



Media Release from Alderney Wildlife Trust

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Robust Tabby Moth recording in the Channel Islands

Despite recent wet and windy weather, Alderney has a remarkable new visitor. A new species of moth, the Robust Tabby (*Pandesma robusta*), was recorded on Alderney in October. Not only is this a first for Alderney, but it also appears to be the first sighting of this species in the Channel Islands.

This exciting discovery was made by Lou Collings, who moved to Alderney full-time in 2021 and now leads the Alderney Wildlife Trust's (AWT) moth monitoring efforts. Lou has honed her identification skills with guidance from the AWT team and extensive reading. She now operates weekly moth traps from her home and assists with traps at Essex Farm and various pop-up locations around the island. This work is vital for building a comprehensive record of one of Alderney's most diverse insect populations.

With over 600 moth species now identified on the island, this discovery adds to the pioneering records started by Alderney lepidopterist David Wedd, now retired. The Robust Tabby is a member of the *Erebidae* family, with a natural range extending from Asia through Africa, the Mediterranean, and as far north as Spain and Portugal.

While the Robust Tabby may not appear showy at first glance, with forewings patterned by undulating lines and black flecks and pale hindwings, its journey to Alderney remains intriguing. Sightings in the British Isles are rare and often associated with accidental transport on fruit shipments. However, with Alderney's recent strong southerly winds, it's possible the moth arrived here by being blown off its usual course.

Although the Robust Tabby is unlikely to establish itself as an invasive species, its appearance highlights the importance of monitoring Alderney's unique natural environment, tracking new arrivals, and understanding shifts in existing species populations.

Get Involved with AWT

If you'd like to experience the wonder of moth recording, consider joining a moth trap opening event or the AWT Wildlife Recorders Scheme. Volunteers help monitor various species, from moths and butterflies to ormers and crabs. Interested? Contact AWT at 01481 822925 or email ecology@alderneywildlife.org.

Ends

Background

About the Alderney Wildlife Trust

The Alderney Wildlife Trust is one of the 46 Wildlife Trusts working across the British Isles. We are the youngest of the Wildlife Trust, forming over 20 years ago and since then the AWT has received incredible support from a dedicated team of wildlife enthusiasts, what we like to think of as the 'TeamWilder'. This team isn't just limited to residents and AWT members, it includes people from all walks of life who have an interest in our island's wildlife, as well as supporters and organisations from around the world. We work with the local community to engage them with their natural environment in order to protect Alderney's wildlife for the future.

Our mission is to study, protect and champion Alderney's wildlife. We wish to see a thriving natural island where wildlife and natural habitats play a valued role in addressing our island's future and the climate and ecological emergencies that face us.

Alderney is a very special place and by helping the work of the Alderney Wildlife Trust you can make a difference. After all, if you love where you live, you'll want to look after it - Dr. George McGavin, Patron AWT

Notes to Media

For further information, please contact:
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