



**Butterfly Conservation  
Friends of Yew Hill Butterfly  
Reserve**

## Newsletter Autumn 2005

*We like to have news from visitors so please email Lynn or drop a note to Ivan.*

### **Dates for your Diary**

#### **Work Parties**

Meet at end of Old Kennels Lane (SU451 269) near junction Port Lane/ Millers lane or join us on the Reserve.(SU 455 264). Usually 10am to 4pm but helpers welcome for part of day. An odd hour helps so please come!

Wednesday 9th November

Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> January

Friday 17<sup>th</sup> February

#### **On the hill**

May 26 A report from Jean Kington who counts certain of the plants for us each year...

*Hippocrepis comosa* Horseshoe vetch c480 plants

*Anthyllis vulneraria* Kidney vetch c59 plants

*Lotus corniculatus* Bird's foot trefoil c63 plants

*Dactylorhiza fuchsii* Common spotted Orchid 1 in flower

*Listera ovata* common Twayblade 1 in flower

Many more spotted orchids visible now.

Dear Lynn,

I saw the Marsh Fritillary on 9th June at Yew Hill - very unexpected! Julia Casson (Simon Woolley's wife!)

Lynn adds apparently a number of Marsh Fritillary were seen at Shawford Down so it might be one of those that had strayed a bit. A release is suspected. Other odd ones were seen at Pitt Down, St Catherine's Hill and Old Winchester Hill.

The orchid walk on 15<sup>th</sup> June led by Colin was very successful. It was pleasing that some pyramidal orchids were found in Hill Top.

On the 27<sup>th</sup> June whilst working at Yew Hill Patrick Fleet saw 2 Privet Hawk moths and 12+ Black-neck moths

Saturday 2nd July

Rupert Broadway reports "I saw a single male Chalkhill Blue at Yew Hill in cloudy conditions - generally an early site for this species. Also 40+ Meadow Brown and Marbled White, 5 Ringlet and a single Small Skipper".



#### **Adonis Blue??**

***Two interesting entries From BC branch web site Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> September....***

Saturday 3rd September

Rupert and Sharron Broadway report "Having recorded up to 3 Adonis Blues at Stockbridge Down last Saturday, we looked out for them again when walking there this morning and weren't disappointed - at least one, possibly 2 males, still looking very fresh. Meadow Browns and Chalkhill Blues are diminishing, but still relatively numerous. Small Heath are doing very well. We also saw a few Large and Small White, Common Blue and Small Copper plus single Red Admiral and Speckled Wood. Equally, if not more, surprising, a late afternoon run to Yew Hill revealed up to 40 or so Meadow Brown and Chalkhill Blue (very faded), 10 Common Blue, 2 or 3 Large White, Small Heath and Brown Argus, a Speckled Wood - and at least 1, possibly 2 fresh male Adonis Blue! - once again the colour and chequered white edgings unmistakable. I have been visiting both sites for a number of years and have never had seen or heard of Adonis Blue at either before. Hopefully they have had an exceptional year elsewhere and dispersed far and wide, but the possibility of captive bred releases cannot be ruled out. Either way, it will be interesting to see if they reappear in the spring".

Sunday 4th September

Adrian Hoskins says "In response to Rupert and Sharron Broadway's observations of Adonis Blue at Stockbridge Down and Yew Hill, my opinion is that the species probably colonised naturally. In normal seasons the Adonis Blue rarely strays more than a couple of hundred metres from the emergence site, but this year we had a prolonged period of exceptional warmth during the latter part of the first brood flight season - the time when females tend to disperse. The butterflies could feasibly have arrived from Martin Down, or from one of several sites in Wiltshire. The second brood is doing very well at both it's Hampshire sites ( Martin Down and Old Winchester Hill ), and with current weather conditions ideal for dispersal, it is quite possible that the butterfly could spread to Magdalen Hill Down, Broughton Down or St Catherine's Hill. Watch this space !".

## **Small Heath**

In 2004 we were very pleased about the re-appearance of 18 Small Heath, after a complete absence of three years. Not so many have been seen this year – Lynn has heard of 11 being counted on transect but it is pleasing to hear of one being seen in a garden at Badger farm ( about a mile away from Yew Hill as the crow (or the Small Heath) flies! This account is from the web site...

Saturday 20th August

Lots of activity today, reports as below:

Rupert Broadway returned from holiday in Italy yesterday to find a Small Heath in his **Winchester** garden: the first ever seen there, the 25th species recorded in 12 years or so and the 21st sighted this year. Also present, a pair of mating Common Blues.

Lynn adds reading the above really emphasises how important our gardens are for butterflies, and the joy that watching them brings. I think 25 species in 12 years is pretty good going. My own total at home in Ropley is 28 species in 22 years.

## **Grazing and other grassland management**

Cattle will arrive to graze both the reserve and Hilltop in late September/ early October.

Ben Spraggon cut several areas through the summer and this has worked well in controlling the bramble.

We are planning on clearing small scrub from the grassland at winter work parties.

We were grateful to have the help of Hampshire Conservation volunteers in clearing ragwort from Hilltop at the end of July.

An area has just been cut by Serco with a very special machine. The arisings have been spread on Hill top to encourage the spread of wild flowers.

Lynn Fomison

## **Newsletter**

This newsletter has been written mainly by Ivan & Lynn. Apologies for any errors/omissions. Items welcomed from you – it all helps to make the newsletter interesting and informative. Please send any items for the Spring Newsletter to Ivan or to Lynn by 1st April 2006.

## **Distribution List**

If you are receiving this newsletter by post but have an email address please let us know as

sending by email saves money and time. Thank you.

## **An invitation**

Members of Butterfly Conservation will get the Branch September newsletter shortly. It will give details of the AGM and Members Day on Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> November at St Barnabas Church Hall. Doors open 1pm. Non members welcome. There is a good selection of talks to be heard, displays etc

## **Another invitation**

Many of you will know Nigel Spring from his years at The Kingcombe Centre. Nigel is just starting running work parties at Butterfly Conservation's new Alners Gorse reserve which is near Lydlinch Common in Dorset. Weekends are planned 23<sup>rd</sup>/4<sup>th</sup> September and 29<sup>th</sup> /30<sup>th</sup> October. Contact him for more details if you are interested.

Tel: 07981.776767.

Any help Hampshire Members can give will be most appreciated.

Nigel is also planning conservation work party trips to France and Hungary next March.

## **Yew Hill Who's Who**

### **Newsletter Editor & Local Friends Co-ordinator**

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### **Reserves sub-committee Chairman**

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### **Reserves Officer for all BC' s Hampshire**

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### **Branch web site**

<http://www.hantsiow-butterflies.org.uk>

**National Web site** [www.butterfly-conservation.org](http://www.butterfly-conservation.org)