Introduction

The Crambinae are represented by 39 species in the British Isles. Most are associated with grasses or rushes, and can often be disturbed during the day, sometimes in significant numbers.

This guide covers the eleven species most commonly found in Berkshire (VC22). It should be possible to make a positive identification of all these species based on visual characteristics. Where there are similar species which are either uncommon or absent in the region the differences are described. It will not be possible to identify all specimens unequivocally as there will always be oddities and worn individuals where there is room for doubt.

The species are grouped according to similar appearance, rather than in taxonomic order. Inset pictures are actual size.

Understanding the data

Flight season (phenology) graphs

These show the number of records from each month, as a percentage of the total (range 0-100%).

Key to text:
Status indicates national status.
Length is measured from palps to wingtip, with wings closed.
Classification numbers used are Bradley & Fletcher.

Key to distribution maps

- Tetrads (2 kilometre squares) in VC22 where the moth has been recorded.
- Tetrads where any recording activity has occurred (i.e. at least one record of any moth).
Total number of records is also shown. Data is taken from the VC22 County Moth Records database and includes all records up to December 2007.
Terminology

Apical
Towards or in region of apex.

Basal
Towards or in region of base.

Costal
Towards or in region of costa; costal edge: edge facing costa; costal half: half of wing adjacent to costa.

Dorsal
Towards or in region of dorsum; dorsal edge: edge facing dorsum; dorsal half: half of wing adjacent to dorsum.

Fringe
Long thin scales projecting beyond termen; also known as cilia.

Inner
Towards head/base of wing.

Longitudinal
Along length of wing, e.g. longitudinal streak: streak running along length of wing.

Oblique
At an angle to costa or dorsum, i.e. neither parallel nor perpendicular to wing edges.

One half/one-third/two-thirds etc
Approximate position along wing taken from base.

Outer
Away from head/base of wing.

Subterminal
Immediately before termen.

Terminal
At end of wing; towards termen.

Tornal
Towards or in region of tornus.

Species comparisons

Flight season | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
--- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
Crambus lathoniellus | | | | | | | | | | | | |
Crambus pascuella | | | | | | | | | | | | |
Chrysoteuchia culmella | | | | | | | | | | | | |
Agriphila straminella | | | | | | | | | | | | |
Agriphila tristella | | | | | | | | | | | | |
Agriphila inquinatella | | | | | | | | | | | | |
Agriphila geniculae | | | | | | | | | | | | |
Crambus perlella | | | | | | | | | | | | |
Catoptria pinella | | | | | | | | | | | | |
Catoptria falsella | | | | | | | | | | | | |
Agriphila sefasella | | | | | | | | | | | | |
Agriphila inquinatella | | | | | | | | | | | | |
Agriphila tristella | | | | | | | | | | | | |
Agriphila geniculae | | | | | | | | | | | | |

Bar indicates range of possible lengths, although this is a guide only. If food sources are restricted (e.g. in drought conditions) smaller specimens may well be found.

Appearance chart

To be added.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agriphila tristella</th>
<th>Common Grass-veneer</th>
<th>1305</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Flight season</strong></td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Flight season chart" /></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Status:</strong> Common.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Habitat:</strong> Tall grasses. Often disturbed by day. Comes to light.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Distinctive features:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strong longitudinal streak 1, often narrowing at one third 2, splitting into four ‘fingers’ 3.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Similar species</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. selasella (p5). Fingers less prominent. Streak splits into two fingers 1 rather than four. Termen rounded and roughly perpendicular to costa. Streak pure white, of uniform width. Generally smoother appearance.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agriphila selasella</th>
<th>Pale-streak Grass-veneer</th>
<th>1303</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Flight season</strong></td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Flight season chart" /></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Status:</strong> Local.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Habitat:</strong> Grass. Can be disturbed by day. Nocturnal. Comes to light.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Distinctive features:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pure white longitudinal streak of roughly even width 1 with dark costal edge 2 dividing into two faint ‘fingers’ 3. Termen rounded, perpendicular to costa. Smooth appearance.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Variation</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ground colour quite variable.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. tristella ‘Fingers’ more prominent, four rather than two 1. Narrowing of streak at one third. Termen straight, not perpendicular to costa. Rough appearance.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

© Ian Kimber
© Malcolm Storey
© Jeff Higgott
Berkshire Moth Group

Identification Guide 1

**Crambus perlella**

**Satin Grass-veen**

**1302**

**Flight season**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FM</th>
<th>AM</th>
<th>JJ</th>
<th>AS</th>
<th>ON</th>
<th>D</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><img src="image" alt="Flight Season Chart" /></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Status:** Common/abundant.

**Habitat:** Tall grass. Very easily disturbed by day. Nocturnal. Comes to light.

**Distinctive features:**

Shiny white colour, lack of markings. Variant *f.warringtonellus* has strong white longitudinal streak ① plus another streak along costa ②.

**Similar species**


- *Platytes cerussella* (no records): Much smaller (Length 6-8mm).

**Variation**

Little variation in typical form. Some variation in strength of markings in *f.warringtonellus*.

---

**Chrysoteuchia culmella**

**Garden Grass-veen**

**1293**

**Flight season**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FM</th>
<th>AM</th>
<th>JJ</th>
<th>AS</th>
<th>ON</th>
<th>D</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><img src="image" alt="Flight Season Chart" /></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Status:** Very common/abundant.

**Habitat:** Tall grasses. Frequently disturbed by day. Comes to light.

**Distinctive features:**

- "C" shaped outer cross-line (C for culmella) ①.
- Brassy metallic sheen. Fringe uniform colour ②.

**Similar species**


**Variation**

Ground colour and strength of markings very variable. "C" shaped cross-line can be rather faint but is always visible.

---

**Pyralidae: Crambinae**
Berkshire Moth Group

Identification Guide 1

**Agriphila straminella**

**Straw Grass-veenr**

**Flight season**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FM</th>
<th>AM</th>
<th>JJ</th>
<th>AS</th>
<th>ON</th>
<th>D</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>♀</td>
<td>♂</td>
<td>♀</td>
<td>♂</td>
<td>♀</td>
<td>♂</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**VC22 distribution**

611 records

**Status:** Common/abundant.

**Habitat:** Grasses, esp. Sheep’s Fescue (Festuca ovina). Often disturbed by day. Flies by day and night. Comes to light, often in numbers.

**Distinctive features:**


**Male:**

Two-tone appearance – dorsal half of wing light, costal half dark ④.

**Female:**

More uniform in tone. Streak splitting into faint fingers ⑤.

**Similar species**


**Variation**

Degree of brown speckling and overall colour quite variable.


C. silvella (1 unconfirmed record): Streak more rounded, extending beyond subterminal line ①.

C. uliginosellus (5 records in Baker): Smaller size. Longitudinal streak touches costa to half way ①.

C. ericella (no records; northern moorland only): Much darker. Longitudinal streak narrower, well-separated from costa.

**Crambus pascuella**

**Inlaid Grass-veenr**

**Flight season**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FM</th>
<th>AM</th>
<th>JJ</th>
<th>AS</th>
<th>ON</th>
<th>D</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>♀</td>
<td>♂</td>
<td>♀</td>
<td>♂</td>
<td>♀</td>
<td>♂</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**VC22 distribution**

334 records

**Status:** Common/very common

**Habitat:** Grasses and bushes. Easily disturbed by day. Comes to light

**Distinctive features:**

Thick, white longitudinal streak ①, dorsal edge more or less straight ②, costal edge angled at two-thirds ③, broken by thin oblique brown line ④. Triangularly shaped and marked apex ⑤. Hind wing pale.

**Ground colour and hence apparent strength of markings fairly variable.**

**Similar species**

C. silvella

C. lathoniellus

C. hamella (4 records):

Longitudinal streak unbroken.

C. pratella (no records):

Longitudinal streak with sharply angled costal edge ①, notched in a similar way to C. lathoniellus. Hind wing dark.

C. hamella (4 records):

Longitudinal streak unbroken.

C. pratella (no records):

Longitudinal streak with sharply angled costal edge ①, notched in a similar way to C. lathoniellus. Hind wing dark.

C. hamella (4 records):

Longitudinal streak unbroken.
**Crambus lathoniellus**

**Hook-streak Grass-veener**

**Identification Guide 1**

**Flight season**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FM</th>
<th>AM</th>
<th>JJ</th>
<th>AS</th>
<th>ON</th>
<th>D</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**VC22 distribution**

189 records

**Status:** Common.

**Habitat:** Tall grasses. Easily disturbed by day. Nocturnal. Comes to light.

**Distinctive features:**

- Longitudinal streak 1, notched halfway along 2, costal edge fairly straight 3. Strong, sharply bent subterminal line with dark inner edge 4. Triangularly shaped and marked apex 5. Hind wing dark.


- Female: Streaks between veins white 7, fewer dark scales on wings, hence much paler overall appearance than male.

**Variation**

- Overall colour quite variable. In male, blackish speckling varies in intensity.

**Similar species**

- See previous page for photographs.
- *C. pascuella* (p9): Longitudinal streak broad, not notched. Hind wing pale.
- *Crambus hamella* (4 records): Longitudinal streak unbroken.
- *Crambus silvella* (1 unconfirmed record): Longitudinal streak broad, without notch.
- *Crambus pratella* (no records): Costal edge of longitudinal streak sharply angled at about two-thirds.
- *Crambus encella*. See previous page.

---

**Agriphila inquinatella**

**Barred Grass-veener**

**Flight season**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FM</th>
<th>AM</th>
<th>JJ</th>
<th>AS</th>
<th>ON</th>
<th>D</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**VC22 distribution**

230 records

**Status:** Local

**Habitat:** Short grass. Easily disturbed by day. Active from dusk onwards. Comes to light.

**Distinctive features:**


**Similar species**


**Variation**

- Ground colour variable both in colour and tone. Markings variable in intensity.

- *Pediasia contaminella* (5 records): Rests with head down, abdomen raised upward (as *P. aridella* below). Spot in place of dark patch 1.

- *Pediasia aridella* (no records): Superficially similar but only found in coastal saltmarsh.
Agriphila geniculea

Elbow-striped Grass-veneer

Status: Common.
Habitat: Grasses, and can be found at rest in young conifer bushes among grass. Readily disturbed by day. Comes to light.
Distinctive features:
Two distinct cross lines ①, outer line strongly elbowed toward termen ②. Overall coloration greyish brown. Fringe metallic ③.

Variation
Some variation in overall darkness.

Similar species
A. inquinatella (p11): Outer cross-line more rounded and broken by branches of longitudinal streak ①. Usually larger, although size ranges

A. permutataella (5 records): Rests with abdomen raised upward (as Pandella on previous page). Lacks elbowed cross-line.

Catoptria pinella

Pearl Grass-veneer

Status: Local.
Habitat: Found during day amongst trees and bushes, particularly pine. Nocturnal. Comes to light.
Distinctive features:
Broad, widening longitudinal streak ①, cut by slightly oblique dark brown cross-line ②.

Variation
Very little variation.

Similar species
Catoptria permutataella (only in Scotland), Catoptria osthelderi (only one UK record, Kent) and Catoptria speculalis (only one UK record, Perth) all have thin white outer band beyond end of streak.

Other records:

Catoptria pinella (1313 records)

Flight season

VC22 distribution

387 records

Catoptria pinella

Pearl Grass-veneer

Status: Local.
Habitat: Found during day amongst trees and bushes, particularly pine. Nocturnal. Comes to light.
Distinctive features:
Broad, widening longitudinal streak ①, cut by slightly oblique dark brown cross-line ②.

Variation
Very little variation.

Similar species
Catoptria permutataella (only in Scotland), Catoptria osthelderi (only one UK record, Kent) and Catoptria speculalis (only one UK record, Perth) all have thin white outer band beyond end of streak.

Other records:

Catoptria pinella (1313 records)

Flight season

VC22 distribution

387 records

© Richard Eagling
Pyralidae: Crambinae

**Catoptria falsella**  
**Chequered Grass-veneer**  1316

**Flight season**  
June–July in reed beds. 4 records on database between 1989 and 1998, from Thatcham Reed Beds, Cholsey Marsh and Fernham; Baker mentions an old record (pre-1906) from Bulmershe Park, Reading.

**VC22 distribution**  
182 records

**Status:** Local.

**Habitat:** Hides in moss, thatch or haystacks by day. Nocturnal. Comes to light.

**Distinctive features:**
- Strong white longitudinal streak (1) broken by strong dark brown oblique band (2). White ‘c’ shaped arc in outer half (3).
- Length: 9-12mm

**Similar species**  
Thisanotia chrysonuchella  
(14 records): First cross-line much thinner. Outer cross-line thin and less elbowed. Scattered black scales, particularly in dorsal half.

**Variation**  
Strength of markings quite variable.

Catoptria verellus (no records): Lacks strong longitudinal streak. Rare migrant.

**Other species recorded in VC22**

- **Chilo phragmitella**  
  **Reed Veneer**  1290
  June–July in reed beds. 4 records on database between 1989 and 1998, from Thatcham Reed Beds, Cholsey Marsh and Fernham; Baker mentions an old record (pre-1906) from Bulmershe Park, Reading.

- **Calamotropha paludella**  
  **Bulrush Veneer**  1292
  July–August in reed beds. 51 records on database between 1992 and 2006; Baker mentions records from Didcot, Dinton Pastures and Sandford Mill. Recorded occasionally in North Hampshire. Nationally scarce/Nb.

- **Crambus silvella**  
  **Wood Grass-veneer**  1296
  July–August. 1 unconfirmed record on database from Silwood Park, 2003. Red Data Book 3: Rare

- **Crambus uliginosellus**  
  **Marsh Grass-veneer**  1297

- **Crambus hamella**  
  **Dark Grass-veneer**  1299

- **Agriphila latistria**  
  **White-streak Grass-veneer**  1307

- **Thisanotia chrysonuchella**  
  **Powdered Grass-veneer**  1321

- **Pediasia contaminella**  
  **Waste Grass-veneer**  1323
Further information


http://ukmoths.org.uk/
http://www.uklepidoptera.co.uk/
http://www.hantsmoths.org.uk

References


Acknowledgments

Editorial team

Nick Asher, Mark Calway, Roy Dobson, Les Finch, Grahame Hawker.

Compiled with assistance and expert advice from Norman Hall, Tony Davis and Martin Harvey, and with help from all the members of Berkshire Moth Group.

Distribution maps and flight period charts based on data from the county database, compiled and maintained by Martin C. Harvey, Berkshire County Moth Recorder, from records submitted by a multitude of enthusiastic amateur recorders. Martin would be pleased to receive any further records of moths in Berkshire. Martin can be contacted by e-mail: martin@kitenet.freeserve.co.uk

Photographs

Unless indicated otherwise, photographs © Nick Asher.

Other photographs contributed by: Steve Barrett, Mathias Biere, Richard Eagling, Jan Haselar, Paul Harris, Jeff Higgott (www.uklepidoptera.co.uk), Ian Kimber (www.ukmoths.org.uk), Mark Parsons/Butterfly Conservation, Rob Petley-Jones, Jens Christian Schou (www.biopix.dk), Chris Steeman (www.phegea.org), Malcolm Storey (www.bioimages.org.uk), Charly Streets, Mike Wall (www.hantsmoths.org.uk), Nigel Whinney

Every effort has been made to contact the copyright holders of photographs. In some cases this has so far proved impossible.

Berkshire Moth Group

www.berkshiremothgroup.co.uk

Enquiries about this publication should be addressed to:

Nick Asher

e-mail: mail@nickasher.co.uk