

Wednesday 27th February

Mike Wildish sends this joyful communication from Clatford Oakcuts (SU 322 396) (41) Red Admiral - 1 "Allylooyah! Seen my first Hants butterfly of the year at last. (I've seen a few over in Wiltshire)."

Dr David Tinling sends the following sightings Tues 26th Feb: 3 Red Admirals basking and flying in Gosport, the first in Stanley Park (SZ592989), the second in Carters Copse (SU586001), and the third in Ann's Hill Cemetery (east) (SU602002). 24th & 25th Feb: 2 Red Admirals in Carters Copse, Gosport (SU586001). Sun 24th Feb: Red Admiral at Stokes Bay Old Moat, Gosport(SZ595985), seen by Anne McCue. Tues 12th Feb: 2 Holly Blues seen by Mrs Eileen Webb flying in her garden in Monckton Road, Alverstoke, Gosport(SZ609985).

Dr Tinling also informs that the migration of the Painted Lady can be followed at www.bbc.co.uk/worldonthemove

Saturday 23rd February

Dr David Tinling sends the following sightings Thurs 14th Feb: 3 Red Admirals in Gosport, two in Carters Copse(SU586001) (one taking blackthorn nectar) and the third in Sandhill Lane (SU579001), West of the River Alver, seen by Anne McCue and David Tinling. Sun 17th Feb: Red Admiral basking on nettles in Manor Way (SU563013), Lee-on-the-Solent, seen by David Tinling. Mon 18th Feb: 2 Red Admirals taking blackthorn nectar in Carters Copse (SU586001),Gosport, and a Comma basking and flying in Solent Way(SZ594991), Gosport, seen by David Tinling. Tues 19th Feb; Angleshades larva(smooth bright light green) on footpath in Clayhall Road(SZ605986), Gosport,seen by David Tinling.

Friday 22nd February

Lynn Fomison writes "In late February & March butterflies can still be quite rarely seen. But there is more to watching butterflies than.... watching butterflies. Take the White-letter Hairstreak. Its a butterfly that is not frequently seen. Have you ever seen one? Would you know where to look? Last Saturday a number of us from Hampshire Branch attended the splendid Regional Conservation Day organised by Dan Hoare, Liz Goodyear (Herts Middx Branch) and Peter Kirby (Kent) provided inspiration as far as White-letter Hairstreak was concerned. Step One is Find your elm trees. And the next few weeks is a good time to do this. They have very distinctive flowers from now onwards - when few other trees are in bloom. Step two. Visit the trees from Mid June to end of July, preferably about 9am in the morning. Look at the top of the tree with binoculars & see if you can see a dark almost triangular butterfly taking short vertical flights from the tree top, maybe two or even three males sparring with each other. We shall be expecting lots of White-letter Hairstreak reports to the web site this summer. I especially want people to look for White-letter Hairstreak on the bridleway adjacent to our Yew Hill reserve. We have both old elms there and some of the new hybrids provided by Andrew Brooks. For more details of the project to find more elms & White-letter Hairstreak visit :www.w-album.hertsmiddx-butterflies.org.uk/

Illustration of flower from wikipedia



Wednesday 20th February

Lynn Fomison writes "A lack of sunshine at Bentley Station meadow on meant no early butterflies were seen but Sue Clark managed to find this common plume moth in the vegetation she was trimming back along the fence line."



Monday 18th February

Geoff Jones reports "Just a quick note on behalf of Brenda Powell who reports that this morning she saw a Small White clearly suffering from the cold in a garden at Little Green, Gosport."

Andy Barker writes "Linda and I had a brief foray for Brown Hairstreak eggs in the Shipton Bellinger area yesterday. Disappointingly we only managed to find one egg on this occasion, but we didn't search for that long and we didn't try all of the best areas. The beautiful sunshine and lack of wind makes for ideal searching conditions at present, so we'd encourage others to have a go. But hurry up, because once the blackthorn buds burst the task is much harder as the egg is usually right by the junction of old and new growth and often at the base of a spike with lots of tiny flower buds on. For those that want to see what the eggs look like have a look at the image taken by Colin Baker on the 30 December entry to the sightings page (see below)."

Piers Vigus writes "I took a day off work last week and went to Shipton Bellinger primarily for a spot of bird watching but also to look for Betulae ova. I counted 32 ova in the space of an hour or so. Not bad!"

Richard Seargent reports from Yetminster Road, Farnborough (SU875543) (85) Small Tortoiseshell. 1 individual flying around garden, disturbed from a pile of wood.

Wednesday 13th February

Dr David Tinling reports the following Wed 13th Feb: male Brimstone, 3 Red Admirals (one taking Blackthorn nectar) and Comma in Carters Copse, Gosport(SU586001). Fred Gibson and his working party saw a Red Admiral basking in the reed bed West of the River Alver, Gosport(SU579002). The Small Whites seen taking Blackthorn nectar on 8th Feb in Southampton at Shirley by Andy Collins and near the General Hospital by Phil Budd were the earliest ever Hampshire sightings replacing the 3 seen at Southbourne Undercliff by Mike Gibbons on 25th Feb 2000. The Large White seen in the Hermitage Garden, Gosport on 12th Feb by David Tinling was the earliest ever mainland Hampshire sighting replacing the one seen at Bedhampton on 22nd Feb 1990, although one or both of the whites seen on 9th by Peter Bowker could have been a Large White. The earliest IOW sighting was at Seaview on 19th Jan 2007 by Pauline Peach. The late Jan and early Feb sunshine have produced far more sightings than usual. Richard Seargent reports from the Aldershot Training Area (SU848512) (31, 41) 1 x Brimstone, 1 x Red Admiral. "Flying well in sun shine. Little wind. Surprised to see given the last three cold nights."

Tuesday 12th February

Lynn Fomison reports from her garden in Ropley (SU643307) (38,84,85) Small Tortoiseshell 1. "Seen by husband Paul whilst I was away on holiday. The garden is welcoming to butterflies with wild plum in flower & cowslips. The Small Tortoiseshell was nectaring on species crocus. On the 10th February Paul also saw Brimstone 1 male.

Dr David Tinling sends in the following sightings. 30th Jan and 4th, 6th & 10th Feb: Red Admiral basking and flying in Stanley Park, Gosport(SZ592989),and taking Mahonia nectar on 6th. Friday 8th Feb: 3 Red Admirals basking and flying in Gosport,one in Sandhill Lane (SU579001), a second in Carters Copse (SU586001), and a third in Jellicoe Avenue (SZ598992). Sat 9th Feb: 2 Red Admirals, one taking Berberis nectar in Southsea Rock Gardens (SZ647981) and the other basking on white polyanthus flowers in Ravelin Park, University of Portsmouth (SZ637996). Peter Bowker saw 2 whites and the earliest ever **Holly Blue** in the Hermitage Garden, Gosport (SU596004). Sun 10th Feb: Red Admiral basking and flying in Crofton Avenue, Hill Head (SU554016), and a ~~Small Tortoiseshell~~ (Correction **Large Tortoiseshell** - see report for 17th April) flying and basking on a white window ledge in Cambridge Road, Lee-on-the-Solent (SZ567999). Mon 11th Feb: Red Admiral basking and flying in Carters Copse, Gosport (SU586001); Peacock basking on a fence and flying in Bury Hall Lane, Gosport (SZ599993);Comma basking on a cigarette packet and flying in Alver Meadow, Gosport(SZ586996). Tues 12th Feb: 2 Red Admirals taking Blackthorn nectar and Chiffchaff calling in Carters Copse, Gosport (SU586001); very fresh male **Large White** flying in the Hermitage Garden, Gosport(SU596004).

Monday 11th February

Richard Hart reports from Warsash (SU494053) (85) 1 Red Admiral. "Also 1 Red Admiral seen by my wife in Hook Park (code 84) SU499050."

Saturday 9th February

Richard Symonds reports "Today I saw a single Red Admiral in flight at Redhill Road, Rowlands Castle (SU734100)"

Ashley Whitlock reports from Queen Elizabeth Country Park - Burnett Copse SU748160. "A glorious day very warm, and I thought I would start my Butterfly season early, and what a good few hours, in a stroll around a small part of the woods I saw Peacock (1) **Comma** (2) Red Admiral (3) Brimstone (6) five males and one female. One of the Red Admirals reminded of the heady days in July when looking up at the blue sky and the tops of conifer trees, one male was on patrol in a 'triangular flight' rather similar to the glorious Iris, looking for a suitable perch, and getting the maximum rays of the sun, settling down on the edge of a branch with wings outstretched. All the specimens seen were in really good condition."

Richard Hughes reports from Red Shoots Wood, New Forest - Peacock one seen and at Blashford Lakes also one Peacock seen.

Ralph Hollins reports from Havant (SU721063) Brimstone male 1, and from Langstone village shore (SU722051) Red Admiral 1.

Peter Vaughan writes "I saw three butterfly species on the wing today in and around Hook, NE Hants - a Brimstone, two red Admirals and a Peacock. I also saw the first Adder and first Slow Worm of the year out basking at a local heathland site.

Friday 8th February

Lorraine Dearnley reports from Wootton, New Forest (SZ229993)(85) Red Admiral "Sunny day".

Andrew Bolton reports from Axmansford, Tadley (SU566607) 1 **Small Tortoiseshell**. "My first butterfly of the year - and it seems to have been a long time coming. A nice one to start with though, and not what I expected, fluttering around the kitchen window at lunchtime."

Andy Collins reports from Lordsdale Greenway, Shirley, Southampton: Red Admiral - 2, **Small White** - 1. "The Small White and 1 of the Red Ads. were nectaring on Blackthorn blossom. Certainly the earliest Small White I have ever seen."

Geoff Jones writes "A pleasant Spring stroll around Meonstoke during later morning into early afternoon brought my first butterfly sightings of the year: male and female Brimstones and a Red Admiral all enjoying the warm weather."

Tuesday 5th February

Sue Clark writes "The pictured moth flew through an open window into our bathroom last night. I think it is a Dotted Border but if anyone knows different please let me know. As the weather was so awful he stayed the night and was released this morning."



Monday 4th February

Lorraine Dearnley reports from Wotton, New Forest (SZ229993)(85) Peacock "Sunny day".

Richard Symonds writes "Today my father spotted a Peacock in our garden at Stoke, Hayling Island (SU72250218). It was in flight then landed on a chestnut fence. The left hind wing was reported to be torn."