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Dear Branch Member,

Please find the latest news from the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Branch...

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Branch communications

As you may or may not know, the Branch is currently without a Main Committee. So, for the foreseeable future, it is hoped to publish the Branch e-Newsletter every two months in order to keep the membership up to date with Branch and other relevant information. e-Newsletters are published on the second Friday in February, April, June, August, October, and December.

To ensure you receive notifications of future e-Newsletters, please send an email, mentioning you are a member of the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Branch (ideally with your Membership No.), to Butterfly Conservation Head Office membership to request this (but no need if you're already receiving email notifications of newsletters, of course).

If you have any interesting news to impart, please submit your proposed copy to [the branch e-Newsletter Editor](mailto:enewsletter@hantsiow-butterflies.org.uk) (enewsletter@hantsiow-butterflies.org.uk). If sending a document attachment, PDF is preferred; any photos should be sent separately as JPEGs or PNGs - copyright will be acknowledged. Note that images in the e-Newsletter will be embedded at low resolution. Copy deadline is the Monday of the preceding publication week, i.e. 12 days before publication date.

Transect Recorders' Conference 2025

To mark the 50th anniversary of UK Butterfly Transect Recording, **BC Hants & Isle of Wight Branch will be hosting a Transect Recorders' Conference on Sunday, 26 October, at Littleton Millennium Hall, Littleton, just north-west of Winchester.**

Following the format of previous events, a programme from 10.00am until 3.00pm has been arranged - a PDF of the programme is available [here](#). It will be a great opportunity to socialise, as well as hear presentations on topics such as long-term species trends, use of transect data to guide conservation management, and how to get more from your data within UKBMS.

The event is free, and open to all, but **booking is essential**, as the venue has a limited capacity of c.100. To book your place, please [email me](#).

If anyone would like to **help on the day** (e.g. setting-up the room, helping with teas/coffees etc.), I'd be very pleased to hear from you!

[*Andy Barker \(Butterfly Transect Co-ordinator, Hampshire & Isle of Wight\)*](#)

2025 Butterfly Transect data

Many thanks to all who have participated in butterfly transect recording in 2025. The data collected is vital for our understanding of species trends both locally and nationally. This helps assess how well species are doing, which in turn helps prioritise conservation action for those in greatest need.

Most of you are very good at entering your data as soon as you've walked your transect, but for those who still have data to enter, could I encourage you to enter it via the UK Butterfly Monitoring Scheme (UKBMS) portal as soon as possible, and **no later than 31st October**, which is the deadline set by Butterfly Conservation/UKBMS. Thanks in advance!

[*Andy Barker \(Butterfly Transect Co-ordinator, Hampshire & Isle of Wight\)*](#)

Isle of Wight field trips 2025 report

Parkhurst Forest (26th April) - the 1st Field trip of the year, and the sun shone for us! It was really well-attended - it was good to see everyone after the long winter months. We saw lots of early spring butterflies, including Orange-tips, Commas, and too many Brimstones to count. Also a great many Large Whites, which at the time surprised us all.

Mottistone Chalk Pits (17th May) - primary target species: Glanville Fritillaries! We had people over from the Mainland, as well as a lot of our regular Island people, to see these lovely butterflies that we are so lucky to get on the Island. This year the number of Glanvilles was well up on last year (they started flying early, in late April). The Chalk pits is a wonderful place for butterflies, and we saw many Spring ones including Brown Argus, Orange-tips, and Skippers. It was good to see so many flying in the Spring sunshine.

Afton Down / Compton Bay (23rd May) - The 2nd Glanville Fritillary field trip. We had to run the trip a day earlier than planned, as the weather was expected to be very bad for the day of the walk. We still had a lot of people join us from the Mainland, as well as Islanders. I was worried that the Glanvilles would be finished by late May, as they had started flying early this year, but my worries were groundless and lots were still flying in the sunshine. Plenty of other Spring butterflies, too!

Newtown Meadows (28th June) - well-attended and the sun shone. In fact it was a bit too hot! In the field part of the walk we saw Small Heaths, Marbled Whites, and a few

Large Skippers. But the undoubted highlight was the Purple Hairstreaks which had come down low, in several Oak trees and people were able to get very good photos of them. We moved on to Walters Copse, where it was cooler, and saw our first White Admirals and Silver-washed Fritillaries of the year.

Mottistone Down (5th July) - cancelled due to wet weather (yes, really!). A shame as we had hoped to see Dark Green Fritillaries. At least it was the only field trip we had to cancel this year.

Kemphill Moor Copse (19th July) - this is an amazing Copse for butterflies. We saw 18 different species that sunny afternoon, including White Admirals, lots of Silver-washed Fritillaries, and an amazing number of Large Whites. In the field, again, the Purple Hairstreaks came down very low, so everyone got good photos. We also watched a steam train go by, just to add to the lovely afternoon walk.

Mount Joy Cemetery, Carisbrooke (26th July) - another good place to see many butterflies. This time the weather was cloudy, and we had to abandon the field trip after only 1½ hours because of heavy rain(!). But the short time we spent looking at butterflies was good, and well worth the hard climb up to the cemetery - we saw Chalk Hill Blues, Common Blues, Brown Argus, Jersey Tiger moths, and a Wall Brown.

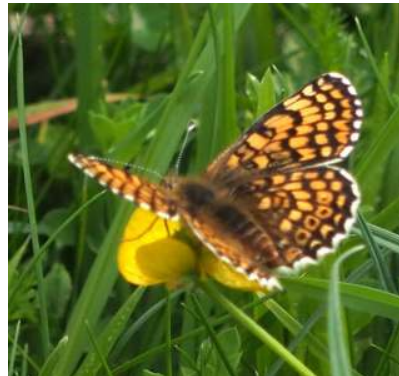
Brading Downs (16th August) - also cloudy, but we enjoyed seeing the Chalk Hill Blues, on the downs as well as Small Heath. In Bully's Chalk pit we saw a few Painted Ladies, and Commas.

Thorness Bay (6th September) - this was the first time we had done this field trip, and it didn't disappoint as there were so many butterflies, on a lovely sunny day. I was pleased that we all saw a Clouded Yellow, and a Wall Brown down by the beach, and there were Brown Argus, Common Blues, and Red Admirals all over the field. A must for next year!

Some photos from this year's field trips (all photos © Kay Shaw)...



May: Afton Down / Compton Bay, with target species Glanville Fritillary



June/July: Purple Hairstreak posed nicely for us!



August: Kay helps with ID



September: Thorness Bay - we will return!

In all it has been a good year for butterflies on the Isle of Wight - let's hope next year is as good, if not better. I would like to thank Graham Sherratt, Nikki Kownacki, Emma Brown, and Sue Davies for leading their walks.

Also a special Thank You to Graham Sherratt, for all his knowledge and willingness to share it with everyone.

[Kay Shaw \(Isle of Wight Field Trip Coordinator\)](#)

Reserves report

Summer warmth has finally faded and been replaced by cold fresh mornings, filled with autumn light and colours. It's touched me how beautiful everything is!

Magdalen Hill Down

MHD keeps shining bright with its abundance of Devil's-bit Scabious and Boletus mushrooms popping up all over the hillside. The SDNP volunteers and staff came to Magdalen for their Volunteer Team Day. We had a walk-and-talk around Magdalen, looking at all the scrub clearance they had done. The staff did some updates, and I was delighted we could host this as they made themselves at home on the chalk bank by the pond – apparently, it's the prettiest pond they've funded, so really pleased!

I also had a site meeting with Andy Barker who discussed this year's winter scrub clearance programme – there's plenty to do! There's been a lot of fence repairs and we are looking at securing funding to complete fence work and carry out improvements to the surfaced footpath which is becoming narrower and more eroded. So fingers crossed we get some funding.

We are working with the Magnificent Meadows project run by Rachel Remnant, who has scythed and raked the Chilcomb scrape with her fabulous team of volunteers. They used the seed to spread as green hay on other sites in Winchester.

Rachel is planning on bringing her scything team to Magdalen to cut some paths and again, we can collect the seed and spread it on other sites, to help increase the diversity of meadows and those little overlooked places around Winchester.

Yew Hill

We're just waiting for the sheep to return and graze everything down again. As the swallows depart, the volunteers will return (I hope!) to help clear all the hawthorn regrowth, the familiar cycle of chalk grassland and keeping the scrub in check.

Bentley Station Meadow

BSM has been grazed for around six weeks by four very sweet cows. There is a lot of bramble coming back so plenty of work for the volunteers.

Volunteer work days schedule

The volunteer work party dates are on the [Hampshire Branch website](#) (summarised in the Newsletter [here](#)). In essence: Mondays at Magdalen Hill, first Wednesday of each month at BSM and fortnightly Thursdays at Yew Hill. (Please see the Reserves Volunteering sub-section of the Dates section, below.)

If anyone is interested in being a Livestock Looker for either MHD or Yew Hill, then please do get in touch. You just need to visit once a week to check on the animals, no experience needed and all training will be given.

Butterfly Walks on the Reserves

We'll let you know in the Newsletter, when the dates have been finalised. And keep checking [the branch website](#).

Some photos from the reserves (all photos © Fiona Scully)...



The friendly cows at BSM



Devil's-bit Scabious at MHD



A *Boletus* mushroom at MHD



SDNP Volunteers & staff at the Volunteer Team Day at MHD



[Fiona Scully \(BC Reserves Officer, South East England\)](#)

Snippets

- With the increased frequency of e-Newsletter production (6 issues per annum), we'd like to spread the editorial load. If you are at all interested in helping-out, please email me (enewsletter@hantsiow-butterflies.org.uk), the e-Newsletter editor.
- Do you feel that moths are under-represented in our communications? Well, we're keen to include more copy relating to our furrier lepidoptera, so please submit any general-interest articles that might redress the balance.

Dates

An electronic calendar (.ics), covering all Field Trips & Reserves Walks, is available from [the Butterfly Walks webpage](#), or just copy/paste this link into your Calendar application, to **subscribe** (don't 'download' - you won't get automatic updates, if events change): https://www.hantsiow-butterflies.org.uk/BC_Hants_walks.ics

Reserves Volunteering

Please check the website for updates.

Every Monday until 8th December 2025 inclusive. Start 10am, finish 3pm	Magdalen Hill Down	Please contact Fiona Scully for details.
Fortnightly on Thursday until 12th February, 2026. Start 10am, finish 3pm	Yew Hill	
First Wednesday of the month from 1st October until 4th March 2026 inclusive. Start 10 am, finish by 3 pm	Bentley Station Meadow	

Branch, and branch-related Events

2026 Events to be announced.

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Branch Field Trips

2026 Field Trips to be announced.

When	Where	Target species

Accompanied Reserves Walks

2026 Reserves Walks to be announced. Email [Fiona Scully](#) to book a place on a Reserves walk.

When	Where	Target species	Information

First sightings (04/08/2025 - 03/10/2025)

Note: Data extracted from [Branch 'News' webpage](#) (so, NOT official!)

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Social Media links, etc.



Branch FB



Our Reserves FB



Branch X
(Twitter)



Branch Insta



Branch WWW