



# 2026

*Calendar*

 Moths and  
**Butterflies** of  
New Zealand Trust  
Pūrerehua Aotearoa

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**Blue moon** – *Hypolimnastis bolina nerina* – Photo by Tom Musson





## January 2026

**Blue moon** – *Hypolimnas bolina nerina* – Photo by Tom Musson

Known in Australia as the 'giant eggfly', 'common eggfly' and 'varied eggfly', this large butterfly often arrives in large numbers on late summer cyclones. In 2022 there were sightings throughout the winter – perhaps they are now breeding here? The male comes in one form, but the females can look quite different. Males have jet black wings with three prominent ultraviolet eyespots and other small white patches/spots. Females come in three different colourations.

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
				1 New Year's Day	2	3 ○
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11 ◐	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19 ● Wellington Anniversary	20	21	22	23	24
25	26 ◐ Auckland and Northland Anniversaries Term 1 begins	27	28	29	30	31

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**Cinnabar moth** – *Tyria jacobaeae* – Photo by Jesse Bythell



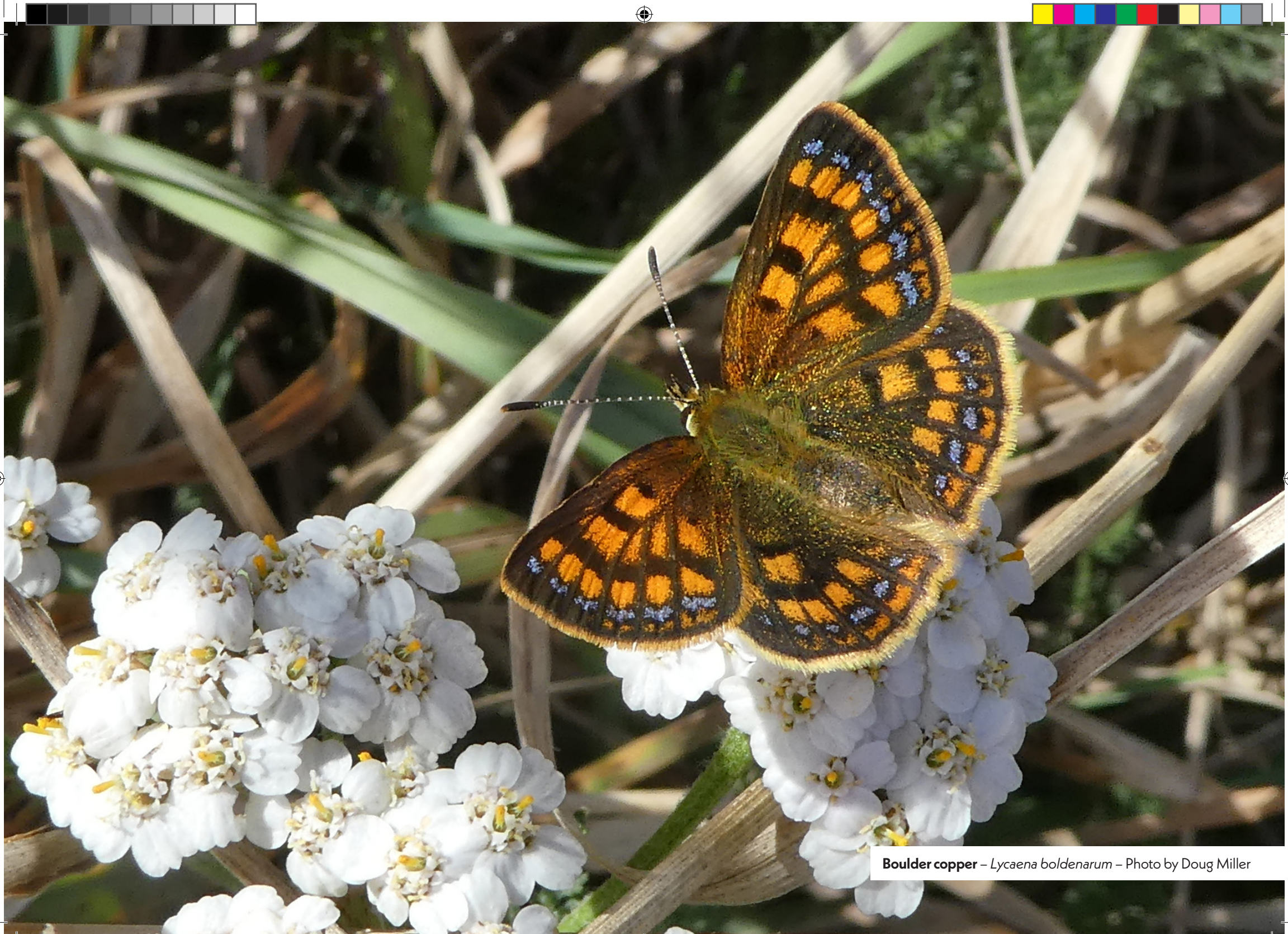


## February 2026 **Cinnabar moth** – *Tyria jacobaeae* – Photo by Jesse Bythell

This day-flying moth was introduced to New Zealand in 1926 to control ragwort, which is toxic to livestock. They are found in many parts of the NZ countryside including the lower North Island and many areas of the upper South Island. The moths can be found flying at night and are attracted to light. Caterpillars have distinct yellow and black bands, and feed on ragwort and senecio.

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
1	2  Buller and Nelson Anniversaries	3	4	5	6 Waitangi Day	7
8	9	10 	11	12	13	14 Valentines Day
15	16	17	18 	19	20	21
22	23	24	25 	26	27	28









**Boulder copper** – *Lycaena boldenarum* – Photo by Doug Miller



## March 2026

**Boulder copper** – *Lycaena boldenarum* – Photo by Doug Miller

This beautiful butterfly is endemic to NZ with larvae feeding on *Muehlenbeckia* species. It is also known in Māori as pepe parariki and mokarakare, names shared with other members of the genus *Lycaena* in NZ, including the closely-related common copper, *L. salustius*. It has been observed mainly on the North Island. The copper species are being investigated as part of The Butterfly Discovery Project.

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
1	2	3	4 	5	6	7
8	9 <small>Taranaki Anniversary</small>	10	11 	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19 	20	21
22	23 <small>Otago Anniversary</small>	24	25	26 	27	28
29	30	31				

### The difference between butterflies and moths

NZ has a higher rate of endemic Lepidoptera (butterflies and moths) than anywhere else in the world (ones that occur in a particular area and nowhere else). Endemism accounts for over 90% of NZ's Lepidoptera. There are over 2,000 moths.

Over recent years Brian Patrick and his son Hamish, both highly respected lepidopterists, have been researching the possibility that some butterflies presently considered as sub-species are actually different species, and so this number may rise in the near future when DNA analysis is completed. As far as moths go, it is more than probable that there are many species still to be described!

The most reliable way of distinguishing a moth from a butterfly is that moths have feathery, sometimes pointed, antennae (feelers) but butterflies have clubbed antennae which terminate with an expanded knob.

Butterflies are generally diurnal (day-flying) and moths nocturnal (night-flying) although we have a number of day-flying moths. A third distinction is that generally butterflies settle with wings together over their back like a yacht's sail, exposing the undersides, whereas moths' wings tend to lie flat over the body like a tent with the upper side of the forewing visible.

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**Red admiral** – *Vanessa gonerilla* – Photo by Devangi Farah









## April 2026

**Red admiral** – *Vanessa gonerilla* – Photo by Devangi Farah

Māori: kahukura. This is our beautiful endemic red admiral, voted Bug of the Year in 2024. In the wild the tree nettle (Ongaonga or *Urtica ferox*) is the host plant. The eggs are often laid on the spines or stinging hairs on the leaves. The caterpillars feed on the leaves, pulling the outer edges of the leaf together with silk to form a 'tent' in which to shelter and conceal themselves from predators, and feed from within their shelter. One of the most exciting projects we launched in 2024 was to bring the red admiral back to Auckland. Check out our website for more information!

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
			1	2  End of Term 1	3  Good Friday	4
5  Daylight saving ends Easter Sunday	6  Easter Monday	7  Southland Anniversary	8	9	10  	11
12	13	14	15	16	17  	18
19	20  Start of Term 2	21	22	23	24  	25  ANZAC Day
26	27  ANZAC Day observed	28	29	30		





**Green blotched moth–** *Cosmodes elegans* – Photo by Jacob Littlejohn










## May 2026

**Green blotched moth** – *Cosmodes elegans* – Photo by Jacob Littlejohn

This moth is native to Australia but sometimes arrives in NZ during summer as a migrant and establishes temporary colonies. It lives in forest clearings with the larvae feeding on Lobelia and Verbena species. It flies at night and is attracted to light.

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
					1	2 
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10  Mother's Day	11	12	13	14	15	16
17 	18	19	20	21	22	23 
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31 						

### Create a Habitat for Butterflies

Do you want to create the ideal environment for butterflies at your place? The MBNZT has an online "Create Butterfly Habitat" course which covers information about creating a butterfly garden/habitat.

For more information, visit our website [www.nzbutterflies.org.nz](http://www.nzbutterflies.org.nz).



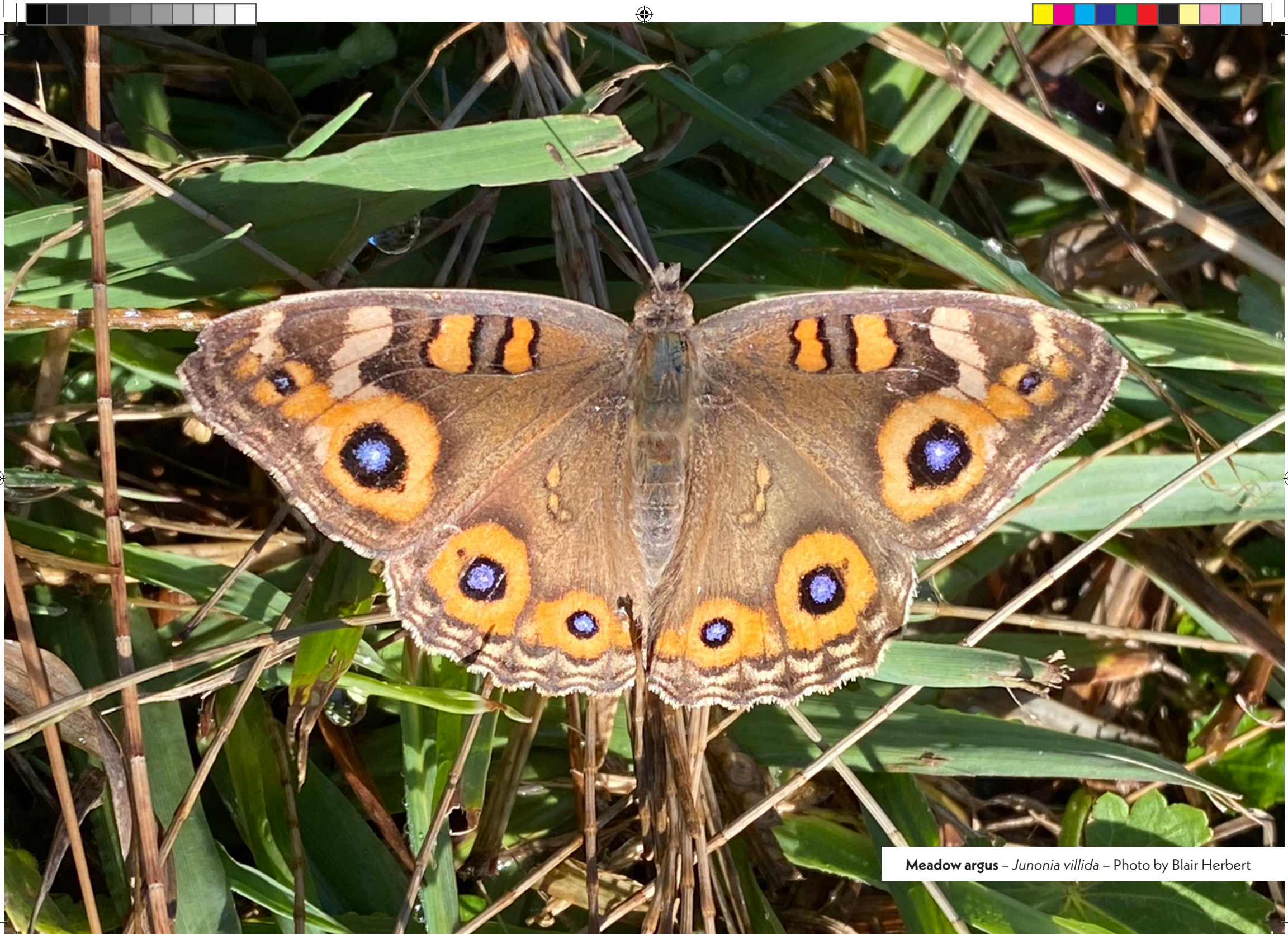
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**Meadow argus** – *Junonia villida* – Photo by Blair Herbert



## June 2026

**Meadow argus** – *Junonia villida* – Photo by Blair Herbert

Normally a rare migrant visitor from Australia, this butterfly has a distinctive flight pattern unlike any other species to be seen in NZ. Flying about one metre above the ground, it beats its wings a couple of times and follows that with a short glide period, wings outstretched in a straight, horizontal position. This feature alone is enough to identify an individual even if the wing markings are not visible. Plantago (plantain), snapdragons and portulaca are among the caterpillars' food plants.

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
	1 <small>King's Birthday</small>	2	3	4	5	6
7	8 	9	10	11	12	13
14	15 	16	17	18	19	20
21	22 	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30 				

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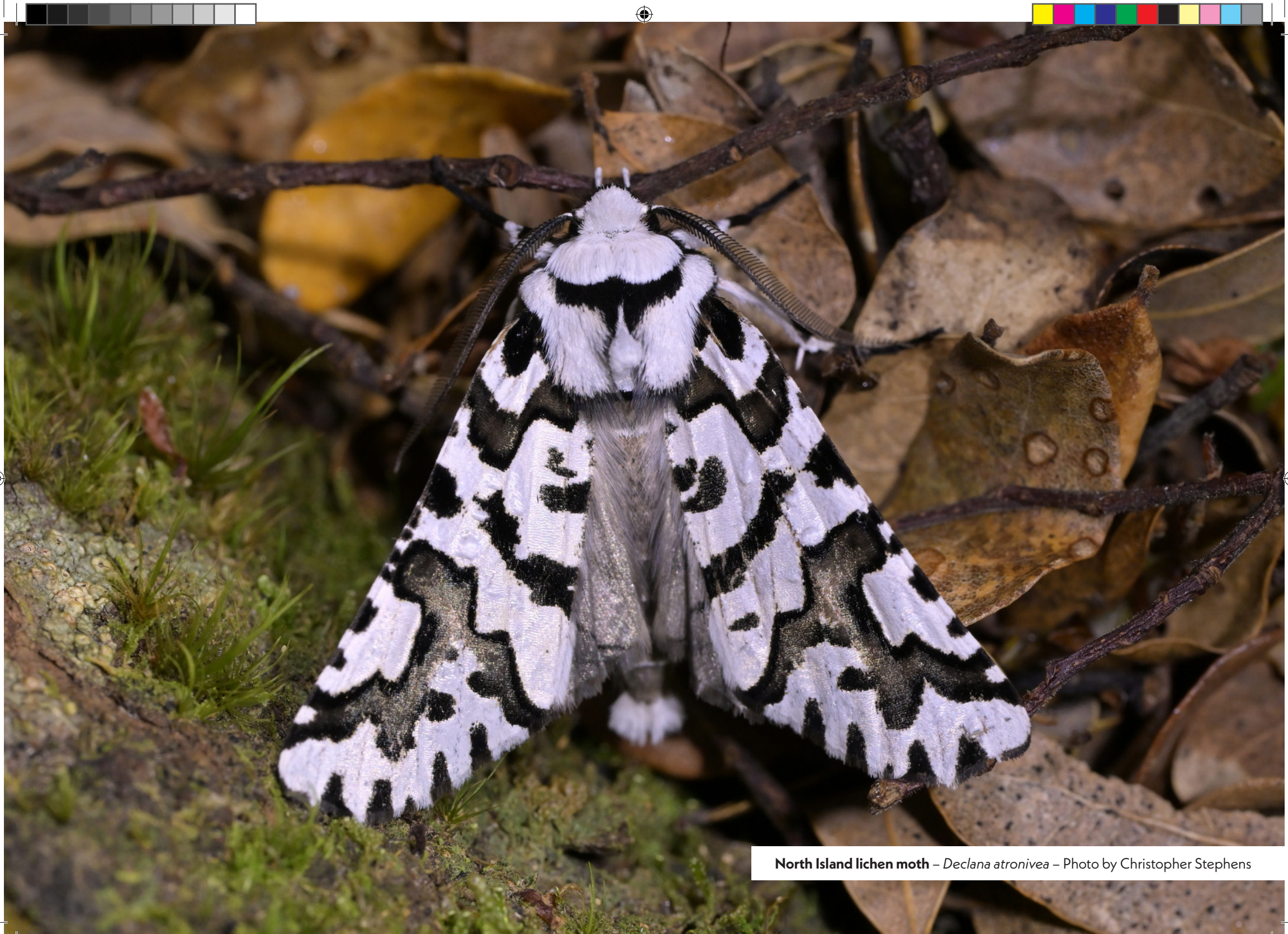




## SETTLERS

LIFESTYLE VILLAGE





North Island lichen moth – *Declana atronivea* – Photo by Christopher Stephens



## July 2026

### North Island lichen moth – *Declana atronivea* – Photo by Christopher Stephens

Confined to the North Island, this moth is a striking lichen or bark mimic, resembling twigs of the host plant covered with lichen or scale insects. The larvae are well camouflaged, resembling a small bird dropping when young and a fruit of the *Pseudopanax* plant when older.

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
			1	2	3 End of Term 2	4
5	6	7	8 ☾	9	10 Matariki	11
12	13	14 ●	15	16	17	18
19	20 Start of Term 3	21 ☾	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30 ○	31	

### Where to see habitat

The MBNZT certifies habitat specifically landscaped for butterflies and moths so that visitors can see the best conditions for our native Lepidoptera: shelter, ecoclimates, nectar and host plants. There are initiatives nationwide: some are private\* but most open to the public year-round.

Apollo Park, Milson  
Bethells Beach\*  
Blockhouse Bay Recreational Reserve, Auckland  
Earthlore, Owaka  
Bright Side, Central Auckland  
Cedar Creek, Sawyers Bay, Dunedin  
Halfway House, Glenside Reserve, Wellington  
Hobbiton™ Movie Set, Matamata  
Kaipātiki Project, Birkdale, Auckland  
Neil Hunt Native Butterfly Habitat, Rotorua  
Paripuma\*, Seddon  
Pēpepe Butterfly Friendly Gardens\*, Tokomaru Bay  
Saint Kentigern College, Auckland  
Te Puna Quarry Park, Bay of Plenty  
Verran Road School, Birkdale  
West Lynn Garden, New Lynn  
Wildwind, Milson\*  
Yealands Estate, Seddon

There is more information on our website,  
[www.nzbutterflies.org.nz](http://www.nzbutterflies.org.nz)

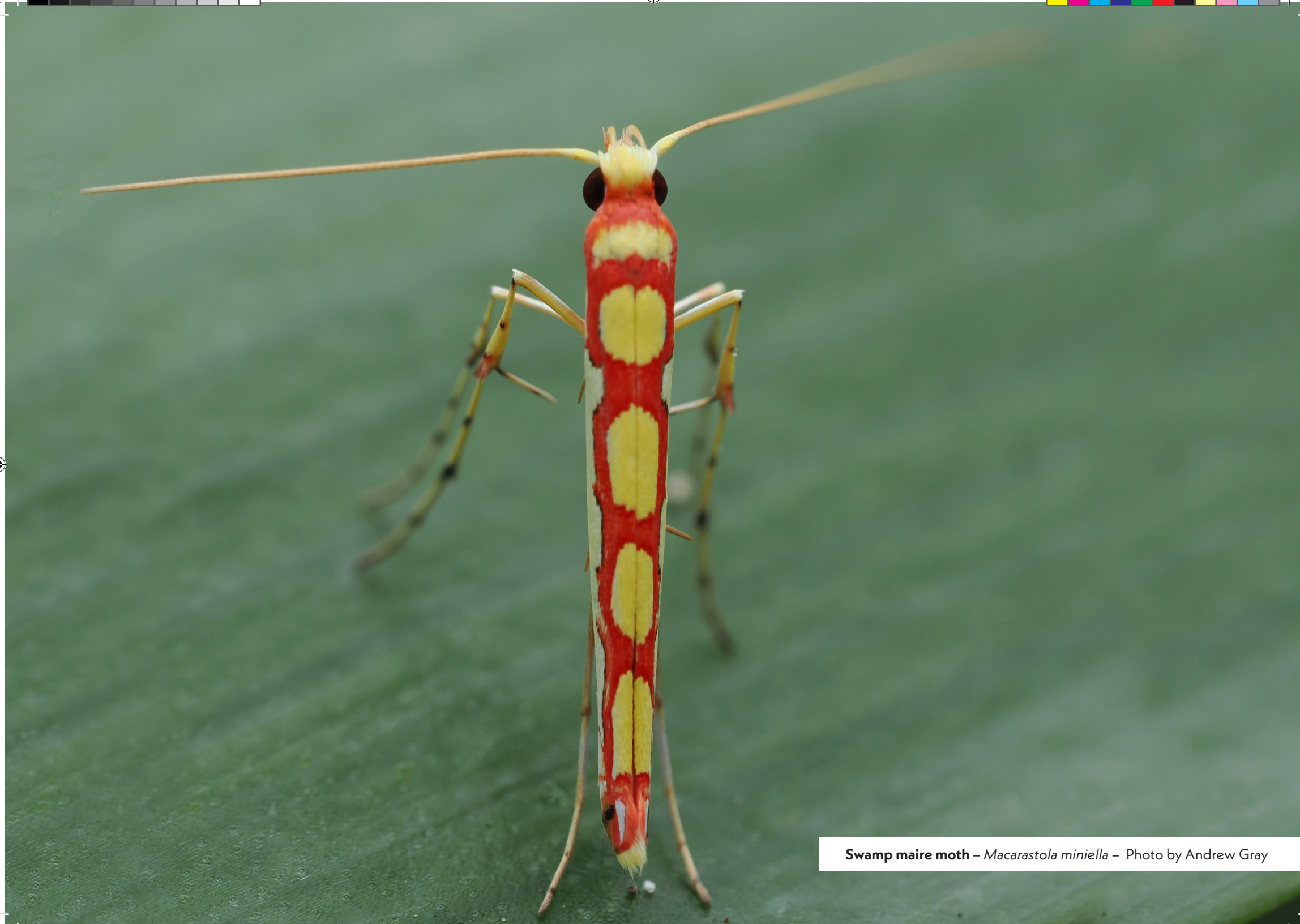
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**Swamp maire moth** – *Macarastola miniella* – Photo by Andrew Gray








## August 2026

### Swamp maire moth – *Macarastola miniella* – Photo by Andrew Gray

A pretty little moth endemic to NZ. The only known host plant of this colourful species is swamp maire, an uncommon native tree found in wetland forest on the North Island. There are concerns for the survival of this moth as its host plant, swamp maire, is affected by myrtle rust and is now classified as 'At Risk—Declining', even before myrtle rust was found in NZ.

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
						1
2	3	4	5	6 	7	8
9	10	11	12	13 	14	15
16	17	18	19	20 	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28 	29
30	31					



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**Yellow admiral** – *Vanessa itea* – Photo by Devangi Farah

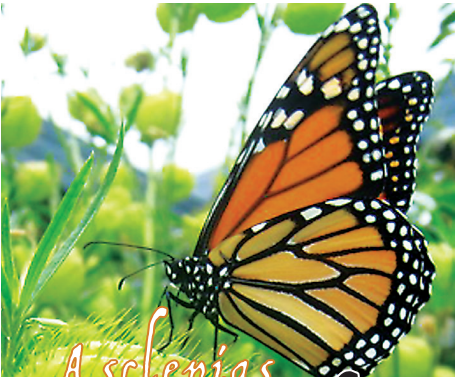




## September 2026 Yellow admiral – *Vanessa itea* – Photo by Devangi Farah


Māori: kahukōwhai. We share this species with Australia and other Oceanic islands. The yellow admiral lays its eggs on any nettle which is available – but that is becoming increasingly harder for it to find. The caterpillars are also identical to our endemic red admiral caterpillar. Just before pupation they will leave their host plant and hang until ready for their final moult to transform to the pupa. It is at this stage that they are particularly vulnerable to the introduced parasitic wasps such as *Pteromalus puparum*.

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
		1	2	3	4 ☾	5
6 Father's Day	7	8	9	10	11 ●	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19 ☾
20	21	22	23	24	25 End of Term 3	26
27 ○ Daylight Saving begins	28 South Canterbury Anniversary	29	30			



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**Forest ghost moth** – *Dumbletonius unimaculatus* – Photo by Christopher Stephens









## October 2026

### Forest ghost moth – *Dumbletonius unimaculatus* – Photo by Christopher Stephens

This endemic moth is found in native lowland forest of the North Island. Males have bright purple hindwings fading to pink-orange-yellow after death. Up to 10,000 eggs are laid indiscriminately over the forest floor. Found in various types of leaf litter, the larvae are up to 100mm long, and live 2-3 years in tunnels. The moth is also host to the vegetable caterpillar fungus.

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
				1	2	3
4 	5	6	7	8	9	10
11 	12 Start of Term 4	13	14	15	16	17
18	19 	20	21	22	23 Hawkes' Bay Anniversary	24
25	26  Labour Day	27	28	29	30	31

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**Dotted green carpet moth** – *Asaphodes beata* – Photo by Christopher Stephens





## November 2026 Dotted green carpet moth – *Asaphodes beata* – Photo by Christopher Stephens

A beautiful moth endemic to NZ, this is a relatively common species that can be found throughout the country in native forest or scrub habitat, mainly observed in clearings. The larvae of this species feed on watercress but tend to be inactive during the day. If threatened, they will mimic a twig and drop to the ground. The adult moths are on the wing commonly from October to March but have been observed in all months of the year.

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
1	2 ☾ Marlborough Anniversary	3	4	5	6	7
8	9 ●	10	11	12	13 Canterbury Anniversary	14
15	16	17	18 ☾	19	20	21
22	23	24	25 ○	26	27	28
29	30 Chatham Islands/Westland Anniversary					

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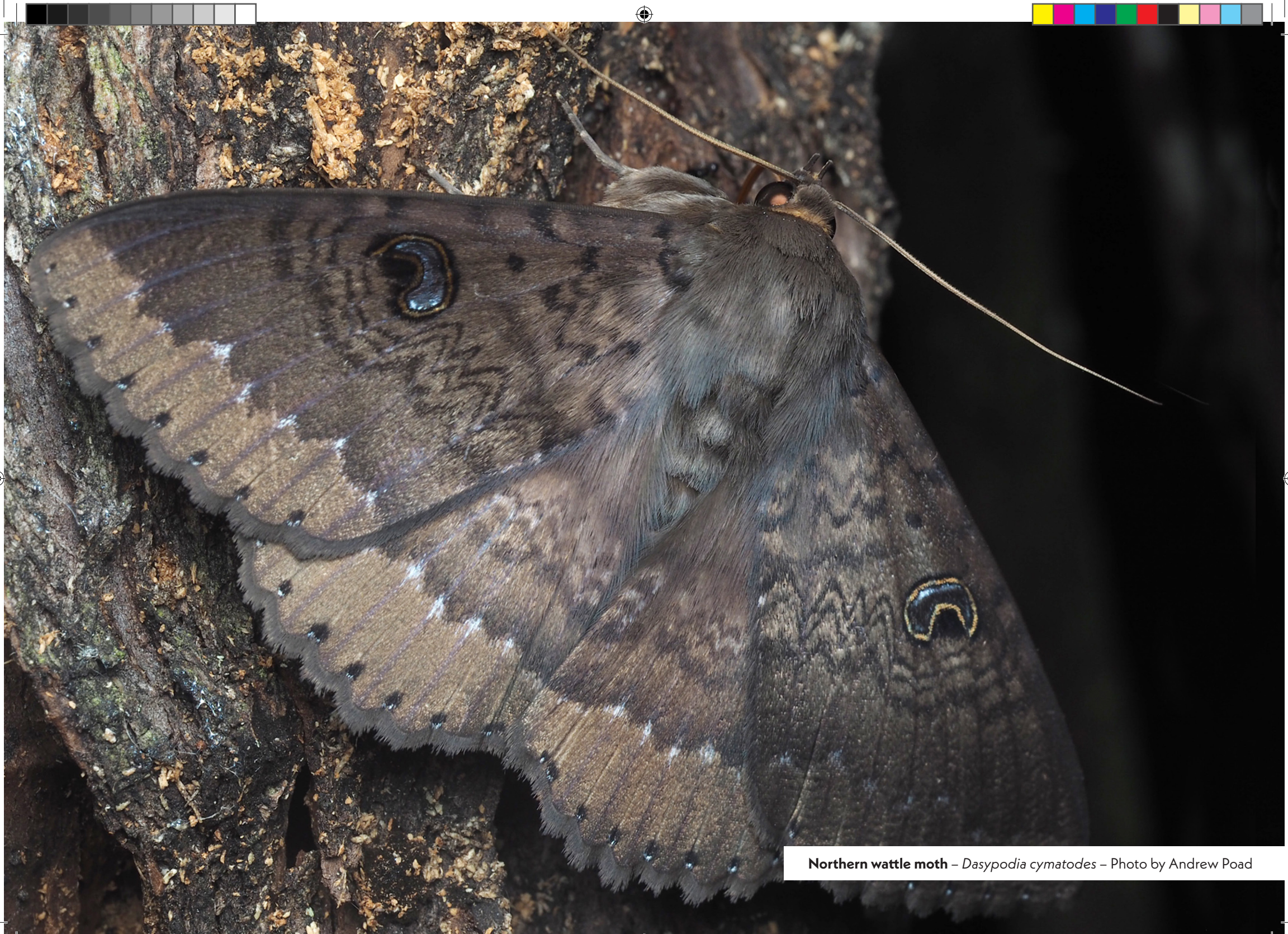
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**Northern wattle moth** – *Dasypodia cymatodes* – Photo by Andrew Poad



## December 2026 Northern wattle moth – *Dasypodia cymatodes* – Photo by Andrew Poad

Also known as owl moth', 'peacock moth' and 'northern old lady moth', this striking moth has scent-scales reaching to the ends of its hindlegs and would appear to have no tarsi or 'feet'. The larvae feed on Acacia species. It is known to enter houses in autumn seeking overwintering sites.

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
		1 	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9 	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17 	18 End of Term 4	19
20	21	22	23	24  Christmas Eve	25 Christmas Day	26 Boxing Day
27 Boxing Day observed	28	29	30	31  New Year's Eve		

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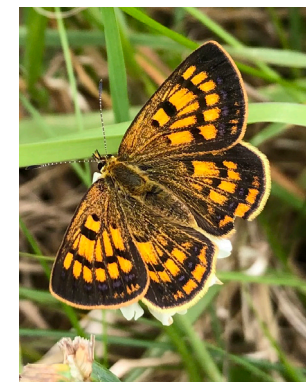
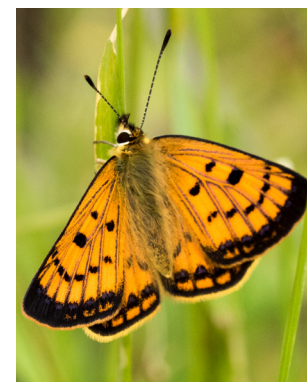
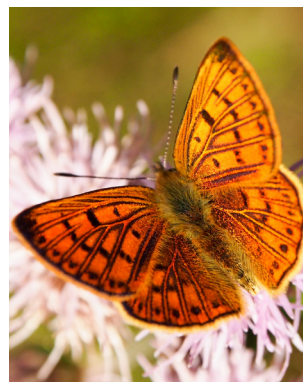


## December 2026

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	20
19	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

## January 2027

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						



### The Butterfly Discovery Project

The three photographs above are all 'common coppers'... and yet it is so obvious they are all quite different. What's more, the photographs were taken in different parts of New Zealand.

Our copper butterflies are not related to any other species in this part of the world. We already know that some of our butterflies are in serious decline. It would be a travesty if we were to lose them altogether!

The Butterfly Discovery Project is an MBNZT initiative, to engage a PhD student to undertake DNA analysis and clarify the identity of our NZ endemic butterflies, beginning with the coppers. It is quite feasible that the project will uncover different species, previously unknown. In Europe where a species has 'died out' in a region it has been possible to reintroduce the species from another location in another country. New Zealand's Lepidoptera are unique, with 90% of them endemic (found only in this country).

This is a critical project for the MBNZT – and an expensive one. There is more information about the project on our website, and we would certainly welcome donations. The project is being championed by Angela Moon-Jones.

[www.nzbutterflies.org.nz/projects/butterfly-discovery-project/](http://www.nzbutterflies.org.nz/projects/butterfly-discovery-project/)



### Cover Photo: Monarch Butterfly on Tropical Milkweed, Golden Bay

Devangi Farah captured this monarch butterfly enjoying the nectar of the tropical milkweed (*A. curassavica*) in her polytunnel in Takaka, Golden Bay. This plant is also a host plant for the monarch caterpillars and you can purchase the seeds (scarlet or gold) from the MBNZT. [www.nzbutterflies.org.nz/product/seeds/](http://www.nzbutterflies.org.nz/product/seeds/)





Welcome to the calendar for 2026 from the Moths and Butterflies of New Zealand Trust, profiling more of our fascinating Lepidoptera species. When the MBNZT (formerly the Monarch Butterfly NZ Trust) was formed it soon became obvious that many New Zealanders knew little about many of our beautiful butterflies and moths. Most people could name only two butterflies: the monarch and the cabbage white. As we set about creating awareness of our other species, habitat needs and their life cycle, we realised that the monarch is a universal favourite. A love for the monarch butterfly creates an interest in biodiversity and other species.

We are at first horrified by what happens to them when they meet a predator or a parasite. But a monarch will lay hundreds of eggs, and if every egg produced a butterfly we would soon be over-run by monarchs. Some are destined to be food for birds, hedgehogs or other insects.

Studying the monarch raises our awareness and we begin to see and understand the interaction between the monarch and milkweed (such as swan plant) and how other life is affected or affects our favourite butterfly. Late summer/early autumn 2026 we will begin our tagging project, so that citizen scientists (that's YOU!) can help us find out more about their overwintering behaviour.

Learning about biodiversity in our own backyards has a huge benefit. Our children may learn about kiwi and kauri, penguins and marine mammals, but unless they are very lucky they may never come across them in the wild. There is action they can take to benefit our environment right in their own backyard. Working with the monarch is a step in the right direction.

Trustees and members  
Moths and Butterflies of New Zealand Trust

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*If you are not already a member, please consider joining up and receive our quarterly magazine for only \$50.00 per year (\$40.00 for the on-line version). Payments can be made directly to our bank account, Moths and Butterflies of NZ Trust, 38-9009-0654693-00 and email: [treasurer@nzbutterflies.org.nz](mailto:treasurer@nzbutterflies.org.nz) with your details.*



For more information contact:  
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## Support the Trust

The Moths and Butterflies of New Zealand Trust is a registered charitable trust with donee status, relying on membership subscriptions, donations, grants and bequests to carry out our vital work for the conservation of NZ's butterflies, moths and their habitat. (Registered Charity CC11297, IRD No. is 91 118 254). We were originally the Monarch Butterfly NZ Trust. It is through the support and generosity of members and supporters that we can continue working in the field of environmental education, conservation and protection.

At the peak time of the year we might have about 600 financial members supporting our organisation. By joining us you will get the opportunity to learn more about NZ's unique butterflies and moths and take part in our conservation projects. Our shop has a range of gift items and products, such as seeds, posters, brooches etc to raise funds – check out our website, [www.nzbutterflies.org.nz](http://www.nzbutterflies.org.nz).

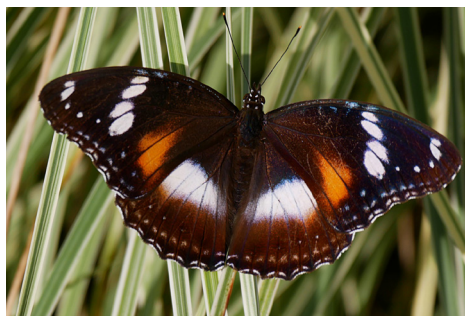
Whether you are a business or an individual, there are tax advantages in donating to the MBNZT. By becoming a regular gift-giver for example, you can help fund our work. Gift giving starts at \$25 per month. In return you will become a member of the MBNZT, receive a certificate, quarterly magazines, email news updates, invitations to events and our annual report and audited accounts.

Our heroes know that they are linked with an ethical and responsible organisation, not only involved in environmental education but building relationships with all New Zealanders, whatever their gender, age, ethnicity or socio-economic background. Corporate sponsors are able to demonstrate their commitment to sustainability – hugely important in our hearts, minds and lives. As well, a sponsor benefits from the exposure to our fast-growing membership through our high-quality magazine, website and printed information. Whether the organisation is looking for national sponsorship or support at a regional or local level, we can design a package to suit.

Individuals may wish to consider leaving us a bequest – a gift in their will to provide a lasting legacy, ensuring the protection of our unique butterflies and moths which can continue on their behalf for future generations. Perhaps consider leaving a gift in perpetuity to the NZ Lepidoptera Fund, an endowment fund that will be invested and left to build each year forever. The MBNZT then intends to use a portion of the generated income each year to fund our work.

We always appreciate your support.





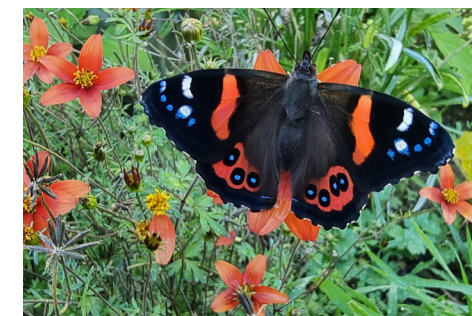
Blue moon – *Hypolimnias bolina nerina*  
Photo by Tom Musson



Cinnabar moth – *Tyrea jacobaeae*  
Photo by Jesse Bythell



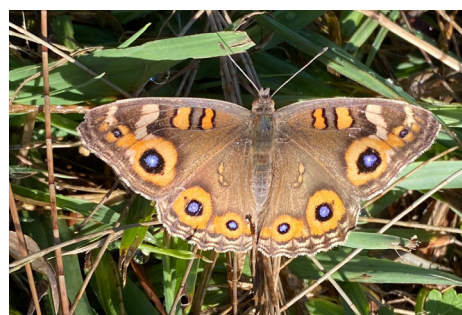
Boulder copper – *Lycaena boldenarum*  
Photo by Doug Miller



Red admiral – *Vanessa gonerilla*  
Photo by Devangi Farah



Green blotched moth  
*Cosmodes elegans*  
Photo by Jacob Littlejohn



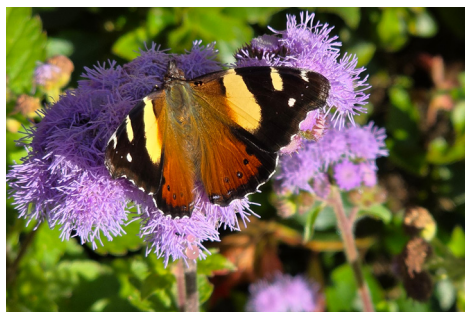
Meadow argus – *Junonia villida*  
Photo by Blair Herbert



North Island lichen moth  
*Declana atronivea*  
Photo by Christopher Stephens



Swamp maire moth  
*Macarastola miniella*  
Photo by Andrew Gray



Yellow admiral – *Vanessa itea*  
Photo by Devangi Farah



Forest ghost moth  
*Dumbletonius unimaculatus*  
Photo by Christopher Stephens



Dotted green carpet moth  
*Asaphodes beata*  
Photo by Christopher Stephens



Northern wattle moth  
*Dasypodia cymatodes*  
Photo by Andrew Poad

  
**Moths and  
Butterflies** of  
New Zealand Trust

Many thanks to Devangi Farah, Jacqui Knight, Keith and Beverley Miller and Victor Storch for their extensive work, and the photographers who made it possible. All proceeds to the Moths and Butterflies of New Zealand Trust. Why not order your calendar for next year NOW? Email [trademe@nzbutterflies.org.nz](mailto:trademe@nzbutterflies.org.nz)

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