

White-mantled Wainscot Moth (*Archanara neurica*)

1 Definition

The White-mantled Wainscot Moth, which is now only known in Britain from the Suffolk coast, inhabits the drier peripheral areas of reed-beds. It spends the day concealed and flies over the tops of the reedbeds at dusk and amongst the reeds later in the night. The white-mantled wainscot is light brown in colour and flies from July to early August, over-wintering as an egg. The larva feeds in the stems of common reed. Suitable habitat for the larva appears to be found in drier reedy ditches, on the edges of reed-beds and locally within larger reed-beds in the drier areas.

2 Current Status

2.1 National

This moth was discovered in this country in 1908 at Pett Level in Sussex but the habitat at the site was destroyed during the Second World War. In 1939 it was re-discovered in Suffolk and this remains the only area of coast marsh where the moth is found in Great Britain. There are other records from around the country but these are generally discounted due to the confusion with the similar, more widespread - brown-veined wainscot (*Archanara dissoluta*).

2.2 Local

The moth is known to occur in the reed-beds of Minsmere and Walberswick. The moth has also been reported from Thorpeness/North Warren RSPB Reserve, Dingle Marshes, Walberswick, Benacre Broad and Darsham Marshes. Minsmere and North Warren are managed as nature reserves by the RSPB and Walberswick is managed as a nature reserve by English Nature

2.3 Natural Areas

Suffolk Coast & Heaths

3 Current factors affecting the White-mantled Wainscot Moth in Suffolk

- Loss of suitable areas of drier reed-bed
- Conversion of suitable habitat to wetter areas of reed-bed as part of conservation management for other species - notably the Bittern
- Loss of habitat as reed-bed becomes too dry to support the foodplant.

4 Current action

4.1 Legal Status

The species is classified as rare on the GB Red List and as a species of conservation concern in the UK BAP

4.2 Management, research and guidance

Survey work has been ongoing since 1998 by the British Entomological and Natural History Society, Butterfly Conservation and Suffolk Moth Group at Minsmere, Dingle Marshes, North Warren and Walberswick.

Survey work by the Suffolk Moth Group in 2003 aimed to record the species at Easton Broad and in a different part of the reed-bed at Minsmere. Both surveys produced negative results, although at the former site trapping was not undertaken in the most suitable part of the reedbed. The Suffolk Moth Group plan to return to these sites in 2004 to re-survey.

5 Action plan objectives and targets

- 1. Establish current status and distribution of this species in Suffolk.*
- 2. Maintain and where appropriate enhance populations of this species at extant sites.*
- 3. Make available suitable habitat further inland to prepare for current habitat loss from coastal erosion*

5 White mantled wainscot moth: Proposed action with lead agencies

Action	Date	Partners
SITE SAFEGUARD AND MANAGEMENT		
Prevent damage to drier areas of reed-bed at existing sites.	2004 2005 2006 2007	SCDC, RSPB, SWT, EN
Ensure appropriate management of all occupied sites and of suitable sites within the moth's dispersal range.	2006 2007	BC, EN, SWT, RSPB
Attempt to link isolated colonies by suitable habitat management if feasible.	2004 2005 2006 2007	BAP Wetland Working Group, EN, RSPB, SWT
RESEARCH AND MONITORING		
Conduct research into the local status, habitat requirements, population dynamics and dispersal abilities of the moth to aid conservation management.	2004	BC/ SMG
Set up monitoring schemes at key sites to identify any changes in the distribution and status of this species.	2004 2006	BC/SMG, EN, NT, RSPB, SBRC
Identify & survey suitable areas for presence of the moth outside known sites.	2004 2005	BC/SMG, EN, NT, RSPB
Pass survey and monitoring information to SBRC for onward distribution to JNCC and National BRC.	2004 2005 2006 2007	BC/SMG, EN, SBRC
ADVISORY		
Produce a leaflet on the current status and breeding requirements of the moth for site owners and managers.	2005 2006 2007	BAP Wetland Working Group, BC/SMG, EN, HWG
COMMUNICATIONS AND PUBLICITY		
Promote opportunities for the appreciation and the conservation of the White-mantled Wainscot Moth and its habitat.	2004 2005 2006 2007	BAP Wetland Working Group, BC/SMG, RSPB, NT