

Butterfly  
Conservation

Saving butterflies, moths and their habitats

# The Suffolk Argus

The Newsletter of the **Suffolk** Branch of Butterfly Conservation

Red Admiral on ivy by Matt Berry



## Butterfly aberrations

see page 11



Ringlet ab. *lanceolata*



Green Hairstreak ab.

Photos by Mervyn Crawford

## Olive Crescent A new colony is discovered at Old Hall Wood

see page 12



Olive Crescent



Larva

Photos by Neil Sherman



Old Hall Wood



Branch with withered Chestnut leaves

Photos by Tony Prichard

# Contents

<i>New Members</i>	3
<i>Contacts</i>	4
<i>Editorial</i>	5
<i>Silver-washed Fritillary</i>	5
<i>2012 Butterfly Conservation Report</i>	7
<i>Red Admirals</i>	9
<i>Changes to the Website</i>	10
<i>Volunteer work parties at Purdis Heath</i>	11
<i>Butterfly Aberrations</i>	11
<i>Olive Crescent</i>	12
<i>Pakenham Wood</i>	13
<i>The Sussex trip</i>	14
<i>Rendlesham, Tangham &amp; Upper Hollesley Common</i>	15
<i>North Downs</i>	16
<i>Late Season Foray</i>	17
<i>Black Hole Surveys</i>	18
<i>Where are all the Butterflies</i>	19
<i>How the season changed!</i>	19
<i>Wildlife Edge</i>	21
<i>Hill-topping</i>	22
<i>What to do in winter</i>	24
<i>Greenwings Butterfly tours in 2013</i>	24

## New Members

We welcome the following new members who have joined the Branch and we look forward to meeting them at our events in 2013.

Mr M Bacon	Lavenham
Mrs D E Blanchard	Brantham
Ms V Grassley	Stoke By Clare
Mrs J A J Freeman	Ipswich
Mr A P A & Mrs S Fox	Stutton
Miss J Heathfield & Mr B Bartoff	Lower Somersham
Mr G D & Mrs S M Janson	Pettaugh
Mrs Heather Macloughlin	Bury St Edmunds
Mr Gary & Mrs Murriekah Last	Walpole
Ms Penny De Quincy	Knodishall
Mrs J L Savage	Thorpeness
Mr M Stearman	Old Newton
Mrs J Webber	Ipswich

# Suffolk Branch *Contacts*

*President*

Howard Mendel  
c/o The Natural History Museum,  
Cromwell Rd, London SW7 5BD  
Tel: 0207 938 8782

*Chairman*

Mike Dean  
Coach House, Ixworth,  
Bury St Edmunds IP31 2HL  
Tel: 01359 230292  
email: Michael.Dean2@virginmedia.com

*Membership Secretary*

Susan Sidle  
Five Gables, The Ling, Wortham, Diss,  
Norfolk IP22 1ST  
Tel: 01379 643665  
email: ssidle@btinternet.com

*Treasurer*

Graham Simister  
The Old Bank House, Wickhambrook,  
Newmarket CB8 8XG  
Tel: 01440 820471  
email: graham.simister@btinternet.com

*Secretary*

Julian Dowding  
84, Clapgate Lane,  
Ipswich IP3 0RE  
Tel: 01473 436096  
email: julian.dowding@ntlworld.com

*Committee Member*

Bill Stone  
27 Draymans Way  
Ipswich IP3 0QU  
email: birderbill68@yahoo.com

*Conservation Officer (Butterflies) and County Recorder*

Rob Parker  
66, Cornfield Rd.,  
Bury St Edmunds IP33 3BN  
Tel: 01284 705476  
email: robparker@waitrose.com

*Conservation Officer (Moths)*

Tony Prichard  
3, Powling Rd., Ipswich IP3 9JR  
Tel: 01473 270047  
email: tony.prichard@btinternet.com

*Programme and Publicity*

Matt Berry  
Tel: 07599 243026  
email: matt.berry1@sky.com

*Newsletter Editor*

Peter Maddison  
Barnmead, Fishpond Rd,  
Waldringfield,  
Woodbridge IP12 4QX  
Tel: 01473 736607  
email: prmaddison@yahoo.co.uk

*Regional Officer, Eastern England*

Sharon Hearle  
216, The Street, Kirtling,  
Newmarket CB8 9PD  
Tel: 01638 731648  
email: shearle@butterfly-conservation.org

*Committee Member*

Richard Perryman  
email: richard.perryman@ntlworld.com

---

The Suffolk Argus is published by the Suffolk Branch of Butterfly Conservation. The opinions expressed in this newsletter are not necessarily those of Butterfly Conservation or the Branch.

© 2012 All rights reserved. For more information, see: [www.suffolkbutterflies.org.uk](http://www.suffolkbutterflies.org.uk)

Butterfly Conservation

Company limited by guarantee, registered in England (2206468) Registered Office: Manor Yard, East Lulworth, Wareham, Dorset, BH20 5QP Charity registered in England & Wales (254937) and in Scotland (SCO39268)

---

## Editorial

*Peter Maddison*

Even the most disappointing butterfly season has a silver lining: this season was silver washed. The fritillary was recorded in 17 Suffolk woods on those rare sunny days in July and early August. Read about the spread of the butterfly, the elation in making new sightings and the rain-sodden, squelching field event that oozed enthusiasm at Pakenham Wood.

The silver lining extended into the latter half of the summer, when fine weather and favourable winds encouraged the emergence of our Nymphalids and the arrival of migrants from the continent. Trudie Willis has written about an explosion of Red Admirals, Peacocks and Small Tortoiseshells.

At the AGM we learnt of the passing of

Douglas Hammersley who most kindly allowed us to use his line drawings within *The Suffolk Argus*. Rob Parker made a tribute when he included many of Douglas Hammersley's line drawings and photos in his presentation of the 2012 butterfly season.

At the AGM Rob Parker announced his gradual retirement from the position as County Recorder (Butterflies) and that Bill Stone would be assisting him with the intention of assuming the County Recorder's role in the future.

BC websites at both National and Branch levels are being developed, and Richard Perryman writes in the newsletter to outline the evolution at our Branch level.

---

## Silver-washed Fritillary makes a welcome return to Suffolk

*Rob Parker*

Climate change appears to be good for the Silver-washed Fritillary, *Argynnis paphia*, which used to grace Suffolk woodland in the 1940's and 1950's, but has suffered a long absence since then. Recently it has been strengthening its colonies in the south of England and in 2007 a couple of stray males turned up in Suffolk. At the time these were put down to overspill from a re-introduced

colony in Essex, but a few more in a private wood near Stowmarket gave cause for hope in 2009. That hope turned to excitement in 2010 when the butterfly had a very strong year across Essex, Herts and Cambs, and suddenly turned up in a dozen places in Suffolk and Norfolk. It is a woodland species, and several of the sightings were in woods that seemed to offer good prospects

for breeding.

The early, hot, dry spring of 2011 brought more success than anyone had expected. Searches of the prospective breeding woods in late June discovered *paphia* flying in numbers that proved that colonisation had taken place the previous year. They turned up in 13 Suffolk woods, and pairing was observed in at least one of these. Two strays have also turned up in gardens. The woods in question are mainly large oak woodlands, and are spread across the county. Most of them already support colonies of the White Admiral too.

Although 2012 was an awful season for butterflies in general, the Silver-washed Fritillary continued its consolidation, with numbers increasing dramatically in 3 woods, and gently in others, with a spread to nearby woods in several cases. Pakenham Wood, north of Bury St Edmunds is a private wood with a public footpath running through its best open glade, and was chosen as a suitable site for a field meeting. This event attracted an enthusiastic attendance, despite heavy rain on the day. At least it was possible to show everyone where to look, and those who returned later had exciting viewing opportunities. Several observers were able to count over 20 *paphia* on visits in late July and early August. Notably, Bill Stone saw three mating pairs and took the photograph on the back page showing one pair with a third in transit above them.

The number of woods with sightings in 2012 rose to 17, not counting 4 sites that had apparently had only one brief visit in 2011.

Here is a list of the best of the woods for observing Silver-washed Fritillary. All of these have at least some public access (please respect the private areas to preserve the landowners' goodwill).

Bradfield Woods (SWT)

Wolves Wood (RSPB)

Theberton Wood (FC)

Northfield Wood (WT – only one seen so far; the wood is rather heavily shaded)

Dunwich Forest (FC/ SWT – look in the glades with oak and bramble)

Norton Wood (private with footpaths)

Reydon Great Wood (private, crossed by Hadleigh railway walk)

Pakenham Wood (private with public footpath crossing through the wood)

The butterflies are on the wing from late June, they fly through July, and can be found taking nectar from bramble blossom or thistle. In 2012 they were still to be found in at least 3 woods on 18<sup>th</sup> August, although their bright colours had faded and most were worn. The females lay their eggs low down on oaks close to violets - the larval host plant.

Why not visit a wood near you next summer, spending time in sunny glades with violets. If you find any Silver-washed Fritillaries or White Admirals, you can report them via the Butterfly Conservation website: [www.suffolkbutterflies.org.uk](http://www.suffolkbutterflies.org.uk)

# 2012 Butterfly Conservation Report

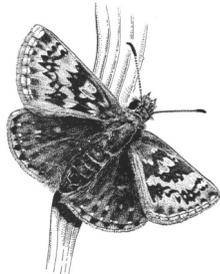
Rob Parker, Conservation Officer (Butterflies)

*The report was presented as a slide show at the AGM on the 22nd September 2012, using the photography and artwork of Douglas Hammersley, a talented contributor to 'The Suffolk Argus', who passed away earlier this year.*

Following two rather poor seasons, and beginning with a challenging winter, 2012 did not inherit strong populations of many species. Global weather patterns then intervened, notably irregular jetstreams, and these created chaotic weather which further depleted wild stocks of eggs, larvae, pupae and adult butterflies. The result was an awful butterfly season, typified by the results of the Spring Lane transect at Bury St Edmunds, which produced the worst results in the 13 years it has been walked.

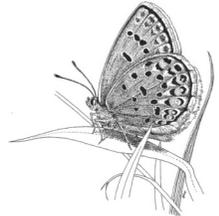
The preliminary analysis covered each of the biodiversity action plan species, the one bright spot of the year, which was the continued success of the Silver-washed Fritillary, and two other items of conservation importance.

**Dingy Skipper.** The King's Forest colony was found flying in all the established areas, albeit in weak numbers, and without many sightings of mating or egg-laying. The RAF Barnham and Center Parcs sites were both checked again but confirmed as defunct. Close to Barnham though, the colony on Thetford Heath nature reserve and the margin of the Thetford Forest was still present, and one mating pair was seen.



Dingy Skipper

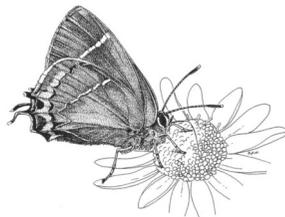
**Silver-studded Blue.** Emergence dates reverted to 1990's timing, defeating pre-planned dates for the Minsmere count. As a result, the deferred first count was still too early and the second attempt was rained off in the afternoon, so an incomplete weak count was all that was achieved. Similar difficulties were encountered at most other sites, with two notable exceptions. At Walberswick NNR, three searches were mounted in decent weather but not a single Silver-studded Blue was seen; it now looks likely that this colony has been lost. Better news from Blaxhall Common,



Silver-studded Blue

our 2007 translocation colony, was a highest ever single walk count of 48, and an encouraging spread into the wider off-transect parts of the common.

**White-letter Hairstreak.** Sightings were down, although this was probably attributable to poor weather reducing sighting opportunities. Where a determined search was conducted, small numbers were seen.



White-letter Hairstreak

**Grayling.** Judging by casual sightings, Grayling seemed to have a reasonable season in West Suffolk, and good numbers were seen at several of the traditionally strong coastal sites.



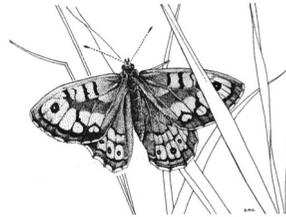
Grayling

**White Admiral.** Casual sightings were strong, partly because they were found in many of the woods where searches for Silver-washed Fritillary were being conducted. White Admiral was found in at least two woods with no history of a colony.

**Silver-washed Fritillary.** The field event at Pakenham Wood took place in heavy rain on 6<sup>th</sup> July. The high turnout was a tribute to members' determination; they learned where to look (and where to observe the owner's privacy) and were able to return in better weather for some delightful experiences. Several people counted over 20 individual SWFs, and on one occasion 3 separate mating pairs were observed. This bodes well for that colony, and for the species' chances everywhere else in Suffolk too. Sightings from Bradfield Woods, Wolves Wood and Theberton suggest that breeding colonies may have been established there, and sightings from new woods bring the total up to 17 Suffolk woods where they have put in an appearance. Let's hope that SWF is back to stay.

**Wall Brown Survey.** The joint SNS/BC single-species survey of 2011 was extended into 2012 on the grounds that we were perhaps watching its final decline. Sadly, the

results so far tend to confirm our concern. Most of the sites where they were flying 2, 3 or 4 years ago did not produce any sightings this year. The majority of sightings came from the known strong coastal strip from Shingle Street down to Bawdsey and inland to Butley. Outliers still exist in the north in the Somerleyton/Lowestoft area and in the north-west at Sedge Fen near Lakenheath. The latter was particularly welcome, although it was just 2 Walls on just one day of the year. Wall is currently suffering a decline across UK, with populations thinning out and becoming more coastal, frequenting only sites in low fertility grassland on well drained sandy soils. It is ironic that our strongest colony sits astride the site just chosen for the landfall of cables bringing electricity ashore from the Anglia ONE offshore wind turbine field.



Wall Brown

**The Losers.** Many species had their breeding opportunities reduced by heavy rain during their flight periods and drought or cold during their larval developmental periods. Species suffering particularly badly included Common Blue, Brown Argus, Holly Blue and Small Copper, all of which are double-brooded. The spring generations were thin on the ground, and the late summer generations have been hard to find. Many observers commented on the absence of Vanessaids on their buddleja this year, although a brief Indian Summer with a

small scale immigration of Red Admiral and some Small Tortoiseshell did bring a bit of colour to some gardens in early September. At the time of writing, it is unclear whether we will have a mild extended autumn – or an early winter to close this disappointing butterfly season. What is evident, is that 2012 has been a set-back, and we should not expect a prompt return to “normal”.



Small Copper

**Other Species.** The Purple Emperor was late emerging at Theberton this year, and was not reported from any other sites. The

Marbled White was again flying in Landseer Park.

**Other Conservation Activity.** Suffolk Branch of Butterfly Conservation has made representations in the planning process for the Anglia ONE Windfarm, in which we drew attention to the need for mitigation of the destruction of habitat for the Wall Brown colony breeding astride the proposed landfall site just north of Bawdsey. The proposed route inland passes clear of the Silver-studded Blue colony at Martlesham Heath, so that is no longer a concern. An important project to improve the condition of 14 fragmented heathland sites in the Ipswich area has been funded with a grant from WREN. This was the subject of a separate briefing by the project officer.

Illustrations by Douglas Hammersley.

---

## Red Admirals - Large and Small

*Rob Parker*

The influx of Red Admirals in autumn led a number of people to comment on a perceived wide variation in size.

Obviously, there is a natural spread of size, but I would have said that it is less (as a percentage) for Red Admirals than for many other species. The good book (Emmet & Heath 1990, *The Butterflies of Great Britain and Ireland*, MOGBI Vol 7) gives the typical wingspans as:

male 64 - 72 mm (12% spread)  
female 70 - 78 mm (11% spread)

This means the normal range of 8mm for either sex amounts to a 11-12% variation, which does not sound dramatic. On the other hand, the maximum wingspan difference between a small male and a large

female is 14mm, or 21%. Bear in mind though, that this leaves a much larger impression when judged by wing area, as 78 squared divided by 64 squared amounts to an extra 48% of wing area - so an observer naturally sees this as much larger. (OK, I know their wings are not really square!)

Another factor is dwarfism. When food plants dry out, undernourished larvae sometimes pupate one whole instar (skin cast) early, and are undersize when they emerge as adults, maybe 15 to 25% smaller than typical. I doubt there were dwarfs in the early September immigration though. Interestingly, my own 2012 season began with a very early sighting of a tiny Orange-tip, and as an isolated specimen, this stood out as a dwarf.

# Changes to the Branch Website

*Richard Perryman*

You may have noticed that during the past two months the Branch website has started to include more information. The website is a key component of what we do but, in the past, we have probably not been using it effectively to publicise the important projects we undertake or to give members as much information as we could. We therefore decided to make the site more active, vibrant and informative. The aim is to improve the information for members and so that other people who visit the site will find it interesting. Rather than start again the site will evolve - this is less time-consuming and can include suggestions for changes from members.

The main changes so far have been:-

**Sightings** – as is the case with other Branches you can now send in sightings (sightings@suffolkbutterflies.org.uk).

This does not replace the annual return recorders send to the Butterfly Recorder, which it is essential to continue. Any sighting that you think will be of interest to others can be included. Especially interesting would be the first or last of any species seen in the year, unusual numbers, unusual locations or scarce species. For example the entry that showed the Wall had been seen at Bawdsey would encourage other people to search in similar locations. Clicking on the grid reference produces a map of the exact location.

**Recording** – this will be expanded to give more information about formal recording. This also includes news of the latest surveys

of UKBAP priority and study species e.g. Silver-studded Blue, and butterflies new to Suffolk e.g. Silver-washed Fritillary.

**Conservation** – this highlights the important projects on which the Branch spends time and money. It includes updates on the success of previous work e.g. the translocation of the Silver-studded Blue to Blaxhall Common, and progress on new projects such as Ipswich Heaths.

Other information which will be included before next year will be good sites in Suffolk to see butterflies (we have no BC reserves) and the species which can be seen there.

The main Butterfly Conservation site will also be changing in December. As well as changes to the main pages they are introducing an easier way for people to obtain information about their local Branch. By entering a post-code a page of information about the local Branch will be displayed. This will include a link to the local Branch site.

It is therefore essential that our site is seen as up-to-date and informative as the main site. Anyone visiting the site must see that we are an active Branch with volunteers carrying out important work for the conservation of butterflies.

---

# Volunteer work parties at Purdis Heath

*Matt Berry*

For the past two years we have been hosting volunteer work parties at Purdis Heath in Ipswich. As many of you will know we've been working alongside other partner organisations to rescue an ailing population of Silver-studded Blue butterflies and to get the heath back into a better overall condition for other wildlife that thrives in a well-managed heathland site. In essence what is required is regular scrub management, to restrict the spread of Gorse, Silver Birch and Oak, onto the main areas of Bell Heather and Ling – food and nectar plants of the Silver-studded Blue. An open sunny heath is also required for the ants, which have an intricate, beneficial relationship with the butterfly.

We will have an organised work party on every first Saturday of the month, throughout the winter. The first of which will be on **Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> November**. Parking on site is limited, in a layby on Bucklesham Road, opposite the Suffolk Showground. We will meet there at 10am and then walk to the work area with our tools and the important

tea and biscuits!

In brief the kind of work you can expect to get involved in will be cutting down small trees and shrubs with bow saws and loppers. We use some of the material to construct habitat piles on site. These benefit (amongst other things) resident reptiles that use them for shelter, especially Viviparous Lizards.

We usually finish by about 3pm, but you can of course come and go as you wish. You don't need to bring anything, but do wear sensible outdoor clothes for winter conditions and stout boots. If you have your own work gloves please bring them as we have limited supplies. If the weather on the day is significantly bad we may have to cancel, so in those circumstances please phone to check first before setting out.

If you would like to find out more or have any questions please contact me on 07599 243 026

---

# Butterfly Aberrations

*Mervyn Crawford*

## **Green Hairstreak ab.** photo page 2

The Spring Issue 109 of Butterfly magazine contained a photograph of a Green Hairstreak in which the underside white 'hairstreak' was distinctly enlarged. Although this seemed completely new to the Natural History Museum, I was aware that specimens with the hairstreak completely missing were not that uncommon and reasoned that at the other end of the scale some insects could have bolder than normal markings. So a point was made this year of examining closely all of the thirty or so Green Hairstreaks that settled and this one was found at Wangford Warren on 26<sup>th</sup> May 2012.

## **Ringlet ab. *Lanceolata*** photo page 2

The cool wet summer this year seemed to suit Ringlets which were found in scores, even hundreds at some sites. So it was a good time to look for aberrations and four were spotted in Mildenhall woods and this one was actually not the most striking one seen.

## Olive Crescent Moth

*Tony Prichard has news of a colony discovered in Suffolk*

Earlier this year, at the end of June, the Suffolk Moth Group held one of its moth nights at Old Hall Wood, near Bentley. The group has visited the site in recent years for some general recording as well as targeted searches for particular species that might occur at the site. One of the species searched for has been Olive Crescent, an RDB and BAP species that in East Anglia is restricted as a resident to Stour Wood in Essex. It also occurs in a few scattered woods in some of the southerly counties but the picture is confused a little as the moth appears to be migratory and has turned up at various southerly coastal localities in the past.

In Suffolk the moth's first county record was a singleton at Ipswich Golf Course, where Neil Sherman recorded it in 2005. At the time this was thought to be either a migrant or possibly a wanderer from across the water in Essex. At the SMG moth night this year we were quite surprised to have twelve adults of the moth appear at some of the lights in the wood. This number of moths all appearing at once is strongly indicative of there being a colony present in the wood and in addition the habitat in the wood appears suitable with plenty of oak, sweet chestnut and beech trees.

Neil Sherman and myself made a daytime visit to the wood in late September and very quickly found a number of larvae of Olive Crescent feeding on the withered leaves of oak and beech. The larva can be found on bunches of leaves that have snapped or broken off and remain suspended in the branches - why they prefer the withered leaves when there is plenty of fresh foliage around is unknown to me. The finding of larvae confirms the presence of a colony and one probably of recent origin, as we've not seen it during past visits. We also had a search in Wherstead Wood but failed to find any Olive Crescent larvae.

The following day I made a brief visit to Great Martins Wood and found a couple of larvae feeding on withered sweet chestnut leaves - a second site for the moth in Suffolk. John Chainey and Jenny Spence from Hertfordshire were also searching for the larvae at this time but failed to find it at Freston Wood, Cutlers Wood or Wherstead Wood.

Further searches will take place at some of the other woods south of Ipswich, there are a few of them to check, to see if we can find any more colonies.

---

### Editorial copy date

Contributions for the Spring edition of our newsletter are very welcome and should be sent to the Editor, Peter Maddison, no later than Saturday 12th January, 2013.

Any piece of writing considered to be of interest will be published and we also welcome line drawings, prints and photographs.

Contributions (preferably electronic) can be sent to the address on the *Contacts* page or by email to: [prmaddison@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:prmaddison@yahoo.co.uk)

## Pakenham Wood Friday 6<sup>th</sup> July 2012

*Rob Parker*

Never before have we held a Butterfly Conservation field meeting on a day when the met office forecast 'a month's rain in a day'.

So it was remarkable that 10 optimistic enthusiasts turned up in wet weather gear for an excursion that was never likely to find any Silver-washed Fritillaries. I predicted that at best we might see a few Ringlets.

We were glad of the hospitality of the porch at Pakenham church for our dry briefing before setting out for the wood. The main objective of the walk was to show people the best publicly accessible points to see the resident White Admirals and the recently arrived Silver-washed Fritillaries that we hope will also become residents. We began with a circuit of the public footpath around the wood and the short cut across to the heart of the wood. At this point, the main ride through the private part of the wood meets the footpath in the largest clearing, where sunlight can enter (but not during our visit) and fall on a mass of bramble blossom and a thicket of flowering thistles. This is the sheltered playground of the Silver-washed, and a good spot for the honeysuckle that dangles from some of the tall oaks.

As we walked in the pounding rain, we recalled the ongoing contest for the least productive butterfly field meeting. There was Richard Stewart's walk along the Lavenham railway line - with nothing but a single Speckled Wood, then the Dingy Skipper hunt in the King's Forest (also well attended despite the pounding rain) when

nothing at all set the unbeatable zero points, and the probability that we were about to equal that record. However, by the time we got to the eastern end of the wood - a good viewing opportunity from the public footpath - a roosting Ringlet was spotted, followed by several more, and then one in flight. We kept count, just to see whether the butterfly : observer ratio would break even, and finished the walk at 15 Ringlets to 10 observers.

Everyone had at least had the opportunity to familiarise themselves with the habitat and plan for their return visits. What is more, we had all had a good time, despite our wet feet.

Four stalwarts went on after a picnic (church porch again) for a look at the closed landfill site at Lackford. By then, the rain had eased slightly, but it was an inspection of the flora amongst the conservation grassland rather than a real butterfly survey. Two Meadow Browns on this artificial hillside showed that it merits another visit in better weather.



Bedraggled enthusiasts at Pakenham  
photo by Jo Sweetman

## The Sussex trip

- ten haikai by Richard Stewart

Our first male Chalkhill  
Its wing colours reflecting  
A pastel blue sky.

Walking into rain  
And how it trickles into  
Every dry corner.

In one tall thistle  
Dispensing fragrant nectar  
A crab spider waits.

Female Common Blue  
Suffused with veined male colours  
A living jewel.

A well worn skipper's  
Antennae prove a challenge  
At last we agree.

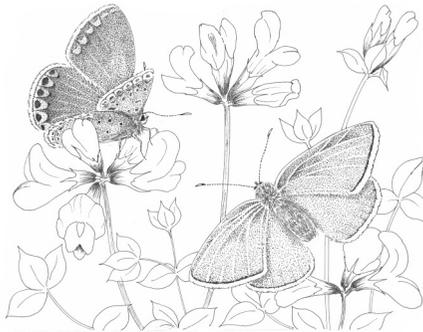
Deep marjoram beds  
Full of feeding butterflies  
And breeze blown perfume.

Tossing and turning  
In a shrill shrieking tumble  
Peregrine falcons.

He stalks the Wall Brown  
Digitally determined  
This will be the one.

A blaze of ragwort  
Cloud shadows drifting over  
Then the glory returns.

In a warm gully  
Out of the freshening breeze  
Marbled Whites gather.



Common Blue by Beryl Johnson

## Field Event Wednesday 11th July Morning at Rendlesham and Tangham Forest

*Richard Steward*

Seven members met on a morning of indifferent weather but with enough sun for butterflies to be moving. Our inspection of a long heather strip about a hundred yards from the entrance produced a Small Heath but our attention was quickly diverted when Stella Wolfe spotted an initially high flying White Admiral, which then obligingly landed on nearby bramble, giving close views and photo opportunities. A second White Admiral was seen further along the red marked trail, above a large clump of honeysuckle. The other two were both flying in cloudy conditions. Several Speckled Woods came out in the sun, two unusually perched next to each other on sunlit bracken. At the first area of water a distant Red Admiral was seen from the bridge but our view of the pond on the other side was severely restricted by a spreading

alder. I love trees but this one is in the wrong place and could be removed- there are plenty nearby. Meadow Browns and Ringlets were now abundant and at the second smaller and more secluded pond we recorded dozens of azure and a few large red damselflies. Later, after some disorientation caused by forestry work diverting the route, we had to shelter under a beech during a short shower, and in doing so disturbed several fallow deer. The last species recorded was Small Copper, on a long path to the left of which bracken was virtually a monoculture, even starting to climb some trees. This bracken problem needs to be addressed, as it must be reducing the biodiversity. Several sites which, a few years ago, held a wide variety of butterfly species, are now completely covered by bracken.

## Afternoon at Upper Hollesley Common

*Peter Maddison*

The likelihood of a deterioration in the weather encouraged a speedy lunch before we drove to Upper Hollesley Common. Here the Silver-studded Blue was our target species and within three hundred yards of the parked cars we found the colony. Two shallow trenches bulldozed into the heathland as an X shaped marker, originally used for parachute training during the American era at RAF Woodbridge, serves now as a sheltered, heat retaining environment, suited to the Silver-studded Blue. In the abundant bell heather we recorded 12 male and 4 female butterflies, totals that would suggest the peak

emergence had not been reached. Within the relatively short distance that we walked 9 Small Copper, one of which was var. *caeruleopunctata*, 5 Small Heath, 5 Meadow Brown and 2 Ringlet were sighted. Off towards the perimeter fence a pair of stonechats perched high on gorse scrub. Their calls beckoned us further on to the heath where patches of both bell heather and ling invited further exploration, but overhead heavy clouds had gathered and with the first rain drops of what became a heavy downpour, we returned to the vehicles.

## North Downs 11<sup>th</sup> August 2012

*Richard Stewart encounters 'clouds of butterflies'*

There have been very few days, in my many years of British butterfly recording, when I have been unable to count accurately, because of the large numbers involved. One such day occurred at Ranmore Common and Denbies. The actual target species, second brood of Adonis Blue and Dingy Skipper, weren't found and Ranmore initially was poor, with vast swathes of long and rank grasses, reducing nectar sources. As I moved downhill the habitat improved and I soon realised this was going to be a day when one species dominated: Chalkhill Blues.

Both males and females were everywhere, a cloud of silvery blue and chocolate brown butterflies all around me, against a background of multi-coloured chalkland flora. It was a veritable ballet, with up to seven males pursuing one female in flight and others chasing Meadow Browns and one Comma out of their territory. I observed both courtship and mating but, unable to make any effective count, I decided at two points, near the bottom of Ranmore and halfway up Denbies, to adopt a different strategy. I initially stood still, then slowly revolved my body for 360 degrees, trying to count the Chalkhill Blues all around me; as I turned full circle the first count was approximately 150, the second around 200. I spent most of the day on these two stretches of the Downs and would calculate a total of at least 2,000, possibly nearer 3,000 Chalkhill Blues. Not all were active, allowing me to look at the subtleties of texture, colour and pattern through my close

focus Papilio binoculars, adding another dimension of beauty to the day.

On a memorable visit back in May 2005, I counted over 30 first brood Adonis Blues on just one fox dropping, along the Carriageway path. With no second brood Adonis seen, these droppings were monopolised by Chalkhill Blue males, jostling so closely that at two of the six places where I witnessed this behaviour, I also discovered a dead Chalkhill male. The maximum number around one dropping was 17.

I walked back along the Carriageway to Dorking station and the banks either side of the path offered better opportunities for counting, though there are also long stretches of deep shadow beneath trees. My count here was 108.

I have heard many elderly naturalists talk of frequent 'clouds of butterflies' encountered in their youth- this was certainly comparable and an unforgettable experience.

## Late Season Foray

*Derek and Valerie Soper*

We had just returned from a slowish drive around neighbouring lanes of High Suffolk on a hot, early September mid-morning hoping, in less visited tetrads, to record butterflies. It was desperately unrewarding: we saw none! The only creatures observed (no humans) were the occasional dragonfly, plus numerous pheasants along headlands and roach in a moat waiting supposedly for the shooting and angling fraternity.

In order to seek reassurance that butterflies were still around we returned to our own garden and were pleasantly surprised to observe two Red Admirals, a Small Copper, several 'whites' and a Silver-Y moth busily nectaring on *Verbena bonariensis*. Moreover, there was also a Silver-Y on meadow clary and a Comma on a shallot flowering head. With the buddleias 'going over', the *Verbena* and meadow clary are ideal late nectaring provision. Small Coppers enjoy *Echinacea*, and the other flower deserving particular mention is the lawn 'weed' lesser hawkbit, visited by whites, wild bees and hoverflies. Hawkbit does however go-to-bed-at-noon, so care must be taken not to mow it off in the afternoon when the yellow inflorescences are not apparent. Fallen apples also provide a good feeding source for Commas and Red Admirals, which we witness daily.

In our tetrad only two species: Ringlet and Small Tortoiseshell, were recorded in the 1986 Suffolk survey and a further four: Gatekeeper, Green-veined White, Large Skipper and Meadow Brown, in the millennium survey of 2001. Here in our garden over the past eleven years we have

recorded 18 regularly-visiting butterfly species, 24 in total.

The one-acre property we own is rather isolated, being surrounded by intensive arable farming. Although there are contiguous grass strips these have been mown and are only suitable for rodents and the foraging barn owl. No wild flower seed has been sown with the grass. Thistles and nettles are not allowed to grow and the roadside verges are cut early. Although some hedge planting has been done, this is alongside roads and never across the vast wide-open fields.

The reason for the dearth of butterflies in our surrounding countryside is clear. There are no late-nectaring opportunities.

At present we have Comma pupae on stinging nettles in an old greenhouse. As the adults emerge we must warn them to stick around.

References:

Mendel and Pietrowski (1986) *The Butterflies of Suffolk*.

Stewart (2001) *The Millennium Atlas of Suffolk Butterflies*

## Black Hole Surveys: West Suffolk

*Tom Wade*

I was offered free membership of Butterfly Conservation last autumn, shortly after agreeing to take Voluntary Early Release from MOD.

I learned from the BC papers that it is easy to keep casual records of what you identify and noticed that Exning was an area where I could make a difference by reporting just one butterfly in a tetrad.

I had planned to be with Stella Wolfe on 22nd April (event reported in *The Suffolk Argus* Summer 2012, page 16) but it was not until 15th May that I met with others in the Branch. The Dingy Skipper Hunt in Kings Forest was not successful but it was a great day for me. Attending events at Minsmere, Pakenham and Lackford increased my realisation that I had a 'black hole' of knowledge to address as well.

Exning is surrounded by Cambridgeshire and I quickly found suitable places to find butterflies in the surrounding area. I then went to Red Lodge, Herringswell where my daughter lives, which is east of Newmarket. I did return to Pakenham Wood on 30th July.

It was a beautiful day. Rob Parker had previously shown a group of us where we might find Silver-washed Fritillary and White Admirals. I had been wanting to see a White Admiral since the age of four, so seeing 2 as I entered the wood was magic. I then met with another BC member and her husband and soon the fritillaries were

around but the rain came. As I left the sun returned and I met with a 'birder', Steve who had heard about the fritillaries and wanted to see them. We went to the glade together and slowly the numbers increased. It was just like the films I had seen on TV of the Monarch butterflies, but this was real.

Steve counted 22 mostly feeding on the thistle and bramble flowers and missed many that were flying about. As we stood and marvelled, I told him of the White Admiral; he wanted to see one and he did. And all the while we had the mewing of a young buzzard as it flew overhead. Dreams are made of such days.

With August the summer came and I took to butterfly surveys in earnest. Things are different now. There are more butterflies about: they fly faster, look more worn and spar or pair up. I am getting 1-9 species for each tetrad I visit, so next year the challenge will be to increase the species list and become more disciplined in the recording process so that population trends can be assessed. Meanwhile, thank you MOD for giving me the time to enjoy going to different places and watching butterflies.

# Where are all the Butterflies

*Rob Parker*

Every year, people ask why there are no butterflies on their buddleia. Generally, the first buddleias come into flower a couple of weeks before the widespread emergence of our familiar Peacocks, Commas, Small Tortoiseshells and Red Admirals. But this year that gap has been greatly extended because the butterfly season was two weeks behind normal. This was largely down to the stop-go nature of the awful 2012 weather.

However, things are worse than just timing. Last winter was relatively harsh and followed a below-average year, so we got off to a poor start. The cold wet weeks of what ought to have been spring and summer have had a serious impact on butterfly populations. They do not emerge on time if it is too cold, they cannot fly if it is raining and they cannot meet and mate if they cannot fly. Thus their reproductive chances have been poor this year, and it will need a fine year in 2013 for them to have any chance of picking up. For those species that have more than one generation a year, such as the Common Blue, Small Copper, Brown

Argus, Small Tortoiseshell and Speckled Wood, the impact is felt in the same season; a wet May will have reduced the number of eggs laid, and those that hatched successfully will have had to survive the downpours of rain that can wash them away and greatly increase the risk of fungal disease. Caterpillars can tolerate a brief inundation, but a couple of days underwater will kill them (remember all those images of our summer floods?). Even if we do get an Indian summer, I am still not expecting decent numbers of these species. For small isolated colonies, this is the kind of setback that can eliminate them entirely.

That is all pretty gloomy stuff for our 'common' species, but happily, there has been some good news for a couple of our scarce species. Two of our delicately-balanced Silver-studded Blue colonies have had good seasons despite the weather, and our newly-arrived Silver-washed Fritillaries have bred successfully in the shelter of their chosen woods. Two Silvers, but no Golds in this Olympic Year!

---

## How the season changed!

*Snippets from the 2012 late summer postbag of the County Recorder...*

### **From Trudie:**

*'Things have changed dramatically at Priors Oak. Last Saturday (25th Aug) I walked up to the Buddleia walkway and was astounded. Out of the blue it was teeming with butterflies, to the extent that it was reminiscent of the Painted Lady influx. Today I needed to do a count for you and despite a fairly strong wind, I was over awed by my results. I walked quietly outside the*

*walkway and counted over 100 Red Admirals (mostly new specimens). This included the two large yellow Buddleias at the very top. I then started again and counted over 40 Peacocks but the real joy was counting the same amount of Tortoiseshells. I can only say that my count was probably half of what was really there as I was only counting from one side of the shrubs/trees and not counting on the adjoining field and trees*

where they appeared to be sunning wherever I looked. Feeling very elated I went over to Peter's heather and found it full of Small Coppers, Small Heaths, Graylings, Meadow Browns and a couple of Common Blues. A party of late butterfly visitors couldn't believe their eyes. It will only take a good late hatching of Commas and Speckled Woods and I would say it was the best year in the past 5. No idea how this late hatching has arrived but bodes so well for next year. I never dreamed I would see them tumbling in 3's and 4's this year. Still totally confused, very delighted and wondering if as the Sedums come into flower they will move towards the main garden for nectar. Interestingly the Tortoiseshells and Peacocks were only in the new Buddleia walkway but each flowering bush was covered in them, however the big Buddleias at the top were mostly only Red Admirals. Will monitor how things progress but am totally confused by this weekend's appearances, especially as I had only seen half a dozen Tortoiseshells in the past few years, and almost always as single sightings. Also at least 4 Painted Ladies in very good order. Amazing! Look forward to hearing what feed back you get elsewhere.'

**More snippets.....**

**From Julian:**

'On Sunday 26th August, I walked the RSPB Minsmere reserve from the sluice outfall on the beach (near the east hide) towards Sizewell for a mile-ish and counted 38 Graylings among the grasses, path, Ling and Bell Heather. Also 5 Small Heath and one very blue female Common Blue. This was around 3.30 pm-5.15pm. I don't know whether you think this is a high or low count for the Grayling, but it certainly raised my spirits. It was lovely to observe their marbled paleness fluttering in the failing sunlight and then to try and work out where they had settled.'

**From Stan:**

'As an update, I can add the recording of a Purple Hairstreak in my garden moth trap at Sicklesmere. I have lived at this address since 1970 and this is the first record that I have of this species. There is a large mature oak at the bottom of the garden, it was mature when I moved here, but I have never seen Purple Hairstreak here before. This record was from the night of 14 July 2012. You may recall that I recorded one from my moth trap at Elveden last year.'

**Rob's reply:**

'Interesting Stan, My usual advice for spotting PH is to sit in the afternoon sun watching an oak from a deck chair with a glass of gin in one hand. Now I can add . . . by moonlight, with a mug of cocoa!'

**From Mervyn**, the day after sighting two Walls at Sedge Fen - the first Walls seen in West Suffolk since 2009.

'I returned to the spot near Sedge Fen yesterday with the main purpose of a photo ID of the place where two Walls were seen on Saturday.

The Wall sightings of the day before were not to be repeated - rather a disappointment, but large Burdocks (and Hemp Agrimony) are probably the best nectar sources in these fenland areas. On the same 'bush' were three S.Tortoiseshells, two RAs, two Small Coppers, a Gatekeeper, a female Brimstone, a GVW, a Comma and a couple of very late Large Skippers.

Just for a dismal comparison, around ten/twelve years ago Sheila and I recorded Walls in dozens along this track - they well out-numbered any other species.'

**From: Paul (4 emails)**

1. 'Having posted a picture on Facebook I discovered that a friend had spotted a White Admiral in a field yesterday; am checking where.'
2. 'The one spotted by a friend was flying into a

patch of woodland at TL953726. Will go and investigate further!’

[Paul did so within hours, returning with White Admiral sightings from 2 woods from which there were no previous records, in a tetrad also without any previous records.]

3. ‘Success! I parked just off the A143 by the entrance to the Green Lane; there are a couple of passing places where one can sensibly leave the car. I walked through into the main body of Half Grove Wood and about three quarters of the way through got to a little clearing on the path with honeysuckle growing up an oak tree and there was one flitting about. I could see to the south that there were sunny glades and there were at least half a dozen White Admirals there. I worked my way through to the further glade passing another couple of White Admirals on the way and there were two more in the next glade. In all I am confident I saw at least 13 individual White Admirals, several looking in very fine shape.’

4. ‘A very 21st century find! My Pakenham White Admiral photo on Facebook elicited a response from Claire. I Googled the location to see where to go and used the Maps app on my phone to work out where I was. Couldn’t have happened even 5 years ago.’

**From Tim:**

‘Back in July I visited Bradfield Woods a few times to see the White Admirals. Wellies were essential, but paddling through the mud was worth it. I got the impression they were doing well, and saw them along more rides than in previous years. I even found one basking on the gravel path not far past the visitor centre when I was there on July 15th, and counted a total of 15 that afternoon. I didn’t see any Silver-washed Fritillaries at Bradfield this year, but probably I wasn’t looking in the right areas, and was preoccupied with the White Admirals.’

---

## Wildlife Edge

*Alison Connors gardens for wildlife*

How about an impressive display of colour in your garden, which not only pleases the eye but also encourages wildlife to thrive? I have come up with a very simple idea that will transform your garden, bring in the wildlife and enrich your life.

Most gardens consist of at least one area of grass. This always has to be kept in check either by strimming or digging out the edges when the grass grows over pathways. After a tough gardening job of scrapping grass and soil from a tarmac path which had spilled over from a lawn, I came up with a good plan to prevent it happening again. I dug out a 20cms wide border around the

edge of the lawn. I planted it with *Ajuga reptans* which has purple leaves and flower spikes in early Summer. These produce tiny purple flowers which attract bees and butterflies. This plant spreads easily, covering the bare ground and the lawn edge. This means that there will eventually be an end to cutting the lawn edge with shears as the plant will weave itself into the grassy edge.

I planted *Lavendula angustifolia* ‘Hidcote’ all along the border 60cms apart. These plants are nectar rich, attracting bees and various types of butterfly. I scattered a huge amount of *Papaver rhoeas* ‘Wild Red Poppy’ seeds in

amongst the existing plants. This Poppy is not only incredibly stunning in appearance it is also a good source of pollen for bees.

So far these are my '3' plants which are currently growing in that border. The next lot of plants that I shall be adding are cornflowers. They come in many colours and have a long flowering period. These will attract various insects and birds one of

which is the goldfinch.

Many other wildflowers can be added to your Wildlife Edge.

Helpful books on this subject are – 'The Wildlife Garden Month by Month' by Jackie Bennett and 'RSPB Gardening For Wildlife' by Adrian Thomas

---

## Hill-topping

*Mervyn Crawford*

This year I had a reminder of one of those endearing but complex examples of butterfly behaviour which has come to be known as 'hill-topping'. On the continent, particularly in the hot, dry and scrubby regions bordering the Mediterranean, this strange habit can be very key to the survival of a species within a certain district. It would appear to facilitate the meeting of the sexes, and the subsequent courtship and mating of several iconic European butterflies. In some parts of the world, notably Australia, even small changes to the topography and disturbances to plant life of sites used by hill-topping insects have led to localised extinctions of some species.

This September, our Spanish hotel was situated on a rocky promontory surrounded on three sides by the sea. The seaward side of this outcrop was as high as the six-storey hotel itself and covered in gnarled pine trees. After three days the European Swallowtail, so similar to our *Britannicus* version, was becoming conspicuous by its absence. So after one of those notoriously satisfying buffet breakfasts and leaving my wife to enjoy the scorching poolside, I scrambled up the slopes of this small wood with camera in hand. The reward was to come across a

number of these butterflies either resting on dried stalks of Fennel or patrolling a small clearing at the 'summit'. Nectar sources were non-existent, so the attraction offered by this particular spot was hard to see. Mated females however, would have to leave such a site and fly for a considerable distance to lay their eggs, which would just have time to hatch and achieve the pupal stage before the short, mild Mediterranean winter arrived.



Another hill-top site well documented in previous editions of the Argus newsletter by our former chairman, is the 'Ermitage', a small monastic building near the town of Ceret on the foothills of the Pyrenees in southern France. This spot is within quick and comparatively cheap reach of Stansted with its fleet of Ryanair jets which fly at least twice on most days into Perpignan. The site is enriched in places by a number of Fig trees with their usual underlying carpet of decaying autumn fruit. Here in September one is confident in finding numbers of that

exotic-looking inhabitant of the coastal 30 km. strip, the Two-tailed Pasha, the Cardinal, the Lesser Purple Emperor and even perhaps the odd Camberwell Beauty, but the summer emergences of the Large Tortoiseshell, as they once did in England, will have already gone into hibernation.

A 'hill-top' can qualify as a recognised site by just being appreciably higher than the land surrounding it, and such is the case near the village of Pras-de-Lys, which itself is at quite an altitude close to the popular ski-resort of Les Gets in the French Alps. The area I came across a few years back probably covers several hectares, but even a site no larger than a tennis court can be used for hill-topping. Here the Apollo and Small Apollo were flying together, but were never seen in the nearby village or surrounding hillsides. Even other species not generally recognised for their hill-topping behaviour such as the Dark Green Fritillary and Black-veined White were far more prolific here than elsewhere, whilst two Nettle-tree butterflies on the extreme edge of their European range were observed at this spot.



Two-tailed Pasha

A favoured hilltop can take the form of a ridge and extend for several kilometres. Examples of this are on the Halkidiki peninsula, the most westerly of those three fingers which stretch into

the Aegean from Northern Greece. Above the resorts of Hanioti and Pefkohori these ridges are criss-crossed from south-west to north-east by several very narrow stony roads with their seemingly endless succession of steep hairpin bends. The views and butterflies at the top are well worth the

effort. My visit a few years ago coincided with large numbers of Queen of Spain Fritillaries, together with Woodland and Great Banded Graylings, many of which were drinking along the edges of a small stream and very approachable. None of these were seen along the coasts at sea-level.

Aside from 'hill-topping', many butterflies can often be observed at extraordinary altitudes. On a beautifully clear September day we once took the cable car from Chamonix in two stages to Aiguille-du-midi, not that far from the summit of Mont Blanc. Here the altitude caused breathlessness when ascending just a few steps, whilst the temperature varied from 28°C in the sun to below freezing in the shade. The landscape consisted of just snow, ice and rocks, yet we observed a passing Small Tortoiseshell, a Large White and several Humming-bird Hawk moths from the viewing platform.

In the increasingly popular destination of Croatia, one can travel high into the hills inland to see the rather scarce False Comma and Eastern Festoon which appear to be extending their range northwards into this area.

In Europe, genuine 'hill-topping' behaviour is attributed mainly to the Swallowtails and a few other species, whilst on other continents it includes many of the Skippers and the Blues. There are no elevated places in the Broads for our own solitary Swallowtail species to use. However, when taking that next holiday in the Med., I hope the foregoing might encourage some to avoid the pre-planned coach tours, hire that small car, and take to the hills. Don't forget the camera, as apart from the views, the comparative solitude and slightly cooler air, you should be pleasantly surprised at what you might find.

Illustrations by Mervyn Crawford

## What to do in winter

*Matt Berry*

The months of winter can be a bit of a depressing time for the butterfly or moth enthusiast, with very little on the wing, cool days and long dark evenings spent indoors. Unlike a Small Tortoiseshell or Brimstone we cannot tuck ourselves away somewhere and sleep through it, so what can we do to lift the spirits whilst we wait for spring?

Well, like me I am sure many of you will make use of digital cameras to capture images of butterflies, moths and caterpillars. But what do you do with all of these captured memories? I would be willing to bet that mostly they languish on the computer and rarely see the light of day – that is what happens to most of mine! We rarely print photographs these days, so gone are the days of browsing through albums on the sofa. However, with digital technology comes a vast amount of potential for sharing images, not just with our immediate friends and families, but with the whole world – via the internet.

So this winter, why not spend some of those dark nights going through your images and sharing them with others? I am an administrator for the Butterfly Conservation photo group on the Flickr photo sharing website. It currently has almost 600

members and a bank of 12,000 photos. It is a great place to upload your photos and to see what others have seen and snapped around the country.

Or how about joining us on Facebook and sharing them there? We have almost 500 friends, some of whom already upload their photos. It's a useful way for them to ask for identification help, point out a sighting in Suffolk, or just to share their pleasure in what they have seen.

We look forward to seeing your photographs and especially any that depict the interesting or unusual, such as an aberration or some kind of interesting behaviour. Don't forget, if you have images that aren't digital, they could still be shared online by scanning them first.

The web address for the Flickr group is <http://www.flickr.com/groups/butterflyconservation/>

Our Facebook username is BC.Suffolk . Just log in to your own account and search for us using that name. We are also on Twitter and currently have almost 850 followers. Our username there is BC\_Suffolk.

---

## Butterfly tours in 2013

*Matt Berry from Greenwings outlines some of next year's tours*

As autumn and winter take over from the fairly disappointing British summer we've just experienced it is time to look forward to next year's butterfly season. We have a number of tours abroad (complete with guaranteed sun!) to tempt you with, all of which can be found on our website at [www.greenwings.co](http://www.greenwings.co). I would just like to point out one or two that I

am particularly looking forward to myself, both of which are in Greece. It is something of a second home to me as I have a Greek partner and have been spending time with her there now for over ten years. I love the Country, its wildlife, people and the delicious Greek cuisine - not to mention the very agreeable warm climate!

**Birds & Butterflies of north Greece with BirdWING: 4<sup>th</sup> May – 11<sup>th</sup> May 2013 £900**

On this tour we'll spend our time predominantly on birds, but also butterflies and other wildlife. We'll be based at Lake Kerkini National Park, in north-east Greece, near to the Bulgarian border. It is an excellent and accessible location, being less than two hours' drive from Thessaloniki, where direct flights from London are readily available. We're delighted to be teaming up with Steve Mills and Hilary Koll from BirdWING (Birdwatching in Northern Greece) for this tour. As a wildlife charity their mission is to raise awareness of birds in Greece and to raise money for the conservation and restoration of bird habitat in the region. These aims match our own and so some of the proceeds from this tour will be donated to Birdwing to help fund their Dalmatian Pelican conservation project. We'll be able to see some of the conservation work they've already funded in the areas we'll visit during the week, such as Common Tern breeding rafts. With their expert knowledge of the birds of the region and the locations in which to see them we will enjoy an avian feast and 100+ species should not be difficult to achieve (over 300 bird species have been observed in the area). A flavour of what's on offer includes Dalmatian Pelican, Pygmy Cormorant, Squacco Heron, Black Stork, Great White Egret, Glossy Ibis, Golden Oriole, European Bee-eater, Roller, Blue Rock Thrush, Red-backed Shrike, Scops Owl, Eagle Owl, Whiskered Tern, Black Tern, Penduline Tit, Black-eared Wheatear, Middle Spotted Woodpecker, Hoopoe, Grey-headed Woodpecker, Black-headed Bunting and Hawfinch.

During the week we'll visit various locations, including Dadia Forest, close to the eastern border with Turkey. It is justifiably labelled as "the place to go in Europe for raptors", with 36 species

recorded and 20 that breed there. Highlights of this raptor fest include Black Vulture, Griffon Vulture, Egyptian Vulture, Golden Eagle, Imperial Eagle, White-tailed Eagle, Lesser Spotted Eagle, Booted Eagle, Short-toed Eagle, Honey Buzzard, Goshawk, Levant Sparrowhawk and Black Kite.

We should also be able to enjoy a good number of species of butterflies on this tour. A selection possibly on the wing include Southern Comma, Southern and Eastern festoons, Lattice Brown, Nettle-tree Butterfly, Large Tortoiseshell, Powdered Brimstone, Yellow-banded Skipper, Eastern Dappled White, Black-veined White, Gruner's Orange-tip, Duke of Burgundy, Map, Little Tiger Blue, Long-tailed Blue, Lesser Fiery Copper, Chequered Blue, Osiris Blue, Blue Argus, Green-underside Blue and Eastern Baton Blue - to name but a few!

**Balkan Butterflies with Tristan Lafranchis: 15<sup>th</sup> June – 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2013 £1,185**

This trip features one of the most celebrated butterfly mountains in Greece, Mount Chelmos in the northern Peloponnese region of Greece, where we will enjoy seeing between 75 – 100 species of butterfly. We will be based on the slopes of Mount Chelmos, in the charming mountainside village of Kalavryta. We will stay in a small, friendly hotel with all the usual modern facilities. In the winter the area is a busy ski resort, but during the rest of the year it is a remarkably peaceful place and as we explore the mountains we'll be more likely to see goats than other people. We will enjoy a leisurely week, exploring the slopes of Chelmos and other hidden corners and secret glades, for a week of fine weather, butterflies, birds & botany.

We are very pleased to have Tristan Lafranchis on board for this tour. Tristan is a celebrated author, publishing the highly acclaimed field guide 'Butterflies of Europe'

and the wonderfully illustrated two-volume work 'Flora of Greece' in 2009. Tristan's knowledge of the wilder parts of Greece, particularly the butterflies and plants, is second to none. This and his friendly and easy-going manner make him an invaluable and much sought after leader. Tristan is also a proficient birder and a keen herpetologist. He speaks fluent English, Italian and good Greek.

Tristan's expert knowledge of the butterflies of Greece will be a huge bonus to anyone wishing to hone their identification skills. There are many different Blues in the area, which can easily confuse. Let Tristan show you how we can identify them in the field!

During our stay we will try to seek out the famous Chelmos Blue, a rare species endemic to the mountain and some parts of Turkey. There are also many other delights to discover; Southern White Admiral, Clouded Apollo, Cleopatra, Lattice Brown, Large Wall Brown, Camberwell Beauty, Powdered Brimstone, Southern Swallowtail, Scarce Swallowtail, European Swallowtail, Grecian Copper, Nettle-tree Butterfly, Large Tortoiseshell, Queen of Spain Fritillary, Spotted Fritillary, Cardinal, Great Banded Grayling, Mountain Small White, Escher's Blue, Anomalous Blue, Amanda's Blue, Ilex Hairstreak, Greek Clouded Yellow, Olive Skipper, Oriental Marbled Skipper, Blue Argus, Osiris Blue, Pontic Blue, Odd-spot Blue, Little Tiger Blue, Greek Mazarine Blue (*helena*, often considered a distinct species), Balkan Grayling, Grecian Grayling, Southern Comma, Blue-spot Hairstreak, Adonis Blue, Zephyr Blue, Ripart's Anomalous Blue (*pelopi*, often considered a distinct species) Silver-studded Blue, Meleager's Blue, Great Sooty Satyr, White-banded Grayling and many more!

We are also offering an optional extension to this tour, crossing the Gulf of Corinth to the

Greek mainland, to visit Mount Parnassos and Delphi. The mountain is as rich in butterflies as Chelmos. During our short stay we'll pay an early morning visit to Delphi and the Temple of Apollo, to soak up the atmosphere of this ancient site before tourists arrive and also to do some butterfly spotting! One target species for the area will be Europe's smallest butterfly the Grass Jewel - we'll all need to join in on helping to hunt for this tiny treasure! Anyone wishing to undertake this extended part of the tour can discuss exact details with us at the time of booking. Please note, Tristan is unable to join us for the extension.

**10% of the profits from this tour will be donated to Butterfly Conservation.**

**Tour information** Both tours will be at a relaxed pace to enable maximum enjoyment of wildlife. The walks are graded as easy to moderate, which should pose no problems for people of any age that are used to some regular walking. As a general rule of thumb maximum walking distance per day is approximately 5 miles.

The prices include accommodation with private facilities, all food, all ground transport by minibus and photography advice & tuition where desired (tour leaders are usually excellent and often award winning photographers). The maximum group sizes are fourteen plus two or three tour leaders.

For further details please visit [www.greenwings.co](http://www.greenwings.co) or contact Matt direct via email at [matt@greenwings.co](mailto:matt@greenwings.co) or by phone on 01473 602389 or 07599 243026

For more information about BirdWING visit their website at [www.birdwing.eu](http://www.birdwing.eu)

*Please note: Tours are the sole responsibility of Greenwings Wildlife Tours Limited.*

In 2013 watch these butterflies  
..... in Suffolk



White Admiral  
Photo by Peter Maddison



Wall  
Photo by Douglas Hammersley

..... and in Greece



Balkan Marbled White  
photos by Matt Berry



Eastern Bath White



Map

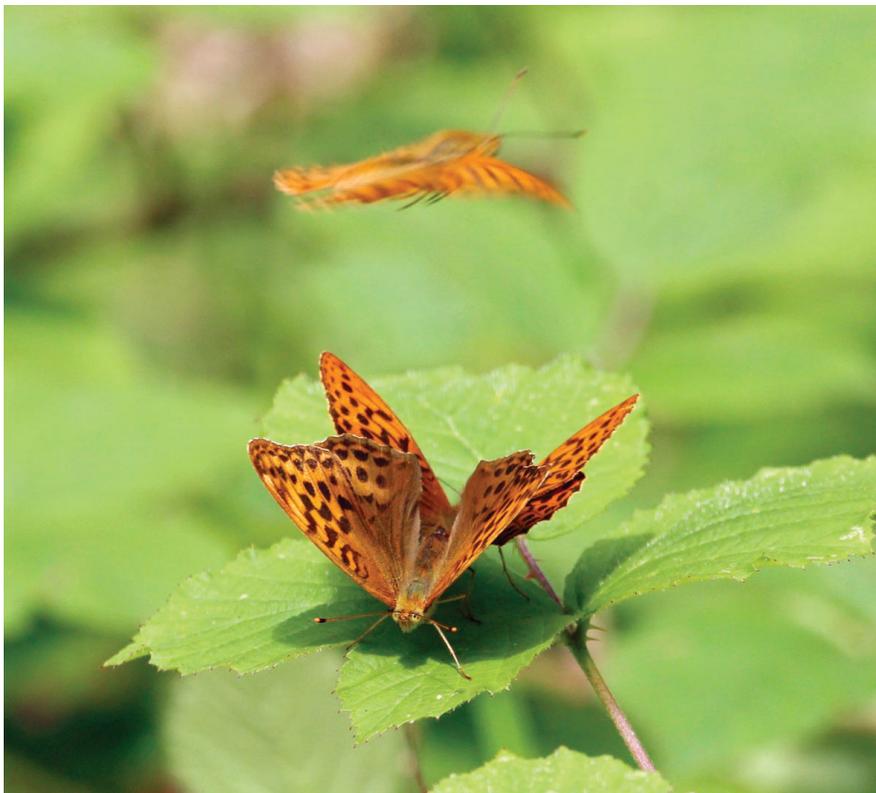


Grecian Copper



Lattice Brown  
photo by Julian Dowding

## Silver-washed Fritillary makes a welcome return to Suffolk



A mating pair of Silver-washed Fritillaries in Pakenham Wood with a flyby.  
Photo by Bill Stone, July 2012



Female  
Photos by Peter Maddison



Male