

Micro-moths 2016

Andy & Melissa Banthorpe

Introduction

In past years David Manning, the previous Bedfordshire County Micro-moth Recorder, has just detailed new species to the county each year. This is the first of a new style of micro-moth report which will include the new species to county in the year but also other notable records.

A total of five new species were added to the county list during the year: *Lampronia flavimitrella*, *Diplodoma laichartingella*, *Anarsia innoxella*, *Coleophora lithargyrinella* and *Cydia conicolana*. Full details of these can be found in the accounts below.

Review

The following list includes species of interest recorded in VC30 during 2016. Most of the species analysis is based on the 9,200 records for 2016 that had been uploaded to the county database by mid-April 2017. This also includes all records from the two Rothamsted traps in the county as David Manning has kindly identified the micro-moths from these where kept.

The list is based on that of Agassiz, Beavan & Heckford (2013), which was a revised taxonomic list and numbering system of British Lepidoptera. This list has subsequently been updated and corrected; the new version can be downloaded via the Natural History Museum's website. The number in square brackets refers to a species' Bradley-Fletcher number (Bradley 2000), which were used in previous reports.

A list of the micro-moths of VC30 with their current status is on the Beds Moth Group (BMG) website www.vc30moths.org.uk or available from the Recorders on request. This is based on a National status list and associated supporting documentation that was produced by the Moths Count team at Butterfly Conservation in early 2016.

Nepticulidae

4.001 *Eteucha acetosae* (Stainton) [Na] [118]

At Ampthill Park eight leafmines of this species, including one with an active larva, were found in Sheep's Sorrel *Rumex acetosella* on 29th October (MGB). This was the first time the species' continuing presence at the site had been checked since 2011; mines were found in the original site but also c200m away.

4.049 *Stigmella aeneofasciella* (Herrich-Schäffer) [Nb] [55]

At Sundon Hills CP on 17th October three leafmines of this species were found in Common Agrimony *Agrimonia eupatoria* (AMB). There are only three previous records of this, all of leafmines found at Waterloo Thorns on 2nd November 1987 (DVM) and 21st August 2005 (J.E.Childs), and Totternhoe Old Quarry on 30th August 2014 (AMB & MGB).

4.084 *Ectoedemia turbidella* (Zeller) [pRDB3] [24]

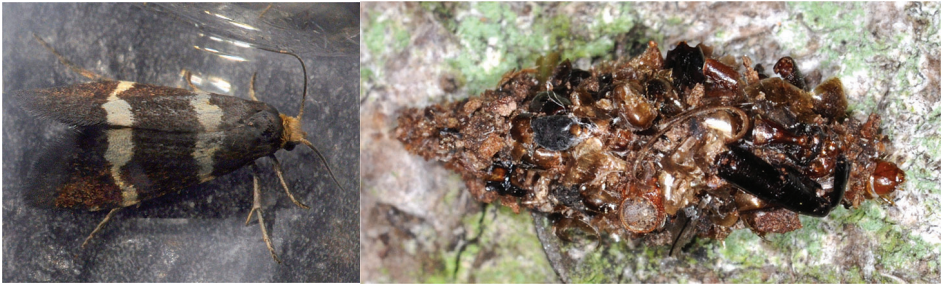
There were three leafmines of this species found in fallen leaves below a large Grey Poplar *Populus x canescens* alongside the river Ivel at Stotfold on 19th November (AMB). This is the same tree where the species was rediscovered in the county on 3rd November 2009 (AMB), and also seen on

20th October 2011. The only other VC30 record was of mines in a Grey Poplar, also near Stotfold, in 1986 (T.Hollingworth) but sadly that tree was destroyed soon after.

Incurvariidae

9.005 *Lampronia flavimitrella* (Hübner) [pRDB3] [134]

A singleton netted flying over Bluebells *Hyacinthoides non-scripta* in Potton Wood on 8th May during a BNHS visit (AMB) was new to county. This was a surprise, as previously the species had only been known from south of the river Thames – in Kent, Hampshire, Surrey and Sussex. Its foodplant is unknown, though it is thought that the larvae may feed on bramble *Rubus* species.



Lampronia flavimitrella and *Diplodoma laichartingella*.

Photos: Melissa Banthorpe

Psychidae

11.001 *Diplodoma laichartingella* (Goeze) [180]

During a bioblitz at Woburn Safari Park, four larval cases (three active and one vacated) of this species were found on 10th June (AMB & MGB). It is new to the county. When seen close to, the cases were rather stunning; they were decorated with shells, parts of beetle elytra and one case had two segments of woodlouse exoskeleton on it.

Tineidae

12.006 *Infurcitinea argentimaculella* (Stainton) [203]

Following the addition of this species to the county fauna in 2015, it was found at two new sites in 2016. Larval feeding tubes were found at Maulden Wood on 14th February (AMB) and at Flitwick Moor on 20th March (AMB & MGB).

12.015 *Nemapogon granella* (Linnaeus) [Nb] [215]

A single specimen to light at Biggleswade on 22nd July (LRB gendet DVM) was the fifth county record. It was also recorded at this site on 23rd August 2012 (LRB gendet DVM), and netted twice at The Lodge (RSPB Sandy) on 9th and 11th June 2011 (AMB & MGB gendet AMB). The first county record was back in 1985 at Queen's Park, Bedford (T.Hollingworth).

12.048 *Psychoides filicivora* (Meyrick) [200]

This was new to the county in 2014 with two records – a pupa and an adult; a larva was finally found within displaced sporangia of Hart's-tongue Fern *Asplenium scolopendrium* by the main footbridge in the middle of Flitwick Moor on 17th March (AMB). Care must be taken when separating the larvae of this species from *Psychoides verhuella*, which is also known from the county.

Gracillariidae**15.003 *Caloptilia populetorum* (Zeller) [281]**

A male of this species came to a garden light trap in Biggleswade on 22nd March (LRB gendet AMB). This was only the third for the county, following one at the same site on 16th March 2014 (LRB gendet DVM), and the first from the Cockayne Hatley RIS trap on 30th July 2003 (IPW gendet DVM).

15.005 *Caloptilia betulicola* (Hering) [283]

A leafmine of this species was found in birch *betula* sp. at The Lodge (RSPB Sandy) on 9th October (AMB & MGB). This was only the 11th county record, and the first since an adult was attracted to a light trap at Clophill on 19th March 2005 (LJH).

15.026 *Parornix fagivora* (Frey) [302]

Leafmines of this species in Beech *Fagus sylvatica* at The Lodge (RSPB Sandy) on 9th October and Ampthill Park on 29th October (AMB & MGB) were the first in the county since 2009. This remains a scarce miner in the county with only six records, all at different sites.

15.093 *Phyllocnistis xenia* Hering [Nb] [369]

The leafmines of this moth on White Poplar *Populus alba* persist at Upper Stondon despite the felling of the main tree. It survives on the young regrowth, where mines were found on 18th September (AMB). It is still only known in the county from this site plus a single site at Holwell which, despite being in Hertfordshire administrative, is in the Vice-county of Bedfordshire.

Ochsenheimeriinae**17.014 *Ochsenheimeria taurella* ([Denis & Schiffermüller]) [Nb] [251]**

The adult moths of this genus are very distinctive; although they are tiny they have extended tufts of scales that thicken the lower parts of the antennae. A singleton was swept from grassland on Maulden Heath on 6th July (ARO conf. AMB), a site where it had previously been recorded to MV light on 6th August 2003 (CWP). Of the other three records in the database, two were from 2007 at Houghton Regis ChP and Upper Sundon ChP (CWP) and one was swept at Studham Common on 9th August 2012 (CRBB).

Oecophoridae**28.008 *Metalampra italica* Baldizzone [642a]**

Although there are 19 records for the county and this species would not normally be commented on, it is notable that all come from just three sites. These are Studham – on 27th June 2006, 11th July 2014 and 8th August 2015 (CRBB & PMB); Biggleswade on 4th and 11th July 2012 (RL det. DVM); and most notably 14 records from the Eaton Bray II RIS trap in 2012 (2), 2013 (1), 2014 (4), 2015 (1) and 2016 (5) (GBu gendets DVM).

28.024 *Tachystola acroxantha* (Meyrick) [656]

With the first record coming from light trapping in a Biggleswade garden in 2015, it is notable that both the 2016 records came from exactly the same site – on 12th and 24th September (PM).

Depressariidae**32.011 *Agonopterix scopariella* (Heinemann) [704]**

There was one of this scarce species in 2016, which came from a light trap at The Lodge (RSPB Sandy) on 4th February (SCB gendet DLB). Apart from one in a Biggleswade garden on 28th March 2011 (LRB gendet DVM) there are just two further records from 2004.

Gelechiidae

35.003 *Syncopacma larseniella* Gozmány [844]

This species has to be dissected to separate it from *Syncopacma cinctella*, which has not yet been found in the county but has been recorded in adjacent counties. There are only three confirmed records of *S.larseniella* in the county: Maulden Wood on 9th July 2003 (leg. & gendet CWP), Chicksands Wood on 19th July 2012 (AMB & MGB gendet AMB), and DENR on 20th July 2016 (leg. & gendet AMB). In addition there are seven records of *S.larseniella/cinctella* from five other sites.

35.0191 *Anarsia innoxiiella* Gregersen & Karsholt

A specimen of what was thought to be *Anarsia lineatella* Zeller (ABH 35.019, BF 857) at the time was trapped at Upper Caldecote on 7th July (MB). However, in early 2017 a paper was published (Gregersen & Karsholt 2017) describing a new species *Anarsia innoxiiella*. MB's photos of his moth were emailed to Ole Karsholt who kindly confirmed it to be *innoxiiella*. At the time of writing a paper is being prepared that will discuss the current known records of *Anarsia innoxiiella/lineatella* in the UK, which will enable us to put the VC30 record into context. It appears that *innoxiiella*, whose larvae feed in spinnings on *Acer* sp., is by far the more likely to be found in the wild in the UK.

The original county record of *Anarsia lineatella* remains valid as it was of a larva found in a shop-bought imported peach in 1997 (CRBB).

35.045 *Bryotropha basaltinella* (Zeller) [Na] [777]

Added to the county list in 2013, this species has still only been identified from two sites – Sharnbrook on 23rd July and 8th August 2013, and 8th June 2015 (leg. & gendet DVM), and now from Bromham on 2nd and 5th August 2016 (PA gendet DVM).

35.065 *Monochroa cytisella* (Curtis, 1837) [728]

With the first and, until 2016, only county record – an adult swept at Cooper's Hill back in 1992 (DVM) – it was expected that this should be re-found. The larvae cause a leafmine and gall in Bracken *Pteridium aquilinum*, which should be obvious, however, until this year had not been found in the county. Multiple leafmines/galls and larvae were found in the foodplant during a bioblitz at Woburn Safari Park on 10th June (AMB & MGB). Hopefully, it will now be located at other sites as the foodplant is common on the Greensand Ridge.

35.077 *Monochroa hornigi* (Staudinger) [Na] [740]

The first record of this species for 15 years came to light at Biggleswade on 15th July (LRB gendet DVM). Apart from a single record in 2004 at Eaton Ford (A.A.Lawrence gendet DVM), all the other records come from the Cockayne Hatley RIS trap (IPW gendet DVM).

35.080 *Eulamprotes unicolorella* (Duponchel) [Nb] [732]

A singleton of this small, plain species came to light in Sharnbrook on 23rd June (leg. & gendet DVM). There are only two previous records – Totternhoe Old Quarry on 6th July 2013 (AMB & MGB gendet DVM) and Cranfield Airfield on 8th June 1983 (T.Hollingworth det. DVM).

35.133 *Caryocolum blandella* (Douglas) [Nb] [832]

The fifth county record was attracted to a light trap at Sharnbrook on 11th August (leg. & gendet DVM). Previous records come from Maulden Wood in 2010, the Cockayne Hatley RIS trap in 1997 and 2001 and the Eaton Bray II RIS trap in 1997.

35.145 *Teleiodes sequax* (Haworth) [775]

A single larva found in a spinning on Common Rock-rose *Helianthemum nummularium* at Barton Hills on 27th May (AMB) was the first larval record for the county. The adult moth emerged on 9th July. This was a new site for this chalk-downland species, which was previously known from daytime records at Dunstable Downs and Knocking Hoe, and a light trap in Lower Stondon.

Coleophoridae**37.017 *Coleophora prunifoliae* Doets [Nb] [494a]**

The second county record of this was in the Cockayne Hatley RIS trap in the week commencing 2nd July (IPW gendet DVM). This is the same site as the only other record, which was in 2003.

37.040 *Coleophora lithargyrinella* Zeller [Nb] [524]

A single case of this species was found on Greater Stitchwort *Stellaria holostea* on the Baker's Wood side of the fence by Stockgrove CP on 28th May (MGB det. AMB). This was a new addition to the county list.

C.solitariella is also a case feeder on *Stellaria*, so the cases need to be inspected closely to identify them or bred through to adult.

*Anarsia innoxia*Photo: Matt Burgess *Coleophora lithargyrinella*

Photo: Melissa Banthorpe

37.061 *Coleophora lixella* Zeller [Nb] [530]

This species had only been recorded twice before in the county – Dunstable Downs on 20th July 1984 (T.Hollingworth) and Whipsnade Zoo on 3rd July 2014 (AMB & MGB det. AMB). It was therefore excellent to have three records this year. These were from Biggleswade on 9th July (LRB gendet DVM), followed by two at Totternhoe Old Quarry on 15th July (AMB & MGB det. AMB), and two more in the Eaton Bray II RIS trap on 19th July (GBu gendets DVM). The larvae (in cases) feed on Thyme *Thymus* sp. and later grasses.

37.100 *Coleophora solitariella* Zeller [Nb] [525]

A single case on Greater Stitchwort *Stellaria holostea* on the Baker's Wood side of the fence by Stockgrove CP on 28th May (AK conf. AMB) was the first in the county since 1998, and only the sixth record. It was located only c2m away from the case of *C.lithargyrinella* noted above.

Elachistidae**38.001 *Perittia obscurepunctella* (Stainton) [Nb] [590]**

A leaf mine of this on Honeysuckle *Lonicera periclymenum* at Kidney Wood, Luton, on 28th June (AK) was only the fourth for VC30. There are two other recent records of leafmines in *Lonicera* – at

Flitwick Moor on 28th June 2014 (AMB) and King's Wood Heath & Reach on 30th June 2014 (AMB & MGB). An adult at Aspley Guise back in 1983 (DVM) was the first county record.

Momphidae

40.012 *Mompha miscella* ([Denis & Schiffermüller]) [884]

This is a leafminer of Common Rock-rose *Helianthemum nummularium*, and both previous records have been of adults. It was therefore good to find leafmines at Sharpenhoe Clappers on 23rd April (AMB & MGB), from which one adult emerged on 4th June. An adult and leafmines were also found in 2016 at Barton Hills on 27th May (AMB).

Scythrididae

43.006 *Scythris potentillella* (Zeller) [pRDB1] [920]

The second county record of this rare species came from The Lodge (RSPB Sandy) on 12th September (leg. & gendet DLB). It was the first record for ten years.

Pterophoridae

45.025 *Oxytilus parvidactyla* (Haworth) [Nb] [1490]

Also known as the Small Plume, one swept at Totternhoe Old Quarry on 11th June (AMB) was the fifth county record. The first was at King's Wood Heath & Reach, on 14th June 1955 (S.H.Kershaw) but all the rest have been on the chalk: Sewell Cutting on 18th June 1987 (DVM), Houghton Regis ChP on 10th July 2012 (MGB det. AMB) and Totternhoe Old Quarry on 22nd July 2012 (AMB). The foodplant is Mouse-ear Hawkweed *Pilosella officinarum*, which is found in the county on both base and acidic substrates.

45.037 *Oidaematophorus lithodactyla* (Treitschke) [1523]

This is another plume, also known as the Dusky Plume, with only five county records. The latest was in a light trap at Sharnbrook on 21st July, the same site as the first record of the species on 22nd September 1973 (both DVM). The other records of this species come from Barton Hills on 11th August 2007 (AMB & MGB det. DVM), DENR on 2nd August 2009 where two were netted amongst the foodplant Common Fleabane *Pulicaria dysenterica*, (AMB & MGB), and Upper Caldecote on 19th July 2015 (MB).

Choreutidae

48.002 *Prochoreutis myllerana* (Fabricius) [Nb] [388]

A worn male of this species was netted from around the pond-dipping platform at Flitton Moor on 30th July (SRP gendet AMB). On returning to the site the following day AMB & MGB found the foodplant – Skullcap *Scutellaria galericulata* – and a pristine female was swept from it (leg. & gendet AMB). The only previous records of the species in the county come from Felmersham GP on 4th September 1985 and at Sharnbrook on 5th August 1991 (both leg. & gendet DVM).

This species and *Psehestediana* are extremely similar as adults and can only reliably be separated by gendet. The acid mire area at Cooper's Hill was also visited on 31st July by AMB & MGB and signs of larval feeding were found on Skullcap, though no larvae or pupae were found. This will be investigated further in 2017.

Tortricidae

49.134 *Cochylis roseana* (Haworth) [962]

Although there are now 41 records of this species in the county database, 2016's records were the first for ten years. These were from a light trap at Houghton Regis on 21st July and Sandy Smith NR,

near Chicksands, on 26th July (both TM). Despite the paucity of recent records the foodplant, Teasel *Dipsacus fullonum* is common.

49.202 *Ancylis uncella* ([Denis & Schiffermüller]) [1118]

The only known site for this heathland species in the county is The Lodge (RSPB Sandy). Following on from the first county record in 2014, it has been caught in 2015 and 2016, with an amazing 27 on 20th May (DGr).

49.284 *Epiblema sticticana* (Fabricius) [1186]

With only five previous records, it was good to get two in 2016. These came from Sandhouse Lane NR on 6th July (TM conf. AMB) and Broom GP on 24th July (MB det. DVM). It had not been seen since one at Hockliffe on 18th July 2003 (CRBB).

49.299 *Pseudococcyx posticana* (Zetterstedt) [Nb] [1208]

Four years on from the first county record, it was good to get another record of this Scots Pine *Pinus sylvestris* feeder. This was in a garden light trap at Biggleswade (LRB det. DVM).

49.330 *Cydia conicolana* (Heylaerts) [Nb] [1269]

Both records of this were females identified by gendet. The first was in a garden light trap at Bromham on 11th June (MaH & MiH gendet AMB) and was a new county record. The second was beaten from planted Pines *Pinus* sp. at Wigmore Valley Park, Luton, on 1st July (TB gendet HB conf. CWP & AMB). The larva bores into young pine cones and feeds internally on the seeds.

49.335 *Cydia strobilella* (Linnaeus) [Nb] [1254]

Following on from the 2013 record, which was the first since VCH there were two records in 2016, both in garden light traps – Lower Stondon on 9th May (AMB & MGB gendet AMB) and Luton on 19th May (AG gendet AMB). Both were males.

Pyralidae

62.021 *Oncocera semirubella* (Scopoli) [Nb] [1441]

This very attractive micro was found in a garden light tap in Clophill on 6th September (RC conf. AMB & MGB), the fifth county record. The first was trapped in 2006 on 24th July at Studham (CRBB); it has subsequently been recorded at Toddington in 2013, and Biggleswade and Luton in 2014.

Crambidae

63.048 *Palpita vitrealis* (Rossi) [1408]

Following on from the first two county records in 2014, this large, migrant pyralid was recorded at Luton on 5th November 2015 (AG), Clophill on 22nd August 2015 (RC) and finally Upper Caldecote on 12th September 2016 (MB).

Migrant records are forwarded to the appropriate editor for inclusion in the Immigration of Lepidoptera to the British Isles Report for the *Entomologists Record and Journal of Variation*.

All records are held by the Bedfordshire and Luton Biodiversity Recording and Monitoring Centre and updated regularly. In addition the dataset is forwarded to the National Moth Recording Scheme annually, as in 2016 this started accepting micro moth records.

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Andy and Melissa Banthorpe are now the Society's joint Recorders for all Moths, a position they hold in an honorary capacity, having taken on the Micros as well in spring 2016.