

Welcome to 2018 butterfly recording.

The weather so far this year has been very variable and our first week of recording is looking to be a bit of a challenge as far as acceptable weather parameters are concerned. Towards the end of the week looks most promising according to current forecasts.

Please remember that the temperature should be **13°C** combined with an overall percentage sun of **60%**. You will be extremely lucky to experience temperatures of **17°C** or above when **zero** sun would be acceptable.

2017 was an exceptional year in the New Forest with many routes having their best Annual Index ever. Interesting to note that 2017 was also our best year for seven species: Common Blue, Peacock, Comma, Pearl-bordered Fritillary, Meadow Brown, Small Heath & Ringlet. However, it was a bad year for Grayling, with a 32% fall in numbers in the New Forest between 2017 and 2016, which was a poor year anyway.

Last year, nine different species were seen overall during Week 1 - Brimstone, Red Admiral, Peacock, Comma, Small Tortoiseshell, Small White, Holly Blue, Speckled Wood & Orange-tip. The first five would have over-wintered as hibernating adult butterflies, the others as chrysalis.

We have already had reports of Red Admiral, Peacock, Small Tortoiseshell this year and seen male Brimstone patrolling forest rides awaiting emergence of the females.

Those of you walking heathland routes may not be blessed with too many sightings - your day will come!

Please remember to look out for any moths and record these in the Notes at the bottom of the form, ensuring to include Section & number seen.

New Recorders - please feel free to walk your route at any time and report any butterflies seen on the Casual Recording Form or if you prefer, on our actual Transect Recording Form to give you some practice. This can be done in any weather conditions.

Safety - you are all in possession of relevant Risk Assessments. Please read these carefully. Your Team Leaders will be able to advise you of any particular issues along their transects. If you notice particular hazards, even temporary, please advise your Team Leader who will alert the rest of the team.

Be particularly aware of any forestry operations and restricted access. Please comply with these without question. You may be able to access part of your route from a different direction. Once again please liaise with your Team Leader.

Our very best wishes for a successful season.