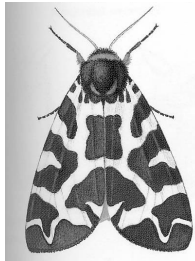
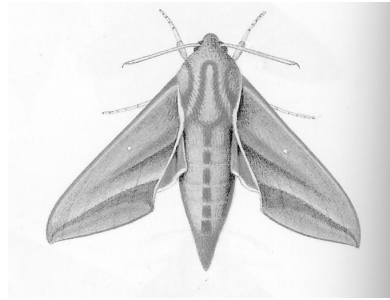


## Magnificent Moths

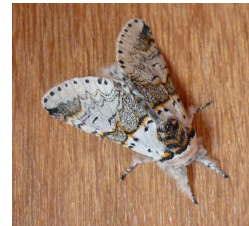
Peter built a moth trap for my Christmas present and, once a week, for the last couple of months, I could be seen prowling around the back garden in the early morning mists eagerly finding out what was waiting for me. And the answer is: lots of beautiful moths which you never see unless you have a moth trap. Pride of place must go to the Elephant Hawkmoth – a confection of lovat green and cerise (doesn't come out well in black and white!) which is actually quite common in the area – the large brown larvae feed on willowherb and can sometimes be found in gardens.



Second place must go to the Garden Tiger – named for its striking brown and cream pattern (not very tiger-like admittedly). A handsome moth indeed but even more so when it flashes its underwings which are orange-red with blue spots.

Then are there large numbers of less dramatically coloured moths which can take a while to identify and which often have interesting lifecycles – some of the caterpillars feed on lichen, for example. It's all great fun and my garden list is growing rapidly.

Perhaps my favourite moth so far is the Sallow Kitten – a white moth with black and tan markings and true to its name, furry – you really do want to stroke it!



*Rosemary Royle*