

On the spot

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



April 2008



Small blue by Keith Futter

Dedicated to saving wild butterflies, moths and their habitats

BUTTERFLY CONSERVATION
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Chair's Notes

2007 was not a great year for butterflies or moths, despite the early immergence of a number of species, such as Green Hairstreak. Despite this we now have confirmed records of 4 species of Skippers in SW Scotland: Chequered, Large, Small and quite amazingly Essex Skipper. The Essex Skipper cannot be identified readily without careful observation. The undersides of the antennae are dark and sometimes called dipped in ink. All other features are very similar to the Small Skipper. Let's hope we can find them again in Dumfries and Galloway this year – keep a look out.

Moths Count (www.mothscount.org) is the new initiative to encourage moth recording and interest. The related National Macro Moth Recording Scheme is active and we have in place now moth recorders for all areas in the branch. Once data has been submitted to the database we will start to be able to see some dot maps published on their website. The aim is for these to start to be available at the end of this year. This will enable recorders to target areas in terms of seeing existing and under recorded areas. Please contact your local county recorder for details. Also see the eGroup at: <http://tech.groups.yahoo.com/group/ScottishMoths/>

There is a focus for 2008 on 4 priority butterfly species, these are Pearl-bordered Fritillary, Mountain Ringlet, Grayling and Scotch Argus. Andrew Masterman has drawn up methods for recording and investigating distribution of these species, details of which can be found on our website.

Butterfly Conservation now has a new Scottish reserve in Mabie Forest, Dumfries and Galloway. This is a fantastic place with extensive Forestry Commission areas. The butterfly area is being monitored by transect walk and moth trapping. We would welcome any records from the reserve and would encourage you to visit for a very pleasant day. It has over 20 of the local 31 species of butterfly. Forester moth is also resident and now since it is a Biodiversity Action Plan Priority species it is worthy of looking out for.

Our website continues to grow in content and the number of visitors. Andrew Masterman is now our Webmaster and immediate improvements have already been made. Please do visit and feel free to contribute: www.SouthWestScotland-butterflies.org.uk

It is with great sadness that we inform you of the death in January 2008 of Keith Futter after a long battle with cancer.

Keith made a major contribution to Butterfly Conservation in Scotland. He was a member of the Glasgow Branch from early 1990s. He joined the branch committee in 1992, serving as an ordinary committee member, and was also RAP officer from 2000.

He was responsible for extensive surveys of Dunbartonshire on behalf of the Scottish Wildlife Trust, when he identified the importance of Blackhill Mire on the outskirts of Helensburgh for Lepidoptera. He showed it was probably the best site in the Greater Glasgow area for Green Hairstreak, and made major efforts to protect the site from proposed developments by Helensburgh Golf Club, who own it.

Keith was a prominent member of the Helensburgh Green Belt Group, and many of his photographs are prominent on their website.

He was a very keen recorder. He recorded all the wildlife in his Dumbarton garden, and in recent years ran a moth trap producing lots of records which will feed into the National Moth Recording scheme. He sent in over 1500 butterfly records to the Glasgow Branch between 1992 and 2007.

He was always keen on the Branch producing an atlas of butterflies in SW Scotland, and he was the driving force behind the *Butterflies of SW Scotland* published in 2006. He got everyone together, organised meetings, and managed to get funding from a wide variety of sources. Not only did he write well over half of the text, he also designed the layout and did all the liaison with the publisher. Without him the atlas probably wouldn't have happened!

He was always keen to promote the importance of Ragwort for wildlife and would argue strongly with those people who insisted it should be removed because it posed a danger to horses.

Even in the last few months of his life, Keith was determined to make sure that some of the issues he was passionate about would continue after he was gone.

He was keen that the Small Blue should be considered for re-introduction as part of the Ayrshire Biodiversity Action Plan.

He was also determined to get more recognition for the importance of his local wildlife site, Brucehill Cliffs, Dumbarton. The site was designated as Dumbarton's first local nature reserve several years ago, but was threatened by a nearby housing development in 2006. Keith appeared before the West Dunbartonshire Planning Committee in December 2006 and as a result, although the planning application was approved, it was to include '*any additional condition considered to be appropriate for the protection of the flora and fauna in the adjoining area of Brucehill*'. As late as December 2007, Keith was having discussions with the Dunbartonshire Biodiversity Officer about this and other local sites.

Keith's loss will be a major blow to the Glasgow Branch and Scottish natural history in general. His expertise and wide knowledge will be greatly missed.

We send our condolences to his widow Sue.

Discover Glasgow's Really Wild Side

We're used to seeing films of wildlife out on the African savannas, and we may have seen wildlife on our nature reserves, but the Biodiversity in Glasgow project is encouraging people to look in the local parks of Scotland's biggest city.

Anyone can take part in recording birds and butterflies in Glasgow's green spaces. The information collected by volunteers will have a very real use that should be of practical benefit to the 'dear green places'. Volunteers' findings will be used to inform those managing Glasgow's green spaces, such as Glasgow City Council, to help improve the city's urban wildlife.

It's not only Glasgow's wildlife that stands to benefit. In addition to the surveys on birds and butterflies conducted by members of the public in Glasgow, information collected by people taking part in Garden BirdWatch in Scotland will be analysed.

Jacqui Kaye, Promotions Officer for BTO Scotland said, "Anyone who takes weekly records of the birds and other wildlife seen in their gardens as part of BTO/CJ Garden BirdWatch in Scotland will help us to learn more about wildlife in urban areas throughout the whole of the country."

BTO Scotland and Butterfly Conservation Scotland hope to encourage a whole new range of people to take part in the BIG project. Participants don't have to be experts and may not have taken part in any surveys before.

BIG Volunteer, Jo Davis, said, "Glasgow has such a lot of green spaces, so I thought it was an excellent idea to see who lives in them. When I heard of the plan of asking Glasgow's citizen's to take part in a survey, I instantly signed up for it."

Many people don't realise how easy, rewarding and fun it can be to collect information for a genuine scientific survey. BTO Scotland and Butterfly Conservation Scotland are actively recruiting volunteers for the BIG Project. All those who sign up to a site can be provided, on request, with a training pack for bird surveying, including a full colour guide to the butterflies and day-flying moths of Glasgow and free CD of bird calls.

The BIG project is funded by Scottish Natural Heritage, Biodiversity Action Grants Scheme, Glasgow City Council and the Robertson Trust. It is also supported by members of the Glasgow Biodiversity Partnership. It is a partnership project between BTO Scotland and Butterfly Conservation Scotland.

Butterfly Conservation Scotland

Getting to know my local green space with the BIG project: Yorkhill Park (NS562662)

When I first heard about the BIG Project in January 2007 I jumped at the chance to discover more about the wildlife living in Glasgow's parks and green spaces. I quickly signed up to one of the free training courses organized by Butterfly Conservation and the British Trust for Ornithology to help identify the habitats, birds and butterflies that might be present.

Over 100 likely sites, ranging from formal parks to cemeteries had been identified and volunteers were also encouraged to suggest other potential green spaces that they wanted to survey. I was lucky

enough to get Yorkhill Park, my own local green space. Situated behind Yorkhill Children's hospital, the park is split into a 'well kept' area dominated by short mown grass with trees and some shrubby borders, but no formal flower beds. The other half is wilder with bare patches and rough grass full of wild flowers such as Cuckoo Flower and Ragwort, a mixture of mature trees and stands of young self-seeded Alder, plus plenty of tangled shrubs and undergrowth.

In the previous year, local kids had built up mounds of earth into ramps for their bikes, which by mid-Summer were covered in Thistles, Ox-eye daisies and other opportunistic wild flowers.

Apart from a few dog walkers, joggers and hospital staff, it manages to avoid the hordes that flock to nearby Kelvingrove Park and the Botanic gardens on sunny days. It's a quiet haven despite being situated next to the busy Clyde expressway.

After attending the excellent bird identification course at the Glasgow Museums resource centre in February, I began practicing my spotting skills and listening to the free CD of bird calls and songs. The early successes were great confidence builders, such as identifying a Mistle Thrush hiding in a bush by his song, just moments before he obligingly popped into view. Hurrah! The butterfly training course at Pollock Park in April was great: Dr Tom Prescott of Butterfly Conservation succeeded in making it informative and a lot of fun. A highlight being the sight of about 30 adults running around after Orange-Tips with a butterfly net! I came away from both courses enthused about getting out and seeing what I could see!

My first 'official' visit to the park was for a habitat survey which went well. Unfortunately I did come across bags of dumped rubbish and a section of path scattered with cans, bottles and plastic bags where the local under-age drinkers gather at the weekend. A call to the council helped sort out the dumped rubbish, which thankfully hasn't proven to be a regular problem.

On the morning of my first bird survey, I was a bit apprehensive about what passers-by might think of me with my binoculars, but everyone I spoke to during the surveys seemed really interested and wished me well. In total 22 species of birds were identified using the park during the 2007 survey season. Getting a day with suitable conditions for the butterfly survey proved to be the biggest problem! In the end, 5 species of butterfly including Small Tortoiseshell, Peacock, Small White, Green-veined White and Meadow Brown were identified using the site. I noticed there was a marked difference in the distribution of the butterflies within the site, with almost all (unsurprisingly) being within the 'wild' section of the park.

One of most memorable moments of the project so far was being interviewed in Yorkhill Park along with the BTO's Jacqui Kaye for BBC Radio Scotland's Out of Doors program. Jacqui gave a brilliant overview of the project's aims before helping me out with some on-the-spot bird call identifications. It was lot of fun, although all mention of butterflies was edited out of the 5 minutes broadcast, and it was a bit weird hearing myself on the radio!

Since the 2007 surveys finished in September I've continued to take a walk through the site during weekends, gathering cans and bottles for recycling. It's also meant that I've been able to observe a few more species of birds using the park including Redwings and Siskins. In November (after Bonfire night) I started putting up a few nest boxes on trees around the site, and I'm looking forward to seeing if any will be used this year. I also tried collecting wildflower seed heads for propagation in 2008, with an aim to increasing nectaring opportunities for butterflies and moths in the park, and providing more potential food plants for caterpillars.

I'm looking forward to taking part in the project again in 2008 and seeing some of the results. In the mean time I have also started submitting my bird observation records for the BTO Bird Atlas project, and of course my butterfly records to our Butterfly Conservation branch recorder Richard Sutcliffe. I'd recommend taking part in the BIG project to anyone who wants to know more about the wildlife living around us in Glasgow. The training courses are free and really useful. You can do the survey by yourself or as part of a group, and you can choose to survey birds and butterflies or one or the other.

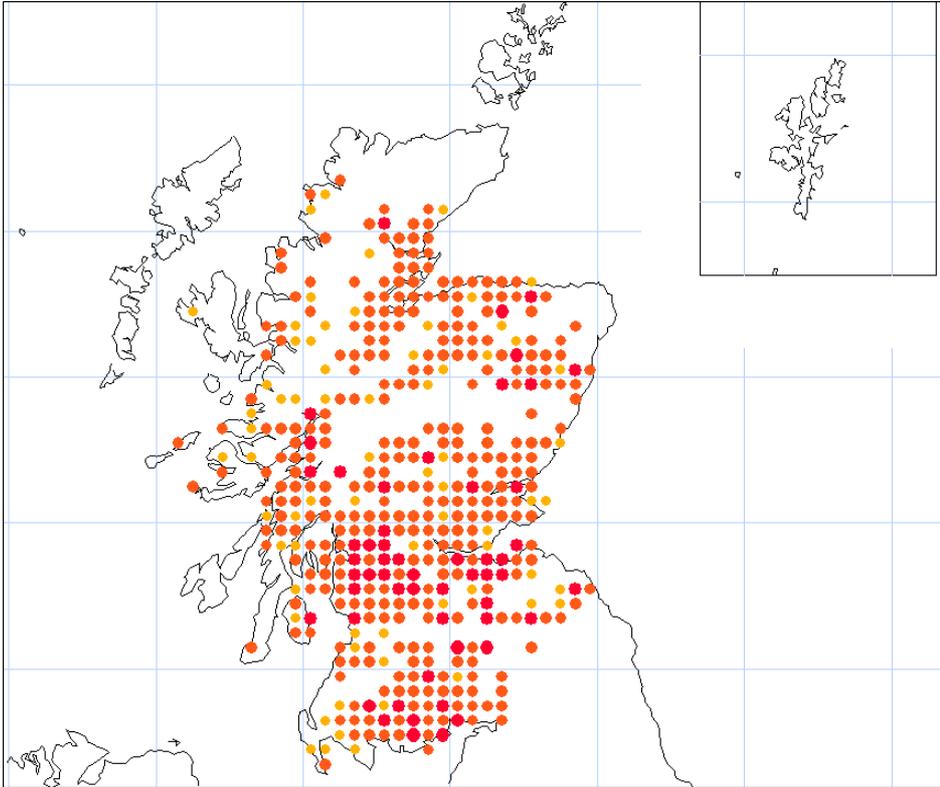
For more information see:

http://www.glasgow.gov.uk/en/Residents/Parks_Outdoors/Ecology/thebigproject.htm

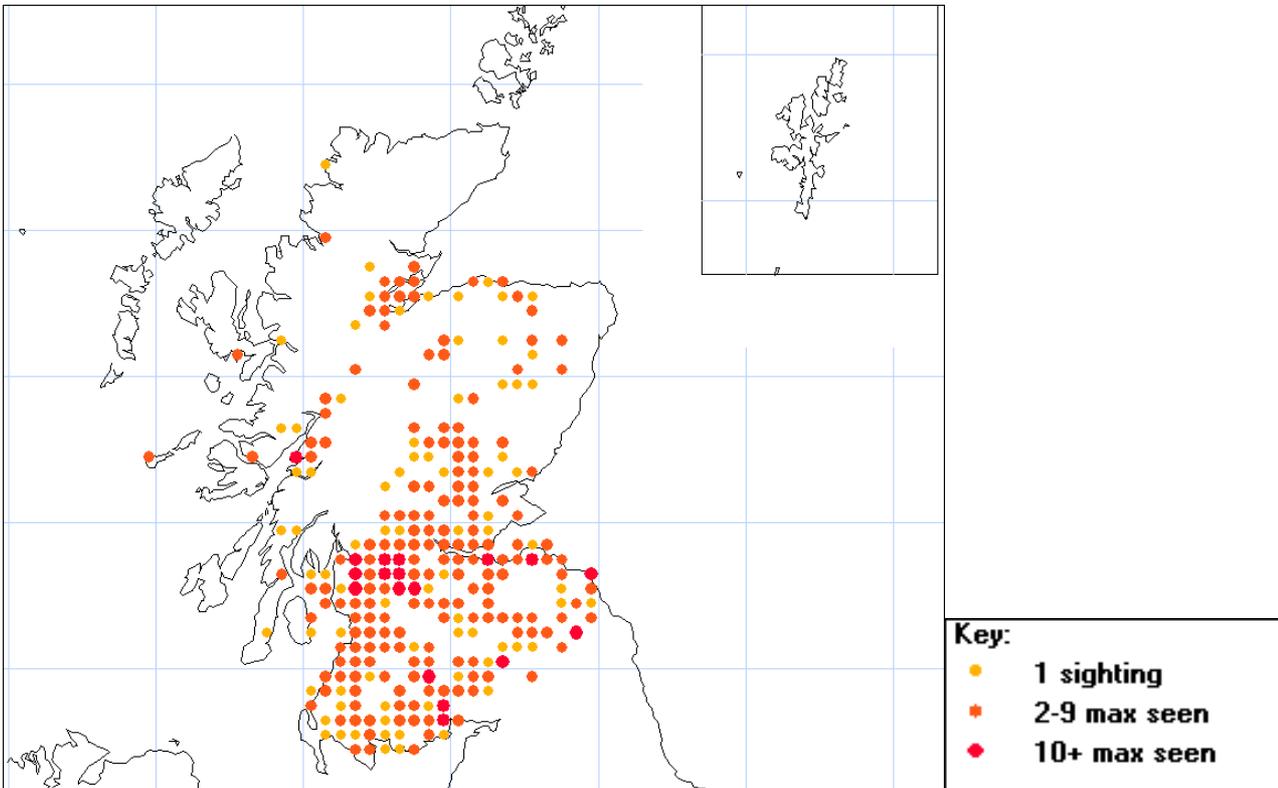
Scott Shanks

Postcard Survey

In 2007 Butterfly Conservation Scotland ran a postcard survey to find out more about the movements of the Orange-tip butterfly. The survey found that the butterfly was far more widespread, with a 45% increase in range compared to a similar survey ten years earlier. Populations had grown most dramatically in Grampian, Highland and Argyll.



Orange-tip 2007 (10 km squares) postcard records + other records



Orange-tip 1997 (10 km squares) postcard records + other records

Experts ask for help as Peacock butterfly invades

The public are being asked to look out for the Peacock butterfly, which is believed to be colonising new parts of Scotland in huge numbers. Its movements are a very visible indicator of the impact of climate change.

Before 2000, the Peacock butterfly was only found in around less than 30% of Scotland. Since then, it has spread far further a field. The Peacock is now found in over half of the country. It has taken advantage of warmer weather and has even colonised the Highlands. Peacock butterflies have even been found hibernating in a peat stack in the Western Isles.

Now Butterfly Conservation Scotland is asking the public's help to monitor its progress. The movements of the Peacock demonstrate the impact that the warming climate is having on wildlife.

"The Peacock is an instantly recognisable butterfly, as well as being an important environmental indicator. Tracking its movements could unlock valuable clues about the impact that climate change is having on our wildlife" said Dr Tom Prescott of Butterfly Conservation Scotland.

Climate change has been helping Peacocks hibernate successfully in much greater numbers. In the past, colder winters meant that many would not survive the winter. Milder autumns mean that nectar is more readily available, so the butterfly can store energy for hibernation. Milder winters mean less chance of freezing to death in poorly protected hibernation spots.

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"The response to last year's Orange-tip survey was fantastic." Said Dr Tom Prescott. "We predict the findings of the Peacock survey will be even more dramatic. The Peacock is a stronger flyer and, unlike the Orange-tip, can live almost anywhere as its caterpillars feed on nettles. It is likely that we will find that the Peacock has spread much further a field. It can be found in gardens and other flowery places mainly between March and June, and again in August and September. "

How to take part in the survey:

Postcards with a picture of a Peacock, can be found at libraries, museums and visitors centres or directly from Butterfly Conservation Scotland or the Highland Council Countryside Rangers. People simply fill these in and post back.

Or online at www.butterfly-conservation.org –and follow the quick link to Scotland Peacock Survey

The peacock butterfly survey postcards and a new Highland butterfly guide have been produced by Butterfly Conservation Scotland for the 'Communities Project for Highland Biodiversity'. This is a partnership programme supporting 24 local biodiversity projects across Highland, three of which focus on butterflies. The programme is led by the Highland Biodiversity Partnership and receives funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund, Highland Council, Scottish Natural Heritage, Highlands & Islands Enterprise and RSPB Scotland.
Butterfly Conservation Scotland.

Humming-bird Hawk-moth and Painted Lady online survey with BBC Radio 4

Butterfly Conservation has developed an exciting online survey of these two migrant species in association with Radio 4's major series World on the Move and as part of the Garden Moths Count initiative. The survey will run throughout 2008 on the Butterfly Conservation website and gives us a great opportunity to raise awareness and engage with the general public. Anyone who sees a Humming-bird Hawk-moth or Painted Lady butterfly can use the simple but amazing interactive mapping on the website to zoom in on satellite images (down to the scale of your own garden) and log their sightings. This will enable us to track the arrival in the UK of these wonderful creatures on their journey from North Africa and southern Europe, and then to map their spread here during the summer. We are also keen to hear observations of interesting behaviour (such as courtship, mating, egg laying, plants used for nectaring, reverse migration in the autumn or hibernation) which can be recorded in a comments box in the online recording system. What we do know about the migration of these spectacular insects comes from observations over the centuries from amateur recorders, but there is still much to learn and we hope that the public will help in 2008.

The BBC Radio 4 – World on the Move was launched February and will be broadcast until December with live reports at 11am on a Tuesday repeated at 9pm on the Wednesday. This programme will be covering all aspects of animal migration.

Please contribute your records of these species on the Butterfly conservation Website at www.butterfly-conservation.org

Butterfly Conservation.

Help us to Record the Green Hairstreak

The Renfrewshire East Renfrewshire and Inverclyde Local Biodiversity Action Plan (LBAP) is a Partnership forum which aims to protect and enhance Biodiversity. Biodiversity is simply put; biological diversity or the variety of living things. The LBAP was launched in 2004 and includes 18 Action plans for 7 habitats and 11 species, species groups are represented by examples of fungi, plants, fish, birds and mammals.

The LBAP partnership is aware of the lack of invertebrate representation and consequently we are now planning to include Green Hairstreak Butterfly as a new Species in the LBAP.

One of the priorities for the LBAP is to raise the profile of biodiversity and for the general public to become more involved to help us protect the wildlife we have in our local area. We would really like to get people involved with recording and monitoring this enigmatic species to give us a better understanding of its local distribution and help identify areas where habitat management to conserve this species would be possible.

The butterflies usually start to emerge in early May and can continue to do so until early July but the bulk of the emergence in this region occurs from the 4th week of May until the 2nd week of June. The species is mainly found on scrubby hillsides or warm sheltered valley bottoms moors, sphagnum bogs and wet lowland heaths.

The Green Hairstreak foodplants are Bilberry (*Vaccinium myrtillus*), Broom (*Cytisus scoparius*), Common Bird's-foot-trefoil (*Lotus corniculatus*) Common Rock-rose (*Helianthemum nummularium*), Dyer's Greenweed (*Genista tinctoria*) and Gorse (*Ulex europeaus*) but Bramble (*Rubus fruticosus*), Buckthorn (*Rhamnus cathartica*), Cross-leaved Heath (*Erica tetralix*) and Dogwood (*Cornus sanguinea*) are also used.

The Green Hairstreak larva is green and plump, like a woodlouse and marked with rows of yellow dots on the back and sides. They feed on the flower buds, flowers or tender young leaves of common rockrose, gorse, bilberry, bird's-foot-trefoil, buckthorn, dogwood, broom and various vetches.

Currently most of our records are around 10 years old and come from within Clyde Muirshiel Regional Park, particularly in the land surrounding the Muirshiel Centre (NS3163) but also in the Cornalees area. Other odd sites include Barcube Hill at Langbank, Renfrewshire and Glen Moss Scottish Wildlife Trust Nature Reserve at Kilmacolm. More recent records would be useful but also the confirmation of other sites would be desirable. If people know of sites with suitable habitat that have or may have this species please let us know. One site that is potentially suitable is Burneven Hill SINC near Gourrock in Inverclyde.

If you would like to get involved with recording this species and think you could spare some time in May and June to look for this species please contact Petrina Brown the Local Biodiversity Officer at Renfrewshire Council or Nicola Macintyre the curator of Natural History at Paisley Museum.

Petrina Brown
Biodiversity Officer
Renfrewshire council

Help Collect Data for a New Dragonfly Atlas

The British Dragonfly Society is requesting help to collect data to prepare a new national dragonfly atlas. The National Dragonfly Atlas Project will be launched in April 2008. The aim of this project is to update the known distribution of British dragonfly and damselfly species over the next 5 years, culminating in the publication of a new national atlas in 2013. A new national atlas is urgently required. Climate change is contributing to increasingly earlier spring emergence and changes in the range of a number of our species. In addition, new species are becoming established in Britain. We are living through a dynamic change in our dragonfly fauna and need to record this information, thereby providing evidence for future assessment of the impact climate change and other environmental factors are having on our dragonfly fauna.

To succeed in this ambitious project good national coverage is needed, particularly in Scotland. The more volunteers that get involved, especially in the traditionally under-recorded areas of Scotland, Ireland and Northern England, the more information on the status of our dragonfly and damselfly species can be gathered. This will not only allow the production of a high quality national atlas but also provide a good baseline of information that can be used for the future benefit of dragonfly conservation.

Can you help with recording the dragonflies and damselflies in your local area or further a-field? Volunteers are needed to record in one or more 10-km squares – there are many squares in Scotland that have no or few records. You can help fill in these gaps.

Contact the Scottish National Recorder, Pat Batty (01546 605 316) pat@patbatty0.wanadoo.co.uk), to sign up to a 10-km square.

For 10-km squares in the Cairngorms National Park area please contact

Stephen Corcoran, Cairngorms Biodiversity Officer (stephencorcoran@cairngorms.co.uk, 01479 870 528).

Any records of dragonflies and damselflies are important, particularly in Scotland as these species are under-recorded in many areas. Records can be sent to Pat Batty. For information on local or national events, or more information about dragonflies in general, check out the British Dragonfly Society's website: www.dragonflysoc.org.uk
Scottish Biodiversity Forum

Butterfly Surveys 2008

With the clocks going forward, it is tempting to look forward to long warm summer days and butterflies despite the cool temperatures of early April. So here are some butterfly surveys to look forward to!

In 2008, there are four species specific butterfly surveys being organised in the Glasgow & SW Scotland branch area which need volunteers to get involved. So if you fancy a day or two out in Scotland's fantastic highland scenery surveying some wonderful butterflies this summer, read on!

Full details are available on the Glasgow & SW Scotland branch website but some details are given below:

Pearl-bordered Fritillary Surveys in Loch Lomond & the Trossachs National Park (1-21 May):

there are relatively few Pearl-bordered Fritillary records in Scotland's first National Park despite there being suitable habitat in the form of dry south-facing bracken hillsides, so it is likely it is under-recorded here. A number of sites with steep south-facing bracken hillsides have been identified around the Arrochar Alps and the Trossachs and it is hoped that surveys during May 2008 will discover this UK BAP species at these potential sites. A map and table listing these sites can be found on the website.

Mountain Ringlet Surveys in the Southern Highlands (25 June-20 July):

the Mountain Ringlet was designated a UK BAP species in 2007 on the basis of colonies becoming extinct at lower altitudes in recent decades owing to climate change. In addition, neither its distribution nor ecology are well known due to difficulties of studying this butterfly in its remote mountain habitat. A number of different mountains with accessible south-facing slopes have been identified in the branch area, and volunteers are required to survey a number of 200m long transects on different mountains. A fine, warm sunny anticyclonic day is required for this survey but the Scottish mountains are fantastic places to be in such weather so a wonderful day out surveying this charming little butterfly will be had by those who get involved.

Grayling Surveys in the West Highlands (1-31 July): the Grayling was designated a UK BAP species in 2007 owing to declines in England so any new information on its ecology will be welcome. Its distribution is very coastal and it is found widely around the coasts of the west Highlands and Western Isles. In 2006, two new habitat types were found in Argyll: one individual was found at the rocky gorge on the south slopes of Ben Cruachan above the Hollow Mountain Visitor Centre; another was found along a south-facing rocky escarpment on a forestry track near Bridgend. These are unlikely to be unique examples of Grayling habitats so volunteers are required for surveys to find other examples of these new habitats in the west Highlands: such features can be identified from OS maps. If you like hillwalking or walking/cycling along forestry tracks, then please survey Grayling in July 2008!

Scotch Argus Surveys in Loch Lomond & the Trossachs National Park (1- 31 August): while the Scotch Argus is very abundant in much of highland Scotland, it is not found in parts of the Southern Highlands including the south and east of Loch Lomond & the Trossachs National Park. Another characteristic of the Scotch Argus is that it can be very abundant at some sites and it would be good to obtain some habitat data to identify which factors favour high populations of Scotch Argus. So if you would like to spend a day or two in Scotland's first National Park in late summer 2008, the Scotch Argus surveys are for you.

Detailed information and survey forms to take out into the field can be found on the Glasgow & SW Scotland branch website and if you would like to register an interest without any obligation, please email me at andrewmasterman@hotmail.com, then an email reminder can be sent to you later in the summer.

So please do get involved in surveying Scotland's butterflies in the fantastic scenery of the highlands this summer!

Butterfly Surveys 2008: <http://www.southwestscotland-butterflies.org.uk/surveys/surveys2008.shtml>

Andrew Masterman

Moths Count Project

If like me you are uncertain and confused about moth identification, you think a forester is someone who looks after trees and wonder if you would find a scorched carpet in front of the fireplace! If you think a treble-bar is something for a big drinker and a garden tiger is a cat with attitude. If you can not tell a footman from a lackey, if when you try to describe a moth you have seen to an expert, it seems not to exist or to be anomalous then this is a project to get involved in. (however the experts among you may just want to amuse yourselves by spotting the hidden moths in the preceding sentences!).

Moths Count Project

This project has been developed over the past few years by BC in consultation with moth recorders, local groups and conservation organisations. Funding was secured from the Heritage Lottery Fund and others during 2006 and the four-year project started in earnest at the beginning of 2007. The overall aim of this project is to stimulate and encourage moth recording throughout the UK and to establish an ongoing recording scheme for the 900+ species of macro-moths. The objectives are to:

- Develop a broad base of expertise by recruiting, training and encouraging new recorders, and supporting existing moth recorders, groups and networks.
- Encourage a greater appreciation and enthusiasm for moths among a new, wider audience, including people who have not previously participated in wildlife recording or conservation.
- Develop the National Recording scheme leading to a comprehensive, accurate and accessible database showing the distribution of the UK's larger moths.
- Contribute to the long term conservation of moths by making available the data needed to implement conservation policies and action at the local, regional, national and international levels.
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The National Moth Recording Scheme

Will build upon and support existing County Moth Recorders and local moth groups. Existing, accurate data sets of moth records will be collated from County Moth Recorders to form the central database and to provide an essential historical background against which to measure change and define conservation priorities. The database will also provide a rich source of information for research into a range of ecological questions, including the impact of climate change on insect biodiversity and the links between declines of moths and their predators such as birds and bats.

This scheme allows anyone to play a direct part in documenting and helping to protect moths and their habitats. If you can see and identify a macro-moth you can record that observation. These observations or sightings are called records and when you send your records to your County Moth Recorder your records will contribute to the National Moth Recording Scheme. If you are unsure about your identification skills, it is a good idea to look at moths with more experienced people, for example at local moth trapping events. Taking a photograph of a moth will help you to refer to identification guides giving you more time to make an accurate identification or to ask a person more experienced in moth identification. There are a number of colour identification books and there are photographs of moths available online at the Moths Count website www.mothcount.org, and at the UK Moths website www.ukmoths.org.uk.

National Moth Night

If you need a special event to get you started then participate in an event held on National Moth Night and Day. (June 7th 2008). National Moth Night is the annual celebration of moths and moth recording. It is organised by Atropos (the journal for butterfly, moth and dragonfly enthusiasts) and Butterfly Conservation (through the Moths Count Project). The aim is raise awareness of moths by encouraging people to:

- Records moths in their garden or further a field
- Get together with friends to record moths
- Attend a public event
- Search for target species or to select their own target species.

Each year a group of target species are selected for National Moth day and night. These are species that moth count would like to learn more about, either because they are rare, declining, or perhaps even increasing in some parts of the country. Unlike the night flying moth, the two day flying moths can be found in Scotland, but there is no obligation to concentrate on the targets (some may not occur in your part of the country. You can choose your own targets and record all the moths you identify as all data is important in building the bigger picture.

Targets:

Anania funebris is a new UK Biodiversity Action Plan (UK BAP) Priority Species and the first micro-moth to be targeted on National Moth Night & Day. It is a highly attractive day-flying species, found in open woodland and grassland (often on cliffs) in Britain and Ireland, where the larvae feed on Goldenrod *Solidago virgaurea*.



Bordered Gothic *Heliophobus reticulata* was known until recently from several counties in southern England (particularly in East Anglia and the South-east) but has declined dramatically and may now be extinct in Britain, although the reasons for this are not fully understood. It is a UK Biodiversity Action Plan Priority Species and still occurs in the Republic of Ireland. Bordered Gothic is associated with calcareous habitats, particularly chalk downland, quarries, limestone and chalk cliffs, and other disturbed ground, including brownfield sites.



The last known records in Britain are from Kent in 2001 and Norfolk in 2003, but whether these were of resident or immigrant origin is not clear. Portland in Dorset was perhaps the best known site for the species, but it has not been seen there since 1998.

Narrow-bordered Bee Hawk-moth *Hemaris tityus* is a day-flying UK BAP Priority Species which mimics a bumblebee. It frequents unimproved grasslands, heathlands and bogs, particularly in the west of Britain and Ireland, but has declined greatly as a result of agricultural intensification. It may be seen nectaring at flowers, particularly in late morning and early afternoon, and may also be lured to Lilac flowers. Care needs to be taken with identification as it may be confused with the Broad-bordered Bee Hawk-moth.



Orchards are a new UK Biodiversity Action Plan Priority Habitat and, despite their wildlife importance, are generally under-recorded for moths. We are encouraging recorders to investigate these habitats on National Moth Night and Day. Orchards are

home to a number of interesting moth species, including Pinion-spotted Pug *Eupithecia insigniata* and Red-belted Clearwing *Synanthedon myopaeformis*. The latter species may be attracted using pheromone lures.

Garden Moth Counts

Closer to home, why not join in the Garden Moths Count. This is a nationwide survey to be held in 2008 from June 21 to July 6th to find which moths live in our gardens. There are 20 target species for Garden Moth Count:

Poplar Hawk-moth	Lime Hawk-moth
Elephant Hawk-moth	Humming-bird Hawk-moth
Cinnabar	Garden Tiger
Swallow-tailed Moth	Brimstone Moth
Blood-vein	Peppered Moth
Heart & Dart	Silver Y
Angle Shades	Large Yellow Underwing
Flame Shoulder	White Ermine
Buff Ermine	Common Swift
Mullein	Buff-tip

Most of these moths are fairly active at this time of year. They are relatively widespread so there is a fair chance of being able to see them. There is a gallery of photographs of these moths on the Moth Count website and tips about how to find them. From June 21st you will be able to send your results on the online form at this website. However do not ignore any moths you find, do try to identify all of them. Above all, join in and enjoy yourself finding, watching, identifying and recording these beautiful insects. It is a very good family project and an excellent way of introducing children to wildlife! Or join with friends and neighbours to investigate more than one garden.

Anne Welham

Ayrshire, Inverclyde and Renfrewshire (VC75+76) Moth Recording in 2007

2007 was quite a poor year despite the fantastically warm start to the year. The migrants were particularly bad with Silver Y reaching only 2 of one occasion, whilst in 2006 over 200 were noticed at one time near Hunterston on the Michaelmas Daisies. The species list though is roughly comparable with 316 species recorded in 2006 and 309 species in 2007.

Below is a list of new records for 2007 in each Vice County. There have been some surprises to the list considering their relative commonness. Species such as Small Elephant Hawkmoth and Speckled Yellow should be relatively common to record.

New county records for VC75:

Code	Taxon	Vernacular	Status	Site	Recorder	Date
0150	<i>Adela reaumurella</i>			Culzean Castle	Deirdre Mackinnon	01/05/07
0674	<i>Depressaria badiella</i>			Minishant	Don Smith	25/08/07
0706	<i>Agonopterix nervosa</i>			Minishant	Don Smith	11/08/07
0873	<i>Blastobasis lignea</i>			Kelburn	Neil Gregory	29/07/07
0874	<i>Blastobasis lacticolella</i>			Minishant	Don Smith	01/08/07
0937	<i>Agapeta hamana</i>			Auchalton Meadows SWT Reserve	Gill Smart	25/06/07
0947	<i>Aethes smeathmanniana</i>			Minishant	Don Smith	01/07/07

1013	<i>Olindia schumacherana</i>			Auchalton Meadows SWT Reserve	Gill Smart	31/05/07
1038	<i>Acleris laterana</i>			Minishant	Don Smith	24/08/07
1043	<i>Acleris aspersana</i>			Minishant	Don Smith	24/08/07
1055	<i>Acleris hyemana</i>			Balbeg	Neil Gregory	27/03/07
1073	<i>Olethreutes schulziana</i>			Minishant	Don Smith	16/06/07
1083	<i>Hedya nubiferana</i>	Marbled Orchard Tortrix		Minishant	Don Smith	13/06/07
1103	<i>Endothenia ericetana</i>			Minishant	Don Smith	19/07/07
1111	<i>Bactra lancealana</i>			Minishant	Don Smith	11/08/07
1182	<i>Epiblema turbidana</i>		Nb	Minishant	Don Smith	24/07/07
1201	<i>Eucosma cana</i>			Minishant	Don Smith	13/07/07
1336	<i>Eudonia pallida</i>		Local	Minishant	Don Smith	11/07/07
1390	<i>Udea prunalis</i>		Common	Minishant	Don Smith	29/07/07
1426	<i>Achroia grisella</i>	Lesser Wax Moth	Common	Minishant	Don Smith	05/08/07
1951	<i>Aethalura punctulata</i>	Grey Birch	Common	Minishant	Don Smith	10/06/07
1992	<i>Deilephila porcellus</i>	Small Elephant Hawk-moth	Local	Prestwick: Edmiston Avenue	Philip Noble	01/06/07
2216	<i>Cucullia umbratica</i>	Shark	Common	Prestwick: Edmiston Avenue	Philip Noble	12/06/07
2236	<i>Lithophane hepatica</i>	Pale Pinion	Local	Balbeg	Neil Gregory	27/03/07

New county records for VC76:

Code	Taxon	Vernacular	Status	Site	Recorder	Date
1009	<i>Philedonides lunana</i>			Duchal Moor	Neil Gregory	14/04/07
1386	<i>Opsibotys fuscalis</i>		Common	Glen Moss	Neil Gregory	10/06/07
1428	<i>Aphomia sociella</i>	Bee Moth	Common	Kilmacolm	Neil Gregory	14/08/07
1501	<i>Platyptilia gonodactyla</i>			Harelaw	Neil Gregory	07/06/07
1720	<i>Orthonama obstipata</i>	Gem	Migrant	Kilmacolm	Neil Gregory	06/10/07
1909	<i>Pseudopanthera macularia</i>	Speckled Yellow	Common	Kilmacolm	Neil Gregory	06/06/07

The following 10km squares in VC75 and 76 have less than 10 species so far: NS41, NS50, NS51, NS52, NS60, NS61, NS62, NX18, NX29. I would welcome any records from these areas. These are the less accessible parts of the area. There will be good numbers of moths in these areas, especially in the grassy hills where Drinker Moth, Fox, Emperor and Northern Eggar will be very much present.

It will be interesting to see how 2008 pans out. I have seen several species so far this year including Chestnut, March Moth and various sightings of Ruby Tiger larva have been reported too. We are still short of records for the day flying moths and would welcome any sightings or species like Six-spot Burnet, Silver Y, Chimney Sweeper, Emperor Moth, Northern Eggar. Although the literature indicates that the Small Purple and Gold (*Pyrsautra sanguinalis*) is found on the Ayrshire coast it hasn't been recorded for a long time. It feeds on Wild Thyme. It is reported to fly in June and August and we would very much like to find this species again.

Many thanks to those submitting records and good looking in 2008.

Neil Gregory – County Moth Recorder

Moths an Introduction – Poplar Hawk Moth

This is a large moth that people often see resting on the outside of buildings underneath lights. It has an unusual wing shape and holds its wings high above its body rather than the usual tucked tight in. It has a wingspan of nearly 9cm, overall grey, but if disturbed will often show the red warning spots on the hind wings. It will not fly if touched as this takes much effort and usually a few minutes of fast wing beats to warm itself up. The adults fly between from May to July. The larva feed on Poplar, Aspen, Sallow & Willow and can be found from June to September. The larvae grow to be large and green with a small pointed tail.

If you see one send a photo to your county moth recorder for confirmation and so a record can be generated.



See www.ukmoths.org.uk for other information.

Transects

Here is a short summary of the transects presently walked in SW Scotland.

What are transects?

Transects are a standardised methods of recording butterflies, sometimes day-flying moths too such as Speckled Yellow, at a site so that the data can be compared from year-to-year, site-to-site and nationally. Sites are usually about 2 or 3 km long, divided into roughly equal length sections or similar or different habitats. Most species are suitable to monitored in this way. Purple Hairstreaks may be an exception due to difficulty in recording this species.

How many do we have in SW Scotland?

We have records for 37 transects for our area, 17 of which are no longer walked. 2 new transects are due to be setup for the area for 2008. We are keen to try and resurrect some of these old transects, but also to know if anyone would like to setup new ones. Please contact me and we'll try and sort them out.

Site Name	County	Year Started	Year Finished
Baron's Haugh	North Lanarkshire	2003	
Ben Lomond - Ptarmigan Hill	Stirlingshire	2008	
Brodict Country Park	North Ayrshire	1999	
Caerlaverock WWT	Dumfries and Galloway	2004	
Callendar Wood	Falkirk	2000	2006
Cam Chreag	Stirlingshire	2001	2003
Carty Port	Dumfries and Galloway	2000	2000
Cashel	Stirlingshire	1998	
Cathkin Braes	Glasgow City	2001	2006
Cathkin Braes (2)	Glasgow City	1998	2000
Commonhead Moss	North Lanarkshire	1999	
Cream o' Galloway	Dumfries and Galloway	2004	2004
Dalbeattie Forest - Lover's Loup	Dumfries and Galloway	2004	
Darnley Mill	Glasgow City	2006	2006

Dean Castle Country Park	East Ayrshire	2003	2007
Eglinton Park	North Ayrshire	2001	
Falls of Clyde	South Lanarkshire	2003	2003
Gailes Marsh	North Ayrshire	2003	2003
Glasdrum	Argyll and Bute	2002	
Glencoe	Stirlingshire	2003	2006
Greenhead Moss	North Lanarkshire	2003	2003
Killean, Lismore	Argyll and Bute	2006	
Kinghill Country Park	North Lanarkshire	2003	2003
Knockman Wood	Dumfries and Galloway	2004	2004
Knowetop Lochs	Dumfries and Galloway	2004	
Langlands Moss	Lanarkshire	2005	
Loch Gruinart (Craig Mhor)	Argyll and Bute	1995	
Loch Lomond	West Dunbartonshire	1979	1985
Lochaber	Dumfries and Galloway	2000	
Mabie Forest North	Dumfries and Galloway	1998	
Mereshead	Dumfries and Galloway	2008	
Mugdock Country Park	Stirlingshire	2001	
Rockcliffe	Dumfries and Galloway	2003	
Sandford Moor	South Lanarkshire	2007	
Sorbie	Dumfries and Galloway	2004	2004
South Haugh	Lanarkshire	2005	
Taynish	Argyll and Bute	1985	

What happens to the data?

The data goes to Neil Gregory for checking, either via the free Transect Walker software or on paper. This is then checked and data then sent onto BC HQ in Dorset where Ian Middlebrook co-ordinates the national scheme. Data is then used for analysis of trends such as declines in abundance.

Data also goes to the branch butterfly recorders and to the county moth recorders.

Who is the co-ordinator for data?

Currently Neil Gregory is the data co-ordinator for Scotland. Help can be sought from any Butterfly Conservation staff member.

How do I start a transect?

If you have a site you would like to monitor please contact Neil Gregory in the first instance or BC HQ in Stirling.

Websites

www.ukbms.org

<http://tech.groups.yahoo.com/group/UKTransect/>

Scottish wildflowers for butterflies and moths

With the days getting longer and spring just around the corner, it's time once more to get back out into the garden. My garden consists of a south-east-facing 1st floor balcony just 2m x 1.5m. It's tiny by anyone's standards, but you'd be amazed how much colour and greenery you can squeeze in, and how much wildlife it attracts.

A Kilmarnock willow in one corner shares a wooden planter with honeysuckle, spring bulbs and summer annuals. Greenfinches and goldfinches flock to feeders just a few feet from the window. A small firethorn in the other corner looks great covered in red berries and is a magnet for bees and moths in the summer. Hanging baskets mounted on the balcony railings are regularly patrolled by a cheeky little wren, while bees hoverflies and the occasional Small Tortoiseshell flit around nectar-rich annuals. I'm looking forward to recording how many butterflies visit my new buddleia this year. It's been my goal over the last few years to include as many native plants as possible to attract more species of insects and birds. I've also tried collecting some wildflower seed heads from the local park with the intention of sowing them this year.

With that in mind, I recently made a trip to the Jupiter Urban Wildlife centre at Grangemouth. This Scottish Wildlife Trust reserve was developed on an old industrial site to showcase what can be done with brown field sites to encourage wildlife. The site is also home to an excellent wild flower nursery specialising in Scottish wildflowers. The nursery is an organic and peat free establishment, with all plants grown from seeds of Scottish provenance. It's run by the British Trust for Conservation volunteers (BTCV) under the knowledgeable eye of Nancy McIntyre. Volunteers can go along during the week to take part in a green gym, which promotes gardening as a great way to keep you fit. When I visited at the start of March many of the herbaceous plants were still dormant, but others were beginning to produce new green shoots and flower spikes.

I was looking specifically for caterpillar food plants to encourage butterflies and moths to hopefully stay around the garden for longer. I was pleasantly surprised at the wide range of species they had available: Cuckoo flower, garlic mustard and Dame's violet for orange tips, birds-foot trefoil for common blues, thistles for painted ladies, and even dog's violet and marsh violets should any passing pearl-bordered fritillaries wish to pay a surprise visit (which admittedly would be a very surprising visit in the centre of Glasgow!).

Almost every plant species they grow has at least one species of associated moth or butterfly that you could encourage into your garden. Prices range from £1.25 for specimens in pots, up to £17.45 for a tray of 40 mixed plants made to your requirements. Nancy also provided helpful advice on techniques for germinating and propagating the seeds I'd collected myself.

So this year if you fancy making a wildflower meadow at the back of the lawn, or you're looking to plant something interesting around the pond, or maybe just want some dazzling colour for the border, you should make a trip to the Jupiter wildflower nursery. Your garden's butterflies and moths will thank you for it!

For a list of available species and information about the green gym at Grangemouth go to:

<http://www.btcv.org/jupiterwildflowers/> or e-mail Nancy at n.mcintyre@btcv.org.uk. Other good suppliers of locally-sourced wildflowers can be found at <http://www.floralocale.org/>

Scott Shanks

Ardeer Quarry LNR Stevenston , Ayrshire.

This local nature reserve contains a mixture of wetland, woodland, scrub and grassland habitats, the Cunninghame cycle path runs through the reserve. Various improvements are constantly being made to improve the reserve for the benefit of birds, butterflies and other wildlife. David and I were kindly invited by Iain Hamlin to

advise on improving the habitat for butterflies.

Butterflies at the site:- Meadow Brown, Green Veined White, Large White, Small White, Orange tip, Peacock and Small Tortoiseshell. There are also small numbers of Common Blue, Small Heath, Grayling and Ringlet. Some unidentified Fritillaries have also been seen at the site.

There is a small pond on the reserve which attracts:- Common Darter, Common Hawker, Four Spotted Chaser dragonflies and Azure, Emerald, Large Red, Common Blue and Blue Tailed Damselflies.

Proposed Improvements:-

- On the south side of the reserve, near the railway line there is an area of butterfly grassland which will undergo some shrub clearance and wildflower plug plants will be planted. This will include Birdsfoot- trefoil for the Common Blue's and yellow rattle will be included to keep the grass at bay. Areas of bare ground will be left to encourage the Grayling.
- The area around the dragonfly pond will be improved for butterflies, including planting sheep's sorrel along the edge of the path for the Small Coppers and managing the nettles as caterpillar food-plants for the Peacock and Small Tortoiseshell.
- A woodland clearing will be provided and wildflowers introduced for nectaring. Also woodland edge planting will be introduced including Common Dog Violets (Marsh Violets round the pond) to encourage any Fritillary butterflies to move in. Cuckoo Flower and Garlic Mustard plants will be increased to improve the numbers of Orange-Tips.
- A triangle of amenity grass will be removed and the area managed as a wildflower meadow rich in nectar plants. The meadow will include common grasses to improve the habitat for Meadow Brown and Ringlet. It is also proposed to plant a mixed Buddleia hedge along a path adjacent to the meadow to provide a summer long nectar bar for the butterflies and moths. Although Buddleia is an invasive non-native species it is thought to be such a valuable nectar supply that it is reasonable to be included. Especially because one of the aims of a local nature reserve is to bring wildlife closer to people.

So far there has been no moth recording at the site and it is proposed to conduct some moth trapping sessions in the coming year possibly as a public event.

Any members that live in the local area who may wish to assist with the development and maintenance of the reserve or simply visit to monitor butterflies or moths please contact us or Iain Hamlin, (iainhamlin@yahoo.com) for further information.

How to get there:- By car:- There is a small car park at the end of Moorpark Road East.
Pedestrian/Cycle:- access is via the entrance at the very bottom of Dubbs Road/Highfield Drive.
By Bus:- Alight at Hawkhill Cemetery on Kilwinning Road and walk the short distance down Dubbs Road.
By Train:- Alight at Stevenston Station and walk up Station Road and turn right into Moorpark Road East.

David and Anne Welham.

Gardening Scotland:- Volunteers needed!

Gardening Scotland will burst into bloom this year from Friday 30th May to Sunday 1st June at the royal Highland Centre Edinburgh. The show is the highlight of the gardening year in Scotland providing dedicated gardeners with access to specialist nurseries and growers from all over the UK and giving new gardeners all the inspiration and advice they need to make the most of their own gardens. The floral hall holds thousands of stunning blooms in peak condition, some of which are the rarest plants for sale anywhere in the country.

Other attractions include the stunning Show Gardens and the Pallet Garden Contest, Food Fayre, International Village, Floral Art Competition, Craft Marquee, BBC Scotland Beechgrove Theatre-hosting workshops and demonstrations, Fashion show of bio-degradable, recycled gardening clothing. Most importantly - Martin Dare of Gardening Scotland said "The living garden, which is a whole area dedicated to conservation, is the fastest growing attraction at Gardening Scotland".

Tickets to the show cost £14 for the Friday and £12 for Sat & Sun. Book before 23rd May and save £2 per ticket.

The above information is from The Gardening Scotland Website.

Garden for Life - Garden for Health

Butterfly Conservation Scotland is a member of garden for life which is a forum of partnership organisations who work together throughout the year to promote the benefits of gardening for people and biodiversity. Once a year we come together at Gardening Scotland to form the Garden for Life marquee. This year's theme is about how gardening can be good for your health. Come and see our unusual 'Jigsaw Garden' and demonstration/workshop areas, plus a host of unusual and interesting stands.

As always we need volunteers to help with our stand, so if you have a couple of hours to help us enthuse the public about butterflies and moths (no experience necessary, just lots of goodwill and enthusiasm!) We can offer you free entry to the show in return.

Contact Shona Greig at:- shona.greig@btconnect.com

For further information contact www.gardenforlife.org.uk or www.gardeningscotland.com

Anne Welham

Butterfly World ST. Albans

This major project run by Clive Farrell, will be launched by Sir David Attenborough on March 12th.

Butterfly Conservation will be working with Clive and his team to build a major Butterfly Conservation Garden within the grounds as well as including BC messages throughout the site.

Butterfly world will cover a 27 acre site and will contain 3,000 tropical butterflies drawn from 250 species. The dome similar to the Eden Project in Cornwall, will be 328ft across and 56ft high, with a sophisticated sprinkler system to mimic tropical rainstorms. The conservationists behind the project are Sir David Attenborough the leading patron, Jeremy Thomas, renowned for reintroducing the Large Blue to Britain and the botanist David Bellamy. It is hoped the project will attract up to 1 million visitors a year and generate profits for butterfly conservation.

The gardens will be laid out in the form of a giant butterfly and a row of show gardens designed in the shape of a caterpillar. The plan is that the gardens will open in 2009 and the actual butterfly dome soon after. BC hope the project will provide a major opportunity to promote educational work and increase membership.

The above was prepared from an article in The Sunday Times written by Steven Swinford.

Editor's Note

Clive Farrell has pioneered a series of butterfly-based visitor attractions around the world including the Stratford-Upon-Avon Butterfly farm. David and I have visited this butterfly farm and it is truly stunning. The tropical butterflies are very numerous and beautiful, and kept in excellent conditions. Outside the butterfly farm the garden was in full flower when we visited and we saw quite a number of native butterflies nectaring. The planting was all chosen to attract butterflies.

Anne Welham.

The Wider Countryside Project

The wider countryside pilot has completed it's second year of field testing. Highland branch participated in 2007 along with Norfolk, South Wales, Somerset and Bristol. BC recorders surveyed 130 random 1km squares 2-4 times in the general countryside between May and August. Partnership with BTO was very fruitful as Breeding Bird Survey recorders covered an additional 180 squares. The grand total of 310 squares far exceeded expectations and we predict that more than 1000 squares could be monitored throughout the UK when the scheme is rolled out in 2009. In total 43 butterfly species were recorded in the 2007 pilot including most of the target wider countryside species plus 4 migrants and 14 habitat specialists.

On average 100 butterflies and 10 species were seen over each set of 2 visits to random squares. The results show that virtually all the wider countryside species are likely to be recoded in enough squares to enable calculation of unbiased national abundance indices and to monitor trends over time.

More information can be found at www.ukbms.org/wider_countryside_pilot.htm

Dr. Katie Cruickshanks

Editor's Note

At the Scottish Recorders meeting in March a word of caution was added by some BC recorders in Highland area. Due to the fact that the squares are chosen at random some of the habitat encountered was in some cases almost impenetrable when trying to follow the survey lines. There may be no footpath, thick waist high vegetation and tick infested vegetation were some of the problems encountered. Also it may turn out to be a dense conifer plantation or miles from an access road.

Anne Welham.

West Kilbride Butterfly Garden

Last year the wild area at the above garden was started by clearing unwanted grasses, brambles and weeds from the area and planting nectar rich wildflowers such as Knapweed and encouraging the extension of an existing nettle-bed as caterpillar food plant.

The sad news is that Charlie Garrett (chair of the west Kilbride Community Initiative Ltd.) died suddenly in January. Charlie, one of our BC branch members was the person who invited the branch to participate in the garden project. The Community Initiative will continue with their project and have been kind enough to request our continuing involvement.

David and I have agreed to revisit the wildflower area to check on progress and set about sorting out the more formal butterfly garden area. The late and much missed Keith Futter and his wife Sue put a lot of work into the wild area of the garden and we were also assisted by Pru. Williams. We are looking for volunteers to help us with this butterfly garden, so if you have a couple of hours or so to spare to give us a hand, please let us know as there is a great deal of work still to do. We would be very grateful for any assistance, even if it is a one off spell you could fit in during the year.

David and Anne Welham

Scottish Biodiversity Week

Scottish Biodiversity week (17th to 25th May) is a fun way for those involved with the biodiversity process to raise awareness of biodiversity locally but also throughout Scotland. This year Scottish Biodiversity week includes International Biodiversity Day on the 22nd May.

The aim of Scottish Biodiversity 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 organisations websites who are holding events during the Week.

Scottish Biodiversity Forum www.biodiversityscotland.gov.uk

Our First Garden Sighting of 2008

April 5th a bright and sunny day but with a biting cold wind, brought us our first garden butterflies of 2008. (2 hours later it was snowing!) Two Small Tortoiseshell were chasing each other around the garden, pausing to warm themselves in the sun and nectaring on Dandelion flowers in the lawn which we leave on purpose to flower and provide nectar for our early garden visitors. The other nectar source they found was a shrub called *Osmanthus delavay* (there was a lot of competition here from bumblebees) which has tiny, beautiful, fragrant white flowers. This shrub has a very short flowering period but is very good for April butterflies. If you have a garden or window box or even space for a plant pot, please remember that very early butterflies desperately need nectar to survive, so provide some suitable plants for them.

If you wish to know more about the importance of garden flowers to our native butterflies read page 113 -114 of our butterfly atlas. Our branch atlas, *Butterflies of South West Scotland* written by Futter et.al. is proving very popular, if you do not have a copy you can still purchase one from any committee member at the reduced price of £11.

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

Anne Welham

Branch Members' Meeting

The SW Scotland branch member's meeting held on the 9th of March 2008 was very successful. It was attended by 33 people who enjoyed the afternoon very much. The meeting got off to an excellent start with a slide presentation by Jim Black on the butterflies of the Spanish Pyrenees. Richard Suttcliffe then gave an update on the Orange Tip survey. After a break for tea Andrew Masterman gave an interesting talk about the Mountain Ringlet and Pearl-bordered Fritillary surveys and David Welham gave an illustrated talk on some of the flowers, moths and butterflies we encountered on our summer holiday in the Vercors and Dauphine Alps.

May we thank all those people who attended and may we make a request for members to contact us on topics they would like included in future meetings. Also would any members who could have the newsletter and other branch communications sent to them by e-mail please contact

David.Welham@talktalk.net

Electronic communications would save us a lot of postage costs which could be spent on conservation, events and equipment.

Anne Welham

2008 Butterfly conservation 40th Anniversary

7 March:- was the actual anniversary date, but there are events planned for the coming year:-

7 June: Butterfly Ball. Maurice Avent is kindly hosting a Butterfly Ball fundraising event in Wiltshire where the guest of honour will be Chris Packham. Tickets can be purchased via Head Office and further details appear in Butterfly.

21 June – 6 July: Garden Moths Count. This will again allow online recording via the Moths Count website so please encourage friends and family to take part.

19 – 27 July Save Our Butterflies Week. A special 40th anniversary series of events will be held around the country. Again details are in the magazine and on the website.

6 Sept: Open Day at Manor Yard. This Open Day will be for Branch Chairs and invited guests to celebrate our 40th anniversary.

22-23 November: AGM and extended Members Day in York. The weekend will include a celebratory meal on the evening of 22nd and a wide range of talks from staff and Branches to celebrate our achievements as well as several exciting keynote speakers.

40th anniversary appeal: Last but not least we will soon be launching an appeal that we hope will raise substantial funds to help us maintain and expand our vital conservation work.

Butterfly Conservation

Events

Saturday 26 April 10am to 2pm

Wildlife Gardening Day

Lochwinnoch Nature Reserve, Largs Road, Lochwinnoch.

Saturday 26 April.

Biodiversity in Glasgow (BIG) Project

Butterfly recording training day for those involved in project.

Pollok Country Park Visitor Centre.

Contact Robin Anderson tel: 01786 446560

Saturday 7 June, 2130 till late.

National Moth Night - Find out about moths & moth trapping

In association with Pollok Country Rangers.

Children welcome & please bring torch & warm clothing.

Pollok Country Park, Glasgow. Meet at courtyard NS550616 at 2130.

Free event. Please call for bookings: 0141 2760924

Saturday 7 June, 9-11pm and/or Sunday 8 June 9-11am.

National Moth Night - Find out about moths & moth trapping

Saturday 7 June 9-11pm Talk about moths, moth trapping and some live moth trapping

Sunday 8 June 9-11am Identifying the moths caught overnight in the traps.

Glasdrum Wood National Nature Reserve, Loch Creran Argyll

2 miles east of new Creagan bridge on north side of Loch Creran. Car park at NN002456

Free event but please email or phone Andrew Masterman if you want to attend:

Email: andrewmasterman@hotmail.com

or 0771 8658096

Wednesday 18 June, 1045am

Butterfly Walk- Forestry Commission Dumfries & Galloway

Join John Mackenzie on his butterfly transect in Dalbeattie Forest.

Meet at Woodend. Booking required. Telephone 01556 630380

Wednesday 25 June 2- 4pm

Butterflies, High Camer - Forestry Commission Dumfries & Galloway

Woodland butterflies and the rare day-flying moth, Argent & Sable.

Meet at picnic site; on back road from Minnigaff to Bargrennan.

Saturday 28 June, midday-3pm

Discover Mabie Forest Reserve-Forestry Commission Dumfries & Galloway

Join Forestry Commission staff and wildlife experts as we explore one of the region's richest wildlife sites.

Part of National Insect week. Discover flora & fauna including butterflies, dragonflies & various bird and plant species..

Meet at Mabie Forest carpark. Grid reference NX950710.

Saturday 28 June, 2030 and/or Sunday 29 June 0800.

An introduction to moths at Flanders Moss- SNH

Flanders Moss National Nature Reserve, West Moss-side Farm, Thornhill, Stirling.

Booking Essential. Phone or email David Pickett: tel: 01786 450362

Email: david.pickett@snh.gov.uk

Friday 4 July, 2200 and/or Saturday 5 July 1030.

Moth Event at Glasgow Botanic Gardens

730 Great Western Road Glasgow G12 OUE

Butterfly Conservation & Glasgow City Council

Free event. Live moth trapping Friday night and identification of moths caught overnight Saturday morning.

Sunday 6 July Culzean Castle 10.30 to 4pm

Celebrate Ayrshire - wildlife event

Culzean Castle and County Park, Maybole, Ayrshire.

Wednesday 16 July, 2-4pm.

Wildlife in the Woodlands - Forestry Commission Dumfries & Galloway

Learn more about Mosaic of Habitats, rare birds and butterflies on this informative walk.

Meet at Bruce's Stone, Glentroot.

Friday 18 July 21.00hrs Glasgow Natural History Society

Moths Evening Darnley Mill

meet at Ashoka Restaurant NS514609

Sat. 9 August Falls of Clyde

Joint event with Glasgow Natural History Society looking for Purple Hairstreaks.

Contact Richard Suttcliffe for details before Thurs 7th Aug.
0141 942 1563

Saturday 26 July, 10am.

Marvellous Moths!

Looking at moths caught in traps the night before.

Glen Nant National Nature Reserve, 3 miles south of Taynuilt on rd to Kilchrenan, Argyll.

Meet at Glen Nant Car Park. Free event.

For more info, contact Forestry Commission. Tel: 01546 602518 or

Email: west.argyll.fd@forestry.gsi.gov.uk

Monday 18 August.

Bat & Moth Night

An opportunity to discover the bats & moths that feed & live around the Finlaystone Estate

Finlaystone Country Estate, 10 minutes west of Glasgow Airport.

Booking Essential. See Finlaystone Website.

Friday 22 August 20.30hrs

Moths and Bats at Glasgow Botanic Gardens.

An opportunity to discover the moths and bats that inhabit the Botanic Gardens.

Branch Committee 2007/2008

<p>Chaiman and Moth recorder for VC 76&77 Neil Gregory 32 Oldhall Drive Kilmacolm, Inverclyde PA13 4RF 01505 874275 droitwich@btinternet.com</p> <p>Butterfly Recorder Richard Sutcliffe 68, Rowan Drive Bearsden, Glasgow 0141 942 1563 family@sutcliffe1989.freeserve.co.uk</p> <p>Newsletter Editor David Welham 3 Lamberton Road Stewarton, Ayrshire KA3 3HU 01560 484760 david.welham@talktalk.net</p> <p>Moth recorder for VC 72/73/74 & Small Isles Jessie McKay Fiochra, Carsfad, Dalry, Castle Douglas Dumfries and Galloway DG7 3ST 01644 432048 mackay@entomology.freeserve.co.uk</p> <p>Committee member and Moth Recorder for VC 98 Andrew Masterman Flat 1/3, 214 Calder Street Glasgow G42 7PE 0141 432 1336 andrewmasterman@hotmail.com</p>	<p>Treasurer Mrs Anne Welham 3 Lamberton Road Stewarton, Ayrshire KA3 3HU 01560 484760 anne.welham@talktalk.net</p> <p>Conservation Officer (Dumfries & Galloway) Jim McCleary Beechmont Cunninghame Terrace Newton Stewart, Dumfries and Galloway DG8 6DY 01671 402412</p> <p>Minutes Secretary Jo Davis 5A Killermont View Glasgow G20 0TZ</p> <p>Committee member and Moth Recorder for VC86/87/99 John Knowler 3 Balfeurs Street Milngavie, Glasgow G62 8HW john.knowler@ntlworld.com</p> <p>Committee Member Scott Shanks 1/2 113 Haugh Road Yorkhill Glasgow G3 8XT</p>
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Other Moth recorders for the Branch Area

<p>VC77 Lanarkshire Nick Holding, Blawbare, Closeburn, Thornhill, Dumfries-shire DG3 5HL Email: Claybuch@aol.com</p> <p>VC100 Clyde Isles Stephen Mason, National Trust for Scotland Ranger Service, Brodick Country Park, Isle of Arran, KA27 8HY Email: smason@nts.org.uk Tel: 01770 302462</p>	<p>VC101 Kintyre Helen Bibby, Gowanlea, Kilduskland Road, Ardrishaig, Argyll, PA30 8EH Email: Gowanlea4@btinternet.com Tel: 01496 860396</p> <p>VC102 South Ebudes John Armitage, Airigh Sgallaidh, Portnahaven, Isle of Islay, Argyll, PA47 7SZ Email: jsa@ornquest.plus.com</p> <p>VC 103 Mid Ebudes Alan Skeates, Dunellen, Craignure, Isle of Mull, Argyll, PA65 6AY Email: alanskeates@btinternet.com</p>
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