

MOTH MUMBLINGS: “stop the press” extra !

DUSKY CLEARWING FOUND

I am delighted to say that my prediction was correct – Dusky Clearwing is indeed present in the south-east!

On returning home to Fordham, south Cambridgeshire, after 24 hours away, Ben Sale checked the pheromone traps in his garden today, 17th June 2023 and – to his great joy and surprise – there was a male Dusky Clearwing in one of them. It had been attracted to the TAB lure; there are Aspen trees (*Populus tremula*) nearby. Sadly, not in our counties (yet) – but at least I am proved right!

Since my very recent newsletter comments, I have been bullying a few people to take their lures out and about this has resulted in some helpful information:

- Matthew Gandy comments that it is a common species in Berlin, Germany, where it is associated with Aspen.
- Tim Green, who is currently at his house in southern France, reports that on Thursday [15th June], a Dusky Clearwing came to his Oak Clearwing (*conopiformis*) lure. This is the first this year, but he has recorded 18 on 15 occasions over the last 5 years. Dates range from 5th June to 24th July.
- The males tend to come to lures quite late in the afternoon or early evening so this may be worth considering when surveying potential sites. This most recent one arrived between 18:00 and 19:45 hours. The earliest time was 15:15 and the latest 20:00, with the peak appearing to be around 17:00.
- They come to both the TAB and CON/OAK lures, with the numbers being 4 to OAK and 14 to TAB.
- I’m pretty sure they’re associated with Aspen here as I’ve yet to see any other *Populus spp.* nearby.

The news that Aspen is important is significant (though the Warwickshire moth was definitely associated with a hybrid poplar variety) so that nothing should be taken for granted.

If you have either the TAB lure or the *conopiformis* lure please take it/them for a walk in Herts or Middlesex tomorrow (Sunday) between 3pm and 8pm. I recall plenty of Aspen in Balls Wood – a place certainly worth trying for it. I shall be visiting a couple of spots in the north-east of the county around tea time. There must be plenty of other places with one or more Aspen trees evident. **Please give it a try.**

No time can be allocated to Ben’s capture, but do bear in mind that 3pm to 8pm might be the window, with 5pm being the peak?

I know it is distinctive – but I would very much like to see photos if you can get any. Don’t let those rogues in Cambridgeshire have all the glory – help me find this moth in both Herts and Middlesex tomorrow.

[Of course, the weather may turn against us – but please make a note to go out later in the week if it does. Many of you might be able to fit in a session after work if it flies until 8pm?]



Dusky Clearwing male, Fordham, Cambs., 17 June 2023, Ben Sale

OTHER SPECIES

Tim Green reminds me that when anyone is using these two lures, it’s worth keeping an eye out for the **tiny tineid** *Dryadaula heindeli*. No UK records yet as far, but Tim has recorded over 1000 in France (at the lures) over 5 years. Flight time is mainly early evening, but on hot days a few are active throughout the day and sometimes overnight.

Remember also that **Tamarisk Clearwing** *Synanthedon theryi* is very recently established as a new species for both a new species for both France and Belgium ... on the northern coast, just across the channel. It comes well to the *ichneumoniformis* lure. Readers in Suffolk take note (e.g., Landguard Point). **This species is guaranteed to colonise southern Britain.**

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