

CBDC Recorders' Conference – 26 February 2022

A few Cumbrian Moth Highlights from 2021

It may be some time before the 2021 dataset is available, but in the meantime here is an almost random selection of notable or interesting 2021 records with photos submitted by Cumbrian recorders. Thanks to all who have contributed these highlight photos. Some of these moths may not even be great rarities, just nice images of beautiful moths from across the county. A fuller report on the year's moth highlights will follow in due course.



•**Martin Tordoff & Guy Broome**

72.067 Small Purple-barred, Hodbarrow,
VC70, 31 May 2021 *Justine Patton*

8.003 *Incurvaria oehlmanniella*



Wing length a mere 7 mm. All but two of Cumbria's 40 or so records are from the present century.

Trapped from Bilberry
at Roudsea Woods &
Mosses NNR, VC69
19 Jul 2021

Guy Broome

16.005 Willow Ermine / *Yponomeuta rorrella*

Some of the *Yponomeuta* genus cannot be reliably identified in the adult form, but this specimen was bred from Grey Willow, which determined the species. Probably the first Cumbrian record of the species to have been determined in this way.

Watchtree Nature Reserve,
VC70 from willow collected
on 23 July 2021, pupa inset



Liz Still

18.006 *Rhigognostis incarnatella*



This species was believed new to the county in 2012, and there has been only a handful of records since, mainly in VC70. Three were recorded in 2021 at Bowness-on Solway, of which this specimen (Left) was found in a polytunnel on 12 October.

Liz Still

This moth may be confused with the much commoner Diamond-back Moth, *Plutella xylostella*, (example inset R), though there are no early records of *R. incarnatella* to suggest this may have happened in the past.



52.003 Lunar Hornet Moth

Though the most widespread member of the clearwing family there have been few Cumbrian records over the years. However, a pheromone lure is now available so more records of this wasp mimic may now be expected.

This specimen, however, was found near Silloth on 12 July 2021 without the use of a pheromone lure. Also there was a record from Bowness-on-Solway of two at a pheromone lure on 1 July, and an unfortunately unsubstantiated report of two escaped from a pheromone trap at Milnthorpe on 17 July.



Sam Griffin

63.060 *Evergestis pallidata*



Though described as very local and scarce in northern England, this species has continued to turn up in reasonable numbers in Cumbria in recent years. The majority of recent records are from VC70 but this specimen was caught in a VC69 Kendal garden trap on 18 July 2021, a welcome first record from this well recorded site.

Martin Tordoff



66.005 Small Eggar

With its north-west distribution now confined to the Grange-over-Sands / Cartmel peninsula, this species is more often found in its distinctive larval web form. (Below) Vacated larval web on hawthorn, Wartbarrow Quarry, Allithwaite 22 June 2021

(Above) A larval web at Allithwaite on 19 June 2013, and (Below) an adult Small Eggar at Cartmel on 3 April 2016



Martin Chadwick, David Benham, Wendy Nelson

70.155 Netted Pug

Netted Pug is arguably the most distinctive and easily identified in this sometimes tricky group of Geometrid moths, of which around 40 species have been found in Cumbria. With larval foodplants of Sea and Bladder Campion, this species' distribution in Cumbria is mainly confined to VC69. This specimen was seen on a house window at Grange-over-Sands on 8 May 2021.



Martin Chadwick

70.215 V-Moth



A formerly widespread moth which has suffered severe declines nationally. This species does however continue to turn up in mainly the east and south of Cumbria. This specimen was one of two trapped at Cumrew VC70 on 24 July 2021, with a further two reported two days later at Kirkoswald, also VC70. Both records were from sites adjacent to Blackcurrant, one of its larval foodplants.

Guy Broome

70.253 Spring Usher



Though not uncommon in Cumbria this beautiful Geometrid moth is often one of the first of the year for many recorders.

This one was photographed on a fence post at Kingmoor South Nature Reserve, Carlisle on 1 Feb 2021

Paul Kennedy

72.007 Beautiful Snout

This moth has considerably expanded its range northwards in recent years. Though the first VC70 record was not until 2017, it is now quite frequently recorded across that VC, and now occurs in southern Scotland too.

This specimen was from Bowness-on-Solway on 10 July 2021



Liz Still

72.037 Round-winged Muslin



Not to be confused with
Muslin Footman (inset),
another lichen feeder
and common in both VCs

Almost all past records of this species have come from VC70, but from around 2019 the species has begun to make appearances in small numbers in VC69, but with something of an explosion of reported sightings in the vice-county and adjacent Lancashire sites around July 2021.

This specimen was caught at
Carr Bank, Storth on 18 July
2021

Steve Benner

72.060 Marsh Oblique-barred

This diminutive macro-moth, with a wing length of only 6-8 mm is possibly commoner than was previously believed. Before the advent of affordable micro-moth field guides, this species would almost certainly have been dismissed as a micro on many occasions.

This specimen was caught in typical habitat for its species at Glasson Moss VC70 on 1 August 2021



Seb Buckton

72.063 Blackneck



An easily recognised species whose range has expanded considerably in northern England in the present century. With no Cumbrian records prior to 2002, and very few then until around 2010, it is now reported in quite good numbers in both VCs.

This specimen was recorded near Cavendish Dock at Barrow-in-Furness on 16 July 2021.

Helen Wallace

73.164 Reddish Light Arches

This is a species of mainly calcareous grassland, and is recorded only in very small numbers in Cumbria. In a perhaps uncharacteristic habitat this specimen was caught in a Kendal garden on 7 July 2021, the only one of its species recorded there in 16 years continuous trapping.



Martin Tordoff

73.183 Dusky-lemon Sallow



A much declined species not recorded in Cumbria in every year, this specimen was caught at Cumrew VC70 on 24 September 2021, close to its larval foodplant Wych Elm. It has also appeared on three occasions over recent years from another VC70 site at Brampton.

Guy Broome

73.209 Red Sword-grass

73.327 Dark Sword-grass



In November 2021, just three days apart, these two moths turned up in a Kendal garden trap, after absences there of seven and four years respectively. But neither is particularly rare in the county.

(Above) Dark Sword-grass
15 November 2021 – previous site
record was in 2017

(Right) Red Sword-grass
18 November 2021 – previous site
record was in 2014



Martin Tordoff

73.364 Rosy Marsh Moth



This species was believed to have become extinct in England in the mid-1800s, until its discovery by Rob Petley-Jones at Roudsea Woods & Mosses NNR in 2005.

On 5 Aug 2021 a record number of 43 adults was counted at light traps at Fish House Moss, part of the above site.

Rob Petley-Jones, Rob Pickett & Guy Broome

A date for your diaries – Saturday 21 May

National Moth Night at Bowder Stone Car Park, Borrowdale

**Joint event – Butterfly Conservation /
National Trust / Cumbria Moth Group
social event**

From c 2115 hours until late

**In a massively under-recorded 1km
square of superb habitat**

Bring a trap or two

**See CMG Facebook page for more
information much nearer the time**

**Subject to no major resurgence of Covid,
and of course weather permitting**

