Species to look for in May

Dip: Agromyzidae: We have two reasonably common **Agromyzid leaf miners** for you to find this month

(i) *Phytomyza glechomae*:

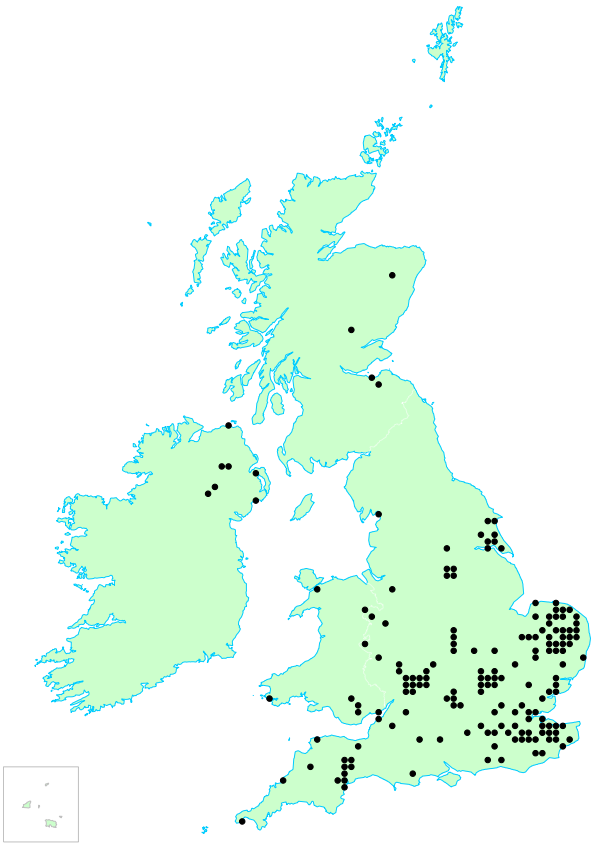
Photo © Rob Edmunds

This is a common leaf miner of Ground Ivy (*Glechoma hederacea)* and a good species to look for in May.
It forms a twisting linear mine, which expands and becomes a blotch. It is usually whitish in colour.

Photo © Barry Warrington

Its current distribution is shown:

Phytomyza glechomae



Map © National Agromyzidae Recording Scheme

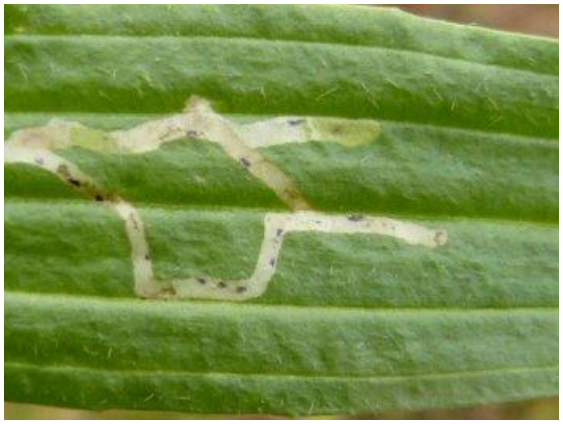
(ii) *Phytomyza plantaginis*:

This forms long narrow, whitish, thin linear mines on Plantain species, especially Ribwort Plantain (*Plantago lanceolata).*

The frass grains are small and widely spaced.

The photos below show typical *P. plantaginis* mines in Ribwort Plantain in increasing detail.

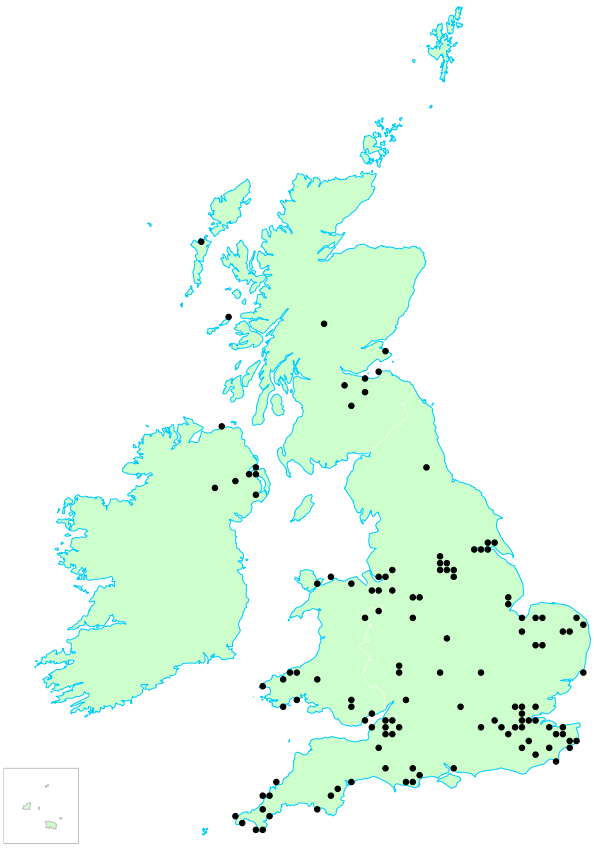
Note the narrow galleries and widely spaced frass grains:



Photos © Graham Calow

The current distribution of this miner is:

Phytomyza plantaginis



Map © National Agromyzidae Recording Scheme

© Barry Warrington

Further details:

Can you add records to these maps?

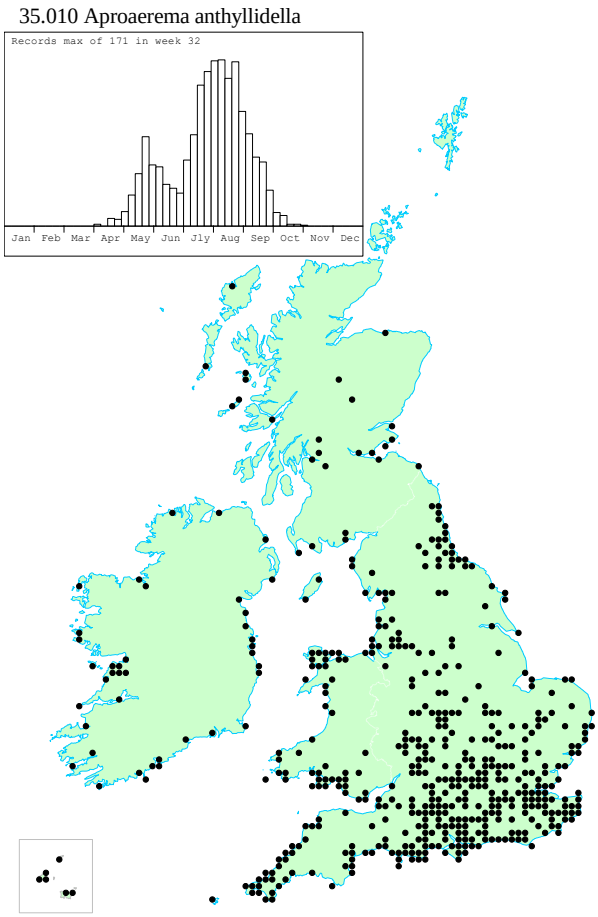
If you find either of these Agromyzid miners then please photograph and iRecord.

National Agromyzidae Recording Scheme:

agromyzidaers@gmail.com

Lep: Gelechiidae:

Aproaerema anthyllidella:



Map produced using MapMate

This is a species of rough ground, dry pastures and coastal areas.

It feeds mainly on *Anthyllis vulneraria* (kidney vetch) but less frequently on *Lathyrus pratensis* (Meadow Vetchling), *Lotus corniculatus* (Common Bird's-foot-trefoil), *Medicago lupulina* (Black Medick), *Medicago sativa* (Lucerne), *Melilotus* spp. (Melilot), *Ononis* spp. (Restharrow), *Onobrychis vicifolia* (Sainfoin) and *Trifolium* spp. (Clovers). A pupa has been found in the shoot of *Vicia cracca* (Tufted Vetch).

It would be much appreciated if you could include details of the plant being utilised with your record as this will add considerably to the value of each record submitted.

The larva makes distinctive white blotches on leaves (as shown below) in the Spring brood) which eventually curl up to form a pod. The early stage mines on unfolded leaves need to be checked carefully to exclude mines made by the larvae of Diptera.

Photos © Steve Wullaert

This is a widespread but rather local species over much of southern Britain becoming more restricted to lowland and coastal sites the further north one goes.

The larva is shown below:

Photo © Ben Smart

© Steve Palmer

Further details:

Gelechiid Recording Scheme:

https://www.gelechiid.co.uk/

Lep: Coleophoridae:

Coleophora albitarsella:

This is a good garden species to look for especially if you grow herbs such as Majoram – you may not even realise that it is colonising your garden!

It feeds on a variety of plants such as: *Calamintha* spp. (Calamint), *Clinopodium vulgare* (wild Basil), *Glechoma hederacea* (Ground Ivy), *Mentha* spp. (Mints), *Salvia horminoides* (Wild Clary), *Prunella vulgaris* (Self-heal), *Origanum vulgare* (Marjoram) and *Thymus* spp. (Thyme).

Look for white blotches, which turn brown, on these plants. These are shown on Majoram :

If you turn the leaf over you may find the cases of *Coleophora albitarsella:*

The cases are very distinctive being slender, slightly curved, and with a keeled tip:

Photos © Rob Edmunds

Lep: Lyonetiidae:

Lyonetia clerkella:

This is a very common leaf miner found on lots of plants such as Hawthorn, Apple, Cherry, Birch etc.

The gallery is long, narrow and sinuous, often crossing itself (which causes that section of leaf to die). The exit slit is long.

It may cause confusion as it may resemble mines made by the Nepticulidae but that of *L. clerkella* does not have an egg at the start of the mine and the larva is elongated and segmented.

This shows a typical mine (in Amelanchier), where the mine has caused a section of leaf to die:

A typical mine in Apple – note the elongated exit slit:

When it pupates it forms a hammock structure under the leaf:

Photos © Rob Edmunds

Dave Shenton has made a video of this miner:

youtu.be/XE5XyzMu3WA

© Rob Edmunds

Lep: Epermeniidae:

Epermenia chaerophyllella:

This leaf miner is found on a range of plants such as *Heracleum sphondylium* (Hogweed), *Angelica sylvestris* (Wild Angelica), *Anthriscus sylvestris* (Cow parsley), *Daucus carota* (Wild Carrot) and *Pastinaca sativa* (Wild Parsnip).

The feeding signs are readily seen as they form brown blotches on the top of the leaf (due to eating through the lower leaf epidermis and mesophyll)

Hogweed is a good plant to search in May for feeding signs. As my Parsnips develop through the summer so does the population of *Epermenia chaerophyllella* feeding on their leaves, with characteristic brown blotches forming:

The larvae feeding under the leaf can be seen:

They are easy to rear and the adult moth is striking:

Photos © Rob Edmunds

© Rob Edmunds

Hym: Tenthredinidae:

Parna apicalis:

This is an early season sawfly leaf miner which is found on Lime (*Tilia spp*.), especially Small-leaved Lime (*Tilia cordata*).

It forms distinctive blotches on the edges of leaves, which soon turn brown:

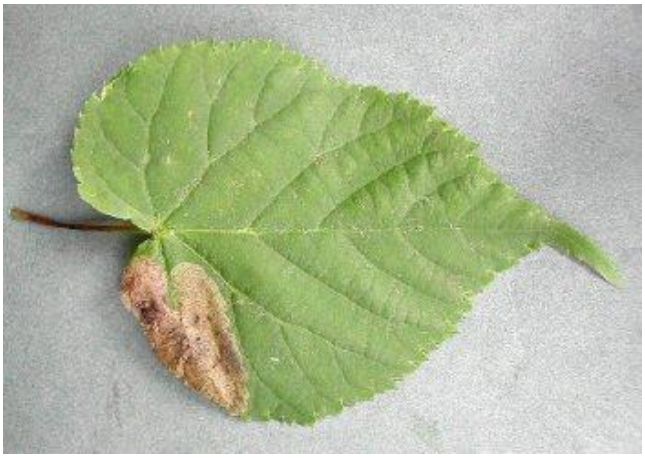


Photo © Rob Edmunds

It was first discovered in the UK in 2007 and was probably an overlooked species.

It can be common in places, especially in parks and arboretums.

If you find it please iRecord it and your record will be picked up and verified.

© Rob Edmunds

Col: Curculionidae:

Orchestes testaceus:

This is an uncommon leaf miner in Alder and Birch but worth looking for.

It forms distinctive edge mines, rather like a large squashed –head tadpole, as this photo on Italian Alder (*Alnus cordata*) shows!

The initial gallery can resemble that of a nepticulid but the developed mine removes that doubt.

The nepticulidae lay an egg at the start of the mine, unlike *O. testaceus,* which oviposits into the leaf, causing a scar (as shown):

The larva is shown in dorsal then ventral view:

Photos © Rob Edmunds

There is a very similar and more common *Orchestes* mine in Beech - *Orchestes fagi.*

© Rob Edmunds

Answer to mystery Eriocrania mine in the **April newsletter** – it was *Eriocrania sangii* – the larva was a dark grey colour and this is the only one with this colouration.