

2010 is International Year of Biodiversity. The following articles are written by two girls who clearly enjoyed themselves on a nature watch event in The Worthys ...

Moth Watch, by Emily Alexander, age 12

As far as I'm concerned the moth watch was a complete success, we saw carpets, footmen, waves and a large variety of other moths. Because of this large variety I have only chosen a few to write about.

We set up two stations; one was a box in which the moths could not escape from, this proved very successful as we managed to capture moths of all kinds. Our other station was a large white sheet with a lamp behind it to attract moths that would not become trapped, but simply for us to look at and identify them.

Below is a selection of the moths we saw:

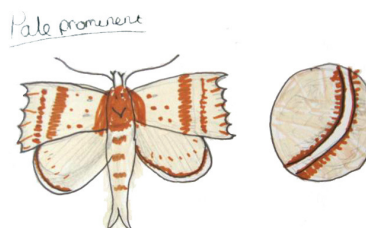
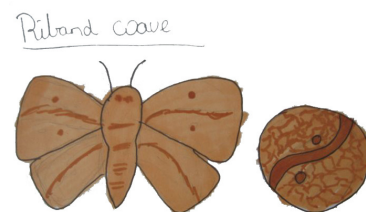
Straw dot (top right) - length: 5-10mm approx, colour: yellow with black dots, observations: stayed still for a few minutes then moved on.

Riband wave (middle) - length: 27-30mm, colour: gold or transparent silver with brown line patterns, observations: stayed very still until more of his kind came along (possibly of the opposite sex).

Pale prominent (bottom) - length: 15-25mm, colour: yellowish brown head brownish green body, observations: stayed very still and close to the ground.

Other moths we saw included: brimstone, flame shoulder, dingy footman and common carpet.

Now that you know about what we saw I will tell you about what I thought of the whole thing. It was great, there was a friendly atmosphere and it was really nice getting to know everyone. It was fantastic there were so many! I learnt that moths can be spotted during the day and that there is a whole other world of micro-moths. I also learnt the difference between a dingy and a buff footman, none of which I had ever even *heard* of before! Overall I really enjoyed the whole thing and I would definitely go again.



Bat Watch, by Leora Alexander, age 10



By Leora

Batz

When we got to the church where the moth watch would take place (St Swithuns, Headbourne Worthy) I had no idea that we would also be looking at bats (that is a *good* thing!).

I can't tell you much about the bats we saw because we weren't able to know for sure what species they were. Though some came close as soon as they were there they were gone, just like that!

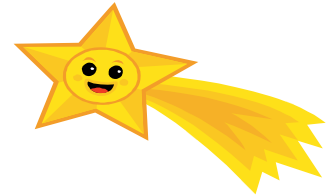
But I can tell you some of the call frequency range kHz numbers we picked up on the bat detector. So I will list them and say what they could have been. At the beginning we picked up a range of 20-30 that could have been: Leisler's, serotine, noctule or barbastelle.

Then later we picked up a call frequency of 58 that could have been: common pipistrelle or Natterer's. We had a dead on 40 that could have been: common pipistrelle or Leisler's.

Then round the end we picked up 56-67 and these calls could have been: Daubenton's or Brandt's.

Now you know about what we possibly saw I want to tell you about what it was like to be there. It got dark really quick and I don't think many people noticed until it was pitch black. We were all sitting down until about 10 minutes into the night. That was when people started looking in the moth box which you can read all about in the moth watch evaluation written by my big sis Emily. Anyway we saw some of the group go down a long path and me, Emily and a very nice lady (who's name I can't remember) followed them over a small bridge and down a path to a big meadow with grass up to my neck to find the others who had picked up a bat sign on the bat detector then we walked back to join the others.

I looked at some moths and then found myself more interested in bats so I followed a man (whose name I also can't remember) with a detector and we saw lots of bats (after first detecting them) and then to make our day a lovely shooting star went by (I missed it though).



Then we sat down and just looked up and saw several bats flying past, and as soon as you know it, it's time to go.

But if the group does anything like it again then I would love to join in the fun!!!

I would also like to thank the whole group for being so kind we had lots of laughs so I would like to thank them ALL!!!



Observing moths using a specialist moth trap (left), and a makeshift trap (right) consisting of a 125W mercury lamp standing behind a large white sheet which was suspended over a line fixed between two stakes tethered to the ground, with a second sheet laid on the ground.

This year WCV is setting up a nature database to help create a picture of what's in our parishes and we would like your help by logging on to www.worthysconservationvolunteers.org.uk/naturewatch and recording your own sightings.