

# Butterfly Conservation

Saving butterflies, moths and our environment



## E-moth

### Moths Count Update October 2010

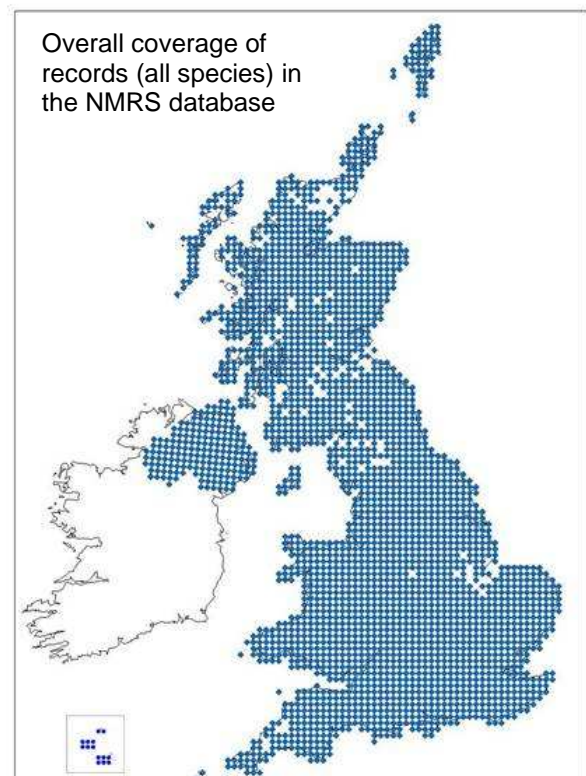
#### National Moth Recorders' Meeting 2011

Following on from our series of country-level meetings, we are holding our first UK-wide Moth Recorders' Meeting on Saturday 22 January 2011 at the Birmingham and Midlands Institute. The programme for the day is currently being put together and will be available on the Moths Count website in due course; it will include a variety of talks from amateur moth recorders and researchers and we're sure it'll be a very interesting and enjoyable day. The event is open to everyone with an interest in moths, moth recording and conservation. Several trade stands will be present so you can stock up on equipment and books for next season – don't forget your wallet! This is a free event (including buffet lunch and refreshments), although advance booking is essential. To secure your place please contact [info@butterfly-conservation.org](mailto:info@butterfly-conservation.org) or phone 01929 400209.

#### National Moth Recording Scheme

The National Moth Recording Scheme (NMRS) database has grown to an amazing 11.3 million moth records!! Perhaps even more incredible is that every UK vice-county is now represented in the NMRS (see map right). We thank everyone who has enabled this milestone to be reached.

A refresh of the NMRS data available online through the National Biodiversity Network (NBN) Gateway took place during the summer. With this update the NMRS is now the largest dataset on the NBN Gateway, with 10.2 million records publicly available to view (either on the Gateway itself or via the Moths Count and UK Moths websites). Because of the size of the NMRS dataset, it takes a considerable amount of time and effort to undertake Gateway updates, so these are only done periodically (usually every six months). Hence the online dataset always lags behind what in the 'live' NMRS database on the server at Butterfly Conservation Head Office. This is why county datasets may take some months to appear online, even after they have been



received and imported into the NMRS. The online maps will be refreshed again during the winter.

Work on the NMRS Provisional Atlas is well underway. Two rounds of querying odd-looking records with County Recorders have been undertaken over the past six months and, at the time of writing, we are about to start sending everything to the printer. We hope to have the finished product available for distribution by mid-November. As stated previously, this will be a simple publication, essentially just a collection of distribution maps for the c.900 species of macro-moths, showing records in two date periods, pre-2000 and 2000 onwards. Nevertheless, what it lacks in colour and gloss will hopefully be more than outweighed by its interest and usefulness, particularly as the existing national maps (for the species that *have* existing maps) are almost 30 years out of date.

The maps are, of course, provisional and, despite the best efforts of County Moth Recorders and ourselves, some errors are inevitable. One of the purposes of this publication is to enable people to identify these errors, as well as to highlight under-recorded areas and, ultimately, to inform conservation priorities and policy. Complimentary copies of the Provisional Atlas will be sent to County Moth Recorders and others who've played vital roles in the development of the NMRS database. Copies will also be available for sale from Butterfly Conservation Head Office and, in addition, the atlas be freely accessible online from the Moths Count website ([www.mothscount.org](http://www.mothscount.org)).

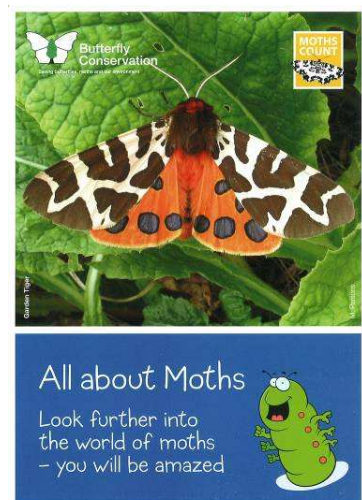
Following the publication of the Provisional Atlas, the next big undertaking for the NMRS team will be to analyse the data and calculate distribution changes for each of the macro-moth species. At the moment the data is heavily biased towards more recent records and this will need to be addressed and factored into the analysis to ensure that the results are robust. We will start this analysis very soon and make the results available to the moth recording community in due course.

The long awaited and almost forgotten identification guide to difficult species (mainly by genitalia determination) is also due to be published later this year; hopefully it will be available for Christmas! Watch this space!

### **Moths Count**

Since the last newsletter, the Moths Count team has declined by 40%. Laura McLellan's contract ended on the 31<sup>st</sup> August; however, she is still with Butterfly Conservation working on a different project. We also said fond farewells to Susan Anders, our Outreach Officer, at the end of August. We wish to thank both Laura and Susan for being great assets to the team and for all of their hard work on the project. Richard Fox, Les Hill and Zoë Randle are still in post and will remain so until the end of the current financial year, at least. We are still pursuing longer-term funding but, as stated previously, the National Moth Recording Scheme will definitely continue, so please keep sending your moth records to your County Recorder.

A new leaflet aimed at children *All about Moths* has been produced by the Moths Count team. It is full of accessible information and has a great poster on the back. If you would like copies of this (or



any of our other leaflets) to distribute at events or meetings please contact [info@butterfly-conservation.org](mailto:info@butterfly-conservation.org) or 01929 400209. They can also be downloaded from the website.

### **Irish Moth Recorders' Meeting**

At the end of September, we held our second Irish Moth Recorders meeting, at Garrison, Co. Fermanagh. This two-day event gave moth recorders from Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland an opportunity to catch up and share mothing experiences on both sides of the border. The talks were informative and the video showing the rediscovery of the White Prominent was extremely entertaining! Numerous moth traps were put out at various locations over the weekend, but sadly it was a little chilly for most moths.



### **National Moth Night – a statement from Atropos and Butterfly Conservation**

National Moth Night has become a national institution since it started in 1999. It has proved hugely successful with over 1000 sites returning records annually, hundreds of public events introducing newcomers to the wonders of moth recording, and massive media coverage raising awareness of the much-maligned moth. Many thanks to all those who have taken part and helped achieve this success.

Now the event has reached a crossroads. The cycle of repeated NMN events in different months of the year has been completed and, as the event has grown, so have the resources required to manage NMN, to the point that it is not sustainable in its current format. Atropos and Butterfly Conservation have agreed that there will be no National Moth Night in 2011. The time will be used instead to regroup, reconfigure and reinvigorate NMN in preparation for the 2012 event.

If you have suggestions for the future of NMN, we would be very glad to receive them via [views@nationalmothnight.info](mailto:views@nationalmothnight.info). Please be assured that your views will be considered, but we regret that we will not be able to respond individually to such emails.

In the meantime, please remember to submit your records for NMN2010 before 1<sup>st</sup> December (see [www.nationalmothnight.info](http://www.nationalmothnight.info)). National Moth Night will return in 2012 and a date will be announced in due course.

### **Moths Count Contacts**

**General enquiries** [info@butterfly-conservation.org](mailto:info@butterfly-conservation.org) 01929 400209

**Richard Fox** Project Manager [rfox@butterfly-conservation.org](mailto:rfox@butterfly-conservation.org) 01626 368385

**Les Hill** Database Manager [lhill@butterfly-conservation.org](mailto:lhill@butterfly-conservation.org) 01929 406008

**Zoë Randle** Moth Recording Co-ordinator [zrandle@butterfly-conservation.org](mailto:zrandle@butterfly-conservation.org) 01929 406006

# [www.mothscount.org](http://www.mothscount.org)



Supported by

**The National Lottery**<sup>®</sup>  
through the Heritage Lottery Fund

