

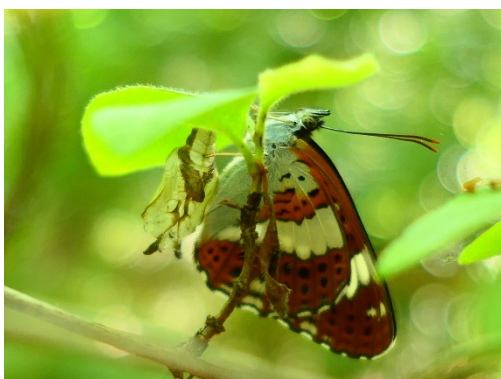
# BUTTERFLY CONSERVATION UPPER THAMES BRANCH

## White Admiral Species Champion Report 2018



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I hardly think I need remind you all of the wonderful summer weather this year, so suffice it to mention what a delightful year it was for wandering in our shady woodland to see this beautiful butterfly on the wing. The warmth seemed to push the White Admiral down more readily from the canopy to seek some shade below and correspondingly numbers recorded were up on recent seasons. A couple of new sites were noted across our region (including from gardens!) and I would expect this was partly due to the weather also, not only encouraging us to loiter in a wood and record but providing good conditions for dispersal of the adult insects.



On a personal level, I was lucky enough to have discovered a pupae in a nearby wood, and I was able to monitor it until finally seeing the newly emerged insect, waiting to take its first flight.

It was a delightful experience, followed by an equally magical moment that same afternoon when moving out into a nearby sunny dell I was surrounded by a dozen or so adults dipping and swirling in late afternoon sunshine. Right place at the right time!

On a less uplifting note, the management of my local wood appears to have had a dramatic impact on the White Admiral colony that was in the wood, and I only saw one individual in flight this year.

### **Detail**

In summary I received 191 reported sightings for 2018, coming from 79 individual recorders reporting 393 White Admirals across our region (including three double-figure sightings). These came from 65 sites across our region. Additionally, I received three reports from Hampshire in and around Silchester. Once again, however, recommended sites for (almost) guaranteed sightings are woods in and around Bernwood, Finemere and Black Park.

Our first sighting this year was on 8 June with the final record coming in for 30 August; so once again this implies there are some second broods happening in our area. If time permits one year I must begin reviewing for leave damage from early instars earlier than I have traditionally done and review progress through the summer.

Finally, and as ever, many thanks to everyone who has submitted records whether to me direct, via the website or centrally through completion of a transect walk. They are all appreciated.

Julia Huggins