



# Butterfly Reserves Walks 2019

## 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)

- 17 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.
- 1 May**      **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.
- 5 June**      **Meet 11.00am** Leaders: Jenny Mallett and Jayne Chapman – Tel: 01962 808400
- 21 June**      **Meet 11.00am** Leader: Pete Flood
- 3 July**      **Meet 11.00am** Leaders: Jenny Mallett and Jayne Chapman – Tel: 01962 808400
- 12 July**      **Meet 11.00am** Leaders: Jenny Mallett and Jayne Chapman – Tel: 01962 808400
- 19 July**      **Meet 11.00am** Leader: Pete Flood
- 7 August**      **Meet 11.00am** Leaders: Jenny Mallett and Jayne Chapman – Tel: 01962 808400
- 23 August**      **Meet 11.00am** Leaders: Jenny Mallett and Brian Fletcher – Tel: 01962 882746
- 4 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

- 28 May**      **Meet at 2.30pm** Leader: Steve Easter – Tel: 07770 823271
- 13 June**      **Meet at 2.30pm** Leader: Arthur Greenwood – Tel: 07920 803900
- 9 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.

- 20 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 was playing my usual bad game of tennis on a cold Saturday in January when my partner said at the changeover, "I suppose there is nothing for you to do with your butterfly-stuff at this time of year?". Nothing to do! I nearly strung him up with my racquet until I remembered we were on the same side and the match was still in the balance.

November saw a very successful **AGM and Members' Day** at the Littleton Memorial Hall. Our guest speaker was Pete Eeles who shared some remarkable new insights into the immature stages of different butterfly species. The successful re-introduction of the Large Blue proved the value of understanding all butterfly life-stages in detail and Pete's research has undoubtedly advanced the boundaries of our knowledge. His new book, *The Lifecycles of British and Irish Butterflies*, will describe all four stages of the 59 species that are either resident in Britain and Ireland or regular migrants. Visit <http://www.butterflylifecycles.com/> for details. It is a labour of love, packed with stunning photographs and highly recommended.

Last year marked the 50th anniversary of Butterfly Conservation and we were pleased to make two special awards to honour the occasion at the AGM. Kate Barrett gave a framed certificate to John Walton on behalf of the South Downs **Volunteer Ranger Service** for their outstanding contribution to the conservation of Lepidoptera in Hampshire. Roger Dobbs, a BC Trustee, also presented a framed certificate to **Andy and Linda Barker** for their wonderful contribution to the work of the Branch over many years and in so many ways. Long may it continue.



*Andy and Linda Barker  
with Roger Dobbs.  
Ashley Whitlock.*

Members were also treated to the world premiere of a short film about Magdalen Hill Down. It was beautifully made and I would urge all members to take a look at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z30Rpr3Jzhg>. And make sure you attend this year's meeting to avoid missing out: **Sunday 17th November**, no excuses!

The Members' Day is not usually a fund-raising opportunity for the Branch, quite the reverse, but this year was different. All told we raised £823 through donations, book and plant sales, the raffle, Double Your Impact matched funding and a remarkable £135 from all the coins and stamps that you donated. Who would have thought there was so much money in old change and used stamps? Thank you to everyone who contributed to this result.



*Glanville Fritillary. John Vetterlein.*

The photographic competition is a regular feature of Members' Day and once again we were treated to some fantastic images. Please visit the Branch website at <http://www.hantsiow-butterflies.org.uk/2018%20Photographic%20Competition.php> for the winning entries. The winner of the UK Butterflies category, John Vetterlein, hosted a lovely display of butterfly and moth photographs at the Harbour Lights Gallery in Ocean Village, Southampton, in February. The exhibition was eye-catching and John has already raised £2000 for BC through the sale of prints. These funds will once again go to BC's Double Your Impact appeal so well-done John and many thanks. It just shows what entering the Branch photographic competition can lead to!

I am pleased to announce that **Elaina Whittaker-Slark** has recently joined the Branch Main Committee. Elaina is a Lead Ranger with the South Downs National Park Authority and will help us develop a new conservation strategy for the Branch. Our priority butterflies and moths face many challenges and we are determined to build a more ambitious conservation agenda using all the knowledge and scientific tools in our 'partnership and volunteer tool-kit'. We have established a small working group to develop our plans and will share more details over time.

There is no doubt that we will want to invest in our **Species Champions** network, especially for our most threatened species. The Species Champion role was promoted by Head Office a few years ago and there are some great examples of individuals taking the initiative to help understand and share population trends and habitat concerns with relevant parties. If I mention the Duke of Burgundy and Grayling, for example, you will know whom I'm referring to! There is a lot more we can do in this area but much depends on people coming forward to say, "I can help". We would love to hear from anyone who wants to make a difference for butterfly communities in their area so please get in touch.

About volunteers, we really do need someone to step forward to take on the role of **Branch Treasurer**. My previous appeals have sadly met with no response whatsoever. Can I stress that the role has greatly reduced in complexity and the time commitment required following the transfer of all accounting responsibility for our butterfly reserves to Head Office. Head Office also undertakes all posting and accounting work, settles invoices and record receipts etc. But we do need someone to act as the lead point of contact with the Head Office Finance Team, to keep an eye on our cash flows and to manage the budgeting and reporting process. Please get in touch with me if you think you can help or know someone who can.

I was delighted to read Iain Outlaw's article in the last newsletter on notable moth records on the Isle of Wight. More moth articles please! It was also encouraging to receive confirmation of a new **Brown Hairstreak** colony towards the southern end of the Meon Valley. They may be émigrés from Noar Hill but any natural re-colonisation is very welcome news.

Thank you for your continued support of Butterfly Conservation as nothing would be possible without our members. In the meantime, my best wishes for the new season.

*Clive Wood, Chair*



## Events and Shows Programme 2019

Please check the Branch website <http://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

- 4 May** \***Butser Ancient Farm**  
Organiser – Fiona Haynes
- 27 May** #**Gilbert White Nature Festival, Selborne**  
10.30am to 5.00pm; Organiser – Clive Wood
- 2 June** #**Fleet Pond Wildlife Day, Fleet**  
11.00am to 3.00pm; Organiser – Arthur Greenwood
- 29 June** **Skippers and Admirals Cruise, Odiham** (see opposite page)  
10.30am to 1.00pm; Organiser – Kelvin Richards
- 2 August** #**Family Butterfly Day at Hillier Gardens, Romsey**  
Big Butterfly Count event  
Start 10.00am; Organiser – Linda Barker
- 7-11 August** #**Boomtown Festival, near Winchester**  
Organisers – Jayne Chapman and Kate Barrett
- 10 August** \*#**Ellingham Show, Somerley Estate, near Ringwood**  
Organiser – Bob Annell
- 7 September** #**Test Valley Wood Fair, Knightwood Leisure Centre, Chandlers Ford**  
10.00am to 5.00pm; Organiser – Clive Wood
- 15 September** #**Lymington Reserves Open Day, Normandy Lane, Lymington**  
Organiser – Bob Annell
- 13 October** #**Blackmoor Apple Day, near Liss**  
9.30am to 5.00pm; Organiser – Clive Wood
- 17 November** **Branch AGM at Littleton Village Hall**  
11.00am to 5.00pm; Organisers – Clive Wood and Mary Macmillan

*Clive Wood, Chair*



# Skippers and Admirals Cruise

**Yes, it's back...the 'field trip' with a difference...  
but travelling downstream this year.**

**Saturday 29 June 2019**

A 2½-hour cruise on the Basingstoke Canal SSSI

- Depart 10:30am from Colt Hill Wharf, Odiham (10 minutes from M3 junction 5)
- Return around 1:00pm
- Lunch on board included – fish & chips (alternatives available)
- Plus licensed bar with light refreshments, teas and coffees
- This year we're limiting to 36 seats – so book early!
- Relax, chat, enjoy the scenery...and spot some butterflies

Plus, optional afternoon walk around Odiham Common SSSI

£16/person for the cruise and lunch (maximum 36 places available). All profits go to the branch.

Contact Kelvin Richards for booking and further information,  
email: [junctionfive@gmail.com](mailto:junctionfive@gmail.com)  
visit: <http://www.hantsiow-butterflies.org.uk/events.php>  
for link to cruise web page.



*Kelvin Richards*



# Reserves News

## Magdalen Hill Down, Yew Hill, and Bentley Station Meadow

The weather was in our favour in 2018-19 meaning that we completed all but one of the planned work-parties with a few extra thrown in for good measure. As well as scrub bashing, we tried our hand at hedge-laying. This is an age-old practice of laying mature hedges to encourage new growth to sprout from the base of the cut (or pleached) stems. The hedge thickens up creating favourable habitat for small mammals and birds, whilst also providing a stock-proof barrier. These techniques evolved in farming communities centuries ago during the enclosure acts to contain stock. A local expert, Simon Farndon, came along for the day to teach us the necessary skills. We used traditional tools, stakes to lay the hedge and binders to weave along the top.



*Hedge-laying at  
Magdalen Hill Down.  
Jayne Chapman.*

At the branch AGM back in November 2018, I was asked to put together a presentation of a 'Life in the Day of a Reserves Officer'. With the help of a very talented young man, Matt Garrett, the following video of Magdalen Hill Down using drone footage was produced and is now available to view on YouTube – search for Butterfly Conservation Magdalen Hill Down: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z3ORpr3Jzhg>

## Butterflies

Magdalen Hill Down continues to be one of the top Hampshire sites to see butterfly species such as the Chalk Hill Blue and Brown Argus. If you have a look on the branch website <http://www.hantsiow-butterflies.org.uk> and click on the tab 'Transects' and scroll down to 25 year trends, you will find the excellent graphs compiled by Andy Barker showing long-term Hants and Isle of Wight trends compared with national trends (1994-2018). For some species, individual site trends are also shown (Andy & Linda Barker; Transect Co-ordinators).



*Brimstone. Rosemary Powell.*

The reserve is also a good place to spot some early spring butterflies, including the Brimstone, another winner at MHD in 2018, and Small Tortoiseshell.

## Grazing news

We were finally able to graze Bentley Station Meadow this year with sheep. This is great news on many fronts, not least because it is a prescription under our Stewardship agreement to do so. Rue Ekins and Richard Collingridge from Hillcroft Conservation Grazing supplied a small flock of 15 native-breed sheep. The meadow is quite remote, with tricky access, but again, we have been very lucky with volunteers stepping forward to check the sheep on a rota. The neighbouring Alice Holt Forest is very popular with dog walkers, posing a real risk of attacks on sheep, so daily checks are vital.



*'Steve the Shepherd' attending his flock. Jayne Chapman.*

Cattle and sheep were once again provided by the HLOWWT on our other Hampshire reserves, and this year we had 18 in-calf cows over the winter, grazing alongside our resident heifers, sheep, and small herd of semi-feral Exmoor ponies on Magdalen Hill Down. Two steers, a bull and 30+ sheep grazed Yew Hill, and a further flock of sheep kept the invasive species at bay at Morn Hill. The total livestock that we are responsible for daily, across four sites, add up to circa 120 animals. Do let me know if you would like to join the rota. Full training is given.

## New Volunteers

Huge thanks as always go to all of our volunteers who make the reserves what they are. Remember, we are always on the lookout for new volunteers to help with the following tasks:

- Checking livestock (year round);
- Helping at work-parties between October and March;
- Ragwort pulling in July;
- Attending events during the summer months to promote the work we do;
- Running moth traps on our Hampshire Reserves;
- Basic tool maintenance (I have a container and under-cover facilities at my office outside Alresford);
- Leading work-parties.



If you are interested in finding out further details about any of the above, or you would like to be added to our email list, please contact me (details below).

We look forward to welcoming old and new members alike to our reserves walks over the summer months, including a walk on 1st May to see the Cowslips, which is spectacular and not to be missed.

*Cowslips. Rosemary Powell.*

**Jayne Chapman, Senior Reserves Officer**  
Email: [jchapman@butterfly-conservation.org](mailto:jchapman@butterfly-conservation.org)  
Direct dial: 01962 808400



## Looking at Yew Hill

In common with the other Hampshire reserves, Yew Hill and Hilltop are grazed during the autumn and winter months to keep them in good condition for butterflies. The well-being of the grazing animals relies on a network of local volunteers, referred to as “lookers”, who visit the reserve daily. Each visit is followed by a brief blog entry that enables both the reserves manager and the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust staff, who provide the livestock, to see that all is well and pick up on any small problems, such as a limping ewe or a broken fence post. Any more pressing issues are reported by telephone immediately.



*Red Tags. Rupert Broadway.*

As someone who has carried out these duties for a year or so, I very much enjoy my Friday visits, particularly to Hilltop, which isn't open to the public. For much of the winter, Hilltop has been grazed by 18 ewes, who were subsequently moved onto the main reserve, to join a couple of British White steers who had been there for some time and looked a bit put out by the invasion. Most of the ewes take little notice of their visitors, with the exception of “Red Tags” who has been particularly curious and welcoming. The sheep were replaced on Hilltop by a large Sussex bull named Captain and a couple more steers. Despite his intimidating appearance, Captain has proved to be something of a pussycat, although the volunteers have had to be mindful of the health and safety training they are given on the etiquette around bulls, whose behaviour can be unpredictable.

A particular bonus for many of us has been the opportunity to enjoy the wild-life at the reserve in the autumn and winter months and to record highlights and photos in our blog entries. The butterflies diminish as the autumn days get shorter, with just the odd Red Admiral and Brimstone on sunny days, but bird interest is maintained throughout the winter months. Autumn sees summer migrants such as Spotted Flycatcher and Willow Warbler passing through on their way south. The song of the Skylark and call of the Yellowhammer are replaced by chattering Fieldfare and cheeping Redwing descending on the berry harvest in the hedgerows to join over-wintering Blackcap and Chiffchaff. Meadow Pipit and Stonechat feed in the rough grass. As the woodland at the edge of Hilltop loses its leaves, smaller residents such as Goldcrest, Nuthatch and Marsh Tit are easier to view, and a drumming woodpecker signals the coming spring. Shy Roe Deer graze the surrounding fields while Buzzard, Red Kite and the occasional Raven patrol the skies above.



*Captain and two companions. Rupert Broadway.*

As the days lengthen, we look forward to the emergence of the hibernators and the first spring butterflies, grateful for the contribution of the grazing animals in keeping the habitat in such good condition for them.

***Rupert Broadway***



## Re-introducing the Marsh Fritillary to north-east Hampshire

After all the hard work spent caring for thousands of Marsh Fritillary larvae over the summer it was a relief to see the remaining captive stock head into their winter hibernacula webs in September. Plants can be refreshed and sorted out and repairs made to the cages or breeding tubs. Predator activity falls away and long daily checks can be replaced with shorter weekly inspections.

The winter was relatively incident-free with only one fresh incursion into the breeding cages by a mammalian vandal of some description or other. The first few larvae to emerge from hibernation were seen on the 4th January, a record for the project, but within a week a massive aggregation was photographed basking on dry Molinia grasses. The larvae continued to emerge as the winter cold receded, initially basking on their webs before venturing onto dry Devil's-bit Scabious leaves or the frames of the breeding cages. Warmth is a precious resource in January and February for a small caterpillar.



*Emergent Marsh Fritillary larvae, January 2019. Andy Barker.*

All the captive larvae will have been released into the wild by the time this newsletter reaches your doormat. This will mark the end of the breeding phase of the project. Hopes will rest on a successful adult emergence and mating season. Every year we hope for good butterfly weather, but would it be too much to ask for especially good weather in north-east Hampshire this year? Fingers crossed.

***Clive Wood, Hampshire Marsh Fritillary Action Group***



# Butterfly Transects 2019

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](mailto:lindabarker4@btinternet.com)**

- 1 Itchen Valley Country Park** on the edge of Southampton, 1.1km/0.7 mile in length, in an area of mature woodland.
- 2 Browdown 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.
- 3 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.
- 4 Yew Hill** near Winchester, one of Butterfly Conservation's reserves, chalk downland, 1.2km/0.8 mile (plus an extension to the original transect 0.9km/0.6 mile).

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

- 5 Foxlease Meadows North** on MoD land, managed by HLOWWT, near Junction 4a of M3. A rather strenuous walk (4.4km/2.7 miles round trip) over uneven terrain, damp in some parts and there may be cattle present.
- 6 College Copse** HLOWWT 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/1.25 miles 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. A round trip from the station car park of 3.1km/1.9 miles.
- 8 Yateley Common**, where three transects were established in 2018. These are close together and could be walked the same day by one person. The total length is 4.3km/2.7 miles. 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.

Following a review in 2018 a number of squares have been identified that currently need owners. These include one in the Shawford/Twyford area and one at Portsea Island, where it looks as if routes can easily be established.

A full list can be found on the Branch website

**<http://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](mailto:jackyna7579@gmail.com)** and I will be happy to provide further information and support.

***Jacky Adams***



*Marbled Whites. Rosemary Powell.*

## Go Wild In Winchester!

Hampshire is leading the way with a new education project, based at Magdalen Hill Down. The first of its kind for Butterfly Conservation, Wild In Winchester aims to get children out of the school environment and onto our beautiful nature reserve to learn about chalk downland and why it's so important for Lepidoptera. We run workshops which encourage children to get hands-on with the natural world by handling moths, hunting for bugs, examining plants and searching for caterpillars and chrysalises.

The benefits of children spending time in nature are well documented. We know that it contributes significantly to improving pupil's social, personal and emotional development. The disconnect between children and nature has increased dramatically in recent years, with children spending more time looking at screens than playing outdoors. A recent study found that 75% of children spend less time outdoors than prisoners, but it's also known that just one day spent learning outside can spark an interest in nature.



We have had the pleasure of seeing first-hand the benefits of spending time outside, in nature. One particularly significant moment last summer was watching a group of teenagers with mental health issues transform in response to one of our workshops. They started out very withdrawn and disengaged, but once they got onto the reserve they were animatedly hunting out Cinnabar moth caterpillars, photographing Chalk Hill Blue butterflies and gently picking up Six-spot Burnet moths. It was magical to watch them respond so positively to their surroundings.

Thanks to funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund and a series of generous donations by Ken Bailey into the June Bailey Education Fund, last year we introduced around 500 children to Magdalen Hill Down. This year we are hoping to go even further but this depends upon finding more willing volunteers, so we need your assistance. If you would like to help with the Wild In Winchester project, then please contact me using either of the methods below.

**Kate Barrett**

*Email: [kbarrett@butterfly-conservation.org](mailto:kbarrett@butterfly-conservation.org)*

*Tel: 01962 735375*





If you are lucky and land on one of the Short Cut stars, then next turn move in the arrowed direction according to the throw of the die with each circle counting as one space.

If you are unlucky enough to land on the orange stars in spaces 9 and 12 or 90 and 93, then next turn move in the arrowed direction according to the throw of the die with each circle counting as one space. Whether going clockwise or anticlockwise, when you have completed the detour move on to the next square on the numbered route.



## My Butterfly Reserve

Over recent years I've been creating my own butterfly and wildlife haven in North Baddesley, south Hampshire. Way back in the past, the fields that make up my reserve were part of a working farm but when I bought the land, 32 years ago, it was horse paddocks. Approximately 10 years ago, when the land was no longer used for horses, I began to let it go slowly back to nature. As it did so, I started to notice a lot of butterflies. At the time I was not really interested in butterflies, although I did appreciate their beauty. After a few years of seeing the numbers and species increase, I thought there must be something going for the site and so I decided to look into it. My partner bought me Butterfly Conservation Membership for Christmas 2015 and it has taken off from there.

The land is split roughly into two halves with mature oak, sallow and other trees all along one side. The bottom half was seeded with a flower mix approximately 25 years ago. It now has amongst a lot of other nectar flowers, the largest area of meadow thistles I have ever seen anywhere. The top half is damp and was covered with thick rush. With the advice of Butterfly Conservation and the help of Hazelwood Landscapes, I have started to clear large areas of the rush. The cleared areas have been planted and seeded. Amongst other plants, lots of Sorrel has appeared and with this, an increasingly large colony of Small Copper has moved in. We saw 15 in just a 30 minute period at the end of August 2018.



Throughout 2018 we saw 29 different species of butterfly here, including Purple Emperor and Purple Hairstreak. I think both species were already here but I had not noticed them before. Some species are here in surprisingly large numbers, for instance 80 Orange-tips seen in an afternoon. One very surprising new sighting was a Grayling. This was likely to be a one off, with the Grayling passing through, but you never know.

In addition to the butterflies there are also a lot of moths. The day-time flying moths spotted here include Mother Shipton, which is one of my favourites. I do not have a moth trap so I would welcome anyone who has one and would be interested in setting it up here. There are also lots of corrugated panels laid in various areas which when lifted have Adder, Grass Snake, Common Lizard, Slow Worm and various mice underneath. Various spiders are resident here including the Wolf Spider and Crab Spider, and also dragonflies and hornets.



*The former horse paddocks, now a wildlife haven in North Baddesley.  
Kevin Ross.*

A lot of people came to visit the reserve in 2018. I am very happy for anyone to visit that has an interest in butterflies and moths, or wildlife in general. I can show you around and then you can explore on your own if you wish.

I look forward to seeing you.

**Kevin Ross**

Email: [spark.ky@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:spark.ky@hotmail.co.uk)

Tel: 02380 733995



## Wildlife Gardening: Create a Pond

No matter how big or small your garden the most valuable thing you can do, from the point of view of increasing biodiversity, is to provide water. This could be in the form of a pond, a water feature or even a boggy patch. There is no need to despair if you have only a small backyard: upturned dustbin lids or half barrels, buckets, washing-up bowls, decorative pots or any other type of container can be used to make a mini habitat providing water. It could be free standing or sunk into the ground, but is best if surrounded by vegetation to provide some shade and hiding places. Fill with rain water, put in some gravel and plants of an appropriate size and see what happens. A more ambitious pond can be made by digging a hole of the desired size and depth and lining it with butyl. It should be about 2ft (60cm) deep in the middle with a shallow sloping end allowing access to wildlife. Some areas should only be an inch (2cm-3cm) deep to facilitate bathing and encourage frogs and dragonflies to breed. The edges of the liner can be buried in the surrounding grass, or covered with stones and disguised by plantings. A pond sited in full sun attracts more wildlife, but newts, for instance, prefer shade.



Larger ponds should have submerged oxygenating plants (preferably native, e.g. Rigid Hornwort (*Ceratophyllum demersum*) to keep the water clear, and a good covering of both floating and native marginal plants is important. Think of native plants such as Water Forget-me-not (*Myosotis scorpioides*), Marsh-marigold (*Caltha palustris*), Brooklime (*Veronica beccabunga*) and Lesser Spearwort (*Ranunculus flammula*), amongst others, which will provide shelter and breeding habitat for wildlife. Dragonflies and newts need submerged plants for their larvae and when emerging both dragonflies and damselflies need a vertical surface, such as reed or iris, to climb up and rest on while they dry off their wings. They are unable to do this on a flat surface. Birds are not the only creatures that will be attracted to the water for drinking and bathing. The commonest visitors to a small pond in my garden during last year's drought were wasps, and hedgehogs made good use of it in the evenings. Many other small aquatic creatures including beetles, water striders, pond skaters, water boatmen, pond snails, etc. will live in your pond. Toads and frogs may breed, with toads preferring deeper water than frogs. Pollinators such as bumblebees, hoverflies and butterflies will visit the flowering plants. However, avoid stocking the pond with fish if you wish to attract other wildlife.

The pond will be a hive of activity all summer and help to enrich the whole of your garden, immeasurably enhancing its value as a wildlife habitat.

**Juliet Bloss**





## The Small Tortoiseshell

The Small Tortoiseshell was the butterfly that ignited my love affair with butterflies as a child. My dad had planted Buddleia around the perimeter of the garden, and the spiky blooms always attracted a host of Small Tortoiseshells in the summer months. They were commonplace, almost expected, and it was a visit from a Peacock or a Red Admiral that truly piqued our interest.

Sadly, this once ubiquitous butterfly is now much less common, and in our recent summer I can count the sightings I made on the fingers of one hand. Once, on a walk in the countryside with my father, I espied a basking butterfly on the path ahead of us. I remember hoping it might be a butterfly I hadn't seen before; that I'd be able to put a new tick in my *I-Spy Butterflies* book. But on approaching the butterfly, my dad announced that it was 'only a Small Tortoiseshell'. And I still recall now a palpable sense of disappointment.



*Small Tortoiseshell paintings.*  
Rosemary Powell

Our perception of a thing's beauty is so often related to its scarcity, and abundance conversely detracts from our appreciation of something's beauty. But the Small Tortoiseshell is not only a very attractive butterfly, it's also a butterfly with personality; a vibrant, feisty butterfly whose bright colours manifest a zest for life.

The Small Tortoiseshell's decline continues to baffle lepidopterists. The butterfly's food plant is the Common Nettle, which thrives on soils enriched by fertilisers and vehicle emissions. Unlike many other butterflies, the Small Tortoiseshell would appear to have the resilience to prosper in habitats subject to anthropogenic pressures. Its status was never a cause for concern and its populations weren't monitored until the early 2000s.



Some scientists have attributed the current plight of the Small Tortoiseshell to the arrival in England of *Sturmia Bella*, a parasitic fly that targets the larvae of the butterfly. But this explanation cannot be the whole story as the Small Tortoiseshell is also declining in parts of the country as yet uncolonized by *Sturmia Bella*.

Butterflies are known to be highly sensitive to changes in the environment and climate change may be having a subtle effect on the Small Tortoiseshell's life-cycle. The insect spends the winter in hibernation as an adult butterfly, emerging in the spring to mate and foster a new generation of Small Tortoiseshells. But milder, wetter winters are disrupting the butterfly's torpid state, causing it to become active when it should be sleeping and to consume reserves of energy with a consequent reduction in its survival rates.

An adult Small Tortoiseshell would often hibernate in a corner of my bedroom when I was a small child. The upstairs rooms of our house were unheated and my room provided a safe sanctuary for the overwintering butterfly. Come the warmer days of March, the butterfly would wake up and I'd find it beating its wings against the window pane, demanding to be released. But our centrally-heated homes have unfortunately destroyed this wonderful relationship between ourselves and the hibernating butterfly.

These days a nectaring Small Tortoiseshell on my Buddleia bush is the cause of much joy. This beautiful butterfly is much missed and its absence represents for me a disconnection with my childhood and all its associated memories. But I retain faith that it will bounce back, and will, as always, be scanning the blossom-clad brambles for tortoiseshell colours next summer on my country walks.

***Stuart Read***



# Hampshire Walks 2019

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.**

**Sunday 28 April**, meet at 10.30am

**Hawkhill Inclosure, New Forest (SU350019)**, site: Forestry Commission

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

*Directions:* Meet in the FC Hawkhill Inclosure car park, just west of Hatchet Pond between Brockenhurst and Beaulieu. Bring a packed lunch.

*Aiming to see:* Emperor moth.

**Sunday 5 May**, meet at 10.30am

**Little Butser Hill/Pillow Mound (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). The walk from the car park to the Duke colony and around the Little Butser site is very steep in places. Bring a packed lunch as we aim to visit a different part of Butser in the afternoon.

*Aiming to see:* Duke of Burgundy, Grizzled Skipper, and, hopefully, hear (if not see) a Cuckoo.

**Thursday 9 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:* Pearl-bordered Fritillary and Duke of Burgundy.

**Sunday 12 May**, meet at 10.30am

**Pignal and Ramnor Inclosures, New Forest (SU314036)**,

site: Forestry Commission

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

*Directions:* Meet in the FC Standing Hat car park, which is just over ½ mile east of the Balmer Lawn Hotel, Brockenhurst. Bring a packed lunch.

*Aiming to see:* Pearl-bordered Fritillary in a walk to one of its largest New Forest colonies and, hopefully, hear (if not see) a Cuckoo.

**Thursday 16 May**, meet at 10.30am

**West Wood, Farley Mount (SU420292)**, site: Forestry Commission

*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.

*Aiming to see:* Pearl-bordered Fritillary and Duke of Burgundy.

**Saturday 18 May**, 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 and Duke of Burgundy.

**Wednesday 22 May**, meet at 10.30am

**Martin Down NNR (SU036200)**, site: Natural England

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

*Directions:* Meet in the nature reserve's main car park, off the A354, 11 miles south-west of Salisbury. This national nature reserve is a large tract of open chalk grassland with many species of wildflowers, butterflies and moths. Bring lunch. We may well look for Duke of Burgundy near to the reserve's other car park in the afternoon.

*Aiming to see:* Marsh Fritillary, Adonis Blue and Small Blue.

**Thursday 30 May**, meet at 10.30am

**Coulter's Dean, Queen Elizabeth Country Park (SU733198)**,

site: HLOWWT

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

*Directions:* Meet in the country park car park, off Kiln Lane, about ½ mile south-west of Buriton. Coulter's Dean is a small reserve within the country park with excellent displays of Cowslips.

*Aiming to see:* Green Hairstreak, Dingy and Grizzled Skipper and various orchid species.

**Sunday 2 June**, 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. Good invertebrates and birdlife. Bring a packed lunch.

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

**Thursday 6 June**, meet at 10.30am

**Portsdown Hill (SU647066)**, site: Portsmouth City Council

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

*Directions:* Meet at James Callaghan roundabout car park, off B2177, west of Fort Widley.

*Aiming to see:* Small and Common Blues, and spectacular views over The Solent.

**Friday 7 June**, meet at 10.30am

**Old Burghclere Lime Quarry (SU469578)**, site: HLOWWT

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.

**Saturday 22 June**, meet at 10.30am

**Butser Hill NNR (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 walk involves very steep slopes in places. Bring a packed lunch as we aim to visit a different part of Butser in the afternoon.

*Aiming to see:* Dark Green Fritillary, Marbled White and various orchid species.

**Sunday 23 June**, meet at 10.30am

**Broxhead Common (SU806369)**, site: Hampshire County Council

*Leader:* Arthur Greenwood, Tel: 01428 604730; Mobile: 07920 803900

*Directions:* Meet in the cricket ground car park off Broxhead Farm Road, B3004, 1 mile north of Bordon.

*Aiming to see:* Silver-studded Blue.

**Tuesday 2 July**, meet at 09.30am – the Purple Emperor experience

**Havant Thicket (SU723102)**, site: Forestry Commission

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

*Directions:* Havant Thicket car park, signed 'Forest of Bere' off B2149, north of Havant and west of Rowland's Castle.

*Aiming to see:* Purple Emperor.

**Saturday 6 July**, meet at 09.30am

**Butter Wood (SU718514)**, site: HLOWWT

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

*Directions:* Meet in the car park of the Fox and Goose, Greywell, and the nice opportunity to take refreshment at the pub afterwards.

*Aiming to see:* White-letter Hairstreak, Purple Emperor and Purple Hairstreak.

**Monday 8 July**, meet at 09.30am

**Creech Wood, Forest of Bere (SU648112)**, site: Forestry Commission

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

*Directions:* Meet in the FC car park, off Bunkers Hill, approx. ½ mile south-west of Denmead.

*Aiming to see:* Purple Emperor and, possibly, Dark Green Fritillary.

**Thursday 11 July**, meet at 09.30am

– Butterfly Safari with Romsey Naturalists

**West Wood, Crab Wood and Pitt Down (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.

**Sunday 14 July**, meet at 09.30am

**West Walk, Forest of Bere (SU596123)**, site: Forestry Commission

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

*Directions:* Meet in the FC car park (charges apply), off Hundred Acres Road, which is north off B2177 at Wickham Common. Bring a packed lunch.

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

**Wednesday 17 July**, meet at 09.30am

**Holt Down and Head Down, Queen Elizabeth Country Park (SU733198)**, site: Forestry Commission

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

*Directions:* Meet in the country park car park, off Kiln Lane, about ½ mile south-west of Buriton. These are neighbouring sites, both with excellent beech and mixed woodland. Bring a packed lunch as Holt Down will be visited in the morning followed by an afternoon on Head Down.

*Aiming to see:* Purple Emperor, Purple Hairstreak, and Silver-washed Fritillary.

**Sunday 11 August**, meet at 10.30am

**Broughton Down (SU296325)**, site: HIOWWT

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

*Directions:* 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:* Silver-spotted Skipper and Dark Green Fritillary.

**Thursday 15 August**, meet at 10.30am

**Shawford to St Catherine's Hill (SU470251)**, site: HIOWWT

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

*Directions:* Meet in the Shawford Down nature reserve car park, just west of Shawford Station. This is a lengthier than usual walk, firstly along the towpath of the Itchen Navigation northwards from Shawford and then around St Catherine's Hill, with grand views over Winchester. Bring a packed lunch.

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

**Sunday 18 August**, meet at 10.30am

**Ramsdean Down, Butser Hill NNR (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). Silver-spotted Skipper is known to be at this site but may prove to be somewhat elusive. Bring a packed lunch.

*Aiming to see:* Silver-spotted Skipper.

**Thursday 22 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.

**Sunday 25 August**, meet at 10.30am  
**Noar Hill (SU737321)**, site: HIOWWT

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

*Directions:* Meet in the lane south from Selborne by Charity Farm, where there is limited verge parking only: please park considerately. Bring a packed lunch.

*Aiming to see:* Brown Hairstreak, Brown Argus and Clouded Yellow.

**Sunday 1 September**, meet at 10.30am  
**Beacon Hill NNR (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.

**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](mailto:ashleyrwhitlock@virginmedia.com)*



*Purple Emperor. Rosemary Powell*



# Isle of Wight walks 2019

**Friday 31 May**, meet at 10.30am  
**Compton Chine** (SZ367854); 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 so wear sturdy footwear. Note that if the weather is bad on the day, this walk may be rescheduled for Saturday 1 June. Please contact Sue for further information.

*Aiming to see:* Glanville Fritillary, Wall, Green Hairstreak, Small and Adonis Blue.

**Sunday 23 June**, meet at 10.30am  
**Bouldnor Forest** (SZ385902); site: HIOWWT and Forestry Commission  
Led by Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust

*Leader:* Jamie Marsh, Tel: 01983 760018; Email: Jamie.Marsh@hiwwt.org.uk

*Directions:* From the A3054 just east of Hill Place Lane, Bouldnor, take the concrete forest track on the north side of the road signed Bouldnor Forest (FC sign with WT sign underneath; postcode PO41 0AB). The green barrier is unlocked, but please close behind you. Follow the track for about one-third of a mile, bearing right at the top of the straight section, until you come to the parking area on the right-hand side beside the Bouldnor Forest Centre buildings.

*Aiming to see:* Green Hairstreak, White Admiral, Dark Green Fritillary, Wall, Ringlet.

**Saturday 13 July**, meet at 1.30pm  
**Kemphill Moor Copse, Havenstreet** (SZ569896);  
site: Forestry Commission

*Leader:* Kay and Colin Shaw, Tel: 01983 882873, or 07562 974343

*Directions:* Meet at Firestone Copse car park (SZ558910) as limited parking available at the site. Transport provided to Kemphill Moor Copse. Please contact Kay for further information. This is a woodland ride walk.

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

**Sunday 4 August**, meet at 10.30am  
**Arreton Down** (SZ533873), site: HIOWWT  
Led by Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust

*Leader:* Jamie Marsh, Tel: 01983 760018; Email: Jamie.Marsh@hiwwt.org.uk

*Directions:* Meet in the car park at the entrance to Downend Chalk Pit, off Downend Road. There are some steep slopes on this walk.

*Aiming to see:* Chalk Hill Blue, Small Heath.

**Caroline Dudley, IoW Field Trips Organiser**





## Branch Photographic Competition Results

Another bumper selection of photographs at the 2018 Branch AGM, and well done and thank you to all those that entered to make it such a well-supported competition. It's interesting to note that the overall winner is of a caterpillar for the second year running. All the winning entries can still be viewed on the branch website:

<http://www.hantsiow-butterflies.org.uk/2018%20Photographic%20Competition.php>

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 John Vetterlein – Glanville Fritillary
- 2nd John Stacey – Silver-spotted Skipper
- 3rd Sharron Broadway – White-letter Hairstreak

### UK Moths

- 1st Tony Rackham – Merveille du Jour
- 2nd Brian Cartwright – Hummingbird Hawkmoth
- 3rd John Vetterlein – Plume Moth

### Immature stages

- 1st Gillian Pullinger – Emperor Moth\*
- 2nd John Stacey – Brown-tail Moth
- 3rd Tony Rackham – December Moth

### Overseas butterflies and moths

- 1st Ken Bailey – Southern Marbled Skipper
- 2nd Francis Plowman – Purple Emperor
- 3rd Joint third places:
  - Ken Bailey – Azure Chalk Hill Blue
  - Chris Web – Small Copper

### First time entrants

- 1st Joint first places:
  - Linda Kent – Essex Skipper
  - Debbie Hart - Swallowtail
- 3rd Joint third places:
  - Linda Kent – Brown Argus
  - Steve Lovick – Large Skipper

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

*Merveille du Jour. Tony Rackham.*



## Useful Contacts

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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 news-worthy pieces and features to Kevin Freeborn... and you don't have to wait until August!

**The deadline for the autumn Newsletter, edition no. 107, is 27 August 2019**

### Lepidoptera Tale Piece... your story behind the picture

This gripping and colourful action shot of an Emperor Moth caterpillar and an ant was taken by Gillian Pullinger and was the deserved overall winner in the Branch Photographic Competition, as well as winner of the Immature Stages category. Gillian took the photograph on Yateley Common. She recalls 'I spotted the colourful caterpillar, and was trying to take some close-up photos of it when an ant appeared and seemed to start attacking it. The caterpillar escaped into the heather, and seemed OK'.

*Kevin Freeborn*

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



Hampshire  
County Council



Portsmouth  
CITY COUNCIL

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# *Lepidoptera Tale Piece ...*



*...for the full story, go to the inside back cover.*

*Emperor Moth caterpillar – Gillian Pullinger*