

WEG - July 2018

Glowworms, Moths & Lunar Eclipse at Aston Rowant.

After the most extraordinary period of baking hot weather and crystal clear skies, expectations for this 'triple-whammy' meeting were well... sky high. Then, to the horror of the weather watchers among us, it appeared that everyone's prayers for rain were finally going to be answered on the very evening of the event!

However WEG weather has a well-earned reputation for proving neigh-sayers wrong and, despite the disappointment of the lunar eclipse (best for the next 100 years apparently) being entirely hidden by clouds, a dry and balmy evening at least delivered a 'double-whammy' of glowworms (even if only 2 of them) and moths.

An unexpectedly large group had gathered at the Natural England office and after some introductions we set off to stumble and roam over the hills in the dark in search of the illusive glowworm. This in itself is a somewhat mystical experience against a soundtrack of the roaring M40 traffic!

After a glowworm briefing from our leader for the evening Robin Scagell we spread out and thankfully, after an unpromising start, one of the Natural England volunteers managed to find and capture one. The search then proved fruitless until, wonder to behold, one turned on it's light right by the path where we had started out from. So all got a good look - albeit from behind a barbed-wire fence. Such is the lot of a nature watcher.

We then returned to the moth trap which had been set up back at base by enthusiasts Paul Bowyer and Karen Roberts to see what had arrived in our absence. In contrast to the slim pickings of the glowworm hunt there was much to see and a good list of species was recorded - see below.

Moth Trapping at Aston Rowant - 27th July - Recorded by Paul Bowyer and verified by Karen Roberts.

Weather: warm, cloudy with a slight breeze.

Brimstone, Fan-foot, Dun-bar (5), Ruby Tiger (5), Large Yellow Underwing (2), Buff Ermine, Least Carpet, Dusky Sallow (2), Maple Prominent, Pyrausta aurata (3), Black Arches (5), Straw Dot, Iron Prominent (5), Silver Y (3), Lime-speck Pug, Jersey Tiger, Flame Shoulder (5), Willow Beauty (2), Tawny Speckled Pug, Dark Arches, Nut-tree Tussock, Dusky Thorn (2), Common Carpet (3), Scarce Footman, Phoenix, Dark Umber, Common Rustic agg., Bird-Cherry Ermine, Agapeta hamana, Agapeta zoegana, Sallow Kitten, The Snout, Agriphila selasella.