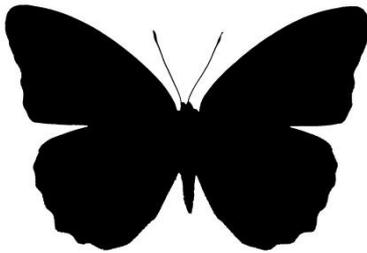


All the Moor Butterflies

2019 survey results summary

This is a summary of the 2019 survey results from Exmoor, Dartmoor and Bodmin Moor. The target species for the surveys were: High Brown Fritillary, Heath Fritillary, Marsh Fritillary and Pearl-bordered Fritillary.



3497

Butterflies recorded



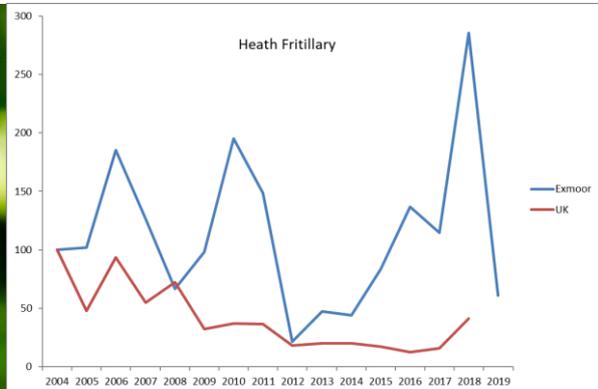
177

Sites surveyed



62

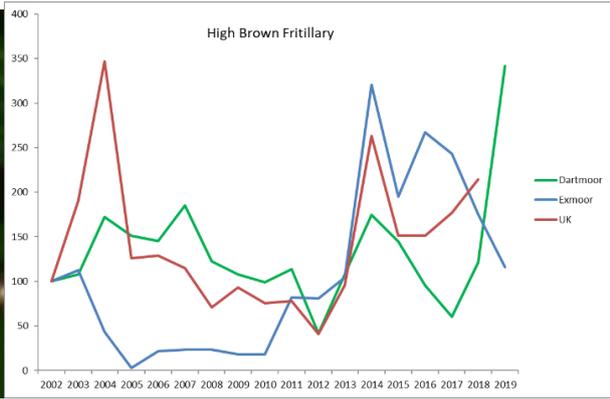
Volunteer surveyors



Heath Fritillary – Exmoor

A poor year, numbers were the lowest they've been in the past 5 years.

The Heath Fritillary had a difficult year in 2019, with numbers at their lowest since 2014. The primary reason for this was the cold and cloudy weather conditions that dominated their flight period in June. In 2019 15 sites were surveyed and there were a total of 13 occupied and 2 unoccupied sites. Within these 13 occupied sites there were 13 colonies. The estimated peak population sizes for the 11 fully surveyed colonies (2 weren't fully surveyed) consisted of 4 large, 1 medium and 6 small. In terms of a 10 year trend (since 2010), of the 11 fully surveyed colonies there is 1 site where the colony size is increasing and 10 sites where the colony size remains stable. The poor weather during the survey period made it impossible to accurately assess how the Heath Fritillary did in 2019.

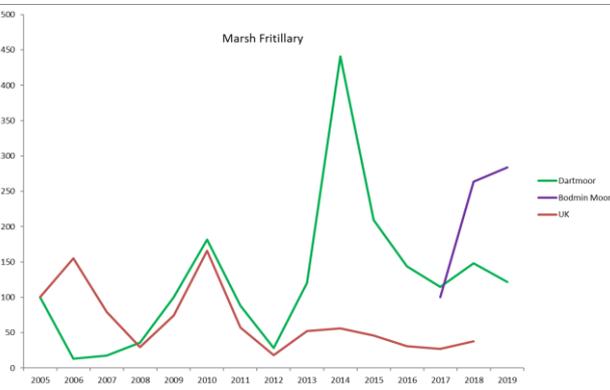


High Brown Fritillary – Exmoor & Dartmoor

Worrying declines on Exmoor but welcome increases on Dartmoor.

On Exmoor in the Heddon Valley, the High Brown Fritillary was recorded on 6 sites. It remained stable on 1, increased on 1 and decreased on 4. Numbers have been falling on Exmoor since 2016 and at some sites the numbers are now very low. The reasons for this decline are not fully understood, however they are probably linked to the lack of grazing on many sites and issues relating to bracken growth and climate change.

Things are looking more positive for this species on Dartmoor where numbers have been rising since 2017. It was recorded on 8 sites in 2019. At its core metapopulation network in the Dart Valley, it increased at 5 sites and declined at 1. The grazing of these sites by cattle and ponies, combined with habitat management by the Devon Wildlife Trust, is having a positive impact on the habitat in the Dart Valley.

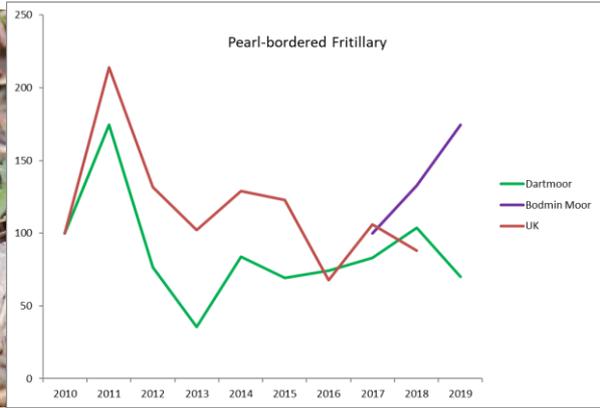


Marsh Fritillary – Dartmoor & Bodmin Moor

Poor weather halted the recovery on Dartmoor, whilst on Bodmin Moor further new colonies were discovered.

Marsh Fritillary was recorded on 32 sites on Dartmoor. Numbers rose on some sites, but remained stable or fell on others. The anticipated rise (due to natural boom-bust population cycle) did not occur at many sites, probably due to the poor weather during the flight period in June.

A further 6 new sites were discovered on Bodmin Moor in 2019. This brings the total number of new sites discovered over the past 3 years to 29 (23 completely new and 6 rediscoveries). The number of known sites has increased by 152% on Bodmin Moor. These discoveries have transformed our knowledge of this species on Bodmin Moor and show how important this landscape is.



Pearl-bordered Fritillary – Dartmoor & Bodmin Moor

Numbers fell on Dartmoor, whilst positive increases were observed on Bodmin Moor.

The Pearl-bordered Fritillary had an ok year on Dartmoor and was recorded on 36 sites. Numbers fell or stabilised at most sites, with a few notable increases at sites like Castle Drogo. The species has remained stable on Dartmoor since 2014, which is positive to see.

The Pearl-bordered Fritillary had a good year in 2019 on Bodmin Moor. Of the 7 sites where the species is found, 6 increased and 1 decreased. It was particularly pleasing to see numbers rise at Jordans and Pendavy, two sites that project has carried out habitat management on.

Thankyou!

This is the final species monitoring update from the All the Moor Butterflies project, as the project comes to the end of its 3 years of Lottery funding at the end of March 2020.

We wish to say a massive thankyou to all of the amazing volunteers and partner organisations who have helped survey these species. You have all done a brilliant job and provided us with essential data that helps us to monitor how these special species are faring.

A special thankyou also goes to the landowners and farmers who have allowed us to monitor the species on their land and who have supported our work with them on the project.

Thanks to our funders:



Devon & Cornwall Branches