



# Summer Newsletter 2011

Welcome to Butterfly Conservation Scotland's Summer e-newsletter.

Contributions to our newsletters are always welcome – please contact Shona at [sgreig@butterfly-conservation.org](mailto:sgreig@butterfly-conservation.org) or the postal address below. If you do not wish to receive our newsletter in the future, simply reply to this message with the word 'unsubscribe' in the title – thank you.

**Scotland Team (Paul Kirkland, Tom Prescott and Shona Greig)**  
**Butterfly Conservation Scotland**  
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## **Volunteer Hours**

A timesheet has been sent out with this newsletter for those of you who volunteer on behalf of butterflies and moths. If you can let us know of any hours you have worked (preferably at the end of each quarter) that would be much appreciated. Please return the completed timesheet by email or post to Shona at the address above.

## **DATES FOR YOUR DIARY**

### **Big Butterfly Count - Taking the pulse of nature**

#### **What**

- The **Big Butterfly Count** is a major new project, launched in 2010, aimed at involving the public in a nationwide online survey of butterflies during July, the peak time in the year for butterflies.
- The survey is one of the largest citizen science projects of its kind and the biggest survey of butterflies ever undertaken by the public. Almost 16,000 counts were undertaken in 2010, by over 10,000 people, and 210,000 individual butterflies and moths were logged.

#### **When**

- **Big Butterfly Count** 2011 runs for two weeks from Sat 16th - Sun 31st July.
- The website will be open to take sightings throughout July and August, and will thereafter be used to disseminate details of the results.

#### **How**

- The **Big Butterfly Count** consists of a simple survey in which you count how many of each different type of butterfly that you see during a 15 minute period.
- The focus is on 21 species of commonly occurring butterflies and day-flying moths, but other species seen can be recorded in a comments box. Big Butterfly Count 2011 focal species are: Brimstone, Comma, Common Blue, Gatekeeper,

Green-veined White, Holly Blue, Large Skipper, Large White, Marbled White, Meadow Brown, Painted Lady, Peacock, Red Admiral, Ringlet, Silver Y, Six-spot Burnet, Small Copper, Small Tortoiseshell, Small White, Speckled Wood, Wall.

- There is a downloadable identification chart that can be printed off now so that people can get their eye in. It can also be used during the 15 minute counts to record numbers seen of each species prior to input on the website.
- Participants can carry out as many counts as they wish.
- Sightings can **only** be submitted online at [www.bigbutterflycount.org](http://www.bigbutterflycount.org)

#### **Where**

- It can be done anywhere where you might see butterflies, from your garden, school grounds or nearby park, to fields and woods, coast and mountain.

#### **Who**

- Anyone can take part, young or old, fit or frail. All you need is access to a sunny open space, where you might see butterflies, either near your home or on holiday. Gardens are ideal, but you can choose anywhere you can see butterflies, whether in parks or on countryside walks. Full information on how to take part is available on the website.
- Big Butterfly Count is ideal for children, families and schools. This year we've worked with the National Schools Partnership to develop **The Butterfly Effect**, a package of teaching resources and children's activities aimed at primary school (Key Stage 2) children. There is a link to The Butterfly Effect from the Big Butterfly Count home page.
- Every participant receives a regular newsletter with results of the survey and fascinating facts and information on butterflies and how to conserve them.
- Sir David Attenborough will launch Big Butterfly Count 2011.
- The survey is run by Butterfly Conservation, the largest insect conservation charity in Europe, in association with the high street retailer, Marks & Spencer as part of their Plan A commitment to improving the environment.

#### **Why**

- Butterflies and moths are declining rapidly because their habitats are being destroyed or not managed correctly. Many familiar butterflies are now far less abundant than formerly, giving concern for the health of our environment.
- Butterflies are valuable indicators of the health of our environment. It is hoped that the survey will be repeated in future years to build up a picture of the changes that are taking place amongst our widespread butterflies. It will also be an especially useful indicator of the health of our towns and cities as well as measuring the impact of climate change and the importance of gardens as habitat for butterflies.
- By taking part in the **Big Butterfly Count**, members of the public can contribute to our knowledge of butterflies and help 'take nature's pulse' i.e. assess the health of the environment. Every sighting of a butterfly provides valuable information on the national distribution of that species and how it is changing over time.

## **Save Our Butterflies week – 23<sup>rd</sup> to 31<sup>st</sup> July**

### **Wester Moss Bioblitz – 13<sup>th</sup> July**

A Bioblitz at our latest reserve Wester Moss in Stirlingshire, is to be held on Wednesday, 13<sup>th</sup> July from 10am to 4pm. Details are still to be confirmed but it promises to be an action packed day for all the family. Please contact Alex Hogg, Tel 01786 459811 or email [ahogg@butterfly-conservation.org](mailto:ahogg@butterfly-conservation.org) for more information.

### **Mabie Forest Activity Day – 27<sup>th</sup> July**

A family activity day at our Mabie Forest reserve is to be held on Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> July. Details are still to be confirmed. Please contact Alex Hogg, Tel 01786 459811 or email [ahogg@butterfly-conservation.org](mailto:ahogg@butterfly-conservation.org) for more information.

### **Pine-tree Lappet – It's not too late to get involved....**

#### **Fri 24<sup>th</sup> and Sat 25<sup>th</sup> June - Pine-tree Lappet survey Kiltarlity/Black Isle**

Further work to determine the current status of Pine-tree Lappet in pine plantations in the area. Again the focus will be on looking for new sites rather than confirming its presence at currently known sites. Meet at 8.30pm at the Brockies Lodge Hotel, Kiltarlity (Grid Ref NH514418 OS Sheet 26). Depending on the number of people/traps/generators etc. we will split into groups and set traps in the locality. Please bring along any traps you have. To help us co-ordinate the survey effectively please can you let us know if you plan to come along. If you are unable to attend but keen to help please look for this moth during its flight period (latter half of June into early July) then please also get in touch to arrange access permissions etc. to trapping sites.

Leader: Tom Prescott. Tel 01540 661469. Mobile 07979 785665.

Email [tprescott@butterfly-conservation.org](mailto:tprescott@butterfly-conservation.org)

There are still a couple of places on Highland branches Intro to Micros workshop being run by Mark Young and Roy Leverton. Please contact Tony Mainwood to book a place – first come first served! Details are....

#### **Sat 16<sup>th</sup> July Micro Moth Workshop at Aigas Field Centre with Mark Young and Roy Leverton.**

Tea/coffee and biscuits from 10am for a 10.30am start. A soup and sandwiches type lunch will be provided and there will be tea/coffee and biscuits in the afternoon with a 4pm to 4.30pm finish.

Photographs of micro-moths and other tricky specimens for identification will be welcome and so will any already existing voucher specimens but please do not bring live moths.

The workshop is being funded by Highland Branch and there is no charge.

**BOOKING IS ESSENTIAL** with Tony Mainwood: Tel 01408 633247,

email [tony.mainwood@btinternet.com](mailto:tony.mainwood@btinternet.com)

### **An additional Highland Branch event for you -**

#### **Sat 23<sup>rd</sup> July - Narrow-bordered Bee Hawk-moth larval survey at Bogbuie Wood, Black Isle, in conjunction with Forestry Commission Scotland.**

Meet at 10.30am at the FC carpark at the east end of Culbokie, Grid Ref NH611597, OS Sheet 26. We will then share cars up to the wood as there is limited parking. Duration 4 hours plus. 14 Bee Hawks were seen in the wood last year and around 6 on the field trip earlier this year. We will be looking for larvae along the tracksides to locate the breeding colonies and therefore ensure that these areas are suitably managed by FCS. We will also check moth traps run the previous night. For more information please contact Margaret Currie and Andy Scott for details, Tel 01349 877223. Email [moths.vc106@btinternet.com](mailto:moths.vc106@btinternet.com)

### **Scottish Members' Day - Saturday, 1<sup>st</sup> October 2011**

This year, on 1<sup>st</sup> October, we will be holding our 5<sup>th</sup> annual Members' Day at the Battleby Conference Centre, Perthshire. The programme is still taking shape but we hope to have a fun, informal day with an interesting mix of talks, workshops, stands and of course a chance to meet other local members and the Branch organisers. More information and booking forms will be available in due course.

### **Scottish Recorders' Gathering – Saturday, 17<sup>th</sup> March 2012** (details tbc)

Don't forget to check out your local Branch website for up-to-date lists of fieldtrips, events etc:

**South West Scotland** – [www.southwestscotland-butterflies.org.uk](http://www.southwestscotland-butterflies.org.uk)

**Highlands & Islands** - [www.highland-butterflies.org.uk](http://www.highland-butterflies.org.uk)

**East Scotland** - [www.eastscotland-butterflies.org.uk](http://www.eastscotland-butterflies.org.uk)

### **Interesting Sightings!**

#### **The Conformist**

The following is taken from a press release from RSPB Scotland:

A species of moth has been recorded for the first time in Scotland, according to RSPB Scotland. Entomologists from England found the Conformist moth in a light-trap they had set up on the RSPB's Insh Marshes nature reserve in Strathspey. The insect was one of two "races", or sub species, of Conformist known as *furcifera*. Since 1946, it has only previously been recorded in the UK once - in Northumberland in 2007.



The other sub species of Conformist, called *suffusa*, is believed to be extinct in the UK with the last recording of it made in Glamorgan, Wales, in 1959. The Strathspey find is the first recording of any type of the moth in Scotland.

RSPB warden Pete Moore, who is also the official moth recorder for east Inverness-shire, said Insh Marshes was a haven for rare insects. He said: "Last year we were surprised to discover a colony of the very scarce dark bordered beauty moth on the reserve. "And, currently, we are running a project to increase the numbers of another very rare insect - the aspen hoverfly.

#### **Small Tortoiseshell seen on mountain top!**

This interesting sighting was sent in by Ian Hardy:

You might be interested in an unusual sighting my wife and I had yesterday at around noon. We were on the summit of Merrick (N of Newton Stewart, D&G), the highest point of the Southern Uplands, at 842m (not in fact 843m as the OS maps have it) on a good weather day – a lightish westerly wind, sunny intervals - and a Small Tortoiseshell flew right past the triangulation pillar! – heading south-west. Half wayish down the trail to the Glen Troon car park (the car park at "Bruce's Stone") we saw a fresh Small Copper, followed a few yards further down by a Small Heath. Finally a few hundred yards above the car park we saw a Red Admiral nectaring on bluebells!

A nice end to 3 weeks of hill-walking around Scotland, mostly in, shall we say, inclement weather!



Merrick summit by Ian Hardy

This lovely **Argent & Sable** photograph was taken by Ramsay Young in Glen Orchy. It is likely to be a new 10km square record.



Argent & Sable by Ramsay Young



Orange-tip by Heather Young

And this **Orange-tip** photo taken by Heather Young in Carron Glen SWT reserve near Denny shows how effectively even the males can be camouflaged on the right flower.

### **Broxburn Academy Visit**

Back in April Mark Cubit and myself visited Broxburn Academy in West Lothian. The pupils at the Academy are very lucky to have Dr Derek Wood as a teacher, whose enthusiasm for moths has spread to his pupils. On our visit Mark gave a talk about the differences between butterflies and moths, which I found very useful as a relative newcomer to Lepidoptera, and identified moths from the school's previous night's moth trapping. These included Hebrew Character and Common Quaker to name but a few. Meanwhile I showed the children my two pet caterpillars, one of which has since emerged as a Common Marbled Carpet, whilst the other still remains a mysterious pupa.



**Mark and Alex with the Broxburn Academy pupils by Derek Wood**

It was a pleasure to meet such keen and interested young people and see them so interested in moths. Subsequently, in his school holidays, one of the pupils created his own excellent website which can be found at <http://www.wix.com/bamoths/moths#!>.

**Alex Hogg (BTCV Natural Communities Apprentice)**

### **Gardening Scotland 2011**

We had a lovely time at Gardening Scotland this year with the Friday being the hottest day of the year! The sun certainly brought out the crowds and we had lots of visitors to the Living Garden and our butterfly stand.

The theme for Gardening Scotland this year was Alice in Wonderland and our showgarden was resplendent with planted teacups and teapots for the Mad March Hare's teaparty, a giant willow rabbit and heart-shaped pond. A competition was



**The Teapot Competition entries by Shona Greig**

held for primary schools to bring in their own planted teapots and the entries were spectacular. We had lots of visitors to our stand where we had displays, live caterpillars (courtesy of Alex), leaflets to take away, and activities for the children with face painting and butterfly fingerpuppets. I'm pleased to say we made a few new members as well.



**The giant willow rabbit and heart-shaped pond by Shona Greig**

Our volunteers, were as always, excellent ambassadors for Butterfly Conservation and were kept busy chatting with visitors and helping with queries. Can I just say a very big thank you to all of you who took the time to come along and help out – you all did a fantastic job and it is very much appreciated.

**Shona Greig**

### Scottish Garden Tiger Safari – August 2011

We would like to encourage everyone to go on a tiger hunt to look for the stunning Garden Tiger, a UKBAP species declining rapidly in lowland Britain (but not it seems in parts of the north). The survey will help us determine its current status in Scotland. Garden Tigers are big, blowsy and beautiful and occur throughout Scotland so anyone can get involved. They are readily attracted to outside lights and can occasionally be found during the day. It is hoped the main effort will be around the August Bank holiday weekend ie. 30/31<sup>st</sup> July/1<sup>st</sup> August and the following week. There will be a Garden Tiger feature on the BC Scotland webpages. Records should be returned by email or on website link. Details are still to be confirmed but check the website [www.butterfly-conservation.org/scotland](http://www.butterfly-conservation.org/scotland) for more information nearer the time.



Garden Tiger by Paul Kirkland

### Comma Postcard Survey

As you know, this year we are running a Comma Postcard survey. Sightings can be returned both by postcard and online – please keep them coming. Online sightings can be returned by visiting [www.butterfly-conservation.org/scotland](http://www.butterfly-conservation.org/scotland) and clicking on the link to Scottish Comma Survey.



### **Wider Countryside Butterfly Survey**

The Wider Countryside Butterfly Survey (WCBS) will be running from 2011 for at least another 3 years. Many thanks to all of you who took part and helped to encourage participation in the WCBS. Last year 686 random 1km squares were covered by over 500 recorders – a fabulous achievement, although a 10% reduction in coverage achieved in the launch year of 2009.

The WCBS will be running in a similar fashion to 2009 and 2010, as a collaborative project with BTO and CEH. I look forward to working with you in the coming months, recruiting volunteers, providing support and promoting the scheme wherever possible.

We are currently analysing and interpreting the 2010 data and the WCBS feedback newsletter will be circulated in the near future. If you wish to take part in the 2011 WCBS please contact your Branch Champion. If you do not know who your Champion is or if you require any advice on the survey, please contact Zoë Randle [survey@butterfly-conservation.org](mailto:survey@butterfly-conservation.org) or phone 01929 406006.

**Zoë Randle, Surveys Officer**

### **Changes at East Branch**

After performing the role of Branch Chair/Organiser since 1997, Richard Buckland is standing down at the end of June and handing over the reins to Barry Prater, who currently looks after the group of members in the Borders. Richard has done a tremendous job over the past fourteen years, during which time branch membership has grown enormously and along with it the profile and influence of Butterfly Conservation in the branch's area. He co-authored the Borders Butterfly Atlas which was published in 2009; this represented the culmination of a huge amount of dedicated teamwork. Richard has clearly not run out of steam though, as he will continue on the branch committee as Newsletter Editor and will also be helping with other aspects of the branch's work, such as the Wider Countryside Butterfly Survey. Perhaps he will be most proud of steering the branch to victory in three of the six quizzes held on the Annual Members Day to win the coveted Kindrogan Cup. At this year's Members Day on 1<sup>st</sup> October Barry hopes to be able to talk with branch members who are there and get some ideas from them about the future - particularly their thoughts on what the branch should or should not be doing. As ever, there are opportunities for people to join the branch committee - not just to be a committee member, but to contribute to the activities of the branch and to help the conservation effort. Barry can be contacted at [barry@prater.myzen.co.uk](mailto:barry@prater.myzen.co.uk).

### **East Scotland Branch**

#### **Notes from the Borders**

As in other parts of the country, our butterflies and moths have put in some early appearances. The first Green Hairstreak was seen on 19<sup>th</sup> April, Small Blue on 9<sup>th</sup> May and Small Pearl-bordered Fritillary on 22<sup>nd</sup> May.

Notable moth records include Oak-tree Pug and V-Pug (both possibly the first Borders records). Looking in the daytime for larvae during the earlier months of the year can reveal species which are strictly nocturnal, such as the Drinker moth and, when flying adults are still scarce, this helps to boost records. Hopefully when people read this both moths and butterflies will be approaching peak numbers.



V-Pug moth by Reuben Singleton



Oak-tree Pug moth by Barry Prater



Drinker moth larva by Barry Prater

Borders Biodiversity Week has come and gone, with mixed fortunes for the Lepidoptera events. At Duns Castle the moth evening attracted around 20 people and a similar number of moth species, despite the windy, damp weather which became heavy rain when we packed up around midnight. This was a joint event with the local Scottish Wildlife Trust group and most of those who came were SWT members. Bearing in mind the relatively small BC membership in the Borders, combining with other groups for events is a good recipe. A similar event at Plora Wood on the same night suffered heavy rain and wind from the start which prevented most people and all moths from attending.

Forthcoming outside meetings are:

<p>Saturday 25 June 2011</p>	<p>Butterfly field trip to the Gordon Moss area to see Small Pearl-bordered Fritillaries as well as Small Heath, other butterflies and day-flying moths.</p>	<p>Meet at 10.30 am and park at the entrance to the SWT reserve (NT636428). This is on a bend on the A6105 just beyond Greenknowe Tower to the west of Gordon village. There is a burn to cross so wellies are advised.</p>	<p>Barry Prater 018907 52037 <a href="mailto:barry@prater.myzen.co.uk">barry@prater.myzen.co.uk</a></p>
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Saturday 2 July 2011	Butterflies, dragonflies and moths at Edrington - Large and Small Skippers, Speckled Wood and Banded Demoiselle plus (hopefully) the contents of the previous night's moth trap.	Meet and park at 10.00 am at Edrington Mains Farm (NT943546) which is on a track off a minor road from the A6105 just E of Foulden village. There is a 1km walk to the site which is steep in places and can be muddy, so come prepared.	Barry Prater 018907 52037 <a href="mailto:barry@prater.myzen.co.uk">barry@prater.myzen.co.uk</a>
Sunday 10 July 2011	Monymut Water/The Bell in the Lammermuirs to see whether a record of Rock Rose proves to be a site for Northern Brown Argus.	Meet at the entrance to Nether Monynut Farm (NT728645) at 10.30 am. We may also call in at the Bell, where we are almost certain to see the target species.	Richard Buckland 0131 332 0615 <a href="mailto:r.buckland@blueyonder.co.uk">r.buckland@blueyonder.co.uk</a>
Saturday 30 July 2011	Butterfly walk near Tweedsmuir to see Scotch Argus in an area where they were only discovered in 2010. Search for other species too. This event forms part of Save Our Butterflies Week 2011.	Meet at 10.30 am at NT098242. Leave the A701 at Tweedsmuir on the minor road to Talla and Fruid reservoirs. Pass over the bridge and park in clearing 200m beyond the crossroads. The walk may be boggy in places.	Alison McArthur 01968 682232 and Barry Prater 018907 52037 <a href="mailto:barry@prater.myzen.co.uk">barry@prater.myzen.co.uk</a>

Do we have any Purple Hairstreaks in the Borders? There are a few very old records, the most recent in 1951 from the Bowhill Estate, but nothing more. Looking at the map in last autumn's e-news, this butterfly appears to be quite well-distributed across SW Scotland and it is also recorded in the Stirling area. Suitable habitat exists (oak woodland and even isolated oak trees, with the butterfly showing a possible preference for pedunculate over sessile oak) so it could be worthwhile taking some binoculars and spending a sunny afternoon and early evening in July or August scanning some oaks for this fluttering, silvery rarity which has no excuse not to be around here.

**Barry Prater - Borders sub-group**

### **Highland Branch News**

#### **A feast of fritillaries in Sutherland**

The warm weather in April is a distant memory just now but at the time it did prompt earlier searches for Pearl-Bordered Fritillaries than usual. I make a point of checking the couple of sites that I know about in the Rogart area each year. The first ones were 4 on 29<sup>th</sup> April at what I have always regarded as the better site along a small sheltered burn with gorse, bracken and obviously enough dog violets to keep the population going. Half an hour later I found 14 at the other site about 5km away and at which I usually only record a handful each year just to check that they are still there. On this occasion I was surprised to see 14, which is the most I have ever recorded there.

These records clearly indicated that another visit might prove particularly productive a little further into the season. I went back 5 days later on 3<sup>rd</sup> May and there were 22 at the first site. When I checked the other site I decided to cover a lot more of the area and ended up searching over a distance of about 400m in one direction and then back again on a different path higher up the south facing slope. There seemed to be fritillaries all over the place and I was busily jotting down 2's, 4's and even 10's



**Pearl-bordered Fritillary by Tony Mainwood**

as I went along. At the end when I counted them all up the total was a staggering 92 individuals; a much more extensive and thriving colony than I had ever imagined.

After that I thought it best to search for any other colonies in the area and although I found nothing on the scale of the two main colonies there were four or five new sites spread over a distance of about 9 or 10 km with two or three individuals in each spot. I am sure that there will be other ones hidden away but the number of fine sunny days seemed to dry up and there were also other sites I needed to check in SE Sutherland but for this year at least the Pearl-bordered Fritillary appears to be thriving in this area.

**Tony Mainwood**

### **Highland Notes**

My first introduction to butterflies came in 1962 when I was appointed Warden of Castor Hanglands NNR in Northamptonshire. The reserve was the then stronghold of the Chequered Skipper but also, in the 220 acres of mixed woodland and grassland, of over 40 species of butterflies. These included five species of hairstreaks and three species of fritillary. The collecting of the Chequered Skipper on the reserve was restricted, by written permit, to two individuals per collector! I knew about the colonies of Chequered Skipper around Fort William in the Highlands but at that time it seemed a world away. In those early years most of my butterfly studies centred on the Chequered Skipper and understanding its ecology. Then when I became Warden of Inverpolly NNR, northwest of Ullapool in 1969, I just had to see the Chequered Skipper in its Highland haunts. I can remember my first walk into Ariundle Oakwood NNR, west of Fort William, and it so resembled the woodland and rides of the Hanglands it was unbelievable. Along the shore of Loch Arkaig I found the larvae of the skipper feeding on *Brachypodium sylvaticum* which is the main food plant I found it on at the Hanglands. As far as I am aware nobody else has recorded that food plant in the Highlands as its main one is *Molinia caerulea*. There was still collecting on the Fort William colonies. A few years later someone from Northamptonshire came up and collected several females and took them back south to re-introduce them as they had become extinct in England by 1975. All very unofficial and illegal and the attempt was unsuccessful. Nobody knew where the Highland colonies came from but it was interesting when a few years ago there was an attempt to re-introduce the Chequered Skipper to the Lincolnshire Woods. The European colonies were genetically more comparable with the original English ones than the Scottish butterflies but it was all to no avail. A chequered history indeed!

**Ray Collier**

## South and West Branch News

### **Glasgow & SW Scotland Branch Committee news**

There have been a couple of changes in the Glasgow & South West Scotland branch committee since our last AGM, including our chairman Neil Gregory standing down from the committee after 4 and a half years in the driving seat. The committee would like to express its gratitude to Neil for all his hard work and the fantastic job he's done promoting Butterfly Conservation's work in South West Scotland. His leadership, diplomacy, creative ideas, expertise and humour will be greatly missed at meetings. The branch has been considerably strengthened during Neil's chairmanship with an enlarged membership, the launch of the branch website and the beginning of our Small Blue reintroduction project, among many other accomplishments. We wish him all the best for the future.

Until the next AGM (likely in October/November) when a new chairman will be properly voted for, Scott Shanks, the branch Butterfly Recorder will be acting chairman.

The branch also has a new Treasurer, Mrs Gillian Rae, and new Secretary, Joe Davis, who took over from Anne and David Welham at the start of May. The committee wish to thank Anne & David for all their hard work and dedication to the branch over the years.

### **Butterfly Identification Workshop**

Glasgow & SW Scotland branch had a fantastic turnout of 44 people at our spring Members day & ID workshop on the 7<sup>th</sup> of May in Glasgow. Talks were given on butterfly identification by Richard Sutcliffe, followed by a talk on 10 easily-recognised day-flying moth species by Scott Shanks. This was followed by a talk on how to set up your own butterfly transect by Neil Gregory.



Butterfly id workshop by Neil



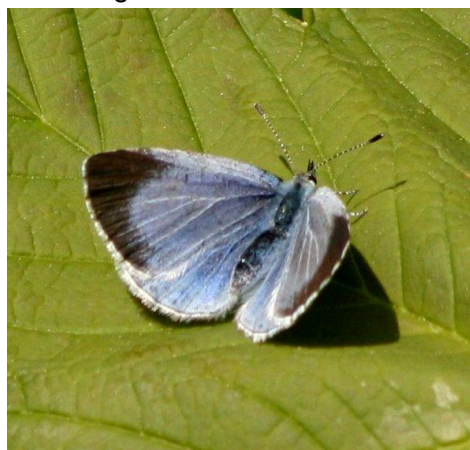
Museum specimens by Neil

Many thanks to the Glasgow Museums Resource Centre & its staff for use of their superb venue and access to part of their stunning British butterfly and moth collection. There have been at least 4 new butterfly transects started since the workshop, which is pretty fantastic!

## SW Scotland Butterfly News

It's been a very mixed year so far, with a bitterly cold, dry winter; a fantastic sunny April and then unseasonably cold, wet and windy weather since the beginning of May! The warm and sunny April had a distinct effect on the emergence of many of our spring butterfly species, with quite a few recorded 1 to 3 weeks ahead of their average first sighting dates. For example Green-Veined Whites were recorded 2 ½ weeks earlier than in 2010, and Pearl-bordered Fritillaries were almost 3 weeks earlier than 2010. The subsequent cold, wet and windy May & June appears to have reversed the trend with summer species such as Northern Brown Argus, Meadow Brown and Ringlets emerging closer to their normal emergence times.

Holly Blues were one of the species that benefited from the good weather in April. There were 10 times as many sightings in April this year than during the whole of 2010! Most of the sightings were from around Ayr, where this species was first recorded in 2008. There was also a scattering of records from across Dumfries & Galloway and a sighting in Airdrie too.



Female Holly Blue basking by Scott Shanks

It hopefully won't be long before they begin to colonise Glasgow! It'll be interesting to see if the second brood is as big in as the spring brood. Keep an eye out for blue butterflies flying around ivy in parks and gardens during July/August.

Orange-tips seem to have had a fantastic year, with records from many new 1km squares including a sighting of a male OT from a garden in Balephuill on the Isle of Tiree! A



Female Holly Blue by Ian Saunders

new species for the island! This is 40 km from the nearest sighting on Mull and would require a flight over at least 20km of open water! There is plenty of cuckooflower on the island, so fingers crossed he managed to find a mate!

Pearl-bordered fritillaries had a bumper year at our Butterfly Conservation reserve at Mabie Forest, south of Dumfries. Up to 500 individuals were recorded on one visit, with reports of these rare butterflies jostling for space on every available dandelion flower! Record numbers were also counted on the reserve's butterfly transect.

Dingy Skippers have also had a great spring, with record-breaking numbers seen at a number of locations along the Solway coast, and the discovery of a healthy new colony at a brown field site near Rankinston in Ayrshire. This is the most northerly Ayrshire sighting in over 100 years!

Meadow Browns, Ringlets, Graylings and Dark-Green Fritillaries have just started emerging. Purple Hairstreak, Mountain Ringlet, Scotch Argus and Large Heath will likely be emerging soon. So keep a lookout for these species. Last year we had an amazing number of new Purple Hairstreak sightings due to people checking out oak woods in sunny late afternoon/evenings. There are likely lots of colonies waiting to be

found! Argyll in particular has a huge amount of beautiful oak forest with very few records. Colonsay has PH records from back in 1984. Are they still there? We had very few Large Heath records last year, so if out walking in areas with cotton grass keep an eye out for this species. Wester Moss, the new Butterfly Conservation reserve at Fallin, near Stirling is a great place to visit to see this species for the first time.

If you are based in Ayrshire, or planning a wildlife spotting visit to the coast it would be great to get more records of 5 key coastal species: Northern Brown Argus, Dingy Skipper (possibly getting late in the season now), Wall, Grayling and Dark-Green Fritillary for Ayrshire's next Local Biodiversity Action Plan. Records of all other species very welcome too!

The Mountain Ringlet survey pages on the branch website have been updated for 2011, so if you are planning a day walking in the hills, consider choosing a likely Mountain Ringlet location to see if you can see this lovely black and red butterfly on your way to the top.

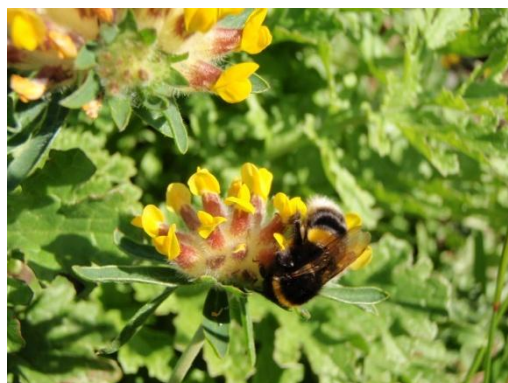
### **Small Blue Reintroduction Project**

The 15<sup>th</sup> of May saw 19 volunteers assemble at SWT Gailes Marsh reserve near Irvine to plant kidney vetch, (the foodplant of the Small Blue) for our Small Blue reintroduction project. Despite the cold and windy weather, the volunteers made short work of the 900 kidney vetch plants that needed to be planted! :). Many thanks to Gill Smart, Ayrshire reserves manager of the Scottish Wildlife Trust; Owen Figgis who grew the plants for the project, and drove up with them on the day, and to Frank Clarkson, course manager of Dundonald Links golf course for allowing us to plant kidneyvetch in the roughs and banks of his course.



**Small Blue volunteers by David Welham**

The reserve is well worth a visit at the moment to see the amazing display of kidney vetch in the habitat strips that were created in 2010. The KV flowers are absolutely loved by bees, and consequently Gailes Marsh must be one of the best places in Ayrshire to practice your bumblebee (and butterfly) identification skills!



**Kidney vetch bumbler by Lorna Cole**

**Scott Shanks - SW Scotland Branch Chair & Butterfly Recorder**

## **Dumfries and Galloway Butterfly Sub-group Survey work**

Dumfries and Galloway is an under-recorded part of Scotland which the D&G group hopes to rectify over the next few years. A request for surveying to be carried out in 2011 was made and using postcodes submitted by members of the D&G group meant that corresponding maps could be produced. The maps are split into large squares which contain four 1km squares: these show where no records exist or where previously recorded numbers of species have been made. With over 30 volunteers who can cover 1 – 5 areas, it is hoped inroads to the missing information in Dumfries and Galloway can be made.

In November 2010, the group were contacted by a RSPB staff member who has been working with the Scottish Agricultural College at their Royal Crichton Farm in Dumfries to improve the area for biodiversity. Although an intensive dairy farm with around 500 cattle, they have through agri-environment schemes implemented some biodiversity measures and are also benefitting wildlife indirectly by trialling different crops that require less artificial inputs and less intensive management. One of the measures they have put in place through a previous agri-environment scheme is a species-rich grassland and they are also looking to extend this management over adjacent fields.

The staff at Crichton would like to know how these changes are benefiting wildlife. On 14<sup>th</sup> May the steering group members met on site to assess the area which includes a wildflower meadow and two unimproved fields which are cut once a year and to plan the necessary survey work which will take place over the next few months, which is now underway.

The Forestry Commission has requested assistance with surveying Forester Moths at Mabie Forest which have been in decline for a number of seasons now. Numbers, locations and preferred habitat components of these moths are needed before options regarding habitat improvement are considered. The results will help with essential decisions on the combination of conservation cattle grazing and habitat manipulation to hopefully benefit this species. The first survey will take place on 25<sup>th</sup> June – weather permitting!!

## **Day Trips**

Three trips have already taken place this year with a further two planned 24<sup>th</sup> July, Wamphrey and 8<sup>th</sup> July, Knockman Woods. The group will also have a presence at the Wildlife Garden Festival, Threave on 31<sup>st</sup> July. For further information about these days contact: [dumgalbutterflies@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:dumgalbutterflies@yahoo.co.uk)

The group started in April 2010 and has over 100 people on its contacts list. For anyone interested, the group can be contacted at [dumgalbutterflies@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:dumgalbutterflies@yahoo.co.uk) or **Tina Flinn (Chair):** [blueamber23@gmail.com](mailto:blueamber23@gmail.com)

## **Transect Co-ordinators**

Here are the contact details for our transect co-ordinators in Scotland:

Andrew Masterman (Stirlingshire, Argyll and Bute):

Tel: 0141 4231336 email: [andrewmasterman@hotmail.com](mailto:andrewmasterman@hotmail.com)

Nick Morgan (East Lothian):

Tel: 01620 827671 email: [nmorgan@eastlothian.gov.uk](mailto:nmorgan@eastlothian.gov.uk)

Duncan Davidson (Clackmannanshire, Fife):

Tel: 01383 730446 email: [duncan@dwwd.freeserve.co.uk](mailto:duncan@dwwd.freeserve.co.uk)

Louisa Maddison (Lanarkshire):

Tel: 01355 236644 email: [louisa.maddison@southlanarkshire.gsx.gov.uk](mailto:louisa.maddison@southlanarkshire.gsx.gov.uk)

Andy Riches (Dumfries & Galloway):

Tel: 01683 300393 email: [sloch69@aol.com](mailto:sloch69@aol.com)

Hilary Quick (Highlands):

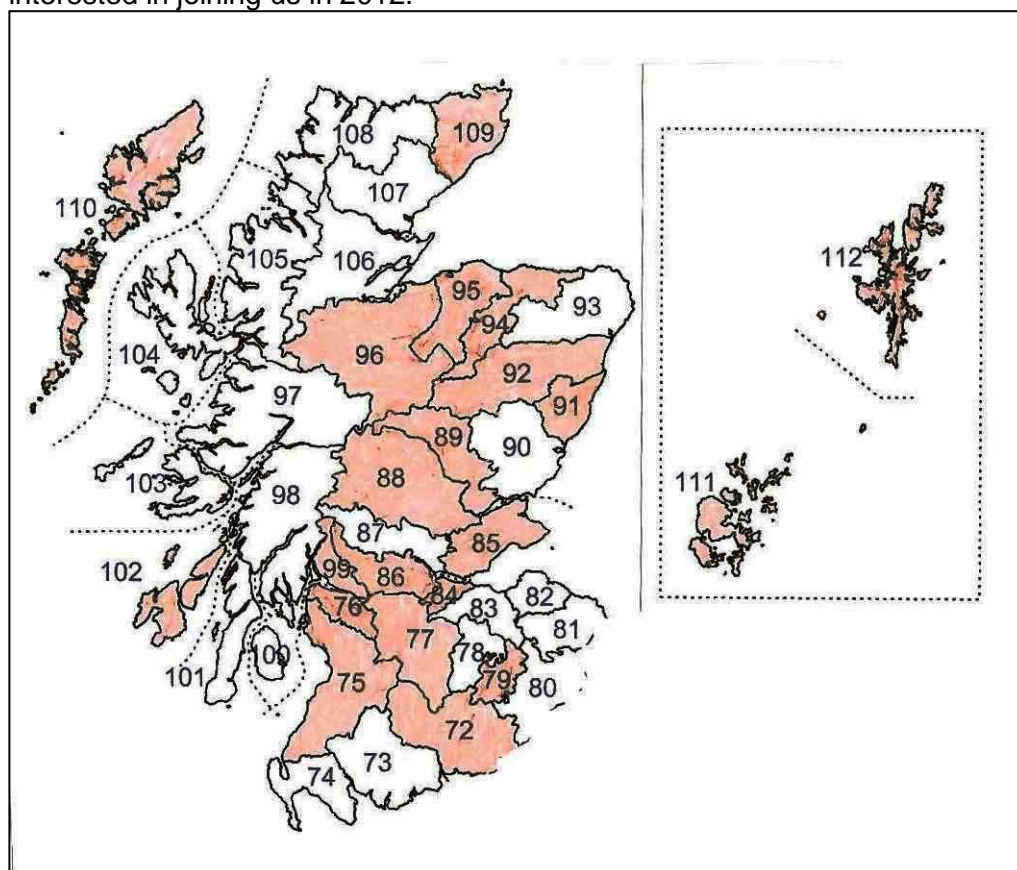
Tel: 01479 861374 email: [hilary@scottish-orienteing.org](mailto:hilary@scottish-orienteing.org)

For transects in other areas, please contact Ian Middlebrook in the first instance at [transect@butterfly-conservation.org](mailto:transect@butterfly-conservation.org)

### Garden Moth Scheme

#### GMS 2011 in Scotland

Following an excellent response to our latest recruitment drive, we now have someone trapping regularly for the GMS in over half of the Scottish vice counties. No doubt some will fall by the wayside and not manage to complete the season for one reason or another, but it is a fantastic start to the 2011 campaign. There are however still large areas with no representation, so if you know someone who lives in one of the 'white' regions, we would be delighted to hear from them if they would be interested in joining us in 2012.



Twenty sets of Quarter 1 results were returned, and Norman will no doubt have crunched the numbers to perfection, so I will simply point out that on average, counts are up from around 145 individuals per garden in 2009 & 2010 to 265 for Q1 this year. The top three are once again Hebrew Character, Common Quaker and Clouded Drab, but the inclusion of records from Shetland and South Uist has boosted the numbers of Hebrew Character in relation to the other *Orthosias*. The total number

of moths trapped ranged from 1911 in John T's rural Killiecrankie garden to 4 on Scott's balcony in Glasgow (but that was 4 more than last spring!). After a poor 2010, Red-green Carpet and Brindled Pug seem to have bounced back, but not so Double-striped Pug, and Yellow Horned has had a disappointing year. Winners include Red Chestnut (although most of these were in John K's garden on South Uist), Brindled Beauty and



Red Chestnut © Harry Scott

Small Quaker, along with an interesting influx of Dark Sword-grass, turning up from Dumfries and Selkirk in the Borders to Caithness and the Western Isles.



Small Quaker © Harry Scott

Interesting moths that are not on the GMS list included several female Brindled Ochre emerging after hibernation in Caithness and South Uist, Ringed Carpet in Lewis's garden in Killiecrankie, and a Peacock moth in Audrey's Aviemore trap (a species with a strange north / south distribution).

Bucking the trend, I have personally had fewer moths this spring than for the same period last year, and am hoping it is not an indication that my old home-made plastic Skinner was actually more effective than the new funnel & vane contraption that Santa delivered. Time will tell. Meanwhile, keep trapping, and I look forward to reviewing your Quarter 2 catches in due course.

**Heather Young - GMS Co-ordinator, Scotland**

### **New Tayside & Fife id leaflet launch**

On Friday, 17th June we launched our new Tayside & Fife identification guide at Scotia Seed's Annual Open Weekend. There were walks and talks, displays and activities and of course moth-trapping! The guide is available from Butterfly Conservation's Stirling office (please send a SAE for a copy).



## **Lyme Disease**

As the field season is underway, please find attached an extract from our Code of Practice No 7 relating to ticks and Lyme disease. Please familiarise yourselves with the code and take appropriate action.

### **7.2.1 Lyme disease**

#### **7.2.1.2 The Disease and the Tick**

Lyme disease is an infection in humans that can be caused following a bite from a tick (*Ixodes ricinus*) infected by the spirochaete bacterium *Borrelia burgdorferi*. The tick may be found on vegetation and animals, in a variety of habitats. Ticks are most active from April to October.

In their first year, tick larvae remain inactive, sheltering in leaf litter. In their second year, in spring, the tick larvae climb up vegetation and wait to attach themselves to their hosts, normally small mammals such as field mice, or voles, for a blood meal. It is during these blood meals that the tick can become infected by the bacteria that can cause Lyme Disease. In their third year, tick nymphs become active again in spring, searching for a blood meal. After feeding on larger mammals such as rabbits and hares, the nymphs fall to the ground and mature into adults. In autumn, the adults emerge, climb up vegetation and attach themselves to larger hosts (commonly deer but also sheep, horses and dogs). It is in this third year that transmission to humans by a bite can occur from infected nymphs.

However, not all ticks are infected by the bacterium, and not every bite from an infected tick will transmit the bacterium. An infected tick will not usually pass on *Borrelia burgdorferi* unless it has been attached to a host for more than 24 hours.

#### **7.2.1.3 Health Hazard from Lyme disease**

Early symptoms are a reddish-pink rash, which spreads out from the site of the bite after three to thirty days. Some people may become feverish (flu-like symptoms) and have some enlargement of their lymph gland near the site of the bite. They may also complain of aches and pains and feel very tired. The rash may spread to cover quite a large area (1–18 inches) but will gradually clear, starting from the centre outwards. This will occur even without antibiotics, but antibiotics will shorten the duration of the rash and should prevent complications. You may develop symptoms up to a year after you have been bitten.

If untreated, later symptoms can include nervous system complications such as weakening or paralysis of the muscles in the face, mild meningitis-like symptoms and sensitisation of the skin. Lyme Disease can lead to pain in the joints and arthritis-like symptoms, and in rare cases, abnormalities of heartbeat rhythm, all of which should respond well to treatment.

#### **7.2.1.4 Groups at Risk**

People who work and walk in the countryside are most at risk – especially those who walk/work in long grass, in forests, woodland, heath and moorland. In Butterfly Conservation this would include: conservation and other fieldwork staff, Branch volunteer field officers, volunteer groups working on reserves, other volunteers carrying out activities such as transect walking, and volunteers and members attending field trips. There is also a potential risk to members of the public who walk or pursue leisure activities in affected areas, which may include some BC reserves.

Since the tick is a well-known deer parasite, staff and volunteers who frequent areas where deer are present are considered to be at greater risk. In the UK, carrier ticks are commonly found in most of southern England (with the exception of most parts of Kent), the Pennines, the Lake District, Thetford Chase, Wales and the Welsh Marches, Northern Ireland and the Scottish Highlands. However, it is possible for infected ticks to be present in any location where appropriate conditions exist.

#### 7.2.1.5 Precautions

- **Avoid tick habitats when possible:** For example, keep to the middle of pathways.

- **Prevention of tick bites:** The skin, especially the legs, should be covered – wear long trousers, tucked into socks if possible, and long-sleeved shirts. Light coloured clothing will help you spot ticks and brush them off. Consider spraying your clothes with an effective anti-tick pesticide. Clothes should be inspected every few hours. At the end of the day's outdoor work, undress and completely check your body for ticks. They usually crawl about for several hours before burying their feeding tube into your skin. Undertake further thorough checks the next morning.

- **Prompt removal of ticks:** If not attached, ticks can easily be picked off and destroyed. If the tick is attached to the skin, remove it as soon as possible, preferably within 24 hours, as the virus is then unlikely to have been transmitted. Remove ticks by grasping them as close to the skin as possible using tweezers or a proprietary tick remover, twisting anti-clockwise, and gently pulling upwards. It may take several twists before the tick lets go. Part of the tick may remain embedded, but you will have prevented the tick from transferring the infection to you. If it is suspected that mouthparts have been left in the skin, consult a doctor as this may result in local infection by other bacteria. The use of Vaseline is not now recommended. Save the tick in a sealed container in case you develop symptoms later. All field staff are issued with proprietary tick removers.

#### 7.2.1.6 Immunisation/Treatment

If any of the symptoms described above appear after a known tick bite or exposure to an area where ticks are likely to be prevalent, seek advice from your GP as soon as possible. It is important to tell your GP the nature of your work in the field so that Lyme Disease can be considered. If Lyme Disease is confirmed, staff must inform their line manager (who will then inform the Health & Safety Advisor at Head Office) without delay and volunteers must inform the Health & Safety Advisor at Head Office (see Legislation, below).

Early detection and treatment normally results in complete recovery – delay may lead to (or some susceptible individuals may develop) complications that require a longer period of treatment and recovery. Treatment is by antibiotics. The earlier the diagnosis the better.

#### 7.2.1.7 Legislation

Lyme Disease is a reportable disease under the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR).

#### 7.2.1.8 Reference

<http://www.lymediseaseaction.org.uk/ticks.htm>