

Barberry was discovered to be a secondary host of the Wheat-rust fungus *Puccinia graminis*. Barberry eradication was being recommended by the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries (MAFF) at least as recently as the 1970s and I have seen that it still takes place, even though the modern strains of Wheat now grown are rust-resistant. By 1987, only one population of the Barberry Carpet Moth was known to survive in England and this was lost in the 1990s as a result of scorching of the occupied bushes by a fire in an adjacent field of stubble. Further information on this moth and its conservation is provided in the selected references below and in a series of confidential reports to English Nature.

The establishment project in Lincolnshire is part of a species recovery programme which has been funded by English Nature and is in partnership with the Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust. I am now continuing the Lincolnshire part of the project with support from Writtle College, Essex.— PAUL WARING, Reader, Centre for Environment & Rural Affairs, Writtle College, Essex. Contact address: Windmill View, 1366 Lincoln Road, Werrington, Peterborough, PE4 6 LS (E-mail: paul\_waring@btinternet.com).

### **A weekend's mothing on Alderney**

From 14-16 May 2004 Dr Phil Sterling joined my wife Pat and me as guests of Dr Struan Robertson on Alderney. Our visit coincided with the Alderney Wildlife Trust's Wildlife Weekend and we were able to join in some of their events, notably the evening bat walks lead by Struan and a boat trip to see the offshore Gannet colonies. Alderney is the third largest of the Channel Islands and the most northerly. It is also the closest to France; the Normandy coast, some eight miles away, can often be seen clearly. Indeed, on several occasions during our visit, the enormous nuclear waste reprocessing plant at Cap de la Hague was glimpsed glinting alarmingly in the late spring sunshine.

Although the island is small, about 3½ miles long by 1½ miles wide and covering under 2000 acres, there is a variety of habitats including rocky shores, sandy beaches and dunes, wetland, nutrient-poor grassland and heathland. Even though the island has sometimes been described as being treeless – as long ago as 1862 Ansted and Latham in *The Channel Islands* held that “Alderney and Sark are very badly provided with trees” - this was not our impression (nor of Sark). Certainly this view might still be gained today when approaching the island by air, but the valleys and a number of other areas are wooded, although there appeared to be few trees older than 60 years as large numbers were felled for fuel by the German occupying forces during the latter part of World War II. Ash *Fraxinus excelsior*, Sloe *Prunus spinosa* and *domestica*, Grey Willow *Salix cinerea* ssp. *cinerea* and some short-lived Elm *Ulmus* spp. suckers are present, but Sycamore *Acer pseudoplatanus* is by far the most common species. But if the island does not completely want for trees, it does lack hedgerows, and this deficit is a relic of a strip agriculture and communal rough grazing system, which was employed well into the last century.

In preparation for our visit, a search of the literature revealed that nothing has been published on the Lepidoptera of Alderney, certainly in the journals available to



us, since the Guernsey naturalist Luff published a series of five papers in the years from 1874 to 1903. However, Rich Austin, the Guernsey Moth Recorder, was able to provide us with a list of 229 macrolepidoptera and 108 microlepidoptera species made up mainly of his own observations and those of visitors whose records had been passed to him, and to this we were able to add a further 18 species.

Actinic light traps were run at two sites. In Struan's garden in St. Anne we took the Scarce Chocolate-tip *Clostera anachoreta* which has been the subject of a separate note in this journal (*antea*. 222). In a wooded area near Longis Common we were pleased to find the Early Tooth-striped *Trichopteryx carpinata* which has been recorded from La Manche, Normandy, although not from the area closest to Alderney. This is a new vice-county record. In the same area the galls of *Monochroa cytisella* were noted on Bracken *Pteridium aquilinum* and larvae collected from a White Poplar *Populus alba* proved on rearing to be those of *Gypsonoma aceriana*.

Also in St. Anne, we found three case-bearing species all of which are new to the island: at our host's house, larvae and adults of the Common Clothes Moth *Tineola bisselliella* were noted in and around a piece of discarded carpet. At the cricket ground at Les Buttes, during a barbecue, the cases of *Bankesia conspurcatella* were found in great numbers on fences posts just below the level of the grass, a habitat quite different from those in which we have found the moth on Guernsey and Sark (Costen, 2003, *Ent. Rec.* **115**: 224-225; Sterling & Costen, in press, *Ent. Gazette*). On several algae-covered walls Phil found many cases of *Luffia ferchautella* which is of particular interest as only *Luffia lapidella* had been recorded previously from the Channel Islands. The cases were notably smaller than those of *lapidella* and from the several he collected only females emerged but then, in September, hundreds of tiny larvae with minuscule cases were seen crawling around the pot in which the females were being kept. In the absence of any males these must have developed parthogenetically, hence their identification as *ferchautella*.

The extent of coastal heathland, about 400 acres, mostly concentrated to the south-west of this small island, surprised us. We noted the beautiful Spotted Rock-rose *Tuberaria guttata* in large numbers, and the Greater Broomrape *Orobanche rapum-genistae*, which is parasitic on Prostrate Broom *Cytisus scoparius maritimus*, was also surprisingly frequent. Some of the moths found there, although new to the island list, were not unexpected, for example, *Pempelia palumbella* and *Eudonia angustea*, but another pyralid, *Mecyna asinalis*, was remarkable because its foodplant, Wild Madder *Rubia peregrina*, is very rare on Alderney. However, the one known stand of the plant showed the typical signs of *asinalis* feeding and Phil found a larva although, unfortunately, I failed to rear it through to the adult stage. Interestingly, there are three reliable recent records of this moth from Guernsey where Wild Madder was last recorded in 1870.

Further to the west, at La Giffoine, a search of the Prostrate Broom produced larvae of three species which were all reared through to the adult stage: *Agonopterix scopariella*, *Agonopterix nervosa* and *Mirificarma mulinella*.

At Saye Bay, on the north of the island, a search of the Sea-holly *Eryngium maritimum* specifically for larvae of *Agonopterix cnicella* was successful and the



single larva found was reared through to the adult stage. This was of special interest as several previous searches on Guernsey, and especially on Herm, had proved unsuccessful. And at Crabby Bay some old stems of Viper's-bugloss *Echium vulgare* were gathered and a month later produced a large number of *Tinagma ocnerostomella*. Both of these species are new vice-county records. At Braye Bay Phil found a larva of *Acleris aspersana* feeding on Creeping Cinqufoil *Potentilla reptans* and two adults of *Aproaerema anthyllidella*.

Finally, since Phil mentioned to me in passing several years ago that the moth I had been recording for some time in Guernsey as *Cydia succedana* was in fact not that species at all but *Cydia ulicetana*, and that *succedana* was a different species apparently not found in Britain, I have become interested in this common tortricid which is found in numbers in Guernsey wherever Gorse *Ulex europaeus* grows. A short series was collected from several parts of Alderney and on dissection all proved to be *ulicetana* as has been the case with specimens examined from Guernsey, Sark and Herm.

As always I am grateful to Phil Sterling for his support and on this occasion especially for checking a few of my *ulicetana* dissections. Struan Robertson could not have been more hospitable nor Roland Gauvain and Graeme Neal of the Alderney Wildlife Trust more helpful.— P. D. M. COSTEN, La Broderie, La Claire Mare, St. Peters, Guernsey GY7 9QA. (E-mail: pcosten@guernsey.net).

### ***Lymantria monacha* (L.) (Lep.: Lymantriidae): extension of range**

This species seems not to have been an inhabitant of north-west Kent, including what is now regarded as south-east London, for some two hundred years, excepting at Darenth Wood during the 1860s and the West Wickham area a decade earlier (Chalmers-Hunt, 1961-63. *The Butterflies and Moths of Kent. Suppl. Ent. Rec.* **74**: 58). As that author suggests, the species had a largely Wealden distribution in Kent. A hundred years later, in the mid-twentieth century, the species was again reported as present in the West Wickham area, due to a lack of published records or a recrudescence following long absence. Also, in the 1940s it was noted in the well-wooded Petts Wood neighbourhood. However, no further records appeared in Chalmers-Hunt's work, which included records until 1980.

Two male *Lymantria monacha* observed on a high wall behind a street light at Dartford on 24 August 1946 seem to be the first for this area. The location is not far from my present residence where I commenced to operate an m.v. light in 1969. However, more than fifty years were to elapse before *L. monacha* came to the light, suggesting that the 1946 specimens were vagrants from elsewhere. Two males were attracted to the light in 2002, on 28 July and 3 August. A further specimen arrived on 30 July 2003 and in 2004 two more appeared – on 20 and 25 July. This suggests the species may be established locally, probably in the neighbouring mixed woodland, indicating an extension of range as has occurred with several other species in north-west Kent for the first time, or after a very long apparent absence, such as *Hyloicus*



Costen, P. D. M. 2004. "A weekend's mothing on Alderney." *The entomologist's record and journal of variation* 116, 263–265.

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