

# **GMS News**

## **Spring 2025**

### **Weeks 1-9**



### **Contents**

Editorial	Norman Lowe	1
Overview GMS 1st Quarter 2025	Evan Lynn	2
Spreading the Word	Angel Porteous	13
From Barren Lawn to Wildlife Haven: How I Rewilded My Garden For The Sake of Moths	Jilly Mackenzie	14
GMS Annual Conference 2025	Norman Lowe	17
Puzzle Corner	Nonconformist	18
Communications & links		19

### **Editorial**

Welcome to the first edition of GMS News 2025 covering Garden Moth Scheme records from the 9 weeks of the 1<sup>st</sup> or Spring Quarter. As always, we start with Evan's in-depth analysis of the results in which he looks at the numbers in relation to those of previous years and to the changing weather conditions. He also explores a variety of related subjects such as non-GMS species as well as taking a close look at a selected moth, in this case the Grey Shoulder-knot.

Evan puts a lot of work into his quarterly reports and sometimes I think he wonders if it's actually worthwhile. He would really like to know which bits you find interesting and wants to hear suggestions for new topics to cover. Please let me have your thoughts by emailing me at [micromoth33@gmail.com](mailto:micromoth33@gmail.com) and I'll pass them on to Evan.

I'm very pleased to see articles from two first-time contributors. Angel Porteous, describes his efforts to bring home the special nature of moths to his community. That's something I try to do and we are helped greatly by the attractiveness of the likes of the Small Elephant Hawk-moth. Though in my village the species putting itself about is the Scarlet Tiger.

Next up, Jilly Mackenzie tells us of her success in turning her garden from a green wasteland into a haven for wildlife, especially moths.

This year our Annual Conference looked at how best use can be made of the valuable dataset that has been produced by GMS. I'm asking the question, do we want in future to have an in-person Conference as we used to in those pre-covid days? Because if we do, someone will have to take on the non-trivial task of organising it.

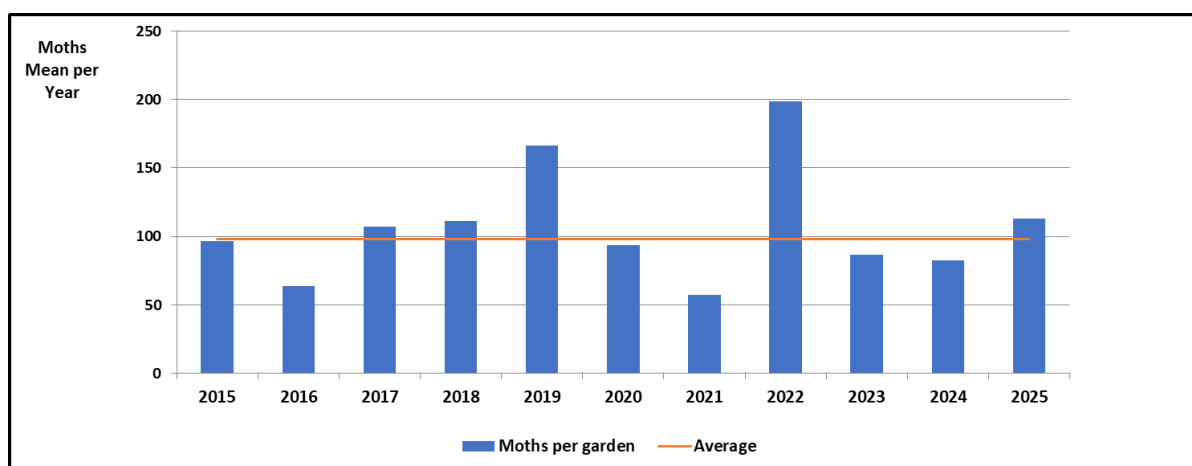
We finish with Puzzle Corner and our usual Communications and Links section.

## GMS 1st Quarter 2025

Evan Lynn

As the results filtered in from all the regions, it was readily apparent that the number of moths this quarter was substantially better than that of the last two years (fig 10). While this is gratifying, there will have to be several egg-laying seasons to build up from the past few years of dry or cold weather.

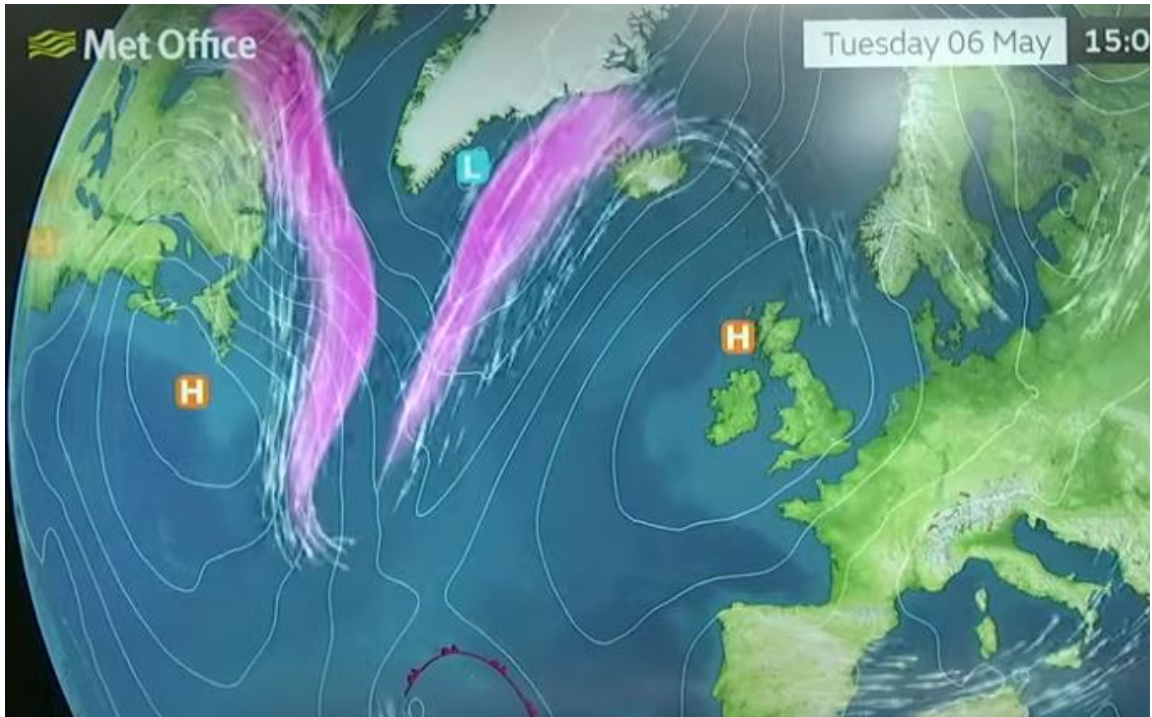
Fig 1. GMS 2025 Q1. Mean Quarterly Moth Numbers 2015 to 2025



The weather this quarter has been mainly a seesaw battle between continental high-pressure and low-pressure systems moving in from the Atlantic, trying to push through. One effect of climate change is that large areas of high pressure tend to stay in one spot longer. Such a high-pressure area is made up of cold air high up, which gradually sinks, warms, and dries, leading to stable atmospheric conditions. In contrast, the low-pressure system involves warm air rising, then cooling, which creates more unstable atmospheric conditions.

In March, the continental high-pressure system covered much of the south while low pressures from both the Atlantic and the Arctic tried to push their way through, bringing in a spell of cold northerly winds. The mean temperature for the UK was 1.3°C above average, with some regional variations above and below. Towards the end of the month, several low-pressure systems north of Scotland tried to force their way in from the Azores, giving rise to severe thunderstorms in the East of England.

April continued in the same vein, with this high pressure extending its dominance, pushing the jet stream well north of the UK as depicted here.



This resulted in the sunniest April since 1910. Rainfall was well below average, though Ireland recorded 114% of its rainfall due to mid-month rain. On the 19<sup>th</sup>, Lough Fea and Ballypatrick Forest received 34.5 and 27.4 mm, respectively. With generally warmer evenings in April and the lowest temperatures restricted to Scotland, this quarter excelled in hours of sunshine.

The following charts from the Met Office illustrate some of these features, with March experiencing several areas with cold nights, particularly in Scotland. April nights were much warmer, again apart from the Highlands of Scotland (fig 2).

Fig 2. Mean Minimum Temperature for March & April 2025 (with permission of the Met Office).

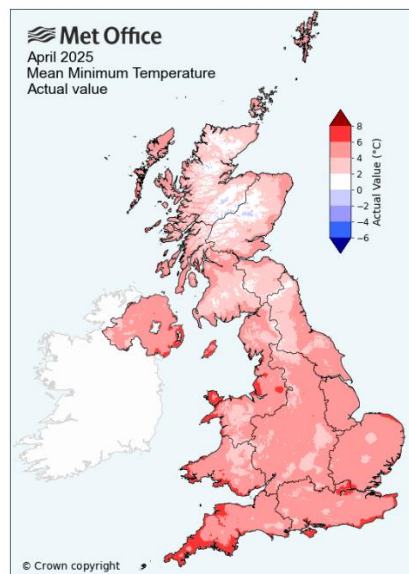
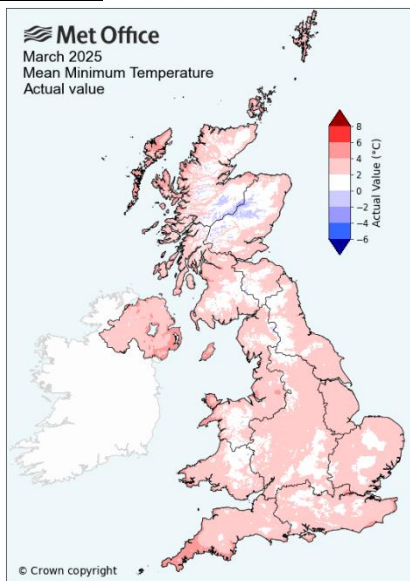


Fig 3. Days of Rainfall Greater than 1mm 2025 (with permission of the Met Office).

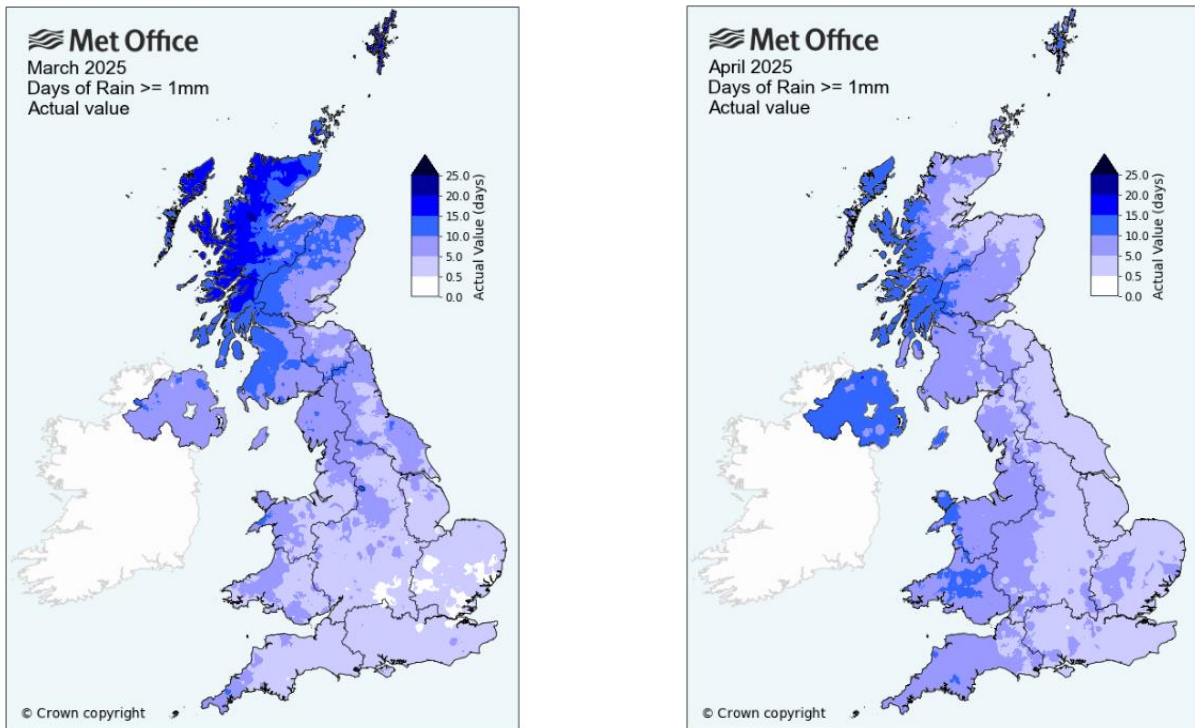
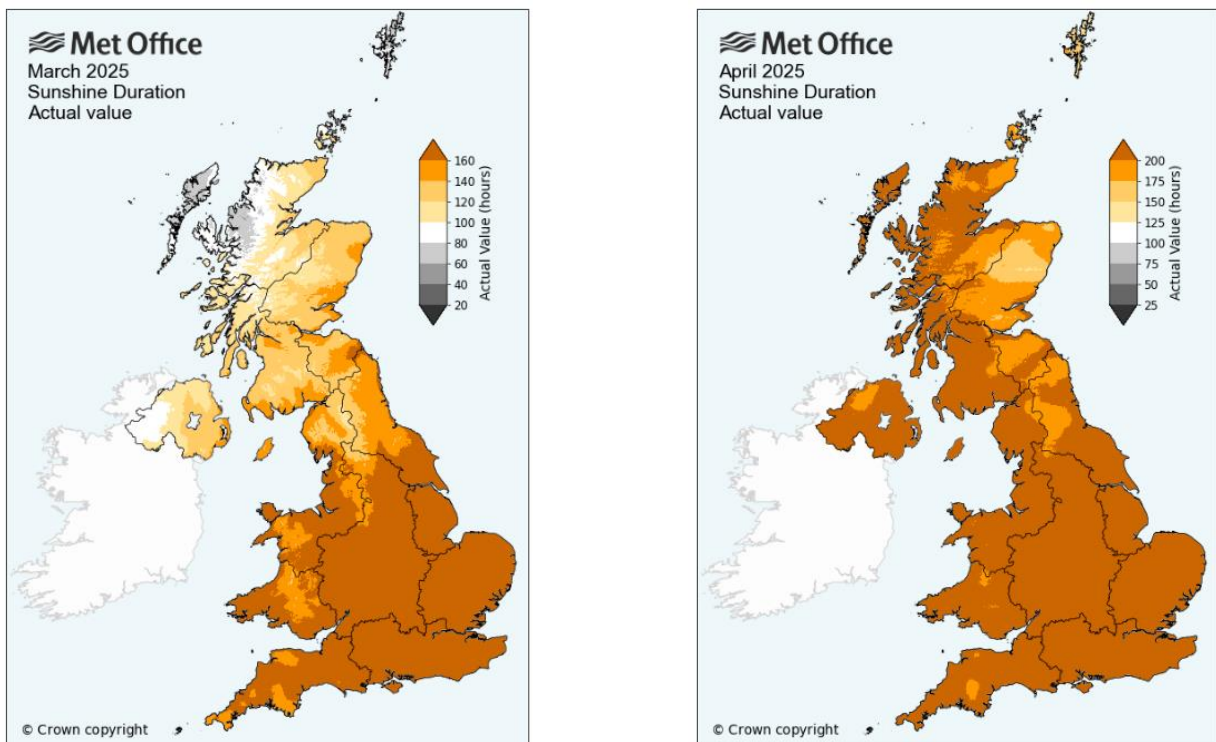
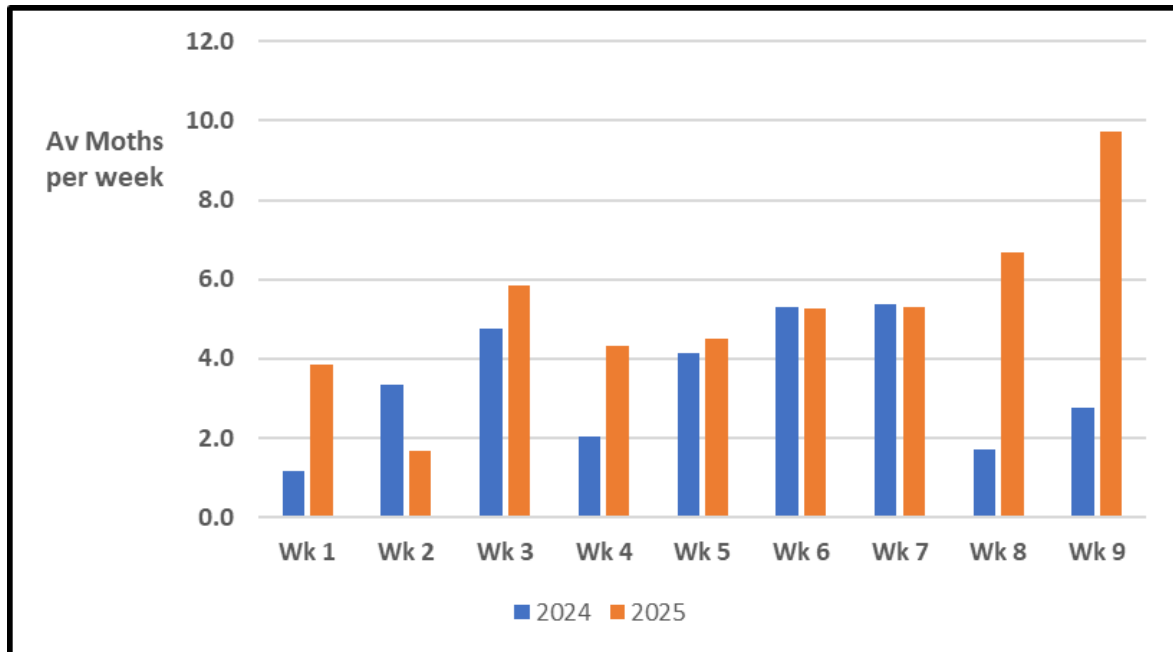


Fig 4. Hours of Sunshine for March & April 2025 (with permission of the Met Office).



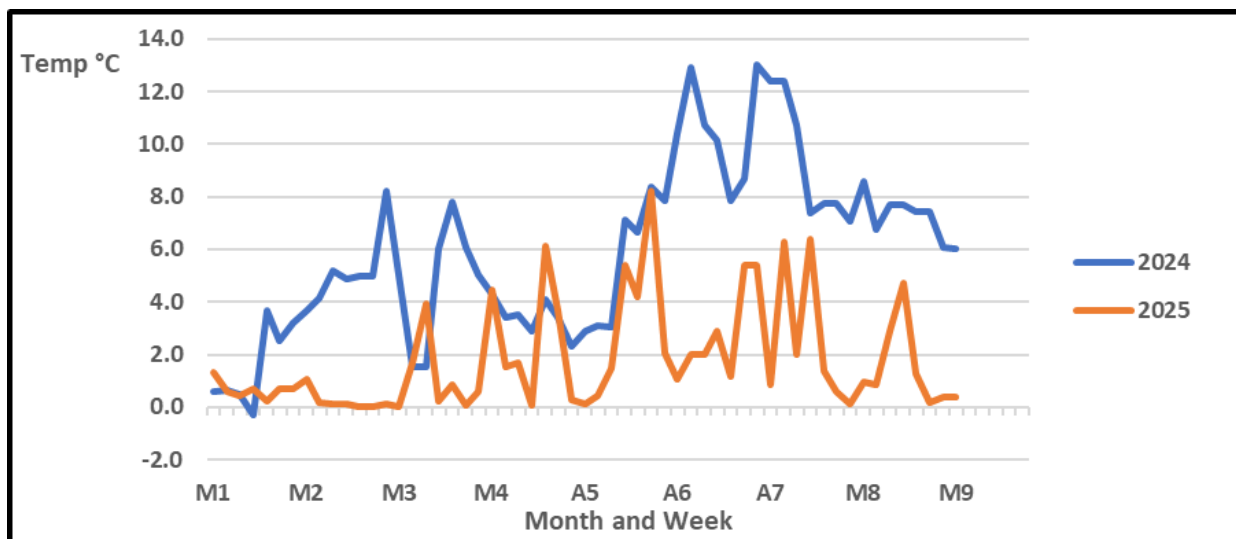
The chart below illustrates the difference in catches between 2024 and 2025. This year is significantly more optimistic than last, showing gains each week except for week 2, when they fell dramatically, as well as weeks six and seven, where they narrowly missed out (fig 5).

Fig 5. GMS 2025 Q1. Average Catches 2024 & 2025



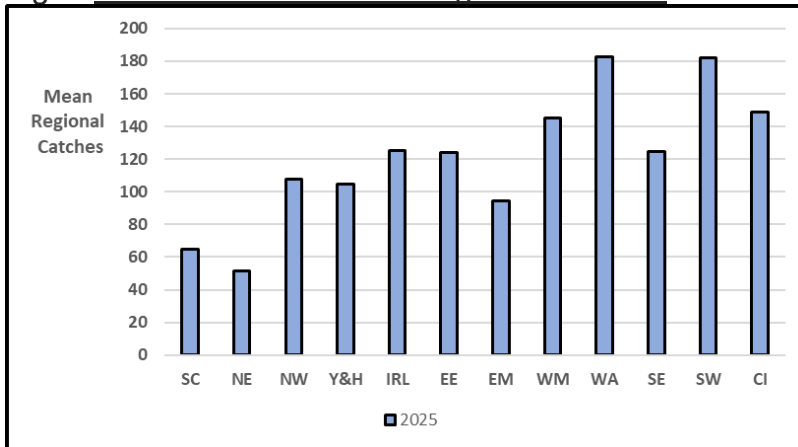
With significant temperature differences between years (fig 6) and little difference in catches as in weeks 8 and 9, it suggests that other factors may be at play.

Fig 6. GMS 2025 Q1. Minimum Temperatures 2024 & 2025



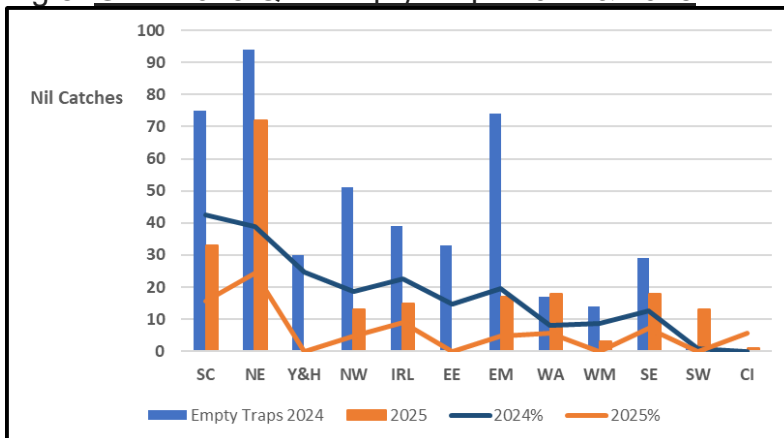
Care must be taken here, as the temperature chart shown above covers the entire country. Therefore, some warmer regions, away from the cold North Sea, may have had better catches, potentially distorting the picture (fig 7).

Fig 7. GMS 2025 Q1. Mean Regional Catches



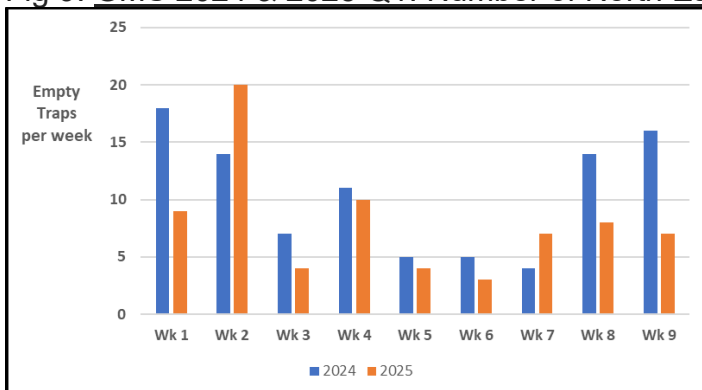
Some regions suffered more with empty traps than others, especially those on the east coast where the cold wind comes in over the North Sea. Certainly, Scotland, the North East and the East Midlands suffered the most last year. The worst-affected region was the North East, but at least this year, the percentage of lost days was much lower.

Fig 8. GMS 2025 Q1. Empty Traps 2024 & 2025



The number of empty traps in the North East looks high, but that's for the whole quarter. If it's expanded to show nil catches per week, the picture looks less worrying (fig 9).

Fig 9. GMS 2024 & 2025 Q1. Number of North East Empty Traps During Quarter One



On the Saturday of our Zoom AGM this year, Norman greeted everyone by mentioning that he had caught 11 species that night, which he considered a good result for the first week. Then he asked how others had fared. So, the big question is, how did everyone else do? Taking his 11 species (15 moths) as the gold standard, I checked to see if anyone else had surpassed his catch. Indeed, I found a few intrepid recorders who exceeded this catch, and they are listed below in a two-part table. The upper half displays the number of these successful recorders, while the lower section details the moth numbers and the regions where they were caught. The highlighted date is the official Friday (table 1).

Table 1. GMS 2025 Q1. The highest number of Species and Moths caught in Week One.

Number of Species					
Dates	Recorders	06/03/2025	07/03/2025	08/03/2025	09/03/2025
06/03/2025	1	14			
07/03/2025	4		13,13,13,12		
08/03/2025	2			17,12	
09/03/2025	1				12

Moth Numbers for each Recorder					
	Region & Recorders	06/03/2025	07/03/2025	08/03/2025	09/03/2025
06/03/2025	EE (2)	28,27			
07/03/2025	NW (3) WA(1)		38,59,32,13		
08/03/2025	WA (2), IRL(1)		16	24,55	
09/03/2025	WA (1)				20

But what about the rest of the recorders? How did they all do? Firstly, 24 recorders had empty traps. The remaining recorders are divided into the number of species they each caught (table 2).

Table 2. GMS 2025 Q1. Number of Recorders and Species Caught in Week One

No. Moth Species	05/03/2025	06/03/2025	07/03/2025	08/03/2025	09/03/2025	10/03/2025
1-3	3	14	54	19	6	3
4-6	0	14	65	17	1	4
7-10	0	6	26	3	1	0

So, as Norman said, 11 species is a good start to the season, but will it continue? Answers will be found in your results and the fourth quarter newsletter!

This quarter follows the same pattern as last year, with minimal rainfall in most areas, which is unfortunate for larvae trying to emerge from the ground or feed on drought-hardened leaves. Despite what many pundits claim, the larvae are standing their ground. Although we captured very few Winter Moths, Iolo Williams could be seen brushing aside their numerous gossamer threads while walking through one of our reserve woods in the Rheidol Valley.

Even though this appears to be good news and the increase in moth numbers in Figure 1 is promising, a lot of good years are going to be needed to boost their numbers.

When comparing the numbers with last year's first quarter, it is indeed gratifying not to see any highlighted negative changes. No doubt you can relate your results to this chart. For us, we either caught or saw locally, all of them, apart from the Muslin Moth and the Powdered Quaker. Some of the gardens that the moth did not visit are highlighted, indicating a reduction, but the numbers in other gardens compensated for this.

Table 3. GMS 2025 Q1. Top 20 Core Species

Position		Top 20	Mean Per Trap			Catching Frequency (% of gardens)		
2024	2025	Species	2024 298 Gardens	2025 291 Gardens	Change	2024	2025	Difference
2	1	Common Quaker	16.2	22.7	6.53	94.1	<b>91.4</b>	-3
1	2	Hebrew Character	19.9	21.5	1.53	96.5	<b>92.8</b>	-4
4	3	Clouded Drab	6.5	7.5	1.03	81.1	<b>83.8</b>	3
5	4	Early Grey	5.2	6.9	1.71	83.9	<b>81.4</b>	-2
6	5	Brindled Beauty	2.2	3.2	0.99	45.1	<b>48.8</b>	4
7	6	Brindled Pug	1.7	2.8	1.07	39.5	<b>46.4</b>	7
13	7	Muslin Moth	0.8	2.7	1.85	32.9	<b>50.2</b>	17
43	8	Shuttle-shaped Dart	0.1	2.3	2.24	7.7	<b>48.5</b>	41
12	9	Double-striped Pug	0.9	2.1	1.24	35.3	<b>48.8</b>	13
8	10	Oak Beauty	1.1	1.8	0.64	44.8	<b>50.5</b>	6
16	11	Early Thorn	0.6	1.7	1.06	30.4	<b>47.4</b>	17
11	12	Light Brown Apple Moth	0.9	1.7	0.73	37.8	<b>43.3</b>	6
18	13	Brimstone Moth	0.6	1.6	1.01	23.8	<b>36.1</b>	12
14	14	March Moth	0.7	1.5	0.78	28.7	<b>44.7</b>	16
35	15	Flame Shoulder	0.1	1	0.84	10.8	<b>35.1</b>	24
19	16	Common Plume	0.6	1	0.37	33.2	<b>33.7</b>	0
25	17	Least Black Arches	0.3	0.8	0.5	12.9	<b>28.5</b>	16
21	18	Many-plumed Moth	0.5	0.8	0.35	22.7	<b>29.2</b>	6
17	19	Lunar Marbled Brown	0.6	0.7	0.06	21.7	<b>29.6</b>	8
15	20	Powdered Quaker	0.7	0.7	2.16	30.8	<b>26.8</b>	-4

So, where were these two elusive moths that we didn't see (Table 4)? In Wales, out of 36 recorders, 25 caught Muslin Moths and only 12 caught the Powdered Quaker, so I feel a bit better!

Table 4. GMS 2025 Q1. Distribution of the Muslin Moth and the Powdered Quaker

Moths/Region	SC	NE	NW	Y&H	IRL	EE	EM	WM	WA	SE	SW	CI
Muslin Moth	0	7	22	15	125	113	103	39	141	38	187	11
Powdered Quaker	7	46	13	10	33	14	28	8	17	11	13	0

At the regional level, the Hebrew Character and the Common Quaker maintained the top two positions in many regions, except for Ireland, where the Early Grey took second place.

Table 5. GMS 2025 Q1. Regional Top 10 Core Moths

Scotland (25)	Mean	%	North East (33)	Mean	%	North West (31)	Mean	%
Hebrew Character	5.1	20.5	Hebrew Character	4.3	21.0	Hebrew Character	5.9	14.1
Common Quaker	3.3	13.3	Common Quaker	3.1	15.3	Common Quaker	5.2	12.6
Clouded Drab	3.0	12.0	Early Grey	2.2	10.6	Clouded Drab	3.3	7.9
Early Grey	1.5	5.9	Clouded Drab	2.1	10.1	Early Grey	3.0	7.3
Double-striped Pug	0.8	3.2	Small Quaker	0.6	3.1	Small Quaker	1.9	4.6
Mottled Grey	0.8	3.0	Powdered Quaker	0.6	2.8	Double-striped Pug	1.4	3.3
Chestnut	0.8	3.0	Brindled Pug	0.5	2.2	Twin-spotted Quaker	1.1	2.6
Red Chestnut	0.6	2.4	Light Brown Apple Moth	0.4	2.1	Early Thorn	1.1	2.6
Brindled Pug	0.6	2.4	Oak Beauty	0.4	1.9	Oak Beauty	0.9	2.3
Red-Green Carpet	0.5	2.1	Red Chestnut	0.3	1.5	Brindled Pug	0.9	2.2
Yorks & Humber (13)	Mean	%	Ireland (20)	Mean	%	East of England (28)	Mean	%
Hebrew Character	5.2	14.4	Hebrew Character	6.3	15.6	Hebrew Character	5.8	12.5
Common Quaker	4.5	12.5	Early Grey	3.8	9.4	Common Quaker	4.3	9.3
Clouded Drab	3.1	8.5	Common Quaker	3.7	9.1	Clouded Drab	3.0	6.5
Early Grey	2.9	8.0	Clouded Drab	3.1	7.6	Small Quaker	2.2	4.8
Small Quaker	1.8	4.9	Early Thorn	2.5	6.1	Early Grey	2.1	4.6
Double-striped Pug	1.2	3.2	Double-striped Pug	1.6	4.0	Muslin Moth	2.0	4.2
Twin-spotted Quaker	1.1	3.0	Muslin Moth	1.2	3.0	Double-striped Pug	1.9	4.1
Early Thorn	1.1	3.0	March Moth	1.1	2.6	Shuttle-shaped Dart	1.9	4.1
Oak Beauty	1.1	3.0	Powdered Quaker	0.8	1.9	March Moth	1.5	3.2
Brindled Pug	1.1	3.0	Light Brown Apple Moth	0.8	1.9	Brindled Beauty	1.2	2.6
East Midlands (40)	Mean	%	West Midlands (16)	Mean	%	Wales (36)	Mean	%
Hebrew Character	5.1	12.3	Hebrew Character	5.6	11.6	Hebrew Character	10.8	11.0
Common Quaker	4.5	10.8	Common Quaker	5.0	10.5	Common Quaker	8.8	9.0
Clouded Drab	3.4	8.2	Clouded Drab	3.8	7.9	Early Grey	6.1	6.3
Early Grey	2.4	5.7	Early Grey	3.1	6.5	Clouded Drab	6.1	6.3
Small Quaker	2.3	5.4	Small Quaker	2.2	4.6	Small Quaker	4.7	4.8
Brindled Beauty	2.0	4.9	Brindled Beauty	1.9	4.1	Brindled Beauty	4.2	4.3
Shuttle-shaped Dart	1.4	3.3	Brindled Pug	1.8	3.7	Muslin Moth	3.1	3.1
Muslin Moth	1.3	3.1	Shuttle-shaped Dart	1.6	3.4	March Moth	2.4	2.5
Oak Beauty	1.1	2.6	Muslin Moth	1.6	3.3	Double-striped Pug	2.4	2.4
Early Thorn	1.0	2.4	Light Brown Apple Moth	1.2	2.5	Early Thorn	2.3	2.4
South East (28)	Mean	%	Southwest (25)	Mean	%	Channel Islands (2)	Mean	%
Hebrew Character	5.4	11.3	Common Quaker	35.5	21.1	Early Grey	29	22.1
Common Quaker	4.8	10.0	Hebrew Character	26.5	15.7	Common Quaker	21	16.0
Early Grey	2.9	6.2	Muslin Moth	9.8	5.8	Hebrew Character	18	13.7
Small Quaker	2.3	4.9	Early Grey	9.2	5.5	Flame Shoulder	7	5.3
Clouded Drab	2.1	4.4	Brimstone Moth	6.5	3.9	Diamond-back Moth	5.5	4.2
Brindled Pug	1.8	3.8	Clouded Drab	6.3	3.7	Knot Grass	5.5	4.2
Double-striped Pug	1.7	3.5	Small Quaker	6.0	3.6	Rusty-dot Pearl	4	3.0
Brindled Beauty	1.6	3.5	Brindled Beauty	5.3	3.2	Muslin Moth	4	3.0
Shuttle-shaped Dart	1.4	3.0	Brindled Pug	4.8	2.8	Shuttle-shaped Dart	3.5	2.7
Light Brown Apple Moth	1.2	2.6	Flame Shoulder	4.6	2.7	Swallow Prominent	3	2.3

The number of additional species I check has fallen dramatically following the use of the new form, where all species limited to one or more regions have now been upgraded to regional status. This is undoubtedly a great relief to the coordinators who have had to trawl through the top names to check for errors. I have had to devise a few strategies to alert the coordinators to the incorrect inclusion of species below the line. A new one has now been provided by Mike Cook. If you enter the vernacular name or Latin name correctly, it should be highlighted in yellow, along with its counterpart in the list above the line.

Table 6. GMS 2025 Q1. Top 20 Additional Species

		Total	SC	NE	Y&H	NW	IRL	EE	EM	WA	WM	SE	SW	CI
<i>Eupithecia dodoneata</i>	Oak-tree Pug	77	3	4	5	0	4	16	0	10	0	35	0	0
<i>Epinotia immundana</i>	Birch Tortrix	22		0		0	1	1		18		2		0
<i>Agonopterix heracliata</i>	Common Brindled Brown	18	1	0	5	0		9		1		2		0
<i>Lycia zonaria</i>	Belted Beauty	17		0		0	17	0		0		0		0
<i>Aethalura punctulata</i>	Grey Birch	15		7		0	3	0		4	1	0		0
<i>Nycteola revayana</i>	Oak Nycteoline	14	1	0	3	0		8		0		2		0
<i>Agonopterix arenella</i>	Brindled Buff	13	1	1	1	0	3	4		3		0		0
<i>Amblyptilia acanthadactyla</i>	Beautiful Plume	13		0	4	0		5		1		3		0
<i>Agonopterix alstromeriana</i>	Hemlock Moth	11		1	1	0		3		0		5	1	0
<i>Grapholita jungiella</i>	Beautiful Crescent	11		0		0	11	0		0		0		0
<i>Ligdia adustata</i>	Scorched Carpet	11		0		0		1		8		2		0
<i>Eupithecia tripunctaria</i>	White-spotted Pug	10		1		0	6	0		1		2		0
<i>Eupithecia virgaureata</i>	Golden-rod Pug	10	1	2		0	5	1		1		0		0
<i>Elachista canapennella</i>	Common Grass-miner	8	1	0	1	0		2		3		1		0
<i>Cyclophora annularia</i>	Mocha	8		0		0		0		3		5		0
<i>Odontesia carmelita</i>	Scarce Prominent	9	6	1		0	1	0		0		0	1	0
<i>Scotopteryx mucronata</i>	Lead Belle	7		0		0	7	0		0		0		0
<i>Acronicta alni</i>	Alder Moth	7		0		0		1		0	1	4	1	0
<i>Conistra rubiginea</i>	Dotted Chestnut	7		0		0		4		3		0		0
<i>Papestra biren</i>	Glaucous Shears	7	1	4		0	1	0		0	1	0		0

All the trap nights and catches completed by the recorders are summarised in Table 7. The minimum and maximum moth numbers caught in these nine weeks vary considerably, possibly reflecting location, type of trap and the individual micro-climates. The minimum catches range from 1 to 144, and the maximum between 153 and 673, while the trapping effort (Moth Trap Nights) is very high as usual. The third section shows the preferred night for trapping. Although Friday is the official night, three nights on either side are acceptable, as everyone hopefully has a life apart from mothing.

Table 7. GMS 2025 Q1. Regional Statistics

Region	Gardens	Moths				Moth Trap Nights		
		Total	Mean	Min	Max	Possible	Actual	Percent
SC	25	1627	65	5	365	225	210	93
NE	33	1693	51	1	259	297	294	99
Y&H	13	1362	105	29	226	117	110	94
NW	31	3337	108	11	319	279	267	96
IRL	20	2503	125	16	357	180	169	94
EE	29	3469	120	4	427	261	169	65
EM	40	3783	95	17	205	360	234	65
WA	36	6577	183	8	560	324	203	63
WM	16	2324	145	27	415	144	72	50
SE	28	3486	125	19	399	252	107	42
SW	26	4554	175	26	673	234	215	92
CI	2	297	149	144	153	18	18	100

Weekday Trap Nights	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat	Sun	Mon
Number of Nights	92	262	844	1990	885	478	197
Percent	2	6	18	42	19	10	4

### **Grey Shoulder-knot (*Lithophane ornitopus*)**

This noctuid, that overwinters as an adult, was formerly restricted to southern and central England and across Wales. Its abundance has increased greatly since 1970 by 267% and it has more recently colonised parts of northern England and is thinly scattered across Ireland (Atlas of Britain and Ireland’s Larger Moths).

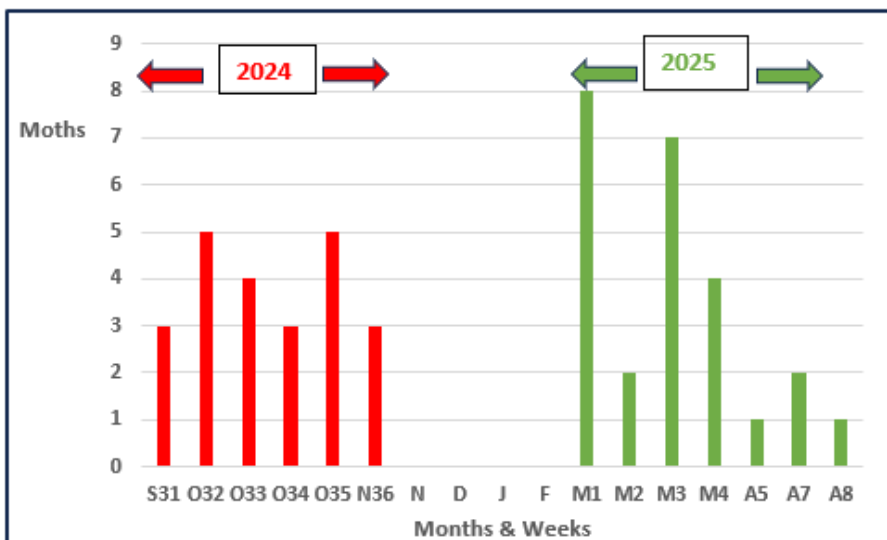
Its vernacular name describes the colour of the moth, which features a black mark at its base (shoulder). "Shoulder-knots" were fashionable in the late seventeenth century, coinciding with a growing interest in insects. The genus of its scientific name, "*Lithophane*," refers to a type of artwork that is etched onto a thin, translucent sheet of porcelain in such a way that the image is only visible when held against the light. Such pieces were popular in the 1820s, during the time Jacob Hübner was classifying noctuid moths; thus, he used the name for a group of moths whose wing patterns appear to be etched onto a plain background (Emperors, Admirals, and Chimney Sweepers – Peter Marren). The species name "*ornitopus*" (from the Greek *ornis*-bird, *poús*-foot) refers to the black trifurcated mark at the base, reminiscent of the toes of a bird’s foot.

In appearance, the moth has a light grey forewing with a bold, black antler-like mark at its base, which are diagnostic features. It is often marked with light brown in the lower half of the kidney mark and along the outermost cross-line.



The adult emerges in September and October initially nectaring on ivy flowers and blackberries. It then overwinters under loose tree bark, reappearing again in February to April when it feeds on willow catkins.

Fig 10. GMS 2024&25 Grey Shoulder-knot Flight Season



They are found in broadleaved woods and parkland where the larvae feed on oak. It comes regularly to light and can be found by day resting on tree trunks and fences, where it is often conspicuous. It mates in the spring, and the larvae can be found between May and July, where, like other *Lithophane* species, they have a tendency towards cannibalism. They construct a strong underground cocoon and pupate a month later.

## Spreading the Word

### Angel Porteous

I've been trapping, counting and photographing moths for several years now, a thoroughly enjoyable pastime - not really news to all other moth enthusiasts. I have always tried to educate people to the benefit and beauty of insects in all their shapes, forms and place in the ecosystems they live. I thought this year rather than bore people with endless photos on my smartphone (this normally occurs in my local pub - the Allenheads Inn) I would post 'Moth of the Week' on their noticeboard.

Spreading the word - it's not just bees and butterflies which pollinate and look good. You could maybe try something similar in your local pub, cafe, post office, workplace or wherever would be appropriate to you.

I've been slightly naughty in giving the glamour moths their place in the spotlight, a Brown Rustic or Clouded Drab doesn't always do it! I've only stuck to moths trapped in my garden, at 1250 feet/380m asl (often wondering if anybody else is trapping at a higher altitude) I usually wait until GMS night for relevant moth to concur with the week. Here's this week's offering.

21 June 2025

---

## Moth of the week

---

Small Elephant Hawk- moth



(*Deilephila porcellus*)

---

## ***From Barren Lawn to Wildlife Haven: How I Rewilded My Garden For The Sake of Moths***

**Jilly Mackenzie**

When I moved into my new house last autumn, the garden was a blank slate — just a simple lawn with barely any other flora in sight. Having come from a house where my wildlife-friendly garden buzzed with life, this new space felt eerily quiet. That silence was especially apparent when, come March and May, my moth trap, which I use to contribute to the Garden Moth Scheme, caught almost nothing. It was a stark contrast to the vibrant variety I had grown used to seeing.



Determined to bring life back to my patch of earth, I began planting with purpose. I introduced pollinator-friendly plants like bramble, Buddleja, honeysuckle, foxgloves, and lavender as a border along the fence-line. These choices weren't just for show; they were chosen for their ability to attract insects and support the wider ecosystem.



To complement the planting, I started feeding the birds. In return, they became unexpected allies — goldfinches and blackbirds helped to scatter and disperse seeds across the garden. Nature, it seemed, was eager to lend a hand once I gave it a little encouragement. The transformation has been remarkable. My once plain lawn is now a thriving wildflower meadow.



The highlight of this year came in June, when I spotted a southern marsh orchid stood proudly amongst the other wildflowers — a beautiful, native surprise. Not long after, a common spotted orchid appeared beside it, confirming that nature had truly taken root.



And best of all? My moth trap is now catching high numbers again, including species I had never caught in my old garden, which was only 15 miles away, such as the Bright-line Brown-eye *Lacanobia oleracea* and the Clay *Mythimna ferrago* - a reassuring sign that the garden is alive with activity and becoming increasingly biodiverse. Areas of tall grass now sway gently in the breeze, alive with moths flitting between the seed heads — a magical sight during warm summer evenings.



What began as a sterile patch of grass is now a buzzing, blooming oasis. Proof that a little care and planting the right plants can go a long way in rewilding even the most unassuming garden.



The plan next: a tree or two!

## ***The GMS Annual Conference*** **Norman Lowe**

This year's Annual Conference was held online on Saturday March 8<sup>th</sup>. We started with a presentation by Evan Lynn looking back at the results for 2024 in comparison with previous years going back to 2014. As expected, numbers were down on the previous year and in fact were the lowest in the whole period.

Next, Steve Roberts gave a presentation describing the work done on interpreting the huge amount of data on the GMS database. Readers will remember his article in the Autumn 2024 Newsletter<sup>5</sup>.

This was followed by a talk by Reuben O'Connell Booth which also used data from our database, this time aiming to understand the variation in moth numbers, particularly that resulting from the different types of moth trap used.

Martin Harvey from CEH then described some of the developments in iRecord which would improve data flow and enable better use to be made of the results.

Finally, Mike Cook gave us a run-down on how to import GMS records into iRecord

Holding the conference online is convenient for presenters and attendees but it loses the ability to chat with colleagues and to shop at entomological stalls. Is there any appetite for a face-to-face event in future? It would take a lot of organising so we would need a team of volunteers. Let me know at [micrromoth33@gmail.com](mailto:micrromoth33@gmail.com) if you would be up for such a challenge. It would, I think, be necessary to include an online option for those who live far away.

## Puzzle Corner

### Mothsearch No.8

The square contains words of three letters or more which relate to a recognised vernacular name of a British moth. For example : Blue or Bordered or Carpet separately or together and several of the words form a part of a longer word and both can be accepted, i.e. ear, early and pearly. The words can be horizontal, vertical or diagonal and even reversed.

C	T	E	T	Y	K	L	I	S	Y	C	O	A	S	T
L	R	N	S	B	S	B	C	S	L	E	A	D	E	E
A	I	O	E	U	C	S	E	A	A	N	K	N	I	P
Y	P	C	R	R	O	E	Y	R	M	T	O	C	Y	P
P	L	A	N	U	T	M	E	G	B	R	Y	R	A	A
R	E	B	M	E	C	E	D	R	U	E	E	R	O	L
M	U	B	R	R	H	R	X	O	F	I	R	O	N	L
A	S	A	E	I	A	A	I	U	F	I	G	U	R	E
R	S	G	T	N	N	L	T	N	L	S	L	N	B	H
S	I	E	N	G	D	D	E	D	A	D	A	D	A	S
H	T	L	I	E	M	I	L	I	M	N	U	N	R	M
S	T	D	W	D	A	A	U	E	E	N	C	S	D	O
A	G	O	T	H	I	C	N	A	H	C	O	M	K	K
H	T	O	O	T	D	E	N	I	L	S	U	M	A	Y
X	A	W	D	R	E	M	A	E	R	T	S	P	O	T

I believe there are at least 68 acceptable words and also 12 spaces which contain unused letters. These 12 letters consecutively form the name of another British moth.

## **Tailpiece**

**Norman Lowe**

Did anyone take part in the survey for “Nocturnal Wasps” – ichneumons – organised by Iona Cunningham-Eurich? If so, did you find it of interest and how many did you get?

## **Communications & Links.**

**GMS Website** <https://gardenmothscheme.org.uk/> In it are 5 Sections:

Home – the introduction

Information – lists the Regional Coordinators and gives some help with identification

Communications - includes past newsletters

Links – how to access our Facebook material and a link to UK Moths

Downloads - access to the regional recording forms and instructions.

**Facebook Page** - <https://www.facebook.com/GardenMothScheme>

**Facebook Group** - <https://www.facebook.com/groups/438806469608527/> - currently with more than 3000 Members (not all active GMS participants) – open membership – recording forms, instructions and micro-moth id guides are available in the Files section.

**Bluesky** - Garden Moth Scheme [@gardenmothscheme.bsky.social](https://bsky.app/profile/gardenmothscheme.bsky.social)

**Twitter** - Garden Moth Scheme [@GardenMoths](https://twitter.com/GardenMoths)