Hampshire and Isle of Wight Branch









Walks on Magdalen Hill Down

Do join us for a **Wednesday Wander** or a **Friday Foray**, from spring through to late summer, and enjoy our fabulous downland reserve with its beautiful wildflowers and chalk grassland butterflies, other insects and birdlife. Meet in the gravel car park opposite the cemetery on Alresford Road, B3404, SU512295. (SatNav. SO21 1HE)

15 April	Meet 2.30pm Leaders: Jenny Mallett and Brian Fletcher – Tel: 01962 882746 Our first walk of the year to see early butterflies and cowslips.
	Meet 2.30pm Leaders: Jenny Mallett and Brian Fletcher – Tel: 01962 882746 Come along to enjoy the butterflies and the spectacular display of cowslips. A leisurely walk with friendly company. All welcome, including dogs on short leads.
3 June	Meet 11.00am Leaders: Jenny Mallett and Jayne Chapman – Tel: 01962 808400
19 June	Meet 11.00am Leader: Pete Flood
1 July	Meet 11.00am Leaders: Jenny Mallett and Jayne Chapman – Tel: 01962 808400
17 July	Meet 11.00am Leaders: TBC – Tel: 01962 808400
5 August	Meet 11.00am Leaders: Jenny Mallett and Jayne Chapman – Tel: 01962 808400
28 August	Meet 11.00am Leaders: Jenny Mallett and Brian Fletcher – Tel: 01962 882746
2 September	Meet 11.00am Leaders: Jenny Mallett and Brian Fletcher – Tel: 01962 882746

Walks at Bentley Station Meadow

Meet in the Forestry Commission car park off Gravel Hill Road. Leave the A31 east of Bentley, signposted Alice Holt Research Station. Go along Gravel Hill Road, over a railway bridge. The car park is about 500 yards after the bridge on the right. SU802433

26 May	Meet at 2.30pm Leader: Steve Easter – Tel: 07770 823271
18 June	Meet at 2.30pm Leader: Arthur Greenwood – Tel: 07920 803900
7 July	Meet at 11.00am Leader: Jayne Chapman – Tel: 01962 808400 A good chance to see a Purple Emperor.

Walk on Yew Hill

Meet at the end of Old Kennels Lane at junction with Port Lane and Millers Lane, Oliver's Battery, SU451269.

18 July Meet at 2.00pm Leader: Rupert Broadway – Tel: 07906 227478 A good time to see Chalk Hill Blue, many other butterflies and lovely wildflowers.



Chairman's Message

I usually try to begin my introductory piece to the Newsletter with a positive story or piece. Not so this time. **A torrent of bad news** has made it a thoroughly depressing start to the year. Fires in Australia are a regular feature of the ecosystem across the continent but not on the scale and intensity seen this year. Climatic and man-made factors appear to have made the fires much worse and resulted in the scorching of over 12 million hectares of land and the death of 33 people and an estimated 1 billion animals. The fires have also released millions of tonnes of CO2 into the atmosphere. In Indonesia, a BBC report showed the jaw-dropping sight of rivers blocked by mountains of plastic and other waste. Nearer to home, the latest State of Nature reports released at the end of last year show a continuing loss of biodiversity across the UK with no apparent let-up in the net loss of nature over the past decade. It seems certain that the UK will fail to meet most of the global 2020 targets it committed to through the Convention on Biological Diversity.

Perhaps most dispiriting of all, the *Washington Post* reported the alleged murder of **Homero Gómez González**, a former logger who became one of the most vocal defenders of central Mexico's Monarch butterfly population. He was found in a well near the El Rosario Monarch Butterfly Reserve that he managed in an area where illegal logging and organised crime is rife. A local guide has also been killed.



Hampshire orchids. Rosemary Powell It is possible to spot **the odd piece of good news**. The birthday cards I buy are no longer wrapped in single-use film. Small cafés in small villages on the top of small islands in the Canaries now use recyclable cups and non-plastic stirrers. The consumption of plant-based food seems to be increasing rapidly at the expense of meat in many countries and electric car sales are also increasing, albeit still dwarfed by the sale of large, diesel-powered SUVs. In the UK, the new Environmental Land Management Scheme holds out the prospect of better targeted payments for more environmentally sensitive farming practices.



Painted Lady. Freya Brown

Concern for the environment is high and rising on many agendas. I suspect that the political class is running well behind the sentiment of most people who want us to respect nature and allow it to recover. Politicians may fear the consequences of implementing unpalatable trade-offs when the balance between short-term pain and long-term benefit is unfavourable. But decisions must be taken if anything is to change and a new Environment Act with resources to match would be a start.

Our **AGM and Members' Day** in November was an enjoyable affair. We had our highest attendance in recent years so thank you to everyone who was able to make it. We garnered some very useful feedback which we will use when planning this year's event. Fortunately we seem to get more things right than we get wrong. The star of the show was undoubtedly a fantastic presentation from **Penny Green, Ecologist at Knepp Wildland in West Sussex**. Her talk on "Rewilding and Butterflies" was so well received that one member asked if we could get her back this year! Knepp is becoming a veritable butterfly hotspot with a strong and growing Brown Hairstreak colony and a remarkable 388 Purple Emperors recorded in 2018. Some 140 Emperors were recorded on one day last year. Knepp is a great reminder that it might be better to let nature recover in its own space and time rather than rush to plant millions of trees with possibly the wrong genotypes in almost certainly the wrong places. Staying with the Members' Day, the **photo competition** again scaled great heights. If you want to give yourself a treat, do please take a look at the six winning entries on our website: **www.hantsiow-butterflies.org.uk** (Once on the Home page go to About>Resources>Photo Competitions>2019.) The images are simply stunning. Particular congratulations must go to lain McIntosh for his image of a Green Hairstreak and to Freya Brown for the Painted Lady in the first-time entrants' category.

This year's AGM and Members' Day will be held on **Sunday 22nd November**. This is a week later than usual to avoid clashing with BC's National AGM. They keep changing their dates, we try not to.

Later in the newsletter you will find a reminder asking members to please let us have your up-to-date **email addresses**. We get a huge number of bounced emails whenever we send out an e-newsletter. Please also let us know if you would be happy to receive electronic versions of the **Newsletter and/ or Annual Butterfly Report**. We spend a large proportion of our Branch income on printing and postage so anything we can do to reduce the amount of paper we send out will increase the money we have left over for conservation work.

I have said on more than one occasion that good recording is a cornerstone of conservation. An example of this came with the sighting of a solitary female **Brown Hairstreak at Stockbridge Down** on the 8 September 2019. A lone male was seen a week later. These single sightings prompted four BC and National Trust volunteers to undertake an egg search in sheltered areas north-west of the lower (eastern) car park with the local NT Ranger in November. The result was 28 live eggs, a single predated egg and confirmation that Stockbridge Down is a new breeding site for the species. The site can now be managed with the needs of the Brown Hairstreak in mind. It just shows what one or two records can lead to.

I would like to conclude this introduction with a big thank you to our Newsletter Editor, Kevin Freeborn, and to Dan and Rosemary Powell for their design and artist skills. It is always a pleasure to receive the Newsletter, in either paper or electronic form, and this is largely due to the work of Kevin, Dan and Rosemary. Well done you three!

With best wishes for the new season,



Clive Wood, Chair

Thank you Clive. K, R & D



Events and Shows Programme 2020

Please check the Branch website **www.hantsiow-butterflies.org.uk** for further information and for confirmation, nearer the time, that each event is going ahead.

* New event for the Branch, # Children's activities, + Dates in italic are TBC

18-19 April	*#Celebration of Spring, Basing House – Barton's Lane, Basingstoke, RG24 8AE 10.30am to 4.30pm; Organiser TBC
24 May	#Gilbert White Nature Festival, Selborne – The Wakes, High Street, GU34 3JH 10.30am to 5.00pm; Organiser – TBC
30 May	*New Forest Bioblitz 2020, Wilverley Plain – near Brockenhurst; Organiser – Bob Annell
+2 June	*#Fleet Pond Wildlife Day, Fleet – Cove Road, GU51 2RN 11.00am to 3.00pm; Organiser – Arthur Greenwood
14 June	*#Hampshire Country and Garden Festival, Whitchurch – Bere Mill, RG28 7NH 10.00am to 5.00pm; Organiser – Kate Barrett
12 July	*#Alton Town Eco-Fayre – Park Gardens, Alton 10.00am to 4.00pm; Organiser – TBC
18 July	*Blackwood Forest, Forest Holidays – near Micheldever Organiser – Bob Annell
+25-26 July	*Rockbourne Roman Villa Museum – near Fordingbridge; SP6 3PG; Organiser – Bob Annell
7 August	#Family Butterfly Day, Hillier Gardens, Romsey – Jermyns Lane, SO51 0QA Start 10.00am; Organiser – Linda Barker
12-16 August	#Boomtown Festival – near Winchester Organisers – Jayne Chapman and Kate Barrett
5 September	#Test Valley Wood Fair, Knightwood Leisure Centre – Chandlers Ford, SO53 4SJ 10.00am to 5.00pm; Organiser – Clive Wood
+September	#Lymington Reserves Open Day, Lymington – Normandy Lane, SO41 8AE; Organiser – Bob Annell
11 October	#Blackmoor Apple Day, near Liss – GU33 6BS 9.00am to 4.30pm; Organiser – Clive Wood
22 November	Branch AGM and members' Day, Littleton Village Hall – Littleton, SO22 6QL 11.00 to 4.30pm; Organisers – Clive Wood and Mary Macmillan

Clive Wood, Chair

Going Paperless

Opting out of the Newsletter and Annual Report Did you know that...?

- We currently spend £6,600 a year on printing and posting the Newsletter and Annual Butterfly Report.
- Over two-thirds of our share of member subscription income is spent on printing and postage.
- "Stuffing the envelopes" at Head Office is a big logistical exercise twice a year for a small band of volunteers, especially as membership continues to rise.

Members can help reduce these costs, and the amount of paper we use, by deciding to opt out of receiving the printed versions of either or both documents in favour of easily downloadable electronic versions. These are identical to the printed versions and readily available at the Branch website:

Newsletter: www.hantsiow-butterflies.org.uk/newsletters.php

Annual Report: www.hantsiow-butterflies.org.uk/annualreports.php

It may be that you would like to receive a paper copy of one but an electronic version of the other. If you would like to change your preferences, please email our Membership Secretary at: **sharron_broadway@hotmail.com**

Please be assured that we will continue to offer paper versions of the Newsletter and Annual Report to all members who wish to receive them, free of charge, for the foreseeable future.

Up-to-date email addresses, please!

Please notify our Membership Secretary, as above, if your email address has changed. This may be the case if you have not received a Branch e-newsletter or BC's electronic *All A-Flutter* in the past six months (unless you have opted out of these communications). Your details will be passed to the Head Office Membership Team only and not retained by the Branch.

Many thanks.

Clive Wood, Chair



Reserves News

Magdalen Hill Down, Yew Hill, and Bentley Station Meadow

At the time of writing and in my usual rush to meet the newsletter copy deadline, I decided once again to add up the volunteer hours that have been spent at the work-parties between the months of October 2019 to January 2020, (with practical tasks in February and March still to complete). The time that the volunteers put into the reserves added up to a staggering 530 hours, which equates to approximately 70 days of work. In addition, we had contractors out for four days to tackle some of the preparation work such as felling old and diseased trees and cutting thorny scrub and dogwood.



Jane Plenderleith erecting a dead-hedge. Alex Billimore

The type of work that the volunteers tackled included clearing derelict blackthorn scrub at Bentley Station Meadow (BSM) to encourage new growth which hopefully will find favour with female Brown Hairstreaks in future years. Sue Clark recorded the first ever sighting of this species at BSM in 2019, an egg-laying female. Two Sparsholt students – Alex Billimore and Jane Plenderleith – erected dead-hedges to protect areas where Herb Paris grows – an ancient woodland indicator found on the reserve, and Ian Hampshire cleared very old sallow that had lain in a heap and a tangled mass in the centre of the reserve for many years. This removal will help to increase the grassland and wildflowers such as Bugle, Oxlip and orchids that grow elsewhere on the reserve.

As in previous years we have continued with our scrub bashing to open up large areas of chalk grassland that had succumbed to hawthorn, elder and privet over many years. Bramble is a problem and one that we need to keep in check. However, it is also very popular with the large number of Harvest Mice (*Micromys minutus*) that are regularly found on Magdalen Hill Down. This is the smallest UK rodent weighing in at a tiny 4-6g and survives on a diet of seeds, berries and insects, although moss, roots and fungi may also be taken. The bramble requires sensitive management, especially during the colder months when these tiny creatures slow down and keep warm close to the ground in tennis-ball sized nests made from shredded grasses. Harvest mice are listed as a BAP (Biodiversity Action Plan) Species because they are thought to have become much scarcer in recent years and conservation plans are required to reverse the decline. Changes in habitat management and agricultural methods are thought to be the main cause for the loss of populations from certain areas, although there have been no reliable studies to quantify this change. (The Mammal Society available online at https://www.mammal.org.uk). Harvest mice have many predators including weasels, stoats, foxes, cats, owls, hawks, crows, even pheasants, all of which can be found on the reserve.

Harvest Mouse. John Stacey



It is quite wonderful walking around the reserves and noticing signs of early spring, with the Cowslips and Bedstraws showing new growth and a Red Admiral butterfly on the wing at Magdalen on 29 January. Each year we collect seed from the hay meadows and use this to enhance other areas such as the scrapes along the bottom of Magdalen Hill Down bordering the A31. Here we scattered seed from Dark Mullein which is the food-plant of the Striped Lychnis moth. The scrapes were created to benefit this particular species in 2016 with great results. We collected quite a large amount of Cowslip and Kidney Vetch seed in 2019 – if anyone is interested in scattering some on a bit of bare ground, or short turf, or if you have a small conservation project on the go, please get in touch with me to arrange for some seed collection from the meadows in 2020.



Cowslips at Magdalen Hill Down. John Stacey

Butterflies

The results are in for the 2019 butterfly season with some exciting news for our Hampshire reserves. At the end of the transect year, Andy Barker compiles an Annual Index of species for all the Hampshire BC reserves transect routes as a ranking position out of 160+ Hampshire and Isle of Wight transects.

This provides a way to see which species our reserves are particularly good for, and in the case of Magdalen Hill Down (MHD), even which parts of the sites are best for particular species. MHD Extension which was formerly a cultivated field and began a process of arable-to-meadow reversion in 1995

was the third-best transect monitored site in the whole of Hampshire and Isle of Wight for Marbled White, and also fifth-best for Common Blue and Small Blue. MHD Old Allotments proved that the 2018 second position for Small Tortoiseshell was no fluke, by taking top spot for this species in 2019, out of all Hampshire and Wight transects, despite being a relatively short transect.

Andy's report went on to say that MHD (Original) maintained top spot for Brown Argus and Common Blue (by some considerable margin in both cases), but also gained top spot for Brimstone. It maintained second place for Grizzled Skipper and saw a big rise to second place for Green Hairstreak. Small White was also ranked second. Clouded Yellow and Chalk Hill Blue stayed in third place, whilst Small Copper rose to fourth and Marbled White stayed



Marbled White. John Stacey

fifth. The rise to equal-ninth spot for Dingy Skipper is a great result, considering the species is usually only seen in very low numbers. This year it had an Annual Index of 28. (A. Barker, 2019.)

Yew Hill and Bentley Station Meadow, both small sites did well to produce tenth place for Small Heath (out of all transects), and ninth for Ringlet respectively.

Grazing news

The cattle returned to Bentley Station Meadow last year following a few years where we used Icelandic horses or sheep. There were just four – a mix of Aberdeen Angus and Belted Galloway – and they did a fantastic job of taking out coarse grasses and bashing holes through the scrub. Yew Hill is grazed with rare breed sheep, and Magdalen Hill Down has a mix of British White Cattle, sheep and Exmoor ponies.

Summer Walks 2020

We are looking forward to the start of the walks on our reserves. Please check out the dates in the Newsletter and join us if you can. The walks are all very informal and generally last two hours, although you can leave sooner if you wish. There is no need to book, just turn up on the day at the specified meeting point. We really do see some spectacular butterflies and day-flying moths if the conditions are right.

Finally, I'd like to say a huge thank you to John Stacey for the stunning images used to illustrate 'Reserves News'.

Jayne Chapman, Senior Reserves Officer

Email: jchapman@butterfly-conservation.org Direct dial: 01962 808400





Walk on the wild side

Despite the cold of late winter in the UK, as I write this the sun is well and truly out, bees are bumping against my window and I'm half expecting to see a Red Admiral or Brimstone flit past. I'm looking forward to another fantastic season on Magdalen Hill Down, where I hope to introduce around 700 more children to the reserve and the beautiful butterflies and moths which thrive there.

We had a great season last year, welcoming over 500 children, running a weekly work party with boys from Winchester College and hosting St Swithun's Forest School on a regular basis. We celebrated 50 years of Eric Carle's *The Very Hungry Caterpillar*, on the reserve by holding a special picnic with pupils from Kingsworthy Primary School. Staff from Head Office attended and we had a professional photographer capture the day for us. Jayne Chapman and I also worked with a local designer to develop a child-friendly interpretation board for Rosebay Corner in memory of George Yorke, who was so instrumental in securing the future of the reserve.





George York memorial board. Kate Barrett Nature study on Magdalen Hill Down. Leela Bennett

Next year we hope to go even further with at least 25 classes expected on the reserve, the strengthening of our relationship with Sparsholt College and a student volunteer scheme being developed with the RSPB. I look forward to having even more to share in future newsletters as the Branch's educational activities develop in 2020.

To get involved in Branch educational activities, please contact me, Kate Barrett, on **kbarrett@butterfly-conservation.org** or 01962 673565.

Kate Barrett



Butterfly Transects 2020

A butterfly transect is a method of monitoring butterflies by walking a fixed route at a given site and recording the species and numbers of butterflies observed. Transects are undertaken from the first week in April to the last week of September (26 weeks), under specified weather conditions and during a particular period of the day, so that comparisons can be made in the data collected between different years and across other sites. Transects are usually walked by a group of four or five recorders, so any one recorder would be expected to cover 5-6 weeks during the season.

There are now some 160 transects in Hampshire and the Isle of Wight, and we are looking for additional help with the transects detailed below.

The first four of these are organised by Linda Barker. If you think you can help, please contact Linda; email: lindabarker4@btinternet.com

1 Browndown North near Gosport, 2.6km/1.6 miles in length, across an area of dry and wet heathland, and of particular interest for recording Grayling.

2 Crab Wood near Winchester, 1.3km/0.8 mile in length, mature broadleaved woodland, easy walking, and Silver-washed Fritillary and White Admiral are of particular interest.

3 Barton Meadows near Winchester, a new transect to be set up by Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust.

The next four transects are organised by Kelvin Richards. If these appeal, please contact Kelvin; **email: junctionfive@gmail.com**

5 Foxlease Meadows North on MoD land, managed by HIoWWT, near Junction 4a of M3. A rather strenuous walk (4.4km, 2.7miles round trip) over uneven terrain, damp in some parts and there may be cattle present.

6 College Copse HIoWWT farm near Hook, with grassland and woodland. Involves climbing over a five-barred gate twice and there may be cattle present. Woodland stretch can be hard to follow. Actual transect is 2km/1.25miles but closer to 3.25km/2 miles round trip from the car park.

7 Bentley Station Meadow, our own Branch reserve, adjacent to Bentley Station. Easy walking across grassland and scrub with one damp section; and a round trip from the station car park of 3.1km/1.9miles.

8 Yateley Common, an area of heathland, Silver-studded Blue is of particular interest here.

Linda Barker

Wider Countryside Butterfly Survey (WCBS)

If you're interested in monitoring butterflies but don't have time to commit to a transect, can you help with a WCBS square?

The WCBS is a nationwide 'light touch' recording scheme designed to monitor butterfly numbers across the UK, with results feeding into national statistics. 1km OS grid squares are randomly selected for monitoring and can include urban and agricultural areas as well as more butterfly-rich environments. Volunteers take 'ownership' of a square, with two walks along an agreed route required each year, once in July and once in August, identifying and recording any butterflies seen. Walks need to take place in good weather, between 10.45am and 3.45pm and use similar methodology as for butterfly transects.

Further details about the scheme can be found at **www.ukbms.org/wcbs**. Square owners need to identify all butterflies seen during walks and support with this is available for those who are new to recording.

There are a number of squares in Hampshire and the Isle of Wight that currently need owners. A full list can be found on the Branch website **www.hantsiow-butterflies.org.uk/widercountryside.php**.

If you are interested in getting involved in this scheme, please contact me on 023 8081 3671 or via email to **jackyna7579@gmail.com** and I will be happy to provide further information and support.

Jacky Adams



Chalk Hill Blue. Rosemary Powell



Although the majority of moths are nocturnal, a fair number do in fact fly in the daytime and can often be seen when you are out on a butterfly or any other walk in the countryside. Quite a lot of moths can be disturbed from their daytime roost and will fly short distances to find another hiding place. These are not true day-flying moths. There are about 133 species of macro-moths in the UK which are true day-flyers, according to the field guide *Britain's Day-flying Moths* (BDFM) by Newland, Still and Swash. There are many more micros, of which only 22 are included in the guide; the remainder, because of their small size and difficulty of identification, are excluded.

Day-flying moths can be found in most habitats, but especially on heathland, in woodlands with wide rides, in meadows, on downland, and in parks and gardens. The latter two locations, as so often these days, are increasingly important for many forms of wildlife. As with butterflies, it is important to provide moths with plants that have easily accessible nectar, although a number of moths (e.g. Oak Eggar, Fox Moth), do not in fact feed as adults and have no proper mouth parts: they are mostly plump and furry and live off their body fat until they die. In general, old-fashioned, less highly cultivated varieties of plants and wildflowers such as forget-me-nots and clovers in spring, knapweed, scabious, ragged robin and yarrow in summer, and grasses, birds-foot trefoils, sorrels and plantains in autumn are preferable to garden ornamentals. Indeed, what are often considered to be 'weeds' are good for many species of insects, not just for moths; BDFM provides a list of the main food-plants of those day-flying moths which commonly visit gardens and parks. In addition, many moth caterpillars favour woody plants such as willow, hawthorn, birch and oak.

One of the earliest day-flyers is the Orange Underwing, which emerges in March in open woodland and birch scrub. The spectacular male Emperor Moth follows on in early April, when it flies low over the ground searching for a female with which to mate. Heathland is one of its favoured habitats.

Flying low in grassy/flower-rich habitats, also from April onwards, is one of the commonest day-flyers you are likely to see, an immigrant called the Silver Y. It has a very fluttery, rather frantic flight and takes its name from a Y-shaped mark on its grey forewing. Another summer immigrant is the Hummingbird Hawk-moth which, unlike the large showy nocturnal hawk-moths, doesn't conform to most people's idea of a moth at all; numbers vary annually, but it is often seen in gardens. A small buzzy moth, it is very fast moving and uses its long tongue to extract nectar from its food source while hovering in front of it, hence its name.

Some of the easiest day-flyers to find are the Six-spot and Narrow-bordered Five-spot Burnets. These colourful black and red moths, together with the others mentioned below, frequent grassland and are easily seen on knapweeds and other wildflowers where they feed on sunny days from about June.

bottom left clockwise - Scarlet Tiger, Pyrausta aurata, Wood Tiger - Richard Coomber Jesrsey Tiger - Dan Powell





top left clockwise - Speckled Yellow, Mother Shipton, Antler Moth, Silver Y - Richard Coomber

You might also notice the similarly coloured Cinnabar, which has red stripes down the leading edge of its forewings in place of the Burnets' spots, or the Forester, a plain green moth. This habitat also supports the Burnet Companion, a stripy brown moth, and the greyer Mother Shipton, so named for the pattern of a 'face' on its forewings.

The Clearwings are a group of seldom-noticed moths, quite un-moth-like in appearance. With their translucent wings they could be mistaken for wasps or other insects, but they have no waist and show a coloured bar near the wing tip; the best chance of seeing them is to use a pheromone lure (available from entomological suppliers) in June or July. This attracts the males, but even then you need to be alert, as they whizz in and out very fast. Most species are categorised as Nationally Scarce B (nationally notable, recorded in only between 31 and 100 hectads – a hectad being an area of 10 x 10km), but they may be under-recorded.

For colourful species it is hard to beat the tiger moths. Locally common in the South in mid-summer are the Scarlet Tiger (especially on comfrey), the Jersey Tiger (a recent colonist), and the Ruby Tiger. The less common yellow and black Wood Tiger inhabits open grassy, scrubby or heathy areas as well as woodland clearings.

Other common summer moths you might come across include Brown Silver Lines, easily disturbed in bracken, Speckled Yellow in woodland rides, and Common and Latticed Heath on grassland or heath.



bottom left clockwise - Clouded Buff, Humming-bird Hawk-moth, Burnet Companion - Richard Coomber

These last two can be told apart by the latter's habit of perching with its wings held over its back, like a butterfly. The sexually dimorphic Clouded Buff is unmistakable and flies as readily in daytime as at night; the same applies to the Antler Moth, with its streaked 'antler-like' mark on the forewing. Both these species favour rough, open habitats such as downland and heaths. In the garden the Small Purple and Gold (Mint Moth) is often found on marjoram or mint and can fly as late as September.

There is a whole slew of moths, too many to mention here, that although not true day-flyers, are on the wing late in the afternoon or at dusk and can easily be disturbed during the day. These include many Pugs, Carpet Moths, Grass Moths and other micros. Any walk in reasonable habitat should produce a fair number of species, and it's not hard to build a good list in a season.

Sightings can be reported to the county moth recorder, whose details can be found on the Butterfly Conservation website; several websites help with identification, including www.hantsmoths.org.uk www.ukmoths.org.uk www.mothshots.co and www.ukleps.org. The book to consult, and on which this article is based, is the above-mentioned *Britain's Day-flying Moths*, one of the Wild Guides series.

Juliet Bloss



As the autumn and winter nights drew in, I found myself turning to read a wide range of the Lepidoptera-related books that are out there. The most recently browsed being *Common British Moths*, written by A. M. Stewart in 1913. As with Peter Marren's fascinating book *Emperors, Admirals and Chimney Sweepers*, I have found myself querying and be fascinated by the past naming of species.

Stewart's book in particular, threw up a few quandaries for me to ponder. Even with the help of the internet, I was left with a few mysteries. In some cases, both the common and Latin names had changed, while other species were no longer present in the British Isles.

Some have been easy to decipher, while with others I felt clueless. The following are a few that stuck in my mind, and I have tried my best to guess what they might be.

Gold-tail (*Porthesia simillis*), the Latin may have changed, but this is a rather nice name for the familiar **Yellow-tail** moth.

White-ear (*Apamea didyma*) – could this possibly be **Common Rustic** or, perhaps, **Lesser Common Rustic**? This is a moth that can be hard to determine in the field these days.

Hay Moth (*Caradrina quadripunctata*), a seemingly well-used name at one point – might this be **Pale Mottled Willow**, which feeds readily on grasses?

Another moth with an odd description, is the **February Carpet** (*Laventia caesiata*), in which even older books make a point of saying doesn't fly in February, so why the name? As far as I can tell it is referring to **Grey Mountain Carpet** which flies from July onwards in mountains and moorlands.

My favourite mention was the **Parrot Carpet** (*Cidaria siderata*) which brings up images of a very bright colourful creature. I think this may be referring to the **Barred Yellow** (*Cidaria fulvata*), which this relic of a name seems more suited to; in fact I think I prefer it.

I offered this flurry of thought on Facebook one night, and was given a few more thoughts. Bruce Hurst said **Convolvulus Hawk-moth** (*Agrius convolvuli*) was once called the **Unicorn Moth** from the 'horn' on its caterpillar, though many larvae have this and I have heard the Lime Hawk-moth given the same name. It might however be a great name for encouraging young people into moth surveying. In America there is a **Unicorn Moth** (*Schizura unicornis*).

Ben Sale said he used to trap down in Essex, and they referred to **L-album Wainscot** (*Mythimna l-album*) by its Victorian name of the Lettered Wainscot. He also mentioned that **White-speck** (*Mythimna unipuncta*) was once called American Wainscot, a species we share with the Americas.

There are probably many other archaic names out there lurking in the pages of books and papers, and I find it fascinating how some names have endured and others have become but distant memories.

Graeme Davis

Convolvulus Hawk-moth - Dan Powell



In the Newsletter last April I introduced you to my own butterfly and wildlife haven in North Baddesley, south Hampshire. As work is ongoing, I thought I would give an update and roundup some highlights of last season.

Last spring and autumn planting took place with over 800 new plants added, including Common Rock Rose for the Brown Argus. Some new-to-site plants were put in as an experiment, but some of these disappeared very quickly as it turned out they were appealing to local deer. I am compiling a list of potentially deer-proof plants if anyone would like guidance for their own planting. It is very annoying and costly for plants to be destroyed in this way within a few days.

In the autumn I cut, cleared and seeded a large area, mainly with Ammi, after I discovered on another site that it was constantly covered in butterflies. I also heavily seeded with Yellow Rattle to try and keep some of the grass and rush under control.



All the hard work and planning seems to have paid off as 28 different species of butterfly were seen here in 2019. There seems to have been an increase in the number of some species, including Small Tortoiseshell. Counts of Purple Emperor, Dark Green Fritillary, Clouded Yellow and Brown Argus stayed roughly the same. Common Blue was the only species to have decreased in numbers, and initially I was worried but it seems to be a county-wide trend for 2019.

Many moths were seen, also increasing in numbers, apart from Silver Y which was down considerably on last year. Wasp spiders were seen in the biggest numbers so far. Lots of slowworms, lizards, grass snakes and adders were seen, all increasing in number. The highlight was a fresh baby adder, the first one seen in 33 years of living here. Hampshire and Isle of Wight Amphibian and Reptile Group (HIWARG) have now set up a transect on my reserve.

It was not only species that increased but visitors also with more people coming to have a look round. Numerous groups visited including Butterfly Conservation trainee transect recorders, one group totalled 17!

You are all very welcome to come and have a look round and my contact details are given below.

Kevin Ross Email: spark.ky@hotmail.co.uk Telephone: 02380 733995



Another bumper selection of photographs at the 2019 Branch AGM, and well done and thank you to all those that entered to make it such a well-supported competition.

As ever, keep your camera close by on your travels and join in the fun this November. Entry details will be included in the autumn newsletter.

UK Butterflies

- 1st Steve Lovick Silver-studded Blues
- 2nd John Vetterlein Silver-spotted Skipper
- 3rd Joint third places:
 Sharron Broadway Brown Hairstreak, Iain McIntosh Green Hairstreak*

UK Moths

- 1st Gillian Pullinger Broad-bordered Bee Hawk-moth
- 2nd Joseph Shaffery Eyed Hawk-moth
- 3rd Joseph Shaffery Privet Hawk-moth

Immature stages

- 1st John Stacey Mullein Moth larva
- 2nd Tony Rackham Large White larvae

Overseas butterflies and moths

- 1st Joseph Shaffery Jersey Tigers
- 2nd Tony Rackham Black-veined White
- 3rd Joint third places: Ken Bailey – Anatolian Blue Argus, Peter Hunt – Blue-spot Hairstreak

First time entrants

1st Freya Brown – Painted Lady 2nd Ioint second places:

Joint second places: Paul Harknett – Glanville Fritillaries, Hugh Wood – Swallowtail

*Overall competition winner; see the back cover of this newsletter.

Seeing the results of the Branch Photographic Competition – **www.hantsiow-butterflies.org.uk** – may inspire you to pick up your camera and head out on a butterfly walk. Iain McIntosh, our overall winner of the 2019 competition, did just that as he describes opposite.

Kevin Freeborn Newsletter Editor "From early childhood I've always been interested in the natural world, mainly from my father and also a very keen primary school teacher, Miss Mitchell, in the early 1960s. I was determined to re-engage with photography upon retiring in October 2018, and at the same time my wife acquired a copy of *Hampshire and Isle of Wight Butterfly Walks*. So each walk has become a mini project to photograph butterflies, plants and birds. Since then butterflies have somewhat taken over to the extent that my wife has to head off into the distance for her walk while I get waylaid by butterflies.

My Green Hairstreak photograph (see the back cover, and inside back cover for the story behind the picture) was taken with a Fujifilm X-H1 and XF 50-140mm lens at 140mm, 1/2000s, f5.6, ISO 800."







Broad-bordered Bee Hawk-moth. Gillian Pullinger Silver-studded Blues. Steve Lovick Mullein Moth larva. John Stacev



The Branch is grateful to the site owners/managers of the nature reserves visited in our walks, for maintaining public access and safeguarding these very special places of wildlife interest.

Note: the grid reference given is for the parking location/meeting point which is *not always* at the site of the walk's focus.

Sunday 26 April, meet at 10.30am

Matley Heath, New Forest (SU332073), site: Forestry Commission Leader: Ashley Whitlock, Tel: 02392 731266; Mobile: 07752 182340 Directions: Meet in the FC Matley Heath car park, on the B3056 between Lyndhurst and Beaulieu Road Station. Bring a packed lunch. NB This venue may change at short notice as car park may close in early spring due to ground nesting birds in the vicinity. Aiming to see: Emperor moth.

Wednesday 6 May, meet at 10.30am Ramsdean Down and Grandfather's Bottom, Butser Hill (SU712201), site: Natural England

Leader: Ashley Whitlock, Tel: 02392 731266; Mobile: 07752 182340 *Directions:* Meet in the hilltop car park at Butser Hill (Pay and Display). This is a strenuous walk over uneven and very steep slopes. Bring a packed lunch. *Aiming to see:* Duke of Burgundy, Grizzled and Dingy Skipper.

Sunday 10 May, meet at 09.30am Beacon Hill NNR, Exton (SU598227), site: Natural England; and Stephen's Castle Down

Leader: Ashley Whitlock, Tel: 02392 731266; Mobile: 07752 182340 *Directions:* Meet in the reserve car park, which is approx. 1¼ miles west of Warnford and a similar distance north-west of Exton, both off the A32. **NB There is no parking at Stephen's Castle Down so a car will have to ferry field trippers to the site from Beacon Hill. Please note the meeting time as this could take a while!** Bring a packed lunch.

Aiming to see: Duke of Burgundy, Green Hairstreak, Brown Argus.

Wednesday 13 May, meet at 10.30am Ivy Wood and New Copse Inclosure, New Forest (SU316024),

site: Forestry Commission

Leader: Ashley Whitlock, Tel: 02392 731266; Mobile: 07752 182340

Directions: Meet in the car park at Ivy Wood on B3055, about 1 mile east of Brockenhurst. In the afternoon the walk will be extended along the Lymington River looking for dragonflies and other invertebrates so bring a packed lunch.

Aiming to see: Pearl-bordered Fritillary.

Sunday 17 May, meet at 10.30am Stockbridge Down (west car park SU374346), site: National Trust

Leader: Ashley Whitlock, Tel: 02392 731266; Mobile: 07752 182340 *Directions:* Stockbridge Down is 1 mile east of Stockbridge and 6 miles west of Winchester on the B3049. Bring a packed lunch.

Aiming to see: Duke of Burgundy, Pearl-bordered Fritillary, Grizzled Skipper and Brown Argus.

Wednesday 20 May, meet at 10.30am Broughton Down (SU304327), site: HIOWWT

Leader: Ashley Whitlock, Tel: 02392 731266; Mobile: 07752 182340 *Directions:* To avoid rough track up to the reserve (SU296325), park in Buckholt Road, west out of Broughton, or in the village, from which walk along Queenswood Road, bear right along the B3084 then go left along Buckholt road; where this ends take the middle of the three ongoing tracks to climb to the reserve. *Aiming to see:* Adonis Blue; and, possibly, Duke of Burgundy.

Sunday 24 May, meet at 09.30am Martin Down NNR, Lower car park, Sillen Lane (SU058192), site: Natural England

site: Natural England

Leader: Ashley Whitlock, Tel: 02392 731266; Mobile: 07752 182340 Directions: NB change of car park this time! Meet in the nature reserve's lower car park, along Sillen Lane, about ½ mile west of Martin village. Aiming to see: Marsh Fritillary, Adonis Blue, Small Blue and Brown Argus; and, possibly, Duke of Burgundy.

Wednesday 27 May, meet at 10.30am Bentley Wood (SU258291), site: Trustees of Bentley Wood

Leader: Ashley Whitlock, Tel: 02392 731266; Mobile: 07752 182340

Directions: Meet at Bentley Wood car park, just across the Wiltshire border, reached along a track signed off Scouts Lane, which runs between West Dean and Middle Winterslow to the east of Salisbury. Bring a packed lunch.

Aiming to see: Pearl-bordered, Small Pearl-bordered Fritillary, Marsh Fritillary, and Argent and Sable Moth.

Saturday 30 May, meet at 10.30am Old Burghclere Lime Quarry (SU469578), site: HIOWWT Arranged by Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust

Leader: Mervyn Grist, Tel: 01264 358737

Directions: Meet in the old station farmyard to left of gate, reached by a rough lane, south off minor road through Old Burghclere between the manor house and old railway bridge. The large quarry is a short walk away. Donations invited. Bring a packed lunch.

Aiming to see: Small Blue, Dingy Skipper and Wood Tiger Moth.

Sunday 31 May, meet at 10.30am Holmsley and Brownhill Inclosures, New Forest (SU231006),

site: Forestry Commission Leader: Ashley Whitlock, Tel: 02392 731266; Mobile: 07752 182340 Directions: Meet at the Old Station Tea Rooms car park, Holmsley. Aiming to see: Small Pearl-bordered Fritillary.

Wednesday 3 June, meet at 10.30am Portsdown Hill, Fort Widley (SU662064), site: Portsmouth City Council

Leader: Ashley Whitlock, Tel: 02392 731266; Mobile: 07752 182340 *Directions:* Meet at Fort Widley car park, off B2177, just east of Fort Widley. *Aiming to see:* Small and Common Blues; and, possibly, Wall Brown.

Sunday 21 June, meet at 10.30am Bramshott Common (SU855337)

Leader: Arthur Greenwood, Tel: 01428 604730; Mobile: 07920 803900 *Directions:* Meet in the car park at the end of Rectory Lane. This can be reached directly off the A3 northbound, taking the lane-turning after the Liphook interchange (this is just before you get to the top of the hill, do not miss it! – there is no access to Rectory Lane from the southbound A3) or leave A3 at Liphook interchange and turn immediately right into Church Lane which leads on to Rectory Lane. *Aiming to see:* Silver-studded Blue.

Wednesday 24 June, meet at 09.30am Abbotstone Down (SU584360)

Leader: Ashley Whitlock, Tel: 02392 731266; Mobile: 07752 182340 *Directions:* Meet at the Abbotstone Down and Oliver's Battery Settlement car park signposted off the B3047, north of New Alresford and south-east of Swarraton. Bring lunch.

Aiming to see: Marbled White and Dark Green Fritillary; and, possibly, Purple Emperor.

Sunday 28 June, meet at 10.30am Hawkhill Inclosure and Hatchet Moor, New Forest (SU350019),

site: Forestry Commission

Leader: Ashley Whitlock, Tel: 02392 731266; Mobile: 07752 182340 *Directions:* Meet in the Hawkhill Inclosure Forestry Commission car par, off the B3055, west of Hatchet Pond between Brockenhurst and Beaulieu. Bring lunch as the plan is to walk Hawkhill Inclosure in the morning and Hatchet Moor in the afternoon. *Aiming to see:* Dark Green Fritillary, Silver-studded Blue, Grayling and White Admiral.

Sunday 5 July, meet at 09.30am Abbotts Wood Inclosure, Alice Holt Forest (SU810410), site: Forestry Commission

Leader: Ashley Whitlock, Tel: 02392 731266; Mobile: 07752 182340 *Directions:* Meet at the Abbotts Wood Inclosure car park off Dockenfield Street, just south-east of the Halfway House pub.

Aiming to see: Purple Emperor, White Admiral, and Silver-washed Fritillary.

Tuesday 7 July, meet at 09.30am West Wood, Crab Wood and Pitt Down – Farley Mount (SU420292),

site: Forestry Commission and HCC

Leader: Ashley Whitlock, Tel: 02392 731266; Mobile: 07752 182340

Directions: Meet in Spindle Trees car park, signed off Sarum Road on Pitt Down, one of several Farley Mount Country Park car parks. Bring a packed lunch. In the morning we will circumnavigate West Wood and look in on Crab Wood, and walk on Pitt Down in the afternoon.

Aiming to see: Purple Emperor, White Admiral, Dark Green Fritillary, and Scarlet Tiger Moth.

Saturday 11 July, meet at 09.30am Micheldever Wood (SU529363), site: Forestry Commission

Leader: Ashley Whitlock, Tel: 02392 731266; Mobile: 07752 182340 *Directions:* Meet in Micheldever Wood car park, which is off Chillandham Lane, which is about 2½ miles south-east of Micheldever and 2½ miles west of Swarraton. Bring lunch.

Aiming to see: Purple Emperor, White Admiral and Silver-washed Fritillary.

Wednesday 15 July, meet at 09.30am West Harting Down (SU739156)

Leader: Ashley Whitlock, Tel: 02392 731266; Mobile: 07752 182340

Directions: Meet in the lane just over the railway bridge east of Charlton village. From the A3 take the Butser Ancient Farm exit and at Charlton turn left before the Red Lion and then cross the railway. The lane (to Ditcham Park School) is immediately left with limited parking on the left-hand side.

Aiming to see: Purple Emperor, Silver-washed, Dark Green Fritillary, and Hummingbird Hawk-moth.

Sunday 16 August, meet at 10.30am Soberton Down and River Meon (SU611166)

Leader: Ashley Whitlock, Tel: 02392 731266; Mobile: 07752 182340

Directions: Meet in Soberton Village Hall car park, off Long Lane, by the crossroads with Chalk Hill, along which the walk begins. Bring a packed lunch as in the afternoon the walk will take in the River Meon where Brown Hairstreak sites have been found in recent years.

Aiming to see: Brown Hairstreak.

Wednesday 19 August, meet at 09.30am Shipton Bellinger (SU229456)

Leader: Ashley Whitlock, Tel: 02392 731266; Mobile: 07752 182340

Directions: Meet in the village hall car park. Bring a packed lunch as there will be a visit to another local site in the afternoon.

Aiming to see: Brown Hairstreak and Wall Brown.

Sunday 23 August, meet at 10.30am Beaulieu Heath, New Forest (SU350019)

Leader: Ashley Whitlock, Tel: 02392 731266; Mobile: 07752 182340 *Directions:* Meet in the Hawkhill Inclosure Forestry Commission car par, off the B3055, west of Hatchet Pond between Brockenhurst and Beaulieu. Bring lunch. *Aiming to see:* Grayling.

Wednesday 26 August, meet at 10.30am St Catherine's Hill, Winchester (SU471249), site: HIOWWT

Leader: Ashley Whitlock, Tel: 02392 731266; Mobile: 07752 182340 *Directions:* Meet in the Shawford Down car park, Shawford, just west of Shawford railway station. The walk will pick up the Itchen Navigation towpath from the car park and head northwards to St Catherine's Hill beside the canal/river. St Catherine's has steep hillside paths. Bring a packed lunch.

Aiming to see: Adonis Blue and Silver-spotted Skipper.

Sunday 30 August, meet at 10.30am Beacon Hill NNR, Exton (SU598227), site: Natural England

Leader: Ashley Whitlock, Tel: 02392 731266; Mobile: 07752 182340 *Directions:* Meet in the reserve car park, which is approx. 1¼ miles west of Warnford and a similar distance north-west of Exton, both off the A32. Bring a packed lunch. *Aiming to see:* Silver-spotted Skipper, Brown Argus and Clouded Yellow.

Wednesday 2 September, meet at 10.30am

Old Winchester Hill NNR (SU645214), site: Natural England *Leader:* Ashley Whitlock, Tel: 02392 731266; Mobile: 07752 182340 *Directions:* Meet in the nature reserve's car park, which is signposted off the A32 at Warnford. Steep hillsides in places.

Aiming to see: Adonis Blue, Silver-spotted Skipper and Clouded Yellow.

Field trips are for everyone. Rough terrain over fields and woods could, most regrettably, make access impossible for some people with mobility issues. Please check with the leader if in doubt. These walks can be enjoyed by everyone, whether butterfly-novice or expert. Photographers, children (with adult supervision) and first time field trippers,

YOU ARE ALL WELCOME!

If the weather looks inclement then please phone the leader of the field trip. I will change the date of my field trips if the 5-day forecast suggests the weather is going to be wet and windy, so look out for this on the Branch website and on the Hampshire Butterfly Facebook page.

Ashley Whitlock, Field Trips Organiser Tel: 02392 731266 Mobile: 07752 812340 Email: ashleyrwhitlock@virginmedia.com



Isle of Wight walks 2020

Sunday 17 May, meet at 1.30pm Mottistone chalk pits (SZ419845); site: National Trust

Leader: Graham Sherratt, Tel: 07788 881408

Directions: Meet in the Jubilee Car Park, Lynch Lane, Brighstone.

A downland walk with uneven ground, steep slopes and chalk pits.

Aiming to see: Glanville Fritillary, Dingy and Grizzled Skipper.

Saturday 30 May, meet at 10.30am

Compton Chine (SZ351856); site: National Trust

Leader: Sue Davies, Tel: 07702 151312

Directions: Meet in the National Trust Afton Down chalk pit car park off the A305 Military Road. On the No. 12 bus route. Some steep steps and uneven ground. Note that if the weather is bad on the day, this walk may be rescheduled for Sunday 31 May. *Aiming to see:* Glanville Fritillary, Green Hairstreak, Small and Adonis Blue.

Saturday 11 July, meet at 1.15pm Kemphill Moor Copse, Havenstreet (SZ558910);

site: Forestry Commission

Leader: Kay and Colin Shaw, Tel: 07562 974343

Directions: Meet at Firestone Copse car park (OS National Grid reference above) as limited parking available at the site. Transport provided to Kemphill Moor Copse. This is a woodland ride walk.

Aiming to see: White Admiral, Silver-washed Fritillary and Purple Hairstreak.

Sunday 26 July, meet at 1.30pm Mount Joy, Carisbrooke (SZ496883)

Leader: Graham Sherratt, Tel: 07788 881408

Directions: Meet in Whitepit Lane, Carisbrooke, by the fish and chip shop near the junction with Elm Grove, and close to the junction with footpath N24, along which the walk up to Mount Joy proceeds. Some steps are encountered on the route. *Aiming to see:* Chalk Hill and Common Blue, Brown Argus and Wall Brown.

Saturday 1 August, meet at 1.30pm Tennyson Down, Totland (SZ324856), site: National Trust Leader: Kay and Colin Shaw, Tel: 07562 974343

Directions: Meet in the National Trust car park at the end of Highdown Lane, Totland. The Needles Breezer open top bus stops at the High Down Inn. This is a downland walk with some uneven ground. Note that if the weather is bad on the day, this walk may be rescheduled for Sunday 2 August.

Aiming to see: Chalk Hill Blue, Dark Green Fritillary and Jersey Tiger.

Note: the grid reference given is for the parking location/meeting point which is *not always* at the site of the walk's focus.

Kay Shaw, IoW Field Meetings Organiser



Butterfly Flight periods

Listed below are the 46 Hampshire and Isle of Wight butterfly species shown with their respective flight periods. Dark orange denotes peak flying season and monthly divisions are simplified into 4-weekly periods.

See how many you can tick off during 2020. And please keep records of your sightings and enter them into either iRecord www.brc.ac.uk/irecord or Living Record livingrecord.net as these can then be fed into our Branch records database.



Orange denotes main flight period; monthly divisions are simplified into 4-weekly periods

Butterfly Flight Periods

Jersey Tigers - winner of the Overseas category in the 2019 Branch Photographic Competition. Joseph Shaffery





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Newsletter Deadline

I am grateful to all who have contributed with words and images for this issue. It is always heartening to receive copy from new contributors. I want to continue to reflect the very deep interest in butterflies **and** moths, the work and events that support our branch, and encourage articles representative of the wider conservation interests throughout Hampshire and Isle of Wight. Please send your Lepidoptera-related newsworthy pieces and features to Kevin Freeborn... and you don't have to wait until August!

The deadline for the autumn Newsletter, edition no. 109, is 28 August 2020

Lepidoptera Tale Piece ... your story behind the picture

This Green Hairstreak image was taken on 12 May last year when my wife and I were taking our regular walk on Stockbridge Down from the lower car park to the earthwork right at the very top. I'd been photographing various butterflies on the way up (Small Heath, Small Copper, Holly Blue) so I had the camera ready to shoot. We had just sat down on the highest point of the earthwork when this Green Hairstreak landed right in front of me on a small dogwood. I couldn't believe my luck. It was a very bright sunny day just before 1pm, so the light was perfect and really brought out the colours of the butterfly. The photograph has not been re-touched in any way, it has simply been cropped to better show the butterfly.

Iain McIntosh

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







Butterfly Conservation is a charity registered in England & Wales (254937) and in Scotland (SCO39268). Registered Office: Manor Yard, East Lulworth, Wareham, Dorset BH20 5QP. Vat. No. 565 9070 16.

Lepidoptera Tale Piece ...

... for the full story, go to the inside back cover. Green Hairstreak – Iain McIntosh