

## Scottish Speckled Wood (*Pararge aegeria*) Survey Report 2012-16.

The Speckled Wood butterfly was the subject of an online survey in Scotland in 2012, and an online and postcard survey from 2013 to 2016, although the survey was not actively promoted after 2013. A total of 783 records were received over the 5-year period; 667 online and 116 by postcard.



Common on grass they rest nearby. butterfly pupa.

The expansion restricted and much wider there were and expanding Inverness



'The State of the UK's Butterflies 2015' (the fourth of its kind) for the first time used occupancy modelling to generate species trends in distribution. The Butterflies for the New Millennium scheme (BNM) comprises over 11 million butterfly occurrence records from 1690 to the present day, which now include sightings from the Big Butterfly Count and other schemes verified by a network of County Recorders. The Speckled Wood is reported as having a long-term (1976 - 2014) change in occurrence of +71% across the UK, and a 10-year (2005 - 2014) occurrence change of +3%.

Distribution maps showing the range of the butterfly at the start of the century (2000 - 2004) and its current range using data from the BNM scheme for the five-year period of the Scottish survey (2012 - 2016) are shown below. These indicate a clear expansion in range, with strong populations appearing in the south-east and south-west of Scotland, particularly

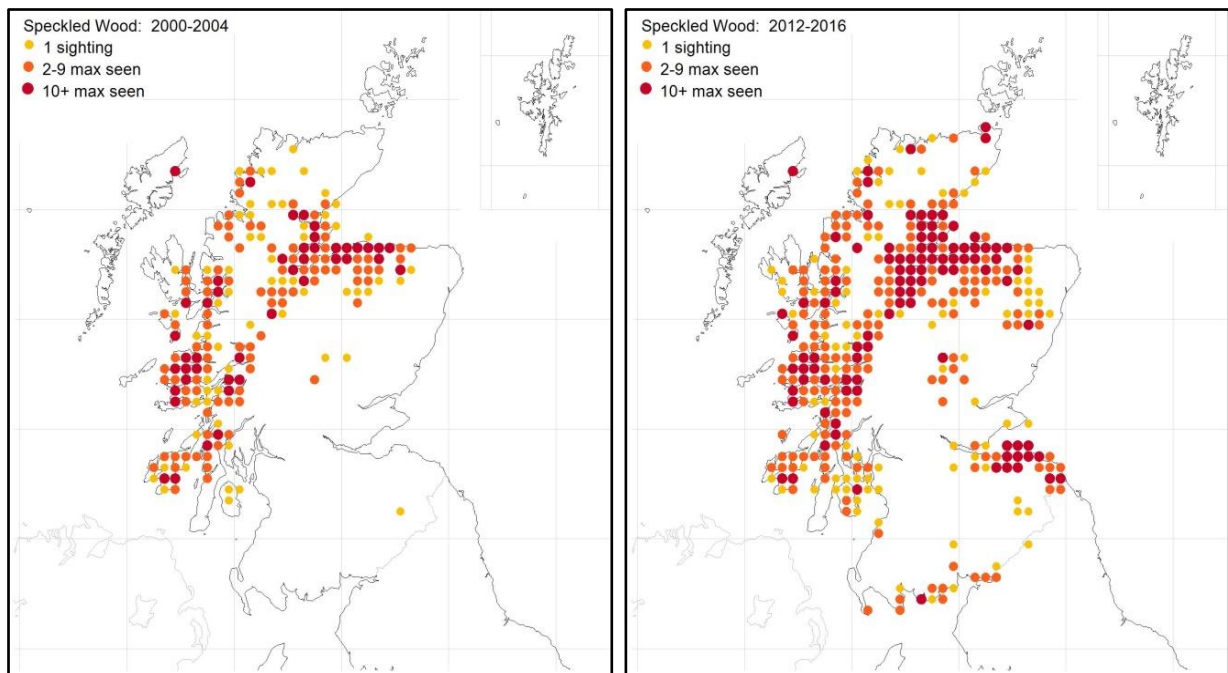
The Speckled Wood is a butterfly of partially shaded woodland with sunny clearings that the males occupy and defend while the females spend more time in the canopy, basking and feeding on aphid honeydew.

The caterpillars feed on various grasses, including Cock's-foot (*Dactylis glomerata*), False Brome (*Brachypodium sylvaticum*), Yorkshire-fog (*Holcus lanatus*) and

Couch (*Elytrigia repens*). Eggs are laid singly leaves and the larvae are well-camouflaged as on the underside of the leaves, pupating There are 2 - 3 generations a year and the can overwinter as either a caterpillar or as a

Speckled Wood has shown a significant in its range since the 1920s when it was to the south-west of England, lowland Wales western Scotland, having previously occupied a area. In Scotland at the end of the 20th century reports of a few recent sightings in Dumfries Galloway, and the butterfly seemed to be its range outwards from strongholds in and Argyll. The Butterfly Conservation report

near the coasts, as well as records coming in from the very far north of the mainland. The populations in the previously mentioned strongholds of Inverness-shire and the north-west are expanding towards the south as well as inland, and seem to be merging.



Data provided from the Butterflies for the New Millennium recording scheme courtesy of Butterfly Conservation.

Please continue to send your records of Speckled Wood and all of our other butterflies in Scotland to Butterfly Conservation - details of how to do this are available on our website:

<https://butterfly-conservation.org/butterflies/recording-and-monitoring>

#### Key References:

Asher, J., Warren, M., Fox, R., Harding, P., Jeffcoate, G. & Jeffcoate, S. (2001). *The Millennium Atlas of Butterflies in Britain and Ireland*. Oxford University Press, Oxford.

Fox, R., Brereton, T.M., Asher, J., August, T.A., Botham, M.S., Bourn, N.A.D., Cruickshanks, K.L., Bulman, C.R., Ellis, S., Harrower, C.A., Middlebrook, I., Noble, D.G., Powney, G.D., Randle, Z., Warren, M.S. & Roy, D.B. (2015). *The State of the UK's Butterflies 2015*. Butterfly Conservation and the Centre for Ecology & Hydrology, Wareham, Dorset.

**Heather Young**