

# Hairstreak

No 106

Autumn 2019



Butterfly  
Conservation



Upper Thames  
Branch



Field meeting at Holtspur Bottom on 22nd May.

*Photos by Tony Gillie*

Articles and photographs for inclusion in this newsletter are welcome.  
Photographs should be sent as .jpg (or similar) files and not embedded in a document or album.

Copy dates are: 1st January for Spring Issue  
1st April for Summer Issue  
1st August for Autumn Issue

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Cover photo: *Pyrausta* species by David Ferguson

Background: Jubilee River, Bucks

## BUTTERFLY CONSERVATION

COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE, registered in England & Wales (2206468)

Registered Office: Manor Yard, East Lulworth, Wareham, Dorset, BH20 5QP

Charity registered in England (254937) and in Scotland (SCO39268)

This summer I've seen good numbers of butterflies and on the rare occasion that I was able to attend moth trapping events, good numbers of moths too. I hope you've all had some exciting encounters with butterflies and moths this summer. I also hope you have been able to record them all as this is the final year of the most recent 5-year recording phase. It is never too late to enter records, even for previous years, so please make sure that every single sighting is logged in one of our recording schemes (for more guidance, see <https://www.upperthames-butterflies.org.uk/recording>).

As ever, the best places to see the rarest species are places where conservation effort has retained them in an otherwise hostile environment and I would urge you all to consider what you can do to assist with conservation. Even apparently small actions, like leaving areas of grass to grow uncut through the summer, will reap amazing results. All the common brown family species breed in my garden as a result of leaving a patch of grass uncut until October.

Rarer species need more help than simply leaving things alone and that's why we are involved in many conservation events at nature reserves all winter. The tasks vary but invariably provide a tremendous sense of achievement and worthwhile endeavour. For the sake of our hard pressed butterflies and moths and for your own well-being (see <https://tinyurl.com/yy3q4nlb>) I hope you can join us those tasks.

The branch is involved in a wide range of activities besides hands on conservation tasks. We attended about twenty summer fairs to raise awareness and many meetings with landowners and public bodies like Network Rail and Highways England; conducted surveys at many public and private sites; and led over 60 guided butterfly walks. All this is achieved by voluntary effort and your part in that is both amazing and extremely welcome. We can never thank you enough for all you do but hope that the knowledge of all the benefit to butterflies and moths is reward enough.

Later in this edition you will see news of the sad passing of one of the Branch stalwarts, Frank Banyard. I was slightly surprised that Frank's first report as chair was about the way that the ever expanding membership required growing voluntary support. He made a plea for help with the tasks of running a successful and effective branch. Some things rarely change, we have an even bigger membership these days to assist us, arguably, there is even more need for action. Please read the list of tasks that need a hand. I feel absolutely awful each time I refuse to take on a new action because we are overstretched and can't offer help.

To that end we have employed Caroline (Caz) Temple to work on the Five Hairstreaks project. You will know that we are blessed with all five UK Hairstreak species in north Bucks and north Oxon; we both want to keep them and to see their populations flourishing. You will see more of Caz's work in the future as she engages with landowners and land managers and our membership to secure a place for these iconic butterflies in our changing countryside.

Once again, I thank those of you that take this newsletter in an electronic form and make a difference to our coffers, freeing up money for conservation. I also thank all of you once again for your fantastic support. Without your tens of thousands of records and thousands of hours of volunteer effort hundreds of our rarest butterflies and moths would, quite simply, not exist. Hopefully you can join us for your Members' Day in Benson (Oct 26th) to celebrate their beauty and our fantastic achievements.

## Frank Banyard (1930 - 2019)

Frank joined the UTB committee in 1993 and with his obvious organisational prowess, became vice chair within a year and soon found himself propelled to Chair. Frank determinedly pursued ideas that he felt were correct, prepared to struggle on alone for causes he felt deserved an effort but preferring to work with others, whom he encouraged with his friendly and competent manner. Largely unseen, but hugely effective, Frank represented the UTB at many meetings where he became known for efficient and sensible contributions.

In order to spur the membership on, he published a table of the number of field trips and conservation work tasks we organised compared with those of other branches. Whilst we provided more for our UTB membership than most, we were not the best. Frank

declared his aim that we should be so. It was his drive to make us better that has created the branch that we are, achieving amazing results despite all our work being done voluntarily. He instigated many changes to our branch, like the change to a colour magazine and most notably Frank established our Holtspur Bottom reserve. There he was delighted that first Small Blue, then Chalkhill Blue and White-letter Hairstreak returned. Planting their larval foodplants (many of which Frank grew himself) allowed them to form breeding colonies. This summer the Dark Green Fritillary has returned too and he hoped it will also establish. Things that Frank instigated, that went into abeyance once Frank had to withdraw from running them, were an annual Conservation Review (a digest of the branch's conservation work and reviews of good sites to visit) and the phenomena that were "Honest Frank's Tours", a series of long-distance trips. Attendees paid the minimum costs with Frank arranging all the travel and hotel requirements for everybody. All reports were of amazing experiences, at wonderful locations visited with long-term friendships established. The direction that Frank steered the branch has seen it grow and grow.

Some of my fondest summer memories are of the trips to Holtspur Bottom with a 'post-match' BBQ at Frank and Eileen's home, with excellent food and like-minded company. His organisational abilities, modesty, affability and generosity will be sadly missed.

*Nick Bowles*



Frank leading a field trip at Holtspur Bottom  
*Jim Asher*

# Butterfly Conservation - Upper Thames Branch Members' Day & AGM, Saturday 26th October 2019 Parish Hall, Benson, Oxfordshire OX10 6LZ

## PROGRAMME

09:45	<b>Doors Open - Registration and Coffee</b>	
10:15	<b>Introduction and Welcome</b>	Nick Bowles
10:25	<b>Review of Upper Thames Moths in 2019</b>	Jan Haseler
10.50	<b>Review of Upper Thames Butterflies in 2019</b>	Nick Bowles
11:15	<b>Holtspur Bottom Reserve – latest news</b>	Tony Gillie
11.30	<b>Break</b>	
11:45	<b>Tracking the Impact Project - Chilterns Conservation Board</b>	Nick Marriner
12.00	<b>Bowdown Woods - The impact of woodland management on butterfly populations</b>	Roger Dobbs
	<b>Lunch</b>	
13.00	Vote in our annual photographic competition, have a go at the quiz, buy raffle tickets, and view the displays. Richard Lewington will be selling his artwork, and Pemberley Books will have a bookstall.	
14.00	<b>BRANCH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING</b>	
	<b>Agenda:</b>	
	1. Apologies for absence	
	2. Minutes of last AGM and matters arising	
	3. Chairman's Report	
	4. Treasurer's Report and approval of accounts	
	5. Election of Officers	
	6. Any Other Business (previously notified)	
14.30	<b>Atlas of Britain and Ireland's Larger Moths - the first of its kind!</b>	Dr Zoe Randall BC H.O.
15.30	<b>National Conservation Strategy - Regional Action Plan updates</b>	Steve Wheatley
16.00	<b>Tea and raffle</b>	
16.30	<b>Photographic Competition Results, Quiz</b>	Peter Thompson
16.50	<b>Round Up of the Day and Closing Remarks</b>	Nick Bowles
17.00	<b>Close</b>	

## Map & Directions to Benson Parish Hall, our venue for Members' Day

(O.S. maps 164 & 175, grid reference SU618920, postcode OX10 6LZ)

### By road:

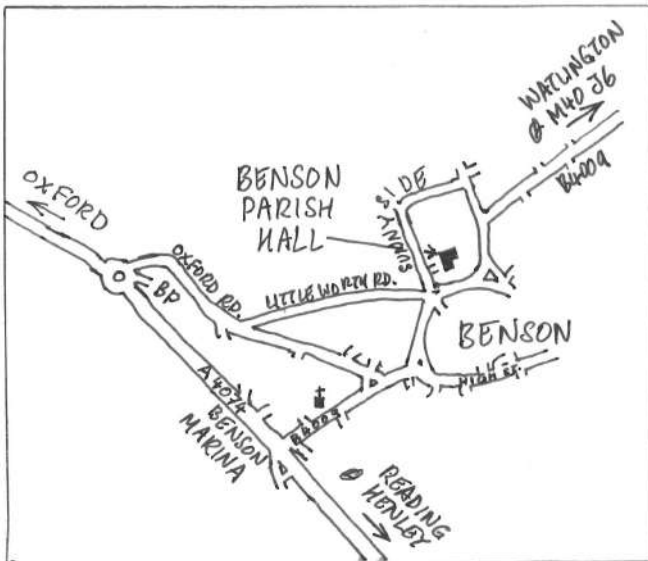
From **Oxford** direction take A4074 and on outskirts of Benson, turn left at roundabout by BP petrol station. In 200 yards, at new mini roundabout continue straight on, past the school on the left, then bearing left past the War Memorial on your right, and take the left turn signposted Watlington (B4009 and Parish hall). After approx 200 yards the main road curves right and you must turn sharp left at new modified junction into Sunnyside and then immediately right into Parish Hall carpark

From **Reading** (A4074) or **Henley** (A4130) direction, at the roundabout near Crowmarsh Gifford, take the Oxford road (A4074) for 1.5 miles and turn right to Benson on the B4009 towards Watlington. Pass the church on left and at war memorial triangle, bear right then shortly bear left towards Watlington (B4009, signed to Parish Hall). After about 200m turn left into Sunnyside, crossing Littleworth Road, then immediately right into the Parish Hall car park.

From **Watlington** or **M40 J6**, take B4009 towards Benson. At outskirts of Benson, go through speed chicane, follow road round left and right hand bends, and be aware of new pedestrian crossing after right hand bend, then almost immediately turn right at modified junction into Sunnyside, and immediately right into Parish hall car park.

### By public transport:

Buses from **Oxford** leave St. Aldates stop H3 the River Rapids service, X38, X39, & X40 at 9.05, 9.25 & 9.45 and so on every hour. Alight opposite Benson Marina and it's an eight-minute walk to the Parish Hall. Walk in Reading direction a few yards, turn left onto B4009 towards Watlington, then follow instructions by road from Reading direction. From **Reading Rail Station** buses X39 & X40 leave station road at 9.20, then 9.50 & 10.20. X39 is the faster service. Alight at Benson Marina, cross the road, and see instructions above.



This summer (at the time of writing – during a very hot spell) has seen a good range of butterflies compared to a few years ago, so there should have been plenty of opportunities to photograph our glorious butterflies and moths, especially as I know many of you have been out scouring the countryside, filling gaps for the next Atlas of Butterflies. I expect and hope that many of you will have plenty of images to inspire the audience at Members' Day.

We will again run the '**Newer Entrants**' category this year, reserved entirely for members who have never previously entered, or who have done so no more than twice before. You might be a younger member just getting into butterfly photography, or a more experienced person who just needs a bit of extra encouragement! Entries in this category can be of either butterflies or moths, taken, in the wild, in the UK or overseas and at any stage of life from egg onwards.

Bowing to the inevitable, we will not run the Digital Alteration category this year; whilst there have been some great ideas, it really hasn't taken off.

As usual, there will be two parallel competitions, and the winners in each will be selected by popular vote:

**Members' competition – open to members** (apart from recent winners of the overall 'best in show' prize, who have been individually notified.)

You can enter a maximum of ten images across all categories, but in the case of UK Butterflies, it's now a maximum of just six (so look out your very best!).

There will be **six** categories, as shown below.

- 1. UK butterflies**
- 2. Overseas butterflies**
- 3. Moths (including micro moths and overseas moths)**
- 4. Immature stages**
- 5. Newer Entrants**

All photos entered for these first five categories should be **without digital alteration**. For this purpose, 'digital alteration' means making changes to the subject matter by digital means – such as removing or replacing parts of the image, deleting grass stems or blemishes. It does **not** preclude the use of cropping, brightness and contrast adjustments, or some degree of sharpening that happens anyway in most cameras and printers. All these are allowed.



**All Members' Competition prints should be a maximum of 19x13cm including mount.**

There will be prizes for the most popular photos in each category, though only one prize per photographer, and an additional prize for 'best in show'. All photos entered should be prints, taken in the wild since last year's Members' Day. Please write the photographer's name and telephone number on the back, plus the category being entered. Mounting on card, and adding a title, can enhance any photo, but this is optional.

**2. Recent Winners' Competition - open to recent winners of the overall 'best in show' prize.**

Recent winners of the members' competition have put on an inspiring display in recent years, and we are asking each of them to contribute any 6 prints, preferably mounted on grey card, with an overall maximum size, including mount, of 30x25cm.

**We would be very grateful for some help with the photographic competition on the day. This involves collating entries at the beginning, and counting the votes after lunch. If you'd like to help please contact me on [plthompson127@gmail.com](mailto:plthompson127@gmail.com), prior to the event. Many thanks in anticipation.**

Finally, I would like to confirm that by entering our competitions, you are giving UTB permission to use (with acknowledgement) any of your images in our newsletters or electronic media.

So make the most of the rest of the summer, get on top of that technology, and help us to create an even better display than last year!

**Members' Day lunch and tea Your food offerings are welcome**

In the hope that we can continue to feed everyone at lunchtime and teatime on Members' Day, I am again asking ALL members who are attending the day to bring along a contribution. It can be either savoury or sweet. If possible it would be helpful if you could let me know what you might bring at least a week before the meeting. Also, if you could help behind the scenes, please do come and see us in the kitchen. I look forward to hearing from you and to seeing you on the day.

Gillian Oldfield - 01993 891565 (all messages left on the answerphone will be listened to!).



## **Want to carry out butterfly surveys in new and unexplored areas? Want to improve your ID and survey skills? Want to help train new butterfly surveyors?**

*Tracking the Impact might be of interest to you as Nick Marriner explains .....*

The Chilterns Conservation Board has teamed up with Butterfly Conservation, British Trust for Ornithology, Plantlife and the Centre for Ecology and Hydrology to deliver an exciting new landscape surveying programme across the Central Chilterns area.

Tracking the Impact seeks to find what is happening locally to our butterflies, birds and plants in a major cross taxa project. New surveying opportunities will be on offer for not only experienced butterfly surveyors but also for the next generation through an ID and survey training package.

Working across 30 1km survey squares, the project will work as part of existing national recording schemes such as the Wider Countryside Butterfly Survey, Breeding Bird Survey and National Plant Monitoring Scheme to bolster coverage and to better understand what is happening to our wildlife in the Central Chilterns.

The project will offer opportunities to explore new areas of the Central Chilterns and the data will be used to not only track trends across the landscape but to inform practical woodland, grassland and farmland habitat management projects.

Exciting new opportunities exist to:

- Take on new UKBMS survey squares

- Receive training in butterfly species ID and survey techniques

- Offer training and support to new volunteer butterfly surveyors

The project will be going live in the spring of 2020 and the CCB will be offering full briefing and training package prior to the start of the survey season. Volunteer surveyors will be kept up to date with results and analysis through regular workshops and an annual conference.

Tracking the Impact is one of a number of projects supported through the new Chalk, Cherries and Chairs Landscape Partnership Scheme which is funded by the National Lottery Heritage Fund and managed by the Chilterns Conservation Board: <https://www.chilternsaonb.org/projects/landscape-partnership-scheme.html> If you are interested in getting involved as a surveyor, want to find out how the project can help you improve your skills or if you would like to help others improve their skills then please contact Nick Marriner (Landowner Engagement Officer, Chilterns Conservation Board):

[nmarriner@chilternsaonb.org](mailto:nmarriner@chilternsaonb.org)

**07785 527108**

## **Citizen Scientists - a thank you**

**Dick Ashford with Jonathan Jones & Jamie Burston**

When searching for my last butterfly I turned to a citizen scientist. In doing so I began to realize their importance. A network of them had discovered the jet stream by recording the spread of the ash cloud from Krakatoa, as it circled the globe. Gregor Mendel, who founded the science of genetics, was a monk. Today citizen scientists contribute in many areas, notably in astronomy and ornithology. And citizen scientists have been recording changes in our butterfly populations through the UK Butterfly Monitoring Scheme (UKBMS) for the last 40 years. Citizen scientists are all ages and come from all walks of life.

By the end of last year I had seen and photographed 58 of our 59 butterflies and was left with just the White-letter Hairstreak (WLH). In 2017 I made several unsuccessful attempts to see it. Some were hampered by bad weather and in others I was just looking in the wrong place of a large site. Local knowledge is essential and success is more likely if visiting the site with a Butterfly Conservation field trip where the leader will take you to the right place. So, although I was excited to hear that the WLH had been recorded in the county, it was the article in the newsletter by Jamie Burston that caught my eye. Jamie is a young wildlife and portrait artist from Sussex, who has studied the butterfly in detail. His online article on the Sussex BC website <sup>1</sup> is a detailed treatise on all aspects of the butterfly and its foodplant the Elm. Helpfully for me there are tips on how and when to see the butterfly. But clearly the best bet was to contact him and hopefully he would agree to take me to it. So, following an introduction from Jo Poland, we made contact and agreed to meet at a BC outing in Sussex.

Unlike Patrick Barkham <sup>2</sup>, who saw the WLH in a North London park, where the elms were scarred by dogfights, and which he described as 'a psycholand' in his book, we were travelling to the genteel retirement town of Seaford on the south coast. I imagined rows of bungalows, shingly beaches and old peoples homes. My friend Jonathan had joined me for the early start.

Meeting in a church car park, and after the health and safety briefing, Jamie gave us a run-through of the WLH life cycle. As the caterpillar feeds on Elm, the butterfly has suffered badly in the aftermath of Dutch Elm Disease. The eggs are laid on the junction between the old and new growth on the sunny side of the tree. After overwintering they hatch in late February or March and produced characteristic holes in the tips of the leafbuds. More mature caterpillars then cause distinctive leaf damage, which leaves a diamond shape at the top of the leaf (see photo). They usually pupate in crevices in the bark. However they have been documented to sometimes pupate on the leaves of English & Wych Elm<sup>3</sup>. On emergence the males fly around the tops of the trees, and squabble over territory by characteristically spiraling upwards above the trees in dogfights. This distinguishes them from the Purple Hairstreak, which is on the wing at the same time. The Purple Hairstreak tends to tumble around the tree in a more languid style. The female WLH is more elusive & only visits the tree canopy when ready to

mate. The WLH is also a morning butterfly, which I had already found to my cost, as we had started early, something I am less than keen on.

Of course I already knew that all the tree flying hairstreaks were fiendishly difficult to photograph, especially using a pocket camera with no viewfinder! However I felt confident, as we headed out, that I would have no difficulty in getting that last elusive shot.

We were soon pointing cameras and binoculars skyward at the tops of the Elms. Jamie then turned to Dutch Elm Disease. The fungus *Ophiostoma novo-ulmi* is carried by the adult Elm Bark Beetle. They pick up the fungal spores on their body, as they emerge from an infected tree. Females can also collect spores when laying eggs in an infected tree and can lay many thousands of eggs in galleries underneath the bark. Adult beetles also spread the spores by seeking out healthy elm on which to feed so causing open wounds from their feeding damage in the crotch of branches. In this way the beetle introduces the fungal spores into the xylem of the tree (the tree's circulation). The fungus then spreads through the trees circulation slowly starving it. This produces the tell-tale wilting and browning of the leaves and the die-back. The rootstock, however, can survive and, even now, old affected elms are producing new shoots. These survive for some years, as the characteristic fissured bark frequented by the beetles doesn't form until the sapling is about 10 years old. At this point it is re-infested and again dies back. Jamie then showed us some Elm leaves with their characteristic asymmetry and also the leaves of the Wych Elm, which are more deeply fissured.

It was getting hot and we had had lots of treetop sightings, so I had definitely seen it. But I couldn't get my binoculars on it, let alone get a photo. Even Jonathan with his huge telephoto lens was having difficulty getting a decent shot. So, although we had seen it, it was becoming clear that we weren't going to get a proper photograph on this outing.

Although we weren't doing well, the WLH has done much better than expected since the arrival of Dutch Elm Disease. More mobile than previously realized, its treetop lifestyle has meant that, unless one looks carefully, large populations can remain undiscovered. Andrew Middleton and Liz Goodyear from Herts and Middlesex BC have discovered many colonies in the Home Counties. Also, as the English Elm was being wiped out, councils replaced it with disease-resistant varieties such as 'Sapporo Autumn Gold' on which the butterfly survives quite happily. We learned that Brighton has a relatively favorable climate for elms, and holds the National Elm Collection with 124 different sub-types of elm. 'Where is this held?' I asked Jamie. His reply that the trees were on the streets and in the parks of Brighton was a surprise. Furthermore since the first outbreak of the disease in 1971 East Sussex County Council has had a Dutch Elm Disease policy. More recently it has formed the Elm Partnership, bringing together local interest groups and are at the forefront of research into the most effective control measures<sup>4</sup>. Any sightings of die-back can be reported to the council, who will send out their team to aerial prune and destroy infected branches, which can sometimes save the tree. It has also been found that infected trees are more attractive to the beetle than un-infected trees, owing to their lower water content. This has led to the idea of 'Priority Pruning' or the 'Tree-trap' approach. Here selected infected

trees are left to attract more beetles until just before the adults emerge in the spring. They are then destroyed. This looks to be lowering the beetle population, which will continue to be monitored. Much of the pressure for this work and the ongoing monitoring has come from citizen scientists in the form of the 'Save the Elm' campaign. Indeed we now also have the 'Great British Elm Search', which has its own website <sup>5</sup>. All this work maintains the health of the elm stock of the town, which is an interesting use of municipal funds and an encouraging crossover between politics, civic pride and the environment.

Luckily for us the WLH will leave the safety of the tree-top to nectar. So, by prior arrangement with Jamie, we headed to Brighton. There he kindly took us to another less well-known location, where the WLH comes down from the trees to nectar on a large patch of thistles. And there they were in profusion. Many fresh specimens, and as they gorged on nectar, we held our cameras within inches of them. Jamie pointed out their tails, like false antennae, which are more pronounced in the females. In common with several other hairstreaks, the WLH also has lines converging on the tails and small eyespots at their base creating the image of the head. The 'W' which gives it its name enhances this illusion. This 'false head' strategy is widely used (e.g. Swallowtails) to mislead or confuse a predator and often gives the insect a second chance. These and other ruses used by butterflies are beautifully described in Philip Howe's book 'Seeing Butterflies' <sup>6</sup>.

Replete with photographs and then further repleted with coffee and cake, Jamie took us to another park to look at some of the more recent disease-resistant elm plantings. These included the beautiful columnar Elm Columella.

On his website Jamie sells a number of beautiful graphite/pencil reproductions of the WLH <sup>7</sup> and gives a percentage of all his sales to the planting of disease-resistant Elms. This led me back to thinking about his continuing and generous contribution, and the ongoing contribution of others. UKBMS is one of the largest citizen science projects in the world. By recording butterfly populations we can judge the health of the whole environment. We are beginning to see the impact of climate change on our butterfly populations, for example the northern spread of the Comma and the gradual disappearance of the Wall. We can only hope that as time goes by and the world's population hurtles toward 10 billion, our citizen scientists are not just the chroniclers of the planet's destruction.

## References

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2. Barkham P, The Butterfly Isles, Granta Publications, 2010. ISBN 978 1 84708 315 9, p211.
3. Burston J, Personal communication
4. De Bruin A, Dutch Elm Disease management in East Sussex, <https://www.york.ac.uk/media/sei/documents/publications/Final%20report%20-%20Dutch%20Elm%20Management%20in%20East%20Sussex%20-%2018th%20Oct%202013.pdf>
5. <https://www.conservationfoundation.co.uk/elms>
6. Howse P, Seeing Butterflies, Papadakis, 2014. ISBN 978 1 906506 46 9, p48.

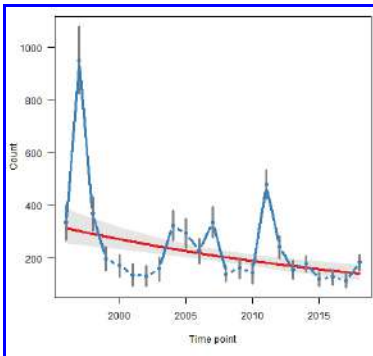
## Butterfly trends in Buck, Berks & Oxon 2018

Mike Wilkins

Now that all transect data is entered on line this report takes on a different format, reporting population changes. Long-term trends are from 1978, where data are available.

Data were received in 2018 for 78 transects, of which 55 contributed to the 2017 to 2018 comparison. The rest were new sites or did not have enough weeks walked to produce an index for any of the species analysed. For the long-term analysis, a total of 118 sites contributed data.

Trends from 2017 to 2018 have been calculated for 31 species, of which 16 showed an increase and 15 a decrease. Broadly speaking, blues and Lycaenids fared best like most of the whites. The Nymphalids fared the worst while the skippers and browns were mixed.



Grizzled Skipper

The Dingy Skipper recovered after three successive poor years, increasing by 131%. It does fluctuate widely from year to year but the overall trend is stable. In contrast, although the Grizzled Skipper also had a significant increase of 60% it shows a steady decline in the long-term. They probably both benefitted from the very warm May weather.

In contrast, the 'golden' skippers all decreased significantly, the Small and Essex by 35% and 84% respectively. They both also show a strong decline over more than 20 years. There is some doubt about the validity of these results, which may be connected with the fact that the

two are often recorded as an aggregate and that practice may be growing, with more inexperienced recorders walking new transects. The Large Skipper decreased by 12% but its long-term trend is stable.

Large, Small and Green-veined Whites all increased, by 102%, 180% and 34% respectively but are stable in the long-term. Although the Brimstone decreased slightly from 2017 it shows a moderate increase over the past 40 years. Likewise, the Orange-tip, which fluctuates widely from year to year decreased by 12% from 2017 but shows a long-term increase.

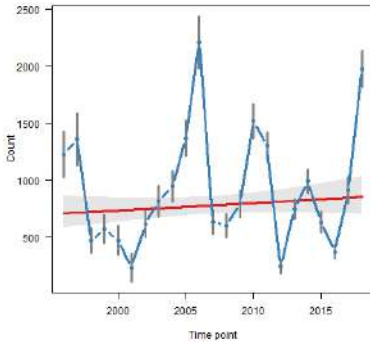
Small Blues were the only one of their group to show a decrease and that was only 2%. After an initial peak in 2005 they settled down at a much lower level, and have been stable since 2007.

The Small Copper showed a second year of recovery, of 51%, from its lowest point in 2016. Long-term there is a decline with large year to year variations. Green Hairstreaks had a second year of recovery, by 33%, from a low in 2016 to give them an average year for the period from 2003.

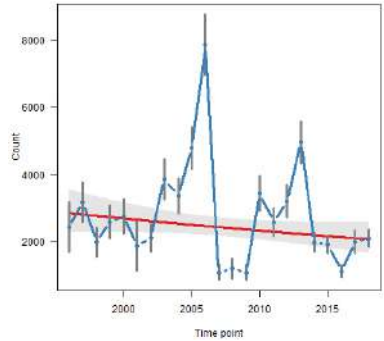
The rest of the blues all showed an increase over 2017. The Brown Argus showed a big increase of 117%, the second successive increase, to bring it

second to the peak in 2006. It is stable over the long-term, but varies widely in the short term. Similarly, The Common Blue showed a 125% increase, the second in succession, the best since 2010 and third over the period.

Chalkhill Blues only had a small 5% increase but have been stable over the long-term. They had peaks in 2006 and from 2010-2013 but settled down afterwards. After high peaks before 2005 Holly Blues have remained at a lower level and have recovered from a minimum in 2014 with a year to year increase of 58%.



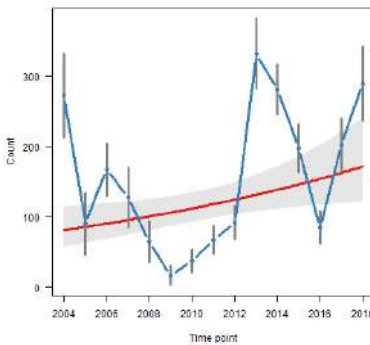
Brown Argus



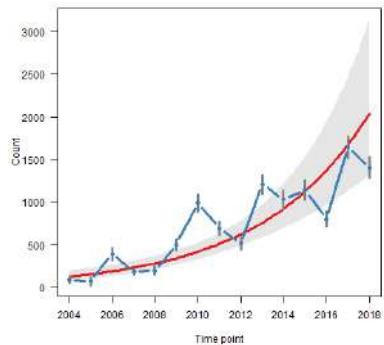
Chalkhill Blue

The White Admiral shows an overall decline of 46% over the whole period since 1996, reaching a minimum in 2016. Since then it has recovered to some extent, 31% in the last year.

The only other Nymphalid species to increase in 2018 was the Dark Green Fritillary which increased by 43%, continuing a trend, though with wide fluctuations. 2018 was its second best year after 2013 with the minimum in 2009.



Dark Green Fritillary

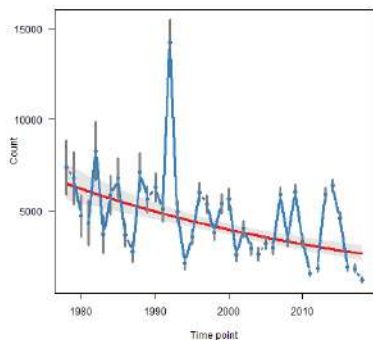


Silver-washed Fritillary

The rest of the group show a wide range of decreases from 2017. The mainly migrant Red Admiral which fluctuates widely from year to year decreased 78% from 2017 but appears to remain stable in the long-term. Painted Lady, another

migrant, shows a steady decline from 1996 with major invasions in 1996 and 2009. The decline from 2017 was just 8%.

The Small Tortoiseshell index decreased 62% from 2017, reversing the slight recovery in 2016 from a steady long-term decline. Peacocks also continued to decrease overall, reaching their lowest index in 2018 with a fall of another 34%. Yet another decrease was recorded, of 50%, by the Comma but from an increasing overall trend in the long-term, the only one in its group.

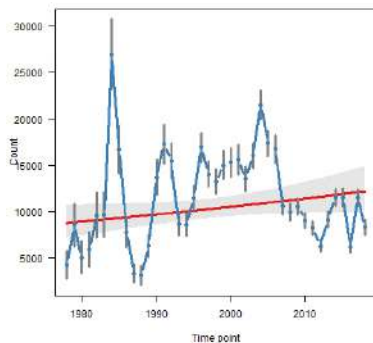


Peacock

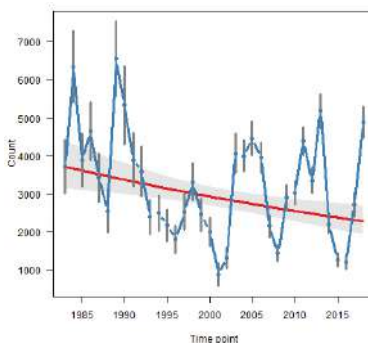
The odd species out is the Silver-washed Fritillary which has increased at a remarkable rate since at least 2004, since when there has been sufficient data to calculate an index. It suffered a slight setback in 2018 with a decrease but that fits in with the year to year pattern.

The browns show mixed fortunes. Speckled Woods are stable in the long-term and increased by 28% over 2017. Marbled Whites, also stable overall, increased by just 10% but Gatekeepers, also not showing a trend in the long-term, but with wider fluctuations in between, decreased by 28%. The Meadow Brown shows a moderate long-term decrease, but again, with wide

fluctuations every few years. It decreased by 16% in 2018.



Gatekeeper



Small Heath

Similarly, the Small Heath shows a long-term decline but continued a recovery from a low in 2015/6 with an 80% increase from 2017 to bring it well above average. In contrast Ringlets, with an increasing trend decreased by 36% from 2017.



Species	% change 2017 to 2018	start year	end year	overall % change	in x years	Overall Trend (significance)
Small Skipper	-35	1989	2018	-95	29	<b>Strong decrease (p&lt;0.001)</b>
Essex Skipper	-84	1996	2018	-93	22	<b>Strong decrease (p&lt;0.05)</b>
Large Skipper	-12	1978	2018	-10	40	Stable
Dingy Skipper	131	1996	2018	4	22	Stable
Grizzled Skipper	60	1996	2018	-55	22	<b>Moderate decrease (p&lt;0.001)</b>
Brimstone	-5	1978	2018	48	40	<b>Moderate increase (p&lt;0.001)</b>
Large White	102	1983	2018	-15	35	Stable
Small White	180	1978	2018	-6	40	Stable
Green-veined White	34	1978	2018	-14	40	Stable
Orange-tip	-12	1989	2018	28	29	<b>Moderate increase (p&lt;0.05)</b>
Green Hairstreak	33	1996	2018	-28	22	Stable
Small Copper	51	1989	2018	-49	29	<b>Moderate decrease (p&lt;0.001)</b>
Small Blue	-2	2004	2018	-40	14	Uncertain
Brown Argus	117	1996	2018	20	22	Stable
Common Blue	125	1983	2018	-11	35	Stable
Chalkhill Blue	5	1996	2018	-27	22	Stable
Holly Blue	58	1996	2018	-35	22	<b>Moderate decrease (p&lt;0.05)</b>
White Admiral	31	1996	2018	-46	22	<b>Moderate decrease (p&lt;0.05)</b>
Red Admiral	-78	1989	2018	-10	29	Stable
Painted Lady	-8	1996	2018	-66	22	<b>Moderate decrease (p&lt;0.05)</b>
Small Tortoiseshell	-62	1983	2018	-82	35	<b>Moderate decrease (p&lt;0.001)</b>
Peacock	-34	1978	2018	-59	40	<b>Moderate decrease (p&lt;0.001)</b>
Comma	-50	1989	2018	73	29	<b>Moderate increase (p&lt;0.001)</b>
Dark Green Fritillary	43	2004	2018	111	14	<b>Moderate increase (p&lt;0.05)</b>
Silver-washed Fritillary	-14	2004	2018	1521	14	<b>Strong increase (p&lt;0.001)</b>
Speckled Wood	28	1978	2018	12	40	Stable
Marbled White	10	1978	2018	5	40	Stable
Gatekeeper	-28	1978	2018	39	40	Stable
Meadow Brown	-16	1978	2018	-40	40	<b>Moderate decrease (p&lt;0.001)</b>
Ringlet	-36	1978	2018	-40	40	<b>Moderate increase (p&lt;0.001)</b>
Small Heath	80	1973	2018	-39	35	<b>Moderate decrease (p&lt;0.05)</b>

I am indebted to Ian Middlebrook, National Transect Coordinator for Butterfly Conservation for extracting and processing the Upper Thames on-line data in a form that I was able to use for this report. I must also acknowledge all the transect organisers and walkers, who have put so much effort into collecting and collating a huge amount of data over many years.

## The impact of woodland management on butterfly populations

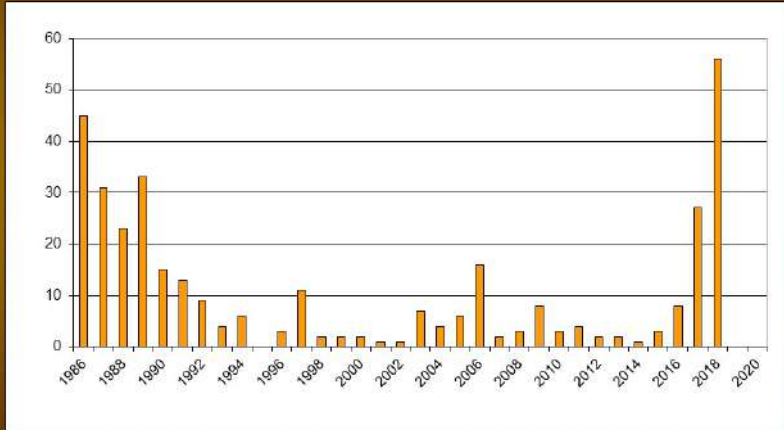
Roger Dobbs

Bowdown Woods is a 135 acre, semi-natural, ancient woodland on the northern edge of Greenham Common, near Newbury. In 1983, it was designated as a SSSI because, in a relatively small area, it comprised so many different woodland types, for example areas of exclusively oak or birch or ash or alder along with mixed areas of hazel/ash, hazel/oak, etc. The presence of very large ash, hazel and sweet chestnut coppice stools confirms that the wood was actively managed for many hundreds of years, perhaps from time immemorial. Annual growth rings on those ancient coppice stools suggest that large scale management of the wood probably ended in the 1940s. It was then left largely untouched until 1983/4 when Bowdown became part of BBOWT's suite of reserves.

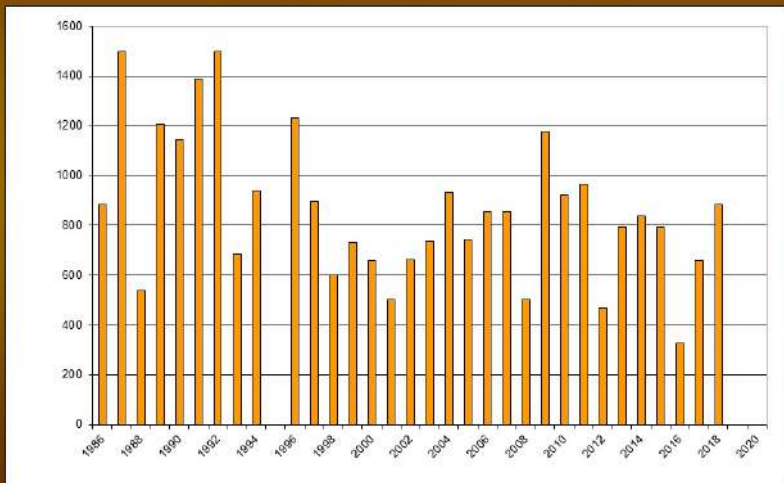
BBOWT's long term goals for the wood have always been to maintain the natural range of woodland types and to increase biodiversity by creating rides and clearings. The importance of these open spaces is dramatically illustrated by the history of a ride that has become known as Barr's. This new ride was created in 1984 through mixed ash/hazel woodland on a south-facing slope. In 1986, a butterfly transect was set up with one of the sections being the 2-year-old Barr's ride. The first count along the ride was quite reasonable, but the numbers fell steadily over the next few years as the coppiced hazel regrew and the ride became heavily shaded. No further clearance or coppicing was carried out on the ride for many years because conservation effort was directed elsewhere in the wood. However, over 2015-17, the ride was coppiced and restored to its 1984 state as a warm, sunny, south-facing corridor. The following chart shows the initial decline in butterfly numbers and their very recent and spectacular recovery.

Over the first 15 years or so of the transect, butterfly numbers were declining although not as much as in the Barr's ride. This general decline was probably due to a combination of: the wider national decline in butterflies; limited volunteer effort for clearance work; the focus of available resource elsewhere in the wood; and increasing tree cover and scrub encroachment along the transect route. Fortunately, over the last decade, much more volunteer effort and other resource have become available for conservation work along the transect route and this has helped to stabilise butterfly numbers. This overall picture, and particularly the Barr's ride results, give real encouragement to the ongoing, reserve-wide programme of ride management and the creation of new coppice coupes.

## Barr's – total count – 1986-2018



## Full Transect Total Counts 1986 - 2018



The number of butterfly species in Colombia currently stands at 3300. A recent expedition to the Santa Marta Mountains found 50 new species of glasswing butterflies which suggests that this number will rise, especially now much of the country has become accessible due to the peace agreement with FARC the terrorist organisation.

This normality is apparent when, on a Sunday morning in Bogota, you see thousands of lycra-clad bikers about to set off into the surrounding mountains and, later in a municipal park, families wandering around eating ice-creams. Bizarrely, this park is the best place to see one of the world's rarest birds, the Bogota Rail.

Although a birding trip, with 3300 species of butterfly on offer they were difficult to miss. At one point there was about 50 Sunset Daggerwings taking minerals from a track. Daggerwings are brightly coloured, tailed and about the size of a Red Admiral. Sunsets are orange, dark brown and dark blue.

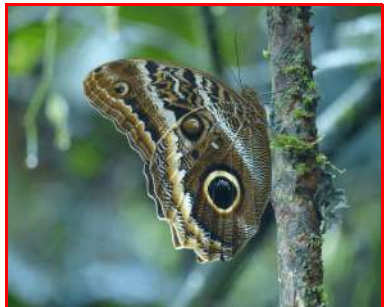
At the opposite end of the colour spectrum was a small charcoal and chalk white butterfly sitting on a roadside flower. This was *Detritivora ma* whose generic name used to be *Charis* but the joke was destroyed by some humourless taxonomist who preferred to refer to the caterpillar's habit of eating detritus. There is a companion species whose specific name is *matic*.

The butterflies I saw ranged in size from a tiny blue half the size of our Small Blue to the enormous owl butterflies. It is a pity that they and the closely related morphos always keep their wings closed when at rest so that the blue uppersides can only be seen when they are flying. The intermittent brilliant blue flashes of a morpho flying slowly through a tropical American rain forest is one of the sights of the insect world.

The butterflies I managed to photograph and identify, usually by trawling the internet, are a random sample of what I imagine are reasonably common butterflies. The photos give an idea of what can be seen without too much effort.



Sunset Daggerwing

*Detritivora ma*

Yellow-edged Giant Owl



Alala Sister



Cinderella Admiral



Corinna Daggerwing



Cyan-banded Perisema



Fiery Satyr



Rusty-tipped Page

Close to the Carribbean coast is the Sierra de Santa Marta, an isolated mountain island that has the highest concentration of endemism in the world. It is also the second highest mountain range in the world that comes straight out of the sea. Here are some of the butterflies I saw.



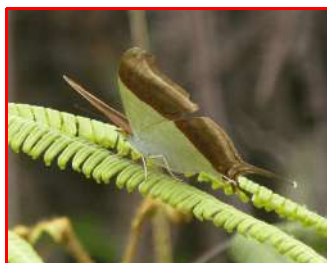
*Lymanopoda caeruleata*  
A Satyr not a Blue



Symmacus Satyr  
Endemic to Santa Martas



Orange Mapwing



The Waiter



White-edged Longwing

## Butterfly Conservation: Upper Thames Branch

### Income and Expenditure for the year ended 31st March 2019

INCOME	2019			2018		
<b>Membership</b>						
Subscriptions	7560.00			7497.00		
Legacies/donations (inc. Gift Aid)	1618.51			2631.00		
Events/fundraising	658.00			677.35		
Atlas sales	40.00			193.50		
Other	20.68					
<i>Sub-total</i>		<b>9897.19</b>			10998.85	
<b>Conservation</b>						
Holtspur Reserve	427.01			998.36		
Atlas donations				42.50		
<i>Sub-total</i>		<b>427.01</b>			1030.86	
<b>Finance/Admin</b>						
VAT Refund	36.09			217.01		
Holtspur Bank HLS				1234.13		
<i>Sub-total</i>		<b>36.09</b>			1451.14	
Total income			<b>10360.29</b>			13480.85
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>						
<b>Membership</b>						
Newsletter	3181.25			3381.39		
Events/fundraising	518.25			414.03		
Stock purchases				460.62		
Other						
<i>Sub-total</i>		<b>3699.50</b>			4256.04	
<b>Conservation</b>						
Holtspur Reserve	666.00			396.00		
Atlas (postage)						
Equipment/Training	117.50			270.00		
HLS re Holtspur Bank				1234.13		

Other Projects	423.15			505.50	
Subs/donations	11106.00			6096.00	
<i>Sub-total</i>		<b>12312.65</b>			8501.63
<b>Finance/Admin</b>					
Admin/Insurance	75.00			75	
VAT	108.13			96.24	
<i>Sub-total</i>		<b>183.13</b>			171.24
<b>Total expenditure</b>			<b>16195.28</b>		12928.91
Net income/expenditure			<b>-5834.99</b>		551.94
Cash b/f			<b>13716.98</b>		13165.04
Total cash available			<b>7881.99</b>		<b>13716.98</b>
<b>STATEMENT OF NET ASSETS AT 31 MARCH 2019</b>					
<b>NET ASSETS</b>					
Fixed assets (after depr'n)		0.00			0.00
Stock, debtors & creditors		0.00			0.00
Cash		7881.99			13716.98
Total			<b>7881.99</b>		13716.98
<b>ALLOCATION OF NET ASSETS</b>					
Endowment		0.00			0.00
Restricted		447.50			447.50
Designated		5157.00			7287.25
Unallocated		2277.49			5982.23
<b>Total</b>			<b>7881.99</b>		13716.98

If any member not attending the AGM has any questions on the accounts please email the Treasurer.

## Field Meeting Reports

**Aston Upthorpe 19 May 2019**

**Gerry and Penny Kendall**

I deliberately left my sun hat at home. This normally results in 100% sun with a UV index in double figures. But the fates were not to be manipulated and the Spring walk at Aston Upthorpe got exactly the weather that had been forecast: light sun to start but clouding over. Obviously, not ideal for butterflies but eight hardy souls were not put off.

Our targets were the Spring Skippers, Dingy and Grizzled, but also Green Hairstreak and Small Blue. There was an outside chance of an early Adonis Blue. Duke of Burgundy, alas, seems lost to the site, although a possible reintroduction has been discussed.

Common butterflies may be common but the vivid Brimstones and fresh Common Blues were a delightful backdrop to the start of our walk. And it was not too long before the first of our targets appeared – a Grizzled Skipper, loitering around a large patch of wild strawberry. We found a Dingy Skipper not long afterwards, though not obviously keeping close to its food plant. All this happened while the sun lasted and butterflies were active. Over the rest of the walk we found several more of both species so we felt reasonably well done for Spring Skippers.

Green Hairstreaks often fly higher than most of the grassland butterflies and are easily overlooked if your eyes are glued to the turf. Maybe this is what happened to us, or maybe the conditions just weren't quite good enough. In any event we certainly failed to find one.

We did manage to bag Small Blue. It was not an ideal sighting. A sharp-eyed enthusiast was carefully examining likely vegetation and spotted one. The rest of the party were a little way away and by the time we gathered round the butterfly was spooked, so some of us got only a glimpse in flight. It is quite remarkable how butterflies can sense when humans are showing an interest in them and take evasive action.

Not long afterwards the cloud thickened and a little light rain fell. It never came to anything much (grumbled the gardeners) but it was enough to make butterflies keep their heads down. We saw nothing more for a little while until we found our thirteenth and last species, a Holly Blue, freshly showered and smelling of shampoo.

In total we saw over 200 butterflies, most on the first half of the walk. Almost 90 of these were Common Blues with about 30 Brown Argus, Small Copper and Small Heath. We found three of the four target species. So we did reasonably well, but the overall impression was that if the sun had lasted just one extra hour things might have been outstanding at such a good site.

As well as the butterflies there were several moths. Cinnabar were there in large numbers and together with the usual grass moths they provided quite a distraction from the butterflies. We also saw or heard some interesting birds: lapwing, corn bunting and whitethroat stick in the memory.

Many thanks to all who participated.



## Ivinghoe Beacon 12th May

Steph Rogers

On a bright, sunny day eleven people joined Steph Rogers for this walk to look for Spring Butterflies but mainly for Duke of Burgundy.

Across the road from the car park we discovered our first Duke. The walk continued with sightings of Dingy Skipper and Green Hairstreak, along with Brimstones and Orange-tips.

There were nine species of butterfly seen throughout the hour and a half walk, which took us to the bottom of the hill and back to the car park. They were: Brimstone (12), Green Hairstreak (16), Orange-tip (5), Dingy Skipper (24), Speckled Wood (1), Grizzled Skipper (3), Brown Argus (4), Duke of Burgundy (8), Holly Blue (5) 5. Also three moths were noted – Green Carpet, Cinnabar and Straw-barred Pearl (*Pyrausta despicata*).

It was a very enjoyable walk.

## Holtspur Bottom 22nd May

Brenda Mobbs

Nineteen people gathered at Holtspur Bottom Nature Reserve to see some of the summer butterflies. The meadows at the reserve were awash with wild flowers. We saw a large number of Small Blues, Meadow Browns and Marbled Whites. There were also a few Common Blues, Small Tortoiseshells and Brimstones, a couple of Large Skippers, and a single Ringlet.

We also spotted a Mullein moth caterpillar, five Orange-tip caterpillars and over 100 Peacock caterpillars. In the entrance area, just above the disease resistant elms, two White-letter Hairstreaks were seen. Unfortunately this was just after most of the group had left. Very pleasing, as last year was the first year that the species had been spotted there.



View across the Holtspur Valley

Tony Gillie

## Pitstone Quarry 18th May

Nick Bowles

Under a sky the colour of asphalt, seven UTB members gathered, put on raincoats and headed into the quarry to search for roosting butterflies. As so often seeing the first took some time but with warming temperatures we soon saw quite a few Small Blues roosting and then, although low clouds were visible in most directions, we got some hazy sun and suddenly there were butterflies opening their wings on low bushes and in the grass. We eventually saw at least 67 Small Blue, 4 Dingy Skipper, 1 Grizzled Skipper, 2 Small Heath, 1 Common Blue, also 2 Cinnabar, 1 Small Purple-barred, 1 Small Yellow Underwing, 1 Burnet Companion, 1 Purple and Gold (*Pyrausta aurata*) and a probable Grass Rivulet, and as we put our coats back in our cars, a Holly Blue.

A shame the weather was poor as this is a wonderful site.

## Yoesden Bank 30th May

Sue Taylor

Ten people came on the walk. Given the forecast, Brenda and myself (who jointly led the walk) wondered if we would see much at all. We needn't have worried – there were butterflies in abundance.

The target species was Adonis Blue and we saw at least 100, along with Common Blue (14) and Small Blues (50+), Green Hairstreak, Small Copper, Peacock, Brimstone, Brown Argus, Grizzled and Dingy Skipper and good numbers of Small Heath (29). Moths included Mother Shipton, Cinnabar, Burnet Companion, Heart and Dart and a Violet Cosmet (*Panacalia leuwenhoekella*) micromoth. We saw a great variety of other invertebrates too, including a Cockchafer, the very colourful *Anaglyptus mysticus* and the fence post spider *Marpissa mucosa*.

Just as we were leaving site there was great excitement as a Marsh Fritillary was spotted! No idea where it came from and it was probably a release, though not an official one, so no chance of a colony establishing. Nevertheless the lucky few who saw it were pleased to have seen it.

As for me, just seeing the wealth of invertebrates on a beautiful site on a beautiful day in good company was treat enough.

Many thanks to Ched for facilitating the walk and helping with ID's.

## Bradenham June 21st

Sue Taylor

It was a lovely day when 14 of us met at Bradenham for the annual butterfly walk. Initially the numbers of butterflies were lower than expected as we walked up through Yew Tree Hill, down the aptly named Butterfly Bank and into the area of former plantation known as the Hangings.

By the end of the walk we had seen 14 species of butterfly with strong numbers of Small Blue and Small Heath. Many of us saw our first Meadow Browns and Large Skippers of the year and there were Dingy and Grizzled skippers too. There were also at least five species of moth along with a host of other bugs and beasties. It is a good site for flowers, and we were treated to White Helleborine,

Pyramidal, Common Spotted and Bee Orchids amongst pools of Oxeye Daisy, Horseshoe Vetch and Kidney Vetch.

But for me there was one further treat in store, I went back after the walk to look at the Horseshoe vetch as last year we saw a single male Adonis Blue. No males but a single female Adonis! This gives hope that a colony may establish in the future.

Our tally for the walk was Brimstone 14, Small Blue 68, Green Hairstreak 4, Dingy Skipper 17, Small Heath 24, Common Blue 21, Speckled Wood 3, Grizzled Skipper 5, Holly Blue 3, Brown Argus 3, Small Tortoiseshell 1, Small Copper 1, Meadow Brown 2 and Large Skipper 3. Moths were Cinnabar 7, Mother Shipton 2, Burnet Companion 2, Yellow Shell 1 and a host of Grass Veneers. Not bad at all.

I am heading up the invertebrate survey on the Bradenham Estate and the sightings will be included in the report that will help inform future management of the site in favour of invertebrates.

Thank you to Brenda for jointly leading the walk and for the 14 people who joined us.

## Conservation Work Parties

You might combine a walk around the site with a brief session of work. Nobody has to work for the entire session but obviously you may. There are a variety of tasks and no great strength is required. Tools and full instructions are provided. **Please bring a drink and a snack.**

All work parties start at **10.00 a.m.** unless otherwise stated. At Holtspur Bottom and Aston Upton they usually finish about 13.00 though in good weather conditions they may continue until about 14.00. PLEASE, **ALWAYS** CONTACT THE TASK LEADER IN ADVANCE.

**Details frequently change** according to weather, number of volunteers etc. The planned work and contact detail for each event will be shown on the Events page of the UTB website.

<b>Holtspur Bottom</b> Meeting point: SU918906 HP9 1BT Contact: Nick Bowles 01442 382276		All on Sunday
3 Nov 2019	guided walk, planting & scrub control	
8 Dec 2019	'scrape' weeding, scrub control & hedge laying	
5 Jan 2020	scrub control, hedging & bonfire (if dry)	
26 Jan 2020	as above plus planting	
23 Feb 2020	to be decided. Please check before attending	

**Aston Upthorpe** Meeting point: at the grain dryer, SU550844  
Contact: Jim Asher 01865 391727 jim.asher@btinternet.com

All on Sunday

20 Oct 19	24 Nov 19	15 Dec 19	12 Jan 20	16 Feb 20
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There will be many other conservation events through the winter and sites where we expect to work are listed below. Unfortunately, for a variety of reasons, the dates are not decided as we go to publication. Please check the Events page of the Upper Thames branch website for details as they become clear.

Aston Upthorpe Oxon. Private site  
Arcott MOD land near Bicester, Oxon.  
Bradenham Bucks. National Trust  
Buttlers Hangings, Bucks. Private site  
Caversham Lakes, Reading Private site  
Deanfield Bucks. Private site  
Grangelands , Bucks. BBOWT  
Maidenhead Thicket, Berks National Trust  
Milestone Wood, Reading  
Moor Wood, Lane End, Bucks. Private site  
Saunderton, Bucks. Private site  
Shotover Park, Oxford. Oxford City Council  
Wardrobes, Bucks. Private site  
Upton disused rail track, Oxon. Sustrans

## New Members

## Brenda Mobbs

Since the last newsletter 25 new members have joined and the membership is now over 1808. The more members we have the more we can achieve as a branch. Please encourage your friends to join Butterfly Conservation either on the website or by leaflet. Please let me know if you would like any membership leaflets to pass on.

A warm welcome to all new members who have joined since the last newsletter was published.

7 from Berkshire  
8 from Buckinghamshire  
10 from Oxfordshire

All of you are welcome to join field meetings, work parties and attend Members' Day and will be invited to a New Members' Day.

## BROWN HAIRSTREAK WINTER EGG HUNTS

*Because the adult Brown Hairstreak is quite an elusive beast, looking for eggs on blackthorn during the winter months is the best way to map the distribution of the species. A limited number of sites, spread across our local population, are also visited annually by a group of us and searched thoroughly, the results enabling the Branch to monitor the health of the butterfly from year to year.*

*Anyone is very welcome to join us – no previous experience is required! It would be useful if you could bring a hand lens (x10) or small magnifying glass but otherwise no equipment is needed. Please wear warm clothing and waterproof footwear. It is also a good idea to bring a warm drink to revive you after a couple of hours in the field.*

*In the past the weather or other circumstances beyond our control have sometimes caused a search to be postponed or cancelled, occasionally at the last minute, so if you do intend to join us it is important that you **please let Dave Wilton know by the evening before**, preferably by e-mail to [wilton@burnhamlodge.plus.com](mailto:wilton@burnhamlodge.plus.com) (otherwise via text or telephone to 07710 864097). Where changes are known about in sufficient time, information will be posted on the branch website (<http://upperthames-butterflies.org.uk/>).*

*This winter's programme of searches will include the following:*

### **Sunday 17th November: Slade Camp, Shotover, Oxford (10.30am – 1pm)**

Meet in the retail car-park at grid reference SP555050 on the west side of the A4142 Oxford Eastern By-pass (turn off the A4142 at the Horspath Driftway traffic lights then take the first left into the retail park). The area to be searched is immediately opposite on the east side of the by-pass.

### **Saturday 14th December: Rushbeds Wood BBOWT Reserve (10.30am – 1pm)**

Meet in the small BBOWT car-park at grid reference SP672154. This is accessed from Kingswood Road via a track across the railway, the entrance to which is about 100 metres north of the junction with the Wotton to Brill road. If the car-park is full then further space for parking is available by the road junction.

### **Wednesday 1st January 2020: Otmoor RSPB Reserve (10.30am – 1pm)**

Meet in the RSPB Reserve car-park (grid reference SP570127) for our traditional New Year's Day egg search. The car-park is accessed via Otmoor Lane, leading north out of Beckley.

### **Saturday 29th February 2020: Bernwood Meadows, Bucks (10.30am – 1pm)**

Meet in the main Oakley Wood car-park for Bernwood Forest (grid reference SP611116) off the road between Stanton St John and Oakley. We will walk from there to the meadows (the forest path is often quite muddy so wellies are recommended). There is a good deal of blackthorn to be searched so it would be helpful to have as many participants as possible!

**Could you help with any of the tasks listed below?**

With meetings	With direct conservation	With organisation
Physical help; e.g. putting out chairs, erecting displays	Use hand tools at conservation tasks	Maintain a database or spreadsheet
Meet and greet people attending meetings	Use power tools at conservation tasks	Lead a walk, or invite others to view your moth trap
Help with catering, e.g. pour the tea, make a cake	Help to store and transport tools	Help to man our stall at fairs and events
Put together a display to show at meetings	Grow plants for reserves	Help with publicity and promotion
Write accounts/take photos of meetings (indoor & out)	Record butterflies & moths locally	Help to arrange events
Run the raffle or a quiz	Run a moth trap & record the catch	Contribute to: our website, our Twitter feed, our Facebook page or our newsletter
Provide facilities for meetings, e.g. rooms, laptops	Join and survey as part of a team	
Help with finance	Walk a transect	Join a committee
Consider a legacy to leave money to BC	Travel to record in under-recorded areas	
Arrange a token collection at Waitrose	Organise a team of surveyors	
Organise a fund raising event	Become a 10km square champion	
Take the newsletter electronically	Become a species champion	

Please tell us of any additional ideas

**Thank you**

**Apology**

The cover photo in the last issue was of a Large Heath not a Small Heath. The spots were far too large for it to be the latter.

## Bicester scrub bash dates

Your chance to help with the conservation of two of our rarest butterflies - Black and Brown Hairstreaks. All tools and gloves provided by Chiltern Rangers. Please contact [steph@chilternrangers.co.uk](mailto:steph@chilternrangers.co.uk) for more information and to book your place! All sessions start at 10am.

Friday 27th September 2019  
Monday 28th October 2019  
Friday 22nd November 2019  
Monday 16th December 2019  
Saturday 25th January 2020  
Friday 21st February 2020

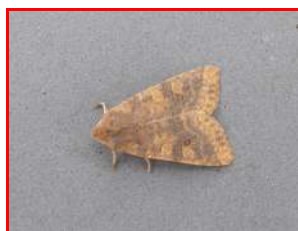
## Autumn Moths



Cosmopolitan  
Martin Harvey



Grey Shoulder-knot  
Andy Newbold



Dusky-lemon Sallow  
Mark Griffiths



Brick  
Dave Wilton



Dotted Chestnut  
Adam Basset



Red-green Carpet  
Andy Newbold

In Buckinghamshire, the Bucks Invertebrate Group organise a lot of field trips which include studying butterflies and especially moths. Their list of field trips is available on their web site.

<https://sites.google.com/site/bucksinvertebrategroup/Home>

In Berkshire, the Berkshire Moth Group hold regular meetings on the second Thursday of every month. They organise other events as well. Refer to their web site for details. <https://sites.google.com/site/berksmoths/Home>

### Upper Thames Branch Website

[www.upperthames-butterflies.org.uk](http://www.upperthames-butterflies.org.uk)

<http://butterfly-conservation.org/288/upper-thames-branch.html>

Have your butterfly sightings and photos posted on the website by sending them to: [sightings@upperthames-butterflies.org.uk](mailto:sightings@upperthames-butterflies.org.uk) or [www.upperthames-butterflies.org.uk/submit\\_sightings](http://www.upperthames-butterflies.org.uk/submit_sightings)

Upper Thames Branch Moth Sightings Blog

<http://upperthamesmoths.blogspot.co.uk>

Follow us on Facebook

<https://www.facebook.com/Butterflies.Berkshire.Buckinghamshire.Oxfordshire>

and Twitter - [@UpperThamesBC](https://twitter.com/UpperThamesBC)

and Instagram - [utb\\_butterfly\\_conservation](https://www.instagram.com/utb_butterfly_conservation)

Holtspur Bottom Reserve

<http://www.holtspurbottom.info>

## Upper Thames Branch Officers

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