

Kent & South East London Branch

ANNUAL BUTTERFLY REPORT 2020



**Butterfly
Conservation**

Saving butterflies, moths and our environment

Introduction 2020

Of course, the 2020 season was totally overshadowed by the pandemic. The lockdown restrictions meant that transects could not be walked for part of the year, and visits to some sites were not possible. However, it did mean that more people were able to record butterflies in their gardens, or on walks from their homes. This resulted in more records being submitted than ever before – a total of 72,200! Once again much of the credit for this report is due to John Bangay, who has converted all the sightings recorded on iRecord, Transect Walker and the Garden Butterfly and Big Butterfly Count schemes and put them into a form that I can study and pick out highlights. He has also produced all the maps for the report. Records that have been sent directly to me by email or on paper recording forms have also been entered onto the Branch database and sent to the Co-ordinator of the National Recording Scheme. Butterfly Conservation is very grateful to you for your efforts. The records will be used to update the national distribution maps so that changes in butterfly populations can be monitored.

There were several periods of hot, dry weather in 2020, making it a good year for many butterflies. Several of our rare species, such as Heath Fritillary and Duke of Burgundy, did well and there were more Nymphalids around, even Small Tortoiseshells. Another highlight was a sighting of a Grayling, after six years absence! Brown Hairstreak continued to increase its range in the Bromley/Orpington area and new sites were discovered for Silver-spotted Skipper, Small Blue, Silver-washed Fritillary, Wall and Purple Emperor. Some species, such as Brown Argus, were in rather low numbers, possibly because of drying out of their foodplants when in the larval stage.

Numbers of the commoner migrants, such as Painted Lady and Clouded Yellow, were quite low but several Swallowtails and Large Tortoiseshells were seen, plus a few Long-tailed Blues, a Camberwell Beauty and a Queen of Spain Fritillary.

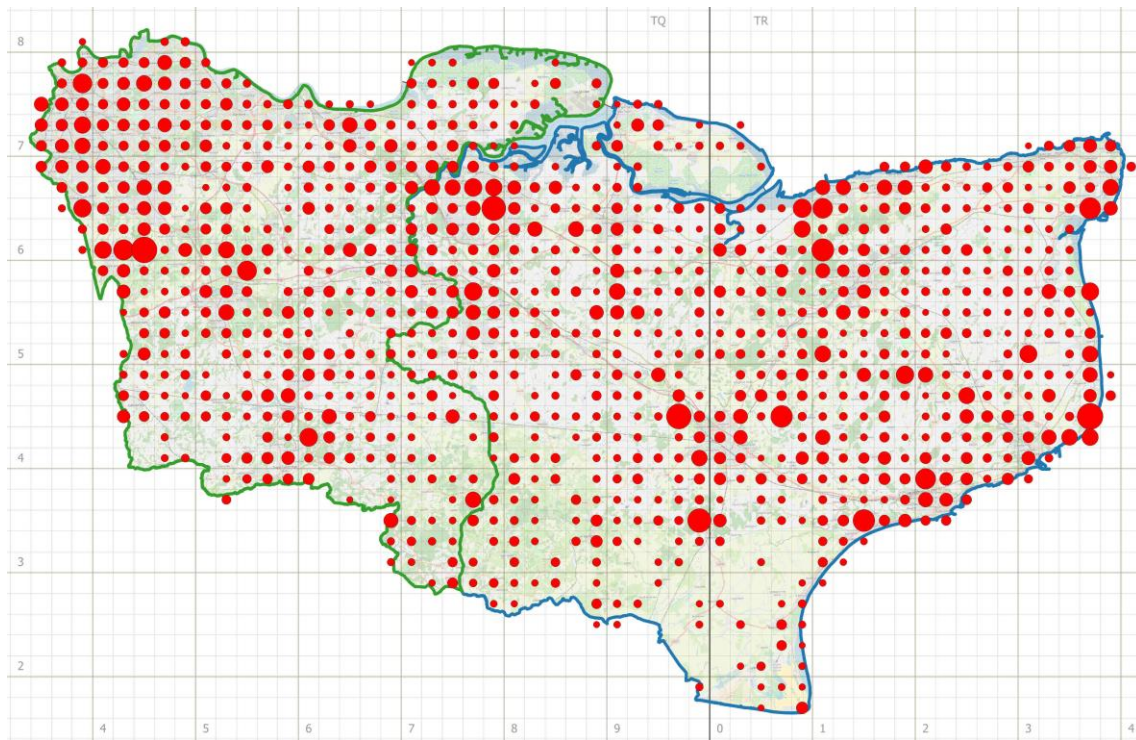
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All maps © OpenStreetMap contributors, CC-BY-SA

Front Cover photo: Mating pair Chalkhill Blues, Lydden Temple Ewel; Paolo Farina

Map of all 2020 butterfly sightings

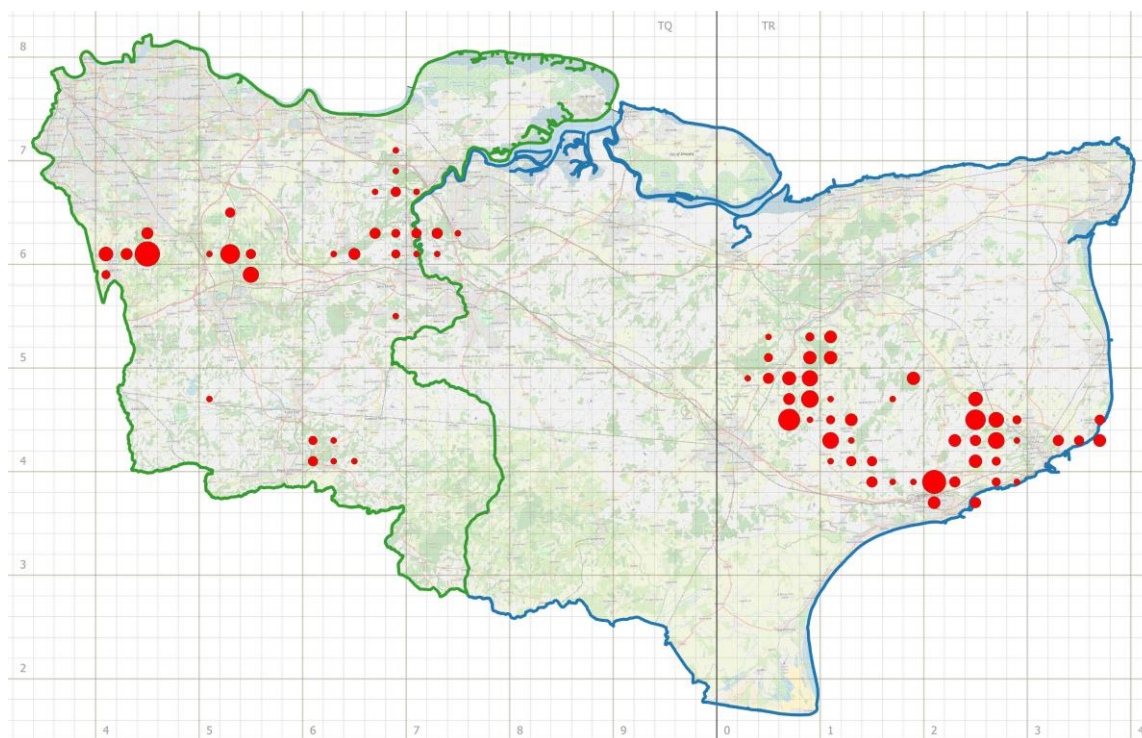
In this distribution map, the size of the dot indicates the number of records from that 2 kilometre square.



2020 was the first year of the latest five-year recording period, as used by Butterfly Conservation nationally for comparing populations of butterflies between different time periods, so that changes can be assessed.

The data boxes (above the text) of the following species reports show a combined 2015-19 figure for the total number of tetrads that each species was recorded in during that period, and also a figure for the 2010-14 period for comparison. Other figures in bold refer to 2020 data. Figures in brackets refer to 2019 data.

HESPERIIDAE



DINGY SKIPPER *Erynnis tages*

79 (51) Tetrads

70 Tetrads 2015-19 (82, 2010-14)

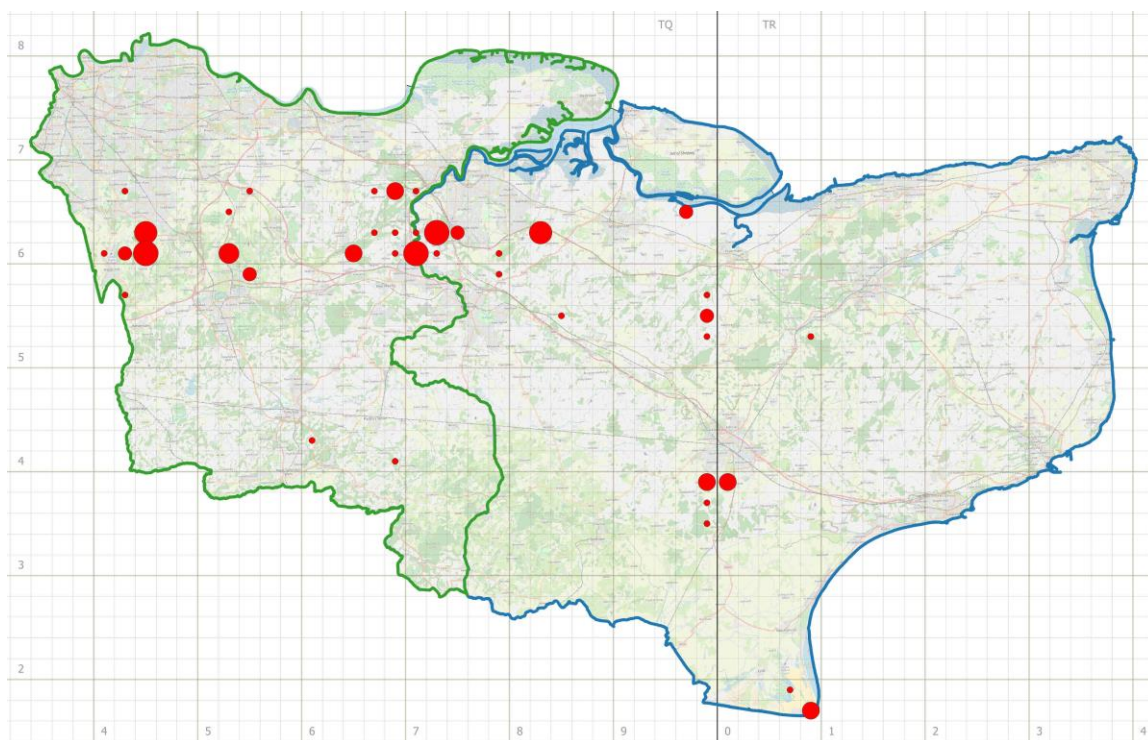
First: Lydden (S. Cutt)

Apr 9 (Apr 13)

Last: Brabourne (J.Martin/K.Reel)

Aug 31 (Aug 4)

After the early sighting of **Dingy Skipper** at Lydden by Steve Cutt on 9th April, the next sighting wasn't until the 20th. There were some high counts at Wye Downs, with 17 seen by David Harper on 23 April and 22 by Emily Neighbour on 15 May. Further east along the North Downs, Joan Martin and Kelvin Reel found 59 roosting at Brabourne on 8 May, and Dan Tuson reported 17 at Postling and 29 at Wolverton in late May. In the western half of the county there were counts of 19 by Ewan Shilland near Cudham on 9 May and by Fred O'Hare at High Elms CP on 18 May, while John Waghorn counted 21 at Trosley CP on 16 May and Stephen Weeks saw 16 near Upper Halling on 15 May. The first generation ended on 14 June and there was a large second generation starting on 11 July and with highest counts of 35 on 29 July by Alfie Gay at Cheriton Hill, near Folkestone, and 16 on 20 July by Robert Newington at Lydden Hill.



GRIZZLED SKIPPER *Pyrgus malvae*

39 (29) Tetrads

53 Tetrads 2015-19 (62, 2010-14)

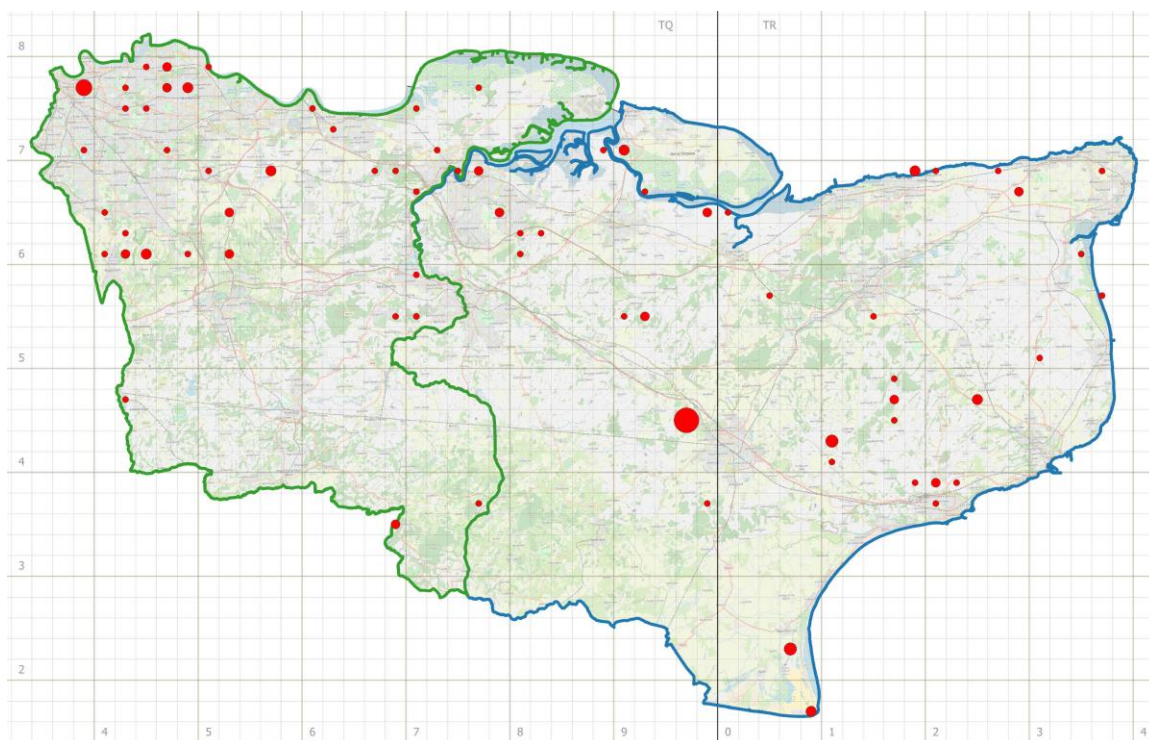
First: Bredhurst (R. Knight); Wouldham (R. Pennington)

Apr 19 (Apr 18)

Last: Snoad St (A. Jupp); Horsmonden (S. Mills)

June 8 (Aug 31)

Counts of **Grizzled Skipper** were again rather low in 2020, with the only double-figure count being 12 found at a site at Kingsnorth, near Ashford, by Rob Price on 20 May. John Waghorn saw 9 at Trosley CP on 16 May and there were counts of 7 in late April from Daphne Mills at Burham and Fred O'Hare at High Elms CP. The good news is that several new sites were discovered for this species :- at Farningham (Monica Percival), Ham Hill, near Snodland (Mike Easterbrook), Throwley (Tony Witts & Amy Poole), Horsmonden (Stephen Mills) and Sparrow Wood, near Orpington (Wanda Hagan).



ESSEX SKIPPER *Thymelicus lineola*

72 (82) Tetrads

193 Tetrads 2015-19 (200, 2010-14)

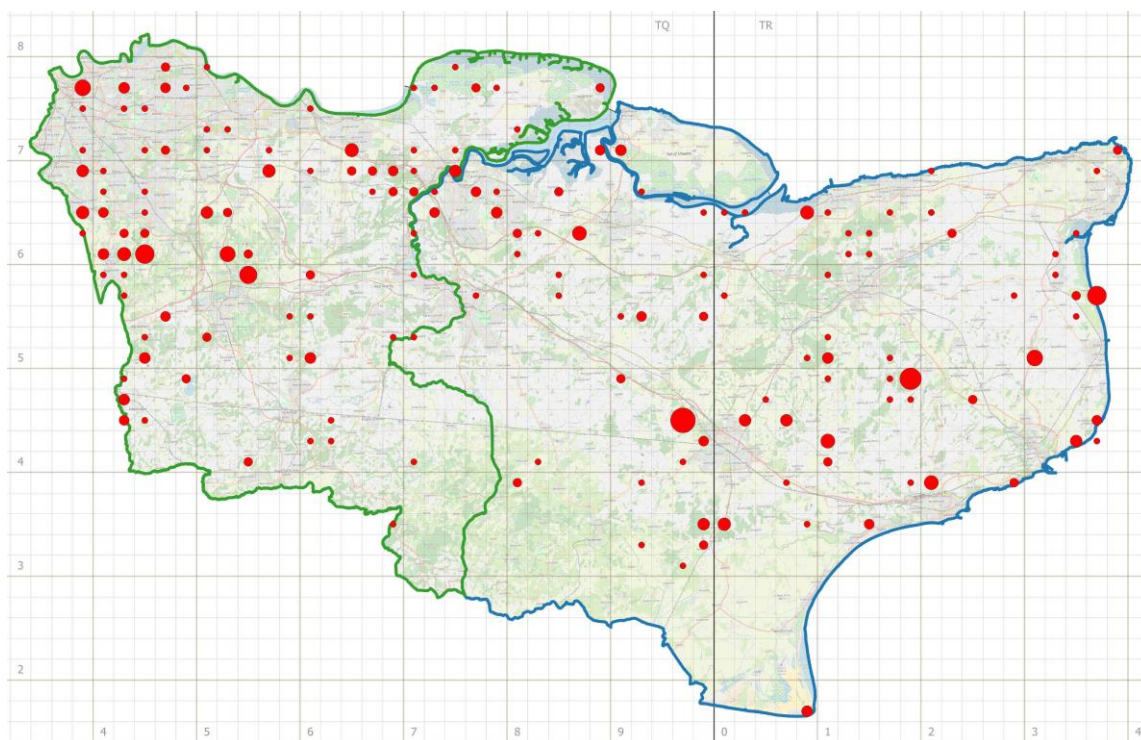
First: Plumstead (M. Robinson)

May 30 (June 20)

Last: Park Gate Down (R. Insall)

Aug 9 (Aug 13)

Numbers of **Essex Skippers** remained low in 2020. The highest counts were 40 at Woolwich Common on 5 July from Paul Gibbs and 25 at Dungeness BO on 17 July from David Walker. The first sighting on 30 May by Mike Robinson was three weeks earlier than in 2019.



SMALL SKIPPER *Thymelicus sylvestris*

164 (157) Tetrads

299 Tetrads 2015-19 (294, 2010-14)

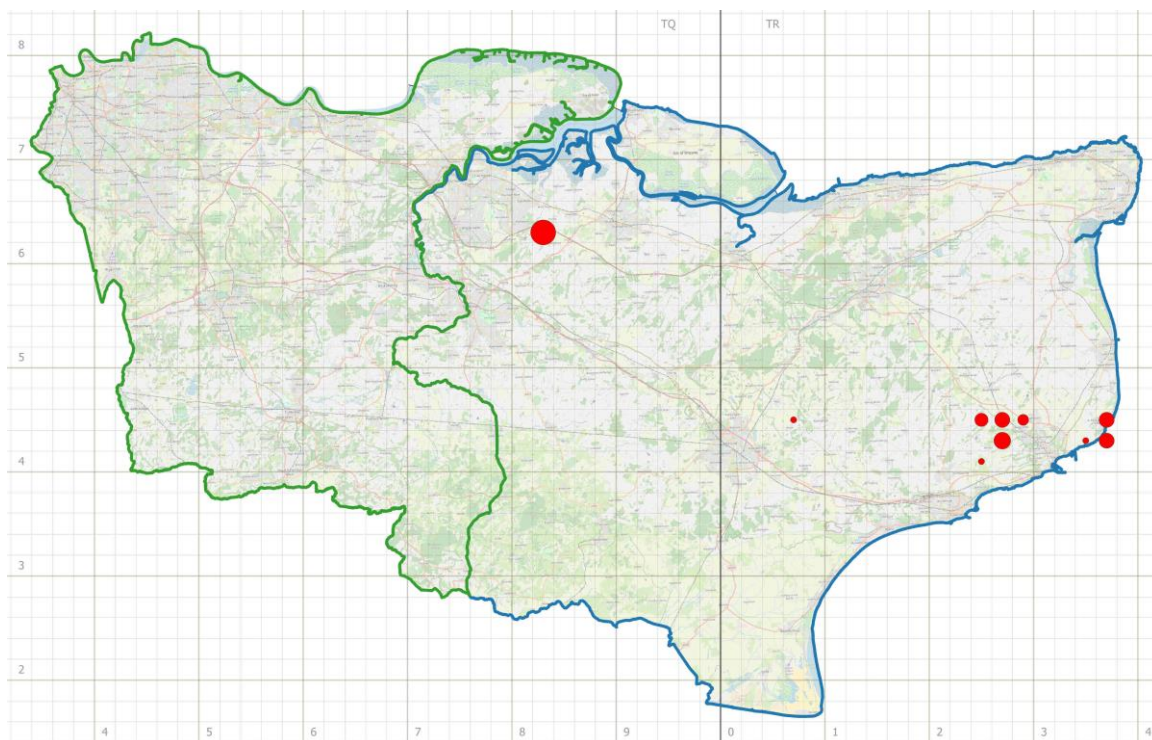
First: Edenbridge (D.Eade)

May 26 (May 30)

Last: Chetney Marshes (D. Tutt)

Aug 14 (Sept 16)

There were some high counts of **Small Skipper** in 2020, with 500 recorded by Derek Tutt at Chetney Marshes on 12 July, 250 seen at Dungeness Bird Observatory by David Walker on 18 June and 102 counted at Sandwich Bay by Steffan Walton on 23 June.



SILVER-SPOTTED SKIPPER *Hesperia comma*

10 (11) Tetrads

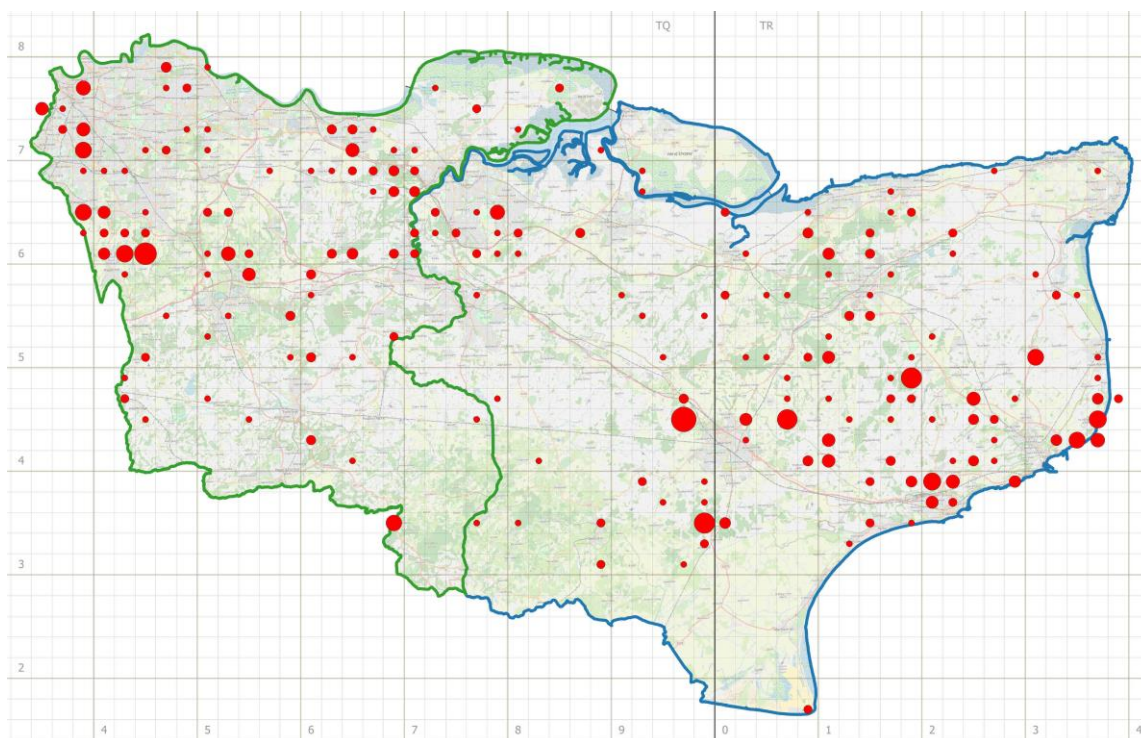
16 Tetrads 2015-19 (17, 2010-14)

First: Queendown Warren (J. & L. Pell)

June 29 (July 29)

Last: Wye Downs (E. Neighbour); South Foreland (I. Hodgson) **Aug 27** (Sept 2)

There was an incredibly early sighting of **Silver-spotted Skipper** on 29 June by John and Liz Pell at Queendown Warren. Good numbers were seen at Queendown, with 25 counted by Chris Barnes on 2 August and 21 by Howard Vaughan on the 4th. John Websper and Mike Sykes recorded 93 at a site near Lydden on 24 August and 8 at Great Watersend on 10 August, while Francesca Partridge saw 10 at Temple Ewell on the 15th. Dan Tuson found this butterfly at two sites at Ewell Minnis, with 22 seen in total, and Iona Dubieniec discovered one at a site in the Alkham Valley. Small numbers (2 to 3) were seen in the South Foreland area by Ian Hodgson and Mike Watts on separate occasions.



LARGE SKIPPER *Ochlodes sylvanus*

193 (160) Tetrads

335 Tetrads 2015-19 (326, 2010-14)

First: Marden Meadow (D. Mills)

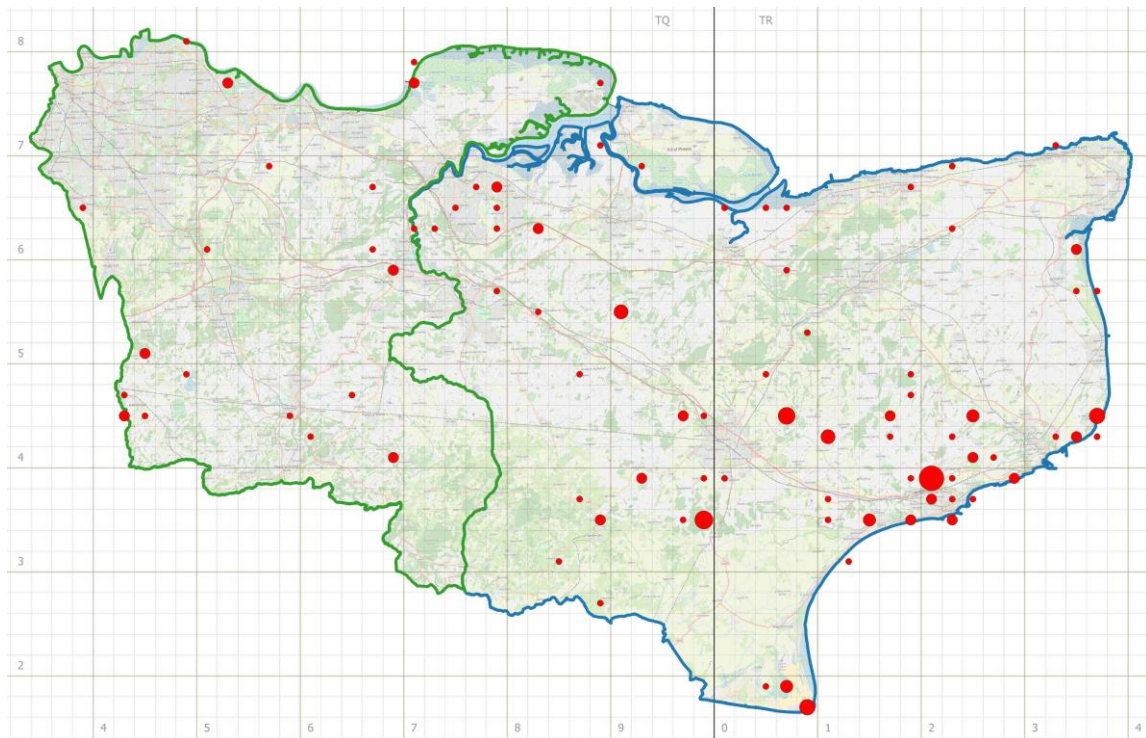
May 17 (May 23)

Last: South Foreland (I. Hodgson)

Aug 20 (Aug 31)

There were good numbers of **Large Skipper** in the Wye area, with 39 counted on Wye Downs on 22 June by Emily Neighbour and 19 seen at Wye Crown on 15 June by Ade Jupp. Robert Insall recorded 35 at Hothfield Common on 24 June. Further east, Bill Martin had counts of 22 at both Covert Wood, Barham and Telegraph Farm, Tilmanstone, while Alfie Gay counted 27 on Folkestone Downs.

PIERIDAE



CLOUDED YELLOW *Colias croceus*

88 (55) Tetrads

174 Tetrads 2015-19 (170, 2010-14)

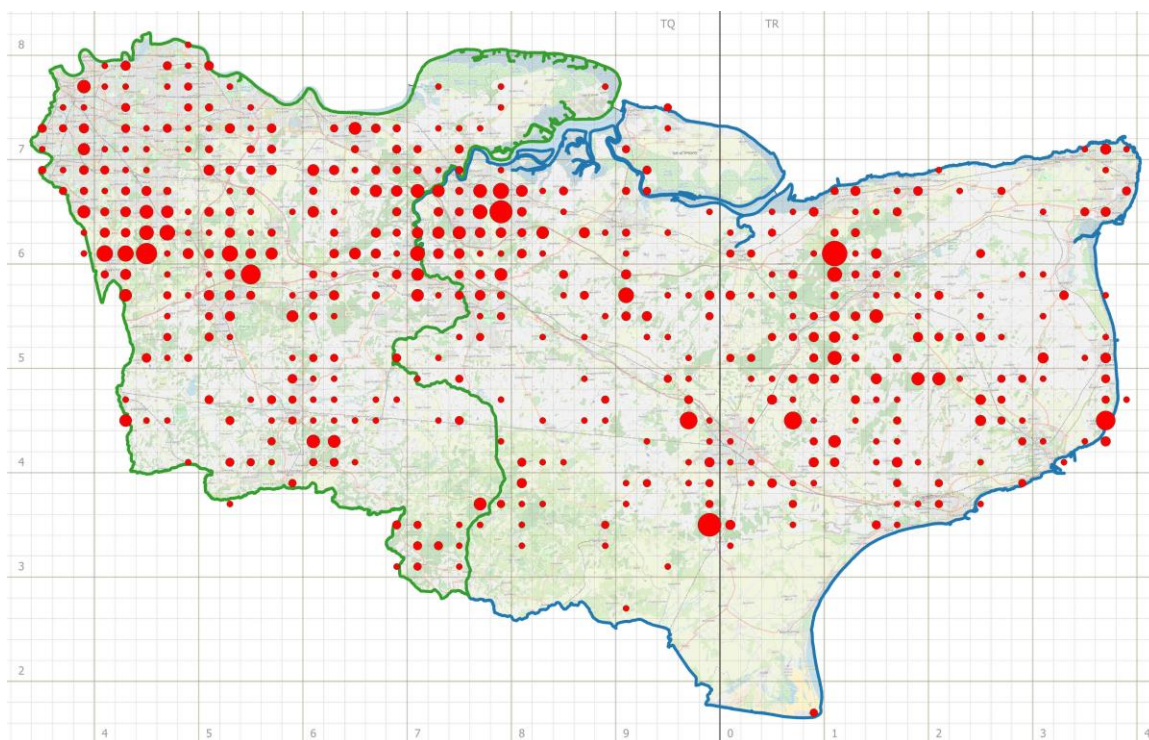
First: West Wickham (S. Jones)

Apr 5 (Mar 18)

Last: Brabourne (J. Martin/K. Reel)

Nov 12 (Nov 3)

There were fewer sightings of **Clouded Yellow** in the spring of 2020 than in recent years, with only three records in April and three in May. After that they were only seen in ones and twos for most of the year, with a few counts of 3 in September, a count of 5 at Brabourne on 20 September and a report of 4 at St Margaret's on 11 October.



BRIMSTONE *Gonepteryx rhamni*

463 (427) Tetrads

564 Tetrads 2015-19 (370, 2010-14)

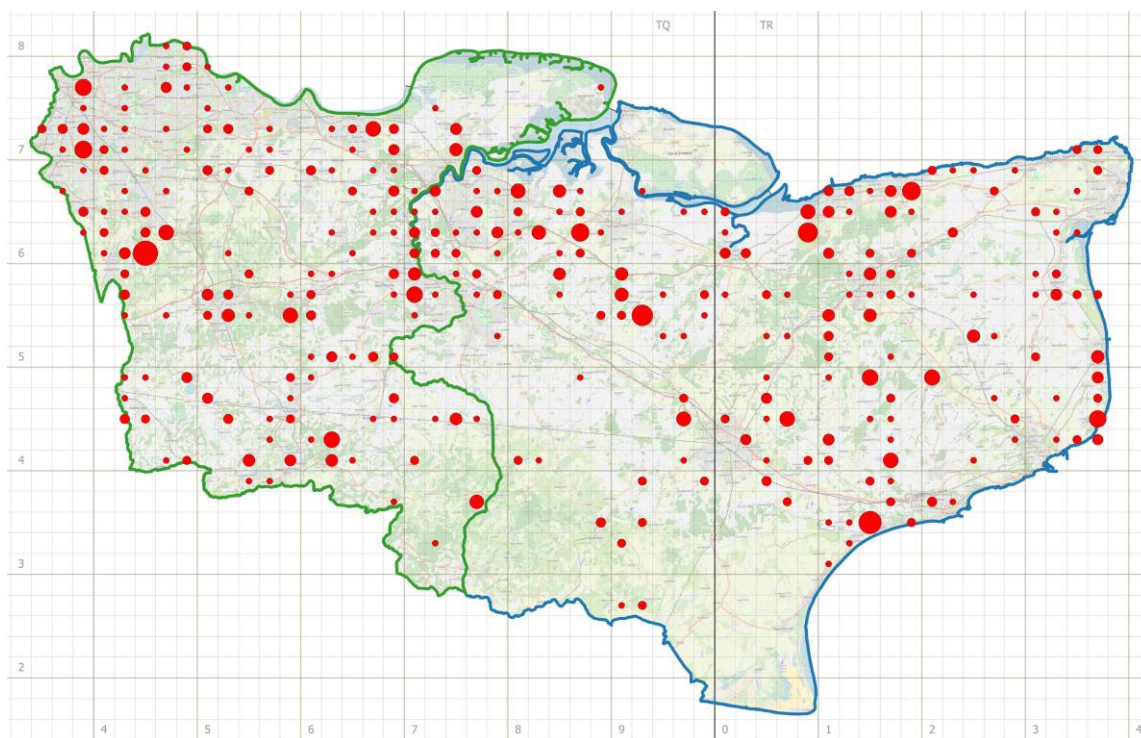
First: Patricxbourne (G. Smith)

Jan 18 (Jan 13)

Last: Tonbridge (V. Holah)

Nov 28 (Nov 3)

There were some high counts of **Brimstone** in the spring of 2020, with 31 seen by David Harper at Wye Downs on 7 April, 29 counted by Kevin Tolhurst at Darland Banks on 20 May and 25 seen by Michael Walter at RSPB Blean Woods on 15 May. John Bangay recorded 16 at Kemsing Down on 15 May and there were counts of 14 by Fred O'Hare at Biggin Hill and Janet Wilson at Downe Bank in mid-May. Numbers were lower later in the year, though Howard Vaughan counted 15 at Plantlife's Ranscombe Farm reserve, Cuxton on 30 July and Alan Cooper saw 15 at Orlestone Forest on 4 August.



ORANGE-TIP *Anthocharis cardamines*

299 (301) Tetrads

510 Tetrads 2015-19 (500, 2010-14)

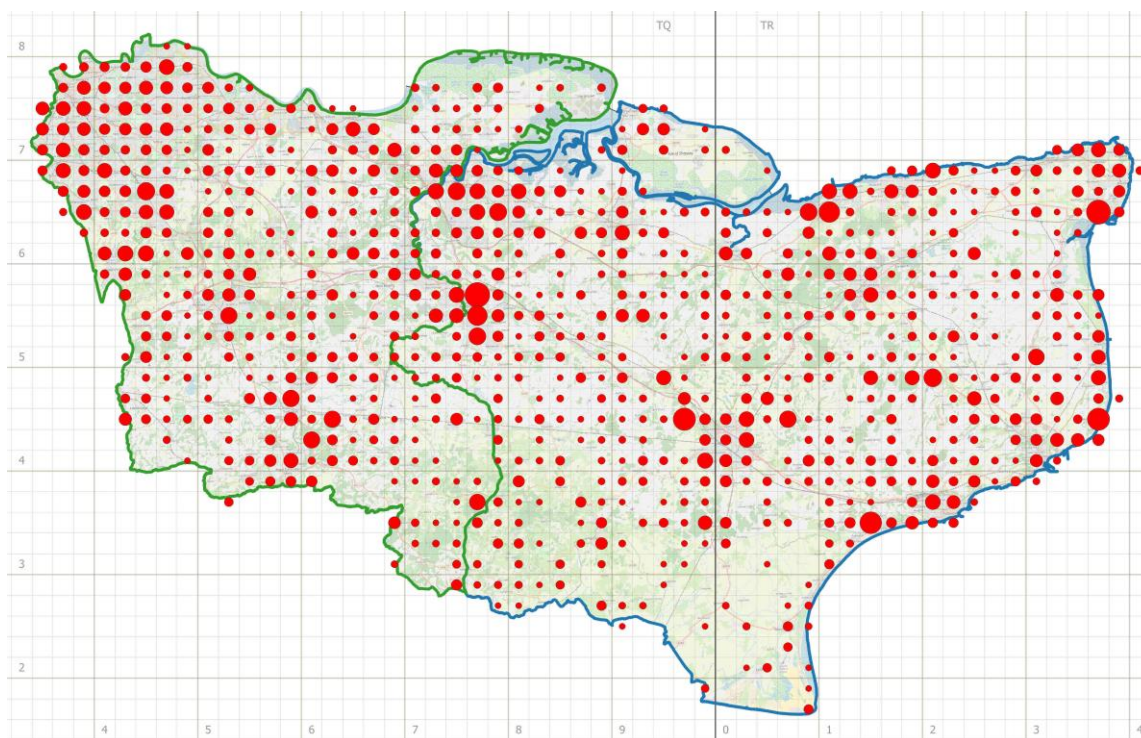
First: Doddington (A. Brookman)

Mar 19 (Mar 23)

Last: Wichling (G. Fillingham)

July 12 (July 12)

The warm weather in the spring of 2020 resulted in five sightings of **Orange-tip** in March. There were several double-figure counts. Peter and Pauline Heathcote counted 25 at Hartley Woods on 23 April, David Harper reported 15 at Wye Downs on 26 April and Sarah Ingle saw 12 at Basted on 12 April. David Eade reported 11 at Edenbridge and there were counts of 10 at Haysden CP and Dene Park by Christopher Dobson, also 10 at Rainham by Iain Akers and at Herne Bay by Arnie van Orsouw, all in April. There was again a late sighting in July.



LARGE WHITE *Pieris brassicae*

815 (700) Tetrads

805 Tetrads 2015-19 (585, 2010-14)

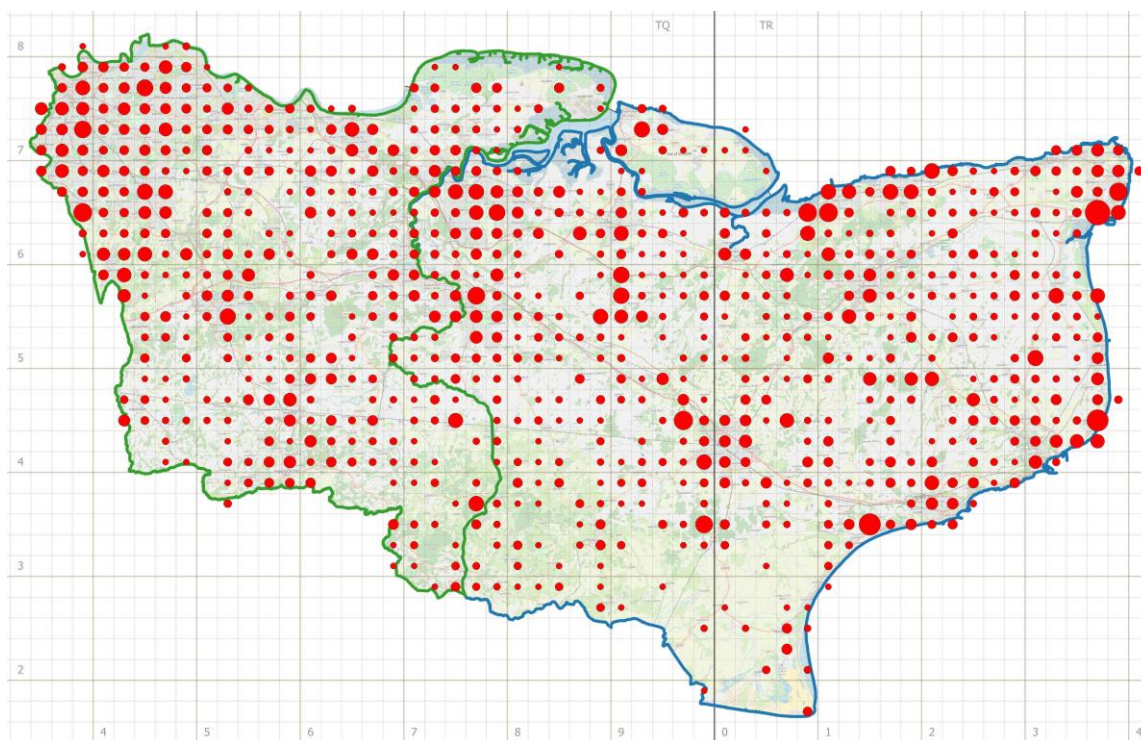
First: Pegwell Bay (E. Woollas)

Mar 3 (Mar 26)

Last: Cudham (J. McShane)

Nov 7 (Oct 22)

Numbers of **Large White** were low early in the year, though Darren Day saw 28 at Nettlestead Green on 27 April. The highest counts were in July. On the 3rd Jill Carr saw over 30 in a field of soya beans at Five Oak Green and Lucy Adams saw 26 at Shorne. On the 7th Jack Stubbins counted 85 at Conningbrook Lakes, on the 11th David Harper saw 102 at Wye, and on 17th Alison Hedley saw 48 at Jury's Gap and Mark Pickford reported 60 at Penshurst. Evelyn Andrews saw 44 at Woolage Green on the 24th and Graham Skinner counted 47 at Kennington on 29th. In early August Keith Gates saw 37 at Dymchurch and Jim Jameson 60 at Faversham.



SMALL WHITE *Pieris rapae*

809 (738) Tetrads

853 Tetrads 2015-19 (607, 2010-14)

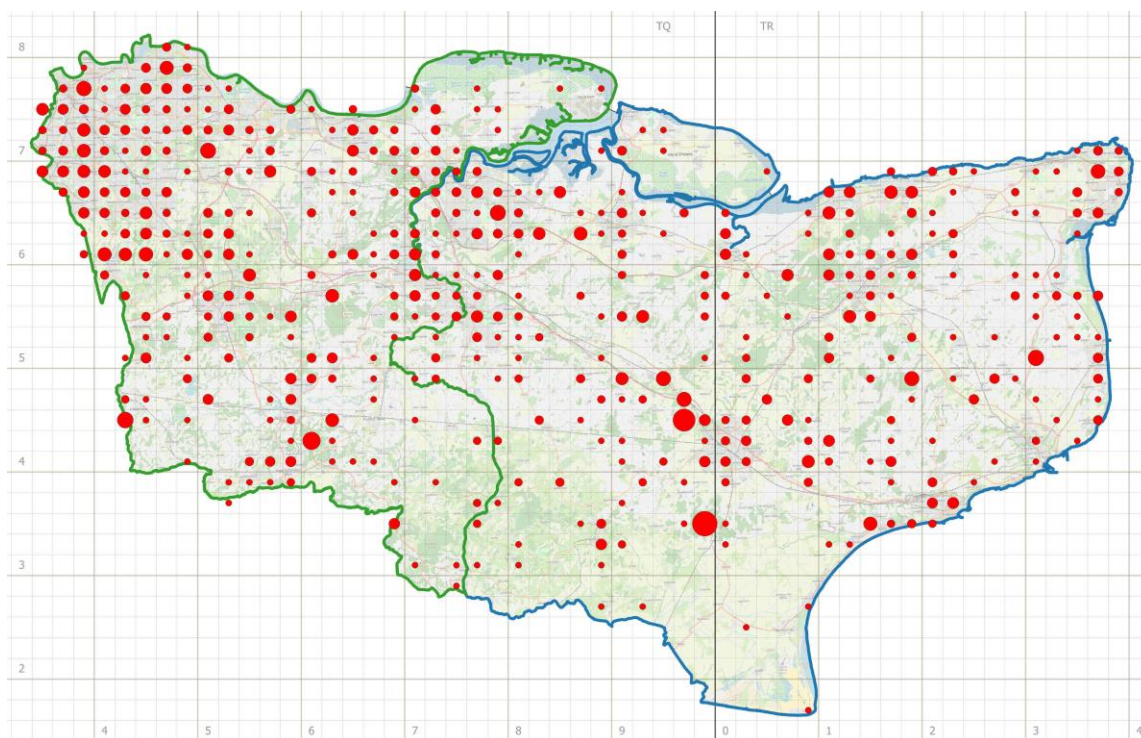
First: Cudham (E. Shilland)

Mar 1 (Feb 23)

Last: Strood (H. Vaughan)

Nov 8 (Oct 27)

There were some high counts of **Small White** in late June and throughout July. Pauline and Peter Heathcote saw 60 at New Barn on 25 June, while John Smith recorded 181 at Reculver CP on 23 June and 261 on 12 July. On 11 July David Harper saw 124 at Wye, Emily Neighbour saw 91 at St Margaret's Bay and Ian Hodgson 76 at nearby South Foreland, suggesting a possible immigration from France. Martin Newcombe counted 72 at Wrinsted on 12 July and Steffan Walton recorded 86 at Sandwich Bay on the 7th. There were high counts at RSPB Cliffe Pools, with 126 there on 22 July (Barrie Puttock), 166 on 10 August (Derek Goodban) and 100 on 20 September (Grant Hazlehurst). Further inland, Cameron Rance saw 160 at Sandhurst on 23 July.



GREEN-VEINED WHITE *Pieris napi*

458 (445) Tetrads

603 Tetrads 2015-19 (470, 2010-14)

First: New Barn (P. & P. Heathcote)

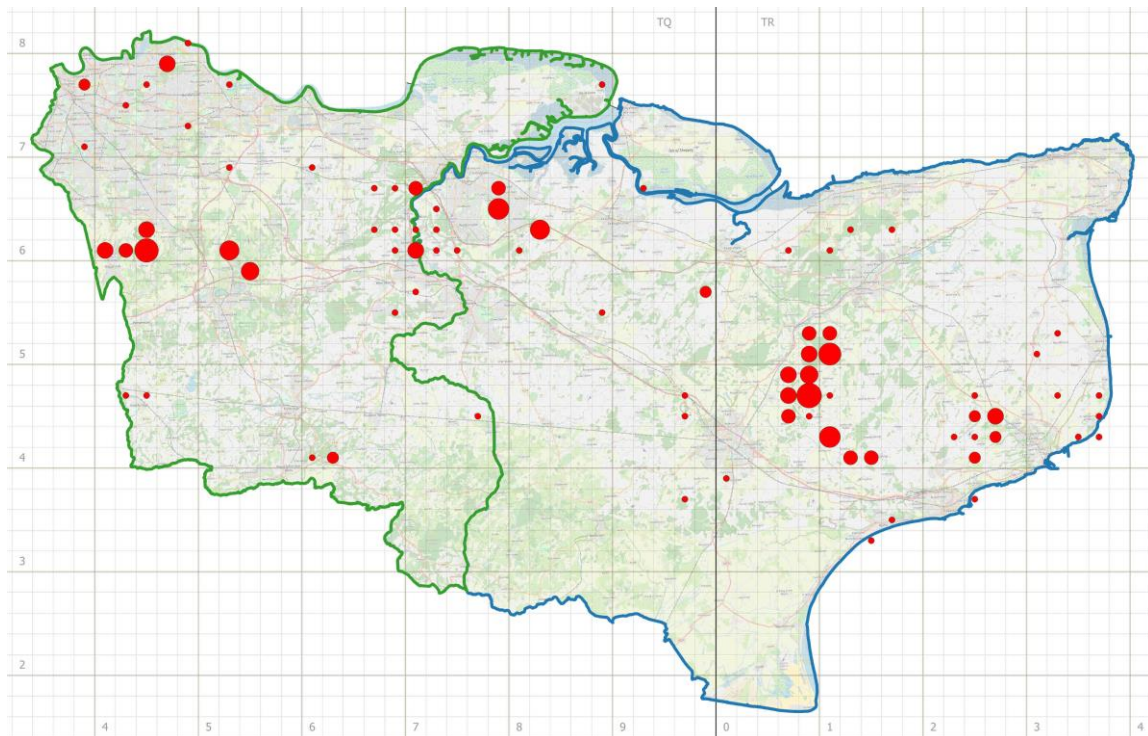
Mar 17 (Mar 24)

Last: East Malling (D. Chambers/M. Easterbrook)

Oct 5 (Sept 26)

The highest counts of **Green-veined White** were all in the second half of July. Peter Tyler saw 39 at Foxden Wood, near Egerton, on the 17th, Pippa Spiridonov reported 40 at Orpington on 18th, Sharon Jones saw 20 at Dartford on 26th and Robert Insall counted 31 at Hothfield Common on 29th.

LYCAENIDAE



GREEN HAIRSTREAK *Callophrys rubi*

82 (90) Tetrads

136 Tetrads 2015-19 (128, 2010-14)

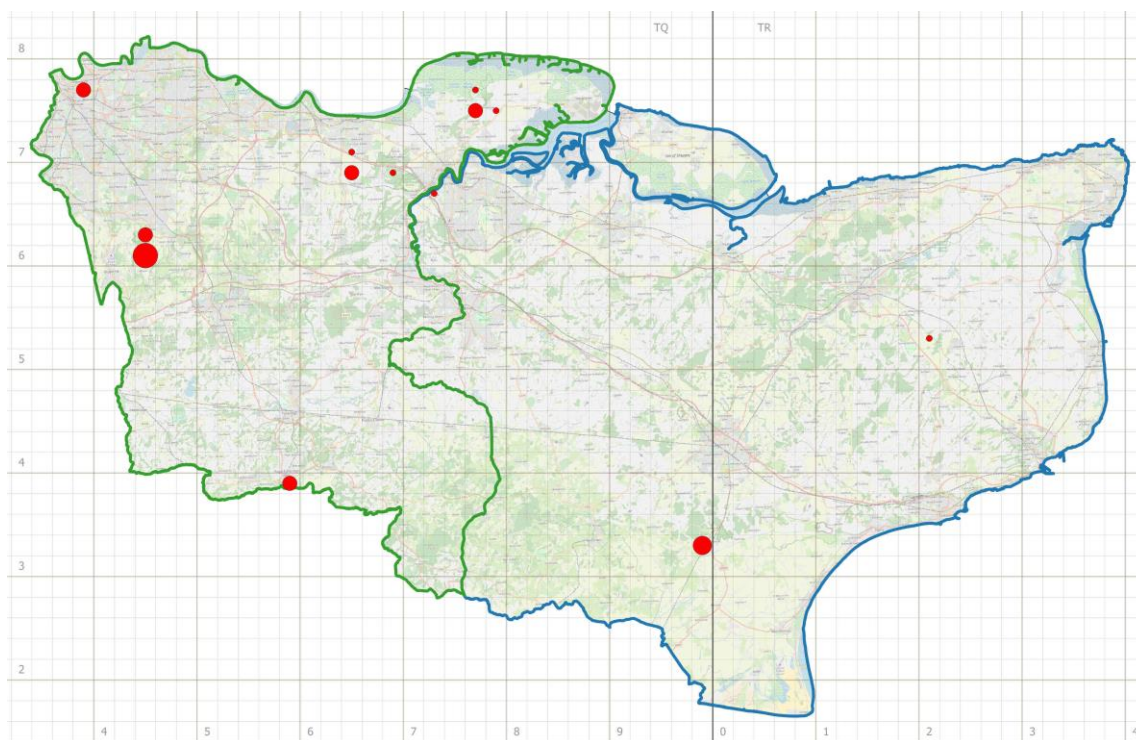
First: Cudham (E. Shilland)

Apr 10 (Mar 24)

Last: Darland Banks (L.Taylor)

July 7 (July 16)

There was only one double-figure count of **Green Hairstreak** in 2020 but that was a high one, with 24 counted at Brabourne on 24 April by Joan Martin and Kelvin Reel. There were counts of 7 at Darland Banks by Kevin Tolhurst and at High Elms CP by Fred O'Hare, while Nick Osler saw 6 at Shoreham.



WHITE-LETTER HAIRSTREAK *Satyrrium w-album*

13 (12) Tetrads

38 Tetrads 2015-19 (31, 2010-14)

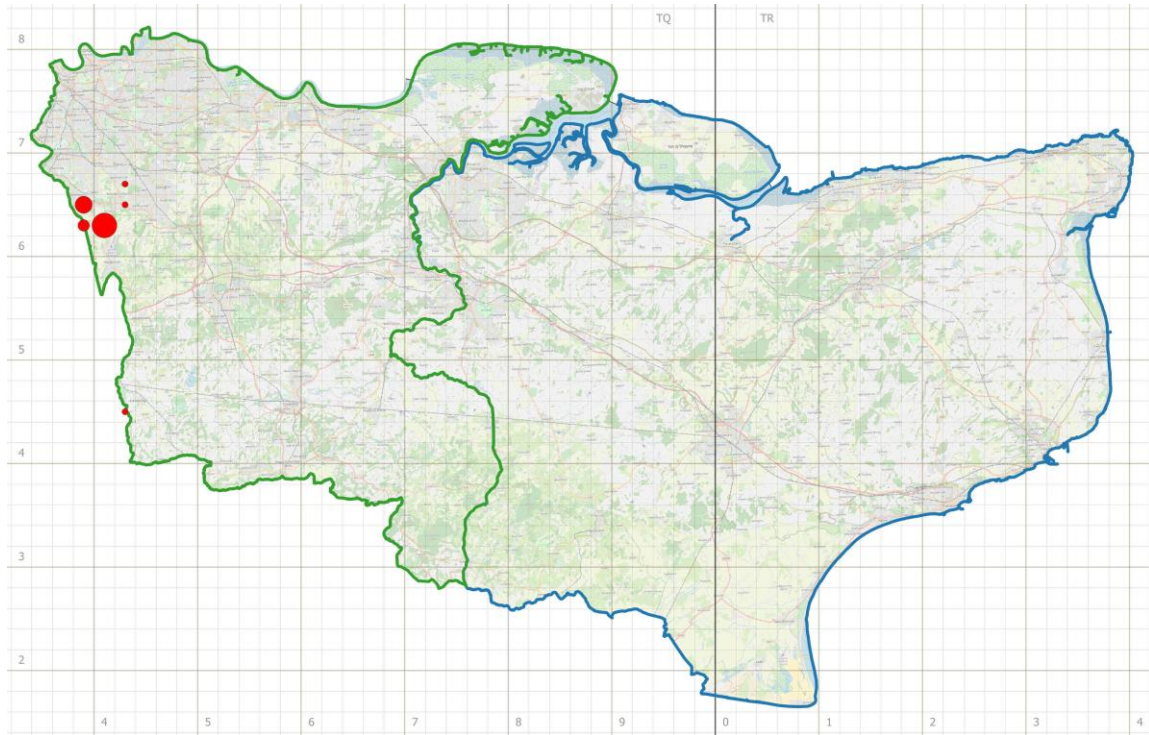
First: Cudham (E. Shilland)

June 13 (June 25)

Last: Adisham Woods (K. Heaven)

July 31 (Aug 19)

There were counts of 7 **White-letter Hairstreaks** at the Royal Military Canal, near Warehorne by Peter Burness and Rob Price on 18 June and at High Elms CP by Keith Perry on 25 June, and 6 were seen by Colin Brotherwood at RSPB Northward Hill on 28 June. New sites for this species were discovered at Adisham Woods (Keith Heaven), Cobham Park (Howard Vaughan), Nash St (Karen Hall), Rochester (Carole Tyrrell), Greenwich Park (Joe Beale) and Gravesend (Malcolm Jennings).



BROWN HAIRSTREAK *Thecla betulae*

6 (6) Tetrads

9 Tetrads 2015-19 (0, 2010-14)

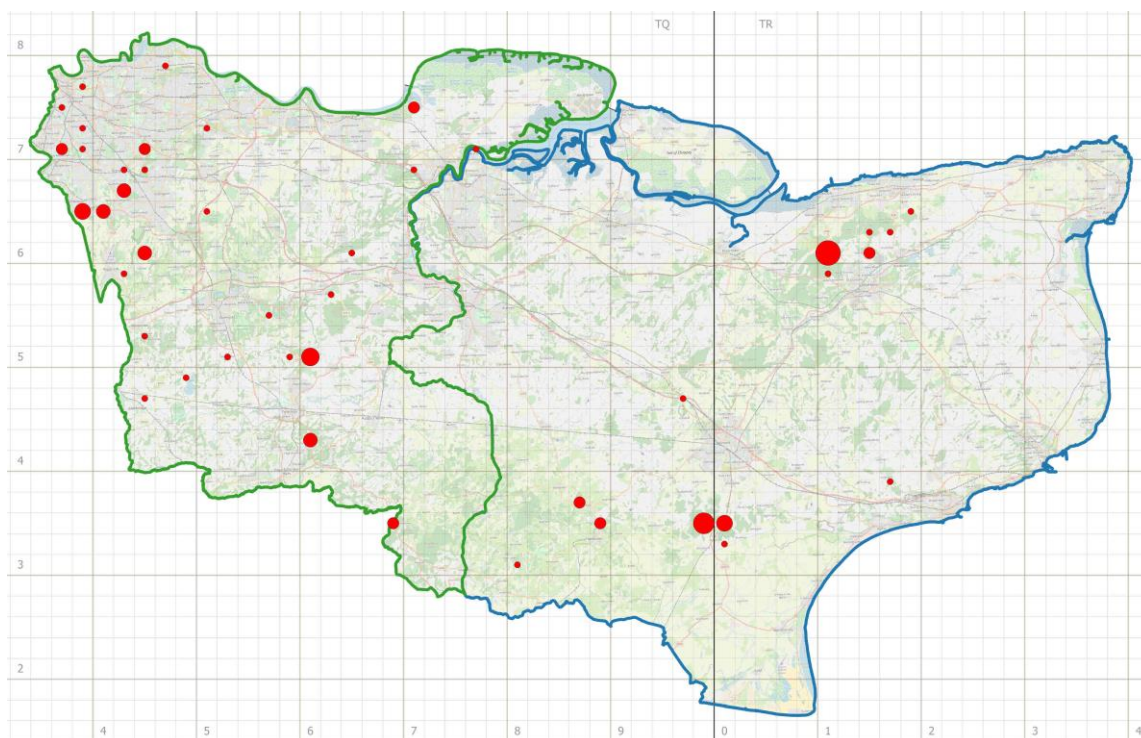
First: Keston (F. O'Hare/K. Perry)

Aug 1 (Aug 8)

Last: Keston (F. O'Hare)

Sept 22 (Sept14)

At Keston Fred O'Hare saw 7 **Brown Hairstreak** adults on 20 August and Eric Barlow reported 3 at Nash on 1 September. Adults were seen in the West Wickham area by Cliff Robson, Sue Jones and Fred O'Hare and there was further evidence of spread with the discovery of eggs at Jubilee CP, near Orpington by Peter Smart and at Ninehams Wood, near Farnborough by Bob Harrop. In the other part of our region where this species has appeared, David Eade saw an adult at Edenbridge on 27 August.



PURPLE HAIRSTREAK *Favonius (Neozephyrus) quercus*

44 (26) Tetrads

83 Tetrads 2015-19 (96, 2010-14)

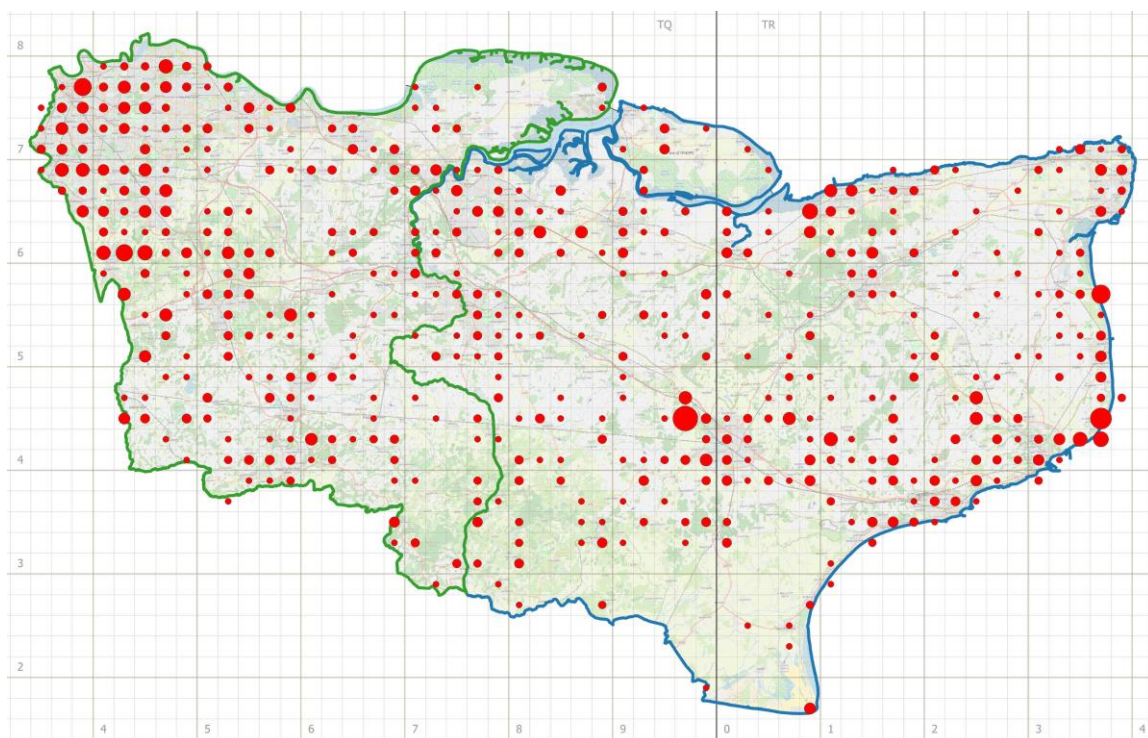
First: Packing Wood (A. Stubbs)

June 6 (June 28)

Last: Mincing Wood (L. Brown)

Sept 1 (Aug 2)

There was a very early sighting of **Purple Hairstreak** on 6 June by Alan Stubbs at Packing Wood. Keith Perry saw 10 at Petts Wood on 23 June, Alan Ford counted 12 at Bough Beech on 12 July and Ian Wright reported 11 at Crofton Woods on 31 July.



SMALL COPPER *Lycaena phlaeas*

486 (278) Tetrads

425 Tetrads 2015-19 (280, 2010-14)

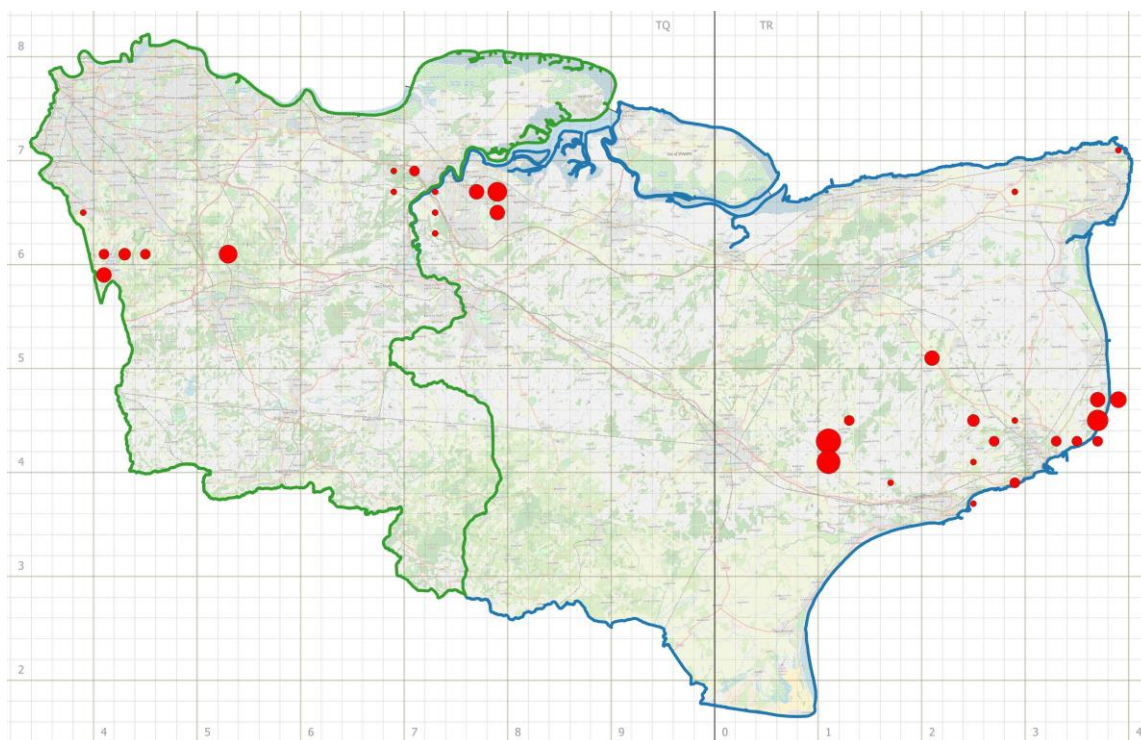
First: Dungeness BO (D. Walker); Capel-le-Ferne (I. Roberts)

Apr 7 (Mar 24)

Last: Brabourne (J. Martin/K. Reel)

Nov 3 (Nov 3)

At Dungeness Bird Observatory David Walker had peak counts of 80 **Small Copper** in the first generation on 22 May, 60 in the second brood on 24 June and 20 in the third on 6 September. Dawn White saw 27 at Deal on 21 July, Jenny Bough counted 15 at Rough Common on 20 July and Paula Hardy reported 16 at Brasted on 30 July. In September David Eade recorded 41 at Edenbridge on the 9th and Robert Insall counted 17 on Hothfield Common on the 20th.



SMALL BLUE *Cupido minimus*

34 (31) Tetrads

39 Tetrads 2015-19 (31, 2010-14)

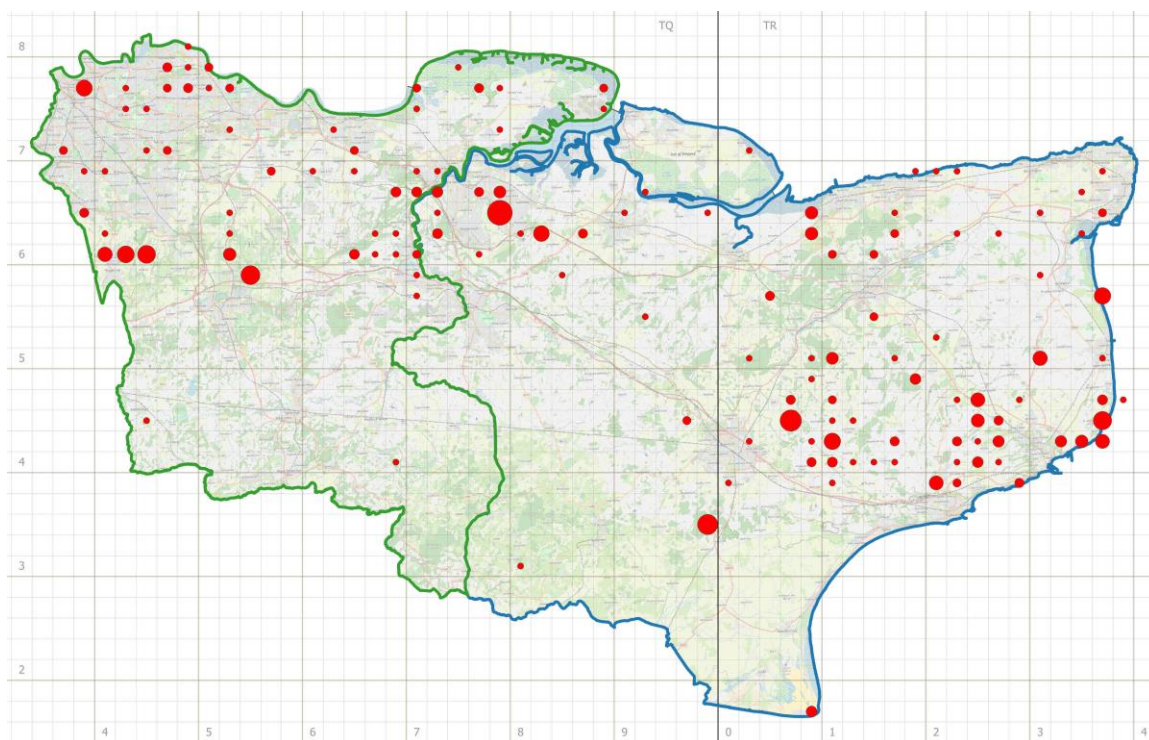
First: Brabourne (J. Martin/K. Reel)

Apr 26 (Apr 14)

Last: Brabourne (J. Martin/K.Reel)

Aug 22 (Sept 2)

Small Blue is doing well at Brabourne, where Joan Martin and Kelvin Reel counted 134 roosting on 25 May. Dan Tuson discovered a colony at Kingston, where he counted 67 on 29 May. He also found small numbers at Spong Wood and Wolverton. At the other end of the county Keith Perry saw 60 at Biggin Hill, Anna Guerin counted 6 at West Kent Golf Course, Downe, Janet Wilson found 1 at Downe Bank and Eric Barlow saw 1 at Spring Park Meadow. In mid-Kent Howard Vaughan recorded 40 at Ranscombe Farm, Cuxton and 15 on the Medway Gate Estate.



BROWN ARGUS *Aricia (Plebeius) agestis*

139 (156) Tetrads

247 Tetrads 2015-19 (191, 2010-14)

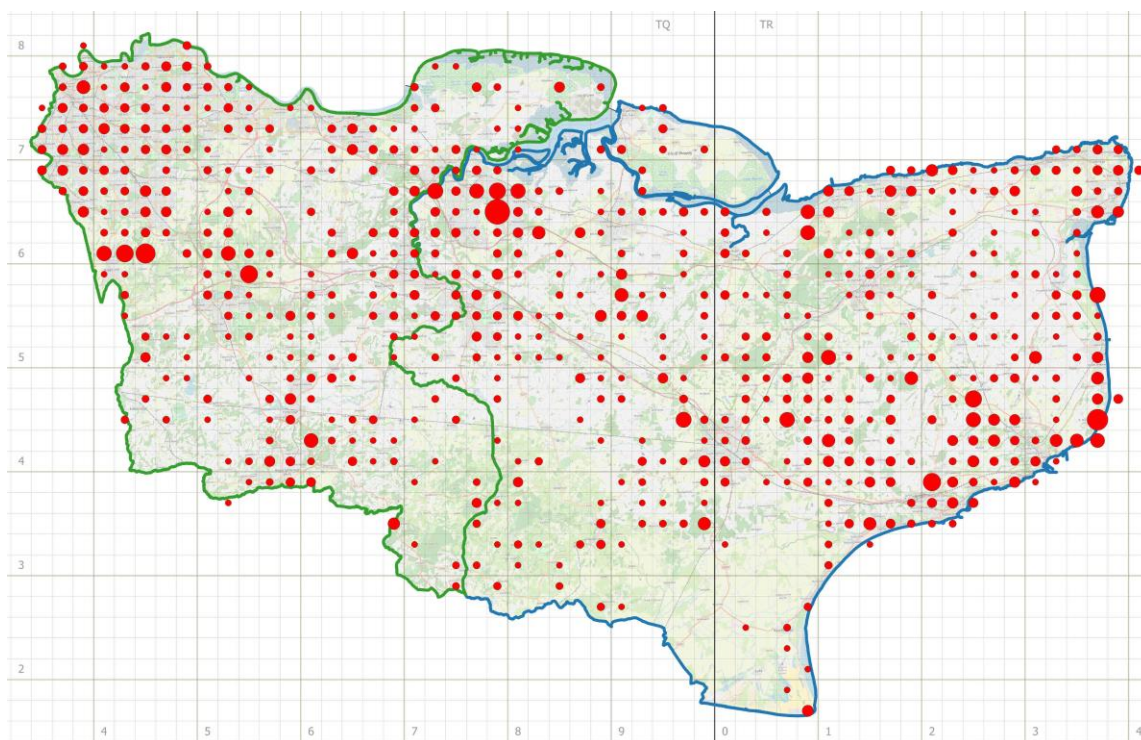
First: Dungeness BO (D. Walker)

May 1 (May 1)

Last: Hoo St Werburgh (M. Easterbrook/D. Chambers)

Oct 19 (Oct 10)

Numbers of **Brown Argus** remained low in 2020, and there were no counts over 20. The highest numbers were in August, with counts of 19 at Brabourne on the 9th (Joan Martin & Kelvin Reel) and Lydden on the 24th (John Websper). Alan Cooper saw 15 in Orlestone Forest and Emily Neighbour 14 at Wye Downs on the 16th and John Waghorn saw 13 at Queendown Warren on the 1st.



COMMON BLUE *Polyommatus icarus*

608 (463) Tetrads

643 Tetrads 2015-19 (448, 2010-14)

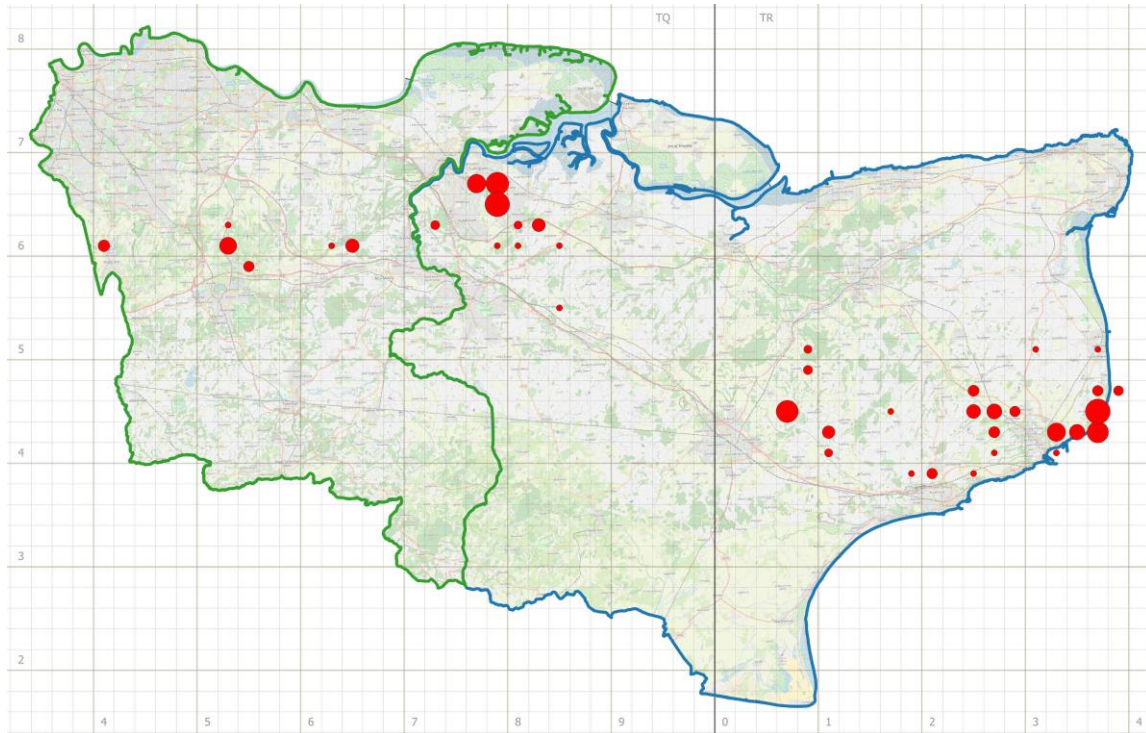
First: Folkestone (D. Clarke)

Apr 11 (Apr 10)

Last: Crossness (M. Robinson)

Nov 7 (Oct 10)

There was some improvement in numbers of **Common Blue** in 2020, particularly in the second generation. In mid-May Francesca Partridge saw 32 at Darland Banks and Nick Osler counted 30 at Shoreham but the highest counts were in July and August. Martin Newcombe recorded 144 at Wrinsted on 7 August, David Walker saw 100 at Dungeness Bird Observatory on the 16th and Cathy Myles counted 90 at Wraik Hill on the 2nd. Maggie Moore saw 101 at Temple Ewell on 8 August and on the 6th there were counts in the fifties at St Margaret's-at-Cliffe (Deborah O'Boyle), Samphire Hoe (Lindsey Mitchell) and Sandwich Bay (Steffan Walton).



CHALK HILL BLUE *Polyommatus coridon*

40 (54) Tetrads

69 Tetrads 2015-19 (71, 2010-14)

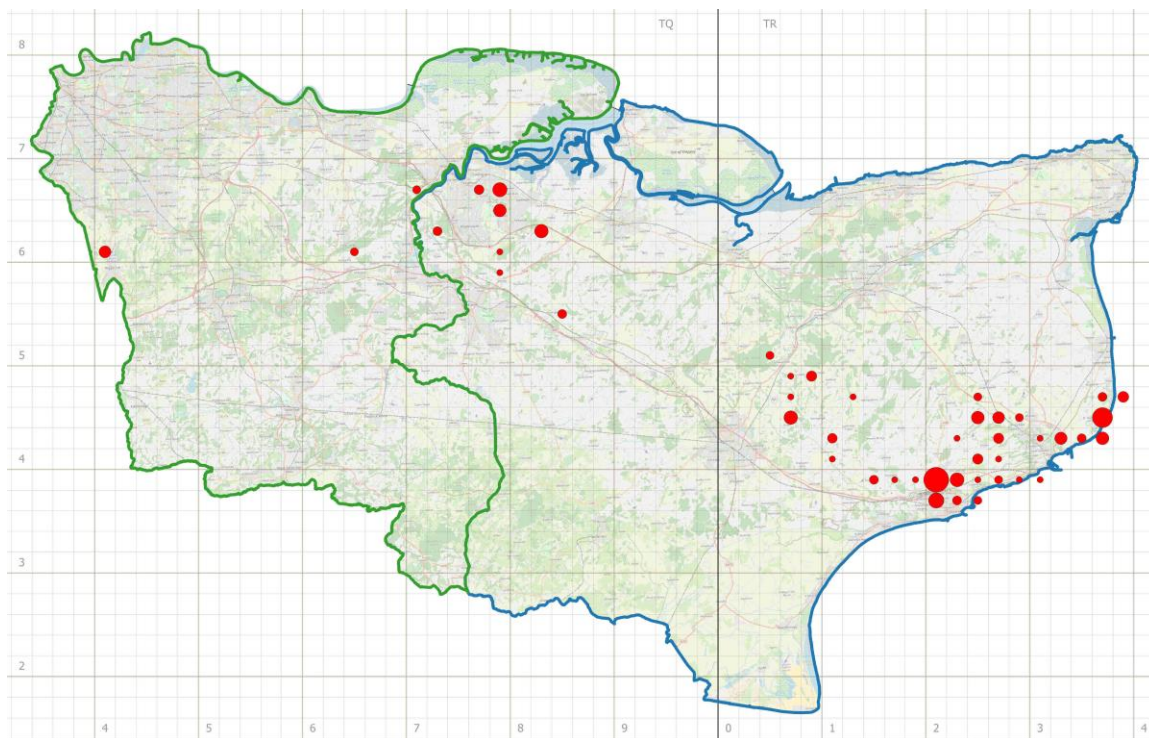
First: White Hill, Shoreham (D. Goodban, G.Kalli)

July 5 (June 22)

Last: Burham Down (D. Chambers)

Sept 22 (Sept 23)

Chalk Hill Blue is now doing well at KWT's Fackenden Down reserve and Derek Goodban estimated 400 there on 26 July. Fred O'Hare saw 75 at the adjacent White Hill reserve on 21 July and he also reported 176 at Biggin Hill on 30 July. Jo Hay saw 100 on Greenhill Down, Otford on 29 July and Kevin Tolhurst recorded 122 at Darland Banks on 30 July. There were also some high counts in south-east Kent, with 300 seen at Lighthouse Down, South Foreland by Keith Heaven, 178 counted by Emily Neighbour at Langdon Cliffs, 127 seen by John Websper at Lydden and 100 by Francesca Partridge at Temple Ewell, all in early August.



ADONIS BLUE *Polyommatus bellargus*

46 (41) Tetrads

61 Tetrads 2015-19 (59, 2010-14)

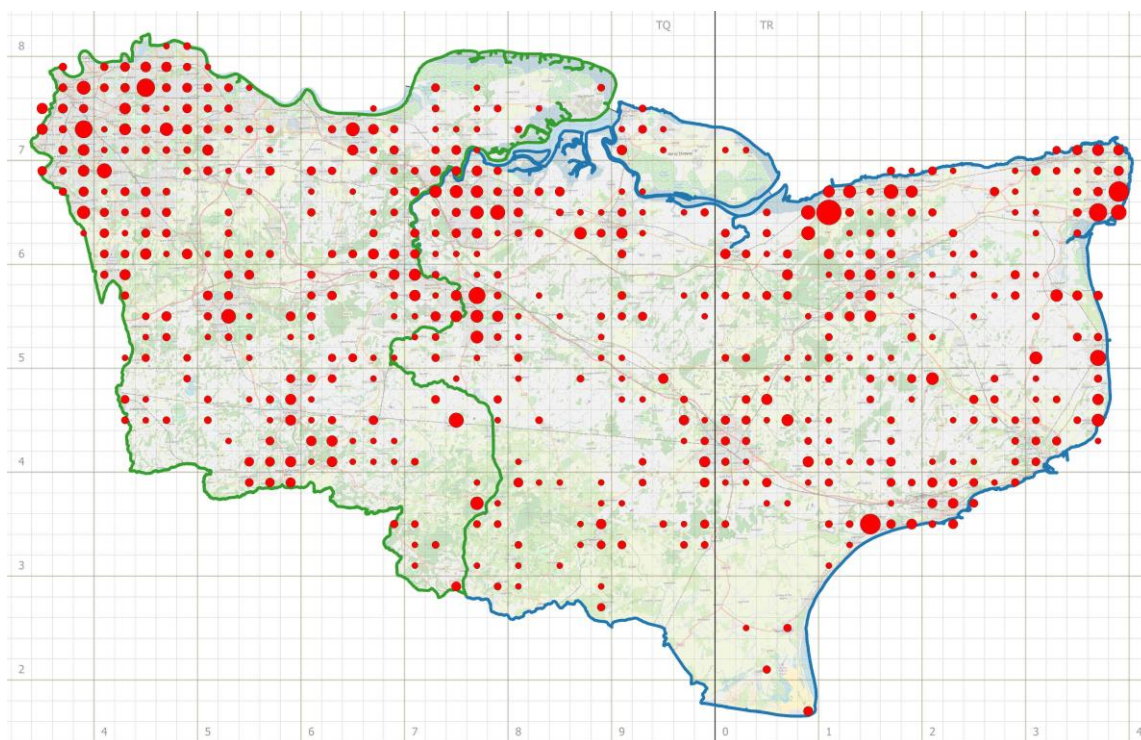
First: Round Hill (A. Gay)

Apr 26 (May 1)

Last: Abbotscliffe (I. Roberts)

Oct 9 (Oct 2)

Numbers of **Adonis Blue** weren't very high in 2020 but Alfie Gay reported 91 on Horseshoe & Round Hills above Folkestone on 31 August. Francesca Partridge saw 30 at Temple Ewell on 15 August and in the first generation John Waghorn counted 26 at Queendown Warren on 24 May.



HOLLY BLUE *Celastrina argiolus*

530 (358) Tetrads

563 Tetrads 2015-19 (414, 2010-14)

First: Stubb's Cross (A. Sadler)

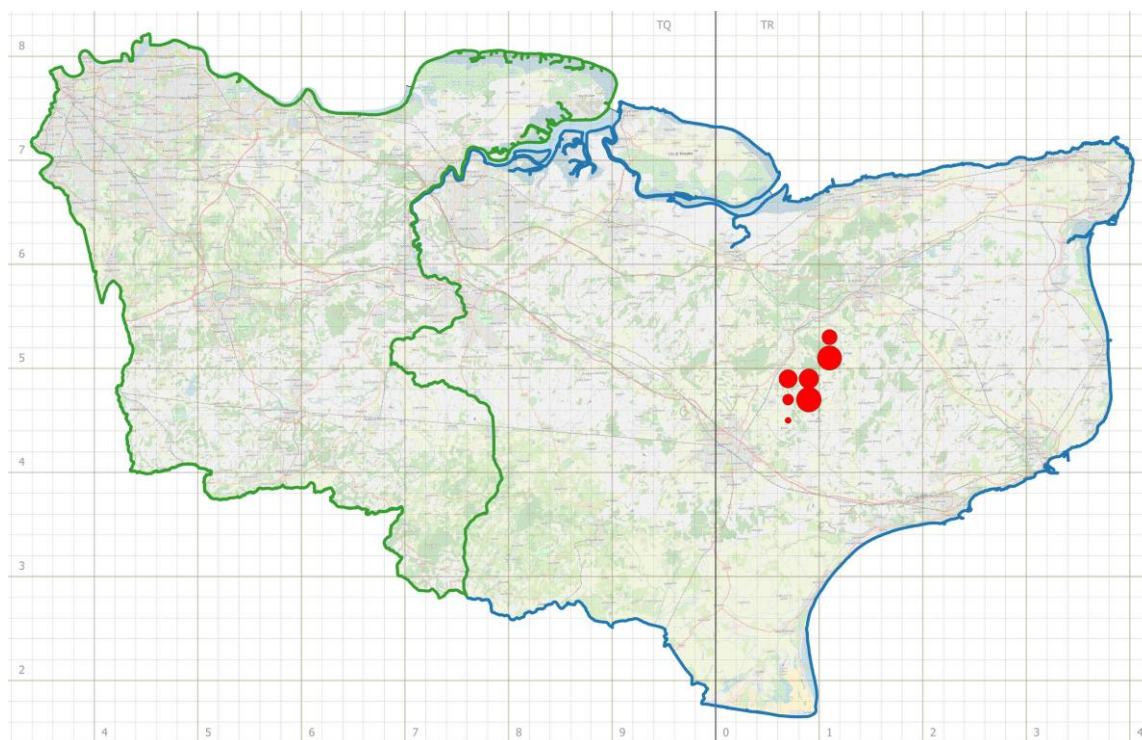
Mar 25 (Mar 24)

Last: Whitstable (D. Ponsonby)

Nov 7 (Nov 3)

Holly Blues were very numerous in 2020. Phyllis Davis had an annual total of 120 in her garden at Rainham, up from 108 in 2019. In the first generation Sue Smith counted 27 at Dumpton on 30 May and Doug Stannard saw 25 at Tenterden on 8 May. In the second brood Pippa Spiridonov saw 40 at Orpington on 18 July and on 2 August Suzi Williamson reported 22 at Harvel and Deborah O'Boyle saw 19 at St Margaret's-at-Cliffe. Not surprisingly given the warm summer, there was a third generation, with several sightings in October and one in November.

RIODINIDAE



DUKE OF BURGUNDY *Hamearis lucina*

7 (10) Tetrads

10 Tetrads 2015-19 (9, 2010-14)

First: Denge Wood (C. Wade/R. Newton)

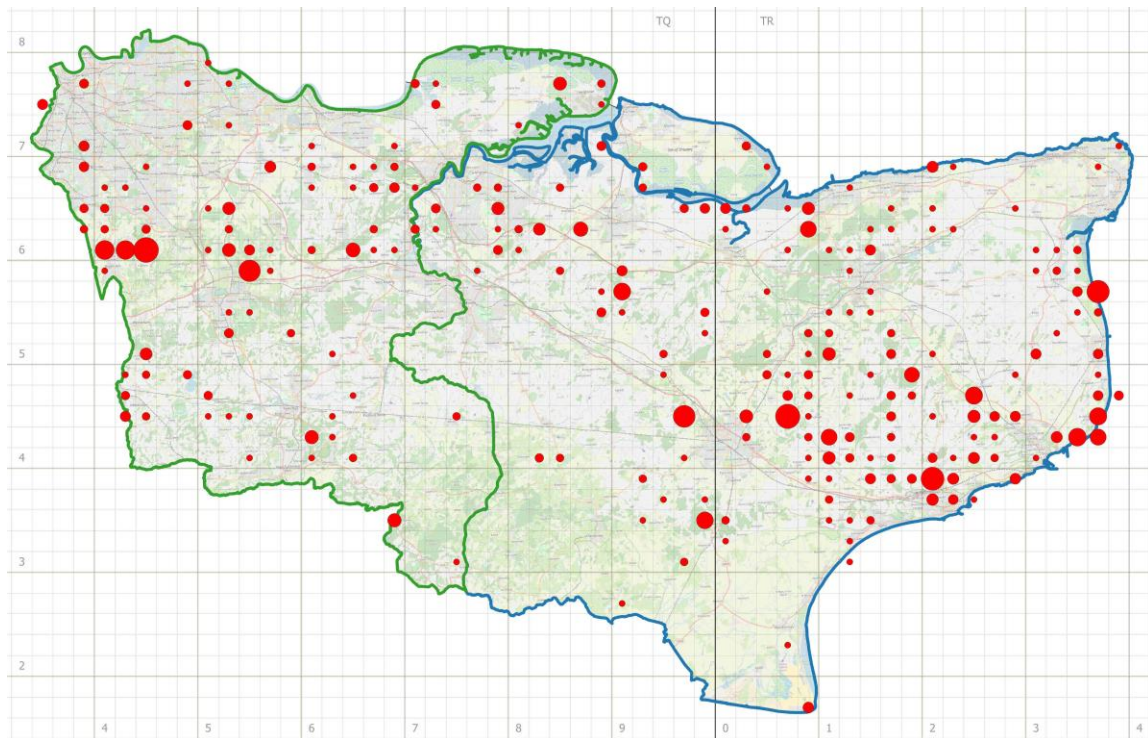
Apr 23 (Apr 16)

Last: near Crundale (A. Cooper)

June 2 (June 1)

Duke of Burgundy had a very good year in 2020, with the total maximum number across all sites the highest for the last 25 years. Thirteen colonies were recorded by a group of volunteers (thanks to Claire Ward for leading the volunteers and to Dan Tuson for a summary report) and these consisted of eight small colonies (peak of 2-8 individuals) and five medium to large colonies (9-53). Alan Cooper counted 53 at a site on private land on 19 May and on 15 May Claire Ward recorded 30 at Bonsai Bank and 21 at The Warren Woodland Trust site. Dan Tuson reported 32 and 23 at two other sites which are on private land. This butterfly is continuing to take advantage of the increasing amount of suitable habitat across the landscape that has been the focus of Natural England's grassland habitat creation work over the last 10-15 years.

NYMPHALIDAE



SMALL HEATH *Coenonympha pamphilus*

237 (216) Tetrads

340 Tetrads 2015-19 (239, 2010-14)

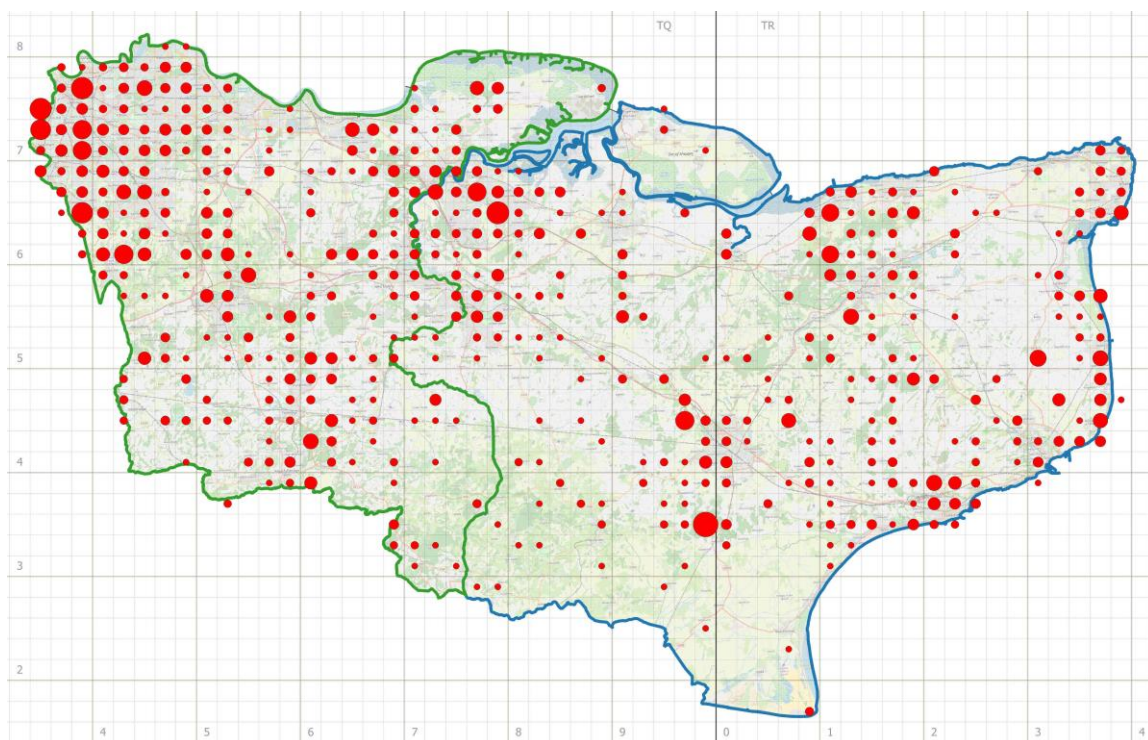
First: Ranscombe Farm, Cuxton (H. Vaughan)

Apr 22 (Apr 13)

Last: Dungeness BO (D. Walker)

Sept 30 (Oct 2)

In late May David Harper saw 20 **Small Heaths** at Wye Downs and Fred O'Hare recorded 17 at Biggin Hill. On 1 June David Eade saw 21 at Edenbridge and Steffan Walton counted 16 at Sandwich Bay and in mid-June there were counts of 18 at Queendown Warren (Rob Pennington), 17 at Charing (Amanda Brookman), 30 at Elmley (Jill Tardivel), 30 at Penshurst Place (Matthew Baseden), 22 at Church Hougham (Paolo Farina), 30 at Dungeness BO (David Walker) and 86 at Marlpit Hill (Naomi Ward). In July Anne Davis saw 30 at Blean and in August Pauline & Peter Heathcote reported 40 at New Barn and Karen Hill recorded 33 on Allhallows Marshes. Overall, numbers were lower than in 2019.



SPECKLED WOOD *Pararge aegeria*

485 (462) Tetrads

648 Tetrads 2015-19 (516, 2010-14)

First: Bethersden (T. & S. Dove)

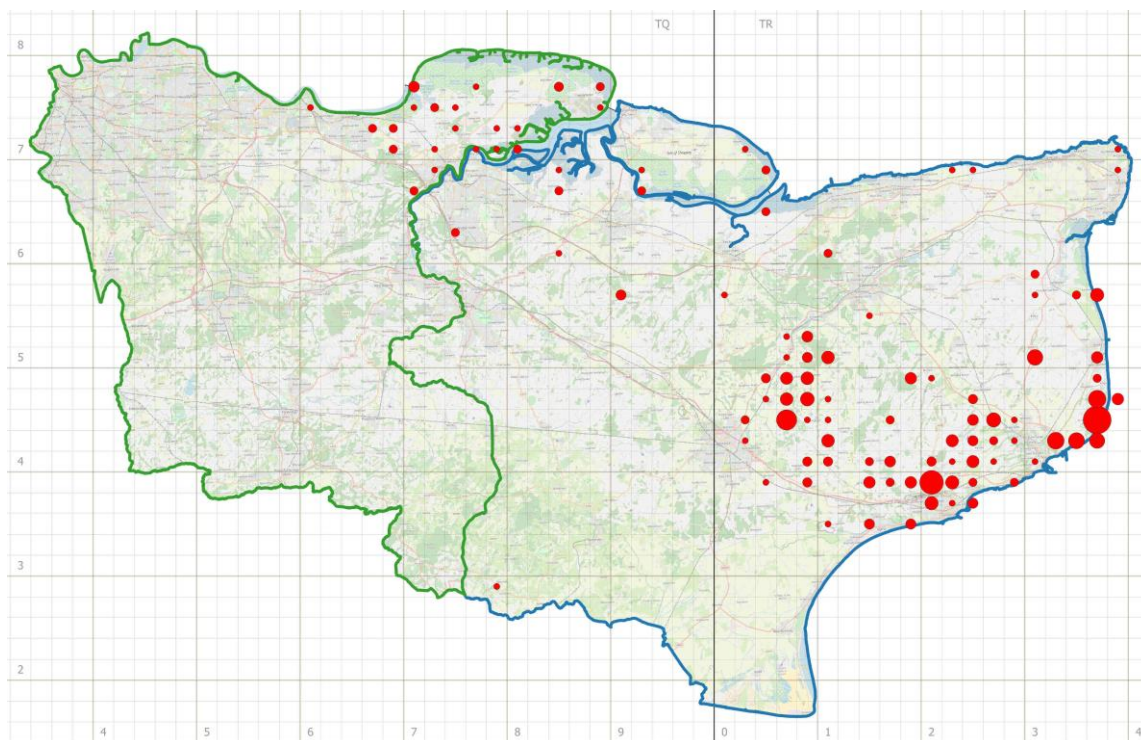
Mar 7 (Feb 26)

Last: Worth (S. Blaskett)

n

Nov 7 (Oct 30)

There were quite a lot of double-figure counts of **Speckled Wood** in 2020. Janet Wilson saw 20 at Downe Bank in late June and in July Ruth Bradshaw recorded 12 in Greenwich Park, Jackie Tyson saw 14 in Mote Park, Maidstone and Peter Frost counted 16 in Folkestone Warren. In August Ricky Atkin reported 24 at Footscray Meadows and Alfie Gay recorded 23 on Folkestone Downs.



WALL *Lasiommata megera*

105 (74) Tetrads

122 Tetrads 2015-19 (101, 2010-14)

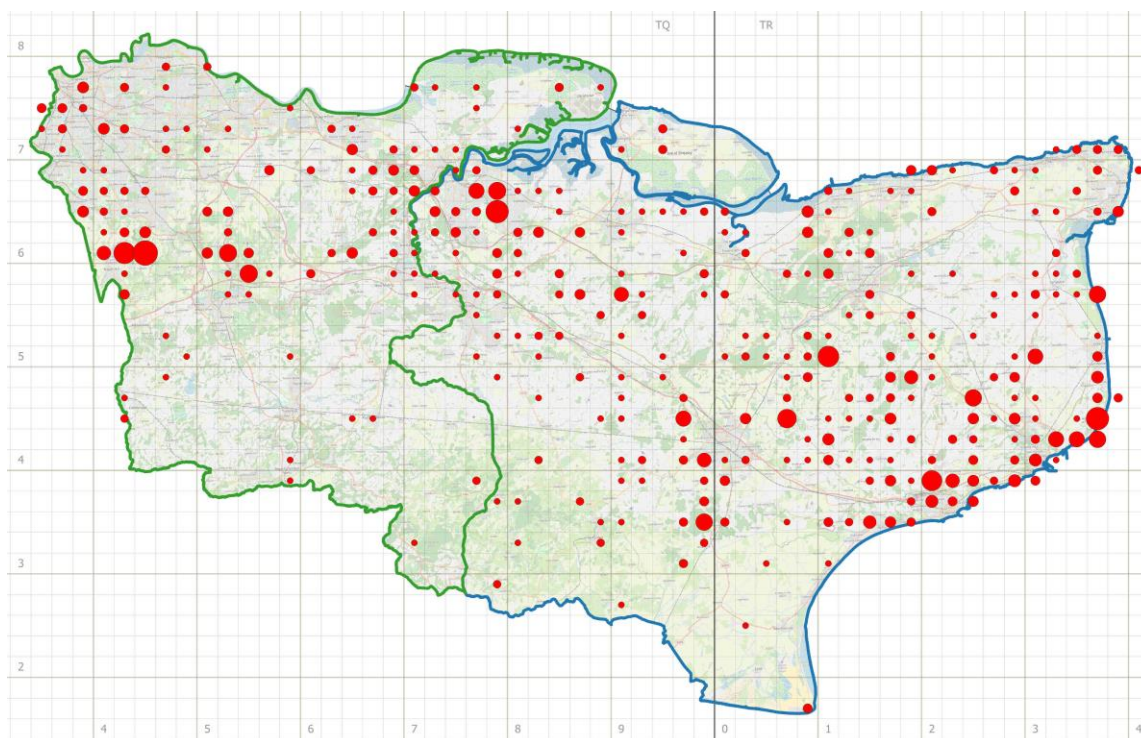
First: St Margaret's Bay (E. Neighbour)

Apr 19 (Apr 14)

Last: Peene Quarry (N. Jones)

Nov 6 (Oct 9)

There were high numbers of **Walls** on the south-east coast of Kent in 2020. Jay Jarman-Chantler recorded 36 at Bockhill, St Margaret's on 3 August and there were counts of 15 and 16 from nearby South Foreland from Keith Heaven and Ian Hodgson, also in early August. Gary Linney counted 18 at Kingsdown, Emily Neighbour recorded 17 at Langdon Cliffs and Alfie Gay saw 20 on Folkestone Downs. Alongside the Thames Estuary on the Hoo Peninsula there were counts of 24 at Grain in September from Mike Easterbrook and David Chambers, 9 at Cliffe Pools in August from John Waghorn and 7 at Allhallows Marshes in July from Karen Hall. There was also a record of one at Botany Marshes, Swanscombe from Kelly-Ann McGuinness and three records of singles on the Isle of Sheppey from Karen Thorpe, Stuart Goodwin and Rebecca Levey. In the Wye/Brabourne area there were counts of 16 by Piers Griffin and 10 from Joan Martin, while Iona Dubieniec counted 11 at a site in the Alkham Valley and Bill Martin saw 9 at Tilmanstone. Numbers seem to be building in the area south of Sittingbourne, where Martin Newcombe recorded 13 on the Torry Estate. There were more indications of a return to inland sites in other areas, with records from Bluebell Hill (Rob Pennington), Borden Hill (Tracey Corbishley), Walderslade (Hayley Rose) and Sandhurst (Emma Budgen).



MARBLED WHITE *Melanargia galathea*

340 (293) Tetrads

78 Tetrads 2015-19 (239, 2010-14)

First: Langdon Cliffs (E. Neighbour)

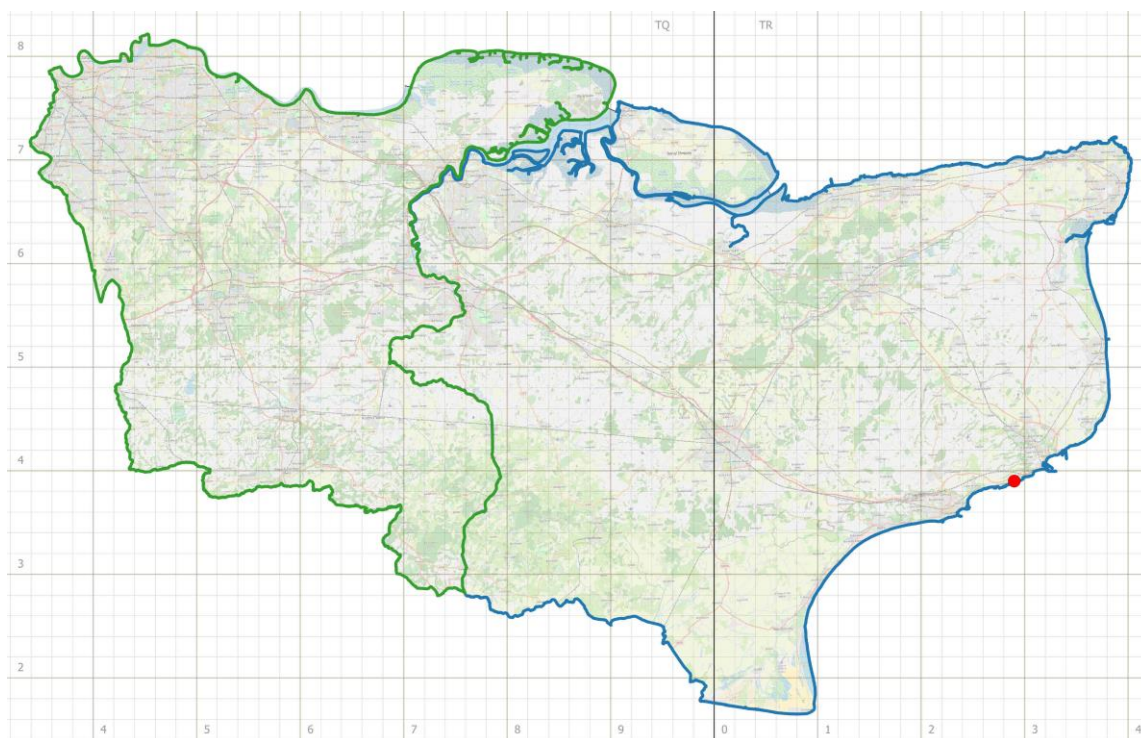
June 2 (June 11)

Last: Bethersden (T. & S. Dove)

Sept 3 (Aug 26)

High numbers of **Marbled White** were recorded in mid-Kent. Christina Lamb saw 300 in Horsted Valley, near Chatham, Robert Pennington counted 59 at Darland Banks, Howard Vaughan saw 70 at Bredhurst and Peter & Pauline Heathcote reported 80 at New Barn, all in late June. Numbers continue to increase in north-west Kent, with 250 seen at Farnborough by Keith Perry, 126 at Downe Bank by Janet Wilson, 149 near Downe by Anna Guerin and 90 at Green St Green by Cathy Murphy. In the Darent Valley area John Bangay recorded 114 at Kemsing Down and Colin Brotherwood 60 at Lullingstone CP. In the traditional stronghold for this species in south-east Kent Alfie Gay counted 102 on Folkestone Downs and Robert Newington saw 182 at Lydden Hill.

In the Ashford area Mike Bax saw 100 at Shadoxhurst, Lindsey Mitchell 61 at Singleton, Piers Griffin 68 at Wye Downs and Joan Martin & Kelvin Reel 138 at Brabourne.



GRAYLING *Hipparchia semele*

1 (0) Tetrads

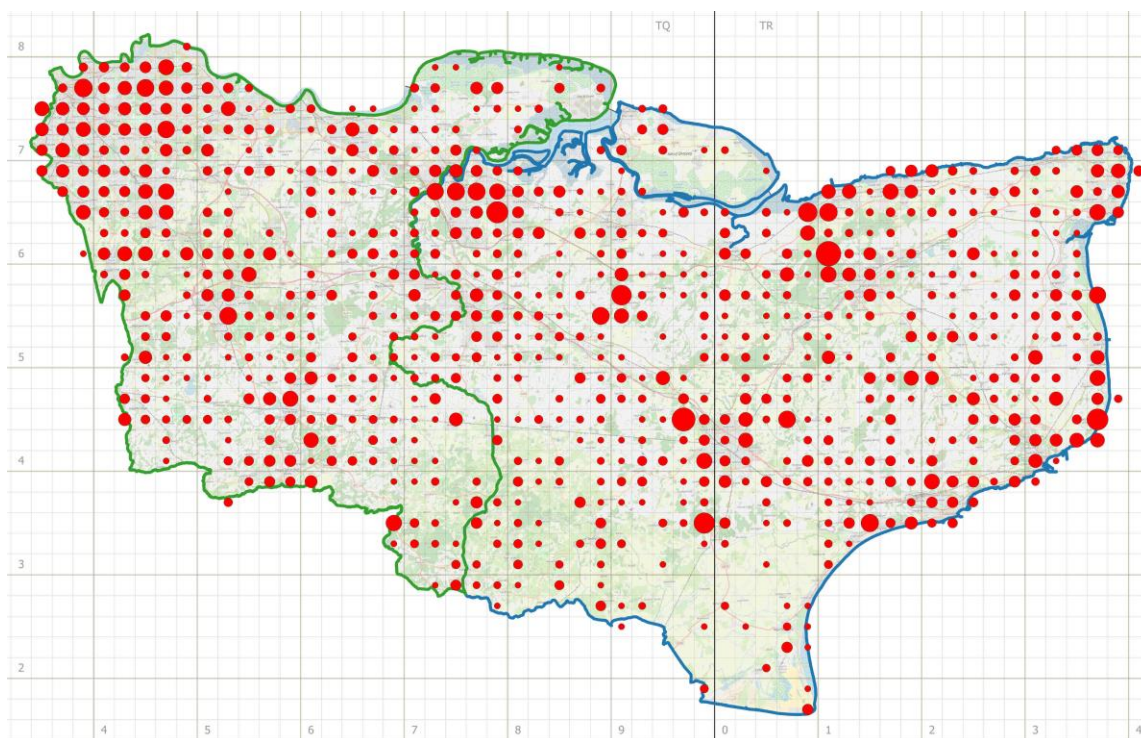
0 Tetrads 2015-19 (1, 2010-14)

First: Samphire Hoe (M. Collins/P. Holt)

Aug 18

Last:

After six years without a sighting, a **Grayling** was seen at Samphire Hoe, a new site for this species, providing some hope that it still lives on the inaccessible chalk cliffs in this area.



GATEKEEPER *Pyronia tithonus*

764 (718) Tetrads

809 Tetrads 2015-19 (547, 2010-14)

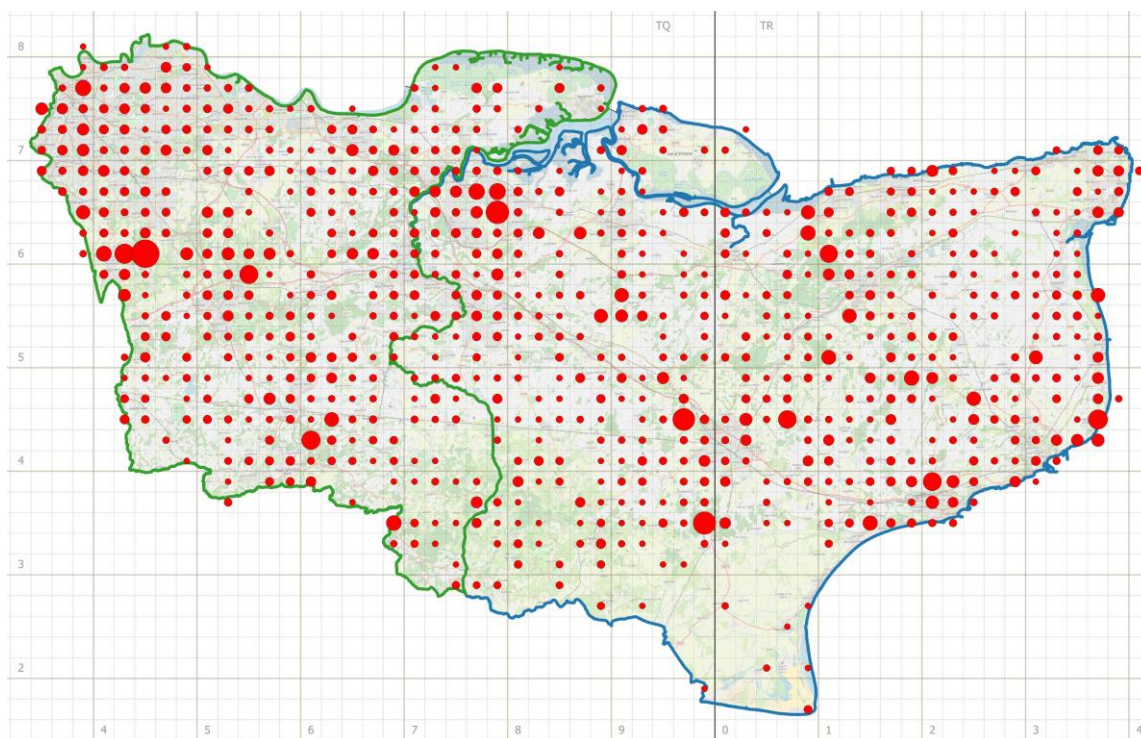
First: Edenbridge (L. Bignall)

May 24 (June 6)

Last: Dungeness BO (D. Walker)

Sept 28 (Sept 28)

There was a very early record of **Gatekeeper** on 24 May by Linda Bignall, then there were six more records on the 28th. Peak numbers occurred from mid-July, with 276 at Allhallows Marshes (Karen Hall), 250 at Chetney Marshes (Derek Tutt), 221 at Mincing Wood (Lesley Brown), 226 at Hothfield Common (Robert Insall) and 178 at North Foreland (John Websper). In early August Jay Jarman-Chantler saw 148 at Bockhill Farm, Cathy Myles counted 298 at Wraik Hill and Steffan Walton recorded 144 at Sandwich Bay.



MEADOW BROWN *Maniola jurtina*

760 (651) Tetrads

796 Tetrads 2015-19 (625, 2010-14)

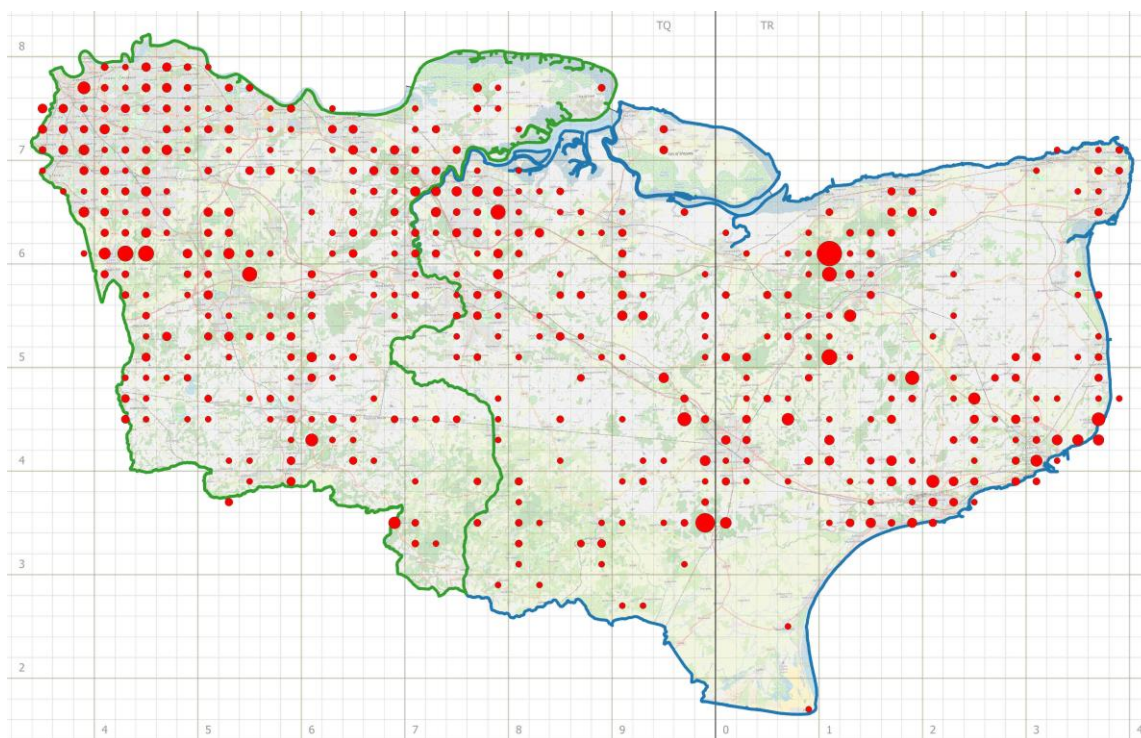
First: St Margaret's Bay (E. Neighbour)

May 25 (May 24)

Last: Queendown Warren (R. Pennington)

Oct 7 (Oct 15)

Elmley Marshes on the Isle of Sheppey has harboured high numbers of **Meadow Brown** for some time and Jill Tardivel saw over 1000 there on 17 June. Janet Wilson recorded 312 at Downe Bank on 12 July, Derek Tutt saw 600 at Chetney Marshes on the same day and there were counts of 300 at High Elms CP on 13 July by Fred O'Hare and at Edenbridge on 23 June by David Eade. There were also counts of over 200 at Frittenden (Nick Osler), New Barn (Pauline & Peter Heathcote) and Scotney Castle (Keith Goodman).



RINGLET *Aphantopus hyperantus*

443 (328) Tetrads

423 Tetrads 2015-19 (256, 2010-14)

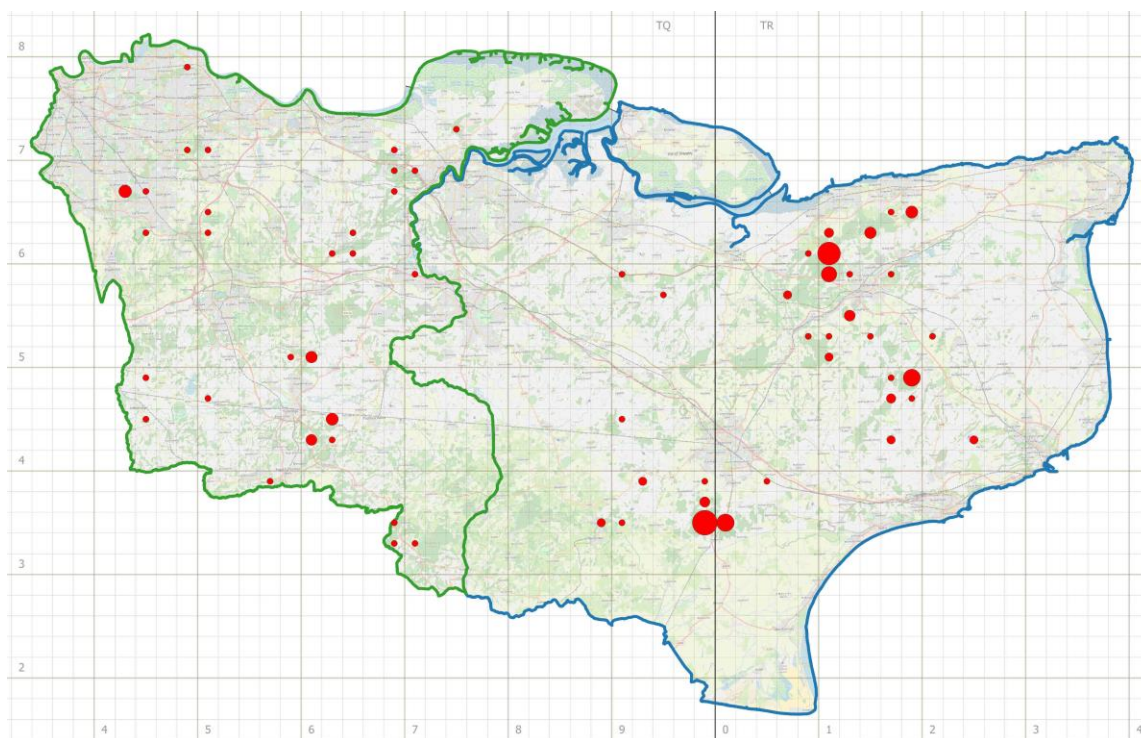
First: Hadlow College (J. Price)

June 2 (May 31)

Last: Tudeley Woods (C. Derbyshire)

Aug 24 (Sept 1)

There were some high counts of **Ringlet** in the Blean Woods complex, with 214 recorded by Michael Walter in Church Wood on 12 July and 177 in Mincing Wood by Lesley Brown on 2 July. The only other count over 100 was at Orlestone Forest, where Alan Cooper recorded 177 on 8 July.



WHITE ADMIRAL *Limenitis (Ladoga) camilla*

62 (57) Tetrads

124 Tetrads 2015-19 (139, 2010-14)

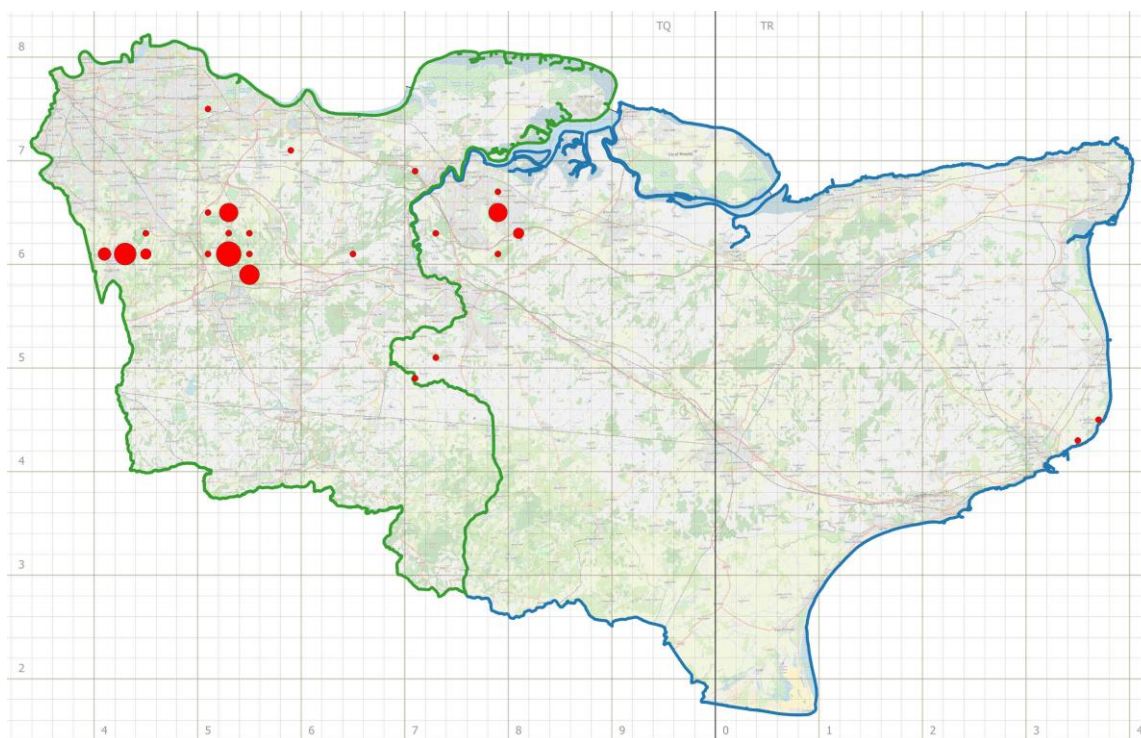
First: Packing Wood (A. Stubbs)

June 6 (June 1)

Last: Packing Wood (A. Stubbs)

July 30 (Sept 20)

The highest counts of **White Admiral** were in the traditional stronghold of the woods near Hamstreet, where on 23 June David Harper counted 19 at Faggs Wood and Alan Cooper saw 26 in both Burnt Oak Wood and Orlestone Forest. Elsewhere, Keith Ferris counted 20 at Dering Wood, near Pluckley on 24 June and Bill Martin recorded 14 at Covert Wood, near Barham on the 26th. In the Blean area there were counts of 10 from Sam Thomas on 29 June and 18 by Michael Walter on 12 July, while Jim Higham saw 9 in East Blean Wood on 29 June.



DARK GREEN FRITILLARY *Argynnis aglaja*

25 (18) Tetrads

31 Tetrads 2015-19 (31, 2010-14)

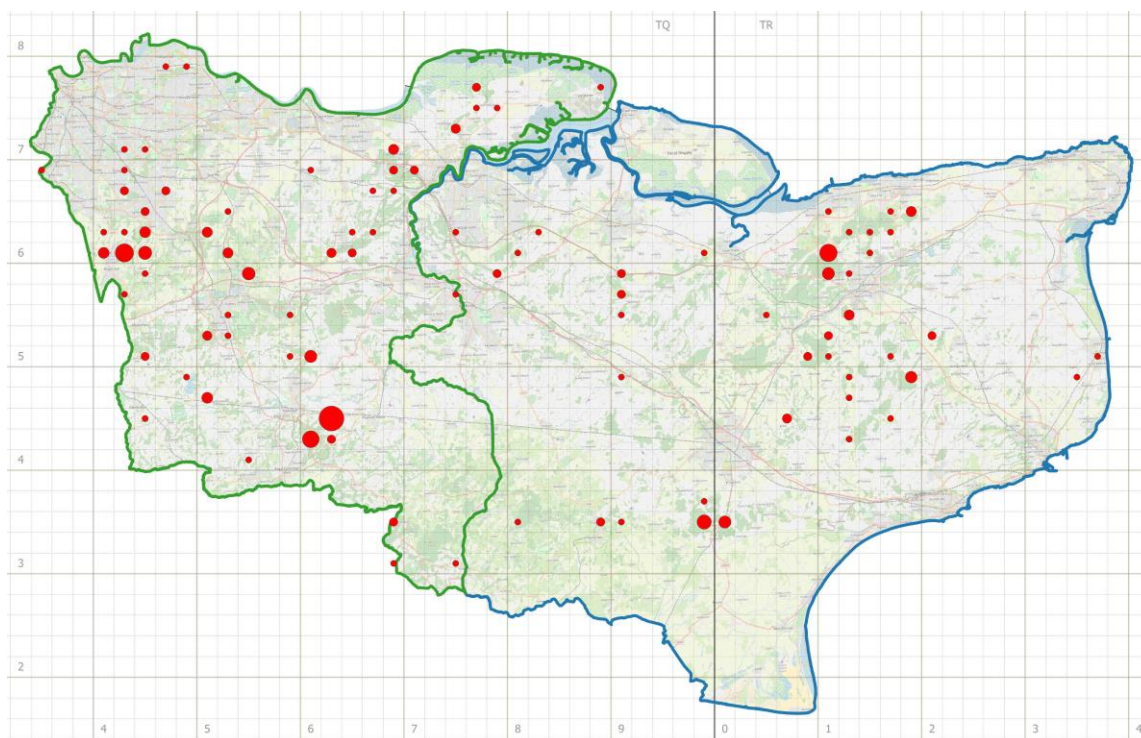
First: Hunton (J. Frances)

June 2 (June 14)

Last: Downe Bank (J. Wilson); Beacon Woods (L. Currie)

Aug 3 (Aug 7)

There was an early sighting of **Dark Green Fritillary** on 2 June, then no more records until the 13th. There seems to have been a sharp decline in numbers at Lullingstone Country Park, where the highest count was 12, recorded by Howard Vaughan on 23 June. At other sites in that area, John Bangay counted 7 at Kemsing Down and Derek Goodban saw 5 at Fackenden Down. In the north-west of our area Keith Perry counted 6 at High Elms CP, Anna Guerin saw 4 at West Kent Golf Course, Downe, Steve Bolton 2 at Saltbox Hill and singles were seen by both Janet Wilson and Grant Hazlehurst at Downe Bank and by Steven Lofting at Hangrove Bank. In mid-Kent Mark Gracey recorded 4 at Trosley CP, Kevin Tolhurst saw 3 at Darland Banks and individuals were seen at Bredhurst (Howard Vaughan; Robert Knight), Burham (Rob Pennington) and Coxheath (Keith Ferris). Doug Stannard saw singles on the south-east coast at Bockhill Farm and Langdon Cliffs.



SILVER-WASHED FRITILLARY *Argynnis paphia*

94 (77) Tetrads

148 Tetrads 2015-19 (108, 2010-14)

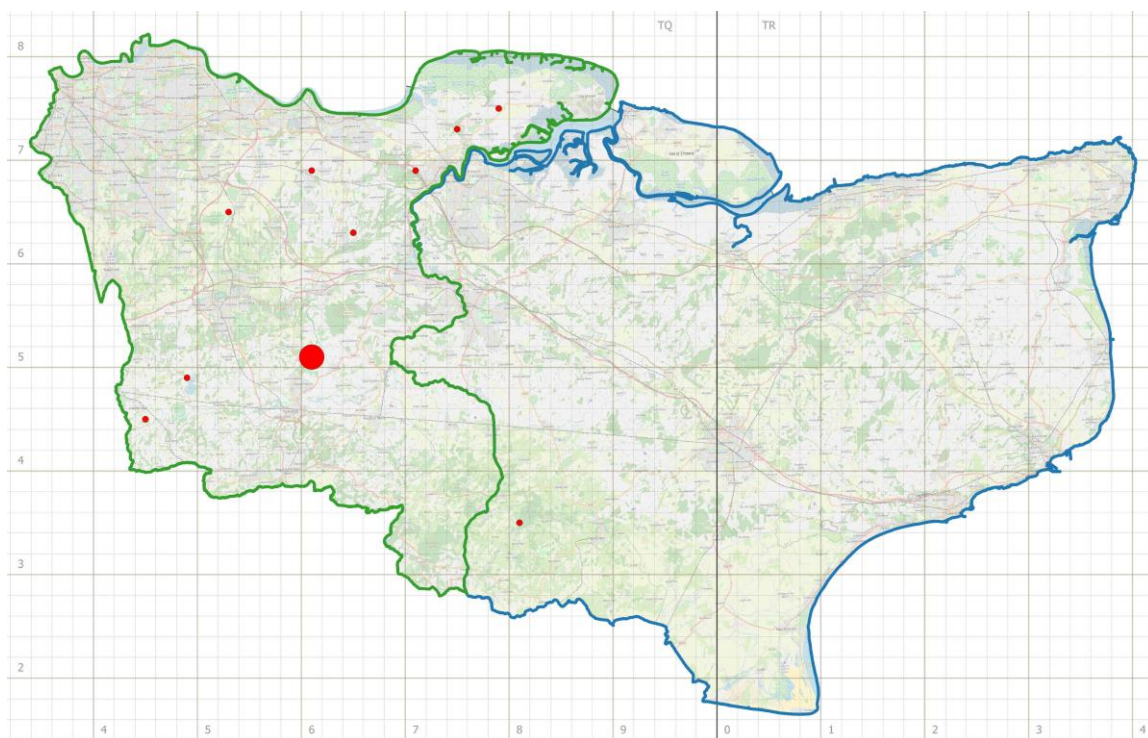
First: Jubilee CP (K. Perry)

June 1 (June 22)

Last: Downe Bank (J. Wilson)

Sept 1 (Aug 31)

Keith Perry spotted a very early **Silver-washed Fritillary** at Jubilee CP, Petts Wood on 1 June, then there was a ten-day gap before the next sighting. High numbers were seen at various sites around the county in mid-July. At RSPB Tudeley Woods reserve Claire Derbyshire counted 22 on the 13th and Barry Richardson 18 on 17th. Fred O'Hare recorded 16 at High Elms CP and there were counts of 11 by David Milnes at Mill Bank Wood, near Sevenoaks and Lesley Brown at Mincing Wood, near Blean, while Emily Neighbour saw 12 near Hamstreet. Fred Butcher had a first record of this species at Grain and in south-east London Liam Redmill recorded it at Lesnes Abbey and Abbeywood.



PURPLE EMPEROR *Apatura iris*

10 (13) Tetrads

41 Tetrads 2015-19 (18, 2010-14)

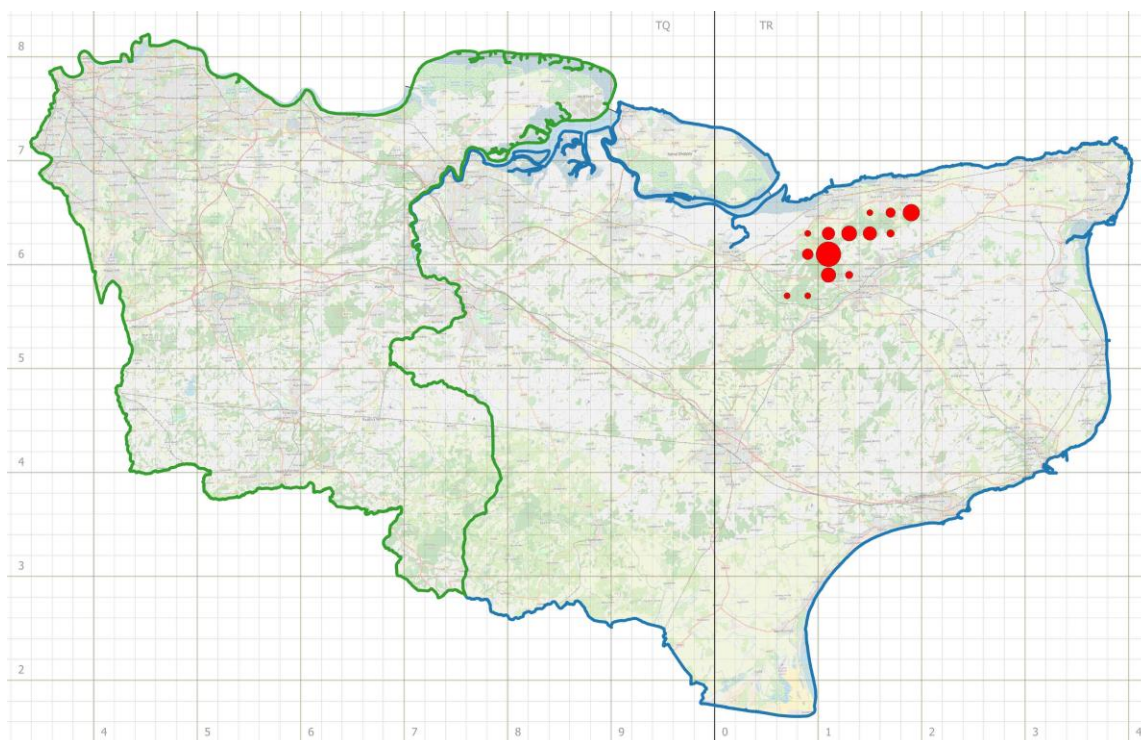
First: Lullingstone CP (H. Vaughan)

June 23 (July 3)

Last: Great Wood, Strood (A. Devriendt)

July 23 (Aug 1)

Only single **Purple Emperor** were seen at Dene Park, by James Butler on 7 July and George Kalli on the 12th, but Howard Vaughan saw 3 at Great Chattenden Woods and Alan Ford reported 2 at Bough Beech. Individuals were seen at Whitehorse Wood (John Waghorn), New Barn (Pauline & Peter Heathcote), Edenbridge (Paul Lugg), and in a new area at Hemsted Forest (Richard Farran).



HEATH FRITILLARY *Melitaea (Mellicta) athalia*

14 (10) Tetrads

14 Tetrads 2015-19 (12, 2010-14)

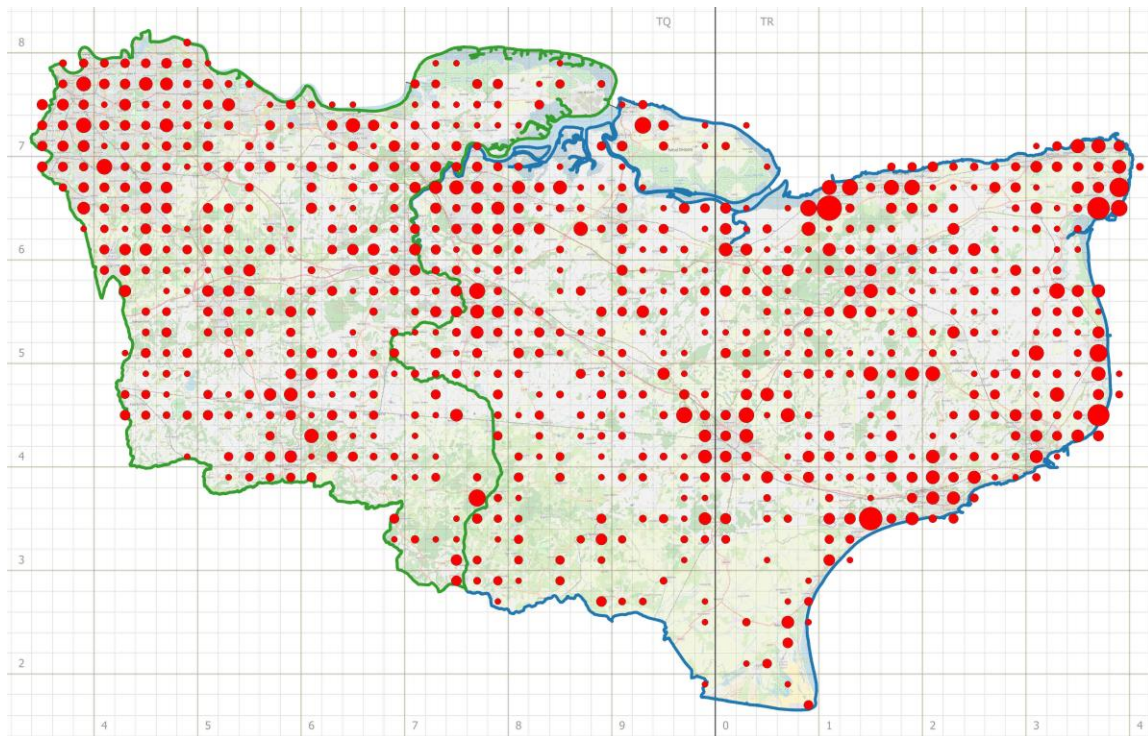
First: Blean Woods (M. Walter)

May 15 (May 30)

Last: Thornden Wood (F. Partridge); Mincing Wood (L. Brown)

ept 17 (Sept 17)

Heath Fritillary emerged early and had a good year. Lesley Brown recorded 292 in Mincing Wood and Steve Wheatley had counts of 159 in East Blean Wood, 151 in Clowes Wood, 53 in Cole Wood and 30 in Ellenden Wood. Francesca Partridge reported 142 in Thornden Wood and there were counts of 100 from Amanda Brookman in West Blean Wood and Michael Walter at RSPB Church Wood. Arlie Witts saw 45 in North Bishopden Wood. Seventeen second generation adults were seen.



RED ADMIRAL *Vanessa atalanta*

777 (684) Tetrads

818 Tetrads 2015-19 (595, 2010-14)

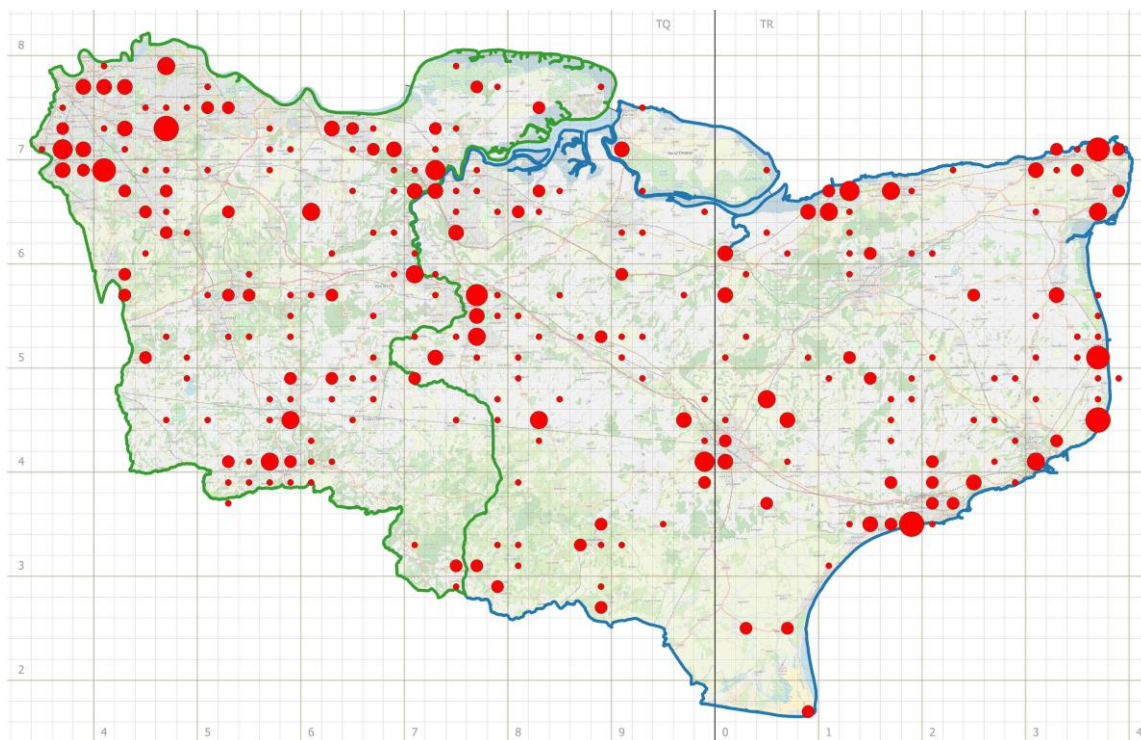
First: Crayford (L. Currie); New Eltham (M. Bretherton)

Jan 9 (Jan 1)

Last: Ramsgate (C. Inglis)

Dec 1 (Dec 31)

There were three records of **Red Admiral** in January 2020 and five in early February. The first high count was in mid-May when Jay Jarman-Chantler saw 15 at Bockhill Farm, St Margaret's Bay. However, most of the highest counts were from July onwards. There were counts of 19 on 2 July at Stodmarsh (Francesca Partridge) and on the 7th at Conningbrook Lakes (Jack Stubbins), then on 11th David Walker saw 30 at Dungeness BO and on 17th Eric Filler counted 32 at Aldington. Vivien Joslin saw 22 at Ringwould on 18 July, Suzan Simmons counted 38 at Old Romney on 22nd and Pearl Long saw 27 at Eastry on 31st. In August David Walker had a count of 40 at Dungeness Bird Observatory on 16th and on 7 October David Ponsonby saw 13 at Whitstable.



PAINTED LADY *Vanessa (Cynthia) cardui*

267 (609) Tetrads

695 Tetrads 2015-19 (256, 2010-14)

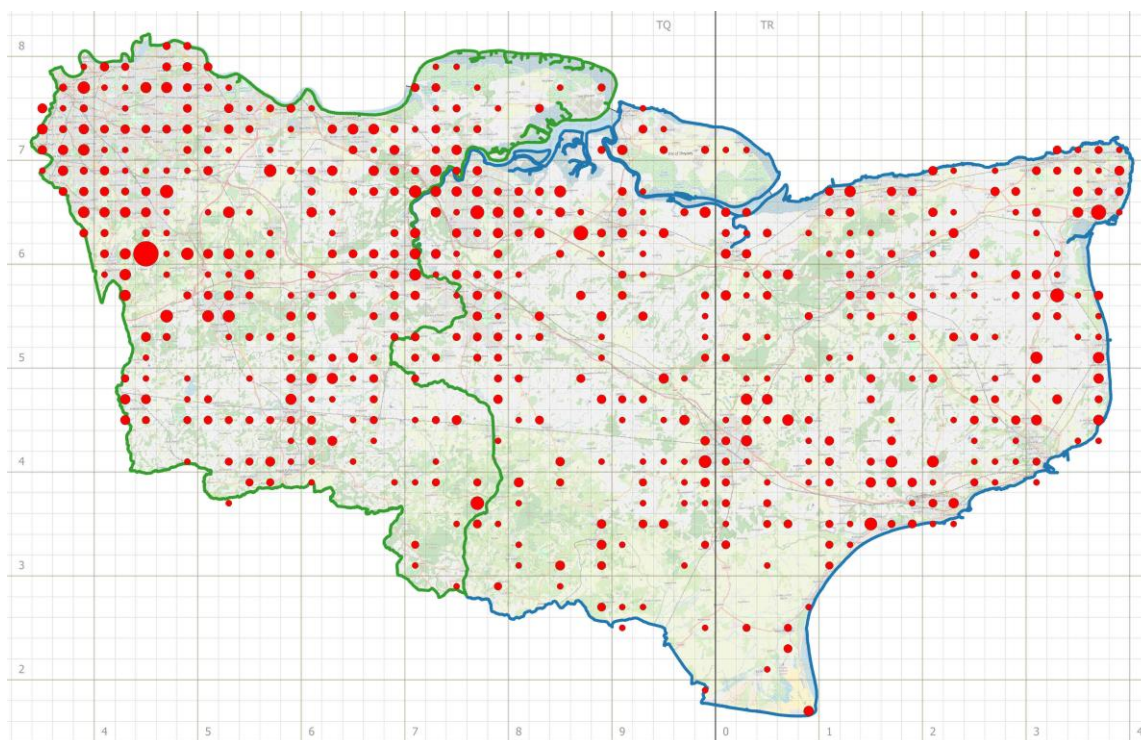
First: Deal (A-M. Thomas)

Apr 5 (Mar 11)

Last: Tudeley (A. Gibbs)

Oct 19 (Nov 10)

There were four sightings of **Painted Ladies** in April but the main immigration came in mid-July, when there were a few double-figure counts. Jan Crowther saw 15 at Loose on 18 July and there were counts of 11 at Old Romney on 22nd (Suzan Simmons) and at Easry on 31st (Pearl Long).



SMALL TORTOISESHELL *Aglais urticae*

544 (398) Tetrads

635 Tetrads 2015-19 (561, 2010-14)

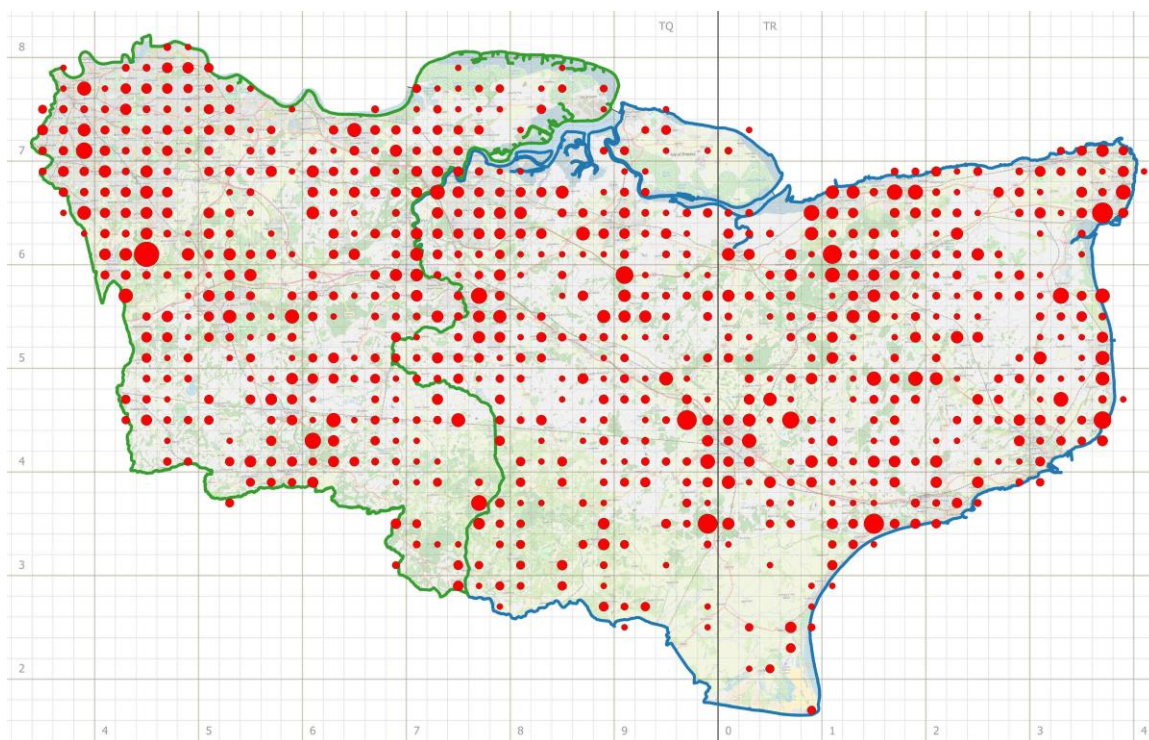
First: Hempstead (D. Stock)

Feb 3 (Feb 15)

Last: Dungeness BO (D. Walker)

Oct 26 (Dec 7)

There was a really pleasing recovery in numbers of **Small Tortoiseshell** in 2020, with several counts of over 20. David Eade recorded 28 at Edenbridge on 29 May and David Harper saw 48 at Wye on 9 June, while on 20 June John Woodhead counted 23 at South Darenth. In July Samantha Groves reported 30 at Ightham Mote and Suzan Simmons saw 25 at Old Romney. In the hot summer they probably went into cooler overwintering sites early, as after 11 August only singles were recorded.



PEACOCK *Aglais (Inachis) io*

762 (693) Tetrads

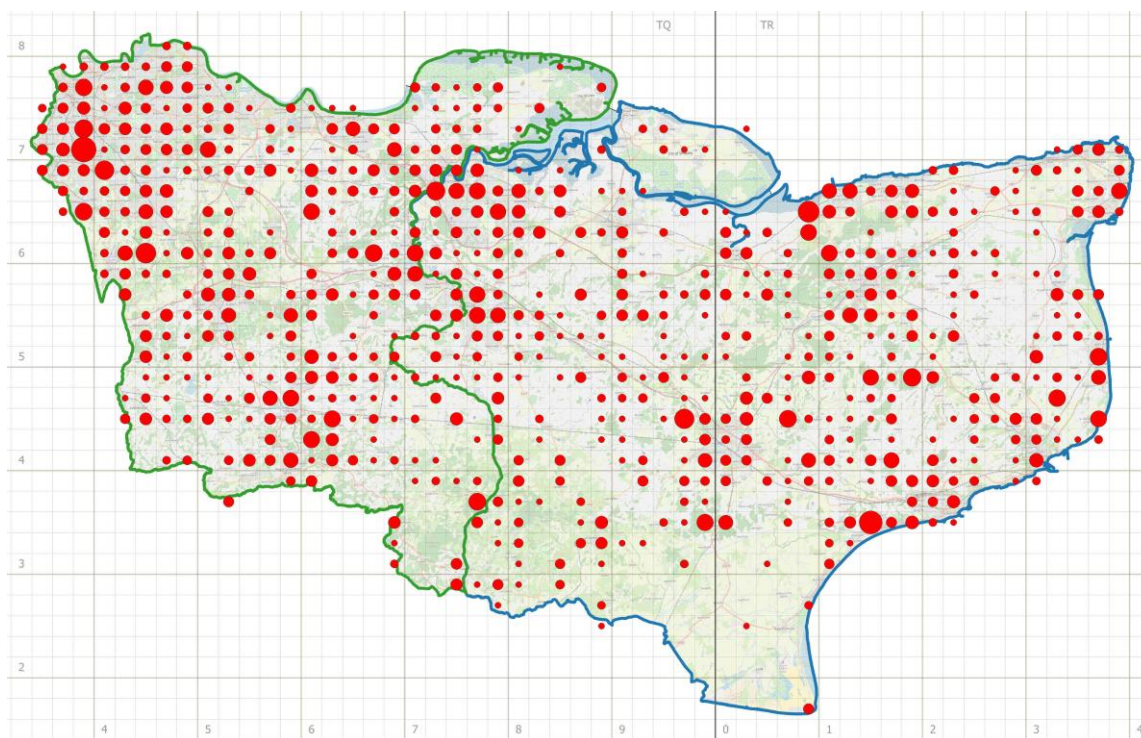
812 Tetrads 2015-19 (581, 2010-14)

First: Aylesford (C. Clay); Ightham (J. Bangay); Tonbridge (V. Holah) **Feb 1** (Jan 1)

Last: Darland Banks (R. Pennington)

Dec 17 (Dec 30)

Jill Tardivel found 100 **Peacocks** hibernating in underground rooms at Fort Burgoyne, near Dover in January 2020. Outdoors, there were some high counts in early April, with 16 seen at Lesnes Abbey by Mike Robinson, 20 at Tenterden by Doug Stannard, 53 at Church Wood, Blean by Michael Walter, 25 at Margate Cemetery by Stephen Blaskett, 33 at Wraik Hill by Cathy Myles, 46 at Wye by David Harper and 20 at Great Crabbles Wood by Howard Vaughan. There were large numbers in the summer generation in July too, including 100 at Dungeness (Stanley Furlongs), 168 at Hothfield (Robert Insall), 150 at Adisham (David White), 102 at Sissinghurst (Sally Harris), 73 at Gravesend (Lucy Hayes), 54 at Aldington (Eric Filler) and 50 at Hemsted Forest (Graham Grimmett). Most of these butterflies disappeared into cooler overwintering sites in the hot weather and few were seen after July, although there were seventeen records of singles in November.



COMMA *Polygonia c-album*

656 (559) Tetrads

697 Tetrads 2015-19 (521, 2010-14)

First: Greenwich (J. Beale)

Mar 2 (Feb 14)

Last: Shrewsbury Park (S. Banks)

Nov 18 (Dec 30)

Numbers of **Comma** continued to recover, particularly in the summer generation. In late June and July there were counts of 23 at Trosley CP and 17 at Northward Hill (John Waghorn), 14 at Quex Park (Sarah Cornelius), 14 at Wrinsted (Martin Newcombe), 13 at Hever Castle (Faye Shouler), 11 at Chiddingstone (Janice Wallace), 11 at High Elms CP (Fred O'Hare) and 10 at Ashford (Teagan Owen).

OTHER, NON-RESIDENT, SPECIES

SWALLOWTAIL

There was an early sighting of a Swallowtail at Hever on 15 April by Jo Cockerill. This was followed by one seen by Sharon Norman at Capel-le-Ferne on 30 May, with another seen there by Dale Gibson on 2 August. In early June Ross Newham saw one near Dungeness and another (or the same one) was seen by Graham Parry at Lydd. Brian Adams spotted one at Folkestone Warren on 22 July and Nigel Stapley had one on Buddleia in his garden at Kemsing on 10 August.

LONG-TAILED BLUE

There were sightings of single Long-tailed Blue at Kingsdown by Francesca Partridge on 8 August and by Howard Vaughan on the 10th. In September Alfie Gay found 2 adults on the Downs above Folkestone on the 14th and Chris Randall saw 3 at Pegwell Bay on the 21st.

LARGE TORTOISESHELL

At least seven Large Tortoiseshells were seen in 2020. Derek Smith saw one at Denge on 21 March then in April Lawrence Rogers saw one at Barnehurst on the 9th, David Walker had sightings at Dungeness BO on 11th and 22nd, and Carol Wade and Roger Newton reported one at South Foreland on 12th. Later in the year there were records in mid-July from Natalie Dean at Brasted, Pat Straughan at Hadlow and Jane Rogers at West Wickham.

CAMBERWELL BEAUTY

A Camberwell Beauty was seen at Marden by Alan Pavey on 13 August.

QUEEN OF SPAIN FRITILLARY

John & Emily Neighbour saw a Queen of Spain Fritillary at South Foreland on 22 September, in the same area where one was seen in summer 2019.

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KENT BIOLOGICAL RECORDS CENTRE
KENT FIELD CLUB
KENT ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY
KENT WILDLIFE TRUST (KWT)
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Kent Branch Website

www.kentbutterflies.org

Back cover photo: Marbled White, Jim Higham

