

Supplimentary Advice for moth recorders in VC37

Microlepidoptera

Acleris laterana/comariana

laterana is common and widespread; comariana is v. local, mostly feeding on Marsh Cinquefoil (as at Bog at Hartlebury Common and Wilden Marsh) and occ. records in commercial Strawberry fields (as at Drakes Broughton and near Evesham). comariana is bivoltine and laterana usually univoltine but latter has long emergence period and seems to have extended its emergence period of late, or possibly has become bivoltine as well. As imagines I feel ok to usually record unremarkable moths as laterana but, unless bred, possible comariana should be dissected to confirm id.

Acleris ferrugana/notana

Both are common especially in mixed deciduous woodland feeding on Oak (ferrugana) and Birch (notana), both bivoltine and both hibernate as imagines. notana has a characteristic spinning on Birch where it spins two leaves around each other and webs them up with silk. Moths in good condition can usually be separated by ferrugana having a distinct small black scale tuft in disc of forewing towards the base, whilst notana has the scale tuft absent or minimally present. If in doubt then either record as ferrugana/notana agg. or dissect to confirm id if wished but both are widespread.

Many small Microlepidoptera are difficult to identify as imagines and may need dissection if worn/damaged especially. Most are more easily recorded from larval mines, etc. Some, such as many Nepticulidae, some Tineidae, most Coleophoridae, and various species in other families, will need genitalia dissection to make a definite identification. If asked Danny Arnold, Patrick Clement, Alan Prior, Tony Simpson and Oliver Wadsworth would be able to dissect specimens for identification. See the contact details at the end of the VC37 Recorder's Notes.

Macrolepidoptera (Larger Moths)

November Moths (Epirrita species)

Unless dissected record 1795 dilutata, 1796 christyi, 1797 autumnata as November Moth E. dilutata agg. (aggregate)

Grey/Dark Dagger (A. psi/tridens)

Males can be distinguished by genitalia examination of briefly anaesthetised moth (with Ethyl Acetate) without killing or damaging it. Females need dissection. Their larvae are quite distinct. Grey Dagger in my experience outnumbers Dark Dagger by about 9:1 So I feel record as Dark/Grey Dagger (A. tridens/psi) agg. unless examined/dissected.

Copper Underwings

I feel the only sure way to separate these moths as imagines is by dissection. So record undissected moths as Copper Underwing agg.

Marbled Minors

The date and the appearance of certain forms of 2337 *O. strigilis*, 2338 *versicolor*, and 2339 *latruncula* can be diagnostic as to species, but many forms are indistinguishable unless dissected. So generally record undissected moths as Marbled Minor agg.

2343 Common Rustic/2343a Lesser Common Rustic (*M. secalis/didyma*) are only separable by genitalia dissection. Both appear about equally common in VC37 and I suggest undissected moths are recorded as Common Rustic agg.

Ear Moths

2360 Ear Moth is widespread in VC37 in small nos. All specimens I have dissected over the years have turned out to be this species. We do not seem to have either Crinan or Saltern Ear in this area.

2357 Large Ear is normally a species of moorland and bog. It has been confirmed once from the Salop part of Wyre Forest and in 2010 was confirmed from the extreme north-west of VC37, possibly straying from across the Salop border. It does usually look different from ordinary Ear Moths. Therefore I suggest it is ok to record as Ear Moth (*A. oculea*) unless Large Ear is considered a possibility, when record as Ear Moth agg. unless dissected

Tony Simpson 2011