

NORFOLK BRANCH

Newsletter

ISSUE 97 | SPRING 2019



Butterfly
Conservation

Saving butterflies, moths and our environment

NORFOLK BRANCH - OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE

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Conservation Officer & Catfield Fen Liaison	Mike Gasson
County Recorder	Andy Brazil
Transect Co-ordinator	Alan Dawson
Field Trip Organisers	Vacant
Events Organiser	Vacant
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Moth Officer	Greg Bond,
Webmaster & Twitter Co-ordinator	Neil Saunders
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Committee Members	Dr. Bernard Watts, Jane Uglow Heather Goody
Catfield Parish Liaison	Dr. Keith Bacon
Norfolk Branch website	https://butterfly-conservation.org/norfolk
National website	https://butterfly-conservation.org
Facebook:	https://www.facebook.com/ButterflyConservationNorfolk/
Twitter:	@BC_Norfolk

Part of the cost of printing this newsletter in colour has again been kindly donated by Roland Rogers.

**The opinions expressed in this newsletter are those of the author(s)
and not necessarily those of the Society**

Front Cover: Lobster moth larva. Photo: Peter Lindsley

I would like to take some more video of this species, but obtaining livestock is very difficult. If you have a female come to your trap, do please let me know.

Chairman's Message

Judy Dunmore

As I write this in late March we have calm weather, rather cloudy and cold at night. The aubrietia in my garden is in full flower attracting bees, other insects and the occasional worn Small Tortoiseshell. Male and female Brimstones have passed through but otherwise things have been very quiet here. We missed the 2 weeks of exceptional weather in February when I understand butterflies were tempted out of hibernation. After last year's hot summer I think everyone is awaiting with some apprehension to see how our butterflies and moths fair this year.

I am delighted to welcome Peter Lindsley back as our Newsletter Editor. For the past 4 years' Mike Gasson has occupied this role, doing an amazing job for which I am very thankful. However, more and more of Mike's time is taken up with Conservation and as Catfield Fen Liaison Officer so Peter's timely offer to return has been warmly welcomed.

I would like to give a warm welcome to new members. Included in this Newsletter is a full programme of both indoor meetings and field trips for butterflies and moths. I hope you will find something of interest and come along and join in. Do make yourself known to the leader. For those of you, new and existing members, who have given us your email address, Jen, our Membership Secretary, will be sending monthly reminders for up-an-coming events as well as any extra or last minute information or news. Some of this can also be found on our website, our Facebook page or on Twitter. However, for those of us who do not embrace social media, providing your email address is much the best route. Jen will never share your details with any other organisation and keeps the data encrypted. Just contact her if you want to be included.

As I said in the Autumn Newsletter we are without a Field Trip Organiser. For this year the committee have put a programme together. However, we all already have other branch responsibilities and need a volunteer to co-ordinate things next year. The role involves planning a varied programme, contacting relevant organisations to get permissions etc where necessary, ensuring there is a leader (it is not necessary to lead every trip themselves) and getting the text ready for publication. Please give serious thought to whether you could take this on; get in touch with me for more information. As mentioned several times we also still do not have an Events Organiser and it looks as though we will be attending even less events this summer.

For logistical reasons we are not holding an Open Day at our Catfield Reserve this year but Mike Gasson, our Conservation Officer, has planned a trip there to look for Swallowtail larva on 2nd July. However, there will be good opportunities to see Swallowtails at the World Swallowtail Day to be held at Wheatfen, where as usual we will be helping with the walks and have a stand.

This year is the last of the 10-year recording season for our Atlas. The hope is to have sightings from every tetrad in the county during that time. Andy Brazil has produced a map showing the non-recorded and under-recorded areas. If you are out and about, or just want something to do one day, please double-check and see if you can fill in the blanks. Take your camera with you - you might just get that amazing shot to enter into our photographic competition.

Lastly, details of our October Members' Day and AGM are included in this Newsletter. Please be sure to note the date on your calendar now as the next Newsletter will not be out until December. Visitors are also welcome if you wish to bring friends or family with you.

Editorial Note

Peter Lindsley

Newer members will probably not recognise my name, so I thought a short introduction might help you to know a little about me.

A few years after my wife died, I decided to move from Ealing in London, to north Norfolk. This was partly because I had good memories of being sent to Mundesley Sanatorium back in 1954, and partly because it's a very good area for wildlife. I now live in West Runton, between Sheringham and Cromer.

My working life has been involved with video and audio, both at a professional level. For some years in the early 1960s I worked at EMI's Abbey Road Studios. A great time to be there, although I didn't fully appreciate the fact at the time.

My main interest is filming and photographing wildlife, mainly butterflies and moths, some of which I enjoy rearing most years. I've also done a lot of filming for the North Norfolk Railway; restoration of the B12 loco and the reinstatement of the Sheringham level-crossing being two big projects.

As for the Branch Newsletter, I have been editor before, but had to give up a few years ago due to serious domestic problems. Thankfully the situation has improved considerably, hence I was able to offer to take on the newsletter again. Doing so also gave Mike Gasson some much needed relief in his very busy life. I would like to take this opportunity to thank Mike for doing an excellent job with the newsletter for the last few years.

Best wishes, Peter

Our Website and Social Media

Our website at <https://butterfly-conservation.org/norfolk> holds a wealth of information about the work of the branch, and butterflies and moths that can be found in Norfolk. The site also contains information on our events and the reports of our field trips. On the website you can also see what is happening on our Facebook page and Twitter feed.

Our Facebook page is <https://www.facebook.com/ButterflyConservationNorfolk/>

Our Twitter name is [@BC_Norfolk](https://twitter.com/BC_Norfolk).

On Facebook you can find local branch news and events at the above link.

We also run a growing Facebook Group for sharing photos, help with IDs and discussing all things re butterflies and moths. You can find the Group via our Facebook page, or directly at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/NorfolkButterflies/>

Please contact either Neil (nrwildlife1@gmail.com) or Kiri (me@kiri.uk) if you need any help with social media.

Field Trips and Events 2019

When organising the field trips we take every care to ensure that our events present no greater hazard than any other countryside walk. However please note the following:

Clothing – generally stout shoes are needed, a sun hat and sun screen are advisable in hot weather; insect repellent can be useful.

Refreshments – bring plenty of liquids in hot weather and a packed lunch where appropriate.

Weather – if the forecast is poor, contact the leader to check if the event is going ahead.

Wednesday 1st May – 7.30pm at Blakeney Scout Hut HQ

‘A Greek Odessey – Butterflies of Hungary’ – an illustrated talk by Ann Carpenter

Postcode NR25 7PQ – see website for map.

Contact: Ann Carpenter Tel: 01508 488337

Saturday 11th May - Field Trip to Cut-Off Channel at Stoke Ferry 10.30am

Target species – Dinky and Grizzled Skipper

Directions: From Mundford take the A134 to Stoke Ferry. At Stoke Ferry roundabout take 2nd exit into village, turn left just after the church, continue and turn left into School Lane and meet at the end.

TL696990 – see website for map.

Contact: Andy Brazil Tel: 07759 892597

Wednesday 5th June - Moth Event at Grimes Graves 10.00am

Our first visit to this rarely trapped Breckland site. Moth traps set overnight will be opened at 10.00am. Meet at Grimes Graves car park TL816901, postcode IP26 5DE.

From about 11.30am onwards, after we have opened the traps etc, we will be able to search the site for Dinky Skipper and other butterflies and day flying moths.

There are toilets and a small shop with vending machine and snacks on site. There will be a charge if you wish to visit the flint mines.

Contact: Sharon Hearle Tel: 07920 131526 or Greg Bond Tel: 01263 579520

Sunday 9th June – World Swallowtail Day at Wheatfen Nature Reserve from 10.00am

Held in conjunction with The Ted Ellis Trust at Wheatfen Nature Reserve, Surlingham.

An opportunity to see Swallowtails, Norfolk Hawker dragonflies, Marsh Harriers and other interesting fauna and flora on the paths around this special Reserve.

Guided walks all day. Please note the Reserve is tidal, wellies are strongly recommended.

Refreshments available. No charge, donations are welcome. Sorry no dogs.

Follow signs for parking at TG325057, postcode NR14 7AL Info:www.wheatfen.org

Wednesday 19th June – Field Trip to Kelling Heath 2.00pm-4.00pm

For Silver-studded Blues and other butterflies. Meet in the public car park at TG099418 on Holt to Weybourne Road on the west side, north of Garden Centre.

Contact: Judy Dunmore Tel: 01263 822550

Wednesday 26th June – Moth event at Pigney’s Wood, near Knapton 9.00am

Moth traps set overnight will be opened at 9.00am at this recently acquired NWT reserve.

Meet in the Wood’s car park, TG296324

Contact: Greg Bond Tel: 01263 579520

Tuesday 2nd July Catfield Fen

Restricted field trip to Catfield Fen aimed at viewing larval stages of Swallowtail. May involve difficult, wet and very muddy areas of the fen so suitable only for reasonably fit and mobile members of BC. Pre-booking is essential as numbers will be limited to a total of 24 in two led groups. Parking by kind permission of Dr and Mrs S Holburn at TG369215, postcode NR29 5DD. Wellies and insect repellent highly recommended. **To pre book:** email Mike Gasson on moorend@globalnet.co.uk or Tel: 01328 829307

Wednesday 3rd July - Moth event at Weeting Heath 10.00am

Our second visit in consecutive years to this NWT Breckland reserve.

Meet at Weeting Heath NWT visitor centre TL757880, postcode IP26 4NQ to open moth traps set overnight.

There are toilets and a small shop with vending machine and snacks on site. There is a charge if you are not an NWT member and wish to visit the bird hides.

Assuming the weather is favourable we will then move on to Cranwich Camp and look for Forester and other day flying moths and butterflies.

Contact: Sharon Hearle Tel: 07920 131526 or Greg Bond Tel: 01263 579520

Sunday 7th July - Field trip to Cranwich Camp 11.00am–1.00pm

A walk round the site searching for White-letter Hairstreak and day-flying moths as well as other heathland species.

The site is west of Mundford, south of A134. Meet in car park at TL775940

Contact: Alan Dawson Tel: 01603 454092 or 07826 070872

Thursday July 11th - Field trip to Holt Country Park 11.00am

A walk round this North Norfolk Council Reserve looking for summer butterflies including Silver-washed Fritillary and White Admiral. Sturdy footwear advised. For anyone interested bring a pack lunch to go on to Holt Lowes and search for Grayling, Small Heath and Purple Hairstreak.

Directions: Meet in Country Park car park (fee payable), TG087384

Contact: Judy Dunmore Tel: 01263 822550

Tuesday 16th July - Moth event and Field Trip to Foxley Wood 9.00am–1.00pm

We will be opening moth traps put out the night before courtesy of NWT, followed, at about 10.30am, by a walk round this reserve looking for summer butterflies including White Admiral. Paths may be damp and uneven so sturdy footwear is advisable.

Directions: Meet in car park TG049229

Contact: Greg Bond (Moths) 01263 579520 or Mike Gasson (Butterflies) 01328 829307

Sat 27th July - Moth event at Abbey Farm, Flitcham 9.30am

We have again been invited to open moth traps at this excellent part-organic farm in north west Norfolk. On previous visits we have captured a number of interesting and colourful chalk grassland species so there should be plenty to see. Meeting arrangements are yet to be confirmed but we will be directing visitors on the day.

Abbey Farm can be found along Abbey Road, Flitcham, TF735266

Contact: Greg Bond Tel:01263 579520

Sunday 28th July – Butterflies in the Park, Eaton Park, Norwich 11.00am–3.00pm

Visit our stand near the circular herbaceous borders where we hope to have some moths on display from the previous night's trapping. Last year we found 12 butterfly species in the park – help us try to equal or better this number and take part in the Big Butterfly

Count. Refreshments are on sale in the Park Café and a brass band will be playing!

Contact: Alan Dawson Tel: 01603 454092 or 07826 070872

Thursday 1st August - Field trip to Tyrells Wood 11.00am-1.00pm

Investigating this unrecorded Woodland Trust SSSI.

Directions: 2.5 miles north of Pulham Market. From Pulham Market take Colgate End Road for just over a mile, turn into Common Road, then 1st right into Wood Lane for half a mile. From Long Stratton, head south on A140, turn left into Wood Lane (just after water tower) and follow for 1 mile. Car park is on your left at TM206897.

Contact: Andy Brazil Tel: 07759 892597

Monday 12th Aug – Moth event at Holme NOA/Dunes 9.00am

The warden will be opening traps put out the previous night in the NOA reserve.

Meet in Reserve car park by visitor centre at 9.00am. TG714449, postcode PE36 6LQ
There may be donations requested for non-NOA members.

Contact: Greg Bond Tel: 01263 579520

Friday 16th August – Field trip to Lynford Water 11.00am-1.00pm

Searching for Grayling and day-flying moths.

Directions: Lynford Water is along the Lynford Road off the A1065 north of Munford. There is a left turn to car parking at TL816942 just after the hotel (which is on the right) and opposite the entrance to the Forestry Commission Arboretum.

Contact: Alan Dawson Tel: 01063 454092 or 07826 070872

Wednesday 4th September – 7.30pm at Blakeney Scout Hut HQ

'Forms, Mutations and Aberrations' - why butterflies don't always look like the pictures in the guidebook. An illustrated talk by our Recorder, Andy Brazil.

Postcode NR25 7PQ – see website for map.

Contact: Judy Dunmore Tel: 01263 822550

Saturday 5th October: Members' Day and AGM

See page 29 for details

Wednesday 6th November – 7.30pm at Blakeney Scout Hut HQ

'Zambia - Birds and other Wildlife' an illustrated talk by John Geeson.

Postcode NR25 7PQ – see website for map

Contact: Judy Dunmore Tel: 01263 822550

Friday 22nd November– 7.30pm United Reform Church, Ipswich Road, Norwich

'Butterflies of Hungary' - an illustrated talk by Ann Carpenter.

The Hall is south of the ring road, access via Lyhart Road.

Postcode NR4 6QR - see website for map.

Contact: Andy Brazil Tel: 07759 892597

Other Moth Events

Other groups will also be hosting a number of moth-trapping sessions during the summer; for details please see page 8.

Other Moth Events

The Norfolk Moth Survey will be hosting a number of trapping sessions during the summer; just these were confirmed as we went to press:

Saturday 1st June - Upton Fen

Saturday 6th July - Pigney's Wood

BENHS are also holding evening/night-time moth trapping events:

Friday 14th June and Friday 12th July - Honeypot Wood (Wendling)

Friday 26th July - East Wretham Heath

Friday 2nd August - East Winch Common

The Norfolk Moth website <https://www.norfolkmoths.co.uk/> should be consulted for details of all these events.

Photos for the Newsletter

Peter Lindsley

I hope you will agree that good quality and attractive photos add a great deal to any newsletter. At the moment I don't have any members photos available; the last of the Photo Competition entries were used in the Autumn issue, so I would welcome any you might like to submit for possible use, particularly for the front cover. Please see Mike Gasson's 'Editorial Note' regarding the front cover on page 18 of the Spring 2018 issue. However, there is one important point that is worth bearing in mind when you send me your photos.

Cropping: This is the most important point. Cropping for use as a stand-alone photo, such as a print for a Photographic Competition, can be quite different from one for newsletter use. Most people tend to crop a photo before submitting it for possible newsletter use, and very often this means the photo cannot be placed to best advantage due to size constraints. ***Please do not crop*** your photos. By sending your files uncropped I can crop and place them to fit with any related text, and have far more freedom as to where best to place the image. When possible it will always be placed to show the image to best advantage. Clearly if you are entering the Photo Competition, then by all means crop to suit your printed entry. However, please keep the original file available and let me have that for possible use in the Newsletter.

Butterfly Report 2018

Andy Brazil

The numbers in parentheses are the comparable figures for 2017.

We received 20,055 records (21,993) covering 659 tetrads (732) and representing 5975 site reports (7,470). As usual I have not included the data from the Big Butterfly Count in these totals, as it would prevent results being comparable to previous years. However, I again include the records from the mobile phone app 'iRecord Butterflies' (<https://butterfly-conservation.org/our-work/recording-and-monitoring/irecord-butterflies>). This year also includes records from the main iRecord website, (<https://www.brc.ac.uk/irecord/>) as many recorders have switched to using this to submit records previously sent by post. (I have also imported records from previous years, and the 2017 figures quoted reflect this). At the time of writing I have not received the results of Migrant Watch and Garden Butterfly schemes, which accounts for some of the reduction in numbers.

In total 44 tetrads were visited for the first time this year, bringing surveyed tetrads to 1,301 (leaving just 125 unsurveyed tetrads remaining for the 2011-2019 period).

Globally it was the 4th warmest year ever recorded, just beaten by 2017, 2015 and 2016, but it was only the 7th warmest year in the UK. It was a year of extremes, February and March brought snow and frost (the 'beast from the east') while the summer was one of the warmest on record – comparable to 1976.

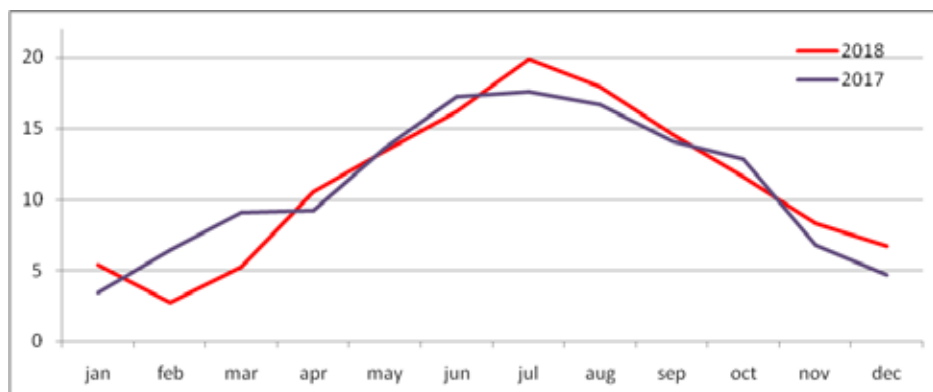


Fig 1: East Anglia Monthly Average Temperatures

Those two extremes affected several species. Peacock, Comma and Small Tortoiseshell were badly hit by the cold because many individuals had been tempted out of hibernation by unseasonably warm January and early Feb, while Brimstone – traditionally a late emerger – seems to have mostly escaped. Meanwhile the summer heat and drought appears to have shortened several species flight period, with all the grassland browns and summer skippers ending early. (Nationally 40% of species had shorter than average flight periods.)

The clear winner of the year was without doubt the Small White – which was everywhere, recording 155% increase nationally but June flying species also did well – particularly the blues and hairstreaks. Nationally, Black Hairstreak recorded its best year ever, while Lycaenidae overall were up 70%. All families recorded increases except the Vanessaids, which were down 10% across the UK. While it was a good year for

butterflies, showing an overall increase of 24% in numbers recorded, unlike 1976, which remains the best year ever recorded, the significant increase in numbers was from such a low base that it only brought the ranking to 18th in the 43 year series.

The heatwave of 1976 (and consequent drought) produced a terrible 1977 – the worse year for butterflies ever recorded. Hopefully the relative shortness of the drought this year will mitigate the effect on 2019 – but grassland butterflies may be in short supply.

The first butterfly was seen on 1st January, the last on 26th December. (15 Jan – 8 Dec). Butterflies were seen in every month of the year, with regular sightings from February. In total reports were received for 263 days of the year (271).

Species Reports

Grizzled Skipper (*Pyrgus malvae*)

Recorded from 3 tetrads (5), no further sightings from TF72. Ironically, as the three tetrads actually represent just two sites - Foulden and the Cut-off Channel - but occupy separate 10km squares, the 2020 national atlas will dramatically overstate its abundance. In reality at Foulden the species occupies a space not much bigger than a football field, but because it straddles TL79 and TF70 it will appear to cover 200km². Highest count was 15 (6). The late first sighting 6 May (17 April) may be a result of earlier low temperatures delaying development. Last 6 June (10 June). Nationally it was up 33% on transects, and actually better here, but from a low base. This remains the rarest butterfly in Norfolk, and the one most at risk of disappearing.

Dingy Skipper (*Erynnis tages*)

Recorded from 15 tetrads (12) of which 2 were new. A healthy new colony at Crostwick Heath is probably the result of habitat restoration work there by the Forestry Commission, while there was a single sighting near Weeting Heath. There was also a first report from Santon Downham – but as it was from a ride just adjacent to Grime's Graves, it didn't count as a new tetrad. However, as we haven't had a report from the graves for some time it's gratifying to know the species is still there. It would be worth exploring those rides this spring (before the new housing estates move in). Sightings also came from Narborough, Lynford, TF72, Cranwich, and West Tofts as well as the Cut-Off Channel and Foulden. Earliest sighting a very late 15 May (19 Apr), last 9 June (13 June), but all other sightings ended 29 May – a very short flight season. Highest count 15 (26). Nationally up 10%.

Large Skipper (*Ochlodes sylvanus*)

First seen on 25 May (31 May), but not then till 6 June, last 30 Aug (28 Aug), but that was exceptional, all other sightings stopped 6 Aug. Recorded from 149 tetrads (163), of which 39 were new. It recorded a 24% drop on Norfolk transects – but that might be an artifact of the shorter flight period – less flight time = lower total count.

Small Skipper (*Thymelicus sylvestris*)

Recorded from 166 tetrads (168), of which 42 were new. First sighting 13 June (12 June) then regularly till 19 Aug (27 Aug). Down 19% in Norfolk, 24% nationally.

Essex Skipper (*Thymelicus lineola*)

Recorded from 78 tetrads (97), 23 new. First sighting 24 June (19 June), then regularly until 12 Aug, with a single 30 Aug (26 Aug). Down 28% Norfolk, 32% nationally.

Swallowtail (*Papilio machaon*)

First seen 15 May (10 May), then regularly until 5 July (13 July), then a handful of reports between 25 July and 10 Sept (20 Aug). A very poor second brood is surprising – I would have expected the warm weather to have encouraged more individuals to go for emergence in the same year – but perhaps May just wasn't warm enough on those critical days when the decision is made, or perhaps the late emergence reduced the numbers sufficiently developed to have the option. Recorded from 21 tetrads (21), but 5 new – all some distance from the broads and reflecting wandering in August in search of mates. Interestingly, one report from Cambridge 19 May, Ipswich 3 June and 2 from Suffolk. No photo on any so impossible to say which sub-species, and of course no idea where they came from. Carleton Marshes is working on encouraging Milk Parsley, so Norfolk's monopoly on *britannicus* may soon be a thing of the past. Down 52% on transect, but from a high base.

Brimstone (*Gonepteryx rhamni*)

First seen 11 Mar (16 Feb). Traditionally Brimstones emerged on the first warm day on or after March 16th, and although they've crept forward this century, they seem to be less susceptible to being tempted out early than the Nymphalid hibernators. That served them well this year, recording only a 9% drop on transect compared to Peacock's 54%. Last was 16 Nov (25 Oct). Recorded from 250 tetrads (294), 44 new.

Large White (*Pieris brassicae*)

First seen on 4 April (15 March), last was a remarkable 17 Nov – but regular till 17 Oct (25 Oct), recorded from 375 tetrads (397), 74 new. Up 151% on Norfolk transects, 118% nationally.

Small White (*Pieris rapae*)

First seen 3 April (15 March) until 5 Nov (27 Oct). Recorded from 393 tetrads (376), 98 new. Up 197% on Norfolk transects, and 155% nationally, this was the butterfly of the year.

Green-veined White (*Pieris napi*)

Recorded from 318 (295) tetrads, 66 new. The first on 16 April (2 April) then regularly until 12 Oct (9 Oct). Up 55% locally, 63% nationally. All three whites had fairly average first broods (although clearly the cold didn't bother the pupae), but exploded in the second generation – it might be the warm weather, but I wonder if the cold spring had reduced predatory wasp and fly numbers, thus allowing greater breeding success?

Orange Tip (*Anocharis cardamines*)

First reported on 15 April (19 March), it was then regularly until 24 June (16 June). Recorded from 259 tetrads (266), 49 new. It had a small increase (7%) in Norfolk but 22% down nationally. This was not a good year to be a spring butterfly.

Small Copper (*Lycaena phlaeas*)

Recorded from 178 tetrads (153), 44 new. First 8 March was tempted out by the warm February, but was the only one, next seen was 4 May (8 April). The last was 19 Nov (6 Nov).

Common Blue (*Polyommatus icarus*)

First 6 May (9 April), last 31 Oct (15 Oct). Recorded from 208 tetrads (186), 56 were new. Up 122% in Norfolk, but 155% nationally. With first generation in May/June and

second July/August it was perfectly situated to take advantage of the warm weather. The cold spring may have helped by ensuring a single mass emergence in May, rather than adults dribbling out singularly in April.

Holly Blue (*Celastrina argiolus*)

Recorded from 245 tetrads (208) of which 67 were new. First 17 April (24 March). Last seen 24 Oct (16 Oct), but that, and one seen 11 Oct, were anomalous, main flight was over 28 Sept. Up 40% nationally, only 23% locally.

Chalkhill Blue (*Polyommatus coridon*)

The BC annual count at Warham this year was 570, a pleasing increase from last year's 158. I only received reports of 8 visits that saw Chalkhill, spanning the period 18 July to 18 Aug, but clearly the flight period was both earlier and later than that, as there were high counts at both ends. No reports from Ringstead this year, but this is definitely absence of evidence and not evidence of absence.

Silver-studded Blue (*Plebejus argus*)

First reported 11 June (3 June), last 17 July (18 July). The big news was from Cawston where 10 were counted – after none were seen last year, but all sites were up. However, East Ruston didn't increase as much as Buxton or Kelling, and scrub clearance was undertaken this winter to improve conditions. More work parties are planned.

Brown Argus (*Aricia agestis*)

First seen 7 May (28 April), then regular to 28 Oct (30 Oct). Recorded from 73 tetrads (56), of which 26 were new. Nationally up 104%, locally 160%, but that was transects, casual records were actually quite poor. Either people weren't going where these were, or they did particularly well in the sort of place that has a transect.

Green Hairstreak (*Callophrys rubi*)

The first sighting was 21 April (6 April) then regular until 12 June (3 June). Then seen 18 June and last 22 June (6 July). Highest count 11(7), which matches transect increases of 57%. Recorded from 49 tetrads (29), 14 were new.

Purple Hairstreak (*Favonius quercus*)

Recorded from 104 tetrads (59) of which 57 were new. First 19 June (19 June) and last 17 Aug (2 Sept). I received 156 records (68). This is a difficult butterfly for transects to track normally, so we might question if the 88% increase in numbers recorded was perhaps an artifact, the drought making the butterflies more obvious by driving them lower perhaps. Fortunately we can be confident the rise was real because the East Midland Branch has been trialing a new protocol for tracking these butterflies, involving counting with binoculars at tree top, and that also recorded a similar rise. Clearly Hairstreaks like it hot.

White-letter Hairstreak (*Satyrrium w-album*)

Recorded from 43 tetrads (22) of which 21 were new. Interesting sightings included one in front of Norwich Castle. When the Castle Mall was first being built campaigners chained themselves into the elms slated for destruction to prevent them being cut down, and in the end some were transplanted into the garden atop the mall. Well, it seems that, 25 years after that campaign, it finally bore fruit. There were no sightings reported from the Mousehold Heath colony this year, however there was a flurry of reports from the Hethel/Hethersett area. Apart from those, nearly all sightings were on the north coast.

First seen 18 June (17 June) last 4 Aug (5 Aug).

White Admiral (*Limenitis camilla*)

Recorded from 58 tetrads (54) of which 12 were new. All the new tetrads were adjacent to existing records, representing consolidation rather than expansion. First 17 June (13 June), last 6 Aug (15 Sept), but then a single sighting on 15 Sept (24 Oct).

Red Admiral (*Vanessa atalanta*)

Recorded from 317 tetrads (464), 59 were new. First seen 5 Jan (28 Jan), there were 15 sightings up to 5 March, but then none until 21 March – sightings remained infrequent until 11 May, clearly very few over-wintering individuals survived the cold. Numbers then climbed, peaking 1 Aug. There was then a decline until another peak mid-Sept to mid-Oct. The last sighting was on 3 Dec (8 Dec), regular sightings however continued to 29 Nov (24 Nov). It had the poorest result in Norfolk transects, recording a decline of 79%, and I suspect nearly all sightings were migrants. The Big Butterfly Count also recorded a 70% decline in sightings relative to the previous year, suggesting migration was low.

Small Tortoiseshell (*Aglais urticae*)

First 25 Jan (15 Jan). Sightings only really got going on 21 March, just 12 sightings up till then. Those hibernators were gone by mid-May, the first new individuals emerging in early June. Next generation in August but dropped away almost completely by the end of Sept. The highest number of sightings in a single day were 28 in April, 14 in July and 7 in Aug. It didn't just decline due to a cold spring, but failed in each generation. Last 17 Dec (27 Dec), but that was an extreme outlier, next latest was 13 Nov. Recorded from 267 tetrads (406) of which 29 were new. The Big Butterfly Count recorded 40% fewer sightings in England, UK transects were down by 32% and Norfolk down 68%. Interestingly, it's doing really well in Scotland, BBC counts up 21%. It seems that cold hitting hibernators was compounded by drought and heat damaging foodplants to produce a perfect storm for this species.

Peacock (*Aglais io*)

First 1 Jan (20 Jan), 5 records to 5 March then nothing until 20 March. That generation was gone by mid-June, new emergence flew most in July, very few sightings after 4 Aug. Hopefully they all hibernated early and didn't just succumb to heat exhaustion. Last 26 Dec (4 Dec). Recorded from 250 tetrads (390) of which 27 were new. Down 54% on Norfolk transects and 25% nationally – it also did well in Scotland (sightings reported from the Big Butterfly Count there were 20 times higher than the previous year!).

Painted Lady (*Vanessa cardui*)

The first sighting was 21 April (13 March), but only 7 records to mid-May. Main migration 28 May to 5 July. Then a second generation 13 July to 31 Aug, only a few sightings after. Last 25 Oct (6 Nov). Recorded from 157 tetrads (268) 26 new. A poor year, down 18% in Norfolk, but only slightly down nationally.

Comma (*Polygonia c-album*)

Reported from 265 tetrads (329), of which 42 were new. First 1 Jan (14 Feb), but that and one early March were all until 25 March. Hibernators were over by 26 May (27 May), first brood 18 June (7 June) blended into second brood with no clear separation, sightings continuously until 24 Oct (15 Oct) when it came to an abrupt stop, with no sightings after then until a last single 18 Nov (6 Nov). Down 62% in Norfolk, and 40%

on BBC. It is clear that poor winter survival of hibernators affected all three previous species – the ‘beast from the east’ would have been survivable had it arrived mid-season, but hitting after a warm, mild winter just as they were beginning to stir was the worst possible combination.

Dark Green Fritillary (*Argynnis aglaja*)

Fritillaries however, loved the weather this year. Recorded from 16 tetrads (10), 2 were new. The female photographed at Bircham Newton was the first ever for TF73 and shows again the movement inland of this species that seems to be taking place. Don't assume a woodland Fritillary is Silver, particular along the greensands running from Sandringham to the Brecks. First seen 18 June (14 June), last 15 Aug (20 Aug). Up 28% in Norfolk, and I had a report of 128 seen in a day at Horsey – much improved.

Silver-washed Fritillary (*Argynnis paphia*)

Recorded from 72 tetrads (46) of which 36 were new. First seen 3 June (15 June), last seen 2 Sept (23 Aug), quite an extension of its flight period. There were first records for TF73, TF91, TF94, TG22 and TG42 as it continues its spread across the county. Up 87% on transect. *Valezina* again reported from Holt and Foxley. There are at least three 10km squares where it hasn't yet been recorded, but where I'm sure it's lurking: TM09, TF81 and TF90 – it just needs someone to go find them.

Speckled Wood (*Pararge aegeria*)

Recorded from 345 tetrads (340), 68 new. First sighting 17 April (29 March), last 25 Oct (26 Oct). This seems at first glance to have escaped the miseries inflicted on some other Browns, probably because of its liking for cool, shady woodland out of the heat. Up 14% in Norfolk.

Wall Brown (*Lasiommata megera*)

Recorded from 82 tetrads (72), 14 new. First seen 22 April (5 May): that brood ended 15 June (10 June). Second 24 July (17 July) to 1 Sept (27 Aug), then third brood 16 Sept to 25 Oct (22 Sept to 25 Oct). All records were within 25km of the coast. Norfolk transects were down 22%, but nationally it was up by 79% so it was doing well somewhere.

Grayling (*Hipparchia semele*)

First 1 July (18 June), last 28 Sept (4 Sept). Recorded from 24 tetrads (14), 5 were new. The records from TF73 were the first since 2004, and those from TG02 and TG22 the first since 2010. Transects were up 38% so overall a good year.

Gatekeeper (*Pyronia tithonus*)

First 13 June (14 June), last 9 Sept (25 Oct). Recorded from 296 tetrads (319), 64 new. Norfolk transects were up 10% but nationally it was down 20%. The drought, and consequent poor condition of the grass on which it lays its eggs, may affect next year's emergence.

Meadow Brown (*Maniola jurtina*)

First 28 May (18 May), last 11 Sept (25 Oct). It might seem from that last date like a truncated flight season, but actually only four sightings in 2017 fell past 11 Sept, so no great significance can be ascribed to it. However, down 56% in the Big Butterfly Count, which suggests that many individuals emerged earlier and consequently were over by the time of the count. So the heat appears to have encouraged many to live fast, and die young. This is probably the reason for the 12% decline in Norfolk, and 20% nationally

in transect counts. As above, the state of the vegetation leads to concerns for next year. Recorded from 356 tetrads (400), 63 were new.

Ringlet (*Aphantopus hyperantus*)

First 6 June (6 June), last 10 Aug (1 Sept). Again only 9 sightings separate the years. However, it is no surprise that a species adapted to cool, wet summers didn't like this one: down 15% in Norfolk, 62% on the Big Butterfly Count. Recorded from 295 tetrads (291), 59 new.

Small Heath (*Coenonympha pamphilus*)

This species however, loved the weather: up 162% nationally. It actually recorded a 4% drop in Norfolk transects though. However, I received 171 casual records to last year's 76, which might suggest a greater abundance? First report 27 March and one other 18 April (15 April) were extreme outliers, regular sightings began 12 May (14 May), then regularly to 19 Sept with just a handful of records until final 31 Oct (5 Oct). Recorded from 69 tetrads (52), 22 new.

Incidentals and Migrants

Clouded Yellow (*Colias croceus*)

I received 15 reports (20) covering 13 tetrads (20). The first was 7 July (29 May), last 5 Nov (25 Oct).

Purple Emperor (*Apatura iris*)

Once again it appeared in Sheringham and Beeston Common, and this year a single sighting in Holt Country Park. The dates are odd however: in the rest of the country Emperor started 15 June. Here our first sighting was 18 July, last 27 July. Last year at Sheringham our first was also 18 July. The corresponding dates for Suffolk for first sighting were 24 June 2018 and 23 June 2017. Most odd. A total of 7 reports – 2 from Sheringham, 4 from Beeston and 1 from Holt.

Marbled White (*Melanargia galathea*)

No sightings this year, not surprising as it seems to have had a bad year.

Camberwell Beauty (*Nymphalis antiopa*)

No sightings, but I know of one release of 3 bred individuals from TG33.

Glanville Fritillary (*Melitaea cinxia*)

A You-tube video is online that shows an individual releasing five of these butterflies in his garden. This appears to have been in Watton in 2018. The same individual appears to have released Heath Fritillary and rather worryingly attempted to rear and release European Swallowtail in 2017. This is not illegal, but poses a serious threat to our native swallowtail, both from the risk of hybridization and consequent loss of fitness; and the importation of disease and parasites (all of his caterpillars died apparently from parasites).

It just remains for me to thank all the recorders who submitted data this year. Their records will now go forward to the national database, to be used in research, conservation and the production of the next national and local atlas in 2020. Without their time and effort none of this would be possible.

Records were received from:

M Abdulla, J Adams, A Addyman, A Adkins, K Aggersberg, R Aldis, M Alqurashi, B& Y Anderson, S Anderson(SA), T Anderson, M Andrew, T Andrew, N Anne, C Antony, N Armour-Chelu, R Atkins, T Atkins, R Atkinson, T Austin, M Bacon, E Baker, D Balcombe, G Baldock, M Baldwin, S Barker, P Barkham(PB), J& V Bartlett(JVB), S Bashforth, L Bassett, D Bean, A Beaumont, S Bedford, G Bell, L Berkshire, D Bevis, A Billett, L Bilston, I Black, B Blackburn, J Blake, T Blumire, T Bolderstone, I Boston, L Bovey(LB), S Boyce, J Bradin(JB), A Brazil(ABr), K Brett, M Brewster, D Brice, L Bridge, I Brittain, K Brockman, C Brooker, A Brookes, A Brown(AB), P Brown, L& D Bryant, S Bryan-Terry, S Buck, D Buckingham, T Bucknall, J Bull(JBu), C Bullen, R Burrell, P Busby, C Carpenter(CC), A Carter, R Carter, S Carter, P Cawley, N Chadwick, S Chapman(SC), M Chesterman, H Clark, A Clarke, R Clarke, K& M Claydon, M Clements, R Cole, R Coleman, C Coles, R Comont, P Cook, L Cooper, M Court, J Cousins, D Crawford, B Crook(BC), G Crooks, E Cross, D Cullern, A Culshaw, AJ Culshaw(AC), E Cuthbertson, R Daplyn, J Davenport, M Davis, A Dawson, J Day, T Day, T Derham, N Di Mino, R Doggart, S Doggett, J Donley, J Dossetor, P Douch, I Downs, A Duff, J& G Dunmore, S Dye, J E Lee, S Eckersley, J Edie, A Edwards, P Elphick, N Elsey, B Elvy, J Emerson, C Emm, D Esterson, D Evans, P Evans, H Fairhurst, C Falvey, L Farnish, C Farrar, F Farrow(FF), T Fawcett, M Ferguson, M Field, J Fiennes, D Filby, P Fisher, L Fitt-Savage, K Flowerday(KF), H Ford, A Franco, A Fraser, B Frewin, C Gambrell, S Gann, S Garten, M Gasson, K Gay(KG), P Gentry, W George(WG), M Ghullam, C Gibbs, B Gilbert, M Gluth, P& M Gluth(PMG), R Godfrey(RG), A Goodall, H Goody, L Goodyear(LG), A Gorton, Z Gorton, S Grant, M Greenland, A Griffies, A Hale, K Hale, J Halls, G Hampshire, P Hampson, V Hampson, L Hanley, P Hannant(PH), R Harding, M Harkup, A Harrap, J Harris, P Harrison, A Hartley, M Harvey, P Hasell, J Heal, S Heal, S Henderson, H Hepburn, D Hewitt, J Hewitt, G Hibberd(GH), L& S Highfield, A Hill, S Hillman, T Hodge(TH), D Hodkinson, R Hoe(RH), J Hogg(JH), M Hoit, K Holbeck, S Holloway, R Holt, T Holt, G Hooton(Gho), C Hopkinson, D Howdon(DH), C Howells, D Howson, D Hudson, C Humphries, D& J Humphries, C Humpleby, C Hutchinson, H Inslay, D Jakeways, P James(PJ), S Jellett, N Jenkins, R Jenkins, M Jennie, A Jewels, M Jillian, A Johnson(AJ), F Jolliffe, B&S Jones, D Jones, R Jones, R& J Jones, S Jukes, P Kadwell(PK), G Keeble, J Kelly, A Kerr, P Kidman, A King, C King, S King, D Knight(DK), J Knightbridge, A Laing, P Lambly(PL), J Lansdell, N Lawton, A Leach, S Lelievre, J Levine(JLe), H Lewis, C Leybourn, J Lightwing, K Limb(KL), J Lines(JL), S Little, S Lloyd, I& T Lomas, D Longdon, D Longe(DL), L& S Lonsdale, B Madden, P Maddison, A Madeley, A Maguire, R Marsh, T Marshall, S Martin, S Matchett, S Mathers, P Mathews, J Matthews, V Matthews, P Maynard, S Mayson, S Mcavoy, J McCulloch, J Mears, J Mendelssohn, J Metcalf(JM), A Middleton(AMi), T Money, A Monteath(AM), D Moore, H Moore, K Morgan, S Morris, N Morrish, D Moss, D& K Moss, T Moverley, C Murray, CA Murray, E Murray, A Musgrove(AMu), C Naden, W Nash, R Nebbett-Blades(RNB), T Needham, L Newman, L Nicholson, G Nobes, M Noble-James, S North, S Northwood, D Oakley-Martin, J Orestano, N Owens, B Palmer(BP), H Peeling, S Pennell(SP), I Perkins, D Peters, D Phillips, G Phillips, C Phoenix, R Pike, R Pittman, J Pitts, E Pollard, N Pomiankowski, P Popkin, J Powley, A Price, C Pritchard, I Pritchard, J Prochera, M Pygott, K Radley, N Rains-Kardi, B Raspberry, G Rawcliffe, K Redhead, D Rendall, G Revill, K Rhodes, M Rhodes, C Rich, DI Richmond, T Righton, A Riley(AR), C Robinson, J Robotham, C Robson, I Robson(IR), M Rooney(MR), S Rosas, M Russell, P Sage, J Sanderling, K Saul, A Sayer, A Schuetzle, J Scott-Bolton, B Seager, R& J Seymour, S Sharman, C Sharpe, A Shaw, D Sheen, C Sheppard, G Sherwin, E Shilland, J Shutes, C Smith, E Smith(ES), R Smith, R Southwood, D Spark, J Speed-Andrews, C Spinks(CS), J Splude, S Springall, T Starnes, I Stemp, P Stevens, S Stevens, R Stewart, W Stewart, T Stowe, K Stuart-Clarke, E Stubbings, D Stubbs, J Symonds(JS), P Taylor(PT), A Tegala, R Thatcher, A Thompson, L Tibbs, J Tilt, A& S Tipper, P Tom, M Toms, W Tucker, N Turner, J Uglow, G Upton, T Wade, J Waghorn, L Wakeford-Marks, A Wakeham, N Walker, D Walsh, A Ward, C Ward, K Warner, S Warrington, J Wasiak(JW), R Weal, M Webster, S Weeks, J Wells, S White, P Wilkins, F & C Wilkins-Jones, L Wilkinson, S Willett, C Williams(CW), L Wilshaw, I Wilson, J Wilson, K Wilson(KW), R Wilton, A Winnington, S Witham(SW), B Wix, A Wood, J& T Wood, C Woodley, P Woods, K Wright, L Wright, M Wright, E Wyatt, K Wyatt, A Wyldes, E Yeomans, P Young

Records were also received from The Friends of Hemblington: All Saints, Holkham National Nature Reserve (H), NOA, NT, NWT and RSPB

First and Last Sightings - 2018

Species	2018 first	Recorder	2017 first	2018 last	Recorder	2017 last
Comma	01/01/2018	AC	14/02/2017	18/11/2018	GHo	06/11/2017
Red Admiral	05/01/2018	CS	28/01/2017	03/12/2018	TH	08/12/2017
Small Tortoiseshell	25/01/2018	KG	15/01/2017	17/12/2018	AMu	04/12/2017
Small Copper	08/03/2018	JL	08/04/2017	19/11/2018	JL	06/11/2017
Brimstone	11/03/2018	JBu	16/02/2017	16/11/2018	PT	03/11/2017
Small Heath	27/03/2018	AB	15/04/2017	31/10/2018	SC	05/10/2017
Small White	03/04/2018	PB	02/03/2017	05/11/2018	AB,MR	27/10/2017
Large White	04/04/2018	JBu	15/03/2017	17/11/2018	JM	03/11/2017
Orange Tip	15/04/2018	IR	19/03/2017	24/06/2018	AJ	09/07/2017
Green Vnd. White	16/04/2018	PH,TH	09/03/2017	11/10/2018	DK	09/10/2017
Holly Blue	17/04/2018	AB	24/03/2017	24/10/2018	ABr	16/10/2017
Speckled Wood	17/04/2018	SC	29/03/2017	25/10/2018	JL	26/10/2017
Green Hairstreak	21/04/2018	SC	06/04/2017	22/06/2018	AR	06/07/2017
Painted Lady	21/04/2018	ES	13/03/2017	25/10/2018	NOA	06/11/2017
Wall Brown	22/04/2018	LB	05/05/2017	25/10/2018	NOA	27/10/2017
Common Blue	06/05/2018	JW	09/04/2017	31/10/2018	AB	15/10/2017
Grizzled Skipper	07/05/2018	SP	17/04/2017	06/06/2018	KL	10/06/2017
Brown Argus	07/05/2018	SP	28/04/2017	28/10/2018	AB	30/10/2017
Dingy Skipper	15/05/2018	DL	19/04/2017	09/06/2018	JS	13/06/2017
Swallowtail	15/05/2018	RSPB	10/05/2017	10/09/2018	PK	20/08/2017
Large Skipper	25/05/2018	JH & PJ	31/05/2017	30/08/2018	H	28/08/2017
Meadow Brown	28/05/2018	RG	18/05/2017	11/09/2018	CW	25/10/2017
Ringlet	06/06/2018	BC	06/06/2017	19/08/2018	SW	01/09/2017
Silver Studded Blue	11/06/2018	SA,SC	03/06/2017	17/07/2018	AR	18/07/2017
Small Skipper	13/06/2018	JW	14/06/2017	19/08/2018	JLe	27/08/2017
Gatekeeper	13/06/2018	JB	14/06/2017	09/09/2018	BP	25/10/2017
White Admiral	17/06/2018	SP	13/06/2017	15/09/2018	PT	24/10/2017
White-L Hairstreak	18/06/2018	JVB	17/06/2017	30/08/2018	H	05/08/2017
Dark Green Frit.	18/06/2018	CC,PT	14/06/2017	15/08/2018	PT,TH	20/08/2017
Purple Hairstreak	19/06/2018	SC	19/06/2017	17/08/2018	AC	02/09/2017
Silver Washed Frit.	22/06/2018	AR,SC	15/06/2017	02/09/2018	AM	23/08/2017
Essex Skipper	24/06/2018	AR,RNB	19/06/2017	30/08/2018	WG	26/08/2017
Grayling	01/07/2018	AM	18/06/2017	28/09/2018	BP	04/09/2017
Clouded Yellow	07/07/2018	KF,PL	29/05/2017	05/11/2018	MR	25/10/2017
Chalk Hill Blue	18/07/2018	RH	21/06/2017	18/08/2018	AC,DH	29/08/2017
Purple Emperor	18/07/2018	AMi & LG	26/06/2017	27/07/2018	FF,PMG	30/07/2017

Norfolk's Plusia Moths

John Geeson

The Plusias (sub-family Plusiinae) are one of the most attractive groups of the Noctuid moths, with distinct metallic marks or patches on the folded forewings – the fact that the English names of most include one of the words: “Gold”, “Silver” or even “Brass” should be a good clue! – and many also have elaborate tufts and ornamentation on the head/thorax. They are a Holarctic group of moths occurring in both North America and Eurasia, and sixteen species have occurred in Norfolk. These include the often abundant day-flying **Silver-Y** *Autographa gamma* familiar to most of us who look at nectaring butterflies, some species which are fairly common and are frequently attracted to light, and several scarce or even rare migrants which occasionally find their way into our light traps.

All of these are illustrated on the next two pages.

The aptly named **Burnished Brass** *Diachrysis chrysitis*, with its brilliant shiny golden panels on the forewings is a common visitor to moth traps in mid-summer and again with a second generation in the autumn. The major larval food plant is Common Nettle.

Golden Plusia *Polychrysis moneta* is relatively scarce and local in the county despite the fact that its preferred food plant Delphinium is widely grown in gardens, with most recent records from the Norwich area. As well as its very ornate wing pattern with twin white circles and its exaggerated head-dress, the exceptionally long stilt-like legs give this moth a very distinctive appearance when sitting.

Two very similar species: **Gold Spot** *Plusia festucae* and **Lempkes' Gold Spot** *P.putnami* are probably the most beautiful moths in this group. Both have subtly different shaped metallic (actually silver) panels in the centre of the forewing and wing corners set off against a rich gold and chestnut background, and a useful identification aid can be found on the Norfolk Moths website (www.norfolkmoths.co.uk). Both moths occur in marshes and other damp areas, but whereas **Gold Spot** occurs quite widely in Norfolk and throughout the UK, **Lempke's Gold Spot** has a more northerly distribution in N.England and Scotland, but does occur locally in the Norfolk Broads.

Silver-Y *Autographa gamma*. Although essentially a migrant, several generations can be produced on a range of larval food plants in this country, and this moth can be seen throughout much of the year. Large influxes are frequent in the summer, often alongside similar arrivals of migrant butterflies such as Painted Lady, and these moths can often be found feeding on a variety of flowers near to the coast and inland in Norfolk; the species also frequently comes to light. As the name suggests, the silver 'Y' mark is the most obvious feature on the marbled grey-brown wing, and a distinctly small form *f.gemmina* often occurs late in the season.

Another similar species pair: **Beautiful Golden-Y** *Autographa pulchrina* and **Plain Golden-Y** *A.jota* are both fairly widespread throughout the UK and in Norfolk, feeding on a range of plants in hedgerows, fields and gardens, and come regularly to light. Both species have quite intricate reddish brown patterned forewings with a prominent shiny metallic broken 'Y' mark (typically a 'V' and a detached oval) in the centre. **Plain Golden-Y**, as its name suggests has a somewhat plainer base and margin to the forewing and is generally paler and more pinkish in colouration.

The final species pair which are resident breeders in the county are **Spectacle**



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Norfolk's Plusia Moths

Fig. 1: Burnished Brass *

Fig. 2: Golden Plusia *

Fig. 3: Gold Spot *

Fig. 4: Lempke's Gold Spot, Hickling

July 2016 (*John Geeson*)

Fig. 5: Silver-Y *

Fig. 6: Beautiful Golden-Y *

Fig. 7: Plain Golden-Y *

Fig. 8: Spectacle *

Fig. 9: Dark Spectacle *

Fig. 10: Dark Spectacle and Spectacle *

Fig. 11: Golden Twin-spot, Spain June 1996

(*John Geeson*)

Fig. 12: Ni Moth, Bawdeswell September 2013 (*Dave Appleton*)

Fig. 13: Dewick's Plusia, Eaton October 2018 (*Nick Watmough*)

Fig. 14: Gold Spangle, Overstrand August 2013 (*John Geeson*)

Fig. 15: Scarce Silver-Y, Cley July 2017 (*Mike Harcup*)

Fig. 16: Slender Burnished Brass (*from Lepiforum.de*)

Fig. 17: Scarce Burnished Brass (*from Lepiforum.de*)

* Figs. 1,2,3,5,6,7,8,9 and 10: Barnham Broom (*John Geeson*)

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Abrostola tripartita and **Dark Spectacle** *A.triplasia*; both are attracted to light. The **Spectacle** is a common, often double-brooded, moth, the larvae of which feed on nettles. The name derives from the very authentic ‘pair of goggles’ on the thorax when viewed head-on, but the dark grey central band with oval and kidney marks outlined in black, flanked by paler grey base and margins, also create a distinctive appearance. **Dark Spectacle** is more localised in Norfolk, but has become more widespread in recent years; another moth which feeds on Common Nettle, and also Wild Hop. Dark Spectacle is typically larger and with a browner ground colour; the pale buffish base to the wings is more pronounced and the cross lines are edged rufous; the ‘spectacles’ are less obvious, and in side view the tuft of hairs on the head is bigger (see Fig. 10).

A further seven species have occurred only as occasional migrants in the county.

Golden Twin-spot *Chrysodeixis chalcites* is a migrant from Southern Europe and North Africa; although understandably most records are from the south-coast of the UK, there have been eight Norfolk records, most in the east of the county, since the first occurrence in 1988. This moth has a golden-brown forewing with an obvious pair of oval white spots in the centre.

Ni Moth *Trichoplusia ni* is one of the smallest member of the family and another migrant from S.Europe and N.Africa. It superficially resembles Silver-Y but the central mark is much reduced to two tiny spots. There have been 10 Norfolk records since 1961.

Dewick’s Plusia *Macdunnoughia confusa* is another small but very striking Plusia, predominantly grey but with a rich brown rectangular panel framed by a cranked silvery-white line. Another European immigrant recorded mostly in Southern England; although first recorded in the county in 1955, there have been many more records since 2015, so certainly one to look out for. It is yet another nettle feeder, and there is some evidence that this beautiful moth may now be breeding in the county.

Gold Spangle *Autographa bractea* is resident in Northern Britain, but only an occasional immigrant in Norfolk with 13 records since 1958. The forewing is relatively plain warm brown with a large central silver mark in the shape of a ‘squashed S’.

As its name suggests, **Scarce Silver-Y** *Syngrapha interrogationis* does superficially resemble the ubiquitous Silver-Y but, is smaller, with distinct monochrome black and grey patterned wings and the ‘Y’ mark is much reduced and usually broken. Although resident on moorlands of Northern England and Scotland, where the larvae feed on heather and bilberry, the occasional Norfolk records have mostly been in coastal sites and are considered to be immigrants.

Two relatives of Burnished Brass have also occurred in the county, and the shape of the brass mark on the wings make each of them readily identifiable (if you should be so lucky!). **Slender Burnished Brass** *Thysanoplusia orichalcea*, another Southern European species, has been recorded only once, at West Runton in 1959. **Scarce Burnished Brass** *Diachrysia chryson*, a rare resident in SW Britain, has been recorded only twice in 1950 and 1961.

With records of Golden Plusia and all of the scarce migrant species, digital photographs should be obtained for their acceptance and to confirm the records for the county data base.

I am very grateful to friends who have contributed photographs and willingly shared their moths with me, and to Greg Bond for his helpful comments on an earlier draft of this article.

Norfolk UKBMS Transect Recording in 2018

Alan Dawson - Transect Co-ordinator

Perhaps in these days of climate change it is too much to expect a 'normal' year for butterfly recording, but 2018 certainly went out of its way to be different. First there was the 'Beast from the East' and then there was one of the hottest and driest summers for many years. The result was that, overall, the number of butterflies recorded on transect was quite similar to 2017 (43843 from 43 transects compared with 45678 from 41 transects) and, as can be seen from Fig 1, the number of butterflies recorded per week was remarkably similar to 2017. As always Week 1 started on April 1st and in both years the peak butterfly number was recorded in Week 14, the first week of July. The shape of the flight curve was also very similar although in 2017 there were more butterflies flying in the early part of the year. In both years there was an historically early disappearance of Meadow Browns and Ringlets. Despite the overall similarity of the numbers and flight times, this coincidence conceals some major differences between species, which I will deal with later on.

Full 26 Week Transects

Given that we now have around 50 transects in Norfolk, it is not surprising that every year there are a few that do not get done for a variety of reasons. This year Marlingford and Pensthorpe were not recorded, although hopefully they will both be back on track next year. Some transects did not get many visits due to pressure on recorder time, and, sadly, the three Swanton Novers transects had to be stopped in the third week of June because of an escape of wild cattle into the wood, which meant that the routes were too dangerous to walk. I have included the Swanton Novers data in Table 1, but it is not in any way comparable to data from there for previous years for the later-flying species. Although the UKBMS computer system can fill in data from missing weeks, it depends on there being records from roughly adjacent weeks to work from, so the complete loss of the second half of the recording season cannot be compensated. However, the good news was that Holt Country Park and Sculthorpe 2 came back on stream and a new transect at Blickling Hall was started. Another new transect was started at Snettisham Coastal Park, but rather late in the season, so data is not included in Table 1 for this year. Altogether, data was received from 43 full transects.

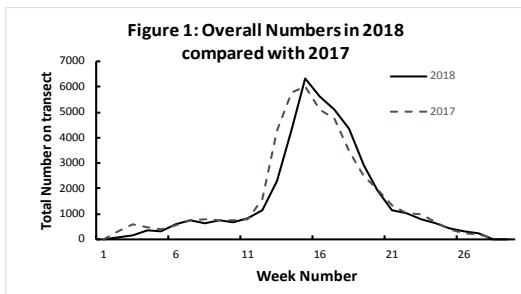
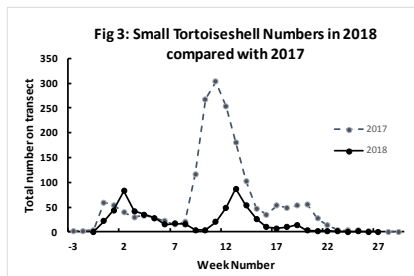
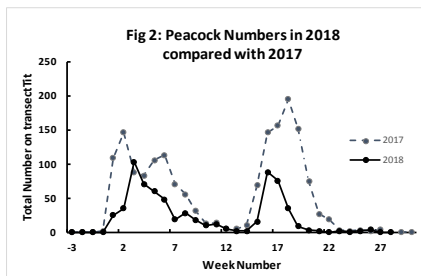


Table 1 shows the annual summary for the full transects. While the software fills in for missing weeks, the estimates are not too reliable when there is a lot of data missing (see above). The total number of species seen was 34 (same as 2017). Chalkhill Blue was not seen on transect again this year (although it was, as usual, counted at Warham Camp) and

Grizzled Skipper was seen on the single species transect at Fouldeu (see below).

Table 2 shows the winners and losers for 2018 compared with 2017 based on the 34 transects for which the data sets were comparable. While the total number of butterflies



recorded in both sets of transects is very comparable (39915 for 2018 compared with 38236 for 2017, there are some enormous differences among the common species. The Whites (Small, Large and Green-veined) are all very substantially up, while Peacocks, Small Tortoiseshells, Commas and Red Admirals are disastrously down. This, of course, reflects one's subjective impression from observations in the back garden. Given the decrease in Peacocks and Small Tortoiseshells, and looking for possible explanations, I thought it might be instructive to look at what happened across the flight season – between the hibernators and the summer brood. The results of this are shown in Fig 2 (Peacock) and Fig 3 (Small Tortoiseshell). While in both cases the summer broods are very much smaller, the pattern for the hibernators is a bit different. The Spring appearance of Small Tortoiseshell is very similar between the two years, while for Peacock the Spring appearance is much smaller in 2018 than 2017. It seems likely that in the case of both species the 'Beast from the East' affected the breeding success of the insects emerging from hibernation and will probably have a large knock-on effect in 2019. For other species, it is encouraging to see a recovery in Brown Argus, Common Blue and Grayling numbers after some poor years, and there is a continuing rise in Silver-washed Fritillary (seen on 12 transects compared with 8 in 2017). Swallowtail numbers are discussed below.

Single-species Transects

These are only walked during the flight season and the numbers are not included in Table 1 but are reported below under the relevant section on Red-list species. As in previous years, we had single species transects for Swallowtail at Wheatfen Broad, Catfield Fen, Strumpshaw Fen and Ranworth Broad. There was a transect for Silver-studded Blue at Buxton Heath and one for Dingy and Grizzled Skipper at Foulden Common.

Red-list Species

Nine of the ten red-list species in Norfolk were recorded on transect in 2018:

- Dingy Skipper: 29 at Foulden (59 in 2017); 12 at Cranwich (24 in 2017); 27 at Lynford (41 in 2017). A gloomy picture at all three sites.
- Grizzled Skipper: 19 at Foulden (7 in 2017). Good to see an increase after a steep drop in 2017.
- Silver-studded Blue: 779 at Buxton Heath (393 in 2017); 356 at East Ruston (346 in 2017); Substantial increase in the total count at Kelling Heath and recorded again at Cawston Heath after some years absence (see the Autumn 2018 Newsletter for details). A generally encouraging picture.
- White Admiral: recorded on 11 transects (13 in 2017). Bure Marshes, Holkham, Swanton Novers 1 and 2 (note that the Swanton transects had to be

abandoned at the very start of the flight season), Sutton Fen, Sculthorpe Moor 3 (new for 2018), How Hill, Holt Country Park, Foxley Wood, Reffley Wood, Bintree Wood. Overall very similar to last year (Table 2).

- Wall Brown: seen at 8 sites (10 in 2017) – none were recorded at Winterton or Blakeney Friary Hills this year. Numbers overall were quite a bit down on 2017 (Table 2) but still better than 2016.
- Grayling: 5 sites (same as in 2017). Numbers were up overall, largely due to a welcome recovery at Winterton Dunes, as well as an increase at Blakeney Point. There was a decline at Holkham and Lynford Lakes. Scolt Head was unchanged.
- Small Heath: 11 sites (13 in 2017); Marlingford was not recorded this year, Ringstead Down and Redgrave and Lopham Fen missed out but Dersingham Bog was a new site. Overall numbers were pretty much unchanged from 2017.
- Chalkhill Blue: none on transect. The only colony now seems to be the one at Warham Camp, where numbers roughly doubled compared with 2017 (see Autumn Newsletter for details).
- Swallowtail: Table 3 shows a very mixed picture. Most sites had a poor year, particularly Sutton Fen, Bure Marshes and Catfield Fen, so numbers overall were substantially down on 2017. The Strumpshaw transects bucked the trend as did Wheatfen Broad and it was good to see Ranworth back on the scoreboard after a few years of no sightings.

Outlook for 2019

In terms of butterfly populations, it is going to be very interesting to see what effect the extremely warm, dry summer has on next year's numbers. The previous equivalent year, 1976, was followed by a very poor year for butterflies, although it must be said that in those days the number of transects was very much fewer than today.

It is good to see that the number of transects continues to grow in Norfolk. Next year a second transect will be starting on the Blickling Estate, courtesy of the National Trust. I would like to thank all the Norfolk (and Suffolk) wildlife organisations that manage so many of the important sites that we monitor for UKBMS. As they say in 'Strictly, come Dancing', in no particular order: Natural England, Forestry Commission, RSPB, NWT, SuffolkWT, Broads Authority, Holkham Estates, Ted Ellis Trust, Butterfly Conservation, Norwich City Council, North Norfolk District Council, Hawk and Owl Trust, National Trust and the numerous charities that administer the heaths and commons in Norfolk. Apologies if I have missed any, but as you see we are in debt to a very large number of organisations.

The whole UKBMS transect system hinges, of course, on the dedicated band of recorders who manage to fit weekly walks in around the weather and all the other things that they have to do. They have my heartfelt thanks. As a rough calculation, I think the total distance walked on Norfolk transects during 2018 was about 2700km. We are always on the lookout for volunteers, both for new transects and to act as backups for existing transects, so if you feel you would like to get involved, please contact me.

Table 1: Norfolk Transect Data as Indices (Corrected to 26 weeks)

	Bure Marshes	Holkham	Holme Dunes	Swanton Novers 1	Swanton Novers 2	Swanton Novers Little Wood	Mousehold Heath	Mousehold Heath East	Blakeney Point	Winterton Dunes	Strumpshaw Fen	Marston Marsh	Scott Head Island	Tomas's pightle	Roydon Common
Sm. Skipper		7	24					4	6		1	6	31		
Essex Skipper							2	2				10	3	12	
Sm/Es Skipper			45				12	17		1	1	160	8		
Large Skipper	4	8	2		3	4	7	8		1	3	10			12
Dingy Skipper				12											
Swallowtail	9										7				
Clouded Yellow															
Brimstone	126	1	1	19	3	3		2			98	15		16	7
Large White	12	62	27	5	1	2	172	145	6	6	38	19	87	81	9
Small White		8	111				34	27	237	1	85	10	138	104	2
G-v White	437	58	4	18	9	8	58	51			63	536	30	34	3
Orange Tip	18	9		2		3	7	2			47	96		10	
Gr. Hairstreak							6	2					127		
Pu. Hairstreak							29	14				4			
W-L Hairstreak		1													
Small Copper		28	9				14	36	17	5	1	24	18		23
Silver-studded Blue															
Brown Argus		160	69					5							
Common Blue	2	186	187	10			2	88			13	26	397	2	2
Holly Blue	6	8			1		99	30			7	13		13	
White Admiral	7	2		4	3										
Red Admiral	15	46	3				8	3	5	1	31	16	16	10	
Painted Lady		97	1	2				2	44		1		8	4	7
Sm. Tortoiseshell	23	10	8					13	15		43	23	36	7	10
Peacock	27	67	8	1	1		6	7		3	44	24	20	33	4
Comma	12	12		1			21	11		2	13	16		14	
S-w. Fritillary				28		3	1				3				
D. G. Fritillary		33							38	13			25		
Speckled Wood	43	87	10	39	26	43	90	35		14	22	36		14	1
Wall Brown		42	46										91		
Grayling		9							13	290			28		
Gatekeeper	9	75	143				43	49	46	128	57	61	877	150	3
Meadow Brown	55	160	197	19	15	3	69	172	75	16	87	318	484	21	76
Small Heath		23	91							44			481		
Ringlet	47	125	57	91	39	23	20	53	2	20	61	45	16	87	5
Total (index)	852	1324	1043	251	101	92	700	778	504	545	726	1468	2921	612	164
No. of species	17	26	21	13	10	9	20	23	12	15	22	21	19	17	14
Weeks done	22	15	17	12	12	12	20	19	11	17	25	26	22	23	6
Transect started	1976	1976	1978	1992	1998	1998	2004	2012	2008	2008	2008	2009	2009	2009	2010

Table 1: continued

	Sutton Fen	Gaywood Valley	Middle Harling Heath	Ludham Marshes	Barnham Cross Common	Cranwich Camp	Dersingham Village R/way	Syderstone Common	Dersingham Bog	Ringstead Down	Scutthorpe Moor 2	Scutthorpe Moor 3	How Hill New	Courtyard Farm
Sm. Skipper	21		261	27	7	12	2	6	6		18	3		147
Essex Skipper				4		5	1	1	5			7	6	26
Sm/Es Skipper	1	88						95	4	158	10	99	8	132
Large Skipper	66	24	83	23	8	5	3	13		4	5	23		15
Dingy Skipper						12								
Swallowtail	46												8	
Clouded Yellow						2				1				
Brimstone	111	5	88	11	14	152	2	6		13			42	1
Large White	59	37	275	36	19	206	38	3	14	96	57	122	49	95
Small White	44	180	206	45	50	78	108	134	7	336	197	217	45	217
G-v White	374	156	9	137	2	28	19	40		20	109	191	111	19
Orange Tip	13	19	185	2	15	33	7	3	2	29	3	9	31	8
Gr. Hairstreak			3					1						1
Pu. Hairstreak								3						7
W-L Hairstreak						3								
Small Copper		5	22	1	12	60	5	53	4	9	3	7		14
Silver-studded Blue														
Brown Argus		2	60			3	2	2		22				2
Common Blue	5	25	232		5	224		44		111		17		61
Holly Blue	5	18				16	6	6				5	6	1
White Admiral	2											3	4	
Red Admiral	28	14	7	5		3	11	4		3	3	9	12	2
Painted Lady	18		9	4		1	2			12	4			3
Sm. Tortoiseshell	79	55	5	43		2	16	5	3	19	46	10	3	10
Peacock	60	16	36	26	4	12	10	2	6	4	13	14	42	4
Comma	6	10	11	1		20	5	1	1	13	10	13	23	4
S-w. Fritillary						6				6		3		
D. G. Fritillary														
Speckled Wood	62	76	42	4	7	74	74	8		15	23	142	71	21
Wall Brown				21						14				2
Grayling														
Gatekeeper	386	39	250	151	2	105	20	78	22	175	26	139	46	105
Meadow Brown	496	47	1438	1104	94	389	5	78	15	324	74	230	34	459
Small Heath			158		31	93		204	2					
Ringlet	390	188	540	148	24	41	41	161	35	220	68	263	92	283
Total (index)	2272	1004	3920	1793	294	1585	377	951	126	1604	669	1526	633	1639
No. of species	21	19	21	19	15	26	21	23	13	23	17	21	18	24
Weeks done	26	16	23	18	24	22	22	21	9	25	14	14	21	14
Transect started	2010	2011	2011	2012	2012	2012	2012	2012	2013	2013	2013	2014	2015	2015

Table 1: continued

	Blakeney Friary Hills	Felbrigg Hall	Holt Country Park	Foxley Wood	Redgrave and Lopham Fen	Natural Surroundings	Reffley Wood	Burgh Doles	Quidnam	Lynford Water	East Ruston	Orchard House	Bintree Wood	Blickling Lakeside
Sm. Skipper	68				1	2				12	6			
Essex Skipper					2	9					7			
Sm/Es Skipper		1		24	33			10	3		105		3	14
Large Skipper		1		7	3	7	2	48		9	44	1	8	1
Dingy Skipper										27				
Swallowtail								2						
Clouded Yellow														
Brimstone		1	30	12	18	16	7	2	23	25	2	4	41	4
Large White	117	218	108	109	156	79	4	23	137	105	40	37	121	33
Small White	21	163	62	30	336	52	3	27	372	11	36	17	22	117
G-v White		1	2	83	53	188	132	195	12	22	6	17	113	3
Orange Tip		2	1	12	19	31	9	17	18	15	11	7	10	8
Gr. Hairstreak	6									5	34		3	
Pu. Hairstreak					2								3	2
W-L Hairstreak						6								
Small Copper	87	2		1	1	3		3	4	26	38		7	
Silver-studded Blue											356			
Brown Argus										12		2		
Common Blue	15	3		1	6	7		3	8	225	12	10	4	
Holly Blue	3			1	8	10	2	10	7	1	4	6	4	2
White Admiral			10	24			1						4	
Red Admiral		10	12	2	17	48	11	13	17	5	1	2	7	7
Painted Lady	6	10	1	4	1	6		3	2		1		2	2
Sm. Tortoiseshell	27	6		2	26	9	2	27	9	6	4	5	1	2
Peacock	7		1	29	57	8	11	33	19	8	28	6	37	3
Comma	5	3	11	11	10	61	26		16	2	8	2	37	
S-w. Fritillary			58	125		9				2			118	
D. G. Fritillary														
Speckled Wood	9	17	88	156	56	10	74	70	79		95	2	322	19
Wall Brown						1		16						
Grayling										10				
Gatekeeper		34	6	63	37	111		71	16	86	670	21	72	62
Meadow Brown	203	61	44	72	116	105	61	61	72	112	155	19	159	280
Small Heath										122	170			
Ringlet		16	28	820	121	78	64	64	57	122	531	6	986	142
Total (index)	574	549	462	1588	1079	856	409	698	871	970	2364	164	2084	701
No. of species	13	17	15	21	21	23	15	21	19	23	23	17	23	17
Weeks done	8	27	20	22	20	16	23	18	23	22	26	19	23	20
Transect started	2015	2015	2015	2016	2016	2016	2016	2016	2017	2017	2017	2017	2017	2018

Table 2: Winners and Losers for 2018 compared with 2017

	2018	2017	% Change		2018	2017	% Change
Small White	3484	1175	197	Small Heath	1417	1481	-4
Brown Argus	341	131	160	Brimstone	855	943	-9
Large White	2719	1085	151	Meadow Brown	7345	8361	-12
Common Blue	1906	858	122	Ringlet	5789	6824	-15
Pu. Hairstreak	62	33	88	W-L Hairstrek	10	12	-17
S-w. Fritillary	273	146	87	Painted Lady	235	285	-18
Gr. Hairstreak	182	116	57	Sm. Skipper	586	725	-19
G-v White	3199	2064	55	Wall Brown	233	300	-22
Clouded Yellow	3	2	50	Large Skipper	440	581	-24
Grayling	350	253	38	Sm/Es Skipper	1004	1393	-28
D. G. Fritillary	109	85	28	Essex Skipper	97	135	-28
Holly Blue	292	238	23	Dingy skipper	39	65	-40
Speckled Wood	1828	1607	14	Peacock	705	1543	-54
Gatekeeper	4315	3938	10	Swallowtail	72	166	-57
Orange Tip	694	647	7	Comma	384	1006	-62
Small Copper	425	399	7	Sm. Tortoiseshell	522	1639	-68
White Admiral	47	49	-4	Red Admiral	385	1819	-79

Table 3: Swallowtail Numbers

Site	Started	Swallotail numbers									
		2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	
Bure Marshes (NE) TG336164	1976	42	50	20	40	37	7	13	51	9	
Strumpshaw Fen (RSPB) TG340065	2008	6	12	4	2	4	8	5	4	7	
Sutton Fen (RSPB) TG370233	2010	78	123	30	76	118	26	24	93	46	
Wheatfen (Ted Ellis Trust) TG326060	2010	2	10	6	14	8	5	31	16	17	
Strumpshaw Fen (RSPB)(Single sp.)	2010	13	18	6	14	8	5	3	16	14	
Ranworth (NWT) TG357149	2010	2	Not done	0	3	0	0	0	0	2	
Catfield Fen (BC) TG366214	2010	4	Not done	8	17	16	10	8	21	3	
How Hill (Broads Au- thority) TG370194	2011	-	22	2	13	10	9	4	13	8	
Burgh Doles (NWT) TG440126	2016	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	5	2	
Ludham Marshes (NE) TG409178	2012	-	-	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	

Saturday 5th October 2019

2.00pm-5.30pm

Hethersett Village Hall

Back Lane, Hethersett NR9 3JJ

‘Wildlife Gardening’

A presentation by The Butterfly Brothers

Wildlife garden specialists

‘Pinned for posterity - Butterflies and Museums’

A short illustrated presentation by Tony Erwin

former Senior Curator of Natural History at Norfolk Museums’ Service

AGM

Photographic Competition

Further details on page 34

Free Parking

Refreshments

From North/Norwich

At the A47/A11 Thickthorn roundabout take the HETHERSETT exit B1172. After about 2 miles TURN RIGHT on CHURCHFIELDS and follow the road through the estate and on to BACK LANE.

The Village Hall is on your right.

From South/Wymondham

At Waitrose supermarket roundabout follow the signs for HETHERSETT on B1172. After 3 to 4 miles look for CHURCHFIELDS on the LEFT.

Follow the road through the estate and on to BACK LANE.

The Village Hall is on your right.

See website for map

Please make a note in your diary of on your calendar

NOW!

Moths Matter

Greg Bond

As I write in March the first of the abundant spring moths are starting to appear. No one could ever accuse the Orthosia family of Quakers as being glamorous but they can be common, especially around flowering sallows. This follows on from very weather dependent bits and pieces earlier in the year with odd Pale Brindled Beauties, Early Moths, Dotted Borders and Spring Ushers coming to light as well as Chestnuts and Dark Chestnuts which have generally overwintered as adults. Even these can be quite abundant in the right settings, woodland and wooded gardens. The first micros are also out and about, *Agonopterix heracliana* in particular but also the attractive and variable *Acleris cristana*. These early moths are often striking examples of relative abundance which carries on through the year with some sites recording Common and Small Quakers and Hebrew Characters in hundreds and others, my garden, for example, struggling to make double figures. In particular inland sites can be very productive while coastal sites are not, as they can be more subject to the strong winds this time of year, so if you live close to the coast, and are just starting out, don't worry too much – you should get your rewards later in the year.

One of the most strikingly obvious contrasts in Norfolk is the complete change in species to be found in the Brecks, with early species such as Mottled Grey and Water Carpet really quite common. In fact the species distribution throughout Norfolk is really a subject for a paper in its own right with obvious contrasts between north and east coasts, the Brecks, the western bogs and commons, the southern river valleys, Broads etc etc. This is also when the first resident rarities appear in traps, such as Dotted Chestnut, which is extending its range northwards up the west of the county, and Pale Pinion which is nowadays quite frequent. There are also some really attractive species starting to appear, such as Oak Beauty and Shoulder-stripe, but in reality by the time you read this there should be lots of action in your traps.

Unlike with birds, Norfolk doesn't have a particularly enviable status for migrant moths, though it can do well some years. The plume of warm winds from north Africa in February brought some exciting species to Cornwall and the south coast, but we did manage the odd Dark Swordgrass and even a couple of Hummingbird Hawkmoths. In the next few weeks those Common Quakers in your traps are also worth a quick check for the much rarer and migratory Blossom Underwing, as attractive as its name sounds.

One of the key events this year will be the publication of the Distribution Atlas of the larger British Moths. Readily available as a pre-order this will be an important 'snap shot in time' but will no doubt need some regular updating to reflect range expansions as well as the unfortunate contractions, such as V-moth from much of Norfolk. The increase in numbers, such as Tree Lichen Beauty, Pale Pinion and potentially L-album Wainscot, is relatively easy to track as records are submitted to the County Recorder. Far and away more difficult is identifying the disappearance of species and we would be interested to hear if you are missing species once common in your traps, as this may flag a species of conservation concern which could otherwise disappear without a murmur.

Finally, Butterfly Conservation nationally are starting an initiative whose objectives are:-

To raise public awareness of moths and BC's role in conserving them.

To test levels of interest in moths to tailor make future moth-related campaigns.

With this in mind we, as a branch, have arranged rather more than usual Moth events this year and we are also posting regularly on the branch Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/ButterflyConservationNorfolk/?ref=bookmarks> and other social media outlets, detailing what might be appearing in moth traps locally at that time.

BC nationally have also created a page about why moths matter, so please feel free to take a look at both our page above and the national www.butterfly-conservation.org/mothsmatter.

A Pleasant Surprise

Judy Dunmore

This January Giles and I again went on a long cruise starting from Southampton. Part of the itinerary included, for the second time, 7 days travelling the Amazon river as far as Manaus. The Amazon sits on the equator and the weather at that time of year is humid and often cloudy. When we did a similar trip 2 years' ago we were told that moths are attracted to the ship lights and we could expect to see good numbers. Ships dim their lights at night to minimise attracting insects and also hose the decks just before dawn to clear away as many as possible. So, despite extensive searching, last time we found very few moths. We were therefore pleasantly surprised this time to find there were plenty to be seen. Our cruise ship was not particularly large by modern standards but, as with most such ships, is painted white with many places where moths can tuck themselves away, avoiding the hose pipes! There were a handful of people on board who were genuinely interested in moths but also many photographers, so for several hours each morning on the days we were not in port passengers were trawling the promenade deck and the top decks. Moths were often quite high up and reflection from the white background made photography with my point and shoot camera quite difficult. However, some of the moths settled under furniture or even on the sports nets on the top deck. On a number of occasions we also found butterflies either settled on deck or coming to the ship during the day. We even had a hummingbird briefly flying against glass before escaping and a bat struggling in the water left by the deck cleaning. Some of the moths and butterflies were very large but size is difficult to capture in photographs and we have made no attempt to find names for the things we saw. Photos below and over the page.



A Pleasant Surprise - photos (See page 31)



Wider Countryside Butterfly Survey - 2019 Season

Christian King - WCBS Co-ordinator

Are you interested in doing a butterfly survey? The WCBS is a simple yet very effective survey that only needs you to do it a minimum of twice a year in July and August (it can however be done four times from May to August). The squares to survey are randomly generated to create a good non-biased representation of the habitats throughout the wider countryside of the county of Norfolk. The survey has been running since 2009 and in 2018 we covered 31 squares in Norfolk.

We need your help! There are some squares recently vacated that have strong data history and established routes that I am very keen to keep going:

TF6920 - South of Roydon Common; 33 species have been recorded.

TF7041 - North of Ringstead; 30 species have been recorded.

TF7429 - Anmer; 24 Species have been recorded.

TF8313 - Near Castle Acre; 32 Species have been recorded.

TG0305 - Hardingham; 31 species have been recorded.

TF4513 - Wood Walton; 18 species have been recorded.

If you would like to see the route maps or would like any more information then please do not hesitate to contact me. The WCBS is a great entry level survey and a lot of fun! I would like to thank all those wonderful volunteers that have helped with the WCBS thus far ... here's to a great 2019!

www.ukbms.org/wcbs

Moth Officer needed, could you help?

Judy Dunmore

Greg Bond has indicated that he will be standing down as our Moth Officer at the AGM in October. Since taking on this role 9 years ago, Greg has expanded enormously the Branch interest in moths. Not only has he arranged many public opportunities for members to engage with and learn to identify moths, but he has personally given a great deal of encouragement to all concerned. Over the course of those years there have been moth opening events across the county and in many different habitats.

Greg's departure will mean we need to find a replacement. The role initially involves organising a summer programme of moth opening sessions and ensuring that records from the day are input into the Norfolk Moth Survey database. The Moth Officer is also a point of contact for our members if they need identification assistance or directing to someone else more knowledgeable. We are occasionally approached to do moth surveying at places where access is restricted and this can give opportunities to set traps on behalf of BC at interesting sites.

If you are interested in taking on this role, please contact Greg or myself for more information. Please also bear in mind that the Branch is looking for an Events Officer and a Field Trip Organiser. All these roles are very important. As a local branch of BC we need to be in a position to engage with the general public and raise awareness of the plight of our butterflies and moths. We all know the importance of sparking an interest with children at a young age. We can only do this successfully with help from you, our local members.

2019 Photographic Competition

We will be holding our popular Photographic Competition during the branch AGM on 5th October (please see page 29). Everyone attending will be encouraged to vote and the winning entries will be announced on the day. Details of how to enter are as follows:

1. There are two categories you can enter with a prize for both winners
 - 1. British Butterflies and Moths, including immature stages.**
 - 2. Overseas Butterflies and Moths, including immature stages.**
2. All entries must have been photographed during 2019.
3. Entries must be prints up to A4 size (297mm × 210mm) including any mount.
4. Mark the reverse of entries with your full name, address, information on the subject and which category is entered.
5. You are limited to a maximum of three entries in each category.
6. Postal entries should be submitted to the address below to arrive by 25th September. They can be collected after the competition at the AGM but will not be returned by post unless a stamped addressed envelope is provided with the entry.
7. Entries on the day of the competition must be provided at least 20 minutes before the start of the meeting.
8. Some entries will be published in the branch newsletter. Postal print entries can be scanned, but it will be helpful to have digital files sent to the Newsletter Editor at: cbmpublishing@btinternet.com.
For entries submitted on the day to be considered for publication, digital files must be provided.
9. By entering the competition you agree that your photographs can be used in the branch newsletter or on our website. Photographer credits will be given.

Contact details for enquiries and postal entries:

Peter Lindsley, Oak Lodge, Cromer Road, West Runton, Norfolk, NR27 9QT
Tel: 01263 838335 email: cbmpublishing@btinternet.com

Front cover photographs wanted

Peter Lindsley

When taking photographs during the year, possibly for our Photographic Competition, please give thought to taking some in 'portrait' mode. These are often best for use on the front cover of our Newsletter. I would be pleased to receive any that might be suitable.

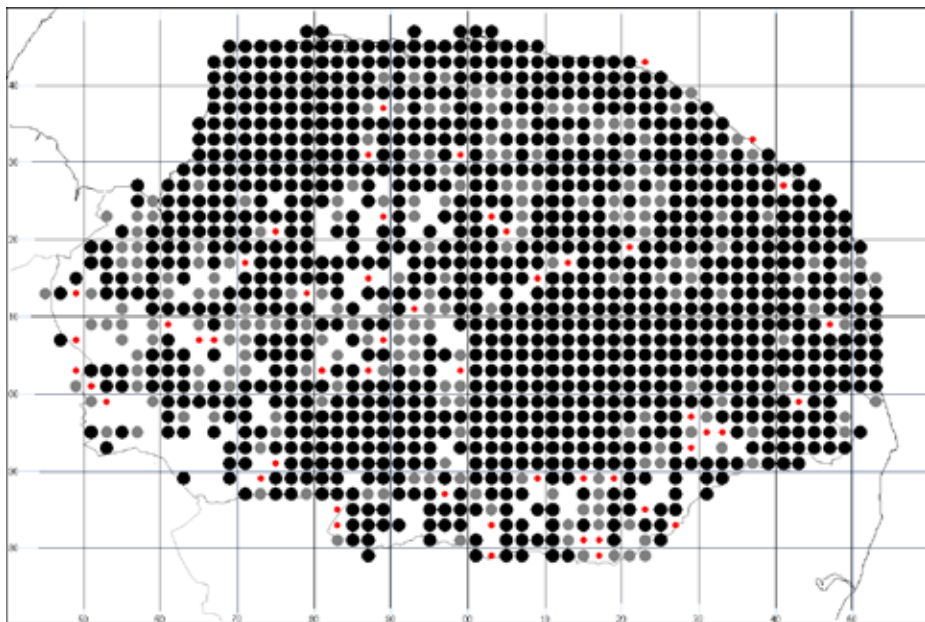
The Norfolk Atlas Project 2011-2019

Andy Brazil

We now enter the last year of recording for the next atlas. The map below shows coverage so far: red have only a single species recorded, grey have between 2 and 5, while black are 6 or more. There remain only 125 blank, unvisited squares to cover. Most are on the edges of the county, but there's an area between Fakenham and Watton with a number of gaps.

Can you help fill in the blanks? Are there any gaps close to you? Can you spare an hour to pop over and write down the butterflies you see one day this summer? "Tetrad bashing" can be a fun way to get to explore unknown and neglected bits of the county, and every square you can fill in will help us complete a full view of the state of Norfolk's butterflies. If you want more details of coverage near you, drop me an email and I'll send you an larger map.

Of course we still want your records even if you live in a filled square. Many of the squares we do have records for are still missing common species, so we still want your records wherever you are.



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Green Hairstreak - spring sunshine at last!

Photo: Peter Lindsley

Butterfly Conservation

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