

# Hairstreak

No 96 Summer 2016




Butterfly  
Conservation



Upper Thames  
Branch

# The Butterfly Year in Haiku

Richard Stewart



Under the deep snow  
And beneath daggers of ice  
New life is waiting.

Late February  
A calm day with warming sun  
The first butterfly.

Out of long darkness  
A comma with widespread wings  
Soaking up the sun.


Prefers hedge garlic  
Warmed by rays of evening sun  
Roosting orange tip.

On such a dull day  
Even a single small white  
Brightens the landscape.


From a coal blackness  
To this large eyed radiance  
Peacock's open wings.

Along the leaf spine  
Brimstone caterpillar rests  
Green on green unseen.

Green hairstreaks emerge  
With a scent of yellow gorse  
Heavy on the breeze.



Two peacocks spiral  
Up and up into blue sky  
Drifting with white clouds.



From a pine's darkness  
One red admiral seeks sun  
And the last nectar.

Juicy chunks of plum  
A dripping pile on the lawn  
Feeding butterflies.

Two feeding commas  
On fermenting blackberries  
Out of the wind's edge.

On grey paving slabs  
Wide wings of small tortoiseshells  
Basking in the sun.

Flying to the feast  
Vanessids land on the first  
Sunlit buddleia.

A bright swallowtail  
Wings luminous in the sun  
Be still and thankful.

In the bramble glade  
Large whites glide like admirals  
Through shafts of sunlight.





*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  
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Contact details are:

David Ferguson  
21 Amersham Road, Beaconsfield, Bucks, HP9 2HA  
davidm.ferguson@tiscali.co.uk  
01494 675230

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Cover photo: Buff Arches by David Ferguson

### BUTTERFLY CONSERVATION

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It is pleasing that after I wrote that I wanted to see us achieving even more, the Upper Thames branch continues to be increasingly busy and successful, so, thank you to the members who came forward and allowed us to expand our efforts ever further.

One of the areas where we could still use some help is in response to requests for us to attend fairs and shows. We are invited to twenty or so each year and need someone to keep a list of which volunteers can attend which show. Currently, we miss some of these opportunities.

However, to mention things we don't do seems silly when there is so little space to write about what we have done since your last *Hairstreak*. So, I shall simply describe our most important achievements. Most notable among them was the publication of an atlas of our butterflies' distribution and abundance (sorry that it was delayed or if yours never arrived. Though posted to all, a few unlucky members have not received one – please let me know if you are still waiting).

Whilst we are basking in the warm glow of many positive comments about the book, we will always acknowledge that every single record in there was contributed freely by a huge army of like minded people – very keen to help our butterflies survive. It is our members' records that make the production of an atlas feasible and worthwhile.

It is difficult to thank people adequately for their record submissions as the thousands of records pour in. We hope that the receipt of the free *Butterflies of Berkshire, Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire* goes some way to showing our members how much we value their continuous efforts. I would also like to very gratefully acknowledge the literally hundreds of pounds in donations that we received in response to the Atlas arriving.



Holtspur in May  
Nick Bowles

Our reserve at Holtspur Bottom continues to improve. So much had been achieved by the happy band that work there in the early winter that we cancelled the season's final work party. My extremely grateful thanks go to all the volunteers that lent a hand both there and at our other regular 'workplace' Aston Upthorpe and with our other conservation tasks.

One of which was a spin off from one of the many planning meetings the Branch attends. Meetings with Network Rail led to agreement to create habitat for the Duke of Burgundy (see an article on p7). Other notable meetings include those to vastly increase wild flower resources along field margins and in abandoned spaces right

across Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire; to conserve and expand valuable habitats in the Chilterns (across all three counties); to continue planning for conservation management with the MOD for hairstreaks and for the return of the Marsh Fritillary; with county councils, BBOWT, NT, RSPB and with private landowners.

And finally, in this truncated list, the work done in Holtspur Bottom reserve in planting Elm trees that can withstand the Dutch Elm Disease to a greater extent than can Common Elm. This initiative is still in its infancy but is showing tremendous promise as a way to engage landowners in the effort to enhance the countryside for butterflies (rather like the continuing Dark Mullein initiative to help the Striped Lychnis).

For a more complete overview of all that we do, visit our very popular Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/Butterflies.Berkshire.Buckinghamshire.Oxfordshire> or the branch website, which will be brimming with recent sightings of butterflies and moths by now <http://upperthames-butterflies.org.uk/index.html>.

Coming up soon are the myriad Branch Field trips – all free to attend, thanks to the generosity of the members leading those walks (though one or two might have a parking charge), the New Member's Day (invitation only – sorry), a chance to join in with four different survey schemes (please ask), a chance to join us at various fairs and fetes through the summer and, of course, the invitation to send us all your butterfly and moth records. Remember that records can still be made with pen and paper and sent to the appropriate recorder or with the free app *iRecord Butterflies*.

Another 'thank you' and another reminder: about 100 members opted to take the newsletter electronically. This will save a portion of the £4000 we spend each year on printing and posting the paper copy. Will you help us convert more of your subscription into direct conservation by opting for the electronic version? If you agree that this is a sensible choice, please advise us at <https://tinyurl.com/hzu5wu9>.

Finally the bit where I ask for even more help; for our tremendous efforts to be maintained (dare I ask increased?) we could use you. If you have a little time to be part of a successful team there are a variety of tasks that you could help with. Please get in touch, because as the Atlas shows, many butterfly species are struggling and things rarely change for the better without some intervention.

Enjoy the summer.

### Recording Forms

Please remember how important it is to send in your records of butterflies and moths.

The recording forms with this edition of Hairstreak are included for the last time.

Most members use email, *iRecord Butterflies* or download the forms from <http://upperthames-butterflies.org.uk/recording.html> and send them to the recorders listed there.

Our savings on paper, printing and postage will go towards conservation projects.



## Chilterns Duke of Burgundy Project

Sarah Meredith

The Duke of Burgundy, *Hamearis lucina*, is a springtime butterfly that is associated with chalk and limestone grassland using Cowslip and Primrose as its food plant. In the past it was known as a woodland butterfly using coppiced woodland where their food plant grew. Due to the cessation of coppicing the butterfly moved out onto grassland with 80% of the national population now present within grassland habitats. The Duke of Burgundy requires sheltered grassland with patches of scrub and well distributed Cowslips or Primroses.



**Duke of Burgundy Life-cycle: 1 Adult butterfly, 2 Mating pair, 3 Cluster of eggs, 4 Newly hatched caterpillars, 5 Mature caterpillar, 6 Pupa**

The Duke of Burgundy is restricted to eight colonies across the Chilterns and at the southern end (Bradenham) three colonies exist but are vulnerable to changes in climatic and management events.

In 2015 we were able, through the help of volunteers, to map the presence of the Duke of Burgundy across the sites along with the location of eggs and larva. This information helps guide site managers when undertaking winter scrub management and grazing. Also, in 2015 sites were identified that offer potential for the Duke of Burgundy in the future. Some of these sites are in good condition but many will need work such as scrub management and food plant propagation and planting over the next few years.

This year we will be carrying out further surveys of adult butterflies, eggs and larva and habitat suitability. Please contact Sarah Meredith at [smeredith@butterfly-conservation.org](mailto:smeredith@butterfly-conservation.org) if you are interested in helping with these surveys.

On the 25th of February, on a railway tunnel south of Princes Risborough, a team of 25 employees from Network Rail came as willing volunteers to join a small band of Upper Thames Branch volunteers and the professional Chiltern Rangers in an effort to clear extremely thick scrub from an area that previously hosted a colony of Duke of Burgundy (aka 'The Duke'). Despite valiant effort and a great deal of enthusiasm, there was just too much for the 34 workers so another team of ten UTB volunteers went back to complete the clearance on February the 28th.

There are some signs that 'The Duke' may still be breeding in the railway cutting leading to the tunnel judging by holes in the cowslip leaves visible along the cutting's fence line, though the butterfly hasn't actually been seen there for some years. We are fairly confident that 'The Duke' will recolonise this patch. This will strengthen the butterfly's precarious toe hold in the area.

Another very positive outcome of the work is that we made contact with the adjacent golf club and now they too are looking to work with us to create more suitable habitat for the endangered butterfly to enlarge its breeding area.

Very grateful thanks to all those that responded to the Facebook and email requests for help; to Network Rail for permission to work on their site and for turning up in huge numbers to give volunteer effort; and to Chiltern Rangers who used power tools to great effect.



Summer is now almost upon us. Hopefully some or all of your spring plantings and sowing have come to fruition and you are starting to see more butterflies, moths and other insects in your garden. Species to look out for include colourful garden favourites such as Small Tortoiseshell, Peacock and Red Admiral. Day-flying moths are not that unusual, for instance the Silver Y which is an immigrant from continental Europe that is commonly seen during the summer months.

You may have seen in other Butterfly Conservation publications or press releases about a new campaign this year called Plant Pots for Pollinators ([www.plantpotsforpollinators.org](http://www.plantpotsforpollinators.org)). This initiative is ideal for people who are short on time or space. Indeed, even if you have a balcony or window box you can still “plant a pot for pollinators”. You can keep it simple and just pot up one plant or be adventurous and choose a mix of plants that are of a variety of heights and flowering times to create a great display that is attractive to pollinators over a longer period. Don’t forget to water them regularly, particularly in a dry spell as pots tend to dry out quickly.

Other jobs that you can be doing in the garden over the summer include: dead heading flowering plants regularly to prolong flowering. This in turn will keep the butterflies and moths coming back to your garden. Collect seeds from plants you want to regrow next year. Some autumn flowering bulbs can be planted out now. Clear algae, blanket weeds and debris from ponds but leave it by the side for a few days to allow the pond life to return before clearing away. Also keep ponds topped up in dry weather.

Recording butterflies and moths is essential to our conservation work. It helps to increase our knowledge and understanding of their needs, the impacts of climate change and pressures of developments upon them. So please consider taking part in the annual Butterfly Garden Survey. The recording form for this can be found on our branch website or records can be entered online at [www.gardenbutterflysurvey.org](http://www.gardenbutterflysurvey.org). Another change for the scheme is we are now being asked to record throughout the year as the flight periods for many species are altering due to climate change.

Whilst on the subject of recording, don’t forget to take part in the Big Butterfly Count from 15 July - 7 August. Last year over 52,000 people took part, counting over 580,000 individual butterflies and day-flying moths across the UK. This is a great way to introduce children to butterflies. All the information you need to take part can be found at [www.bigbutterflycount.org](http://www.bigbutterflycount.org).



Red Admiral



## Help needed with Butterfly Transects

You may recognise this heading from the last issue of Hairstreak. I am repeating it because the response was - zero. This seems incredible from a membership as large and as active in many other ways as Upper Thames.

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. 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.

If you really feel that a transect is too much for you to commit to then how about one of the Wider Countryside Butterfly Survey (WCBS) one kilometre squares? These only have to be walked twice in the season (July & August) and use the same methods as for transects. We have an allocation of 27 random squares throughout the three counties but in 2015 only 8 were covered.

The available squares are: SP: 2405, 2502, 4119, 6124, 7130, 7212, 7222, 8231, 8314, 8434, 8437, 8502, 8612, 9319, and SU: 4771, 7669, 7689, 7964.

You can get more information on the transect method if you go to the Butterfly Monitoring Scheme website [ukbms.org](http://ukbms.org) or contact me on [mikeawilkins@googlemail.com](mailto:mikeawilkins@googlemail.com)

Mike Wilkins, Upper Thames Transect Coordinator & WCBS Coordinator.

## **NEW PHOTOGRAPHERS INVITED!!**

**If you don't usually enter our Members' Day photo competition, this is for you!**

We are introducing an extra 'Newer Entrants' category to our annual image-fest, reserved just for members who have never previously entered, or who have done so only once or twice before.

You might be a younger member just getting into butterfly photography, or a more experienced photographer who needs a bit of extra encouragement!

There will be a special prize for the most popular image in this category, and the subject can be either an adult butterfly or moth, or an egg, caterpillar or chrysalis, and may be taken, in the wild, either in the UK or overseas.

**We are giving advance notice of this change, so that you can use the summer months to get out in the field with your camera and wow us on Members' Day by bringing along your best images.**

As with other categories, these will need to be in print form, with a maximum size of 19x13cm (7.5x5"). Each person may enter up to six images. Further details of Members' Day and all of the competition's categories will be confirmed in the autumn edition of Hairstreak.

So, if you are new to our competition or have entered no more than twice before, we look forward to seeing you – and your best photos – at Benson Village Hall on Saturday 29th October.

Good luck!!

**David Dennis**

## **A Date for your Diary Saturday 29th October 2016, 10:30 – 17:00 Members' Day and AGM – at Benson Parish Hall, Oxon.**

We will hear fascinating talks on butterflies and moths from guest speakers ...

from the European Interest Group of Butterfly Conservation, who will also be holding their annual meeting in Benson Parish Hall in parallel with ours,

from 'Focus on Nature', a group representing the interests of young people in nature,

and from other distinguished speakers ...

... plus a round-up of the 2016 butterfly and moth season (with a chance to make your own views known), news of our Holtspur Bottom reserve, photo competition, quiz, stands and displays, and the renowned lunch and tea. Make a note of the date now!

## Identification of day-flying Moths

David Ferguson

There are a surprising number of moths that habitually fly during the day; indeed they outnumber the number of butterfly species in the UK. Some are small and grey but some are among our most spectacular insects. This article is designed to allow you to identify some of the commoner ones on a (fairly) casual walk in the countryside. The micro-moths described here (distinguished by the presence of scientific names), although tiny, can be surprisingly easy to see.

The text in green shows the length of the forewing, the major habitat and the flight period.

### Six-spot Burnet

15-19 mm    flowery grassland    late June - Aug

One of the two common species of narrow-winged red and dark green moths that fly with a distinctive whirring flight. They are often found in large numbers. This species can be distinguished from the next species by the pair of red spots near the wing-tip. The pale straw-coloured pupal cases can easily be found fastened to grass stems.

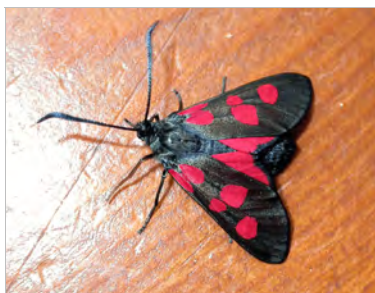


### Narrow-bordered Five-spot Burnet

14-19 mm    flowery grassland    late June - July

The other common burnet moth. There is a single red spot near the wing-tip. It flies at the same time and in the same places as the Six-spot.

There is a Five-spot Burnet but it is rare and can be distinguished only with difficulty by its slightly shorter and rounder-tipped wings. The width of the black borders on the red hindwings is, unfortunately, an inconsistent identification point. It does, however, fly slightly earlier (late May - June).



*Dave Wilton*



## Cinnabar

17-23 mm grassland with ragwort mid-May - Aug

The startling red and dark green moth that can be disturbed where ragwort (the food plant of the very obvious black and yellow hooped caterpillars) grows. The broad wings distinguish it from the narrow-winged but similarly-coloured burnet moths and, unlike the burnets, it has a floppy flight. Like the burnets, the hindwings are red.



## Burnet Companion

13-15 mm flowery grassland May - June

A brown and dull orange moth of flowery grasslands that can be mistaken for the much more local Dingy Skipper. The skipper is found in similar habitat, is the same size and flies at the same time but is greyer and lacks the orange. The tiny moth in the Burnet Companion photo is a Cocksfoot Moth (*Glyphipterix simplicicella*).



Burnet Companion  
*Jim Asher*



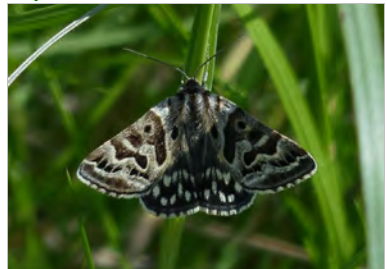
Dingy Skipper

## Mother Shipton

13-16 mm flowery grassland May - July

A grey-brown moth that is almost always found with the Burnet Companion.

Mother Shipton (aka Ursula Southeil) was a 16th Century soothsayer. Legend has it she was hideously ugly. Her profile is supposedly shown on each forewing of the moth.



### Speckled Yellow

13-15 mm woodland May - June

A local moth confined to woods with an acid soil where the foodplant of the caterpillars, Wood Sage, grows. In some years quite large numbers can be seen.



### Dusky Sallow

14-16 mm flowery grassland  
late July - Aug

A night-flying moth that is sometimes found resting on flowers, particularly Scabious and Knapweed.



### Silver Y

13-21 mm flowery grassland  
May - Sept

A common immigrant, grey or brown with a silver Y in the middle of the forewing.

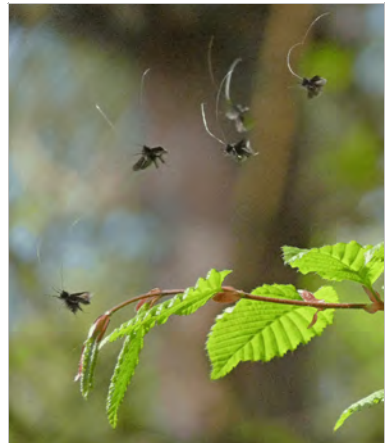


*Dave Wilton*

### Green Longhorn (*Adela reaumurella*)

7-9 mm bushes mid April - June

The ludicrously long antennae (particularly in the male) and the plain dark metallic green wings are diagnostic. They are colonial and may be found dancing around bushes, sometimes in large numbers.



**Yellow-barred Longhorn** (*Nemophora degeerella*)

7-10 mm    woodland & hedgerows    May - June

The long antennae (up to 4 times the length of the body) and the yellow bar across the golden-brown wings are diagnostic. Like the Green Longhorn they can be colonial and have similar habits. The photo of the right shows the length of the antennae.



**Little Longhorn** (*Cauchas fibulella*)

3.5-5 mm    speedwell    late May - June

This tiny moth is closely associated with the foodplant of the caterpillars, Bird's-eye Speedwell. The antennae are the shortest of the longhorns, about the length of the wings. The forewings are dark golden-green with a purplish tinge and have a pale spot halfway along the wing and sometimes another pale spot at the base of the wing.



**Gorse-piercer** (*Cydia ulicetana*)

5-7 mm    gorse    April - Sept

This is the tiny pale grey moth that flies in numbers around gorse bushes.





**Nettle-tap (*Anthophila fabriciana*)**

5-7 mm      hedges      April - Nov

This is another tiny grey moth but the one that flies around hedges. The outer edges of the wings are bowed. As the name suggests, the foodplant of the caterpillars is nettle.



**Small Purple and Gold (*Pyrausta aurata*)**

7-9 mm      flowery grassland      April - early Sept

**Common Purple and Gold (*Pyrausta purpuralis*)**

7-11 mm      flowery grassland      April - early Sept

Common in chalk and limestone grassland, and occasionally in gardens, these are tiny moths whose wings usually form a distinctive triangle. They are purple and gold when fresh, brownish and yellow when worn. They are lumped together because they are sufficiently variable to make them impossible to separate by just looking at the upperside. However, they are sufficiently common to make you wonder what they are, which is why they are included here.



For a detailed analysis of the identification, visit the website

[http://upperthames-butterflies.org.uk/Moth\\_files/Pyraustas\\_difficult\\_moths.pdf](http://upperthames-butterflies.org.uk/Moth_files/Pyraustas_difficult_moths.pdf)



There is a school of thought that considers butterflies to be a mere subset of that vast order of insects *Lepidoptera* otherwise known as moths. The French partly understand that butterflies and moths are essentially the same by calling butterflies *papillons* and moths *papillons de nuit* but the pro-moth thinkers would suggest that the French should have called moths *papillons* and butterflies *papillons de jour*. This uncharacteristic French failure in logic occurred because, in the popular perception, butterflies are beautiful creatures of the day while moths are mysterious creatures of the night who come into our houses to eat our clothes.

This popular conception of the inferiority of moths is misguided on several counts. While it is true that some moths are boring mud-coloured nondescripts it is also true that the most beautiful moths are the equal of the most beautiful butterflies. This beauty can range from the shocking pink body and the swept-back wings that look as if they could take an Elephant Hawkmoth through the sound barrier to the complexity of the black and white dazzle pattern of a Black Arches.

Even many of the apparently dull moths are very beautiful when looked at closely. The Coronet is a dark, medium-sized moth. Look closely and one form is an amazing mixture of oranges, browns and blues overlaid with a complex pattern of black lines.

The black of the 'Darth Vader' moth, the Black Rustic, which seems just simply black, is actually different shades of black and textures, some areas shiny, some not.

The Buff Arches shown on the cover has a very restricted palette of cream and brown but it is still a stunning insect. The intricate pattern of waves and the scalloping on the trailing edges of the forewings make one wonder why evolution came up with such amazing patterns which, in another context, would be considered as art.

The why is probably unknowable but the how may possibly be explained. Alan Turing, he of Bletchley Park and the Enigma code-crackers, in a moment of throwaway genius, worked out how a zebra got its stripes (see below) and it is quite possible that the Buff Arches got its patterns via the same principle. But whatever the mechanics, the results can be stunning. Moths are indeed beautiful.



Coronet

<http://mosaicscience.com/story/how-zebra-got-its-stripes-alan-turing>



# Garden Survey Report 2015

## Margaret Price

### Predictions and disappointments

Never trust a prediction! 2015 weather began well and there was the promise that the summer would be hot and sunny but, as it turned out, it was mainly cool, dull and at times damp. Yes, the autumn was warm but by this time butterfly numbers had dwindled and were disappointing. With the El Niño effect, this winter was predicted to be exceptionally cold and snowy but as we all know it has been the opposite in the south of the country.

Comments from recorders have included, 'promising start not fulfilled; 'season fizzled out'; 'worrying for several species that used to be very numerous' and 'not a vintage year'. But there were a few positive ones, 'good year for Holly Blues and Essex Skippers' and 'plenty of species but low in numbers'.

The gardens of butterfly recorders are varied in size, habitat and surroundings and so it is not surprising that species visiting these gardens are varied too. Each year the overall picture of the species recorded does not vary greatly although two – Holly Blue and Small Tortoiseshell – took a tumble in preceding years but are making a recovery. Only two species have ever had a 100% coverage: Peacock and Painted Lady. With Painted Ladies arriving in mid-May it was predicted that it was going to be a great year for them. In fact it was reasonable but not exceptional – so much for predictions!

Comparing the flight periods with 2014, most hibernators appeared later, apart from Peacock which was a week earlier. Most went into hibernation earlier than usual but again it was Peacock that was the exception being four weeks later. Of the new generation most were seen at a similar time. Small Skipper, Small White and Ringlet were later and Common Blue was exceptionally earlier by three weeks. Despite the warm autumn the last sightings were either at a similar time or earlier, up to four weeks in the case of Green-veined White and Holly Blue. On looking back over the years at flight periods for Brimstone, 2003 saw the earliest record and the last record for that year was also the earliest. 2006 it had the latest appearance but also the latest last record.

As in other years there are those exciting



Small Tortoiseshell  
*Stephen Jones*



Indian Leaf Butterfly  
*Kallima paralekta*  
*Margaret Price*



moments when an unexpected species turns up as it did for those who recorded Purple Emperor, White Admiral and White-letter Hairstreak. For me it was an Indian Leaf Butterfly which had escaped from Blenheim Butterfly House and was feasting on a buddleia flower. I went to remove what I thought was a dead leaf but suddenly it moved and I could see it had legs and a proboscis! Having found out what it was it was duly returned to the humid conditions of the butterfly house.

Overall 34 species were recorded which is encouraging until comparing actual numbers of each species to numbers in 2003, when I started co-ordinating the records. There are now very few records in double figures and many are just singles. Despite this trend it is very important that we continue to record. Nearly half of recorders saw fewer species in their gardens but on a brighter note there were those who saw an extra three or more compared to the previous year.

As always, the most popular nectaring plants were Lavender, Marjoram, Verbena bonariensis, Valerian, single Dahlias (easily grown from seed and flower very quickly in their first year), Scabious, Knapweed, Hyssop, Wallflower Bowles Mauve and Everlasting Pea (loved by Brimstones).

I received more moth records than previous years and nearly 50% were from Oxfordshire. Only a few recorders noted the Cinnabar Moth but one recorder in Buckinghamshire had the privilege of seeing over 20 for several weeks. Scarlet Tiger Moths were also only seen by a few recorders but over a period of several weeks and often several at one time. Hummingbird Hawkmoths were noted from the week beginning the 24th May to the week of 4th October, usually in ones but three were seen towards the end of June in one garden. Finally, Silver Y didn't have a particularly good year apart from one garden in Oxfordshire where up to five were seen in one week.

Over the last 13 years the number of completed forms received each year has hardly altered, between 80 and 90, yet the number of UTB members has more than doubled and now stands at about 1400 which means that the percentage doing the garden survey has halved to about 5%. This is especially disappointing as I thought an increase in membership would mean an increase in garden records. So, why so little enthusiasm to record butterflies in your gardens? It would be very interesting to know and if you have a moment do please let me know. I would like to extend my sincere thanks to Julia Huggins for so very kindly helping with the records this winter and to Peter Ogden for passing on records to the Species Champions. Both have reduced my workload considerably. Occasionally I treat myself to a few minutes sitting in a comfortable chair beside a good butterfly spot



Brimstone  
*Anne Pagett*

in the garden to wait and see what comes along. It is surprising how much does appear and often only for a few minutes to stop and nectar before flying on over the hedge and out of sight. So, do try and find a few moments each week to sit with a cup of coffee or a glass in your hand and hope to be pleasantly surprised with what turns up.

I hope you have a very enjoyable summer with good weather and I look forward to receiving your completed forms later in the year.

I will leave you with this poem sent to me by Emma Turnbull. She wrote that 'it's all too easy to become species count obsessed'. How very true.

### **So Sorry Meadow Brown**

I'm so sorry Meadow Brown  
For now in September  
The sun is shining bright  
And I realise you are gone.

The end of July,  
Your numbers soared  
And I saw you every day  
Until I was almost bored.

Avidly looking for a rarity  
Often I found myself saying  
'Oh! it's just a Meadow Brown'.

Counting twenty Peacocks  
With great delight,  
Thirty plus of you  
Was an expected sight.

So I'm sorry Meadow Brown  
For now you are gone,  
The sun may shine  
But I miss you being around.

Next year, my dearest  
Meadow Brown  
I will enjoy you more.

And whilst I search  
For an elusive Grayling  
Gaze fondly at a Painted Lady  
I won't dismiss you and say  
'Oh! it's just a Meadow Brown'

## Garden survey data - percentage of recorders reporting species

Species	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010	2009	2008	2007	2006
Brimstone	95	92	98	99	96	89	97	87	96	99
Small Tortoiseshell	91	97	94	84	78	81	93	61	79	82
Holly Blue	91	63	88	87	96	81	81	96	99	88
Gatekeeper	91	84	84	81	79	86	89	87	89	92
Peacock	90	100	98	96	85	89	100	96	99	96
Large White	90	93	94	93	93	87	94	97	96	98
Red Admiral	87	97	84	98	97	86	93	94	96	99
Orange Tip	87	96	93	93	96	87	86	80	84	89
Meadow Brown	87	93	92	87	76	79	81	80	82	93
Small White	86	96	96	92	94	86	96	94	92	95
Comma	85	85	91	93	85	84	94	88	86	93
Speckled Wood	76	86	77	71	84	74	84	77	70	72
Green-veined White	69	71	79	62	75	74	73	64	70	66
Ringlet	66	67	69	62	61	61	66	46	47	51
Painted Lady	65	49	44	24	31	40	100	28	61	93
Common Blue	55	48	53	33	55	73	54	39	30	56
Small Skipper	48	48	44	26	25	31	31	20	32	45
Large Skipper	42	33	37	36	46	39	33	25	28	31
Marbled White	33	41	38	25	36	24	33	26	24	47
Small Copper	24	36	38	16	31	50	33	19	29	52
Silver-wash Fritillary	21	21	24	12	9	23	10	4	1	13
Essex Skipper	20	15	10	8	6	9	4	9	12	20
Brown Argus	16	14	13	8	18	30	20	7	9	22
Small Heath	9	12	17	15	19	10	7	12	13	14
Green Hairstreak	5	3	1	2	4	0	3	1	1	1
Dark Green Fritillary	3	5	4	0	0	0	3	0	0	2
Grizzled Skipper	3	1	1	0	3	0	0	0	3	0
Purple Emperor	2	1	1	0	1	1	0	0	0	0
Purple Hairstreak	2	0	4	1	4	4	1	1	0	4
Clouded Yellow	2	5	7	0	0	0	6	0	1	11
Chalkhill Blue	2	2	5	1	1	4	3	0	1	7
Small Blue	1	2	2	1	1	6	0	1	3	6
White Admiral	1	2	1	1	3	3	0	0	5	5
White-ltr Hairstreak	1	1	1	0	0	3	1	0	3	5
Dingy Skipper	0	3	3	1	4	3	1	1	4	1
Brown Hairstreak	0	1	0	2	0	1	0	0	1	0
Wall	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
Graying	0	0	1	0	1	1	0	0	0	2
Silver Sp Skipper	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
Adonis Blue	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Small P-b Fritillary	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Camberwell Beauty	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1

## Flight periods 2015

Class	Species	Earliest record	Latest record
Hibernators	Brimstone	13 February	16 November
	Red Admiral	8 February	18 November
	Small Tortoiseshell	25 January	1 November
	Peacock	8 February	28 December
	Comma	3 March	1 November
New Generation	Small Skipper	11 June	16 August
	Essex Skipper	28 June	9 August
	Large Skipper	4 June	12 August
	Large White	29 March	20 October
	Small White	24 March	23 October
	Green-veined White	27 March	19 September
	Orange Tip	29 March	20 June
	Small Copper	22 April	18 October
	Common Blue	23 April	25 September
	Holly Blue	6 April	20 September
	Speckled Wood	12 April	28 October
	Marbled White	15 June	7 August
	Gatekeeper	18 June	20 September
Meadow Brown	8 June	25 September	
Ringlet	22 June	15 August	
Small Heath	3 June	6 September*	
Migrants	Clouded Yellow	-	-
	Painted Lady	16 May	11 October

\* during week beginning



This year's surveys took place in the usual variety of village and urban churchyards. Some churchyards have set up wildlife areas in recent years, and some have been managed for butterflies for many years. Fifty-nine sites were surveyed in 2015, ten fewer than 2014. Fifteen were in Berkshire, 26 in Buckinghamshire and 18 in Oxfordshire. Thank you very much to everyone who took part.

**Rarities** – the **Silver-washed Fritillary** recorded at Tilehurst on 9th July was a welcome visitor. This is the first churchyard sighting since 2010.

The greatest number of species seen in churchyards were: Cholsey, Oxon (21) - four more than in 2014; Stanford-in-the-Vale, Oxon (17); Stone, Bucks (17).

### Churchyards with ten or more species during 2015 were:

**Berkshire:** Grazeley (13); Tilehurst (12).

**Buckinghamshire:** Hartwell (13); Denham (13); Ellesborough (12); Iver (10).

**Oxfordshire:** Wallingford Memorial Chapels (14); Oxford Cowley Road (13); Whitchurch Hill (12); Benson (11); Brightwell-cum-Sotwell St Agatha (10); North Stoke (10).

The top five butterflies were: **Small White** (68%) which had similar figures to 2014 although only three sites had more than ten Small White for the season and half had just ones and twos. **Meadow Brown** (63%) was slightly reduced. The highest number in one visit was 26 in Aston Abbotts (Bucks) wildlife area; Stone (Bucks) had 20 in one visit. *In 2014, Henley Holy Trinity had 70 in one visit.*

**Large White** (58%) was slightly up on 2014 but only two sites had more than 10 for the season. *In 2014 just one site had more than 10 Large White. In 2013, when 81% of sites saw them, six sites had more than 10 Large White.*

**Holly Blue** (51%) had a better year. However, numbers totalled mostly three or fewer for the year, except for Brightwell-cum-Sotwell St James, where six were seen on one May visit and ten in the year. *In 2014, Holly Blue were sparse (27% of sites), mostly ones and twos. In 2013, numbers were also low, except for Reading cemetery where 14 were recorded during the year.*

**Gatekeeper** (47%) was recorded at fewer sites in 2015 - Stanford-in-the-Vale had 50 for the year, half the number of 2014 and the surveyor is concerned about the drop in numbers. In contrast, Goring had 20 in one July visit, and Cholsey had twice as many in 2015 as in 2014.

A few other butterflies from lower down the table: **Small Tortoiseshell** – (41%) - 14 were seen at Tilehurst in one visit, nine at Stanford-in-the-Vale and seven in one visit at Cholsey. Most of the 24 sites had only one individual in the whole year. **Red Admiral** (27%) was less common in 2015. No surveyor recorded more than eight in the season, even in Stanford and Stone where autumn surveys were carried out.

**Small Copper** (12%) - the same proportion for four years. Denham and Whitchurch Hill recorded Small Copper in both 2015 and 2014. **Small Heath** (5%) was seen at Cholsey, Henley and Wallingford Memorial Chapels in 2015 (*and in Frieth and Benson in 2014*). **Painted Lady** was only seen at Stanford in 2015; *in 2014 it was seen at Colnbrook, Ellesborough and Iffley*.

#### **News from around the area:**

Large patches of flowers in the wildlife area attracted butterflies (Cholsey)

1. Some established long grass areas were cut, which affected brown butterflies (several places)
2. A variable year but good Holly Blue numbers (Wallingford area)
3. Churchyard is next to a meadow of unimproved grassland so maybe next year's numbers will be better if the weather permits (Streatley)
4. Wild areas had to be cut back as they were growing over gravestones (two locations)
5. Last Red Admiral sighting was on 2nd November (Stone)
6. Garden Tiger moth and Hummingbird Hawkmoth were seen during the survey (Stanford-in-the-Vale)

In a time when there is much pressure to build housing, roads and schools, churchyards are more important than ever for wildlife. If your local churchyard has sunny areas and a mixture of habitats, it might attract butterflies. New members might like to do the Big Butterfly Count or UTB's own churchyard butterfly survey in 2016.



Pitstone Churchyard

*Helen Hyre*

**Percentage of churchyards where species were seen in 2015,  
and comparison with previous years**

Year	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010	2009	2008	2007	2006
<b>No. of Sites</b>	59	69	68	50	54	45	36	36	40	47
Small White	68	65	87	60	74	76	75	69	80	79
Meadow Brown	63	78	81	66	56	56	78	81	70	87
Large White	58	45	81	32	67	60	89	75	60	79
Holly Blue	51	17	34	32	67	33	33	42	60	45
Gatekeeper	47	58	54	42	39	36	36	44	65	70
Speckled Wood	44	62	54	26	46	47	72	69	55	49
Ringlet	42	42	44	50	28	40	53	31	35	17
Small Tortoiseshell	41	61	47	14	22	29	44	11	25	19
Green-veined White	41	46	35	28	46	42	58	28	38	36
Peacock	41	42	43	12	19	24	44	36	38	36
Brimstone	39	42	34	22	30	29	33	22	45	36
Orange-tip	37	39	37	32	52	33	42	22	28	43
Red Admiral	27	43	22	36	52	36	28	42	65	70
Comma	24	42	40	22	20	27	44	42	35	40
Common Blue	20	20	22	4	22	36	31	17	5	26
Marbled White	19	16	16	10	13	13	8	14	18	32
Small Skipper	17	23	18	10	6	9	22	25	15	43
Essex Skipper	14	12	4	2	4	2	0	3	3	9
Large Skipper	14	12	15	6	9	16	14	6	8	6
Small Copper	12	12	13	12	19	18	17	11	13	15
Brown Argus	10	6	4	2	17	2	8	3	0	6
Small Heath	5	3	4	4	0	2	0	0	0	0
Painted Lady	2	4	4	2	0	9	56	3	5	26
Silver-washed Fritillary	2	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0
Purple Hairstreak	0	3	1	0	0	0	3	0	0	0
Chalkhill Blue	0	1	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	2
Small Blue	0	0	3	2	2	4	8	0	0	0
Clouded Yellow	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2

100 - 70%		69 - 50%		49 - 30%	
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Since the last newsletter 75 new members have joined and the membership now stands at 1434. 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 T Adderley	Arborfield Cross, Reading
Mr & Mrs T Bullock	Great Shefford, Hungerford
Ms M Carter	Caversham, Reading
Mrs J Lake	Newbury
Mr & Mrs J Mavromatis & Family	Winnersh, Wokingham
Ms C Moran & Ms L Abbott	Newbury
Miss H Park	Reading
Mr L Powell & Ms C Beech	Caversham, Reading
Miss L Sharpe	Newbury
Mr & Mrs G N Shillam	Newbury
Ms B Silsoe	Wyfold, Reading
Mr & Mrs D Tolson	Maidenhead
Mr & Mrs A Vincent	Reading
Mr & Mrs F Wilbrink & Family	Emmer Green, Reading
Miss L Woolhouse	Whitchurch on Thames, Reading

### **BUCKINGHAMSHIRE**

Mr & Mrs P Almadi	Tinkers Bridge, Milton Keynes
Mr M Andrews	Cliveden, Taplow
Mr R Barker & Ms E Stobart	Woburn Sands, Milton Keynes
Mr C Clarke	Aylesbury
Ms C Coen	Little Chalfont, Amersham
Mr & Mrs S Heath	Newton Longville, Milton Keynes
Mr R Jarvis	Wendover
Mrs C Langham	Haversham, Milton Keynes
Mr F McGuirk	Newport Pagnell
Mr & Mrs S Poyton	Chesham
Mrs J Redrup	Naphill, High Wycombe
Mrs A Roberts	Buckingham
Miss G Rowland	High Wycombe
Mrs E Ryan	Booker, High Wycombe



**OXFORDSHIRE**

Mrs A Aitken  
Mrs S Benyon Bennett  
Mrs U Blake  
Mrs A Burrell  
Ms S Campbell  
Mr D Chapman & Ms Joekend & Family  
Mr & Mrs J Collie  
Mr N Creed  
Mrs B Crittenden  
Mr M Donegan  
Miss J Edwards  
Mrs A Gibb  
Mrs L Hamill  
Mr F Henson  
Dr D Johnston  
Mrs J Keene  
Mr M Kelly  
Mrs D Langley  
Mr T Lea  
Mrs J Malden  
Mr J E McCrae  
Dr A Newbold  
Mr & Mrs A Softley  
Mrs D Spitzley  
Mrs J Watson  
Ms E White  
Miss S White  
Ms J Wilson

Abingdon  
Witney  
Eynsham, Witney  
Kings Sutton, Banbury  
Oxford  
Oxford  
Wantage  
Headington, Oxford  
Adderbury, Banbury  
Charlbury, Chipping Norton  
Eynsham, Witney  
Stadhampton, Oxford  
Carterton  
Banbury  
Didcot  
Southmoor, Abingdon  
Thame  
Witney  
Oxford  
Wolvercote. Oxford  
Oxford  
Sibford Ferris, Banbury  
Chilton, Didcot  
Brailes, Banbury  
Eynsham, Witney  
Eynsham, Witney  
Abingdon  
Henley on Thames

**ELSEWHERE**

Mr H E Clarke  
Mr P A Clarke  
Miss H Jones

Effingham, Leatherhead  
Poole, Dorset  
Clutton, Bristol

## FIELD MEETINGS

The May field trips have already been announced in the previous issue of Hairstreak and on the website. It is a very crowded programme with some trips on the same day, giving you a choice.

**Tick bites are becoming more prevalent in the UK. It is essential to wear long trousers and shirts with long sleeves to minimise the area of exposed skin.**

*Please note the trip on June 11th to Shotover Hill/Brasenose Wood. This is a special event during the Oxford Nature Week organised by BBOWT. This is an opportunity for us to visit a very nice habitat which few of us know about. It is being led by the charismatic Ivan Wright who, many of you may remember, gave a very entertaining talk to our AGM a few years ago. Also, Karen Saxl has, imaginatively, invited us to evening walks which she takes regularly and nearly always sees many butterflies.*

Please look at the Herts/Middx section website for field trips close to our region; we are invited to these trips, as they are to ours.

**Saturday 11th June at 09.45.**

**College Lake, Bucks**

We welcome beginners to moth trapping; families and interested members of the public to meet us to examine moths trapped the previous night. With luck, some choice moths captured the previous night in other traps will be on display and two traps will be opened live so that all the moths they hold can be identified. In addition, we will be provided with identification sheets so that you can identify the moths on display for yourself (and then get confirmation by experts). Event to finish by 12.00. Please note that College Lake welcomes a donation of £3 if you choose to use their car park. This event is a joint enterprise with the Buckinghamshire Invertebrate Group (BIG) and in the event of very poor weather overnight from the 10th/11th it will be postponed to the 11th/12th – if this seems likely please check the UTB website or ring Nick. Grid ref: SP935139, Map 165. Post code: HP23 5QG.

Contact: Nick Bowles 01442 382276; [nick.bowles@ntlworld.com](mailto:nick.bowles@ntlworld.com)

**Saturday June 11th at 10.30.**

**Shotover Hill and Brasenose Wood, Oxon**

Meeting organised by the Upper Thames Branch and Shotover Wildlife under the auspices of Oxford Nature Week and BBOWT. A very interesting habitat consisting of acidic grassland, ancient woodland and blackthorn scrub. We hope to see the rare Black Hairstreak as well as early summer species. This trip will be led by the Chairman of Shotover Wildlife, Ivan Wright. Meet at Shotover car park, Old Road (east end), Headington, OX3 8TA  
It is advisable to bring a packed lunch.

Grid ref SP564062, Map 164. Leader: Ivan Wright 01865 874423

**Wednesday evenings 15/6, 23/6, 30/6, 6/7, 13/7 at 6.00 pm** **Didcot, Oxon**

Ever wondered what butterflies do outside transect hours? Target species: Marbled White, Small Blue, and other summer butterflies on a path on top of the disused railway line from Didcot to Upton. Some rough ground but along side of metalled path. That should catch the height of the Marbled White season. At that point in the year I'd be going out daily ... and I'd be doing that even if it was raining as the numbers of MW will be good even in the rain. Around the solstice butterflies will be perching until 22.00! and can be in flight up to 21.00. Meet at the Village Hall in East Hagbourne.  
Grid ref: SU525883, Map 174. **Leader: Karen Saxl 01235 818574**

**Saturday June 18th 11.00 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 road. Grid ref: SP720209, Map 165. **Leader: Stuart Hodges 01296 730217**

**Saturday 25th June at 10.30 am** **Holtspur Reserve, Bucks**

We hope to see the Small Blue, as well as most of the common summer species. Meet at the Holtspur Bottom reserve entrance in Riding Lane.  
Grid ref: SU918906, Map 175. **Leader: Brenda Mobbs 01494 712486**

**Saturday 25th June at 11.00 am, and later, at 9 pm, for moths.**

**Blackland Covert, Bucks - joint meeting with BIG (Bucks Invertebrate Group).**

The site is a private farm approximately 7 miles N of Aylesbury and 2 miles W of Stewkley. It is managed sensitively for wildlife and a lot of restoration work has taken place in recent years. The focus for the meeting will be the Black Hairstreak which has been recorded here. We will also look for other invertebrates so members interested in all groups are very welcome.

Please note that the number of places on this trip is limited. It is essential that you book with the leader(s) before the event.

Please allow plenty of time to get here, as it takes longer than you think it will! We will be moving away from the parking site, and do not want to hang around for late arrivals.

Directions: west of Stewkley, follow High Street North heading out of the village NW until the edge of the village then turn left onto Dean Road and follow it to the end which will take you to Blackland Farm, park carefully in the farmyard.

Drive carefully along Dean Road as there are large potholes and there is a very narrow cattle grid at the entrance to the farm track.

Grid Ref: SP8258 2583, Map 165 (farmyard) Postcode for satnav LU7 0EU (short of farm by 0.6 mile, keep going on Dean Road) **Leader: Roger Kemp 01296 748932 . Leader moth meeting: Bill Parker 07774 170573**

**Saturday 2nd July 10.30 am**

**Iver, Bucks**

A level walk from the centre of the village along a track and footpaths through a variety of habitats, including Swan Meadow where some disease resistant Elms will be planted. White-letter Hairstreaks are seen regularly, together with a wide range of summer butterflies, which should appeal to experts as well as family groups and complete beginners. Meet in Swan Road, a cul-de-sac with parking bays, next to the Swan Pub [SL09NG] opposite the parish church in Iver. Please do not use the pub car park unless you intend to eat there.  
Grid ref: TQ039812, Map 176. **Leader: Wendy Wilson 01753 883465**

**Sunday 3rd July, 1 pm**

**Maidenhead Thicket, Maidenhead, Berks**

A woodland walk, target species is the White-letter Hairstreak as well as the usual summer species. The Purple Emperor was also seen here a couple of years ago. Meet in the car park off the Henley Road [A4130], Grid ref: SU857809. Map 175. Binoculars recommended.  
**Leader: Peter Cuss, the species champion, 07938 577944**

**Sunday, 3rd July 10.30**

**Salcey Forest, Bucks/Northants**

Meeting with Northampton section, repeating our successful field trip of last year with Purple Emperor, White Admiral, Silver-washed Fritillary, Wood White and three possible Hairstreak species. Meet in the Horsebox car park on Midshires Way, Grid ref: SP801509, Map152.  
**Leaders: Douglas Goddard and Dave James. Doug's number: 01604 408670**

**Saturday and Sunday July 9th and 10th, 10.30**

**Bernwood Forest Bucks/Oxon**

Weather permitting, good numbers of summer butterflies should be seen, the main attraction being the Purple Emperor. If the weather is fine participants may like to arrive earlier since the Purple Emperor is active from 9 am in really warm weather. Meet in the main Oakley Wood car park, Grid ref: SP611117, Map 164. **Leader: Dennis Dell 01296 397039 and 07986868747**

**Saturday 9th July at 10.30 am**

**Bowdown Wood, Berks**

A walk through the varied landscape of a BBOWT reserve near Newbury in search of the fairly elusive White Admiral. The walk will include a couple of steep slopes (one with steps) and will take in areas of woodland, wooded valleys and open ground so a variety of summer butterflies should be observed. Meet in the 'Bomb Site' car park (see BBOWT website for directions) at grid ref SU507654, Map 174. (N.B. Car Park is different to last year's meeting and isn't signposted.).  
**Leader: Julia Huggins 07879 066876.**

**Thursday 14th July at 10.30 am**

**Bradenham, Bucks**

Target species Dark Green Fritillary and other downland 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, grid ref SU827972, Map 165. Leader: Paul Bowyer 001628 52622530

**Saturday 16th July 11am**

**North Bucks Way & Oakhill Wood, Milton Keynes.**

A walk of 2.5 miles approximately along the North Bucks Way to look for White Admiral, hairstreaks and other summer species. We also spotted the Purple Emperor here last year. Meet at Shenley Wood car park, grid ref: SP824356, Map 152. Leader: Martin Kincaid 01908 235632 Mob:07768 146232

**Saturday 16th July 11 am**

**Silchester Common, Hants**

A good site for the Silver-studded Blue. Ground uneven so wear suitable footwear. Also, there is gorse so wear long trousers. Meet in the car park on the west side of Pamber Road in Silchester. Grid Ref: SU625622, Map 175. Leader: Bryan Williams 0118 9792177, mobile 07919921910

**Sunday 17th July at 10.30 am**

**Bacombe Hill, Wendover, Bucks**

Summer butterflies and day-flying moths at this newly acquired BBOWT reserve. This is a fairly long walk (3km) and includes some steep slopes, but it should be possible for any reasonably fit person with grippy shoes and the exercising of caution about rabbit holes. Parking at the rear of the Shoulder of Mutton, 20 Pound Street, Wendover, HP22 6EJ. Grid ref: SP866077, Map 165. I expect to return to the pub by about 13.30 for a refreshment. Pub lunches will be available. We have permission to park at the rear of the pub from the manageress. Leader: Nick Bowles 01442 382276 nick.bowles@ntlworld.com

**Saturday 23rd July at 10:30am**

**West Wycombe Hill and Buttler's Hangings**

A walk to see summer butterflies and hopefully some of the rarer species including Silver-spotted Skipper, Dark Green Fritillary and Chalkhill Blue. After meeting at the north end of National Trust Car park on the top of West Wycombe Hill (Grid ref: SU827951), we will walk, through the woods, along the top of the ridge until we arrive at Buttler's Hangings. A walk of about 4 kilometres in total with very steep slopes, so please wear suitable footwear. Please note it is not possible to park on the road directly below Buttler's Hangings. Leader: Tess and Peter Ogden 07596 495007

**Saturday 30th July at 10.30 am**

**Fence Wood, Hermitage, Berks**

A good site to find White Admiral, but many species are possible along this wide woodland ride. On Slanting Hill from Cold Ash to Hermitage just before turn to Marlston. Park at SU507716. Leader: John Lerpiniere 0118 375 1756



**Sunday 31st July 10.30 am**

**Oven Bottom, Oxon**

Butterflies of high summer. From the A417 a mile east of Blewbury turn south along the narrow lane opposite the turning to Aston Upthorpe village. Park and meet by the grain drier half a mile along the lane. Steep chalk slopes. The walk will proceed to the near end of "Juniper Valley" then bear right up the hill, turn right onto Grim's Ditch by the dew pond and then on to Oven Bottom returning by descending "Juniper Valley". Grid ref: SU550844, Map 174.

**Leader: Malcolm Brownsword 01235 850668**

**Thursday 4th August 11.00am**

**Greenham Common Berks**

BBOWT reserve and the largest area of heathland in our region. A major spot for butterflies which is flat, so no walking problems. Target species is the Grayling, but many other summer species will be seen too. Meet at car park near control tower, off Bury's Bank Road. Grid ref: SU501652, Map 174.

**Leader: Paul Bowyer 01628 526225**

**Sunday 7th August 10.30 am** **Hackpen Hill [also known as Crowhole Bottom, Devil's Punchbowl], Oxon.**

Chalk Carpet and summer butterflies. Steep slopes requiring suitable footwear. Meet at The Ridgeway car park at Sparsholt Firs on the B4001.

Grid ref: SU343850, Map 174. The site itself is at SU355847.

**Leaders: Mike and Gillian Taylor 01235751646**

**Saturday 13th August at 10:30am** **Hundred Acre Piece, Mortimer, Berks/Hants**

The wide flowery rides through the conifer plantations are one of the local hotspots for the Grayling butterfly. Park in the quiet cul-de-sac of Stephen's Firs, Mortimer. Grid ref: SU644647, Map 175.

**Leader: Jan Haseler 0118 9414750 / 07464 603236**

**Sunday 14th August at 10.30**

**Whitecross Green Wood, Bucks/Oxon**

BBOWT reserve. Target species Brown Hairstreak. Binoculars and lots of patience essential! Meet at car park at entrance to wood. Grid ref: SP600150, Map 164 or 165. **Leader: Dennis Dell 07986 868747.**

**Saturday 20th August 10.30 am**

**Lardon Chase, Berks**

Target species: the second brood of the Adonis Blue, together with other late summer butterflies. Very steep grass slopes. Meet at the National Trust car park off the A4009 at the top of the hill out of Streatley. Grid ref: SU583807, Map 174. **Leader: Maureen Cross 01491 871239**

**Sunday 21st August at 10.30am**

**Paices Wood, Aldermaston, Berks**

A look at the varied habitats of this country parkland which supports a variety of species. Entrance south of Youngs Industrial Estate between Aldermaston and Tadley off A340. On west side of A340, best satnav code is RG74PG. Then follow brown signs. Parking at SU587639, Map 174.

**Leader and contact John Lerpiniere 0118 375 1756**

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

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

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

## Upper Thames Branch Website

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

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

Have your butterfly sightings and photos posted on the website by sending them to: [wendy.campbell@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:wendy.campbell@tiscali.co.uk)

Upper Thames Branch Moth Sightings Blog

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

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Holtspur Bottom Reserve

<http://www.holtspurbottom.info>

## Upper Thames Branch Officers

**Chairman** Nick Bowles

01442 382276 [nick.bowles@ntlworld.com](mailto:nick.bowles@ntlworld.com)

**Vice-chairman & Conservation & Recording Chairman** Grahame Hawker

Well Cottage, 22 Brimpton Common, Reading RG7 4RZ

0118 9814405 [grahamehawker@hotmail.com](mailto:grahamehawker@hotmail.com)

**Hon Secretary & Branch Contact** Dave Wilton

25 Burnham Road, Westcott, Aylesbury HP18 0PL

01296 658701 [wilton@burnhamlodge.plus.com](mailto:wilton@burnhamlodge.plus.com)

**Hon Treasurer** Chris Woodrow

39 Old London Road, Benson, Wallingford OX10 6RR

01491 838637 [lepidoptera@mybtinternet.com](mailto:lepidoptera@mybtinternet.com)

**Membership Secretary** Brenda Mobbs

01494 712486 [bc.upperthames@gmail.com](mailto:bc.upperthames@gmail.com)