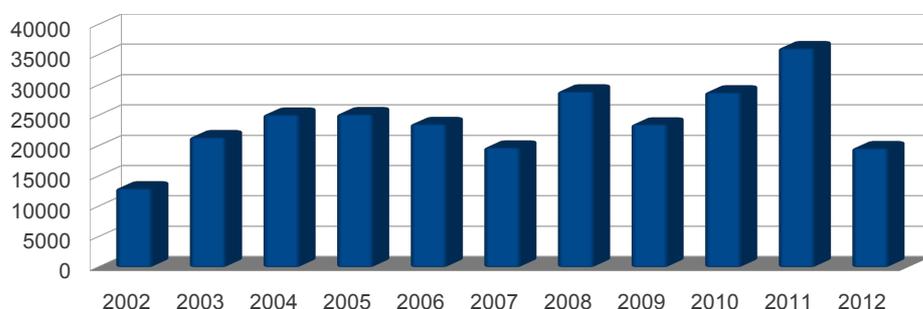


Worcestershire Moth Database Summary 2012

2012 was, by popular agreement, a particularly bad year for moths. While we had a short, very warm and sunny early spring this gave way to cool wet weather for, pretty much, the rest of the year. Finding windows in the weather to arrange fieldwork was difficult and catches at home were well down in both variety of species and numbers. At the end of the year, those of us who look for leaf mines were dismayed by the scarcity of even the more common species that are normally to be found in our woodlands and hedgerows.

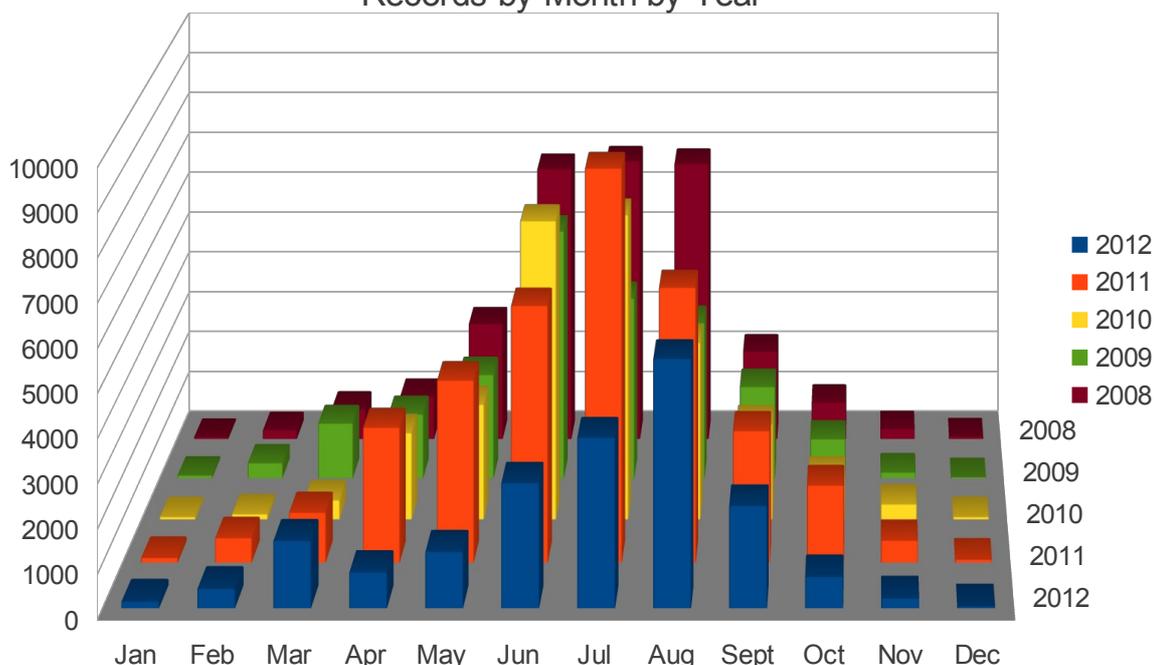
All this is reflected in the records we have received for the year. In Worcestershire VC37 we have been lucky enough to have a good number of productive recorders for most of the last decade. A quick comparison of the last 10 years total records shows the general trend of annual increase in recording effort and the sudden lack of records for 2012 very clearly. The lowest total since 2002!

VC37 Records vs Year



Looking at the last five years it is easy to see below how poor the period April to July was compared to recent years. It is also clear how good 2011 was. Despite the general feeling that the summer was poor, 2011 was a record year in many respects.

Records by Month by Year



The above data simply refer to the total number of records we received in the county in a year. They do not necessarily imply that moth numbers were that far below normal but certainly shows that recording was hindered by the conditions. However the variety of moths recorded was also well down. In 2011 we recorded 1131 species between us. In 2012 the total was 921.

Migrants.

Migrant moths were few and far between in 2012.

Code	Taxon	Vernacular	Records	Individuals
1984	Macroglossum stellatarum	Humming-bird Hawk-moth	3	9
2441	Autographa gamma	Silver Y	200	403
1398	Nomophila noctuella	Rush Veneer	3	3
1395	Udea ferrugalis	Rusty-dot Pearl	3	3
0464	Plutella xylostella	Diamond-back Moth	40	42
2091	Agrotis ipsilon	Dark Sword-grass	1	1
1716	Rhodometra sacaria	Vestal	1	1
1720	Orthonama obstipata	Gem	1	1
2051	Lithosia quadra	Four-spotted Footman	1	1

New Species for VC37

We had 4 new species for the county in 2012. Last years unprecedented 16 species remains an anomaly but we have averaged about 6 for the last few years.

Code	Taxon	Vernacular	Records
0471	Digitivalva perlepidella		1
0902	Chrysoclista lathamella		1
1022a	Cnephasia pumicana		1
1401	Maruca vitrata	Mung Moth	1

Digitivalva perlepidella may well have been present in the far south east of the county for years although the recent discovery of more sites in the northern Cotswolds might indicate it is spreading a little. It was found to be present on a weedy bank on the edge of Broadway Quarry, just inside the VC37 boundary. (O.Wadsworth)

Ken Willets' *Chrysoclista lathamella* is an excellent and unexpected record of a very rarely recorded moth nationally.

Tony Simpson caught 7 small grey Cnephasias (Tortricidae) at light at Bransford between 16/7/12 and 2/8/12 and dissections over the winter showed them to be *Cnephasia pumicana*, a recently recognised species which has been spreading from the southern counties. It is polyphagous on herbaceous plants and has become a pest species on cereals and grasses on the continent.

The Mung moth was caught by Dave Grundy in Birmingham city and may well have originated from stored food imports.

Other highlights for 2012

A single **Pine Hawkmoth** was found by M. Crookston in Evesham on 9/7/12.

White-spotted Pinion was found at its only known West Midland site again this year (B. Harley).

The **Small Ranunculus** continues to spread southwards in Worcestershire with singletons at light in Stourport (C. Price 1/7/12) and Bransford (2/7/12 ANBS) and larvae on Prickly Lettuce in Worcester (O. Wadsworth 3/8/12).

Tony Simpson found larval feedings of *Lampronia capitella* in Red Currant at two sites on the Worcestershire side of the Dowles Brook in the Wyre Forest (last recorded Worcester 1877).

Tony also recorded three specimens of the rare Tortrix, *Choristoneura diversana*, from Slade Wood on 7/7/12 (last recorded Worcester area 1882).

Caloptilia cuculipennella was discovered at two new sites. Arley Wood 18/8/12 (ANBS) and Upper Rochford 3/8/12 (D. Arnold).

Species to look out for in 2013

291 *Caloptilia hemidactylella* is being found in the east and north of UK and said to be spreading on the continent, so might get here? Unfortunately feeds on Sycamore and Maples as does semifascia and rufipennella and so early stages would have to be bred out.

Does 780 *Bryotropha similis* really occur in the county? Previous records now seem uncertain due to dissection difficulties in separating it from related species, though fresh specimens should be identifiable on external appearance.

Look out for 801a *Gelechia senticetella* for which we only have one record. It should be spreading and feeding on garden conifers.

We should be doing better in finding the Mistletoe marble, 1066 *Celypha woodiana* mines as there are many more records just across the Gloucestershire boundary. It would be well worth looking more intensively in the south of the Severn Valley in April.

Does anyone know of a good site for the small yellow Biting Stonecrop *Sedum acre* on old walls? 393 *Glyphipterix equitella* has not been found in the modern era but might still be around?

Wider distribution of VC37 data.

This last year we have sent data on to the Moths Count scheme run by Butterfly Conservation and the Gelechid recording Scheme. We are also in the process of sharing our data with the Worcestershire Biological Records Centre and the National Leafminers Scheme.

A lot of work has been done improving the quality of the data we hold. Some dubious old records have been reassessed and many duplicates have been eliminated.

The County List spreadsheet has been updated and is available, along with the rest of the VC37 moth recorders package, from:

<http://www.temevalleywildlife.com/galleries/WorcestershireMothWebsite.htm>

We would like to thank all those recorders who have contributed records to the county database over the last year. If you still have outstanding data for 2012 do please send in your records as soon as you can. We will be sending an update to Moths Count at the end of March.

If you need any help with sending in records or identifications do please get in touch with either myself or county moth recorder Tony Simpson.

May 2013 bring more moths to your lights.

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