



February 2023

Dear Branch Member,

Please see the latest news from Hampshire and Isle of Wight Branch, below...

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2023 AGM and Members Day

I'm pleased to confirm that **this year's AGM and Members' Day will be held at Littleton Village Hall on Sunday 5th November**. While the full agenda will be made available in due course, I'm very pleased to announce that Mike Slater, Chair of the Warwickshire branch of Butterfly Conservation, will be speaking. Mike's book on 'Butterfly Conservation – the Warwickshire Approach' has just been published and is [available from the NHBS bookstore, here](#).



Pete Eeles (Branch Chair)

2022 AGM Photo competition

The branch annual photo competition took place at last November's AGM. The standard of images submitted was phenomenal, and there were many more wonderful photos on display on the day. Thanks again to all who took part, and we look forward to

another competition next November. Only a few weeks now until the season starts once more - get your cameras ready...

Here's a taster, showing a selection of the winning images. (More coverage in the Spring Newsletter.)



Lee Hurrell (Member, Conservation & Records Sub-committee)

Branch Vacancy

Our branch is run entirely by volunteers, and we have an opportunity for a member to take on a vacant role. If you are at all interested in helping the branch continue to go from strength to strength, then we would be delighted to hear from you! Please contact Pete Eeles in the first instance at pete@eeles.net or by calling 07796 331061.

The purpose of the **Events Coordinator** role is to plan the branch's annual programme of events and ensure that all events are resourced with a leader, volunteers and equipment. We are invited to attend various events each year, and we also set up our own (such as a New Members' Day). This is also a Main Committee appointment that will give you insight into the inner-workings of the branch and Butterfly Conservation, allowing you to maximise your impact!

Pete Eeles (Branch Chair)

Events Notice

The Hampshire and Isle of Wight Branch is seeking to build an events team of volunteers to encourage engagement with our conservation work and share interest in butterflies, moths and their habitats by leading or helping to staff events at which we receive requests for representation.

Representation at such events engages with the public, helps share out work and can help recruit new members. The events are great fun and very social, it's an absolute pleasure to talk to people about butterfly and moth conservation, species and habitats and hear the connections they have to them.

Volunteers take responsibility for collection and return of any equipment which can generally fit into a moderate size family car, set up and liaison with the organiser where applicable.

We would also like to hear from people who would like to attend an event in their local area where perhaps there is not a Butterfly Conservation presence but where this would be very appropriate. In this case we could provide equipment and resources you might need.



Our planned events for 2023:

Wild and Wonderful Day at Whitchurch Silk Mill

Wednesday, 5th April

Sholing Valley Spring Fayre	Saturday, 13th May
New Members / Members Day	Saturday, 5th August
Blackmoor Apple Day	Sunday, 8th October
Test Valley Wood Fair	To be confirmed
AGM and Members Day	Sunday, 5th November

Please let us know by emailing Membership Secretary Suzie Brown hisuziex@yahoo.co.uk



All images © Suzie Brown

Information sub-committee on Events and Volunteers

Transect News

A total of 179 butterfly transects were walked in Hampshire and Isle of Wight during 2022, comprising 172 full transects and seven single species transects. More than 200,000 butterflies were recorded on transect, and almost 3,000 moths. These are impressive tallies, reflecting the enthusiasm and dedication of our volunteers, so many thanks to all involved!

Full results and analysis will appear in the 2022 Annual Butterfly Report, which should be available from early April 2023, but if you'd like an early look at the data, a tabulation of 2022 trends for all butterfly species is available [here, on the Branch website](#). If you'd like to see the long-term (25-year) trends, in graphical form, [they're available here](#).

Andy Barker (Branch Transect Co-ordinator)

Isle of Wight Group update

We have our first event of the year on Friday and Saturday 17-18 February (3-8pm each day) when I will be attending [the Isle of Wight Dark Skies Festival](#) at Isle of Wight Pearl, Military Road, Brighstone.

Astronomy, nocturnal wildlife and insects, photography, science, art, heritage, and culture will be explored within the festival, supporting the Isle of Wight's application to become a 'Dark Skies Park'. I will be on hand to talk about moths, in my role as County Moth Recorder, and I will have traps on display. If the weather is good, I might even run a trap! A great opportunity to come and find out more about moths and moth recording.

Jim Baldwin (County Moth Recorder (Isle of Wight) / Isle of Wight Group Leader)

Farewell to Steve Lockett

It is with mixed feelings that we say goodbye to Steve Lockett, our Volunteer Warden at Bentley Station Meadow. I've visited the reserve twice in the last few weeks, and it's looking really promising for the year ahead. It was a pleasure to meet volunteers at a recent work party, where an area adjacent to a meadow was being cleared of scrub.



On behalf of the Branch, I would like to wish Steve the very best in his new job, where he will be able to use his knowledge and skills to further develop a nature reserve in Warwickshire – an amazing opportunity! If anyone is interested in considering the now-vacant role at BSM, then [you can find more details here](#).

See Steve's final BSM Report, below.

Pete Eeles (Branch Chair)

Reserves & volunteering News

Magdalen Hill Down and Yew Hill



The new tools bought with the grant, in use; and some of our volunteers chilling

The year started with a generous grant of £1,000 for new tools from the South Downs National Park. Armed with brand new loppers, saws and rakes, the Reserves Volunteer Team were straight in action clearing scrub, footpaths and letting light back into the

education area. The volunteers are continuing their impressive scrub clearance work each week at Magdalen Hill Down. The Livestock Lookers have also been amazing showing their dedication to checking on the animals in the worst of weather, breaking thick ice from the troughs when it's been freezing, enduring heavy rainstorms, helping me at the last minute. Each reserve comes with an awesome team of volunteers so thank you all!



Maintaining access to water, for the livestock in frozen conditions

At Magdalen, two new troughs are being installed with funding from the *Farming in Protected Landscapes* grant. There will be a new trough at the bottom of the Allotment field so we can graze each compartment separately. A second trough in Extension field will allow periodic grazing of the small remnant of chalk grassland that's hidden and tucked away at the bottom of the field. This is part of the transect route and permissive footpath.

Yew Hill has continued to be managed by volunteers who meet fortnightly clearing scrub and restoring the Southern Water meadow. Hampshire Conservation Volunteers are spending a weekend doing scrub clearance so I hope after this winter you can see much improvement.

Reserve Volunteer Dates -

- Magdalen Hill Down - Every Monday, last one 20th March.
- Yew Hill – Fortnightly every Thursday 9th Feb, 23rd Feb, 9th March

We always welcome more helping hands. There will be occasional volunteer days over summer too so if you can spare a day, please do come and join us. The days are sociable, provide good exercise and fresh air, are great for health and wellbeing and very rewarding. Email fscully@butterfly-conservation.org for details.

Butterfly Walks -

- **Monday 5th June, 2-3.30pm, MHD.** Looking out for the dancing jewel Green Hairstreak, Small Blues and the iconic Adonis Blue. Joined by birder and botanist Dave and Anna Stewart.
- **Friday 16th June, 11am-1pm, YH.** A walk looking at chalk grassland butterflies, orchids and other wildflowers. Led by naturalist Rupert Broadway.
- **Wednesday 19th July, 11am-1pm, MHD.** Enjoy a walk through glorious wildflower meadows in search of Marbled Whites, Small Tortoiseshells and chalk grassland specialists. Joined by birder and botanist Dave and Anna Stewart.
- **Friday 4th August, 11am-1pm, YH.** In search of the Chalk Hill Blue, and other butterflies on this little reserve packed with wildflowers. Led by naturalist Rupert Broadway.
- **Friday 18th August, 11am-1pm, MHD.** Hoping for sunshine, Chalk Hill Blues and the stunning Adonis Blue. With birder and botanist David and Anna Stewart.

MHD - meet and park at the top of the track from the stone masons next to the cemetery entrance off Alresford Road.

YH – Meet at the bottom of Old Kennel Lane roadside, junction with Mill Lane, Oliver's Battery.

These are great walks for learning and sharing butterfly and day-flying moth identification and celebrating our magnificent wildflower meadows, a haven for wildlife. Please email to book a place fscully@butterfly-conservation.org

News

The cycleway along the A31, next to Magdalen Hill Down, has been re-routed through the scrape that was originally designed for the Striped Lychnis moth, and Small Blue butterfly. A chalk bank has been created from the spoil which will be managed for these species. It will allow better access and ensure the grassland verges and bank are managed appropriately. It has been entered into a five-year management plan in collaboration with the South Downs National Park. The second scrape (alongside Kings Lane) will be managed by the Magdalen Monday volunteer team.

Request for help running moth traps

Are there any moth trappers out there who can spare time to run a moth trap at Magdalen Hill Down this summer? We would really like to keep records updated. Tony Davis from Butterfly Conservation has helped previously, but has too many commitments - it would be hugely appreciated if someone could give their time and expertise to help with our moth records. Please do get in touch. Thank you!

Looking forward to the coming butterfly season and seeing what 2023 brings.

Fiona Scully (BC South Downs Landscape Project Officer)

Bentley Station Meadow Reserve update

The last volunteer session of the winter saw us able to complete clearing a clump of tangled bramble and thorn which has really opened up the North Meadow at the station end of the reserve. A great turnout boosted no doubt by the chance to meet Paul Tinsley-Marshall, South East Region Conservation Manager and to catch up with Pete Eeles, newly (re-)elected Branch Chair. Great networking went on as Alison and Sarah, two stalwarts of the recently created and rapidly evolving Blacknest Community Open Space, came to share ideas about linking-up with Bentley Station Meadow, using a network of forest rides. They will lead a **guided walk that will take place on 18th May at 12.00 from Gravel Hill car park SU 80204332**. Keep an eye out for full details, soon to be published on [the Alton Walking Festival website](#). It is hoped that this will become a waymarked route in time.



After lunch, while the bonfire died down (see above), some of us hunted for Brown Hairstreak eggs - not as many as last year's survey, but good to know they were breeding here again last summer.

This was also the final volunteer task that I will be leading at Bentley, as I have a new job involving a move to Warwickshire, where I will be helping to look after a small nature reserve - which, you will be glad to hear, already has an established butterfly transect! I'm sure my 18 months in the role of Volunteer Reserve Officer gave me the opportunity to see that bit more of the behind the scenes goings on in a conservation organisation, which allowed me to secure this role. I can recommend the role to anyone keen on learning more about caring for natural spaces.

A great big thank you to all volunteers, past and present, who have made my time with Butterfly Conservation a memorable experience.

Steve Lockett

Dates

Reserves Volunteering

Mondays (up to 20th Mar)	Magdalen Hill Down	Fiona Scully
9th & 23rd Feb., 9th Mar.	Yew Hill	

Branch Events

Friday, 17th February	Isle of Wight Dark Skies Festival	Jim Baldwin (County Moth Recorder) will be present
Saturday, 18th February		
Wednesday, 5th April	Wild and Wonderful Day, Whitchurch Silk Mill	Contact Suzie Brown
Saturday, 13th May	Sholing Valley Spring Fayre	Contact Suzie Brown
Saturday, 5th August	New Members / Members Day	Contact Suzie Brown
Sunday, 8th October	Blackmoor Apple Day	Contact Suzie Brown
Date to be confirmed	Test Valley Wood Fair	Contact Suzie Brown
Sunday, 5th November	AGM and Members Day, Littleton Village Hall	

Branch Field trips

Full details of Hampshire walks 2023 [here](#). Full details of **Isle of Wight** walks [here](#).

Wednesday, 19th April (10:30)	Broxhead Common (SU805376)	Target species: Emperor Moth, Orange Tip, Green Hairstreak
Wednesday, 26th April (10:30)	Danebury Hill Fort (SU323376)	Target species: Possible Wall Brown + good flora & fauna
Saturday, 29th April (30th, if wet) (13:30)	Parkhurst Forest	Target species: Orange Tip, Brimstone, Comma, Peacock
Sunday, 7th May (10:30)	Little Butser Hill / Pillow Mound (SU720205)	Target species: Duke of Burgundy, Grizzled Skipper, Cuckoo
Wednesday, 10th May	Beacon Hill at Exton	Target species: Duke of Burgundy,

(10:30)		Grizzled Skipper, Green Hairstreak
Saturday, 13th May (14th, if wet) (13:30)	The Revetment, Ventnor	Target Species: Glanville Fritillary & other Spring butterflies
Sunday, 14th May (10:30)	Old Winchester Hill (SU640208)	Target Species: Duke of Burgundy, Adonis Blue, Green Hairstreak
Wednesday, 17th May (10:30)	New Forest: New Copse Inclosure and Lymington River (SU315024)	Target species: Pearl Bordered Fritillary
Saturday 20th May (21st, if wet) (13:30)	Mottistone Chalk-pits (SZ41818446)	Target Species: Glanville Fritillary, Grizzled & Dingy Skippers
Sunday, 21st May (10:30)	West Wood/Pitt Down (SU435295)	Target Species: Duke of Burgundy & rare flora and fauna
Wednesday, 24th May (10:30)	Stockbridge Down (SU380350)	Target Species: Duke of Burgundy, possible Pearl-Bordered Fritillary
Saturday, 27th May (29th, if wet) (10:30)	Compton Chine (SZ367854)	Target Species: Glanville Fritillary, Green Hairstreak, Small & Adonis Blues
Sunday, 28th May (10:30)	Martin Down & Kitts Grave (SU045195)	Target Species: Marsh Fritillary, Adonis Blue, and good Flora & Fauna
Sunday, 4th June (10:30)	Bentley Wood (SU260300)	Target Species: Possible Marsh Fritillary, Argent and Sable Moth, Good flora and fauna
Wednesday, 7th June (10:30)	Queen Elizabeth Country Park (Coulters Dean) (SU747230)	Target Species: Green Hairstreak, excellent Orchids
Saturday, 24th June (25th, if wet) (13:30)	Newtown, Meadows Butterfly walk, and part of Walters Copse	Target Species: White Admiral, Marbled White, Brown Argus, Ringlet
Sunday, 25th June (10:30)	Old Winchester Hill (SU640208)	Target Species Chalk Hill Blue, possible White Letter Hairstreak
Wednesday, 28th June (09:30)	Beaulieu Heath (New Forest) (SU355000)	Target Species: Silver Studded Blue, Early Grayling, Clouded Buff Moth, Common Lizard, Dartford Warbler, Nightjar
Saturday, 1st July (2nd, if wet) (10:30)	Tennyson Down, near Freshwater	Target Species: Dark Green Fritillary, Brown Argus, Chalk Hill Blue
Sunday, 2nd July (09:30)	Alice Holt Forest (Abbotts Wood Inclosure) (SU815480)	Target Species: Purple Emperor, White Admiral, Silver Washed Fritillary
Wednesday, 5th July (09:30)	West Wood & Pitt Down (SU435295)	Target Species: Dark Green Fritillary, Purple Emperor, Purple Hairstreak
Sunday, 9th July (09:30)	Micheldever Wood (SO24 9UB) (SU53013753)	Target Species: Purple Emperor, Silver-Washed Fritillary, and White Admiral
Wednesday, 12th July (09:30)	Basingstoke Canal (part) / Odiham Common (SU752526)	Target Species: Purple Emperor, White Admiral, good flora and fauna
Saturday, 15th July (16th, if	Kemphill Moor Copse, Rowlands	Target Species: White Admiral,

wet) (13:30)	Lane, Havenstreet (SZ569896)	Silver-washed Fritillary (inc. <i>ab. Valesina</i>), Purple Hairstreak
Sunday, 16th July (09:30)	West Harting Down (SU737157)	Target Species: Purple Emperor, Silver-Washed Fritillary, Dark-Green Fritillary, Hummingbird Hawk Moth
Saturday 22nd July (23rd, if wet) (13:30)	Mount Joy, Carisbrooke (SZ49248787)	Target Species: Chalk Hill & Common Blue, Wall Brown, Brown Argus
Saturday, 5th August (6th, if wet) (13:30)	Arreton Downs	Target Species: Chalk Hill Blue, Wall Brown, Brown Argus
Sunday, 13th August (09:30)	Shipton Bellinger (SU222465)	Target Species: Wall Brown, Brown Hairstreak, good flora and fauna
Wednesday, 16th August (10:30)	Noar Hill (SU745316)	Target Species: Brown Hairstreak, Clouded Yellow
Wednesday, 23rd August (10:30)	Idsworth Down / Charlton Down (SU735151)	Target Species: Clouded Yellow, Brown Argus, Dark Green Fritillary, poss. Silver Spotted Skipper
Sunday, 27th August (10:30)	Butser Hill (SU712205)	Target Species: Adonis Blue, Silver Spotted Skipper
Wednesday, 30th August (10:30)	Beacon Hill NNR (SU605227)	Target Species: Silver-Spotted Skipper, Brown Argus, Clouded Yellow & spectacular views
Saturday, 2nd September (3rd, if wet) (13:30)	The Revetment, Ventnor	Target Species: Clouded Yellow, Hummingbird Hawk Moth
Sunday, 3rd September (10:30)	Old Winchester Hill (SU640208)	Target Species: Adonis Blue, Silver-Spotted Skipper, Clouded Yellow

Accompanied Reserves Walks

Thursday, 18th May (12:00)	Bentley Station Meadow	Guided walk from Gravel Hill. See the Alton Walking Festival website for details.
Monday, 5th June (14:00-15:30)	Magdalen Hill Down	With Dave & Anna Stewart. Contact Fiona Scully for details.
Friday, 16th June (11:00-13:00)	Yew Hill	With Rupert Broadway. Contact Fiona Scully for details.
Wednesday, 19th July (11:00-13:00)	Magdalen Hill Down	With Dave & Anna Stewart. Contact Fiona Scully for details.
Friday, 4th August (11:00-13:00)	Yew Hill	With Rupert Broadway. Contact Fiona Scully for details.
Friday, 18th August (11:00-13:00)	Magdalen Hill Down	With Dave & Anna Stewart. Contact Fiona Scully for details.

First sightings (year to date)

January 6th	Red Admiral	Hayling Island
January 16th	Brimstone	Magdalen Hill Down

Social Media links



Branch FB



Our Reserves FB



Branch Twitter



Branch Insta



Branch WWW