

# Hampshire and Isle of Wight Branch



Newsletter 104



Butterfly  
Conservation

April 2018



## Butterfly Reserves Walks 2018

### Walks on Magdalen Hill Down

Do join us for a **Wednesday Wander** or a **Friday Foray**, from spring through to late summer, and enjoy our fabulous downland reserve with its beautiful wildflowers and chalk grassland butterflies, other insects and birdlife. Meet in the gravel car park opposite the cemetery on Alresford Road, B3404, SU512295. (SatNav. SO21 1HE)

- 11 April**      **Meet 2:30pm**  
Leaders: Jenny Mallet and Brian Fletcher – Tel. 01962 882746  
Our first walk of the year to see early butterflies and cowslips.
- 2 May**      **Meet 2:30pm**  
Leaders: Jenny Mallet and Brian Fletcher – Tel. 01962 882746  
Come along to enjoy the butterflies and the spectacular display of cowslips. A leisurely walk with friendly company. All welcome, including dogs on short leads.
- 6 June**      **Meet 2:30pm**  
Leader: Jenny Mallet and Jayne Chapman – Tel. 01962 808400
- 22 June**      **Meet 11:00am** Leader: Pete Flood
- 4 July**      **Meet 11:00am**  
Leaders: Jenny Mallet and Jayne Chapman – Tel. 01962 808400
- 13 July**      **Meet 11:00am**  
Leaders: Jenny Mallet and Jayne Chapman – Tel. 01962 808400
- 20 July**      **Meet 11:00am** Leader: Pete Flood
- 1 August**      **Meet 11:00am**  
Leaders: Jenny Mallet and Brian Fletcher – Tel. 01962 802746
- 17 August**      **Meet 11:00am**  
Leaders: Jenny Mallet and Brian Fletcher – Tel. 01962 882746
- 5 September**      **Meet 11:00am**  
Leaders: Jenny Mallet and Brian Fletcher – Tel. 01962 882746

### Walks at Bentley Station Meadow

Meet in the Forestry Commission car park off Gravel Hill Road. Leave the A31 east of Bentley, signposted Alice Holt Research Station. Go along Gravel Hill Road, over a railway bridge. The car park is about 500 yards after the bridge on the right. SU802433

- 29 May**      **Meet at 2:30pm**      Leader: Jayne Chapman – Tel. 01962 808400
- 15 June**      **Meet at 2:30pm**      Leader: Arthur Greenwood – Tel. 07920 803900
- 10 July**      **Meet at 11:00am**      Leader: Jayne Chapman – Tel. 01962 808400  
A good chance to see a Purple Emperor.

### Walk on Yew Hill

Meet at the end of Old Kennels Lane at junction with Port Lane and Millers Lane, Oliver's Battery, SU451269.

- 21 July**      **Meet at 2:00pm**      Leader: Brian Fletcher – Tel. 01962 882746  
A good time to see Chalkhill Blue, many other butterflies and lovely wildflowers.



## Chairman's Message

I was struck by the following statement made by Theresa May when she introduced the Government's 25 Year Environment Plan in January:

*"In the UK alone, the amount of single-use plastic wasted every year would fill 1,000 Royal Albert Halls. This plastic is ingested by dozens of species of marine mammals and over 100 species of sea birds, causing immense suffering to individual creatures and degrading vital habitat. One in three fish caught in the English Channel contains pieces of plastic".*  
(<https://www.gov.uk/government/>)

Her pledge to eliminate all avoidable plastic waste within a quarter of a century rather begged the question of why wait to fill another 25,000 Royal Albert Halls. It would certainly be easy to be critical of the Plan. It lacks legal underpinning, quantifiable outcomes and clear milestones. Money barely gets a mention and the post-EU legislative framework cries out for a new Environment Act.

There was, however, much to cheer. The Plan talks about creating or restoring 500,000 hectares of wildlife-rich habitat outside the protected site network. It aims to recover threatened species of animals, plants and fungi. Development for housing or infrastructure should deliver a 'net environmental gain', an improvement on the current approach. Another goal is to prevent human-induced extinction or loss of known threatened species in England, albeit with the caveat, "where possible".

The Plan is impressive in its scope and tone despite the inevitable lack of detail. This may say something about where my expectations were pitched but hats off to the scientists in the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs. Coupled with encouraging noises over the future shape of farm subsidies, I was pleased to catch a glimpse of broad sunlit uplands in this era of Brexit knock-about.

2018 marks the **50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Butterfly Conservation** and the Branch will be working hard to support some of the core aims of the charity. Our shared priorities are:

- 1) To recover threatened butterflies and moths
- 2) To increase numbers of widespread species
- 3) To inspire people to understand and deliver species conservation

At the AGM in November we announced that agreement had been reached with Julie Williams, CEO of Butterfly Conservation, to transfer financial

responsibility for the three Branch reserves to Head Office with effect from 1st April this year. The Branch will continue to assist in the management of the Reserves but responsibility for a substantial shortfall in the income received will pass to Head Office from this date. This is a significant development since it removes the need for the Branch to set aside substantial funds to cover both planned and unplanned costs relating to the Reserves.

We propose to use this greater freedom to develop a more ambitious **conservation programme** using the new Regional Action Plan ("RAP") to guide our priorities. The Branch has a good track record in leading and supporting county and regional conservation initiatives and our Reserves will continue to act as exemplar sites for conservation work. However, the trends for many butterfly and moth species are not encouraging and I believe we need to be more ambitious with the conservation objectives that we set ourselves. We are a small charity but by forming partnerships with other conservation bodies I know that we can punch above our weight and make a real difference to the butterfly and moth fauna in our two counties.



*White-letter Hairstreak.  
Rosemary Powell*

Perhaps I can illustrate the point with an example. The Hampshire & IoW Wildlife Trust has recently been appointed to establish and manage a new 32Ha nature reserve in Winchester called Barton Meadows. This is mitigation land to create new habitat for wildlife displaced by the development on Barton Farm. The reserve will include two large wildflower meadows and a new permissive 2.75 km circular path around the perimeter of the site. We have been pleased to donate ten disease-resistant elms of two varieties to grow as both standards and shrubs. Hopefully they will provide habitat for the **White-letter Hairstreak**, one of our high priority RAP butterflies which has been recorded in the area. Better still would be for a volunteer to step forward to work with our Species Champion for the White-letter Hairstreak, Andrew Brookes, to extend the planting of new disease-resistant elms in suitable locations across the county. If you are interested, please get in touch!

We will share our conservation plans in more detail at our next **AGM on 18th November**. Last year's AGM was very well attended and we were entertained by two excellent talks from Neil Hulme of Butterfly Conservation and Jay Doyle of the Forestry Commission. We raised £225 in the raffle organised by Steve and Gwen Easter which was increased to £450 by donating the funds to BC's new Double Your Impact appeal. My thanks to all who donated prizes and bought tickets. And if you want to be reminded of the talent that resides within our membership, take a moment to look at some of the winning entries in the photographic competition on our Branch website: <http://www.hantsiow-butterflies.org.uk/2017%20Photographic%20Competition.php> The images are fantastic and hopefully will inspire even more of us to get snapping.

Later in this newsletter you will find details of one of the best **Walks/Field Trip programmes** of any Branch in the country and the latest on our project to re-introduce the **Marsh Fritillary** to north-east Hampshire. It promises to be a busy but enjoyable season ahead!

Best wishes,

*Clive Wood, Chair*



*Grayling.  
Rosemary Powell*



## Events and Shows Programme 2018

Please check the Branch website [www.hantsiow-butterflies.org.uk](http://www.hantsiow-butterflies.org.uk) for further information and for confirmation, nearer the time, that each event is going ahead.

- 29 April**     **Pondhead Open Day, near Lyndhurst, New Forest**  
Organiser – Bob Annell
- 28 May**     **Gilbert White Nature Festival, Selborne**  
10:30am to 5:00pm; Organiser – Kate Barrett
- 3 June**     **Fleet Pond Wildlife Day, Fleet**  
11:00am to 3:00pm; Organiser – Steve Easter
- 1 July**     **Brickfields Country Park Fun Day, Aldershot**  
11:00am to 4:00pm; Organiser – Steve Easter
- 7 July**     **The Skippers and Admirals Cruise, Odiham**  
(see page 23 of this newsletter)  
10:30am to 1:00pm; Organiser – Kelvin Richards
- 14 July**     **Open Day and Big Butterfly Count at Magdalen Hill Down**  
10:30am to 4:00pm; Organiser – Kate Barrett
- 3 August**     **Family Butterfly Day at Hillier Gardens, Romsey**  
Start 10:am; Organisers – Linda and Andy Barker
- 26 August**     **Graze Festival, near Twyford, Winchester**  
Organiser – Jayne Chapman
- 1 September**     **Test Valley Wood Fair, Knightwood Leisure Centre, Chandlers Ford**  
10:00am to 5:00pm; Organiser – Clive Wood
- 8 September**     **Romsey Show, Broadlands, Romsey**  
8:00am to 6:00pm; Organiser – Clive Wood
- 16 September**     **Lymington Reserves Open Day, Normandy Lane, Lymington**  
Organiser – Bob Annell
- 14 October**     **Blackmoor Apple Day, near Liss**  
9:30am to 5:00pm; Organiser – Clive Wood
- 18 November**     **Branch AGM at Littleton Village Hall**  
11:00 to 5:00pm;  
Organisers – Clive Wood and Mary Macmillan

*Clive Wood, Chair*



## Branch News

### David Walton

It was with great sadness that we learnt of the death of David Walton, a long-standing member of the Branch, shortly before Christmas. David was a wonderful supporter of Butterfly Conservation and helped our work in so many ways. He was a great help to our Reserves Officer when she first started to tackle the management issues at Bentley Station Meadow (BSM) and was a stalwart of many conservation work parties.

David knew that records were the building block of conservation work and he walked transects at BSM and the arduous transect at Foxlease Meadows. David was a generous supporter of the Marsh Fritillary re-introduction project at Foxlease and it is very sad that he will not be able to join us to see adult Marsh Fritillaries flying over north-east Hampshire later this year. We shall release some larvae in his name.

David had more than one string to his bow and was a leading figure in his local amateur dramatics society. Stage hand, chief set designer or head of lighting, it seemed that David could turn his hand to most things. But above all he was a wonderful family man and was held in great affection by those who knew him best.

We extend our condolences and best wishes to his family at this time and to his partner, Judith.

*Clive Wood, Chair*

### New members

A very warm welcome to the 140 new member households who have joined the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Branch of Butterfly Conservation since the publication of the autumn Newsletter. New members may be interested to join some of our events, reserve walks and many field trips held across both counties. The walks are a great way to meet fellow members and see many of our native butterflies and moths, and to enjoy some beautiful scenery and splendid variety of rich wildlife habitats.



*Duke of Burgundy.  
Rosemary Powell*

*Sharron Broadway,  
Membership Secretary*

## Turn old stamps and coins into cash!

If you have old coins and stamps buried in a dark cupboard in your home, why not bring them to the next Branch AGM in November and help us raise valuable funds for our conservation work? Please donate any and all coins and stamps, of any age and from any country, to the Branch. Apparently all old coins and stamps have some value. Stamps can be in albums or loose but taken off envelopes at a margin of around 1-2 cm. Old bank notes are also accepted from any country.

Simply bring the stamps and coins to the AGM and we will do the rest. There is no need to sort the items. If you cannot attend the AGM in person, please pass any donations to a friend or Branch Committee member. Start collecting!

*Clive Wood*

## Dan Hoare

Butterfly Conservation's Head of England Regions, Dan Hoare, is braving the challenge of the London Marathon in April to raise funds to protect butterflies and moths. Not only will he be taking on the gruelling 26.2-mile course, but to add more of a challenge he will also be doing it in costume. The more money he raises the more extreme the costume will be!

If he reaches £1,000 he will run the marathon with antenna; help him get to £3,000 and he will run with butterfly wings, and if you help him reach his final target of £6,000 he will run as the full lifecycle, complete with costume changes on route!

To find out more and sponsor him visit  
<https://uk.virginmoneygiving.com/DanHoare>

*Dan Hoare*



*Dan in action in 2010*



## Branch Photographic Competition Results

Another bumper selection of photographs at the 2017 Branch AGM, and well done and thank you to all those that entered to make it such a well-supported competition. As ever, keep your camera close by on your travels and join in the fun this November. Entry details will be included in the autumn newsletter.

### UK Butterflies

1st Three joint first places:  
Sue Lambert, Small Blue; and Sue Lambert, Silver-studded Blue;  
Ken Bailey, Clouded Yellow

### UK Moths

1st Gill Berry, Hummingbird Hawk-moth  
2nd Tony Rackham, Spectacle  
3rd John Stacey, Six-spot Burnet

### Immature stages

1st Tony Rackham, Comma\*  
2nd Betty Rackham, Tiger Moth

### Overseas butterflies and moths

1st Ken Bailey, Monarch  
2nd Ken Bailey, Carline Skipper  
3rd Three joint third places:  
Sharron Broadway, Damon Blue; Tony Rackham, Glasswing;  
Bob Whitmarsh, Apollo

### First time entrants

1st Christine Whiffen, Duke of Burgundy  
2nd Christine Whiffen, Small Pearl-bordered Fritillary  
3rd Two joint third places:  
Harriet Poland, Swallowtail; Penny Michaelides, Commas

\*Overall competition winner; see the back cover of this newsletter.



*Small Blue.  
Sue Lambert*



## Re-introducing the Marsh Fritillary

Our project to re-introduce the Marsh Fritillary to sites in north-east Hampshire usually follows the larvae into a form of hibernation over winter as nature's seasonal clock continues its course and progress slows. The Devil's-bit Scabious plants get an occasional drink and a late autumn prune. We keep an eye on the breeding cages and check for predators, winter hibernacula webs, holes in the meshing, loose doors and storm damage. Usually there is little activity to see and this winter there has been no need to send a report into Natural England. Instead, the breeders swop the occasional email and Andy Barker and myself catch up on overdue paperwork. We fret that the larvae will suffer if they emerge too early into a heavy frost or don't emerge at all. We re-assure ourselves that we have made good plans but worry that the plans are not good enough. I'm not going to compare myself with an expectant mother but drawing a parallel with a clucking hen is not entirely unjustified. The project has been 6 years and counting and it is proving to be quite a birth.

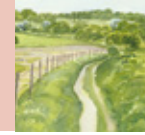


*Exciting early emergence of our Marsh Fritillary larvae. Clive Wood*

But then, the first emergences and the spirits soar! A few early larvae were seen basking on the 4th January whilst Andy and I were drilling drainage holes in the plant breeding trays. They were probably awoken by the racket. Just 20 or so but good to see, and an amazing six weeks earlier than last year. And then, during a mild spell in mid-February, the larvae emerged in their hundreds. The project team step up several gears and emails multiply like midges over a Scottish loch.

Roll on the seasonal clock to late April or May; this is when we expect to release the first larvae into the wild. I cannot wait!

***Clive Wood, Hampshire Marsh Fritillary Action Group***



## Reserves News

### **Magdalen Hill Down, Yew Hill, and Bentley Station Meadow**

What a very busy season we have had with a total of 23 planned work-parties across all three Hampshire reserves! At the time of writing, we had a staggering contribution of 606 volunteer hours from 17/10/17 to 20/2/18 at Magdalen Hill Down (MHD) alone. This is purely on practical conservation tasks and highlights both the magnitude of work that is required in managing a large reserve, and the generosity of people who give up their time to help us with this important work. These hours do not include volunteer effort in checking livestock, attending events, and helping with office duties.



*Magdalen munchers. Jayne Chapman*

The difference to some areas has been truly amazing and we look forward to large areas of derelict scrub returning to their former pristine habitat glory, with active ant-hills dotted across the chalk downland. The Tumuli area at MHD has long since had an area of derelict scrub and bramble to the western boundary, but thanks to a one-off payment of £980/ha, under the Countryside Stewardship scheme, we have cleared an area of 0.5ha. The Tumuli is an important breeding area for Brown Argus and Chalkhill Blue, as well as a haven for birds which utilise the remaining scrub, and any newly cut scrub that will be encouraged to regenerate, to provide new habitat and shelter. Species regularly seen at MHD include Green Woodpecker (observed flying into an abandoned rabbit burrow), Goldcrest, Goldfinch, Stonechat and Wren, and Fieldfare and Redwing enjoying the adjacent Allotment field.

## Hidden Treasures from the Past

It's amazing what turns up during the work parties that has either lain hidden or buried for many years. Much of what we find, including broken pottery and glass artefacts, can be directly traced to the former WW1 army camps that occupied the site in 1914. John Stacey, a regular volunteer, came across a stack of rusty tin plates under an old hedge at MHD. They appear to have the number of a regiment stamped on the rim – investigations are ongoing to find out a bit more on their history.

## Butterflies

2017 was a good year for butterflies. On MHD Original transect, the Grizzled Skipper had its best ever year and Brown Argus held the number one spot. Small Blue is now present on all 5 transects and all 5 MHD transects were in the top 20 across Hampshire for Chalkhill Blue. MHD was also the top spot in Hampshire for Common Blue. For more detailed information, please see the Butterfly Report (2017), published this spring and soon to be available on the branch website.



*Small Blue studies. Rosemary Powell*

Towards the end of 2017 the Jubilee Clump at MHD was fenced and gated to allow pulse-grazing by cattle. During the initial construction of this area in 2003 under the Hampshire County Council Management Plan, trees were planted and wildflowers sown and the area became a lovely place to walk and to sit and take in the views. However, no provision was made for future management, resulting in bramble and hawthorn scrub taking hold over the years. An area of this size is impossible to cut and rake manually, so the livestock were brought in to control the grasses and growth as elsewhere on the reserve. It is hoped that this area will mimic the habitat of Tree & Shrub East, which is continuing to look ideal for the Duke of Burgundy butterfly.



*Anna Young. Jayne Chapman*



*Lyndn and Elf Cup at BSM. Jayne Chapman*

## Dogs on the Reserves

In 2017 BC amended their policy of dogs on reserves. Due to consistent and persistent offenders of dogs out of control, or off leads where livestock were grazing, and owners not picking up after their dogs, we adopted the policy of dogs on leads across the reserve. This has been an unmitigated success (although inevitably there are still a few offenders). The message that we aim to get across to dog owners is that MHD is a nature reserve and not a dog park. Dogs are welcome, but must remain on a lead for the duration of the visit and, under the dog fouling act, dog mess must be collected and binned, or taken home. We hope that you will notice a positive difference when you visit this summer.



*Top. BC, South Downs National Park Countryside Access Team, with staff and volunteers. Below. Dean in action. Jayne Chapman*

## Educational Access

The Wild in Winchester project will be in full swing this summer, with walks from the Winchester Science Centre to MHD a big part of the project. The connecting bridleway between the two sites had become overgrown and the path uneven with old rabbit burrows and tree roots. On the 30th January, Kate Barrett (BC Education Officer), myself, our volunteers, the SDVRS and Abby Sullivan (Countryside Access team) upgraded the path, clearing branches and roots, and using wheelbarrows of scalplings to fill holes and level the surface. Well done team!

## Grazing News

The Icelandic horses that we were lucky enough to have at Bentley Station Meadow for two seasons have now moved with their owner to another county, so from 2018-19 we need to locate a few cattle to graze the reserve. MHD and Yew Hill cattle and sheep were once again provided by the HIWWT, and this year we had 10 in-calf cows. These have all now successfully calved at the Trust's farm, producing healthy calves on fodder of rough pasture that our nature reserves are able to provide over the winter.

## Diary Date

Please pop Sunday 22nd July in your diary and join us for a day of Ragwort thinning at MHD. Meet at 10:00am opposite St Swithun's School. The gate to the reserve is adjacent to the Masonic Lodge, SO21 1HD.

We look forward to welcoming old and new members alike to our reserves walks over the summer months. Please do contact me for further information, or if you would like to get involved with the work that we do.

*Jayne Chapman, Reserves Officer*

## Reserves Work Placement

We began our work placement with Jayne Chapman (Reserves Officer) and the team of volunteers at Magdalen Hill Down at the beginning of February. Luckily the sun was shining and before long we were all shedding layers; unfortunately the remaining days were less kind! The majority of our time was spent clearing and burning the scrub to help create and restore grassland habitats. Another important part of our work was checking all the fence posts across the site to see which ones needed replacing, an essential job to prevent the livestock from escaping. The most enjoyable part of all this was meeting and getting to know the group of dedicated and friendly volunteers, who are out in all weathers over the winter months. Of course the cakes were an added bonus! We spent some time working with Kate Barrett (Education Officer) at the office near Alresford, putting together resources for her teaching groups. You may spot some of our creations on the notice board (bird posters) next time you visit Magdalen Hill Down. We have had a fantastic learning experience and can't thank the team enough for their knowledge and support to ensure we got the most from our placement. We have thoroughly enjoyed our time with Butterfly Conservation.



*Alison and Sophie. Sophie Yeomanson*

*Alison and Sophie, February 2018*





## Butterfly Transects 2018

At the end of 2016 we had 140 transects in Hampshire and the Isle of Wight. This has now increased to 156, the most of any branch. We are looking for additional help with the transects detailed below.

### Help with existing transects

The first three are organised by Kelvin Richards. If you think you can help with any of these please contact Kelvin, **email: junctionfive@gmail.com**

**1 Foxlease Meadows North** MoD land, managed by HloWWT, near Junction 4a of M3. A rather strenuous walk (4.39km, 2.73miles round trip) over uneven terrain, damp in some parts and there may be cattle present.

**2 College Copse** HloWWT farm near Hook, with grassland and woodland. Involves climbing over a five-barred gate twice and there may be cattle present. Woodland stretch can be hard to follow. Actual transect is 2.04km/1.27miles but closer to 3.23km/2.00miles round trip from car park.

**3 Bentley Station Meadow** Our own reserve next to Bentley Station with neutral grassland and scrub, damp in one section, easy walking. Round trip from car park 3.09km, 1.92miles.

The next three existing transects are organised by Linda Barker. If these appeal, please contact Linda; **email: lindabarker4@btinternet.com**

**4 Browndown North** Near Gosport, 2.6km/1.6 miles in length, across an area of dry and wet heathland, and of particular interest for recording Grayling.

**5 Crab Wood** near Winchester, 1.3km/0.8 mile in length, mature broadleaved woodland, easy walking, and Silver-washed Fritillary and White Admiral are of particular interest.

**6 Wick Wood** North-east of Selborne, 3.1km in length, easy walking, and one of the top woodland sites in Hampshire for Silver-washed Fritillary and White Admiral.

### Help with new transects

**7 Yateley Common** We would like to set up a new transect on Yateley Common this year, with Silver-studded Blues of particular interest here. Please contact Linda Barker for further information.

**Linda Barker**



## Butterfly Recording 2018

### Annual Report

Thank you to all who have submitted 2017 butterfly records; at the time of writing we seem to be heading for 90,000. If we continue like this we will achieve our two-millionth record very soon!

We are looking for another one or two members to join the species writers for the 2018 Annual Report. If you think this is something you might like to help with, then please contact me.

Please send any images that you think might be suitable for this year's annual report as you take them and preferably before mid-November.

My thanks as usual for the support of the Records Sub-committee, their help in preparing the Annual Butterfly Report, and also the necessary ongoing task of reviewing the Hampshire Database to highlight and deal with any anomalies.

**Bob Annell**

### Wider Countryside Butterfly Survey

A Wider Countryside Butterfly Square has become vacant at Kitwood, between Ropley and Four Marks. The square is SU6633, with the route running along a footpath and local roads, through woodland, agricultural land and small settlements. This route needs to be walked a minimum of two times in the year, once in July and once in August. If you are interested in recording butterflies and are in easy reach of this square, please contact Jacky Adams on 023 8081 3671 or by email to **jackyna7579@gmail.com** and I will be happy to provide further information and support.

**Jacky Adams**



*Chalk Hill blues. Rosemary Powell*



## Hampshire Walks 2018

2018 will herald some new formats to the field trips programme. Some of the summer walks will start promptly at 09:30am as the Purple Emperor can be such a fickle creature, and I find 10:30am is sometimes too late to get on site to see it on the wing. Also some of the field trips are on a Thursday. I will be doing some longer walks as well, to please those of you who like walking for the pleasure of it; these will be taking in some of the well-known routes in and around Hampshire, known as 'Whitlock's Walks', and these will start at 10:00am and will be at least a couple of miles and aim to take most of the day.

The Branch is grateful to the site owners/managers of the places visited in our walks, for maintaining public access and safeguarding these very special places of wildlife interest.

*Note: the grid reference given is for the parking location/meeting point.*

### **Thursday 19 April, meet at 10:00am**

#### **Whitlock's Walk – Micheldever Woods (SU530363), site: Forestry Commission**

*Leader:* Ashley Whitlock, Tel: 02392 731266; Mobile: 07752 182340

*Directions:* Meet in the FC car park off Northington Lane on the south side of Micheldever Wood. Likely to be muddy so bring appropriate footwear.

*Aiming to see:* early butterflies and invertebrates, plus carpets of bluebells.

### **Sunday 29 April, meet at 10:30am**

#### **Petersfield Heath (SU754227)**

*Leader:* Ashley Whitlock, Tel: 02392 731266; Mobile: 07752 182340

*Directions:* Meet in the Petersfield Heath car park off the B2147, Sussex Road. Petersfield Heath covers around 90 acres (36 ha) and is a designated Site of Importance for Nature Conservation. A short walk of about 1 hour or so.

*Aiming to see:* early butterflies, moths and invertebrates, and waders and waterfowl.

### **Sunday 6 May, meet at 10:30am**

#### **Oxenbourne Down (SU717189)**

*Leader:* Ashley Whitlock, Tel: 02392 731266; Mobile: 07752 182340

*Directions:* Oxenbourne Down is just off the A3 near the Hogs Lodge pub, reached from the Charlton/East Meon junction. Pass the pub on the left and proceed down the A3 northbound slipway to meet in the small lay-by next to the old Petersfield Road café building. Bring a packed lunch.

*Aiming to see:* Green Hairstreak, Grizzled and Dingy Skipper and Duke of Burgundy.

### **Thursday 10 May, meet at 10:30am**

#### **Butser Hill (SU712201), site: Natural England**

*Leader:* Ashley Whitlock, Tel: 02392 731266; Mobile: 07752 182340

*Directions:* Meet in the hilltop car park at Butser Hill (Pay and Display).

This will be a strenuous walk taking in several Duke of Burgundy colonies. Bring a packed lunch.

*Aiming to see:* Duke of Burgundy, plus Cuckoo and Red Kite.

### **Thursday 17 May, meet at 10:30am**

#### **Stockbridge Down (west car park SU374346; east car park SU387345), site: National Trust**

*Leader:* Ashley Whitlock, Tel: 02392 731266; Mobile: 07752 182340

*Directions:* Stockbridge Down is 1 mile east of Stockbridge and 6 miles west of Winchester on the B3049. If the east car park is full, use the west car park and meet inside the reserve on the main path paralleling the main road between the two car parks. Bring a packed lunch.

*Aiming to see:* Pearl-bordered Fritillary, Duke of Burgundy, Brown Argus and Grizzled Skipper.

### **Sunday 19 May, meet at 11:00am**

#### **Sidney Wood, near Dunsfold, Surrey (TQ026352), site: Woodland Trust**

Arranged by Surrey Branch

*Leader:* Frances Kelly, email: fkfranciskelly2@gmail.com Mobile: 07952 285661

*Directions:* Meet at Sidney Wood car park, GU6 8JG, on the south side of Dunsfold Road, 1 mile west of the A281 Alfold crossways. A chance to see the rare Wood White in Surrey, and there will be a walk around Botany Bay if not successful in Sidney Wood. Please bring a packed lunch.

*Aiming to see:* Wood White.

### **Thursday 24 May, meet at 10:30am**

#### **Beacon Hill NNR (SU599227), site: Natural England**

*Leader:* Ashley Whitlock, Tel: 02392 731266; Mobile: 07752 182340

*Directions:* Beacon Hill NNR is to the west of the A32 reached from Exton or Warnford. Meet in the reserve car park. A look at a lesser-known Duke of Burgundy site with some steep slopes that may be slippery after rain. Bring a packed lunch.

In the afternoon, if time allows, we will visit Stephens Castle Down, but there is no parking here so space only for one shared car.

*Aiming to see:* Brown Argus, Duke of Burgundy, Green Hairstreak, plus Buzzard.

### **Sunday 27 May, meet at 10:30am**

#### **Martin Down and Kitts Grave (SU036200), site: Natural England**

*Leader:* Ashley Whitlock, Tel: 02392 731266; Mobile: 07752 182340

*Directions:* Meet in the nature reserve's main car park, off the A354, 11 miles south-west of Salisbury. This national nature reserve is a large tract of open chalk grassland with many species of wildflowers, butterflies and moths. Bring lunch. We may well look for Duke of Burgundy near to the reserve's other car park in the afternoon.

*Aiming to see:* Adonis Blue, Small Blue, Brown Argus and Marsh Fritillary.

**Saturday 2 June, meet at 10:30am**

**Old Burghclere Lime Quarry (SU469578), site: HIOWWT**

Arranged by Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust

*Leader:* Mervyn Grist, Tel: 01264 358737

*Directions:* Meet in the old station farmyard to left of gate, reached by a rough lane, south off minor road through Old Burghclere between the manor house and old railway bridge. The large quarry is a short walk away. Donations invited. Bring a packed lunch.

*Aiming to see:* Small Blue, Grizzled Skipper and Wood Tiger Moth.

**Sunday 3 June, meet at 10:30am**

**Bentley Wood (SU258291), site: Trustees of Bentley Wood**

*Leader:* Ashley Whitlock, Tel: 02392 731266; Mobile: 07752 182340

*Directions:* Meet at Bentley Wood car park, just across the Wiltshire border, reached along a track signed off Scouts Lane, which runs between West Dean and Middle Winterslow to the east of Salisbury. Good invertebrates and birdlife. Bring a packed lunch.

*Aiming to see:* Pearl-bordered and Small Pearl-bordered Fritillary, Argent and Sable Moth.

**Saturday 23 June, meet at 10:30am – Caterpillar Hunt**

**Butser Hill (SU712201), site: Natural England**

*Leader:* Ashley Whitlock, Tel: 02392 731266; Mobile: 07752 182340

*Directions:* Meet in the hilltop car park at Butser Hill (Pay and Display). A successful and popular field trip in recent seasons, and let's see if we can do as well this year. Very steep in places. Bring a packed lunch.

*Aiming to see:* Dark Green Fritillary, Small Heath, Brown Argus and Green Hairstreak.

**Sunday 24 June, meet at 10:30am**

**Bramshott Common (SU855337)**

*Leader:* Arthur Greenwood, Tel: 01428 604730; Mobile: 07920 803900

*Directions:* Meet in the car park at the end of Rectory Lane. This can be reached directly off the A3 northbound, taking the lane-turning after the Liphook interchange (this is just before you get to the top of the hill, do not miss it! – there is no access to Rectory Lane from the southbound A3) or leave A3 at Liphook interchange and turn immediately right into Church Lane which leads on to Rectory Lane.

*Aiming to see:* Silver-studded Blue, and other heathland flora and fauna.

**Sunday 1 July, meet at 10:00am**

**Whitlock's Walk – Hawkley to Wheatham Hill (SU746292)**

*Leader:* Ashley Whitlock, Tel: 02392 731266; Mobile: 07752 182340

*Directions:* A walk of about 3 miles starting from Hawkley, heading south to Wheatham Hill, where there are possible colonies of White-Letter Hairstreak.

A landscape of rolling Beech-clad hills, a hidden flower-filled valley and undulating farmland. Park by the village green or the church in Hawkley. Bring a packed lunch; post-walk drink at the Hawkley Inn.

*Aiming to see:* White-letter Hairstreak, Purple Hairstreak and, possibly, Purple Emperor.

**Thursday 5 July, meet at 09:30am**

**Abbotts Wood Inclosure (SU810410), site: Forestry Commission**

*Leader:* Ashley Whitlock, Tel: 02392 731266; Mobile: 07752 182340

*Directions:* Meet at the Abbots Wood Inclosure car park off Dockenfield Street, just south-east of the Halfway House pub.

*Aiming to see:* Purple Emperor, White Admiral, and Silver-washed Fritillary.

**Sunday 8 July, meet at 09:30am**

**West Wood, Crab Wood and Pitt Down (SU420292), site: Forestry Commission and HCC**

*Leader:* Ashley Whitlock, Tel: 02392 731266; Mobile: 07752 182340

*Directions:* Meet in Spindle Trees car park, signed off Sarum Road on Pitt Down, one of several Farley Mount Country Park car parks. Bring lunch. In the morning we will circumnavigate West Wood and look in on Crab Wood, and walk on Pitt Down in the afternoon.

*Aiming to see:* Purple Emperor, White Admiral, Silver-washed and Dark Green Fritillary, and Tiger Moths.

**Thursday 12 July, meet at 09:30am**

**Whiteley Pastures and Botley Wood (SU532096), site: Forestry Commission**

*Leader:* Ashley Whitlock, Tel: 02392 731266; Mobile: 07752 182340

*Directions:* Meet in the Whitley Outlet Village car park (max. 3 hours free before payment) reached off Whiteley Way from M27 J9. Bring a packed lunch.

*Aiming to see:* Purple Emperor, Purple Hairstreak, White Admiral, Silver-washed Fritillary

**Saturday 14 July, meet at 10:30am**

**Swanwick Lakes Nature Reserve (SU506099), site: HIOWWT**

*Leader:* Ashley Whitlock, Tel: 02392 731266; Mobile: 07752 182340

*Directions:* Meet at the reserve off Sopwith Way, which is off Swanwick Lane (just north of M27). At the end of Sopwith Way turn right at the mini-roundabout in front of the NATS security gates.

*Aiming to see:* Purple Emperor, White Admiral, plus Kingfisher and Great Crested Newt.

**Thursday 19 July, meet at 09:30am**

**Whitlock's Walk – West Harting Down (SU739156)**

*Leader:* Ashley Whitlock, Tel: 02392 731266; Mobile: 07752 182340

*Directions:* Meet in the lane just over the railway bridge east of Charlton village. From the A3 take the Butser Ancient Farm exit and at Charlton turn left before the Red Lion and then cross the railway. The lane (to Ditcham Park School) is immediately left with limited parking on the left-hand side.

*Aiming to see:* Purple Emperor, Silver-washed and Dark Green Fritillary, and Hummingbird Hawk-moth.

**Sunday 22 July, meet at 10:30am**

**Ampfield Wood (SU375237), site: Forestry Commission**

Arranged by Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust

Booking required, with a small donation

*Leader:* Coral Newton, Tel: 01794 523759; Email: coralnewton99@gmail.com

*Directions:* Meet in the Sir Harold Hillier Gardens car park (SO51 0QA), north of Romsey. Bring a packed lunch.

*Aiming to see:* Purple Emperor, Purple Hairstreak, and Silver-washed Fritillary.

**Sunday 29 July, meet at 6:30pm (evening walk)**

**Sinah Warren, Hayling Island (SZ697995)**

*Leader:* Ashley Whitlock, Tel: 02392 731266; Mobile: 07752 182340

*Directions:* On Hayling Island, drive south along the A3023 to the last roundabout before the beach, go right following signs to Hayling Golf Club/Sinah Warren, and park opposite the holiday village on Ferry Road. An area of scrubby oak where observations of Purple Hairstreak should be easy.

*Aiming to see:* Purple Hairstreak, Grayling and Red Underwing Moths.

**Thursday 16 August, meet at 10:30am**

**Broughton Down (SU296325), site: HLOWWT**

*Leader:* Ashley Whitlock, Tel: 02392 731266; Mobile: 07752 182340

*Directions:* Park in Buckholt Road, west out of Broughton, or in the village, from which walk along Queenswood Road, bear right along the B3084 then go left along Buckholt road; where this ends take the middle of the three ongoing tracks to climb to the reserve. Bring a packed lunch.

*Aiming to see:* Silver-spotted Skipper, Adonis Blue.

**Saturday 18 August, meet at 10:30am**

**Perham Ranges (SU234462), site: MOD**

Arranged by Bulford Conservation Group

*Leader:* John Moon, Tel: 01264 710123; Mobile: 07598 874899

*Directions:* Cars to assemble at the tank crossing on the Shipton Bellinger to Tidworth road, A338, (grid ref: SU23414623). Then drive up the tank track further into the ranges to park. Bring a packed lunch.

*Aiming to see:* Brown Hairstreak, Silver-spotted Skipper, and Dark Green Fritillary.

**Thursday 23 August, meet at 10:30am**

**Yew Tree Heath, New Forest (SU351064)**

*Leader:* Ashley Whitlock, Tel: 02392 731266; Mobile: 07752 182340

*Directions:* Meet in the Forestry Commission Beaulieu Road car park opposite Beaulieu Road Station, midway between Lyndhurst and Beaulieu. Bring a packed lunch.

*Aiming to see:* Grayling, Small Heath and, possibly, late Dark Green Fritillary.

**Sunday 26 August, meet at 10:00am**

**Whitlock's Walk – Keyhaven and Pennington Marshes (SZ306915)**

*Leader:* Ashley Whitlock, Tel: 02392 731266; Mobile: 07752 182340

*Directions:* Meet in Keyhaven car park (Pay and Display) opposite the Gun Inn; potential parking along Saltgrass Lane. This is a 3-mile walk along the Solent Way in search of one of Hampshire's most endangered butterfly species, in recent years only seen in this area. Bring a packed lunch.

*Aiming to see:* Wall Brown, plus coastal flora and birdlife.

**Saturday 1 September, meet at 10:30am**

**Old Winchester Hill (SU645214), site: Natural England**

*Leader:* Ashley Whitlock, Tel: 02392 731266; Mobile: 07752 182340

*Directions:* Meet in the nature reserve's car park, which is signposted off the A32 at Warnford. Steep hillsides in places.

*Aiming to see:* Silver-spotted Skipper, Adonis Blue and Clouded Yellow.

**Saturday 8 September, meet at 10:30am**

**Gunner Point, Hayling Island (SZ688999)**

*Leader:* Ashley Whitlock, Tel: 02392 731266; Mobile: 07752 182340

*Directions:* Meet in the car park by the Ferryboat Inn, off Ferry Road, on the south-western tip of Hayling Island overlooking Langstone Harbour. Pie and a pint in the Ferryboat Inn afterwards.

*Aiming to see:* Small Copper, Clouded Yellow and, possibly, Grayling.

**Field trips are for everyone.** Rough terrain over fields and woods could, most regrettably, make access impossible for some people with mobility issues. Please check with the leader if in doubt. Field trips can be enjoyed by everyone, whether butterfly-novice or expert. Photographers, children (with adult supervision) and first-time field trippers, YOU ARE ALL WELCOME!

If the weather looks inclement then please phone the leader of the field trip advertised. I will change the date of my field trips if the 5-day forecast suggests the weather is going to be wet and windy, so look out for this on the Branch website and on the Hampshire Butterfly Facebook page.

**Ashley Whitlock, Field Trips Organiser**

Tel: 02392 731266

Mobile: 07752 812340

e-mail: ashleyrwhitlock@virginmedia.com



## Isle of Wight walks 2018

**Wednesday 16 May, meet at 10:00am**

**Whealers Bay, Ventnor (SZ569775)**

*Leader:* Andy Butler, Tel: 01983 854925

*Directions:* Meet in the Wheelers Bay car park (free), off Wheelers Bay Road, Ventnor, for a walk along the revetment to see the management that has been carried out for Glanville Fritillaries.

*Aiming to see:* Glanville Fritillary

**Friday 1 June, meet at 10:30am**

**Compton Chine (SZ367854); site: National Trust**

*Leader:* Sue Davies, Tel: 07702 151312

*Directions:* Meet in the National Trust Afton Down chalk-pit car park off the A305 Military Road. On the No. 12 bus route. Some steep steps and uneven ground so wear sturdy footwear. Note that if the weather is bad on the day, this walk may be rescheduled for Saturday 2 June. Please contact Sue for further information.

*Aiming to see:* Glanville Fritillary, Wall, Green Hairstreak, Small and Adonis Blue.

**Saturday 7 July, meet at 1:00pm**

**Newtown NNR (SZ429905); site: National Trust**

*Leader:* Stuart Read, Tel: 07877 333734, Email: s.jread@btinternet.com

*Directions:* Meet at the entrance to Walter's Copse. Park carefully on the side of the road between Town Copse and Walter's Copse.

*Aiming to see:* White Admiral, Silver-washed Fritillary, Purple Hairstreak

**Tuesday 7 August, meet at 10:30am**

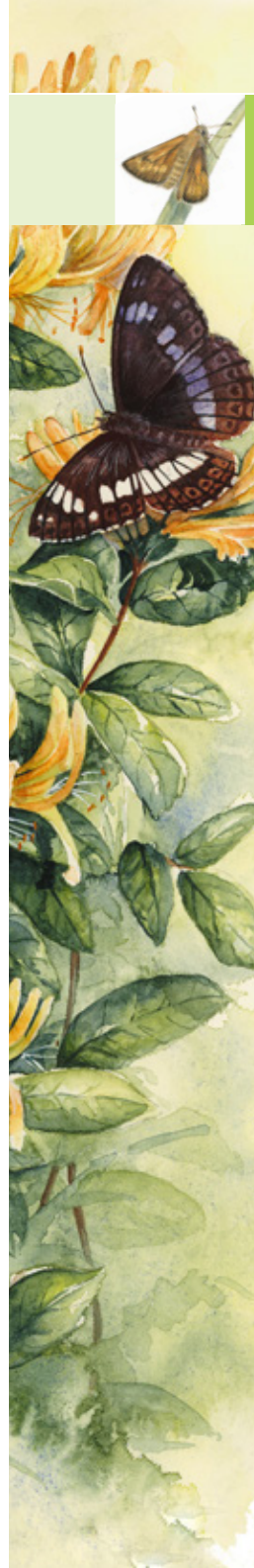
**Mottistone Down (SZ420845), site: National Trust**

*Leader:* Caroline Dudley, Tel: 01983 754935

*Directions:* Meet in the NT Jubilee car park, Mottistone Down. Some steep slopes and uneven ground so please wear sturdy footwear.

*Aiming to see:* Grayling and other downland species

**Caroline Dudley, IoW Events Organiser**



## Skippers and Admirals Cruise

**The 'field trip' with a difference!**

**Saturday 7 July 2018**



A 2½-hour cruise on the Basingstoke Canal SSSI

- Depart 10:30am from Colt Hill Wharf, Odiham (10 minutes from M3, junction 5)
- Return around 1:00pm
- Fish and chips lunch on board
- Plus licensed bar with light refreshments, teas and coffees
- Relax, chat, enjoy the scenery... and spot some butterflies

Plus, optional afternoon walk around Odiham Common SSSI.

£16/person for the cruise and lunch (maximum 50 places available). All profits go to the Branch.

Contact Kelvin Richards for booking and further information, email: [junctionfive@gmail.com](mailto:junctionfive@gmail.com)

Go to <http://www.hantsiow-butterflies.org.uk/events.php> for the link to the cruise web page.



**Kelvin Richards**

*White Admiral, Red Admiral & Grizzled Skipper.  
Rosemary Powell*



## Wildlife Gardening: Using Containers

If you have a very small garden, or even just a sunny balcony or windowsill, you can still give wildlife a helping hand by planting pots full of nectar-bearing flowers. Butterfly Conservation has been promoting “Pots for Pollinators” on their website <https://butterfly-conservation.org/10759/plant-pots-for-pollinators.html>, which gives lots of good suggestions. Tubs, pots, hanging baskets and window boxes can all be pressed into service. It’s best to think in terms of all pollinators, as you are more likely to get bees and hoverflies coming to your pots, than butterflies and moths. You will be dependent on the surrounding habitat for attracting butterflies: if they are there, they may well find your pots. The most likely are whites, Peacock, Red Admiral or Small Tortoiseshell, all pretty mobile species. The most important thing is to ensure that you place whatever container you plant in a sunny spot.

You can use almost any plant you like; annuals and tender perennials are fine, but avoid bedding plants as most of them have no nectar or pollen and are quite sterile and of no use to insects. Double flowers are also of less use as they have limited amounts of nectar which is often hard to reach.

As with gardening in the open ground a long season of interest is the most beneficial; early emerging insects need nectar and pollen urgently, and late in the year many bumblebees are feeding up for winter hibernation. You could change your pot display seasonally. In spring bulbs like crocuses have accessible pollen, and primroses are always a hit with Brimstone and other insects. A container planted with herbs which are allowed to flower, such as chives, hyssop, lavender, oregano or thyme acts as a magnet. If you can vary flowering times you get a constant succession of insects inspecting your offerings.



When summer arrives you have a wide choice of plants. Long-tongued bumblebees such as the Garden Bumblebee (*Bombus hortorum*) or the Common Carder Bee (*Bombus pascuorum*) enjoy tubular flowers, whereas short-tongued types, which are most of the others you are likely to attract, like open single flowers where the pollen and nectar are easily accessed. Single open flowers are best for butterflies and moths, and moths especially are attracted to night-scented flowers. The greater the range of flowers you provide, the more pollinators you will see.

Many plants are suitable for growing in pots. Some good choices would be Catmint (*Nepeta racemosa*), adored by bees and butterflies, cranesbill geraniums (e.g. *Geranium* ‘Rozanne’) or Cosmos (*Cosmos binpinatus*) with their open accessible forms and long flowering season, Lamb’s Ears (*Stachys byzantina*) nectar-rich and attractive to carder bees, Shasta Daisy (*Leucanthemum x superbum* ‘Snow Lady’), a mass of long-lasting blooms. *Agastache* (Giant Hyssop) and *Liatris* (Gayfeather), both with long flower spikes packed with flowers, are also good.

For a wilder display it would be worth trying a pot of heather (*Calluna vulgaris*), or some combination of Clustered Bellflower (*Campanula glomerata*) with Cornflower (*Centaurea cyanus*), and Greater Knapweed (*Centaurea scabiosa*). Any flower with a compound head (which is made up of many small flowers appearing as a single bloom) is very valuable: alliums, daisies, coneflowers, teasel, *Echinops*, Agapanthus, *Armeria maritima* (sea pink) or Scabious are all examples.

To ensure good drainage in your container add grit to the potting compost (use a good peat-free one); the compost will contain enough nutrients for six weeks. Thereafter, for a longer-lasting display, you need to apply a liquid feed, such as dilute tomato feed. Dead-heading also ensures a longer display.



Juliet Bloss



## Actively Seeking *Juvernica*

I have always been keen on seeing new species of butterfly, especially if they occur in the UK, and one that was high on my list is the Cryptic Wood White (*Leptidea juvernica*). This recently-discovered butterfly is almost identical to the Wood White (*Leptidea sinapis*) and was originally described as Réal's Wood White (*Leptidea reali*). However, in 2011, Réal's Wood White was itself taxonomically reclassified, resulting in another new species - the Cryptic Wood White. It is found across Ireland with the exception of The Burren, a limestone area in north-west County Clare. Current evidence suggests that there is no overlap in distribution between the Wood White and Cryptic Wood White; the Wood White being confined to areas of The Burren and south-east Galway in the west of Ireland.

I then set about planning a trip to Northern Ireland for the 12-15th of June, as this seemed to be the optimum time to see both the Cryptic Wood White and Irish Damselfly (*Coenagrion lunulatum*), another species I was keen to see. After much correspondence with Ian Rippey, I booked a flight from Southampton to Belfast, three days accommodation at Aghalee in County Antrim, and hired a car for the duration of the visit.



Irish Damselfly (*Coenagrion lunulatum*). Illustration Dan Powell. Photo Dave Pearson.

The first day started with what you could typically be described as a 'soft day' being generally grey, cloudy, with occasional light rain and hardly any wind. I decided to concentrate on finding Irish Damselfly as conditions were not ideal for butterflies, and visited an area of the Montiags Moss NNR recommended by Ian. This involved negotiating some very boggy ground where I soon found six males holding territory around some water-filled peat workings. Due to the weather these individuals afforded some good, albeit distant, photographic opportunities as they were reluctant to move too far in the cool and overcast conditions.

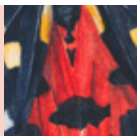
As the day progressed the weather improved with some long sunny intervals, although the wind had picked up significantly. I decided it might be best to try for the Cryptic Wood White during the afternoon as the forecast for the next day was not promising. I then headed over to Craigavon Lakes in County Armagh to an area suggested by Ian where he had seen around 50 individuals at the end of May. The temperature had now improved and, despite the brisk wind, conditions were suitable for butterflies. Keeping to the area south of the railway line which afforded some shelter, I soon found at least eight active Cryptic Wood Whites, probably males seeking females, only stopping to nectar very briefly. Their energetic activity was quite different to that of the Wood Whites I had seen previously in the UK. I was just thinking that I would find it hard to get any photographs when I found one nectaring on some Tufted Vetch (*Vicia cracca*) which allowed me to get close. Very few other butterflies were seen in that area, just one (Irish) Green-veined White (*Pieris napi ssp. britannica*) and a Ringlet (*Aphantopus hyperantus*). Afterwards, I drove over to Oxford Island and had a look round, but there were few butterflies to be found.



Cryptic Wood White (*Leptidea juvernica*). Dave Pearson

The weather on the next day was much colder with more cloud and wind so I went over to Castle Ward in County Down and looked round the estate and Strangford Lough. I did not see a single invertebrate so concentrated instead on the local bird and plant life. The last day was even windier with heavy showers developing so I made a quick excursion to the Belfast Hills before retreating to Lisburn, and its excellent museum, then driving to the airport.

All in all I was very pleased with the trip. I had managed to see good numbers of both my target species. I shall definitely be visiting the area again soon, hopefully with some better Irish weather!



## Gilbert White's Garden Moth Night 2017

Moths are sensitive indicators of the health of the natural environment and a vital part of the food chain; something which didn't escape the attention of Gilbert White as early as the 18th century. On Friday 13th October 2017, and the following morning, we participated in the national celebration of moths scheduled each year by Butterfly Conservation and Atropos <http://www.mothnight.info/home> The aims of Moth Night are to introduce moths to a new audience, and to encourage their study; aims very consistent with the vision of the Museum. This year the organisers set a particular challenge by choosing several nights in October for the event with a theme of 'Ivy and Sugaring'.

Searching ivy blossom at night has proven an effective way of recording moths during the autumn. At this time of year it can also attract scarcer migrant insects in addition to resident species. Sugaring, using a combination of molasses, black treacle and stout, with maybe the addition of a little rum or fruit, applied to posts and tree trunks, can also attract moths to study which might not often be attracted to other observation lures. Many moths are also known to be attracted to light. So to improve our chances of providing something of interest to study, we prepared by installing light traps, applying some sugaring to posts and some tree trunks, as well as identifying the location of the all important ivy in the garden.



*Large Ranunculus (Polymixis flavicincta). Chris Piper*

There was a nice balance of experience among the participants from those relatively experienced in the study of moths, but still learning, to those new to moths and wishing to learn more. It proved to be a fascinating evening for everyone with new species even for the most experienced.

After some tips on what to look out for, we explored the garden and grounds by torchlight. The spirit of Gilbert White was among us. If only we had possessed his exceptional observation skills. The evening started well with a Large Ranunculus moth spotted resting on a bench near the Yew Hedge by the house. Very soon we found the next moth of the evening, a Tawny Pinion, on a sugared post.

Despite such early success this proved to be the last moth we found attracted to the sugar! For reasons which will remain a puzzle, the ivy in the grounds didn't appear to attract moths or other night-time insects despite attracting pollinators and feeders, such as Red Admiral butterflies, during the day, including on Saturday morning.

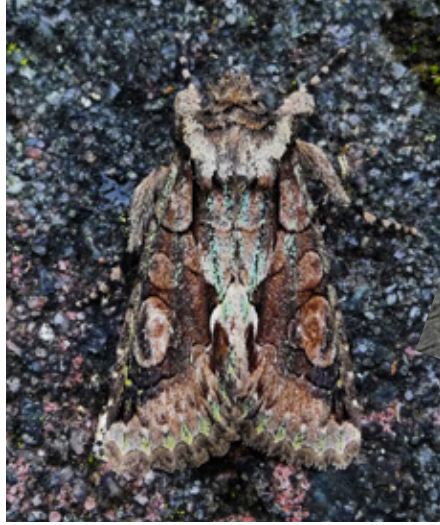


*left Swallow-tailed Moth (Ourapteryx sambucaria). Chris Piper  
right Four-spotted Footman (Lithosia quadra). Chris Piper*

There was plenty of interest to excite and delight despite the absence of moths on ivy. One participant was delighted to spot a Swallow-tailed Moth on the *Mirabilis Jalapa* (Marvel of Peru) by the Yew Hedge, probably attracted by the adjacent light trap, as well as the night time pollen of the plant. That hedge behind the light seemed to be attractive to a range of other moths too, such as Black Rustic and Straw Dot. We saw plenty of other invertebrates including a rather fine parasitoid wasp and a shield bug enjoying some sugar. An eft (juvenile newt) was seen under torchlight in the wildlife pond. The light traps proved once again a great success and we were able to see many examples of a wide range of resident autumn moths, including beautiful examples during the evening such as Light Emerald.

On Saturday morning, we opened the light traps to discover which moths had additionally been attracted during the rest of the night. This proved to be very exciting as, among the moths to be expected for this time of year, we saw a *Nationally Scarce* Female Four-spotted Footman - a probable immigrant to this part of the country, perhaps thanks to the earlier strong south-westerly winds and the warm temperatures. There are suggestions, though, that this species has taken up residence in the New Forest and at Haslemere in recent years. It was, nevertheless, a beautiful moth and new for the garden and for everyone that saw it.





left Green-brindled Crescent (*Allophytes oxyacanthae*). Chris Piper  
right *Evergestis limbata*. Chris Piper

The final moth tally for the event was twenty-eight species. Thanks to an unseasonably warm evening with a low of 15°C this was an exceptional record. There were six new species observed in the garden taking the list here beyond 250 species. Moths such as Black Rustic, Straw Dot, Beaded Chestnut, Common Marbled Carpet, Brimstone, Green-brindled Crescent and Setaceous Hebrew Character were out in numbers. In addition to the Four-spotted Footman, a smaller micro moth, *Evergestis limbata*, was a nice surprise too so late in the year - a moth that was once regarded as Nationally Scarce but is now appearing more frequently as a result of a probable locally established population. All Lepidoptera records will be reported into Butterfly Conservation and retained for Hampshire biodiversity records. Unlike in the 18th century from what is read, all the insects were safely released back to suitable habitats.

The Gilbert White's House garden is a very special place at night as well as during the day. We were entertained by the occasional Tawny Owl and bat during the evening and in the morning by the typical autumn song of Robin and Long-tailed Tits along with the calls of Green Woodpecker, Nuthatch and Buzzard. 'The redbreast's note is very sweet, & pleasing; did it not carry with it ugly associations of ideas, & put us in mind of the approach of winter.' wrote Gilbert White in October 1776.

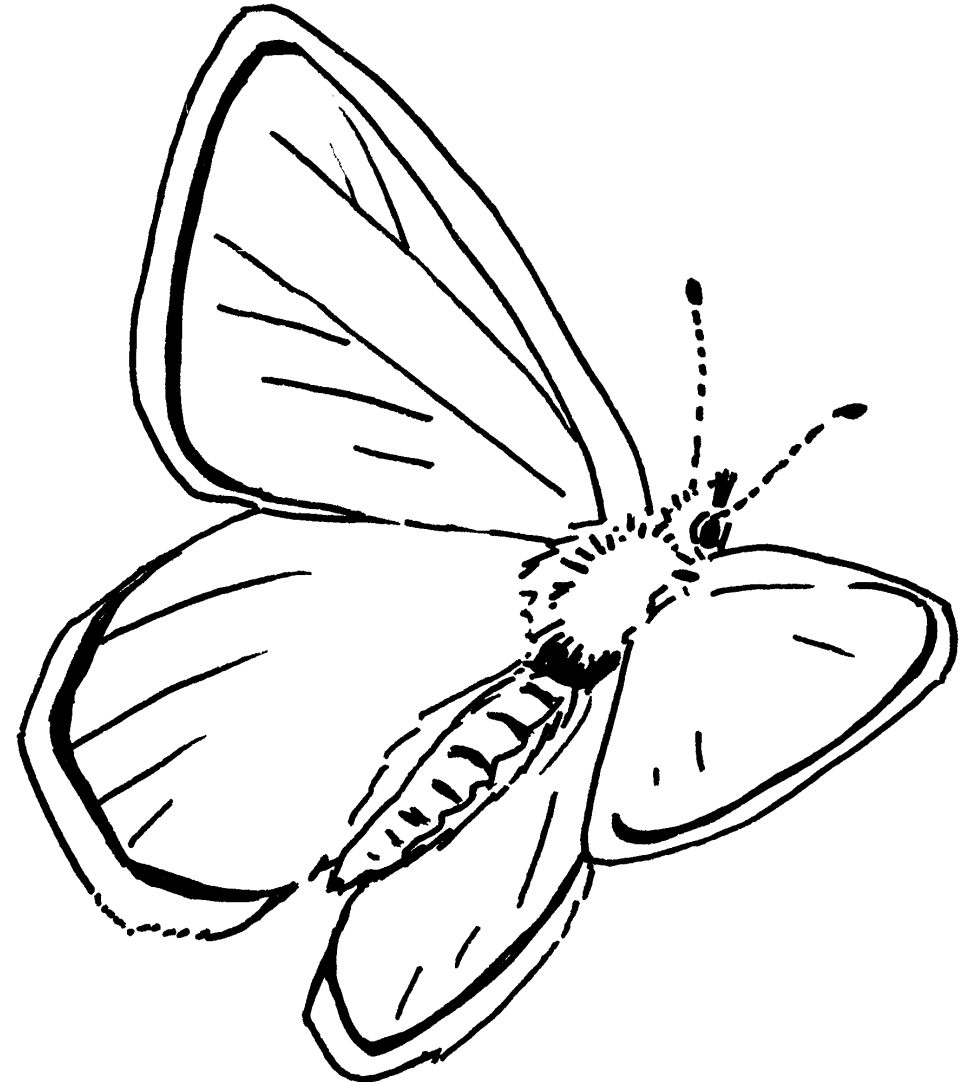
This felt very much like one of those "Inspiring Journeys of Discovery in the Natural World" for all those that participated. Look out for similar events throughout this year including as part of the Nature Festival in May 2018.

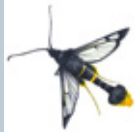
**Chris Piper**



## Colour me in

Share your coloured picture with us by posting on the branch Facebook page.  
<https://m.facebook.com/ButterflyConservationHampshireAndIsleOfWight>





## Useful Contacts www.hantsiow-butterflies.org.uk

**Chairman:** Clive Wood, Tel: 01962 852620; Mob: 07833 088150;  
Email: clivepwood@gmail.com

**Vice-Chairman:** Mike Wall, Mob: 07981 984761; Email: mike@hantsmoths.org.uk

**Branch Organiser:** Mary Macmillan, Tel: 01590 719563; Mob: 07803 022389;  
Email: marymacmillan.mm@gmail.com

**Treasurer:** Bridget Grande, Wield Manor Cottage, Upper Wield, Alresford, SO24 9RS;  
Tel: 01420 562876; Mob: 07768 741273; Email: grande.bridge@gmail.com

**Minutes Secretary:** Kate Barrett, Email: kneame@gmail.com

**Butterfly Recorder:** Bob Annell, Tel: 02380 840316; Email: grahants23@gmail.com

**Butterfly Recorder (IoW):** Andy Butler, Email: a.butler321@btinternet.com

**Transect Recorders:** Linda & Andy Barker, 13 Ashdown Close, Chandlers Ford,  
Eastleigh, SO53 5QF; Tel: 02380 270042; Email: lindabarker4@btinternet.com

**Moth Recorder (Hants):** Mike Wall, Email: mike@hantsmoths.org.uk

**Moth Recorder (IoW):** Iain Outlaw, Email: zoothera@live.co.uk

**Chairman Information Subcommittee:** Abby Sullivan,  
Email: abby.sullivan1990@outlook.com

**Chairman Records Subcommittee:** Bob Annell, 23 Ashleigh Close, Hythe, Southampton,  
Hampshire, SO45 3QN; Tel: 02380 840316; Email: grahants23@gmail.com

**Chairman Reserves Subcommittee:** Jenny Mallett, Great Fontley Farm, Fareham,  
PO15 6EA; Tel: 01329 832177; Email: jbm.gff23@gmail.com

**Webmaster:** Bob Whitmarsh, Email: webmaster@hantsiow-butterflies.org.uk

**Newsletter Editor:** Kevin Freeborn, Mob: 07929 278582;  
Email: kevinfreeborn@btinternet.com

**Reserves Officer and Health & Safety:** Jayne Chapman, Tel: 01962 808400;  
Email: jchapman@butterfly-conservation.org

**Financial Adviser:** Arthur Greenwood, Tel: 01428 604730;  
Email: greenwoodarthur@hotmail.com

**Membership Secretary:** Sharron Broadway, Email: sharron\_broadway@hotmail.com

**Publicity Officer:** Richard Lemon, Email: richardlemonjnr@gmail.com

**Field Meetings Organiser:** Ashley Whitlock, Tel: 02392 731266;  
Email: ashleyrwhitlock@virginmedia.com

**Isle of Wight Group:**

**Caroline Dudley (events):** Tel: 01983 754935;  
Email: caroline\_dudley@btopenworld.com

**Stuart Read (all other enquiries):** Tel: 07877 333734, Email: s.jread@btinternet.com

**Newsletter Designer:** Dan Powell, Email: danpowell11@btinternet.com

**Artworks:** Rosemary Powell. www.powellwildlifeart.com

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### Newsletter Deadline

I am grateful to all who have contributed with words and images for this issue. It is always heartening to receive copy from new contributors. I want to continue to reflect the very deep interest in butterflies and moths, the work and events that support our branch, and encourage articles representative of the wider conservation interests throughout Hampshire and Isle of Wight. Please send your Lepidoptera-related newsworthy pieces and features to Kevin Freeborn... and you don't have to wait until August!

**The deadline for the autumn Newsletter, edition no. 105, is 28 August 2018**

### Lepidoptera Tale Piece... your story behind the picture

This marvellously detailed image of a Comma caterpillar was snapped by Tony Rackham to win the Immature Stages category in the Branch Photographic Competition, held at the Members' Day last November. It was voted overall winner of the competition and congratulations to Tony for such a beautiful picture.

**Kevin Freeborn**

The opinions expressed in the Newsletter are not necessarily those of Hampshire and IoW Branch.



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*Lepidoptera Tale Piece ...*



*... for the full story go to the inside back cover.*

*Comma caterpillar – Tony Rackham*