

# Butterfly Conservation Upper Thames Branch

## Butterfly Sightings Archive - January to December 2009

*[No butterfly sightings were reported during December 2009.]*

### Thursday 26th November 2009

*Dave Ferguson reported the following today, 26th November:* "On a bright, rather cold, breezy morning (26th Nov) at *Shardeloes in Bucks*, I saw a **Comma** land briefly on a fence post."

### Tuesday 24th November 2009

*Dave Maunder sent this news on 21st November:* "An update today from the Willows in *Aylesbury, Bucks* - a **Small Tortoiseshell** from Roberts Way enjoying some unseasonable very warm lunchtime sun!"

*Helen Hyre reported the following on 21st November:* "On *15th November* from 9.40 there was a **Comma** in our *Bierton* garden (in Bucks) for 3 hours. Just after 12.00 I saw two **Painted Ladies**. Both looked pristine and were not the PL which I saw on 12th November, which had slight wing damage. One flew off southwards after 15 minutes, the other went up over the house roof, approx north. At 1.15 there was a Painted Lady for approx 20 minutes. Also, on *Tuesday 17th November*, a **Comma** from 11.05 until 12.40."

### Friday 20th November 2009

*David Gantzel sent the following report on 19th November:* "I saw a **Red Admiral** on the outside ledge of a shop window in *Buckingham High Street, Bucks* on *November 12th.*"

### Wednesday 18th November 2009

*Dave Maunder reported the following on 16th November:* "A few more recent sightings here in *Aylesbury, Bucks*, have been:- **Red Admiral** (1, *Monday 16th November*), another **Painted Lady** last *Thursday 12th*, also my first (and probably last!) **Hummingbird Hawkmoth** of this year yesterday *15th*, disturbed from a pile of bean-poles on my allotment in town."

*Nick Bowles reports on last Sunday's first conservation work party of the season:* "*Holtspur Bottom's* first work party of the season took place in wonderful weather (as promised at Member's Day) on *15th November*. A group of 6 smiling members carried out a number of tasks - [click here to see photos and read the full report](#). Hopefully, others would want to put our next few Holtspur 'work morning' dates into their diaries and join the fun: 06.12.09, 17.01.10 and 21.02.10. These dates will see a variety of tasks, including bonfires, where we will try to cook potatoes - we would be happy to see you there and share a jacket spud!"

*Richard O'Dare sent the following sighting on 15th November:* "After yesterday's storm, I was surprised today to see this **Painted Lady** enjoying the sunshine in my garden in *Little Marlow, Bucks.*"

*On 16th November David Redhead (UTB Brown Hairstreak Species Champion) sent the following update on this year's Brown Hairstreak egg hunts to date:* "We have now completed the first set of **Brown Hairstreak egg** transects at *Shotover Country Park in*

*Oxon* and they have been very successful. The combined count showed a 45% increase on last year and since the transects started five years ago there has been an increase in the total count each year. This site is on the very edge of the known range of the only remaining population in the three counties and before the transects started there was no evidence for its presence. I think we can now definitely say this butterfly is on the march and has got its feet well and truly under the table at Shotover Country Park with individuals completing their life cycle there and using the local ash and oak trees for mating."

### Friday 13th November 2009

*Helen Hyre sent this report today, 13th November:* "On *Thursday 12th November* there were a few sunny periods in *Bierton, Bucks*. I saw one **Painted Lady** and one **Comma** at 11.25am. The Comma made return visits at 12.15 and 12.50, but I did not see the Painted Lady again."

*Dave Maunder sent this news on 12th November:* "Today I had my latest ever sighting of a **Painted Lady** at 9.00am, sunning itself on a house near mine here in *Aylesbury, Bucks*. Last week I also saw **Painted Lady**(1), **Red Admiral** (1) and **Small Tortoiseshell** (1), all on the *4th November*."

### Tuesday 10th November 2009

*Tony Short sent the following sighting on 9th November:* "In case it's of interest, I sighted a very fresh specimen of the **Clouded Yellow** in *Windsor Great Park, Berks* (outside the Royal School), at 11:30am on *25th October 2009*. It was sunning itself at the edge of a field fringed with brambles and bracken, near a very tatty **Red Admiral**."

### Sunday 8th November 2009

*David Redhead wrote the following on 7th November:* "At 11am this morning, *7th November*, I decided to examine the ivy bank in my neighbour's field (*Littlemore, Oxon*). That drew a blank so I walked up to the rotting apples at the top of the field and just as I picked up their heady aroma I was met by a **Comma** which circled round me before alighting on a bramble leaf to bask in the sun at 8.2C. Shortly after it moved on to an old stone wall where I left it. On the way back to the house I examined the sunny face of the assorted vegetation that hides the derelict Thames Water building from our houses when a faded **Speckled Wood** flew before my eyes and landed on a laurel leaf to bask in the sun."

*Dave Wilton reported the following:* "A **Red Admiral** was active in our garden at *Westcott, Bucks*, during the morning of *7th November* (sunny but only 7 celsius) and at lunchtime it was joined by a **Small Tortoiseshell** which was found flying around inside the house. The last **Painted Lady** sighting here was on *30th October*."

*Helen Hyre sent the following sighting:* "*Thursday 5th November* - after early showers, the sun came out in *Bierton, Bucks* and so did the butterflies. 4 **Painted Lady**, 1 **Comma** and 1 **Red Admiral**."

### Tuesday 3rd November 2009

*Dave Maunder sent this news today:* "A few recent sightings here in *Aylesbury, Bucks* have been:- **Painted Lady** (1) and **Red Admirals** (2) on *2nd November* - almost beat my latest ever sighting for Painted lady, which was 4th Nov. 2006!"

*John Parsons sent this report on 2nd November:* "Two **Painted Ladies** seen on *Greenham Common, Berks* on *2/11/09* in a sheltered sunny area."

***This sighting came from David Redhead on 2nd November:*** "Seen today, *Monday 2nd November*, on my neighbour's ivy bank (*Littlemore, Oxon*), a single nectaring **Comma**."

***On Monday 2nd November Mick & Wendy Campbell saw a Comma*** on the Ridgeway near *Swyncombe Downs, Oxon*. "It must have been sunning itself on some dead leaves - we wouldn't have seen it if it hadn't flown up, as it was an exact colour match for the fallen leaves."

### **Wednesday 28th October 2009**

***Peter Vaughan reported the following on 26th October:*** "At *Harwell Science Campus (Didcot, Oxon)* (map ref SU 477 873) on *Monday 26 October* in the bright mid-day sunshine, I saw ten butterflies on a single flowering bush. These were four **Small Tortoiseshells**, five **Painted Ladies**, some looking very fresh, and one fresh-looking **Red Admiral**. When disturbed by my shadow they briefly rose to produce a small cloud of butterflies - not something I'd expected to see in late October!"

***David Redhead sent this update on 26th October:*** "Since my last report on 4th October our garden in *Littlemore, Oxon*, has been almost devoid of butterflies with just a single **Comma** seen on the *8th October*. However, since then I have still managed to see butterflies near my house on my neighbours bank of ivy. On the *11th, 12th* and *13th* 3 **Commas** and a single **Painted Lady** were to be found there each day, either nectaring on the blossom or basking. On the *14th* the Painted Lady was replaced by 3 **Red Admirals** and on the *16th* all three species were there together with 2 **Red Admirals** and a single **Painted Lady** and **Comma** but the day after it was just a single **Red Admiral**. I did not manage to get there for the next few days but on the *23rd* a single **Painted Lady** was still to be found there. Since then the ivy bank has been devoid but a couple of **Red Admirals** were to be found on the *24th* on rotten apples beneath an aged apple tree nearby. The surprise that day was a female **Brimstone** fluttering about the ivy growing up the apple tree, presumably disturbed from hibernation. On *Sunday 25th* I went further afield in search of **Brown Hairstreak** eggs finding five between *Elsfield and Beckly* but also seeing a **Painted Lady**. Back at home today (*26th*) a single **Red Admiral** was feeding on one of the rotten apples. This makes my October count to date 46 butterflies from four species (28 Comma, 10 Red Admiral, 7 Painted Lady & 1 Brimstone) - all bar one seen within 100 metres of my house."

***Judith Barnard reported as follows on 26th October:*** "Sighting today at grid ref SP8841 - 1 **Painted Lady**."

***Dave Ferguson wrote the following on 26th October:*** "On a warm and sunny morning (26th October) two fresh **Red Admirals** were taking in the rays on the fence by *Amersham CG* at Shardeloes in Bucks."

***Chris Brown reported the following on 26th October:*** "Having just checked out the UTB sightings page it reminded me to send in some late observations. The week ahead promises more to come hopefully as this fine autumn weather continues.

***Crowsley Wood, Berks, 8 OCT - Red Admiral*** (1), **Peacock** (1), **Comma** (3), **Speckled Wood** (1). All nectaring on Ivy flowers in full sunshine.

***Crowsley Wood 12 OCT - Small Copper*** (1), **Red Admiral** (1), **Comma** (1), **Meadow Brown** (1). Again, all nectaring on Ivy flowers in full sunshine, although the Meadow Brown soon moved on along the hedgerow investigating grasses and other shrubbery at low levels. The Meadow Brown caught me by surprise and it looked in very good condition. I checked my records for this site and it is the latest I have ever seen one by nearly 3 weeks.

***My garden Sonning Common, Berks, 25 OCT - Red Admiral*** (1), **Painted Lady** (1). *Verbena Bonariensis* still flowering and attracting butterflies."

**Wendy Wilson sent this report on 25th October:** "Today (25th) I went back to the same field in *Dorney, South Bucks*, I told you about on October 13th. Amazingly for so late in the season the oilseed rape is still in full bloom and butterflies were making the most of it. It was a bright and breezy day with a temperature of about 16C. I recorded 1 **Small White**, 1 **Small Tortoiseshell**, 3 **Peacock**, 3 **Comma** and 8 **Painted Ladies**. All except the White were in excellent condition and nectaring on the rape flowers or nearby sow thistles. Butterflies are still around wherever there's some nectar, but there aren't many nectar sources left now and I have not seen much elsewhere."

### Saturday 24th October 2009

**This news came from Nick Bowles today, 24th October:** "I see that sightings reports are tailing off, so you might like to hear of a **Small Tortoiseshell** on a late dandelion, a **Red Admiral** and at least one, possibly two, **Painted Lady** on ivy at the end of the garden here (just over the border in Tring) mid-day on *Friday 23rd* - where I was marooned with a bug. They lifted my spirits."

**Dennis Dell reported as follows:** "**Peacock** seen in *Aylesbury* yesterday, *23rd October*, sunning itself on a south facing window ledge, taking full advantage of the warm sunshine. Although there is little doubt that Peacocks enter hibernation around mid-August, it is obvious from the sightings page that they will awake, briefly, on sunny autumn days."

**Helen Hyre sent the following report on 21st October:** "On *Wednesday 21st October* a **Painted Lady** was nectaring on *Verbena bonariensis* and *Erysimum* in our garden in *Bierton, Bucks*. It was cool, windy and only a hint of a watery sun. I think it/they may be residing in our eaves at present."

### Sunday 18th October 2009

**Dave Miller reported the following on 18th October:** "I took my three sons to the *Buckinghamshire Railway Centre* at Quainton Road today (*18th*). There was a bit of sunshine, but it wasn't any warmer than 13 degrees at most. Nevertheless, around the miniature railway area, we saw at least four individual **Small Coppers**, two new-looking **Painted Ladies**, a **Red Admiral** and a **Large White**. Someone we talked to claimed to have seen two 'yellow butterflies' earlier in the day. Some photos below - two were from a bit of a distance and aren't quite so good."

### Wednesday 14th October 2009

**Wendy Wilson sent this news on 13th October:** "This morning, *13th October*, I went birdwatching at *Dorney Wetlands, Berks*. The first bird in my sights was a kingfisher which was a good start. The temperature was only 8.5C, so I wasn't really looking for butterflies. However, I changed my mind when I came upon a very late crop of oilseed rape in full bloom in a huge field bisected by the public footpath from Jubilee River to Dorney village (SU933792). The flowers were still wet with dew, but the sun was warming up fast and **Small Whites** started to fly around and a **Comma** basked on the path. As the flowers dried, **Peacocks** and **Painted Ladies** started to appear, all looking fresh and in beautiful condition (see below). My count for the morning was seven species: 1 **Large White**, 21 **Small White**, 1 **Small Copper**, 1 **Comma**, 5 **Peacock**, 17 **Painted Lady** and 1 **Speckled Wood**. Not bad for mid-October! The **Small Copper** and three of the **Painted Ladies** were nectaring on sow-thistles along the path, but all the rest were on the rape flowers. By lunch time they had mostly had their fill of nectar as I didn't see much in the afternoon apart from the **Whites** still flying around, so I went back to birdwatching."

**Peter Vaughan, BC Hampshire Branch member, sent the following report on 12th October:** "During a mid-day walk around part of *Harwell Science Campus (Didcot, Oxon)* (map ref SU 477 873) on *Monday 12 October* I saw a **Clouded Yellow** butterfly. I had a good view of the insect for several minutes while it was feeding on Dandelion flowers in a lawn. I also saw a fresh-looking **Painted Lady** and two rather worn **Speckled Woods**."

### Sunday 11th October 2009

**Dennis Dell writes:** "Seen on *10th October* in fine weather in the valley between *Waddesdon and Upper Winchendon, Bucks*: **Painted Lady** [5], on thistle patch; **Brimstone** [3], **Small White** [5], **Comma** and **Small Tortoiseshell**. The Painted Ladies were in good condition."

**Jan Haseler sent this report:** "Butterflies in the sunshine at *The Grove, Shinfield Park, Reading* yesterday (*Thursday 8th Oct*): 4 **Small Copper**, 2 fresh **Brown Argus**, 1 male **Common Blue**. On ivy blossom nearby at Shinfield Park: 2 **Red Admirals**, 1 **Peacock** and 1 **Speckled Wood**."

**Ben Carpenter took advantage of the good weather on 8th October:** "I went to *Radley Lakes, Oxon* and saw 1 **Red Admiral**, 1 **Small Copper** and 1 **Clouded Yellow**."

**Dave Maunder sent the following catch-up on 8th October:** "On *Sunday 27th September* we went to *Waterperry gardens, Oxon* for our annual visit and noted a reasonable selection of butterflies on the flowers there:- **Painted Ladies** (11 - all fresh); **Red Admirals** (6); **Peacock** (1); **Commas** (6); **Small Tortoiseshells** (3); **Large Whites** (2); **Small Whites** (10); **Speckled Wood** (1) and **Small Copper** (1). Not as many Small Tortoiseshells here as last autumn, although we visited two weeks earlier last year. Anyway, a nice day here in perfect weather! On *Sunday 4th October* we went to *Hillesden, north Bucks*, and saw **Painted Ladies** (2); **Commas** (3); **Large White** (1); **Small Whites** (3); **Green-veined Whites** (2); and **Small Coppers** (2)."

### Tuesday 6th October 2009

**David Redhead reported the following on 5th October:** "In our garden on *Sunday 4th October* in *Littlemore, Oxon*, 3 **Commas** were to be found nectaring on ivy flowers and another was on the michaelmas daisies (mentioned in Dennis Dell's report below). A **Red Admiral** was dividing its attention between the two nectar sources. This garden count of 4 Comma and 1 Red Admiral does not compare too well with a year ago when on the 3rd October 2008 I was able to report 10 Commas, 2 Red Admirals and a Small White in our garden. I need to point out that the original source of our michaelmas daisies was Frank Banyard's garden. This year, although we augmented the Autumn Joy hybrid with a couple of true Ice Plants (*Sedum spectabile*), the sedums in our garden have proved very unattractive to butterflies and I have only ever seen one Comma and a couple of whites on them and then only for a short while."

### Friday 2nd October 2009

**There are still a few butterflies to be seen during warm, sunny spells:** In our *Bucks* garden this morning, *2nd October*, Mick & I had one each of **Large White**, **Small White**, **Red Admiral** (on ivy) and **Small Tortoiseshell** (on michaelmas daisies). Then this afternoon during a walk through *Wendover Woods* we added 2 **Speckled Woods** and 2 **Commas** to the count. *Wendy Campbell*

**This news was sent by David Redhead from Littlemore in Oxon on 1st October:** "The first day of October found a fresh **Painted Lady** nectaring on our michaelmas daisies and a

**Red Admiral** basking on the vegetable garden fence. A quick inspection of my neighbour's ivy flowers produced three **Commas** and two more Red Admirals."

**Dennis Dell sent this report on 1st October:** "Last autumn, I was impressed to read about the number of butterflies David Redhead was seeing on his Michaelmas Daisy. He was kind enough to dig some roots up for me, and I'm very pleased with the results. The Beijing Buddleia is finished and the only remaining nectar sources in my garden in [Aylesbury, Bucks](#), are a very small Ice Plant and this Michaelmas Daisy. The Michaelmas Daisy has been attracting a fresh looking **Painted Lady** every day this week and, in addition, during a long spell of sunshine a **Small White**, a **Peacock** and a male **Brimstone** made brief sorties without stopping to nectar. The last time I saw these latter two species in the garden was on August 16th and 9th, respectively."

**Helen Hyre reported the following on 29th September:** "On [Sunday 27th September](#) our [Aylesbury](#) (Bucks) garden butterflies included a male **Brimstone** and a very photogenic **Painted Lady** which spent hours on our Cosmos. On the same day we went to [Ellesborough](#) for the last teas of the season. In the churchyard were **Small White**, **Comma**, **Painted Lady** and two very mobile **Small Copper**. On the nearby hills were chalkland flowers, a possible Small Copper (it didn't cooperate!) and a surprising **Meadow Brown**."

**Chris Lamsdell sent the following report:** "At [Wraysbury Gp](#) in east Berks, a fresh **Brown Argus** on [26/9](#) and at Stanwell Moor (just over the border in Surrey) a Clouded Yellow on [27/9](#)."

### Saturday 26th September 2009

**Mike Collard reported the following sighting today:** "Whilst undertaking some badger surveying this afternoon, [26th September](#), I saw a **Clouded Yellow** over cut fields in [Chartridge, Bucks](#)."

**David Redhead writes:** "Whilst looking for **Brown Hairstreak eggs** today (26th), with some success, west of Woodeaton in Oxon I recorded 5 **Red Admirals**, 2 **Painted Lady**, 2 **Comma** and 1 **Green-veined White**. All except one Comma and the White were nectaring on ivy flowers."

**Dave Wilton sent the following report today:** "This afternoon ([26th September](#)) I paid yet another visit to my local biodiversity hot-spot, the disused railway cutting west of [Westcott](#) airfield in Bucks. I thought it would be a struggle to find any butterflies because numbers seem to have dropped off quite noticeably following the recent run of cold nights, but I managed to see the following: **Large White** (1), **Small White** (1), **Small Copper** (1), **Common Blue** (1), **Red Admiral** (1), **Painted Lady** (10), **Small Tortoiseshell** (1), **Peacock** (1) and **Comma** (15). They were out enjoying the sunshine, most of them on devil's-bit scabious flowers although four or five of the Commas were on blackberries. Double digits of species was achieved by managing to locate **Brown Hairstreak eggs** in two different kilometre squares there, so a very pleasing result for the end of September. The Painted Ladies were all very fresh individuals and some (presumably females) seemed noticeably larger than those I've seen over the past month or two."

### Friday 25th September 2009

**Chris and Pat Dennis sent this report on 24th September:** "The pictures below were taken today ([24th](#)) at [Bernwood](#). There were a lot of butterflies about today, including **Painted Lady**, **Red Admiral** and **Brimstone** but we were surprised to see a **Brown Hairstreak**. It was a bit pale but otherwise in good condition. The pictures of the hairstreak were taken at about one o'clock down the main track just on the edge of the meadow on the

right hand side that had just been mowed today."

**Dave Wilton sent this report yesterday:** "This afternoon, *24th September*, I had a quick look at the meadows at *Leaches Farm*, adjacent to the A41 north of Ludgershall, Bucks, which BBOWT are hoping to purchase to add to their River Ray Reserves (see [www.bbowl.org.uk/appeal](http://www.bbowl.org.uk/appeal)). As I set foot on the public footpath which runs along the western edge of the site I met a female **Brown Hairstreak** coming the other way. She made a valiant attempt to cross the A41 but was beaten back by a stream of lorries, so took to prospecting the adjacent hedge on the south side of the road for some blackthorn on which to lay an egg. Other butterflies seen included **Large White** (1), **Green-veined White** (2), **Small Copper** (10, including a mating pair), **Common Blue** (2), **Peacock** (1) and **Comma** (3). Enjoying what remains of the blooms on our buddleias at *Westcott* were single examples of **Painted Lady**, **Small Tortoiseshell**, **Peacock** and Comma, but most of the vanessids seem to have deserted us for ivy elsewhere in the village which has just come into bloom. The Painted Lady looked very fresh and is the first we've had in the garden for two weeks."

**Tony Croft reported the following on 24th September:** "I completed the final transect of the season at *Rushbeds Wood* this afternoon in glorious sunshine. I counted 3 **Small Copper**, 5 **Speckled Wood** and an astonishing 87 **Comma**. Practically all the Comma were on blackberries in the south-facing hedge of the tramway meadow. In the garden today (*Easington, Bucks*) were **Small White**, **Comma**, **Small Tortoiseshell**, **Speckled Wood**, **Red Admiral** and either a Brown Hairstreak or Vapourer Moth. It could have been either as they have both visited from time to time."

**Dave Maunder sent this news on 24th September:** "On a visit to *Hartwell cemetery* in Bucks yesterday (*23rd*) I saw in a brief warm and sunny spell quite a nice number of Vanessids on Ivy bloom:- **Red Admirals** (4); **Painted Lady** (1), and **Commas** (14). Also seen were 1 **Speckled Wood** and 2 **Green-veined Whites**."

**David Redhead sent the following sightings:** "On Tuesday afternoon, *22nd September*, the michaelmas daisies in our garden in *Littlemore, Oxon* were playing host to two **Red Admirals** along with singletons of **Large White**, **Painted Lady** and **Comma** whilst another two Commas were on the ivy flowers. Meanwhile on the sun-blessed and sheltered ivy growing over an old wall on our neighbour's land eleven Commas and nine Red Admirals were to be found. A dog walk up the top led to two more basking Commas and a **Speckled Wood**. So a total of 30 butterflies from 5 species in SP5202 was not a bad haul considering it was the first day of Autumn - all the vanessids, except for one Comma but including the Painted Lady, were in very good condition. Two days previously, on *Sunday 20th*, we visited *Swyncombe Down* to complete week 25 of the transect, and saw two dozen **Small Copper** plus a **Brown Argus** in surprisingly good condition. Also seen were **Brimstone**, **Small White**, **Common Blue**, **Peacock**, **Comma**, **Speckled Wood**, **Meadow Brown** and **Small Heath** making the species count for the site 10. A report just received from Bob Ellidson showed that on *Friday 18th* he set an all time record for the *Shabington Wood* transect, when he counted 96 (ninety-six!) **Commas** nectaring on the ride-side devil's-bit scabious. He also saw another six species - **Brimstone**, **Green-veined White**, **Red Admiral**, **Painted Lady**, **Small Tortoiseshell** and **Speckled Wood**."

**Friday 18th September 2009**

**Judith Barnard saw a Small Copper** in *Willen, Milton Keynes* today *18th September* at grid ref SP8841.

**Tuesday 15th September 2009**

**Chris Lamsdell wrote the following on 12th September:** "**Clouded Yellow** at *Wraysbury GP* in east Berks today, *12th September* and another just over the border in Surrey on 30th August at Stanwell Moor."

**Saturday 12th September 2009**

**The following report came from Richard Soulsby on 12th September:** "After several days spent topping up tetrads in 10k square SU59, today's sunny afternoon was spent at Swyncombe Downs and Aston Rowant (North). The general transect at *Swyncombe*, followed by a Silver-spotted Skipper transect, produced in total 7 **Brimstones**, 2 **Large Whites**, 7 **Small Whites**, 23 **Small Coppers** (all over the place), 3 **Brown Argus**, 1 **Common Blue**, 1 **Small Tortoiseshell**, 8 **Speckled Woods**, 14 **Meadow Browns**, 6 **Small Heaths** and the highlight, two **Small Blues**. One was quite worn but the other was fairly fresh. But no Silver-spotted Skippers remaining, nor were there any here a week ago. Then I spent an hour at *Aston Rowant* walking to the far end and back, where butterflies seemed much thinner on the ground. This yielded 1 **Speckled Wood**, 10 **Meadow Browns**, 3 **Small Coppers**, 15 **Small Heaths**, 4 **Common Blues**, 4 **Small Whites**, 2 **Brown Argus**, 1 **Brimstone**, 1 **Red Admiral** and, the highlight here, three **Silver-spotted Skippers**. Two were very worn, but one female was fairly fresh. After seeing lots of vanessids in farmland tetrads in recent days, it seemed strange to see so few at today's downland sites."

**David Redhead reported the following on 12th September:** "Yesterday, *11th September*, **Commas** were putting on a very good show in *Bernwood Forest* - the ride edges remain uncut and there is abundant devil's-bit scabious for them to nectar on - my final Comma count was 62 including 35 on the Shabbington Wood transect. The **Small Tortoiseshell** transect count was 7 which is the highest count since 13th September 2002 when 21 were recorded, so still some way to go until the recovery of this species is complete. However, my sighting of the day was an off-transect female **Silver-washed Fritillary**, somewhat dull in appearance but otherwise in reasonable condition with only a slight nick out of one wing. I also did the transect in the *M40 Compensation Area*, which is adjacent to the eastern edge of the Forest, and here the Comma count was just 8 with no devil's-bit to attract them and they were all nectaring on ripe blackberries. My final total count for both sites was 154 butterflies from 11 species - Comma 70, **Speckled Wood** 33, **Red Admiral** 10, **Small Tortoiseshell** 9, **Green-veined White** 9, **Brimstone** 7, **Small White** 7, **Common Blue** 6, **Large White** 1, **Peacock** 1 and **Silver-washed Fritillary** 1. When I returned home (*Littlemore, Oxon*) I managed to increase my day species count to 12 as there was a faded **Painted Lady** nectaring alongside a **Peacock** on our michaelmas daisies - interestingly Wendy told me earlier there had been 3 **Peacocks** - two in good condition and one extremely tatty. Before I left home for Bernwood I had received the results for the previous week's Shabbington Wood transect walked on *Saturday 19th September* by *Beryl Hulbert*. In not so good conditions Beryl counted 50 butterflies with only 2 **Commas** but 5 **Brown Hairstreaks** - all females basking low down on various vegetation. 5 **Brown Hairstreaks** is an all-time record for this transect which has been walked since 1995. You will have noted, as the Species Champion, my nil return for this species in my report above! However, I did manage to find 9 eggs in about as many minutes - 4 in the Compensation Area and 5 in the Forest itself. Finally, on *Wednesday 9th September* I saw my second **Hummingbird Hawkmoth** of the year nectaring on a garden buddleia in *Church Lane, Kidlington*."

**David Redhead sent the following request:** "**CALLING ALL RESIDENTS AND WORKERS IN OXFORD**. Please, during your everyday life in the city and for the next month, keep an eye out for the **Brown Hairstreak** butterfly. Although it is a UK Biodiversity Action Plan Priority Species we now know the only extant population in Berks, Bucks & Oxon spreads significantly into the city. Over the last four seasons some 200 eggs have been



found at numerous locations within the city boundaries. Also seven sightings of the elusive adults have been made, including two in back gardens. Last summer a female was seen in a back garden in Dene Road and this summer another female was seen in a back garden in Bullingdon Road. By this time only females are about and they will be beginning to show their age like the one depicted in the photographs below, taken on 17th September 2005. **Please report any sightings to this website.** Listeners to the Archers on BBC Radio 4 will also realise this rare species has recently joined the cast!"

**Paul Warham reported the following on 8th September:** "A one-hour visit to [Homefield Wood, Bucks](#) in this afternoon's warm sunshine produced: **Comma** (10) feeding on blackberries; **Speckled Wood** (10); **Peacock**(1); a couple each of **Large & Small White** and **Common Blue** (7) in the "meadow".

**Chris Brown sent the following update for Crowsley Wood, Berks on 8th September:** "No Silver-washed Fritillary seen at the [Crowsley Wood](#) site since my last report on 27th August. However, there are plenty of other butterflies about and nectar sources still around though sparse. Today (*8th Sept*) I counted: **Brimstone** 1M, **Small White** 1, **Small Copper** 1, **Red Admiral** 1, **Comma** 16, **Speckled Wood** 17 and **Meadow Brown** 6."

### Monday 7th September 2009

**Dave Miller reported the following on 6th September:** "I decided to pay probably my last visit of the year to [Aston Rowant](#) (N) this afternoon, *6th September*. Usual weather! Intermittent sun and very breezy... Nevertheless, I found at least six **Silver-spotted Skippers**, including a mating pair. Also braving the wind were five **Common Blues**, a single **Chalkhill Blue**, a **Small Tortoiseshell**, four **Painted Ladies**, ten or so **Small Heaths** and the same number of **Meadow Browns**. Also seen were three **Brown Argus**, one of which was egg-laying. Finally, the path back to the car park provided five or six **Speckled Woods** and a couple of **Green-veined Whites**."

**Judith Barnard reported the following on 6th September:** "Sightings over the last week or so at grid ref SP8841 ([Milton Keynes area](#)) included 7 **Speckled Wood**, 14 **Small White**, 3 **Large White**, 1 **Green-veined White** and 1 **Painted Lady**."

### Thursday 3rd September 2009

**Mark Bunch, Cambs and Essex Branch, reported the following:** "I visited [Aston Rowant](#) on *Bank Holiday Monday, 31st August*. I started on the west side of the M40 motorway. Butterflies fewer now, but still some good ones present - **Silver-spotted Skippers** down to around 10, though some in excellent condition. A lovely male **Clouded Yellow**. A few **Common** and **Chalkhill Blues** and **Brown Argus**, all faded. Lots of **Brimstone**, plus **Large, Small** and **Green-veined Whites**, **Small Coppers**, **Painted Ladies**, **Tortoiseshell**, **Red Admiral**, **Comma**, **Speckled Wood**, **Meadow Brown** and lots of **Small Heaths**. I walked to the other side of the M40 mid-afternoon but it was windy there. Similar species seen, including several more lovely Silver-spotted Skipper and, of course, buzzards and kites!"

**Mark Ward sent the following report on 1st September:** "A few records for the website from my trip to Oxfordshire on *Saturday 29 August*. A quick visit to [Aston Rowant](#) in the early afternoon produced around 30 **Silver-spotted Skippers** doing their best to shelter from the strong wind on the slopes. Also 2 worn **Chalkhill Blues**, c10 **Common Blues**, c15 **Small Heaths**, 2 **Painted Ladies** and 2 **Brown Argus**. [Whitecross Green Wood](#) mid-late pm - 3 sightings of female **Brown Hairstreaks** coming down to blackthorn to lay eggs along the ride leading off from the car park during the handful of brief sunny intervals in my hour's visit. Also a worn **Purple Hairstreak** in an oak."

## Saturday 29th August 2009

**Wendy Wilson sent the following report:** "On *2nd August* I watched a **Green-veined White** lay two eggs on garlic mustard in my garden in *Gerrards Cross, Bucks*. I kept them and on *7th August* they both hatched and ate semi-circles out of the edges of the leaves for two weeks. Both pupated on *22nd August*, one under the top of the insect cage and one on a leaf stem of the food-plant. The attached photos show them at the three stages, the larvae are ten days old here. Every time I picked leaves for them to eat I found more eggs, so I now have another lot to look after. Then today, *29th August*, I was surprised to find that one of the butterflies had emerged from its pupa. Below is a photo of it warming up on my finger. I thought I would have to wait until next Spring. Is it a third brood or what? The other pupa looks as if it might emerge soon."

**Chris Brown sent this update on 28th August:** "It's been a good season for the **Silver-washed Fritillary** judging from the numbers seen at *Crowsley Park Wood in Berks*, but all good things come to the end and it cannot be far off when looking at recent sightings. I recorded 8 Silver-washed Fritillary on *13th*, 4 on *19th* and 3 on the *27th August*. Below are a couple of photos of one of the females showing how worn they have become. Just wonder if they can survive into September this year?"

**Dave Maunder visited Watlington Hill reserve on 27th August:** "I saw a **Clouded Yellow** (my first this year) and a female Helice specimen - difficult to get a good photo! Other species seen were: **Silver-spotted Skippers** (4); **Painted Lady** (1); **Brimstones** (3); **Large Whites** (3); **Meadow Browns** (15); **Hedge Brown** (1); **Small Heaths** (9); **Chalkhill Blue** (1); **Common Blues** (9)."

**Ian Stevenson reported the following on 26th August:** "Just to let you know that whilst conducting a heathland rapid assessment at BBOWT's *Broadmoor Bottom Reserve* in Berkshire on *26th August*, we disturbed 2 **Grayling** and a **Heath Rustic**, which were busy dodging the showers."

## Wednesday 26th August 2009

**Clive Burrows spent two hours at Lardon Chase on Tuesday afternoon, 25th August:** "I saw a total of 15 **Adonis Blue** including 5 females. A single **Clouded Yellow** was seen amongst the other species."

**On Monday August 24th Richard O'Dare visited Little Marlow gravel pits:** "On the way I came across a Buddleia with several species nectaring, these included **Small White**, **Large White**, **Comma**, **Painted Lady** and a **Red Admiral** (pictured) - wonderful!"

**Nick Bowles walked two transects on 24th August and was disappointed with numbers:** "No Peacock or Small Tortoiseshell anywhere, no Brimstone, Meadow Brown or Gatekeeper at one site and only one **Painted Lady** and one **Silver Y moth** after both transects. However my first **Clouded Yellow** at *Coombe Hill*, near Wendover, Bucks. I also heard of an accumulation (my description) of Clouded Yellow in Chacombe, near Banbury two weeks back - estimated at 50 Clouded Yellow in a field margin. Could they have been a local hatch?"

**Rupert Perkins saw the following on 23rd August: Bernwood Meadow - Brown Hairstreak**, 6 seen on the southern side, 4 females and 2 males. Otherwise quiet with a few **Painted Lady** (3), many **Common Blue** (20+), **Gatekeeper** (about 5) and the usual common species, **Meadow Brown** and **White** spp. *Aston Rowant NNR* - **Silver-spotted Skipper** - at least 30 seen in a 1 hour visit, including egg laying females. Also a surprise of an **Adonis Blue**, a single male, a few **Chalkhill Blue** still flying (6), many **Common Blue** and **Brown**

**Argus** (50+ of each) and the usual common species including a very fresh **Brimstone**."

**News via Ched George on 23rd August:** "I have it on good authority that a **Wall Brown** was seen in a garden very recently. Grid ref SP 848199, Aston Abbots."

### Sunday 23rd August 2009

**Judith Barnard reported the following today, 23rd August:** "Sightings last week at grid ref SP8841 (*Milton Keynes area*) included 21 **Small White**, 5 **Large White**, 3 **Speckled Wood**, 2 **Gatekeeper** and 1 **Painted Lady**."

**Tony Croft sent this news on 21st August:** "I found three **Brown Hairstreak** eggs yesterday (*20th*) on blackthorn which I have been planting over the last two winters. This is near the house on an area of neglected ground which used to be completely overgrown with nettles. It happens to be close to three ash trees and a bank of bramble so I have been hoping that it would eventually be used by a Brown Hairstreak for egg laying. They are all on the same bush and the photo below is one of them."

**Paul Warham sent the following on 19th August:** "I visited *Homefield Wood, Bucks*, on 19th August and saw 3 male and 4 female **Silver-washed Fritillaries**. One female was still being chased in nuptial flight!"

**Malcolm Brownsword did his BBOWT transect at Homefield Wood on 19th August:** "Although the numbers of **Silver-washed Fritillary** have now declined significantly, the count of six, including one *Valezina* form, still made it the third most numerous butterfly species on the transect route. Others seen were 2 **Small Skippers**, 9 **Brimstones**, 7 **Large Whites**, 4 **Green-veined Whites**, 2 **Common Blues**, 5 **Painted Ladies**, 1 **Peacock**, 1 **Comma**, 2 **Speckled Woods**, 1 **Gatekeeper**, 13 **Meadow Browns** and a single **Silver 'Y' moth**. There were many less butterflies than expected in the meadow area, doubtless due to recent grazing by sheep, resulting in many flowering plants being flattened. Shortly after completing the transect, I returned to the main track and covered the first 300 metres of the first section of the transect again and saw an additional 20-30 Brimstones nectaring on wild basil (see photo below) and a rather battered Silver-washed Fritillary *Valezina* form, alive but trapped on a broken leaf stalk. The long stalk had passed through one of several holes in its wings. I released the butterfly and it flew away (see photo). The green sheen can be clearly seen and is presumably due to refraction, since it is only visible at certain angles. In the last 2 years, this is the third time I have visited Homefield Wood and found *Valezina* forms. The books seem to agree that they prefer more shade than the normal females, but in my experience, if anything they prefer the sun. In July 2008 I followed one in full sun in the meadow area for about 20 minutes."

**Francis Gomme popped into Grangelands on the afternoon of 19th August:**

"Predictably large numbers of **Common Blue**, **Brown Argus**, **Small Coppers**, **Small Heaths**, **Meadow Browns**, **Gatekeepers**, **Small Whites**, **Large whites**, **Green-veined Whites**, **Brimstones** plus **Small Tortoiseshells**, **Commas** and **Painted Ladies**. Reasonable numbers of **Chalkhill Blues** on Rifle Range Bank and Grangelands. At least six **Clouded Yellows** flying across Grangelands itself and a late and very worn **Large Skipper** on Rifle Range Bank. However the highlights were **Silver-spotted Skippers**. 4 seen on lower slopes of Grangelands, at least 2 on north end of Rifle Range Bank and 3+ very fresh specimens inc 1 female on the Rifle Range itself!"

**Ian Gamble and David Turnbull visited Bernwood Meadows and Whitecross Green Wood on 19th August:** "Between 8am and 10am we were unable to locate any Brown Hairstreaks in *Bernwood Meadows*. We did see several other species including **Painted Lady**, **Speckled Wood**, **Meadow Brown**, **Gatekeeper**, **Common Blue** and **Green-veined**

**White** all in small numbers and single **Comma**, **Red Admiral** and **Small Copper**. We arrived at [Whitecross Green Wood](#) at about 10:30am and stayed until just after midday. During our visit we found 6 **Brown Hairstreak** all females and four of these were seen laying eggs. The only other species noted which we had not seen during our visit to Bernwood Meadow was a **Brown Argus**. This was an interesting individual as it showed characteristics of the Northern Brown Argus having a distinct white spot in the centre of the forewing."

**Richard Soulsby wrote the following on 19th August:** "I spent a baking hot afternoon among the dust and smells of [Didcot Power Station \(Oxon\)](#) ash-dumping yard and landfill site doing some atlas grid-bashing. Despite the industrial desert landscape I managed to raise SU5092 from 2 to 13 species and SU5292 to 7 spp. Surprising finds were plenty of **Common Blues**, quite a good haul of **Brown Argus**, a few **Small Heaths** and a **Small/Essex Skipper**, as well as the usual 3 **Whites**, **Speckled Woods**, **Painted Ladies** and **Small Tortoiseshells**, **Meadow Browns** and a **Gatekeeper**."

**Dave Miller drove up to Whitecross Green Wood on the morning of 18th August:** "Leaving home in wall-to-wall sunshine, it was disappointing to have the cloud close up the moment I arrived. However, I wandered hopefully up the main path, disturbing **Common Blues**, **Meadow Browns** and the odd **Gatekeeper**. Gazing optimistically at the favoured ash tree, for some reason my eye was drawn down to the blackthorn below: there was a small splash of orange in amongst the leaves at about head-height. I couldn't believe that this was not (as I expected) a dead leaf, but was a rather new-looking female **Brown Hairstreak**. Allowing me a few photos, of which the one reasonable one is below, it suddenly took off across the path and disappeared into the trees on the other side. After a further hour of neck and eye strain and no sun or hairstreaks, I headed back home to near Heathrow - where the sun burst forth of course. I hope the other enthusiasts I left behind, including a determined gentleman from North Yorkshire, fared better later on. They had missed my original encounter unfortunately."

## Tuesday 18th August 2009

**Ched George sent this exciting news today:** "I recorded a single **Wall Brown** today, [18th August](#). It was on a private site close to [Brush Hill NR](#) near to Princes Risborough, Bucks."

**Don Otter writes:** "I had a **Clouded Yellow** at Incombe Wick on the [Ivinghoe Hills](#) today, [Tuesday 18th August](#)."

**Malcolm Brownsword reported the following:** "On Sunday afternoon, [16th August](#), after the Brown Hairstreak Field Meeting, I went on to [Little Linton Wood](#) for a BBOWT Dormouse field meeting. Most of this was in dense shade, so few butterflies were seen, but on a ride we did see a male **Silver-washed Fritillary**, which I was informed had not been recorded here. Then on my BBOWT [Hartslock](#) transect (including the extension) on [17th August](#), a total of 13 species were seen. Notable features were the large numbers of **Large Whites**, **Common Blues** and **Gatekeepers** and a reasonable number of **Small Heaths**. Totals were: Large White 32, **Green-veined White** 1, **Small Copper** 1, **Brown Argus** 3, Common Blue 25, **Chalkhill Blue** 10 (see image), **Painted Lady** 5, **Small Tortoiseshell** 2, **Speckled Wood** 1, Gatekeeper 25, **Meadow Brown** 66 (see image of male with opened wings), **Ringlet** 1 and Small Heath 8."

**David Redhead reports on the Brown Hairstreak Field Meeting at Whitecross Green Wood on 16th August:** "Walking much the same route, with much the same number of observers, we saw only nine **Brown Hairstreaks** as opposed to fifteen last year. Five of our sightings were of females sitting in oaks in the sunshine but with their wings closed rather than basking - fortunately they all did partially open their wings for a short while to allow us to sex them. We saw two males, one very briefly as it flew down to wild angelica before almost

immediately returning to the oak tree from whence it had come. The other male, somewhat worn and faded, offered close up photographic opportunities as it nectared on one of the very few bramble flowers still to be found. It was disturbed several times by other insects, including **Meadow Browns**, but immediately returned to the same flower. After some time it flew off to, very briefly, alight on a wild angelica flower before flying away over the blackthorn. When we got back to the first ride there were two females down on the blackthorn briefly but neither appeared to lay eggs. Finally back in the car park a female, most probably the first we had seen in an oak very near the car park, kept making appearances. She spent some time on the blackthorn but again there was no evidence of egg laying. A search of the blackthorn around the car park also produced no eggs. Reported sightings are running at about a third of last year, so it appears the Brown Hairstreak is not having a good year in our area. Other species seen were **Brimstone, Brown Argus, Comma, Common Blue, Gatekeeper, Green-veined White, Large Skipper, Large White, Painted Lady, Peacock, Purple Hairstreak, Ringlet, Small Copper, Small Skipper, Small White, Speckled Wood** and **Silver Y**. On my way home from the Brown Hairstreak meeting I stopped off at [Shotover Plain](#) where I saw my second **Clouded Yellow** of the year, the white helice form of the female."

**[Dave Ferguson visited Wapsey's Wood WDS near Beaconsfield in Bucks on 16th August:](#)** "I saw a male **Clouded Yellow** fly past. Also, there were **Brown Argus** (2), **Common Blue** (40) and **Small Heath** (1). On a small pond there I found a pair of **Small Red-eyed Damselflies**, I think the 3rd record for Bucks. On [14th August](#) I went to [Yoesden Bank](#). Didn't see any Adonis Blues but 100+ **Common Blues**."

**[Dave Maunder wrote:](#)** "On [Sunday 16th](#) here in [Aylesbury](#) I was very lucky to come across a **Silver-washed Fritillary** in a woody glade by Coldharbour Way, near Fairford Leys - it must have strayed quite a long way from its breeding grounds, I should think - the nearest I've seen them is probably Finemere woods - certainly a first for me in town! Anyway, I've attached a photo to prove it!"

**[Adam Bassett reported as follows on 16th August:](#)** "Just returned from a week away and it was nice to see a male **Silver-washed Fritillary** sailing around the back garden in [Marlow Bottom, Bucks](#), this afternoon (16th) before sunning itself on the patio table. It was a fairly worn individual. The buddleia at the front of the house is beginning to go over and the numbers of **Peacocks** and **Painted Ladies** have fallen away from their peak a couple of weeks ago, but it was nice to see 5 **Small Tortoiseshells** nectaring, as I don't normally see this butterfly very often in the garden."

**[Andrew Ashworth sent the following report on 16th August:](#)** "Ian and I made it to [Lardon Chase](#) for 10am on [Saturday 15th August](#) to view it through the drizzle! Returning after a look along the river at Goring. things eventually warmed up enough for butterflies to move without our encouragement: approx 10 **Adonis**, fewer **Chalkhills** and more **Common Blues**. We had intended looking across at The Holies but by now it was 2pm due to the bad weather start, so we went straight across to [Aston Rowant](#). Still breezy but an oasis at the bottom of Bald Hill in the shelter was very busy with **Brown Argus, Silver-spotted Skippers, Small Skippers** etc and the Chiltern Gentians just nicely out. I find it so much more pleasant here than the Beacon Hill side. Still mustn't complain too much about motorways - they got us down (from Yorkshire) for the day!!"

### Sunday 16th August 2009

**[Dave Wilton sent this report today, 16th August:](#)** "An afternoon wander around the meadows that make up [BBOWT's River Ray Reserves](#), adjacent to the A41 on the Bucks/Oxon border, produced nothing unexpected. However, there were really good numbers of some of the more common species, of which **Common Blue** (127), **Small**

**Tortoiseshell** (66) and **Small Copper** (58) had the highest scores. The Small Copper seems to be having a particularly good second brood everywhere and the number of Small Tortoiseshells to be found, at least here in the northern half of Bucks, makes one wonder what all the fuss has been about with this species recently! There are still plenty of **Painted Ladies** about (26 seen) although not as many as a week ago. One small patch of flowering devil's-bit scabious in the *Grange & Long Herdon Meadows* held **Small White** (1), Small Copper (13), Common Blue (11), Painted Lady (16), Small Tortoiseshell (32), **Peacock** (8), **Comma** (1), **Meadow Brown** (2), **Silver Y** (6) and **Straw Dot** (1), showing just what a good nectar source the plant is at the moment. Elsewhere the butterflies were found on fleabane, water mint and ragwort alongside ditches and hedgerows because most of the meadows had already been cut for hay. Other butterfly species seen included **Large White**, **Green-veined White**, **Brown Argus**, **Speckled Wood**, **Gatekeeper** and **Small Heath**."

*Becky Woodell reported the following on 15th August:* "This afternoon I saw a pale, creamy coloured **Clouded Yellow** in *Asham Meads (Oxon)* but do not know which one. It landed quite close to me several times, but then flew off rapidly."

### Friday 14th August 2009

*Ben Carpenter spent a few hours at The Holies and at Lardon Chase today (Friday 14th August):* "At *The Holies* I had the following: 216 **Meadow Brown**, 29 **Large White**, 12 **Painted Lady**, 19 **Adonis Blue**, 48 **Common Blue**, 12 **Chalkhill Blue**, 8 **Brown Argus**, 3 **Brimstone**, 1 **Clouded Yellow**, 6 **Small Tortoiseshell**, 3 **Green-veined White**, 4 **Small White**, 1 **Dingy Skipper**, 4 **Small Heath**, 1 **Gatekeeper** and 2 **Small Copper**. At *Lardon Chase* I had the following: 23 **Large White**, 42 **Meadow Brown**, 35 **Common Blue**, 6 **Painted Lady**, 1 **Green-veined White**, 7 **Chalkhill Blue**, 3 **Adonis Blue**, 2 **Small Tortoiseshell**, 1 **Small Copper**, 1 **Small White**, 1 **Peacock** and 1 **Speckled Wood**."

*Maureen Cross sent this news on 13th August:* "**Adonis Blue** are on the wing. Several were seen on *Lardon Chase today (13th)*."

*Paul Warham visited Bernwood Meadow on 13th August:* "Highlights were one male and 2 female **Brown Hairstreaks** along with one **Purple Hairstreak**. Also near Picadilly in Oakley Wood were **Purple Hairstreak** (6) and **Silver-washed Fritillary** (one female)."

*John Ward-Smith sent this report on 12th August:* "On *11th August*, whilst dragonfly recording at *Swinley Brick Pits in Berks*, I counted at least 7 **Grayling** and there were probably plenty more. Also noted **Common Blue**, **Gatekeeper**, **Large Skipper** and several **Painted Lady**."

*Graham Taylor was at Oxford Airport on the afternoon of 11th August and saw* his first **Clouded Yellow** of the year.

*Helen Hyre sent the following on 12th August:* "Birdsfoot Trefoil has flowered well at *Stewkley churchyard (Bucks)* this year. On *11th August* my survey was dominated by **Common Blue**. In the past the best total has been 3. There were 12 on 11th August, ranging from the pristine to the very scruffy."

### Monday 10th August 2009

*David Redhead sent this report today, 10th August:* "Although I did not see a **Brown Hairstreak**, the weekend just gone proved to be memorable for its butterflies. On Saturday morning, accompanied by Wendy, I walked week 19 of the *Shabbington Wood Transect in Bernwood Forest*. The total butterfly count was 256, which is the second highest total for this week since the transect was started in 1995. Piccadilly was awash with **Painted Ladies** and

the 33 recorded on transect played a part in the high overall count. But the Piccadilly Painted Ladies were out-numbered by the **Common Blues** and 36 were recorded on transect, second only to the **Gatekeepers** with 53. The Common Blue count surpassed the total recorded on transect for the whole of 2008 (24) and 2007 (a meagre 11) combined. Three **Silver-washed Fritillaries** were also recorded and this year this species is going to achieve its highest ever count for the transect. *In the afternoon I did some tetrad bashing in my ten km square and visited Kendal Copse*, a new wildlife area created by Oxford City Council near Templeton College. I did not see any Common Blues there but I did come across a **Brown Argus** and my first **Clouded Yellow** of the year. *On Sunday I accompanied Becky Woodell to the disused railway line in N Bucks* in search of egg laying Wood Whites. We saw seven second brood **Wood Whites** including two females but neither obliged us by laying any eggs. The Common Blue activity was prodigious and our count for the one and a quarter miles we walked was 299! Several times we noticed spirals of half a dozen or so cavorting Common Blues - one of these happened just in front of us when it was plain that the butterfly at the bottom of the spiral was a female whilst all the others were males. *Back home, Wendy & I took the dog for a walk up to the grassland above our house at about 6pm* - during the last few days I had become rather worried about the state of the small Common Blue colony here as I had only ever managed to see two males. It did not take us long to find 8 roosting Common Blues, in a limited area, of which at least two were obviously females, so we returned home feeling somewhat reassured about the future of our local colony. My species count for the two days was 22 with the following seen in addition to those already mentioned - **Small Skipper, Large Skipper, Brimstone, Large White, Small White, Green-veined White, Purple Hairstreak, Small Copper, Red Admiral, Small Tortoiseshell, Speckled Wood, Meadow Brown and Ringlet**. Additionally, whilst I was out on Saturday afternoon, Wendy saw a **Holly Blue** in our garden."

*Helen Hyre walked along Wendover Arm near Aston Clinton, Bucks, on 10th August:*

"It was cloudy and very windy, no butterflies seen until beyond the bypass bridge, where a few **Peacock** and **Large White** were nectaring on buddleia. A **Painted Lady** flew up and then I noticed others, sitting on the chalky slope. Some were very tatty, others looked new. There was another large group further along, again on chalky slopes. I saw 14 Peacock, 1 **Small Tortoiseshell**, 1 **Common Blue**, 1 **Comma**, 8 Large White and 4 **Small White**. I counted 58 Painted Lady, on a very gusty day. During the summer I have seen very few Painted Lady on Wendover Arm, so today's sighting was unprecedented. [This is the same place where I saw a few Painted Lady flying northwards on 29th May. Could they be preparing to migrate?]"

*Wendy Wilson reports on the Field Event at Winchmore Hill on Sunday, 9th August:* "It was a warm sunny morning and a small group of five members set out to count butterflies in and around the villages of *Winchmore Hill* and *Coleshill, Bucks*. Between us we recorded fifteen species: large numbers of **Painted Ladies, Meadow Browns, Gatekeepers** and **Small, Large & Green-veined Whites**, a few **Small Coppers, Peacocks, Red Admirals, Commas** and **Speckled Woods** and one each of **Brimstone, Common Blue, Small Tortoiseshell** and **Essex Skipper**. On the way home, I stopped off at another under-recorded 4km square near *Chalfont-St-Giles* and, in addition to seven of the above, spotted two **Purple Hairstreaks**."

*Nick Bowles visited the Pitstone area on 9th August:* "At *Pitstone Hill, Bucks*, this am/lunchtime a few **Chalkhill Blue** and all other anticipated species plus at least three and probably 4 **Dark Green Fritillary**. One female was attempting to lay first on some hanging dead Hawthorn leaves and then into moss in almost non-existent turf (by the side of some scrub) - approx 50cm from nearest sizeable violets which were also in full sun. Conceivably there were violets I couldn't see under the scrub. I couldn't find any eggs after she left. Grazing is current and probably benefitting this site after all the rain has led to greater than average grass growth."

**Peter Hall sent the following on 9th August:** "My garden buddleia (*Ballinger Common, Bucks*) is covered with **Peacocks, Small Whites, Large Whites, Small Tortoiseshells, Red Admirals, Painted Ladies** and **Meadow Browns**. Must be a hundred on the bush at a time!"

**On Friday 7th and Saturday 8th August in ideal weather Mick & Wendy Campbell did some atlas grid-bashing in SP70 on the Bucks/Oxon border near Thame:** "Although a lot of the area we walked is predominantly arable and livestock farmland we found an extraordinary number of butterflies in the hay meadows, setaside fields and field margins, especially where there were flowering thistles or red clover. Over the 2 days we counted 685 butterflies of 18 species: **Brown Argus** (33), **Common Blue** (58), **Small Copper** (17), **Holly Blue** (1), **Gatekeeper** (77, inc. mating pair), **Meadow Brown** (76 inc. mating pair), **Brimstone** (2), **Large White** (135), **Small White** (39), **Green-veined White** (5), **Comma** (6), **Painted Lady** (151), **Peacock** (37), **Red Admiral** (2), **Small Tortoiseshell** (32), **Small Skipper** (10), **Speckled Wood** (2), **Purple Hairstreak** (2). Moths were: **Dusky Sallow, Silver-Y** (they were everywhere and in pristine condition, so must be a new influx or second generation from here), **Straw Dot** and a **Smoky Wainscot**."

### Saturday 8th August 2009

**Richard Soulsby reports on the field meeting to Aston Rowant on 8th August:** "The beautiful weather today attracted 12 members of Upper Thames and other branches to the field trip at the *Aston Rowant North (Beacon Hill) National Nature Reserve*. Plenty of butterflies were flying, including the main target species, **Silver-spotted Skipper**, with 90 seen in 60 minutes across the best area of habitat – in fact, possibly the most numerous species seen. Most identified were males, but some females were also seen – although no eggs could be found. The second target species, **Chalkhill Blue**, was seen in smaller numbers, yielding about 7 males and 3 females. The following additional species were seen in greater or smaller numbers: **Comma, Brimstone, Small Tortoiseshell, Common Blue, Brown Argus, Painted Lady** (lots, of course), **Peacock, Small, Large and Green-veined Whites, Small, Essex and Large Skippers, Meadow Brown, Gatekeeper, Small Heath, Small Copper, Red Admiral, Speckled Wood** and, right at the end, a probable **Dark Green Fritillary**. Moths included innumerable **6-spot Burnets** and **Silver Y's** and a **Treble-bar**. Silver-spotted Skippers are now at, or near, their peak, so if you haven't seen any yet, now is the time to start looking! Please report any sightings to the Upper Thames Branch website."

**Ian Gamble visited Aston Rowant this morning, 8th August:** "I saw eighteen species of butterfly. Good numbers of **Silver-spotted Skipper** and both **Common** and **Chalkhill Blue** were present. Also of interest were 8 **Small Tortoiseshell**, 1 **Red Admiral**, 15 **Brown Argus**, 6 **Small Copper**, 4 **Brimstone**, 2 **Essex Skipper** and a **Clouded Yellow**. In the afternoon I visited *Whitecross Green Wood*. I failed to see any **Brown Hairstreak**. I did however see 1 **Purple Hairstreak**, 1 **Ringlet**, 2 **Small Copper** and many more **Common Blue** than on my visit a week ago, otherwise the numbers of the other more frequent species remained much the same."

**Ben Miller reports that there were great numbers of butterflies around the Ivinghoe Hills this morning, 8th August:** "I recorded 18 species - 1 worn **Dark Green Fritillary** north of the S-bend (SP959165), 40+ **Painted Ladies**, 1+ **Small Skipper**, 3+ **Essex Skipper**, 2 **Brimstones, Large White, Small White, Green-veined White**, 2+ **Brown Argus**, many **Common Blue, Chalkhill Blue**, 2 **Small Tortoiseshells** (also 4 at College Lake later), **Peacock, Speckled Wood**, 3 **Ringlets, Meadow Brown**, 30+ **Gatekeepers** and 5 **Small Heaths**. A few photos below - Painted Ladies seem to be becoming more obvious by the day!"

**Paul Warham visited Lardon Chase on 8th August:** "Highlights this morning were **Adonis**



**Blue** (3 males - one photographed) and a **Clouded Yellow** that landed twice before continuing on through. Other sightings were: **Brimstone**(3); **Large & Small White** (c.100 in total); **Green-veined White**(3); **Holly Blue**(2); **Common Blue**(c.10); **Chalkhill Blue**(10+); **Small Copper**(2); **Brown Argus**(3); **Painted Lady**(20+); **Small Tortoiseshell**(4); **Peacock**(3); **Comma**(1) and a few **Meadow Brown**."

*Jon Mercer, Wilts BC, spent an hour Friday afternoon 7th August at Linkey Down, Aston Rowant, in sunny conditions:* "I saw 6+ fresh **Silver-spotted Skippers** also 2 **Chalkhill Blues** and 12+ **Common Blues**, 2 **Brown Argus**, 3 **Essex Skipper**, 2 **Small Heath** and 1 **Marbled White** (+ other common species)."

*Dave Wilton reported as follows on 7th August:* "While mowing the lawn in our *Westcott (Bucks)* garden late this afternoon I disturbed a butterfly that was sunning itself at ground level. It flew up to join the hordes of **Peacocks** on the buddleia and I assumed it was just another worn **Painted Lady**. Then I put my glasses on and got a surprise - not a Painted Lady but a worn **Silver-washed Fritillary**. It remained on the buddleia for a couple of minutes, giving time to grab the camera for a quick record shot before it flew to the top of a laurel for a brief sunbathing session and then disappeared over the fence into next door's garden. Our nearest colony is about two miles away in the woods at Kingswood and that is probably where this specimen had wandered in from."

*Chris Brown sent this update for Crowsley Wood on 7th August:* 21 **Silver-washed Fritillary** seen on *30th July* including this female (see below) which was testing out the violet foodplants on the woodland floor. Then 17 seen today, *7th August*, the males were actively patrolling the central ride and challenging anything flying, even a dragonfly! Less females today so whether they are in the woods egg laying whilst the boys are all out showing off I do not know. Roughly half of the males seen were looking tatty. A couple quite fresh."

*Nick Bowles sent this news on 7th August:* "**Dark Green Fritillary** and **Silver-washed Fritillary** (minimum of two of each) at a private site in *Wendover, Bucks*, this afternoon. 20 species of butterfly were seen altogether and a large number of **Silver-Y moths**. The butterflies included second brood **Dingy Skipper**."

#### Thursday 6th August 2009

*Dave Ferguson sent this email today, 6th August:* "I thought you might like to see these pictures of what I think is the butterfly of the summer - the **Large White**. They were taken on *Steps Hill in Bucks* yesterday (5th)."

*Dave Wilton reported the following on 6th August:* "This morning the garden here at *Westcott, Bucks* produced a typical return of about 60 butterflies, with **Large White** (10), **Small White** (2), **Green-veined White** (2), **Common Blue** (2), **Red Admiral** (3), **Painted Lady** (5), **Small Tortoiseshell** (4), **Peacock** (33), **Comma** (1), **Gatekeeper** (1) and **Meadow Brown** (1) enjoying the buddleias. We have had in excess of 40 Peacocks on one occasion but around 30 seems to be the norm. Just why the Painted Lady total has never exceeded five I don't understand because in the adjacent fields there are many times that number, making do with thistles, ragwort and clover when they could be enjoying our far superior nectar! The **Brimstone caterpillars** on our alder buckthorn are still showing no signs of wanting to pupate, meaning that they are unlikely to emerge as adults until September. One is still quite small (2cm) but the others now appear to be fully grown. With little of the warm morning sunshine remaining before the appearance of the first of the day's thunderstorms, I decided to make a quick hour-long survey of the fields close to our house until the rain set in. Most of the expected candidates were to be seen, comprising **Small Skipper**, **Brimstone**, **Small Copper** and **Brown Argus** in addition to those species already recorded in the garden. Needless to say, the most numerous butterfly in the fields was the Painted Lady with

67 recorded, but it was a very pleasant surprise to find that the Small Tortoiseshell came second with a total of 53. Of that number, no less than 45 were counted on thistles surrounding what seems to have become the butterfly's favourite local nettle patch (see report for 23rd June)."

## Tuesday 4th August 2009

**Richard O'Dare visited Aston Rowant reserve on 3rd August:** "On the slope I saw 6 **Chalkhill Blue** and 3 **Silver-spotted Skipper**. Two of these were close to each other and I was able to take the following photograph."

**Dave Miller (Herts & Middx Branch) reported as follows today, 4th:** "Having met Andy King at both the sites he visited on *2nd August*, I shall leave the tallies to his accurate recording as already posted. I think he may not have arrived in time to see the tired looking **White Admiral** at *Whitecross Green Wood*, however! We also saw **Common Blues** at *Aston Rowant*, including a female with large red mites piggy-backing. I have attached some photos from both - **Purple Hairstreak** and the White Admiral from Whitecross and the others from Aston Rowant. Many congratulations to Andy on his achievement for the year (see report below for *2nd August*)!"

**May Webber sent the following from Long Hanborough near Witney, Oxon on 4th August:** "I have attached a photograph of a **Peacock** that was feeding on my apple and sugar solution that I made, it seemed really successful."

**Ched George visited Buttlers Hangings in Bucks on 3rd August:** "I thoroughly searched the southern paddock between 3pm and 4pm. Some breeze and some sun (also lots of flowers, but sheep dung betrayed previous presence). 1 male and 1 female **Chalkhill Blue**. Definitely 6 **Silver-spotted Skipper** (from 9 - 10 sightings) and, surprisingly, 1 male **Silver-washed Fritillary**. I entered the north paddock to find few flowers and 10 sheep. With the sun now in, I only recorded **Meadow Browns** but the set-a-side field yielded a **Small Copper**. The rest was much as one would expect, with a few **Gatekeepers**, maybe 20 Meadow Brown, a dozen-or-so **Painted Ladies**, a few **Brimstones**, **Large** and **Small Whites**, 5 **Peacocks**, 1 **Comma**, a dozen **Common Blue** and an **Essex Skipper**."

**Malcolm Brownsword reported the following on 3rd August:** "A week or so after my visit to *Aston Upton Downs and Oven Bottom*, I returned on *2nd August* in more favourable weather conditions. On Juniper Hill and approaches, I saw: 10 **Small Skippers** (including 2 with red parasitic mites), 30 **Chalkhill Blues**, 20 **Common Blues** (including one 'Blue' Female - see photo below), the very welcome sight of 2 **Small Heaths** and 1 **Brown Argus**, 2 **Ringlets**, 25 **Large Whites**, 4 **Small Whites**, 5 **Green-veined Whites**, 5 **Meadow Browns**, 1 **Brimstone**, 5 **Small Tortoiseshells**, 34 **Peacocks** and 60+ **Painted Ladies**. The latter three species were mainly nectaring on Ragwort. Surprisingly, I did not see any Marbled Whites. At nearby Oven Bottom, the following were seen: 1 Brown Argus, 2 Small Skippers, 3 Meadow Browns, 15 Chalkhill Blues, 5 Common Blues and 4 Peacocks. Again, surprisingly there were no Marbled Whites. Returning towards the grain drier, close to the 'Y' track junction near the lower entrance to Juniper Hill, at 5 pm I saw the remarkable sight of a roost of Common Blues (20+) with about 6 Brown Argus. They were mainly head-down, perched on tallish dried grasses (see image of 4 on a single plant)."

**Adam Bassett sent this report on 3rd August:** "A **Silver-washed Fritillary** made a brief appearance at the garden buddleia bush (*Marlow Bottom, Bucks*) on *August 2nd*, the first since July 19th, but too brief to sex. Both **Painted Lady** and **Peacock** numbers have climbed considerably over the past 2 weeks and are now in daily double figures, with 15 of the former and 20 of the latter the peak so far feeding on the same buddleia bush."

**Monday 3rd August 2009**

**Dennis Dell reported the following on 2nd August:** "This surprisingly intact *valezina* form of **Silver-washed Fritillary** was seen in *Romer Wood, Bucks* today, plus 4 standard ones. I also found 4 **Purple Emperor larvae** [3 on one bush!] and one egg there, but saw no adults."

**Dave Turnbull wrote the following on August 2nd:** "I visited a site in *Pitstone, Bucks* two weeks ago and it revealed two fresh Small and Common Blues, heralding the start of their second broods. A two hour visit today revealed the field had been cut but I counted 30+ **Small Blues** and probably 100 **Common Blues**. A single **Brown Argus** and 6 **Dingy Skippers** completed the second brood tally. Another two species of orchid now brings the number to seven at this site."

**Ben Miller reported the following on 2nd August:** "Having got family duties done and finally finishing my section of systematic list for the '08 Bucks bird report, I finally got into the field late afternoon... Took Hazel for a walk round *Ivinghoe Beacon, Bucks*. The highlight was a wonderful show from c.60+ **Chalkhill Blues** at the usual spots on the northern slope of Gallows Hill (SP965171), including a number of very fresh insects. Other butterflies in the area included 3+ **Essex Skippers**, 2+ common Skippers, just 2 **Marbled Whites**, 2 **Painted Ladies**, 4 **Gatekeepers** and one very worn **Ringlet**."

**Andy King visited two sites on 2nd August:** "I saw the following species:  
*Whitecross Green Wood:* **Meadow Brown, Gatekeeper, Small, Large and Green-veined Whites, Painted Lady, Peacock**, all in good numbers. Also one each of **Small Tortoiseshell and Large Skipper** and a possible Common Blue. Also two or three **Brown Hairstreaks** high in a favoured ash tree and, with them and elsewhere on-site, quite a few **Purple Hairstreaks**.

*Aston Rowant NNR:* Meadow Brown, Gatekeeper, Small, Large and Green-veined Whites, Painted lady, Peacock, all in good numbers. Also there were a reasonable, but not huge, number of **Chalkhill Blues**, two or three **Brown Argus**, several **Small Skippers**, two **Brimstones** and the first flush of **Silver-spotted Skippers**, mostly males. The Brown Hairstreaks and the Silver-spotted Skippers complete my list for 2009: I have seen every regular English resident and both the regular immigrants in 2009."

**May Webber sent this news on 2nd August:** "At last the sun came out this afternoon for an acceptable period of time! I was sitting in my garden in *Long Hanborough near Witney, Oxon* and was completely surrounded by butterflies! On one of my Buddleias this afternoon I saw: 11 **Peacocks**, 7 **Large Whites**, 3 **Small Whites**, 3 **Painted Ladies**, 1 **Red Admiral** and 2 **Meadow Browns** (one that I had never seen on a Buddleia)."

**Tony Croft reported the following on 2nd August:** "I've just seen a male **Brown Hairstreak** in the top of an ash tree near *Long Crendon, Bucks*. I watched it flying round the tree for a while before it settled at which point I was able to make a positive identification."

**Chris and Pat Dennis managed an outing to Finemere Wood on 31st July between 12 noon and 2-30pm:** "We saw 1 **White Admiral**, 2 **Purple Hairstreaks**, 4 **Silver-washed Fritillaries**, 1 **Brimstone, Large Skippers and Small Skippers**. On our way home we had a look along the disused railway line between the Edgcot Road and the bridge over the road to Kingswood, we saw 1 male and one female **Common Blue** plus one **Brown Argus**, it seems to be another poor year for the blues this year."

## Friday 31st July 2009

**Tony Croft said he had a very good transect result at Rushbeds Wood, Bucks, this afternoon, 31st July:** "It yielded 20 species. Particularly gratifying were 2 **Clouded Yellow** in the tramway meadow. The others included 78 **Meadow Brown**; 59 **Painted Lady**; 42 **Peacock**; 41 **Large White**; 36 **Green-veined White**; 31 **Gatekeeper**; 26 **Common Blue**; 25 **Speckled Wood**; 23 **Ringlet**; 10 **Small Copper**; 9 **Small White**; 7 **Comma**; 5 **Small Heath**; 4 **Silver-washed Fritillary**; 3 **Red Admiral**; 3 **Small Tortoiseshell**; 2 **Brown Argus**; 1 **Small Skipper** and 1 **Brimstone**."

**Dave Turnbull and Ian Gamble visited Whitecross Green Wood on the morning of 31st July:** "We recorded twenty species of butterfly. The highlights of the trip included 4 **Brown Hairstreaks**, 6 **Purple Hairstreaks** and a female **Silver-washed Fritillary** form *valezina*."

**Mick & Wendy Campbell went to Stanton Little Wood (Oxon) on Friday 31st July:** "We managed 19 species, the most surprising being a very worn female **Purple Emperor** which glided very slowly across the track and disappeared behind a willow. Other species seen were: **Clouded Yellow**, **Brown Argus**, **Comma**, **Small Skipper**, **Painted Lady**, **Purple Hairstreak**, **Large White**, **Small Copper**, **Meadow Brown**, **Ringlet**, **Gatekeeper**, **Small White**, **Peacock**, **Silver-washed Fritillary**, **Green-veined White**, **Common Blue**, **Brimstone** and **Speckled Wood**."

## Thursday 30th July 2009

**Don Otter writes:** "A tatty old female **Purple Emperor** at *Ringshall (Ashridge Estate)* on *28th July*." Quite close to the Herts border but definitely in Bucks. It was hanging around a Sallow bush."

**Ben Miller sent this report on 26th July:** "I visited *Wendover Woods* on *25th July* and saw: **Brimstone** (4+), **Comma** (3), **Peacock** (25+), **Green-veined White**, **Small White**, **Large White**, **Speckled Wood** (4), **Small Copper** (3), **Large Skipper** (1), **Silver-washed Fritillary** (15+), **Ringlet**, **Gatekeeper** (5+), **Meadow Brown**, **Painted Lady** (5+), **Red Admiral**."

## Tuesday 28th July 2009

**This news came via Jim Asher today:** Roy Alliss had a **White Admiral** in his garden in *Reading* on *26th July*.

**Dave Ferguson sent this sighting on 27th July:** "While looking for a Whinchat on the edge of *Beaconsfield, Bucks*, this afternoon (*27th*) a female **Clouded Yellow** flew over a clover field and landed nearby."

**Malcolm Brownsword wrote the following on 27th July:** "Exactly one week after the BC Upper Thames Branch visit to *Homefield Wood*, when we saw a total of 21 species of butterfly, on *Saturday 25th July* I saw 14 species on my monthly BBOWT transect. Notable was my first **White-letter Hairstreak** on the transect route and the continuing large numbers of **Silver-washed Fritillaries**. Individual totals were: 2 **Small Skippers**, 2 **Large Skippers**, 9 **Large Whites**, 7 **Green-veined Whites**, 1 **White-letter Hairstreak**, 4 **Common Blues**, 27 **Painted Ladies**, 11 **Peacocks**, 2 **Commas**, 22 **Silver-washed Fritillaries**, 2 **Marbled Whites**, 25 **Gatekeepers**, 28 **Meadow Browns** and 14 **Ringlets**."

**Chris Brown sent this update on 27th July of the Silver-washed Fritillary colony at Crowsley Wood, Berks:** "On the whole with the cooler weather the **Silver-washed Fritillaries** are somewhat inactive. The males are patrolling the area to some extent but, like the females, are mostly feeding. Numbers overall seem better this year so far: 9 seen on

10/07/09, 8 on 16/07/09, 12 on 22/07/09 and 10 on 24/07/09. Also of interest is the sudden emergence of **Peacock** and **Comma** on 22nd July as I had a bewildering time counting the SWF from the many Commas on the wing. I counted 25 Peacock and 26 Comma in all and the central ride of the wood was 'on-the-boil' with all butterflies such that I had to give up counting to concentrate on the SWF."

**Ben Carpenter reported as follows on 27th July:** "I have managed to get round to sorting out my butterfly (and moth) records for the last month or so. These are the more recent ones: On 26th July at *Hurst Meadow* near Dorchester-on-Thames I encountered at least 5 **Brown Argus**, 1 **Speckled Wood**, 1 **Gatekeeper**, 3 **Green-veined Whites**, 1 **Peacock**, 1 **Common Blue**, 2 **Meadow Brown**, 1 **Large White** and 1 **Essex Skipper**. Walking back to the car I recorded 6 **Painted Ladies**, 2 **Peacocks**, 2 **Large Whites**, 1 **Green-veined White**, 1 **Red Admiral** and 1 **Small Tortoiseshell** feeding on a *Buddleia*.

On Saturday 25th July I counted in my garden at *Nuneham Courtenay* (just south of Oxford) an incredible 52 **Peacocks**, 15 **Painted Ladies**, 2 **Commas**, 1 **Red Admiral**, 1 **Small White**, 1 **Large White**, 1 **Meadow Brown** and 1 **Gatekeeper**, with the majority of them feeding on the *Buddleias*.

On 16th July I took a trip up to the *Holies*, *Lardon Chase* and *Lough Down*. At the *Holies* there were a number of **Ringlets**, **Large Whites**, **Green-veined Whites**, **Meadow Browns**, **Painted Ladies**, **Marbled Whites**, and 23 **Chalkhill Blues**. *Lardon Chase* revealed a number of **Small Whites**, **Meadow Browns**, **Ringlets**, **Gatekeepers**, 4 **Large Whites**, 4 **Peacocks**, 190 **Chalkhill Blues**, 2 **Brimstones**, 3 **Painted Ladies** and 3 **Common Blues**. At *Lough Down*, there were a number of **Gatekeepers**, **Large Whites**, **Ringlets**, **Meadow Browns**, 7 **Chalkhill Blues**, 1 **Painted Lady**, 2 **Brimstones** and 1 **Comma**."

**Steve & Mary Woolliams were in Bernwood Forest on the afternoon of 25th July:** "We spotted this **Silver-washed Fritillary**, one of three we saw during the afternoon. Unfortunately our camera isn't great so the picture is quite blurred. We also saw four **White Admirals**, numerous **Marbled Whites** both in the forest and in the meadows, one **Small Copper**, several **Common Blues** and **Purple Hairstreaks**. We saw many **Meadow Browns**, **Gatekeepers**, **Ringlets**, **Large** and **Small Skippers**, **Painted Ladies**, **Peacocks**, one **Brimstone**, **Commas**, **Large Whites**, **Small Whites**, **Speckled Woods**. I think that's the lot!"

### Sunday 26th July 2009

**Ian Gamble sent the following sighting on 25th July:** "I was in *Oakley Wood (Bernwood)* today, 25th July, and saw two **Brown Hairstreaks**. I met a gentleman who said he was the **Brown Hairstreak** champion and asked me if I would send in a picture. I have not sent the picture of the one I saw first but a second individual which was found later in the afternoon. Some twenty species of butterfly in the wood including four **White Admirals**."

**Mick Jones says it was a red-letter day at Dancersend (Bucks) on 25th July:** "Good sightings of two species I've searched for unsuccessfully for a number of years - **Purple Hairstreak** (4) seen on two Oak trees along our main woodland ride and **White-letter Hairstreak** (2) seen on one of our Wych Elms. Also **White Admiral** seen in the same area where Robin Carr saw one about a fortnight ago and a total of 7 **Silver-washed Fritillaries**. Also seen were **Small Skipper**, **Large Skipper**, **Brimstone**, **Large White**, **Small White**, **Green-veined White**, **Small Copper** (11), **Brown Argus**, **Common Blue**, **Painted Lady** (lots), **Small Tortoiseshell** (2), **Red Admiral** (1), **Peacock**, **Comma**, **Speckled Wood**, **Gatekeeper**, **Marbled White**, **Meadow Brown** and **Ringlet**. A total of 23 species making one of my best butterfly days ever at the reserve."

**Michael Pitt-Payne reported the following on 25th July:** "During the past few days my garden has been attracting a large number of **Peacocks** which look as if they have just

hatched. Below is a picture of one I took this afternoon."

***Martin Rowland says he was pleased to attend BBOWT's Butterfly ID workshop at Warburg Nature Reserve on 25th July:*** "During this event we achieved a species count of 19 - my best day and some personal firsts: **Small and Large Skippers, Brimstone, Large, Small, Green-veined and Marbled Whites**, one elusive **Purple Hairstreak, Small Copper, Common Blue**, one **Red Admiral, Painted Lady, Peacock, Comma, Silver-washed Fritillary, Gatekeeper, Meadow Brown, Ringlet and Small Heath.**"

***David Gantzel wrote the following on 25th July:*** "On buddleia in *Hazlemere (Bucks)* today *July 25th*, several **Large and Small Whites**, 3 **Painted Ladies**, 1 **Small Tortoiseshell**, 1 **Gatekeeper**, a few **Peacocks.**"

***Dave Ferguson sent this report on 25th July:*** "I saw a male **Silver-washed Fritillary** at SP748278 today (25th) which is a bramble patch on the edge of *Addington Park, Bucks*. I also saw a female in *Finemere Wood* on the trunk of an oak c4m up. It appeared to be ovipositing but it was some distance away. It was on the E side of the main track c30m from the track."

***Dave Maunder sent the following news on 25th July:*** "We've got good numbers of Vanessids here in *Aylesbury (Bucks)* now. This morning, *25th July*, I did a little survey in a rough field adjacent to Coldharbour Way on the edge of town and saw **Painted Lady (25), Peacock (46), Comma (3)**. All were nectaring on Thistles in the morning sun! There were good numbers of **Small Tortoiseshells** in the same field a week or so ago, so I'm thinking the *Sturmia Bella* parasitic fly hasn't affected the local vanessids too much this summer, I'm pleased to say! Also today in my small garden on my Buddleias I've had **Painted lady (3); Peacock (7); Red Admiral (1); Comma (1); Small Tortoiseshell (1); Brimstone (1); Large Whites (8+); Small Whites (6+) and Green-veined Whites (2).**"

### Friday 24th July 2009

***Judith Barnard reports on this week's sightings in Willen, Milton Keynes:*** "Sightings this week at grid ref SP8841 were:

*Monday 20th July* - 31 **Gatekeepers** (including a mating pair), 1 **Comma**, 1 **Speckled Wood**, 1 **Holly Blue**, 7 **Large White**, 7 **Small White**, 12 **Painted Ladies**.

*Tuesday 21st July* - It was raining but as it eased about 15+ **Painted Ladies** flew past.

*Wednesday 22nd July* (v. windy) - 5 **Painted Ladies**, 18 **Gatekeepers**, 1 **Large White**, 1 **Peacock**, 2 **Speckled Wood**, 8 unidentified **Whites (Small, Large & Green-veined)**.

*Thursday 23rd July* - 21 **Gatekeepers**, 22 **Painted Ladies**, 1 **Holly Blue**, 1 **Speckled Wood**, 12 **Large White**, 6 **Small White**, 6 **Green-veined White.**"

***Caroline Searle, National Trust Warden for White Horse Hill in Oxfordshire, sent the following sighting on 24th July:*** "One **Clouded Yellow** sighted during transect walk at *Uffington White Horse* on Wednesday *22nd July.*"

***Malcolm Brownsword says that despite a strong wind (force 5) and the likelihood of showers, he went to Aston Upthorpe Downs early in the afternoon of 24th July and on to the nearby SSSI, Oven Bottom:*** "Between the grain drier and the top of Juniper Hill I saw the following: 10 **Chalkhill Blues** (all male), 2 **Common Blues**, 1 **Brimstone**, 1 **Small Copper**, 8 **Small Skippers**, 3 **Marbled Whites**, 2 **Large Whites**, 15 **Gatekeepers** (including a mating pair), 10 **Meadow Browns**, 1 **Small Tortoiseshell** (nectaring on Ragwort), 3 **Ringlets**, 30+ **Peacocks**. The Peacocks were nectaring on the vast area of Oxford Ragwort. Shortly after arrival at Oven Bottom the promised rain started, but before this I saw: 1 **Common Blue**, 5 **Small Skippers**, 1 **Marbled White**, 6 **Meadow Browns**, 1 **Ringlet**, 1 **Peacock** and 1 **Large White.**"

**David Redhead reported the following on 24th July:** "Yesterday, *23rd*, I spent the day in Haugh Woods in Herefordshire seeing the first of their second brood of Wood Whites plus several Comma, but only a couple each of Painted Lady, Peacock and Red Admiral and a single Small Tortoiseshell, amongst other things. When I got home to *Littlemore, Oxon* at nearly 7pm Wendy told me at 5pm there had been 8 **Painted Lady**, 3 **Peacock** and 3 **Comma** on the smallest of our garden buddleias which gets the late afternoon/evening sun. This morning, *24th*, at 9.10am in hazy sunshine there were 12 **Painted Ladies** on or around our second largest and most sheltered garden buddleia which gets the morning sun. They were accompanied by 3 **Comma**, 2 **Red Admiral**, 2 **Large White**, 2 **Green-veined White**, 1 **Peacock** and 1 **Speckled Wood**. 30 minutes later the Painted Lady count had risen to 14 although half of them were now basking on some long grass near the buddleia. In the intervening half hour during a short walk outside the garden another 6 Painted Ladies were seen - so my Painted Lady count by 9.40am was 20. After the daily deluge I decided to pop over to *Shotover* and by the time I got home my Vanessid total for the day was 71 - 33 Painted Lady, 18 Peacock, 14 Comma and 6 Red Admiral but a local Small Tortoiseshell eluded me."

### Thursday 23rd July 2009

**Richard Soulsby sent the following:** "Yesterday afternoon, *22nd July*, I saw my first **Silver-spotted Skippers** of the year at *Swyncombe Downs (Oxon)* – two fresh-looking males (see photo) plus another probable. A major national survey of Silver-spotted Skippers is underway this year, so **please report any sightings (with approx number seen and location) to this website** and they will be passed on. Records from sites where they are rarely seen, such as the northeast Chilterns, will be especially valuable. But beware! There are still quite a few fresh **Large Skippers** around, so do check carefully for silver spots on the undersides of the wings!"

**Dave Ferguson sent the following sightings:** "On a day of sun and showers I walked in and around *Waterperry Wood, Oxon* today (*23rd July*) seeing 25 species. They were: **Large Skipper**, **Small Skipper**, **Essex Skipper** (1), **Large White**, **Small White**, **Green-veined White**, **Purple Hairstreak** (1), **White-letter Hairstreak** (3), **Common Blue** (1), **Brimstone** (1), **Painted Lady** (9), **Peacock**, **Comma** (6), **Red Admiral** (1), **White Admiral** (5), **Silver-washed Fritillary** (3), **Purple Emperor** (1), **Meadow Brown**, **Gatekeeper**, **Ringlet**, **Marbled White** (3), **Speckled Wood**. The Emperor was a female flying around a sallow by the main ride, the Fritillaries were on the southern edge of the wood while the White-letter Hairstreaks were at Drunkard's Corner. I had already seen **Small Copper** and **Small Tortoiseshell** near home (Beaconsfield, Bucks) so I thought, as I was on a roll, I would stop at *Aston Rowant* for some chalk grassland species but a short visit only produced 5 **Chalkhill Blues**. I also saw 5 **Chalkhill Blues** at *Granglands* on *18th July*."

**Dave Wilton says he had a couple of transects to complete in the Bucks Chilterns this morning, 23rd July:** "*Aston Clinton Ragpits* produced a pleasing total of 18 species in half an hour, comprising **Small Skipper**, **Large Skipper**, **Brimstone**, **Large White**, **Small White**, **Green-veined White**, **Common Blue**, **Chalk-hill Blue**, **Red Admiral**, **Painted Lady**, **Small Tortoiseshell**, **Peacock**, **Comma**, **Silver-washed Fritillary**, **Marbled White**, **Gatekeeper**, **Meadow Brown** and **Ringlet**, while at *Coombe Hill near Ellesborough* I added **Essex Skipper**, **Brown Argus** and **Small Heath** to the list. An attempt to refind Purple Emperor in private woods at *Kingswood, Bucks* this afternoon was thwarted by some very heavy showers but while there I did see **Purple Hairstreak** and **White Admiral**, making an effortless 23 species for the day. Assuming that the weather remains as currently forecast, those of you who will be attempting to see 27 species in Berkshire on Sunday should have no trouble at all achieving that target!"

**Chris Iles sent the following report on 22nd July:** "A fair few butterflies and moths around despite the poor weather:

**On Monday 20th, in Wytham Woods, Oxon** huge numbers of **Ringlet, Green-veined White** and **Large White**, also **Gatekeeper, Peacock, Meadow Brown, Speckled Wood, Large Skipper, Marbled White, Painted Lady, Small Tortoiseshell, Six-spot Burnet** moths and a female **Silver-washed Fritillary**. Additionally, a **Comma** on the edge of Wytham village. *In central Oxford*, a **Small White** was seen window-shopping along Queen Street.

**On Tuesday 21st** I found what looked like the larval workings of Hornet Moths in poplars along the *Thames near Binsey, Oxon* - in a large poplar at the entrance to Bossom's boatyard (SP49700757) and at the north tip of Fiddler's Island (SP49860729). In some cases, the holes appeared to retain their larval cocoons. Not too many butterflies present - the three usual species of white, also **Meadow Brown, Speckled Wood, Gatekeeper** and **Painted Lady**.

**On July 22nd** I had a late evening walk around *Hartslock, Oxon*. Butterflies included **Comma, Small Skipper** and **Common Blue** but the most interesting sighting was a **Chalk Carpet moth** by the fence at the top of the orchid slope - not the sort of thing you come across every day."

### Monday 20th July 2009

**Paul Bowyer reports on Saturday's field trip to Homefield Wood in Bucks: Saturday 18th July.** 8 UTB members met at *Homefield Wood near Marlow* on a bright and breezy morning. The event started with a look at part of the catch from the previous night's moth trapping which included a photogenic **Leopard Moth**. The butterfly walk started slowly and got slower because there were so many species to identify and photograph. The list of 21 species was impressive and consisted of the following:- **Silver-washed Fritillary**(36), **Dark Green Fritillary**(1), **Comma**(15), **Peacock**(1), **Painted Lady**(3), **Red Admiral**(1), **Speckled Wood**(6), **Gatekeeper**(17), **Meadow Brown** (39), **Ringlet**(22), **Marbled White**(5), **White-letter Hairstreak**(5), **Purple Hairstreak**(4), **Large White**(12), **Green-veined White**(5), **Small White**(5), **Brimstone**(1), **Large Skipper**(12), **Small Skipper**(3), **Common Blue**(9) and **Brown Argus**(3)."

**Adam Bassett sent this news on 19th July:** "I have had 2 **Silver-washed Fritillary** visiting my garden buddleia (*Marlow Bottom, Bucks*) this weekend - a tatty female and quite a smart male. The male seems quite aggressive and whilst it feeds occasionally, it also seems to sun itself/lie in wait for a female and will actively pursue **Painted Lady** and **Comma** (I suppose because they are orange). When the female approached this afternoon, the male pursued her and they collided into one of our bedroom windows! Also, while at a friend's garden on Saturday about a mile or so to the south of here, but still in Marlow Bottom, I found another female, not quite so tatty, also feeding on buddleia. With 3 definite sightings in the last 4 years from the garden, I suspect that there is a small colony in the surrounding woodland."

**Dave Turnbull sent the following reports:** "A quick visit to *Pitstone in Bucks* on 16th revealed two fresh **Small Blues** suggesting a start to a second brood. In May there were several hundred seen at this site. Then on 19th July while walking my dogs in the Bucks section of *Ashridge* and in between the torrential downpours I saw 2 **Silver-washed Fritillaries** nectaring. I also saw two a week earlier in the same spot. Must be a good year for them as I believe this to be an unusual sighting for this 10k square."

**Jim Asher sent this report on 19th July:** "I did some solid atlas bashing in a number of 2km squares in SU47 (Berkshire) yesterday (*Saturday 18th*) in the morning sunshine, plus a few in SU39 in the late afternoon. The prize of the day was to find a large population of **Silver-washed Fritillary** in the wooded ridge to the west of *Curridge* (around SU487722) - I counted at least 22. I also found Silver-washed Fritillary SE of *Bussock Wood* (at SU468722) - 3 seen there. A total of 20 species overall, and records from 13 2km squares during the



day. Today (19th) was a near washout, although I did go out and see at least 40 **Painted Lady** in a lane to the south of *Fernham* (SU29/39), even in dismal weather, mostly basking on the ground or vegetation. Records from only three squares: total of only 9 species."

### Saturday 18th July 2009

*Graham Taylor sent the following report today, 18th:* "I know large numbers of **Painted Lady** are old hat now, but particularly impressive this morning was a group of upwards of 200 Painted Ladies (I stopped counting at 100) basking or nectaring over a 50m stretch of field edge at *Badbury Clumps (Oxon.)*, which flew up in great clouds as I walked through. All were in pristine condition and of very variable size. Dozens more Painted Ladies over the rest of the site, along with **Comma, Peacock, Small Tortoiseshell, Ringlet, Gatekeeper, Meadow Brown, Small White, Large White** and **Green-veined White**. Other winged things overhead included a Peregrine, a Raven and a B52 bomber displaying at RAF Fairford. Who says SU29 is dull?"

*May Webber sent this unusual garden sighting today, 18th July:* "I was able to use my next door neighbour's camera to photograph this female **Silver-Washed Fritillary**. It was such a thrill to see one in the garden (*in Long Hanborough, Oxon!*)"

*Mick & Wendy Campbell visited Sheephouse Wood in Bucks on 18th July:* "This lovely wood is an SSSI and produced 19 species of butterfly despite the weather being rather mixed. **Marbled Whites, Ringlets** and **Green-veined Whites** were seen in good numbers along most of the rides and we were pleased to find a strong colony of **White Admirals** (22) gracing the wood. A single **Purple Emperor** female was seen flying around a Sallow and 6 **Silver-Washed Fritillaries** were patrolling the rides and nectaring on bramble flowers during the sunny spells. The full species list was: **Red Admiral, Ringlet, Green-veined White, Purple Hairstreak, Meadow Brown, Comma, Gatekeeper, Marbled White, Large Skipper, Small Skipper, Small White, White Admiral, Purple Emperor, Peacock, Speckled Wood, Painted Lady, Silver-Washed Fritillary, Common Blue** and **Large White**. 8 **Small Tortoiseshells** in a nettle-filled corner of the nearby farmyard brought our total species count for the day to 20."

*Judith Barnard sent the following sightings:* "This week at grid ref SP8841 in Willen, Milton Keynes, I recorded:

*Monday 13th July* - 5 **Gatekeepers**, 1 **Comma**, 1 **Peacock**, 5 **Large White**, 1 **Green-veined White**, 2 **Small White**, 2 **Ringlets**.

*Tuesday 14th July* - 15 **Gatekeepers**, 1 **Comma**, 1 **Painted Lady**, 2 **Speckled Woods**, 7 **Large White**, 5 **Small White**, 1 **Ringlet**.

*Wednesday 15th July* - 9 **Gatekeepers**, 1 **Painted Lady**, 3 **Small White**, 2 **Speckled Wood**, 5 **Large White**.

*Thursday 16th July* - 26 **Gatekeepers**, 1 **Small Tortoiseshell**, 2 **Comma**, 1 **Speckled Wood**, 5 **Painted Ladies**, 7 **Small White**, 10+ **Large White**."

*Chris and Pat Dennis visited Homefield Wood in Bucks on 16th July:* "The main ride was surprisingly alive with butterflies. **Silver-washed Fritillaries** were in abundance - we stopped counting after 20. There were at least 10 **Common Blues** and we also saw 1 **Purple Hairstreak**. At *Grangelands* (Bucks) yesterday, 15th, we saw **Chalkhill Blues**."

*Helen Hyre sent this news on 16th July:* "On 12th July I had spent a while surveying in *Gt Brickhill churchyard (Bucks)* and thought I had seen everything. As I turned to leave, something else appeared, which turned out to be a **Brown Argus**. Great Brickhill is in the greensand area so I was surprised to see it."

### Friday 17th July 2009

**Dave Ferguson sent this news on 16th July:** "A walk in *Finemere Wood today (16th)* on a warm, humid, but mostly cloudy day produced 22 species. They were: **Small Skipper, Large Skipper, Large White, Small White, Green-veined White, Brimstone (1), Common Blue (1), Bläck Hairstreak (1), Purple Hairstreak (2), Small Tortoiseshell (1), Peacock (2), Comma (3), Painted Lady (3), Silver-washed Fritillary (6-10), Marbled Fritillary (4-8), White Admiral (1), Purple Emperor (1), Meadow Brown, Gatekeeper, Speckled Wood, Ringlet, Marbled White.** The Bläck Hairstreak was a very worn, tired individual, the Purple Emperor was a female flying round a sallow by the main track. The Marbled Fritillaries were quite aggressive, one leaping up from its perch and chasing a Silver-washed Fritillary and another whizzing round several perched Ringlets."

**David Redhead, Littlemore, Oxon sent the following:** "On *15th July* between 6pm and 6.30pm the feral buddleias still in the sun near our house were adorned by at least 4 **Comma, 3 Red Admiral, 3 Painted Lady** (all fresh) and 2 **Peacock**. When I returned home there was still a fresh Painted Lady on our smallest garden buddleia which gets the early evening sun. Last *Sunday (12th)* our garden count was 11 species - **Comma, Green-veined White, Gatekeeper, Large Skipper, Large White, Meadow Brown, Peacock, Red Admiral, Ringlet, Small Skipper** and **Small Tortoiseshell.**"

**Ched George visited the Holtspur reserves on 15th July, accompanied by Frank Banyard on Holtspur Bottom:** "No sign of Dark Green Fritillary (I saw one at *Bradenham* on the *10th*). I/we saw **Meadow Browns, Gatekeepers, 1 Large Skipper, 1 Small Skipper, Ringlets, 2 Commas, 2 Peacocks, 1 Red Admiral** and 1 **Common Blue.**"

**Malcolm Brownsword writes:** "Despite the windy weather on *15th July*, it was pleasing to see the following butterflies in my garden in *West Hagbourne, Oxon:* **Comma 3, Large White 4, Gatekeeper 1** (very scarce in the village this year), **Peacock 1** (see image), **Meadow Brown 1**, and about 15 **Painted Ladies** (see image) - all of the latter were newly hatched. At 2pm several were on an earth patch in my vegetable garden sheltering from the wind before unsuccessfully attempting to alight on a nearby swaying Buddleia. These are presumably the next generation from those arriving at the end of May. At 5.30pm there were 8 on the Buddleia flowers."

**Wendy Wilson sent the following report:** "**Peacocks** have suddenly started to emerge. On *Tuesday 14 July*, I counted at least 17 on two short strolls in the *Chalfonts*. Seven were on one bramble bush at *Newlands Park* where I also spotted a fresh-looking **Painted Lady** (see photos). The previous day however I saw neither while I was filling some gaps on the map at eight places near *Newport Pagnell*, but I recorded 20 **Small Tortoiseshells** there. On a country lane near *Hardmead*, close to the Bucks/Beds border I witnessed an amazing sight. Upwards of 30-40 assorted Whites, mostly **Green-veined Whites**, were mud-puddling at the side of the road. Every time a car went by, they scattered among the thistles on the verge but, in less than a minute, they were back again feeding on the minerals in the damp mud (the attached photo shows 15 of them). This behaviour went on for half an hour while I sat and ate my lunch, accompanied by an equally fascinated local dog-walker. This part of north-east Bucks is full of interest and there are still many more gaps-in-the-map to be filled before the end of the season ( [click here](#) to see Jim Asher's plea). I've spent three most enjoyable days up there this year and can thoroughly recommend it."

**Tuesday 14th July 2009**

**Martin Harvey sent this report on 13th July:** "This **White Admiral** photo was sent to me by Bobby Franklin, who found it in his conservatory in *Butler's Cross* (near Wendover, Bucks) on *28 June*. He tells me that the last time he saw one of these was many years ago in the New Forest. Presumably it must have dispersed from a breeding colony somewhere, but where?"

**Dave Wilton wrote the following on 13th July:** "A **Small Skipper** visited our garden at [Westcott, Bucks](#) today, taking this year's garden tally to 19 butterfly species. A female **Meadow Brown** was noted laying eggs on our back lawn but I don't think I'll get away with that as an excuse not to mow it until this time next year! A casual inspection of our four alder buckthorn plants, purchased from the Woodland Trust a couple of years ago and plonked into a large pot pending a decision on where to put them, brought to light five **Brimstone caterpillars**. They vary in length from 12mm to 20mm so even the largest has some way to go yet before pupation. The books say this usually occurs in mid-July but it doesn't look as if these particular caterpillars are in any great rush to comply with the written word."

**Rob Hill sent this report on 13th July:** "*On 10th July, at Ravenstone STW* (near Stoke Goldington in Bucks) a BTO breeding bird transect was predictably quiet, but there were a few butterflies about, mainly **Large** and **Small White** (dozens), 7 **Small Tortoiseshell**, 14 **Gatekeeper**, 1 **Painted Lady**, 2 **Comma**, 4 **Ringlet** and 9 **Meadow Brown**. *On 11th July*, a visit to a slightly overcast and breezy [Little Linford Wood \(Bucks\)](#) was still worth it for the 3 pristine **White Admirals** I saw there. There were also lots of **Large** and **Small Whites**, 4 **Small Tortoiseshell**, 15+ **Meadow Brown**, 55+ **Ringlet** (and I think that was an under-estimation), 7 **Comma**, 8 **Gatekeeper**, 1 **Peacock**, 1 **Marbled White** and 3 **Large Skipper**, but curiously no **Speckled Wood** – obviously I wasn't looking properly! *Today (13th) at Finemere Wood*, I saw 3 **Purple Emperor**, 2-3 **Silver-washed Fritillary** and 1 **Marbled Fritillary**, all along the main ride before the turning circle, plus 1 **Purple Hairstreak**, 5+ **Comma**, plus the usual commoner species. Again, **Ringlets** seemed particularly abundant."

**Steve Croxford sent the following on 13th July:** "I thought the attached photos of **Marbled Fritillaries** may be of interest. I bumped into Dennis Dell at [Finemere Wood](#) on the *10th July* so was interested in your report on the sightings web site. The photos were taken on the 12th a couple of days later. I have been seeing good numbers of the **Marbled Fritillaries** at [Finemere](#) for the last couple of weeks. Today I took a walk over to the adjoining [Greatsea](#) and [Sheephouse Woods](#) to see if they had spread into these woods. There was no sign of **Marbled Fritillaries** but there were good numbers of both **Silver-washed Fritillary** and **White Admiral** at both woods, I stopped counting after a dozen of each. I also saw a single **Purple Emperor** at [Sheephouse Wood](#)."

**Helen Hyre says she had a nice visit on 4th July to Slapton churchyard in Bucks:** "There was high cloud but I saw 2 **Small White**, 1 **Large White**, 2 **Green-veined White**, 9 **Meadow Brown**, 2 **Ringlet**, 7 **Small Skipper**, 1 **Large Skipper**, 2 **Marbled White**. Also at [Cheddington churchyard](#) on *30th June* I saw a **Small Skipper** which I don't think I've seen there before."

**Steve Croxford visited Seven Barrows on the 1st June:** "Below are a couple of photos of **Marsh Fritillaries** taken at Seven Barrows. There were several individuals there on the 1st June 2009. As you can see from the images they looked like they had been on the wing for several days."

**Martin Townsend reported the following on 31st May:** "3 **Marsh Fritillaries** at Seven Barrows this morning, one fresh, one quite worn and one I didn't get close enough to see the condition of."

**Andy King visited Seven Barrows Reserve on the afternoon of 30th May and saw the following:** "4/5 **Marsh Fritillaries** (hard to be sure as I was there quite some time and then, of course, I was seeing the same ones again and again) - but rather disappointing figures, I think. Also a few **Small Blues** (2/3 positive id's) and several, mostly worn **Brown Argus**. Also double figures of **Small Heath** and 2 or 3 **Common Blues** and 2 **Dingy Skippers**. Lastly, there was a constant stream of **Painted Ladies**, in ones and twos, ploughing straight lines across the scene and never looking remotely interested in stopping. I wasn't counting or

looking hard but I wouldn't be surprised if the rate was an individual every minute or two for 3 hours."

*On 30th May Jon Mercer, Wilts BC, saw 6+ Marsh Fritillaries* at Seven Barrows, Lambourn, also a **Dingy Skipper** and 2 **Small Blue**, many **Small Heath**, a **Common Blue** and a **Brown Argus**.

*Nigel Parsons stopped off at Seven Barrows on the way back from Somerset on 26th May:* "Although it was windy I did manage to see 3 **Marsh Fritillary** in a sheltered spot on the reserve. Other sightings included **Small Blue** (1), **Brown Argus** (1), **Small Heath** (1), **Large White** (1), **Common Blue** (1), **Dingy Skipper** (3) and of course several **Painted Ladies**. I expect everyone has experienced the mass invasion of Painted Ladies over the last week or so. I was amazed and delighted to see over 100 in about 15 minutes whilst in Somerset and another 65 in about 10 minutes during my lunch break on Friday near Aston Abbots and Weedon. On both occasions the butterflies were flying rapidly across a field and along field hedges."

*On 24th May Jim Asher visited Seven Barrows:* "I saw at least 9 **Marsh Fritillary** before 10.30 - all males I think, before going off to target some blank squares nearby. Good to see that the horses haven't obliterated them. Also: **Dingy Skipper**, **Brimstone**, **Green Hairstreak**, **Brown Argus**, **Common Blue**, **Small Heath**, plus a **Small Blue** flying at the entrance to Crog Hill."

### Sunday 12th July 2009

*Nick Bowles reported as follows today, 12th July:* "I had my first **Chalkhill Blue** today at *Aston Clinton Ragpits* though there were none at Coombe Hill (or at least none 'on transect'). There were NO Dark Green or Silver-washed Fritillaries either, though I did clock up 17 species in the combined hour of transect time. Having seen both these frit species in good numbers at private sites I am concerned that they are not appearing at sites where I have previously seen them. Signs are that **Ringlet** are giving way to **Gatekeeper**. **Painted Lady** larvae all seem to have vanished as they pupate, though adults continue to fly on hill tops and fresh **Peacock** and **Comma** were about, along with many **Green-veined White**. I saw two **Common Blue** and my first **Small Copper** (on transect) of 2009.

*Jim Asher carried out his Aston Upthorpe transect this morning, 12th July:* "Conditions were rather breezy but I saw 4 **Chalkhill Blues** - my first this year, but only one **Common Blue** - what has happened to Common Blue this year? Also fresh **Peacocks** and **Brimstones** and, again, lots of **Commas** - more Commas than **Small Tortoiseshells**. I managed my 1km Wider Countryside Butterfly Survey square this afternoon and also visited three 2km squares to get total of species up to at least 10 for every 2km square in SU49...a busy day! One **Scarlet Tiger moth** seen between Steventon and A34 (and one at home on Friday night)."

*Dennis Dell sent these reports today, 12th July:* "On 10th July in *Finemere Wood* with Richard Soulsby, we saw 5 **Purple Emperors** spread throughout the wood. The territory at the high northern end along a line of Ashes is reliable for sightings, although you have to concentrate because only very short flights [2-5 seconds duration!] occur in the narrow canopy gaps. A couple leaving the wood as we entered had seen a **Marbled Fritillary** [remember last year?] and took a photograph: there is no doubt about it. So either they are breeding, or someone is releasing them again. We did not see them.

*On 12th July in a private wood in Bucks:* This large ancient Oak and Ash Wood is an SSSI. I've never seen the Purple Emperor here, but it ought to be present since it is in woods close by; however, I did not find it today either. **Ringlets** [50+] and **Marbled Whites** were abundant [50+]. Others: **Large** and **Small Whites** [common], **Meadow Brown** [10+], **Comma** [10],

**Purple Hairstreaks** [in Oak trees, many], **Large Skipper** [6], **White Admiral** [5], **Gatekeeper** [1], **Silver-washed Fritillary** [5], including a mating pair."

**Stuart Hodges did his transect in Finemere on 12th July:** "Linda and I saw one **Purple Emperor** along the main ride which, looking through the binoculars, I'm fairly sure was a male. Also 4 **Silver-washed Fritillary**. There were loads of butterflies including my first of the summer **Peacocks** and lots of **Commas**, one was being eaten by a Dragonfly."

**David Redhead reported the following on 12th July:** "In *Bernwood Forest* today, *12th July*, the Shabington Wood transect score was 203 **Ringlet** vs 3 **Gatekeeper**, so Gatekeepers have not really got going here yet. On the M40 transect on Friday it was 160-6. **Silver-washed Fritillaries** and **Purple Emperors** did break the monotony of counting Ringlets on both occasions. Interestingly **White Admirals** are noticeably scarcer in the eastern part of Bernwood than in the SW sector whereas, if anything, the opposite is true of the Silver-washed Fritillaries. Back home today (in *Littlemore, Oxon*), the garden buddleia which gets the late afternoon sun was sporting a **Small Tortoiseshell**, **Peacock**, **Red Admiral**, **Meadow Brown** and 3 **Commas** - there were actually two different Small Tortoiseshells in our garden this afternoon as the one Wendy saw earlier had part of a wing missing and the one I saw was intact. I saw my first second brood **Common Blues** at *Holtspur* yesterday afternoon plus my first **Essex Skipper** of the year. The wild angelica is coming into flower in Bernwood and are already "active" and covered in Soldier Beetles - we are now less than a week off the earliest ever sighting of Brown Hairstreak - so please start looking for them in ash & oak and try to decide if those smaller Purple Hairstreaks really are purple!"

**Following up on Malcolm Brownsword's report of Silver-washed Fritillary sightings on 9th July, Mick & Wendy Campbell visited Homefield Wood on 12th July:** "Although it was cloudy **Silver-washed Fritillaries** were very active throughout the wood. Male and female numbers were very even and, while searching higher up in the wood, we observed a female Silver-washed Fritillary oviposit on the trunk of a large oak tree, about 3 metres above the ground. Further into the wood, at 3 different locations, we found **White-letter Hairstreak** at the top of some nice quality Elms. We counted 11 altogether. Only one **caterpillar of Striped Lychnis moth** was found on the Dark Mullein. Best find of the day though was our sighting of a **Purple Emperor** flying high up above the tree canopy - a possible first for this wood!"

**Becky Woodell visited Rushbeds Wood on 9th July:** "In the car park at 13.25 I saw a **Purple Emperor** flying briefly in the tops of the trees before settling again."

**Malcolm Brownsword reports seeing the following at Homefield Wood on Thursday 9 July (not on transect):** "Small Skipper 2, Large Skipper 1, Marbled White 12, Comma 20, Large White 2, Meadow Brown >20, Ringlet >40, Silver-washed Fritillary: difficult to estimate, since they kept largely to the main ride to the left of the BBOWT reserve, but sightings were in excess of 50. Three were often seen in flight at the same time. The number of individuals was probably in excess of 25. I have never seen so many of this species at Homefield Wood. As last year, there were no Dark Green Fritillaries. See images below - Silver-washed Fritillary, Small Skipper and Meadow Brown with upper wings displayed."

### Friday 10th July 2009

**Judith Barnard's sightings in Willen (Milton Keynes) this week, grid ref SP8841, were:** *Monday 6th July* - 1 **Holly Blue**; *Tuesday 7th July* - 3 **Large Whites**, 2 **Comma**, 3 **Gatekeepers**; *Wednesday 8th July* - 1 **Gatekeeper**, 1 **Comma**, 4 **Small White**, 2 **Small Tortoiseshell**, 1 **Ringlet**; *Friday 10th July* - 8 **Gatekeepers**, 1 **Comma**, 4 **Small White**, 5 **Large White**, 1 **Meadow brown**, 1 **Green-veined White**.

***Dave Wilton did his transect in Waterperry Wood today, 10th July:*** "The sun was out for less than 20% of the entire period but I was still surprised not to see a single Silver-washed Fritillary. Species found on transect were **Small Skipper, Essex Skipper, Large Skipper, Large White, Green-veined White, Purple Hairstreak, Purple Emperor (4), Red Admiral, White Admiral, Comma, Marbled White, Meadow Brown, Gatekeeper & Ringlet.**"

***Sezar Hikmet sent these reports:*** "On *9th July at Black Park - Gatekeepers, Speckled Woods* and several **Large Skippers**. At *Langley Park today, 10th July*, a number of **Commas, Gatekeepers, 3 Large Whites.**"

***Mick & Wendy Campbell visited three woods today searching for Purple Emperor and Silver-washed Fritillary:*** "We had success in two out of the three woods for **Purple Emperor** with 6 being seen in *Stanton Little Wood* and another 6 in *Stanton Gt. Wood* (southern edge). Other species recorded were: **Silver-washed Fritillary (6), Small Tortoiseshell, Purple Hairstreak, Large Skipper, Large White, Small Skipper, Gatekeeper, Meadow Brown, Ringlet, Green-veined White, Comma, Brimstone, Painted Lady (pristine), Marbled White, Red Admiral, Small White (50+) and Peacock (pristine).**"

***Dave Ferguson was out bird atlassing on 5th July:*** "I saw a pair of **White Admirals** in *Oldfields Copse (SP630280)* which is 2km NE of Stratton Audley."

***This report came via Dennis Dell:*** "In Bernwood on *5th July*, new UTB member Robert Lewis took this excellent shot of a **Purple Hairstreak** with its wings open - quite difficult to get normally!"

### **Monday 6th July 2009**

***Paul Furtek sent the following today, 6th July:*** "I wondered if you might be interested in a picture I took on Saturday afternoon in my back garden in *Langley, Berkshire* of a **Holly Blue**. Amazing detail for a point and shoot camera!"

***Chris Hazell visited Black Park, Iver, Bucks on Sunday morning 5th July 2009:*** "Between 9.30am and 11.30am I saw the following species: **Purple Emperor** - 1 male gliding around one of the large oaks in Strawberry Wood; **Silver Washed Fritillary** - At least 4 in the same area. I've never seen these at Black Park before, so wonder if they are recent colonists this year; **White Admiral** - At least 7 in the same area as above; **Purple Hairstreak** - 30+ all flying around the tops of smaller oaks and **Ringlet** - 10+ feeding on brambles along woodland rides."

***6th July - Chris Brown says that the Silver-washed Fritillary have finally made an appearance at Crowsley Wood in Berks:*** "The emergence of Silver-washed Fritillary seems to be in a sudden rush this year rather than starting with a few and numbers building so it will be interesting to see if the numbers increase further. On *3rd July* my attention was first caught by a lot of orange flying about in the trees. Indeed on nearly all occasions it was several of the many Commas which are also on the wing, but eventually I was able to count 3(F) and 6(M) **Silver-washed Fritillaries**. Other species seen were singletons of **Small Skipper, Large Skipper, Small White, Red Admiral, Painted Lady, Peacock, Speckled Wood, Marbled White** plus **Comma 17, Meadow Brown 29 and Ringlet 35.**"

***Paul Bowyer sent the following on 6th July:*** "I am not able to get to a computer very often so I am sending a late entry for the Gatekeeper now. On *Thursday 25th June* while walking the worst of my tetrads I saw a **Gatekeeper** near *Dorney* between Sainsbury's and the M4 bridge along Lake End Road. I saw little else in the haze of car fumes along a road which runs between sprayed fields of arable farmland."

**Jim Asher sent the following on 5th July:** "I decided today that I needed to tackle SU29 ([Faringdon, Oxon](#)) which had become the most poorly recorded square (due to efforts made elsewhere). I was in the area NW of Faringdon this morning and notched up two **White-letter Hairstreaks** in near-showery conditions at Eaton Hastings and then a solitary **White Admiral** at a woodland edge near Taylors Hill north of Buscot House. This afternoon, I was in the Great Coxwell area, W of Faringdon, and had another White Admiral to the west of Badbury Clumps, along with at least 22 Commas! Even the dull squares have their redeeming features! Altogether, I visited 7 x 2km squares (9 x 1km squares) in total, with at least ten spp in each. (8 x 2km squares yesterday, not including Bernwood)."

**Mick Jones reports on Saturday's (4th July) Joint Bucks Invertebrate**

**Group/BC/BBOWT event at Dancersend:** "Just four people attended the afternoon session and we concentrated on the Meadow Plots/Anthill area of the reserve. Part of the plan was to search for primrose plants with signs of damage from Duke of Burgundy larvae as I have only found one damaged clump so far this year in the centre of Anthill. We were surprised to find two areas with extensive larval activity along the fence-line across the middle of the Meadow Plots. This was exactly where I had one of the few definite sightings of a female in early May this year, but it does challenge the view we've developed over the last few years of the ideal conditions for egg-laying and larval survival - I think we will have to go back to the drawing board. Covering a small area in the centre of the reserve we saw large numbers of **Ringlet, Meadow Brown, Large Skipper and Marbled White, 8 Commas, 6 Small Tortoiseshells, 3 Painted Ladies, 5 Small Skippers, 2 Common Blues, 7 Speckled Woods, 4 Large Whites, 2 Small Whites, 1 Green-Veined White, 3 Gatekeepers, 1 Brimstone and 2 Silver-Washed Fritillaries**. Most amazingly, two of us had two brief sightings of a female **Purple Emperor** - the first ever sighting at the reserve! Other invertebrates included the large longhorn beetle *Stenocorus meridianus* and dragonflies Brown Hawker, Broad-bodied Chaser and Black-tailed Skimmer. [On a return visit today - Sunday 5 July](#) - to check the circular ride through Bittams Wood, I saw 5 Silver-washed Fritillaries and stopped counting Commas at 20. Sadly, no further sightings of Purple Emperor."

**Pete Eeles made the following interesting observation:** "I believe that Wendy Wilson's image of a Gatekeeper on 30th June is actually *ab. excessa* (note the extra spots on the forewings)."

**Chris Lamsdell visited Black Park on 5th July:** "I saw around 8+ **White Admirals**, one **Silver-washed Fritillary, Ringlet, Meadow Brown, Gatekeeper, Large Skipper, Painted Lady (1), Large White, Green-veined White, Comma, Peacock**."

**John Parsons writes:** "I went to [Greenham Common, Berks](#), on [5/7/09](#) and saw **Grayling** butterfly, caterpillars of **Beautiful Yellow Underwing** and **Cinnabar** moth."

**Chris and Pat Dennis sent this report on 5th July:** "On the [2-7-09](#) we had our first sighting this year of a **Purple Hairstreak** at about 1-45pm in [Waterperry Wood, Oxon](#), along the main ride by the seat marked with a plaque to "Mr. Bernwood". The other picture of the **Dark Green Fritillary** was at a place called [Smalldean Bank](#) on the [5-7-09](#) about 2-00pm. This site is part of the national Trust estate at Bradenham Woods."

**Saturday 4th July 2009**

**Dennis Dell reports on Saturday's (4th July) very successful Purple Emperor Field Meeting in Bernwood Forest:** "Eighteen people turned up for the Bernwood field meeting today, including four from the Chesham Natural History Society. As soon as the arrivals got out of their cars in Oakley car park, they were greeted by two grounded male **Purple Emperors**, one on dog poo in long grass and the other on a metal post (see photo). We

moved on down the main track to Piccadilly, where we saw seven along the length of the path between the car park and Piccadilly Circus. They were flying low around the small Oaks and sometimes landing briefly. The group then split up: half went along to the right to Yorks Wood and Hell Coppice, and the rest of us continued along the main track towards the turning circle at SP627106. From SP623108, at three discrete places along a 500m stretch, we saw nine. We finished at the turning circle. The nine were variously engaged in gliding around the Oaks and Sallows, perching and aerial battles. The other group only saw one in York's Wood. We also saw all the usual suspects, plus about six **Silver-washed Fritillaries** and the same number of **White Admirals**. Several **Purple Hairstreaks** were also spotted. So, a total of seventeen Purple Emperors is more than I have ever seen in one day, anywhere: we will not forget 4.7.2009!"

**Rob Hill sent this report on 4th July:** "Today, on a quick visit to *Broughton Grounds* in north-east Milton Keynes, I was delighted to see a minimum of 8 **Marbled Whites** in the grassy margins of the plantation, the first I've seen here in 10 years of watching this site. Also 10+ **Meadow Browns**, 5+ **Large Skipper**, 2 **Small Tortoiseshell**, plus **Large** and **Small Whites**."

**Dave Wilton did a couple of transects in private woods in north Bucks on Saturday 4th July:** The weather was mixed with sun and cloudy spells but Dave reports that there were plenty of butterflies on the wing, the most significant being good numbers of **Purple Emperor**, with a final tally for the day of 19! Also seen were 7 **Silver-washed Fritillary**, 1 **White-letter Hairstreak** and 1 **Bläck Hairstreak** which was unfortunately in the grips of a spider.

**Peter Cuss had a walk at Warren Bank on 4th July:** "It's a BBOWT Reserve in Oxon (os 175 653 859). I went late afternoon and on the wing were **Meadow Browns** (40+), **Marbled White** (20), **Large Skipper** (12), **Brimstone** (1), **Painted Lady** (1), **Ringlet** (5), **Comma** (10+), **Large White** (4), **Dark Green Fritillary** (2) and **Gatekeeper** (2)."

**David Redhead sent the following report:** "On *Thursday (2nd July)* by spending just over three hours at three very diverse sites (*Otmoor, Bernwood Forest* and the grass/scrub area near my house in *Littlemore, Oxon*) I managed to see 17 different butterfly species. I literally lost count of the numbers at times but I must have seen over 300 butterflies of which half were **Ringlets**. The ones I did count very carefully were **Silver-washed Fritillary** (6), **Gatekeeper** (4 - my first of the year), **White Admiral** (2), **Red Admiral** (2), **Bläck Hairstreak** (1), **Purple Emperor** (1 - also my first of the year), **Small Tortoiseshell** (1). More numerous were **Meadow Brown**, **Marbled White**, **Large Skipper**, **Comma** and **Small Skipper**, while ones and twos of **Large White**, **Small White**, **Green-veined White** and **Speckled Wood** completed the list. Also seen were a good number of **Narrow-bordered Five Spot Burnet moths**, including three mating pairs, and a couple of **Cinnabars**. I was also surprised to find a single nearly fully grown **Cinnabar moth caterpillar**."

**Becky Woodell's visit to Oakley Wood on 01-07-09 yielded:** 10 **Comma**, 2 **Purple Emperor**, 4 **White Admiral** and 4 **Silver-washed Fritillary** among others.

### Thursday 2nd July 2009

**Mike Wilkins walked the Lardon Chase (Berks) transect today, 2nd July, and recorded** 10 **Chalkhill Blues** on transect and a similar number off.

**Wendy Wilson sent this report today, 2nd July:** "I was looking for Purple Emperors between 9.00 and 11.00am in *Black Park, Bucks* this morning but although I recorded 11 species including 9 **White Admirals** (all normal sort), I did not manage to see a Purple Emperor. However I was delighted to see a male **Silver-washed Fritillary**. Last year I saw



one in both Langley Park and Philipshill Wood, but I have never seen one in Black Park and I am wondering if they have been recorded there before. It was flying low over a large patch of brambles opposite the gate and being very aggressive, seeing off the many intruders, (mainly **Large Whites** and **Meadow Browns**). It settled briefly a few times so I managed to get good views of both top and undersides, but dog-walkers kept disturbing it so I never got a photo."

**Robin Carr writes:** "Just to let you know I saw my first **Silver-washed Fritillary** of the year at *Dancersend* this morning."

**In Wendover Woods this morning (2nd July) Dave Ferguson saw:** 8 male **Silver-washed Fritillaries** but no Purple Emperors. "In the afternoon I went to *Black Park* and saw c12 **White Admirals**, one of which was an *obscura*, I think a different individual to the one I saw two days ago as it seemed to have more white. It had similar characteristics, though. It was small and habitually landed on the ground just resting for a period slightly shorter than I can point and focus the camera. I also saw a male Silver-washed Fritillary, the first I have seen here."

**Don Otter went to some woodland in the Bucks section of the Ashridge Estate on 2nd July:** "I saw three **Silver-washed Fritillaries** and a couple of other people have reported them in the same area in the last couple of days. This follows on from me seeing one in the Herts section on Saturday. Also today, a few **Dark Green Fritillaries** on the *Ivinghoe Hills, Bucks*."

**John Ward-Smith sent this report today:** "I mainly record dragonflies around South-east Berkshire, but I have had two very interesting records of butterflies recently. On *29 June*, I recorded **White Admiral** at *Rapley Lake*. This is a site I have visited regularly for twenty years and this is the first time I have seen it there. Then yesterday, *1 July*, I visited *Felix Farm Trout Fishery at Binfield*. At this site, I look out for Purple Emperor and Purple Hairstreak. In the past I have seen both species here, but there were none around yesterday. However, I was rewarded with the sighting of a **Silver-washed Fritillary**. It was very lively, but with a lot of patience I managed to obtain a photo when it alighted briefly. Also present on the site was a **Marbled White** and a few more common species."

**David Redhead reported the following:** "Yesterday, *1st July*, our garden in *Littlemore, Oxon*, was visited by its first **Small Tortoiseshell** since the 15th March and its first **Red Admiral** of the year. Also about were a few each of **Comma**, **Meadow Brown**, **Ringlet** and **Scarlet Tiger Moth** plus a lone **Large Skipper** which is the only butterfly to date to show an interest in the buddleia flowers. Best of all was the pristine male **Silver-washed Fritillary** in combat with a pair of Commas above the brambles growing alongside the transformers serving the nearby Thames Water pumping station. We have now had Silver-washed Fritillaries in or near our garden in three of the last four summers. This morning at 7:40am the Large Skipper was already active on the buddleia flowers and a Scarlet Tiger Moth was flying around. Crossing the nearby marshland we were sworn at by two Cetti's Warblers before coming across at 7:55 a **Small White** flying about and a pristine Red Admiral basking on a Comfrey leaf. At 8:00am three Ringlets and a Meadow Brown were seen flying about on the small meadow in the *Rivermead Nature Park* and a Comma and Red Admiral (in good condition but not pristine) were basking on the nearby brambles. Re-crossing the marshland the Cetti's Warblers ignored us but we did put up a **Common White Wave**. Back in the garden at 8:25am, where the temperature was already 19.9C, the Large Skipper was still on the buddleia and as we watched it a Meadow Brown alighted on a nearby flower."

**Sezar Hikmet wrote the following on 1st July:** "Today at *Black Park in Bucks* two **White Admirals**, 15 **Comma**, **Speckled Wood** and a few **Large Whites**."

**Jeremy Soane visited Black Park on the afternoon of 30th June:** "I saw 7 **White Admirals** in the areas North and West of the heathland, quite widely spaced in woodland glades. I also spotted an early, and very confiding, **Purple Hairstreak** on the Western edge of the heathland. Other species included several **Commas**, several **Large Skippers**, **Meadow Browns**, possible **Ringlets** (they flew fast in the hot weather), a **Brimstone** and a **Large White**."

**Peter Cuss sent this report on 1st July:** "I did the same walk today (01/07/09) between **Chazey Heath (Berks) and Blagrove Farm** as on 28th June and again saw good numbers of **Marbled White**, **Meadow Browns**, **Large Skippers**, **Small Skippers**, **Ringlets**, **Commas**, another **Small Tortoiseshell**, also two **Gatekeepers**."

### Tuesday 30th June 2009

**Dave Ferguson visited Black Park, Bucks today:** "This morning (30th June) I saw 3 **Purple Emperors** and 13 **White Admirals** in Black Park. 2 of the Emperors were along the main E-W ride in Strawberry Wood while the other was around a clump of willows in the heathland. One of the White Admirals was of the melanic form *obliterae* which has the white bands replaced by whitish dots. It was so dark it almost qualified for *nigrina* which has no white at all."

**On 30th June Wendy Wilson stopped off at Little Boys Heath, Little Kingshill, Bucks:** "It's an unrecorded square (SU9098) and I saw my first **Gatekeepers** of the season (at 10am). Actually there were three of them, by a gate (of course!), the photo shows a male on bramble. Also there were numerous **Ringlets** and **Meadow Browns**, four **Speckled Woods**, two **Large Skippers**, a **Large White**, **Comma** and **Red Admiral**."

**Malcolm Brownsword sent these sightings on 29th June: 27 June : Whitecross Green Wood** (13.00 -14.30 hrs.) - 4 **White Admirals**, over 30 **Ringlets**, **Meadow Browns** 25, **Large Skipper** 4.

**29 June : Dry Sandford Pit** 11.00 - 12.15 hrs - 6 **Marbled Whites**, 6 **Ringlets**, 4 **Meadow Browns**, 1 **Red Admiral**, 2 **Commas**, 1 **Brimstone**, 2 **Large Skippers**.

**29 June : Oakley Wood** 12.45 -13.30 hrs - This brief visit started with my seeing 2 **Purple Emperors** on the 'Butterfly Trail', each within 200 yards of the car park. Each was flying at an altitude of approximately 4 feet, then landing on the path periodically. Also seen were: 8 **Marbled Whites**, 1 **White Admiral**, 8 **Ringlets**, 4 **Meadow Browns** and 1 **Red Admiral**."

**Tom Stevenson says the birds weren't up to much during his regular monthly survey around Battle Farm, Preston Crowmarsh (Oxon):** "But the following butterflies were recorded - and all before the official start time for butterfly surveying! **Small Skipper** 8, **Large Skipper** 2, **Large White** 18, **Green-veined White** 3, **Small Tortoiseshell** 4, **Comma** 2, **Marbled White** 15, **Gatekeeper** 1, **Meadow Brown** 227, **Ringlet** 136 and **Small Heath** 4."

**Tony Croft writes:** "On **Sunday 28th June** I was helping to lead a BBOWT mid-summer wildlife walk at **Rushbeds Wood** and, amongst the usual butterflies, we saw one **Silver-washed Fritillary** and one **White Admiral**. Then on **Monday 29th** with Mick & Wendy Campbell, we saw two **Purple Emperors** in the ash trees near the gate to the meadow."

### Sunday 28th June 2009

**Robert Lewis attended the field meeting to Ivinghoe Beacon (Bucks) on Sunday 28th June:** "One of several **Dark Green Fritillaries** seen during the Ivinghoe Beacon event led by Paul Bowyer. Taken close to noon they were very lively. Managed to capture this one by waiting for it to return to a favourite thistle. Paul informs me that they should be easier to

photograph in the evening. Thank you Paul for a great day, the first time I have ever seen Dark Green Fritillaries."

***Mick & Wendy Campbell walked from Holton to Waterperry Wood, Oxon, on 28th June:*** "It was a perfect day for butterflies and was very warm and humid. At Holton we counted 5 **Small Tortoiseshells**, one of which was laying eggs plus a **Red Admiral** (also ovipositing). Our main targets in Waterperry Wood were **Purple Emperor** (3 seen), **White Admiral** (18+) and **Silver-washed Fritillary** (5), but there were many other species active: **Marbled White**, **Ringlet**, **Meadow Brown**, **Comma**, **Large White**, **Small White**, **Painted Lady**, **Large Skipper**, **Green-veined White**, **Speckled Wood**, **Essex Skipper**, **Small Skipper** and **Purple Hairstreak**."

***Dennis Dell walked the footpath to Little Wood, Oxon, on 28th June*** and saw a **Purple Emperor** flying at the top of an ash tree.

***Martin Kincaid writes:*** "On ***Saturday 27th June***, myself and Chris Winnick took a longish walk along the ***North Bucks Way*** on the western boundary of Milton Keynes. The warm, humid weather had certainly brought out the butterflies in numbers and although we didn't count we saw hundreds of **Ringlet**, **Meadow Brown**, **Speckled Wood** and **Large Skippers** with lesser numbers of **Marbled White** and second brood **Common Blue**. Pleasingly, we also saw our first **White Admiral**, **Gatekeeper** (2) and **Small Skipper** of the year. Also seen were **Large**, **Small** and **Green-veined Whites**, **Painted Ladies** (5, rather worn), **Commas**, **Small Tortoiseshells** (12) and abundant **Peacock larvae**. This must be the best butterfly walk anywhere in MK and it was a pleasure to introduce Chris to it. We then went on to nearby ***Howe Park Wood SSSI***, where earlier in the week several people had sightings of **Bläck Hairstreaks**. We spent about half an hour looking but didn't find any **Bläck Hairstreak**, however we were happy to add a fresh **Red Admiral** to our day's list. ***Today (28th)*** I visited ***BBOWT's Little Linford Wood*** nature reserve looking for **Purple Emperor** which I keep expecting to find here. No joy, but the butterfly highlights were 2 **White Admiral**, 1 **Red Admiral** and 1 **Purple Hairstreak**. I've never had **Purple Hairstreak** before 1st July before but patient scanning of the oak canopy was eventually rewarded."

***Jim Asher sent this news today, 28th June:*** "After visiting 7 unrecorded squares in SP60 yesterday afternoon, I went to **Finemere Wood** this morning in search of late **Bläck Hairstreak**, but drew a blank. I did however see many **Meadow Brown**, **Ringlet**, **Large Skipper**, a few **Small Tortoiseshell**, **Comma**, **Marbled White**, 3 **White Admirals** and one **Silver-washed Fritillary** - seen long enough to identify clearly, and one male **Purple Emperor** on the main ride, near the signboard. Pity about the left hindwing - so no danger of a competition entry!"

***Dave Wilton paid another short visit to the disused railway cutting west of Westcott Airfield today, 28th June:*** "It produced plenty of active butterflies so they were obviously quite adept at sheltering from yesterday's massive hail-storm. Seen were **Small Skipper**, **Large Skipper**, **Grizzled Skipper**, **Large White**, **Small White**, **Bläck Hairstreak**, **White-letter Hairstreak**, **Brown Argus**, **Common Blue**, **Painted Lady**, **Small Tortoiseshell**, **Comma**, **Speckled Wood**, **Marbled White**, **Meadow Brown**, **Ringlet** and **Small Heath**. The single **Grizzled Skipper** came as rather a surprise and looked very fresh. The one **Bläck Hairstreak** was worn and tired-looking while the two **White-letter Hairstreaks**, which occasionally shared the same bramble patch as the **Black**, were fresh and sprightly. They engaged in a couple of upwards-spiralling aerial battles while I watched them. This is the third year running that I've found them on the same quite insignificant-looking young elm here. All five British hairstreaks can be found at this site - I wonder if anywhere else has that claim to fame? Moths seen during today's visit included **Chrysoteuchia culmella**, **Opsibotys fuscalis**, **Pyrausta purpuralis**, **Narrow-bordered Five-spot Burnet**, **Six-spot Burnet**, **Barred Straw** (egg-laying on lady's bedstraw) and **Blackneck**. The burnets, a

couple of dozen of them altogether, were feasting on clover flowers in an adjacent field and their colonies must be somewhere on the airfield itself because I've not seen them using the bird's-foot trefoil in the cutting."

**Peter Cuss sent this report on 28th June:** "I went for a walk along the bridleway that runs between *Chazey Heath (in Berks)* and *Blagrave farm* (os 175 693765) and can report **Meadow Brown** (40+), **Marbled White** (4), **Large White** (2), **Small white** (2), **Red Admiral** (2) **Comma** (10), **Large Skipper** (6), **Small Skipper** (8), **Essex Skipper** (1) and (very nice to see as I have not seen them in this area for some time) **Small Tortoiseshell** (2), **Scarlet Tiger moth** (1), **Cinnabar moth**. Also several large groups of **Peacock caterpillars**."

**On 27th June Michael Anderson reported that he visited Steps Hill (just S. of Ivinghoe Beacon, Bucks) recently:** "I saw **Dark Green Fritillary** on *Tuesday, 16th June* (just 2) and *Tuesday, 23rd June* (maybe as many as 6 but very difficult to be sure as they were constantly on the move). I have not seen them on Steps Hill before but maybe I have not been there at the right time."

**Judith Barnard paid several visits to Willen, Milton Keynes (SP8841), recently:** *Monday 22nd June*, 1 **Meadow Brown**. *Tuesday 23rd June*, 1 **Meadow Brown**, 3 **Small Tortoiseshell**, 1 **Speckled Wood**, 1 **Painted Lady**. *Thursday 25th June*, 1 **Speckled Wood**.

#### Thursday 25th June 2009

**Tony Palmer from Burghfield Common, Berks sent this news today, 25th June:** "I had my first sighting of **Purple Emperors** at Burghfield Common on *Thursday 25th June* at 19.20pm in the top of an oak tree local to my garden."

**Ian Stevenson writes:** "Just to let you know that whilst doing the rounds on BBOWT nature reserves in my job as Berkshire Reserves Officer on *25th June*, we disturbed a nice specimen of a **Four-dotted Footman** (f. flava) on *Wildmoor Heath* and a number of **Scarlet Tigers** at *Moor Copse*. A quick visit to *Hartslock* revealed hundreds of **Marbled Whites** and numbers of **Comma**, **Painted Lady**, **Small Tortoiseshell**, **Large/ Small** and **Essex Skipper**, **Brimstone**, **Large White**, **Meadow Brown**, **Ringlet**, **Speckled Wood**, **Six-spot Burnet** and **Yellow Shell**."

**Wendy Wilson sent the following report:** "I went to *Black Park, Bucks*, at 8.30am this morning, *25th June*, to look for **Purple Emperors**. First I took a photo of a **White Admiral** but though I spent an hour or two looking in various places, I had no success, so I gave up and went to *Langley Park, Bucks* (which is also in my 10km square) to do some run-of-the-mill recording. At about midday, on my way back to the car-park there, I was amazed to see a lovely male **Purple Emperor** flying low just in front of me. It did a couple of low passes above the grass verge. It was much bigger than the **White Admirals** I'd been looking at and I could see its purple sheen with the naked eye. Then I got an excellent view through binoculars when it settled on a bare patch of ground for a minute. Unfortunately as I switched on my camera, a very noisy helicopter flew over and spooked His Imperial Majesty. He shot up into the oak trees behind the *Wellingtonias*. I got my lunch out of the car and sat scanning the oak trees for ages, but saw no movement apart from a nice view of a nuthatch having a spat with a tree creeper (the nuthatch won). I also saw **Red Admiral**, **Comma**, **Speckled Wood**, **Large Skipper**, **Meadow Brown**, **Painted Lady**, **Small White**, **Large White** and **Ringlet**."

**Chris and Pat Dennis were in Bernwood Forest (Bucks) today, 25th June:** "These two pictures were taken today at *Bernwood Forest* along the main path not far from the car park. My wife and I went there today looking for **White Admirals** (2 spotted) but at 12 noon we found a **Purple Emperor** instead."

**Chris Brown writes:** "The forecast for Friday is thundery showers so I went back to [Crowsley Wood \(Berks\)](#) today. Still no Silver-washed Fritillary seen despite optimal weather - 26 to 28 C, no breeze, humid, hazy sunshine. Other butterflies seen were: **Meadow Brown** (32), **Ringlet** (17), **Red Admiral** (1), **Comma** (5), **Speckled Wood** (6), **Large White** (1)."

**Richard Soulsby had a wander around the lanes and roads of Benson (Oxon) for a couple of hours on Wednesday afternoon, 24th June:** "I was pleasantly surprised to see 12 butterfly species, many of them along the verge of the busy A4074 Oxford – Reading road. These were: **Large Skipper** (19), **Small Skipper** (1), **Meadow Brown** (31), **Ringlet** (6), **Marbled White** (7), **Speckled Wood** (1), **Comma** (8), **Small Tortoiseshell** (2), **Brimstone** (1), **Green-veined White** (3), **Small White** (4) and **Large White** (4). The Ringlets, Marbled Whites and Small Skipper were all first-of-the-year for me. It was nice to see such good numbers of Large Skippers (mainly male, but at least one female) and Commas."

**Andy King sent this report on 24th June:** "[Black Park, Fulmer \(Bucks\)](#), entered from Fulmer Road, yielded views of **White Admiral** from the moment I walked into it. Sightings may well have numbered around 30 or more. Of course, this will include the same individuals more than once, however, I would think 6 to 8 would be a reasonable minimum count. They are very mobile insects for a lot of the time. The woodland at that end of the park must be a White Admiral paradise, with plenty of bramble patches edging plenty of rides and glades and copious honeysuckle of the right, straggly sort within the woods, as well as everywhere else. Also seen: quite a few **Meadow Brown**, **Large Whites**, one **Green-veined White**, 3 **Large Skippers** and two or three **Commas**. Interestingly, there appeared to be no Ringlets. One or two impressive **Hornets** were patrolling. The heathland part of the park, the (very different) woodland at the other side and even a flowering Buddleia there had no butterflies, however, except a Large Skipper and a Comma."

**Dave Turnbull went to Whitecross Green Wood on three occasions recently looking for Bläck Hairstreaks:** "[June 19th, 21st and 23rd](#) revealed a number of **Bläck Hairstreaks**, 10+ being seen on the 19th and 5 or 6 on the subsequent days. On the last visit there were two fresh specimens so they should be around for a couple of weeks or so."

**Malcolm Brownsword went to Bernwood Meadows and the adjacent part of Bernwood Forest on 23rd June:** "I saw the following: 20 **Marbled Whites**, 25 **Ringlets**, 30 **Meadow Browns**, 3 **Large Skippers**, 1 **Common Blue**, 1 **Painted Lady**, 1 **Comma** and 1 **White Admiral**. Sadly, no **Bläck Hairstreaks**. In the afternoon I went to [Woodsides Meadow, Oxon](#) (BBOWT reserve) and saw 3 **Small Tortoiseshells**, 10 **Ringlets**, 12 **Meadow Browns** and 2 **Large Skippers**. Surprisingly, there were no **Marbled Whites** and no dragonflies or damselflies by the pond."

**David Lloyd visited BBOWT's Broadmoor Bottom Reserve in Berkshire on 22nd June and saw** 3 male and one female **Silver-studded Blue** there.

## Tuesday 23rd June 2009

**Dave Wilton reported the following today, 23rd June:** "I had a day off from **Bläck Hairstreak** searching today and instead enjoyed the sunshine here in the garden at [Westcott, Bucks](#). It gave me an opportunity to see what was using it and I was pleasantly surprised to find six different species, comprising **Large Skipper**, **Brimstone**, **Red Admiral**, **Small Tortoiseshell**, **Speckled Wood** and **Meadow Brown**. I usually have to wait for the buddleias to be in flower before getting that much variety in one day. A short walk around the adjacent fields added **Painted Lady**, **Marbled White**, **Ringlet** and **Small Heath**, but there was no sign of **White-letter Hairstreak** yet on our local elms. Three nettle patches were inspected. One contained five **Peacock larval nests**, another contained two nests and the

third (the largest patch) contained one nest. The caterpillars ranged in size from quite small to almost fully grown. The last nettle patch, surrounded by thistles just coming into flower, was also the Small Tortoiseshell's favourite. Ten adults were seen there and I was surprised to find three or four **Small Tortoiseshell caterpillars** almost fully grown (I'm not sure which generation they'll belong to!). A single **Painted Lady caterpillar** was also spotted. There seems to have been a mass emergence of **Seven-spot Ladybirds** locally because I counted over 100 just on this one nettle and thistle patch, several of them still sitting next to their vacated pupae."

**Paul Warham visited Finemere Wood on 23rd June:** "Today, one **Silver-Washed Fritillary**, my first of the year, but I couldn't find a Bläck Hairstreak."

**Chris Brown sent the following report:** "I'm delighted to report my first observation of a **Silver-washed Fritillary** for this year, although not at the Crowsley Wood site. In fact it was at *Moor Copse, Berks*, on *22nd June* in the same locality as last year. I am unable to confirm sex as it was just too active. I have also attached photos of a **Peacock caterpillar** group found locally and **Large Skipper** (Crowsley). On *23rd June* I visited *Crowsley Wood* in 23 degC, mixed cloud/sunshine, but no Silver-washed Fritillary found. Other butterflies were present: **Small White** 1, **Comma** 2, **Speckled Wood** 5, **Meadow Brown** 12 and **Ringlet** 11."

### Monday 22nd June 2009

**Malcolm Brownsword did his BBOWT transect at Homefield Wood this morning (22nd June):** "I saw the following during my transect: 3 **Large Skippers**, 1 **Large White**, 1 **Common Blue**, 3 **Red Admirals**, 1 **Painted Lady**, 7 **Commas**, 2 **Silver-washed Fritillaries** - my first of the year, 10 **Speckled Woods**, 10 **Marbled Whites** - my first of the year, 27 **Meadow Browns**, 42 **Ringlets** -my first of the year and a **Cinnabar Moth**. Sadly, no sign of Dark Green Fritillary."

**Dave Ferguson reports seeing** 5 fresh **White Admirals** in *Strawberry Wood, Black Park (Bucks)* this morning, *22nd June*.

**David Redhead walked part of a disused railway line near Winslow, Bucks this morning, 22nd:** "My total butterfly count during the two miles was 148 and that was with three of the major contributors not being at their peak and a few Whites going unidentified - 37 **Meadow Brown**, 28 **Ringlet**, 24 **Marbled White**, 23 **Small Tortoiseshell**, 11 **Large Skipper**, 8 **Painted Lady**, 6 **Speckled Wood**, 5 **Brimstone**, 4 **Common Blue**, 1 **Large White** and 1 **Small Heath**. At one stage I went back a decade watching a small patch of knapweed adorned by three Small Tortoiseshells, a Marbled White and a Painted Lady. The latter rather spoilt it for a photo as rather more of it was missing than was there, but one of the eight seen was in surprisingly good condition considering the distance it had flown."

**Mick Campbell went to Chearsley Furze wood (Bucks) this afternoon, 22nd, looking for Bläck Hairstreaks:** He recorded **Small Tortoiseshell** (6), **Painted Lady** (4), **Comma** (1), **Small White** (1), **Large White** (1), **Speckled Wood** (2), **Large Skipper** (20), **Ringlet** (10), **Meadow Brown** (15), **Peacock caterpillars** (about 50, 3rd instar) and a **Brimstone**. Moths were: **Large Yellow Underwing** and **Yellow Shell**. No Bläck Hairstreaks unfortunately.

### Sunday 21st June 2009

**Nick Bowles writes:** "I know the **Green Hairstreak** flies in late Summer in some heathy parts of the UK but around the Chilterns I don't think it goes into July. Certainly, the one I saw today (*21st June*) at *Coombe Hill, Wendover* was late (in terms of my personal records). Rather few of anything else but good to see a few **Painted Ladies** and fresh **Small**

**Tortoiseshells** about, with small numbers of **Large Skipper**, **Small Heath** and slightly more **Ringlet**. **Meadow Brown** relatively scarce. I also heard of a presumed 'old' brood Comma today in Surrey - that really is late."

*John Ward-Smith visited BBOWT's Broadmoor Bottom Reserve today, 21st June and saw:* two male **Silver-studded Blues** in pristine condition.

### Saturday 20th June 2009

*Dave Maunder sent the following:* "While cycling home from school on *19th June*, I saw 28 **Small Tortoiseshells** in the fields near *Fairford Leys* on the edge of Aylesbury, mainly nectaring on thistles, so they seem to be doing really well in my area this summer, I'm very pleased to say! Also saw a couple of worn **Painted Ladies** near my house, nectaring on Cotoneaster flowers alongside 4 Small Tortoiseshells, plus my first **Small Copper** of the year. On nettles near my house I also found 6 more batches of **Peacock larvae**, all 3rd/4th instar, so hopefully these are also going to do well this year!"

*David Redhead visited three known Bläck Hairstreak sites on 18th June:* "In spite of the far from ideal weather, I was delighted to be successful at two of them. Altogether I saw eleven **Bläck Hairstreaks** and got very good views of eight of them. Five were still in good condition, like the one in the photo below, but three were beginning to show signs of ageing with the tail region looking slightly tatty and faded. This is usually a sign that numbers are about to start waning and my advice, if you have not already seen a Bläck Hairstreak, is to take corrective action this weekend. Please report any sightings to our Bläck Hairstreak Champion, *Stuart Hodges*. Besides the Bläck Hairstreaks, the highlight of my day was my first **Red Admiral** of 2009! A truly pristine example which had obviously only just emerged locally. My total butterfly count at the end of the day was 68 comprising the following in addition to those already mentioned - **Large Skipper** (20), **Meadow Brown** (12), **Ringlet** (7), **Speckled Wood** (6), **Small Tortoiseshell** (5), **Comma** (2), **Marbled White** (2), **Painted Lady** (1) and **Common Blue** (1). Both the Commas were also pristine but the Painted Lady hardly qualified as half a butterfly.

*Also, in his garden in Littlemore, Oxon, David thought the Orange-tip had not laid on the Sweet Rocket this year:* "But catching sight of a couple of **Orange-tip caterpillars** today, *20th*, proved me wrong. Further inspection produced an even bigger surprise as one Sweet Rocket plant was being ravaged by about 20 **Large White caterpillars**. I have never seen them on Sweet Rocket before, they appear to be most partial to the leaves but also evidence that they eat the seed pods."

### Thursday 18th June 2009

*Don and Sandra Otter had a quick visit to Finemere Wood this morning, 18th June:* "We saw about 6 **Bläck Hairstreaks** at 9.30am."

*Stuart Hodges led a field trip to Finemere Wood on 17th June with Bläck Hairstreak the target species:* Five Hampshire members and a hard core of UTB members took part. An early sighting was Small Tortoiseshell, a new species for the year for some of the members from Hampshire where Small Tortoiseshell numbers are still severely down. Local knowledge proved invaluable and Stuart took us to the hot spot where we quickly saw a good candidate for **Bläck Hairstreak** in flight. It kept us waiting, but eventually settled and allowed itself to be admired. This proved to be the first of several sightings and there were at least three individuals. We then went into the wood proper where we found a fourth individual. A total of five butterfly species in mid June may not sound anything to write home about, but no field trip which finds Bläck Hairstreak can be anything but a memorable one! The full butterfly list was **Green-veined White**, **Bläck Hairstreak**, **Small Tortoiseshell**,

Speckled Wood, Meadow Brown.

*Wendy Wilson sent the following news on 17th June:* "Large Skippers have been out in force and by far the commonest species during the last few days. Today I was lucky enough to watch, but not photograph, one lay an egg at [Hardings Row Local Nature Reserve](#) in Iver Heath, Bucks. I did get a photo of the egg though (see below). Also below is a different Large Skipper taken the day before at [Little Chalfont, Bucks](#). I am also seeing Small Tortoiseshells regularly, which makes a nice change from last year."

*John Parsons writes:* "Today 17/6/09, I saw a Ringlet along the canal path west of [Newbury, Berks](#). Marbled White also appeared this week."

*Dennis Dell spent two hours on the afternoon of 16th June looking for Bläck Hairstreaks:* "I visited the many Bläck Hairstreak hotspots in some privately owned woods in Bucks and counted 18, spread fairly evenly over 8 discrete hotspots. The whole stretch I walk [about 2.5 km] consists almost entirely of blackthorn which is either at the edges of the woods or as separate hedgerows. Every year, however, Bläck Hairstreaks are only seen at the same specific spots on the blackthorn."

*Judith Barnard writes:* "In [Willen, Milton Keynes](#) (SP882414) this week: **Monday 15th** - 4 Speckled Woods, **Tuesday 16th** - 2 Meadow Browns."

### Tuesday 16th June 2009

*16/06 - David Redhead wondered about the effects of yesterday's torrential downpours:* "However, a visit to the grassland above our house in [Littlemore, Oxon](#) just now would suggest they are insignificant - I found 4 Marbled Whites (only 2 yesterday), a Ringlet, 2 Meadow Brown, 4 Large Skippers and plenty of Narrow-bordered Five Spot Burnet Moths plus a Silver Y, Cinnabar and Burnet Companion. A fairly typical haul for a short visit to this site at the moment. At [Shotover](#) I was delighted to see a Small Tortoiseshell and a beautifully fresh Comma. 4 Bläck Hairstreaks were also seen at sites in [Shotover](#) and [Bletchington \(both Oxon\)](#)."

*Dave Wilton visited a number of Bläck Hairstreak sites in Bucks today.* He found 8 Bläck Hairstreaks and said it was also nice to see a couple of Marbled Whites in [Finemere Meadows](#) and his second Red Admiral of the year in [Piddington Wood](#).

*Mick & Wendy Campbell visited Bernwood Forest today, 16th June:* "We were looking for Bläck Hairstreaks and managed to see 7 altogether. Other species included Speckled Wood (4), a worn Brown Argus, Painted Lady (4), Large Skipper (8), a Red Admiral, Meadow Brown (6) and a fresh White Admiral, our first of the year. At [Sydlings Copse \(Oxon\)](#) later on we also saw our first Ringlets and Marbled Whites of this season along with 3 Small Tortoiseshells, 1 faded and the other two in pristine condition."

*Jan Haseler says she was delighted to see* 3 Small Tortoiseshells on [University of Reading \(Berks\)](#) farmland on **15th June**. "It's the first time in 3 years that I have seen so many Small Tortoiseshells in a single day in Berkshire. There were also Painted Ladies, Red Admirals and Large Skippers there."

*Ched George writes:* "I spent an hour at [Bradenham \(Bucks\)](#) on the **14th June** hoping to see a first Dark Green Fritillary. No luck, just 2 Marbled White, 1 Painted Lady, a few Large Skippers and a few Meadow Browns. A Small Tortoiseshell was tasting nettles near our allotment in [Radnage, Bucks](#) earlier in the day."

*Jon Mercer, BC Wilts Branch reported as follows on 14th June:* "4-5 Bläck Hairstreaks



at *Whitecross Green Wood* early pm, mostly high in the blackthorn and flying actively, also **Large Skipper** and **Green-veined White**, but no Wood Whites."

**Most of the places we visit are pretty inaccessible by public transport but Dennis Dell managed to achieve the following:** "I was interested to see what was logistically possible and since I have a senior bus pass it costs me nothing! On *June 11th* I took the 16 bus from *Aylesbury to Quainton*, arriving there at 10.35. It took me 40 minutes to walk from there to *Finemere Wood*. My plan was to walk westwards, going through several *Bläck Hairstreak* hotspots and ending up at Edgcott [about 5 miles] to catch the 4pm bus back to Aylesbury. It worked a treat! The weather was less than ideal however [16 to 18 degrees, partly overcast, some light rain], which probably contributed to the relatively poor yield of species and numbers. Species seen along the way: **Meadow Brown** [29], **Speckled Wood** [17], **Large Skipper** [17], **Small White** [6], **Common Blue** [4], **Small Tortoiseshell** [5], **Large White** [1], **Large Skipper** [17], **Brimstone** [1]. Only two **Bläck Hairstreaks** were seen: at the Finemere Wood hotspot, and another at Finemere Bridge."

**This news came via Dennis Dell:** "A friend of ours, Janet Simmons, saw 2 **Small Skippers** on *7th June* in her garden in *Waltham St Lawrence, Berks*, feeding on *Spirea* flowers."

**Saturday 13th June 2009**

**Wendy Wilson reports on the Winchmore Hill field meeting this morning, Saturday 13 June:** "The meeting achieved its objective which was to fill in some gaps on the map. It was overcast to start with but the sun came out and it soon warmed up to 20C. Five people came and we split up into three groups and walked in different directions, recording all the species we saw before meeting back on the common at 12.15pm. The final tally was 10 species: **Large White**, **Small White**, **Green-veined White**, **Orange-tip**, **Peacock**, **Red Admiral**, **Painted Lady**, **Small Tortoiseshell**, **Meadow Brown** and **Speckled Wood** and included 3 nests of **Peacock larvae**. Also seen were **Cinnabar** and **Brown Silver-line moths**. We covered two unrecorded tetrads (SU9294 Winchmore Hill area and SU9494 Coleshill area), not the four I'd hoped we'd manage, but still worthwhile. We all enjoyed ourselves too!"

**David Redhead sent this report on 13th June:** "My *Swyncombe (Oxon)* transect this afternoon produced my first **Small Blues** of the year - 49 of them! Also my first English **Dingy Skippers** of the year (15 seen in Scotland) - a couple, both tatty and studied carefully to make sure they were not Burnet Companions. Surprisingly no **Marbled Whites** in view of the one I saw nr Wytham yesterday and the one I saw on grassland by my house before leaving for transect - this had become 2 by the time I returned. Finally I pushed my luck and went to *Shotover* at 5.25 but still 22C and stayed 40 minutes with 50% sun and still 21C when I left but no *Bläck Hairstreak*. I have seen them still active at this time of day in the past - two **Speckled Wood** were active and lots of nice pink bramble flowers about which were good enough for a **Painted Lady**. Also saw a tatty **Peacock** which was my 11th species of the day which also included a late **Orange-tip**."

**Mick & Wendy Campbell went to Waterperry Wood on 13th June to look for Bläck Hairstreaks:** "We walked the southern edge of the wood and counted a total of 15 **Bläck Hairstreaks**, all very active flying over the blackthorn. Other species seen were **Large White** 6, **Small Tortoiseshell** 4, **Meadow Brown** 14, **Common Blue** 2, **Large Skipper** 25, **Speckled Wood** 3, **Painted Lady** 4. Moths seen were: **Straw Dot** 5, **Yellow Shell** 2, **Mother Shipton** 2 and numerous **Green Oak Tortrix** flying in the Oak trees."

**Dave Maunder sent this news on 13th June:** "Last weekend I had 51 **Small Tortoiseshells** hatch from a batch of larvae I found near my house in *Aylesbury (Bucks)* - only one had a parasite pupa in it, so a good success rate! I've seen 12 **Small Tortoiseshells** locally over this last week, so numbers seem quite good around here at the moment. Other

species seen this week were:- **Brimstone** (1, 13th); **Peacock larvae** (4 batches of 4th instar); **Large Whites** (2); **Small Whites** (4); **Meadow Browns** (2); **Large Skippers** (25+); **Common Blues** (4)."

### Friday 12th June 2009

**Nick Bowles sent this sighting today, 12th:** "On my way home from work today I was passing by my transect site in *Bucks* when I decided that it would be best to make sure that I did actually visit this week (in case of rain at the weekend) so I wandered around in some glimpses of sun and saw a **Ringlet**, my first for the year."

**Tony Croft sent this report today, 12th:** "On my *Rushbeds Wood (Bucks)* transect this afternoon, I saw one **Bläck Hairstreak** in the green lane. Later on at *Whitecross Green Wood* I bumped into Dave Dennis and we saw ten individuals including the one pictured."

**Whilst surveying a meadow besides the River Thames and just north of Wytham Woods, Oxon, for TVERC this afternoon 12th June, David Redhead saw** his first **Marbled White** of the year. "In spite of the overcast conditions, by the time I got back to my car my butterfly count was 34 - **Meadow Brown** 18, **Speckled Wood** 6, **Small Tortoiseshell** 4, **Painted Lady** 2, **Large Skipper** 2 and **Green-veined White** 1. Some day flying moths also seen - 3 **Yellow Shell**, 2 **Straw Dot** and a **Silver-Y**."

**Dave Wilton wrote the following today, 12th June:** "Despite good weather, a day spent searching the *Bucks/Oxon border area* for **Bläck Hairstreak** was rather disappointing (six known sites visited, just the one butterfly seen). However, this was more than made up for by seeing no less than 23 fresh **Small Tortoiseshells** during the course of the day and, at *Edgcott, Bucks*, my first **Ringlet** of the season."

**David Redhead reported the following on 11th June:** "Besides visiting a number of **Bläck Hairstreak** sites in *Oxon* today, *11th*, my butterflying included dog walking in the setaside field near our house in *Littlemore, Oxon*. My total butterfly count in addition to 1 **Bläck Hairstreak** was 12 **Common Blue**, 8 **Large Skipper**, 6 **Speckled Wood**, 3 **Meadow Brown**, 1 **Painted Lady** and (pick of the day) 1 **Small Tortoiseshell**. There was a **White** flying in our lane as well but I did not manage to id it. Two of the **Large Skippers** were mating but when I moved in for a photo they flew. I looked around and all I could find were an individual male and female sitting on nearby leaves - think they must just have decided to separate at that very moment."

### Sunday 7th June 2009

**Tim Watts sent this report today, 7th June:** "I spent half an hour watching **Blackthorn** on the *Calvert Jubilee BBOWT reserve, Bucks (members only)* hoping to see my first **Bläck Hairstreak** of the year. There is a small recently discovered colony here but I saw none in flight. I was just leaving when I spotted one, motionless, resting on a leaf low down allowing me to get this photo."

**Andy King visited Finemere Wood, Bucks, on Sunday 7th June:** "I saw 7 **Speckled Woods**, 6 or so **Green-veined Whites**, 1 **Large White**, 2 **Large Skippers**, 1 (90% certain) **Meadow Brown**, 1 **Painted Lady** (probably a female looking for egg-laying sites), 1 **Bläck Hairstreak** and 1 male **Orange Tip** (also a possible **Common Blue**)."

**Nigel Parsons says he's been out and about doing some more tetrads in his lunch breaks this week:** "On *Thursday (4th June)* I visited a riverside site in the *Meadowcroft area of Aylesbury (Bucks)*. On this area of disturbed land (due I think for future house building) I found several species and surprisingly **Small Tortoiseshell** was the most numerous (12),

mainly nectaring on creeping buttercups - a new brood must have emerged recently. I also saw my first **Meadow Browns** (8) of the year. Others included **Small Copper** 2, **Small White** 1, **Brown Argus** 1, **Speckled Wood** 1, **Common Blue** 2 and **Large White** 1. Also a couple of moths, **Straw Dot** 1 and **Mother Shipton** 1. For any botanists out there I saw a very large specimen of Celery-leaved Crowfoot - not seen this very often."

### Friday 5th June 2009

**David Redhead reported the following on 4th June:** "I arrived at *Otmoor Rifle Range* just after 9.30am today, *4th June*, at 11C and sunny to look for Bläck Hairstreak. I went to the west thicket hot-spot - sheltered bramble not in flower and no evidence of Bläck Hairstreak. I walked up & back down the east (sunny) side of the west thicket but still no action. I crossed the range and walked up the east side of east thicket and still no action, but as I got back to the southern end of the thicket there was a short typical flight of a dark small butterfly - I was 90% certain it was a Bläck Hairstreak. I hung around for five minutes but no reappearance. I then went into scrub area to the south and searched the three south facing "alcoves" all produced a negative result on the first visit but on returning to the best of the three there was again a short typical flight. I hung around and there was a prolonged repeat flight about 5m to the west of the first - I got a much better view in flight of this one and now 99% certain I was seeing Bläck Hairstreaks. I hung around for some time and there was another short flight in the same place but every time they were settling out of sight. At 10.50 I returned to the hot-spot on the west thicket and after a couple of minutes a couple spiralled up a few feet from the blackthorn and just as they returned to it there was another in flight 5m to west and this time it briefly landed on a leaf giving me a good but short view of the underside - now 101% certain I had seen at least 5 **Bläck Hairstreaks** (with a possible sixth)."

**Andrew Bolton reported the following today:** "A couple of minor sightings from a corner of Berkshire at Lakeside Garden Centre, *Brimpton Common*, grid ref SU 573628 - *24/05/09* **Painted Lady** 7, **Holly Blue** 1, **Large White** 1, **Comma** 1; *31/05/09* **Painted Lady** 2, **Small Tortoiseshell** 1, **Large White** 1."

**Maureen Cross visited the Holies, Berks on 3rd June:** "I was fortunate to see 11 **Adonis Blue**, a good mixture of male and female which bodes well for the next brood if the weather is kind, but drew a blank at Hartslock. Today, *4th*, we saw our first freshly emerged **Small Tortoiseshell** on *Lardon Chase*."

### Wednesday 3rd June 2009

**Martin Mitchell reported the following today, 3rd June:** "These sightings are from the southern edge of the western (Crookham Common) end of *Greenham Common, Berks*: 1 **Green Hairstreak**, 3 **Dingy Skippers** (all very worn), 1 **Large Skipper**, 1 **Small Copper**, 1 **Small Blue**, 40+ **Common Blues**, 2 **Brown Argus**, 10+ **Small Heath**, 2 **Painted Lady**, 1 **Speckled Yellow** moth."

**David Redhead sent these sightings on 2nd June:** "An excursion to *Shotover (Oxon)* this afternoon has reassured me that not all the Painted Ladies have gone to the North Pole. The first hour was spent at Slade Camp. The most numerous butterfly here was **Speckled Wood** (5) and my first **Large Skipper** of the year plus a fresh **Holly Blue** (only my second of the year) were nice to see. Also singletons of **Large White**, **Brimstone**, **Peacock** and **Common Blue** - the latter showing a worrying scarcity in spite of there being plenty of Bird's-foot Trefoil about. I then went to the meadows below Westhill Farm, the western margin of which is my local hot spot for Small Coppers and usually good for Common Blues & Brown Argus. The **Small Coppers** were a slight disappointment with only two faded individuals seen but the Common Blues and Brown Argus were a total disappointment - both with a zero

score. There was another Large Skipper jousting with one of the Small Coppers and 3 Peacocks also seen around the edge of the meadow. A setaside field produced another Peacock and a Large White and also a **Painted Lady** - the first of five that I saw altogether."

**Terry Hotten sent this news on 2nd June:** "**Clouded Yellow** at *Homefield Wood, Bucks* on Saturday May 30th together with a few **Painted Ladies**, **Common Blues**, **Small Heaths**, **Orange Tips** and a **Large White**. Painted Lady also seen at *Hambleden Mill, Bucks.*"

**On 2nd June Judith Barnard saw** 4 **Speckled Woods** and one **Painted Lady** (on the wing) in *Willen, Milton Keynes*, (SP879413).

**Tom Stevenson sent this report on 2nd June:** "Following the sighting of a single **Small Blue** on 29 May amongst the radishes down my allotment in *Benson (Oxon)*, yesterday I saw at least 8 very mobile individuals along the Ridgeway path that leads SE from North Farm (*1km SE of Britwell Salome*). This is less than 500m from the Swyncome site so not quite as surprising as the allotment location."

### Monday 1st June 2009

**Colin Everett (Assistant Recorder for birds in Herts!) sent this report today:** "**Monday 1st June:** On rough land off Lodge Lane nr *Chorleywood/Little Chalfont, Bucks* TQ0096, a **CLOUDED YELLOW** paused briefly on Red Clover before continuing NE. Also seen there: 3 **Large Skippers**, **Common Blue**, 20+ **Painted Ladies** (including 8+ flying N & 2 NW) and a **Peacock** on bramble blossom. At nearby Roughwood Park Lodge TQ0095 was a male **Orange-tip.**"

**On Sunday 31st May Graham Taylor visited Wytham Woods, Oxon (permit only) and had sightings of:** 1 **Green Hairstreak**, 3 **Red Admiral** and 1 **Brown Argus** on the hilltop.

**Wendy Wilson was walking in and around Coleshill in Bucks this morning, Monday, 1st June:** "I saw my first **Meadow Brown** of the season - a dark male in mint condition. During our two hour walk Maggie Cartridge and I also saw 11 **Large White**, 12 **Small White**, 2 **Green-veined White**, 1 female **Orange-tip**, 1 **Holly Blue**, 3 **Peacock**, 2 rather faded **Painted Ladies**, 1 **Small Tortoiseshell**, 1 **Red Admiral** (which Maggie rescued from under the net on someone's allotment), 1 **Comma**, 3 **Speckled Wood** and numerous other unidentified whites. We also spotted 2 **Burnet Companions**. Painted Ladies are still around, but not in such huge numbers as last week. I have recorded 187 at various places in Bucks and Slough during the last two weeks."

**Mick & Wendy Campbell went to Asham Meads on 1st June** and saw 3 pristine **Small Tortoiseshells**. Other species recorded were **Common Blue**, **Small White**, **Speckled Wood**, **Large White**, **Painted Lady** (5 - 1 very worn, nectaring on bramble flowers), **Small Heath** and **Green-veined White**. Moths were **Silver-Y** (3), **Burnet Companion** (2) and a **Grass Rivulet**.

**On May 31st David Turnbull paid another visit to Pitstone in Bucks:** "The site still revealed 60+ **Small Blues** (see report for 22nd May) and now a similar number of **Common Blues**. Strangely no Skippers were seen but 10+ **Small Heaths**, only 2 **Painted Ladies** and a late male **Orange-tip**. Also of note were 5 species of orchid with White Helleborine in profusion and a Lesser Broomrape."

**Pete Eeles paid a visit to Hartslock, Oxon on Friday 29th May and saw:** 6 **Common Blue** (all male), 4 **Dingy Skipper**, 1 **Grizzled Skipper**, 5 **Small Heath**, 1 **Large Skipper** and 12 **Painted Lady**. He was also surprised to see his earliest ever **Meadow Brown** (male) of the year. He then paid a visit to *Lardon Chase, Berks*, finding 6 **Small Blue** (all female), 7

Common Blue (all male) and 4 **Adonis Blue** (3 male and 1 female)."

**Nigel Parsons writes:** "I expect everyone has experienced the mass invasion of **Painted Ladies** over the last week or so. I was amazed and delighted to see over 100 in about 15 minutes whilst in Somerset and another 65 in about 10 minutes during my lunch break on *Friday (29th May)* near *Aston Abbots and Weedon, Bucks*. On both occasions the butterflies were flying rapidly across a field and along field hedges. I have also been out tetrad bashing near *Chalfont St Giles* on *31st May* and saw my first **Large Skipper** of the year. Generally, the number of butterflies has dipped from a few weeks ago but I still managed to see several species, including **Orange-tip** (4 males), **Large White**, **Small White** and **Green-veined White** (15, 4 and 7, respectively), **Peacock** (6), **Painted Lady** (4) and **Speckled Wood** (3). I noted that many of these butterflies were attracted to the flowers of water cress along the sides of the River Misbourne."

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### Saturday 30th May 2009

*John Parsons sent the following report:* "On *28/05/09* I saw **Small Blue** (*Cupido minimus*) on *Greenham Common, Berks*. They seemed very interested in the muddy remains of a puddle."

### Wednesday 27th May 2009

*Dennis Dell sent this news today:* "27th May - Cloudy, raining, 11 degrees, but that did not stop a **Painted Lady** from coming into our garden and allowing Sonia to snap it on our *Choisya*. Maybe the bright yellow leaves made it feel warm!"

*At a site in Frieth, Bucks on Tuesday 26th, Alan Gudge, Dennis Dell and Mick & Wendy Campbell saw* their first **Clouded Yellow** of the year, heading N-W at speed. Is this the first of many to come? Also seen were 25 **Painted Ladies**, **Green-veined White**, **Large White** and **Speckled Wood**. Then in the afternoon, Mick & Wendy went to a site near the Ridgeway in Wantage and recorded 35 **Painted Ladies**, 9 **Common Blue** (inc a mating pair), 10 **Green Hairstreak**, 8 **Small Heath**, 1 **Dingy Skipper** (worn) and 2 **Brown Argus**. Moths were **Wood Tiger** (6) and **Cinnabar** (1).

*On 26th May Adam Bassett wrote:* "Like everyone else I've seen quite a few **Painted Lady** butterflies recently, several through the garden (Marlow, Bucks) on 25th and c10 at Oaktree garden centre nr Ascot on 26th."

*Juliet and Alan Gudge reported as follows on 26th:* "Our experience of the **Painted Lady** influx in our garden in Frieth (Bucks) yesterday was a constant stream flying over heading roughly north-west and a number which settled to nectar through the day. Their favourite plant was Sweet Rocket (*Hesperis matronalis*) and the most PLs we had at any one time in the garden was 18. They carried on into the evening with 3 or 4 still at it at 8.30pm. Today the numbers are much lower due presumably to the wind and lower temperatures. Look forward to more arriving!"

*Judith Barnard, Webmaster for Beds & Northants branch, sent the following on 26th:* "Today in the area around the church in Willen, Milton Keynes, in the space of half an hour, I saw about 15 **Painted Ladies** and one **Large White**. Grid ref: SP882414."

*David Fuller had* seven **Painted Ladies** in his Maidenhead (Berks) garden on 26th May.

*Chris and Marilyn Taylor reported the following on 26th May:* "We would like to notify you of a sighting of a **Green Hairstreak** at Wildmoor Heath, Crowthorne on Sunday 10 May 2009."

*Martin Walters, Loosley Row SP8101 (Bucks) sent this update on 26th:* "Howling WNW gale blowing on the Chiltern Ridge today (what a difference a day makes), after my report

yesterday on **Painted Ladies** they have all disappeared. On a walk round my wood, however, in reasonable shelter, I counted over a dozen of them flying rapidly around and giving the resident **Speckled Woods** a run for their money."

**Dennis Dell reported the following on 26th:** "59 **Painted Ladies** in one hour flashing through Aylesbury park golf course yesterday afternoon. Interesting the regularity of this 'fly-past' - one per minute. Quite a few landing for a 'lunch break' on bugle and common vetch. Also one **Small Tortoiseshell**."

**Ched George says he counted** 54 **Painted Ladies** flying across Yoesdon Bank, Radnage, on 25th May. "This was over 2 hours while looking for everything else, so may have missed many. No Adonis Blue, 3 **Dingy Skipper**, 20+ male **Common Blue** but only saw 2 females. 3 **Small Blue**, 1 **Grizzled Skipper**, 2 worn **Peacock**. I have not seen **Small Tortoiseshell** for some time, but only nymphalid larvae seen were 10 **Small Tortoiseshell** about 1 inch long."

**Grahame Hawker sent this email on 26th May:** "Many hundreds of **Painted Ladies** in Berkshire. Over one field Lesley and I counted over 20 flying by in one minute - that's over 1200 per hour. All heading rapidly north. By 8 in the evening they had stopped migrating and were forming duelling groups along the country lanes."

**Tuesday 26th May 2009**

**Dave Wilton sent this report yesterday, 25th:** "Today there seemed to be an even greater number of **Painted Ladies** in transit locally than there were yesterday. A ten-minute count while standing in the middle of a large field near to me in Westcott, Bucks produced 138 butterflies flying strongly in a north-westerly direction. That equates to more than 800 per hour in just one spot! During the day I found a few of them taking a breather, with two nectaring in the disused railway cutting at Westcott (see below) and another 15 found on buttercups near the Calvert land-fill site. The disused railway cutting also produced my first **Large Skipper** of the year as well as **Dingy Skipper** (15, numbers on the wane now), **Grizzled Skipper** (8), **Green Hairstreak** (1), **Brown Argus** (2), **Common Blue** (139) and **Small Heath** (8)."

**Helen Hyre sent this on 25th May:** "I thought I saw a high-speed **Painted Lady** in Berton, Bucks, on 24th May, but usually we don't see them in this garden until at least 8th June. I checked the UTB website on 25th and decided it must have been a **Painted Lady**. On 25th May we had 2 **Painted Ladies** for an hour in the garden, sitting on paving but mostly nectaring on Sweet Rocket and Erysimum. For another 2 hours one or both of them were in the garden. In between all this excitement, I went to Berton churchyard where 3 **PLs** crossed at high speed, a few seconds apart. At 6.50pm a **PL** was still active in our garden, despite all the other butterflies having gone to bed!"

**In David Fuller's garden in Maidenhead, Berks recently:** "Saturday 23rd **Painted Lady**, Sunday 24th **Painted Lady** 2, Monday 25th **Painted Lady** 4 all together on White Valerian. Also **Orange Tip** female, **Holly Blue** female, **Peacock**, **Green-veined White** at least 3 and **Large White** 1."

**Danny Howard (Cowley, Oxford) reported the following on 25th:** "Went to the shops today and saw a few **Painted Ladies** on the way so when I got back to the house I thought I'd actually do a count. In a ten minute timed period from 16:10 to 16:20 I counted 31 flying through. Mostly around house roof height and heading between North and North West. Throughout the day one or two have stopped in the garden for a feed but most have just flown on by."

**Derek Brown sent this update on 25th:** "And still they come!! The **Painted Ladies** were

coming through the garden in Beenham, Berks, today at a rough rate of 1 every minute or so. That adds up to several hundred during the course of the day, all heading North. An amazing sight and one I've not seen before."

***Martin Walters, Loosley Row in Bucks, sent this report on Monday 25th:*** "Having seen no **Painted Ladies** last year, I must have seen several hundred this afternoon moving rapidly from a SE direction heading NW. Several nectared on the large amount of Sweet Rocket we have in the garden and adjoining field. Our map reference is SP817017. I have completed the garden survey for many years and the above is one of the most exciting butterfly events since I have been recording."

***Lloyd Garvey completed the Butterfly transect at Greenham Common (West Berks) yesterday, 25th*** and counted 112 **Painted Ladies**, along with 99 **Common Blues**, 3 **Small Blues**.

**Monday 25th May 2009**

***Chris Woodrow reported the following today, 25th:*** "A friend of mine up in Norfolk witnessed part of an invasion of **Painted Ladies** yesterday, counting over 100 butterflies passing over his garden in a 3 hour period. He contacted one of the County Recorders Andy Brazil, who advised as follows: Yes, we're in the middle of a huge influx of painted ladies - counts have been as high as 800 an hour at Strumpshaw, and they're moving in across a huge front from here down to Sussex. Possibly the largest migration event of our generation may be happening (Italy is reporting "millions", and Spain "hundreds of thousands". The bulk of them haven't got here yet.) Apparently it's all the result of a wet winter in the sahara, which has led to a population explosion."

***Gerry Kendall reports on the 2 recent UTB Field Meetings:***

***Thirteen Butterfly conservation members took advantage of the fine weather to join the Field Meeting at Aston Upthorpe Downs on 23 May.*** Butterflies came by steadily and we found the realistic target species: both spring Skippers and Green Hairstreak. Neither Adonis Blue nor Duke of Burgundy appeared. The former should emerge shortly, but the Duke now seems rare indeed on the site. However, a good number of other butterflies and moths compensated for the absence of the rarities. In particular around the Fairmile there was a Small Blue hotspot with perhaps fifty in a couple of hundred metres. The pleasure of the walk was increased by some nice birds and flowers, including Corn Bunting which seems to be doing well in this area whatever may be happening nationally. The total number of butterfly species for the day was seventeen – a very reasonable number in May. **Dingy Skipper, Grizzled Skipper, Brimstone, Large White, Small White, Green-veined White, Orange Tip, Green Hairstreak, Small Copper, Small Blue, Brown Argus, Common Blue, Painted Lady, Small Tortoiseshell, Peacock, Comma, Small Heath.** Moths included **Cinnabar, Small Yellow Underwing, Common Heath, Common Carpet, Silver-ground Carpet and Latticed Heath.** Plus **Six-spot Burnet cocoons.**

***Paul Bowyer led a successful Field Meeting at Calvert Jubilee on 24 May.*** The group saw thirteen species of butterfly: **Dingy Skipper, Grizzled Skipper, Brimstone, Large White, Small White, Green-veined White, Green Hairstreak, Common Blue, Holly Blue, Painted Lady, Peacock, Speckled Wood, Small Heath.** The moth list included **Mother Shipton and Burnet Companion, Treble Bar and Common carpet.** Worthy of special note was the stream of northbound Painted Ladies making their non-stop way through the reserve as if their final goal was a distant one. But the most unusual sighting was a 25 cm **red-eared terrapin** which was found close to the lake margin.

***Tim Watts says he only managed to get out late afternoon in Bucks today:*** "I still counted 96 **Painted Ladies** in under 10 mins at Granborough, all bombing North and another 90 in 10 minute stop at East Claydon. At Calvert there was a constant stream flying



up both lakes and surrounds. Would have been fantastic to have been sitting on the summit of Quinton Hills where I have seen Red admirals migrating in numbers and often get odd Painted Lady. Presume the total day count up there, where you have a wide field of view would have been in the thousands!! Home counties bird websites still reporting very large numbers on the move."

**Pete Eeles writes from Thatcham, Berks:** "The **Painted Lady** invasion continues! I saw between 8 and 9 per minute flying over my garden this afternoon - with several settling to nectar. That's around 500 per hour! All heading in a northerly direction."

**Paul Warham** observed **Painted Ladies** today flying N. through Marlow (Bucks) in ones and twos at a rate of c.50/hour between 14.00 & 15.00.

**Dave Maunder says:** "Today my wife and I took a stroll around nearby fields to our house in Aylesbury (Bucks) and we found:- **Painted Lady** (1); **Peacocks** (3); **Small Tortoiseshell** (1 adult, 2 more batches of 4th instar larvae); **Holly Blue** (1); **Large Whites** (3); **Small Whites** (7); and **Green-veined White** (1)."

**Phil Todd reported these sightings today, 25th:** "At Salden disused railway were:- **Wood White:** No more than 6. Very flighty in hot sunshine with only 2 individuals landing to feed. **Common Blue:** very common at least 50. **Orange-tip:** 10-20. **Brimstone** 2-4. Small numbers of **Small White** and **Large White**. Moths: 1 **Mother Shipton**, 2 **Burnet Companion**, 1 **Pyrausta Aurata**."

**Dave Miller visited Pitstone again yesterday (24th):** "A glorious day, and the butterflies were out in force, especially on the lower steeper slopes and in the dips. I quickly lost count of the numbers of **Small Heath**, **Brown Argus**, **Common Blue** and **Dingy Skipper**. One of the female Common Blues was entirely blue, except for the orange spots. Along the bottom of the slopes next to the Hawthorn scrub were good numbers of **Green Hairstreak** – the males squabbling in the trees and the females egg-laying on the nearby open slopes. I also encountered about half a dozen **Grizzled Skippers**, several very worn **Speckled Woods** and one brand new one. Finally, as noticed by many people across the south of England I think, there were **Painted Ladies**. I would say that one passed me roughly every 10-15 minutes, heading along the Ridgeway roughly North/ NorthEastwards. Driving back to Heathrow, I spotted them whizzing across the M25 at frequent intervals too. I've attached a decent picture of a pristine Brown Argus from Saturday's trip.

**Danny Howard reports:** "I went for a walk in the sun around Coombe Hill near Wendover (Bucks) yesterday (24th) and must have seen 20+ **Painted Ladies**, as well as my first **Small Heath** of the year and a fair number of **Brimstones** and 1 male **Orange Tip**."

**Wendy Wilson says:** "Yes, **Painted Ladies** have reached east Bucks and quite far north as well. I saw 2 in Gerrards Cross at 9am yesterday, 24 May, one was in my garden. I then drove up to North Bucks near MK to visit my daughter and saw one in Great Brickhill, in SP9030, and two in Stoke Hammond churchyard, in SP8628 tetrad, in the early afternoon."

**Ched George writes:** "**Painted Ladies** flying steadily through Radnage (Bucks) and Kingston Blount (Oxon) all day yesterday, flying west-north-west. 1 or 2 seen every few minutes. Evidently a large migration of Clouded Yellows approaching from Essex and Herts."

**Derek Brown writes:** "Looks like my previous comment 'might be a good year for them' was something of an understatement! Like everyone else we had another 20-30 **Painted Ladies** flying through the garden in Beenham (Berks). Most were on a Northward mission but the odd one stopped to nectar on the Mexican Orange."

**Sunday 24th May 2009**

**Maureen Cross reports that** her daughter saw a male **Adonis Blue** on [Lardon Chase, Berks](#), today (Sunday 24th).

**Graham Taylor says he was sitting in a park in central Witney, Oxon, today 24 May:** "I watched a mass migration of **Painted Ladies**. There were never more than 2 or 3 flying together at a time, but over the course of an hour and a half there were individuals visible at least every couple of minutes - often more frequently - all flying at speed in the same northward direction. All were keeping low to the ground, except when avoiding a large circus tent. I didn't keep a count, but must have seen close on a couple of hundred individuals. I've not watched a migration like this in the UK before! On a more mundane note, one **Holly Blue** in our garden in [Cumnor \(Oxon\)](#)."

**Jim Asher writes from Abingdon, Oxon:** "Today (24th), and especially this afternoon, the commonest butterfly was **Painted Lady**. We had over 50 sightings on the Downs south of [East Hendred, Oxon](#) - almost all flying strongly northwards. If the invasion force hasn't hit Bucks yet, it soon will! This morning I went to target some blank squares nearby and recorded **Dingy Skipper, Brimstone, Green Hairstreak, Brown Argus, Common Blue, Small Heath** plus **Small Blue**. So far this weekend, I have seen 17 species ... and it's not over yet!"

**Pete Eeles spent just over an hour in Upper Bucklebury, Berks, this morning (24th) and, whilst walking his dogs, saw:** 2 **Common Blue** (1 male, 1 female), 2 **Painted Lady**, 2 **Large White** (both female), 11 **Speckled Wood**, 1 **Small White** (male) and 3 **Cinnabar moth**. He spent lunchtime at Newbury racecourse and saw 22 **Painted Lady** in just under an hour - all heading purposefully in a northerly direction. This afternoon he also had 2 **Painted Lady** flying across his garden in [Thatcham, Berks](#).

**John Ward-Smith saw** three **Painted Ladies** in his [Bracknell \(Berks\)](#) garden today, 24th, and possibly another dozen or so that flew swiftly through without stopping.

**Tim Watts sent this sightings report today, 24th:** "I'm sure everyone knows about the massive Painted Lady influx/invasion!! but here are my sightings - **Painted Lady** seen at 5 mid-Bucks sites a.m., 2 in our garden and I counted 26 bombing past me, all heading North, in 1 hour at the end of Calvert landfill. The birdwatching websites are reporting numbers seen by observers that dwarf this. Also seen in Calvert drain area were large numbers of **Common Blue** and **Dingy Skipper**, 5 **Green Hairstreak** and 3 **Grizzled Skipper** but no Wall Brown yet!"

**Jan Haseler did the Lardon Chase butterfly transect this morning, 24th May, and saw:** "3 **Painted Ladies**, 16 **Small Blues**, 1 **Silver Y**, plus **Thisanotia chrysonuchella**, **Crambus lathionellus** and **Crambus perlella** but no Adonis Blues. We then went across to [The Holies](#) where we saw: 32 **Painted Ladies** (almost all heading fast north) + 18 **Adonis Blues**, including 2 mating pairs."

**This news came from Dave Wilton today, 24th:** "Did anyone NOT see at least one **Painted Lady** today?! There must have been thousands upon thousands of them in transit northwards through our region. I visited several sites in west Bucks between [Bernwood Forest](#) and the [River Ray](#) during today's glorious sunshine and absolutely everywhere one seemed to pass by every few minutes. At about 1pm I stopped for 15 minutes to eat a sandwich in Leaches Meadow (BBOWT), north of the A41 near Marsh Gibbon, and counted 23 powering along the same hedgerow in that time. Quite an event!"

**Dave Maunder sent the following today, 24th May:** "While working at my allotment in

*Aylesbury, Bucks*, today I witnessed some good visible migration, as I saw at least 31 **Painted Ladies** flying past at speed over a period of 3 hours, all heading north, none stopping to feed! So hopefully we will see a good Painted Lady year. Also seen were **Peacock** (1); **Small Tortoiseshell** (1); **Brimstones** (2); numerous **Large Whites** and **Small Whites**, **Green-veined Whites** (2); **Speckled Wood** (1) and **Holly Blue** (1)."

*Andrew Bolton, Hants Branch, sent this report on 23rd May*: "After a most enjoyable walk around the Aston Upthorpe Downs site during the field trip on Saturday where we saw about 16 species, I went on for a late pm visit to *Lardon Chase, Berks*, my first visit here. I saw the following species between about 3.20 - 4.50 pm - it was really warm too. Grid ref. SU 588809: **Common Blue** 16, **Small Blue** 3, **Adonis Blue** 1, **Painted Lady** 3, **Brimstone** 2 and **Large White** 1. I would have liked a photo of the Adonis Blue from a better angle, but it was warm and the insects were really lively and off it went so I was lucky to get anything at all!"

### Saturday 23rd May 2009

*Jan Haseler writes that* members on the BBOWT walk to *Paices Wood near Aldermaston (Berks)* on *Saturday 23rd May* had an excellent opportunity to watch butterflies and day-flying moths. The 9 butterfly species included **Dingy Skipper**, **Grizzled Skipper**, **Brown Argus**, **Common Blue** and **Small Copper**. Moths included **Drab Looper**, **Silver-ground Carpet**, lots of **Speckled Yellows**, **Burnet Companion**, **Mother Shipton** and **Lesser Treble-bar**."

*This news came from Derek Brown today*: "We have had several **Painted Ladies** recently in our garden in *Beenham (Berks)* - looks like a good year for them. One on *Tuesday 19th* and a couple today *23rd May*. I must admit I didn't think these 'garden centre' Pansies would be attractive to them."

*Richard Soulsby spent this afternoon, 23rd, in his garden in Benson (Oxon)*: "It produced visitations from **Holly Blue** (2), **Common Blue** (1), **Small White**, **Large White** and two sightings of **Painted Lady**. Taken together with the species seen on the enjoyable and productive field trip with Gerry at Aston Upthorpe Downs this morning, gave a very satisfactory total of 18 species for the day."

*Dave Miller thought he'd investigate the Pitstone area, having seen several reports on the website of Small Blues there*: "I walked up onto the hill from the National Trust car park but was unable to find the Small Blues. However the bit I did investigate was worth a look as there were 5+ **Common Blues** (inc. 1 female), 10+ **Brown Argus** (an even split between m/f I'd say), two **Green Hairstreaks** (female by behaviour), 5+ **Dingy Skippers**, 2 **Grizzled Skippers**, 2 **Large Whites** and 10+ **Small Heaths**. There were many multi-species disputes, notably a four-way tussle between a Common Blue, a Dingy Skipper, a Small Heath and a Brown Argus. The last of these, by far the smallest, kept his ground. Site location: SP952147. A sheltered ditch with one slope facing south."

### Friday 22nd May 2009

*David Turnbull sent the following report today*: "A visit to a site in *Pitstone, Bucks* to look for **Small Blues** to photograph led to quite a surprise when I found 100+ on three consecutive days - the *20th, 21st and 22nd May*. Also seen were 10+ **Dingy Skippers**, a few **Common Blues**, **Large White**, **Green-veined White** & **Orange-tip**."

*This news came from David and Pippa Lloyd today*: "Two **Painted Lady** sightings in Berkshire today, *22nd May*. Firstly in *Charvil Country Park*, at about 1230 on grassy area just west of the lake. Secondly by David White at *Dinton Pastures* on the path running on the

east side of White Swan Lake about 1615."

### Wednesday 20th May 2009

**Andy King visited Pitstone late this afternoon, 20th:** "I saw the following: x3 **Dingy Skippers**, x2 **Small Heaths**, several **Common Blues**, x2 or 3 **Brimstones** and x18 Little Blues (**Small Blues**, if you prefer). The Little Blues were congregating for roosting and could be found in or near x3 clumps of grass, near where the site's chalk bank 'turns a corner'."

**Dave Wilton sent this report today:** "Having got a couple of Chilterns transects out of the way, I called at a site near *Pitstone, Bucks* late this afternoon (*20th*) and was pleased to find **Small Blue** (10) active in the sunshine. Other species present included **Dingy Skipper**, **Small Copper** & **Common Blue**."

### Tuesday 19th May 2009

**Dave Ferguson sent the following today:** "I saw a **Painted Lady** at *Pipers Corner* (near the Hughenden Valley, Bucks) this morning, *19th May*."

**This news came from David Fuller today:** "My first sighting of a **Painted Lady** in my *Maidenhead (Berks)* garden yesterday *18/05/09*."

**On 18th May Dave Maunder wrote:** "I recently found two batches of **Small Tortoiseshell larvae** on nettles near my house in *Aylesbury, Bucks*, one batch of which I've kept to see if the parasitic fly *Sturmia bella* is present!"

### Saturday 16th May 2009

**Robin Carr reports on the Field Meeting to Ivinghoe Beacon on 16th May:** "A total of seven people braved the weather to be rewarded with the sighting of a total of 25 **Dukes of Burgundy** on the beacon side of the road, 6 of these were in the gully. There were none seen on Steps Hill probably because the sun hadn't come out by then. Other sightings were 2 Green Hairstreaks, 1 **Brown Argus**, 2 **Large Whites**, 4 **Dingy Skippers**, 1 **Small Heath**, 1 **Green-veined White** and 1 **Orange-tip**, also 1 **Green Carpet** and 1 **Common Carpet**."

**Pete Eeles saw** a female **Green-veined White** egg-laying on Garlic Mustard in his garden in *Thatcham, Berks*, last week and noticed that the eggs were hatching this morning, *16th May*. He rushed to get a photo of the event (see below).

### Monday 11th May 2009

**This report came from Dave Wilton today:** "On *8th May* another visit to the disused railway cutting west of *Westcott Airfield, Bucks* provided a healthy total of Skippers with **Grizzled Skipper** (21) and **Dingy Skipper** (27) recorded. **Common Blue** was starting to emerge, with a dozen seen there, and the first **Small Heath** for the site was out. A very quick look at two places near *Calvert, Bucks* on *10th May* found healthy Skipper numbers there as well. On waste ground at Calvert Green I recorded **Grizzled Skipper** (7), **Dingy Skipper** (21), **Green Hairstreak** (1), **Small Copper** (1), **Common Blue** (2), while the Calvert Jubilee reserve produced **Grizzled Skipper** (15), **Dingy Skipper** (18), **Green Hairstreak** (1) & **Common Blue** (5). A brief return visit to the disused railway cutting by *Westcott Airfield* on *11th May*, where the site was nicely sheltered from the north-easterly gale, produced **Grizzled Skipper** (24), **Dingy Skipper** (61, the highest total I've ever recorded there!), **Green Hairstreak** (3, including a female egg-laying on bird's-foot trefoil), **Brown Argus** (5) and **Common Blue** (104). After two years of very poor numbers, the **Common Blue** colony here seems to have bounced back rather well. In contrast, has anyone else noticed a lack of

Holly Blue butterflies so far this year? Apart from one in our garden on 26th April I've failed to record the species anywhere locally."

**Pete Eeles visited Hartslock, Oxon, on the morning of 10th May, for just over an hour and saw:** 12 **Small Heath**, 19 **Dingy Skipper** (including a newly-emerged female that was drying her wings and being accosted by an amorous male!), 15 **Common Blue** (14 male, 1 female), 8 **Grizzled Skipper** (all looking worn), 9 **Green Hairstreak**, 2 **Green-veined White**, 5 **Orange-tip** (all male) and 1 **Brown Argus** (male).

**David Redhead sent the following report:** "Dog walks on **10th May** near my house in **Littlemore, Oxon**, produced my first 2009 sightings of two common moths - early morning a **Common Carpet**, early evening a **Green Carpet**. An active **Speckled Wood** and **Large White** were also seen before 9am. In the afternoon a 3 mile walk from the southern car park at **Port Meadow to Binsey Churchyard** and back produced a disappointing tally of 8 **Peacock**, 3 **Orange-tip** (two female, one male) & 2 **Speckled Wood**. 7 of the Peacocks were interesting though - by a field gateway halfway along Binsey Lane there were suddenly 4 Peacocks flying about, a look over the gate into the field gave a sighting of a mating pair settled on a post with a "gooseberry" in close attendance. Presumably the four initially seen were also frustrated males. 26 **Orange-tip** eggs and one caterpillar were found along the way on garlic mustard. All the eggs were orange bar one which was still white and the majority were either in the more sheltered car park or churchyard - the most heavily laid plant in the car park had a female roosting on the top. Meanwhile in our garden Wendy recorded 8 species - **Brimstone**, **Comma**, **Green-veined White**, **Large White**, **Orange-tip**, **Peacock**, **Small White** & **Speckled Wood**."

**Here are Malcolm Brownsword's sightings for Hartslock (including the extension) on his BBOWT transect on 10th May:** "Having abandoned my transect 3 days earlier, due to bad weather, I managed to complete it before bad weather forecasts for the next few days. 19 **Dingy Skippers**, 3 **Grizzled Skippers**, 1 **Large White**, 2 **Small Whites**, 5 **Green Hairstreaks**, 3 **Brown Argus**, 8 **Common Blues**, 1 **Peacock**, 5 **Small Heaths** and also 2 **Burnet Companion moths**. Many more than the 19 **Dingy Skippers** recorded were seen outside the transect route. Considering the wet summers of 2007 and 2008, this seems a good start for 2009. All of the **Grizzled Skippers** were nectaring on **Milkwort** in the extension to the reserve. 4 of the **Dingy Skippers**, 2 of the **Brown Argus** and 4 of the **Common Blues** were also recorded in the extension, which is being grazed using sheep and goats during the summer months."

**Don and Sandra Otter saw** one or possibly two **Wood White** in the disused railway cutting near **Mursley, Bucks** on **Sunday 10th May**.

**On the afternoon of 10th May, in fine weather, Sonia and Dennis Dell visited** the **Duke of Burgundy** hotspots on the south west slopes below **Ivinghoe Beacon**. Six were seen on the north side of the road and two more lower down to the south of the road. It is interesting to note that this species remains loyal to a few well-defined, small, areas on these slopes and is only seen elsewhere in very good seasons when the numbers are higher than average. Other species seen: **Holly Blue** [1], **Small White** [11], **Brimstone** [10], **Dingy Skipper** [7], **Green Hairstreak** [4], **Small Heath** [2], **Speckled Wood** [2], **Peacock** [3], **Grizzled Skipper** [1], **Orange Tip** [3], **Large White** [1]. The **Dukes** were all in good condition, indicating that the peak is being reached about now.

**Malcolm Brownsword sent the following report of his BBOWT transect in Homefield Wood (Bucks) on 9th May:** "1 **Brimstone**, 5 **Large Whites**, 1 **Green-veined White**, 2 **Small Whites**, 7 **Orange-tips**, 1 **Common Blue**, 5 **Peacocks** and 3 **Speckled Woods** and one **hornet!** I found numerous **Orange-tip** eggs on 'Jack by the hedge' - see photo below."

Wednesday 6th May 2009

***Dennis Dell and Dave Wilton visited Ivinghoe Beacon yesterday afternoon, 5th May:***

Unfortunately the weather forecast didn't live up to its promise of sunny intervals and there was a south-westerly gale blowing so few butterflies were seen, but they did include three **Dukes of Burgundy**. Two were in the usual gully on Beacon Hill while the other was flushed from scrub on the lower slopes of Steps Hill. The latter example exhibited some unusual behaviour by shooting straight up to roost 8ft off the ground in a hawthorn bush.

Monday 4th May 2009

***Dave Miller, member of the Herts/Middx branch of BC, sent this report today:*** "I found myself yesterday (3rd May) with an hour to kill at *Cherwell Valley Services* on the M40, and three boys (aged 4-12) to entertain. I was amazed to find that round the back of the service area is a large meadow full of wild flowers with a bit of mixed woodland at the back. During the hour, we saw at least a dozen male **Orange-tips** (no females, curiously), 6 or 7 **Green-veined Whites**, 2 **Brimstones** (one of each sex) and a **Painted Lady**. One of the Orange-tips had lost a huge chunk of one forewing (no orange left at all) and part of the hindwing, yet managed to fly quite happily. Unfortunately, the Painted Lady was not posing for pictures. Just shows you can find butterflies in unlikely places – and keep the kids happily occupied at the same time!"

***May Webber reported the following today:*** "The two **Orange-Tip eggs** I have been monitoring in my garden in *Witney, Oxon*, have finally hatched! They are very very small and I had great difficulty trying to find them again to show my Mum!"

***Chris Iles made a visit to Hurst Hill, Cumnor in Oxon (SP4704) on 3rd May:*** "When the sun came out, it was very enjoyable to see the appearance of hyperactive **Small Coppers**. These were chasing each other around the glades, where there is abundant sheep's sorrel for their caterpillars. At least 11 seen, along with 5 **Speckled Woods**, a **Large White**, a **Peacock** and a couple of unidentified whites; also a **Winter Moth larva** which descended onto my hand, and an unidentified micro-moth. I looked for White-letter Hairstreak larvae on some English elm in a nearby lane, where there was some feeding damage on the leaves - however, these turned out to be **March Moth larvae**."

***Terry Hotten sent the following sighting yesterday, 3rd May:*** "I have just viewed your first sightings data and have an earlier date for **Common Blue**. There were 1 or 2 Common Blues flying at *Hartslock, Oxon on April 29th*, first seen by the warden Chris Raper and then by me."

***Mick Jones spent most of Saturday morning, 2nd May, at Dancersend, Bucks:*** "There were 2 male **Dukes of Burgundy** holding territory in the meadow plots area, but none on Anthill which is a bit of a puzzle. Friday lunchtime I had a very tatty female who looked as though she might have been laying right in the centre of the meadow plots, so things not quite going by the book - mind you, we've only just reached the normal emergence date for Dancersend. Had **Green Hairstreak** and **Dingy Skippers** as well. Also, my first **Cuckoo** of the year."

Saturday 2nd May 2009

***Dave Wilton sent this sighting today, 2nd May:*** "While carrying out a transect in a private *mid-Bucks wood* this afternoon I was delighted to find a **Dingy Skipper**, a species I've not previously recorded there. However, better was yet to come. About 20 minutes later, while walking along a wide N-S ride, I was dive-bombed by a large brown Vanessa which then carried on along the ride, each time settling high up in willows and blackthorn before my

hurried arrival spooked it into moving again. When I finally managed to sneak up on it, I got a brilliant view through my binoculars of a **Large Tortoiseshell** sunning itself high up in some sallow! While scrabbling to get my camera out of my rucksack the sun went in and the butterfly closed its wings. By the time the sun re-appeared it had adjusted its position so that only a distant underside shot was possible, but here it is for the record. A few seconds later the beast shot off again and further searching over the next half an hour failed to relocate it. I'm not aware of a record for this species in Bucks since one was caught at Penn Street in August 1964."

**Ben Miller sent the following report today:** "Despite an extensive search this afternoon, *2nd May*, I was unable to find any Duke of Burgundys at *Dancersend*. Just reasonable numbers of common woodland butterflies, especially **Orange-tips** (including my first female of the year), **Speckled Woods** and **Green-veined Whites**. A calling **Hobby** was the avian highlight, my first away from the rezzies this year."

**On the Lardon Chase (Berks) transect this morning, 2nd May, Jan Haseler saw the following:** "Dingy Skipper, Grizzled Skipper and **Small Blue**. Then over at *The Holies*, I saw about 20 Dingy Skippers, 2 Grizzled Skippers, 8 **Common Blues** (all male), a **Brown Argus** and 3 **Small Coppers**. A **Small Yellow Underwing** moth was at both Lardon Chase and The Holies."

**While doing his transect on Sands Bank, High Wycombe, Bucks yesterday (1st May), Tony Speight saw** his first **Common Blue** of the year. "This is 10 days earlier than I saw them last year. I also saw 14 **Dingy Skipper**, 11 **Brimstone**, 2 **Large White**, 2 **Orange Tip**, 2 **Peacock** and a **Speckled Wood**."

**Judith Barnard, Beds & Northants branch, sent this report today:** "Last Wednesday (*29th April*) I saw many **Speckled Woods**, **Orange Tips** and a female **Holly Blue** in *Willen, Milton Keynes*."

**This news was received from Nick Bowles on 1st May:** "On Sunday last (*26th April*) I went to the *Pitstone area in Bucks* and saw a **Small Heath** the position of which I described to Tom Dunbar who was arriving as I left. He couldn't find it but instead saw **Small Blue** in the area I sent him to, which didn't please me as I have yet to see one this year! There were approximately 15 **Dingy Skipper** there and oddly no Green Hairstreak; other species included **Brimstone**, **Large White**, **Orange-tip**, **Peacock**, **Comma**. *Also on Sunday 26th*, I saw two **Grizzled Skippers** (one of each sex) in *Wendover Woods, Bucks*. This sighting is especially pleasing as Forest Enterprise, who manage this wood, have done such an excellent job of creating habitat which is ideal for this species. Grizzled Skipper is a high priority species within the UK Biodiversity action planning and is not known to be present at any site within about 5 miles of this section of Wendover Woods. If a strong colony can develop here it could well spread to occupy other adjacent sites."

**Richard Soulsby says his visit to Aston Rowant NNR (North) on 1st May in mediocre weather at 9:30am yielded only three butterflies:** "However one was my first **Small Copper** of the year (the other two were **Speckled Woods**). Then, mid-morning in my garden (*Benson in Oxon*), I noticed a **Holly Blue** sitting with closed wings on a flower of evergreen Ceanothus. When I inspected it more closely it identified itself as a female by laying an egg on a flower calyx, which can just be seen in the centre of the photo below. My various reference books list a wide range of shrubs that are used as larval hostplants of the Holly Blue, but I can't find Ceanothus mentioned. A few years ago, I saw an egg laid on a flower bud of a Cotoneaster tree, a few feet from the Ceanothus, and I can't find this listed either. I wonder if other people have seen Holly Blues laying on these plants? It may just be a mistake on the part of the female. I'll keep an eye on this egg and see if it hatches and whether the larva survives on Ceanothus."

**Thursday 30th April 2009**

**Wendy & David Redhead took the dog for a walk yesterday afternoon, 29th April, on the rough grassland near their house in Littlemore, Oxon** and the second of the two **Peacocks** they came across was hanging from the underside of a nettle leaf where they suspected she was egg laying. When she moved on they inspected the leaf and found a small pile of green eggs attached. Also seen were a male **Orange-tip** and two **Speckled Woods**.

**Tuesday 28th April 2009**

**Mark Calway sent this news today:** "Whilst on a family walk on Sunday afternoon (26th April) we noticed our first batch of **Small Tortoiseshell caterpillars** - around one-third to one-half full grown. These were in *Berkshire between Earley and Wokingham.*"

**David Gantzel sent this report yesterday:** "At *Little Hampden, Bucks*, on *April 23rd* I saw 2 male **Brimstones**, 2 **Large White**, 1 **Speckled Wood** and 1 male **Orange-tip**."

**Sunday 26th April 2009**

**Dave Ferguson visited Lodge Hill on the morning of the 26th April:** "It produced 4 **Grizzled Skippers**, 4 **Small Coppers**, a **Speckled Wood**, **Orange Tips**, **Brimstones**, **Small Whites** and **Peacocks**."

**Wendy Wilson has carried out some more surveys in Bucks recently:** "At *Denham Country Park* today, *26th April*, 21 **Orange-tips** were competing with 13 **Green-veined Whites** for the cuckoo flowers blooming in the damp meadow between the Misbourne and Colne rivers. An aggressive male **Orange-tip** dived repeatedly at a mating pair of **Green-veined Whites**, but they carried on regardless (as you can see in the photo). Several female **Orange-tips** were ovipositing and I spotted some orange eggs as well as freshly laid ones on the cuckoo flowers. Also there were 3 **Small Whites**, 7 **Peacocks**, 3 **Holly Blues**, 3 **Speckled Woods**, 2 **Large Whites** and 4 rather worn **Commas**. I also saw a **Hornet** scraping wood from a fence post. Also, on *Sunday 19th April*, I decided to see if I could find some butterflies in a hitherto unrecorded area between Slough and Heathrow, an urban area close to the M25 and M4. I was not hopeful, but I got a delightful surprise as I entered the very pretty churchyard at *St Michael's, Horton*, as the first thing I spotted were 2 **Small Tortoiseshells** nectaring on the same dandelion (see photo). Also there were 4 **Holly Blues**, 2 **Peacocks**, 1 **Orange-tip** and 2 each of the three whites."

**Mick Jones sent the following email:** "*Sunday 26 April* I was finally able to confirm that **Duke of Burgundy** had emerged at *Dancersend*. 3 **Dukes** were seen in two of the usual areas - very brief sightings due to the gusty wind. Did anyone see them during the week when I couldn't get there? If you visit the reserve please contribute to the **Duke of Burgundy** survey - contact me at [m.d.jones@open.ac.uk](mailto:m.d.jones@open.ac.uk) and I will send a recording form and map."

**Robin Carr reports that the first Duke of Burgundy at Dancersend, Bucks**, was seen this morning, *Sunday 26th*, at the west end of the meadow plots.

**David Redhead didn't have much time for butterflying today, 26th, but says two dog walks proved interesting:** "The early morning dog walk to *Rivermead Nature Park* in Oxford produced sightings of an active male **Orange-tip** and **Green-veined White** at 8.15am with the temperature about 8C. Then in the afternoon a walk through the rough grassland near my house in *Littlemore (Oxon)* was proving rather unproductive when we suddenly came across our first **Brown Argus** of the year."



**Francis Gomme did a walk in Turville, Bucks, on Saturday 25th April:** "I managed to find **Grizzled Skipper, Dingy Skipper, Small Heath, Comma, Peacock, Orange-tip and Large White** despite the rather fresh wind and patchy sun!"

### Friday 24th April 2009

**David Redhead visited the disused railway near Salden Wood, Bucks today, primarily to survey the Wood White colony:** "My total identified butterfly count was 120 plus 28 unidentifiable whites - **Brimstones** 29 (24 male, 5 female with one investigating buckthorn), 26 **Peacocks**, 20 **Green-veined Whites** (either nectaring on ground ivy or settled on damp patches), 17 **Orange-tips** (all male), 10 **Speckled Woods**, 9 **Small Tortoiseshells**, 5 **Large Whites**, 3 **Wood Whites** and 1 **Small White**. I only saw one patch of Orange-tip larval food plant, 7 garlic mustard flowers just west of the old station - three had a white egg, one had an orange egg (laid on the edge of a leaf). Not a sniff of a Grizzled Skipper!"

**Dave Wilton sent this report today, 24th:** "Over the past week I've visited several **Grizzled Skipper** sites local to me in Bucks and found the species active on waste ground at **Greatmoor** (1 on 19th, 8 on 22nd), along the disused railway near **Salden Wood** (1 on 20th), on waste ground at **Calvert Green** (4 on 21st), in the **Calvert Jubilee nature reserve** (7 on 21st) and in the **Finemere Meadows nature reserve** (1 on 23rd) as well as along the disused railway cutting west of **Westcott Airfield** (8 on 21st and 20 seen today). Also present in the cutting today were **Dingy Skipper** (1), **Brown Argus** (1), **Peacock** (6) and **Speckled Wood** (4) as well as the usual pierids. The Brown Argus would have made a Small Blue look large! It was so small that it was difficult to keep up with when it flew and I only managed one rather distant picture."

**John Parsons sent this email on 24th April:** "At **Greenham Common (Berks)** today I saw my first **Small Copper** of the year."

**David Fuller sent the following on 23rd April:** "I usually go to **Watlington Hill (Oxon)** in the first week in May but as we have had some hot weather I went today. Not so hot today but the following were seen: **Grizzled Skipper** 3, **Green Hairstreak** 1, **Brimstone** males 7 females 2, **Peacock** 4, **Green-veined White** 4, **Speckled Wood** 1. Also, in my **Maidenhead (Berks)** garden: **Holly Blue** male and **Green-veined White** 2 and at **Bolter End (Bucks)** an **Orange-tip** female."

### Thursday 23rd April 2009

**Francis Gomme reported the following sightings:** "One **Duke of Burgundy** on **Ivinghoe Hills (Bucks)** yesterday morning, **22nd April**, plus **Green Hairstreak, Grizzled Skippers** (5), **Large Whites, Orange-tip, Brimstones, Speckled Woods** and **Peacocks**. A pleasant surprise on **Steps Hill** was a **Small Tortoiseshell**. Then today, **23rd**, I had my first **Small Heath** on a field boundary just south of **Princes Risborough, Bucks.**"

**Some butterflies seen over the last few days in Aylesbury by Dave Maunder include:** **Peacock** (1); **Small Tortoiseshells** (2); **Orange-tips** (3); **Brimstones** (7); **Large Whites** (10); **Small Whites** (30+); **Green-veined Whites** (2); **Speckled Woods** (5) and **Holly Blue** (1).

**Tim Watts was up on Quanton Hill, Bucks again yesterday, 22nd** and saw another **Painted Lady** in the same spot as the day before (see report below).

**David Redhead sent the following on 22nd April:** "Further to my report of the 14th April, we now think that the hatching of the monitored **Brown Hairstreak** eggs is complete - last year we had to wait until the 1st May for the last eggs to hatch. I have now seen two female

**Orange-tips** - one nearly landing on my hand as I inspected a Lady's Smock flowerhead for eggs. Yesterday every other unshaded Lady's Smock and Garlic Mustard flowerhead on the marshland near my house (*in Littlemore, Oxford*) possessed an Orange-tip egg and several had two. The total egg count was 44. At this time last year I had not even found my first egg and by mid-May this area only contained 38 eggs on slightly more plants. Our garden seemed quieter yesterday morning than on previous days and a visit to *Bernwood Forest* in the afternoon to do the Shabbington Wood transect proved a bit disappointing - in an hour and a half my count was just 24 butterflies - 9 **Speckled Wood**, 6 **Orange-tip** (all male), 3 **Peacock**, 2 **Brimstone** (both male) and 4 unidentified Whites. This year's first sightings list seems to be challenging April 2007, let's hope this April does not prove to be a false dawn as well."

### Tuesday 21st April 2009

*Ched George sent this news today:* "1 **Duke of Burgundy** seen at a site in *South Bucks* today, *21st April*."

*Tim Watts sent this report today:* "Tonight, *21st April*, I watched a **Painted Lady** in flight then basking on dry mud on the summit of *Quainton Hill, Bucks*. This spot is good for migrant birds and it has produced Painted Lady, Clouded Yellow and Red Admirals, presumably all migrating, in the past."

*Peter Cuss had a walk at Moor Copse (OS 175 SU633738) today, 21st April, to see what was on the wing:* "I can report **Orange-tip** (25) **Speckled Wood** (12) **Comma** (2) **Peacock** (4) **Small White** (5). Also 3 **Scarlet Tiger caterpillars** feeding on comfrey. Still no sighting of Small Tortoiseshell, which I have not seen in Berkshire for 3 years now."

*Alun & Chrissie visited West Wycombe Hill (482778) on Sunday April 19th:* "We had 7 **Small White**, 8 **Brimstone** (all male), 3 pristine **Orange-tip**, 3 **Holly Blues** (2 probable female) and our first **Small Copper**, a rather fine male. Anticipating a lot more sightings if the weather continues like this."

### Monday 20th April 2009

*Francis Gomme reported the following today:* "I visited *Grangelands, Bucks*, yesterday, *19th April*. Just 1 **Dingy Skipper** (my first this year) but **Grizzled Skipper** numbers are growing, 15+ on a circular walk. Also **Holly Blue**, **Orange-tip**, **Green-veined White**, **Large White**, **Small White**, **Brimstone**, **Comma** and **Peacock**."

*Another update from David Fuller today, 20th April:* "My garden in *Maidenhead, Berks:* **Speckled Wood** 2, **Peacock** 3, **Orange-tip** male, **Holly Blue** male, **Green-veined White** 2, **Small White** 1.

*Towpath River Thames Maidenhead:* **Speckled Wood** 6, **Comma** 1, **Peacock** 3, **Green-veined White** 2, **Orange-tip** 1.

*Romney Walk and Romney Island Windsor:* **Peacock** 3, **Brimstone** male and female, **Holly Blue** 2 males, **Green-veined White** 2, **Speckled Wood** 3, **Orange-tip** 2 males."

*Mick & Wendy Campbell went to the disused railway cutting near Salden Wood in Bucks this afternoon, primarily to look for Grizzled Skipper:* "It was a lovely warm afternoon, 20-22C, and quite humid in the cutting. We walked west along the track and achieved a count of 62 butterflies of 11 species: **Orange-tip** (17), **Peacock** (16), **Large White** (3), **Brimstone** (7), **Small White** (4), **Small Tortoiseshell** (3 - 1 worn and 2 in good condition), **Speckled Wood** (7), **Comma** (1), **Green-veined White** (2). On our return journey we managed to find a single **Grizzled Skipper** and, unexpectedly, two close up sightings of **Wood White**. Our only moth was a fresh **Burnet Companion**."

**Ched George writes:** "10 species seen in *Radnage, Bucks*, today, *20th April*, including **Small Tortoiseshell**, 2 **Green Hairstreak** and 1 **Dingy Skipper** on *Yoesdon Bank*."

**Tony Croft visited Wytham Woods, Oxon this morning, 20th April:** "I went to check on the **Brown Hairstreak** eggs and to look for Green Hairstreaks. I managed to find four of the seven eggs all of which I am pleased to say have hatched. I was also delighted to see two **Green Hairstreaks**. Six of the seven Brown Hairstreak eggs in my garden (*Easington, Bucks*) have now hatched."

**Jim Asher sent this report yesterday, 19th:** "I had my first sightings today of **Dingy Skipper** and **Grizzled Skipper**, both at *Aston Upthorpe (Oxon)*."

**Ched George sent the following on 19th April:** "A cold north-east wind kept butterflies close to the ground on *Lodge Hill (Bucks)* on *Saturday April 18th*, but we did see a **Grizzled Skipper** as well as 4 **Peacocks**."

**Dave Maunder went to his allotment in Aylesbury on 19th April:** "I saw:- **Peacock** (1); **Small Tortoiseshell** (1); **Brimstones** (2); **Large Whites** (3); **Small Whites** (6+) and **Speckled Wood** (1)."

**David Fuller sent this report on 18th April:** "My garden in *Maidenhead, Berks* today, 18th, **Orange-tip** 3 males together chasing each other, **Holly Blue** 2 males, **Peacock** 1 and **Green-veined White** 2 my first of the year. Then in *Bourne End* a **Holly Blue** male, new site for me."

**Nick Bowles did his transect at Coombe Hill on 18th April:** "Just 1 **Grizzled Skipper** today, plus a **Peacock** and **Green-veined White** both off transect. Had the sun come out sooner it would definitely have been more seen."

### Friday 17th April 2009

**Ched George surveyed a number of areas on 15th April trying to fill in some blank tetrads for the 2005-8 recording period (see "[Butterfly recording 2009 - we need your help!](#)"):** *Kingston Blount* - **Brimstone** male, 1. *Kingston Stert* **Brimstone** male, 1. *Adwell Comma* 1, **Green-veined White** 2, **Orange-tip** male 1, **Speckled Wood** 1, **Brimstone** male 1. SP 685005 **Speckled Wood** 1, **Green-veined White** 1, **Large White** 1, **Brimstone** male 1. *Easington* **Peacock** 2, **Green-veined White** 2. Near *Chalgrove* **Peacock** 1, **Orange-tip** male 1, **Small Tortoiseshell** 1. Near *Rofford Hall* **Orange-tip** male 1, **Green-veined White** 1, **Peacock** 1. SU 626993 **Green-veined White** 1, **Comma** 2."

**Tom Stevenson sent this email on 16th April:** "I was interested to read Chris Brown's comments (14/04/09) re. **Small Tortoiseshells**. Not sure if I have found a hotspot but during a walk between *Benson (Oxon)* and *Warborough* yesterday (*15th*) I counted 2 **Brimstone**, 2 **Green-veined Whites**, 10 **Peacocks**, 1 **Speckled Wood** and 12 **Small Tortoiseshells**. Just the one today along Hollantide Bottom near Benson with 3 **Green-veined Whites**, a **Small White**, a **Speckled Wood** but a distinct lack of sun."

**David Gantzel sent these sightings for 15th April:** "*Bassetsbury (High Wycombe, Bucks)* - male **Brimstone**, male **Orange-tip**, **Small Tortoiseshell** (worn) and **Peacock**."

**Francis Gomme visited Bald Hill, Aston Rowant (Oxon) on Tuesday 14th April:** "I found my first **Green Hairstreak** for 2009 at Bald Hill, also 2 **Grizzled Skippers** plus **Large Whites**, **Small Whites**, **Orange-tip**, **Brimstones**, **Peacocks** and a **Comma**. There were also **Grizzled Skippers** flying at *Granglands, Bucks*, on *Wednesday 15th*."

**Wednesday 15th April 2009**

**Chris Brown sent these Berkshire sightings:** "*Crowsley Wood 14/04/09* SU736796 - 3 Male **Brimstone**, 1 Female **Brimstone**, 2 Male **Orange-tip**, 11 **Peacock**, 3 **Comma**. *Blounts Court 14/04/09* SU715806 - 3 **Speckled Wood** (very bright yellow spots so guess newly emerged).

*Kennylands Field (Millennium Green) 15/04/09* SU714794 - 3 Male **Brimstone**, 1 **Large White**, 2 Male **Orange-tip**, 2 **Holly Blue**, 1 **Small Tortoiseshell** (counting my blessings seeing one of these!), 6 **Peacock**, 1 **Comma** and 1 **Speckled Wood**."

**Terry Hotten from Farnborough visited BBOWT's Moor Copse reserve in Berkshire on 14th April:** "I was pleased to see 2 **Early Purple orchids** in bloom. On the butterfly front there were good numbers of **Orange-tips** with a few **Green-veined Whites**, **Peacocks**, **Comma** and **Brimstones**."

**David Redhead (UTB Brown Hairstreak Champion) sent this report on 14th April:** "Just over a quarter of the 155 **Brown Hairstreak** eggs under surveillance at four different sites had hatched by the afternoon of Easter Monday - on the same date last year only 2 eggs out of 119 at the same four sites had hatched. This means hatching is about a week in advance of last year, which was by no means a late year, and if we do not have a cold snap hatching could well be complete the earliest in the last five years. Thanks go to Shelagh Harlow, Wendy Wilson, Tony Croft and Stuart Jenkins for their monitoring efforts. Before checking the eggs again at Shotover today I managed to see my first **Green-veined White** and **Speckled Woods** of the year. The Green-veined White was nectaring on ground ivy in the rough grassland by my house in *Littlemore, Oxon*. The Speckled Woods, six of them, were flying in a bridleway by *Garsington (Oxon)*. They were accompanied by four male **Orange-tips**, a **Small White** and a **Peacock** was flying in an adjacent field.

Has anybody seen a female Orange-tip yet? They are about, although I have not knowingly see one yet, as on my early morning dog walk I found an egg on a garlic mustard plant on the marshland near my house. The plant was checked yesterday morning so the egg was definitely laid on Easter Monday making it the earliest I have ever found by 6 days. Later at *Shotover* I found another along with three Green-veined White eggs - the latter are laid on the back of the garlic mustard leaves rather than on the flower stems."

**Roger Kemp and Ched George visited Cadsden Glen, Bucks on 14th April:** "1 **Grizzled Skipper**, 1 **Large White**, 1 **Comma**, 1 **Speckled Wood**, 1 **Orange-tip**, several **Peacocks** and several **Brimstones**. We witnessed a female **Brimstone** ovipositing many eggs on **Purging Buckthorn**."

**In David Fuller's Maidenhead (Berks) garden on 14th April:** **Orange-tip** male, **Peacock** 2, **Holly Blue** male, **Brimstone** male and female. Then along the *River Thames Towpath in Maidenhead*: **Orange-tip** female, **Small White** 2, **Comma** and **Peacock** 2.

**Tuesday 14th April 2009**

*All winter I've been keeping an eye on a Large White pupa on the outside of one of the windows of our house in Bucks. Yesterday the wing colour became visible through the pupal case and this morning (14th) the butterfly emerged. I managed to grab my camera quickly enough to get a photograph before the wings had finished unfurling. We also had our first garden visit from an Orange-tip (male) and Holly Blue today.*  
**Wendy**

**Tom Stevenson sent this report today, 14th:** "**Holly Blue** at my *Benson (Oxon)* allotment yesterday and, today, a **Speckled Wood** in my Benson garden plus another at *Millbrook Mead* with a male **Orange-tip** there also."

**A walk this morning (14th) in the Stadhampton/Chalgrove area of Oxon produced a good crop of butterflies for Richard Soulsby:** "2 **Speckled Woods**, 3 **Orange-tips** (M), 1 **Small Tortoiseshell**, M & F **Brimstone**, 2 **Peacocks**. Later in my garden in *Benson, Oxon*, I saw my first **Holly Blues** (2) of the year, plus **Orange-tip** (M & F), **Green-veined White** (1), **Small White** (2), **Large White** (1) and **Peacock** (1), bringing the total for the day to 9 species. *A short walk yesterday (13th) in Benson* gave 1 **Small Tortoiseshell**, 2 **Peacocks**, 2 **Orange-tips** and 3 **Brimstones**. But I haven't seen a **Red Admiral** yet this year."

**Dave Wilton sent this report today, 14th:** "Acting on a tip-off from Tom Dunbar who saw two **Grizzled Skippers** there yesterday (13th), I visited the disused railway line to the west of *Westcott Airfield* today and found four **Grizzled Skippers** enjoying the sunshine in the cutting. **Brimstone**, **Green-veined White**, **Orange-tip**, **Small Tortoiseshell**, **Peacock**, **Speckled Wood** and **Comma** were also seen, as were moths **Pyrausta purpuralis** and **Common Heath**."

**John Parsons visited Greenham Common, Berks on 14th April:** "Today on Greenham Common I saw a **Grizzled Skipper** and a **Common Heath** moth."

**Chris Brown sent this email today:** "As yesterday (13th April) was the only good day of the bank holiday weekend I went for a wander along the river at *Goring/Streatley*. It was worth it as there were many butterflies about. The only positive ID's I got were: 5 Male **Brimstone**, 1 Female **Brimstone**, 1 Male **Orange-tip**. There was also a **Ruby Tiger** moth crawling across the tow-path and fortunately I was looking down at the time!"

**David Redhead reported the following:** "The welcome sunshine on *Bank Holiday Monday, 13th*, brought a flood of butterflies back to our garden (*Littlemore, Oxon*) with 4 **Peacocks**, 3 male **Orange-tips**, several whites including a **Large White** and a couple of **Small Whites** but no **Green-veined Whites** as far as we could tell, 2 male **Brimstones**, a **Comma** and our first **Holly Blue** of the year. A couple of the **Peacocks** spent their time nectaring on the flowers."

**Pete Eeles made the most of the good weather that finally arrived from the west yesterday, 13th.** He visited *Midgham Lakes, near Thatcham in Berks*, for an hour and saw 1 **Peacock**, 4 **Speckled Wood**, 4 **Green-veined White** (2 male, 2 female), 4 **Orange-tip** (all male) and a single male **Brimstone**. At his home in Thatcham he saw 1 **Holly Blue**, 1 male **Orange-tip** and 1 male **Green-veined White**.

**In David Fuller's garden in Maidenhead, Berks yesterday 13th April:** "Five species appeared although there was a brisk breeze as soon as the sun came out - **Peacock** 2, **Small White** 2, **Orange-tip** 1 male, **Holly Blue** 1 male and **Brimstone** 1 male."

### Saturday 11th April 2009

**Helen Hyre sent this report today:** "I saw an **Orange-tip** at *Dunton churchyard* (in Bucks) on 7th April."

### Thursday 9th April 2009

**David Fuller saw the following yesterday, 8th April:** "Along the *River Thames towpath at Maidenhead* 11.00 am - **Orange-tip** male and a **Peacock**. My garden (in *Maidenhead, Berks*) - **Orange-tip** male 12.30am, **Peacock** 2, **Small White**."

### Tuesday 7th April 2009

**John Rust sent the following report on 6th April:** "Whilst out walking on *Sunday (5th*

*April*) I spotted quite a number of **Orange-tips**. The area was *Toot Baldon* churchyard (Oxon) at about 11.30am."

*This report came from Richard Soulsby on 6th April:* "I was pleased to add **Orange-tip** (male) and **Large White** to my 2009 list during a walk near *Toot Baldon (Oxon)* yesterday 5th."

### Sunday 5th April 2009

*Helen Hyre sent this report today:* "I saw a handsome **Large White** in *Bierton, Bucks* on 4th April."

### Saturday 4th April 2009

*Stuart Hodges sent this news today, 4th April:* "This afternoon I saw an **Orange-tip** at the *Steeple Claydon (Bucks)* level crossing, in just the same place as I saw one last year on the 30th of March but on the opposite side of the road."

*In David Fuller's garden in Maidenhead, Berks, today (4th April):* "A **Holly Blue** male - first of the year for me - and **Peacock 2**, **Brimstone** male, **Small White** male."

### Friday 3rd April 2009

*Tom Stevenson sent the following report today, 3rd April:* "How nice to have a real Spring for a change - half an hour down *Millbrook Mead*, a very small nature reserve in Benson (Oxon), revealed 2 **Peacocks** and one each of **Comma**, **Brimstone** and **Green-veined White**."

*Mick & Wendy Campbell visited Yoesden Bank, Bucks, on Thursday 2nd April:* "It was a warm, sunny afternoon, about 18-19C. A number of butterflies were very active along the top edge of the bank, including 5 **Peacocks**, 1 **Comma** and 3 **Small Tortoiseshells**, two of which engaged in a long chase up and over the tree tops."

*John Parsons saw a Speckled Wood* on *Greenham Common, Berks* on *April 2nd*.

### Wednesday 1st April 2009

*Wendy Wilson writes:* "Today, *Wednesday 1st April*, I walked round *Stoke Poges Memorial Gardens, Bucks*, as no butterflies have been recorded there (SU 975 826) in recent years. I was delighted to see 11 **Peacocks**, 4 **Commas**, 3 **Brimstones**, 3 **Small Whites** and my first **Holly Blue** of the year. There was also a pair of Egyptian geese with six cute goslings on the lake. The photo is of a male **Brimstone** which posed obligingly on a daffodil in my garden yesterday."

*David Bainton sent the following on 1st April:* "I saw a **Speckled Wood** butterfly this morning *1st April* near to the Queens Head pub in *Old Chesham, Bucks*."

*David Redhead sent this report on 1st April:* "On Sunday afternoon, *29th March*, I went searching for **Brown Hairstreak** eggs in *Oxford*. My first finds were in Great Meadow by St Catherine's College. The three previous winters I had been unable to find any in this location but this time I found three. These eggs are the closest we have ever found them to the city centre and indicate that last summer a female **Brown Hairstreak** was within 900 metres of achieving my ambition of one being recorded flying over Magdalen Bridge. Later on I completed the Marston Meadows egg transect, just over a kilometre north of Great Meadow, to bring the transect total to 40, nearly twice the numbers found in the previous two winters."

Perhaps any students of Magdalen College reading this could find time to check out any blackthorn growing in their college grounds. To add to my delight a **Small Tortoiseshell** flew by me just east of Parson's Pleasure.

*At 1pm today (1st April)* a couple of male **Brimstones**, a pair of **Small Whites**, a **Peacock** and a male **Orange-tip** were all active in our garden (*Littlemore, Oxon*). A little earlier in the grassland/scrub area near our house I saw another Small White, two Peacocks and a **Comma**. Five species on the first day of the 2009 transect season reminded me that I needed to finalise the rota for the Shabbington Wood transect!"

*Dennis Dell saw his first Speckled Wood* of the season in his *Aylesbury (Bucks)* garden on *30th March*.

*Mark Calway found this Green-veined White* in his garden in *Earley, Reading (Berks)* on *30th March*.

### Sunday 29th March 2009

*Pete Eeles saw his first non-hibernator of the year on 29th March* with a single sighting of a **Holly Blue** (male) in his garden in *Thatcham, Berks*. He also saw a **Small Tortoiseshell** in a nearby field, the first he's seen in the Thatcham area for some time, which is an encouraging sign.

*Nigel Parsons sent the following report on 27th March:* "I visited *Iver Heath Fields (Bucks)*, a site reasonably local to me, in the hope of seeing my first butterfly of the year on *Sunday 15th March* and was rewarded by seeing 4 **Commas**, 2 **Brimstone** and a **Small Tortoiseshell**. On the following Saturday *21st March* I returned and this time saw eleven **Commas** and one each of **Brimstone**, **Peacock**, **Small Tortoiseshell** and **Small White**."

*David Fuller saw a Peacock* at *Bratwick Park Nature Reserve Maidenhead, Berks* on *26th March*.

### Tuesday 24th March 2009

*A group of UTB egg-searchers spent some time at Finemere Wood, Bucks on Saturday 21st March:* Butterflies active while they were there included **Brimstone**, **Small Tortoiseshell**, **Peacock** and **Comma**. It was very pleasing to see five Small Tortoiseshells in all, four of them on the same flowering willow bush.

### Sunday 22nd March 2009

*David Fuller reports on his last 2 days' sightings:* "21/03/09 : My garden in *Maidenhead, Berks* - **Peacock**, male **Brimstone** and **Small White** female; *Odney Island Cookham* - 2 **Comma**. I didn't think I would be reporting anything for today (*Sunday 22nd*) as I went on the same route as last Sunday when I saw 11 **Brimstone** butterflies but none today. However mid afternoon in my garden I saw **Comma** 1 and male **Brimstone** 1."

### Friday 20th March 2009

*Richard Soulsby sent these sightings today, 20th March:* "This week I at last broke my duck for 2009, with **Brimstones** in *Abingdon* and a **Comma** in my garden in *Benson (Oxon)* on the *16th*, another **Comma** at *Howbery Park* (near Wallingford) yesterday *19th*, and my first non-hibernator, a **Small White**, in my garden today. But 1½ hours spent at *Swyncombe Downs, Oxon* in shirt-sleeve weather this afternoon produced not a single butterfly!"

*Pete Eeles sent his first sightings of the season today, 20th March:* "While taking my

dogs for a walk close to home in *Thatcham, Berks*, I spotted my first butterflies of the year - a very faded **Red Admiral**, a single **Peacock** and a single **Comma**."

**David Fuller has sent in these sightings over the last three days:**

18/03/09 my garden (*Maidenhead, Berks*) : 2 male **Brimstone** and 3 **Peacock** all spiralling together.

19/03/09 my garden - male **Brimstone**; *Cliveden Woods Bucks* - male **Brimstone**, **Comma**.

20/03/09 *Tetsworth, Oxon* - 2 male **Brimstone**."

**Wendy Redhead reported these sightings on 19th March:** "Five butterfly species were active in our garden (*Littlemore, Oxon*) today. First on the wing was a male **Brimstone** which was shortly followed by a **Large White** and **Small White** investigating the blossom on the bullace/cherry plum trees. They were soon joined by two **Peacocks** and a **Comma** whilst another pair of **Commas** basked on the gravel paths in the vegetable garden."

**Tony Croft reported the following on 19th March:** "We're doing well with **Small Tortoiseshells** having six in our garden (*Easington, Bucks*) at one time yesterday, 18th."

**Dave Wilton had a walk through Rushbeds Wood (Bucks) on 19th March:** A **Peacock** and two **Commas** seen at the central ride cross-roads.

**Chris Brown sent this sightings update on 18th March:**

17/03/09 *Peppard Common* SU 706 816 - 2 **Peacock**, 4 **Comma**.

18/03/09 *Millennium Green* SU 713 793 - 1 **Comma**.

18/03/09 *Blounts Court Johnson Matthey* SU 714 806 - 1 **Small Tortoiseshell** nectaring on purple heather, 1 **Peacock**.

### Tuesday 17th March 2009

**Tony Croft sent this report today, 17th:** "In common with other reporters so far, this weekend produced the first butterflies of the year in the garden (*Long Crendon, Bucks*). *Sunday (15th)* produced a **Brimstone**, a **Peacock** and a **Small Tortoiseshell**. Today there were three **Small Tortoiseshells** nectaring on bergenia and heather."

**David Fuller recorded the following today, 17th:** "A **Peacock** in my garden in *Maidenhead, Berks* and 6 **Comma** at *Woolman's Wood Hedsor, Bucks*."

**Chris Brown sent the following report today:** "16/03/09 at *Crowsley Wood (Berks)*, 1 male **Brimstone**, 1 **Peacock** and 5 **Comma**."

**Dave Maunder had a good butterfly day yesterday, 16th March:** "At my town-centre (*Aylesbury, Bucks*) allotment, I saw **Peacock** (1), **Commas** (2), **Small Tortoiseshells** (2), at least 6 **Brimstones**, and my first **Green-veined White** of the year!"

**Dave Wilton had a quick look around Finemere Wood Monday afternoon, 16th March:** "It produced **Peacock** (6) and **Comma** (12) but - surprisingly - no patrolling **Brimstones**, although one did make several appearances in our garden at *Westcott*."

### Monday 16th March 2009

**David Fuller recorded a number of butterfly sightings today, 16th March:** "Male **Brimstone** and a **Peacock** in my garden in *Maidenhead, Berks*. At *Dorney Wetlands, Jubilee River, Berks* : **Comma** and **Peacock**. *Maidenhead Weir* : **Comma** and male **Brimstone**."



**Judith Barnard, BC Beds & Northants Branch, sent this report today:** "In *Willen, Milton Keynes, Bucks* today (16th) I saw a **Brimstone**, **Peacock** and a **Comma**. My first sightings of the year!"

**Mike Wilkins reported the following today:** "I was pleased to see my first butterfly of the year yesterday, *15th March*, in the garden (*Abingdon, Oxon*) nectaring on celandines. I was even more pleased that it was a **Small Tortoiseshell**. I wonder if that is a good omen? It was closely followed by a **Brimstone**."

**Nick Bowles sent this news on 15th March:** "I couldn't find time for a butterfly walk today but did go for a bike ride from Tring (Herts.) to Ashridge Forest (also in Herts.) and back, but I went through Bucks on the way in the *area of Pitstone Hill and Stepps Hill*. I was busy not falling off and such, but still saw a min. of 8 **Brimstone** (male), 1 definite **Small Tortoiseshell**, 2 **Peacock** and 1 **Comma**. I also saw a probable Peacock and a Small Tort/Comma at height against the sun."

### Sunday 15th March 2009

**Wendy Wilson comments that butterflies were out in force today, Saturday 15th March:** "I recorded 5 **Peacocks**, 2 **Commas** and 1 **Brimstone** on Austenwood Common *Chalfont St Peter* and four more Brimstones nearby. They were all in reasonable condition, considering they have lived through such a hard winter, as you can see from the photo below. Also below is a **Red Admiral** photo I took at *Langley Park Arboretum* on *2nd March*."

**Alan Miller, Member BC Yorkshire Region on holiday at Berkhamsted, sent this sighting today:** "Just to let you know that I saw two **Brimstone** in the car park for *Startops End Reservoir (Bucks)* near Tring at 11.40am today *Sunday 15th March*."

**This report came from Martin Townsend today:** "Never thought I'd see the day that I felt moved to immediately report a **Small Tortoiseshell**, but I had one today at *Farmoor (Oxford)* on willow blossom, in one of the rough enclosed areas on the bank on the way around to Pinkhill at about SP 443070. I only saw 1 in the county last year, at Chimney Meadows, but I did see dozens at Gibraltar Point in Lincs on about 30th August, all nectaring on Sea Aster (and would have probably with more time, seen hundreds given the extent of the saltmarsh). I remember Nick's comment about possible immigration, but I feel that they were as likely to be locally bred. The mature dunes nearby have become very overgrown, with abundant nettles, and maybe *Sturmia* hasn't got there yet! Plenty about today - 3 **Brimstones** (2 at Farmoor), **Peacock** in the garden (Littlemore, Oxon) and an unspecified *Pieris* flew over the ring-road heading towards Rose Hill."

**David Redhead sent this news today:** "At least 10 butterflies visited our garden (*Littlemore, Oxon*) today and between about 11.30am and 2.30pm you could not go out into the garden without seeing one. **Brimstone** and **Comma** were most numerous - at one stage 2 male Brimstones were nectaring on lungwort (never seen anything except bees on it before although the patch has been there for several years) and a third was flying about, later a female was in evidence. The Commas peaked later in the day with two spiralling around each other, a third watching from near the top of a conifer and the fourth studiously ignoring them while it basked on some dead grass. A **Peacock** made fitful appearances and was usually to be found basking on the gravel paths in the vegetable garden. Best of all was a **Small Tortoiseshell** which spent about 20 minutes nectaring on the first of the bullace flowers before disappearing."

**Dave Wilton saw the following today, 15th March:** "My *Westcott (Bucks)* garden has just produced a **Small White!** So far today, that and a **Brimstone** have been encouraged out into the sunshine."

**David Fuller reported the following sightings:** "A **Brimstone** male in my garden in *Maidenhead, Berks*, a **Brimstone** male and a **Comma** at *Odney Island Cookham, Berks*, all seen on *14th March*. Then today, *15th*, a male **Brimstone** and a **Peacock** in my garden, and 10 other male **Brimstones** counted around Maidenhead, Twyford, Hare Hatch and Knowl Hill."

**Nick Bowles sent this sighting on 14th March:** "I had to pop out of the UTB CAD meeting (in *Aylesbury, Bucks*), to let some late joiners in through the locked outer doors, and there was a **Comma** basking on some low conifers."

#### Friday 13th March 2009

**David Redhead sent this news on 12th March:** "Wendy saw a **Peacock** and a **Brimstone** in our garden (*Littlemore, Oxon*) in the sunshine about midday on *Wednesday 11th March*. Meanwhile I had been inspecting Hairstreak habitat in *Wytham Woods* with Tony Croft but all we managed to see were three **Blue-bordered Carpet Moth** eggs."

**David Fuller reported the following on 12th March:** "A male **Brimstone** in my garden (*Maidenhead, Berks*) and one in *Cookham (Berks)* per Brian Clews, both seen on *12/03/09*."

**Danny Howard sent this sighting on 12th March:** "I saw my first butterfly of 2009 on *11th March* (not including those I saw in the butterfly house at Blenheim the day before!). It was a male **Brimstone** in *Florence Park, Cowley (Oxon)*."

#### Monday 9th March 2009

**Pete Eeles has spent the last couple of weekends surveying his local area for Purple Hairstreak eggs:** On *1st March* he found a single egg on an oak at *Upper Bucklebury, West Berkshire*, and found a further 6 eggs today (*8th March*) on a couple of oaks at *Bowdown Woods* near Greenham Common, Berks.

**Dave Maunder sent the following on 7th March:** "A couple more butterflies seen last week were - **Comma** (1) on *2nd March*, at `Dayla` in *Aylesbury, Bucks* where I work, and a female **Brimstone** in my garden (also in Aylesbury), seen by my mum."

**Tom Stevenson reported seeing his third species of the year on 6th March:** "It was a **Small Tortoiseshell** at *Ewelme Watercress Beds (Oxon)* to go with my earlier **Brimstone** (*Feb 26*) and Red Admiral (*Jan 17* as reported below) both in my *Benson (Oxon)* garden."

#### Thursday 5th March 2009

**Paul Bowyer sent the following report today:** "Sightings for *Friday 27th February*. My front garden (*High Wycombe, Bucks*), 1 male **Brimstone** and a further 3 in *Marlow (Bucks)* amongst the houses between the High Street and the station."

**Welcome to the website new contributor Ruth Wood, who lives in Bracknell, Berks. Ruth sent this interesting report on 27th February:** I found a **Red Admiral** hibernating in my garage which was a surprise to me as I always thought that they died at the end of the summer. I'm living in a new housing development, so it's good to see that wildlife is visiting so soon!"

#### Saturday 28th February 2009

**Dave Maunder reported his first butterfly of the year today:** "It was a **Peacock**, seen last *Saturday (21st February)*, sunning itself on a house near mine in *Aylesbury, Bucks*."

**David Fuller saw a** male **Brimstone** at *Bourne End (Bucks)* garden centre on *25/02/09* SU896866. Also, a male and female **Brimstone** seen in his *Maidenhead (Berks)* garden on *27/02/09* SU 900833.

**With the lovely weather on 27th February, Chris Brown decided to cycle down to the Crowsley Park Wood site to look for any violets in flower:** "It seems not yet, but I found some Lesser Celandines in flower for the Phenology records and as a bonus 2 male **Brimstones** were out and exploring so I thought I would try and contribute all my butterfly sightings for the UTB page this year by starting with these 2."

**Dave Wilton sent the following on 27th February:** "In the sunshine at *Westcott, Bucks today (27th)* our garden produced a **Brimstone** and **Small Tortoiseshell** both in transit, several active bumble bees (*Bombus terrestris*) covered in crocus pollen, a hoverfly (*Eristalis tenax*) feeding from box flowers and our first Treecreeper on the trunk of the ancient lime. And all that before lunch!"

#### Thursday 26th February 2009

**This sighting came via Richard Soulsby today:** "I had a report yesterday of a **Brimstone** seen by Carol Johnson in her garden in *Benson (Oxon)* on *Saturday 21st February*, but I have yet to see my first butterfly of the year!"

#### Sunday 22nd February 2009

**Dave Ferguson saw a Peacock** fly past him on Saturday afternoon, *21st*, near *Nash, Bucks* as he was doing some bird atlassing.

#### Saturday 21st February 2009

**Mike Flemming sent this sighting:** "My first **Brimstone** of the year was in my *Abingdon (Oxon)* garden around lunchtime today, *21st*. Grid ref: SU 508983."

**UTB Member Nick Bowles reported the following from his garden in Tring, on the Bucks/Herts border:** "My first sighting of a **Small Tortoiseshell** here in Tring, Herts (the field behind my garden) today, 21st. I know it isn't in Bucks - or even UTB land - so realise it won't count towards the UTB 'first sighting' listings."

**The following was reported by David Redhead:** "I managed a **Peacock** today (*21st*) to add to yesterday's Comma. It was seen flying about the farmyard of the *Oxford University farm at Wytham*. I was surprised not to see more butterflies on the wing as it got up to 12C with continuous sunshine and Wendy had a nil return back home in the garden. I note **Brimstone**, **Comma** and **Peacock** have been seen in the last couple of days but no **Red Admiral** - I wonder if there will be any more early local sightings or will they have all failed to survive the hardest winter for 30 years?"

**This news came from Dave Wilton:** "On *Saturday 21st February*, following a successful **Brown Hairstreak egg** search on nearby MoD land (77 eggs in two hours), Stuart Hodges and I were pleased to see our first butterfly of the year in *Piddington, Oxon* where a male **Brimstone** was found patrolling a roadside hedgerow."

**Graham Taylor sent the following:** "Just to let you know that we had our first **Brimstone** of the year in my garden in *Cumnor (Oxon)* today, *21st February*."

#### Friday 20th February 2009

**The following came from David Redhead today:** "Following up on Tony's excellent discovery of Brown Hairstreak eggs in Wytham Woods on Wednesday (see below), I spent 90 minutes this morning (*20th February*) to the *west of Wytham Woods* searching an area of reasonable habitat with blackthorn for Brown Hairstreak eggs but with no success. In fact no eggs of any sort, but compensations were a 7 spot Lady, a weasel scurrying across the path just in front of me, a roe deer, a couple of buzzards fairly low overhead and a lot of small bird activity. But best of all was a **Comma** flying along the footpath to meet me at 11.30am and 10C."

**Maureen Cross sent this news today:** "Today, *20th February*, to my delight I saw my first butterfly of the year, a **Peacock** flying in the hills above *Goring (South Oxfordshire)* and just half an hour later a **Brimstone** flew into my garden in *Streatley (West Berkshire)*. Is it Spring at last?"

**This exciting news came from Tony Croft:** "I have been meaning to do a Brown Hairstreak egg search at *Wytham Woods, Oxon (permit required)* this winter and finally managed it on *Wednesday, 18th February*. I found four **Brown Hairstreak eggs** including one doublet! From records of the late 1980s the Brown Hairstreak had been found in this wood, but not where I found today's eggs. I'm sure that this is not a case of the butterfly becoming extinct there and making its way across the A34 recently, I suspect they have always been present but presumably went unrecorded."

**Tuesday 10th February 2009**

**Nick Bowles reported on the February Holtspur Bottom conservation work party - [click here to read the report.](#)**

**Thursday 29th January 2009**

**Wendy Wilson saw her first butterfly of the season on Tuesday, 27th January:** "It was a **Red Admiral** below *Shardeloes Lake, Amersham, Bucks*. It flew out from behind the groundsman's shed straight at me, just missing my eye. It settled briefly on my shoulder before zooming off across the cricket field at great speed, with me in hot pursuit, but I lost him when he disappeared among the trees. It was all too quick for a photo. The temperature on my car thermometer was only 5C, but the sun had come out after the freezing fog we had earlier, though this still lingered on the shady side of the valley."

**Tuesday 20th January 2009**

**Tom Stevenson sent the following report:** "My first sighting at lunchtime on *Saturday 17th January* - a **Red Admiral** in my *Benson (Oxon)* garden."

**Friday 16th January 2009**

**Dr Peter Vaughan from the BC Hampshire Branch spotted the first UTB non-hibernating butterfly of the season:** "While out for a lunch time stroll on the *Harwell Science Campus (Didcot, Oxon)* on *Wednesday 14th January* I saw a **Red Admiral** basking on a tree trunk, about a metre and a half up from the ground (map ref SU 477 873). It had its wings fully open, taking advantage of the bright sunshine. I did not see it fly but on close examination it was showing a slight, rapid vibration of its abdomen, presumably to try to boost its body temperature. Although the tree trunk was slightly warm to touch, there was still frost on the ground in shaded areas. Interestingly the insect had positioned itself part-covering a 2.5 cm diameter metal identification disk set into the tree trunk, presumably this was not coincidental but rather because the metal had warmed up slightly quicker than the surrounding wood."

Monday 12th January 2009

*The following came from David Redhead on 7th January:* "Following last night's (6th Jan) very low temperatures I thought I ought to do a safety check on the header water tanks in the lofts of our house in *Littlemore, Oxon* and my Mother-in-Law's next door. I am pleased to report all was well and whilst up there I decided to do a wildlife check. My Mother-in-Law easily won the contest as her loft contained twelve intact hibernating **Peacock** butterflies, a **Herald Moth** and the nest of a solitary **wasp**. Ours contained just 2 intact **Peacocks** but there was evidence of at least another five with half a dozen wings scattered across the floor and another two sets of wings caught up in spider's webs. Sadly no Small Tortoiseshells in evidence as there would have been a decade ago."

*Ched George (Radnage, Bucks) sent this news on 5th January:* "I disturbed a hibernating **Peacock** butterfly as I brought in logs from the woodpile today. I've put it in a cardboard box in the shed, hoping it will survive."