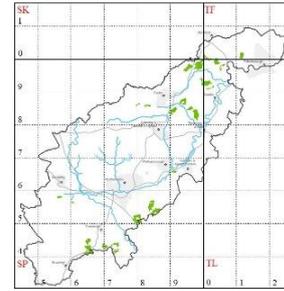


VC32/Northamptonshire Moths – A Summary of New Species & Noteworthy Records from 2025

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(February 2026)

Northamptonshire/VC32 Moth Group website:
<http://www.northamptonshiremoths.org.uk/home.htm>



This is an annual review of species newly recorded in VC32 (Northamptonshire and The Soke of Peterborough), along with interesting and noteworthy moths recorded during the 2025 season, based on records received as at the end of January 2026. If you have any queries or observations about the article, please do drop me a line. If you are reading this and still have records to submit for 2025 (or indeed from any previous years), it's never too late – please send them in. All records (macro and micro-moths) are ultimately uploaded to the National Moth Recording Scheme, hosted by Butterfly Conservation, where they are subject to further scrutiny and used in scientific research to support conservation and to increase our understanding of our moth fauna.

1. Introduction

2025 could really not be more different to 2024 in terms of moths. In my personal experience, which is supported by the wider 2025 data, the year was one of the best for moths in all of my fifty-ish moth recording years. I have been recording moths in my current garden since January 2010, and I added an unprecedented thirty species as being new to the site during the year. I think this has been reflected in many garden moth traps around the county, and further supported by the VC32 data as a whole.

Northamptonshire experienced its warmest and sunniest year on record, mirroring a wider trend across the United Kingdom. The year was characterized by extreme summer heatwaves and significant winter storms. The mean annual temperature for the region exceeded 10°C, breaking the previous records set in 2022 and 2023. Spring was mostly dry and settled, and according to the Met Office, provisionally the warmest and sunniest on record. March was noted to have been exceptionally sunny. Despite a series of weather systems in June, which brought cooler than average temperatures, and some fairly heavy spells of rain, the summer period was also noted as the warmest on record, with four distinct heatwaves in June, July, and August. Local temperatures frequently exceeded 30°C, peaking around 33.4°C in August. That said, July had mixed conditions; exceptional heat but punctuated by heavy thunderstorms and flash flooding. Autumn 2025 was also warmer than average across the eastern part of the UK, with some very mild conditions in the first half of November. November then transitioned to being cool and breezy; marked by significant storm activity (Storm Claudia). December then proceeded to be very mild and wet, which yielded some very unseasonal moth sightings, notably, in no particular order:

Dark Arches, *Apamea monoglypha*, in late November and December – the last being On 18.xii.2025 at Pitsford Reservoir

Common Footman, *Eilema lurideola*, on 05.xi.2025 (Thrapston) and 07.xii.2025 (Brackley)

Orange Footman, *Eilema sororcula* on 07.xii.2025 (Brackley)

Vine's Rustic, *Hoplodrina ambigua*, on 07.xii.2025 (Brackley)

Heart & Dart, *Agrotis exclamationis*, 14.x.2025 (Pitsford), 31.x.2025 (Upper Boddington); 05.xi.2025 (Little Billing)

The table below shows the summary of the 2025 dataset, as compared to previous years.

	2025	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020
No. records received	62,460	46,687	44,831	56,913	48,476	46,654
No. species recorded (exc. aggregates)	1,080	1,001	983	1,047	1,037	1,053
No. individual moths recorded (approx.)	265,000	159,860	184,660	196,600	168,600	150,000
No. species new to the county	17	11	4	14	10	12

It can be clearly seen that the year broke pretty much every record going! An incredible 1,080 species were recorded (which excludes aggregated records), with a record seventeen species recorded in the county for the first time. Perhaps the stand-out figure is that of actual numbers of moths – around 265,000 (NB: the number is never 100% accurate, and hence rounded - quite a few datasets are for moths being “present”, or noted when first recorded, rather than actual numbers/estimates of every recording session). iRecord and iNaturalist provided around 8,000 records, compared to the more usual 5,000 in recent years.

As has become customary, and would be recognisable to those who participate in the Garden Moth Scheme, the table below shows the Top Ten species, based on the number of records submitted, with their position in 2024 in parentheses:

Pos.	ABH	Taxon	Vernacular	No. Records
1 (1)	73.342	<i>Noctua pronuba</i>	Large Yellow Underwing	1406
2 (-)	73.325	<i>Agrotis puta</i>	Shuttle-shaped Dart	1216
3 (3)	70.258	<i>Peribatodes rhomboidaria</i>	Willow Beauty	1054
4 (9)	73.291	<i>Mythimna pallens</i>	Common Wainscot	951
5 (2)	73.359	<i>Xestia c-nigrum</i>	Setaceous Hebrew Character	866
6 (8)	73.317	<i>Agrotis exclamationis</i>	Heart and Dart	843
7 (-)	73.319	<i>Agrotis segetum</i>	Turnip Moth	833
8 (4)	70.226	<i>Opisthograptis luteolata</i>	Brimstone Moth	801
9 (-)	73.099	<i>Hoplodrina ambigua</i>	Vine's Rustic	789
10 (6)	70.016	<i>Idaea aversata</i>	Riband Wave	707

It shows that the good old Large Yellow Underwing remains the most widely seen species, as it has been for as long as I have been producing this report, and many of those in the top-ten appear there quite regularly.

2. 2025 Winners & Losers

The tables below show the “winners” and “losers” in 2025, based on numbers of moths seen, showing the top-40 and bottom-40. I have tried to eliminate recording bias by including species usually seen as adults (e.g. to light, during daytime observations, to lures) and excluded those species whose numbers can be affected by targeted recording (e.g. searching for leaf-mines, adults requiring dissection). The exception here is for Small Eggar. The vast majority of records for the past few years have been of larvae and larval webs. In fact, the adult was only recorded on three occasions in 2025. The lists are therefore slightly subjective, but I feel are a good representation of the issue discussed here.

The tables below show the approximate number of individuals recorded during 2025. The next column shows figures averaged for the previous ten years (i.e. 2015-2024), and both tables are sorted on the final “Percentage of Ten Year Average” column.

TOP 40

ABH	Taxon	Vernacular	2025 Numbers	Ten Yr Average (TYA)	Percentage of TYA
73.093	<i>Caradrina kadenii</i>	Clancy's Rustic	82	5	1,822
49.238	<i>Epinotia cruciana</i>	Willow Tortrix	35	2	1,750
63.048	<i>Palpita vitrealis</i>	Olive-tree Pearl	34	2	1,700
63.028	<i>Ostrinia nubilalis</i>	European Corn-borer	131	8	1,638
73.297	<i>Mythimna albipuncta</i>	White-point	2,528	162	1,557
72.011	<i>Lymantria dispar</i>	Gypsy Moth	73	6	1,327
66.005	<i>Eriogaster lanestris</i>	Small Eggar	710	56	1,279

62.021	<i>Oncocera semirubella</i>	Rosy Knot-horn	91	8	1,162
63.054	<i>Cydalima perspectalis</i>	Box-tree Moth	4,005	384	1,042
49.059	<i>Tortrix viridana</i>	Green Oak Tortrix	14,379	1,457	987
71.001	<i>Thaumetopoea processionea</i>	Oak Processionary	31	3	969
73.319	<i>Agrotis segetum</i>	Turnip Moth	3,105	331	938
73.347	<i>Noctua janthina</i>	Langmaid's Yellow Underwing	9	1	900
72.041	<i>Lithosia quadra</i>	Four-spotted Footman	20	2	889
12.017	<i>Nemapogon koenigi</i>	White-speckled Fungus Moth	31	4	886
70.077	<i>Pennithera firmata</i>	Pine Carpet	26	3	867
16.005	<i>Yponomeuta rorella</i>	Willow Ermine	9,595	1,117	859
49.342	<i>Cydia fagiglandana</i>	Beech Mast Piercer	32	4	835
37.033	<i>Coleophora trifolii</i>	Melilot Case-bearer	27	4	759
72.029	<i>Callimorpha dominula</i>	Scarlet Tiger	1,042	137	759
16.001	<i>Yponomeuta evonymella</i>	Bird-cherry Ermine	6,084	806	755
70.218	<i>Chiasmia clathrata</i>	Latticed Heath	326	44	739
20.011	<i>Argyresthia brockeella</i>	Gold W	107	15	730
44.001	<i>Alucita hexadactyla</i>	Twenty-plumed Moth	208	29	726
70.159	<i>Eupithecia phoeniceata</i>	Cypress Pug	45	7	685
49.133	<i>Thyralia nana</i>	Birch Straw	9	1	675
63.015	<i>Sitochroa verticalis</i>	Lesser Pearl	9	1	675
49.363	<i>Pammene argyrana</i>	Oak Gall Moth	20	3	667
73.327	<i>Agrotis ipsilon</i>	Dark Sword-grass	216	33	657
73.289	<i>Mythimna pudorina</i>	Striped Wainscot	8	1	640
52.011	<i>Synanthedon myopaeformis</i>	Red-belted Clearwing	123	19	633
12.021	<i>Nemapogon clematella</i>	Black-barred Fungus Moth	37	6	604
32.009	<i>Agonopterix purpurea</i>	Least Brown	16	3	600
72.004	<i>Hypena rostralis</i>	Buttoned Snout	11	2	592
49.266	<i>Eucosma hohewartiana</i>	Common Knapweed Tortrix	14	2	573
62.053	<i>Ancylosis oblitella</i>	Saltmarsh Knot-horn	15	3	563
73.002	<i>Abrostola triplasia</i>	Dark Spectacle	48	9	557
52.001	<i>Pennisetia hylaeiformis</i>	Raspberry Clearwing	11	2	550
49.044	<i>Tortricodes alternella</i>	Spring Harbinger	668	122	549
63.052	<i>Nomophila noctuella</i>	Rush Veneer	172	33	520

Interesting to note that this table contains several species with known migratory tendencies. This is reflected in the migration summary section further down this report. However, it also includes several which are known to be expanding their ranges (Buttoned Snout, Langmaid's Yellow Underwing, Gypsy Moth) and generally becoming more commonly recorded (Dark Spectacle).

It will be interesting to monitor populations of Box-tree Moth in the coming few years. Locally to me, there are very few Box hedges which have not been severely affected by the larvae of this moth. Of the six close neighbours to my garden, there were three with established Box plantings. All are now either completely destroyed or moribund. I'm sure this is the case over the county, and at some stage, the moth will have eaten itself out of house and home!

BOTTOM 40

ABH	Taxon	Vernacular	2025 Numbers	Ten Yr Average (TYA)	Percentage of TYA
73.368	<i>Naenia typica</i>	Gothic	1	4	26
73.015	<i>Autographa gamma</i>	Silver Y	195	774	25
49.162	<i>Celypha rosaceana</i>	Roseate Marble	1	4	25
63.081	<i>Crambus pascuella</i>	White-banded Grass-moth	30	121	25
73.036	<i>Acronicta alni</i>	Alder Moth	7	29	24
7.006	<i>Adela reaumurella</i>	Green Longhorn	16	67	24
12.048	<i>Psychoides filicivora</i>	Common Fern Moth	14	58	24
49.128	<i>Aethes rubigana</i>	Burdock Straw	1	4	23
49.143	<i>Eudemis porphyra</i>	Apple Marble	1	4	23
73.352	<i>Anaplectoides prasina</i>	Green Arches	2	9	22
73.351	<i>Graphiphora augur</i>	Double Dart	1	5	22
53.001	<i>Apoda limacodes</i>	Festoon	3	14	21
70.189	<i>Eupithecia subumbrata</i>	Shaded Pug	5	24	20
73.064	<i>Amphipyra tragopoginis</i>	Mouse Moth	32	157	20
12.012	<i>Triaxomera parasitella</i>	Brindled Fungus Moth	1	5	20
49.367	<i>Pammene fasciana</i>	Acorn Piercer	1	5	19
70.264	<i>Deileptenia ribeata</i>	Satin Beauty	5	27	19
70.273	<i>Parectropis similaria</i>	Brindled White-spot	13	69	19
73.114	<i>Euplexia lucipara</i>	Small Angle Shades	4	22	18
49.348	<i>Grapholita pallifrontana</i>	Liquorice Piercer	4	22	18
49.091	<i>Pseudargyrotoza conwagana</i>	Yellow-spotted Tortrix	11	61	18
15.009	<i>Caloptilia robustella</i>	Shaded Oak Stilt	2	11	18
70.082	<i>Thera juniperata</i>	Juniper Carpet	6	34	18
70.134	<i>Perizoma bifaciata</i>	Barred Rivulet	1	6	17
70.181	<i>Eupithecia valerianata</i>	Valerian Pug	1	6	16
49.307	<i>Rhyacionia pinivorana</i>	Spotted Shoot Moth	1	6	16
73.314	<i>Euxoa nigricans</i>	Garden Dart	2	13	15
38.025	<i>Elachista atricomella</i>	Cock's-foot Miner	3	20	15
49.092	<i>Phtheochroa inopiana</i>	Fleabane Drab	1	7	14
49.297	<i>Notocelia rosaecolana</i>	Rose Shoot Moth	1	7	14
49.335	<i>Cydia strobilella</i>	Spruce Seed Moth	1	7	14
70.279	<i>Lomographa bimaculata</i>	White-pinion Spotted	2	17	12
49.199	<i>Eucosmomorpha albersana</i>	Honeysuckle Beauty	1	9	11
49.078	<i>Acleris aspersana</i>	Small Rufous Tortrix	2	22	9
1.005	<i>Micropterix calthella</i>	Plain Pollen-moth	8	88	9
15.014	<i>Gracillaria syringella</i>	Garden Stilt	1	12	8
49.356	<i>Grapholita lobarzewskii</i>	Small Fruit Moth	1	15	7
71.016	<i>Peridea anceps</i>	Great Prominent	2	34	6
49.354	<i>Grapholita jungiella</i>	Beautiful Crescent	1	19	5
73.270	<i>Melanchnra persicariae</i>	Dot Moth	2	47	4

Some of the species represented in this second table have been experiencing gradual declines over the past few years and I have made mention of Dot Moth and Gothic in a previous report. Whether the above indicates any long-

term trends due to e.g. climate or habitat changes, are a result of natural annual fluctuations or are directly related to other factors is difficult to tell.

3. Migrant Summary

I don't think it would be too far-fetched to say that 2025 was one of our best for migrant species activity. Perhaps even matching the heady days of 2006... Certainly, not only did we experience higher than usually numbers of our regular migrants, but we also saw several of the less frequent visitors to the Midlands, and some for the first time.

NB: It's not an exact science, and several species included below are known or suspected to breed locally, but would be sufficiently enhanced by migration (e.g. Silver Y, Delicate, Diamond-back Moth, Rush Veneer,). Conversely, Dewick's Plusia, European Corn-borer and White Point are listed as migrant species, but appear to be recorded in VC32 at times outside of periods of known migration, and sometimes in such numbers as to argue that they must be breeding locally, hence not included in the below table:

ABH	Taxon	Vernacular	2025 Numbers	2024 Numbers	2023 Numbers
18.001	<i>Plutella xylostella</i>	Diamond-back Moth	194	114	117
49.261	<i>Crociosema plebejana</i>	Tree-mallow Tortrix	2	0	0
62.033	<i>Acrobasis tumidana</i>	Tufted Oak Knot-horn	1	0	0
63.002	<i>Loxostege sticticalis</i>	Mugwort Pearl	2	0	0
63.031	<i>Udea ferrugalis</i>	Rusty-dot Pearl	87	24	32
63.044	<i>Diasemiopsis ramburialis</i>	Migrant Sable	1	0	0
63.048	<i>Palpita vitrealis</i>	Olive-tree Pearl	34	45+	3
63.052	<i>Nomophila noctuella</i>	Rush Veneer	172	9	2
69.004	<i>Agrius convolvuli</i>	Convolvulus Hawk-moth	2	5	9
69.015	<i>Hyles livornica</i>	Striped Hawk-moth	1	0	0
70.034	<i>Cyclophora ruficiliaria</i>	Jersey Mocha	1	0	0
70.038	<i>Rhodometra sacraria</i>	Vestal	21	2	20
70.047	<i>Nycterosea obstipata</i>	Gem	2	5	5
71.001	<i>Thaumetopoea processionea</i>	Oak Processionary	31	3	2
72.041	<i>Lithosia quadra</i>	Four-spotted Footman	20	1	3
72.073	<i>Eublemma parva</i>	Small Marbled	3	0	0
72.087	<i>Dysgonia algira</i>	Passenger	1	0	0
73.008	<i>Chrysodeixis chalcites</i>	Golden Twin-spot	1	0	1
73.015	<i>Autographa gamma</i>	Silver Y	195	784	1351
73.074	<i>Heliothis peltigera</i>	Bordered Straw	22	1	0
73.076	<i>Helicoverpa armigera</i>	Scarce Bordered Straw	27	19	5
73.087	<i>Spodoptera exigua</i>	Small Mottled Willow	22	2	2
73.104	<i>Athetis hospes</i>	Porter's Rustic	1	0	0
73.295	<i>Mythimna vitellina</i>	Delicate	31	142	38
73.307	<i>Peridroma saucia</i>	Pearly Underwing	10	1	2
73.327	<i>Agrotis ipsilon</i>	Dark Sword-grass	216	33	37
73.330	<i>Ochropleura leucogaster</i>	Radford's Flame Shoulder	2	3	0

The exception appears to be Silver Y, with considerably fewer records than seen in previous years.

One species of particular interest (to me at least), is Oak Processionary. This species is recorded only occasionally in the county, and so far, always as adult males to light traps. The reason for my interest is the date cluster for records.

In 2025, the moth was recorded on ten occasions, often with several moths in a trap – but nine of those records were on 19th July (with one on 20th). This mirrors previous years:

2018: five records of seven individuals, four of these records on 26.vii.2018, one on 28.vii.2018

2020: five records of five individuals, all on 31.vii.2020

2024: two records, two moths at different sites on 11.viii.2024

To me this suggests short-term dispersal events, possibly from areas within the UK where it has become established (e.g. London/Home Counties), rather than sustained migration. I have no idea if this is mirrored in other vice counties, and clearly not a scientifically supportable fact!

The Olive-tree Pearl, *Palpita vitrealis*, is another species which is now appearing with some regularity. In previous years it was recorded almost exclusively as singletons to light traps. 2025 saw the moth recorded several times, but often in numbers. The highest count was of eight individuals to light at Farthinghoe NR on 06.vii.2025; followed by five to a Nassington garden light trap on 24.ix.2025. I'm not aware that the larval stages have been found in the UK, unsurprising given that it relies upon Jasmine and Olive plants for development. However, there is some evidence that it may utilise Privet, which might lead to it becoming established here. Time may tell..

4. Recording Issues

General request

A general note for those who use their own spreadsheets or electronic documents for retaining their moth records.

Date format:

- Please could all records be put in the in dd/mm/yyyy format. Other formats do not always transcribe well during the importing process, and can also default to an incorrect year.

Spatial references:

- 6-figure grid refs are just perfect, and 4-figure also very acceptable. There seems to be a move towards using grid references of greater accuracy, which is not necessary for moth recording purposes. And please don't use 10-fig references.
- Most UK recording packages are based on the OS grid reference system, and thus do not accept input using latitude/longitude. If your system outputs records in Lat/Long format, these need to be converted to OS, but is time-consuming, so please avoid if you can.
- WhatThreeWords is also being increasingly utilised. W3W can also be converted to OS grid references, but also adds time and increases the chances of transcription errors creeping into the final file.

Life Stage:

Life stage is vital (e.g.: larval, larval web, adult, etc). Some records appear with no information about which life stage has been recorded. In many cases it seems clear that it was of an adult, but can be unclear with certain species, such as Cinnabar for example, which can be found in larval and adult stage at same time on the same site.

iRecord

iRecord is becoming increasingly popular, and validation slightly easier!

Data on this platform is generally quite robust, and can be supported with images of the insect. These records are especially useful if users utilise the specific "Moth Group Form".

For anyone interested, this iRecord 101 Skills for Ecology training webinar is free to access:

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/1734876575539>

iNaturalist

This is perhaps the worst recording package that I deal with. Users are effectively anonymous and uncontactable (using nick-names only), and the records often do not contain the essential fields to make the record valid. I would estimate that 80% of data contained in iNaturalist does not meet the minimum standard required for them to be regarded as a valid biological record, and thus do not end up in the county database. This is such a shame as good records are potentially lost as a result. Therefore, any current users, please stop using this system and consider utilising iRecord instead.

MapMate

A brief update on what has happened so far.

MapMate, as a business, has now ceased to exist.
On-line support from MapMate has now also finished.

However, the software will continue to operate on your machines as normal.

I use it most days and can reassure you that it continues to operate perfectly well. Of course, it does mean that there will no longer be updates to moth names etc. sent out to users from MapMate as we have been used to. However, Les Evans-Hill is still working towards creating updates to taxonomy, adding species new to the UK list and ensuring that other changes are captured for the software. It is not yet known how these updates will be distributed to users, but I shall make sure that all users are aware of these updates.

There is a FaceBook group for MapMate users, so I would strongly advise keeping an eye on this forum too.

Therefore, in summary - do please keep on using it in the same manner as you have been. I will keep everyone updated when I get further news.

Brief notes on using the VC32 Moth Recording Spreadsheet

I wanted just to explain the colour-coding to be found on the VC32 Recording Spreadsheet, which many people use (and it is really quick and easy for me to convert this to MapMate format once submitted) but also to highlight what other information could be entered into a given cell.

The first premise is that the sheet is for use for **one site** – e.g. regular surveyed site, such as the garden, and the assumption is that records are of **adults** resulting from **light trapping**

- Where no colour highlight exists – simply record numbers seen, no caveats
- Orange: Species highlighted in orange – denotes that caution may be required to get identification correct
- Red: Species highlighted in red – these can only be used if the specimen has been confirmed by dissection. Any records in here will be aggregated where possible
- Green: Those in green indicate that these are aggregate entries for species pairs/complexes, which for example have not been dissected

Next to the numbers seen for a given species on a given day, additional notes can be added. These could include e.g. “Ph” - to say that they were attracted to a pheromone lure

“Day” – seen by day and not light trapped

“L” – larval, not adult

Basically, put whatever you like in the cell as the information will not be lost – but do please tell me what your notations mean when you send the file!

Finally, if you are about to record a species which does not appear on the spreadsheet, it could potentially new to VC32, a rarely-recorded vagrant/accidental, or has not been recorded since 2000. In those circumstances, **please retain the specimen** and contact the County Moth Recorder before release. The specimen may need to be corroborated for the record to be valid.

5. A couple of Macro-moth ID Guides

I have picked a couple of regularly encountered “species pairs” which can cause difficulties in identification and recording.

Treble-bar vs Lesser Treble-bar

An issue, I guess, mainly aimed at more recent converts to moth recording, but one I wish to highlight, mainly in the hope of ensuring we get a better picture of a couple of our species complexes.

In the past, ID has been accepted purely on the basis of upper wing markings, especially the angle of the sub-basal fascia/inner-bar, and by reference to slight differences in size and the other cross-bands. The angle of the inner bar is quite variable and open to interpretation on both species so isn't a reliable feature to use. The left-hand image below is a composite of the upper-side of the forewing, showing the above-mentioned features. This gives an

indication of species, but to be certain, the underside of the abdomen should be examined, which is shown in the right-hand image below:

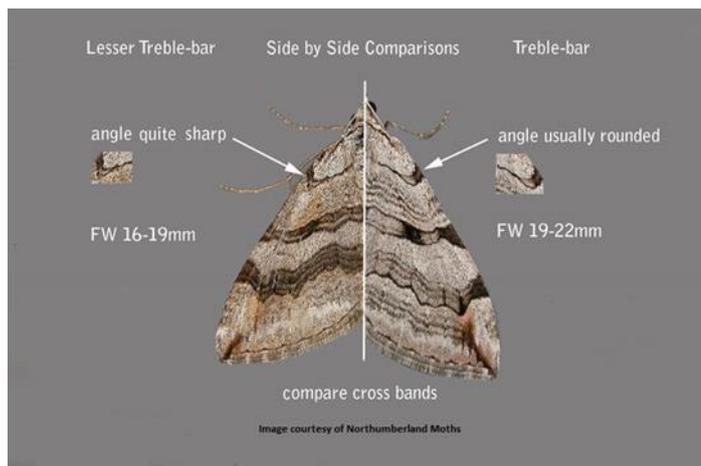


Image credit: Northumberland Moth website (Tom Tams)

There is an aggregate for records of specimens not reliably determined:
Aplocera plagiata/efformata (Lesser Treble-bar/Treble-bar agg.)

Red Twin-spot Carpet vs Dark-barred Twin-spot Carpet

Red twin-spot and Dark barred twin-spot carpets can be a tricky pair to tell apart! I also believe that Dark-barred Twin-spot Carpet has been over-recorded in the past, and that the true distribution of both species is somewhat confused due to historical errors in recording. Several authors indicate that Dark-barred TSC is more associated with wetland/damp habitats. Therefore, I felt it would be useful to make the following notes.

Red-twin-spot Carpet usually has a red median band on the forewing, but in some forms this band can be very dark or almost black. Dark-barred Twin-spot Carpet has that median band of the forewing dark, or even black. A very widely used character for the separation of the two has been the presence (in Dark-barred) or absence (in the Red) of a notch on the inner edge of the median fascia of the forewing at the costa. However, this character has now been proven to be unreliable and should not be used.

The two can also be separated by the underside of the forewing, Dark-barred Twin-spot Carpet being uniform grey with little contrast. Red Twin-spot Carpet shows a contrasting pattern with deep ginger colouration towards the apex of the underside (pictured below).

Be aware that there is a red-barred form of Dark-barred Twin-spot Carpet. It is rare and should be treated as indistinguishable from Red Twin-spot Carpet without dissection of the genitalia.

Red Twin-spot Carpet, *Xanthorhoe spadicearia*



Dark-barred Twin-spot Carpet, *Xanthorhoe ferrugata*



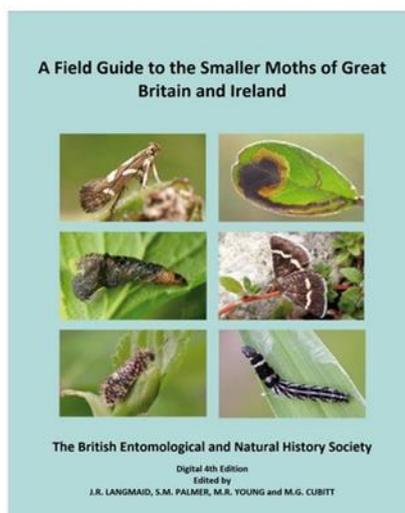
Image credit: Lepiforum.org

NB: There is an aggregate for records of specimens not reliably determined:
Xanthorhoe spadicearia/ferrugata (Red/Dark-barred Twin-spot Carpet agg.)

6. Publication News

A Field Guide to the Smaller Moths of Great Britain and Ireland (4th Edition-Digital)

Editors: J.R. Langmaid, S.M. Palmer, M.R. Young and M.G. Cubitt.



A new 4th edition of the Field Guide to The Smaller Moths of Britain and Ireland is now available to download **FOR FREE** from the British Entomological and Natural History Society:

<https://www.benhs.org.uk/publications/smaller-moths-4th-edition/>

All previous editions were hard-copy books, and have been absolutely invaluable pieces of work for anyone interested in micro-moths and their early stages. However, this 4th edition is an entirely digital version which will be updated regularly as new findings can be incorporated. The Field Guide is presented in three formats:

- Digital Download - PDF
- Digital Download - Spreadsheet
- Android App

For every species that breeds in Great Britain and Ireland, the full life-history details are set out concisely in a standard layout. It contains fully updated accounts including the latest available information on each of the 1,596 species covered.

The Spreadsheet and the App are designed as searchable versions of the guide, allowing very quick use of key words in drop-down boxes to identify candidate species, based on the user's field observations. This is the first time that a field guide to micro-moths has been designed to allow quick and easy identification of what the field-worker has found.

NB: Unlike previous, hard-copy editions, this latest digital version does not include distribution maps.

Effect of bulb type on moth trap catch and composition in UK gardens

The Royal Entomological Society recently published an Open Access paper, based on Garden Moth Scheme data, looking at the effect of bulb type and trap design on moth catches.

The paper can be freely downloaded from the journal "Insect Conservation and Diversity"

Title: Effect of bulb type on moth trap catch and composition in UK gardens

Authors: Reuben O'Connell-Booth, Christopher Hassall, William E. Kunin

Editor: Alan John Stewart and Associate Editor: Nick Littlewood

First published: 12 December 2025

The download link is below:

Paper Abstract:

- Light traps are a key method for monitoring moth populations. A wide variety of light sources are employed for this purpose, differing in brightness and spectrum. Relatively little is known about how this affects the resulting sample.
- We analyse seven moth trap bulb types using 10 years of records from the Garden Moth Scheme (GMS) to provide the largest and most comprehensive comparison of moth trap bulb types to date.
- The total abundance of moths caught by a trap is strongly linked to bulb wattage and brightness. We estimate that Heath traps catch fewer moths than Robinson or Skinner-style traps.
- Ordination models indicated that Mercury Vapour bulbs collected a distinct fauna to Actinic bulbs. Species composition also varied between Actinic bulbs which differ in brightness, with brighter Actinic traps tending to collect a larger proportion of large-winged species.
- We develop hypotheses whereby large-winged, strong-flying moths are more strongly affected by artificial light (arising from moth traps or other sources). We explore how this hypothesised mechanism may result in negative fitness effects for larger, mobile moth species. Our findings have significant consequences for survey design, citizen science projects and understanding the impact of ALAN on the moth community.

Brief summary of finding:

We find that brighter moth trap bulbs generally collect larger numbers of moths. We find that Robinson and Skinner traps tend to collect more moths than Heath-style traps. We find some differences in species composition between bulb types. Ordination model results lead us to hypothesise that MV traps collect a unique assemblage and that brighter, higher wattage Actinic bulbs collect a larger proportion of large-winged and mobile moth species.

7. [Some Taxonomy Updates](#)

Updates to the taxonomy of UK Lepidoptera are published annually in The Entomologist’s Record and Journal of Variation. The following changes affect species on the VC32 list, as published in Volume 138, part 1 of the above journal:

ABH	Vernacular	Old name	New name
49.354	Beautiful Crescent	<i>Grapholita jungiella</i>	<i>Ephippiphora jungiella</i>
49.356	Small Fruit Moth	<i>Grapholita lobarzewskii</i>	<i>Aspila lobarzewskii</i>
49.357	Plum Fruit Moth	<i>Grapholita funebrana</i>	<i>Aspila funebrana</i>
49.358	Rose Piercer	<i>Grapholita tenebrosana</i>	<i>Aspila tenebrosana</i>
49.359	Hawthorn Piercer	<i>Grapholita janthinana</i>	<i>Aspila janthinana</i>
70.055	Large Twin-spot Carpet	<i>Xanthorhoe quadrifasiata</i>	<i>Ochyria quadrifasiata</i>

Other general changes and updates of note:

[Wilson’s Yellow Underwing, *Noctua tertia*](#)

I made mention in the BOLO section of the 2022 moth report, to keep an eye out for this recently described species. Following DNA studies, it is no longer recognized as a “good species”, rather it is now considered to be a form of Langmaid’s Yellow Underwing, *N. janthina*

[Ling Pug, *Eupithecia goossensiata*](#)

Although unlikely to crop-up in VC32, felt it worthy of report, as there is always a chance that it might turn up as a result of garden planting of Heathers, *Calluna vulgaris*

Once considered to be a species in its own right, it has very recently been understood to be heathland ecotype of Wormwood Pug, *Eupithecia absinthiata*. Current scientific consensus, supported by genetic and ecological data, once again recognises *E. goossensiata* as a distinct species.

The adult moth is generally smaller than Wormwood Pug (9–11mm forewing) and greyish-brown rather than the reddish-brown of Wormwood Pug

Stigmella salicis species cluster news

This is a species complex/cluster which is undergoing current research, and who's outcome is not yet completely clear. I guess therefore, that this one is dedicated to those who are very much into the deepest "dark-side" of moth recording...

In the 3rd edition of The Field Guide to the Smaller Moths of Great Britain and Ireland (BENHS), there were two entries, thus:

4.035 *Stigmella salicis*

4.0351 *S. salicis* (cluster 6) yet un-named

According to the recently published 4th edition of the field guide, which reflects the current state of affairs, we now have two more of the *S. salicis* clusters in the UK. I am hoping that these will be given ABH numbers in the next checklist revision; in the meantime, the guide has removed checklist number 4.0351 (which was only in the guide, not in a checklist update). Here is the relevant extract from the guide:

Stigmella salicis has been studied by DNA barcoding, *Entomologisk Tidskrift* **132** (4): 235-255 (2012); Nieukerken_SEL2019_Salix_Stigmella.pdf and has been found to fall into several clusters, four of which, including *S. salicis* sensu stricto (Cluster 1), occur in the British Isles as follows:

Cluster 1 Egg underside; mine often but not always contorted; usually on 'short-leaved' willows (but very occasionally on *S. fragilis*); larval head mid/dark brown.

Cluster 2 Egg underside (often near midrib or a main vein); mine tends to be obviously linear, especially at the start; so far only on *S. caprea*, often later in the season than other clusters; larval head very pale brown.

Cluster 3 Egg upperside; mine mostly linear, especially early in mine, but occasionally a bit distorted; on most *Salix* species; larval head very dark brown.

Cluster 6 Egg upperside, mostly near the midrib; mine contorted and occupying very small space; on most willows (not salixes); larval head dark brown.

4.035 *S. salicis* (Staint.)

- | | | |
|----|----------|--|
| O. | 8-9;5 | On the underside of a leaf of one of the rough-leaved <i>Salix</i> spp. (<i>S. caprea</i> , <i>S. cinerea</i> or <i>S. aurita</i>). |
| L. | 9-11;6-7 | In a contorted gallery, often leading to a small blotch. Larva with head brown, mandibles darker; prothorax without longitudinal sclerites; body pale greenish yellow, with ventral chain of ganglia less obvious than in the following species. |
| P. | 11-4;7-8 | In a cocoon spun on detritus. |
| I. | 4-5;7-8 | Occasionally noted in September, and a few times in October and November. |

It seems very likely that most if not all our VC32 records of *S. salicis* mentioning egg underside are of Cluster 1, with mines containing broad dispersed frass. For anyone wishing to record these mines, please record initially as *S. salicis* (ABH # 4.035), and mention which cluster seems pertinent in the comments. These can then later be assigned to the appropriate entry in MapMate in due course. I hope!

Phyllocnistis saligna update

Sadly, nothing much to report/update from last year's report.

The situation remains thus:

There are four species in this complex (*P. saligna*, *P. ramulicola*, *P. asiatica* and *P. triandricola*).

What we thought was *P. saligna* in VC32 are likely all going to prove to be *P. asiatica*.

Only the females appear to be determined by dissection, otherwise all current efforts are looking at DNA of material from mines.

P. triandricola was finally recorded as new to the UK in 2025.

Watch this space...if you are still awake!

8. BOLO (Be On the Look-Out for...)

There follows a short list of species which may make an appearance in VC32 in the coming season (or two), based on species which are known to be expanding their range. I have not included any from previous reports which remain un-recorded in VC32, but these documents can be found in the link from the front page of the website. As requested in previous editions of this report, if you are lucky enough to capture any of the species featured below, please retain any specimens of the species below, and notify the CMR as soon as possible to see if further confirmation is required.

15.0932 *Phyllocnistis extrematrix* (Vernacular TBA)

This is one for anyone who gets especially excited about leaf-mines, as the adults are very difficult to distinguish.

Discovered new to the UK in 2025, this species has been found in several locations across some counties of southern England but its full extent is not yet known.

The larvae mine the stems of young growth on Black and Lombardy Poplar, starting in young stems and petiole, finally moving to the underside of the leaf. In similar fashion to other members of this family, the pupa may be found in a rolled section on the edge of the leaf (as far as I can tell, always on the underside) thus:



These feeding signs are often tricky to find, thus I am offering this as a bit of a challenge!

Martynova, 1955



Photo credits: all= lepiforum.org

28.029 *Trachypepla contritella* Kiwi Engima

This species was added to the British list in 2012, and has been recorded recently in several neighbouring counties. As its vernacular suggests, this is another species originating from The Antipodes. The larvae of this species feed on leaf litter, and possibly lichens, and are associated with Beech woodlands in its native New Zealand.

Bedfordshire has several records the county of adults to light, with a grouping in the east of the county near Eaton Ford/Eaton Socon, with others in Cambridgeshire and Huntingdonshire. The image here is of a moth caught in Eaton Ford, Beds, 14.vi.2024 (Bashford, R).

(Walker, 1864)



Photo credit: Richard Bashford

41.004 *Blastobasis vittata* Dotted Masoner

Originally recorded as a presumed adventive in Sussex in 2008, the species appears to have expanded its range in recent years. Records are known from Suffolk, Cambridgeshire, and further north in Yorkshire. The moth was recorded in Bedfordshire and twice that I am aware of in Leicestershire during 2024, so it is reasonable to assume that it may be present in Northants.

Identification could prove tricky, as it may appear fairly uniformly brown, grey or blackish or can appear well marked similar to *B. adustella* but seldom shows the 'V'-marking of this species.

Any putative individuals will need to be dissected to prove identification, so please retain any which are considered possible.

(Wollaston, 1858)



Photo credit: lepiforum.org

49.302 *Gravitarmata margarotana* Pine Cone Moth

Another relatively recent addition to the British fauna, being first recorded in Clowes Wood, Kent in May 2011. It was subsequently recorded in Suffolk in 2014, The Brecks, Norfolk from approx. 2017, and regularly in the Bramfield Woods complex, Hertfordshire, since 2018. I believe there is also a single record in Leicestershire from 2013.

There is therefore a reasonable chance that this species may be present in the county, and worth keeping an eye out for. The adults can be seen flying in suitable habitat (amongst Pines and Firs, possibly Spruce) from late afternoon and readily come to light. However, the flight period is fairly early in the season, i.e. from mid April to early May.

(Heinemann, 1863)



Photo credit: lepiforum.org

49.3221 *Dichrorampha obscuratana*

(Vernaculr TBA)

(Wolff, 1955)

An article was published recently in The Entomologist's Record & Journal of Variation (Vol. 137, Part 3) alerting us to the fact that *Dichrorampha plumbagana* has likely been misidentified over the years, and that *D. obscuratana* also exists in the UK.

It would be worth looking at Tansy plants during the flight period and retaining *Dichrorampha* specimens in the immediate vicinity. As with many species within this genus, adults require dissection to prove identification, so do please retain any putative *D. plumbagana*.



Photo credit: lepiforum.org

	<u><i>D. plumbagana</i></u>	<u><i>D. obscuratana</i></u>
Flight period	Early 06 - early 07	Mid 06 - end 07
Peak flight	Mid 06	Early 07
Larval foodplant	<i>Achillea millefolium</i> (Yarrow)	<i>Tanacetum</i> (e.g. Tansy)

70.2841 *Pungeleria capreolaria*

Banded Pine Carpet

([Denis & Schiffermüller], 1775)

A species which may put in an appearance in the next few years.

A migrant species first recorded in Britain in 2014, in Sussex. It now appears to be resident in several southern and south-eastern Vice Counties, as well as Buckinghamshire, Worcestershire (2016), Norfolk (2023), Essex (2024), Suffolk (2025) and the London area (2025).

Adults may be seen during June, and again in September/October, especially in coniferous woodland.



Photo credit: Keith Tailby

9. [Species Recorded as Being New to VC32 in 2025](#)

Seventeen species were noted as being new to VC32 during 2025:

04.073 *Bohemannia auriciliella* Gold-fringed Dot (Joannis, 1908)

A single moth was taken to light in ancient parkland near Northampton (SP66) on 17.vi.2025 (Skinner, J.). The identification was only confirmed in early 2026 following dissection and discussion with other experts in the field. The species appears to be rare, with very few records to date in the UK, and very limited known distribution in Northern Europe. The early stages of the species are as yet unknown, but there is reported association with Birch and Small-leaved Lime.



Photo credit: Lepiforum.org

12.031 *Tinea columbariella* Dovecote Moth

A single adult was taken in a garden light trap in Cogenhoe (SP86) on 25.vi.2025 (Seaman, D.). the identification was subsequently confirmed by dissection.

The moth may have several broods in the year depending on the habitat, and is likely easily overlooked. The larvae feed on animal and vegetable detritus primarily in bird's nests in tree holes or wooden nest boxes, pigeon and poultry houses. They have also been reported indoors in other Vice Counties. I note records in Cambridgeshire and Bedfordshire, along with old records in Huntingdonshire.

Wocke, 1877



Photo credit: Lepiforum.org

12.042 *Monopis fenestratella* Raptor Nest Moth

As those who know me well, know that I'm not a huge fan of the recent vernacular names for micro-moths, but this one, I have to admit, is rather good! A single moth was taken to light in a privately owned area in Yardley Chase (SP85) on 19.vi.2025 (Horsnail, P. & Gill, R.). It is associated with nests of these birds, and who's larvae feed upon keratin found in the nest material. There is also some association with poultry rearing/housing establishments.

(Heyden, 1863)



Photo credit: Lepiforum.org

35.027 *Acompsia schmidtellus* Marjoram Snout

(Heyden, 1848)

A single adult moth was recorded in a garden light trap in Cogenhoe (SP86) on 08.vii.2025 (Seaman, D.).

The species has scattered records in the southern counties of England. At the time of writing the nearest record I can find is in Cambridgeshire. The larvae feed within a spun leaf-roll on Wild Marjoram, so further records may well be found by searching for larvae/larval spinnings between May and late June in suitable habitat, or even on garden-planted stock. Adults may also be swept from foodplant during the day.



Photo credit: Darren Seaman

35.061 *Ptocheuusa paupella* Pale Seedhead Moth

(Zeller, 1847)

The species was recorded twice in quick succession at the same site during 2025. Both were taken as adults to a garden light trap in Thrapston (SP97) – the first on 12.viii.2025, with another, different individual on 15.viii.2025 (Hammond, M.). The first moth was very worn and dissected to confirm the ID. The larvae of this moth feed inside the seed heads of Common Fleabane, creating a tell-tale tuft amongst the developing seeds. The assumption is that there is foodplant located somewhere in the ditches nearby to the site of capture, or in damp areas adjacent to The Nene, which is only about 50m from the site. The moth appears to have been recorded in several adjoining Vice Counties, namely mid-Bedfordshire, mid-Cambridgeshire and Buckinghamshire (in grid square SP85 which is the same square as parts of Yardley chase).



Photo credit: Lepiforum.org

37.085 *Coleophora squamosella* Blue Fleabane Case-bearer

Stainton, 1856

This species was recorded three times, all at the same site. The first was of an adult retained during a light trapping session at Swaddywell Pits (TF10) on 06.viii.2025 (Hammond, M.). The identification was only confirmed once the specimen was dissected. This led to a field search later in the year to look for larval cases on the seed heads of Blue Fleabane (photo opposite), which is scattered throughout the site. A total of 12 cases were found there on 12.ix.2025 (Hammond, M. & Tailby, K.), with another located on 12.x.2025 (Symonds, J. & Hillier, M.).



Photo credit: Lepiforum.org



Photo credit: Keith Tailby

49.008 *Philedone gerningana* Northern Reveller ([Denis & Schiffermüller], 1775)

An adult of this species was seen at light at Farthinghoe NR (SP54) on 07.viii.2025 (Pridmore, T.). The moth was noted sitting on the outside of a light trap, and despite best efforts to record it in a photograph, the moth decided to depart! From the vivid description provided, it is clear that the moth was a female - being sexually dimorphic. This species is primarily associated with upland bogs and areas such a limestone outcrops, and recorded in more western and northern counties across the UK. Given its current distribution and habitat preferences, my assumption is that this is most likely to be a vagrant individual. Larval foodplants include Bilberry, Cinquefoils, Rock-roses and Thrift.



Photo credit: Lepiforum.org

49.041 *Adoxophyes orana* Summer Fruit Tortrix (Fischer von Röslerstamm, 1834)

The identity of this one was confirmed amongst a batch of dissection material, processed at the latter end of the season. The specimen was a little worn and looked initially to be one of the Archips species or similar. The moth was taken in a garden light trap in Earls Barton (SP86) on 31.v.2025 (Gill, R.).

The moth is a relatively recent arrival to these shores (circa 1950), but appears to be gradually expanding its range. It has been recorded in neighbouring Bedfordshire (albeit before 2000) and more recently in Huntingdonshire, but looks to be quite widespread in e.g. Norfolk and Suffolk. Of note, this moth comes to both its own pheromone lure (ORA) and the one designed for Carnation Tortrix, *Cacoecimorpha pronubana*, and thus further records may be gleaned using that method.



Photo credit: Lepiforum.org

49.361 *Pammene ignorata* Obscure Tortrix Kuznetsov, 1968

A single adult was recorded at light in Easton Hornstocks (TF00) on 12.v.2025 (Follows, R.), subsequently confirmed by dissection.

This species is apparently extremely rare in the UK, with just a scattering of records known from various scattered Vice Counties. The nearest I could easily find was of one in Central Bedfordshire, several in Herts, Worcestershire, Herefordshire and Staffordshire. Little is known of its habitat requirements or early stages.



Photo credit: Lepiforum.org

49.366 *Pammene obscurana* Birch Catkin Tortrix (Stephens, 1834)

An adult was taken to light in Bearshank Wood (SP98) on 01.v.2025 (Hammond, M.). The moth was not immediately recognised and thus dissected to obtain the ID.

The moth may be found in Birch woodland, where the larvae feed within the catkins. Adult moths fly during the day, but clearly do attend light traps, and also come to several pheromone lures (especially MOL, occasionally JAN & ARG).



Photo credit: Lepiforum.org

49.372 *Pammene populana* Willow Y Moth (Fabricius, 1787)

A single moth was taken to light traps in Bearshank Wood (SP98) on 11.viii.2025 (Hammond, M.). This is another species which seems to be quite rare in the UK, with scattered records in nearby counties, i.e. Bucks, Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire, Oxfordshire, old records in Hunts. This is also a species which responds to pheromone lures, particularly NIG and possibly POM.



Photo credit: Lepiforum.org

63.044 *Diasemiopsis ramburialis* Migrant Sable (Duponchel, 1834)

An increasingly regular migrant species to the UK, primarily areas with coastal records from southern and eastern Vice Counties, but which is being noted further inland. The first VC32 record of this very attractive micro-moth was of a single adult taken to light in a Kingsthorpe, Northampton garden (SP76) on 14.viii.2025 (Sharpe, P.).

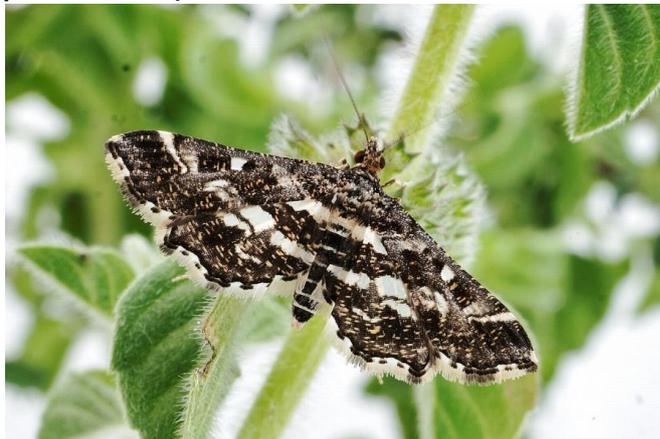


Photo credit: Lepiforum.org

65.0021 *Watsonalla uncinula* Spiny Hook-tip (Borkhausen, 1790)

This species still appears to have its known heartland in the south-west, with increasing records from N. Somerset and Gloucestershire, but has cropped-up further afield (i.e. Bedfordshire, Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire). Appearing on the “BOLO” list for 2025 (and 2024!), I am pleased to say that one was taken to light in a garden in Desborough (SP88) on 19.ix.2025 (Andrews, L.). The moth was dissected to confirm the ID. A photo of the actual moth is posted here.



Photo credit: Liam Andrews

70.034 *Cyclophora ruficiliaria* Jersey Mocha (Herrich-Schäffer, 1855)

A rather unexpected visitor to the county, a single moth of this species turned up at light in an Oundle garden (TL08) on 07.ix.2025 (Horsnail, P.). Upon further investigation, the species has been recorded in several neighbouring and nearby counties in the last few years, e.g. Bedfordshire (Upper Caldecote, 24.viii.2025), Hertfordshire, Cambridgeshire and Buckinghamshire, albeit in very low numbers.



Photo credit: Keith Tailby

72.087 *Dysgonia algira* Passenger (Linnaeus, 1767)

Another unexpected migrant visitor – perhaps more so than the last. A single adult was recorded at light in a Higham Ferrers garden (SP96) on 26.viii.2025 (Andrews, J.). Known to be a rare visitor to UK shores, there are odd records within inland vice-counties such as Berkshire (2020), Cambridgeshire (2012), and even one in South-west Yorkshire (2024).



Photo credit: Jon Andrews

73.127 *Amphipoea lucens* Large Ear (Freyer, 1845)

Following a record of this species in Leicestershire (Rutland Water) in 2024, and VC32 seeing a record of one of its congeners, Saltern Ear, the same year, I felt it was a reasonable punt to ask recorders to keep a look-out for this species in 2025. We were rewarded with a single moth being recorded at light in a garden moth rap in Oundle (TL09) on 13.viii.2025 (Horsnail, P). As with all Ear species, the moth needed to be dissected to prove ID, but the captor did retain this particular moth as “it just looked a bit different”.



Photo credit: Keith Tailby

73.196 *Conistra rubiginosa* Black-spotted Chestnut (Scopoli, 1763)

Well, what a relief. At last! I have been hoping this species would be recorded in VC32 for some years now. It is recorded with some regularity in several sites in Bedfordshire and Cambridgeshire, and thus has been knocking on the door for a while. The first VC32 specimen was taken in one of the Pitsford Reservoir light traps (SP76) on 23.xii.2025 (Gill, R). The fact that the species has been recorded well inside the VC32 boundaries suggests that it is likely to be elsewhere and probably established at other sites. An excellent reason to keep moth traps running during the winter months. The adults will probably also come to sugar and wine ropes.

(Scopoli, 1763)



Photo credit: Bob Gill

10. Significant and Noteworthy Records During 2025

Below therefore, are some species of note which were recorded during 2025. The list is by no means comprehensive and I hope I have included everything I had meant to! (inc. species recorded fewer than 5 times up to the end of 2023).

4.072 *Bohemannia quadrimaculella* Four-spot Dot (Boheman, 1853)

2025 saw the 3rd and 4th VC32 records for this tiny moth:

Farthinghoe NR, 22.vi.2022 – adult seen at rest on an Alder leaf (Pridmore, T.)

Thrapston garden, 05.vii.2025 – adult to light (Bailey, M.; confirmed by photo)

An apparently rare species (categorised as Nationally Scarce B) with only a few records in neighbouring counties, the moth tends to be diurnal and might be found by examining or beating Alder.

12.023 *Triaxomasia caprimulgella* Tree Hollow Moth (Stainton, 1851)

Recorded in the county on only two previous occasions, this species was encountered twice in 2025 using the LUN pheromone lure (designed to attract Lunar Hornet Moth). The 3rd VC32 record was of a single adult to the lure, left overnight in a private site near Northampton on 17.vi.2025 (Hammond, M.). A few days later three males were attracted to the same lure in a Cogenhoe garden on 21.vi.2025 (Seaman, D.). I'm sure that this species is more widespread in the county, and I would urge the deployment of this lure overnight during the flight period to yield further records.

15.059 *Phyllonorycter cavella* Large Birch Leaf-miner (Zeller, 1846)

The 6th county record was of the larval mine being noted at a known site, Farthinghoe NR, on 22.x.2025 (Pridmore, T.). The moth only has four post-2000 records, and all are from leaf-mines found on Birch. These mines can be quite large, contorting the leaf towards the end of larval growth and worth looking for between September and October.

15.0862 *Phyllonorycter pastorella* Royal Leaf-miner (Zeller, 1846)

Only recorded once previously as a leaf-mine in Narrow-leaved Willow along the Nene in Thrapston in 2019, the second county record was also of a mine, this time at the opposite end of the county at Farthinghoe NR, on 24.x.2025 (Pridmore, T.).

15.091 *Phyllocnistis ramulicola* Willow-stem Maze-miner Langmaid & Corley, 2007

The only known site so far for this species is Farthinghoe NR. It was recorded for the first time last year (14.ix.2024), as a leaf and stem mine on *Salix fragilis*. The 2025 record was also of a leaf and stem mine on the same foodplant on 02.viii.2025 (Pridmore, T.).

33.002 *Ethmia quadrillella* Comfrey Ermine (Goeze, 1783)

It's been a ten-year wait to receive the 4th VC32 record for this species.

A single adult was attracted to a garden light trap in Earls Barton on 10.viii.2025 (Gill, R.).

All previous records are in the north-east of the vice county, so this is quite a way away from its previously known "heartland".

The larvae feed in a slight web on the underside of the leaves of its foodplants (Comfrey, Lungwort, Lithospermum, Wood Forget-me-not).

35.029 *Brachmia inornatella* Fen Snout (Douglas, 1850)

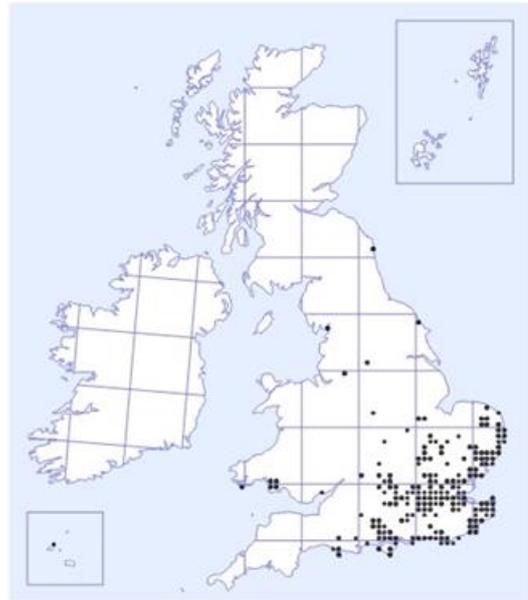
As its vernacular name suggests, this species is only really seen in damp habitats, the larvae feed internally in the upper section of the dead stems of *Phragmites*. All VC32 records are from sites within sight of streams, rivers or other damp areas. The 5th county record was of seven adults coming to light at Swaddywell Pits NR on 30.v.2025, part of a Northants Moth Group event. Previous records were all of singletons to light.

35.032 *Pexicopia malvella* Hollyhock Seed Moth (Hübner, [1805])

This species has not been seen in Northants since July 1940! That is 86 years ago... Before that, it has been seen on only two occasions (1902 & 1918). A single adult was taken to light at Delapre Abbey grounds, Northampton, on 29.vi.2025 (Waller, J.). the record was placed on iRecord, with a good, clear image, and subsequently verified. The recording there has been part of a final-year under-graduate project, and was recently reported on BBC Radio Northampton. From information I can find on-line, it seems that the moth is fairly well-recorded in neighbouring Bedfordshire and Cambridgeshire, with one or two also in Huntingdonshire. I believe that Warwickshire may have had its first record of the moth last year (source from social media). The larvae, as its vernacular suggests, feed internally on the developing seeds of Hollyhock, overwintering within the seed-heads as full-grown larvae until May. It may be worth collecting and retaining seed-heads of the plant to see if adults subsequently emerge. The adults do readily come to light too.

Provisional map

Maps updated with all data received by January 2025.



**From the Gelechiid Recording Scheme
(<https://gelechiid.co.uk/>)**

35.117 *Scrobipalpa atriplicella* Mottled Orache Moth (Fischer von Röslerstamm, 1841)

This species was only previously recorded in the Rothamsted tap which operated at Fineshade, between 1993 and 1999. All specimens were confirmed by dissection by the CMR for micros at the time, the late David Manning. One moth was confirmed in a similar fashion from a garden light trap in Cogenhoe, taken on 01.v.2025 (Seaman, D., confirmed by dissection, Hammond, M.), thus the 7th Vc32 record, but first post-2000. The adults can look similar to several of its congeners and thus is assigned as a Grade 4 moth, requiring dissection of the adult to confirm ID. The larvae mine the leaves of various *Atriplex* and *Chenopodium/Chenopodiastrum* species, generally between mid-May and late October.

37.026 *Coleophora violacea* White-tipped Case-bearer (Ström, 1783)

The first county records for this under-recorded species were noted in 2024, being taken twice to the Ni Moth pheromone lure. The species was seen on seven occasions during 2025, with all but one of those records to the same lure:

Bearshank Wood, 16.v.2025 (Hammond, M)

Farthinghoe NR, 21.v.2025 – four different locations within the reserve (Pridmore, T.)

Cogenhoe garden, 21.v.2025 (seaman, D.)

Farthinghoe NR, 18.vii.2025 – adult to light (Pridmore, T. - confirmed by dissection, Hammond, M.)

I am sure that further records can be gleaned by deploying this lure overnight in suitable habitat, such as hedgerows, mature gardens and woodland. The larvae are reported to feed on a wide variety of trees and shrubs. The adults are similar to *C. fuscocuprella* except for the antennae that are dark ringed in this species - are white and not ringed in the apical part in *C. violacea*. If necessary, the moth can be identified by genitalia dissection.

37.063 *Coleophora albicosta* Gorse Case-bearer (Haworth, 1828)

A 5th county record was of a single adult to a garden light trap in Oundle on 15.vi.2025 (Horsnail, P. - confirmed by dissection, Hammond, M.). The larvae fed on Gorse and I'd assume that garden records are possibly adventive individuals on garden planting, or those which have wandered from suitable habitat. Gorse is not a widespread plant in VC32.

37.072 *Coleophora otidipennella* Wood-rush Case-bearer (Hübner, [1817])

Another 5th VC32 record, but only the second post-2000 sighting. The species is found mainly in suitable woodland habitat, reflecting the vernacular name and its larval foodplant. A single adult was taken to light in a restricted-access area within Yardley Chase on 15.v.2025 (Horsnail, P. & Gill, B. - confirmed by dissection, Hammond, M.).

37.103 *Coleophora follicularis* Agrimony Case-bearer (Vallot, 1802)

Another good moth from Swaddywell Pits NR. A single moth was confirmed from light trapping on 06.viii.2025 (Hammond, M.). This represents the 5th all-time VC32 record and 4th post-2000. The larvae feed on various Fleabanes and Ploughman's Spikenard.

38.012 *Elachista obliquella* Woodland Grass-miner Stainton, 1854

Adults of this species rarely attends light traps, and as such has only been recorded once previously in the county, in 2022. The 2nd county record of this Nationally Scarce B species was of an adult taken in Bearshank Wood on 11.viii.2025 (Hammond, M.). As with many *Elachistidae*, records might be had by searching for the larval stages, but this does require the recorder to be able to recognise various grass species.

38.022 *Elachista gleichenella* Twin-barred Sedge-miner (Fabricius, 1781)

A 6th VC record (and 5th post-2000 record) was of a single adult taken to light in Bearshank Wood on 27.vi.2025 (Hammond, M.). Interestingly, only two of the six records have come as adults to light, with the other four records being of adults either seen by day or swept from vegetation.

45.034 *Merrifieldia baliodactylus* Dingy White Plume (Zeller, 1841)

Three adults were noted during a Northants Moth Group outing to Swaddywell Pits on 30.v.2025 (Hammond, M.). This is the 6th VC32 record, and at a known site, but the first of multiple individuals, all of which were either seen at dusk along a short stretch of path, or were in the immediately adjacent moth trap. The moth was not seen in any of the other dozen or so moth traps on the night.

47.002 *Phaulernis dentella* Dusky Ridge-back (Zeller, 1839)

A third county record was of two adults being seen nectaring on Umbellifers during the day in Bedford Purlieu on 11.vi.2025 (Meredith, G.). Adults of this species appear to be strictly diurnal, not being attracted to light, and maybe therefore under-recorded. That said, there appear to be very few records in neighbouring vice-counties. The larvae feed on the developing seeds of a number of *Umbelliferae*, including *Chaerophyllum* species, *Pimpinella saxifrage*, *Aegopodium podagraria* and *Angelica silvestris*.

49.052 *Cnephasia pasiuana* Meadow Grey Tortrix (Hübner, [1799])

There are seventeen old records of this species in the county database, all via the now defunct Kettering & District Natural History Society, dated from the 1930's and 1940's. The species was then not recorded until 2012, and again twice in 2016. All these modern records have been dissected to corroborate their ID. One adult was taken in a light trap in Earls Barton on 02.vii.2025 (Gill, B. - confirmed by dissection, Hammond, M.) – this being the 4th post-2000, confirmed record. As with almost all of the *Cnephasia* species, dissection is essential to prove the identification of wild-caught adults.

49.0388 *Clepsis peritana* "Garden Tortrix" (Clemens, 1860)

Clepsis peritana was only added to the British list in 2023, from material caught in Staffordshire. It is a North American species, which appears now to have become naturalised in the UK and other parts of Europe. The moth was subsequently added to the VC32 list in 2024, when a single adult was caught in a light trap in Oundle. Amazingly, a second moth was caught at the same site on 23.vi.2025 (Horsnail, P.).

49.132 *Cochylidia implicitana* Chamomile Straw (Wocke, 1856)

This species can be difficult to differentiate from some of the other members of the family, but adults tend to exhibit a pink tinge in the terminal third of the forewing. The 4th county record was of approximately twenty-five individuals seen at light at Swaddywell Pit NR on 06.viii.2025 (Hammond, M.).

49.204 *Ancylis obtusana* Lesser Hook-wing (Haworth, 1811)

The 5th and 6th county records of this Nationally Scarce B species were both noted in Yardley Chase as singletons on 15.v.2025 and 19.vi.2025 (Gill, B.). Larvae feed on Buckthorns, yet appears to be rarely recorded in this and surrounding vice counties.

49.247 *Epinotia subsequana* Dark Spruce Tortrix (Haworth, 1811)

Another nationally scarce species, graded currently as pRDB2, it comes as little surprise that there is one previous record of this species in the county database (adult netted by day, Harlestone Heath, 2020). The 2nd county record was of a single adult to light in Bearshank Wood on 29.v.2025 (Hammond, M.). This record is, in itself, a little unusual as it tends to be seen by day and through to late evening. Text books suggest they are best recorded by tapping branches of the host plants and netting by day. As the vernacular suggests, the larvae feed on leaves of *Picea* and *Abies* species, which can be found quite widely in forest plantations. They initially mine and then within spun leaves.

49.261 *Crociosema plebejana* Tree-mallow Tortrix Zeller, 1847

This is a known migrant species, which is more regularly recorded in southern and eastern counties, particularly in coastal areas. That we have two records in 2025 indicates the quality and quantity of migrant activity experienced during the year (see other species reports here!). There are only four other records for Northants, between 1999 and 2022 – and interestingly, three of those records are from one garden site in Northants. The 2025 records are thus:

Peterborough garden, to light, 16.x.2025 (Kirby, P & Lambert, S.)
Oundle garden, to light, 03.xi.2025 (Horsnail, P.).

62.033 *Acrobasis tumidana* Tufted Oak Knot-horn ([Denis & Schiffermüller], 1775)

Another rare migrant to this part of the UK. Only one previous record which was to light in the same garden site as per *C. plebejana* mentioned previously. The 2nd VC32 record was of another single adult to a garden light trap in Cogenhoe on 13.vii.2025 (Seaman, D.).

62.037 *Acrobasis marmorea* Marbled Knot-horn (Haworth, 1811)

The 6th VC32 record, and only the third post-2000, was of a single adult to light in Earls Barton on 30.vii.2025 (Gill, B.). There are scattered records inland in neighbouring counties; the larvae feed on Sloe, occasionally Hawthorn and Rowan, so surprising that it's not more widespread. ID can be tricky as it is very similar to *A. suavella* and *A. advenella*, both of which are quite common in the county.

62.053 *Ancylis oblitella* Saltmarsh Knot-horn (Zeller, 1848)

Previously to 2025, there were eleven records for this species. It was recorded on no less than fourteen occasions during the year, between 19.vi.2025 and 19.ix.2025. The larvae predominantly feed on various *Suaeda* and *Salicornia* plant species, which are generally found in saltmarsh habitats (as per the vernacular name of the moth!), but is also known to feed on Goosefoots (*Chenopodium*), which I presume are being utilised locally. Looking at other county moth websites, the moth is clearly recorded widely at inland sites.

62.064 *Ephestia elutella* Cacao Moth (Hübner, 1796)

Ephestia (and other closely related) species are very difficult to distinguish when caught as adults, and as such, most are categorised as Grade 4, requiring dissection. I have taken a pragmatic view in that most *Ephestia* specimens caught in gardens tend to be *E. woodiella*, and have waived the need to dissect these (rightly or wrongly!). However, one specimen caught the eye of the captor and was retained. Upon dissection it proved to be *E. elutella* – taken in a light trap at Farthinghoe NR on 04.vii.2025 (Pridmore, T. - confirmed by dissection Hammond, M.) – 6th VC32 record. This is another species not seen for many years, in this instance not since 1960 (recorded near to the Victoria Mills in Wellingborough) – the first record 66 years! The larvae are synanthropic, feeding on a wide variety of stored products, and are most likely to be captured inside e.g. grain/feed stores, or outdoors where the infested products are spread for bird/animal feed.

63.046 *Duponchelia fovealis* European Pepper Moth Zeller, 1847

The sixth VC32 record was of a single adult to light in Denford on 12.viii.2025 (Terry, P.). The moth is known as an adventive species in the UK, with the larvae being found on various cultivated plants such as *Begonia* spp., boring into stems.

63.059 *Evergestis limbata* Dark-bordered Pearl (Linnaeus, 1767)

First recorded in the UK as a rare migrant, in 1994, but has subsequently colonised many more inland areas. The moth was recorded in a garden light trap in Helpston in 2022, and again at the same site this year on 23.viii.2025 (Hillier, M.). However, this is the 3rd county record – the second was in a nearby Helpston garden light trap on 13.vii.2025 (Astle, R.). Larvae feed on Garlic Mustard, *Alliaria petiolate* and Hedge Mustard, *Sisymbrium officinale* and the tight cluster of the above records really suggest a local, breeding colony. Keep an eye out for this one as I suspect it might crop up elsewhere.

63.109 *Pediasia contaminella* Rolled Grass-moth (Hübner, 1796)

Only recently added to the county list in 2018, it has been recorded just three occasions prior to 2025. The 4th VC32 record was of a single adult to light in a Kingsthorpe, Northampton, garden on 24.vii.2025 (Sharpe, P.). The 5th county record was of another singleton to light, 17.ix.2026 (probably second generation) at Sywell Country Park (Seaman, D.).

70.212 *Macaria alternata* Sharp-angled Peacock ([Denis & Schiffermüller], 1775)

This is a species which was recorded rarely up until 1975, noted in that year on two separate occasions by highly reputable recorders. Since then, it apparently vanished from the county list until re-recorded in 2020. A further single adult was recorded to light in a Helpston garden on 18.viii.2025 (Astle, R., confirmed by photo sent to CMR), thus the 8th VC32 record, but only 2nd post-2000. It seems to be similarly very rare in neighbouring districts, but relatively common in the south and east of the UK. Care is certainly needed to separate it from Peacock Moth, which is most regularly seen in the north-east of the county.

72.011 *Lymantria dispar* Gypsy Moth (Linnaeus, 1758)

A moth which has increased significantly in the county over the past couple of years. Of note in 2025 – there were two records of larvae thus:

Pitsford Reservoir, 20.vi.2025 (Barclay, F.)

Wellingborough, 27.vi.2025 (Rowley, L.)

Interestingly there was a single record of an adult female at rest with a freshly laid egg batch. This was also in Wellingborough, 25.vii.2025 (Seaman, D.).

72.057 *Pechipogo plumigeralis* Plumed Fan-foot (Hübner, [1825])

Recorded for the first time locally in 2022 (twice), 2025 saw five separate records for this moth which is known to be expanding its UK range. Records thus:

3rd VC32 record: Oundle garden to light, 17.ix.2025 (Horsnail, P.)

4th & 7th VC32 record: Earls Barton garden, to light, 29.ix.2025 (Gill, B.), and again 06.x.2025

Joint 5th VC 32 record: Higham Ferrers garden, to light, 01.x.2025 (Vials, T.)

Joint 5th VC 32 record: Kingsthorpe, Northampton, garden, 01.x.2025 (Sharpe, P.)

72.07 *Trisateles emortualis* Olive Crescent ([Denis & Schiffermüller], 1775)

The second county record was of a single adult to light in a Pitsford garden on 27.vi.2025 (Molyneux, A.). Whether this species is a migrant to the county, or resident is hard to pin down. The larval foodplants include the withered leaves of Oak, Beech and Sweet Chestnut, all of which are present in the county in reasonable quantity. Perhaps it is a species which does not attend light traps in great numbers (noted by the late Bernard Skinner) and thus under-recorded.

72.082 *Catocala promissa* Light Crimson Underwing ([Denis & Schiffermüller], 1775)

There has been a single “record” of this species in the county dataset for many years. It was derived from a list entitled “Moths of the Oundle Area”, authored by M. Skirrow. The record was noted to be from Ashton Wold in 1921, but the captor was not named. That area of woodland was once renowned country-wide by moth and butterfly enthusiasts, and so could have hosted a population. That said, there was no specimen to be found of this

moth – an unusual issue given that collecting was prevalent in that period. So, I have always regarded it effectively as “unconfirmed”. I am therefore delighted to report two records of the moth in 2025, which I am referring to as the first and second confirmed, both of adults to light traps:

Easton Hornstocks, 01.vii.2025 (Follows, R.)

Farthinghoe NR, 11.vii.2025 (Pridmore, T.)

73.008 *Chrysodeixis chalcites* Golden Twin-spot (Esper, [1803])

The very first Northants record was of a moth found indoors in Sywell in 1997. The assumption at the time was that it most likely arrived as either larva or pupa, in with flowers brought into the home. Since that time, another two have been recorded, but on both occasions, to garden light traps – and thus likely as migrant/vagrant individuals. There was another record in 2025, of a single adult to a garden light trap in Desborough on 19.ix.2025 (Andrews, L.). This again reflects the heightened migration activity in the region during the year.

73.093 *Caradrina kadenii* Clancy's Rustic (Freyer, [1836])

Recorded an incredible 57 times in 2025 (and over 80 individuals, between 20.iii.2025 and 20.x.2025, presumably reflecting its general expansion in range. Arguably our most successful moth in 2025.

73.104 *Athetis hospes* Porter's Rustic (Freyer, [1831])

The second county record of this known migrant species was of another singleton to light, in a Cogenhoe moth trap on 16.ix.2025 (Seaman, D.). I noted during the year that it had been seen again in reasonable numbers in more southerly counties of the UK, especially those in the south-west.

73.330 *Ochropleura leucogaster* Radford's Flame Shoulder (Freyer, [1831])

Recorded for the first time in 2024 – on four separate occasions, which at the time reflected a massive influx into the southern half of the UK in the year. The moth was recorded on another two occasions in 2025, but both in the same garden light trap. Therefore the 5th and 6th county records were from Oundle on 16.ix.2025 and 19.ix.2025 (Horsnail, P.). Interestingly, this Oundle garden site now has three records for the moth in two years. Further evidence of the increased migrant-moth activity in the region? Or has it become established...?

73.347 *Noctua janthina* Langmaid's Yellow Underwing ([Denis & Schiffermüller], 1775)

The most significant caveat with this species is that it can be very difficult to separate from its congener, Lesser Broad-bordered Yellow Underwing. This confusion will inevitably cause issues for future recording, but also means we cannot be absolutely certain how many may have escaped detection over the past few years.

There were three confirmed records of this species up until the start of 2025. Amazingly, recorded on a further seven occasions in 2025 (thus, 4th VC32 record onwards, listed in order below), all as single adults to garden light traps, with two exceptions as noted:

Oundle, 04.vii.2025, Horsnail, P.

Northampton, Kingsthorpe, 10.vii.2025, Pickering, T.

Northampton, Kingsthorpe, 11.vii.2025, two adults recorded, Sharpe, P.

Denton, 12.vii.2025, two adults recorded, Terry, P.

Northampton, Kingsthorpe, 16.vii.2025, Pickering, T.

Cogenhoe, 18.vii.2025, Seaman, D.

Oundle, 08.viii.2025, Horsnail, P.

It seems likely then, that the species is becoming locally resident, or will do so very soon. It is critical that specimens are looked at critically in order to ascertain the extent of population spread. Identification is tricky, and as such I'd like to ask that **ALL putative specimens** must be retained / photographed showing hindwing and underside of forewing for confirmation.

11. [Update of UK BAP Species on the VC32 List](#)

Below is an update of selected species formerly noted as UK BAP species (now not in use for the macro-moth species, having been superseded by the IUCN listings) in VC32 - limited to those species with VC32 records dated after 1st January 2000:

49.348 *Grapholita pallifrontana* Liquorice Piercer

Seen only on three occasions during 2025:

Fermyn Woods (Oxen Wood access track), known colony, 20.v.2025 (Hammond, M.)

Aldwinckle roadside verge, known colony, 23.v.2025 (Hearle, S.)

Fineshade (Westhay), known area for the species, 10.vi.2025 (Meredith, G.)

50.001 *Cossus cossus* Goat Moth

No records for 2025 (last recorded 2024).

70.035 *Cyclophora porata* False Mocha

No records since 2012.

73.031 *Tyta luctuosa* Four-spotted

The results for the regular monitoring along the railway at Werrington, Peterborough, is as yet unknown. The moth was recorded on a number of occasions at various locations at Maxey Cut between 05.v.2025 and 10.viii.2025 (Hearle, S.), one of these being a larval record, noted during a torchlight survey on 10.viii.2025. The species was also recorded twice at Swaddywell Pits, namely 30.v.2025 & 06.viii.2025 (Moth Group session & Hammond, M. respectively), Tanholt Gravel Pits 03.viii.2025 (Newman, J.) and a Helpston garden on 18.v.2025 and 31.v.2025 (Hillier, M.)

73.149 *Photedes extrema* Concolorous

Records for Concolorous are summarised in the table below.

Amongst these is a new site for the species: Bearshank Wood. The larval foodplant is scattered throughout this wood, with some clearings quite richly populated – and worthy of further study.

Site	Quantity	Date
Ring Haw	4	20.v.2025
Easton Hornstocks	11	29.v.2025
Bearshank Wood	4	29.v.2025
Swaddywell Pit	117	30.v.2025
Nassington garden	6	31.v.2025
Fineshade - Westhay Wood	12	01.vi.2025
Collyweston Great Wood	1	02.vi.2025
Corby – Tech Centre grounds	4	03-10.vi.2025
Ring Haw	9	04.vi.2025
Easton Hornstocks	16	10.vi.2025
Helpston garden	2	10.vi.2025
Yardley Chase	@100	19.vi.2025
Easton Hornstocks	3	01.vii.2025
Fineshade - Westhay Wood	2	03.vii.2025

73.214 *Cosmia diffinis* White-spotted Pinion

Four records for 2025:

Helpston, garden light trap, 10.vii.2025 & 13.vii.2025 (Astle, R.)

Oundle, garden light trap, 21.vii.2024 (Horsnail, P.)

Higham Ferrers, garden light trap, 22.vii.2025 (Andrews, J.)

73.218 *Dicycla oo* Heart Moth

No VC32 records since 2006. There was one targeted light trapping session conducted during 2025 at a private site which was known to host a colony, which again yielded no moths of this species.