

## Tom Giubhais and National Moth Night 2013

*Martin Faulkner (of Scottish National Heritage) asked if he could go up into the "Pinewood" and see what moths he could find as part of the National Moth Night. This is what Martin said about it:-*

Moths undoubtedly get a raw deal when compared to their butterfly cousins. Sometimes it's just because most of them come out at night. National Moth Night tries to redress the balance. This year it was 10 August and we had a good, warmish night. It was made more enjoyable by listening to tawny owls and watching bats hunting.

We got a real result in Tom Giubhais using three ultraviolet lights. The **Rusty-dot Pearl** is a rare immigrant for Scotland and has never been found in Lochaber! Bit dull maybe, but still a result!

The other 18 species were all fairly common, but there were some very beautiful carpet moths. The moth that seemed to be most popular and common was the dark marbled carpet. However, that's because it's big enough to see without a magnifier.

The yellow underwings are the ones you would probably know. They're big, common and sometimes you see them during the day. If they get disturbed they whir away and you see their bright underwings. Then they seem to disappear! They fold up their wings and drop to the ground while you or a bird is still looking for the bright orange.

The real stunner was, wait for it, **Argyresthia goedartella**. It's a micromoth which really is micro. Its wings are like burnished gold with inlay of pearl. The only problem is that it's about 5mm long at most. It's other curious habit is that it ALWAYS rests with its head down and its tail up. Nobody knows why.



full size  
*Argyresthia goedartella*

I've been trapping in Tom Giubhais quite a few times this summer. What I enjoyed finding the most was another micro-moth - **Nematopogon swammerdamella**. Another long name as well! But its family are called longhorns because their antennae (feelers) are so long. This one waves them about constantly. It has a hard life – eats dead leaves as a caterpillar, turns into a dull brown adult and has a long name.

Here's the list of the others I caught this year. They have more interesting names: Barred Red, Chestnut, Clouded Drab, Common Carpet, Common Marbled Carpet, Common Quaker, Common Rustic, Dark Marbled Carpet, Dotted Clay, Double-striped Pug, Dun-bar, Ear moth, Engrailed, Flounced Rustic, Green Carpet, Green-brindled Crescent, Grey Pine Carpet, Hebrew Character, July Highflyer, Larch Pug, Large Yellow Underwing, Lesser Broad-bordered Yellow Underwing, Lesser Yellow Underwing, Light Emerald, Mottled Beauty, Northern Spinach, Red-green Carpet, Small Quaker, Small Wainscot, Yellow-line Quaker, *Scoparia ambigualis*.

If you want to see what they all look like, UK Moths is a great website ([ukmoths.org.uk](http://ukmoths.org.uk)).