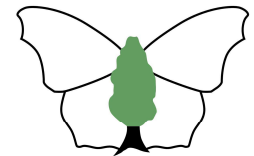


# Butterflies for the New Millennium



**Butterfly Conservation**  
in association with the  
Biological Records Centre

## Summer Newsletter 2011

*Butterflies for the New Millennium* is the national recording scheme for butterflies in Britain and Ireland and is organised in the UK by Butterfly Conservation and the Biological Records Centre and in the Republic of Ireland by The Dublin Naturalists' Field Club. The initial survey work (1995-99) was used to assess the status of all native species in *The Millennium Atlas of Butterflies in Britain and Ireland*. New data from 2000-04 were incorporated in *The State of Butterflies in Britain and Ireland* published in 2006. Recording continues so as to provide up-to-date information for nature conservation, public education and research.

### Introduction

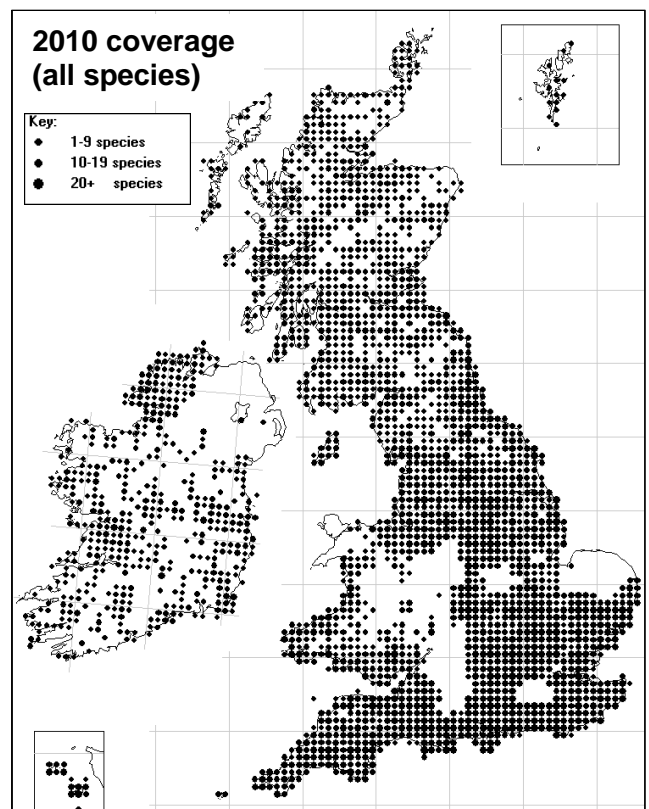
Welcome to the summer newsletter. It's been a very strange year from a weather perspective but I hope that you managed to get some good butterfly recording done in what is the second year of the current five-year survey period. There were very early emergence dates across most species this year and many butterflies seemed to do well in the hot spring weather. Unfortunately, this was followed by a cold and disappointing summer for most recorders with butterfly highlights few and far between. Now our thoughts turn to sending in records and collating the year's data.

### 2010 butterfly records already online

There was a fantastic response by BNM Local Co-ordinators / County Butterfly Recorders to our newly introduced annual data deadline of 31<sup>st</sup> March. The vast majority submitted collated and verified local datasets of 2010 butterfly records before or shortly after the deadline, enabling us to undertake additional verification checks and to compile a national dataset in a much more rapid turnaround than has previously been the case. We are extremely grateful to all the recorders who sent in their sightings on time and, in particular, to the Co-ordinators and their helpers, for getting all the data processed in a timely and efficient manner.

The result is that over 380,000 UK records from 2010 are already available for use by the statutory conservation agencies and others on the National Biodiversity Network Gateway. The map (right) shows the recording coverage for 2010 in the BNM database thus far, with some particularly good coverage of often under-recorded areas. A grand total of 397,000 records have been collated so far for the year, which is very impressive considering that there are still a few datasets outstanding.

Nowadays, it is very important that we can mobilize butterfly distribution data rapidly to support biodiversity conservation and research. Therefore, although the BNM project will continue with its programme of five-year surveys of Britain and Ireland (e.g. 2010-2014), we will aim to collate and make available records from the preceding year on an annual basis. We recognize that this presents a considerable challenge to recorders and Co-ordinators alike, but hope that having a regular deadline each year will help encourage timely



#### Butterfly Conservation

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submission and processing of records – it will certainly help to maximize the use of the butterfly data for conservation.

So, please all note that local datasets for 2011 (together with any updates of records from preceding years) should be submitted to the BNM by **31<sup>st</sup> March 2012**. To enable your Local Co-ordinator to meet this deadline, please make sure you send in all of your 2011 butterfly records promptly this autumn.

## **The State of the UK's Butterflies 2011**

The results and analysis of the last five-year BNM survey (2005-09) will be presented, along with trends from the UK Butterfly Monitoring Scheme, in the latest 'State of' report in the next few months. This is the third such report produced by Butterfly Conservation and the Centre for Ecology & Hydrology, with previous publications in 2001 and 2007. The new report will follow the same format as previously, presenting a short summary of the results and their implications to a wide audience including politicians, policy makers and conservationists, as well as butterfly recorders. The report will also be made freely available online.

## **National Butterfly Recorders' Meeting: Saturday 17 March 2012**

Please make a note in your diary of the date of the next National Butterfly Recorders' Meeting, which will take place at the usual venue of the Birmingham and Midland Institute in central Birmingham on Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> March 2012. The 2011 meeting was one of the biggest and best yet, attended by around 100 people. It is always a great day out with a chance to hear about interesting results and research findings, including the first announcement of the UK BMS results for the previous year, and to meet and chat with butterfly recorders from across Britain, Ireland, the Isle of Man and the Channel Islands. There will be an exciting programme for the day, with Professor Jeremy Thomas OBE as our star speaker. The full programme, together with booking details, will be publicised in the next newsletter early in 2012.

## **Receiving this newsletter by E-mail**

To cut down on financial (and environmental) costs in these difficult times, we have decided to send this and future copies of the BNM Newsletter by e-mail where possible. If you have received a paper copy of this newsletter and would be happy to receive it by e-mail in the future, please let us know at [bnm@butterfly-conservation.org](mailto:bnm@butterfly-conservation.org). Many thanks.

## **Big Butterfly Count 2011**

The second year of the Big Butterfly Count, run by Butterfly Conservation in association with M&S, went extremely well during the summer. There was excellent media coverage and over 34,300 people took part! The number of Counts submitted online was just under 30,000, almost twice as many as in 2010. Perhaps not surprisingly given the weather during late July when most of the Counts took place, the numbers of butterflies and day-flying moths recorded was down on 2010; the average number of individuals seen per Count dropped by 11%. The Gatekeeper was the most abundant species at the UK level but, amazingly, the Small Tortoiseshell came top in Scotland. The results of Big Butterfly Count 2011 can be found at [www.bigbutterflycount.org/2011mainresults](http://www.bigbutterflycount.org/2011mainresults) and the records will be made available to BNM Local Co-ordinators in due course.

Big Butterfly Count will return again in 2012 and, although we don't want to distract you from important recording for the BNM project or transect, we hope that all butterfly recorders will spare just 15 minutes to take part.

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We are very grateful to the Redwing Trust, Countryside Council for Wales, Natural England, Northern Ireland Environment Agency and Scottish Natural Heritage who are helping to fund the BNM project at present. Feel free to pass copies of this newsletter on to others or to incorporate the information into your own newsletters, so as to help promote butterfly recording. I can provide an electronic copy if that helps. Please contact me if you want to be added to or taken off the mailing list.

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