



Butterfly
Conservation

Saving butterflies, moths and our environment

50th Anniversary



The Suffolk Argus

The Newsletter of the Suffolk Branch of Butterfly Conservation



Hornet clearingwing on poplar photo: Trevor Goodfellow



BC stand at Helmingham Hall plant fair



New wildflower area with chalk bank at Landseer Park

An important Branch post will become available when Dom Hill will be resigning his role as Treasurer at our 2018 AGM in November.

We are grateful to Dom for both managing our account and for over-seeing the recent move to central financing by Head Office.

The search is on for someone to fill this position. Perhaps you are thinking of devoting some of your time to volunteer work. Here is your opportunity to find out more about this post.

Treasurer's Role

Book-keeping for BC Branches is done by BC Head Office, so the Treasurer's role for the Suffolk Branch is not too demanding and no prior financial experience or technical qualifications are required.

The Treasurer has to liaise with Head Office in order to: arrange the payment of invoices, maintain a spreadsheet of Branch transactions and reconcile against Head Office information, and present simple accounts for the Branch AGM.

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Butterfly Conservation

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Saturday 17th November

SUFFOLK BRANCH AGM AND MEMBERS' AFTERNOON

Venue: Earl Stonham Village Hall

Map Ref: TM 097598

Post Code: IP14 5HJ

Time: 2.30 pm.

The AGM will be followed by members' slides then light refreshments,
the annual photo competition
and our guest speaker,

Patrick Barkham

the author of books including 'Butterfly Isles: A Summer In Search Of Our Emperors And Admirals', and is a features writer for The Guardian.

Further details will be announced on the Branch website.

Editorial

Trevor Goodfellow

As the new editor of the Argus, I should introduce myself: I am a retired self employed telephone engineer and I have been a BC member since 2011, actively recording butterflies and moths for the county recorders.

Although I have been keen Lepidopterist since I was a boy, it is only since 2007 that my interest became more of a major hobby and like many Argus readers, I am often taking trips out to Devil's dyke, Languard, Bawdsey and any heaths or woodland that I can get access to. I often walk four or five miles in my quest for a better photo of a particular butterfly or the sight of an unusual moth or caterpillar. In 2017 I managed to photograph forty butterfly species without travelling very far afield and I hope to add another four or five in 2018.

In 2017 I discovered several new sites with white-letter hairstreaks in my home village of Thurston, a neck-aching job looking up to the tops of elm trees, but at least four sites of healthy elms hosted around thirty WLH. At least one of these sites was to be within a development area as part of an eight hundred new homes project. I assisted Rob Parker, our BC conservation officer, with tracing the relevant people who could make planning decisions that would help the plight of the hairstreaks. Rob made suggestions to plant elms and we possibly secured the chance to rescue the WLH from any felled trees. It remains to be seen if this is a success, but I have faith, and at least we tried. I was reassured after talking to Robert Eburne of Hopkins Homes that conservation is deservedly high on their agenda.

The continuing decline of the UK butterflies has been highlighted in the press and although some common species have fared well others are taking worrying losses.

Helen Lewis was thrilled to inform me of her brimstone sighting on February 18th! I hope her buckthorn shows evidence of use this year. Certainly my alder buckthorn has successfully attracted a female brimstone twice, laying several eggs each time. I had not noticed any action previously since planting several years ago.

The annual dingy skipper hunt in the King's forest was controlled as usual by the weather and restricted areas of forestry logging, but despite this and limited support, sightings were encouraging as Bill Stone, Peter Maddison and myself recorded a total of seventy five. To put this into context: around fifty orange-tips were recorded so that is good news. It is also great news that Bill is able to continue working with us as county recorder, although we are seeking a treasurer to replace Dom Hill (see page 3).

At the time of writing, silver-y moths are arriving and recent sightings reported of painted lady and wall brown.

Helmingham Hall plant fair was well attended and a reasonable amount of interest was shown in the BC stand from young and old alike. Thanks to Peter Maddison for his work with setting up the gazebo in the wind by himself and Jillian Macready for her support.

Thanks to all our volunteers and recorders, keep it up and don't forget the Big Butterfly Count on July 20th & August 12th.

Contribution deadline for the Autumn issue is 30th September 2018

Field Events during July and August, and the November AGM

Friday 6th July

MOTHS AND BUTTERFLIES

The Moths and Butterflies of Landseer Park County Wildlife Site

Evening Moth Trapping at Landseer Park, Ipswich.

Time: 9pm (evening) - packing away by midnight.

Meet: look for the light in the park and find us at the moth traps.

Map ref: TM 17621 42743

Contact: David Dowding 07736 826183

or Sam Chamberlin 07712 281307

Saturday 7th July

MOTHS AND BUTTERFLIES

The Moths and Butterflies of Landseer Park County Wildlife Site

Moth Identification & Butterfly Walk at

Landseer Park, Ipswich.

Time: 10.00am (morning).

Meet: Landseer Park car park.

Contact: David Dowding 07736 826183

or Sam Chamberlin 07712 281307

Sunday 8th July

BUTTERFLY WALK

Butterflies of Piper's Vale (Orwell Country Park)

Butterfly Walk on Piper's Vale, Ipswich

Time: 10.00am - finish around lunchtime.

Meet: Pipers car park Map ref: TM 178 419

Contact: Julian Dowding 07910 170609

Thursday 19th July

MOTH TRAP OPENING AND BUTTERFLY SURVEY

Shifting Sands Project with Sharon Hearle

All welcome. Suitable for beginners.

Join Sharon Hearle to see moths caught the night

before in 5 traps set in the forest, followed by

an optional 3 mile walk to record butterflies and

moths. Forester moth might be found. Bring

packed lunch and drinks if staying for the walk.

Ticks are present in Kings Forest, please cover up.

Meet: Kings Forest Picnic Site Car Park opposite

ride 203, just off B1106

Grid Ref: TL825747

Approx. postcode: IP28 6UY

Time: 10am - 2pm

Contact Sharon Hearle at shearle@butterfly-conservation.org Tel 07920131526 It is very helpful to know before if you are planning to attend.

Fri 13th July to Sun 5th August

BIG BUTTERFLY COUNT

For more details visit www.butterfly-conservation.org

Saturday 21st July

RED LODGE HEATH SSSI

For butterflies and moths, potential 20+ species Members, novices and families welcome.

Meet indoors to see moths trapped locally the night before, followed by a tour of the heath and woodland margins. A rare day-flying moth is known to be on this site.

Meet: Millennium Centre, Magnolia Close Post

Code: IP28 8TT

Map ref: TL699703

Times: start at 10:00, tour about 11:30, end about 13:00.

Contact: Twm Wade 01638 577446 or 07743 305363

Email: twm.wade@yahoo.com for more details

Saturday 21st July

Big Butterfly Count Event

Lukeswood, Church Road, Elmswell

Map ref: TL985635

Times: 11:00 - 12:30

Contact: Mary Feeney (Lukeswood) - 01359 241901

Suffolk BC will be there.

Sunday 29th July

GARDEN OPEN DAY*

Wildlife Garden Open Day

An invitation from BC member Mrs Trudie Willis, to visit her 10 acre garden, including a Buddleia and Honeysuckle collection.

Meet: Park at Prior's Oak, Leiston Road,

Aldeburgh (B1122 Leiston to Aldeburgh Road)

Map Ref: TM452591
Post Code: IP15 5QE
Time: 10.30 am start
Contact: Peter Maddison 01473 736607

Wednesday 1st August
MOTH TRAP OPENING AND BUTTERFLY SURVEY

Shifting Sands Project with Sharon Hearle

All welcome. Suitable for beginners.
Join Sharon Hearle to see moths caught the night before in 5 traps set in the forest followed by an optional 3 mile walk to record butterflies and moths. Grayling might be recorded. Bring packed lunch and drinks if staying for the walk. Ticks are present in Kings Forest, please cover up.
Meet: Forest Lodge Car Park at West Stow Ride 205, between West Stow Country Park and West Stow Hall.

Grid Ref: TL814715
Approx. postcode: IP28 6HB
Time: 10.00am – 2.00pm
Contact Sharon Hearle at shearle@butterfly-conservation.org Tel 07920131526 It is very helpful to know before if you are planning to attend.

Saturday 4th August
BUTTERFLY WALK

Grayling Hunt starting in the King's Forest

Meet: Recess on west side of B1106.
Map Ref: TL825739, almost opposite Ride 204 sign.
Contact: Rob Parker 01284 705476.

Saturday 11th August
BUTTERFLY WALK
Search for declining Wall Brown at SWT Carlton Marshes Reserve

Carlton Marshes is a major stronghold for the Wall Brown in Suffolk
Meet: Reserve Car park
Map Ref: TM 508920
Post Code: NR33 8HU
Time: 10.30am bring lunch
Leaders: Peter Maddison and Robert Quadling
Contact: Peter Maddison 01473 736607

Saturday 18th August
BUTTERFLY WALK
Sutton Heath, Woodbridge

Target species Grayling, Small Copper & summer Dragonflies.
Grid Ref for Parking: TM306475
Start time: 10:00am
Contact: Kevin Ling Mobile: 07443 623987

Saturday 17th November
SUFFOLK BRANCH AGM AND MEMBERS' AFTERNOON

Venue: Earl Stonham Village Hall
Map Ref: TM 097598
Post Code: IP14 5HJ
Time: 2.30 pm.

Please note the change in location and the afternoon start.

The AGM will be followed by members' slides then light refreshments, the annual photo competition and our guest speaker, **Patrick Barkham, who is the author of books including 'Butterfly Isles: A Summer In Search Of Our Emperors And Admirals', and is a features writer for The Guardian.**

Further details will be announced on the Branch website.

Important information

Late cancellation of events - Please contact the leader before an event (except those marked *) to give a telephone number so that we can contact you if the event has to be cancelled at the last minute.

Safety - there are hazards in the countryside and everyone taking part in an event has a responsibility (duty of care) for their own and others safety. The leader will brief you before setting off, with details of any known hazards and what to do in an emergency.

Be aware that Suffolk is a high risk area for ticks. Please dress appropriately.

People take part in these events entirely at their own risk. The Suffolk Branch of Butterfly Conservation cannot accept liability for any injuries or losses during the course of an event.

2017 Suffolk Butterfly Report

Bill Stone

1. Introduction

Another “unremarkable and generally disappointing year” was how one regular recorder described her Suffolk 2017 butterfly season. I certainly had to work hard to catch up with many species in the county and as usual the weather played its part in making things difficult. However, hidden amongst some of the negative comments were several positive ones especially in respect of some of the butterfly sightings made in gardens. A number of you reported how much you had enjoyed watching butterflies within your gardens and especially where a new species was recorded or interesting behavior experienced. The importance of a butterfly and insect friendly garden cannot be under estimated and for many the garden represents the space in which we observe most of our butterflies. With increased house building, intensive farming and land being secured for further development much of our local countryside is diminishing and our gardens and allotments are becoming more significant as wildlife havens. I know that here in Suffolk there are some wonderful butterfly friendly gardens and these range from tiny urban spaces through to large rural paddocks, meadows and private nature reserves. Regardless of size all are significant and their importance increases especially if they provide nectar, shelter and suitable habitats for the full life cycle of butterflies and other insects. Within the records received for 2017, a large number came from the online Butterfly Conservation Garden Survey scheme. This scheme, replacing the paper-based Butterfly Garden Survey, began in 2016 and has become incredibly popular. Nationally, in 2017, a total of 1491 gardens were registered as participating with over 75,000 records submitted. For Suffolk, 30 gardens were registered and these generated over 1,500 records. So, despite the online scheme only running for a short period it is already adding significant value to our recording efforts on both a county and national basis. Planting the right

flowers, shrubs and trees for butterflies and other significant insects such as bees is important and there are many useful resources to help on this. However, one of the key considerations is where you source your plants from. Worryingly, two recently published papers by Greenpeace (<http://sos-bees.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/04/A-Toxic-Eden.pdf>) and the University of Sussex (<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.envpol.2017.03.084>) have highlighted that many plants bought from nurseries and garden centers contain significant levels of pesticides and other harmful chemicals. In particular, the University of Sussex study led by Professor Dave Goulson looked at nectar and pollen rich ornamental plants described as “pollinator-friendly”. Findings showed that: a wide range of pesticides were found in leaves, pollen and nectar; 70% of plants contained neonicotinoid insecticides and; concentrations of some pesticides were sufficient to pose a risk to bees. The study suggested that gardeners should think carefully about what plants they use encouraging the use of uncontaminated plants by growing their own from seed, plant-swapping or by buying plants from an organic nursery or supplier. Here, in Suffolk, Butterfly Conservation has supported butterfly gardening with the Brimstones and Buckthorn project running again during the year with over 500 east Midlands grown Alder Buckthorn and Common Buckthorn whips distributed within the county. This simple scheme has had a significant impact in supporting the Brimstone butterfly in Suffolk and many of the buckthorns have gone to under recorded areas and new developments. In 2017, the branch also supported the Plant Heritage Plant Fair at Helmingham Hall and this is well worth a visit in 2018 (see Suffolk BC website events) if you are looking for pollinator and nectar rich plants and shrubs to add to your garden.

2. Residents - Winners & Losers

A mild winter and warm spring meant some of

our species emerged earlier than normal resulting in Orange-tip, Brimstone and Comma being seen in good numbers. Green Hairstreak also seemed to do well when compared to a poor 2016 and many of you commented on seeing more of this species in 2017 than in recent years. The warm spring also helped some of our multi-generation species by encouraging earlier emergence which assisted in delivering a strong first population and moderate subsequent generations. This resulted in a slight but pleasing upturn in records for Common Blue, Small Copper and Small Heath. This Suffolk position is reflected nationally as in respect of Common Blue, the 2017 Wider Countryside Butterfly Survey (WCBS) report shows a significant increase in sightings for this species. The report comments “This is a welcome recovery for this species because in 2016 the butterfly had its worst year in the WCBS since the cold wet summer of 2012”. The report also identifies that Small Copper was more widespread with 2017 being its best year since 2013. All three of our golden skippers were also on the wing earlier but only a small increase was noted on their results for 2016. A reasonably early summer also allowed several species such as Gatekeeper, Meadow Brown and Ringlet to appear early and gain a foothold before the wet summer and strong winds arrived, this perhaps being the reason that Grayling numbers were sadly down. This weather then impacted negatively on our summer fliers and it seems that the flight season was cut short for many species. The whites are always an indicator on how well the season went and for Suffolk, 2017 records of Green-veined White and Small White were marginally lower compared to 2016. Large White was seen in similar numbers to those in 2016. This snap shot of “white” butterfly populations was worryingly replicated in a number of the national recording schemes such as the Big Butterfly Count where sightings of Green-veined White and Large White were down 38% and the Small White down 37%. The most abundant butterfly for the Suffolk year was the Red Admiral, being seen in over 75% of the tetrads visited and it was again recorded flying in every month of the year.

3. Early & Late

Given the warm spring and favorable early summer a number of species appeared on the wing early and earliest county dates were recorded for nine species. These included Green Hairstreak (30th March), Small Heath (22nd April) and Common Blue (6th April), Small Skipper (5th May) and Large Skipper (20th May). Most new earliest dates were by one or two days but Green Hairstreak, Small Skipper and Ringlet (24th May) appeared over a week earlier than previous records. Purple Emperor appeared on the same day, 23rd June as the previous record in 2014. In respect of latest sightings, Ringlet was recorded on 21st September, previously 17th September and Meadow Brown was seen on the 8th October, the same date as the current latest record seen in 2013. Common Blue also equaled its latest date of 6th November, remarkably the previous earliest date being set back in 1994. Two other latest dates of notice belong to Dingy Skipper (12th July) and White-letter Hairstreak. In respect of the Dingy Skipper record this is 8 days later than the previous date of 4th July set way back in 1983. This 2017 date must relate to a second brood and this in itself is significant. The White-letter Hairstreak was seen on 11th September and related to a tatty individual seen around a stand of elms in central Ipswich. The previous earliest date was 28th August 2000 some two weeks earlier than the 2017 sighting.

4. Rarities and Migrants

This year was rather quiet for rare butterflies with only two species of note being reported. The first was a male Long-tailed Blue which was seen and photographed in an Ipswich garden on 9th July. The butterfly was seen for 10 mins by one lucky observer. The sighting followed a period of southerly winds and so it is possible that it arrived from the near continent. A Camberwell Beauty was seen briefly in flight but at close quarters by a Felixstowe dock worker on 12th October. The sighting was made at approximately 1200hrs close to the Fagbury perimeter along the north-western edge of the dock. Of interest, at 1240hrs a second sighting of a probable Camberwell

Beauty was made close to the café at Landguard Point, Felixstowe. This butterfly was seen to fly strongly over the café and westwards into the dock complex. It is not clear whether both reports relate to the same individual but the location and timings suggest one butterfly being involved.

The year provided plenty of records for key migrant butterfly species, Painted Lady and Clouded Yellow but it was not a great year for either species with numbers and abundance similar to that seen in 2016. Clouded Yellow was first seen on 10th May in Stanton, west Suffolk and the last record was 5th November in Ipswich. The highest number recorded was 10 on 15th October at Landguard Common, Felixstowe. Painted Lady was first seen on 1st April at Kessingland and last seen on 27th October at Redgrave. The highest count was of

111 at Felixstowe Ferry on 4th June. The Red Admiral is also one of our main migrant species, although more records indicative of over-wintering are being received each year. This species was our most abundant butterfly in 2017 and the graph below shows how it was recorded during the course of the year. Peaks are indicative of immigration supplementing local populations.

5. Other species of interest

Chalkhill Blue: The site in the west of the county was again closely monitored with the first butterflies seen on 13th July and last seen on 1st September. Visits were affected this year by poor weather with counts frustrated by strong winds and cool temperatures. The chart below shows a summary of visits undertaken and numbers recorded:

Date (2017)	Males	Females	Comment
13th July	1	0	
22nd July	22	1	
4th August	10	1	Fem of type "tithonus"
6th August	28	4	
19th August	24	3	
25th August	15	4	
1st September	7	4	

As identified in the above table, a female As identified in the above table, a female Chalkhill Blue of the form tithonus was recorded on 4th August. The butterfly showed pale blue upper-sides but with a bold marginal band and orange lunules. Reference made to Thomas & Lewington (New edition, p137) shows an illustration of this form. Although the Chalkhill Blue was seen throughout the full survey area, close monitoring continues to suggest that there are again two distinct, but very small populations. Based on these results the colony appears to be self-sustaining and will continue to be monitored.

Disappointingly, no other records were received in the year which was surprising given the good numbers being seen on the Devils Dyke just over the border in Cambridgeshire. However, it is likely that small pockets of this species exist in west Suffolk on suitable chalk land habitat especially if the larval host plant, horseshoe vetch (*Hippocrepis comosa*) can be found. Some localized conservation efforts are now being made away from the known colony. This is being attempted through the planting of horseshoe vetch in an area near to the Suffolk/Cambridgeshire border and where disturbance will be minimal.

Silver-washed Fritillary: 2017 demonstrated that this species increased again in coverage within the county after a small dip last year. The butterfly was recorded in 47 tetrads in 2017 as opposed to 30 tetrads in 2016. Of particular interest was that a good number of records were received from gardens where the butterfly was seen nectaring on buddleja. It goes to show how versatile and adaptable this species is when it comes to habitats.

Marbled White- West Suffolk: In west Suffolk, several Marbled White were reported. These butterflies appear to reflect the successful breeding season in nearby Cambridgeshire, particularly along the Devils Dyke and may be wanderers from here. However, it is entirely feasible that small colonies may exist along the Suffolk/ Cambridgeshire borders.

6. Unusual Species

Brown Hairstreak, Marbled White- Ipswich area

The recording position on these presumed releases of Marbled White and Brown Hairstreaks at central Ipswich sites is that they will not be submitted to Butterfly Conservation for inclusion in national data sets. However, local monitoring will be undertaken and records will be maintained at a county level in order to assess population and range changes.

7. Suffolk Biodiversity Action Plan- Priority Species

Seven species of butterfly occurring in Suffolk are deemed as UK BAP priority species. These are Dingy Skipper, Silver-studded Blue, White-letter Hairstreak, White Admiral, Grayling, Wall and Small Heath. These are all dealt with separately in the accompanying annexes (D-J) as listed below.

See also <http://www.suffolkbis.org.uk/biodiversity/speciesandhabitats/specieslist>

8. Recording and Geographic Coverage

Butterflies for the New Millennium(BNM) remains the key recording scheme for general distribution and numbers of butterflies. The BNM aims to achieve comprehensive national coverage in successive five-year recording periods.

As such, 2017 was the third year in the current five year (2015- 2019) recording period. Looking at the 37,000 records received for 2017 shows that butterflies were recorded from 728 tetrads (2km x 2km squares). Given that there are 1089 tetrads in Suffolk it means that butterflies were recorded in approximately 68% of Suffolk during the year.

Species Maps

Distribution Maps and flight charts have been prepared for our regular Suffolk species, and these are available for reference as required. However, distribution maps for regular Suffolk species for the five-year period 2013-2017 can be downloaded from the BC Suffolk website at <http://www.suffolkbutterflies.org.uk>

Transects-UK Butterfly Monitoring Scheme (UKBMS)

Transects are very effective at monitoring habitat specialist butterflies and lowland semi-natural habitats. They are resource intensive but give a sharp view of butterfly trends. The 2017 results from those transects walked in Suffolk have been added to the Suffolk database and are a useful addition as they reflect consistent, sustained and focused recording within the county.

During 2017, 24 transects and 3 single species transects were monitored and these are listed below. My thanks go to all those team coordinators and walkers, who put in dedicated monitoring efforts at:

Suffolk Transects:

Site Name	
Alton Water	RSPB Minsmere
Black Heath	RSPB North Warren
Center Parcs (Elveden)	RSPB Wolves Wood
Dunwich Forest 1	Sizewell Belts
Dunwich Forest 2	Spring Lane (Bury St Edmunds)
Manor Farm (Coddendam)	SWT Bradfield Woods
NE Cavenham Heath	SWT Church Farm
Newsons Farm (Thorpe Green)	SWT Lackford Lakes
Newsons Farm Extension (Thorpe Green)	SWT Knettishall Heath
Nowton Country Park	SWT Redgrave and Lopham Fen
Ramsey/Hintlesham Woods	SWT Reydon Wood
River Lark Path	Upper Abbey Farm (Leiston)

Suffolk Single-species transects:

Site Name	Species
Blaxhall Common	Silver-studded Blue
Purdis Heath	Silver-studded Blue
SWT Bradfield Woods	Purple Hairstreak

Wider Countryside Butterfly Scheme (WCBS)- UK Butterfly Monitoring Scheme (UKBMS)

The WCBS complements transect monitoring of butterfly populations on semi-natural sites and forms part of an integrated approach to monitoring butterflies through the UK Butterfly Monitoring Scheme (UKBMS). It runs as a partnership between Butterfly Conservation, the British Trust for Ornithology (BTO), the Centre for Ecology and Hydrology (CEH) and the Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC). The scheme targets common and widespread butterflies by selecting random 1km squares which are then subject to a minimum of two visits ideally in July and August.

The records generated from the scheme are included in the Suffolk data set and represent a significant contribution both in terms of record numbers but also in respect of the locations involved. In 2017, records were received from the squares as shown below:

Annex D-Dingy Skipper

Based on coverage achieved in 2016, a more focussed and determined recording strategy had been put in place for 2017. However, perhaps stirred on by the warm and settled weather the Dingy Skipper emerged earlier than most previous years. It was found flying on the Devils Dyke, Cambridgeshire during a transect walk on the 22nd April and then here in Suffolk on the 29th April in the Kings Forest. Although

exciting to see the butterfly so early this also caused concern from a recording point of view as the main Dingy Skipper surveys were due to take place in the last two weeks of May. In addition, extensive forestry felling and clearance work, within the Kings Forest in particular, had been ongoing since last year and was still underway at the end of April. It was therefore unclear as to impact that this may have had on the butterfly within the forest.

As such a number of visits were undertaken earlier than planned and fingers were kept firmly crossed that the butterfly would still be flying in reasonable numbers towards the end of May. In addition to the organised surveys a number

of individuals also volunteered to visit areas where the butterfly had not been seen in recent years and this added to the amount of coverage undertaken to search for the butterfly. These areas included large sections of the western side of the Kings Forest and also the West Stow, Culford and Cavenham. Significant ground was also covered northwards from Elveden towards Brandon with many suitable sites identified for Dingy Skippers. Unfortunately, none were found in this large area which is real shame given the fact that the species historically flew here.

The following is a summary of the survey work undertaken and sites visited.

Location	Grid Reference	Date	Max No. of Dingy Skippers recorded
Kings Forest- Wordwell Ride	TL8272, TL8372, TL8373	29/04/2017	3
Kings Forest- Archery Area	TL8373	07/05/2017	7
RAF Barnham	TL8579, TL8580, TL8680	14/05/2017	19
Kings Forest- Wordwell Ride	TL8273, TL8373	20/05/2017	14
Kings Forest- Chalk Lane	TL8275, TL8375, TL8474, TL8374	22/05/2017	16
Euston Estate inc' Lime Pit	TL8977	23/05/2017	Nil
Kings Forest- Archery Area	TL8373	24/05/2017	32
Kings Forest- Wordwell Ride	TL8372	24/05/2017	17
NWT Thetford Heath	TL8480	25/05/2017	Nil
Angles Way (Marmansgrave Wood), St Edmunds Way	TL8480	25/05/2017	2
Barnham Cross Common	TL8680	26/05/2017	1
Kings Forest- Wordwell Ride	TL8372	04/06/2018	4
Kings Forest- Chalk Lane	TL8375	12/07/2018	1

As it turned out the butterfly flew throughout May in the Kings Forest but appeared to drop away early in the eastern most sites such as NWT Thetford Heath. Again, none were recorded at Center Parcs, Elveden. Based on the records received in 2017 and recording undertaken the distribution map below identifies the small area that the Dingle Skipper occupies in Suffolk. In 2017, it was recorded in 7 tetrads, 2 more than in 2016 and perhaps reflects the increased recording coverage undertaken. The sighting in July is significant as it not only represents the latest ever sighting of the species in the county but is also highly indicative that a second generation took place.

Clearly, the Kings Forest remains the stronghold for the species in the county and numbers seen this year were pleasing. The butterfly has demonstrated its robustness and its ability to move short distances within the forest to colonise newly cleared areas especially where birds-foot trefoil can be found. However, given the significant forestry activity seen along with planned activity next year the species' position continues to hang in the balance and requires constant monitoring.

Annex E- Silver-studded blue

By D.Dowding and H.Saunders

Phenology- An early season for most butterflies with the warm spring and early summer. This saw SSB emerging from the 1st June, 2 weeks earlier than in 2016 and 11 days earlier than the current 5-year average. This caused a peak towards the middle of June, with the flight season over in early July. The Summer weather was much better than 2016 and although counts were not significantly higher, the flight period was significantly longer. Similar to 2006 data it shows that although the number of butterflies has almost halved in 10 years, the butterflies' range has remained the same. Excitingly a new colony was found at Martlesham common - an area where heathland management has made the habitat suitable for SSB once again. There have been occasional records here in the past but it was pleasant to see both a male and a female on the same visit. Habitat is likely to get more suitable in the future and the site is protected, but development on surrounding

land will increase the footfall on the site. The new colony at Piper's Vale seems to be doing well and pioneer Erica heathland is continuing to increase the butterflies potential flight area. The Dunwich forest area has shown a good return of numbers where clear felling of coniferous woodland has created conditions for heather to flourish.

Population counts- The total Suffolk count this year of 1287 was a positive number. Traditionally the counts were compared to the datum year of 2006 but since 2015 there has been a change in sampling techniques and survey effort. When compared to the "datum year" of 2006 where 5470 butterflies were counted this returns a very low figure of only 23%. But this is due to a reduction of surveys on the Minsmere colonies. If you compare the non-Minsmere survey data from 2006 (1881) with 2017 (1287) it is more representative. This shows the 2017 data to be 68% of what it was in 2006

The figures have showed an increase in sites this year due to New/Expanding colonies.

Also the figures have shown an increase on the 2015 (29%) and 2016 (28%) data so in relation to recent years, this has been a good year for the butterfly in Suffolk

During the 2015 season arrangements had been made to create two single-species transects as a method of sampling the overall numbers in the Minsmere colonies. This is now in place of the traditional 100% annual count at population peak and only records a small fraction of the butterflies.

Unfortunately having difficulty finding people to carry out the Minsmere surveys. Ad hoc counts have shown the species to still be in good numbers at these sites (see tetrad map) but without a dedicated recorder, to take multiple samples, the data is less comparable.

As a result, only 22 peak counts were made this season compared with 22 (2016) 26 (2015) and 29 (2014). Of the sites that could be compared there was a slight increase in numbers on last year's figures. 18 of the 22 sites showed little variation from last year but there were a few rejuvenated colonies that shifted the overall Suffolk population

positively. As a result, this year was a better year than last overall but still around 3rd (32%) less from 2006 at comparative sites.

Again, there are many factors to what causes low or high counts. As well as the weather, there is also habitat condition, predation, parasitism and disease to be considered. Often when there is a decrease, it is followed by a good year but the relative influence of each factor is difficult to assess.

Re-colonised areas of heathland where habitat has come into condition have been positive but on the whole, the butterfly is still struggling across Suffolk, and the ongoing maintenance and recreation of pioneer heathland communities will prove vital in the species' success. Likewise, the greater the data set tabulated each year, the greater the comparability and the more trends can be analysed.

To help with this we are always looking for volunteers, both for practical conservation work and for population monitoring. Recent effort has proved that dedicated habitat management can help the butterfly recover. If you are interested in helping please contact Helen Saunders – details in the Suffolk Argus or on Suffolk Branch website: <http://www.suffolkbutterflies.org.uk/>

Annex F- White-letter Hairstreak

In 2017, the butterfly was first recorded on 13th June in Dunwich Forest and last recorded on 11th September at a central Ipswich site. This is the latest sighting of the species in Suffolk. The highest count this year was of 20 butterflies on 18th June at Rymer Point, Euston Drive but as in previous years most records related to single butterflies. The map on page 24 shows the recorded coverage for the year with the butterfly being recorded in 38 tetrads. This is the same as 2016 but despite increased county coverage being achieved in 2017 there was not a corresponding increase in range of this species.

Within the county, the long-term trend is still of concern with no real significant increases noted and I have described the White-Letter

Hairstreak population as being “weak but stable”. On a national level, the UKBMS 10-year trend indicates a fall of -59% in abundance. This species is described as suffering from a “very highly significant” fall in abundance based on the UKBMS 1976- 2017 trend period which reveals a fall in White-letter Hairstreak abundance of -93%. The White-letter Hairstreak is a troublesome butterfly for recording purposes. Seeing the butterfly and accurately addressing the population of this species is difficult due to it invariably flying in the canopy of elms and neighbouring trees. It can also roam wide areas utilising elm hidden amongst roadside hedgerows. It is, therefore, difficult to count away from known sites where established viewing positions are normally used. As identified above, locating additional sites is important for the future assessment of this species. Looking for elms in the spring is a useful method as they often get lost amongst other more dominant trees as the canopy develops. These sites can then be recorded and returned to in the summer for accurate monitoring.

NB: In the 2016 report on White-letter Hairstreak I incorrectly referred to the latest sightings as being on the 13th September at Laxfield. This record was in fact that of a Small Copper. The latest date in 2016 was 12th August at RSPB Minsmere.

Annex G- White Admiral

As with its woodland cousin, the Silver-washed Fritillary, the White Admiral also showed a small increase in the numbers seen this year. It was recorded in 60 tetrads as opposed to the 57 in 2016.

The first butterfly was seen on 13th June at Old Hall Woods, Bentley and the last was seen on 5th September at Brantham. The highest number seen was 12 at SWT Bonny Wood on 20th June and Old Hall Woods, Bentley on the 25th June. Most records received involved only two or three butterflies per site.

As in recent years, despite being a butterfly of mature deciduous woodlands, a number of records and photos received for this species concerned individuals seen in gardens and urban sites. This reinforces the fact that it is a strong flyer prone to wandering and seeking out new territories.

2017 COUNTS

Monitored Silver-studded Blue Sites listed geographically from the North

Location	Grid Ref.	Date	Observer	Male	Fem	Total
Blackheath Wenhaston	TM420749	Release 23/06/17	Ravenscroft & Miller	10	12	22
Walberswick NNR	TM451727	-	W Russell S Hoadley	51	11	62
Dunwich Forest Area 4	TM459697	14/06/17				
Westleton Heath NNR	TM4569	23/06/17	W Russell	27	6	33
Westleton Common	TM443687	-	W Russell			
Westleton Football Pitch	TM444688	-				
Minsmere Reversion Fd.	TM451689	14/06/17	S Hoadley	4	0	4
Minsmere Sawmills	TM452692	14/06/17	S Hoadley	5	2	7
Minsmere Natterjack pit	TM451693	14/06/17	S Hoadley	1	0	1
Minsmere N. Grimstones	TM462688	No Count				
Minsmere Gravel Pit	TM449669	14/06/17	S Hoadley	0	0	0
Aldringham Walks	TM464612	No Count	D Jobson			
Blaxhall Common	TM377566	18/06/17	T Peake	57	16	74
Upper Hollesley MOD	TM333472	19/06/17	N Mason	3	0	3
Upper Hollesley A	TM335471	19/06/17	N Mason	9	0	9
Lower Hollesley 'A'	TM342466	20/06/17	P Maddison	46	14	60
Lower Hollesley 'B'	TM343460	20/06/17	P Maddison	307	101	408
Lower Hollesley 'C'	TM350459	23/06/17	N Mason	43	9	52
Lower Hollesley 'C2'	TM349460	No Count	N Mason	-	-	-
LHC HCF Firebreak	TM346462	23/06/17	N Mason	8	3	11
Lower Hollesley 'D'	TM351455	19/06/17	N Mason	58	8	66
Lower Hollesley 'E'	TM344460	No Count	N Mason	-	-	-
Lower Hollesley 'F'	TM338469	19/06/17	N Mason	249	30	279
Parsnip Plantation	TM327458	Several dates	N Mason/ Clavesbert	0	0	0
Martlesham Common	TM	22/06/17	D Dowding	1	1	2
Martlesham Heath	TM2344	24/06/17	P Smith	83	60	143
Ipswich Golf Club	TM208432	14/06/17	N Sherman	0	0	0
Purdis Heath	TM212427	22/06/17	H Saunders	27	8	35
Ransomes CWS	TM207419	22/06/17	H Saunders	8	3	11
Ind. Est. Jacobsen	TM200410	-	No count	-	-	-
Ind. Est. lagoon fringe	TM207415	-	No count	-	-	-
Pipers Vale	TM178415	19/06/17	H Saunders	5	1	6
Sites counted (2017):			2017 Totals:	1002	285	1287

Datum good year:

2006 totals	3617	1438	5470
2006 Totals (ex. Minsmere)	1228	365	1881
% of 2006:			68%
2016 Totals:	820	183	1003
2015 Totals:	794	134	994

This year (-minsmere SSBT counts) as

% of 2016: 128%

This year (-minsmere SST counts) as

% of 2015: 129%

Despite the species appearing to be stable in the county, albeit, in low numbers the national position is very different. The UKBMS 10-year trends indicate a -46% fall in abundance. As with the White-letter Hairstreak, the White Admiral is also described as suffering from a “very highly significant” fall in abundance based on the UKBMS 1976- 2017 trend period which reveals a fall in abundance of -71%.

Annex H- Grayling

In 2017, the Grayling was recorded in 53 tetrads as opposed to the 61 in 2016 which is a worrying decrease especially given the additional recording coverage achieved this year. It was first seen on 16th June at Sizewell and at Shotley, some 10 days earlier than last year. It was last seen on at 22nd September at Westleton Heath and RSPB Hollesley Marshes. Some reasonable counts were made with many 50+ counts received. The highest count made, however, related to 102 seen at RSPB Minsmere on 11th August.

The distribution recorded in the year showed one interesting anomaly in that the butterfly was recorded on the Shotley Peninsular and early in the flight season too. This may represent a previously unknown colony or some recent re-colonisation. The map shows the county divide and is representative of the Breckland habitat in the east of the county and the Sandlings habitat in the east. It sharply represents this species’ preference for dry sandy grasslands. As with previous years a few wanderers were recorded away from key sites in gardens and parklands indicating that this species is capable of finding new sites and will exploit them if suitable. Of interest, a number of records of Graylings found in urban gardens made reference to the butterfly nectaring on buddleja and in a couple of cases the butterflies were seen vigorously defending the buddleja against other butterflies.

The UKBMS Summary of Changes Table for 2017 identifies a change of -63% for the Grayling population over the last 10-year trend. The position is worse when looking at the national long-term series trend (1976-2017) with the Grayling recorded as having declined by -72% which is defined as “very highly significant”. In Suffolk, it is a weak but stable population but, it

is clearly vulnerable to changes in land use and from increased footfall within the Brecklands and Sandlings areas. As such, it is essential that close monitoring continues.

Annex I- Wall

The Wall was first recorded in 2017 on 30th April at Sudbourne some two weeks earlier than in 2016. It was last seen on 12th October along the Angles Way, Blundeston. The best counts received were all from SWT Carlton Marshes with the highest being 25 on 29th July. Other notable counts from this site were; 16 on 27th May, 21 on 22nd July, 16 on 5th August. Most records received away from SWT Carlton Marshes were of single butterflies.

A review of all the records received helps to identify the generations seen within the county. The graph below helps to show the first (30th April to 3rd June) and second (16th July to 26th August) generations with an almost insignificant third (29th September to 12th October) generation. Of note, the first generation was almost a week earlier than last year.

The Wall was, disappointingly, only recorded in 21 tetrads in 2017, albeit slightly up on 2016 where it was recorded in 18 tetrads. The distribution map below shows where the wall was recorded.

It has continued its slide eastwards towards the coast and is now only recorded in two key locations; the area comprising of Orford/Sudbourne and various sites throughout the Waveney Valley. The stronghold for the species is now very much in the north-east of the county around the Waveney Forest and Waveney Valley areas. Perhaps the key site for the whole county is now SWT Carlton Marshes with this site providing the bulk of the Wall records received for the whole county. However, and of some significance, some sightings were also made by experienced recorders in the south-west of the county. This may suggest that small, remote populations still exist in suitable habitat or are indicative of wandering individuals. Sadly, the Wall continues to decline in Suffolk and this position is reflected throughout the UK and parts of Europe. The UKBMS Summary of Changes shows the long-term series trend (1976-2017) as a -89% decline. As such, this decline is classified as “very highly significant”. It is therefore essential that the county population

is monitored very closely and both range and abundance recorded accurately.

Annex J- Small Heath

The Small Heath was recorded in 154 tetrads this year which represents an astonishing increase when compared to the 104 achieved in 2016. The first record was received on 22nd April at Blackheath. It was last reported on 28th September at the Natural England reserve at Cavenham Heath. The maximum number recorded for the year was 104 at Shingle Street on 4th. Elsewhere, high double-figure counts (50+) were recorded at key sites in both the east and west of the county. The 2017 distribution map clearly shows the strongholds of this butterfly as the heaths of the Sandlings in the east of the county and of the Brecklands to the west. However, the Small Heath is not confined to heath land. It is highly adaptive

and can be found in a variety of grassy habitats including woodland rides but the key requirement is a short sward of fine grass species.

The increase in the Suffolk population in 2017 is very pleasing and relates to the favourable weather in the spring and early summer which allowed the butterfly to breed successfully and establish strong subsequent generations. However, we cannot be complacent as the long-term trend for Suffolk is still “weak and vulnerable” and this is mirrored in the UKBMS Summary of Changes Table for 2017. This identifies a series trend (1976-2016) of -58% for the Small Heath population and this fall in abundance is classified as being “very highly significant”.

The full 2017 Butterfly Report, including maps and year analysis tables, will be published in the next volume of Suffolk Natural History, the Transactions of the Suffolk Naturalists’ Society.



2018 Photographic Competition



After what seems like a very long winter without butterflies, it’s time to dust down those cameras and get photographing once more. Who knows, you could be the star of this years BC Suffolk Photographic Competition. This is a traditional part of our annual AGM and will be held on Saturday 17th November at Earl Stonham Village Hall.

In a revised format this year, there are three categories, with a prize for the overall winner whose photograph attracts the most votes.

- **UK Butterfly or Moths** (any species photographed during 2018 in the UK)
- **Overseas Butterfly or Moth** (any species photographed during 2018 outside of the UK)
- **Early Stage Butterfly or Moth** (Ovum, Larva, Pupa) – it is hoped this category will encourage you to search for and photograph the developmental journey to adulthood.

Have an enjoyable Summer and we look forward to seeing you and your photographs at our AGM.

Full details of the competition will appear on the events page of our website.

Urban buzz Ipswich Update

David Dowding

Urban Buzz Ipswich is a community conservation project, looking to create and enhance 100 sites for pollinators spanning 25 hectares across the town. Reaching the midway point of the project I have now completed 42 sites. This consists of 15 town parks and 9 nature reserves, 6 community areas, 3 roadsides verges, 3 allotments, 3 schools, 2 office grounds and a sea wall. Of these 42, there have been 30 grassland improvements, the remainder a mixture of hedgerows, orchards, woodland and formal plantings.

Open habitats

The favoured method for habitat creation in both grassland and heathland habitats has been turf stripping. This is a great way to remove the nutrients from the soil and reduces grass growth into the future, providing a greater opportunity for wildflower seed germination. It also provides lots of bare ground which butterflies such as Common Blue, Brown Argus and Small Copper and their respective food plants favour. On heathland sites this method is highly favoured by Grayling, Small Heath and Silver-studded Blue, which favour a short sward.

Brown Argus, together with Small Copper and Common Blue have responded very well to turf stripping in Ipswich.

Suppression of coarse vegetation can also be achieved through the burying of hard materials such as rubble and aggregates underneath. This makes the soil layer shallower and drier and will favour wildflowers. It also reduces the amount of mowing needed which means less risk of damage to any overwintering larva. Recently on Landseer Park, 120 tonnes of chalk were imported to create a chalk bank. In the winter this will be profiled and sown with chalk grassland species, adding a new habitat feature to the park and hopefully increasing diversity of species (see page 2).

Areas scraped off autumn 2017 were initially sown with cornfield annuals such as Cornflower, Corncockle, Corn Chamomile and Corn Marigold as a support crop while the perennials establish. Of course, such flowers are beautiful in their own right and support lots of pollinating insects too.

Hedgerows and woodland

The supplementing of wildflower sites with the planting of shrubs and trees is another method of creating pollinator sites and this has worked well. Early spring nectar sources such as Blackthorn and Goat Willow have been mixed with late spring species such as

Buckthorn and Privet. These species not only provide nectar but also support a huge range of Lepidoptera as larval food plants. They also provide shelter from the wind and roosting opportunities.

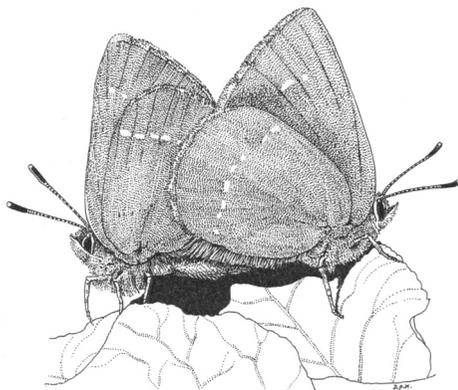
Buckthorn is a real success story in Suffolk with the Brimstones and Buckthorn project drawing in Brimstones from west Suffolk right across to the east coast. When I was young I used to find larva of the Brimstone and occasionally Holly Blue and Green Hairstreak. These are all pollinating insects, so procurement of Buckthorn is a great plan for Urban Buzz. It wasn't however until going out with Adrian Knowles surveying for Hymenoptera that I realised just how good Buckthorn flowers are for other pollinating insects. The flowers of both Common and Alder Buckthorn were literally humming with bumblebees, solitary bees and hoverflies, including some local rarities.

Call for sites

Altogether I have created/enhanced around 13 hectares mainly within the urban footprint, but a few are slightly further out.

I am still looking for site suggestions in the Ipswich area and to enhance a further 12 hectares of habitat over the next 9 months.

If you have any suggestions for Urban Buzz sites within the Ipswich area or would like to get involved with the project, please contact me. Tel: 07464828624, email david.dowding@buglife.org.uk.



Green hairstreak: Beryl Johnson

Brimstones & Buckthorn

Kevin Ling

2018 has seen the 20th Anniversary of Suffolk Butterfly Conservation's Brimstones & Buckthorn project. It began in 1998 with Julian Dowding spearheading the initiative alongside other wildlife groups and rangers at Ipswich Borough Council.

The continued initiative is aimed at communities and individuals across Suffolk, getting them involved in the preservation of the Brimstone butterfly. Over the winter Peter Maddison and I joined Julian in the distribution of 600 whips, a combination of both Common Buckthorn *Rhamnus cathartica* and Alder Buckthorn *Fragula alnus*. We identified new areas that had not previously been incorporated into the Brimstones & Buckthorns Project, including 'black hole' areas featured on the distribution maps for Suffolk Butterflies 2013-2017. A number of community wildlife projects were also identified along with schools that promote conservation through their wildlife gardens. We were able to offer whips to members of Suffolk Butterfly Conservation too. As you can imagine demand was high and we accommodated as many people as possible.

Once scarce in our county, sightings of this species have become far more regular and widespread thanks in no small part to the Brimstones and Buckthorn project. Over its

twenty-year lifespan we have helped deliver almost 5000 Buckthorn bushes to key locations where this species is known to be recorded in much fewer numbers. The results have shown a significant increase in sightings and helped secure the Brimstone's future in our area.

The most valuable part of the project will be the ongoing recording of sightings in your area. This can be done by sending them to brimstones@suffolkbutterflies.org.uk.

For those that have planted our latest batch of Buckthorn, your sightings will also enable us to gain valuable feedback into the continued preservation of this Butterfly, at a time when numbers of all species in the UK continue to fall. Although it may generally take a couple of years for the bushes to attract Brimstones, we are sure that it will be worth the wait and have a certain expectation this time around, due to the female Brimstone's proven ability to find the bush from afar. But don't just take our word for it, because Mary and Peter Feeney of the Lukeswood Project in Elmswell have already had a female egg laying on one of their newly planted whips (see p23). Success proven, if ever it was needed.

Thankyou to everyone who got involved in this winters project and we wish you every success with your Brimstones and Buckthorn.

Purple Hairstreaks in 2017

Richard Stewart

In previous editions of 'The Suffolk Argus' I described successful attempts to see individual species at six different locations in one year, these being Swallowtail and White Admiral. Purple Hairstreaks were my target in 2017, in reality a plentiful species but difficult to see as they are largely arboreal and most active when we are not around i.e. early or late in the day. One helpful fact is that they tend to be present where oak and ash are together, since these usually produce the most aphid honeydew, on which they feed.

Here are my six sightings for 2017, with a few notes:

1.7: Wolves Wood- my main purpose was to see White Admirals, just four, and Silver-washed Fritillaries, a personal record for this wood of twenty five. Seven Purple Hairstreaks were seen, mainly singletons, probably because this was early on in their flight period. The large oaks along the main path, about three hundred yards after the large clearings, are usually a good location.

3.7: an evening sighting of two or three near the top of a sycamore just beyond our garden, sycamore also being a good tree for honeydew. The colony is based in the large oak on the corner of nearby Borrowdale Avenue.

5.7: Rushmere Common: I always visit this site for White-letter Hairstreak, in the elms that are part of the hedge near the water tower and the parallel hedge about three hundred

yards to the west. Between the two there are oak fringed grass clearings and here two Purple Hairstreaks were seen. 25.7: at Sutton Hoo I spent well over an hour walking backwards and forwards along a short part of the main track from Wilford Bridge. it was cold and windy, with little sun, but late afternoon when more activity can be expected. Eventually one was detected, putting up a second as it flew across. This was hard work!

30.7: Trudie's garden at Aldeburgh had one in the oak that was surrounded by parked cars and a second near the pond, again in an oak.

1.8: Christchurch Park, Ipswich: several attempts in the evening were foiled by a lack of calm conditions but I eventually found one in an oak alongside Westerfield road, close to the park boundary.

You have to be careful not to confuse this species with Holly Blue, which also flies in oaks, but the silver flickering movement as they turn is a good indication. Purple Hairstreaks do sometimes descend to feed on nectar sources, the best Suffolk location I know being along the old railway line between Aldeburgh and Thorpeness, where bramble blossom is close to oaks. I have just once seen that rare phenomenon of this species, in some numbers, flying close to the ground- probably the result of a poor year for honeydew.

"Moths and moonshine mean to me Magic – madness – mystery" –

James Reeves

Deborah Vass

I am now rather ashamed to say that, although this poem was a favourite as a child, until quite recently moths were those brown, flappy creatures that darted unnervingly at your bedside lamp at night. And then one moth changed all that.

Outside my front door one morning was the White Ermine Moth. I look at it entranced. Its soft fur cowl and speckled wings were not what I associated with those dark, erratic creatures of old. I drew it, took photographs and then made my first moth painting. And so began my obsession.

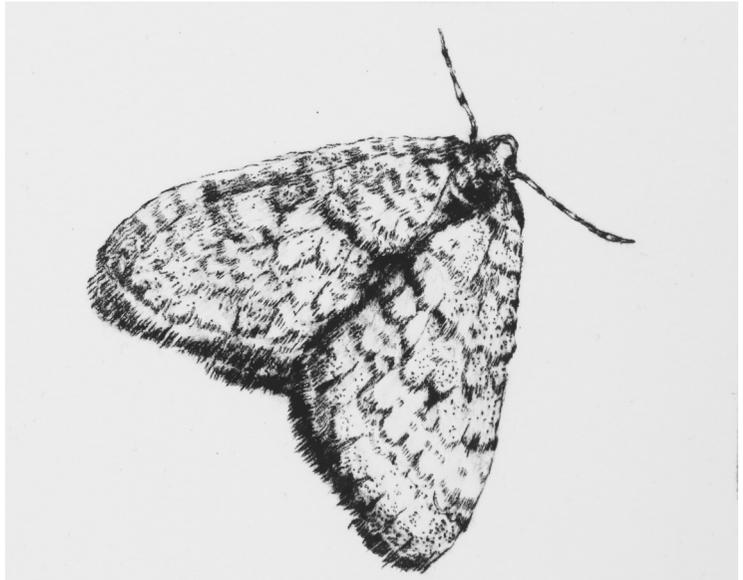
I quickly set up a rudimentary moth trap and each morning was like Christmas, lifting the egg boxes to discover what treasure lay inside. I studied guides and became entranced by their poetic names: Scalloped Oak, Brimstone and Hebrew Character. I began recording them and making drawings while they were still sleepy, and each season bought new beauties. The December Moth was a particular joy, with its dark amethyst and chocolate wings and coppery fringing. I managed to take it into my cold studio where it sat obligingly to have its portrait painted.

I also began to make dry point etchings. This was the perfect medium to capture the delicate tracery of their markings. The process involves using a Perspex plate

that is placed over your drawings. A fine needle engraver then scratches into the surface of the Perspex and it is then carefully covered in ink. Excess ink is then wiped away and the scratched burrs hold the ink in the raised reservoirs. This is then printed by placing it next to a damp piece of soft paper and is rolled through a printing press where the ink is then released into the paper. The fragile nature of the Perspex means that only a few of each drawing can be made. My work is not intended as scientific drawings, but instead I like to try to capture their beauty and the features that fire my imagination.

As the summer brings more delights, and the expectation of new and yet unseen creatures, I shall continue to draw and paint these magical moths.

www.deborahvass.com



Winter Moth: Deborah Vass



White ermine in oil:
Deborah Vass



Mother of pearl moth study:
Deborah Vass



Brimstone ovipositing on buckthorn:
Mary and Peter Feeney

