

# On the spot

The newsletter of  
the Glasgow and  
South-West  
Scotland Branch  
of the British Butterfly  
Conservation Society



**April 2007**



**Dedicated to saving wild butterflies, moths and their habitats**

BUTTERFLY CONSERVATION  
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## Chairman's Notes

Spring is in the air and it won't be long before the first spring butterflies are seen.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank David Welham for his hard work as the branch chairman for the last few years. The branch has developed well with many new ideas and projects, not least of which is the recent publication of the Butterflies of South West Scotland. I am happy to announce that I have been elected as the current branch chairman and hope to take forward the excellent work done previously, along with our thriving committee. If you have anything you would like to ask or propose to the committee please do get in contact.

This year sees a new initiative called the BIG project in Glasgow. The BIG project is an exciting opportunity for volunteers to become involved in surveying Glasgow's green spaces for birds and butterflies. You can find details of the project on the internet at:

[www.glasgow.gov.uk/en/Residents/Parks\\_Outdoors/Ecology/thebigproject.htm](http://www.glasgow.gov.uk/en/Residents/Parks_Outdoors/Ecology/thebigproject.htm). Please also look out for more details in the press.

A great step forward for Butterfly Conservation is the acquisition of a new nature reserve located in Mabie Forest . This is one of the prime sites in Scotland for butterfly diversity. 25 Species can be found here including Pearl-bordered Fritillary, Small Pearl-bordered Fritillary, Dingy skipper and Purple Hairstreak. Various events will take place to launch the new site this year, details of which will be posted on our branch website [www.SouthWestScotland-Butterflies.org.uk](http://www.SouthWestScotland-Butterflies.org.uk).

Dumfries and Galloway Environmental Centre have organised a Scottish-wide postcard survey looking for orange-tip butterflies. This aims to stimulate wildlife recording and interest and also generate some valuable distribution data. The orange-tip is an easily identified butterfly (a great photograph appears on the postcard), so hopefully this will appeal to novices and experienced recorders alike. It is open to anyone so please encourage friends, family and neighbours to keep an eye out. Please do continue to send in your butterfly records to complement this survey.

The National Moth Recording Scheme (for macro-moths) is now well underway. Details can be found at: [www.mothrecording.org.uk](http://www.mothrecording.org.uk). This is a 5-year project to raise awareness of moths and their habitats. It is a very exciting development and complements well the butterfly and micro moth recording schemes already running. The nub of the scheme is people's observations and data, so if you have any odd records anywhere they will be very valuable for this project. Please submit your moth records to your county moth recorder (see back page for contact details).

Finally I hope that you all have a good season, maybe finding new sites for Small Skipper in Dumfries and Galloway, Comma records or indeed any butterfly or moth in our area.

Neil Gregory – Branch Chairman

## Letter to the Editor

DR JAMES BLACK  
KILMARNOCK

The Editor,  
On the Spot  
2 April

Dear Sir

### Publish and be damned

Over my many years of membership of the branch, I have noted repeated pleas from you, and your predecessors, for items to publish. I challenge you to publish this "letter to the editor".

I am concerned at the decreasing lack of input by our branch into the conservation of butterflies. I fear we are falling well below the efforts of other branches.

I note from the recent website listing of forthcoming events only one mention of the word "butterfly", and no reference at all to "conservation". I have no problems with moths, bats, or various other worthy creatures, but have we lost sight of our core purpose?

In the past, we have had a variety of field trips, variously involving visits to see less common species, following up unusual sightings, scrub and bracken clearance etc.

Are this year's events likely to tempt members from other branches to come along, or bring us a flood of new members? I have reservations.

I am also a member of Highland Branch, and find their approach much more pro-active. They have a membership of approximately 150, many of whom are distant, but they have an active core, who cover a huge area, despite obvious problems with weather. They organize field trips, surveys, and have a reserve. We have been in existence for over twenty years, but have not, as far as I am aware, tried to establish a reserve. Given that we have a number of interesting species on our patch, including Marsh and Pearl Bordered Frits, Dingy and Chequered Skippers and Northern Brown Argus, should we be trying harder? There is lottery money out there, and many less deserving causes seem able to access it, (including a photographic club, of which I am a member)

Have you seen Upper Thames Branch's website? Have you joined Lancashire for a field trip? The last one I went on, they had such a big attendance, they had to split us into groups.

I wonder if any other members share my concerns?

Yours sincerely

Jim Black

(Full contact details supplied).

## Editor's Response

Dear Jim,

In response to your letter of the 2<sup>nd</sup> April, thank you for your interesting comments. I have some sympathy with the general theme of your letter but can not agree with all of your comments.

Although it would certainly be optimal for the branch to do more and have lots of outings and conservation projects, the reality is that the committee is made up of a very small core of dedicated volunteers (with busy lives due to work and family commitments, and some of whom cope with serious illnesses) who are as proactive as they can be.

As with many other groups, despite a reasonable sized membership (180 in our branch) there are a very small number that can be persuaded to give talks, lead initiatives or take outings. Also we have organised many events in the recent past that have been very poorly attended. Often it is only committee members who turn up. To give just a few examples there was only one non-committee member who attended the AGM in December. When I led an outing to see chequered skipper the only people who joined Anne and I, were from the south of England. We had an outing to Polmasie Bing and Wester Moss to see Large Heath and Common Blue and again only committee members participated. On the other hand, moth events have been better attended, but often by the general public from the local area.

So may I request if branch members would let the committee know what kind of events they would prefer to attend, things may work out better. Also if anyone feels they would like to lead an outing this would be very much appreciated.

I do not want it to sound as if the committee feel that the members let the branch down, on the contrary every member is very precious to us and we value them all, we know that many people do a lot of good work observing butterflies and sending in records, gardening for butterflies and running moth traps and getting youngsters interested in butterflies and moths. There may be a lot of other things branch members do, that we do not hear about, so may I urge members to send in and let us know what good ideas they put into practice!

The committee make no apology for giving moths as high a profile as butterflies, because the society's conservation strategy covers the "protection of butterflies, moths and their habitats". As the launch of the National Macro Moth Monitoring Scheme has recently been announced, which will eventually lead to an Atlas type publication similar to that produced for butterflies (the Millennium Atlas), moth monitoring will be a major focus of branch activity.

Your comments Jim have raised the question of, "are the branch members aware of all of the work that goes on?" and perhaps the committee are guilty of not keeping people fully informed of the events that members of the committee participate in and all the behind the scenes work this entails. So let me redress that omission by listing some of the things that have been achieved:

- A branch web site was introduced in 2005 which Neil Gregory has put time and much effort into creating and updating. Neil has also spent a lot of effort running moth events.
- For 20 years the branch has built up a tremendous amount of information on the butterflies of Glasgow and South West Scotland which was fed to the national society for entry into the Millennium Atlas and update. Richard Sutcliffe has entered thousands of records to facilitate this.
- Last year the branch published an Atlas of the Butterflies of South West Scotland which was driven by the tireless efforts of Keith Futter who also secured all of the grants that provided the funding for publishing.
- All of the committee have worked hard to promote our Atlas at many events.
- The Dingy Skipper has been identified by the branch committee as our most threatened butterfly and we have been conducting and will continue to conduct targeted surveys to monitor the status of this butterfly.
- We are about to establish a butterfly garden in West Kilbride for the local community.
- Richard has given numerous butterfly talks to local societies, he has been working on SPBF for Glasgow and E. Dumbarton LBAP's and is now preparing Green Hairstreak BAP for Renfrewshire LBAP. He is busy answering numerous requests for species distribution information and planning requests from consultants etc. and providing knowledge/information to BC at a Scottish and National level.
- Neil is heavily involved in transect walking and co-ordination and is arranging for 20 people from the W. Midlands to visit Skye and he is busy answering telephone and e-mail enquires, generated by the web site, from members of the public, about butterflies and moths. As well as attending the Birmingham National Recorders meeting.
- I am acting as lead for the Ayrshire Coastal LBAB for butterflies and co-ordinating a survey of the large heath for the HAP on Ayrshire lowland raised bog.
- Pru Williams hosted a national moth night event at her home.
- Most of the committee members have attended meetings such as the Scottish branches meeting at Kindrogan and the Stirling moth meeting, as well as branch committee meetings.

Another strand of the society's strategy is "increasing public awareness of butterflies and moths" and to this end we have had a presence at many public events.

- Anne and I attended the Gardening for Scotland Show and Lenzie Moss open day.
- Neil and Corinna attended Finlaystone.

- All four of the afore mentioned attended events at Flanders Moss, Kelburn and 2 events at Lochwinnoch.

This is a sample of the committee members involvement and is not an exhaustive list.

Good news about a reserve Jim, Mable forest is regarded as the best butterfly site in Scotland and will, thanks to the efforts of the branch and Paul Kirkland become a reserve in July/ August this year!

The Small Blue is the only butterfly to be thought to have become extinct in our branch area in recent times, the committee have constantly raised the profile of this species and have been in liaison with others to assess the possibility of a re-introduction scheme, possibly in Ayrshire. This project is as yet in it's infancy. For more details of some of these up and coming projects see the articles elsewhere in this newsletter.

To be more active the branch committee need more people to assist with projects! – Any volunteers?

David Welham.

### **Have you seen a Dingy Skipper?**

The results of the ten year survey (1995-2004) in our branch area have revealed that the Dingy Skipper is our rarest butterfly and that it appears to be declining rapidly. There have not been any recent records of this butterfly from Ayrshire, which is a worry. Records have been received from Dumfries & Galloway.

If you are walking along the coast in Ayrshire and Dumfries & Galloway in areas that have pockets of poorly vegetated ground with Birdsfoot trefoil, the caterpillar food-plant, please look out for this butterfly. It is also worth looking on derelict industrial sites close to the coast.

It is small and brown but does have a charm of its own. It is most often seen in ones or twos but occasionally in greater numbers. The butterfly is short-lived and the wings soon lose scales and become worn. Worn, tatty individuals really do live up to its name. It is on the wing from mid May to mid June.

Please forward all records to Richard Sutcliffe.

Keith Futter

## Scottish Biodiversity Week

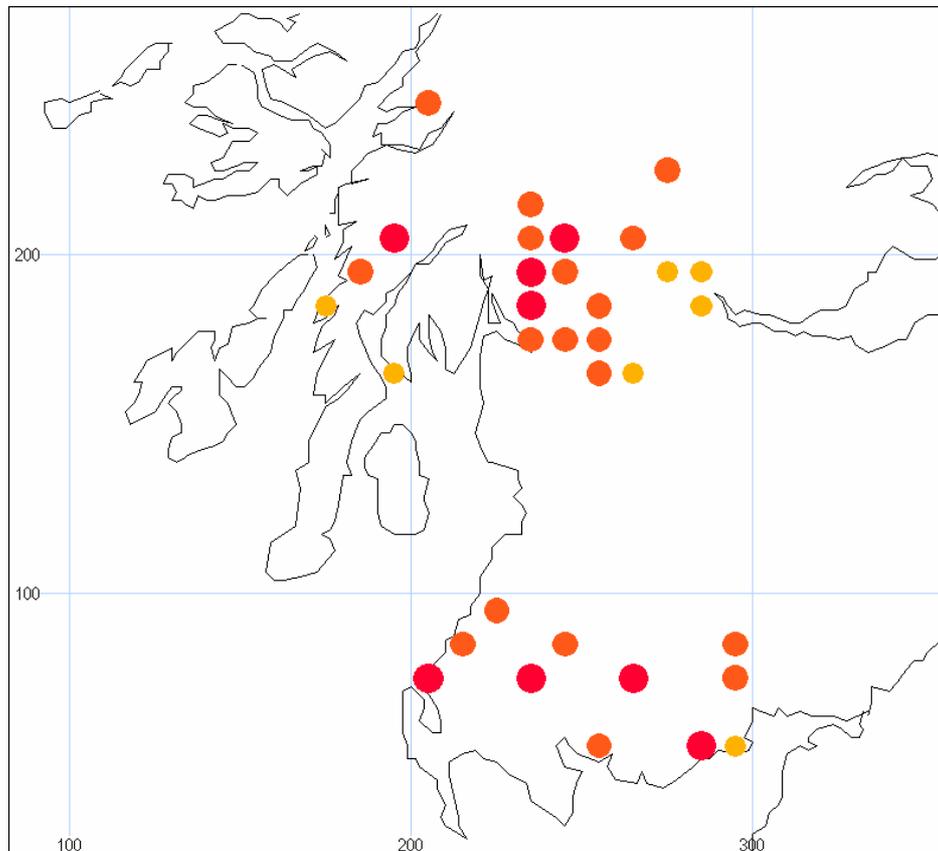
Scottish Biodiversity Week (19<sup>th</sup> to 27<sup>th</sup> May) is a fun way for those involved with the biodiversity process to raise awareness of biodiversity locally but throughout Scotland. The aim of the week is to encourage active learning about the environment through a range of enjoyable events to engender public understanding that action taken locally has national and global importance, and to encourage people to take an interest in helping conserve biodiversity for future generations. There will be a Scottish Biodiversity Week web page with links to those organizations websites who are holding events during the Week.

Scottish Biodiversity Forum [www.biodiversityscotland.gov.uk](http://www.biodiversityscotland.gov.uk)

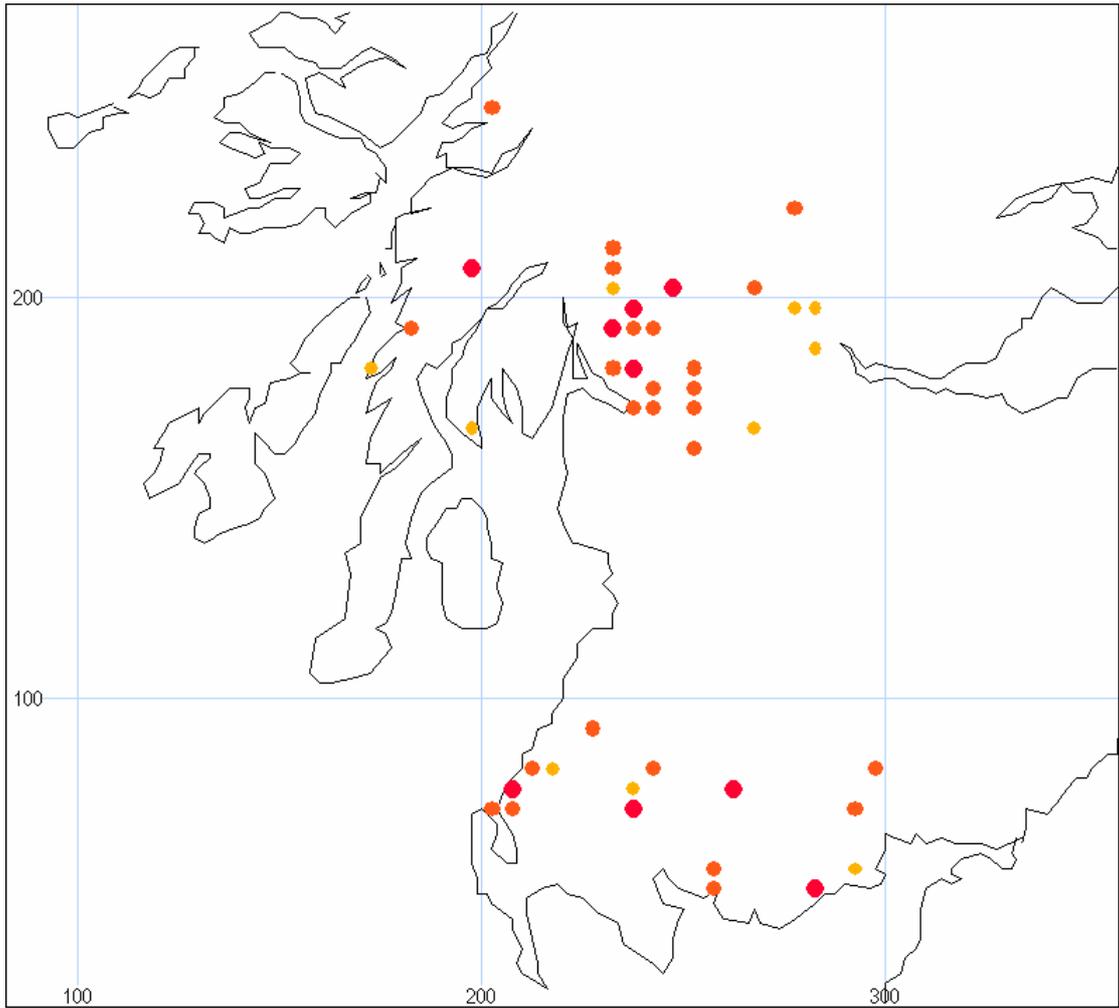
## PURPLE HAIRSTREAK - We need your records !

Since the publication of our Atlas there has been much debate on just how locally distributed the Purple Hairstreak really is in our branch area.

Purple Hairstreak 1995-2006



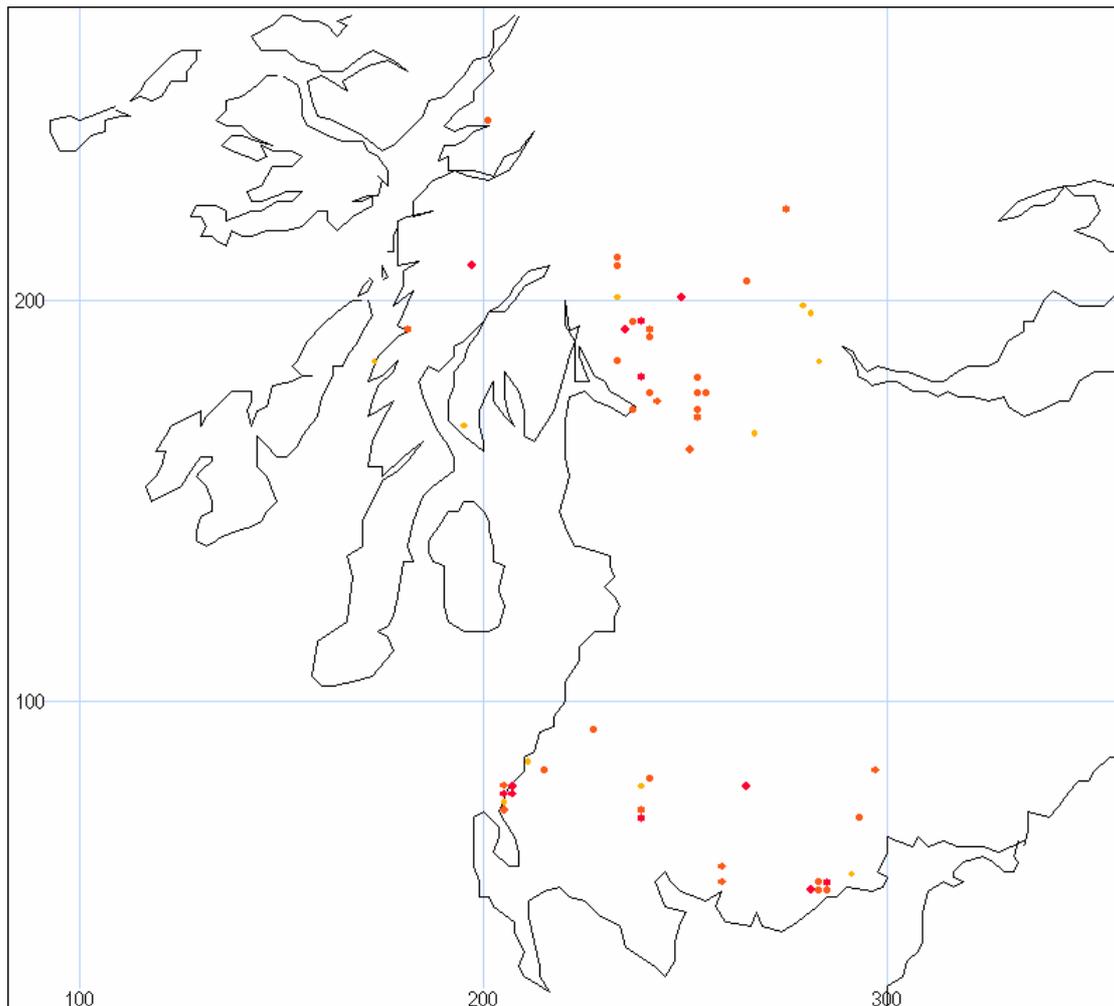
10km squares



5km squares



Purple Hairstreak



Tetrads

It has been known for many years that the greatest numbers of the Purple Hairstreak in our branch area are to be found in the Oak woods around Loch Lomond and Glasgow. The greatest abundance appears to be on the eastern side of Loch Lomond. Indeed, John Mitchell, the author of the *New Naturalists* book, *Loch Lomondside* (2001), thought that the Purple Hairstreak was the most common butterfly in these woodlands.

Away from Loch Lomond and Glasgow, the distribution of the Purple Hairstreak is very scattered and appears to be absent from large areas. It can be found in Argyll, Stirling and Dumfries & Galloway, in relatively small numbers, but has it been overlooked?

The Purple Hairstreak is a butterfly that spends much of its life in the canopy of Oaks and nearby trees, particularly Ash and occasionally Sycamore, when it feeds on the aphid honeydew deposits on leaves. The female is seen more often than the male because she is more active when choosing sites to lay her eggs. She will lay her eggs on the lower branches of Oak that are south facing and in these situations the butterfly can be seen at eye-level. At other times a pair of binoculars is useful to look higher up the tree to detect this elusive butterfly. The butterfly will also fly

in the early evening. Warm, calm evenings from mid July to the end of August can be a productive time to look for the butterfly.

To determine if the Purple Hairstreak is more common than records suggest we would welcome all records of this butterfly, especially away from the well known sites. For example we would particularly welcome any records of this butterfly from the Clyde and Avon Valleys in Lanarkshire near the Scottish Wildlife Trust reserve at the Falls of Clyde. With such a local abundance of woodland containing a good number of Oaks it would be expected that the Purple Hairstreak would occur in this area. To date we have received no records - is it really absent from this ancient semi-natural woodland? If so, why?

Please send all records of the Purple Hairstreak to Richard Sutcliffe.

Keith Futter

### **HAVE YOU SEEN ANY EVIDENCE OF THE GOAT MOTH ?**

The Goat Moth (*Cossus cossus*) is a scarce moth throughout the UK and appears to be declining in range (Waring *et al.* 2003). The large grey-brown adult is seldom seen. It rarely comes to light traps but it has been found at sugar bait which is surprising as the adult does not feed; indeed it has no mouth parts. The larvae feeds under the bark and in the heartwood of broad-leaved trees particularly willows, poplars, elm, birch and ash but sometimes oak, alder and apple. It favours trees in damp situations that are susceptible to winter flooding but infected trees can be in a variety of habitats from isolated trees on a river bank or roadside to dense woodland. The larvae take 3-5 years to mature and some then leave the tree to seek a place to pupate. It is at this time, as a large, rather grotesque, shining reddish-purple caterpillar with paler sides and a black head, that the insect is most commonly observed. The only other indication that the moth may occur in an area are infected trees which tend to ooze sap from their wounds and as a result are attractive to flies, wasps and Red Admiral butterflies that feed on the sap. This may explain why the moth is attracted to sugar. It may mistake the sweet smell of sugar bait for that of an infected tree that would be a potential site to lay eggs. Infected trees and the larvae are said to smell of goats, hence the name.

South (1908), in his classic two volumes on moths in the Wayside and Woodland series, states that the Goat Moth occurs throughout the UK except for the far north of Scotland. Today it is certainly present in the Spey Valley and around Loch Rannoch. However, the only record for west-central Scotland shown on the distribution map in *The Moths and Butterflies of Great Britain and Ireland* (1985) is a pre-1960 record for the Ayrshire coast.

In 2005 John Mitchell, the ex-Senior-Warden at the then NCC Loch Lomond Nature Reserve, took me to where, during his warden-ship, a tree fell down and revealed workings that he believed to be those of Goat Moth

larvae. We were at a corner of Gartfairn Wood that floods regularly and has some grand old willows. Although all trace of the fallen tree had gone, the site appeared to be a text book locality for the species. However regular trapping and sugaring at the site has produced no Goat Moths and I could find no evidence of infected trees. Nevertheless, the species certainly occurs not far away as I have subsequently been made aware of a larvae that was found in 1999 by the then Stirlingshire moth recorder in his garden in Buchlyvie where it may have matured in his apple trees (Nick Holding, personal communication).

I suspect that the Goat Moth may be under-recorded and more widespread in our area than appears to be the case. This is a request for information on trees that are oozing sap to the extent that they attract flies, wasps and Red Admiral butterflies and might therefore be infected with Goat Moth larvae. Obviously I should also love to hear of records of the adult and/or larvae of the moth. Please contact John Knowler at 3 Balfleurs Street, Milngavie, G62 8HW or at [john.knowler@ntlworld.com](mailto:john.knowler@ntlworld.com)

#### References

- South, R., (1908) in *The Moths of the British Isles*, Warne.  
Skinner, B., (1985) in *The Moths and butterflies of Great Britain and Ireland Vol 2*, Harley Books  
Waring, P., Townsend, M. and Lewington, R. (2003) *Field Guide to the Moths of Great Britain and Ireland*, British Wildlife Publishing

John Knowler

### **Butterfly Reserve in South West Scotland !**

Butterfly Conservation and Forestry Commission Scotland have signed an agreement similar to that which is in place for the Allt Mhuic reserve on the shores of Loch Arkaig in Highland Region, for an area of Mabie Forest known as Locharber Loch Forest Nature Reserve. Mabie Forest is situated south west of Dumfries.

This site consisting of plantation, ancient woodland and scrub extends from Mabie House west towards Locharber Loch. There is an extensive network of footpaths and cycle tracks.

Mabie forest has been in existence since 1800 and was acquired by the Forestry Commission in 1943. In recent times the Forestry Commission has been managing it's forests in a much more wildlife friendly manner. In particular this area of Mabie forest has been managed for the benefit of it's butterflies especially for species such as Pearl-bordered Fritillary and Small Pearl-bordered Fritillary. This agreement will mark a new chapter in the histories of Mabie Forest, Forestry Commission Scotland, Butterfly Conservation Scotland and last but by no means least the butterflies of Mabie Forest.

Glasgow and South West Scotland branch of Butterfly Conservation is looking forward to the challenges and opportunities created by this

agreement. The Official opening will take place hopefully July/August this year. All members will be notified when a date is confirmed.

David Welham

### **A Good Start to the Butterfly Year!**

I am by no means claiming that we have seen the earliest butterflies of the year in Scotland (indeed we did see a Small Tortoiseshell flying around the supermarket in January, but I doubt this poor thing would not survive very long.) but we have had a good start to the season. We observed our first Small Tortoiseshell on April 4th in our garden and a single Peacock and 5 Small Tortoiseshell in Eglinton Country Park on the 6<sup>th</sup> of April. Then we saw 6 Peacocks and a single Male Orange Tip on April 13<sup>th</sup> at Rockliffe. So it seems to be a good start to the season, lets hope it turns out to be a bumper year for our butterflies. We would be interested to hear the first dates you saw butterflies this year and if it was earlier than previous years. Can I here make a plea to those people who garden with butterflies in mind that very early butterflies desperately need nectar to survive so please, please provide some suitable plants for them! If you need some ideas of spring flowers suitable for butterflies please see my article on gardening for butterflies in the previous issue of 'On the spot' which is also on the website.

May I also say a big thank you to those people who help in the conservation of our butterflies. No matter how big or how small your contribution. Every nectar source, every caterpillar food plant, every record you submit adds to the effort. Getting others interested in butterflies, especially young people who will be the conservationists of the future, is of great importance. So keep up the good work!

Finally may I take this opportunity to remind you that copies of the Atlas of the Butterflies of South West Scotland can still be purchased at the reduced price of £11 from any committee member. I make no apologies for bringing up the topic of the Atlas here for when I am talking of saying thank you, it is appropriate to say we felt it important to acknowledge everyone who contributed records for the Atlas by printing a list of all recorders names in the book.

Anne Welham

### **Survey of Ayrshire Coastal Butterflies Appeal for Volunteers**

I have been asked to participate in the Ayrshire LBAP Coastal Habitats Action Plan to be the lead for the action "To establish the extent and abundance of the butterfly species associated with the coast and their food plants and to identify the actions needed for their conservation." The overall vision for the complex of the Coastal Habitats is to:

- Retain as much of the most specialist coastal habitats (e.g. sand dunes, salt marsh, rich coastal grasslands) as is possible, in as big a unit as possible.
- Achieve positive management for as much of the coastal habitats as possible for their specialised coastal biodiversity especially where the land has another use.
- Stimulate an enjoyment and appreciation of Ayrshire's coastal wildlife and an interest in its welfare amongst the people of Ayrshire.

The aim for the coastal butterflies project is to produce a detailed and complete survey over two seasons of six target species and their food plant to produce a report of the state of the coastal butterflies by 2009. The target species are Small Blue, Dingy Skipper, Northern Brown Argus, Wall, Grayling and Dark Green Fritillary. The survey needs to produce accurate annotated records of sightings with distribution maps for these species and their food-plants as well as site descriptions for the main butterfly populations.

It is envisaged that as well as this specialist survey, public involvement in the project will be encouraged perhaps by the use of a postcard survey and/or public events.

It is essential that all of the coastal area is explored at the correct time of year to ensure accurate coverage therefore I am appealing for volunteers who would be willing to dedicate their valuable time to conducting the survey work required for this extensive project to conserve coastal butterflies and their habitat in Ayrshire. Planning and co-ordinating of the survey needs to start very soon so please may I urge anyone who is interested to contact me urgently. All offers of help will be very greatly appreciated.

As a note of interest Keith Futter is going to draw up a small blue re-introduction proposal which it is hoped will meet the IUCN guidelines for consideration by the LBAP.

David Welham

Contact details: see back page plus mobile no. 07866 7444 896

### **Going wild in Glasgow**

The BIG project is all about biodiversity in Glasgow and is an exciting opportunity for local volunteers to get involved in surveying Glasgow's green spaces for birds and butterflies.

As I pointed out in my article entitled 'Help our Butterflies to Survive' in the last issue of 'On the spot' areas of good butterfly habitat are shrinking and becoming very fragmented. It has been recognised that some urban green spaces are poorly managed for biodiversity and some are disappearing altogether. There is great scope for improving the biodiversity in urban sites to protect existing sites of high conservation

value and to encourage people to make greater use of their local green spaces.

Glasgow has been chosen by The British Trust for Ornithology, Scotland and Butterfly Conservation Scotland as the location for a volunteer-based study to record the birds and butterflies and the urban biodiversity habitats in 2007 and 2008. Over one fifth of the city of Glasgow is made up of green space consisting of parks, river corridors, woodlands, cemeteries and communal gardens.

Volunteers are being invited to survey over 130 sites across the city to note the birds and butterflies found and a simple description of the site. Volunteers can choose to record birds, butterflies or both and training is available for identification and recording methods.

The project aims to:-

- Provide data on the birds, butterflies and habitats found within Glasgow's green spaces.
- Generate information on how habitat type and structure affects the birds and butterflies found in green spaces.
- Encourage greater interaction of local communities with urban biodiversity.
- Provide guidance on the management of the green spaces in Glasgow and other cities to promote and enhance Scottish biodiversity.

So if you live or work in Glasgow and have 2 hours of time to spare each month during the summer from the beginning of May to the end of September for butterfly monitoring, get involved! There are still some training spaces available on the 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> of May.

The project is supported by Glasgow City Council, the Glasgow Biodiversity Partnership, Scottish Natural Heritage and the Scottish Executive. Respond for training on butterflies by the end of April 2007. For information on volunteering E-mail [glasgowbiodiversity@bto.org](mailto:glasgowbiodiversity@bto.org) or telephone BTO Scotland on 01786 466560 or go to [www.bto.org/survey/special/Glasgow biodiversity](http://www.bto.org/survey/special/Glasgow%20biodiversity).

Anne Welham

(This article was prepared from an article written by Paul Kirkland and Liz Humphryes and information from the Scottish Biodiversity Forum.)

## **Orange – Tip Postcard Survey 2007**

Butterfly Conservation Scotland are repeating a postcard survey last conducted in 1997/98. The aims of the survey are to encourage more people to record butterflies and other wildlife, raise awareness of the effects of climate change and to update information on the Orange-tip with particular reference to areas where it is still colonising.

The sightings will be added to biological recording databases, which underpin biodiversity conservation at local and national levels. The Dumfries and Galloway Local Biodiversity Partnership have produced 50,000 Orange- tip postcards for the survey and these have been distributed throughout Scotland.

Anthocharis cardamines the Orange-tip is a very distinctive butterfly, the male is unmistakable, being a medium sized white butterfly with orange and black wingtips. The underside of the hind-wings are mottled green and white. The females are less conspicuous as they do not have the orange on the wingtips but they have a single black spot near the front edge of the forewing and the faint pattern of the under-wing showing through from below.

The Orange-tip is widespread in South West Scotland and males can often be seen patrolling up and down along a hedgerow or woodland edge or over marshy grassland with adjacent scrub, looking for females. Orange-tips are usually found close to their caterpillar food-plant which in drier sites is Garlic Mustard, on wetter sites the Cuckoo Flower is the favoured food-plant

The Orange-tip butterfly is on the wing from mid April until mid June but sometimes as late as July. If the warm weather continues the Orange-tip may emerge early so enjoy the good weather and go Orange-tip spotting and send in your records. Also it is a very good butterfly for children to recognise!

P.S. David and I saw our first Male Orange Tip for this year in Rockliffe Friday 13<sup>th</sup> April!

Anne Welham

(This article is based on an article by Paul Kirkland and Information about the Orange-tip was taken from "Butterflies of South west Scotland" by Futter et al).

## **Gardening Scotland 2007**

Garden for Life – Garden for Change: Butterfly Conservation Scotland is taking a stand once again as part of the Garden for Life marquee at Gardening Scotland 2007. This is Scotland's largest Garden Show to be held at the Royal Highland Centre, Ingliston near Edinburgh from Friday 1<sup>st</sup> to Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2007.

We had such a positive response last year to our marquee and show-garden that this year the event will be even bigger and better, with a large show-garden called 'The Living Garden' with demonstration/activity areas surrounded by a host of stands all promoting similar messages about wildlife-friendly gardening and sustainability. It is a great day out with lots to see and do come along and support butterfly conservation.

Shona Greig.

## **West Kilbride Butterfly Garden**

Our branch of Butterfly Conservation have been invited by the West Kilbride Community Initiative Ltd. to develop a butterfly garden at their recently purchased quarry site. They wish to highlight the conservation of plants and insects for their importance to the natural environment. The following statement is the reason the Community Initiative choose to highlight insects "Insects are at the bottom of the animal food chain and

their survival is an important indicator of the health of the natural environment we wish to protect. Insects pollinate the flowers, break down vegetative matter and provide a food source for many larger animals including birds. The conservation of wild plants and an understanding of their dependency on insects will be an important issue for future generations threatened by environmental pollution. The animals and birds that predate on the insects will also be observed and studied."

The insect and habitat garden with an interpretive centre is the community initiative's latest project, it is to include as many insects as possible including bees and aquatic insects as well as butterflies. The West Kilbride Community Initiative have already been very proactive in developing other gardens about the town and developing Kirktonhall Glen to make a countryside park along the route of the Kilbride Burn. At the far end of the glen a field has been planted as a new woodland area and another field is planned to be a wild flower meadow for the enjoyment of the community as well as the benefit of local wildlife.

It is proposed that our butterfly garden will be used not only as an area to attract butterflies for visitors to view at close range but also to demonstrate methods of gardening for butterflies that people can repeat in their own gardens.

If anyone wishes to assist us in this project please contact me, all help will be very welcome.

Anne Welham

## News from BC Head Quarters



### **Butterfly Conservation 'European Interests Group' formed**

Butterfly Conservation (BC) has recognised for some time that a pan European butterfly conservation organisation was needed. This is why BC was instrumental in setting up Butterfly Conservation Europe (BC Europe).

BC Europe is not however a membership organisation. BC members can make a considerable contribution in Europe and recent bilateral initiatives such as the BC Europe and West Midlands Branch trips to Hungary and recording by members in the Ecrins National Park are already starting. In order to coordinate and promote these activities BC has set up a European Interests Group (EIG), similar in structure to a BC branch, to provide a member-based organisation within BC.

The mandate of the BC European Interest Group is to:

- Circulate information on European butterflies and moths to members and partners in Europe via a website [www.bc-eig.org.uk](http://www.bc-eig.org.uk)
- Encourage recording of butterflies and moths in Europe, facilitate contact with recording schemes and encourage the local atlases that are planned in several parts of Europe.
- Publicise the plight of butterflies and moths in Europe where changes in agriculture, particularly land abandonment are a huge threat.
- Help set up projects with partners in Europe.
- Provide a skilled volunteer resource for European nature conservation organisations such as national parks.
- Assist the work of Butterfly Conservation Europe (BC Europe) and act as ambassadors for BC in Europe with partner organisations.
- Work with partner organisations in lobbying in Europe.

A small committee has been formed with Simon Spencer as chairman, Mike Williams as vice chairman, Neil Thompson as webmaster, Ian Duncan, Nigel Spring and Nigel Charles.

Membership of the EIG is open to any BC member for the additional fee of £10 which will finance the group in the same way as similar subscriptions go to branches. The £10 will be taken on the next membership renewal date. To make administration much easier and cheaper a direct debit mandate is required for UK members. Non UK members will pay by credit card. Members will need an email address as all correspondence, newsletters, etc will only be sent by email in order to minimize costs and simplify administration.

To join Butterfly Conservation's European Interests Group please download the application form from the website at [www.bc-eig.org.uk](http://www.bc-eig.org.uk) and post a completed Direct Debit Mandate to **Butterfly Conservation, Manor Yard, East Lulworth, Wareham, Dorset, BH20 5QP,**

Projects for 2007 include sponsored survey trips to Turkey (already oversubscribed) and a survey for Balkan Fritillary (*Boloria graeca*) in the Ecrins national park (France) based at a campsite from 10-17<sup>th</sup> July. EIG will normally hold its AGM at the same date and venue as the BC AGM.

Simon Spencer ([cerisyi@btinternet.com](mailto:cerisyi@btinternet.com))

### **Help raise money for Butterfly Conservation by using the Internet**

If you are an Internet user, you can support Butterfly Conservation by using Everyclick.com as your search engine, and by buying goods from the businesses with whom it has links. There is no cost to you or to BC. As a search engine, I don't think it's quite as fast as Google, but its results are very acceptable (and much improved – if you tried to use the site previously, give it another go). Shops signed up with them include the

likes of Amazon (2.5% of sales to charity); Freemans (2.5-5%); Thomas Cook (2%); Powergen (£4) and Abebooks (2.5%).

It's very easy to tell them to give your donations to Butterfly Conservation and you can search to see how much money the charity has earned via the site (find this via the "charity" or "charities" link).

BC will get a cheque when the amount goes over £25. Everyclick allocates 50% of its gross revenue to charity each month and each active charity receives a proportion of that sum equivalent to the proportion in which its supporters use the website relative to the supporters of other active charities.

So, use [www.everyclick.com](http://www.everyclick.com) to make your Internet searches, use them when you can to purchase items online and help BC. They estimate that if half of our members used the site we could raise over £28,000.

### **Charities Tax Reform Group supports e-petition on VAT**

Members of the public are being invited to sign an online petition urging the Prime Minister to "stop making charities pay VAT".

Charities fork out up to £500m every year in irrecoverable VAT, and although private firms and local authorities can recover the VAT they pay, charities cannot – a situation the voluntary sector has long lamented as unfair.

More than 1,500 individuals have signed, including RNIB chief executive Lesley-Anne Alexander and World Emergency Relief's UK director of operations Alex Haxton. Helen Donoghue, head of the Charities Tax Reform Group, has been circulating the email to contacts in the sector and encouraging them to sign.

The charity petition takes advantage of the e-petition functionality that was launched last November on the Prime Minister's website. Set up by an individual known only as 'Damien', it states: "This is an added expense for groups that are already financially stretched to their limits. Give charities a break. The PM knows how valuable the work of charities are and the pressure they relieve on welfare state services."

It will be hoping to capitalise on the current popularity of such appeals, demonstrated by the more than 1.8 million people who signed a petition in protest at the government's proposals on road pricing and vehicle tracking. The scale of feeling on that issue prompted the PM to issue a reply stressing that no final decision had been taken.

The petition may be viewed at [\\_<http://petitions.pm.gov.uk/Charities/>](http://petitions.pm.gov.uk/Charities/)

Gareth Jones

## **Save Our Butterflies Week 2007**

Planning is underway for Save Our Butterflies Week 2007. To be held in July. (21<sup>st</sup> to 29<sup>th</sup>).

Last year's event was a great success and considerably raised the profile of butterflies.

Branch members championed the cause of Butterfly Conservation in all sorts of ways with special events, television and radio interviews, and in the local press.

Butterfly Conservation's publicity team is keen to hear from branches about anything they are planning or have already lined up for Save Our Butterflies Week 2007.

We want to make Save Our Butterflies Week an annual event that generates an interest in butterflies and their conservation among as many people as possible.

### **What will you do with your old mobile phone?**

Butterfly Conservation has just signed up to a new scheme to encourage more people to recycle their old mobile phones. All our members received a reply envelope with their February copy of *Butterfly* magazine. Apart from being a really good 'green' initiative, this scheme will help Butterfly Conservation raise funds for its conservation work. Also, if we can persuade some bigger organisations to join in with us we should generate significant sums of money, as we receive £2.50 for every phone that is recycled (all phones, all makes and any condition!).

Denise Carter at Head Office has a stock of extra reply envelopes if any branch would like some to distribute locally via their members, local businesses or any other suitable outlets. If you have a contact in a large organisation who might be prepared to support this scheme through their staff or customers, please contact me on 01403 256175 or by email at [butterfly0@btinternet.com](mailto:butterfly0@btinternet.com)

Many thanks.

David Bridges

## Events List

Arran Wildlife Week – **Butterflies of Arran**, Kilmory Hall

Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> May, 1900-20.30

Discover more about butterfly identification and their conservation from Richard Sutcliffe. No Need to book. See Arran Wildlife for details.

Arran Wildlife Week – **Butterflies Walk**, Kilmory Hall Friday 18<sup>th</sup> May  
1400-15.30

Search for butterflies including Green Hairstreaks, with Richard Sutcliffe. Booking required. See Arran Wildlife for details.

**Green Hairstreak Walk – Cornalees Bridge Visitor Centre, Murishiel C.P.** Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> May, 11am to lunchtime. Contact Neil Gregory for details.

**Bioblitz Dalzell Estate & RSPB Barons Haugh in Motherwell**

Saturday 26<sup>th</sup> and Sunday 27<sup>th</sup> May 3pm to 3pm. A 24hr event to record as much wildlife as possible. Saturday is for wildlife recorders and Sunday for Public involvement.

**Small Pearl-bordered Fritillary Walk** Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> June 11am to  
Lunchtime Glen Moss Kilmacomb

Meet at Golf Club car park. Contact Neil Gregory for details.

**Save the Planet, Kelburn Park** Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> and Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> July  
11am to 3pm each day.

**Ringlet Walk** Glen Moss Kilmacomb Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> July 11am to lunchtime  
Meet at Golf Club car park. Contact Neil Gregory for details.

**Moths and Bats** Lochwinnoch Friday 27<sup>th</sup> July evening and Saturday 28<sup>th</sup>  
July from 10am. Contact Lochwinnoch for details.

**Moths – Minibeast Weekend, Kelburn Park.** Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> July.

**National Moth Night** Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> August – event still to be arranged.

**Moths and Bats – Finlaystone Park** Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> August

**Butterflies and Moths – Finlaystone Park** Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> August from  
13.30

An afternoon of walks, talks and much more.

**Moths and Bats – Dean Castle** Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> August 20.00hrs

## **Committee 2006/2007**

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#### **Moth Officer/Webmaster**

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