

BUTTERFLY CONSERVATION UPPER THAMES BRANCH

Dingy Skipper Report 2009

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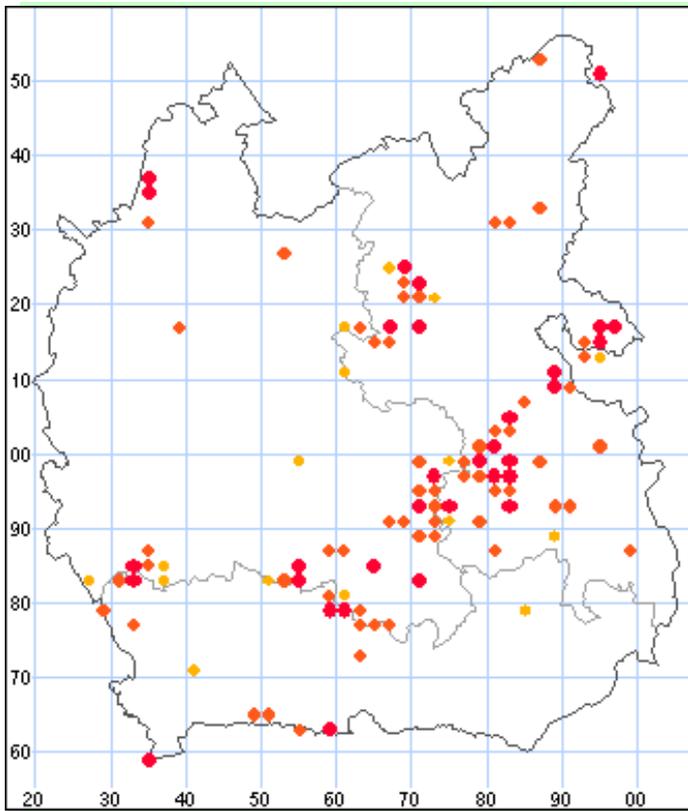


Dingy Skipper
Photo © Jim Asher

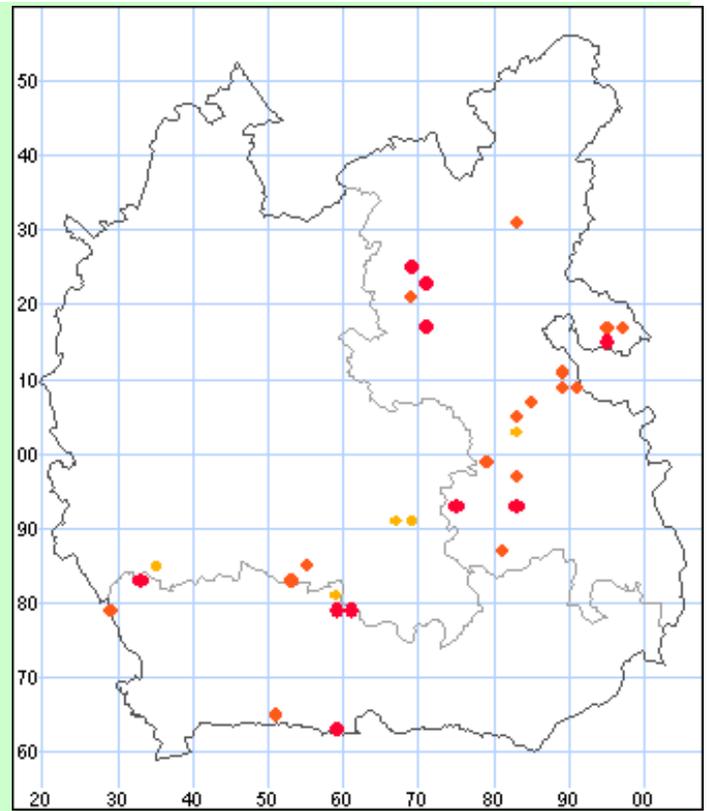
In 2009 the **Dingy Skipper** was first recorded flying in Kent on 11th April. This year the Upper Thames region was not far behind, with activity recorded from 19th April (first sightings at Grangelands, Bucks and Aston Upthorpe Downs, Oxon) until 13th June (last sightings at Westcott, Bucks and Swyncombe Down, Oxon). This was a more typical flight period following the delayed start in 2008.

There was also a partial second brood at some favoured sites, with individuals being recorded between 2nd August (at Pitstone, Bucks) and 25th August (at Sands Bank LNR, High Wycombe, Bucks). For a change this second brood was not confined entirely to the downland colonies because one individual was seen near to the Calvert landfill site in Bucks on 13th August.

At the time of writing 110 Dingy Skipper records had been received for 2009, coming from 31 tetrads and comprising sightings of more than 670 individuals. The number of records is about average for the last ten years. The number of tetrads from which the species was recorded is currently well down, although that should increase with the eventual addition of transect data and records from other sources (notably the Wildlife Trust and the Environmental Records Centres). However, of particular significance is the number of individual butterflies recorded. This is already above the highest total achieved since the millennium, suggesting that the butterfly did particularly well where it was seen. This is certainly borne out by the results from the colony in the disused railway cutting near Westcott, Bucks (SP 7016) where more than 60 individuals were counted on 11th May, the highest total ever recorded there.



Dingy Skipper records 2000-2009 (106 tetrads)



Dingy Skipper records 2009 (provisionally 31 tetrads)

One new colony was discovered during the year, by John Lerpiniere at Fognam Quarry, a well known geological site to the west of Lambourn, Berks (SU 2979).