

Micro-moths of Gaddon and Birnie Lochs

S.T. Buckland

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I have included those species that I have been able to photograph at Gaddon and Birnie Lochs. My thanks go to Nigel Voaden for help with identifying the more difficult species, and to Duncan Davidson for his help, enthusiasm and encouragement.

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Contents—micro-moths

Achroia grisella 4
Acleris emargana 5
Acleris ferrugana 6
Acleris forsskaleana 7
Acleris laterana 8
Acleris notana 6
Acleris rhombana 9
Acrobasis advenella 10
Adela reaumurella 11
Agapeta hamana 12
Agonopterix heracliana 13
Agonopterix ocellana 14
Agonopterix scopariella 15
Agriphila straminella 16
Agriphila tristella 17
Alder stilt 28
Amblyptilia acanthadactyla 18
Anania fuscalis 19
Anthophila fabriciana 20
Aphomia sociella 21
Apple fruit moth 22
Argyresthia conjugella 22
Argyresthia pygmaeella 23
Aspen dot 38
Beautiful plume 18
Bee moth 21
Beech mast piercer 35
Bird cherry ermine 65
Black cloak 53
Blastobasis adustella 24
Blastobasis lacticolella 25
Brindled poplar tortrix 41
Broom buff 15
Brown alder roller 42
Brown china-mark 39
Brown house moth 48
Brown-spot grey 60
Bryotropha senectella 26
Bucculatrix nigricomella 27
Caloptilia elongella 28
Caloptilia stigmatella 29
Carrion moth 51
Catoptria pinella 30
Celypha lacunana 31
Chrysoteuchia culmella 32
Cnephasia asseclana 33
Cnephasia incertana 34
Cocksfoot moth 46
Common brindled brown 13
Common grass-moth 17
Common grey 59
Common marble 31
Common masoner 24
Common ridge-back 40
Cydia fagiglandana 35
Daisy tuft 27
Dark fruit-tree tortrix 56
Dark-barred tortrix 61
Dark-marked tortrix 8
Depressaria pulcherrimella 36
Diurnea fagella 37
Double orange-spot 55
Early reveller 37
Ectoedemia argyropeza 38
Elophila nymphaeata 39
Epermenia chaerophyllella 40
Epinotia nisella 41
Epinotia sordidana 42
Eucosma cana 43
Eudonia lacustrata 44
Eudonia mercurella 45
Flax tortrix 33
Garden grass-moth 32
Garden grey 45
Garden straw 12
Glyphipterix simpliciella 46
Gorse streak 50
Green longhorn 11
Grizzled moss-moth 26
Hawthorn knot-horn 10
Hawthorn shoot moth 54
Hedya pruniana 47
Hoary tortrix 43
Hofmannophila pseudospretella 48
Knapweed seedhead moth 49
Large pale masoner 25
Lesser wax moth 4
Light grey tortrix 34
Metzneria metzneriella 49
Mirificarma mulinella 50
Monopis weaverella 51
Mother of pearl 58
Nematopogon schwarziellus 52
Netted tortrix 7
Nettle-tap 20
Notocelia cynosbatella 53
Notocelia trimaculana 54
Orange-tipped nest moth 62
Pale straw pearl 64
Pammene aurana 55
Pandemis heparana 56
Parornix scoticella 57
Patania ruralis 58
Pearl grass-moth 30
Pignut brown 36
Plum tortrix 47
Rattle pearl 19
Red-eyed buff 14
Rhomboid tortrix 9
Rowan parornix 57
Sallow tip moth 23
Sandy longhorn 52
Scalloped tortrix 5
Scoparia ambigualis 59
Scoparia pyralella 60
Spring harbinger 63
Straw grass-moth 16
Syndemis musculana 61
Tawny birch tortrix 6
Tawny grey 44
Tawny oak tortrix 6
Timothy tortrix 67
Tinea semifulvella 62
Tortricodes alternella 63
Udea lutealis 64
White-shouldered ochre 66
Willow stilt 29
Yponomeuta evonymella 65
Ypsolopha parenthesella 66
Zelotherses paleana 67



Lesser wax moth *Achroia grisella*

A scarce species in Scotland. The larvae usually occur in bee hives. This one was at Birnie Loch in mid-August 2024. It has only previously been recorded at one other site in Fife.





Scalloped tortrix

Acleris emargana

A fairly common species where goat willow grows.









Tawny oak tortrix / tawny birch tortrix

Acleris ferrugana / notana

Two species that cannot usually be distinguished from photos.





Netted tortrix *Acleris forsskaleana*

A locally-distributed species in Scotland, occurring in areas with sycamores.



Dark-marked tortrix *Acleris laterana*

A common species of woodland, hedgerows and gardens.





Rhomboid tortrix *Acleris rhombana*

A common hedgerow species.







Hawthorn knot-horn *Acrobasis advenella*

In Fife, a locally-distributed species of hedgerows, woodland and gardens, where hawthorn is available.





Green longhorn *Adela reaumurella*

A locally-distributed species, occurring mostly in broadleaved woodland.





Garden straw *Agapeta hamana*

A common species where thistles occur.



Common brindled brown *Agonopterix heracliana*

A very common species.





Red-eyed buff *Agonopterix ocellana*

Fairly common in locations with willows.



Broom buff *Agonopterix scopariella*

A relatively scarce species in Fife, associated with broom. Although the above moth is probably this species, *Agonopterix propinquella* and *Agonopterix subpropinquella* cannot be ruled out on the basis of this image. This moth was at Gaddon Loch in mid-October 2023.



Straw grass-moth *Agriphila straminella*

A common grass moth.



Common grass-moth *Agriphila tristella*

A common grass moth.





Beautiful plume *Amblyptilia acanthadactyla*

A locally-distributed species, occurring in a variety of habitats.



Rattle pearl *Anania fuscalis*

A common grassland species.





Nettle-tap *Anthophila fabriciana*

A common species wherever nettles grow. Flies in daylight.





Bee moth *Aphomia sociella*

A common species. Its caterpillars live in nests of bumblebees and wasps.



Apple fruit moth *Argyresthia conjugella*

Common where rowans or apples grow.



Sallow tip moth *Argyresthia pygmaeella*

A scarce species in Fife, occurring in woodland with willows or poplars.





Common masoner *Blastobasis adustella*

A common species in a range of habitats.





Large pale masoner *Blastobasis lacticolella*

A common species, occurring mostly from May to November.







Grizzled moss-moth *Bryotropha senectella*

A locally-distributed species in Fife. Identity of this one is not certain!





Daisy tuft *Bucculatrix nigricomella*

A scarce species in Fife. These were by Gaddon Loch in late May 2022.





Alder stilt *Caloptilia elongella*

An uncommon species that occurs where alders grow. This well-marked individual was at Gaddon Loch in mid-October 2022.





Willow stilt *Caloptilia stigmatella*

This species is associated with aspen and poplars as well as willow. This one was at Birnie Loch in mid-September 2026.



Pearl grass-moth *Catoptria pinella*

A locally-distributed species in Scotland.



Common marble *Celypha lacunana*

A very common species.





Garden grass-moth *Chrysoteuchia culmella*

A very common species of grass moth.





Flax tortrix *Cnephasia asseclana*

Cnephasia moths cannot always be identified to species from photos. The identity of this one is not certain.



Light grey tortrix *Cnephasia incertana*

As with the previous species, the identity of this one is not certain.



Beech mast piercer *Cydia fagiglandana*

A rare species in Scotland. It occurs where beeches grow. This one was at Gaddon Loch in mid-August 2024.



Pignut brown *Depressaria pulcherrimella*

A grassland species that is seldom recorded in Fife. This one was at Gaddon Loch.





Early reveller *Diurnea fagella*

A common spring species.





Aspen dot *Ectoedemia argyropeza*

These images show the tell-tale green patches on aspen leaves in autumn. The larvae initially mine the leaf stem, resulting in this effect on the leaf. Although this species is not considered common, it can be numerous when it occurs, and in November 2026, a few of the aspen at Gaddon and Birnie showed the characteristic green patches on most of their leaves.







Brown china-mark *Elophila nymphaeata*

A fairly common species of wet habitats.



Common ridge-back *Epermenia chaerophyllella*

A tiny moth that occurs in a wide range of habitats. In Fife, it has seldom been recorded away from the Firth of Forth coast. This one was at Gaddon Loch in mid-October 2023.







Brindled poplar tortrix

Epinotia nisella

A species of woodland, hedgerows and gardens, locally distributed in Fife.









Brown alder roller *Epinotia sordidana*

These were by Birnie Loch in mid-September 2026. It is only the third time that the species has been recorded in Fife. As its common name suggests, it is associated with alders.







Hoary tortrix *Eucosma cana*

A common summer species.





Tawny grey *Eudonia lacustrata*

A common species of open habitats.



Garden grey *Eudonia mercurella*

A common species across a range of habitats.





Cocksfoot moth *Glyphipterix simpliciella*

A very common and often abundant grassland species.





Plum tortrix *Hedya pruniana*

Seldom recorded in Fife, the large areas of blackthorn will have attracted this species to Gaddon loch.



Brown house moth *Hofmannophila pseudospretella*

A common house moth, although this one was a long way from the nearest house!



Knapweed seedhead moth *Metzneria metzneriella*

A local species in Fife.







Gorse streak *Mirificarma mulinella*

A common species where gorse grows.





Carrion moth *Monopis weaverella*

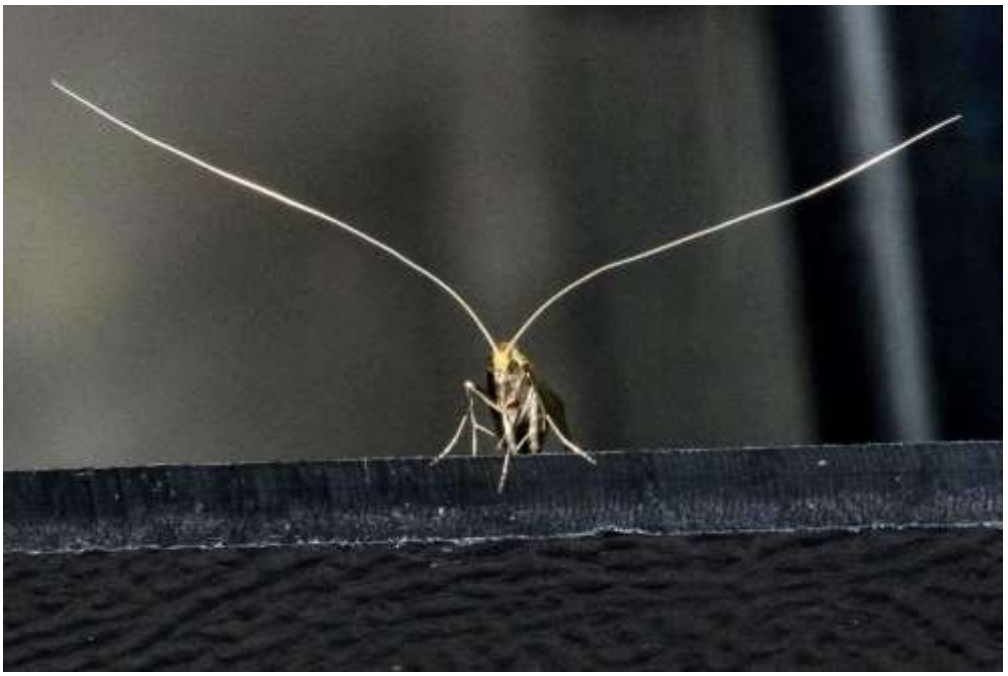
A fairly common species in lowland habitats.





Sandy longhorn *Nematopogon schwarziellus*

This species of longhorn moth is not often recorded in Fife. Its caterpillars feed on dead leaves. This one was at Gaddon Loch in late May 2023.





Black cloak *Notocelia cynosbatella*

A common species of early summer, often seen in daylight.



Hawthorn shoot moth *Notocelia trimaculana*

A scarce species in Fife. The caterpillars feed on hawthorn.





Double orange-spot *Pammene aurana*

Generally local in Scotland, but can be common in summer at Gaddon Loch, where it can be seen on flowers in daylight.



Dark fruit-tree tortrix *Pandemis heparana*

A common species of woodland, hedgerows and gardens.





Rowan parornix *Parornix scoticella*

This tiny species is not often recorded in Fife. This one was at Gaddon Loch in early June 2022.





Mother of pearl *Patania ruralis*

A common species, especially where nettles grow.



Common grey *Scoparia ambigualis*

A common species, often seen during the day.







Brown-spot grey *Scoparia pyralella*

A locally-distributed species of open habitats, where ribwort plantain grows.



Dark-barred tortrix *Syndemis musculana*

A common woodland species.







Orange-tipped nest moth *Tinea semifulvella*

The caterpillars of this species feed on the debris in bird nests.







Spring harbinger *Tortricodes alternella*

Fife is on the edge of the range of this species. It is an early-season species that occurs mostly on or near oak trees. Those above and below left were at Gaddon Loch in late February 2022, while the worn one below right was at Birnie Loch in mid-February 2024.







Pale straw pearl *Udea lutealis*

Common in a variety of habitats.





Bird cherry ermine *Yponomeuta evonymella*

A common species that can be very numerous.





White-shouldered ochre *Ypsolopha parenthesella*

A fairly common woodland species that is associated with several tree species, including alders and birches.





Timothy tortrix *Zelotherses paleana*

A grassland species that is not especially common in inland Fife.

