

Clouded Yellows at Hutchinson's Bank



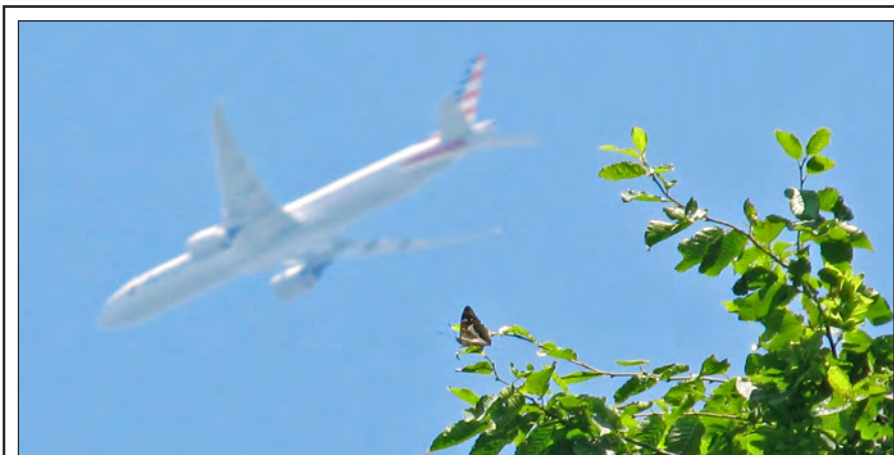
A male Clouded Yellow harasses a mating pair in a shot from a remarkable film by Martin Wills at Hutchinson's Bank, New Addington, in August. Martin reports:

Jun 21 1st CY at HB since 2009, a female.

Aug 4 10 CY along the cutting from at least 2-6pm, probably offspring of June female.

Aug 8 At least two males patrolling along the cutting; in the flower meadow above, a female was feeding and moving back towards the cutting; another female was flying down the path to the cutting. She soon met a male coming the other way, and they paired within seconds, only to be joined by another male (see picture). After a few seconds he shot off and found a second female. A further male and female were seen.

More pictures: www.spock-butterflies.blogspot.co.uk



Purple Emperor and American Airlines jet at Bookham Common. Geoff Eaton

Number 56

£2.00

SURREY Skipper

Autumn/Winter 2013-2014

*Butterflies of
Surrey Revisited*

OUT NOW
see page 21

**News from
Box Hill**
page 8



MEMBERS' DAY – Saturday 9 November: see pages 4-5

**Butterfly
Conservation**



**Surrey & SW London
branch magazine**

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www.surreybutterflies.org

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Surrey Skipper

Spring edition includes the new season's field trips.
Autumn edition previews the annual Members' Day.

	Copy deadline	Published
2014 Autumn	Sep 21	October
2015 Spring	Feb 22	March

■ ARTICLES and photographs for your Surrey Skipper are very much welcomed.

Please contact editor Francis Kelly.



Dates 2013

Oct 12	AES Annual Exhibition and Trade Fair, Kempton Park.
Oct 12	Branch Chairs' Meeting, Birmingham.
Oct 26	Hampshire Members' Day, 1.30, Littleton, Winchester SO33 6QL. Speakers include BC Chief Executive Dr. Martin Warren.
Oct 26	Upper Thames Members' Day, 10.30, Wallingford OX10 6LZ.
Nov 9	Surrey & SW London Members' Day , 9.50-4.30: Friends Life Sports & Social Club, Pixham Lane, Dorking, RH4 1QA.
Nov 16	BC National AGM & Members' Day, Swindon.
2014	
Jan 25	National Moth Recorders' Meeting, Birmingham and Midland Institute
Mar 1	Garden Moth Scheme starts. www.gms.staffs-ecology.org.uk
Mar 1	Surrey recorders, East Horsley
Mar 1	BC Branch Liaison Meeting, NCVO, Regents Wharf, London N1 9RL.
Mar 22	National Butterfly Recorders' Meeting, Birmingham.
Apr 4-6	BC 7th International Symposium, Southampton University.

Erratum: Skipper 55, page 33: *Caryocolum proximum* was last recorded in 1911.

Front page photo: Purple Emperor male, Bookham Common, by Ken Willmott, as featured on the cover of *Butterflies of Surrey Revisited*.

Chairman

David Gardner

A WONDERFUL summer is now topped off brilliantly by our branch's contribution to the Surrey Wildlife Trust Atlas Series – *Butterflies of Surrey Revisited*.

This is the first in the series to be in full colour, and with 240 pages and over 100 photographs is great value at £16. I congratulate chief author Ken Willmott; Malcolm Bridge and the other writers; Harry E. Clarke, who produced the distribution maps and charts; editor Francis Kelly and all the other contributors.

Please see Francis's introduction on page 21, the Dingy Skipper extract in the centre pages, and Dan Hoare's review on page 25.

Launch day is Saturday, October 12 at the Amateur Entomologists' Society's Annual Exhibition and Trade Fair at Kempton Park racecourse. Books will be available at our Members' Day in Dorking on Saturday, November 9, when the authors may be induced to sign your copy.

Another book that will interest you is Jeremy Early's *My Side of the Fence*, about the natural history in his Reigate garden. Jeremy will be one of our Members' Day speakers, introducing his book and signing copies. See pages 26-29.

Thanks to Phil Boys for putting together an interesting programme for Members' Day. Full details are on the next two pages.

Phil attended several shows, selling BC goods and promoting the branch. He would very much welcome any help with this. We had a stand at the Field Studies Council event at Juniper Hall and they were able to use the field for parking that was denied to our biennial Butterfly Festival there last year. We will have more on this subject when we review whether to run our event there next year after the 2012 weekend produced a profit of only £84 (see Peter Camber's accounts on page 41).

I must also thank Malcolm Bridge for 13 years great work as County Butterfly Recorder. Now that *Butterflies of Surrey Revisited* has been published, Malcolm felt it was a good time to stand down, especially as he has found an enthusiastic and skilled successor in Harry E. Clarke. Harry introduces himself on page 42. Malcolm remains busy with Oaken Wood and its new lease, and continues as Branch Contact.

On behalf of those who attended any of our 37 field trips this year, I would like to thank Mike Weller, who organised the programme, and all those who led a walk. Many of their tales are featured in this Skipper.

I thank Paul Wheeler for his moth events. The visit to Pewley Down was an astonishing night with over 200 species confirmed including many *Metzneria neuropterella*, which matches the increased records in Kent.

■ As a promotional exercise, we hope to make this Skipper available for £2 (proceeds to be shared) via the Surrey Wildlife Trust at Newlands Corner and the Friends of Box Hill at their NT shop section.



This magazine is distributed free to members of BC Surrey branch

Members' Day 2013

Saturday, November 9

Friends Life Sports & Social Club,
Pixham Lane, Dorking RH4 1QA



9.50 AGM	Treasurer p40	Transects
Last year's minutes p38	Membership	Moths
Matters arising	Recorder	Field trips
Chairman's report	Oaken Wood	<i>Butterflies of Surrey Revisited</i>

■ Standing for re-election to the committee:

David Gardner, Mike Weller, Ken Willmott.

■ Standing for election as County Recorder: *Harry E. Clarke.*

10.40 Refreshments

Book Signings

11.10 Dan Hoare: BC Senior Regional Officer – South East.
Dukes on the Edge – Duke of Burgundy conservation project.

12.10 Jeremy Early: author of *My Side of the Fence* –
The Natural History of a Surrey Garden.

12.40 Lunch: members who wish to partake of an excellent buffet lunch are asked to contribute £10. **Book Signings**

2.00 Ian Middlebrook: BC UK transects coordinator.

3.00 Sarah Meredith: Small Blue conservation around Guildford.

3.30 Francis Kelly: editor of *Butterflies of Surrey Revisited.*

4.00 Photo Competition result, Prize Quiz answers, Raffle.

4.30 Close **Book Signings**

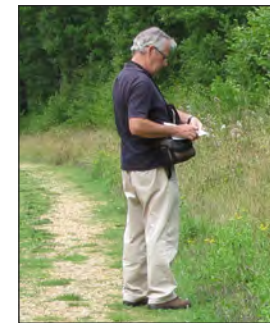
■ The Social Club is the white building at the end of the path on the left of the entrance drive. There is ample parking further along the drive. Doors open 9am.

Members' Day Photo Competition

- Maximum size A5 (148 x 210mm). Mounting the photo on cardboard will protect the print and enable a good display.
- Surrey Lepidoptera only – any stage, taken this year.
- Caption is helpful, stating what, where and when.
- Write on the back your name and email address or phone number.
- Maximum two entries per person.
- The winning photo will be published in colour in the next Skipper.

*On arrival, please hand your photos for display to **Kirstie Banham.***

Members are invited to vote during the day and the winner will be announced at the end of the day.



Prize Quiz

Graham Revill, winner for the last two years, is setting the questions for the traditional Prize Quiz. Please collect a quiz sheet on arrival and tackle the questions during the day.

■ Graham is pictured jotting down another fiendish question during a trip to Chiddingfold.

Book signings

Ken Willmott, chief author, and other contributors will be available to sign copies of *Butterflies of Surrey Revisited*, £16.

■ *Cash or cheque to F J Kelly (will pass on to SWT)*

Jeremy Early will be signing copies of *My Side of the Fence* – *The Natural History of a Surrey Garden*, £20.

■ *Cash or cheque to Jeremy Early*

Raffle

Items for the raffle will be gratefully received, e.g. books, bottles. Please hand to them **Phil Boys** on arrival.

ALL MEMBERS ARE MOST WELCOME

Recorder's (farewell) Report

Malcolm Bridge

AFTER the wettest summer on record (2012), a long cold winter and a cool spring, the prospects of a good butterfly summer in 2013 were distinctly gloomy.

This remained the case into July, when I realised a long-held dream of meeting *Cynthia* in the Rila Mountains of Bulgaria on a chill-mist and juniper-covered scree slope while the UK basked in the warmth of a real and prolonged summer. Before my departure the spring species, when they eventually emerged, had performed better than expected given the nature of 2012, but the summer species were late and in small numbers. When I returned home in mid-July the difference was astonishing. Summer butterflies were everywhere, with Small Skippers especially plentiful after several lean years. And so it continued through July and August.

Of the migrants, Red Admiral, Painted Lady and Large White were much in evidence and, although not a historic year, Clouded Yellows were seen throughout the county, the June arrivals giving rise to a good emergence of home-grown ones in August. Several *f. helice* specimens were seen, occasionally reported as Pale Clouded Yellows

On the downside, Adonis Blue seemed to underperform in spring and certainly in summer, with only small numbers reported at the end of August. A fuller picture will emerge in the months ahead and the 2013 story will be told by Harry Clarke.

Gail Jeffcoate, the branch's first butterfly recorder, contributed significantly to the *Millennium Atlas* (2001) and felt that this major landmark offered the right moment to step aside. Thus in 2001 I became branch recorder. For a year or two it was difficult to motivate colleagues to continue square-bashing after several seasons of massive recorder effort. I discussed this concern with Surrey's most prolific recorder, Ian Cunningham, and we felt that a new target would help to motivate colleagues to record from under-visited areas as well as their local patch.

The new target was that by the end of the next five-year recording cycle (2009) every 1km square (monad) would be visited, if possible in spring and summer, to achieve a more thorough coverage than the previous 2km square (tetrad) coverage. This implied therefore not just 550 tetrads but 2,200 monads, a tall order indeed. Many records had already been submitted at 1km resolution so Ian mapped out the unrecorded 1km squares and set the targets. The missing monads were posted and



1	2	3	4
RECORDING EXAMPLE			
<i>Date</i>	<i>Grid Ref.</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Species</i>
09 July 2013	TQ086516	Sheepleas	Purple Emperor
09 August 2013	SU948565	Brookwood Cemetery	Clouded Yellow

several colleagues rose to the challenge, none more so than Ian. The last unrecorded monad was visited in early September 2009 by Ian and, not quite coincidentally, myself. It lay just south-east of Dunsfold so the two of us celebrated the success of mapping the whole county at 1km resolution by repairing to The Sun Inn. This was, in every sense, a tribute to the many colleagues who had sent records to Gail and me since 1989 and remains as the only county dataset at 1km resolution.

Now we have reached a new landmark with the publication of *Butterflies of Surrey Revisited* (2013). In the course of preparing this book, Harry Clarke offered to deploy his considerable IT skills to generate sophisticated distribution maps. It was apparent that Harry's skills far exceeded mine and that he was keen to become involved with data handling for our new book and beyond, so I am handing over to Harry from October 1 (see page 42).

It remains for me to note that, after caring for the branch database for the past 13 seasons, many of you have given me terrific support in the valuable work of maintaining up-to-date and reliable data of Surrey butterflies' changing fortunes. I know that Harry will enjoy being the fortunate recipient of your field work in the years ahead. My thanks to you all. I will continue as Oaken Wood manager and branch contact. ■ *Cynthia is a montane fritillary of SW Bulgaria and the Alps.*

How to submit records

Harry E. Clarke

- **Online** via the branch website recording facility.
- **Email** to harry@harryclarke.me.uk as a spreadsheet attachment.
- **Paper** records are also acceptable (see my address on inside-back page).

RECORDING FORMAT

- 1 Date** – any valid Excel format.
- 2 Grid Reference** – of the centre of the site, ideally 6 digits giving accuracy to nearest 100m; will accept 4 digits giving 1km accuracy. References west of Guildford are in the SU 100k square: format SU123456, where 123 are eastings, and 456 northings. East of Guildford format: TQ123456.
- 3 Location name.**
- 4 Species** – common or scientific name.
- 5 Abundance** – number of butterflies seen. Unless qualified this is assumed to be adults. Additional columns can be used, e.g. egg, larva, pupa, adult female, adult male, mating pair. Leave blank any unused fields.
- 6 Comment** – any relevant information; e.g. state if unusual record was photographed, which may be important if validation is required.

5a	5b	5c	6
<i>ABUNDANCE</i>			
<i>Adult</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Comment</i>
		1	Fresh that day
4			

■ Unless otherwise advised, the recorder is assumed to be the person submitting the record.

■ www.gridreferencefinder.com is a useful map website for identifying grid references.

News from Box Hill

Gail Jeffcoate

THERE are many reasons to go to Box Hill: the views, the walks, the wildlife, the new cafe and, for the last couple of years, the cycling. 2014 marks the centenary of the acquisition of Box Hill by the National Trust. There will be events and displays, and the memorial at the top of the famous viewpoint is to be remodelled in honour of the anniversary.

What has happened to butterflies and moths during these 100 years? The overall number of butterfly species remains pretty constant, but there have been gains and losses. Grayling, High Brown Fritillary and Pearl-bordered Fritillary died out in the middle of the 20th century, and the Duke of Burgundy and Wall had gone by the early 1990s. On the other hand, Purple Emperor, White Admiral, Comma, Marbled White and Essex Skipper were either not present in 1914 or in much lower numbers than now. Most recently the Brown Hairstreak has arrived, as it spread up through Surrey to reach at least two south London Boroughs in the last decade.

These losses and gains are in line with the pattern over much of south-east England. Box Hill continues to support 38 butterfly species, making it Surrey's richest site. It has an important population of Silver-spotted Skipper and plenty of those – and their eggs – were seen on the branch field trip in August, along with good numbers of Chalkhill Blue. We were just too late for the Dark Green Fritillary, which has its strongest Surrey population at Box Hill, and too early for the second brood of the Adonis Blue, which occurs in small numbers on the south side and is closely monitored. The grazing regime is carefully adjusted to help the small population of Small Blue, and work is being carried out to extend the area of suitable habitat for it.

Many kinds of moth are also present. Box Hill is now thought to be the only remaining Surrey site for the Straw Belle, which also occurs in just a few places in Kent. The Chalk Carpet, another scarce species nationally, occurs in good numbers, and this year the rare Lace Border was recorded. Surrey Midget Moth *Phyllonorycter scabiosella*, a rare micromoth that mines the leaves of small scabious, is also found in the grassland.

In 2012 the Olympic Road Cycle races brought some of the world's top cyclists to Box Hill. Many months of planning were needed to make sure the sensitive grassland was not damaged by the thousands of spectators. LOCOG (London Organising Committee for the Olympic Games) paid for detailed surveys of invertebrates, plants and Dormice along the route, especially in the Zig Zag Valley, with ecologists mapping out where protection was needed. Once spectator areas were agreed, experts calculated the numbers that could be allowed on site, and the number of marshals needed.

There were conservation gains in the form of carefully planned cutting of scrub and grass, paid for by the organisers. Clearance of scrub at the top of the Viewpoint slopes for the huge Olympic rings was an example of this – the scrub clearance there was planned in any case. The event passed off without damage to the slopes, but surveys paid for by LOCOG continue this year and next, with emphasis on particular species, including the Straw Belle and Small Blue. Summer 2013 brought the Ride London legacy event, with many more cyclists but few spectators. These events, with much planning and organising, can be accommodated without damage to the slopes, though



The Olympic Rings overlooking the south-facing slopes of Box Hill. GJ

the numbers of visitors, especially cyclists, during the rest of the year has increased enormously as a result of them.

Conservation grazing with sheep began at Box Hill in 1990, with the aim of reducing the coarse tor-grass that smothers less vigorous plants. It was successful, but cattle-grazing is a better option, and for the last few years first Highland, and more recently Belted Galloway, cattle have grazed the south slopes. Cattle-grazing calls for stout fencing and permanent water supplies, which are expensive. Last year Box Hill entered the Higher Level Stewardship scheme, which provides money for grazing infrastructure as well as for scrub management carried out by contractors. From autumn 2013 the grazing animals will be supplied, looked after and moved when necessary by Surrey Wildlife Trust, while areas of unwanted scrub are being dealt with by contractors, to reinstate grassland. One example of this can already be seen at the west end of the "Dukes" slope, in the southeast of the property.

Scrub is not all bad. Scrub of varied age and varied species composition, when carefully managed, is an important element of the vegetation on chalk grassland. At Box Hill scrub supports the Brown Hairstreak, Orange-tailed Clearwing moth and two Red Data Book beetles, while scrub edges are important for the Roman Snail and Rufous Grasshopper, to name but a few. A dedicated team of volunteers helps the National Trust with this work, which is planned and prioritised by a small group of National Trust staff and expert volunteers. There are 20 grassland areas on Box Hill and prioritising the work needed on all of them is a challenge. Guidance from experts is regularly sought, for example from BC staff when planning management of the Straw Belle areas.

Two butterfly transects were set up in 1984. The southern route proved to be too long, and in 1994 it was divided into two separate walks. The three routes, on the Zig Zag slopes, the Viewpoint slopes and at Dukes, are now walked by volunteers and will provide information on the success of the new grazing regime. More volunteers are needed to help with the butterfly transects, ensuring that they are walked every week between April and September.

■ If you would like to help by walking a transect a few times each summer, please contact coordinator Richard Donovan (see inside-back). To find out more about wildlife walks and events at Box Hill, see the National Trust and Friends of Box Hill websites. There is always plenty going on, and in the centenary year there will be even more!

Notes from Oaken Wood

Malcolm Bridge

IN the last set of Notes I promised that I would report the outcome of our proposal to enlarge the reserve by taking on the area immediately to the west of the current Oaken Wood. Pressure of work and then illness have prevented Bruce Auchterlonie, the beat forester, from meeting branch officers to discuss the proposal and this meeting will now take place in October. I am nervous about saying “all will be revealed” at our AGM in November but I hope that will be the case.

Coleophora wockeella, the Betony Case-bearer, has provided the focus for most of this summer’s management activity. With Oaken Wood and an adjacent area being its only known breeding habitat in the UK, this micro-moth has attracted funding to pay for a major research project.

Tony Davis, BC Moth Officer, outlined this work in the spring Skipper and phase one was completed by mid-July. Large scrapes have been created in the grassland close to the moth’s breeding areas. These are well known as a consequence of regular searches over the last decade for the characteristic signs of larval feeding damage and discovery of larvae in late summer or early spring.

To encourage the spread of the larval foodplant, betony, which grows in several of the open grassy areas at Oaken Wood, some bracken management has been a part of the phase one management. Work over the two previous summers by branch members has reduced significantly the dominance of bracken within and adjacent to the reserve. In 2013 these areas have been sprayed with Asulox herbicide, which has saved the volunteers from a hot and dusty activity.

When I visited on August 1 the bracken seemed untouched and threatening another takeover. A hasty exchange of e-mails between Tony Davis and myself assured me that Asulox has an insidious effect. It is absorbed into the bracken’s underground structures and prevents the bracken from building the reserves to promote good growth in the following season. So it seems that a little patience on my part is called for and the benefits of the spraying will be apparent in 2014. I will be a happy man when I can see with my own eyes. The impact of the labour intensive and exhausting bracken-scything and flailing of the last two years is immediate, but perhaps *festina lente* (hasten slowly) may be the best approach in the long term.

OAKEN WOOD, a branch reserve since 1995, is 8.9ha of woodland and grassland in the south-west of the county, 2.6km south of Dunsfold, and a similar distance north of the Sussex village of Plaistow. It is part of the Forestry Commission’s 324ha Chiddingfold Forest.

Access: SU99303379, via track (usually no vehicular access) that runs west from Plaistow Rd at SU99433381; GU8 4PG. Parking for only a few cars.

Western (Botany Bay) entrance to Chiddingfold Forest is off High Street at SU97843481; GU8 4YA. Parking here is slightly easier but beware the roadside ditches! Oaken Wood is 2.5km to the east.



Malcolm Bridge addresses the troops at Oaken Wood during the May field trip. **FK**

The summer visit to look over the reserve and to check on Wood White numbers – as well as bracken management – was blessed with warm sunshine and a terrific show of fresh Brimstones. Every burdock along the rides boasted several nectaring Brimstones and an estimate would be 100-200 spread between Oaken Wood, the Triangle and the county boundary at the southern edge of Fisherlane Wood.

Of greater significance was the good scattering of Wood Whites south of the Triangle and into Fisherlane Wood. In a poor Wood White year Fisherlane is often devoid but in 2003 several were seen and this year 11 Wood Whites were counted, my best ever total. By a happy coincidence I bumped into Ken Willmott doing his Wood White survey. I hope that his work reflects the same cheering conclusion that my day-long visit did.

There have been the inevitable disappointments, the greatest being the loss of the Small Pearl-bordered (last recorded 1997) and Pearl-bordered (2007) Fritillaries. Happily other species have prospered. The Wood White is more numerous and widespread throughout the forest than it was 20 years ago. The Marbled White, introduced into the reserve’s meadow area in the early 1990s, has now built into a good colony and has spread into suitable areas adjacent to Oaken Wood.

John Buckley, who has walked the butterfly transect at Oaken Wood since 2004, reports a summer of two halves. Miserably low numbers until the middle of July and then, following the advent of summer, a real upsurge. Figures are being analysed after September’s final walk and will be an improvement on 2012, but the sunshine arrived too late for 2013 to be a vintage year at our reserve.

MEMBERS are warmly invited to join the regular work parties at Oaken Wood.
Please contact Malcolm Bridge (details inside-back page)

Purple Emperor at Oaken Wood

Ken Willmott

IN July 2010 I visited our Oaken Wood reserve in order to observe the Purple Emperor egg-laying on one of the many suitable willows. Experience has shown that lunchtime is the best time to make such an observation.

At 13.21 an Empress flew towards the two large willows I was watching, but she glided gracefully past them both, went marginally off the reserve, and landed on a young broad-leaved willow about 20 metres into the Forestry Commission's plantation. I marked out the egg, which was unusually low down, but the larva soon perished.

Despite the poor spring, 2013 was proving to be a very good year for the Purple Emperor. A warm and sunny July gave ample opportunities to view egg-laying at various locations. I returned to Oaken Wood on August 1, a perfect day with continuous sunshine from a gin-clear sky. Lunchtime at the same willows produced nothing, but there are many other good willows on the reserve and there was still time before Empress activity declines. I walked past the pond to a magnificent single-stemmed willow culminating in a crown of leaves, many of which were in dappled sunlight – ideal for an egg-laying Empress.

At 12.55 an Empress came to investigate the foliage before gently fluttering inside the cathedral of leaves. At last the Purple Emperor was confirmed as a breeding resident of Oaken Wood! She spent about five minutes within the canopy and deposited at least half a dozen eggs, possibly as many as eight, as I counted each of her settlements on a leaf. If she spends 30 seconds or more that is confirmation for me.

Despite having seen a number of egg-laying Emperesses this year, the Oaken Wood event was my most memorable, for the clearest and longest view achieved. At one point it appeared that two Emperesses were at work, but I soon realised that with the sun at its highest and strongest, she was casting a large shadow.

It seems a long time since I have watched the event on a single-stemmed willow. My early sightings on Bookham Common were mostly on such growths, but the storms of 1987 and 1991 destroyed many of the finest, and my attention these days is usually concentrated on groups of willows.

Many a willow, leaning towards the light in the shadow of a taller tree, becomes top-heavy and falls over. We must maintain the reserve as an important Purple Emperor location. The wider Chiddingfold Forest complex has fine willows but is perhaps more threatened from FC operations.

We should initially make an inventory of all the willows on site and plan for a future where the age of these short-lived trees is varied and thus always supplying the Empress with suitable growths. I am studying whether an Empress will use a willow that has been cut and forming new shoots, similar to coppice, but where the trunk is lopped off at 3-4 metres above the ground.

On the same day as the Oaken Wood egg-lay I watched a Purple Emperor at



midday enter a “coppiced” willow along the main ride, not far from the reserve information board. It did not seem to stay long enough to lay an egg and soon moved on to a smaller-leaved willow. Again I felt it departed too quickly to have deposited an egg, and in my opinion both were rejected. As I did not get a good look at this individual, I could not say that it was definitely a female, particularly as midday is usually a little too early for this activity. It might have been a male searching for freshly emerged females, which I recorded on Bookham Common on several occasions this year.

I have earmarked several “coppiced” willows in Chiddingfold Forest that have been treated like this and they may make an interesting lunch venue in 2014. Despite many years of watching Purple Emperors, I learn something new every season.

Hairstreak Heaven

Ken Willmott

IN July 2011 a female White-letter Hairstreak was feeding on the yellow flowers of Canadian goldenrod just outside the French doors leading to our back garden in Leatherhead. It was in perfect condition, complete with tails.

A pleasant surprise, as I had not found this elm-feeding Hairstreak in Surrey for some time. It remains a mystery where the elm that fed the larva was situated in relation to my garden. Matthew Oates, of the National Trust, was on his way to see me and luckily he arrived in time as the Hairstreak was in no hurry to leave the goldenrod. We took a selection of pictures but mine were disappointing – the wind was my excuse!



Garden Brown Hairstreak. KW

On August 10 this year, another Hairstreak was avidly feeding on the goldenrod. This time it was a rarely seen male Brown Hairstreak. Nine out of ten sightings of this species will be a travelling female on a lunchtime egg-laying spree. I took a set of photographs, including an upperside showing the scent brand in lieu of the red/orange patch of the female. Although the Hairstreak was very fresh, a small triangular piece of wing membrane was missing from both its hindwings. These were close to its “tails” and may have been caused by a text-book example of a bird aiming for the butterfly antennae/head, but being confused by the tails.

Two other lycaenids have been seen on the goldenrod, an established garden escape: a Holly Blue and a “spidered” Small Copper. Interestingly these are small butterflies with a very short proboscis that is able to probe for nectar into the tiny flower spikelets.

I have recently had female Brown Hairstreaks in the back garden, and in the front garden I found an overwintering egg on a mature cherry plum tree, *Prunus cerasifera*. Although the Brown Hairstreak is rarely stated as a garden butterfly, I know of two other Branch members that have regular encounters with this elusive species in both their adult and overwintering egg stages.

Emperor Experiences

July 9, Bookham: having never seen a male Purple Emperor, I stationed myself at the Hill House Farm site. At 12.40 an Emperor flew across the gap in the canopy and for the next couple of hours I had sightings of one, two and even three males in the air at once. From time to time one settled in full view on the highest branches of a hornbeam at a height of about 20 metres. Relying on 12x optical zoom and a steady hand, I tried to keep the camera focused on the critical piece of foliage. Several of the pictures gave a small, indisputable image of the Emperor, but I was concentrating so hard on the butterfly that I never noticed an American Airlines jet slide past! *See picture on back page.*



Him indoors. **Harry Eve**

Geoff Eaton

July 11, South Woking: while photographing three White Admirals on a sunny bramble 200 metres from my house at 4pm, I was astonished to see a male Emperor flying purposefully along the street (Bonners Close, TQ 00525607) at a height of just one metre. He disappeared into Westfield Common woods, where I have often half-heartedly looked for an assembly point despite never having seen the butterfly previously. I shall resume the search, but the wood is on flat ground, pretty dense, and has no obvious high point.

Francis Kelly

July 12, Sheepleas: after one Emperor sighting at the master tree on the July 9 field trip, I returned three days later and was rewarded with a male on a path at the bottom of the meadow north of the viewpoint.

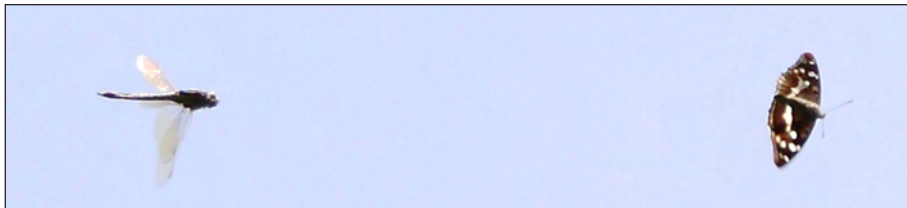
Michael Friend

July 14, Bookham: female egg-laying at 13.19 just six days after the first emergences of males on July 8! Hill Farm territory is seemingly average this year, with three in view at once the most so far.

Ken Willmott

July 14, Holmwood: first sighting of an Emperor on this regular branch field trip.

Mike Weller



A dragonfly gives an Emperor a taste of its own medicine. **Rob Hill**



There's one! Jenny Shalom points out an Emperor at Sheepleas. **Helen Tickner**

July 15, Bookham: a dragonfly turned on a chasing Emperor and pursued it at speed across the canopy. Luckily, the dragonfly didn't make contact. **Rob Hill**

July 21, Chobham Common: an Emperor was flying around a small oak near the car park at SU97896503. It landed in the tree, allowing positive ID. The butterfly was seen by all in the small group led by Alan Hunt – an unexpected surprise for a walk to look at emerging Graylings and worn Silver-studded Blues. There was a sighting of two individuals in the area in 2011. Maybe a small colony has established itself.

Harry E. Clarke

July 22, East Horsley: I was called by my next door neighbours to confirm the identity of a butterfly that had entered an upstairs room and was settled on the window pane. It made no attempt to fly, although another window was open, and remained settled until encouraged to leave. It flew off towards a tree - slightly off course for the site (approx. 900 metres away) where they congregate at Sheepleas. Regrettably, it did not include my garden in its flight itinerary but I did see one here in 2006 - on the ground in a pit that my children used to dig in.

Harry Eve

July 24, Wimbledon Common: our group split up on arrival at an open meadow at the Putney Heath end of the Common (close to Telegraph Road). Leader Malcolm Bridge and I were exploring a stand of rejuvenated elms for White-letter Hairstreak. Suddenly a large flying object broke cover at the top of a nearby, not particularly large oak. My initial thought was small bird, although the flight pattern looked more lepidopteral than ornithological. A few minutes later it reappeared and we realised it was displaying all the characteristics of a Purple Emperor. Then it flew down and obligingly passed right in front of our eyes. There could now be no doubt – it was indeed an Emperor. We rejoined the rest of the group and Nigel Jackman announced he had just seen what he thought was a White Admiral, although it had seemed rather large. This must have been the same Emperor. Back at the Windmill Malcolm reported the event to the ranger's office, which seemed unaware of previous records of this royal visitor. New County Recorder Harry Clarke confirms that, at TQ235741, this is VC17's nearest record to central London. **Michael Friend**

Sheepleas Nettle Meadow

Ken Willmott

THE branch did not acquire butterfly-rich Sheepleas Nettle Meadow (TQ086521) as its second reserve but we have worked successfully with Surrey Wildlife Trust after the tenant farmer did not renew his lease. I made 10 visits during spring and summer and propose a final visit to see how it has been left for the winter.

Apr 14: my first visit, after a long wait for decent weather to maximise observations. Three nymphalids were on the wing – Peacock, Comma, and a couple of individuals of the targeted species, the Small Tortoiseshell. In a normal spring the ST has usually begun egg-laying on the nettle beds in early April, but growth was retarded this year due to the low temperatures.

Apr 29: six STs on a day of increasing cloud and cool breeze. The first Red Admiral was seen, probably a local, overwintered example rather than an immigrant. The cold spring hardly encouraged visits from abroad at this early date and British hibernators have been regular at Bookham for many years, sometimes flying as early as February given a sunny mild day.

Apr 30: in better weather I saw double the number of STs, including courting couples. There was a notable increase in Comma activity too.

May 2: mostly sunny, becoming warm; at least a dozen STs, four Red Admirals, one of which was busily depositing eggs on appropriate nettles, and a female Brimstone finding buckthorn in the south-facing hedgerow, the importance of which has been drawn to the attention of SWT. The opposite side to Nettle Meadow was trimmed during the summer, but the important side, with buckthorn, and blackthorn for the Brown Hairstreak, remained untouched.

May 5: a branch field trip also found an egg-laying Brimstone and saw the Brown Hairstreak egg I had marked in 2012. I was pleased to find that the overwintered egg had successfully emerged between May 2 and 5. Peacocks were in double figures. Early May is usually a good date to see this species depositing their egg batches on the underside of nettle leaves, but after such a cold spring they were not yet ready.

Jun 1: I counted 23 ST larval nests in varying stages from newly hatched to penultimate instar. The larva changes its skin four times, each being a critical period of vulnerability. At least six Peacocks were still present.

Jly 1: I was encouraged to find 62 Peacock larval nests, again varying from just hatched to penultimate skin change. It was clear later in the month that Peacocks were having an exceptional year and that Nettle Meadow had provided them with the ideal conditions. Our Senior Regional Officer Dan Hoare counted 262 on Oxenbourne Down, Hampshire. They were also much more common than in recent years on knapweed on the roadside verges of Chiddingfold Forest, where for the last two seasons or more they have been virtually absent. The first male Meadow Browns were seen, and a Clouded Yellow meandered through – forerunner of a reasonable 2013 influx.

Jly 6: morning counts of the new brood of ST produced 24 and 36, with half an hour between counts as the weather improved. Egg-laying Red Admirals were busy but

not in the same high number as in 2012. A geriatric male Comma, a survivor from last winter, was still on territory. A new species was a Dark Green Fritillary, feeding on the meadow's most favoured nectar plant, the lilac-coloured creeping thistle.

Jly 9: a branch field trip saw the importance of the site for STs, with over 50 seen on our perimeter walk. How would this brood respond to the nettles not being summer-cut, as they had been by the farmer in previous years? Freshly cut nettles, like the new spring growths, are much preferred.

Jly 26: I need not have worried as a larval nest count produced 25-30 in the now waist-high nettles. A small section of nettles cut alongside the perimeter track was quickly utilised. Perhaps next year we could provide both cut and uncut patches. Peacocks were also emerging and I photographed one individual that had residue of meconium (waste chemical matter from metamorphosis usually ejected from freshly emerged individuals) at the tip of its abdomen, confirming that it had pupated within the nettle bed. A great year for the aristocrats!

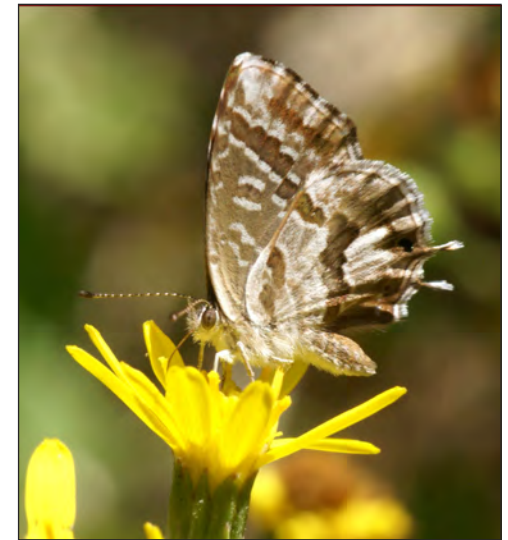
■ This winter I hope to negotiate the way forward with SWT, building on the success of our partnership in 2013, for which we are most thankful, as should be local residents with a profusion of our most colourful butterflies in their gardens.

Geranium Bronze

Marian Thomas

STEPHEN Reisbach and I visited Tolworth Court Farm Fields on September 2. In the corner of one of the smaller fields (TQ199654) Stephen spotted something flitting about which he straightaway identified as “different”. When it settled, the unmistakable underside was that of a Geranium Bronze.

The species is now widespread in Mediterranean countries after being accidentally introduced from South Africa. It is conceivable that this one might have been a product of the mini-influx of exotics along the south coast a few weeks earlier. However, it was in absolutely pristine condition, with its tails and fringes beautifully intact, and there is a garden centre nearby on the other side of the A240. So, in the absence of other data, the probability must be that it arrived by the conventional route, i.e. as an early stage on a consignment of pelargoniums, and the good weather enabled it to progress successfully to an adult. It was nectaring contentedly on ragwort.



Geranium Bronze on ragwort at Tolworth Court Farm. **Stephen Reisbach**

Warren Farm

Peter Camber

FOLLOWING Jovita Kaunang's interesting article in the spring Skipper about Warren Farm (TQ232629) and its Small Blue colony, I took up the invitation to assist with general recording at the Ewell site, which is within easy walking distance from my home.

I arranged to meet Jovita, Graham Collins, and Sarah Meredith, who has been working on the Small Blue conservation project that was also featured in the Skipper. We walked the site, particularly noting the areas where Small Blues had been seen, following which Sarah helpfully proposed a route for my weekly walk. After some fine-tuning we agreed a route that would cover much of the Farm's perimeter, plus a more detailed sweep across the area known locally as Sleepy Field.

In spite of the inclement weather, I started my walks on May 20, and for the first two weeks I didn't see a single butterfly, although there were a lot of Common Carpet moths to keep me company. Fortunately, things improved on June 3 when I saw nine species, including my first Small Blue. The following week I saw only four butterflies, but the good news was that two of them were Small Blues – the other two being Small Coppers.

My peak sightings of Small Blue were on June 25 and July 5, when I saw 13 and 14 respectively, but by the following week the first brood was coming to a close and I saw only two. With the arrival of the second brood I saw at least one Small Blue on each of my five August visits, with a peak of eight on August 9, declining to a single sighting on the 27th.

In the three months from June to

Weekly transects: Jun 1 – Aug 31, 2013

	Weeks seen	Max seen	Max date	Total seen
Meadow Brown	11	154	Aug 27	1,016
Small/Essex Skipper ..	6	286	Jly 18	510
Marbled White	5	222	Jly 12	500
Ringlet.....	5	100	Jly 18	247
Gatekeeper	6	56	Jly 25	174
Common Blue	10	29	Aug 19	111
Large Skipper	4	51	Jly 18	101
Small White.....	10	21	Aug 19	87
Large White.....	9	13	Aug 2	55
Small Blue.....	10	14	Jly 5	49
Small Copper.....	7	7	Aug 14	30
Comma	7	6	Jly 5	25
Speckled Wood	8	7	Jly 5	17
Green-veined White	3	5	Aug 9	10
Brimstone	5	4	Jun 3	9
Holly Blue	2	2	Jun 3	3
Peacock	2	2	Jun 3	3
Small Tortoiseshell	2	2	Jly 5	3
Red Admiral	1	2	Jly 25	2
White-letter Hairstreak	1	2	Aug 2	2
Brown Hairstreak.....	2	1	Aug 19	2
Orange-tip	1	1	Jun 3	1
Species Count	22			2,957

August I recorded a total of 2,957 butterflies representing 22 species. My most productive visit was on July 18, when I recorded 786 butterflies from 11 species with Small/Essex Skipper being the most numerous at 286 sightings, followed by Marbled White at 218. However, perhaps the most interesting visits were on August 2, when I recorded two White-letter Hairstreaks, and on August 19 and 27, which both included a female Brown Hairstreak.

Although I have been a regular visitor to Warren Farm for many years, I have never recorded its butterflies in any detail. It is evident that this is an important site, not only for the Small Blue, but also for a range of grassland and woodland species.

Brown Hairstreak Hunt

Marian Thomas

OUR discovery of a Brown Hairstreak at Ashtead Common last year inspired Stephen Reisbach and me to try our luck at a few other places going roughly north from there. In summary:

Horton Country Park: we understood BH had been reported from here recently (eggs at least). **Aug 19:** Stephen sighted one; **Aug 26:** we both saw two.

Howell Hill, Aug 28: all four Surrey Hairstreaks have been recorded here. Given that there isn't a large amount of sloe, we were amazed to find three BHs.

Cuddington Meadows, Aug 28, none: a small area of chalk grassland tucked away near Banstead Downs, and owned by Sutton LB, whose website mentioned that BH eggs had been found there. Just one smallish patch of sloe.

Warren Farm, Aug 28 & Sep 2, none: grassland (with extensive golden rod) adjoining Nonsuch Park. Does not look like promising habitat as a whole for BH, but there is some sloe in the NE corner. Recorded by Peter Camber on Aug 19 & 27.

Tolworth Court Farm Fields, Sep 2, four BHs: we were woefully ignorant about this site, which is local for us, until reading the article in the spring Skipper. There are extensive stretches of sloe hedgerow (as well as some other *Prunus*).

Stokes Farm, Sep 4: a small reserve in Long Ditton owned by Elmbridge BC. We spotted something which looked decidedly like a BH flying along one of the sloe-containing thickets. As it was a bit far away to be sure, I was hesitant to treat this as a definite sighting. **Sep 5:** one sitting at the end of a bramble twig before doing its Houdini act through the back of the undergrowth. **Sep 10:** another tantalising sighting of what I'm pretty sure was one flying along a sloe hedge, but it refused to settle where we could see it.

ALSO: **Ashtead, Aug 21:** none; **Bookham, Aug 23:** male and female.

PS: Brown Hairstreaks still active at Bookham on **Sep 24** (Rob Hill, Nigel Jackman).

Brown Hairstreak Expansion

Matt Phelps

SINCE 2007 I have been a gardener at the Bishop of Guildford's residence, Willow Grange, Jacob's Well, between Guildford and Woking. On August 30 at 2.15 I noticed a male Brown Hairstreak (confirmed by phone photo) on a pear tree in the orchard (SU993533). It is the first record for this 10km square away from Pewley Down, almost three miles to the south, and another step in the butterfly's north-westerly expansion. A Grayling on September 19 took my garden list to 26.

White Admiral 2nd brood

Francis Kelly

SEPTEMBER 20, 12.30: the sun was shining (temp 18°C) so I wandered into my Woking garden (TQ003563) to check the ivy. A fresh White Admiral was flying around. It settled briefly in an apple tree and then departed. It must have been a 2nd-brood individual. It is my second garden record, and they have had a good season in my local woods 250 metres away. The sighting on August 10 at White Downs on the branch field trip was my previous latest record.

Weather Watch

David Gradidge

THE weather has never been out of the news this year, but what do the records tell us? As usual, I refer to published data for South East & Central Southern England.

Winter was on the cold side and especially so as February progressed. However it was the spring weather that was notable, with March being the coldest since 1962 and the 4th-coldest in over 100 years. Contrast this with the year before when March was the 3rd-mildest over the same period. What was rare this year was for the freezing conditions to last right to the end of the month. April and May remained below average so that spring was the 3rd-coldest in the series stretching back to 1910. June was also on the cool side so that the first six months of 2013 were all below average. The last six months of 2012 were not much better.

At least June was dry and reasonably sunny – 50 hours more than last year! Then it all changed. The jet stream, which had been a fixture to the south of Britain, moved north and the weather became wonderful. July was the 2nd-sunniest since 1929 at almost 300 hours and the 5th-warmest. It was of course very dry, as was August, making summer the 9th-driest in the series. Overall the summer was the best since 2006 but did not set any temperature or sunshine records (but as I write, September just might). Butterflies responded wonderfully well to all this warmth.

So what of the future? Spring 1962 was the coldest in 100 years and was followed by the coldest winter in 200+ years. So what! Spring 1941 was the 2nd-coldest and January/February 1942 was the 2nd-coldest in 100 years. Interesting! The spring of 1986 was the 4th-coldest and, you've guessed it, January 1987 was very cold with the period between the 12th and 14th being described as the most severe in Southern England since 1740. My guess is that it is all down to the jet stream getting in a rut.



Big Butterfly Count 2013 Natalie Ngo, Butterfly Conservation

A RECORD-BREAKING 46,000 people took part in BC's Jul/Aug Big Butterfly Count, recording more than 830,000 butterflies and day-flying moths across the UK. Large and Small White numbers were up by more than 300% but it was the huge increase in Small Tortoiseshell and Peacock numbers that was most pleasing, with Small Tortoiseshell up by 388% compared to 2012 and Peacock up by more than 3,500%. Both species probably had their best year since the mid-1990s. In all, 15 of the 21 Big Butterfly Count species increased compared with the previous year, and 12 of these were up by at least 50%.

The top 10

Small White.....	154,438
Large White.....	136,944
Peacock	130,796
Meadow Brown.....	88,547
Gatekeeper	76,935
Small Tortoiseshell	49,418
Green-veined White	38,988
Ringlet	31,206
Six-spot Burnet moth.....	18,681
Comma.....	17,230

■ www.bigbutterflycount.org

Butterflies of Surrey Revisited

Ken Willmott

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

AN enthusiastic conception; a difficult pregnancy; a protracted labour; a joyous outcome! Not the royal baby, but *Butterflies of Surrey Revisited*, which has taken nine months to create and deliver.

In 1995 Surrey Wildlife Trust published *Butterflies of Surrey* by Graham Collins, the first of a series that reached number 13 last year with *Smaller Moths*. That original volume was a one-author work of 87 pages; it sold out long ago and the time has come for a revisit. Much has changed since 1995: Surrey has lost Pearl-bordered and Small Pearl-bordered Fritillaries, Duke of Burgundy and the Wall, while Glanville Fritillary has been controversially introduced in the Farnham area.

This 2013 volume is neither a revision nor a second edition. It is a new book that expands the scope of the original volume and takes advantage of additional data and improved technology. It has 240 pages, over 100 photographs, and is the first in the series to be full colour.

Every species has a distribution map, abundance and flight charts (all created by Harry E. Clarke), at least one photograph, statistics box, flight weeks table and featured transect. The writer presents everything you could want to know about the butterfly in Surrey and finishes with a general article.

Butterflies of Surrey Revisited, with legendary lepidopterist Ken Willmott as chief author, sheds new light on many of the county's 42 regular species. Additional features and statistics make it a mine of information that will delight natural history lovers in Surrey and beyond.

Francis Kelly, editor

Butterflies of Surrey Revisited costs **£16.00 plus postage** from:
Surrey Wildlife Trust, School Lane, Pirbright GU24 0JN. 01483 795440
www.surreywildlifetrust.org

Malcolm Bridge's Dingy Skipper account is featured on the next three pages.

Dingy Skipper *Erynnis tages*

Malcolm Bridge

Surrey status: once locally common, especially along the North Downs; declined throughout the 20th century but now stabilised, at a lower level, on the Chalk and a few other localities.

Flies: mid-April to June, peaking in May; occasional partial second brood from mid-July.

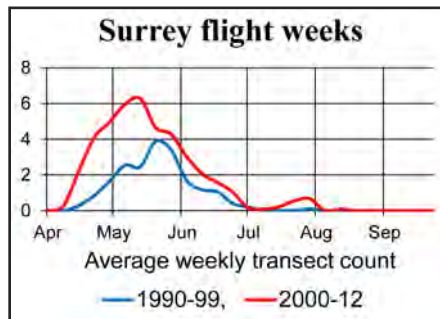
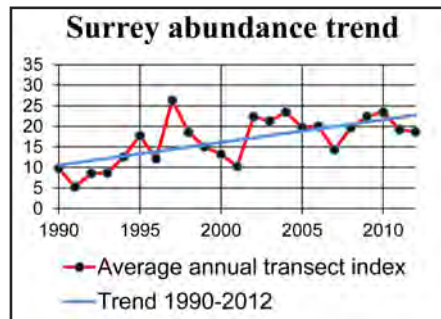
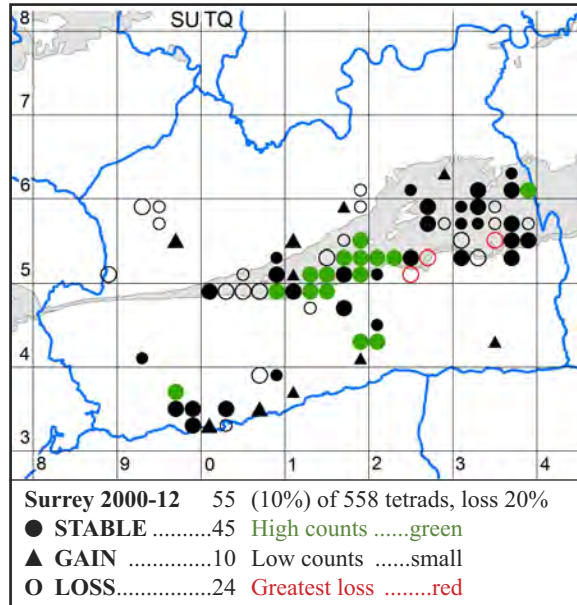
Conservation: UK Biodiversity Action Plan priority species; BC 2010 Red List: vulnerable.

Trends: rapid decline in range and abundance now stabilised. Thomas noted that probably few colonies contain more than 100 adults, even in better years.

Wingspan: 27-34mm.

Identification: moth-like; upperside mainly brown-grey with an indistinct pattern of darker patches and lighter areas. Fresh specimens can be richly dark but worn ones provide the clue to the unfortunate name provided by the Aurelians in the 18th century. Male has pale-brown forewing costal fold containing androconial scales. Spends long periods basking on bare ground, with wings spread flat and pressed against the warm soil. Rests with wings wrapped around dead flower or grass head, becoming difficult to spot. The only British butterfly not to close its wings vertically above its body at rest.

Confusion species: Burnet Companion (see page 187), a day-flying moth, is similar in size and colour. Against possible expectations, the moth is the more attractive insect with



orange-yellow hindwings traversed by two brown bands. Both species prefer the Chalk but the moth also inhabits grasslands such as Richmond Park and Wimbledon Common.

Habitat: downland; also a few woodland rides and brownfield sites.

Top transects: Denbies Landbarn B, Hutchinson’s Bank, Nore Hill, Box Hill, Quarry Hangers, Headley Heath.

Life cycle: usually univoltine; winters as fully grown larva. Darting male waits for a passing female, whose pale green-yellow eggs turn orange after a few days on plants in warm, sheltered spots with bare soil. Few, if any, are laid on ant mounds or in very short sward. Eggs hatch after

some two weeks and the larva immediately spins two or three leaflets together to form a small tent. As it grows, nests are spun within which the grey-green larva shelters and feeds. Some eight months later, the following spring, the larva pupates within its hibernaculum. Occasionally there is a partial second brood in late summer.

Larval foodplants: bird’s-foot-trefoil; also horseshoe vetch (downland), greater bird’s-foot-trefoil (heavier soils).

NATIONALLY, regionally and locally, many Dingy Skipper colonies have been lost in recent decades. The “improvement” of traditional grasslands, formerly species-rich, has eliminated larval foodplants. Also, reduced woodland management and the cessation of coppicing have restricted the butterfly to a few favourable rides and glades.

Despite these losses the Dingy remains Britain’s most widely-distributed Skipper but it becomes relatively common only in southern counties and along parts of the Welsh coast. Its absence from many suitable sites is not fully understood but habitat fragmentation probably played a part in its declining fortunes.

Phenology trend	1990-2012	earlier by 2 weeks
Best transect day 2000-12	May 11, 2005	Denbies Landbarn B 53
Transects abundance	1990-2012 gain 116%	2000-2012 gain 28%
UK transects abundance	1976-2012 loss 28%	10-year trend gain 49%
UK 4,361 10k squares	2005-09 547 = 12%	10-year trend loss 5%



Dingy Skipper pair, male above. Helen Sterne

Dingy Skipper *continued*

Malcolm Bridge

Goss (1902) considered the Dingy Skipper to be distributed throughout Surrey, and common, sometimes abundant, on the North Downs. Worms (1950) listed it from Esher and the commons of Wimbledon and Mitcham, where there have been no records in recent decades.

Gail Jeffcoate *et al.* (2000) noted that this species prospers on the south-facing slopes of the North Downs, and acknowledged small colonies on the western heaths and within Chiddingfold Forest.

A Dingy Skipper “sighting” at Ham Riverlands in 2010 demanded a confirmatory visit, on a lovely mid-May day. Several areas with bird’s-foot-trefoil along the southern edge of the old Thames floodplain produced small, brown, lively insects, which revealed themselves on settling to be Burnet Companions. It does appear that the Dingy Skipper remains absent from suburban south London.

Dingy Skipper		weekly transect counts												
Denbies Landbarn B TQ135499		Gail Jeffcoate, Robert Cramp												
WEEK	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	
8 April	2			1	-	-		1		-	-	-	1	
15	3		-	7		-	-	3	-	11	-	2		
22	4		8	18	-	-	-	10	1	23	20	24		
29	5		13		1	29	10	8	2	50		36	23	
6 May	6			38	31	53	15	8	20	17	35	11	26	
13	7		19	10	38	47	36	5	48		30	11		
20	8		22	2	27	14		1	17	7	16	10	14	
27	9		12	1	17	10	14	-	3	4	15	-	29	
3 June	10			1	10	8	3	-	8	5	10	-	3	
10	11		2	-	2	3	2		-	1	1	-	-	
17	12		-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	3		-	
24	13		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
1 July	14		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
8	15		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
15	16		-	-	-	-	-	4	-	-	-	-	-	
22	17		-	-	-	-	-	5	-	-		1	-	
29	18			2	1	-	-	3		-		-	-	
Abundance index			101	NI	127	166	107	50	96	112	150	104	NI	
Weeks recorded			6	8	8	8	6	10	7	8	8	7	6	

Flight weeks		▲High transect counts △Middle ^Low																							
Apr			May				Jun				Jul				Aug			Sep							
1	8	15	22	29	6	13	20	27	3	10	17	24	1	8	15	22	29	5	12	19	26	2	9	16	23
^	△	△	▲		▲	▲	▲	▲	△	△	△	△	△	△	^	^	^	△	△		^				

Book Review

Dan Hoare

AS the authors of this new volume in the Surrey Wildlife Trust Atlas series are quick to acknowledge, *Butterflies of Surrey Revisited* is not a revision of Graham Collins’ excellent *Butterflies of Surrey* (1995), but a new attempt to tackle the same subject.



In the 18 years since that publication, the quality and volume of butterfly data has been transformed, and this atlas incorporates the results from surveys of butterfly distributions and population abundance to present a richly detailed picture of the state of Surrey’s butterflies. The result is a volume packed with information, maps, charts and excellent colour photographs that will be irresistible to anyone with an interest in Surrey’s butterflies.

Individual species accounts form the core of the book, and include an extraordinary amount of information, covering lifecycle, flight period, larval foodplants and natural history as well as colour distribution maps. If you have submitted a sighting of a butterfly to the county recorder (and remarkably this includes records from 2012), it is here, forming the maps which are one of the key attractions of the book. Delivering this densely informative work in just nine months is an impressive achievement!

The text for each species reflects the distinctive voices of the different authors, rich in anecdote and personal observation, revealing how to find the elusive Purple Emperor or what grass-cutting regimes favour the Meadow Brown. This mix of the personal and the broader picture allows room for a little poetry rare in a work of this kind, and this is no dry academic text: “conga lines” of Purple Hairstreaks weave around the canopy while Ringlets “dance on a grave”.

There is something for everyone here: features include lists of larval foodplants and nectar resources, and articles on geology, ecology, weather, gardening and photography. It is not a site guide per se but a combination of maps and key sites would allow anyone to find their target species. I would have liked to see more on the causes underlying changing species’ fortunes, and wanted more on the recently extinct Wall and Pearl-bordered Fritillary.

There is also a detailed breakdown of how every Surrey species could be seen by visiting just seven sites (which are already well known and perhaps too well trodden). Instead I would implore the many readers who will surely snap up this atlas to strike out for pastures new: get off the beaten track and generate new records, investigating those empty or “lost” squares where your observations would be more significant. Your records will form the next Surrey atlas, whatever they call it. As for this one, whether you are a butterfly fanatic, a general naturalist or just interested in the wildlife of Surrey, this is an essential addition to your library.

■ Dr Dan Hoare is BC Senior Regional Officer – South East.

New book

JEREMY EARLY introduces his new book, *My Side of the Fence – The Natural History of a Surrey Garden*

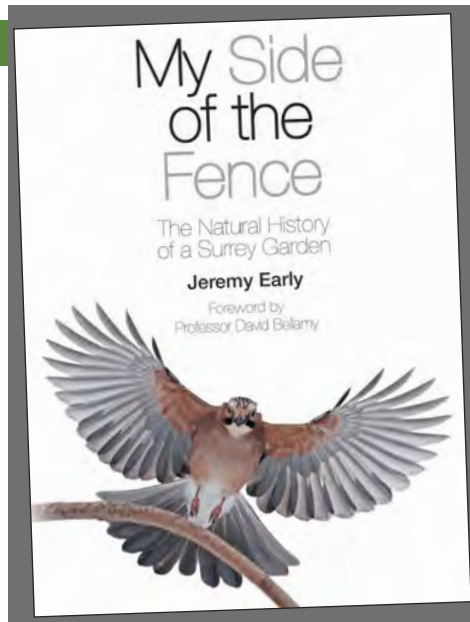
OVER the last 30 years gardens have played a pivotal role in stimulating nature observation. Encouraged by “media gardeners”, by the press, by conservation charities and by dozens of books giving advice about the correct plants to grow and the correct mosaic of habitats to introduce as an aid to wildlife, hundreds of thousands of property owners nationwide have all done their bit.

Yet this activity has tended to revolve almost entirely around birds and mammals plus invertebrates regarded as “useful”, which usually means ones that are a reasonable size and fulfil the modish imperative of possessing “economic value”. Among these are honeybees, bumblebees, butterflies and hoverflies, with perceptions about the importance of pollination given full rein. Generally excluded from the privileged list are legions of flies, bugs, beetles, wasps, solitary bees and spiders; there is even some ambivalence towards moths.

Two reasons for this virtual consignment to oblivion are the feverish activity of members of most of these invertebrate families, and the virtual impossibility of identifying the majority of species in the field. By comparison, birds and butterflies are relatively easy. Anyway, to confirm the shortfall, I own six books focusing on wildlife gardening and only Jennifer Owen’s *Wildlife of a Garden* does anything like justice to the full range of invertebrates.

Reflecting on this, and with the benefit of a large library of photographs taken at the property in Reigate that has been owned by one or more members of my family since 1964, the notion arrived in 2011 that it might be worth writing a book showing just what can turn up in one garden, especially when efforts are made to encourage species. The emphasis would be on imagery, with as much stunning beauty on show as possible, and while the plan was to target anyone owning a garden or interested in wildlife, I intended to be sufficiently scientific to appeal to specialists as well. Writing the book took the best part of six months. Sorting out images and adding to my stock, particularly in the spring of 2012, took a fair bit longer. So did organising the printing and binding by a firm in Krakow, whose work had impressed me previously.

My interest in wildlife has always had a strong bent towards invertebrates, although birds have consistently been at the top of the list. My father was a great butterfly enthusiast, keeping reasonable records, and he handed this passion on to me. After



Jeremy Early has lived in Surrey nearly all his life and is a long-standing member of Butterfly Conservation. A journalist by profession, he is a trustee of the conservation charity Hymettus Ltd and has provided many photographs for use in Surrey Wildlife Trust publications as well as recording invertebrates for that charity for the last ten years.

See his work at:

www.natureconservationimaging.com

returning to the property in 2004 to enable my mother to continue living there, fresh families of invertebrates entered my ken en masse, chiefly aculeate Hymenoptera, Diptera and Coleoptera.

Backing on to the ancient woodland and acid grassland of Priory Park helped swell the numbers and Surrey Wildlife Trust experts, led by David Baldock and Graham Collins, provided unstinting support in identifying what I found. It was, quite simply, a revelation. To the 13 species of mammal, 53 species of bird and 22 species of butterfly already recorded were added 81 species of bee, 77 wasps and 58 hoverflies. Two obvious ways of encouraging an influx were by replacing showy annual plants with perennials producing much more nectar and pollen, and setting up accommodation in the form of tubes, stems and dead wood.

It is much easier to do this for bees and wasps than for butterflies and moths, whose requirements often are on a landscape scale and involve foodplants such as grasses that are rarely easy to set up and maintain in bulk in a garden. The most interesting butterflies to have dropped in were Brown Hairstreak once in the 1980s, Purple Hairstreak, which used to breed nearby, Dark Green and Silver-washed Fritillaries.

There were good records for the butterflies but a distinct shortage for moths, with Yellow-legged Clearwing and Red-belted Clearwing playing starring roles. Irritatingly, as my plans for the book developed, the aim of running a light trap in 2012 under the aegis of Graham Collins came to nought due to inclement weather. May and June 2013 were no better so the moth tally of 30 in *My Side of the Fence*, boosted by a fair number of day-flying visitors this year including *Esperia sulphurella* and *Nemophora degeerella*, is a significant underestimation of the full population.

But that is part of the joy of observing what is in a garden: it should always be work in progress. This year, apart from the new moths, I have had one new butterfly, a Ringlet, two new solitary bees, one nationally scarce solitary wasp, three hoverflies and some cracking beetles led by a couple listed as nationally scarce. There will surely be additions, and not just from the hoped-for light trap.

■ *My Side of the Fence* costs £20, plus £6 postage and packing, from:

Jeremy Early, 30 Park Lane East, Reigate, Surrey RH2 8HN. jeremy@early.uk.com

■ Jeremy Early will be a guest speaker at Members’ Day on November 9.

■ Roger Hawkins reviews *My Side of the Fence* on the next page.

Book Review

Roger Hawkins

I WAS totally enthused by *My Side of the Fence* from the moment I opened it, somewhat perversely at the last page, and found a full-page picture of an ant and a spider captioned, in part: "... a worker ... heading for the nest with a paralysed spider mislaid by a spider-hunting wasp".

It did not just say "this is an ant, that is a spider" but demonstrated some of the complex interactions within the natural world. Yes, spiders eat insects, but the wasps of one family catch spiders as food for their young and yet are careless and forgetful as to where they leave their prey, while ants will feed on anything they can overcome, no matter how large.

All this is illustrated by a single picture, and the book is full of such high-quality images whose subjects, often greatly magnified, are generally doing something, and this behaviour is described in the detailed captions. One marvels at the author's patience and the amount of careful observation, from behind the camera lens, that must have gone into the making of this book.

There are chapters on habitats, mammals, birds, pond life, bees, wasps, flies, beetles and other invertebrates. Each chapter opens with a stunning double-page spread with no caption! To learn what it is, one has to read the fairly brief but highly informative text. The pictures and their captions occupy about two-thirds of each chapter, and each picture tells a story.

Taking birds for example, the stories illustrated include the decline in familiar species such as Starling and House Sparrow, the arrival of Ring-necked Parakeets, a rare visitor in the Wryneck, a Sparrowhawk with its prey, and the variation in plumage of the male, female and juvenile Great Spotted Woodpecker, shown on two adjacent photographs that match or surpass any field guide. Even such familiar birds as Magpie, Jay and Woodpigeon are shown with wings outstretched, revealing details of their plumage of which I was previously unaware.

The great feature of this book is that almost all the invertebrates illustrated are identified to species level, including such difficult groups as solitary bees and wasps, flies, and other insects. How has the author done this? Bees and wasps have been attracted to the garden by planting suitable flowers and providing nesting sites in the form of drilled logs, bamboo canes and cardboard tubes, often stacked together in a "bee hotel", of which an impressive multi-storey version is portrayed.

These insects are smaller than butterflies and very active, and lack the defining pattern of coloured scales on the wings, so only a few species can be named on sight. Before taking the photograph, the author has calmed them through cooling in the refrigerator, and then examined the critical features using a binocular microscope and the relevant textbook. In the cases of greatest difficulty, he has not been shy of retaining the specimen for critical examination by an expert.

What then of the butterflies? There are excellent photographs of the species of the wider countryside, but location is all important, and the garden's position on the narrow and heavily-wooded greensand ridge rules out the special species of the chalk downs and the West Surrey heaths.

The general standard of accuracy is high, but I noted a couple of errors, which can easily be corrected through the inclusion of an errata slip. The small blue damselfly illustrated is not the one bearing the name Common Blue Damselfly, but the Azure Damselfly, a much more likely species at a small garden pond. The small day-flying moth, *Pyrausta aurata*, recorded for the garden and shown here, is incorrectly captioned as *Pyrausta purpuralis*.

This is perhaps not the book for those whose interest goes no further than butterflies, but is essential reading for those having or planning to create a "bee hotel". It is also highly recommended to anybody who wishes to learn more about the full range of garden visitors. This is a book to be bought, studied in detail and read over and over again. It is already on my Christmas present list!

■ *My Side of the Fence – The Natural History of a Surrey Garden*, by Jeremy Early. Hardback, 256pp, 2 black-and-white and 520 colour photographs.

■ Roger Hawkins is consultant to the Surrey Wildlife Atlas series and author of *Ladybirds of Surrey* (2000) and *Shieldbugs of Surrey* (2003).

New Members' Day

Geoff Eaton

IT was cloudy and overcast when 19 attendees arrived at Juniper Hall on Saturday, July 20 for New Members' Day 2013. Following our established programme, we began with an informal chat over tea, coffee, and freshly baked cake still warm from the oven. After an official Field Studies Council welcome, the group succumbed to the dulcet tones of Malcolm Bridge, Phil Boys, David Gardner and Geoff Eaton in the morning session, covering various branch activities and aspects of the study of butterflies and moths.

At lunchtime it was still cloudy, with the temperature only a measly 21°C, but as we assembled for our afternoon walk a male Chalkhill Blue on hemp-agrimony in the butterfly garden proved a good omen. On our journey across the fields and along Juniper Bottom (the valley behind Box Hill) we saw 18 species in total, with an army of Ringlets and Meadow Browns providing a guard of honour all the way.

Highlights included male Silver-washed Fritillaries displaying their aerial prowess once the sun came out, three fresh Commas in view at one time, and a pristine Red Admiral laying her eggs on nettles close to the footpath. The star performer though was a female Dark Green Fritillary providing photo opportunities as she took nectar from the bramble flowers – a beautiful sight. By the time we returned to Juniper Hall the temperature had soared, and it was probably just as well that the sun had shone only for the latter half of the walk!

Judging by the immediate feed-back from the group, everyone had an enjoyable day. Many thanks to the staff at Juniper Hall for preparing the Templeton Room (their new PowerPoint system worked a treat) and the refreshments.

Full details from all Transects

www.ukbms.org

Big Butterfly Race

Ken Willmott

THE 2nd Big Butterfly Race, a promotion for the Big Butterfly Count and organised by Sussex's Dan Danahar, took place on July 19 between Hampshire and Sussex branches.

THE 10-man teams gathered in the village of Bosham, about 5km west of Chichester, in perfect weather and attracted an excited crowd of butterfly enthusiasts, local radio reporters and a BBC camera team. I did a minor interview with local radio, telling them that each species would gain one point, increased to two for an early-stage, like a caterpillar.

I am a member of Hampshire branch, and our team had to find butterflies in Sussex between 9.30 and 5.30. The Sussex team, disadvantaged by the meeting venue, were given a 30-minute start to reach Hampshire.

The driver of our branded minibus had obviously had F1 training and was expert in getting us to the sites quickly. I had a side-seat in the bus, which had a low roof, and some of the minor roads were bumpy. I was also opposite a BBC cameraman with long legs and a large camera on his knee. It was a relief to arrive at the sites.

While stopped at some roadside elms, where White-letter Hairstreak was anticipated, I found a batch of Small Tortoiseshell larvae (my eyes were well in after recent visits to Nettle Meadow at Sheeples). No Hairstreaks here, but Matthew Oates found one towards the end of the day by a busy roadside. The teams

were kept informed of each other's progress by text messages, and by lunchtime we were several points behind. We wasted some time being fooled by a Silver-washed Fritillary that appeared to be egg-laying on an oak trunk in Southwater Woods, but could we find one? No way! A point and time were lost.

It was neck and neck as we made our way back to Bosham, desperately looking to gain a point en route. Dan Hoare suggested a churchyard in the hope of Holly Blue plus egg. With little ivy to search, I noticed that the lawns had recently been cut and I spotted a female Meadow Brown. From experience, I knew that they love freshly-cut grassy areas, so it was just a matter of time before she deposited that precious point-winning egg! I managed to find it amongst the debris and the adjudicator was called over to confirm (although it could have been a pigeon's egg for all he knew!) and Tim Norriss took a photograph as proof. One sudden move with my forefinger or too deep a breath and the egg could have become detached from the debris and lost forever! Peter Eeles thought that this late find could have won us the event and I was ready to be hoisted onto the shoulders of my teammates.

Hants Glanville Fritillaries: Matthew Oates (c), Ken Willmott, Dan Hoare, Andy Bolton, Arthur Greenwood, Lynn Fomison, Paul Brock, Peter Eeles, Tim Bernhard, Tim Norriss.
Sussex Wood Whites: Nick Baker (c), Bob Foreman, Colin Knight, Dan Danahar, Jamie Burston, Mark Colvin, Martin Warren, Neil Hulme, Nigel Symington, Patrick Barkham.
SCORING: adult species 1; early stage 2
RESULT: Sussex (28 + 6) beat (Hants 26 + 8)

Back to Bosham and a tense minute's silence before the announcement. We had scored equal points! My female Meadow Brown had prevented our defeat, or so I thought. Alas, the Wood Whites had seen two more species and were awarded victory. They survived a stewards' inquiry after photographic evidence of a team member wielding a butterfly net! We were let down by a Silver-washed Fritillary and a church with no ivy, but it was a grand day, great people, great butterflies.

Both teams had some good finds. Matthew discovered a pair of mating Essex Skippers and the Wood Whites stopped in a village when they saw nasturtiums in a hanging basket, complete with Small and Large White eggs! They also found a Green-veined White pupa in a bus shelter, so perhaps they deserved their victory.

Isle of Wight

Ken Willmott

LORRAINE and I had a difficult day on the Isle of Wight on Friday, June 7. When we arrived at Lymington harbour to catch the ferry there was torrential rain and thunder. We had to sit in the car for 20 minutes before we could collect our parking ticket. When we reached the island the sun came out but after our bus journey to the south side a severe gale was blowing along the coast.

Butterflies were in two areas only. A sunken sheltered footpath revealed three Walls among Dingy Skippers and Common Blues. The only other active site was the NT car park for Afton Down, a quarry-like area offering good shelter from the gale. The only Glanville of the day was seen here, a fine condition male, among Small Blues, an Adonis, Grizzled and Dingy Skippers, plus Small Heath and another Wall.

The coastal footpaths were hopelessly windy, impossible for butterfly flight, but a pale Small Copper, which I somehow managed to photograph, was blown out of the grasses. We had problems eating our ice cream, with my 99 almost being sucked out of the cone. A pleasant but frustrating day out!

Butterflies and Beer

Tim Bright

ELEVEN intrepid butterflies caught the 9.14 train from Dorking Deepdene to Betchworth on July 18 to walk back along the Surrey Hills on what was to be the hottest day of the year so far.

It is one of my favourite trips in the calendar and well worth my taking the day off work. The walk is pleasantly up and down, aside from a killing climb at halfway, with some interesting industrial archaeology. The real treat was the abundance of Dark Green Fritillaries on the lower slope. We must have seen upwards of 25 and it was great that they had such a good year.

I fell into conversation with Michael Friend about ticks, why we still wear shorts, and beer. I live next to the Surrey Hills Brewery at Denbies Vineyard and Michael suggested that we walk on to the brewery, where we were joined on the grass by Robert Edmondson and Nigel Jackman for a fine pint (only £2.50). Then it was back to my house for iced elderflower cordial and cake provided by my wife, Louise.

It has since been mooted that the brewery visit should be added to this wonderful walk. I am voting for it, so next year let's go for it!

Field Trip Reports

Mike Weller

THERE were times when I felt guilty for not seeing the target species of some of the field trips this year. How was I to know back in January, when drawing up the programme, that we would experience such a late start and end with 10 weeks of hot, dry weather? In April to early July butterfly emergences were up to three weeks late but this had lessened to about one week by August.

It was particularly pleasing to see the partial recovery of Small Tortoiseshell, Small Heath, Common Blue and Dark Green Fritillary. Here are my memories.

Jun 8, Howell Hill: Peter Wakeham showed us 20+ Small Blues in excellent condition at the start of their emergence, rivalled in number by all three Whites, Brimstone and Small Heath. It was a relief to record Common Blue and Small Copper after their poor showing in 2012.

Jun 12, Fairmile Common: the only species flying was the emerging Silver-studded Blue – thankfully both sexes were out to provide extra interest. The first Meadow Brown of the season was recorded.

Jun 23, Box Hill: the splendid number of orchid species rivalled that of the butterflies many of which (Marbled White, Dark Green & Silver-washed Fritillaries) had not yet emerged.

Jun 29, Norbury Park: 12 species but still no Marbled White or fritillaries. A hopeful sign for late summer was the discovery of two nests of Peacock larvae containing over 100 individuals.



Scores of Chalkhill Blue males, taking minerals from horse-droppings on Albury Downs below Newlands Corner, fascinate our Vale End field-trippers. **Clive Huggins**



That E. B. Ford moment! Malcolm Bridge (3rd-right of those standing) at the view towards Denbies Hillside and Reigate Hill immortalised opposite page 135 in Dr Ford's *Butterflies*, the first of the New Naturalist series, published in 1945. This is Malcolm's traditional stopping point during the Great Train Journey West. **Nigel Jackman**

Jul 4, Bookham: no Purple Emperors but spirits were lifted by two Small Tortoiseshells, a single White Admiral and, for most, the first Silver-washed Fritillary, unusually a female.

Jul 7, Chiddingfold: a glorious morning encouraged a good turnout for the early start (9.30am!) at Botany Bay but apparently not good enough for Purple Emperor. Interest was provided by six Wood Whites still in good condition, single Dark Green & Silver-washed Fritillaries and one White Admiral. Another WA in Oaken Wood was joined there by 10+ Large Skippers and at last Marbled White (2) and a Small Skipper. 15 species.

Jul 14, Holmwood: just two Silver-washed Fritillaries but an excellent nine White Admirals. Highlight was the discovery, after 10 years of looking, of a Purple Emperor at a tree-on-a-hilltop I had long regarded as a likely spot. In a sunburnt Inholms Claypit we added Marbled White. 15 species.

Jul 18, Great Train Journey East: only 11 trippers for our Betchworth to Dorking ramble. Perhaps the 9.14 start, dictated by the train timetable, was too early for some. The perfect weather, sunny but not too hot, produced abundant Marbled White, Chalkhill Blue, Silver-washed Fritillary (10) and 20+ Dark Green Fritillaries. This trip is usually the first to see Silver-spotted Skipper but not this year due to the season's continued lateness. 21 species.

Jul 20, Walton Down: a sunny afternoon; 16 species including Chalkhill Blue (7), Marbled White (10+), Dark Green Fritillary (3) and Large, Small & Essex Skippers.

Aug 3, Vale End: perfect hosts Daphney & John Foulsham served us countless teas, coffees, sandwiches and cakes in their beautiful "Yellow Book" garden before and after the walk. Our biggest turn out so far of 27 were rewarded with 23 species, including female Dark Green Fritillary.

Aug 21, Bookham: a beautiful morning and the late season boosted the total species to 23 compared to previous years' single figures, which was exceeded before we had even left the car park! Notable were Clouded Yellow (2), Purple Hairstreak (4) and the target species, Brown Hairstreak (3).

Field Trip Reports *continued*

April 23: Ham Riverlands

Helen Sterne

IN glorious sunshine, and having negotiated our way past a film crew who were shooting a period drama at Ham House and had all but taken over the riverside car park, 14 enthusiasts assembled for the first walk of the year in search of Orange-tips and other early flyers.

The walk begins from the Thameside car park close to Ham House and goes through the flood meadows of Ham towards Kingston. Across the river are Marble Hill House and Eel Pie Island, with Richmond Hill to the rear.

What a contrast to the same time last year, when a torrential deluge drowned out all but the hardiest souls. Along the towpath the first Holly Blue caused a bit of a stir, and a number of Brimstones, Commas and Peacocks were warming themselves in the sun. Across the meadows beside the river a couple of Small Tortoiseshells were seen, and then a small fluttering white shape provoked great excitement – was it an Orange-tip? It turned out to be a Small White, nonetheless a sign that spring had at last arrived after an unusually long spell of cold weather.

TALLY: Peacock 13, Comma 12, Brimstone 5, Holly Blue 2, Small Tortoiseshell 2, Small White 2; bird species 26, but no Orange-tips as yet.

May 1: Hutchinson's Bank & Chapel Bank

Clive Huggins

OUR 17-strong party's first encounter was with Sutton Borough's Biodiversity Officer Dave Warburton, who was showing the site to a group of conservation volunteers. Malcolm Bridge and Martin Wills gave insights into the challenges and rewards of active conservation management of this London Wildlife Trust reserve.

Kidney vetch had colonised the chalk bank and the creation of two or three south-facing scrapes each winter since 2008, along with the planting of plugs and seeds, has helped the foodplant of the Small Blue, which would be flying in a few weeks.

It was interesting to see the different stages of vegetation regeneration after clearances or grazing. There was a splendid show of primroses and hairy violets on an area cleared only two years earlier; also early and common dog-violets.

Our first butterfly was a Brimstone, which became the most numerous species of the day. Spring having arrived exceptionally late, the expected Dingy and Grizzled Skippers and Green Hairstreak were still to emerge.

Three Corners Grove held some medium-sized elms that should interest the White-letter Hairstreak. A Bullfinch's piping notes competed with noise from the nearby recycling centre and light aircraft from Biggin Hill.

TALLY: Brimstone 30, Peacock 10, Orange-tip 6, Comma 3, Small White 2, Small Tortoiseshell 2, Speckled Wood 2, Holly Blue 1, Large White 1.



June 18: Hutchinson's Bank & Chapel Bank

Malcolm Bridge

A RETURN visit to Croydon's butterfly hotspot was frustrated by the late spring and a delayed summer. The day was fine and warm and the seven walkers recorded 14 species, mostly the spring butterflies. The Browns were hinting at emergence and eventual numbers were much improved on 2012. The leader reminded the group that but for the outbreak of WW2 a crescent of detached houses with long gardens would have obliterated this wonderful 35-acre reserve. Some wag observed that it was good to know that Hitler's legacy was not entirely a negative one.

The amount of kidney vetch was impressive and the recent planting of horseshoe vetch offered the hope that the small numbers of Chalkhill Blue seen in recent years could become an established colony.

June 30: Mitcham Common

Malcolm Bridge

WHITE-letter Hairstreak eluded several of our dozen-strong party on previous visits and a pre-walk examination of a nearby hotspot drew a blank. So again this target species was not seen (on the day) on a well-managed common that was once a stronghold.

The walk proceeded up and down the landscaped spoil-heaps, which in the second half of the last century transformed a flat and bleak south-London common, pock-marked by countless gravel pits, into a visually pleasing series of hills and elevated plateaux. The gradients are sufficiently gentle to ensure that a late-morning temperature of 28°C was no problem.

Once again the lateness of the season was evident and a delightful walk was saved by the good company and delightful setting rather than by the butterflies. The leader received terrific support from Dave Warburton, Ted Forsyth and Lawrie de Whalley.

August 10: Great Train Journey West

Malcolm Bridge

THIS trip has been in the calendar since 1996 and inspired a typical turnout of 29 for a 10km walk along the North Downs Way from Gomshall to Dorking. The leader's target was at least one butterfly species per walker, but falling two short could not blight a superb day.

Highlights were good numbers of Silver-spotted Skippers throughout, welcome immigrants Clouded Yellow (5) and Painted Lady (2), and a finale provided by shimmering clouds of Chalkhill Blues on Denbies Hillside and carriageway.

A strategically positioned buddleia at the top of Beggar's Lane offered good views of Dark Green Fritillary, White Admiral, a supporting cast of Whites and Vanessa's, and even a Silver-spotted Skipper. Some Peacocks had delayed aestivating but three were found tucked away for the winter in one of the cool pillboxes.

It is easier to list the missing species rather than the 27 recorded. Adonis Blue – a small emergence in late August – did not show, nor did the usual Purple Hairstreak. Had both been seen the all-time record for this walk of 29 species in 1997 would have been equalled.

Field Trips: West Surrey

Francis Kelly

OVER the last couple of seasons I have expanded my field trips programme in the west of Surrey. Living in Woking, I know this part of the county best.

This year I led nine trips to five different sites, seeing 36 of Surrey's 42 regular species. Adonis Blue and Brown Hairstreak were both seen at Pewley Down on other visits. The missing four were Wood White (exclusive to Chiddingfold), Silver-spotted Skipper (Colekitchen is as far west as it gets), Glanville Fritillary (even the Wrecclesham regulars missed it this year) and White-letter Hairstreak (my bogey butterfly that I can never find anywhere).

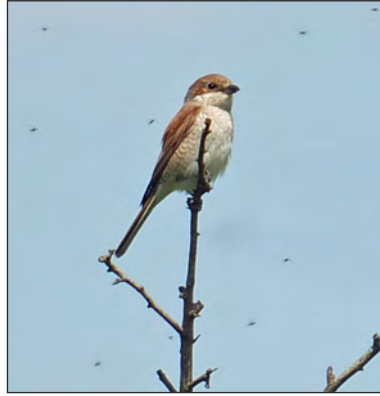
No trips were cancelled but several were affected by the dismal start to the season. Only two species were seen in June at Brookwood Cemetery, but the site redeemed itself in August with 23 species, including my first Clouded Yellow for four years, spotted by Paul Huckle. There were also two wandering male Chalkhill Blues five miles from the nearest downs, including one on Dawney Heath found by Jan Shorter of the Guildford Natural History Society, who joined us for the morning.

Pewley Down in August also delivered 23 species, including second-brood Small Blues. But the big surprise was Broadstreet Common, adjacent to a Guildford housing estate. Seventeen species included White Admiral, Silver-washed Fritillary, a profusion of Marbled Whites, a probable (ok, possible) Purple Emperor and Britain's longest dragonfly, the spectacular Golden-ringed.

Other highlights were 6+ fresh Silver-studded Blues at Whitmoor Common on June 26 where there had been none the previous day. We had similar luck at Sheepleas on July 9 with a new Purple Emperor at the Sheepleas master tree, again none the day before. The walk also produced a Dark Green Fritillary in Nettle Meadow, which is being managed according to Ken Willmott's advice and delivered scores of Small Tortoiseshells.

Perhaps the star of the year was at Pewley Down on May 26. A strange bird, first noticed by Carol Lewis and Kirsten Osa, was quickly identified as a female Red-backed Shrike, a Surrey first for most of us and a lifer for many. It attracted a stream of twitchers after we put out the news but was gone the next day.

So much for the wildlife! What about the people? I was joined by 58 different faces, of whom 23 appeared only once. I am not sure what that tells us. There was a bumper turnout of 28 at Sheepleas on July 9 and only a gloomy Brookwood in June failed to attract double figures. Thanks to Nigel Jackman for top-scoring with seven attendances, one ahead of Paul Huckle and Lin and Harry Matthews.



Red-backed Shrike at Pewley Down, attracted by St Mark's flies. FK

Memorable day at Chiddingfold

Stephen Jeffcoate, with Gail Jeffcoate and Graham Revill

WE had a truly memorable day at Chiddingfold Forest on August 20. The primary purpose was to look for second-brood Wood Whites after our visit in May to assess the spring brood.

This is a species we have been studying for 20 years. It is a remarkable butterfly, which has evolved a survival strategy we are only just beginning to understand. Between us we recorded about 20 Wood Whites - all females, some of them egg-laying. Almost all were on the trackside up to Lagfold and at Lagfold Copse itself.

Particularly amazing were the clouds of golden fleabane either side of the Lagfold track, which along with other flowers such as common knapweed were bursting with nectaring butterflies of at least 10 species. The Whites were everywhere. Between us we counted at least 100 (yes!) Brimstones of both sexes feeding up before the winter. Astonishing numbers - none of us had seen anything like so many in one place at one time. What is the explanation? We had theories.

There were uncountable numbers of Small Whites, Large and Green-veined Whites, and 6-8 Clouded Yellows. Then there were newly-emerged Commas, Peacocks and (a few) Small Tortoiseshells. Silver-Washed Fritillaries were still around, including one or two fresh-looking females (one mating dance flight was seen).

We also saw Common Blues, a Holly Blue, a female Brown Argus and astonishingly a fresh male Chalkhill Blue (perhaps, given the prevailing winds, it had come from the Sussex rather than Surrey downs), a Small Skipper and two late Large Skippers. And Browns in abundance - Meadow Browns, Gatekeepers (some rather small and there are theories about that too) and a few Speckled Woods.

We spend most of our time on the downs, where 2013 had already been a striking year for Surrey's Chalkhill Blues, with transect counts in thousands at Denbies Hillside, and greater numbers than recently of Dark Green Fritillaries. But numbers of other butterflies on the downs had not, until now, been particularly good. So this profusion in woodland was a welcome surprise.

We discussed the prospects of the Wood White eggs progressing to next year's adults: they have to hatch (in 12-14 days); then the larvae feed up (for about four weeks in favourable conditions); and enter over-wintering diapause as pupae. The next month's weather will be critical. We have studied larvae in September over the years but never recorded an adult after the end of August; another challenge for a return visit!

We were disappointed to see neither Purple nor Brown Hairstreak, and no Red Admirals (seen only 48 hours later on the Isle of Man in dozens on buddleia), but 19 species in such profusion in a Surrey wood on such a wonderful day was reward enough. A pity that we saw no other specimen of the human species all day - what a miracle they missed!

PS: GR revisited on August 26. Numbers were much lower by then, but a female Chalkhill Blue was seen. The Clouded Yellows had moved on.

Minutes from last year's AGM

Butterfly Conservation Surrey & SW London branch 18th AGM.

10am, Saturday, November 10, 2012. Friends Life Sports & Social Club, Dorking
Chairman David Gardner welcomed members and thanked the committee for their work on behalf of the branch during the year.

Apologies: Ian Cunningham, Gay Carr, Peter Webster, Enid Newland.

1 Minutes of 2011 AGM: proposed, Dennis Newland; seconded, Malcolm Bridge.

2 Matters arising: none.

3 Chairman: New Members' Day on May 19 went well. Field trips and moth events were well attended. *The Smaller Moths of Surrey* book has been published, co-authored by Jim Porter, one of the day's speakers.

4 Finance: David Gradidge stood down as Treasurer after 16 years. Peter Camber agreed to take on the position.

The year's activities showed a deficit of £1,579. This was consistent with forecast figures and the need to reduce reserves in line with HO request.

Greater expenditure was due to increases in VAT and postage.

The number of events the branch attended was reduced due to increased stall rents and reduced takings.

Membership rise means an increase in the amount derived from subscriptions (£6) but also in the cost of printing and posting the Skipper.

New Members' Day is a new expense but good value.

The Butterfly Garden show at Juniper Hall in July made less than £100 profit and was by far the worst turnout in the history of the show.

NFU Mutual sponsorship paid for postage of two Skipper editions.

David thanked Phil Boys for his fundraising efforts at shows this year.

Accounts proposed, Tony Hoare; seconded, Barry Hilling.

5 Membership, David Gradidge: total 880 is down on peak of 895.

March 31 totals: 2012=872; 2011=770, 2010=726, so membership is increasing.

6 Recorder, Malcolm Bridge: spring species did reasonably well given the mixed start to the year. Glanville Fritillary at Wrecclesham emerged late but in good numbers; Adonis Blue emerged late; Chalkhill Blue bucked the trend and was seen in huge numbers; Red Admiral put on a good late-summer show; Dark Green and Silver-washed Fritillaries survived the wet reasonably well; Wood White is surprisingly resilient; Purple Emperor did well but late to emerge. 2012 will be seen as a dismal year.

7 Oaken Wood, Malcolm Bridge: the lease is coming up for renewal. Malcolm is keen to negotiate an extension to the west of the current reserve.

8 Transects: Richard Donovan was unable to attend.

9 Moths, Paul Wheeler: as a result of more recording for *The Smaller Moths of Surrey*, new species were discovered, but numbers were down, perhaps by half. At the Butterfly Garden Show, 70-75 moths were trapped and shown to visitors. On behalf of the branch, Paul ran some joint events with Surrey Wildlife Trust

and Guildford Borough Council, at Pewley Down, Stoke Meadows and Shalford Meadows, in addition to ad-hoc events for his email group, which Paul invited members to join.

Straw Belle is doing well at Box Hill. its best site in the country. Paul had the first record of Striped Lychnis in Surrey for a number of years. He then showed a selection of photographs of Surrey species with comments on their status.

10 Field Trips, Mike Weller: the branch ran 37 field trips, the highest ever number. Vale End and the Great Train Journey West were the best attended. Clouded Yellow and White-letter Hairstreak were not seen, but a female Purple Emperor at Denbies was a nice way to start a field trip.

Mike invited new leaders and ideas for new venues.

11 Committee elections: Richard Donovan, Paul Wheeler, Phil Boys and David Gradidge stood for re-election.

Proposed, Dennis Newland; seconded, Robert Edmondson.

12 Members' questions

Robert Edmondson asked the branch to promote butterfly-friendly gardening. He agreed to write about it in the Skipper.

Dennis Newland asked the committee to consider sending the newsletter by email to minimise postage and printing expenses. David Gardner confirmed that the subject is under discussion.

Meeting closed 11.05

Membership

David Gradidge

Aug 2013 total 873 (down by 6 from Feb). A warm welcome to the following new members.

Mrs D Albarran.....SW19	Mr & Mrs P Hand	Mr P Pires & Mr I Santos
Miss N Anthony.....SW2	& FamilyFarnham	SE5
Mr J BannisterGuildford	Miss K Haynes.....SW14	Mrs L Renwick....Normandy
Miss J BullerSurbiton	Mrs P A Hill.....Twickenham	Ms G RundleSth Croydon
Mr S CheethamSW19	Ms J Hogarth &	Mrs C Shawyer ..Addlestone
Dr J CheneyCobham	Mr M Axford East Molesey	Mrs V SpratleyWoking
Mr & Mrs M Clarke	Mr N HopkinsSW19	Mrs J T F Spring-Smyth
Carshalton	Mrs M HydeFarnham	Lyndhurst
Ms I Cooper, Mr R Wilkins	Mr M Jones & Ms L Davies	Mr P StantonSW15
& FamilySW13	Knaphill	Mr & Mrs R Stewart
Mr P CrookBookham	Mrs K Killner ..Chessington	& FamilySW18
Mr E DaviesRedhill	Mr M LloydSW13	Mrs A Topalovic Athan
Mrs L DyerWeybridge	Ms J LumleySW8	& Mr C AthanSutton
Ms J FeeneyAddlestone	Ms J Marot & Mr C Marot	Mr & Mrs R Travers
Mrs J Filipinyi, Mr J Kvasz	East Molesey	Farnham
& FamilyFarnham	Mr A MarquisGodalming	Ms L TrenchardTadworth
Mr K Gadhave.....Egham	Mr D Marshall &	Miss J Van de VliesSW16
Miss K Goldie-Morrison	Mrs M Brown West Clandon	Mr P R WilliamsFarnham
SW13	Mr R Pike.....Fetcham	Mrs V WithersWeybridge
Mr W Haines ..London W13	Mr R PimbleFleet	Mr J J WoodSE25

LATE NEWS, Sep 30: after a successful Big Butterfly Count, BC national membership has topped 20,000 for the first time.

Surrey branch membership is now increased to about 930.

Treasurer's Report

Peter Camber

Branch accounts to March 31, 2013

1 Income (main items)

■ Subscriptions were similar to last year at approximately £5,000, reflecting total membership held at 872 throughout the year.

■ Income from the 2012 Butterfly Festival was disappointing – only £84 versus around £1,000 for each of the previous three festivals.

■ NFU sponsored some of the postage costs for Skipper distribution, saving £762.

■ Profit on the sale of goods at £295 was £50 down on 2011/12, reflecting both lower turnover and reduced margins.

2 Expenditure (main items)

■ Newsletter printing and postage costs of £3,247 were up by £436, reflecting increased Skipper circulation and a 12.5% increase in the cost of stamps. We are considering alternative production and distribution methods in order to contain these costs in future.

■ Conservation costs for Oaken Wood and our contribution to Head Office re support for the South-east Regional Officer totalled £2,325 versus £2,390 last year.

■ We did not produce an Annual Report for butterfly recorders as priority was being given to the production of the new Surrey Butterflies Atlas.

3 Excess of expenditure over income

■ £170 versus £1,639 last year – a reduction of approximately £1,500. Much of this improvement (£846) resulted from the NFU sponsorship and income from the Butterfly Festival, neither of which benefited us last year.

4 Year-end Balance Sheet

■ Cash at bank was £9,897, £7,000 of which has been placed on deposit.

■ Value of sales goods stock increased slightly: £935 versus £895 last year.

■ Debtors stood at £74 representing monies due re interest and VAT recovery. Last year's figure of £751 also included £612 subscriptions re new members who had joined during that year.

■ Creditors stood at £1,272 (including £825 printing costs), versus £939 last year.

■ Overall, our general funds remained much the same: £9,695 versus £9,865.

5 Conclusions: Although we managed to keep expenditures more or less in line with income, this was largely due to the one-off benefit of the NFU sponsorship and the (albeit small) income from the biennial Butterfly Festival.

It was unfortunate that we did not see a net increase in membership last year and we hope to see a stronger position in future as the UK economy improves.

Given the disappointing attendance at the Butterfly Festival we shall continue to seek alternative sources of income and take every opportunity to minimise our operating costs, whilst continuing to support appropriate conservation projects.



BALANCE SHEET AS AT MARCH 31, 2013

	31.3.13	31.3.12
ASSETS		
Current Account - Nat West	9,897	9,158
Stock of sales goods	935	895
Sundry debtors & prepayments	74	751
- adjustment re interest received versus forecast		-60
Less Sundry Creditors	-1,272	-939
	£9,635	£9,805
REPRESENTED BY: General Funds As at April 1, 2012	9,805	11,444
Less excess of expenditure over income for the year	-170	-1,639
As at March 31, 2013	£9,635	£9,805

INCOME

	12 Months to 31.3.13	12 Months to 31.3.12
SALE OF GOODS		
Stock valuation April 1, 2012 - Goods	895	1,259
Add Purchases	753	415
Less Sales (net of VAT)	1,007	1,125
Stock valuation March 31, 2013	935	895
Profit on Sale of Goods	295	345
GENERAL INCOME		
Subscriptions	4,974	5,010
Donations	65	54
Sponsorship (NFU re newsletter postage)	762	0
Butterfly Festival 2012 - Juniper Hall, net of expenses	84	0
Interest received	232	213
	6,118	5,277
TOTAL INCOME	£6,413	£5,622

EXPENDITURE

Newsletters - printing, postage & stationery	3,247	2,811
Oaken Wood Reserve, less grants received	325	140
Hire of Halls, Open days etc net of receipts	447	636
Annual Report	0	105
New Members Day	370	295
Conservation	0	609
Equipment Purchases & Repairs	77	277
Regional Officer - Contribution	2,000	2,250
Insurance	163	117
Refund of VAT re 2011/2012	-45	-39
Sundry Expenses	0	0
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	£6,583	£7,201
Excess of income over expenditure, transferred to General Fund	-£170	-£1,579
TOTAL	£6,413	£5,622

**PHIL BOYS, who sells BC goods and promotes the branch at half a dozen shows and events throughout Surrey, would welcome any help.
Contact details: inside-back page**

First Person

Focus on a branch personality

HARRY E. CLARKE, County Butterfly Recorder

I WAS born in 1956, and brought up on the edge of Exmoor, where my father introduced me to butterflies. I started a small collection of pinned butterflies, which was the fashion in those days. My first attempt at photographing butterflies was using a Kodak Vigilant Junior JIX-20 camera with a close-up lens. Not ideal, and it would be many years before I could afford a SLR.

We lived quite close to Nettlecombe Court Field Studies Council, where I attended a course led by John Heath, which was my introduction to genitalia dissection of moths, although circumstances prevented me from putting theory into practice at the time.

My academic qualifications are in applied mathematics, and I later obtained an MSc in Software Engineering. I started my career writing programs for simulation models. I then moved to work at JET Joint Undertaking for 16 years, working on controlling and acquiring data from all the physic diagnostic systems. I currently work in Information Security as an independent contractor.

During the autumn and winter months, I help out at Surrey Wildlife Trust's closed nature reserves of Dawcombe and Fraser Down, clearing scrub. Certainly a better way to keep fit than going to the gym, and with the bonus of maintaining wonderful habitats for butterflies.

Last year I learnt about the Butterfly Atlas and volunteered to write some species accounts. My first choices had already been taken so I offered to write accounts for the three Whites. After researching the articles, I started to look at the UKBMS data and produced some population trend charts for the Whites. Somehow Francis Kelly managed to convince me to produce the charts and distribution maps for all Surrey butterflies. Fortunately I was between contracts, which enabled me to spend the time producing them.

The charts required UKBMS (Butterfly Monitoring Scheme) transect data from CEH (Centre for Ecology and Hydrology). Initially I obtained the data up to 2011, which enabled me to work out how to produce the charts. The 2012 data was not available until mid-April. The distribution maps needed data from all sources. Richard Fox of Butterfly Conservation provided the historic data used in the first UK Atlas of butterflies, and also the Big Butterfly Count data. Zoë Randle of Butterfly Conservation provided the WCBS (Wider Countryside Butterfly Survey) data. And of course Malcolm Bridge provided the data he held in Levana.

At the Recorders' conference in Birmingham in March, Malcolm indicated that he intended to retire as VC17 Butterfly Recorder after publication of the Atlas. I agreed to take over. The job of Recorder is to ensure that an accurate record of Surrey's butterflies is maintained on behalf of the Branch. Working on the Atlas has shown how important it is to spot errors and correct them. I shall be changing from Levana to Recorder 6, which provides greater functionality. I am hoping that more records can be submitted electronically to reduce transcription errors.

