



# day-flying moths

## a brief guide

A surprising number of moth species are active by day and are often as brightly coloured and beautifully patterned as butterflies.

## Moths in this leaflet

There are about 2,500 moth species found in Britain and Ireland, traditionally separated into about 900 larger moths (macro-moths) and the smaller or micro-moths. This leaflet covers those macro-moths that are naturally active during the daytime, which are often mistaken for butterflies. It does not include all those nocturnal moths which will fly if accidentally disturbed from their daytime resting places. Owing to space restrictions some day-flying moths have been omitted, particularly those that are difficult to distinguish from similar species (for example not all burnets and clearwings are shown). The leaflet can only provide a general introduction to day-flying moths and for more comprehensive information the suggested additional sources should be consulted.



**Scarce Vapourer**

Jun-Oct (England)

## Moth conservation

Many UK moth species are in decline. Butterfly Conservation works to conserve butterflies, moths and their habitats and, in partnership with other organisations, has established the Moths Count project to raise awareness and improve knowledge and conservation of moths. The project has developed the National Moth Recording Scheme to support moth recorders and utilise the information they collect to monitor all the larger moths in the UK and guide conservation efforts. You can contribute to this by sending sightings of day-flying species to your County Moth Recorder.

**For more information about the Moths Count project, moths, moth recording, County Moth Recorders' contact details and free activities to join in, visit [www.mothscount.org](http://www.mothscount.org) or contact Butterfly Conservation.**



**Oak Eggar** (female and male)

May-Aug (Widely distributed)

## Key to images

The species illustrated are not to scale or in order of size. Moths are grouped by general geographical regions; some are found widely throughout those ranges but others have more limited distribution. Very localised species are marked ●. Guidance on flight period is given, but this is likely to vary towards the north or south of a species' range, and climate change is altering the flight period of some species.

# Widely distributed (Britain and Ireland)

**Currant Clearwing**

Jun-Jul



**Fox Moth**

May-Jun



**Chalk Carpet**

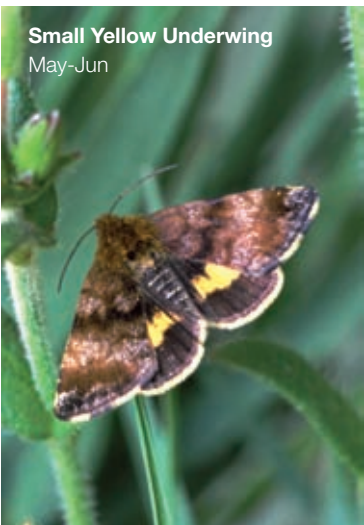
Jul-Aug



(Eng & Wales)

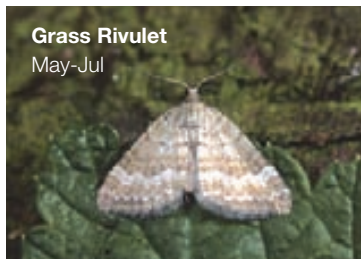
**Small Yellow Underwing**

May-Jun



**Grass Rivulet**

May-Jul



**Pretty Pinion**

May-Aug



**Forester**

May-Aug



**Vapourer**

Jul-Oct





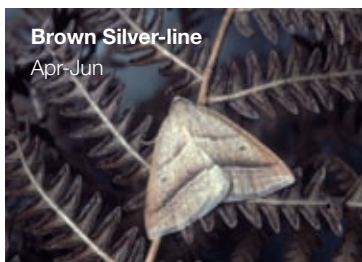
**Small Purple-barred**  
May-Aug



**Humming-bird Hawk-moth**  
Mar-Nov



**Wood Tiger**  
Ma-Jul



**Brown Silver-line**  
Apr-Jun



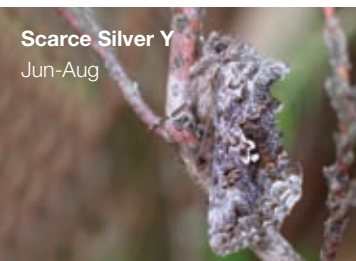
**Argent & Sable**  
May-Jun



**Broad-bordered Bee Hawk-moth**  
May-Sep



**Clouded Buff**  
Jun-Jul



**Scarce Silver Y**  
Jun-Aug

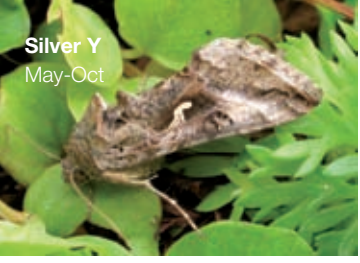


**Treble-bar**  
May-Sep



**Small Argent & Sable**  
May-Aug

**Silver Y**  
May-Oct



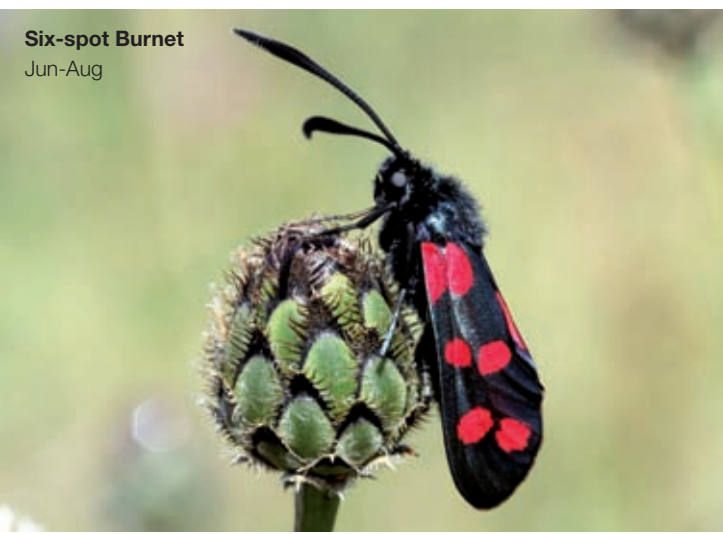
**Burnet Companion**  
May-Jul



**Bordered White**  
May-Aug



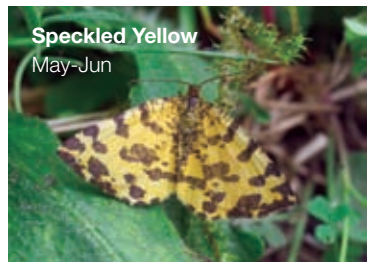
**Six-spot Burnet**  
Jun-Aug



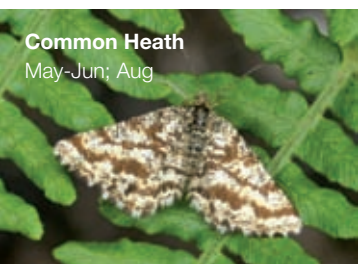
**Red-necked Footman**  
Jun-Jul



**Speckled Yellow**  
May-Jun



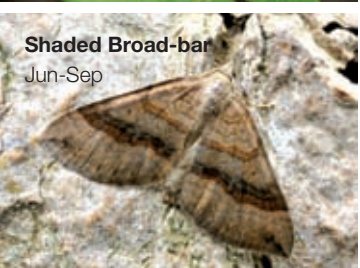
**Common Heath**  
May-Jun; Aug



**Dew Moth**  
Jun-Jul



**Shaded Broad-bar**  
Jun-Sep



**Latticed Heath**

May-Sep



**Cinnabar**

May-Aug



**Small White Wave**

May-Sep



**Mother Shipton**

May-Jul



**Chimney Sweeper**

Jun-Aug



**Orange Underwing**

Mar-Apr (not Ireland)



**Belted Beauty**

Mar-Apr



**Narrow-bordered Bee Hawk-moth**

May-Jul



# Southern England and Wales

Scarce Forester

Jun-Jul



Yellow Belle

May-Jun, Aug-Sep



Black-veined Moth

May-Jul



Silver Barred

May-Aug  
(also Ireland)



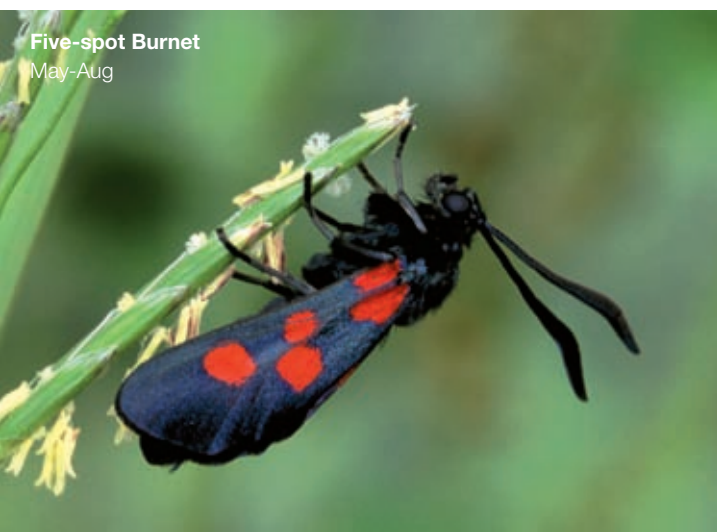
Four-spotted

May-Sep



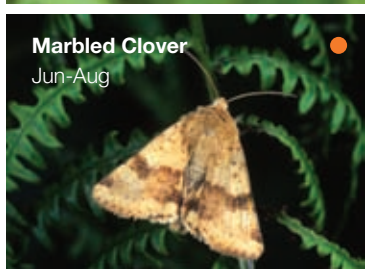
Five-spot Burnet

May-Aug



Marbled Clover

Jun-Aug



**Jersey Tiger**

Jun-Sep



**Drab Looper**

May-Jun; Aug



**Shoulder-striped Clover**

Jun-Jul



**Lace Border**

May-Sep



**Little Thorn**

May-Jun  
(also Ireland)



**Straw Belle**

Jun-Sep (also Ireland)

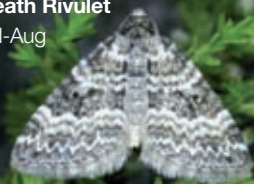


# Northern England and Scotland

**Heath Rivulet**

Jul-Aug

(also Ireland)



**Least Minor**

Jun-Aug



**Netted Mountain Moth**

Apr-Jun



**Kentish Glory**

Apr-May



**Transparent Burnet**

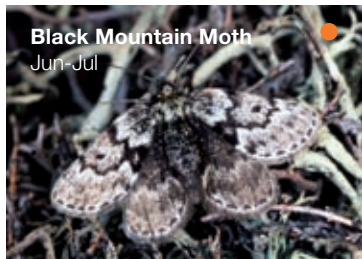
Jun-Jul (also Ireland)



**Black Mountain Moth**

**Black Mountain Moth**

Jun-Jul



**Broad-bordered White**

Underwing May-Jun



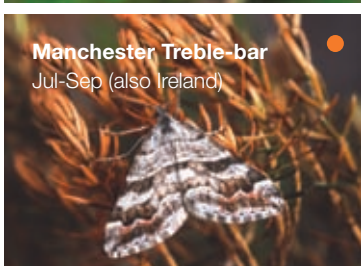
**Dark Bordered Beauty**

Jul-Aug



**Manchester Treble-bar**

Jul-Sep (also Ireland)



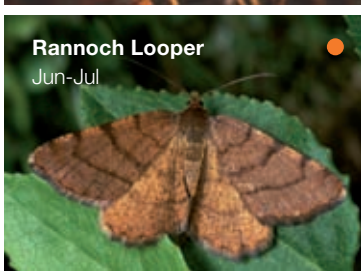
**Scotch Burnet**

Jun-Jul



**Rannoch Looper**

Jun-Jul



## Further information

There is plenty of help to identify moths, and other information, on the Moths Count website at [www.mothscount.org](http://www.mothscount.org), plus links to further sources. The following books are good identification guides:

### **Concise Guide to the Moths of Great Britain and Ireland.**

Townsend, M., Waring, P. & Lewington, R. 2007 (British Wildlife Publishing)

### **Field Guide to the Moths of Great Britain and Ireland.**

Waring, P., Townsend, M. & Lewington, R. 2003 (British Wildlife Publishing)

### **The Colour Identification Guide to Moths of the British Isles.**

Skinner, B. 1998 (Viking)

Butterfly Conservation is working to save butterflies, moths and their habitats.

Why not become a member?

More information at

[www.butterfly-conservation.org](http://www.butterfly-conservation.org)

Moths Count is a partnership of many organisations, individuals and businesses, led by Butterfly Conservation. Principal funders include the Heritage Lottery Fund, Butterfly Conservation, British Entomological and Natural History Society, City Bridge Trust, Countryside Council for Wales, Environment Agency, Natural England, Northern Ireland Environment Agency, Royal Entomological Society, RSPB and Scottish Natural Heritage. Many other organisations are involved, providing support and helping to host events. Full details at:

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

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Butterfly Conservation

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Emperor Moth Apr-May (Widely distributed)

R Thompson