

June has been a changeable month with few suitable trapping nights and a general lack of insects in lower than average temperatures for the time of year.



Always in anticipation of better things to come, July can be a peak time for moths, both in numbers and variety of species.

The various thorn moths are first differentiated by their resting position, closed tight shut for Early Thorn and among the others which hold their wings partly open, the Canary-shouldered Thorn (*left*) is among the most distinctive. Its name gives it away.

The footman moths with care and practice can be sorted out. The largest and less common are the sexually dimorphic Four-spotted Footman.



The female (*left*) has four black spots, one of them often hidden in the folds of the upper wing when at rest. The male (*right*) when fresh is a very striking moth with yellow head and thorax and grey wings. Said to be a migrant it is suspected that at least here in the SW it is also a scarce breeding resident.



Probably the commonest especially in woodland is the Dingy Footman (*below*) distinguished by its characteristic 'pumpkin seed' shape at rest.



Care is needed to differentiate Common from Buff. They need to be fresh, and I think it's partly 'jizz'; the Common (*left*) is a little more parallel shaped with clear cream margins to the upper wing.

The Buff (*right*) holds itself very slightly more loosely and has more buff colour on head and reaching further down the back of its neck.

It has a form which is pale buffish grey all over.

