

Jubilee Pasture – Moth Report 2025

Expanding on the work started in 2024, the North and East Yorkshire Ecological Data Centre (NEYEDC) returned to Jubilee Pasture throughout 2025 to continue to build a picture of the moth species present at the site. Following the first two moth recording session in July and September 2024, the aim was to visit approximately once per month across the main flight season, from May to August. The long, dry summer of 2025 made this possible and allowed a fifth recording session in September 2025.

At each session two low-level LED light bucket traps are placed on the pasture, with moths (and other invertebrates) being attracted to the light. They then fly into the bucket, to rest, but the design of the trap means it is difficult for the moths to easily escape. The moths are then recorded and counted before being released unharmed the following morning.

With a baseline of 16 species from 2024, it would be interesting to see what would be found in 2025. Whilst some moths fly all year round, many have specific flight seasons, so by starting at the very end of April and continuing into September there is the best chance of recording different species. As well as different flight seasons, the number of species flying fluctuates throughout the year with the most species being recorded in June, July and August.



The first recording session yielded just four common moth species, but all were new for the site. June 2025 saw an increase to eight different species, including 10 Common Swifts, the first hawk-moth species to be recorded on site (Poplar Hawk-moth) and both White and Buff Ermine. Again, all species are common, but seven were new for the site increasing the total species for the site to 27.



White Ermine and Common Swift



Poplar Hawk-moth

The traps yielded 75 moths of 24 species in July, and included some more unusual species like the Ringed China-mark, which is currently only found in south-eastern parts of Yorkshire and this being only the second record of the species in the 10km square (<https://yorkshiremoths.co.uk/micros.php?bf=13480>). There were also two species of thorn – Canary-shouldered Thorn (already seen in September 2024) and Dusky Thorn. These species often hold their wings in a folded position like butterflies. Other distinctive species included Iron Prominent and Swallow Prominent that sit with their furry front legs facing forward. The six-striped rustic was a nice record as it was the first time this species had been recorded in the 10km square since 1973! 20 out of the 24 species recorded were new for Jubilee Pasture.

As the warm, sunny weather continued into August a further 32 moths of 15 species were recorded, six of which were new to the site. The stars of the show were four Poplar Hawk-moths, and at the other end of the scale, the tiny Chinese Character, which wins the prize for the moth that most looks like a bird dropping! The record for Vine's Rustic is only the second in this 10km square – this is a relatively new arrival in the UK, with the only records in Yorkshire being at Spurn until 2001, since then it has started to spread westwards, but is still only found in the southern and eastern parts of Yorkshire.

The final records for Jubilee Pasture came in early September, with a further three new species for the site. More autumnal species like Lunar Underwing and Feathered Gothic were recorded.



Lunar Underwing



Feathered Gothic

At the end of the year a total of 54 species of moths had been identified at Jubilee Pasture.

Detailed distributions for each moth species can be found on the Yorkshire Moths website:
<https://yorkshiremoths.co.uk/>