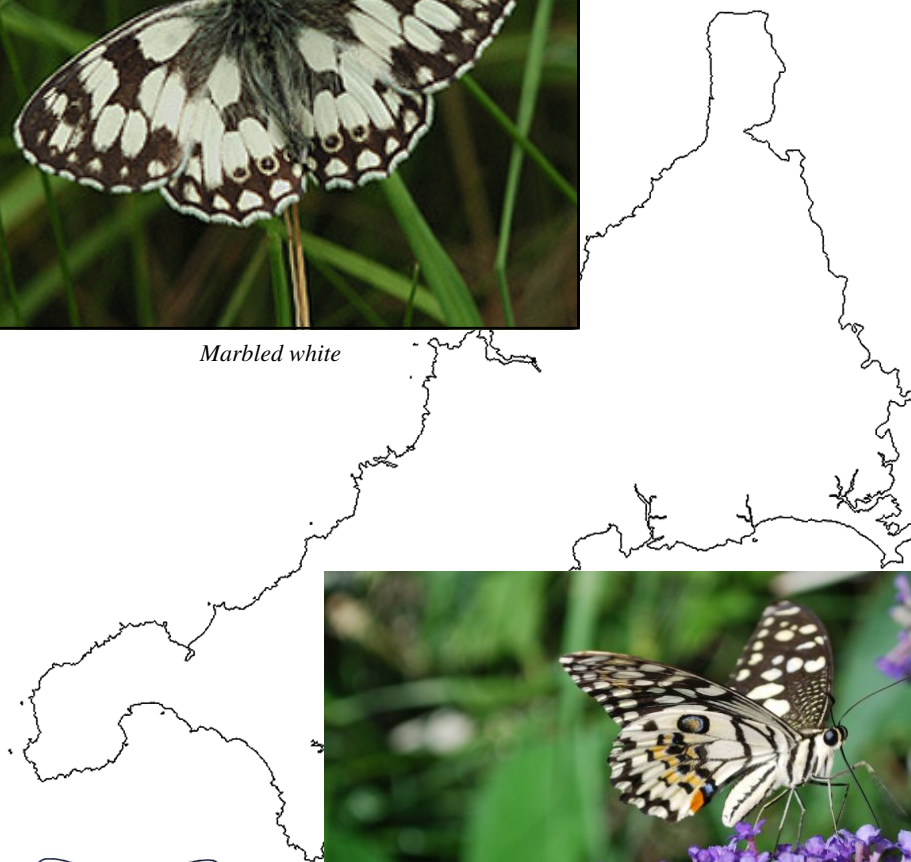


The Butterfly Observer

Cornwall Butterfly Conservation Part 2 of Newsletter No.47



Marbled white



**Butterfly
Conservation**

Autumn 2010



Do you know what this butterfly is? See page 21 for the answer

The Barn House Butterflies

We live just above the cliffs to the south of Bude. From our drive we have a magnificent view over Bude Bay and on to Lundy. In the other direction is the steep drop into the glorious Millook Valley. Our 10 acre field slopes down towards Millook, and is the area we manage for butterflies.

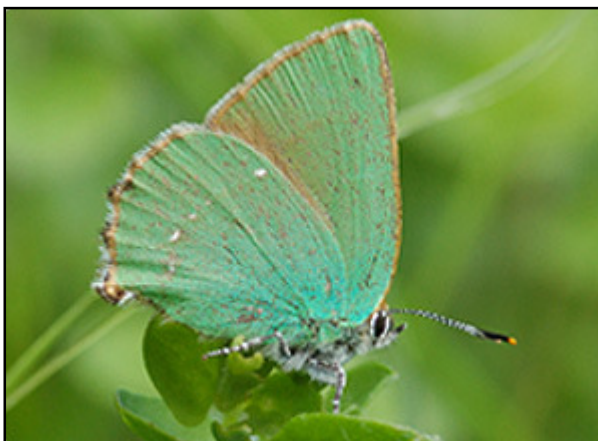
The field is divided in two by a fence. When we moved here 15 years ago, the field had been reseeded, presumably on the basis that it would make it better for sale! Luckily, only the top part was really successful, hence the fence. Since then no fertilizer has been put on the area. Gradually the whole lot is reverting to flower rich meadow.

The top section is managed as a hay meadow. Each year it is allowed to grow up and a neighbour cuts it for hay, but



Dingy Skipper (courtesy of the BC website) - one of the many species of butterfly the Dingles encourage

not until August. Most farmers would be aghast at this but my neighbour seems happy with the resulting hay. Occasionally he puts sheep in on the aftermath. This section of the field is now becoming a mass of marsh birdsfoot trefoil and knapweed and the delicate pale flax. The hay rattle from the bottom field has now spread up through it, helping to reduce the grass. Actually, the grasses are good, with plenty of sweet vernal grass, crested dog's tail and timothy, which is good news for the meadow browns and ringlets.



Green Hairstreak (courtesy of the BC website)

The bottom section drops away into the scrub and wood of a spur of the Millook Woods. The grassy section is managed as grazing pasture. A few Red Ruby cows from Bodmin Moor have their seaside holiday here in the autumn and early winter.

The Butterfly Observer - Autumn 2010

They graze down the summer growth of birdsfoot trefoil, Knapweed, hay rattle, hemp agrimony and purple loosestrife, as well as the grass of course. This section has the most common blues and marbled whites, as well as meadow browns and ringlets.

The bank of scrub below this is the main area of work for me. I, with a few friends, cut out some of the gorse, blackthorn and bramble each winter. These open areas, along with the paths, attract small copper, dingy skipper, small and large skipper. I occasionally see green hairstreak here too.

I have a sheet of tin on a bank and in summer I often find slow-worms under

it and, occasionally, an adder!

The bottom section is woodland edge mainly. Here I keep paths open and cut out a few little glades, with a seat to enjoy the silver-washed fritillaries, commas and, of course, speckled wood. In July, from the seat, I can get neck ache peering up at the tops of the oaks to glimpse the purple hair-streaks.

It seems a lot of work, but the reward is the pleasure I and any visitors get from seeing the range of butterflies as well as the flowers. Did I mention the twayblades and broad-leaved helleborines?

Editorial

Your Committee has recognised that the costs in printing a full colour Observer three times a year is beyond our financial resources. As a result, we have experimented with placing an interim version on our website, indeed, an earlier edition, which was numbered Part 1 of No.47, was placed on the website to update Members as to what had happened and what would happen in the second half of the summer. This edition is the traditional Observer magazine for Summer 2010.

If you wish to access the Observer in the future we are asking again that you supply us with your email address so that members can be circulated when the magazine has been put on our website. Hard copies will be sent to those who are unable to download from our site. Already a number of people have notified us of these circum-

stances but we do need to know whether there are any more members without internet facilities so that they do not lose out. Every member will continue to receive a printed edition of the Observer once a year containing the Annual Report.

It is possible you have already received a phone call regarding your email address or lack of it, but if you do not think we have this information, please contact our membership secretary, Keith Wilson (details on page 22).

Finally, some of you will be disappointed that the Observer is not printed in full colour, again, the cost is proving beyond our means. But please remember that you can see them in all their technicolour glory on the website: www.cornwall-butterfly-conservation.org.uk

Gillian Thompson & Paul Brewer
Joint Editors

First Sightings—2010

Date	Species	Place	Reporter
9-Mar-10	Brimstone	Herod Wood, Pillaton	John Nicholls
21-May-10	Brown Argus	Upton Towans	
17-May-10	Clouded Yellow	Kenidjack	Bernard Hocking
5-Mar-10	Comma	Falmouth - top of the beach	Steve Ogden
5-Mar-10	Comma	Seaton seawall, Downderry	John Nicholls
5-May-10	Common Blue	Duckpool	Steve Ogden
17-Jun-10	Dark Green Fritillary	Marsland	Gary Pilkington
21-May-10	Dingy Skipper	Goss Moor	Keith Wilson and Paul Browning
02-Jul-10	Gatekeeper	Dodman (SX004401)	Paul Brewer
19-Apr-10	Green Hair-streak	The Blouth (SW927380)	Walter Eyre (via Ian Bernallick)
9-Apr-10	Green-veined White	Rosewarne - Duchy College	per Phil Harris
23-Apr-10	Grizzled Skipper	Goss Moor (SW936598)	Paul Brewer
30-May-10	Heath Fritillary	Greenscoombe Wood	Richard Vulliamy
10-Apr-10	Holly Blue	Coast path east of Polruan	Andrew Carey
10-Apr-10	Holly Blue	Marsland	Steve Ogden
18-May-10	Large Skipper	Kenidjack	Laurie Oakes
8-Apr-10	Large White	Marsland	Steve Ogden
30-Jun-10	Marbled White	Marsland	Steve Ogden
22-May-10	Marsh Fritillary	Brenay Common	Roger Lane
26-May-10	Meadow Brown	Church Hay (SX102770)	Sally and John Foster
8-Apr-10	Orange-tip	Ponts Mill (SX0756)	Roger Lane

The Butterfly Observer - Autumn 2010

27-Apr-10	Painted Lady	near Wheal Coates (SW7050)	Ellie May (via Mark Whittaker)
17-Jan-10	Peacock	Castallack (SW4525)	Peter Rhodes
17-Apr-10	Pearl-bordered Fritillary	Murrayton	Paddy Saunders
26-Jun-10	Purple Hair-streak	Ponts Mill	Roger Lane
11-Jan-10	Red Admiral	Duchy College heated greenhouse	Phil Harris
13-Jan-10	Red Admiral	Penzance Bus Station (SW4730)	Geoff Littler
20-Jun-10	Ringlet	Sheviok	Leon Truscott
2-Jun-10	Silver-studded Blue	Penhale Sands	Roger Lane and Lee Slaughter
26-Jun-10	Silver-washed Fritillary	Ponts Mill	Roger Lane
23-Apr-10	Small Copper	500 m south of Pendeen Watch	Bernard Hocking
17-May-10	Small Heath	Treskillings Downs	Roger Lane
1-May-10	Small Pearl-bordered Fritillary	Marsland	Steve Ogden
11-Jun-10	Small Skipper	Penhale Sands	Dave Thomas
13-Jan-10	Small Tortoiseshell	Polgigga (SW3723)	anon (via Sennen Cove website)
7-Apr-10	Small White	St. Blazey (SX0655)	Roger Lane
15-Mar-10	Speckled Wood	Penzance	Frances (via Sennen Cove website)
19-Apr-10	Wall	Manare Point (SW933389)	Ian Bennallick
	Awaiting Grayling		

Data provided by John Worth, Cornwall Butterfly Conservation's Recorder.

A quick look at last year's records would appear to indicate that recorded first sightings, this year, are earlier than 2009. For example the first sighting in 2009 for:

- Small-pearl Bordered Fritillary 20th April at Minadew
- Marsh Fritillary 30th May 2009 at Breney

CBC Field Trip Reports and Moth Group Meetings

Greenscoombe Wood 12th June 2010

One of the better days of the year as far as the weather was concerned. The first three weeks of June were fine and sunny – just what the butterflies needed and the fortunes of the Heath Fritillary, with decent dry weather in the spring, aided a bumper emergence. I well remember the enthusiasm of Richard Vulliamy, our leader for the day, leading us carefully into a clearing on the upper reaches of this wooded valley to find Heath Fritillaries literally everywhere you looked – what a sight! We all just stood there in silent amazement. I remember thinking, 'How many places in England would you be able to catch such a site as this!' One or two of us remained, not wanting to leave this glorious spectacle. One or two of us do find climbing the steep inclines on this site rather wearisome but this time it was well worth it. Again, thanks to Richard for leading us through this site and elaborating on the good fortunes of this butterfly, one of Britain's rarest. My impression is that with the clearance work over the past few years, the site has benefited from an increase in both population and species diversity –

very encouraging. Species seen included: Green-veined White, Heath Fritillary, Common Blue Meadow Brown, Speckled Wood Small Copper, Large White, Large Skipper and Brimstone. Moths seen were: Brown Silver-line, *Micropterix calthella*, *Opisibotys fuscalis* (there is a large population on this site), Silver Y, *Agapeta hamana*, Humming-bird Hawkmoth, Orange moth (spotted resting up in the leaves of a tree), and Speckled Yellow.



Heath Fritillary, Greenscoombe Wood,
Lockett, 12th June 2010.

Richard finally took us over to the western slopes of the reserve to see how the Heath Fritillary was faring there. Although found in lesser numbers, I felt that it had taken a foothold along an upper ride and seemed to be doing well. The photograph above was taken in this section of the wood. Lee Slaughter informs me that a 10 year management plan is now in operation at Greenscoombe Wood for the Heath Fritillary Butterfly and where management work had begun, there has already been an improvement in the numbers of adults seen by a number of people who attended our field trip. Richard Vulliamy says that good numbers were seen during June 2010.

CBC Field Trip Reports and Moth Group Meetings

Penhale Sands 19th June 2010

One of the highlights of the year is our trip to Penhale Sands to discover afresh the delights of the thousands of Silver-studded Blues that can be seen here at the height of summer each year. This site always thrills us as we are continually amazed at its species richness. Every year we report that thousands of Silver-studded Blues have been seen and this year was no exception. This site must be one of the best in Europe for this butterfly. Our group set off from the Rose village footpath and we wound our way towards the St. Piran's Cross seen in the distance, which is where one of the main colonies of this butterfly exists. First port of call was to photograph a pair of Dingy Skippers in cop. This took quite a time as there



A rather worn female Dingy Skipper is here seen in cop. The rest of the butterfly looks reasonably fresh so perhaps a predator has attacked it at some stage.

Photo: © P. H. Boggis.

were a number of keen photographers amongst us even though the butterflies were worn and looking rather tatty. As we arrived at the main population site, we soon discovered the delights of seeing so many of these delightful little butterflies which were crowding together to nectar on the Ragged Robin.

Also within this marshy area a lone Dark Green Fritillary was discovered nectaring, so we took the opportunity of taking some more photographs.

In the next article there is a picture of a Five-spot Burnet and illustrated below is a Six-spot Burnet – I hope you can spot the differences.



This Six-spot Burnet is seen here resting on a cocoon of the same. Note that moths spin cocoons for themselves that contain the pupae whereas butterflies do not.

CBC Field Trip Reports and Moth Group Meetings



Kilminorth Woods 2nd July 2010

In moth-ing circles the Scarce Merveille du Jour is, I suppose, analogous to the Heath Fritillary in terms of its scarcity and occurrence in Cornwall and perhaps generally across southern England although, it has to be said, it does occur in more woodlands than the Heath Fritillary, usually within 40 kilometres of the coast. It is a Red Data Book species and one that we covet here in this county – just as we do the Heath Fritillary.

No photo gallery of butterflies seen at Penhale would be complete without one of the Dark Green Fritillary. Usually flying swiftly about the dunes, this particular specimen, resplendent on this Orchid, was more interested in nectaring. I suppose it could not resist the spread before it!

Butterflies seen included: **Common Blue**, Speckled Wood, Meadow Brown, Large Skipper, Dingy Skipper, Red Admiral, Small Heath, Silver-studded Blue, Painted Lady, Small Copper and Dark Green Fritillary (11 species). Moths included: Cinnebar and Cinnebar caterpillar, Lackey caterpillar, Common Carpet, Drinker caterpillar, *Opsibotys fuscalis*, cases and caterpillar of *Coleophora troglodytella* on Hemp Agrimony,

Feeding places on Hogweed of *Epermenia chaerophyllella* and *Agonopterix heracliana*, caterpillars of *Depressaria pastinacella* also in Hogweed, feeding place of *Mompha epilobiella* on Hairy Willowherb, *Crambus pascuella*, *Byratropha desertella* (or similar sp.), Speckled Yellow and finally, feeding places of *Yponomeuta padella* on Blackthorn. My thanks to John Gregory for the records.

As the photograph shows, it is a beautiful moth with its pale green wings with sharply contrasting black markings interspersed with the occasional brown blotch making it quite invisible when settled on lichen covered tree trunks. Oak, both Sessile and Pedunculate are its foodplant with, perhaps the occasional Sweet Chestnut.

During 2003 and 2004 the Cornwall Moth Group made concerted efforts to locate additional colonies in the lower reaches of the West Looe valley and this paid off when on the 25th June 2004 an individual was trapped at Lower Kilminorth woods (ref. *Lepidoptera Conservation Bulletin* no. 6, April-March 2005, p.15). The moth has been monitored every year since and although it was not recorded last year due to poor weather it has turned up

CBC Field Trip Reports and Moth Group Meetings

consistently on this site over the years since it was first discovered. Why this moth does not inhabit woodland further west has been the subject of much discussion and speculation. Clearing a few 'master' Oaks from any one of its haunts may be enough to wipe this species out, that is how tentative its foothold is in Cornwall.



Scarse Merveille Du Jour, at John Foster's mercury vapour light, Lower Kilminorth Woods, 2nd July 2010. Photo: © P. H. Boggis.

We keep a close eye on clearance

operations within Forestry Commission woods and liaise with the Forest Rangers to keep them informed of what oaks to try and leave strictly alone.

If you have a copy of 'A Field Guide to the Moths of Great Britain and Ireland' by Paul Waring and Martin Townsend, on page 304 under the descriptive head-

ing of the Scarse Merveille du Jour, and the last sentence, you can see that there is an intimation supporting what is being said here in this article.



With a wingspan of between 41 and 55mm the Privet Hawk-moth is our largest native species. Ponts Mill, St. Austell, 25th June 2010.

It reads: 'Last seen in Essex in 1936 in a wood at Rettendon, which was clear-felled and replanted soon after.' - I think that says it all.

CBC Field Trip Reports and Moth Group Meetings

Trelusback Farm 31st July 2010



Many of us were really looking forward to this event and our host Keith Wilson along with Jo and Shaun Poland and friends had been busy making it an extra special time for us as we were guided round the farm where over the years Keith has planted many trees and excavated a large lake with aquatic plants and has managed rides and fields for wildlife and butterflies – a treat to behold!

Keith believes he had the White-letter Hair-streak on his farm before he had

We were rewarded with 12 species of butterfly including: Small Tortoiseshell, Green-veined White, Large White, Com-

mon Blue, Meadow Brown, Small Skipper, Gatekeeper, Comma, Red Admiral, Peacock, Small Copper and Ringlet.

Amongst the moths seen were: *Agriphila straminella* (a common grass moth), A caterpillar on Sallow of *Epi-phyas postvittana* (an original import from Australia way back in 1933). Larval cases of *Coleophora alticolella* (a micro moth). Leaf mines on Hawthorn of

Phyllonorycter oxyacanthae and *Parornix anglicella*, Mines on Blackthorn of *Del-taornix torquillella* and *Stigmella plagio-colella*. A leaf mine of *Stigmella aurella* on Bramble and a feeding place of *Schreckensteinia festaliella* also on



Small Copper, Trelusback Farm, Stithians, West Cornwall, 31st July 2010. Photo: © P. H. Boggis.

CBC Field Trip Reports and Moth Group Meetings

Bramble. Leaf mines on Sallow of *Phyllonorycter salicicolella* and *Stigmella salicis* (some of these are small leaf-mining micro-moths, with extremely small wingspans of between 4 and 6mm!). Other moths seen included: *Nomophila noctuella* (Rush veneer which is a breeding migrant), Ruby Tiger, Common Pug, Silver Y, 5-spot Burnet, Common Carpet, *Cydia ulicetana* (*C.succedana*) – also known as the Gorse Moth because it is often seen flitting around Gorse bushes upon which the larva feed.



As soon as we embarked on one of a number of trips around the farm, we came across this larval web of the Small Tortoiseshell – good to see after several year's decline. Nearby was a solitary Red Admiral caterpillar. A fuller treatise of this species can be found at: http://www.ukbutterflies.co.uk/species.php?vernacular_name=Small%20Tortoiseshell



Eucosma cana, Small fan-footed Wave, Magpie and *Scoparia lacustrata*. This may not be a complete list but is representative of what was seen.

It was good to see a number of Five-spot Burnets. The Six-spot Burnet is common and often coastal in Cornwall, however the Five-spot Burnet is indicative of relatively undamaged wetland.

Many of the known localities of this moth are vulnerable to human interference. As such this species is a useful 'indicator species' (Smith, F.N.H. in *The Moths & Butterflies of Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly* 1997).

**Five-spot Burnet, Trelusback Farm,
Stithians, West Cornwall, 31st July 2010.
Photo: © P. H. Boggis.**

CBC Field Trip Reports and Moth Group Meetings

Kynance Cove 7th August 2010

For me this trip is on par with the Penhale field meeting as we expect to see many species and usually fine weather. I can only think of one occasion when the weather was so bad we had to cancel. I awoke to a rather damp morning but the weatherman said there would be an improvement through the day – and so it was that as I arrived at the Kynance Cove car park, the sun began to shine and with only a slight shower, the weather improved with every passing minute. As usual we adjourned for lunch at the



Tortoiseshell, Kynance Cove, 7th August 2010.
Photo: © P. H. Boggis. It is heartening to see this pretty butterfly, once so common, on the increase again



Small Pearl-bordered Fritillary (2nd generation). Kynance Cove, 7th August 2010. Photo: © P. H. Boggis.

serpentine quarry, where we watched as a Humming-bird Hawk-moth hovered over vegetation looking for Bedstraw to lay its eggs. A number of us were

surprised at the number of Small Pearl-bordered Fritillaries there were of the 2nd generation – probably more than the 1st generation. Some visitors to Cornwall sent me records of sightings of this butterfly at SW781172 on the coastal path between Porthbeer Cove and Black Head so this butterfly does have a 2nd generation elsewhere. Butterflies seen included: Gatekeeper, Meadow Brown, Wall

CBC Field Trip Reports and Moth Group Meetings

Brown, Small Pearlbordered Fritillary, Small Tortoiseshell, Painted Lady, Grayling, Common Blue, Large White, Small Copper, Small Heath, Red Admiral, Dark Green Fritillary, Peacock and Small Skipper (15 species).

As we were walking back to the car park, one of our company nearly trod on an Emperor Moth



The Oak Eggar. This female was sitting 'pretty as a picture' for all to see on top of the Heather. Note dark specimens and females like the one above, in the South West, must not be confused with the Northern Eggar. Photo: © P. H. Boggis.



The sting (or part of it) left in this unfortunate Bright-line Brown-eye caterpillar. I'm not aware that wasps would leave a sting in their victim

caterpillar as it was traversing the path seeking to find a suitable place to pupate. After taking some photographs, I asked the group whether they minded me taking it home to breed out the adult. If it turns out to be a female, I shall take it to a piece of suitable heathland as soon as it has emerged to attract males, which it is sure

CBC Field Trip Reports and Moth Group Meetings



The Grayling finally returned to a more normal resting posture on this Ribwort Plantain seed-head. Photo: © P. H. Boggis.

ceed to burrow into the caterpillar's skin to take up residence in its innards to digest the fats and nutrients but never the vital organs. The venom injected by the sting serves to alter the caterpillars metabolism and defence mechanisms to accept the parasitoid larvae (for they ultimately kill the host – parasites do not). It is now understood that the venom may also in-

to do, and in numbers so that I can breed out this magnificent species. I have done it before and they are easy to do, but I'm looking forward to a repeat performance.

On the subject of caterpillars, I found a Bright-line Brown-eye caterpillar the other day. It had been stung by a parasitic wasp. Unfortunately from that moment on its fate had been sealed as it would never pupate properly and turn into a moth. These parasitic wasps, often quite small, are able to sting between the caterpillar's segments primarily to paralyse them and then to lay their eggs. After hatching, the larvae pro-

terfere with the caterpillar's normal 'brain' function so that its behaviour is altered to protect the parasitoid larvae when they ultimately borrow out of the



**Common Blue, Kynance Cove, 7th August 2010.
Photo: © P. H. Boggis. Note the difference in the width of the black border compared with the Silver-studded Blue.**

CBC Field Trip Reports and Moth Group Meetings



The magnificent caterpillar of the Emperor moth. This specimen soon spun up and pupated ready for emergence next April or May. Earlier instars (younger caterpillars) look completely different!

Photo: © P. H. Boggis.

caterpillar to pupate. I have included some photos to show what happened to this unfortunate caterpillar for, after a few days feeding, it seemed to lose interest and tried to pupate but died and shrivelled up before succeeding. A parasitoid larva subsequently emerged and pupated. I hope this does not turn your stomach over!

Ponts Mill 25th June 2010

The Cornwall Moth Group has always had a good working relationship with the Friends of Luxulyan Valley and this year's 'moth-ing' session with them was no exception. It was typical of this season generally that the weather was against us. It happened to be clear with a full moon which was at its zenith, although not so high in the sky as in the winter, this was not good for moths which like dark

moonless nights. However, after four and a quarter hours at the trap 53 species were recorded, the best being the Double Line and Ruddy Carpet, which is designated a 'nationally scarce B' species, that is to say: occurring in between 31 and 100 10 Km squares.

Quite some considerable attention was given to a Privet Hawk-moth which crashed into the light after midnight – the usual time to see hawk-moths. They must be like me, late risers! The moth, which is our largest native species, is often found in woodland where invariably the caterpillars are found on Ash and not so much Privet - believe it or not, both are related. A disappointment was not recording the Blomer's Rivulet, another notable B species whose larvae feed on Wych Elm. There are not many of these trees in Cornwall which no doubt accounts for the moth's scarcity.

Phil Boggis
CBC Moth Officer

Editors' Note—Phil Boggis is the author of all the CBC Field Trip and Moth Group Meeting Reports on pages 6—15. Due to financial restraints it has not been possible to print Phil's excellent photographs in colour, but do please remember that you can see them in all their technicolour glory on the website: www.cornwall-butterfly-conservation.org.uk

Cornwall Butterfly Conservations Field Trip Reports

Bunny's Hill Saturday, 15th May 2010

I counted 22 people at the Cornwall Butterfly Conservation's trip to Bunny's Hill to see Pearl-bordered Fritillary.

It is always hard to decide how many butterflies were actually seen but of the six fritillaries only two were positively identified as Pearl-bordered. I think the general opinion was that the others were also Pearl-bordered. They all seem to be in good condition and with the weather improving it may be a good time to visit. Five of the butterflies were seen in SX1167 and one pristine male in SX1267.

Cutting back of gorse and bramble by BTCV volunteers has created bare areas for violets amongst dead bracken and hence good basking sites for the larva. One of the burnt areas was also looking good for next year with plenty of violets and new growth of bracken. As helpful as the burning is, I hope the arsonist will let the site recover for a couple of years.

Other species: (we did our best!) One Small or Green-veined White; Two Speckled Yellow (SX1167 and SX1267); One Brown Silver-line (SX1167); A common micro on gorse but I can't remember its name!

Well worth a visit to this site with 29 recorded butterfly species as well as Cornish Bladderseed.

John Worth, Cornwall Butterfly Recorder

Tuckingmill, nr St Breward Saturday, 22nd May 2010

We had a 'boiling' afternoon at and saw 30+ Pearl-bordered Fritillaries of which ALL BUT 1 were perfectly fresh! 7+ Orange Tips, 6+ Green-vein Whites, 4 Small coppers, 1 Holly Blue, 8+ Small Whites, and my son Robert Slaughter (aged 6) found a female earwig under a stone protecting and rounding up her brood of 20+ baby earwigs!! I've never seen that before! You learn something every time at one of our field trips!!!

Thanks to Phil Harris for leading us in such scorching hot conditions (well 25 degrees 77 farenheight in shade and very sweaty and humid!).

Everyone had had enough after 3 hours and called it a day due to the heat. The site is being managed well and looks very good for the long-term security of this species in Cornwall thankfully.

**Lee Slaughter, Cornwall Butterfly
Conservation Field Trip Organiser**

Carkeet 5th June 2010

Twenty-one members attended, thanks to all those people!

We saw 70+ Marsh Fritillaries altogether!!! 20+ Small Pearls, 1 Small Heath, 3 Small Copper, 25+ Green-vein Whites. 19° C temperature with a breeze + hazy sunshine.

Cornwall Butterfly Conservations Field Trip Reports

Thanks everyone, especially Paul Brewer for leading us at short notice.

Lee Slaughter, Cornwall Butterfly Conservation Field Trip Organiser

*Please note that there were probably another 8 people who were late getting to Carkeet because of traffic problems on the A30 most of whom decided to look at the easy area to walk (beside the road in to the farm). **Paul Brewer***

The Barn House, Penhalt 27th June 2010

Thank you to Tim and Sandy for dedicating one of your Open Days to Butterfly Conservation--- lovely gardens and refreshments as delicious as ever!

Despite being in competition with the World Cup, several of the committee attended and helped out on the stall and, as it turned out, missed a lot of pain in the process!

It was glorious weather, a stark contrast to last year's cold winds, and hard to get Paul Browning off the sun-lounger at tea-time. Although not over-busy, there was a steady trickle of visitors even with the additional competition from local beaches on this most perfect of summer days.

An additional treat was to see the Marbled Whites and freshly emerged Silver-washed Fritillaries in Tim's fields. All in all, a most enjoyable day!

**Maggie Goodere
Secretary**

AGM NOTICE

Cornwall Butterfly Conservation AGM

Venue: Cornwall Wildlife Trust Headquarters, Allet near Truro

Date and Time: Saturday 22nd January 2011 at 2pm.

**Our main speaker will be Adrian Spalding
whose talk will be entitled
"Re-introducing the Large Blue butterfly to Cornwall—
successes, failures and long-term plans"**

Cornwall Butterfly Conservations Field Trip Reports

Upton Towans 3rd July 2010

Upton Towans is one of the few places (unless the weather is really appalling) where we are guaranteed to see hundreds of butterflies in mid summer. Eighteen people attended (the same number as last year).

This year the Silver-studded Blues were seen in their thousands and the Dark Green Fritillaries numbered over a hundred. There were plenty of other butterflies to see in smaller numbers. It was probably too early to see a Brown Argus, although one was spotted about 10 days later on the new transect walk. We are keeping our eye out for Graylings also!

We saw a few strange sights on the trip which makes one realise there is always something new to learn. These included finding a number of mini Silver-studded Blues (much, much smaller than usual and in roughly the same location) and the rather indecent spectacle of a Dark Green Fritillary mating with a Meadow Brown!

Maggie Goodere, Secretary

Porthgwarra Walk Sunday 8th August 2010

Twelve of us, including two visitors from Cheltenham, met up in the car park as the sun came out. It was a beautiful morning with glorious coastal scenery. The count started in the car park with six Speckled Woods and continued with immediate sightings of Grayling and Small Pearl Bordered

Fritillaries as we tackled the coastal path going west. A micro moth was identified as *Pyrausta Cingulata* by Frank Johns & Bernard Hosking and we also saw a Humming Bird Hawk Moth hovering as we continued to the top of the cliff. Amongst the various moths seen were also: Silver Y and 6 Spot Burnett. There were 16 butterfly species in all: Red Admiral, Peacock, Small Tortoiseshell, Painted Lady, Large & Small Whites, Dark Green Fritillary, Small Copper, Small Heath, Common Blue, Meadow Brown, Gatekeeper and a flirting pair of Wall Brown as well as the three species mentioned above.

The two Walls were doing a flirting dance head to head and it gave a really good comparison between the male, with scent marks, and female as they were both very fresh specimens. Many of the Grayling were also flirting and mating and we were allowed the privilege of fleeting glimpses of the top surface of the wings as they danced about; too fleeting to get a photo unfortunately. It was very noticeable how small the Small Pearls were in this second generation. Also seen on the walk were some 7 spot ladybirds, two common Lizards, many bumble bees and a few dragonflies including: Black-tailed Skimmers and mating Keeled Skimmers. At lunchtime Laurie Oake found us a very rare plant: *Centaureum schilloides* (Perennial Centaury) which according to my digital encyclopaedia is found in West Pembrokeshire and *formerly* in West & East Cornwall. Laurie had suggested walking down the cliffs into a valley for lunch; the last Cornish record was in 1962 and ever

Cornwall Butterfly Conservations Field Trip Reports

since botanists have been searching for it. The *Pyrausta Cingulata* is also rare, Cornwall being one of very few sites in Britain. On the UK Moths website one of the photos is by our very own Phil Boggis.

Furze Mite *Epitetranychus lintearius*.
The web of this sp., covering gorse can

be found on the moor above Porthgwarra, not something that is usually seen and sometimes (not this year) quite spectacular here.

This was a great day out finishing with a well earned ice cream from the local shop.

Jim Barker

The Board of Butterflies at the Annual Moth Meeting

The High Brown Fritillary announced to the meeting,
"There are none of us left – we took a real beating.
The heathlands and wetlands are being reclaimed,
We're now reduced to only our name."

"Pesticides, chemicals – what shall we do?"
Was the dire agenda of the Large Blue.
"Where will we breed? Please tell me and how?
Our flower rich pastures are under the plough."

The Marsh Mallow Moth was next to complain,
"The hedgerows are going on many a lane."
"And what shall I do?" cried the old Brown Hairstreak,
"My home was torn down – I barely can speak."

The Dark Bordered Beauty shed a few tears,
"New housing and industry is what we fear."
The Barberry Carpet was also bereft,
"We have only nine breeding sites left."

The Large Tortoiseshell said "It's a disgrace.
Time was I was seen in many a place."
"Me too," said the Straw Belle, the rare grassland moth,
"We fell to the farmer – his blade and his wrath."

The Large Copper spoke of the bad schemes of men,
And the Black-veined Moth of the drainage of fens.
The Dark Crimson Underwing wondered who might
Take on the moths' and the butterflies plight.

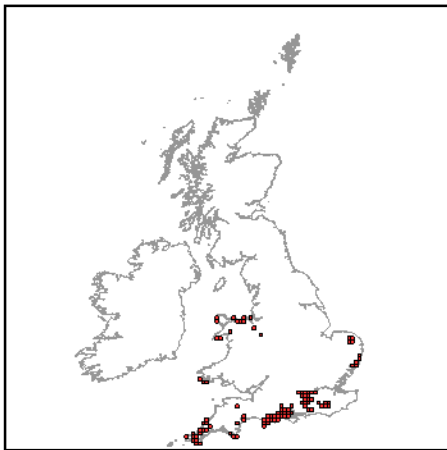
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Letters to the Editor

Dear Editor

I thought you might be interested to know that we have had a couple of verified Silver-studded at home. A female in the house (which Dick assumed he must have brought in on his clothes after the dog walk) but today I caught a male nectaring on the Lychnis which we photographed (in case no one believed me!).

The Lychnis is very popular as I saw a Small Skipper doing the same yester-



The Silver-studded blue is found in only a few areas of the country, so Maggie can, indeed, count herself lucky to have one in her garden. Ed.

day and we have had a Dark-green visiting also. I have seen a few small blue butterflies in the garden over the last few weeks which looked suspiciously like Silver-studded but as I did not get near enough for confirmation, I thought they were probably Common Blues as we have never had SSB's in

the garden before. They are so prolific on the Towans this year and they are so dry do you think they are flying further than usual because they are desperate?

Maggie Goodere, 3 Churchtown Road, Gwithian, Hayle. TR27 5BX

Trelusback Working Days

Two working days have been organised at Trelusback Farm, Penhalvean, Redruth, to cut back gorse and bramble, to enable devil's bit scabious to flourish as a food plant for the caterpillars of the Marsh Fritillaries.

The dates that have been arranged are:

Saturday, 13th November 2010

Saturday, 20th November 2010

We will start at 10.30am.

Please wear protective clothing and bring cutting tools and saws, if you have them, though we do have a small supply of saws and cutters.

For further information please contact Keith Wilson, Trelusback Farm, Penhalvean, Redruth, TR16 6TQ

Tel: (01209) 860298

Email:

Trelusback_farm@hotmail.co.uk

Chairman's Report

Yo there folks.

Well I would say that after three bad years of cold and wet 2010 was a near perfect winter / summer for insects of all descriptions.

It was a lovely early summer period and all the spring flying moths and butterflies had free reign over their territories with wall to wall sunshine and dry nights in some cases and it's becoming clear from my local searches that marsh fritillaries are definitely spreading, as I've found four new sights of webs where I've never found them before. Almost to prove it was dry by the time we all got to Gwithian on our field trip to see the silver studded blues we were amazed at the small size of the flying adults miniatures as we moved towards the dry front of the dunes.

In July/August there followed a damp spell with a fair start to September so not bad this year. Now in my mind three years like that and we might see a few more of everything.

The committee has been burning some of that old midnight oil, at the last meeting with some good results. We've now got little business cards and I used two last week for the first time. It's easier than trying to explain who we are etc when out in the field. Well done Jo and Sean.

I recently went to Birmingham to attend the chairman's meeting, when we discussed the vision for 2020 and how we are going to increase membership, as other societies are much bigger than

us. This is a step change that needs careful consideration, as we are about 15,000 at the moment and if numbers were to increase, say to 50,000, how could we cope with that sort of numbers, as we are an amateur organisation. Only time will tell if this happens, but we are increasing in numbers and the potential is out there. I believe the RBSP is 100,000!

There is a feeling, within the committee, that east and west Cornwall are so far apart that east Cornwall is under represented and that they may be feeling left out as the society has a stronger representation in the west. Are there any ideas how we can redress the balance anybody?

Everybody is working hard on all the things that we do in their own ways. For fun I'm out searching for new marsh fritit sites. A pleasure if you've got to walk the dog anyway.

May I take the opportunity to remind you to let Maggie Goodere have your email address, if you have not already done so?

See everybody at the AGM with a bit of luck.

Cheers

Phil Harris
Chairman

The picture on the bottom, right-hand side of the front cover is of an escaped European swallow tail – photographed at Lethytep by Philip Hambly this year .

The Butterfly Observer - Autumn 2010

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Lethytep Wildlife Created by Philip & Faith Hambly

Several years ago Philip Hambly was able to purchase a few fields West of Bocaddon in Lanreath where he could keep some South Devon cattle. This was a new interest for a successful garage proprietor where he could relax in the countryside.

Sometime later he was able to purchase more land adjacent to his original purchase and adjacent to the hamlet of Penadlake where he was able to build a new house. This also had land that was adjacent to a stream which is a tributary of Trebant Water and had adjoining wet woodland.

At Lethytep two lakes have been created in the lower wet area and rides have been cut in the woodland to enable sheltered walks and seats for the observation of the many species of wildlife in the area. A colony of Purple Hairstreak butterfly has been located. More rides have yet to be created.

A bridge has been built to an island on one of the lakes and a summerhouse erected from which the birds and insects that fly over the water can be seen clearly. There are wild flowering plants that fringe the island which create a colourful vista. Having tea and cake on the lake, generously provided by Faith, is un-forgettable.



Lethytep—Photograph by Philip Hambly

A ten foot “observation” platform has been built between the lakes which makes viewing the wildlife on the water an exceptional experience.

Bird species observed so far number 80, the majority having been photographed, and the butterfly tally is 24 observed and photographed. Philip is constantly on the look out for additions on his holding. He is actively planting or encouraging by management, plants which are specific to the more uncommon wildlife species such as Alder buckthorn. This has rewarded him by being able to see and photograph the Brimstone butterfly plus migrating birds including whimbrel and various duck.

Philip and Faith open the area for Charity fundraising during the summer months. It is hoped that a visit for Members can be arranged for next season.

Paul Brewer

Lethytec Wildlife created by Philip & Faith Hambly

**Butterflies at
Lethytec**

Brimstone
Comma
Common Blue
Gatekeeper
Green-Veined
White
Holly Blue
Large Skipper
Large White
Meadow
Brown
Orange Tip
Painted Lady
Peacock
Purple Hair-
streak
Red Admiral
Ringlet
Silver -Washed
Fritillary
Small Copper
Small Skipper
Small Tortoiseshell



Holly Blue

Holly Blue—photograph Philip Hambly

Small White
Speckled Wood

Wall
Clouded yellow



Silver-washed fritillary—photograph Philip Hambly