

## Review of 2009 – non-avian records

### Pyralid moths

#### Migrants

After a blank year for both the regular migrant species in 2008 there was a single record of *ferrugalis* in 2009, at Hythe on 8<sup>th</sup> September, and a total of 13 *noctuella*, with the first at Abbotscliffe on the 10<sup>th</sup> July, and 12 at Hythe between the 30<sup>th</sup> August and 19<sup>th</sup> September.

#### Residents

A light trapping visit to Folkestone Warren by Steve Whitehouse and Matthew Deans on 9<sup>th</sup> July produced a number of notable records of localised species, including singles of *advenella*, *bistriga*, *marmorea*, *ornatella*, *palealis*, *saxicola*, *verbascalis* and five *obducatella*. A *pinguinalis* (Large Tabby) at Hythe on 15<sup>th</sup> July was also of some note.

### Macro moths

#### Migrants

The highlight of the year was a **Dusky Hook-tip** which was trapped at Folkestone on 31<sup>st</sup> July by Tony Rouse. A **Dewick's Plusia** at Hythe on 13<sup>th</sup> June (Ian Roberts) was also extremely notable and national moth weekend in September produced Clancy's Rustics at Hythe on the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> (2) and a Barred Red of the continental form *prasinaria* there on the latter date.

A Hummingbird Hawk-moth was at Saltwood Castle on the 18<sup>th</sup> July and there were widely scattered records of Silver Ys in small numbers between 21<sup>st</sup> May and 28<sup>th</sup> October.



Dewick's Plusia at Hythe (Ian Roberts)



*prasinaria* Barred Red at Hythe (Ian Roberts)

#### Residents

The first moths of the year appeared on the 31<sup>st</sup> March, when Common Quaker, Hebrew Character and Early Grey were caught at Hythe. Other typical early species were Small Quaker there on the 3<sup>rd</sup> April, Muslin Moth there on 11<sup>th</sup> April and a Streamer in Folkestone Warren on the latter date.

Late April saw the appearance of the first Dew Moth at Abbotscliffe (on the 26<sup>th</sup>) and another 8 were seen there in May. Other day flyers included a Rest Harrow in Folkestone Warren on 12<sup>th</sup> July, a Small Purple-barred at Capel-le-Ferne on 10<sup>th</sup> July, Mother Shipton at Hythe Redoubt on 4<sup>th</sup> June, a number of Burnet Companions, Common Heaths and Green Carpets, and a count of 40 six-spot Burnets at Abbotscliffe on the 10<sup>th</sup> July.

A spell of warm weather in June produced a few noteworthy records at Hythe, including Bird's Wing (13<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup>), Straw Dot (13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup>), Barred Yellow (14<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup>), Broad-barred White and Tawny Shears (14<sup>th</sup>), and White-line Dart, Toadflax Brocade, Figure of Eighty, Sycamore and Least Carpet (30<sup>th</sup>).

It was another quiet year for the resident hawk-moths but Elephant, Eyed, Lime, Poplar and Privet were recorded in small numbers. Singles of Pebble and Maple Prominent were at Folkestone Warren on 9<sup>th</sup> July and there were two of the latter at Hythe in June.



Clancy's Rustic at Hythe (Ian Roberts)



Eyed Hawk-moth at Saltwood (Brian Harper)

The light trapping visit to Folkestone Warren by Steve Whitehouse and Matthew Deans on 9<sup>th</sup> July produced a number of other interesting records, including a total of 15 **Sub-angled Waves**. Ghost Moth, The Fern (3), Small Rivulet, Grey, Shaded and Larch Pugs, Orange Moth (4), Engrailed, Kent Black Arches, Short-cloaked Moth, Least Yellow Underwing, True Lover's Knot, Toadflax Brocade (2), Peach Blossom, Shark, Coronet, Leopard Moth, Small Angle Shades, Dusky Brocade, Bordered Sallow, Marbled White Spot, Nut-tree Tussock, Plain Golden Y (5) and Dwarf Cream Wave were amongst the other species that were recorded.

There was limited coverage beyond July but national moth weekend on 18<sup>th</sup>/19<sup>th</sup> September produced a typical array of autumn species, including Feathered Ranunculus, Lunar Underwing, Orange Sallow and Centre-barred Sallow.

### Micro moths

The light trapping visit to Folkestone Warren by Steve Whitehouse and Matthew Deans on 9<sup>th</sup> July produced a number of notable records, which included *Eupoecilia ambiguella*, *Metzneria lappella*, *Marasmarcha lunaedactyla*, *Mompha ochraceella*, *Cnaemidophorus rhododactyla*, *Aethes rubigana*, *Eucosma hohenwartiana*, *Phtheochroa inopiana*, *Agonopterix liturosa*, *Acompsia schmidtellus*, *Eulamprotes atrella* and *Acleris schalleriana*.

### Butterflies

#### Migrants

The highlight of the non-avian year was a spectacular invasion of Painted Ladies, which was tracked back to the Atlas Mountains in North Africa, where heavy winter rains triggered the germination of their food plants, causing hundreds of thousands to emerge in mid-February. There was a northward drift through Spain and France in April and May before the large wave of immigrants reached England in late May.

Singles at Capel-le-Ferne on the 14<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> May gave no hint as to what was to come, but a count of 26 at Abbotscliffe on the 21<sup>st</sup> was some indication. At least seven were seen arriving in off the sea at Hythe Redoubt on the 23<sup>rd</sup> and a total of ten were at three sites the next day, but it was the 25<sup>th</sup> when the mass influx began: nearly 300 were at Capel-le-Ferne in the morning and 'hundreds' were seen arriving in off the sea on a broad front between Capel-le-Ferne and Hythe in the afternoon ahead of a northerly-moving thunderstorm. The estimate for the day of 500 was grossly conservative.

The 26<sup>th</sup> saw a similar arrival with an observer on a trawler three miles south of Hythe describing swarms of Painted Ladies coming from France just as another storm and heavy rain arrived. He estimated around 1,000 butterflies, with dozens on the boat itself. A further 120 were counted at Barrowhill on the same day but numbers quickly tailed off as the insects continued northwards. There were still 20 at Church Hougham on the 29<sup>th</sup> May but in June there were just widely scattered ones and twos, apart from a count of 19 between Hythe and Lympne on the 18<sup>th</sup>. There were fewer still in the first half of July but numbers began to increase again from the 19<sup>th</sup>, presumably as locally-bred butterflies emerged. Counts of 11 at Capel-le-

Ferne on the 19<sup>th</sup> July, 20 at Pond Hill Road (Cheriton) the next day, 10 at Abbotscliffe on the 11<sup>th</sup> August and eight in Folkestone Warren on the same day were the highest. Odd stragglers persisted into October, with the last at Abbotscliffe on the 11<sup>th</sup>.

A Red Admiral at Blackhouse Hill on the 17<sup>th</sup> January was the first butterfly of the year and singles were seen at many sites through until the last at Folkestone on the 15<sup>th</sup> November, with a peak count of just three at Mill Point on the 10<sup>th</sup> October. None were caught up in the mass influx of Painted Ladies.

In contrast to last year there were no spring records of Clouded Yellow but quite a good run in the autumn, commencing with five in Folkestone Warren on the 11<sup>th</sup> August and a single there on the 17<sup>th</sup>. Two were at Abbotscliffe on the 26<sup>th</sup> September and two were at Samphire Hoe the following day. Counts of six at Mill Point and three at Abbotscliffe on the 10<sup>th</sup> October both included probable examples of the *helice* form. Later singles were at Folkestone Warren on the 25<sup>th</sup> October and Samphire Hoe on the 9<sup>th</sup> November.



Painted Lady at Cheriton (Brian Harper)



Clouded Yellow at Folkestone Warren (Brian Harper)

### Residents

The usual species characteristic of chalk downland were recorded, including decent numbers of Adonis and Common Blues, Dingy Skipper, Gatekeeper, Marbled White, Ringlet, Small Copper and Wall.

Amongst the other resident species the more notable records included single Brimstones at Samphire Hoe on the 15<sup>th</sup> March, Saltwood Castle on the 14<sup>th</sup> April and Peene Quarry on the 10<sup>th</sup> May, Green Hairstreaks at Samphire Hoe on the 22<sup>nd</sup> April and Peene Quarry on the 20<sup>th</sup> May, and a peak count of 7 Brown Argus in Folkestone Warren on the 11<sup>th</sup> August.

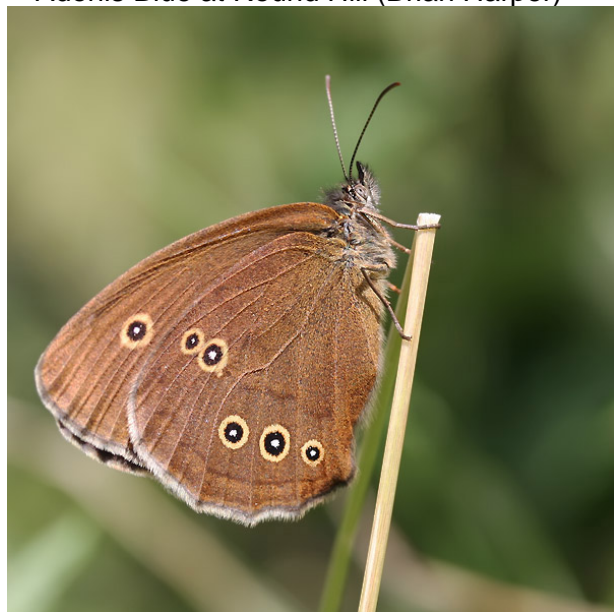




Adonis Blue at Round Hill (Brian Harper)



Brown Argus at Botolph's Bridge (Brian Harper)



Ringlet at Peene Quarry (Brian Harper)



Dingy Skipper at Peene Quarry (Brian Harper)



Green Hairstreak at Peene Quarry (Brian Harper)



Orange-tip at Saltwood Castle (Brian Harper)



## Other insects

There was incomplete coverage of other insect groups but a selection of photographs that were received appear below. An unusual spectacle that was witnessed in December was an emergence of thousands of 16-spot Ladybirds (the photograph shows just a small sample, together with a 7-spot Ladybird) at West Hythe. Harlequin Ladybirds were widely recorded (small numbers continuing to appear in moth traps) and are established here now, as they are elsewhere in the county.

A number of the rather stunning Wasp Spiders were recorded at Round Hill in August.



Migrant Hawker at Botolph's Bridge (Brian Harper)



Ladybirds at West Hythe (see above)



Wasp Spider at Round Hill (Brian Harper)



Crab Spider at West Hythe (Brian Harper)



Bee-fly at Saltwood Castle (Brian Harper)



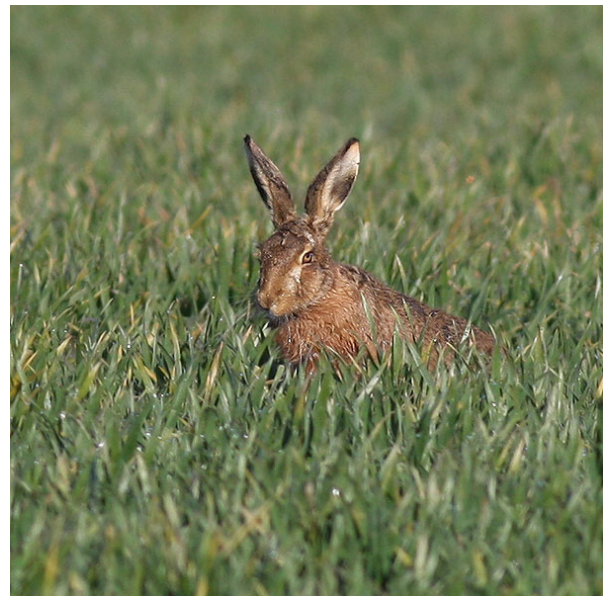
Wasp Beetle at West Hythe (Brian Harper)

## Mammals

Harbour Porpoise were seen off Samphire Hoe in mid-February and off Copt Point on 6<sup>th</sup> April and 23<sup>rd</sup> August. Commons Seals were seen off the Willop Outfall on 7<sup>th</sup> February, Folkestone Warren on 6<sup>th</sup> March (2), Samphire Hoe on 6<sup>th</sup> April and 27<sup>th</sup> September, and Willop Outfall again on 4<sup>th</sup> December. Following the Samphire Hoe sighting in 2008, this year's odd Grey Squirrel record was one on the listening dish in Abbot's Gully, Abbotscliffe on 11<sup>th</sup> August. Hare appear to be increasing in the Botolph's Bridge area, with regular records in 2009, including a peak of 6 there on the 4<sup>th</sup> February, and a Mink was at West Hythe on the 18<sup>th</sup> January.



Common Seals at Folkestone Warren (Brian Harper)



Hare at Botolph's Bridge (Brian Harper)