



## **Dates for your Diary Walks**

Meet at end of Old Kennels Lane (SU451 269) near junction Port Lane/ Millers lane or join us on the Reserve. (SU 455 264).

**Tuesday 3rd June.** Leader Colin Matthews. 01794 388272. Meet at 7.15pm Amble through the flowers. Wind down after a busy day with a relaxing walk. Superb views and we will be taking a close look at the spectacular flowers and butterfly habitat

**Wednesday 23rd July** 10.30am, Leader Ivan Arnold (& possibly Brian Fletcher) Meet 10.30am. A gentle stroll at one of the best times to see Chalkhill Blue butterflies. Celebrate National Butterflies Week by getting to know your local reserve.

For walks at all reserves and elsewhere in Hampshire see [www.hantsiow-butterflies.org.uk](http://www.hantsiow-butterflies.org.uk)

We can provide walks for groups under the educational access provisions of our Higher Level Stewardship agreement. Such visits earn us grant income from Natural England. They are free to the group so if you belong to a group that would like a visit please contact Lynn or Colin.

## **On the hill**

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

Snow 6<sup>th</sup> April 2008

Dan Hoare Regional Conservation Officer BC SE visited Yew Hill in the snow. His lovely photo is on our web site. This is what he wrote..

A photo I thought might be of interest for you from Yew Hill yesterday - no butterflies, despite the warmer weather in the afternoon. But a good example of how much warmer the southeast-facing sides of the furrows are: the snow melted off them in minutes (it was still snowing 10 mins before this picture was taken, and the ground was evenly covered). The snow was still on the NW facing side of the furrows and anthills an hour later...

## **Friends of Yew Hill Butterfly Reserve Newsletter Spring 2008**

Patrick Fleet was working at Yew Hill on 12<sup>th</sup> May and was thrilled to see a Grizzled Skipper. These have only been recorded as seen in three of the years between 1990 and 2007 so it is a significant sighting. He also saw green Hairstreak, Small Copper and a number of Small Heaths.

## **Butterflies**

How they fared in 2007 at Yew Hill  
The information gathered on the transect is coordinated by Brian Fletcher & he writes the piece about Yew Hill butterflies for the Branch annual report. Members of the branch get a free copy – it is a wonderful publication giving lots of information on how the Hampshire species fared in the previous year.

Here are some of the main points from Brian's report.

He was pleased to report that in spite of the horrible weather one of the most memorable features of the summer was that Yew Hill, its flora & fauna had not been too badly affected. With a total of 2364 butterflies were recorded on the 26 weeks of the transect – the set walk around that volunteers do each week, numbers were higher in 2008 than in 2001 when the reserve had to be grazed for longer than planned because of the foot & mouth restrictions.

As usual there were winners and losers. Brimstones did particularly well, with the first seen on the reserve in January. The excellent April weather suited this species and 134 were seen on transect, the highest number recorded since it was started in 1990. Red Admirals were more common than in any year since 1996. As far as less common species were concerned two that were regularly seen were Dark green Fritillary (5 recorded on transect) & Small Copper (8). Pleasingly Small heath numbers continued to increase with 36 recorded. It was the Blues that fared worst with Brown Argus, Chalkhill & Common Blue numbers all being significantly down. Brian's report also mentioned moths and birds including the unusual sighting of a Red Kite.

It is great to hear of your sightings, any rarities, any of the less frequently seen butterflies, all such reports add to the interest of this newsletter & Brian's annual report. Less frequently seen butterflies include: -  
Dingy & Grizzled Skippers, Green Hairstreak, Dark Green Fritillary, Small Blue and White-letter Hairstreak.

## **Winter Conservation Work**

We feel we have had another successful winter and have achieved much of what we set out to do. Much of the scrub regrowth has been cut and work has been done on several of the hedgerows, including planting new shrubs in gaps in the hedge on Hill Top. Hampshire Conservation Volunteers gave significant help on a wet & windy Sunday to renovate shrubs on the bridleway. Only real problems are too many rabbits, too much dogwood & brambles, possibly as a result of milder winters!

The cattle grazing went well and the benefits of this are really starting to show on Hill Top with an increase in the quality and quantity of flowers.

## **Keeping Yew Hill special**

The vigilance of all visitors is important in keeping a control on unwelcome activities like camping, fires and barbeques at Yew Hill. There was a real problem with these in 2006. Please contact Lynn if you see anything untoward or phone the police non-emergency help number 101.

## **Humming-bird Hawk-moth and Painted Lady online survey**

Butterfly Conservation has developed an exciting online survey of these two migrant species in association with Radio 4's major series World on the Move and as part of the Garden Moths Count initiative. The survey will run throughout 2008 on the Butterfly Conservation website and gives a great opportunity to raise awareness and engage with the general public. Anyone who sees a Humming-bird Hawk-moth or Painted Lady butterfly can use the simple but amazing interactive mapping on the website to zoom in on satellite images (down to the scale of your own garden) and log their sightings, notes on behaviour etc.

## **Butterfly Conservation needs more members!**

As the ONLY national charity devoted to butterflies and moths Butterfly Conservation is working hard to halt the decline in moths and butterflies. We KNOW we can make a difference. But what would help us tremendously is MORE members. Membership costs only a little more than 50p a week and can be paid monthly. So if you are not a member please think about joining, and if you are a member can you persuade a friend to join or give a gift membership?

I always say to people that I do not want to be writing in twenty years time saying, "Back in 2008 we knew butterflies were declining badly but not

enough people listened and helped, and now it is too late".

I am optimistic that people will recognise the magic of butterflies, not want to lose them from their lives and want to keep them for future generations and respond positively to this request. Membership of BC is a way of being part of something good to help butterflies and moths.

This year BC celebrates it's 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary so there is no better time to join. The actual "birthday" was 7<sup>th</sup> March and we had a very successful celebratory work party at Magdalen Hill Down with over 40 people attending. Martin Warren, BC's Chief Executive, came along with other BC staff and journalist Rosie Boycott. We got good publicity in local papers and a few mentions in the national press too.

*Lynn Fomison*

## **Newsletter**

This newsletter is produced on behalf of Butterfly Conservation Hampshire and Isle of Wight Branch & is provided free of charge to friends of the reserve. Apologies for any errors/omissions. Items welcomed from you. Please send any items for the Autumn Newsletter to Lynn or Ivan by 15th August 2008

Including reports from visitors makes the newsletter interesting so please send us your news

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

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

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

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**Cattle Owner** Sarah Jackson 01962 733969  
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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)

**If you no longer wish to receive this newsletter or can receive it by email or look at it on our web site please tell Lynn**