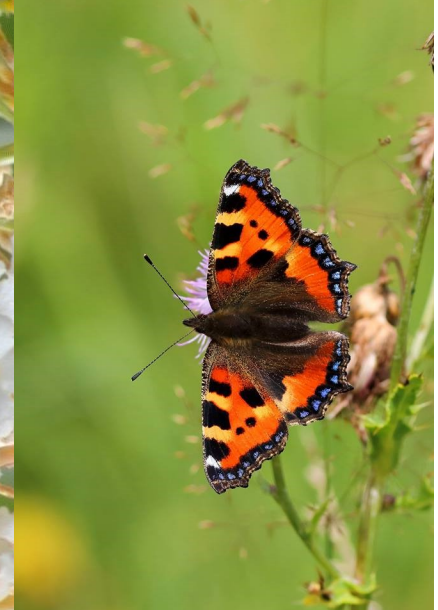


### Welcome to our Autumn Newsletter



Comma by Harry Bickerstaff  
Dark Bordered Beauty by Roy Leverton  
Small Tortoiseshell by Iain Cowe  
Canary-shouldered Thorn by Iain Leach

Contributions to our newsletters are always welcome.

Please use the contact details below to get in touch!

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.

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*(Please note our office is currently closed and staff are home-working)*

# Scottish Autumn Gathering 2021



## Scottish Autumn Gathering 2021 - (Zoom Webinar)

Saturday, 2<sup>nd</sup> October

10am – 1pm

You are invited to join us for our Scottish Autumn Gathering 2021 via Zoom Webinar. We have a full morning programme of talks and are delighted to have Dr Martin Warren with us as our keynote speaker. We will also have a Live Moths session where we will show you live moths from the evening before (weather permitting) as well as reflections on the season and updates on our projects. We are working hard to bring this to you in what we hope will be a relaxed and informal way and are indebted to our speakers who have kindly taken up the challenge. The event will be recorded and uploaded to Youtube. Advance booking is essential and to attend you will need to register via the link below. For queries please contact [events@butterfly-conservation.org](mailto:events@butterfly-conservation.org)

**Programme** *(Please note the content and order of presentations may be subject to change)*

- 10:00 Welcome**  
Apithanny Bourne, BC Trustee
- 10:10 The Secret Lives of Butterflies**  
Dr Martin Warren, Head of Development, BCEurope  
(Author of Butterflies: A Natural History)
- 10:55 Clearing News from Berwickshire**  
David Long, BC Volunteer
- 11:15 Comfort break**
- 11:25 Live Scottish Moths**  
Dr Tom Prescott, Senior Conservation Officer, BC Scotland
- 11:45 Butterfly Conservation's 2026 Strategy – vision & purpose**  
Dai Rees, Head of Conservation Wales, Scotland & Northern Ireland, BC
- 12:00 Purple Hairstreak discoveries in 2021**  
Chris Stamp, BC Volunteer
- 12:20 Autumn & Winter Volunteer Opportunities**  
Anthony McCluskey, Helping Hands for Butterflies Project Officer, BC Scotland
- 12:30 2021 Butterfly & Moth Highlights**  
Dr Tom Prescott, Senior Conservation Officer, BC Scotland
- 12:50 Closing remarks**  
Apithanny Bourne, BC Trustee

### Registration

You are invited to a Zoom webinar

**Date** October 2<sup>nd</sup> 2021 at 10:00AM start (You may join the virtual room from 9:45)  
**Event** Scottish Autumn Gathering 2021

**Register in advance for this webinar:** [www.butterfly-conservation.org/osgm](http://www.butterfly-conservation.org/osgm)

This event is FREE but there will be an opportunity to make a donation. After registering, you will receive a confirmation email with information on how to join the Webinar.

# Autumn Work Parties

## 2021 Autumn-Winter Work Parties in Highland Branch

Following a summer without field trips, we are hoping that there's an eagerness to meet up with branch friends and acquaintances for some chat, laughs, fresh air, exercise and of course the good feeling that comes from doing something useful for butterflies and moths.

So seven magnificent work parties have been arranged during September to November primarily to benefit Dark Bordered Beauty, Small Blue and Dingy Skipper, although two have already passed. All events start at 10am and will finish around 4pm, but you are welcome to attend even if it is just for a couple of hours. Handtools, (Loppers, Tree-poppers and Bowsaws), as well as work gloves, will be provided but please bring your own if you have them. In all cases bring lunch and wear old clothes.



Small Blue – Iain Leach

Each event requires the removal of scrub and small



seedlings. The three that are benefitting Dark Bordered Beauty are to remove birch scrub to favour Aspen, the moth's sole larval foodplant in Scotland. The Logie Quarry and Glenfeshie events are to remove a mix of pine, birch, gorse and broom to prevent further encroachment and increase the area of bare ground to encourage the establishment of Bird's-foot Trefoil and Kidney Vetch, whilst plug plants will also be planted out. The Insh Marshes events will also remove birch that is shading out Rockrose that is impinging on a Northern Brown Argus colony.

The seven events are;

### **Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> September: - Dark Bordered Beauty Birch Bash, near Grantown.**

Sadly you have missed this event, however, we plan to return later in the year as there is more birch to bash, so if you wish to attend simply contact Tom or Pete.

- Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> September - RSPB Insh Marshes Mid-week Birch Bash (Part 1).
- Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> October - Glenfeshie West Scrub Clearance
- Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> October - RSPB Insh Marshes Mid-week Birch Bash (Part 2).
- Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> October - Glenfeshie East Scrub Clearance
- Saturday 6 November - Logie Quarry, (between Alness and Tain) (Part 1)
- Saturday 20 November - Logie Quarry, (between Alness and Tain) (Part 2)

Regulars to our work parties will be wondering why Polmailly isn't on the list. Forest and Land Scotland (FLS), who own the site, are carrying out management work and so the site is out of bounds this winter. However, we have been assured that the verges and adjacent steep bank where we have previously carried out our own management work will be safe. In addition, FLS have agreed to flail the remaining verge and bank and remove the resulting brash, mostly thick gorse, as well as lightly scrape the vegetation to aid the establishment of Bird's-foot Trefoil and violets. Tom and Pete hope to visit the site after these operations to apply herbicide to any cut stumps to prevent their regrowth.

Since Covid-19 is still with us, safe distancing will be observed during work parties and the sharing of cake discouraged! Disinfectant will be provided for the cleaning of tools.

Although Covid-19 restrictions have eased, you will be aware that Covid-19 cases are currently rising and there is a chance that restrictions will be re-imposed.

Further details of each event are available on the event pages of our website [here](#)

If you wish to attend any of these work parties, please register your interest with either

**Tom – Tel:** 01540 661469 **Mob:** 07979 785665 **email:** [tprescott@butterfly-conservation.org](mailto:tprescott@butterfly-conservation.org)  
or

**Pete – Tel:** 01479 872261 **Mob:** 07866 578079 **email:** [tonuptwitcher@gmail.com](mailto:tonuptwitcher@gmail.com)



# Autumn workshops

## Conservation Work Party to benefit the Northern Brown Argus Laidlawstiel disused railway line (between Innerleithen and Galashiels)



**Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> October**  
10.30 – c4pm

and

**Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> October**  
10.30 – c4pm

### Details

A colony of Northern Brown Argus has continued to survive on the disused railway line that formerly ran between Peebles and Galashiels, near Laidlawstiel. However, the future presence of the butterfly is threatened by the establishment of scrub, mainly hawthorn, birch and blackthorn, that is slowly and steadily shading-out the butterfly's sole foodplant, Common Rockrose. We therefore plan to remove any excess scrub with handtools; loppers, bow saws and Tree-poppers to prevent further encroachment and allow the Rockrose, and thus the butterfly, to flourish.

The event will take place over the weekend of the 9 & 10<sup>th</sup> October. You are welcome to come and help on either or both days, or even just for the morning or afternoon.

### Directions

There is very limited parking at the work site which lies just to the north of the very busy A72. We will therefore meet at the nearby Forestry and Land Scotland Thornielee Forest Car Park which is situated around 1.5km to the west. The car park is about 4km east of Walkerburn (Grid Reference NT403365) and is clearly signposted off the A72.

We will then ferry attendees from Thornielee to the work site.

### What's needed

It is advisable to wear old clothes and suitable footwear. If staying all day please bring lunch and a hot drink. Hand-tools, including the wonderful Tree-poppers, as well as loppers, bowsaws, and gloves will be available, but please bring your own if you have them.

Please bring and wear a face mask when you are being ferried to and from the work site.

### Booking

We would be grateful if you could let us know if you intend to come so that we have some idea of numbers, especially if you intend to come for half a day (morning 10.30am to 1pm, afternoon 1pm until 4pm) so we can arrange to pick you up or drop you off. Please register your interest by completing and submitting our very simple online form which you can find [here](#).

### Additional information

A site-specific Risk Assessment will be sent to all attendees prior to the event. For more info simply contact Tom.

Tom Prescott. E-mail: [tprescott@butterfly-conservation.org](mailto:tprescott@butterfly-conservation.org) Mob: 07979 785665

We are very grateful to the local farmer for granting permission for us to undertake this important work on their land.

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## BC events in Scotland

Don't forget to check our website at [www.butterfly-conservation.org/scotland](http://www.butterfly-conservation.org/scotland) as well as your local Branch website for up-to-date lists of fieldtrips, events etc:

**Highlands & Islands** – <http://butterfly-conservation.org/313/highlands-and-islands-branch.html>

**South West Scotland** – <http://butterfly-conservation.org/311/glasgow--sw-scotland-branch.html>

**East Scotland** – <http://butterfly-conservation.org/312/east-scotland-branch.html>

And of course Branch Facebook and Twitter pages too!

# Project Updates

## Help us make meadows for butterflies!

### Help make meadows in Glasgow, Edinburgh, South Lanarkshire and Lennoxton

Over the past two years we've been working to create and maintain new wildflower meadows in parks in Central Scotland. They're in Glasgow (Springburn, Ruchill and Elder Parks), Edinburgh (Silverknowes and Granton Crescent), South Lanarkshire (Hamilton and Blantyre) and Lennoxton. This autumn and winter we'll be out to maintain the meadows by cutting back old vegetation and removing it, as well as sowing more seeds and planting wildflowers. If you'd like to get involved, please contact Project Officer Anthony on [amcluskey@butterfly-conservation.org](mailto:amcluskey@butterfly-conservation.org)



Meadow raking at Hamilton

### New volunteer opportunities in Highland area: can you help?

Volunteering with Butterfly Conservation is a great way to help us conserve butterflies, moths and our environment. You'll also meet like-minded people, and gain skills that are useful if you're considering a career in conservation. Over the next year we'll be working to recruit and train new volunteers for key roles within our three Scottish Branches. For a starter, we'd like to hear from anyone interested in the following roles in the Highland Branch area:

**Publicity Volunteer** (helping with media, including writing articles)

**Events volunteer** (helping at events that are run by the branch, or running own events)

**Events leader** (taking a more active role in planning and delivering events in the branch area)

**Social media volunteer**

**Transect co-ordinator** (helping new and existing volunteers find transects to monitor butterflies, and helping them get started)

Full training and support will be provided for each of these roles. For more information, contact Anthony on [amcluskey@butterfly-conservation.org](mailto:amcluskey@butterfly-conservation.org)

**Anthony McCluskey**

**Helping Hands for Butterflies Project Officer**





# Conservation News

## Introducing Rachael Conway - Supporting Science Officer

Rachael has worked for Butterfly Conservation for 5 years previously in the Northern Ireland team. Amongst many other duties she was responsible for the recruitment and training of new transect walkers and the facilitation of the Northern Ireland Butterfly Verification Committee.

Rachael will be working with Ian Middlebrook (UKBMS Programme Lead) to help with UKBMS communication and administration and will be your first point of contact for any transect and website queries. Rachael will also be involved in updating the online UKBMS guidance including a suite of training videos over the coming months. If you have any feedback on the current guidance or requests for training support, please do contact her with your ideas.

In addition to the UKBMS role Rachael is delivering an exciting new project which aims to improve data flow and encourage new people from diverse backgrounds into recording and verifying. The Supporting Science project has three key areas of work

- Development of a data management portal and 'tool kit' co-created with County Recorders
- Delivery of three bespoke iRecord training programmes aimed at beginners, trainee verifiers and County Recorders and their teams
- Redevelopment and roll out of the Garden Butterfly Survey

An Expert Working Group of thirty county recorders will meet in October to get the ball rolling, but it's not too late to contribute your ideas, please contact Rachael at the email address below. We will also be looking for testers to trial the new Garden Butterfly Survey website if you already take part in the scheme and would like to be involved in testing new functions, please get in touch at [rconway@butterfly-conservation.org](mailto:rconway@butterfly-conservation.org)



Rachael delivering transect training earlier this summer

# Conservation News

## Teach yourself Micros (on Fair Isle)

The tag line *Teach yourself Micros* has appeared regularly this summer in the email box of a number of islanders interested in moths. It is a pretentious, somewhat flippant title considering I am no expert myself. However, thanks to guidance over the years from Lepidoptera Grandees such as Ian Lorimer, Barry Goater, Colin Plant and Mark Young, I have become familiar with at least the resident Fair Isle taxa; and I know where to go for further advice.



*Agriphila straminella* microscoped by NJ Riddiford

The 'season' is short lived on the Isle. Scarcely a moth is to be seen before June and the September gales usually put an end to activity for all but a few. Walk through ungrazed grassland, across coastal heath or the moorland of the hill on a calm, sunny day of July and August and tiny moths shoot off in all directions. Some, such as *Aphelia viburnana*, are highly synchronised: a few one day, rather more the next and myriads after that. Within ten days or so it is hard to find any. Others, such as *Agriphila straminella*, are common and active for much of the summer along Fair Isle's flower-rich road verges. *Bactra lancealana* abounds on wet soils and the plantains of the coastal grassland host *Bryotropha terrella* and *Scrobipalpa samadensis*.



*Eana penziana* (ssp. *colquhounana*) by NJ Riddiford

The light traps demonstrate that activity continues during Fair Isle's albeit short nights. *Eana osseana*, variable but with a recognisable 'jizz' once it is known, enters liberally. Its highly patterned congener *Eana penziana* joins it from time to time. *Udea lutealis*, abundant in taller



# Conservation News

vegetation during late July-August daylight hours, is equally likely to be encountered clinging to the inside of traps in the morning.

Seven Fair Isle adults, including myself of course, have a keen interest in moths; and there has been continuous recording at various sites for about 30 years. Apart from Schoolton (*chez moi*) the micros have largely been ignored, not least because until recently the literature to tackle them was not readily available. "This needs to be addressed", I thought. A wider knowledge would a) capture records and patterns from other locations, b) respond to a wish I had already detected amongst the moth-ers to know more and c) arrive at a point where the observers would not overlook something unusual or new.

So, for the last couple of months, the Fair Isle mothing community have received regular updates incorporating one or more photos of the moths – not easy as I do not have any fancy equipment – and a description of the main features they should look for. I also add supporting information on habits, habitats and locations – i.e. where and when to look – and their status on the isle.

The intention was not to overwhelm so I kept it to no more than one species a day. So far we are up to 17. There will be more if I can catch them! Feedback seems to be favourable. I steer away from anything technical in my descriptions. What I have done though, to make these moths more 'accessible', is to provide accompanying common names – which seem to have extended recently to micros. This was done with some trepidation because a) I want them to be familiar with the scientific names, b) I would not have a clue if they told me they had seen a dotted shade (*Eana osseana*). I would probably think they were referring to the outlandish sun-glasses cricketers are paid to wear. I'm not sure, either, that yellow-spotted lance-wing trips off the tongue any better than *Phaulernis fulviguttella* – what a pretty micro much addicted to our wild angelica *Angelica sylvestris*. I have to say that my daughter as a six or seven year old was perfectly happy to inform visitors "that's an *Agriphila straminella*". At that age it's just another name and Dr Naomi Riddiford, now with children of her own, still remains comfortable with it.



*Phaulernis fulviguttella* on Angelica by NJ Riddiford

That leads me to the topic of children. One of our most active moth-ers, also a mother and grandmother, is a teacher at the school. This means that moths are very much on the curriculum. All the children are familiar with the resident larger moths and quite capable of running through the contents of the trap. They also get encouragement from their parents. Inevitably interest is accompanied by immense enthusiasm at that age and that certainly shows, not just for the moths but wildlife generally. Where better for that? A generation of young enthusiasts may yet push their elders to one side. I hope so.

**Nick J Riddiford, Fair Isle**



# Walking for Butterflies

## Walking for Butterflies

Jennie and Matthew Knights from Dundee are walking **494 miles** from the **Mull of Galloway** to **John o' Groats** to raise money for Butterfly Conservation and the RSPB. We asked them to tell us a bit more about their plans and why they want to 'walk for butterflies'.

Where did the idea to walk from the Mull of Galloway to John o' Groats come from?

*"We started to fall in love with long distance walking following a wet but wonderful week on the Rob Roy Way back in October 2011 and since then have completed a further 12 long distance routes in the UK. We were looking for a new challenge and started toying with the idea of walking from the most south westerly to the most north easterly point of Scotland. We'd hoped to get started with the SW to NE idea in 2020 but that was of course not to be due to the pandemic. However, we were finally able to get started this past August."*

Are you walking the full 494 miles in one go or splitting the route into stages?

*"As much as we'd love to walk the full route in one go unfortunately that just isn't possible due to work commitments - but splitting the walk into sections over the next 12 months will be just as fun, plus less taxing on the legs and wallet. The full route shall take in six recognised trails: the Mull of Galloway Trail, the Ayrshire Coastal Path, the Clyde Coastal Path, the West Highland Way, the Great Glen Way and the John o' Groats Trail. We hope to do the final, and likely most challenging stretch, the 147-mile John o' Groats Trail from Inverness to the finish line, by Autumn 2022. We have already completed the 37-mile Mull of Galloway Trail so we can tick that off!"*



Ailsa Craig



Jennie & Matthew battling the elements from Croy shore to Alloway

You are raising money for Butterfly Conservation and the RSPB. What made you choose these charities to support?

*"We are both passionate about nature and learning more about wildlife has become a major part of what makes our walks enjoyable. Sometimes it takes us twice as long as the guidebook suggests for getting from A to B because we spend so much time birdwatching and looking at butterflies, insects, and wildflowers. Plus the occasional picnic of course. We are concerned about declining populations of certain species, damage being done to delicate habitats and the effects of climate change on our wildlife. Raising money for Butterfly Conservation and the RSPB while undertaking this walk allows us not only to fund raise for these important charities but also to raise awareness among family, friends and sponsors about some of the issues as we also learn more ourselves"*

# Walking for Butterflies



August Thorn

How would you describe the benefits of walking and being out in nature?

*“There are so many benefits, both physically and mentally. If anything, the last 18 months have only made us appreciate the outdoors even more; the paths, parks and hills close to Dundee revealing all the amazing nature and wildlife right on our doorstep. There is something deeply healing about closely observing nature and we never fail to be astonished; for example the first time we saw a Red Admiral roll out its long tongue to suck up nectar was genuinely exciting! Learning how to look at nature, to really look, rather than being lost in thought or headphones, takes time and effort and we are still practicing, but the rewards are plentiful; more and more people our age seem to be experiencing something similar which is great.”*



Small Copper

Where can Butterfly Conservation members find out more about your walking challenge?

*“We are blogging about the walk and detailing our bird and butterfly sightings on our website <https://ramblingknights.weebly.com/> To sponsor us people can simply fill in our virtual sponsor form and pledge what they would like to give us **once we complete the full 494 miles** :)”*

**Jennie and Matthew Knights**

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# Conservation News

## Lanarkshire Butterfly Report 2020

From rolling uplands to urban inner city Lanarkshire covers more than 2250 km<sup>2</sup> with some very varied habitats for our butterflies. It stretches from Glasgow and the central belt to Beattock summit in the south, eastwards from Biggar and Dolphinton to Ayrshire in the west. We receive butterfly records from 34 different 10-km squares covering most corners of the county and 22 species of butterfly are regularly recorded each year. However since the turn of the millennium we have had some 28 species noted which total included Grayling, a species I fear may have been lost as no records have been received of it since 2009. Clouded Yellow also is another butterfly which has not been seen since 2008, but as a rare migrant we can live in hope for it to turn up again. Large Skipper is a rarity in the county only having been seen twice, lastly in 2014. For Speckled Wood we have had three individuals since 2017, hopefully this butterfly can establish itself here, as once it reaches our area there are many large woodland areas that it may do well in. Holly Blue is also rare and has only been recorded three times since 2011 the last two individuals being seen in Hamilton and Uddingston in 2019. Then there was the single Camberwell Beauty which turned up and was photographed in Strathaven in 2019, another extreme rarity which we are unlikely to see again anytime soon.

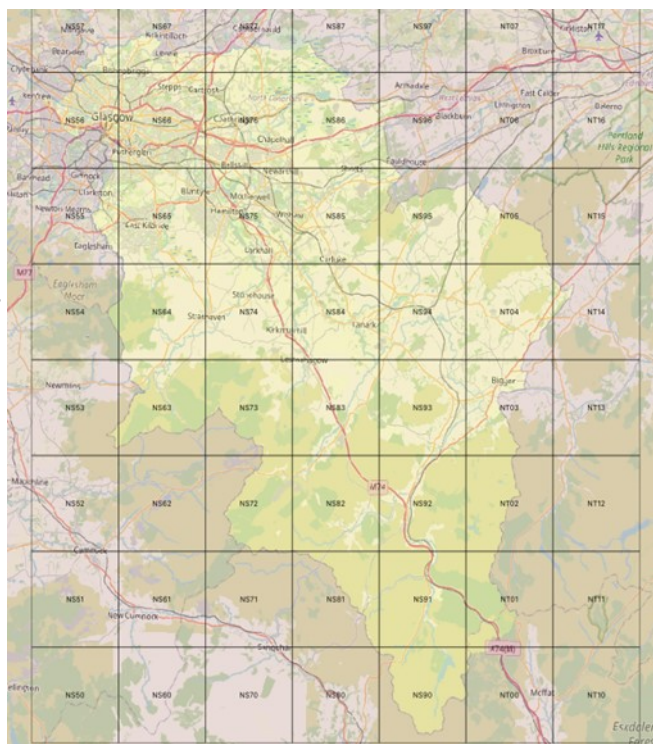


Figure 1: VC77 Lanarkshire showing 10-km OS grid squares

The weather was kind in spring of 2020 with the May temperatures reaching 24°C on some butterfly transects, in July temperatures reached a balmy 28°C and unusually in the West of Scotland we even had some temperatures in the 20s during August and September. Recorded butterflies in Lanarkshire were down from the peak number achieved in 2019 of 32865 butterflies, brought about due to the Painted Lady invasion seen in the west of Scotland where in excess of twenty thousand of these Mediterranean beauties were recorded. So between Covid affecting the early part of the 2020 season and no 'Painted Lady effect', the total number was reduced. Overall a total of 22 species of butterfly were logged from transects and field observations throughout the county by 213 recorders, with the total number of records for Lanarkshire and Glasgow city being around 2900 giving a total of some 6090 individual butterflies.

Rank	2020	2019	2018
1	Ringlet (1399)	Painted Lady (20572)	Ringlet (2549)
2	Small Tortoiseshell (1271)	Ringlet (3259)	Green-veined White (2410)
3	Peacock (923)	Peacock (2046)	Peacock (922)
4	Green-veined White (821)	Small Tortoiseshell (2029)	Small Heath
5	Red Admiral (449)	Green-veined White (1264)	Orange-tip (530)

**Table 1 Top five butterflies recorded in Lanarkshire 2018-2020**

# Conservation News

## Skippers

The only skipper recorded regularly in the county since 2018 is the **Small Skipper** which we have at the far eastern end in Dolphinton and in south of the county at Coulter. Ten individuals were recorded on the UKBMS transect in Haughhead at the old quarry site from where we hope this lovely little butterfly can continue its spread.



Figure 2: Small Skipper, Dolphinton. (T.Stewart ©)

## Whites

For **Large White** we had a total of 106 butterflies reported, which was down from the 2019 total of 306, the first individual was reported on the 24<sup>th</sup> April and the last seen was on 14<sup>th</sup> September.

**Small White** records totalled some 271 individuals down from 571, with the first seen on the 11<sup>th</sup> April and last of the year was seen on 26<sup>th</sup> September.

**Green-veined White** came fourth in total numbers with 821 recorded, down from 1264 in 2019. The first of the Green-veined Whites was reported on 22<sup>nd</sup> April and the last of the year was on the 9<sup>th</sup> September. We still receive many records of large totals of Small White butterflies up to thirty individuals at a time from unlikely places such as moorland. The underside is the best way of telling the two butterflies apart although it is not always easily seen, another good way of telling them apart is the outer margin of the upper wing where it can be seen that Green-veined White has triangular black markings at the ends of the veins.



Figure 3: Green-veined White (left), Small White (right) (T.Stewart ©)



Figure 4: Orange-tip (T.Stewart ©)

For **Orange-tip** we had a total of 366 recorded in 2020 down from 800 in 2019. The smaller number sighted was no doubt due to lockdown in the early part of the year. 2018 numbers for it were 530 and in 2017 we had 644 reported. The first Orange-tip was seen on 16<sup>th</sup> April and the last for the county was reported on the 25<sup>th</sup> June.

## Hairstreaks, Coppers & Blues

**Green Hairstreak** totaled some 173 butterflies up from 119 in 2019, with a peak number of 51 recorded in one hour at the timed count from Mossmulloch, south of East Kilbride. The butterfly is now recorded from eighteen different 10-km squares a great improvement in recording since 2012 when it was only known in nine 10-km squares. The first Green Hairstreak for Lanarkshire was seen at Langlands Moss in East Kilbride on 25<sup>th</sup> April and the last was from Braid Hill, by Crawfordjohn on 29<sup>th</sup> May.

**Purple Hairstreak** had been recorded from oak woodland in Gartloch in North Lanarkshire back in 2006 by Sandy McNeil and also at oaks in Baron's Haugh in 2010 by the late Jimmy Maxwell. But, it was a great addition to South Lanarkshire's butterfly fauna in 2020, being



# Conservation News

recorded at Cathkin Braes and South Haugh in Hamilton. It was also found in Glasgow parks at Ruchill and Kelvingrove by Scott Shanks. This butterfly is no doubt much more widespread than we know and is a great challenge for our butterfly recorders to search it out and help map its distribution and population more accurately. A total of 14 butterflies were counted in 2020 with the first seen on 11<sup>th</sup> August and the last on 22<sup>nd</sup> August.

**Small Copper** is always a delight when seen but is never seen in any great numbers with the 56 seen in 2019 the highest total for the county since 2000. It turns up each year on some of the transects I walk but only 20 individuals were recorded in 2020.

**Northern Brown Argus** is only found in Coulter in Lanarkshire and 19 butterflies were recorded on the one visit in 2020 up from the 8 individuals seen in 2019. Some years due to the vagaries of our weather more eggs are recorded than individual butterflies. Searching for the eggs can also be done no matter the weather



Figure 5: Northern Brown Argus and Northern Brown Argus egg on Rockrose (T.Stewart ©)

**Common Blue** had a poorer year than the previous two years where we had 175 in 2019 and 192 in 2018, in 2020 a total of 103 butterflies were recorded. It has been recorded in 28 different 10-km squares.

**Holly Blue** was posted missing in 2020 but it is one that is possibly making inroads around the Uddingston and Hamilton areas with a couple being seen in gardens near the train lines in those areas, possibly some holly and ivy along the train tracks are being utilized for egg-laying purposes. This butterfly is one to definitely keep an eye out for.

## Vanessids

**Red Admiral** was number five on the most reported butterflies for Lanarkshire with 449 butterflies recorded, which total was down from 851 in 2019. It also achieved the distinction of being the last butterfly of the year reported on 9<sup>th</sup> November 2020. For **Painted Ladies** what a difference a year makes where in 2019 it was first place with the huge invasion in the central belt of Scotland but in 2020 only 25 were seen in the county. **Small Tortoiseshell** had a very good year with 1271 individuals, which admittedly was down from 2019 but over the previous five years it had averaged 548 so a nice showing of them for the year.

For **Peacock** we had a good report of 923 individual butterflies for the year, a large reduction from 2019 where we had 2046 recorded. But the five year average is just 673, so all in still a good total. The **Comma** is still a particular delight whenever I see one and it's good to report they continue doing well since they were first reported in 2005. They are still not abundant but 50 individual butterflies reported means they are still increasing over the past few years.



Figure 6: Comma (T.Stewart ©)

# Conservation News

## Fritillaries

**Small Pearl-bordered Fritillary** is one of the gems and a particular favourite of mine whenever I come across it. We had 24 individuals seen in 2020 down from a total of 70 seen in 2019. The butterfly has been recorded in 18 different 10-km squares across Lanarkshire. **Dark Green Fritillary** another beautiful butterfly only known from fourteen of our thirty-four different 10-km squares. It was a particularly poor year for records of this beauty with only 7 individuals recorded.

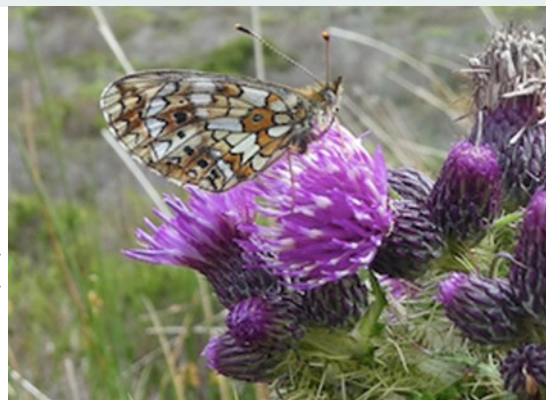


Figure 7: Small Pearl-bordered Fritillary (T.Stewart ©)

## The Browns

**Meadow Brown** was one of only three butterflies for which we had an increase in numbers reported in 2020 with 312 butterflies recorded compared to 234 in 2019. **Ringlet** was down for the year from a two-decade high of 3259 in 2019 to 1399 individuals reported. **Scotch Argus** only occurs in the extreme south of Lanarkshire in the area around Beattock and the Daer and Camps reservoirs. Only 2 individuals were reported to us for the year which was down from 23 noted in 2019. **Small Heath** numbers were 195 compared to 323 seen in 2020. For **Large Heath** only 7 were recorded in 2020 also down from 16 in 2019 it has a restricted distribution being limited to our raised and blanket bogs and as such is only known in nine 10-km squares.

Butterfly species	2020	
	1st	Last
Small Skipper	21/07/2020	08/08/2020
Large Skipper	-	-
Clouded Yellow	-	-
Large White	24/04/2020	14/09/2020
Small White	11/04/2020	26/09/2020
Green-veined White	22/04/2020	09/09/2020
Orange-tip	16/04/2020	25/06/2020
Green Hairstreak	25/04/2020	29/05/2020
Purple Hairstreak	11/08/2020	22/08/2020
Small Copper	23/04/2020	17/09/2020
Northern Brown Argus	25/06/2020	25/06/2020
Common Blue	14/06/2020	15/08/2020
Holly Blue	-	-
Camberwell Beauty	-	-
Red Admiral	10/04/2020	09/11/2020
Painted Lady	26/05/2020	17/09/2020
Small Tortoiseshell	22/03/2020	06/10/2020
Peacock	17/03/2020	04/10/2020
Comma	10/04/2020	27/09/2020
Dark Green Fritillary	25/06/2020	15/08/2020
Small Pearl-bordered Fritillary	18/04/2020	31/07/2020
Grayling	-	-
Speckled Wood	-	-
Meadow Brown	12/06/2020	15/08/2020
Ringlet	08/06/2020	15/08/2020
Scotch Argus	21/07/2020	21/07/2020
Small Heath	20/05/2020	08/08/2020
Large Heath	16/06/2020	25/06/2020

Table 2: First & Last dates for Lanarkshire's butterflies in 2020

The first and last dates for all of Lanarkshire's butterflies are as seen in Table 2 above. Many thanks to all who have taken the time to submit records to the U.K. Butterfly Monitoring Scheme, completed transects walks, taken part in the 'Big Butterfly Count', sent in emails to myself or even completed some of the postcard surveys. All the records are very much appreciated.

**Tam Stewart, VC77 Lanarkshire & Glasgow City Butterfly Recorder.**



# Conservation News

## A new traits database

(for the butterflies and macro-moths of Great Britain and Ireland)

There is a wealth of ecological information about butterflies and moths, especially compared to many other invertebrate groups. This is thanks to the large group of people such as the readers of this newsletter interested about the ecology of these beautiful species. Information about butterflies and moths exists in a wide range of resources such as field guides, books and journals. Until now however most of this information was not available in a single location or in a digital format. There was a need to collate this important information into one usable, digital resource for both researchers and conservationists alike.

At the end of 2019 BC staff began the task of collating these resources into one place, the so called 'Traits database for the butterflies and macro-moths of Great Britain and Ireland'. The focus was on butterflies and macro-moths initially due to the availability of distribution and abundance trends for these groups, especially after the publication of the Moth Atlas. Such data are currently lacking for the micro-moths which is why they have been excluded from the database for just now.

The database consists of a spreadsheet with ecological information on 968 species of butterfly and macro-moth. There is also a helpful ReadMe file containing information on how data were collected and what sources were used for each column. Within the database each species has a range of data available including details on distribution and abundance trends, habits of various life-cycle stages, body measurements such as forewing length, life-cycle timings and habitat use. Phil Sterling, Barry Henwood and Bloomsbury Publishing also kindly allowed us to use the data from their caterpillar identification book. This means the database contains important information regarding species host plant use and specificity, allowing us to easily answer questions such as 'how many species feed on oak?'

Hopefully this is a useful resource for researchers and conservationists combined. The full database can be downloaded from the CEH Environmental Information Data Centre at the following link <https://catalogue.ceh.ac.uk/documents/5b5a13b6-2304-47e3-9c9d-35237d1232c6>. You'll need to make an account to download the dataset.

Undoubtedly there will be additions needed to the database as new information is received and due to the size of the task there will be the odd mistake too. The database will be updated on an annual basis so if you do spot anything please let me know via the email at the bottom of this article.

We hope you find the traits database a useful resource and if you have any questions regarding the dataset please contact Patrick Cook via email at [pcook@butterfly-conservation.org](mailto:pcook@butterfly-conservation.org)

**Patrick Cook**  
**BC Ecologist/GIS Support Officer**

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