

# Hairstreak

No 98

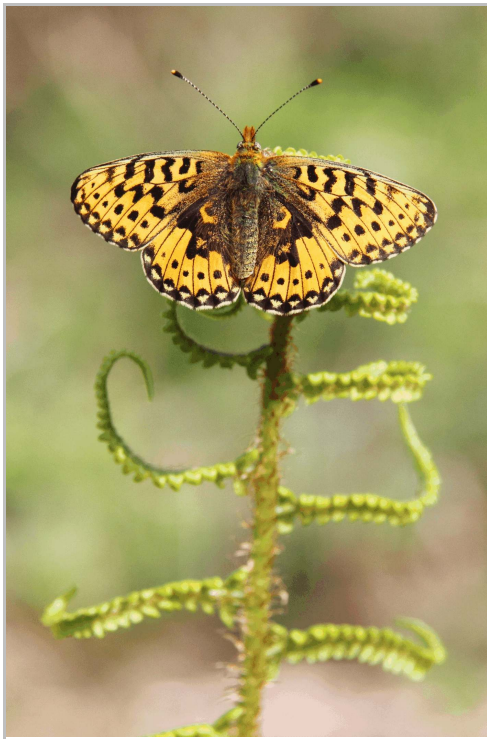
Spring 2017



Butterfly  
Conservation



Upper Thames  
Branch



Pearl-bordered Fritillary Andrew Cornick  
1st in UK Butterflies category  
Overall winner



Marbled Whites Nigel Kiteley  
1st in Previous Winners category

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

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### **Contents**

<b>Chairman's notes.....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Mike Wilkins.....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>News from the 10k squares.....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Upper Thames butterfly recording...11</b>	
<b>Members' Day.....</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>Photo Competition report.....</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>New members.....</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>Training days.....</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>Work parties.....</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>Field meetings.....</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>Photo competition winning photos.</b>	<b>30</b>

Cover photo: Green-veined White by Cliff Buckton

Opposite page: two winners of the Photo Competition

Background: Chequers Knap, Bucks

**BUTTERFLY CONSERVATION**  
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Once again we are at the point where we review what's gone and look ahead to the opportunities of the coming year.

Our winter work (2015/16) with Network Rail extended the breeding area for the Duke of Burgundy (at one of its three remaining Chiltern sites) and subsequently we found evidence of larval damage to cowslips there. Further work occurred this winter on nearby private land and plans for more, with Network Rail and another local landowner, are progressing. Highways UK are instigating important work at the M40 Compensation Area (Bernwood), to assist the Black and Brown Hairstreak butterflies. Moth recording in Oxfordshire will benefit from a grant for recording equipment, as will the Dutch Elm Disease resistant Elm tree planting programme, which received a grant from South Bucks District Council as more landowners in Berkshire and south Bucks agree to have disease resistant trees added to their hedges. Butterfly recording continues to expand from members' gardens and open access land onto larger areas of private land with the more owners granting access.

There have been some internal changes. Marion Gillie left the committee (with our thanks for her more-than-three year's service), while Peter Cuss and Lloyd Garvey joined it. Our new Field Trip officer, Dennis Dell, served up an excellent diary of visits and Vikki Rose, Oxfordshire's new Moth Officer, showed her amazing enthusiasm at Members' Day. Mike Wilkins (our transect Coordinator) won two National awards for his work in conservation and Sarah Meredith won external funding to continue her paid work with The Duke, concentrating on an area around the National Trust's Bradenham re-introduction site.



Working at a private site to help  
The Duke

In the last few weeks we said a very humble "Thank you" to our departing Webmaster, Wendy Campbell. She has unassumingly posted pages and pages of detail to the website: sightings in summer, Species Champions reports and up-coming events in the spring, winter work party reports through the winter; and so very much more, for many years. Perhaps Wendy has devoted more of her time to the branch than any other member. She will be sorely missed. Fortunately, we have an able replacement in David Hastings and we wish him many happy hours with the web

pages.

We have been involved in various efforts to ensure that housing developments, and so on, are placed appropriately with as little impact on our butterflies and moths as can be achieved. We sit on many advisory bodies and continually seek new opportunities to work with like-minded individuals and organisations. In 2017 our work with other groups will expand to involve Thames Water and more private landowner and MOD sites. Between them they own not just large areas of land but some extremely interesting and diverse places. Our involvement will range through surveying to practical conservation tasks. All of which will need extra volunteer hours.

Almost everyone (not just our members) tells me that they see fewer butterflies and/or moths each year and each issue I ask that you might consider how you could help them recover their numbers and expand their ranges.

The way to reverse this downward trend is through our efforts. Evidence shows that directed conservation effort will convert dwindling numbers into expanding populations.

So, maybe when, in a quiet time around New Year, you are musing your annual resolutions, you will decide how you are going to do a bit more for wildlife conservation. I have added to this report a list of tasks that need some extra help.

You might begin by checking that your sightings records from 2016 are sent to the relevant recorders and then put some of our winter conservation events and spring public events into your planner. We would love to welcome you into the warm embrace of those already doing a bit more.

<b>Could you help with the tasks listed below?</b>	
<b>Please email <a href="mailto:nick.bowles@ntlworld.com">nick.bowles@ntlworld.com</a> if you can – thanks.</b>	
<b>Help with meetings</b>	<b>Help with direct conservation</b>
Physical help; e.g putting out chairs, erecting displays	Use hand tools at conservation tasks
Meet and greet people attending meetings	Use power tools at conservation tasks
Help with catering at meetings, e.g. pour the tea	Help to store and transport tools
Take photos for our internet pages & newsletter	Organise a team of surveyors
Run a moth trap and invite people to join you	Join and survey as part of a team
Help direct traffic in parking areas	Write accounts/take photos of tasks
Put together a display to show at meetings	Run a moth trap & record the catch
Provide facilities for meetings, e.g. rooms, laptops	Attend meetings as a UTB representative
Write an account of a meeting	Walk a transect
Help with organisation	Travel to record in underrecorded areas
Lead a walk around a site you know	Visit Holtspur Bottom & report on it
Help to man our stall at fairs and events	Become a species champion
Maintain a database or spreadsheet	Become a 10km square champion

Contribute to our website, or our Twitter feed, or our Facebook page, or our newsletter	Grow plants for reserves
Help beginners with identification on UTB walks	Record the butterflies & moths locally
Help with publicity and promotion	Help with finance
Join a committee	Consider leaving a legacy to BC
Help identify members' moth images	Take the newsletter electronically
	Organise a fund raising event
	Arrange a token collection at Waitrose
please tell us of any additional ideas	

## Mike Wilkins receives two awards on the same day!



Mike receiving his Outstanding Volunteer Award from Jim Asher.  
*Nick Bowles*



Mike receiving an award as a long standing transect coordinator from Martin Warren, Chief Executive of Butterfly Conservation.

*Jim Asher*

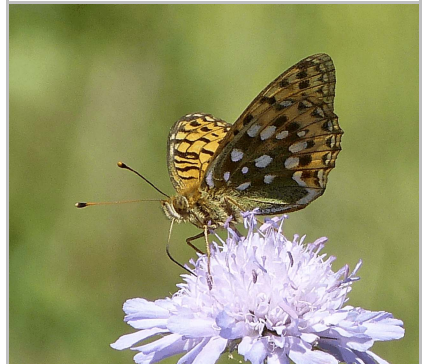
Both presentations were made at the UKBMS 40th Anniversary Seminar.

A number of our members have adopted a 10K square, coordinating the recording for the current butterfly atlas which runs from 2015 to 2019. The report below, compiled at the end of July, describes how some of them have been finding the 2016 butterfly season. Several commented on how slow the start of the season had been and how few butterflies they had seen in the first half of the year.

Des Sussex and Robert Godden look after SU86, which is in the south east corner of the Upper Thames area, sharing borders with Hampshire and Surrey. The square holds large areas of lowland heath, mixed woodland and farmland as well as the towns of Bracknell, Wokingham and Sandhurst. The undoubted highlight of 2015 was the discovery of a Dark Green Fritillary, a species not recorded in the square in recent times. They had anticipated that if this species were to be found in the square it would be most likely in the north east owing to the habitat and the presence of another population in that direction, so the initial discovery came as a complete surprise – while searching for its silver-washed cousin

in an extensive woodland in the south west of the square, a single fresh specimen appeared in a bracken-filled glade late one afternoon. Then a week later, Robert was amazed to find another individual in a neighbouring tetrad, even closer to home in Sandhurst. The plot then thickened in 2016 when Des found a Dark Green Fritillary in his garden on 2nd July. It was settled for some time allowing great views. Later the same day he saw one at Yateley Common just over the border in Hampshire. The site ranger reported that a small colony was discovered there a few years ago and seems to be hanging on. That site is about 4–5km from their Berkshire sightings, and it is not yet known if their individuals have come from a Berkshire colony or have dispersed from elsewhere.

The square also turns up other occasional ‘surprises’ and new records, so in spite of being fairly well covered over the years there is always the chance of adding something to the database – for instance there have been occasional Purple Emperor sightings over the years but they have not found a ‘colony’ as such (as far as they know) yet. Marbled White seems to be spreading and able to find its way to newly created or available habitat, sometimes not quite the typical habitat where it might be expected. Targeted searching of gorse and broom bushes in heath and forest have shown that Green Hairstreak survives at various locations, and is perhaps more widespread and numerous than previously thought. The timber harvesting and forestry operations in parts of the square often create major habitat changes over a



Dark Green Fritillary  
David Ferguson

short space of time, and this can sometimes create useful open sunny habitat for a number of years, enabling colonisation or dispersal for some mobile species through the forest areas.

Frances Buckle has been looking after SP33, to the north of Chipping Norton in north-west Oxfordshire. She reports that the old railway line near Hook Norton, a BBOWT reserve, is a great spot for butterflies on a sunny day. Unfortunately so far this year, finding that sunny day has been difficult. A visit on 27th June was a bit disappointing, resulting in 10 Meadow Browns, 2 Marbled Whites, 2 Ringlets and a Large Skipper. However the permissive meadow at SP3531, which is on the other side of the road, is a delightful spot. There were up to 50 Marbled Whites and Meadow Browns fluttering around enjoying knapweed and other flowers in the meadow. She also saw about 30 Ringlets, particularly along the hedge line which goes alongside the old railway line route. Other butterflies in small numbers were Large Skipper (10), Common Blue (6), Green-veined White (2). Also seen were a single Brimstone, Small Tortoiseshell and Speckled Wood. The highlight of the afternoon was one rather fast flying Dark Green Fritillary. This field is also good for orchids, Common Spotted, Pyramidal, Fragrant and Bee being found that afternoon.

Ched George, who looks after SU79 on the Oxfordshire / Buckinghamshire border to the west of High Wycombe, reports that the first Chalkhill Blues appeared on Yoesden Bank on 16th July and a Purple Hairstreak appeared unexpectedly near a house in Sprig's Alley, Radnage on 15th July.

In SU66, south-west of Reading in Berkshire, Jan Haseler has been exploring a new site. The Reading Lake Hotel has a gravel pit in its grounds which is used for water-skiing and other water sports. The Reading – Southampton railway line runs along the eastern boundary of the site and the M4 runs along the southern boundary. The management have kindly given permission for her to monitor the butterflies in the grounds. A mown grass pathway runs round the outside of the site, edged with longer flowery grass in places and banks of bramble. Willows grow around the water's edge. Red Admirals have been seen on every visit since the middle of May and the only Painted Lady recorded so far in the 10K square was here at the end of June. Skippers have been surprisingly hard to find – just a few Small Skippers in thistly grass next to the railway line. Failing to find Marbled Whites was a disappointment, but hearing a Nightingale in full song in deep undergrowth close to the path was an unexpected bonus.

Gerry and Penny Kendall, who look after SP50 around Oxford, send this message. 'Heartfelt thanks to all the butterfly enthusiasts who sent in records of their sightings in "our" square. You can't imagine how cheering it is to find that someone



Chalkhill Blue  
*Stephen Jones*

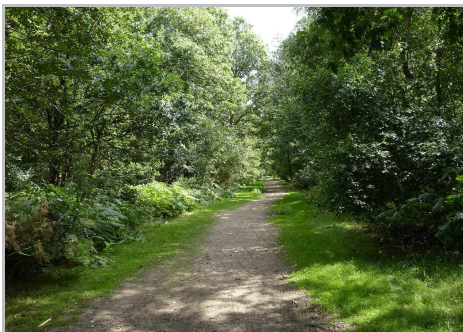


else has filled in some of the tetrads that you find difficult, or found a really interesting species in the square. And don't forget, no matter where you live or where you travel in the three counties, you are in someone's 10 km square. Records submitted to Jim Asher via the web site or otherwise will find their way to the grateful 10K Champion.'

Paul Bowyer looks after SU98, which is to the north of Slough in Bucks. He reports that while walking his newly acquired dog across Flackwell Heath golf course, where there are two public footpaths, he has seen a number of butterfly species including Dingy Skipper.

John Lerpiniere helps out in SU37, near Lambourn in Berkshire. He was impressed by the species, including two Small Blues, at a chalk cutting underpass beneath the M4 near Lambourn Woodlands. He reports that Small Blues have done very well in SU37 this year, including sixteen on a dried mud patch in a gateway.

Wendy Wilson, who has been surveying the Buckinghamshire parts of TQ07, TQ08, TQ09 and TL00, sends this report: 'These three fragments of 10km squares on the far south-eastern fringe of our area make up my 10km square. I have become very fond of my square during the ten years I have been recording butterflies there. There are some excellent butterfly sites including six woods with recent Purple Emperor sightings. TQ09 (with the adjoining small bit of TL00) is the most rural fragment and contains Chiltern Open Air Museum and a Woodland Trust wood, both good butterfly sites. TQ08 is the largest of the three. It contains three large Country Parks (Denham, Langley and Black Park) where the rangers are always friendly and helpful and two Parish Councils (Chalfont St Peter and Iver) which have adopted wildlife-friendly policies to benefit and hopefully increase their butterfly populations. TQ07 is an urban area, but it contains some surprisingly good butterfly sites. Only the other day a short visit to Crown Meadow in Colnbrook yielded 14 species including a Small Copper aberration I had never seen before.



Strawberry Wood, Black Park  
*David Ferguson*

If this all sounds like a sales pitch – it is! I shall be downsizing to the Milton Keynes area near my daughter in 2018, so my square will be up for grabs then. Meanwhile I should appreciate some help in 2017 with one or more of the three part squares. If you have been thinking of doing some recording and live near here, but feel a bit daunted by taking on a 10km square, the idea of breaking in gently may appeal to you. Don't let the fact that the square contains three motorways put you off – I once stood on a footbridge over the M25 and watched a Purple Hairstreak laying eggs on the oak canopy on the embankment below me whilst Marbled Whites flew back and forth across the carriageways – and there are other compensations, a free annual parking permit worth £45 at the Country Parks is one possibility...'

We have a number of 10K squares across the three counties where we are

looking for one or more volunteers to help coordinate recording. Figure 1 below shows whether squares are already adopted, need additional help or are unassigned.

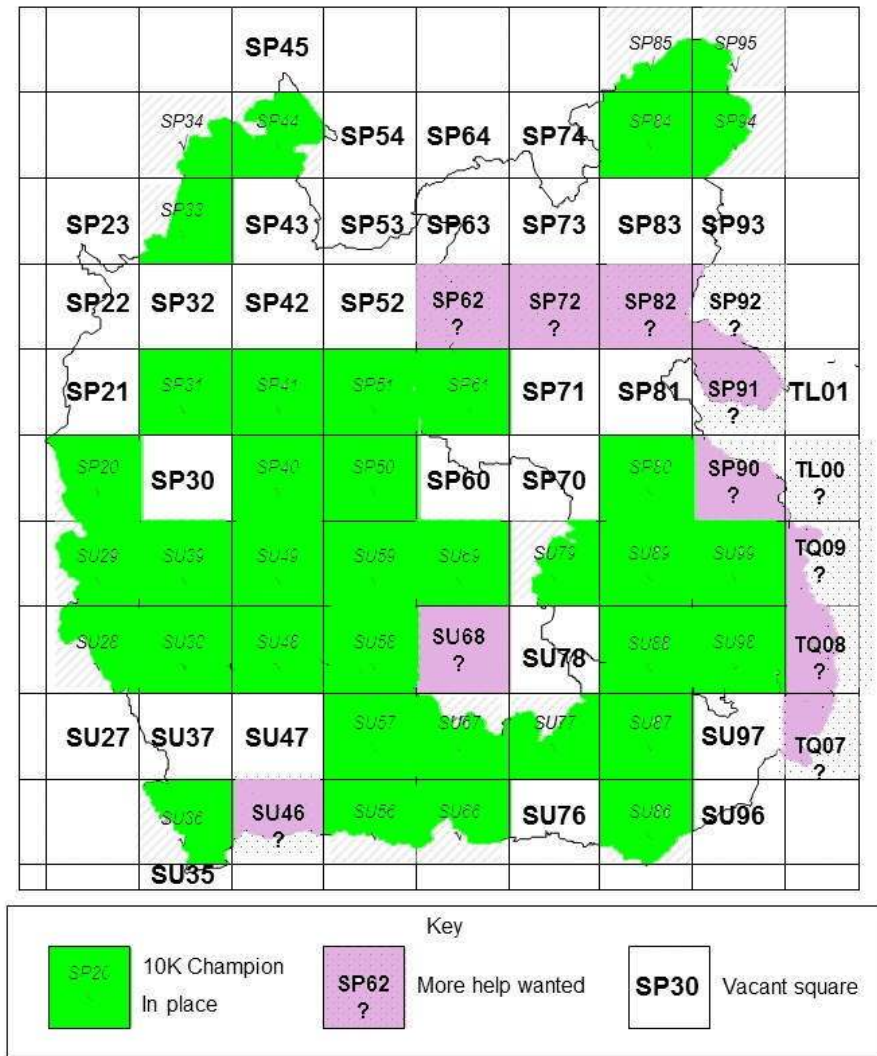


Figure 1: 10K square status, July 2016

If you think you could help, please contact Jan Haseler. (Tel: 0118 9414750, email [jan.haseler@btinternet.com](mailto:jan.haseler@btinternet.com)).

## Strongest Year Ever for Upper Thames Butterfly Recording

### Steve Wheatley

Recent years have seen a big increase in butterfly recording in the UK, and activity in our South East region has led the way in this boom of interest and activity.

There is so much data now being submitted that it takes a full year for the season's data to be entered, checked, formatted and entered into the national database. The best data currently available to Regional Officers goes up to 2014, whilst our recording team at County, Branch and National level is beavering away, collating and cleaning the data for 2015 and the incoming data for 2016 season.

Given this caveat, I am able to offer some observations on the data to 2014. Looking at just our rarest and most threatened butterflies (the UK Biodiversity Action Plan UKBAP species) 5,453 records were submitted from the Upper Thames Branch area alone in 2014. This is the most ever submitted by the Branch in a single year. Over the five years to 2014 the Upper Thames Branch has submitted over 12,400 UKBAP records. This is almost three times as many as was recorded in a similar period 1990 to 1994.

Does this tell us that UKBAP species are three times more common than they were 20 years ago?... sadly not. This huge level of recording enables us to measure the changes (sometimes declines) in these important species at an unprecedented level of detail and with an unprecedented level of confidence. For example, it tells us that Dingy Skipper has increased 24%, while the Grizzled Skipper has suffered a slight decline (1.2% drop in distribution, 1994 to 2014).

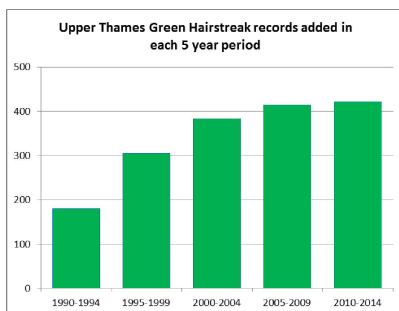
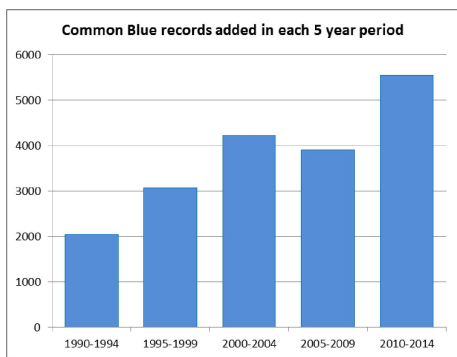
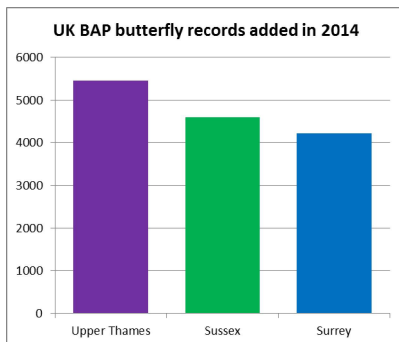
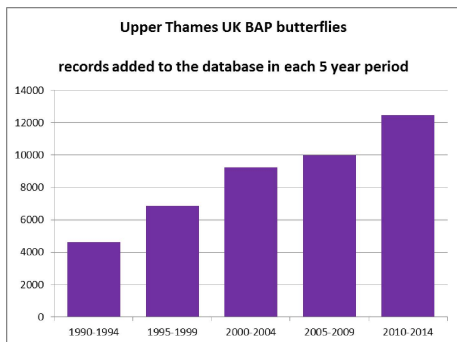
Data for more common and widespread species is also very valuable. This data tells us about the health of the wider countryside, which gives power to Butterfly Conservation's Science and Policy Team.

5,556 Common Blue records in the Upper Thames area (representing 30,389 individual butterflies) have been added to the national database in the last five years. Even relatively hard to spot butterflies are being recorded in record numbers; 1,576 Green Hairstreak sightings in the Upper Thames area have been added to the database in the last five years.

This valuable data has enabled the Branch to produce the excellent new Atlas of Butterflies and it provides us with the best information to prioritise the conservation effort. We can then share this in a strong, clear, and focussed manner with land managers, decision-makers and conservation partners in order to influence and drive positive changes for butterflies and other wildlife. This data underpins the new Regional Action Plan, and we're sharing this with the Wildlife Trust, the Forestry Commission, Natural England and a variety of other conservation partners, land managers and decision makers. This is already helping to inform the selection and designation of Local Wildlife Sites and inform decisions about the impacts and mitigation required for housing developments and large-scale initiatives such as HS2.

A big **THANK YOU** to everyone who records their butterfly sightings in the Upper Thames area. Every record counts and adds permanently to the vast knowledge base we can use to protect wildlife and drive conservation action. Thanks

especially to the outstanding contribution of the Branch volunteers, County Recorders and the data wizards at Butterfly Conservation.



## An adventurous Silver-spotted Skipper Nick Bowles and Richard Soulsby

Some butterfly species are renowned travelers, such as Painted Lady, Clouded Yellow, and Monarch. But others, such as Black Hairstreak, rarely stray far from where they emerge from the chrysalis. Silver-spotted Skippers (SSS for short) come into the latter category, and are notoriously slow to colonise neighbouring sites. But one individual, a Christopher Columbus among SSS, ventured far from its home last summer and arrived by chance in the Tring garden of UTB Chair Nick Bowles. Nick describes this rare event:

“On 26th August I was admiring the unusually large numbers of Small Tortoiseshells (7) and Common Blues (4) in our small, town garden (20 x 12 m), when I saw what I first thought was a Small Skipper feeding on a buddleia inflorescence. I crept closer to check for possible confusion with a late Essex Skipper. I was amazed to realise

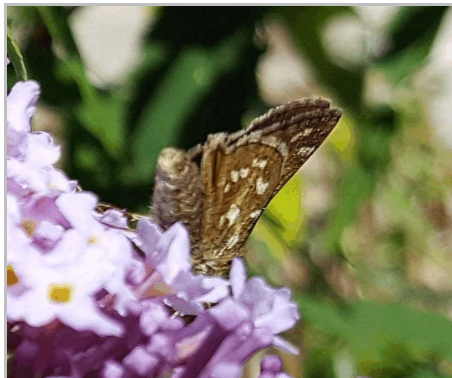
that it was a Silver-spotted Skipper! I rapidly took some shots on my mobile phone before going to fetch my camera. Just as well; despite the poor quality of the four mobile shots, by the time I returned with the SLR the skipper was gone, and though I searched three more times that day there was no sign of it.

“Our garden is almost all tall meadow with almost no short grassy areas, so the Silver-spotted Skipper wasn’t drawn to that feature. We do have many breeding species of butterfly and moth for a small, town garden, because I plant larval food plants in preference to adult attractants (though we have those too – like buddleia) and possibly the large amount of movement of other butterflies was an added attractant to this male SSS.”

Two of the photos are reproduced here and illustrate the identification, especially the shot of the undersides of the wings showing the characteristic pattern of silvery-white spots. The dark streak of the sex brand on the uppersides of the wings, and the orange-and-black colouring of the antennae, reveal it to be a male. Nick promptly alerted the UTB Species Champion for SSS, Richard Soulsby, about this remarkable find. Richard replied:



“Your sighting is very exciting SSS news! It is probably the most northerly confirmed sighting in Britain of recent years. So where has it come from? I think it is unlikely to have been introduced by deliberate human intervention. SSS are not sufficiently spectacular to tempt people to make an unauthorised transplant of adults, in my opinion, and they are apparently a difficult species to rear from eggs. So it seems more likely that it is a long-range vagrant from one of the stronger northern colonies.



“It is the only example I know of a SSS being seen ‘out-of-place’, not on a patch of suitable habitat, and the only one nectaring on buddleia. And of course, if it hadn’t settled under the nose of someone who knows butterflies intimately, it would have gone completely unnoticed.”

Enquiries among other SSS enthusiasts in southern England confirm that this is a very unusual occurrence; they remarked that long journeys might be undertaken as a series of shorter hops with re-fuelling stops en route – such as buddleia bushes if no more suitable habitats turn up. One wonders how many other SSS fly off like this every year, possibly over a wide range of directions and distances, and simply are not

recognized. So there seem to be two possible explanations: either it is a short-range vagrant from an unknown population that is somewhere in the vicinity of Tring, or it's a long-range vagrant from one of the known populations.

There is a network of small SSS colonies in the Chilterns north-east of Princes Risborough. Based on recent observations, Beacon Hill near Ellesborough has the most northerly known colony, and seems to be strengthening. The nearby colonies at the Grangelands reserve and Great Kimble Warren are also doing well. Nick's garden is 9.5km northeast of Beacon Hill – an easy excursion for some species but a long-haul flight for SSS.

Research has revealed how reluctant this species is to fly to neighbouring sites. A study by the Highways Agency in 2010 found that of more than 1,200 SSS marked, released and re-captured at the three main areas of Aston Rowant National Nature Reserve over a period of some weeks, *none* had travelled between the three areas, which are separated by less than 1km.

Longer-term evidence comes from a series of extensive surveys of SSS in southern England undertaken by researchers from the Universities of Leeds, York and Exeter at nine-year intervals between 1982 and 2009. They found only five cases of new colonies establishing 10km or more from the nearest colony found in the previous survey, so movements of 10km are rare but possible. Moreover, there must be many more vagrants that fail to establish a colony (like the lone male reported here) than those that succeed.

Previous contenders for unusual SSS sightings in this area include a possible sighting in a clearing in Wendover Woods in 2008 (between Ellesborough and Tring), and a sighting on 21st August 2005 by Malcolm Hull of Herts & Middx Branch at Aldbury Nowers, which is 4.5km further northeast of Tring. Frustratingly, Malcolm did not have a camera with him on that day, but Nick's confirmed sighting adds weight to the possibility that a SSS could fly the 14km or more from the Ellesborough / Grangelands / GWK region to Aldbury Nowers.

It is said by some that the most important thing for the survival of a butterfly species is not whether existing colonies go extinct but whether new colonies are formed. If this is so, then vagrants such as these are not just curious anomalies but are arguably the most important individuals in a population, as without them new colonies could not be formed.

## References

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Lawson, C.R., J. Bennie and 14 others, 2013. The status and conservation of the Silver-spotted skipper (*Hesperia comma*) in South-East England 2000-2009. University of Exeter, Exeter, UK.

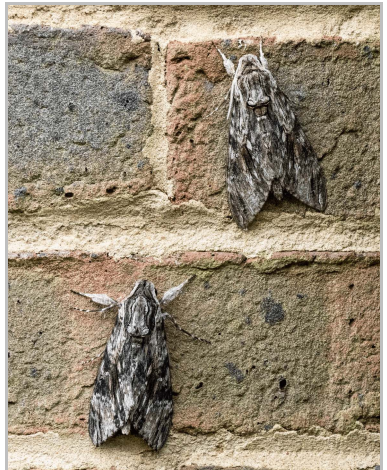
## Members' Day, 29 October 2016, Benson, Oxon Gerry Kendall

A welcome feature of this year's Members' Day was that it was held jointly with the European Interests Group (EIG), a special interest branch of Butterfly Conservation. As Simon Spencer, Chair of EIG, described, the group was set up to conduct surveys of rare (Red List) European butterflies which have limited distributions in areas where there are little data and few volunteers. The hope is both to increase our knowledge of such species and to increase local interest in conserving them. Simon emphasised that external interest in local butterflies often carried weight in areas where butterflies otherwise had a low profile. If you are interested in becoming involved, don't worry, training in identifying these unusual insects is given.

Important sessions at Members' Days are the reviews of how our local butterflies and our local moths fared over the current year. The weather plays a very important role in this, and 2016 had not been kind. The winter was unusually warm, but the spring conversely cold. The first half of the year was wet and it had probably been more windy than usual. These are not ideal conditions and were reflected in generally disappointing success for our Lepidoptera.

Marc Botham reported that, while not all moth records are yet in, indications were that both the numbers of species and the numbers of individual spring moths had been generally down, though there had been some improvement later in the year. But with 2500 species of moth in the country, some bright spots could be identified. Amongst the larger and showier species, the migrant *Convolvulus* Hawkmoth with a striking pink and black striped body had built on a relatively good year in 2015 and several sightings had been reported. Both Garden and Jersey Tiger Moths had done well. There was also good news concerning a much smaller species. A new colony of the Liquorice Piercer micro-moth (named after its food plant, Wild Liquorice) had been found near Wallingford. It may not be as showy as some, but the two light bands on dark wings give it a jaunty air. The South East Region Action Plan had declared nine rare moths as "priority species" for conservation efforts. One of these is the Striped Lychnis which the Branch is trying to encourage on its Holtspur Bottom reserve.

Nick Bowles in his customary dialogue with the audience developed a broadly similar picture for butterflies as for moths. While most species had had a poor or poorish season there was some good news. The White-letter Hairstreak had been



*Convolvulus* Hawk-moths  
Neil Fletcher

seen more frequently than in most years and the Duke of Burgundy, one of our rarest butterflies had had at least an average year and maybe better. But the general picture had been disappointing.

Vikki Rose, the Oxon Moth Conservation Officer for UTB, became interested as a result of becoming active in the Oxford Moth Project. As she remarked, mothers (those who moth – do think where you are) are very good at exchanging news and enthusiasm. She gave a very approachable talk on her lepidoptoral Odyssey. One of the topics that fascinated her was the variety of ways in which caterpillars try to avoid being eaten (and thus growing up to be Blue Tits). Some accumulate poisonous or distasteful chemicals and display bright colours to advertise the fact. Some mimic dead leaves, twigs or bird droppings. She had been at the Countryfile roadshow and had a 7-year old so taken in by a caterpillar mimicking a twig that he had grown quite indignant when she explained what was going on and accused her of telling lies. Let's hope that his interest in moths was reinforced by the famous Silver-Y that drank Ronaldo's sweat during the European Football Championships.



Jim Asher, National Chairman of BC but a long-term Branch Activist, spoke about the future for butterflies, moths and Butterfly Conservation as an organisation. He started with a reminder of what a bad year it had been – not even buddleia bushes had had butterflies most of the time. This year may have been particularly bad, but, more significantly, the long-term trends are also down as documented in the report "The State of Nature". This authoritative overview brings together data and expertise from over 50 organisations, including, of course, Butterfly Conservation. Crucial input to such influential publications was the truly enormous dataset of butterfly and moth sightings across the UK and prominent amongst the inputs to this dataset are the reports by BC members, whether as transect walkers or as recorders for the successive Atlas projects.

Butterfly Conservation's core strategy had several aims

- To recover threatened species of butterfly and moth
- To increase the numbers of widespread species
- To inspire people to understand and deliver conservation goals
- To promote international action.

Nature reserves, and BC nature reserves in particular, are important in achieving these aims. Areas where we have total control allow us to demonstrate what can be achieved and to influence visitors. Moreover, reserves can play a vital part in linking landscapes; it is now realised that perhaps the greatest threat to animals and plants



is the fragmentation of suitable habitats so that when random fluctuations mean that isolated colonies become too weak to survive they will not be recolonised from neighbouring populations.

Jim emphasised again the importance of volunteer effort in achieving our aims. BC members are far more likely to be active in monitoring and other conservation matters than members of most similar organisations. In a point also made by Nick Bowles he asked whether members could find time for even greater participation.

Tony Gillie reviewed the status of the UTB reserve at Holtspur Bottom, a 10 acre chalk grassland site near Beaconsfield. The reserve supports a good range of butterflies including two which have colonised during UTB's management: Chalkhill Blue and Dingy Skipper. Tony was understandably delighted to be able to tell us of the comment of BC's SE Regional Officer that it was "the best reserve of its size that he'd seen in a long while". The reserve also has the nationally rare Striped Lychnis moth. Its beautiful caterpillar feeds on Dark Mullein and there has been a mammoth effort to increase the number of these plants on the site. Unfortunately the moth itself, while holding its numbers, had not yet increased in the way we would have liked to see. Good progress was being made with the survey of the plants on the reserve (over 280 species to date) and the beetle survey is to resume next year. A final piece of good news was that management efforts seemed to be getting on top of ragwort, that bane of grazing meadows.

Bernard Watts confirmed the worst fears of those of us who believed that European butterflies are impossibly difficult to identify. He showed that, even with the aid of pin-sharp close-up photographs of relatively compliant insects, it is sometimes impossible to use the advice in field guides to separate pairs of similar species. A case in point is Idas Blue against Silver-studded blue. The books will tell you that the latter has a spine on its fore-tibia, which the former does not. If true, that's bad enough if you are dealing with an active insect at binocular ranges. But even if a specimen is netted for identification, he showed that the butterflies are so variable that the distinguishing marks are no use. There is, by the way, little doubt that the species are genuinely distinct – the DNA is substantially different and the genitalia show that they would not mate with each other.

What is to be done? One possibility is to restrict your butterflying to countries where only one of the species lives. But if both co-exist the situation is very difficult. The Victorian expedient of killing and pinning is no use, it isn't that the distinguishing features can't be seen in the field, they simply aren't there. Few of us could consider taking a tiny specimen of tissue for DNA analysis.

Might I offer a modest suggestion? Even in the UK, some species are unhelpfully similar. Think of Small White and the feeble Southern Green-veined White where the veining can be so faint as to be almost invisible. Why not eliminate such specimens and replace them with the Scottish type where the veins are bold enough to be visible in flight? Selective breeding could similarly ensure that the Silver studded blue has proper silver studs; again suitable populations exist. But with modern DNA engineering there is no need to stop at natural characteristics. The upper surfaces of the large fritillaries are unhelpfully similar. Surely it would be possible to introduce distinctively coloured initials or even a name? Green, brown or silver would be

appropriate colours. Only joking.

Members' Day is more than just the talks, excellent though these were. The photographic competition deserves, and has, a separate slot. So does the AGM. The quiz had a new format, with an easy question or two to lure you into the morass of no escape (at least, that's how it worked for me). The raffle at least gave me an even chance, even if the attractive prizes went elsewhere. Pemberley Books had their usual enticing display. Richard Lewington's paintings were even more irresistible (David Attenborough is a big fan); I am running out of wall space at home. Jenny Pearson was showing her paintings of Holtspur for the first time and Holtspur and other reserves could be admired on the many excellent displays round the hall.

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

Nick Bowles closed the meeting by thanking everybody who had put in so much effort to make sure that everything "just worked". Prominent amongst these was the local organiser Richard Soulsby. He made one last bid to squeeze volunteer effort from the audience by reminding them about the tick sheet that was placed on every chair, and he hoped they would complete and return as many had during the lunch break. This sheet will be displayed on the branch website to give an idea of the volunteering opportunities to those who could not attend Members' Day and is also on pages 5 and 6 of this issue of *Hairstreak*.

Thank you very much to everyone for all the food in such variety that arrived for Members' Day at Benson. It would be impossible to feed the unknown numbers who arrive on the day if these contributions did not appear. Very many thanks to the helpers in the kitchen, especially those who helped all day and the washer-uppers who worked tirelessly until all was done and dusted and put away at the end of the day.

With many thanks again to everyone who helped in any way towards the food - looking forward to your help again next year!

Gillian Oldfield



Denise Asher having a well-earned rest.

Michael Pitt-Payne

## 2016 UTB Photo Competition Report

### David Dennis

We never know what the weather is going to be like each summer, and we never quite know what effect it will have on our butterflies. The same is true of each year's photo competition – and I have given up trying to predict how many entries we will get, which over recent years has varied from around 50 to over 150! Whatever the weather, one constant seems to be the high quality of our members' work, and 2016 was no exception.

There was one new aspect of the competition this year – an extra category for 'Newer Entrants', defined as those who had not previously entered more than twice before. The opportunity to try their luck encouraged three members to submit their photos, so our thanks go to Hilary Glew, Beryl Hulbert and Pete Kaspar for responding to the challenge. Every one of these photographers received a number of votes for their work, and the result was very close between Pete's subtle-toned Comma and Hilary's dramatic Emperor Moth larva – the winner by just one vote. In other categories the votes were similarly widespread – for example in 'Immature Stages', where Gillian Taylor's Cherry Spot Moth larva also won by just one vote over Colin Mather's Elephant Hawk-moth larva.

Now, our excellent Chair, Nick Bowles, is a frequent entrant, but he tells me that he never expects to win anything. His poor luck seemed to be continuing this year – his extreme close-up of a Latticed Heath came second in the 'Moths' category to John Thacker's beautifully lit Poplar Hawk, and amongst the 'Overseas Butterflies', his lovely Apollo lost out to Keith Salter's excellent Scarce Swallowtail by just a couple of votes. However, we were all delighted that he did not continue as the perpetual bridesmaid, when his 'Ring of Peacocks' came first in the 'Digital Alteration' category ahead of Michael Pitt-Payne's excitingly colourful Large White.

This just leaves the biggest category – 'UK Butterflies'. Again, votes were widely spread, with Colin Mather, John Thacker and Andrew Cornick vying for first place. In the end, it was John who was runner-up with his Brimstone, half hidden in a Bindweed flower, and Andrew Cornick, who won with his crystal clear Pearl-bordered Fritillary. He not only claimed this category, but also the 'Best in Show' prize – so we look forward to inviting Andrew to take part in the 'Previous Winners' competition next year.

This year's 'Previous Winners' were Jim Asher, David Hastings, Ben Kiteley and Nigel Kiteley, and our thanks go to each of them for a quite superb display. No less than 14 of their 24 photos received votes and there was a three-way tie for third place between two of Jim's and one of Ben's excellent images. However, it was David Hastings' pin-sharp Grizzled Skipper that took second place and, by a small margin, Nigel Kiteley's delicate pair of Marbled Whites that won first prize.

The quantity of entries in the last couple of years has not been as high as their quality – maybe partly due to our increasingly strange weather patterns – so we would like to encourage even more of you to contribute to this splendid event next year.

# Minutes of Annual General Meeting

29th October 2016 at 2.10pm  
The Parish Hall, Sunnyside, Benson, Oxon OX10 6LZ

**Present:** Nick Bowles (Chairman), Dave Wilton (Secretary), Chris Woodrow (Treasurer) and all other Committee Members, along with approximately 90 members of the Branch.

**Apologies** were received from Steve & Tina Attril, Dennis Dell, Martin Harvey, Michael Taylor and Steve Wheatley.

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

**Chairman's Report:** Nick Bowles started his address by stating that all the best social animal groups have no leadership as such, but members do what they think will help the greater good. This helped explain how, once again, we had our most effective year ever with members doing a fantastic amount of work. He then went on to point out just a few of them: the member (not part of our committee or official structure) who has worked to prepare land for a Duke of Burgundy reintroduction and gained English Nature approval for it (others are doing the same for Marsh Fritillary); the member who has persuaded land-owners to plant disease resistant elms for White-letter Hairstreak and then sourced the trees for them; two members working quite separately who have initiated more moth-trapping in Oxfordshire, one of whom has also successfully applied for a grant to buy moth traps that can be loaned to novice trappers; one member who put us in touch with Thames Water where a new partnership has already resulted in a gift of £3,000 towards conservation projects of our choosing.

The Committee have also been busy and work included finishing the new Atlas which has now been printed and distributed to the membership. Nick thanked everyone who had sent in donations as a result of it and mentioned that some of those funds would be put towards the on-going Duke of Burgundy project and some towards a new Hairstreak project. There is in fact masses going on in the Branch to try and turn around the fortunes of our declining butterflies and moths and details can be found in the Newsletter, on our Website and on our Facebook and Twitter accounts. On the subject of the Newsletter, Nick was aware that a few members had not received the most recent issue and asked them to let him know if that was so.

Thirty-five field trips had been run during the season (organised and led by more non-Committee members) and Brown Hairstreak egg hunts would be run over the winter period. Moth events were run in Berks and Bucks for National Moth Night and Nick welcomed aboard Vikki Rose as our new Moth Officer for Oxon. Committee members had attended meetings with the MoD, BBOWT, Chiltern Landscape Partnership, Buglife, Thames Water, Wild Oxfordshire, TVERC, national BC officers and many private landowners. Winter conservation work parties had taken place not only at Holtspur Bottom and Aston Upthorpe but also around Princes Risborough (for

Duke of Burgundy) which had resulted in us being short-listed for an award for partnership between construction companies and conservation bodies. The Chilterns Duke project came to an end in October but Sarah Meredith will soon be starting on a new, more tightly-focussed, project centred around the re-introduced colonies at Bradenham.

Public outreach had seen us attend eight events, at which more than 50 members had given time to help spread the word about BC, the Branch and its work. Internal events had included our Conservation Review Day and thanks were given to Marc Botham for organising it and to CEH for hosting. We also held another New Members' Day which involved voluntary effort from many individuals. Nick reported that branch membership now stands at 1,484, up from 1,330 at this time last year, while National membership stands at about 29,000.



Aston Upthorpe work party at rest  
*Tony Gillie*

To conclude, he then passed on grateful thanks to everyone who had helped us during the year, especially our Species Champions, 10km Square Champions, transect and wider countryside surveyors and co-ordinators and conservation work party volunteers. He also thanked Dave Ferguson, David Hastings and Wendy Campbell our Newsletter and Website editors, Tony Gillie for managing our social media, Dennis Dell for running our field trip programme, Angus Mylles for providing us with a database search tool, Peter Ogden for helping Jim Asher manage our butterfly records and everyone who had helped make Members' Day such a success, especially Gillian Oldfield and her team who managed the refreshments!

**Treasurer's Report:** Chris began his report by drawing attention to the annual accounts which were available to everyone present on the programme hand-out. In the financial year 2015-16 Branch finances continued to show a healthy position with income increasing by £327 and expenditure decreasing by £706 to £12,892.69, resulting in an excess of expenditure over income of £2,906.64 for the year, a reduction in deficit of £1,033 over the previous year. BC Head Office requires branches not to hold large cash balances as 'designated funds' because this affects their ability to obtain funds for important projects from grant-making bodies. In the year under review, donations increased due to us receiving a legacy of £400 and, towards the end of the financial year, members who had received a copy of the new Atlas donated £415.

Increased branch membership (98 new members) has meant an increase in subscription payments from BC Head Office of £585 over 2015. Membership had increased by a further 81 since the start of the current financial year and now stands

at circa 1,480. Increasing membership has a knock-on effect on the cost of the newsletter, which increased by £732 in the year under review, although we do our best to contain these costs by using Head Office for printing and dispatch. In recent issues of *Hairstreak* we hope you have noticed that the newsletter is now available electronically and we would urge as many people as possible to receive their copy by this means, thus saving on printing costs and postage.

Apart from the newsletter the other main expense this financial year was the Atlas. The Committee had previously set aside £4,000 for production and Chris was pleased to report that it had come in under budget, with postage and packing covered by a generous gift provided expressly for that purpose.

Our Holtspur Reserve required less in the way of maintenance and repair during 2015, resulting in much lower costs than previous years. Other expenditure included small donations to Lindengate (for growing seedlings for us) and to the Holtspur Scouts (for use of their HQ for our New Members' Day). Expenditure of £375 on other projects includes work done at various butterfly sites on our behalf by Chiltern Rangers. £730 was provided to Head Office for their Match Pot Appeal this time last year, of which £300 came from donations received at last year's Members' Day. Although expenditure exceeded net income by £2,900, Chris was happy to report that the balance of cash in hand (£12,185.49) represented sufficient reserves to meet likely costs during the current financial year. Paul Huckle proposed that the accounts be accepted. This was seconded by Jim Asher and carried unanimously.



Holtspur work party  
Tony Gillie

**Election of Officers:** Under our rotational system Tony Gillie, Brenda Mobbs and David Roy were standing down from the Committee and seeking re-election. Marion Gillie was standing down and not seeking re-election, while Peter Cuss and Lloyd Garvey were seeking election. Gerry Kendall proposed that this be done as a block vote (seconded by Marion Gillie) and it was carried unanimously. The Committee for 2017 then comprised the following 12 members:

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

*Those marked \* will be due to stand down in rotation at the next AGM in October 2017.*

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

Since the last newsletter 130 new members have joined and the membership is now over 1560. 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 and on work parties or egg hunts in the winter. Details are in *Hairstreak*.

### BERKSHIRE

Mrs A Albert	Wokingham
Mr & Mrs M Billinge-Jones & Family	Lambourn, Hungerford
Mr N Bradbury	Wantage
Mr D Butlin	Reading
Mr & Mrs R J Carter	Taplow
Ms S Cooper	Woolton Hill, Newbury
Mr R Davies	Wokingham
Mr A De Swardt & Mrs P Naidoo	Woodcote, Reading
Miss J Dunn	Windsor
Mrs S Frost	Newbury
Mrs B Goodman	Thatcham
Mr G Goodrick-Meech & Mrs L Richards & Family	Upper Lambourn, Hungerford
Mrs L Green	Highclere, Newbury
Mr & Mrs J Hewetson & Family	Newbury
Mr R Josey & Mrs J Reynolds-Gibb	Tilehurst, Reading
Mrs C Klesel	Birch Hill, Bracknell
Miss C Mutongwizo	Reading
Dr A Nalden & Ms M Victoria	Wokingham
Mr B Narewski & Mrs J Narewska & Family	Maidenhead
Miss A Padfield	Ascot
Mr R Riasat & Ms A Abbasi & Family	Slough
Mr P Richards	Finchampstead, Wokingham
Mr & Mrs B Slatter	Hurley, Maidenhead
Mr & Mrs D Stone & Family	Reading
Mr G Taylor	Reading
Mrs K Venables	Crowthorne
Mr A Webb	Newbury
Mrs S Woolhouse	Whitchurch on Thames, Reading

## **BUCKINGHAMSHIRE**

Mr T Ayling	Amersham
Mrs C Baker	Buckingham
Mr & Mrs R Bennett	High Wycombe
Mrs R Bignell	High Wycombe
Ms S Buck	Stone, Aylesbury
George Davies	Clifton Reynes, Olney
Mrs J Dewick	Newport Pagnell
Mr S Douglas & Ms I Craddock	Penn, High Wycombe
Ms K Espwall	Marlow
Mr N Fletcher	Walters Ash, High Wycombe
Emma Hanford	Beaconsfield
Mr R Haynes	Hazlemere, High Wycombe
Miss K Henley	Shenley Church End, MK
Dr E Hobson	Chesham
Mrs J Hughes	Barton Hartshorn, Buckingham
Mr T Jackson	Little Horwood, Milton Keynes
Mrs L Kanachowski	Aylesbury
Mrs N Keen	High Wycombe
Mr & Mrs J Knibbs	Kingswood, Aylesbury
Mrs C Levett	Cuddington, Aylesbury
Miss L Lisle & Family	Shenley Church End, MK
Mr D Murrie	Calvert, Buckingham
Mr J Newport	Jordans, Beaconsfield
Mr P J Rowley & Ms D Moss	Aylesbury
Alby Russell	Chesham
Mrs N Saunders	Emerson Valley, MK
Mrs M Simons	Flackwell Heath
Mrs P Sloots	Marlow
Mr P Somers	Deanshanger, Milton Keynes
Mr & Mrs N Tomlinson	North Marston, Buckingham
Dr K & Dr S Weatherhead	Willen Park, Milton Keynes
Mr H Wheate	Downley, High Wycombe

## **OXFORDSHIRE**

Mrs J Anders	Stonesfield, Witney
Ms C Ashby	Oxford
Mrs J Ayres	Didcot
Mrs J Barton	Farmoor, Oxford
Dr D Briggs	Oxford
Mr & Mrs M Bullivant	Witney
Mrs L Catling	Wheatley, Oxford
Mrs E Conway-Huelin	Didcot
Mr & Mrs P Crook & Family	Henley-on-Thames



Mr & Mrs A Dalitz & Family  
Ms H Den Hartog  
Mrs S Ganney

Ms C Gelson

Mr P Harris

Dr M Jirotko

Mrs F Lunn

Mrs J Parkinson

Mrs K Pennington

Mr D Perrow

Mr R Powles & Ms L Rees & Family

Ms K Prudden

Mrs M Roadknight

Mr D Rolfe

Miss C Russell

Mr A Sammons & Ms J Firth & Family

Mr M Silver

Mrs C Swan

Mr M Tegg

Miss L Tustian

Mr E Urquhart

Mrs H Wakelin & Family

Mr & Mrs R Weinhold

Mrs J Wiggins

Mr & Mrs R Wilson & Family

Mr & Mrs C Worth

Mr & Mrs N Wright

Henwood, Oxford

Bicester

Britwell cum Sotwell,

Wallingford

Lea Park, Thame

Wallingford

Oxford

Oxford

Hook Norton

Kingham, Chipping Norton

Abingdon

Rowstock, Didcot

Enslow, Kidlington

Britwell Salome, Watlington

Witney

Faringdon

Banbury

Bicester

Standlake, Witney

Ducklington, Witney

Banbury

Kingham, Chipping Norton

Thame

Witney

East Hagbourne, Didcot

Thame

Kennington, Oxford

Blewbury

## **ELSEWHERE**

Mr & Mrs D Helsby

Dr R Knight

Mr & Mrs W Saunders & Family

Tring, Hertfordshire

Ditchling, Hassocks, Sussex

Minchinhampton, Glos

'Thank you', to the members opting to take the newsletter electronically. This saves some of the £4000 we used to spend each year on printing and posting the paper copy.

Will you help us to convert more of your subscription into direct conservation by opting for the electronic version? If so, please type this address into a browser: <https://tinyurl.com/hzu5wu9> and follow the simple instructions.

Thank you.

A free introduction to Butterfly and Moth Identification, Surveying & Recording

**Sunday 12.03.17**

**10.00 - 17.00**

Maiden Erlegh Nature Reserve, Lakeside, Earley, Reading, **Berks.** RG6 5QE

**Sunday 26.03.17**

**10.00 - 17.00**

Howe Park Wood Education & Visitor Centre, H7, Chaffron Way, **Milton Keynes,** MK4 3GG

**Sunday 09.04.17**

**10.00 - 17.00**

Sutton Courtenay Environmental Education Centre (SCEEC), Sutton Courtenay, near Didcot, **Oxon.** OX14 4TE

**Programme** (for each day)

09.45 – 10.15	tea/coffee and biscuits
10.15 – 11.15	<b>Identification of the butterflies of BBO</b>
11.15 – 11.30	tea/coffee and biscuits
11.30 – 11.45	<b>a quick butterfly i.d. quiz</b>
11.45 – 12.30	<b>Separating moths into their families – a start to moth identification.</b>
12.30 – 13.10	<b>Conducting timed count and standardised surveys</b>
13.10 – 13.45	lunch ( <b>please bring a packed lunch</b> ) tea/coffee and biscuits are provided
13.45 – 15.30	<b>Transect recording – why and how</b>
15.30 – 15.45	<b>A quick moth family quiz</b>
15.45 – 16.00	tea/coffee and biscuits
16.00 – 16.30	<b>Record submission - and how it helps conservation</b>
16.30 – 16.45	<b>closing remarks</b>

If you wish to attend either day please email [nick.bowles@ntlworld.com](mailto:nick.bowles@ntlworld.com) – all places are free and open to non-members of UTB/BC but are subject to availability. So, please do not plan to attend without pre-booking.

## Conservation Work Parties

Much of our winter effort is at our own Holtspur Bottom reserve near Beaconsfield. You might combine a walk around the site with a brief session of work. Nobody has to work for the entire session but obviously you may. There are a variety of tasks and no great strength is required.

Tools and full instructions are provided. **Please bring a drink and a snack.**

All work parties start at **10.00 a.m.** unless otherwise stated. At Holtspur Bottom they usually finish about 13.00 though in good weather conditions they may continue until about 14.00.

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

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

<b>Holtspur Bottom</b> Meeting point: SU918906 HP9 1BT Contact: Nick Bowles 01442 382276 nick.bowles@ntlworld.com	
Sun 5 Feb 2017	scrub control, hedging & bonfire (if dry)
Sun 26 Feb 2017	to be decided (possibly will not run. Please check before deciding.)
<b>Aston Upthorpe</b> Meeting point (at grain dryer): SU550844 OX11 9EH (1 mile N). Contact: Jim Asher 01865 391727	
Sun 19 Feb 2017	scrub clearance
<b>Arcott MOD site:</b> The security at this site requires notification of planned attendance at least 5 days in advance and prompt arrival at the meeting point with photo identification (e.g. a driving licence or passport).	
<b>St George's Barracks</b> Meeting Point (Guard Room): SP616166 OX25 1PP Contact: Nick Bowles 01442 382276 nick.bowles@ntlworld.com	
Fri 28 Jan 2017	scrub control (10.00 to 15.00)

## 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 May 7th at 11.00**

**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 ref SU814866].

Leader: [Paul Bowyer 01628 526225](#)

**Saturday May 14th at 11.00**

**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 National Trust car park for Ivinghoe Beacon [OS map 165, grid ref SP963159].

Leader and contact: [Robin Carr 01296 625734](#)

**Sunday 20th May at 11.00**

**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 181, grid ref SP955149].

Leader and contact: [Dennis Dell 01296 397039](#)

**Sunday 21st May at 11.00**

**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 and contact: [Gerry Kendall 01865 245029](#)

**Saturday 27th May at 10.30**

**Lardon Chase, Streatley, Berks**

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

Leader and contact: [Maureen Cross 01491 871239](#)

**Sunday 28th May. 10.00**

**Pitstone Quarry, Bucks**

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

Meet at Pitstone Church [OS map 181, grid ref SP941149].

Leader and contact [Nick Bowles 01442 382276](#)

**Thursday 1st June at 2 pm****Yoesden Bank, Bucks**

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

[OS map 165, SU789975]. [Leader and contact: Ched George, 01494 484493](#)

**Saturday June 3rd 11.00****Bradenham Bucks**

Target species: Small Blue, along with other early summer butterflies. Turn east off the A4010 into Bradenham Wood Lane at the Red Lion pub. After 500 metres, turn left into the small car park [OS map 165, grid ref SU827972].

[Leader and contact: Brenda Mobbs 01494 712486](#)

**Sunday June 4th at 10.30****Shotover Hill and Brasenose Wood, Oxon**

Meeting organised by the Upper Thames Section of Butterfly Conservation and Shotover Wildlife under the auspices of Oxford Nature Week. 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

[OS map 164, grid ref SP564062]. It is advisable to bring a packed lunch.

[Leader and contact: Ivan Wright 01865 87442](#)

**Saturday 10th June at 10.30 Shabbington Wood M40 compensation area**

Target species Black Hairstreak. Meet at Oakley Wood car park, [OS map 180, grid ref SP611115]. [Leader and contact Dennis Dell 01296 397039](#)

**Saturday 17th June at 10.30****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.

[OS map 165, grid ref SP720209].

[Leader and contact Stuart Hodges 01296 730217 and 07941 763850](#)

**Saturday 17th June at 10.30****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.

OS map 165, grid ref SP720209.

[Leader and contact Stuart Hodges 01296 730217 and 07941 763850](#)



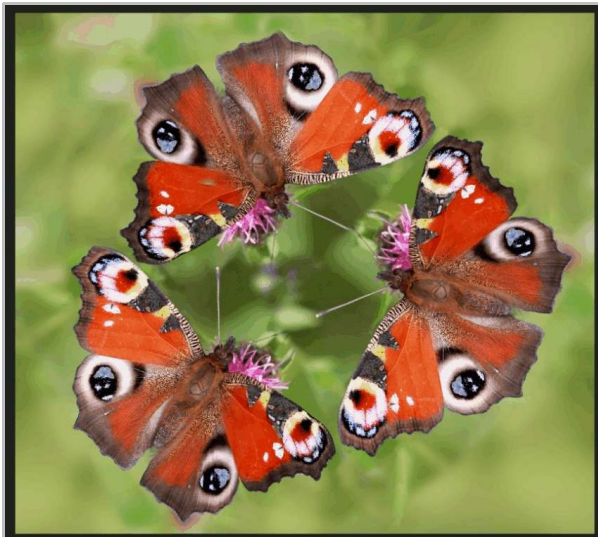
Cherry Spot Moth      Gillian Taylor  
1st in Immature Stages category



Emperor Moth      Hilary Glew  
1st in New Entrants category



Poplar Hawk-moth                      John Thacker  
1st in Moths category



Peacock conglomeration                      Nick Bowles  
1st in Digital Alteration category

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

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

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

## Upper Thames Branch Website

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

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

Have your butterfly sightings and photos posted on the website by sending them to: [sightings@upperthames-butterflies.org.uk](mailto:sightings@upperthames-butterflies.org.uk)

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>

## Upper Thames Branch Officers

**Chairman** Nick Bowles

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

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