

EAST MIDLANDS
Butterfly

ISSUE 75 – AUTUMN 2024

IN THIS ISSUE:

2024 Field Trip Reports

VC55 Transect Summary

Clearwing Moth Update

Gardening for Butterflies



**Butterfly
Conservation**

Saving butterflies, moths and our environment



Contents:		<p>Welcome to the Autumn/Winter Newsletter which has very kindly been produced by the Leicestershire and Rutland Butterfly Recorder, Richard Jeffery.</p> <p>We are all deeply upset to have to inform you that Eliot Taylor, our regular Newsletter editor is now seriously ill, and has had to move into full-time care.</p> <p>This means we now have to look for a new Newsletter editor. Details of the vacancy are provided later in this issue.</p> <p>In the meantime, I am sure all of you who know Eliot wish him well. Jane.</p>
Welcome	2	
Assemble	2	
Branch Organisers Notes	3	
Grizzled Skipper Practical Conservation Tasks 2024/25	4-5	
2024 Field Trip Reports	6-11	
Hoe Grange Quarry Open Day	12-13	
Leicestershire & Rutland Butterfly Transects 2024	13-14	
Clearwing Report	15	
Gardening for Butterflies	18	
Contact	19	
Vacancies	20	

Assemble – Butterfly Conservation’s New Volunteer Portal

This year BC has been rolling out its new secure system – Assemble – for everyone who volunteers in any way. The aim is to strengthen the volunteer community, share news and connect people with a love of butterflies, moths and the environment.

As well as sharing news of upcoming events, opportunities and news, Assemble will soon feature an online forum where you can chat with other volunteers and ask each other questions. Hopefully, this will make volunteering even more enjoyable and rewarding.

If you regularly give your time to BC, you are invited to register. Please contact the Volunteering Team (volunteering@butterfly-conservation.org) for a sign up link for your county, or call Head Office on 01969 400209. Once registered, you will be protected by BC’s insurance while you volunteer, which gives added peace of mind.

The role that volunteers perform is vital to secure the future of our butterflies and moths, and it is hugely important for the health and wellbeing of each volunteer.

Please take a few minutes to sign up. Thank you.

Branch Organiser's Notes.

The lack of a Butterfly Conservation Reserve in the East Midlands has always been of major concern to the Branch. Even as far back as 1991 the East Midlands committee was concerned that we were just a Spotters Club and were achieving nothing in terms of actual conservation. They hoped a reserve would make the Branch more conservation-orientated. At that time Ketton Quarry in Rutland was available and discussed as a possible reserve, but, alas, it was not to be. Since then many sites have been put forward to Head Office, none of which have been approved. Has this been a problem over the years? Well, yes and no. With such a large Branch in area would we be able to maintain the site with a team of volunteers? We would ideally need a warden and plenty of Branch money to upkeep it.

Of course Hoe Grange Quarry (HGQ) always springs to mind; the one site which was dangled in front of us for the taking and then snatched away from us. Both Ken and myself have never got over that. Without a site we have had the option of being able to spend our money throughout the Branch although two of the counties have had more spent on them than the other two. The information now emerging from Head Office is that the future of all BC Reserves is now being looked at. Just think, if we had been looking after HGQ for 10 years how devastated we

would feel if we lost it.

As Ken Orpe so often tells us, we were always the 'Cinderella' branch of BC, of little concern during the early years of the charity, but what a difference now. Who would have thought we would get Wall Brown in abundance, Purple Emperor in all 4 Counties, more Common Blue and Small Heath than anywhere else in the UK. Not to mention all of Melanie Penson's Clearwing moth recording. We have a lot to be proud of in the East Midlands. On the good side we have had 10 years of the Grizzled Skipper Project which is still going thanks to Bill Bacon and Chris Jackson who are still as enthusiastic about this small iconic butterfly. You can help the project by attending any of the winter work parties (*see page 4*). Winter work is also available on sites such as Markham Vale on the Notts/Derbyshire border; an amazing site with a wonderful team of volunteers should you wish to help in this area.

Lastly, I would like to give a big **thank you** to all our branch members. As Julie Williams (CEO) told us recently, BC is one big family and we should all be there for our UK Butterflies, wherever they should be. I have to say, for me, you cannot get the same passion for a butterfly that you cannot see on a regular basis. I agree with Ken; 'long live the East Midlands butterflies'.

Jane Broomhead
Branch Organiser

Grizzled Skipper Practical Conservation Tasks - Winter 2024 -25



Grizzled Skipper butterfly

Tuesday 29th October 2024 - Grange Farm north, Normanton on Soar

Sunday 17th November 2024 - Great Central Railway, East Leake (Lime Sidings)

Tuesday 3rd December 2024 -Great Central Railway, East Leake (Rushcliffe Halt)

Sunday 15th December 2024 - Grange Farm south, Normanton on Soar

Sunday 12th January 2025 - Flawborough Footpath & Triangle

Tuesday 21st January 2025 - Saxondale Disused Railway

Sunday 2nd February 2025 - Newstead & Annesley Country Park

Tuesday 11th February 2025 - Granby Disused Railway

Sunday 23rd February 2025 - Kilvington Lakes

Tuesday 4th March 2024 - Flawborough Footpath & Triangle

All work parties 10am to 3pm. Please contact **Chris Jackson** for details of meeting points.

Come along and join a group of like-minded people who are enthusiastic about the conservation of the Grizzled Skipper butterfly - a nationally important species which occurs at several sites in south Nottinghamshire. Many of the sites where the Grizzled Skipper occurs require regular management to keep them in a suitable condition for the butterfly, so we will be undertaking a series of practical workdays at some key sites, which will involve:

- Scrub clearance work to maintain open habitats required by the Grizzled Skipper and to help create corridors to link existing open habitats
- Creation of bare earth patches to increase the availability of suitable egg-laying habitat



Volunteers working along the Great Central Railway at East Leake Station

What to bring:

- Lunch
- Warm clothing and stout footwear
- Work gloves (gloves will be provided if you don't have any)
- Tools (if you have any - bow saws/loppers/spades. Tools will be provided, along with instruction on their use)

For more information please contact Chris Jackson at the Nottinghamshire Biodiversity Action Group on 0115 993 2588 or email

chris.jackson@nottscc.gov.uk



Thanks go out to all of the leaders who volunteered to run a field trip.

We would welcome anyone who would be prepared to lead a field trip in 2025. Please contact Max Maughan for more details.

(See contact details on page 19)

Bingham Linear Park (Nottinghamshire)

Sunday 19 May

The weather was sunny but there was a brisk, cool, northerly wind keeping the temperature to about 14 degrees C. This did not put off 23 people from turning up.

We saw a few individuals of a range of species (Peacock, Red Admiral, Brimstone, Common Blue, Brown Argus) as well as a few more individuals of Orange Tips, Small Whites, Green-veined Whites and Large Whites. Speckled Woods were common for most of the transect.

We kept our eyes peeled for the elusive Grizzled Skipper and saw one briefly on the way back. The previous day there had been significant numbers of Silver Y Moths - just one seen on this walk.

Jenny Craig

Longstone Edge (Derbyshire)

Sunday 26 May

Unfortunately, the walk was cancelled due to very poor weather conditions.

John Green

Ketton Quarry (Rutland)

Sunday 1 June

It must be said that the weather for this trip was far from ideal, being grey and rather windy so it was no surprise that butterflies were keeping their heads down. We did manage to find a single male Common Blue clinging on tightly to a flower-head and a Common Carpet moth also showed briefly, ensuring the day wasn't a complete blank.

We did try the Orange-tailed Clearwing lure on the guelder rose bushes in The Valley but to no avail as the season was so late this year. We did manage to find larval evidence of this clearwing on a stem of guelder rose where there was a distinct swelling surrounding the larval exit hole. This has really helped the author's understanding of larval requirements for this moth. Given how cloudy it was, we were not surprised that the Liquorice-piercer micro-moth didn't perform for us either.

Melanie Penson

Chee Dale

(Derbyshire)

Saturday 15 June

The day began with a promise of bright sunshine; the leader arrived early to walk the site before the trip officially began and saw both target species early on: a Brown Argus flitted across the path at the bottom of the slope below the car park and a distant Cistus Forester moth could be seen through binoculars, taking nectar from one of very few knapweed flowers on a steep slope by the path.

But right on cue and as soon as the last of the participants arrived, the clouds rolled in so that by mid-morning, we had to shelter from the pouring rain under one of the access bridges. Eventually, the sun returned but the

only butterfly to show itself was a Small Heath. Most of the knapweeds were still in bud due to the lateness of the spring and the nectar might have been washed out of those which were in flower so despite a good search we didn't see any Cistus Foresters. A Yellow-shell moth made a break from cover on our return to the car park.

Both trips were symptomatic of the wet winter with very few butterflies or moths being recorded in the spring of 2024; favouring viruses and parasites and accelerated grass growth shading out larval food plants. It is sincerely to be hoped that things pick up in 2025.

Melanie Penson



Brown Argus

Photo by Christine Maughan

Bagworth Heath Woods Country Park

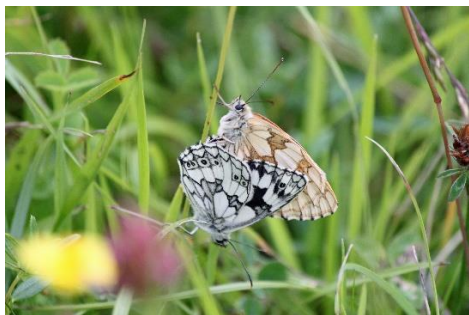
(Leicestershire).

Tuesday 2 July

2 people attended plus the leaders. The weather was overcast and rained on the journey there, the temperature was 17°C.

However, we counted 11 Meadow Browns, 85 Ringlets, 94 Marbled Whites 2 Large Skippers, 4 Small Skippers and 1 Red Admiral, but the icing on the cake were 2 Scarlet Tiger Moths. We also saw Cinnabar Moth larvae.

Eliot Taylor



Marbled White

Photo by Richard M. Jeffery

Cloud Wood (LRWT)

(Leicestershire)

Tuesday 9 July

Number of attendees: 12

As is becoming the new 'normal' these days, I had spent the previous few days transfixed by the weather forecast; mostly for the wrong reasons. Persistent grey skies and scattered heavy showers refused to go away and the probability of a wet field trip was quite high. I decided that it was worth taking the risk and gave everyone the option to attend or stay at home.

Although the clouds refused to disperse, a gentle southerly breeze and a temperature of 20 degrees increased our chances of spotting a few butterflies. It turned out that I need not have worried. Within minutes of entering the reserve we encountered our first butterfly; a Speckled Wood. This turned out to be our only sighting of this species. The most abundant species on the day was the summer stalwart, the Gatekeeper (*which is having a better summer than most species*) being seen regularly in most sections of our walk, and in total we recorded 38 individuals.

Our main target species for the day proved a little more elusive and we began to doubt whether we see any at all. Fortunately, the skies brightened at little and one eagle-eyed individual spotted a large butterfly flying in and out of a substantial Sallow. Views through binoculars and cameras revealed a female Purple Emperor (*target species number one*), and we were privileged to witness Her Imperial Majesty egg laying on numerous branches on and about the tree. Whilst watching H.I.M we were treated to a brief fly-past by a solitary Silver-

washed Fritillary, our second target species. Unfortunately, it disappeared just as quickly as it appeared, and no more were seen.

In Cloud Wood there are two key spots where our final target species, the White-letter Hairstreak, are recorded each year so I knew exactly where to look. Lofty Oak and Ash trees provide suitable look out posts for this species and, as the sky brightened briefly, we witnessed two individuals engaged in aerial combat. Sadly they refused to come down to a lower level to allow us the opportunity to get a photograph. On returning to the site of our Purple Emperor sighting as our visit drew to a close, a few of us stayed behind as some headed home. Our patience, and optimism, was rewarded when two more Emperors (*or Empresses*) were seen flying high around an Oak tree. It's good to know that this butterfly has well and truly established a permanent (*hopefully*) territory here. Fingers crossed we get to see them again next year.

Our total butterfly count was as follows:

Speckled Wood 1
Ringlet 38
Green-veined White 6
Meadow Brown 2
Purple Emperor 3
Silver-washed Fritillary 1
White-letter Hairstreak 2

We saw no day-flying moths at all on this visit.

Richard M. Jeffery



Dark Green Fritillary

Photo by Christine Maughan

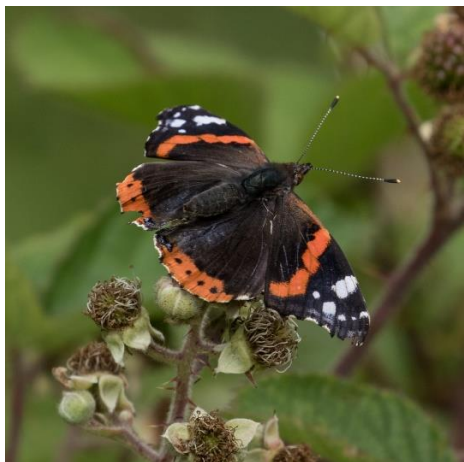
Coombs Dale
(Derbyshire)

Wednesday 24 July

Twelve members gathered in the car park at the playing field anxiously looking at the sky to try to fathom what the weather would be like for the walk. We all knew how bad the season had been but the signs seemed to be in our favour as we set off up the dale and we soon saw our first butterflies of the day. Unfortunately, as we advanced the clouds came over and sightings dropped off. As we approached the meadow, we met a group of botanists who led some of the group into the meadow to search for orchids while the rest of us walked to the cave. Thankfully the weather had improved and the sun appeared and we had good views of Dark Green Fritillary and Brown Argus, two of our target species.

In addition, we saw Meadow Browns, Ringlet, Gatekeeper, Comma, Red Admiral, Small, Large and Green-veined Whites, Small and Large Skipper, Speckled Wood, Common Blue and Small Heath; 15 species in all. Shaded Broad Bar, Orange Underwing, Speckled Yellow and 5 Spot Burnet moths were also seen.

John and Al Roberts



Red Admiral

Photo by Christine Maughan

Belper Private Butterfly NR

(Derbyshire)

Sunday 28 July

All had looked bleak meteorologically just a week before this inaugural field trip and it was with great relief that the Sunday of the visit saw glorious sunshine. Eleven enthusiastic Butterfly fanatics arrived with experience levels

varying from novice to expert.

Everyone was prepared to share their knowledge and over the noise of stridulating grasshoppers and buzzing invertebrates was a steady background hum of good-natured nature-based conversation.

A review of the i-Record submission shows that there were 96 butterflies of 13 species spotted during the day with counts as follows:

3 Brimstone, 1 Comma, 30 Gatekeeper, 1 Holly Blue, 1 Large White, 10 Meadow Brown, 10 Peacock, 1 Red Admiral, 13 Ringlet, 13 Small Skipper, 2 Small Tortoiseshell, 1 Small White, 10 Speckled Wood.

In addition, there were a number of day-flying moths of four species spotted including 2 Silver Y, 3 Six spot burnet, 1 Yellow Underwing, 1 Pale Pearl Straw.

A ruby tiger caterpillar was observed along with an interesting Meadow Cranesbill Weevil.

Everyone agreed that they had enjoyed themselves and thanks go to Dawn, Alison and Lucy who furnished a thirsty and hungry bunch of lepidopterists with a magnificent selection of home-made comestibles and refreshments afterwards.

Nigel Davidson

Pleasley Pit

(Derbyshire)

Sunday 4 August



Small Blue

Photo by Christine Maughan

The weather once again proved to be the determining factor for our walk. The day started dull and overcast and did not improve at any stage, in fact we experienced rain at one stage.

Twelve optimistic people turned up with hopes of seeing at least one or two Butterflies. I believe a number of people came along with the expectation they might see Small Blue's and Brown Hairstreak. The Small Blue did oblige albeit not in high numbers, in fact of the eleven species seen, all were in very low counts.

Two Brown Hairstreak were reportedly seen however neither offered a chance of a full identification or a photographic opportunity.

Species seen were: Ringlet, Meadow Brown, Speckled Wood, Small Skipper, Small Blue, Peacock, Green-veined White, Gatekeeper, Essex Skipper, Red Admiral and Brown Hairstreak.

The feedback from those who attended was that despite the weather the walk was thoroughly enjoyed, I'm inclined to think that was because following the walk a number of people tucked into a Sunday roast at the Pit café.

Willy Lane

We are extremely grateful to all of the volunteers who agreed to take on the role of first aider for each field trip. Fortunately their first aid skills were not required, but it was reassuring to know they were at hand.

If anyone is a qualified first aider and would like to help out by volunteering at one of next year's field trips, then please contact Max Maughan.

(See contact details on page 19)



Hoe Grange Quarry Open Day 2024

The soggy start to the day, augmented by a poor weather forecast, limited the number of people attending this year's Hoe Grange Quarry open day, which has been running since 2017. There were, nevertheless, still 200 brave souls who turned up at Derbyshire's first dedicated butterfly reserve, and by the end of the afternoon the weather had improved enough for the later arrivals to enjoy seeing up to 10 species.

Since Longcliffe Quarries Limited handed the disused limestone quarry back to nature in the 1970s, the 4.75 hectare space has – with more recent help from volunteer planting events to boost the variety of flora and regular monitoring by East Midlands

Butterfly Conservation (EMBC) personnel – developed into a brilliant habitat for butterflies and moths (and plenty of other wildlife).

Effectively a joint venture between Longcliffe Quarries, Derbyshire Wildlife Trust and Butterfly Conservation's East Midlands branch, the Hoe Grange Quarry reserve is overseen by an EMBC warden and the site of one of Derbyshire's numerous butterfly transects, recording more and more species as the habitat developed and matured.

Over the past eight years, 17,500 butterflies of 32 species have been counted, including three BAP species: Wall Brown, Dingy

Skipper and Small Heath. Two Peak District specialities – Dark Green Fritillary and local variant of Brown Argus – have been sighted there.

The open day has been a popular annual event on the local Butterfly Conservation calendar (though Covid led to a two-year absence) and, on sunnier days, as many as 600 people have previously pored over the luxuriant vegetation seeking butterflies and moths.

Despite the slightly smaller crowds at Hoe Grange this year, there were some far-flung visitors as nature-lovers from Cornwall, Somerset, Gloucestershire and Surrey, holidaying at nearby Blore Hall, booked a mini-bus to attend.

As ever, Longcliffe were generous hosts, laying on refreshments and areas to sit and relax. There was plenty of coffee and cake to help keep visitors warm and well fed, though neither did the conditions stop queues forming at the ice-cream van!

As the late sun emerged this year, the species list grew and eventually was still quite impressive – comprising Meadow Brown, Ringlet, Small Heath, Speckled Wood, Red Admiral, Small Copper, Common Blue, Small and Large Skippers, a well-worn Dingy Skipper.

Gary Atkins

Butterfly Transects in Leicestershire & Rutland (VC55) – 2024 Season

The most common question I have been asked this summer is ‘where have all the butterflies gone?’ It goes without saying that anyone with an interest in the natural world couldn’t fail to notice far fewer insects this year, and it wasn’t just butterflies that were conspicuous by their absence. Bumblebees, ladybirds, and even the much maligned wasps were far fewer in numbers than we are used to and, indeed, expect to see.

Over the last 10 years we have gradually been increasing the number of transects in the county aiming to form a better idea of the status of our butterflies (*and day-flying moths*).

This year we set up an additional 8 new butterfly transects in VC55, and I must take this opportunity to thank everyone who made this possible. Many new volunteers joined our recording team, and feedback from many of them was that of a sense of disappointment at the lack of butterflies. Even seasoned recorders expressed the same concerns.

Analysis of the transect data shows a marked contrast in results in comparison to last season (2023). *Please see the following summary for a direct comparison.*

Leicestershire & Rutland Butterfly Transects

2024 = 37 Transects

Total butterflies seen: 20,027

Top 4 butterflies:

Ringlet	4,568
Meadow Brown	4,118
Gatekeeper	2,316
Speckled Wood	2,249

2023 = 29 Transects

Total butterflies seen: 27,285

Top 4 butterflies:

Meadow Brown	8,099
Gatekeeper	4,130
Ringlet	3,171
Speckled Wood	2,137

The most alarming observation here is the fact that despite having 8 more transects than 2023, butterfly numbers were down in total by over 7,000.

Looking at the top four species, it shows a change in the number one species for this season. It may appear that the Ringlet has had a good year, and I guess in a way it has, but the increase in numbers of this species is compared to a relatively poor year last year and has resulted in numbers returning to a similar level to that of 2022.

There was always a fear that the very wet autumn and winter of 2023/24, and a grey and damp summer, would adversely affect the grassland species of butterfly, especially those that overwinter a larvae and pupae. Wet and soggy tussocks of grass would cause both potentially to perish. It would appear that this is exactly what has happened to the Meadow Brown with numbers down by 49%. It will be

interesting to see if the same pattern occurs when the Big Butterfly Count and records submitted via i-Record are assessed.

Amidst all of this negativity, there is cause for optimism. Both August and September show that many species rallied as the weather improved, and this bodes well for next year. We do have to remind ourselves that butterflies are pretty resilient and do have the capacity to bounce back in favourable conditions. If the weather is reasonable this coming winter then there is every chance that many species will recover to some extent next year.

One thing is for certain and that is the many transect volunteers will be out and about recording when the new season begins on the 1st of April. If you would like to join our team of recorders in VC55 then please get in touch with me. *My contact details are on page 19.*

Richard Jeffery

Diary Date:

Pat and I will be doing our Annual Transect Training and Butterfly I D Session on **Sunday the 16th of March 2025** at the Evergreen Club in Allestree DE22 2FT from 11.30 am till 2.30 pm including results of the 2024 transect season.

It will be of interest to all members including those of you who are thinking of setting up a new transect in any part of the Region for 2025 – I see that the RSPB have acknowledged the fact that enjoying wildlife in the countryside is a great way to help with stress, mental health issues and general wellbeing by taking time to be with nature – this is something that we in the East Midlands have been doing for some time with some excellent results from the 500 or so volunteers who carry out surveys including those volunteers who email their casual sightings to me over the butterfly season!

The first hour will cover the rules for carrying out transects, followed by a break for tea/coffee and home-made cakes, courtesy of Christine Maughan of B C East Midlands, after which I will present an illustrated guide to the Butterflies of Region.

Hopefully there will then be time for a question and answer session.

Ken Orpe

Update Clearwing Report from the 2024 season.

It will have been abundantly clear by now that 2024 was hardly a vintage year for butterflies and moths but it has not been doom and gloom for every species. Clearwing moths emerged in lower numbers than in previous years and slightly later than has been traditional but some species have had a good season in some parts of their East Midlands range.

We now have at least nine active colonies of Hornet Moths in Nottinghamshire, with four new sites found this year in the south of the



County. From my research and examining host trees on five sites and finding frass, pupal cases and luring adults, at least 40 adult moths had emerged over these sites. The photo above shows a mating pair in Bridgford Park in June 2024. The challenge now is to re-find it in Derbyshire now that the only known site drew a blank and is no longer considered suitable due to extensive flooding adversely affecting the host trees.

Orange-tailed clearwings have also appeared at new sites in Leicestershire and Rutland; the established colony at Ketton is still active and larval emergence holes were found on a field trip this year. The big surprise was two lured during the Bird Fair at Lyndon Top, one of which was potted and exhibited on our BC stand for an afternoon, which drew quite a crowd and many people saw this for the first time. The host tree was a sickly looking guelder rose in a short section of hedgerow normally surrounded by caravans.

I confirmed presence at Fosse Meadows Nature Reserve in early July, eventually tracking down host trees (guelder rose and wayfaring tree) in the hedgerows surrounding the fields.

Perhaps the largest VC55 population was found at Narborough Bog where 19 came to a bucket lure in early July. The host trees have been retained, Natural England had previously requested more scrub removal from around the reed bed.

Orange tailed clearwing has also been found for the first time in Nottinghamshire, from a garden in the south of the County.

Yellow-legged clearwings were found in numbers across Sherwood and three willow-clearwings were recorded at garden lures in the Whetstone area of Leicestershire in early July but repeated attempts by the author and others to lure in suitable semi-natural habitat within the vicinity drew a blank. We will have to try again in 2026 as adults only fly in even years.

Targeted luring of large red-belted clearwing in Sherwood revealed 11 individuals, two of which appeared within seconds in an area of pollarded birches on Sherwood Heath which had been cut in 2022. It is also well-established in Clipstone Old Quarter with five individuals on one day. A management prescription has been written for this, for the Nottinghamshire Nature Recovery Strategy, with the aim of aiding range expansion and hopefully re-colonisation of Derbyshire where it was last seen in the 1970s. Further surveys are planned for 2025.

Melanie Penson.



*Narborough
Bog LRWT
Reserve*



This time last year we introduced you to Butterfly Conservation's new initiative, **Wild Spaces**. We would like to take this opportunity to encourage as many of you as possible to create your own Wild Space.

BC declared a **Butterfly Emergency** this summer as butterfly numbers plummeted. Individually we cannot affect the regional and national position, but we do have control of the space in and around our own homes and gardens. It has been well documented that the area of garden space in the UK far exceeds the total area of all of our nature reserves put together. Consequently, if everyone created an area for wildlife no matter how large or small, it could potentially make a massive difference.

Gardens can provide a vital link that connects our nature reserves and country parks by becoming 'stepping stones' for our local wildlife.

It doesn't matter whether you have a large or small garden, or even a balcony or window box (*see Nick Sparrow's article on the next page*). By adopting a few basic principles, your Wild Space can become just that....wild.

The first and most important step is to put away all of those sprays. Chemicals and wildlife do not mix. Secondly, aim to plant a few native plants in your garden or containers. Trailing plants such as Bird's Foot Trefoil, and clump formers like Clover look stunning in hanging baskets and containers. Please refer to BC's gardening pages for a list of plants suitable for providing nectar and for feeding larvae too. Also, don't be too tidy. Nature prefers spaces that are a little loose around the edges.

<https://butterfly-conservation.org/how-you-can-help/get-involved/gardening>

As Sir David Attenborough recently said; 'what happens next is up to us'.

Welcome to the first of our new feature on gardening for butterflies. In each issue we will aim to highlight how important our gardens are for butterflies and moths, and give topical advice on how to attract them into your garden. *Editor.*

Gardening for Butterflies - *Window Box*

I was grateful to receive a letter on lovely headed notepaper from Prince Charles' office during lockdown, thanking me for my efforts on behalf of those without gardens. But since then, many gardens have been paved over in the rush for outdoor rooms and car parking. Grey space doesn't help nature. It needs regular jet-washing, can flood or heat up, become a slip hazard and generates lots of CO₂.

A vine covered pergola, balcony or window box and natural paving do need tidying for sure, but this is often regarded as a labour of love and the creatures we find make it worthwhile. See a significance in beautiful things. Reward your senses. Enjoy sitting in some shady corner and wait for what comes by.

Through the seasons, a grape vine or runner beans make a fine place for sunbathing Speckled Wood butterflies, Red Admirals and some night-flying moths. My friend Robbie the Robin more or less lives in his vine, he tells me.

There are at least fourteen paving or outdoor room contractors advertising in my local free paper, which has a monthly circulation of 100,000, but only one small nature garden company. So, anything you can do for butterflies will help. I know that volunteer boffins and labourers at EMBC work very hard for both habitat and associated species, but there are not enough of them and we need every tiny garden space. Window boxes, balconies and containers can all provide invaluable resources for our butterflies and moths.



Photo by Richard Jeffery

I do hope that King Charles III might approve if 'Window Box' appoints you the reader as a 'Special Agent' for nature. This is your mission. Don't wait. Do something.

Nick Sparrow

EAST MIDLANDS MAIN COMMITTEE:

Branch Organiser/Chairperson:

Position Vacant

Treasurer/Events Organiser:

Jane Broomhead Tel: 01623 862854 e-mail: malcsmonkey@hotmail.com

Membership Secretary & Butterfly Reports Co-ordinator:

Christine Maughan Tel: 01332 511825 e-mail: cm.maughan@gmail.com

Butterfly Recorder for Derbyshire & Regional Transect Co-ordinator:

Ken Orpe e-mail: ken@malaga.plus.com

Conservation Officer for Derbyshire:

Amy Ross email: amyeross@hotmail.co.uk

Butterfly Recorder for Leicestershire and Rutland & National Forest Representative:

Richard M. Jeffery Tel: 01455 845112 e-mail: winrich168@btinternet.com

Conservation Officer & Moth Officer:

Melanie Penson e-mail: harfangneige2018@gmail.com

Newsletter Editor:

Position Vacant

Publicity Officer:

Gary Atkins: Tel: 01335 370773 e-mail: garysatkins@aol.com

Field Trip Organiser:

Max Maughan Tel: 01332 511825 e-mail: cm.maughan@gmail.com

Committee Member:

Suzanne Halfacre Tel: 07884 403903 e-mail: tinytreasures56@gmail.com

Nick Sparrow e-mail: nsparr@hotmail.com

Associate Committee Member & Butterfly Recorder for Nottinghamshire:

Steve Mathers e-mail: smbutterflies11@gmail.com

Vacancies:

Branch Organiser and Chairperson.

We are actively seeking a replacement for this role as Jane Broomhead has taken the decision to step down at the forthcoming AGM to give herself more time to concentrate on Events and Fund Raising, and also her role as Treasurer. *We offer our sincere thanks for the hard work she has put into this role over the last few years.*

The position involves chairing two committee meetings per year, one in January and one in September, and also the branch AGM, usually held in November. As Branch Organiser the role entails being the main link between the branch and BC head office, and will include regular Zoom meetings with BC and other county branch organisers. For more details please see the link below, and please feel free to contact Jane Broomhead to discuss the role further. (*See contact details on page 19*)

[BC Branch Organiser Role Description.pdf](#)

Newsletter Editor.

We are also looking for a new Newsletter Editor. The successful applicant would ideally have some basic computer knowledge, especially in the use of Word and creating PDF documents. We produce two newsletters each year, one in March and the other in late October or early November. It is also essential that the new editor joins the committee to be able to keep abreast of branch news and activities.

If you, or maybe someone you know, is interested in this role then please feel free to contact me, Richard Jeffery, for further details and an informal discussion. (*See contact details on page 19*)

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

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