



Macro-moths of Bankhead Moss

S.T. Buckland

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I have included images of all the species that I have recorded at Bankhead Moss. All of the images were taken at Bankhead Moss, except for the following species, for which I had not retained photos: ghost moth, mouse moth and peach blossom. My thanks go to Nigel Voaden for identifying the more difficult species.

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5/July/2026

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Angle shades

Common across a range of habitats and through most of the year. Autumn numbers are boosted by immigrants.





Antler moth

A common species with antler-like markings, often seen feeding on flowers such as ragwort during the day.





Autumnal rustic

A common autumn species of open country.





Barred chestnut

A locally-distributed species of broadleaved woodland, moorland and wooded heathland. These were at Bankhead Moss in August 2024.





Barred red

Fairly common where conifers grow.





Barred straw

Common in a variety of lowland habitats.





Barred yellow

A fairly common species where dog roses or other roses grow.





Beautiful carpet

A fairly scarce woodland species. This camera-shy moth was at Bankhead Moss in early July 2025.





Beautiful golden Y

A fairly common species in a range of habitats.





Blue-bordered carpet

Locally-distributed in Fife, occurring especially in damp woodland, with lower numbers in other habitats. The one above and below left was at Bankhead Moss in mid-August 2024, while the one below right was there in early August 2025.





Bordered white

Common where pines grow.





Brick

A relatively scarce autumn species of broadleaved woodland in Fife.





Bright-line brown-eye

A summer species that occurs in a wide range of habitats.





Brimstone moth

A common woodland species.





Brindled pug

A common spring pug whose food plants are oak and hawthorn.



Broad-bordered yellow underwing

A common species of broadleaved woodland.





Broken-barred carpet

A scarce species in Fife, occurring mostly in deciduous woodland. These were at Bank-head Moss in late May 2024 and mid-May 2025.





Brown rustic

A common species of broadleaved woodland, and occurs in a range of other habitats.





Brown silver-line

A common species of early summer, wherever bracken occurs.





Brown-spot pinion

A declining autumn species, but still quite common in Fife.





Buff footman

This species is a recent arrival in Fife, spreading from the south.





Buff-tip

This moth of open woodland is uncommon but increasing in Fife. When at rest, it looks like a broken birch twig.





Burnished brass

A common species, especially anywhere that nettles grow.





Campion

A relatively scarce species in Fife, occurring where red, white or bladder campion, or ragged robin, grows.





Canary-shouldered thorn

A common woodland species in autumn.





Centre-barred sallow

A common autumn species where ashes grow.





Chestnut

Chestnuts overwinter as adults and are usually seen in autumn and early spring.





Chevron

A fairly common species, mostly on moorland and heathland. This one was at Bankhead Moss in late August 2024.





Cinnabar

Rather locally-distributed in Fife, occurring where ragwort grows. This one was at Bank-head Moss in mid-May 2024.





Clay

Widespread in grassy habitats, though never numerous.





Clouded border

A common woodland species.





Clouded-bordered brindle

A common species of broadleaved woodland.





Clouded drab

A common woodland species in spring. Its markings are variable.





Clouded silver

A woodland species that is expanding its range in Scotland.





Common carpet

A common summer species in a range of habitats.





Common footman

A mostly southern species that occurs in small numbers in Fife, mostly at coastal locations. This was one of a few recorded at Bankhead Moss in mid-July 2025.





Common lutestring

A sparsely distributed species in east Fife. There are plenty of birches to provide food for the caterpillars at Bankhead Moss.





Common marbled carpet

A variable species that is common in summer and autumn in a range of habitats.





Common pug

A common summer pug in a range of habitats.





Common quaker

A very common spring moth.





Common rustic / lesser common rustic

Two common grassland species with variable markings that cannot be separated from images.





Common wainscot

Very similar to the more common smoky wainscot, but with white underwings instead of smoky.



Common wave

A common species of damp woodland, especially where willows or poplars grow.





Common white wave

A common woodland species, especially where birches, alders or willows grow.





Copper underwing

A southern species that, like the very similar Svensson's copper underwing, has spread north into Fife.





Coxcomb prominent

A fairly common woodland species.





Curren pug

Occurs where wild hops or garden currants grow.



Dark arches

A common species of grasslands, and wherever grasses grow.





Dark marbled carpet

A common species of woodland and moorland.





December moth

A common species of broadleaved woodland, occurring from late October to December.





Devon carpet

A southern species that is spreading north. Bankhead Moss is the third site in Fife where it has been recorded. This one was there in mid-May 2025.





Dotted border

A common spring species, occurring mostly in woodland.





Dotted carpet

A locally-distributed species of mature woodland. This one was at Bankhead Moss in mid-August 2024.





Dotted clay

A common summer species in a range of habitats.





Double lobed

This species has expanded its range, but is still very scarce in Fife. This worn individual was at Bankhead Moss in early August 2023.





Double square-spot

Common in a range of habitats.



Double-striped pug

A widely-distributed species, occurring in a variety of habitats. The above one has one hind wing that did not expand fully when it emerged from a pupa.





Dun-bar

A common species, especially in woodland.





Dusky brocade

A common species of grasslands.





Dwarf pug

A common species, occurring mostly in conifer plantations.



Early thorn

This attractive moth is common in woodland in late spring.





Early tooth-striped

A spring species that is fairly common in deciduous woodland.





Engrailed

A fairly common woodland species, mostly of late spring and early summer.





Fan-foot

In Scotland, a relatively scarce species of broadleaved woodland. These were at Bankhead Moss in July 2025.





Feathered thorn

A relatively common autumn species of broadleaved woodland.





Flame carpet

A common species across a range of habitats.





Flame shoulder

A common species across a range of habitats.





Foxglove pug

A common species in areas where foxgloves grow.





Garden carpet

A common species, occurring in a range of habitats.





Garden tiger

Common in open habitats but declining.





Ghost moth

A fairly common grassland species. Female above, male below.





Gold spangle

A northern species that is scarce in Fife. This one was at Bankhead Moss in early August 2025.





Gold swift

A locally-distributed species, but can be quite abundant where it occurs. It is often associated with bracken.





Golden-rod pug

A fairly common species that occurs in a range of habitats.





Green arches

A large, impressive species of broadleaved woodland.





Green carpet

A common species that occurs in a range of habitats.





Green silver-lines

A fairly scarce species in Fife, most common in broadleaved woodland. The adult was at Bankhead Moss in mid-May 2025, while the caterpillar was there in mid-September 2024.





Grey dagger

A fairly scarce species in Fife, occurring in a range of habitats.





Grey pine carpet

A common species where conifers grow.





Grey pug

A common species that occurs in a range of habitats.





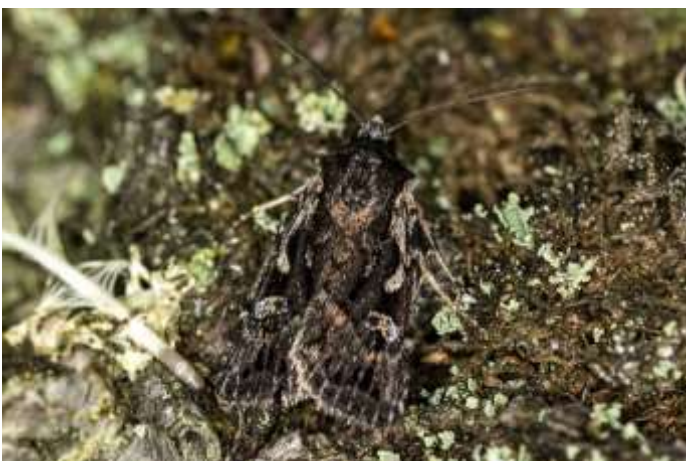
Heart and dart

Common in a very wide range of habitats.



Heath rustic

A locally-distributed species of acid heath-land and moorland with heather.





Hebrew character

A very common spring species across a wide range of habitats.





Ingrailed clay

A fairly common and very variable species of woodland and moorland.





Iron prominent

A woodland species of late spring and early summer that is becoming more common.





July highflyer

Common in a range of habitats.





Knot grass

A species of open habitats that is fairly scarce in Fife.





Large ear

These were at Bankhead Moss, the one above and below left in early August 2024, and the one below right in late August 2025. They are probably of this species although ear moth cannot be ruled out.





Large emerald

A fairly common and impressive woodland species.





Large yellow underwing

A large, variable and very common grassland species.





Latticed heath

This species is widely-distributed but not especially common in Fife.





Least black arches

A small moth of woodlands that is becoming more common in Fife.





Least yellow underwing

A scarce species in Scotland. This one was at Bankhead Moss in mid-July 2025.





Lempke's gold spot

A locally-distributed species of damp habitats. These were at Bankhead Moss in July 2023 and 2024.





Lesser broad-bordered yellow underwing

Common and sometimes abundant across a range of habitats.





Lesser swallow prominent

A fairly common species where birch trees grow.





Lesser yellow underwing

This variable species is common across a range of habitats.





Light arches

A fairly common grassland species.





Light emerald

A common species, especially in broadleaved woodland.





Lunar hornet moth

This was thought to be a rare moth in Scotland until a pheromone lure was developed. The species probably occurs wherever there is a large area of carr that is dominated by willows. The two above and below left came to a lure at Bankhead Moss in late June 2024. The one below right came to a lure in early July 2026.





Lunar thorn

A locally-distributed woodland species.





Lunar underwing

A common autumn species in grassland habitats.





Lychnis

A common summer species where champions grow.





Map-winged swift

A common species in areas of Fife with bracken.





Marbled minor

These moths are probably of this species, but there are two scarcer species, rufous minor and tawny marbled minor, that cannot be reliably separated from it from images.





March moth

A common species from mid-February to mid-April, especially in open woodland habitats.





May highflyer

In Fife, a scarce species of damp woodland with alder trees. This one was at Bankhead Moss in late May 2024.



Middle-barred minor

A common summer species of grasslands, often seen on flowerheads in daylight.





Mottled beauty

A common species, especially in woodland.





Mottled grey

An early spring species, occurring in small numbers in mostly open habitats. These were at Bankhead Moss in mid-March 2024.





Mottled pug

A local species of woodland and scrub in Fife.



Mouse moth

A common and widespread species. When threatened, it scuttles like a mouse, hence its name.





Muslin footman

Occurs mostly in stoney places. Locally-distributed, but becoming more common. This one was near the stone wall alongside the path to the south car park at Bankhead Moss.



Narrow-winged pug

A common species on heathland and moorland. Its caterpillars feed on heather.





Northern winter moth

A locally-distributed species in Fife, mostly associated with birches. This one was at Bank-head Moss in early November 2024.



November moth

A common late-autumn species, especially in broadleaved woodland. Male above, female below.





Nut-tree tussock

A common species of broadleaved woodland.





Oak beauty

A scarce spring species in Fife, associated with oak. 2025 was a good year for the species, and this one was at Bankhead Moss at the end of March.





Ochreous pug

Locally distributed in Fife, this species is associated with pines. These were at Bankhead Moss in mid-May 2024 and mid-May 2025.





Orange sallow

A scarce species of deciduous woodland in Fife. These were at Bankhead Moss in September.





Pale brindled beauty

A common species of broadleaved woodland in February and early March.





Pale November moth

A scarce late-autumn species of broadleaved woodland, very similar to the November moth. The one above is definitely of this species. The one below probably is. They were at Bankhead Moss in late October 2024.





Pale prominent

A locally-distributed species, occurring where poplars grow.





Pale-shouldered brocade

A common woodland species.





Peach blossom

A scarce species in Fife. Although a big, showy moth (above), it is remarkably difficult to spot when it folds its wings around a twig (below).





Pebble prominent

Occurs where willows or poplars grow.





Peppered moth

A fairly common species in woodland.





Phoenix

A scarce species in Fife, occurring in gardens and woodland. Its foodplants are black- and redcurrants and goose berries.



Pine beauty

A spring species of pinewoods and plantations which is fairly scarce in Fife. This one was at Bankhead Moss at the end of March 2025.





Pine carpet

A species of pinewoods and plantations.





Pinion-streaked snout

A scarce species of damp habitats. This one was at Bankhead Moss in late September 2023.



Pink-barred sallow

A common autumn species, especially in broad-leaved woodland and marshes.





Plain golden Y

A fairly common species, occurring in a range of habitats.





Poplar hawk-moth

The most widely-distributed and common hawk-moth in Fife.





Powdered quaker

A scarce species in Fife. It is most common in marshes and damp woodland. These were by the bird hide in mid-April 2025.





Purple bar

A common species where bedstraws occur.





Purple clay

A fairly common species of broadleaved woodland and wooded heathland.





Red chestnut

A spring species, mostly in broadleaved woodland. Fairly patchily distributed in Fife. This one was at Bankhead Moss at the end of March 2025.





Red-green carpet

A common autumn species, and again in spring, when it emerges from hibernation.





Red-line quaker

An autumn species, occurring where willows grow.





Red-necked footman

A scarce woodland species in Fife. The adults were at Bankhead Moss in late June and early July 2023, and the caterpillar came to light in late October 2024.





Red sword-grass

A widely-distributed but scarce species of moorland, rough pasture and damp woodland. The one above was at Bankhead Moss in early April 2023, the one below left in mid-March 2024, and the one below right in late March 2025.





Riband wave

Common across a range of habitats.





Rivulet

A common species where red campion grows.





Rosy rustic

A common species across a range of habitats.





Ruby tiger

A common species of open habitats. The caterpillar was on the style at the north entrance to the reserve in mid-November 2024.





Rustic

A common species in lowland habitats.





Sallow

Fairly common where willows or poplars grow.





Sandy carpet

A common species where champions grow.





Satellite

A common species in autumn and spring, mostly in broadleaved woodland.





Satin beauty

This species is most common in conifer plantations, but also occurs in ancient broadleaved woodland.





Scalloped hazel

A common woodland species of late spring and early summer.





Scalloped oak

A fairly common woodland species. It is not restricted to where oaks occur, as its caterpillars can feed on several tree species.





Scarce prominent

A species of mature birch woods that is not often encountered. This one was at Bankhead Moss in mid-May 2024, and was the first one recorded in east Fife.





Setaceous hebrew character

A common lowland species.





Shaded broad-bar

Common in grassy habitats, and often disturbed during the day.





Shoulder stripe

A spring species that occurs where dog roses grow, mostly in woodland and along hedgerows.





Shuttle-shaped dart

A southern species that has spread into Scotland, occurring in a range of habitats.





Silver-ground carpet

A common and often abundant species in a range of habitats. Often seen in daylight.





Silver Y

An abundant migrant moth, occurring in a wide range of habitats.





Single-dotted wave

This species is close to the northern limit of its range in Fife. It occurs in woodland and damp habitats.





Six-striped rustic

A common species of wet and damp habitats.





Slender brindle

A fairly common woodland species.





Small angle shades

A fairly common species of woodland, moorland and gardens.





Small clouded brindle

A species of damp habitats that is scarce in Fife. This one was at Bankhead Moss in late June 2024.





Small dotted buff

A species of wet grassland. Not numerous in the east of Fife.





Small fan-foot

A fairly common species of broadleaved woodland.



Small fan-footed wave

A common species, mostly in broadleaved woodland.





Small phoenix

A common species, especially in woodland.





Small quaker

A spring species mostly of broadleaved woodland. It is not numerous in Fife. This one was at Bankhead Moss in late March 2024.





Small rivulet

Very similar to the rivulet. It is common, occurring in a range of habitats.





Small square-spot

A common summer species in a range of habitats.





Small wainscot

A locally-distributed species of damp habitats.





Smoky wainscot

A common grassland species.





Snout

A common species where nettles grow.





Spectacle

This species is not numerous in east Fife.
The foodplant of its caterpillars is nettles.





Spruce carpet

A common species where conifers grow.





Square-spot rustic

A common grassland species.





Straw dot

A fairly common grassland species.





Suspected

A scarce species. These rather worn individuals were at Bankhead Moss in mid-August 2023.





Tawny-barred angle

Common, occurring mostly in conifer plantations.





True lover's knot

A common species where heathers grow.





Twin-spot carpet

A common species, mostly in open habitats.



Twin-spotted quaker

A species of broadleaved woodlands that has spread north in recent years, and is now common in Fife.





Uncertain

A common species of lowland habitats. Very similar in appearance to the rustic.





V-pug

This species is becoming more common and widespread. It occurs in a variety of habitats.





Water carpet

A common spring species, occurring mostly in April and May.





Welsh wave

A locally-distributed species, occurring where rowans grow.





White ermine

Common in a wide range of habitats.





Winter moth

A widespread and common species of late autumn and early winter.





Yellow-barred brindle

A locally-distributed species, occurring mostly in deciduous woodland. This newly-emerged one was at Bankhead Moss in late April 2025.





Yellow horned

An early spring species of birch woodland.





Yellow-line quaker

A common autumn species of broadleaved woodland, heathland and moorland.

