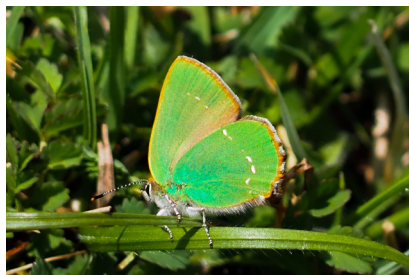


UPPER THAMES BRANCH

Hairstreak

ISSUE 127 | AUTUMN 2025



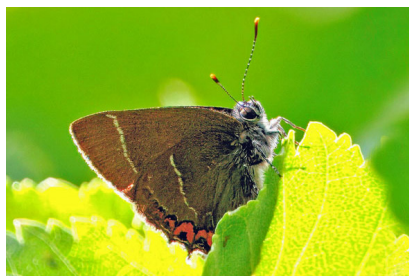
Blessed to
have all 5
Hairstreaks
in our
region



**MEMBERS'
DAY**

**Saturday 25th
October 2025**

See page 7 for
further details



**Butterfly
Conservation**

Saving butterflies, moths and our environment

**Upper Thames
Branch**



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Cover images (from top left, clockwise):

- Green Hairstreak (Incombe Hole, Bucks, 22nd April 2025 ©Denise Harper)
- Black Hairstreak (Waterperry Wood, Oxon, 2nd June 2025 ©Geoff Dymott)
- Purple Hairstreak (Besselsleigh Wood, Oxon, 17th July 2025 ©Mike Towndrow)
- Brown Hairstreak (Otmoor, Oxon, 14th July 2025 ©David Hastings)
- White-letter Hairstreak (Woolstone, Oxon, 28th June 2025 ©Nancy Massie)

Opinions expressed in the articles in this publication do not necessarily reflect the views of the Branch or the Society.

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First Thoughts

Wow, what a summer for many (perhaps the majority) of our species!

One wonders how many of you have witnessed 'clouds of butterflies' in 2025 which have served as a reminder of the times we fondly remember from our childhoods. My experiences this year involved (in particular) Purple Hairstreaks and Gatekeepers in higher numbers than I've ever seen before at a single location (one oak tree and one small patch of brambles, respectively). My July WCBS assignment also chronicled a record number of individuals.

The UK's warmest- and sunniest-ever spring appears to have triggered earlier-than-usual emergences of most of our resident butterflies, with Wall 'leading the way' with a first-sighting date (3rd May) over a month earlier than the mean first date for the species. OK, so we did have a sighting of Small White in January (two months earlier than its mean first date) - but one can't attribute that to a warm spring! Indeed, with the exception of Speckled Wood and Holly Blue, each of our resident butterfly species emerged earlier than usual in 2025.

Another outcome of a warming climate was the arrival this year (for the first time ever in the UK) of Southern Small White, *Pieris mannii*, which — until recently — was confined to southern and south-eastern



Europe. If this is news to you, take a look at

<https://butterfly-conservation.org/news-and-blog/mediterranean-butterfly-spotted-in-the-uk-for-the-first-time-twice>

... and maybe grow candytuft! Our members have also reported myriad sightings of migrant Clouded Yellows.

This issue's front cover features Britain's five Hairstreaks, in celebration of our good fortune in having all of them as residents of the UTB region. They, too, seem to have had a very good year - with evidence of their presence in previously unrecorded locations (such as Brown Hairstreak in the Chilterns).

Members have also been actively reporting their moth sightings (and taking great photos), both in the species' native settings and under the custodianship of managed moth traps... wonderful!

Elsewhere, it's encouraging to note that many of our under-recorded 1km squares (the so-called 'holes of ignorance') are being visited, with species often being recorded there for the first time in recent years. An article on page 26 provides further details of this creative initiative.

Members' Day will soon be here, so be sure to put the date (Saturday 25th October) in your diary since it promises — as always — to be a stimulating and entertaining event. See page 7 for full details.

Derek Haynes
Editor

View from the Chair

As the days begin to shorten and we enter the season of mellow fruitfulness, it is pleasing to look back at the summer and remember lots of warm, sunny days filled with good numbers of many of our butterfly species, at least compared to recent years. Indeed, many have fared much better than in the disappointing summer of 2024 when I only noted four Small Tortoiseshells; I have now seen more than five times that number this year.

Not only were many species in good numbers this year, but some were on the wing more than two weeks earlier than normal - with Brown Hairstreak recorded 17 days earlier than the mean 'first date'.



Your Chair trying to photograph Silver-spotted Skipper ©Linda Seward

I recorded my first Silver-spotted Skippers of the year at the fabulous BBOWT Grangelands nature reserve on the 12th of July – over a week early; one was looking rather 'wrinkly' as it was still inflating its wings. In fact, I have seen more Silver-spotted Skippers this year than in any previous year. However, that probably reflects the fact that I took on two transects where this dainty little butterfly thrives.

It is also worth reflecting that many of our most threatened species only survive and thrive thanks to the fantastic work by a group of dedicated UTB volunteers and the many targeted work parties. We are now moving into the main 'work party season'. Please do consider joining one or more of these. They can be great fun, get you out in the fresh air, give you some exercise and a feeling of achievement. Tools, first aid and instructions are all provided, and in the following years you can look back with pride knowing that you have made a real contribution. See the list of work parties elsewhere in this magazine and on our website.

You will also read, herein, that we have taken the difficult decision to aim to make *Hairstreak* a digital-only publication. I realise this will disappoint some of you; however, if you are able to receive it electronically, more of our precious resources can be used to improve conditions for our local populations of butterflies and moths. If you have previously made an additional voluntary donation towards the cost of receiving a printed copy (an option no longer available), you will continue to receive it (subject to opting in). See page 6 for further details.

It is both sad and disappointing to report that many other conservation organisations have been affected by the current economic climate. In addition to staff cuts in BC and RSPB that I have mentioned previously, the National Trust has recently announced that they will have to lose up to 550 staff! BBOWT are also in the process of slimming down.

On a much more positive note, I am pleased to learn that our Head Office is not taking

the financial and staffing challenges lying down, but are being positive and proactive. Discussions are already underway about how we can get the most 'bang for our bucks'. These include looking at innovative conservation delivery methods (like our UV surveys for Hairstreak larvae), looking at alternative funding sources (for example, Biodiversity Net Gain, Carbon offsetting and Natural flood management payments - as well as private and blended finance); and engaging more varied partners to help deliver biodiversity gains.

Also on a positive note, I am delighted that a volunteer has come forward to take on the important role of Transects Coordinator, thus ensuring we get good coverage for the 120 or so transects monitored across our three counties. So, please join me in welcoming Tom Primett to the role. Another volunteer is considering joining Simon to help deliver our public events, and several others have joined our WCBS, transect and events teams. Welcome and many thanks to you all.

Without our dedicated teams of volunteers, our Branch could achieve little. So, I would like to thank everyone who has helped out over the summer in any way. Also, I would like to give a special vote of thanks to Andy Spragg, who has taken on board the task of understanding a little more about the distribution of butterflies within the UTB region. He hit his own target of having records for every single 1km square. Very well done, Andy.

Of course, there are many others who do a great deal, often behind the scenes. Some may have thought that when Nick Bowles stepped down as Branch Chair, he would take life 'more gently' – no, nothing of the sort! He is still out day-in-day-out surveying, organising



Volunteers on a UTB Work Party ©Nick Bowles

and participating in work parties, advising landowners, etc. There are many other folk, too...

I can't wind up without mentioning the Branch's leading role in surveying and monitoring Hairstreak butterflies as part of BBOWT's RBOR project, gaining much new information to guide future actions.

One of the highlights of the season for me was our Aston Rowant guided walk. It is always a delightful site with a fabulous range of chalk grassland flora and invertebrates. However, this year's walk was extra special, with visitors from far and wide and fabulous numbers of the specialist butterflies. See my report on page 14.

I hope to see many of you at our Members' Day (details on page 7) or on some of our work parties.

Meanwhile, to every one of you: keep safe and healthy, do what you can to help our butterflies and moths, and make time to enjoy yourself.

Regards,

Peter Philp
chairman@upperthames-butterflies.org.uk

IMPORTANT INFORMATION REGARDING HAIRSTREAK



You are probably aware that Butterfly Conservation's Head Office has taken the difficult decision to reduce the number of issues of *Butterfly* magazine from three per year to two. This decision was made purely due to economics. However, you can further help by **opting in** to receive your copy of *Butterfly* electronically (a quick email to membership@butterfly-conservation.org will do the job). This would save the cost of printing, packaging and postage, and is a much 'greener' option, reducing the carbon footprint significantly.

Our Branch is rightly proud of the content and production of *Hairstreak*. Thanks here must go to our editorial team, Derek and Lorraine, as well as to the many contributors. We hope you have enjoyed reading recent issues, and trust that you value this publication as much as we value and enjoy producing it for you.

We are the only Branch in the UK to produce four issues of its newsletter/magazine per year and would like to continue doing so. However, the cost of producing and distributing four full-colour editions a year in printed form is no longer financially viable: it costs us (a lot) more than we receive from membership contributions. Thus, it takes funds away from vital local conservation work for some of our most threatened butterfly and moth species.

So, reluctantly, the Committee has decided that, **from the next (winter) issue, *Hairstreak* will – by default – become an entirely digital newsletter.** You will receive an email from Head Office when each issue is published, from which you follow the link to get to your copy of *Hairstreak* (in exactly the way that most of you already receive it). Of course, it is also available on our website shortly after its publication (<https://www.upperthames-butterflies.org.uk/newsletter>).

However, if you do not have access to email, please contact BC's membership team (**01929 400209** / membership@butterfly-conservation.org) and **opt in** to receive a printed copy of *Hairstreak*. **This action is necessary, even if you have previously opted out of electronic communications.**

I know this decision will disappoint some of you. However, moving to an entirely digital *Hairstreak* will eventually enable us to include more content. With the digital version, you can jump from the index directly to your chosen article; it also allows the reader to zoom in to read each page more easily.

For those of you who would prefer a printed copy in your hand to pick up and browse whenever you want, an alternative to opting in for a printed copy is to consider printing your own copy at home (or arranging for your local library to print it for you, albeit at a cost). We hope to be able to provide further details on how to print *Hairstreak* at home in the next issue.

We hope you can appreciate and accept these changes, in light of the rationale behind the decision.

**Peter Philp, Branch Chair
on behalf of the Committee and Editorial Team**

Members' Day 2025



Members' Day 2025 will be held at the Village Hall in Benson, Oxfordshire (OX10 6LS) on Saturday 25th October.

Please do join us: it is always a great day... a chance to meet and chat with other butterfly enthusiasts, purchase interesting books, buy a Richard Lewington print, and listen to talks from inspirational speakers.

Make sure you put the date in your diary! Entry is free but there will be a donation box, so if you would like to make a contribution to cover costs it is always appreciated. Tea, coffee, squash and biscuits will be provided during the morning and afternoon breaks. Please bring your own packed lunch. We have an amazing set of speakers lined up, so do please save the date!

Although it is called **Members' Day**, we also welcome friends and supporters. **We look forward to seeing you there.**

Why not have a go at the photo competition? Details on the next page.

Programme

09:45	Doors Open - Registration and Coffee	
10:15	Introduction and Welcome	Peter Philp
10:25	Review of Upper Thames Butterflies in 2025	Nick Bowles
10:50	Holtspur (and other sites) update	Nick Bowles
11:10	Review of Upper Thames Moths in 2025	Peter Cuss
11:30	Break (Tea/coffee/squash/biscuits provided)	
12:00	Talk 1. Delving into Dung: A look at the amazing world of dung beetles	Sally-Ann Spence
12:45	Lunch (Please bring your own. Tea/coffee/squash/biscuits not provided)	
13:45	Re-election of Committee Members and presentations of awards	Peter Philp
14:00	Talk 2. Finding Hairstreak larvae using UV light/RBOR project	Stephen Lofting
14:30	Talk 3. The weird and wonderful names of butterflies and moths	Peter Marren
15:15	Break (Tea/coffee/squash/biscuits provided)	
15:45	Talk 4. Sex, life and death in the world of butterflies	Martin Warren
16:30	Photographic Competition Results	Peter Thompson
16:45	Closing remarks	Peter Philp
17:00	Close	

Members' Day 2025

Photo Competition



There are four categories in the 2025 photo competition:

- **UK Butterflies**
- **UK Moths**
- **Early stages (egg, larva or pupa) of UK Lepidoptera**
- **Foreign/non-UK Lepidoptera (all life-cycle stages)**

A few simple rules to follow, please! Photos should have been taken in either 2024 or 2025. A maximum number of three photos per category per person, and a maximum number of eight photos per participant. Please label your photos with the species (if known), and – for overseas lepidoptera – the country in which they were taken.

Please send your photos (in jpeg format) by email to Peter Thompson at: plthompson127@gmail.com. Photos need to be received by Peter no later than October 5th.

The photos will be shown as a rolling presentation during the lunch break on the day, with the winners announced at the end of the day's programme. It is also hoped that we can publish them in *Hairstreak*. **Good luck!**

TRISTAN LAFRANCHIS

As a member of the European Butterflies Group (formerly European Interest Group/ElG), I was saddened to learn of the untimely death of the eminent French naturalist, botanist and entomologist Tristan Lafranchis (1960-2025). Some of you may have met Tristan on tours organised by Greentours and Greenwings.

On a rare sortie to England in 2011, he was one of the first recipients of the Marsh European Lepidoptera Award for services to butterflies.

Tristan wrote a book, *Butterflies of Europe*, which became 'the bible' for those 'wrestling' with identification. Although now out of print, a free downloadable pdf version of the book is available from <https://diatheo.weebly.com/butterflies-of-europe.html>

The downloadable version is also useful for the identification of our own butterflies, as for all intents and purposes all species found in Britain and Ireland are also found on the continent.

Tristan devoted most of his life to the study and protection of butterflies and will be sorely missed by those who knew him.

Derek Haynes

Key Species Update: How Are They Doing? (Part 1)

The UTB's key species need Species Champions because these species need more help if they are to remain breeding in our area. Some Species Champs do a brilliant job of monitoring their species and informing on habitat management practices that seem to benefit them. It certainly isn't an easy role, as working out if populations are changing in size, and then picking apart the multifarious factors that cause populations to grow or shrink, is far from straightforward. Some causes are obviously bad, like ploughing up grassland or cutting down a woodland. Even tree planting can be a hinderance. Planting in areas where essential foodplants grow in warm, sunlit, low swards, will shade and cool the foodplant, making it unsuitable for the key species' larvae. But many other factors are far harder to weigh up. For example, global warming has had both expected and unexpected effects. Some species have larvae that struggle to keep warm enough



Silver-spotted Skipper larva (third instar) ©Peter Eeles

in our spring and summer climate (e.g. Silver-spotted Skipper), so some extra warmth for the larvae is helpful. Yet those species that easily find enough warm habitat in regions colder than the UTB, have gained little benefit. Worse, some of those are negatively impacted by increased warmth in late winter/early spring which sees them leave hibernation too soon, before all their other requirements (for example, foodplants) can be met.

One thing is certain: the hundreds of our members that submit records, the Species Champs that pour over them and try to understand what those records tell us, and the tens of you that venture out to participate in conservation work based upon our interpretation of those records, have ensured that no butterfly species has become extinct in our region in more than 25 years. And although it isn't a species with a Champ, the Downland Plume moth – which was long-believed extinct in the UK – was rediscovered in the UTB area and now gets special attention (just like some butterflies) to ensure that a species, unique to our region, prevails.

In general, butterfly species that need a species-rich grassland habitat are suffering because that habitat continues to be lost (and it takes decades to re-create it at the few sites where anyone can afford to attempt it). Woodlands are also changing: as trees grow, they shade the woodland floor even more densely, resulting in less varied ground flora. Tree planting (usually in dense stands from the outset) has a similar impact, as ground flora are normally overlooked during the process. The flora under the planted trees are often a few grassland species, which struggle in shady conditions. This loss of species-rich areas is very disturbing because every time a colony is lost, the distance between remaining colonies can be increased. That makes recolonisation less likely, even if the habitat can be recreated.

The chart below compares the number of colonies known to the UTB in 2004, 2014 and 2024. *Where any single colony ‘begins and ends’ is a subjective judgement; therefore, so is the absolute number of colonies. I have assumed that clusters of adjacent sites hold a single colony and have ignored singleton records away from known colonies. Other interpretations will produce different colony numbers, but I have applied the same criteria to all species and years. Numbers indicate trends rather than factual colony numbers.

It is worth noting that recorder effort has increased; so, even if the number of colonies had remained static, the data could show a slight rise in numbers due to more thorough coverage which revealed previously undetected colonies. Although the summer of 2024 was frequently wet, thus reducing the opportunity to record, the increased recorder effort is partly balanced out.

UTB Key Species	Number of extant colonies *		
	2004	2014	2024
Adonis Blue	6	7	14
Black Hairstreak	34	29	39
Brown Hairstreak	12	21	33
Chalk Hill Blue	18	21	16
Dark Green Fritillary	9	10	11
Dingy Skipper	29	36	42
Duke of Burgundy	6	5	5
Grayling	4	5	6
Green Hairstreak	22	31	42
Grizzled Skipper	18	16	12
Marsh Fritillary	1	1?	1?
Purple Emperor	12	15	17
Silver-spotted Skipper	5	6	5
Silver-studded Blue	4	3	3
Silver-washed Fritillary	5	33	39
Small Blue	22	24	23
White Admiral	15	23	22
White-letter Hairstreak	24	38	10
Wood White	8	7	5

Adonis Blue: A warming climate is generally helpful to this species. It needs more warmth than some others to allow its larvae to digest their food, and to stimulate the ants which guard them. A complication is that – if warm and wet – vegetal growth accelerates and taller vegetation shades the larvae and ants, cooling them again.



Adonis Blue (male)
©Andrew Cooper

Twenty years ago, only south-facing sites in Berkshire and south Oxfordshire, with a very short sward, were warm enough. Now, more sites are warm enough to hold sizeable breeding colonies in all three counties (and other sites regularly have small numbers that seem to be transient breeding colonies), and not only those with southerly aspects. Most sites with the foodplant Horseshoe Vetch growing – in a short, south-facing sward – are colonised.

Black Hairstreak: The area that this species occupies doesn't seem to have appreciably changed in the last 20 years. We know of stretches of Blackthorn that have been grubbed out (for instance by HS2) with the loss of the butterfly, but very detailed monitoring has shown that beyond well-known colonies, hedges with Blackthorn seem to support tiny populations. We are unsure if these 'hedgerow colonies' can self-sustain and we doubt they all persist in years with a colder than average May and early June (which seems to be the critical time, in the pupal stage); but we are sure that the numbers in these 'hedgerow colonies' are vastly more than was previously thought. A new tool to assist in surveys for Black Hairstreak is the UV torch, which makes the larvae shine like small lamps. As the Branch with the largest number of Hairstreak colonies, we feel a responsibility



A Black Hairstreak larva fluoresces under UV light

to safeguard them; so, it is very reassuring that encouraging an increase in the amount of Blackthorn planted and growing in sunny positions has seen an increase in population size. And the use of UV torches is revealing secrets about the chosen egg laying/ larval feeding positions within Blackthorn. We still haven't solved the conundrum that, despite areas of apparently suitable Blackthorn, widely spread in all three counties, the species only uses the small proportion of it north of Oxford and Aylesbury and to the east of central northern Oxon.

Brown Hairstreak: Though this species is being ever-more-closely monitored – and with the Branch having advocated leaving Blackthorn suckers growing out into field margins – we can only claim a portion of the success that the species is showing in a considerable expansion in its range. We know that the most sheltered bits of young Blackthorn in sunny positions are most favoured by egg-laying females, and assume that a warmer temperature has assisted in successful larval development. If we could persuade land managers to leave some sections of Blackthorn hedges uncut in the autumn/winter (rather than trim all four sides of a field annually) we would see an even



Using a hand lens to study a Brown Hairstreak egg

more rapid spread of this species. Even without that help the species has spread through much of northern Oxon, much of northern Bucks, south through Oxford to central Oxon, and is simultaneously entering Berks from the east and west (from colonies outside the UTB).

Chalk Hill Blue: Some isolated sites have lost colonies during years with cool, wet mid and late summers that prevented sufficient egg laying and/or larval development, and shows the truth in the Lawson report on Biodiversity that advocates 'Bigger and Better Joined' reserves. Amounts of Horseshoe Vetch (HV) seem to fluctuate;



Planting small clumps of Horseshoe vetch

and warm, wet years with prolific vegetation growth around the HV might hinder the ants that protect the larvae, as well as reducing larval development - so numbers of this butterfly vary quite markedly. Some small colonies produced just one or even no sightings in 2024, but the species was still present at some of these sites in 2025. We plug-plant HV, trying to get the plant spread thinly over large areas, as female Chalkies seem to favour smaller patches of plant; and we work to

clear scrub encroaching onto patches of HV at several sites. Unfortunately, the spread of scrub on grasslands that shades HV and makes it unsuitable is removing high-quality grassland faster than the far-too-rare attempts to recreate it; so, the future of the Chalk Hill Blue seems one of gradual losses.

The health of the remainder of our key species will feature in the next (winter) issue of *Hairstreak*, so, until then, let's summarise...

Climate warming is helping some species, and **our conservation work is helping them all**. Several species would probably be lost from the region without the essential work our Branch is undertaking. A largely unrecognised debt is owed to those that have quietly laboured for no personal reward and secured our butterflies' future for later generations to enjoy.

You have our unending gratitude.

Nick Bowles

Photos ©Nick Bowles (unless otherwise stated)

Treasurer's Report 2024-25

BUTTERFLY CONSERVATION: UPPER THAMES BRANCH

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

INCOME		2025	2024	
Membership				
Subscriptions		9720.00	9348.00	
Legacies/donations (inc. Gift Aid)		3179.06	1163.70	
Events/fundraising			0.00	
Other (Grants)			4.08	
<i>Sub-total</i>		12899.06	10515.78	
Conservation				
Holtspur Bottom Reserve		0.00	0.00	
<i>Sub-total</i>		0.00	0.00	
Finance/Admin				
VAT Refund			0.00	
<i>Sub-total</i>		0.00	0.00	
Total income		12899.06	10515.78	
EXPENDITURE				
Membership				
Newsletter		2014.50	2446.10	
Events/fundraising		480.67	10.00	
Website Costs		50.00		
Publicity etc		101.45		
<i>Sub-total</i>		2646.62	2456.10	
Conservation				
Holtspur Bottom Reserve				
Equipment/Training			1061.83	
Other Projects		15000.00	11135.00	
Subs/donations		2046.00	46.00	
<i>Sub-total</i>		2046.00	12242.83	
Finance/Admin				
Admin/Insurance			11.49	
FB Memb Support		39.48	45.00	
VAT			0.00	
<i>Sub-total</i>		39.48	56.49	
Total expenditure		19732.10	14755.42	
Net income/expenditure		-6833.04	-4239.64	
Cash b/f		28,329.87	32569.51	
Total cash available for future activities		21496.83	28329.87	
STATEMENT OF NET ASSETS AT 31 MARCH 2025				
NET ASSETS				
Fixed assets (after depreciation)		0.00	0.00	
Stock, debtors & creditors (net)		0.00	0.00	
Cash C/fwd		21496.83	28329.87	
Total		21496.83	28329.87	
ALLOCATION OF NET ASSETS				
Endowment		0.00	0.00	
Restricted			915.00	
Designated			1000.00	
Unallocated		21496.83	26414.87	
Total		21496.83	28329.87	

If any member has any questions on the accounts please email the Treasurer at 'treasurer@upperthames-butterflies.org.uk'

Summer 2025 Guided Butterfly Walks: Report

Firstly, a massive thank you to all the leaders who have given of their time to allow us to put on a good variety of guided butterfly walks this season. Without them (and their knowledge and skills), the walks could not take place.

As you know, we are all getting older and virtually every year a leader steps down because the walks are becoming too much of a physical challenge. I know there are quite a lot of younger and fitter enthusiasts out there with the skills and knowledge to lead one of our walks. If this is you, please consider giving it a go - and get in contact.

The following brief reports outline some of this summer's walks.

Whitecross Green Woods

A dozen of us gathered in reasonable weather in search of the elusive Black Hairstreak. It was a slow start, but we eventually had reasonable views before Tony, the BBOWT voluntary warden, took us to an area where they had been managing some blackthorn scrub specifically for the species. Here we managed very good views, and a number of participants were able to get some very good photographs. Otherwise, it was much as expected with a total of 12 butterfly species recorded.



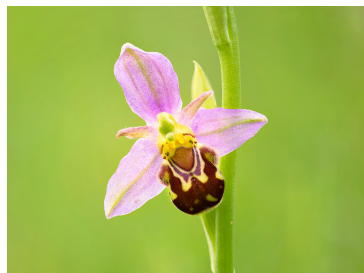
Black Hairstreak ©Iain Leach

Bernwood Meadows

We parked in Forestry England's main car park (BBOWT's car park being so small) and 16 of us walked down the rides to the Meadows. This proved fortuitous, as we managed to see at least a dozen each of Silver-washed Fritillary and White Admiral. Although the sun shone sporadically, we had quite a stiff breeze and the Black Hairstreaks were keeping well hidden. We eventually managed to get good views of a fairly tatty Black Hairstreak and several other glimpses before a somewhat 'neater' individual posed for us briefly.

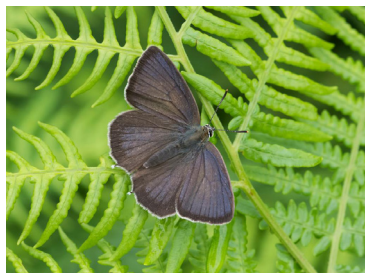
Sustrans Track, East Hagbourne

We held our 'traditional' evening walks along the track on two dates. Each was attended by 8-10 individuals. Both Marbled Whites and Small Blues appeared to be already past their peaks. However, we did get views of both and Karen managed to find a Small Blue egg which the whole group were able to admire. A supporting cast included the usual Browns and Whites; and we managed to see a handful of delightful Bee Orchids.



Bee Orchid ©Francis Taylor

Bernwood Forest



Purple Hairstreak ©Bob Eade

About 20 individuals gathered in relatively cool and dull weather (especially after the hot and sunny weather of recent weeks). We had a very pleasant walk and the sun even threatened to fully shine - but never quite made it. This may account for the fact that we did not see any Purple Emperors, White Admirals or Silver-washed Fritillaries. However, we did manage to see at least a couple of Purple Hairstreaks, though they stayed well up in the oaks and we had to use our binoculars to see them at all decently.

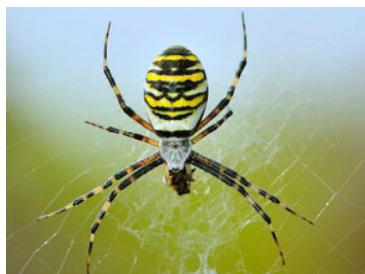
Whitcross Green Wood

This walk used to focus on the small colony of White-letter Hairstreaks in the elms near the car park entrance. Sadly, these elms are diseased (hence dead or dying, though there are some new suckers). Hence, I have not seen White-letter Hairstreaks here for three years. Indeed, the day's relatively cool temperatures and more-or-less continuous cloud cover meant we had to work hard to see even the common species. Even the dragonflies, that are normally seen at the ponds, were not showing. Fortunately, one member of the group managed to find a nice fresh Brown Hairstreak, which gave everyone good views.



Brown Hairstreak ©Adam Gor

Wytham Woods

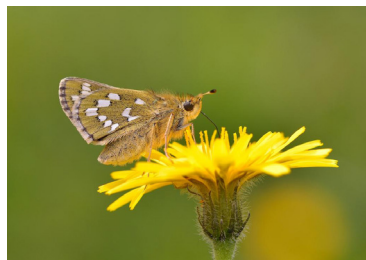


Wasp Spider ©Living Levels

Once again, this walk was fully booked (25), but the cool and cloudy weather put several visitors off. It also meant we did not see a single butterfly or moth for the first third of the walk. We eventually found a few Speckled Woods and Whites; and then a trip into the rocky area gave us a couple of Small Heaths. The open short grassy area allowed us to compare Brown Argus and Common Blue and we had great views of the fabulous Wasp Spider. Highlights of the walk came towards the end of the walk when we had a pristine Painted Lady and great views of a Hummingbird Hawk-moth feeding on thistles.

Aston Rowant

After a cool, breezy and cloudy start, this walk turned out to be spectacular. With participants from Norfolk and Gloucestershire, and one down from Northumberland, we were all hoping to see Silver-spotted Skippers (photo left). I was concerned, in that the Skippers tend to like the sun on their backs. However, the weather was kind, the sun shone, and the hillside was soon covered in butterflies and delightful flora... and many people (including a group from the Warwickshire Branch). Estimated figures for the morning were – Silver-spotted Skipper: 100, Chalk Hill Blue: 150, Adonis Blue: 30, plus good numbers of Common Blue,



Silver-spotted Skipper ©Bob Eade

Brown Argus, etc. Icing on the cake came in the form of not one – but two – Clouded Yellows (photo right) which patrolled the lower slopes and gave close views.



Clouded Yellow ©Bob Eade



Adonis Blue ©Peter Eeles

**PLEASE DO CONTACT ME IF
YOU FEEL ABLE
TO LEAD A WALK IN 2026.
THANK YOU.**

Peter Philp

guided-walks@upperthames-butterflies.org.uk

Native Wildflower Plant Sale

Chiltern Rangers have been growing native wildflowers from seed and will be selling the individually potted plants at their High Wycombe depot (details below) on Saturday 18th October, between 10am and 12:30pm.

Chiltern Rangers Depot, Kingsmead, 60 Fennels Road, High Wycombe, HP11 1SL

The Macro-moths of the UTB Region

Following our brief introduction to the butterflies of the Upper Thames Branch area in the summer edition of this magazine, we now turn to the macro-moths that can be found here.

However, there are far too many to introduce each one and it must suffice to look at the families (at this point) in order to get an idea of the number and variety of these fascinating insects.



Hummingbird Hawk-moth ©Ervin Szombathelyi

A brief reminder from last time on some of the key characteristics of moths:

- Most of our moths are nocturnal. However, there are maybe twice as many day-flying moth species as there are butterflies!
- Their bodies are often stockier and hairier than butterflies.
- Many moth species have thicker feathery antennae or if they are thread-like, they normally lack the clubbed-tip of the butterflies.
- Butterflies generally rest with their wings held vertically over their back, whilst moths usually rest with their wings spread flat or folded like a tent over their body.

The International Union for the Conservation of Nature estimates that there are about 160,000 moth species globally. However, the division of moths into ‘macros’ and ‘micros’ is somewhat arbitrary and based – in past times – on the practicalities of identifying the common species: the smaller species being ‘lumped’ into micros and the larger species as macros. However, as we have found out more about our species and their evolution, we find that our old ideas do not always hold, and some micro-moth species are larger than some ‘macros’, and vice versa. However, many of the micro-moth families are considered ‘more primitive’ than most of their macro brethren.

If we assume that about 40% of global moths could be regarded as ‘macros’ (as in the UK), then this would equate to about 64,000 species. Citizens’ science in the UK means we have a better understanding of our lepidoptera than in many other parts of the world; hence we can say that of the 2,500+ species of moth recorded in the UK, over 900 are regarded as ‘macros’ with around 800 species being regular¹. Reference to the fabulous Upper Thames Moths website shows that almost 700 macro-moth species have been recorded in our area with around 600 species being regular.

¹ ‘regular’ means not vagrants/rare migrants but includes rare residents

The moth families that are currently regarded as macro moths in the UK (and hence in the UTB area) are shown below - some 15 families altogether. For each family we present its scientific family name and the most commonly used English name for the family. It also gives an approximate number of **UK species** & **UTB species** in the family, as well as an example species for each.

Hepialidae: Swift moths
5 species 5 species



Orange Swift - © Garry Barlow

Cossidae: Leopard & Goat moths
3 species 2 species



Leopard Moth - © Gilles San Martin

Sesiidae: Clearwing moths
16 species 13 species



Six-belted Clearwing - © Iain Leach

Limacodidae: Festoon & Triangle
2 species 2 species



Festoon - © Stuart Read

Zygaenidae: Forester & Burnet moths
10 species 5 species



Six-spot Burnet - © Patrick Clement

Drepanidae: Hook-tips
16 species 15 species



Pebble Hook-tip - © Bob Eade

Lasiocampidae: Eggar moths
12 species 8 species



Drinker - © Garry Barlow

Endromidae: Kentish Glory
1 species 1 species



Kentish Glory - © Pete Withers

Saturnidae: Emperor moths
2 species 1 species



Emperor Moth - © Iain Leach

Sphingidae: Hawk-moths
26 species 15 species



Elephant Hawk-moth - © Heath McDonald

Geometridae: 'Geometer' moths
316 species c250 species



Willow Beauty - © Sue Davies

Notodontidae: Prominent & Kitten moths
28 species 23 species



Puss Moth - © Iain Leach

Erebidae: Underwings, Tigers etc.
108 species 67 species



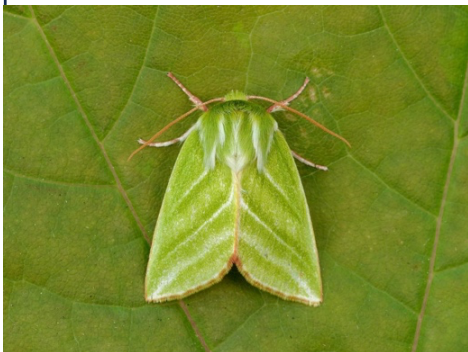
Garden Tiger - © Iain Leach

Noctuidae: 'Owlet' moths
382 species c266 species



Large Yellow Underwing - © Ryszard Szczygiel

Nolidae: 'Tuft' moths.
15 species 8 species



Green Silver-lines - © Iain Leach

Next time:

**An introduction to
the micro-moth
families of the UTB
region**

I hope this article inspires you to find out more about these lovely creatures and encourages you to help our moths as well as our butterflies.

**Peter Philp
Branch Chair**

Winter Conservation Tasks 2025-26

The most important activities that we undertake are our conservation tasks.

Unless we act to create and maintain suitable habitats, many of the butterflies and moths we love will vanish. Built-up areas and intensively farmed land host very few species; and though fallow land is good for a time, as thicker grasses & scrub develops this rank vegetation smothers and reduces the diversity of other plants that made it so good.

We will undertake about 60 conservation events this winter and we need you to come along and help. The details of some tasks are not yet fixed, so please check the Events page of the UTB website to see when and where you might help. <https://www.upperthames-butterflies.org.uk/events> (and details will also appear in the emailed Bulletin).

At every site, you might combine a walk around the site with a brief session of work.

Everybody is very welcome. **Nobody must work for an entire session**, but obviously you may. New volunteers are always welcome – training is provided. There are always a variety of tasks, and no great strength is required. At many events we would welcome a photographer to document what is being done.

Tools and full instructions are provided on every task. **Please bring a drink and a snack** and dress appropriately for the forecast weather. Work parties start at **10.00am** unless otherwise stated and they usually finish about 13.00, though in good weather conditions they may continue to about 14.00 (and those with Chiltern Rangers usually finish about 15.00, for those who choose to stay). Butterfly Conservation prefers that you register your intent to attend with Assemble <https://volunteer.butterfly-conservation.org/portal/event/index?type=upcoming&filter=all>

PLEASE, ALWAYS CONTACT THE TASK LEADER IN ADVANCE of a task, as details frequently change... according to weather, no. of volunteers etc. The details of each event will be shown on the Events page of the UTB website:
<https://www.upperthames-butterflies.org.uk/events>

Holtspur Bottom (Bucks) Tasks begin at 10.00am and usually finish at 13.00.

Meeting point: O.S. ref SU918906 nearby postcode HP9 1BT what3words ///manage.banana.chimp	
Leader & contact details: Nick Bowles 07727 441376 nick.bowles@ntlworld.com	
Thurs 25. 09.25	Protect scrapes from sheep
Sun 19.10.25	Guided walk, planting, scrub control (& fence repair – if necessary)
Sat 15.11.25	Planting, scrub control, scrape weeding
Sat 06.12.25	'Scrape' weeding, scrub control & temp. fence removal (or next time)
Sun 11.01.26	Hedging and scrub control (possibly temp. fence removal)

**** For **Aston Upthorpe** Work Parties, please refer to page 29 ****

Tasks jointly with Chiltern Rangers begin at **10.00am** & finish at 15.00 (if you wish to stay that long, otherwise any part-session is appreciated). Chiltern Rangers supply hot drinks, tools and safety gear, but we advise bringing your own.

The chronological list below gives an idea of where we will work, and includes some sites where dates are not yet agreed. Full details of each task will appear at <https://www.upperthames-butterflies.org.uk/events>, in the emailed Bulletin and on Chiltern Rangers' Eventbrite pages.

Please register your intention to attend on Eventbrite or with nick.bowles@ntlworld.com 07727 441376 so that we know what kit to bring; and **please check the UTB website immediately before the task** to confirm that it is proceeding.

Date	Site Name	Meeting point/parking
29/09/2025	Dean Farm	On verge in grass field HP14 4JG (Grid Ref SU80389826) ///unloading.inched.curtail
06/10/2025	Winchester Wood 11am vol start	In Thames Water parking HP27 0RH (Grid Ref SP82180192) ///arranges.plums.successes
09/10/2025	Long Orchard	Park in field if ground hard HP27 9NJ (Grid Ref SP798013) ///link.hesitate.utensil
13/10/2025	Christmas Gorse	Parking in entry to farmhouse MK18 3LF (Grid Ref SP78602514) ///worry.blushes.songbird
14/10/2025	Winchester Wood 11am vol start	In Thames Water parking HP27 0RH (Grid Ref SP82180192) ///arranges.plums.successes
16/10/2025	Sands Bank	Parking in overflow Wyc Wanderers car park HP12 4HJ (Grid Ref SU83229333). ///custom.alive.length
17/10/2025	Christmas Gorse	Parking in entry to farmhouse MK18 3LF (Grid Ref SP78602514) ///worry.blushes.songbird
20/10/2025	Long Orchard	Park in field if ground hard HP27 9NJ (Grid Ref SP798013) ///link.hesitate.utensil
03/11/2025	Sands Bank	Parking in overflow Wyc Wanderers car park HP12 4HJ (Grid Ref SU83229333). ///custom.alive.length
04/11/2025	Sands Bank	
10/11/2025	Sands Bank	
11/11/2025	Sands Bank	
17/11/2025	Studham Hall Farm	Parking in business premises Studham Place LU6 2FU (grid ref TL01061524) ///wiped.woes.hourglass
04/12/2025	Saunderton Network Rail Triangle	Roadside layby HP27 9NP (Grid Ref SU80769978) ///clipped.idealists.fairly
22/12/2025	Far Kingdom	At far north-east of Golf Club parking area HP27 9NX (Grid Ref SP79800078) ///craziest.signal.asked
08/01/2026	Wardrobes	Parking at private property HP27 0RH (Grid Ref SP81780170) ///darkest.superhero.inventors
22/01/2026	Far Kingdom	At far north-east of Golf Club parking area HP27 9NX (Grid Ref SP79800078) ///craziest.signal.asked
We will also visit these 5 sites later, in 2026 And very possibly 5 other sites. Still to be confirmed	Buttlers Hangings	Pay and Display car park transfer to site at 09.50 HP14 3AP (Grid Ref SU82659474) /horses.luck.risks
	Small Dean Lane	Roadside layby HP27 0PR (Grid Ref SU82319898) ///adventure.creamed.stop
	Coombe Hill	Roadside layby HP17 0TZ (Grid Ref SP84710712) ///alternate.digesting.share or Golf Club please check
	Westcott Venture Park	Meet at café parking HP18 0XB (Grid Ref SP714173) ///plan.assemble.townhouse
	Wadborough Field	Parking at Pitstone Hill (NT) car park LU7 9EN (Grid Ref SP95501493) ///cashier.gobbling.coaster

Foiled Again

The hairstreak fluttered down to lay: a rare and wondrous scene.
I crept in close and placed it square and fulsome on the screen.
The image would have put an end to years of fruitless search –
Had not that darned Small Tortoiseshell dislodged it from its perch!

The skipper darted back and forth then finally sat still;
Its silver-spotted underside a fresh and sparkling thrill.
The portrait that resulted would have caused my heart to sing –
Had not a massive blade of grass been blocking half its wing!



The Swallowtail soared up high and glided round the fen.
I'd almost given up and was about to go, but then
It settled on a flower right beside me, and I'd share
A truly marvellous snap with you – had both its tails been there!



The sun was shining brightly as the Clouded Yellow fed;
Her underside poised picture perfect in the Clover bed.
This long-awaited photo would have capped a marvellous day –
Had not my shadow crossed her wings and frightened her away!

The scarce High-brown Fritillary was resting on the moor;
A most elusive butterfly I'd never seen before.
A record of this rarity would send me home well-pleased.
I conjured up the flawless shot. If only I'd not sneezed!

The Duke sat on the Cowslip. I was totally engrossed:
It's rare to see the adult resting on the larval host.
So could this be the perfect pose I'd catch where others can't?
Perhaps – if auto focus hadn't majored on the plant!

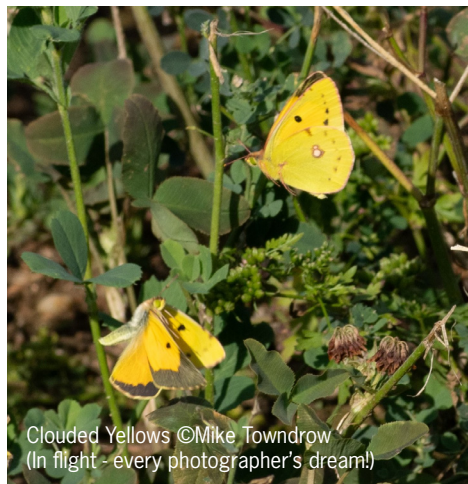
The Emperor settled on the track, its purple showing clear.
I dream of such a special summer moment every year.
It's taking salts, there's time to check that everything's just right.
If only I had thought to charge the battery pack last night!

Rikki Harrington

If you would like to read more of UTB member Rikki's butterfly poems, you can get a copy of his book *The Butterfly Collection: A poem for every British butterfly* from the publishers (Brambleby Books), Amazon, bookshops (Google 'Richard Harrington The Butterfly Collection') or direct from Rikki (harrington.rikki@gmail.com). The book is hardback and beautifully produced, including Rikki's photographs that didn't fall foul of the incidents mentioned above. It would make a nice Christmas gift. The rrp is £20.

Mike's Magic Touch

Member Mike Towndrow has the enviable knack of taking photographs that capture the grace and beauty of our species in a way the rest of us wish we occasionally could! The following images were all taken this summer.



Outcasts

I thought I'd 'do my bit' towards the surveying of under-recorded¹ UTB 1k squares (now somewhat aptly collectively referred to as **holes of ignorance**) in my part of the world.

The term **hole of ignorance** is qualified by a colour to indicate how long has elapsed since the most recent records were added (more specifically, the number of most-recent empty recording cycles), thus giving us:

- **dark green** for one (the most recent) empty recording cycle (so, **between 5 and 9 years**)
- **blue** for the two most-recent empty recording cycles (so, **between 10 and 14 years**)
- **dark blue** for the three most-recent empty recording cycles (so, **between 15 and 19 years**)
- **dark purple** for the four most-recent empty recording cycles (so, **between 20 and 24 years**)
- **black**² for at least the five most-recent empty recording cycles (so, **25 years+**)

So, for example, a 1k square with no records for 12 years would be referred to as a **blue hole of ignorance**.

A square **with** records over the most recent cycle is – for mapping purposes – coloured **green**.

Using Andy Spragg's 'game-changing' facility that can be accessed from the Conservation/10km Champions option on the UTB website – which has been described more fully in the past couple of issues of *Hairstreak* – I researched which under-recorded 1k squares were reasonably close to home.

I live in the village of Eton Wick (near Windsor), Berks (on the border with Bucks). My 'home square' is SU97, but I chose to begin my quest in neighbouring SU98, in which I record for the Bucks County Council Parks Team (and, of course, for BC/UKBMS!).

Below you'll see the results I obtained from the website facility for both SU97 and SU98.

SU97 ignorance spectrum

No records for 5+ complete recording cycles			
No records for 4 complete recording cycles			
No records for 3 complete recording cycles			
No records for 2 complete recording cycles			
No records for 1 complete recording cycle			
Right of way		No right of way	
1k square	Recordless years	1k square	Recordless years
SU9172	25	SU9774	7
SU9171	16	SU9372	5

SU98 ignorance spectrum

No records for 5+ complete recording cycles			
No records for 4 complete recording cycles			
No records for 3 complete recording cycles			
No records for 2 complete recording cycles			
No records for 1 complete recording cycle			
Right of way		No right of way	
1k square	Recordless years	1k square	Recordless years
SU9280	8	SU9285	25
SU9881	7		
SU9880	5		

The nearest 1k square to home that had received no recent records (for the past 8 years in this case and thus classified as a **dark green** square) is **SU9280** – very convenient as it has my local supermarket car park at its northern edge. The land itself is primarily agricultural and has West Town Farm and a storage facility at its heart, so it's perhaps unsurprising that it has been under-recorded over recent years.

¹ 'under-recorded' squares are considered to be those with no records for **at least** the past 5 years (one recording cycle)

² To the purist, **black** is not a colour in the way physics describes colour: it is an outcast – a bit like the squares in question... and their species... and hence the title of this article! (White is also an outcast.)

So, on a balmy June morning (21st), I parked up and took the short walk along Farm Road – a dead-end residential street, yet with a footpath that wends its way from the end of the street to the farm between fields of crops.

With net in hand – and a quick GPS check to ensure that I was definitely in **SU9280** – I started my walk along the footpath which (on its right) had a border of nettles, other plants and a smattering of wildflowers. I was greeted immediately by a Comma.... hoorah, the **dark green** square was no more! Over the next 20 minutes (a short period given that the beneficial border soon ‘disappeared’) I also recorded Painted Lady, Small Tortoiseshell, Essex Skipper, Large White, Small White, Green-veined White and Brimstone: 8 species in all... well chuffed!

Two days later I was even more adventurous, heading off to a **black** square (so, no records for at least 25 years). This was **SU9285** (about 4 miles from home, in Bucks), ‘labelled’ as having no rights of way at all... oh dear. Would I be arrested for trespassing, I pondered?

SU9285 was at least half-covered by woodland on the map, with the remainder being the domain of the golfer (c/o Lambourne Golf Club). Would I find more golf balls than butterflies?



Well, it's dispiriting to report that I was unable to find either! Despite driving all the nearest roads which effectively encircle **SU9285**, there was no way in (other than for the entrance to the golf complex). Most of the perimeter road to the west of the square had a 10' metal fence alongside, with each of several access roads having huge, locked metal gates guarding whatever was inside. Maybe I'll have to join the golf club!

On my short journey home – and requiring provisions – I returned to the supermarket I mentioned above in respect of **SU9280**... and couldn't resist another wander.

Glad I did, as I found singles of Red Admiral and Marbled White within just a couple of minutes, bringing my tally to 10 species. In fact, there were 11 – but it was so windy that when I disturbed what was either a Meadow Brown or Ringlet (probably the former), on two occasions, the individual just spiralled high into the sky... and ‘was lost’. Not to worry; I was pleased, nevertheless. It's encouraging how an unkempt (and relatively short) border (shown above) had managed to attract 11 species of butterfly.



There were still 6 under-recorded squares that required my attention: **SU9372**, **SU9774**, **SU9880** and **SU9881** – all **dark green** squares and all ‘within striking distance’ of home; and **SU9171** (**dark blue**) and **SU9172** (**black**) – both a little further afield. It’s both challenging and rewarding to be attempting to fill in some of the gaps.

So, on my way to Black Park on 25th June, I had to pass the adjacent squares **SU9880** and **SU9881** (Upton Lea, near Slough)... so in I went. **SU9880** was first on the itinerary, a predominantly residential area (with the Grand Union Canal flowing across the square). I had hoped to be able to gain access to the canal towpath, but, alas, no. I chanced upon Upton Lea Community Centre, where I spotted a rough grassy bank with a White of some sort on it. Parked up, grabbed the net, and seconds later I had captured 2 Small Whites. That’s all... but at least *something* had now been recorded in the square after nothing for 5 years. As for neighbouring **SU9881**, this too was largely residential – but I passed along a road with a narrow, scruffy verge, so stopped to take a look. I was rewarded with 3 Speckled Woods and a Small White (the first records for the square in 7 years). Result! Still 4 squares yet to tackle.

After a couple of weeks of intense heat, I next decided upon **SU9774** (mostly Crown Estate land near Windsor) as my next challenge once conditions had become more favourable. So, on 14th July I set off with a view to ‘finding a way in’ to the square. Not easy, as I was invariably met with signage such as that shown alongside. Having then parked up in Windsor Great Park – and with tracker in hand – I knew I’d probably end up



on The Long Walk, which is a 2.5-mile stretch between Windsor Castle and a statue of King George III. Having passed probably 50+ Gatekeepers on one short stretch of brambles (never seen so many in one spot before), I was yet to get to **SU9774**. My GPS told me I had to enter the Deer Park (so my dog had to go on his lead), and I had the feeling that I’d never get into **SU9774** before reaching another high security fence and yet more warning signs to KEEP OUT. But I got lucky,

and recorded Small Copper, Gatekeeper and Common Blue just inside the square – at **SU970745** (with 97 being the ‘problem’ co-ordinate). More success (but only just!), after a 7-year absence of records.

It had been my intention to try to survey the one remaining **dark green** square (**SU9372**) on the same day, but life’s other challenges got in the way! (Furthermore, my ambitions to get all targeted squares surveyed by the end of the summer were similarly thwarted.)

I have thoroughly enjoyed searching out these under-recorded 1k x 1k patches of land and suggest that you may also relish the opportunity to help UTB to further populate the maps during the current 5-year recording cycle. Maybe start planning now for 2026?

Derek Haynes

Aston Upthorpe Work Parties: Winter Season 2025/26

Aston Upthorpe Scrub-clearing and Coppicing

2025

Sunday 26th October

Sunday 16th November

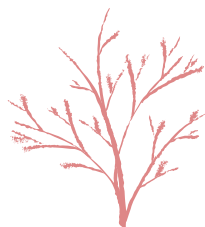
Sunday 14th December

2026

Sunday 18th January

Sunday 15th February

Sunday 8th March



Meeting Point: at the grain dryer, SU550844

Start Time: 10:00; finish time: 13.00 (possibly extending to 14:00 in good weather)

Work Party Leader: Jim Asher **01865 39172** jim.asher@btinternet.com

- New volunteers are always welcome, with training provided. Even if you can only come for part of the time, your help will be appreciated.
- Please contact the Work Party Leader in advance of each event (as details may change at short notice).

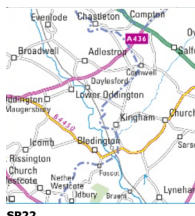
Championing a Cause

The role of a 10k Champion is essentially to be a 'gap filler'. In order to record the distribution of our butterfly species, our aim is to have each tetrad (2x2km) of each 10x10km square visited at least twice per year (spring and summer) over the five-year atlas period. Recording by others is likely to provide a lot of information about each 10k square, so the Champion's role is simply to fill in any gaps. Before the start of each new spring, we will let each Champion know which species have already been seen in each of 'their' tetrads. A prioritised list of tetrads can also be provided if required. Being a 10k Champion is a very enjoyable way of getting to know one's local patch better.

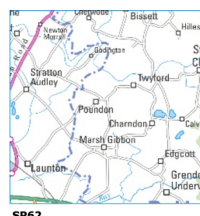
Alongside are four 10km squares that have a Champion in place; yet each Champion could do with some additional help. **Another six such squares are shown on page 44.**

There are also a number of 10km squares that have **no-one** currently 'looking after them'. All such **vacant** 10km squares can be found at [upperthames-butterflies.org.uk/10km champions](http://upperthames-butterflies.org.uk/10km_champions)

Please let us know if you can assist in any way, by emailing coordinator Andy Spragg at 10k-coordinator@upperthames-butterflies.org.uk



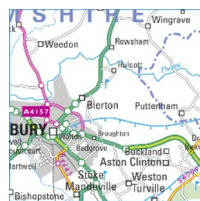
SP22



SP62

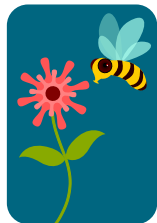


SP71



SP81

Food for Thought



Butterfly Conservation recently promoted National Allotment Week (with this year's theme being *wellbeing*) - but even if you don't have an allotment, the five edible plants suggested below

will work just as well in your garden, *"to brighten your [outdoor space], your dinner plate and your day"*.

1. Nasturtiums

- **For you:** Bright, peppery leaves and edible flowers that add colour and bite to salads, sandwiches, and garnishes.
- **For wildlife:** A magnet for pollinators. The leaves are irresistible to caterpillars (especially those of the white butterflies) and their bold blooms keep your allotment or garden buzzing all summer.
- **Wellbeing boost:** A pop of colour that lifts your spirits every time you pass by.

2. Wild Marjoram

- **For you:** A fragrant herb for teas, sauces, and Mediterranean cooking, this herb is loved for its citrus and sweet pine flavours.
- **For wildlife:** Nectar-rich flowers feed Brimstone and Common Blue butterflies, while Burnished Brass moth caterpillars enjoy the leaves.
- **Wellbeing boost:** Brushing against marjoram releases a warm, herby scent that melts away tension.

3. Mint

- **For you:** Fresh sprigs for teas, chutneys, cocktails, and desserts - think mojitos in the garden on a warm summer evening.
- **For wildlife:** Loved by Mint Moth caterpillars and a wide range of pollinators.
- **Wellbeing boost:** That cool uplifting scent can clear a cloudy head in seconds.

4. Chives

- **For you:** Mild onion flavour for soups, egg dishes, and salads – especially wonderful in a creamy potato salad.
- **For wildlife:** Early-summer flower heads provide nectar when food is scarce.
- **Wellbeing boost:** Their neat clumps and cheerful pom-pom flowers bring a sense of order and joy to your plot or garden.

5. Lavender

- **For you:** Aromatic flowers for herbal teas, baking, homemade syrups and a fabulous sleep aid when infused into oils or dried for pillow pockets.
- **For wildlife:** Highly attractive to butterflies, bees, and other pollinators throughout summer.
- **Wellbeing boost:** The scent of Lavender is renowned for its calming properties, making it perfect for moments of calm in your outdoor space.

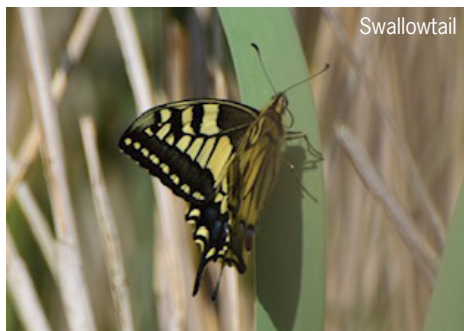
A Butterfly-hunting Holiday (Part 2)

Following on from my article in *Hairstreak* (spring 2025) I have the pleasure of publishing the results of my preparation for a solo butterfly-hunt in Norfolk. Did it rain for 2 weeks? Nope, thank goodness.

As part of my preparation in May I made sure I had OS Maps of all the areas using the brilliant OS App on iPhone... very handy. I also approached all areas to visit by email or website to get visitor information. I'm not looking to be surprised by an area; I want to be prepared (damn Boy Scouts actually taught me something). So, you prepare for bad weather in advance – but what about good weather?

Our very dry late winter/early spring has messed a few things around. My hero species, the Swallowtail – and the point of the trip – was well on the decline by 16th June, with some having been spotted in April! Also, the main food source of the adult, the Yellow Flag Iris, flowered a month early. So, I wasn't holding out much hope... however, you can always be proved wrong.

Strumpshaw Fen was my first visit, a superb RSPB site and a 20,000-step walk. Many varied habitats and the source of my first Swallowtail on the wing... and then a stationary Swallowtail on bramble flowers. Apart from being a lovely place to visit, it also threw up some nice surprises, like seeing more than ten recently hatched Small Tortoiseshell on a single bush. Plenty



Swallowtail

of other Small Tortoiseshell, Red Admiral, Painted Lady, Whites, Speckled Wood, Comma and other critters like dragonflies by the million.

Norfolk naturalist Ted Ellis's beloved Wheaten was next... though quite disappointing. Whilst being a lovely place, only Speckled Wood, Red Admiral and Meadow Brown were seen.

How Hill was also disappointing. Lovely scenery and walks, but little in the way of flying wildlife.

Hickling Broad offered a day's walk to known Swallowtail and other butterfly habitats with a guide (always useful) and to visit and open their moth traps – which I had booked (in May) for 18th June. Some would say it's cheating going on a guided tour, missing the thrill of the hunt and all that, but my motto is that if at first you fail then seek local knowledge (as to try and try again becomes tedious). And what a decision that was! The guide, Bruce, wearing his butterfly shirt, was amazingly knowledgeable when opening the moth traps. There

were around 20 glorious species, with the 'prizes' for me being Elephant & Eyed Hawk-Eyed moths.



Elephant Hawk-moth



Eyed Hawk-moth

We then proceeded to walk the reserve, aiming to discover butterflies. Aim is the wrong word: they leapt out at us at every given opportunity. Eleven different species were recorded, including 5 Swallowtails, Small and Large Skippers and Ringlets.

Holt was a quick stop after visiting the Military Museum at Muckleburgh. I wasn't expecting much, but it *did* deliver. Holt Country Park advertises White Admiral and Silver-washed Fritillary. Both were seen, along with an abundance of Meadow Brown, Speckled Wood and Whites.

Thus, week one came to an end. Lovely. Week two shadowed my prediction that the British weather is fickle, providing mainly wet and/or very windy days.

There was, however, a small window when the wind abated, so I decided to visit Buxton Heath. What a great decision that was! Hundreds (literally) of Silver-studded Blues... everywhere. Common Blue, Ringlet, Comma, Green-veined White and many Meadow Browns were seen aplenty. Lovely habitat of low gorse and fern with a small meadow area.



Silver-studded Blue

Overall, a very successful butterfly-hunting holiday. I saw my hero species, the Swallowtail, and 8 other species that I have not seen before (including some big moths). I took over a thousand photos and am pleased with some of them.

The only negative of this holiday is that I have to wait 12 months to do it all again!

Tom Primett
All photos ©the author

Moth-trapping Event: Parsonage Moor & Dry Sandford Pit

One of our region's less common moth species, the Scarce Burnished Brass, has been recorded in the past at the BBOWT Parsonage Moor (PM) nature reserve near Abingdon. Our Branch Moth Officer, Peter Cuss, was keen to have another look to see if it was still present. I was keen to 'try out' an event where members and the public could come along and see what happens at a moth-trapping session... and what might be seen. So, we agreed a joint event with BBOWT that would also take in their nearby Dry Sandford Pit (DSP) nature reserve.

The weather forecast for the evening was not encouraging. However, I set up 3 traps on DSP and Peter arrived and set up another 5 traps on PM.

Participants arrived, and a dozen of us set out to see what could be found. As the daylight began to fade, we started to pick out a wide variety of species including lots of Ruby Tigers, Dinky Footman and Wainscots.



Ruby Tiger ©Garry Barlow

Unfortunately, we did not manage to find the Scarce Burnished Brass, but, thanks to Peter's expertise, we did manage to identify almost 80 species. Among these were some impressive-looking moths ranging from Sallow Kitten and Canary-shouldered Thorn to Elephant Hawk-moth and Swallow Prominent.

Canary-shouldered Thorn ©Iain Leach



The group voted the scarce Chocolate-tip (below) as 'moth of the evening'.

Chocolate-tip ©Iain Leach



Swallow Kitten ©Iain Leach



It was after one o'clock in the morning by the time we had packed up and left. All the participants enjoyed the evening and said they would be keen to participate in the future. Would you be interested in attending a similar event in 2026, or, perhaps, even leading or helping out? Please do let us know.

Peter Philp

Purple Reign

On one of my regular sorties to Langley Park (Bucks), on 10th July 2025, I recorded at least 35 Purple Hairstreaks in various locations – most significantly on two oaks, where I gave up counting after 10 individuals on each.

This is my eighth consecutive year of recording in this park, and I've never recorded the species in such numbers during that time. The oaks did seem to be in better general condition this year, though – 'full and bushy', which the species tends to prefer.

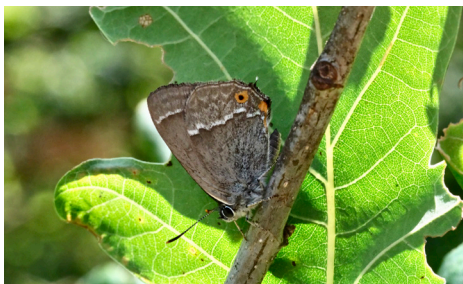
Most individuals were seen – typically – higher up in the branches, but on one tree in particular, the butterflies were concentrated on the lower branches - at eye level, so with the opportunity to take a few photos. Unfortunately – and possibly because it was a hot day – not one individual opened its wings while at rest. Purple Hairstreaks do seem to behave quite differently in hotter, drier conditions, when – perhaps due to a lack of aphid honeydew higher in the trees – they can be found nectaring at ground level, taking salts, and even supping water from any nearby source.

Some individuals – like the one below – seemed very attracted to the young acorns, thrusting their proboscises into the tops to feed. This is something I hadn't witnessed before.



Others seemed content to just sit around on branches or leaves, typically in the shade – like the one alongside.

The most fascinating sight was of two individuals who appeared to be in some sort of embrace, as seen below. Another first for me. Perhaps they found a new way of mating!



In the last photo, one individual seems patiently to be awaiting its turn to feed on the young acorn. Great entertainment for me for quite some time!

We all need a bit of good fortune when engaged in our passion for recording, studying or simply enjoying these beautiful creatures.

Derek Haynes

Butterfly Walk on Watlington Hill, 19th August 2025

I had been looking forward to the Upper Thames Branch butterfly walk on Watlington Hill, especially as it's my local patch and a site I know well. Our leader was Peter Philp, and we had a group of 16 people all hoping to see the day's target species - the Silver-spotted Skipper (*Hesperia comma*).



The weather was slightly chilly, a bit windy and overcast, but our worries about butterfly numbers were short-lived. Almost as soon as we reached the heathland on top of the hill, the first Silver-spotted Skipper appeared. As the group spread out, more and more were spotted, obligingly settling long enough for everyone to enjoy good views and take photos (example left).

In addition, we recorded three species of White, four species of Blue (Common, Chalk Hill, Brown Argus, and Holly), plenty of Meadow Browns and Small Heaths, plus two

species of day-flying moths (including Six-spot Burnet, below left).



Peter proved an excellent leader - not only guiding us to the butterflies but also sharing his deep knowledge of the chalk downland plants we encountered along the way.

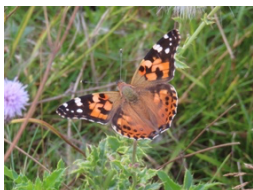
Linda Seward
(all images © Linda Seward)

Picture Perfect

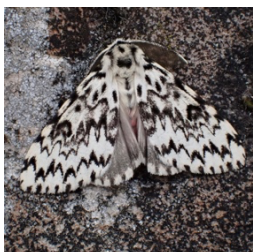
Our members can always be relied upon to discover (and photograph) our region's butterflies and moths. We've included an assortment here.



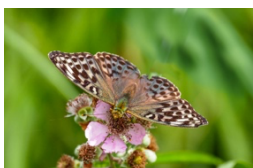
Red Underwing (25/07/25)
© Mike Towndrow



Painted Lady (26/07/25)
© Roy Booth



Black Arches (27/07/25)
© Linda Seward



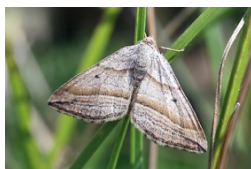
Silver-washed Fritillary
(f.valesina) (04/07/25)
© Denise Harper



Lesser Broad-bordered
Yellow Underwing
(16/07/25) © John Kearns



Clouded Yellow (25/07/25)
© Geoff Dymott



Oblique Striped (07/07/25)
© David Hastings



Brimstone (25/07/25)
© Ross Euan McIvor



Jersey Tiger (underside)
(07/08/25)
© Cliff Buckton



White Admiral (02/07/25)
© Graham Parkinson



Pine Hawk-moth larva
(01/08/25)
© Esmond Brown



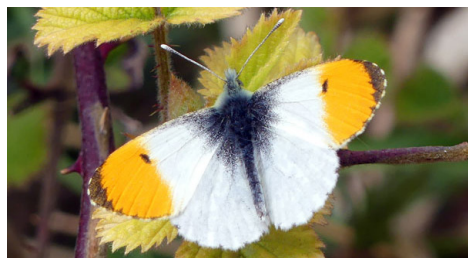
Purple Emperor (22/06/25)
© Peter Milligan

A nice selection of photos (and specimens!), we're sure you'll agree. There are some super images on our Facebook pages – but some contributors are yet to grant permission for us to use them. **If that's you, please refer to page 47.**

Second Coming?

A few of our resident non-hibernating butterflies, usually single-brooded in the spring, occasionally have a partial second brood later in the year (typically in August). Dingy Skipper is one example.

One species I had never realised had a potential second brood is the Orange-tip *Anthocharis cardamines* (one of my favourite butterflies, it being a harbinger of spring and so dainty, too) - until a recent (at the time of writing) report appeared of some (reputed) second-brood Orange-tips in Kent. Further research revealed similarly late sightings in other southern counties over the years. A mating pair was even recorded in a Shoreham garden on 20th September 2012: intriguing!



There are several theories which attempt to explain the occasional appearance of a partial second brood:

- If the spring brood appears earlier than usual
- If the summer is unusually warm
- If the pupal stage lasts through a second winter [Emmet & Heath proposition, 1989] (?)

To add to the uncertainty (and by way of example), the UKBMS Report for 2018 (reflecting data and trends from national transect and WCBS records) noted

that – despite a **colder-than-average spring** – second-brood Orange-tips (as the Report identified them to be) were recorded at six sites nationally across five counties in August of that year (following **warm, dry and sunny conditions in the preceding three months**). This suggests that any of the pre-mentioned theories (factors) is not necessarily influenced by (or dependent upon) any other.

In the UTB region in the same year (2018, when the first spring sighting was 14th April - 16 days later than the mean), we had 13 Orange-tip records during the July to September period (the highest number of 'late' sightings since records began).

Due to the lack of clarity over which combination of factors might contribute to the likelihood of a second brood in some years – and out of pure curiosity – I thought I'd take a closer look at the Orange-tip records for the UTB region in case any trends could be identified or conclusions drawn. (Thanks to Andy Spragg for supplying the data set.)

Since 1980, 134 Orange-tip sightings have been recorded in our region during the July-September period: so, on average, around 3 individuals each year. What was unexpected, though, was Andy's pronouncement that there was no **'fallow period' for Orange-tip between weeks 10 and 41** (that is, there was at least one Orange-tip sighting every week from about mid-March to mid-October when taking the entire period into consideration). Of course, this begs the question: how many of these years had a definite

second brood? Without having to trawl through over fifty thousand Orange-tip records across the period – and studying how early (or late) the first brood was each year (also the weather pattern for the year) – I decided to check the first sightings records on the UTB website for Orange-tip for each of the past 20 years (relevant data only going back to 2004).

The mean date of emergence was 29th March, with the earliest sighting during this period being 27th February (2013) and the latest 16th April (2006) - a variation of 48 days. This seems like a sizeable variation, 'beaten' only by Dingy Skipper (50 days) among the 'traditional' single-brooded spring species.

Returning to the data set, one might presume that records from mid-August onwards are most likely to be of **second-brood** individuals, in which case - due to such **sightings from every year between 2016 and 2022** (including three from September over that period) - an Orange-tip second brood is seemingly becoming the norm. Or is it? Andy has looked for evidence of *bimodality* in the historical data (2 noticeable peaks in the flight-time graph), but - whilst evident for the likes of Small Blue and Dingy Skipper – has concluded there is no evidence of it for Orange-tip, stating that the number of records just declines slowly, week by week, following the springtime peak (which appears – on average - to be around the second week of May).

I thought it worth a trawl through the Natural History Museum's extensive collection of almost 3,000 Orange-tip specimens - but my random look at several hundred of them (dating from the mid-late nineteenth century to the

1980s) showed only records from April, May & June (with the bulk in May & June). The earliest date I found was 8th April (itself later than the present UTB mean emergence date) - but these specimens were bred from pupae. It would have taken me too long to look at every single specimen in the collection!



Female Orange-tip ©Andy Spragg
(near Ilmer, Bucks., 10th April 2025)

What we do note from all the available data is that spring

emergences are regularly occurring earlier than in past times, and that individuals are also being seen much later in the year.

So, nothing proven, but one might conclude that a warming climate (leading to typically earlier spring emergences) over at least the last few decades has prompted a trend towards two broods and/or a much prolonged single brood.

We can certainly recommend keeping an eye open for the Orange-tip for (yes!) up to nine months of the year (depending...), which is a significant shift from what one would have expected when folk from our grandparents' generation were out and about with butterfly net in hand. One wouldn't necessarily be sure, though, today, which brood such an individual is from if seen from, say, mid-July onwards.

Your own thoughts and theories welcome!

Derek Haynes

newsletter-editor@upperthames-butterflies.org.uk

A Journey to the Dark Side

It all started perfectly innocently at the Upper Thames Members' Day last October, when the offer of the use of a moth trap was made by Peter Cuss.

After the event, in a devil-may-care moment, we decided to take him up on his offer. I have always had an interest in butterflies but not particularly moths – except the day-flying ones – which are kind of honorary butterflies in my eyes. We had had a taste of moth-trapping on a holiday in France the previous year, when our tour guide had set up a trap in the evening and we came down in the early morning before breakfast to see what had been caught. A wide variety of moths of all shapes, sizes and colours had been attracted by the trap's UV lamp and caught in a box below the light. They were photographed and identified by the resident experts. Names such as Heart and Dart, Orange Footman, The Uncertain and the even more extraordinary Setaceous Hebrew Character started to become familiar.

As promised, in spring this year, Peter arrived at our door with the trap, which bore a striking resemblance to some of the early Soviet spacecraft which landed on Venus in the 60s and 70s! Similar to what we had seen in France, the trap had a UV light mounted in a vertical position above a dark box with a hole through which the moths fell into the box with sections of egg carton where they could shelter until the next morning.

We first set up the trap one evening in early May this year, and came eagerly downstairs the next morning to see what had been caught. The answer was 12 species of moth and about a dozen cockchafers(!), the latter large brown cumbersome nocturnal beetles being liberated with the moths into the undergrowth. This took some time as they were very reluctant to move from their new-found comfortable daytime retreat, and they clung to the egg boxes tenaciously with their remarkably adhesive clawed feet.



Elephant Hawk-moth

We had other insects stray into the trap throughout the summer. One evening, we had a possible murder mystery when we found three wasps - all dead. The moths found with them that night were alive and well but understandably uncommunicative about what had happened, so the potential crime remains unsolved. Sometimes, a live hornet would be caught, so we learned to be careful where we put our fingers when lifting up the egg boxes!

We discovered straight away that moths are much more cooperative to being photographed than butterflies, and most will pose calmly and still. However, for non-experts like us, we found many species notoriously difficult to identify. Even with a guidebook, kindly lent to us by Peter, we struggled. We solved this problem largely by using an iPhone and an app and then trying to match up what the app told us with pictures and descriptions on the UK Moths website <https://www.ukmoths.org.uk> We also put our sightings and photographs on iRecord so that experts could review them and correct any errors we had made.

Throughout the summer we put the trap out on fine evenings and rose early the following morning to see what we had found. To date we have caught 157 species represented by 322 moths. There are about 2500 species of moths in the UK, so we have only just scratched the surface. However, we have been astounded by the variety of shapes, colours, sizes and patterns of these amazing creatures that we have caught in the trap. The moths not only nestle in the box at the bottom of the trap but many will settle on the garden walls and plants nearby. We have been introduced to the Pug family, a group of small moths which lie flat with all four wings pressed against their chosen surface; the Plumes which look like they have no right to fly on their spindly wings; and the Footmen: small, sleek and tidy. The Thorns, Dusky and Early, rest with their wings erect almost butterfly-like as if ready for flight.



Many moths have brown or grey upper wings yet often have intricate patterns. The otherwise dowdy Underwings will flash their orange or yellow hindwings at us as we try to release them, and they then fly off in a blaze of colour, presumably as a defence against would-be predators. Some moths such as the Emeralds and Ermines are brightly coloured, which seems an unnecessary extravagance for their nocturnal existence. The White Ermine appears to be adorned with robes befitting nobility. The Buff-tip's and Chinese

Character's extraordinary camouflage disguises them convincingly as a piece of wood and a bird dropping respectively. The variety seems infinite.

The Elephant Hawk- and Privet Hawk-moths were the largest and probably the most spectacular of our visitors, both moths vibrating their wings in the early morning sunshine to raise their body temperature before flying rapidly away like jet fighters. Jersey Tigers were very numerous, and we would frequently find half a dozen or so in the trap at the height of summer.



Privet Hawk-moth

Many of the moths we caught have extraordinary lives. The larvae of the Greater Wax Moth, caught in late July, feed on the honeycomb in beehives and are considered a pest. The Light Brown Apple Moth is an Australian species, accidentally introduced originally in south-west England, probably in the 1930s. It is now widespread and common in some areas. The larvae of the Foxglove Pug live inside the flowers of foxgloves where they feed on the stamens and developing seeds.



Black Arches

Now the weather has taken a turn for the worse, we may not get many more opportunities to use the trap again this year.

But tonight, as you are going to bed, just think about the thousands of wonderful moths out there in the darkness going about their business, largely unseen and unnoticed.

Welcome to the dark side!

Martin Robinson

All photos ©Martin Robinson

Full Focus

On 23rd June 2025, I came across a small army of Cinnabar caterpillars chomping on ragwort – and was keen to take a photo that would ‘do the scene justice’.

The problem as we photographers know only too well is depth of field - that is, getting everything in focus from front to back of the scene. So, I resorted to a feature called *focus stacking* (sometimes referred to as 12), where I programmed my camera to take as many shots as required to achieve the objective. In this case, it was a burst of 90 shots (spanning a little over 10 seconds).

The images were then ‘blended together’ using bespoke software (the process being referred to as *focus merging*), with the result (the best it could manage, given the variables) that you see above.

It was blustery on the day the shots were taken – borne out by the somewhat blurred stems of grass in the background (and one or two caterpillars ‘on the move’!). But I think it makes for a detailed, atmospheric scene.

What a marvel of nature that a fully-grown poisonous yellow and black caterpillar can emerge into such a handsome red and black adult!



Cinnabar ©Ben Sale/BC

Focus stacking is not a feature that you’ll find on all cameras – and it does require relatively still subject matter... and a tripod. So, best used (in the field of butterflies

and moths) for capturing the immature stages, or perhaps for mating adults who don't tend to move around much! Some of the cameras that do offer focus stacking may also perform in-camera *focus merging* – but mine doesn't (so I use a PC/Mac program called Serif Affinity, which some consider to be 'a poor man's Photoshop').

If your camera **does** have *focus stacking*, it's worth learning how to use it. Why not give it a try?

If I hadn't used *focus stacking* but instead focussed on the larger caterpillar near the top (right) of the plant (for a single shot), the result would have been far less detailed (and somewhat underwhelming).

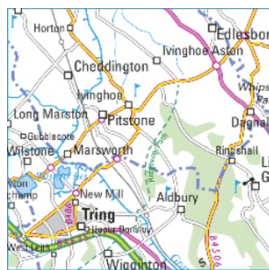
Next thing for me to try is in-flight shots (and that would be the subject, not me!). We do have members who **are** doing rather well in that regard...

Footnote: I'm not sure why so many eggs were laid on a single plant, with the next nearest plant several metres away. Some days later I observed that the original plant had been stripped bare of leaves, but there were still caterpillars on it. Not sure whether they will ever make it to adulthood; fingers crossed.

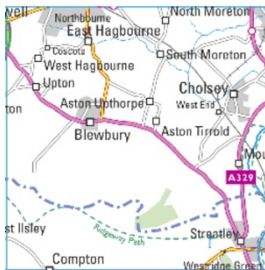
Derek Haynes

Championing a Cause (continued)

Please refer to page 29 for details of how you can help with these squares.



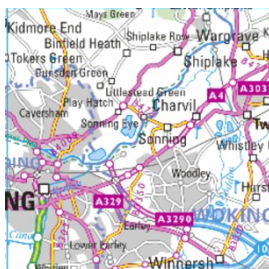
SP91



SU58



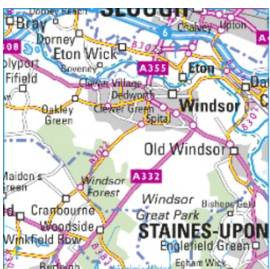
SU59



SU77



SU78



SU97

Life is Short

Brown Hairstreaks are the last of our hairstreak quintet to emerge each year. They are well worth waiting for, though the search to find them can be just as challenging as it is for the four other hairstreak species that have lit up earlier summer months.

The line of the Roman road that runs along the eastern side of the car park at RSPB Otmoor is my go-to place for seeing this late-summer delight. As someone who taught Roman history for many years, I invariably imagine the sights and sounds of two thousand years ago when I head down what is now an untidy lane. Hence my references to those ancient times in this poem – ‘sin-dex’ is ‘Latin for ‘left-right’.

My title for the poem alongside is a gem of a word that is as well-hidden as the butterflies themselves can be. ‘Encolouring’ is a rarity from the mid-17th century, used by the poet Robert Herrick, but not a term that caught on. He often included in his writing the message that life is short, which is certainly true for the flight phase of Brown Hairstreaks.



Encolouring

*The August hush
of a bramble-pinched lane,
where Romans marched
on a cambered causeway.*

*Time-travel musings
depressurize my
‘needle-in-a-haystack’ search
for the spice-rack butterfly:*

*a drift into ‘sin-dex’
echoes of hob-nails
on a day when Otmoor’s
shooting range stays muted.*

*I scan for oriental hues:
saffron, hints of paprika,
female wings of turmeric
bold as a Buddhist’s robe,*

*a hot-clime palette,
laid in the pallor
of a tiny ‘sea-urchin’ egg,
the size of a pinhead.*

*I spotted one last autumn,
just a yaffle’s dash hence;
pure white against dark bark,
parked on a blackthorn spur.*

*There’s a magical force
in this encolouring:
enchantment in a blaze
of auburn, when spied*

*atop a bramble flower.
I wonder if Roman souls
also leapt at the sight
of a brown hairstreak?*

Paul Gamble

[This is Paul’s fourth in his series of poems about our five Hairstreaks - Ed.]

Pride and Joy



The Branch prides itself in its commitment to publish four issues of *Hairstreak* every year through which we can communicate effectively with our members; and we very much welcome the contributions which have helped to make this issue of *Hairstreak* both diverse and – hopefully – inspirational. As Editor, it is forever encouraging to receive potential contributions for an upcoming issue, and it serves to endorse our belief in the process.

Of course, the content of each issue may not conform to everyone's brief of what they would like to see included - but we can only run with the material we receive; and be steered (in part, at least) by any feedback gleaned post-publication.

To be honest, feedback is invariably next-to-non-existent - unless mistakes have been inadvertently made, in which case we do tend to get a response or two! I'd like to receive more feedback about *Hairstreak's* content, especially if you are particularly inspired by something featured, or if favoured material is conspicuous by its absence.

Whether you are a regular or 'newbie' contributor, here are a few guidelines which would help make the process both effective and efficient:

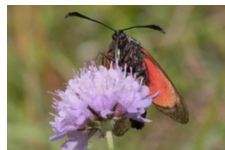
- (1). Articles should ideally be produced in Microsoft Word, using a page size of A5, narrow margins and an Arial 10 font (our standards for *Hairstreak*). As a rough guide, each A5 page will contain between 300 and 350 words (with 1 or 2 embedded images or graphics). Usually, we would not anticipate an article to occupy more than 3 pages, which equates roughly to 1000 words (presuming between 4 and 6 embedded images or graphics). If you don't have access to Word, send us what you can by whatever means available.
- (2). If you are embedding images in your article, please **also** send them as separate email attachments (or use a free utility such as WeTransfer).
- (3). Please ensure that you have permission to use any images or graphics you include (if not your own) and ensure that you have permission from any person(s) featured in a photo to use their image in a UTB publication.
- (4). Please submit your article(s) as soon as possible upon completion and preferably not wait until close to copy deadline day (as this may lead to disappointment; and will make the editing team's job more challenging).

Thank you.

Derek Haynes
newsletter-editor@upperthames-butterflies.org.uk

Getting the Picture

In the last issue of *Hairstreak*, I asked the members of the Facebook Group **Butterflies and Moths of the Upper Thames region** to consider granting permission for the Branch to use content from their posts (in particular, photos) in this publication. Unfortunately, the instructions given were incorrect.

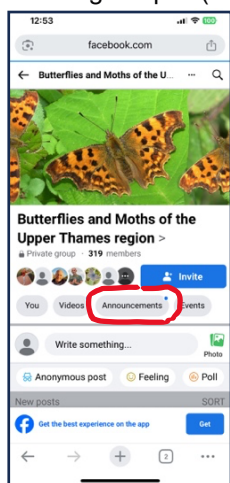


Permission to use content is granted via a poll accessible from a special-status post on the Facebook Group pages. The means by which this post is accessed varies depending on the device and 'portal' being used, as follows.

(1). From a mobile device

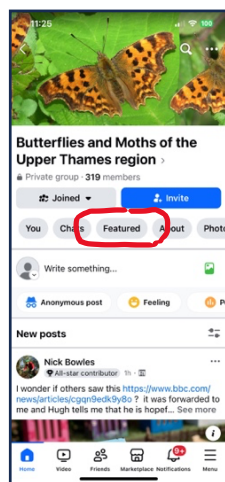
(a). Using the Facebook app

The above-mentioned special-status posts are visible in a section called **Featured** on the home page (shown here, right). Scroll through the posts until you find the one featuring the poll (shown here, bottom left).



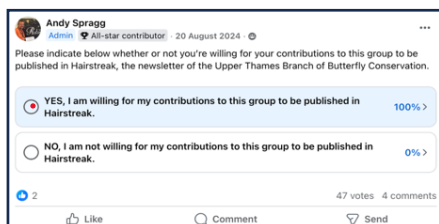
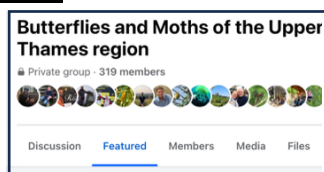
(b). Using a web browser

These special-status posts are accessible from the **Announcements** option on the home page (shown here, left). Scroll through the posts until you find the one featuring the poll (shown here, bottom left).



(2). From a computer web browser

These special-status posts are visible in a section called **Featured** on the home page (shown here, right). Scroll through the posts until you find the one featuring the poll (shown here, below).



In all cases, Press the **YES** button if you are willing to have your content considered for publication in *Hairstreak*.

At the time of writing, only around 15% of Group members have granted permission via the poll. We'd appreciate that percentage increasing. Thanks.

Derek Haynes

In Buckinghamshire, the Bucks Invertebrate Group organises a lot of field trips which include studying butterflies and especially moths. Their list of field trips is available on their website <https://sites.google.com/site/bucksinvertebrategroup/>

In Berkshire, the Berkshire Moth Group holds regular meetings on the second Thursday of every month. They organise other events as well. Refer to their website for details <https://sites.google.com/site/berksmoths/Home>

Upper Thames Branch Website

www.upperthames-butterflies.org.uk

<https://butterfly-conservation.org/in-your-area/upper-thames-branch>

Have your butterfly sightings and photos posted on the website by sending them to: sightings@upperthames-butterflies.org.uk

Upper Thames Branch Moth Sightings Blog

<http://upperthamesmoths.blogspot.co.uk>

Follow us on Facebook

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/458565932924345>

Twitter [@UpperThamesBC](https://twitter.com/UpperThamesBC)

Instagram [utb_butterfly_conservation](https://www.instagram.com/utb_butterfly_conservation)

Holtspur Bottom Reserve

upperthames-butterflies.org.uk/holtspur_bottom

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