

North East England GMS Report

Fourth Quarter 2024

In 2024, Quarter 4 of the GMS ran from Friday 6th September until Friday 2nd November.

Number of GMS participants

I received valid GMS recording forms from 26 participants in 2024, Quarter 4. Of these 9 were in County Durham (VC 66), 14 were in South Northumberland (VC 67) and 3 were in North Northumberland.

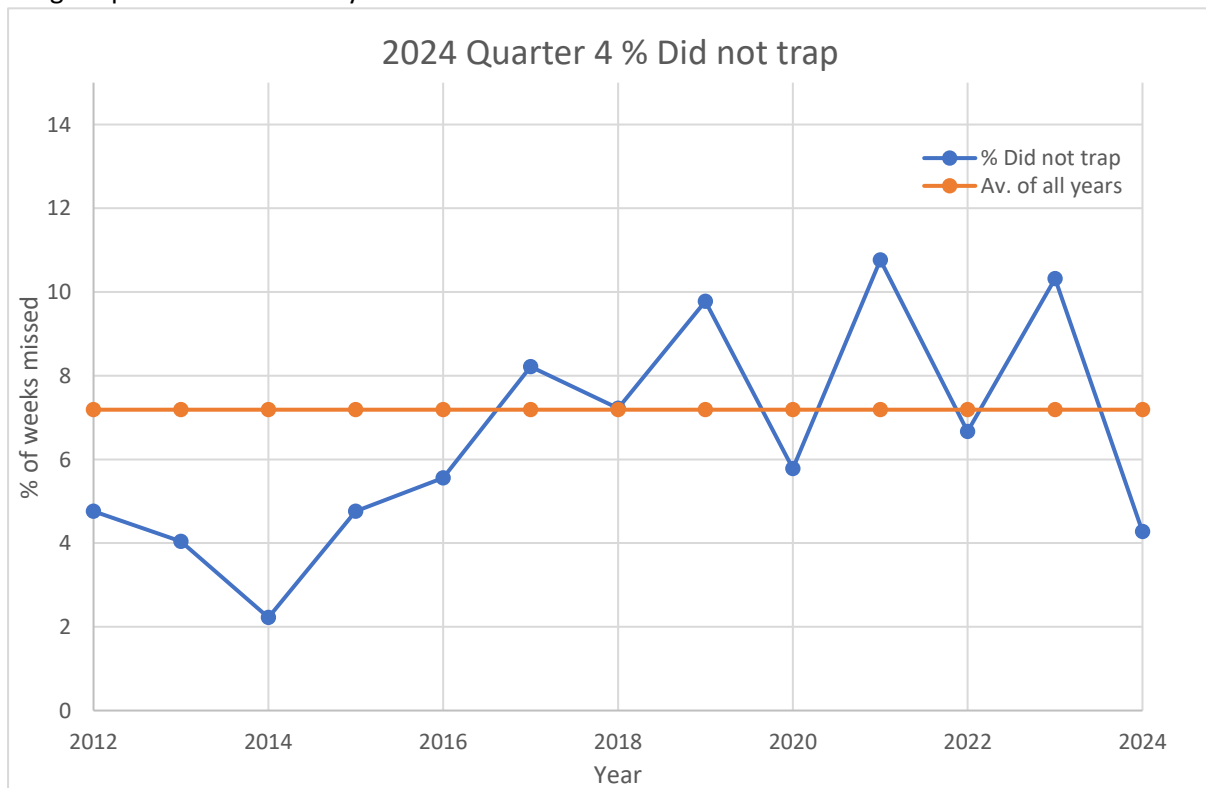
Loan traps

I now have three applicants lined up to borrow a trap in 2025. Now, I just need another three! I also have three other possible 2025 participants who already own a trap who I hope to convince to participate.

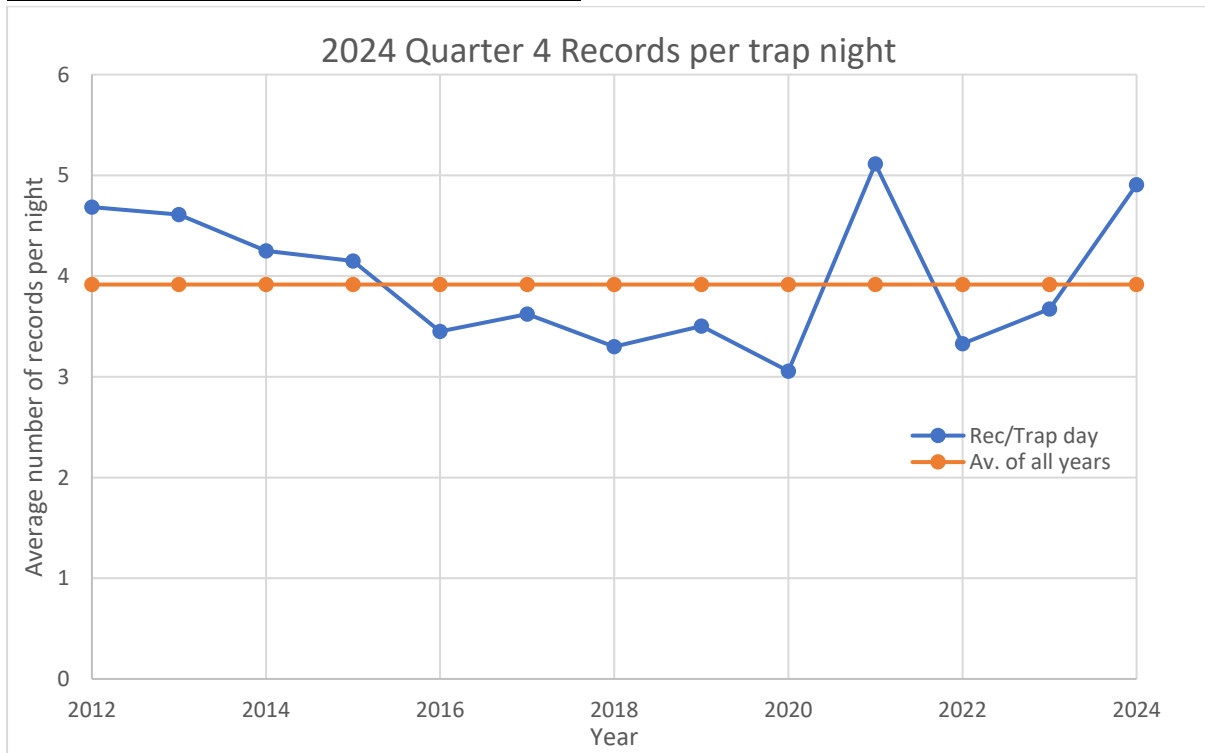
I just hope that some of the 5 participants who borrowed a trap this year are inspired to buy a trap and participate in 2025. Think about it, not only does a moth trap make a great Christmas present, but you then have two months of gradually increasing anticipation before the start of the GMS in the first week of March.

Did not trap

Just over 4 percent of nights were missed in Quarter 4, the lowest since 2014. Have we finally caught up with all the holidays we missed due to lock-down?

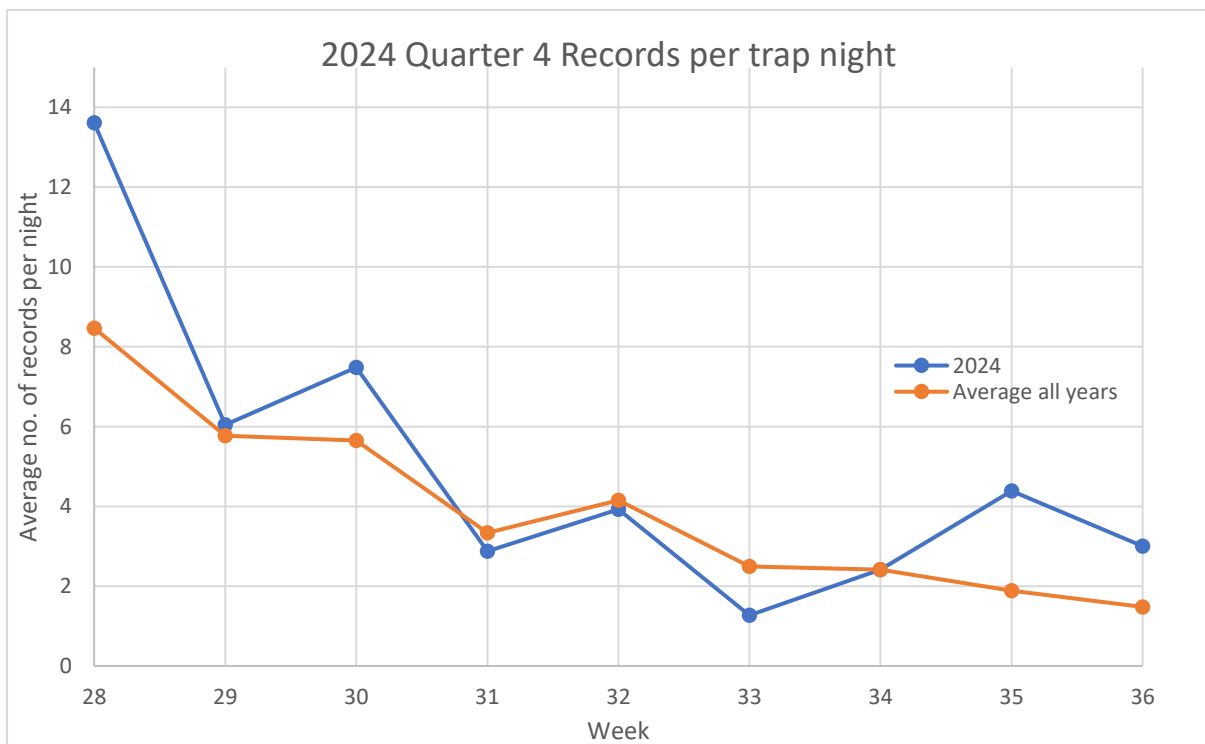


How do catches compare with earlier years



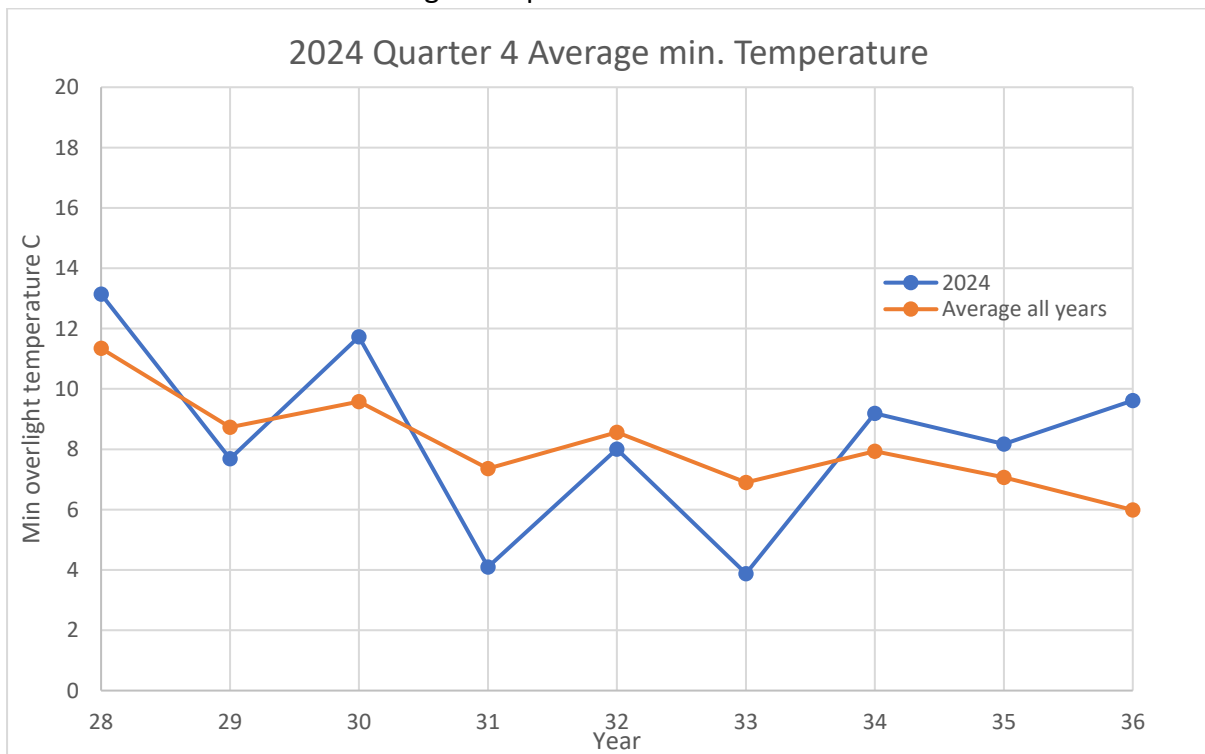
After a terrible year with below average number of records in quarters 1, 2 and 3, we are at last recovering slightly with above average number of records in the final quarter!

Now we will consider how the number of records per trap night varies by week.



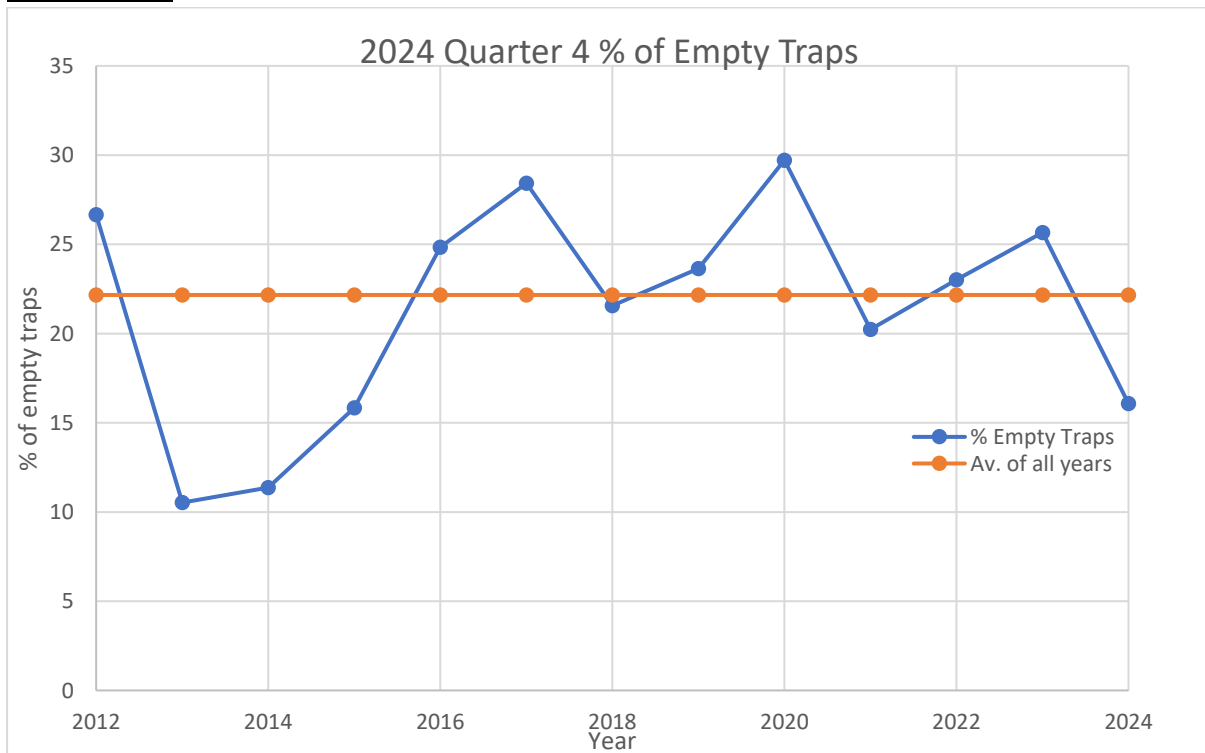
The weeks with above average number of records were weeks 28 (6th September), 30 (20th September, 35 (25th October and 36 (1st November). On 6th September there was a large influx of migrants in the North East. As luck would have it, we were down in Somerset that weekend! ☹️

What were the minimum overnight temperatures each week?



The temperature was below average on weeks 31 (29th September) and 33 (11th October) and above average on week 36 (1st November). The influx of moths on week 28 (6th September) was probably due, not to temperature, but to low pressure on the continent leading to strong rising air currents that swept the moths up and over the North Sea

Empty Traps



The number of empty traps was below average, but not as low as in 2013 and 2014.

Top twenty species

Here is a list of the 2024 top twenty species in Q4 (by number of records), compared to the top twenty for last year, and for all years from 2012 until 2024. The green species are moving up the top 20, the yellow species are non-movers and the red species are moving down compared with 2023 quarter 4.

Common name	Av. 2012 to 2024	2023	2024	Trend
Large Yellow Underwing	1	3	1	
Setaceous Hebrew Charact	6	2	2	
Light Brown Apple Moth	2	5	3	
Silver Y	4	1	4	
Common Marbled Carpet	3	4	5	
Lesser Yellow Underwing	7	11	6	
Red-green Carpet	5	7	7	
Spruce Carpet	15	23	8	
Copper Underwing agg.	20	8	9	
Angle Shades	9	9	10	
Square-spot Rustic	12	10	11	
Mouse Moth	19	12	12	
Garden Carpet	17	18	13	
November Moth agg.	11	19	14	
Green-brindled Crescent	16	16	15	
Rosy Rustic	10	14	16	
Blair's Shoulder-knot	13	17	17	
Feathered Thorn	21	20	18	
Lunar Underwing	23	24	19	
Canary-shouldered Thorn	24	28	20	

Trending species.

I have previously included a paragraph on species with a noticeable upward or downward trend. Because an apparent trend can be due to a shift in flight period if the peak of the flight period lies in an adjacent quarter, I'm going to try writing an Annual Report as well as the four Quarterly reports, and that is where you'll find the trending species paragraph in future.

The Annual report will probably have to wait until the deepest, darkest, coldest, mothless days of midwinter.

Outstanding Records

Martin recorded the third Brindled Green in the North East GMS database in Darlington on 6th September, followed by Sheila's South Shields record, just three weeks later.

Not on the GMS form, but very much an outstanding record, Andrew and Lorna recorded a Convolvulus Hawk-moth in Longhorsley 6th September (part of the migrant influx mentioned earlier.



Brindled Green (Image courtesy of Martin)



Convolvulus Hawk-moth courtesy of Andrew and Lorna