

Hairstreak

No 95

Spring 2016



Butterfly
Conservation



Upper Thames
Branch



Plain Tiger

Jim Asher

Winner of Overseas category



Violet Copper

Ched George

Runner-up in Overseas category

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: Green Longhorns (*Adela reaumurella*) by David Ferguson

BUTTERFLY CONSERVATION

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I feel that the weather has been similar in every month of 2015. Tomorrow's December temperature is predicted to reach 17°C in the South East, higher than some days I remember in July and August! The facts state that although we had the warmest day ever in July, overall July and August were colder than the long term average.

With a cool and often wet summer followed by a pleasantly warm autumn we saw many species flying far later into the year than normal and our monitoring for Hairstreak eggs, Duke of Burgundy larval damage and sightings of species in new areas (and so on) suggests that butterflies coped with the strange weather to achieve fairly usual breeding.

If so, then 2015 beat the depressing trend of the last ten years as depicted in the most recent "State of Butterflies 2015" report. That shows that hard on the heels of previous declines more than half our butterfly species declined further (in distribution, abundance or both) in the last ten years.

The figures gave a ray of light though; species receiving the most attention from

conservationists seem to have fared better than many of the commoner species. Thankfully, we can hold our heads up locally, because the members of the UTB took their conservation efforts to new heights. It will have helped that membership kept on rising (currently at 1398). We led 11 well attended Conservation work parties (over 500 man-hours of work) and members attended at least thrice that number with sister organisations. We paid for work at three private sites (which needed mechanical work that manual labour couldn't supply) and of course at our own reserve. There were six guided egg hunts for Hairstreak species. One of these confirmed all five Hairstreak species at yet another



Ched George (UTB Duke champion - far left) shows national experts around a site being assessed for its quality and future potential.

Bucks site. Additionally, our near 300 hours of Hairstreak searches identified new colonies of both Black and Brown Hairstreak, confirming our region as one of the very best for both species.

Our program of events grew too and included 29 guided field trips and eight other field excursions with land managers and owners to assess habitat quality and explain ways to maximise the potential of their sites.

There was also the notable publication of a new 'Atlas', accounting the fortunes

of the butterflies of our three counties between 1995 and 2014.

I never cease to be amazed by your amazing work to ensure that we achieve new heights every single year. My very grateful thanks to every one of you. My request for volunteers brought forward a pleasing number of new offers to help with all manner of activities. If somehow you missed out on that chance to get more involved, please get in touch and let us know how you might help. To match the accelerating number of projects that we are involved with we need ever more people. So, perhaps you can come along and learn how to search for Hairstreak eggs in the winter; we especially need some people to concentrate on Purple and White-letter Hairstreak whose numbers fell this year. Or you may prefer walking around sites to assist with reports on their butterflies and moths in the summer. Maybe you have more time to offer from home, on the computer; or the phone? Whatever your skill we could really use the help. Judging by the "State of Butterflies 2015" report, so could the butterflies (and moths) that we love.

By the time that this edition reaches you there will be an electronic version of the previous one on the website (along with masses of other information). Please look at that and consider if such a version could replace your paper one so the Branch can use the postage saved (by not sending you a paper copy), on conservation.

Finally, it is tempting to think that the reason I rarely hear of things we should be doing better is because we are doing so very well at delivering what you want from your branch. But, if you think we could do even better, please get in touch.



Some of our volunteers at work

Tony Gillie

White-letter Hairstreak - an appeal for volunteers

Peter Cuss

The White-letter Hairstreak is an uncommon butterfly and a priority species in the UK Biodiversity Action Plan. It undoubtedly suffered, and continues to do so, as a result of Dutch Elm Disease, but I also believe it is probably under-recorded, as it is an elusive butterfly and easy to overlook. One of my aims, as Species Champion, is to try and better map its distribution in the UTB area. With this in mind I am trying to recruit volunteers for this coming season to search elms in your local area for previously undiscovered colonies. It's good fun and very rewarding when you find a new colony! I am keen to gather as much data as possible from across the three counties, but reports from Berkshire and Oxfordshire would be particularly welcome as there are so few from these counties.



Peter Cuss

The best way to find a colony is to search for likely elms in April. At this time of year the elms have the seeds on and they really stand out. Larger elms (and in particular wych elm) in a sunny position are the most likely to support a colony, but any flowering elm is worth a look. Having made a list of the elms found it is then a matter of searching them (on a sunny day!) once the adults start to emerge. Late June and early July is the best time when the butterflies can be seen in brief spiralling dances in the canopy. Any small butterfly exhibiting this behaviour at the top of an elm, at this time of year, is likely to be WLH but do take your binoculars as they are unlikely to come down very far! If you haven't looked for WLHs before I would recommend going onto www.ukbutterflies.co.uk, click on the blue (Lycaenidae) in the top right, scroll down to White-letter Hairstreak and go down to the videos section. Here you will find a superb short film by Peter Eeles showing the life story of the WLH. In particular it shows well how the adults look in flight over the tree canopy. Patience is key and if you don't see it first time it is worth returning a couple of times. If you find a colony all you need to do is send the details to me at pj.cuss@gmail.com, please include your name, the location, the date and a grid reference. A big thank you in advance for anyone willing to help in this project and happy hunting!

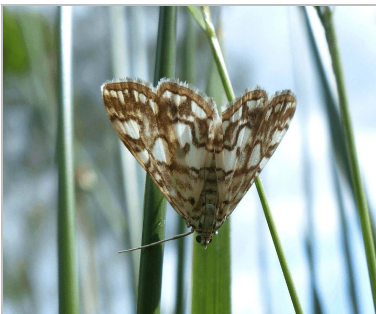
Any size garden can attract various forms of wildlife, even a small courtyard garden or a window box or tubs and planters will all help as our gardens are in total a huge nature reserve. If you have the space to create a wild area or, best of all, a pond, the diversity of wildlife attracted would be immense. Try not to be neat and tidy and let nature take its course; a nettle patch, preferably in the sun, will encourage Red Admiral, Small Tortoiseshell, Peacock and Comma butterflies. Leave a strip of lawn to grow as this will allow the Daisies, Dandelions and Clover to flower which all provide nectar in spring helping our overwintering butterflies, as they emerge on warm days in search of food. Cut down on your use of herbicides and pesticides. They kill butterflies, moths and many other pollinating insects, as well as ladybirds, ground beetles and spiders – the natural enemies of your garden pests.

Early spring flowering plants such as Primrose, Honesty, Hyacinth, Cuckoo Flower (Lady's Smock), Bluebell (native) and Grape Hyacinth are all good for attracting butterflies and moths into the garden. The Cuckoo Flower is also the food plant of the Orange Tip caterpillar, one of our earliest flying butterflies of spring.

A third of all Britain's butterflies have been regularly recorded in our gardens. Most butterflies only stop to feed; some though will also breed if suitable food plants are provided. So ask yourself, what can I do to help? Have a look at your garden, how can you improve it to attract more wildlife? How is it enclosed? Native hedging such as Hawthorn and Blackthorn provide a good source of nectar in spring and along with Holly, they also provide berries for birds in the autumn. Holly is also the larval food plant of the first generation of the Holly Blue butterfly, another of our early emerging butterflies often seen in gardens. The second generation uses Ivy, which is a great nectar source in autumn and provides berries in winter. Even panel fencing can support climbers such as Jasmine which is a night-scented plant and great for attracting moths, as well as Honeysuckle, Clematis, Roses and berry carrying climbers like Cotoneaster and Pyracantha. Some fruit trees can be trained along wires or planted in large containers as these flower very early in the year and are especially useful to our early flying insects that are searching for a source of nectar. Most plant nurseries and garden centres now



Lady's Smock
David Ferguson

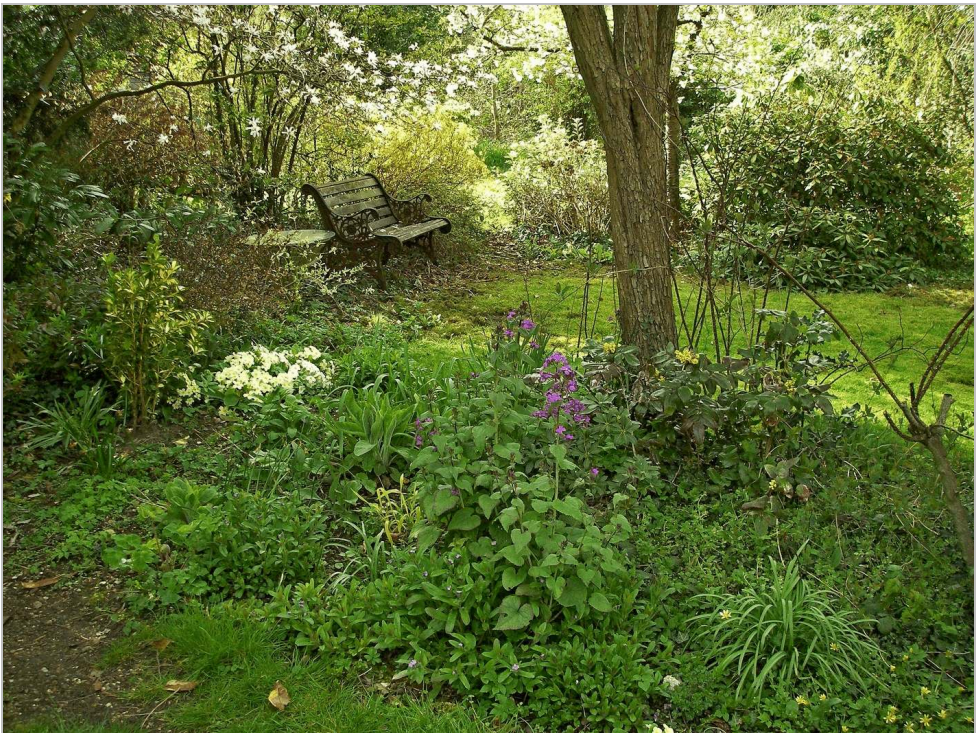


Brown China-mark
David Ferguson

stock a wide range of insect attracting plants. Opt for old fashioned varieties as they tend to have more nectar and choose those with single flowers. While you're in the garden centre, why not browse the section on ponds and water features. Even a small pond could be of great benefit as they can support a good variety of aquatic wildlife such as Damselflies, Dragonflies, Newts and Frogs. The attractive micro-moth Brown China-mark may also be persuaded to breed.

Jobs to do in Spring include; planting out herbs in readiness for summer flowering such as Marjoram and Thyme. Also plants of the Daisy family, Cosmos, Osteospermum, Sweet William and Lavender are particularly good for pollinators. Shrubs such as Buddleia should be pruned back hard to encourage new growth. Buddleia is the first choice food plant for 18 species of butterfly which includes Brimstone, Peacock and Painted Lady.

Then sit and watch the fruits of your labour blossom and flourish in your garden.



Primrose, Honesty and Holly in an insect-friendly garden

David Ferguson

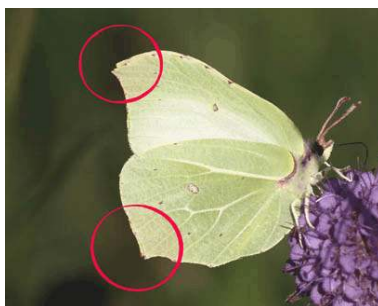
A(nother) Difficult Separation - 'the garden whites'

Nick Bowles

The last two issues dealt with the identification of three types of blue butterfly seen in gardens, Holly Blue, Common Blue and Brown Argus. Another difficult separation is between the Whites commonly found in gardens. Whereas the blues could be separated through their colour, pattern and by watching their behaviour, the white butterflies have very similar colouring and behaviours. The most helpful separation is through the pattern of black or dark grey on the white background.

But first let us exclude the potential confusion of female Brimstone from the other whites.

The male Brimstone is fairly easily separated as it is bright lemon yellow. But the female has such pale colouring that she may appear white. However, compare the Brimstone's pointy wing tips (right) with those of this Green-veined White (left). The Green-veined and the Large, and Small Whites have the same 'rounded' wing shape.



The easy way to separate the Large, Small and Green-veined Whites is through comparison of the amount of black on their fore-wing tips.



Small White

The black tip may not reach the wing's edge and does not extend down the edge.



Green-veined White

Notice that some veins end in black blobs. These extend over halfway down the wing's edge.



The black tip extends unbroken along the wing edge

Please take the opportunity to examine all those 'white' butterflies carefully and then report them, to help us build a more accurate picture of butterfly distribution.

Large White



Field Meetings

Tony Gillie



“Impressions of Spring at Holtspur Bottom”

Jennifer Pearson

A few more details can be found at
<http://holtspurbottom.info/jenniferpearson.html>
Jennifer can be contacted at c&jp@thepolkadots.net

Help needed with Butterfly Transects

Monitoring butterfly population trends from year to year requires the butterflies to be counted by a systematic, repeatable method. The main method is by means of transects, walked weekly from the beginning of April till the end of September. Branch members walk a number of transects in the three counties, some of which have been running for over thirty years. As few people can commit to a weekly visit most of these transects are shared by a number of people.

Over the years walkers have to drop out for a variety of reasons leaving vacancies. At the moment, there is an urgent need for extra walkers, especially in the Bernwood area. There may be vacancies in other areas if that is too far away. As the transects are shared, a new walker would probably only need to walk a transect every four weeks or less.

If you feel you would like to help and have not walked a transect before we can give you what training is necessary. You will, of course, need to know your butterflies.

You can get more information on the transect method if you go to the Butterfly Monitoring Scheme website <http://www.ukbms.org> or contact me on mikeawilkins@googlemail.com - Mike Wilkins, Upper Thames Transect Coordinator

In pursuit of beauty

Neil and Janet Holman

We have been pursuing butterflies since 2013 and as the 2015 season approached we had seen and photographed 44 of the 58 different butterflies that can be found in mainland Britain. Last autumn, plans were put in place to tour the country to find as many as possible of the remaining 14 we had not seen (Pearl-bordered Fritillary, Small Pearl-bordered Fritillary, Chequered Skipper, Marsh Fritillary, Glanville Fritillary, Swallowtail, Large Blue, High Brown Fritillary, Heath Fritillary, Northern Brown Argus, Large Heath, Mountain Ringlet, Lulworth Skipper and Scotch Argus). Many hours were spent on the computer and scouring butterfly books to research these 14 butterflies, discovering their best sites and their flight periods etc. Eventually a schedule of trips was compiled with most also requiring overnight accommodation, but never in our wildest dreams did we expect such a high success rate with only one trip proving unsuccessful and 13 of our 14 targets being found and photographed. Many miles were covered across four long months and reflecting on our efforts now all the hard work was definitely worthwhile.

Our first visit was in early May to seek out the Pearl-bordered Fritillary at Bentley Wood, Eastern Clearing. On our second visit to the site we were successful in finding this delightful butterfly during a brief sunny interlude in an otherwise miserable afternoon. Just 13 more to go!

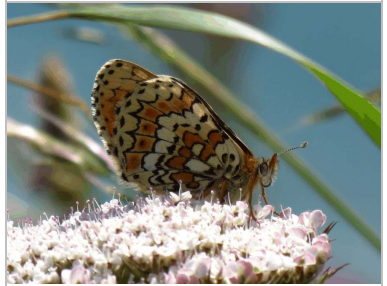
Our second trip was scheduled for late May to search out the Small Pearl-bordered Fritillary, also at Bentley Wood and the Marsh Fritillary at Cotley Hill, Heytesbury. Our base was Farthing Down B&B in West Tytherley. The Marsh Fritillary is a beautiful butterfly and the Cotley Hill site a superb venue with the views as you climb the hill quite stunning. The butterfly was present in huge numbers and I would suggest that a visit at the right time at this site should always produce positive results. The next day a return trip to Bentley Wood, Eastern Clearing proved successful again with sightings of the Small Pearl-bordered Fritillary and celebratory drinks and a super evening meal were enjoyed at the Black Horse in West Tytherley. Three down, just 11 to go.



Marsh Fritillaries

After a short break back home we set out for the Isle of Wight to find the Glanville Fritillary. Our base was Rockstone Cottage in Freshwater and on this visit the weather was fantastic making our search very enjoyable indeed. The first of several sightings of this butterfly was on the undercliff at Horseshoe Bay, Ventor, on the island's south coast and this really is a stunning butterfly, particularly when photographed with its wings closed. Also present in good numbers that day was the Painted Lady. Just ten left now.

After just one day back home we set off to Spean Bridge in Scotland to try and find the Chequered Skipper. We set out with such high hopes as we headed to Luton Airport for our early morning flight to Inverness. The drive from the airport to Spean Bridge took us along the banks of Loch Ness and Loch Lochy but as we arrived at our accommodation the heavens opened and the rains continued for the next two days making this our one unsuccessful trip in terms of the butterfly. However, even in the rain the scenery was quite spectacular. We did manage to travel out to our two planned sites at Allt Mhuic and Glasdrum Wood and our B&B accommodation was superb so we will return next year hoping for better weather! Unfortunately still ten to go.



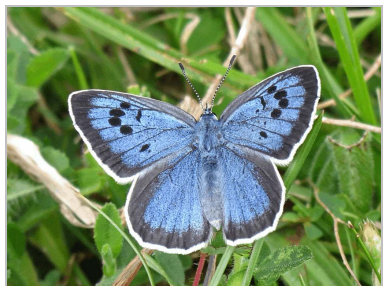
Glanville Fritillary

We returned home on the Wednesday and on the Friday we were off again to Brundall in Norfolk to seek out the iconic Swallowtail. We chose Brundall as it is adjacent to Strumpshaw Fen, a site of the RSPB which also boasts the Swallowtail. However, during one of my many local butterfly trips during the season I met a gentleman at Incombe Hole, Ivinghoe who was adamant that the best place to see the Swallowtail was at Potter Heigham and how right he was! On a circular walk from Potter Heigham church you can walk alongside Hickling Broad and close to the bird hide on this walk the Swallowtail was there in abundance. The hardest part was in trying to compose a quality photograph as this butterfly would rarely settle in a set position, but we are pleased with some of our efforts. Just nine more now!



Swallowtail

The next weekend, 20th June, we were scheduled to go to Orchard Farm in Barton St David, Somerset, our lovely base to find the Large Blue at Collard Hill, just outside nearby Street. However, after a little more research on the computer we felt that a trip to Green Down at Charlton Mackrell just two miles away would be a better option. We were also planning to hedge our bets by stopping at Daneway Banks, Gloucestershire (another Large Blue site) on the way down but I discovered that on that Friday afternoon the Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust were planning an organised Large Blue event. Surely they were very optimistic of some sightings so I decided to travel on that Friday morning to Daneway provided the weather was good. I awoke on the Friday to bright



Large Blue

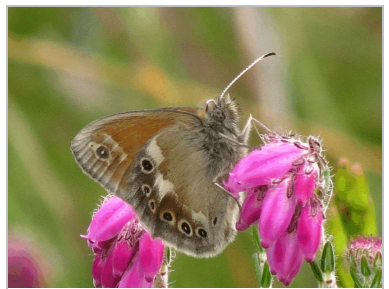
sunshine so the trip was on and it was a good job that I did because at the top of the site I managed to take some super shots of the Large Blue, including a mating pair! On the way home after a lovely lunch in the Daneway Arms I reflected just how worthwhile this 150 mile round trip had been. Down to eight now.

Having located the Large Blue we essentially had a free weekend so somewhat foolishly we decided to detour into North Somerset and Devon to try and find both the High Brown Fritillary and the Heath Fritillary before travelling back to find Orchard Farm. The journey could have been better and quicker but nevertheless we eventually made it to North Devon by about 2.30pm. The High Brown Fritillary was found in bright sunshine at a recommended site at Heddons Mouth on a very steep valley side on a walk from Hunters Inn to the village of Trentishoe, but what a difficult butterfly to photograph! Always on the move and flying with the similar Dark Green Fritillary we just had to keep snapping and reviewing our photographs before deciding that our efforts were a success. The problem now was there time to travel back to Bin Combe on Dunster Hill, Exmoor to look for the Heath Fritillary.

We decided that as the venue was sort of on our way back to Orchard Farm we would at least find the site and see. Bin Combe is not the easiest place to find but with the excellent instructions downloaded from the internet we eventually found the car park and made our way downhill into the combe. By this time it was late afternoon and we were not optimistic but as we crossed the stream at the bottom of the combe I saw a brown butterfly take to the air. I managed to see it land and there it sat with its wings open enjoying the late afternoon sun, a gorgeous Heath Fritillary. I sat taking photographs for several minutes before it decided to relocate out of sight. What a day! Two more to tick off the list.

We did manage to visit Green Down twice over the weekend and were rewarded with several more Large Blue sightings and photographs. This is only a small site, very steep slopes but it is certainly worth visiting to spot this lovely butterfly.

The next port of call was Cumbria, where we stayed at the highly recommended Challon Hall in Silverdale, and we hoped to find the Large Heath, Northern Brown Argus and the very elusive Mountain Ringlet. The dreaded M6 was successfully encountered and our base at Challon Hall was quite exquisite. On the advice of Chris Winn, once a member of this group and now an officer with the Cumbrian Butterfly branch, we visited three locations with success each time. The Large Heath, a very attractive, yet elusive, butterfly was found at Meathop Moss, quickly followed by the Northern Brown Argus at Latterbarrow Nature Reserve (the two sites being just a mile apart). Just four more...



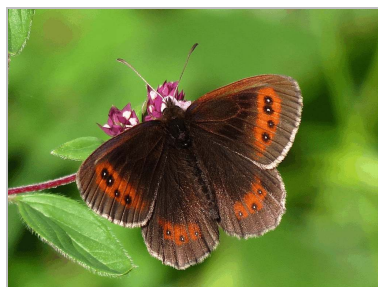
Large Heath

The nearest recommended site for the Mountain Ringlet and the lowest level at which it flies in England is Greathall Gill on Irton Fell some 60 miles away from our base and despite a non favourable weather

forecast we decided to try our luck. We parked up and commenced our climb up Irton Fell following more excellent downloaded directions. The weather was bleak and very misty and after an age we arrived at the edge of Greathall Gill, a huge, fabulous ravine. The weather now decided to turn really nasty and the mist became so thick that you could not even see the path. We just sat and sheltered behind a low wall and after an hour or so the wind got up and blew the mist away. As soon as the mist disappeared and the temperature rose a few degrees these lovely little black butterflies suddenly emerged from the grass around us. We could not believe our eyes, Mountain Ringlets at our feet. We managed a few photographs before the mist descended again and the Mountain Ringlets disappeared from view. Fortunately the mist was not as severe as previously and we beat a hasty retreat back down the fell. As we reached the car the rain fell in torrents, how lucky had we been! Another off the list, just three more.

The last one planned for this season was the Lulworth Skipper and for that one we would have to go to Dorset, so in late July we got back into the car and made the three hour journey Lulworth Cove. We arrived in a heatwave with cars and people everywhere but once we had eventually parked the car and walked up Bindon Hill to the footpath that overlooks Lulworth Cove itself we only came across just a few walkers and to our surprise a number of very photogenic Lulworth Skippers, a beautiful little creature. Another success, now just two left for a full house. During this break we stayed at Janet's sister's home in Fordingbridge and decided to make a trip to the Butterfly Conservation reserve at Alners Gorse in Hazelbury Bryan. If you get the chance to visit this reserve please do so, it is a super little reserve. We stayed all day and saw 15 varieties of butterfly including the Brown and Purple Hairstreak. As you go back into the village there is a small tearoom on the left hand side called the Old Milking Shed Cafe. What a find! Go in and try their carrot cake as it is certainly the best we have ever tasted.

Just one more possible sighting for this year and that was the Scotch Argus which would mean a return trip to Cumbria in early August. We didn't really want to stay over so we resolved to make a day trip, mad or what? I rang Chris Winn again and after he had confirmed that the butterfly was out at Arnside Knott we checked the weather forecast and went for it on 6th August. Up the M6 again to Arnside in super weather conditions and at the top of Arnside Knott this lovely butterfly made its appearance. A 470 mile round trip to see one variety of butterfly, but it was worth it!



Scotch Argus

In just over four months we have travelled thousands of miles, found and photographed 13 of 14 target butterflies with just the Chequered Skipper in our sights for next year. Our personal favourites are probably the Large Blue, Large Heath, Scotch Argus and the fabulous Swallowtail. We have also found some super butterfly sites, stayed at some excellent B&Bs, had a terrific time doing something that we

both thoroughly enjoy.

During the visits described above and the many visits we have made to our own butterfly sites in the Thames Valley area this season we have been lucky enough to see and photograph an amazing 57 of the 58 mainland British butterflies. If only the weather had been better in Scotland...

If any of you would like any information regarding any of the sites we visited or the B&B venues etc please do not hesitate to contact me on 07975 611465 or email neil@holman1.freereserve.co.uk

Members' Day, 31 October 2015, Earley, Reading Gerry Kendall

Getting on for 100 people attended the annual Members' Day, held this year in St Peter's Church Hall in Earley. The traditional last Saturday of October fell this year on Halloween. Fortunately no ghoulies or ghosties disturbed the day; if the Moon Moths in the moth-room counted, figuratively, as long-legged beasts they were very welcome ones, and unlikely to go bump in the night.

Proceedings started with the traditional review of how different species of butterfly and moth had fared in 2015 as compared to a "typical" year. In fact one can't help regarding the baseline as rather better than might be genuinely typical: we picture a year that is warm and sunny, but with enough rain for larval food plants to flourish and favourable winds to bring migrants over from the continent.

Nick Bowles started by reviewing butterflies. Needless to say, in the real world some species had done reasonably well and others less so. But 2015 had certainly been more butterfly-friendly than 2012, the last year that Members Day had been in Earley. Perhaps the most striking and depressing news was that we have lost Marsh Fritillary from our region, the last small colony at Seven Barrows now almost certainly extinguished. A re-introduction is not out of the question when we can be more certain of its success. More happily, Black Hairstreak and Duke of Burgundy, two other species that have caused concern, seemed to have had a tolerably good year. There

seemed, too, to be more evidence that the Brown Hairstreak was expanding its range.

Marc Botham reviewed how moths had fared in 2015. With more than ten times as many moths as butterflies he had to make some broad generalisations. Spring had been cold and the year then turned dry. Marc said that the omen had seemed so poor



This Marsh Fritillary was photographed at one of its last sites in Bucks in June 1987.

David Ferguson

that he seriously considered giving up moths and finding another hobby. The year then picked up somewhat, but numbers were generally low, even when the variety of species was quite encouraging. However, the picture had been cheered by sightings of some spectacular migrants. Nobody could fail to be impressed by the Striped Hawkmoth, the Silver-striped Hawkmoth or the Clifden Nonpareil, though one would need to have studied moths to realise that they are not just very beautiful but also remarkably unusual. Of course, rarities can hardly help but give a positive picture. Since they are rare, it is no surprise if none are seen; if some are found it is a cause for rejoicing.



Silver-striped Hawkmoth
Dave Wilton

Tom Brereton's talk was entitled "Monitoring Brown Hairstreak and other canopy dwelling species". Last year Matthew Oates gave practical advice on this kind of question: for Purple Emperors, take a cherry-picker down the ride; you are at the right height and most PE males will come out to attack this new rival. Well, perhaps not practical advice for most of us who lack access to a cherry-picker. Tom's focus was much more on how one could make records from different observers more consistent. This might be easy enough with paid observers; it is quite another matter with those who are doing it for love, and probably fitting a bit of butterflying into a busy day. But I can offer Tom help on one of his questions. He worried whether different observers out after say Black Hairstreak might have different maximum distances at which they would regard sightings as legitimate. Believe me, Tom, if you are out after Black Hairstreak, any you can identify are legitimate sightings, no matter the distance.

Casper Breuker gave the next talk on the development of butterfly eggs. This was fascinating, though few will have come away totally on top of cutting edge developmental biology. But I will see if I can do a little better than a friend's suggestion that I should simply say "A man spoke about eggs". Casper started with a simple question. A butterfly egg is a single cell, when it is fertilised it starts to divide. How does this spherical mass of cells know where the caterpillar's head is to be? The

answer is that the female butterfly puts a dab of RNA on the surface of the egg. At the right moment this RNA generates hormones which trigger the next and then



Three Wise Men
Nick Bowles, Dave Wilton, Jim Asher
Michael Pitt-Payne

subsequent steps in development. Casper likened the sequence to a row of dominos in which the first to topple knocks over the second, the second the third and so on. All this work was done on Speckled Woods. These are much more sophisticated insects than one might imagine and their goal is not just to lay as many eggs as possible. External factors such as temperature or stress affect laying patterns.

After an excellent lunch (“The best on the Circuit”, you’ll remember) we had the formal part of the day, the AGM. As usual this was kept to well within half an hour and didn’t drag. Nick Bowles, our new Chairman, reported that the Branch continued to expand. We ran 28 field trips during the year which had been well attended by a mixture of old hands and very welcome newbies. Paul Bowyer had organised this programme for many years, but was now stepping down. Dennis Dell was taking over the job. We are grateful to both Paul and Dennis and to all the other officers and volunteers who help make our Branch so successful.

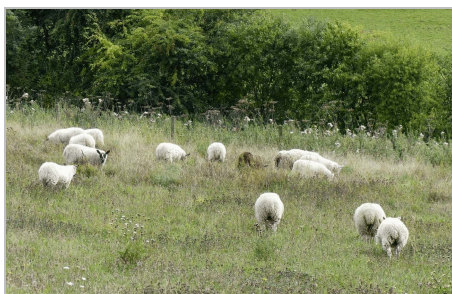
There is one other Branch matter that should be mentioned. We are on course for publication before Christmas of the next butterfly atlas of the three counties, covering 2010-2014. This will make fascinating reading when it appears. But it isn’t too early to be looking ahead to the next five year period. Jim Asher would love to receive your records.

Holtspur Bottom is our very own reserve and we are lucky enough to have been able to hear reports of its development over the last few years. Today Tony Gillie gave an update. A particularly welcome theme has been the way that the reserve has improved – has been improved I should have said – for the Blue Butterflies with Chalkhill Blue having done particularly well this year.

But Butterfly Conservation is about more than Butterflies and Holtspur Bottom is a stronghold of the rare Striped Lychnis moth. The moth itself is actually not very striking, but the caterpillar is a psychedelic riot of yellow and black as it munches its way through its foodplant, Dark Mullein. The Branch decided to take decisive action to encourage the Striped Lychnis and gave away a million Dark Mullein seeds. It was never intended that they would all be turned into plants for the reserve, but six or seven hundred were planted out with the promise of a bumper crop of this special moth next



Michael Pitt-Payne



*Mullein-eating sheep
Tony Gillie*

year. A tale of pure success? Up to a point. As part of best management practice, Holtspur Bottom is grazed by sheep. The experts were unanimous that sheep found Mullein distasteful and would eat almost anything else in preference. But not our sheep, who love Dark Mullein above all the other vegetation on offer. Sometimes life is unkind.

Many people are tempted by the challenge of seeing all the UK butterfly species in a year. Martin Davis gave a wonderful account of his efforts in which he confessed that he had had to take advantage of some ambiguities in the specification of the challenge. He had started successfully enough in a conventional way, picking up the overwintering species and Orange Tip. But then a trip to the Maritime Alps to do survey work took him away for a crucial couple of weeks. Later on in the season a very similar thing happened again. Inspiration struck while he was rueing the fact that by mid July the Black Hairstreak season was over and he had not seen them. Hang on! He had seen Black Hairstreak in the Alps. Certainly this was a British species, even if he had not seen it in Britain. A little more thought gave a couple more useful additions to the list. The sub-species might not be the same as the British one, but who wants to be a racist? Certainly not when Swallowtail and Large Blue were in question. A little more envelope pushing came when he realised in mid-October that he was likely to miss Brown Hairstreak too. But, he had seen it the autumn before! By defining his year as running from September to September he had the extra species. A few species defeated him despite his best efforts, but in compensation he could claim some former British species, now extinct with us, Mazarine Blue and Black-veined White, not to mention some accidentals very rarely seen in Britain.

There will be a separate account of the photographic competition where the standard was again enormously high. The quiz, organised by Jan Haseler and Rob Stallard, tested the identification skills of the best of us, even with the nourishment for mind and body provided by voluntary donations and organised by Gillian Oldfield with Denise Asher, Tess Ogden and Margaret Price.

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

Gillian Oldfield



"The best on the Circuit"
Michael Pitt-Payne

2015 UTB Photo Competition Report

David Dennis

The irony of the weather for Members' Day was not lost. After a summer of weird and often unpleasant weather preventing us from getting out and about looking for butterflies, October 31st dawned warm and sunny as we all set off for a full day indoors!

In the past, I have regularly failed to predict how many entries we would have in our photo competition based on the season's weather, but this time there did seem to be a correlation. Entries for most categories were well down on the record levels achieved in the last two years, and in particular, the UK Butterflies category had fewer than half its usual number.

Quantity is one thing, but the same certainly cannot be said about the quality, which was quite superb. All categories benefitted from some really skillful work, so there was much to enjoy in the spacious room that was available for our display.

Last year, there was a tie for 'Overall best Members' photo' between David Hastings and Ben Kiteley, resulting in an extra set of photos in this year's 'Previous Winners' section. This is often a highlight of the day, and never more so than this year. We were able to marvel at 30 beautifully printed and mounted images, all celebrating the glorious details of our native and overseas lepidoptera. Our thanks to Mike Taylor, David Hastings, John Hemmings, Nigel Kiteley and his son, Ben, for giving us such pleasure. So split was the voting, that three photographers (David, John and Nigel) tied for third place, with David Hastings' lovely Orange-tip coming second. There was, however, no doubt about the winner. Nigel Kiteley's Silver-studded Blue, surrounded by ants, alone received over 40% of the votes – no surprise, as this image was quite wonderfully detailed and sharp.

There was one other example of a photographer sweeping the board. Colin Mather grabbed all three podium slots in 'UK Butterflies', with very different images, including a moody black and white shot of a Marbled White, which came second to his very unusual 'offset' head-on shot of a Common Blue.

The Overseas Section was more widely split with Ched George's Violet Copper and Robert Gooden's pair of Spotted Fritillaries being pipped at the post by Jim Asher's excellent Plain Tiger, which went on to claim this year's 'Overall Best Photo' as well. So after a number of years back in the Members' Competition, Jim will rejoin the Previous Winners' Group next year. Our congratulations to him.

The categories for Moths and Immature Stages have sometimes been the 'Cinderallas' of our competition, but they can also produce some fascinating entries, and so it was this year. In the Moths, Tony Rayner's third place Great Prominent demonstrated superb camouflage and Jim Asher's extraordinary frenzy of male Northern Eggars around a mating pair was narrowly beaten by his own Royal Mantle – a beautifully lit example of a spectacular moth.

Unusually, a pupa won the Immature Stages, with Nick Bowles' crisp Large White coming in ahead of Gillian Taylor's Buff Tip larva and Colin Mather's group of Peacock larvae.

This was the second year that we had offered a category for photographers who wish to use digital techniques to alter their images for artistic effect. Last year there were only three entries, but this year we attracted 12 entries from four photographers, so maybe the idea is starting to catch on. Pete Thompson came third with a visual 'kaleidoscope' featuring the South American butterfly known as the '88', and I was lucky enough to take the top two slots with a rather too colourful Marbled White, and the winner – a manufactured 'Small Skipper Swarm' facing head-on to the camera.

Your committee will be reviewing all aspects of this year's competition to decide if the categories or the rules need any further adjustment. So please let us know your views, in particular if you feel that there are new ways to encourage more photographers to enter. I can be contacted at ddennis48@outlook.com

Once again, my thanks to Tony Rayner and Pete Thompson who do a huge amount of work behind the scenes to make the competition run smoothly, and to all you excellent UTB photographers who put on such a great show every year.

Minutes of Annual General Meeting

31st October 2015 at 2pm

St Peter's Church Hall, Church Road, Earley, Reading, Berks, RG6 1EY

Present: Nick Bowles (Chairman), Dave Wilton (Secretary) and most other Committee Members, along with about 80 members of the Branch and guests.

Apologies were received from Frank Banyard, Paul Bowyer, Roger Dobbs, Mark Duckworth, Martin Harvey, Mick Jones, Stephanie Mahers, Caroline Steel, Steve Wheatley and Chris Woodrow (Treasurer).

The **Previous Minutes** were accepted and there were no **Matters Arising**.

Chairman's Report: Nick Bowles welcomed everyone and started with an apology: with so many hard-working members and so much going on in the Branch, someone was bound to have been forgotten so he thanked everyone for their efforts which were so very welcome. Branch membership stood at 1,330 of which 50 had joined just over the spring and summer of 2015. We had 11 conservation work parties and paid for conservation work at three private sites, we attended five public events with our display stand and organised 28 field trips. Paul Bowyer, who had been arranging field trips for the past eight years, had decided to stand down and was thanked for all his efforts. Dennis Dell was welcomed as the new field trip organiser.

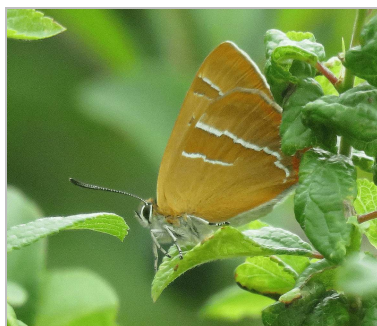
Steve Wheatley, our new Regional Officer, was involved in updating the south-east's Regional Action Plan which would prioritize our approach to our most threatened species and identify the most important sites. Our part in the process was being led by Stuart Hodges and Marion Gillie. The branch had been involved in producing a new Atlas which would hopefully be available by the end of December. A very generous donation ensured that we had funds to post a free copy to each UTB

member. A year ago the branch had begun funding a 'Duke in the Chilterns' project led by Sarah Meredith with support from Ched George, aimed at improving the fortunes of the Duke of Burgundy locally. The current populations had all been identified and a series of interventions were being planned to help the butterfly. We have continued to work at the Holtspur Valley reserves and at Aston Upthorpe Downs. Overseen by Mike Wilkins, transects are walked at about 40 sites in our region. One of these is at the M40 Compensation Area adjacent to Bernwood Forest (a site owned by the Highways Agency) where we have temporarily funded some work to keep the transect route open and to help the Black and Brown Hairstreak colonies there. New and re-opening railway lines have offered us the opportunity to get involved in mitigation work for some of our more threatened species. Other developments also occupied the Committee, with advice being given to various groups about the best ways to ensure beneficial outcomes from often unwanted landscape alterations. For help with these and in other ways we were particularly grateful to our Species Champions and 10km Square Champions.

The Committee ran a New Members' Day at Holtspur in 2015 and plan to do so again in Oxfordshire in 2016. Nick pointed out how useful these events can be and urged anyone who had recently joined to contact Membership Secretary Brenda Mobbs if they would like to participate. We have our own website and thanks were given to Wendy Campbell and David Hastings for their efforts in keeping it running. We also have a presence on Facebook and Twitter organised by Tony Gillie and our newsletter is edited by Dave Ferguson. They were also thanked for all their efforts. We plan to have the newsletter available electronically as well as in printed form during 2016 and hope that members will seriously consider taking this up as we could make substantial savings on printing and postage costs (please supply an e-mail address to Brenda Mobbs).

Nick made clear that none of our events or activities simply happened on their own. Arrangements for Members' Day had been made by Jan Haseler with the catering team organised and led by Gillian Oldfield. Everyone on the Committee, and others besides, gave hours to the cause and grateful thanks were passed on. The only thing stopping us doing more to help our butterflies was a lack of volunteers and Nick ended by drawing everyone's attention to the list of vacant jobs which had been circulated.

Treasurer's Report: In Chris Woodrow's absence the treasurer's report was read out by Vice-Chairman Grahame Hawker, who drew everyone's attention to the accounts for the financial year 2014/15 on the programme (where a typing error, not of the treasurer's doing, was kindly pointed out by Michael Pitt-Payne). The Branch remained in a healthy position with an excess of expenditure over income for the year



Brown Hairstreak
James Ford

of £3,939 which was a slight reduction on the deficit for the previous year. A donation of £1,500 was made to BBOWT in support of their Yoesden Bank appeal and another of £100 to Holtspur School to enable them to buy butterfly-friendly plants for the school garden. Earlier in the year funds had been allocated to conservation projects at Wardrobes and Yoesden. Increasing Branch membership had meant an increase in subscription payments to us from Head Office but much of that was consumed by consequent increases in Newsletter production, although those costs are contained now that the Newsletter is printed and dispatched by Head Office using franked mail rather than stamps. Our other main expense was the reserve at Holtspur Bottom where a lot of extra work was carried out in 2014/15, resulting in the increased costs shown in the accounts (to which must be added VAT of £805, although some of that is claimed back by Head Office and re-imbursed to the Branch).

Although expenditure exceeded net income during the year by nearly £4,000 Chris was happy to report that the balance of cash in hand at the end of financial year 2014-15 (£15,092.13) represented a sufficient reserve to meet any likely costs in the current year. Gerry Kendall proposed that the accounts be accepted and this was seconded by Richard Soulsby.

Election of Officers: Under our rotational system Paul Bowyer, Grahame Hawker, Richard Soulsby and Dave Wilton were standing down from the Committee, with three of them (all except Paul Bowyer) seeking re-election. No other members had put themselves forward to stand. Tony Gillie proposed that all three be re-elected, this was seconded by Mike Wilkins and agreed unanimously. The Committee for 2016 then comprised the following eleven members:

Nick Bowles (Chair)	Marion Gillie*	Tony Gillie*
Jan Haseler	Grahame Hawker (Vice-Chair)	Stuart Hodges
Brenda Mobbs*	David Roy*	Richard Soulsby
Dave Wilton (Secretary)	Chris Woodrow (Treasurer)	

*Those marked * will be due to stand down in rotation at the next AGM in October 2016.*

Any Other Business: Jim Asher made the sad announcement that Harold Hughes, a former Chairman of Butterfly Conservation in the 1990s, had passed away the previous Monday.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 2.30pm.

Dairy Date
Upper Thames Branch AGM & Members' Day 2016
Saturday 29th October 2016 at Benson Parish Hall, Oxfordshire

Since the last newsletter 136 new members have joined and the membership is now over 1398. 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 the following new members who have joined since the last newsletter was published. All of you are welcome to join field meetings in the spring and summer.

BERKSHIRE

Mrs N Ballard	Woodley, Reading
Mr E Berridge	Crowthorne
Mrs S Briggs	Thatcham
Miss J Buckingham	Stype, Hungerford
Mr A Burton & Miss M Watts	Reading
Mr & Mrs R T Croker	Tilehurst, Reading
Mr & Mrs P Crook	Thatcham
Ms L Curtis	Newbury
Mrs S Dopson	Inkpen, Hungerford
Mr & Mrs P Drummond & Family	Sulhamstead, Reading
Mr & Mrs S Edwards	Reading
Mr R Emerson	Slough
Mr G Fish	Bracknell
Mr W Foster	Wokingham
Mr C Geary	Reading
Mr K Hardy	West Ilsley, Newbury
Mr D Hassell & Dr R Siertsema & Family	Reading
Mr D Hunter	Reading
Mr & Mrs R Killestein	Binfield, Bracknell
Mr M A Kirby	Lower Earley, Reading
Miss C Lawton	Newbury
Mr J Mayfield	Spencers Wood, Reading
Mr & Mrs N Melleney & family	Tilehurst, Reading
Mr C Punccheon & Miss K Bowling & Family	Wokingham
Mr A Sharp & Ms D Ingham	East Ilsley
Mrs E Smith	Wokingham
Mrs C Statham	Upper Basildon, Reading
Mrs D Timmins	Reading
Ms R Tucker	Reading
Mr J Westall & Miss A Shaw & Family	Tilehurst, Reading
Mr & Mrs R Wood & Family	Caversham, Reading

BUCKINGHAMSHIRE

Mr E Baker
Mr A C Barker
Ms L Bassett
Mr S Boughton
Mr M Chapman
Mr P Clarke
Mr M Clifford
Mrs T Coleman
Mr & Mrs C R Dean
Mrs R Drewitt
Ms C Floud
Mr T Fountain
Mrs C Garrity
Mr J Haley & Ms J Johns
Mrs S Harley
Mr B Howe
Mr S Jones
Miss P McDonald
Mrs N Neale
Mr & Mrs C Nicholls
Mr & Mrs K Pitman
Mr J Saunders
Miss S & Ms J Winnard
Mr & Mrs K Salter
Mrs B Smith
Ms J Tilsley
Miss S Welsh
Mrs C Williams
Mr & Mrs M Wood

Marlow
Newport Pagnell
Kents Hill, Milton Keynes
Broughton, Milton Keynes
Holmer Green, High Wycombe
Wooburn Green, High Wycombe
High Wycombe
Aylesbury
High Wycombe
High Wycombe
Aylesbury
Seer Green, Beaconsfield
Downley, High Wycombe
Amersham
Amersham
Haversham, Milton Keynes
Amersham
Buckingham
Newport Pagnell
Haddenham
Chesham
Farnham Common
High Wycombe
Marlow
Waddesdon, Aylesbury
Stony Stratford
Stone, Aylesbury
Downley, High Wycombe
Penn, High Wycombe

OXFORDSHIRE

Miss E Ashwell
Mrs L Bailey
Mrs C Barton
Mrs J Bradford
Mrs A Brown
Mr & Mrs M Burnett & Family
Dr S Cook & Mr I Sharp
Mr J Coulson
Miss K Corfield
Mr A Davies
Mr & Mrs R Douglas & Family
Mr J Fitzwilliams
Mrs S Floate
Miss H Gardner
Mrs J Gibbard

Oxford
Banbury
Moulsford, Wallingford
Edgehill, Banbury
Bampton
Didcot
Sibford Ferris, Banbury
Leafield, Witney
Witney
Abingdon
Bodicote
Didcot
Bloxxham, Banbury
Banbury
Kennington, Oxford

Miss T Gray	Appleton, Abingdon
Mrs L Gubby	West Challow, Wantage
Mrs J Hill	Didcot
Mr O Hooper	Oxford
Mr G Horn	Oxford
Ms A & Mrs C Jackson & Family	Hardwick, Witney
Mr M B Jones	Wantage
Mr & Mrs A Keen	Banbury
Miss E Lane	Sutton Courtenay, Abingdon
Mr D Lee	Kidlington
Mrs P Little	Great Haseley
Miss M Meering	Britwell Salome. Watlington
Mrs J Mattam	Wantage
Miss R Mills	Henley on Thames
Mr & Mrs G Moore	Banbury
Mr & Mrs P O'Neill	Oxford
Miss A Pearce	Oxford
Mr S Pendred & Ms R Goode & Family	Oxford
Mr & Mrs J Penrose	Shiplake, Henley on Thames
Mr W Petrie	Crowmarsh Gifford, Wallingford
Ms B Pickup	West Hagbourne, Didcot
Mrs A Ridgers	Carterton
Miss M Rogers	Oxford
Ms M Ryan	Oxford
Ms E Sinclair	Oxford
Miss P Smith	Abingdon
Mr P Stewart	Chipping Norton
Ms T Thompson	Rutherway, Oxford
Mr C Wearn	Kidlington
Ms S Wiffen	Oxford
Miss G Wilkins	Kings Sutton, Banbury
Ms A Williams	Henley-on-Thames
Mr R Wolski & Miss J Robkowska & Family	Henley on Thames
Mr R Williams	Denchworth, Wantage
Miss L Wyldbore	Watlington

ELSEWHERE

Dr D & Mrs A Auld	Edington, Bridgewater
Mr R Harrington	Ivinghoe Aston, Leighton Buzzard
Mr & Mrs D K Richards	Hook
Mr P Townsend	Watford

Conservation Work Parties

Tools and full instructions are provided. **Please bring stout footwear, a drink and a snack.** All work parties detailed below start at **10.00 a.m. and finish at 13.00** unless otherwise stated.

PLEASE, **ALWAYS** CONTACT THE TASK LEADER IN ADVANCE.

Details frequently change according to weather, number of volunteers etc.

The task at Holtspur Bottom on 28th Feb 2016 will **NOT** run. See below for change of venue.

Site near Princes Risborough

Please contact Nick Bowles on nick.bowles@ntlworld.com or 01442 382276 for details of the meeting point.

Thurs 25 Feb 2015
10.00 - 14.30

Scrub control to help Duke of Burgundy

Sun 28 Feb 2016

Scrub control & hedging to help Duke of Burgundy

Aston Upthorpe Downs Meeting point SU549844 (at grain dryer).
Please contact Jim Asher on 01865 391727 if you are intending to come.

Sun 14 Feb 2016

Scrub clearance

Brown Hairstreak egg hunt

Saturday 5th March, Bernwood Meadows, Bucks (10.30am - 1pm)

Our annual search for Brown Hairstreak eggs on the hedgerows at BBOWT's Bernwood Meadows reserve. Meet in the main Oakley Wood car park for Bernwood Forest, off the road from Oakley to Stanton St John at grid reference SP 611116. Please wear suitable footwear because the short walk from the car-park to the meadows can sometimes be quite boggy. It would be helpful if attendees could bring a small hand lens or magnifying glass.

As winter events may be cancelled at short notice due to weather conditions, it is important to let Dave Wilton know the day before that you are intending to come. Please email wilton@burnhamlodge.plus.com, or text or call 07751 472004.

Field Meetings

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 8th May at 11 am **Homefield Wood, Bockmer End, Bucks**

Start of season meeting for early Spring butterflies. Meet at the main entrance to the wood [Ordnance Survey 'Landranger' map 175, grid reference SU814866]. [Leader: Paul Bowyer 01628 526225](#)

Saturday 14th May at 11 am **Ivinghoe Beacon, Bucks**

Target species: Duke of Burgundy. We also hope to see plenty of other spring species. Steep slopes and rabbit holes. Meet at the NT car-park for Ivinghoe Beacon [OS map 165, grid ref SP963159]. [Leader: Robin Carr 01296 625734](#)

Saturday 21st May at 10 am **Pitstone Quarry, Bucks**

A large, shallow, disused chalk quarry. Mostly easy flat walking, some scrub and slopes with rabbit holes. Spring butterflies, especially Small Blue, Dingy Skipper and day-flying moths such as Burnet Companion. Meet at Pitstone Church [OS map 165, SP941149]. [Leader: Nick Bowles 01442 382276](#)

Sunday 22nd May at 11 am **Aston Upthorpe Downs, Oxon**

Targets are spring butterflies, including Dingy and Grizzled Skipper, and Green Hairstreak. Steep chalk 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]. [Leader: Gerry Kendall 01865 245029](#)

Saturday 28th May at 10.30 am **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, SU583806]. [Leader: Maureen Cross 01491 871239](#)

Sunday 29th May at 11 am **Pitstone Hill and Aldbury Nowers**

Targeting spring butterflies. Aldbury Nowers was subjected to a radical surface scrape some years ago, revealing bare chalk. There has been gradual regeneration of the flora and it will be interesting to note how the butterflies have fared. Steep slopes. Meet at the National Trust car park. [OS map 165, grid ref SP955149]. [Leader: Dennis Dell 01296 397039](#)

Saturday 4th June at 11 am **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: Brenda Mobbs 01494 712486](#)

Saturday 18th June at 10.30 am

Finemere Wood, Bucks

Our Black Hairstreak champion leads a walk to see his butterfly. Meet at the reserve entrance on the Edgcott to Quainton Rd. [OS map 165, SP720209]

Leader: Stuart Hodges 01296 730217 and 07941 763850

Upper Thames Branch Conservation Review Day Wittenham Conference Room, Centre for Ecology & Hydrology 6th April 2016

10:30 -11:00 arrival and coffee

11:00 Introduction and background – *Grahame Hawker*

11:10 The Chilterns Duke of Burgundy project – *Sarah Meredith*

11:30 “The Mosaic Approach”: the importance of habitat heterogeneity at small scales– *Jo Staley*

11:50 Earth Trust: local management projects – *Kerry Lock*

12:10 BBOWT’s Bernwood Forest project – *Tim Read*

12:30 –13:30 – *lunch (+informal discussion)*

13:30 The Striped Lychnis in the Upper Thames region – *Elaine Ingram*

13:50 Wildlife management and roads – Highways Agency/County Council
Road verges and wildlife – *Highways Agency (Stuart Wilson)*
Local management - County Council perspective – *Nick Mottram*

14:30 – 15:30 – *General discussion + coffee break*

15:30 Hairstreaks in the Upper Thames region

A background to our hairstreak species – *Nick Bowles*

White-letter Hairstreak recording – *Peter Cuss*

15:45 – *Final remarks & close* – *Jim Asher/Grahame Hawker* (Leave by 16:00)

Lunch: unfortunately we are unable to provide lunches as we have done before and so attendees are asked to please bring their own lunch with them. We will provide tea and coffee.

Directions:

CEH is in the village of Crowmarsh Gifford. From the Crowmarsh Roundabout (junction of the A4130 and A4074), travel west towards Wallingford and then turn right at the first mini-roundabout into Benson Lane (signed Maclean Building). CEH is on the left after 300m. Express bus services (X39/X40) run twice an hour from central Oxford (journey time 25 minutes) and Reading station (40-45 minutes) to Crowmarsh Gifford.

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: wendy.campbell@tiscali.co.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

Holtspur Bottom Reserve

<http://www.holtspurbottom.info>

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Hon Secretary & Branch Contact Dave Wilton

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Hon Treasurer Chris Woodrow

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01491 838637 lepidoptera@mybtinternet.com

Membership Secretary Brenda Mobbs

01494 712486 bc.upperthames@gmail.com



Common Blue

Colin Mather

Winner of UK Butterflies category



Large White pupa

Nick Bowles

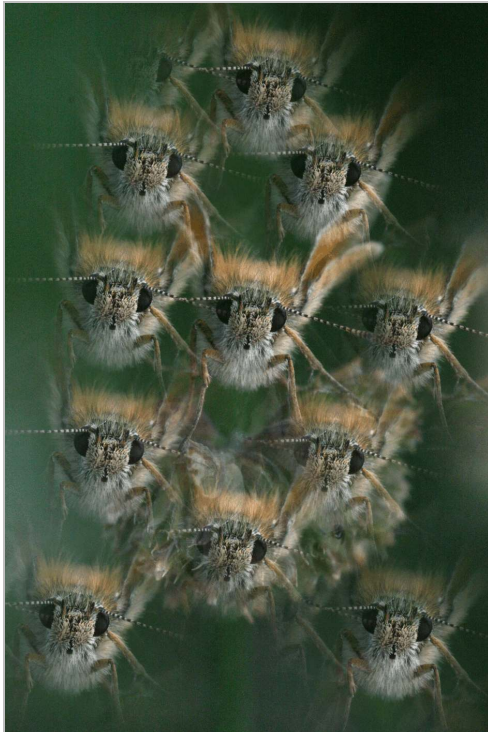
Winner of Immature Stages category



Royal Mantle

Jim Asher

Winner of Moths category



Small Skipper Swarm

David Dennis

Winner of Digital Alteration Category