

Dorset Branch News



**Butterfly
Conservation**

Saving butterflies, moths and our environment

Chairman's Letter

From Jane Smith, Dorset BC Chairman

There are not many years when we have a good summer to look back on, but this is definitely one of them. The year did not have a promising start, and our spring was exceptionally cold. March was particularly extreme, and was the coldest since 1962 (some of us remember that!) with average temperatures that were significantly lower than the preceding winter months of December, January and February. The last time this happened was in 1975, when, as many of you will remember, we had a hot, dry summer – leading me to fantasise that this year's summer might follow the same pattern. Things improved a bit after Easter and into early May, but then deteriorated again with temperatures in late May and June being below average.

But as we now know, my fantasy was realised, and everything changed in July with a long and sustained heat wave running into August. After several summers which were unfavourable it was a real pleasure to see our buddleias and other plants covered with butterflies and moths, particularly Small Tortoiseshells, Peacocks, Large and Small Whites, Silver Ys and, in the evenings, Hummingbird Hawk-moths. It was particularly pleasing to see such large numbers of Small Tortoiseshells and Peacocks as they have declined at an alarming rate in recent years. Venturing further afield into the countryside enabled one to see many more species in large numbers.

The Big Butterfly Count was nicely timed to coincide with the warmer weather, and the results have now been published. More than 44,000 people took part, submitting a total of 830,000 butterfly and moth records. This was almost twice the number submitted in 2012. The Big Butterfly Count is conducted wholly online, so the results are available very quickly.

It will be some months before our own survey results in Dorset become available. As I write, there are another two weeks of transect walking still to come and the steady flow of casual record forms to

Bill Shreeves, our Records Officer, will continue for the rest of the year, as will the Garden Butterfly Survey forms to Adrian Neil.

An increasingly important method of reporting is our new online reporting form for butterflies on our website - www.dorsetbutterflies.com. Lyn Pullen, our Website Coordinator, has announced that this year, for the first time, all of the butterfly species on the Dorset list have been reported via the website and the number of sightings is running at about twice the level submitted last year. This is both a tribute to the improved reporting form and, of course, the higher number of butterflies on the wing this summer. All of the records received are checked by Martin Raper or Bill Shreeves before being input to our recording systems. After analysing the results, Bill will be giving his annual series of talks about the findings at venues around the county in the new year (see the events list for details). These meetings are always fascinating, so it is well worth going to at least one of them if you can.

As usual, Bridget de Whalley and her display stall team have been busy going to various events around the county all through the summer. This is an exhausting activity which needs a lot of stamina, but it is also pleasurable and satisfying to meet new people who show an interest in butterflies and moths, and to catch up with old friends. However I have a feeling that Bridget will breathe a sigh of relief now that her last show has passed.

This year we have been approached by Marquee Print of Westbourne to help them with their calendar for 2014, which is sent out to all of their clients. This usually features an aspect of Dorset, and next year's theme is to be Dorset's Butterflies and Moths. We will supply them with 13 photos and some text. This is an exciting opportunity for us, and will help to spread our name and what we do to a new audience. Marquee Print will give us 100 copies of the calendar for distribution in some way. The Branch Committee haven't yet decided how to do this, but it is likely that we will be raffling some of them at meetings early next year to raise funds for the branch.

I hope that you have a good autumn and winter, and that I meet you at one of our winter events.

Jane Smith

Editor's note

I would like to apologise for the delay in getting this edition of the newsletter and events list published, which unfortunately has meant that the first couple of events will probably have passed by the time this goes to print. The last couple of months have been particularly busy for me but things should be a lot quieter over the winter, so I will make sure that the next edition is out more promptly!

Could 2013 possibly be an even worse year for Butterflies than 2012? A mid-term 'progress' report

By Bill Shreeves

The United Kingdom Butterfly Monitoring Scheme, which coordinates the Transect Walk records, described 2012 as the worst butterfly year since the records began in the late 1970s. In Dorset, Transect Walk data showed that a record 24 species declined by over 50% on a majority of walks when compared to 2011 or their annual average counts. Only one species, the Dark Green Fritillary, bucked the trend and increased on over half the walks by more than 50% on its annual averages. Most of this disastrous butterfly year was caused by the dreadful weather. The Fontmell Magna weather station recorded the mean temperature for May to August as below average, the sunshine from June to September as below average and rainfall as above average in April, June, July and August.

Andrew Branson's weather reports for July/August in the excellent wildlife reports section of British Wildlife made grim reading: "this summer (June to August) has gone down as the wettest for 100 years". The only hope for 2013 was that improved weather, and building on sites which, against all expectation, had managed to produce their own 2012 record counts for individual species, might be able to kick start a recovery. At least, according to Andrew Branson in British Wildlife 2013, the British winter weather was (November to February) "unexceptional – slightly colder, a little wetter and above average for sunshine".

Unfortunately after that things went downhill again: "the analysis of the data for March and April confirmed the feeling that winter had dragged on into Spring. For the first time since 1975, March was colder than any of the winter months of 2012-13. April was little better and the temperature for the month was below the long term average. May and June continued the disappointing Spring weather with below average temperatures. It was the coldest May since 1996 and conditions tended to be windy and unsettled". With such a dreadful start to 2013 was it remotely possible that butterflies could fight back from 2012?

The only 'scientific' way of working out how things have been going for butterflies must be to use the Transect Walk data. Unfortunately this is impossible to do until all the results are coordinated at the end of the walking season from the close of September. Eventually when the whole Transect Walk system has been transferred on line it will, in theory, be possible to follow what is happening from week to week. However, at present, although many walks are being put on line soon after they have been completed, the whole Dorset system of over 60 walks is not yet up and 'running'! The best I can do is to select from walks which I coordinate myself on the north Dorset chalk and choose species which either have one summer brood now completed, or have an early first brood completed which can be checked to see if it has improved on its second brood in 2012. Fortunately in Dorset most walks now have a very important running statistic, which is the average annual count for individual species since the walk began.

It is therefore relatively simple to determine whether a species has done better than it did in 2012, or regained its annual average, and attaining both these goals would certainly mark a recovery. The 5 walks which I coordinate, and therefore have all the statistics to hand, are Fontmell Down, Jerry's Hole, Sovell Down, Clubmen's Down and Melbury Down and Wood. As these are all in North Dorset and on chalk they are obviously not a proper sample and any results can only be viewed as possible 'straws in the wind'. There are seven single brooded species which at the time of writing (August) have pretty well completed their flight period.

Of these, two species, **Orange-tip** and **Dingy Skipper**, have improved their counts on 2012 and were above their annual averages on a majority of the walks. Another species, the **Small Blue**, although doing better than 2012 on a majority of the sites, still fell below its annual average. A third group, **Grizzled Skipper**, **Large Skipper** and **Green Hairstreak** fell below both 2012 and annual averages on a majority of the walks which record them. However



Despite the cool spring, Orange-tip numbers were up on 2012.



Dark Green Fritillary numbers have continued to build on the impressive 2012 counts.

This has been another triumph for last year's only 'winning' butterfly, the **Dark Green Fritillary**. On all sites it finished well above both its annual average and counts in 2012, which was itself a good year for the species. Its success at Fontmell Down was totally amazing. The startled group of walkers, including myself, for week 15, counted 178! By comparison the **Meadow Brown** count that week was 92 and **Marbled White** 63!

Its success radiated out to the Fontmell Magna buddleia collection, my garden and a neighbouring field in Shaftesbury which all recorded it for the first time. So, though a very small sample, this evidence shows that despite the poor weather all was not doom and gloom, and the 'swings and roundabouts' proverb still applies.

Indeed, to press the point home, although **Grizzled Skipper** did badly at most of my sites, on Sovell Down it actually achieved a record count of 17!

Four other species which suffered very badly in 2012, because the weather in most cases led to their second broods being unable to build higher numbers than their first, were the **Small Copper**, **Brown Argus**, **Common** and **Adonis Blues**. Since their first broods are over at the time of writing, it is possible to see whether their first broods in 2013 declined or fell compared to their second 2012 broods. As might be expected the answer is neither all doom nor gloom. Adonis Blues and Small Coppers fell, while Brown Argus and Common Blue went down on half the walks and up on the others!

So the very tentative conclusion, drawn from a very small sample of walks and from one region and geology, is that despite everything there may be 'small green shoots of recovery'.

Less scientific personal observations of events unfolding at present seem to add further optimism. The desperately declining Small Tortoiseshells have hit back, at least in gardens. My own garden count rose from 17 in the first week of August when Peacocks were at 50 and passed the Peacocks (down to 10) in the last week of August by gaining an amazing count of 101.

I think the same story has been unfolding in most Dorset gardens, and certainly at the magnificent Buddleia collection in Fontmell Magna. We must wait until we get the full results in to get the whole picture, but I am putting a moderate bet on the incredible ability of butterflies to bounce back, especially when they get a weather break as has been happening in July and August.

2012 Butterfly Report

From Bill Shreeves and Lyn Pullen

Bill Shreeves writes: "I must apologise for failing to get the usual full report for the year (2012) into the earlier Dorset Branch News. Those of you who came to any of the four regional meetings back in March 2012 will, in any case, have heard the mostly bad news. For those who did not, Lyn Pullen has kindly put a summary up on the website. For anyone who would like a copy of an annual report which I put into the Proceedings of the Dorset Natural History and Archaeological Society please email me (my address is in the 'who's who' on the back page). Sadly, or not as the case may be, this report contains no photos or statistical tables!"

The following report is adapted from Lyn Pullen's summary of one of Bill's presentations from the regional meetings.

Weather

The weather in a given year has a major effect on how well our butterflies will fare, and 2012 was not good. Some of the major negative factors were:

- The mean temperature between May and August was below average.
- Between June and September sunshine was below average.
- We saw higher than average rainfall in April, June, July and August.

These three things combined ensured that, weather-wise, 2012 was extremely poor for butterflies.

Effect on recording of butterflies

The most readily comparable data we have comes from our 60 regular butterfly monitoring (transect) walks. 2012 saw 276 weeks missed. This is an increase on the 195 missed walks in the previous year, and 255 the year before that. These missed walks reduce the data available to us, and they give a clear indication of just how bad the weather was!

Butterfly totals

In 2012, the total number of butterflies counted on all our transect walks added together was 93,683.

This is a decrease on the counts in 2011 (108,226) and 2010 (100,719).

Butterfly Species

Records from the transect walks show that for 24 species numbers dropped by more than 50% on their counts in 2011, or on their annual average counts.

Only one species showed an increase of more than 50%.

Best Performer

This accolade went to the Dark Green Fritillary. A total of 320 were counted across all the walks, one third of which were recorded at Fontmell Down.

Poorest Performers - top (or bottom?) five

- Small Tortoiseshell: only 486 were counted across all of the walks. In Dorset there have been some bad years for this butterfly in the past, but the decrease in 2012 continues a decline which has been ongoing since 2009.
- Brown Argus: just 172 were counted. This is a major decrease from the 409 recorded the previous year. Furthermore, the butterfly was only recorded on 17 of the transect walks in 2012, compared with 28 in 2011.
- Small Copper: there was a massive drop from 864 in the previous year to 204 in 2012. This is the lowest count of the 21st century for Dorset.
- Green Hairstreak: the count of 83 was also the lowest recorded for Dorset this century, with the next lowest being 86 in 2008. This is a sharp decrease on 2011's figure of 262.
- White Admiral: only two walks recorded this species at all. The best count since 2000 was 11 walks recording the butterfly in 2003, while 2011 managed 7. The total number of individuals recorded was only 7, compared with 39 the previous year.

Unusual Migrants

Two Monarchs were recorded; a reasonable count as in some years there are none. One Long-tailed Blue was seen in Colehill (Wimborne) in September, while one Black-veined White was recorded at North Poorton (Beaminster) in August.

Regular Migrants

9 Clouded Yellow were seen on Transect Walks. Records are showing that, since the 1980s, Clouded Yellows are being seen both earlier and later in the year than they have been previously.

48 Painted Ladies were recorded. The last bumper year for this species was 2009 when 5035 were recorded on transect walks. We did, however, see a number arrive (not on transect walks) very late in the year and early in 2013

Red Admirals had a great inward migration during September, though overall their numbers were around normal.

A bracing spring walk on Cashmoor Down

By Bridget de Whalley

If you look through our newsletters you can see how varied the weather is for this walk at Cashmoor Down. Last year, in late May, we walked in bright sunshine and saw a range of species. This year a group of ten of us set off in winter woollies, gloves and warm, waterproof coats! But still, between us we spotted a number of Orange-tips clinging onto waving flower heads (plus one egg), a Green-veined White, a plucky Dingy Skipper and a handsome Scorched Carpet moth. We also spotted a bright green looper caterpillar and the handsome micro-moth *Ancylis unculana*, which feeds on Buckthorn.

Lapwings glided overhead and Skylarks called out to us. Bright yellow Cowslips danced in the grass and we found purple, pink and blue Milkwort, and, waiting to flower later on, Common Spotted Orchids, Hairy Violets and good healthy Horseshoe Vetch.

These valuable plants are growing in areas which have been kept open by Dorset BC Branch conservation work parties every year for the past

ten years. This selective work produces a balance between a variety of scrub (Buckthorn, loved by Brimstone, and providing Green Hairstreak perching points) and the short grass and herb glades. Part of the site is sheep grazed and transect results show just how successful this work has been. Please contact Arthur Bryant (see back page) for details of this season's work parties at the site.

We detoured a little as we returned to take in the route of the Dorset Cursus at Gussage Down. I wonder which butterflies and moths would have been around in Neolithic times?

Many thanks to Arthur Bryant for reminding us that butterflies do still fly!

Mixed species pairings

By Guy Freeman

Over the summer, Sarah Wall observed some interesting butterfly behaviour in her garden in Corfe Mullen. On a hot sunny afternoon, Sarah noted "two butterflies, one Peacock and one Small Tortoiseshell, on the ground, the Peacock opening and closing its wings now and again, and the Tortoiseshell apparently trying to mate with it, coming up close on to the Peacock's rear end and fluttering its wings continuously. Then the Peacock crawled away – making no attempt to fly – closely followed by the Tortoiseshell which repeated the same behaviour all over again. This went on for several minutes before they both flew away".

This is a good description of typical courtship behaviour by the Small Tortoiseshell. After locating a female, males of this species will approach her on the ground and gently tap their antennae on her hindwings. Then, by rapidly fluttering their wings, they will shower their partner in pheromones in an attempt to persuade her to mate. When two Small Tortoiseshells are involved this process can last for several hours before the female finally accepts, but in the case described above there was probably never a happy ending for the male! However, it is interesting to note that the Peacock did not appear to be



A Meadow Brown paired with a Ringlet. Photo © Mark Pike

rejecting the Tortoiseshell's advance; indeed, her behaviour sounds similar to the way in which a female Tortoiseshell would behave during courtship (it is probably safe to assume that the Peacock was a female, as a territorial male would not take the Tortoiseshell's approach quite so lightly!).

Using a combination of scent and visual cues butterflies are usually very good at recognising, and mating with members of their own species, which is why we rarely hear about observations such as Sarah's. There has been little research in to how and why these mixed pairings occur, but presumably it is a case of confusion, or desperation to mate. The nymphalids seem to be particularly prone to inter-species mating, and within the family there are a few species which crop up frequently in observations of mixed pairs. Meadow Brown/Ringlet seems to be a relatively frequent combination, while Small Tortoiseshell/Meadow Brown has also been recorded. Mark Pike saw, and photographed, the former pairing in Dorset back in 2005. It might seem strange that butterflies which appear so distinctly

different to our own eyes (e.g. Small Tortoiseshell and Meadow Brown) should fail to recognise their own species; however, it's possible that the pheromones given off by the females are more easily confused. In some cases this could mean that a male would latch on to the wrong scent and begin courtship, and, in the rare event that the female of the other species does not immediately reject him, this would then lead to a mixed species pairing.



Ab. *polonus*, from West Sussex.
Photo © Neil Hulme.

In the vast majority of cases these pairings will come to nothing, as the different species are incompatible and therefore cannot successfully reproduce. However, there is one combination that has been known to produce viable offspring in the wild: Adonis and Chalkhill Blue. The appearance of the hybrid, known as ab. *polonus*, is intermediate in all respects, with a fairly thick dark border to

the wings, and a ground colour that is halfway between the pale blue of Chalkhill and the bright sky blue of Adonis. Ab. *polonus* is extremely rare, but on the very few occasions that it has been seen it appears among the spring brood of the Adonis Blue. Perhaps unsurprisingly, only male specimens are known, as identifying a hybrid female would likely be impossible in the field. There have only been a handful of records of this hybrid from the whole of Europe, but it's worth keeping an eye out at sites, such as Fontmell Down, which have good populations of both species as it's just possible that you might come across one of these butterflies.

Inter-species matings probably happen more frequently than we realise, and they could easily go unnoticed in some of our trickier species e.g. spotting a pairing between Small and Essex Skipper would take some extremely careful examination! If, like Sarah, you notice any interesting butterfly behaviour, please send your observations in to the website.

Phil Grey

By Colin Nunn

Phil Grey, who died in July, was a man with a lively and enquiring mind and a great many interests. These included: steam engines, aircraft, stamps, coins, photography and many others. Paramount amongst these was his passion for butterflies and, indeed, the conservation of wildlife in general, and he was also a good botanist. He retired from the RAF at a relatively early age and, with his wife Mary, moved to Langton Matravers in Dorset where he pursued these interests with great enthusiasm.

He was already in his late seventies when I got to know him, but was still unstinting in giving time and encouragement to those who shared his interests, as many Dorset butterfly enthusiasts will testify. He was a founder member of the Dorset Branch of BC, one of the co-founders of winter wildlife talks at Langton Matravers, which still continue under the umbrella of the Dorset Wildlife Trust, and he initiated and led twice-yearly walks on Ballard Down. He also set up, and carried out, a regular weekly butterfly transect for 15 years at Durlston Country Park, ably assisted by Janet and Tony Dicks. Very high numbers of Meadow Brown and Gatekeeper were the norm, but for one count during 1999 there were no less than 199 Lulworth Skipper and 123 Small Skipper! His recording activities went much further and I am advised that there are more than 7000 of his records on the database, starting in 1949 with a Silver-studded Blue at Lulworth and going right up to 2003. There are so many other notable achievements of his that could be listed: his encouragement of the young Ken Wilmott, who has gone on to become one of the leading UK butterfly experts, his discovery that the Geranium Bronze (a South African species) was established in Majorca, and the wealth of illustrated talks that he gave to wildlife groups and others. There are many more examples that could be quoted, and he has left a great legacy behind him.

A more comprehensive account of Phil's life can be found in Dorset Branch News Anniversary Edition No. 60, Autumn 2008, under "A visit to Phil Grey" by Bobby Knowles.

A notable record

By Adrian Neil

When I was opening the post one day in late May I was surprised to find that one envelope contained a garden record form. They are not normally sent in at this time of year, but a note enclosed with it immediately explained the reason: "Please find the enclosed survey from my Dad. This will be the last one from him as he died last Thursday".

The recorder was Robin White. How thoughtful it was of his daughter to send me the form when she must have been preoccupied with so many other things at the time. No doubt she appreciated how much her father's interest in wildlife meant to him. Robin lived in Stoke Abbott and had sent me his garden records for a number of years. I was always particularly pleased to receive them because I don't get many others from that part of Dorset. Over the previous 5 years Robin had recorded a total of 20 species. The best single year was in 2010 when he got 19, including Large Skipper, Marbled White, Painted Lady, Ringlet, Small Copper and Silver-washed Fritillary. Oddly enough, he never once had a Common Blue in his garden.

Despite the late spring and the general lack of butterflies this year, he had already seen 6 species, the first being a Peacock on April 18th. He had recorded a Wall in all of the previous years and, sure enough, here was one on the 1st May. This seemed quite early so I had a look on the Butterfly Conservation website in the list of first sightings of species. Robin's Wall was in fact just earlier than the one already reported there so I informed Richard Fox who duly entered Robin's as the earliest. It was also considerably earlier than the previous first reported sighting in Dorset.

Robin's last record was made on May 7th which must have been just a few days before he died. This, and his 'first' for the Wall, were, I thought, fitting tributes to his passion for wildlife and all aspects of the natural world that continued right until the end of his life.

National Moth Night 8 to 10th August 2013

Report by Bob Steedman

The interest in moth trapping has grown in recent years due to excellent new identification books becoming available. The Field Guide to the Moths of Great Britain and Ireland has become the standard work for macro-moths, and Dorset's Phil Sterling and Mark Parson's new book on micro-moths is rapidly establishing itself as the comprehensive guide to the 1500+ smaller moths in Great Britain. National Moth Night this year was themed to record moths on 'brown field' sites and, in particular, take note of tiger moths. Dorset Butterfly Conservation played its part by organising four mothing events on a variety of sites around the county.

Nigel Spring ran several traps and an overnight camp and barbecue at BC's Lankham Bottom Nature Reserve, a few miles north of Dorchester. He was ably assisted with the identification by two young men, Jack Oughton and Sean Foote. The catch was very good for a cool night, consisting of 550 moths of 80 species. Highlights included Ruby Tiger, Brussels Lace and Chinese Character. More than 30 people attended the event.

Colin Burningham and Christine Bonner, along with Bridget and Lawrie de Whalley, operated a trap on the old railway line at Blandford, recording several interesting species such as Four-spotted Footman, Pretty Chalk Carpet and Old Lady. There were 56 species altogether.

One of our member's, Jack Oughton, ran two traps at Broadcroft Quarry on Portland on the night following the Lankham Bottom event. He had 80 species, including Garden Tiger, Kent Black Arches and Peach Blossom. A photograph of the event featured on the Portland Bird Observatory Website.

Mark Spencer operated a trap at Bournemouth Natural Science Society. The catch included some scarce moths such as Variegated Golden Tortrix, Svensson's Copper Underwing and Garden Tiger, with 27 species overall.



Examining the catch at the Milldown event (left) and a Pretty Chalk Carpet (right).
Both photos © Barbara Steedman.



Male (bottom) and female (top) Four-spotted Footman (left), and an Old Lady (right). Footman photo © Lawrie de Whalley, Old Lady photo © Barbara Steedman.

The events attracted a small but keen audience, and several walkers passing by the Blandford site showed a great interest in the event, being amazed by the beauty and variety of the moths. A big thank you is due to the members who set up the traps and looked after them overnight. The moth data that was obtained will be added to the statistics for the whole country to give valuable data on the state of British moths.

Website and social media progress report

From Lyn Pullen

The website goes from strength to strength, and is drawing some favourable comments as well as showing increased use levels. The number of visits to the site in August 2013 increased by over 100% against the same month last year (5,124 compared to 2,523), while unique visitors were up from 1,397 to 2,867: another 100%+ rise.

I am particularly pleased with the performance of the online sightings form, which from January through to the end of August 2013 gained 2,422 records (up 150% on last year) of 16,968 butterflies! The form is now working reliably and is easy to use, so do think about trying it. You do not need to do this if you record via one of the existing systems: transects, garden recording, etc., but even then you may wish to record the odd sighting of particular interest, or sightings that are not on your transect, in your garden, or whatever. The results are verified before they are published on the website, and we are very grateful to Martin Raper, who has had the huge job of verifying nearly all the records this year.

Sightings are very important and will be all the more so in 2014, as this is the final year of our five year recording cycle. We particularly need people to record in ordinary places, not just at butterfly hotspots, so please see if you can help. Once all the 2013 results are in, we will publish a new map of 'white holes' on the website (thanks to the hard work of Robin George) so you can see where there have been no sightings of any species reported so far in this five year period.

It is the sightings pages (the input form and the records gained from it) which are the most used on the website, followed by the news page, the photo gallery and the events page in that order. If you haven't looked at the photo gallery, you are missing a treat, we get sent some great photos.

We have a new volunteer, Jo Stephen, who has taken over our Twitter account (thanks Jo!). She is doing great things with it, and we

have a constantly growing number of 'followers', currently standing at 210. We also have a Facebook account, being run by Dave Whalley (thanks Dave!), which has some enthusiastic followers and 129 'likes'. I'm very new to Facebook, but I should be able to say more about it by the time the next newsletter is published.

I am aware that online media might leave some members cold, but we need to use a range of media if we are to reach a range of people, particularly the younger ones. However, to make use of this we have to have things to report, so please think of sending in any bits of news you come across: interesting butterflies seen, a butterfly walk you've enjoyed, a moth you've never seen before, or anything else. They don't have to be observations of exotic species, or show great knowledge, they just need to share your enthusiasm for butterflies and moths. There is nothing like enthusiasm for making other people want to get involved, and that's got to be good for our Lepidoptera.

If you wish to keep up to date with the Dorset Branch online, have a look at the following:

Website: www.dorsetbutterflies.com

Twitter: @bc_dorset

Facebook: Butterfly Conservation (Dorset Branch)

News snippets by email to: news@dorsetbutterflies.com (this address comes to me).

Plant Sales in 2013

From Lyn Pullen

I'm delighted to report a very successful year of plant sales. As I write in early September, the total is over £550. This is very encouraging after a series of not-so-good years, when we either had thefts from the stall, or I couldn't start it as early as usual due to a broken foot, or sales were down because of the dreadful weather. The money goes to branch funds, and the committee allocates it where they see fit.

My very grateful thanks go to those who donated plants: Bridget Young, Barbara Bruce, Bridget de Whalley, Martin and Dee Raper, and Angela and Eric Rose (I apologise if I've forgotten anybody). Not only does this increase the stock for sale, but it provides a wider range of plants, which is important: as the locals have already got most of the things I regularly propagate so I need some different plants to tempt them to continue buying. This year I have been quite encouraged by the number of people in the village who have told me how they look forward to me opening the stall.

The largest single sale was probably to the East Burton Garden Club. I had given them a talk on gardening for butterflies in April and arranged for them to come and see the garden in August, and they bought plants on both occasions. They also gave a donation of £40 for the talk, and then donated about as much again for the visit, all of which goes to the branch.

I'm gradually trying to sell more wild flowers, which are often good for butterflies and other wildlife. I did, however, have one failure this year: I sowed some Bird's-foot Trefoil seeds and was pleased with the germination. As they grew, I began to think that they weren't the Bird's-foot Trefoil that I knew, so I thought that perhaps they were a non-UK version. But when they flowered it became clear that they weren't Bird's-foot Trefoil at all, but Hyssop! But at least Hyssop is good for our blue and the white butterflies, and it's easier to grow than Lavender.

I will be selling again next year, all being well, so please think on whether you could find a few plants for me – collection can be arranged.

Update: as of October, Lyn has reached the £600 mark for plant sales in 2013. Congratulations and thanks go to Lyn for her outstanding efforts in raising awareness, and funds, for the Dorset branch.

Your lasting legacy

Have you ever considered leaving a gift to Butterfly Conservation in your Will? An increasing number of members and friends are choosing to support Butterfly Conservation in this way. All gifts, however small, are welcome and make a crucial and lasting contribution to the conservation of butterflies and moths. Accounting for over one third of voluntary income, legacy gifts make a real difference to the work we can undertake.

So as well as leaving gifts to loved ones in your Will, please consider leaving a gift to Butterfly Conservation, it will help ensure butterflies and moths thrive in the years to come.

For more information about leaving a gift to Butterfly Conservation and sharing your love of butterflies and moths with future generations please contact Helen Corrigan on 01273 453313 or hcorrigan@butterfly-conservation.org or write to her at Butterfly Conservation, Manor Yard, East Lulworth, Wareham, Dorset BH20 5QP

Thank you for your support.

Greetings! *The Branch is delighted to welcome the following new members. We hope to meet you all soon at our events and work parties. Please introduce yourselves to any of the committee members and find out how you can get the most out of your membership and what you can do to help.*

Mr B Arnold - Swanage

Mr A Ashpool - Bridport

Ms J Balderson & Mr J Kirwin -
Swanage

Mr C Becker - Poole

Mr D Biggs - Wareham

Mrs C Bowman-Hill - Swanage

Mr D Chapman - Wimborne

Mrs E & Mr P Coyne & Family -
Poole

Mr F E & Mrs C H Crosier -
Salisbury, Wilts

Mr S Darke - Poole

Mr J Dennis - Bournemouth

Ms A O J Evans - Wimbledon,
London

Ms J A Foster - Huntingdon,
Cambs

Mr R & Ms M Francis -
Littlehampton, W Sussex

Mr C Garrard - Christchurch

**Mr A Gilbert & Miss M L
Dunnings** - Portland

Miss R Grant - Poole

Miss W Hammett - Ferndown

Mr K Huggins & Miss P Rosling -
Sturminster Newton

Mr M W Humphreys -
Shaftesbury

Mr P & Mrs J Jefferies & Family -
Weymouth

Mr I Kirk - Broadstone

Mr M J Lawson - Poole

Mr L & Mrs A Legg - Bournemouth

Mr C McMullen - Bournemouth

Mrs C & Mr A Miller - Wareham

Miss P E Parker - Poole

Mrs V Peacock - Wimborne

Miss H Pittwood - Poole

Mr R A & Mrs G S Reese - Dorchester

Mr B P Roberts - Dorchester

Miss H Salisbury - Lyme Regis

Mr S B Saville - London

Ms J Seawright - Poole

Mr G Sherratt - Poole

Miss A Simpson - Weymouth

Mr C Steadman - Weymouth

Miss J Stephen - Blandford

Ms J Turner - Dorchester

Mrs M Vanstone - Poole

Mr S Webb - Weymouth

Mrs A Woodward - Beaminster

Mr J Young - Poole

NEWSLETTER DEADLINES

31st August

For mid-September publication

28th February

For late-March publication

If you would like to submit something for the next newsletter please send your articles in by these dates at the latest. Many thanks to the people that have contributed articles to this current edition.

We are always in need of articles and line drawings, so please put pen to paper, or your finger to keyboard, and send in your contributions.

TREASURER'S NOTE

**Bank balance at 30th
September 2013:**

£15,349

COMMITTEE MEETINGS

All members are welcome to attend committee meetings.

The next meeting will be held on:

6th November 2013

If you would like to attend please get in touch with with Adrian Neil (01305 832937 or adrian.neil@madasafish.com) for details of time and venue.

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PLEASE NOTE THE OPINIONS
EXPRESSED IN THIS NEWSLETTER ARE
NOT NECESSARILY THOSE OF
THE SOCIETY OR THE BRANCH

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