

Hampshire and Isle of Wight Branch



Newsletter 96



Butterfly
Conservation

April 2014



Events

www.hantsiow-butterflies.org.uk

Saturday 10 May: Sholing Valley Study Centre Association Spring Fayre.

Phil Budd is setting up a Butterfly Conservation display stand. Call Phil for details. **Tel: 02380 444172.**

Saturday 17 May: Making the Most of your Transect.

10.30 am. Join Phil Budd on Magdalen Hill Down for a training session to brush up your skills. **See p. 8**

Sunday 15 June: Itchen Valley Country Park Family Countryside Day.

A great family day out and an opportunity to learn about traditional countryside skills and crafts. Looking for 2 more volunteers so please contact Clive if you would like to help. **Contact: Clive Wood. Tel: 01962 852620.**

Thursday 3 - Saturday 5 July: Moth Night. See p. 11

Friday 11 - Sunday 13 July: Hampshire Moth Weekend. See p. 11

19 July - 10 August: Big Butterfly Count. www.bigbutterflycount.org

ID sheets can be downloaded and sightings reported on the website.

Tuesday 29th-31st July: The New Forest Show. This is our major showpiece event of the year. Always a busy day but great fun and a fantastic experience. Will need plenty of volunteers to help so please contact Clive for further information. **Contact: Clive Wood. Tel: 01962 852620.**

Saturday 9 August: Making the Most of your Transect.

10.30 am. Join Phil Budd on Magdalen Hill Down for a training session to brush up your skills. **See p. 8**

Wednesday 3 September Main Committee

Saturday 13 Sept: Romsey Show.

Volunteers needed for our stand. **Contact: Clive Wood. Tel: 01962 852620.**

Saturday 25 October Branch AGM, Millennium Hall, Littleton.

Saturday 14 November National AGM, Stoneleigh Park, Warwickshire.

Cover painting - Silver-washed Fritillaries by Rosemary Powell



Chairman's Report

In what is my first report as the new Branch Chair I ought to start with a bit of an introduction, as some may not know me. I have been an active moth recorder since 2002 and have been on the Main Committee as county microlepidoptera recorder for about 10 years now. I never envisaged becoming Chair but was more than happy to accept the role at the AGM in October: the first 'moth man' to do so!

May I thank Pete Eeles for his support and enthusiasm for the Branch during his time as Chair, and to the other members of the Main Committee for their endorsement of my appointment. I look forward to carrying on the good work of my predecessors as Butterfly Conservation, along with almost every conservation charity, charts a course through increasingly challenging financial times. Butterfly Conservation membership numbers have in fact risen healthily in the past couple of years but this growth emphasises the need to ensure that the focus remains on the organisation providing the best service for the membership and achieving our conservation aims. As one of the largest branches of Butterfly Conservation, Hampshire and Isle of Wight has a significant part to play in this, and we look forward to working closely with headquarters staff as we plan for the future.

As I write, it feels as if spring has arrived after over two months of continuous low pressure sent deluge after deluge across the south and west of England, and the overwintering species such as Brimstone, Peacock and Small Tortoiseshell are everywhere. The main focus has inevitably been placed on the significant human cost, but relatively little, perhaps understandably, on the wildlife impact of the flooding. My expectation - for invertebrates at least - is that any setbacks will be relatively local, minor and temporary. As ever, time will tell. Perhaps more significant will be the effect of an unusually mild winter. Hard winters help to increase mortality rates in parasites, and a shift in the host-parasite balance towards the latter may well become obvious this year in certain species. It will be interesting to see how such species as Small Tortoiseshell and Holly Blue, which are particularly sensitive to parasite numbers, will fare over coming months.

Last year's New Members Day was as ever well attended. This is an annual event at which we invite new members to spend a day being introduced to the work of the Branch and of Butterfly Conservation as a whole, and to see the Branch's flagship reserve at Magdalen Hill Down in the afternoon. This year's event is still being planned but will likely be held on Sunday 20 July at the Masonic Hall. If you have joined within the past two years and want to come along, please keep this date free in your diaries. More details will be released in due course.

The AGM and Members Day in October was an excellent occasion and saw a changing of the guard: thanks are due again to the three members who stood down, Roger Buchanan, Dave Green and Brian Fletcher, and to Pete Eeles in his last appearance as Chair for MC-ing the AGM before handing over to a quite nervous replacement in myself. The subsequent entertainment was varied – from flights of fantasy, through art, to science and back again, often in the same talk.

Last year saw a welcome bounce back in butterfly and moth numbers after a run of poor summers, and transect counts on our reserves, the lifeblood of our Branch, reflect both this and the significant habitat management work that has been done. As Jayne Chapman highlights in her reserves update, ride-widening and hedge-management at Bentley Station Meadow has resulted in record numbers of species such as Silver-washed Fritillary there, and Magdalen Hill Down and Yew Hill are being restored to optimum condition through scrub clearance and carefully managed grazing by sheep and cattle. We would like to thank the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust and the South Downs National Park Authority for their continued support, without which management of our reserves would be almost impossible.

Let's hope 2014 brings another good summer and a continuation of the recovery seen last year for our varied and diverse lepidoptera. Visit our reserves and see the good work that is being done. If you would like to know more about our work or get involved with the work of the Branch, please contact us.

Mike Wall, Branch Chairman

The June Bailey Education Fund

The Branch has been able to establish an Education Fund thanks to a legacy from June Bailey and the generous support of her husband, Ken. Awards of up to £500 are available to support individuals or organisations involved in educational activities that promote awareness, knowledge and conservation of butterflies, moths and their habitats in Hampshire and the Isle of Wight.

Details of how to apply for an award can be found on the home page of the Branch website. Applicants need not be members of Butterfly Conservation. Successful bids might include students planning a final year dissertation or a study centre preparing new educational material for visiting school groups.

Members are encouraged to bring the existence of the award scheme to the attention of relations, friends, schools and others working on projects that support the objectives of the Education Fund.

Further information contact Clive Wood, Vice Chairman - clivepwood@btinternet.com



Reserves updates

Well, spring has certainly got off to a great start this year, with many garden butterflies such as Brimstone and Small Tortoiseshell emerging from their winter hibernation a bit earlier than in 2013. This is due to a mild winter, and although they are seen as a welcome relief after the wet winter this timing is not always good for the butterflies themselves. This is because they will be using up valuable energy reserves looking for plants and flowers on which to nectar, which are still few and far between. But spring sunshine does make the previous weeks of watery misery seem almost like a distant memory.

We don't yet know what impact the wet weather will have had on butterflies that have specific requirements. Species such as the Brown Argus do not like the wet, and overwinter in the ground in the larval stage. The adults emerge in early May, peaking at the end of May and beginning of June, and produce a second brood that emerges at the end of July. Numbers of this butterfly at Magdalen Hill Down in 2012 were well above the national average, and this year's monitoring will help us evaluate any long-term weather-related impacts. Keep an eye out for them and if you are unsure of how to differentiate the female Brown Argus from the female Common Blue have a look at the following website: www.ukbutterflies.co.uk



British White Cattle

Jayne Chapman

Magdalen Hill Down

The 5.5 miles of fencing on the Down is coming to the end of its useful life partly owing to a lack of regular maintenance and also to the age of the posts, which all seem to be rotting out at the same time. Replacing and repairing the fences has taken a considerable amount of time this winter. So far it has swallowed up over 40 contractor days and approximately 600 fencing stakes. Because of access issues on some parts of the Reserve the majority of these posts have to be driven in by hand using a post-thumper. We have been very fortunate to have a couple of strong local lads, who have managed the majority of the work on their own. I won't go into the financial details, but a big thank you is due once again to the South Downs National Park Authority, which continues to support the Branch in many ways and contributed £3,000 towards the cost of tackling the fencing crisis from their open access funding pot.

Since keeping the livestock safe is a prime objective, the fences are regularly checked for any signs of damage. The recent storms certainly kept Colin busy. We cannot thank him enough for the miles he walked every day, and for keeping the fence lines clear of fallen trees and branches.

We began the grazing earlier last year to get on top of the excessive grass growth from the previous two years: we had over 30 cattle and 50 sheep from early August. Most have now been moved to other sites, but we still have the nine British White cattle on the Allotments, where they have so far produced six healthy calves, including twins. The Hampshire & Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust provide all of our livestock requirements. It has been great working with them over the last few months: they have been very helpful and accommodating, sometimes in difficult circumstances.

The new TB testing regulations place extra demands on both staff and volunteer time. The cattle are rounded up into the corral and moved one at a time through the crush, where they undergo the TB test: an area of hair is shaved on the neck, and a needle inserted. With an average of eight cattle per test, this can take a total of 20 hours of staff/volunteer time, with a similar period needed three days later to check for any reactors. The cattle are never quite so easy to round up the second time, and with the vet waiting around (at £150 per hour) time does become an issue. We do try to get the animals in before the vet arrives, but the Dexters seemed to have very different ideas about this.

All the cattle were TB-free, so that there was no need for any movement restrictions, which would automatically put a stop to cattle movement on or off the site for 60 days.

The winter work parties have been well attended in general, with both our own volunteers and the South Downs Volunteer Ranger Service. We are lucky to have the support of this conservation group, which works tirelessly to improve the habitat conditions at both Magdalen Hill and Bentley Station Meadow.

The Small Blue continues to expand its range across the North Down. According to Andy Barker this is a fantastic achievement for what was originally an arable field and has been managed as conservation grassland for only 10 years. It just shows what chalk grassland restoration projects can do.

Bentley Station Meadow

When this Reserve was put into a new Higher Level Stewardship agreement in 2012, I can remember feeling daunted by the extent of work that was required (under the new Management Plan) to restore the Meadow to its former glory and make it a place where butterflies would like to go. Looking at the Meadow now, I cannot believe how much has been achieved in a relatively short space of time. Bentley has a very strong volunteer group, headed by David Walton, and including Branch members who have had a long association with this site. A few new and very dedicated volunteers have joined the group. We have completed the three east/west rides, and the difference has proven to be spectacularly beneficial to butterflies. Even though 2013 was an excellent year for butterflies across all sites, Bentley produced a transect annual index for Silver-washed Fritillary that exceeded the Hampshire average since transect recording began there in 1993. Andy Barker also informs me that Marbled White has colonised the open grassland, having been barely present in the past.

Earlier discussions with the Forestry Commission (in line with the new Management Plan) has resulted in the creation of a new east/west ride in the Commission's SSSI area. This has been designed to mirror the rides on the Reserve and facilitate the movement of butterflies from the forest and into the Meadow. We are delighted to be working so closely with the Commission for the benefit of both BC and Commission sites and the butterflies they support. Many thanks to Jay Doyle and Julian Williams for making this happen.



Silver-washed Fritillaries

Dan Powell

Yew Hill

Last year saw the reintroduction of sheep-grazing both on the Reserve and at Hill Top after an absence of 13 years. The sheep are more suited to creating a closer sward height – as preferred by members of the blue butterfly family, including Chalkhill Blue and Adonis Blue; the latter made an appearance in 2012 with three recorded on-transect, and one seen off-transect on the reservoir front in 2013. I am hopeful that they will become ever more frequent, as they are regularly seen at St Catherine’s Hill – a very short flight away.

Other news

Please take a look at the events we are hosting this year: in addition to the usual Reserves walks (which are free to members of the public), we are also putting on three moth walks. Details can be found in the field meetings programme on p.18.

Phil Budd is also repeating the popular transect training days. The first date in May is ideal for any transect walkers wishing to brush up their skills and offers hints and tips on getting the most out of a transect. The second date in August is good for any members who might like to volunteer to help with our transect walks in 2015. Here I would like to welcome two new transect walkers - Alex Hogg from the Wildlife Trust and Mike Wall, the Branch Chairman and Hampshire Moth recorder - and to thank existing walkers for their excellent monitoring.

I look forward to seeing many of you on the walks this year. Please feel free to contact me on 01962 808400 for information on our work, or if you would like to become one of our volunteers.

Jayne Chapman, Reserves Officer





Surveys, Reports and Events

Wider Countryside Butterfly Survey

The Wider Countryside Butterfly Survey (WCBS) runs as a partnership between Butterfly Conservation (BC), British Trust for Ornithology (BTO) and the centre for Ecology and Hydrology (CEH). The scheme is a UK-wide survey of butterfly numbers using randomly selected 1km squares to assess the changing status of widespread butterfly species which provides an indication of the health of the countryside. The scheme has been running for five years. We currently have 30 squares in Hampshire and the Isle of Wight. Many of the squares are being monitored but I am looking for people to help out with some squares which are not covered:

SU0717 Tidpit, in the west of Hampshire, about 2km south-east of the village of Martin.

SU7108 Leigh Park, Havant.

SU7334 North-west of Selbourne, just north of Selbourne Common.

SU8230 Liphook.

SZ4587 Apse Down, Isle of Wight, about 3km west of Newport.

SZ5192 Whippingham, Isle of Wight, about 2km south of east Cowes.

Recording involves counting butterflies along two parallel 1km-long survey routes within your 1kmsquare. You will be given a map with the routes marked out and full instructions on how to carry out the survey. You are asked to visit at least twice during the year, in July and August, and if possible in May as well. In 2013 visits were made to 857 squares in the UK, including a number monitored by BTO. This is 86 more squares sampled than in 2012. Nationally, 45 species were recorded and a total of 142,217 individual butterflies were counted.

To find out more about these 1km squares, please contact me. Details on back page.

Linda Barker

Butterfly Transects

I am currently looking for help with three butterfly transects in Hampshire.

1. Ashford Hill, SU5661, about 4km north-east of Kingsclere. This transect has been running since 2007. It is walked by a team of 4 people, one of whom is unable to do it this year. Over the 26-week recording season each team member will walk 6-7 weeks, timetabled to suit your availability.

2. Wendleholm SU4907, just west of Locks Heath. this transect was started in 1988 and ran until 2004. There are plans to start this transect again; I'm looking for additional help.

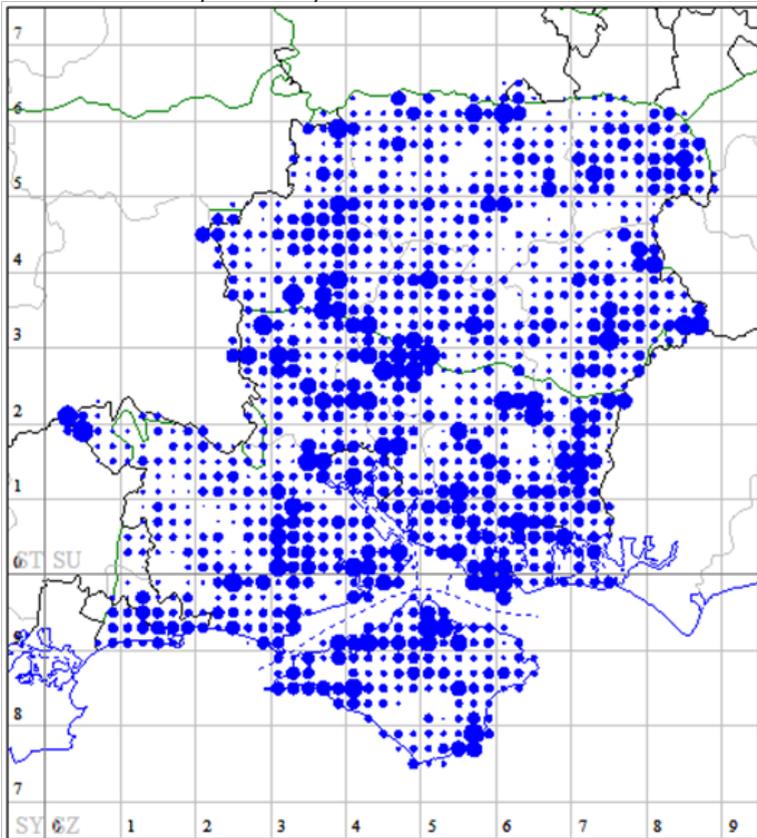
3. Yew Hill SU4526. Chalk downland reserve, Oliver's Battery, west of Winchester. There are other transects which may need help this year; please let me know if you are interested in getting involved.

To find out more about these three transects, please contact me. Details on back page.

Linda Barker, Transect Coordinator

Butterfly Recording 2014

This year (2014) is the last of the current five-year recording period. We welcome records from anywhere in Hampshire and the Isle of Wight. Some parts are not as well covered as others, and members may be interested in exploring more neglected areas to survey the butterflies present: see 'Conservation' section of the Branch website for details of these areas. The 10-km squares where we would particularly like more recording are SU55, SU63, SU64 and SU74, where there are still quite a few gaps (thanks to members filling in certain gaps during 2013). Records from even a brief visit will be useful if you are anywhere near these areas.



Butterflies in the New Millennium 2010 to 2014. 2-km coverage 2010 to 2013

Moth Night 2014: 3 - 5 July 2014

The theme for Moth Night this year is “Woodlands”, although recorders are always welcome to do their own thing. The event will be held on three consecutive nights (Thursday to Saturday) to allow for the vagaries of the weather. Recording can take place on any one or more of these nights.

There is an online recording system for **all** Moth Night records, and this will be the **only** way to submit your records to the organisers. Your county recorders cannot submit records on your behalf. This system will be available from the first day of the event until the deadline for data entry of **Sunday, 30 November 2014**. As well as reducing the incidence of data duplication, the system dramatically improves the efficiency of data-handling and validation of the many thousands of records received nationally each year. It gives participants immediate feedback of their own records and information on where records have been submitted throughout the British Isles. See www.mothnight.info/www/

The full findings of each event are published in Atropos. Prizes for various categories are kindly donated by Atropos Books, Anglian Lepidopterist Supplies, Apollo Books, and Bioquip.



Clifden Nonpareil

Richard Coomber

Hampshire Moth Weekend 2014: 11 - 13 July 2014

Hampshire Moth Weekend will be held again in 2014, with the objective of encouraging recorders to explore new sites for moths in Hampshire and the Isle of Wight, be it in a friend's backyard or in an unexplored part of our area. As an incentive, prizes are again being offered to the individual that finds the rarest or most significant species, and for the most new 10km-square records for the weekend. For more details, email Mike Wall mikewall@gofast.co.uk or Tim Norriss tim@kitsmail.com

Isle of Wight Report

The Isle of Wight Group is pursuing an increasingly active role in the conservation of the Island's butterflies. We have lost three species (the Duke of Burgundy, the Pearl-bordered Fritillary and the Small Pearl-bordered Fritillary) in recent years, and these extinctions have provided a stimulus to greater organisation with a view to raising the profile of butterflies on the Island. More can be achieved as a cohesive group than as a collection of individuals, and a structure is gradually developing around a few dedicated individuals.



We continue to cultivate a relationship with the Forestry Commission at Parkhurst Forest, and our input was sought with regard to the Commission's conservation programme for this past winter. One of our members, Mark Russell, who also runs the Green Gym volunteers, was invited to carry out some habitat enhancement work at a couple of sites earlier in the year. We hope in time to establish a permanent presence at Parkhurst and to undertake ride and site maintenance on a regular basis.

Last summer we undertook a butterfly survey for the Wight Salads Group. The latter is a major producer of tomatoes and its glasshouses occupy a considerable acreage near Arreton. The Group has applied for the Conservation Grade standard and is anxious to demonstrate its commitment to biodiversity conservation. The scheme requires members to devote 10% of their land to nature conservation and Wight Salads has allowed large areas of grassland adjoining its glasshouses to revert to meadow. Over twenty species of butterfly were observed at the site, including Marbled White and Common Blue.

In the summer ahead we will be monitoring butterfly populations for Isle of Wight Pearl at their site at Chilton Chine on the south coast of the Island. The Glanville breeds in the Chine, and Isle of Wight are looking to exploit this association, and butterflies generally, as a marketing tool.

Both Wight Salads and Isle of Wight Pearl have asked us for advice in making their sites more attractive to butterflies. This represents a big opportunity for us to do something tangible for butterfly conservation on the Island and we are keen to meet the challenge.

The IOW Group has come a long way in a short time. Membership of Butterfly Conservation remains low, given that the Island can boast some of the best sites for butterflies in the country. Our higher profile will, however, hopefully result in new members and enable us to make an even greater contribution to the conservation of our butterflies and their habitats.

Stuart Read. IoW Group

South East Area Group News

Bedenham Grasslands, DSDA Gosport

The Grasslands, the second most important butterfly habitat in south east Hants after Ports Down , have seriously deteriorated since the Group's first visit in 1999, when the Grizzled Skipper and other comparative rarities were discovered. Over the years, 29 species have been recorded in the area generally, four of which are listed as High Priority in the UK BAP. Invasion by oak scrub, bramble, and coarser grasses had gone unchecked owing to cuts in the depot's maintenance budget. Accordingly, an appeal was made to the Defence Estates Conservation Office, and the issue has now been satisfactorily resolved.

Horsea Island

The MoD has now sold the south eastern corner of the 'island' to Portsmouth City Council, which is planning to build 500 homes there despite its belated designation by Hampshire County Council as a SINC. In particular, the development as proposed would oblige the destruction of the elm thicket and plantation there. A letter of protest was duly sent to the leader of the Council, who eventually replied offering some hope of preserving the trees within the planned development.



South East Area Group 1999-2014

In the absence of any younger blood rising through the ranks, it has been decided to disband the Group, now largely in the grip of senility. Created in the run-up to the Millennium Atlas, its finest hour perhaps was the surveying of almost every semi-natural habitat in south-east Hants, and with it the discovery of many new colonies of priority species such as the Grizzled Skipper and White Admiral. Unhappily, the surveys inevitably created a benchmark against which many local extinctions, including three species from Ports Down alone, would become apparent. Liaison with local authorities and other bodies was often rewarding, although the constant change in personnel made long term gains elusive. Weekend work parties armed with brush cutters were fun, although the minuscule results were sobering. The Group's greatest failing was undoubtedly recruitment, and therein lay the seeds of its own demise.

Andrew Brookes

Andrew Brookes

The Branch would like to thank Andrew for his many achievements while leader of the South-East Area Group. Under his leadership the Group highlighted the importance of habitats for butterflies and other wildlife. His particular achievements include: organising the tetrad survey of the area for the Millennium Atlas project; persuading public bodies and landowners to permit surveys which led to the Butterfly Conservation Handbook for South-east Hants; experimenting with disease-resistant hybrid elms to determine their suitability as an alternative caterpillar food source for White-letter Hairstreaks and establishing trial plantations (the Portsmouth and Gosport conurbation was awarded “key site status” in this regard). In addition, the Group’s work on Portsdown Hill restored parts of the Hill to what they looked like decades ago.

Andrew is distinguished by his knowledge of butterflies and commitment to their conservation, as well as by his vigorous support for the Group’s prime objective of butterfly conservation through active habitat management.

Twyford Waterworks Trust

Twyford Waterworks near Winchester, is an industrial heritage site of four acres managed and maintained by volunteers of the Twyford Waterworks Trust, a trust that preserves and operates the steam boilers and pump of the original installation (1900). Around the buildings there are more than two acres of rough uncultivated downland, brownfield parcels and tall grass that support more than 240 native plant species. The site, though small, provides a habitat for numerous birds, amphibians and invertebrates, including at least twenty butterfly species. The whole site including the nature trail is open to the public on the first Sunday in the month from May to October. There are usually about 200 paying visitors and lots of children.

Janet and Richard Stobart, with other volunteers, have been trying to protect and cautiously to enhance the wildlife attractions of the site, but there is now an acute need for at least one, or preferably two, additional volunteers for meeting the public on open days and other light tasks. Some knowledge of wildlife beyond butterflies would be valuable. (An interest in steam engineering would be invaluable but is not necessary at all).

There is a cheerful and friendly atmosphere amongst the all the volunteers. If you are able to help, please email the Stobarts at jr.stobart@waitrose.com but first look at www.twyfordwaterworks.co.uk

Hampshire BC members who visit the waterworks, especially in June, July or August are sure to enjoy this unusual wildlife site - if the weather is kind.

Richard Stobart

Report on the Moth Conference, Saturday 15 February at Littleton Memorial Hall

The annual Moth Conference was attended by about 50 people, who heard a number of interesting talks. Tim Norris gave an update on the 2013 season, mentioning especially moths new to the two counties. This was followed by David Evans who gave advice on how to fill in an under-recorded area quickly, by blanketing it with home-made 15w actinic traps. He showed photos of a number of such traps. Amanda Ingham described the surveys carried out by Hampshire Wildlife Trust for Striped Lychnis. The information obtained was fed to HCC Highways to help in their management of road verges where the food plant, dark mullein, was growing. The surveys have now come to an end due to lack of funding.

After the tea break James Halsey described his moth recording and breeding experiences since 1998 on the Isle of Wight and showed some fascinating videos of pupae hatching and the moths emerging.



Merveille du Jour

Pete Durnell

Keith Godfrey gave an extremely interesting talk on epigenetics, i.e. heritable non-genetic influences on the appearance and characteristics of an individual stemming, from environmental conditions which might be present at the time of conception, such as food availability, temperature, stress, etc. The direct action of the environment on an individual can be passed on to subsequent generations. He gave several examples of moths affected in this way, such as the two forms of the peppered moth. The last talk was by Simon Curson from Natural England, who discussed strategies for targeting searches for scarce species, which help fill in blanks in the coverage of an area.

The Conference closed with Tim Norris giving the results of the fiendish quiz he had devised: 20 photos of tiny parts of moths were displayed on the walls and you were invited to identify the species. Mike Wall triumphed with 9 correct. Most of the rest of us either didn't try or got nowhere. Thanks, Tim.

Juliet Bloss, Editor

Mottisfont Wildlife Week

The Branch participated in the Wildlife Week held at Mottisfont Abbey in February. Parents and grandparents with children on half term flooded in and were confronted by our new display panels featuring our three reserves. Along with other display material they made a good talking point for the adults. For the children activities included badge making, card games and various colouring activities. A lot of the boys picked caterpillars while the girls went for the butterflies and both sexes created colourful butterfly masks. The children ranged in age from two to about 12.



Juliet Bloss

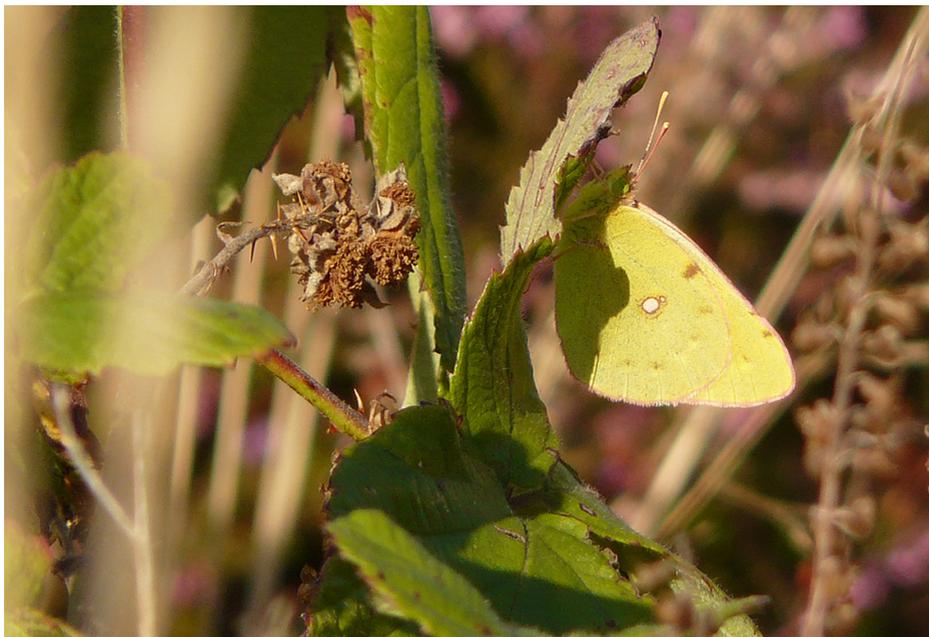
Many thanks to volunteers Lizzie Beer and Mark Coles who with committee members Clive Wood, Jenny Mallett and Juliet Bloss helped at the event. It was an enjoyable two days meeting families and introducing them to the work of Butterfly Conservation.

Juliet Bloss, Editor

Latest 2013 and earliest 2014 sightings

December 2013 was the wettest on record – I personally recorded 200mm for the month. Nevertheless, Red Admiral was reported on most days, and there were also regular reports of Peacock, Brimstone and a few Small Tortoiseshell. Of particular interest was a Clouded Yellow at Southborne Undercliff seen on 6 December by Mike Gibbons.

After Christmas A. Smith reported a Red Admiral on the 26th at Lee on the Solent, Chris Hall saw a Brimstone on the 28th at Velmead Common, and Graham Dennis found a flying Peacock on the 29th at Mortimer, West End. Barry Juniper in Bournemouth reported the last Red Admiral on the same date.



Clouded Yellow

Dan Powell

Unusually, no butterflies were reported to the website on New Year's Day (it was very wet), but on 2 January Red Admirals were seen by B. and J. Annell at Exbury, Rob Skinner at Bolderwood, Andy Stocker at White Hill, Andy Bolton at Axmansford, David Holland on Southampton Common(where he also saw a Brimstone), and Lynn Fomison had a Peacock flying in her garden. Later in the month Mark Hallett saw the first Comma in the New Forest on the 7th , and surprisingly early Speckled Woods were seen by Peter Ridout at Millbrook on 11 January and by David Ryves at Pittswood on the 20th. The first garden Small Tortoiseshell was reported by Phil Lowe in Locksheath on 9 February.

Jenny Mallett, Branch Organiser



Field Trips April - October 2014

Hampshire

Saturday 3 May 2014

Hyden Wood

Leader: Ashley Whitlock **Tel:** 02392 731266

Meet: 1.00 pm at North Lane, Clanfield, nr Waterlooville. Driving south on A3, Clanfield is signed opposite Queen Elizabeth Country Park. Drive along Petersfield Lane, then turn right into North Lane. Parking will be by entrance to Lowtons Copse.

Map ref: SU 700 177 A typical primrose-rich woodland in spring with Orange Tip and Brimstone on the wing, and (hopefully) the sound of the cuckoo in the distance!

Wednesday 7 May

Magdalen Hill Down

Leaders: Jenny Mallett/Brian Fletcher **Tel:** 01962 882746

Meet: 10.30 am in the gravel car park opposite the cemetery on the B3404, Alresford Road, Winchester. **Map ref:** SU 512 295. **Sat Nav:** SO21 1HE. Wednesday Wanders will be on the first Wednesday of each month up to and including 3 September.

Come along to enjoy butterflies, wildflowers and a leisurely walk in friendly company. All welcome, inc. dogs on short leads.

Saturday 10 May

Butser Hill

Leader: Ashley Whitlock **Tel:** 02392 731266

Meet: 10.30 am in the car-park at Butser Hill, where there is a parking fee. Leave the A3M at Clanfield, opposite Q.E.C.P, and at the crossroads take North Lane and follow signs to Butser Hill. **Map ref:** SU 715 201. Steep hills, not for the faint hearted! Bring lunch. Duke of Burgundy, Dingy Skipper, Green Hairstreak, moths and wildflowers.

Saturday May 17

Pignal Inclosure

Leader: Ashley Whitlock **Tel:** 02392 731266

Meet: 10.30 am in the Standing Hat car-park behind the Balmer Lawn Hotel, Brockenhurst. This is the second car park along a gravel track off the B3055. A circular walk for Pearl-Bordered Fritillary and other invertebrates, early wild flowers and the sound of the cuckoo. It is normally very muddy at this time of the year; bring lunch and appropriate walking boots. **Map Ref:** SU 314 035.

Monday 26 May, Bank Holiday

Bentley Station Meadow

Leader: David Walton. **Tel:** 07759 684513

Meet: 10.30 am in the Forestry Commission car-park, Gravel Hill Road.

Leave the A31 east of Bentley, signposted Alice Holt Forest Research Station. Go along Gravel Hill Road over the railway bridge. The car-park is about 500 yards after the bridge on the right. **Map Ref:** SU 802 433. Exploring a typical meadow in late spring with grassland species of invertebrates and wildflowers.

Wednesday 28 May

Bentley Station Meadow

Leader: David Walton **Tel:** 07759 684513. Details as 26 May.

Saturday 31 May **Old Winchester Hill NNR**

Leader: Brian Fletcher

Meet: 10.30 am - 4.00 pm in the main Reserve car park 2 miles east of the A32 on the minor road (south) east of Warnford. This is a joint event with Hampshire Wildlife Trust. Bring a packed lunch.

For further information **Tel:** Mary Parker on 01962 864440. **Map ref:** SU 646 214

A summer walk for butterflies and flowers at this chalk downland National Nature Reserve. Suggested donation: £3.

Wednesday 4 June **Magdalen Hill Down**

Leaders: Jayne Chapman/Jenny Mallett **Tel:** 01329 832 177

Meet: 10.30 am. Details as for 7 May. Wednesday Wander.

Saturday 7 June **Old Burghclere Lime Quarry**

Leader: Mervyn Grist **Tel:** 01264 358737

Meet: 10.30am in the old station farmyard to the left of the entrance, reached by a rough lane, south off minor road through Old Burghclere which is between Old Burghclere Manor and the old railway bridge. The quarry is a short walk from the parking.

Map ref: SU 469 578 Grizzled Skipper, Green Hairstreak, Small Blue, Dinky Skipper.

Sunday 8 June **Moths at Magdalen Hill Down**

Leaders: Jayne Chapman/Mike Wall **Tel:** 07981 984 761

Meet: 10.00am - 12.00pm in the car park at Winchester Masonic Association, 124 Alresford Road, **Map ref:** SU 498 294.

Mike Wall will show and talk about the often beautiful and always interesting moths found on MHD. There will be plenty of opportunity to see the moths close up and to take photographs. **Please call on the day if the weather looks doubtful.**

Saturday 14 June **Roydon Wood**

Leader: Ashley Whitlock **Tel:** 02392 731266

Meet: 1.00 pm opposite the The Filly Inn, SO42 7UF on the A337 Lymington Road, just south of Brockenhurst at Setley. Park in lay-by on Sway road, opposite the pub.

Map ref: SU 301 002

A typical meadow in the New Forest with plenty to search for, including orchids, Silver-Studded Blue, Clouded Buff and Lattice Heath Moths, and other invertebrates.

Friday 20 June **Bentley Station Meadow**

Leader: Arthur Greenwood **Tel:** 01962 808400

Meet: 7.00 pm in NE corner of car park at Bentley Station DN5 0BE. An evening walk to enjoy the orchids and other flowers in the Meadow.

Sunday 22 June **Yew Hill**

Leader: Ivan Arnold **Tel:** 01962 866706

Meet: 10:30 a.m. Park at end of Old Kennel's Lane near junction with Port Lane and Millers Lane, Oliver's Battery, Winchester. **Map ref:** SU 451 269

A typical chalk downland in the early summer.

Saturday 28 June **Stockbridge Down NT**

Leader: Brain Fletcher **Tel:** 01962 882746

Meet: 10.30 am at the lower car park on the north side of the B3049 Winchester/ Stockbridge road, west of the Sandy Down crossroads. **Map ref:** SU 388 344
Marbled White and Ringlet; possibly an early Chalkhill Blue; chalk grassland flora.

Wednesday 2 July **Magdalen Hill Down**

Leaders: Jenny Mallett/Jayne Chapman **Tel:** 01962 808400

Meet: 10.30 am. Details as 7 May. Wednesday Wander.

Sunday 6 July 2014 **Butterwood/Bartley Heath**

Leader: David Walton **Tel:** 07759 684513

Meet: 10.30 am. along the track to the Derby Inn, North Warnborough RG29 1HD. Leave M3 at exit 5. Take A287 south towards Odiham. At next roundabout take 1st exit to Bartley Heath. Park along the track to the Derby Inn. A walk along the footpaths in Butterwood, followed by a visit to the nearby Bartley Heath. **Map ref:** SU 730 525
Possible Purple Emperor, White Admiral, Purple Hairstreak, and Silver-Washed Fritillary.

Saturday 12 July **Abbotts Wood Inclosure**

Leader: Ashley Whitlock **Tel:** 02392 731266

Meet: 10.30 am in the Abbots Wood Inclosure car park. From A325 between Farnham and A3 turn left at the Halfway House pub onto Dockenfield St. Car park is on the right.

Meet: 1.00 pm at Binsted Road, Bucks Horn Oak, near the Half-Way House pub for a walk in Goose Green Inclosure. Parking in old loading bay at **Map ref:** SU 805 416.
If coming for the whole day bring lunch and a deck chair for Purple Emperor spotting!
Also possible: White Admiral, and Silver-Washed Fritillary.

Friday 18 July **Magdalen Hill Down**

Leaders: Jenny Mallett/Jayne Chapman **Tel:** 01962 808400

Meet: 10.30am. Details as for 7 May. Butterflies and wildflowers should at their best.

Saturday 19 July **West Wood/Pitt Down**

Leader: Ashley Whitlock **Tel:** 02392 731266

Meet: in the Spindle Tree car park on the Sarum Road. From Oliver's Battery roundabout on B3040 head towards Winchester. At next roundabout turn left, then next left into Old Sarum Road. Car park is about 3 miles along on right. Easy walking; bring lunch. A walk around a lovely oak and beech wood in the morning, and a typical-downland in the afternoon. **Map ref:** SU 422 292

Dark Green Fritillary, Silver-Washed Fritillary, Purple Emperor, White Admiral.

Sunday 20 July **Magdalen Hill Down**

Leaders: Jayne Chapman/Mike Wall **Tel:** 07981 984761

Meet: 10.00 am - 12.00pm. Details as for 8 June.

Saturday 26 July **Hawkhill Inclosure/Hatchet Moor**

Leader: Paul Brock **Tel:** 01590 624683

Meet: 10.30 am at the car-park in Hawkhill Inclosure off the B3055 Brockenhurst to Beaulieu road for an easy walk in the New Forest. Bring lunch. **Map ref:** SU 352 019
Dark Green Fritillary, Grayling, and Silver-Studded Blue.

Saturday 26 July**Yew Hill****Leader:** Brian Fletcher **Tel:**01962 882746**Meet:** 2.00 pm at the end of Old Kennels Lane at junction with Port Lane and Millers Lane, Oliver's Battery.**Map ref:** SU 451 269. Chalkhill Blue, other butterflies and wildflowers.**Tuesday 29 July****Bentley Station Meadow****Leader:** David Walton **Tel:** 07759 684513. **Meet:** 10.30 am. Details as 26 May.**Saturday 2 August****Chalton Down****Leader:** Ashley Whitlock **Tel:** 02392 731266**Meet:** 1.00 p.m. near the Red Lion at Chalton PO8 0BG. Take the Clanfield/Chalton exit off the A3M, turn right at the end of the slip road, turn right at the mini roundabout and then the next left. Pass Butser Ancient Farm; The Red Lion is at the top of the hill. Go left with the church on your right, up over steep hill to the base of Chalton Down near the railway bridge. Limited parking on side of road where leader will direct cars. **Map ref:** SU 731 156

Typical downland with Chalkhill Blue, Dark-Green Fritillary and Burnet Moths.

Wednesday 6 August**Magdalen Hill Down****Leaders:** Jenny Mallett/Jayne Chapman **Tel:** 01962 808400.**Meet:**10.30 am. Details as 7 May. Wednesday Wander.**Saturday 16 August****Broughton Down****Leader:** Brain Fletcher **Tel:** Mary Parker 01962 864440.**Meet:** 10.30 am – 4 pm. At the end of Buckholt Road off the B3084 at the west side of Broughton village for an exploration of HWT's Broughton Down Reserve. Joint event with the Wildlife Trust. Bring lunch. **Map ref:** SU 301 325

Sorry, no dogs. Suggested donation £3.

Saturday 23 August**Shipton Bellinger****Leader:** Mervyn Grist **Tel:** 01264 358737**Meet:** 10.30 am. Turn west off A338 at Tidworth traffic lights and follow this road towards Bulford. After two miles turn right immediately after a major tree line is crossed. Car park is between trees and long barrows.

Using this new car park permits looking at some Shipton Bellinger areas and other locations along the county boundary. Walk distance 2 miles. Please bring lunch.

Map ref: SU 217 462 Brown Argus, Brown Hairstreak and Wall Brown.**Saturday 23 August****Mothing at Yew Hill****Leaders:** Jayne Chapman/Mike Wall **Tel:** 07981 984761**Meet:** 8.00 pm at end of Old Kennels Lane at junction with Port Lane and Millers Lane, Oliver's battery. **Map Ref:** SU 451 269. Light traps will be set up and Mike Wall will be on hand to talk about the often beautiful and always interesting moths of Yew Hill. Bring torch, warm clothing, suitable footwear, insect repellent, small stool or plastic bag to sit on. **Call Mike on the day to confirm.**

Wednesday 3 September

Magdalen Hill Down

Leaders: JennyMallett/Jayne Chapman **Tel:** 01962 808400

Meet: 10.30 am. Details as 7 May. Final Wednesday Wander.

Saturday 6 September

Beacon Hill NNR

Leader: Ashley Whitlock **Tel:** 02392 731266

Meet: 10.30 am. in Beacon Hill car-park. From A32 turn immediately left into the village of Exton (easily missed). Pass the Shoe Inn pub and follow the track known as Shoe Lane into Beacon Hill Lane (very narrow lanes with few passing areas). After about 1.5 miles the car park is on the right. **Map ref:** SU 605 227

Chalk downland, with Silver-Spotted Skipper, Brown Argus and possibly, Clouded Yellow. Very steep in places. Wonderful views of the Meon Valley; good birds and flora.

Flora and Fauna Pub Walks with Ashley Whitlock

Walks designed to be easy on the feet and Ideal for non-early-risers!

A social gathering, meeting in the pub car-park at 1.00 pm, starting with a gentle walk to the site and ending back at the pub again at about 4.00 pm.

Email: ashleyrwhitlock@virginmedia.com **Tel:** 02392 731266 or **Mob:** 07752 182340

Isle of Wight

Monday 28 April

Parkhurst Forest

Leader: Stuart Read **Tel:** 07877 333734

Meet: 1.30 pm in the main car park off Forest Road. **Map ref:** SZ 480 900. Close to no. 7 bus route. **In search of:** Brimstone, Grizzled Skipper and other springt butterflies.

Saturday 17 May

Wight Salads, Arreton

Leader: Ashley James **Tel:** 07807 214155

Meet: 8.00 pm in the Wight Salads reception car park. **Map ref:** SZ 548 848. From the A3056 south of Horringford, turn east off the road at the sign marked for Wight Salads. Ignore the initial car park to your right and follow the directions down to reception and park in the car park there. **Moth trapping.** Bring a torch and warm clothing. Contact Ashley if you are able to bring a moth trap.

Thursday 29 May

Compton Bay/Freshwater cliffs

Leader: Sue Davies **Tel:** 07702 151312

Meet: 10.30 am in the Afton Down chalk-pit car park (near Compton Farm).

Map ref: SZ 367 854. Close to no. 12 bus route. If the weather is poor on the day, Contact Sue as this walk will be rescheduled for either 30 or 31 May.

In search of: Glanville Fritillary, Small Blue, Green Hairstreak and Wall. There may also be the opportunity to see some moths trapped locally the previous night.

Friday 20 June

A linear walk, Southford to Roud and Beacon Alley

Leader: David Biggs **Tel:** 01983 292595

Meet: 11.00 am in Beacon Alley, near Godshill, just west off the old railway bridge at **SZ 520 812** where the road widens, and we will leave some cars. We then go to the western end of Southford Lane, parking at **SZ 511 789** on the west side of the Niton road. Bring lunch. **In search of:** butterflies and dragonflies.

Thursday 3 July**Briddlesford Copse**

Leader: James Halsey **Tel:** 07866 925888

Meet: 9.15 pm in the small car park by the Black Hut. **Map ref:** SZ 542 901. On Briddlesford Road, opposite the junction with Blacklands Road, take the farm track signed for cane furniture (towards Great Briddlesford Farm). Follow this bumpy track for approximately five minutes and take the next obvious left turn. The Black Hut is in the wooded area on your left behind a gate. Bring a torch and warm clothing.

Moth trapping as part of National Moth Night.

Saturday 5 July**Parkhurst Forest**

Leader: Ian Merrifield **Tel:** 01983 297132

Meet: 9.15 pm in Ian's garden. At the traffic lights on Horsebridge Hill, turn west onto Noke Common Road. Continue to Hillisgate entrance to the forest; at this road junction proceed towards Marks Corner. Oaks Cottage is the second entrance on the right. Look for signs (**NMN 2014**). Parking available in paddock in garden.

Map ref: SZ 475 924. We hope to run some traps in Ian's garden and some in Parkhurst Forest. Please contact Ian if you are able to bring your own trap. Bring a torch and warm clothing. **Moth trapping as part of National Moth Night.**

Thursday 10 July**Firestone Copse**

Leader: Tony Redfern **Tel:** 01983 883849 **Meet:** 10.30 am in the main car park.

Map ref: SZ 558 910. **In search of:** White Admiral, Silver-washed Fritillary.

Tuesday 22 July**Shalcombe Down**

Leader: Caroline Dudley **Tel:** 01983 754935

Meet: 10.30 am in the parking area along the track west of the road from Chessell to Brook (east of Five Barrows). **Map ref:** SZ 395 851. **In search of:** Dark Green Fritillary.

Sunday 10 August**Arreton Down**

Leader: Jamie Marsh, of the Hampshire & IOW Wildlife Trust **Tel:** 01983 760018.

Meet: 1.30 pm in the Arreton village car park (next to White Lion Pub).

Some steep slopes. **Map ref:** SZ 535 867. **In search of:** Chalkhill Blue.

Wednesday 3 September**Bonchurch Down**

Leader: Andy Butler **Tel:** 01983 854925

Meet: 10.30 am in the viewpoint car park, Leeson Road.

Some steep slopes. **Map ref:** SZ 576 782. **In search of:** Adonis Blue.

Wednesday 1 October**Whealers Bay**

Leader: Andy Butler **Tel:** 01983 854925

Meet: 6.00 pm in the garden of Cliff Cottage. Park in the Wheelers Bay car park off Wheelers Bay Road, Ventnor. Walk down the main steps to the esplanade and turn left. **Map ref:** SZ 569 775.

Moth trapping. Please let Andy know if you can bring a moth trap.

Important: If the weather looks unfavourable, and you are intending to go on any of the above field trips, please contact the field trip leader.



New Members

We are very happy to welcome the 149 new members who joined the Branch between mid-August 2013 and the beginning of March 2014. We do hope you will enjoy your membership and participate in some of our events and field meetings.

Ms G Alexander, Kings Worthy; Ms S Axten, Liphook; Mr C Backwell, Chilbolton; Mr P & Mrs A Barrel, Southsea; Mr J Beal, Sweden; Miss D Beckley, Gosport; Ms Bishop & Mr Blackburne, Cosham; Mrs J Boam, Clanfield; Mrs M Bookham, Clanfield; Mrs W Brundle, Basingstoke; Mr B & Mrs D Burke, Marchwood; Mrs V Burton, Waterlooville; Mr J W J Cahill, Riverdene; Mr G Carr & Ms S Wood, Southampton; Mr J Cartwright, Netley Abbey; Mrs L Clapham, Liphook; Mr M Cotton, Rowland's Castle; Mrs S Coyle, Guernsey, Channel Islands; Mr J Crook, Havant; Mr M Davies, Fareham; Mr H Dawson, Winchester; Miss C Day & Mr D Brunton, Lymington; Mrs LB & Mr R C Dobbs, Headley, Berkshire; Mrs D Dobson, Godshill Green; Mr M Dowden, Havenstreet, Isle of Wight; Mrs S East, Vernham Dean; Dr J & Mrs Easton & Family, Bradley; Mr K & Mrs S Edwards, Wickham; Mrs P Elliott, Petersfield; Mr E Fairs, Tadley; Ms S Fear, Brockenhurst; Miss A Finch, Freshwater, Isle of Wight; Mr Flood & Mrs Boddy & Family, Alresford; Mr DR & Mrs J Fry, Burghclere, Berkshire; Mr M Fussell, Pennington; Miss E Geach, North Baddesley; Mr P George, Rownhams; Mrs A Golby, Alton; Miss G Green, Woolton Hill; Ms E Grieveson, Cove; Mr S Groom & Miss P Smith, Southampton; Mr R I J Hardy, Beech; Mr P Harfield, Hedge End; Miss A Hebbert, Farnborough; Miss S Henderson, Ibsley; Mrs R Hendry, Andover; Mrs G Hickman, Pennington; Miss W Hicks, Candover; Ms SL Hill, Portsmouth; Mr P & Mrs A Hogan, Southsea; Mr M Holloway, Totton; Mr G Holmes, Holbury; Mr P Hutchins, Overton;

Ms Y Inkpen, Alton; Mr D Ive, Gosport; Mrs J Jackson, Gosport; Mr C & Mrs J Jacob, Chandler's Ford; Mrs J James, Oliver's Battery; Mr S Jeal, Portsmouth; Mrs A Jones, Little Ann; Miss V Jones, Chineham; Miss R Jones, Winchfield; Mr TKB Joyner, Totton; Miss R Kernohan, Marchwood; Mr MFJ & Mrs T Kinsella, Emsworth; Mr C & Mrs S Knight, Littlehampton, West Sussex; Mr SA Le Quesne, Jersey, Channel Islands; Mrs S Leach, Romsey; Miss S Legg, Portchester; Ms Lenton & Mr Ali, Church Crookham; Mrs DA Long, Southampton; Mr D & Mrs K Lyndon & Family, Drayton; Mr L Masters, Dibden Purlieu; Miss E Mayhew, West Well; Mr M & Mrs S Mayo, Fareham; Mr R McMillan, Hambledon; Miss C Meech, Newtown; Ms A Mellor & Mr R Bunce, Fareham; Mr M Melrose, Beaulieu; Mrs K Mendelsohn, Winchester; Miss J Meyer, Crow Hill; Mr M & Mrs D Mills & Family, Brighstone, Isle of Wight; Miss R Millward, Bransgore; Miss V Mitchell & Mr A Thayers, Lopshill; Miss I Morgan, Kingsley; Miss C Morley, Emsworth; Mrs F Morley, Southampton; Mr N Munday, Cosham; Mrs A & Mr D Noakes, Hythe; Mrs J Oliver, Farnborough;

Mrs C Olsen, Ashurst; Mr A & P Orme, Dibden Purlieu; Mrs L Orr, Romsey;
Mr N & Mrs G Owen & Family, Bramley; Mrs Page & Mr Stacey, Hayling Island;
Ms R Paley, Ower; Mr CJ Parsons, Basingstoke; Mr M Phillips, Wymering;
Mr & Mrs K Price & Family, Overton; Ms B Price, Buriton; Dr G Pullinger, Farnborough;
Miss E Pycroft, Cowplain; Mrs S Rea, Emsworth; Miss E Redman, Basingstoke;
Mrs J Redway, Alresford; Mrs W Reynolds, Southampton; Mr B Richardson, North
Baddesley; Mr E & Mrs R Robbins, Damerham; Mrs S Robertson, Aldershot;
Mr G & Mrs E Robinson, Alresford; Mr P Rowley & Miss S Hitchin, Eastleigh;
Miss C Rowley-Morris, Lymington; Miss H Russell, Waterlooville;

Miss C Saunders, Whiteley; Mr R Sawyer, West End; Miss L Schneider, Winchester;
Mr J Scott, Newport, Isle of Wight; Mrs R Seager, Lymington; Mrs L Sharp, Bramley;
Mrs E & Mr J Sheehy, Fleet; Miss A Showan, Littleton; Mr I Smith, Lee-on-the-Solent;
Mr RO Spedding, Landford Wood, Wiltshire; Miss J Spiller, Denmead;
Mrs R Stewart, Cowes, Isle of Wight; Mrs S Stileman, East Wellow; Miss A Sullivan,
Alresford; Mr R Sullivan & Mrs M Anne, Waterlooville; Mrs S Thomas, Ringwood;
Mr J & Mrs P Thompson, Hedge End; Mrs H Thompson, Liss; Mr W Tofts, Southamp-
ton; Miss Townsend & Mr Dunsdon, Andover; Mr S Tyler, Waterlooville; Mrs E Varley,
Havant; Mr D & Mrs M Wager, Freshwater, Isle of Wight; Mr M Wagstaff, Lee-on-the-
Solent; Miss M Walker, Aldershot; Mrs S Wallace, Petersfield; Mrs & Mr Wallace &
Family, Greatham; Ms H Waller, Tadley; Mr P Walters, Stockbridge;
Mr I & Mrs L Watterson, Merstone, Isle of Wight; Mrs T Welsh, Dibden Purlieu;
Miss A Whiffin, Rotherwick; Mr B & Mrs E Williams, Chandlers Ford; Mr M Willis,
Southampton; Mr A Worgan, Farnborough; Mr T Wright, Oakley.





Potpurri

Butterflies of Surrey Revisited

Those of you who venture into Surrey for your butterflying will enjoy *Butterflies of Surrey Revisited*, published last October by Surrey Wildlife Trust. The original *Butterflies of Surrey* was published in 1995. Much has changed since and this is a new book of 240 pages, and the first in the SWT Atlas series to be full colour. It describes Surrey's 42 species, with guides to the key sites and best times to visit. Ken Willmott is lead author, supported by other members of Surrey & SW London Branch.

The book is a mine of information that will delight lovers of Surrey's downs, heaths and woods. *Butterflies of Surrey Revisited* costs £16.00 plus postage from: www.surreywildlifetrust.org. Tel:01483 795440

Britain's Day-Flying Moths

by David Newland, Robert Still and Andy Swash

There's always room for one more book on the bookshelf and even if there isn't no serious naturalist should be without this book.

It will significantly aid the finding and identifying of day-flying moths. It gives information on habitats to search, flight times and nation-wide distribution. In addition, it is illustrated with excellent photographs. Get the book and get searching! Your records will be important in the development of the next annual atlas.

Recording Lepidoptera - Living Record

Whilst for many people MapMate works well as a recording and mapping tool enabling them to enter and access their records of lepidoptera, others have had problems with it, perhaps owing to further rapid developments in Windows software, with which MapMate always has to play catch-up.

There is however an excellent alternative – and it's free! Living Record is an on-line recording system into which you can enter all your records, not just of moths and butterflies. Visit www.livingrecord.net and get recording. Your records can then easily be reviewed and downloaded by the relevant county recorder for import into the Branch database.

Tim Norriss, Macro-moth Recorder

All Aflutter

This is an excellent newsletter that Butterfly Conservation sends out by email. It is well worth reading and you can sign up for it on the home page at www.butterfly-conservation.org

Moth Quest

Look out for moth quests in 2014

Last year it was suggested that recorders should focus their search for moths on particular species during certain months. This idea was proposed by Tim Norriss and Lynn Fomison and their suggestions for this year can be accessed on the Branch website: www.hantsiow-butterflies.org.uk or through the Hantsmoths email group.

Nothing without a moth trap

The majority of moth records are derived from light-trapping, but running such equipment is not for everyone. However, it is possible to find and record moths by other methods. Neale Jordan-Mellersh, West Gloucestershire County Moth Recorder, spoke at the National Moth Conference. In his urban garden in Bristol he had recorded 525 species, around 100 of them by methods other than light-trapping. He suggested looking for micros in light from a low sun morning and evening. Another suggestion was sugaring.



*Mother Shipton -top
Speckled Yellow -right
Richard Coomber*



Day flying moths: start by looking for these species. A number are easily identifiable and often frequent the good habitat we visit to see butterflies. Look out for Yellow Shell and Speckled Yellow, Burnet Companion and Mother Shipton. The delightful Hummingbird Hawkmoth cannot be mistaken. Look on <http://butterfly-conservation.org/51/identify-a-day-flying-moth.html>. This is a good way to start to get to know day-flying moths.

At house lights: a number of people check the outside lights of their house or lit windows at night and identify the moths that are attracted.

Lights at other places: some people, Colin Baker for example, look on lights at other places such as at a local filling station where overnight lights cause moths to gather on an adjacent fence. Incidentally, Colin has a super website, with photos and accounts of sightings www.lepi-photos.com. In Andover, Graeme Davis has recorded many species by searching underpasses around the town, where 24-hour lighting is attractive to moths. Public toilets where the lights are left on overnight can prove a fruitful source of moths as well.



Yellow Shell - top
Hummingbird Hawk-moth - left
Richard Coomber

At flowers and fruit: Maurice Pugh was fortunate to see Convolvulus Hawkmoth on flowers of *Nicotiana* planted under a house light. Silver Y, as well as being easily seen during the day, often visits garden flowers at dusk. Tim Norriss also had an interesting report of many species found on ripe blackberries one evening. Patrick Fleet, sometimes with Colin Beyer, found that searching ivy flowers in autumn at Magdalen Hill Down was a good way to see moths without using a light trap. Last summer Tim and I tried to encourage members by way of the monthly moth quest, to search for Ghost Moths at dusk. When I tried this in my orchard I just saw lots of Snouts. But again, Patrick Fleet has been very successful in seeing Ghost Moths this way.

Micro moths: both Chris Manley's book *British Moths and Butterflies* (a photographic guide) and the *Field Guide to Micro Moths* are helpful in identifying micro moths. Some of them are day-flying too and are associated with particular plants, (e.g. *Pyrausta aurata* on mint).

Tapping to disturb resting moths: our friend Dave Cooke on the Isle of Wight has recorded many moths, particularly micros, by disturbing them at rest by tapping vegetation with a cane, watching them settle and then taking photographs to aid identification. When on holiday in the Peloponnesus Tim and I found various species of Underwings resting under bridges on rivers and on the shady sides of trees during the day time.

If you have not been paying much attention to moths hitherto I hope these suggestions will prove helpful in developing an interest. And of course there is also the allure of searching for caterpillars too - a topic about which I have written previously. One last helpful hint: www.Hantsmoths.org.uk is very helpful with identification, especially the “Flying Tonight” feature.

Lynn Fomison

Elm News

Spanish discovery

The 3rd International Elm Conference held in Florence last October was a rather melancholic affair. Only 29 attended, a reflection on the demise of elm research on both sides of the Atlantic owing to spending cuts and a general loss of interest. Like whales perhaps, elms have gradually faded from the public’s stream of consciousness, although the ravages of Dutch elm disease remain unabated. Indeed, Prof. Clive Brasier of the Forestry Commission announced that the two strains of the disease found in Europe, ssp. *americana* and ssp. *novo-ulmi*, had hybridized, although the new hybrid did not appear to be more lethal, if that were possible.

Better news came from the elm research team at Madrid University, which had discovered a number of native Field Elms *Ulmus minor* around Madrid and Valencia that were highly resistant to DED, more so than the hybrid cultivar ‘Sapporo Autumn Gold’, universally used as the yardstick of resistance. However, elation at the discovery has been tempered by problems within the Spanish government. Understandably anxious to recoup its investment in the research, the government is insisting that the elms be patented before release to commerce, but is apparently unable to finance the process owing to its own dire budgetary constraints. Consequently progress has stalled, and it is unlikely the trees will be available for at least another five years.



White-letter Hairstreak

Dan Powell

The status of *Ulmus minor* in the UK is unclear; largely restricted to the eastern counties, it is not known in Hampshire, where the majority of trees are English Elm *Ulmus procera*. Richens (*Elm*. Cambridge University Press 1983) hypothesized that *U. minor* was introduced from Europe before the arrival of the Romans. The most genetically diverse of the European species, it was always the most likely to produce a resistant tree, but hitherto only a few examples from France had been found with a modest 2-out-of-5 resistance.

Elm Planting

The Forestry Commission has planted a further 300 DED resistant cultivars this winter, all of them in the West Walk plantation near Wickham following clear felling of conifers east of the Hundred Acres Road.

Andrew Brookes

Memorable days out in the 2013 season

14 July: Purple Emperors in Basing Wood

I had the most wonderful Purple Emperor experience in Basing Wood, with a total of four seen in the same view, between 6 and 7pm. The weather was incredibly hot, muggy and cloudy, almost tropical. First a male zipped by at head height; I gave chase for 20 yards then encountered a female which settled in a ride-side willow bush. She perched very prominently facing the ride and remained motionless. Meanwhile the male was repeatedly powering up and down 100 yards or so of the ride at about 2ft off the ground, presumably trying to locate the female whose scent he could detect. He even perched briefly in the same bush 3ft below her, but still couldn't locate her - or chose not to approach. After that he made two short stops on the track and one brief landing on me. The female was remained motionless on the willow bush.

I then walked on about 30 yards and encountered two more Purple Emperors vigorously sparring with each other about 3ft above the track. They crossed the ditch into the shrubbery, where the larger female perched in clear view and the male soared into the canopy and out of sight. I hoped to see a pairing but it didn't happen. Later I returned to this spot and found at least three Emperors chasing around above the tree canopy, just the kind of activity often reported from Straits Inclosure, Alice Holt, over the years. It was great to witness, and they were still at it as I left just before 7pm.

21 July: Finding the White-letter Hairstreak

In recent years I've started to enjoy the challenge of trying to find this scarcely seen butterfly. Sometimes I've visited a location where it has been found, but there are no guarantees of success with this mostly tree-canopy-dwelling insect. It's more satisfying to find one's own locations by studying the countryside for overgrown hedgerows containing decent numbers of elms. Despite Dutch elm disease there are still elms out there growing back from root suckers, and sometimes larger Wych elms. Often the river valleys have the most trees.

I'd had my eye on a suitable-looking hedgerow in the Overton area for a year or two, and finally found time for a visit in late July. It was still hot and sunny as I scoured 200 yards of hedgerow, a step at a time, looking for movement. After several false alarms when Vapourer moths flew out, I saw something different skittering about on an elm leaf about 15 ft up. The binocular view sharpened into the orange band and white W-mark on the underside of the butterfly. Fantastic! I'd got one - and at 7.15 in the evening. I guess this specimen was matching the late-in-the-day behaviour of its cousin the Purple Hairstreak.

26 July: Local sightings of the Dark Green Fritillary

I've often missed the flight period of this lovely butterfly, partly because it is usually fairly thin on the ground in north Hampshire. However, having vowed to see more woodland and less downland in 2013 I made a special effort for this fritillary, and I was duly rewarded. The North Hampshire Downs yielded records from five tetrads, mostly in small numbers, though 26 July was well on in the flight period.

At the Warren, near Kingsclere, it was encouraging to see a female Dark Green egg-laying among hairy violets on the drier east-facing slope, while lush plants were to be found on the west-facing slope. However, Old Burghclere Lime Quarry has developed into the local stronghold of this butterfly over the past couple of seasons, with numbers up to several dozen present during the 2013 peak; yet there had been no recent records prior to 2012. It's very pleasing that this 'colonisation event' has taken place, but one wonders why. One theory is that recent wetter growing seasons have been beneficial, allowing the hairy violets to grow strongly amongst a lush surrounding sward, and providing more leaves for caterpillars, so that more individuals complete the life cycle. Either way, the Dark Greens were a very welcome sight.



10 September: Clouded Yellow joy in Devon

2013 was one of the best summers in recent years for the Clouded Yellow, so that I was hoping to see a few on a September holiday to the West Country coast. Occasional individuals were seen in the Bridport area, but Branscombe Mouth across over the Devon border was the most rewarding spot. On a warm sunny day there were plenty of butterflies to be seen in sheltered areas. One particular spot was where the coastal path passes through some holiday chalets located off the way up the cliff. There was plenty of Buddleia nectar here too, and Clouded Yellows were making the most of it, flitting between bushes then basking in twos and threes on the sunny bank.

Incredible numbers of Small Whites were shimmering like snowflakes higher up the cliff face. There were other species to be seen on the bank beside the cliff path: Small Coppers, Common Blues and astonishingly an Adonis Blue. I later learnt that there is a fairly recent Adonis colonisation very near to this location. With the stunning sea views and Peregrine Falcons into the bargain, this was a memorable visit.

Andy Bolton

An Urgent Meeting

It was a lovely sunny spring morning at Bentley Station Meadow. Jayne Chapman, the Reserves Officer, checked her watch. She was in good time, which was just as well. Yesterday she had received a phone call from one of the local residents insisting on an urgent meeting to discuss recent work done on the reserve. He had sounded very upset. She hoped she could placate him and his three friends.

Hearing rustling behind her she turned round to find herself in the company of a bear, a small pig, a tiger and a donkey.

"Hello," said the bear. "My name is Pooh".

"Hello Pooh," said Jayne, shaking him by the paw.

"These are my friends" said Pooh. "We all live in that big wood".

"This is Piglet," he said.

"Hello," squeaked Piglet.

"And this is Tigger," said Pooh.

"Worraworraworra," said Tigger, jumping in and out of a large muddy puddle.

"And this is Eeyore," said Pooh.

"Morning," said Eeyore, gloomily, getting splattered in mud from Tigger's antics.

"So how can I help you?" asked Jayne.

"You probably can't," said Eeyore.

"But you never know," said Piglet.

"We've got a list," said Pooh importantly, rummaging around in his left wellington boot.

"Oh that's helpful," said Jayne. "It's always useful to have an agenda."

"We haven't got one of those," said Pooh. "Owl told us a list is what we should have and he is very wise. So he wrote one out for us. Can I read it to you?"

"What a good idea," said Jayne.

Pooh cleared his throat and started reading. "Meating beatween represententivs of 100 akre wood and sum wonne from but-a-fly conservayshun. For diskushun. Item 1. Why hav you choppd all the treez down?" Then he folded the piece of paper into four and put it in his right wellington boot.

"Is there anything else on your list?" asked Jayne.

"No," said Pooh that's all. "It's a small list but it's a very big question."

"You see," said Piglet "we're very worried that you're going to carry on chopping down the trees and then we won't have anywhere to live."

"Oh no, that definitely isn't going to happen," said Jayne. "Let me explain what we've done and why. And while we're talking let's walk around the Reserve so I can show you what it looks like."

"Off they set. And Jayne started explaining. "You see, many years ago this land used to be a beautiful meadow with lots of wildflowers for butterflies. Over the years it became overgrown with lots of trees and dense vegetation. The light couldn't get in, the flowers didn't grow and a lot of the butterflies disappeared. So last year we started clearing the area of trees and other vegetation so that we could make it a beautiful meadow again and create the right habitat for the butterflies."

"I like Habitat," said Tigger. "I went there once with Kanga and Roo. It's such fun bouncing on all the beds."

"This is a different sort of habitat," said Jayne, patiently. "The right habitat for a butterfly means that there's plenty of food for the caterpillars and for the butterflies, and there's the right amount of sun and shelter and it's a safe place to live." She would normally have mentioned courtship and mating but didn't feel up to explaining such matters to the current audience.

"I've got a happitat too," said Piglet. "I need lots of oak trees so I can eat the haycorns."

"That's right," said Jayne. "We all have a habitat."

"So you aren't going to cut down any more trees?" asked Pooh.

"Definitely not," said Jayne. "In any case your wood is a very special place. It's a SSSI." They looked a bit confused. "What's a triplless eye?" asked Eeyore.

"It's a Site of Special Scientific Interest" said Jayne. "No-one is allowed to chop the trees down because it is recognised by the Government as being of great importance and being home to lots of rare species, like yourselves," she said, crossing her fingers - she knew the SSSI documents wouldn't have listed bears, pigs, tiger and donkeys as a reason for conferring SSSI status, but she didn't want to hurt their feelings.

"That's very good to hear," said Pooh, feeling very proud to live in such an important and highly valued place.

"So have you had any more butterflies since you chopped the trees down?" asked Piglet.

"Oh yes we've had three times as many as before," said Jayne. "And for the first time we've had Dark Green Fritillaries. They love feeding on the nectar from thistles."

"Oh dear," said Eeyore glumly. "I knew it all sounded too good to be true. You've all got your happitat safe and sound and I've got an unhappitat because all these new butterflies are eating my thistles."

"Oh Eeyore, don't worry. The butterflies are really small and they don't have big appetites. There'll be plenty of food for all of you," said Jayne. "In fact. now that the meadow is back there will be a lot more thistles to eat."

"Really?" said Eeyore. "I think you might have made me happy. Not for long, of course, but it's a nice feeling once in a while."

"Well I think it's time for lunch," said Pooh. "Thank you very much for making us all happy again, Jayne."

And off they went into the wood without a care in the world.

Penny Jeffreys, Minutes Secretary



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Newsletter Deadline

Many thanks to all contributors. The deadline for the autumn
Newsletter is 7 September 2014



Artworks: Rosemary Powell www.powellwildlifeart.com

We are always looking for new artwork and photos to
use in the Newsletter.

Please contact Juliet or Dan if you wish to contribute.

The opinions expressed in the Newsletter are not Necessarily those of Hampshire and IoW Branch.





Brown Hairstreak

John Dodds

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