

Autumn/Winter 2019-20

Number 68

# SURREY *Skipper*



Sat 2 Nov  
Members' Day  
*page 6*

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Butterfly Conservation  
Surrey & SW London



*Saving butterflies, moths  
& our environment*

## Branch Committee

<b>Chair:</b> Simon Saville (first elected 2016)	07572 612722
<b>Conservation Adviser:</b> Ken Willmott (1995)	01372 375773
<b>Field Trips Organiser:</b> Mike Weller (1997)	01306 882097
<b>Membership Secretary:</b> Ken Owen (2015)	01737 760811
<b>Moth Officer:</b> Paul Wheeler (2006)	01276 856183
<b>Skipper Editor &amp; Publicity Officer:</b> Francis Kelly (2012)	07952 285661, 01483 278432
<b>Transects &amp; WCBS Coordinator:</b> Bill Downey (2015)	07917 243984, 020 8949 5498
<b>Treasurer:</b> Peter Camber (2011)	020 8224 2957
<b>Social Media:</b> Francis Kelly (& Mick Rock)	<i>see above</i>
<b>Website:</b> Francis Kelly & Ken Owen	<i>see above</i>
<b>Committee member:</b> Clive Huggins (2014)	020 8942 7846

## County Recorders

<b>Butterflies</b>	Harry Clarke	07773 428935, 01372 453338
<b>Moths</b>	Graham Collins	<a href="http://butterfly-conservation.org/surreymoths">butterfly-conservation.org/surreymoths</a>

## Branch reserve

<b>Oaken Wood</b>	Harry Clarke	<i>see above</i>
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## Media

[surreybranch@gmail.com](mailto:surreybranch@gmail.com)

<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://butterfly-conservation.org/surrey">butterfly-conservation.org/surrey</a>
<b>Twitter</b>	@BC_Surrey, @surreymoths <b>Recording</b> <a href="http://irecord.org.uk">irecord.org.uk</a>
<b>Facebook</b>	<b>Branch page</b> ..... Butterfly Conservation in Surrey
	<b>Groups</b> ..... Surrey Butterflies (Mick Rock), Surrey Moths
	<b>Conservation groups</b> ..... Small Blues in Surrey, Wealden Wood Whites

## Surrey Skipper

*thank you to all contributors*

	<i>copy deadline</i>	<i>published online</i>
<b>Spring</b>	<b>Feb 28</b> ..... mid-March	..... includes new season's field trips
<b>Autumn</b>	<b>Sep 27</b> ..... mid-October	..... previews AGM & Members' Day

■ The full *Surrey Skipper* is published online only. A *Small (essential) Skipper* is posted to the 10% of members for whom we do not have an email address.

■ **Front-page photo:** Dark Green Fritillary, Tugley Wood, Jun 27      Francis Kelly. *See page 3*

**LINKS** When reading on screen, click underlined link to visit webpage

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## Chair

Simon Saville

IT has been a warm summer and I hope that you have been able to enjoy the sunshine. I have seen a lot of Painted Lady butterflies this year - more than any year since 2009 - I expect you have too.

It has also been a good year for other migrants, including Long-tailed Blue (several seen in Surrey) and Humming-bird Hawk-moth, which even made its way to Burgess Park in central London.

Our Small Blue "Stepping Stones" project on the North

Downs came to an end in July. This has been a great success, ably led by Fiona Haynes. The project won a well-deserved Nature Conservation award at Guildford in Bloom: see page 12.

On behalf of the Branch, I would like to pay tribute to Fiona and all the volunteers who have contributed to the success of the project. A group of volunteers, coordinated by Bill Downey, is continuing work parties to maintain habitat for the Small Blue and other grassland species. You are welcome to join these, which are fun and a way of getting a bit of exercise - as well as important for nature.

The Branch is now active in three important projects (see table on page 4).



*Simon Saville (3rd-left holding Dark Green Fritillary) at the launch of Brilliant Butterflies with (L-R): Andrew Briscoe (Natural History Museum), Sunitha Amos (London Wildlife Trust), Shaun Marriott (LWT), Katy Potts (NHM) Anna Guerin (LWT), Humayun Kabir (Croydon Mayor), John Tweddle (NHM), Catherine Cullen (LWT Project Manager), Mathew Frith (LWT Director of Conservation). Martin Wills*

We are partners with the Natural History Museum in **Brilliant Butterflies** (see photo above), an exciting project led by London Wildlife Trust. This 2-year project will work with local residents to create over 40 areas of chalk grassland in south Croydon across nature reserves, road verges, housing estates, parks and more, including Hutchinson's Bank & Chapel Bank (New Addington), Riddlesdown (Purley), Dollypers Hill (Coulsdon) and Saltbox Hill (Bromley).

The project is funded by a £1 million Dream Fund Award, thanks to the players of the People's Postcode Lottery. It was launched on Sep 24 at Hutchinson's Bank. Steve Bolton is BC's project officer.

■ *continued next page*

**Front-page photo:** Dark Green Fritillaries have returned to Chiddingfold Forest! This male, on thistle, was one of three, plus one female, in a new plantation (SU98283325) at Tugley Wood, Jun 27. That is 17km south of the North Downs (Surrey's only regular area for DGF), and 23km north of the South Downs above Storrington. Andrew Reekie photographed a male four days earlier, 1.2km SW of Oaken Wood. Other sightings included in Oaken Wood itself.



### ■ SIMON SAVILLE from previous page

Butterfly Conservation has been awarded £93k from the National Lottery Heritage Fund for our **Saving the Wood White** project in the Chiddingfold area. Steve Wheatley, Regional Conservation Manager, gives more information on page 5.

Alongside this, work parties at the nearby Oaken Wood reserve will continue through the winter, led by Harry Clarke and Jayne Chapman. These are on the first Thursday of the month: please help if you can.

The **Big City Butterflies** project is focused on the green spaces in Inner London, encouraging local residents, schools and friends groups to discover the butterflies and moths near them. May Webber, Project Officer, gives more information on page 16.

This project is one of the ways in which Butterfly Conservation is trying to be more active in London - to engage local people in wildlife and offer more for our many members who live in the capital.

In July about 20 people attended our New Members' Day at Ashted Common. We started with talks about Butterfly Conservation, Branch activities and the wildlife of this National Nature Reserve. Then we walked across the Common in brilliant sunshine, where the butterflies showed well, including Purple Emperor,

Silver-washed Fritillary and lots of Purple Hairstreaks.

Thanks to everyone who has walked a transect this year, and to Bill Downey for his tireless efforts in coordinating activities: read more about the 125 transects and 200,000 butterflies seen on page 22.

Our members were able to enjoy over 40 field trips this year. I would encourage you to give these a try as they are a great way to learn about the best butterfly sites in our area and to meet like-minded members. See Mike Weller's report on page 18.

I am in the final stages of producing our Annual Report of Butterflies and Moths in Surrey for 2018. As last year, this is primarily an electronic document, distributed via our website. Once again, we will produce a small number of copies for partners, land managers, volunteers and other stakeholders.

Members' Day and AGM is on Nov 2 in Effingham. We are privileged to have Julie Williams, CEO of Butterfly Conservation, as our keynote speaker. It is an exciting time for our charity and I encourage you to come along and hear all about it. More details on pages 6-7.

■ Our Branch will celebrate its 25th birthday on January 1. We will be marking the occasion through 2020.

Conservation projects			
Big City Butterflies			
BC officer	Start	Duration	Main funding
May Webber	2019-02	1 year development phase	NLHF
London	2020-07	4 years to 2024	Application: 2020-02
Brilliant Butterflies			
Steve Bolton	2019-09	2 years to 2021	PPL Dream Fund £1,000,000
South Croydon & Bromley	London Wildlife Trust, in partnership with BC & NH Museum		
Saving the Wood White in the South East			
Fiona Haynes	2019-10	3 years to 2022	NLHF £93,000
Chiddingfold, Dunsfold, Plaistow, Ifold			
Small Blue Stepping Stones			
Fiona Haynes	2017-19	COMPLETED	

## Saving the Wood White

Steve Wheatley

I am pleased to announce the launch of our new project, **Saving the Wood White**, which will help to conserve the only Wood White colony in south-east England.

Working with project partners including Kew, Millennium Seedbank, National Trust and Forestry England, we have put together a really exciting project and it is now underway.

Over the coming three years we will engage with local communities (Chiddingfold, Dunsfold, Ifold and Plaistow) to champion this charismatic butterfly, grow food and nectar plants and enhance existing areas to help increase its distribution across the local landscape and secure this population for the future.

By bolstering the abundance of the existing population and expanding its distribution, we will make the Wood White more secure and robust, and better able to colonise and take advantage of future habitat that will continue to be created.

The project will also help other rare Lepidoptera, including the Betony Case-bearer (*Coleophora wockeella*), which is found nowhere else in the UK, and the Drab Looper moth, which relies on Wood Spurge.

The work will provide more habitat for bees and other pollinators, ultimately benefitting a range of wildlife dependent upon a rich and diverse flora, such as amphibians, reptiles, birds and bats. These rely on an abundance of prey, including caterpillars and flying insects, to feed their young. Experts in plants, benefitting herptiles and bees, will help us deliver the



best results for these groups.

One of the targets of the project is the creation of 3km of new habitat strips across the area, producing an interconnected network of habitat stepping stones, much like the successful Small Blue project. We will be learning as we go and will seek the involvement of local communities to help us on this

journey. There will be opportunities to develop new skills, and deliver positive action. The varied programme of events and activities should prove popular.

Surrey's Small Blue Project Officer Fiona Haynes has been given the responsibility of delivering the project. Fiona did great work for the Small Blue and has ensured that butterfly is in a stronger position, so we are hoping she can do the same again with the Wood White.

The project is funded by the National Lottery Heritage Fund and by local Trusts and private donors, also with help directly from the Surrey and Sussex Branches.

We are immensely grateful to our funders and supporters, who have enabled us to deliver this long-planned project. It is an exciting time and you will hear more about the project over the coming months.

■ To make a donation to the project (we still have some funding to raise), please visit our [project page](#)

■ Project area [map PDF](#)

■ Contact: [Fiona Haynes](#)

■ Facebook group: [Wealden Wood Whites](#)

■ Steve has more Heartening news: [page 34](#)

**Karen Goldie-Morrison** has been elected to succeed Jim Asher as Chair of Butterfly Conservation. We are proud that, once again, a member of our Branch is

taking the helm at the national level. Karen leads a transect on Barnes Common.

**LINK** [BC's Council](#)

# Members' Day

*Saturday 2 November, 2019*

King George V Hall, Effingham



10.00 Doors open

10.15–10.45 Tea/coffee served

## 11.00 AGM

1 Apologies	3 Matters arising	6 Committee elections
2 Last year's minutes:	4 Chairman	7 Q & A
page 8	5 Treasurer: page 9	

■ Standing for re-election: Simon Saville, Mike Weller, Ken Willmott

12.00 Prize Digital Photo Show: see next page .....Francis Kelly

12.30 LUNCH: *please contribute £5 if you wish to partake*

### POSTER SESSIONS

Steve Wheatley .....Regional Action Plan & Saving the Wood White  
May Webber .....Big City Butterflies

14.00 Julie Williams .....Saving Butterflies & Moths in 2020 and Beyond

14.30 Q & A: Julie, Steve & May

15.00 Results: Photo Show, Quiz, Raffle .....End c.15.30. Doors close 16.30

## PRIZE QUIZ

Marian Thomas, last year's winner, is setting the questions.

Please collect a quiz sheet on arrival; tackle the questions during the day.

## RAFFLE

Raffle prizes will be gratefully received, e.g. books, bottles.

Please hand them to **Mike Weller** on arrival.

## VENUE

King George V Hall, Browns Lane, Effingham KT24 5ND, TQ119535

■ If you would like a lift from Effingham Junction station (3km), which is on the Guildford/Waterloo lines via either Surbiton or Epsom, please contact Francis Kelly 07952 285661. Return lifts are also offered.



# Prize Digital Photo Show

Please submit your best photos for our Members' Day Show

- Maximum THREE photos per member
- Adult butterflies only
- Must be taken in Surrey this year
- Please send photos (full resolution), with your name, species, site & any notes, by **October 27**, to: [surreybranch@gmail.com](mailto:surreybranch@gmail.com)
- The best photos will be selected for the Show
- Attendees will be asked to vote for the winner
- Prize to be determined on the day
- Winning photo will be featured in the Surrey Skipper
- Entrants need not be present



**Julie Williams** is the keynote speaker at Members' Day.

She is BC's Chief Executive Officer & Company Secretary.

Julie joined BC in 2000 and succeeded Martin Warren as CEO in 2017.

She holds the Institute of Chartered Accountants' Diploma in Charity Accounting.

Follow Julie on Twitter @JulieWilliamsBC

Photo by Katie Callaghan



*The Mount, September: our new Conservation Group's first work party. Guildford Cathedral and the Woking skyline (distant left) form the backdrop. Ken Elsom*

## Minutes of 2018 AGM

Francis Kelly

24th AGM, Sat 3 Nov, 2018, 11.00; King George V Hall, Effingham

Attendance: **AGM** 55, **Members' Day** 66

### 1 Apologies

Geoff Eaton, Valerie Esplen, Helen Kelly, Andrew Kingston, Carey Lodge, John Stather, Peter Webster, Lawrie de Whalley, Tony Williams

### 2 Minutes of 2017 AGM

**Approval proposed:** Bill Downey  
**Seconded** Malcolm Bridge

### 3 Matters arising

**Michael Friend** asked about printed copies of the Skipper.

**Simon Saville** replied: The committee decided to continue with our online-only policy. This saves £2,500, which is redirected towards conservation.

A reduced edition, intended for those without internet access, is posted to members for whom we do not have an email address.

**Caroline Woodley** asked about weekend work parties.

**Harry Clarke** replied: Work parties are limited by people to organise them (volunteer or otherwise). We are fully committed with current resources.

**Simon Riley** added: Other organisations offer weekend opportunities.

### 4 Chairman: Simon Saville

*Full report: Skipper 66 and website AGM page*

### 5 Treasurer: Peter Camber

Statement of Income & Expenditure to Mar 31, 2018: Skipper 66.

Book-keeping is now done by Head Office, so formal approval of accounts at Branch AGM is no longer required.

**Joan Lowe** asked why conservation work is concentrated on existing sites rather than expanded to others that are in need (e.g. Howell Hill).

**Harry Clarke** replied: Work parties are constrained by the Small Blue project and Oaken Wood. There are insufficient resources to consider other sites.

**Bill Downey** added: The deterioration at Howell Hill is part of a bigger problem within Surrey WT. Surrey Branch has had discussions with Surrey CC Ecologist John Edwards.

### 6 Committee: Standing for re-election

Bill Downey, Francis Kelly, Ken Owen, Paul Wheeler

**Proposed:** Gail Jeffcoate

**Seconded:** Bridget de Whalley

### 7 Q & A

**Michael Friend** spoke about Lyme Disease. See your GP if you suffer a rash and flu-like symptoms after a tick bite.

**Gary Margetts** added: I suspect I have LD but am struggling to receive correct treatment. Best advice is on NHS website. Also see: [butterfly-conservation.org/news-and-blog/be-tick-aware](http://butterfly-conservation.org/news-and-blog/be-tick-aware)

■ Meeting closed: 12.00



2018 AGM (L-R):  
Simon Saville (Chair),  
Peter Camber (Treasurer),  
Francis Kelly (minutes)  
Clive Huggins



## Treasurer's Report 2018/19

Peter Camber

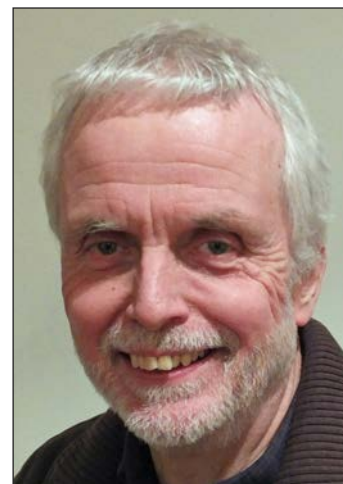
### Introduction

The statement of branch income and expenditure (p 10-11) provides an overview of branch finances for the 2018/19 year, together with the equivalent figures for 2017/18.

The following comments relate to the figures shown for the year ended 31 March 2019.

### Income

Total income of £10,243 included subscriptions of £7,338, a of £2,150 from Surrey Wildlife Trust in support of the We Love Heart Moth project, and a personal donation of £500 to be used for Small Blue conservation work in Surrey. This compares to a total of £7,460 last year, excluding the legacy donation.



### Expenditure

Total operating costs for the year were £6,358, which included £971 for training our conservation volunteers and £1,605 re equipment and other expenses for the Heart Moth project (see Skipper 66). Expenses for Oaken Wood were £780 for contractor support, £322 for water fern eradication and £561 for deer-proof fencing. In a busy year, these conservation expenses for the reserve totalled £1,663 versus £242 last year.

Using a different supplier to print our latest Skipper magazine further reduced its total cost to £452, versus £648 last year. Similarly, a change of supplier and a reduction in the number of copies printed reduced the cost of our Annual Report to just £345, a saving of over £1,000 on last year's figure.

Taken together, these savings will enable us to spend around £1,250 more on conservation projects.

Our Members' Day and AGM cost £855, compared with £952 last year. This was offset by donations of £280 for lunch and raffle proceeds of £185. Changing our approach to the catering saved around £200.

After allowing for a VAT refund of £105 for last year's purchases, our total operational expenditure for the year was £6,358 compared with £5,803 last year.

### Contributions to BC projects

Our strong opening cash balance enabled the branch to contribute £13,000 to the West

Weald Wood White project and £10,000 to the Big City Butterflies project.

A total of £470 in cash, including the Members' Day proceeds mentioned above, was donated directly to BC's Winter Appeal, thereby benefiting from the "Double Your Impact" 2x multiplier.

### Closing balance and 2019/20 budget

The above income and expenditure resulted in a year-end cashbook balance of £6,121, some of which has been earmarked for supporting conservation projects in 2019/20.

Our budget for 2019/20 anticipates contributions of £1,250 to the Surrey Small Blue project, £550 to complete the Heart Moth project, and a further £5,000 for other projects to be agreed during the year.

### Conclusion

Still benefiting from last year's legacy donation, the branch was again able to make some important financial commitments in support of projects to conserve butterflies and moths in the South-East region. This included continued support for an impressive amount of practical conservation work by our team of enthusiastic volunteers, who have helped to make some important habitat improvements this year, both at Oaken Wood and at key sites along the North Downs. We look forward to seeing the target species benefiting from those improvements in the years ahead.

## Income & Expenditure Statement: year ended 31 March 2019

Peter Camber

	Balance as at 1 April	2018/19	2017/18	
<b>Income</b>		<b>£25,199.52</b>	<b>£8,358.04</b>	<b>2018/19 Comments</b>
Receipts from Head Office				
Grants	Membership Subs	7,338.00	7,065.00	Re Heart Moth Project
	From Surrey Wildlife Trust	2,149.50	-	
Donations	Individual donations	505.00	42.00	500 re Small Blue conservation
	Corporate donations	115.61	130.05	100 Ecological Planning, plus EasyFundraising
	Legacy Unrestricted	-	25,970.48	
Sales (net of VAT)	Sales of goods bought in	135.00	223.17	
	<b>Total Income</b>	<b>£10,243.11</b>	<b>£33,430.70</b>	
<b>Expenditure</b>				
Payments to Head Office	Insurance	42.37	36.77	Field equipment
	VAT refunded	-104.53	-114.27	For last year's expenditure
Fundraising/publicity	Publicity & Leaflets	-	10.00	
	Support for Events	-	20.00	
	Purchase of Sales Stock	-	-	
	Cost of goods sold	36.22	113.88	Equals decrease in stock value below
Conservation	Training Courses	970.60	1,051.80	804 pesticides, 167 First Aid in Forestry
	Event costs (room hire, food)	-	24.20	
	Conservation volunteer expenses	234.00	-	209 Heart Moth project, 25 Oaken Wood
	Field Equipment	1,601.85	703.58	1,395 Heart Moth project; 207 maintenance & fuel
	Contracts	780.00	156.00	Oaken Wood: 690 ditch clearance, 90 tree felling
	Other	882.84	85.98	Oaken Wood: 322 Weevils, 561 deer fencing
Membership	Membership Postage	87.00	152.15	
	Surrey Skipper	451.86	648.07	284 printing, plus 168 postage
	Annual Report	345.13	1,413.00	223 printing, plus 122 postage
	New Members' Day	104.00	433.00	Room hire
Support	Stationery	14.23	17.46	
	Postage	-	15.78	
Management & governance	Committee travel expenses	-	-	
	Other Committee expenses	57.00	84.00	Room hire for meetings
	Members' Day/AGM	855.47	951.70	555 catering, 216 hall hire, 85 speaker

	Total Operating Expenditure	£6,358.04	£5,803.10	
BC project contributions	West Weald Wood White			
	Big City Butterflies	13,000.00	0.00	Includes 10k from Eric Wynn's legacy
	Surrey Small Blue Stepping Stones	10,000.00	-	" 6k "
	Thames Basin Silver-studded Blue	-	10,000.00	
	<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>£29,358.04</b>	<b>£16,803.10</b>	
<b>Cashbook Adjustments</b>				
	2018/19 VAT payable on sales	0.00	8.33	
	2018/19 decrease in stock value	36.22	113.88	Closing stock balance: £165.76
	<b>Closing cashbook balance</b>	<b>£6,120.81</b>	<b>£25,107.85</b>	
<b>Bank Reconciliation</b>				
	2017/18 VAT paid on sales	-8.33	-43.33	
	2017/18 prepayment – NMD room hire	104.00	104.00	
	Payment of last year's creditors	-135.00	-	
	Payment in advance for next year	-158.00	-104.00	
	Payment not yet cleared	-	135.00	
	<b>Closing bank balance</b>	<b>£5,923.48</b>	<b>£25,199.52</b>	
<b>BC Appeals</b>				
	The following additional cash sums were donated directly to BC's Winter Appeal			
	Members' Day lunch donations	280.00	502.00	
	Members' Day raffle proceeds	185.00	156.00	
	Donations made following presentations, etc	-	95.00	
	Donations made at AES event	5.00	-	
	Other events	-	185.00	
		<b>£470.00</b>	<b>£938.00</b>	Benefited from 2x multiplier
<b>Financial Analysis</b>				
	Total income	£10,243.11	£33,430.70	
	Operating expenses	£6,358.04	£5,803.10	
	- % of Total income	62.07%	17.36%	
	Conservation costs	£4,469.29	£2,021.56	
	- % of Operating expenses	70.29%	34.84%	
	Membership costs	£1,843.46	£3,597.92	
	- % of Operating expenses	28.99%	62.00%	





Photo: Ken Elsom

Fencing scrapes on Blatchford Down, May 2019. L-R: Sarah Henson, Dom Greves, Fiona Haynes, Geoff Pierce, Steve Pitt, Ellie Stradling, Simon Riley, Gillian Elsom, Steve Wheatley.

## Small Blue Project

Fiona Haynes

*Fiona Haynes was Officer for BC's Surrey Small Blue "Stepping Stones" Project, on a part-time contract for two years, ending in July 2019*

THE PROJECT seems to have gone by in a complete whirlwind, and I wonder where the time went! However when I look at my records of what we have achieved along the North Downs it is clear that we were extremely busy and that it has been time well spent. The future for the Small Blue is now looking brighter across this section of the North Downs.

There are populations of Small Blue around Guildford, and a population 16 km further East at Box Hill. This project has been working to provide stepping stones of suitable habitat between these populations to encourage them to increase and spread. We worked on 20 main sites managed by our partner organisations – mainly National Trust, Surrey Wildlife Trust and Guildford Borough Council, plus



landowners such as Albury Estate, Rosamund Trust and Denbies Wines Estates.

The project spent a budget of approximately £37,000 on contractor work – including scrub management, using a contractor with mini-digger to create 60 chalk scrapes or "wildflower plots" suitable for cultivation of Kidney Vetch (the sole food plant for the

Small Blue), and installing fencing exclosures around some scrapes to protect new plants from nibbling and disturbance by rabbits and livestock.

An intrepid, hardy and knowledgeable group of BC Surrey volunteers worked across the project area between Guildford and Betchworth to improve habitats for the Small Blue and additional target species including Grizzled, Dingy and Silver-spotted Skippers; Chalkhill and Adonis Blues; plus Chalk Carpet and Lace Border moths. We often worked as an independent group, but also benefited from the help of

■ *continued on page 14*





L-R: Ken Mead, Steve Nevard, Dom Greves, Simon Riley, Fiona Haynes  
Steve Wheatley, Sarah Henson, Amanda Barnicoat (NT), Ellie Stradling  
Ken & Gillian Elsom





## ■ FIONA HAYNES from page 12

our partner organisations, from assistance with transporting tools and the all-important tea kit, to running joint tasks.

The project completed 81 habitat management tasks, resulting in 1,191 days of volunteer work. The most recent tasks included erecting fencing enclosures on Blatchford Down and Netley Plantation to protect the new Kidney Vetch plants from being nibbled by rabbits and livestock; creating new scrapes at Tyting Farm; scrape maintenance and installing stiles to make accessing enclosures easier.

Volunteer work primarily involved bare-ground creation, scrub management, sowing Kidney Vetch seeds, weeding around Kidney Vetch seedlings, plus erecting fencing around scrapes as protection from grazing and disturbance.

Around 60 volunteers have attended practical tasks directly through BC, 25 of whom were regular volunteers. Additional volunteers from our project partners were also involved in joint tasks.

We have directly worked on over 18.5 hectares of land to favour Small Blues – increasing bare ground and managing young scrub and invasive species such as Buddleia and Cotoneaster. We created a total of 186 bare ground “scrapes” in order to cultivate Kidney Vetch from locally sourced seed. All these scrapes now have Kidney Vetch coming up. Some sites have

this year had flowering Kidney Vetch – most notably Hackhurst Down, Pewley Down and Wholecomb Down, where there has been a considerable number of flowers.

Our volunteer “Scrape Stewards” weed them, seed them, monitor their progress, create species lists, and report issues such as damage to scrapes or grazing pressure on Kidney Vetch. It is an important outcome of the project to have a team of stewards giving scrapes this extra attention for the first few years.

The idea is that over time the scrapes will vegetate over with Kidney Vetch and other desirable food plants and nectar sources, but that we can also ensure the surrounding habitat becomes more suitable for recruitment of Kidney Vetch seedlings. We also hope that our partner organisations will consider more bare-ground creation in appropriate locations in the future.

Small Blue egg searches took place this season at various project sites, including Box Hill and Pewley Down. I was pleased to find that four sites where Small Blue is not yet established had some egg-laying. One is above Gomshall, where Small Blues have not been recorded before. This is a good indication that Small Blues are mobile and trying to spread across the project area.

One of the most exciting outcomes of the project is that a team of three new task leaders, with the help of Bill Downey, will lead more work parties the future.

## Project volunteers

Anita Bathurst  
Janet Baxter  
Nick Baxter  
Daniel Bound  
Sarah Brown  
Jim Brownjohn  
Peter Camber  
Florence Cardner  
Matt & Andrew  
Cartledge  
Harry Clarke  
Tanya Clarke

Kathryn Coleman  
Peter Cureton  
Chris Cutcliffe  
Martin D'arcy  
Bill Downey  
Gillian Elsom  
Ken Elsom  
Stuart Fleming  
Mike Galtrey  
Mike Gibson  
Dom Greves  
Lucy Halahan

Sarah Henson  
Mike Hobbs  
Joseph Hobden  
Ben Hunter  
Matthew Hunter  
Josephine Hurren  
Michael Jones  
Richard Lilley  
Jane Lowe  
Andy Merritt  
Helen Middlemas  
Steve Nevard

Ken Owen  
Geoff Pierce  
Steve Pitt  
Jane Ponsford  
Gillian Pullinger  
Andy Ralph  
Libby Ralph  
Stephen Reisbach  
Simon Riley  
Julie Russ  
Neville Squires  
Cher Steinberg

Ellie Stradling  
Mary Stuart-Jones  
Jill Summers  
Mike Sweaney  
Jo Tallon  
John Tallon  
Adrian Thompson  
Dave Thomson  
Janet Thomson  
Roger Twitchin  
Martin Walsh  
Jon Wilson

■ Apologies to anyone omitted in error. Excludes volunteers from partner organisations.





*Fiona Haynes with Guildford in Bloom's Nature Conservation gold award, Yvonne Arnaud Theatre, Sep 17. Joining the celebration are BC volunteers (L-R) Geoff Pierce, Simon Riley, Adrian Thompson & John Tallon. Gillian Elsom*

These volunteers are now part of BC Surrey's Conservation Oversight Group and will have valuable input into future management priorities, including extending activities onto additional sites.

These leaders are experienced conservationists, who have been fully involved since the start. Look out for more information on future work parties of the project and you can join the mailing list. The group are extremely friendly and there are usually a variety of tasks, with plenty of breaks for tea, coffee and biscuits!

One of the things I valued most about the project was the opportunity to work with such an enthusiastic and knowledgeable group of people. We were always learning from each other and enjoying great wildlife

sightings while we worked.

I thank all the partners and landowners, particularly Amanda Barnicoat of the National Trust, who was extremely supportive from the start. She and her volunteers worked with us on many occasions, provided yummy cakes and arranged tool storage.

I extend a huge thank you and lots of respect to the volunteer group. It was an immensely rewarding project for me personally and I thoroughly enjoyed your input and company too. Well done for all your hard work on those steep slopes and good luck with the project in the future!

I also thank Gail Jeffcoate, Bill Downey and Harry Clarke for their invaluable help, guidance and support.

**LINK** [Small Blue "Stepping Stones" Project](#)

### Links to Small Blue "Stepping Stones" videos on YouTube

**Cathy Clarke** [11min 36sec](#)

**My Surrey Hills** [1min 40sec](#)

## Big City Butterflies

May Webber (Project Officer)

*BIG City Butterflies* has had an overwhelming amount of support across London during this development phase.

The summer months have been busy, with the majority of our consultation taking place with target groups and delivering trial activities.

Trial workshops included: habitat management training (x2), surveying & monitoring training (x3), identification workshops (x2).

These trial activities have been delivered to various audiences from council staff to Friends groups across our target boroughs.

After each session I sent participants a survey and the feedback has always been

positive, with everyone commenting that they now have a more positive attitude towards Lepidoptera, a particular improvement for moths PR!

Comments have included: “[I am] more aware of how even the smallest garden makes a difference” and “Very interesting info about the alternative grounds maintenance practice, which could be trialed on a small scale”.

Trials also included walks and talks, which have been well received and have occasionally led to the first sighting of a species in a site. For example, a Brown Argus at Gillespie Park in the borough of Islington was a first for the site.

There is a clear demand for more niche information on Lepidoptera in London and Big City Butterflies can perfectly cater for that. Londoners are keen to encourage caterpillars and always asking what the best larval food plants to plant are.

This is something I always emphasise – you must include larval food plants in your garden, not just nectar plants for the adults!

One smaller part of Big City Butterflies



May Webber (right) in action at the Lambeth Country Show in July. Jim Asher



engagement is the delivery of school workshops. These went well, teaching over 100 pupils. We have also secured involvement for the delivery

project from some schools. One is even purchasing chalk in order to build a wildflower mound in the playground!

With the project spanning 17 boroughs, there are lots of potential green spaces to work in: finalising project sites has been a hefty task! Each borough has a flagship site where there is a strong Friends group, toilets/café and a site that is already known to support many different species.

I have had lots of support from the four BC branches that fall into London and they have helped immensely with site selection and engagement.

My main focus now is writing up the project plan and completing the budget plans. Lots of letters of support have been received from partner charities, organisations and volunteer groups, which puts us at great stead for our second round application.

We will be submitting the application to the National Lottery Heritage Fund at the end of February, with the hope of receiving an answer as to whether we have been successful by June 2020.



## Long-tailed Blue in Godstone garden

Richard Stephens

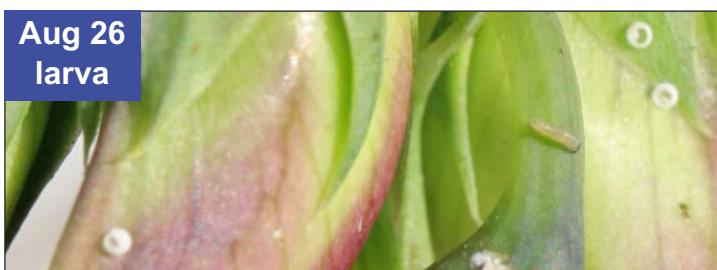
**Aug 19:** I looked out of the kitchen window and was stunned to see a Long-tailed Blue on our Everlasting Sweet Pea. I ran for my camera and took several photos of her laying eggs.

The problem since has been to stop my wife from picking the flowers!

**Aug 26:** more eggs laid by probably same female. I recorded the larvae emerging. They hide in the immature flower buds, venturing out occasionally to find a new bud when they have eaten the first. I saw only one larva eating a pod during the day.

**Sep 16:** first larva pupates.

**Sep 23:** two more larvae pupate.



**Sep 29:** first adult emerges.

If temperatures drop no lower than 5C, more adults will emerge in October.

### ■ Other LTBs in Surrey

**Aug 4:** Caterham, Mike Bromley

**Sep 11 (fresh):** Strood Green, Julia Hatto

■ Surrey's last LTB was in 2008.

We missed out on the 2013 & 2015 invasions to Sussex, which has again enjoyed bumper numbers, notably at Whitehawk Hill, next to Brighton racecourse.

■ LTB is one of the world's most widely spread species. It is continuously brooded and does not hibernate, so has no strategy for surviving British winters. The species can be imported accidentally (e.g. on Kenyan mangetout) in its immature stages. Current sightings are genuine migrants and their offspring.





## Field Trips 1

Mike Weller

ABOUT 80% of our planned field trips had reasonable or very good weather, similar to 2018. I led 13 of the 23 I attended, so many thanks to our other leaders.

The Train Journey East was postponed because of the

forecast for the UK's hottest-ever day. Undeterred, Robert Edmondson kept to the original schedule by himself and survived to take part a second time!

After a rainy hiccup at the end of July & early August,

the sun returned and we were rewarded with a record 20+ Brown Hairstreaks, including a rarely-seen male on Merrow Downs. Painted Ladies made a welcome appearance after many poor years but where were the Clouded Yellows?

### **May 25/Jun 23, Norbury Park:**

good numbers of Small Heath; Brown Argus, Dingy & Grizzled Skippers hanging on. Silver Y, Small Elephant & Humming-bird Hawk-moths; 6 Painted Ladies and my first White Admiral.

### **May 29/Jun 1, Hutchinson's Bank & Howell Hill:**

Small Blue doing well in the south London suburbs. 100s at HB, even in cloudy conditions.

### **Jun 18, Fairmile Common:**

Silver-studded Blue just emerging.

### **Jun 27, Whitmoor Common:**

SSB thankfully holding their own.

### **Jun 29, Bookham Common:**

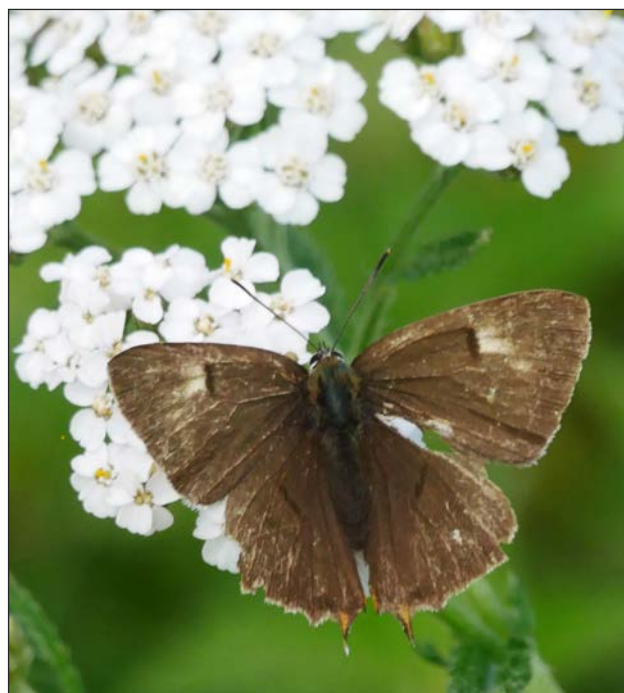
a rare Small Tortoiseshell with another 5 Painted Ladies on a glorious day. 3 Purple Emperors seen by some; half the number (35) of Silver-washed Fritillaries seen in 2018 but twice the number of White Admirals (14); single Marbled White. 16 species.

### **Jul 1, Knepp Wildland, Sussex:**

our first FT here, perfect weather. Purple Emperor (10), White Admiral (6), White-letter (2) & Purple Hairstreak (5). Main interest for me were the White Storks (8) flying free and the huge Old English Longhorn Bull chasing a female and calf, and very nearly us! 16 species.

### **Jul 13, Walton Downs & Juniper Hill:**

half the wildflower meadow (including Round-headed Rampion) on the racecourse had been degraded by close-mowing since last year. This had concentrated the population of Dark



*Brown Hairstreak male on Yarrow. Merrow. FK*

Green Fritillary (10 seen) to a small vulnerable breeding area. 17 species.

### **Jul 16, Broad Street Common:**

finally a White-letter Hairstreak after 7 years of fruitlessly searching one particular stand of elms. 19 species

### **Jul 27, Vale End:**

12 of us enjoyed the hospitality of Daphne Foulsham despite morning drizzle which miraculously ceased as we started the walk. 12 species.

### **Aug 3, Great Train West:**

our favourite FT, this year with the most species (26).

### **Aug 8, Great Train East:**

20 species including my first Adonis Blue (3) & Silver-spotted Skipper (50).

### **Sep 1, Merrow & Pewley Downs:**

my first view of a male Brown Hairstreak.

## Field Trips 2

Francis Kelly

**May 14:** Wood Whites in limited habitat at Sidney Wood.

**May 21:** Grizzled Skippers in Brookwood Cemetery, Surrey's only site north of the Downs.

**Jun 5:** 10+ Scarce Chasers at Vale End, where the dragonfly was first recorded in 2018 by branch member John Austin.



*Scarce Chaser dragonflies at Vale End: fem (left) & male. FK*

**Jul 20:** White-letter Hairstreak on Marjoram at Headley Heath.

**Aug 27:** 4 Brown Hairstreaks in Cranleigh.

■ I attended 11 field trips, leading seven. They attracted 79 different trippers, of whom 34 attended more than once. David Gough, with whom I shared eight trips, wins my Sweet FA (faithful attendee) Award.

## Work Parties: North Downs

Bill Downey

THE Stepping Stones Project finished at the end of July. However, as a legacy of the project, Friday work parties (except 1st Fridays) along the North Downs are set to continue.

Libby Ralph, Sarah Henson and Simon Riley will be the new leaders and a set of equipment is housed with the National Trust at Landbarn Farm. I will contribute as liaison with the land managers.

We want to walk before we run so will concentrate on easy locations initially. If all goes well, we can consider moving to other

sites outside the original project area.

To join the Conservation Group and receive information on the work parties, please "opt-in" to the mailing list via:

<http://eepurl.com/ds7MaP>

Also as a legacy of the project, a network of scrape stewards will sustain the gains of the last two years. They will maintain the condition of the many scrapes created; harvest and reseed Kidney Vetch; and monitor for Small Blue eggs or adults.

**LINK** [Surrey work parties](#)

## Work Parties: Oaken Wood

VOLUNTEERS are invited to join our winter work parties at Oaken Wood or along the North Downs.

Harry Clarke, in conjunction with BC's Senior Reserves Officer Jayne Chapman, is leading work parties at our branch

reserve on 1st Thursdays, October to April.

Work parties are a great way to gain exercise, enjoy the outdoors, make new friends, and make a difference.

Warm thanks to all our volunteers.

New volunteers are always welcome.

## Email Appeal

Francis Kelly

Members whose email address bounces,  
or who have joined 1999+ and never supplied one.

Mary Adler	Barbara Crake	Hugh Hughes	Ransford Rowe
June Anderson	Amy Crank	Stephen Jackson	Allen Russell-Smith
Alexander Ballingal	Brian Crawford	Wanda Jay	Susan Saxby
Matthew Banner	Christine Crawley	Reston Kilgour	Peter Shaw-Ashton
Caroline Bateman	Paul Crook	Kathleen Knowles	Peter Shelley
Alec Baxter-Brown	Susan & Zoe Davies	Eleanor Lamb	Susan Shore
David Boothroyd	Stephen Davis	Keith & Mary	Thelma Smalley
Richard Bosanquet	Kathleen Dobson	Lawrence	Leslie Smith
Mary Bridge	Simon Donkersley	Trudy Mapstone	Jennifer Spring-
Jo Brimble	Marc Duveen Conway	Neil McMillan	Smyth
Dorothy Brookes	Colin Ede	Mike Metherall	Peter Stephens
Judith Browning	Alan Edwards	Nicholas Moll	Suzanne Stephens
Nick Burrows	Peter Edwards	Hazel Morgan	Jennifer Stiasny
Valerie Butt	Conrad Eilts	Maurice Moss	Diana Straker
Martin Cale	Margaret Gunning	Nancy Murphy	William Straker
Patrick Chapman	Katherine Haire	Ian Newlands	Bill Swinglehurst
Victoria Chester	Charles Hales-Hunt	Vivien Oakes	Judith Symons
Tim & Sue Cleminson	Trevor Harris	Rick Ovenden	Colin Turner
Judy Cobbett	Neil Hayter	Jean Parker	Alistair Wilson
Barbarta Collecott	Michael Healy	Patricia Perkins	Jean Winn
Maureen Conway	John Heward	Tim F Phillips	Ro Woodbridge
Sheila Cooper	Jim P A Hewitt	Toby Prescott	Alexandra Young
Jed Corbett	Pamela Hill	Jill Rigby	
Mark Cosgrove	Philip Hills	Monica Rogers	
Neil & June Covey	Simon Howorth	Patricia Ross	

If you did not receive an email alert to this Skipper, we do not hold a valid email address for you. We have some addresses that bounce.

If you have email, please inform [surreybranch@gmail.com](mailto:surreybranch@gmail.com)  
This will allow us to save printing costs and direct more money towards conservation.

REMEMBERING Butterfly Conservation in your will is one of the most effective ways to help ensure butterflies and moths thrive in years to come. Legacies represent over a third of our voluntary income and make a crucial contribution to our work.

■ Please contact Dorset head office: 01929 40020  
[info@butterfly-conservation.org](mailto:info@butterfly-conservation.org)





## Marsh Fritillary Reintroduction

Clive Wood

*The Marsh Fritillary is being reintroduced to former sites in north-east Hants, two miles from the Surrey border.*

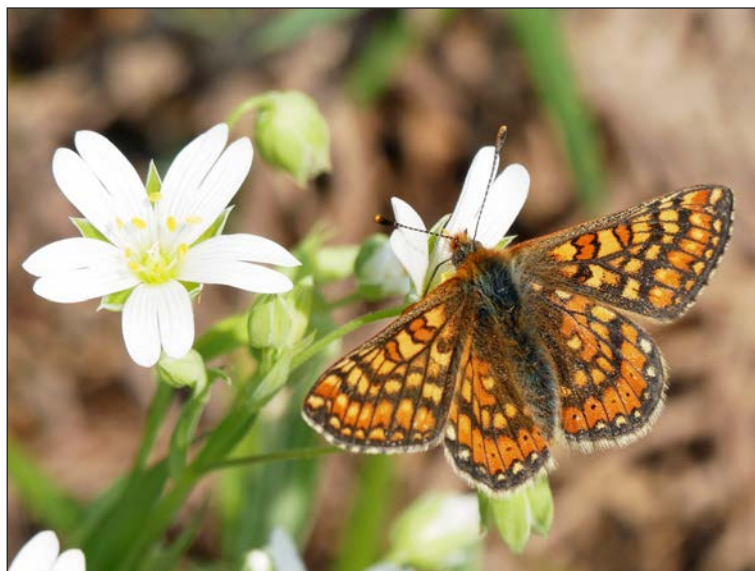
THE FINAL releases of all remaining captive-bred Marsh Fritillary larvae were made in March this year over three sites within the north-east Hampshire landscape. Approximately 27,000 larvae were released over two years from the original 300 larvae taken under licence from six donor sites on Dartmoor in Sep 2016.

First year mortality was between 33-50% due to the presence of *Cotesia bignelli*, a parasitic wasp, in the donor stock but subsequent fertility and mortality/survival rates have been good, aided by the husbandry skills and dedication of the captive breeders.

In late August and early September, Andy Barker and I spent two days surveying the three release sites for larval webs. We found 150 larval webs during ten hours of search effort. This worked out at one larval web every four minutes, including one minute of recording time. The density of webs within particular patches is probably beyond the carrying capacity of the patch in question but hopefully this will encourage dispersal next May and June.

The vast majority of observations were of black, 4th-instar larvae in hibernacula webs low down in the sward, often directly below a clean moult web. Only a small minority of webs contained feeding or basking larvae. A combination of Devil's-bit Scabious (DBS), *Molinia* and *Tormentil* seemed to be sward of choice.

Our best guess is that the webs contained an average of 60-90 larvae each. Clearly this is only an approximation but provides a range estimate of 9-13,500 larvae. Survey conditions in the largest release site were



*Marsh Fritillary on Greater Stitchwort, NE Hants, May 2019. FK*

complicated by the fact that both meadows had recently been lightly grazed, resulting in significant trampling of the sward. The larvae would have been fine but spotting old "trail webs" and the newer moult and hibernacula webs was more difficult than in the other release sites. This, together with webs that were present but not seen, means that the total of 150 webs is likely to underestimate the true breeding success. This is a wonderful outcome and an encouraging sign that the species will continue to breed successfully in the wild.

We have found good homes for the 5,000 DBS plants used to rear the larvae, mainly local HIWWT sites and a wild flower meadow at the Sir Harold Hillier Gardens near Romsey.

Our next steps are to discuss the future management of two of the release sites, neither of which can be grazed for different reasons, and to survey adjacent areas of potentially suitable habitat. Our thoughts will also need to turn to writing a synopsis of the project to capture and interpret much of the data collected over the course of a challenging but rewarding reintroduction.

**Clive Wood** is Chair of Hants branch and a member of the MF Action Group

## Transects

Bill Downey

BY late September records had been returned from around 115 transects in VC17, with 200,000+ butterflies.

Some walkers enter their records after the season has ended and I expect the final figure to be around 125 – five fewer than in 2018.

Walking a transect throughout the season requires dedication and once again my thanks go to all walkers for their hard work and enthusiasm.

There were nine new routes this year: at the new heathland sites, Frensham Great Pond and Mare Hill Common, the aim is to improve our monitoring of Silver-studded Blue and Grayling.

The new routes in Inner London – Brockwell and Burgess Parks – complement the four routes added in 2018. Both parks will be flagship sites for the Big City Butterflies project.

Bookham Common is a site that I have long wanted to add to our portfolio, particularly after Matthew Oates's comments at the AGM in 2017.

There have been a number of changes/retirements this year. NT Ranger



Sophie Parker has left Leith Hill Place and been replaced by Francisco Martinez, who has moved from Hatchlands Park. Clive Hewett at Whitmoor Common and Geoff Hewlett at Quarry Hangers will be retiring and we will probably lose long-term walkers Eleanor Lines at Richmond Park and Mike Gibson at Sheepleas.

My thanks to all these for their recording over the years.

There is a maximum number of routes that I can maintain and with the inevitable yearly changes I now aim to keep the total more steady-state. However there is growing demand from land managers for more species monitoring: from the National Trust (with their Land, Outdoors and Nature policy), the Downlands Project and various councils.

As a result, without persuasion from me, I have about 12 new routes pencilled in for 2020 and with walkers identified. I cannot say no to such enthusiasm, but it will mean a full January to March – which is when I develop new transects.

### New routes in 2019

<b>Belair Park, Dulwich</b> Dave Clark
<b>Bookham Common</b> Bob Yeo, Nicola Sainsbury
<b>Brockwell Park, Herne Hill</b> Danielle Wagner, Laura Grice
<b>Burgess Park North, Walworth</b> Simon Saville
<b>Burgess Park South</b> Simon Saville
<b>Earlswood Common</b> Maureen Hounslow, Hilary Reive, Gill Langridge, Graham Saxby
<b>Frensham Great Pond</b> Julie Russ
<b>Manor Park, Whyteleafe</b> Brian Smith
<b>Mare Hill Common</b> Ian Exton Bryony Chapman, Vicky Keller

### New walkers in 2019

<b>Chapel Bank</b> Anna Guerin
<b>Chiddingfold Forest West</b> James & Catherine Field
<b>Colekitchen</b> Adrian Thompson
<b>Hackhurst Down</b> Adrian Thompson
<b>Hutchinson's Bank</b> Anna Guerin
<b>Leith Hill Place</b> Francisco Martinez
<b>RSPB Farnham Heath – two routes</b> Geoff Coombes, Nigel Martyns
<b>Wimbledon Common SW &amp; Fishponds Wood</b> Peter Fischer

## Wider Countryside Butterfly Survey

Bill Downey

<i>Monad</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Walker</i>	<i>Monad</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Walker</i>
<b>SU8736</b>	Hindhead		<b>TQ1662</b>	Chessington	<i>Pamela Harwood</i>
<b>SU8737</b>	Beacon Hill		<b>TQ2042</b>	Newdigate	<i>Jo Hurren</i>
<b>SU8748</b>	Badshot Lea	<i>Clare Grindrod</i>	<b>TQ2059</b>	Epsom	<i>Janet Cheney</i>
<b>SU8960</b>	Camberley		<b>TQ2355</b>	Tadworth	<i>Nicola Sainsbury</i>
<b>SU9038</b>	Thursley	<i>Harry Clarke</i>	<b>TQ2562</b>	Belmont	<i>Morag Loader</i>
<b>SU9047</b>	Seale		<b>TQ2654</b>	Mugswell	<i>Janet Cheney</i>
<b>SU9133</b>	Haslemere		<b>TQ2657</b>	Banstead Woods	<i>Alison Gilry</i>
<b>SU9150</b>	Ash Green		<b>TQ2759</b>	Woodmansterne	<i>Morag Loader</i>
<b>SU9351</b>	Normandy		<b>TQ2868</b>	Mitcham	
<b>SU9364</b>	Windlesham		<b>TQ3045</b>	Salfords	<i>Lucy Halahan</i>
<b>SU9647</b>	Compton	<i>Gill Hanson</i>	<b>TQ3069</b>	Norbury	<i>Malcolm Bridge</i>
<b>SU9760</b>	Chobham		<b>TQ3079</b>	Westminster	<i>Danielle Wagner</i>
<b>SU9863</b>	Chobham Common	<i>Paul Wheeler</i>	<b>TQ3269</b>	Upper Norwood	<i>Mike Pearce</i>
<b>SU9951</b>	Guildford		<b>TQ3279</b>	Borough	<i>Janet Cheney</i>
<b>TQ0071</b>	Runnymede		<b>TQ3354</b>	South Caterham	
<b>TQ0543</b>	Winterfold		<b>TQ3377</b>	Southwark	
<b>TQ0944</b>	Peaslake	<i>Gill Hanson</i>	<b>TQ3378</b>	Bermondsey	<i>Simon Saville</i>
<b>TQ0960</b>	Cobham	<i>Roz Szanto</i>	<b>TQ3559</b>	Hamsey Green	<i>David Gough</i>
<b>TQ1144</b>	Holmbury St Mary	<i>Bill Downey</i>	<b>TQ3566</b>	Shirley	<i>Malcolm Bridge</i>
<b>TQ1247</b>	Wotton	<i>Graham Revill</i>	<b>TQ4352</b>	Limpsfield Chart	<i>Jim Yeeles</i>
<b>TQ1354</b>	Great Bookham	<i>Harry Clarke</i>			

THIS is my second year as WCBS Coordinator. My thanks again to all surveyors.

WCBS monads are fixed. Each year brings new volunteers but it is often impossible to match them to a free square close to where they live. The majority of squares in London, eastern and central Surrey are already taken. However there is a group in the west and south west of our region for which there are no walkers.

Survey coordinator Zoe Randle has made five more squares available:

SU9863 Chobham Common

TQ0543 Winterfold, TQ2868 Mitcham

TQ3354 South Caterham

TQ3377 Southwark

The Westminster route, which spans the north and south banks of the Thames, means that we now have recording by the Houses of Parliament!

■ WCBS monitors butterfly abundance in the wider countryside away from hot-spots via one monthly visit, May-Aug.

It is ideal for surveyors unable to commit to a weekly transect. If you can help, please contact [Bill Downey](#)

A TRANSECT is a fixed-route, weekly walk, typically 1–3km, lasting 30–90 mins.

Volunteers record butterflies in a 5m band in suitable weather in the 26 weeks Apr–Sep, 10.45–15.45. Data is managed by the [UK Butterfly Monitoring Scheme](#)

If you would like to walk a transect or help with an existing one (many are shared), please [email Bill Downey](#)

**LINK** [Transects & WCBS](#)



## Surveys

Bill Downey

### White-letter Hairstreak

Wearing my hat as Species Champion, I can report that, although it has not been such a good year for the species as in 2018, we have again made progress in tracking its distribution in VC17.

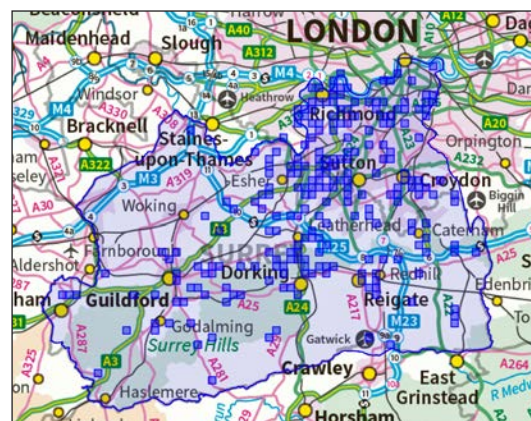
The strategy this year was to fill in more blank areas, particularly in the south and west by the Kent, Sussex and Hampshire borders, where there were previously few or no records. So, although the species has been recorded again in many places where we already know it to be, its presence is now confirmed in the following new areas:

- Ash Green
- Along the A31 at Farnham
- Hindhead – a particularly pleasing find near the A287 in an area more associated with heathland
- Sites around Godalming and Catteshall – Godalming being a particular hotspot for large Wych Elms
- Cranleigh, and along the A281 at Alfold Crossways, Graffham and Bramley
- In the east at Bletchingley, Limsfield and Lingfield
- Redhill Common, which seems to be almost entirely populated by Wych Elms
- Shere and Chilworth Gunpowder Works
- Hersham and Morden Cemetery
- Southwark Park, which virtually completes our knowledge of its spread across the London area.

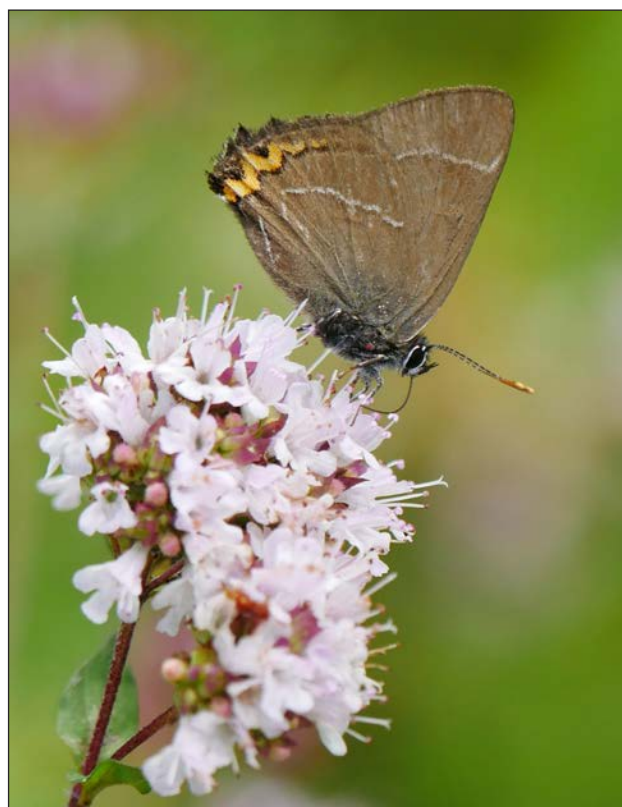
The map shows records in the south, west and east of VC17, with the London area almost completely filled in. The only remaining blank area is to the north west.

I am much less worried about the White-letter than a few years ago. Wherever there is suitable habitat we appear to be able to find the butterfly.

My sense is that the species is adept at colonising whatever habitat is available. Certainly in our area WLH seems an extremely resilient species and DED is proving no impediment to its survival.



White-letter Hairstreak 2016-19



White-letter Hairstreak on Marjoram, Headley Heath field trip. FK

**Grizzled Skipper:** more new locations

- The Weald: Alderbrook Estate, Cranleigh; Exfold Furze, Ewhurst
- Dollypers Hill, Croydon
- Beaverbrook Estate, Leatherhead
- North Downs: Tyting Farm, Guildford; Caterham Viewpoint

Grizzled Skipper surveyors have also confirmed small colonies of **Adonis Blue** in new locations along the downs.

## UKBMS 2018

Francis Kelly

THREE Surrey butterflies enjoyed their 3rd-best year on record in the hot summer of 2018: Speckled Wood, Brown Argus and Common Blue.

In contrast, the Peacock had only one worse year in the 43-year series of transect records going back to 1976.

The 10 years of transects in all England, 2009-2018, show a negative trend of >10% for 20 of Surrey's 41 regular species. Holly Blue is the biggest positive at +137%.

Professor Tom Brereton, BC's Associate Director of Monitoring, said: "2018 brought some welcome relief for butterflies following five below-average years in a row. But, there were not as many butterflies around as we might have expected given the fabulous weather and overall 2018 ranked as barely better than average.

"It remains to be seen what the knock-on effects of the 2018 heatwave will be.

We know that extreme events such as this, which are set to increase under climate change, are generally damaging to butterflies."

Dr Marc Botham, Butterfly Ecologist at the Centre for Ecology & Hydrology, said: "The results show the positive impact that suitable weather conditions can have if there is suitable habitat in place for our butterflies to thrive."

Anna Robinson, Monitoring Ecologist at the Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC) said: "We are grateful to the thousands of volunteers who submit records to the UKBMS, providing really valuable evidence on the state of butterflies."

■ The UK Butterfly Monitoring Scheme (UKBMS) has run since 1976, covering a record 2,873 sites in 2018.

**LINK** [UK Butterfly Monitoring scheme](#)

Abundance ranking of 2018 in the 43 years of transects from 1976					
43-year ranking of 2018, & 10-year trend			43-year ranking of 2018, & 10-year trend		
3rd	Speckled Wood	-6%	18	Clouded Yellow	+120%
	Brown Argus	+27%	20	Meadow Brown	+38%
	Common Blue	+1%		Comma	-17%
4	Ringlet	+19%	27	Dingy Skipper	-21%
5	Silver-washed Fritillary	+22%		Painted Lady	-73%
	Purple Hairstreak	+47%		White-letter Hairstreak	-38%
	Silver-studded Blue	+12%		Small Blue	-33%
7	Large White	-20%	28	White Admiral	-40%
	Small White	-4%		Green Hairstreak	-36%
	Brimstone	+72%	29	Brown Hairstreak	-15%
	Purple Emperor	-31%	30	Red Admiral	+46%
8	Silver-spotted Skipper	+21%	32	Large Skipper	-20%
9	Green-veined White	-28%	35	Chalk Hill Blue	-45%
	Holly Blue	+137%	36	Grizzled Skipper	-52%
10	Orange-tip	+1%	38	Gatekeeper	-4%
11	Adonis Blue	-51%	39	Small Skipper	+23%
12	Wood White	+29%		Grayling	-69%
13	Small Copper	-35%	40	Essex Skipper	+36%
14	Small Heath	-3%	41	Small Tortoiseshell	-17%
15	Dark Green Fritillary	-25%	42	Peacock	-38%
17	Marbled White	+113%			

Table features Surrey's 41 regular species; data is drawn from all transects in England, 1976-2018

## Big Butterfly Count 2019

Jul 19 – Aug 11

NEARLY half a million Painted Ladies were counted in the three weeks of the 10th Big Butterfly Count - the biggest Painted Lady year since 2009. But the Small Tortoiseshell, which has declined by 78% since the 1970s, is a cause for concern.

Richard Fox, BC's Associate Director of Recording and Research, said: "Last year the Small Tortoiseshell experienced its

worst Big Butterfly Count, so to see its numbers jump up by 167% this year is a big relief. But it performed far better in Scotland and Northern Ireland than in England and Wales.

"The poor results in southern England in particular suggest that climate change may be having more of an impact on this species than we have previously realised."

UK top 10		Butterflies	Change from last year
1	Painted Lady	420,841	2,498%
2	Peacock 5	207,814	235%
3	Small White 3	179,715	-42%
4	Gatekeeper 1	161,987	95%
5	Large White 4	138,671	-42%
6	Meadow Brown 2	110,858	87%
7	Red Admiral	91,146	138%
8	Small Tortoiseshell	70,704	167%
9	Speckled Wood	33,015	-18%
10	Green-veined White	32,965	-42%
Surrey Top Five			

	Recorders	Butterflies
2010	10,200	210,000
2011	34,300	322,330
2012	27,000	223,000
2013	46,000	830,000
2014	44,000	560,000
2015	52,000	600,000
2016	36,000	390,000
2017	60,400	550,000
2018	100,200	964,000
2019	113,500	1,595,500

[LINK](#) Big Butterfly Count

## While away the winter with . . .

*An essential reference for anyone with any interest in Surrey's wildlife. And at only £16 it is an absolute bargain.*

**Steve Chastell, Chair  
Surrey Bird Club**

## Butterflies of Surrey Revisited



Ken Willmott  
Malcolm Bridge, Harry E. Clarke, Francis Kelly  
and members of Butterfly Conservation Surrey branch

**£16 (+ £3 p&p) from Branch Treasurer, Peter Camber**





*iRecord* is our recommended recording platform via app (smartphone/tablet) or computer. Thank you to the recorders who have submitted 6,000+ Surrey butterfly records in 2019. More details, including how to create filters, are on our website's recording page.

**LINK** [Surrey Recording](#)

**LINK** [iRecord](#)

	<i>iRecorders</i>	<i>iRecords</i>
<b>2013</b>	32	344
<b>2014</b>	116	1,004
<b>2015</b>	159	3,182
<b>2016</b>	230	4,247
<b>2017</b>	333	7,214
<b>2018</b>	322	6,434
<b>2019</b>	to Sep 22	6,300

## Oaken Wood

**OAKEN WOOD**, formally opened by FC senior ranger Peter Beale in 1993, and our branch reserve since 1995, is 12ha (30 acres) of wood/grassland in the south-west of Surrey, 2.6km south of Dunsfold. It is part of Forestry Commission's 324ha Chiddingfold Forest.

A 3ha extension west to Lagfold track was added in 2015. Our licence was renewed for five years in Jan 2018.

**Access:** SU993338, via track (usually no vehicular access) that runs west from Plaistow Rd at SU994338; GU8 4PG. Parking for only a few cars.

Western (Botany Bay) entrance to Chiddingfold Forest is off High Street Green at SU978348; GU8 4YA. Parking here is slightly easier; beware roadside ditches! Oaken Wood is 2.5km to the east.

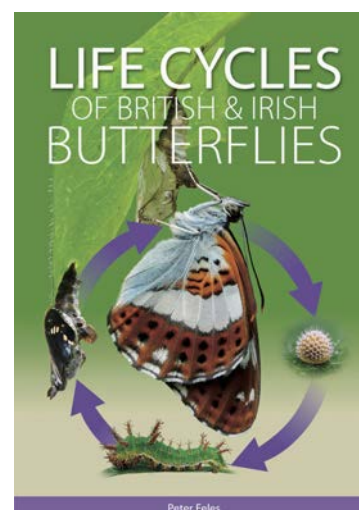
■ Volunteers are invited to our winter work parties. Please see website.

## LIFE CYCLES of British & Irish BUTTERFLIES

**Pete Eeles**, founder of [ukbutterflies.co.uk](http://ukbutterflies.co.uk)

"A must for anyone who wants to really get to know British and Irish butterflies and understand their ecology and conservation". **Martin Warren**, ex BC CEO

[www.naturebureau.co.uk/bookshop](http://www.naturebureau.co.uk/bookshop)



## Dragonfly Hotspot

Francis Kelly

THURSLEY COMMON was declared a Dragonfly Hotspot by Natural England's Deputy Chairman Lord Blencathra at a ceremony on August 22.

Thursley has 26 of Surrey's 29 odonata species and is the first Hotspot in the south of England. Others are in West Yorkshire, Shropshire & Devon, plus 10 in Scotland.

Lord Blencathra said: "It's fantastic to receive this badge of honour from the British Dragonfly Society.

"I would like to thank Reserve Manager James Giles and Thursley's incredible volunteers for creating the amazing boardwalk and Dragonfly Nature Trail, which makes the wetland wildlife on this site accessible to all."

Centrepiece of the trail is a sculpture designed by Lucy Quinnell and Adam Boydell. It is on a former pylon which dominated the area before the electricity lines were buried.

**VIDEO** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=41ZPJXaUhH8&feature=youtu.be>



Thursley manager James Giles (left) and Lord Blencathra at Thursley's dragonfly sculpture.  
Ellen Softley, NE

## DATES

Oct 12	Amateur Entomologists' Society Annual Exhibition & Trade Fair: Kempton 11.00-16.30	Jan-Dec	Butterfly House, Horniman Gardens SE23
Oct 26	Kent AGM, Maidstone	Mar 21	Herts/Middx AGM, Old Welwyn
Oct 26	Upper Thames AGM, Oxon	Mar 1	Garden Moth Scheme starts
Oct 31	<i>Transect records to be online please</i>	Apr 1	Transect season starts
Nov 2	■ <b>Surrey AGM, Effingham</b>	May	BioBlitz: Tice's Meadow, Badshot Lea
Nov 16	National AGM, Shrewsbury	May 30-31	BioBlitz: Clandon Wood Burial Ground, Guildford
Nov 17	Hampshire AGM, Littleton	Jun 22	National Insect Week, to Jun 28
Nov 23	Sussex AGM, Burgess Hill		



## Frank Banyard

**1930–2019**

*Frank Banyard, Surrey member, former Chair of Upper Thames branch, and founder of BC's Holtspur Bottom reserve at Beaconsfield, died on July 28, aged 88.*

*MALCOLM BRIDGE pays tribute to his friend.*

FRANK was born on September 25, 1930 in Camden Town and the family, now including his sister Eileen, moved to Morden in 1936.

The children enjoyed cycle rides in the south London countryside, with Banstead Heath being particularly favoured. Briefly the family were evacuated to Hindhead, where Frank discovered butterflies.

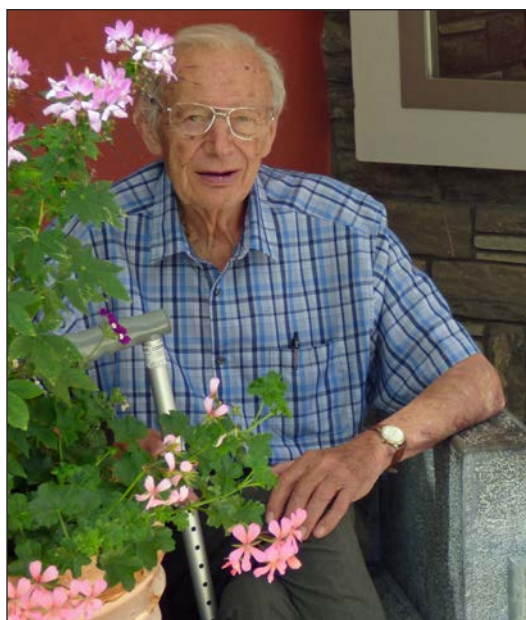
On leaving school Frank joined British Oxygen as an analytical chemist. There he met the second Eileen in his life, whom he married in 1957 having completed his National Service in the Air Training Corps.

They lived in Fetcham where their two daughters, Gail and Clare, were born. Nine years later they moved to Beaconsfield in South Bucks.

Holidays in Switzerland centred on the alpine village of Grindelwald: winter for skiing, summer for butterflies.

Travelling on cog-wheel railways was a special joy for Frank and was his second hobby. Frank loved railways, and he built a splendid model layout from raw materials.

Frank's two lifelong hobbies each have a permanent memento to his passion and commitment: Holtspur Bottom Reserve and Didcot Railway Centre, an outstanding visitor attraction reflecting Frank's time as Development Manager.



Some readers will have enjoyed "Onest Frank's Tours", home and abroad. Favoured UK visits were Challan Hall in Silverdale, and the Isle of Wight (hosted by Daphne and the late John Foulsham).

The two most visited butterfly holidays abroad included Grindelwald, where the Parkhotel was the base to explore alpine

meadows filled with butterflies, trips on gondolas or cog-wheel trains, always with a restaurant and large portions of Black Forest Torte or apple strudel.

The other, Casa Guilla in NE Spain, was perched high on a rocky outcrop, a breathtaking setting with a feast of exciting butterflies and raptors. Eileen was a key part alongside Frank. They shared their 60 year marriage with so many BC members, up to Eileen's death two years ago.

Although having some problems with balance, not helped by often forgetting to change slippers for shoes when going out, Frank was booking new trips right up to his death. Sadly time called a halt to this remarkable and lovely man's life after a mercifully short illness. He gave so many BC members so many memories of and encounters with glorious butterflies in spectacular settings.

I will miss him very much.

**LINK** [BC's Holtspur Bottom Reserve, Beaconsfield](#)



## Elusive Half-Century

Ken Owen

THERE are 59 regular species of butterfly in the UK. The question arises: how many of these can one realistically expect to see in a season?

Even Patrick Barkham, author of *The Butterfly Isles*, needed a lot of help to ensure he made it to the end.

First, one must target Surrey and SW London's own, not in itself the easiest of tasks.

It will involve:

- Travelling to the far south west in May/June for the Wood White.
- North to Hutchinson's Bank for the Glanville Fritillary (at last accepted as one of ours).
- Searching out a Green Hairstreak early in the season.
- A pilgrimage to the Surrey heathlands for the Silver-studded Blue in June, and later for the Grayling.
- Patiently searching the residual elms scattered across the county in June and July for the White-letter Hairstreak.
- Hoping for a Painted Lady invasion to make things easier.
- Praying for the arrival of some Clouded Yellows.

With a favourable wind, and the Brown Hairstreak finally in the bag late August/September, and not forgetting the Silver-spotted Skipper on a last return visit to the Downs, you will be able to proudly proclaim that you have seen 42 species in your own area.

Pat yourself on the back, you deserve it. But that still leaves eight for the elusive half-century.

Sussex can provide five:

- 1 Duke of Burgundy, now much easier to find along the northern side of the South Downs.



- 2 Pearl-bordered Fritillary at Rewell Wood.
- 3 The recently reintroduced Small Pearl-bordered at Park Corner Heath & Rowland Wood.
- 4 Wall, at the gloriously named High and Over between Alfriston and Seaford.
- 5 We are fortunate now in having the newly discovered Black Hairstreak on Ditchling Common, thus

avoiding the need to head for the likes of Fermyn Wood along the border of Oxfordshire/Northamptonshire.

Though in years to come, we may still wish to head in that direction for the newly reintroduced Chequered Skipper.

The remaining three are going to be harder. Perhaps the easiest is the Heath Fritillary as an early morning sortie round the M25 in sunny June will find several flying at 9am in Blean Woods near Canterbury.

With favourable weather, a day's trip out west to the Wiltshire hills beyond Salisbury Plain will perhaps be the destination of choice for the best sites to ensure a feast of Marsh Fritillaries. Their reintroduction site near Fleet in NE Hampshire remains off-limits for the time being.

The Large Blue is even further down the A303 towards Wincanton. Perhaps the weekend of the Glastonbury festival is the answer. And that would be it. Success! You've made it!

But in any normal year, life is not quite like that. A Long-tailed Blue does not appear on some Everlasting Pea while you are walking the North Downs; a Queen of Spain Fritillary does not land miraculously in Sussex to get you over the final hurdle.

■ *continued next page*

Something goes wrong, the weather turns sour, and you are left one short.

How to solve the problem? Nothing for it but a trip to Swanage for the Lulworth Skipper, or squeezing in a stay on the Broads in June for the Swallowtail: even with a friend who lives there, I found that good weather could not be guaranteed – two years in three, no show.

Consider a visit to North Devon or the Northern crags above Morecambe Bay for the High Brown Fritillary, and in the latter case the Northern Brown Argus. And the Shropshire/Welsh border bogs for the Large Heath.

All require planning, if not wholesale kidnapping of your family life for a concentrated three-month period of the year – and you are not even trying to see all 59! 50 or over? Get a life!



*Duke of Burgundy male, Kithurst Hill, on the Sussex Downs. KO*

## South London Downs

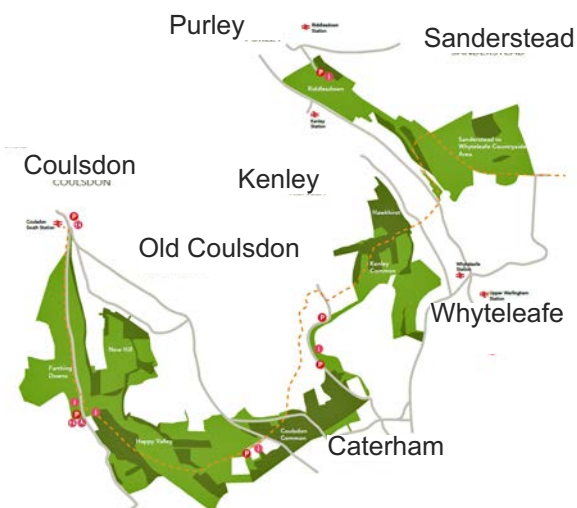
SOUTH London Downs, 417 hectares of prime butterfly habitat along the border of Croydon and Surrey, was declared London's third National Nature Reserve in a ceremony at Farthing Downs, Coulsdon, in July.

Managed by the City of London Corporation and Croydon Council, the new NNR unites:

Riddlesdown, Farthing Downs, Happy Valley, Coulsdon & Kenley Commons, Hawkhurst, New Hill Sanderstead to Whyteleafe Countryside Area.

■ NNRs were established in 1949.

England currently has 225. They are overseen by Natural England and managed by a range of organisations, including Butterfly Conservation, Wildlife Trusts, Forestry Commission, National Trust, RSPB, Woodland Trust and local councils.



London's NNRs	hectares
Richmond Park .....	856
Ruislip Woods .....	305
South London Downs .....	417
<b>Surrey</b>	
Ashted Common .....	181
Chobham Common .....	574
Thursley Common .....	325

**LINK** [Natural England blog](#)

## Weather Watch

DAVID GRADIDGE

RECORDS for SE England for the last six months show nothing exceptional. If anything, it has been a little on the dry side, like the last four years.

Sunshine and temperatures have been above average but rarely in the top 10. For instance, summer temperatures were 13th in a series going back to 1910 and over 1c below 1976 and 2018 (and 0.5c below 1911).

What this hides is three short episodes of exceptionally high temperatures spaced out about a month apart. These affected Western Europe and predominately the East of England. I noted in one that, as is often the case, while we were above 30c, others were not so lucky, with Moscow only at 12c.

The number of recording stations in the UK has declined dramatically over the years, and in some parts of the country is dominated by RAF stations and major airports. They, of course, are not short of acres of concrete and tarmac, not to mention jet exhausts. Heathrow regularly records the highest daily UK temperature.

Recently I was in touch with the Met Office regarding rather odd records emanating from what the press always reported

### England SE & Central South

Surrey, London, Berks, Hants, Kent, Sussex, Wilts

*Anomaly columns shows comparison with 30-year average, 1981-2010*

**Yellow:** warm/sunny; **Blue:** wet

**Red:** year's warmest/sunniest; **Black:** wettest

	Temp C		Sunshine		Rainfall	
	Mean	Anom	Hours	Anom	mm	Anom
<b>2018</b>						
Jan	6.0	+1.4	57	97%	82	102%
Feb	2.9	-1.6	116	147%	41	74%
Mar	5.5	-1.3	78	68%	103	178%
Apr	10.5	+2.5	137	89%	81	155%
May	13.7	+1.8	269	134%	56	103%
Jun	16.6	+1.8	266	132%	3	6%
Jul	20.0	+2.9	301	140%	31	60%
Aug	17.5	+0.6	194	95%	68	119%
Sep	7.2	+2.3	47	91%	102	121%
Oct	11.3	+0.2	147	130%	55	59%
Nov	8.4	+1.0	75	105%	115	131%
Dec	7.2	+2.3	47	91%	102	121%
<b>Annual</b>	11.2	+0.9	1,874	115%	776	99%
	Temp C		Sunshine		Rainfall	
	Mean	Anom	Hours	Anom	mm	Anom
<b>2019</b>						
Jan	4.0	-0.6	59	100%	34	42%
Feb	6.6	+2.0	125	159%	56	102%
Mar	8.5	+1.7	130	114%	66	114%
Apr	9.4	+0.7	181	107%	28	53%
May	11.8	-0.2	209	104%	33	60%
Jun	15.2	+0.3	192	95%	92	180%
Jul	18.2	+1.1	232	108%	43	83%
Aug	17.5	+0.5	226	111%	51	88%
Sep	15.0	+0.5	177	118%	83	134%

as Gravesend but was really a station some miles away at Swanscombe Marches, which has since closed. The hourly data was to four decimal places: that is what the latest instruments can do.

September was very dry for the first 20 days and now it is too wet. Further afield, in the USA, the Northern Rockies are forecast to receive “a potentially historic winter storm with 1 to 3 foot of snow – locally more”. Climate emergency?

## Glanville Fritillary

Martin Wills

THE unofficial introduction of Glanville Fritillaries at Hutchinson's Bank produced a rare second brood from August 3.

This happens only when a warm summer follows an early emergence in April: this year Apr 20; usually mid-May.



## Fiji Expedition

Clive Huggins

I represented the Swallowtail and Birdwing Trust on Operation Wallacea's summer expedition to Fiji. My task was to research the newly described Natewa Swallowtail, *Papilio natewa*, using mark and release.

I spent five weeks in a tented camp at the Natewa Peninsula research site on Vanua Levu, Fiji's second-largest island.

The 55,000 ha Peninsula has high conservation value: four of the 13 butterfly species are endemic. In 2018, the Natewa Swallowtail became the first new swallowtail described to science in over 50 years. It was known from just a few kilometres radius of our camp, which was a 90-minute drive, mostly on rough tracks, from the nearest town and airfield at Savusavu.

With no mobile signal or internet, we kept in contact via radio and the new satellite Text Messengers. Land is owned by a number of villages, so permissions had to be obtained from the local Headman, which would include a welcome ceremony before we could enter their land.

Natewa retains large expanses of tropical lowland and hill forest. This required much scrambling on steep, muddy slopes behind our local guides, who cut trails with machetes to reach places where no foreigners had ever been.

The expedition aimed to demonstrate that the Peninsulas' importance for endemic species was of sufficient value for it to be protected as a National Park. In return the locals would receive the benefits of ecotourism and support from a carbon fund for preserving the forest timber.

We collected various other insects for London's Natural History Museum and



*Clive Huggins with the Natewa Swallowtail*  
Fiji's Suva University. Arachnids included a Crab spider and Jumping spider, both new records for Fiji and possibly new species.

My visit confirmed the Swallowtail's limited distribution and its dependence on the preservation of this forest. I noted behaviour and obtained samples of the larval foodplant tree, which will be identified by a botanist with local expertise. There are plans to set up a local supplementary breeding programme.

■ Fiji is 300+ volcanic islands in the South Pacific, 1,300 miles NE of New Zealand. The two largest islands, Viti Levu and Vanua Levu, make up 87% of Fiji's landmass. Vanua Levu covers just over 30% of the country's land area but hosts only 15% of Fiji's 880,000 population.

■ Clive Huggins is a branch committee member and an Associate of the Swallowtail and Birdwing Butterfly Trust.

[\*\*LINK\*\* Science News: Natewa Swallowtail](#)

[\*\*LINK\*\* Swallowtail Trust](#)

[\*\*LINK\*\* Operation Wallacea](#)

## Holly Blue alert

I took a *Listrodromus nycthemerus*, host-specific parasite of the Holly Blue, in my Reigate garden in June. They tend to turn up en masse every six years or so,

meaning we can probably expect a collapse in the butterfly's numbers this year or next.

**Jeremy Early**, Chair, BWARS  
*Bees, Wasps & Ants Recording Society*

## Steve Wheatley

## BC Conservation Manager — South East

SITTING alone in a Surrey field at 1am in mid-June, I began to question what on earth I was doing. I was hoping to attract the elusive Heart Moth to a light trap. This rare (Red Data Book) moth is known to come to light, but usually not until after 1:30am.

What it does for the rest of the night we have no idea.

No-one had ever looked for the moth here at the NT's Harewood Estate, west of Lingfield. How could I justify this time sitting here in the dark with increasing hopelessness, waiting for a moth that might not even be there, knowing that in the morning I would need to be back at work counting butterflies on the heaths and in the woods?

Thankfully, in this interconnected world, I can get on with work even in a dark field in the middle of the night. I spent many hours sitting there responding to emails, writing reports, but also reading Twitter accounts of superb butterfly numbers in parts of the south east I had no time to visit.

Then at 1:35 I spotted a light sandy blob on the outside of the nearest moth trap. It was a Heart Moth.

Immediately everything changes when you spot your target. Mission Successful! This is the same feeling I get whenever I find the butterfly I was looking for, or its caterpillars on the underside of a leaf, or eggs between the spines of a twig, or a discarded larval casing. The feeling confirms it was all worth it.

Spirits raised, I eventually recorded five Heart Moths between 1:35 and 3am. The Heart Moth is so obliging: well behaved and happy to be counted, inspected and photographed, before disappearing back into parts of the habitat unknown. This year was my first direct encounter with them,



Heart Moth: Paul Wheeler

and it has instantly become one of my top 10 favourite moths.

With the help of volunteers Bob Arnfield, Julian Clarke and Ashley Bradshaw we recorded a total of 51 Heart Moth in Surrey over three different nights this year, officially confirming Surrey is the national hotspot. Other

searchers were not so lucky; only two other Heart Moth were found in the UK this year.

The season provided many other magical moments that help to spur us on, including Straw Belle at Box Hill, Silver-studded Blues at new sites on the Thames Basin Heaths, and clouds of Heath Fritillaries in Kent (a boom year rivalling 2009).

As an extra reward, this season brought a variety of unexpected migrants, including Hawk-moths, Long-tailed Blues and the Queen of Spain Fritillary. The glorious influx of Painted Ladies reached every part of Surrey and the rest of the South East.

The wrapping up of the formal phase of the Surrey Small Blue Project was also a unique and special moment, with the BC volunteers gathering to make wood-fired pizzas at Denbies (thanks so much to Amanda Barnicoat) and well done to Fiona for delivering such a great two-years work. The Small Blue volunteers will now continue the superb conservation work.

The 2019 season has been one of the most challenging seasons for me in my time at Butterfly Conservation, but also rewarding. As always, the hard work, the travelling, the late nights and early mornings, and the searching ultimately pay off.

My thanks go to all of the practical conservation volunteers and to the butterfly and moth recorders, who share their experience and experiences and help to make each season so special.

## Moths

Les Evans-Hill

*Manager of BC's National Moth Recording Scheme database and Putney resident*

READERS will be delighted to hear that hornets have not detracted from my recording this year. However, a two-week holiday followed by a house move curtailed recording during May and June. The recent weather has also dampened abundances although some quality moths have arrived during this period.

2019 is on track to be a decent year for immigration. Here on Wimbledon and Putney Commons, Red Sword-grass, a presumed immigrant, turned up on Mar 5, the first site record since 1898, when it was considered a site resident.

Pale Mottled Willow, another presumed immigrant, was recorded most months since April. I suspect some may be progeny of the original influx, interjected with fresh immigrants. Diamond-back Moth has also been recorded most months, with Silver Y only showing during Aug & Sep.

However, the stars of the year are Dark Crimson Underwing and Clifden Nonpareil. Dark Crimson Underwing has had an excellent immigration year with many UK records. I had no expectations of seeing it in SW London but the first two appeared on Aug 22.

With this knowledge I made a sugar mix of brown ale, molasses and black treacle. This method was more successful than MV light and more fun too! I even managed to spot another specimen 2km away during the middle of the day flying around Oak. With at least 12 specimens recorded up to Sep 4, it is possible these may be the progeny of a gravid female that arrived on the Commons during 2018.

I have predicted since moving to Wimbledon (and now Putney Heath) the eventual arrival of Clifden Nonpareil: the Commons have more than enough stands of Aspen to support a healthy population. I am delighted to announce the arrival of this



*Clifden Nonpareil*. LEH

iconic species on Putney Heath, at sugar on Aug 27, with another six individuals recorded at MV light and sugar up to Sep 24. I suspect this species is now resident on the Commons. Ironically, I have not recorded Red Underwing this year, a notable absence!

The adventive *Musotima nitidalis* has now turned up earlier in the year with singletons on Mar 19, Apr 21 & May 6. Its only previous records were in autumn. Other immigrants include:

<b>Jul 7-9</b>	Double Line (11)
<b>Jul/Aug</b>	Hoary Footman (3)
<b>Jul 30-Sep 6</b>	Gypsy Moth (36)
<b>Sep 23</b>	Vestal
<b>Sep 24</b>	Four-spotted Footman

■ There has been further delay with BC's forthcoming *Larger Moths Atlas*, mostly due to verification issues and missing records of importance published elsewhere. However, the proofs have now been checked and will imminently go back to the publishers. Publication is now due in November.

**LINK** [Surrey Branch Moths page](#)

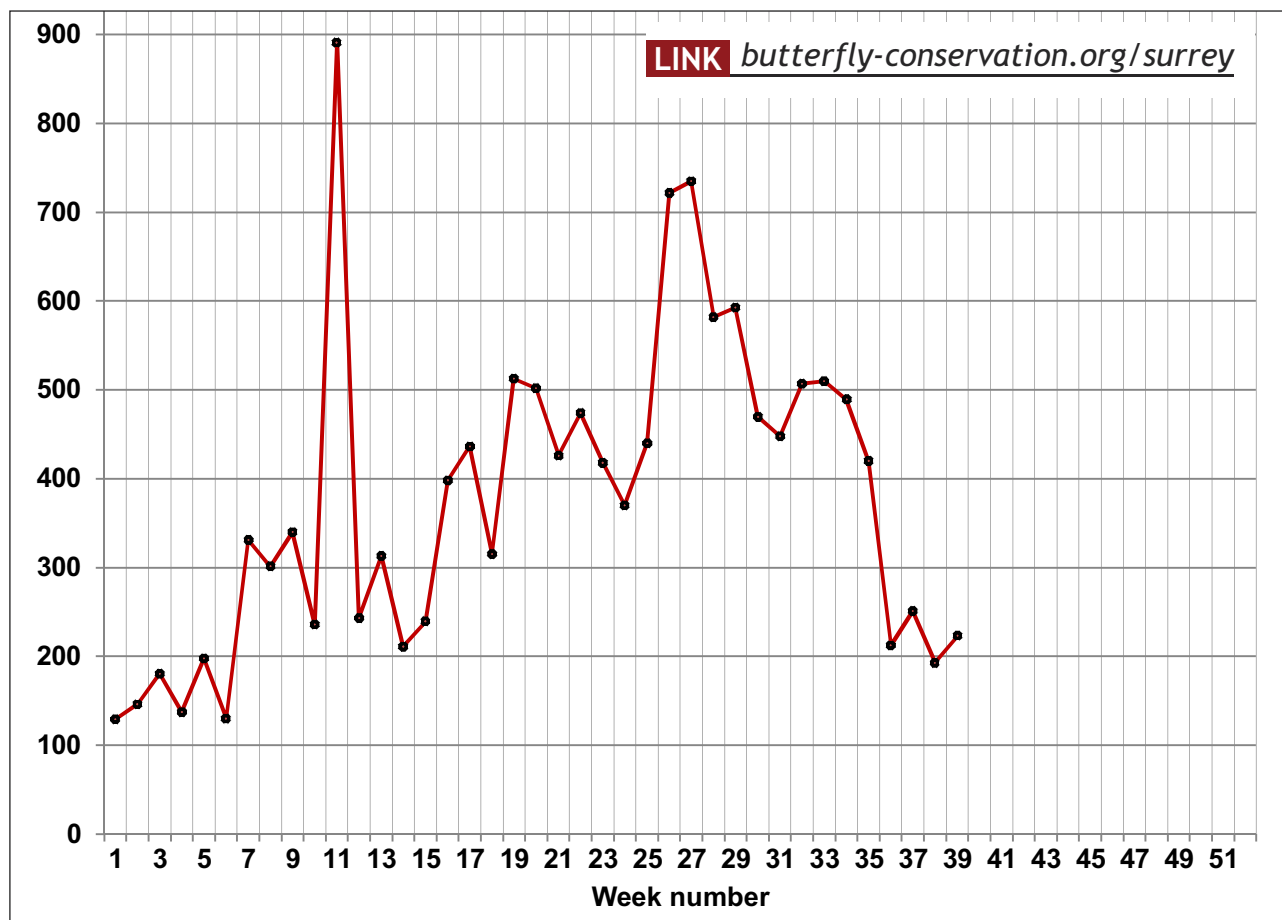
**LINK** [Order from Atropos](#)

*Atlas of Britain & Ireland's Larger Moths*  
Publication due: Nov 25, £37.50.  
Current orders **£29.50** (save £8)



## Branch website

Francis Kelly



GOOGLE analytics now show unique visitors to each of Surrey branch's website pages, including the home page. The total of these, as shown in the chart, is a higher figure than unique Surrey visitors but weekly trends remain clear.

Week 11 (Mar 11) was the most popular with 891 visitors for online publication of the Skipper. Next were Purple Emperor weeks at the end of June and beginning of July, followed by the Big Butterfly Count.

## Social Media

Francis Kelly

IF you follow @BC\_Surrey on Twitter, you will see branch tweets and retweets. You are not sure to see all mentions, which are no longer automatically retweeted and depend on the attention and judgement of the account managers.

**Talkwalker** is the free way to see all mentions. Open an account at <https://alerts.talkwalker.com> and create a Twitter alert for @BC\_Surrey.

You can choose to receive by email a daily digest or live alerts. It is a good way to keep your finger on the pulse of lepidopteran news in our area.

Running totals	Twitter	Facebook
	Followers	Likes
2015 Sep	360	131
2016 Feb	463	192
Sep	637	248
2017 Mar	734	270
Sep	889	336
2018 Feb	935	347
Sep	1,062	366
2019 Mar	1,100	389
Sep	1,183	416

■ FACEBOOK: **Butterfly Conservation in Surrey**  
**Surrey Moths, Surrey Butterflies** *Mick Rock's group*

**Small Blues in Surrey**  
**Wealden Wood Whites**