

Micro-moths 2017

Andy & Melissa Banthorpe

Introduction

A total of 11 new species were added to the county list during the year: *Adela cuprella*, *Triaxomasia caprimulgella*, *Phyllonorycter comparella*, *Ocnerostoma friesei*, *Depressaria pimpinellae*, *Mirificarma lentiginosella*, *Tuta absoluta*, *Coleophora conspicuella*, *Phtheochroa schreibersiana*, *Pammene trauniana* and *Elegia similella*. Full details of these can be found in the accounts below.

Review

The following list includes species of interest recorded in VC30 during 2017. Most of the species analysis is based on the 9,914 records for 2017 that had been uploaded to the county database by mid-April 2017. This also includes 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**4.012 *Stigmella aceris* (Frey) [pRDB2] [102]**

Leafmines of this species were found in many parts of the county this year, particularly in the centre and south. Concerted recording work, targeting tetrads, was carried out, which resulted in an amazing 243 records, compared with only 27 in previous years following on the first record at Leighton Buzzard in 2009. An article was published (Banthorpe 2018) describing this sudden expansion and putting it into context by also covering Hertfordshire (VC20), Middlesex (VC21) and Huntingdonshire (VC31), and including a map of the current known distribution across the four Vice-counties.

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

On 30th September at Old Warden Tunnel NR a tenanted leafmine of this species was found in Common Agrimony *Agrimonia eupatoria* (AMB).

4.072 *Bohemannia quadrimaculella* (Boheman) [Nb] [19]

One in a light trap on 19th June at Upper Caldecote (MB, conf DVM by gendet) was the second county record, following one at Flitwick Moor in 2015.

4.083 *Ectoedemia hannoverella* (Glitz) [pRDB3] [24a]

Leafmines found in Black Poplar hybrids *Populus x canadensis* on 29th September at Stanford Wood (MGB) and on 13th October at Sandy (AMB & MGB) were the first in the county since 2010. Both were new sites.

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

A new site was found for this species when at least 30 leafmines were found on 26th October in fallen leaves below Grey Poplars *Populus x canescens* near to the river Ivel at Astwick (AMB).

Adelidae**7.007 *Adela cuprella* ([Denis & Schiffermüller]) [149]**

Adults seen and photographed flying around male catkins at the tops of Sallow *Salix* trees on 27th March and 9th April in Potton Wood (JC & JS) were new to county.

Tineidae**12.006 *Infurcitinea argentimaculella* (Stainton) [203]**

A larval feeding tube was found on 21st September at Stanford Wood (AMB), which was another new site for the species.

12.019 *Nemapogon ruricolella* (Stainton) [Nb] [219]

A single male to light on 19th June in Home Wood, Northill, (LRB, MB & BS, gendet AMB) was the fifth county record. The first county record was from 25th June 1992 in Cockayne Hatley Wood (DVM). This was followed by a singleton attracted to a VES clearwing lure in Dedmansey Wood on 10th July 2011 (CRBB), and singletons in the Cockayne Hatley RIS trap in 2014 and 2015 (IPW, gendet DVM).

12.023 *Triaxomasia caprimulgella* (Stainton) [pRDB1] [226]

A single male in a light trap on 13th June at Biggleswade (LRB, gendet AMB) was new to county.

12.026 *Tineola bisselliella* (Hummel) [236]

A female of this species found indoors on 29th January in Toddington (JP, gendet AMB), and a further specimen in a light trap on 15th July at Biggleswade (LRB, gendet DVM) were the first recorded in the county since 2008.

12.048 *Psychoides filicivora* (Meyrick) [200]

A singleton to MV light on 14th August at Studham (CRBB, det. AMB) was only the fourth county record.

Bucculatricidae

14.006 *Bucculatrix frangutella* (Goeze) [270]

This species was only added to the county list in 2015, from leafmines found at Pegsdon Hills (MGB). It was therefore very pleasing to find leafmines in Purging Buckthorn *Rhamnus cathartica* at four new locations in 2017: Etonbury Wood (four mines), Henlow Bridge Lakes (19 mines) and Wilbury Hill copse (over 100 mines) on 12th October (AMB), and in a hedgerow just south of Lower Stondon on 14th October (AMB & MGB).

Gracillariidae

15.007 *Caloptilia azaleella* (Brants) [285]

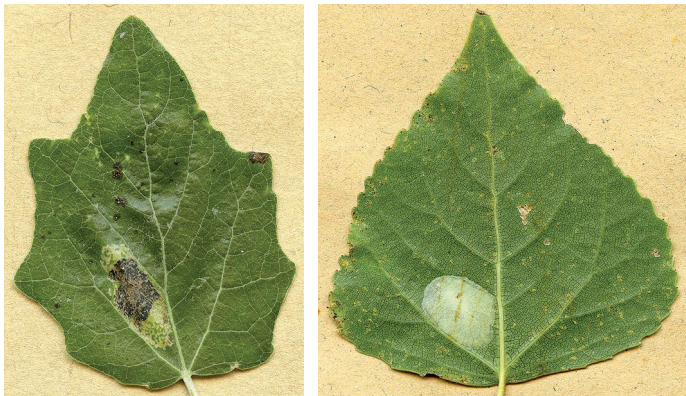
Since the first county record of an adult in a light trap on 9th August 2009 at Lower Stondon (AMB & MGB, det DVM), no further records had been received of this species until 2017 when leafmines were found in *Azalea* in Woburn Abbey Gardens on 23rd April (BH).

15.045 *Phyllonorycter mespilella* (Hübner) [Nb] [325]

A leafmine of this species was found in Conference Pear *Pyrus communis* on 9th October at Upper Caldecote (MB). This was the second county record, which was from the same location as the first in 2013.

15.026 *Phyllonorycter strigulatella* (Lienig & Zeller) [344]

Three leafmines of this species were found in Grey Alder *Alnus incana* on 19th August at Jordans Mill, Broom (AMB). There are two previous records in the county: 18th October 2004 Eaton Ford (DVM) and 10th December 2005 also at Jordans (J.E.Childs, det. DVM).



Phyllonorycter comparella in Grey Poplar and Black Poplar hybrid leaves
Andy Banthorpe

15.087 *Phyllonorycter comparella* (Duponchel) [Na] [365]

This species was an addition to the county list in 2017. Leafmines of this moth were found in Grey Poplar *Populus x canescens* on 19th August at Jordans Mill (MGB, conf AMB). Subsequently, leafmines were found in Black Poplar hybrids *Populus x canadensis* on 21st September at Stanford Wood (AMB) and in White Poplar *Populus alba* on 22nd October at Sharnbrook (DVM).

Yponomeutidae**16.024 *Ocnerostoma friesei* Svensson [445]**

A very small, silver-grey micro in a light trap on 30th March in Lower Stondon turned out on gendet to be a male of this species and new to the county (AMB & MGB, gendet AMB). The larvae of this and the almost identical *O.piniariella* mine the tips of the needles of Scots Pine *Pinus sylvestris*.

Depressariidae**32.037 *Depressaria pimpinellae* Zeller [Na] [673]**

A male of this species found on 13th August in the Eaton Bray II RIS trap (GBu, gendet DVM) was new to the county. The larvae feed in a silken spinning on Burnet-saxifrage *Pimpinella saxifraga* and Greater Burnet-saxifrage *P.major*.

32.039 *Depressaria daucella* ([Denis & Schiffermüller]) [670]

This species turned up on 10th March in a light trap at Houghton Regis (TM, gendet AMB). This was the only record since the species was mentioned (as *Depressaria nervosa* sensu auctt. nec Haworth) at Bedford in the Victoria County History (VCH) of Bedfordshire, published in 1904.

Gelechiidae**35.0191 *Anarsia innoxiiella* Gregersen & Karsholt [857a]**

This species, and its very recent description as new to science, was discussed in the 2016 report. There were three further records in 2017: 13th June Biggleswade (LRB); 19th June Home Wood (LRB, MB & BS); and 1st July Biggleswade (different site) (PM). The provisional distributions in the UK of this species and *A.lineatella* have been published (Palmer 2017). The vast majority of wild caught moths of these two species have been *innoxiiella*, with *lineatella* mostly being bred from imported fruit.

35.065 *Monochroa cytisella* (Curtis) [728]

An adult came to MV light on 7th July at Woburn Safari Park (AMB & MGB). The species has still only been recorded at this site and Cooper's Hill, Ampthill.

35.092 *Mirificarma lentiginosella* (Zeller) [Na] [793]

This was a new addition to the county list, when three males came to actinic light on 12th August at Waterloo Thorns (DLB inc. gendets). The larvae feed on Dyer's Greenweed *Genista tinctoria*, which is present at the site.

35.101 *Gelechia soroculella* (Hübner) [802a]

A specimen of this species came to light on 19th June in Home Wood (LRB, MB & BS, conf AMB). It was the fifth record for the county, and the first since 1996 when one was recorded in the Cockayne Hatley RIS trap.

35.127 *Tuta absoluta* (Meyrick) [825a]

A small micro with an appearance similar to a *Scrobipalpa* sp. came to a light trap on 27th July in Biggleswade (LRB). After dissection by DVM it was identified by AMB as this species, an adventive fairly new to the UK and an addition to the county list. The first British record was reared from Tomato *Solanum lycopersicum* in Cheltenham in 2009, and it is a known pest of Tomato crops in Spain and elsewhere in southern Europe with its origins in South America.

35.150 *Carpatolechia notatella* (Hübner) [768]

A female came to light on 19th June at Home Wood (LRB, MB & BS, gendet AMB). It was the third county record, following singletons in 1982 at Sutton Fen (T.Hollingworth) and in 2013 in the Cockayne Hatley RIS trap (IPW, gendet DVM).

Coleophoridae

37.058 *Coleophora conspicuella* Zeller [pRDB2] [539]

The first county record of this came from a light trap on 13th July in Biggleswade (LRB, gendet DVM). This is a very uncommon species, the larvae of which feed in a case on Common Knapweed *Centaurea nigra*. In addition to Bedfordshire, it is currently known from East Sussex, both Essex Vice-counties, both Kent Vice-counties, Middlesex and Surrey.

37.074 *Coleophora taeniipennella* Herrich-Schäffer [581]

On 1st July six larval cases were found on *Juncus* sp. in a Lower Stondon garden, with a female light trapped the same day (AMB & MGB, adult gendet AMB). These were the first records for 11 years; there are 12 previous records for VC30, seven of which come from the Cockayne Hatley RIS trap.

37.103 *Coleophora follicularis* Vallot [555]

The third county record of this species, a male, came to MV light on 16th June at Duck End NR (AMB & MGB, gendet AMB). The other two records relate to one on 15th July 1984 found in Bedford (T.Hollingworth), and a case found on Fleabane on 10th May 2014 at Marston Vale Country Park (AMB & MGB). The larvae of this species feed on Hemp Agrimony *Eupatoria cannabinum* and Fleabane *Pulicaria dysenterica*.

Momphidae

40.006 *Mompha jurassicella* (Frey) [Na] [890]

With only two previous records in the county – in 2009 and 2012 – it was good to have three in 2017. These were from light traps on 9th March and 28th September at Kempston (HJG, gendet AMB) and on 30th March at Wootton (PCo, gendet AMB).

Epermeniidae

47.002 *Phaulernis dentella* (Zeller) [Na] [477]

One in a light trap on 1st June at Biggleswade (LRB) was the first in the county since one at The Lodge (RSPB Sandy) on 11th August 2007. It was also the fifth record for the county.

Choreutidae

48.003 *Prochoreutis sehestediana* (Fabricius) [Nb] [387]

Having failed to find this species at Coopers Hill in 2016, it was good to find evidence of active larval feeding on Skullcap *Scutellaria galericulata* around the acid mire on 1st May (AMB). From collected leaves that had been folded and fixed with silk, a female emerged on 15th May (leg. & gendet AMB). A further search on 13th July resulted in one adult female and another larva that

emerged as a third female on 21st July (AMB & MGB, gendet AMB). The only previous record of this species in the county was at the same site on 14th August 1992 (DVM).

Tortricidae

49.055 *Cnephasia communana* (Herrich-Schäffer) [1018]

A surprise amongst various micro-moths handed over for gendet was a female of this species, only the second county record. It was in a light trap on 22nd May at Wootton (PCo). The other record – also a female – on 4th June 2004 was in the Cockayne Hatley RIS trap (IPW, gendet DVM).

49.058 *Spatalistic bifasciana* (Hübner) [1034]

Following on from three netted at dusk in a Biggleswade garden in 2015, one came to light on 19th June in Home Wood (LRB, MB & BS).

49.093 *Phtheochroa schreibersiana* (Frölich) [pRDB1] [922]

One in a light trap on 2nd June at Wootton (PCo, det BS from photo) was a complete surprise and a new addition to the county list. This was formerly a local species in the UK but thought to be extinct until a record from Buckinghamshire in 2010. There were at least three other records in the UK in 2017.

49.094 *Phtheochroa sodaliana* (Haworth) [Nb] [923]

Following records in 2008 and 2014, the third county record came from a light trap on 21st June at Upper Caldecote (MB). The larvae feed in the ripening fruits of Purging Buckthorn *Rhamnus cathartica*.

49.184 *Lobesia reliquana* (Hübner) [1106]

One in a light trap on 31st May in Kempston (HJG, det AMB) was only the third county record. Previous records come from the VCH and to MV light on 26th May 2012 in King's Wood Heath & Reach (AMB & MGB).

49.187 *Endothenia oblongana* (Haworth) [1098]

The second county record came to MV light on 2nd July in Bedford (BH). The moth was set and the identification was clear from this.

49.191 *Endothenia nigricostana* (Haworth) [1102]

One on 19th June at Home wood (LRB, MB & BS) was only the fifth in the county, and the first since 2008.

49.221 *Rhopobota stagnana* ([Denis & Schiffermüller]) [Nb] [1161]

A female to actinic light on 17th July in Lower Stondon (AMB & MGB, gendet AMB) was only the third record for the county. The first was on 24th July 2010 at Eaton Ford (A.A.Lawrence), followed by five to MV light on 20th May 2014 at Barton Hills (AMB & MGB, det DVM).

49.319 *Dichrorampha flavidorsana* (Knaggs) [Nb] [1275]

Dichrorampha species can be hard to separate, and despite this species being one with a yellow dorsal blotch it is very similar to *D.alpinana*. One trapped on 14th July at Biggleswade (LRB) turned out, on dissection, to be the rarer of the two whose larvae feed in the roots of Tansy *Tanacetum vulgare*. It is the fourth record for the county following two records in 2012 from a Bedford garden (KB, gendet DVM) and one in 1988 in another Bedford garden (W.Champkin, gendet DVM).

49.348 *Grapholita pallifrontana* Zeller [pRDB3] [1243]

A request to carry out a survey of this species in the UK in 2017 was sent out by Mark Parsons at Butterfly Conservation. Diligent searching of known sites combined with surveying other sites where the foodplant occurs resulted in 11 records from six sites. Three were new sites – a hedgerow by Old Warden Tunnel NR on 3rd June (KB), Upper Sundon Chalk Quarry on 10th June (AMB) and a hedgerow south of Lower Stondon on 10th June (AMB & MGB). More sites will be checked in 2018.

49.356 *Grapholita lobarzewskii* (Nowicki) [Na] [1249]

This species seems to be on the increase in southern Britain, and was only added to the county list in 2015. It was good therefore to add three more records in 2017: 14th and 18th June Luton (AG, gendet AMB) and 16th June Biggleswade (LRB).

49.362 *Pammene giganteana* (Peyerimhoff) [Nb] [1227]

One trapped on 29th March at Home Wood (LRB & MB) was not retained but good photographs were taken. This enabled the identification to be confirmed. It is the first modern record; the only other mention we have of it in the county is in the VCH. The larvae feed within spongy oak galls like oak-apples.

49.374 *Pammene trauniana* ([Denis & Schiffermüller]) [Na] [1235]

A female netted on 7th May at Waterloo Thorns (leg. & gendet DLB) was the first county record of this scarce moth.

49.382 *Strophedra nitidana* (Fabricius) [1222]

A male to MV light on 7th July at Woburn Safari Park (AMB & MGB, gendet AMB) was only the fourth for county, following one on 10th May 2015 at Flitwick Moor (AMB & MGB, gendet DVM). The original two records were both in 1987 from West Wood (DVM).

Pyralidae

62.010 *Elegia similella* (Zincken) [Nb] [1449]

One on 19th June at Home Wood (LRB, MB & BS) was the first county record.



Elegia similella was a new addition to the county list in June

Ben Sale

Crambidae**63.046 *Duponchelia fovealis* Zeller [1403a]**

Following on from the first county record in 2010, this pyralid was recorded on 30th September 2011 at Toddington (JP), on 7th June 2013 at Leighton Buzzard (AW), and finally on 13th October 2017 at Upper Caldecote (MB).

63.054 *Cydalima perspectalis* Box-tree Moth (Walker) [1409a]

The first county record of this was back in 2013, and in 2017 two more turned up. These were on 23rd October at Potton (WG) and on 24th October at Markyate (DG). The larvae can be very conspicuous and it is worth checking Box *Buxus* for spinings.

63.085 *Crambus pratella* (Linneaus) [Nb] [1300]

One on 17th July at Sharnbrook (DVM) was the first since a singleton on 5th June 2004 at Eaton Ford (A.A.Lawrence).

63.122 *Donacaula mucronella* ([Denis & Schiffermüller]) [Nb] [1330]

This is by far the scarcer of a pair of reed-feeding pyralids, the other being *D.forficella*. A singleton on 9th July at Sharnbrook (DVM) was the first since one on 29th June 2013 at Eaton Ford (A.A.Lawrence, gendet K.Royles). The only other record was in 1982 from Flitwick Moor (T.Hollingworth).

Migrant records are forwarded to the appropriate editor for inclusion in the Immigration of Lepidoptera to the British Isles Report for the *Entomologist's 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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Melissa and Andy Banthorpe are the Society's joint Recorders for all Moths, a position they have held in an honorary capacity since 2016.