

It was a problem week weather wise so well done to all of you who tried so hard to get a valid record. What an awful start to the season. A miserable total of 227 butterflies this week were seen (excluding exploratory Roe transects), equating to 2.95 butterflies/km. Last year's density for Week 4 was 5.55, but 2016 was 0.26, so an improvement on that. Comparing the first four weeks of this season with last, we recorded 13.84 butterflies/km in 2018 and 19.34 in 2017.

First Holly Blue of the year were recorded at Breamore & Fields Heath, so lets now hope for Small Heath & Pearl-bordered Fritillary soon and maybe even Dingy Skipper (Fields Heath/Breamore). At last a reasonable number of Speckled Wood have been recorded - this species is usually around for all twenty-six weeks of the recording season.

Ten different species were seen this week: Speckled Wood (79), Brimstone (78), Orange-tip (28), Peacock (22), Small White (8), Comma (5), Green-veined White (2), Holly Blue (2), Red Admiral (2) and Small Copper (1).



Orange-tip at Mockbeggar
John Levell

Results

Week 3: Total - 408. Week 4: Total - 248 (Both figures include exploratory Roe transects)

	Weeks			Weeks			Weeks	
	3	4		3	4		3	4
Acres Down	5	5	Hasley	13	R	Normandy Marsh	8	2
Badminton	22	0	Hawkhill	9	1	Perrywood Ivy	12	21
Barton Common....	10	5	Hightown	1	1	Pignal	7	9
Beaulieu Heath	2	0	Holmsley	10	2	Pondhead	13	3
Blackwater	6	1	Ibsley	1	1	Pondhead Wood	10	0
Breamore	50	54	Janesmoor	11	19	Rockford	6	1
Broadley	7	5	Janesmoor Plain....	4	9	Roe North	12	7
Dibden Bottom	0	0	Keeping Marsh.....	9	8	Roe South.....	8	14
Fields Heath.....	31	7	Kings Copse	25	1	Standing Hat.....	6	7
Frohawk	11	14	Lepe	11	16	Studland Common....	3	5
Godshill.....	9	0	Little Linford	7	1	Vales Moor.....	5	2
Great Linford.....	23	3	Mockbeggar	34	17	Warren Farm.....	7	7

R: unable to walk due to weather conditions

The forecast is not looking good yet again for Week 5, but seems to be getting better towards the end of the week. Don't forget that in this cooler weather butterflies are often resting on pathways, bracken etc, attempting to warm up. Look carefully and do not walk too fast! There have been a few 'early starts' - please do not start before 10.45 (latest finish 15.45). Remember, the minimum temperature is 13°C with an average of 60% sun.

Moths to Spot: In the spotlight this week is the **Common Heath** (<https://www.ukmoths.org.uk/species/ematurga-atomaria/>). This small spring flying moth is one that has been spotted on our transects in the past. Despite the name, it can be seen in woodland rides as well as on heathland transects. Take care not to confuse it with the **Latticed Heath** (<https://www.ukmoths.org.uk/species/chiasmia-clathrata/>), which has also been spotted in the past. The main distinctions are that the Latticed Heath has notable veins and often rests with its wings closed, similar to a butterfly.



Common Heath moth at Vales Moor
John French

Diary Dates: A couple of dates for your diary, both of which are subject to the weather:
19 May - Pearl-bordered Fritillay count, leaving Standing Hat Car Park (SU314036) at 10.15. If there are enough of us we will split to cover as many colonies as possible.
26 May - We will be at Martin Down (Sillens Lane Car Park (SU057192)), hoping to see some chalk download species, including Marsh Fritillary.
 Please let Bob and Jean know if you intend coming and car share if possible.