

# Butterfly Sightings 2006 - Upper Thames Branch

Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> December 2006

*Ali Latham sent the following report from Reading today, Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> December, which may well be the last butterfly sighting for 2006:* “Thought you might like to know that I saw a **Red Admiral** this morning, 30<sup>th</sup>, flying down the road during the mild, sunny break. Was great to see it!”

Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> December 2006

*On Sunday 17th December Paul Bowyer saw 2 Red Admirals* in his front garden in *Flackwell Heath* at about 11.30am: “They flew around for a while and perched on the Sky dish. I wonder what they are doing for Christmas?”

*17<sup>th</sup> December – Dave Wilton reports that a couple more Brown Hairstreak egg* searches over the past few days have confirmed another twelve kilometre squares around *Ambrosden* and to the south and west of *Bernwood Forest*, taking this year's total well past 100 squares (*see links above for the latest Brown Hairstreak Distribution Map*).

Monday 11<sup>th</sup> December 2006

*Pete Eeles visited Bowdown Woods, just north of Greenham Common, on Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> December:* “I managed to locate 15 **Purple Hairstreak eggs** on 2 trees – the same 2 trees that seem to attract Purple Hairstreak every year! They're in a typical Purple Hairstreak oviposition position (!) – trees in a sheltered area at the edge of the wood, with a south-facing aspect. This is a good time of year to look for the eggs since they stick out like a sore thumb. I wonder why they're bright white – perhaps to inform other ovipositing females that an egg is already on the bud? An excellent video, by Peter Kirby, gives guidance on how to locate Purple Hairstreak eggs. It can be found on the UK Butterflies website at [http://www.ukbutterflies.co.uk/species.php?vernacular\\_name=Purple%20Hairstreak](http://www.ukbutterflies.co.uk/species.php?vernacular_name=Purple%20Hairstreak).”

Friday 8<sup>th</sup> December 2006

*On 6<sup>th</sup> December Dave Maunder was surprised to see* a **Red Admiral** flying in the midday sun in his mother's garden in *Aylesbury*.

*Dave Wilton located some more Brown Hairstreak eggs on Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> December:* “This afternoon (6<sup>th</sup>) another 49 **Brown Hairstreak eggs** were found in six kilometre squares to the *north of Bernwood Forest* before bad light stopped play.”

[See the links to the latest Brown Hairstreak Distribution Map above.]

### Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2006

*Martin Raper sent the following sighting in on Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> December:* “Our **Red Admiral** came out for a fly around the car port today 2<sup>nd</sup> December. Also a **Blackcap** singing at the bottom of our garden (in Purley-on-Thames, Reading)!”

*Tim Watts reports a Red Admiral* in central *Aylesbury* on *Thursday 30th November*. He also read reports on the [Portland Bill Bird Observatory website](#) of several Red Admirals and a Painted Lady on 2<sup>nd</sup> December!

*[The Portland Bill website is an excellent place to keep an eye on migration activities of birds, butterflies and moths. A moth-trap is run there every night. Click the “Latest News” link to see their latest sightings.]*

### Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> November 2006

*Tim Watts recorded a Peacock* in central *Aylesbury* on *24<sup>th</sup> November* and a **Red Admiral** at *Hillesden* today, *Sunday 26<sup>th</sup>*.

### Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> November 2006

*Richard Soulsby recorded yet another late Red Admiral, seen at work (Howbery Park near Wallingford) at lunchtime on 21<sup>st</sup> November:* “It was basking for quite a while on a metal wall. Sunny, but temp only 9C.”

“On *Sunday 19th November* I saw a **Red Admiral** at *Shardeloes* near Amersham.” *Steve Pash.*

*Paul Bowyer sent this news on 20<sup>th</sup> November:* “I saw a **Red Admiral** in my garden in *Flackwell Heath* on *Saturday 18th November*. How many more will I see this year?”

*Dave Wilton reported on another successful hunt for Brown Hairstreak eggs on 19<sup>th</sup> November:* “A quick search this afternoon, *Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> November*, lasting just an hour and a half, added another six egg squares in the *Brill and Ludgershall* area to this year's Brown Hairstreak distribution map, one of which is a completely new square. The combined egg total came to 19 (plus one empty egg shell from last year) and the majority of them were on roadside hedgerows. There are plenty more squares which need to be confirmed for this year, many of them in Brown Hairstreak "hot-spots", so it would be very nice if a few

more people would go out and look!”

*From just over the border in Tring, Nick Bowles sent the following news on 19<sup>th</sup> November:* “To my joy, 2 **Red Admirals** sunbathing by the football pitch at back of my house while I watched some Sunday league and one of them laid an **egg** (19<sup>th</sup> Nov). So now I have two **larvae** under observation and yet another egg to watch. Both larvae inside tents so I don’t know if they are continuing to grow or simply quiescent - conundrum is that if I open the tent to find out I will probably kill them. Shall have to continue checking and maybe eventually the larvae will move to a new leaf.”

*A couple more late season butterflies received from Dave Maunder:* “Seen on 18<sup>th</sup> November - a **Red Admiral** sunning itself on a house near mine in *Aylesbury* and a **Peacock** seen in woods near *Gt. Hampden* - these late ones can't go on much longer!”

Friday 17<sup>th</sup> November 2006

*On 16<sup>th</sup> November, Dennis Dell reported a few more butterfly sightings:* “While walking the *Brill Tramway Trail, Bucks*, with a friend on 9<sup>th</sup> November, I saw a **Red Admiral** at Quainton railway station and a **Small Tortoiseshell** on the hillside at Waddesdon Manor just below the tree line.”

*Dave Maunder sent this email on 14<sup>th</sup> November:* “Seems like it's mainly late **Red Admirals** being reported now and over the last few days I've seen another 4 around *Aylesbury*, the latest being yesterday morning (13<sup>th</sup>).

*Martin Raper sent the following news on Tuesday 14 November:* “In *Purley on Thames*, for the last few weeks, we have had a **Red Admiral** that roosts for the night, or when it's raining, under our car port. Once, in October, it roosted for 6 days without flying. It roosts in a besom broom that I wedged under the plastic. Still flying about today 14<sup>th</sup> November.”

Monday 13<sup>th</sup> November 2006

*Tim Watts saw a Red Admiral* in *Whitchurch*, Bucks, on *Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> November*.

*Nick Bowles sent the following update on 12<sup>th</sup> November:* “I took another look at the **Red Admiral** eggs I saw laid last week as I couldn't find any butterflies (though I did see a **Common Darter** dragonfly at *College Lake*, Bucks/Herts border, while we were planting Horseshoe vetch in another attempt to persuade Chalkhill Blue to do more than make annual visits). I was slightly surprised to see two of the eggs unhatched and one now **larva**. Also one other larva very close by which was being visited by a wasp (presumed parasitic) that seemed unable to penetrate the larval tent.”

**Paul Bowyer sent the following report for Saturday 11th November:** “Saturday morning I saw a **Red Admiral** in a garden in *Little Chalfont*. In the afternoon (at 5 to 3.00) at *Adams Park, High Wycombe*, another Red Admiral on the corner flag at the F.A. cup tie between Wycombe and Oxford. It flew south before the match started. A discerning butterfly!”

**After work on Friday afternoon, 10<sup>th</sup> November, Dave Wilton managed to find Brown Hairstreak eggs in SP6915 and SP7014:** “The latter is another brand new square, with a single **Brown Hairstreak egg** find at SP 704140 beside the village seat at the road junction in *Ashendon*. At the same place I found seven **Blue-bordered Carpet eggs** and 31 **Seven -spot Ladybirds** congregating on the blackthorn.”

#### Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> November 2006

**Jan Haseler took the photos below and top of page of a rather worn Red Admiral** on a tombstone in *Swallowfield Churchyard* today, 9<sup>th</sup> November.

**On Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> November Tim Watts sent the following:** “1 **Red Admiral** and 1 **Peacock** in central *Aylesbury* today, 9<sup>th</sup> November.”

**Dave Wilton sent the following report on Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> November:** “Having added four Brown Hairstreak egg squares to the Brown Hairstreak distribution map yesterday (all in the vicinity of *Piddington and Ludgershall*, I had another foray out this afternoon and managed to add four more around *Dorton and Wotton Underwood*, one of which is a brand new square. The south-eastern edge of Howe Wood (Dorton) produced 43 **Brown Hairstreak eggs**, many more than I've recorded there in the past, which gives me hope that we may be able to extend the distribution map eastwards this season. The other squares in which eggs were found were all in a line due north from there and included SP 6816 which up until today had been an annoying hole in the map. This square is entirely on the Wotton House estate and the one public footpath which runs through it gives access to very little blackthorn. Today it seemed that every little bit had an egg on it and, all told, eight were found there. Other sightings on the blackthorn included a **Drinker Moth caterpillar** (about 3cms in length) and in excess of a hundred **16-Spot Ladybirds**.”

#### Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> November 2006

**Martin Harvey sent this report on 6<sup>th</sup> November of some late butterflies:** “Some flowering Chrysanthemums by my front door (*Great Kimble, Bucks*) are still attracting clouds of hoverflies and today, 6<sup>th</sup> November, also a **Red Admiral**, a **Painted Lady**, a **Peacock** and a **Small Tortoiseshell**. These are my latest ever records for the Admiral and Lady.”

**5<sup>th</sup> November - Paul Bowyer has also reported seeing Red Admirals:** “1 **Red Admiral** in a garden at *Little*

*Chalfont* on the *5th November*. 1 at *Burnham Nature Trail* lunch time on the *6th November*.”

*Tim Watts sent the following sightings report on 6<sup>th</sup> November*: “*November 4<sup>th</sup>*; 5 **Red Admirals** seen at 5 different mid-Bucks sites and a **Painted Lady** at Claydon House. On *November 5<sup>th</sup>* 4 Red Admirals at four sites visited.”

*From just over the border in Tring, Herts, Nick Bowles watched a Red Admiral laying eggs on 5<sup>th</sup> November!*

*See Nick's full report on the Herts & Middx Branch website.*

*Richard Soulsby sent this message on 5<sup>th</sup> November*: “Like Dave Wilton, I can't find any November records for my garden, looking back as far as 1997. But on *Saturday 4/11/06* I had both a **Red Admiral** and a **Small Tortoiseshell** in my garden in *Benson*. And today, 5/11, I saw one or two presumed Red Admirals flying near *Swyncombe*.”

*5<sup>th</sup> November – Dave Maunder says he's also been seeing butterflies in low temperatures recently*: “A few **Red Admirals** (5+) during this last week active in very low temperatures, usually early morning with temps around freezing - surprised me! Today, 5<sup>th</sup>, I saw Red Admirals (4), and a male **Brimstone** near *Fairford Leys*. Yesterday, *4<sup>th</sup> November*, I saw my latest ever **Painted Lady** sighting - is all this late activity related to `global warming`?”

**Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> November 2006**

*Dave Wilton sent this news today, Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> November*: “I don't recall ever having seen a butterfly in my garden at *Westcott* in November until this year. Over the last three sunny days we've had activity from a **Red Admiral**, presumably the same one as it doesn't seem to stray very far from a couple of favoured spots, sunning itself on our south-facing house walls. The outside air temperature has not achieved much more than 7 or 8 degrees Celsius.”

*On Thursday 2nd November Jan Haseler sent this report*: “Attached is a picture (*see below*) of a fresh-looking and active **Clouded Yellow** which was nectaring on a variety of flowers at *Green Park, Reading* today, 2nd November, in bright sunshine, but a temperature of 9C.”

**Tuesday 31<sup>st</sup> October 2006**

*Dave Wilton added another Brown Hairstreak egg square to the Distribution Map on 30<sup>th</sup> October*: “It was at SP 6719: There are still too many leaves on the blackthorn at present but the frosts expected later

this week should improve things.”

**Dennis Dell was walking the Aylesbury Round Walk on Sunday 29<sup>th</sup>:** “At the north-western corner along the River Thames I saw two **Red Admirals** and a worn **Speckled Wood**.”

**Dave Maunder sent the following sightings on Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> October:** “What a glorious day! And some nice late season butterflies seen on our allotments in *Aylesbury* today: **Red Admiral** (5); **Peacock** (1); **Small Tortoiseshell** (1); **Small White** (1), and my latest ever **Common Blue** - a very worn male (*see photo below*)! Also, during *last week*, I saw Red Admiral (5), and on *26<sup>th</sup> October* I found a pristine male **Holly Blue** in *St. Mary's churchyard in Aylesbury* (not quite the latest I've ever seen – in 2004 I saw one on 30<sup>th</sup> October).”

**Wendy & Mick Campbell counted 7 Red Admirals** on their walk on the *Ridgeway Trail at Ivinghoe Beacon* on *Sunday 29<sup>th</sup>*. Also, in their garden near *Thame on Friday 27<sup>th</sup> October* they had a visit from a pristine **Painted Lady** which was nectaring on the buddleia in rather cool and overcast conditions (*see photos below*).

#### Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> October 2006

**Wendy & Mick Campbell walked a section of the Ridgeway National Trail near Wantage, Oxfordshire, on Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> October.** The weather started off rather overcast but by midday had cleared to warm sunshine, about 15 degrees. Along the first part of the track, sheltered on both sides by hedges, they counted 7 Red Admirals nectaring on the flowering ivy. The trail then opened out to beautiful rolling downland countryside and they saw a steady stream of migrating Red Admirals heading across the trail in a south-easterly direction. By the end of their 4-hour walk they had counted a total of 51 **Red Admirals**. Also seen were **Painted Lady** (1 – also flying southeast) and **Peacock** (1). In their garden near *Thame today, 26<sup>th</sup>*, several Red Admirals and a **Comma** nectaring on the few remaining buddleia flowers and the Bowles Mauve wallflowers.

**Dave Maunder reported some more sightings of butterflies in Aylesbury, seen since Monday 16<sup>th</sup>:** “Red Admirals (8); **Comma** (1); **Small Tortoiseshell** (1); **Peacock** (1- seen at *Eythrope* on 21<sup>st</sup>).”

#### Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> October 2006

**Dennis Dell sent this report on 15<sup>th</sup> October:** “As people are seeing a lot of Red Admirals this year, I thought the following news from Don Otter, who looks after *Ivinghoe Beacon/Steps Hill* for the National Trust, might be interesting for the website because it denotes migration activity: ‘*On Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> I watched Red Admirals flying southwards past Steps Hill. Saw over 40 in 20 minutes, all flying singly in the same direction. Also 1 Painted Lady and 1 Clouded Yellow.*’ In my own garden in *Aylesbury*, the

'large numbers' of Red Admirals finished during the third week in September, and I've seen only dribs and drabs since then. They are still around though, and maybe those we are still seeing are going to hibernate here."

**Dennis, who is the UTB Purple Emperor Species Champion, also sent the following photo**, taken recently, of a 3rd instar **Purple Emperor larva** which he found on a Sallow in [Waterperry Wood](#): "The larva won't go into hibernation until the Sallow leaves start to die and, as you can see, it's still quite green. Its silken pad is quite obvious."

**A few more sightings were reported by Dave Maunder on 15<sup>th</sup> October**: "Painted Lady (1), Red Admiral (2), Peacock (1), and Small White (1) - all butterflies were seen at my allotment in [Aylesbury](#)."

### Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> October 2006

**Dave Maunder sent the following on 14<sup>th</sup> October**: "After reading Dave Wilton's report of 12<sup>th</sup>, I can also say I noted a couple of **Red Admirals** flying south past my house on the same day (12<sup>th</sup>) - both early morning at 8.20am! Also, numbers now have dramatically dropped on my normal cycle-routes around Aylesbury town, with only 4 spotted today, whereas a week ago the Ivy bushes everywhere were covered in them! Other sightings recently include: **Clouded Yellow** (1, very worn on 8<sup>th</sup>); **Peacock** (1); **Comma** (1); and **Small Tortoiseshell** (1) - the last three on 14<sup>th</sup>."

**On 14<sup>th</sup> October Richard Soulsby added to the Red Admiral migration news**: "Having read Dave Wilton's report from the 12<sup>th</sup>, I was driving yesterday (13<sup>th</sup> October) along the [B4009 from Chinnor to Benson](#) and saw about 4 or 5 (presumed) **Red Admirals** flying high and purposefully from right to left (roughly southeastwards). Also a male **Brimstone** in [Chinnor](#), and a **Peacock** sunning itself on my house wall in [Benson](#). Then later 10 Red Admirals nectaring on an ivy-covered tree near the river in Benson. The previous day (12<sup>th</sup>) at work ([Howbery Park near Wallingford](#)) I saw 14 Red Admirals nectaring on ivy, plus a **Speckled Wood** and a Peacock. At [Swyncombe Downs this afternoon \(14<sup>th</sup> October\)](#) in warm sunshine I saw 5 Red Admirals and one very tatty **Meadow Brown** (see photo below)".

**13<sup>th</sup> October - Following on from yesterday's report by Dave Wilton of migrating Red Admirals, Tim Watts looked back at his records**: "On 23/09/06 I recorded 23 **Red Admirals** all flying low and fast up and over [Quainton Hill, Bucks](#), in a southerly direction. 1 **Clouded Yellow** was also seen. This was over a 2 hour period. Ade Parker arrived as I left and recorded a steady stream of Red Admirals following the same behaviour for the duration of his stay. On 24/09/06 again in the same spot M.Hunt and I recorded another steady stream of Red Admirals all heading south. Another Clouded Yellow and 2 **Painted Lady** were also seen. On 13/10/06 I spent 2 hours on Quainton Hill again and counted 31 Red Admirals, again all heading up and over the hill in a southerly direction. If they have been flowing like this since the 23<sup>rd</sup> September (or before) there must have been thousands following this route!"

### Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> October 2006

**12/10/06 - After reading a report of the mass migration of Red Admirals in Hertfordshire, Dave Wilton sent the following news**: "It was a noticeable event where I was today (12<sup>th</sup> October) as well. Driving

westbound on the A41 *between Aylesbury and Waddesdon, Bucks*, at about 2.30pm today, a journey through open countryside which takes all of five minutes, I counted eight presumed Red Admirals crossing the road, all of them well above car height and travelling purposefully from right to left (ie southbound).”

*This afternoon, Thursday 12<sup>th</sup>, in warm sunshine David Redhead searched the rough grassland by his house in Oxon* and fairly quickly came across a **Common Blue** sitting on an Ox-eye Daisy flower. “After flying around a bit it settled on another Ox-eye Daisy flower where it was clearly nectaring. I saw a Common Blue, with a bit of its right hindwing missing, in this area on the 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> October but visits on subsequent days had drawn a blank and I thought the low temperature on the night of the 3<sup>rd</sup> may have finished it off. However, the one seen today was a different individual, as you can see from the photo below, with just a very small bit of its left (as you look at it) hindwing missing. I combed the area thoroughly but could not find any more specimens. On returning to the garden a **Comma** was nectaring on ivy flowers. The Comma makes my October species count 8 (plus a couple of unidentified Whites).”

*David also recorded the following near his house at about midday on Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> October:* “13 **Red Admiral** and 2 **Peacock** all bar a couple nectaring on ivy flowers. A visit to *Whitecross Green Wood* in the afternoon in an unsuccessful attempt to see a Brown Hairstreak resulted in a **Small Tortoiseshell** flying in the horse paddock by the reserve entrance and 2 **Speckled Wood** and a **Small Copper**, nectaring on a knapweed flower, in the reserve itself. The Peacocks and Small Tortoiseshell put my species count for October up to 7.”

### Monday 9<sup>th</sup> October 2006

*On Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> October Nick Bowles visited Coombe Hill:* “I saw probably my last **Meadow Brown** along with an either/or **Brimstone/Large White** (too distant to be sure) plus **Red Admiral**, **Peacock** and **Small Copper** at *Coombe Hill* today.”

*Tony Croft sent this news on Sunday 8<sup>th</sup>:* “Becky Woodell and I saw a **Brown Hairstreak** whilst working at *Whitecross Green Wood* today. It was in the section between the pond entrance and the green lane. We saw it flying over the ride about 3 metres above the ground. It then settled about the same height above ground in a willow tree long enough to get a positive identification. It then flew off into the wood. It looked in surprisingly good condition for the time of season.”

*During a walk in the Dorton area of Bucks on Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> October, Mick & Wendy Campbell* walked through a green lane which was alive with Red Admirals. There must have been a dozen sunning themselves on the track and another ten were packed onto a small piece of flowering ivy. A total of 36 **Red Admirals** were recorded during the afternoon, along with one each of **Comma**, **Peacock** and **Small White**.

### Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> October 2006

*Keith Mitchell reports seeing* 10 fresh **Red Admirals** feeding on Ivy flowers by the *Newport Pagnell* Health Centre, Bucks, at lunch-time today (7<sup>th</sup> October).

**7/10 - A few sightings by Dave Maunder around Aylesbury for this last week include:-** “**Red Admirals** (47, on Ivy mainly, on the 2nd); **Painted Ladies** (3 - 2 on ivy on 2nd; 1 on ivy on 7th); **Peacocks** (3 - 2 on 3rd, 1 on 7th); **Speckled Wood** (1 - on 3rd); **Large White** (1, on 3rd); and **Small Whites** (2, on 7th). Good to see so many Red admirals around on Ivy this autumn in the town!”

Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> October 2006

**Dave Wilton sent this report today, 4<sup>th</sup> October:** “On the southern boundary of our garden at *Westcott* we have a dead elm trunk, the only one still standing from what was once a row elms which unfortunately succumbed to dutch elm disease. It has been left because it is covered in a mass of ivy up to a height of about 25ft. I'd noticed some butterfly activity around it over the past day or two but hadn't had time to investigate properly until this morning. At 9.30am, in bright sunshine but with the temperature still only a fairly chilly 10 degrees, I found on the ivy blossom ten **Red Admirals** fighting for space with lots of bees and flies, while on an adjacent bramble patch were a **Small Copper**, a **Comma** and another two Red Admirals. This prompted me to have a short walk around our village, during which I found another Small Copper, six Red Admirals and a **Speckled Wood**, although most of the ivy flowers that I saw elsewhere had not yet opened so these butterflies were all on brambles. When I came back to look again at my dead elm there were no less than 18 Red Admirals on the ivy!!”

**On Tuesday afternoon, 3<sup>rd</sup> October, Wendy & Mick Campbell walked from Oakley Village into Bernwood.**

The weather wasn't very good, mostly overcast and windy, temperature about 16C, so there were very few butterflies about, with only 6 **Red Admiral** braving the poor conditions. In a warm corner of the first field in Oakley they found a single **Brown Hairstreak egg** on Blackthorn sucker growth. Bernwood didn't produce any other butterfly species but they did find another 18 BrH eggs in and around the meadow. *Then early on Wednesday morning, 4<sup>th</sup>*, they recorded 25+ Red Admirals, 1 **Painted Lady** and 2 **Peacocks** on the flowering ivy and buddleia in their garden near Thame.

**David Redhead sent the following two reports for Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> and Monday 2nd October:** “On Monday, in better weather than Sunday, I returned to the rough grassland near my house about 1pm and discovered the same male **Common Blue** in more or less the same spot as the previous two days but alternating between nectaring on a thistle and ragwort. Nearby ragwort flowers provided two **Small Copper** - one small (male), intact but faded, the other large (female), brightly coloured and intact. So, with yesterday's sighting, it seems there are at least three Small Copper in this area. A patch of nettles provided a **Red Admiral** and some wild Michaelmas Daisies another and a nectaring **Painted Lady**. The edge of a nearby copse provided a **Speckled Wood** and a bank of ivy just up our lane provided another pair of nectaring Red Admirals and there were two more in our garden again nectaring on ivy flowers. The Painted Lady and Red Admirals were all in good condition. Unfortunately I just missed out on a **Comma** in the garden seen by my better half.

**On Sunday 1st October we had a couple of decent spells here (on the edge of Oxford) amongst the downpours.** During the second, about 3.30pm, I managed to survey the rough grassland near my house. I was delighted to find a **Common Blue** in much the same spot where I had found one roosting the previous day. This time he was sunning himself showing himself to be somewhat faded but with some blue still about the hindwings, one of which was showing very minor damage. He then took flight giving off a vivid blue and in flight I would have assessed him as being quite fresh. I need to look back through my records but I think an October Common Blue on this site is unprecedented. My delight doubled when I noticed a **Small Copper** nectaring on a nearby ragwort flower. This time he (from his size) was only slightly faded but had considerable damage along the trailing edges of his hindwings.”

Friday 29<sup>th</sup> September 2006

**Brown Hairstreak Update – as at 27<sup>th</sup> September:** Adult sightings this season now total 160. It's still definitely not too late to see female **Brown Hairstreaks** - on *Tuesday 26<sup>th</sup> September* four were seen at *Whitecross Green by Tony Croft* and one at *Bernwood Meadows by Wendy & David Redhead*. From these and other recent sightings it appears the females are surviving in higher numbers for longer than last year and we expect sightings to again continue into October. Is the latest sighting record of 9th October under threat? *[For any sightings, or to find out how to join in with this winter's Brown Hairstreak egg-hunt, please email David Redhead, Brown Hairstreak Champion at [red.admiral@ntlworld.com](mailto:red.admiral@ntlworld.com).]*

**David Redhead reports the Shabington Wood transect on Tuesday 26<sup>th</sup> September did not produce an impressive haul** with just 4 **Red Admiral**, 3 **Speckled Wood** & 2 **Comma**. "Although some patches of Devils-bit Scabious had survived the recent ride-side mowing they were totally unoccupied by butterflies. The real excitement came when crossing *Bernwood Meadows* when a female **Brown Hairstreak** and a **Clouded Yellow** were seen. In the afternoon at *Shotover Meadows* the fleabane patches in the central meadow were found to be largely over but a minimum of six **Small Copper** were found to be nectaring on the remaining flowers. Another **Clouded Yellow** rounded the day off nicely. A visit to the rough grassland by my house the previous day showed a **Common Blue** to be still hanging on there - *25<sup>th</sup> September* seems pretty late to me for finding a **Common Blue** especially at this location where there is only a small colony."

**Dave Maunder sent this report on 27<sup>th</sup> September:** "The number of species is definitely dwindling but *yesterday, 26<sup>th</sup>*, I found 38 **Red Admirals** on my cycle-ride to work in Aylesbury at 9.30am! Most were sunning themselves on foliage near Oxford Road or at Ivy bloom. Only one **Small White** seen."

**Tony Croft visited Whitecross Green Wood in the glorious autumn sunshine on Tuesday 26<sup>th</sup>:** "I saw 4 **Brown Hairstreaks** and small numbers of **Red Admiral**, **Speckled Wood** and **Comma**. Also, I did my final survey of *Buttler's Hangings on Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup>* and saw 10 **Meadow Brown**, 4 **Red Admiral**, 2 **Comma** 1 **Clouded Yellow** and what looked like a very late **Chalkhill Blue**. I'm consulting Nick Bowles (*Chalkhill Blue Species Champion*) about this but I am pretty convinced."

**On Saturday afternoon, 23<sup>rd</sup>, David Redhead decided to carry out the final transect of the season at the M40 Compensation Area:** "Before leaving I had a wander around the rough grassland near my house and was surprised to come across a couple of **Common Blue**, a couple of **Small Copper** and a **Brown Argus**. There is a small **Common Blue** and even smaller **Brown Argus** colony in this area but I had not seen either there for over a month. The **Small Coppers** were even more pleasing as I have not seen any there for the last few years. Two **Red Admiral** and a **Speckled Wood** added to the enjoyment. The transect route at the *Compensation Area* starts by the entrance gate where there are some sheltered brambles. These produced six **Red Admiral** and three **Comma** feeding on the ripe blackberries. Further patches of brambles pushed the **Red Admiral** count up to sixteen and the **Comma** count up to eight. 3 **Speckled Wood**, 2 **Small Copper**, a **Small White** and a **Green-veined White** brought the total count to 31 - nearly twice the count when it was my previous turn to do the transect four weeks ago. I was a bit disappointed not to see a **Common Blue** or **Brown Argus** in view of my morning sightings and considering the colonies of both species are much stronger here. I always find visiting this site rather upsetting owing to the ravaging of the blackthorn by the deer which have broken through the protective deer fence in several places. Finding **Brown Hairstreak eggs** there is now almost impossible but I am glad to report an hour of optimistic searching did produce two eggs. On-going negotiations with the Highways Agency, whose apparent inaction is largely negating the reason for this conservation area being set up when they extended the M40, are being stepped up to try and get the problem resolved and return the site to a productive **Brown Hairstreak** breeding ground."

Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> September 2006

**On Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> Dave Ferguson went to Black Park in Bucks:** “There was a **White Admiral** by the track on the southern edge of *Black Park heathland* this morning. It flew onto the heathland where it nectared on heather. I have never seen them in this area before - they have all been in Strawberry Wood, to the north of the heathland. I thought 2nd-generation White Admirals might do a Map Butterfly and be completely different, but no. I attach a picture (*see below*).”

**Dave Maunder has recorded the following butterflies around Aylesbury recently:** “A few butterflies seen recently include *Saturday 23rd, at Coombe Hill* - **Painted Lady** (1, flying around the monument); **Red Admirals** (5); **Commas** (8 - most on Blackberries); **Small Tortoiseshell** (1); **Meadow Browns** (6); **Speckled Woods** (2); **Small Heath** (1); **Small Coppers** (3).

**Sunday 24th, at Eythrope:** **Clouded Yellow** (1); **Red Admirals** (19 - a lot at Ivy); **Large Whites** (2); **Small White** (1); **Speckled Wood** (1), and **Small Copper** (1). I also found **Angleshades** (1) and a **Vapourer** moth.”

**Phil Coles' evening walk around 1Km Square SP7310 (Cuddington - Bucks) on September 23rd produced:** **Large White** 1, **Small/Green-veined White** 2, **Small Copper** 1, **Red Admiral** 3 (plus a possible further 3).

**Nick Bowles carried out his transect at Coombe Hill, Wendover on Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup>:** “I saw **Brimstone** 2, **Small Copper** 4, **Red Admiral** 1, **Comma** 2, **Speckled Wood** 2, **Meadow Brown** 10 and **Small Heath** 4 With so many Meadow Browns I did expect to see the odd Common Blue - but failed. Not bad for the last transect of the year! The transect at *Aston Clinton Ragpits* provided the exact contrast to last week's at Finemere. The only butterfly was Speckled Wood until I spotted a minimum of 10 Red Admiral and 3 Comma up in the top (and I mean a good 6m up) of an ivy-covered tree. In my garden (in Tring) were **Small White** 2, **Red Admiral** 4, **Painted Lady** 1 and **Comma** 1 (possibly 2). 9 species for an officially autumn day seemed a fair return!”

**Michael Robinson visited Ibstone, Bucks, on Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> and recorded the following:** “3 **Clouded Yellows** (at the same place I saw them previous years), 5 **Red Admirals**, 1 **Meadow Brown** and 4 **Small Coppers**.”

**David Redhead sent this report on 23/9:** “Thursday afternoon, *21st September*, I went to *Span Green* in search of adult Brown Hairstreaks - very warm (26C), sunny but extremely breezy. No success with adults but I did find 7 **Brown Hairstreak eggs** distributed along the whole length of the green lane. However, the more sheltered spots produced 7 adult species - **Comma** 6, **Small Copper** 5, **Red Admiral** 5, **Small White** 2, **Large White** 1, **Painted Lady** 1 & **Speckled Wood** 1. Over the last couple of weeks I have noticed a sudden increase in the number of **Hornets** about – I even had one in my last moth trap (16th September) for the first time ever. At Span Green two very small and sheltered ash trees contained several hornets feeding on sap. Closer examination showed that wherever there was a hornet there was an area where the bark had been removed - usually right round the circumference of the branch. Various flies were also to be found feeding at these bare patches and at one time a Comma. Do the hornets remove the bark or are they, with others, just taking advantage of the activity of some other organism?”

Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2006

**Dave Wilton went to Finemere again on Thursday afternoon (21st) after work:** “It was 28 Celsius in full sun, but blowing a gale from the SE. I saw 24 butterflies along the track leading to the wood - **Small White** x 10, **Red Admiral** x 14 - all on or adjacent to the sheltered, sunny side of the hedge alongside the pathway, but only 17 butterflies within the wood itself - Small White x 6, Red Admiral x 3, **Comma** x 4, **Speckled Wood** x 4). This was my third visit there to look for second-brood White Admiral and again there was no sign of one, but at least I did see a few Speckled Woods after Nick's zero return of the other day!”

**Phil Coles' walk around Starveall Farm near Stone (Bucks) on September 20<sup>th</sup> produced** Large White 13, Small Copper 6, Red Admiral 36, Painted Lady 1, Comma 1.

**Also, at Shirburn Hill ('Open Access Land') on September 19<sup>th</sup> Phil recorded:** Small Copper 3, Red Admiral 1, Speckled Wood 1, Meadow Brown 32, Small Heath 6.

**Wendy & Mick Campbell did some walking in the Bishopstone, Bucks, area on Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup>.** The weather was sunny but breezy. They recorded 36 butterflies of 8 species. In one sheltered, sunny corner of a field they counted 19 **Red Admirals** and 6 **Commas** all flying around a large patch of bramble or feeding on the ripe blackberries. The final count for the day was: Red Admiral (22), **Small White** (1), **Speckled Wood** (1), **Small Tortoiseshell** (1), Comma (7), **Common Blue** (1 – very tatty female), **Small Copper** (1) and **Painted Lady** (2 – nectaring on some late-flowering Thistles).

**Last Sunday 17<sup>th</sup>, Danny Howard saw his first UK Hummingbird Hawk-moth of the year feeding on his neighbour's buddleia, along with** several Red Admirals, a Comma and Large & Small Whites.

### Monday 18<sup>th</sup> September 2006

**Martin Harvey reports seeing** a very fresh-looking **Meadow Brown** at *Great Kimble* on Sunday 17<sup>th</sup>.

**Nick Bowles was walking his transects in Finemere and the Grendon area on Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> September:** “I brought my bike and cycled the Calvert drain as well in search of Clouded Yellow, but didn't find any. My entire *Finemere* transect didn't return one Speckled Wood surprisingly! 5 **Small Coppers** though and even a late **Small Heath**. There were three **Speckled Wood** on transect in the *Grendon* area plus a solitary **Brown Argus** (freshly emerged) along with several Small Coppers and a **Large White**. Both sites had **Red Admirals**, **Commas**, **Brimstones** and **Small White**. There were 3 Common Blue in the drain but none seen elsewhere. Also good views of 2 **Buzzards**, 3 **Sparrowhawk** and at least 2 **Red Kites**.”

**David Redhead sent the following report of his recent sightings:** “11/09/06 the *Shabbington Wood* transect produced 11 species and 33 individuals - 8 **Comma**, 6 **Red Admiral**, 5 **Green-veined White**, 4 **Brimstone**, 3 **Large White**, 2 **Peacock**, 1 **Clouded Yellow**, 1 **Small White**, 1 **Small Copper**, 1 **Painted Lady** and 1 **Speckled Wood**. Most nectaring on the ubiquitous ride-edge Devils-bit Scabious.

On *Friday 15/09/06*, on the wild buddleias near our house, 5 **Red Admiral**, 2 **Comma** and 2 **Hummingbird Hawk-moths**. Also a couple of **Speckled Wood** nearby and a Comma in the garden nectaring on ivy flowers.”

Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> September 2006

*Chris Brown carried out his survey of Crowsley Park Wood on Monday 11<sup>th</sup> September:* “A hot humid day. The Buddleia is still blooming and there are still many fresh **Commas**, as last week. Also, 1 **Hummingbird Hawk Moth** as I left work on the evening of 5/9/06, so totalling 16 of them this year for my area.”

*Dennis Dell sent the following report from his garden in Aylesbury on 11<sup>th</sup> September:* “I've mentioned the late flowering Beijing Buddleia before, but I must talk about it again: it is amazing! It has been in full bloom this last week and it is difficult to count the numbers of **Red Admirals** on it [at least 12 at any one time]; they arrive from about 9.30 and stay till late afternoon, feeding. Every so often, they take a rest and choose some interesting perches - a towel and the plastic cover of an umbrella stand - where they remained for 15 minutes at least. In smaller numbers, **Commas**, **Small Tortoiseshells**, **Painted Ladies**, **Hummingbird Hawk-moths**, and **Small** and **Large Whites** come to feed also. **Peacocks** are notable by their absence, however [only one seen last week]. The 'normal' Buddleias are finished flowering, so the Beijing is a superb late source of nectar. I also have an ice-plant [sedum], pink variety, which, in my youth, was a certainty for attracting the Vanessids in late summer. However, nowadays, they hardly ever use this in my garden.”

*Mick & Wendy Campbell went to Greenham Common, near Newbury, on Monday 11<sup>th</sup> September hoping to find Clouded Yellows.* The weather was hot and sunny, 25C. 12 species of butterfly were recorded altogether: **Small Heath** (26), **Clouded Yellow** (7), **Comma** (11), **Common Blue** (7), **Meadow Brown** (4), **Small Copper** (5), **Peacock** (1), **Brimstone** (2 – both female), **Speckled Wood** (2), **Painted Lady** (1), **Red Admiral** (1) and **Small White** (1). The only moths seen were the **Lesser Treble-bar**. Finally, a nice sighting of a female or juvenile **Wheatear** which was probably passing through on its way back to Africa. (*Thanks to Tim Watts for helping to id the Wheatear.*)

*David Redhead reports that there was a good turnout for the Brown Hairstreak Field Meeting at Whitecross Green Wood on Sunday 10<sup>th</sup>:* “The final total **Brown Hairstreak** count was 17 - one was in oak, a second in ash (although it appeared to fly into a neighbouring oak) and two were in flight over the blackthorn. All the other 13 were low down and settled on a variety of vegetation - blackthorn, bramble leaves, grass, willow, birch, hawthorn and 1 feeding on a blackberry (see *Jim Asher's photo below*). Our sightings were spread throughout the reserve and all but a couple of the females observed closely were, while not being pristine, in good condition and Jim's second photo (see *below*) is typical of those we saw. We also found **8 eggs** during the walk. Other species seen were 16 **Comma**, 6 **Speckled Wood**, 4 **Red Admiral**, several Whites but only 2 definitely identified as **Small White**, 2 **Small Copper**, 1 **Peacock** and 1 female **Brimstone**.

[*Thanks to David for leading another successful Brown Hairstreak field meeting.*]

*After the Field Meeting on 10<sup>th</sup>, David Redhead went to Shotover Meadows* in search of a Brown Hairstreak on the southern edge of its range but without success. “However, the patches of fleabane produced 17 **Small Copper**, 3 **Common Blue**, 3 **Clouded Yellow**, 2 **Painted Lady**, 1 **Brown Argus**, 1 **Small Tortoiseshell**, 1 female **Brimstone** and several **Small White**. Two of the Clouded Yellow had white upper surfaces to their forewings - they were almost certainly the Helice form of the female Clouded Yellow. The Small Tortoiseshell was nice to see but I doubt if it took my UTB 2006 total count into double figures. However, last week I discovered that the Small Tortoiseshell is still alive and well in Pembrokeshire with a six mile walk along the coast path from Aberbach to

Strumble Head producing a count of 190 (mainly nectaring on heather but also water mint & Devils-bit Scabious).”

**David Fuller had an interesting sighting on Sunday 10th September 2006:** “This year I was asked if I would assist in a survey of three woods in *Oxfordshire, South East of Woodcote* and I have been walking these woods monthly. On the walk in New Copse whilst looking at a **Bullfinch** I noticed a transparent winged butterfly flying towards me and thought of Small White when it alighted only five feet from me and to my amazement was a male **Purple Hairstreak** in very faded plumage but still the Purple sheen, or should I say pale purple, and there was a hint of orange left in the eye by the tail.”

### Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> September 2006

**Welcome to the website new contributor Paul Furtek who sent the following report today, 10<sup>th</sup>:** “Just thought I'd drop you an e-mail following a trip to *Coombe Hill in the Chilterns* on *Sunday September 10th*. It was a hot and sunny afternoon. The only species seen on the top of the hill and North facing ridge were **Small Heath** and **Meadow Brown**, but even these were few and far between. However, on the sheltered western slope of the hill it was a different story. Here there were plenty of **Brimstones** and newly-hatched **Commas** (20+ of each) as well as large numbers of Small Heath and Meadow Brown. Also seen were 3 **Small Coppers**, 2 **Painted Ladies** and around a dozen **Brown Argus**, although all but a few of the latter species were in poor condition.”

**Mick & Wendy Campbell went for a walk in the Cadmore End / Piddington area of the Chilterns today, 10<sup>th</sup> September,** looking in particular for Small Tortoiseshell as they had found good numbers of larvae there in previous years. The habitat hadn't changed and there were still good patches of stinging nettles along the sunny field and track margins, but no Small Tortoiseshells were recorded despite searching all suitable nectar flowers. Species seen were: **Peacock** (2), **Comma** (5), **Speckled Wood** (13), **Brimstone** (6 – 4 male and 2 female), **Common Blue** (1), **Small Copper** (2) and a single pristine **Painted Lady** nectaring on thistle flowers.

**Nick Bowles also went to Coombe Hill on Sunday morning 10<sup>th</sup>:** “Hopefully some others might get to share the enjoyment I had at *Coombe Hill, Wendover today (10<sup>th</sup> September)* in the good weather predicted for the next few days. I was delighted with the large numbers of **Comma** and smaller numbers of **Brimstone**, **Small Copper**, **Brown Argus**, **Red Admiral**, **Small Tortoiseshell**, **Meadow Brown** and **Small Heath** on the Devils Bit Scabious there just below the monument. I would strongly advise approaching from the path along the bottom (parallel to the golf club boundary) as the descent from the monument is very slippery in damp weather (as it was this morning after the dew overnight). Also present on site were **Large** and **Small White**, **Common Blue** and very good numbers of **Speckled Wood**. Strangely no Painted Lady - for first time since mid-June. Also no Chalkhill for first time since mid-July. Despite the feeling that the season is closing down; there's evidence that emergence continues as I saw both Small Copper and Meadow Brown mated.

**In my garden today in Tring, just outside the UTB area,** I had similar species to yesterday – Large White, Small White 4, Red Admiral 3, Comma 2, **Hummingbird Hawk-moth** 1 - but no sign of Painted Lady for a week.”

**Dave Maunder visited Waterperry Gardens, Oxon, on Saturday 9<sup>th</sup>:** “It was a very warm and sunny day and I saw **Red Admirals** (35+) - at least 20 were seen feeding on rotting apples in their orchard! (no sign of any Camberwell Beauties though!); **Painted Lady** (1); **Commas** (2); **Small Tortoiseshells** (4); **Large Whites** (6); **Small Whites** (20+); **Small Coppers** (6). I also saw a **Hummingbird Hawk-moth** and got a nice bit of film of a **Grass snake** swimming in the nearby river!”

**Dave Wilton sent the following report on 9<sup>th</sup> September:** “*Friday (8<sup>th</sup>) afternoon's* visit to the *Calvert drains in mid-Bucks* produced no sign of second-brood Wall Brown despite a thorough search in the sunshine. As expected, **Clouded Yellows** were busy patrolling the area (six were seen) while other active species included **Brimstone, Small White, Green-veined White, Small Copper, Common Blue, Brown Argus, Red Admiral, Painted Lady, Small Tortoiseshell, Comma, Speckled Wood, Small Heath and Silver-Y moth**. I wonder if there is a connection between land-fill sites and the Clouded Yellow as I've heard of another near Manchester which seems to attract the species as well. After Calvert I went to the *disused railway line west of Westcott Airfield* where I bumped into most of the aforementioned species again (no Clouded Yellows, though), along with **Large White** and **Peacock**. The Small Copper population there is especially healthy with 24 recorded. Three **Brown Hairstreak eggs** were found, adding two squares to the [distribution map](#), but there was no sign of any adults.

*On Saturday 9<sup>th</sup>* I had a transect to complete at *Finemere Wood, Bucks*. Nothing noteworthy was seen, with only eight species recorded, but it was nice to find **Small Copper** active within the wood for the first time this year. There was no evidence of second-brood White Admiral here, or at Kingswood or Rushbeds which I visited afterwards. In the meadows along the southern edge of *Rushbeds Wood* the number of **Clouded Yellows** (see last Thursday's report) had increased to eight and I finally had success with **Brown Hairstreak** in that area, finding a single female sunning herself on a bramble leaf.”

#### Friday 8<sup>th</sup> September 2006

**After hearing news of a second brood White Admiral sighting in Berkshire on 6<sup>th</sup> September** ([click here to read the report](#)), **Mick & Wendy Campbell went to Chinkwell Wood in Bucks today, 8<sup>th</sup> September**. They found a single fresh **White Admiral** a short distance down the main footpath, flying in a bramble-filled sunny clearing. It settled on bramble intertwined with honeysuckle growing up a tree trunk and stayed in the clearing, flying and perching, for 10 minutes before flying off. Other species recorded in and around the wood were: **Red Admiral** (4), **Speckled Wood** (16), **Comma** (23 – all seen feeding on ripe blackberries), **Green-veined White** (1), **Small Copper** (2 – on fleabane and ragwort), **Common Blue** (1 male), **Small White** (1), **Meadow Brown** (1), **Peacock** (2), **Large White** (1). A single faded **Yellow Shell** was the only moth seen. The temperature was 24C.

**News of another Camberwell Beauty sighting has just been received via Frank Banyard.** It was seen near the front of a house in the centre of *Checkendon, Oxfordshire, on 4th September*, and is the fifth **Camberwell Beauty** recorded in the Upper Thames Branch area this year. The reporter said it landed a few feet from where he was standing and settled for about ten seconds. Knowing nothing about butterflies, and being surprised to see such a large one, he checked it against a framed set of 1930's Cigarette Cards!

[[Click here](#) to go to the fourth Camberwell Beauty sighting.]

Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> September 2006

*Dave Wilton managed a visit to Rushbeds Wood, Bucks this afternoon, 7<sup>th</sup> September, to look for Brown Hairstreak:* “I found **Brown Hairstreak** eggs but no adults. However, I was pleased to see six pristine **Clouded Yellows** (*see photo at top of this page*) in the meadow along the southern edge of the wood (the "tramway") and another two in the vicinity of *Lapland Farm meadows* to the north. These are presumably locally-bred specimens which have just emerged, the off-spring of migrants from earlier in the year. Other species active in the area comprised **Small White, Green-veined White, Small Copper** (in good numbers), **Common Blue, Brown Argus, Red Admiral, Painted Lady, Comma, Speckled Wood** and **Meadow Brown**.”

*On 7<sup>th</sup> September Tony Hall took the following photographs of Small Tortoiseshells* nectaring on buddleia in a garden near Thame.

*A report has been received from Jim Asher of a definite fresh White Admiral seen on a garden buddleia in Crowthorne, Berks, on 6<sup>th</sup> September.* This could be a partial second brood individual, so *please keep an eye out for further sightings of White Admiral.*

*On 5<sup>th</sup> September Chris Brown did his survey of the Crowsley Park Wood site:* “A warm humid day with light breezes, some sunny periods but mostly cloudy. The Buddleia is still blooming well and attracting other butterflies. There were many freshly emerged **Commata** to distract me, along with **Speckled Woods, Meadow Browns, Red Admirals** and **Peacocks**, but none of the target species (Silver-washed Fritillary) again.”

*Phil Coles sent the following report for Shirburn Hill ('Open Access Land') September 5<sup>th</sup> 2006:* “Weather moderate – **Small White** 1, **Brown Argus** 8, **Common Blue** 7, **Meadow Brown** 21, **Small Heath** 16.”

*Dave Wilton went to BBOWT's River Ray Reserves alongside the A41 south of Marsh Gibbon, Bucks on Monday 4<sup>th</sup>:* “One section of the *Grange/Long Herdon Meadows* has been left uncut, allowing the copious amounts of Devil's-bit Scabious there to flower. Considering the time of year there were plenty of butterflies making use of this unexpected nectar source as well as Fleabane and Water Mint in adjacent ditches: **Large White** (1), **Small White** (3), **Small Copper** (16), **Common Blue** (20), **Brown Argus** (2), **Small Tortoiseshell** (7), **Speckled Wood** (1) & **Small Heath** (10). I can't remember the last time I managed a double-figures count of Small Copper anywhere! Moths seen in the area included **Red Underwing** (1) and **Silver Y** (6). Earlier in the day I'd spent some time in the vicinity of *Merton and Wendlebury, Oxon* where additional butterfly species comprised **Meadow Brown, Red Admiral, Painted Lady** and **Comma**, the latter three species all on a buddleia bush in Merton churchyard along with some Small Tortoiseshells and Whites. SP5517 has now become a **Brown Hairstreak "egg square"** for this year, but the two eggs found there were the only sign of this species anywhere today, unfortunately.”

*Mick & Wendy Campbell recorded good numbers of Small Copper on a walk in the Ickford area, Bucks, on Monday afternoon:* 12 **Small Coppers** in all, 5 of which were along a small patch of roadside verge nectaring on

Yarrow. Most of the others were in an arable field margin on thistles along with a couple of **Small Tortoiseshells** (a total of 5 Small Tortoiseshells were seen during the afternoon). Despite reasonable amounts of sun and warm weather, no adult Brown Hairstreaks were found, but they did locate 8 **Brown Hairstreak eggs**. Other butterfly species included **Common Blue** (1), **Small White** (2), **Comma** (3), **Red Admiral** (2), **Brown Argus** (2) & **Speckled Wood** (2).

*On a visit to Grangelands/rifle range Sunday afternoon, 3<sup>rd</sup> September, Dave Maunder saw the following late season butterflies:* “Red Admiral (1); Green-Veined White (1); Meadow Brown (6); Small Heath (2); Speckled Wood (1); Small Copper (1); Chalkhill Blue (2); Common Blue (5). Also 11 Treble-bar moths flew up as we walked through. *On Saturday 2nd*, I saw my 11<sup>th</sup> Hummingbird hawk moth in my garden, battling in high winds to attempt to feed on my Verbena flowers at 6.30pm! “

Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2006

*On Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> September Wendy & Mick Campbell recorded* 6 **Small Tortoiseshells** on the buddleia in their garden near Thame, along with 2 **Red Admirals** (1 fresh and 1 worn), 2 **Small Whites** and a pristine **Comma**.

*On 2<sup>nd</sup> September Dave Maunder sent this photograph of* a **Small Copper**, seen in *Aylesbury* recently:

*David Redhead reports on the status of the 2006 Brown Hairstreak season so far:* “At the end of August we have 117 reported sightings of **Brown Hairstreak adults** - all bar seven from the six core areas - *Whitecross Green/Asham Meads 59, Bernwood Forest complex 19, Piddington/Arncott area 17, Otmoor 8, Ludgershall/Rushbeds area 5, Span Green area 2*. The seven non-core area sightings range from meadows near Bicester in the north to a copse near Waterperry in the south. The females, many of them still very fresh looking, have been laying eggs on the blackthorn for just over three weeks (67 eggs found to date) but at times they can still be seen in ash, oak and elm trees along with the occasional male. However numbers do seem to be down this year as by the same time last year 161 adults had been sighted. Please send any reports of sightings to UTB Brown Hairstreak Champion, David Redhead on [red.admiral@ntlworld.com](mailto:red.admiral@ntlworld.com).”

*Dave Wilton managed 90 minutes in the Dorton area on Thursday 31<sup>st</sup> August:* “I found quite a few **Brown Hairstreak eggs**, 7 fresh this year's and two last year's empty shells, but no sign of any adults despite much staring at ash trees. The sun did come out for a bit and there was some butterfly activity, but **Small White, Holly Blue, Red Admiral, Comma** and **Speckled Wood** were the only ones seen.” Dave also sent these photos of a **Red Admiral caterpillar and pupa**, found at a site near Bicester on 1<sup>st</sup> September 06

*Dennis Dell visited Laplands Farm Meadows on Wednesday afternoon, 30<sup>th</sup> August:* “**Speckled Woods, Meadow Browns, Small Heaths, Common Blues, Brown Argus** [one only], **Clouded Yellows** [three, including a deformed specimen which had difficulty flying, hence the photo below]; one Hairstreak at the top of an Ash; impossible to tell whether it was a Purple or a Brown.”

Thursday 31<sup>st</sup> August 2006

**David Redhead reports on the status of the 2006 Brown Hairstreak season so far:** “At the end of August we have 117 reported sightings of **Brown Hairstreak adults** - all bar seven from the six core areas - [Whitecross Green/Asham Meads 59](#), [Bernwood Forest complex 19](#), [Piddington/Arncott area 17](#), [Otmoor 8](#), [Ludgershall/Rushbeds area 5](#), [Span Green area 2](#). The seven non-core area sightings range from meadows near Bicester in the north to a copse near Waterperry in the south. The females, many of them still very fresh looking, have been laying eggs on the blackthorn for just over three weeks (67 eggs found to date) but at times they can still be seen in ash, oak and elm trees along with the occasional male. However numbers do seem to be down this year as by the same time last year 161 adults had been sighted.

**Dave Wilton managed 90 minutes in the Dorton area on Thursday 31<sup>st</sup> August:** “I found quite a few **Brown Hairstreak eggs**, 7 fresh this year's and two last year's empty shells, but no sign of any adults despite much staring at ash trees. The sun did come out for a bit and there was some butterfly activity, but **Small White, Holly Blue, Red Admiral, Comma and Speckled Wood** were the only ones seen.” Dave also sent these photos of a **Red Admiral caterpillar and pupa**, found at a site near Bicester on 1<sup>st</sup> September 06

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**Dave Ferguson sent news of another Camberwell Beauty sighting on Wednesday 30<sup>th</sup> August, this time in Bucks:** “There was a **Camberwell Beauty** in [Prestwood](#) feeding on rotten plums this morning. It was found by a friend of mine, Leon de Muynck and photographed by Angela de Muynck. I looked for it this afternoon but without success.”

[\[Click here to go to the third Camberwell Beauty sighting.\]](#)

**Paul Olive has had another visit by the Camberwell Beauty to his garden in Newbury (see his report of 29<sup>th</sup> August below):** “The **Camberwell Beauty** was back in my garden on [Tuesday 29<sup>th</sup>](#) and this time I managed to get a wings-open photo whilst it rested on a garden bench. Result is below - pretty good, but still hand-held camera - I was about to take another using a tripod but was just too late...”

[\[Click here to go to the second Camberwell Beauty sighting.\]](#)

**On Wednesday 30<sup>th</sup> August David Redhead sent the following report:** “For the first time this summer I decided to don a jumper for the morning dog walk and I was glad of it. So I was surprised to see a **Speckled Wood** already active at 7.55am in the lower reaches of the ash trees in the [Rivermead Nature Reserve](#), admittedly they were in full sun. In the afternoon, from 4 - 5.15pm at [Shotover Meadows](#) (19C sun) I went looking for Brown Hairstreak but no joy and no eggs - 2 good condition **Small Copper**, a tired **Common Blue** and a tatty **Large White** was all that I managed.”

**Chris Brown's update on his survey of the Silver-washed Fritillary colony at Crowsley Park Wood for 29<sup>th</sup> August follows:** “18°C cloudy/sunny - a mild day with light breezes, some sunny periods and

occasional short showers. Sorry to say this, but no Silver-washed Fritillary seen despite searching the whole access track and waiting around the buddleia for about 20 minutes. There were other butterflies around so the weather was favourable. I guess those last two males wore out (*see Chris's report and photos of 22<sup>nd</sup> August*). Still there was a bonus with 2 **Hummingbird Hawk Moths** still visiting the buddleia, arriving from the deciduous forest to the north. 2 more were seen on the way back to work."

***Dave Wilton went to Piddington Wood and surrounding area on Tuesday 29<sup>th</sup> August looking for Brown Hairstreaks:*** He arrived at 2.15pm and then had to sit in the car for three quarters of an hour waiting for the rain to stop! However, he did manage to find **5 Brown Hairstreak eggs** during his subsequent walk, although there was no sign of any adults. The only butterflies seen were **Red Admiral** (1), **Comma** (4) and **Speckled Wood** (4).

**Tuesday 29<sup>th</sup> August 2006**

***29<sup>th</sup> August - Following the exciting news that a Camberwell Beauty had been seen in the UTB area last week, a second sighting has just been received from Paul and Kate Olive in Newbury:*** "I thought you may like to know that we have seen a **Camberwell Beauty** in our garden *in Newbury, Berkshire, on Friday 25<sup>th</sup>, Saturday 26<sup>th</sup> and Monday 28<sup>th</sup> August*. I managed to get a photo (*see top of this page*). We have quite a large garden with several plum trees, all of which are laden this year, so I guess we have these to thank for attracting the Camberwell Beauty."

*[[Click here](#) to go to the first Camberwell Beauty sighting.]*

***David Redhead sent the following update on the Brown Hairstreak season as at 29<sup>th</sup> August:*** "We now have **104 reported sightings of Brown Hairstreak adults** - all bar one from the six core areas - *Whitecross Green/Asham Meads* 51, *Bernwood Forest complex* 20, *Piddington/Arncott area* 16, *Otmoor* 9, *Ludgershall/Rushbeds* area 5, *Span Green* area 2. The non-core area sighting was on the edge of the known range in some meadows near *Bicester*. The females, many of them still very fresh looking, have been laying eggs on the blackthorn for nearly three weeks now (**41 eggs found**) but at times they can still be seen in ash, oak and elm trees along with the occasional male. However numbers do seem to be down this year as, by the end of August 2005, 161 adults had been sighted." [Click here to see the Distribution Map](#).

*Please send any reports of sightings to UTB Brown Hairstreak Champion, David Redhead on [red.admiral@ntlworld.com](mailto:red.admiral@ntlworld.com).*

***Mick & Wendy Campbell spent a couple of hours walking footpaths in an area to the north of Ickford today, 29<sup>th</sup>, looking for Brown Hairstreak.*** In a sheltered corner of one field, where they had found eggs in 2005, they saw 2 female **Brown Hairstreaks**, one of which was egg-laying on Blackthorn. The only other butterflies recorded were **Speckled Wood** (6) and singletons of **Comma**, **Small Heath** and **Common Blue**.

***Dave Wilton spent three hours on the trail of the Brown Hairstreak on Monday afternoon, 28<sup>th</sup>:*** "First port of call was the *M40 bridge between Waterperry and Wheatley*. In the young copse to the east of the motorway I found a **Brown Hairstreak egg** and then, in a group of small ash trees, a **female Brown Hairstreak** perching on a sheltered leaf just before a shower passed through. 25 minutes later, when the

downpour had come to an end, she was still perched on the same leaf with wings closed and antennae facing forwards together. I stayed watching her for another 15 minutes, during which time she remained in the same spot even though the sun had come out. Another female started flying around the next-door ash and ended up perched on top of the tree with wings open, sunning herself. Her movement didn't distract the first female, which was still in the same spot when I left. Next stop was the [M40 bridge between Worminghall and Waterperry Wood](#) where I found three eggs very quickly, two on the east side of the bridge and one on the west side. One very battered **Purple Hairstreak** was recorded here, along with **Brown Argus** (9), **Common Blue** (6) and **Comma** (1). Final stop was the [Touchbridge end of Span Green](#). It was dull for most of the time that I was there although blue sky was visible in the distance all around. The only butterfly to brave flying in the strong wind was a single **Speckled Wood**. However, I did manage to find two Brown Hairstreak eggs.

**[Dave Ferguson went for a walk around some sites to the west of High Wycombe, Bucks, Sunday morning 27<sup>th</sup> August and recorded the following:](#)**

**[Buttlers Hangings:](#) Silver-spotted Skipper (6), Brown Argus (8), Chalkhill Blue (6), Common Blue (4), Meadow Brown (17).**

**[Hearnton Wood:](#) Speckled Wood (4).**

Buddleia at [Nobles Farm:](#) Painted Lady (1), Hummingbird Hawk-moth (1).

**[On Friday 25<sup>th</sup> August Francis Gomme's ramble through Whitecross Green Wood produced 5 Brown Hairstreaks, Common Blue, lots of fresh Speckled Wood, Gatekeeper, Meadow Brown, Comma and Red Admiral.](#)**

### **Saturday 26<sup>th</sup> August 2006**

**[Further to reports on the BC Herts & Middlesex branch website \(and in particular read the report dated 21<sup>st</sup> August from Dutch Butterfly Conservation\) of recent sightings of the Camberwell Beauty, the following exciting news was received from Nicky Jones today, 26<sup>th</sup> August:](#) "Thought you might like to know that some work colleagues and myself have spotted a **Camberwell Beauty** feeding on a plum tree [on Monday 21<sup>st</sup> August and again on 22<sup>nd</sup> August, in Marcham, nr Abingdon, Oxfordshire.](#) " It was reported to be in excellent condition, very dark on the underside and with beautiful blue markings on the topside with very prominent pale yellow wing margins.**

*[Please keep your eyes peeled for further sightings of this rare migrant ! [Click here](#) for more information and a photo of the Camberwell Beauty.]*

### **Friday 25<sup>th</sup> August 2006**

**[Mike Mobbs sent the following report yesterday, 24<sup>th</sup> August:](#) "I went to [Bradenham Hillsides](#) this afternoon. Windy and cloudy start but sunshine when I reached the main butterfly areas. Two hours walking and wandering produced 14 species: a single male **Silver-washed Fritillary** (a first for me in this**

area after twenty years!); **Painted Lady** 3; **Red Admiral** 1; **Comma** 1; **Meadow Brown** 54; **Small Heath** 14; **Speckled Wood** 5; **Common Blue** 73; **Brown Argus** 12; **Small Copper** 2; **Brimstone** 2; **Large White** 4; **Small White** 6; **Green-veined White** 4. Also seen: 3 **Hummingbird Hawk-moths**.  
*On Tuesday 22<sup>nd</sup>* we saw eight **Silver-washed Fritillary** at the famous buddleia in *Wendover Woods*.

*David Redhead spent a couple of hours in the Meadows at Shotover on Thursday afternoon, 24<sup>th</sup>, looking for Brown Hairstreak but without success:* “Not even a Purple – but I did manage **Common Blue**, **Brown Argus**, **Small Copper**, **Meadow Brown** and **Small White**. Also some **Large White** in *Oxford* this morning and a **Comma** when taking the dog for a walk at 6pm. So species total for the day was 7.

*Then this afternoon, 25<sup>th</sup> I went to Marston Meadows.* There was hardly anything about and definitely no Brown Hairstreaks but on my return journey I had a nice bonus - my first UTB **Clouded Yellow** of the year! Then I went to the eastern end of *Shotover Plain* where some eggs were found in the winter. I got out of the car near a large wild buddleia and there were five **Red Admirals** on it. Again no Brown Hairstreaks but another small buddleia had a **Humming-bird Hawk Moth**. Final species count was 6: **Clouded Yellow**, **Red Admiral**, **Large White**, **Comma**, **Speckled Wood** and **Holly Blue**. Wendy said there had been a **Comma** & **Peacock** in the garden while I had been out - our buddleias have gone inactive.”

*Dave Ferguson went to Yoesden Bank on Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> August and recorded:* **Adonis Blue** m. (14), **Chalkhill Blue** m. (30), **Adonis/Chalkhill Blue** f. (60), **Common Blue** (30), **Brown Argus** (8), **Meadow Brown** (30), **Small Heath** (1), **Common Carpet** (1).

*News has just been received from Debbie Lewis, BBOWT,* confirming that **Silver-studded Blue** has been seen in the UTB area this year at *Broadmoor Bottom*, just over the road from Wildmoor on *30<sup>th</sup> June 2006* (5 males) and *11<sup>th</sup> July 2006* (4 males and 1 female - observed ovipositing on bell heather).

*On 22<sup>nd</sup> August Chris Brown sent his latest update on the Silver-washed Fritillary colony at Crowsley Park Wood:* “A warm day on 22<sup>nd</sup> with very light breezes and quite humid, 21C. Mostly cloudy with frequent sunny spells. Generally a lot less butterflies of other species now and only 2 **Silver-washed Fritillary** males holding on. In fact if it were not for the buddleia, which they were both regularly coming back to, it would have probably been the end for them by now I assume. There are very few alternative nectar sources, just a few late bramble flowers and some small purple thistle type flowers. In fact this buddleia has been a boon in other ways too. Much to my delight there were 3 **Hummingbird hawk moths** there this week and I have seen another 1 on 2 separate days at home too. I guess the same ones still hanging around but that makes 9 observations in total I have seen this, and only this year. Both male SWF in very bad condition as pictures below show.”

*Phil Coles went to Shirburn Hill ('Open Access Land') on August 22<sup>nd</sup> 2006:* “Weather moderate – **Silver-spotted Skipper** 1, **Brown Argus** 2, **Common Blue** 21, **Peacock** 1, **Meadow Brown** 45, **Small Heath** 6.”

*Dave Wilton sent this report on 22<sup>nd</sup> August:* “After work today I spent a couple of hours walking from *Dorton, Bucks* to *Chinkwell Wood* and back and, yet again, had no sign of Brown Hairstreak anywhere. It was particularly disappointing not to find anything around the small copse near Spa Farm where I found

60+ eggs last winter. However, there are a huge number of young ash trees there and you can only spend so much time looking skyward without getting permanent neck damage! Butterflies seen comprised **Large White** (1), **Green-veined White** (1), **Small Copper** (1), **Brown Argus** (1), **Common Blue** (1), **Holly Blue** (1), **Painted Lady** (1), **Speckled Wood** (26, the majority inside Chinkwell Wood), **Gatekeeper** (1), **Meadow Brown** (2) along with moths **Shaded Broad-bar** (1), **Magpie** (1) & **Mother of Pearl** (1). Back home at [Westcott](#) the buddleias were hosting **Large White** (2), **Small White** (1), **Red Admiral** (5) and **Hummingbird Hawk-moth** (2).”

Monday 21<sup>st</sup> August 2006

*Jan Haseler sent the following report today:* “On Saturday [19th August](#) 10 male **Adonis Blues** and a **Clouded Yellow** were seen on the Reading and District Natural History Society field trip to [The Holies](#) (near Lardon Chase).”

*Late afternoon on Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> August after the weather had cleared, Mick & Wendy Campbell decided to visit Yoesden Bank, Bucks, for second brood Adonis Blue.* During several sunny spells, 7 fresh male **Adonis Blue** were seen along with numerous **Chalkhill Blues** - male & female (too many to count, but estimated to be 100-200) including a mating pair. Other species seen were **Clouded Yellow** (2), **Brown Argus** (6), **Meadow Brown** (5), **Small Heath** (5), **Common Blue** (good numbers – 50+), **Painted Lady** (3 pristine). One very worn **6-spot Burnet moth** was also recorded.

*Then on Monday afternoon 21<sup>st</sup>, despite the poor weather outlook, they went on a 5 mile circular walk, starting at Holton, in Oxfordshire, and taking in Waterperry Wood (next to Bernwood Forest).* Seven butterfly species were recorded in the fields from [Holton](#) but only in low numbers due to the cool and cloudy conditions. Fortunately the weather improved dramatically by the time they reached the centre of [Waterperry Wood](#) and the butterflies became very active - eleven species were seen here. The most numerous was **Speckled Wood**, 11 of which were recorded in the dappled shade of the woodland rides. 10 **Brown Argus** (which seems to be having a good year) were recorded down the edges of the main ride where there are plenty of wild flowers available as a nectar source (ragwort, fleabane and hemp agrimony). A nice surprise was **Purple Hairstreak** (3) still fairly active in one of the very small Oak trees. On the return leg of the walk, across mainly arable fields with “set-aside” margins, a **Clouded Yellow** and finally a single, pristine **Small Tortoiseshell**. The full list of butterflies (a total of 17 species for the afternoon) was as follows: **Brown Argus** (10), **Clouded Yellow** (1), **Comma** (1), **Common Blue** (9), **Gatekeeper** (3), **Green-veined White** (2), **Holly Blue** (1), **Large White** (2), **Meadow Brown** (4), **Painted Lady** (3), **Purple Hairstreak** (3), **Red Admiral** (3), **Small Copper** (2), **Small Heath** (2), **Small White** (2), **Small Tortoiseshell** (1), **Speckled Wood** (23). Moths were: **Silver-Y** (2) & **Magpie moth** (1 – in pristine condition).

Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> August 2006

*Chris Brown sent the following update for the Crowsley Wood site where he is monitoring the Silver-washed Fritillary colony:* “[Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup>](#) was a mild to warm day with very light breezes, 22C, mostly cloudy with occasional sunny spells. I was pleasantly surprised to still see **Silver-washed Fritillary**. All were quite active. Females feeding on bramble flowers & males on the buddleia, settling for up to 30 seconds at each pit stop. Two females were still in good condition whereas all the males were ragged. One was in such a state that half of the entire hind wings from the rear edge was just a skeleton support with

all of the wing scales missing, holes showing where the black spots should have been, but still able to fly okay! Total recorded: 7 (4 male, 3 female). Also seen were two **Hummingbird Hawk-moths**.”

*On Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> August Mick & Wendy Campbell did a circular walk from Asham Meads, taking in part of Otmoor, in search of Brown Hairstreaks.* The weather was cloudy and cool with brief intervals of sun. At *Asham Meads*, however, the **Brown Hairstreaks** were very active during the short bursts of sun and a total of 10 individuals were seen (male & female), mostly flying in the tops of Ash and Elm trees. Three more were recorded on the remainder of the walk, one female a mile south-west of Asham Meads, another two females to the west of *Horton-cum-Studley*. Other species seen were: **Meadow Brown, Red Admiral, Small Copper, Speckled Wood, Small White, Common Blue, Comma, Gatekeeper, Green-veined White, Painted Lady, Peacock.**

*Phil Coles surveyed Shirburn Hill ('Open Access Land') on August 15<sup>th</sup>.* The weather was poor but the following were seen: **Silver-spotted Skipper 1, Common Blue 3, Meadow Brown 39.**

*On Saturday afternoon 12<sup>th</sup> August, in less than ideal conditions, David Redhead ran a butterfly identification and recording session in Bernwood Forest for four BBOWT members to assist them in carrying out butterfly transects on BBOWT reserves:* “As we left the main car park nothing was flying, but a patch of Fleabane proved productive with a **Painted Lady, Ringlet**, a couple of **Gatekeepers**, a **Small or Essex Skipper** (these are not expected to be differentiated on a transect) and a **Common Blue** all nectaring on it. As we moved on several Common Blues were seen in flight and then one of the trainees pointed out another blue - to my amazement there was a **Chalkhill Blue** sitting on a bramble leaf - actually a bit embarrassing as my intro chat had included Chalkhill Blue on the wing but not here. As one of the other trainees remarked "Never say never". Presumably a vagrant but it must have flown an awful long way. A small ash tree provided another excellent identification display. A movement was noticed in the top by another of the trainees but before the rest of us could raise our eyes there was a commotion towards the bottom of the tree with about half a dozen butterflies chasing one another around. When everything had settled back down there before our eyes was a male **Brown Hairstreak** surrounded by four **Purple Hairstreaks**! Our final success was on another patch of Fleabane - a nectaring male **Silver-washed Fritillary**. So my concerns about a lack of butterflies to identify was totally unfounded with 14 species seen - **Speckled Wood, Meadow Brown, Green-veined White, Small White** and **Red Admiral** in addition to those already mentioned. The non-ideal conditions meant that most were not very active which allowed the trainees to get a really good look at them. So a very worthwhile session especially as it produced the 64th reported Brown Hairstreak sighting in the UTB area.”

### Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> August 2006

*Phil Coles went to Shirburn Hill ('Open Access Land') on August 11<sup>th</sup> 2006:* “Weather poor – **Silver-spotted Skipper 10, Small White 1, Green-veined White 1, Common Blue 1, Marbled White 1, Meadow Brown 36.**”

*On his transect at Coombe Hill near Wendover on 11<sup>th</sup> August Nick Bowles recorded 3 Silver-washed Fritillary:* “This species is new to the reserve list. I suspect that there were only two **Silver-washed Fritillary** there and one was seen twice in two different sections. I know there were at least two as after I saw the first I came across two males spinning about each other.”

*David Redhead sent the following Brown Hairstreak update on 10<sup>th</sup> August:* “By close of play on the 8<sup>th</sup>

*August* the reported **Brown Hairstreak** sightings totalled 59 (compared to 61 in 2005 on the same date). 30 have been seen up in oak (an unusually high proportion), 19 up in ash, 8 down on blackthorn and 4 nectaring (3 on wild angelica and 1 on bramble flowers). Females now egg-laying - see previous reports for further details of many of these sightings."

Please report any sightings to the UTB Brown Hairstreak Champion, David Redhead on [red.admiral@ntlworld.com](mailto:red.admiral@ntlworld.com)

*Thomas Merckx reports seeing* a male **Silver-washed Fritillary** foraging on buddleia at *Tubney House*, Tubney (SU4398) on the *9<sup>th</sup> August*.

*Graham Elcombe visited Aston Rowant Nature Reserve on 9th August:* "Despite (relatively) cool and cloudy weather, **Silver Spotted Skippers** were present in good numbers. In several places, I saw four or five at once within a few square yards."

*Chris Brown continued his survey of Silver-washed Fritillary at Crowsley Park Wood on 8<sup>th</sup> August in clear and sunny weather:* "The **Silver-washed Fritillary** were quite active, settling for up to 15 seconds at each pit stop. Most males are quite ragged now, a couple of them were better, being barely nibbled. One looked nearly new. Again, all males were flying along the central track throughout its length but clustering around a self sown buddleia at the far end. There were 6 males on occasion squabbling over this bush. A female visited briefly, was mobbed and then headed straight for the interior of the conifer forest. I also saw a second female come out of the conifer forest, in what must have been a 50 yard flight, land on the bare earth, sit there for about a minute with wings open flat to the ground, then fly straight back into the forest for at least the same distance in the same direction until I lost sight of it. I got the impression this was just to warm-up as there was no interest in any of the nectar sources nearby."

*On 8<sup>th</sup> August Wendy & Mick Campbell visited a site near Bicester where they were pleased to record 13 butterfly species*, including a female **Brown Hairstreak**. It spent 15+ minutes sitting quietly on blackthorn, occasionally sunning itself and then laid a single egg before flying up into a nearby Ash tree. Other species seen were: **Common Blue, Gatekeeper, Brimstone, Brown Argus, Purple Hairstreak, Holly Blue, Painted Lady, Speckled Wood, Small Tortoiseshell, Small Skipper, Meadow Brown** and three **Small Copper**. Late afternoon they called into *Lapland Farm Meadows*. In the Ash trees at the end of the railway bridge there were several Hairstreaks, 3 definite Purple Hairstreaks and 1 definite Brown Hairstreak. No Hairstreaks were seen along the hedgeline through the meadow as far as the big Oak & Ash trees in the corner. A single **Small Heath** brought their species count for the day up to 14.

*On Sunday 6th August Paul Bowyer led a joint UTB / BBOWT Field Meeting at Homefield Wood:* "On a field trip for butterfly conservation the following 19 butterfly species were identified: **Silver Washed Fritillary (7), Clouded Yellow (2), Brown Argus (20+), White-letter Hairstreak (1), Small White, Large White, Brimstone, Green-veined White, Large Skipper, Essex Skipper, Common Blue, Meadow Brown, Ringlet, Gatekeeper, Speckled Wood, Painted Lady, Red Admiral, Comma, Peacock.**"

*Thanks to Paul Bowyer (UTB) and Phillip Pratt (BBOWT) for a very enjoyable event.*

Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> August 2006

**Dave Ferguson went to Pitstone Hill on 8<sup>th</sup> August and recorded:** “30+ **Brown Argus**, 20 **Chalkhill Blue**, 20 **Common Blue**. I have never seen so many Brown Argus in one place! Then at [Ashridge](#) (Bucks section): 2 **Hummingbird Hawk-moths**. One was feeding on a Bottlebrush Buckeye bush. *Today, 9<sup>th</sup>, at Little Marlow Gravel Pit:* 6 Brown Argus, 10 Common Blue, **Small Copper**. I have never seen Brown Argus at this site before.”

**Ched George reports** a single **Clouded Yellow** in [Radnage](#) on the *8th August* and another 2 Clouded Yellows on [Turville Hill](#) (Cobstone Hill) today, *August 9th*.

**David and Sally Irvén of Northants Branch sent this report on 8<sup>th</sup> August:** “Over the week end we walked round Bernwood forest and meadows. On *Saturday 5th* in the wood we saw a male **Brown Hairstreak** nectaring on wild angelica and a female flying and settling on Oak and blackthorn. Two females were seen, on *Sunday 6<sup>th</sup>*, the first female was flying and then basking in the wood and the second was a very fresh female just sitting on blackthorn in the meadow.”

**Becky Woodell reports seeing** a **Silver-washed Fritillary** at [Whitecross Green Wood](#) on 8<sup>th</sup> August.

**Maureen Cross saw** 82 second brood **Adonis Blue** on a quick walk across [Lardon Chase](#) on Tuesday afternoon, 8<sup>th</sup>, and wondered if this is a record for the site.

[Please email Maureen, UTB Adonis Blue Species Champion, with all Adonis sightings.](#)

**Melvyn Jones sent this news on 7<sup>th</sup> August:** “I’m writing to confirm the presence of **Silver-washed Fritillary** at [Little Linford Wood](#), a BBOWT reserve near Gayhurst, just north of Milton Keynes. I reported a sighting last year and checked for the presence of violets (*their foodplant*) in the wood this spring - the plant is present across much of the reserve. I saw them again yesterday after recent reported sightings by others. In both years numbers seen were small - over my regular transect I saw 2 last year and 4 this, although being quite strong fliers I cannot guarantee the absence of double-counting. Also, I saw a **Clouded Yellow** on *Saturday, 5<sup>th</sup> August at Hazeley Wood*, a Milton Keynes Parks Trust property on the west flank of MK.”

**David Redhead sent the following report on 7<sup>th</sup> August:** “On Sunday there was a lot of Brown Hairstreak and human activity in [Whitecross Green Wood](#) - well until just before 11am when the Browns quietened down. A total of 18 **Brown Hairstreaks** were seen - 15 in oak trees, 2 in ash and another flying up from the blackthorn - this total was arrived at from observations made by [Tony Clancey and Kevin & Sandra Standridge all from Herts and Middlesex Branch](#) as well as myself. In the early afternoon Kevin & Sandra saw two females down on the blackthorn in [Bernwood Meadows](#), one appeared to be searching for a suitable spot to lay an egg. Later in the afternoon I saw three (one female and two males) in the ash trees near the [Menmarsh Post](#) junction - the female and one of the males were feeding off ash buds, the other male for a short while appeared to be feeding off lichen before it flew away.”

**On 6<sup>th</sup> August Tim & Colleen Watts went to Kimble Warren looking for Silver-spotted Skippers:** “We saw 6 at the same time, possibly more. They were very mobile, in groups of 2 or 3 together. Also seen c.70 **Chalkhill Blues**, 1 **Brown Argus**, 1 **Painted Lady**.”

**5<sup>th</sup> August - Adam Bassett sent the following photo of the female Silver-washed Fritillary that visited his garden in Marlow Bottom on August 4<sup>th</sup> (see report below).** “It was resting on wisteria after feeding on buddleia. Following on from that visit last Friday, we had a brief visit from a rather tatty male Silver-washed Fritillary on the same garden buddleia bush for a few minutes before flying into adjacent woods. Rather tatty, it was missing some of the left hindwing and right forewing. First and second garden records!”

**On 5<sup>th</sup> August Dave Maunder had a Clouded Yellow fly past his front door in Aylesbury.** “And on Monday 7<sup>th</sup> my wife saw another **Clouded Yellow** in *Stoke Mandeville*. Still plenty of **Painted Ladies** and **Silver-Y** moths on the wing everywhere - a lovely summer sight!”

### Monday 7<sup>th</sup> August 2006

**The 28<sup>th</sup> sighting of a Brown Hairstreak has just been received** - 26 seen in ash or oak trees, 1 nectaring on wild angelica and 1 nectaring on brambles. The last reported sighting was the first definite female seen. [Please email any Brown Hairstreak sightings to David Redhead, UTB Brown Hairstreak Champion.](#)

**Welcome to the website new contributor Yvonne Dixon who sent this report on 6<sup>th</sup> August:** “I have only recently started to take an interest in butterflies and am still very much a novice. However I would like to share my butterfly sightings as surely every bit helps. On our return from a family holiday on the Isle of Wight - where I learned to identify a few more species of butterfly - I was thrilled to see a **Painted Lady**, a **Comma**, two **Red Admirals** and a **Large White** on and around the Buddleia in my back garden in *Binfield*. I also saw something that I think was a Meadow Brown but it wouldn't open its wings long enough for me to see properly.”

**Derek Brown made a quick trip to Greenham Common on the morning of 5<sup>th</sup> August and saw** 12x **Graylings** in 15 minutes in dull conditions. “Grayling are clearly out in force now. The **Painted Ladies** are in my garden in *Beenham* in profusion. Cathy counted at least 8 last Monday (31st) on the Buddleia and we've had similar numbers again today. Last year we didn't manage a single specimen. Lots of **Red Admirals**, **Peacocks**, a few **Commas** and finally today our first **Small Tortoiseshell** since mid April. We also had a new species for the garden a few weeks ago - a Marbled White flyby on the 16th July - taking the garden list to 25.”

**Tim Watts went to Calvert on 5<sup>th</sup> August and recorded** 2 **Brown Argus**. Also at *Calvert Green*; 3 **Clouded Yellow** on the waste ground adjoining the estate. This area can be viewed from Brickhill Way or through the slatted fence next to green.

**David Redhead sent this report on 5<sup>th</sup> August:** “This morning I went looking for Brown Hairstreaks more in hope than expectation because I was on the edge of the known range in meadows at *Shotover* where a few eggs were found this winter. Sadly the nice ash/oak combinations produced just one **Purple**

**Hairstreak.** There was a compensation in 13 **Small Coppers** mainly nectaring on ragwort - are we in for a deluge? Also seen **Brown Argus, Comma, Common Blue, Essex Skipper, Gatekeeper, Meadow Brown, Peacock, Red Admiral & Small White.** 11 species in total.”

*On 4th August David did his M40 Compensation area transect in the afternoon:* “Numbers at about 70 well down but a reasonable spread of species including a **Small Copper & Large Skipper** but nothing "exotic". I kept a weather eye out for a Brown or White-letter Hairstreak but no joy. On the way back I had a look at the large ash/small oak combination at the turning circle - alive with **Purple Hairstreak**, at least a dozen, but could not turn any of them into a Brown. I finally stopped at the ash trees by the [Menmarsh](#) post where I have seen Browns for the last few years. I arrived at 4.50pm and a few minutes later noticed a movement and managed to lock the binoculars on a male **Brown Hairstreak** sunning itself about half way up the middle one of the first three ashes.”

*Dave Wilton spent two hours at Rushbeds Wood on 4th August:* “There was no sign of Brown Hairstreak anywhere. Plenty of other species were active, though: **Large Skipper, Essex Skipper, Large White, Small White, Green-veined White, Small Copper, Common Blue, Brown Argus, Purple Hairstreak, Red Admiral, Painted Lady, Peacock, Comma, Speckled Wood, Meadow Brown, Gatekeeper, Ringlet** and, best of the bunch, a single **Silver-washed Fritillary** on brambles along the southern "tramway" (SP 669153). I then spent another two hours searching between [Dorton](#) and [Chinkwell Wood](#), again with no luck so far as Brown Hairstreak was concerned. Most of the others were seen again, the only addition being **Small Skipper** to give me 18 species for the day.”

*On Saturday morning, 5th August, Dave carried out his transect at Finemere Wood:* “There was plenty of butterfly activity even though numbers are on the wane and the skippers and browns are starting to look decidedly worn. Twenty species were recorded inside the wood, comprising **Small Skipper, Essex Skipper, Large Skipper, Brimstone, Large White, Small White, Green-veined White, Common Blue, Brown Argus, Red Admiral, Painted Lady, Peacock, Small Tortoiseshell** (one worn individual - the first I've seen for weeks), **Comma, Silver-washed Fritillary** (at last! - a reasonably fresh male in the centre of the wood and it was even on transect!), **Marbled White** (one very tatty example), **Speckled Wood, Meadow Brown, Gatekeeper & Ringlet.** After completing the transect I took a walk through [Finemere Meadows](#) and added **Small Copper, Purple Hairstreak** and **Small Heath** to the total. This afternoon I went to [Bernwood Meadows](#) and then to [Lapland Farm Meadows](#) in an attempt to add to the Brown Hairstreak score but failed dismally at both places. There were Hairstreaks about, but all those that I saw were Purple!”

*Mick & Wendy Campbell went to Span Green on Friday afternoon, 4th.* At the north end of the footpath on the first big patch of bramble they saw a stunning, pristine female **Brown Hairstreak** with its wings open, nectaring on the bramble flowers. Unfortunately it was the only one they saw despite walking right through to the other end of the footpath and checking all other bramble, ash trees and lots of Angelica. 15 species were seen altogether, noteworthy ones being **Purple Hairstreak** (1), **Small Tortoiseshell** (1), **Small Copper** (5), **Clouded Yellow** (1), **Common Blue** (4) and **Holly Blue** (1). They also found a batch of 2nd/3rd instar **Small Tortoiseshell caterpillars** on a patch of nettles.

*Chris Brown sent the following update for 2 recent visits to Crowsley Park Wood (SU735800 Berks) surveying Silver-washed Fritillary:* ”25<sup>th</sup> July was a very humid, still day and the **Silver-washed Fritillary** were frenetically active, only settling for a few seconds at a time. 12 seen (4M, 1F, 7U). One female was investigating the conifer tree trunks but on the occasions I got a quick focused view through my binoculars, I could not confirm any egg laying. I did try to examine one convenient spot I fixed my eyes on where she had alighted but could not see anything. 1<sup>st</sup> August was an overcast warm day with occasional brief patches of sun. 10 SWF seen (7M, 2F, 1U), As expected the cooler temperatures meant that the Silver-washed Fritillary were much more docile and tended to bask and top up their tanks on the

available nectar sources. Most of the males were looking 'tatty' with missing parts to their wings and were now faded to a browner shade, not looking quite so bright. It is noticeable that the females are harder to find. I am guessing that they are in the woods laying eggs?"

Friday 4<sup>th</sup> August 2006

**4<sup>th</sup> August - Adam Bassett forwarded this sighting from his garden in Marlow Bottom, S.Bucks:** "Just had a female **Silver-washed Fritillary** on the garden buddleia along with the almost daily appearance of **Hummingbird Hawk-moth**. Numbers of **Painted Ladies** seem to have dropped off in the cooler weather."

**David Redhead sent this "buddleia" report on 4<sup>th</sup> August:** "On *Saturday 29th July* Wendy & I popped to *Temple Cowley library in Oxford*. When we arrived the buddleia alongside the car park sported 6 pristine **Painted Ladies** and a **Red Admiral**. All the Painted Ladies were still there when we left but the Red Admiral appeared to have moved on. *Yesterday, 3rd August* I examined the buddleias towards the eastern end of the *Botley Road*. They produced 3 **Large White**, 3 **Small White**, 1 **Painted Lady**, 1 **Peacock** and, to my surprise, a female **Common Blue**. The buddleias alongside the River Thames immediately north of the Botley Road were surprisingly devoid of butterflies."

**Welcome to the website new contributor Prem Roy who sent this sighting on 2<sup>nd</sup> August:** "I saw two **Silver-washed Fritillary** on the *21st July* quite close together, one was in *Round Wood just* south of Tingewick and another just outside *Tingewick Wood* in an area known as Tingewick meadows, but on the southwestern edge of the wood near the road. The other butterfly of interest is the **Brown Argus** which I have seen in Tingewick meadows, quite a few in the meadow south of *Lenborough Wood* and one in my garden in Lenborough (there is open grassland all around), I suspect that these are cranesbill feeding populations as there is no rockrose. The White Admiral is common in the area but no sign of the Purple Emperor. *Round Wood* (SP653310) has a rather overgrown entrance at the southern side, into the actual wood, but there are some clearings and rides inside the wood. *Tingewick Wood* (SP651316) has a track through - I have not explored it much but it is quite dense and I have not seen much. *Lenborough Wood* (SP669309) - this corner is good and the southwestern edge is also quite good as is the northeastern edge. There is a bridle path through but the tree cover is dense, the rest is private."

**Allen Beechey managed to join a site visit to the western part of Aston Rowant reserve on 2<sup>nd</sup> August with Oxfordshire CC's BAP officer:** "Despite the weather we saw a good number of butterflies sheltering from the wind, 13 species in total with the highlights being 30+ **Silver-spotted Skipper** (see *photo below*) and 40+ **Chalkhill Blue** (including an ab. female – *photo below*). Other species seen were; more **Meadow Brown** than you can shake a stick at, **Gatekeeper**, **Common Blue** (many), **Marbled White**, **Speckled Wood**, **Small Skipper**, **Large Skipper** (very worn), **Brown Argus**, **Large White**, **Small White** & **Brimstone**."

**Maureen Cross recorded her first** second brood **Adonis Blue** at *Lardon Chase* on Wednesday afternoon, 2<sup>nd</sup> August. [Please email Maureen, UTB Adonis Blue Species Champion, with all Adonis sightings.](#)

**Despite the dull, overcast and windy conditions Dave Wilton went to the disused railway cutting to the**

**west of Westcott airfield for three hours on Wednesday afternoon, 2<sup>nd</sup>:** “One reason for going was to have a look at *Grove Wood* as I think it has possibilities for Purple Emperor. The wood itself is mainly ash and it has several rides. They're not very wide and are mostly enclosed under the ash canopy, but there are some areas where sunlight would penetrate if the sun was out. I saw plenty of honeysuckle so this could be where my garden White Admiral came from (it is probably also where the Silver-washed Fritillary I saw along the cutting came from). I noticed some odd bits of willow here and there within the wood, but there's an abundance of far better quality willow all along the railway line between SP 700165 and the north-east corner of the wood. One to keep an eye on for next year... Sheltered from the wind, the cutting produced quite a few butterflies even under the dull overcast. 12 species were recorded, comprising **Large White, Small White, Brown Argus, Common Blue, Red Admiral, Painted Lady, Comma, Speckled Wood, Meadow Brown, Gatekeeper, Ringlet and Small Heath.**”

**David Redhead sent this news on Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> August:** “This afternoon I decided I should take my new responsibilities as a 10km Square Champion seriously and went for a mooch in SP50 with the following results - *my garden* 8 species, *Florence Park* 5 species, *Elder Stubbs Allotments* 5 species, *Cowley Marsh* 5 species, *Southfield Golf Course* 0 species (too windy), *Warneford Meadow* 6 species and finally on return home after 5pm the *rough grassland above my house* produced 4 species. The total for the afternoon was 15 species: **Small Skipper, Large Skipper, Large White, Small White, Green-veined White, Small Copper, Common Blue, Red Admiral, Painted Lady, Peacock, Comma, Speckled Wood, Gatekeeper, Meadow Brown & Ringlet.** Not a bad haul considering the non-ideal weather and the habitat. The highest concentration of butterflies was in the allotments but the majority of them were Large or Small Whites - they know when they are on to a good thing these butterflies! The Small Copper in Warneford Meadow gave the most pleasure, as I have seen very few this year, but I think I would have swapped it for a Small Tortoiseshell of which I have seen even less. The only moths were a faded **Six-spot Burnet** and a couple of **Shaded Broad-bar**. Anybody who would like to assist in recording the butterflies and day flying moths in SP50 please contact me on [red.admiral@ntlworld.com](mailto:red.admiral@ntlworld.com)”.

### Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> August 2006

**On 1<sup>st</sup> August Frank Banyard reports that** two **Silver-washed Fritillary** have been visiting his garden buddleias in *Beaconsfield* in recent days. “No idea where they come from as I'm not aware of this species in any of the local woods which in general are violet and nectar free!”

**At one point on Sunday morning, 31<sup>st</sup> July, Dave Ferguson counted** 27 **Silver-washed Fritillaries** on the *Wendover Woods* buddleia. “There were always at least 10. Also on the bush were: **Red Admiral (2), Painted Lady (1), Comma (1), Small White (6), Large White (1), Green-veined White (1), Meadow Brown (1), Marbled White (2), Large Skipper (1), Small Skipper (2).**”

**Phil Coles went to Rushbeds Wood & Lapland Farm on July 31<sup>st</sup> 2006 in poor conditions** – Gatekeeper 4, Meadow Brown 36, Ringlet 4.

**Dave Maunder sent this news on 30<sup>th</sup> July:** “On a family visit to *Coombe Hill* near the monument, I was lucky enough to see a nice male **Silver-spotted Skipper** - the only one I could find! Other species seen were:- **Essex Skippers (12); Purple Hairstreak (1); Small Coppers (5); Chalkhill Blues (25+); Common Blues (8); Brown Argus (1); Painted Ladies (4); Red Admirals (2); Peacock (1); Marbled Whites (3); Meadow Browns - many;**

**Hedge browns** - many; **Small Heaths** (2); **Large Whites** (3); **Small Whites** (5). Moths seen were:- **Hummingbird hawk-moth** (1); **Silver-Y** (5); **Vapourer** (3); **Six-spot Burnet** (30+); **Pyrausta purpuralis** (1)."

**Tim Watts visited the private Calvert landfill site on 30<sup>th</sup> July:** "On the near 4 mile walk around the perimeter I counted 56 **Painted Lady** and 13 **Clouded Yellow**. No sign of Wall Brown in favoured areas. There was 1 Greenshank/3 Green Sandpiper/2 Common Sandpiper 1 Yellow Wagtail. Clouded Yellow hotspots could be viewed from public footpaths. 3 together at the far end of the landfill. Next to the railway bridge (a long walk) 5 together on the last remaining part of the old brickworks site, next to the new Calvert Green estate. This area could be viewed through/over a slatted wooden fence next to the green on the estate (next to no walk!)."

**Dennis Dell sent the following report on 29<sup>th</sup> July:** "Slopes below *Ivinghoe Beacon* and *Steps Hill*, July 28th, 2 to 4 pm. As recent sightings by members have shown, there cannot be a better place and time for variety and numbers than downland in July. Ivinghoe Beacon yesterday was no exception, although Silver Spotted Skippers have not yet reached 'so far north', but I'm sure it won't be long. Seen: **Small White** [36], **Gatekeeper** [44], **Red Admiral** [2], **Large White** [26], **Meadow Brown** [91], **Marbled White** [34], **Painted Lady** [9], **Peacock** [5], **Small Skipper** [11], **Chalkhill Blue** [94], **Common Blue** [6], **Dark Green Fritillary** [9], **Small Heath** [4], **Brimstone** [5], **Brown Argus** [2]. The Dark Green Fritillaries were all quite worn, so their season is coming to an end, but they were nevertheless still flying briskly; I'm always amazed at the energy of this species! The numbers of Chalkhills and Meadow browns are certainly an underestimate: it became quite difficult to count them all."

**Following Neil Davies's visit to Aston Rowant on 23/7/06,** he has sent the following photos of **Chalkhill Blue** and **Brown Argus**:

**On Friday 28<sup>th</sup>, Richard Soulsby did a Silver-spotted Skipper-special transect at Swyncombe and then on Saturday 29<sup>th</sup> he did the standard transect:** "Noteworthy species were as follows. **28<sup>th</sup> July** - warm and calm: 26C, 90% sun. **Silver-spotted Skipper** 28, **Dark Green Fritillary** 5, **Chalkhills** 20+ (not counted) mostly male, a few females, **Small Blue** - most noteworthy was one at bottom near car parking area. **Silver-Y's** - great quantities (too many when trying to spot SSS!). The hillside was alive with butterflies generally. **29<sup>th</sup> July** - windy and not so warm: 24C, 86% sun 20 butterfly species seen - not bad, but not as good as the 23 last week. Noteworthy species: **Silver-spotted Skipper** 5 M & F, mint condition, no DGF surprisingly - I wouldn't have thought such powerful flyers would be put off by the wind. **Chalkhills** 24, only 3 were female **Small Blue** 20, seen in small numbers on every section. Inspected fresh kidney vetch flower/seed heads. On 4 seed heads found 15 **Small Blue eggs**, of which 2 were fresh (blue) and 13 were hatched (white with tops eaten), but no sign of larvae (hidden in seed heads?). So possibly these 2nd generation Small Blue can reproduce - but can the larvae survive the winter? There were a lot less butterflies (and moths) in evidence today compared with yesterday. Total 290, c.f. 376 in week 17 and David Redhead's 641 in week 16."

**Sunday 30<sup>th</sup> July 2006**

**Dave Wilton managed to get a transect done at Finemere Wood NR, Bucks over lunchtime on Saturday 29<sup>th</sup> before the weather deteriorated.** "I was pleased to find 21 butterfly species active, although the only surprise was the number of pristine **Painted Ladies** to be seen, with 16 located along the track leading to the wood and within the wood itself. The only vanessid present in larger numbers was the **Peacock** with

29 seen nectaring from thistles and teasles. The other species comprised **Small Skipper, Essex Skipper, Large Skipper, Brimstone, Large White, Small White, Green-veined White, Clouded Yellow, Common Blue, Purple Hairstreak, Red Admiral, White Admiral, Comma, Marbled White, Speckled Wood, Meadow Brown, Gatekeeper, Ringlet** and **Small Heath**. Unfortunately there was no sign of Silver-washed Fritillary, a species which I've yet to see in this wood."

*Phil Coles visited Shirburn Hill ('Open Access Land') on July 29<sup>th</sup> 2006 where he recorded:* Essex Skipper 2, Small/Essex Skipper 2, Silver-spotted Skipper 14, Large White 1, Brown Argus 3, Chalkhill Blue 1, Painted Lady 2, Dark Green Fritillary 2, Marbled White 5, Gatekeeper 24, Meadow Brown 100+, Ringlet 1.

*Tim Watts visited Hillesden again on 29/7/06* and recorded 3 **Clouded Yellows**, mostly on the planted wild flower mix strip, which is adjacent to the track overlooking the pools (*see also Tim's report of 26<sup>th</sup> July below*). This site is in Bucks (SP69012805). The very obvious hard track that passes the pools, which everyone uses with the owner's consent ISN'T on OS maps. However it is okay for anyone to use this track. The owner has created this area purely for wildlife and welcomes anyone there to record their sightings.

*The Field Meeting led by Maureen Cross on Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> July to explore new open access land near Goring, including BBOWT's Hartslock Reserve and adjacent hillsides, produced 23 butterfly species and 10 moths.* Two of the moth species, the Pyralid *Mecyna flavalis* and **Chalk Carpet** *Scotopteryx bipunctaria* are of special interest being new for the UTB 2006 list. The *Mecyna flavalis* is of notable moth status and the Goring Gap is its only known location in the three counties.

*Our thanks to Maureen for leading this event.*

*Dave Ferguson has been out and about during the last few days and sent the following reports:*

- *"A belated sighting for 24<sup>th</sup> July:* c20 **Graylings** scattered around *Swinley Forest*. This was my first visit to Swinley Forest. I parked at the Discovery Centre (SU876662) which has a large free car park and is the only access point to the forest that I know. I was walking South to Upper Star Post (SU873646). The area is coniferous forest with rides. Some of these are sunny, wide and have grass and heather edges. This is where I saw the Graylings. Caesar's Camp (SU657864) is an open area of grass/heather. The information board mentions Silver-studded Blues here but I didn't see any. There are some large oaks here which are worth a look. I was actually after Brilliant Emerald dragonflies which have been recorded at Upper Star Post Pond and Butter Bottom, but these ponds are fenced off. Where are the **Small Tortoiseshells**? I have seen just one of the new brood, but **Red Admirals** and **Commas** are well above normal numbers.

- *Then on Saturday afternoon 29<sup>th</sup>, on the buddleia in Wendover Woods* there were 10 **Silver-washed Fritillaries** and one each of **Painted Lady, Red Admiral, Meadow Brown, Ringlet, Marbled White, Small White, Large Skipper** and **Small Skipper**.

- *On Sunday morning, 30<sup>th</sup>, at Lodge:* **Painted Lady** (6), **Peacock** (3), **Red Admiral** (1), **Small Tortoiseshell** (1), **Common Blue** (10), **Marbled White** (3), **Meadow Brown** (40), **Gatekeeper** (30), **Small/Essex Skipper** (10), **Small White** (80), **Large White** (30).

- *And finally, taken near Radnage this afternoon, 30<sup>th</sup>,* this photo of **Chalkhill Blues** (*see below*). I don't know what the snail thought of this!"

Friday 28<sup>th</sup> July 2006

*Francis Gomme's tour around a very hot and dry Princes Risborough today (Friday 28th) was rewarded with* second brood **Small Blue** and **Silver-spotted Skippers** at two previously unrecorded sites, *Kop Hill* and *Pulpit Hill* respectively. A **Clouded Yellow** was also performing at *Kimble Rifle Range*."

*David Redhead sent the following report on sightings at the Watlington Hill field meeting yesterday, 27<sup>th</sup> July:* "The most numerous species was **Common Blue** with numbers well into three figures. **Brimstone**, **Brown Argus** and **Gatekeeper** were also about in good numbers. Amongst the key species **Chalkhill Blue** led the way with a dozen (all male bar one), **Silver-spotted Skipper** totalled seven and three **Dark Green Fritillary** were seen in the scallops. Other species seen were: **Small White**, **Small Copper**, **Peacock**, **Painted Lady**, **Meadow Brown** and **Small Heath**. Surprisingly the other Skippers, Red Admiral and Comma were all noticeable by their absence and a haul of just 13 butterfly species was a bit lower than expected. In places every step disturbed a pyrausta moth and they seemed to be almost exclusively *Pyrausta aurata*. **Silver-Y moths** were frequent and a few **Six-spot Burnet** were seen."

*Dave Maunder sent the following report on 27<sup>th</sup> July:* "Yesterday I was lucky enough to see another two **Silver-washed Fritillaries** - male and female again - up on *Coombe Hill* behind the monument. I also saw a **Purple Hairstreak**, 3 **Painted Ladies**, 1 **Red Admiral**, 2 **Comma**, 1 **Peacock**, 2 **Small Copper**, 20+ **Essex Skippers**, many **Hedge Browns**, 15+ **Meadow Browns**, 3 worn **Ringlets**, 2 **Speckled Woods**, 3 **Brimstones**, 1 **Large White**, 10 **Small Whites**."

*On 26th July Frank Banyard and Ched George went to Holtspur Bottom. Frank sent the following exciting news:* "Ched was primarily checking for Dark Green Fritillary while I was looking for second brood Small Blue following their return last year and successful 1st brood this year. Two, possibly three **Small Blue** were seen, the first this July. In the area just in front of the new Claude Rivers memorial seat, Ched noted a male **Chalkhill Blue**. This is the first recorded sighting of this species in the valley **for at least 40years**, and near to the bank on which we have reintroduced Horseshoe Vetch. With the return of the Small Blue in 2005, two of the three "blues" long absent from the valley have reappeared. The third, Adonis Blue will probably take longer, but the current successes will encourage more Horseshoe Vetch planting this winter. Ched did not record Dark Green Fritillary on this occasion although they have been about in increased numbers this year."

*Peter Hall recorded a Clouded Yellow* at *Bradenham* on Wednesday 26th.

*Dick Bodily had a Painted Lady* on the buddleia in his *Shenley Lodge* garden on 26<sup>th</sup> July.

*Tim Watts passed on this news:* "Up to 6 **Clouded Yellow** seen by *Jon Holt 26/7/06 at Hillesden*. This site is accessed from public footpaths that form a circular walk from the church at the far end of the village. Walk through large open iron gates to left of church, carry on down the track through the wooden gate. After a further 300mts take track on right which passes a large open area with pools which has been created for wildlife. Clouded Yellow seen over this. View from path only. This is a very recently created area that has instantly attracted rare migrant birds and now migrant butterflies."

*Tim followed up the sighting with a visit to Hillesden pools on 27<sup>th</sup> July and recorded 5 Clouded Yellow, Small Copper, Painted Lady & lots of blues.*

*25<sup>th</sup> July at Wytham Wood, Andy Reynolds saw 6 Silver-washed Fritillaries (2 male, 1 female, 3?). "Also 1 male SWF on the buddleia bush in my urban Oxford garden in [Summertown](#) - that's the 12th species on that one bush this year!"*

*Welcome to the website new contributors Jane & Alan Williams: "My husband and I went to the [Dancersend BBOWT](#) site for a walk on the afternoon of 23<sup>rd</sup> July. It was fantastic and we will be going back again. Anyway, we thoroughly enjoyed seeing lots of butterflies and we spotted a **Silver-washed Fritillary** and a male **Brimstone**."*

### Wednesday 26<sup>th</sup> July 2006

"The **Silver-spotted Skipper** season is truly underway! They have been seen at Kimble Warren, Buttlers Hangings and Aston Rowant, plus I saw two this on 23<sup>rd</sup> at [Swyncombe](#). All reports will be gratefully received by email, UTB website or phone." [Richard Soulsby, UTB Silver-spotted Skipper Champion.](#)

*Jackie Tuckey sent this unusual report yesterday, 25<sup>th</sup>: "I sat down to have my lunch at [Murcott](#) under the apple trees when suddenly a butterfly dropped on to my hand. It was a bit tatty and new to me then it opened its wings and there it was, a beautiful purple sheen. I've never seen one before but that was definitely a **Purple Emperor**! It wouldn't leave me and was wandering round my hand prodding me with his yellow tongue. After studying it for so long I tried to put it on to some flowers but it kept coming back to my hand. Just as I was wondering what to do it flew off. Fantastic! Do you think it was getting minerals or salt from me? Am I lucky or what!"*

*Welcome to the website Neil Davies who sent this report yesterday, 25<sup>th</sup>: "I live, and do my butterfly recording, in Shropshire but last weekend I was visiting in-laws in Little Chalfont so took the opportunity to visit your site first in readiness for getting out on The Chilterns for the first time ever. [On Sat \(22<sup>nd</sup> July\) I visited Aston Rowant \(North\)](#). It started to pour down just as I arrived in the afternoon and I duly headed back home. [On the Sunday \(23<sup>rd</sup> July\)](#) by early afternoon the cloud was starting to break up in Little Chalfont so I headed back to Aston Rowant on the off chance it was going to be a fine afternoon. Arriving at 2.30pm, the sun had disappeared again! Nevertheless, I spent a profitable hour or so waiting for the sun to return and saw: **Meadow Brown** 50+, **Gatekeeper** 30+, **Marbled White** 20+, Small / Essex Skipper 30+, 1 **Painted Lady**, 1 **Red Admiral**, 1 **Brown Argus**. At 3.45pm, the sun came out properly - then after 5 minutes of sun, I saw 10 **Chalkhill Blues** (all male, save 1 female lying low on vegetation) and 6 **Silver-Spotted Skippers**, as well as more of the species seen flying when the sun was in - but no more Brown Argus."*

*Phil Coles reports that in the 1Km square SP7310 (Cuddington – Bucks) on July 25<sup>th</sup> 2006 he recorded: "Small/Essex Skipper, **Large White**, **Small White**, **Green-veined White**, **Common Blue**, **Red Admiral**, **Peacock**, **Comma**, **Gatekeeper** and **Meadow Brown**.*

**On 25<sup>th</sup> July Andy Reynolds reported that he visited Waterperry Wood:** “I had 16 species just in a 20-metre strip of bramble, including **White-letter Hairstreak** and **Purple Hairstreak**, both feeding on the bramble. **White Admiral** (2 or 3) and possible Silver-washed Fritillary (flew by fast) too. I didn't get to see the mighty Emperor in Waterperry but did see a raggedy old male **Purple Emperor** in the south of *Bernwood*. That trip upped my species count for this year to 34.”

**On Monday afternoon, 24<sup>th</sup> July, Dave Wilton called into Greenham Common on his way back up from the south coast:** “As there's still no mention of the species on the website and as it took me 45 minutes of searching to find just one example, I thought I'd better let you know that I saw a single **Grayling** there today, about a quarter of a mile west of the control tower. Quite understandably, other butterflies tend to shun the stony areas favoured by the Grayling so, despite the glorious sunshine, my species count remained very low for the hour that I was there: **Clouded Yellow** (2), **Large White** (1), **Common Blue** (21), **Meadow Brown** (6), **Gatekeeper** (5) and **Small Heath** (1).

Also, I spent 90 minutes at *Stoke Wood* on Friday morning. 16 butterfly species were in evidence but the only noteworthy item was a single **Silver-washed Fritillary**. I think I can state fairly categorically that this is not a Purple Emperor wood - I found no sign of sallow anywhere.”

**Allen Beechey went up to Chinnor Hill during his lunch break on Monday 24<sup>th</sup> July to have a look for potential Purple Emperor habitat:** “Whilst up there I had a look at the grassland. The clearing had a veritable swarm of butterflies criss-crossing the sward. I didn't bother counting numbers but saw: many **Marbled White** (looking quite faded), **Meadow Brown** (new & old), **Gatekeeper**, **Small Skipper**, **Large Skipper**, **Green Veined White**, **Large White**, **Peacock**, **Brimstone** (second generation), **Common Blue** (1 male & two female – second generation), **Painted Lady** (two very fresh individuals) & **Comma**. On my return to the office in Chinnor there were 5 Painted Lady, 2 **Peacock** & 2 **Red Admiral** on the buddleia waiting to greet me! Not bad in half an hour, even if *Iris* did not show itself!”

**Welcome to the website new contributor Stephen Jackson from Stanwell, Middlesex:** “I was just reading through the UTB Butterfly sightings and took a look at the first sightings page. You have your first recorded Silver-spotted Skippers for the 21<sup>st</sup> July, I was at *Aston Rowant* on Thursday evening, 20<sup>th</sup> July, from 18:30 until about 19:15 and in that time I saw about half a dozen **Silver-spotted Skippers**. Other species noted were **Large**, **Small** & **Essex Skippers**, **Chalkhill Blue**, **Marbled White**, **Meadow Brown**, **Small Heath** and **Red Admiral**.”

**David Redhead went for a longer walk than he meant to Sunday afternoon, 23<sup>rd</sup>, in Jarn Mound/ Matthew Arnold Field/ Wootton/ Youlbury/ Chilswell Farm/ Boars Hill area (the last in error as a footpath he was aiming for had disappeared).** “In the woodland near Yarn Mound I saw a fresh **Holly Blue** and in a field belonging to the Oxford Preservation Trust a **White Admiral** & two pristine **Small Coppers**. The rest did not quite live up to this start but I still ended up with 19 species. A glorious patch of fleabane in the setaside meadow south of Chilswell Farm where I saw the first UTB Small Skippers was covered in **Meadow Browns** & **Gatekeepers** and also provided a pristine male **Brown Argus**, male **Common Blue** and, surprisingly, a female **Common Blue**. By the time I got to the footpath leading to Chilswell Farm I had only see one Skipper and that was **Small Skipper**. Suddenly there were Skippers everywhere and I was able to identify a considerable number of them and they were all **Essex Skipper**. I went past a lot of oak trees but none produced a Purple Hairstreak.”

**At Aston Rowant on Sunday afternoon, 23<sup>rd</sup>, Tony Croft saw** at least 10 **Silver-spotted Skippers**: “They weren't being very co-operative posing wise so the attached picture is the best of a mediocre bunch (see photo below).”

*On Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup>, in Wendover Woods Dave Maunder got nice sightings of two Silver-washed Fritillaries* - male and female - at close range. *On 11<sup>th</sup> July* he had a **White-letter Hairstreak** land on his stomach while in his Aylesbury garden! “Good numbers of **Peacocks** have been on the wing since the 18th, also many **Red Admirals** this week, and a few **Painted Ladies** appearing on our local buddleias. Also Small Tortoiseshells seem to be around in good numbers now.”

*Jim Asher visited Buckland Warren on Sunday afternoon, 23<sup>rd</sup>, after the sun eventually re-appeared.* He found two **Silver-washed Fritillaries** on the east side of the wood and one towards the south, plus one **White Admiral**. “I have seen Silver-washed Fritillary only once before here (a singleton, a few years back) and White Admiral just once, also a couple of years back. It’s a first time for both together and Silver-washed Fritillary in multiple numbers.”

*Francis Gomme sent this report on 23<sup>rd</sup> July:* “On *Saturday 22<sup>nd</sup>* **Silver Spotted Skippers** were already in good numbers at *Linky Down*. Two **Dark Green Fritillaries** also seen in the upper field adjacent to Upper Icknield Way i.e. the more recent NNR extension.”

*David Redhead reports that the Swyncombe Downs transect, which is now in its fifth year, produced a record number of butterflies on Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> July with 641 individual butterflies.* “The stars were 16 **Dark Green Fritillary** (also a record for the transect) and 18 pristine second brood **Small Blue**, including a mating pair (see *photo below*). **Meadow Brown** were the most numerous at 261 and **Marbled White** came a strong second at 140. The remaining numbers were made up of **Small/Essex Skipper** 64, **Ringlet** 43, **Gatekeeper** 30, **Small Heath** 27, **Small White** 14, **Chalkhill Blue** 8, **Large White** 7, **Brimstone** 6, **Green-veined White** 2, **Speckled Wood** 2, **Red Admiral** 1, **Comma** 1, **Peacock** 1. Also seen off transect were singletons of **Common Blue & Small Tortoiseshell**.”

*Danny Howard had his first ever Purple Emperor sighting at Bernwood Forest on Sunday 16th.* “I had just about given up and was walking back to the car park when a female **Purple Emperor** came and sat on some willow next to the main ride at about head height. It fluttered from leaf to leaf and it wasn't until it had flown back to the tree tops that I realised it may well have been egg laying (although a very brief search didn't yield any). I think we are having a bumper **Silver-Y moth** year too! Have had about 40 feeding (and egg laying) in my garden every evening for the last week or so.”

**Saturday 22<sup>nd</sup> July 2006**

*David Redhead attended the hayraking party at Whitecross Green Wood on Friday, 21<sup>st</sup>:* “Just after 9am our activities received a seal of approval as a **White Admiral** majestically circled round us - we were to see two more later in the day. Whilst moving to the next raking location, about 10.20am, I noticed an interesting looking dead leaf on a small oak tree, on closer approach it transformed into a pristine **Brown Hairstreak** settled on an oak leaf at head height. It sat there for a couple of minutes, allowing me to examine it at close quarters, before it flew off - unfortunately I did not have my camera with me! A nearby ash tree showed some Hairstreak activity up top but they were all **Purple Hairstreaks**. A pristine male **Brown Argus** was the last butterfly seen before leaving site. Another 13 species, making a total of 17 were seen by the party - **Large Skipper, Small Skipper, Brimstone, Large White, Small White, Comma, Peacock, Red Admiral, Marbled White, Speckled Wood, Gatekeeper, Meadow Brown & Ringlet**.”

There is still a lot of hay that needs raking up at Whitecross Green Wood. This is essential work to prevent over-enrichment of the rides. The next hayraking party is on **Monday 24th July from 9am onwards**. Why not come and help preserve the flora and fauna you enjoy watching. Contact **David Redhead 01865 772520** for further details.

**On Saturday afternoon, 22<sup>nd</sup>, Tony Croft managed to add Purple Hairstreak to his list of garden visitors:**

“We have a very large ash tree which I have studied from time to time over the years to little avail but during the last few days have noticed butterfly activity up at the top. I finally got a good view of one which turned out to be a **Purple Hairstreak**. There is a copse nearby containing quite a few oak trees so I guess a visitation was inevitable eventually.”

**On 21<sup>st</sup> July Francis Gomme made a lunchtime dash to the very hot, dry and dusty former BBOWT**

**Chequers reserve:** “I was rewarded with my first **Silver-spotted Skipper** of the year on *Kimble Warren*. Recorded every year here since the BIG/EN field day in 1999 - two days earlier than 2005. On the way home tonight I had another **Purple Emperor** at *Whiteleaf*, in trees below the cross.”

**Michael Pitt-Payne visited the nature reserve at Lower Cadsden opposite the Harrow pub on 20th July:**

“The whole area was alive with butterflies. The most noticeable were **Chalkhill Blues** and **Marbled Whites**. I was delighted to see a **Clouded Yellow** and to obtain this picture of it (see below).”

**Peter Hall sent the following report on Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> July:** “**Silver Washed Fritillary** today at the base of *Coombe Hill*, Ellesborough. Also **Small Skipper**, **Marbled White**, **Gatekeeper**, **Meadow Brown**, **Small White**, **Small Copper**, **Common Blue**, **Peacock**.”

**Robin Dryden followed up his friend Paul Cropper's sighting of White-letter Hairstreak at Maiden's Green**

**on 20<sup>th</sup> July at 9am:** “I was also successful with three **White-letter Hairstreak** nectaring together on bramble. The path was full of butterflies with **Meadow Drown** and **Gatekeeper** too numerous to count, fourteen **Small White**, one **Red Admiral**, two **Essex Skipper**, one **Holly Blue** and one **Purple Hairstreak** also on bramble.”

**The Holtspur Valley Reserves Open Day on 15th July was a great success. Frank Banyard reports:** “18 species of butterfly were recorded - **Dark Green Fritillary**, **Large Skipper**, **Small Skipper**, **Essex Skipper**, **Brimstone**, **Large White**, **Small White**, **Green-veined White**, **Brown Argus**, **Holly Blue**, **Small Tortoiseshell**, **Peacock**, **Red Admiral**, **Comma**, **Marbled White**, **Meadow Brown**, **Gatekeeper** & **Ringlet**. Numerous **Six-spot Burnet moths** and a **Dusky Sallow** were seen. In fact the moths tended to outshine the butterflies as several **larvae of the Striped Lychnis**, a ‘Notable A’ moth, were found on the Dark Mullein plants re-introduced to our Holtspur Bottom Reserve by our Striped Lychnis Champion, Peter Hall, as there were historic records for the valley. Also seen on both the Bottom and the neighbouring LNR Holtspur Bank were singletons of **Sitochroa palealis**- a ‘Notable B’ Pyralid moth - never previously recorded in the valley.

**On the Monday following the open Day**, new brood **Painted Lady** was present on *Holtspur Bottom*, while **Purple Hairstreak** was also seen. Both this and **Holly Blue** had been recorded on the previous Friday.”

**Note:** *Nick Bowles subsequently reported that the walk he led managed Small Copper and Speckled Wood in addition to those listed above, bringing the species count to 20.*

**On Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> July Dave Wilton thought he would try the woods south of Tingewick, Bucks:** The first wood had some reasonable rides with plenty of brambles and as a result was quite good for butterflies. "I found **Small Skipper, Essex Skipper, Large Skipper, Brimstone, Large White, Green-veined White, Common Blue** (1 fresh female, plenty of bird's-foot trefoil about), **Red Admiral** (2), **Peacock** (16), **Comma** (1), **Silver-washed Fritillary** (1, a bird-pecked male), **Speckled Wood, Marbled White** (20+), **Meadow Brown, Gatekeeper & Ringlet** in residence. I was surprised not to find White Admiral as I saw quite a bit of honeysuckle. I then went to **Tingewick Wood**, which has public paths around the outside and through the middle. This is another mostly conifer wood with some areas of ash. The rides are narrow and, for the most part, little light gets down to ground level. Very little was seen, but I did find **Peacock** (7), **Comma** (1) and **Silver-washed Fritillary** (1, believed female)."

**David Redhead reports that he and Wendy had sightings of Silver-washed Fritillary in their Oxon garden on 19<sup>th</sup> July:** "One **Silver-washed Fritillary** was flying around the partially out buddleia which catches the early morning sun along with a couple of **Red Admiral, Comma, Peacock, Gatekeeper**, a **Large White** and several **Meadow Browns**."

Then at about 5pm today a second, darker (possibly female) **Silver-washed Fritillary** flying round a small wild buddleia near the bramble patch."

**David also passed on this news:** "Just had a telephone conversation with a contact who was in **Bernwood** on the **18<sup>th</sup> July**. He saw a large **Fritillary** in the eastern side of the forest towards the M40. He did not think it was a **Dark Green** because he had seen them about 3 weeks ago on **Cleeve Common** and asked me if it could have been a **Silver-washed Fritillary** - I told him it almost certainly was. He also went to the old **Hell Coppice car park** because he remembered seeing a **Purple Emperor** there in 1974. He stood with his back to the gate and saw a **Purple Emperor** up in the smaller of the oak trees. In fact he had three separate sightings but they may all well have been of the same butterfly. This was about 11:15 am."

**Chris Brown visited Crowsley Park Woods again on 18<sup>th</sup> July:** "I recorded 3 **Silver-washed Fritillary** (2 were female). It was 34 C in the shade and I went late afternoon when most of the site is shaded. Most butterflies are in the pockets of sunlight, so I did not hang around too long. In fact my bicycle tyres were sticking to the road each way!"

### Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> July 2006

**Francis Gomme sent this news today:** "A tour around Princes Risborough on **Tuesday afternoon (18<sup>th</sup>)** produced single **Purple Emperors** at **Whiteleaf Hill, Kop Hill** and **Sergeant's Wood**. **Purple Hairstreaks** also seen in good numbers at each location. **Chalkhill Blues** already abundant at usual sites across the Risborough Gap."

**On 19<sup>th</sup> July Tim Watts walked the public footpath through Kingswood and recorded 1 Silver washed Fritillary, 2 White Admiral, 8 Purple Hairstreak, 2 Peacock and an Emperor Dragonfly** all around the small pond in the wood.

**Dave Wilton went to College Wood near Nash, Bucks this morning (19<sup>th</sup>) to look for Purple Emperor.** "I didn't see any signs of it but there's certainly sufficient sallow present so I see no reason why it shouldn't inhabit the wood. Over two hours I walked all of the rides and ended up recording 16 species,

comprising **Small Skipper, Large Skipper, Brimstone, Large White, Small White, Green-veined White, Purple Hairstreak, White Admiral (4), Red Admiral (34), Peacock (25), Small Tortoiseshell (1), Comma (9), Speckled Wood, Meadow Brown, Gatekeeper and Ringlet**. I then came back to the [Calvert](#) drains in an attempt to get my 40th butterfly species of the year, the **Clouded Yellow**. Sure enough, two of them were seen, along with **Essex Skipper, Common Blue, Painted Lady** and large numbers of **Marbled White** which were additions to the day's list. The Painted Lady and a single White Admiral were recorded at the northernmost point of the drains adjacent to Sheephouse Wood. Why is it that I can guarantee seeing Clouded Yellow here every year from late July onwards? Is it the aroma of the land-fill site which attracts immigrants to this area year after year, or is the accepted wisdom that this species can't over-winter in the UK just plain wrong and there is a resident single-brooded colony in the area? Back home at [Westcott](#), our garden managed to attract a dozen species over a half hour period late this afternoon, comprising Essex Skipper (1), Large White (2), Small White (2), **Holly Blue (1)**, Red Admiral (2), Peacock (3), Small Tortoiseshell (1), Comma (1), Marbled White (1), Meadow Brown (7), Gatekeeper (3) & Ringlet (1), as well as the inevitable **Hummingbird Hawk-moth**. The various buddleias are proving their worth at the moment!"

***Paul Bowyer went to Church Wood Hedgerley at lunchtime today, 19<sup>th</sup> July, to look for the White Admiral.***

"There were few butterflies in the wood. I didn't see 1 Speckled Wood. I did find 1 **White Admiral** in the churchyard which was cooler than the wood. Other species identified in the wood and the church field were **Meadow Brown, Peacock, Marbled White, Purple Hairstreak, Gatekeeper, Comma, Common Blue, Ringlet, Large Skipper, Small Skipper** and **Large White**."

***Tim Watts carried out a survey of the Calvert reserve (BBOWT permit required) on 17<sup>th</sup> July with butterflies as the target:***

"I was very pleased to confirm 2 **White Admirals**. The first one was perching on the lower branches of a poplar tree defending its territory against other butterflies for 40mins. I was amazed to see a second White Admiral amongst some brambles, so hopefully this means there is a breeding/small colony on site. Other species seen: **6-Spot burnet**. and a **Glow-worm** (seen in the evening)."

***Dennis Dell had a short walk around the top end of Wendover woods [Aston Hill] on Monday afternoon, 17<sup>th</sup>.*** He saw 2 **Silver-washed Fritillary**; one female egg laying about one foot from the base of a tree.

***Mick & Wendy Campbell went to Wendover Woods on 17<sup>th</sup> July to survey the Silver-washed Fritillary colony.***

They walked about 75% of the perimeter of the wood at a reasonable pace, during which time they had in excess of 60 sightings of **Silver-washed Fritillary**. Given the mobility of this butterfly it is impossible to count exact numbers in the colony, but at one point they were able to see 14 Silver-washed Fritillary in one small area: 5 nectaring on bramble, 3 flying in a chain and 3 mating pairs. In the many sunny glades they regularly saw 2 Silver-washed Fritillary on bramble patches. Also seen, amongst the usual species, was a single **White Admiral**.

***Phil Coles visited Shirburn Hill ('Open Access Land') on July 17<sup>th</sup> 2006.*** He recorded **Small/Essex Skipper 18, Large Skipper 9, Large White 1, Small/Green-veined White 5, Peacock 1, Comma 1, Dark Green Fritillary 9, Marbled White 100+, Gatekeeper 36, Meadow Brown 100+, Ringlet 5, Small Heath 7.**

***Then on 18<sup>th</sup> July Phil visited Swain's Wood (BBOWT Permit Reserve):*** **Small/Essex Skipper 100+, Large Skipper 5, Brimstone 2, Large White 4, Small White 7, Small/Green-veined White 8, White-letter Hairstreak 2, Common Blue 2, Chalkhill Blue 3, Red Admiral 1, Peacock 2, Comma 2, Dark Green Fritillary 1, Marbled**

**White 100+, Gatekeeper 100+, Meadow Brown 100+, Ringlet 1, Small Heath 2.**

*Having seen so many Silver Washed Fritillary on his brief visit last week, Allen Beechey returned to the Warburg reserve on Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> July, camera in hand:* “I needn’t have bothered - with the camera that is – as due to the high temperature the **Silver-washed Fritillaries** were bombing around without the slightest intention of stopping! As for numbers, I gave up counting when I reached 25. Also floating around were a number of **Marbled White, Meadow Brown**, a brace of **Ringlet**, a **Green-veined White**, one **Large White** and one second generation **Brimstone**. The highlight, however, was an inquisitive female **Purple Emperor** that completed a lazy circuit of me before disappearing into the scrub that lies between the two rifle ranges (now strips of grassland). That was at 5pm (temperature 29.5°C!!!!).”

**Monday 17<sup>th</sup> July 2006**

*Paul Cropper of Reading sent the following sightings today:* “5pm on *Saturday 15th July* at least 3 **White-letter Hairstreaks** near *Maiden's Green, Berkshire*, along the byway at SU893750, on the elm suckers and nectaring on the brambles. One female in good condition but others looking rather tatty. 3pm on *Saturday 15th July* at least 5 **Purple Hairstreaks** around the junction of *Snipes Lane and Hawthorn Lane*, near Maiden's Green, Berkshire, at SU884738. One of these came down to nectar on the brambles, giving good views.”

*Tim & Colleen Watts went to Finemere on Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> July:* “We watched the tall Ash trees at the far end of *Finemere* for **Purple Emperor** from 10:30-11:30 but no luck. At 12 o'clock one flew over the turning circle in the wood. I located it perched on the last but one Oak, on right of track heading towards the turning circle. It was a male and stayed perched/guarding for 40 minutes+. It was still there when we left. We managed to show it to other visitors who were looking for their first ever sighting of one. It was a bit tatty with a chunk missing from its wings. Also seen: 2 **White Admiral** and lots of **Purple Hairstreak**, some of which were low down. One was seen on the grass in the turning circle.”

*Martin Harvey had a bit of a surprise on Sunday 16<sup>th</sup>:* “Here in our garden in *Great Kimble* (central Bucks) Nina saw a **White Admiral**. We both watched it for a minute or so, during which time it landed briefly on an apple tree, and then flew off over the fence. I'm not aware of any colonies nearby, indeed there are no records anywhere in this 10km square in the recent UTB atlas. Presumably it must have been dispersing from some distance away. A very welcome addition to the garden list, I wonder if we'll ever see one again?”

*Richard Soulsby reports that Chalkhill Blues are out in good numbers now:* “I saw 18 **Chalkhill Blues** in 2 hours (1400-1600) at *Aston Rowant North (Beacon Hill)* this afternoon (16<sup>th</sup>), all males. The hillside was thick with clouds of butterflies, mostly **Marbled Whites, Meadow Browns** and **Small/Essex Skippers** (out of 10 identified, 7 were Essex and 3 were Small), plus 2 **Large Skippers** in the more wooded areas. 15 species seen in total (**Small Tort, Gatekeeper, Brimstone, Painted Lady, Ringlet, Small Heath** (only 3), **Red Admiral, Comma** and **Small White** in addition to the above). Interestingly, I didn't see any Common Blues - then on return home found a female **Common Blue** on my lawn probing around in the black medick with intent to lay. Total seen in my garden between 16:30 and 19:00 were 12 species including **Holly Blue, Peacock** and **Large White** on top of species seen at Aston Rowant. So 19 species for the day.

No Silver-spotted Skippers yet at A.R., but they should be out in the next 7-10 days. **Everyone, keep your eyes open to claim the first of the last species of the year!**

*[Please report sightings of Silver-spotted Skippers to [Richard Soulsby, UTB Species Champion for SSS.](#)]*

**Dennis Dell sent the following on 16<sup>th</sup> July:** “On *Sunday 9<sup>th</sup>*, the second day of the Purple Emperor field meeting, there were several people present from the Milton Keynes Natural History Society. Paul Manchester took this amazing photo of **Purple Emperor** in flight above the *Bernwood Oakley car park* territory (see below).”

**Thomas Merckx sent the following report:** “On *15<sup>th</sup> July* I saw more than 10 individual **Silver-washed Fritillary** in *Wychwood forest* (near Charlbury). I also saw one **White Admiral**.”

**Graham Elcombe visited the southern half of Wendover woods on 14<sup>th</sup> July:** “Although I saw no Purple Emperors, I was glad to see that *Buddleia dellensis* is now coming into flower, abundantly. What I DID see, in the general area to the East of the *Buddleia*, was a lot of **Silver-washed Fritillaries**, as the website had already noted. Impossible to count them accurately, but I momentarily saw four at once on scrubby brambles about 200 metres from *Buddleia*.”

**Derek & Cathy Brown went to Waterperry Wood on Saturday 15<sup>th</sup>:** “We managed 3 **White-letter Hairstreaks** in the usual place but no Emperors at all in 3 hours. Lots of the usual subjects with **Gatekeepers** out in force.”

**Wendy & Mick Campbell had a very enjoyable visit to Chinkwell Wood on Saturday 15<sup>th</sup>, recording 20 species of butterfly.** Walking along the outside edge of the wood, they were lucky enough to see one large (probably female) **Purple Emperor** which headed out of the wood about 8 feet above the ground and then continued flying strongly out across an open field! It was almost out of binocular range when it turned around and headed back into the wood. They also found a number of Elm trees in the wood and recorded 3 fresh **White-letter Hairstreaks**. 42 **Red Admirals** were counted on the many patches of bramble. Other species seen were: **Speckled Wood, Comma, Meadow Brown, Gatekeeper, Small Tortoiseshell, Ringlet, Purple Hairstreak, Peacock, Small White, Small Skipper, Marbled White, Painted Lady, Large White, Large Skipper, White Admiral (5), Brimstone** and a single pristine **Small Copper** in the adjoining field.

**Saturday 15<sup>th</sup> July 2006**

**Richard Soulsby wandered through Benson today, 15<sup>th</sup>, to do the Benson churchyard survey:** “I noticed a single modest-sized *buddleia* with 9 species on or near it: **Small Tortoiseshell, Peacock, Comma, 2 x Large White, Meadow Brown, 4 x Red Admiral, Essex Skipper, Small White** and **Brimstone**. The **Peacock** was the first I've seen of the new brood. Also seen in both my garden and the churchyard were my first of the summer-brood **Holly Blues**. One week ago Skippers seen by the verge-side of the main road past Benson were roughly 50/50 **Small** and **Essex Skippers**, whereas yesterday evening they were about 5 to 1 in favour of Essex.”

**At Piddington wood today, 15<sup>th</sup> July, Tim Watts watched the tall Ash trees for one and half hours** and eventually saw a male **Purple Emperor** gliding around the tops then landing on the same look-out branch. “This

was at 2pm. I also saw 1 **White Admiral** and 2 **Purple Hairstreak**.”

**Ched George visited Bix on Friday pm. 14<sup>th</sup>:** “A number of **Silver-washed Fritillaries** flying. 2 males positively identified once settled. Two courtship flights witnessed but did not confirm females as they did not settle. I saw 3 individuals at once. Must be more. All looked very fresh but one male chipped on hind wing.”

**Nick Bowles has received reports of Chalkhill Blue being seen:** 1 at *Lardon Chase* on 6<sup>th</sup> July, 1 at *Coombe Hill* on 11<sup>th</sup> and 2 at *Aston Rowant* on 12<sup>th</sup>.

*[Please report sightings of Chalkhill Blue to [Nick Bowles, UTB Species Champion.](#)]*

**Dave Wilton called in to Bernwood on Friday 14<sup>th</sup>** and spent 50 minutes searching for Purple Emperor but didn't see any, despite trying the poplars by the Oakley Wood car park entrance and walking down the track as far as Piccadilly and back. He did see a couple of **White Admirals** and loads of **Purple Hairstreaks**. Back at home he decided to go for a wander around the village and it proved very fruitful. On the far side of a football pitch, about 150 yards from his garden he discovered a **White-letter Hairstreak** on a hedge of elm/ash/sallow with blackthorn and hawthorn.

**Wendy & Mick Campbell went to Waterperry Wood on Friday 14<sup>th</sup> to look for Purple Emperor.** In a thorough survey of the wood they didn't see any males but did have good views of **4 female Purple Emperors**, one of which glided ahead of them along the track only a metre above the ground and then settled low down on vegetation sunning itself. Another female was seen flying into a Sallow tree where they watched it laying eggs. 20 species of butterfly were recorded altogether, including **White-letter Hairstreak** (4), **Silver-washed Fritillary** (3) and **White Admiral** (16).

**14<sup>th</sup> July - David Redhead reports that the buddleias in his garden are already attracting butterflies.** “The "wild" one, which went unpruned this year and grows out of an old wall, had a maximum count of nectaring butterflies of 3 **Red Admiral**, 2 **Comma**, 1 **Small Tortoiseshell** (my first of the second brood), 1 **Small White** and a very tired **Meadow Brown** - all this in spite of none of the flowers being fully out. Another buddleia, which only has 3 partially open flowers, even had a temporary visit from a **Large White**. In the parched area of rough grassland, over half a dozen Meadow Brown were flying along with a **Ringlet** and a **Marbled White** (there is a colony nearby and most years one or two find their way into our garden). In the vegetable garden a Comma was showing prolonged interest in the contents of the wheelbarrow. The herb garden sported a couple of **Gatekeeper**, another Large White and a couple of Meadow Brown, all mainly interested in the marjoram. There were also three Small Whites nectaring on lavender. The alleged wildflower lawn, which is partially shaded at this time of day, had a couple of Ringlet and Meadow Brown plus a **Large Skipper**. Total count 25-30 butterflies and 10 species. Later in the afternoon Wendy added two **Holly Blue** and a **Small Skipper**. In the afternoon I went to the [Westwood Country Hotel](#) which is surrounded by Bagley Woods. They kindly gave me permission to search their grounds for the Silver-washed Fritillary. On the buddleia in their formal gardens I saw singletons of Red Admiral, **Painted Lady**, Small Tortoiseshell and **Silver-washed Fritillary**. There were also two other Silver-washed Fritillaries flying in the wilder parts of their grounds. A very successful afternoon.”

*Allen Beechey sent the following sightings on 14<sup>th</sup> July:* “I saw a **White-letter Hairstreak** in my parents' garden in *Chesham* on *Wednesday evening, 12<sup>th</sup>*. This is the third year in the last four that a White Letter Hairstreak has been sighted there. There must be a colony quite close by but I have so far been unable to find any Elm or Wych Elm in the vicinity! It's a fantastic year for **Silver-washed Fritillary** this year - I paid a visit to the *Warburg reserve yesterday, 13<sup>th</sup>* and saw 24 individuals including a frenzied whirring mass of 6 all chasing each other! Another highlight was seeing my first ever **Adder**!

The reserve warden told me that Silver-washed Fritillary are now far more common than Dark Green Fritillary at the site, although he has seen one this year. Two Purple Emperor have also been seen there this year.”

*David Gantzel took a short walk along a footpath at Hazlemere on Thursday July 13<sup>th</sup>.* “Most numerous were **Gatekeeper** and **Meadow Brown**, a good number of **Marbled White**, a few **Ringlets**, **Small Skippers**, **Large White** and 1 **Comma**. I have a large buddleia in my garden at *Hazlemere* and those butterflies seen at 4pm were: 4 **Red Admiral**, 3 **Painted Ladies**, 1 **Small Tortoiseshell**, 2 Meadow Brown and 1 Gatekeeper, 3 Large White. **Old Lady moth** in evening.”

*Upon getting home from work Thursday afternoon, 13<sup>th</sup>, Dave Wilton popped out to the disused railway line to the west of Westcott airfield for an hour between 3.30 and 4.30pm:* “I was hoping that I might bump into White Admiral and thereby perhaps find a source for the occasional specimens in my garden, once last year, twice this year. No luck with the target, but I did have some other surprises. Along a field hedge near the airfield fence there are several dead elms but quite a lot of regenerating growth and I discovered a single **White-letter Hairstreak** there. Another new colony, perhaps, and one that would be my closest yet to home, although there's so much elm in Westcott that I must be able to find the species even closer if I really try! I bumped into ten other species on the way to the cutting but nothing unexpected. In the cutting itself it was more of the same, with **Meadow Brown** and **Gatekeeper** being most numerous but with good numbers of **Marbled White** and a couple of **Small Heath**, even an early second-brood **Common Blue**. Further on I found another row of youngish elms amongst the blackthorn and other scrub right next to the path and noticed that there was Hairstreak activity there as well. In ten minutes I must have seen double-figures but there were two species present so all I could definitely come away with was five White-letter and two **Purple Hairstreaks**. Nice! Carrying on down the line I was surprised by a **Silver-washed Fritillary** which did a quick circuit around the area where I was standing and then disappeared over the vegetation.”

Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> July 2006

*John Stevens sent the following report today, 13th:* “I am sure that I am not the first person to point out that this year seems to be quite extraordinary in the UT/H&M area for **Silver-washed Fritillary**. On Tuesday I spent the day walking and observing in the general area of *Wendover Woods* and in the period 11.00 - 15.00 had at least 15 sightings of this species in the area. On three occasions the individual stopped to nectar and could be examined but the other records were rapid fly-bys. At *Dancers End* there were two separate males frequenting the meadow area and a very tatty *valezina* female nectaring on Marjoram.”

*Nick Bowles saw a White-letter Hairstreak at College Lake, Bucks, at lunchtime on Wednesday while helping to plan an ecological study day.* “Also seen there today (not by me) was a **White Admiral** – a reserve first I think.”

**Adrian Hickman went to Sole Common BBOWT reserve on Wednesday mainly to look for Dragonflies:**

“Only yards from where I parked and within minutes of arriving I saw **White Admiral** and **Silver-washed Fritillary**, closely followed, to my amazement by a superb male **Purple Emperor** feeding on some smelly fly-tipped DIY rubbish close-by! It was in view for at least half an hour and allowed very close approach. Being unexpected, as I'm new to the area, this was all the more enjoyable! I also saw **Large White**, **Comma**, **Meadow Brown**, **Ringlet**, **Large Skipper** and **Red Admiral**. Plenty of Dragonfly activity also, so all in all an excellent visit.”

**Chris Brown regularly visits a site called Kennylands Field, now the Millennium Green, in the triangle of B481 & Kennylands Road and sent in this interesting information:**

“It's slowly reverting to an unimproved pasture. Frequented by large numbers of Small Skipper, Essex Skipper, Marbled Whites, Small Heath, Common Blue, Small Copper, Gatekeeper, Ringlet & Meadow Browns, most years, but particularly for the many hundreds (most years) of Forester Moths (only a few this year so far). Although I am not really a moth observer, this is the only one I currently recognise and monitor specially for the Millennium Green Trust. It was the presence of this one species which enabled the Trust to get a grant to help establish & run this site. The Forester can usually be found on the blue field scabious. I am currently growing both the blue field scabious and some knapweed from seed collected there, specifically to increase the amount of plants available as nectar sources. The Marbled Whites are fond of the knapweed. The plan is to have more wild plants around the field in the years to come. There is a lavender hedge around the playing green which is usually swarming with Bees, Skippers, Meadow Brown & Gatekeepers in the warm weather.”

**At Finemere wood yesterday, 12<sup>th</sup>, Tim Watts recorded** 10 **Purple Hairstreak** and 2 **White Admiral**. “I met a couple who I know from bird-watching. They were delighted to have seen 2-3 **Purple Emperor** over tall Ash trees at the end of wood, their first ever. Luckily they met Dennis Dell who had pointed them in the right direction. I sat by the bend in the track where I've seen them before but no luck. We also saw 1 **White-letter Hairstreak** on the scraggy elms 200mts from road,”

**Dave Wilton went to Chinkwell Wood yesterday, 12<sup>th</sup> July:** On his approach to the wood clumps of thistles were providing nectar to **Red Admiral** (4), **Painted Lady** (5), **Small Tortoiseshell** (14) and **Comma** (1) as well as the usual suspects. “Twenty minutes studying the trees (and the cowpats in the field) at the corner of the wood produced no sign of any Purple Emperor activity so I went through the gate into the set-aside field which borders the wood's southern edge. Just inside the field, right by the gate, there's a big clump of brambles with some thistles in front of them and on one of the latter I found a **White-letter Hairstreak** with a large chunk of its hindwings missing (*see photo below*). All the usual species were present plus Red Admiral (3), Painted Lady (1) & Small Tortoiseshell (2). Inside the wood I was pleased to find **Brimstone** (3), **White Admiral** (7), Red Admiral (29), Comma (13) & **Speckled Wood** (2) as well as very good numbers of skippers, whites and browns. After Chinkwell I did a quick circuit of the public footpath through **Kingswood** and found 2 **Silver-washed Fritillary**, White Admiral (6), Red Admiral (1), Small Tortoiseshell (2) & Comma (3).

**Tony Croft went to Aston Rowant on Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup>:** “It was an absolutely perfect summer's day and there was an astounding number of butterflies. **Marbled White**, **Meadow Brown**, **Ringlet**, **Gatekeeper**, **Small Skipper**, **Large Skipper**, **Small Heath**, several **Brimstone**, **Large White**, what looked like **Green-Veined White**, **Small White**, **Painted Lady**, **Red Admiral**, **Small Tortoiseshell**, **Comma** and two **Chalkhill Blue** looking fantastic.”

**Robin Dryden had a very successful walk around Black park between 1 and 2 pm on Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> in**

**glorious sunshine:** “I was with friends so didn't do anything other than guess the numbers! The undoubted highlight was a **Purple Emperor** gliding across the ride and then sunning itself in full view at the top of an oak tree. My friends were impressed! Tomorrow I'm taking my telescope and camera! There was plenty of other activity with 10-15 **White Admiral**, 2 **Red Admiral**, 1 **Comma**, <10 **Gatekeeper**, >20 **Meadow Brown**, 2 **Ringlet**, <10 **Whites - Large and Small** identified, 3 **Large Skipper**, <10 **Purple Hairstreak**.”

Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> July 2006

**Allen Beechey was out yesterday, 11<sup>th</sup>, carrying out a survey of the Alderbourne, which runs between Fulmer & Uxbridge:** “Whilst looking at the stretch that runs through *Kingcup Farm SSSI near Denham* I noticed a small brown butterfly skim the grass before landing nearby. On closer inspection it turned out to be a **White-letter Hairstreak**. It was a good 800 yards away from the nearest hedge but there is plenty of Wych Elm in the area. Unfortunately I had the wrong lens on my camera (wide angle) and so could only get a poor quality photo of it (see below). **Meadow Browns** dominated on the site with a good number of **Essex Skipper** (I gave up after identifying 10) and **Small Skipper**. There were also a good number of fresh **Small Tortoiseshell** and **Comma**.”

**11<sup>th</sup> July - Tim Watts reports from the Calvert BBOWT reserve:** “4-6 **Purple Hairstreak** over Ash trees to the far left of the entrance gate this evening. This species has only been recorded on here over the last 2 years, with the odd sighting. Also the most **Red Admirals** I've ever seen at one moment - at one stage there were 7 tumbling together!”

**Welcome to the website new contributor Chris Brown who sent the following report on his lunch-break visit to Crowsley Park wood on Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> July. Chris has been monitoring this site for a number of years:** “The weather was perfect and there were too many butterflies to make a proper count in the short time available. My brief tally was: **Small Skipper** 1, **Brimstone** 1, **Large White** 1, **Small White** 1, **Green-veined White** 1, **Red Admiral** 1, **Comma** 14, **Silver-Washed Fritillary** 5 (including a mating pair – *photo to follow*), **Marbled White** 1, **Meadow Brown** 17, **Ringlet** 12. If it is too hot (over 30C) this site is best visited in the later afternoon I have found, particularly for the Silver-Washed Fritillaries which then tend to bask on the conifer tree trunks and are much harder to locate, sometimes up as high as 30ft off the ground. They also rest high up on the beech tree leaves and unless they move are impossible to spot. I usually visit this site once a week from June to August.”

*[Photographs will be posted tomorrow along with another report from Chris about Kennylands Field/Millennium Green.]*

**Wendy & Mick Campbell met Chris Brown in Crowsley Park wood on 11<sup>th</sup> July whilst they were surveying for Silver-washed Fritillary.** During 3 hours they recorded very good numbers of **Silver-Washed Fritillary** including mating pairs. Chris's records indicate that this is a well established and growing colony based on several years of his observations and this also lines up with their records from the last 3 years. They recorded 13 species of butterfly altogether. Late afternoon they moved on to **Homefield Wood** and were very pleased to record 5 Silver-Washed Fritillary as they normally only see one or two in the wood. Along with the usual species seen were 5 **White-letter Hairstreaks** in the tall Elms along the main ride, 4 **Red Admirals**, 3 **Painted Lady**, 34 **Commas** and a pristine **Small Copper**.

**Dave Wilton had a day off and some decent sunshine on 11<sup>th</sup> July:** “First priority for me was to find

Dark Green Fritillary so I went to the only place that I know where a sighting is virtually guaranteed in season - [Swyncombe Downs](#). The climb to the footpath produced **Small Skipper, Essex Skipper, Large White, Small White, Green-veined White, Small Tortoiseshell, Comma, Painted Lady, Marbled White, Meadow Brown, Gatekeeper, Ringlet** and **Small Heath**, while my journey west from the footpath junction added **Large Skipper, Brimstone, Brown Argus, Red Admiral** and **Dark Green Fritillary (9)**, so 18 species in the hour that I was there! Moths included **Cistus Forester, Six-spot Burnet, Silver-Y & Pyrausta purpuralis**. Then on to [Piddington Wood](#) where I saw **White-letter Hairstreaks** in the Elms. A **White Admiral** along the footpath started circling my legs and within seconds it was joined by what I thought was another one twice its size - but it was actually a **Purple Emperor!** It just lazily followed the White Admiral around me twice, about a foot behind it and about 18 inches above ground level, then shot off along the track. Up in the canopy there was also a male Purple Emperor active.”

[David Redhead was carrying out some transects on 11<sup>th</sup> July](#): “I have always wondered if we start our Field Meetings unnecessarily late. On Tuesday I saw my first butterflies just after 7.30 am whilst dog walking across [Iffley Meadows](#) - at least 30 **Meadow Brown** plus a **Comma** nectaring on a thistle. Returning home via [Rose Hill Nature Reserve](#) added several more Meadow Browns, a **Gatekeeper** or two, a couple more nectaring Commas, a **Ringlet** and a **Small Skipper**. So by 8.30 am I had seen about 40 butterflies and 5 species. After a hurried breakfast I arrived at [Bernwood Forest](#) at 9.30 am to do the M40 Compensation Area transect. In the next hour I did several bunny hops (by car) down the main ride to the Compensation Area. On the way I added **Purple Emperor, Silver-washed Fritillary, Purple Hairstreak, Marbled White, Red Admiral, Large White, Small White** and **Green-veined White** to my list. So by 10.30 am, the usual start time for our Field Meetings, my species list was 13 (a couple of them rather special) and I reckon I had seen something like 150 butterflies. I then did the transect which, with a total count of 529, was just higher than Mike Wilkins’ previous record for this transect set a week earlier (see below). Marbled Whites were still the most numerous (178) but had dropped by a third from when Mike did it. The increase in Ringlets (122) and Gatekeepers (60) enabled the record to be broken. Another Silver-washed Fritillary was seen on transect and this represented a first ever for this transect. **Large Skipper** and **Essex Skipper** were also added to my day list. Back at the entrance by the Oakley Wood car park a **White Admiral** became my 16th species of the day. In spite of spending the afternoon in [Oxford](#) my final species count rose to 17 when a **Holly Blue** was seen flying along the Botley Road.”

[From the Herts/Bucks border in Tring, Nick Bowles recorded the following in his garden on 11<sup>th</sup> July](#): “Tonight when I got home at 5pm my 25 x12 m garden held a minimum of: **Small Skipper** 1; Unidentified white (probably Large W) 1; **Red Admiral** 2; **Painted Lady** 1; **Small Tortoiseshell** 2; **Meadow Brown** 3; **Ringlet** 2 and **Gatekeeper** 1. Considering that most of June passed with literally nothing at all most days (though I am not home until about 5) this is a cheering development.”

Monday 10<sup>th</sup> July 2006

[Ched George sent this news today](#): “Sue and I paid a late evening visit to [Yoesdon Bank on the 7<sup>th</sup>](#), to see if we could see any Chalkhill Blues. No luck, but astonished to see easily **100+ Marbled White**, a very large count for this site.”

[Martin Raper sent this transect report](#): “On [Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> July](#), our transect in [Moor Copse](#) has also reached record counts for the 5 years we have been doing it. **Small Skipper** (42), **Meadow Brown** (56), **Ringlet** (62) and a record transect total of 199. **Silver-washed Fritillaries** both sexes seen during last 2 weeks, after last year's first single sighting record, imply we may have a colony now?”

*Mike Wilkins sent the following report on 9<sup>th</sup> July:* “I had an amazing transect walk at the *M40 Compensation Area (Bernwood) on 4th July* on a hot (31°) hazy afternoon. There were clouds of **Marbled Whites** totalling 235 with 93 **Small/ Essex Skippers** (no ES identified yet), 83 **Meadow Browns** and 75 **Ringlets**. The total was 509 individuals of 10 species which is a record for the site. A good number of **Banded Demoiselles** in sections 1 & 2 as well as **5- and 6-spot Burnets**, **Silver Ys** and **Cinnabar**. Single figures of a few other species making ten in total. To round it off I looked for **White-letter Hairstreaks** and quickly found 4 on the motorway side of the dividing hedge. I would like someone to confirm I/D as I forgot my binoculars but they were all behaving correctly at the tops of the elms so I am 90% certain.

Two days later, *on 6<sup>th</sup> July*, I walked the *Aston Upthorpe Downs* transect at 'only' 24°. Here, the dominant species was **Meadow Brown** at 268 with only 107 **Marbled Whites** and 81 **Ringlets**. **Small Heath** at 31 is also a good count but the four **Gatekeepers** should increase considerably. This time the total was 516 of ten species but it is a longer walk than the Compensation Area. Added to that were 116 **Six-spot Burnets**, many nectaring on the abundant ragwort which was being devoured by masses of **Cinnabar caterpillars**.”

*David Redhead confined his butterflying to the vicinity of his house on Sunday 9<sup>th</sup>:* “At one time there were three **Commas** flying in the garden and over a wider area they ran into double figures along with about half a dozen **Red Admirals**. Over a patch of brambles about 100m from my house at first sight they were three **Commas** flying together but one appeared larger than the others and when it settled it became a male **Silver-washed Fritillary**. This is my second Silver-washed Fritillary in 3 days in areas which I have visited regularly in the past but have never seen them. On both occasions my first instinct was to "dismiss" them as fresh **Commas** - so the moral of the story is:- check those **Commas** (which appear to have emerged recently in good numbers) very carefully. Also seen (in order of abundance) **Ringlet**, **Gatekeeper**, **Small Skipper**, **Marbled White**, **Meadow Brown**, **Large Skipper** & **Small White**. Also a couple of **Scarlet Tiger Moths** seen.”

Sunday 9<sup>th</sup> July 2006

*Dennis Dell sent this unusual photo of a Purple Emperor.* “It was seen yesterday in the *Oakley Wood car park*. This specimen arrived at 10.20 and stayed there until 10.50, landing mainly on car bonnets and tyres, all the time with its proboscis out, feeding from the hot surfaces. Here, it crawled over the top of the tyre and down into the area behind the wheel, in complete darkness! I pointed my camera in and pressed, and, because the flash worked, I got this picture.”

*David Redhead sent this report on 9<sup>th</sup> July:* “This is the fifth year I have been running the *Shabbington Wood* transect and on *Friday afternoon, 7<sup>th</sup>*, I nearly broke the record count during this period with 481 butterflies recorded (record 484 in third week of July 2005). Two-thirds of the butterflies were **Ringlets** and at 311 this was a five year record. **Large Skippers** (44), **Marbled White** (37), **Gatekeeper** (36), **Meadow Brown** (23) and **Small/Essex Skipper** (21) all made good contributions to the total. The **Marbled White** count was also a five year record and actually exceeded the total count for this species in 2002 & 2003. **Large White** (3), **White Admiral** (2), **Red Admiral** (2) and **Comma** (1) brought the total to 480. *In York's Wood* what I thought was another fresh and bright **Comma** rapidly flew out of the birch saplings and settled in the bramble patch ahead of me. On checking with the binoculars it turned into a gorgeously fresh male **Silver-washed Fritillary**. It has only been recorded on this transect (walked since 1984) four times before - twice in 1997 and twice in 1985. I managed to definitely identify six of the **Small/Essex Skippers** and one of them proved to be an **Essex Skipper** making the final species count 12. Back home I recorded 3 **Commas**, a **Scarlet Tiger Moth** and two fresh **Red Admirals**. Up on the rough grassland **Meadow Brown**, **Ringlet**, **Marbled White** and **Small Skippers** all reached double figures. An **Essex Skipper** and a couple of **Large skippers** were also about. From my observations at *Bernwood* and nearer home I think **Marbled Whites** must be having a good year.”

**Tim Watts forwarded the following news:** “Michael Hunt doing a survey for BBOWT at the [Calvert reserve](#) today, 8<sup>th</sup> July, recorded 1 **White Admiral**, the first he's seen here in 30 years of recording. Also 40 **Red Admiral** which was very unusual.”

**Paul Bowyer and Mick & Wendy Campbell visited Sydlings Copse on 8<sup>th</sup> July.** This site has an unusual mix of habitats, with a flower meadow, woodland, a fen area and heathland. 19 species of butterfly were recorded: **Small Tortoiseshell** 7, **Large White** 4, **Meadow Brown** 17, **Small White** 14, **Gatekeeper** 8, **Large Skipper** 1, **Small Skipper** 7, **Green-veined White** 13, **Red Admiral** 6, **Essex Skipper** 2, **Painted Lady** 1, **Comma** 3, **Ringlet** 8, **Marbled White** 47, **Speckled Wood** 1, **Purple Emperor** 2, **White-letter Hairstreak** 3, **White Admiral** 3, **Purple Hairstreak** 2. Moths included: **Yellow Shell** 1, **Silver-Y** 7, **N.B. 5-spot Burnet** 2, **Scarlet Tiger** 7.

**Dennis Dell has posed the following question:** “Do any other members share my view that **Small Tortoiseshell** is having a better season than of late? On Friday 7<sup>th</sup> July, on a small patch of thistles just outside [Finemere Wood](#) I counted 12 - something I have not seen for some years.”

[A number of fresh *Small Tortoiseshells* have been reported recently – in order to try and answer Dennis' question, please [send in your sightings to me.](#)]

**Tony Croft did his survey at Buttler's Hangings this morning, 8<sup>th</sup>:** “I was hoping for Chalkhill Blue but without success. I did see 16 **Small Skipper**, 1 **Large Skipper**, 2 **Large White**, 1 **Common Blue**, 1 **Red Admiral**, 1 **Comma**, 2 **Dark Green Fritillary**, a startling 186 **Marbled White**, 37 **Gatekeeper**, 98 **Meadow Brown**, 21 **Ringlet** and back at home a lovely fresh **Small Tortoiseshell**.”

Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> July 2006

**6<sup>th</sup> July - Jackie Tuckey reports seeing her first Comma** for this year down the drive at [Murcott](#): “It was immaculate. Also a **Marbled White** and loads of Browns.”

**Robin Dryden had a pleasant stroll around Langley Park today, 6<sup>th</sup> July:** “Insects were interesting with two firsts for the park for me. *Butterflies* were very much to the fore with innumerable **Meadow Brown**, 7 **Gatekeeper**, 4 **Speckled Wood**, 6 **Red Admiral**, 17 **Comma**, 2 **Large White**, 6 **Small Skipper** including a mating pair and the two firsts were a **Marbled White** and a female **Purple Hairstreak** that I rescued from the middle of the path and put on some bramble. She was very sluggish and the first I have held in the palm of my hand! *Dragonflies included* a couple of **Emperor Dragonflies** including an egg laying female, several **Broad-bodied Chasers** and **Black-tailed Skimmers**, some newly emerged **Hawkers** which I think were Migrant and a newly emerged female **Common Darter**. *The bird news* is that the pair of **Common Terns** have successfully raised two young to flying, there are three surviving **cygnets** with one surviving parent and the lonely **Egyptian Goose** is still mourning the loss of its mate. Young **Jackdaws**, **Parakeets** and **Tits** abound. The paths were teeming with **frogllets!**”

**4<sup>th</sup> July - Nick Bowles recorded a single fresh Essex Skipper** female in his garden, just over the border in [Tring](#). “I don't think it was newly emerged but a very fresh specimen which posed quite nicely for a few antennae end shots. For the first time in weeks I have now seen 3 species in as many days in my garden: **Meadow brown**, **Ringlet**, **Essex Skipper**. Also a **Hummingbird Hawk-moth** which has been

around for a couple of days”.

**On 4<sup>th</sup> July, Dave Ferguson saw a male Purple Emperor** in *Wendover Woods* on the track behind Picket Piece. Also 2 male **Silver-washed Fritillaries** nearby.

**Tony & Hazel Hall were walking their dog in Rushbeds Wood on 3<sup>rd</sup> July.** At around 11.00am they came upon a butterfly sunning itself on the ground. They initially thought it was a White Admiral but, on studying the photo when they arrived home, realised it was a **Purple Emperor**. (See photo at the top of this page.)

**Andy Reynolds sent the following sightings for 3<sup>rd</sup> July:** “**White Admiral** (1) at *Waterperry Wood*. One male **Purple Emperor** working the ride at 11am in the southern end of *Bernwood Forest*.”

**Allen Beechey sent the following report on 4th July:** “I had this sighting sent to me by our education officer [*at Chilterns AONB*]. A **White Admiral** seen on privet at the top edge of a glade in *Toothill*, Bottom Wood end, on *Friday 30<sup>th</sup> June*. Bottom Wood is near Studley Green.”

**Ade Parker reported a male Purple Emperor** at *Black Park* on *3<sup>rd</sup> July* along with **White Admirals**.

**Dave Wilton had a single confirmed Essex Skipper** along the track leading to *Finemere Wood* on the afternoon of *3<sup>rd</sup> July*.

### Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2006

**Dick Lister sent this significant sighting today:** “I felt you would be interested in a sighting today *3<sup>rd</sup> July* of a **Purple Emperor** particularly as in the Jim Asher book it does not appear to be recorded in this grid square. It was at the *Field Studies Council Field Centre at Amersham*. It paid particular attention to our dustbins and most particularly to a plastic bag containing something a dog had left behind!”

**Tim Watts sent this report on 3<sup>rd</sup> July:** “On *Calvert BBOWT reserve* I spent some time watching the tops of trees next to the car park. Mick Campbell from the local butterfly conservation branch had spotted a Purple Hairstreak here last year around the small Ash. I had seen one low down the year before. These were the first records for the reserve. At 2:30pm I spotted 2 dark butterflies duelling around the tops of the small Elms to left of car park. They were **White-letter Hairstreak**, 2 or 3 very active, sticking to tree tops, scrapping and not staying in the same spot long enough to get a digi-scoped photo. I rang Michael Hunt who has been surveying butterflies on the reserve for 30 years and he says it's the first record. Would be good if someone can have a look at the Elms to confirm. Underwing darker than Purple and line of orange below the white W. Unbelievably I think I had another first with a superb **White Admiral** which came through the road line of trees and into oak by the hide. We don't have a big wood on the reserve but there are oaks, honeysuckle and brambles. I have seen them on the railway

line on the landfill as close as 500 metres from the reserve boundary so it probably came from here. There are loads of them in the adjacent Sheephouse Wood. Also seen: **Banded Demoiselle** along track to 2nd hide, **Marbled Whites**, **Small Heath**, **Gatekeeper**, **Common Blue**, **Small Skipper**, **Meadow Browns**, **Burnet moth**, **Red Admiral**, **Large White**, **Ringlets** and the water is covered in the most small blue damsel flies I've ever seen!"

*Dennis Dell reports seeing* three **Silver-washed Fritillary** at *Wendover Woods* (high up near the top car park) on 2<sup>nd</sup> July and one in *Finemere Wood* on 3<sup>rd</sup> July.

*Dave Wilton spent a couple of hours at Finemere after work today, 3<sup>rd</sup> July:* "After walking through the gate at the entrance to the wood the first butterfly I saw was a **Purple Emperor**. It was orbiting the ride cross-roads by the sign board and then landed on the willow on the SW corner of the junction, at about 10ft up, and proceeded to sun itself for about five minutes. I believe it was a male as there was a hint of purple occasionally. When it took off it headed north up the main ride and I lost it from sight. I checked the oaks south of the turning circle and the high points at the two corners up the top end of the wood but had no further sightings. I also walked down to Greatsea, checking the cow-pats in the field by the entrance as well as the high-point there, then continued down the ride as far as the spot where the clay shoot was obviously going to be constructed. Three **White Admirals** but not a lot else. Attached is a photo of a **White-letter Hairstreak** (see below). Pity it had been pecked, but this is the only half-decent picture I've ever managed to get of this species! One of six seen around the elms along the track leading to the wood."

*Tony Croft did his survey at Buttler's Hangings this afternoon, 3<sup>rd</sup> July, and had* 4 sightings of **Dark Green Fritillary** along with 17 **Small Skippers**, 5 **Large Skippers**, 1 **Large White**, 1 **Common Blue**, 111 **Marbled Whites**, 4 **Gatekeepers**, 76 **Meadow Browns** and 31 **Ringlets**.

*Graham Taylor sent the following report on 3<sup>rd</sup> July:* "Just to let you know I saw good numbers of **White-letter Hairstreak** and two **Purple Emperor** in *Wytham Woods on 1<sup>st</sup> July* (the latter in two widely separated locations), with both species coming down to the ground at times."

*Allen Beechey had a short walk around Oakley Wood (Bernwood) on Saturday 1<sup>st</sup> July:* "I saw, amongst the usual suspects, 15 **White Admiral**, including one which was completely black (Matthew Oates did tell me what this aberration was called but I can't remember – caused by high temperatures during the pupal stage, I believe). No **Purple Emperors**, but I did see my first **Essex Skipper** of the year."

*David Gantzel visited Watlington Hill on Friday 30<sup>th</sup> June and again on Saturday July 1<sup>st</sup> with South Bucks BNA:* "Both visits were disappointing. On both days **Small Heath** were most numerous followed by **Meadow Brown** - neither in large numbers. Also **Speckled Wood**, single **Common Blue**, single **Ringlet**. On July 1<sup>st</sup> single male **Brimstone**, single **Marbled White**, single **Cream Wave moth** and **Six-spot Burnet**."

*News from Debbie Lewis that a White letter Hairstreak* was seen in the *Warburg* car park during the week commencing 26<sup>th</sup> June.

Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup> July 2006

*Phil Coles went to Starveall Farm (Stone – Bucks) today, July 2<sup>nd</sup> and recorded the following:* **Large Skipper** 3, **Large White** 1, **Small Tortoiseshell** 1, **Comma** 2, **Speckled Wood** 1, **Gatekeeper** 1, **Meadow Brown** 100+, **Ringlet** 4, **Small Heath** 1.

*Dennis Dell went to Wendover woods today, 2<sup>nd</sup> July:* “No Purple Emperor yet, but three **Silver-Washed Fritillaries** (not around the buddleia, as it’s not flowering yet).”

*Paul Bowyer and Wendy & Mick Campbell visited Penley Wood today.* No luck with Purple Emperors, but a single **Silver-washed Fritillary** was a nice compensation. Also seen were **Painted Lady**, 4 **Purple Hairstreaks** in the Ash trees, 2 **Small Skipper**, one **Small Heath**, 4 **Speckled Wood**, 3 **Red Admiral**, 4 **Comma** and good numbers of **Ringlet**, **Meadow Brown**, **Marbled White** and **Large Skipper**, but surprisingly no Gatekeepers. Moths included **Yellow Shell**, **Cinnabar** and **Straw Dot**. A fresh **Small Tortoiseshell** was also in their garden later in the afternoon.

*Dave Wilton spent 1hr 45mins at Rushbeds Wood this afternoon, 2<sup>nd</sup> July:* “33C, so said my car thermometer, and wall-to-wall sunshine. **Purple Emperor** was found flying around a small gap in the ash canopy above the track just inside the wood from the Lapland Farm Meadows entrance (exactly the same place as last year). When I got there at 3.55pm a single male was patrolling the spot. He chased off another similar-sized butterfly - possibly a Red Admiral but I couldn't get binoculars on it in time - then carried on patrolling and perching for as long as I stood there (he was constantly in view for 20 minutes, after which neck-ache got the better of me!). Most of the perching was done with wings closed, but then for the last three or four minutes he started sunning himself. There was no sign of activity at the railway bridge, along the other tracks or at the central "cross-roads". The heat didn't seem to put off other species either and I recorded **Large Skipper** (6), **Small Skipper** (1), **Brimstone** (1), unidentified Whites (2), **Purple Hairstreak** (1), **Red Admiral** (1), **Comma** (6), **White Admiral** (2), **Marbled White** (1), **Speckled Wood** (4), **Meadow Brown** (30) & **Ringlet** (34) along the various rides.”

*Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup> July Martin Raper sent this news:* “Just a short note to say that today's work party saw two **Silver-washed Fritillaries** in *Moor Copse* over bramble. This complements our first ever sighting for Moor Copse last June.”

*Robin Carr saw two* male **Silver-washed Fritillaries** on his transect yesterday Saturday 1<sup>st</sup> July.

*David & Wendy Redhead went to Brasenose Woods on Saturday morning and saw* 7 **White Admirals** along with **Meadow Brown**, **Ringlet**, **Speckled Wood**, **Gatekeeper**, **Comma**, **Large Skipper** and a fresh **Small Tortoiseshell**.

*Phil Coles went to Rushbeds Wood and Lapland Farm on July 1<sup>st</sup>:* Small Skipper 1, Small/Essex Skipper 7, Large Skipper 27, White Admiral 3, Painted Lady 1, Comma 1, Speckled Wood 11, Marbled White 97, Meadow Brown 100+, Ringlet 100+, Small Heath 7, S/GV White 1.

Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup> July 2006

*Phil Coles went to Starveall Farm (Stone – Bucks) today, July 2<sup>nd</sup> and recorded the following:* Large Skipper 3, Large White 1, Small Tortoiseshell 1, Comma 2, Speckled Wood 1, Gatekeeper 1, Meadow Brown 100+, Ringlet 4, Small Heath 1.

*Dennis Dell went to Wendover woods today, 2<sup>nd</sup> July:* “No Purple Emperor yet, but three **Silver-Washed Fritillaries** (not around the buddleia, as it’s not flowering yet).”

*Paul Bowyer and Wendy & Mick Campbell visited Penley Wood today.* No luck with Purple Emperors, but a single **Silver-washed Fritillary** was a nice compensation. Also seen were **Painted Lady**, 4 **Purple Hairstreaks** in the Ash trees, 2 **Small Skipper**, one **Small Heath**, 4 **Speckled Wood**, 3 **Red Admiral**, 4 **Comma** and good numbers of **Ringlet**, **Meadow Brown**, **Marbled White** and **Large Skipper**, but surprisingly no Gatekeepers. Moths included **Yellow Shell**, **Cinnabar** and **Straw Dot**. A fresh **Small Tortoiseshell** was also in their garden later in the afternoon.

*Dave Wilton spent 1hr 45mins at Rushbeds Wood this afternoon, 2<sup>nd</sup> July:* “33C, so said my car thermometer, and wall-to-wall sunshine. **Purple Emperor** was found flying around a small gap in the ash canopy above the track just inside the wood from the Lapland Farm Meadows entrance (exactly the same place as last year). When I got there at 3.55pm a single male was patrolling the spot. He chased off another similar-sized butterfly - possibly a Red Admiral but I couldn't get binoculars on it in time - then carried on patrolling and perching for as long as I stood there (he was constantly in view for 20 minutes, after which neck-ache got the better of me!). Most of the perching was done with wings closed, but then for the last three or four minutes he started sunning himself. There was no sign of activity at the railway bridge, along the other tracks or at the central "cross-roads". The heat didn't seem to put off other species either and I recorded **Large Skipper** (6), **Small Skipper** (1), **Brimstone** (1), unidentified Whites (2), **Purple Hairstreak** (1), **Red Admiral** (1), **Comma** (6), **White Admiral** (2), **Marbled White** (1), **Speckled Wood** (4), **Meadow Brown** (30) & **Ringlet** (34) along the various rides.”

*Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup> July Martin Raper sent this news:* “Just a short note to say that today's work party saw two **Silver-washed Fritillaries** in *Moor Copse* over bramble. This complements our first ever sighting for Moor Copse last June.”

*Robin Carr saw two* male **Silver-washed Fritillaries** on his transect yesterday Saturday 1<sup>st</sup> July.

*David & Wendy Redhead went to Brasenose Woods on Saturday morning and saw* 7 **White Admirals** along with **Meadow Brown**, **Ringlet**, **Speckled Wood**, **Gatekeeper**, **Comma**, **Large Skipper** and a fresh

## Small Tortoiseshell.

*Phil Coles went to Rushbeds Wood and Lapland Farm on July 1<sup>st</sup>:* Small Skipper 1, Small/Essex Skipper 7, Large Skipper 27, White Admiral 3, Painted Lady 1, Comma 1, Speckled Wood 11, Marbled White 97, Meadow Brown 100+, Ringlet 100+, Small Heath 7, S/GV White 1.

*At 6.30 on Friday evening, 30<sup>th</sup> June, Dave Wilton had another very pleasant surprise in his garden in Westcott:* “This time I had the camera ready! It spent about five minutes resting on the laurel then moved to some bramble flowers before disappearing over the fence. That's two years running I've had a **White Admiral** in the garden. I did a butterfly count for BBOWT at *Woodsides Meadow* this afternoon (no WLH, the one tree left has succumbed to Dutch Elm). Also called at *Piddington Wood* on the way back and spent 20 minutes at "the spot" there and another 20 minutes at the entrance to Little Wood, but no sign of Purple Emperor. Saw two **Bläck Hairstreäk** along the footpath, one on brambles (I think that's the first I've seen nectaring this season!).”

*News from Ched George that Dark Green Fritillary* are now flying at *Bradenham* with 2 seen Friday afternoon, 30<sup>th</sup>. Large numbers of **Burnet moths**, the majority were 6-spot. No sign of Gatekeeper yet.”

*Dave Ferguson's walk in Black Park on 29<sup>th</sup> June produced:* White Admiral (5), Red Admiral (1), Marbled White (1), Meadow Brown (15), Ringlet (5), Speckled Wood (3), Large Skipper (3). “As I drove along *Hedgerley Lane by Bulstrode Park* a White Admiral flew across the road! The flowery spoil heap by the M40 at Hedgerley produced: Marbled White (30), Meadow Brown (40), Large Skipper (3), **Burnet Moth sp** (30).”

*On 27<sup>th</sup> June, whilst out speculatively looking for Bläck Hairstreäk (following up a reported 1990's sighting), David Redhead came across a rather nice setaside field above Chilswell Farm near Oxford:* “This field gave me my first **Small Skippers** of the season (see photo at top of this page) along with numerous **Meadow Browns**, some **Ringlets** and **Large Skippers** and a fresh **Comma**. On the way back to my car a **Red Admiral** flew by but I never did find a **Bläck Hairstreäk**.”

Thursday 29<sup>th</sup> June 2006

*Ched George reported the following today, 29<sup>th</sup> June:* “2 possibly 3 **Dark Green Fritillaries** flying in a south Bucks location this morning. Also seen was a fresh **Small Tortoiseshell** and worn **Brown Argus**. **Marbled White** and **Meadow Brown** abundant, plus a few **Large Skippers** and **Common Blues**.”

*[Please report sightings of Dark Green Fritillary to [Ched George, UTB Species Champion for DGF.](#)]*

*Dave Wilton visited Finemere Wood today, 29<sup>th</sup> June:* “Having been at work all last night I didn't really feel like going out this afternoon but as I still had this week's transect to do at *Finemere Wood* I thought I'd better make the effort. A wise move as it turned out, because I managed to add four new butterfly species to my list for this year. Two of them were **Small Skipper** (3), seen along the wood's main ride,

and **Marbled White** (5), present in the central meadow area. Half an hour spent staring at the oaks near the turning circle produced no sign of Purple Emperor (nor Purple Hairstreak for that matter), but having completed the transect I did a butterfly count for BBOWT in the new meadows and one of the first species that I saw there was a **Purple Emperor**! It was on the ground close to the wood edge in an area where there is a lot of bare earth. It was disturbed by my passage, took off and did three or four large lazy circles around me at grass-top height and then shot off up into the wood canopy. Marvellous! The icing on the cake came as I walked back up to the road from the wood because four pristine **White-letter Hairstreaks** were charging around the tops of the elms on both sides of the track at the usual spot a few hundred metres from the road. I'd spent 15 minutes staring at those self same elms a couple of hours earlier on my way down to the wood and seen nothing at all."

*Caroline Steel sent the following on 28<sup>th</sup> June:* "Today I was thrilled to see a **White Admiral** flying over the hedge (full of honeysuckle!) in my front garden in Leiden Road, *Oxford*. The garden is only 50 metres from Madgalen Wood which has had White Admirals in the past. The last record for my garden was in 1992!"

*Phil Coles visited Shirburn Hill ("Open Access Land") on June 28<sup>th</sup> and recorded:* **Large Skipper** 12, **Speckled Wood** 2, **Marbled White** 8, **Meadow Brown** 23, **Ringlet** 15, **Small Heath** 20.

**Tuesday 27<sup>th</sup> June 2006**

*Dennis Dell received the following exciting news from Liz Goodyear on Sunday:* "Just had a phone call from a Herts & Middx member who was out cycling with his son in *Black Park* this morning (25<sup>th</sup> June 2006). He had stopped to adjust his son's helmet and saw what he thought was another White Admiral on the ground - on closer inspection he realised he was looking at a very smart male **Purple Emperor**! Time was about 11.30am.

*[To join the hunt for Purple Emperor, or to report a sighting, please email Dennis Dell, UTB Purple Emperor Species Champion.]*

*David Redhead sent this report for Saturday's Butterfly Walk in Bernwood Forest:* "The joint *Upper Thames Branch/Woodstock Naturalists Society* walk in Bernwood Forest on Saturday morning, 24<sup>th</sup> June, was a great success. Fourteen gorgeous **White Admirals** were the stars and four were seen flying together in a ride side scallop created by Upper Thames members at a winter workparty several years ago. **Ringlets**, **Meadow Browns** and **Large Skippers** were all seen in good numbers along with several **Marbled Whites**. Being recently emerged all these butterflies were in a pristine state and they enabled our guests to practise their identification skills. Singleton **Common Blue**, **Speckled Wood**, **Red Admiral** and **Large White** also seen. One probable **Bläck Hairstreak** was seen flitting through the blackthorn canopy but it never settled in a convenient place to allow definite identification. On the moth side a female **Orange Moth**, spotted by Lyn Matthews, was very much the star and an addition to my UK list. Also seen were several **Narrow-bordered Five-spot Burnets** along with a **Six-spot Burnet** and **Cinnabar**."

**Monday 26<sup>th</sup> June 2006**

**Andy Reynolds sent the following recent sightings on 25<sup>th</sup> June:**

23<sup>rd</sup> June at Bernwood Forest – **White Admiral** (5) and **Comma** (1).

24<sup>th</sup> June at a wood in Bucks – **Bläck Hairstreak** (maybe 4 or 5) and about three times as many satisfied human spectators.

24<sup>th</sup> June at Piddington Wood – **White Admiral** (2). In the adjacent eastern meadow – **Small Skipper** (10) and **Ringlet** (20).

25<sup>th</sup> June at Ardley Quarry – **Gatekeeper** (1).

On 24<sup>th</sup> June Juliet Gudge saw a **Silver-washed Fritillary** on an orchid in a wood in *Fingest*. Also seen in the area was a **Small Blue**.

**Welcome to the website Tony Marsh who sent the following report:** “I spent a few hours in fine weather photographing many species at *Whitecross Green Wood on June 23<sup>rd</sup>*, amongst them my first sightings this year of **White Admiral** (2), **Marbled White** (6) [see photo below], and newly-emerged **5-Spot Burnet moths**. I was very confident that I had seen a **Small Blue**, however its foodplant does not grow there. It is possible that it was carried in during the recent windy weather, or perhaps it was a variant small female common blue without any orange markings on upper- or undersides. Other species included many **Meadow Brown** and **Large Skippers**, and a tired-looking female **Brimstone** still surging up and down the rides.” On June 24<sup>th</sup> Tony made another visit to a site where he had good sightings of **Bläck Hairstreak**, including one female laying eggs [see photo below], **White Admiral** (9) and **Marbled White** (28), plus a single **Red Admiral** and a fresh-looking **Comma**.

**Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2006**

**Welcome to the website new contributor Andy Reynolds:** “I’m new to Oxford and this is my first sightings email to you. A June 22<sup>nd</sup> afternoon walk around *Wytham Wood in Oxford* furnished me with two personal firsts for the year - **Marbled White** (several) and **Ringlet** (1). Also flapping around were dozens of **Meadow Browns** and **Speckled Woods**, several **Large Skippers** and **Red Admirals**, 1 **Comma** and 1 handsome **Hummingbird Hawkmoth**.”

**This afternoon, 22<sup>nd</sup> June, the combined efforts of David Redhead, Stuart Hodges & Mick Campbell discovered a new colony of Bläck Hairstreaks** with the sighting of two adults at a site on the edge of *Bicester*.

**Dave Wilton was very pleasantly surprised to discover a Silver-washed Fritillary on the edge of Noke Wood on 22<sup>nd</sup> June.** “It was accompanied by a pair of **White Admirals** and the inevitable **Painted Lady**. I had it in my sights for about ten minutes before it disappeared into the wood.”

[Please email [Mick Campbell](#), Silver-washed Fritillary Species Champion, with all sightings of the SWF.

*Thank you.]*

**Peter Bugg sent this news on 22<sup>nd</sup> June:** “I had my first sighting of **White Admirals** flying in the *Bernwood* rides this afternoon. *Please let me know of your sightings of White Admirals, with grid references if possible - [Peter Bugg, White Admiral Species Champion.](#)*”

**Dave Wilton sent the following on 21<sup>st</sup> June:** “I may have the body of a weak and feeble woman...’ (with apologies to Elizabeth I !!). This tired and decrepit **Painted Lady** was found in a field at *Dorton, Bucks on 20<sup>th</sup> June* but she could still fly well enough. Also, a freshly-emerged **Comma** seen at *Piddington Wood, Oxon today, 21<sup>st</sup> June*. Then on returning home to *Westcott* I espied something small and brown clinging on for dear life to a buttercup on our front lawn. It turned out to be a **Small Heath!** Not very exciting really, but it is the first example which has been noted in our garden and brings our all-time species tally here up to 25.”

**Dennis Dell has visited a number of sites during the last few days:** “At *Aylesbury Golf Course on Tuesday afternoon, 20<sup>th</sup>*, it was rather windy, but sunny and about 21-22 degrees. First **Marbled Whites** [4] for this habitat and a **Ringlet**. Others seen were: **Meadow Brown** [62], **Large Skipper** [5], **Painted Lady** [1], **Speckled Wood** [1], **Comma** [2], **Red Admiral** [1]. Yesterday, I went round *Finemere meadows*, and the Meadow Browns were rising from the grass in front of me as I walked along: a wonderful sight, in spite of it being one of our commonest species. I stopped counting after 100!”

At various sites in *North Bucks* he saw six **Bläck Hairstreäks** on 14<sup>th</sup> at a blackthorn hedgerow junction; on the 16<sup>th</sup> he recorded fifteen at known territories and on the 18<sup>th</sup> about 15 more. “What was particularly interesting at the last site was the presence of a large Aspen which was an attraction - about 6 Bläck Hairstreäks were flying round and landing on this tree.”

**David Gantzel visited Aston Clinton Ragpits on Tuesday June 20<sup>th</sup>** where he recorded one **Painted Lady**, one **Ringlet**, several **Large Skippers** and **Common Blues**.

**Dave Wilton visited a site in the Brill area for a couple of hours on Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> June while checking on local Bläck Hairstreäk colonies.** “I found **Large Skipper** (1), **Bläck Hairstreäk** (4), **Painted Lady** (1), **White Admiral** (3), **Speckled Wood** (4), **Meadow Brown** (18, including two mating pairs) & **Silver-Y** (1), while noted in the set-aside field to the south were **Large Skipper** (2), **Painted Lady** (1), **Speckled Wood** (1), **Meadow Brown** (31) & **Ringlet** (2) with moths **Latticed Heath** (1) & **Mother Shipton** (1).”

**On 20<sup>th</sup> June Mark Calway sent the following:** “This is just to advise that the **White-letter Hairstreak** has been seen flying in our area so this is a good time to keep your eyes peeled. Bramble and Hemp Agrimony are popular nectar sources - when they decide to come down from the trees! It is worth looking out for adults pretty much anywhere as they will wander. The sighting and photo (*see top of this page*) were by *John Notton on 15<sup>th</sup> June 2006.*”

*[Please email [Mark Calway, White-letter Hairstreak Champion, with all sightings of the White-letter. Thank you.\]](#)*

*On 20<sup>th</sup> June Tom Dunbar reported* that the blustery wind seemed to put a cap on butterfly action at *Finemere Wood* late this afternoon. He located 24 **Bläck Hairstreäks** in the shelter of the wood, a further 10 in the 'hotspot' area and just 2 in a sheltered spot on the New Meadow hedge. **Small Heaths** had a strong presence in the New Meadow with a small number of **Marbled Whites** and countless **Meadow Browns**.

*Pete Eeles popped into Finemere Wood on Monday afternoon (19<sup>th</sup>)* and, despite the overcast conditions, managed to see 13 **Bläck Hairstreäk**, together with 9 **Painted Lady**, 8 **Meadow Brown**, 2 **Ringlet** and a **Speckled Wood**.

*19<sup>th</sup> June - Tony Croft* sent this photo of his first "face to face" encounter with a **Bläck Hairstreäk**:

### Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> June 2006

*Martin Harvey sent the following report today, 18<sup>th</sup>:* "During a brief visit to *Burnham Beeches* this morning I found what I assume must have been a freshly emerged **Purple Hairstreak**. It was sitting on one of the tarmac roads through the Beeches, walking around but making no attempt to fly. We lifted it on to nearby vegetation to prevent it getting run over by the bikes."

*On Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> June, Martyn Godfrey visited Bernwood Forest:* "There were very few butterflies in the main rides, but the meadow was looking good: **Common Blue** (55), **Large Skipper** (4), **Speckled Wood** (7), **Brimstone** (1 - male), **Painted Lady** (3), **Meadow Brown** (26)."

*During a survey of a number of sites in Bucks on Saturday, 17<sup>th</sup>, Tom Dunbar reports* seeing a **single Marbled White**.

*Derek & Cathy Brown sent the following sighting on 17<sup>th</sup> June:* "We had our first **Painted Lady** of the year in the garden last night which is pleasing as we didn't see one in the garden at all last year."

*Dave Ferguson spent 3 hours Friday morning, 16<sup>th</sup>, in the Cockmarsh/Winter Hill area:* "It produced only 7 butterflies: 4 **Common Blues**, 1 **Green Hairstreak**, 1 **Painted Lady** and 1 **Meadow Brown**. The hairstreak seems to be a new record for the site."

### Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> June 2006

*Tom Dunbar sent the following report on 15<sup>th</sup> June:* "I saw a **Ringlet** at 3.15 this afternoon on a bridleway in

the *Greatmoor* area.”

*During a visit to a wood in Bucks Thursday morning, 15<sup>th</sup>, Mick Campbell and David Sommerlad saw 8 Bläck Hairstreäks.* Other butterflies recorded were: 3 **Green Hairstreak**, 1 **Purple Hairstreak**, 20 **Meadow Brown**, 5 **Common Blue** (surprisingly few!), 3 **Small Heath**, 4 **Painted Lady** (faded), 12 **Speckled Wood**, 1 **Ringlet** and 1 **Grizzled Skipper**. Moths were **Mother Shipton**, **Burnet Companion**, several **Yellow Shells** and lots of **Silver-Y**.

*On 15<sup>th</sup> June David & Wendy Redhead paid an early morning visit to one of the sites in Oxfordshire that he surveyed on 11<sup>th</sup>:* “I took Wendy to see her first **Bläck Hairstreäks**. In 40 minutes we amassed a total of 23. Most were very lively, counting was difficult and the reported total is probably conservative. Also we only covered three-quarters of the core area. Nearly as exciting was our first **Purple Hairstreak** of the year flying in one of the oak trees on the edge of the woods. Also seen were 3 **Speckled Wood**, 2 **Red Admiral** & 2 **Common Blue**. My total Bläck Hairstreäk count is now a staggering 52 - although some of today's 23 were probably among the 8 seen on Saturday.”

*Tony Croft went to a private wood in Oxfordshire on 13<sup>th</sup> June and saw 4 Bläck Hairstreäks.* “I had to turn tail and walk quickly to avoid a soaking but will return soon for a more thorough search.”

*Derek & Cathy Brown visited a wood in Bucks on 12<sup>th</sup> June and saw 1x Meadow Brown; 1x Large Skipper and a single Bläck Hairstreäk - luckily a nice fresh one low down that allowed a photo (see below).*

*David Redhead has been to several sites in the last few days surveying for Bläck Hairstreäk:*

*“On Friday 9<sup>th</sup> & Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> June I drew a blank, but managed 7 Speckled Wood - new brood just out. But I have had some compensations - Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> at Swyncombe Downs: 196 Small Blues plus a Grizzled Skipper and a Green Hairstreak and good numbers of Common Blue, Brown Argus and Small Heath. Also this morning (11<sup>th</sup>) a group of us surveyed Pyrton Hill (with the permission of the Beechwood Estate) and got 13 Grizzled Skippers, 3 Dingy Skippers, 3 Green Hairstreak and good numbers of Common Blue, Brown Argus and Small Heath but not one Small Blue. At Otmoor on the 12<sup>th</sup> I saw two Bläck Hairstreäks in pristine condition. Also my first Large Skippers (3) and Meadow Brown (1) of the year.”*

*On 11<sup>th</sup> June Dave Wilton went to a site in north Bucks:* “I spent a quick 45 minutes this evening searching for **Bläck Hairstreäk** and counted 20 (and that was a conservative count!). Unfortunately they preferred the tops of the blackthorn but maybe when they've got the mating out of the way they'll come down to camera level! My first **Meadow Brown** as well today (by co-incidence I saw my first Bläck Hairstreäk and Meadow Brown on exactly the same date last year).”

*Gerry Kendall reported seeing one (perhaps two) Bläck Hairstreäk in a wood in Bucks this morning, 11<sup>th</sup> June.*

*Paul Bowyer and Mick Campbell went to Asham Meads on Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> June where they recorded:* **Bläck Hairstreäk** 5, **Meadow Brown** 1, **Painted Lady** 3, **Red Admiral** 1, **Common Blue** 12, **Brown Argus** 1, **Speckled Wood** 2, **Green Veined White** 1, **Large Skipper** 4, **Small Copper** 1, **Large White**. Day-flying moths were numerous **Silver Y** 50+, **Forester** 30+, **Mother Shipton** 1, **Burnet Companion** 2.

Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> June 2006

*Bläck Hairstreäk is on the wing! The first sighting was reported by Stuart Hodges, Bläck Hairstreäk Species Champion, on 10<sup>th</sup> June.* Several more sightings have since been reported and will be posted soon.

*[Please send any Bläck Hairstreäk sightings you may have in the coming weeks to [Stuart Hodges](#).]*

*Dave Ferguson's visit this morning, 13<sup>th</sup> June, to Yoesden Bank produced a similar result to Saturday:* **Adonis Blue** (32), **Common Blue** (47), **Small Blue** (22), **Green Hairstreak** (1), **Meadow Brown** (10), **Small Heath** (7), **Dingy Skipper** (2), **Large White** (1), **Silver-Y** (1).

*Ali Latham saw the following today on her transect at Seven Bärrows:* 1 **Red Admiral**, 4 **Small Copper**, 20 **Dingy Skipper**, 12 **Small Heath**, 10 **Small Blue**, 5 **Common Blue**, 20 **Märsh Fritillary** - now mostly tatty looking, 5 **Cinnabar Moth** and 6 **Brown Argus**.

*On 12<sup>th</sup> June Dave Ferguson went to Wilton Park, Beaconsfield:* "2 **Large Skippers** this morning, my first of the year."

*Dave Maunder sent this news on 11<sup>th</sup> June:* "Nothing exciting to report from [Aylesbury](#), but it looks like it may be a good summer for Silver-Y moths, also Painted Ladies after this recent hot spell. Today I had a **Painted Lady** on my garden Scabious and saw another nectaring on Thistles- both a bit worn, like newly arrived migrants, and the **Silver Y moths** were nectaring on Comfrey at dusk last night - a nice sight! Other butterflies seen include **Small Tortoiseshell**, **Comma**, **Brimstone**, **Orange tips**, **Green-veined Whites**, **Small Whites**, **Large Whites**, **Speckled Woods**, **Meadow Browns** (my first two seen today), **Holly Blues**, **Common Blues**, and **Small Coppers**."

*Jan Haseler sent the following report on 11<sup>th</sup> June:* "We saw a **Meadow Brown** at [Moor Copse](#) this morning, together with **Large Skipper**, **Common Blue** and a male **Orange-tip** - I'm surprised that Orange-tip and Meadow Brown are on the wing at the same time."

Monday 12<sup>th</sup> June 2006

*Märsh Fritillary sightings at Seven Bärrows have been suppressed for 2 weeks to provide some protection to this fragile colony. The following reports were received:*

*On 28<sup>th</sup> May, Ali Latham was the first to send in a report of a Märsh Fritillary sighting:* “I thought you might like to know that I saw 5 fresh **Märsh Fritillaries** at *Seven Bärrows* today - in between the cloud and cool breeze.”

*28<sup>th</sup> May: Derek & Cathy Brown reported seeing* 8 **Märsh Fritillaries** at Seven Bärrows today (see photo below):

*Tony Croft sent this out of area report on 28<sup>th</sup> May:* “I took this picture this afternoon at a site in Wiltshire whilst visiting the in-laws. It's only my second ever sighting of **Märsh Fritillary** so it was a truly magic moment.”

*Ali Latham carried out her transect at Seven Bärrows on 31<sup>st</sup> May* and recorded 15 **Märsh Fritillaries**.

*Dave Wilton visited Seven Bärrows on 2nd June:* “I recorded 26 **Märsh Fritillaries** as well as numbers of **Dingy Skipper, Large White, Green-veined White, Small Copper** (including a mating pair), **Brown Argus, Common Blue, Duke of Burgundy** (a single very faded example), **Peacock** and **Small Heath**. I couldn't find any Small Blues but I did meet someone else there who had seen two or three.”

*Tom Dunbar recorded his first Märsh Fritillary* at Seven Bärrows on Sunday *4th June*.

*On 7<sup>th</sup> June Dennis Dell and Dave Wilton spent three hours at the Pewsey Downs NNR in the Marlborough Hills, Wiltshire:* “We went just to see what ‘vast numbers’ of our rarest local butterfly, the **Märsh Fritillary**, really looked like, and what a wonderful experience it was! There were literally hundreds of them everywhere, a sight which has to be seen to be believed. Some were newly emerged and several mating pairs were seen, but lots more were beginning to look rather old and frail now (somewhat like their observers!). Other species present included **Dingy Skipper, Green Hairstreak, Brown Argus, Adonis Blue, Common Blue, Small Blue, Small Tortoiseshell, Red Admiral, Painted Lady, Wall Brown** and **Small Heath**. Moths were in good supply as well, including **Cistus Forester** (50+ seen), **Five-spot Burnet sp., Yellow Shell, Wood Tiger, Cinnabar, Treble Lines, Silver-Y, Mother Shipton & Burnet Companion.**”

*Allen Beechey & Kathryn Graves visited Seven Bärrows on 11<sup>th</sup> June* and recorded 42 **Märsh Fritillaries**.

**Robin Dryden went to Seven Bärrows on Saturday morning, 10<sup>th</sup>, and had a very successful time:** “Pride of place goes to **Märsh Fritillary** - about 20 were seen. Also about were **Dingy Skipper** - 2, **Small Copper** - 1, **Small Heath** - 6, **Brown Argus** - 8, **Common Blue** - 15 and **Painted Lady** - 1. Moths included a **Mother Shipton** and a couple of **Silver Y.**”

### Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> June 2006

**Phil Coles visited Asham Meads (Murcott Meadows SSSI) on June 10<sup>th</sup> where he recorded:** Small or Green-veined White 3, **Large White** 10, **Common Blue** 23, **Brown Argus** 1, **Small Copper** 2, **Small Tortoiseshell** 1, **Speckled Wood** 1.

**At Swycombe Downs today, 10<sup>th</sup>, David & Wendy Redhead saw 241 butterflies from 11 species:** 196 **Small Blue**, 52 **Common Blue**, 52 **Small Heath**, 19 **Brown Argus**, 4 **Brimstone**, 4 **Large White**, 3 **Speckled Wood**, 2 **Holly Blue**, 2 **Painted Lady**, 1 **Grizzled Skipper** & 1 **Green Hairstreak**. Also seen 11 **Silver-Y**, 2 **Silver-ground Carpet**, 2 **Burnet Companion**, 2 **Cinnabar**, 1 **Small Yellow Underwing**, 1 **Yellow Shell** & 1 **Mother Shipton**.

**Tom Dunbar went to 2 sites today, 10<sup>th</sup> June** – at a site in the **Greatmoor** area he saw a **Meadow Brown** and in **Finemere** a **Large Skipper**.

**Dave Ferguson sent the following report today, 10<sup>th</sup> June:** “**Yoesden Bank** this morning was amazing - at least 31 **Adonis Blues** including 4 females. Also my first **Meadow Browns** of the year. The count was: **Adonis Blue** (31), **Common Blue** (60+), **Small Blue** (38), **Meadow Brown** (3), **Small Heath** (4), **Brimstone** (3), **Large White** (1), **Dingy Skipper** (2 -very battered), **Burnet Companion** (5), **Silver-Y** (1).”

**Yesterday afternoon, 9<sup>th</sup> June, David Redhead went to Brasenose Woods/Slade Camp:** “I saw 3 **Brimstone**, 3 **Common Blue**, 2 **Comma** and several whites but no energy to chase them in the heat.”

**Tony Croft went over to Wytham Wood on Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup>** to look for **Green Hairstreaks** and found 3 on one of the small areas managed for the species and then another 2 at **Watlington Hill** on **Friday 9<sup>th</sup>**. “**Saturday morning** at **Gomm Valley** there was hardly anything airborne, just 8 **Brimstone**, 2 **Large White**, 3 **Common Blue** and 3 **Speckled Wood**. At **Buttler's Hangings** only three species but perhaps it was getting a bit hot by then (27C). There were 3 **Brown Argus**, 49 **Common Blue** and my first **Meadow Brown** of the season.”

### Friday 9<sup>th</sup> June 2006

**David Chandler, Chairman of the Herts & Middlesex Branch sent the following sightings report:** “I had a holiday from work on June 9<sup>th</sup> and visited four of my favourite butterfly sites and, despite it being

in the June gap, saw seventeen different species during the day. It was a very hot day and the butterflies were whizzing around in the bright sunshine.

*At Ivinghoe Beacon:* **Browns:** Small Heath [40] Speckled Wood [5] **Whites;** Green-veined White [3] Small White [2] Brimstone [3] Large White [1] Orange Tip [5] **Blues:** Small Blue [1] Brown Argus [25] Common Blue [20] Green Hairstreak [2] **Skippers:** Grizzled Skipper [1] Dingy Skipper [2] **& Others:** a possible Duke of Burgundy (but it didn't stop to be positively identified). I think the Dukes season might now be over despite reports from Upper Thames branch last week that some fresh emergences took place in June. There was no sign of any new hairstreak activity at any of the sites excepting those now quite old & tatty-looking Green Hairstreaks left." [Click here to visit the excellent Herts & Middx Branch website.](#)

*Phil Coles went to Aston Rowant NNR (Linky Down) today, June 9<sup>th</sup>.* He recorded **Large White** 1, Small or Green-veined White 2, **Common Blue** 46, **Speckled Wood** 5, **Small Heath** 19, **Brown Argus** 6, **Small Copper** 2 and **Brimstone** 1.

*Dave Wilton saw his first Large Skipper* of the season at *Finemere Wood* on Thursday afternoon 8<sup>th</sup> June.

*Tom Dunbar forwarded the following sighting: "Niamh Frith who is 7 years old was in Micklefield Woods yesterday, 8th June.* She saw a brown butterfly with little rings on the edges of its wings. She knew it was a **Speckled Wood** because she has seen them before. Niamh's favourite butterfly is the Peacock."

*At Shirburn Hill ('Open Access' land) on June 7<sup>th</sup> 2006, Phil Coles saw* **Brimstone** 30, **Common Blue** 41, **Small Heath** 1, **Speckled Wood** 1 and **Brown Argus** 7.

*Allen Beechey & Kathryn Graves took a trip down to Lambourn on 7<sup>th</sup> June:* "The weather was fantastic and there were many active butterflies. It was as if they were happy to see us as we'd no sooner got out of the car when we were buzzed by a couple of Small Blues and a Dingy Skipper. We saw the following butterflies: 7x **Small Blue**, 9x **Dingy Skipper**, 22x **Common Blue**, 25x **Brown Argus**, 19x **Small Heath** and 3x **Small Copper**."

*At Bernwood Meadows on 7<sup>th</sup> June, Tim & Colleen Watts recorded the following:* c25 **Common Blue**, 1 **Small Copper**, 1 **Large White** and 1 **Forester moth**. *Granborough:* 2 (worn) **Painted Lady**.

*On Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> June Adrian Hickman went to Greenham Common:* "Ironically the most productive area was the herb rich patch of grassland just west of the Control tower car park! I recorded **Common Blues**, **Small Heath**, **Brown Argus**, **Green Hairstreak**, **Grizzled Skipper**, **Dingy Skipper** and **Painted Lady**. Couldn't find any Small Blues despite finding areas of Kidney Vetch in various places to the SE of the runway crossroads. As previously reported Treble Bar moths were frequently seen. Of the c30 seen managed to net 3, of which 2 were **Lesser Treble Bars**. Other moths seen include **Mother Shipton**, **Burnet Companion**, **Cinnabar** and **Yellow Shell**."

Monday 5<sup>th</sup> June 2006

**Frank Banyard sent the following report for the Holtspur Valley Reserves Field Meeting held on Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> June:**

“Sunday was an excellent day, with the *Holtspur Bottom reserve* looking great. Species recorded were; **Small Blue, Common Blue, Holly Blue, Brown Argus, Small Copper, Green Hairstreak, Red Admiral, Painted Lady, Comma, Peacock, Brimstone, Orange Tip, Small White and Speckled Wood.** Large White and Green-veined White were almost certainly additions, but could not be positively identified amongst a profusion of female Brimstone, Orange Tip and Small White. Moths recorded were **Burnet Companion** (abundant), **Treble-bar, Silver-Y, Latticed Heath; Mother Shipton and Cinnabar.**”

*Thanks to Frank for leading a very enjoyable walk.*

**Yesterday (4<sup>th</sup> June) Steve Pash visited Aston Rowant Nature Reserve (north) from 14.00 to 17.00hrs and recorded the following species:** 25+ **Common Blue**, 15+ **Brown Argus**, 4+ **Dingy Skipper**, 2 **Small Heath**, 7 **Brimstone**, 4 **Orange-Tip**, **Peacock** and **Red Admiral.**

**David Redhead went to Whitecross Green Wood on 4<sup>th</sup> June:** “I saw numerous **Grass Rivulets** flying as I was leaving at about 4pm. Also saw 5 **Wood White**, 1 **Common Blue**, 1 **Speckled Wood** (very worn and faded), 1 **Comma** and 3 **Burnet Companion.**”

**On 4<sup>th</sup> June Tom Dunbar reported:** “Some excellent weather at last! On the 28th May a joint visit with Andrew Middleton and Andrew Palmer of Herts & Middlesex to a *Bucks site north of Tring* delighted us with 50 **Small Blues**. Late in the day at *Ivinghoe* we located 19 **Duke of Burgundy eggs**, the adults having roosted for the night. On the 31st I located 12 **Adonis Blues** at a site near *Whitchurch*. The 1st June took me to the New Forest for two days. Highlights were 38 Pearl Bordered Fritillary with the usual suspects i.e. Painted Ladies and Clouded Yellow. Hordle Cliff failed to deliver Glanville Fritillary at its mainland site. Is it still there folks? On the 3rd June there were good numbers of **Dingy** and **Grizzled Skippers** at two sites *west of Aylesbury*, a joint 77 and 36 respectively. I managed 6 sites today; including three local ones where I formerly found Wall Brown but to no avail on this occasion.”

Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2006

**Tony Croft carried out his surveys at Gomm Valley and Buttler's Hangings today, 3<sup>rd</sup> June:** “At *Gomm Valley*; 8 **Brimstone**, 1 **Large White**, 1 **Small White**, 1 **Green-veined White**, 2 **Orange Tip**, 3 **Common Blue**, 2 **Red Admiral**, 1 **Small Tortoiseshell** and 2 **Peacock**. Then at *Buttler's Hangings*; 1 **Dingy Skipper**, 5 **Brimstone**, 1 **Large White**, 1 **Small White**, 3 **Green Hairstreak**, 2 **Brown Argus** and 30 **Common Blue.**”

At *Whitecross Green Wood* yesterday, Tony also recorded 6 **Wood White**, 2 **Common Blue**, 1 **Red Admiral** and 1 **Peacock.**

**[Whitecross Green is a wood carefully managed by Becky Woodell and a team of volunteers. This excellent wildlife site includes several species of rare butterfly. All visitors are welcome but please ensure your visit has as little impact as possible in order to protect the delicate habitat which is**

essential to these rare species. Thank you.]

*Derek Brown sent the following photos today, 3<sup>rd</sup> June, of Adonis Blue at Lardon Chase and, just outside the UTB area, a Small Pearl Bordered Fritillary at Pamber Forest:*

*Tom Stevenson recorded several Small Blue at Swyncombe this afternoon, 3<sup>rd</sup> June.*

*Richard Soulsby also went to Swyncombe this afternoon, 3<sup>rd</sup>, to carry out his transect. He recorded lots of Small Blues plus plentiful Common Blues, Brown Argus, Small Heaths, one Green Hairstreak, Small Tortoiseshell, Comma and Red Admiral.*

*Welcome to the website new contributors Adrian Hickman and partner Ali Futter, who sent the following report on 2<sup>nd</sup> June: "Ali and I went to Lardon Chase today (2<sup>nd</sup> June). In beautifully warm and sunny conditions we saw the following: Common Blue (30+), Adonis Blue (4-3 of which were males), Small Copper (1), Brimstone (several sightings), Large White and Painted Lady (1). Good numbers of *Crambus pascuella* and several nicely marked *Thisanotia chrysonuchella*.(both Pyralid moths)."*

*Dennis Dell sent this interesting report on 2<sup>nd</sup> June: "I went to Ivinghoe Beacon this afternoon, June 2<sup>nd</sup>. On the last really fine day (May 11<sup>th</sup>) before today, I saw six Duke of Burgundies here. Because of the atrocious weather during the last fortnight in May, I thought that we would not see the Duke again: mistaken! Robin Carr saw nine here this morning, and I saw four this afternoon. To my surprise, at least one of them was quite fresh [see photo below], indicating that they are still emerging, which implies a flight period of almost one month. This may be prolonged because of the bad weather. Eggs were found by Tom Dunbar, Nick Bowles and colleagues from the Herts/Middlesex branch here a few days ago. Others seen: Large and Small Whites, 11; Dingy Skipper [6]; Brimstone [8], Common Blue [2], Brown Argus [1], Small Heath [23], Peacock [8], Orange Tip [2], and Green Hairstreak [1].*

*Dave Ferguson reported these sightings at Yoesden Bank on Friday 2<sup>nd</sup>: Adonis Blue (1), Small Blue (24), Common Blue (47), Brown Argus (1), Green Hairstreak (1), Brimstone (5), Orange Tip (1), Green-veined White (2), Small White (1), Large White (3), Peacock (4), Dingy Skipper (4), Small Heath (3), Mother Shipton (4), Burnet Companion (2), Silver-Y (1), Treble-bar (1).*

*Wendy & David Redhead's visits to Greenham Common and Swyncombe Downs on Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> produced an interesting comparison although the latter site was helped by the temperature being 4 degrees higher and continuous sunshine as opposed to intermittent: "At Greenham Common: 7 species, 10 butterflies - 3 Small Blue, 2 Common Blue, 1 Grizzled Skipper, 1 Green Hairstreak, 1 Small Copper, 1 Small Heath & 1 Large White. At Swyncombe Downs: 14 species, 165 butterflies - 71 Small Blue, 22 Small Heath, 21 Common Blue, 16 Brown Argus, 13 Brimstone, 4 Grizzled Skipper, 4 Green Hairstreak, 3 Small Copper, 2 Dingy Skipper, 2 Small Tortoiseshell, 2 Red Admiral, 2 Painted Lady, 2 Peacock & 1 Speckled Wood. Small Blue was the "winner" at both sites and it was nice to confirm the continuing presence of this species at Greenham Common. The most prevalent species at Greenham Common was the Lesser Treble-bar/Treble-bar with at least a dozen being seen - definite id of only one was possible and that was a Lesser Treble-bar. The Cinnabar moth made an appearance at both sites with 1 at Greenham and 3 at Swyncombe - in the latter case these ranged from extremely fresh looking to extremely tatty and faded."*

*On Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> June Richard Soulsby recorded the following:* “Common Blue, Small Copper, Dingy Skipper at *Aston Upton* at lunchtime and **Painted Lady**, on my way home from work today.”

#### Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> June 2006

*David Redhead was looking along the Bicester railway embankment yesterday afternoon, 31<sup>st</sup> May,* and recorded 4 **Common Blue**.

*Ali Latham went to Seven Bärrows on 31<sup>st</sup> May and recorded* 6 **Brown Argus**, 12 **Small Heath**, 10 **Dingy Skipper** and 1 male **Brimstone** at the gate at 3pm.

*Still searching for that elusive Red Admiral (without success) Tom Stevenson went to Hartslock on Wednesday afternoon, 31<sup>st</sup> May:* “Odd ones or twos of **Green-veined White**, **Large White**, **Small White**, **Brimstone**, **Grizzled Skipper** and **Brown Argus**. 2 **Green Hairstreak**, c20 **Small Heath**, c10 **Dingy Skipper** and 100+ **Common Blue**.”

*Jan Haseler sent the following report on 31<sup>st</sup> May:* “While our car was having its MOT done, I had a walk round a South Reading industrial estate. Amongst the discarded bicycles and beer cans of a neglected part of the Makro car park, I saw a **Brown Argus**, a **Large White** and a **Yellow Shell**. Is SU7070 a new tetrad for Brown Argus?”

*Dave Wilton’s umpteenth visit to the Calvert drains over the past few weeks finally came up with the goods yesterday, 31<sup>st</sup> May:* “A single **Wall Brown** was seen there late in the afternoon. It was very active even when there was no sunshine, patrolling a hundred-metre strip of grassland and stopping occasionally to feed from buttercups. Other butterflies active in the area included **Dingy Skipper** (14), **Grizzled Skipper** (12), **Common Blue** (2) and **Small Heath** (2).”

*Ched George visited Yoesden Bank late on Wednesday 30<sup>th</sup> May:* “In fairly cloudy weather I scored differently to Dave Ferguson as follows: **Small Blue** 2, **Dingy Skipper** 2, **Grizzled Skipper** 1, **Common Blue** (males only) 11, **Small Heath** 1 and the **Treble-bar sp.** 1 not sorted.”

*On Monday 29<sup>th</sup> May, Dave Ferguson went to Lodge Hill and saw:* 2 **Brown Argus**, 2 **Common Blues**, 3 **Small Coppers**, 1 **Green-veined White**, 1 **Dingy Skipper**, 8 **Small Heaths** and a **Cinnabar moth**.

*Dave Maunder saw the following butterflies on 28<sup>th</sup> May:* “My first **Painted Lady** of the season and a **Small Copper**.”

Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> May 2006

*Tom Stevenson sent the following report today, 28<sup>th</sup>:* “Considering the weather, not too bad a list at *Swyncombe* this afternoon: **Brimstone, Small Tortoiseshell, Large White, Small White, Common Blue, Brown Argus, Small Heath, Green Hairstreak** but the only one new to my list **Dingy Skipper**.”

*Derek and Cathy Brown were in Lambourn today, 28<sup>th</sup>, and managed several new species for the year:* “We saw numerous **Small Heath, 2 Small Coppers** and a couple of **Brown Argus** there. All new for us this year. We then went to *Lardon Chase* after lunch and saw a single **Small Blue** and numerous **Common Blues**, but unfortunately no sign of the Adonis today.”

*Dave Ferguson managed to do a bit of butterflying today, 28<sup>th</sup>, after a week away in Norfolk where Wall Browns were the commonest butterfly in Holkham Woods!*

“At *Stoke Common*: 1 **Common Blue** and 2 **Small Coppers**, then at *Yoesden Bank*: 32 **Common Blues**, 2 **Small Blues**, 1 **Green Hairstreak**, 1 **Orange Tip**, 1 **Brimstone**, 1 **Green-veined White**, 1 **Small White**, 1 **Painted Lady**, 1 **Peacock**, 2 **Small Heaths**, 10 **Burnet Companions**, 4 **Mother Shiptons**, 1 **Treble-bar**. There were also hundreds of small bronze beetles whizzing about.”

*Ali Latham went to Lambourn today, 28<sup>th</sup> and saw:* 2 fresh **Brown Argus**, 5 **Dingy Skippers**, 1 **Small Copper**, 2 **Small Heaths**, 2 **Small White** and 2 **Cinnabar Moths** - in between the cloud and cool breeze.

*Two photos from Dave Wilton's site visits of 25<sup>th</sup> May:*

*Stuart Hodges walked his transect in the Grendon area last Thursday 25<sup>th</sup>* and recorded two new species for the year - a **Grizzled Skipper** and a **Small Heath**.

*The Aston Rowant field meeting on 24<sup>th</sup> May met with some poor weather.* However, during a 20 minute window of sun in the morning, five species of butterfly were seen: **Brown Argus, Common Blue, Small Copper, Dingy Skipper** and **Grizzled Skipper**. An extremely good result considering the awful weather! *Thanks to Paul Huckle for leading the meeting.*

Friday 26<sup>th</sup> May 2006

*Tom Dunbar took advantage of the glorious late afternoon weather on Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> May and visited 3 sites on his way home from work - Prestwood Picnic Site, Grangelands and the Rifle Range:* “**Dingy Skippers** were present at all three sites - I have the impression they are having a good season. I saw 4 **Grizzled Skipper** at Grangelands, which is well above average for me at this site and I was pleased to see a total of 9 **Common Blues** shared between Grangelands and the Rifle Range, my first CBs for the season. I thought a **Brown Argus** might have been a possibility but it was not to be. I failed yet again to find **Duke of Burgundy** at either site

despite reliable reports that small numbers had been seen in recent years.

Have **Small Heaths** been adversely affected by the recent poor weather? I only saw 2 today, well down on 2 weeks ago."

**Maureen Cross recorded** four more **Adonis Blue** at **Lardon Chase** today (25<sup>th</sup> May): "They were males this time. Also one **Small Blue** and 49 **Common Blues**. A good day for Blues."

**Dave Wilton sent the following report for 25<sup>th</sup> May:** "With the Met Office threatening a dull, overcast day, a quick look at the early morning satellite images suggested that the forecasters had been a tad pessimistic, so I decided to go out anyway. What an excellent day it turned out to be! I must be the last UTB member to go to **Hartslock** this year. Butterflies seen in an hour's visit comprised **Dingy Skipper (8)**, **Brimstone (4)**, **Large White (2)**, **Green-veined White (1)**, **Common Blue (80+**, including several mating pairs) & **Small Heath (6)**. No sign of Adonis Blue there. Across the Thames at **Lardon Chase** another hour spent searching clumps of horseshoe vetch was again unsuccessful so far as Adonis was concerned and all I found there were Brimstone (2), Large White (1), **Small White (2)**, **Orange-tip (1)** & Common Blue (17). My final stop was **Swyncombe Downs** which, as usual, came up with an interesting selection of butterflies: **Grizzled Skipper (3)**, Dingy Skipper (1), Brimstone (14, including a mating pair), Large White (4), Orange-tip (3), **Green Hairstreak (1)**, **Small Copper (5)**, **Small Blue (2)**, **Brown Argus (3)**, Common Blue (1), **Small Tortoiseshell (5)**, **Peacock (1)**, **Comma (1)** & Small Heath (1). A pleasing 16 species for the day, of which four were new to my list for this year."

## Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> May 2006

**Today, May 23<sup>rd</sup>, Maureen Cross located her first Adonis Blue of the season on Lardon Chase:** "Female and newly emerged. Interestingly it was the semiceronus aberrant form, often seen on this site."

[Please send any Adonis Blue sightings you may have in the coming weeks to [Maureen Cross](#), Adonis Blue Species Champion.]

**The following was received from Dave Wilton today, 23<sup>rd</sup>:** "Despite the high winds and low temperatures this morning, at least there was some sunshine for once so I decided to head north in search of Wood White. The two sheltered locations that I chose to visit were **College Wood near Nash and the disused railway line to the east of Winslow**. Both places came up trumps, with one **Wood White** being seen at College Wood (see photo below) while another five were found along the railway cutting."

**In some desperation Richard Soulsby reports that he took the "window of opportunity" to do the Swyncombe transect at lunchtime today:** "Weather pretty poor, but forecast is worse. Dodging the showers, I saw very little, but what I did see was mainly new for me this year, namely 4x**Grizzled Skippers**, 1x**Small Heath** and 1x**Brown Argus**, plus a **Mother Shipton** (and two **Brimstones**)."

**Tom Stevenson sent this report in today, 23<sup>rd</sup>:** "I spent a super hour and a half up at **Swyncombe** this morning between the showers. These species were new for my list this season: **Grizzled Skipper (6)**, **Brown Argus**, **Common Blue**, **Green Hairstreak** and **Small Heath**. Quite a few moths but the only ones I managed to identify were **Common Carpet** and **Cinnabar**. Also two **caterpillars of the Drinker** (enormous!) and a family of **Fox Cubs**."

**Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> May 2006**

**Chris Raper saw the first Adonis Blue** of the season at *Hartslock* today, 20<sup>th</sup>. It was sitting near Horseshoe Vetch.

**Rosaleen and Tom Dunbar accompanied Ali Latham to the Bucks / Herts borders today, Saturday 20<sup>th</sup>:**

“During a brief sunny spell at *College Lake* we only managed one butterfly, a **Green Hairstreak**. Despite searching no Small Blues were seen there. However at another Bucks site just to the north of there we had better luck; 12 **Dingy Skippers**, 1 **Small White**, 2 **Small Blues** and 3 **Small Heaths**.”

**Dave Wilton sent this report on 19<sup>th</sup> May:** “I’ve been trying to concentrate on visiting local Grizzled Skipper sites as much as possible over the past few weeks. *Thursday morning* I called at the *Kirtlington Quarry Local Nature Reserve*, Oxon while on my way to work. A few butterflies were quite active in the sunshine at this small site, which is quite sheltered from the wind, and I found **Grizzled Skipper** (1), **Brimstone** (3), **Large White** (1), **Small White** (1), **Orange-tip** (2), **Red Admiral** (1) and **Speckled Wood** (1) in an hour's visit.”

**Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> May 2006**

**Tom Stevenson managed, at last, to catch up with a Small White** this afternoon, 18<sup>th</sup>, at Mill Brook Mead, *Benson*.

**Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> May 2006**

**Dave Wilton sent the following report today, 17<sup>th</sup>:** “Another quick trip along the *disused railway line west of Westcott Airfield* this morning, to check on the **Dingy** and **Grizzled Skipper** populations (both doing well) produced more moth species than butterflies. Seen there were **Burnet Companion** (1), **Cinnabar** (1), **Common Carpet** (3), **Common Heath** (5), **Green Carpet** (2), **Lesser Treble-bar** (3) and one of the **Pyrausta sp.** moths which disappeared before I could be sure of its identity.”

**17<sup>th</sup> May - Dave Maunder has seen the following butterflies around Aylesbury recently:** “**Peacocks** (2), **Small Tortoiseshells** (2), **Brimstones** (3), **Large Whites** (4), **Small Whites** (7), my first **Green-veined Whites** (2) of the year on 11<sup>th</sup>; **Orange Tips** (18), **Holly Blues** (9), and **Speckled Woods** (2).”

**Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> May 2006**

**At a work party at Dancersend on Sunday (14 May), Mick Jones reports that there was a brief period just**

*after lunch when it brightened up a bit:* "I went on a quick **Duke of Burgundy** search and saw three separate individuals, all in areas where we've recorded them for some years now, so I feel slightly relieved. Also, the condition of the primroses is probably better than we've seen for at least three years, so as long as they get a chance to lay eggs I wonder if we might see a bit of a revival. If you add to this the fact that we are adjusting the grazing plan now so two of these areas will not get any summer grazing from now on, perhaps we can be hopeful. I also saw **Brimstone**, **Orange tip**, **Silver Y** and **Mother Shipton**, but that's all - showing just what a dismal day it was!"

*David Redhead reports on the caterpillar crawl field meeting at the RSPB Otmoor Reserve held on 12<sup>th</sup> May:* "Just four searchers found **14 Brown Hairstreak third instar caterpillars** of which the longest was just 4mm. Six of these were totally new finds and this increased the caterpillar inventory to 35. May Webber also spotted a **Drinker moth caterpillar** in the undergrowth and waited patiently for it to uncoil when it measured in at 60mm making it almost full grown."

**Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> May 2006**

*Tom Stevenson, just back from a week in Devon, saw a pristine Painted Lady* at the *Ewelme* watercress beds on Saturday afternoon, 13<sup>th</sup> May. Then today, 14<sup>th</sup>, he found it very quiet up at *Swyncombe* in the afternoon but managed to find his first **Small Copper** of the year.

*David Redhead sent the following report today, Sunday 14<sup>th</sup>:* "I legally visited the railway embankment east of *Bicester*, where a footpath crosses the railway line, trying to replicate a last year's Grizzled Skipper sighting but without success. However, I did have my first **Small Heath** and **Latticed Heath** sightings of the season plus a couple of **Silver-Y's**. In the locality I also saw several **Orange Tips** and **Speckled Woods** plus a **Brimstone**. Most of the Cuckooflower plants I looked at bore an **Orange Tip egg** and several bore more than one. I think Orange Tips have been laying quite heavily this year - my garden count is now 10 on Garlic Mustard plants whereas last year I found only 2 on a similar number of plants. In other areas near where I live I have found good numbers whereas last year I was struggling to find a few."

*Despite the cool and overcast conditions on Saturday, 13<sup>th</sup> May, there was an excellent turnout of 18 people for the Duke of Burgundy Field Meeting at the Dancersend Reserve.* The sun did manage to show itself for about 20 minutes and the group, which included a couple from Warwickshire hoping to see their first **Duke of Burgundy**, were very pleased to get three Duke sightings altogether. Pip Holland, aged 9, was able to get the photo below:

Other species seen on the day were **Orange Tip** (1) and **Speckled Wood** (2), Longhorn moth *Adela Reaumurella* (5) and a **Green Carpet**. *Thanks to Robin Carr for leading a most enjoyable field meeting.*

*After attending the Duke of Burgundy field meeting at Dancersend on Saturday, Tom Dunbar went on to visit a Small Blue site* but failed to locate his target species. However, at *Ivinghoe* he managed his first **Large White** of the season and **also recorded 2 more Duke of Burgundy**. Then at the *disused railway line near Winslow* today, Sunday 14<sup>th</sup>, he saw 9 species of butterfly in two hours: **Dingy Skipper** (3), **Grizzled Skipper** (4), **Orange Tip** (6), **Large White** (1), **Green-veined White** (2), **Wood White** (4), **Small Copper** (1), **Peacock** (1) and **Speckled Wood** (1).

*On Friday May 12<sup>th</sup> Maureen Cross reported that she found a Small Copper on Lardon Chase on Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup>. Then on 12<sup>th</sup> at Churn Knob near Blewbury she was rewarded with, amongst others, 5 Green Hairstreaks and a Painted Lady.*

*Stuart Hodges recorded a Dingy Skipper at Calvert on Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> and a Green-veined White at Simms farm near Chesterton on Thursday 11<sup>th</sup>.*

#### Friday 12<sup>th</sup> May 2006

*Mick & Wendy Campbell paid another visit to the disused railway line near Winslow this morning, 12<sup>th</sup> May. They were pleased to find that the first Wood Whites (3) of this small colony had emerged, although it took about 20 minutes of chasing these beautiful little butterflies up and down the track before they settled, allowing a positive identification. Also seen were Grizzled Skipper (6), Orange Tip (4), Brimstone (5), Peacock (3) and one each of Green-veined White, Dingy Skipper, Small Tortoiseshell and Large White. Moths seen were Silver-Y (2) and a Burnet Companion.*

*Tom Dunbar spent a half-hour at Prestwood Picnic site on Friday 12th May between 5.30 and 6 pm. "In that time I managed to add Small Copper to my list making a total to date of 16 species. The Large White and Duke of Burgundy still elude me but hopefully will be added very soon. It was good to see Dingy Skipper at this site - a resident species. As ever in May the downland is a carpet of Cowslip. I always take some time to visit Ron Beaven's memorial seat - it has recently been restored. Ron was the driving force behind the development of this wonderful jewel of a site and a very active member of the branch."*

*At Grangelands yesterday, 11<sup>th</sup>, Francis Gomme recorded good numbers of butterflies: "Dingy Skipper, Grizzled Skipper, Green Hairstreak, Holly Blue, Green-veined White, Small White, Orange Tip, Brimstone, Peacock, plus Small Tortoiseshell (1), Comma (1) and a lone Duke of Burgundy."*

*On 11<sup>th</sup> May Maureen Cross walked through the new "Right to Roam" land between Goring and Hartslock BBOWT reserve (SU 615 798) which is steep chalk grassland, partly south facing. She was delighted to see 5 Dingy Skippers and 2 Grizzled Skippers without even trying, in addition there were 5 Small Heaths.*

#### Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> May 2006

*Wendy & David Redhead had a glorious time doing the transect at Swyncombe Downs this afternoon with a total of 79 butterflies from 14 species (although all of them did not qualify for the transect count). They saw their first Green Hairstreak, Dingy Skipper and Small Copper of the season. The breakdown of their sightings was: Brimstone 40, Green Hairstreak 9, Large White 5, Grizzled Skipper 4, Peacock 4, Small Copper 3, Dingy Skipper 3, Green-veined White 3, Holly Blue 2, Small Tortoiseshell 2, Red Admiral 1, Small White 1, Orange Tip 1 & Speckled Wood 1. They did well for day-flying moths with lots of *Pyrausta purpuralis* on the wing, along with several Silver-ground Carpet and a Cinnabar, Mother Shipton & Silver-Y.*

**Tom Dunbar went to Grangelands today, Thursday 11<sup>th</sup>:** “I added 2 **Small Heaths** to my site list for this season. There were probably 5 or 6 on the wing but only 2 definite positive IDs. **Dingy Skippers** were also active but no Grizzled Skippers on this occasion.”

**Today 11<sup>th</sup>, Ched George sent the following report:** “Rape fields on approach to *Lodge Hill* were alive with Whites, Large?, Small?, no, I was astonished to find that all that I checked were **Green-veined Whites**; around 15 in all. On the hill I saw 15 **Grizzled Skippers**, 6 **Dingy Skippers**, 2 **Small Copper** and 2 **Small Heath**. There were many **Brimstones**, a few **Orange-tip**, a few **Peacock**, 2 **Holly Blue**, 3 **Green Hairstreak** and 1 **Small Tortoiseshell**. Back in *Radnage* I had 3 **Speckled Wood** and a **Holly Blue**.”

**Chris Raper was working on Hartslock today and saw the first Common Blue of the season along with Small Heath, Orange-Tip, Brimstone, Peacock, Dingy & Grizzled Skippers, Holly Blue, Cinnabar moth and Pyrausta nigrata.** “I also noted that *Diplolepis rosae* (the gall-wasps that cause the Robin's Pincushion gall on roses) was ovipositing on Sweet Briar. Its commonest parasite (*Orthopelma mediator*, a 3mm ichneumon) was also in good numbers.”

**In a circular walk from Bledlow today, through a mixed habitat of damp meadows, unimproved chalk downland and farm field edges, Mick & Wendy Campbell recorded over 100 butterflies from 17 species.** The most abundant species were as follows: **Brimstone** (20+), **Orange Tip** (18), **Grizzled Skipper** (11) and **Small Tortoiseshell** (9 – 1 of which was very tatty). Also seen were **Small Heath** (4), **Small Copper** (5), **Painted Lady** (2) and a single **Duke of Burgundy**. The Painted Ladies were observed along the edge of a warm south-facing crop of Rape, flying amongst **Peacocks**, **Small Tortoiseshells** and **Red Admirals**. **Silver-Y** (7) was the only moth species recorded.

**Dave Ferguson called in to Turville Hill today, 11<sup>th</sup>, where he saw the following:** 13 **Dingy Skippers**, 3 **Small Heaths**, 1 **Red Admiral**, 1 **Orange Tip**, 5 **Brimstones**, 2 **Green-veined Whites**, 1 **Small White**, 3 **Silver-Y**, 1 **Mother Shipton**.

**Nick Bowles recorded a single Dingy Skipper** at *Aston Clinton Ragpits* at about 5pm today on his way home from work. Also, a **Painted Lady**, hurtling north through the Ragpits.

**Dennis Dell sent the following report today, 11<sup>th</sup>:** “Last week, no **Duke of Burgundy** at *Ivinghoe Beacon*, and none seen yesterday there by Tom Dunbar, in fine weather. I went today and saw 6 along a 'hotspot' stretch, which is a sunken path below the beacon on the west facing slope. I saw none, however, in another 'hotspot', lower down on the same slope where it is more sheltered, which I find strange. Others seen: **Brimstone** [8], **Small White** [4], **Peacock** [5], **Green Hairstreak** [3], **Orange Tip** [2], **Silver Y** [7].”

**Jan Haseler saw 2 Small Coppers** at Green Park, Reading at lunchtime today, 11<sup>th</sup> May.

**Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> May 2006**

**Tony Croft did his BBOWT surveys at Gomm Valley and Buttler's Hangings again today, 10<sup>th</sup>:** “At *Gomm Valley* I saw 13 **Brimstone**, 3 **Large White**, 6 **Green-veined White**, 5 **Orange Tip**, 1 **Holly Blue**, 2 **Small Tortoiseshell**, 1 **Peacock**, 1 **Speckled Wood** And 1 **Silver-Y Moth**. At *Buttler's Hangings* I saw 9 **Dingy Skipper**, 12 **Brimstone**, 1 **Large White**, 2 **Green-veined White**, 4 **Orange Tip**, 4 **Green Hairstreak** and 6 **Peacock**.”

**10<sup>th</sup> May - Dave Wilton carried out a transect at Finemere in this afternoon's glorious sunshine:** “There was little of note to be seen apart from a **Red Admiral** and six **Small Tortoiseshells** along the track leading to the wood and a **Holly Blue** in the adjacent meadows. Other species present were **Brimstone**, **Large White**, **Green-veined White**, **Orange-tip**, **Peacock** and **Comma** (not a single **Speckled Wood** was recorded). Of interest along the *Calvert drains* were three **Grizzled Skippers** and a mud-puddling **Holly Blue**, while the bridleway past the wood produced another **Holly Blue** sunning itself on the blackthorn. Final stop was the disused *railway cutting west of Westcott Airfield* where I found an egg-laying **Green Hairstreak** as well as reasonable numbers of **Grizzled Skipper** (11) and **Dingy Skipper** (7).”

**Dave Ferguson sent the following report today:** “This morning (10<sup>th</sup> May) at chalk grassland/scrub near Princes Risborough: **Duke of Burgundy** (5), **Grizzled Skipper** (2), **Dingy Skipper** (5), **Green Hairstreak** (2), **Speckled Wood** (2), **Brimstone** (5), **Green-veined White** (2). *Also, at Lodge Hill:* **Grizzled Skipper** (4), **Dingy Skipper** (1), **Green Hairstreak** (1), **Brimstone** (15), **Green-veined White** (5), **Orange Tip** (2).”

**Wendy & Mick Campbell visited Bradenham Bank today, 10<sup>th</sup>, hoping to see the return of the Duke of Burgundy to this site.** They weren't able to find any and were disappointed to see that most of the bushes and scrub had been cleared from the area the **Duke of Burgundy** used to be found. However, the sun did get a good number of butterflies on the wing and they recorded 11 species, of which the **Brimstone** (12+) was the most numerous. Other species seen were **Green Hairstreak** (7 – all very active), **Red Admiral** (2), **Orange Tip** (4), **Peacock** (3), **Dingy Skipper** (3) and singletons of **Painted Lady**, **Small Tortoiseshell**, **Grizzled Skipper**, **Holly Blue** and **Speckled Wood**. Moths seen were **Silver-Y**, **Burnet Companion** and their first **Green Carpet** of the season.

**Robin Dryden had another walk at Wraysbury Gravel Pits yesterday, 9<sup>th</sup> May:** “I had a couple of what I consider to be unusual sightings. The first was a **Painted Lady** alongside the railway line and the second was a **Clouded Yellow** in the middle of the scrub area. I can only assume that both these species have been brought here on the southerly airflow we had last week. I was particularly surprised at the **Clouded Yellow** as I only recall ever seeing them in mid to late summer before.

Also about were **Brimstone** (6), **Orange Tip** (5m 3f), **Peacock** (2), **Comma** (2), **Speckled Wood** (4) and **Small White** (3).

**9<sup>th</sup> May - Richard Soulsby recorded his first Large White** in central Oxford.

**Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> May 2006**

**Derek and Cathy Brown tried Aston Upthorpe again around lunch-time today, 7<sup>th</sup>:** “In 20 minutes of sunshine we had **Peacock** (7); **Small Tortoiseshell** (3); **Green Hairstreak** (1); **Comma** (2); **Grizzled Skipper** (2); **Dingy Skipper** (2); **Green-veined White** (6); **Brimstone** (5); **Orange-tip** (8) and best of all

2 **Duke of Burgundy**. Also had a **Green Carpet** there which I think is new for the UTB moth species list. Before we went to Aston I also saw **Speckled Wood** in the garden at [Beenham](#).”

**Tom Dunbar sent the following sightings report for Sunday 7th May:** “Taking a risk with the weather paid dividends today. I managed **Grizzled Skippers** at three sites namely [Ludgershall Railway Cutting](#); the adjacent [Laplads Farm](#); and finally [Calvert Jubilee Reserve](#). However numbers were low 1:1:2. **Dingy Skippers** made a showing at CJR - 3 in all. Calvert played an ace with a magnifique **Painted Lady** only to be trumped by a **Nightingale**. A local birder, Colin Oran - I met him previously at Piddington Wood - drew my attention to its tentative song. On my return to the spot an hour later I was lucky enough to get a full view and earful of its full-on mating call. While its song held up to its glorious reputation the attendant body language was absolutely hilarious. **Silver-Y moths** were rather overshadowed today but they did appear in low numbers at all three sites.”

[Note: Calvert Jubilee is a BBOWT permit-only reserve.]

**On Saturday 6th May Ali Latham went to Moor Copse BBOWT Reserve:** “I arrived there at 0845 while there was some sun. Driving through Tidmarsh I saw 2 male **Brimstones** and a **Small White** flying across the sheltered sunny lane I was driving down, then in Moor Copse, I saw a **Comma**, 3 **Speckled Woods**, 5 male **Orange Tips** and 3 male **Brimstones** before the clouds arrived and then down came the rain. The **Bluebells** are at their best and a stunning sight in this copse.”

**Nick Bowles sent the following report:** “I saw **Holly Blue**, **Orange Tip** and **Speckled Wood** in [Aylesbury](#) on Friday evening while I waited for a lift in the car park at work. **On Saturday 6th I went to Dancersend** and saw 2 **Green Hairstreaks**, **Duke of Burgundy**, **Orange Tip**, 3 **Peacocks** basking on the path and several **Brimstones**. More interestingly there was a fresh **Silver-Y** and a fleeting glimpse of **Red Admiral**. Still no sign of **Dingy Skipper**, but the weather was poor. Then back home about 6pm I disturbed a **Small White** from the flower border.”

**Chris Raper sent the following news today:** “On a sunny evening on [Friday 5th May](#) I saw a **Painted Lady** chasing a **Brimstone** around the orchid slope at [Hartslock](#).”

**Ched George went to Yoesdon Bank on May 5th:** “Butterflies included one each of **Dingy** and **Grizzled Skipper**, and 3 **Green Hairstreaks**.”

**Saturday 6th May 2006**

**Derek and Cathy Brown tried Aston Upthorpe for Duke of Burgundy on Saturday:** “But, of course, as soon as we arrived the cloud started to thicken and by the time we left it was starting to rain. Needless to say no Dukes, although we had singles of **Holly Blue**, **Brimstone**, **Green veined White**, **Peacock** and **Grizzled Skipper**.”

**Dick Bodily sent the following sightings report today, 6th:**

**Linford** - **Speckled Wood**, **Holly Blue**, **Large White**, **Comma**, **Peacock**.

*Willen* - lots of male **Orange Tips** near the hide.

**6<sup>th</sup> May - Dave Maunder has seen a number of butterflies around Aylesbury town during the last two days:** **Peacocks** (5), **Small Tortoiseshell** (1), his first **Large Whites** of the year (2), **Small Whites** (12), **Orange Tips** (5), **Brimstones** (2), and **Speckled Woods** (3).

**Tom Dunbar sent the following report:** "I spent this morning, Saturday 6<sup>th</sup>, in a private wood in the Grendon area. After a slow start I finally managed just 7 species. These included 8 **Grizzled Skippers** and my first **Green Hairstreak** of the season. A single **Brimstone** and a half dozen **Orange Tips** were the only whites despite reports from Surrey of a suspected migration of Large Whites in recent days. I was pleased to see 4 **Small Tortoiseshells** - a butterfly that will hopefully make a better showing this season. I did manage one **Speckled Wood**, my first in 3 recent field visits. There were no Dingy Skippers which was surprising since there is normally a good colony at this site."

**Friday 5<sup>th</sup> May 2006**

**Mick & Wendy Campbell went for a walk today, 5<sup>th</sup>, which took in Dancersend, hoping to confirm the presence of the Duke of Burgundy for next week's Field Meeting (on 13<sup>th</sup>).** They met **Robin Carr**, Duke of Burgundy Species Champion, who was just leaving, and he was pleased to have seen a single **Duke of Burgundy** on site. They carried on round the site and managed to find a Duke of Burgundy sunbathing in the grass. Other species seen on the walk were **Small Tortoiseshell**, **Orange Tip**, **Brimstone**, **Peacock**, **Green-veined White**, **Speckled Wood** and **Red Admiral**.

**Phil Coles sent the following reports today, 5<sup>th</sup>:**

**Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> Swains Wood** (BBOWT – permit required), late afternoon – **Peacock** 4

**Friday 5<sup>th</sup> Rushbeds Wood & Lapland Farm** (BBOWT) – **Peacock** 1, **Speckled Wood** 2, Small or GV White 1.

**5<sup>th</sup> May - Francis Gomme found good numbers of Grizzled Skippers, Dingy Skippers and Green Hairstreaks at Hartslock** this morning. "Fewer of each at **Grangelands** this afternoon. No Dukes seen yet at sites around Princes Risborough despite intensive searches yesterday and today!"

**On Friday 5<sup>th</sup> May Tom Dunbar completed a hat-trick of Grizzled Skipper days with a visit to Grangelands between 5 and 6 pm.** He added his first **Dingy Skippers** of the season. "I'll be watching the Eagles tomorrow!"

**David Redhead sent the following report:** "Yesterday (4<sup>th</sup>) I returned in much better conditions to **Watlington Hill** after seeing nothing there on Bank Holiday Monday. It still took me nearly an hour to find my first **Grizzled Skipper** of the season, on my way down towards the White Mark. A second was found immediately below the White Mark. A dozen **Brimstones**, nearly all males, were seen around the site plus two **Peacocks**. So still not the greatest of hauls. But the best sighting of the day, although a common species, occurred as I walked up the hill alongside the White Mark but you will have to turn to the [moth sightings page](#) to discover more. Meanwhile back at home we continue to see a wider range of species with up to three **Holly Blues**, several **Orange Tips** - I found **7 Orange Tip**

eggs on the garden garlic mustard on my return from Watlington, and the **Speckled Wood** has now made an appearance but in only one of its three usual haunts."

**Stuart Hodges reports:** "I saw a **Holly Blue** outside Buckingham Hospital yesterday, 4<sup>th</sup>, and Linda saw one in the garden here at the Green".

Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> May 2006

**Encouraged by reports from localities south of Bucks of the first Duke of Burgundy sightings, Dennis Dell went, optimistically, to the slopes below Ivinghoe Beacon today, in superb weather.** "No Dukes yet [and none at Dancer's End as the species champion, Robin Carr reports]. Saw one **Green Hairstreak**, **Brimstones** [17], **Peacocks** [4], and a **Small White**."

**David Redhead went to Watlington Hill this afternoon, 4<sup>th</sup>, and recorded** two **Grizzled Skippers** and a **Silver-Y Moth**.

**Dave Wilton recorded his first Holly Blue of the season in the Grendon area yesterday. On his way home from work this afternoon he visited several sites on the Berkshire Downs looking for Duke of Burgundy.** "None was seen. In fact, despite 27 degrees in wall-to-wall sunshine, there seemed to be very few species active apart from **Brimstone**, **Orange-tip**, **Large White** and **Peacock!** The only unexpected sighting was of five **Silver-Y moths**, probably brought in overnight on the southerly winds (it was apparently a good night for immigrants)."

**On Thursday 4th May Tom Dunbar dropped into Wotton disused railway line en route from Wycombe to Aylesbury.** He was very pleased to see 4 **Grizzled Skippers** between 5 and 6 o'clock. Other species seen were **Brimstone** (5) **Orange Tip** (4) **Peacock** (6). Various unidentified Whites were also noted. "Was it too hot for the Speckled Woods?"

**Robin Dryden went for lunchtime walks at Horton and Wraysbury Gravel pits the last two days:** "I've been pleased with the abundance of Butterflies - *Wraysbury* (3/5/06) had **Brimstone** c10, **Orange Tip** c25, **Peacock** 3, **Comma** 4 and at *Horton* (4/5/06) had **Brimstone** 8, **Orange Tip** 12, **Peacock** 6, **Comma** 3, **Holly Blue** 1 and **Green-veined White** 2."

**Tony Croft sent the following report:** "I did my BBOWT surveys at Gomm Valley and Buttler's hangings today. In spite of the superb weather there wasn't that much about. *At Gomm Valley* I saw 15 **Brimstone**, 3 **Large White**, 1 **Green-veined White**, 3 **Orange Tip**, 4 **Peacock** and 1 **Speckled Wood**. *At Buttler's Hangings* where the wind was quite a bit stronger I saw my first **Grizzled Skipper** of the season also my first **Green Hairstreak**. Others were 9 **Brimstone**, 1 **Small Tortoiseshell**, 3 **Peacock** and 1 **Comma**. At home there was 1 **Holly Blue**."

**David Gantzel saw a single Holly Blue** at Bassetsbury Manor yesterday, May 3<sup>rd</sup>, and several **Brimstones**.

Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> May 2006

*Stuart Hodges walked his transect in the Grendon area this afternoon and added a few more species to his list for this year: Speckled Wood, Large and Small White.* "I called in at Calvert on the way. The Grizzled and Dingy Skippers do not seem to have emerged there yet, the food plants are still very small so it is probably best for them to be late!"

*Dave Maunder has at last seen his first Orange Tips (2) in Aylesbury today; 3<sup>rd</sup> May.* "Other butterflies seen were **Brimstone** (1), **Speckled Wood** (1), **Peacocks** (3), **Comma** (1), **Small Tortoiseshell** (1) and my wife saw a **Holly Blue** - not surprising on such a nice warm day!"

*On 3<sup>rd</sup> May Tom Stevenson saw Green-veined White and Speckled Wood* in Mill Brook Mead, Benson.

*On Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> May Tom Dunbar dropped into Coombe Hill on the way home from work between 5.35 and 6 PM.* Species seen were **Brimstone** (4) **Comma** (2) **Peacock** (2) and his first **Grizzled Skippers** (2) of the season.

Please send any Grizzled Skipper sightings you may have in the coming weeks to [Tom \(Grizzled Skipper Champion\)](#). He can also supply members with details of Grizzled Skipper sites that need monitoring.

*Mick & Wendy Campbell went to the disused railway line near Winslow this afternoon, 3<sup>rd</sup>, and were pleased to see good numbers of butterflies: Orange Tip* (10+ – male & female), **Brimstone** (7), **Large White** (2), **Peacock** (7), **Comma** (1), **Small Tortoiseshell** (1) and **Green-veined White** (1). Two moths were seen – **Burnet Companion** and **Ruby Tiger**. They also went to the Calvert drain but only found **Peacocks** (3). Back at home, two **Holly Blues** (1 male & 1 female) were basking in the evening sun on ivy.

*Dave Wilton sent the following report on 2<sup>nd</sup> May:* "I was fooled into going to *Finemere* this afternoon when the sun came out - it had of course become completely overcast again in the ten minutes it took me to get there. I disturbed one **Speckled Wood** and noted three **Orange-tips** perched on Lady's Smock (they'll probably still be in the same positions next week!). A quick search for Orange-tip eggs produced eight in all, although a lot of the plants seemed to be missing their flower heads (rabbits/muntjak?)."

Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2006

*1<sup>st</sup> May - Welcome to the website new contributor Tom Stevenson from Benson. He reports that so far this year he's seen the following:*

*5<sup>th</sup> April* - Ewelme watercress beds - **Brimstone**

*21<sup>st</sup> April* - Ewelme watercress beds - **Large White, Holly Blue, Small Tortoiseshell, Peacock, Comma**

*23<sup>rd</sup> April* - Benson garden - **Orange Tip.**

**Pete Eeles visited Midgham lakes on 1<sup>st</sup> May** and saw 5 male **Orange-tips** and, at home, saw 2 **Brimstone** (both male) and his first **Large White** (male) of the year.

**Derek Brown sent the following sightings on 1<sup>st</sup> May:** “Cathy and I went to **Hartslock** after lunch today, 1<sup>st</sup> May, seeing 9x **Dingy Skippers**, 2x **Grizzled Skippers** and a single **Green Hairstreak**, along with a **Comma**, a **Holly Blue** and a couple of **Brimstones**.”

**Monday 1<sup>st</sup> May 2006**

**On Saturday 29<sup>th</sup> April, UTB held its first butterfly Field Meeting of the year at Moor Copse and, despite the cool and cloudy weather conditions at the start of the walk, there was a good turnout of 11 people.** The sun did eventually break through the cloud and 8 species of butterfly were recorded: **Orange Tip, Comma, Peacock, Green-veined White, Small White, Brimstone, Holly Blue** and finally a **Speckled Wood**. Also seen was the longhorn moth **Adela reaumurella** and the moth larvae of **Scarlet Tiger, Yellow Tail, Drinker** and **Lesser Yellow Underwing**. Birds included a **Buzzard, Grey wagtail** and several **Garden Warblers**. The **bluebells** were just starting to open and are well worth a revisit in a week or two to see them in full flower. However, there were several **Early Purple Orchids** in flower and the noteworthy fungus, **Dryad's Shoulder** was seen. A selection of photos is shown below. **Thanks to Dee Raper and her son Chris for leading a highly enjoyable and successful field meeting.**

**Saturday 29<sup>th</sup> April 2006**

**Nick Bowles reports that two hours this afternoon on Coombe Hill produced** two **Peacocks** and three **Brimstone** males.

**Richard Soulsby did his Swyncombe Downs transect Saturday afternoon in marginal weather conditions:**

“I was rewarded with my first **Green Hairstreak** of the year. What's more, it was in a place where I've only occasionally seen them before. Also seen were **Orange Tips, Small Tortoiseshells, Peacocks, Brimstone** and **Small White**. Earlier, in my garden in **Benson** I had seen a **Comma**, and what was probably a **Large White**, but the latter wouldn't get close enough for a positive id.”

**Mick & Wendy Campbell visited two sites today, 29<sup>th</sup>.** In the morning they went to the **Moor Copse** field meeting where they were able to add **Small White** and **Green-veined White** to their species list for the year. In the afternoon they decided to go to the **Hartslock Reserve** in the hope of finding **Green Hairstreak** and possible **Grizzled Skipper**. They met up with **Chris Raper, Reserve Manager**, while they were there who reported that he had seen a **Green Hairstreak** in a field adjoining **Hartslock** on **Wednesday 26<sup>th</sup> April**. The weather improved considerably from the morning's cool and overcast conditions and the steep south-facing chalk grassland slope soon warmed up in the sun, bringing out the following butterflies: **Brimstone** (5, including 2 females ovipositing), **Speckled Wood, Green-veined White, Grizzled Skipper, Small Tortoiseshell, Dingy Skipper (3), Peacock (2)** and finally a **Green Hairstreak** sunbathing in the grass. They also saw a **Pyrausta Purpuralis/ Ostrinalis** and a possible **Small Purple-barred**, which wouldn't stay still long enough to be properly identified.

**Pete Eeles visited Hartslock today, Saturday 29<sup>th</sup>, and saw:** **Speckled Wood** 2, **Green-veined White** 1 (a new species for him this year), **Holly Blue** 2 (both male) and **Orange-tip** 3 (2 male, 1 female). He then moved on to **Hosehill Lake** and saw **Peacock** 2, **Orange-tip** 3 (all male) and **Small Tortoiseshell** 1.

**Dennis Dell sent the following news today, 29<sup>th</sup>:** “An **Orange Tip** is nothing special, of course, but, sitting there on Forget-Me-Nots, and the first one in my garden this year, it cheered me up no end!”

**Stuart Hodges has been out and about in the last few days and reported the following on 29<sup>th</sup> April:** “I saw a **Comma** on Wednesday 26<sup>th</sup> at *Finemere* and an **Orange tip** here at *Claydon* on Thursday 27<sup>th</sup>.”

**29/4 - Dave Maunder sent a quick note to say he saw his first Holly blue** of Spring in St. Mary's churchyard, Aylesbury on 27<sup>th</sup> April.

**On Thursday morning 27<sup>th</sup>, Dave Wilton decided on a change of scenery and went back to the Grendon area again:** “The weather turned dismal as soon as I got there so I didn't see much along the drains, but the sun came out briefly on my way back along the bridleway. The one **Grizzled Skipper** that I found was actually seen along the bridleway in the wood area, holding hands with my one and only **Speckled Wood! Peacock** x 1 and **Orange-tip** x 6 were also active there.”

#### Friday 28<sup>th</sup> April 2006

**Pete Eeles visited Midgham lakes at lunchtime yesterday, 27<sup>th</sup>:** “It was very cloudy, however I managed to find 7 **Peacock**, 2 **Small Tortoiseshell**, 1 **Speckled Wood** and 1 male **Orange-tip** roosting on the head of a Garlic Mustard plant, which always makes for a nice photo, since the critters are so well-camouflaged!”

#### Wednesday 26<sup>th</sup> April 2006

**The following report for 26<sup>th</sup> April was received from David Redhead:** Whilst in the garden Wendy managed to overcome our lack of **Holly Blues** when she saw three flying around the holly tree and the laurel bush. She also saw a couple of **Brimstones** and singleton **Large White, Peacock, Comma & Orange Tip**. Her final sighting was the first **Speckled Wood** of the year for our garden. Meanwhile I had been elsewhere and managed a couple of Peacocks near Bicester but my final port of call was to check the now 82 tagged Brown Hairstreak eggs at the RSPB Reserve. I observed the first **Brown Hairstreak caterpillar** hatching on Monday 24<sup>th</sup>, the second was found hatched by Shelagh on Tuesday 25<sup>th</sup> and yesterday we found a third one hatched. So 4% hatched - by this time last year 81% had hatched! However, as they re-emerge from the leaf buds as third instar caterpillars in 10-12 days time we should have some caterpillars to find at Friday 12<sup>th</sup> May evening Field Meeting.”

**26<sup>th</sup> April - Dave Maunder recorded his first Speckled wood of the season at Fairford Leys today:** “As well as a **Speckled Wood** I also saw **Comma, Peacock** and a **Brimstone**. *Last Saturday, 22<sup>nd</sup>*, I saw 10 Peacocks, 10 **Small Tortoiseshells**, 1 **Comma**, 8 **Brimstones** and 2 **Small Whites** also around Fairford Leys. Still haven't seen an Orange tip yet though!”

**Pete Eeles went for an early-morning walk today, 26<sup>th</sup>, around Greenham Common:** ”The walk produced my

first **Speckled Wood** of the year and, when I got home in Thatcham, I saw my first **Small White** of the year, together with a **Peacock**.”

**26/04/06 - Seen by Richard Soulsby today in the grounds where he works near Wallingford were the following:** Brimstones, Peacock, 2x Speckled Woods, Small White, Green-veined White, Orange Tip and 2x Holly Blues.

**Mick & Wendy Campbell went for a walk in the Ibstone Common area today, 26th, taking in Penley Wood.** Only a few butterflies were seen as it was rather cool and cloudy: **Brimstone** (1), **Peacock** (3), **Comma** (2) and **Red Admiral** (1). There were many **Bee Flies** on the wing, including one very small one with a dark wing border (probably the *Dark-edged Bee Fly*, a photo of which can be seen on the [BC Hants & IoW Sightings Page on 17th April](#)) and also their first **Pyrausta Aurata** of the season.

### Saturday 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2006

**David Gantzel found that March was a very quiet month in his garden in Hazlemere with no butterflies seen:** “Things are improving!! On [April 22<sup>nd</sup>](#) a **Small White** in the garden and the following were observed from public footpaths in Hazlemere: **Comma** – one, **Peacock** – five, **Small Tortoiseshell** – three, **Brimstone** – three.”

**Latest news from Derek and Cathy Brown:** “No Green Hairstreaks at [Decoy Heath](#) today, 22<sup>nd</sup>, however we did see a single **Orange Tip** male and later 7 males at **Moor Copse**. Suddenly all the female **Brimstones** are out as well. We also had a single **Small White** in our garden at [Beenham](#) - stay put and they'll come to you!!”

**22<sup>nd</sup> April - Ched and Sue George witnessed the first Grizzled Skipper** of the season today in [Radnage](#) and also saw **Comma**, 4 **Brimstone**, 5 **Small Tortoiseshell**, 4 **Peacock** and an **Orange-tip** (male).

**Saturday 22<sup>nd</sup> - Pete Eeles sent the following report:** “Today I saw a total of 7 species of butterfly – Spring has finally sprung! I visited [Bowdown Woods](#), seeing 1 **Red Admiral**, 2 **Peacock**, 2 **Comma** and 2 **Brimstone** (1 male, 1 female). All were feeding on Blackthorn blossom. I later visited [Midgham lakes](#), and saw 3 **Small Tortoiseshell**, 7 **Peacock**, 4 **Comma**, 9 **Brimstone** (7 male, 2 female), 3 **Orange-Tip** (all male) and 5 **Holly Blue** (all male).”

**Nick Bowles was carrying out a transect at Grendon/Doddershall today and added Orange Tip and Green-veined White** to his species list for this season, seen amidst good numbers of **Peacock**, **Brimstone**, **Comma** and just 3 **Small Tortoiseshells**.

**Mick & Wendy Campbell saw their first Holly Blue** in their Bucks garden today, 22<sup>nd</sup>.

**Jan Haseler saw a Green-veined White** this afternoon, 22<sup>nd</sup>, on the bank of the Thames below Wargrave.

*Dick Bodily was in Willen North today, 22<sup>nd</sup>, and saw Peacocks, male Orange Tip (near the hide), Small Tortoiseshells and Brimstones. Later on in their garden in Shenley Lodge he and his wife Val saw their first Holly Blue of the season.*

*News from Dave Wilton on 22<sup>nd</sup> April - a Green-veined White in his garden in Westcott today.*

*David & Wendy Redhead sent the following report today, 22<sup>nd</sup>: “Our first Green-veined White (pristine) of the season in our garden today, plus Orange Tip (male only), Small White (tatty), Brimstones (male and female), Peacocks, Commas and at last another Small Tortoiseshell. Still no Holly Blue or Speckled Wood. Later on, we saw a pair of Large Whites flying about. They spiralled up into the bullace tree, settled there momentarily and then eventually landed on the pyracantha where I managed to get a photo.” (See photo at top of page.)*

*Dave Wilton was out and about for several hours on 21<sup>st</sup> April at locations along the A41: “Butterfly sightings were still confined almost exclusively to the four main hibernators. Most of these were Peacocks - 24 between four locations - and they seem to be everywhere except in my garden at the moment! The only new species was a freshly-emerged male Orange Tip which I found in BBOWT's River Ray reserves south of Marsh Gibbon and it kindly posed for the camera.”*

#### Friday 21<sup>st</sup> April 2006

*Dave Maunder reports only one more butterfly seen recently - on Tuesday a Comma near Fairford Leys.*

*Richard Soulsby's next-door neighbour in Benson asked him to identify a butterfly sitting on a daffodil in her garden yesterday afternoon (20<sup>th</sup> April): “It turned out to be a female Orange Tip – my first this year.” (See photo below).*

*18/04/06 - Dave Wilton added butterfly species number 5 to his list for this year when a Small White passed through his garden in Westcott.*

#### Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> April 2006

*David Fuller had a Small White in his garden in Maidenhead on 17<sup>th</sup>/18<sup>th</sup>. He also reported 15 Brimstones at Maidenhead Thicket on 17<sup>th</sup> plus 3 Peacock and 2 Commas. David added: “I have seen the Alpine Swift from my garden - what a good bird!”*

*18/04/06 - David Redhead sent the following report of his Easter holiday sightings:*

***Easter Monday 17th April - Morning:*** In the morning I checked Brown Hairstreak eggs at RSPB Reserve and Whitecross Green Wood - still none hatched - by the 17th April last year 10% were hatched, so things definitely running late - the knock on effect of the coldest March for a decade and 1 degree C below the 30 year average.  
***Afternoon*** - Wendy & I did the Swyncombe Down transect in marginal conditions and recorded 2 **Comma**, 2 **Small Tortoiseshell**, 2 **Peacock** and a **Brimstone**.

***Tuesday 18th April – Morning:*** Learning of Orange Tip sightings by the Campbells and Jim Asher over the Easter weekend I decided to try and retaliate with a Holly Blue. Whilst staring intently at our Holly Tree in the sunshine a male **Orange Tip** flew in front of me! A **Brimstone** (male), **Comma** and **Peacock** were also seen. Our first garden Orange Tip last year was also the 17th - so perhaps the cold March has not had the same effect on them.  
***Afternoon:*** Went to Shabbington Wood to do the transect but abandoned it halfway round when the sun was permanently obscured but 4 Peacock and a male Brimstone had already been ticked. Entertained myself by rediscovering some of the Brown Hairstreak eggs we found on News Years Day - managed 26 but again none hatched."

***Dave Ferguson recorded 5 butterfly species on Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup> April:*** "Small White, Peacock and Small Tortoiseshell at Little Marlow and a Holly Blue and Brimstone in our garden this morning."

***Richard Soulsby sent the following report on Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup>:*** "Seen this lunchtime at work on my Howbery Park transect (near Wallingford): 3 **Speckled Woods**, 2 **Brimstones**, 2 **Commas**, 1 **Peacock** - and a very bold **Mink** which inspected me at close range for several minutes."

***Jackie Tuckey reported 2 more Brimstones*** on 18<sup>th</sup> April, seen during her cycle ride from Worminghall to the Whitecross Green Wood area.

***18/04/06 Paul Bowyer reported these sightings:*** "On Friday 14th April in Longstreet, Bucks, I saw 2 male **Brimstones** and 1 female plus 2 **Small Tortoiseshells** in a garden near the Northamptonshire border."

***On 17<sup>th</sup> April Pete Eeles had*** 2 **Comma**, 2 **Peacock**, 1 **Small Tortoiseshell** and 1 **Brimstone** (male) in his garden in Thatcham.

***Dave Wilton sent the following report on Monday 17<sup>th</sup>:*** "Today's outing, mostly in reasonably warm sunshine, produced 57 butterflies but still only the four main hibernators. During a walk along the **Calvert drains** (where I thought the sheltered slopes would have produced some Orange-tips by now) and then back along the bridleyway past the wood brought me **Brimstone** (1), **Small Tortoiseshell** (8), **Peacock** (9) and **Comma** (2). Sallow and Coltsfoot were just about the only nectar sources and the Peacocks and Tortoiseshells were making good use of the latter. I then had another wander around **Finemere Wood**, where **Brimstone** (8), **Small Tortoiseshell** (3), **Peacock** (17) and **Comma** (9) were seen before a shower brought proceedings to a halt."

***Welcome to the website new reporter Martin Mitchell who saw*** a **Holly Blue** in his parents' garden in **Shinfield**, **Berks** on **Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> April** and also male and female **Brimstones** plus a **Red Admiral**.

## Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> April 2006

**16<sup>th</sup> April - Dave Maunder reported the following butterflies:** “At [Eythrope](#) on the 14<sup>th</sup> - **Peacocks** (2), **Commas** (2), **Brimstones** (3), and today (16<sup>th</sup>) in [Aylesbury](#) I saw: **Peacocks** (5), **Comma** (1), **Small Tortoiseshells** (3) and **Brimstones** (2).”

**Richard Soulsby sent the following news today:** “Seen this morning, Sunday 16<sup>th</sup>, in warm sunshine: **Brimstones**, **Comma** and **Small White** (my first non-hibernator this year) in [Benson Churchyard](#), and **Peacock** in my garden in [Benson](#). But nothing this afternoon in chilly rain!”

**Derek and Cathy Brown went out looking for butterflies this weekend:** “Well the weekend has been a bit of a dead loss so far but Cathy and I did manage to see our 5 species for the year all this morning (16<sup>th</sup>). We had **Comma** (1), and **Peacock** (2) at [Decoy Heath](#); and **Brimstone** (4), **Comma** (3), **Small Tortoiseshell** (1) and **Red Admiral** (1) at [Moor Copse](#). Nothing new though.”

**Dave Wilton reports:** “I went to [Finemere](#) again in this morning's sunshine (16<sup>th</sup> April) and managed to see **Brimstone** (3), **Small Tortoiseshell** (3), **Peacock** (5) and **Comma** (3), so I'm finally making some progress this season.”

**Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> - Mick & Wendy Campbell saw their first Orange Tip** of the season near Thame this morning. Also on the wing were **Small Tortoiseshell**, **Peacock** and 2 **Brimstones** (one male and one female).

## Saturday 15<sup>th</sup> April 2006

**Wendy & David Redhead sent the following report for Good Friday:** “A dismal morning was used for checking Brown Hairstreak eggs for hatching - of 121 inspected not one had hatched - for the previous three years hatched eggs have always been found on or before the 14th April and last year we had 8 hatched out of 188 inspected. So a definite indication that the recent prolonged cold spell has put things back this year. In the afternoon the weather improved to such an extent that it was actually possible to do a transect. On the [Shabbington Wood](#) transect the **Brimstones** and **Peacocks** vied for supremacy with the **Brimstones** just shading it at 5-4 and a single **Comma** taking the count into double figures. However, including off transect sightings the **Brimstones** (all male) took a definite lead and the final total score: **Brimstones** 9, **Peacock** 6, **Comma** 2. On the way home a call into [Brasenose Woods](#) and the adjoining [Slade Camp](#) produced a different ratio: **Comma** 3, **Peacock** 3, **Brimstone** 2 (both male). The **Wood Anemones** were prolific and made a beautiful sight. Only three species but a total of 25 butterflies was pleasing. Back home in the garden Wendy's total count was only 7 but she did better for variety – **Comma** 2, **Brimstone** 2 (one male, one female), **Peacock** 1, **Large White** 1 & **Small White** 1.”

**14/04/06 - Welcome to the website new contributor Jackie Tuckey:** “I've just seen a male **Brimstone** passing through my garden in Worminghall.”

**Nick Bowles sent the following report on Friday 14<sup>th</sup>:** “I saw both several **Brimstones** and a **Peacock** on my

Bucks transects this afternoon and then precisely the same species at home in the garden here in Tring. Still not seen a Small Tortoiseshell in Bucks.”

*Dave Maunder recorded another Brimstone*, this time at Fairford Leys on the 12<sup>th</sup> April.

**Monday 10<sup>th</sup> April 2006**

*Pete Eeles watched a very lonely Small Tortoiseshell* flitting around his garden in Thatcham today, 10<sup>th</sup> April.

**Friday 7<sup>th</sup> April 2006**

*David Gantzel recorded a Red Admiral* at Little Marlow gravel pits on Thursday April 6<sup>th</sup>.

**Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> April 2006**

*6<sup>th</sup> April - David Redhead sent the following news:* “Red Admiral, Peacock, Comma & Brimstone all flying in the garden today but again Otmoor was devoid of butterflies although I did find a **Drinker Moth caterpillar**. My species list is now up to six. Keeping an eye on the Holly tree for a Holly Blue but no luck yet.”

*Today, Thursday 6<sup>th</sup>, Paul Bowyer recorded butterflies in three locations:* At Farnham Royal churchyard he recorded a **Comma**. At East Burnham Common he saw 2 Commas and 1 **Peacock** and on the Slough Trading Estate 1 Comma.

*On Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> Wendy Redhead saw* 3 **Brimstone** (all males), 2 **Comma**, 1 **Small Tortoiseshell**, 1 **Peacock**, 1 **Small White** and 1 **Large White** in her garden in Oxon. Meanwhile, David Redhead says he only managed the 3 **Brimstone**, 1 **Comma**, 1 **Small Tortoiseshell** and 1 **Small White** before going to Otmoor to check on the **Brown Hairstreak** eggs (none hatched) where nothing was seen on the wing.

*Wendy and Mick Campbell went for a walk which took in Waterperry Wood on 5<sup>th</sup> April.* The temperature was about 14 degrees in the shelter of the wood where they recorded 12 **Brimstone** (all male) and 2 **Comma**. On returning to the car, a **Small Tortoiseshell** was seen basking in the sun next to a patch of stinging nettles. Then back at home in their garden a **Comma** and a **Peacock** were competing for the sunniest spot on the patio.

*Cathy Brown reports seeing* a **Comma** on the 5<sup>th</sup> April at Coley Park and a **Small Tortoiseshell** on the 4<sup>th</sup> in her

garden in Beenham.

*05/04/06 - Dennis Dell photographed this rather dark and greasy looking Comma* in his garden today and wondered if anyone might like to comment on it.

*Yesterday, 5th April, Paul Bowyer went to Cocksherd Wood next to Britwell in Slough* and saw 1 **Comma**, 1 **Small Tortoiseshell**, 1 male **Brimstone** and 1 **Small White**.

*Dave Maunder reports that his wife saw* a **Brimstone** in Aylesbury on Monday, 3<sup>rd</sup> April.

**Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> April 2006**

*Welcome to the website, new contributors Val and Dick Bodily who reported seeing a Comma* at Willen North on Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup> April.

*On Saturday 1st April Paul Bowyer went to the allotments in Bassetsbury Lane High Wycombe where he saw his first butterflies of the year:* “First was a **Red Admiral**, then 5 **Small Tortoiseshells** and then a **Brimstone**. Later I saw a **Brimstone** in my garden at Flackwell Heath.”

**Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2006**

*On 2<sup>nd</sup> April Stuart Hodges sent in the following early sighting:* “On Friday 31<sup>st</sup> March I saw a **Painted Lady** here at Steeple Claydon just outside the garden in the paddock. It was a rather tired looking specimen, so I presume it must have migrated here?”

*David Fuller saw a Comma in his garden in Maidenhead today, Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup>:* “Also a **Little Owl** calling and seen, they do breed about a quarter of a mile away but until last year I had not experienced them in gardens.”

**Saturday 1<sup>st</sup> April 2006**

*Wendy and Mick Campbell recorded their first butterflies of the season today, 1<sup>st</sup> April:* a **Comma** and a male **Brimstone** in their garden.

**Over the last few days David Fuller has seen a number of Brimstones:** “On Thursday 30<sup>th</sup> March I watched 2 male **Brimstones** make their way along the towpath at Maidenhead. I also had 2 male Brimstones in my Maidenhead garden on Thursday, one Brimstone male on Friday and Saturday and finally today 3 male Brimstones together at Odney Island, Cookham, so they seem to be moving at last, at least two weeks later than my sightings last year. Let us hope for more sun.”

#### Thursday 30<sup>th</sup> March 2006

**29<sup>th</sup> March - In spite of the blustery conditions on Tuesday morning, David Redhead reports** a female **Brimstone** flying about in their vegetable garden. Then *today, 30<sup>th</sup>*, the **Brimstone** count was three - two in the garden and one down by the River Thames at Iffley - all males.

**Peter Eeles managed to get the day off work yesterday, Wednesday 29<sup>th</sup>, and decided to go on a Märsh Fritillary larval web and Purple Hairstreak egg hunt.** “It was also an excuse to take my dog out for a long walk! Starting at Seven Bärrows, I drew a blank with Märsh Fritillary, which didn’t surprise me in the slightest, given the low density of Märsh Fritillary at this site. But I was inspired by some finds by the Dorset branch in their area (6 larval webs found at Lydlinch Common). I then went to **Snelsmore Common** and found **6 Purple Hairstreak eggs** on one of the first oaks I came to, right next to the car park. I didn’t find any others here, but took a detour to **Bowdown Woods**, near Greenham Common, and found another **4 eggs** on the same tree that I found Purple Hairstreak eggs for the last 4 years. This particular tree is in a very sheltered spot, on the edge of the wood, with eggs laid on the south side. If anyone wants to learn the secrets of finding Purple Hairstreak eggs, then there’s an excellent video from Peter Kirby on the UK Butterflies website at [http://www.ukbutterflies.co.uk/species.php?vernacular\\_name=Purple Hairstreak](http://www.ukbutterflies.co.uk/species.php?vernacular_name=Purple%20Hairstreak).”

#### Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> March 2006

**Peter Hall saw** a **Brimstone** in his garden in Ballinger Common today, Sunday 26<sup>th</sup>.

**26<sup>th</sup> March - David Redhead sent the following sightings in:** “On *Sunday 17th March* Wendy saw a faded **Red Admiral** in our garden and on *Thursday 23rd March* I saw my first butterfly of the year. After 5 hours walking in the sunshine around the countryside to the north and east of Kidlington searching for Brown Hairstreak eggs, in a vain attempt to extend the western boundary of its range, I saw a **Brimstone** as I re-entered the suburbia of Kidlington just south of Gosford Bridge.”

#### Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> March 2006

**Dave Maunder has seen his first spring butterflies:** “On Thursday 23rd March two **Brimstones** in Aylesbury Vale park; also today (Saturday) I saw my first **Comma** and first **Small Tortoiseshell** on a warm and sunny morning.”

**After Derek Brown’s report yesterday he finally saw his first butterflies of the year today, 25<sup>th</sup> March:** a male **Brimstone** in his garden at Beenham and a **Peacock** at Decoy Heath.

## Friday 24<sup>th</sup> March 2006

**Derek Brown reports as follows:** “Cathy had a **Brimstone** today, (23<sup>rd</sup> March), at Coley Park in Reading - her first butterfly of the year. I'm still on a blank but hopeful for the weekend!”

**23/03/06 - Richard Soulsby saw** a **Red Admiral** and **3 Brimstones** in the grounds at work (Howbery Park, nr. Wallingford) today, 23<sup>rd</sup> March.

## Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> March 2006

**20/03/06 – Paul Bowyer passed on news of the following sighting:** “Christine Hoskins saw a **Brimstone** and a **Comma** in her back garden in Bourne End yesterday the 19th March.”

## Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> March 2006

**Richard Soulsby sent the following news today, Sunday 19<sup>th</sup>:** “At last, my first butterfly of the year. A **Small Tortoiseshell** spent most of this afternoon nectaring on a Viburnum bush in my garden in Benson.” [See photo below.]

**Sunday 19<sup>th</sup>, Pete Eeles came across 7 overwintering Peacocks at his home in Thatcham today:** “Whilst clearing out the garage I found **2 overwintering Peacocks** - one was fairly tatty, but the other was in almost pristine condition. Then later in the day we had a blocked kitchen sink, so I went to get the plunger from the roof area of our garage and found another **5 hibernating Peacocks**, in addition to the 2 found earlier in the day!”

**19/03/06 - Ched George reports that a Red Admiral** showed up at the Bottom Wood, Radnage, work party today: “It just warmed itself above the bonfire at lunchtime.”

**On Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> March Pete Eeles had his first sighting of the year:** “A **Red Admiral** in my garden in Thatcham – flying in a most disorientated manner. Hopefully the large numbers of Red Admiral sightings will lead to quite a showing this year for this species.”

**18/03/06 - Dave Wilton finished searching Bernwood Meadows for Brown Hairstreak eggs this morning, adding another 82 to his total.** “This takes the overall total there to 380 eggs for this year, of which 255 are in the western meadow and 125 in the eastern one.”

Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> March 2006

*12/03/06 - David Fuller sent the following news from Maidenhead:* “A **Peacock** seen in my garden on Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> March in sunny weather, but it did not stay long and was very flighty.”

*On Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> March, David Redhead reports* that 5 UTB members were joined by Ivan & Jaqui Wright of Shotover Wildlife to scour the blackthorn on Shotover Plain for **Brown Hairstreak eggs**. A total of 7 eggs were located, four of which were spotted by sharp-eyed May Webber, aged 12.

Friday 10<sup>th</sup> March 2006

*David Redhead went to Waterperry Wood today 10<sup>th</sup>* and, with the help of Gillian Oldfield & Dennis Dell, found **31 Brown Hairstreak eggs** in about 20 minutes in the same location where he found just over 20 eggs a few winters ago. He also found another 7 eggs in **Whitecross Green Wood** with Becky Woodell.

Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2006

*21/02/06 – Ched George was at a bridge club in Lane End village hall on Monday and* a **Small Tortoiseshell** was flying around the tables all evening.

Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> February 2006

*19/02/06 - Dave Wilton sent this news:* As searching for Brown Hairstreak eggs wasn't proving sufficiently challenging for them, Species Champion Stuart Hodges and Dave Wilton spent nearly three hours at **Finemere Wood** today (Sunday) looking for those exceedingly elusive **eggs laid by the female Black Hairstreak**. One egg which had been discovered there during January was found to be still present and correct and they managed to locate another example as well. Three empty egg shells from last year were also found. Other items of entomological interest found on the blackthorn included five **Blue-bordered Carpet eggs**, a half-grown **Drinker Moth caterpillar** (about 2cms in length), two **2-spot Ladybirds** (black overall, with red spots) and the usual collection of small **22-spot Ladybirds** (yellow overall, with black spots).

*On 16th February Ali Latham reports* a second sighting of a **Small Tortoiseshell** in Belmont Rd, Reading, flying during a sunny break across the back yards at midday.

Friday 17<sup>th</sup> February 2006

*Ali Latham saw a Small Tortoiseshell on the wing in Belmont Road, Reading, on Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> February:*

“Nice surprise but hope it finds some flowers! I knew there was a good reason for me to walk back from town and not be lazy and take a bus! Had some sunny spells today even if the wind is a bit nippy when the clouds are out.”

**Wendy Redhead recorded a *Brimstone* in her garden on Saturday 11th February:** She thinks one of the cats may have disturbed it out of hibernation in the ivy growing on an outhouse.

### Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> February 2006

**12<sup>th</sup> February - David Redhead reports on the annual *Brown Hairstreak* Egg Hunt held at the Otmoor RSPB Reserve today:** “In spite of the rain 9 UTB Members & 1 RSPB Volunteer joined me this morning at the RSPB Reserve. We searched the immature hedge in the car park field and found 112 eggs, in January 2005 we found 74 on the same hedge = a 50% increase. 2 more were found in the car park itself - making 114 for our combined two hours effort. This is a new record for the reserve as a whole as last winter just 105 were found and that included searching the blackthorn along the bridleway, the hedge up to the hide and some bushes on the newer part of the reserve towards Noke Wood.”

Please contact [David Redhead](#) if you would like to help monitor egg hatching and larval development from April to June.

**Jan Haseler sent this news on 11/02/06:** “On Thursday 9th February, in bright sunshine but at a temperature of 5C, with a strong NW wind, I was extremely surprised to see a **Red Admiral** in a sheltered part of [Swallowfield Churchyard](#). The snowdrops and yellow aconites are superb - it's well worth a visit at the moment.

### Tuesday 31<sup>st</sup> January 2006

**Ched George has reported** that a scrub-bashing session at a Radnage site on 29th January presumably disturbed a **Brimstone** butterfly which fluttered around the cleared area.

### Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> January 2006

**Dave Maunder sent in the following photo** of his **Red Admiral** sighting of 22<sup>nd</sup> January:

### Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2006

**Dave Maunder reports the first UTB butterfly sighting of the year:** “A **Red Admiral**, slightly worn, sunning itself on a wall in Hartwell cemetery today (22<sup>nd</sup> January) - tempted out of hibernation, no doubt, by a few hours sun in a sheltered corner!”

Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> January 2006

*12/01/06 - Dave Wilton reports on his latest surveys:* “I’ve been out looking for **Brown Hairstreak eggs** again over the past few days. On [10th January](#) I discovered three eggs in SP 7016, just over a kilometre west of my house, so I now fully expect to find adults in the garden within the next year or two! Today I managed to fill in one of those irritating blank squares south-east of Brill with the discovery of seven road-side eggs in SP 6612. The [web-site map](#) has now been updated accordingly.

Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> January 2006

*David Redhead reports on the Brown Hairstreak egg hunt which took place on Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> January:* “The 15 BC Members who attended today’s Brown Hairstreak egg hunt in Bernwood Forest surpassed themselves with a final count of **345 Brown Hairstreak eggs**. Two **Purple Hairstreak eggs** were also found plus a girdle of **Lackey moth eggs**. Surprisingly no Blue-bordered Carpet moth eggs were found and less surprisingly, no Black Hairstreak eggs. An early instar **Drinker moth larva** made the lepidopteral species count for the day 3.” *Thanks to Sue Nicholls for the following photos:*