

July Belle or Lead Belle?

At first glance, the July Belle (*Scotopteryx luridata*) and Lead Belle (*Scotopteryx mucronata*) look very similar, and they are sometimes indistinguishable. In areas where both species are known to occur they can sometimes be separated on the basis of flight season; the July Belle is normally on the wing from mid-June to early August whereas the Lead Belle's earlier season is from mid-May to mid-June.

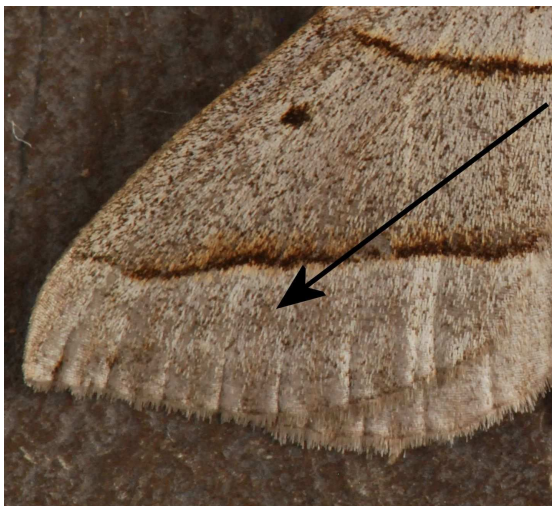


July Belle

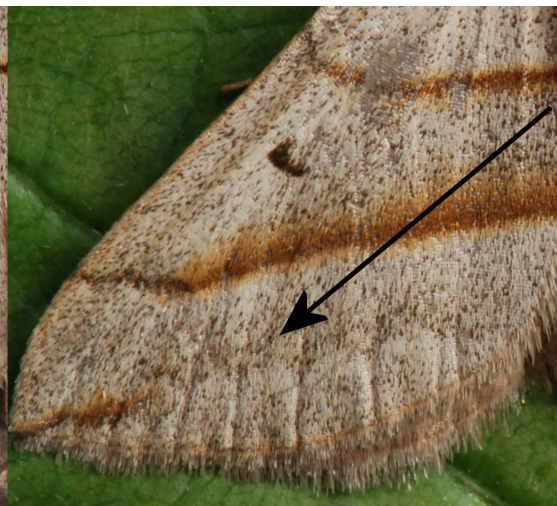


Lead Belle

The zigzag outermost cross-line is normally rather faint on the July Belle, but more well-defined on the Lead Belle, as indicated below.



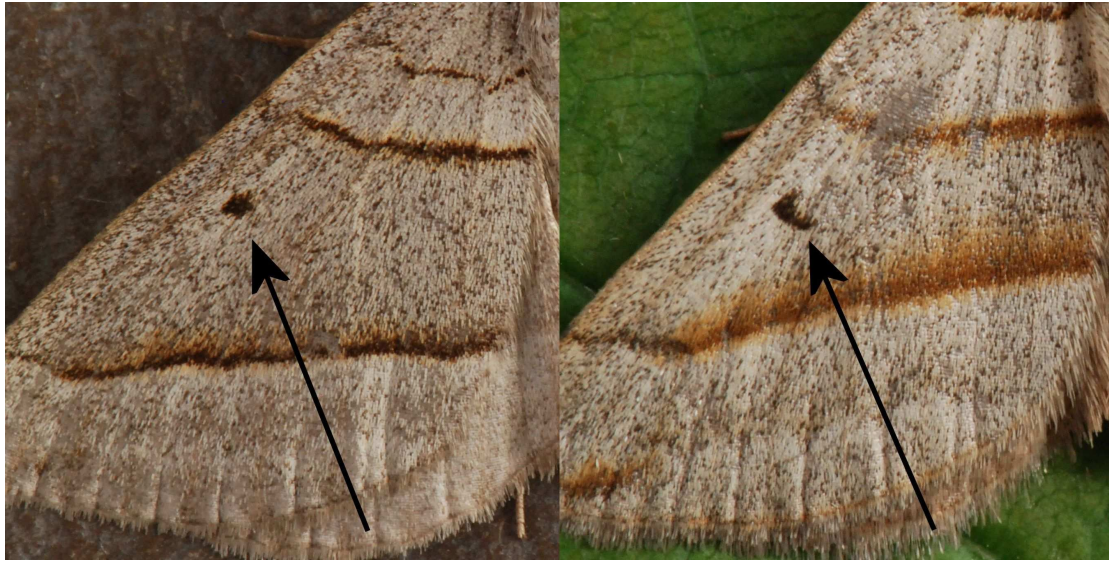
July Belle



Lead Belle

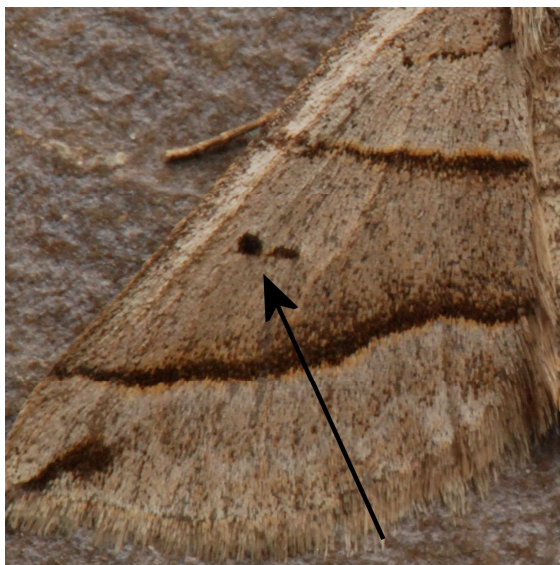
The most reliable way to tell these two species apart is the shape and position of the black central spot on the forewing. The July Belle's spot is small, round and dot-like, and tends to be closer to the second cross-line than the third, whereas on the Lead Belle the

central spot is usually tear-shaped and approximately central between the second and third cross-lines, or even sometimes closer to the third.



July Belle

Lead Belle



Lead Belle - variation of central back spot where the tear-shape is broken, but still centrally placed.

These guidelines should help to distinguish between the two Belle species but is not definitive, so if in doubt submit a photograph to the County Recorder for verification. If you wish you can also retain the specimen and arrange for genitalia examination.