

CORNWALL BRANCH

The Butterfly Observer

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**Butterfly
Conservation**

Saving butterflies, moths and our environment

www.cornwall-butterfly-conservation.org.uk



A new site for the rare and highly threatened Pearl-bordered Fritillary was found by two Branch members in 2015, see page 7
(Photo: Peter Eeles)



The White-letter Hairstreak was recorded in a members garden during 2014: the first Cornwall record for many years

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Chair's Report

Hello Everyone,

Well, just as we thought we were in for another bumper butterfly season it has turned decidedly cold of late (mid-May) and sightings have dropped.

Still, plenty of summer left yet! And now some really good news - our hardworking volunteers have discovered a new colony of Pearl-bordered Fritillaries on Bodmin Moor.

This sits really well with the latest funding news for BC's All the Moor Butterflies project and together with the approval and commencement of the Cornish Mining Sites project will provide numerous opportunities for our volunteers to prove themselves. These projects provide justification for the Branch's decision to fund a Training and Outreach Officer, which has certainly been a great success.

We have now successfully recruited new volunteers to our Committee, so welcome to Kathy Wood as Membership Secretary and Gordon Thomas as Branch Treasurer.

We have also redoubled our efforts to find a Branch Secretary and are

hoping that this will bear fruit in the near future. The post of Field Trip Officer has been amalgamated with the Conservation sub Committee, because the workload for this job was quite minimal. Finally, Roger Hooper has taken the role of Newsletter Editor.

Our field trips are now in full swing, and I hope you will find time to attend some meetings and enjoy the outstanding scenery associated with these venues. It is a great opportunity to meet others with a passion for Lepidoptera and to increase your knowledge of our wonderful Cornish countryside.

Finally, please keep sending any butterfly sightings to our County Recorder:

cbcrecords@cornwall-butterfly-conservation.org.uk

Best wishes to you all

Philip Hambly

Chair
Butterfly Conservation Cornwall

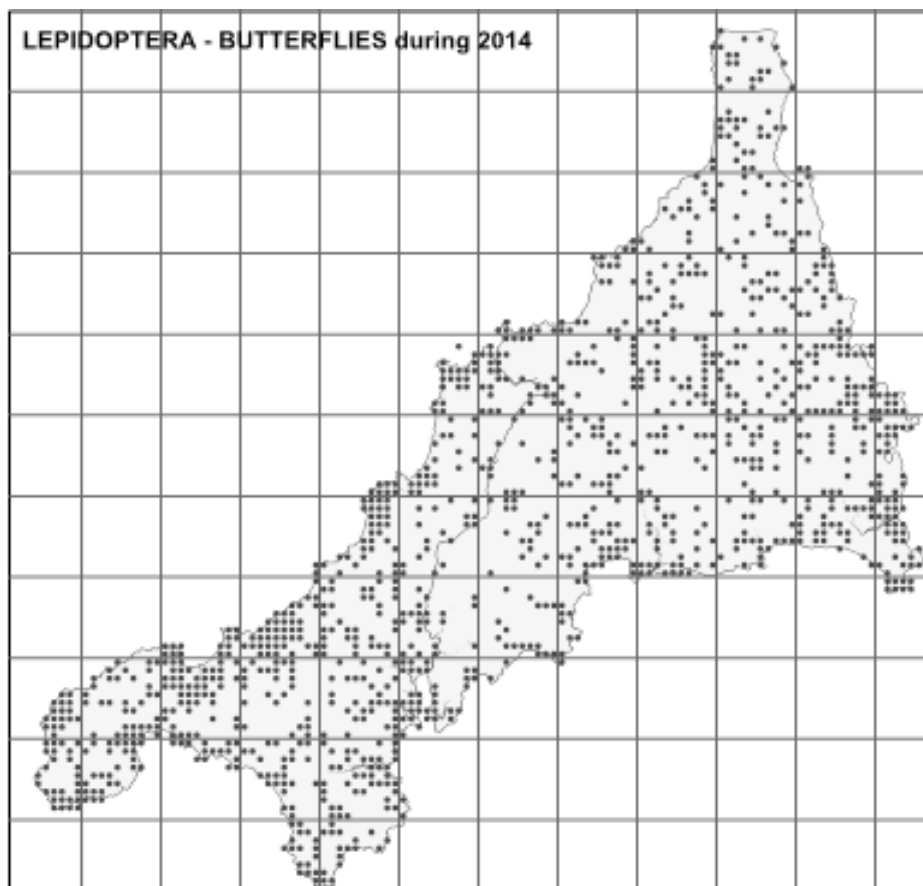
County Recorders Report for 2014

By Dick Goodere, County Recorder

This has been another excellent year for butterflies with an increase in records and butterfly numbers compared with 2013 which was itself a good year. There were more sightings sent directly to the County Recorder but also the records were boosted by a larger number of the public submitting their sightings for the Big Butterfly Count and also via the new Butterfly Conservation i-Record app. The number of records received was 22,086 (14,435 in 2013) and the number of butterflies seen was 78,256 (60,161 in 2013). The discovery of a **White-letter Hairstreak** (not seen in Cornwall for many years) in a member's garden was one of the highlights of the year.

Most species saw an increase in numbers. The **Small Tortoiseshell**, **Peacock** and **Speckled Wood** had a particularly good year. There were significant increases in **Meadow Browns**, **Gatekeepers**, **Small Skippers**, **Large Skippers**, **Brimstones**, **Small Coppers**, **Holly Blues**, **Common Blues** and all the **Whites** did well. In relation to non-resident migrant species, **Painted Ladies** were down by a half from last year whilst the **Clouded Yellows** had another good year following 2013.

Silver-washed and **Dark Green Fritillaries** have continued to thrive but **Commas** were slightly down. **Marbled Whites** showed a



considerable increase in numbers. However, there are some non-priority species which are of concern, including **Purple Hairstreak** (only 14 records compared with 30 in 2013) and also **Green Hairstreak**. **Brown Argus** numbers were slightly up from 2013 but are still low.

Ten of the 20 UK BAP species are in Cornwall. **Marsh Fritillary** which is the only butterfly with EU protection has always been a high priority. There has been a reduction in the number of sites over the past five years but 2014 saw an increase from 10 to 17 sites. Particularly notable is the increased number of sites on the Lizard. Hayle Kimbro is a new site where over 231 webs were counted in the spring and 200 plus adults seen in June.

The Pearl-bordered Fritillary continues to hold its own in its strongholds and although fewer records were submitted, numbers were slightly up on the previous year. The **Dingy Skipper** shows a general downward trend in Cornwall although there has been a slight recovery after the disastrous year of 2012. It is one of the butterflies we should be looking for at some of its former sites. The decline of this species bucks the national trend which indicates the Dingy Skipper is recovering in other

parts of the country. Again, the **Grizzled Skipper** was seen at just one site (Penhale).

The Small Pearl-bordered Fritillary remains quite widely distributed but although the number of records was similar to the previous year, actual butterflies counted was down by about a half and we need to see if this trend continues. **The Heath Fritillary** seems to be showing a slight downward trend on its one site in Cornwall .

The **Wall and Small Heath** have increased significantly this year but the **Grayling** showed only a slight increase in records (62 to 65).

Finally, the number of butterflies counted seems to indicate the best year ever in recent times for the **Silver-studded Blue**. On a sunny day walking on the Towans at Upton or at Penhale in June it is hard to believe that this is one of Britain's scarcer butterflies. It is also pleasing to see they are still present at a number of different inland sites.

Thank you to everyone who submits records - please keep them coming in 2015.

A new site for the Pearl-bordered Fritillary

Pick up any book on British butterflies and in the text for Pearl-bordered Fritillary will be phrases like ‘now much reduced’ or ‘formerly widespread’ and other depressing words that can only underline the pressure that our butterflies face in the modern world. So, it is all the more pleasing when a new site for this species is found by two stalwart volunteers from Butterfly Conservation, Sally Foster and Jo Poland.

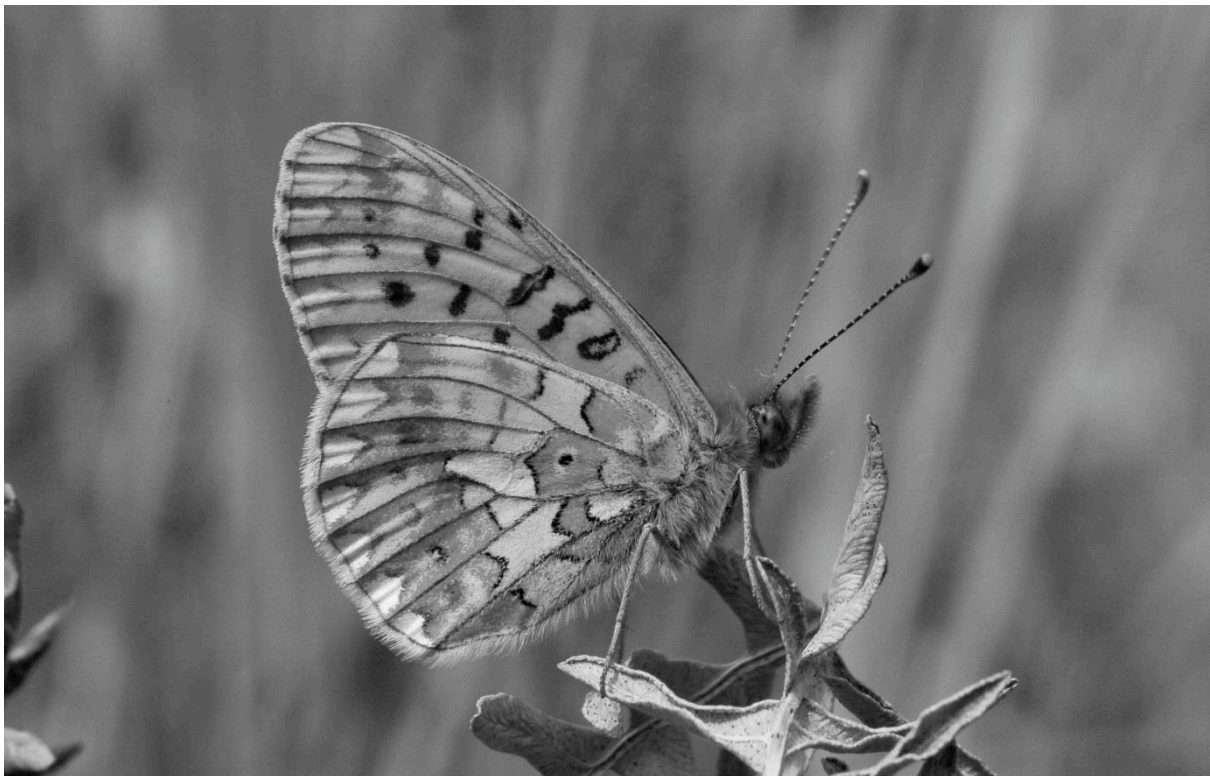
As Jo explained, the weather on the day, 4 May, was not good for butterflies but at a site not too far from St. Breward, on the west of Bodmin Moor, she and Sally were determined to give it a go.

Sally had done a lot of work building

relationships with landowners of good butterfly sites, a lot of whom were in Higher Level Stewardship schemes and keen to help butterflies.

So it was that on a pretty unpromising day for butterflies Sally, in Jo’s words, was determined to find some Pearls and after climbing many hedges and crossing scrubby hillsides they came to a site that looked promising. One single butterfly was visible but Jo thought it was a Pearl-bordered. She proved to be right and saw several more and confirming the ID. The sighting was not too far away from the well-known location at Fellover Brake.

For obvious reasons the exact location will be kept a secret for the time being, but what an encouraging find. Well done Jo and Sally.



Pearl-bordered Fritillary (Photo: Peter Eeles)

Heritage Lottery Funding for the All the Moor Butterflies project

By Jenny Plackett, Senior Regional Officer (South-West England)

Butterfly Conservation is delighted to announce the support of the Heritage Lottery Fund in the development of the All the Moor Butterflies project.

The three-year project will provide opportunities for people across South West England to learn about their region's unique heritage of rare butterflies and moths and to participate in practical measures to safeguard them. Alongside this, training and specialist advice will be provided to a wide audience of land management professionals, advisers and site managers, to promote best practice in the conservation management of moorland habitats for rare butterflies and moths.

The project is being developed in partnership with the National Trust, and will involve a range of voluntary environmental organisations and local community groups as well as landowners and site managers across Bodmin Moor, Exmoor and Dartmoor. The project will showcase management work in five demonstration areas, and management advice and support will be provided to farmers and land managers, helping managers to better understand the importance of their land and appreciate the rare species which depend on it.

In the Bodmin Moor area, the project will focus on restoring habitat for the

Pearl-bordered Fritillary and the Small Pearl-bordered Fritillary in the De Lank Valley, working with the landowner of South Penquite Farm as a demonstration site (see back cover). We will also be focussing on sites in the Upper Fowey Valley, providing support and management advice to restore habitat for the Marsh Fritillary.

The project will support two new posts in the South West: a Project Officer will be appointed to deliver management advice and support landowners in getting appropriate management carried out on the ground, and an Outreach Officer will work to encourage people of all ages and backgrounds to engage with the project. A programme of events will be organised, and volunteers will be recruited and trained to champion moorland biodiversity. The demonstration networks will be used to bring members of the public closer to butterflies and moths, providing opportunities for local communities to explore, celebrate and conserve their natural heritage.

A Project Development Officer is currently being appointed, who will be working with existing staff, partners and BC Branches to develop the project in more detail over the next nine months. The project proposal will then be submitted to HLF and, once approved, the project will be delivered over three years.

Cornwall Mining project update

By Martin Warren, BC Chief Executive

Cornwall is famous for its mines, most of which have long since been abandoned. They are an important part of our cultural heritage but are also vital refuges for several rare butterflies such as the Dingy Skipper and Silver-studded Blue. Abandoned sites are equally important for other insects such as solitary bees and wasps.

The Cornwall Mining project is one of several projects being developed by BC Head Office at the suggestion of Cornwall Branch. Its aim is to raise awareness of the importance of Cornish mines for wildlife and to carry out targeted conservation work where habitats are deteriorating.

I am delighted to report that thanks to funding by the D'Oyly Carte Charitable Trust, we have been able to embark on phase one of the project this year. We have taken on a contractor, Robin Curtis, to conduct surveys of around 35 target sites in the Camborne and Redruth area. This will be followed up by surveys of butterflies later in the year conducted by Jo Poland and Cornwall Butterfly Conservation volunteers.

If you would like to help with surveys, please contact Jo Poland
Tel: 01872 540371
publicity@cornwall-butterfly-conservation.org.uk



Abandoned mine sites are a haven for many rare butterflies and other insects, including the Silver-studded Blue

(Photos Adrian Spalding and Peter Eeles)

Wasp and other Parasitoids on Lepidopteran Larvae

By Phil Boggis, Cornwall Butterfly Conservation Moth Officer

An article in the Daily Mail, 9 September 2014, p.15 and found online:

www.dailymail.co.uk/sciencetech/article-2748653/Why-learn-love-WASPS-They-ve-vanished-summer-But-s-shouldn-t-celebrate-writes-STEVE-BACKSHALL.html

about the lack of wasps last autumn has prompted me to write the following report. The newspaper article was essentially about how useful wasps are as predators and without them we would literally be swamped out of existence by an over abundance of insect life. To illustrate this, a quote from this link:

www.funtrivia.com/en/subtopics/animal-extremes-48277.html states that, 'cabbage aphids reproduce asexually and, with unlimited food and no predators, could theoretically create an 809-million-ton mass of offspring every year! That's three times the weight of the whole human population!'

Almost every insect pest species has at least one wasp species that preys



Setaceous Hebrew Character (*Xestia c-nigrum*)
- Littleborough, Lancs. (Photo © Ian Kimber)

upon it or parasitizes it. This makes wasps critically important in the natural control of pest numbers. During the last week of July, after watering the garden one evening, I noticed a moth larva of what I believe to be the Setaceous Hebrew Character (*Xestia c-nigrum*). It was placed in a container to photograph later and to my surprise, the next day it appeared to have spawned upon its back a collection of small translucent green 'grubs'. A few were knocked off before a photograph was taken which is illustrated on the right and also, just as a matter of interest, the moth from which this caterpillar would have eventually turned into is also illustrated.

The 'grubs' turned out to be the larvae of a tiny wasp (about 2.5 mm in length) of the Eulophidae family which comprises over 4300 described species. Moth larvae almost certainly die from this type of attack and hence the predatory organism is known as a parasitoid as opposed to a parasite which lives on its host but does not

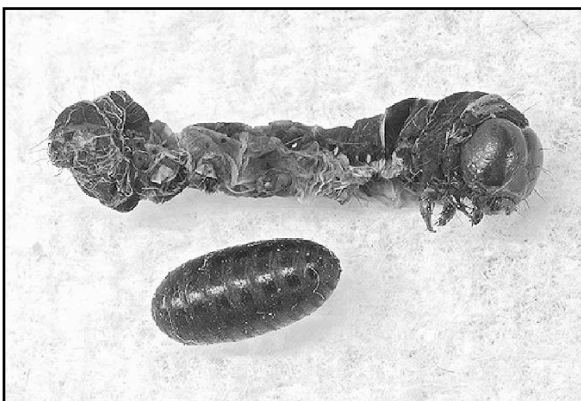


Possible larva of Setaceous Hebrew Character attacked by the larvae of a parasitoid of the family Eulophidae – 25 July 2014.
(Photo © P H Boggis)

necessarily kill it. The host is therefore left in a condition allowing it to reproduce.

These particular Eulophid wasp larvae are ectoparasitoid, that is, they live on the outside of the host. Their mouth-parts incise the victim's outer skin to suck the nutrients contained within. This whole process in some cases may only take 24 hours or so. The following link serves to illustrate the point and if you are a bit squeamish, I advise you not to go there! The link is found here: www.butterflyfunfacts.com/ectoparasitoid-euplectrus.php If the parasitoids are brushed off, the small holes that are left within the victim's skin usually allow fungal spores to invade and the demise of the larva is inevitable. Hence one way or another, the victim's fate is sealed! Other parasitoid larvae live within, and nourish themselves on the victim's internal fats and nutrients, often avoiding vital organs so the caterpillar is spared imminent mortality.

Parasitoid wasps may lay eggs on,



The dried-up carcass of a Bright-line Brown-Eye caterpillar parasitised by the Tachinid *Blondelia nigripes*. Also illustrated is the resultant pupa of the parasitoid.

(Photo: © P. H. Boggis)

near or within the host depending on the particular hymenoptera species involved and some are themselves parasitised by what are called hyperparasitoids. Many also come from the order Diptera (flies). The family Tachinidae for instance is a large and variable family of true flies and as far as is known they are all parasitoids, however they are usually not so host specific as the hymenoptera parasitoids.

Unfortunately, due to space limitations, the full article could not be printed. I therefore include the photos of the host larva, pupa and the fly that emerged below. A high quality YouTube link can be seen here: www.youtube.com/watch?v=5lITAwSVyeA Returning to the Eulophids, the venom glands of many parasitoid wasps manufacture various proteins and peptides that influence the host's physiology. In many cases they do not kill their target instantly but instead keep them alive to serve as a fresh food supply for their offspring. In order to achieve this, they have to target the



Blondelia nigripes. This Tachinid fly emerged from the pupa in the photograph on the left. Upon close inspection I found two pupae, not one.

(Photo: © P. H. Boggis)

host's immunity, physiology, mobility, reproductive capacity and even behaviour.

Having brushed off the parasitoid larvae the caterpillar was left to its own devices. It sat in its container for a week hardly moving and apparently incapable of feeding even though plenty of its foodplant was available. This behaviour is typical of infected larvae as their physiology is altered. The parasitoid larvae wriggled away and onto some soft tissue placed in the bottom of the larval container whereupon they pupated and sometime later must have emerged. Unfortunately owing to their small size, they escaped attention. A photograph of the pupal cases is illustrated below along with a typical example of an adult wasp.

It must be stated that it was difficult to positively identify the host larva due to its rather shrunken appearance which tended to obscure the obvious patterns exhibited by this species, however I believe it to be that of



Pupal cases of the parasitoid wasp family Eulophidae. Length 2mm. Early August 2014. (Photo © P H Boggis)

Setaceous Hebrew Character (*Xestia c-nigrum*). The adult moth makes its appearance from May to July and again, in a more abundant second generation, from August to October, which is possibly augmented by immigrants. It is more often met with in mercury light traps during this period than in early or mid-summer.

It is reported from most parts of the British Isles but more commonly in southern Britain. The larvae feed at night on a variety of low growing herbaceous plants including common nettle. The larvae may be found from autumn to early spring and again during June and July. Larvae from the second generation and those from possible immigrants hibernate, feeding during mild weather.

The moth readily comes to light, sometimes in large numbers, and visits the flowers of Ragwort, Buddleia, Ivy and many other plants, these being a valuable nectar source for such autumn species.



Typical example of the parasitoid wasp family Eulophidae. (Photo © Lisa Tewksbury, University of Rhode Island)

Day-flying moth and caterpillar recording

By Dr Zoe Randle and Richard Fox, BC Moths Count Team.

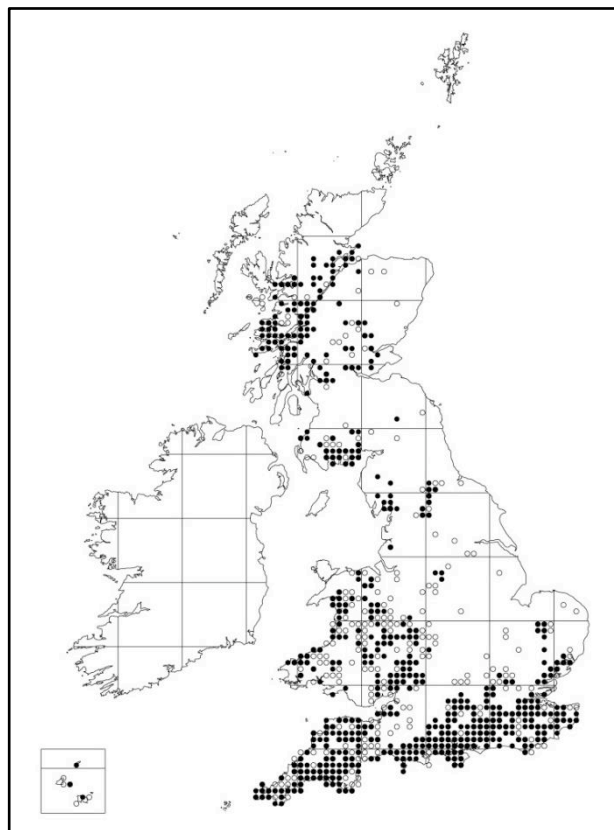
Butterfly Conservation would love butterfly recorders to record day-flying moths and moth caterpillars when they are out and about. In 2018, in collaboration with MothsIreland, we will be publishing a *Macro-moth Atlas for Britain and Ireland*. The majority of moth recorders use light-traps and, as a result, the many species of day-flying moths may be relatively under-recorded compared to nocturnal ones. Butterfly recorders can make a huge contribution to the forthcoming atlas by submitting records of day-flying moths such as Speckled Yellow (see map) and indeed distinctive caterpillars (e.g. Cinnabar) that they encounter while out looking at butterflies.

The National Moth Recording Scheme (NMRS) run by Butterfly Conservation will provide the UK moth data for the forthcoming atlas. The scheme already holds over 17.3 million moth records and geographical coverage of the UK, Channel Islands and Isle of Man at 10km resolution is very good (97% have at least one moth species recorded). There are only 113 10km squares for which we do not have any records from the year 2000 onwards (see figure 2). However, in addition to these, there are 613 10km squares which we consider to be under-recorded - they possess 50 or fewer records of 25 or fewer species.



Above: Speckled Yellow (Photo: Pam Parsons)

Right: NMRS Provisional distribution map of Speckled Yellow at 10km resolution. Open circles pre 2000 records and solid dots 2000 onwards records.



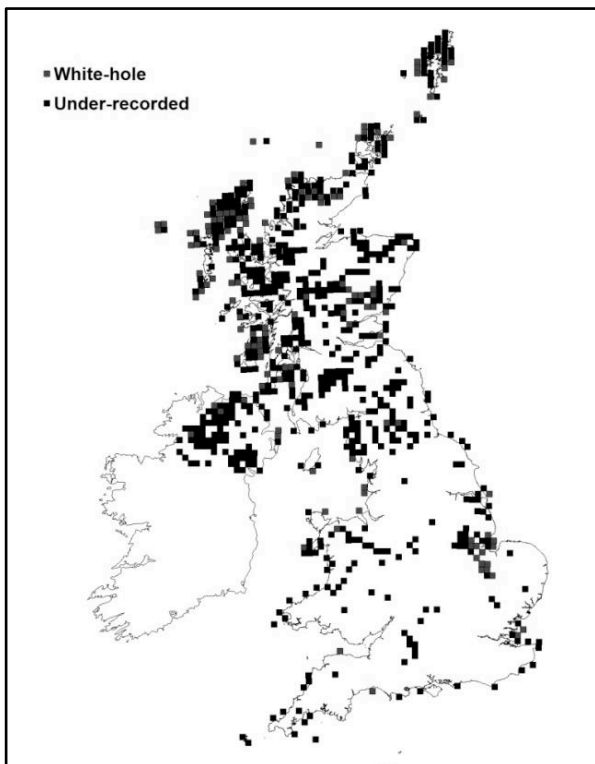
You could really help by targeting these unrecorded or under-recorded squares for moth sightings during your butterfly recording. To find out what 10km squares, or tetrads, are under-recorded in your area please contact Leon Truscott, your County Moth Recorder via 01752 812023 or leon.truscott47@gmail.com. If you wish to venture further a-field, the list of County Moth Recorders can be found on the Moths Count website www.mothscount.org.

Many butterfly recorders already record the moths they see along their transects. In 2013, the UK Butterfly Monitoring Scheme (UK BMS) team extracted moth records entered into Transect Walker software. The data extraction exercise revealed data for 109,485 individuals of 123 moth species, with 13,622 records from 403 sites. The five most frequently recorded species (in descending rank order) were Silver Y, Six-spot Burnet, Cinnabar, Burnet Companion and

Speckled Yellow. These records will be repatriated to County Moth Recorders in due course.

Participants in the Wider Countryside Butterfly Survey (WCBS) are also encouraged to record day-flying moths in their squares. In 2014 a record of Blood-vein in Gloucestershire was only the second for SP10 and the first since 1974.

In the run up to the forthcoming *Macro-moth Atlas for Britain and Ireland* all butterfly recorders can help boost coverage by recording moths, whether on butterfly/WCBS transects, during 'casual' butterfly recording or by specifically targeting areas that are under-recorded for moths. Your help will be very gratefully received. Records are best submitted to your local County Moth recorder on an annual basis by the end of the year to enable incorporation into local datasets and ultimately the National Moth Recording Scheme.



Map of National Moth Recording Scheme 'white-holes' and under-recorded 10km squares from 2000 onwards.

Breeding and releasing of butterflies: the Butterfly Conservation view

Introduction

By Philip Hambly, Chair of Cornwall Butterfly Conservation

I am very pleased that the membership of Cornwall Butterfly Conservation has increased so rapidly in recent years. We are delighted to have your support for our important work saving the dwindling butterflies and moths of Cornwall.

I suspect that many of you have joined because of your love of wildlife and because you want to do your bit to protect the natural world, especially its butterflies and moths. Our membership is a broad church. It includes people who are very knowledgeable about butterfly natural history and those who know little beyond the joy of seeing those bright wings of summer. Some want to get involved in conservation projects whilst others are content to provide support through their membership. Everyone's support is important, regardless.

In Cornwall we face a new situation following the formation of a Cornwall Butterfly and Moth Society (formerly Cornwall Lepidoptera Breeding Group). The county now has two distinct groups claiming to champion

the cause of butterflies. On the face of it, you might wonder why that should be a problem if the two groups had similar objectives.

The problem is that the two groups pursue their objectives in very different ways. And without understanding the implications of that, members may be misled or confused. So the following statement has been produced by the head office of Butterfly Conservation in conjunction with Cornwall Butterfly Conservation. It explains the issues so that you can make an informed decision as to which organisation is better placed to assure a thriving population of butterflies and moths in Cornwall now and into the future.

Cornwall Butterfly Conservation runs a wide range of activities to conserve butterflies and moths, and we are developing some exciting new projects that are described in this newsletter. We look forward to your continued support.

Breeding and releasing: The BC view

To breed or not to breed? That is the question that goes to the heart of what distinguishes Cornwall Butterfly Conservation from the Cornwall Butterfly and Moth Society (formerly the Cornwall Lepidoptera Breeding Group). Butterfly Conservation – and its branch in Cornwall – work primarily to create and manage habitats that support sustainable populations of butterflies and moths in the wild. By contrast, the Cornwall Butterfly and Moth Society breeds stock in captivity, which they want eventually to release into the wild.

That is the difference. So why does it matter? Dr Martin Warren, Chief Executive of Butterfly Conservation,

explains, “One of the problems of rearing butterflies is what to do with the progeny, even if the original aim was just to study them, as releases into the wild can cause unexpected harm. Rearing and releasing butterflies may thus seem an innocent pastime but there are some serious concerns about how it might affect natural distributions and conservation efforts.” The main conservation pitfalls are shown in the box below.

It is important to be aware that there are also situations in which it can be unlawful to collect or release in the wild (see box on following page)

The scientific reasons against captive breeding and release

- ❖ **Release disrupts natural distribution patterns.** Many thousands of BC members submit records of butterflies seen in the wild. This data provides objective evidence of the status of UK species and population trends. Releases may disrupt such monitoring and invalidate the scientific value of the data.
- ❖ **Release masks environmental impact.** Widespread and repeated releases can mask underlying trends, so we have no way of measuring or understanding the needs of habitat management or the impact of climate change.
- ❖ **Collection and release weakens wild populations.** Collecting eggs, larvae and adults from the wild may reduce natural populations. Captive-bred stock lacks genetic diversity and is weakened through adaptation to an indoor environment. Release of captive-bred stock can introduce disease and may reduce the vigour of natural populations.

You can find Butterfly Conservation’s policy guidance on this subject at <http://butrfli.es/collectingpolicy>

Instances where collecting and release break the law

- ❖ **It is against the law** to collect or release the six fully protected butterflies listed in the ***Wildlife and Countryside Act*** 1981
- ❖ **It is against the law** to collect any species from or to release them into a **Site of Special Scientific Interest**
- ❖ **It can be against bye-laws** applicable to land owned by The National Trust or Forestry Commission
- ❖ **It may be against the law** to collect wildlife from a site without the landowner's permission.

So can captive breeding and release ever be OK? Very exceptionally, yes: there are circumstances in which controlled and monitored release can be beneficial.

Dr Warren describes one example of good practice in Cornwall. "The re-introduction of the Heath Fritillary into Greenscombe Wood in the Tamar Valley was a great success because we complied with the principles of Butterfly Conservation's policy for an attempted re-introduction: the species is a national or regional conservation priority; the causes of extinction are known; the habitats have been sufficiently restored to support a population; there is an appropriate long term management plan; the landowner has consented; and relevant conservation bodies such as Natural England have approved the plan."



Making habitat fit for butterflies

Even with such examples of carefully planned species re-introduction, long-term habitat management is the primary means by which Butterfly Conservation enables wild populations to thrive naturally and sustainably. That will remain the clear focus of our efforts now and in the future.

Joint statement on collecting, rearing and release, issued June 2015

Dr Martin Warren,
Chief Executive
Butterfly Conservation

Philip Hambly,
Chair
Cornwall Butterfly Conservation

Similar principles are followed by **Natural England, The National Trust, Forestry Commission** and **Cornwall Wildlife Trust**.

The joy of Butterfly Conservation field meetings

By Roger Hooper, Cornwall Butterfly Conservation Press Officer

I had always had an interest in butterflies and moths but have been first and foremost a birdwatcher since childhood. Coming to the world of Lepidoptera from birding was made easier by the knowledge of natural history in general that I had built up but my first forays into the field with experienced people were just like my first time out with knowledgeable birders. Exciting!!

I'd had my butterfly guide for years, but seen only the common species. Fritillaries and the like were just pictures to admire, although I was rather pleased with myself when I found and correctly identified Small Pearl-bordered Fritillary near Zennor, thanks to my newly purchased *A Cornwall Butterfly Atlas* back in 2007. Several colonies were shown to exist right where I'd seen it. The spark had just turned into a little flame.

Much more leisure time from 2012 onwards meant I could expand my interests in the natural world and for me that meant butterflies, moths and dragonflies. These are all birdwatchers 'second favourites', I think we just like coloured things that fly! I joined Butterfly Conservation straight away and at the end of the worst summer most of us will ever have, I distinctly remember the phrase '2012, the worst year on record for UK butterflies'. Oh well, the only way was up!

Up it most certainly was, as on a scorchingly hot July Sunday in 2013, at the Cornwall Wildlife Trust reserve of Cabilla Woods, I experienced what new birdwatchers do when they see the bird that hooks them for life (usually a kingfisher!) My 'kingfisher moment' was in the form of big bold and beautiful Silver-washed Fritillaries flying up and down the woodland rides like ginger frisbees. Dozens of them. It was the most exciting experience in nature for me in years and the equal of any birding abroad. That was it, totally smitten. I went back on the Tuesday just to see them again.

I came to live in Cornwall in 1978 and have loved it here. However I never really realised just how good the area I grew up in was for birds and also (as I now know) butterflies. My home city of Portsmouth lies just south of the South Downs, a 100 mile solid chalk escarpment just a few miles inland from the south coast. Home to Chalkhill and Adonis blues and Duke of Burgundy. Damn, I went and moved! However I have family back there so I will be a frequent visitor in summer. I recently found out that my first home after getting married was just a couple of miles from a colony of silver-spotted skippers. At least I know how to get there!

Here in Cornwall I have seen, thanks to field meetings, Pearl-bordered Fritillary, Marsh Fritillary, Grizzled

Skipper and Green Hairstreak. To be honest I think I must have been seeing Green Hairstreaks for years but thought they were day-flying moths as in flight they are straw coloured little moth-like creatures that fly around gorse and grass areas. Watch them land and close their wings though. Wow, they become the brightest of greens, a real little jewel. A trip to Paignton in Devon to see Brown Hairstreak was lovely and on a Devon beach of all places, Adonis Blue. Hang on though, Adonis Blue on a beach?

In 2014 Cornwall BC members were kindly invited to Devon branch meetings if they wished to travel. I went to Branscombe, now infamous for the looting of cargo from the 'Napoli', to join Devon branch for a walk to find Wood White. Well, they eluded us but I got my first Dingy Skipper and then two male Adonis Blues. They were there because of a mini chalk grassland formed by collapsing limestone cliffs. The wild

flowers were astonishing on the southward facing slope, set at around 45 degrees they heat up under the sun and this provided all that the Adonis blues needed. As the locals said, 'Branscombe's best kept secret'. I expected the quest to see these wonderful blue butterflies to involve many hours in the field on sunny chalk hillsides in Sussex or Hampshire, maybe to be rewarded with a flying male or some fleeting view. To stand on that landslip at Branscombe and see two beautiful males almost at my feet was a very special moment and I'm sure there are many more to come.

So, if you've had your head stuck in a field guide all winter and wonder how people see all these wonderful creatures, now is your chance to start seeing some for yourself by coming to Cornwall Branch field trips. Everyone is very friendly and keen to help newcomers to the wonderful world of butterflies and moths.



Marbled White: one of many spectacular species that can be seen on CBC field trips (Photo: Peter Eeles)

FIELD TRIPS AND EVENTS – SUMMER 2015

Sunday 5 July 11.00am - UPTON TOWANS, Near Hayle

Join us on a delightful walk through this sand dune complex situated between Gwithian and Hayle, a Cornwall Wildlife Trust reserve and SSSI. Target species will be Dark Green Fritillaries and Silver-studded Blues. Meet by the gate, in front of the large chimney at the entrance to the CWT reserve (SW 579396). Please bring a packed lunch. *Leader and contact: Dick Goodere 01736 753077.*

Saturday 11 July 11.00am - PENLEE RESERVE AND PENLEE POINT, Near Rame Head

We will be led by moth expert and Cornwall Moth Recorder Leon Truscott in looking for Marbled White butterflies, as well as Small Heaths and Dark Green Fritillaries. Six-belted Clearwing and Thrift Clearwing moths can also be found here with the help of pheromone lures. Meet in Penlee Battery car park (SX436491). *Leader and contact: Leon Truscott 01752 812023.*

Sunday 12 July 1.00pm - KELSEY HEAD, Near Holywell and Newquay

Join us to look for Dark Green Fritillaries and Silver-studded Blues, and many more species, at this beautiful SSSI and National Trust reserve along the north Cornwall coast. Meet at SW775600. Drive through Crantock village and shortly after Crantock turn left onto the road to Treago farm and continue to drive through the farm and follow the track until the National Trust car park. Parking is free for NT members, or a £2 suggested donation for others.

Leader and contact: Carly Hoskin 01637 498462.

Saturday 18 July 10.30am - WILD FLOWERS AND BUTTERFLIES OF PENHALE, Near Cubert

Join us for a closer look at the wild flowers, butterflies and moths to be found on Penhale Sands Army Training Camp, not normally open to the public. We should find orchids and many species of Lepidoptera on this unique marsh and dune area. Jointly organised with the Botanical Cornwall Group, the trip will be led by botanist Ian Bennallick, accompanied by Dave Thomas. Please bring a packed lunch. Meet by the South Gate near Treworthen Farm, Cubert (SW783567). Booking is essential. Leaders: Ian Bennallick and Dave Thomas.

Contact: Dave Thomas 01726 861093 or davecarp86@hotmail.com.

Sunday 19 July 1.00pm - CARDINHAM WOODS, Near Bodmin

Join us for our first field trip to this popular site, managed by the Forestry Commission. We are keen to see and record what butterflies and moths we will find there, but expect many woodland species. Meet in the Cardinham Woods car park at PL30 4AL. There is a parking charge according to time parked, but the Forestry Commission have kindly agreed to charge only the minimum cost (£2).

Leader and contact: Carly Hoskin 01637 498462.

Saturday 25 July 1.00pm - NEWLYN DOWNS, Near St Newlyn East

Join us in exploring this SSSI and Special Area of Conservation. We'll be searching for Grayling butterflies, Bog Bush-crickets and Scarce Blue-tailed Damselflies, and much more. Meet in the layby opposite the entrance at SW8368355209. *Leaders and contacts: Shaun and Jo Poland 01872 540371 or 07800 548832.*

Sunday 26 July 11.00am - WOODLAND VALLEY FARM, Near Ladock

Chris and Janet Jones have kindly invited us to their wonderful organic farm for a visit. In return, we'll be finding out for them what butterflies and moths can be found there, and collecting the results as part of the 2015 Big Butterfly Count organised annually by Butterfly Conservation. There'll be a barbecue as well! Meet in the woodland Valley Farm car park, for directions, see <http://www.woodlandvalley.co.uk/contact findsu.php>). There will be a suggested donation of £5 to cover food: please let us know if you'll be attending for catering purposes. *Leader and contact: Amanda Scott 01209 862792 or 07747 864184.*

Sunday 2 August 1.30pm - GODOLPHIN WOODS, Near Godolphin

Join us for this interesting walk through Godolphin Woods. There will be a wide variety of Lepidoptera but the target species will be the Purple Hairstreak.

Directions: Coming from Leedstown, you turn left at Townshend, then at Godolphin Bridge the road swings to the left; some distance along this section there is a parking area on the left where a track runs down to the river. It is possible to park here, but it is better to drive down the short track and park in the larger car park at the bottom (on the right) at SW60023243.

Leaders and contact: Perry and Judi Smale 01736 448304 or 07412 262184.

Sunday 9 August 11.00am - KYNANCE COVE, Near Lizard

Join us on this wonderfully scenic coastal walk on the Lizard as we look for Clouded Yellow, Grayling and Small Pearl-bordered Fritillary butterflies, and many more species. Meet in the National Trust Kynance Cove car park (SW688132).

Leader and contact: Jim Barker 01736 794134.

Sunday 16 August 10.30am - GWENNAP HEAD AND PORTHWARRA, Near Land's End

This beautiful location boasts an abundance of butterflies, including Graylings, Dark Green Fritillaries, Clouded Yellows, Small Heaths and many more. You might also spot a Chough! Meet in the Porthgwarra car park (SW372218): charges apply. Café. *Leader and contact: Jim Barker 01736 794134.*

Saturday 5 September 1.00pm RAME TO PENLEE, Near Kingsand

We hope to see many late-summer butterflies and day-flying moths on this beautifully scenic walk from Rame Head to Penlee Point. Meet in Rame Head car park (SX420487). *Leader and contact: Paddy Saunders 01503 262567.*

Cornwall Butterfly Conservation Committee and Contacts

If you would like to volunteer or just get more involved with the Branch, please don't hesitate to contact a member of the Committee:

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Dark Green Fritillary. One of the target species for the field visit to Gwennap Head near Land's End (photo: Peter Eeles)



The Purple Hairstreak is the target species for our trip to Godolphin Woods on 2 August (photo: Peter Eeles)



Above: South Penquite Farm – partnership site within the De Lank Valley demonstration network area for the new All The Moor Butterflies project, funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund (see page 8). Below: Marsh Fritillary: one of the priority species to be conserved (photo: Peter Eeles).

