

Butterfly Sightings 2007 BC Upper Thames Branch

** January to December 2007 Archive **

Monday 31st December 2007

John Lerpiniere sent the following report on 23rd December: "I saw a **Peacock** at *Castle Hill, Reading* flying across the traffic on *26th November*, a **Brimstone** at *Broadmoor Bottom, Crowthorne*, over heather on *29th November* and a **Peacock** near *Tidmarsh near Pangbourne* making many circuits around a pheasant pen on *1st December*."

For some winter interest, Dennis Dell sent the photograph below on 3rd December: "It's a hibernating **Purple Emperor larva** in typical position at a junction of Sallow branches. Fantastic camouflage!"

Sunday 2nd December 2007

Nick Bowles reports on the Conservation Work Party at Holtspur Bottom in November: "The reserve continues to look very good. A small group planted Violet (for Dark Green Fritillary larvae) around the scrub edge, after some tidying operations to remove dogwood regrowth, and Kidney Vetch (for Small Blue larvae) near the scrape."
[To find out more about our Branch Conservation work - [click here.](#)]

On 29th November Jan Haseler saw a Peacock in the hedge at the *Riseley Village* Sports Field.

Saturday 24th November 2007

John Ward-Smith sent this news from Bracknell on 22nd November: "My wife reported a **Peacock** in the back garden at mid-day. It even settled on her and she said it was in good condition."

David Redhead went to the National Members Day on 17th November: "Whilst chatting to Gillian Oldfield she told me she was surprised to see a **Peacock** flying in Combe on Friday afternoon - sunny but cold."

Dave Wilton has been busy with the search for Brown Hairstreak eggs in the Bucks/Oxon border area over the past couple of weeks and has already managed to add three new kilometre squares to the butterfly's known range around *Bicester*. David Redhead has been equally successful around *Oxford* where eggs have been found in two more, taking our total number of kilometre squares past 240. The "re-egging" of squares within the known range is just as important and about 15% have been confirmed so far. Any help with this mammoth annual task would be gratefully appreciated - you can find the areas which need to be searched by checking the distribution map (see link at top of page). Organised egg searches are listed on the [Events](#) page."

Sunday 11th November 2007

Dave Maunder sent the following news on 10th November: "On *4th November* I saw 4 **Red Admirals** on Ivy near my garden in *Aylesbury* and my wife saw a **Peacock** at a local supermarket on the *9th November*."

Friday 9th November 2007

Becky Woodell sent this update on 5th November: "On Friday, *2nd November* I saw one male **Brimstone** at *Whitecross Green Wood*.

Saturday 3rd November 2007

Dave Maunder sent this news today: "After a week away in West Cornwall, the only butterflies seen in *Aylesbury* have been a handful of **Red Admirals** - 3 near my garden on 3rd, feeding on Ivy bloom, and a 4th at Fairford Leys. Incidentally, on my drive down to Cornwall on October 20th, I witnessed more return migration of Red Admirals - at least 13 as I drove over Bodmin Moor! I got a total of 9 species of butterfly during my week in Penwith - quite a few late Peacocks, also Red Admirals have had a good season down there. Painted Ladies were flying over Sennen beach every day!"

Nick Bowles sent this report from just over the border in Tring: "There were two **Red Admirals** on the last few buddleia flowers in the garden today, *3rd November*, and two more in the field behind my house, where the shelter of a fence makes for some very warm nettles. These two were both intermittently feeding on ivy and coming down to test the nettle leaves. One laid at least two eggs (see photo below). Then the sun disappeared so no other species added - I had hoped to find a Speckled Wood."

The following news came from Richard Soulsby today, 3rd November: "On a pleasantly warm and sunny walk along the Thames yesterday, *2nd November*, (*Tadpole Bridge to Bablock Hythe*) I saw a **Red Admiral** and a **Brimstone**. I've seen plenty of Red Admirals around recently, but I haven't seen a Brimstone for a while."

Cathy Brown saw a Red Admiral and more surprisingly a very worn **Painted Lady** at *Coley Park in Reading* on the *2nd November*.

Thursday 1st November 2007

On 30th October Dennis Dell saw a Red Admiral, in very good condition, near a pile of rotting fruit on the edge of *Sergeant's Wood, nr Princes Risborough*.

In bright sunshine on the morning of Tuesday 30th October, Becky Woodell saw one Red Admiral near *Whitecross Green* (SP588150).

On a circular walk from Shillingford in Oxfordshire on 30th October, Mick & Wendy Campbell saw a Red Admiral and a **Peacock** both basking in the sun in the *Little Wittenham* reserve.

Saturday 27th October 2007

26/10 - Dick and Val Bodily reported that they had a Holly Blue in their garden in *Shenley Lodge, Milton Keynes* on *Sunday 21st October*.

Dennis Dell sent the following yesterday: "On *24th October*, in my garden near *Aylesbury*, a **Red Admiral** chose an unusual perch to catch what little sun there was: a droopy sunflower head."

Thursday 25th October 2007

Wendy Redhead saw a Large White flying in the grounds of *Littlemore Hospital, Oxford*, on *23rd October*.

Sunday 21st October 2007

Martin & Dee Raper went to The Holies today, Sunday 21st October: "After the frosts we have just had, we were pleased to find two **Meadow Browns** still fluttering about in the sun today at *The Holies* in Berkshire."

Dennis Dell sent these sightings for Saturday 20th October: "A sunny afternoon - along hedgerows in set-aside farmland just north of *Stone*: 2 **Commas** and 1 **Red Admiral**."

Friday 19th October 2007

Mick & Wendy Campbell went for a circular walk which took them through the beautiful landscape of Swyncombe, Benson and Ewelme on Friday 19th October. Although it was warm and sunny the only two butterflies seen were a **Red Admiral** and a **Small White**.

Wendy Redhead was visiting Littlemore Hospital, Oxford, on 17th October and saw a Red Admiral flying in the grounds there. Also, on *Sunday 14th* David saw 3 **Red Admirals** - 1 on buddleia, with about half a dozen flowerheads still in flower, at the city centre end of Botley Road in *Oxford*, 1 in their garden in Oxford and 1 flying across the Oxford Eastern-bypass. The latter was on David's way to Bernwood Forest which proved to be butterfly free at 17C with sunshine and ride-side devil's-bit scabious still in flower.

17th October - A few butterflies seen in Aylesbury recently by Dave Maunder were: **Speckled Wood** (1, on 17th); **Red Admirals** (2), and **Comma** (1).

Sunday 14th October 2007

Dennis Dell continued his exploration of the Chilterns today, Sunday 14th October: "I was looking for potential Purple Emperor territories. At SP842027 [nr Great Hampden], at the south-facing edge of a strip of woodland I saw male **Brimstone** and a **Peacock**. I had not seen a Brimstone for ages."

Dave Maunder was pleased to see a Painted Lady near his house in Aylesbury today, 14th October: "The **Painted Lady** was a slightly faded, late specimen. Also today I saw **Red Admirals** (2), **Small Tortoiseshells** (2); **Comma** (1); **Large White** (1) and **Small White** (1) - not a bad selection on a sunny day in Aylesbury!"

David Gantzel reports a rather worn Speckled Wood at *Little Kingshill* Arboretum open day today, *Sunday October 14th*.

Saturday 13th October 2007

Malcolm Brownsword reported that he saw the following at Waterperry Gardens last Sunday 7th October, between 11.30am and 12.45pm: "The temperature was about 18C, cloudy, but with a little sun. 1 **Red Admiral**, 1 **Small Tortoiseshell** - pristine (newly hatched) and 1 **Brown Hairstreak f.**" Malcolm and his wife watched the Hairstreak for about 20 minutes and on 2 or 3 occasions it descended to a height of less than a metre enabling a positive identification.

David Redhead, Brown Hairstreak Champion, commented that this is currently the last sighting for this season of a Brown Hairstreak.

David Redhead said an hour spent at Shotover Meadows, Oxford on the afternoon of 11th October produced just two butterflies: a **Small Copper** with one wing slightly damaged but otherwise in quite good condition. The other was probably a **Red Admiral** but

its flight along the hedge top with the low autumn sun behind made definite identification impossible.

Dennis Dell recorded the following on 10th October in his Aylesbury garden: "This **Red Admiral** managed to find the last bloom on my Beijing Buddleia today, 10th. It kept returning to this single flower, perhaps realising that soon there will be no more where this came from until next summer!"

Monday 8th October 2007

Tim Watts reports seeing a Small Copper at the *Calvert Sailing Lake* on 05/10/07. "It was resting on a boat near the clubhouse and looked in pristine condition. I thought this was a rather late record."

David Redhead spent 2 hours in Whitecross Green Wood on the afternoon of 4th October for just a **Green-veined White**, 2 **Commas** and just 12 **Brown Hairstreak** eggs, although the best laying habitat was not examined. "Whilst I was there Wendy did marginally better for variety in our garden in *Oxford* with a **Small White** and Comma nectaring on Michaelmas Daisies and a **Large White** nectaring on Verbena Bonariensis. The Small White was "tatty", the Comma in "good condition" but the superb condition of the Large White won her praise, which is praise indeed coming from somebody who has given up growing cabbages in despair!"

Thursday 4th October 2007

Dave Wilton sent the following report today, 4th October: "Having seen a **Comma** flying around my *Westcott* garden in this morning's sunshine, I checked a local bramble patch and found **Red Admiral** (2) and Comma (6) enjoying the improvement in the weather. Deciding that it was worth a trip out to see what else could be found, I went to *Rushbeds Wood* and *Lapland Farm Meadows*. There I found **Brimstone** (2), **Holly Blue** (2), **Red Admiral** (11), Comma (36), **Speckled Wood** (8) and **Silver Y** (1). Pride of place, though, went to a very late female **Brown Hairstreak** which was seen flying along the Lapland Meadows dividing hedge as soon as I emerged from the wood. I followed her for a short distance and she eventually landed on some bramble leaves to sun herself for a minute or two before moving on to some adjacent blackthorn to lay an egg for me! This afternoon I paid a short visit to the disused railway cutting west of *Westcott Airfield* but very few butterflies were to be seen there, only **Green-veined White** (1), **Common Blue** (3, two very tatty males and a worn female) and Comma (1). A cursory search of some blackthorn did produce a **Brown Hairstreak** egg, though."

Dave Ferguson went to Spade Oak Gravel Pit, Little Marlow (Bucks) on Wednesday afternoon, 3rd October: "I was amazed to see a fresh male **Common Blue!**"

Wednesday 3rd October 2007

Chris Raper sent this news today, 3rd October: "I was up on *Hartslock* today and saw a rather weak-flying **Brown Argus**. Not sure if it is notable but it surprised me. Also saw **Brimstone** (male), **Meadow Browns**, **Peacock**, **Comma**."

Thursday 27th September 2007

Dennis Dell reported the following yesterday, 26th September: "During a 'scrub bashing' working party organised by the Chilterns Conservation Board and the National Trust on *Pitstone Hill today*, I saw two **Meadow Browns**. Were these third generation? I thought this was a very late sighting, until I read Richard's Soulsby's report from Aston Rowant for 22nd

September, when 'plenty' were seen."

Sunday 23rd September 2007

In an attempt to beat the latest sighting date for Silver-spotted Skippers in the UTB area, Richard Soulsby visited Aston Rowant (Beacon Hill) on the 18th September and again on 22nd: "The numbers seen there recently are: 15 on the 13th (by Paul Huckle), 9 on the 14th (see my earlier report), 6 on the 18th, and 3 on the 22nd. The latest sighting date that I am aware of previously in the UTB area was 18th Sept 1988, so the record now stands at *22nd September* (unless anyone else knows otherwise). Saturday's 3 **Silver-spotted Skippers** comprised two females, still in quite good condition and actively egg-laying (I found a fresh egg laid by one of them) and a slightly more worn male. The other surprise yesterday (22nd) was a fairly worn male **Chalkhill Blue** – presumably the same one seen by Paul Huckle on 13th September, when he described it as pristine. Out of 8 **Small Coppers** seen yesterday, two were the attractive blue-spotted *caeruleo-punctata* form, one a bit worn (that I saw also on 14th and 18th) and one quite fresh. Also seen yesterday were: 1 **Peacock**, 2 **Speckled Woods**, 2 **Small Whites**, plenty of **Meadow Browns**, 2 **Brimstones** (M & F), 1 female **Common Blue**, 1 **Brown Argus**."

Saturday 22nd September 2007

21st September - Chris Brown sent his final report of the year for Silver-washed Fritillary in Crowsley Park Wood, Berks: "With such lovely September weather I decided to get out as often as possible and so kept a more frequent watch to try and pin down the last seen date for **Silver-washed Fritillary**. On *5th September* it was warm and humid, 22°C in the shade and reaching 26°C in the sun. I was greeted by a lone male feeding on the remaining thistles and patrolling the entire central ride up and down, then stopping for a feed each cycle. Other butterflies were **Red Admiral** (1), **Peacock** (1), **Brimstone** (1), **Small White** (1), **Speckled Wood** (4) and **Meadow Brown** (4). On *7th September* this last male was still there and very active, flying the whole length of the central ride, back into the woods and coming out at the top of the ride to repeat the loop round and round. *On 10th, 13th and 21st September* I had no further sightings of Silver-washed Fritillary, so assume it has now gone. Other butterflies seen on these days were Red Admiral, **Comma**, **Green-veined White**, Speckled Wood, Meadow Brown, Peacock, **Holly Blue** and Brimstone."

[23/9 - Thanks to Jim Asher for checking the records database and confirming that Chris's sighting on 7th September is the latest known record of a Silver-washed Fritillary in the UTB area.]

David Redhead sent the following update of Brown Hairstreak sightings for the season up to 21st September : "We had 115 adult **Brown Hairstreak** sightings as at the end of August, compared to 117 last year. Things have slowed down considerably since then and the current total is now only 131, so although the first half of the flight period was comparable with last year there has been a noticeable relative slump in the second half. The last definite **male Brown Hairstreak** sighting was *23rd August*, earlier than previous years when they have been seen in the first week of September. The current last **female** sighting is last Sunday, *16th September*, at Otmoor. In spite of the reduced second half sightings we actually have a minimally larger spread of adult sightings encompassing 29 one kilometre squares as opposed to 28 last year. Also with egg finds it seems that the Brown Hairstreak has been active in most, if not all, of its known range this summer (see latest distribution map). Tony Croft's garden egg finds (now up to 15!), although they do not add a new square, they do represent a 0.5km extension in known range. **Adult Brown Hairstreaks could still be on the wing, so please continue to look for them during the first fortnight of October.**"

Wednesday 19th September 2007

19th September - Dave Maunder has seen the following butterflies in Aylesbury over the last week: Painted Lady (1), Red Admiral (8), Peacock (2), Comma (2), Small Tortoiseshell (5), Large White (8), Small White (30+), Green-veined White (1), Speckled Wood (1).

Tuesday 18th September 2007

Dave Wilton sent this news today, 18th September: "After a couple of weeks with next to nothing appearing in the garden at *Westcott* apart from the odd White or Small Tortoiseshell in transit, it was rather odd that today's cool (16 C) but sunny conditions should bring about a considerable amount of activity, especially as we've very little left in the way of nectar! Some michaelmas daisies and the last remnants of the buddleia attracted **Large White** (1), **Small White** (2), **Red Admiral** (1), **Painted Lady** (1), **Small Tortoiseshell** (2), **Speckled Wood** (1) and **Small Heath** (1), as well as a **Hummingbird Hawk-moth**. Unlike last year when we had daily appearances in the garden for most of the summer, this year the Hummingbird Hawk-moth has been a relative rarity with only about half a dozen visits that we've noticed."

David Redhead visited the RSPB Otmoor reserve on the afternoon of 15th September: "I located a female **Brown Hairstreak** just to the west of the most southerly hide and two pristine **Small Tortoiseshells** nectaring on the wild Michaelmas Daisies to the south of the most northerly hide. At home, in spite of the sunshine, ivy flowers, Michaelmas daisies and even some remaining buddleia flowers, my garden in *Oxford* is to all intents and purposes "dead". Hopes were raised at 5pm on *Friday 14th* when I looked out of the window and noticed something fluttering around the Michaelmas daisies which turned out to be a pristine **Painted Lady**. Eventually it settled on the gravel path in the vegetable garden and allowed me to get a reasonable photo. There were fleeting visits from a good condition **Red Admiral** and **Comma** on *Saturday 15th*, a tatty **Peacock** and a **Small White** - so perhaps things are looking up."

Monday 17th September 2007

Nick Bowles and Stuart Hodges walked a private site transect in N Aylesbury Vale on Saturday 15th: "Despite few butterflies overall, we saw a single **Clouded Yellow** heading very strongly south. Indeed if we hadn't both seen it we might have doubted our sighting as it went past so swiftly that it was gone almost before we spotted it."

Jim Asher went to the M40 Compensation area and to Whitecross Green Wood on 15th September: "I had a nil return for Brown Hairstreak. Quite a number of **Red Admiral** and **Comma** on scabious in *Bernwood* - autumn in the air. In the course of walking the *Aston Upton* transect this morning, *16th September*, in sunny but marginally too breezy conditions, I saw three **Clouded Yellows** in Juniper Valley. They kept making wide sorties and returning to an extended patch of scabious in flower. Perhaps the winds from the SW had brought them up from the south coast? I also saw one somewhat worn **Adonis Blue** male. A variety of other species, but none were numerous."

Martin Mitchell sent the following report on 15th September: "I saw a single **Grayling** on 09/09/07 at *Moor Green Lakes* (a.k.a Eversley Gravel Pits) on the Berks/Hants border (SU805624). This is the first record on the reserve since 2003. Access to most of the reserve (and the adjacent fresh workings) is limited to the perimeter footpath so it's possible that a colony has been overlooked. Alternatively this may just be a vagrant from a separate colony - although I'm not aware of any in the immediate area."

Friday 14th September 2007

Richard Soulsby sent this report today, 14th September: "Following a tip-off from Paul

Huckle, I went to [Aston Rowant North](#) (Beacon Hill) this afternoon. Despite poor weather, I managed to find 9 **Silver-spotted Skippers** including 5 females and 2 males identified. Two of the females were in very fresh condition, but some of the others were pretty worn. Not quite as good as the 15 seen by Paul yesterday, but not bad considering the poorer weather. This is very late for Silver-spotted Skippers. The latest UTB record I can find is 18th Sept 1988 at Watlington Hill, next latest (apart from today) is 12/9/05 by Paul Huckle at Aston Rowant (N). Judging from the fresh state of some of the females today, they could hang on for some days yet, so the 18/9 record might be broken. *Keep looking, everyone!* Others seen were: 6 **Speckled Woods**, 7 **Brown Argus**, 70 **Meadow Browns**, 1 **Small Heath**, 9 **Small Copper** (1 caeruleo-punctata), 3 **Small Whites**, 1 **Brimstone**, 2 **Common Blues**. With 2 **Large Whites** in my garden in Benson on return, that makes 10 species – not bad for mid-September."

Dave Wilton sent this news regarding a conservation meeting which took place in Bernwood Forest earlier this week: "On Wednesday afternoon, [12th September](#), Chief Executive Martin Warren, Director of Conservation Nigel Bourn and other Butterfly Conservation staff members met with members of the UTB Conservation & Recording Team (CART) in [Bernwood Forest](#) to discuss the management plan for the area. In the [M40 Compensation Area](#) a female **Brown Hairstreak** put in an appearance and kindly laid an egg for the benefit of the Chief Executive's camera! At the evening CART committee meeting, held in nearby Oakley, Nigel Bourn gave those present an overview of BC's latest initiative, the [South-East Woodlands Project](#)."

Tony Croft sent this unusual sighting on 12th September: "I saw this **Small Tortoiseshell** in my garden in [Long Crendon](#) today. I think it is quite an uncommon aberration called "*semiichnusoides*". On my transect at [Rushbeds Wood](#) this afternoon I recorded 8 **Speckled Wood**; 5 **Small White**; 1 **Meadow Brown**; 1 **Peacock** and 1 female **Brown Hairstreak**."

[There's considerable variation within the aberrant varieties and this specimen also looks quite similar to ab. nigra Tutt, 1896, as shown on the [Natural History Museum website](#). It seems to be agreed that the cause is elevated temperatures at the pupal stage and many of the aberrations illustrated are of bred specimens.]

Wednesday 12th September 2007

Dave Wilton sent this news on 11th September: "There are still a few species to be found out there if luck is on your side, but numbers seem to be diminishing rapidly now, especially away from the Chilterns. I spent an hour and a half at [Granglands, Bucks](#) on [7th September](#) and was rewarded with over a hundred butterflies of 12 species, comprising **Silver-spotted Skipper** (1), **Brimstone** (6), **Large White** (1), **Small White** (1), **Clouded Yellow** (1), **Small Copper** (2), **Brown Argus** (2), **Common Blue** (3, including a mating pair), **Small Tortoiseshell** (2), **Meadow Brown** (91, including a mating pair), **Gatekeeper** (2) and **Small Heath** (11). Contrast that with a couple of hours at [Finemere, Bucks](#) today ([11th September](#)) when the wood and adjacent meadows produced less than half the number of butterflies, with only **Brimstone** (2), **Large White** (1), **Small White** (13), **Green-veined White** (2), **Brown Argus** (1), **Common Blue** (1), **Red Admiral** (1), **Peacock** (1), **Comma** (1), **Speckled Wood** (19) and **Small Heath** (3) being seen. Not a single Meadow Brown or Gatekeeper was recorded."

Sunday 9th September 2007

Wendy Wilson sent the following report today, 9th September: "I suppose, to be scientific, one should report the negatives as well as the positives. I spent 3 hours in [Langley Park, Bucks](#), today and only saw four common butterflies. The weather was warm, sunny and calm. I scoured the grasslands, heathland, scrubland, woodland rides, marshy bits,

flowery bits, tree-tops, basking stones, horse dung, a lake and two ponds and all I saw were 1 **Large White**, 1 **Speckled Wood**, 1 **Green-veined White** and a very faded **Meadow Brown**. This is typical of my days out '[square-bashing](#)' since I got home from Cornwall on August 11. Where have all the butterflies gone? Very frustrating. Oh, for those heady days back in April - but I did pick a tub of lovely blackberries!"

Dave Maunder sent this news on 8th September: "Last [Sunday \(2nd\)](#) I was lucky enough to see my only **Clouded Yellow** of this year flying over a flowery chalk-slope above [Ellesborough Church, Bucks](#), also **Small Tortoiseshell** (1) and **Meadow Browns** (25+). During the last week here in [Aylesbury](#) I've seen:- **Painted Lady** (1), **Red Admirals** (2), **Peacocks** (2), **Small Tortoiseshells** (3), **Large Whites** (7), **Small Whites** (30+), **Meadow Brown** (1), **Speckled Woods** (2) and **Holly Blue** (1)."

Thursday 6th September 2007

On the afternoon of the 4th September Dave Ferguson paid a visit to Yoesden Bank and Aston Rowant: "The results at [Yoesden Bank](#) were: **Meadow Brown** (65), **Small Heath** (1), **Marbled White** (1), **Common Blue** (1), **Chalkhill Blue** (2), **Large White** (1), **Brimstone** (1). The **Marbled White** seemed quite fresh. A short stop at [Aston Rowant \(Linkey Down\)](#) produced: **Silver-spotted Skipper** (1), **Common Blue** (1), **Brown Argus** (1), **Meadow Brown** (6), **Gatekeeper** (1), **Small Heath** (2), **Speckled Wood** (1), **Brimstone** (2). [A visit to Hedgerely spoil heap today, 6th September](#), produced a hyperactive male **Clouded Yellow** plus **Small White** (3), **Small Heath** (3), **Brown Argus** (1) and **Common Blue** (2). Surprisingly, there were no **Meadow Browns**."

David Redhead did the M40 Compensation Area transect on 4th September and only recorded: 5 **Speckled Wood** and 3 **Small White**. However, he was compensated by seeing two **Brown Hairstreaks** in the tree canopy alongside the reserve. The first a good condition female in a crab apple tree and the second so high up in an ash tree he was unable to determine its sex. On the way back through Bernwood Forest he drove very slowly examining the ride side devil's-bit scabious as he went. Four judicious stops enabled him to increase his species tally to 11 as 4 **Painted Ladies** and singletons of **Brimstone**, **Comma**, **Green-veined White**, **Large White**, **Peacock** and **Red Admiral** were all seen nectaring. A male and female **Common Blue** were also seen. A quick call into [Stanton Little Wood](#) on the way home did not produce any more more adult **Brown Hairstreaks** but he did find two **Brown Hairstreak eggs** on the SE face of the woods. Meanwhile his [Oxford](#) garden had put on its best show for a few weeks with Wendy recording a **Comma**, **Holly Blue**, **Large White** and **Small White**.

Tony Croft did his transect at Rushbeds Wood on Tuesday 4th September: "There wasn't much about; 14 **Speckled Wood**, 4 **Meadow Brown**; 3 **Small White**, but nice to see one **Clouded Yellow**. By the way, the **Brown Hairstreak egg** count in my garden in Long Crendon is up to 14 now!"

Monday 3rd September 2007

Dave Ferguson was walking by Little Marlow Gravel Pit yesterday, 2nd September: "I felt something crawling along the back of my neck. A few seconds later a **Comma caterpillar** appeared, marching purposefully along my sleeve. The intent way it kept moving suggested it was on its way to pupate. I placed it on a nettle where I hoped it would reorientate itself."

On 1st September Tony Croft reported that he's added to the Brown Hairstreak egg count in his Long Crendon (Bucks) garden blackthorn hedge: "In fact another four **Brown Hairstreak eggs** including this "doubler" have appeared in the last 72 hours making a total of nine for the garden now. We have an ash tree on the boundary of us and our

neighbours in which I've seen Purple Hairstreaks both this year and last. Also we have bramble very close by and some in the hedges of the garden."

1/9 - Robin Dryden led a 'Butterflies and Blooms' walk for the Chilterns Conservation Board at a private estate near Ibstone, Bucks: "Not many butterflies - 8 **Meadow Brown**, 2 female **Common Blue** and 1 **Small Heath**. However, a super abundance of **Chiltern Gentian** and a great view of a flyover and calling **Raven**."

On Wednesday 30th August Judith Barnard of Beds & Northants Branch went to Rushbeds Woods, Oxon: "1 **Brown Hairstreak** (I suspect there were more up in the tree tops), 20+ **Speckled Wood**, 2 mating **Green-Veined Whites** and 5 **Meadow Browns**."

Wendy & David Redhead went to Swyncombe Downs on 31st August to carry out the butterfly transect: "We saw a total of 7 **Silver-spotted Skippers** of which two were egg-laying and in about 20 minutes of searching we found 10 eggs. Other species seen were **Meadow Brown** 43, **Brown Argus** 5, **Small Heath** 5, **Common Blue** 4 (3m, 1f), **Small Copper** 3, **Small White** 3, **Speckled Wood** 3 and **Green-veined White** 2. Also 12 **Common Carpet** moths were recorded along with 1 **Green Carpet**."

Friday 31st August 2007

Nigel Spencer sent the following report yesterday, 30th August: "Just joined BC and found your sightings page while viewing from the BC homepage. I went to **Whitecross Green Wood** on **Saturday 25th August** and saw between 4 and 6 **Brown Hairstreaks** including the one on the Rose Hips mentioned on your sightings page."

Chris Iles (West Country branch) sent this news on 30th August: "The sandy, heathy glades in the wood at **Hurst Hill near Cumnor in Oxfordshire** (SP4704) proved fairly productive on **Sunday 25 August**. A select range of species but an unusual one: 8 **Small Coppers**, 4 **Speckled Woods** and 2 **Purple Hairstreaks**. The gorse and patchy cover might make this a promising site for Green Hairstreak next spring."

29/8 - Tony Croft sent this follow-up to his 19th August report from Long Crendon in Bucks: "I'm pleased to report the finding of four further **Brown Hairstreak eggs** in my garden. These are in another hedge in a different part of the garden on small blackthorn bushes I planted last December. I created this gap in the hedge deliberately so that I could include some blackthorn. I searched these bushes without success as soon as I found the first egg so I'm certain they were laid during another visitation. These eggs were quite difficult to see because of the leaves so I'll wait until the leaves drop before searching further in order not to damage the bushes. I think the clear message is "Get Planting" this winter!"

Mick Jones sent this news on 28th August: "On **25th August** I saw one rather tatty **Silver-washed Fritillary** nectaring on Marjoram at the edge of one of our clearings at **Dancersend**. On **27th August** I saw another one on bramble at the edge of a ride in a completely different part of the reserve and then watched a definite female moving slowly around clumps of Marjoram and sunning on low Hazel in a clearing in the far northern part of the reserve. Also saw two **Painted Ladies** nearby. Sadly, I've not been able to observe any egg laying by the Silver-washed Fritillaries."

Tuesday 28th August 2007

Chris Brown sent his latest update today on his regular Silver-washed Fritillary surveys at Crowsley Park Wood, Berks: "15/08/07: Cool weather and nearly continuous cloud with occasional sunny patches. Other butterflies were about but with much reduced numbers. No Silver-washed Fritillary seen."

28/08/07: A mixture of sunshine and cloud but no breeze gave temperatures between 18°C & 21°C. Just a single and somewhat ragged male **Silver-washed Fritillary** and quite pale in colour. If it had not settled I would have mistaken it for a Comma from its wing shape. It was still very active though and patrolling a 50 metre stretch of the central ride back and forth. I will hazard a guess that this will be the last sighting for the year, although it would be nice if this one can break the record for the site and survive into September."

David Redhead reports on Sunday's (26th August) field trip to BBOWT's Asham Meads reserve: "For the second field meeting in a row, the rare and elusive **Brown Hairstreak** proved to be the most abundant butterfly recorded. In total five were seen. Four were roosting on the blackthorn hedge leading west from the car park but by the time we left site they had moved on. The fifth was flying around in the most southerly oak in the copse between the two meadows. Other butterflies seen were **Meadow Brown** 4, **Purple Hairstreak** 3, **Common Blue** 2 (both male), **Red Admiral** 2 **Speckled Wood** 2 and **Green-veined White** 1."

Ched George visited Yoesdon Bank on 24th August: "On the bank I had: **Meadow Brown** 97, **Brown Argus** 2, **Silver-spotted Skipper** 3, **Small/Essex Skipper** 2, **Painted Lady** 13, **Chalkhill Blue** males 14, females 5, **Brimstone** 6, **Large White** 1, **Small Copper** 1, **Gatekeeper** 4, **Common Blue** males 5. In the woodland clearing: **Meadow Brown** 8, **Gatekeeper** 1, **Peacock** 1, **Holly Blue** 1, **Brimstone** 5, **Common Blue** female 1. At 5.50pm on the way off the bank, I saw a male **Adonis Blue** and then a female (both fresh) and during a photo session a second less fresh female appeared."

Monday 27th August 2007

26th August - Dave Maunder and his family spent a day at Coombe Hill and saw the following butterflies near the monument: **Painted Ladies** (2); **Red Admiral** (1); **Peacocks** (2); **Brimstones** (3); **Small Whites** (4); **Meadow Browns** (25+); **Hedge Browns** (5); **Speckled Woods** (2); **Chalkhill Blues** (15+); **Common Blues** (4); **Brown Argus** (2) and **Small Copper** (1).

The following reports came from Dennis Dell on 25th August: "On 24th August I did my transects in *Finemere Wood and Meadows* in lovely weather. I had seen only **Small Whites** [9], and **Speckled Woods** [8] and that, I thought, was it! Making matters even worse, the rides and the meadows had been mown [a necessary activity at this time of the year, of course], so there were few nectar plants around. Depressed, and nearing the end of the Meadow transect, a **Clouded Yellow** suddenly passed across my path: my day had been rescued! On 25th August I did *Chequers Knap to Beacon Hill* looking for more northerly habitats for the Silver Spotted Skipper. Good looking habitat, but I did not see any. Not a bad day, otherwise, though: **Brown Argus** [1], **Meadow Brown** [28], **Chalkhill Blue** [including a mating pair, see photo] [12], **Small Heath** [3], **Peacock** [1], **Small Tortoiseshell** [2], **Small Copper** [1], **Common Blue** [1], **Large White** [3], **Brimstone** [2].

I've sung the praises of the late flowering Bejiing Buddleia in my garden several times and I'm doing it again: during these last few days, **Painted Ladies**, **Peacocks**, **Red Admirals**, **Small Tortoiseshells**, **Large Whites** and **Small Whites** have been arriving in good numbers, staying from early morning until dusk. Today, there was even a fresh Meadow Brown nectaring."

David Redhead sent this Brown Hairstreak update on 25th August: "Following the trail of some 300 eggs found last winter on MoD land at *Arccott* and in the grounds of *Bullingdon Prison* proved successful at the *Upper Thames Field Meeting on Friday 24th August*. Although it was initially overcast it did not take the group too long to find their first adult **Brown Hairstreak** of the day roosting in an ash tree on the MoD land. When the sun came out a female was seen basking on some pathside bramble leaves when she flew onto the

bare soil of the path which she proceeded to investigate with her proboscis - presumably gathering minerals and/or moisture. Although this is recognised behaviour for other species, this is the first time the author has observed this behaviour for this species in several years of Brown Hairstreak watching. A few yards further along a very tatty hairstreak was again seen basking on the pathside vegetation when it again flew onto the path and appeared to copy the female. Only then, with a good look at the undersides of its wings, were we finally able to decide it was a male Brown Hairstreak - possibly one of the tattiest Brown Hairstreaks to ever receive close up inspection. When we arrived in the prison grounds two good condition females were seen down on the blackthorn. One of them partially disappearing behind the blackthorn leaves where we suspect she may have laid an egg. Altogether 14 eggs were found at various locations - so egg laying is well underway. Another thirteen species of butterfly were seen but all in such low numbers - I think the July monsoons and recent arctic August must have taken their toll on most species - that Brown Hairstreak with 5 sightings took pole position. Also seen were **Gatekeeper** 3, **Purple Hairstreak** 3, **Common Blue** 2 (both male), **Meadow Brown** 2, **Speckled Wood** 2, **Brimstone** 1, **Brown Argus** 1, **Green-veined White** 1, **Painted Lady** 1, **Red Admiral** 1, **Small Copper** 1, **Small Tortoiseshell** 1 and **Small White** 1. Thanks go to Gary Beckett (MoD) and Stuart Jenkins (Bullington Prison) for permission to carry out these surveys. *With a report in from Douglas Goddard and Andy Wyldes of Northants & Beds Branch of their visit today to Asham Meads and Whitecross Green Wood* sightings of adult Brown Hairstreaks in the Upper Thames area for this summer now exceed 100. Douglas and Andy saw a total of 10 in ash trees, down on brambles, egg-laying and one even taking an interest in rose hips (see photo) - another new behaviour!"

Friday 24th August 2007

Despite the lack of sun and a stiff northerly breeze, on Wednesday 22nd August Dave Wilton went searching for Brown Hairstreak: While negotiating some bends in the road between Oakley and Worminghall he noticed something brown flying along the nearside hedgerow. Assuming it to be a Vapourer moth because of its "cork-screw" flight pattern, he stopped the car and, surprisingly, managed to keep it in sight until it landed on some blackthorn. It was indeed a male **Vapourer** moth (the females are wingless). Moving on, two **Brown Hairstreaks** were found, both of them in sheltered locations near *Waterperry, Oxon*. One was a female who, while being watched, obligingly laid an egg on blackthorn beside the M40 to the north of the village. The other, of indeterminate sex, was seen nectaring on a thistle, again close to the motorway but to the west of the village. Eggs were also found at the latter spot as well as to the south of *Oakley* and near *Dorton*, Bucks. In far better weather Dave went looking for the butterfly again during the afternoon of *Thursday 23rd August*. Two were found near *Wendlebury, Oxon*, a female basking on elm in a low hedge and the other (sex unconfirmed) flying around the lower branches of a large oak tree. Another two were seen adjacent to MoD land near *Piddington*, one a female on brambles and the other a male on a thistle. The sunshine brought out several other species as well, including **Brimstone**, **Small White**, **Green-veined White**, **Small Copper**, **Brown Argus**, **Common Blue**, **Red Admiral**, **Painted Lady** (6 seen), **Peacock**, **Small Tortoiseshell** (22 seen), **Speckled Wood**, **Meadow Brown** and **Gatekeeper**.

24th August - Mick & Wendy Campbell had a reasonably good show of butterflies in their garden in Bucks: 9 **Small Tortoiseshells**, 5 **Red Admirals**, several **Large Whites**, 2 **Small Whites** and 2 **Peacocks** all on the buddleia and 'Everlasting Wallflowers' (Bowles Mauve). A **Holly Blue** flying around the ivy, a female **Gatekeeper** (still in reasonably good condition) and a **Painted Lady** both on the Hemp Agrimony. Also a *Pyrausta* (probably *P. aurata*) moth on the marjoram.

David Redhead reported on the field meeting at UTB's Holtspur Reserve on 12th August: "The weather was indifferent and we abandoned a transfer onto the Bank when it

started to rain at about 12.30. Butterflies seen were: numerous **Meadow Brown**, **Common Blue** 8 (all male), **Gatekeeper** 4, **Comma** 2, **Brown Argus** 1, **Small Copper** 1, **Speckled Wood** 1. We didn't have an absolutely definite sighting of Small Blue but I'm pretty sure we had one in flight just south of the seat but it did a very neat disappearing trick! Moths seen were: **Common Carpet** 1 and **Treble-bar** 2. Also one **Roesel's Bush-cricket**. Jill Saunders and Gerald Salisbury identified a **Musk Thistle** growing in the chalk scrape and **Woolly Thistles** growing to the left of the gate into the top field (according to Roy Maycock's checklist of the plants of Buckinghamshire, Musk Thistle is 'Uncommon; open calcareous grassland' and Woolly Thistle is 'Rare; calcareous grassland, especially in the north of the county')."

Monday 20th August 2007

Tony Croft sent the following report from Long Crendon in Bucks on 19th August:

"Whilst perusing my garden blackthorn this morning I found a **Brown Hairstreak** egg. It's in a mixed hedge in which I planted some blackthorn about five years ago to fill a gap so I think that's quite a result!"

Friday 17th August 2007

Mick Jones sent his recent findings at the Dancersend Reserve: "6th August - 2 Silver-washed Fritillaries, Small Skipper, Large Skipper, Brimstone, Large White, Small Copper, Common Blue, Small Tortoiseshell (1st this year at the reserve!), Red Admiral, Peacock, Comma, Dark Green Fritillary, Speckled Wood, Gatekeeper, Marbled White, Meadow Brown, Ringlet, Small Heath. 10th August and again on 12th August - One Silver-washed Fritillary flying along main ride, one Dark Green Fritillary on marjoram on Anthill."

Mike Wilkins reports that the Field Meeting to Aston Rowant turned out to be a good day in spite of the unpromising weather forecast: "Although it was windy we had sunny periods and avoided the showers. *Beacon Hill* produced good numbers of **Chalkhill Blues** (9+) and **Brown Argus** (8) but only four **Common Blues** (my counts). The fresh wind and cloudy periods kept the butterflies down but I counted 24+ **Silver-spotted Skippers** in 2.5 hours. **Meadow Browns** were abundant. Others were **Small Skipper** (1), **Brimstone** (1), **Large White** (1), **Small White** (1), **Small Copper** (1), **Painted Lady** (2) and **Gatekeeper** (6) making a total of 12 species. **Common Carpets** were widespread and a few **Six-spot Burnets** seen. *Bald Hill in the afternoon* allowed us to add two new species: **Holly Blue** and **Red Admiral**, making a visit total of 14. Silver-spotted Skipper, Chalkhill Blue and Brown Argus were also here."

David Arch reports seeing a male Brimstone on Friday 10th August at Emberton Country Park, Bucks.

On 15/8/07 Tim Watts reports seeing a fresh Painted Lady on Quainton Hill, Bucks.

David Redhead sent the following report on 15th August: "Whilst replenishing the bird feeders early this morning (15th August) Wendy disturbed a **Red Underwing** moth from the front porch of our house on the edge of *Oxford*. Following a short but heavy shower I set out on the usual early morning dog walk across the rough grassland above our house and, in spite of the dog's best efforts, failed to flush out a single Meadow Brown or Gatekeeper. However, to my delight, I did come across a single roosting **Small Copper**. A decade ago this species was regularly recorded here in low numbers but then seemed to disappear. It made a reappearance last year and this was the first sighting of 2007. The dog did manage to flush out a faded **Green Carpet** moth and a wander through the nettle patch also put up 8 **Mother of Pearl**."

Tuesday 14th August 2007

Darin Stanley sent this news on 13th August: "I visited *Yoesden Bank, Bucks* on *Saturday 11th August* (a lovely sunny day) - still no Adonis Blue! 1 **Silver-spotted Skipper** (more were seen by others prior to my attendance), numerous **Chalkhill Blues** and a few **Common Blues**, 3 **Small Coppers**, 2 **Painted Ladies**. Then at *Salden disused railway, Bucks* - 3 **Wood Whites**, some lizards and a **Grass Snake**."

Sunday 12th August 2007

Linda Fitch, Katie Corbishley and Clive Burrows from Herts made a luntime trip to Whitecross Green Wood today (Sunday 12th) for approximately two hours: "We observed 4 **Brown Hairstreaks** down low. Three were males and one fresh female (photo below)."

Derek Brown tried Greenham Common on Saturday morning, 11th August: "I saw only a single **Grayling** and that was a bit worn. At *Lardon Chase* I saw 3 **Adonis Blue** (1 female 2 males) and 3 male **Chalkhill Blues**."

Chris Brown sent the following update of his Crowsley Wood Silver-washed Fritillary surveys for the last 3 weeks: "On 24/07/07: 4 **Silver-washed Fritillary** in total with 3 of them finally venturing up and down the central ride. They were stopping more frequently to feed on Bramble rather than just flitting about as in previous weeks. Temperatures in the sun were at 26°C which might have helped. There seems to be an explosion of **Peacock** (15) here this year.

On 01/08/07: Ideal weather for the butterflies and myself. 5 Silver-washed Fritillary in total and all active. Feeding for only a few seconds at any flower making it tricky to get any video this year. Again large numbers of **Peacock** (16) and **Brimstone**, both male & female (14). Blackberries ripening so another record for the autumn phenology list. This means bramble flowers are in short supply so I noticed that the Silver-washed Fritillary were also using thistles (see photos).

On 08/08/07: Ideal weather again - 6 Silver-washed Fritillary in total. 1 pair seen mating. Almost no bramble flowers now. The Peacocks have all gone today, though several **Brimstone** were still about and a rarity for this year, a solitary **Painted Lady** dropped by."

Thursday 9th August 2007

Jon Mercer (Wilts) managed another walk at Linkey Down 12-1pm today 9th August: "It was sunny and breezy and I recorded 10 **Silver-spotted Skippers**, 40+ **Chalkhill Blues**, 2 **Brown Argus**, also 5 **Essex/Small Skippers** and a **Small Copper**."

Dennis Dell went to Ivinghoe Beacon, Steps Hill and Incombe Hole, today, 9th August: "I saw **Gatekeeper** [52], **Holly Blue** [1], **Small Skipper** [37], **Meadow Brown** [94], **Marbled White** [17], **Small Heath** [3], **Chalkhill Blue** [52], **Large Skipper** [1], **Large White** [2], **Peacock** [4], **Small White** [8], **Painted Lady** [2], **Common Blue** [4], **Brown Argus** [3], **Small Copper** [2], **Dark Green Fritillary** [2], **Brimstone** [1]. The Dark Green Fritillaries were very worn, but were still flying rapidly, patrolling the very bottom of Incombe Hole and not going up the slope at all. Far fewer Chalkhill Blues than at the same time last year here."

Mick & Wendy Campbell visited two sites today, 9th August. First they followed up on a report from Charlie Kew of Silver-washed Fritillary in *Fence Wood, Hermitage*. It was warm but the cloud was building, however 11 butterfly species were seen: **Silver-washed Fritillary** (3 - 1 was a very tatty male), **Speckled Wood** (9), **Meadow Brown** (5), **Gatekeeper** (3), **Small Copper** (1), **Peacock** (2), **Essex Skipper** (1), **Painted Lady** (2), **Small Tortoiseshell** (1), **White Admiral** (1) and **Brimstone** (1). The second visit was a short walk across

Greenham Common where the following were additions to the species count for the day: **Common Blue** (16m, 3f), **Small Skipper** (1), **Dingy Skipper** (1 - 2nd brood), **Large White** (2) and **Grayling** (3). Moths seen here were **Lesser/Treble-bar sp.** (9 - 2 of which were checked closely and found to be the Lesser Treble-bar), **Six-spot Burnet** (1) and **Cinnabar caterpillars**.

David Redhead sent the following Brown Hairstreak update on 8th August: "Sightings of 62 **Brown Hairstreak** individuals have now been received. This figure is comparable to the last two years when by the same date 57 had been seen in 2006 and 61 in 2005. This year nearly all the sightings have been either in ash trees or nectaring on wild angelica. The two superb photos taken by Sally & David Irven in *Bernwood Forest* on Saturday 4th August, show a male and female nectaring on wild angelica. Also the first possible evidence of a female in egg-laying mode has been received but definite evidence of the first eggs of 2007 is still awaited."

John Ward-Smith sent this report today: "Yesterday, *8th August*, I recorded **Purple Hairstreak** in our garden. A worn individual settled briefly on the lawn and then rested for a short period on ivy growing on the garden fence. By the time I got my camera it had disappeared. Living in the middle of *Bracknell*, this was the first live specimen I had recorded here in forty years. We have a large mature oak in the garden and others are scattered in the locality, but I am not sure where the nearest colony of Purple Hairstreak is to be found. Many years ago I had found a dead specimen in the garden. Talking of dead specimens, one I saw last year at Felix Farm Trout Fishery, Binfield, was in the jaws of a Black-tailed Skimmer (see photo)!"

On Wednesday, 8th August Andy King visited the disused railway line near Salden/Newton Longville: "Many **Meadow Browns**, **Gatekeepers**, quite a lot of **Brimstones**, a fair number of **Green-veined Whites**, **Small Whites**, **Large Whites** and of **Peacocks** (mainly attending the teasles), some **Common Blues**, **Small Skippers**, 2 or 3 **Large Skippers**, a couple of **Small Coppers**, one **Small Heath**, a couple of **Speckled Woods**, 2 **Ringlets** just about hanging on; but best was watching a **Wood White** laying eggs: I would think she laid perhaps 5 or 6 eggs in the 3/4 hour that I was watching her - completely pernickety - despite slowly flying around and back and forth she put them all on the same plant, which she visited about three times, in between feeding off various flowers. When the sun went behind a cloud she would stop and settle immediately. When laying an egg she quite often dithered around, once she landed on a leaf and took off again around 7 times before laying an egg, on another occasion about 8 times. A family of **Whitethroats** are living there at the moment, too."

The following report was received from Dave Ferguson on 8th August: "This afternoon on *Steps Hill* I saw my second second-generation **Dingy Skipper**. Also present was a pristine female **Large Skipper**. Is this a very late first generation or a second generation? I see that second generation **Dukes** are out in Hants. Is anybody looking here?"

Tuesday 7th August 2007

Richard Soulsby led the field trip to Watlington Hill on Sunday 5th August and sent the following report: "The event was well attended with 15 people enjoying the calm, warm, sunny weather. A slow circuit of the hill quickly yielded the target species **Silver-spotted Skipper**, with a total of 22 being seen. The second target, **Chalkhill Blues**, were in smaller numbers, with about 6 – 8 being seen. Other species were: **Speckled Wood**, **Meadow Brown**, **Brimstone**, **Peacock**, **Gatekeeper**, **Small Heath** (only 4), **Common Blue**, **Brown Argus**, **Small/Essex Skippers**, **Small Copper**, one faded **Dark Green Fritillary**, **Red Admiral** and assorted **Whites**. *Eight of us moved on after lunch to Linkey Down, the central part of the Aston Rowant NNR.* This site had perfect chalk grassland conditions, better than

Watlington Hill, with a mass of flowers and slightly longer grass. Most of the morning's species were seen again, with Silver-spotted Skipper and Chalkhill Blue being more abundant than on Watlington Hill. In addition, **Marbled Whites** were seen, and positive identifications made of **Small Skipper, Essex Skipper, Large White** and **Green-veined White**. It was noticeable at both sites that there were very few Common Blues, and most of those were female, a fact remarked on by Maureen Cross for other similar sites. If some of the unidentified whites were Small, the species count for the day was 19. A photo of some of the field trip party at Linkey Down is below."

On Monday, 6th August Richard says his Swyncombe Down transect yielded the following: **"Meadow Brown, Gatekeeper, Brown Argus, Small White, 9 Silver-spotted Skippers, Common Blues** (only 3), **Small Copper, 4 Chalkhill Blues, 1 faded Dark Green Fritillary, Small Heath** (only 1), **2 Small Blues, Red Admiral, Marbled White** and **Small Skipper**. The Small Blues, Small Heaths, Common Blues and Small Skippers were very low in numbers compared with previous years. An intensive Silver-spotted Skipper transect yielded a respectable 58 and 11 Chalkhill Blue. The number of Silver-spotted Skipper is similar to numbers at peak in previous years, suggesting that, after a late start, the Silver-spotted Skipper have built up very rapidly and are now at or near peak, without the reduced numbers due to the poor weather that have hit many other species."

Malcolm Brownsword saw the following on transect at Hartslock yesterday, 6th August: **Meadow Brown** (68), **Gatekeeper** (16), **Ringlet** (2), **Small Heath** (5), **Chalkhill Blue** - only 4, **Brown Argus** 2, **Small Skipper, Brimstone, Large white** and **Green-veined White**, 1 each.

Charlie Kew visited Fence Wood, Hermitage, twice in July: he saw a total of 13 **Silver-Washed Fritillaries** in different locations - 16/07 8 seen and 27/07 5 seen.

Monday 6th August 2007

Dave Ferguson sent this news today, 6th August: "The highlights of this morning's visit to *Yoesden Bank* were my first ever second-brood **Dingy Skipper** and my first **Silver-spotted Skipper** of the year. The lowlight was the complete absence of Common Blues. The numbers were: Silver-spotted Skipper (1), **Small Skipper** (1), **Essex Skipper** (1), **Dingy Skipper** (1), **Chalkhill Blue** (99), **Holly Blue** (1), **Meadow Brown** (98), **Gatekeeper** (5), **Marbled White** (4), **Small Heath** (3), **Small White** (1), **6-spot Burnet** (4), **Yellow Shell** (4), **Shaded Broad-bar** (3)."

Ashley Stow and his girlfriend visited Pinkhill Reserve at Farmoor Reservoir, Oxfordshire, on 5th August: "We went to see the Marsh Sandpiper and we were walking back across the causeway towards the sailing club when a large butterfly caught our attention. We walked over towards it as it rested on the causeway kerb and realised it was a female **Purple Emperor**. A few other birders had joined us by this time and were very excited at what we had found. It soon flitted its way across the causeway towards the sailing club and finally down the grass bank and off towards the water treatment plant where we lost sight of it. After seeing a male Purple Emperor at *Warburg Nature Reserve, Bix, on 14th July* I'm aware that they are quite scarce and thought that I should let somebody know of this sighting."

Darin Stanley & Jo walsh sent the following reports: "'On 4th August at Aston Rowant: 6+ **Silver-spotted Skipper** along the slope by the motorway. *Whitecross Green Wood:* 1 female **Brown Hairstreak**. Alas a small solid white spider hidden in the white flowers, while the Hairstreak was nectaring, caught it. I tried to save the butterfly but think the spider pumped enough juices into it to kill it off. *Yoesden Bank, Bucks:* Numerous **Chalkhill Blues** and **Common Blues**. 2nd brood **Dingy Skippers** were seen by others, 4 thereabouts, but I

didn't see these. *On 5th August we went to Salden disused railway* and saw 2 **Wood Whites**. Also 1 large orange Fritillary in the same area. It didn't stop for me to get a good look at it, but guess it was either Dark Green or Silver-washed Fritillary."

Pete Eeles visited Greenham Common on Friday 3rd August and recorded: a single 2nd brood **Small Blue**, 8 **Grayling**, 14 **Meadow Brown**, 5 **Peacock**, 2 **Small Skipper**, 3 **Small White**, and 12 **Common Blue**.

Saturday 4th August 2007

Derek Brown finally got back on the butterfly trail today: "In the garden in *Beenham* we managed 10 species today *4th August* - **Meadow Brown**, **Speckled Wood**, **Large White**, **Small White**, **Green-veined White**, **Peacock**, **Red Admiral**, **Holly Blue**, and new for the year a single **Brown Argus** and a single **Painted Lady**. *At Decoy Heath* I added several **Common Blues** and 2 **Small Coppers**. And visiting foreign fields at Pamber forest in Hampshire I added Gatekeeper, Large and Small Skipper, Silver washed Fritillary, Ringlet, Small Heath, and Brimstone. Not too bad - 19 species for the day."

Dave Wilton sent the following reports: "On *Tuesday 31st July* the good weather meant that I was able to complete another butterfly transect at *Finemere Wood, Bucks*. I had hoped to see Silver-washed Fritillary there but was unsuccessful on this occasion. However, I did see two (yes, two!) other Fritillary species in the wood. The first was a large female **Dark Green Fritillary** charging around the turning circle when not feeding from knapweed. This is the first time I've recorded Dark Green Fritillary in the wood and means that the number of butterfly species seen there over the past four years now rises to 34, a very respectable total when one considers that only 45 species are to be found in our three counties. The second Fritillary was discovered on-transect in the wood's central cleared area. Unfortunately it must have found its way there with some human help although it still served to brighten my day! From close study of my photographs it appears to be a very battered specimen of **Provençal Fritillary (Mellicta dejone)**, which differs very slightly from our own very similar Heath Fritillary in having orange palps and a very minor difference to the underwing pattern. In the wild it is found in northern Italy, southern France and the Iberian peninsular. The rest of the tally seen at Finemere was unremarkable. **Peacocks** were in great abundance (62 recorded), favouring the teasels which are now coming into flower, but the other species seen comprised only **Small Skipper**, **Essex Skipper**, **Large Skipper**, **Brimstone**, **Large White**, **Small White**, **Green-veined White**, **Small Tortoiseshell**, **Speckled Wood**, **Meadow Brown**, **Gatekeeper** and **Ringlet**. There was no sign of either Common Blue or Comma. *Wednesday 1st August, I visited Rushbeds Wood and Lapland Farm Meadows* with the expectation of seeing at least one Brown Hairstreak but I was unlucky despite a thorough search of all the likely spots. I did find two **Silver-washed Fritillaries**, one in the centre of the wood and one adjacent to the railway cutting in the meadows, but there was little else of note. The wood's southern tramway field contained a mass of flowering knapweed but it was mostly devoid of butterflies, just a handful of skippers, **Peacocks** and browns along with some rather tired-looking **Marbled Whites**. Just the one male **Common Blue** was recorded."

Friday 3rd August 2007

Mick & Wendy Campbell visited several locations today, 3rd August, and recorded 21 butterfly species. They started the day looking for **Brown Hairstreak** and managed to find two males in an Ash tree near the M40 bridge at Waterperry. In some Elm trees nearby they also found an egg-laying **White-letter Hairstreak** which was still in remarkably good condition and two **Brown Argus** in the corner of the adjoining field. A **Purple Hairstreak** was found in another Ash tree further along the road. The next three locations produced no further Hairstreaks so they decided to visit *Salden disused railway* to see if they could find any second generation **Wood Whites** and were very pleased to see 5. Other species here

were: **Speckled Wood, Comma, Peacock, Large White, Small White, Green-veined White, Common Blue** (4 - 2 male & 2 female), **Small Skipper, Meadow Brown, Ringlet** (1 - pristine), **Brimstone, Gatekeeper, Small Copper** and **Essex Skipper**. A **Red Admiral** and **Holly Blue** were also seen during the day.

The following news was received via Martin Harvey today, 3rd August: Matt Dodds saw 5 **Silver-Washed Fritillary** on *3rd August* in *Lenborough Wood, north Bucks*.

Jon Mercer (Wilts branch) visited Aston Rowant after the sun came out, 4-5pm on 2nd August: "3 **Silver-spotted Skippers** on the southern slopes of the southern reserve (South of M40). Also seen, mainly in the longer grass areas - several worn **Dark Green Fritillaries**, 2 **Essex Skippers**, **Marbled Whites**, **Meadow Browns**, **Peacocks**."

02/08/07 - David Redhead reports 41 Brown Hairstreaks have now been sighted: "Two-thirds of these came from an expedition by Herts & Middlesex Branch consisting of Andrew Middleton, Tony Clancy and Tristan Bantock. They visited three known hotspots on the morning of the *31st July* and saw 27 male **Brown Hairstreaks** and the first female to be recorded. The main activity is in ash trees but 7 nectaring males have also been seen with wild angelica being the favourite. So this weekend should be a good one for observing Brown Hairstreaks in ash trees with also the opportunity to photograph a nectaring male. The first records are awaited for the following hotspot areas : Span Green, southern Otmoor and Arncott. Often the peak of activity seems to be in the morning leaving the afternoon free for seeing Silver-spotted Skippers, also now out on the wing!"

Please report any sightings of either species to the relevant Species Champion: [David Redhead \(Brown Hairstreak\)](#) or [Richard Soulsby \(Silver-spotted Skipper\)](#). A 4-digit, or preferably 6-digit, grid reference would be greatly appreciated but is not essential.

Wednesday 1st August 2007

Richard Soulsby did the Swyncombe Downs transect today, 1st August, in very pleasant weather (for a change): "The main transect yielded a good number of species (20), but many of them in very low numbers. These included: **Small, Essex**, (probable) **Large** and 5 **Silver-spotted Skippers**, **Small, Green-veined** and **Large Whites**, **Brimstones**, 1 **Small Blue**, 2 **Common Blue** and 2 **Chalkhill Blues**, 1 **Brown Argus**, 1 **Small Copper**, 3 **Dark Green Fritillary** (worn), 1 **Red Admiral**, **Meadow Browns**, **Ringlets**, **Gatekeepers**, **Marbled Whites**, and 1 **Small Heath**. I followed this with a more intensive zigzag transect for only Silver-spotted Skipper and Chalkhill Blue and on this I had respectable totals of 21 and 13 respectively. With a couple of **Peacocks** and a **Holly Blue** in my garden on return, my total number of species for the day was 22."

Ian Stevenson was inspired by a UTB contributor to attempt to count the highest number of butterfly species he could in a day: "I'm pleased to say I counted 25 different species today, *1st August*, the highlights being a **Purple Hairstreak** and **Adonis Blue** at *Lardon Chase*, several **Silver-washed Fritillaries** at *Homefield Wood* and many **Silver-spotted Skippers** at *Swyncombe Downs*."

Malcolm Brownsword visited Aston Upthorpe Downs and Juniper Valley on Tuesday afternoon, 31st July: "On the first 'real' summer day for 8 weeks, at the gate leading into Juniper Valley, we saw a **Dark Green Fritillary** and a hundred metres further on, a **Silver-spotted Skipper**. Also seen: **Chalkhill Blue** (about 30 in 2 hours), **Small Copper** (1), **Marbled White** (10), **Gatekeeper** (50+), **Meadow Brown** (50+), **Small Skipper** (10+), **Peacock** (1), **Red Admiral** (10) and **Brown Argus** (1)."

David Redhead went to Bernwood Meadows late morning on 30th July: "I examined the ash trees north of the small car park. There was a lot of activity in the first one including two

Brown Hairstreak and at least half a dozen **Purple Hairstreak**. One of the Brown Hairstreaks was definitely a male and I am pretty sure the other was as well. Surprisingly the other half dozen or so ash trees in this locality showed a much lower level of activity, in spite of most of them being more sheltered from the breeze, with just a single Purple Hairstreak being seen in two of them. I then went for a wander through the forest and a small ash tree on the main ride had two Purple Hairstreak flying in it and the neighbouring oak about half a dozen. But the real prize was to be found on the wild angelica at the first intersection down from the main Oakley Wood car park. The flowerheads were covered in nectaring insects which included a pristine male Brown Hairstreak. *I then went to Stanton Little Wood* but had no joy regarding Hairstreaks but a **Speckled Wood** resting in unsuitable habitat caught my eye (see photo). Other butterflies seen during the day included uncountable numbers of **Meadow Brown**; numerous **Gatekeeper**; several **Marbled White**, **Peacock** and **Green-veined White**; a few **Essex Skipper**, **Brimstone**, **Large White**, **Common Blue**, **Red Admiral** and **Ringlet**; and a single **Large Skipper**.

At the end of July I can still recommend early morning butterflying (see report on 17th July) - but not as much as earlier in the month. *On 31st July at Rivermead Nature Park* : 0 butterflies, just 2 **Mother of Pearl moths**; rough grassland and scrub above house : 5 **Meadow Brown**, 2 **Gatekeeper** and 1 **Essex Skipper** plus a **Shaded Broad-bar** and **grass snake**; garden - singleton **Peacock**, **Red Admiral** and **Meadow Brown** nectaring on buddleia and another Peacock sunning itself on adjacent rough grass area. So still 5 butterfly species by 8.30am but only 12 individual butterflies."

Late afternoon on 28th July Jim Asher was exploring an under-recorded area in SU49 around Milton: "I came across this white **Red Admiral**. When I first saw it, I thought I was seeing a White Admiral, except that the flight was wrong. Once it settled, it was clear what it was. The photo is an accurate reflection of its appearance, almost completely lacking the red pigment."

On Sunday 28th July Dave Wilton walked round to the disused railway line west of Westcott, Bucks during the afternoon: "I managed to record 15 species: **Small Skipper**, **Essex Skipper**, **Large White**, **Small White**, **Green-veined White**, **White-letter Hairstreak**, **Small Copper**, **Common Blue**, **Peacock**, **Comma**, **Marbled White**, **Speckled Wood**, **Meadow Brown**, **Gatekeeper** and **Ringlet**. The Meadow Browns (tired and battered) and Gatekeepers (pristine) were both plentiful, with well in excess of 100 of each recorded, but nothing else was present in the numbers that I would normally have expected at this time of year. There is a strong Common Blue colony at the site but this year's first brood was much smaller than usual and went over very quickly and all I saw on this visit was a single lonely-looking male from the second-brood. There was no sign of Brown Argus, nor of second-brood Dingy Skipper which has started to appear in the Chilterns, but the one rather battered **White-letter Hairstreak** seen on brambles does at least confirm the continued existence of the small colony found here last year."

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the small colony found here last year."

Monday 30th July 2007

David Redhead reports on two of the UTB "Save Our Butterflies Week - 25 Species in a Day events which he led recently: "During 'Save Our Butterflies' Week the Upper Thames Branch made two determined attempts to see 25 butterfly species in a day and, for want of trying, failed on both occasions. Our first attempt on [Sunday 22nd July](#) produced just 21 species. A week later on [Saturday 28th July](#) we improved our performance with 24 species, partly due to better weather and partly due to including a last minute third site on our itinerary. We had some bad luck with expected species just not appearing. For example on the 28th in spite of some 60 person hours spent searching three noted butterfly sites we could not find a single Large Skipper. Ironically if the day's programme had started in the Chairman's garden at 9am we would have achieved 25 species as a Large Skipper was to be found on his garden buddleia. Details of the species recorded are given below with numbers seen for the key UTB species:

22nd July : Part 1, Aston Rowant NNR : Small Skipper, Large Skipper, Large White, Small White, Green-veined White, Purple Hairstreak (actually seen in Cowleaze Wood car park), Brown Argus, Red Admiral, Small Tortoiseshell, Peacock, Comma, Dark Green Fritillary (4), Speckled Wood, Marbled White, Gatekeeper, Meadow Brown, Ringlet, Small Heath.

Part 2, Bernwood Forest : Small Skipper, Essex Skipper, Large Skipper, Green-veined White, Purple Hairstreak, Purple Emperor (1), Red Admiral, Peacock, Comma, Silver-washed Fritillary (2), Speckled Wood, Marbled White, Gatekeeper, Meadow Brown, Ringlet.

Saturday 28th July : Part 1, Greenham Common : Small Skipper, Essex Skipper, Brimstone, Large White, Small White, Green-veined White, Small Copper, Brown Argus, Common Blue, Holly Blue, Red Admiral, Peacock, Comma, Speckled Wood, Marbled White, Grayling (2), Gatekeeper, Meadow Brown, Ringlet, Small Heath. Moths seen were Grass Emerald, Lesser Treble-bar, Six-spot Burnet, *Sitochroa palealis*, Shaded Broad-bar, Cinnabar (adult & caterpillars) and *Pyrausta purpuralis*. (Photos will be posted shortly on the Moth Sightings page.)"

Part 2, Baynes Wood : Brimstone, Green-veined White, Purple Hairstreak, Holly Blue, Red Admiral, Peacock, Comma, Silver-washed Fritillary (16), Speckled Wood, Marbled White, Meadow Brown, Ringlet.

Part 3, Lardon Chase : Small Skipper, Essex Skipper, Brimstone, Large White, Small Copper, Small Blue (2), Common Blue, Chalkhill Blue (33), Holly Blue, Red Admiral, Peacock, Comma, Gatekeeper, Meadow Brown."

The following report from Chris Hazell was received via Richard Soulsby: "I went to [Buttler's Hangings BBOWT Reserve](#), near West Wycombe, Buckinghamshire on [29th July](#). I visit this site regularly every year as it's fairly local to me and also a lovely reserve. Between 4.30pm and 7.00pm I counted at least 6 **Silver-spotted Skippers**."

Tony Croft was in Rushbeds Wood on 30th July: "Whilst doing a transect at Rushbeds Wood this morning I came upon a rather unusual fritillary. After a lot of chasing I managed to get this photo and realised it was the *valezina* form of Silver-washed Fritillary! Other butterflies seen were: 122 Meadow Brown; 49 Ringlet; 47 Gatekeeper; 25 Peacock; 6 Green-veined White; 5 Small White; 5 Small Skipper; 4 Large White; 4 Comma; 4 Marbled White; 1 Purple Hairstreak and 1 Speckled Wood. [At Aston Rowant this afternoon](#) I saw 5 Chalkhill Blues; 2 Small Coppers; 2 Brimstones and 1 Brown Argus."

Dave Ferguson visited Lodge Hill on 29th July and saw: Gatekeeper (33), Meadow Brown (22), Marbled White (2), Common Blue (3), Small Copper (3), Peacock (8), Small Tortoiseshell (1), Red Admiral (3), Brimstone (3), Small White (4), Green-veined White(4), Large White (4), Essex Skipper (1), Essex/Small Skipper (6). Moths seen were:

Six-spot Burnet (1), Common Carpet (2).

Chris Iles (West Country branch) was visiting relatives at Cumnor Hill in Oxfordshire at the weekend: "A walk on the *28th July* around *Cumnor Hill* and the wooded area on *Hurst Hill* proved very productive for butterflies: **Small, Large and Green-veined Whites, Meadow Brown, Gatekeeper, Ringlet, Speckled Wood, Holly Blue, Small Copper** (3 on Hurst Hill), **Brown Argus** (1 on Hurst Hill), **Red Admiral** and **Peacock**. Notable was a dozen or more Peacocks in the vicinity of a clump of buddleia bushes, some nectaring but half-a-dozen or so basking close together on a small area of bare rubble nearby. *On the 29th* we had a walk at *Wytham Wood* in the morning: Gatekeeper, Ringlet, Meadow Brown, Speckled Wood, Large White, Green-veined White, **Large Skipper** and **Marbled White** seen. The Large Skippers are finished now and the Ringlets far more worn in my corner of Somerset. Later, a Small White seen on buddleia in Bampton."

Chris also ran a moth trap at Cumnor Hill on the 28th - results will be posted shortly on the Moth Sightings page.

John Ward-Smith has been out dragonfly recording recently and also saw the following: "I have had two sightings of **Grayling**. On *22nd July*, in *Swinley Forest*, near the Upper Star Post Pond, three were on the wing. *On 29th at Crowthorne Woods* I have seen two Grayling (as well as some other more common species)."

Mick Jones reported the following recent Silver-washed Fritillary sightings at Dancersend: " *15th July* - main ride running E-W past the meadow plots. Weather - moderate. One butterfly (gender unknown) near areas of bramble in flower. *21st July* SW edge of Anthill. Weather poor. One butterfly (gender unknown) disturbed when roosting and it took off along woodland edge despite light drizzle just starting."

News via Nick Bowles on 29th July that Michael Hunt recorded 2 Silver-washed Fritillaries on his *19th July* transect in a wood in the *Grendon area*.

Andy King visited Aston Clinton Ragpits on Friday 27 July: "Numerous **Marbled White** and **Meadow Brown** and several **Ringlets**. 2 fresh looking male **Chalkhill Blues**. A couple of **Small Skippers** (not Essex). A few **Gatekeepers**. Is it just me, or is there a dearth of Small Skippers at the moment? What I have seen look a bit worn and I presume the weather is taking its toll."

Dave Maunder has had a couple of family outings in the last few days: "On *Friday 27th* we went around *Hartwell cemetery* and saw **Red Admiral** (2), **Peacock** (7), **Comma** (2), **Brimstone** (1), **Large White** (6), **Small White** (6), **Green-veined White** (3), **Meadow Brown** (10), **Gatekeeper** (8), **Ringlet** (1), **Speckled Wood** (3), **Large Skipper** (1) and **Holly Blue** (2) - also a **Shaded Broad-bar moth** - a nice little sheltered oasis for butterflies here! On *Saturday 28th* we went for a walk around *Coombe Hill* and the monument and saw:- **Red Admirals** (4), **Peacocks** (7), **Brimstone** (1), **Large Whites** (2), **Small Whites** (4), **Green-veined Whites** (2), **Meadow Browns** (5), **Gatekeepers** (15+), **Ringlets** (4), **Marbled White** (1), **Speckled Wood** (1), **Purple Hairstreak** (1), **Large Skipper** (1), **Small Skipper** (1), **Essex Skippers** (3) and also **Six-spot Burnets** (6) - no sign of any Common Blues - a very poor year for them so far!"

Saturday 28th July 2007

David & Jonathan Wright (Gloucester) visited Bernwood Forest today, Saturday 28th July: "We managed to see the following: **Large White** (3), **Small White** (3), **Marbled White** (5), **Brimstone** (4), **Meadow Brown** (6), **Speckled Wood** (4), **Gatekeeper** (6), **Ringlet** (5), **Small Skipper** (10), **Peacock** (30+), **Red Admiral** (2), **Comma** (1), **White Admiral** (2), **Purple Hairstreak** (4), **Brown Hairstreak** (2 - both seen on main ride on flowers, see

photo). Also we may have spotted a **Purple Emperor** in *Waterperry Wood* chasing dragonflies off! It flew very quickly up the ride. Overall good considering the weather this summer!"

David Gantzel sent the following news today, 28th: "I had an **Old Lady Moth** in my garden at *Hazlemere* on *Wednesday July 25*. I've only one **Red Admiral** on the buddleia all week. A very poor year in the garden!"

Joanne Walsh and Darin Stanley visited a wood in Oxfordshire today, 28th: "At 12.15 we saw 3 **Brown Hairstreaks** along the main ride plus 4 **Marbled Whites**."

Wendy & Mick Campbell went to Asham Meads this afternoon, 28th, where they recorded 3 male **Brown Hairstreaks** in Ash trees along the hedge near the car park, plus one **Purple Hairstreak**. Two of the Brown Hairstreaks were pristine but the third (upside down on an ash bud!) had a noticeable slice out of its hind wing. Amongst other butterflies seen were a fresh **Brown Argus**, 2 fresh **Small Coppers** and quite a few very active **Peacocks**.

Adrian Cadman spent this morning, 28th July, at the Lapland Farm drove road and adjacent meadow: "At 10:45 I noticed a hairstreak flying over a bank of bramble and blackthorn. It alighted on a bramble flower conveniently close and at head height and turned out to be a male **Brown Hairstreak**. It was actively nectaring for about 45 mins before leaving. I then moved to an Oxfordshire Wood and eventually found another male Brown Hairstreak which hadn't read the script and took up station on hawthorn where it remained for at least an hour before I left."

Phil Barnett took advantage of the good weather on Tuesday 24th July and visited the area around Noke Wood. He recorded 45+ **Silver-washed Fritillaries** (36 males, 9 females).

Nick Bowles sent this report on 27th July: "On Monday of this week I saw at least one female **Silver-washed Fritillary** in a wood in the *Grendon area*. On *Friday 27th in Wendover Wood* (Hale entry) I saw a male Silver-washed Fritillary right by the road and then a **Dark Green Fritillary** on the buddleia, my first ever sighting of one in Wendover Woods!"

Yesterday, 27th July, Maureen Cross reported seeing a second brood male **Adonis Blue** on *Lardon Chase* during her transect there.

Wednesday 25th July 2007

Martin Harvey led the Homefield Wood field meeting this morning, 25th July: "We saw 12 species, of which the highlights were good close-up views of two **White-letter Hairstreak** and at least 10 **Silver-washed Fritillary**. Others were: **Small Skipper, Green-veined White, Large White, Small White, Common Blue, Comma, Red Admiral, Meadow Brown, Gatekeeper**, and **Ringlet**. Non-butterflies included **Striped Lychnis caterpillars** in good numbers and non-Lepidoptera included the **Downland Villa bee-fly (Villa cingulatus)**, found by Laura Fennell - representing the first Buckinghamshire record of this Red Data Book species (believed to be a parasite of moth caterpillars)."

Dave Wilton sent this update today: "Having had very little in the garden at *Westcott* over the past month even though several of our buddleias have been in flower for a while, yesterday (Tuesday 24th) we managed nine species: **Large White, Small White, White Admiral, Red Admiral, Peacock, Marbled White, Meadow Brown, Gatekeeper** and **Ringlet**. This is the third year in a row that we've had a White Admiral sighting in the garden. I've yet to work out where they are coming from as the nearest known colony is a couple of miles away at Kingswood."

On 24th July, David Redhead sent the following summary of his recent sightings of key species:

Dark Green Fritillaries: *Thurs 19/07 Swyncombe Down* - 4 seen - 3 in fair condition, 1 faded. *Sun 22/07 Aston Rowant NNR north of M40* - 4 seen - 3 in fair condition, 1 faded.

Purple Emperor: *Sun 22/07 Bernwood Forest* - fleeting glimpse of one at the top of a sweet chestnut tree at Yorks Wood Intersection.

Silver-washed Fritillary: *Sun 22/07 Bernwood Forest* - 2 seen, both in flight and did not hang about for me to see if they were male or female - one between Piccadilly and Yorks Wood intersection and the other at Yorks Wood intersection at more or less the same time as the Purple Emperor was sighted which made life both exciting and difficult! *Tues 24/07 in my garden in Oxford* - one female flew onto the buddleia - see attached picture. This is two years in a row we've seen them in our garden.

Dingy Skipper (second brood): *Tues 24/07 Hartslock* - 5 seen!! 4 on the far slope from the entrance, fifth on the slope facing the Thames. No second brood seen at Swyncombe or Aston Rowant.

Chalkhill Blue: *Thurs 19/07 Swyncombe Down* - 2 males seen. None seen at Aston Rowant or Hartslock. I don't understand what is happening with blues as no Common Blues were seen at any of the three sites but I saw a single pristine female at Chilswell Valley on 15/07. Pristine **Brown Argus** were seen at all three sites.

The last photo is of a **Grass Snake** which was managing to make slow progress against a rushing Thames by hugging the bank on Monday!"

Dave Ferguson went to Dorney Lake Rowing Centre yesterday, 24th, on a day of some sunshine and found: **Brown Argus** (5), **Common Blue** (5), **Meadow Brown** (9), **Gatekeeper** (7), **Small White** (1) and **Narrow-bordered Five-spot Burnet** (1).

Dennis Dell went to Finemere Wood on Tuesday afternoon, 24th July: "I found one **Silver-washed Fritillary** along the main ride - it landed briefly on the bramble blossom. Loads of butterflies about - I guess they must have known that they are not going to get much more sun this summer! Also, just one **Purple Emperor** at the high point in *Greatsea Wood*, landing at the top of a wych elm."

Becky Woodell sent this news on 24th July: "At least the **Peacocks** are thriving. There were 10 in my garden in *Oakley, Bucks*, just now and 39 on my Whitecross Green Wood transect Sunday."

Mick & Wendy Campbell took advantage of the better weather on Tuesday 24th July and walked from Ibstone Common to Penley Wood, Bucks: "We recorded 16 species of butterfly, including a **Purple Emperor** on and around a large Sallow, **Silver-washed Fritillary** (3) and **Purple Hairstreak** (7) in the wood. Others seen were: **Red Admiral** (3), **Meadow Brown** (40+, too many to count on the Common), **Green-veined White** (5), **Ringlet** (10+), **Large Skipper** (5), **Small White** (2), **Marbled White** (4), **Large White** (1), **Peacock** (3), **Comma** (2), **Gatekeeper** (6), **Small Tortoiseshell** (1) and **Small Skipper** (6). Also a **Six-spot Burnet** seen on the Common."

Friday 20th July 2007

Charlie Kew sent the following two reports: "*16th July: I spent last Monday in Fence Wood near Hermitage, Berks.* The morning was cloudy but warm with the sun finally breaking through by the afternoon. I managed to record 16 different species of butterfly of which 6 **Silver-washed Fritillaries** and 3 **White Admirals** were the highlight. Other species recorded, in order of abundance, were **Gatekeeper**, **Ringlet**, **Meadow Brown**, **Small Skipper**, **Essex Skipper**, **Marbled White**, **Peacock**, **Red Admiral**, **Large Skipper**, **Comma**, **Green-veined White**, **Speckled Wood**, **Small White** and **Large White**. *19th July: Thursday was a sunny day and a three-hour walk around Maidenhead Thicket, Berks*, rewarded me

with 17 species, consisting of **Meadow Brown** (41), **Ringlet** (31), **Green-veined White** (31), **Small White** (21), **Peacock** (20), **Large White** (15), **Comma** (12), **Speckled Wood** (9), **Gatekeeper** (9), **Red Admiral** (7), **Silver-washed Fritillary** (7), **Brimstone** (6), **Holly Blue** (4), **Purple Hairstreak** (3), **Small Skipper** (1), **Essex Skipper** (1) and **White Admiral** (1)."

Becky Woodell did the Bernwood M40 transect yesterday, 19th July: "Just opposite the entrance to the track leading to the site is a small area of bramble. About 1310 hrs as I returned to my car, a **Silver-washed Fritillary** appeared briefly flying around the bramble, then took off into the wood. I had a very brief, but satisfactory view of it."

Michael Pitt-Payne visited Lower Cadsden Nature Reserve (Bucks) with his camera on Thursday morning, 19th July: "It was rather cloudy but I saw **Meadow Brown**, **Marbled White**, **Ringlet**, **Gatekeeper**, **Small White**, **Small Tortoiseshell**, **Large** and **Small Skippers** and **Chalkhill Blues** on the wing. Here is my best picture which I thought you might like to use on the website."

Tim Watts sent the following update yesterday, 19th July: "Today Michael Hunt saw a **Silver-washed Fritillary** around the car park area of the **Calvert BBOWT reserve** (permit required). Michael has been recording birds, butterflies and dragonflies on this site for over 30 years and the Fritillary is a first record for the reserve. He also saw a **White Admiral**, the first records of these have been in the last two years."

Dave Wilton and Stuart Hodges joined the hay-raking party at Whitecross Green Wood on Thursday, 19th July. While walking along the main ride Dave saw a large female **Purple Emperor** come out of a sallow, do a quick orbit of a clearing and then disappear over the tree-tops, in view for perhaps 15-20 seconds. "A little later Stuart also had a brief view of a possible Purple Emperor towards the far end of the long ride. Becky Woodell also showed us some lovely pictures that she had taken of a male on the ground in the car-park here on Monday of this week. I managed to get my **Finemere** transect out of the way Wednesday afternoon and spent some more time looking for Purple Emperor along the main ride and around the sallows in the central cleared area. No joy there at all, I'm afraid. About an hour spent looking, mid-afternoon."

Dave Ferguson says his search at Grangelands on Wednesday 18th July for Chalkhill Blues was unsuccessful. "The butterflies seen were: **Silver-washed Fritillary** (2), **Dark Green Fritillary** (2), **Peacock** (1), **Comma** (1), **Small Heath** (1), **Holly Blue** (1), **Brimstone** (6) plus **Large White**, **Small White**, **Green-veined White**, **Meadow Brown**, **Gatekeeper** and **Ringlet**."

Wednesday 18th July 2007

Peter Hall sent the following today, 18/7/2007: "At **Whiteleaf** (SP822038) a **Silver-washed Fritillary**, right by the notice board for the tumulus."

18th July - Chris Brown sent this update of his recent visits to Crowsley Wood looking for Silver-washed Fritillary: "1 male **Silver-washed Fritillary** seen 28/06/07 (15°C Heavy Cloud/Light Breeze) - **Ringlets** abounded and several **Red Admiral**, **Comma** and **Meadow Brown** were about their business. So optimistically I staked out the end of the ride and waited...waited... Silver-washed Fritillary do not like cool days with no sunshine it would seem. When a brief patch of sunshine made it into the woods the temperature rapidly shot up to 20°C and within a couple of minutes the only sighting of a SWF, a male, came out from the trees, fed briefly on bramble, patrolled the area for about a minute until the sunshine was gone and then it returned to the tree canopy. With the sunshine not returning neither did the SWF even though I waited. **None seen on 06/07/07** (17°C Heavy Cloud/Light Breeze). **1 seen on 11/07/07** (20°C Occasional Sunshine/Light Breeze) - With intermittent sunshine and

warmer temperatures I was reckoning on better chances. The number of **Ringlet** this year on this site is remarkable. I counted 52 along with other butterflies as per last week. 4 **Commas** had staked out their patches and were basking. I am glad to report 1 Silver-washed Fritillary at least. An orange blaze, much larger than the Commas which challenged it and a more powerful flyer which descended from the trees patrolled the edges of the whole clearing and returned into the depths of the wood. *3 seen (1 male, 1 female & 1 unknown gender) on 18/07/07* (21°C Bright Sunshine/Light Breeze) The best weekday weather for the past month today rewarded the sighting of 3 Silver-washed Fritillary, including my first female of the season. Temperatures in the sun were 5 degrees up on the shade which seems to have helped encourage them out into the open. One other sighting to add was a **Hummingbird Hawk-moth** in my garden on *15th July.*"

Tuesday 17th July 2007

David Redhead reported on the 17th July: "I can recommend early morning butterflying. My early morning dog walking, usually lasting three-quarters of an hour between 7.30 and 8.30 am, during July has regularly resulted in 4 to 6 butterfly species being recorded. However with a slightly extended walk lasting an hour this morning I managed to record 55 individual butterflies from 10 different species. *Rivermead Nature Park, Rose Hill* produced a **Ringlet** and **Meadow Brown** settled on bramble leaves and a pair of **Speckled Wood** exploring a small ash tree. A **Green-veined White** was disturbed from the vegetation in the riverside marshland. 14 **Gatekeeper**, 8 Ringlet, 7 Meadow Brown, 4 **Small Skipper**, 2 **Peacock**, 2 Speckled Wood and a **Red Admiral** were all visible, with many in flight, in the rough grassland and scrub above my house. By the time I returned to the garden at 8.25 am the sun had broken through and the temperature was 15C and the garden buddleia catching the early morning sun had 6 Red Admiral, 2 **Comma**, 2 Green-veined White, a Speckled Wood and a **Large Skipper** nectaring on them. During July, in addition to the above ten species, Essex Skipper, Large White, Small White, Marbled White and Holly Blue have also been seen before 8.30am. This morning four moth species were also recorded, **Small Magpie**, **Shaded Broad-bar**, **Mother of Pearl** and **Cinnabar caterpillars** plus a **Banded Demoiselle** and a **Grass Snake.**"

Tony Croft did a transect at Rushbeds Wood/Lapland Farm on Monday morning, 16th: "I recorded 251 **Meadow Brown**; 180 **Ringlet**; 87 **Marbled White**; 50 **Gatekeeper**; 21 **Small Skipper**; 20 **Large White**; 15 **Small White**; 8 **Peacock**; 4 **Large Skipper**; 3 **Speckled Wood**; 1 **Green-veined White**; 1 **Comma** and 1 **Silver-washed Fritillary.**"

Martin and Dee Raper popped up to the Holies on Monday 16th July: "It was warm but cloudy. We saw very fresh **Chalkhill Blues** (4), **Marbled Whites**(4), a **Peacock** and a **Red Admiral**. Several **Meadow Browns.**"

Mick Jones led the morning joint Bucks Invertebrate Group/Upper Thames BC meeting at Dancersend Nature Reserve on Saturday 14th July: "Roger Kemp, Martin Harvey and his son, Dominic, joined me to explore the northern area of the reserve where we have cleared thick scrub and woodland to expose areas of old chalk grassland. We also visited the adjacent rich south-facing chalk slope of Coombe Hill which we now help to manage. It was overcast with sunny spells, but there was a strong, gusty wind for most of the morning. We failed to find Chalkhill Blue, which have been seen at the site in the last few years, but did manage to record **Small Skipper**, **Large Skipper**, **Brimstone**, **Large White**, **Small White**, **Green-veined White**, **Small Copper**, **Red Admiral**, **Comma**, **Speckled Wood**, **Marbled White**, **Gatekeeper**, **Meadow Brown**, **Ringlet** and **Small Heath**. **Silver-washed Fritillary** also evaded us, but was seen on the BBOWT walk the following morning. After lunch Roger and I examined the main areas where Dukes of Burgundy have been seen over the last few years. We proved conclusively that the Dukes are feeding on primroses at this site, finding four patches with clear larval damage on Anthill and two patches near the

western edge of the meadow plots. These plants were close to the areas where I have observed males holding territory, and were mostly on the edge of annually mown paths, in slightly more open conditions that I'd been led to expect from reading the literature. At one patch of partially eaten leaves we were lucky enough to find a **Duke of Burgundy caterpillar** hiding on the underside of a leaf and I was able to get the attached photograph as it took a snack in broad daylight."

Lloyd Garvey was at Bowdown Woods (BBOWT reserve) on Saturday the 14th and saw the following species: Small White 2, Speckled Wood 1, Red Admiral 2, Meadow Brown 37 (I lost count after this), Peacock 1, Gatekeeper 5, Ringlet 7, Comma 1, Small Skipper 2, Purple Hairstreak 2, plus lots and lots of teneral Common Blue Damsels, a Common Darter and a Golden-ringed Dragonfly."

Sunday 15th July 2007

Dennis Dell led a very successful Purple Emperor Weekend in Bernwood on 14th and 15th July. It was attended by 23 people altogether, including 9 members of the Chesham Natural History Society. *On Saturday* they saw 16 **Purple Emperors** plus 18 other butterfly species: **Purple Hairstreak, Speckled Wood, Ringlet, Meadow Brown, Red Admiral, White Admiral, Large White, Small White, Green-veined White and Marbled White, Large Skipper, Small Skipper, Essex Skippers, Comma, Gatekeeper, Common Blue (f), Peacock and Silver-washed Fritillary.** Also seen were **Cinnabar Moth caterpillars.** *On Sunday the weather was less favourable as it was overcast and thunderstorms were forecast. Wendy Wilson provided this report:* "We spent an hour or so scanning the treetops in vain, spotting the occasional **Purple Hairstreak** but no Emperors. The weather remained overcast all morning, but was dry, calm and warm (19C). We were becoming a bit disheartened, not to mention the cricks in our necks, when Susie Turner spotted a **Purple Emperor** fly down from the top of an oak tree on the main ride towards the car-park to feed on mineral salts on the gravel. It was a slightly worn specimen (*see photo*), but the purple sheen showed up well as the sky lightened somewhat and his yellow proboscis was clearly visible. We watched it feeding for more than 20 minutes until it eventually flew back to the treetops and we saw no more Purple Emperors. We walked along the ride to the crossroads and saw a **Red Admiral, Large Skipper, Small Skipper** and lots of **Ringlets, Meadow Browns and Marbled Whites.** We were absolutely delighted with our day. What the sightings lacked in quantity was more than made up for with the quality. Certainly my best ever sighting of a Purple Emperor. Thanks Dennis!"

David Redhead sent the following reports of his weekend butterfly sightings:

Saturday 14th July: I managed 19 butterfly species today - a record for me during this summer, if you can call it that. A morning dog walk, including our garden and the rough grassland and scrub by our house, produced 13 species : **Meadow Brown, Ringlet, Marbled White, Gatekeeper, Small Skipper, Speckled Wood, Essex Skipper, Holly Blue, Red Admiral, Comma, Peacock, Large White and Large Skipper.** The last five were all seen nectaring on our garden buddleia. The ***Shabbington Wood transect*** added 3 more species: **Small White, Green-veined White and White Admiral.** A stop half way round at the old Hell Coppice car park added **Purple Emperor (2) and Purple Hairstreak (4)** in the oak tree canopy. My nineteenth species was a **Brimstone** seen on an early evening dog walk back home.

Sunday 15th July: The morning in **Oxford** was overcast with a touch of rain in the air. Whilst I was photographing a "new" moth from my overnight moth trap the sun broke through a gap in the clouds for just a couple of minutes. I then noticed the rapid arrival of 4 **Red Admiral, 1 Comma, 1 Meadow Brown and 1 Green-veined White** to nectar on our garden buddleia. I managed to "capture" one of the Red Admirals (*see photo*). By 1pm it was a bit warmer but not much brighter when we visited **Chilswell Valley**, an Oxford City reserve containing a limestone bank. The wild flowers made a glorious show in spite of the lack of sun and an

uncountable number of **Meadow Brown** were active along with **Ringlet**, **Marbled White**, **Small Skipper**, **Essex Skipper**, **Gatekeeper**, **Small White**, **Green-veined White**, **Large White** and **Peacock**. The most exciting observations were a pristine **Painted Lady** and a pristine female **Common Blue** without a male in sight. These last two put my species count for the weekend up to 21. Only two moths were seen, several **Six-spot Burnet** and a **Common Heath**. On our return home a steady drizzle set in."

Wendy & Mick Campbell went to BBOWT's Sydlings Copse reserve to look for Purple Emperors on 14th July. After a slow start they saw a reasonable amount of activity above the Ash and Oak trees and counted 4 **Purple Emperors**. 16 other butterfly species were seen including **Small Tortoiseshell** (7), **Red Admiral** (6), **Gatekeeper** (1), **Purple Hairstreak** (2), **Peacock** (2 - pristine), a **White Admiral** and a female **Brimstone**.

On Becky Woodell's last transect in Oakley Wood, Bernwood, on 9th July, she saw a Silver-washed Fritillary at the crossride in Oakley Wood. "It didn't stop so I only saw it in flight, but it was very large, too big for a Comma, very orange, and very fast. I saw one in the same area last year."

Friday 13th July 2007

Malcolm Brownsword visited two sites recently: 8th July Aston Upthorpe Downs: 19C Cloudy but bright, **Gatekeeper** 10, **Comma** 1 newly hatched, **Common Blue** 1, **Small Heath** 2 only, **Meadow Brown** 30+, **Ringlet** 15+, **Marbled White** 50+, **Small Tortoiseshell** 2, **Large Skipper** 3, **Small Copper** 1. Also hundreds of **Pyramidal Orchids**, 1 **Cinnabar Moth** and hundreds of **6-spot Burnet** moths.

11th July Hartslock: 20C, 60% sun (recorded on transect), **Small Skipper** 3, **Large Skipper** 2, **Brimstone** 1, **Large White** 1, **Red Admiral** 2, **Marbled White** 14, **Gatekeeper** 12, **Meadow Brown** 33, **Ringlet** 11, **Small Heath** 1 (only). Also hundreds of **Pyramidal Orchids**.

Ched George led the Field Meeting to Buttler's Hangings and Bradenham Woods on 11th July: "We had 2 **Dark Green Fritillaries** together in cloudy cool conditions at **Bradenham** and 3+ at **Buttler's Hangings**. Up to 10 sightings altogether, but many could have been repeats. We saw 2 females potentially egg-laying and as one was the dark form it was clearly 2 separate individuals. No **Chalkhill Blues** 2-4pm in mainly sunny conditions there."

Wednesday 11th July 2007

11th July - Dave Maunder says there's not too much to report from Aylesbury on the butterfly front: "Only the common stuff, but on **Sunday 8th** I was lucky to see 2 **White-letter Hairstreaks** flying near to a **Wych Elm** not far from **Oxford road**, so they're hanging on in there! I also found 7 newly-emerged **Commas** in a short stretch of ground."

Late this afternoon, 11th July, Wendy & Mick Campbell went to Rushbeds Wood: After about an hour of scouring the tree tops they eventually caught sight of a **Purple Emperor** in the top of an Ash tree. It spent several minutes perching and then circled the top of the tree a couple of times before flying over the footpath into a neighbouring Ash tree and out of view. Other butterflies seen were **Ringlets**, **Meadow Browns**, **Marbled Whites**, **Small Tortoiseshells**, **White Admirals**, a **Comma** and **Large Skippers**.

A small group of UTB members led by Species Champion Dennis Dell went in search of Purple Emperor yesterday, 10th July. Rather surprisingly, nearly three hours spent in **Bernwood Forest, Bucks** proved unproductive but after decamping to **Piddington Wood** and the footpath along the edge of nearby **Little Wood in Oxon** they managed to finish the day with sightings of five different individuals. These included lengthy views of three males perching and chasing one another around a "master" ash tree at **Little Wood**. The usual

Skippers, Whites and Browns were in plentiful supply everywhere, while other species seen during the day included **Purple Hairstreak, White Admiral, Red Admiral, Peacock and Comma.**"

Monday 9th July 2007

Tony Croft sent the following report today, 9th July: "On a visit to *Buttler's Hangings on Saturday 7th* we saw three **Dark Green Fritillaries**. The sunshine was a bit intermittent and so they were rather inactive staying near the ground to afford excellent views. Whilst visiting friends in *Langley Berks yesterday (Sunday)* we saw a **Holly Blue** investigating the ivy in their garden and a **Clouded Yellow** passing through. *On my transect at Rushbeds Wood today* I recorded 210 **Ringlet**; 190 **Marbled White**; 145 **Meadow Brown**; 12 **Large White**; 8 **Small Skipper**; 6 **Gatekeeper**; 4 **Large Skipper**; 4 **Speckled Wood**; 3 **White Admiral**; 1 **Small White**; 1 **Green-veined White**; 1 **Small Copper**; 1 **Red Admiral**; 1 **Small Tortoiseshell**; 1 **Small Heath.**"

Dennis Dell visited Waterperry Wood on 8th July: "I had a (not very good) view of a male **Purple Emperor** leisurely following a female across the top of the oaks in Waterperry Wood today. This behaviour is very typical of their courtship flight. Also, these mating **Ringlets** were being chased and annoyed by a third so they flew into the wood and settled on this Oak to escape its attentions."

Nigel Partridge had his first Hummingbird Hawk-moth of the year in his garden in *Loosley Row* yesterday, 8-7-07. "This seems to have been a very good year for **Marbled Whites**, top count was 13 in the garden at once. Our first **Gatekeeper** also arrived 7-7-07."

Dave Ferguson made two 1 km transects of a 1 km square centred on the village of Dunsmore near Wendover on 8th July as part of the *UKBMS pilot survey of Butterflies in the Wider Countryside: "The habitats the transects pass through are road verge, arable, hay meadow, woodland and a village. The butterflies recorded were: **Large Skipper** (1), **Small White** (4), **Red Admiral** (2), **Comma** (1), **Speckled Wood** (1), **Marbled White** (8), **Gatekeeper** (2), **Meadow Brown** (29) and **Ringlet** (13), making a total of 61 individuals of 9 species. I also saw a single **Small Tortoiseshell** while walking between the transects.

(*The UK Butterfly Monitoring Scheme has teamed up with the British Trust for Ornithology to carry out butterfly recording on the sites determined by the Breeding Birds Survey. These are randomly selected 1 km squares. The recorder chooses two 1 km transects of the square as parallel to each other as possible and counts birds. The UKBMS pilot scheme changes this by getting us to count butterflies. I made my first visit today to my BBS square near Dunsmore. I will carry out my second survey next month.)"

Wendy & Mick Campbell walked a circuit around the edge of Stanton Great Wood on Sunday 8th July: They recorded 12 species of butterfly and were particularly pleased to see two **Silver-washed Fritillaries**, one of which settled very briefly on bramble (see photo below), **Purple Hairstreaks** and a **White-letter Hairstreak** nectaring on a daisy. **Purple Emperor** failed to make an appearance!

Saturday 7th July 2007

Thanks to Rupert and Nicky Perkins, Caerphilly, Wales for sending the following report of their visit to Bernwood on 7th July: "Sunny at last, but a little breezy, 14 species seen plus a **probable Purple Emperor** in the main car park, but it was high up and flew through very fast. Otherwise: **Large White, Small White, Green-veined White, Large Skipper, Purple Hairstreak** (10+, mainly in the car park), **White-letter Hairstreak** (only 1 seen), **White Admiral** (4 seen), **Red Admiral, Peacock, Comma, Marbled White, Meadow**

Brown, Ringlet, Gatekeeper. Also several **Brown Hawker** (one settled hanging from my left ear!) and many **Common Darter**."

Dave Ferguson was in Bernwood Forest on 7th July: "As I was standing at York's Wood crossroads looking for Purple Emperors (without success, I might say) a female **Clouded Yellow** flew past so slowly that it looked like a large jaundiced Wood White. It landed on a flower, stayed briefly then flew up into a Sweet Chestnut where it remained for ten minutes until the sun reappeared when it descended to settle on a betony. After a few seconds here it flew away strongly through the wood. Other butterflies seen in Bernwood were: **White Admiral** (3), **Purple Hairstreak** (1), **Large skipper** (6), **Small skipper** (1), **Green-veined White** (4), **Large White** (5) and uncounted **Meadow Browns, Ringlets** and **Marbled Whites**. Dragonflies seen were: **Beautiful Demoiselle** (2), **Common Darter** (8), **Southern Hawker** (2). I met someone who had seen a Purple Emperor flying through the main car park."

Welcome to the website Ian Stevenson who sent his first UTB report in today, 7th July: "I have just seen my first **Clouded Yellow** of the year near *Dorchester Abbey, Oxon*, in bright sunshine on *Saturday July 7th* while on a bike ride."

Mick & Wendy Campbell have been to a number of sites during the last few days, looking mainly for Hairstreaks and Purple Emperor: Wednesday 4th July - Bernwood Oakley car park (in very windy conditions), no Purple Emperors but a few **Purple Hairstreaks** and **White Admirals** were seen, along with 8 other 'usual' species. On the way home they stopped at the *Honeyburge M40 bridge* and were pleased to record a **White-letter Hairstreak** (on thistle) and a **Purple Hairstreak** (in Ash tree).

Friday 6th July - Finemere Wood (cool and very windy) - no Purple Emperor but 12 butterfly species including 5 pristine **Commas**, 2 Purple Hairstreaks and, best of all (in 45 minutes of searching), they managed to find one rather worn **Bläck Hairstreak** which was perched on a blackthorn leaf in a sheltered area.

Saturday 7th July - Calvert Jubilee reserve (permit required) in the morning, then Moor Common in the afternoon. Plenty of butterflies flying at Calvert with 15 species recorded: including a single **Small Heath**, a Purple Hairstreak and a White-letter Hairstreak (located in Ash trees not far from Elms.) *At Moor Common in Bucks they spent two hours looking for Purple Emperor.* After a short period of sun then rain the weather turned sunny again and they were rewarded with several lengthy sightings of **Purple Emperor** as one flew from an Oak tree along a ride and then later on one displaying territorial behaviour, chasing off birds and returning to its perch high up in an Oak tree.

The following news was received from Helen Hyre on 2nd July: "I was in the fields at *Bierton, Bucks* on Monday afternoon, *2nd July*, in a local field looking along the hedge, because there are lots of blackberry flowers coming out. In about 5 minutes I saw 3 **Meadow Brown**, 2 **Comma**, 1 **Large Skipper**, 1 **Large White** and 2 **Small Tortoiseshell** on or near the hedge and then a **Clouded Yellow**, maybe 8 feet away, but it didn't hang around! It flew over the nearby gate and disappeared into the next field, where I failed to locate it again."

Thursday 5th July 2007

Adrian Hickman managed to find some butterflies on his Padworth Common transect today, 5th July, in spite of the weather! "These were my first **Grayling** of the year, 2 **White Admirals**, small numbers of **Large and Small Skippers, Meadow Browns** and a tatty **Green-veined White**. Earlier, at *Wokefield Common* saw a male **Purple Hairstreak**."

Dave Ferguson visited a couple of sites on 4th & 5th July: "On 4th July the improved grassy meadows on the south side of Church Wood, Hedgerley and the south edge of the wood produced the following: **Meadow Brown** (307), **Gatekeeper** (3), **Small Heath** (1),

Large Skipper (2), Small Skipper (5), Red Admiral (2), Large White (1), Small White (2). A short visit to the interior of the wood produced: **White Admiral (1), Green-veined White (2), Large White (2), Meadow Brown (11).** Ringlets were conspicuous by their absence. *On 5 July, a morning that started out bright but windy but soon became overcast and even windier, I went to the Dorney Lake Rowing Centre.* This site is mostly water and mown grass, but it has a strip sown with wildflower mix (black knapweed and oxeye daisy mainly) and some uncut areas. The butterflies seen were: **Meadow Brown (23), Gatekeeper (1), Marbled White (1), Large White (2), Small White (1), Large Skipper (1), Essex Skipper (1), Peacock - fresh (1) and Red Admiral (1).**"

On Thursday 5th July Stuart Hodges and Dave Wilton walked the bridleway through Romer and Greatsea Woods on the Claydon estate in Bucks, searching for Purple Emperor: "There was no sign of the target species but plenty of other butterfly activity meant that 15 species were recorded in all: **Small Skipper, Essex Skipper, Large Skipper, Large White, Small White, Green-veined White, Purple Hairstreak, Red Admiral, White Admiral, Painted Lady, Speckled Wood, Marbled White, Meadow Brown, Gatekeeper and Ringlet.** There was nothing out of the ordinary but it was particularly pleasing to see so many White Admirals (20) and Marbled Whites (60+)."

Ched George visited Yoesdon Bank and Buttlers Hangings on Wednesday July 4th: "I went to see if any Chalkhill Blues were out. None seen but a worn **Small Blue** was present at Yoesdon and at least 2 **Dark Green Fritillaries** were at Buttlers Hangings. **Meadow Browns, Marbled Whites** and **Ringlets** were more numerous at Yoesdon than Buttlers Hangings but I only saw 2 or 3 **Small and Large Skippers** at each site. A **Gatekeeper** was seen only at Yoesdon, plus **Red Admirals, a Comma** and a **Small Tortoiseshell.**"

David Redhead sent the following report for 3rd July: "At 12 noon my garden buddleia (in Oxford) had 3 **Red Admiral, 2 Comma** and a **Small White** nectaring on it. 5.00pm - a visit to the setaside field near the top of *Heyford Hill Lane* produced the usual suspects, in order of abundance, **Meadow Brown, Marbled White, Ringlet** and **Small Skipper** but no Large Skipper. The brambles on the southern edge of the field produced my first **Gatekeeper** of the year along with a **Large White, Red Admiral** and **Small Tortoiseshell.** Small Tortoiseshells continue to be in short supply in this locality - today's was only the second in the vicinity of my house this year and our first garden record is still awaited - hopefully the buddleia will attract one in."

Sunday 1st July 2007

John Ward-Smith called in at BBOWT's Broadmoor Bottom reserve briefly this afternoon, 1st July: "The wind was very blustery and the sun only emerged occasionally from the clouds. Nevertheless I came across three male **Silver-studded Blues**, in the usual corner of the cattle compartment. Although these are my first sightings of the season, I know *Des Sussex* saw a singleton at the same site as far back as *12th June.*"

David Redhead spent Sunday 1st July in or around his house and garden on the edge of Oxford but still managed to record 11 butterfly and 3 moth species. His best spots were a **Holly Blue** in *Rivermead Nature Park* and 3 **Scarlet Tiger** moths in *Heyford Hill Lane.* **Ringlets** have taken over as the predominant species on the rough grassland and scrub near his house where a count produced 33 alongside 27 **Marbled White, 5 Meadow Brown, 5 Small Skipper** and 2 **Large Skipper.** Here, in the morning Burnet moths were noticeable by their apparent absence but numerous in the afternoon with all those identified being **Narrow-bordered Five-spot Burnets.** A **Cinnabar** was also seen. **Commas** and **Red Admirals** along with the three **Whites - Small, Green-veined** and **Large** were seen flying in his garden with at least one **Red Admiral, Comma** and **Small White** spending some time nectaring on the buddleia.

Mick & Wendy Campbell found only 8 butterfly and 2 moth species flying at Laplands Farm and Rushbeds Wood today, 1st July, in very cloudy and windy conditions:

"**Ringlet** (59) and **Meadow Brown** (39) were keeping close to the ground - those that risked flying higher weren't able to steer in the strong wind. **Marbled Whites** numbered 15, but there were mostly only ones and twos of everything else: **Large Skipper**, **Comma**, **Red Admiral**, **Small Tortoiseshell** (3) and our first **Gatekeeper** of the season. 2 **Straw Dot** moths were recorded and nice additions were a **Scarlet Tiger** and a **Toad**."

Saturday 30th June 2007

Maureen Cross reports seeing the first two Chalkhill Blues of the season at *Lardon Chase* on *Friday 29th June*.

Friday 29th June 2007

The following news just in from Dave Wilton: "Some sunshine and reasonable temperatures on *Friday 29th June* meant that I was finally able to carry out the week's transect in *Finemere Wood* despite the strong westerly breeze. It was interesting to see just how well the butterflies seem to be coping with our current spell of dismal weather. I saw **Large Skipper** (50), **Small White** (6), **Green-veined White** (3), **Bläck Hairstreak** (7, five of them in remarkably good condition), **Brown Argus** (1, very battered), **Common Blue** (1, looking as if it had just emerged), **White Admiral** (3), **Red Admiral** (4), **Painted Lady** (1), **Small Tortoiseshell** (6), **Comma** (2), **Speckled Wood** (2), **Marbled White** (15), **Meadow Brown** (228) and **Ringlet** (53), along with moths **Narrow-bordered Five-spot Burnet** (3), **Clouded Border** (2), **Marbled White Spot** (1) and **Silver Y** (1). In the adjacent meadows the wind was much more of a factor and those butterflies seen were mostly disturbed from the grass by my passage. However, I still managed to count 38 **Marbled Whites** (many clinging for dear life to thistle flowers) and 128 **Meadow Browns**, while additional species seen were **Small Skipper**, **Large White** and **Small Heath**."

David Redhead's Shabbington Wood transect on Friday 29th June produced a near record for the end of June with 207 butterflies recorded: "Admittedly over half of them were **Ringlets** (124) but a record count of 38 **Marbled Whites** was very pleasing along with 5 **White Admirals**. Others seen were **Meadow Brown** (only 14), **Large Skipper** (11), **Small Skipper** (7), **Speckled Wood** (4), **Comma** (2), **Small White** (1) and **Green-veined White** (1). I then ventured further into Bernwood Forest adding two further species, **Red Admiral** and **Large White**, before receiving my third soaking of the summer. By the time I got back to my car, in a rather sodden state, my **Ringlet** count was 211 - following the downpour they returned to flight within a minute of the sun reappearing. *Back home a dog walk in the rough grassland above my house in Oxford* produced a good number of **Marbled White**, **Ringlet** and **Meadow Brown** along with a **Small Skipper** and, to my surprise, a **Common Blue**. The latter made my species count for the day 13 unless you allow me to count the two **Orange-tip caterpillars** still residing on a **Sweet Rocket** plant in our garden."

Malcolm Brownsword visited Homefield Wood on 28th June (19C, 60% sun, pm) and recorded: "20 **Ringlet**, 14 **Meadow Brown**, 15 **Marbled White**, 1 **Speckled Wood**, 4 **Silver-washed Fritillaries**, 1 **Comma** (newly-hatched), 3 **Red Admiral**, 4 **Large White**, 2 **Large Skipper**. Also 1 **hornet** and a spectacular display of **Pyramidal orchids**!"

Mick & Wendy Campbell took advantage of the reasonably good weather on Thursday 28th June and went for a long walk in and around Waterperry Wood. "We recorded a surprising number of species (17 altogether) considering how windy it was. Many of the **Meadow Browns** were staying down low in the grass although, in the more sheltered interior of the wood, the **White Admirals** (19) were flying nicely, particularly around the **Sallows** for some reason. We found 2 rather tatty **Bläck Hairstreaks** on the bramble at **Drunkard's**

Corner and, spurred on by this, decided to check all the blackthorn around the southern edge of the wood, locating one more Bläck Hairstreak along the way, this one in pretty good condition. **White-letter Hairstreaks** (11) were very active in the Elm in Smith's Lane, on bramble and in Elms along the perimeter of a nearby farm field. Disappointingly, only one **Purple Emperor** was seen as it flew a brief circuit around the top of a willow tree. The full list of species was: **Ringlet**, Meadow Brown, **Green-veined White**, **Essex Skipper**, **Comma**, **Marbled White**, **Large Skipper**, **Red Admiral**, White-letter Hairstreak, **Purple Hairstreak**, **Large White**, **Small White**, Bläck Hairstreak, White Admiral, **Speckled Wood**, Purple Emperor and **Small Tortoiseshell**."

28th June - Helen Hyre reports that the sweet william in her garden in Aylesbury is attracting plenty of butterflies: "I have twice counted 6 **Small Tortoiseshell** at the same time."

David Redhead sent the following on 28th June: "I was rather annoyed that I had overlooked pruning the garden buddleia during the winter. Usually I find early flowers are ignored by butterflies and lack of pruning leads to early flowering. As a consequence the flowerheads on our buddleias started to open a few days ago but this morning I had cause for my annoyance to turn to pleasure:

8.10am (sunny, 10C) : Two Red Admiral on buddleia - one sunbathing other nectaring on partially open flowerhead. **8.40am (sunny, 11C) : Five Red Admiral** on buddleia - four nectaring on partially opened flowerheads, other took off as I approached. **9.10am (sunny, 13C) : Seven Red Admiral and two Comma** on buddleia - all but one of each nectaring on partially opened flowerheads.

Is it going to be a "buddleia year"? I can recommend this early morning butterflying, as taking the dog up to the open grassland above my house between the first two buddleia observations produced about 30 **Marbled White** and 20 each of **Ringlet** and **Meadow Brown** plus a single **Small Skipper**."

Wednesday 27th June 2007

This morning, 27th June, Wendy Wilson spent half an hour beside a bramble bush on the edge of Langley Park, Bucks (grid ref TQ 016 818) when the sun put in a rare appearance: "Talk about a Hot-Spot! I saw no fewer than 8 species on the one bush. They were 1 **Comma**, 2 **Red Admiral**, 1 **Large Skipper**, 1 **Small White**, 1 **Large White**, 1 **Speckled Wood**, 6 **Meadow Brown** and my first **White Admiral** of the year. This afternoon I went to **Denham village, Bucks**, behind the churchyard (TQ 044 871), for a brief visit between showers, and was excited to see and photograph my first **Essex Skipper** of the year, also there were 10 **Meadow Browns**, 1 **Comma** and 1 **Red Admiral** there. I'm pleased to report that the **Orange-tip caterpillar** I told you about on June 9th **has now pupated** in my insect cage."

Tony Croft walked his Rushbeds Wood transect this afternoon, 27th June: "I saw 168 **Meadow Browns**; 55 **Marbled White**; 48 **Ringlet**; 8 **Large Skipper**; 3 **Small Heath**; 2 **Small Skipper**; 1 **Speckled Wood**; 1 **Common Blue**; 1 **Comma**; 1 **White Admiral** and 1 **Gatekeeper**. Unfortunately it started raining heavily two thirds of the way through, so I'll have to do it again!"

Robin Carr was at Dancersend this morning and saw 2 **Silver-washed Fritillaries**, **Red Admirals**, **Peacock**, **Marbled Whites**, **Meadow Browns**, **Ringlets**, **Large Skippers**, **Large Whites** and **Speckled Woods**.

David Redhead sent the following report on 26th June: "This morning on a walk along the **Ridgeway to the west of Nuffield, Oxon** and back along the **Chilterns Way Extension** through **Mongewell Wood**, in spite of a strong breeze, the temperature not rising above 13C

and the sun only shining fitfully, Charlie Kew and I managed to see nearly a hundred butterflies from 10 different species. In order of abundance they were **Meadow Brown, Marbled White, Ringlet, Small White, Large Skipper, Comma, Small Tortoiseshell, Small Copper, Speckled Wood and Red Admiral**. Also seen were a number of **Peacock caterpillars** and a **Cinnabar moth**."

Seen by Jan Haseler on Tuesday 26th June at the side of a quiet lane leading into the woods at Beech Hill, Berks: 2 **Silver-washed Fritillaries**, 1 **Purple Hairstreak**, 1 **White Admiral**, 6 **Red Admirals**, 4 **Commas**, 3 **Large Whites**, 1 **Green-veined White**, 10 **Meadow Browns**. Day flying moths: *19th June, Bearwood College* - **Ringed China-marks** and *24th June, Tilehurst* - **Hummingbird Hawk-moth**.

Wendy & Mick Campbell visited two sites on Tuesday 26th June and recorded 15 species of butterfly despite the mostly cool and cloudy weather (12-15C). In the morning they went to *Moor End Common in Bucks* where they saw **Meadow Brown** (5), **Speckled Wood** (1), **Purple Hairstreak** (5), **Red Admiral** (2), **Marbled White** (1) and **Ringlet** (1). The only moth seen was a **Green Oak Tortrix**. In the afternoon they visited *Sydlings Copse* where the sun did manage to break through the clouds occasionally. Numbers were better here: **Large Skipper** (2), **Small Tortoiseshell** (3), **Meadow Brown** (7), **Marbled White** (16), **Ringlet** (13), **Red Admiral** (2), **Small White** (3), **Painted Lady** (1), **Green-veined White** (1), **Large White** (1), **Comma** (1), **Dark Green Fritillary** (2) and, at last, their first confirmed **White-letter Hairstreaks** (7 : 4 in Elm, 2 in Ash and 1 nectaring on bramble). Also seen were an **Emperor Moth caterpillar** and the longhorn micro **Nemophora cupriacella**.

Monday 25th June 2007

Trevor Lawson glanced out of his office window (in Hyde Heath, Bucks) today, 25th June, and spotted what was almost certainly a Hummingbird Hawk-moth hovering by and feeding on the catnip flowers. "I dashed out to confirm it, but it was already away. Also, I saw a **Marbled White** on the grassy verge of the roundabout by Shardeloes, Old Amersham today. Not a great rarity but nice to see close to home. It's amazing to think of the resilience of these insects in the wake of such awful weather. Not sure that it's going to be a good year for the blues, though."

Paul Bowyer led the Asham Meads field meeting on Saturday June 23rd and sent the following report: "A meeting within the UTB calendar of events took place in warm changeable conditions. There weren't huge numbers of butterflies but the following were identified:- **Comma**(5), **Red Admiral** (2), **Small Tortoiseshell** (1), **Large Skipper** (14), **Green-veined White** (1), **Large White** (1), **Meadow Brown** (45), **Marbled White** (7), **Ringlet** (11), **Common Blue** (5), **Bläck Hairstreak** (2) and **White-letter Hairstreak** (4). The latter were identified using the telescope of a Wiltshire member. We also saw the **Forester** and **Blood-vein** moths as well. The **Forester** was one of the target species of the field meeting."

Jim Asher went out briefly on Sunday morning, 24th June, between (and in) rain showers, to a site just a mile north of Marcham, Oxfordshire: "Despite the rain, there were numerous **Marbled White** disturbed from the grass, several **Meadow Brown**, a few **Ringlet**, a **Red Admiral** and one fresh male **Small Skipper** (first for me this year). Dull damp weather is not a bad time to take a close look at Satyrids, if you don't mind getting wet!"

On 24th June David Fuller sent this update of his recent sightings: "Yesterday, 23rd, at *Combe Gibbet* near Hungerford, walking along the Wayfarers Way I saw the following: **Meadow Brown** 22, **Large Skipper** 3, **Comma** 1, **Red Admiral** 1 and **Ringlet** 1. On *4th June*, along the *Towpath by the River Thames* at Maidenhead: **Meadow Brown** 3, **Small**

Tortoiseshell 3 (I've never seen them here before) and Comma 1. Also, in my *Maidenhead garden* on *9th, 10th & 11th June* I had **Painted Lady** and Red Admiral."

Saturday 23rd June 2007

On Saturday 23rd June Martin & Dee Raper saw their first Silver-washed Fritillary in Moor Copse for this year. Also seen were **Scarlet Tiger Moths**(4) and **Silver Y** (1).

Dave Wilton sent this news today, Saturday 23rd June: "Rather than travelling any distance and risking getting soaked, I had a look around my village of *Westcott* for an hour in the sunshine at lunchtime today. First stop was on the playing fields behind our house where there is a line of decaying elms and I managed to confirm a single active **White-letter Hairstreak**. I've been looking at these elms regularly over the past couple of weeks and this was the first sign of any activity there. Elsewhere around the village I found **Large Skipper** (14), **Large White** (2), **Small White** (1), **Small Tortoiseshell** (7), **Marbled White** (9), **Meadow Brown** (50+), **Ringlet** (4), **Small Heath** (2) and about **130 Peacock caterpillars** at various stages of growth. The only moths seen were **Yellow Shell** (3) and **Silver Y** (1). Even our garden, which could almost have been described as a butterfly-free zone over the past month, had some activity today with **Large Skipper** (1), **Large White** (1), **Small White** (1), **Red Admiral** (1) and **Meadow Brown** (7)."

Mick & Wendy Campbell visited Piddington Wood this afternoon, Saturday 23rd June. Within five minutes of arriving they managed to get their first definite sighting of a **Purple Emperor** in the usual ash trees when it flew up to chase a pigeon out of its territory. Further along the footpath at the top of *Little Wood* they quickly had good views of two more Purple Emperors in the top of a large ash tree where they were flying then perching despite the poor weather conditions.

Maureen Cross recorded Dark Green Fritillaries in the Goring Gap earlier this week: "2 **Dark Green Fritillaries** seen on *The Holies on 19th June*. 1 Dark Green Fritillary seen on the footpath between *Coombe Hill* and the entrance to Hartslock reserve *on 20th June*. Also, a **Scarlet Tiger** moth seen in my neighbour's Berkshire garden on *21st June*."

Welcome to the website new contributor Richard James who sent this exciting report: "I thought you might be interested in a sighting of a single **Purple Emperor** on *Wednesday 20th June*, at *Easthampstead Park* conference centre near Bracknell. The specimen was actually trapped inside the window of one of the conference rooms and was subsequently released by me. Although only about 2 miles from Bracknell town centre, this is a converted country house with some mature trees in its grounds and surrounded by farmland and woodland."

Vince Massimo travelled from Sussex to a visit a wood in Oxfordshire on Wednesday 20th June: "My visit between 11.30 and 14.30 in showery and windy conditions produced 10 **Bläck Hairstreak** in various locations, some nectaring on bramble. Other species were 5 **White Admiral**, 2 **Wood White** and 1 **Small Skipper**. There were abundant numbers of **Meadow Brown**, **Marbled White** and **Large Skipper**."

These two reports were received from David Redhead on 21st June: "*Wednesday June 20th* - This morning the rough grassland and scrub above my *Oxford* house produced a record count for **Marbled White** at 45 also several **Meadow Brown** and **Ringlet** seen. Then a few hours spent in *Bernwood Forest* including walking the transects in the M40 Compensation Area and Shabbington Wood increased my species list for the day to 14 including my first **White Admiral** of the year. The total butterfly count in Bernwood Forest and the M40 Compensation Area was 123 - Meadow Brown 38, Marbled White 35, **Large Skipper** 22, Ringlet 7, **Speckled Wood** 5, **Red Admiral** 3, **Bläck Hairstreak** 3, **Comma** 2,

Small Skipper 2, Small Tortoiseshell 2, Green-veined White 1, White Admiral 1, Common Blue 1, Painted Lady 1. I also saw my first **Six-spot Burnets** of the year in the M40 Compensation Area.

Thursday June 21st - An hour spent at Slade Camp, Oxford produced just two **Bläck Hairstreaks** - one in good condition and one very worn. Also seen **Red Admiral, Large Skipper, Small Tortoiseshell, Comma, Speckled Wood, Marbled White, Meadow Brown, Ringlet, Painted Lady** and **Speckled Wood.**"

Dennis Dell went to Aylesbury Park Golf course on 19th June (4-5pm, sunny):

"Probably most of us have a site just a few minutes walk from where we live which we can monitor very frequently. This can be both very useful and a lot of fun, even though the species we may observe may not be 'very special'. By visiting a nearby site frequently, we can monitor first and last appearances, numbers, apex of flight period, and year on year fluctuations. None of this is easy to do with 'rare' species at sites which cannot be visited frequently. This golf course is 10 minutes walk from my house and has the largest areas of rough grassland and scrub than any other golf course I've ever come across: ideal for Satyrids and other grass loving families. I've been going there for the last three years, so it's too early to draw any conclusions. There are vast numbers of Meadow Browns, Gatekeepers, and Ringlets in July, and large numbers of Marbled Whites. I've decided to focus on the latter species since the numbers are 'manageable'. There is already something I don't understand: although the Marbled White can be found on almost all of the (separated) areas of grassland, there is one spot in particular where I see the most. I want to know why: is it because there is a predominant species of grass, found mainly there, which is favoured, or are there other factors? Seen today: **Meadow Brown [53], Marbled White [13], Small Tortoiseshell [1], Ringlet [2], Large Skipper [11], Small Heath [2], Comma [1].**"

Wednesday 20th June 2007

At a bramble bush in a sunny clearing in the woods at Farley Hill today, 20th, Jan Haseler saw: **2 Silver-washed Fritillaries, 1 White Admiral, 1 Red Admiral, 2 Meadow Browns** and **2 Ringlets.**

David Redhead sent the following reports today: 17th June - An expedition to the *Bletchington area* for **Bläck Hairstreak** eventually proved successful with 2 seen. It also produced my first **Ringlet** of the year with 9 seen. Another 11 butterfly species were also recorded making my total for the day 13 - **Marbled White (24), Meadow Brown (15), Small Tortoiseshell (5), Large White (4), Large Skipper (2), Small White (2), Brimstone (2), Red Admiral (1), Large White (1), Green-veined White (1)** and an extremely tatty **Peacock. Cinnabar (2)** and a single **Narrow-bordered Five-spot Burnet** were also seen. *19th June* - Various sites in and around *Oxford* produced 14 butterfly species including my first **Small Skipper** of the year. The **Marbled White** and **Meadow Brown** had a day long battle and in the end settled for an honourable draw at 40 each. Others were **Large Skipper (25), Ringlet (9), Speckled Wood (6), Small White (5), Small Tortoiseshell (4), Red Admiral (2), Common Blue (2), Painted Lady (1), Large White (1), Brimstone (1), Comma (1)** and again a very tatty **Peacock. 26 Narrow-bordered Five-spot Burnet** moths were also seen plus a **Cinnabar, Shaded Broad-bar** and **Blood-vein.**"

Chris Brown has been keeping watch on the Crowsley Wood site in Berks since early March for whatever might be about. He sent this news on 19th June: "There were three **Silver-washed Fritillary** out today, very active and looking pristine. So much brighter than the **Commas** that were about. An interesting behavioural difference - there were a couple of **Commas** stationed about 25 yards apart, the **Silver-washed Fritillary** were patrolling along and across these **Commas'** "stations". The **Commas** kept challenging every intrusion across their patch, with each encounter 'spiralling sparring' as I call it, but only for about 5 seconds and generally they separated before rising more than 10 feet vertically. However when 2 of

the Silver-washed Fritillary met and challenged each other, they would continue this for up to 30 seconds and rise all the way to the tree tops, about 40 feet above ground, before separating."

At Black Park yesterday morning, 19th June, Dave Ferguson was trying to photograph White Admirals when he saw a Purple Hairstreak on a bramble leaf just a few inches from the ground. "It was there for a couple of minutes before it took off into the tree tops. This is my earliest ever. The tally for the morning was: Purple Hairstreak (1), **White Admiral** (11), **Red Admiral** (4), **Comma** (1), **Large Skipper** (3), **Meadow Brown** (7), **Large White** (1). Just for interest here are my dragonfly sightings for the morning: Emperor Dragonfly (5), Broad-bodied Chaser (2), Four-spot Chaser (1), Blue-tailed Damselfly (1), Large Red Damselfly (4), Common Blue and Azure Damselflies (30+)."

The following report by Andrea Polden of a site visit to Holtspur Bank & LNR was received via Frank Banyard on 19th June: "**Insects seen:** **Brimstones** (male and female), a **Burnet Companion** moth, a **Five or Six-spot Burnet** moth sp., a **cardinal beetle**, a **Comma**, several grasshoppers, a ladybird, **Marbled Whites** galore, **Meadow Browns** likewise, **Peacock caterpillars**, a **Red Admiral**, a very new fresh **Ringlet**, **Skippers** both large and small, and a **Small Blue**. **Plants and flowers:** Agrimony, bedstraw (hedge and lady's), a bee orchid, bird's-foot trefoil, black medick, bladder campion, centaury, clover (red and white), a cowslip (very late!), dark mullein, fairy flax, field forget-me-nots, garlic mustard, geraniums (dove's-foot and cut-leaved), greater knapweed, green alkanet, hemlock, herb benet, herb-robert, marjoram, meadow vetchling, mignonette, milkwort, mouse-eared chickweed, mugwort, nipplewort, ox-eye daisies, plantains (hoary and ribwort), poppies, pyramidal orchids, quaking grass (and many other types of grass), restharrow, rosebay willowherb, salad burnet, sanicle, scabious, selfheal, silverleaf, sorrel, speedwell, St. John's-wort, vetches (horseshoe and kidney), white dead-nettle, wild arum, woundwort, yellow-rattle and yellow-wort. **Birds:** Blackcaps (heard, but very shy of being seen), buzzards, a kestrel, a pied wagtail, red kites and a wren (heard)."

Jan Haseler saw her first SU76 White Admiral at lunchtime on 19th June at *The Coombes near Arborfield*.

Tim Hearn visited Bernwood on Sunday 17th June, from 10.30am-Noon and recorded: **White Admiral** (9), **Black Hairstreak** (3), **Ringlet** (9), **Common Blue** (3) Very tatty!, **Brimstone** (1), **Meadow Brown** (4), **Small Skipper** (13), **Speckled Wood** (5) and **Red Admiral** (3).

Mike Wilkins walked the Aston Upthorpe transect on 17th June: "The reward came quickly as just below the first section I put up my second **Dark Green Fritillary**. It cooperated and just settled to nectar on a nearby thistle where it spent some time. Unfortunately it was on the track between sections so won't count for the transect. I went on to record another 12 species on the transect as well as 6 macro-moths, including adult and larvae of **Cinnabar**. Other species were **Silver Y**, **Yellow Shell**, **Burnet Companion**, **Latticed Heath** and **Six-spot Burnet**. The last was everywhere and every flower had up to 6 or 7 on it, so I counted 186 on transect! The commonest butterfly was **Small Heath** (19) followed by **Meadow Brown** (15) and **Common Blue** (9). The others were **Large Skipper** (5), **Grizzled Skipper** (1), **Brimstone** (2), **Small White** (1), **Green-veined White** (2), **Red Admiral** (1), **Painted Lady** (2), **Comma** (1) and **Marbled White** (1)."

Sunday 17th June 2007

Tim & Colleen Watts saw a Dark Green Fritillary today, 17th June: "It's the first one we have ever seen. It was between 10am-12pm on BBOWT's *Sydling's Copse reserve* in Oxon. This was a total surprise as we were visiting the site for Scarlet Tiger Moth but no luck yet.

We also saw loads of fresh **Marbled Whites** and **Narrow-bordered Five-spot Burnet moths**, plus **Ringlet**, **Meadow Brown**, **Common Blue**, **Red Admiral**, **Small Tortoiseshell** and **Large White**.

Dennis Dell visited Waterperry Wood today, Sunday 17th: "It was 20 degrees, about 50% sunshine. I am puzzled! I knew this wood in the seventies and it was excellent. These days it disappoints, both in numbers of species and absolute numbers observed. I am puzzled because the wood has been improved during the last 30 years, in particular, most of the rides have been widened, allowing more sunlight to penetrate. It demonstrates yet again how little we still know about the ecology of butterflies. Seen today: **Meadow Brown** [39], **Large Skipper** [17], **Speckled Wood** [12], **White Admiral** [3], **Marbled White** [1], **Small White** [7], **Red Admiral** [2], **Large White** [1], **Bläck Hairstreak** [1].

Jan Haseler reports that there was a Small Skipper at *Holtspur Bottom* this morning (Sunday 17/6), seen on the Reading and District Natural History Society field trip, led by Grahame Hawker. Highlight of the trip was seeing the **caterpillars of Peacock**, **Small Tortoiseshell**, **Red Admiral** and **Comma**, all on the nettles at the side of the lane at the bottom.

Gerry Kendall sent the following report on Sunday 17th June: "Penny and I went to *Homefield Wood*, hoping for White-letter Hairstreaks. Instead, we found a large hyperactive fritillary. When it finally sat down, it revealed itself as a **Silver-washed Fritillary!** We also saw **Large Skipper**, **Large White**, **Green-veined White**, **Red Admiral**, **Painted Lady**, **Comma**, **Speckled Wood**, **Marbled White** and **Meadow Brown**."

Stuart Hodges led a very successful Bläck Hairstreak field trip to Finemere Wood today, Sunday 17th June: He welcomed more than a dozen visitors, mostly from other branches, of whom several were hoping to get their first glimpse of our elusive local celebrity. The sun shone and in excess of 20 **Bläck Hairstreaks** were seen. Exceedingly close-up views of half a dozen butterflies were had while they nectared on privet, so even the photographers went away very happy! Other butterfly species seen included **Large Skipper**, **Small White**, **Green-veined White**, **Brown Argus**, **Common Blue**, **Red Admiral**, **Small Tortoiseshell**, **Speckled Wood**, **Marbled White**, **Meadow Brown** and **Small Heath**. Inside the wood at least one **White Admiral** and a handful of **Emperor Moth caterpillars** were also recorded by some members of the party.

Dave Maunder went to Wendover Woods yesterday, 16th June: "I saw my first **Small Skipper** of the year and also my first **Painted Lady** back in our garden in Aylesbury. Today, 17th, I saw another **Painted Lady** (1); **Red Admiral** (1); **Small Tortoiseshell** (2); **Large Skipper** (7); **Meadow Brown** (6); **Large White** (1), and **Small White** (3). Another interesting sighting recently here in Aylesbury was a nest of the **Tree Bumble Bee, Bombus hypnorum**, a new species recently spreading north into our region according to Martin Harvey (this is only the third sighting in Bucks)! They are nesting in a bird's nest-box in my mum's garden, and today I got photos of the queen on flowers in her garden. I also saw two more specimens nectaring on Bramble blossom up in Wendover woods yesterday - they are very distinctive, so worth looking out for!"

David Redhead reports an enjoyable two hour 'Butterfly Mentoring' event at Watlington Hill, although they were dodging the showers, on Saturday 16th June: "Nicola Beeston found our first **Dark Green Fritillary** of the year. I think it had only emerged in the last day or two as it was in absolutely pristine condition. Unfortunately it did not hang around long enough for everybody to get a close up view of it. Lloyd Garvey found what will probably be my last **Green Hairstreak** of the year, obviously a rather faded specimen this time. We also managed a number of **Small Heath** (8), **Meadow Brown** (4) and singleton **Brimstone** and **Painted Lady**. Considering the weather conditions, six species was not too

bad. We also saw three Lesser Treble-bar or Treble-bar but the only one we got a prolonged view of was too faded to decide which.

Also, dog walks on the rough grassland above my house in Oxford have produced up to half a dozen **Marbled Whites**, a few **Meadow Brown**, a couple of **Large Skippers** and several **Narrow-bordered Five-spot Burnet Moths**. Also a couple of **Yellow Shell**, although one this morning turned into a **Barred Yellow** when it settled under a hawthorn leaf - I thought its flight was somewhat different which was why I went in for a close-up check."

Dave Ferguson's visit to Sydlings Copse on 16th June produced: **Dark Green Fritillary** (1), **Small Tortoiseshell** (1), **Painted Lady** (1), **Red Admiral** (3), **Meadow Brown** (15), **Ringlet** (1), **Marbled White** (25), **Large White** (1), **Large Skipper** (2), **Common Blue** (2), **Brown Argus** (1), **Silver-Y** (2).

Friday 15th June 2007

Dave Ferguson sent some of his recent sightings today, Friday 15th June: "On 15th June at Black Park: **White Admiral** (6), **Red Admiral** (1), **Meadow Brown** (3), **Speckled Wood** (2). I attach a photo of the most cooperative of the White Admirals.

"On 13th June, Salsden Wood Railway Line: **Wood White** (5), **Large White** (1), **Small White** (1), **Green-veined White** (1), **Orange Tip** (1), **Large Skipper** (2), **Common Blue** (8), **Meadow Brown** (10), **Ringlet** (1), **Marbled White** (8) and moths **Chimney Sweeper** (5), **Burnet Companion** (1), **Cinnabar** (1)."

This news was received from Nigel Partridge, Loosley Row, on 15th June: "Just spotted this **Painted Lady** feeding on the Deutzia outside our front door along with a couple of **Red Admirals**. We also had our first **Small Tortoiseshell** of the year today."

Jackie Tuckey reported seeing 2 Painted Ladies on Wednesday morning, 13th June, at Thomley in Bucks nectaring on *Phuopsis Stylosa* (Crosswort).

Martin Kincaid sent another report from Milton Keynes on 13th June: "At around 11.30 this morning I decided to visit Stonepit Field (near Great Linford in north Bucks) in Milton Keynes, a site where I first recorded Small Blue in June 2006. This is a grassland site with a rocky limestone outcrop at its heart, which is absolutely covered in kidney vetch. In cloudy but humid conditions I found four adult **Small Blues** in about half an hour, two of which were females egg-laying on kidney vetch. The few other butterflies on the wing were **Red Admiral**, **Meadow Brown** and a couple of rather tatty **Common Blues** but there were literally hundreds of **Burnet Companion** moths buzzing around. This is one of the best wildlife sites in MK, situated just off Newport Road between New Bradwell and Newport Pagnell. It is managed by Milton Keynes Parks Trust which just happens to be my employer!"

Dave Wilton had a successful day surveying Bläck Hairstreaks on 13th June. His search covered five of the important colonies in Bucks and his total count for the day was an excellent **90 Bläck Hairstreaks** even though the weather was not ideal all day, being cloudy and overcast at times. Other butterfly species seen included: **Large Skipper**, **Small Tortoiseshell**, **Meadow Brown** and **Small Heath**.

Malcolm Brownsword sent these recent Oxfordshire sightings reports on 13th June:

Hartslock 12 June (21C, but zero sun): Newly-hatched **Marbled Whites** (well over 100), **Small Heath** (20), **Red Admiral** (2), **Meadow Brown** (20).

West Hagbourne 12 June: **Scarlet Tiger moth** - my first sighting in the village in 17 years.

Aston Upthorpe Down (20C, 60%sun): **Small Copper** (1), **Common Blue** (6), **Brown Argus** (1), **Meadow Brown** (10), **Large Skipper** (2), **Grizzled Skipper** (1), **Dingy Skipper** (1), **Red Admiral** (2), **Brimstone** (1), **Small Heath** (10's). Note: no **Marbled Whites** yet, although they were at Hartslock the day before -probably due to higher altitude at Aston. Also hundreds of

newly hatched **Six-spot Burnet** moths (9 on one thistle) and 4 **Cinnabar** moths (plus 5 red kites and 2 buzzards)."

Robin Dryden visited a site in Oxfordshire for the first time on 13th June: "It was a very successful visit - seven **Bläck Hairstreak** and a single **Wood White** were new species for me! Also seen were four **Marbled White**, one **Speckled Wood**, one **Common Blue** and lots of **Meadow Brown** and **Large Skipper**. There was a **Painted Lady** at [Witney lake](#) on [Monday 11th](#) as well."

Mike Wilkins sent this report on 13th June: "Luckily, I ignored the doom and gloom forecasts [Tuesday 12th](#) and delayed my transect walk at [Swyncombe](#) until the afternoon, when the sun came out producing a pleasantly warm afternoon with light winds. I managed 12 species plus two others off transect (**Red Admiral** and **Brown Argus**). The big surprise was a **Dark Green Fritillary** on the lower part of section 2, which paused briefly on a Musk thistle flower before dashing off further downhill. Having struggled so far uphill I was not inclined to chase back downhill to try to find it again. This must be the earliest I have ever seen one. **Small Heath** was the commonest, with 43 in six of the sections followed by 28 **Small Blues**. Only five **Meadow Browns** were recorded. Other species were in low single figures. No **Marbled Whites** seen."

News just in from Don Otter today that he saw his first two Dark Green Fritillaries of the year at [Ivinghoe Beacon](#) on Saturday [9th June](#). Also two **Small Blues** and one **Grizzled Skipper**.

Paul Bowyer led a UTB field trip to Greenham Common on Saturday 9th June: "Butterflies identified were **Painted Lady** (2), **Red Admiral** (4), **Large Skipper** (5), **Grizzled Skipper** (1), **Small Blue** (10), **Brown Argus** (1), **Common Blue** (12), **Meadow Brown** (3), **Marbled White** (4) and **Small Heath** (26). Moths identified were **Cinnabar** (1), **Lesser Treble-bar** (2) and **Yellow Shell** (4)."

Wednesday 13th June 2007

Tim Watts sent this exciting report on 12th June: "I was very pleased to find a **Bläck Hairstreak** at a new site in Bucks today. In spells of sun I saw it 3 more times than it landed and I was able to confirm the id (*see photo below*). Also in the small Elm trees there were 3-4 small dark hairstreaks that were almost certainly **White-Letter Hairstreaks**."

Tony Marsh sent the following report on 11th June: "I visited a site in Oxfordshire on Sunday afternoon 10th June and recorded **Bläck Hairstreak** (8) in two separate locations, **Wood White** (1), **Speckled Wood** (4), **Marbled White** (1), plus **Meadow Brown** and **Large Skipper**. On Sunday morning as the sun came out at [Westwell Gorse](#), also in Oxfordshire: **Marbled White** (2), **Brimstone** (1)."

Tony Croft sent this unusual report on 11th June: "Nothing to do with butterflies but I thought I'd share this with you. While doing my transect at [Rushbeds Wood](#) this afternoon I came upon this **swarm of bees** in the hedge of the western meadow. Needless to say I didn't hang around too long!"

Gerry Kendall went to Finemere Wood on 11th June: "Several **Bläck Hairstreak** were buzzing round the tops of the blackthorn. Very hard to know how many, but at least half a dozen and probably more. I got one good and a couple of borderline IDs of settled specimens through binoculars. Two **Painted Lady** on the approach track and several **Meadow Brown**."

David Redhead went to the M40 Compensation Area on 10th June: "In an hour and forty

minutes I had a total count of 35 **Blâck Hairstreak** including one unusually nectaring on an ox-eye daisy (see photo). In spite of all the privet in flower only one was seen nectaring on it. The total was a considerable improvement on the 19 I saw there last year although this must partly have been due to the better weather. Also recorded - **Large Skipper** (4), **Red Admiral** 1 (fresh), **Meadow Brown** 1, **Brown Argus** 1 and **Burnet Companion** 1."

Jim Asher went to several sites on 9th & 10th June: On 9th he recorded 10 **Blâck Hairstreak** at two sites in Bucks. On 10th June at a Berkshire site he found **Mârsh Fritillary** still flying (15), several **Small Blues**, including one attending closely to a horse dropping, three **Adonis Blues** and a few very worn **Dingy Skippers**. In the afternoon, in ideal conditions - hot, sunny and little wind - he went to two sites in Oxfordshire and saw 12 **Blâck Hairstreak**. "There were many more **Large Skippers** than last weekend, and **Meadow Brown** is increasing. I saw two **Marbled White** this afternoon."

Tony Croft visited a site in Oxfordshire on 10th June and saw the following: 10 **Blâck Hairstreaks**, 3 **Marbled White**; 2 **Wood White**; 2 **Red Admiral**; 2 **Speckled Wood**; good numbers of **Large Skipper** and a few **Meadow Browns**.

Wendy Wilson sent this report on 9th June: **Peacocks** have been busy on our eastern fringe, I've seen no fewer than eight batches of thirty or so caterpillars in the last four days in "my square" (TQ09). One batch of 2.2cm larvae were in **Chalfont Park**. Four batches of larvae, under 1cm, were by the Chenies/Sarratt Bottom footpath. The other three, also under 1cm, were annoyingly on the nettles on the Herts side of the hedge which forms the Bucks/Herts border near Sarratt Mill. I also saw an **Orange-tip larva** in my **Gerrards Cross** garden on some Jack-by-the-Hedge I have been purposely not weeding. I also saw these in the **Chess valley** area between Chenies and Sarratt Mill: 1 **Brimstone**, 4 **Small White**, 6 **Peacock**, 5 **Red Admiral**, 2 **Meadow Brown**, 2 **Common Blue**, 3 **Small Copper**, 2 **Speckled Wood** and 1 **Large Skipper**."

6th June - Nigel Partridge photographed this Large Skipper in his **Loosley Row** garden on the red valerian.

Sunday 10th June 2007

On Friday afternoon Dave Wilton and Stuart Hodges searched various blackthorn hedgerows in Bucks: "It produced 15 adult **Blâck Hairstreaks** in all. One of them had literally just emerged from its pupa (see photo below)." On Saturday morning Dave walked round to the disused railway cutting west of **Westcott** airfield but saw nothing particularly remarkable there. "**Common Blue** and **Small Heath** were present in some numbers and I was pleased still to find **Dingy Skipper** (3), **Grizzled Skipper** (7) and **Green Hairstreak** (1) hanging on there. On the way back home I passed by some large nettle patches close to my house where I'd seen lots of **Small Tortoiseshell** caterpillars a few weeks ago. Five pristine adults were recorded there today. In the afternoon I cycled to Lapland Farm which produced **Blâck Hairstreak** (4), **Red Admiral** (1), **Painted Lady** (1) and **Marbled White** (1) as well as the usual suspects. Having heard that **White-letter Hairstreak** is now on the wing I got quite excited when I found a **hairstreak** buzzing around the top of an elm in the drover's lane, but once it settled it was clearly a **Green Hairstreak**! I've not seen one behave like that before. On the way home I called into another wood and managed to find another **Blâck Hairstreak** active in the sunshine."

Nick Bowles visited the woods above Dancers End, Bucks, on 9th June and saw the first **Ringlet** of the year. Then on 10th June he recorded two **Blâck Hairstreaks** at a location in Bucks. "Not a great deal else about but approximately 15 **Meadow Browns** in the wood showing a fairly rapid build up in numbers since last week's transect (none recorded)."

Jon Mercer (BC Wilts branch) visited a site in Oxfordshire on 9th June and saw the following: 2 **Blâck Hairstreaks**, 3 **Wood Whites**, **Speckled Wood**, **Large Skipper** (and birds - **Red Kite** and **Hobby**).

David Redhead sent this update on 8th June: "When the sun finally broke through in the Oxford area a female **Orange-tip** was observed egg-laying on the Sweet Rocket in our garden along with a fresh **Comma**."

Adam Bassett sent the following report on 6th June: "My parents recorded a **Green Hairstreak** through their garden in *Hurst, Berks* on *Saturday June 2nd*. It was seen on Sweet Rocket amongst other flowers before flying on. This seems quite unusual to me, as I was not aware of any Green Hairstreaks in that general area. Also, 1 **Painted Lady** at *Dinton Pastures CP, Berks*, on *Wednesday June 6th*."

Wednesday 6th June 2007

David Redhead recorded 17 butterfly species on 5th June: "In the rough grassland above my house in *Oxford* I saw **Meadow Brown** (my second of the year) and **Small White**. Then at *a site in Oxford* : **Blâck Hairstreak**, **Red Admiral** (fresh), **Brimstone**, **Comma**, **Common Blue** (pair mating). On my *Swyncombe Down* transect and kidney vetch/small blue egg survey: **Speckled Wood**, **Small Heath**, **Small Copper**, **Small Blue**, **Peacock**, **Large Skipper**, **Large White**, **Brown Argus** plus **Brimstone**, **Common Blue**, and **Red Admiral**. Late afternoon Wendy & I were in *Chilswell Valley* and we found a **Marbled White** plus **Peacock**, **Meadow Brown**, **Common Blue**, **Large Skipper** and **Small White**. Finally, in our garden this evening we found an **Orange-tip** (female roosting on sweet rocket). Also seen during the day were: **Cinnabar**, **Yellow Shell**, **Mother Shipton** and **Burnet Companion** moths, **Small Blue** eggs, **Peacock** caterpillars, **Bee** and **Pyramidal Orchids**. Sadly no **Grizzled Skipper**, **Dingy Skipper** or **Green Hairstreak** were seen at *Swyncombe* which really would have made it a score. Surprisingly no **Meadow Brown** there either and a **Green-veined White** was an annoying absentee all day. Most peculiar behaviour was the **Marbled White** which at one stage flew 15 feet up into a tree - I've never seen one do that before!"

Richard Soulsby spent a very pleasant afternoon at Whitecross Green Wood on 5th June: "I saw **Large Skipper** (8+), **Wood White** (4), **Meadow Brown** (1), **Red Admiral** (1), **Speckled Wood** (4), and **Mother Shipton** (2)."

Mick & Wendy Campbell visited Laplands Farm for just over an hour on Tuesday 5th June: In the green lane they were pleased to find the **Green Hairstreaks** (6) were very active, while in the meadow they recorded **Large Skipper** (3), **Common Blue** (4), **Small Heath** (6), **Meadow Brown** (2), **Painted Lady** (1) and a **Blâck Hairstreak** (flying at the top of the blackthorn, then perched in an Oak tree just above the hedge). Moths were **Burnet Companion**, **Straw Dot** (2), **Forester**, **Opsibotys fuscalis** and **Yellow Shell**.

On 5th June Thomas Merckx reports seeing a freshly eclosed male **Meadow Brown** at a field margin in *Stonesfield (Oxon)*.

On 5th June Dave Wilton went to north Bucks looking for Wood White in the company of Becky Woodell and Stuart Hodges: "The first site that we visited was the disused railway line near *Salden Wood* which produced 17 butterfly species: **Large Skipper**, **Grizzled Skipper**, **Brimstone**, **Large White**, **Green-veined White**, **Wood White** (7, including an egg-laying female), **Orange-tip**, **Small Copper**, **Common Blue**, **Holly Blue**, **Red Admiral**, **Peacock**, **Small Tortoiseshell**, **Painted Lady**, **Speckled Wood**, **Meadow Brown** and **Small Heath**. We also recorded the following moths: **Yellow Shell**, **Treble-bar** sp., **Chimney Sweeper**, **Latticed Heath**, **Common Heath**, **Cinnabar**, **Small Yellow Underwing**, **Mother Shipton**, **Burnet Companion**, **Timothy Tortrix/Aphelia paleana** and

Plum Tortrix/Hedya pruniana as well as several **Mullein Moth caterpillars**. We then went to *College Wood* where very little of anything was recorded apart from the day's second Painted Lady. Finally, the publicly-accessible parts of *Leckhampstead Wood and Wicken Wood* were visited, producing another six Wood Whites of which four were on the Bucks side of the county line and the longhorn moth *Adela croesella*."

Dave Ferguson visited several sites on 5th June: "*Stoke Common* produced only one butterfly this morning - a surprise **Painted Lady** (see photo below). The walk down to *Fulmer Lake* from the common produced just 3 butterflies: 2 **Common Blues** and a **Meadow Brown**. Then a try at *Black Park* for a very early White Admiral resulted in yet another single butterfly - a **Red Admiral!** The Meadow Brown was my 25th species of the year."
[Congratulations to Dave who won our "First to 25" butterfly competition this year.]

Jez Elkin reports that there were three **Painted Lady** butterflies flying around the monument on *Coombe Hill* on *Saturday 2nd June*.

Monday 4th June 2007

Thomas Merckx saw his first Painted Lady of the year today, *4th June*, basking on an arable field in *Stonesfield (Oxon)*.

Dave Wilton, Mick & Wendy Campbell visited a private Bucks site in this afternoon's dull, drizzly overcast. There they managed to find the season's second adult **Black Hairstreak** along with another which can only go down as a "probable" because it disappeared before the binoculars could be trained on it. The only other species noted were **Green-veined White** (1), **Common Blue** (1), **Holly Blue** (1), **Red Admiral** (1) and **Speckled Wood** (2). A moth, the **Straw Dot**, was the most numerous item with eight of them being recorded. **Cinnabar** (1) and **Thistle Ermine** (1) were also found, as were **Yellow-tail** and **Mullein Moth caterpillars**."

David Chandler, Chairman of the Herts & Middlesex Branch of Butterfly Conservation, sent the following report today, 4th June: "It was a very hot day (23c) on *Saturday June 2nd* and the butterflies in the North Chilterns were whizzing around in the bright sunshine.

My sighting records in order of my visits:

BEDS - Sharpenhoe Clappers - Browns: Small Heath [4], Speckled Wood [1]. Whites: Small White [2], Brimstone [3]. Blues: Common Blue [20]. Skippers: Dingy Skipper [2] & Others: Red Admiral [1].

Bison Hill, Whipsnade - Browns: Small Heath [8]. Whites: Green Veined White [1], Small White [2]. Blues: Brown Argus [20], Common Blue [10], Green Hairstreak [2]. Skippers: Grizzled Skipper [2] & Others: Peacock [1].

BUCKS - Ivinghoe Beacon - Browns: **Small Heath** [10]. Whites: **Small White** [2], **Brimstone** [5]. Blues: **Small Blue** [2] - near old car-park at S bend, **Brown Argus** [20], **Common Blue** [10]. Skippers: **Grizzled Skipper** [1] & Others: (none).

It was good to see Small Blues and both Grizzled & Dingy Skippers but I think the Duke of Burgundy season might now be over at Bison Hill & Ivinghoe Beacon. There was little sign of any new hairstreak activity at any of the sites excepting those now quite old and tatty-looking Green Hairstreaks left at Whipsnade."

Dave Wilton spent some time in the Greatmoor area on 3rd June looking for Wall Brown without success: "However, thanks mainly to the **Common Blue** colony (40+ recorded) I did see quite a lot of butterfly activity in that area. Other species recorded there comprised **Grizzled Skipper**, **Dingy Skipper**, **Large Skipper**, **Large White**, **Small White**, **Green-veined White**, **Brown Argus**, **Peacock** and **Small Heath** but none of them in any great numbers. The bonus was finding a lone **Forester** and two **Commophila aeneana**. There were also several newly-emerged **Narrow-bordered 5-spot Burnets** flying around in

the same area."

Wendy & Mick Campbell walked to Waterperry Wood from Holton on Sunday 3rd June.

They were looking mainly for **Black Hairstreak** but were unsuccessful. However, they managed to record 11 other butterfly species, plus a batch of about 200 first/second instar **Small Tortoiseshell caterpillars**. Moths seen included **Forester** and **Commophila aeneana**. There were countless **Beautiful Demoiselles** flying in the woodland. Also seen were two male and one female **Reed Buntings** in the water meadow approaching the wood.

David Redhead sent these two reports today: "Friday 1st June started well - improved weather and a respectable **Red Admiral** had replaced the previous very faded occupant of the vegetable garden. It ended well at 6pm when my dog flushed my first **Meadow Brown** of the year out of the rough grassland by my house. But things got a bit desperate in between as several hours spent in **Bernwood Forest and Shotover Country Park** produced just 21 butterflies (12 **Common Blue**, 5 **Speckled Wood**, 2 **Orange-tip**, 1 **Peacock** and 1 **Brimstone**). Is this dearth of butterflies what entomologists used to call the "June Gap" or is it just the aftermath of the atrocious bank holiday weather?

Saturday 2nd June. Joining the **Lardon Chase** Field Meeting enabled me to see my first **Adonis Blue** of the year but I missed out on my first **Large Skipper** although they were seen by others. A visit in the afternoon to a setaside field immediately to the south of **Bagley Woods** allowed me to put this right and with the adjoining Kennington Memorial Field I managed to notch up just another six species with **Common Blue** 5, **Peacock** 5, **Large White** 2, **Green-veined White** 1, **Orange-tip** 1 and **Comma** 1 plus my first **Mother Shipton** moth."

Saturday 2nd June 2007

Dave Wilton & Nick Bowles went to a wood in the Grendon area this morning, 2nd

June: "We saw **Large Skipper** and **Meadow Brown**. We were hoping for **Black Hairstreak**, but there was no sign there, at Finemere or anywhere in between! However, that's two new species for Nick and one for me."

Martin Harvey sent this news today, 2nd June: "There was a splendid **Painted Lady** in my garden (**Great Kimble, Bucks**) today, first one I've seen this year. A walk round **Bradenham** in hot sunshine produced just one **Common Blue**, one **Peacock** and a handful of **Speckled Wood**."

Dave Wilton sent the following report on Friday 1st June: "Tom Dunbar & I visited two sites in Berkshire today. The first produced **Dingy Skipper**, **Large Skipper**, **Green Hairstreak**, **Small Copper**, **Brown Argus**, **Common Blue**, **Small Blue**, **Marsh Fritillary**, **Peacock**, **Small Tortoiseshell**, **Small Heath** and moths **Forester**, **Grass Rivulet**, **Green Carpet**, **Yellow Shell**, **Cinnabar**, **Mother Shipton** and **Burnet Companion**. Our very conservative **Marsh Fritillary** count came to 22, some very worn but others still in pristine condition. At the second site we saw **Dingy Skipper**, **Large Skipper**, **Brimstone**, **Green-veined White**, **Common Blue**, **Adonis Blue** (five, including an egg-laying female), **Small Blue**, **Marsh Fritillary**, **Peacock**, **Speckled Wood**, **Small Heath** and moths **Grass Rivulet**, **Common Heath**, **Cinnabar**, **Mother Shipton**, **Burnet Companion**, **Cocksfoot Moth/Glyphipterix simplicicella**, **Opsibotys fuscalis** and **Thistle Ermine/Myelois circumvoluta**. Just the one **Marsh Fritillary** was recorded on here although another specimen was seen nearby. While no adult **Dukes of Burgundy** were seen we did find eight eggs on cowslips nearby."

Yesterday afternoon (1st June) at Salsden Wood Railway Line Dave Ferguson recorded: **Large Skipper** (1), **Common Blue** (25), **Wood White** (5), **Large White** (2), **Small White** (3), **Green-veined White** (3), **Orange Tip** (3), **Brimstone** (1), **Peacock** (1) and

moths **Chimney Sweeper** (10), **Burnet Companion** (5), **Cinnabar** (2).

Wendy & Mick Campbell visited Rushbeds tramway and then Asham Meads searching for Black Hairstreak on Friday 1st June. In 30 minutes at *Rushbeds* they recorded **Common Blue** and **Small Heath** and moths included **Burnet Companion**, **Silver-Y**, **Mother Shipton** and **Grass Rivulet**. They then moved on to *Asham Meads* where the temperature was a humid 20C and recorded **Small White**, **Common Blue** and moths **Silver-Y**, **Large Yellow Underwing**, **Forester** and a **Drinker Moth caterpillar**. After 2 hours of watching the blackthorn they finally saw a **Black Hairstreak** fly out from the hedge and straight across the corner of the meadow. Fortunately it landed in the top of another blackthorn hedge where they had good views of it through binoculars for several minutes.

Tim Watts reports a Painted Lady basking next to his car in *Milton Keynes* on *Thursday 31st May*.

Friday 1st June 2007

Richard Soulsby sent the following report today: "I went to *Lardon Chase* this morning, 1st June, and found 6+ **Adonis Blues** (4M, 2F), 8 **Common Blues**, 7 **Small Blues**, 1 **Brown Argus**, 2 **Brimstones** (M & F), and one fresh **Meadow Brown**, plus one or two **Yellow Shells**."

In an hour-long sunny interlude between thunderstorms yesterday afternoon (Thursday 31st May), Dave Wilton went to Lapland Farm, Bucks to search for Forester Moth: "This time I was successful, with seven recorded in the eastern meadow. Other species active there in the sunshine comprised butterflies **Grizzled Skipper** (1), **Large White** (1), **Green Hairstreak** (1), **Small Copper** (1), **Common Blue** (62), **Small Heath** (13) and moths **Grass Rivulet** (4), **Lime-speck Pug** (1), **Shoulder-striped Wainscot** (1), **Silver-Y** (1), **Mother Shipton** (4), **Burnet Companion** (3), **Hedya pruniana** (2) and **Opsibotys fuscalis** (5)."

Tom Stevenson reports that during a very wet bird survey yesterday morning, 31st May, he was extremely surprised to find a Large Skipper resting on an Ox-Eye Daisy. In the 3.5 hour survey of *Battle Farm, Preston Crowmarsh*, Oxfordshire, the only other butterfly he saw was a **Small White** in a brief sunny period.

Wednesday 30th May 2007

30th May - David Redhead is pleased to be able to report that butterflies in the Oxford area have survived one of the wettest and coldest late May bank holidays on record! "In the fitful sunshine of yesterday I managed to see **Speckled Wood** (2), **Holly Blue** (1), **Small Copper** (1), **Orange Tip** (1) and **Small White** (1) along with a couple of **Burnet Companion** moths.

The Brown Hairstreak Caterpillar Count at the RSPB Otmoor Reserve proved extremely successful on what, fortunately, turned out to be a pleasant evening and our searching was done to the accompaniment of a **Turtle Dove** and a **Grasshopper Warbler**. A total of **15 caterpillars** were found ranging in length from 7mm to 17mm. Below is a photograph of the largest named Eta. In spite of the mainly miserable May, caterpillar development seems to be very well advanced. The average length of the caterpillars found was 12.4mm but on a similar date in 2005 it was only 7.4mm and we had to wait until the 10th June that year for the average length to exceed 12mm."

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Monday 28th May 2007

Welcome to the website new contributor Malcolm Brownsword who sent the following report and photos on 25th May: "I am a new member of Butterfly Conservation. Please see attachments, which may be of interest: The first photo was taken at *Hartslock on 17 May* - it's a **Green Hairstreak** perched on an Orchid. The other two photos are of a female **Adonis Blue** and were taken on *24 May*, shortly after I spoke to Wendy Wilson, who saw the early Large Skipper shown on the website. Also at Hartslock I saw Adonis Blue (2 males), 2 Green Hairstreaks and many **Small Heaths**."

Saturday 26th May 2007

Thanks to Gerry Kendall for his report on the field trip to Aston Upthorpe today: "Twelve people took part in the field trip to *Aston Upthorpe on 26th May*. It was rather breezy and often overcast, but the party managed 15 species: **Large Skipper**, **Dingy Skipper**, **Grizzled Skipper**, **Brimstone**, **Large White**, **Green-veined White**, **Orange-tip**, **Green Hairstreak**, **Small Copper**, **Brown Argus**, **Common Blue**, **Adonis Blue**, **Red Admiral**, **Speckled Wood** and **Small Heath**. The lack of Duke of Burgundy was a disappointment, but not a surprise, but the Adonis Blue was a real treat and suggested that they may be colonising this area. Other sightings were a fine view of a very handsome **fox** and a **Great Grey Slug**."

Robin Dryden visited Lardon Chase on Tuesday morning 22nd May: "I was eventually successful in my quest for **Adonis Blue**, a new UTB species for me. I saw four males and was amazed at how different they looked in flight from the numerous male **Common Blues** (14 males seen, four females). I only found one **Small Blue**, a very tatty **Grizzled Skipper**, two **Orange-tip** and several 'cabbage' Whites. I went to **Hartslock** on **Thursday morning (24th)**, not for the butterflies, but did spot a female **Adonis Blue**, three male **Common Blues**, a **Small Heath** and **Small Copper**. I also found a very fresh **Meadow Brown**, my first of the year!"

Wendy & Mick Campbell spent a couple of hours at Asham Meads on Thursday afternoon, 24th May, in slightly overcast but still and humid conditions. Nine butterfly species were recorded: **Brimstone** (2), **Common Blue** (10), **Red Admiral** (1), **Speckled Wood** (1), **Large White** (2), **Orange-tip** (3), **Small White** (1), **Brown Argus** (2), **Peacock** (1). Moths seen were: **Small Yellow Underwing** (6), **Silver-Y** (2), **Forester** (6), **Mother Shipton** (1 - worn) and dragonflies included **Four-spotted Chaser** (3), **Broad-bodied Chaser** (1 male).

Thursday 24th May 2007

Wendy Wilson photographed this Large Skipper when she paid a brief visit to the **Hartslock Reserve** today, 24th May:

Tom Stevenson went back to Lardon Chase this afternoon 24th May: "I managed to find **Adonis Blue** - probably between 6 and 10 including a couple of females. Also **Small Blue**, **Common Blue**, **Small Copper** and **Small Heath** but only single figures of each (needless to say the sun went behind a cloud as we parked the car!)."

Dennis Dell sent this interesting observation today, 24th May: "I watched a **Holly Blue** ovipositing on an unopened bud of the **Ceanothus** in my garden today. In South's British Butterflies, several foodplants are listed: Ivy, Holly, Dogwood, Berry bearing Alder, Spindle, Furze, Bramble, Pyracantha, and Rhododendron. I've netted the branch and hope to observe the progress of the larva when it hatches in about 1 week to 10 days."

Derek Brown reports that Cathy saw a Common Blue and also a **Brown Argus** at **Coley Park Reading** on 22nd.

Wednesday 23rd May 2007

Richard Soulsby went to Ivinghoe Beacon Wednesday afternoon, 23rd May, having been unable to make Robin Carr's field trip on Sunday: "I've never been there before (it's quite a long haul from Benson), but I phoned Robin last night and he kindly told me just where to look. I found 9 **Dukes of Burgundy**, which doesn't seem too bad, considering I didn't arrive until 3:15 pm. Also **Dingy Skippers**, **Brown Argus**, **Common Blues**, **Burnet Companions**, etc. Yesterday I tried **Dancers End**, but couldn't find any Duke of Burgundy – only **Dingy Skippers** and **Burnet Companions**."

Dave Wilton and Mick & Wendy Campbell visited several Adonis Blue sites on 22nd May: They were successful at two of the sites, locating a total of 9 **Adonis Blue** (8 males, 1 female) altogether. One of the sites where they found **Adonis Blue** was the **Hartslock Reserve** where they also recorded **Dingy Skipper** (2), **Grizzled Skipper** (1), **Large Skipper** (1), **Brimstone** (1), **Green Hairstreak** (3), **Brown Argus** (4, incl one mating pair), **Common Blue** (9), **Red Admiral** (1), **Small Heath** (9), **Yellow Shell** (1), **Treble-bar sp** (1), **Mother Shipton** (1), **Pyrausta nigrata** (1).

Monday 21st May 2007

21st May - Dave Maunder recorded these butterflies around Fairford Leys, Aylesbury recently: Peacock (1), Brimstone (1, female), Orange-tips (2, male), Green-veined Whites (3), Small Whites (15), Large Whites (3) and Small Copper (1).

Allen Beechey sent this news today, 21st May: "Having had quite a run of inclement days, which were as bad for butterflies as they were good for my chalk streams, I paid a visit to *Yoesden Bank* yesterday, in the hope of getting some photos of Adonis Blues. I wasn't disappointed. The site was alive with butterflies, all, no doubt, making up for lost time. In the course of my two hour visit I saw: 1 very tired looking **Green Hairstreak**; 1 very fresh **Grizzled Skipper**; 5 **Dingy Skipper**; 8 **Small Heath**; 30+ **Small Blue**; 6 **Common Blue**; 40+ **Adonis Blue**; 1 **Small White**; 1 **Large White** and 2 **Peacock**."

Posting of Märsh Fritillary sightings have been delayed to provide some protection to this fragile colony. The following reports were received:

On 5th May Jim Asher recorded 20+ Märsh Fritillaries at a site in Berkshire, lots of **Dingy Skippers**, one **Small Copper** and 2 **Small Heath**.

Gerry Kendall went to a site in Berkshire on 6th May: "It was warm, with a bit of sun, but quite windy. I found a **Peacock** sheltering in a hollow and was just berating myself for wasting my time when I saw a couple of **Märsh Fritillaries**. I eventually had half a dozen sightings (not sure how many individuals). Also my first **Small Heath** of the year."

Lloyd Garvey sent the following report on 6th May: "There are large numbers of **Märsh Fritillaries** at a site in Berkshire all along roadside edge of reserve seen yesterday (5th May 2007) along with **Dingy Skipper**, **Red Admiral** and a **Brimstone**."

Sunday 20th May 2007

Ched George visited College Lake today 20th May: "I had my first **Large Skipper**, 2 **Green Hairstreak**, a **Brimstone**, a **Small Heath**, a **Large White** and 2 **Common Blue** males."

Jim Asher revisited some sites along the disused Newbury-Didcot railway line on Sunday morning, 20th May: "I confirmed **Small Blue** present in 4 1km squares and found one mating pair and several eggs. Apart from some **Orange-tips**, **Common Blues**, **Brimstones** - including a female laying on buckthorn - a **Small Heath**, a **Mother Shipton** and some **Common Heaths**, I did not see as many butterflies as I expected. It may be the turn in the weather, plus the residual breeze that kept them down."

Martin & Dee Raper went to Aston Upthorpe Sunday 20th May and saw: Grizzled Skipper (2), Dingy Skipper (7), Green Hairstreak (1), Small Heath (1), Orange-tip (9), Brimstone (10), Peacock (2) and 8 Cinnabar moths. No Duke of Burgundy counted.

Spurred on by John Ward-Smith's report (18th May) of large numbers of Small Blues at Swyncombe, Richard Soulsby went there again today, 20th: "However, despite warm, calm but muggy and rather overcast weather, I only managed to see 30 **Small Blues**. Either their peak is over, or they were having a nap after their Sunday lunch. There always seems to be one day when the Small Blue are out in huge numbers at Swyncombe, then very rapidly they subside to more reasonable numbers, but the peak must be a lot earlier this year than usual. In fact, there were not many butterflies flying at all up there today, and nothing out of the ordinary."

Dave Ferguson tried the Calvert drain this morning: "No sign of Wall Brown. What I did get was: **Brown Argus (3), Grizzled Skipper (4), Dingy Skipper (6), Peacock (2),**

Common Blue (11), Small Heath (3), Large White (3), Green-veined White (5), Small White (11), Orange Tip (1), Red Admiral (1), Cinnabar moth (1)."

Derek Brown finally managed to get back on the butterfly trail today (20th): "I saw 8 **Common Blues**, (1 female), 6 **Adonis Blues**, (1 female), and 5 **Small Blues** at **Lardon Chase** in 45mins."

Wendy & Mick Campbell visited BBOWT's Calvert Jubilee Reserve (permit required) Sunday afternoon, 20th, and recorded the following 15 species of butterfly: **Red Admiral (2), Grizzled Skipper (9), Peacock (5), Small Tortoiseshell (2 - one rescued from a web), Common Blue (36 - mostly male, but 3 female and one mating pair), Small Heath (8), Green-veined White (3), Dingy Skipper (3), Large White (1), Small White (1), Comma (1), Brimstone (2 male), Small Copper (1), Orange-tip (1 male) and Speckled Wood (1).** Also seen were **Burnet Companion, Cinnabar, Lackey Moth Caterpillar, a Wasp Beetle** and the striking micro moth ***Commophila aeneana***.

Saturday 19th May 2007

Dave Ferguson spent an hour at Yoesden Bank yesterday (18th May): "It produced **Adonis Blue (3), Common Blue (1), Small Blue (2), Dingy Skipper (1), Small Heath (5), Small White (1), Green-veined White (1)** and moths: **Mother Shipton (4), Burnet Companion (7).** ***Then today (19th May)*** 30 minutes at **Hedgerley** spoil heap produced: **Brown Argus (3), Common Blue (10), Brimstone (1), Small White (1) and Cinnabar moth (2).**"

On Friday 18th May Dave Wilton spent another couple of hours in the disused railway cutting west of Westcott, sheltered from the strong south-westerly wind: "There was plenty of activity there and I saw the following: **Dingy Skipper (29), Grizzled Skipper (25), Large White (1), Small White (3), Green-veined White (5), Orange-tip (3), Green Hairstreak (2), Brown Argus (6), Common Blue (27, including two mating pairs), Small Copper (7), Peacock (2) and Small Heath (26, mostly in the fields leading down from the A41).** Moths included **Green Carpet (1), Lesser Treble-bar (2), Common Heath (2), Cinnabar (4), Small Yellow Underwing (2), Silver-Y (1), Burnet Companion (1) and Pyrausta purpuralis (5, two of them potted and confirmed).** While hunting unsuccessfully for signs of Brown Hairstreak caterpillars from a couple of eggs which I'd tagged, both of which had hatched, I did manage to find a **Figure of Eight caterpillar** about 2cm in length."

Friday 18th May 2007

John Ward-Smith made an excursion from Berkshire into Oxfordshire today, 18 May, in the company of David White, David Lloyd and Chris Rush which produced the following records: "At **Bernwood Meadows:** **Common Blue, Small Copper, Green-veined White, Brown Argus.** At **Swyncombe Downs** the winds were very strong and there were few butterflies over the main part of the downs. But to the north, between the hedgerow and the field of oil seed rape, where it was sheltered, there were spectacular numbers of **Small Blue**, estimated at between three hundred to four hundred. Also numerous **Brimstone**. Other species included **Dingy Skipper, Large White, Small Copper, Holly Blue, Red Admiral, Peacock** and **Orange-tip.**"

Tom Stevenson sent this report today, 18th May: "At last I caught up with **Common Blue** at **Lardon Chase** this morning but, apart from 4 or 5 of these and a few **Large Whites** and **Small Whites** the strong cold wind was keeping everything else under cover."

17th May - David Redhead says that Orange-tips are definitely still laying (over 6 weeks after he saw his first male): "I found a white **Orange-tip egg** at **Gavray Drive**

Meadows, near Bicester, on 16th May. Also two **Small Heath**, a male **Orange-tip**, a **Small White** and a **Green-veined White** - all put into flight by my presence (14C and overcast). I also came across a roosting female Orange-tip and a **Brown Hairstreak caterpillar** (9mm long). Photos below - an orange Orange-tip egg can be seen beneath the butterfly."

David also did his M40 Compensation Area and Shabbington Wood transects on 17th May in conditions which just qualified: "The M40 produced 5 species - **Brown Argus** 3, **Orange-tip** 3, **Common Blue** 2, **Green-veined White** 1 and **Peacock** 1. Whilst Shabbington Wood produced just a single Green-veined White - a record low for this transect but some early instar **Emperor Moth caterpillars** on ride edge bramble added interest. A **Common Wave** was also seen."

Wednesday 16th May 2007

Dave Ferguson says he finally found his first Common Blue of the season - a single male at *Grangelands* this morning, Wednesday 16th, during the 5 minutes of sunshine.

Dave Wilton sent this news today, 16th May: "Just like the rest of us, this male **Common Blue** was waiting patiently for some May sunshine when seen in private, open-access, wildflower meadows to the west of *Quinton, Bucks*. In a few weeks time these meadows, in SP 7220, will rival the BBOWT sites at Lapland Farm and Bernwood. At the moment only Buttercups, Lady's Smock and Bugle are in flower but copious amounts of Bird's-foot Trefoil, Knapweed and Yellow Rattle, to name but a few, will be joining them shortly. A **Peacock**, three **Small Heaths** and a **Silver-Y** were the only other butterflies and moths seen in this afternoon's drizzle."

David Redhead sent the following reports today, 16th May: "*Thursday 10th*. Inspection of a couple of patches of garlic mustard on the early morning dog walk produced the following **Orange-tip** haul. One roosting **male adult**, two **caterpillars** (3/4 mm long and my first of season), four orange and one white unhatched **eggs**. Also an orange hatched egg - as the Orange-tip caterpillar eats its egg presumably this one had been predated just as it hatched. *By Sunday 13th* the same patches sported three caterpillars - one 7/8mm long the other two 3/4mm - so presumably this represented two new hatches and one of the original two had been predated. Two orange unhatched eggs were also still to be found which, if my maths is correct, means another caterpillar has disappeared.

On Friday 11th Wendy & I made an abortive attempt to complete the Swyncombe Down Transect. Started in sunshine at 15C but ended in rain at 11C. In spite of this, and wind, we did manage 7 species and 15 butterflies - **Small Heath** 5, **Small Blue** 3, **Brown Argus** 3, **Orange-tip** 1, **Brimstone** 1, **Peacock** 1 and **Green Hairstreak** 1."

Tuesday 8th May 2007

Maureen Cross sent the following today, Tuesday 8th May: "Success, we managed to see just one male **Adonis Blue** on *Lardon Chase* today before the weather turned very cloudy."

Dave Maunder hasn't been able to get around any of the local reserves recently, but sent this update today, 8th May: "I've only seen the usual common spring species on my travels around Aylesbury, but *Sunday 6th* I cycled around *Fairford Leys* and managed to find 9 species, which included a new one for me this year - two **Brown Argus** (male & female). Also seen were **Peacock** (1), **Small Tortoiseshell** (1), **Brimstone** (1), **Orange-tips** (4), **Green-veined Whites** (8), **Small Whites** (16), **Large Whites** (3 - male) and **Holly Blues** (2)."

Mick Jones spent most of the day checking things over at Dancersend on Monday 7th

May: "It was very windy most of the time, but after the cloud lifted at midday there were frequent sunny periods. I found 7 **Dukes of Burgundy**, one holding territory in a path mown last winter through chest-high scrub. The rest were in familiar spots. Also saw 17 **Dingy Skippers**, **Green-veined White**, **Large White**, 3 **Brimstones**, 2 **Red Admirals**, 2 **Small Coppers**, **Holly Blue**, 7 **Common Blues**, 2 **Brown Argus**, **Speckled Wood**. No **Green Hairstreaks** - a bit of a puzzle."

David Redhead sent reports of two recent outings today: "On **5th May** Wendy & I went to **Chilswell Valley**, west Oxford, where we recorded: **Common Blue**, **Brown Argus (5)**, **Holly Blue**, **Speckled Wood**, **Small Copper**, **Peacock** and **Large White**. Moths were: **Lesser Treble-bar**, **Burnet Companion**, **Blood-vein** and **Common Heath**. Then on **6th May** I revisited **Aston Upthorpe**. Still no Duke of Burgundy, but **Grizzled Skipper (7)**, **Orange-tip**, **Small White**, **Peacock**, **Speckled Wood**, **Comma**, **Red Admiral** and **Small Copper** were all present, while moths seen were **Cinnabar** and **Green Carpet**."

Sunday 6th May 2007

Dave Wilton went back yet again to the disused railway cutting west of Westcott this afternoon, 6th May: "I found six **Common Blues** (five males and one female), a solitary **Green Hairstreak** and five **Small Heaths**, all of which are new records for the site this year. Other species active before the sun disappeared were **Dingy Skipper**, **Grizzled Skipper**, **Brimstone**, **Large White**, **Green-veined White**, **Holly Blue**, **Brown Argus**, **Small Copper**, **Red Admiral**, **Peacock** & **Comma**."

Nick Bowles was walking his transect in the Grendon area today, 6th May: "I added **Speckled Wood** and **Green-veined White** to my species list for this year. In fact **Green-veined White** was the most numerous species. Not so in Chilterns!"

Saturday 5th May 2007

John Parsons had a great afternoon at Greenham common on Saturday 5th May: "Many species including these four: **Green Hairstreak**, **Brown Argus**, **Speckled Yellow** and **Lesser Treble-bar**."

Nick Bowles sent the following report today, 5th May: "I saw **Dingy Skipper** in reasonable numbers last **Sunday 29th April** (reasonable given the poor weather) at **Dancersend**, Bucks. Today I saw more in the **Pitstone area** (5-despite cloud) and at **Ivinghoe Beacon**. Only at the latter did the sun finally arrive (about 4.30pm) and here I saw about 12 **Dingy Skipper**. At Ivinghoe there were also **Green Hairstreak (1)** and **Dukes of Burgundy (2)**, **Small Copper** and some other common bits. There were 9 **Small Blue** roosting at Pitstone."

When the sun came out, about 3pm this afternoon (5th May), Richard Soulsby thought he'd try his luck at Lardon Chase for an early Adonis: "First, as I got out of the car I was greeted by a **Small Blue** in the car park – a long way from the usual spot. Working my way down the hill, I encountered a plethora of **Common Blues (18+**, including 2 females), and in among them I was rewarded with a single male **Adonis Blue**. It was quite cooperative photographically (see below). Also seen were 2 more **Small Blues**, **Dingy Skipper (4)**, **Small Heath**, **Small White**, **Small Copper (4)**, **Green Hairstreak** and **Yellow Shell**. I hunted around until 4:30, but didn't see any more **Adonis**, or indeed the same one again."

Dennis Dell and Dave Wilton went to Ivinghoe Beacon, Bucks on Friday afternoon, 4th May, when the cloud cover broke up and the sun finally came out. They managed to find 12 **Dukes of Burgundy** in sheltered areas away from the chilly easterly breeze. This would have been viewed as a respectable total had there not been a survey by Matthew Oates and

colleagues two days earlier which produced 35 examples! A further 12 species were seen at Ivinghoe today, comprising **Dingy Skipper** (30+), **Grizzled Skipper**, **Brimstone**, **Large White**, **Small White**, **Green-veined White**, **Orange-tip**, **Holly Blue**, **Brown Argus**, **Green Hairstreak**, **Peacock** & **Small Heath**. Day-flying moths comprised **Cinnabar**, **Burnet Companion** and - the best sighting of the afternoon - a rather tired and battered male **Emperor Moth**.

Dave Ferguson went to Salden Wood disused railway line just as the sun was breaking through yesterday, 4th May: "I managed a solitary **Wood White** on the north bank. It flew down the bank across the lines and disappeared."

03/05/07 - Dave Wilton checked back through his records for April and noticed that he had logged 61 Small Tortoiseshell sightings: "This is quite a healthy total for a species which has seemed to be in some trouble over the last couple of years. Today, **3rd May**, I went out to check a couple of nettle patches close to my house where some of these adult sightings were made and was pleased to be able to count well in excess of **700 Small Tortoiseshell caterpillars** in seven batches, ranging in size from 3mm (just hatched) to more than 30mm (fully grown). Let's hope the parasites and birds leave them alone!"

Wednesday 2nd May 2007

Welcome to the website new contributor Ian Kelloway who sent this news today: "Although I have been a UTB member for just over a year this is my first report. I went for a walk this afternoon at **Grangelands**, just outside Princes Risborough and saw the following:- **Common Blue**, **Brown Argus**, **Small Copper**, **Dingy Skipper**, **Grizzled Skipper**, **Small Heath**, **Holly Blue**, **Brimstone**, **Large White**, **Green-veined White**, **Orange-tip** and **Peacock**."

On Wednesday 2nd May Wendy Redhead reported nine species flying in her Littlemore, Oxford garden today: **Brimstone** - butterfly and moth - **Comma**, **Green-veined White**, **Holly Blue**, **Large White**, **Orange-tip**, **Peacock** and **Small White**.

John Parsons managed to get a couple of hours on Greenham Common today (02/05/07): "Two species I managed to photograph were **Grizzled Skipper** and the **Yellow Belle**."

Wendy Wilson sent the following report today, 2nd May: "Here is some news from the eastern fringes of UTB area. I have seen 11 species in April: **Peacock**, **Brimstone**, **Small White**, **Orange-tip** are abundant. There are good numbers of **Green-veined White**, **Holly Blue**, **Speckled Wood**. I have seen more **Small Tortoiseshell** than I did the whole of last year indicating that last summer's dearth was but a blip. There are a few **Comma**, **Large White**, **Red Admiral** about too. No Skippers or Dukes yet though. My favourite hotspots in **south-east Bucks** have been: the footpath along the southern edge of Latimer House going west towards Chesham, especially around the badger sett at SU 997 990 and at Denham village, the footpath from the church to the railway station, especially the sunny hollow at TQ 044 871 between the churchyard and the golf course (watch out for golf balls!)."

Tom Stevenson chased down a Small Blue at Swyncombe this afternoon, 2nd May. "There must have been at least 30 on the wing, also loads of **Brown Argus**, **Small Coppers**, **Small Heaths** and several **Green Hairstreak**, **Grizzled** and **Dingy Skippers** together with the usual **Peacock**, **Brimstone**, **Large** and **Small Whites**, **Orange-tips** and **Speckled Wood**."

Wendy & Mick Campbell decided to try and locate a Duke of Burgundy at Aston Upthorpe today, 2nd May, as none has been recorded there so far this year. In three

and a half hours of searching, including the "right to roam" scrub area and walking up the track towards the Ridgeway path, they found no sign of the Duke. They did, however, record 14 species of butterfly, including 17 **Grizzled Skipper**, 13 **Small Copper** and a pristine **Brown Argus** and **Red Admiral**. The highlight was watching the **Green Hairstreaks** (19) which were very active on Hawthorn bushes. Two scarce **Club-tailed Dragonflies** were also identified. Moths seen were **Cinnabar**, **Burnet Companion** and **Muslin**. Later on at [Lardon Chase](#) they found that **Small Blue** (3) and **Common Blue** (21+) were on the wing.

Dennis Dell went around a small area of private, managed, scrubland low down in the Chilterns on Tuesday afternoon, 1st May: "The owners have a DEFRA grant, which unfortunately expires next year. They accompanied me. Vast numbers of Cowslips; I've never seen so many concentrated in such a small area. **Dukes of Burgundy** [5], **Brimstone** [6], **Small White** [1], **Speckled Wood** [4], **Small Copper** [1], **Dingy Skipper** [9], **Grizzled Skipper** [3], **Holly Blue** [4], **Orange-tip** [1]. The management involves mainly cutting back the various bushes at regular intervals to maintain small, open and sunny sheltered areas where the butterflies and various larval foodplants can flourish. It has worked very well, because this small Duke population has remained stable for about 10 years here."

Richard Soulsby reported yesterday, 1st May, that the number of **Small Blues** seen on the [Swyncombe Downs](#) transect increased from one on Saturday to 14 today, plus more off-transect, so it seems that it is the start of the main emergence come early, and not just an isolated confused individual. Trouble is, there is no sign of the Kidney Vetch appearing yet, so they might be stuck for egg-laying opportunities. Other species on transect: **Small Heath** (6), **Dingy Skipper** (3), **Brown Argus** (5), **Small Copper** (5), **Small Whites**, **Large White**, **Brimstones**, **Peacocks**, **Small Tortoiseshell** and **Speckled Wood**. Moths seen were **Common Carpet**, **Pyrausta nigrata**, **Pyrausta aurata** and **Adela reaumurella**. Plus off-transect, **Green-veined White** and a lot more **Brown Argus** and **Small Coppers**. I didn't see any **Green Hairstreaks** today, but Tom and Ian Stevenson, who were there at the same time, did."

Tom Stevenson visited Swyncombe Downs on Tuesday afternoon, 1st May, and recorded his first **Brown Argus** of the year.

David Fuller had a good butterfly day on 1st May with 14 species and nearly 100 insects: *At Watlington Hill* : **Brown Argus** 33, **Brimstone** 19, **Small Heath** 1, **Grizzled Skipper** 5, **Common Blue** 4, **Small Copper** 6, **Dingy Skipper** 2, **Holly Blue** female 1, **Small White** 1, **Green Hairstreak** 1. Moths were **Burnet Companion** 1, **Lesser Treble Bar** 10+, **Pyrausta purpuralis** 1. *At Dancers End* : **Small White** 2, **Orange-tip** 2 males, **Speckled Wood** 1, **Dingy Skipper** 2, **Brimstone** 6, **Duke of Burgundy** 3, **Peacock** 1. *At Aston Ragpits* : **Brimstone** 3, **Peacock** 1, **Common Blue** 1. Moths were **Burnet Companion** 1, **Green Carpet** 1."

Mike Wilkins carried out his M40 Compensation Area transect on 30th April: "It yielded 8 butterflies of 4 species, namely **Small White** (1), **Orange-tip** (2), **Peacock** (4) and **Comma** (1). The temperature was 20C with 100% sun. This compares with week 5 in 2006 which recorded 9 individuals of 5 species. One **Brimstone** and 3 **Green-veined White** were extra but no **Comma** (recorded in the previous 2 weeks). To be realistic, numbers do not really get going until week 12 (41 in 2006), half way through the season, while week 26 still produced 31. The only redeeming feature was a count of 221 **Green-winged Orchids** in flower."

David Redhead's Shabbington Wood transect on Monday afternoon, 30th April, produced just the usual suspects: "In order of abundance: **Speckled Wood**, **Green-veined White**, **Large White**, **Peacock**, **Brimstone**, **Orange-tip** and **Small White**, although 7 species and 24 individual butterflies is above average for April for this transect. The best ever in the last five years was wk1 2002 = 8 Species and 40 individuals. Ironically 2002

ended up giving the lowest final total in the last five years - so perhaps we should not get too excited about this amazing April. A detour round *Bernwood Meadows* did add three species: a **Comma**, **Holly Blue** and two **Small Coppers**. So the final scores were Aston Upthorpe 16, Swyncome Down 12, Bernwood Forest/Meadows 10. There was a single **Pyrausta aurata** moth in Bernwood Meadows as well. My Holly Blue in Bernwood Meadows was my ninth of the day. In the morning I dropped my car into the garage for its service and walked back home along the River Thames and through Iffley and saw 8 Holly Blues on the way. The hundreds of **Green-winged Orchids**, lots of **Adder-tongue Fern**, a pair of **Great Crested Grebe** with two young on the back of one and a swimming **Grass Snake** all added to the enjoyment of the day."

On April 28th Paul Bowyer went to the disused railway cutting near Salden Wood: "I saw Large White, Wood White, Green-veined White, Small White, Orange-tip, Brimstone, Peacock, Speckled Wood, Grizzled Skipper, Comma and Holly Blue."

Monday 30th April 2007

Dave Ferguson spent a couple of hours wandering around Yoesden Bank today, 30th April: "I didn't find anything new until I was on my way back when I saw a single male Small Blue! The count was: Small Blue (1), Dingy Skipper (21), Small Heath (12), Peacock (2), Comma (2), Brimstone (7), Small White (3), Green-veined White (5), Large White (2), Orange-tip (3), Burnet Companion (1).

Wendy & Mick Campbell thought they would look for a Small Blue at Yoesden Bank on Monday 30th and met Dave Ferguson who arrived just as they were leaving the site.

There were plenty of butterflies on both the main bank and the smaller bank with the following 14 species being recorded: **Brimstone** (6), **Grizzled Skipper** (10), **Dingy Skipper** (32 including a mating pair), **Orange-tip** (3), **Green Hairstreak** (9), **Green-veined White** (mating pair), **Peacock** (3), **Small Heath** (9), **Small Tortoiseshell** (1), **Holly Blue** (4), **Large White** (1), **Red Admiral** (1 - fresh), **Small Copper** (1) and a **Speckled Wood**. No Small Blue though. Moths seen were: **Lesser Treble-bar**, **Pyrausta sp.**, **Common Carpet**, **Burnet Companion** (2), **Adela Reaumurella** (lots), **Mother Shipton** (2).

Robin Carr reports seeing 2 Duke of Burgundy at Dancersend today, 30th.

Mary Payne of Stoke Mandeville, Bucks, went to the World's End nursery today, 30th April: "I spotted a Holly Blue laying eggs on a holly bush in the car park. At the BBOWT reserve at Western Turville reservoir, I saw a Speckled Wood, Brimstones and Small Whites."

Robin Dryden visited Aston Upthorpe Downs for the first time this morning, 30th April:

No Duke of Burgundy were seen, however, it was a good morning for other species: "Grizzled Skipper were too numerous to count, 3 Dingy Skipper, 14 Small Copper and 15 Green Hairstreak. The only others were a Large White and a male Orange-tip near the grain store. I went for a walk at *Witney Lake, Oxon*, at lunchtime and had a White Out! Large White, Small White, Green-veined White, Brimstone and Orange-tip all about in small numbers with single Red Admiral and Comma as well."

Sunday 29th April 2007

Jim Asher went to Aston Upthorpe today, Sunday 29th: "Including Oven Bottom, I had a species count of 16 - I think that is somewhat high for April: Grizzled Skipper, Dingy Skipper, Brimstone, Small White, Green-veined White, Orange-tip, Green Hairstreak, Small Copper, Brown Argus, Common Blue, Holly Blue, Red Admiral, Small Tortoiseshell, Peacock, Speckled Wood and Small Heath. Common Blue, Brown Argus

and Small Heath all looked newly emerged."

Dennis Dell visited Ivinghoe Beacon again on Sunday 29th April: "I waited and waited until the sun broke through, which happened at about 3 pm and went off to [Ivinghoe Beacon/Steps Hill](#). Fresh **Dukes of Burgundy** [6] seen in four different places on the west-facing slopes. Others: **Dingy Skipper** [9], **Brimstone** [6], **Peacock** [5], **Small Copper** [1], **Small White** [1], **Green Hairstreak** [1]. Maybe the peak for the Duke will be reached during the next seven days, weather permitting. Obviously, as we have all noted, an early season; I wonder if we'll see any of our normal single-brooded species producing a second generation later on in the summer?"

Nick Bowles sent the following report today: "A really early start at [Dancersend](#) for David Dennis and myself today, *29th April*, proved a waste of time. After 4.5 hours and no butterflies I retired to the warmth of my house, only to return, alone, at about 3pm and then I added these species to my year list: **Dingy Skipper**, **Large White**, **Duke of Burgundy** (only one seen and that briefly), **Brown Argus**, **Small Copper**, also **Red Admiral**, **Peacock** and unidentified White."

Welcome to the website, new contributor Martin Kincaid, a Butterfly Conservation UTB member from Milton Keynes: "I wondered if you would be interested in these records from yesterday (*28th April*). I visited [Dancersend](#) with my friend Paul Manchester in search of Duke of Burgundy and others. Arrived at Dancersend at 11.30 where we bumped into Robin Carr at the anthill. Spotted our first **Duke of Burgundy** of the season (first at Dancersend?) almost immediately and patient searching was rewarded with two more (both male) which allowed us close views as they basked on pathways. From the Anthill we moved down to the meadow plots where we found no more Dukes but did see a dozen or more **Dingy Skippers**. We also watched two female **Brimstones** egg-laying on young buckthorn suckers and refusing the advances of amorous males. Other species seen were **Orange-tip** (9), **Small White** (3), **Large White** (2), **Peacock** (15) and **Holly Blue** (1). We then stopped off at [Aston Clinton Ragpits](#) to look for Green Hairstreak. No luck but we were surprised to see a single male **Common Blue** here and less surprised to add **Red Admiral** to our list. A young **slow worm** was also spotted. We finished our day at [Ivinghoe/Steps Hill](#) where, in strengthening winds, we found one more Duke, 1 Holly Blue, 2 Dingy Skippers and 3 **Grizzled Skippers**. **Small Tortoiseshells** were fairly active (we saw 4 - fingers crossed for a good season). Our only disappointment was not seeing any Green Hairstreak at all. Maybe I was looking in the wrong places!"

Saturday 28th April 2007

Richard Soulsby had a productive transect at Swyncombe Downs this afternoon 28th April in warm, sunny weather, 21C: "In addition to the usual suspects - **Brimstones**, **Peacocks**, **Green-veined White** (including a mating pair), **Orange-tips**, **Large White**, **Small White**, **Speckled Wood** and **Small Tortoiseshell** - I saw 3 **Grizzled Skippers**, 4 **Green Hairstreaks** and a **Small Copper**. But the most interesting and surprising was a single **Small Blue** which stayed in the same small area very obligingly settling on flowers and leaves so that I could be positive in my identification (but didn't have my camera, unfortunately). This is easily the earliest I have seen a Small Blue at Swyncombe (or indeed anywhere). We normally get the first ones some time between mid-May and late-May here. It is also intriguing that this individual was found in the same spot (within a few yards) of the place where I found Small Blue eggs on Kidney Vetch flower buds last September, followed by evidence of larval eating of the flower buds (though I didn't find larvae). Not that I am suggesting that this early individual is a result of this, but it could be something to watch out for in the future. After completing the transect, I searched a warm suntrap and had a bonus of a second Small Copper and two **Brown Argus**, which, like the Small Blue, kindly settled repeatedly to give a positive i.d. These also are earlier than normal for Swyncombe. Moths

seen included a **Common Carpet**, a **Cinnabar** and a "flock" of *Adela reaumurella*, all first of the year for me, and *Pyrausta nigrata* and *P. aurata*."

Dave Ferguson paid a visit to an area of scrub near Saunderton, Bucks, on Saturday 28th: "It produced **Duke of Burgundy** (3), **Dingy Skipper** (11), **Grizzled Skipper** (4), **Brimstone** (8), **Large White**(1), **Small White** (2) and **Speckled Wood** (1). There was a fresh **Red Admiral** in our garden in *Beaconsfield*."

Dave Wilton checked the disused railway line west of Westcott again today, 28th April: "It produced 12 active species, including my first **Small Copper** and **Brown Argus** of the year (see photo below) which was mobbed by a couple of **Grizzled Skippers** every time it tried to settle. Other species seen were **Dingy Skipper** (23, a very good number for this colony), **Brimstone**, **Orange-tip**, **Large White**, **Green-veined White**, **Small Tortoiseshell**, **Peacock**, **Comma** and **Speckled Wood**."

Tom Stevenson sent this news today, 28th April: "My first ever **Duke of Burgundy** seen this afternoon (28 April) at the *Dancersend Reserve*."

Thursday 26th April 2007

Gerry Kendall sent this news today, Thursday 26th April: "I went to *Ivinghoe Beacon* today and saw a nice **Duke of Burgundy**. Also at least 4 **Green Hairstreaks** and a **Dingy Skipper**."

Mick & Wendy Campbell paid another visit to the disused railway line near Salden Wood, Bucks this morning 26th April, hoping to find an early Wood White had emerged after all the warm weather: It wasn't particularly warm, about 18C and breezy, so they were quite surprised to count 12 **Wood Whites** along the embankment. Other species seen were **Grizzled Skippers** (2), **Speckled Woods** (5), **Brimstones** (4), **Peacocks** (4), **Orange-tips** (5), **Small White** and a **Large White**. Also, their first **Silver-Y** moth of the season.

Wednesday 25th April 2007

Relying on the weather forecast, which said it would get nicer as the day progressed, Dennis Dell went to Ivinghoe Beacon / Steps Hill this afternoon, 25th April:

"Unfortunately, the weather girl got it wrong again, but since there are reports of the Duke of Burgundy being on the wing in Wilts, Dorset and Hants already, I thought I'd look in some of the sheltered hollows the Duke of Burgundy frequents here. No luck I'm afraid. All the usual suspects, **Brimstones**, **Speckled Woods**, **Peacocks**, **Green-veined Whites**, **Small Whites**, **Orange-tips**, with the small consolation of a single nice fresh-looking **Green Hairstreak**."

UTB's first Field Meeting of the year was led by Paul Bowyer who sent this report: "On a sunny warm *Easter Monday*, 15 Upper Thames members met at the BBOWT reserve at *Homefield Wood* near Marlow Common. There were good numbers of butterflies which hibernate as adults: 16 **Peacocks**, 12 **Brimstones** and 4 **Commas**. There were understandably fewer of those emerging, but **Small White**, **Green-veined White** and **Speckled Wood** were all seen. Ched George gave us an insight into the variety of bumble bees which exist in this area. He captured and showed us 6 species. These were the **Buff Tailed**, **Common Carder**, **Red Tailed**, **White Tailed**, **Garden** and **Vestal Cuckoo**. Among other creatures found were a large family of field mice and a pink frog. The only thing missing was a sighting of the Orange Underwing day flying moth."
Thank you to Paul for leading a very enjoyable event.

Monday 23rd April 2007

Derek Brown reported the following today: "Just to let you know that finally I had a couple of **Green-veined Whites** in the garden (*Beenham*) yesterday, 22nd."

On Saturday 21st April Paul Bowyer went to Sands Bank, High Wycombe: "I counted 20+ **Dingy Skippers**, 6 **Green Hairstreaks**, 8 **Brimstones**, a **Comma**, 3 **Peacocks** and a **Small White**. At home at *Flackwell Heath* I saw a **Holly Blue**, a **Small White** and a **Peacock**. At *Wilks Park*, *Flackwell Heath*, I saw 2 **Peacocks**."

Saturday 21st April 2007

Dave Wilton paid another visit to the disused railway cutting west of Westcott airfield Saturday afternoon (21st): "I found that **Dingy Skipper** has at last begun to emerge away from the Chilterns! Four were seen there, along with six **Grizzled Skippers**. Other species flying were **Brimstone**, **Orange-tip**, **Small White**, **Green-veined White**, **Small Tortoiseshell**, **Peacock**, **Comma** and **Speckled Wood**. There is a small **Green Hairstreak** colony here but I've seen no sign of them yet."

David & Wendy Redhead went for a walk round Bald Hill (Aston Rowant NNR South) and then through Cowleaze Wood Saturday 21st: "The bluebells were making a glorious sight and scent. On the way our butterfly sightings were : 14 **Brimstone** (including two egg laying females), 6 **Dingy Skipper**, 5 **Speckled Wood**, 4 **Green-veined White**, 3 **Grizzled Skipper**, 1 **Large White**, 1 **Small White**, 1 **Small Copper** and 1 **Peacock**. Back home in the garden a **Holly Blue** and some **Orange-tips** put our species count up to 11 for the day."

Richard Soulsby says he has, at last, been able to get a positive identification of a Green-veined White, after one settled in his garden in *Benson* at lunchtime today, 21st April.

Pete Eeles sent this report today, 21st April: "I took a lunchtime walk near *Sheffield Bottom Lock, near Theale*, and saw 8 **Orange-tip** (all male), 4 **Holly Blue**, 2 **Green-veined White**, 1 **Peacock**, 1 **Red Admiral** and 7 **Brimstone**. In addition, I found 3 **Orange-tip** eggs, all laid on **Garlic Mustard** (none being found on **Cuckoo**flower)."

On Saturday 21st April Mick & Wendy Campbell had 6 species of butterfly in their garden: **Large White**, **Green-veined White**, **Orange-tip** (male & female), **Peacock**, **Speckled Wood** and **Holly Blue**.

Tony Croft went to Wytham Woods on Friday afternoon, 20th April: "I was trying to rectify my **Green Hairstreak** duck and was pleased to see three of them in the small areas managed for this species. Also there were lots of **Orange-tips** visiting the **cuckoo** flower and **Jack-by-the-hedge**; 20+ **Speckled Wood** and a few **Peacock**, **Brimstones** and **Small Tortoiseshell**. I took this photo of a **Holly Blue** in my garden in Bucks on Sunday." [\[A permit is required to visit Wytham Woods - click here for their website\]](#)

Derek & Cathy Brown went to Hartslock on Friday morning (20th): "We saw **Green Hairstreak** (9); **Grizzled Skipper** (5); **Small Heath** (2); **Dingy Skipper** (30+); **Peacock** (2); **Brimstone** (6); **Orange-tip** (1) and **Small Copper** (2). We also tried *Snelmore Common* for the **Emperor Moth** but with no luck."

David Redhead sent the following observations on 19th April: "Today I identified my third female **Orange-tip** of 2007. My count for the much easier to recognise male has almost reached the half century. My second **Orange-tip** female was somewhat amazing being literally half the normal size. In fact I have never seen a butterfly so far removed from its

normal size but otherwise she was perfect. So far I have found 19 **Orange-tip** eggs on three foodplants : **Garlic Mustard** (12), **Honesty** (4) & **Cuckoo Flower** (3). Most years the Honesty in our garden goes unused. Four of the eggs laid on Garlic Mustard were on the edges of leaves rather than the normal place, the flower stem. Each year I find one or two, at most, "misdirected" eggs like these but a third is a very high proportion. I wonder if this is because the butterflies are a bit ahead of the flowers and they have been trying to lay on flowerheads not yet fully open. Is this a minor example of what many ecologists worry will be one of the downsides of climate change - the insects getting out of synch with their foodplants. Also one of the eggs on the Honesty has been laid on a flower petal which I have never seen before."

Thursday 19th April 2007

Richard Soulsby went to Hartslock this afternoon, 19th, in superb weather (19C, 100% sun): "I saw much the same species as Tom Stevenson - **Green Hairstreak** 4, **Small Heath** 5, **Grizzled Skipper** 4, but by far the commonest species was **Dingy Skipper**. Tom's estimate of 50+ was no exaggeration – I counted to 44 then gave up counting. In addition, **Brimstone** 9, **Peacock** 3, **Small Tortoiseshell** 1, 2 flying Blues (probably Holly), and several distant Whites, plus **Orange-tip** on the roadside verge. Moths: several **Pyrausta nigrata** and one very fresh **Mother Shipton**. A very pleasant afternoon!"

Tom Stevenson sent this update today, 19th April: "After spending several days chasing Whites around hoping they might settle for a positive ID, I eventually pinned down (not literally) a **Green-veined White** this morning at **Ewelme Watercress Beds LNR**."

Dave Ferguson visited Yoesden Bank yesterday (18th): "It produced only 3 butterflies: a **Small Heath**, an **Orange-tip** and a **Peacock**. Today was better. **Lodge Hill** produced **Brimstone** (18), **Peacock** (2), **Speckled Wood** (1), **Small White** (1), **Small Copper** (1), **Green Hairstreak** (1), **Grizzled Skipper** (1). The scrub by the nearby railway lines produced **Brimstone** (6), **Speckled Wood** (2), **Holly Blue** (1), **Orange-tip** (1), **Peacock** (1)."

Judith Barnard was in Willen, Milton Keynes on Wednesday 18th April and saw 2 Speckled Wood and 1 male Orange-tip.

David Redhead spent Wednesday 18th checking Brown Hairstreak eggs (70% now hatched) at the Otmoor RSPB Reserve and doing transects at the **M40 Compensation Area & Shabington Wood** and saw just three species: **Peacock** (10), **Speckled Wood** (9) and **Orange-tip** (3). Back home he was told by Wendy that their garden had been more productive with **Brimstone**, **Comma**, **Holly Blue**, **Orange-tip**, **Large White**, **Peacock** & **Small White** recorded. The bonus for David was seeing his first **Brown Hairstreak caterpillar** of the year - a 2mm long third instar which had re-emerged from the leaf buds. It was christened Gamma. Alpha and Beta were seen previously by Shelagh Harlow as first instars emerging from their eggs. Shelagh is currently studying Greek!

Tuesday 17th April 2007

Nick Bowles passed on this news today, 17th April: "Tony Rayner phoned me today with a report of **Small Copper** in his garden in **Cholsey, Oxon**, this lunchtime."

Tom Stevenson spent a successful hour at Hartslock this afternoon, Tuesday 17th April adding three new species to his list for this season: **Green Hairstreak** (c6), **Dingy Skipper** (50+) and **Small Heath** (3).

Monday 16th April 2007

Dave Ferguson recorded his first Large White of the season in his *Beaconsfield* garden this morning, *16th April*, but says that two visits to the Ivinghoe Hills has produced nothing.

Tom Stevenson visited Swyncombe this afternoon, 16th April, and saw several **Small Coppers** and a **Grizzled Skipper**. "Also, my son reports about 30 **Dingy Skippers** at *Hartslock Reserve* this afternoon."

Allen Beechey sent some sightings that he had at Yoesden Bank today, Monday 16th: "During my lunch break today I went to *Yoesden Bank* to look for some early emergers. As is normal with this sort of thing, I didn't see the two species I was aiming for (Grizzled Skipper and Green Hairstreak) but I did see two new species for me this year (and possibly the Upper Thames area??), **Small Heath** and **Dingy Skipper**. Other species on the wing were **Brimstone** (male & female), **Peacock**, **Large White** and **Green-veined White**."

Wendy & Mick Campbell visited Aston Upthorpe in the hope of seeing an early Duke of Burgundy on 16th April. No luck with the Duke of Burgundy (which are on the wing further south, see the [Hants & IoW website](#)), however they did record 25 butterflies of 6 species. Late afternoon they moved on to the BBOWT *Hartslock Reserve* and were very pleased to record 10 very active **Green Hairstreak**, mostly flying around the sheltered hawthorn at the top of the site, and 2 **Dingy Skippers**. Other species seen were **Holly Blue**, **Brimstone**, **Small Tortoiseshell**, **Small White** and **Orange-tip**. Moths seen were **Small Purple-barred** and *Adela reaumurella*.

Francis Gomme sent this update today: "Good numbers of **Grizzled Skipper** and **Green Hairstreak** at *Grangelands* on *Saturday 14th* plus two **Dingy Skipper**, the first I have seen this year. Also **Green-veined White**, **Orange-tip**, **Small Whites**, **Large Whites**, **Brimstones**, **Peacocks** and **Commas**. On *Sunday 15th*, 12+ **Dingy** at *Grangelands and Rifle Range*, obviously emerging in some numbers across this site. Other species seen as per Saturday. 14 species now flying in hills above Princes Risborough!"

Welcome to the website, Mary Payne from Stoke Mandeville, Bucks, who reported the following today: "Seen in our garden yesterday, *15th April*, **Brimstone**; **Peacock**; **Orange-tip**."

On April 15th, Phil Coles' Shirburn Hill (Open Access Land) Transect recorded: **Brimstone** 19, **Orange-tip** 4, **Green Hairstreak** 1, **Red Admiral** 1, **Small Tortoiseshell** 1 and **Peacock** 5.

Sunday 15th April 2007

Dave Wilton went to the disused railway line to the west of Westcott village again today, Sunday 15th: "I managed to see four **Grizzled Skippers** (they started to emerge there yesterday, I'm told). They were difficult to get photos of today, being very flighty, so the quality of the attached picture (*see below*) is not as good as I would have liked. Other species on the wing comprised **Orange-tip**, **Small White**, **Large White**, **Brimstone** & **Peacock**. If anything, there was more interest amongst the day-flying moths there. I saw **Common Heath** (2, both male), **Ruby Tiger** (1), *Pyrausta aurata* (1) and *Semioscopis steinkellneriana* (2) flying in the brilliant sunshine."

John Parsons, Newbury, went to Greenham Common on 15/04/07 and recorded a **Small Copper** and a day-flying moth - the **Common Heath** (*see photo below*).

Derek Brown sent the following report today: "Cathy saw a **Green-veined White** and a **Large White** at *Coley Park in Reading* on *Thursday 12th* and we had a record 8 **Holly Blues** in our garden in *Beenham* on *Saturday 14th* along with **Orange-tips**, (3), **Small Whites**, (6),

Brimstones, (3) and a **Peacock** but no new species. *Today, (15th)*, we tried *Greenham Common* and along with several Brimstones and Peacocks saw a single **Comma** and a single **Small Copper**."

Richard Soulsby sent this news today, 15th April: "I had an **Orange-tip** in my garden in *Benson* this morning, 15th. Then I did the *Swyncombe* transect this afternoon in glorious weather. There were surprisingly few butterflies around, but a good selection of species: **Brimstone**, **Peacock**, **Small Tortoiseshell**, **Speckled Wood**, **Large White**, **Holly Blue**, **Green Hairstreak** and **Small Copper**."

Mick & Wendy Campbell visited two sites in the Chilterns today, 15th April: The first site was *Bradenham Bank* where, despite being warm and sunny, there were very few species on the wing with just **Peacock** (8), **Brimstone** (10) and **Orange-tip** (1) present and a single longhorn moth - *Adela reaumurella*. They had more success at *Lodge Hill* with 6 species of butterfly, including two new ones for them this season - **Small Copper** (1) and **Grizzled Skipper** (6). Also their first **Cinnabar** moth of the year.

Saturday 14th April 2007

Alastair Driver, who looks after a local nature reserve called Ali's Pond in Sonning, Berks, sent this report today, 14th April: "I've been working at *Ali's Pond LNR, Sonning*, on and off this last week and have seen a good variety of butterflies, including my first **Large White**, **Holly Blue** and **Small Copper** of the year, all on *12th April*."

David Redhead visited Aston Upthorpe this afternoon, Saturday 14th April: "I saw two definite and possibly three **Grizzled Skippers**. The first was seen with the help of Jenny & Michael Kelsey immediately outside the entrance to Juniper Valley. Between us we did quite well for species. As well as the Grizzled Skippers we recorded: **Peacock**, **Brimstone**, **Orange-tip**, **Holly Blue**, **Large White**, **Small White**, **Green-veined White**. Then when I got back to the grain dryer I added a **Small Tortoiseshell** - my first of the year! Back home in *Littlemore* I found a couple of **Orange-tip** eggs (still white) on a Cuckoo Flower although I have still not seen a female Orange-tip."

Dave Ferguson reports seeing a male **Orange-tip** in his garden in *Beaconsfield* this morning, Saturday 14th and another on *Steps Hill, Bucks*, this afternoon. Also a *Green-veined White* at *Aston Clinton Ragpits* this afternoon.

Pete Eeles visited Greenham Common and Midgham Lakes today, both in Berkshire: "At *Greenham Common* I saw 2 **Brimstone** (1 male, 1 female), 1 male **Orange-tip**, 1 **Holly Blue**, 3 **Peacock**, 1 **Small Tortoiseshell** and 1 **Comma**. At *Midgham Lakes*, I saw 8 **Orange-tip** (6 male, 2 female) and witnessed a pair mating. In addition, there were 7 **Peacock**, 3 **Small Tortoiseshell**, 2 **Red Admiral**, 1 **Comma** and 2 **Speckled Wood**."

David Fuller saw these butterflies in his Maidenhead garden today, 14th: Male **Orange-tip**, male **Holly Blue**, **Comma** and **Small White**.

Friday 13th April 2007

Francis Gomme sent the following update today, 13th April: "**Grizzled Skippers** (2) again at *Grangelands* this morning plus another on nearby Rifle Range. **Green Hairstreak** numbers appear to be building after first sighting on 6th. During brief visit (3) seen again today in scrub on slopes below *Pulpit Hill* and another on Grangelands itself. Also **Peacocks**, **Commas**, **Brimstones**, **Speckled Woods** and **Orange-tips**."

David Gantzel went for a short walk around Widmer farm, Hazlemere, Bucks today,

Friday 13th April and saw: one female **Brimstone**, two **Commas**, three **Small Tortoiseshells**, a few **Peacocks** and, surprisingly, a close up view of a lovely male **Common Blue!** One male **Orange-tip** in his garden in Hazlemere.

Tom Stevenson saw his first Holly Blue of the year down at his Benson allotment yesterday morning (12th) then another together with his first **Orange-tip** at **Ewelme Watercress Beds LNR** yesterday afternoon.

Thursday 12th April 2007

Dave Maunder sent the following news today, 12th April: "I finally saw my first **Orange-tips** (2) up at **Grangelands reserve** today. We also saw **Peacocks** (10), **Brimstones** (5 male, 6 female) - I watched most of the females egg-laying in the midday sun! Also one **Green-veined White** up here; meanwhile back in **Aylesbury** I saw my third **Orange-tip**, also **Holly Blue** (1) and two more **Brimstones**."

Francis Gomme sent this first sighting report in today: "My first **Grizzled Skipper** this morning (12th) at **Grangelands in Bucks**. Will need to check but probably the earliest I have recorded the species on this site! Rather hazy sun and fresh breeze but also had **Comma** (4), **Peacock** (12+), **Orange-tip** (2), **Brimstone** (4), **Small White** (1), plus a **Small Tortoiseshell** across the road at **Cadsden**. At least ten species now on the wing in and around **Princes Risborough!**"

Mick & Wendy Campbell went for a walk on the Newbury Downs today, Thursday 12th. No new species seen: **Brimstones**, **Peacocks**, **Comma** and 2 probable **Small Tortoiseshells**, one chasing the other and flying far too quickly for a positive identification!

Wednesday 11th April 2007

Dave Wilton had a pleasant amble around Finemere Wood on Wednesday afternoon, 11th, in the company of David Dennis: "We managed to see six species - **Orange-tip** (male and female), **Green-veined White**, **Small Tortoiseshell**, **Peacock**, **Comma** and **Speckled Wood**. No **Brimstones** were recorded, but the sun was behind clouds for much of the time we were there."

Yesterday, 10th April, in fine weather Dennis Dell went to Westend Hill and Southend Hills, on the southern edge of Cheddington in Bucks: "Nice chalk hills with scrub, surrounded by short sward, worth looking at again in July by someone. **Peacock** [28], **Small Tortoiseshell** [7], **Brimstone** and **Small White**."

On Tuesday 10th April Dave Ferguson saw a single **Speckled Wood** at Little Marlow Gravel Pit, along with a **Small White** and a **Peacock**. "Butterflies were very scarce over the holiday in this area, only a few **Peacocks** and **Brimstones**, much fewer than a few weeks ago."

At a site near Bicester yesterday, 10th April David Redhead recorded 20+ **Peacock**, 3 male **Orange-tip**, 1 **Comma** and 1 **Speckled Wood**. "Some **Cuckoo Flowers** already in evidence but no **Orange-tip** eggs found - although **Orange-tip** males have been on the wing since the beginning of the month I have not yet seen a female (but others have in the last couple of days) so the lack of eggs isn't surprising."

Tom Stevenson found an hour to visit Swyncombe on 10th April: "Not a great deal to show for it, 3 **Speckled Woods**, several **Brimstones**, a **Large White** and about half a dozen **Peacocks**."

On Monday 9th April, Pete Eeles visited the same patch of nettles where he found the fully-grown Red Admiral larva (on 2nd April): "I found 3 Red Admiral pupae, and 3 larvae in different stages. Not bad considering that this nettle patch is 4 foot by 2 foot! It's south-facing in a sheltered spot – as predicted in a message from Nick Bowles, who tells me that several other sightings of immature stages, and ovipositing females, have been seen this year."

Frank Banyard reported the following on 9th April: "Sunday 8th in my garden in Beaconsfield: Holly Blue 2, Orange-tip 3, Green-veined White 1, Speckled Wood 1, Brimstone 1 female. At Holtspur Bottom on 6th April Orange-tip 2."

Monday 9th April 2007

News just received from David Redhead that he and Wendy visited Swyncombe Down, Oxon at midday today, Monday 9th, to do the transect: "Not a great deal about in spite of the sunshine. Nine Peacock, two Brimstone and a Speckled Wood, but the real bonus was a Green Hairstreak."

Only two butterflies were seen in Dave Wilton's garden at Westcott today, 9th:

"However, as they were Large White and Holly Blue, both new for me this year, I'm not complaining! A three-hour local walk yesterday afternoon was noteworthy only for the number of Small Tortoiseshells recorded (eleven) and the sighting of a 4ft long Grass Snake. Worth mentioning from a visit to BBOWT's River Ray Reserves on the Bucks/Oxon border this afternoon were four more Small Tortoiseshells and a pair of Curlew."

Phil Coles went to Shirburn Hill (Open Access Land) today, April 9th and recorded: Brimstone (2) and Peacock (5).

Richard Soulsby saw a Large White in Blewbury, Oxon today Monday 9th April.

At Moor Copse on Sunday, 8th, Derek Brown recorded a Speckled Wood, then saw a Holly Blue in his garden in Beenham, Berks. Derek and Cathy also tried Aston Upthorpe where they saw lots of Peacocks, Small Whites, Brimstones, and a couple of Small Tortoiseshells.

Yesterday afternoon, 8th April, the Speckled Wood hotspot between Wendy & David Redhead's house and the River Thames produced their first Speckled Wood of the year plus two Red Admirals. During the day they saw another seven species in their garden: Brimstone (male only), Large White, Small White, Green-veined White, Orange-tip (male only), Comma & Peacock. Nine species in a day is their best effort to date.

Dave Maunder reported these sightings for 8th April: "I saw my first Speckled Wood here in Aylesbury today, 8th, taking me to ten species. I also saw Peacocks (2), Comma (1), Small Tortoiseshell (1), Large White (1), and Small Whites (6) at my allotment and Peacocks (2) and Small Whites (2) in my garden. Still not seen an Orange tip yet, though!"

Tom Stevenson saw a Large White pass rapidly through his Benson garden on Sunday, 8th April.

Dennis Dell reported the following on 8th April: "This Peacock (see photo below) was found on Menmarsh Road by Hell Coppice, Bernwood, today. My wife rescued it and we placed it in the undergrowth. The image is blurred because its wings were vibrating very rapidly. The specimen was in perfect condition, so this is strange behaviour. The other photo is on a Cherry Tree in our garden; this is the first time I've seen a butterfly nectaring on Cherry blossom."

Phil Coles sent these sightings for April 8th: "1 km square SP7402 (Emmington, Oxon) – **Brimstone** 4, **Small Tortoiseshell** 9 and **Peacock** 21."

Mick & Wendy Campbell made their first visit of the season to the disused railway line near Salden Wood, Bucks, on Sunday 8th April. They recorded 7 species of butterfly, as follows: **Comma** (8), **Brimstone** (9), **Peacock** (24), **Small Tortoiseshell** (2 - both in pristine condition), **Orange-tip** (2 male), **Speckled Wood** (3) and a single **Small White**.

Saturday 7th April 2007

Derek & Cathy Brown were disappointed with the number of butterflies they saw Saturday 7th: "It wasn't such a good day and no Green Hairstreaks or Coppers turned up. We did however both see a single **Small Tortoiseshell** at *Decoy Heath* which is new for us this year. We'll try again Sunday!"

Richard Soulsby recorded a Speckled Wood in his garden in *Benson* today, 7th April.

David & Wendy Redhead added another species to this season's list with a Green-veined White in their garden in Littlemore. "Also in the garden were **Small Whites**, **Peacocks**, **Commas**, male **Orange-tip** and **Red Admiral** but the **Brimstones**, **Holly Blue** & **Large White** were notable by their absence."

On Friday 6th April Dave Maunder had his first Holly Blue of the year in his *Aylesbury* garden. "Also yesterday I saw **Peacock** (10), **Small Tortoiseshell** (7), **Comma** (2), **Brimstone** (3), **Large White** (2), **Small White** (1) and **Green-veined White** (1) while cycling around the *Fairford Leys* area. Finally, on a visit to *Winslow* I saw **Peacock** (5), **Comma** (2) and **Green-veined White** (1). Altogether a glorious day's weather for the butterflies!"

Friday 6th April 2007

Welcome to the website new contributor John Ward-Smith who sent the following sightings today, Friday 6th April:

"2nd April at Oaktree Garden Centre, Winkfield, Berks there was a **Speckled Wood**.

5th April, in my garden at *Bracknell*, a **Holly Blue**, the first of the season. Also **Holly Blue** is present again today, 6th April. On warm evenings one or two **Commas** are regularly seen here.

Generally, plenty of **Brimstone** and **Peacock** at local heathland sites. Also, **Red Admiral** at *Caesars Camp* on 2nd April. Still have not seen a **Small Tortoiseshell**."

Derek Brown sent this news from Beenham, Berks today, 6th April: "Cathy and I were confined to the garden today - lots of remedial work urgently required - but we still managed 3 new species for the year. We had singles of **Orange-tip** (male), **Peacock**, **Brimstone** and 2 **Small White**. We're hoping to tour the local sites tomorrow - perhaps a **Green Hairstreak** or **Small Copper** at *Decoy Heath*?"

Dave Ferguson saw his first Small Tortoiseshell of the year on *Steps Hill, Bucks* this morning, 6th April.

Dave Wilton sent this update today, Friday 6th April: "Having seen my first **Speckled Wood** near *Westcott* yesterday, I went out and about locally today in search of other emerging species but the only one seen was a single male **Orange-tip** at *Finemere Wood*. There were loads of **Peacocks** and good numbers of **Brimstones** and **Commas** but little else seemed to be flying. However, I was pleased to see three **Small Tortoiseshells** (one at *Finemere* and two at *Greatmoor*). I saw another trio around *Westcott* yesterday as well so let's hope this species is having a revival in its fortunes. Pictured below is a **Brimstone** which

was unusually patient while I took some pictures of it this morning, feeding from aubretia in our garden."

David & Wendy Redhead had a Holly Blue in their garden in *Littlemore* yesterday, *Thursday 5th April*, flying round the holly tree and laurel bush. Also seen in the garden by Wendy were **Brimstones, Peacocks & Commas** and a couple of **Small Whites** by David. *Then today, Friday 6th, David did his Shabbington Wood transect:* "All I saw in Bernwood Forest was **Peacocks (6)** and **Commas (3)** - back at home Wendy added a **Large White** to her list along with **Brimstones, Peacocks, Commas, Small Whites, a Holly Blue** and a **Red Admiral**. I was actually in Shabbington Wood from 10.15-15.30 as I spent the morning clearing one of the transect sections which had become rather difficult to negotiate before walking the transect and then looking for some Brown Hairstreak Eggs and my sum total was just nine butterflies. I did have a faraway white which could have been a large."

Mick & Wendy Campbell visited two interesting sites near Chipping Norton, Oxfordshire on Thursday 5th April. The first was *Foxholes*, a pretty mixed woodland site where they saw **Brimstones (10), Peacocks (7), a Comma** and an **Orange-tip**. An **Orange Underwing sp.** was seen on the ground. The second site was *Hook Norton disused railway cutting*. As it was late afternoon the only butterfly seen was a Peacock, however the warm, steep-sided cutting had many wildflower plants and flowering violets and will be well worth another visit later in the season.

At home in their garden near Thame on Friday 6th, Mick saw his first **Holly Blue** of the season along with a Peacock, Brimstone and a pristine **Small Tortoiseshell**.

On 5th April David Fuller sent this news: "I've just returned from Morocco where I've been birding, a wonderful time with 179 species including 10 larks, 8 wheatears, Bald Ibis, Crimson-winged Finch and Desert Sparrow. A few butterflies i.e. Wall Brown, Small Copper, Painted Lady, Swallowtail and some Fritillaries such as Queen of Spain and Small Pearl-bordered. *Yesterday, 4th April, back in my garden in Maidenhead,* 2 **Small White** with 1 there today, plus a **Peacock**. Another Peacock and **Brimstones** at Toad Hall garden centre, Hambledon and Medmenham today."

Dee and Martin Raper saw their first Orange Tip male in the *Moor Copse Reserve, Berks,* this morning, *Thursday 5th April.*

Tuesday 3rd April 2007

On 2nd April David Gantzel reports seeing Brimstones in several places in *Hazlemere, Bucks,* and two **Peacocks** and a Brimstone in *Bassetsbury, High Wycombe.*

David & Wendy Redhead's garden in Littlemore did rather well for butterflies yesterday morning, 2nd April: "Six species = 2 male **Brimstone**, 2 **Peacock**, 3 **Comma**, 1 **Red Admiral** (one not seen for a while), 1 **Small White** and the male **Orange-tip** spent even more time in the garden than the previous day. At one stage there were 3 **Commas**, 2 **Peacocks** and the **Red Admiral** on the laurel bush with 2 of the **Commas** and the **Red Admiral** on the same flower head."

Pete Eeles sent this surprising news from Thatcham, Berks, on 2nd April: "I took the dogs for a walk this evening in the local park and came across a patch of stinging nettles with the tell-tale folded leaves that **Red Admiral** larvae create. Not expecting to find anything other than an abandoned abode from last year, I uncurled the leaves and found, to my utter astonishment, a full-grown **Red Admiral larva!** The egg must have been laid 3 or 4 weeks ago. A definite sign of climate change if ever I saw one!"

On Monday 2nd April Dave Ferguson saw a Holly Blue in his garden in *Beaconsfield,*

Bucks, at mid-day.

Dave Wilton's trip to the Finemere area in Bucks in the gorgeous weather of Monday afternoon (2nd April) produced a healthy 68 butterflies of 5 species within the wood and in the adjacent meadows: "They comprised **Brimstone** (8), **Small White** (1), **Small Tortoiseshell** (4), **Peacock** (38) and **Comma** (17). Two day-flying moth species were also recorded, **Orange Underwing sp.** (2) racing around the tree-tops and a probable **Adela cuprella** (1) perched on top of a willow."

Robin Dryden went for a walk around Witney Lake Oxon yesterday, 2nd April: "There were two **Commas**, two **Brimstones**, four **Peacocks** one **Red Admiral** and a **Small White**."

On Monday morning, 2nd April, Tom Stevenson had a **Small White** flying about his allotment in *Benson, Oxon*, searching for nectar.

02/04/07 - Paul Bowyer sent these sightings: "On *April 1st* at Bassetsbury Lane allotments in *High Wycombe* I saw 1 **Comma**, 3 **Brimstones**, 2 **Small Tortoiseshells** and 1 **Peacock**."

On Sunday 1st April Mick Campbell recorded a male **Brimstone** and a **Peacock** in his garden near Thame.

Sunday 1st April 2007

David & Wendy Redhead saw the following in their garden in Littlemore, Oxford, on 1st April: "Male **Brimstone** (2), **Comma** (3), **Peacock** (2), **Small White** (1) - all were showing an interest in the large laurel bush, either to nectar on its flowers or bask on the leaves in the sunshine. But the real surprise was a short visit from a male **Orange Tip**."

Dave Maunder sent this news on 1st April: "At last, I've had my first **Peacock** (4) sightings today in Aylesbury, also my first **Large White** (1, male), plus **Small White** (1), **Brimstones** (2), **Comma** (1), and **Small Tortoiseshells** (2) - all seen on a walk along the stream through *Fairford Leys*. Also yesterday (*31st March*) I saw my first **Green-veined White** (1) at my allotment in town, plus another Comma there. So this brings my total to eight species so far this year."

1st April - Stuart Hodges reports seeing a **Brimstone** on *14th March* and a **Peacock** on the *16th*, but says the 3 **Peacocks** hibernating in his garden shed in *Steeple Claydon, Bucks* have still not moved from the cupboard they've been overwintering in.

Friday 30th March 2007

Wendy Wilson sent this news on 29th March: "Saw CLOUDS of butterflies Tuesday afternoon, *27th*, on the lovely sunny footpath below *Latimer House near Chesham, Bucks*, just 1km inside the UTB area - **Brimstones**, **Peacocks**, **Small Tortoiseshells** and **Small White** - nothing new, but the sheer numbers were breath-taking."

Wednesday 28th March 2007

Dave Wilton spent yesterday afternoon (Tuesday 27th) in Bernwood Forest: "I added another **146 Brown Hairstreak eggs** to this year's tally. However, despite all the sunshine the only butterfly seen was a single **Brimstone** as I passed through Honeyburge. *Today, 28th*, was a completely different kettle of fish. I went to the disused railway cutting to the west of *Westcott airfield* and managed to see **Brimstone** (4), **Small White** (1 - my first for the year), **Peacock** (9), **Small Tortoiseshell** (2) and **Comma** (6). Apart from the patrolling

Brimstones, all of the butterflies were on or near willows in flower."

On Monday afternoon, 26th March, Richard Soulsby saw his first non-hibernator of the year: "It was a **Small White** in *Benson, Oxon*. There were also several **Brimstones** flying around in various places between Benson and Oxford. Sunny, 15C. I also saw a **Peacock** today (28th) at *Blewbury, Oxon*."

Tuesday 27th March 2007

David Gantzel sent these sightings from Hazlemere, Bucks today, 27th March: "A **Brimstone** yesterday, March 26th (first one was on March 10th) and a **Small Tortoiseshell** today, Tuesday 27th.

Derek Brown sent this news today, 27th March: "Cathy saw a **Speckled Wood** and **Peacock** at *Coley Park in Reading* yesterday, 26th, and a **Holly Blue** in our *Beenham* garden on the 27th, taking her up to 5 species for the year."

Dave Wilton was out and about yesterday, 26th March: "No Whites today, unfortunately, but spring has certainly sprung as I did manage to see **36 butterflies** during a pre-transect reconnaissance bike ride to Finemere Wood. In the *Quainton area*, on my way to and from the wood, I saw **Brimstone** (4), **Small Tortoiseshell** (1) and **Comma** (1), while within *Finemere Wood* itself I found **Brimstone** (8, conservative estimate), **Peacock** (10), **Small Tortoiseshell** (1) and **Comma** (11). BBOWT have been quite active there during the winter months. The "turning circle" has been nicely opened out and many more conifers have disappeared from the area to the north of it."

On Monday 26th March David Redhead sent the following sightings: "This morning Wendy & I saw a **Comma** at Radley Road Industrial Estate, *Abingdon* and a **Brimstone** in Radley Road. This afternoon Wendy recorded a **Brimstone**, **Comma**, **Peacock** and **Small White** in our garden in *Littlemore, Oxford* and I saw two **Brimstones**, a **Peacock** and a **Comma** at *Slade Camp, Oxford*.

Dave Ferguson reports seeing a Small White at Hedgerley, Bucks yesterday morning, 26th March.

Thomas Merckx reported the following yesterday, 26th March: "I've seen a male **Brimstone** at *Charlbury* and a **Small White** at *Tubney*, both in Oxon, on the 26th March and another **Small White** at *Tubney* on the 22nd March."

Saturday 24th March 2007

Welcome to the website new contributor Alan Marshall who sent this January sighting in today: "A **Red Admiral** seen on 25th January sunning itself on the window - *Bletchley, Milton Keynes*."

Martin Townsend added to his sightings report for Thursday with 1 Red Admiral seen on willow catkins at *Aston Upthorpe Downs, Oxon* on 14th March.

Thursday 22nd March 2007

Martin Townsend reports seeing a single male Small White near *Cookham village Berks* yesterday, 21st March, in spite of the bitterly cold wind. It was in a sheltered spot, but was flying, in an oilseed rape field.

Tuesday 20th March 2007

Kerry Taylor sent the following report on 17th March. All the sightings were in Willen, Milton Keynes, North Bucks:

"Sunday 11th March - Comma 4, Brimstone 4 and a Small White which landed on the Ivy in my garden. This sighting is two days earlier than the current first sighting listed for Small White this year.

Friday 16th March - Comma 10 plus, Peacock 5 or 6.

Saturday 17th March - Comma 5 or 6, Peacock 3, Small Tortoiseshell 1. I had been admiring a Comma sunbathing in a sheltered spot out of the wind when I noticed another butterfly six inches away from it on the ground. My jaw hit the ground when I saw it was a **Speckled Wood**, easily my earliest sighting of the species. It flew weakly for a short distance. I assume it was newly hatched."

Frank Banyard sent the following news: "I saw a **Speckled Wood** at *our Holtspur Reserve on Thursday 15th March*. This species tends to appear early at Holtspur - there's a very sheltered sunny glade there, but 15/3 is as early as we have ever had. Other species at the time were **Brimstone, Peacock and Comma.**"

Friday 16th March 2007

Derek Brown sent this update today, 16th March: "Just to let you know that Cathy managed a **Brimstone** in our garden in *Beenham, Berks* and a **Red Admiral** at work in *Coley Park, Reading* over the last few days."

16th March - David Fuller passed this news on: "Two friends of mine had a **Comma** trapped in their greenhouse in *Pinkneys Green, Maidenhead, Berks* on *13th March*. Today, *16th March*, I had a **Comma** warming itself in my Maidenhead garden."

Thomas Merckx reports seeing a Red Admiral at Tubney House, Tubney, Oxon on 15th March.

The following news was received from Dave Ferguson on 15h March: "A **Peacock and Comma** at *Stoke Common, Bucks* on *13th March.*"

On 15th March Wendy Wilson reported seeing a Peacock in her Bucks garden earlier in the week.

At lunchtime on 14th March Richard Soulsby carried out his Howbery Park transect near Wallingford: 4 x **Brimstone**, one each of **Small Tortoiseshell, Peacock and Red Admiral**, in mild, sunny weather, 13C.

Dave Wilton's walk through Rushbeds Wood, Bucks yesterday (13th) produced five Brimstones, a Peacock and a Comma which was happy to pose for the camera.

David Redhead was walking in Oxford City's Rivermead Nature Park on 13th March: "12 degrees of sunshine quickly produced a couple of basking **Peacocks**. As I approached a small ivy-covered dead tree, in full sunshine, a **Brimstone** emerged from the ivy. It spent a couple of minutes fluttering about the ivy, never more than a foot away. Then in spite of the sun still shining it crawled back into the ivy - it was quite difficult to locate as the greenish undersides of its wings were an almost perfect match for the leaf it had decided to hide under. So some evidence of the value of ivy as a wildlife habitat and that the "at least 13C in sunshine" rule for walking a butterfly transect is well chosen. On returning home, two **Peacocks** and a very small **Comma** were to be seen alternately basking on the flint gravel paths and nectaring on the blossom of the overhead cherry plum tree."

Tuesday 13th March 2007

Judith Barnard saw two **Peacocks** 'dancing' together and a **Brimstone** in *Willen, Bucks* again today, 13th March.

Margaret Price was pleased to report the following: "A couple of butterflies in my garden in *Oxon* this morning, 13th March, a tatty **Red Admiral** and a lovely male **Brimstone** nectaring on a blue flowered hebe and a daffodil. It is wonderful to see butterflies in the garden again - please don't forget to fill in your blue garden butterfly survey forms!!"

13th March - Dave Maunder reports several good days of sightings: "I had my first **Brimstones** (2) on *11th March* and **Small Tortoiseshells** (6 - 3 at my Ardenham lane allotment on 11th), **Commas** (2), and **Red Admirals** (3) - most seen while cycling around the Fairford Leys area of *Aylesbury* this weekend. On *12th* I saw a Red Admiral in St Mary's churchyard and we had a Brimstone in our garden. On *13th March* I saw my first **Small White** of this year near *Aylesbury Vale park*, also Brimstones (2) and Small Tortoiseshell (1) - all at the same location!"

Mike Wilkins sent the following today, *13th March*: "My first **Peacock** and second **Comma** today both in my garden in Oxon. Still no sign of Brimstone or anything else. No doubt they will get here eventually."

Monday 12th March 2007

Welcome to the website, new contributor **Stephen Dunstan** who reported the following today, *12th*: "**Brimstones** seen yesterday and today at *Lane End Conference Centre, Bucks*."

Becky Woodell reported seeing a **Small Tortoiseshell** in her garden in *Oakley, Bucks* today, 12th March. Also, lots of **Brimstones** in Whitecross Green Wood yesterday.

David Fuller had a male and female **Brimstone** in his *Maidenhead* garden today, 12th.

Jim Asher saw his first butterfly of the season on *Sunday 11th*, a male **Brimstone** in his garden in *Marcham, Oxon*.

David & Wendy Redhead sent the following report today, *12th March*: "Four species of butterfly graced our garden in *Littlemore, Oxford*, yesterday morning. The first to arrive were two **Red Admirals** about 10.30, both nectaring high up on the blossom on the cherry plum tree before disappearing not to return until the afternoon. Next was a male **Brimstone** which took to patrolling the garden - flying from the lane he took a diagonal route across the vegetable garden to the large laurel bush which he flew backwards and forwards in front of several times before returning to the lane either round the back of the laurel bush or back across the vegetable garden. Shortly afterwards he would reappear and repeat the exercise, he kept this up for the rest of the morning. On one of his returns to the lane he came across a rival male which he made short work of seeing off. A **Peacock** was next shortly to be joined by a second, mainly nectaring on the cherry plum blossom but also taking some time out to bask on the gravel paths in the vegetable garden. The fourth species was a single **Comma** which was content to just sunbathe on the gravel paths. Things were noticeably quieter in the afternoon with just a Brimstone and Red Admiral seen but the total count for the day was 4 species and 7 butterflies."

Sunday 11th March 2007

Jim Asher reports back on the early **Holly Blue** sighting sent in by **Ashley Whitlock** on *9th March*: "From a quick look at the records database over the past 11 years, the earliest record I have was 15 March (2005). It was also seen on 17.3.05, 18.3.06,

19.3.06. So, 7 March is particularly early!"

Welcome to the website, new contributor Ann Bruce: "I have just seen a **Peacock** butterfly sunning itself on bare soil in a sheltered spot in *Bracknell, Berks.*"

Richard Soulsby sent this news today: "On *Tuesday 6th March*, John Elliott recorded 6 **Brimstones** on the *Howbery Park transect*, while my wife saw one Brimstone in our garden. The next day (*7th*) John and I repeated the first half of the HP transect and had one **Red Admiral** and one **Peacock**, but curiously no Brimstones. In my garden in *Benson, Oxon*, I had my first **Comma** on *8th March*, and today (*11th*) my first Brimstone, making 3 species so far for my garden (with multiple Red Admirals in Jan and Feb). A remarkable year."

Nick Bowles at last had a day with good weather when he wasn't at work: "*College Lake Bucks*, **Small Tortoiseshell** 1, **Peacock** 2. *Dancers End Bucks*, **Brimstone** 2, **Peacock** 1, **Comma** 2 - possibly 3. On the drive back to my home in Tring, Brimstones 3 and in my garden in Tring (Herts), Brimstone 2 -possibly 3, Small Tortoiseshell 1. The Small Tortoiseshells were a surprise as was no Red Admiral all day!"

Tom Stevenson saw single individuals of Peacock and Comma at Millbrook Mead, a small nature reserve in Benson, Oxon today - Sunday 11th March.

David Fuller sent this update today, 11th: "2 male **Brimstones** about all day in my garden in *Maidenhead, Berks* and then male **Brimstone** and **Red Admiral** flying along banks near a gravel pit, also in Maidenhead."

Jackie Tuckey sent the following news on 11th March: "Just spied my first **Brimstone** along the *Ickford road, Bucks*. Spring has sprung!"

On 9th March Wendy Redhead recorded a Brimstone and Red Admiral in her garden in *Littlemore, Oxford*.

Saturday 10th March 2007

On 9th March Ashley Whitlock passed on this exciting report: "Just thought I would drop you a line as I spoke to my father (Robert Whitlock) the other day and he saw a **Holly Blue** in his garden in *Earley near Reading, Berks, on Wednesday 7th March*, probably one of the earliest sightings? He has masses of *Pyracantha* all growing in the front garden which faces south and west and I have in the past observed them ovi-positing on these large bushes." **[A check is being made to see if this is the earliest recorded sighting of a Holly Blue.]**

Judith Barnard, Northants & Beds branch of Butterfly Conservation, sent this sighting today: *Wednesday 7th March*, **Brimstone** and **Small Tortoiseshell** in *Willen*, Milton Keynes, Bucks.

Tom Stevenson sent the following report from Benson, Oxon, on 9th March: "My third species for the year was a **Small Tortoiseshell** in pristine condition nectaring on Plum Blossom in Benson today, 9th March."

On Thursday 8th March Frank Banyard recorded a Comma at *Holtspur Bottom, Bucks*.

David Fuller sent the following update on 9th March: "*Tuesday 6th March*, my garden in *Maidenhead, Berks*, male and female **Brimstone**. *Thursday 8th March, Cockpole Green, near Wargrave* - a **Brimstone** male flying along grassy ditch. At *Odney Island, Cookham*, the worn **Red Admiral** was still there today, 9th, but no sign of the three mint specimens so will look again tomorrow."

Although slightly out of the UTB area, thanks to Wendy Mathews for sending this unusual report: "I live in central London but there is no link nearer than you. We have a *3rd storey terrace adjacent to Waterloo Station* where currently daffodils, berginias, hyacinths, Christmas roses and azaleas are in full bloom. At 10.30am on this sunny morning, *8th March*, I saw a **Red Admiral** with wings outstretched apparently taking nectar from a daffodil. As I watched, it flew across and landed on me - actually on my lavender check shirt - where it stayed for nearly two minutes still with open wings. It then flew to a Christmas rose by which time I had managed to alert my husband to take a photo (*see below*). After 5 minutes it finally flew away and we lost sight of it."

Dave Wilton spent Thursday 8th March catching up on some much needed work in his garden at Westcott: "While I was gardening I was visited by a male **Brimstone** (several times, although presumably the same one), a **Small Tortoiseshell** and, best of all, a **Comma**."

On March 8th Paul Bowyer saw 2 male **Brimstones** at *Burnham Beeches, Bucks*, another at *Cocksherd Wood Britwell, Berks* and another on *Burnham Lane Slough, Berks*.

During a walk near Frieth, Bucks, Mick & Wendy Campbell saw a male **Brimstone** and a pristine **Small Tortoiseshell** on *8th March*.

Wednesday 7th March 2007

Dave Maunder saw his first Comma of the year on *6th March* while he was at work in *Aylesbury, Bucks*.

Dave Ferguson sent this news today, 7th March: "To add to the rush of **Brimstone** sightings, a male flew through our garden in *Beaconsfield, Bucks*, yesterday, *6th March*."

The following report was received from Brian Clews on 6th March: "Just reporting my first **Brimstones** of the year - 3 individuals at various parts of *Cookham, Berks* (c.SU880845) today and a Hummingbird Hawk-moth at Sheepdrove Farm, Lambourn, Berks this afternoon."

Tuesday afternoon, 6th March, David Redhead saw two (possibly three) **Peacocks** and also found three **Purple Hairstreak eggs** on the south face of *Bagley Woods, Oxon*.

Mike Wilkins had his first butterfly of the season yesterday, 6th March, in his garden in Abingdon, Oxon: "It was a **Comma** sunning itself on my hedge. As far as I can remember, it's the first time ever I have had a Comma as a first for the year."

On Tuesday 6th March Frank Banyard started off his season with two **Brimstones** nectaring in his garden in *Beaconsfield, Bucks*.

Tuesday 6th March 2007

Andy Reynolds was delighted to see his first butterfly of the season today, 6th March: "It was a male **Brimstone** in a hurry through *Summertown, Oxford*."

Dave Wilton sent this report today, 6th March: "Today seemed to me to be perfect **Brimstone** weather. When one didn't appear in my garden over lunchtime I decided to go to the disused railway line to the west of *Westcott airfield* and, sure enough, one male **Brimstone** was found 'on patrol' along the sheltered cutting. Shortly afterwards the butterfly seemed to decide that it had done sufficient flying for the day and landed in a bramble patch. I decided to go hunting for it with my camera and it took a while to find, so well was it

camouflaged! That takes me up to four species for this year already, compared to 2006 when I didn't see my first butterfly until the end of March!"

On Tuesday morning 6th March, in warm sunshine, Wendy Campbell saw a male Brimstone fly through her garden near Thame.

Monday 5th March 2007

Tom Stevenson sent the following news today: "My second species of 2007 (following an earlier **Red Admiral** which I think I woke up when tidying the car port) was a **Brimstone**. Several, at least 2, were glowing in the sunshine at the *EWELME (OXON)* watercress beds on *Saturday 3rd March*."

On Saturday 3rd March around midday Thomas Merckx saw a male Brimstone butterfly on the wing in *Charlbury, Oxon*.

Saturday 3rd March 2007

Pete Eeles sent the following sighting today, 3rd March: "I saw 2 **Red Admirals** in my garden in *Thatcham, Berks* – both very worn, but clearly surviving our winter. Roll on spring!"

Dave Wilton noticed a lot of insect activity in his garden at Westcott today, Saturday 3rd March: "Thanks to all that sunshine, even though the breeze was quite chilly, a **Small Tortoiseshell** (...well, three-quarters of one - see photo!) was active for an hour or two, dividing its time between feeding from celandine flowers and sunning itself on one of the honeysuckles. Amongst all the other things buzzing around the garden I managed to identify two varieties of Bumble-bee (*Bombus lapidarius* and *Bombus terrestris*), a Green Shieldbug (*Palomena prasina*) still wearing its brown winter coat and at least ten Seven-spot Ladybirds."

David Fuller saw a Red Admiral along the towpath near *Boulton's Cut, Maidenhead, Berks*, at 10.00am on *2nd March*. "I also saw a **Comma** at *Finchampstead Woods* flying through while I was looking for a Firecrest which I did not see. Today, *Saturday 3rd March*, 4 Red Admirals all nectaring on the same Wild Plum tree on Odney Island Common at Cookham - a wonderful sight. 3 were very fresh and 1 much smaller and not so bright."

On Friday 2nd March Mick & Wendy Campbell had a Small Tortoiseshell in their garden near Thame. It was in pristine condition and was flying quite actively, then sunning itself on the wall of the house.

Thursday 1st March 2007

David and Wendy Redhead saw a Red Admiral in their garden this morning, 1st March, nectaring on a periwinkle flower: "It looked fresh but was on the small side."

Monday 12th February 2007

Dennis Dell sent the following report on Sunday 11th February from Aylesbury, Bucks: "Sunny, but windy and cool; 9 degrees in the shade, 13 in the sun; **Peacock**, in perfect condition, on the ground in the garden fighting against the wind. I decided it should go back into hibernation so I placed it in my garden shed."

Thursday 8th February 2007

Welcome to the website, new contributor Chris Coppock: "I saw a male **Brimstone** near

Gayhurst (NE of Milton Keynes) on *Friday, February 2nd*. From 1991 to 2001 I kept daily butterfly records. The mean date over 11 years for my first Brimstone was 21st March - 47 days later. The earliest was 9th March 2000 (36 days later), and the latest 11th April 1994 (68 days later). I'd like to think it's poor observation, but I'm out a great deal, and Brimstones are hard to miss. There was also a **Red Admiral** up here on Thursday - remember when they weren't even supposed to over-winter in Britain?"

On 6th February Dave Wilton reported the following exciting discovery: "On 1st February, while out searching for Brown Hairstreak eggs near *Oakley* in Bucks, I stumbled across a **Blâck Hairstreak egg** at a site where the butterfly has not previously been recorded. I went back again today armed with camera and the result appears below. It was also interesting to note that some of the blackthorn there is already coming into flower, rather earlier than usual!"

Monday 5th February 2007

Welcome to the website new contributors Michael & Gillian Taylor who sent the following report on 4th February : "A **Red Admiral** in our garden in *Childrey, Nr Wantage*, on 31st January."

Dave Wilton managed to see two Red Admirals on Sunday 4th February: "One of the **Red Admirals** had a death wish, sunning itself on the road at *Touchbridge near Brill, Bucks*, while the other was my garden specimen once again, still making use of the Mahonia."

Saturday 3rd February 2007

Welcome to the website new contributor Brian Clews, who sent the following sighting on 3rd February: "I saw my first **Comma** today, at *Wraysbury Gravel Pit, Berkshire*."

Richard Soulsby had two Red Admirals at 11:30am today, 3rd February: "They were nectaring simultaneously on Viburnum flowers in my garden in *Benson, Oxon*, in sunny calm weather, but at only 4 degees C. I'm confident from close inspection and photos taken that neither of these was the one I saw on 21st January on the same bush. I noted the wing damage on the earlier individual, which was fairly worn. Today's butterflies were one in pristine condition, and one very worn but with different damage to the earlier one. Also the one on 21st and the pristine one today had a little white spot in the red band, but the worn one today did not. So it seems there are at least three individuals hibernating within range of my garden. I wonder what proportion of the autumn Red Admirals are actually over-wintering? I guess the possibility of re-fuelling on nectar in mid-winter must help them."

Wendy & Mick Campbell had another Red Admiral in their garden near Thame today, Saturday 3rd February. It was sunning itself on the wall of the house and was in pristine condition.

Dave Wilton sent the following news on Friday 2nd February: "Over lunch-time today (2nd February), while out and about filling in more egg squares on the Brown Hairstreak distribution map, I managed to see my first UTB-area butterfly of the year. A **Peacock** was enjoying the sunshine in a small copse on the east side of the M40 off the road *between Waterperry and Wheatley*."

Then today, Saturday 3rd, Dave reported another sighting: "I expect there will have been plenty of similar butterfly sightings in the sunshine of the past couple of days but here's a shot of a **Red Admiral** in our garden at *Westcott, Bucks*, this afternoon, my first ever garden record for February. I watched it for about half an hour feeding from one of our mahonias, which are just about the only source of nectar we've got at present. It wasn't at all concerned about my presence or having a camera lens waved at it from about a foot away!"

On 2nd February Dave Ferguson had a Red Admiral in his garden in *Beaconsfield, Bucks*. It was sunning on pampas grass.

Thursday 1st February 2007

During a walk from Fingest in Bucks on Wednesday 31st January, Wendy & Mick Campbell saw two Red Admirals. The first was seen flying and sunbathing in a sunny ride sheltered by tall fir trees in Hanging Wood and the second was patrolling a warm hedgeline on the edge of Bosmore Farm. The temperature was 6-8C.

Monday 29th January 2007

On Saturday afternoon, 27th January, David Redhead saw a Peacock in flight in a field right alongside the Oxford Eastern Ring-Road (sunny, 9C). In the morning Caroline Steel and Una Fenton helped him find 8 **Brown Hairstreak eggs** on Shotover Plain - this area has been searched the two previous winters without success.

Sunday 21st January 2007

Richard Soulsby sent the following update on 21st January from Benson, Oxon: "The **Red Admiral** I saw last Sunday lunchtime was in the same place again this lunchtime (21/1/07). At least I assume it is the same one – I've taken photos and noted its wing-wear characteristics today so that if it re-appears I can tell if it's the same one. After warming itself up on our sunny fence it nectared avidly on the adjacent flowering Viburnum bush. Sunny, but cold wind, 7C."

Dave Maunder sent this news from Aylesbury, Bucks, on 21st January: "Our first butterfly sighting for this year was - you've guessed it - a **Red Admiral!** It was seen flying over our garden today (19th) by my wife. Then I had another Red Admiral sighting on 20th near Hartwell house. Seems like they didn't all migrate south last autumn!"

Pete Eeles saw his first butterfly of the year on 19th January: "It was a black nymphalid flying away from me at speed no doubt a Red Admiral or Peacock. This was both enjoyable, and frustrating (not knowing what it was!). However, today, 20th, I had a definite sighting of a **Red Admiral** in my garden in *Thatcham, Berks*. The poor critter looked extremely disoriented it spent a couple of minutes flying around the garden, never settling, before eventually disappearing into a neighbour's garden."

Along with a number of moths, Les Finch was surprised to find a Red Admiral butterfly inside his overnight moth trap in *Maidenhead, Berks*, on 16th January.

Nick Asher, Newbury, was out walking Friday lunchtime, 19th January: "I saw my first **Brimstone** butterfly of 2007, somewhat earlier than I would normally expect! Grid ref was SU448653."

A second sighting received via Alan Gudge on 18th January: "Another butterfly sighting by one of our Natural History Society members, this time *John Harris* who lives in *Frieth*. In his garden on *January 14th* he saw a **Small Tortoiseshell**.

Dave Wilton continued his search for Brown Hairstreak eggs on 13th January and sent in this interesting report: "Of interest amongst the **Brown Hairstreak eggs** in the centre of *Rushbeds Wood* was one laid on honeysuckle! The egg was a good inch and a half from the nearest blackthorn. That means I've now seen three "errors" made by female Brown Hairstreaks over the last two or three years, with eggs found on bramble (Lapland Farm), honeysuckle (Rushbeds) and hawthorn (Bernwood Meadows).

Tuesday 16th January 2007

The following news was received via Alan Gudge on 16th January: "One of the members of Frieth Natural History Society, who lives in *Lane End, Bucks*, had a **Red Admiral** flying in her garden on *14th January 2007* around lunchtime. It made for a buddleia bush - perhaps remembering that it had been a good source of nectar! What a funny winter!"

Monday 15th January 2007

John Warner sent the following news from Earley in Reading, Berks, today: "Red Admiral sighting 15/01/07, 10:40am at OS175 741-705."

Richard Soulsby started his butterfly year on Sunday 14th January with a Red Admiral which was spotted by his wife. "It was sunning itself on our garden fence in *Benson* for over 30 minutes. Sunny but with a cool wind."

Thursday 11th January 2007

Wendy & Mick Campbell saw a Red Admiral in their Bucks garden on Monday 8th January. The temperature was quite mild but it was very windy. The Red Admiral looked as though it was trying to get up into the eaves of the house without much success as it kept getting blown off-course!

Saturday 6th January 2007

News received via Nick Bowles of a Peacock butterfly seen near *Theale Lake, West Berkshire*, on *1st January 2007*.

Monday 1st January 2007

Les Finch sent this early season sighting in today, 1st January 2007: "Can I start the butterfly list for 2007. On *1st January 2007* at *Little Marlow GP, Bucks*, 1 **Red Admiral**."