



Micro-moths of Tentsmuir

S.T. Buckland

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I have included images of the species that I have been able to photograph in and around Tentsmuir. My thanks go to Nigel Voaden for getting me started on recording Tentsmuir moths, and for identifying the more difficult species — and some of the less difficult ones!

Steve Buckland

steve@st-andrews.ac.uk

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Contents—micro-moths

<i>Acentria ephemerella</i>	5	<i>Aphomia sociella</i>	32	<i>Catoptria margaritella</i>	53
<i>Acleris aspersana</i>	6	<i>Apotomis betuletana</i>	33	<i>Catoptria pinella</i>	54
<i>Acleris emargana</i>	7	<i>Apotomis turbidana</i>	34	<i>Celypha cespitana</i>	55
<i>Acleris hastiana</i>	8	<i>Argyresthia brockeella</i>	35	<i>Celypha lacunana</i>	56
<i>Acleris laterana</i>	9	<i>Argyresthia goedartella</i>	36	<i>Chilo phragmitella</i>	57
<i>Acleris sparsana</i>	10	<i>Bactra lancealana</i>	37	<i>Chionodes distinctella</i>	58
<i>Acrobasis advenella</i>	11	<i>Batrachedra praeangusta</i>	38	<i>Chionodes fumatella</i>	59
<i>Adela reaumurella</i>	12	<i>Blastobasis adustella</i>	39	<i>Chrysoteuchia culmella</i>	60
<i>Aethes cnicana</i>	13	<i>Blastobasis lacticolella</i>	40	<i>Clepsis consimiliana</i>	61
<i>Agapeta hamana</i>	14	<i>Blastobasis vittata</i>	41	<i>Cnephasia incertana / asseclana</i>	62
<i>Agonopterix alstromeriana</i>	15	<i>Blastodacna hellerella</i>	42	<i>Cnephasia stephensiana</i>	63
<i>Agonopterix arenella</i>	16	<i>Bryotropha affinis</i>	43	<i>Cochylichroa atricapitana</i>	64
<i>Agonopterix assimilella</i>	17	<i>Bryotropha terrella</i>	44	<i>Coleophora caespititiella</i>	65
<i>Agonopterix heracliiana</i>	18	<i>Bucculatrix nigricomella</i>	45	<i>Coleophora mayrella</i>	66
<i>Agonopterix nervosa</i>	19	<i>Caloptilia betulicola</i>	46	<i>Coleophora serratella</i>	67
<i>Agonopterix ocellana</i>	20	<i>Caloptilia elongella</i>	47	<i>Crambus lathoniellus</i>	68
<i>Agonopterix scopariella</i>	21	<i>Caloptilia stigmatella</i>	48	<i>Crambus pascuella</i>	69
<i>Agriphila geniculea</i>	22	<i>Capua vulgana</i>	49	<i>Crambus perlella</i>	70
<i>Agriphila inquinatella</i>	23	<i>Carpatolechia proximella</i>	50	<i>Crambus pratella</i>	71
<i>Agriphila straminella</i>	24	<i>Caryocolum fraternella</i>	51	<i>Cydia ulicetana</i>	72
<i>Agriphila tristella</i>	25	<i>Caryocolum marmorea</i>	52	<i>Denisia similella</i>	73
<i>Alucita hexadactyla</i>	26			<i>Depressaria badiella</i>	74
<i>Amblyptilia acanthadactyla</i>	27			<i>Depressaria daucella</i>	75
<i>Anania fuscalis</i>	28			<i>Depressaria pulcherrimella</i>	76
<i>Anania hortulata</i>	29			<i>Depressaria radiella</i>	77
<i>Anerastia lotella</i>	30				
<i>Anthophila fabriciana</i>	31				

Contents—micro-moths

<i>Dichrorampha aeratana/ montanana</i>	78	<i>Glyphipterix simpliciella</i>	101	<i>Pammene aurana</i>	117
<i>Dioryctria abietella</i>	79	<i>Grapholita compositella</i>	102	<i>Pandemis cerasana</i>	118
<i>Diurnea fagella</i>	80	<i>Gypsonoma dealbana</i>	103	<i>Patania ruralis</i>	119
<i>Eana osseana</i>	81	<i>Hofmannophila pseudospretella</i>	104	<i>Plutella xylostella</i>	120
<i>Elachista apicipunctella</i>	82	<i>Incurvaria maschilella</i>	105	<i>Rhigognostis incarnatella</i>	121
<i>Elachista rufocinera</i>	83	<i>Leucoptera spartifoliella</i>	106	<i>Rhopobota naevana</i>	122
<i>Elophila nymphaeata</i>	84	<i>Limnaecia phragmitella</i>	107	<i>Rhyacionia pinivorana</i>	123
<i>Emmelina monodactyla</i>	85	<i>Metzneria metzneriella</i>	108	<i>Scoparia ambigualis</i>	124
<i>Endrosis sarcitrella</i>	86	<i>Mirificarma mulinella</i>	109	<i>Scoparia pyralella</i>	125
<i>Epiblema cirsiiana</i>	87	<i>Monopis laevigella</i>	110	<i>Scrobipalpa samadensis</i>	126
<i>Epinotia immundana</i>	88	<i>Nemapogon cloacella</i>	111	<i>Syndemis musculana</i>	127
<i>Epinotia nanana</i>	89	<i>Neofaculta ericetella</i>	112	<i>Teleiopsis diffinis</i>	128
<i>Epinotia nisella</i>	90	<i>Nomophila noctuella</i>	113	<i>Udea ferrugalis</i>	129
<i>Epinotia ramella</i>	91	<i>Notocelia trimaculana</i>	114	<i>Udea lutealis</i>	130
<i>Epinotia rubiginosana</i>	92	<i>Nymphula nitidulata</i>	115	<i>Udea olivalis</i>	131
<i>Esperia sulphurella</i>	93	<i>Oxypteryx wilkella</i>	116	<i>Udea prunalis</i>	132
<i>Eucosma campoliliana</i>	94			<i>Yponomeuta evonymella</i>	133
<i>Eucosma cana</i>	95			<i>Yponomeuta rorrella</i>	134
<i>Eudonia angustea</i>	96			<i>Ypsolopha ustella</i>	135
<i>Eudonia lacustrata</i>	97			<i>Zelotherses paleana</i>	136
<i>Eudonia mercurella</i>	98				
<i>Eudonia truncicolella</i>	99				
<i>Evergestis pallidata</i>	100				



Water vaneer *Acentria ephemerella*

A locally-distributed wetland species that can be numerous where it occurs. The adults only live for about a day.





Small rufous tortrix *Acleris aspersana*

A woodland species that is seldom recorded in east Fife. This one was at Tentsmuir Point in early August, well away from its foodplants of beech and sycamore.



Scalloped tortrix *Acleris emargana*

A common woodland species.





Varied tortrix *Acleris hastiana*

This worn moth is likely to be this species, although *Acleris ferrugana* and *Acleris notana* cannot be ruled out. These three species have only rarely been recorded in Fife. This one was at Tentsmuir Point in mid-May 2023.





Dark-marked tortrix *Acleris laterana*

A common species of woodland, hedgerows and gardens.





Lead-coloured tortrix *Acleris sparsana*

A common species of woodland and gardens, from late summer into winter.



Hawthorn knot-horn *Acrobasis advenella*

A locally-distributed species, occurring where hawthorns are available.





Green longhorn *Adela reaumurella*

A scarce species in Fife. This male was at Morton Lochs.



Thistle straw *Aethes cnicana*

A common species where thistles grow.





Garden straw *Agapeta hamana*

A common species where thistles grow.



Hemlock moth *Agonopterix alstromeriana*

A scarce species in Fife, occurring mostly along the Firth of Forth coast. This was one of two at Tentsmuir Point in early September 2023.





Brindled buff *Agonopterix arenella*

A widespread species that can occur throughout the year.



Speckled broom buff *Agonopterix assimilella*

A fairly common species associated with broom.



Common brindled brown *Agonopterix heracliana*

A very common species that overwinters as an adult. Some winter in the hides at Morton Lochs, and become active on mild nights.





Burnt-tip buff *Agonopterix nervosa*

A common species, associated mostly with broom or gorse.





Red-eyed buff *Agonopterix ocellana*

A species of wet habitats. The one above was at Tentsmuir Point in late October 2022, the one below left was by the railway hide at Morton Lochs in late March 2022, and the one below right was by the squirrel hide in mid-August 2022.





Broom buff *Agonopterix scopariella*

A scarce species in Fife. Its caterpillars feed on broom. These were near the ice house in mid-March 2023.





Chevron grass-moth *Agriphila geniculea*

A locally-distributed species of dry grassland, occurring mostly at or near the coast in Fife.





Barred grass-moth *Agriphila inquinatella*

A locally-distributed and mostly coastal species in Fife. Occurs in dry grasslands.





Straw grass-moth *Agriphila straminella*

An abundant species of grasslands.





Common grass-moth *Agriphila tristella*

Another common grassland species.





Twenty-plume moth *Alucita hexadactyla*

A common but unique species. It is sometimes found indoors. This one was in the railway hide at Morton Lochs. Its foodplant is honeysuckle.





Beautiful plume

Amblyptilia acanthadactyla

A scarce species in Fife. These were near the ice house at Tentsmuir Point in 2023, one in spring and the others in autumn.





Rattle pearl *Anania fuscalis*

A widespread species, common in suitable grassland.





Small magpie *Anania hortulata*

A fairly common species through much of the year. This one was in a bird hide at Edenside.



Sandhill knot-horn

Anerastia lotella

A sand-dune specialist. These were at Tentsmuir Point.





Nettle-tap *Anthophila fabriciana*

A very common day-flying species wherever nettles grow.





Bee moth *Aphomia sociella*

A common species whose caterpillars live in bee or wasp nests.



Birch marble *Apotomis betuletana*

A species of birch woodland.



White-shouldered marble *Apotomis turbidana*

A birch specialist which has only been recorded from a handful of sites in Fife. These were at Tentsmuir Point in June and July 2022.





Gold W *Argyresthia brockeella*

A common species where birches or alders occur.





Brassy Y *Argyresthia goedartella*

Another species that is common where birches or alders occur. The above moth was at Tentsmuir Point on 30 October 2022, well past its normal flight season, and was probably second generation.





Common lance

Bactra lancealana

A common species of wet habitats.





Poplar needle-moth *Batrachedra praeangusta*

An uncommon wetland species. This one was at Morton Lochs in early July 2022.





Common masoner *Blastobasis adustella*

A common species in a variety of habitats.





Large pale masoner

Blastobasis lacticolella

A common species that is increasing its range.





Dotted masoner *Blastobasis vittata*

A species that only recently arrived in Scotland, and is rapidly expanding its range. This one was at Tentsmuir Point in early August 2023.



Hawthorn berry moth *Blastodacna hellerella*

A species that is seldom recorded in Fife. This one was at Morton Lochs in July 2022.



Dark moss-moth *Bryotropha affinis*

A locally-distributed species.





Brown moss-moth *Bryotropha terrella*

A fairly common grassland species.





Daisy tuft *Bucculatrix nigricomella*

A scarce species in Fife. It is a leaf miner, and its larvae feed in leaves of ox-eye daisy.





Birch stilt *Caloptilia betulicola*

A species of birch woodland, this moth was at Tentsmuir Point in late October 2022.



Alder stilt *Caloptilia elongella*

This is a species of damp woodland and marshes. This moth was on the railway hide at Morton Lochs in mid-April.





Willow stilt *Caloptilia stigmatella*

This is a common species of woodland where willows grow.





Pale-shouldered tortrix *Capua vulgana*

This species is scarce in Fife. It occurs in woodland and heathland. This one was at Tentsmuir Point in late May 2022.





Spotted birch grey *Carpatolechia proximella*

Identity uncertain! A common species where birches or alders grow.





Stitchwort groundling *Caryocolum fraternella*

This species is spreading into Fife, and had been recorded from just four coastal sites prior to this observation, at Morton Lochs in early August 2022.





Mouse-ear groundling *Caryocolum marmorea*

A species of coastal dunes. Tentsmuir Point is the only site in Fife where it has been recorded.





Pearl-banded grass-moth *Catoptria margaritella*

A locally-distributed species associated with wet habitats.





Pearl grass-moth *Catoptria pinella*

This species occur in a range of habitats, but is patchily distributed in Fife.





Thyme marble *Celypha cespitana*

An uncommon species in Fife, recorded from just a handful of sites. These were at Tentsmuir Point in July 2022.





Common marble *Celypha lacunana*

A very common species, often seen in daytime.





Reed veneer *Chilo phragmitella*

A scarce reedbed species. These females were at Morton Lochs in June 2022.





Moss groundling *Chionodes distinctella*

Tentsmuir is the only location in Fife that this species has been recorded. This one was on ragwort in late August 2023.





Smoky groundling *Chionodes fumatella*

A rare species in Scotland. This one was on the sand dunes at Tentsmuir Point in early August 2023.





Garden grass-moth *Chrysoteuchia culmella*

One of the common grass moths, and one of the first to appear in summer.





Rufous tortrix *Clepsis consimilana*

A fairly common species in a range of lowland habitats.



Light grey tortrix / flax tortrix

Cnephasia incertana / *asseclana*

Two common species that are difficult to differentiate!





Common grey tortrix *Cnephasia stephensiana*

A fairly common species in Fife.





Black-fronted straw *Cochylichroa atricapitana*

A locally-distributed species in Fife, occurring where ragwort, its foodplant, grows.





Buff rush case-bearer *Coleophora caespititiella*

A rare species in Fife. This one was at Morton Lochs in mid-June 2021.



Clothed case-bearer *Coleophora mayrella*

This species is not often recorded in Fife. This one was at Tentsmuir Point in early July 2022.





Common case-bearer *Coleophora serratella*

A common species where birch or alder trees grow.



Meadow grass-moth *Crambus lathoniellus*

A common species of grass moth.





White-banded grass-moth *Crambus pascuella*

This grass moth has only been recorded from a few sites in Fife. This one was at Tentsmuir Point in early July 2022.



Satin grass-moth

Crambus perlella

A locally-distributed grassland species in Fife.





Scarce grass-moth

Crambus pratella

A rare species in Fife, recorded from just two locations. These were at Tentsmuir Point.





Common gorse moth *Cydia ulicetana*

A very common species where gorse or broom occurs.





Northern concealer *Denisia similella*

This species has only been recorded from two locations in Fife. It is a woodland species, associated with decaying birch trees. This one was at Morton Lochs in mid-June 2021.





Varied brown *Depressaria badiella*

A locally-distributed species that has only been recorded from a handful of sites in Fife.



Water-dropwort brown

Depressaria daucella

A scarce species in Fife, occurring in wet habitats. These were at Tentsmuir Point in March and April 2023.





Pignut brown *Depressaria pulcherrimella*

A locally-distributed species. This one was at Tentsmuir Point in early August 2023.



Parsnip moth *Depressaria radiella*

A common species where its foodplants occur, common hogweed and wild parsnip.



Dingy daisy moth / northern yarrow moth

Dichrorampha aeratana / *alpestrana*

Two species that are very difficult to separate. *D alpestrana* is the more common species and is widespread in Scotland.



Pine knot-horn

Dioryctria abietella

A fairly common species in Fife, mostly occurring in conifer plantations.





Early reveller

Diurnea fagella

A common spring species.





Dotted cloak *Eana osseana*

A common species of rough grassland, moorland and heathland.





Pearly grass-miner *Elachista apicipunctella*

Seldom recorded in Fife, this one was at Morton Lochs in late May 2022.



Speckled grass-miner

Elachista rufocinerea

A rare find in Fife, these were at Morton Lochs in late May 2022.





Brown china-mark *Elophila nymphaeata*

A locally-distributed species of wet habitats. The one above was at Morton Lochs, the one below at Tentsmuir Point.





Common plume *Emmelina monodactyla*

A locally-distributed species in Fife. This one was near the ice house in mid-October 2022.





White-shouldered house-moth *Endrosis sarcitrella*

Familiar as one of the 'clothes moths'. These were at the squirrel hide at Morton Lochs.





Knapweed root-borer *Epiblema cirsiiana*

This moth is likely to be *Epiblema cirsiiana*, although *Epiblema scutulana* cannot be ruled out. It is associated with knapweeds and thistles.



Birch tortrix *Epinotia immundana*

A common species of open woodland and heathland with birch or alder.





Small spruce tortrix *Epinotia nanana*

This tiny tortrix (less than 5mm long) was at Morton Lochs in late May 2022. There has been just one previous record in Fife, at Tentsmuir.





Brindled poplar tortrix *Epinotia nisella*

A common species where willows or poplars grow. These were at Tentsmuir Point in late September and early October.





Black-marked tortrix *Epinotia ramella*

A common species where birches grow. This one was at Tentsmuir Point in late September.





Pine tortrix *Epinotia rubiginosana*

Seldom recorded in Fife, this one was at Morton Lochs in early June 2022.





Sulphur bark moth *Esperia sulphurella*

A locally-distributed species in Fife. This one was at Tentsmuir Point in late May 2022.



Pied tortrix *Eucosma campoliliana*

This species occurs in habitats with ragwort, its food plant.





Hoary tortrix *Eucosma cana*

A common grassland species.





Narrow-winged grey *Eudonia angustea*

A locally-distributed species in Fife. This one was at Tentsmuir Point in late September 2022.





Tawny grey *Eudonia lacustrata*

A fairly common species, occurring in woodland habitats.





Garden grey *Eudonia mercurella*

A common species in a range of habitats.





Peppered grey *Eudonia truncicolella*

Common in a range of habitats. Its caterpillars feed on moss.



Chequered pearl *Evergestis pallidata*

A locally-distributed species that is spreading into Fife. It occurs in damp, open woodland and on marshes.



Cocksfoot moth *Glyphipterix simpliciella*

A tiny and very abundant moth.





Meadow tortrix *Grapholita compositella*

A tiny moth that is seldom recorded in Fife. The one below was at Morton Lochs in early June 2022, and was the first record from east Fife. The one above was there in mid-June 2022.





Common cloaked tortrix *Gypsonoma dealbana*

A scarce species of open woodland and hedgerows.



Brown house-moth *Hofmannophila pseudospretella*

A common moth. These were in the squirrel hide at Morton Lochs.





Feathered cutter *Incurvaria masculella*

A day-flying species of open woodland and moorland. A scarce species in Fife. This one was at Tentsmuir Point in mid-May 2021.





Broom stem-miner *Leucoptera spartifoliella*

A tiny, locally-distributed species associated with broom.



Bulrush down moth *Limnaecia phragmitella*

A locally-distributed species of habitats with bulrushes.



Knapweed seedhead moth *Metzneria metzneriella*

A locally-distributed species that occurs where its foodplant, common knapweed, grows, such as grassland and road verges.



Gorse streak *Mirificarma mulinella*

A fairly common species of heathland and farmland with gorse or broom.





Skin moth *Monopis laevigella*

A common woodland species.





Cork moth *Nemapogon cloacella*

A common species of woodland and gardens.



Heather grey *Neofaculta ericetella*

A species associated with heather that can be abundant. Its markings are quite variable.





Rush veneer *Nomophila noctuella*

Mostly a coastal species in Fife.





Hawthorn shoot moth *Notocelia trimaculana*

A fairly common species in east Fife, associated with hawthorn.



Beautiful china-mark *Nymphula nitidulata*

A locally-distributed species, occurring in wet habitats.





Silver-barred moss-moth *Oxypteryx wilkella*

A tiny and rare species, mostly on sandy coasts, and only recorded from two or three sites in Fife. These were at Tentsmuir Point in late June 2023.





Double orange-spot *Pammene aurana*

A locally-distributed species in Fife, but often very visible on flowerheads of its foodplant, hogweed, during the day. These were at Morton Lochs.





Barred fruit-tree tortrix *Pandemis cerasana*

A common species of woodland, hedgerows and gardens.



Mother of pearl *Patania ruralis*

A common species of woodland and gardens.





Diamond-back moth *Plutella xylostella*

This moth is a frequent migrant, and can occur almost anywhere.





Northern diamond-back *Rhigognostis incarnatella*

A locally-distributed woodland species which has only been recorded from a handful of sites in Fife. This one was on the railway hide at Morton Lochs in late March 2022.





Holly tortrix *Rhopobota naevana*

There has only been a scattering of records of this species in Fife. This one was at Morton Lochs in mid-June 2022.





Spotted shoot moth *Rhyaciana pinivorana*

Rarely recorded in Fife, this species is associated with Scots pines. These were at Tentsmuir Point in early July 2022.





Common grey *Scoparia ambigualis*

A common species occurring in a variety of habitats, wherever moss occurs.





Brown-spot grey

Scoparia pyralella

A fairly common species of open habitats.





Buck's-horn root miner

Scrobipalpa samadensis

A scarce and variable species, occurring on salt marsh. These were at Tayport Heath in early August 2023. The two below are lacking the identifying markings of the other two, but are probably the same species.





Dark-barred tortrix *Syndemis musculana*

A common species of woodland and moorland.





Common groundling

Teleiopsis diffinis

In Fife, a rare species of dry grassland and heathland that has not been recorded away from Tentsmuir in recent years.





Rusty-dot pearl *Udea ferrugalis*

A scarce species in Fife. The one above was at Morton Lochs in late June 2023, and the one below at Tentsmuir Point in early October 2024. They are likely to be migrants.





Pale straw pearl *Udea lutealis*

A common species of woodland, hedgerows and gardens.





Garden pearl *Udea olivalis*

A common species of woodland, hedgerows and gardens.





Dusky pearl *Udea prunalis*

A locally-distributed species of woodland, hedgerows and gardens in Scotland.



Bird cherry ermine *Yponomeuta evonymella*

A common and sometimes abundant species. Its caterpillars create communal webs on bird cherry.



Willow ermine *Yponomeuta rorrella*

A rare species. This one was at Tentsmuir Point in mid-August 2021. The species had previously been recorded at just one location in Fife.



Varied ochre *Ypsolopha ustella*

A very variable species that is scarce in Fife. This one was at Tentsmuir Point in September 2023.





Timothy tortrix *Zelothereses paleana*

A common species of rough grassland, especially at the coast.

