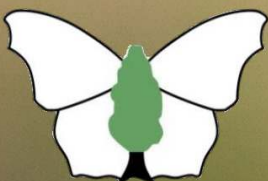


Hairstreak

No 107 Spring 2020



**Butterfly
Conservation**



**Upper Thames
Branch**



Long-tailed Blue
(*Lampides boeticus*)

Long-tailed Blue
1st in Overseas Butterflies Category and Overall Winner

Tony Gillie



Silver-studded Blues

1st in New Entrants Category

Phil Tizzard

*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*

Contact details are:

David Ferguson
21 Amersham Road, Beaconsfield, Bucks, HP9 2HA
davidm.ferguson@tiscali.co.uk

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Cover photo: Brown Argus by Mark Searle

Background: Strawberry Bank, 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)

The Climate Crisis is an important issue for some but the Extinction Crisis still hasn't emerged as a key public concern. So, as we review 2019 and look ahead to the opportunities of the coming year, I really hope that there will be more focus on the very real need to act to conserve living creatures and especially the smaller ones that everything else depends upon.

Our winter conservation work has already seen us return to various regular haunts and take in new sites as well. Obviously, as a conservation society this work to maintain habitats is our primary focus and I'm so grateful to all the members that turned out with us (and our fellow conservation societies) to help keep them in good condition. I sit on a committee that considers the status of (mostly private) sites once designated as of high biological significance. Since designation very many have lost biodiversity, either neglected, or manicured and tidied until virtually no wildlife remains. Their decline helps fuel my passion for the work we do. If you want to see a reports on our conservation work look at our Twitter feed <https://twitter.com/UpperThamesBC> or Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/Butterflies.Berkshire.Buckinghamshire.Oxfordshire>

Our society also does a large amount of admin work. Some long-serving committee members retired (thanks Jan and Tony) but a number of people stepped forward to offer to help with specific tasks. One long standing member of our Conservation subcommittee received a national award from BC and a newer committee member received awards from BBOWT and the NBN. They both were very deserving but the myriad actions by so many of us are what make a bigger difference – so whilst this isn't national acclaim – I would like to thank each of you that submitted records, grew plants, led a guided walk, helped on one of our stalls at a public event, took on a survey, organised something for us, came along to a conservation task or attended a UTB meeting and showed us your support.

One volunteer helps with fund raising and delighted in achieving funding of £1,550 towards new free standing display stands. Our old display boards were held together with duct tape and stood on tables, restricting space for our leaflets and books. Others took advantage of schemes to train power tool operatives. We more than doubled the number of volunteers with certification to use chainsaws (now 2) and brushcutters (now 5). Another volunteer planted the 196th UTB Elm tree in December, slowly rebuilding the local population and helping the invertebrates that feed on Elm.

Volunteers are also involved in various schemes with many large organisations, as we have the expertise and above all, the data to truly inform their decision making about habitat management. 2019 saw the end of the latest 5 year butterfly recording effort. Once again, our membership did a truly amazing job with records received for every single 'square' totally within the UTB area and for virtually all those on the border too.

Despite our ever increasing recording efforts, almost everyone tells me that they see fewer butterflies and moths each year; and each issue I ask that you might consider how **you** could help them recover their numbers and expand their ranges.

Evidence shows that directed conservation effort will convert dwindling numbers into expanding populations. So please consider attending the training sessions we run, check our events page regularly and join us in the field, <https://www.upperthames-butterflies.org.uk/events>. Those already there would love to welcome you into their warm embrace.

Gardening for Butterflies

Nick Bowles

with kind permission of Bryan Russell and adapted from an article first published in the Cambs. and Essex branch newsletter

This is a headline that draws the eye but often seems to disappoint. So many times have I started reading the article and someone tells me that buddleia bushes or lavender attract butterflies – and that's it.

I would like to expand the conversation so that 'Gardening for Butterflies' means the creation of an environment for the entire life cycle of the butterfly. Firstly, there is not a garden big enough to create habitat for every species, and so, by working in reverse, the question is 'what is the smallest area possible that allows a species a full life cycle?'

Number one in this list has to be the Brimstone which requires a medium sized flower pot and a Buckthorn plant with more than about ten leaves placed in a sunny position.

The butterflies that 'wander' from where they hatch have all developed amazingly high abilities to smell out their caterpillar food plant, and the Brimstone

certainly falls into this category. Although Buckthorn can become quite a large bush, the eggs are more normally laid on the smallest plants, in sunshine, so a plant of 18" high almost anywhere, even a window box, should attract egg-laying females. The caterpillar leaves the plant to pupate, normally on something reasonably solid and dry such as the bottom of a hedge, so it would help if the plant pot was as nearby as possible to something



Brimstone laying eggs on Alder Buckthorn
© Matt Berry

similar when the caterpillars reach full size.

In fact, a buckthorn bush is not unattractive and so easy to grow that any garden without one should have to pay extra council tax. (This is not official BC policy).

Buckthorn has two forms that feed Brimstone caterpillars:



Common (or Purging) Buckthorn
Rhamnus cathartica
(Once used as a laxative)



Alder Buckthorn
Frangula alnus
(berries also eaten by
Holly Blue caterpillars
but deadly poisonous
to us)

The Wider Countryside Butterfly Survey Zoe Randall

The Wider Countryside Butterfly Survey (WCBS) aims to improve the data on the population status of butterflies across the countryside as a whole. This is important given that most site-based monitoring via the UKBMS is biased towards good quality semi-natural habitat relatively rich in butterflies. The WCBS complements conventional transect recording and generates high quality data on the population status, i.e. the abundance of common and widespread butterflies.

The WCBS is both scientifically sound (by sampling of the countryside through randomly generated 1km squares) and efficient (a scheme with fewer visits than the traditional 26 weeks per year UKBMS transect scheme) but still with sufficient statistical power to detect change in butterfly populations across the countryside. The WCBS has added hugely to the power of our monitoring schemes adding almost 800 'sites' to the amazing 1,800 transects walked.

Surveyors are asked to plan and walk two 1 km routes, ideally separated by 500m in a randomly chosen 1x1km square. This should be done twice in peak season (July-August) and ideally twice more during May to August. Once established a WCBS square can be monitored annually provided that recorders are willing and able to do so; indeed many squares have been continually monitored since the start of the scheme in 2009. We need your help – uptake in the Upper Thames Branch area is low and it would be great if it could be improved. The scheme is a great way to get involved in butterfly monitoring that doesn't require a huge time commitment, time being a commodity that is incredibly valuable and scarce in modern living.

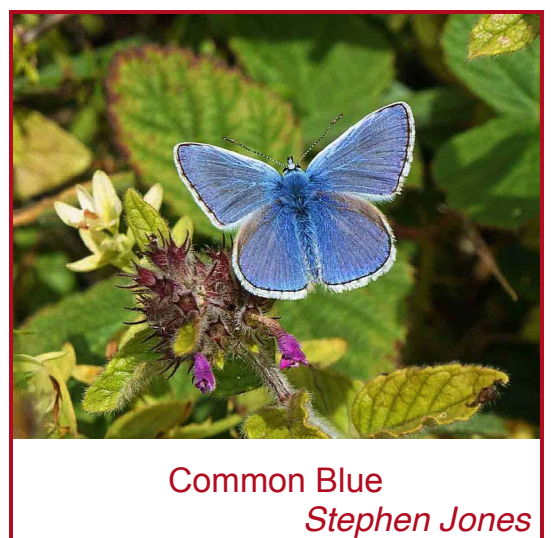
There are opportunities for members to participate in the WCBS; to find out what squares are available near to you please contact Mike Wilkins (mikeawilkins@googlemail.com) the WCBS Upper Thames Branch Champion or Zoë Randle (survey@butterfly-conservation.org) the UK Co-ordinator.

A number of our members have adopted a 10k square, coordinating the recording for the current butterfly atlas, which runs from 2015 – 2019. The report below describes how some of them have been getting on in 2019.

Margaret Price looks after SP41, which lies to the north-west of Oxford, roughly centred on Woodstock. In the final year of the butterfly atlas, Margaret has also been very active, visiting some of the less well recorded areas of north and west Oxfordshire. She comments that farmers are often given a very bad press especially when it comes to conservation issues. However, she found that without field margins and corners of fields left uncultivated but often planted with wild flower mixes and grasses, the number of species and butterflies would have been considerably less. Also the sympathetic cutting of roadside verges makes a huge difference. One site comes to mind, a crossroads on the A3400 with very wide flower-rich verges. The plants were not very tall but supported a wealth of butterflies. A couple of weeks later she went by and tragically the council had cut it and unnecessarily destroyed a wonderful habitat.

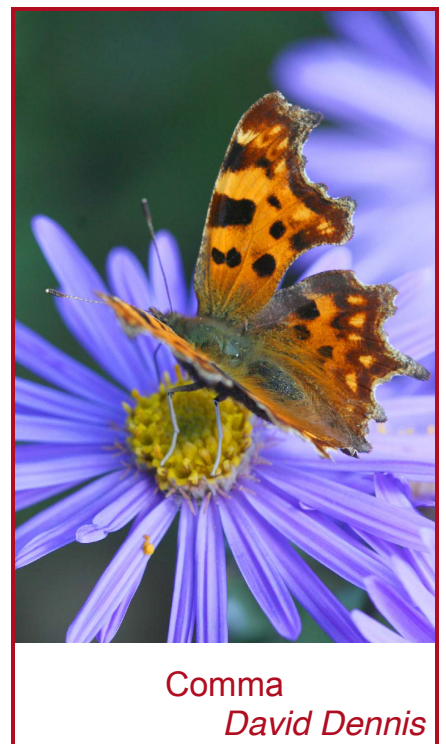
David Cooling has taken on SP70, which lies to the east of Thame, straddling the Oxfordshire / Buckinghamshire border. He had been recording butterflies for several years, visiting obscure places around West London, including Heathrow Airport. Having moved into Buckinghamshire earlier this year, he thought that volunteering to help cover SP70 would be a great way to get see some butterflies in the local countryside. What he noticed most was the marked difference in the quantity and variety of butterflies depending on the landscapes, with crops and improved grass fields being desert-like, while chalk grassland and old meadows were more successful. Even in dense agricultural land there were still the odd bits of scrub or trees that hosted many butterflies. He started too late to see early spring butterflies. He was very lucky to see one rather tatty White-letter Hairstreak in Ilmer amongst many other butterflies. Oddly though he found only 1-2 Small Copper and Common Blue, both of which he thought would have been more common.

SU76, which lies to the south of a line from South Reading to Wokingham in Berkshire, has been without a 10k Champion for much of the current atlas period, but a number of local members have been dropping in to help fill in some of the gaps. Jan Haseler, who was the 10k Champion until 2014, when she moved west one square to SU66, comments that an enormous amount of development has taken place in the intervening time. The University of Reading has sold a lot of farmland south of the M4 at Shinfield and the MOD has sold the Arborfield Barracks site. There have been other big housing developments at Three Mile Cross, Spencers Wood and Winnersh, and most of the surrounding villages have also had some additional homes

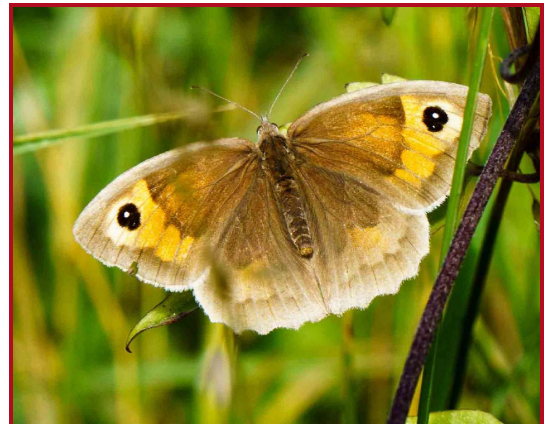


built. The only positive outcome for the local butterfly population has been the SANGs or Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspaces. Any major development within 7 km of the fragile Thames Basin Heaths should also include a SANG, to take visitor and dog-walking pressure off the vulnerable heathland. Mike Turton has been doing a dragonfly survey for Wokingham Borough Council at the Hazebrouk SANG at Arborfield and he has also been recording the butterflies at the same time. So far, he has recorded 16 species, including Green Hairstreak, Small Copper, Brown Argus, Common Blue and Marbled White. This area of flowery acid grassland, scrub and woodland was previously behind an MOD security fence and inaccessible to butterfly recorders. Langley Mead, north of the River Loddon at Shinfield, is the SANG which has been provided by the University of Reading. Green hay from BBOWT's Moor Copse reserve, which includes the Coronation Meadows for Berkshire, was spread on the meadows to improve the floral diversity, areas were planted up with wildflower mixes and other parts were planted up with young broad-leaved trees. The 18 species on Mike's butterfly list for Langley Mead include Large and Small Skipper, Painted Lady, Small Tortoiseshell, Comma and Peacock.

Stephanie Brown looks after SU77, which includes Reading and the area to the north-east. It is a mainly urban or suburban area, but also contains a variety of habitats from patches of mixed woodland and open farmland, to riverine and managed parks/nature reserves. This year, Stephanie set about trying to increase the number of species in the areas with poor recording levels, such as the open arable areas north east of Reading and the urban/suburban areas around Reading and Woodley. At the end of this Atlas period, 21 of the 25 tetrads now have 20 or more species. The remaining four have more than 16 species each. It was a lovely warm summer so perfect for butterfly walks, down leafy lanes, along glittering rivers, through dry crop fields and quiet churchyards. Her overall impression is that 2019 was a better year for our Berkshire butterflies than 2018. It was better for both the number of species and in species numbers. Particular stars this year compared to last year were Brimstone, Holly Blue, Orange-tip and Painted Lady. Large and Small White, Speckled Wood, Meadow Brown, Gatekeeper and Ringlet were plentiful, and it was encouraging to see Marbled and Green-veined White at a few sites. Blues, Peacocks and Red Admirals also seemed more plentiful. Finally but not least, this year Stephanie had the support of Sophie Payne, who has now taken over as 10k Champion for SU77, as she has now moved on to pastures new. Stephanie reports that Sophie is equally passionate about butterflies and she is sure she will make a great Champion and she wishes her every success for the coming Atlas period.



This was Andy Spragg's first year as 10k champion for SU79, a square which includes both Aston Rowant and Yoesden Bank. Inherited record counts per tetrad for the last five years thus ranged from the sublime (more than 5,000) to the ridiculous (0). He focussed on circular walks in order to explore as much under-recorded territory as possible. For each of 25 species, he added at least one record to at least one tetrad in which the species was unrecorded in the last five years. Top of that list was the Small Heath (11 new tetrads); good news considering its priority species status. Equal second were Peacock and Comma (nine new tetrads each). Five species now have records for every tetrad: Meadow Brown (added in seven tetrads), Speckled Wood (added in 6 tetrads), Orange-tip and Brimstone (each added in five tetrads), and Small White (added in four tetrads). Brown Argus, Marbled White, Ringlet and Gatekeeper (six new tetrads each) were all nice surprises in that he saw a lot more of them than anticipated. Dingy Skipper and Dark Green Fritillary (one new tetrad each) were wonderful surprises in that he did not expect to see them at all. Small Copper (one new tetrad) was disappointing because he had hoped to see more.



Meadow Brown
Stephen Jones

Martin Robinson looks after SU88, which lies due south of High Wycombe and is bisected by the River Thames into two roughly equal halves, the northern half being in Buckinghamshire and the southern part in Berkshire. The square contains various diverse landscapes including managed and unmanaged woodland, agricultural land laid to crops, meadows and chalk grasslands and features the urban areas of Maidenhead in the south east corner and Marlow pretty much in the centre. The tetrad jewel in the crown is probably Homefield Wood, a BBOWT site of Special Scientific Interest. This section contains mixed woodland with open rides and a small meadow area. Unsurprisingly this tetrad tops the list for the number of species in the square – 28 – and includes White Admiral, White-letter Hairstreak and Dingy and Grizzled Skipper. In the previous five year cycle (2010–2014) Martin was fortunate to record a female Purple Emperor, but none in the last five years. By contrast, in the urban areas of Maidenhead, he observed only 12 species, but churchyards and any uncultivated spaces (including an area in St Mark's hospital grounds!) provide small oases in which Common Blue, Holly Blue and grassland butterflies can find a foothold. Butterfly recording always continues to throw up surprises and he has found a colony of Grizzled and Dingy Skippers in a small area of private land no more than 500 metres from his home. Other highlights for Martin were the discovery of two colonies of Small Blues, one near Maidenhead



Holly Blue
David Dennis

Thicket, and a population of Green Hairstreaks on the top of the escarpment at Cockmarsh near Bourne End overlooking the Thames. Major changes over the last five years include the continuing spectacular rise of the Silver-washed Fritillary which now occurs in 15 of the 25 tetrads (compared to nine tetrads from 2010 to 2014) and a doubling in the number of sightings. Another encouraging trend is the gradual recovery of the Small Tortoiseshell from its nadir in 2012 when he didn't see a single insect in any of the tetrads. Roll on the next five years and whatever they may bring!

Nick Bowles looks after SP91, which lies to the north of Tring and straddles the border of Buckinghamshire with Hertfordshire and Bedfordshire. He found a pleasing number of Small Tortoiseshells and every one of the rarer species that are breeding in the square but completely failed to find White-letter Hairstreak for another year. So the square has virtually no records over the last five years, just one 2017 record in one tetrad which is an area with little Elm and a recorder he does not know, another two in 2017 and one in 2018 at College Lake BBOWT seen by transect walkers – close to some remnant Elm on the railway line. These are the only records for this 10km square – and this disappearance from more regular sightings previously seems odd when others seemed to be finding them more easily in 2018 and 2019. The various part tetrads, with tiny bits of Buckinghamshire in them, proved difficult to survey; being both some distance from home and relatively uninspiring bits of farmland. One such fragment proved very hard to populate with any number of species because a once fallow field that provided a few species is now back in cultivation and apart from a short section of roadside and a very large and extremely tidy garden there is nowhere in the square to survey. Spring was the most pleasing time as he found Brimstone in every tetrad in SP91 – but then failed to add Brimstone in some empty tetrads in North Buckinghamshire.

We have a number of 10k squares across the 3 counties, particularly in the north and west of the region, where we are looking for one or more volunteers to help coordinate recording. The map below shows whether squares are already adopted, need additional help or are unassigned. If you think you could help, please contact Jan Haseler. (Tel: 0118 9414750, email jan.haseler@btinternet.com).



College Lake

David Ferguson

			SP45				SP85 C	SP95 C	
		SP34 C	SP44 C	SP54	SP64	SP74	SP84 C	SP94 C	
	SP23	SP33 C	SP43	SP53	SP63	SP73	SP83	SP93	
	SP22	SP32	SP42	SP52 C	SP62 ?	SP72 ?	SP82 ?	SP92 ?	
	SP21	SP31 C	SP41 C	SP51 ?	SP61 C	SP71	SP81 C	SP91 ?	TL01
	SP20 C	SP30	SP40 C	SP50 C	SP60 C	SP70	SP80 C	SP90 C	TL00 ?
	SU29 C	SU39 C	SU49 C	SU59 C	SU69 C	SU79	SU89 C	SU99 C	TQ09 ?
	SU28 C	SU38 C	SU48 C	SU58 C	SU68 C	SU78 C	SU88 C	SU98 C	TQ08 ?
	SU27	SU37 C	SU47 C	SU57 C	SU67 C	SU77 ?	SU87 C	SU97 ?	TQ07 C
		SU36	SU46 ?	SU56 C	SU66 C	SU76	SU86 C	SU96	
		SU35							

Key

SP20 C	10K Champion In place	SP62 ?	More help wanted	SP30	Vacant square
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I took on the role of 10k champion for the first time in 2019, for OS square SU79. The picture shows the map I made to hang on my wall, when I was still waiting for the weather to warm up! I had ample time to do a good job, thanks to a four month sabbatical from work, but no previous recording experience to build on, only a lifetime of interest in butterflies. A new five-year recording cycle is looming, so now is the perfect time to become a new 10k champion. The prospect can be a bit daunting, but the rewards for taking the plunge are considerable. I thought potential new recruits might benefit from my own experience.

As a 10k champion, you will be supplied with a spreadsheet that gives you all the records for your 10k square from the last several years, to inform your planning. 10k squares are divided into 25 2km x 2km “tetrads”. The record counts I inherited for my 25 tetrads ranged from more than 5,000 (thanks to Aston Rowant National Nature Reserve) to fewer than 10, and in one case, 0. Your role is to add value by going where the records *aren't*. Does a tetrad have few or no records because there are no butterflies there, or just because no-one has looked? That exciting question is now yours to answer for your newly-adopted 10k square.

I decided that the best way to answer it was to plan circular walks within each tetrad. I used Anquet OS software, for which I already had a license (I believe other, free alternatives are available). I printed out an A4 map of the tetrad I was visiting and took it with me, not only so I knew where I was going, but also so I could note down a species code wherever I saw anything. At the end of the day, back at home, I used my OS software to retrace my steps and read off the six-figure grid reference for each sighting, in order to complete records for the day.

Between late March and late August, I made 60 field trips, on average walking four miles on each, at an average speed of about 1 mph, losing a stone in weight in the process. (It sounds slow, but all being well, you will spend much less time walking than you will spend hanging around watching butterflies). I added more than 1,600 records to the Butterfly Conservation database, split almost equally between my 10k square and elsewhere. I developed a pretty serious spreadsheet to analyse my data, so amongst much other information, I know that on average, for every tetrad in my 10k square, I added records for five species unrecorded in the previous five years. I recorded 30 species in all, four of which I had never seen before, including Dark Green Fritillary on my last day before returning to work. What a swan song!

I want to finish with a few do's and don'ts!

Do: [attend a Butterfly Conservation training day](#). It's a great opportunity to meet like-minded people, ask lots of questions and get enthused.

Do: [check the area and parking beforehand](#). There is an extensive network of footpaths and bridleways, but it intersects with the road network to only a limited extent, and if you just turn up where you plan to start, assuming you will be able to park somewhere convenient, you may well be disappointed. So it is a good idea to do your homework before the weather starts to warm up!

Do: [take a small rucksack or shoulder bag](#). I started with a rucksack, but found it made my back very sweaty, and I changed to a small shoulder bag. Much better choice. Before you set out, make sure it always contains: map and pen (and spare pens), camera, mobile phone, water or squash, something to nibble (block dates are good), kagoule (it might rain), spare T-shirt (if you sweat freely; it might be mega-hot!), and secateurs (you may need to do some trimming, here and there, to facilitate onwards progress).

Don't: [rely on phone GPS for location recording](#). I started out thinking I would write down what I saw in a notebook, and use an app to read off the six-figure grid reference. Forget it. The first time I went out, the app only updated twice the whole time I was out. The second time I was out, it spent much of the walk telling me I was in an adjacent tetrad to the one I knew I was in. I have concluded that GPS is unreliable in woods or in the vicinity of steep gradients, both of which are likely to be the case often enough to be showstoppers. Good old-fashioned technology is your friend. Print a map and write on it.

Don't [plan a route that goes too close to the edge of the map](#). It is all too easy to get lost when your planned route changes direction near the edge of the map, as I found several times to my cost!





Passionate about the wildlife of the Chilterns? Want to carry out bird, butterfly or plant surveys in new and unexplored areas? Want to improve your ID and survey skills? Want to help train new wildlife surveyors? *Tracking the Impact* might be of interest

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

New surveying opportunities will be on offer not only for experienced surveyors but also the next generation through a species ID and survey training package.

Working across 50 1km survey squares, the project will dovetail with existing national recording schemes (Breeding Bird Survey, Wider Countryside Butterfly Survey and National Plant Monitoring Scheme) to bolster coverage in a ground-breaking new partnership.

The project will offer opportunities to explore new sites in the area and the data will be used to track trends across the landscape and inform practical woodland, grassland and farmland habitat management projects.



Roy MacDonald

Is the Duke of Burgundy expanding its range?



Roy MacDonald

Where are Corn Buntings breeding?

If your interest is in birds, butterflies and/or plants we are offering exciting new opportunities to:

- ! take on new survey squares and get involved in national recording schemes
- ! receive training in species ID and survey techniques
- ! offer training and support to new volunteer surveyors

The project will last initially for 4 years and will start in spring 2020. We are looking for volunteers to carry out surveys during the spring and summer and would love to hear from you if you:

- ! are an experienced surveyor and are keen to take on a new patch
- ! have some species ID experience but would like some training to help you develop
- ! are new to surveying and want some training on specific survey methods

By getting involved you will both be making a big difference to your local wildlife in the Chilterns and be contributing to national recording schemes. We will also be offering the chance to meet with other surveyors and to get feedback on the project at regular workshops and events.



Allen Beechey



Nick Marriner

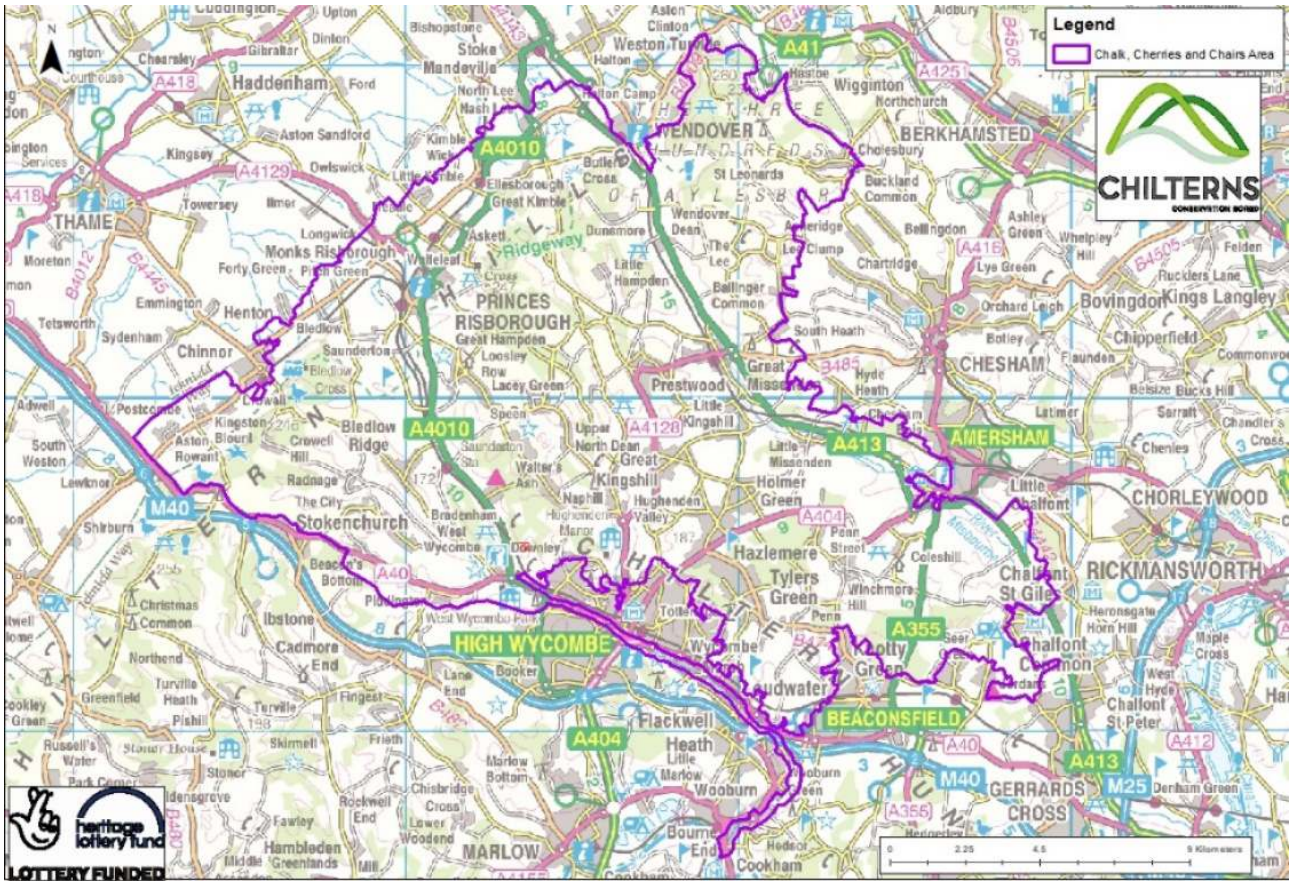
Are there any undiscovered local populations of Chiltern Gentian or new species-rich grassland areas?

Tracking the Impact is part of 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

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 07785 527108



Central Chilterns project area (outlined in purple)

Wanted Large Tent or Marquee for 5 days

In recent years the Upper Thames Branch interacted with tens of thousands of people at the BBC's Countryfile Live event. Held at Blenheim Palace, in early August, the organisers gave an area to BBOWT to develop as a Wildlife Zone and provided large tents, erected free of charge, to encourage our attendance. It proved an effective platform to meet and spread our conservation message.

In 2020 the event is being organised by new people, in late August and in Windsor Great Park. Unfortunately, though once again BBOWT will create a Wildlife Zone and hope we will join them, no tent will be provided.

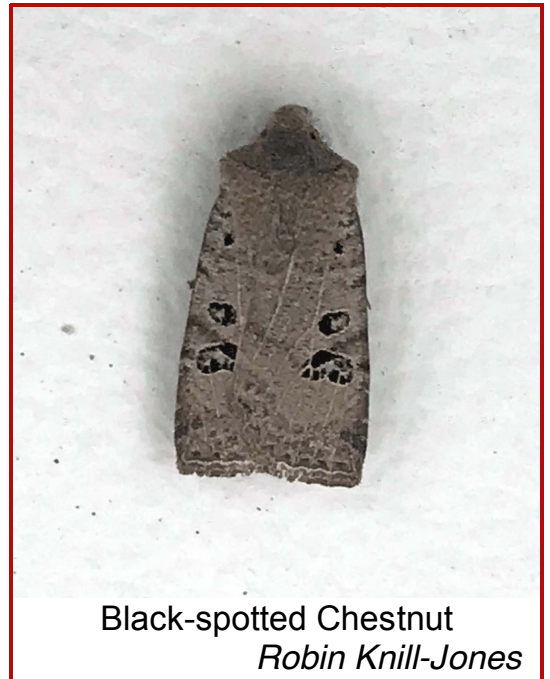
So, we need a large, weatherproof tent (min size 5m x 5m) which can be erected at Windsor over a period including 19th – 23rd Aug. Can any members help us out please? Contact Nick Bowles nick.bowles@ntlworld.com

Members' Day, 26 Oct 2019, Benson, Oxon Gerry Kendall

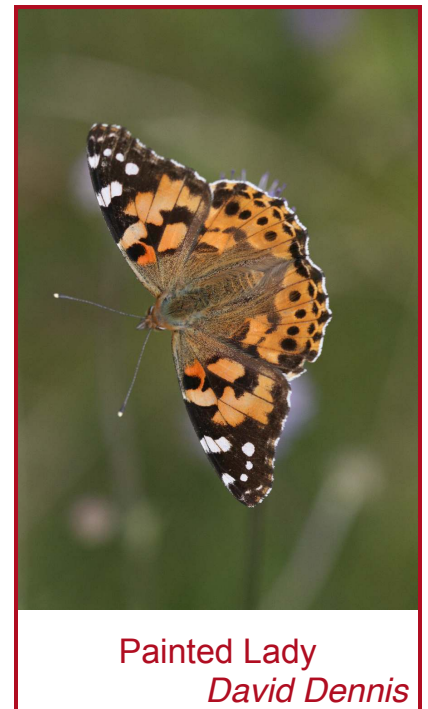
Nick Bowles (UTB) welcomed everyone to the meeting and introduced the first speaker, **Jan Haseler** (UTB), who was to report on how moths had done this year.

Weather is of course a crucial factor for both moths and butterflies. The year started with a lot of sunny, dry weather and it was also very hot at the end of July. But otherwise the year had been unremarkable. The general picture seemed to be that the number of moth species seen had been good, though the numbers of individuals was a bit low. Great interest centres on unusual sightings and on species that are doing strikingly well or badly. Moths, of course are around throughout the year and it was in early January that a Black-spotted Chestnut, a new record for Buckinghamshire, came to a trap in Denham. Black-spotted Chestnut was first recorded in the UK in Kent in 2011 and seems to be settling in. Those who like their moths large and showy will be delighted to hear that the Clifden Nonpareil (or Blue Underwing) is continuing its recolonisation of Southern England. Jan made special mention of fourteen-year-old Jack Jones who caught a rare, large and spectacular Dark Crimson Underwing in a trap loaded with rotten banana.

Nick Bowles (UTB) reviewed how well our various butterfly species had fared in our area in 2019. He adopted his usual technique of Socratic dialogue with the audience, though he was more inclined than Socrates to change his view. The general conclusion was that this year, even more than usual, things had varied from place to place. Some people reported, for example, Painted Ladies in the hundreds while others were delighted to find the odd individual. Inevitably, overall some species had done better than usual and others worse. But cheerily, there seemed no general sense that the losses outweighed the gains. One factor that emerged was the probable effect of parasites and parasitoids (which, unlike parasites, kill their host) on some species. Holly Blue was an example. If our impromptu analysis was correct they will be quite scarce next Spring.



Black-spotted Chestnut
Robin Knill-Jones



Painted Lady
David Dennis

Tony Gillie (UTB) reported on the Branch's reserve at Holtspur Bottom. This had started as a standard rye grass agricultural field. Under the care of volunteers, it had been transformed into a site where the transect routinely finds the number of butterfly species in the mid-twenties. There had been trials and tribulations on the way – memorably the period when the area turned into wall-to-wall ragwort. But it now seems to be mature. Tony emphasized the enormous contribution made by the late Frank Banyard in setting up and developing the reserve.

Nick Marriner reported on The Chiltern Landscape Project, an ambitious scheme, backed by the Heritage Lottery Fund, to improve the landscape for a wide variety of wildlife, not just butterflies. It was good to hear that a great deal of attention is being given to improving the connectedness of pockets of prime habitat. An important early step in the project is survey work. Volunteers should contact Nick.

Roger Dobbs (UTB) gave an entertaining talk on thirty years' experience of practical conservation work in Bowdown Woods, just north of Greenham Common. His subtitle, "Blood, Sweat and Tears" sounded all too apt, though luckily the blood was almost always metaphorical. Bowden Woods is a SSSI because of its diversity of deciduous woodland. Although it is next to an area flat enough to provide a landing strip for heavy aircraft, Bowden Woods itself is on a steep slope and is crossed by several deep gullies formed by the run-off from melting glaciers. By one of those mysterious twists of fate, whenever a heavy, awkward item (think a big fence-post) must be moved within the woods it has to go up the slope and across the gullies. These problems aside, the site presents the usual problems of coppicing that needs re-cutting and scrub that needs controlling. There are also competing wildlife interests – warblers might have liked to nest in the scrub you just cleared.

Zoë Randle (BC Head Office) spoke about the Wider Countryside Butterfly Survey (WCBS). This is an attempt to improve our knowledge about common species in poorly monitored areas. Surveyors are asked to plan and walk two 1 km routes, ideally separated by 500m in a randomly chosen 1x1 km square. This should be done twice in peak season (July-August) and ideally twice more during May to August. It has to be said that the name "Wider Countryside Butterfly Survey" is a little unfortunate. Those who chose it were thinking "wider than the transects", but overlooking distribution mapping schemes like the familiar UTB Atlas, which cover every square inch of the area concerned. The aim of the atlas is to record every species of butterfly living in an area, conventionally reported as 2x2 km tetrads, though the data collected are finer. The problem with the atlas (apart from its insatiable appetite for recorders' time) is that it has no direct indication of the effort that went in to data collection. An apparent change in distribution might reflect either a genuine change in butterfly populations or just a change in recording effort. Transects and the WCBS involve defined effort, with the latter being much less demanding than the former.

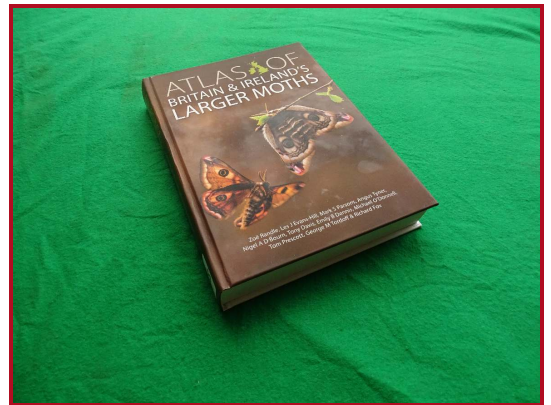


Elsewhere in this issue Zoë appeals for recorders for the WCBS.

The AGM is a necessary part of the day's business but Nick Bowles and the other officers ensured that it went quickly and smoothly. The minutes were approved, the Chairman and Treasurer reported, officers were elected. Two items from the Chairman's report should be mentioned. Nick emphasized the large range of work that the Branch undertook. All this work was done by volunteers and more help was always needed. It was a terrible mistake to hang back, thinking that you lacked useful skills. There had never yet been a volunteer who wasn't useful. And on the subject of volunteers, Phil Penson received an award for many years of invaluable service.

Nick, and other speakers, reminded us of the sad death during the year of Frank Banyard. He had been a long-term member and ex-Chairman of the Branch. He had played a vital role in many aspects of our work. Tony Gillie had spoken of his pivotal role at Holtspur Bottom. Many of us remember with enjoyment and affection the Field Trips that he organised ("Honest Frank's Tours") and which cemented a love of butterflies into the lives of many of us. He is missed and will not be forgotten quickly.

Zoë Randle returned to the podium to talk about the "Atlas of Britain and Ireland's Larger Moths". This had been 12 years in gestation and was produced by Butterfly Conservation and MothsIreland. Many threads had to be brought together to make the work complete. Perhaps unsurprisingly the most troublesome of these was collating and verifying the records of sightings. Much of this detailed work had been carried out by the County Moth Recorders. Many of the questions were the "Dodgy Dots" on distribution maps of sightings far from all other records for the species.



Similarly, "Dodgy Dates" arose when, say a summer species had apparently been recorded in midwinter. Many interesting stories emerged from this detailed and painstaking work. One of the most poignant concerned the Minsmere Crimson Underwing. The only UK specimen was tragically eaten by hornets while caught in a moth trap. But the work on the Atlas is now complete and this handsome volume, with details of over 850 species became available at the end of November. It would make an ideal present for many readers.

You can order your copy here

<https://www.naturebureau.co.uk/atlas-of-britain-irelands-larger-moths>.

Our final speaker was **Steve Wheatley**, Butterfly Regional Conservation Manager for SE England, speaking on the National Conservation Strategy and Regional Action Plan. South East England includes five branches of Butterfly Conservation including, of course, our own. While the plan was aimed at improving the prospects for all butterflies and moths, special attention was given to the 10 highest priority and 12 high priority butterfly species and the 32 highest priority and 88 high priority moths. The highest priority butterflies included Wood White, Duke of Burgundy and Marsh Fritillary. Steve had some encouraging stories about the success of targeted efforts to help specific species. But long term success depended on extending and connecting breeding areas. The picture that emerged was that decisive change required considerable new resources. We must try to be optimistic.

Members' Day is more than just the talks, excellent though these were. The photographic competition was, as ever, a revelation of what can be achieved by the experienced eye and patience. The quiz is an established favourite even with those of us who get very few answers right. The raffle at least gave me an even chance, even if the attractive prizes went elsewhere. Pemberley Books had their usual enticing display. Richard Lewington's paintings were even more irresistible.

No account of Members Day would be complete without a mention of the food. Very many thanks indeed to Gillian Oldfield and the team and thanks too to all those who brought in contributions.

Nick Bowles closed the meeting by thanking everybody who had put in so much effort to make sure that everything "just worked". He made one last bid to squeeze volunteer effort from the audience by reminding them about the tick sheet, which was placed on every chair. But if you missed this opportunity, just get in touch. He pointed out, with justifiable pride that the meeting closed on time, without the extra hour which he claimed would be justified because of the end of Summer Time.



Members' Day photos by Michael Pitt-Payne

Minutes of Annual General Meeting

26th October 2019 at 2.10pm
Parish Hall, Benson, Oxfordshire, OX10 6LZ

Apologies were received from Nick Board, Carol Gibson, Rikki Harrington, Jenny Pearson, Des Sussex, Caz Temple and David White. The **Previous Minutes** were available to all at the meeting. They were accepted and there were no **Matters Arising**.

Chairman's Report: Nick Bowles told us that the Branch continues to grow and as a result we have become more and more effective as an organisation, but the declines in our moths and butterflies continue so it is evermore necessary to keep up our work. We have managed to stabilize the declines of some of the rarest species in our area but we still need to help them recover and we also need to start helping some of the commoner species which are suffering losses. Our "Five Hairstreaks" project is now underway, led by Caz Temple, and Caz will be talking about it at our Conservation Review meeting at CEH Wallingford on 8th February. Our activities can be read about in the newsletter, on our Branch website, on Facebook and on Twitter (although we are in need of help with the latter pair). Once again Nick urged members to opt for the electronic version of the newsletter because if everyone did so this would save us £3,000 annually. Our field trips, web pages and newsletter are entirely the work of ordinary members (not the Committee) and he made the observation that ordinary members across the UK donate the equivalent of £14 million in services to BC as an organisation each year.

Some fellow conservation organisations believe in letting nature take its course but we have seen that taking action can make a real difference. We pick a few species in the greatest of need for special attention and work with a range of partners to help them. Those partners locally include our Councils, Chiltern Rangers, BBOWT, the National Trust, the MoD, the RSPB, Thames Water, Network Rail, the National Grid and a host of private land-owners. The number of tasks we are involved with keeps going up, as do the number of public events we attend, so thanks go to everyone who volunteers to help. There was a tremendous effort put into butterfly recording to complete the final year of our current five year period (2015-2019). For moths we have more work to do but Peter Cuss has taken on responsibility for looking at the priority species and, to try and interest more people in recording moths, he now has a number of moth-traps available for temporary loan (see p23). Our training days for recorders were very well attended, with 25 to 30 participants each time, and we are likely to organise up to six more such days for 2020.

Sadly, our splendid volunteer team at Holtspur Bottom lost Frank Banyard when he passed away on 28th July. Frank was tireless in pursuing his goals, something all of us need to emulate. Nick asked everyone to check the website and newsletter for activities which might interest them, most especially our conservation tasks. We require all manner of assistance and not just from muscle-bound super-heroes! All

sorts of specialist recording goes on where help is required, from single species surveys to more standardised recording. Computer skills, fund-raising abilities and knowledge of social media are other areas where help is needed. Nick made particular mention of Phil Penson, one of our recording stalwarts who was sadly having to put in a reduced effort now due to failing eyesight, and he was presented with a Richard Lewington print by way of thanks from the Branch.

Following further plugs for a work party at Saunderton on 20th January and our Conservation Review morning at Wallingford on 8th February, Nick thanked everyone for attending and reminded us that Upper Thames Branch isn't just the seven or eight volunteer Committee members but is actually the entire local membership of 1,800+.

Treasurer's Report: Chris Woodrow started by drawing everyone's attention to the accounts on the back of the day's programme. He reported that in the financial year to 31st March 2019 the Branch finances continued to show a healthy position. When compared to the previous year, total income decreased by £1,101 and expenditure increased by £3,267. Although increasing Branch membership resulted in a slight increase in subscription funds received from Head Office, our income from donations, grants and fundraising events fell by £3,120.

Receipt of the Holtspur grant had again been erratic, with us receiving funds under the Basic Payment Scheme only at the very end of the financial year. Nothing was received under the Higher Level Stewardship scheme due to a review by Natural England, prior to the ending of the scheme which was expected to happen in this calendar year although it has since been extended until June 2020. In the meantime we have now received an HLS payment in the current financial year.

With regard to expenditure, the cost of the Newsletter has again decreased despite an increase in membership because more members have elected to take it electronically. As it does with most other branches, Head Office is still organising the printing and postage of the hard copies on our behalf, thus saving us a considerable amount of money due to economies of scale and the use of their franking machine, achieving costs that we could not match. The small expenditure for our Holtspur Reserve (£666) was the cost of sheep grazing during the 2017 and 2018 seasons. Expenditure on Other Projects (£423.15) was the cost of conservation work carried out in our region during the year. The increase in expenditure under Donations was a payment of £11,000 to Head Office in support of the Five Hairstreaks Project.

As a result of the foregoing, expenditure exceeded income by £5,385 due mainly to that donation to Head Office, but we had carried forward a balance of £13,716.98 from the previous financial year and were using our available funds appropriately for conservation purposes. Our cash balance in hand at 31st March 2019 was still a healthy £7,882.

Roger Dobbs proposed that the accounts be accepted, this was seconded by Katrina Easterling and carried unanimously.

Election of Officers: Under our rotational system Peter Cuss and Brenda Mobbs were standing down and seeking re-election, while Tony Gillie and Jan Haseler were standing down and not seeking re-election. Jim Asher proposed that those seeking election should be duly elected. This was seconded by Gerry Kendall and carried unanimously. The Committee for 2020 thus comprised the following nine members:

Nick Bowles (Chairman)	Peter Cuss
Grahame Hawker (Vice-chairman)	
Stuart Hodges	Brenda Mobbs
David Roy	Sue Taylor
Dave Wilton (Secretary)	Chris Woodrow (Treasurer)

Nick Bowles, Stuart Hodges, David Roy & Chris Woodrow will be due to stand down and seek re-election in rotation at the AGM in October 2020.

Any Other Business: None was raised.

The meeting closed at 2.40pm.

Thank you very much to everyone who brought food in many and various forms for Members' Day at Benson. It would be impossible to feed the unknown numbers who arrive on the day if these contributions did not appear. Also, very many thanks to all the helpers in the kitchen. With many thanks again to everyone who helped in any way towards the food. Your help will be needed again next year!

Gillian Oldfield

Come over to the dark side

Have you ever fancied having a go at moth trapping? Upper Thames Branch have a number of loan moth traps that are free to borrow for members so why not dip into the world of moths this summer and see what flies in your garden at night? You will be amazed at the beauty and variety of moths, they definitely aren't all brown! All we ask is that you record the moths you catch. Help with identifying species is available and we are hoping to run a couple of beginners' moth trap sessions. Traps are loaned on a first come first served basis and can be picked up from either Caversham (Berks/Oxon border) or Westcott (Bucks). Please email Peter Cuss for details (pj.cuss@gmail.com).

(Health warning: moth trapping can be addictive!)

2019 UTB Photo Competition Report

Pete Thompson

While not quite as hot and dry as 2018, the summer weather supported good populations of many butterfly species. Painted Lady was widely reported to have an excellent year and featured in plenty of positive publicity surrounding the Big Butterfly Count. Perhaps surprisingly then, there were fewer entries in the photo Competition this year: 16 entrants submitted 63 photos, with a very high overall standard. This may be due to the problems experienced with the print version of Hairstreak, so the reminder to enter the competition only appeared a few days before the event; on the other hand, maybe everyone was enjoying the butterflies, or too busy collecting records for the final year of the current Atlas? Unlike in 2018, the results (for the winners at least) were conclusive, so no casting votes were necessary!

The number of categories was one fewer than in recent years, as we closed the experiment with Digital Alteration: while this never produced many entries, I think it did help to clarify in people's minds what is permissible to enter and what is not.

The UK Butterflies section as usual received the most entries overall. In a tight race for third place we had a five-way tie between Mark Chapman (2 photos), Adrian Buckel, John Thacker, and Karen Saxl; but Colin Mather's Gatekeepers were a clear second; and the winner was Tony Gillie's splendid 'At The Bernwood Café' photo of an aberrant Purple Emperor with a Red Admiral, both savouring the rather less than splendid menu item!

In Overseas Butterflies we once again had the opportunity to see images of gorgeously exotic butterflies most of us will never see. We had a tie for third place, this time between Phil Tizzard's *Duillia* Clearwing and Tony Gillie's Spanish Festoon; and another tie for second between Anna Casey's *Idea stollii* and a Plain Tiger by Phil Tizzard. The winner however was Tony Gillie's nectaring Long-tailed Blue, not so exotic-looking but beautifully sharp. Perhaps one year soon we may see this species as a UK Butterfly entry?

Turning to Moths, third was Tony Gillie again with an *Heterogynis* sp.; second was Adrian Buckel's Hummingbird Hawkmoth, but the winner was Colin Mather with his perfectly lit Forester Moth, clearly showing the iridescent individual scales and the antennae detail.

Immature Stages (I'm beginning to detect a pattern here....) In third place was Tony Gillie with a Striped Lychnis larva – presumably a reward for all the work he and the other volunteers have put in at Hotspur Bottom. In second, Tony Gillie with an Eyed Hawkmoth larva. Could he repeat the 2018 success of Sue Taylor by sweeping the Moth winners board? No! The winning entry was an arresting image of a colony of voracious Large White caterpillars submitted by Colin Mather.

Two New Entrants this year. In third place Phil Tizzard's White-letter Hairstreak; in second Andy Spragg with a Comma, and winner, with his pair of Silver-studded Blues nectaring on heather, Phil Tizzard.

The Previous Winners welcomed Sue Taylor this year, and was as we have come to expect, a closely fought contest between her and Jim Asher, Paul Lund and David Hastings. In third place, having taken some time off from more corporate

duties, Jim Asher with his Orange-tip, in second was Sue Taylor with a Six-belted Clearwing. Winner again in 2019 was Nigel Kately, with another superbly sharp image, this year of a Pearl-bordered Fritillary.

Finally, to the Members Competition. Perhaps not surprisingly, the winner this year came from the highly successful portfolio of Tony Gillie, his Long-tailed Blue attracted most votes across the board. He will be invited to join the Recent Winner's category in 2020.

Well done and thanks to all the entrants and voters; hoping for even greater things in 2020.

Many thanks to Mark Chapman for helping again, and best wishes to Tony Rayner, who was unable to make it this year.

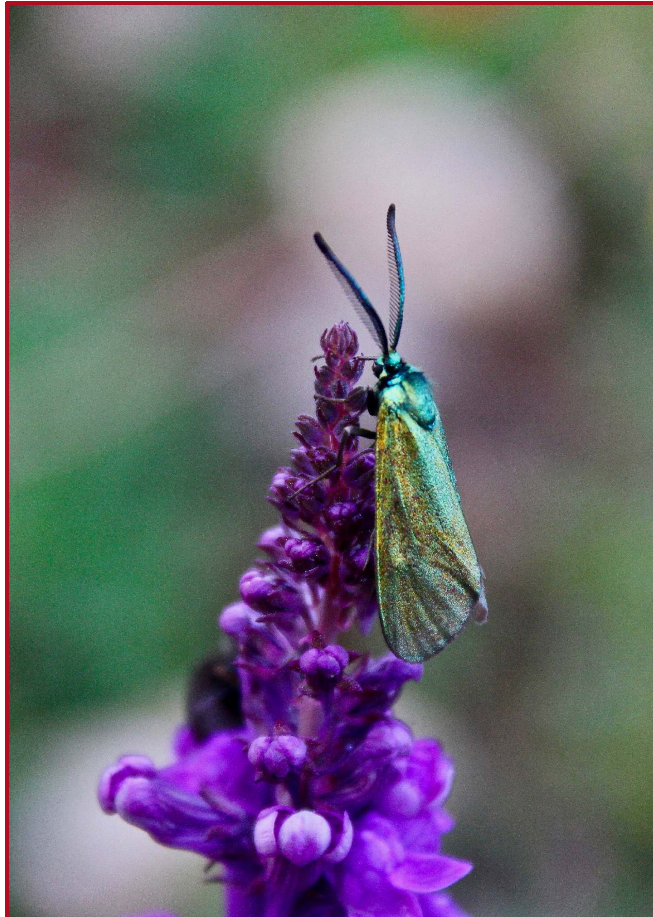
The Forester moths

There are three species of Forester moth in the UK and two of these can be found in our area, the Forester and the Cistus Forester. Upper Thames Branch is keen to raise the profile of these stunning day flying moths and would welcome your sightings. The Cistus Forester, which is distinctly smaller than the Forester, is found on open chalk grassland and can be seen at Aston Rowant. The larval food plant is Rock-rose.

The Forester is more widespread and Sorrel is the larval food plant. This species can be found at Bernwood Meadows amongst other sites. Both species are on the wing from late May to July so look out for these green gems and please report your sightings to the Priority Species Moth Champion (pj.cuss@gmail.com). A photo that shows the antennae would also be most helpful as the shape of the end of the antennae is a diagnostic feature for species ID. These moths are a delight to see in the field and you will be helping us build a better picture of these species distribution in the Upper Thames.

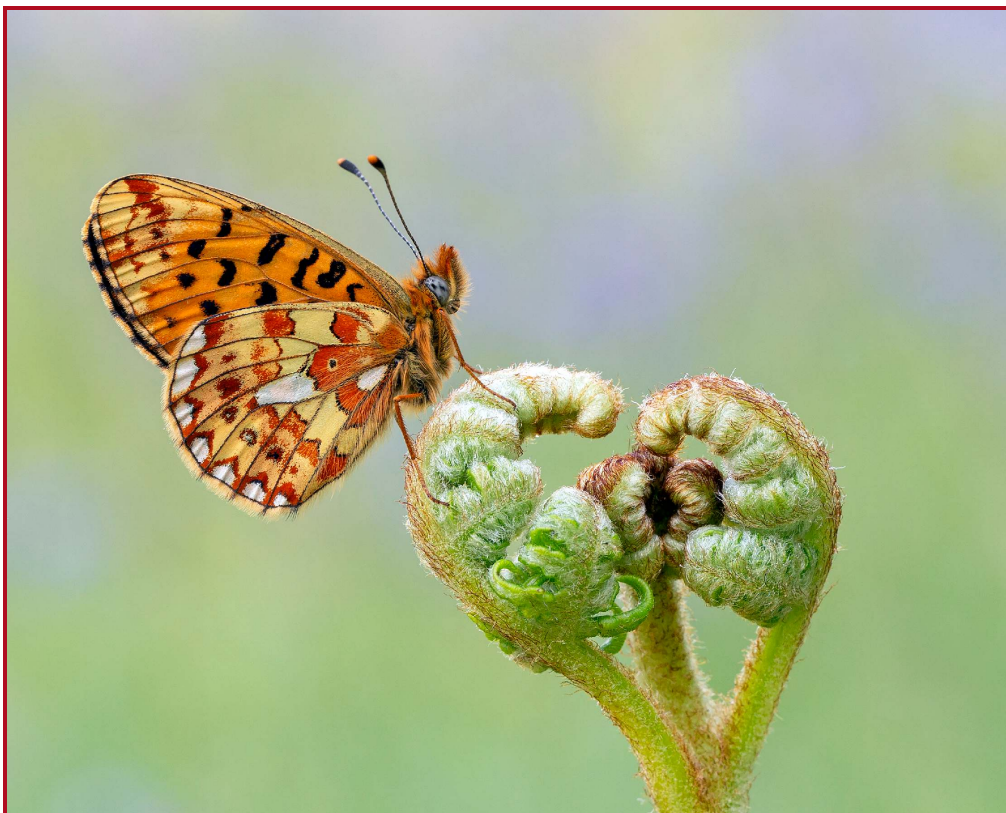


Aston Rowant NNR



Forester Moth
1st in Moths Category

Colin Mather



Pearl-bordered Fritillary
1st in Recent Winners Category

Nigel Kiteley

Butterfly Walks

For all field trips, even though it is early in the season, it is recommended that arms and legs are covered to protect from insect bites.

Sunday 3rd May at 11.00am **Homefield Wood, Bockmer End, Bucks**

Start of season meeting for early Spring butterflies. Meet at the main entrance to the wood (OS Landranger Map 175; Grid Ref: SU814866).

Leader and contact: Paul Bowyer 01628 526225

Saturday 9th May at 10.30 - 12.30 **Ivinghoe Beacon, Bucks**

Target species: Duke of Burgundy and other spring species. The site is very steep with rabbit holes to negotiate! Meet at the National Trust car park for Ivinghoe Beacon (OS Map 165; Grid Ref: SP963159).

Leader and Contact: Steph Rodgers 07734 389301

Sunday 10th May at 10.30 - 12.30 **Sands Bank LNR, High Wycombe**

A walk to find Spring butterflies, including Dingy Skippers, on this unlikely yet beautiful chalk grassland near an Industrial Estate! Meet at Adam's Park overflow car park, Hillbottom Road. OS Map 175, Grid ref: SU831932.

Nearest postcode: HP12 4HJ. Leader & contact: Tony Speight 07931 575367

Sunday 17th May at 11.00am **Aston Upthorpe Downs, Oxon**

Target species: Spring butterflies including Dingy and Grizzled Skippers and Green Hairstreak. Steep slopes. From the A417, a mile east of Blewbury, turn south along the narrow lane opposite the turning to Aston Upthorpe village. Park by the grain dryer half a mile along the lane.

(OS Map 174; Grid Ref: SU550844)

Leaders & contacts: Gerry & Penny Kendall 01865 245029

Saturday 23rd May at 10.30am **Pitstone Quarry, Bucks**

A large, shallow, disused chalk quarry. Mostly easy flat walking, but there is one stile to climb over with a short steep slope after; some scrub and slopes with rabbit holes. Spring butterflies, especially Small Blue and Dingy Skipper and day-flying moths such Burnet Companion.

Meet at Pitstone Church (Explorer Map 181; Grid Ref: SP941149).

Leader and contact: Nick Bowles 01442 382276 & 07727441376

Saturday 23rd May at 10.30am **Lardon Chase, Streatley, Berks**

Targeting: Adonis Blue and other spring species. Very steep grass slopes. Meet in the main National Trust car park off the A4009 at the top of the hill out of Streatley (OS Map 174, grid ref SU583806).

Leader and contact: Maureen Cross 01491 871239

Sunday 24th May**Wicken Wood, Bucks/Northants**

WARNING! Please check the UTB website prior to attending this walk as there is a chance that it will not take place. This is due to the wood being in private ownership and there has been a programme of ongoing works. It will be necessary to check with the owner that we can gain access and that the site is safe for our walk. Most of the walk is along a public footpath for easy walking; however, some 'off path' rides are likely to be more overgrown with footing in places. Meet at the car park at the entrance to the wood.

OS Map 152, Grid Ref: SP730413. **Leader & contact:** [Nick Board 0781255453](mailto:Nick.Board@utb.org.uk)

Tuesday 25th May 2018 at 2.00pm**Finemere Wood, Bucks**

A field trip to try and find Black Hairstreak pupae.

Entrance at Landranger Map 165; Grid Ref: SP720209

Leader and contact: [Stuart Hodges 01296 730217 & 07941 763850](mailto:Stuart.Hodges@utb.org.uk)

Thursday 28th May at 10.30am**Yoesden Bank, Bucks**

Target species: Adonis Blue; we also hope to see other spring chalk downland species. Wear appropriate footwear: steep slopes. Meet in the entrance field by the pumping station in Bottom Road, Radnage. Parking in field.

OS Map 165, Grid Ref: SU789975.

Leaders & contact: [Sue Taylor \(taylor57sc@gmail.com\)](mailto:Sue.Taylor@utb.org.uk) & [Brenda Mobbs](mailto:Brenda.Mobbs@utb.org.uk)

Saturday 30th May at 11.00am**Bradenham, Bucks**

Target species: Small Blue, along with other early Summer butterflies. Turn east off the A4010 into Bradenham Wood Lane at the Red Lion pub. After 500 metres, turn left into the small car park (OS Map 165, Grid Ref: SU827972).

Leader and contact: [Sue Taylor \(taylor57sc@gmail.com\)](mailto:Sue.Taylor@utb.org.uk)

Saturday 6th June at 10.30 to 12.30**Gomm's Wood, High Wycombe**

A walk through Gomm's Wood LNR in search of Spring butterflies. Fairly steep paths. Gomm's Wood, High Wycombe. Meet at Cock Lane Cemetery Car Park. Nearest postcode: HP13 7EA. OS Map 175, Grid Ref: SU897934

Leader & contact: [Francesca Dearden 07838 442042](mailto:Francesca.Dearden@utb.org.uk)

Saturday 13th June at 10.30am**Finemere Wood, Bucks**

Our Black Hairstreak Champion leads a walk to see his butterfly!

Meet at the reserve entrance on the Edgcott to Quanton Road. Landranger

Map 165; Grid Ref: SP720209

Leader and contact: [Stuart Hodges 01296 730217 and 07941 763850](mailto:Stuart.Hodges@utb.org.uk)



Pitstone Quarry



Finemere Wood



Yoesden Bank

New Members

Brenda Mobbs

Since the last newsletter 138 new members have joined and the membership is now 1896. 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.

41 from Berkshire
46 from Buckinghamshire
51 from Oxfordshire

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

Details of events are found in this newsletter or on our website:

www.upperthames-butterflies.org.uk

A free introduction to Butterfly and Moth Identification, surveying and recording

Accurate records can make an enormous difference to efforts to conserve wildlife, locally and nationally. It helps land managers to know both which species are breeding on any patch, and how their management affects numbers. The aim of the courses is to increase both the accuracy and frequency of butterfly and moth recording in the Upper Thames Region. When booking **attendees will be expected to describe how they will use their new knowledge in the three counties.**

Please bring a packed lunch and a USB memory stick for copies of the materials (requires 170MB free space))

Programme *subject to minor change to reflect weather*

(for each day, **except at Earley with reduced butterfly section and increased sections for Moths**)

- 09.45 doors open; tea and coffee available. As they register each person will complete a form describing the type of recording they plan to do and the geographical area that they will do it in.
- 10.00 – 10.10 Welcome and details of the day
- 10.10 – 11.25 **Identification of the butterflies of Berks., Bucks. & Oxon.** Slide show with tips about the salient features to note.
- 11.25 – 11.45 **butterfly i.d. quiz** - a paper quiz- during tea/coffee and biscuits
- 11.45 – 12.30 **Separating moths into their families – a start to moth identification and recording.** Slide show describing briefly the family traits that enable rapid selection of the group within which any moth might be found.
- 12.30 – 13.00 **Transect recording methodology– why and how** - a slide show explaining the 'rules' and guidance.
- 13.00 – 13.30 lunch tea/coffee and biscuits are provided and including **a quick moth family quiz** - a paper quiz
- 13.30 – 14.40 **Practice transect walk** (outdoor) please come prepared for a wintery walk searching for and recording pretend butterflies. We might walk in morning if weather forecast suggests it appropriate.
- 14.40 – 15.10 **Conducting timed count and standardised surveys** - an explanation of the differences between these and transect methodology.
- 15.10 – 15.25 tea/coffee and biscuits
- 15.25 – 15.45 **Record submission - and how it helps conservation.** A slide show.
- 15.45 **Questions, closing remarks and departure**



At the Bernwood café:
Purple Emperor
(*Apatura iris*, ab. *semi-iole*)

At the Bernwood Café (abberant Purple Emperor)
1st in UK Butterflies Category

Tony Gillie



Large White larvae

1st in Immature Stages Category

Colin Mather

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://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

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

Chairman Nick Bowles

01442 382276 nick.bowles@ntlworld.com

Vice-chairman & Conservation & Recording Chairman Grahame Hawker

Well Cottage, 22 Brimpton Common, Reading RG7 4RZ

0118 9814405 grahamehawker@hotmail.com

Hon Secretary & Branch Contact Dave Wilton

25 Burnham Road, Westcott, Aylesbury HP18 0PL

01296 658701 wilton@burnhamlodge.plus.com

Hon Treasurer Chris Woodrow

39 Old London Road, Benson, Wallingford OX10 6RR

01491 838637 lepidoptera45@btinternet.com

Membership Secretary Brenda Mobbs

01494 712486 bc.upperthames@gmail.com