

Birmingham
Natural History
Society

Founded 1858

Registered Charity No 500819

President: Mr Bryan Wood

Internet address: <http://freespace.virgin.net/clare.h/bnhs.htm>

NEWSLETTER No 100 – February 2013

Lecture Programme 2013

Friends Meeting House, Selly Oak, starting at 7.30 pm

15 March 2013

Mike Slater - Trends in the landscape conservation of butterflies

19 April 2013

AGM followed by:

Dr Peter Jarvis – From porcupines to big cats: escaped mammals in the British countryside

Field Visit

Sunday 7 July 2013: Visit to **Park Hall Nature Reserve**. Joint meeting with Sutton Coldfield Natural History Society, who have made the arrangements. We will be taken round the reserve by the Birmingham and Black Country Wildlife Trust Reserves Officer, Chris Wishart. Meet at 11am opposite Park Hall Academy, Water Orton Road, Castle Bromwich, Birmingham, B36 9HF (map ref. OS128: SP16109055).

Park Hall is a large area of remnant farmland and estate grounds on the eastern edge of Birmingham, lying in the valley of the River Tame between Castle Vale and Castle Bromwich. The scarp slope along the south of the reserve has three ancient woodlands, while the grassland below contains various wetland habitats which follow the old line of the River Tame. The reserve also includes about a mile of the River Tame itself.



As spring turns to summer the grasslands and wetlands come into their own, with colourful floral displays of stitchworts, buttercups and meadowsweet, while the air is filled with butterflies and dragonflies. Summer breeding birds include reed bunting, kingfisher, teal, mute swan and buzzard, while in the evenings bats forage on moths and other insects. Increasingly the wetlands are being visited by wading birds such as lapwing and snipe, and herons regularly fish in the pools.

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To contact the Hon Secretary or to provide copy for the next Newsletter:

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SAVE paper, printing and postage costs: could members let me know if they would be happy to receive the Newsletter by email.

Moth identification training courses

Moth identification training courses will be run by Dave Grundy in 2013. They should help improve your identification skills whether you are a beginner or more advanced in your moth skills. He is taking bookings now - so please can people book directly, preferably via email.

Dave Grundy, DGCountryside, 5 Melrose Avenue, Woodfield Road, Sparkbrook, Birmingham B12 8TG.

Tel: 0121-446-5446

Email: dgcountryside@btinternet.com

Website: www.gardenmoths.org.uk

16 June: Sunday (T1) – Moths of Fenns & Whixall Mosses, Shropshire / Denbighshire – Moth identification training course for people of all abilities from beginner to much more advanced. This course is aimed at people who want to learn more about the speciality lowland raised bog species of this exceptional wilderness site. The course will be held at Fenns & Whixall Moss NNR classroom next to the Natural England HQ at Manor House, Moss Lane, Whixall, Shropshire, SY13 2PD (grid ref SJ505365). 10am to 4pm, with a chance to examine the speciality mossland species caught on the reserve, from the night before. - Maximum of 15 participants – booking essential. (Silvery Arches, Oblique Carpet, Small Seraphim, Grass Wave, Light Knotgrass and *Ancylis tineana* might be among moths seen on this course if weather conditions are good).

18 June: Tuesday (T2) – Woodland Moths - Moth identification training course for people of all abilities from beginner to much more advanced. We will be looking at woodland species caught the night before. Woodland is usually the best habitat for seeing the greatest diversity of moths in all weather conditions. At Severn Valley Country Park Visitor Centre, Alveley, Shropshire, (grid ref SO754840) from 10am to 4pm. - Maximum of 15 participants – booking essential. (Blomers Rivulet, Scorched Wing and *Spatalistic bifasciana* might be among moths seen on this course if weather conditions are good).

31 July: Wednesday (T3) – Wetland Moths - Moth identification training course for people of all abilities from beginner to much more advanced. We will be looking at wetland species caught the night before. Upton Warren is believed to be one of the best wetland sites for moths in the Midlands. At Wychbold Club (Formerly British Legion), De Wyche Road, Wychbold, Droitwich, Worcestershire, WR9 7PN (grid ref SO922658) from 10am to 4pm. - Maximum of 15 participants – booking essential. (Bulrush, Brown-veined, Southern and Obscure Wainscot, Double Lobed, Crescent and *Calamotropha paludella* might be among moths seen on this course if weather conditions are good).



August 12th, Monday (T4) – Micro-moths Identification – Moth identification training course for people who have some knowledge of macro-moths, but want to look further at micro-moths. This course will introduce micro-moths to beginners at looking at this group and also to expand knowledge of more advanced micro-moth surveyors, looking at micro-moths caught the night before at Haugh Wood. At Woolhope Village Hall, near Haugh Wood, Herefordshire, HR1 4QS (grid ref SO611356) from 10am to 4pm. - Maximum of 15 participants – booking essential. (At this time of year, there should be a great variety of micro-moths to study from this excellent ancient woodland site)

September 16th, Monday (T5) – Leaf-miner Moths – Leaf-mining moth identification training course that will introduce leaf-miners to beginners at looking at this group and also expand knowledge of more advanced leaf-mine moth surveyors. There will be some time spent outdoors looking for leaves during this course. At Woolhope Village Hall, near Haugh Wood, Herefordshire, HR1 4QS (grid ref SO611356) from 10am to 4pm. - Maximum of 15 participants – booking essential. (This is the peak time of year for seeing leaf-mines created by micro-moths from this excellent ancient woodland site – at least 20 species should be recorded and these will also be species not usually recorded in moth traps.) This course can be attended as a stand-alone course looking at leaf-mines, but it also makes the perfect part 2 of looking at micro-moths and following straight on from attending the micro-moths identification course at the same venue on August 12th (T4).

You need to book in advance for all courses – please don't just turn up on the day!

Please bring a packed lunch for all courses. Training course places will be offered to applicants who apply first. Trainees can book for just one course, several courses or the whole programme of courses. Trainees that book for all or most of the courses should come out of the programme with a good grounding in moth identification and be able to adequately trap and identify most moths on any site unaided.

Training courses will all be classroom based, but with some examination of live moth specimens (that were trapped the night before). If in doubt as to which course might suit you best, then get in touch with Dave for advice for you.

The 2013 Training Course programme is unfortunately not sponsored (due to environmental spending cuts) and therefore places for participants will need to be charged for all dates. The rate for people attending courses is at £25 per day. Firm bookings for courses will only be accepted on receipt of a cheque for £25 per person per day. Refund of cheques will only be possible if four weeks of notice is given of your cancellation for an event. Please make cheques payable to D. Grundy. If trainees wish to purchase a moth trap or other moth-ing equipment, then this will be possible on the course if they contact Dave before the event.

To find out more about the moth identification courses Dave is running for the Field Studies Council, check out their website at <http://www.field-studies-council.org> and look up the Biodiversity Fellowship initiative. This is a new scheme partially funded by DEFRA to encourage voluntary recorders to study more obscure wildlife groups such as lichens and beetles, but also including Micro-moths. One-day courses are free and some places on residential courses are at a reduced fee.