

BUTTERFLY CONSERVATION UPPER THAMES BRANCH

Dark Green Fritillary Report 2011

Ched George

Dark Green Fritillary had a very good 2011, with considerable increases in populations at known sites such as Ivinghoe Beacon. National Trust staff reported that the hillsides there were "crawling with Fritillaries". The first report was on June 4th from Berkshire and the last from Oxfordshire on August 5th.

There were a few scattered records from areas which once produced more sightings, but sites which once held known weak colonies (or even strong ones) produced no records. Although there were increased sightings at Aston Rowant I had no reports from south of there along the Chiltern escarpment, except a solitary record from the usually more prolific Swyncombe Downs.



Dark Green Fritillary
Photo © Ched George

The Holtspur Valley Reserves had no records despite the fact that one would expect those sites to have frequent recorder visits. A wood in the Greatmoor area and a site near Romer Wood, amongst those woods north of Bernwood, and Homefield Wood had singleton records. Una Fenton had 3 sightings in the far north-west of Oxon.



Left: A female searches for an ovipositing site in mosses and dead vegetation near violets.

Photo © Ched George

Andy Bolton saw a singleton at Combe Hill, Berkshire on July 24th. According to my records this was the first report from there since 1998, although there was a record from nearby Wilbury Hill in 2010. I suspect that Berkshire is still under-recorded for this species.

The remaining sightings, mainly singletons, were from near Speen and Wendover Woods for Bucks; Woodcote (3) and Salden railway for Oxon and Seven Barrows for Berks.

Ched George

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