

Hampshire and Isle of Wight Branch



Newsletter 116



Butterfly
Conservation

April 2024



Branch Reserves Walks 2024

Directions for Magdalen Hill Down: meet in the gravel car park opposite the cemetery on Alresford Road (B3404), **SO21 1HE**.

OS National Grid: **SU 512295**; what3words: **thighs.book.locked**

Directions for Yew Hill: meet at the end of Old Kennels Lane at junction with Port Lane and Millers Lane, Oliver's Battery, **SO22 4JT**.

OS National Grid: SU 451269; what3words: **basis.video.courier**

Directions for Bentley Station Meadow: meet at Gravel Hill Road near Alice Holt Lodge, **GU10 4LG**.

OS National Grid: SU 802433 ; what3words: **after.sharp.flaunting**

Magdalen Hill Down

Led by David and Anna Stewart

Monday 10 June, 2.00 to 4.00pm

Aiming to see: Green Hairstreak, Small Blue.

Thursday 18 July, from 11.00am to 1.00pm

Aiming to see: Marbled White, Brown Argus, Large, Small and Essex Skippers.

Friday 16 August, from 11.00am to 1.00pm

Aiming to see: Chalk Hill Blue, Adonis Blue.

Led by Kate Barrett

Tuesday 20 August

Moth morning: details TBC

Yew Hill

Led by Rupert Broadway

Friday 28 June, from 11.00am to 1.00pm

Aiming to see: White-letter Hairstreak, possible Dark Green Fritillary, Marbled Whites, Large, Small and Essex Skippers.

Friday 9 August, from 11.00am to 1.00pm

Aiming to see: Chalk Hill Blue.

Bentley Station Meadow

Saturday 15 June, 9.45am

In partnership with Alton Natural History Society and Blacknest fields Volunteers. We'll look for the first Silver Washed Fritillaries and do a circular walk to Blacknest meadows to see all the conservation work that's going on next door to Bentley.

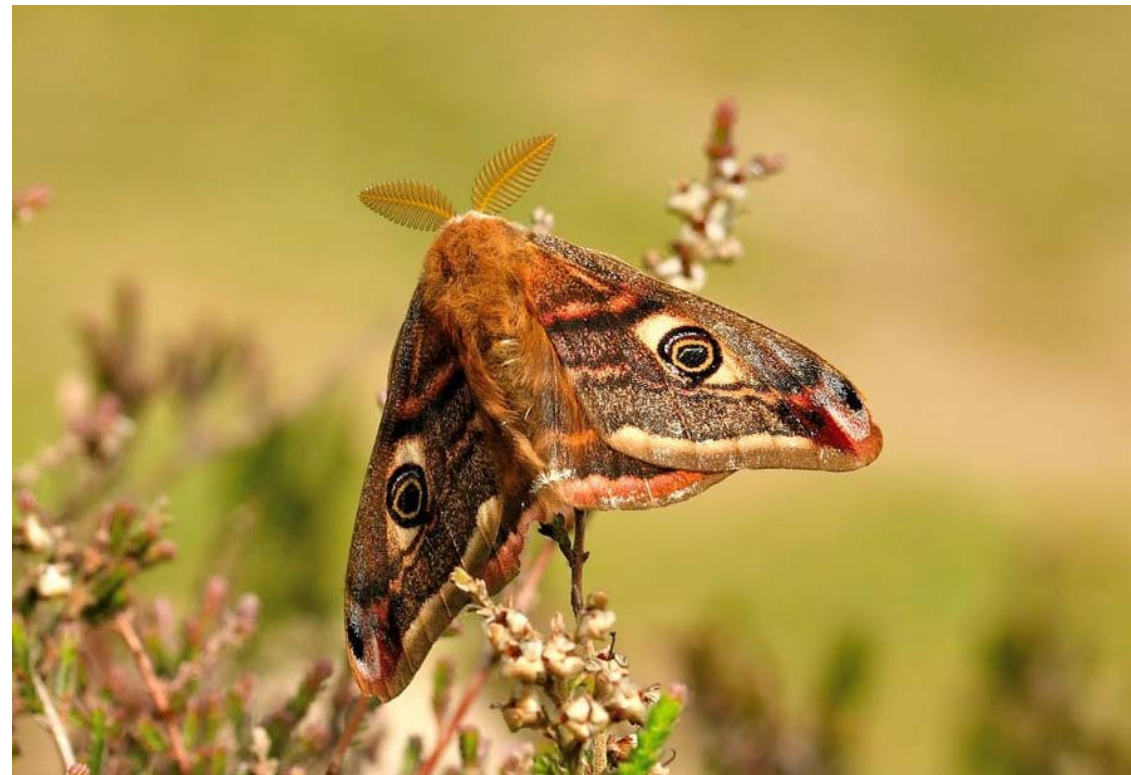
To book a place, and for queries or further information about the walks contact Fiona Scully: email fscully@butterfly-conservation.org



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Male Emperor Moth. Overall winner of the branch photographic competition. Helen Pinchin





Chair's Message

Despite the grey skies and wet weather as I write this, Spring is most definitely on the way and I know that some of you have already seen your first butterflies and moths of the year, with evidence that quite a few Red Admirals have successfully overwintered, which I suspect, with climate change, will be an increasing phenomenon in years to come. It's hard to remember a time when this beautiful butterfly was all but wiped out each winter in Britain due to the extremely cold weather that we used to regularly experience.

Annual Butterfly Report

I would like to take this opportunity to let you know about some decisions that have been made regarding the Annual Butterfly Report – a topic that we have been debating since the end of last year, given the importance of this well-respected publication both within and outside of the branch.

The reality is that the branch has become increasingly stretched in terms of the volunteer capacity needed to pull together our typical Annual Butterfly Report, and some adjustments have needed to be made. This 'reflection' has also provided an opportunity for us to reconsider the report's audiences and format.

A brief summary of the new approach is that the branch will, in the spring of each year, produce a data-intensive online summary of the previous butterfly year, and a similar approach is already taken with the moth report (an example can be found at: hantsmoths.org.uk/report.php?year=2022). As it happens, this exercise will also give us a chance to align the approaches to butterfly and moth record verification and reporting.

In addition, the Autumn Newsletter will be expanded to include an informal 'Annual Butterfly Report' that points to the online summary, but also provides an illustrated in-print synopsis of the previous recording year, with anecdotes included where available and relevant. This aspect of reporting will be led by Kevin Freeborn, our Newsletter Editor, and we may continue to request species writers to support Kevin in this.

The expanded Autumn Newsletter will in no way be a print version of the online summary, but an abstract of selected highlights that presents the 'headlines' of the previous season to members. It will be especially relevant to those with a preference for a printed report and those that are less interested in data or don't have the inclination to delve online.

Since this new approach is a 'work in progress', then all I can say is 'watch this space'!

My thanks Rupert Broadway (Engagement Subcommittee Chair), Kevin Freeborn (Newsletter Editor), Lee Hurrell (Conservation & Records Subcommittee Chair), Bob Annell (County Butterfly Recorder) and Andy Barker for their support and, most importantly, input in helping us converge on this new approach.

Some Thanks!

Following the Branch AGM, we have a few committee changes. I should first like to thank **Suzie Brown** for acting as Membership Secretary – and this main committee role remains a vacancy within the branch. I would also like to thank **Graham Nicol** for his time as Branch Treasurer, with **Neil Goodall** voted onto the main committee in his place. I must thank branch stalwart, **Andy Barker**, who stepped down as Chair of the Conservation and Records Subcommittee, with **Lee Hurrell** taking on the mantle. With Lee moving on from Branch Secretary, I'm pleased to welcome **Claire Hartt-Palmer** into this main committee role. I would also like to thank **Jacky Adams** for acting as Wider Countryside Butterfly Survey champion for the branch, with a replacement already found that will be announced in due course once the handover has occurred.

My thanks to **Bob Whitmarsh** for updating our website; the up-to-date list of committee members can you found at:

hantsiow-butterflies.org.uk/webpage.php?name=committees

Branch Vacancies

As ever, our branch has a couple of vacancies. If you are at all interested in helping the branch continue to go from strength to strength, then we would be delighted to hear from you! Please contact me in the first instance at pete@eeles.net or by calling 07796 331061.

The **Events Coordinator** plans the branch's annual programme of events and ensures that all events are resourced with a leader,

volunteers and equipment. We are invited to attend various events each year, and we also set up our own events, such as a New Members' Day. This is a Main Committee appointment.

The **Membership Secretary** role is also a Main Committee appointment, and is focused on welcoming our new members to the branch, ensuring that their needs are met, liaising with Head Office where necessary, and communicating opportunities for members to become more involved with the branch.

2024 Members' Day

I'm pleased to confirm that this year's Members' Day (of which a small part will comprise the AGM) will be held at Littleton Village Hall on **Sunday 3rd November**. While the full agenda will be made available in due course, I'm very pleased to say that Martin Warren, former Chief Executive of Butterfly Conservation and now Head of Development at Butterfly Conservation Europe, will be speaking on the subject of his recent book 'Butterflies', discussing "Sex, life and death in the world of butterflies".

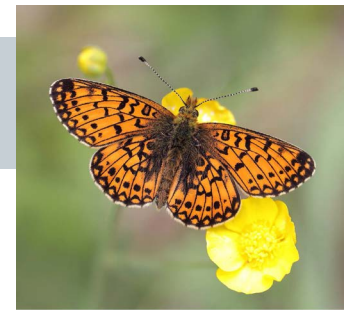
Further details will be made available on the branch website and e-newsletter ahead of the event.

Last, but not least, have a great Lepidoptera-filled 2024!

*Peter Eeles,
Branch Chair*



Small Heath. Rosemary Powell



United Kingdom
Butterfly Monitoring Scheme

Annual Report 2022

UK BMS Annual Report 2022

The UK Butterfly Monitoring Scheme Annual Report for 2022 has been published and is available for reading or downloading from the UK BMS website: **ukbms.org/publications**

Organised and funded by Butterfly Conservation, the UK Centre for Ecology and Hydrology, the British Trust for Ornithology, and the Joint Nature

Conservation Committee, the report is essential reading for everyone with an interest in, and a concern for, British butterflies. It comprises 26 PDF pages, outlining the background to the report and methods of data collection and presentation, and then gives a short account of each species of UK butterfly, with insight into long-term trends and the factors driving population change.

An archive of previous UK BMS annual reports can be found on the website.

2022 report highlights in numbers

47 The number of years of data contributing to UKBMS

235 The number of days on which UKBMS counts were made in 2022

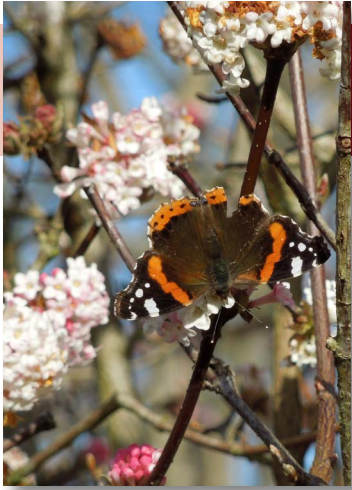
3,196 The number of UKBMS locations monitored in 2022

6,700 The total number of UKBMS locations monitored across all years

40,745 The number of recording visits made to standard transects and WCBS squares in 2022

2,036,621 The number of butterflies counted on standard transects and WCBS squares in 2022

Source: UK BMS Annual Report 2022



Butterfly Transect Season 2024

Firstly, I wanted to say a big thank you to all those who helped with butterfly transect recording in 2023. We have c.180 active butterfly transects in Hampshire and Isle of Wight, and last year proved to be an excellent year. More than 289,000 butterflies were recorded on transect, which is a 44% increase on 2022.

As a butterfly transect recording is a standardised method it allows comparison from one year

to the next and quantification of long-term trends, both locally, regionally and nationally. One species that did exceptionally well in 2023 was the Red Admiral, and it continued to be seen on mild sunny days throughout the winter. If you'd like to find out how other species did in 2023, look at the "Annual Trend Table" on the Branch website:

hantsiow-butterflies.org.uk/transects/trends2023.pdf

The butterfly transect recording season runs from the first week of April to the end of September, so by the time you receive this Newsletter, the 2024 season will already have started. If you have good butterfly identification skills, and feel you'd like to help out, there are two really excellent sites that need some extra transect volunteers. The sites in question are Old Winchester Hill and Beacon Hill, situated either side of the Meon Valley, near Warnford. They are both chalk grassland National Nature Reserves, and have an exceptionally rich butterfly fauna. If you'd like to help, please email Alan McVittie, who is the Natural England Senior Reserves Manager, responsible for both sites: **Alan.McVittie@naturalengland.org.uk**

If you'd like to help at other sites in Hampshire and Isle of Wight, please contact me – **aj3barker@btinternet.com** – and I'll put you in touch with the relevant person.

Andy Barker

Butterfly Transect Co-ordinator, Hampshire and Isle of Wight

*Red Admiral on Viburnum bodnantense, taken on 1 February 2024 at Hillier Gardens.
Andy Barker*



Meet the new Regional Conservation Manager

I'm Steven, the new Conservation Manager for South-East England. I joined Butterfly Conservation in September having been a member for several years while working in my previous conservation roles for the RSPB and idverde. I have always had a keen interest in butterflies and moths alongside botany, bats, and other taxa groups.

My role at Butterfly Conservation is to lead the conservation work across the South-East region, which spans Kent, Surrey, Sussex, Hampshire and Isle of Wight, Berkshire, Buckinghamshire, and Oxfordshire. This includes a range of species monitoring, landowner advice, partnership projects and overseeing the five nature reserves managed by Butterfly Conservation. Hampshire is fortunate to hold three of these: Bentley Station Meadow, Yew Hill and the impressive Magdalen Hill Down. With my support these are managed day to day by our fantastic Landscape Officer Fiona Scully, who I'm sure many of you will be familiar with.

My work is governed by the 2026 strategy goals, which put focus on reversing species declines and enhancing the most important landscapes for Lepidoptera. I would argue the South-East has one of the most diverse arrays of species and landscapes in the country, and I am fortunate to be able to have a crucial role in delivering effective change to secure the future of butterflies and moths in the region.

Within the context of Hampshire and the Isle of White, there have been six areas of priority landscapes identified. Each with unique characteristics and species assemblages, with most recent work focused on the South Downs to provide landscape-scale support for an assemblage of chalk grassland Lepidoptera, with emphasis on Duke of Burgundy.

Only being a few months into my role I have already had the privilege of visiting the Hampshire reserves and getting to grips with the wider Hampshire landscape. I look forward to getting to meet more branch members over the coming months but, most importantly, thank you for supporting butterflies and moths in your area.

Steven Lofting,
Regional Conservation Manager



Reserves News

Magdalen Hill Down

The birdlife has kept the reserve feeling alive in the depths of winter, with fieldfares, goldfinches, long-tailed tits, stonechats and kestrels enlivening the scene.

The volunteers have been out surviving the storms and have managed to continue their excellent work. A lot of the scrub clearance is often in the more hidden parts of the reserve at the bottom of the hill. The volunteers are a great team, transporting tools over rough terrain and steep slopes, and taking on every challenge.

The pond, designed at 8m x 5m x 1.5m depth (26ft x 16ft x 5ft depth), is now complete. Once it's planted up in April it should look much better.

The winter grazing is underway, with the fantastic British White cows being very used to all the walkers and joggers. They have a great presence across the reserve. The cows will leave around March, but we'll keep four on for the summer months. We currently have 29 White Faced Woodland sheep grazing the hillside.

Yew Hill

The sheep will be moved off after nearly four months of winter grazing and the grassland will be left to bloom over the summer.

The volunteers have continued to manage and look after the site, keeping the chalk grassland free of scrub.

Bentley Station Meadow

Bentley has certainly been at the centre of a lot of volunteer action this winter. The reserve's BC Volunteers and the SDNP Volunteers joining forces with the Hampshire Conservation Volunteers who spent a weekend clearing scrub, which all helped open up the meadows and transect route. It will be grazed hard in spring to try and prevent the bramble from taking over again. Bramble was covering most of the site and has rooted and embedded itself through the heart of the species-rich meadow. This is work in progress to try and restore the meadows so they are filled with flowers again. Blackthorn was also taking over. It has been cleared in places, while leaving some thickets, cutting scallops into some areas, and taking care to leave plenty of blackthorn of different ages for the Brown Hairstreak.

All images Fiona Scully

Magdalen Hill Down

Clearing brash from the hazel coppice.

The new pond, December 2023.

Scrub clearance.





Monitoring

The Winchester Farmer's Cluster Group are looking to start monitoring butterflies on their farms. It won't be through weekly transects as these can be time consuming, but instead monitoring will be by timed counts or a 200-metre transect conducted two to four times between May and August. Ideally the farmers will carry out the surveys themselves, but this isn't always possible and they may not be confident in identifying different species.

The existing transects are priority, but if anyone is interested in helping with monitoring for the Winchester Farm Cluster Group, please do get in touch.

I'm looking forward to warm, sunny days again. It will be great to see you out on the reserves.



Yew Hill

*Shetland sheep grazing Yew Hill.
Digging out dogwood.
Bank clearance.*

Bentley Station Meadow

*The Bentley crew.
Uncovering an anthill.
Clearing the ride of bramble.*



Branch Reserves Walks 2024

Please see the inside front cover of this Newsletter for reserve walks on Magdalen Hill Down, Yew Hill and at Bentley Station Meadow. Please email me in advance to book a place on a walk – fscully@butterfly-conservation.org – as this helps with numbers and with notification if having to cancel due to bad weather.

Fiona Scully,
South Downs Landscape Officer



New Forest Butterfly Transect Group

New Forest Bee Fayre

On 26 August 2023, New Forest South Conservation Connection organised a second Bee Fayre on New Milton Recreation Ground, which the New Forest Butterfly Transect Group attended with a stall. The aim was to inform visitors about Butterfly Conservation and to recruit people who expressed an interest in walking a butterfly transect.



All images: Trevor Bumfrey
New Forest Butterfly
Transect Group attending
the Bee Fayre

The day got off to a bright and sunny start, and we managed to erect our gazebo and arrange the display material before the heavens opened. Not all stall holders were so fortunate.

Despite the heavy showers, which continued on and off throughout the day, the stall attracted a number of visitors who had braved the conditions and around 10 people signed up as potential new transect walkers. Some visitors didn't think that they would be able to commit to a regular walk, even as part of a team, but were interested in talking and learning more about butterflies in general.

We are planning to take part in this year's event on 24 August 2024.

New Forest Volunteer Fair

The last Sunday in January in the New Forest means only one thing, the National Park Authority Volunteer Fair in Brockenhurst.

This year, on 28 January, 47 organisations were represented, all seeking to attract volunteers. The opportunities on offer varied from helping out in local hospitals, heritage organisations and wildlife groups, one of which was the New Forest Butterfly Transect Group.

It was a busy day on our stand, with a good number of visitors expressing an interest in butterflies. We recommended that those people who would like to get involved but had a limited amount of time because they were working or still at school or college, download the iRecord app so that their sightings could form part of the national records. Those who were more flexible either left their details or are going to email their interest. Visitors came from across the New Forest, not just the area local to Brockenhurst, with one person saying that they mostly lived in Portugal!

Trevor Bumfrey



Interest in butterflies at the New Forest
Volunteer Fair



Photographic Competition 2023 Results

Following another successful Members' Photography Competition at the Branch AGM in November, the results are listed below and a selection of the winning entries shown opposite. As you can see, the standard was once again extremely high. Congratulations to all of the winners and I look forward to another competition this year.

Wishing everyone a successful 2024 season.

The results are:

UK Butterflies

- 1st Sheila Williams – Holly Blue
- 2nd Peter Hunt – Wall
- 3rd Sheila Williams – Brown Hairstreak

UK Moths

- 1st **Helen Pinchin – Emperor Moth***
- 2nd Brian Cartwright
– Hummingbird Hawk-moth
- 3rd Anne Hobbs – Silver Y

Immature stages

- 1st Chris Piper – Toadflax Brocade larva

Overseas butterflies and moths

- 1st Francis Plowman – Grizzled Skipper
- 2nd Helen Pinchin – Scarce Swallowtail
- 3rd Francis Plowman – Two-tailed Pasha

First time entrants

- 1st Jill Goddard – Marbled Whites
- 2nd Anne Hobbs – Gatekeepers
- 3rd Robert Pycraft – Large White

*Overall competition winner

Lee Hurrell

Conservation and Records Sub-committee Chair

*This page,
Chris Piper
- Toadflax Brocade larva*

*Opposite, from top left, clockwise:
Brian Cartwright
- Hummingbird Hawk-moth
Jill Goddard - Marbled Whites
Sheila Anne Williams
- Brown Hairstreak
Robert Pycraft - Large White
Francis Plowman
– Two-tailed Pasha
Anne Hobbs - Silver Y*





North Baddesley Nature Reserve

My reserve in North Baddesley had 31 butterfly species in 2023. Two new species were seen: Marsh Fritillary and Dingy Skipper. Most species were seen in similar numbers to 2022 apart from a lower-than-normal count of Small Tortoiseshell and Clouded Yellow. In fact, last year had the lowest count (only 1!) of Clouded Yellow since I started recording. I am sure there is a reason, but only to see one Clouded Yellow is very disappointing compared to previous years.

I saw a Marsh Fritillary laying, and so checked later and found a batch of eggs that had hatched; fingers crossed for the species returning in 2024.

I had several people comment on the large number of ringlets seen here while they were visiting. Unknown to me at the time, they were very much down in numbers in a lot of other places. I was recording 70 at time on a walk for consecutive weeks. On a positive note, I have never seen so many Jersey Tiger moths as appeared in 2023. Also, very good numbers of Hummingbird Hawk-moths. Painted Lady was late last year but was then seen regularly.

At the time of writing, I have four Peacocks, one Small Tortoiseshell and 3 Herald moths hibernating in an outbuilding. This is more than usual so hopefully an indication of a good start to the season.

Reptiles seen and recorded were around normal numbers apart from grass snakes, which were in greater numbers than any previous year. A very good sign was that various ages of specimens were seen across all reptiles.

I am in the process of obtaining quotes for a large pond to be developed in the reserve. It will not hold any fish so hopefully many more wildlife species will start to move in.

If anyone would like to look around the reserve or help with recording, please contact me on the details below.

Kevin Ross

Email: spark.ky@hotmail.co.uk



Marsh Fritillary eggs and larval web. Kevin Ross



Sheila Williams' butterfly review of 2023

I travelled and walked many miles searching for butterflies in 2023, traversing some very steep banks and hills which, sadly, now that we have lost so much of our open wildflower-filled meadowlands, are a last refuge for many species of butterfly.

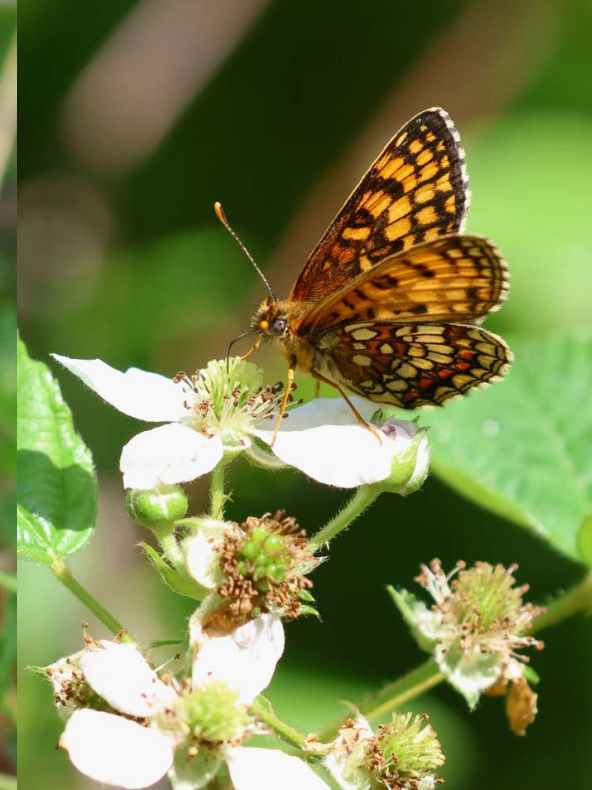
My butterfly sightings this year totalled 50 species, with 44 seen in Hampshire. I had to go outside of my home county, visiting Dorset to see Glanville Fritillary and Somerset to spot a Small Pearl-bordered Fritillary, not having seen the latter in Hampshire since 2021.

The highlight for me last year was seeing four species for the very first time: a Heath Fritillary at Haddon Hill, Somerset, and a High Brown Fritillary at Heddon's Mouth, Devon; a Large Blue at Collard Hill, Somerset, and also seen at Daneway Banks, Gloucestershire; and lastly, a Long-tailed Blue, spotted at Portsdown Hill in early October, which was a nice surprise, and a mating pair that could possibly be the first seen and photographed in Hampshire.

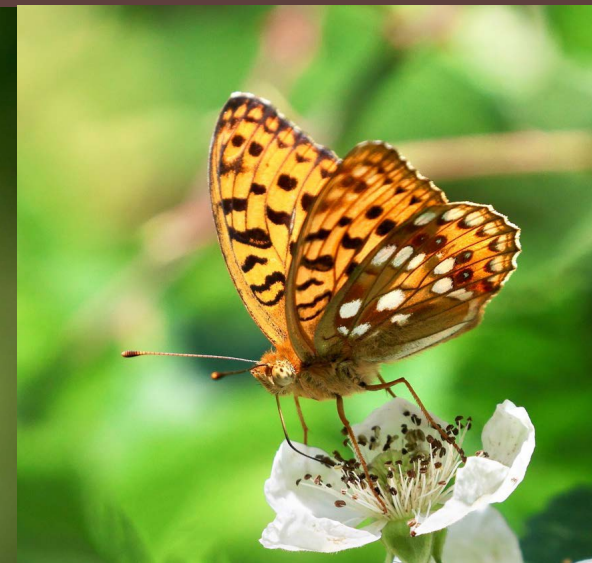
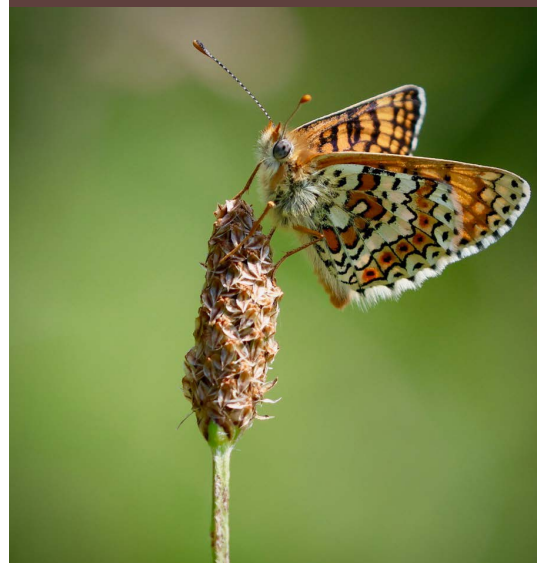
Seemingly, the Red Admiral broke all records last year but it was disappointing not to see many Small Tortoiseshell (only four, and one of those in my garden). However, after a tip-off from a friend in my birth county of Wiltshire, I set off with my two flutterby friends to Morgan's Hill and we were delighted to spend time there surrounded by this beautiful butterfly. We are now aptly named #theflutterbygirls and will continue on our butterfly hunts this coming season.

It has been lovely to meet up with 'butterfly friends' old and new on the 2023 Hampshire Butterfly Walks. Fingers crossed that this year I will get to see the 50 species all over again ... maybe if I am lucky I might be able to add to the total too, but if not it will certainly be fun trying.

Sheila Anne Williams



*opposite -
Large Blue
clockwise from above -
Small Pearl-bordered Fritillary
Heath Fritillary
High Brown Fritillary
Glanville Fritillary*





Long-tailed Blue on Portsdown Hill

Historically, the Long-tailed Blue is exceedingly rare in the UK. In his fabulous book, *British & Irish Butterfly Rarities*, Peter Eeles states that only 30 or so adults were seen between 1859 and 1944.

However, over the last decade the Long-tailed Blue has become a regular migrant; indeed, it has become an annual visitor to the south coast, especially for our neighbours in Sussex. For this reason, I have been expecting to see this species on my local patch and consequently, in recent seasons, I have given any blue butterfly that I see in September and October some extra scrutiny. I was lucky enough to stumble across a Long-tailed Blue on Hayling Island a few years ago but I really wanted to see one on Portsdown Hill.

Last summer, I was keeping a careful eye on the sighting's pages of H&IOW and Sussex BC branches. Sure enough, during August and September, one or two reports began to surface, including one on Porchester Common. While Long-tailed Blue uses a wide range of larval foodplants, in the UK this butterfly is strongly associated with Broad-leaved Everlasting Pea (*Lathyrus latifolus*). Therefore, I had already made a note of locations where I knew this plant to grow, including my garden, so this is where I concentrated my observational efforts, but for little return.



Broad-leaved Everlasting Pea and a Long-tailed Blue egg that has hatched, showing the hole where the larva has bored into the flower. All photos Mark Tutton

Things took a turn for the better in early September when I paid a visit to Porchester Common. While no adult butterflies were apparent, I checked the small patch of foodplant for eggs and sure enough, within 15 minutes, I had located at least half a dozen, which were pretty easy to spot on the flowers. This fired my enthusiasm and on returning home I decided to check the plants

in my garden and lo-and-behold another dozen or so eggs, some of which had hatched. This was very annoying as it obviously meant an adult had been right under my nose at some point! Given by now it was early September I knew that home-grown adults could well be flying in October as the Long-tailed Blue can zoom through the entire early stages of its life cycle in six or eight weeks.



I was keeping my eyes peeled during my regular dog walks on Portsdown when a report came in of one or two adults adjacent to the roundabout on the top of Portsdown. These butterflies are well known for 'hilltopping' where males gather in a prominent location (a lek) to do battle for females. The butterflies are very loyal to these leks so I knew that if more than one had been seen then there would be a good chance that there would be more in the coming days, especially given that I had found a good number of eggs earlier.

A few visits to the said location, in less than optimum weather, brought zero return, and so I waited for a warm and sunny day. I arrived on site at about ten o'clock and kept my eyes peeled for the next couple of hours, with only a couple of Holly Blues to get the heart racing. Then a blue butterfly appeared over the hedge line and instantly I knew what it was. The flight is very hairstreak-like, a rather jerky flight and quite difficult to follow at times. This very fresh specimen settled pretty quickly in exactly the location I had been told and I took a few photos for posterity. Within minutes it was



Mating pair

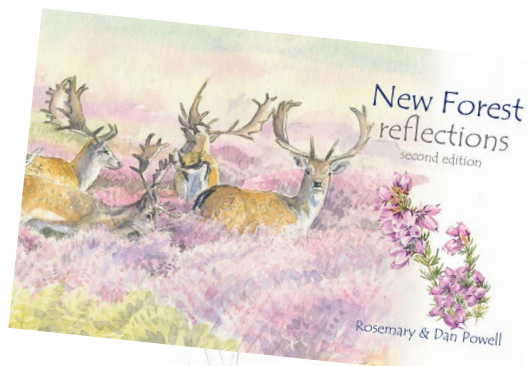
doing battle with another male and eventually at least half a dozen fresh males were having multiple aerial battles, launching from their perches and spiralling high into the sky before the victor would return to the exact same perch. Eventually a female wandered into the lek and was mated by an attendant male within moments, probably one of the first pairings to have been recorded in Hampshire.

The word had obviously got out on the local grapevine and by this time a good number of fellow enthusiasts had gathered to witness the event, probably making these the most photographed butterflies in Hampshire this year!

The weather declined in subsequent days, and to my knowledge none were seen again – I hope they made it back across the channel safely.

All in all a wonderful experience, which I hope will now become an annual event, and not one that I would have predicted ten years ago.

Mark Tutton

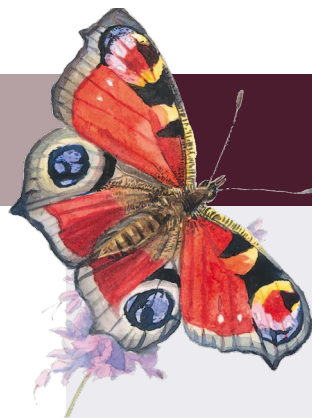


New Forest reflections - new edition

The Powells have published a new edition of their highly popular book **New Forest reflections** - with twelve more pages and over a hundred new paintings, it really has had a spring clean.

Available from their website www.powellwildlifeart.com all sales from this feature will generate a donation to the branch.

Branch Field Trip Programmes 2024



Field trips are for everyone. Walks have been arranged across both counties at a variety of interesting sites, aiming to see target species associated with each location at the optimum time in the season.

These 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!** Please wear suitable footwear, and bring a drink and a packed lunch.

Rough ground over fields and woods could, most regrettably, make access difficult for those with mobility issues. Please check with the walk leader if in doubt.

The Hampshire field meetings programme is organised by **Ashley Whitlock**; the Isle of Wight programme by **Kay Shaw**. Contact details for each are given respectively at the end of each programme listing and in the Useful Contacts directory on page 32 of this Newsletter.

If the weather is looking dodgy...

If inclement weather is forecast, then please phone the leader of the event. Field trip dates may change if the five-day forecast suggests a planned meeting is likely to be affected by rain and/or stormy conditions.

Alternatively, nearer the time of each field trip, do check postings on:

- the Branch website: hantsiow-butterflies.org.uk
- social media and in particular the Branch **Facebook** site: www.facebook.com/ButterflyConservationHampshireAndIsleOfWight
- and Ashley's website: purple-emperor.co.uk

Note: this year the **parking/meeting point locations** are given in three forms: **satnav postcode**, **OS National Grid reference** and **what3words** – and remember that these locations are **not always** at the featured walk site.



Hampshire Walks 2024

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

Sunday 28 April, at 1.30pm Park Hill, East Meon

Leader: Ashley Whitlock, Tel: 02392 731266; Mobile: 07752 182340
Directions: Meet at the village car park, Workhouse Lane, **GU32 1PF**
OS National Grid: **SU 677222**; what3words: **cities.shimmered.wooden**
Aiming to see: Orange-tip, Speckled Wood.

Sunday 5 May, at 10.30am Butser Hill, 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), **GU32 1QR**.
This is a strenuous walk over uneven and very steep slopes. Bring a packed lunch.
OS National Grid: **SU 711200**; what3words: **checked.pods.vine**
Aiming to see: Duke of Burgundy, Grizzled Skipper, Dingy Skipper.

Wednesday 8 May, at 10.30am Broughton Down, site: HIOWWT

Leader: Ashley Whitlock, Tel: 02392 731266; Mobile: 07752 182340
Directions: To avoid a rough track up to the reserve (SU296325), park in Buckholt Road, **SO20 8DA**, 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.
OS National Grid: **SU 304327**; what3words: **them.culling.huts**
Aiming to see: Duke of Burgundy, Grizzled Skipper, Dingy Skipper, Green Hairstreak.

Sunday 12 May, at 9.30am West/Crab Woods, Pitt Down – Farley Mount, site: Forestry England/HCC

Leader: Ashley Whitlock, Tel: 02392 731266; Mobile: 07752 182340
Directions: Meet in Spindle Trees car park, **SO21 2PA**, signed off Sarum Road on Pitt Down, one of several Farley Mount Country Park car parks.
Bring a packed lunch.
OS National Grid: **SU 420292**; what3words: **pull.dispose.clenching**

Aiming to see: Duke of Burgundy, Pearl-bordered Fritillary.

Wednesday 15 May At 10.30am, Standing Hat, New Forest, site: Forestry England

Leader: Ashley Whitlock, Tel: 02392 731266; Mobile: 07752 182340
Directions: Meet in Standing Hat car park, **SO42 7QJ**, off B3055 near the Balmerlawn Hotel, Brockenhurst. Bring a packed lunch.
OS National Grid: **SU 314036**; what3words: **lows.miles.tabs**
Afternoon, Pig Bush, New Forest, site: Forestry England
Directions: Meet in Pig Bush car park, **SO42 7YP**, off B3056, south of Beaulieu Road Station.
OS National Grid: **SU 362050**; what3words: **friend.leader.swept**
Aiming to see: Pearl-bordered Fritillary, Speckled Wood, Emperor Moth.

Sunday 19 May, at 9.30am Martin Down NNR, site: Natural England

Leader: Ashley Whitlock, Tel: 02392 731266; Mobile: 07752 182340
Directions: Meet in the nature reserve's Sillen's Lane car park, **SP6 3LB**, just west of Martin. Bring a packed lunch.
OS National Grid: **SU 057191**; what3words: **coining.bunk.snuck**
Aiming to see: Marsh Fritillary, Adonis Blue, Small Blue, Brown Argus, Duke of Burgundy.

Wednesday 22 May, at 10.30am Danebury Hillfort, site: HCC

Leader: Ashley Whitlock, Tel: 02392 731266; Mobile: 07752 182340
Directions: Meet in Danebury Hillfort car park, **SO20 6HZ**, signed off Old Stockbridge Road, north-west of Stockbridge. Bring a packed lunch.
OS National Grid: **SU 329377**; what3words: **calibrate.intricate.contents**
Aiming to see: Wall Brown.

TBC June 2024

Wood White field trip, joint with Surrey Branch
Watch for future details: e-News; Facebook; websites (see pages 23 or 28)

Wednesday 26 June, at 1.30pm Broxhead Common, site: HCC

Leader: Ashley Whitlock, Tel: 02392 731266; Mobile: 07752 182340
Directions: Meet at the entrance to the nature reserve on Broxhead Farm Road, **GU35 0NY**, lay-by parking, B3004, north of Lindford.
OS National Grid: **SU 803374**; what3words: **navigate.adopts.strutting**
Aiming to see: Silver-studded Blue.

Sunday 30 June, at 9.30am
Abbotstone Down, site: HCC

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

Directions: Meet in the nature reserve's car park **SO24 9DT**, on the B3046, north of Old Alresford. Bring a packed lunch.

OS National Grid: **SU 585361**; what3words: **rankings.graceful.profiled**

Aiming to see: Marbled White, Dark Green Fritillary, Purple Emperor.

Wednesday 3 July, at 9.30am
Abbotts Wood Inclosure, Alice Holt Forest,
site: Forestry England

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

Directions: Meet at the Abbots Wood Inclosure car park, **GU10 4HA**, off Dockenfield Street, just south-east of the Halfway House pub. Bring a packed lunch.

OS National Grid: **SU 810410**; what3words: **landowner.likely.splendid**

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

Friday 5 July, meet at 9.30am
West Walk, site: Forestry England

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

Directions: Meet in West Walk car park, **PO17 6JD**, signed off Hundred Acres Road, east of Wickham. Bring a packed lunch.

OS National Grid: **SU 596122**; what3words: **rehearsed.translate.mindset**

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

Sunday 7 July, at 9.30am
Whiteley Walk and Botley Wood, site: Forestry England

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

Directions: Meet in the Whiteley Outlet Village car park, **PO15 7PD**, opposite Marks and Spencer (max. 3 hours free before payment) reached off Whiteley Way from M27 J9. Bring a packed lunch.

OS National Grid: **SU 531096**; what3words: **dares.rationing.listening**

Aiming to see: Purple Emperor, Purple Hairstreak, White Admiral.

Wednesday 10 July, at 9.30am
Carpenter's Down Wood/Basing Wood,
site: Basingstoke and Deane Council

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

Directions: The wood is off Carpenters Down (SU 642547) but parking is at Popley Community Park car park, **RG24 9EN**, Popley Way, off Basingstoke's Ringway North. Bring a packed lunch.

OS National Grid: **SU 627538**; what3words: **push.tracks.branded**

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

Sunday 14 July, at 9.30am
Swanwick Lakes, site: HLOWWT

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

Directions: Meet in the nature reserve car park, **SO31 7AY**, off Sopwith Way, Swanwick (near the NATS centre). Bring a packed lunch.

OS National Grid: **SU 505098**; what3words: **tells.thrashing.hunter**

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

Wednesday 17 July, at 9.30am
Micheldever Wood, site: Forestry England

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

Directions: Meet in Micheldever Wood car park, **SO24 9UB**, off Chillandham Lane, south-east of Micheldever. Bring a packed lunch.

OS National Grid: **SU 530362**; what3words: **turkey.grumbles.strapping**

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

Wednesday 14 August, meet at 9.30am
Shipton Bellinger

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

Directions: Meet in the village hall car park, **SP9 7TL**. Bring a packed lunch.

OS National Grid: **SU 229456**; what3words: **headlight.panning.smooth**

Aiming to see: Brown Hairstreak, Wall Brown.

Sunday 18 August, at 10.30am
Noar Hill, site: HLOWWT

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

Directions: Meet in the lane south from Selborne by Charity Farm, where there is limited verge parking only, **GU34 3LW**: please park considerately. Bring a packed lunch.

OS National Grid: **SU 737321**; what3words: **latitudes.grazes.sprint**

Aiming to see: Brown Hairstreak, Purple Hairstreak, Brown Argus, Clouded Yellow.

Wednesday 21 August, at 10.30am
Beacon Hill NNR, Exton, site: Natural England

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

Directions: Meet in the reserve car park, **SO32 3LG**, Beacon Hill lane, west of Warnford and north-west of Exton. Bring a packed lunch.

OS National Grid: **SU 598227**; what3words: **credible.swordfish.rocky**

Aiming to see: Silver-spotted Skipper, Brown Argus, Clouded Yellow.

Sunday 25 August, at 10.30am
Soberton Down and River Meon

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

Directions: Meet in the village hall car park, Soberton, **SO32 3PF**.

Bring a packed lunch.

OS National Grid: **SU 611166**; what3words: **paler.inhaled.luxury**

Aiming to see: Brown Hairstreak.

Sunday 1 September, at 10.30am

Old Winchester Hill NNR, site: Natural England

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

Directions: Meet in the nature reserve's car park, **GU32 1HW**, which is signposted off the A32 at Warnford. Steep hillsides in places. Bring a packed lunch.

OS National Grid: **SU 645214**; what3words: **overhear.dramatic.handyman**

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

Wednesday 4 September, at 10.30am

Portsmouth Hill, site: Portsmouth City Council

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

Directions: Meet at Widley Walk car park, **PO6 3LS**, off B2177, adjacent to The Churchillian pub, just east of Fort Widley. Bring a packed lunch.

OS National Grid: **SU 660064**; what3words: **store.juror.lock**

Aiming to see: Common Blue, Brown Hairstreak, Wall Brown, Clouded Yellow.

TBC in September/October, at 10.30am

Portsmouth Hill – in search of Long-tailed Blue,
site: Portsmouth City Council

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

Directions: Meet at Widley Walk car park, **PO6 3LS**, off B2177, adjacent to The Churchillian pub, just east of Fort Widley. Bring a packed lunch.

OS National Grid: **SU 660064**; what3words: **store.juror.lock**

Aiming to see: Long-tailed Blue.

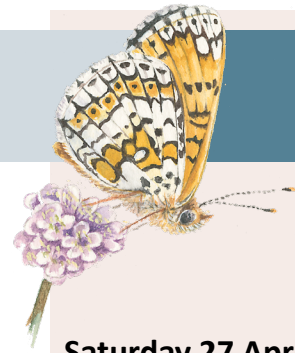
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Ashley Whitlock Butterflies and Moths website: www.purple-emperor.co.uk



Isle of Wight walks 2024

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

Saturday 27 April, at 1.30pm

Parkhurst Forest; site: Forestry England

Leader: Graham Sherratt, Tel: 07944 029056

Directions: Meet at Parkhurst Forest main car park, **PO30 5LZ**

OS National Grid: **SZ 480900**; what3words: **country.opposites.enlighten**

A woodland walk with uneven paths; wear sturdy footwear.

Aiming to see: Brimstone, Comma, Orange-tip, Peacock.

Saturday 11 May, at 1.30pm

First Glanville Fritillary Walk, The Revetment, Ventnor

Leaders: Kay and Colin Shaw, Tel: 07562 974343

Directions: Meet in Wheelers Bay Road car park, Ventnor, **PO38 1HR** at **1.20pm**

OS National Grid: **SZ 568775**; what3words: **surface.muffin.submitted**

There are steep steps from the car park down to the Revetment. Alternatively, use the Eastern Esplanade Long Stay car park, **PO38 1JR** (OS National Grid: **SZ 565773**; what3words: **loose.eclipses.kidney**), and walk to the bottom of the steps at Wheelers Bay by 1.30pm. Parking there makes this walk wheelchair accessible. On the No.3 bus route.

Aiming to see: Glanville Fritillary and other spring butterflies.

Saturday 18 May, at 1.30pm

Second Glanville Fritillary Walk, Mottistone chalk pits;

site: National Trust

Leader: Graham Sherratt, Tel: 07944 029056

Directions: Meet in the Jubilee Car Park, Lynch Lane, Brighstone, **PO30 4JH**.

OS National Grid: **SZ 420845**; what3words: **tipping.quietest.third**

A downland walk with uneven ground, steep slopes and chalk pits; wear sturdy footwear.

Aiming to see: Dingy and Grizzled Skipper, Glanville Fritillary.

Saturday 25 May, at 1.30pm

Third Glanville Fritillary Walk, Compton Chine;

site: National Trust

Leader: Sue Davies, Tel: 07702 151312

Directions: Meet in the NT Afton Down chalk pit car park, off the A305 Military Road, **PO30 4HF**.

OS National Grid: **SZ 367854**; what3words: **aimlessly.sweeper.pastels**

On the No.12 bus route. A downland walk with some steep steps and uneven ground; wear sturdy footwear.

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

Saturday 22 June, at 1.30pm

Newtown Meadows and Walter's Copse; site: National Trust

Leader: Nikki Kownacki, Tel: 07929 614423

Directions: Meet at the entrance to the Meadows Butterfly Walk on Town Lane, parking at the National Trust car park (charge) close by, **PO30 4PA**.

OS National Grid: **SZ 423906**; what3words: **multiples.breached.wedding**

Uneven ground and stiles to cross.

Aiming to see: White Admiral, Marbled White, Ringlet, Brown Argus.

Saturday 6 July, at 1.30pm

Mottistone chalk pits; site: National Trust

Leader: Nikki Kownacki, Tel: 07929 614423

Directions: Meet in the Jubilee Car Park, Lynch Lane, Brighstone, **PO30 4JH**.

OS National Grid: **SZ 420845**; what3words: **tipping.quietest.third**

A downland walk with uneven ground, steep slopes and chalk pits; wear sturdy footwear.

Aiming to see: Dark Green Fritillary, Chalk Hill Blue and Brown Argus.

Saturday 20 July, at 1.30pm

Kemphill Moor Copse, Havenstreet; site: Forestry England

Leaders: Kay and Colin Shaw, Tel: 07562 974343

Directions: Meet at Ashe Cemetery, **PO33 4BS**, at 1pm as parking is very limited at the site (entrance on Rowlands Lane) or contact Kay about a lift.

This is a woodland ride walk.

OS National Grid: **SZ 577897**; what3words: **judges.rebounder.shape**

Aiming to see: White Admiral, Silver-washed Fritillary (including Valezina) and Purple Hairstreak.

Saturday 27 July, at 1.30pm

Mount Joy, Carisbrooke

Leader: Graham Sherratt, Tel: 07944 029056

Directions: Meet in Whitepit Lane, Carisbrooke, **PO30 1ND**, by the fish and chip shop near the junction with Elm Grove, and close to the junction with footpath N24, along which the walk up to Mount Joy proceeds. Some steps

are encountered on the route. Car parking is very limited so leave plenty of time to find a space.

OS National Grid: **SZ 496883**; what3words: **material.hotspot.unpainted**

Aiming to see: Chalk Hill and Common Blue, Brown Argus and Wall Brown.

Saturday 3 August, at 1.30pm

Arreton Down, Arreton; site: HLOWWT

Leader: Kay and Colin Shaw, Tel: 07562 974343

Directions: Meet in Arreton Down car park, off Downend Road, **PO30 2PA**.

On the No.8 bus route, getting off at the Robin Hill Country Park stop.

A downland walk, uneven and steep ground in places; wear sturdy footwear.

OS National Grid: **SZ 533874**; what3words: **meanders.rift.flamed**

Aiming to see: Brown Argus, Chalk Hill Blue and Wall Brown.

Saturday 17 August, at 1.30pm

Brading Downs; site: IOW Council

Leader: Emma Brown, Tel: 07817 504992

Directions: Meet at the most easterly car park on Brading Down Road,

PO36 0ES. A downland walk, uneven and steep ground in places; wear sturdy footwear.

OS National Grid: **SZ 601867**; what3words: **divisible.vibrate.cleanser**

Aiming to see: Brown Argus, Chalk Hill Blue.

Saturday 7 September, at 1.30pm

The Revetment, Ventnor

Leaders: Kay and Colin Shaw, Tel: 07562 974343

Directions: Meet in Wheelers Bay Road car park, Ventnor, **PO38 1HR** at **1.20pm**

OS National Grid: **SZ 568775**; what3words: **surface.muffin.submitted**

There are steep steps from the car park down to the Revetment. Alternatively, use the Eastern Esplanade Long Stay car park, **PO38 1JR** (OS National Grid:

SZ 565773; what3words: **loose.eclipses.kidney**), and walk to the bottom

of the steps at Wheelers Bay by 1.30pm. Parking there makes this walk

wheelchair accessible. On the No.3 bus route.

Aiming to see: Clouded Yellow, Hummingbird Hawk-moth.

Kay Shaw, IoW Field Meetings Organiser

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Useful Contacts www.hantsiow-butterflies.org.uk

 <https://www.facebook.com/ButterflyConservationHampshireAndIsleOfWight>

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Cover painting: Small copper and common blues

Printed by: Hampshire Printing Services, Winchester. www.hants.gov.uk/printing

Newsletter Deadline

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. 117,
is 11 August 2024**

Lepidoptera Tale Piece... your story behind the picture

All being well, and keep your fingers crossed, the field trip programme for this year could well include a search for the Long-tailed Blue on Portsdown Hill. If seen, it will be a field trip first – so no pressure Ashley! Hopefully, with the 2023 sightings (see pages 18 and 20 in this edition), Mark Tutton's carefully documented field craft, and given some favourable weather towards the end of the summer and into the autumn, there's every chance it could be an unforgettable walk.

*Kevin Freeborn,
Newsletter Editor*



The opinions expressed in the Newsletter are not necessarily those of Hampshire and IoW Branch. Butterfly Conservation is a charity registered in England & Wales (254937) and in Scotland (SCO39268). Registered Office: Manor Yard, East Lulworth, Wareham, Dorset BH20 5QP. Vat. No. 565 9070 16.

Lepidoptera Tale Piece ...



*...for the full story, go to the inside back cover.
Long-tailed Blue, by Sheila Anne Williams*