

KENT & SOUTH EAST LONDON BRANCH NEWSLETTER

The Adonis

ISSUE 93 | AUTUMN 2019



Butterfly
Conservation

Saving butterflies, moths and our environment



Black-veined moth
in the Crundale Valley



A Lime Hawk-moth
in London



Small Blue



Kent members taking part in the
Big Butterfly Count



Arable reversion wildflower meadow

Follow us and keep in touch:

Websites: www.kentbutterflies.org / www.kentmothgroup.wordpress.org



@BCKentBranch / @mothsinkent



Butterfly Conservation Kent & SE London Branch / Kent Moth Group



Kent Butterflies

Please add Butterfly Conservation to your approved email addresses.

Cover photo: Duke of Burgundy: Andrew Cooper

Contents

Chair's Welcome	p.4
Regional Conservation Manager's Report	p.6
Highlights of the 2019 Butterfly Season	p.8
Are our landscapes joined-up?	p.9
Cover Story: The Duke of Burgundy	p.10
Long-term farm-based conservation work	p.14
Wild About Gardens	p.16
2019/2020 Conservation Work Party Dates	p.18
Wider Countryside Butterfly Survey	p.20
Committee Members	p.21
Field Trip Reports	p.22

White Hill and Fackenden Down

- Abbots Wood
- Crundale Valley
- Strawberry Banks and Coney Banks
- East Blean
- Burnt Oak Wood
- Lullingstone
- Dene Park Woods
- Langdon Cliffs, Dover
- Steyning Rifle Range
- White Hill Reserve, Shoreham

Kent & SE London Branch AGM & Members Day Insert

Butterfly Conservation. Company limited by guarantee, registered in England (2206468). Registered Office: Manor Yard, East Lulworth, Wareham, Dorset, BH20 5QP. Charity registered in England and Wales (254937) and in Scotland (SC039268). VAT No GB 991 2771 89

Printed by Silver Pines Services
Tel: 01732 465641 www.silverpines.co.uk

Chair's Welcome

By the time you read this the 2019 butterfly season will be all but over and autumn well upon us. Looking back, the summer was more erratic than last year although Kent was officially the sunniest county in the UK according to the Met Office's National Climate Information Centre. With 736 hours of sunshine there was plenty of good butterflying to be had!

The season got off to a good start with our county achieving some notable national first sightings; Green Hairstreak were spotted on 24 March at Queendown Warren by Joanne Fegan, Small Blue on 14 April at Langdon Cliffs by Phil Smith and Chalk Hill Blues were seen in Kent on 29 June, a joint-first with the Isle of Wight. It was an exciting year for rare migrants, with several Large Tortoiseshells and a Camberwell Beauty seen in the spring and a Queen of Spain Fritillary and Long-tailed Blues at the end of summer. 2019 is also notable for the Painted Lady influx which gained a lot of interest in the press and with the general public. Engagement and education are vital to our cause.



The 10th anniversary of the Big Butterfly Count was the most successful ever with well over 100,000 counts. Kent submitted the third-highest number of counts of all counties in the UK! Thank you to everyone who submits their records; every piece of data helps to build a more detailed picture of how our butterflies and moths are faring in increasingly concerning times for the environment. If you are interested in walking a transect or a Wider Countryside Butterfly Survey square, please get in touch.

The second stage application for Kent's Magnificent Moths has been submitted to the National Lottery Heritage Fund and we keep our fingers crossed for good news later this year. If successful, it will be the largest moth conservation project ever in the UK. A huge thank you to Project Officer Lucia Chmurova for her work on this!

We had a successful programme of well-attended field trips and it was a pleasure to meet many of you at these. Moving into winter, we have a number of conservation projects to get involved with. Please see our schedule of work parties and if you haven't been along to one before I thoroughly recommend them! They are a great way to meet

like-minded people, get out in the fresh air and are an opportunity to make a real difference for our lepidoptera. One of my highlights of the year was seeing Brown Hairstreaks in the Keston area, an experience that probably wouldn't have been possible without the hard work and dedication of our volunteers last autumn.

Hopefully you will have received the email about our new initiative to make The Adonis available online on the branch area of the website, as well as sending out the hard copies which are restricted to a degree by the costs of printing. The online version allows us to include fuller content and additional colour. You may need to register your email address so we can keep in touch.



Duke of Burgundy (photo credit: Mark Searle)



Chalk Hill Blue (photo credit: Iain Leach)

Our Annual General Meeting and Members' Day is coming up soon.

This year we will be back in Lenham with a fantastic line up of speakers and of course the usual photo competition and raffle. See the agenda enclosed and please do come along for what promises to be a very enjoyable day.

Last but not least, a big thank you to Richard Oram for designing this edition of The Adonis. If you have any thoughts for future articles please do send them my way.

Nathan Jones, Chair



Green Hairstreak (photo credit: Iain Leach)



Large Tortoiseshell (photo credit: Tamás Nestor)



Heath Fritillary (photo credit: Tamás Nestor)

Regional Conservation Manager's Report

2019 was another unpredictable but fascinating season. Thankfully, many of our highest priority butterflies seem to have had a good year. The Heath Fritillary and Duke of Burgundy did well, thanks in no small part to recent targeted projects and to the great work of volunteers.

Across the South East, all of the BC Branches and volunteers are doing great work for our most threatened species. Conservation partners like the RSPB, Natural England, Kent Wildlife Trust and White Cliffs Countryside Partnership are also all giving a lot of attention to butterfly and moth conservation.

This year we've been busy developing the ambitious Kent's Magnificent Moths project. Our project Development Officer, Lucia Chmurova, has put together a really exciting project that will link our conservation efforts with many local community groups, schools and conservation partners. Kent is home to some of the UK's rarest and most threatened moths, including the Black-veined Moth (as pretty as any butterfly and found nowhere else in the UK), the stunning Sussex Emerald (which despite its name is established only in Kent), and the quite unique Fiery Clearwing (found around the Kent coast). The project will offer all sorts of opportunities to get up-close with this species and many more of Kent's magnificent moths.

The project is being supported by a wide range of conservation partners

(including Natural England, the RSPB) and local authorities. We certainly hope that this project further strengthens our relationship with the many different organisations working in Kent towards the same goal of saving nature.

We're very grateful to the National Lottery Heritage Fund (and to lottery players) for funding the 9 months of project development work. Our funding application for the full three year project has been submitted to the NLHF and we await their decision. If successful, this project will launch in April, with two new and dedicated project officers delivering the work.

Other very good news for butterflies this year includes Kent Nature Partnership adopting the Adonis Blue as one of their key indicator species for the Kent Biodiversity Strategy 2019 to 2044. This will mean that the Adonis Blue will enjoy a significantly higher profile amongst conservation partners in Kent, and being championed, monitored and encouraged for the next 25 years.

Two London-centric projects that will offer new and different opportunities to Kent members are our Big City Butterflies project and London Wildlife

Trust's Brilliant Butterfly Banks. Both these projects will offer some great opportunities to get involved in nature conservation and I'm sure members will get to hear much more about these projects.

Butterfly surveys across Kent will continue to provide valuable feedback on how our colonies are faring. We are so grateful to the volunteers who walk the weekly transects, to those who record their sightings when out-and-about and those that get involved in the Big Butterfly Count. The data

is invaluable for providing a picture of how species are doing at county, regional and national levels, which has never been more important, given these uncertain and changing times.

As ever, the South East is an exciting place for wildlife, for conservation action and for sightings. I've no doubt 2020 will be just as exciting, fascinating and probably just as unpredictable.

Steve Wheatley

Regional Conservation Manager for South East England



The iconic White Cliffs of Dover. Kent are home to some of the UK's rarest and most threatened species.

The 2019 Butterfly Season

There was lots of good news for our butterflies in 2019. Some of the rarer butterflies, such as Duke of Burgundy and Heath Fritillary, have had a good year. Numbers of Small Blue showed a large increase at sites such as Fackenden Down, and Bex Cartwright found a new colony in the grounds of Thanet Earth glasshouse complex. Dingy Skippers and Walls were also quite plentiful.

Silver-washed Fritillaries were around in good numbers at some sites and the beautiful, but rare, form *valezina* was seen at the RSPB reserve at Northward Hill by David Saunders. Several Purple Emperors were spotted at Dene Park and were also seen in gardens at Knockholt by Alan Hofman and Southborough by Margaret and Peter Riley. There was further evidence of a gradual spread eastwards as, following Martin Newcombe's discovery of this species south of Sittingbourne last year, Christine Thompson found one on the Woodland Trust's Hucking Estate this July. Also at Hucking, Alan Stubbs found the caterpillars of White-letter Hairstreak. Marbled Whites continue to spread in south-east London and John Denton found them at Woolwich Common and Falconwood.

Brown Hairstreaks have been seen in good numbers in the Keston area by Fred O'Hare and others and Colin Brotherhood found one at Down House, a new site for this species. Also, Mike Reed found an egg at a new location at Edenbridge.

As I write this in early September there are plenty of Painted Ladies and Red Admirals around.



Red Admiral (photo credit: Richard Oram)

However, other Nymphalids have had a poor year, with very low numbers of Small Tortoiseshell and fewer Peacocks and Commas than usual.

In the last few weeks there have been some exciting finds of rare migrant butterflies in Kent. The beautiful Queen of Spain Fritillary has been seen in the South Foreland area by Phil Smith and others and a Long-tailed Blue was seen at Dungeness Bird Observatory. There is a good chance that there will be more interesting discoveries in the last weeks of the season.

Mike Easterbrook,
Branch Butterfly Recorder

Are our landscapes joined-up?

Testing functional connectivity using butterflies.

Alana Skilbeck, Kent Wildlife Trust

The natural world isn't just something for us to enjoy, it sustains us. The fragmentation of landscapes and isolation of habitat patches put our very survival and prosperity under threat, which is why we work to reconnect these broken links. Through consultation conducted by Kent Wildlife Trust as part its Nature's Sure Connected project, the conservation community have helped us prioritise five key questions that will help us understand whether landscape-scale conservation is working across Kent and beyond. One of these questions is about connectivity - is the landscape joined-up well enough for wildlife to move from one place to another?

Kent Wildlife Trust and Butterfly Conservation are working together to see if connectivity is improving. Butterflies can only move through the landscape when suitable connections exist, and this means that monitoring them can help us determine if the work we do is joining up habitats again. In particular we are asking our volunteers to look for Adonis blue and silver-spotted skipper across the chalk grassland situated on the North Downs of Kent. By looking for butterflies, and searching for them nearby to known records of these species we hope to understand if butterflies are able to disperse from one patch to another.

We have a total of 28 sites being

surveyed by volunteers and so far our volunteers have recorded Adonis blue on Kent Wildlife Trust reserves at Fackenden Down, Magpie Bottom and Old Park Hill.

However, not spotting these species is just as important as finding them as it is showing us where the landscape isn't connected for butterflies and will ultimately help us understand the barriers to species dispersing in those areas. Other species our volunteers have spotted during their surveys include: meadow brown, ringlet, small skipper, large white, chalkhill blue, brimstone, gate keeper, small heath, marbled white, comma, painted lady, small tortoiseshell, Essex skipper, dark green fritillary and common blue. Our surveys will continue into the middle of September, in which the next step will be to analyse the data collected and use it to evidence landscape-scale conservation in Kent.



To find out more about Nature's Sure Connected and the work the project is doing visit:

<https://www.kentwildlifetrust.org.uk/get-involved/our-projects/natures-sure-connected>



Chasing His Grace

Dick Vane-Wright,
OHSCA, Scientific Associate NHM London, and DICE Canterbury

The Duke of Burgundy – *Hamearis lucina* (Linnaeus, 1758) (photo credit: Bob Eade)

On Sunday 12th May 2019, 17 members of the Oaten Hill & South Canterbury Association were kindly invited by Alan Cooper to join BC members for the Denge Wood Duke of Burgundy visit. In anticipation, Dick Vane-Wright produced an information sheet for OHSCA members which, thanks to Nathan Jones, was shared with all those present. This note is adapted from that leaflet.

The Duke of Burgundy, about the size of a Common Blue (*Polyommatus icarus*) and thus one of our smallest butterflies, is the only European member of the ‘metalmark’ family, the Riodinidae. Closely related to our more familiar blues, coppers and hairstreaks (family Lycaenidae), the metalmarks are most numerous in South and Central America, where there are well over 1300 known species¹, with only about 15 in Africa, 20 in North America, and some 100 or so in Asia and the Indo-Pacific.

Originally discovered in Cambridgeshire by William Vernon in about 1695, our species was first named in 1699 by James Petiver, ‘father of British butterflies’, as Mr Vernon’s Small Fritillary – fritillary then being a name given to any butterfly with a pattern of small chequers or spots. In 1717, in the first ever attempt at a comprehensive account of British butterflies, Petiver² stated that it was “found in several woods round London”.

Alas, “round London” is no longer the case. The last remaining colonies of this butterfly in Kent, which all occur near Canterbury, are among the

closest to the capital that still survive. Its national decline has been due to a complex mixture of changes affecting the management of our woodlands and downs. During May, females lay their glassy, spherical eggs in small batches on the underside of primrose or cowslips leaves – the only plants the hairy caterpillars will eat. The pupae, which are also hairy, are formed from the end of July or in August, and have to survive right through the winter to the following May, when the next generation of adults begins to appear. Found just above the ground, or often in grass tussocks (at up to 60 cm above the ground), the pupae seem vulnerable to predation by slugs and shrews³. The adults fly from end of April until early June, perhaps peaking a bit earlier on more open downs and a little later in woodlands.

A map, produced some 20 years ago⁴, revealed that the Duke of Burgundy in Kent was by then restricted to an area of about 40 km² centred on Crundale (just to the south of and including Denge Wood). Concern for its survival in Kent and other counties has since led to a considerable turnaround, brought about by focused conservation work over last 10 years – with a very notable local input from BC Kent

Branch. The decline has been arrested in several areas, and the Duke is thankfully now experiencing an overall upward trend, including the Kent sites. Even so, the existence of this insect in England (already extinct in Scotland and Wales⁵) will probably depend on continuing efforts by conservationists, most notably those linked with Butterfly Conservation.

What makes a metalmark a metalmark?

The family Riodinidae was for long considered to be a subfamily of the Lycaenidae – worldwide, a huge family of some 7000 or more species of mostly rather small butterflies known colloquially as hairstreaks, blues and coppers. We have ten extant native Lycaenidae in Kent, including the Adonis Blue.

Recent research strongly suggests that the roughly 1500 known metalmarks share a common ancestor with all other Lycaenidae. In other words, the two groups diverged from the butterfly family tree at the same time, perhaps as much as 90 million years ago⁶.

Modern approaches to establishing butterfly classification depend heavily on DNA data, and all recent molecular analyses support the idea that the metalmarks form a ‘natural group’. This is significant because much of the morphological evidence on which recognition of the group was long based has proved equivocal⁷.

Many naturalists know about the remarkable relationship between ants and the Large Blue. Fewer seem to be aware that there is now strong evidence that the common ancestor

of all Lycaenidae had an ecological relationship with ants – and this may even be true for the ancestor that gave rise to both families⁶. Thus a number of American Riodinidae are adapted to interact with ants in various ways⁸, as are numerous Lycaenidae worldwide. However, even if this was an ancestral condition of the metalmarks, the Duke of Burgundy belongs to a major subgroup (subfamily Nemeobiinae – probably over 50 million years old⁶) that, if it ever did have a relationship with ants, there is no direct evidence of that now.

One of the structural differences, with respect to the Lycaenidae at least, that does seem to ‘work’, is the sexual dimorphism affecting the legs. In male metalmarks the first pair of legs are small, and not used for walking, whereas the females walk on all six legs – as do both sexes of all Lycaenidae, so far as known. The sexes of the Duke of Burgundy differ only slightly in wing shape and coloration, but if you have really good eyesight (or are very handy with a digital camera!) you can use this curious difference to tell the sexes apart when the butterflies are at rest with wings folded – as in the image here of a mating pair.

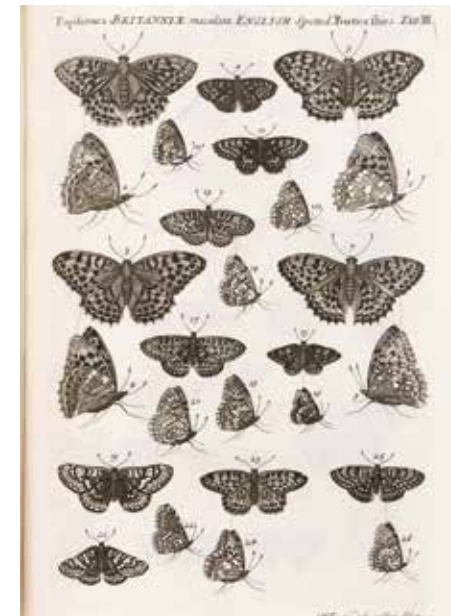
Thanks to Alan and all the hard work done by BC volunteers, all those present on 12th May were privileged to see this charismatic little butterfly at home among the primroses on Bonsai Bank. The Duke is the only metalmark in the whole of western Europe – and indeed, the only member of the genus *Hamearis*. Mysteries to ponder as well as a lovely sight to behold.

References

1. Callaghan CJ & Lamas G. 2004. 99. Riodinidae. In Lamas G (ed.), Checklist: Part 4A Hesperioidea – Papilionoidea. Atlas of Neotropical Lepidoptera volume 5A. Gainesville, Scientific Publishers, pp. 141–170.
2. Petiver J. 1717. Papilionum Britanniae. London, Royal Society.
3. Oates M & Emmet AM. 1989. *Hamearis lucina* (Linnaeus). The Moths and Butterflies of Great Britain and Ireland volume 7(1), 177–179. Great Horkeley, Harley Books.
4. Philp EG. 2004. Butterflies in Kent, 1991–2000. The Transactions of the Kent Field Club volume 17(1): 1–24.
5. Dennis RLH. 1977. The British Butterflies. Their Origin and Establishment. Faringdon, EW Clasley.
6. Espeland M & 14 others. 2018. A comprehensive and dated phylogenomic analysis of butterflies. Current Biology volume 28: 770–778.
7. Ackery PR, de Jong R & Vane-Wright RI. 1999. The butterflies: Hedyloidea, Hesperioidea and Papilionoidea. In Kristensen NP (ed.), Handbook of Zoology volume 4(35). Berlin, Walter de Gruyter, pp. 263–300.
8. DeVries PJ. 1991. Ecological and evolutionary patterns in riodinid butterflies. In Huxley C & Cutler DF (eds), Ant-Plant Interactions. Oxford, Oxford UP, pp. 143–156.



Part of Plate 4 from Petiver 1717 – are ‘Vernon’s small Fritillary’
(photo credit: NHM London).



The male Duke (on two pairs of legs) is on the left, the ‘Duchess’ (on three pairs) is on the right (photo credit: Bob Eade).



The hairy caterpillar feeds only on Primula
(photo credit: Peter Eeles).

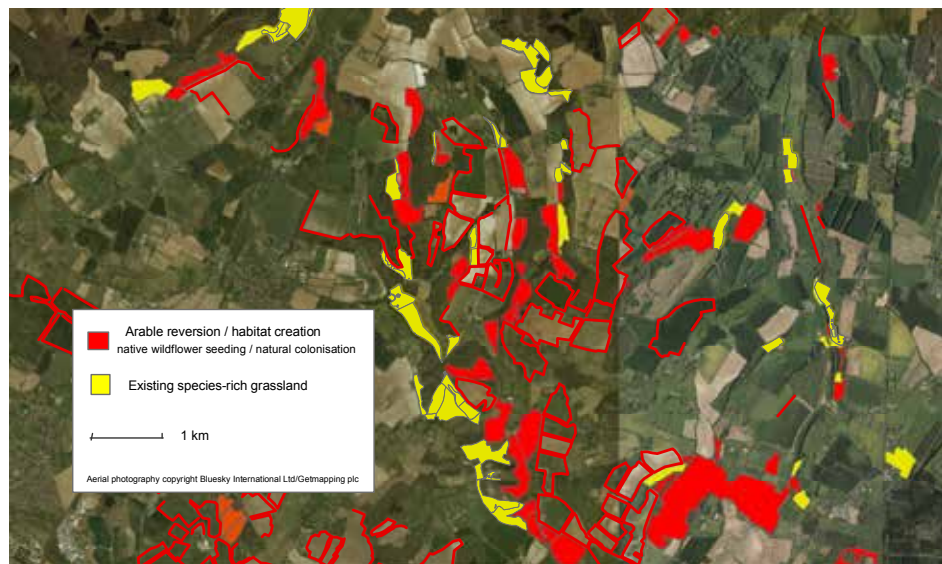
Long term farm-based conservation work for butterflies and moths in Kent

For almost 25 years Environmental Stewardship schemes have been the main mechanism for delivering conservation work in the agricultural landscapes of Kent.

None more so than in the Kent Downs where 'landscape-scale' work has been at the heart of Natural England's approach to working with farms and landowners for many years and where the main aim has been to create, from arable land and agriculturally 'improved' species-poor fields, a new generation of wildflower-rich grasslands across five large geographical areas. Each area encompasses typically between 50 and 80 square kilometres of farmed

countryside with groups of 12 to 20 farms in each project. Central to the delivery of the projects has been the use of targeted, 'on-farm', one to one advice and where the main aim is building long-term relationships with farmers to achieve longstanding land use change and so create a network of contiguously linked species-rich grassland habitats.

Across the project areas, more than 900ha of arable and species-poor grassland have now been converted



(If you look closely!) a Black-veined moth in arable reversion land

into wildflower-rich meadows, putting in place the foundations of local 'Nature Recovery Networks' across multiple farm holdings. Botanical diversity is increased through a combination of natural regeneration, seeding of native wildflowers and spreading of green hay. Native provenance wildflower mixtures have been sown over 330ha, spread across 90 individual field sites, ranging in size from small part-field plots to whole-field areas of up to 20ha and with a rolling programme of around 30ha of native wildflower seeding projects being completed each year.

Long known as good biodiversity indicators, much of this work is

focused on recovering butterfly and moth populations that act as 'flagship' species for a whole range of bird, reptile and mammal life.

Our Stour Valley to Stone Street project encompasses the grassland colonies for Duke of Burgundy and Black-veined moth and where long-term grassland habitat creation is now paying off with 3 new Black-veined moth colonies establishing in the last 3 years on land that was formerly used for arable crops. The network of new flower-rich grasslands is also benefitting Duke of Burgundy which is enjoying an upward trend and where new sightings are made each year across the landscape. Wall Brown, Green Hairstreak, Dingy Skipper and Adonis Blue are amongst the many butterfly species recorded across the landscape.

In our East Kent Valleys project the creation and restoration of 200ha of new flower-rich grasslands across the landscape is now entering a new phase where foodplant seed for Adonis, Small and Chalk Hill Blue are being introduced to new grasslands. Meanwhile new colony sites for Adonis Blue and Silver-spotted Skipper have appeared this year in the project area showing the benefits of increasing habitat connectivity.

In the more intensive agricultural landscapes of the Barham Downs our projects include some larger areas of native wildflower seeding work with ex-arable fields up to 20ha in size now supporting wildflower-rich grasslands and with Small Copper, Brown Argus, Common Blue and Small Heath amongst the new colonists.

Dan Tuson, Natural England.

Wild About Gardens



Thank you for allowing me space in your newsletter to tell you about the inspirational work Kent Wildlife Trust's team of volunteer wildlife gardening advisors have been doing for the past 11 plus years.

2019 has been a record-breaking year for us. We've seen a marked increase in the number of gardeners asking advice as to how they can encourage more bees, butterflies and hedgehogs in their gardens. In response, TV programmes such as Gardeners' World have been talking about nectar and pollen rich planting. But as members of Butterfly Conservation will already know, to maintain a healthy butterfly population, you need to cater for eggs, caterpillars and pupae. Bees need winter shelter and Hedgehogs need connectivity. All these things are generally insufficiently covered by celebrity gardeners.

That's where our volunteer advisors can help. Every garden which enters Kent Wild about Gardens is offered a personal visit and what's more, we don't expect the garden to be completed before entering. Our volunteers are keen to visit a work in progress or a beginner gardener. That way we can encourage people to (for example) choose the best trees and shrubs for wildlife, leave a bit of longer grass or even better, ease up on the mowing altogether and cut out using poisons. It's amazing how with gentle persuasion from a friendly face, even the most die-hard of the stripy lawn brigade can be encouraged to give the mower a break and instead to relax

with a glass of wine and enjoy the increased bees and butterflies visiting their garden!

Since 2008 when the scheme was revamped, our volunteers have visited over 1,200 different gardens (2,350 if you include gardens which re-enter for more advice). We include anything which can be loosely described as a garden from small town centre beds, allotments, community gardens to large private estates.

Our aim is to encourage everyone in Kent to help create those vital stepping stones and corridors that nature desperately needs.

In October we invite everyone who enters the scheme to our big Celebration event. We promise no boring speeches and there is no overall winner, apart from the wildlife. Plaques and certificates are given out depending on how wildlife friendly each garden is and we have "special" awards for gardens of particular interest, such as "Best for Bats", "Best Front Garden" and "Young Wildlife Gardener". There are short presentations about these special gardens and displays from partners such as Kent Bat Group, Kent Mammal Group, Kent Reptile and Amphibian Group and Bumblebee Conservation Trust to encourage beginner gardeners to become more involved.

We are delighted your chairman Nathan will be joining us this year, with a display about moths and butterflies.

Once the Celebration is over, we go straight into planning for Wild about Gardens 2020, where once again we rely on feedback and support from our 50 strong volunteer team to keep

the project relevant and fresh. If you would like to find out more, take a look at the Wild about Gardens section of Kent Wildlife Trust's website or give me a call at Tyland Barn www.kentwildlifetrust.org.uk/get-involved/wild-about-gardens.

Maureen Rainey, Kent Wildlife Trust



Conservation Work Parties

If fresh air, physical work and a deep sense of satisfaction are what you are after, then look no further! By volunteering at a work party, you will help with essential tasks to restore or maintain important butterfly and moth habitats.

When you join a work party you will learn all about the specific habitat requirements of target species and how to manage for them. While the tasks vary, some features don't change. You will enjoy friendly company, be provided with hand tools and health and safety equipment and of course the all-important tea and biscuit supplies!

As well as the positive impacts on the environment, conservation volunteering brings a host of benefits including improved physical and mental health and wellbeing, and increased levels of positivity, as a result of the physical activity and contact with green space.

We have more work parties than ever before this season. Please wear appropriate clothing and bring a pack lunch if you plan to stay all day. Get in touch with Nathan Jones njones@kentbutterflies.org or the site contact if you have any questions about volunteering. Keep an eye on our website and social media for dates yet to be confirmed.



Volunteers at a work party in Denge Woods

Conservation Work Party Directory

White Hill Reserve, Shoreham

Important chalk downland habitat home to a notable colony of Chalkhill Blue butterflies and resident moths species including Peach Blossom and Pale Pinion.

Dates: 27th October, 24th November, 22nd December, 26th January

Please meet onsite for a 10am H&S briefing

Contact: Peter Kirby, 07710 546453
p.kirby@quercus2.co.uk

Denge Woods, Canterbury

Part of an ancient semi-natural woodland complex, this site is home to the endangered Duke of Burgundy butterfly as well as many important moth species, rare orchids and bird life.

Dates: TBC, usually Sundays mid-Dec and mid-Jan.

Contact: Claire Ward,
aceward@googlemail.com

Crundale Valley Area

Natural England work closely with farmers and landowners to improve biodiversity across these sites. Duke of Burgundy and Black-veined moth are target species for conservation work.

Dates: TBC

Contact: Dan Tuson,
Daniel.J.Tuson@naturalengland.org.uk

Blean Woods, Canterbury

A Kent Wildlife Trust reserve, the ancient semi-natural woodland of the Blean is home to critically endangered Heath Fritillaries as well as many other lepidoptera species.

Dates: Every Tuesday and Thursday

Contact: Will Douglas,
William.Douglas@kentwildlife.org.uk

Vanbrugh Pits, Blackheath

A rare, relict acid grassland habitat. An incredible 29 butterfly species have been recorded at this London site including Small Copper, Brown Argus, Green and Purple Hairstreak.

Dates: TBC

Contact: Joe Beale,
joetheillustrator@gmail.com



Wider Countryside Butterfly Survey

Firstly, a big thank you to all our 2019 WCBS volunteers (up from two last year to over a dozen!) who have made it one of the best years for Kent BC squares on record. We can now boast coverage from the Sussex border to East Kent and from London to Folkestone. Even the Isle of Grain was surveyed this year and proved to be our most populous square with well over 400 individual butterflies seen!

A couple of personal highlights included an amazing spot in Bromley, London; whilst doing a recce of square TQ3771 with one of our members we were treated to a slightly tatty but very special Large Tortoiseshell. Needless to say, very exciting and I wasted no time getting the photos identified by Mike Easterbrook.

I'd also been wishing for a Clouded Yellow all over the August bank holiday weekend. When one actually appeared over the White Cliffs while I was completing the last section of my last kilometre of my last square, I'm not ashamed to admit I ran almost the entire kilometre back to where I'd started to secure a photo - once it finally settled on a clump of ragwort it deemed worthy to nectar from. A wonderful memory of a Clouded Yellow on a cloudless summer day!

We do still need more volunteers to take on vacant squares and I'm happy to say we have two new squares to add to the list, up for grabs next year. So please, if you're interested in getting involved in a very easy way with BC's crucial citizen science work, feel free to reach out to me on paolofarina@hotmail.co.uk.

Paolo Farina, WCBS Champion



Clouded Yellow TR2839



Large Tortoiseshell by Platform 2
Lower Sydenham

Committee Members

President: **Dr. Jim Flegg**

Chair: **Nathan Jones**
njones@kentbutterflies.org

Conservation Officer: **Simon Ginnaw**
simon.ginnaw@forestrycommission.gov.uk

Conservation Officer & H&S Officer: **Peter Kirby**
p.kirby@quercus2.co.uk

Country Butterfly Recorder: **Mike Easterbrook**
Mike.easterbrook2@virginmedia.com

Membership Secretary: **Jackie Kirby**
j.kirby@quercus2.co.uk

Moth Recorder (Macro): **Ian Hunter**
mothsinkent@gmail.com

Moth Recorder (Micro): **Dave Shenton**
mothsinkent@gmail.com

Secretary & Branch Contact: **Peter Riley**
petmar.riley@btinternet.com

Transect Officer: **Paul Tinsley-Marshall**
Paul.Tinsley-Marshall@kentwildlife.org.uk

Treasurer: **Trevor Manship**
t.manship@sky.com

WCBS Officer: **Paolo Farina**
paolofarina@hotmail.co.uk

Website & IT Officer: **Ben Kirby**
b.kirby@quercus2.co.uk

Committee Member: **Margaret Riley**
petmar.riley@btinternet.com

Associate Member: **John Bangay**
Jr.bangay@yahoo.co.uk



Field Trips 2019



White Hill and Fackenden Down 5th May 2019

Peter Kirby

Stepping out of my car was a shock to the system to say the least and a cold breeze quickly chilled my bones. Would anyone venture out on such a cold day with little chance of seeing any butterflies? Butterfly enthusiasts are a tough breed, if not a little optimistic, so it came as no surprise to see cars arriving and some hardy souls assemble in the lay-by. Whilst I was waiting for people to arrive, I tracked down an Orange Tip egg on the roadside vegetation to show folk just in case we found nothing else at all, a high likelihood at these temperatures, and the party of fourteen set off up the path towards the reserve.

It really was a lottery but we arrived on the reserve to see the habitat looking good after our winter work parties and we must thank our volunteers for their hard work. Ben and I had varied the sward depth whilst brush-cutting and it was interesting to see the results and proved valuable data for the management next autumn.

We made our way towards the main reserve where I had hoped to see a Brimstone or Peacock and, with any luck, a Green Hairstreak but it was simply too cold. Ben and Jackie Kirby found some Brimstone eggs so all was not lost but these hardly made up for flying insects. I took the opportunity to explain the management targets for the various habitat panels and how the horseshoe

vetch had finally established itself on the main ride, offering additional breeding areas for the Chalkhill Blues.

Our slow walk to Fackenden Down failed to produce any butterflies but the sky was clearing just a little so we walked on. As if to order, the sun popped out for little more than three minutes but this was enough time to stir three Dingy Skippers into action and they were soon joined by two more. I was delighted to see a single Grizzled Skipper enter the ring and good views were had by all. It seemed an appropriate time to search for Dingy Skipper eggs but a close search produced nothing so I can only guess that the adults we were seeing were fairly fresh and yet to lay.

We spent some time in the area but the sun disappeared all too quickly and we were left enjoying the birdsong. Blackcap and Whitethroat were readily identified and a possible Lesser Whitethroat but, with the sun now lost, were retraced our footsteps through White Hill. Any chance of seeing a butterfly now were very slim indeed but we had enjoyed a very pleasant walk and seen at least two species plus some eggs. Given the conditions, I should not complain but, as leader, I try to find things of interest but sometimes these early season field trips can prove very tough but there is still a whole season to follow and who knows, I might have an easier time!

Abbots Wood

26th May 2019

Peter Riley

On a breezy, but reasonably warm and sunny morning twelve BC members met at an entrance to the Abbots Wood complex in East Sussex. Of the twelve, one was a member from Oxfordshire on a cycling weekend to South East England, two were from Essex and four from the Sussex Branch. As we walked the short distance to the Pearl-bordered Fritillary site we did not see or hear the usual cuckoo or nightingale but this was soon forgotten as the first Fritillary found was a beautifully fresh Small Pearl-bordered Fritillary which I had never seen at this site before. (I understand from the Sussex Branch that in 2017 they introduced the Small Pearl-bordered to Abbots Wood at the same time as re-introducing them to their reserve at Park Corner Down where they had become extinct in 2016). We saw at least one other Small Pearl-bordered as well as several Pearl-bordered Fritillaries most of which were noticeably pale and worn and were obviously coming to the end of their flight period which usually overlaps that of the later flying Small Pearl-bordered. It was good to be able to compare the two species as they do not very often fly together. The size difference is not marked and cannot really be used in identification. As is quite normal, there were few other butterflies on the site, only Speckled



Pearl-bordered Fritillary (photo credit: Iain Leach)

Wood and Brimstone, but, unusually, there were only limited numbers of Speckled Yellow day-flying moths which are normally very numerous. As usual, Park Corner Heath was also on the itinerary for the Small Pearl-bordered Fritillary. On this occasion this was not necessary, but four of us went on there in the early afternoon anyway. Unfortunately, by the time we got there the sun had gone and the weather cooled and there were no butterflies to be seen, but we were still very pleased with our day.

Crundale Valley

9th June 2019

Nathan Jones

The day was mild but overcast with the earlier sun giving way to cloud as 20 nature enthusiasts from as far away as Suffolk and London ventured to East Kent to join this late addition to the planned field trips programme. Dan Tuson of Natural England lead our group. Dan is a conservation advisor to farmers and landowners in the area, focusing on landscape-scale biodiversity restoration projects. Some of the meadows we walked are the result of 20 years of successful land management under the Countryside Stewardship Schemes.

Dan explained what the schemes are achieving and it was fascinating to see the various stages of restoration across fields that have been recently reseeded, compared to those that have been established for much longer. The plant diversity was staggering and we enjoyed dozens of Bee Orchid and other early summer orchids amongst many other chalk grassland specialists.

Our target species was the Black-veined moth, one of the UK's rarest moths that is found only here in East Kent and one of the eight species that will be a focus of the Kent's Magnificent Moths project. When the first ghostly-white individual fluttered up from the grass it was met with great excitement, being the first time most of us had ever seen one. In the end we saw around 10 of these ethereal

moths which was very encouraging for the ongoing conservation efforts.

Yellow Shell, Common Heath, Burnet Companion, Common Blue, Green Hairstreak, Small Heath and Large Skipper, amongst others, brought the lepidoptera species seen into double figures. We were also keeping an eye out for any late Duke of Burgundy butterflies, but their season appeared to have ended.

Toward the end of the walk we reviewed some of the areas Kent Branch volunteers had worked on in the winter, clearing scrub and bramble to improve habitat for the Duke of Burgundy and the Black-veined moth. A big thank you to Dan for leading our group, and to the land owners for allowing access. We hope to make this walk an annual event.



Black-veined moth (photo credit: Nathan Jones)

Strawberry Banks and Coney Banks

8th June 2019

Peter Kirby

A quick look at the early morning forecast showed trouble on the way with very high winds and downpours expected. France had already endured 80mph winds and the front was heading our way so I was very surprised to see anyone turn up but just one stalwart made it through and made our journey worthwhile.

A quick look around the car park revealed three Orange Tip larvae on garlic mustard so at least I hadn't blanked! The sky was totally clouded over and the wind threatened to level the trees but we leaders are not easily put off (I believe optimistic is the word) and we headed off to the distant valley. The main site had been lightly grazed during the winter months and the sward looked all the better for it with a good display of flowers and should suit the forthcoming Marbled Whites and Meadow Browns. No blues showed as we walked down into the valley which was surprising given the habitat and plentiful Birdsfoot Trefoil all around but the wind would probably send them to Ramsgate had they flushed from the grass!

We took the path crossing the main bank and were soon surrounded by orchids with Fragrant, Common Spotted, Man and Pyramidal all from one spot. As if by magic, two Adonis Blues flew by in the relative shelter of the wood but soon disappeared as the sky darkened

with the promise of rain. We just made it to the edge of the wood when the sky opened up with a downpour and I was glad that I had packed an umbrella which saved me from the worst of the weather. We certainly wouldn't see any more butterflies but, when the rain cleared, we enjoyed good showings of Man and Bee Orchids. The habitat for Adonis and Chalkhill Blues was superb and showed good results to the grazing.

As we indulged, a dense black cloud appeared over the tops of the trees and I knew we were in for a beating with nowhere to shelter and the rain began to fall with anger. My umbrella tried to turn itself inside-out and I feared becoming Mary Poppins and they tell me Herne Bay is nice at this time of year which was something to look forward to if I couldn't sort things out. The rain was very heavy and coming in head-on and soon penetrated my clothing but there was nowhere to hide so 'take it on the chin Peter' and make the most of it. The situation reminded me of a field trip to Temple Ewell a few years ago when Alan Cooper led a similar trip and the rain dropped out of the sky all morning and we saw no butterflies and talk about wet.

All thoughts of going on to Coney Banks were abandoned and we headed back towards the cars in torrential rain and squelching boots. As we walked, I

reflected that members have a choice to stay at home if things are rough but the poor old leader has to travel to the venue come rain or shine in case anyone turns up, even if there is more likelihood of selling snow shoes in Africa than seeing a butterfly.

A big thanks goes out to Liz who braved the elements and made it all worthwhile but, come to think of it, Liz was also at the Temple Ewell trip so there could be a pattern appearing here!



Chalk Hill Blue (male & female) (photo credit: Adam Gor)

East Blean

16th June 2019

Peter Riley



Heath Fritillary (photo credit: Paolo Farina)

Sixteen members, one of whom had come down specially from Nuneaton, leaving home at 6am, met Margaret and I in the car park of the National Nature Reserve of East Blean on a cloudy and cool morning. We made our way to the nearby fritillary site and noted that recent heavy rain had left several puddles on the path which was unusual, but welcome, summer weather in the South East.

We waited a few minutes, seeing nothing, but then the sun began to come out enough to tempt out a few

Heath Fritillaries. This kept everybody happy as the butterflies were reasonably accessible to the cameras. I should think we saw about six specimens in all in two recently cleared patches of the habitat which is chestnut coppice. I managed to get a good look at three of them, which all seemed to be recently emerged males, which suggested to me that the 2019 season was significantly late. On the same site and date last year, admittedly in better weather, there were over 200 fritillaries flying including many females and mating pairs.

As is usual on rare fritillary sites there were few other butterflies to be seen. We recorded a single Holly Blue, Speckled Wood and two Meadow Browns, and a Red Admiral flew swiftly through the area. Unusually we were visited by a Brown Hawker Dragonfly which I have never seen there before and which, even more unusually, actually settled for a minute or two quite close to the edge of the patch, giving photographic opportunities.

The member from Nuneaton was the first to leave to start his long journey home, very happy with his morning. Shortly after this the sun ceased to appear and light drizzle started and the car park was clear well before 1300 but everybody seemed to be well satisfied with the trip.

Burnt Oak Wood

23rd June 2019

Peter Kirby

After the field trip to Strawberry Banks where rain stopped play, the air was warm and humid with a hint of sunshine as we assembled in the car park. Given the weather of late, things were running a little behind this season so I was quite surprised to see a Purple Hairstreak making its way to the top of the oaks near the cars and a few Meadow Browns were fluttering in the tall grasses nearby so things were looking good as we headed for the forest.

As we negotiated the path leading to the rides and clearings, I spent a little while searching for Brimstone larvae but had no success and I suspected that they had pupated by now. The first Ringlets began to show and most were in good condition so had only recently emerged. Several moths were flushed from the vegetation and a Clouded Border posed well for photographs. As we reached the first ride, the first of several Large Skippers were spotted on the brambles but a diligent search failed to reveal any Small Skippers which was surprising given the ideal habitat. I spent some time discussing the various grasses and where the skippers would later lay their eggs.

A flash of ginger proved to be a Painted Lady and this was soon joined by another. A friend had been away in Poland a few days ago and said that

there were Painted Ladies on seemingly every flower so could well lead to a migration to the UK and I had seen two in a local nature reserve. A call rang out as one of the party spotted a White Admiral in the clearing. It settled for a short while and was reckoned to be a male judging by its wing shape but could not be confirmed. With the sun breaking through, things began to liven up and a Marbled White crossed the ride followed by a Red Admiral. As we stood listening to a distant cuckoo, Nathan spotted a Purple Hairstreak deep in a grass tussock and trying to crawl up to safety. Closer examination showed that it had a damaged wing, probably due to the butterfly being unable to hang correctly during the wing drying process. Many of the hairstreaks seen at ground level are those that have just emerged and are in the process of heading to the canopy of trees where they will spend most of their lives and seldom descend to take nectar from flowers. Another cry saw the arrival of two Brimstones that were still in good condition but they stayed just out of reach of the cameras. The remainder of the trip was spent enjoying the flora and particularly the grasses and orchids. A Speckled Wood along the lane rounded things off nicely on what was a marginal day with very little bright sunshine.

Lullingstone

30th June 2019

Peter Kirby

The previous day had seen record temperatures well in excess of 30 degrees so it was with some relief that a few clouds and a light breeze were set for today as, to attempt a field trip in the furnace like conditions would have been unthinkable. As it was, the temperature was still very high and my H&S briefing centred on dehydration.

Our first stop was in a sheltered corner where we traditionally find a few skippers and Ringlets and we were not to be disappointed. The Ringlets were very fresh and had not been on the wing very long but the Meadow Browns were well established but skippers were hard to find. A single Cinnabar moth added some colour and a Small Heath rounded thing off nicely. The display of orchids was a picture and most were fresh and in mint condition.

Crossing the golf course, we arrived at the bank where we expected to see a few Dark Green Fritillaries but, at first, we saw none at all and began to wonder if we had missed the peak but a shout indicated that we were OK and a fresh male flew past. As if by magic, several more fritillaries were sighted and the place became alive with butterflies. Marbled Whites stole the show and could be counted in hundreds and were in competition with the Meadow Browns but the fritillaries were a little slow and

took half an hour or so to really make it. This often happens at this site and the males were clearly emerging from their pupas as we watched and the numbers rose steadily to give good viewings. Each male would fly downwind of a patch of habitat and then turn into the wind and begin that familiar search for a female, flying close to the ground and checking the base of any scrub before repeating the exercise. Some even posed for photography but it is far more rewarding to wait a week when the females emerge as they often 'tank-up' on nectar before beginning their egg laying but, by the time we decided to work our way back to the car park, everyone had enjoyed views of the males and we had no complaint.

The walk back was a pleasure and we all enjoyed the orchids once again and all agreed that it had been a good day and agreed that we would return next year and hope for peak emergence.

Footnote:

After a quick lunch, we decided to call in on White Hill as it was on the way home. Most people only see this site on our early season visit and the mid August field trip so miss out on a real treat. The winter work parties are vital to the fortunes or otherwise of this site and the volunteers are to be congratulated

for their hard work. As many of you will be aware, the future of White Hill is under review and we are seeking additional help with our winter work and to neglect any part of the habitat spells disaster with scrub taking over very rapidly. Today was different.

Stepping out onto the main slope and breeding ground, we were confronted with a green paradise with flowers all around and the sinister scrub still only a few centimetres tall and posing no immediate threat. Marbled Whites were literally everywhere and we could count dozens at any one time from all corners of the site. This was particularly pleasing and surprising as both the Marbled Whites and Ringlets had not fared well when we lost so much grass and habitat with the rabbit invasion a few years ago.

A flash of ginger turned out to be a male Dark Green Fritillary but more was to come as more fritillaries began to show and we even saw a female being courted by a male. As we continued our walk, we saw more and more fritillaries and our final estimate of those seen was about ten to fifteen, an all time record for White Hill and the peak was yet to come.

Our return walk revealed even more Marbled Whites but the fritillaries were 'photo-sensitive' and completely disappeared when the sun disappeared behind a cloud – quite extraordinary and goes to show how important it is to be in the right place at the right time. Our day could not have been any more rewarding and the icing on the cake had to be White Hill with its fritillaries. I am so glad we visited the site at, what can be, a quiet butterfly time of year as broods come and go.



Marbled White (photo credit: Iain Leach)

Dene Park Woods

7th July 2019

Trevor Manship

In the week leading up to this event it had been very warm and sunny with Purple Emperor's being seen on most days. The weather for our walk was a little different! It started with being overcast with some mizzle and a bit of light rain. Did this dampen our spirits? Of course it didn't!

23 people were forever hopefully that the sun would come out. We were first entertained by examining the exit holes of Hornet Clearwing larva around the base of a tree in the car park, and found empty pupa cases around the base of the tree. We heard Marsh Tit calling in the car park. Peter Kirby showed us all Comma eggs attached to the top of a nettle.

Due to the weather, the low vegetation in the wood was damp as we walked into the wood but at least had Speckled Wood along the first woodland ride. Whilst waiting for butterflies to appear we were serenaded by a Song Thrush and also had Nuthatch and Great Spotted Woodpecker.

We walked to the edge of the wood out to a meadow area which was beginning to see some sunlight and became dry. It felt warm and it wasn't long before we were treated to our first Gatekeepers of the year. We also had Meadow Browns, Ringlets, Small Skippers and Small White.



Gatekeeper (photo credit: Richard Oram)

This lifted our spirits and we headed back into the wood with new optimism and it wasn't long before we were watching a White Admiral. A Southern Hawker dragonfly also paraded along the rides.

The sun came out in the triangle clearing where we added Green-veined White to the days list and were treated to views of a White-legged Damselfly resting in the vegetation and some toadlets!

White Hill Reserve, Shoreham

4th August 2019

Trevor Manship

Twelve of us assembled on a warm sunny morning at White Hill. We had butterflies from the start as we headed up the downs, with around 4-5 Speckled Woods in the shaded woodland. In the first clearing we connected with our first Silver washed Fritillary and went on to see around 9 of these brilliant butterflies, both male and females during the walk. Brimstones were also putting on a show, we had 2 males and 2 females. It wasn't long before we had our first sighting of Chalkhill Blues, taking time to look at the differences between the male and females.

As we continued towards the main "Chalkhill" area, we added Large and Small White, Peacock, Comma, Meadow Brown, Gatekeeper and around 3 Painted Lady. On the moth front, we had several Five and Six spot Burnets and the small but beautiful purple and yellow coloured *Pyrausta aurata*.

We then reached the main "Chalkhill" area in glorious sunshine to be met with literally hundreds of Chalkhill Blues like light blue clouds flying low over the ground – absolutely stunning! We also found around 4 late Marbled Whites, 3 Brown Argus and one Small Copper.

Two species of dragonfly were seen – Brown Hawker and Common Darter.

All in all an excellent walk, with 14 species of butterfly and an unforgettable memory of hundreds of Chalkhill Blues.



Chalk Hill Blue (photo credit: Trevor Wilson)



Six-spot Burnet (photo credit: Iain Leach)



Comma (photo credit: Bob Eade)

Langdon Cliffs, Dover

Sunday 11th August 2019

Peter Kirby

With much of the Midlands under water with massive floods and gale force winds forecast for the south east, the prospects of seeing any butterflies at all seemed optimistic to say the least and I expected a nil turn-out. Imagine then my surprise when ten stalwarts assembled in the car park under bright but total cloud cover and a very stiff breeze. If nothing else, it promised to be a day of getting back what you put into a situation and we would have to work hard for results.

Given the strength of the wind and occasional powerful gusts, I led the party away from the unfenced cliff path and up the slope to the Coastguard Station. The wind was particularly strong on the open ground so we found a sheltered corner where we hoped to find a species or two. Almost immediately, a Wall was spotted which was a pleasing start to the day. This was soon joined by a Gatekeeper, Meadow Brown and Small White, all of which were reluctant to fly due to the wind, even in the shelter of the scrub. A flash of ginger saw a Painted Lady greeting the wind head on, seemingly not bothered about the conditions and more than powerful enough to fly at will.

One of the site rangers came over for a chat and he suggested we try an area further along the path where there were

several war time trenches affording a degree of shelter and the prospect of some butterflies. A short search revealed a Large Skipper, Small Heath and the first Chalk-hill Blues. Both males and females were observed battling the wind and even making some headway which was remarkable as we were having trouble standing up let alone beating the wind!

Our next stop was the cliff ledge that would take us back to the car park and visitor centre. This part of the site usually turns up a Wall or two and today was no different with two being spotted, along with a pair of Small Whites. A female Chalk-hill Blue was observed egg laying in a sheltered spot and several male aberrations, where the dots on the underside were reduced or absent, were noted. My own observations at our White Hill reserve revealed similar anomalies. The reason for this is not fully understood but it is well known in this species and the reason why early collectors sought tray after tray of pinned insects. There is evidence to suggest that hot conditions during the pupal stage can give rise to this aberration and, given the extremely hot weather during July, it is quite possibly the cause in this case.

With the wind now reaching gale force on the ledge, we were finding butterflies in

every sheltered corner and even behind a single bush and we could only wonder at their resolve in such conditions. We made our way back to the car park and enjoyed a few more butterflies before we took a break for lunch. The shelter in the car was most welcome but the sun was shining so, after a cup of tea, we decided to check out the habitat above the top car park where the ranger had suggested we visit.

The site was perfect for butterflies and it was a shame the weather was so tough. Even so, we found plenty of Chalk-hill Blues and Gatekeepers and we will certainly include it in our future calendar. The weather had dictated our day but we had seen all target species and enjoyed bright skies all morning which is more than can be said for Maidstone where heavy rain ruled the day!



Steining Rifle Range

24th August 2019

Pete & Karen Hall

A group of four set off from Kent to join the Sussex Branch trip. The weather was going to be sunny, pretty still, with the temperature likely to get up to 25 degrees - perfect weather for the target species Brown Hairstreak.

We arrived at 10am and joined a group of 30 or more and were first given a brief talk on the history and management of the site. The site is on chalk downland which has a 400-yard length of blackthorn and wild plum hedge with large master trees behind. This is maintained by the Steining Downland Scheme who cut the hedgerow on a rotational basis to maintain areas of new growth that the butterflies prefer for egg laying.

Richard Roebuck gave us a quick talk on the Brown Hairstreak's life history and how to spot them. It helps to have 30 or more pairs of eyes. We were told that the males tend to stay high up in master trees, whilst the more colourful female flies straight down to lay their eggs on the blackthorn. They land on a stem and then spiral down it before turning back up to lay their eggs; all interesting and fascinating but we were keen to get going and find them. This we learnt was not a good plan because the butterflies were unlikely to fly until 11am or later. The group walked up to the range and then spread out along the hedge row. It was still only 10.30am.

I personally walked slowly to the far end of the hedge and may have seen one flying high in the trees. Not having seen a Brown Hairstreak before, and the fact it flew off out of sight very quickly, I didn't call it out. I wandered back along the hedge and was having a chat to Richard when a butterfly flew past us low to the ground. We both noticed it and then looked at each other with a 'I think that is one look'. We ran after it up the hill and Richard confirmed it was indeed a female and interestingly it landed on some red bartsia and fortunately stayed put. This allowed some others in the group to catch up and see it posing nicely and well positioned for the cameras.

Sometime later more females started to come down from the trees. Most went for the blackthorn, with some then moving from one place to another. From the general chit chat amongst the group I would say everybody got great views of the butterfly, wings both open and closed. Other butterflies that were spotted included a few Common Blue, Small Heath, Brimstone and Speckled Wood.

After a couple of hours we felt it was time to seek shade and have lunch. Before this we chatted to Richard and others in the group and decided to go to Mill Hill a Local Nature Reserve near Shoreham-by-Sea to look for the

Adonis Blue and possibly Long-tailed Blues that had been reported recently. We drove there and pulled into the first obvious car park. The site didn't look quite right for our plan but we had a look around and found a perfect Adonis Blue which allowed us a good view. This was a first life time sighting for two of our party. We decided to go further up along the road to another part of the downs that, from where we were, looked more promising. We pulled up and immediately an Adonis Blue flew past before we had got out of the car. We then walked onto the downs and

saw many more Adonis Blues as well as Small Heath, Comma, Painted Lady, Small Tortoiseshell and others, but no Long-tailed Blues unfortunately.

All in all, we had a great day and many thanks to Richard for his leading skills, advice and help. Steining Rifle Range is a site that I would recommend you visit for Brown Hairstreaks and then onto Mill Hill for other downland species, either with the Sussex group or as a 'solo' trip when the butterflies are likely to be seen, late July through to early September and after 11.30!



Brown Hairstreak, female (photo credit: Bob Eade)



Brown Hairstreak, female (photo credit: Iain Leach)



Brown Hairstreak, male (photo credit: Pete Withers)

KENT AND SOUTH EAST LONDON BRANCH

AGM & MEMBERS DAY



Butterfly
Conservation

Saving butterflies, moths and our environment

Kent & SE London Branch AGM & Members Day

Saturday 26th October

Lenham Community Centre
12 Groom Way, Lenham, Maidstone, ME17 2QT

Programme:

10.00 Doors open for members and guests to sign in and enter photos into the competition

10.30 **AGM. Agenda as follows:**

- Welcome
- Minutes of previous AGM* and matters arising
- Treasurer's report
- Reports by other Committee Officers
- Election of Committee
- Any other business

**The minutes of the 2018 AGM may be viewed in the 2019 spring edition of The Adonis*

Members Day:

- **Guest Speaker** – Dan Tuson on Stewardship Schemes
- **Lunch Break***
- **Guest Speaker** – May Webber on Big City Butterflies
- **Photo Competition Results & Raffle**

**A buffet lunch will be provided, please feel free to make a donation. You are also welcome to bring your own lunch if you prefer.*

Income & Expenditure for Year Ended 31st March 2019

	<u>2018/2019</u>	<u>2017/2018</u>
Income		
Subscriptions	6189	6000
Fund-raising	0	24
Donations	0	0
AGM Raffle & Lunch	20	
Transfer from SP Fund (KMP)	2000	81
VAT Refund	7	11
Bank Interest	179	100
Legacies	0	0
Gift Aid Tax Refund	0	0
Bank Charges Refund	0	0
	<u>8395</u>	<u>6216</u>
Expenditure		
Newsletter	1442	1456
Membership Costs	1038	574
AGM Expenses	80	0
Branch Liaison meetings	0	95
Subscriptions	50	50
PCs and Accessories	0	0
Kent Moth Project (KMP)	2000	0
Butterfly and Moth Reports	789	0
Office Expenses	41	0
Bank Charges	0	0
Reserve Management	478	102
Moth Recorders meeting	0	123
Branch Websites	0	0
VAT	0	0
Insurance	20	0
Committee Expenses	0	0
	<u>5938</u>	<u>2400</u>
Surplus	<u>2457</u>	<u>3816</u>

Balance Sheet at 31st March 2019

	<u>2018/2019</u>	<u>2017/2018</u>
Current Assets		
Bank Account	30640	30183
Represented by:-		
General Fund		
<u>Opening Balance</u>	10183	20367
Net Surplus	2457	3816
Transfer to Special Projects Fund	0	14000
Closing Balance	12640	10183
<u>Special Projects Fund</u>		
Opening Balance	20000	6000
Transfer From General Fund		14000
Transfer to General fund (KMP)	-2000	
Closing Balance	18000	20000
Total Funds	<u>30640</u>	<u>30183</u>

Notes:

Income: Mostly relates to Subscriptions and Bank interest.

Expenditure: Membership Costs are for posting the Newsletter and Butterfly Report.

Outgoing Subscription is for KWT membership.

Reserve Management covers fuel, training and safety equipment.

Special Project Fund: £12,000 is held for Kent Magnificent Moth Project costs in 2019/20.

