

2020 Butterfly Transect Season

Coronavirus Covid-19

Following the latest Government advice, which eases restrictions on outdoor journeys and exercise, Butterfly Conservation and the UKBMS partnership have now (14 May 2020) issued advice that butterfly transect recording in England can resume. Those self-isolating or shielding should not resume, and social distancing rules remain. Please also check site access and landowner permissions, as appropriate. The latest guidance and health and safety advice is available on the UKBMS website.

Still time to obtain lots of butterfly transect data

With only 6 weeks missed during April and early May 2020, the resumption of butterfly transect walking, plus good weather forecast over the coming week, means that we can make a great start to transect recording and still obtain data for most species.

There is no doubt that 2020 data for early species such as Orange Tip, Grizzled Skipper and Green Hairstreak will be lacking and, we'll have incomplete data for hibernating species such as Brimstone, Small Tortoiseshell, Peacock and Comma. However, given that we are now able to resume transect recording in Wk.7, it should still be possible to gain sufficient data for most species to allow meaningful annual indices. We have to recognise that easing of restrictions could easily be reversed by the Government if there is a spike in infection rates, so please be alert and adhere to the rules.

Garden records and other casual sightings

In the absence of April and early May 2020 transect data, garden butterfly records for this period will be extremely useful in evaluating how certain butterfly species have fared this year. Please submit your records by one of the methods given under the "Recording" tab of the Branch website.

Hampshire & Isle of Wight Branch Website

For information, the Branch website now has the 2019 Annual Report under "Resources/Publications", and the "Transect" page now has the latest 25-year trends for all species uploaded.

We thank you for your co-operation in these exceptionally challenging times.

Andy & Linda Barker

14 May 2020