



Micro-moths of the East Neuk

S.T. Buckland

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I have included images of the species that I have been able to photograph in and around the East Neuk. My thanks go to Nigel Voaden for identifying the more difficult species — and some of the less difficult ones!

Steve Buckland

steve@st-andrews.ac.uk

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Water veneer *Acentria ephemeralla*

A locally-distributed species in Scotland, large numbers can sometimes be found in suitable aquatic habitats. This one was at Kincraig Point, a long way from suitable habitat!



Lesser wax moth *Achroia grisella*

A rare moth in Scotland. This one was at Cambo Gardens in late July 2025, and was the third record for Fife. Its caterpillars feed on wax in beehives.





Yellow rose tortrix *Acleris bergmanniana*

A rare species in Scotland. These were at Kincaig Point in June 2025.





Scalloped tortrix *Acleris emargana*

A fairly common species, found mostly in woodland.





Scalloped tortrix *Acleris forsskalearia*

A locally-distributed species in Scotland, occurring where field maples or sycamores grow. This one was at Cambo Gardens.





Heath tortrix *Acleris hyemana*

A species of heathland and moorland that is rare in east Fife. These were at Bankhead Moss in mid-April 2024 and 2025.





Dark-marked tortrix *Accleris laterana*

A common woodland species.





Lichen tortrix *Accleris literana*

A scarce species of oak woodland. These were at Keil's Den in May 2023.





Tawny birch tortrix *Acleris notana* /

Tawny oak tortrix *Acleris ferrugana*

Two species that cannot be separated, and which are not common in Fife. These shots were taken in the birch wood at Bankhead Moss in late April 2025, and probably are of *A notana*, as its food plant is birch. The food plants of *A ferrugana* are oak and goat willow.





Rhomboid tortrix

Acleris rhombana

A scarce species in Fife, occurring mostly in hedgerows and scrub. These were at Fleecefaulds and Kilminning.





Lead-coloured tortrix *Acleris sparsana*

A common species of woodland and gardens, from late summer into winter.





Garden rose tortrix *Acleris variegana*

A locally-distributed species, occurring mostly in gardens and woodland margins. These were at Cambo Gardens in late August and mid-September 2025.





Hawthorn knot-horn *Acrobasis advenella*

A fairly common species in Fife, occurring where hawthorn is available.





Green longhorn *Adela reaumurella*

A scarce species in Fife. The male (above) was one of several at Cameron Reservoir, while the female was at Fleecefaulds.





Thistle straw *Aethes cnicana*

A common species in areas with thistles.





Burdock straw *Aethes rubigana*

Much less common than *Aethes cnicana*, and associated with burdock.





Garden straw *Agapeta hamana*

A common species anywhere that thistles grow.





Bright straw *Agapeta zoegana*

A scarce species in Scotland. It usually occurs in grasslands where knapweed grows. These were at Kinraig Point in late July and early August 2024.





Hemlock moth *Agonopterix alstromeriana*

An uncommon species in Fife, occurring mostly in coastal habitats. The one above was at Magus Muir in mid-March 2024, and the one below was at Lower Kilminning in early October 2023.





Angelica brown *Agonopterix angelicella*

A scarce species of fens and marshes where angelica grows. These were at Bankhead Moss.





Brindled buff *Agonopterix arenella*

A common species that occurs almost throughout the year, over-wintering as an adult.





Speckled broom buff *Agonopterix assimilella*

Occurs in habitats with broom. These worn individuals were at Kilminning.





Common brindled brown *Agonopterix heracliana*

A very common species that often overwinters in garages, garden sheds and woodsheds.





Knapweed buff *Agonopterix kaekeritziana*

A fairly common species where knapweeds grow. This one was at KinCraig Point.



Burnt-tip buff *Agonopterix nervosa*

A common species in areas with gorse or broom. These were at Fleecefaulds.





Red-eyed buff *Agonopterix ocellana*

A fairly common species of damp habitats. These were at Keil's Den in spring 2023.





Chevron grass-moth *Agriphila geniculea*

This species is locally-distributed in Scotland. This one was at KinCraig Point.



Straw grass-moth *Agriphila straminella*

An abundant grass moth.





Common grass-moth

Agriphila tristella

An abundant grass moth.





Yellow oak tortrix *Aleimma loeflingiana*

A rare species in Fife. Its main foodplant is the oak. This one was at Fleecefaulds in late July 2023. It is only the third location in Fife where the species has been recorded.





Beautiful plume *Amblyptilia acanthadactyla*

In Fife, a locally-distributed species that can occur throughout the year.





Rattle pearl *Anania fuscalis*

Common in grassland habitats.





Small magpie *Anania hortulata*

A fairly common moth where nettles grow. This one was at Keil's Den.





Meadow hook-wing *Ancyli badiana*

A widespread but not numerous species, mostly of grassland.





Nettle-tap *Anthophila fabriciana*

A very common day-flying moth, occurring wherever nettles grow.





Bee moth *Aphomia sociella*

A common moth whose caterpillars feed on debris and larvae in bee and wasp nests.





Birch marble *Apotomis betuletana*

This species is associated with birch trees. It is not widely recorded in Fife. These were at Bankhead Moss.





White-shouldered marble *Apotomis turbidana*

A locally-distributed species of birch woodland. This one was at Magus Muir.





Hawthorn tip moth *Argyresthia bonnetella*

Occurs where hawthorns grow.





Gold W *Argyresthia brockeella*

Common where birches or alders grow. This one was at Bankhead Moss.





Apple fruit moth *Argyresthia conjugella*

Common where apple or rowan trees grow.



Brassy Y

Argyresthia goedartella

Common wherever birches or alders grow.





Speckled tip moth *Argyresthia retinella*

A tiny species of birch woods that is rarely recorded in Fife. These were at Bankhead Moss in late June 2024.





Common lance

Bactra lancealana

Common in areas where rushes grow.
These were at Bankhead Moss.





Common masoner *Blastobasis adustella*

A common summer and autumn species.





Large pale masoner

Blastobasis lacticolella

A common species that is increasing its range.





Dotted masoner *Blastobasis vittata*

A very recent arrival in Scotland. First recorded at Burntisland, it has been spreading along the coast. The one below left was at Kilminning in late August 2024, while the others were at Keil's Den in mid-July 2023.





Hawthorn berry moth *Blastodacna hellerella*

A scarce species in Scotland. Its food plants are hawthorn and whitebeam. This one was at Fleecefaulds in early July 2023.





Dark moss-moth

Bryotropa affinis

A locally-distributed species. Its caterpillars feed on mosses.





House moss-moth *Bryotropa domestica*

The caterpillars of this species feed on moss growing on stone walls. This one was at Cambo Gardens.





Grizzled moss-moth *Bryotropa senectella*

A locally-distributed species of open habitats, with moss available growing on walls. This one was at Bankhead Moss.





Brown moss-moth *Bryotropha terrella*

Occurs in short grassland, especially in dry sandy conditions. This one was at Dumbarnie Links.



Birch stilt *Caloptilia betulicola*

A fairly scarce species in Fife, occurring where birches grow. This one was at Magus Muir in late August 2024.





Willow stilt *Caloptilia stigmatella*

This is a common species of woodland where willows grow.





Horse-chestnut leaf-miner *Cameraria ohridella*

This species arrived in the UK in 2002, and has been spreading northwards. This one was at Cambo Gardens in late August 2025.





Spotted birch grey *Carpatolechia proximella*

A locally-distributed species, occurring where birches or alders grow. This one was at Bankhead Moss in late May 2024.





Chequered grass-moth *Catoptria falsella*

A locally-distributed species associated with mosses. The one above was at Bankhead Moss in mid-July, while the rather worn one below was at Keil's Den in late August.





Pearl-banded grass-moth *Catoptria margaritella*

A locally-distributed species of wet moorland and heathland. This one was at Bankhead Moss.



Pearl grass-moth *Catoptria pinella*

A locally-distributed species that occurs in a range of mostly open habitats. These were at Kincaig Point.





Meadow longhorn *Cauchas rufimitrella*

Not widely recorded in Fife, this day-flying species occurs in damp grasslands. This one was at Cameron Reservoir in early June.





Common marble *Celypha lacunana*

A very common species in a range of habitats.





Silver-striped marble *Celypha rivulana*

A scarce species that occurs in a variety of habitats. This one was on the moss at Bankhead Moss in mid-July 2024.



Garden grass-moth *Chrysoteuchia culmella*

A very common grass moth, occurring in grasslands throughout.





Rufous tortrix *Clepsis consimilana*

A relatively scarce species in Fife. The one above and below left was at Cambo Gardens in late September 2025, while the one below right was at Kilminning in late August 2024.





Flax tortrix *Cnephasia asseclana*

A common summer species.





Light grey tortrix *Cnephasia incertana*

A common summer species.





Buff grey tortrix *Cnephasia longana*

Sparsely distributed in Fife, and seldom recorded elsewhere in Scotland. These were at Keil's Den in mid-August 2023.





Common grey tortrix *Cnephasia stephensiana*

A common species. The distinctive markings of these 'northern form' moths makes it possible to identify the species from photos. This one was at Kincaig Point.





Black-fronted straw *Cochylichroa atricapitana*

A locally-distributed species, occurring where ragwort grows.





Common straw *Cochylimorpha straminea*

In Fife, only recorded on or near the coast along the Firth of Forth. This one was at Kilminning. Its foodplant is common knapweed.





Common rush case-bearer *Coleophora alticolella* /

Grey rush case-bearer *Coleophora glaucicolella*

These tiny moths are all probably one of the above species, both of which are common where rushes grow. These were all at Bankhead Moss.





Buff rush case-bearer *Coleophora caespititiella*

A scarce species in Fife. This one was at Bankhead Moss in late June.



Common case-bearer *Coleophora serratella*

A locally-distributed species in Fife.





Meadow grass-moth *Crambus lathoniellus*

A common grass moth.





White-banded grass-moth *Crambus pascuella*

A fairly common species of damp habitats. This one was at Bankhead Moss.



Satin grass-moth *Crambus perlella*

Locally-distributed in Fife, but it can be numerous where it occurs. This one was at Kinraig Point.





Beech mast piercer *Cydia fagiglandana*

An uncommon species in Fife. These were at Keil's Den, only the third location in Fife where the species has been recorded. The foodplant of the caterpillars is beech.





Western thyme knot-horn *Delplanqueia dilutella*

Locally-distributed, occurring where wild thyme grows. These were at Kincaig Point, where the species can be fairly numerous.





Parsnip moth *Depressaria radiella*

A common species that can be encountered through much of the year where common hogweed or wild parsnip grows.





Early reveller *Diurnea fagella*

A common spring moth in deciduous woodland.





Large birch dot *Ectodemia occultella*

A common species where birches grow.



Silver grass-miner *Elachista argentella*

A fairly common grassland species.





Cock's-foot miner *Elachista atricomella*

A locally-distributed species of grassland in Fife.





Yellow-headed grass-miner *Elachista luticomella*

A scarce grassland species.



Brown china-mark *Elophila nymphaeata*

A fairly local species in Fife, occurring in wet habitats. These were at Bankhead Moss and Magus Muir.





Marsh marble *Endothenia quadrimaculana*

A locally-distributed species of damp habitats.





White-shouldered house-moth *Endrosis sarcitrella*

Very common, and familiar as a 'clothes moth'.





Common ridge-back *Epermenia chaerophyllella*

A tiny moth that is common, occurring in a range of habitats.





Thistle root-borer *Epiblema scutulana*

A species of damp habitats. This one was at Bankhead Moss in mid-May 2024.



Brown elm tortrix *Epinotia abbreviana*

A species that is not recorded frequently in Fife. It is associated with elm trees. These were at Keil's Den in late June and mid-July 2023.





Crescent tortrix *Epinotia bilunana*

A locally-distributed species in Scotland, occurring where birches grow.



Large birch roller *Epinotia brunnichana*

Another woodland species that is not often recorded in Fife. The one below right was at Keil's Den in mid-July 2023, while the others were at Magus Muir in late July 2024.





Birch tortrix *Epinotia immundana*

This species occurs in damp habitats with birches or alders. It is sometimes common at Bankhead Moss.





Brindled poplar tortrix *Epinotia nisella*

A common species where willows or poplars grow.





Black-marked tortrix

Epinotia ramella

A variable species of birch woodland. Around 80 were recorded at Bankhead Moss in August 2023, when the images below were taken.





Nut bud moth

Epinotia tenerana

A woodland species associated with hazel and alder, not widely recorded in Fife. These were at Bankhead Moss.





Birch-borer tortrix *Epinotia tetraquetra*

A fairly common species where alders or birches grow.





White-blotched roller *Epinotia trigonella*

A species of birch woodland. This one was at Bankhead moss.





Light brown apple-moth *Epiphyas postvittana*

An Australian species that has spread through much of the British Isles. It is scarce in Fife. The ones above and below left were at Lower Kilminning in October 2023, and the one below right was at Keil's Den in late August 2023.





Purple spring jewel / large spring jewel

Eriocrania sangii / *Eriocrania semipurpurella*

Two spring species of birch woodland that cannot be separated from images. These were at Magus Muir in early April 2024.





Sulphur bark moth *Esperia sulphurella*

An attractive woodland species. This male was at Keil's Den in early May 2023.





Pied tortrix *Eucosma campoliliana*

A locally-distributed species in Scotland. In Fife, it is most likely to be encountered among dunes where ragwort grows.





Hoary tortrix *Eucosma cana*

A common species where thistles or knapweed grow.





Common knapweed tortrix *Eucosma hohenwartiana*

A fairly locally-distributed species in Fife, occurring where knapweed grows.





Eyed tortrix

Eucosma pupillana

These were at Kinraig Point, and are from the only known population of this species in Scotland.





Tawny grey *Eudonia lacustrata*

A common species in woodland and open habitats.





Garden grey *Eudonia mercurella*

A fairly common species, associated with mosses.





Peppered grey *Eudonia truncicolella*

A fairly common species, mostly in woodland and heathland.





Chequered pearl *Evergestis pallidata*

A locally-distributed species of damp habitats in Fife. The species is scarce in Scotland, but thought to be increasing.





Tufted pine moth *Exoteleia dodecella*

A locally-distributed species whose caterpillars mine scots pine needles. These were at Bankhead Moss.





Yarrow plume *Gillmeria pallidactyla*

A fairly common species, occurring where yarrow grows.





Cocksfoot moth

Glyphipterix simpliciella

A tiny and very abundant moth of grassland.





Garden stilt *Gracillaria syringella*

A common woodland species. This one was at Bankhead Moss.





Hawthorn piercer *Grapholita janthinana*

A rare species in Fife. The one above was at Fleecefaulds on 20 June 2023, while the one below was at Keil's Den on 16 July 2023.





Marbled orchard tortrix *Hedya nubiferana*

This species occurs in areas with hawthorn or blackthorn. It can be fairly common in suitable habitat.





Birch cutter *Heliozela hammoniella*

A scarce species of birch woods. It is tiny, with a wing length of around 3mm. This one was at Bankhead Moss in mid-June 2024.





Brown house-moth *Hofmannophila pseudospretella*

A common species, often found inside sheds and garages.





Black rhomboid grey *Hypatima rhomboidella*

A fairly common species in birch woodland. This one was at Bankhead Moss.





Double-striped tabby *Hypsopygia glaucinalis*

A southern species that has only recently arrived in Fife. This one was at Keil's Den in late August 2023.





Bulrush down moth *Limnaecia phragmitella*

A locally-distributed species in Fife, occurring in wetlands with bulrushes. This one was at Bankhead Moss in late August 2024.





Burdock seedhead moth *Metzneria lappella*

A species recorded from very few locations in Fife. The one above was at Fleecefaulds on 20 June 2023, the first record from east Fife, the one below left at Keil's Den a few days later, and the one below right at Bankhead Moss on 7 July 2023.





Knapweed seedhead moth *Metzneria metzneriella*

A scarce species in Fife.





White-line pollen-moth

Micropterix aruncella

A tiny species that can be common in grassland and woodland. It can appear anything from black to golden depending on the light. Males (right) have two white stripes.





Great mompha *Mompha conturbatella*

This species is associated with rosebay willowherb. This one was at Keil's Den in mid-July.



White-headed mompha *Mompha propinquella*

A locally-distributed species in Fife. Its caterpillars feed on willowherb. This one was at Bankhead Moss in early July.





Cork moth *Nemapogon cloacella*

A fairly common woodland species whose caterpillars feed in bracket fungi. These were at Keil's Den, Bankhead Moss and Magus Muir.





Sandy longhorn *Nematopogon schwarziellus*

Mostly a woodland species. Scarce in Fife, these were at Keil's Den in late May and early June 2023.





Heather grey *Neofaculta ericetella*

A common species of moorland and heathland. These were at Bankhead Moss.





Rick-rose moth *Neotelphusa sequax*

A rare species in Scotland, but it is sometimes quite numerous at Kinscraig Point, which is where these shots were taken.





Brown-dotted nest moth *Niditinea fuscella*

Identification uncertain! This species has never been positively identified in Fife. This worn individual was at Keil's Den on 24 June 2023.





Rush veneer *Nomophila noctuella*

A migrant in small numbers and mostly a coastal species in Fife.





Black cloak *Notocelia cynosbatella*

A fairly common species in Fife. The caterpillars feed on wild or cultivated roses.





Hawthorn shoot moth *Notocelia trimaculana*

A locally-distributed species in Fife, occurring where hawthorns grow. These were at Keil's Den.





Bramble shoot moth *Notocelia uddmanniana*

A rare species in Fife, occurring where brambles grow. The one above was at Keil's Den in mid-July 2023, while the one below was at Kincaig Point in late July 2024.





Beautiful china-mark *Nymphula nitidulata*

A locally-distributed species. This one was at Bankhead Moss in June 2023.





Dusky marble *Orthotaenia undulana*

A locally-distributed species in Scotland. These were on the raised bog at Bankhead Moss in mid-June 2024.





Olive-tree pearl *Palpita vitrealis*

A migrant that is rarely recorded in Scotland. This one was at Cambo Gardens in mid-September 2025.





Double orange-spot *Pammene aurana*

A locally-distributed species that can often be seen on the flowerheads of its foodplant, common hogweed. These were at Bankhead Moss in late June 2024.





Birch catkin tortrix *Pammene obscurana*

A rare species of birch woods. These were recorded at Bankhead Moss in mid-May 2024.





Barred fruit-tree tortrix *Pandemis cerasana*

A common species. Its caterpillars feed on fruit trees, but also a range of other deciduous trees.





White-faced tortrix *Pandemis cinnamomeana*

A scarce species of woodland. Only the male has a white face. This female was at Magus Muir in early August 2024.





Dark fruit-tree tortrix *Pandemis heparana*

A common species. Its caterpillars feed on fruit trees, but also a range of other deciduous trees.





Parornix sp.

Most species in this genus cannot be separated using photos. This one is probably birch parornix *Parornix betulae*, given that it was in the birchwood at Magus Muir.





Mother of pearl *Patania ruralis*

A common species, especially where nettles grow.





Phycitodes sp.

One of several species that are difficult or impossible to identify to species level from photos.



Common birch leaf-miner *Phyllonorycter ulmifoliella*

A fairly common tiny species of birch woodland.





Striped cutter *Phylloporia bistrigella*

A locally-distributed species, occurring in birch woods. These were at Bankhead Moss and Magus Muir.





Triangle plume *Platyptilia gonodactyla*

A species of rough grassland that is sparsely distributed in east Fife. These were at Fleecefaulds in June 2023.





Diamond-back moth

Plutella xylostella

This moth is a frequent migrant, and can occur almost anywhere.





Ash bud moth / cryptic ash bud moth

Prays fraxinella / *ruficeps*

Two species associated with ash that can only be separated by genetic testing.





Yellow-spotted tortrix *Pseudargyrotoza conwagana*

A fairly common woodland species. These were at Keil's Den.





White plume *Pterophorus pentadactyla*

A scarce species in Fife. This one was nectaring on heather at Bankhead Moss in early August 2024.





Mint moth *Pyrausta aurata*

A very rare species in Scotland, with one previous record from Fife and one from the border with England. This one was at Cambo Gardens in late July 2025.





Straw-barred pearl *Pyrausta despicata*

A locally-distributed species in Fife, this one was at Kincaig Point.



Northern diamond-back *Rhigognostis incarnatella*

A scarce species, occurring in gardens, rough grassland and woodland. The one above was at Kilminning in early November 2024, while the one below was at Magus Muir in late June 2024.





Holly tortrix *Rhopobata naevana*

A common woodland species.





Common grey *Scoparia ambigualis*

Common across a range of habitats.





Brown-spot grey *Scoparia pyralella*

A widespread species, but much less common in Scotland than *Scoparia ambigualis*. The one above was at Bankhead Moss, while those below were at Kincaig Point.





Large grey *Scoparia subfusca*

In Fife, this species occurs mostly at or near the coast, in open habitats. The one above was at Kinraig Point, while the one below was inland at Bankhead Moss.





Scrobipalpa sp.

Many *Scrobipalpa* cannot be identified to species without dissection. This one was at Cambo Gardens.



Brown plume

Stenoptilia pterodactyla

A locally-distributed species in Scotland.
These were at Fleecefaulds and Keil's Den.





Twin-spot plume *Stenoptilia bipunctidactyla*

A locally-distributed species in Scotland, occurring where scabious grows. The one above was at Dumbarrie Links, while the one below was at Cambo Gardens.





Short-barred dot *Stigmella luteella*

A tiny moth — its wings are just 2mm long. This one was at Magus Muir in late June 2024.





Birch drab *Swammerdamia caesiella*

A common species of birch woods. These were at Bankhead Moss.





Dark-barred tortrix *Syndemis musculana*

A common woodland species.





Birch straw *Thyraylia nana*

There are just three old records of this tiny moth in Fife, and the above is the first record with images, so that identity can be confirmed. It occurs in birch woodland, and the one above was at Bankhead Moss in early June 2023, while the one below was one of two at Magus Muir in early June 2024.





Orange-tipped nest moth *Tinea semifulvella*

A fairly common species in a range of habitats. Its caterpillars are usually found in bird nests, feeding on the debris.





Spring harbinger *Tortricodes alternella*

A woodland species, scarce in Fife. These were at Keil's Den in late January 2023.





Rusty-dot pearl *Udea ferrugalis*

A migrant species, which can sometimes be fairly numerous at Lower Kilminning, where the ones above and below left were recorded in October. The one below right was at Cambo Gardens in early October.





Pale straw pearl *Udea lutealis*

A common species, often seen during the day.





Garden pearl *Udea olivalis*

A fairly common species in a range of lowland habitats.





Dusky pearl *Udea prunalis*

A locally-distributed species in a range of lowland habitats.



Spindle ermine *Yponomeuta cagnagella*

Although this species cannot be separated from *Yponomeuta padella* and *Yponomeuta malinellus* from images of the adult, this moth was next to spindle bushes that had been covered in webs and stripped by spindle ermine caterpillars.



Bird-cherry ermine *Yponomeuta evonymella*

A common species. Its caterpillars form webs on bird cherry, often stripping the trees of leaves completely.





Orchard ermine *Yponomeuta padella*

A fairly common species. Its caterpillars form webs on blackthorn or hawthorn. These are probably of this species, but cannot be identified with certainty from an image.





Orpine ermine *Yponomeuta sedella*

These were among four recorded at Cambo Gardens in August 2025. These are the first records of the species from Scotland.





Honeysuckle moth *Ypsolopha dentella*

A common species where its foodplant occurs.





White-shouldered ochre

Ypsolopha parenthesesella

A woodland species not often recorded in the eastern half of Fife. These shots were taken at Bankhead Moss, Magus Muir and Keil's Den.





Pied rabbit moth *Ypsolopha sequella*

A southern species that has recently spread into Scotland. These were at Cambo Gardens in August and October 2025.





Varied ochre *Ypsolopha ustella*

A common species of oak woodland. Its markings are highly variable. These were at Keil's Den.





Mottled oak tortrix *Zeiraphera isertana*

This is the first record of this species from east Fife. It was at Fleecefaulds in early July 2023. Its caterpillars feed on oak leaves.





Ash spinner *Zelleria hepariella*

A rare species in Fife, with only a handful of records. This one was at Keil's Den in mid-August 2023.





Timothy tortrix *Zelotherses paleana*

A fairly common grassland species.

