

# ***The Butterfly Observer***

*Cornwall Butterfly Conservation Newsletter No. 38*



**Camberwell Beauty, photo © Robert Thompson by kind permission (see report page 6).**



**Butterfly  
Conservation**

*Autumn 2007*

## Editorial

**D**ue to unforeseen circumstances, I must apologise for the lateness of this issue. The front cover illustrates a Camberwell Beauty and a full report of Barry and Sue Ofield's sighting can be found on page 6 along with another report of a Large Tortoiseshell by Prof. John Wacher on page 14. It is not the first time that this butterfly has been seen in vice county 1. Articles about it may be found in our newsletter (no. 32, front page) and no. 30, page 12 and as suggested in those reports - is this butterfly breeding in this county on hybrid Cornish Elm?

A complete report from Barry Ofield regarding the ongoing re-introduction programme of the Heath Fritillary can be found on page 4 and a case of the westerly Red Admirals is solved on page 5 followed by Tim and Sandy Dingle's report on the success of their 'Garden Open' Day on page 6.

A complete listing of Conservation Management Days appears on pages 7-9. Special thanks to Sally Foster, Lee Slaughter, Tim Dingle, Paul Browning and BTCV (British Trust for Conservation Volunteers) for organising these.

David Harris, from Sussex Branch, has very kindly sent us an article which sheds more light on over-wintering Red Admirals (page 9).

Lee Slaughter writes about Current Clearwings on page 11 followed by a summary of our Field Trip reports on pages 12-14.

Derek Lord and Dave Simcox from the Large Blue committee keep us updated and write to thank those involved in all aspects of the Large Blue introduction programme in North Cornwall (see pages 15 and 16). Also on page 16, Barry Ofield writes to John Worth, our County Recorder, regarding an interesting site for the Grayling at Delabole.

An identification workshop separating the Common Blue, Brown Argus and Silver-studded Blue appears on pages 17 and 18 and finally, there is a report by John Worth on the latest distribution map of the Small Pearl-bordered Fritillary (page 19).

**Please note there is an addendum to the last issue (see page 18). Please may I remind members that our AGM will again be held at the Cornwall Wildlife Trust Headquarters, Allet but the usual date has been changed to Saturday 19th January 2008 (details at the bottom of the following page and enclosed reminder slip).** A map of how to get there can be found on page 18 of issue 35. My apologies for not re-printing it here but space will not allow. ~ Ed.

## Chairman's Report - Autumn 2007

**Y**o! Well that was the summer that started with a drought in March and April, followed by a May that was just about ok, and then June and July, which turned into 6 weeks of floods. Recently we have had a 4-week spell without rain; consequently butterfly numbers are way down on last year's autumn. This year has never really got going for most species and we have all struggled at times to find anything flying in numbers. The following is a quick summary:

**Pearl- bordered Fritillaries** did very well in the early period at the **Monkey Sanctuary** where they were first seen by Leon Truscott on the 9th April. **Gooseham Mill** also fared well. The weather at **Fellover Brake** soon after, was not so good, but numbers were ok. I checked **Treslea Downs** twice and didn't see any **Pearl- bordered Fritillaries**. I wonder whether anyone else checked this year. The **Bunny's Hill** colony has moved across the road to an area that has been

burned twice in the last 7 years. My personal opinion is that this proves the **Pearl-bordered Fritillary** is basically a bare ground species and does not appreciate gentle treatment. **Bunny's Hill** is changing, this can be seen in the fact that **Dingy Skippers**, another bare ground species, have disappeared completely; however, **Small Pearl-bordered Fritillaries** are up in big numbers. (I recommend, this coming winter, a good patch-burn to improve the microstructure).

**Marsh Fritillaries** flew in poor weather and those people who were looking reported low numbers. This autumn we have been back checking webs and it is looking disastrous with webs down by a factor of 10 or 15.

Sally Foster organised a day searching for webs at Bodmin and guess what folks? We found a new site at **Harpur Down** with six webs in situ. This was against a dismal search at **Hay Down** where only one web was found. (15 were counted last year). I suppose **Marsh Fritillaries** recently, have had good years, but this year it was the wettest early summer period since records began - a disastrous situation and this must have hit the young caterpillars and eggs.

According to Barry Ofield, **Heath Fritillaries** did well at **Luckett's** two sites, but we must keep up some habitat management this winter and pulling Rosebay Willowherb early next summer.

**Clouded Yellows** were only seen in ones - and not even twos. **Painted Ladies** were rare and very patchy. Species such as the **Humming - bird Hawk-moth** were hardly seen at all. Let us just hope for a more normal weather pattern next year!

Maggie, our Secretary, and Phil Boggis are working hard in the background seeking to get results by writing letters to people in positions of authority so that they will at least ask us for our opinions on matters of importance for moth and butterfly welfare.

In this autumn period, we have been quite busy recording **Marsh Fritillary** webs. I can tell you that numbers at all known sites are down by a factor of 10 or 15. It could be that many died in the cold, wet, early egg/young caterpillar period. Let us hope for good luck with the weather to recover numbers next year. It just goes to show that after all of our efforts, the weather plays a big part in the world of nature and we have no control over it. If global warming is set to fall upon us, I think we are helpless to intervene. Insects do not survive well in wet summers!

~ Phil Harris, September 2007.

### **Cornwall Butterfly Conservation AGM**

**Venue:** Cornwall Wildlife Trust Headquarters, Allet near Truro.

**Date & Time:** Saturday 19th January 2008 at 2.30pm.

Our guest speaker will be **Tim Dingle** whose talk will be entitled:

**'Gardening for Butterflies'**

Wild flower plants will be on sale at cost price.

If you think you would like to get more involved with butterfly conservation in Cornwall why not join our committee? Please contact our Secretary or Chairman whose details can be found on the back of this issue.

## Return to Greenscoombe Wood

**D**uring 2005 and 2006 a breeding programme was undertaken to re-introduce the Heath Fritillary to Greenscoombe Wood where it was last seen in 2002. A plan was put into action and an enormous amount of work was carried out by The Duchy of Cornwall Woodlands, English Nature (now Natural England) and Butterfly Conservation National including Cornwall Branch members, to restore the site as near as possible to its former condition. The area had been affected by the planting of conifers some 25 years ago and this had the effect of restricting the growth of food plants & preventing the sun from warming the site, this being essential for the Heath Fritillary which requires plenty of warm sunlight throughout its life-cycle.



**Seen here pictured with Dr. Caroline Bulman (3rd in from the left) are from far left, Rosemary Teverson and Betsy Vulliamy. Centre right is Richard Vulliamy, Mark Beard (far right) and Geraint Richards.**

As previously reported in the Cornwall Butterfly Observer Magazine, Tom Sleep and I bred some 1500 butterflies from ten females taken, during 2005, from the Lydford site in Devon under license from English Nature. The butterflies were released in several places on the site at varying intervals throughout May and June.

On the 12<sup>th</sup> May 2007 a management meeting was held on the site to establish a programme for future work needed to maintain the habitat in good condition. Those present were Geraint Richards (Duchy Woodlands), Mark Beard (Natural England), Betsy and Richard Vulliamy, Dr. Caroline Bulman (Butterfly Conservation National), Barry Ofield and Paul Browning (Cornwall Branch, Butterfly Conservation) and Rosemary Teverson (Areas of Natural Beauty). It was a very warm, sunny day and the group was rewarded for their past efforts by the sight of newly emerged Heath Fritillaries flying in the wood, these being the first generation since the re-introduction.

Due to the warm weather in April 2007 there had been an early emergence of the Heath Fritillary and some 12 Butterflies were seen on and near to the lateral transect path and at other areas on this part of the site. The majority of these were males. On the previous day Betsy Vulliamy had discovered some larvae still feeding. She photographed them together with a chrysalis, which established that there were many more to emerge over an extended period.

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On the ridge area of the site a similar number of specimens were observed flying. This indicated that the butterfly had maintained its distribution throughout the wood. Further monitoring of numbers will be carried out by Betsy & Richard Vulliamy to establish how successful the re-introduction has been. Obviously these are early days and it will take some 3 years before the true measurement of numbers can be established, but the early signs are encouraging. The food plants are now well distributed over the area which together with continued habitat management can only bode well for the future of this beautiful butterfly.



**Heath Fritillary making an appearance at the site meeting.**

Our thanks go to all the organisations and individuals who have put an enormous amount of work into this worthwhile project - for their hard work, dedication and support over the past 4 years.

~ Barry Ofield, June 2007.

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## **A Case of the Westerly Red Admirals.**

Roger Lane, our Migrant Officer writes:

**O**n the 12th June 2007 Lee Slaughter mentioned to me that each of the migrants (c.10?) he saw that day were flying westward (Red Admirals and a Painted Lady I believe), and he wondered why. So did I since it is a most unusual direction for migrants. Today, between the clouds, I took note and of just 4 migrants, I saw 2 Red Admirals and 2 Painted Ladies, ALL flying due WEST!

The answer struck me later. All the recent batch, from early June, entered Britain via the East coast, where they were seen coming 'in-off-the-sea' from the Northeast and Southeast (500 to 1000 Painted Ladies on a fog bound Danish island!). They were then fog-bound ('clag-bound') at the British coast for a day or so. Hence the ones Lee and I saw on 12th and 13th June were probably some of those 'released' from fog on the East coast, and had crossed the country. After all no one had told them to change direction, and they seldom turn through a right angle and head north or south! Allowing time for weather conditions, especially fog, winds and rain, and also time for feeding up, it is not unreasonable to expect a few 'late-comers' from the east. Perhaps someone has an alternative solution. Whatever the case may be, sadly, the Scillies might be the last land they will ever see; nature over-produces.

Best wishes,  
Roger Lane, St. Austell.



## Garden Open Day at Tim & Sandy Dingle's - a Great Success

Tim writes:

**A**fter great concerns and annoyance that the day was forecast to be damp especially after several fine days, and a good forecast for the week, it all worked out ok. It stayed dry and calm until about 4pm, and even got quite bright, briefly. As a result we had about 40 visitors and we even had a few butterflies around. The result was that with the entrance money, plant sales and cream teas we raised £160 in aid of Cornwall Butterfly Conservation.



**Tim and Sandy's garden at Penhalt Barn House**

~ Tim Dingle, 4th June 2007.

We join in thanking Tim and Sandy for all their efforts which were well rewarded and much appreciated.

~ Ed.

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## Camberwell Beauty – An Amazing Sighting.

**A**t around 3.00pm on the 27th August 2007 at St. Enodoc Golf Course, which is behind Rock Dunes, my wife Sue and I were playing golf with some friends, when, on the 13th hole, which runs behind the Church, and from behind the green, Sue saw this large butterfly. At first, it looked like a very large Peacock but as she attracted my attention to it, she shouted that it was a Camberwell Beauty. We were just in time to see the creamy yellow edges to the wings. I do not know of any butterfly that can even come close to it as far as identification is concerned as it was about the size of a Silver-washed Fritillary. I would put my reputation on the line, as a long-time lepidopterist, to say that this was a genuine sighting and my first in the UK.

It was a very sunny day and the wind was from the northwest. The butterfly was fighting the wind and as we watched, it was carried over the sand bunker that it had been in front of, into long scrubby grass and lost from view. It was a shame that I did not have my camera with me but, with the very strong breeze, it would have been doubtful that I could have got near enough to photograph it.

My wife Susan has made some excellent sightings in the past and really knows her butterflies. Since I also saw the specimen in time to clearly see the cream wing edges looking bright against the dark brown/purple wings, I thought that this was a sound sighting and should be recorded.

~ Barry Ofield, August 2007.

As Barry points out, this magnificent butterfly, which is often larger than a Silver-washed Fritillary, is featured on the front cover.

~ Ed.

## Regarding the Camberwell Beauty report, Roger Lane, our Migrant Officer, writes the following:

A normal pattern for those coming from Norway and Sweden are that they are seen in eastern England. During the last influx (whenever), dozens were seen in the East, but still two managed to reach Cornwall: Landulph 'Marsh' and one, captured on the Lizard, by Robin Howard. He used his hat (the only means of capture at his disposal) as it flew past his Land Rover!

Since there was a stable anticyclone over Great Britain for almost 2 weeks, bringing north east winds from Norway and Sweden etc., there seems no reason why Barry's could not have reached Cornwall 'by its own steam'. I was expecting 1 or 2 reports that week, and Barry's was 'on cue' this year. (I wonder if he knew of the anticyclone?)

The weather was set fair for one or more records and indeed with those long term north easterlies, I'm surprised we didn't get more - just weren't seen that 's all! There is the possibility of captive release, though natural conditions could hardly have been better.

UK Leps report:

6 in Norfolk

2 in Essex

1 in Middlesex.

1 in Cornwall (Barry Ofield's)

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## CONSERVATION MANAGEMENT DAYS

The following conservation management days are organised by CBC and also included are days organised by Tom David from the British Trust for Conservation Volunteers (BTCV). Tom has taken over from Jess Tatton-Browne. Last year Jess worked on a project, which targeted the Marsh Fritillary and the Pearl-bordered Fritillary on Bodmin Moor. Tom is continuing this very successful work and he would be most appreciative of any local BC members help and advise on the days listed. The days that Tom is organising are clearly marked. Please contact BTCV for any further details. Transport for BTCV days is available from Falmouth and times are given below. CBC days have a contact for each of the days so please ring beforehand to find out if food will be provided etc. These days have been organised well in advance so there is a chance that the odd date may change so please check before the day.

All BTCV's conservation days are on their website. There is a link on our own website under events section.

Help on **20th October 2007** at **De Lank** would be most appreciated. This area was very good for the Pearl-bordered but has deteriorated badly in the last few years.

Later in the year these dates and more will be on our website so check it out for any changes or additions.

continued over.....

**Tuesday 9th October 2007**

**BTCV - Goodbye to Gorse organised by Tom David.**

We will be clearing gorse from South Penquite to open up rides and improve the local habitat for butterflies.

Transport available from Falmouth Green Centre, Union Road, Falmouth & Truro railway.

Meeting time: **9:00 hrs.** Finish time: **16:00 hrs**

Contact: Betty Levene  
01209 891360

[B.Levene@btcv.org.uk](mailto:B.Levene@btcv.org.uk)

**Tuesday 16th October 2007**

**BTCV- South Penquite Scrubbing organised by Tom David.**

We will be clearing rides to improve the habitat for rare fritillary butterflies.

Transport available from Falmouth Green Centre, Union Road, Falmouth & Redruth railway.

Meeting time: **9:00 hrs.** Finish time: **16:00 hrs.**

Contact:

Betty Levene  
01209 891360

[B.Levene@btcv.org.uk](mailto:B.Levene@btcv.org.uk)

**Saturday 20th October 2007**

**Devegetating De Lank organised by Tom David.**

We will be clearing vegetation from around the disused railway line in order to improve habitat for the Pearl Bordered Fritillary butterfly.

Transport available from Falmouth Green Centre, Union Road, Falmouth & Truro railway.

Meeting time: **10:00 hrs.** Finish time: **16:00 hrs.**

Contact:

Betty Levene  
01209 891360

**Tuesday 23rd October 2007**

**CBC - Gentle removal of an area of gorse at Church Hay, St. Breward.**

Organised by Sally Foster 01736 753259.

Start time at site: **10:00 hrs.** End time at site: **15:00 hrs.**

We will be working to remove limited gorse from the site to improve habitat for the Marsh Fritillary butterfly.

Transport available from Falmouth Green Centre, Union Road, Falmouth & Truro railway – Contact for transport:

Betty Levene  
01209 891360 [B.Levene@btcv.org.uk](mailto:B.Levene@btcv.org.uk)

**Thursday 8th November 2007**

**CBC - De Lank Quarry: important work for Pearl-bordered Fritillary**

-clearing rides and breeding areas. Organised by Sally Foster 01736 753259.



Start time at site: **10:00 hrs.** End time at site: **15:00 hrs.**

For Health & Safety we need to supply numbers and share cars for the quarry owners so please ring in advance. In addition we hope we might be able to do some food so will also need numbers!

**Thursday 6th December 2007**

**CBC – Bunny's Hill: more important work for the Pearl-bordered Fritillary.** Organised by Tim Dingle 01208 265645

Start time at site: **10:00 hrs.** End time at site: **15:00 hrs.**

**Saturday 12th January 2008**

**CBC – Deer Park: Very important work for the rare Heath Fritillary.** This butterfly is responding well to all the good work but we must keep up the pressure! Organised by Lee Slaughter 01726 817505

Start time at site: **10:30 hrs.** at the little car park. End time at site: **15:30 hrs.**

**Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2008**

**CBC – St. Breward:** Work at a new site at the small quarry in St. Breward and nearby land in the Camel Valley. This work is aimed to enhance the very small population of the Pearl-bordered Fritillary at this site and extend suitable habitat with the long term objective to provide a butterfly link to the Fellover Brake populations. Contact Sally Foster 01736 753259

Start time at site: **11:00 hrs.** End time at site: **15:00 hrs.**

Transport from Falmouth may be available. Please check closer to the date.

**Thursday 7th February 2008**

**CBC – Goss Moor : The turn of the Grizzled Skipper.** Only two sites remain in Cornwall. The day will help save this site – organised by Paul Browning 01736 763677

Start time at site: **10:00 hrs.** End time at site: **15:00 hrs.**

**Saturday 17th May 2008**

**CBC – Deer Park: further very important work for the rare Heath Fritillary.** Organised by Lee Slaughter 01726 817505

Start time at site: **11:00 hrs.** End time at site: **16:00 hrs.**

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**Re-print from the Sussex Branch – by kind permission:  
Over-wintering Red Admiral Butterflies.**

**I**n 2006 the normal return migration of the Red Admiral was delayed, probably due to record-breaking high temperatures in September. On 21st October, large numbers of the butterflies were at last seen heading south into the teeth of a gale (K. Pritty, pers. comm.). These strong southerly and south-westerly winds continued to blow for a further week and by November it was obvious that a considerable body of the migration was now 'banked up' on the south coast. There is also some evidence that some butterflies actually flew in as immigrants between 1st to 3rd November. Perhaps, unsurprisingly, there was a lot of late

laying with females seen ovipositing, until at least the 2nd December, on nettles that remained healthy due to the lack of frosts.

On the 23rd December, following several days of frosts, caterpillars from these hatchlings were inspected and found to be alive. By the 27th January, despite storms and snow, a handful of the original sixty-five caterpillars continued to survive and by now new growth was commencing at the base of the nettles.

Meanwhile, in Dublin, Frank Smyth was also finding large numbers of over-wintering caterpillars. In Cornwall, Roger Lane was recording many newly emerged butterflies, the first hatching on the 14th January and at least ten by the 16th. In Peterborough, Red Admirals were seen mating and egg laying in February. The exceptionally warm winter continued.

Back in Sussex, the first (garden) pupa was seen on the 7th March and by the 27th March, following a warm weekend, caterpillars, which until now had been well wrapped in tight small tents at or just above ground level (to control temperature?), began to move up the nettles and adopt the 'familiar' Red Admiral tent mode. Being now easy to see, it became apparent that numbers of survivors were high up the whole of the Ouse Valley and by the 31st March, four pupae and thirteen larvae were under observation and this number grew as April progressed. From the grand tally of seventy-two caterpillars, fifty-six chrysalides were formed of which fifty-three butterflies successfully emerged, the first on the 7th April and the last on the 5th May. No evidence was found of parasitic wasps etc. Hibernating caterpillars were seen in Newhaven, Rodmell, Northease, Iford, Swanborough and Piddinghoe and there are records from other parts of Sussex (Mike Turner, pers. comm.).

It seems that over-wintering of caterpillars is a relatively recent phenomenon in Sussex, commencing about 1995/1996, but 2006/2007 is unprecedented in terms of the numbers reaching maturity. A warm microclimate is an absolute necessity for their success and if the weather is equally favourable this autumn, please keep your eyes open and monitor nettle beds in the shelter of south-facing walls and buildings, thick hedges or ditches. Happy hunting!

David Harris ~ Sussex Branch.

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## **Sandy Harman asks ... The Summer of 2007... how was it for you?**

**F**or me, it was the worst I can remember, with cancelled trips and, as a result, I saw fewer species of butterfly and in much smaller numbers. It started so well, with 'high summer' in April and then the rains! On one occasion I had to keep the camera dry whilst squelching back to the car, soaked to the skin! Perhaps I was unlucky, not going to the right places, or at the most suitable time. Maybe, but I do not really think so. However, I have the good fortune to be able to refer back to video footage of earlier, much better summers, to cheer myself up this winter, and to remind me of what I hope to observe next year. During the past five years I have produced a number of versions of a film entitled 'Butterfly Days'. Earlier ones were on tape and the latest as a DVD. These I have sold with all of the profit being donated to Butterfly Conservation. To those of you who have purchased a copy,

very many thanks, you enabled me to pass on over £2,300 to various Butterfly Conservation branches.

Version 5, on a DVD, is still available, price £8.00 and if you would like a copy of this evocation of a proper summer, just send a cheque payable to S. Harman at 31, Upper Manor Road, Milford, Godalming, GU8 5J W and a copy will be sent to you by return. The 90 minute DVD contains images of 58 species of butterfly that can be seen in Britain, many in stunning and detailed close-ups. Some are shown in the four main stages of their life cycle. The butterflies are identified by discreet captions, as are most of the other subjects. The latter include moths, dragonflies, birds and wild flowers. All accompanied by the natural sounds of the countryside. So, how was it for you? Were you more fortunate than I was? Did you enjoy long hours of sunny weather, with hordes of butterflies? I hope you did, and I wished I was there.

PS. Don't forget, for every DVD purchased, I will pass on to Butterfly Conservation at least £6.00 -- every little helps a very worthy cause and, why not buy one for a friend, and spread the word.

**Editor's note:** Sandy asked for our treasurer's address to pass on £6.20 because at least one CBC member has already purchased the DVD. West Country Branch have received in excess of £290 from proceeds of the sale of the DVD. I cannot personally vouch for the quality and content; however, I have spoken to West Country Branch and they thoroughly recommend the DVD.

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## Current Clearwings Mating - Attracted to Pheromone Lure.

Lee Slaughter writes:

These two specimens were photographed on the 17th June in my father's garden at Lostwithiel. They were attracted to the pheromone lure, 'tip'. They just suddenly appeared, and despite the fact that I was still getting used to a new camera, I was fortunate enough to capture this shot of two mating before they flew away.

The moth is on the wing in June and July, inhabiting domestic and market gardens, allotments, etc. It is fairly common in England and Wales but less so in Scotland and Ireland. The wingspan is between 18 and 22 mm.



Photo © L. Slaughter.

~ Lee Slaughter, June 2007.

## Reports on a Selection of 2007 Field Trips.

**Valency Valley - 13th May 2007.** Rains like you have never seen before! The village flooded so we cancelled. Although I did get a phone call from a local member who saw 8 or 9 **Pearl-bordered Fritillaries** flying in the lower field the next day so that is hopeful in view of the weather during the flight period.

**Gwithian Green - 19th May 2007.** Sunny periods and a good turn out of people for a lovely walk around the Green and then out to the dunes. All the usual species were seen including **Brown Argus**. A beautiful caterpillar of the **Scarlet Tiger moth** (identified by John Gregory) and a large Bluebottle (*Calliphora vomitoria*) that had amazingly been blown, by the wind, across the dunes and had managed to spear itself right through the throat on the sharp end of some Marram grass. Its legs were flailing in the air but firmly speared for the entire group to examine. After photographs were taken of this once in a lifetime accident, it was released, apparently in fair condition as it simply flew away - amazing!

**Tregonhay Reserve (Carbis Moor) - 2nd June 2007.** The weather was disappointing – overcast but not raining as it was further west. About eleven of us turned up with a strong contingent from John Gregory's family! No **Marsh Fritillaries** were seen and calls into question whether they still exist here. The most abundant species was a small moth known as **Glyphipterix thrasonella** (it does not have an English name). They were seen in their 100's. The caterpillar stage is believed to feed in the stems of *Juncus* spp. Only two species of butterfly were seen namely, **Common Blue** and **Speckled Wood** – most disappointing!



**Breney Common - 9th June 2007.** This turned out to be a wonderful sunny afternoon and well attended.

Silver Hook, Breney Common, 9th June 2007

Photo © P. H. Boggis



A number of **Marsh Fritillaries** and **Small Pearl-bordered Fritillaries** were seen along with an interesting little moth called the **Silver Hook** - after the bright silver marking in the centre of its forewing. (See photo above). The caterpillars feed on sedges and coarse grasses including Tufted Hair-grass. The wingspan is between 22 and 26 mm. Another interesting observa-

tion was that of a sawfly larva whose head was entirely covered with small red mites. (See photograph above).



**Deer Park Wood and Greenscoombe Wood – 16th June 2007.**

Despite a reasonable weather forecast, it finally turned out very wet indeed with only a brief spell of sunny weather during the middle of the afternoon when most butterfly observations were made. Richard Vulliamy kindly showed us around the site commenting on all the clearance work that had been done and showing us where the major concentrations of **Heath Fritillaries** had been found after re-introduction. They seem to have moved up into the cleared valley sides. Common Cow-wheat, the **Heath Fritillaries** main food-plant, is found everywhere in this woodland complex;



however, at Deer Park, Ribwort Plantain is the preferred food-plant. Carlton Crouch and I spent quite some considerable time getting the right angle on the Elephant Hawk-moth (pictured left). Butterflies observed were:

**Large Skipper, Meadow Brown, Heath Fritillary, Red Admiral and Marbled White.**

Moths seen were: **Scarlet Tiger, Marbled White - spot, Large Yellow Underwing, Silver Y, Sandy Carpet, Elephant Hawk-moth, Lead-coloured Pug, Emperor Moth**

(eggs), leaf mine of *Emmetia marginata* on

Bramble, *Mompha raschkiella* – empty

mine on Rosebay Willowherb, *Schreckensteinia festaliella* – feeding place on Bram-

ble, *Crambus pascuella*, *Buccatrix frangutella*, *Nemapogon cloacella*, *Parornix devoniella* – leaf mine on Hazel, *Celypha lacunana*, *Eucosma hohewartiana*, *Perinephela lancealis*, *Opsibotys fuscalis*, *Psyche casta* – larval case with caterpillar inside on Bramble, *Incurvaria pectinea* – feeding place on Hazel. My thanks to John Gregory for these moth records.

**Perransands - 23rd June 2007.** As usual there was a good turn out to this midsummer meeting. The weather held good until later in the afternoon when it became overcast, but not before a good selection of species were observed at this 'Mecca' for wildlife. Approximately 15 of us met at the Rose entrance to the dunes where we then proceeded down the footpath towards the dune area. (See below).



A wide angle view taken from Rose, looking north to Penhale Camp, 23rd June 2007.

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Butterflies noted in order of observance were, **Small Tortoiseshell**, **Red Admiral**, **Ringlet**, **Small Heath**, **Silver Studded Blue** (not in the profusion found in recent years). **Meadow Brown**, **Small Skipper**, **Dingy Skipper** (2nd brood), **Common Blue**, **Dark Green Fritillary**, **Speckled Wood**. Moths seen were, **Scarlet Tiger**, **Yellow Shell**, **Drinker** (caterpillar), **White Satin Moth**, **Grass Eggar** (caterpillar), **Cinnabar**, **Humming-bird Hawk-moth**, **Mother Shipton**, **Common Carpet**, ***Cryso-teuchia culmella***, ***Pyrausta cespitalis***, ***Pyrausta cingulata***, ***Agriphila straminella***, ***Homoesa sinuella***, ***Bryotropha desertella***.



A particularly good, fresh specimen of the **Scarlet Tiger**, often to be seen on the dunes. This example was found by Malcolm Lee in the hedge-row along the roadside near to the village of Rose at the entrance to the dune complex. Photo © P. H. Boggis.

**Porthgwarra - 7th July 2007.** This trip turned out to be a very hot experience indeed; I even had a touch of heat stroke that evening. The trip proved to us all that **Silver-studded Blues** are a big part of this landscape with probably over 200 seen across the whole site, flying right down to the last piece of grass on these windswept cliffs. We also had the first **Peacocks** of the summer as well as **Grayling**, **Wall Brown**, **Brown Argus**, **Small Coppers**, **Large White** and **Small Heaths**. Moth records from John Gregory included amongst others, **July Belle**, **Grass Emerald**, **Silver Y**, caterpillars of ***Depressaria pastinacella*** **Lime-speck Pug**, ***Cryso-teuchia culmella***, **Brown Silver-line**, ***Glyphipterix thrasonella***, ***Homoesa sinuella***, ***Dolicharthria punctalis***, **Five-spot Burnet**, ***Pyrausta despicata***, 1st instar caterpillar of the **Red Admiral** and a fantastic **Rose Chafer beetle** (***Cetonia aurata***) this must be the most westerly record for England. The beetle flew in and landed right in front of our happy crew for photographs!

**Gwithian Dunes - 15th July 2007.** A very dull day brought very few butterflies out but a couple of **Dark Green Fritillaries** were seen; however, the previous week had produced scores. ~ Phil Harris and Phil Boggis, September 2007.

## Large Tortoiseshell Sighting.

Prof. John Wachter reports:

**T**he butterfly was seen on the 19th September on a fine calm day at around midday in the beer garden of the Red River Inn at Gwithian, map reference SW 587412. The beer garden is on the other side of the road from the inn and surrounded by trees some of which are Elms, about 25-30 feet in height and quite mature. The butterfly settled on one of the lower branches where John was able to observe it for about 2 minutes whilst it was sunning itself before flying up into the



upper branches out of view.

John observes that it was rather late for this species because the butterfly, after emergence in August, usually hibernates immediately, but he thinks in this instance the recent fine weather awoke it from hibernation.

---

## News from the North Cornwall Large Blue Site.

Derek Lord from the National Trust writes:

**T**he winter management went well with a good amount of gorse burning and grass grazing. In addition, groups of volunteers managed to clear the leggy gorse by hand and with bow saws. Eden did a great job of producing over



**Catherine Larman and son - James seen here putting a match to some gorse at the large Blue site. Others giving a helping hand were Sebastian Larman, Jack Stratfold, Derek Lord and Kevin Sharp.**

*so bad this year - a year that had the promise of being something special in terms of numbers seen. Let's hope that the main effect of this was the lack of sightings on transect and that butterflies were nipping out during short periods of sunny weather to lay eggs! Perhaps we'll have a clearer picture once we have the egg count results from Dave.*

Dave Simcox replies:

*Can I please re-iterate Derek's thanks for your sterling efforts once again monitoring Large Blues and other species on this wonderful site. I have not been able to go through Morag McCracken's egg counts in detail yet but from a very quick calculation I reckon that there were about 1600 eggs laid this year which is a record for the Cornish site. This is particularly pleasing as numbers across other sites have*  
continued over ....

1,000 large, healthy Thyme plants which Kevin Sharp and the team duly planted. (This year we are going to take the Eden staff around the site with the hope of spotting a Large Blue).

Derek also wrote in his e-mail:

*Just a quick note to thank you all for your help with the transect during the 2007 flight period. It's unfortunate that the weather has been*

*generally been significantly down this year owing to the spring drought and poor weather during the flight period. I can't help but think that the population in North Cornwall would have been larger still if we had had a little more sunshine in June. Thanks again to you all.*  
Dave Simcox

Earlier in the season, in response to Dave Conway's sightings of 4 or possibly 5 Large Blues on the 10th June 2007, Dave Simcox wrote the following:

*I am absolutely delighted with the news that the Large Blues are out in numbers already and well done to those who have been managing the site and a huge thank you to all of you who are carrying out the monitoring.*

*To bring you up to date on the season:*

*I saw my first Large Blue this year in Somerset on 22nd May (don't believe everything you read on the National Trust website or in the Times!) which is the earliest UK record for Large Blues ever by four days. Large Blues are currently flying on a total of 11 sites in the Cotswolds, Somerset, now Cornwall and I would expect Dartmoor shortly.*

*Many thanks for your efforts and I hope you are all feeling proud of your achievements and enjoy seeing the butterflies.*

*kind regards*

*Dave Simcox*



## **Extract from an E-mail to John Worth, our County Butterfly Recorder, from Barry Ofield:**

Dear John,

I read your comments on the Cornwall website about the Graylings at Delabole. I think the information came from Colin Selway, a local prominent bird watcher. I visited the location, which is 'on my doorstep', so to speak. It is a wonderful area of old surface granite on a 'hills and hollows' site which is covered in heather, bramble, and buddleia etc. It is only approximately 1 1/2 miles, as the crow flies, from the Large Blue site. Whilst I was there I saw two Graylings, one flying fast in the usual habit and one which settled on some Heather, also there were all of the more common species, Meadow Brown, Gatekeeper, Ringlet, Red Admirals and a good colony of Common Blues along with Six-spot Burnet pupae and imagos.

It is a very good environment and I will keep visiting it throughout the season to see what else appears. I was unaware that the spot existed until Colin told me!

Hope this information helps.

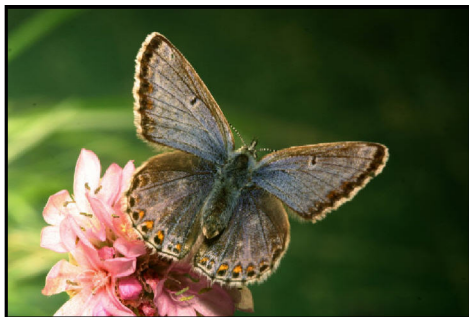
Regards

Barry Ofield

## Identification Workshop - Separating the Common Blue, Brown Argus and Silver-studded Blue.



**Brown Argus female.** Note the total lack of any blue basal suffusion in both sexes. It is generally smaller than the Common Blue and has much more pronounced sub-marginal orange lunules in complete series.



**Common Blue female.** The fore and hind-wing are suffused with blue to a greater or lesser degree. This example has rather more blue than usual.



**Common Blue Male.** Note the thin black margin just within the white fringe compared with the broad black margin of the the male Silver-studded Blue shown below.



**Silver- studded Blue female.** Note how much the usual blue basal suffusion has extended over much of the forewings with the orange lunules almost absent from the forewing but quite distinct on the hindwing. Fresh specimens are shown in the photograph below.



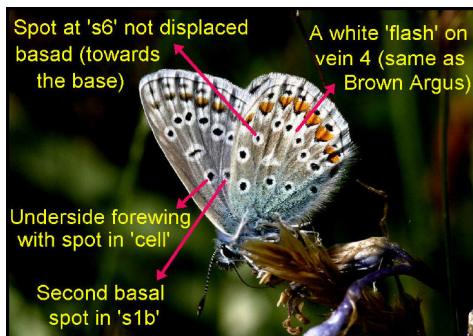
**Silver-studded Blue male.** As stated in the caption above, note the broader black margin within the white fringe compared with the thin black margin of the Common Blue. The Silver-studded Blue is generally smaller in size.



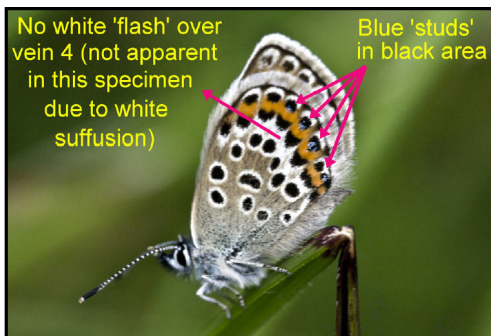
**Fresh specimens of the silver-studded Blue (female).** Note the basal blue suffusion and the orange lunules are almost absent.



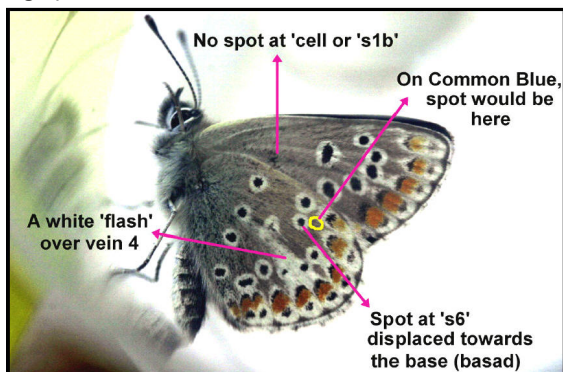
Continued from page 17.



Common Blue underside showing the two basal spots in 'cell' and 's1b'. Note that the Brown Argus has these completely absent (see below). The white flash is missing from the Silver-studded Blue (see photo to the right).



Silver-studded Blue. Note the silver-blue studs. Unfortunately they are sometimes absent! No other resident blue has these and is the defining characteristic. The white 'flash' is not a characteristic of this butterfly.



Brown Argus underside. Note the complete absence of spots at 'cell' and 's1b' which is diagnostic of this species. Also note the white 'flash' at vein 4, absent in the Silver-studded Blue. Spot at 's6' displaced towards the base is also characteristic.

For a description of the principle areas of a butterfly's wings including the veins, see *A Field Guide to the Butterflies of Britain and Europe* by Higgins & Riley, ISBN 0 00 219241 1 published by HarperCollins where 'cell' and 's1 b' are fully described in the introduction on page 14. All photographs are the copyright of the author.  
~ Phil Boggis, September 2007.

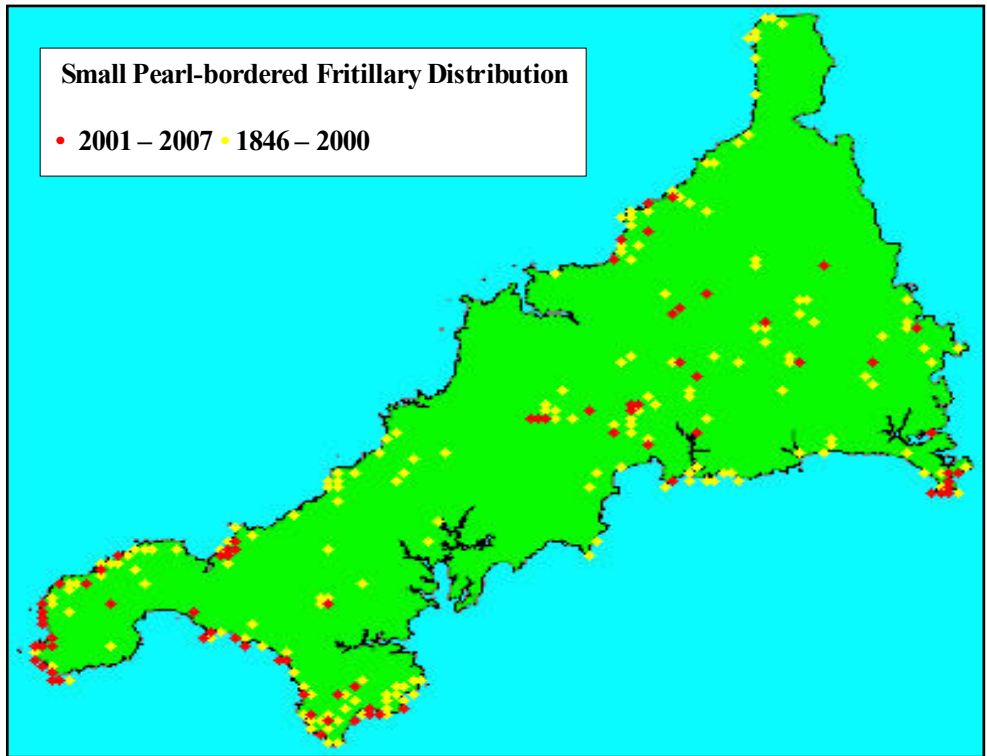
## Addendum to the Last Issue on Page 9 - A Report from Roger Lane.

Three lines up from the bottom, please delete: **1 Marbled White (a month early)**. This was an erroneous record by Roger and a mistake by me. Originally submitted as M. Brown (Meadow Brown), your editor, being a 'moth man', always reads M. Brown as Marbled Brown (a moth). Re-reading the report, I then went into 'butterfly mode' and thought, no this should be Marbled White (which would indeed have been a month early and I believe is found at Rock! However; Roger Lane reliably informs me that this record from him was totally erroneous and should be deleted. Apologies from both of us.

~ Ed.

## The Latest Small Pearl-bordered Fritillary Distribution Map.

**T**he red dots show one km. squares that have had Small Pearl-bordered Fritillaries recorded in them since the year 2000. The yellow dots are km. squares that have had the Small Pearl-bordered Fritillary recorded prior to



2001. It does not necessarily mean that the Small Pearl-bordered Fritillary is no longer resident in the yellow squares - it may still be there but no one has recorded it. For details of the Small Pearl-bordered Fritillary please see:

<http://butterfly-conservation.org/679-3211/small-pearl-bordered-fritillary.html>

Notes:

- ◆ Number of records = 1071 - refers to all the Small Pearl-bordered Fritillary records held on the ERICA database.
- ◆ Number of 1 km = 222 - refers to all the one km. squares with records for the Small Pearl-bordered Fritillary.
- ◆ % of total 1 km sq. = 5.5% - refers to the percentage of one km. squares where the Small Pearl-bordered Fritillary has been recorded in Cornwall since 1846.  
~ John Worth (Butterfly Recorder for Cornwall).

For recording forms please email: [jowannospam@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:jowannospam@tiscali.co.uk) First remove 'nospam' from the address.

**The opinions expressed in the articles of this newsletter are not necessarily those of the Cornwall Branch or Butterfly Conservation.**

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**Cornwall Branch Website: [www.cornwall-butterfly-conservation.org.uk](http://www.cornwall-butterfly-conservation.org.uk)**

**Cornwall Butterfly Conservation Yahoo! Groups:**

**<http://uk.groups.yahoo.com/group/cornwall-butterfly-conservation>**

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