>1804</b>	BARRED RIVULET	10	<b>1919</b>	PURPLE THORN	2
<b>1807</b>	GRASS RIVULET	5	<b>1922</b>	SWALLOW-TAILED MOTH	8
<b>1808</b>	SANDY CARPET	12	<b>1923</b>	FEATHERED THORN	16
<b>1812</b>	MAPLE PUG	11	<b>1926</b>	PALE BRINDLED BEAUTY	1
<b>1816</b>	TOADFLAX PUG	9	<b>1927</b>	BRINDLED BEAUTY	3
<b>1819</b>	MOTTLED PUG	4, 5	<b>1930</b>	OAK BEAUTY	1
<b>1821</b>	VALERIAN PUG	5	<b>1936</b>	WAVED UMBER	3
<b>1824</b>	PAUPER PUG	5	<b>1937</b>	WILLOW BEAUTY	13
<b>1825</b>	LIME-SPECK PUG	15	<b>1944</b>	PALE OAK BEAUTY	5
<b>1830</b>	WORMWOOD PUG	10	<b>1947</b>	ENGRAILED	2
<b>1832</b>	CURRANT PUG	7	<b>1950</b>	BRINDLED WHITE-SPOT	6
<b>1838</b>	TAWNY SPECKLED PUG	13	<b>1951</b>	GREY BIRCH	3
<b>1844</b>	OCHREOUS PUG	4	<b>1958</b>	CLOUDED SILVER	8
<b>1851</b>	GOLDEN-ROD PUG	11	<b>1960</b>	EARLY MOTH	1
<b>1855</b>	CYPRESS PUG	15	<b>1961</b>	LIGHT EMERALD	15
<b>1858</b>	V-PUG	8	<b>1976</b>	PRIVET HAWK-MOTH	7
<b>1859</b>	SLOE PUG	7	<b>1978</b>	PINE HAWK-MOTH	6
<b>1862</b>	DOUBLE-STRIPED PUG	2	<b>1980</b>	EYED HAWK-MOTH	7
<b>1874</b>	DINGY SHELL	13	<b>1981</b>	POPLAR HAWK-MOTH	12
<b>1879</b>	SERAPHIM	3	<b>1991</b>	ELEPHANT HAWK-MOTH	8
<b>1881</b>	EARLY TOOTH-STRIPED	2	<b>1992</b>	SMALL ELEPHANT HAWK-MOTH	6
<b>1883</b>	YELLOW-BARRED BRINDLE	12	<b>1997</b>	SALLOW KITTEN	11
<b>1884</b>	MAGPIE MOTH	12	<b>1999</b>	LOBSTER MOTH	4
<b>1888</b>	SCORCHED CARPET	12	<b>2000</b>	IRON PROMINENT	4
<b>1893</b>	TAWNY-BARRED ANGLE	5, 12	<b>2007</b>	SWALLOW PROMINENT	13
<b>1894</b>	LATTICED HEATH	11	<b>2008</b>	COXCOMB PROMINENT	3
<b>1907</b>	BORDERED BEAUTY	12	<b>2014</b>	MARBLED BROWN	6

## Species Mentioned In Text Index

<b>B&amp;F</b>	<b>Species</b>	<b>Page</b>	<b>B&amp;F</b>	<b>Species</b>	<b>Page</b>
<b>2011</b>	PALE PROMINENT	12	<b>2166</b>	CAMPION	10
<b>2019</b>	CHOCOLATE-TIP	3	<b>2178</b>	FEATHERED GOTHIC	14
<b>2020</b>	FIGURE OF EIGHT	16	<b>2179</b>	PINE BEAUTY	2
<b>2030</b>	YELLOW-TAIL	8	<b>2181</b>	SILVER CLOUD	3, 4
<b>2033</b>	BLACK ARCHES	10	<b>2185</b>	LEAD-COLOURED DRAB	2
<b>2038</b>	MUSLIN FOOTMAN	9	<b>2188</b>	CLOUDED DRAB	4
<b>2043</b>	ORANGE FOOTMAN	5	<b>2190</b>	HEBREW CHARACTER	4
<b>2050</b>	COMMON FOOTMAN	9	<b>2194</b>	WHITE-POINT	14
<b>2057</b>	GARDEN TIGER	10	<b>2197</b>	SOUTHERN WAINSCOT	8, 13
<b>2063</b>	MUSLIN MOTH	3	<b>2204</b>	OBSCURE WAINSCOT	6
<b>2064</b>	RUBY TIGER	11	<b>2216</b>	SHARK	14
<b>2068</b>	SCARLET TIGER	9	<b>2227</b>	SPRAWLER	16
<b>2077</b>	SHORT-CLOKED MOTH	8	<b>2231</b>	DEEP-BROWN DART	15
<b>2078</b>	LEAST BLACK ARCHES	3	<b>2232</b>	BLACK RUSTIC	15
<b>2088</b>	HEART & CLUB	8	<b>2247</b>	MERVEILLE DU JOUR	16
<b>2089</b>	HEART & DART	15	<b>2248</b>	BRINDLED GREEN	15
<b>2091</b>	DARK SWORD-GRASS	12	<b>2256</b>	SATELLITE	1
<b>2098</b>	FLAME	13	<b>2258</b>	CHESTNUT	2
<b>2112</b>	LEAST YELLOW UNDERWING	11	<b>2262</b>	BRICK	15
<b>2117</b>	AUTUMNAL RUSTIC	14	<b>2266</b>	BROWN-SPOT PINION	15
<b>2118</b>	TRUE LOVER'S KNOT	11	<b>2267</b>	BEADED CHESTNUT	15
<b>2132</b>	NEGLECTED RUSTIC	14	<b>2269</b>	CENTRE-BARRED SALLOW	15
<b>2134</b>	SQUARE-SPOT RUSTIC	14	<b>2270</b>	LUNAR UNDERWING	15
<b>2136</b>	GOTHIC	12	<b>2272</b>	BARRED SALLOW	16
<b>2138</b>	GREEN ARCHES	6	<b>2273</b>	PINK-BARRED SALLOW	14
<b>2140</b>	WHITE MARKED	3	<b>2274</b>	SALLOW	15
<b>2145</b>	NUTMEG	13	<b>2280</b>	MILLER	6
<b>2147</b>	SHEARS	6	<b>2281</b>	ALDER MOTH	3
<b>2150</b>	GREY ARCHES	7	<b>2291</b>	CORONET	9
<b>2154</b>	CABBAGE MOTH	5	<b>2299</b>	MOUSE MOTH	15
<b>2155</b>	DOT MOTH	11	<b>2302</b>	BROWN RUSTIC	6
<b>2158</b>	PALE-SHOULDERED BROCADE	5	<b>2312</b>	OLIVE	9

<b>B&amp;F</b>	<b>Species</b>	<b>Page</b>	<b>B&amp;F</b>	<b>Species</b>	<b>Page</b>
<b>2313</b>	ANGLE-STRIPED SALLOW	12	<b>2373</b>	WEBB'S WAINSCOT	13
<b>2318</b>	DUN-BAR	10	<b>2377</b>	FEN WAINSCOT	9
<b>2319</b>	LUNAR-SPOTTED PINION	11	<b>2379</b>	SMALL RUFOUS	11
<b>2330</b>	DUSKY BROCADE	7	<b>2384</b>	VINE'S RUSTIC	13
<b>2333</b>	LARGE NUTMEG	6	<b>2387</b>	MOTTLED RUSTIC	15
<b>2335</b>	SLENDER BRINDLE	8	<b>2389</b>	PALE MOTTLED WILLOW	15
<b>2336</b>	DOUBLE LOBED	9, 14	<b>2391</b>	SILKY WAINSCOT	12
<b>2337</b>	MARBLED MINOR	5	<b>2418</b>	CREAM-BORDERED GREEN PEA	7
<b>2342</b>	ROSY MINOR	12	<b>2422</b>	GREEN SILVER-LINES	5
<b>2343a</b>	LESSER COMMON RUSTIC	12	<b>2423</b>	OAK NYCTEOLINE	2
<b>2345</b>	SMALL DOTTED BUFF	8	<b>2425</b>	NUT-TREE TUSSOCK	3
<b>2349</b>	MERE WAINSCOT	11	<b>2439</b>	GOLD SPOT	11
<b>2353</b>	FLOUNCED RUSTIC	13	<b>2442</b>	BEAUTIFUL GOLDEN Y	5
<b>2360</b>	EAR MOTH	14	<b>2449</b>	DARK SPECTACLE	5
<b>2361</b>	ROSY RUSTIC	12	<b>2450</b>	SPECTACLE	8
<b>2364</b>	FROSTED ORANGE	15	<b>2451</b>	CLIFDEN NONPAREIL	14
<b>2368</b>	CRESCENT	13	<b>2452</b>	RED UNDERWING	14
<b>2369</b>	BULRUSH WAINSCOT	12	<b>2466</b>	BLACKNECK	8
<b>2370</b>	TWIN-SPOTTED WAINSCOT	12	<b>2469</b>	HERALD	2, 9

### **The story behind the cover photograph**

For those of you that knew Val this won't need explaining, but for those who didn't know her, this is the reason. Whenever we were on a moth night most of us would have our heads in the traps trying to identify everything. Val would be in the background searching the surrounds for moths. Invariably there would be one if not more Brimstone Moths sitting on the vegetation around the traps. Once we'd been through the trap Val would delight in pointing them out to the trap owner with the aid of a red laser beam. So most Brimstone Moths would end up with a little bright red dot on them. Only once the Brimstone had that red dot on was it confirmed as such. I continue this tradition today, as it's a little bit of Val's quirky character that makes us all smile on a moth night and reminds us that recording moths should be fun, as well as producing serious and useful data. The Brimstone Moth on the cover is actually a badge made by the talented Izumi Segawa. She was a good friend of Val's and this was her unique, lovely and thoughtful tribute to her. I was honoured to receive it and it always makes me smile when I see it.

*Thank you Izumi.*

## **Val's Legacy of Inspiration**

I have to admit that without Val I probably wouldn't have found the passion for moth recording that I have now. So I am part of Val's legacy. It was her inquisitive nature that started me on this path. She wanted to know what things were and the first moth we identified was a Garden Carpet resting around one of our window frames. That was back in 1994. She then ventured on to attending organised moth nights. However enjoyable they were, most were a little frustrating as the people running the events didn't seem to have the deepest knowledge of the subject. From the moment she saw her first Canary-shouldered Thorn though she was hooked and I had no choice but to get involved. Over the years it became a huge part of both our lives. Val's idea of the "tea shop" as she called it, made things out in the wilds just that little bit more comfortable and enjoyable for everyone. I'm not sure how many other people would have considered making the effort to provide those little comforts and viewed such a thing as the most vital component to having an enjoyable moth night. It has become the standard and without this little luxury a moth night doesn't seem complete. She handpicked "the Pete's" to take over the running of the "tea shop" when she could no longer do it herself. Even though she wasn't able to attend she still wanted everyone to be well catered for. After taking it on the Pete's commented that "it now takes two of us to manage what Val did on her own!" Val was an inspiration to so many and most of all me. I wouldn't be the person I am today without her influence and for seeing the good in people. It was always a total privilege to be in her company and I feel so fortunate that lasted 37 years. For the last couple of them Val had the time of her life. Never letting anything stop her from doing the things she enjoyed most. This was down to everyone chipping in and helping her reach whatever target she had set for herself. There would be far too many people to mention, but you know who you are and THANK YOU. I have my instructions from Val to continue on as we always did. This I do with a great big smile on my face, as I'm well aware that Val is watching over me and making sure I do! I have taken some of her courage and determination on board and will do my very best to make her proud...always.

*Alan*

## **Val Weston – A Tribute**

Warwickshire Branch was formed in 1997 with 50 members and in those early days Val became a regular event attender and fundraiser through her tombola's, raffles and cake sales. She organised an annual doubling of the money she raised through matched funding with Barclays Bank and soon became our min fundraiser. The money Val raised allowed us to purchase the first Branch moth traps and generator, which Alan is still using today. Val's presence at moth events, keeping us all fed and watered, carrying equipment (and highlighting Brimstone Moths) was always appreciated, not to mention the help she provided to Alan in producing this report of the years activities.

In 2007 the Branch acquired its first butterfly reserve at Ryton Wood Meadows and it was Val who provided a splendid buffet lunch and themed cake at the reserve opening by then Butterfly Conservation Chief Executive, Martin Warren. The lunchtime buffet became a regular feature each year for all who attended the Reserve Open Days. Val's catering at all our events became legendary and as our membership grew to over 400 it was clear that most of our members attended our events especially for Val's wonderful cakes!

Val's love of butterflies and moths was clear to see and she even arranged for her Barclays colleagues to carry out conservation work parties on our reserve planting caterpillar food plants for all our rarer butterfly species and even building stiles for easier access. At public events Val was always quick to volunteer and loved to share her passion for moths with the younger generation. Val's enthusiasm and dedication in all she did touched the lives of so many people. Never was this more evident than at her FUN-eral, which she was able to actively orchestrate with Alan before her death. She had insisted that it would be a joyous celebration of her life and indeed it was! Butterfly brooches were handed out to all on arrival. Val's favourite music was played and also sung and performed live during the ceremony. Beautiful and poignant tributes were paid and every one of the hundred plus well wishers from the butterfly, moth and rock music world came away uplifted by the experience.

Butterfly Conservation – Warwickshire will always be grateful for the support Val gave and her legacy she leaves us.

*Keith Warmington*



View down Alan's Lane from Val's Hill



Waiting out THE storm at Kineton

**Massive**  
31 January 2018 · 🌐

Today the world has become a poorer place. A true friend of Massive, Valerie Weston the most beautiful soul in rock n roll has passed away. We are heartbroken but also blessed to have been able to meet and share our story. Over the past 4 years on every trip to the UK we have had the pleasure of being welcomed into the house of Al and Val. We weren't the only ones. This couple of music loving legends have been traveling supporting bands for decades. They have been the home away from home for their favorite bands for years. Their collection of ticket stubs and bootleg recordings is truly amazing. And when we would try to thank Al and Val for everything they do, they would stop us and remind us that we are helping them. They can't play music but they love music and this is their contribution to the art they love. How beautiful and inspiring is that!

Over the past few months Val's also legendary lifelong soulmate Alan has been updating us with the news. Some of the stories are absolutely legendary. Nothing, not even in the face of debilitating illness would stop Val from traveling to see rock n roll bands. Against doctors orders she was attending concerts as little as 6 weeks ago! Music was her heartbeat, it kept her going.

On behalf of Massive, members current and former, our heart and thoughts go to Alan Prior and all their family and friends. Rest in Peace Val. You have been a positive force and one we won't forget. Your legend lives on forever in the music you helped inspire.



Opening Ceremony - Ryton Wood Meadows



Dawn arrives over Val's Hill



Sunset at Sun Rising!



1674 Little Emerald (Pete Smith)



1855 Cypress Pug (Martin Kennard)



1859 Sloe Pug (Martin Kennard)



2181 Silver Cloud (Alan Prior)



2231 Deep-brown Dart (Martin Kennard)



2451 Clifden Nonpareil (Martin Kennard)



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