



NEWSLETTER 61

September 2019

Invasion of the Catocalini



Fig. 1. Light Crimson Underwing, Evington. Photo: Andy Mackay.



Fig. 2. Dark Crimson Underwing. Photo: Adrian Russell.

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The Noctuid family of moths contains a subfamily called Catocalini. There are eight species on the British list but until this year, the VC55 list included just two species: the fairly common Red Underwing *Catocala nupta* and the elusive Clifden Nonpareil or Blue Underwing *Catocala fraxini*. The latter is a rare migrant, on the VC55 list on the basis of a 1902 specimen in the Leicestershire reference collection and an unconfirmed record in 2005.

However, on 22 August, Andy Mackay caught a Light Crimson Underwing *Catocala promissa* in his Evington garden light trap (Fig. 1). This was a major surprise; as a resident, this species is largely confined to the New Forest, though Waring & Townsend (2017) makes reference to occasional suspected immigrants (or strays from resident populations) having turned up in a few south coast counties.

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The editor will be happy to receive articles, short notes and photos (in focus please!) about insects or other invertebrates in Leicestershire and Rutland, also news of members' activities further afield. Photos to be sent separately please at high resolution. Unless otherwise credited, photos are by the author of the article.

Next Copy Deadline: 5 Jan 2020

Editorial

Who likes flies?

It is said that artist Salvador Dali used to rub honey into his outrageous moustache to attract flies (link 1). Contributions in this edition demonstrate that at least a few members are also keen on flies. I am myself a member of the *Dipterists Forum*, however, I suspect that even among naturalists, most are less than enthusiastic about this order of insects and 99% of the general public find them repulsive. A reminder of how troublesome they can be appeared at this September's *Victory Show*, an annual event with a Second World War theme held at Cosby. One of the hardships suffered by the Eighth Army in North Africa was plagues of flies, graphically demonstrated in one of the exhibits. If this is not an exaggeration, it is certainly enough to put one off the order for life!



A more balanced view is presented in Erica McAlister's wonderful book *The Secret Life of Flies* (which I reviewed in *Newsletter 58*).

More new arrivals

Members and their friends have once again put more invertebrates on the vice-county list: some spectacular moths, a spider, a crane fly and a damselfly. My thanks go to them for sharing the news.

References

McAlister, E. 2017. *The Secret Life of Flies*. Natural History Museum.

Link 1: <https://shop.salvador-dali.org/en/icons-dali/moustache-dali.html>

Steve Woodward

Diplopoda:- Helen Ikin (see Chilopoda).

Diptera (Some families):- Ray Morris (see page 2).

Diptera (Nematocera - Mosquitoes, Blackflies & Craneflies):- John Kramer, 31 Ash Tree Road, Oadby, Leicester LE2 5TE. 0116 271 6499.
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Hymenoptera (Symphyta - Sawflies):- Dave Nicholls, 69-71 Church Lane, Ratby, LE6 0JF.
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Hymenoptera (Bumblebees):- Maggie Frankum, see page 2.

Hymenoptera (Other aculeates - Bees, Wasps & Ants):- Helen Ikin (see Chilopoda).

Hemiptera:- Dave Budworth, see page 2.

Isopoda (Woodlice):- Helen Ikin (see Chilopoda).

Lepidoptera:- Adrian Russell, 15 St Swithin's Road, Leicester LE5 2GE. 0116 241 5101.
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Mecoptera, Neuroptera, Plecoptera :- Steve Woodward, see page 2.

Mollusca: - Dave Nicholls (see Hymenoptera (Symphyta)).

Odonata:- Ian Merrill i.merrill@btopenworld.com

Orthoptera:- Helen Ikin, see Chilopoda.

Plant Galls:- Maggie Frankum, see page 2.

Psocoptera:- Helen Ikin, see Chilopoda.

Thysanoptera: - Ivan Pedley, see Arachnids - Mites.

Trichoptera (adults):- Ray Morris, see page 2.

Indoor Meetings Programme



Our venue is Kirby Muxloe Free Church, Main Street, Kirby Muxloe LE9 2AN SK517042. The session starts at 7:30, but most members arrive half an hour earlier for a natter, with tea, coffee and biscuits. Visitors are welcome.

Thursday 17 October 2019- Members' Evening. This is your evening, a chance to share the highlights or disappointments of the entomological year. Bring along any digital images or 35 mm slides plus anything you want to exhibit. New books or gadgets and your comments on their practicality are also welcome. Please ensure any digital media are virus-checked and If you are bringing 35 mm transparencies please bring your own projector.

Thursday 21 November 2019 - A mothing challenge at Charnwood Lodge - curiosity that became a passion. Margaret McLoughlin shares her experiences and dedication to moth recording events with the Charnwood Lodge Moth group. Constant 'on site' recording effort has produced some rewarding results.

Thursday 12 December 2019 Members Annual General Meeting. Our AGM for the first part of the evening, followed by our social 'get together,' catch up with all the latest news on the entomological front whilst taking your fill of mince pies, Christmas cake and chocolate biscuits.

Thursday 16 January 2020 - Leaf mines and plant-galls. Sue Timms will give an illustrated talk about the larval stages of these intriguing insects, the ease of certain identification on some and the difficulty associated with others.

Thursday 20 February 2020 - Update on Spider Recording in VC55. Alan Cann will show us the latest available data and distribution on this relatively under-recorded subject.

Thursday 19 March 2020 - How to find rare beetles. Graham Finch taking it a step further, moving away from casual observations in order to find the more unusual species.

Anona Finch