



Hawk-moths in Wales

Large and striking moths! Look for them at dusk or try creating your own moth trap. Spot Humming-bird Hawks collecting nectar during the day.

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Humming-bird Hawk *Macroglossum stellatarum*

Spot this moth with its darting flight during the day. It hovers like a hummingbird to feed on flower nectar and will often return to the same flowers at the same time each day.

Visits Wales from southern Europe in the summer. Coasts, woodland rides and urban areas.

Flies: August and September
Wingspan: 4 to 4.5 cm

Elephant Hawk *Deilephila elpenor*

The large caterpillars, up to 8cm long, are more often seen than the adults and are just as impressive! They have eyespots near the head and swell up to a much larger size when disturbed, even frightening large birds. They can also swim.

Adults only fly well after dark.

Flies: May to August
Wingspan: 4.5 to 6 cm

Small Elephant Hawk *Deilephila porcellus*

Looks like a small version of the Elephant Hawk. Look for the slightly different pattern on the body and wings. These patterns help to hide the moth amongst vegetation by breaking up its outline. Adults feed after dusk on Valerian, Iris and Viper's-bugloss.

Flies: May to July
Wingspan: 4 to 5 cm



Photos: Dave Slade

Poplar Hawk *Laothoe populi*

A common moth with a distinctive resting position making it look like dead leaves. When alarmed it will flash red patches on its hindwings. Caterpillars mainly feed on Poplar and willows, and the adults will often be found near these trees.

Flies: May to July, sometimes also August and September
Wingspan: 7 to 10 cm

Eyed Hawk *Smerinthus ocellata*

Similar looking to Poplar Hawk with false eye spots on the hindwings. When attacked, this moth will show the eye spots to scare off predators. If this doesn't work, it will move its wings up and down to make the 'eyes' look like they're blinking.

Flies: May to July
Wingspan: 7 to 9 cm

Privet Hawk *Sphinx ligustri*

The largest hawk-moth in Wales. It is found mainly in south Wales and is increasing in numbers. Its name refers to the food plant of the caterpillars. Look for adults resting on vertical surfaces such as tree trunks and fence posts during the day.

Flies: June to July
Wingspan: 9 to 12 cm