

## NATURE NOTES—MARVELLOUS MOTHS

The mid-August heatwave was a great time for seeing moths. A light trap run in our garden captured many different species. There are about 2,500 species of moth in Britain, many more species than our butterflies (about 70 species).



Although there are plenty of brown moths, some moths are beautifully marked and coloured. They also have some lovely names, for example: Elephant Hawk Moth, Angleshades, Annulet, Antler, Apple Leaf Skeletoniser, Argent & Sable, Ashworth's Rustic. Adult moths and their caterpillars are an important source of food for other insects, spiders, frogs, toads, newts, lizards, birds, bats and other small mammals. Many species of bird rely on caterpillars to feed their young.



Silver Y Moth

Whilst most species of moth spend all their lives in Britain, there are some that do not overwinter well here and arrive each year as migrants – just like birds. The Silver Y moth is one example, so called because of the distinctive silver Y mark on each forewing. It spends the winter in North Africa and the Middle East where there is food for the caterpillars. During the summer, adult Silver Y moths move northwards using air currents to assist them. They complete at least one life-cycle in Europe and then, in late summer, a new generation of moths returns to their winter breeding grounds.

Sadly, as with all the wild species that I've written about, moths have been in decline for a good number of years and this is due, to a great extent, to the loss of habitat. The efforts that are being made locally to increase the diversity and abundance of wild plants will all go towards supporting at least some species of moth, as well as butterflies and other insects.



Burnished Brass Moth

Rosemary Collier

## **TYSOE W.I. - MAKING TIME FOR TEA!**



Our members were due to have a lovely afternoon out last week including an afternoon tea. Obviously we couldn't go ahead, but committee thought if our ladies can't go out for tea, then we will take it to them! Everyone received a bag containing a slice of cake, a scone, biscuits, jam, tea bag, napkin and a quiz. It's been

lovely to receive so many messages of thanks. It was also so nice to see our members for a quick chat on the doorstep as we delivered the bags. It's important we all try to stay connected in these difficult times, especially when it doesn't seem that we will be commencing our meetings anytime soon. Chatsworth Christmas trip has been cancelled. Let's hope that we can re book some trips and events in 2021.

## **UP-DATE ST MARY'S CHURCHYARD & SCHOOL LANE**



We're almost ready to cut down everything in the wildflower areas but it's important that all the flowering plants have set seed before we do. The bank in School Lane has produced a surprising number of flowers for its first season; large amount of Yarrow (white flowers), a good patch of Bird's Foot Trefoil (yellow flowers above) and a couple of very nice Mullein plants (tall, yellow flowers, greyish leaves). I've been collecting seed from local verges and plan to sow both areas with a greater mixture of local wildflowers during the autumn. If these seeds germinate then we should get an even more colourful display next year. In July, we were very fortunate to receive a visit from Mike Slater from Warwickshire Butterfly Conservation and he suggested some small improvements we could make to both areas to encourage more butterflies (and moths) next year. He was delighted to see the work that we'd done and also to visit a couple of other wildlife 'reserves' in the village.

Rosemary Collier