

# EAST MIDLANDS Butterfly

ISSUE 66 - SPRING 2020

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**Coronavirus  
update**



**The Fritillary  
Butterflies of  
Derbyshire**



**Butterfly  
Conservation**

Saving butterflies, moths and our environment



**East  
Midlands  
BUTTERFLY  
CONSERVATION**

Conservation for the whole of Derbyshire,  
Nottinghamshire, Leicestershire & Rutland

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Cover Picture:  
Dingy Skipper  
Photo:  
Mark Searle

Right:  
Silver-washed  
Fritillary  
Photo:  
Eliot Taylor

**T**o the Spring 2020 issue of the East Midland Branch of Butterfly Conservation's Newsletter. Thanks to all those who have contributed articles for this issue.

I had started to write these notes early this year, but little did I know then how events would overtake them. We are experiencing the most unprecedented times for a generation and, sadly, we have had to cancel our programme of events. Rest assured if things do change we will update our website accordingly.

Conkers was to be the venue for our branch AGM and Members Day in November, unfortunately it had to be changed at very short notice due to flooding. Branch Organiser Jane Broomhead was able to find a very good alternative venue at The National Brewery Centre in Burton-upon-Trent. The day included an interesting talk by Dr. Phil Sterling, about verge-side management. I'm sure all present will agree it was very well organised event in a brewery!

The branch welcomes the new Regional Conservation Manager - Midlands, Rhona Goddard. Since starting her new role in January, Rhona has been getting to know her new and quite large region. In the East Midlands, Rhona will be working closely with the branch to benefit two priority species for the region; Grizzled Skipper and Dingy Skipper, as well as supporting all the excellent partnership working the branch has developed over many years.

Take care and stay safe.

Eliot Taylor

## Branch Organiser's Notes

**A**s I write this we are still unsure how the Coronavirus will affect our events so please keep checking our web site: [www.eastmidlands-butterflies.org.uk](http://www.eastmidlands-butterflies.org.uk) for up to date information.

A very big welcome to all the new members who have recently joined our branch. As our numbers here in the East Midlands have reached 2000 we are now beginning to see what a difference we can make towards recording and habitat loss. Over the winter the work parties for the Grizzled Skipper Project, who had around 30 volunteers at each site, are making such a difference in reversing the decline of the Grizzled Skipper. Bill Bacon, our ex-chairman, is amazing in his support for this iconic butterfly, walking miles of disused railway and bringing contractors in where necessary. A huge thank you to Bill and also to Chris Jackson (Notts CC) who arranges and manages the work parties on our behalf.

Along with Suzanne, our Nottinghamshire Recorder, I recently attended one of Ken & Pat's Transect Training Days at Attenborough and enjoyed meeting some very enthusiastic members who were all anxious to help with recording. Richard Jeffery, our Leicestershire Recorder, also held a similar training session and we feel that after these the number of members recording or setting up transects throughout the branch is very heartening. We have in the past felt that areas, other than Derbyshire where Ken has a comprehensive network, were not being monitored as we would like. Ken delivered yet another impressive morning and my thanks go

to him and Pat. Again information for transect walking is on the web site.

I am really pleased to report that we now have a new BC Regional Conservation Manager - Midlands, Rhona Goddard. Rhona has been a part time employee of Butterfly Conservation since 2014 for the West Midlands Branch. She was mostly involved in The Wood White Project, but is very knowledgeable about all species of butterflies and moths. Although she will be covering a large area called 'The Midlands' she will be full time and is happy to help with a variety of projects here in the East Midlands. We are still hoping that the Mosaic Landscapes Project will find funding in 2020 and Rhona is anxious that as much recording as possible takes place (subject to restrictions with the coronavirus) especially during the Grizzled and Dingy Skipper flight season.

After a very inspirational talk from Phil Sterling, from head office, at the branch AGM, I think we are now aware that many of the brownfield sites are getting too fertile and I worry this will mean of the decline of the Dingy Skipper and Common Blue butterflies. Should we be able to obtain the necessary funding for this project we hope, working with other land owners and partners, to be able to reverse this.

I hope you all keep safe and well during the current situation. Lets hope with less pollution maybe our butterflies and moths will enjoy a resurgence.

Jane Broomhead  
Branch Organiser

### A message from Butterfly Conservation head office:

## Coronavirus Covid-19

### All Butterfly Conservation events are cancelled until further notice.

We are doing everything we can to provide support and reassurance to our staff, volunteers and supporters in these uncertain and challenging times. We wish to play our part in keeping people healthy and safe.

Following government guidance, we have decided all of our events involving staff and volunteers must be cancelled. This includes both indoor and outdoor activities.

We will review arrangements for future months in due course in light of any updates to government guidance and share updates on our website and social media channels and by email to those registered with us.

These are exceptional times and we will work to support each other and keep you updated.

Please keep checking our web site for updates as guidance may alter:  
[www.eastmidlands-butterflies.org.uk](http://www.eastmidlands-butterflies.org.uk)



## Weleda - a natural partnership

**B**utterfly Conservation East Midlands is pleased to be involved in a partnership approach to conservation with Weleda, at Shipley near Heanor, Derbyshire.

Weleda (UK) Ltd manufactures holistic, natural and organic medicines and cosmetics, many of the ingredients for which are grown at their Shipley site utilising Biodynamic principles. We first approached Weleda a few years ago, and following something of a 'meeting of minds', I spent most of a summer season liaising with the friendly staff and visiting the site, logging every butterfly and getting to know the various habitats, including meadow, woodland and gardens. A report was produced at the end of the season and following discussions with the staff, a series of recommendations provided opportunities for enhancing the site for butterflies – although it is already rather good. A transect has also been set up under the auspices of Ken Orpe and conducted by a group of Weleda's staff from their Ilkeston Headquarters, many of whom appreciate the opportunity to be out in the fresh air and recording what they find.

To date, some twenty one species of butterfly have been recorded, including Purple Hairstreak in the fine, mature Oaks that are present, and last year a Clouded Yellow put in a welcome if all too brief an appearance. It is hoped

one or two more species might be tempted onto the site in the next few seasons.

A moth survey was also undertaken last year by local expert Steve Thorpe, with no less than seventy species being recorded, including Elephant Hawk Moth, Dotted Clay and Chocolate-tip – moths have such wonderful common names! Steve intends to continue the monitoring this year and hopefully beyond.

One habitat creation project includes growing Bird's Foot Trefoil in the polytunnel on the site, and planting the plants out along the side of a field ditch in patches, together with flat stones for sunning, in an effort to attract to the site the Dingy Skipper, a high priority species which occurs not too far away; this should also help the Common Blue which already breeds at the site – both species use the Trefoil as their larval food plant.

We are grateful for the commitment of the staff at Weleda and look forward to working together to improve the site for butterflies and moths through what is an excellent example of a partnership approach to conservation. And they do make a very good cup of tea!

**Jim Steele, Derbyshire Conservation Officer (email: [jim\\_steele@btinternet.com](mailto:jim_steele@btinternet.com))**

# East Midlands Branch Butterfly Conservation Members' Day and AGM 2019

**Held on 17 November 2019 at  
The National Brewery Centre, Burton-on-Trent**

**PRESENT (56):** Adrian Russell (Chairman), Jane Broomhead (Branch Organiser), Richard Jeffery, Jim Steele, Ken Orpe, Pat Orpe, Christine Maughan, Max Maughan, Mick Ball, Eliot Taylor, Richard Penson, Suzanne Halfacre, Gary Atkins, Bill Bacon, Phil Sterling, Dennis Dell, Al & John Roberts, Margaret Hobby, Brian Hobby, John Green, Sylvia Green, Willy Lane, Anita Aked, Sheila Ragg, Chris Ragg, Andy Smith, Jeremy Emerson, Margaret Gibbons, David Gibbons, Jean Gibson, John Clarke, Michael Fletcher, Colin New, Min Bell, Tim Bell, Andrew Brown-Jackson, Nigel Davidson, Colin Blower, Geof Adams, Margaret Adams, Brenda Shore, Pat & Barry Marsan, Jean & Brian Hallam, Ray (Badger) Walker, John Schoffield, Ann Brown, Andrew Brown, Rosie Hamilton, Steve & Lin Orridge, Felicity Jackson, Pete Clark, Jay Beeston

**Apologies for Absence:** Robin Perry, Peter Benson, Lynn & Martin Hill, Win Walsh, Malcolm Broomhead, David Foulds.

**Minutes of the 2018 AGM:**  
These were taken as read.

**Matters arising from these minutes:**  
A question was asked at the 2018 AGM regarding what percentage of membership subs goes back to the Branch. The answer from Finance was reported at the bottom of the agenda and refers to the 2017/18 accounts.

**Chairman's Address – Adrian Russell**

Welcome to the Branch AGM at the National Brewery Centre who we have to thank for the room at the last minute due to Conkers, our usual venue, being flood. A special thanks to Jane for finding the venue at such short notice.

Our butterflies and moths are demising at such an alarming rate and as we are the only charity to wholly support butterflies and moths I want to say a big thank you to everyone for all their recording help during the past year.

### BRANCH OFFICER'S REPORTS

#### Treasurer - Jane Broomhead

I present to the AGM the final audited accounts for the year ending 31st March 2019. A copy of the Statement of Account for the financial year has been handed out with the agenda for the meeting.

The income for the year up to the end of March 2019 was £10,706.78. This was mostly composed of £7,202.00 from East Midland membership, £4004.78 from sales events which included raffles, plant sales, sale of elms and book sales such as FSC Guides which are none VAT items.

The expenditure consists of £287.75. This is for mileage claimed by various committee members especially for such events as working numerous days at the Bird Fair, meetings in different parts of the country and the collection of elms. This represents a small amount individually, and considering we are all volunteers it was felt that those who wished to claim for various events the option should be available. I also want to say that some members did not wish to claim for their mileage. Mileage claims are encouraged by head office as it shows that volunteers need to be paid their expenses.

£869.44 was for the hire of a JCB as part of the ongoing work being supervised by Bill with regard to the Grizzled Skipper Project in Leicestershire. £380 was spent on the stand at Burbage which was £30, display boards for the 2018 National AGM £200 and the rest was for the hire of the room at Attenborough for the discussion on the HLF Bid. At this point

I would like to say that although our Regional Officer Ruth Rolls is no longer in place, the HLF Bid is going ahead although this may be in a different format to the previous way of thinking. It is also hoped to replace Ruth with a more qualified member of staff in the future so that we and Lincolnshire are not without a Regional Officer. I understand that this is the definite wish of Dan Hoare Head Of UK Conservation and also Julie Williams our Chief Executive.

£4,750 is for £4,000 towards the Grizzled Skipper Project in Nottinghamshire. This represents £2,000 for work carried out over the winter of 2017/18 which was paid in April 2018 just after the cut off date of the 31st March and £2,000 paid in March 2019 for work carried out in the winter of 2018/19. This vital work mostly around the Vale of Belvoir and the Great Central railway line is carried out by Chris Jackson and Notts BAG Group. The rest of the money was for the purchase of Elms which our Derbyshire Conservation Officer, Jim Steele, has undertaken as part of a large project to supply suitable sites around the county with young Elms for the White-letter Hairstreak. Some of these have been sold (see above income).

The cost for the branch newsletter is £1,983.06. The purchase of new stock amounted to £2,334.97 and costs incurred by our Membership Secretary posting out welcome packs for new members came to £135.81. Subscriptions for the membership of the three counties Wildlife Trusts and committee expenses is for the hire of the Church Hall for two committee meetings per year. AGM expenses is for the hire of the room for last year's AGM. Insurance is for the cover of events and field trips and is taken out by head office.

Although the expenditure is considerably more for the year up to March 2019 than in the previous year this is mostly because of the expenditure for the Grizzled Skipper Project which was not showing in the previous accounts.

At the present time we have £12,399.67 in the bank up to the end of October 2019. This includes £500 already spent on the Friends of Little Eaton with help for the creation of suitable habitat for butterflies and moths. The committee is always happy to look at similar projects in the East Midlands.

## CONSERVATION

### Derbyshire Conservation Officer - Jim Steele

*(Below are notes from an illustrated talk).*

East Midlands Regional Conservation Strategy. Nearly half way through the RCS. Covers both East Midlands and Lincolnshire Branches. BC Conservation Strategy and all RCS are now on-line. Priority Species. Key Landscapes. Key Sites. High Priority species: Grizzled Skipper, Dingy Skipper, White-letter Hairstreak. Loss of Regional Officer a big issue. Mosaic Project still intended but in abeyance.

Planning issues - Many planning issues involve liaison with Derbyshire Wildlife Trust. I am grateful for the excellent support of Lesley Parker for her volunteering help in accessing the Derbyshire County Council planning website portal and filtering the applications for attention.

Planning Applications: Glapwell Void (development plan for infill terminated); Ashbourne Lathkill Drive (ongoing); Chesterfield A61 link road; Woodville link road, Swadlincote; Langley Mill station site; Drakelow.

Planning Consultations and Advisories: Whitwell Pit (Holding Objection); Amber Valley Local Plan Review; Elvaston Castle Park; Orchid Wood Sawley LNR proposal; Staveley Works; Stanton Ironworks.

Projects and Initiatives: Hoe Grange Quarry NR, Aston Brickyards LNR, West Hallam Screens, Toyota – all Ken Orpe. Pennywell Ponds, Stanton Lagoons, Weleda Sites - Staveley/ Arkwright/Markham Vale/Glapwell/Clowne - great support from local members; Grizzled and Dingy Skipper extant Project (RAP2000) ongoing; Grizzled Skipper Ticknall Limeyards Re-introduction Project; White-letter Hairstreak - Disease-resistant elms (DRE) Project.

Management Advice: DFS - Somercotes Industrial Estate verge, DWT Woodside, Stanton Lagoons, Coton Park LNR; Langley Pit; Mead (Woodland Trust, Shipley). Private Landowners: Ron Fullelove, South Wingfield; Chris Ragg, Darley Dale; Nigel Davidson, Heage. Chris Thirtle, Monsal Head

White-letter Hairstreak – Disease-Resistant Elms Project: Initiative taken by Ken Orpe 2010/2011

– Derbyshire Wildlife Trust, various Councils. Approx. 400 planted - mainly 'Sapporo Autumn Gold'. Continuation last four years. Mainly Lowland Derbyshire. Planted 'Ademuz' native Spanish field elm, LUTECE, FL493/'Wingham', White Elm *Ulmus laevis*. Hopefully, future GIS-based project. Volunteers required to monitor trees and White-letter Hairstreak.

Grizzled Skipper Derbyshire Re-introduction Project: Ticknall Lime Yards, National Trust - Derbyshire demise 2007. Joint Project with local National Trust. Minimum 5 years. Mike Slater, BC Warwickshire – consultation. Ten more adults released this year. More planned next year.

### Nottingham/Leicestershire Conservation Officer – Richard Penson

Most work during 2019 was around supporting Ruth Rolls (temporary East Midlands Regional Officer) in her role, but monitoring the Dingy and Grizzled Skippers and Green Hairstreak was another focus. I will be writing the Green Hairstreak action plan once I have an initial template to work to.

### Grizzled Skipper Project – Bill Bacon

Members will have seen my Dingy and Grizzled Skipper report in the Autumn newsletter. I shall not repeat the information in the report here. If anyone has not had an opportunity to see the report and wishes to have a copy please contact me.

In summary. The Dingy Skipper continues to expand its range. The Grizzled Skipper remains broadly stable with good numbers recorded in several locations and a record number at Flawborough. Intervention by both professional contractors and volunteers made possible through financial support from the branch is crucial. The first of this season's work parties at Flawborough Nottinghamshire attracted a large number of volunteers who cleared a substantial area of encroaching scrub. A project to reintroduce the Grizzled Skipper on to National Trust land in Derbyshire is on track.

### Membership Secretary's Report - Christine Maughan

The following data is based on statistics provided by Butterfly Conservation up to 1 November 2019.

For the organisation as a whole, membership has continued to rise quite dramatically. The national total now stands at well over 40,000 individual members from over 28,150 households.

Since 1 November 2018, recruitment within the East Midlands Branch has again been very positive with 225 new household members recruited (sharing with Somerset & Bristol the 6th highest level of recruitment of all branches nationally). However, this only represents a net gain of 83 new households for the period after taking account of lapsed/cancelled memberships which continue to be quite significant. The overall increase in branch membership is slightly down on last year.

The total branch membership at 1 November 2019 was 1298 households (an increase of 7% since the same time last year).

The branch has retained its ranking as 8th biggest within Butterfly Conservation by household membership.

These figures are again very encouraging, and indicate a strong interest in butterflies. I am sure that recruitment has benefited from successful marketing campaigns and special membership offers by Head Office, often targeted at specific individuals, such as participants in the Big Butterfly Count. However, I also think that local high profile events such as the Hoe Grange Open Day has helped to raise awareness, and there were a good number of new members signing up at the Bird Fair at Rutland Water in August.

At a local level, a breakdown of branch membership by county shows that numbers are fairly evenly split with 31% of our total membership from Derbyshire, 32% from Nottinghamshire, 32% from Leicestershire and Rutland, and the remaining 5% from other areas.

Finally, I would just like to reiterate that I now use the Head Office method of sending out email newsletters to members, which draws contacts directly from their database. This depends on recipients having given Head Office

permission to send newsletters by email, so if you don't currently receive our monthly branch e-newsletters during the Spring and Summer to keep you informed of local events and would like to do so, please contact Butterfly Conservation Head Office to update your contact preferences.

### Butterfly Distribution Maps Co-ordinator's Report 2018 - Christine Maughan

Species distribution maps have been produced up to and including 2017, and these have all been published on the branch website. Data for 2018 is not yet available.

### Field Trip Organiser - Max Maughan

There were 10 scheduled day trips this year. The total number of people attending all the day trips was 157 with the average attendance being 17. The highest number of people attending a single trip was 32 at Cloud Wood on 16 July.

The weather for the majority of day trips was not always perfect but generally the target species were seen. No trips were actually cancelled beforehand due to bad weather, but at Aston Rowant it was extremely windy and nobody actually turned up apart from the leaders. In all a total of 36 butterfly species were recorded. The highest number for an individual trip was 18 species at Coombs Dale.

I would like to express my thanks to all the volunteers who led day trips this year. If you fancy leading a walk next year either locally or further afield please contact me. It can be just for common species, or for more specialist ones. I also urge you to attend field trips - you don't have to be an expert - the leaders will help with identification.

### BUTTERFLY RECORDERS

#### Derbyshire Report – Pat and Ken Orpe

*(Part of an illustrated talk)*

It was a mixed year weather-wise: the 12th hottest summer but also the 7th wettest overall, with Derbyshire having 173% more rain over the summer (only Northumberland and Cheshire had more). In Derby we had 94 sunny days in the transect period, compared with 110 in

2018 but hot days, above 21°C, were only recorded on 60 days compared to 97 in 2018.

In what proved to be an interesting year, Orange Tip did well in spring (Lathkill Dale seeing its highest total of 268 individuals since that transect began in 1979). Dinky Skipper did reasonably well, discovered in at least 10 new brown-field sites in 2019. January sightings of Speckled Wood were two months earlier than previously, and Green-veined White appeared in February – a month earlier – when all four hibernators plus Red Admiral were seen for the first time in 40 years of recording in the county.

The Painted Lady appeared on 10th March in Derby and over 4,000 sightings followed up to the end of October – the best since 3,000 Painted Lady records in 2009. For the first three months of 2019, 1,700 butterflies were seen, the highest Derbyshire total since 2,000 in 2014.

Wall Brown had another good year, with around 1,000 sightings including new sites in lowland Derbyshire including Amber Valley, Erewash and also in the Chesterfield area. The Marbled White continues to expand its range in South Derbyshire, with sightings at 10 new sites including Toyota at Burnaston. Similarly, Silver-washed Fritillary is also expanding its range and in 2019 included sightings in Findern, Kedleston Park, West Hallam and Belper. This area was also one of the best in the UK for autumn sightings of Small Tortoiseshell.

Regionally, transects were completed at a total of 154 sites across the East Midlands – 110 in Derbyshire (against 100 in 2018), 28 in Nottinghamshire (the same as 2018) and 16 in Leicestershire (up one from 2018). As an idea of comparisons with other UK regions, in 2018 East Midlands then-total of 143 was second only to Hampshire and Isle of Wight's 162, with Surrey (119) and Dorset (79) third and fourth.

In Derbyshire itself, the transect results showed a modest increase of 10% in butterfly numbers. The main increases were at Toyota Green Grids (+116%), Aston Brickyards (+66%), Findern Footpaths (+53%) and Hartshorne Wood (+50%), while the notable decreases

were Nestlé's Hatton (-52%), Breadsall Cutting (-50%) and Clover Close Elvaston CP (-25%).

The third Hoe Grange Open Day was once again a great success with more people than ever attending. The reserve produced good numbers of Wall Brown, while new species for the reserve in 2019 included Green Hairstreak, White Letter Hairstreak and Camberwell Beauty butterflies, and the Scarce Bordered Straw and Merveille du Jour macro moths. The 2020 open day – the fourth since the reserve came into being – will be on Sunday, 5th July (11am-4pm).

*(Further slides showed butterfly rarities in Derbyshire – Grizzled Skipper and Peacock Exoculata Weymer – a list of butterfly banks in Derbyshire and photographs from the successful Hoe Grange Open Day).*

Ken urged people to get involved in transects in 2020, informing that transect training is planned for 2020 – for Nottinghamshire at Attenborough Gravel Pits on Tuesday, 3rd March (10.30am-1pm); for Derbyshire at Cromford Wharf on Wednesday, 11th March (1.30-4pm) and Friday, 13th March (10.30am-1pm); a date is to be advised for Leicestershire.

And there were a few other notices:

- There's a vacancy for a WCBS site (surveying a kilometre-square) at Radbourne, Derbyshire (May-August)
- The Peak District National Park are looking for volunteers to survey six farmlands in the White Peak area for butterflies and bees
- Ken invites interested parties to sign up to join 1,050 others receiving his regular butterfly updates
- There will be a presentation on Hoe Grange Quarry at the National Recorders Meeting in Birmingham on Saturday, 21st March (10am-4pm)

### Leicestershire and Rutland Report – Richard Jeffery

*(Part of an illustrated talk)*

Approximately 40 recorders volunteered for 16 transects in 2019. Those transects, together with the number of recorders for each were as follows: Bardon Hill Quarry (3), Brocks Hill Country Park (2), Brown's Hay – Sandhills Lodge (LRWT Charnwood area – c.7), Charnwood Lodge Reservoir LRWT (c.10), Charnwood Lodge Timberwood Hill LRWT (c.10), Cover Cloud – Sandhills Lodge (LRWT Charnwood area – c.7), Croft Quarry Nature Trail (2), Donisthorpe Woodland Park (4), Fosse Meadows (1), Great Glen (1), Hick's Lodge (3), QEII Diamond Jubilee Wood (2), Pick Triangle Wood (2), Sarah's Wood (4), Sence Valley (3), Willesley Wood (4).

New for 2019 were Charnwood Lodge Reservoir LRWT, Charnwood Lodge Timberwood Hill LRWT and

QEII Diamond Jubilee Wood, all of which we hope will be repeated next year, while in the National Forest – Heart of the Forest area several sites – Donisthorpe Woodland Park, Hick's Lodge, Pick Triangle Wood, Sarah's Wood, Willesley Wood – are being monitored.

#### The following are key activities that were undertaken in Leicestershire and Rutland during 2019:

- Planting more wildflower plants on the butterfly bank/adjoining wildflower meadow at Moira Furnace
- Planting of nine Disease Resistant Elms on a site near to Conkers
- Increased monitoring and recording of Dinky and Grizzled Skipper sites in both counties. Final results to follow at the end of 2019 / early 2020
- Ongoing Grizzled Skipper Project work in the Vale of Belvoir, North Leics – Bill Bacon

#### Activities planned in Leicestershire and Rutland during 2020:

- Seek and monitor potential butterfly recording sites in the Soar and Wreake Valleys, with the assistance of LRWT
- Set up a new butterfly transect at Bagworth Heath C.P.

- Zonal surveying on the newly developed areas of heathland and meadow on the Bardon Hill Quarry estate (target species: Wall, Green Hairstreak & Dingy Skipper)

### The following are key notices regarding species highlights in Leicestershire/Rutland during 2019:

- Purple Emperor was recorded in the Charnwood area in August, Beacon Hill, Bardon Hill Quarry, Charnwood Lodge and a garden in Whitwick
- Marbled White continues to thrive on Croft Hill Nature Trail; it is still present in good numbers at Bittesby Wood, Bagworth Heath and Great Glen. An impressive 85 individuals were recorded at Bagworth Heath on 5th July by Eliot Taylor
- Dingy Skipper was recorded at 23 (maybe more?) different sites in the county, with increased focus on the species. Maybe the butterfly is expanding its range. Dingy Skipper was recorded on the butterfly bank at Moira Furnace for the second year in succession. Continued monitoring is required
- Grizzled Skipper still appears to be confined to Rutland and North Leicestershire. Focus will continue in West Leicestershire in 2020
- Green Hairstreak was recorded again at Bagworth Heath on 13th May. This species was also recorded for the third year in a row at Bardon Hill Quarry by myself and by Tim and Min Burdett on the transect; also noted at Bardon Hill Quarry were several Purple Hairstreak
- Black Hairstreak was seen again at Ketton Quarry by several individuals in June
- Repeat sightings of Silver-washed Fritillary were NOT made this year at Bardon Hill Quarry or Croft Quarry Nature Trail. Need to follow up in 2020

### Nottinghamshire Report – Suzanne Halfacre

Despite being another year of extremes of weather, 2,491 casual records were submitted by 49 people from January to October 2019, totalling 10,486 individual butterflies. Records are still coming in so these numbers will increase. Last year's figures were 2,672 records

submitted by 21 people totalling 11,243. The first record in January was on New Years Day when a Peacock was spotted in West Stockwith. In the latter part of 2019 unsurprisingly it was Red Admirals that were seen out and about along with the odd Speckled Wood.

Like last year the majority of butterflies seen peaked in July at 5,024 which is around 500 more than 2018. Thirty-one of the 36 species were spotted this year plus a Swallowtail in Shelford with photographic evidence. This was a migrant around the time of the Painted Lady invasion. Also, a Blue Morph was spotted, believed to be an escapee as it was near an attraction.

The top five most abundant species in 2019 (with 2018's equivalent rankings in brackets) were:

- 1) Meadow Brown 2,378 (Small White 1,722)
- 2) Ringlet 1,346 (Large White 1,230)
- 3) Small White 920 (Speckled Wood 1,212)
- 4) Gatekeeper 776 (Ringlet 1,149)
- 5) Speckled Wood 544 (Common Blue 1,089)

Moving on to the more elusive species, the Clouded Yellow was seen in two places this year, Cotgrave and East Leake. A grand total of three, but one of those was almost certainly seen twice. However, that is still one more than last year. Cotgrave Wood attracted Purple Emperor, Purple Hairstreak, Green Hairstreak, White-letter Hairstreaks and Silver-washed Fritillary, the latter totalling five.

Marbled White was seen at Toton Sidings, Newstead Abbey, Costhorpe and Langold Country Park and, in all, totalled 31. The majority of those were spotted by Paul and Norman. The Purple Hairstreak, totalling six, was mainly seen at Cotgrave, but was also spotted at Compton Acres and in a Retford garden of all places (with photo back up), though the garden does border an oak wood. Thirty-four Green Hairstreak were seen in six places by eight people. Again, the most popular place was Cotgrave Country Park along with Cropwell Bishop. Most White-letter Hairstreaks – 10 – were seen by Richard Smyth at Cotgrave.

The Grizzled Skipper was found in its usual haunts of Kilvington, Langar, Bingham, Staunton Quarry and Cotham in numbers ranging from one to three. The Dingy Skipper on the other hand got up to double figures at Idle Valley Nature Reserve and Calverton, besides being seen in five other places. Species not processed so far are the Dark Green Fritillary, Wall and White Admiral, the same as last year. The largest number of any single species seen on one day goes to Paul Townsend with 201 Meadow Browns at Firbeck Tip on 21st July 2019.

While not going into more detailed specifics, BC HQ let me know there were 2,011 Big Butterfly Count entries from members of the public. Likewise, I have not received any i-Record data as yet, but last year there were over 11,000 entries which equated to just under a million butterflies.

There were 27 transects underway in Nottinghamshire in 2019, slightly up on last year. After delving into the UKBMS website and extracting an annual summary of records to date, a total of 19,754 individuals were recorded, including one Dark Green Fritillary, one Clouded Yellow, three Wall Browns and six Chalkhill Blues.

The top five in numbers are similar to the casual records, as follows: Ringlet 3,445, Meadow Brown 3,154, Small White 2,596, Gatekeeper 2,201 and Large White 1,275.

Painted Lady sightings, having begun in June, peaked on 5th August with 84 and slowly tailed off until 23rd Sep. So far there have been 399 recorded on the transects and 321 casual records.

### Moth Recorder for Leicestershire – Adrian Russell

Moth recording in Leicestershire and Rutland continues to grow in strength, with more than 100 people now recording moths in their garden. 2019 was a bit of a strange year, generally rather average but with some real highlights. In particular, a four week period from late August saw the county's first Light Crimson Underwing and first Dark Crimson

Underwing – two on the same night. In this same period, there were eight records of Clifden Nonpareil (also known as the Blue Underwing), a species only previously recorded in 1902.

### Moth Recorder for Derbyshire/ Nottinghamshire – Mick Ball

The Micro Moth collation for Derbyshire is still being worked on, and so far has 540 species. A Dusky Sweep female moth was noted crawling on the trunk of a tree and he explained how the females of this species never fly and the moths are dispersed by birds eating the eggs.

### Sales & Display – Jane Broomhead

The total amount taken in sales so far this year is £3,085.76 from eight events. This is less money than last year and fewer events, mostly due to cancellations and events clashing with other dates.

The season started with Burbage Common last May where £466.00 was taken. This was followed by Kirk Hallam Lake which took £263.65 and then Rempstone Steam Fair which took £357.23. Hoe Grange Quarry Open Day took the excellent amount of £444.84. I would like to say thank you to Pat and Ken for arranging another very enjoyable day at the quarry with over 600 people.

The next big event was the Bird Fair where £979.96 was taken. This event, over 3 days, is very well supported by helpers some of whom do 3 or 2 full days and a very big thank you to all of you. Special thanks to Max & Christine and Geof & Margaret who provided plants for the sales table which sold for £140.60. It is a joy to meet members from all over the Country who come to the Fair. I would also like to thank Adrian for coming everyday with a wide variety of interesting locally caught moths. We even had Hawk-moth caterpillars on the stand which are a big draw for the general public. New membership taken at the fair was 46.

The North Notts Vintage Ploughing Match, run by a friend, took £144.91 on a very hot day. The Grantham Canal Society Open Day made £209.24 and the Entomological Society (DANES) event took £219.93.

I really enjoy doing these events and meeting new and existing members. I just hope I don't go

over the top talking about butterflies & moths. I do sometimes see a glazed look in their eyes. Thank you to everyone who has helped over the past year I couldn't do it without you.

#### Newsletter Report – Eliot Taylor

As usual, two newsletters were produced – spring and autumn issues.

The spring issue was slightly bigger than normal, at 24 pages instead of 20. This was to accommodate the minutes of last year's AGM. We also featured the Field Trip Programme, articles by Jim Steele on the East Midlands Regional Conservation Strategy, and the White-letter Hairstreak, the Mosaic Project by Ruth Rolls, Ken Orpe's summary of butterfly transects in Derbyshire, and also a piece by Chris Jackson on the Grizzled Skipper project, that had previously appeared in the Great Central Railway Newsletter.

The Autumn issue detailed the 2019 field trip, and also contained an overview of the Hoe Grange Quarry Open Day, a Dingy and Grizzled Skipper report by Bill Bacon and a feature on the Clifden Nonpareil moth by Adrian Russell.

#### Publicity Report – Gary Atkins

Reflecting the steady increase in concern and interest in environmental issues in general – and wildlife in particular – media coverage of butterflies and moths saw an upturn in 2019, both nationally and locally.

BC's head office issued a number of releases over the late spring, summer and early autumn, most of which were picked up by national newspapers and TV and radio ... and many of these also piqued the interest of East Midlands media who wanted the local angles on national stories about, for example, the Painted Lady influx, the blue butterfly boom (albeit perhaps not experienced here as much as elsewhere) – plus what was happening in Derbyshire, Notts and Leicestershire to mark nationwide initiatives such as the Big Butterfly Count and National Moth Night.

When that happened our local gurus like Ken Orpe, Bill Bacon, Andrew Russell, Mick Ball and others were happy to step up to the plate and field interview requests, enthusiastically feeding facts and figures about our moths and butterflies to an evidently hungry audience.

We generated our own publicity, too, of course, most particularly through the Hoe Grange Quarry open day, which seems to have become a hardy annual on the coverage roster of BBC East Midlands TV and radio (the latter carrying interviews, brokered by Ken Orpe, across a whole week of programming) together with several local newspapers.

What particularly pleased me was the changing tone of items emerging from head office: despite the usual sub-text of concern about threats and the future of certain species (which predominated in releases a year or two back), the angles up-front this time were mainly positive and bright ... something I believe is important in attracting a greater interest by the general public in our Lepidoptera and in BC.

#### ELECTION OF OFFICERS

In accordance with branch rules, the three longest serving committee members stood down and offered themselves for re-election. These were Max Maughan as Field Trip Organiser, Jim Steele as Conservation Officer for Derbyshire and Gary Atkins as Publicity Officer.

These were re-elected together under a single nomination.

Proposed by Ken Orpe.

Seconded by Suzanne Halfacre.

#### ANY OTHER BUSINESS: None

*There being no further business the meeting finished at 12 noon.*

*This was followed by an excellent talk by Dr. Phil Sterling – 'Building Sites for Butterflies Programme'.*

*After lunch Dennis Dell gave a talk on 'The Spread of the Purple Emperor in the East Midlands'.*

*This was followed by Members' photographs.*

#### The meeting closed at 3.45pm.

**Jane Broomhead  
Branch Organiser.**



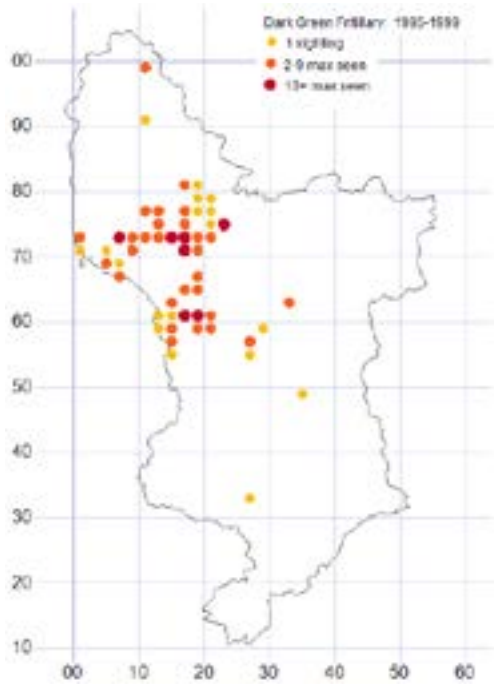
Right: Male Dark Green Fritillary  
Photo: Ian Hurst

## The Fritillary Butterflies of Derbyshire

**I**t was back in the late 1970's that two species of Fritillary butterfly disappeared from our woodlands here in Derbyshire. First of all the PEARL-BORDERED FRITILLARY became extinct in 1977, the last sighting being in the woodlands in lower Lathkill Dale and then in 1979 the SMALL PEARL-BORDERED FRITILLARY disappeared with the last sighting being in the woodlands along the Via Gellia. The main reason for the disappearance of these two species is the lack of coppicing in woodlands which allows daylight to enter and consequently wild flowers to grow in profusion including Violets, the food plant of the caterpillars.

For the next 25 years the only Fritillary butterfly that was regularly seen in Derbyshire was the DARK GREEN FRITILLARY – it's main stronghold is still

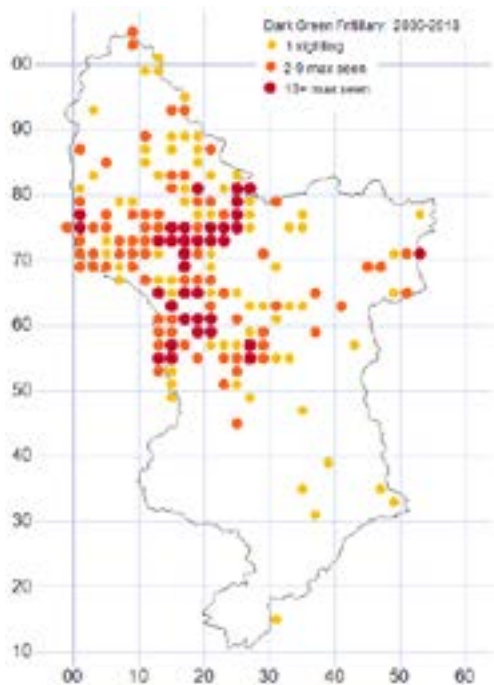
the dales within the Peak District. The largest colonies can be seen in Lathkill Dale, Coombs Dale, Cressbrook Dale and Long Dale where on a sunny day in mid July up to 100 individuals can be seen taking nectar from thistles. Despite its powerful flight the DARK GREEN FRITILLARY is not a particularly mobile species but the males spend most of their time scanning hillsides within the Dales and on the edge of the moors looking for hidden females which sit in tussocks low down in grass. After mating the eggs are laid on Common Dog Violets which are growing in lush clumps within a fairly dense sward. The eggs hatch two or three weeks later and then the caterpillars hibernate amongst the leaf litter, they re-emerge in Spring and then eat the tender new leaves of the Violets, consequently the DARK GREEN FRITILLARY does



well at sites where grazing is light or erratic as over eating will result in mass losses of the food plant and consequently the caterpillars. The benefit of Bracken being trampled by cattle could also be a factor in the expansion of the DARK GREEN FRITILLARY in the Dark Peak.

**CLIMATE CHANGE**

Since the new millennium there have been some substantial changes in the distribution of butterfly species especially here in Derbyshire. The DARK GREEN FRITILLARY has been noted more often than previously in the Dark Peak where females have been noted laying eggs on Dog Violets which are growing in open areas within mainly bracken covering at the edges of open moorland. When comparing the distribution maps for the



Dark Green Fritillary Photo: Eliot Taylor



Right: Mating Dark Green Fritillaries  
Photo: Dale Angie Seymour

periods 1995-1999 against the period 2000-2018, it can be clearly seen that the species is moving north to new areas within the County and indeed during 2019 the DARK GREEN FRITILLARY was noted on the transects at Lightwood above Buxton, the Longshaw Estate at Padley, the eastern moors at Curbar and in the far north western part of Derbyshire in Longdendale near Hayfield. However, individuals of the species noted in North East Derbyshire are probably as a result of unauthorised introductions.

Another factor which is caused by extreme weather conditions is the appearance of Aberrations within butterfly species and a rare white form of the DARK GREEN FRITILLARY was seen in Coombs Dale in 2015 by Nigel Pemberton.



Right: Female Dark Green Fritillary  
Photo: John Green



Right: Dark Green Fritillary, white aberration  
Photo: Nigel Pemberton





Above: Male Silver-washed Fritillary  
Photo: Jean McMahon



Right: Female Silver-washed Fritillary  
Photo: Eliot Taylor



Right: Silver-washed Fritillary, Valezina form  
Photo: Derek Brownlee

Then suddenly around the year 2005 a number of observers were noticing the arrival mainly on Buddleia bushes of small numbers of the SILVER-WASHED FRITILLARY. This is the largest UK Fritillary butterfly and it is also a very strong flier so subsequent years even more sightings have occurred in Derbyshire – see the distribution maps for the periods 1995-1999 and 2000-2018 for the expansion of the SILVER-WASHED FRITILLARY in Derbyshire. Of course this species is mainly a woodland butterfly and it has indeed been observed laying eggs on rough barked trees in semi shaded woods in clearings at Ticknall Limeyards, Hilton Gravel Pits and Whitwell Wood. The eggs are laid at around head height and they hatch in about 2 weeks and the tiny caterpillars eat the egg-shell before spinning a tiny pad of silk in which it hibernates, still on the tree trunk. The caterpillar then descends to the ground level in Spring and immediately starts feeding on Common Dog Violets.

By early June, the first caterpillars are fully grown and then they search for a site to pupate which is often a few metres up in a tree or shrub. The adult butterflies emerge in late June/July and some 10% of the females can be of the very unusual form – VALEZINA in which the upper wings have a dusky greenish sheen and the under wings are a distinctive pink. Apparently the females are less attractive to males than normal females and they behave differently by avoiding sunny clearings and rides by skulking in shady woodland. Possibly this is due to their being more prone to overheating and they can be seen flying in cloudy conditions.

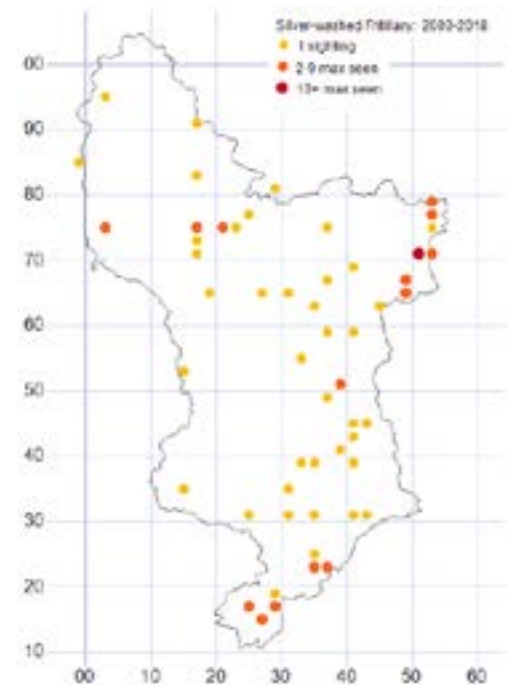
During 2019 the SILVER-WASHED FRITILLARY was increasingly noted on Transects including West Hallam Ash Tip, Aston Brickyards, Eyes Meadow, Duffield, Kedleston Park, Findern Footpaths, Little Eaton Canal, Jim Mart NR, Press, Lathkill Dale NR, Rose End Meadows and in Tansley and Cressbrook Dales. Casual sightings during 2019 of this species have come from the Via Gellia, Grangemill, Hopton Quarry, Brailsford, Milford, Oakwood, Deep Dale, Sheldon, Grindleford, Monsal Dale, Curbar Edge, Kilburn, Wakebridge, and in the far north west of Derbyshire within the Goyt Valley

**DISTINCTIVE FEATURES**

The main differences between the two Fritillaries are seen on the underside.

DARK GREEN FRITILLARIES have silver spots with a green wash appearance to the underwings.

SILVER-WASHED FRITILLARIES have silver streaks to the underwings, this species is large and is a bright orange with black markings.





Above: Mating Silver-washed Fritillary, with Valezina form  
Photo: Jean McMahon

**FLIGHT PERIODS IN DERBYSHIRE**

	FIRST DATE	LAST DATE
DARK GREEN FRITILLARY	17th May (2018)	12th September (2015)
SILVER-WASHED FRITILLARY	25th June (2018)	5th September (2015)
Ditto VALEZINA	26th June (2018)	30th August (2019)

If you would like to contribute to the National Database, then please send your Derbyshire butterfly sightings to Ken Orpe: [ken@malaga.plus.com](mailto:ken@malaga.plus.com)

You can also receive regular Updates on butterfly sightings and emerging dates within Derbyshire by emailing Ken Orpe: [ken@malaga.plus.com](mailto:ken@malaga.plus.com)

**Ken Orpe**  
Derbyshire Recorder

**Welcome To Our New Branch Members**

The Committee extends a warm welcome to new members who have joined the branch since the last newsletter.

We look forward to meeting as many as possible at future Branch Events and Field Trips. At 25 March 2020 the Branch has 1,340 Household members representing a figure of 1,942 Individual members.



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The views expressed within this newsletter are not necessarily those of the Editor, the Branch or of Butterfly Conservation nationally.

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Hummingbird Hawk-moth (Photo Neil Greenberry)



Speckled Wood (Photo Rachel Kirkley)



Green Hairstreak (Photo Mark Searle)



Peacock (Photo Derek Martin)