



▲ *Petrobius maritima*, Benson's Cave, October (photo: Mark West).

## TERRESTRIAL INVERTEBRATES

The majority of these records have been extracted from the Bird Observatory/LFS Log book stored in the Marisco Tavern where those visiting Lundy have shared their findings. Some sightings were not used as the recorder left neither name nor contact information to enable us to verify them. These records are supplemented by observations submitted to iRecord by other visitors to Lundy. Additional records have been sent directly by those who left their properties on their last day and made observations but did not return to the Tavern to record them.

Not all records can be verified without descriptions or photographs and some require dissection. However, some photographed species have been shared with national or regional experts who have verified or determined them.

Unless stated, sections were compiled by Alan Rowland.

### **Nematomorpha** (Horse-hair Worms)

A terrestrial sighting on 15<sup>th</sup> October was made by Ann and Tony Taylor adjacent to the Gothic Gate into Government House. Further Nematomorpha sightings will be found in the Freshwater Invertebrates section.

### **Thysanura** (Silverfish)

Two sightings of **Silverfish** *Lepisma saccharina*, are recorded by A Rowland in the Tavern in March and Thomas Weston in The Old School in April. These are synanthropic and are to be found in domestic buildings.



▲ Garden snail, the Casbah, October (photo: Mark West).

#### Archaeognatha (Bristletails)

Mark West had a **Sea Bristletail** *Petrobius maritimus* photobomb his sighting of a harvestman in Benson's Cave on 21<sup>st</sup> October.

#### Mollusca (Slugs and Snails)

All the usual species were reported ranging from **Black Slug** *Arion ater* agg, two sightings, and a further two of seven individual **Leopard Slugs** *Limax maximus*. These are difficult to separate from Keeled Slugs so photographs would have been preferable.



**Brown-lipped Snails** *Cepaea nemoralis* featured in seven sightings of 18 individuals, but only one **White-lipped Snail** *Cepaea hortensis* was reported. Mark West recorded a large hibernaculum of 25 **Garden Snails** *Cornu aspersum* tucked snugly under the roof of the Casbah in October.

The find of the year was Mandy Dee's **Green Snail** *Ponentina subvirescens*. This is the first record since 1906 and we are indebted to Ben Rowson for his determination of it.

Further mollusc sightings can be found in the Freshwater Invertebrates section.

◀ Green snail, West Side, November (photo: Mandy Dee).

# Arachnida (Spiders, Harvestmen, Mites and Ticks)

Compiled by Mark West

## Mites

Mites are some of the smallest Arachnids, and **Red Velvet Mites** (Trombidiidae) can be found on Lundy from the Landing Bay at the south to the North Light. On warm days, these tiny invertebrates can often be seen racing around on rocks in quite large numbers. Alan and Sandra Rowland reported 50 at Barton's in June. Small and fast also means challenging to photograph in the field; however Mandy Dee achieved a great close-up shot near Castle, using a Canon EOS R6 camera with 35mm macro lens and adapter with built-in ring flash.



▲ 2mm Red Velvet Mite, near the Castle (photo: Mandy Dee).

## Spiders

While identification of some species of Arachnid can be difficult if not impossible without the use of a microscope, cameras and mobile phones are now taken for granted as important tools for the recording and study of finds. It is quite fascinating to make some comparisons of 2024 records with those from a different era, when modern technology was not available. William Bristowe's 1929 paper 'The Spiders of Lundy' was submitted to the Zoological Society of London following his week-long visit to the island during a heatwave in July 1928. His paper discusses instances of spiders poaching on each other's territory, and in 2024 an occupied tube web of a *Segestria* species was found in Millcombe with only the legs of the spider visible making identification difficult. A later review of photographs suggested that rather than *Segestria* the occupant could be an imposter, either a **Long-jawed Orbweb** *Metellina* or an **Orbweb** *Zygiella* species, a behaviour that has been observed on Cornish cliffs (many thanks to Tylan Berry for the identification assistance).



▲ *Segestria* sp. tubeweb with unidentified occupant, Millcombe (photo: Mark West).

Bristowe appears to have concentrated his searches at the north and south of the island, observing: 'Puffins breed on Lundy in countless numbers' and that at the north western slopes he shook from dry sea-pink *Harpactea hombergi*, the **Stripe Legged** or **Sneak Spider**, which Steve Evans found in the completely different setting of the Old School in June 2024. Bristowe also found amongst the rocks, *Textrix denticulata*, the **Toothed Weaver**, which was recorded in the similar habitat of a stone wall north of the village by Andy McGreeney in May 2024.



▲ Pirate Otter Spider, Pondsbury (photo: Mark West).

Interestingly Bristowe does not mention visiting Pondsbury, only that there are 'only one or two little streams on the island'. Martin Harman purchased Lundy in 1925, and an aerial photograph taken early in his ownership does not show what is now the island's largest body of water, presumably because it had not been created by means of a dam at that time. (Many thanks to Michael Williams for the photograph and information.) While searching for freshwater invertebrates during the April 2024 Field Studies Course with Alan Rowland, **Wolf Spiders**, most likely *Pardosa nigriceps* and *Pardosa pullata*, were found, along with a **Pirate Otter Spider**, *Pirata piraticus*, rafting in the margins of Pondsbury. Bristowe recorded all three species amongst the marsh-plants of the streams in 1928.

A visit in July perhaps coupled with the heatwave could explain why no **Garden Spiders**, *Araneus diadematus* were recorded in 1928. These Orbweb Spiders are most abundant in late summer/early autumn and were reported by J & J Macbeth and T. Coldwell at Widow's Tenement and the Quarries in September 2024.

Although at least one of the Quarry cottages (South End Villa) was in use in the early 1920s (Langham, 1995), it is believed the Quarries may have been out of bounds during Bristowe's visit. The Timekeeper's Hut was also in a derelict state (again many thanks Michael Williams). Having been restored in 1983 as a memorial to Felix Gade with further work in more recent years, it is now a good place for spiders! Visiting student Navid Sharifi found a **Black Laceweb Spider**, *Amaurobius ferox*, next to the fireplace, and a male, female and juvenile were recorded in April and October 2024. An impressive Drassodes species **Ground Spider** – probably *D. lapidosus* – was photographed in the corner of the hut window in April 2024 along with several **Long-jawed Orbweb Spiders**, probably *Metellina merianae*. Bristowe comments on the apparent scarcity of Drassodes on Lundy but did not believe them to be rare, hypothesising: 'The soil was dried up and cracked with the heat, and the stones were hot through and through. This would probably make life impossible for them in their usual position under stones'.

In June 2024 Steve Evans found male and female **Missing Section Orbweavers**, *Zygiella x-notata* in the Timekeeper's Hut, a species which is almost exclusively associated with human habitation and buildings. **Metellina merianae** is frequently seen in huts and bird hides, but like many spiders may be found in a wide range of locations that offer a suitable environment of climate, structure, and prey. Bristowe comments: 'Their webs are extremely common in banks, cliff-faces, on houses, amongst shrubs in caves (near the entrance), across Puffin or Rabbit-holes etc'. In 2024, *M. merianae* were also recorded at the Earthquake and in Benson's Cave.

Moving to the south of the island, there is a great entry in the 2024 log: 'Daddy long legs spider **Pholcus** in loo at Castle Cottage eating woodlouse *Porcellio scaber* for breakfast'. The Cellar Spider, *Pholcus phalangioides* is subtropical in origin and found almost exclusively in houses. When opportunities arise, woodlice and other, often larger, spiders are regularly predated. In the 1930s it was only found in the south of England but has since continued to spread northward (Oxford & Smith, 2018). Bristowe reports them to be 'very abundant in the hotel' (now gone),



▲▼ Female and male Black Laceweb Spider, *Amaurobius ferox*, Timekeeper's Hut (note white patches on the pedipalps of the male). (photo: Mark West).



▲ *Drassodes* sp. Stone Spider, probably *D. lapidosus*, Timekeeper's Hut (photo: Mark West).



▲ *Metellina* sp. Long-jawed Orb Weaver, Timekeeper's Hut

(photo: Mark West).



▲ Juvenile *Eratigena* sp. House Spider, probably *E. saeva*, Camping Field (photo: Mark West).



► *Tegenaria* sp. House Spider, Benson's Cave (photo: Mark West).

## Harvestmen

Close examination of the walls of Benson's Cave with torch and camera can yield many Arachnids and although it seems to have been previously reported as present on Lundy, *Nelima gothica*, a harvestman new to the LFS list was discovered in 2024. According to the British Arachnological Society the first British record of this species was not until 1934 on the island of Skokholm, 45 miles north west of Lundy. The finder...W.S Bristowe!

The current Lundy list of all Arachnids (157 spp.) can be found on the LFS

Website. Of those, 93 spp. were first recorded by Bristowe. As Tony Parsons commented in the 2007 LFS Annual Report: 'W. S. Bristowe was one of the major arachnologists of the 20th century.' Indeed he was and as can be seen, his very significant contribution to the understanding of spider distribution on Lundy remains of great relevance.

Spider identification can be challenging and for some genera, for example the Pardosa Wolf Spiders and Clubiona Sac Spiders, confirmation of many of the species is not possible without microscopic examination. Needless to say, good photographs of body and leg conformation, showing shape, colouration and size are helpful, particularly if taken from above, as are macro shots showing the eye arrangement if the spider stays still for long enough! As always please do keep entering records in the logbook and sending in your photographs.

## References

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▲ Harvestman *Nelima Gothica*, Benson's Cave (photo: Mark West).



▲► *Philoscia affinis*, Beach Road, April. *Philoscia affinis* showing 7<sup>th</sup> pereiopod of male (photos: Jean Young).

▲► It is only recently that this species has been separated from the much more common and ubiquitous *P. muscorum*. Reliable identification requires microscopic examination of 7<sup>th</sup> pereiopod of a male specimen which Jean supplied with her photographs.

### Isopoda (Woodlice)

Three species were reported this year: **Common Rough Woodlouse** *Porcellio scaber* at the Castle in April by MW and two sightings of **Common Shiny Woodlouse** *Oniscus asellus* – LESP in September by Macbeth and Coldwell and in the Quarries in April by Jean Young. Of great interest is the first sighting on Lundy by Jean Young of ***Philoscia affinis*** on the Beach Road in April.

There were five sightings of the diminutive **Ant Woodlouse** *Platyarthrus hoffmannseggi*

Selective turning of stones sheltering ant colonies will almost always reveal these 5mm long blind isopods with which they are closely associated. Reported by A Rowland at UESP, Bramble and St John's Valley and on the Beach Road by Jean Young in March and April.

### Myriapoda (Centipedes and Millipedes)

Jean Young reported the **Common Banded Centipede** *Lithobius Variegatus* on the West Coast in April.



▲ *Platyarthrus hoffmannseggi* (photo: Alan Rowland).



▲ Variegated centipede (photo: Janet Young).

# Orthoptera (Grasshoppers and Crickets)

compiled by Malcolm Lee



▲ Speckled Bush Cricket nymph (photo: Alan Rowland).

Just three Orthoptera reports in the log book this year, all in known locations: 28th June, **Speckled Bush-cricket** *Leptophyes punctatissima* nymph on Lower East Side Path near Tibbetts.

On 16th September a **Field Grasshopper** *Chorthippus brunneus* was reported beside Battery Steps. This was entered in the log book as Common Green Grasshopper, which has never been recorded on Lundy, but the image confirmed it was the all green variety of the Field Grasshopper, which is very similar. The third record was another Field Grasshopper by the Felix Gade letter box on 15<sup>th</sup> October.

If anyone has taken an image of a species of Orthoptera about which they are not sure, you may email it to me at [gullrockportgavenre@btinternet.com](mailto:gullrockportgavenre@btinternet.com) so I can take a look at it.

## Hemiptera/Heteroptera (True Bugs)

**Gorse Shieldbugs** *Piezodorus lituratus* were recorded in March by Alan and Sandra Rowland: 11 were counted in the Gorse at the top of Millcombe, four around Rocket Pole (food for Common Lizards?), and six along the Upper East Side Path. Paula and John Holt saw one each at Rocket Pole Pond and at the Timekeeper's Hut.



▲ Spear Thistle Lacebug (photo: Jean Young).

On the 16th and 17th April Jean Young recorded a **Spear Thistle Lacebug** *Tingis cardui* on the Upper East Side Path and around Rocket Pole Pond.

Mandy Dee found a **Masked Yarrow Aphid** *Macrosiphoniella usquertensis* at the Castle on 28th September: this is a first for Lundy and we are indebted to Omar Sanchez for identifying it.

## Coleoptera (Beetles)

### Carabidae (Ground beetles)

One sighting of two **Green Tiger beetles** *Cicindela campestris* was made by Lucy Pecosse at the Battery on the 12<sup>th</sup> May.

### Silphidae (Carion beetles)

Four **Black Sexton beetles**, *Nicrophorus humator*, were found when moth trapping by Elise O'Donnell on 15th May at the Old Light. Sam Bosanquet submitted a late record missed last year of a



▲ *Macrosiphoniella usquertensis* (photo: Mandy Dee).

**Short Sexton beetle** *Necrodes littoralis* found (heroically!) under a sheep carcass at Jenny's Cove on 18<sup>th</sup> August 2023.

#### Staphylinidae (Rove beetles)

Six **Devil's Coach Horse beetles**, *Ocypus olens*, were reported on six separate occasions by Mark West on 19<sup>th</sup> April on the West Side, on the Lower East Side Path on 17<sup>th</sup> September by J&J Macbeth and T Coldwell, at Tibbets and the Timekeeper's Hut on 15<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> October by Paula and John Holt and on the 7<sup>th</sup> November by Chris Dee at the Old Light.

On 30<sup>th</sup> April Sue Waterfield recorded a **Rove beetle**, *Staphylinus dimidiaticornis*, at the Battery.

#### Geotrupidae (Dor beetles)

Unidentified to species Dor beetles *Geotrupidae* were as usual prolific all over the island with over a hundred being reported and as many as 50 at the North End and 30 on the Upper East Side Path seen by many recorders. These are most likely to have been the **Woodland Dor Beetle** *Anoplotrupes stercorosus*. A further two definite sightings of Woodland Dor Beetles *A. stercorosus* were made by Alan and Sandra Rowland, both on the Upper East Side Path on 25<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> June

A single **Geotrupes spiniger** was seen on the Upper East Side Path on 23<sup>rd</sup> Jun by Alan & Sandra Rowland.

Single sightings of a total of 16 **Minotaur beetles**, *Typhaeus typhoeus*, were made from February to November by many recorders at all locations on the island. However, thanks to Linda Losito, we were able to identify this unusual brown morph of a Minotaur beetle found by Mark West at the Old Light on 19<sup>th</sup> April.



▲ Minotaur, unusual brown morph (photo: Mark West).



▲ Devil's Coach Horse (photo: Mark West).



▲ Staphylinus dimidiaticornis, Rove beetle, Battery (photo: Sue Waterfield).



▲ Woodland Dor Beetle (photo: Alan Rowland).



▲ Rosechafer (photo: Alan Rowland).

#### Scarbaeidae (Scarab beetles)

Eighteen sightings of 26 individual **Rosechafers** *Cetonia aurata* were recorded in widely different areas of the island from the North End, where five individuals were seen, to Millcombe and both sides of the island.

#### Elateridae (Click beetles)

A **Click beetle**, *Agrypnus murinus* was seen by Jean Young on 18<sup>th</sup> April at the Battery.

#### Cantharidae (Soldier beetles)

Common **Red Soldier beetles** *Rhagonycha fulva* were not so common this year with only two sightings by Alan and Sandra Rowland on the Upper East Side Path. Five were counted on the 25<sup>th</sup> and 23 on the 28<sup>th</sup> June.

#### Tenebrionidae (Darkling beetles)

There was only a single record of a **Sulphur beetle** *Cteniopus sulphureus* by an anonymous recorder at the Castle on the 12<sup>th</sup> July.

#### Coccinellidae (Ladybirds)

A **7-spot Ladybird** *Coccinella septempunctata* was recorded by Jean Young on 14<sup>th</sup> April on the West Side.

#### Chrysomelidae (Seed and leaf beetles)

Laura Larkin and Andrew Whitehouse of Buglife spend a few days on Lundy surveying Lundy Cabbage. A full report of their findings will be published in the LFS Journal 10. They worked the Lundy Cabbage patches in Millcombe, above the Landing Bay and along the East Side on 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> July and found six **Lundy Cabbage Flea beetles**, *Psylliodes luridipennis*.

Mark West recorded a **Ragwort or Tansy Flea beetle** *Longitarsus jacobaeae/Chrysolina graminis* at Quarry Cottages on 17<sup>th</sup> April. The two species can only be separate by genital dissection but either way, it is a new record for Lundy. Thanks to Michael Geiser for the identification.



▲ Tansy or Ragwort Flea Beetle (photo: Mark West).

P Holt recorded another sighting of the **Leaf beetle** *Chrysolina banksii* at Benjamin's Chair on 17<sup>th</sup> May, a species that is becoming more common recently.

#### Curculionidae (True Weevils)

Laura Larkin and Andrew Whitehouse found more than 25 **Lundy Cabbage Leaf Weevil** *Ceutorhynchus contractus* var. *pallipes* on the same dates and in the same areas as the Lundy Cabbage Flea Beetles noted above. Phyl England also recorded a sighting of two individuals in Millcombe on the 2<sup>nd</sup> June.

Two **Vine Weevils** *Otiorhynchus sulcatus* were recorded in Quarters on 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> March by Alan & Sandra Rowland.

## Diptera (True Flies)

Compiled by Sam Bosanquet

There was very little Diptera recording on Lundy in 2024, with just three records of three species. These were:

**St Mark's Fly** *Bibio marci*: one recorded at North Light on 14<sup>th</sup> April by JY.

**Siphona sp.** (Tachinidae): photographed on Castle Hill on 28<sup>th</sup> September by MD, but sadly not identifiable to species from the photo.

**Volucella zonaria**: this hornet mimic hoverfly was recorded on the Lower East Side Path by James and Jackie Macbeth on 17<sup>th</sup> September. Their note in the logbook was backed up by a photograph to confirm the identification. This species only colonised Britain in the 1940s and is expanding its range north-westwards at a rapid rate; this is the first Lundy sighting. The island Diptera total rises to 485 species following the addition of *V. zonaria*.



▲ *Siphona* sp., Castle Hill (photo: Mandy Dee).



▲ *Volucella zonaria*, Lower East Side path (photo: J & J Macbeth).

## Hymenoptera (Bees, Wasps & Ants)

Compiled by Sam Bosanquet

There was a notable increase in Hymenoptera records compared with the five records made in 2023, although most of the 50 records from 2024 are of common Bumblebees. There was also some confusion as to which species were involved, although **Buff-tailed Bumblebee** was clearly the commonest species and **Common Carder-bee** was seen regularly, along with three definite records of **White-tailed Bumblebee** and one of **Early Bumblebee**. There were four records of **Ruby-tailed Wasp**, although these cannot be assigned to any particular Chrysis species without detailed examination. The only really notable records made during the year were:

**Colletes hederae**: One on ivy at the Battery on 20<sup>th</sup> September (TW). This is the first Lundy record of this colony-forming **Solitary Bee**, which was first recorded in Britain in 2001 and is spreading rapidly north-westwards. It flies late in the year and gathers nectar on ivy flowers, so searching for this species on flowering ivy in Millcombe in September and October might produce more records. The lack of Honeybees on Lundy will make identifying *C. hederae* relatively easy here.

**Diastrophus rubi**: galls seen on bramble in Millcombe on 17<sup>th</sup> May (PH).

The island Hymenoptera total rises to 256 species, following the addition of *C. hederae*.



▲ Emperor Dragonfly ovipositing, Quarry Pond  
(photo: Daniel George Burbidge).



▲ Emperor Dragonfly, Quarter Wall Pond (photo: Amanda Yates).

an Emperor ovipositing in Quarry Pond on the 4<sup>th</sup> of August. This is an interesting sighting as none have been reported as ovipositing in that location in the last 10 years. It will be interesting to see if Emperors are spotted emerging from this pond in two or three year's time or if any pond surveys brings up Emperor Larvae. Emperors were also seen hawking along the main track at Tibbets Hill and along Quarries Terrace.

#### **Black-tailed Skimmer *Orthetrum cancellatum***

This first sighting was recorded on the 16<sup>th</sup> June and the last recorded sighting was 18<sup>th</sup> August, with a maximum of two seen at any one time. Of the eight records of **Black-tailed Skimmers** in the log book all occurred at Pondsbury apart from one that turned up at Quarry Pond during my surveys in June. Eleanor Hams recorded seeing a freshly emerged individual at Pondsbury on the 11<sup>th</sup> July.

#### **Unidentified Dragonflies**

There was one report of a Dragonfly at Pondsbury for the 16<sup>th</sup> August; on contacting the observer we decided it was quite possibly an Emperor. Another sighting of an unidentified Hawker was recorded anonymously as being seen along with an Emperor at Pondsbury on the 6<sup>th</sup> June.

## **Odonata (Dragonflies and Damselflies)**

*compiled by Mandy Yates*

There was a decrease in the number of Odonata species recorded on Lundy this year with only two species of Dragonfly, **Emperor** *Anax imperator* and **Black-tailed Skimmer** *Orthetrum cancellatum* identified, plus two unidentified hawkers. However both of the usual two species of Damselfly were recorded, the **Common Blue Damselfly** *Enallagma cyathigerum* and the **Blue-tailed Damselfly** *Ischnura elegans*. The summer of 2024 had more than the usual number of days of rain, cloudy conditions and cold winds and this may have had an impact on Odonata sightings this year, it certainly was the case when I went over in June to conduct Odonata surveys.

#### **Anisoptera (Dragonflies)**

##### **Emperor *Anax imperator***

The earliest record for the **Emperor** is the 2<sup>nd</sup> of June and the latest was 4<sup>th</sup> September. There were 18 records of Emperor sightings with a maximum of three being seen at any one time. Emperors were sighted near Pondsbury and Quarter Wall Ponds with one female seen laying eggs (ovipositing) in Quarter Wall Pond during my June survey and another record of ovipositing in the same pond entered in the log book anonymously as being seen on 21<sup>st</sup> July. Daniel George Burbidge photographed

an Emperor ovipositing in Quarry Pond on the 4<sup>th</sup> of August. This is an interesting sighting as

none have been reported as ovipositing in that location in the last 10 years. It will be interesting

to see if Emperors are spotted emerging from this pond in two or three year's time or if any pond

surveys brings up Emperor Larvae. Emperors were also seen hawking along the main track at

Tibbets Hill and along Quarries Terrace.

## Zygoptera (Damselflies)

Newly emerged (teneral) Damselflies  
Approximately 20 newly emerged **Common Blue/Blue-tailed Damselflies** were seen around Pondsbury on the 24<sup>th</sup> June.

### Common Blue Damselflies *Enallagma cyathigerum*

The only recording for adults of this species was of 10 Common Blue Damselflies at Pondsbury on the 18<sup>th</sup> July.

### Blue-tailed Damselflies *Ischnura elegans*

There were nine records for this species, with the first being seen between 17<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> May and the last recorded on 18<sup>th</sup> July. The maximum number seen was estimated to be between 20 and 50 individuals around Pondsbury in June. This species have been sighted at both Quarry pond and Pondsbury. I saw one pair copulating at Quarry Pond during my survey.

### Unidentified Damselflies

Two Blue Damselflies were seen at Quarry Pond on the 11<sup>th</sup> June. These were likely to be Blue-tailed Damselflies.

Records of Odonata nymphs can be found in the Freshwater Invertebrates section.

## Trichoptera (Caddisflies)

There were no reports of moth trap intruders this year, but records of caddis larvae can be found in the Freshwater Invertebrates section.

## Lepidoptera – Butterflies

compiled by Kristin Reed

Sixteen species of butterfly were seen on Lundy in 2024. Absent were Speckled Wood, Comma, Holly Blue, Wall Brown and Clouded Yellow - species that have been recorded in previous years.

The first sighting for Lundy this year was one **Small Tortoiseshell** on the 5<sup>th</sup> March followed by **Red Admiral** and a **Large White**.

**Small Heath** were abundant with a peak daily count of 60 on 19<sup>th</sup> June. **Meadow Brown** peaked at a count of 34 on 27<sup>th</sup> June.

Happily the **Grayling** colony was still present though with fewer sightings noted. One Grayling was seen on 19<sup>th</sup> July, the highest count of



▲ Blue-tailed Damselflies copulating, Quarry Pond  
(photo: Amanda Yates)..



▲ Small tortoiseshell (photo: Alan Rowland).



▲ Small Heath (photo: Alan Rowland).



▲ Painted Lady (photo: Alan Rowland).

four individuals on 14<sup>th</sup> July, and the last on 16<sup>th</sup> August. The numbers are down on last year when 13 individuals were noted on the 13<sup>th</sup> July.

As last year there was a Southern migration of **Red Admiral** on the Island. On the 6<sup>th</sup> September there was a recording of over a thousand over the Island dropping to 235 the next day.

The last sighting of the year was one **Painted Lady** on 3<sup>rd</sup> December.

## Lepidoptera – Moths

compiled by David Rowe

During 2024 a total of 96 moths (132 in 2023) were recorded on Lundy – 72 macro moths and 24 micros. This was lower than 2023 due to the poor season that affected all insect populations throughout the UK; the moth trap was also deployed on fewer occasions than usual, just nine sessions: seven by Lundy staff and twice by keen visitors. A new lithium battery has been purchased for the moth trap so it should be more reliable and productive in 2025.



▲ Fox Moth caterpillar, above Earthquake, December (photo: Gavin Rudge).

The first record for 2024 was a **Garden Tiger** *Arctia caja* caterpillar on the Upper East Side path on 14<sup>th</sup> March. The first adult reported was an **Early Grey** *Xylocampa areola* by Bramble villas. The last adult of the season was an **Olive-tree Pearl** *Palpita vitrealis* on the terrace and the last larva observed was a **Fox moth** *Macrothylacia rubi* caterpillar on New Year's Eve above the Earthquake.



▲ Six Spot Burnet Moth (photo: David Rowe).

The highlight of the year was a **Convolvulus Hawk-moth** *Agrius convolvuli* found by Heather Whittaker in the cemetery on 18<sup>th</sup> August. Another feature was the high number of Fox moth caterpillars observed throughout the year: 443 in total (compared to 154 in 2023) with 49 reported on 24<sup>th</sup> September alone. Thankfully there was at least one species of moth that thrived in our strange summer.

### Day-flying Moths

The most notable scarcity in 2024, obviously affected by the weather, were the **Burnet moths** *Zygaena* ssp. Usually in June/July they create quite a spectacle as they emerge on the fields between the church and the castle. These colourful moths are in

a group termed 'day-flying moths'. Around 15% of macro-moth species fly openly during daytime. On Lundy along with the Burnet moths, **Hummingbird Hawk-moth** *Macroglossum stellatarum*, **Emperor moth** *Saturnia pavonia*, **Silver Y** *Autographa gamma*, **Yellow Shell** *Campetogramma bilineata*, **Brown Silver-line** *Petrophora chlorosata* and **Carpet** moths among others are also seen on sunny days.

Even more numerous during the day are the micro-moths. The tiny **grass moths** *Crambus* sp. and *Agriphila* sp. scatter as one walks through long grass and on landing are disguised by aligning themselves with the stem. Another group from the same family, collectively named **Pearls**, on landing scurry to the underside of leaves, away from predators and my camera! The micro **Tortix** family are also often seen flying amongst Bramble, *Rubus fruticosus*, Gorse *Ulex* spp. and Heather *Calluna* spp. and rely on devious colour schemes such as resembling bird droppings. The Burnet moths don't need to hide, since the red spots warn predators that they produce hydrogen cyanide, which gives a bad taste and can ultimately be fatal.

### Moth Migration and the Silver Y

It is common knowledge that birds migrate, but not many people realise that some moths do too. Lundy is visited every summer by several visitors from the continent including three macros: **Dark Sword Grass** *Agrotis ipsilon*, **Silver Y** *Autographa gamma*, **Vestal** *Rhodometra sacraria* and three micros: **Diamond Back** *Plutella xylostella*, **Rufous Pearl** *Udea fulvalis* and **Rush Veneer** *Nomophila noctuella*. With most moth species it is a one-way trip, but Chapman *et al* (2012), using VLR (Vertical Looking Radar) and mark-release techniques have shown that for the Silver Y, one of Lundy's most common moths, this is not the case. In some years numbers increase up to fourfold ready for their mass migration south. Not only that, they have a magnetic compass that resets at sunset enabling them to fly in overcast conditions, so neither moon nor stars are needed for navigation. They also ascend to select the most suitable jet-stream and, providing the air flow is within 20 degrees of their desired direction,



▲ Rusty-dot Pearl (photo: David Rowe).



▲ Garden Tiger (photo: David Rowe).



▲ Grass Moth aligning itself on a stem (photo: David Rowe).



▲ Yellow Shell, Earthquake (photo: David Rowe)..



▲ Brown Silver-line (photo: David Rowe).



▲ Silver Y (photo: David Rowe).

C. Lock, Brittany Maxted, Andrea May, M&D Maye, Jackie & James MacBeth, Andy McGearey, Mac Mellier, Sam Pitt Miller, K. Morris, P and I Morton, Anna Northam, Elise and Steve O'Donnell, Joe Parker, Lucy Pecosse, Chris Pawson, Patrick Penny, Richard Penny, T&J Pyne, Paul St Pierre, S.A. Romall, Ben Rousseau, Alan and Sandra Rowland, Navid Sharif, Warren Shipman, Nigel Smith, Jane-Marie & David Stocks, Janet Streeter, Rebecca & Richard Taylor, Richard Twitchers, Sophie W., MW, Erin Waller, Sue Waterfield, Charlie Weaver, Mark West, Thomas Weston, Roger White, Daniel Whitelegge, Heather Whitaker, Tara McEvoy-Wilding, Sophie Wilkes, T Williams, Robert Wood, Mandy Yates, Jean Young, and all those anonymous people who wrote their sightings in the log book but omitted to give their names.

## Reference

Chapman, JW et al (2012) *Seasonal migration to high latitudes results in major reproductive benefits in an insect*. Proc Nat Acad Sci USA 109:14924-14929)

## 2024 Day-flying moth data from LFS Log Book Check List

Moth Species	Recorded on (Days)	First Date	Last Date	Maximum and Date	Total
6 Spot Burnet	5	16 July	30 July	10 on 18 July	25
5 Spot Burnet	2	30 July	30 July	5 on 30 July	7
Fox (Caterpillar)	58	2 April	31 December	49 on 24 Sept.	443
Emperor	6	9 May	21 May	6 on 16 May	18
Hummingbird Hawk-moth	21	28 August	23 Oct	3 on 7 October	25
Silver Y	46	12 April	31 October	30 on 9 August	136

they finely adjust their bearing to reach their destination at speeds of more than 50km/hr. This enables them to travel between 300km and 400km per night and to travel from the UK to perhaps southern Africa in a matter of days, leaving Cuckoos and Swallows well behind!

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