Butterflies and moths are beautiful insects and a joy to observe as well as identify. This guide will help you identify all the butterflies, and some of the common day-flying moths that occur in the Lothians and Scottish Borders. It also has a table so you can easily see which species are on the wing at a given time, and suggests some of the best and most easily accessible places in the region for you to see them. We hope this leaflet will encourage you to learn more about these beautiful insects.
SKIPPERS

1 Small Skipper 26-30mm
Thymelicus sylvestris
A recent coloniser from England, this is a butterfly of rough, grassy areas, such as field margins, roadside verges and disused railway lines. It will probably continue to spread along habitat corridors in response to the warmer climate. It is on the wing throughout July and August.

2 Large Skipper 33-35mm
Ochlodes sylvanus
A former resident, with records from the 19th century, this species has recently been re-colonising the Borders area. It is found in areas of tall grassland, favouring more sheltered spots than the Small Skipper, and it is on the wing earlier - from early June, continuing to fly until late July and perhaps August.

3 Clouded Yellow 57-62mm
Colias croceus
A migrant to the UK from the Continent, this butterfly is well known for its mass migrations when they arrive in large numbers in "Clouded Yellow years". It is most frequently seen between May and September along the coast.

4 Large White 63-70mm
Pieris brassicae
This is our largest white butterfly and a strong flier. The caterpillars feed on brassicas such as cabbage, broccoli and nasturtiums, and are therefore disliked by gardeners. It is distinguishable from the Small White by its larger size, darker black wing tips extending further down the wing edge, and bolder spots. Flies June - September.

5 Small White 38-57mm
Pieris rapae
The caterpillars feed on brassicas, but they cause less damage than those of the Large White. Easily confused with the Green-veined White which is similar in size, but the upperside has dark tips to the forewings, and it lacks the green veins on the underside of the wing. It is one of the first butterflies to be seen in spring and flies all summer.

6 Green-veined White 40-52mm
Pieris napi
Generally this is the most common species of white to be seen in the countryside. Unlike the two "cabbage whites", the Green-veined White feeds on wild crucifers and is not a garden pest. The green veins on the underside of the wing distinguish this from other white butterflies and moths, but they can fade with wear and are less distinct in second generation butterflies. One of the first butterflies of spring, it flies all summer.

7 Orange-tip 45-50mm
Anthocaris cardamines
Males are unmistakable with their bright orange wing-tips, but females have no orange so could be confused with Small or Green-veined Whites. However, Orange-tips have more rounded wing tips and distinctive mottled green undersides that can also be seen faintly through the upperwing. Their distinctive orange eggs can be found on the caterpillars’ food plants - crucifers such as cuckoo flower, garlic mustard, honesty and dame’s violet. Flies mid April to June.

8 Green Hairstreak 27-34mm
Callophrys rubi
Despite the bright green appearance of this small butterfly, which always sits with its wings closed, it is often difficult to spot. It prefers warm, sheltered sites near woodland or along the scrubby edges of moorland where its caterpillars feed on blueberry (bilberry). The Green Hairstreak flies from mid April to June.

9 Purple Hairstreak 37-39mm
Favonius quercus
A striking butterfly, but difficult to see as it feeds on honeydew on the leaves of trees. We have no recent sightings, but there is no reason why it should not be still present. The adult butterflies are best looked for in late afternoon or early evening on warm days by scanning the tops of the oak trees with binoculars. Occasionally they fly down from the canopy to nectar on flowers. The caterpillars feed only on oak. Flies late July to mid-September.

10 Small Copper 32-35mm
Lycaena phlaeas
This dainty butterfly is a widespread species found in a range of habitats, including gardens. Its caterpillars feed on common and sheep’s sorrel. The spring and summer broods can overlap, so it can be seen from late April through to mid-October, although it is rarely abundant.

11 Small Blue 20-30mm
Cupido minimus
UK Biodiversity Action Plan Species
The smallest butterfly in the UK, this dusky-coloured species is easily overlooked. Currently known from just one coastal site in the Borders, it was formerly found on disused railway lines around Hawick. The sole foodplant is kidney vetch. The day-flying and much more common Chimney Sweeper moth is rather similar, but the Small Blues have a white border extending all around the wing. Flies mid May to late July.

12 Common Blue 29-36mm
Polyommatus icarus
A widespread butterfly found in a variety of grassy habitats almost anywhere that its caterpillar’s foodplant, common bird’s-foot-trefoil, occurs. The beautiful and brightly-coloured males are very conspicuous, while the females are generally blue-brown with distinctive orange spots. It usually has just one generation a year, the adults flying between June and September.
10 Northern Brown Argus 26-35mm  
*Aricia artaxerxes*  
**UK Biodiversity Action Plan Species**  
When newly-emerged this small butterfly has beautiful deep, velvety brown upper wings. It could be confused with a female Common Blue, which can occur in the same habitats, but the pattern on the underside and the gleaming white spot on each forewing distinguish it (see front cover). Adults fly from early June to early September.

11 Holly Blue 30-35mm  
*Celastrina argiolus*  
This species has appeared in the region in recent years having spread from the south. Check its silvery-blue underwings for identification. Of the blue butterflies it is the most likely one to be seen in gardens or parks, as it is not dependent on flower-rich grasslands, like the Common and Small Blues. There are two generations per year and it is on the wing primarily in April/May and August. In early spring the caterpillars feed on holly, while in the summer ivy is the main foodplant.

12 Vanessa cardui  
An unmistakable butterfly and now a regular garden visitor, its range has rapidly expanded northwards in recent years. Often one of the first butterflies to be seen in the spring having overwintered as adults, its summer brood can be seen from July to September, in much larger numbers. Its caterpillars feed on the young leaves of stinging nettles.

13 Small Tortoiseshell 50-56mm  
*Aglais urticae*  
This well-known butterfly can be seen in virtually any month of the year in almost any habitat. The caterpillars feed on stinging nettles growing in sunny conditions, favouring fresh young leaves. It over-winters as an adult and is one of the first butterflies to emerge in the spring. In autumn adults are regularly found in houses, sheds and outbuildings seeking hibernation sites.

14 Comma 55-60mm  
*Polygonia c-album*  
An unmistakable butterfly with ragged shaped wings. The adults hibernate and emerge in early spring, producing a second generation from July to early October. The caterpillars feed on elm, nettles and hop. It has spread north in recent years and is a beautiful new addition to the butterfly fauna of southern Scotland.

15 Peacock 63-69mm  
*Inachis io*  
An unmistakable butterfly and now a regular garden visitor, its range has rapidly expanded northwards in recent years. Often one of the first butterflies to be seen in the spring having overwintered as adults, its summer brood can be seen from July to September, in much larger numbers. Its caterpillars feed on the young leaves of stinging nettles.

16 Wall 44-46mm  
*Lasiommata megera*  
A butterfly of shady woodlands, this species is a recent arrival from England with records from the coast and a record in Peeblesshire in 2011. Males are often seen perched in sunlit spots ready to defend their territory or intercept females, and they are on the wing from late April to late October. The caterpillars feed on various grasses.

17 Small Pearl-bordered Fritillary 41-44mm  
*BoIoria selene*  
This well-known butterfly can be seen in virtually any month of the year in almost any habitat. The caterpillars feed on stinging nettles growing in sunny conditions, favouring fresh young leaves. It over-winters as an adult and is one of the first butterflies to emerge in the spring. In autumn adults are regularly found in houses, sheds and outbuildings seeking hibernation sites.

18 Scotch Argus 35-40mm  
*Erebia aethiops*  
The Scotch Argus breeds in tall, damp grassland and wet woodland where the caterpillars feed on a variety of grasses. In sunshine males can be very active, but cloudy weather can cause them to stop flying completely. In the region, this butterfly is confined to the Borders, where it is much less common than it used to be, possibly due to climate change and/or the loss of its habitats, although it seems to have never been widespread. It is the last butterfly of the season to emerge, flying from late July until early September.
**24 Grayling** 55-60mm
*Hipparchia semele*
UK Biodiversity Action Plan Species
The Grayling needs warm, sunny sites with bare ground and fine-leaved grasses, upon which the nocturnal caterpillars feed. Its natural habitats include coastal cliffs, dunes and heaths, but it has been able to colonise many so-called ‘brownfield’ sites such as old quarries and industrial sites, and railway lines. In recent years it has spread into Edinburgh and onto Arthur’s Seat. The adult butterflies can be hard to see at rest due to their superb camouflage. They are on the wing from late June to early September.

**25 Meadow Brown** 50-55mm
*Maniola jurtina*
The Meadow Brown can be seen in a variety of flower-rich habitats, often in large numbers. The caterpillars feed on a variety of grasses. Males tend to be darker than females, but the amount of orange on both is variable. A strong flier, on the wing from late June to early September.

**26 Small Heath** 34-38mm
*Coenonympha pamphilus*
UK Biodiversity Action Plan Species
An inconspicuous butterfly that tends to fly only in bright conditions, and always keeps its wings closed at rest. It occurs mostly on grasslands where the sward is short and where there are fine-leaved grasses upon which the caterpillar feeds. Although widespread in Scotland, it has undergone massive declines in other parts of the UK. It only has one generation per year, from mid May to early August.

**27 Large Heath** 35-40mm
*Coenonympha tullia*
UK Biodiversity Action Plan Species
The Large Heath is restricted to wet, boggy habitats where its main foodplant, hare’s-tail cottongrass grows. It always sits with its wings closed, but can be distinguished from the Small Heath by its duller colour, larger size. It usually has more prominent spots on the hindwing, but they are not always present. Flies from early June to early August.

**28 Ringlet** 48-52mm
*Aphantopus hyperantus*
The Ringlet has been expanding its range in Scotland. It has a very dark, velvety appearance and a white ‘fringe’ to its wings when newly emerged. The "ringlets" on the under-wings vary in number and size and can be virtually absent. It favours tall, damp grassland, where the caterpillars feed on a variety of grasses. It flies, even in dull conditions, from late June to August, and can be abundant.

**DAY-FLYING MOTHS**
The day-flying moths shown are all conspicuous and attractive, and are sometimes mistaken for butterflies. There are probably several hundred species of moth that could be seen in the region - but most only fly at night.

**29 Six-spot Burnet** 25-40mm
*Zygaena filipendulae*
The bright red and black colours of the adults mean ‘birds beware’ because the moth is packed with a chemical defence in the form of cyanide! The caterpillars are also poisonous and they are thought to derive these chemicals from their foodplant, common bird’s-foot Trefoil. Flies from late June to August in sunny, grassy places, especially the coast.

**30 Cinnabar** 34-46mm
*Tyria jacobaeae*
The adult Cinnabar has similar coloration to the unrelated Six-spot Burnet, and is also poisonous to birds. In this case the poison, again obtained by the caterpillars, comes from common ragwort. The adults fly from mid-May to August in dry, grassy habitats. The caterpillars are also conspicuous, having orange and black stripes.

**31 Chimney Sweeper** 24-30mm
*Odezia atrata*
This striking little moth is sometimes mistaken for the Small Blue butterfly (see above), but is much more widespread. The Chimney Sweeper is entirely black / very dark brown, except for the white edges of the wing tips. The adults are on the wing between June and early August. The caterpillars feed on the flowers and seeds of Pignut, and thus this moth is found in open woodlands and flower-rich grasslands.

**32 Mother Shipton** 26-32mm
*Callistege mi*
This moth gets its strange name from the wing pattern which is reputed to resemble an old witch! The caterpillars can feed on grasses and various legumes, such as white clover and common bird’s-foot Trefoil. The adults are on the wing from late-April through to early July, usually found in sunny habitats with flowery grasslands.

**33 Yellow Shell** 25-30mm
*Camptogramma bilineata*
A common and widespread moth, often disturbed from long grass by day. The caterpillars feed on bedstraws. On the wing early June to late August.

**34 Emperor Moth** 60-80mm
*Saturnia pavonia*
A stunning moth, one of our largest and quite common on moorland, where it is on the wing in spring during April and May. The caterpillars are also striking, being bright green with either yellow or pink spots! They can be very conspicuous between May and August.
Want to get involved?
There are significant gaps in our knowledge of the current distribution and changes in butterfly and moth populations. Everyone can contribute and we really do need your butterfly and moth sightings.

Your local park will almost certainly have a variety of butterflies, such as Peacock, Orange-tip, and Large, Small and Green-veined White, especially if the local Council has sown an area with native flowers and grasses. Moths will probably not be so obvious, but why not find out on Moth Night
www.mothnight.info

Why?
Butterfly and moth recording is the foundation upon which the conservation of butterflies is based. It allows an assessment of population trends, helps identify priorities and can measure the effectiveness of conservation action. Butterflies can be quick to respond to changes to their environment. They therefore make excellent indicator species, capable of detecting changes due to new management or the effects of climate change. Populations are also rarely static making their study more interesting. You can record them in your garden or venture to parts of the countryside you would otherwise not visit. Above all, though, it is easy, great fun and very rewarding!

Where?
Most butterflies prefer sheltered sunny locations with plenty of nectar. Several are specialists and will only be found in, or near to, their niche habitat. Other species, particularly the larger and more mobile species e.g. Red Admiral and Painted Lady, can be seen almost anywhere.

How?
To record butterflies you need to provide the following information; species name, how many you saw, location name, grid reference from an Ordnance Survey map, date, and your contact details. Butterfly records should be sent to your local butterfly recorder (see below) who verifies and collates them before they appear as dots in distribution maps.

Our records are co-ordinated by volunteers. Please send your butterfly records for the Lothians and Borders to Duncan Davidson, 140 Pitcorthie Drive, Dunfermline, KY11 8BJ.
duncan@dwwd.freeserve.co.uk

And your moth records to Borders: Dr Malcolm Lindsay, Burn House, Mossilee Road, Galashiels, TD1 1NF.
malcandles@tiscali.co.uk

East Lothian: Mike Thornton, 107 (1F3) Pitt Street, Bonnington, Edinburgh, EH6 4DE.
mike_thornton_99@yahoo.com

Midlothian & Edinburgh: Dr Alastair Sommerville, 4 Woodbank Crofts, Westfield, Bathgate, West Lothian, EH48 3AT
alastair@biodiversitlysolutions.co.uk.

West Lothian: Mark Cubitt, 12 Burgh Mills Lane, Linlithgow, EH49 7TA. moths@cubes.f9.co.uk.
Want to know more? The following books are recommended.


Excellent field guide to moths. ISBN No. 978-0-9531399-6-5

**Butterfly Atlas of the Scottish Borders** (Mercer et al., 2009).
Information on distribution, ecology, sites and habitats. ISBN 0-9551086-2-4

### Flight Periods

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WEST LOTHIAN

1 Westrigg bing and bog. The entrance is off the B718 Harthill to Blackridge Road, opposite Station Road (NS900667). The Armadale-Blackridge section of the National Cycle network (no. 75) passes through the site. The fritillaries can be found in the wetter parts of the site, at around NS909669. Species present include Small Pearl-bordered Fritillary and Common Blue. The fritillaries can be found in the wetter parts of the site, at around NS909669. More information at www.eastscotland-butterflies.org.uk

2 Linlithgow Peel. The grounds around Linlithgow Palace, well sign-posted from the M9 and A803. Species present include Orange-tip, Small Copper, Peacock, Small Tortoiseshell, Meadow Brown and Ringlet. More information at www.historic-scotland.gov.uk

EDINBURGH

3 Holyrood Park/Arthur’s Seat/Salisbury Crags. Off the lower end of the Royal Mile. Several access points. Holyrood entrance approx. NT270737. Species present are Northern Brown Argus, Grayling, Holly Blue, Orange-tip, Common Blue, Small Copper, Meadow Brown, Small Heath, Six-spot Burnet, Cinnabar, Yellow Shell and Mother Shipton. For more information call Historic Scotland on 0131 652 8150 or email hs.rangers@scotland.gsi.gov.uk

4 Calton Hill. Immediately east of Princes Street, NT263743. Species present are Grayling, Northern Brown Argus and Holly Blue. More information at www.edinburgh.gov.uk

5 Bonaly Country Park, Pentlands. Access along Bonaly Road from Colinton Village, off the Edinburgh by-pass. Well sign-posted, but take care, single track road leads to car park at NT212675. Species present are Green Hairstreak, Common Blue, Small Copper, Meadow Brown, Ringlet and Small Heath. More information at www.edinburgh.gov.uk/phrp/ or call the Ranger Services on 0131 445 3383

MIDLOTHIAN

6 Glencorse Reservoir, Pentland Country Park. The Green Hairstreak colony is near the footpath that runs close to Glencorse Reservoir at NT217643. Either walk from the Flotterstone Visitor Centre, located off the A702 Edinburgh-Biggar Road, at the turning to the Flotterstone Inn (NT233631). Alternatively, park at Caistieglaw Hill Fort (NT230637), and follow the path out of the bottom of the car park to Glencorse. A ravine runs from the path down to the reservoir. Part of this ravine has been fenced off to improve the habitat for the Green Hairstreak. Other species present are Small Heath, Orange-tip, Ringlet and Meadow Brown. More information at www.edinburgh.gov.uk/phrp/ or call the Ranger Services on 0131 445 3383

7 Linn-Dean Water. Park in lay-by (NT467591) on Soutra Hill, on the A86 south of Fala. Walk northwards to the steep sheltered gorge at NT468595. Species present are Northern Brown Argus, Grayling, Dark Green Fritillary and Common Blue. More information from the Scottish Wildlife Trust www.swt.org.uk

EAST LOTHIAN

8 Newhailes, Musselburgh. Turn off Edinburgh by-pass onto Musselburgh road, A6095, or by bus from Edinburgh, Lothian bus 30. Car park at NT326725. Species present are Holly Blue, Comma, Ringlet and Orange-tip. More information from National Trust for Scotland, telephone 0844 493 2124 or visit www.nats.org.uk

9 John Muir Country Park, Dunbar. Two access points. (1) Turn off A1087 at West Barns. Car park at NT651788. (2) Turn off A198 into Limetree Walk. Car park at NT627709. Species present are Dark Green Fritillary, Cinnabar Moth and Six-spot Burnet. More information at www.eastlothian.gov.uk

BORDERS

10 The Bell and Killmade Burn, Whiteadder Reservoir. Along the B6355 Gifford-Chirnside road at the Whiteadder picnic site, NT666633. The Bell Wood is at NT 673633, while Killmade Burn runs southwest from the picnic site. Species present are Northern Brown Argus, Dark Green Fritillary, Common Blue and Ringlet. More information at www.eastscotland-butterflies.org.uk

11 St Abb's Head National Nature Reserve. 5 miles off the A1 on the B6438, about 10 miles north of Berwick. Car park and visitor centre at NT913674. Buses available from Edinburgh, Berwick and Eyemouth. Species include Northern Brown Argus, Grayling, Wall, Large Skipper, Small Copper, Dark Green Fritillary, Small Heath, Common Blue, Six-spot Burnet, Yellow Shell and Chimney Sweeper. Contact National Trust for Scotland on 0844 493 2256 or visit www.nats.org.uk

12 Eyemouth-Lamberton Coast. Section of the Berwickshire Coastal Path. Access from either Eyemouth (NT947646) or Lower Burnmouth (NT960608) where parking is available too. Buses from Berwick and Eyemouth stop at Upper Burnmouth. Species present are Northern Brown Argus, Grayling, Wall, Small Copper, Small Heath, Dew Moth, Six-spot Burnet, Yellow Shell. A coastal cliff top walk also noted for its plants and geology. Contact Scottish Borders Council on 01835 830281 for more information.

13 Thornyilee. Thornyilee is situated just off the A72, approx 3 miles east of Walkerburn and 6½ miles west of Galashiels. Car park at NT405364. Species present are Common Blue, Northern Brown Argus, Dark Green

N.B This information has been provided in good faith from a variety of sources, and Butterfly Conservation Scotland cannot be responsible for errors etc.
The UK Biodiversity Action Plan lists our most threatened species and habitats. Most species listed are either undergoing rapid declines, or have populations of European or international importance in the UK. In Scotland some of these species will not be declining fast, or may even be stable, but the declines in other areas mean that they qualify for listing. What action is needed for each species and habitat is determined at a combination of UK, country, regional and local levels.

Local Biodiversity Action Plans are an excellent way of co-ordinating action to conserve wildlife at the local level. Local action cannot take place without the enthusiasm and interest of local people, and depends on partnerships between local communities, landowners, businesses, a range of voluntary and public organisations, and the local Council. Contact your local council to see how you can get involved.

Butterfly Conservation is a UK charity, with over 18,000 members, and nearly 1,200 in Scotland. We work closely with the Scottish Government, Scottish Natural Heritage, local communities and conservation partners to safeguard Scotland’s butterflies and moths, by:

- Advising landowners on managing land for butterflies and moths.
- Carrying out surveys of our most threatened species.
- Training volunteers to enable them to take action for butterflies and moths.
- Making recommendations to the Scottish Government on its environmental policies.
- Encouraging everyone to cherish butterflies and moths.

Join us!
You can support us in this vital work by joining Butterfly Conservation. With an annual membership you will receive an interesting and informative welcome pack, a colourful magazine Butterfly three times a year and membership of your local branch of Butterfly Conservation. Our local branches run public butterfly and moth events throughout the year. For a membership form or for further information, please contact us.