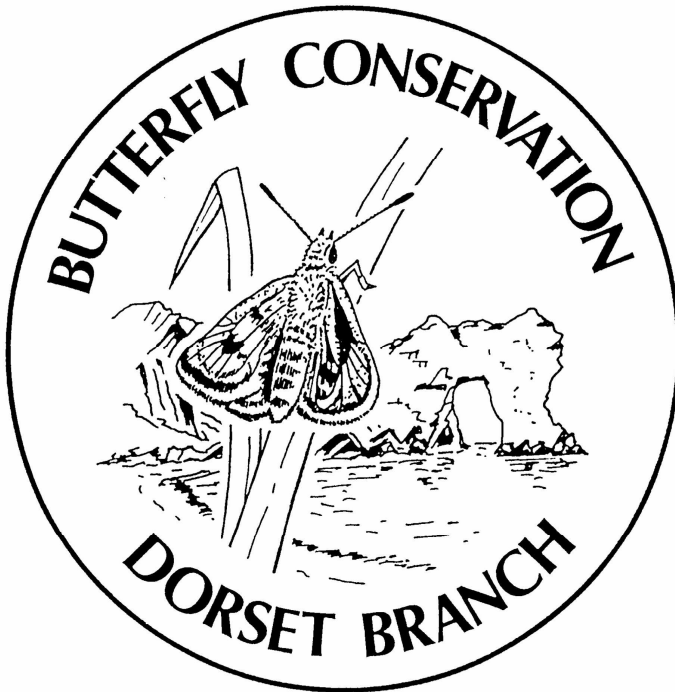


No 71
Summer 2012

www.dorsetbutterflies.com

Dorset Branch News



**Butterfly
Conservation**

Saving butterflies, moths and their habitats

Chairman's Letter

As I sit here writing this, the sun is shining brightly, and it is hard to believe that only half an hour ago we had hail and thunder. At least it is typical weather for the time of year, which now seems to happen less and less often. The cold northerly winds have been a feature of the last two weeks, so butterfly sightings have been much reduced in comparison with the warm weather of late March.



*Marbled White -
Symbol of high summer*

Many of you will have noticed that, so far, we have been doing rather better than last year with our website, displaying butterfly sightings that have been posted on the website without too much delay. I know that an important use of the website sightings is to find out when particular species are on the wing, so we need to keep up it to date. At present, the on-line form for recording sightings cannot be used to display the results directly, so as well as checking the information, we need to input the information manually into another format. We are working on a process to automate the inputting, but meanwhile we have mobilised a small army of volunteers to help out. It is perverse that the busiest time for inputting is when most butterflies are on the wing, when most of us would rather be outside, and I am very grateful to the volunteers for stepping in.

This year Save Our Butterflies Week has been moved from its usual time in high summer, and will be held between 19 and 27 May, thus avoiding proximity or overlap with the Big Butterfly Count (running from 14 July to 5 August). The theme of SOBW this year is rare and threatened species. The Branch is running eight guided walks during the period, so there will be many opportunities to see butterflies in some of the best sites in Dorset. Guided walks will continue throughout the summer of course. Moth Night this year falls on 21 to 23 June, with a theme of brownfield habitats (such as disused quarries and railway lines), with both daytime searches and night time moth trapping and recording.

The Branch is holding its annual workshop on identifying, surveying and recording butterflies and day-flying moths on 2 June, for the first time combining in one day the indoor session on techniques of identification and recording with an outdoor field visit to put the theoretical skills into practice. This event is now fully booked, with a waiting list. In addition, this year the

Branch has embarked on a new venture, running a butterfly identification course at the Kingcombe Centre in Toller Porcorum. This one-day event took place on 12 May with a particular emphasis on the relationship between butterflies and habitat as an aid to identification. By the time you read this we shall be assessing its success. We always need more recorders, as monitoring is such an important activity for the Branch in order to measure progress in maintaining the biodiversity of our species – hence the emphasis we place on identification training.

In March the Branch held its Members' Day and AGM for 2011. In her role as mastermind of the Display, Information and Sales Stall Bridget de Whalley reported that during 2011 over 30 volunteers manned the stall at 20 events, some over two days. We are immensely grateful to Bridget, who says, "It is really great to have such excellent helpers and quite simply, the stall could not operate without such wonderful support. It is also important to keep finding new volunteers to help us." I would like to quote another extract from her report: "I find it very encouraging to see such huge interest from the public in the work BC is doing, and it is good to enrol new members and widen our membership base in Dorset. We are always very pleased when members of the public come up to the stall with questions about garden conservation and more general conservation queries. Some we can answer on the spot and offer leaflets for support and further information. We are always happy to refer other queries to our team of advisors within our branch or to Headquarters."

A summary of Richard Belding's report on the Branch's conservation efforts appears on pages 5-6 below.

After tea, our speaker was Dr Tom Brereton, Butterfly Conservation's Head of Monitoring, who gave an overview of 10-year trends from the UK Butterfly Monitoring Scheme and Butterflies for the New Millennium projects. Everyone enjoyed this fascinating, informative and entertaining talk.

At the AGM there were two resignations of long-standing Committee members, Anna Barwick and Bobby Knowles. Anna has served 18 years on the committee (apart from a short break in 2009), during which time she has been Book Secretary, Sales Treasurer, Newsletter Editor, and, since 2001, Website Officer. She developed and ran our website, enabling Dorset to be one of the first branches with a website.

Bobby joined the Committee in 2001, taking over the role of Newsletter Editor from Anna, her first edition being for Spring 2002. Under Bobby's stewardship, the newsletter has gone from strength to strength, and she holds the honour of being our longest running Newsletter Editor. The Branch is greatly indebted to both Anna and Bobby for their huge contributions and hard work over many years, for which we cannot thank them enough.

We are fortunate that Lyn Pullen has offered to take over a new role, that of Website Co-ordinator, with support from Steve Bennett (who has been involved with the website since last autumn) to deal with the technical aspects. Those of you who look at the website will already have noticed changes, and more will occur as Lyn develops her ideas.

Sadly, no one has yet come forward to enquire about taking over as Newsletter Editor. We are even more in Bobby's debt in that she has offered to produce this Summer Newsletter, but I know she had been hoping to be working on it with her (as yet non-existent) successor. We cannot continue to depend on Bobby's goodwill for long, and without a replacement for her I can see the time fast approaching when all communication is internet based. If you know of anyone who might be interested, please let me know.

Every year, Bill Shreeves makes a plea for records of butterflies to be submitted for "white holes". These are 1km squares on the OS map for which no records exist. He has handed out maps showing the gaps at meetings, but the map is now available on our website, plus a list of the empty squares. If any of you would like to take up the challenge of being the first to submit recordings for an area, please look at the map, or if you do not have access to the internet, phone Bill and ask him for a copy (his phone number is shown on the back cover). I find it adds an extra dimension to my butterfly hunting to feel that I am being a "pioneer".

Finally, I would like to end by wishing you all a good butterfly summer, and by hoping that the declines of recent years for many species are reversed.

Jane Smith

Letter to the Editor, dated 3 April 2012

This morning I met a lady (we shared a table in Costa Coffee) who has just returned from a skiing/walking holiday near Landeck, in the Tyrol in Austria. She said she saw many 'brown' butterflies flying fast above the snow, 7000 feet up in the mountains, heading north-west.

Very interesting - but alas she didn't have her camera, so we don't know for certain what they were.

I wonder if they were Painted Ladies, making their way from North Africa to us.

Perhaps we will see some of them here in Dorset.

From a coffee drinker

Conservation Report for 2011

*By Richard Belding,
Vice-Chairman and Hon. Conservation Officer*

2011 was, dare I say it, another very busy year for the Branch in terms of providing advice and carrying out practical conservation work. Much of the latter was on our own Dorset Reserves but we also carried out conservation tasks on private land as well.

In terms of conservation tasks the main emphasis, as before, has been at **Alners Gorse** where we are reaching the stage of having completed the main work objectives set in the Higher Level Stewardship Agreement. The major removal of conifers is complete, as is the thinning of broadleaf trees. Some rotational scrub clearance has started but by the very nature of this objective will be on-going. It will now be interesting to observe and record what difference all this work will have on the wildlife of the reserve.

Lankham Bottom continues to be managed to maximise its value as an important site for butterflies and moths and Nigel Spring has held a number of work parties to tackle the invasion of scrub.

Cotoneaster, as always, is an issue on our **Portland** Reserves and the backbreaking work of trying to control it has continued this year.

On **Lydlinch Common** Colin Burningham has organised work parties to continue the management of the scrub on this crucial Marsh Fritillary site.

Another big task taken on during 2011 and linked to the Branch is on **Giant Hill** at Cerne Abbas. Here Malcolm Wemyss and Adam Gale have organised six work parties, in liaison with the landowner, to clear an area of scrub that over the years has invaded what was, amongst other things, a prime Small Blue area. Over the six work parties a total of 22 people helped provide 357 hours of labour. The result has been fantastic with a large area cleared by the steps and below the Giant, as anyone visiting can see. The response from the public on this heavily visited site has been very positive, with many thanking us for what we were doing. It will be interesting to observe how this site responds. Further work parties are planned to continue managing the scrub further along this slope primarily to help and encourage the Duke of Burgundy.

Some of the other conservation work the Committee have been involved in is listed overleaf:

Helping control heavy Ragwort infestations on two farms where grazing by cattle only is required to benefit Marsh and Duke of Burgundy fritillaries.

Helping manage scrub on a farm to benefit Duke of Burgundy breeding.
Advising on the management of glades in private woodland to benefit Duke of Burgundy including plug-planting of cowslips.

Advising on clearing woodland on a former area of downland near Melbury to benefit butterflies.

Clearing scrub on an isolated downland site to enable grazing a small but important Adonis Blue site.

Advising on the management of the Quarr, which is a Local Nature Reserve in a Sherborne quarry to which the Branch also donated a small sum of money.

Advising on the management of woodland, hedges and grassland on a site near Lyme Regis.

Advising on a site at Motcombe to enhance it for butterflies and moths.

Advising on the practical management of an important site near Cerne Abbas.

Liaising with Dorset County Council over the planting of butterfly and moth friendly borders at County Hall, including a small sum of sponsorship.

The list goes on.....

Let us hope we have favourable weather this year to enable butterflies and moths to take advantage of all our advice and hard work.

Ticks: A word of warning from President Brian Dicker

When doing conservation work or your Transect Walk, ticking all the boxes and filling in the walk times, don't forget to have your trousers tucked into your socks and your arms covered when walking through long vegetation. There is a health warning out at the moment that Ticks are more abundant this year (2012) because of the early Spring warm weather, so **take care**. Ticks are a carrier of Lyme Disease, and a Tick bite can infect you. Symptoms are similar to a cold, but may develop more seriously. It may be misdiagnosed by the average doctor who encounters Lyme Disease infrequently.

Ticks must be removed as soon as possible, so check your body all over as soon as you can. The method of removal is a matter of personal choice and there is conflicting advice. It may depend on the degree to which the tick has become attached. See your doctor if you feel unwell after finding a tick on your body.

Report on Dorset Butterflies 2011

By Bill Shreeves

Reminder of 2010 weather behind the butterfly season of 2011

The key features of 2010 were very dry months from April to July and exceptional sunshine in April and June. To weigh against this the rest of the months were cool and August was unusually wet. In theory we could expect all this early sunny and dry weather to create high quality egg-laying conditions for early flying single brood species, which in turn would lead to large numbers of butterflies in spring 2011. On the other hand the dry conditions would not suit early season caterpillars and the cold overcast summer would not have looked promising for late summer flight species.

Was the 2011 spring and summer weather an improvement?

Amazingly, after a 2010-11 winter that was dryer and colder than average, the spring of 2011 was even more extreme than 2010. February, March and April had well above the Fontmell Magna temperature average. March, April and May had well below average rainfall and above average sunshine. After that everything went downhill with June, July and August colder, duller and wetter than average. By comparison September was an improvement on the average temperature and was at least quite dry. It was just a pity that it was warm dull rather than warm sunny!

How do we measure a 'good year' for butterflies?

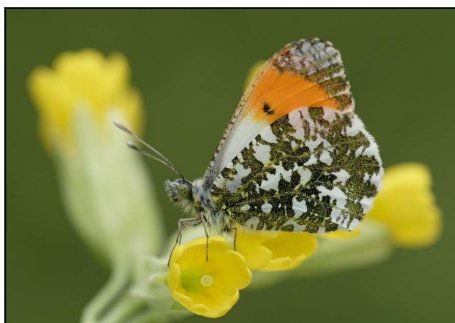
The only satisfactory statistics which can be used are those from transect walks because they are always done regularly under the same rules. The United Kingdom National Monitoring Scheme has been publishing a simple league table since 1976; the results for 2010 are at the time of writing just completed. This shows the rank order of each year according to the total number of butterflies counted on all UK transect walks. 2010 was ranked 14th out of the 35 years; 1992 comes out first and 1981 is at the bottom with fewest counted.

Of course we could do this for Dorset: our total count in 2011 on all 62 walks was 108,226. The snag is that the United Kingdom Monitoring system employs clever statisticians who can adjust each year's totals to compensate for new walks coming into the system and old ones going out. This is done by log linear regression, taking into account 'year' and 'site' effects, and using something called 'bootstrapping.' Needless to say your Butterfly Records Officer has no such tools in his locker to modify, for

example, the 2011 total in order to account for the loss of the West Moors walk and the addition of Chard Junction! However, just using crude unadjusted Dorset figures for the years 2006-2011 only: 2011 comes in third place, after 2009 in second, and 2006 in first place. 2010 is at fourth. In fifth position was 2008 and bottom was 2007.

Another method is to add up the number of species which ended over 50% up on the previous year and/or annual averages since each walk began and compare them with the number of species which fell by over 50% in the same way. Using this method for 2006-11 it is comforting to see that the results are almost the same. 2011 with 10 up and 3 down (= plus 7) is third, and 2010 (11 up, 13 down = -2) is again fourth. This time though 2009 is first (with 22 species up, 8 down = plus 14) and 2007 is last, with 2 up and 24 down = -22! Again, however, this is only a very crude method calculated without any bootstrapping. So **in Dorset 2011 was better than 2010** using both crude methods. It will be interesting to see where the log linear regression and bootstrapping places 2011 in the **national** league table when the results are published.

Does Dorset have a clear 2011 winner?



*Orange Tip on Cowslip, photo by
Keith Miller*

To be in the winner category a species must have over 50% increases on both 2010 and its annual averages, on over half the transect walks. The **Orange Tip** was recorded on 53 sites in 2011 and 66% of them were over 50% above both their 2010 and annual average counts. The **Brown Hairstreak** was in the same league but, with only three sites recording it, could not match the Orange Tip's achievement. The crude total Orange Tip count on all Dorset

Transect Walks was 1,124 compared to the previous highest in 2003 of 649. No other species was over 50% above annual average but three single brood early flight species, **Green Hairstreak**, **Grizzled Skipper** and **Duke of Burgundy** were over 50 % up on the 2010 totals. They were joined by **Dark Green Fritillary** and **Grayling**. The three migrants, **Red Admiral**, **Painted Lady** and **Clouded Yellow** remained well below their annual averages but all improved considerably on their desperately low 2010 counts.

Which species were 2011's losers?

There were no species which fell into the outright loser category of over 50% declines on both the previous year and annual averages on over half the walks. This is only the second time since 2001 that this has happened. However three species were well below their 2010 totals on over half the walks. Two of them, **Lulworth Skipper** and **Small Tortoiseshell** were, worryingly, in that loser category for the second year running. The Peacock was the third species with 55% of its 62 sites doing badly.

Can we explain why some species did so well and some so badly?

It is probably no coincidence that the record count of **Orange Tips** in 2011 came after one of the warmest, sunniest and driest Aprils recorded in 2010. This weather probably enabled record numbers of eggs to be laid. It is just possible that the cold and dry winter of 2010-11 may have been helpful to the chrysalis stage. Orange Tips reacted to the even warmer, sunnier and drier March and April 2011 by emerging early. At Lydlinch which had a biggest ever count and, at 63, the highest in Dorset, the first butterflies were counted on 7 April, the peak was reached on 10 April, and the last one was counted on 6 May. Everywhere Orange Tips took maximum advantage. Some big data crunching research by Robin George on all the Dorset data has shown that the earliest sightings of Orange Tips had moved from late April in the 1970s to late March in the 21st century. So they were responding to global weather changes very effectively. It must be admitted though that a proportion of the large numbers counted in 2011 may be put down to the 'stage magnification effect'. A few soldiers passing across a stage in a theatrical production can be expanded into a great army by continuously recycling them around the back of the stage. In the same way long hours of continuous sunshine, in which the male Orange Tips do non-stop circular patrolling flights, can bluff the careful butterfly walker into 'double count'.

Other butterflies which were 'winners' in 2011, like **Green Hairstreak** and **Grizzled Skipper**, are also species whose flight periods have become noticeably early and no doubt reacted to the early dry and sunny weather in April 2010 in the same way as the Orange Tip. With the 2011 March-April weather even hotter and dryer than 2010, what will happen to Orange Tips in this year 2012? The first sighting on the website was listed as 15 March and so they might be on target for another momentous season...but as I write there are heavy falls of snow in Scotland: anything might happen yet, and I would not bet on it!

The dry weather in April and May 2010 and 2011 could not have been good news for nettle feeding **Small Tortoiseshells** and **Peacocks** hatching from eggs laid earlier in the year. Especially for the Small Tortoiseshell, with its second brood of caterpillars targeted both by its usual native parasites and the southern newcomer, *Sturmia bella*, this ‘double whammy’ of early drought followed by heavy parasitism must explain the collapse of its promising recovery to a count of 1,072 in 2009 back down to a low of 655 in 2011.

The decline of the **Lulworth Skipper** seems especially perplexing at a time when it has expanded its range into Portland and possibly even to the west of Burton Bradstock (though there were no sightings of these pioneers in 2011) and even extended its flight period forward into April. It seems illogical that these trends could be happening simultaneously. However there has most probably been a decline all over Purbeck in its rough Tor Grass larval food-plant due to heavier grazing ironically often aimed at helping the Adonis Blue. While this has been the backdrop to its decline, its extension of its flight range might also be causing it problems in adaptation. At the moment it appears to be spread out very thinly from late April to August with no obvious flight peaks. Surveyors for the Lulworth Skipper project have consequently found it impossible to time their visits accurately and it may be that this has made things look worse than they really are.

Was 2011 a good year for migrants?

Although an improvement on 2010 this was definitely not a good year for our ‘regular’ migrants, the **Clouded Yellow** and **Painted Lady**. The 2011 Transect count placed them both fourteenth out of the last sixteen years. [Editor’s note: for news of early 2012 Clouded Yellow sightings, see page 28.] **The Red Admiral** did better at seventh out of the sixteen. Of course all three species improved in October and even into November but this is not reflected by the Transect data since walking effectively closes down at the end of September. For Red Admirals there were reports of what sounds like a reverse migration. Some were observed heading out to sea and a fascinating report came on to the website for 15 September from a recorder fishing at Pitmans Pond: “About 50 Swallows flew down the pond followed a few minutes later by about 15 Red Admirals in a group and all flying in a **southerly** direction.” However, what were the ‘dozens’ of Red Admirals seen moving **north-east** across Portland on 6 November doing? Could they have been new migrants arriving or ‘natives’ moving along the coast before heading south? Reports of Red Admirals, which had evidently

not headed south, continued right through December and I even saw one in my Shaftesbury garden on 2 January 2012. Swedish research holds out the tantalising prospect that we might eventually have a means of ascertaining where our Red Admirals (and possibly other migrant species) originally came from. Stable hydrogen isotope chemical markers are ingested with the food-plant by caterpillars and later transferred into the wings. This research has already been used in summer in North Europe to show that their Red Admirals had started as caterpillars well down in the south.

Altogether 2011 was better for our rarer migrants, with the first record coming on 8 April. This was a **Camberwell Beauty** which was watched by Martin and Julie Read flying and resting on the classroom wall at Carter Community School in Hamworthy, while they were waiting for their son to embark on a coach for a ski trip to Austria. Had this been in hibernation from a cluster said to have been released in Dorset the previous year? Had it just been released from somebody's breeding cage or could it, as suggested by Martin and Julie, have come off the coach? All that can be said with certainty is that it was the seventeenth recorded sighting in Dorset since 1995. This was the last since the Brownsea Island sighting photographed on 27 March – 4 April 2008 and a worthy successor to the renowned Camberwell Beauty caught at Tyneham House back in 1923. That one was famously commemorated in the stained glass window in the village church.

[Editor's note: There is a famous Camberwell Beauty in the Knowles family too. Edward photographed it feeding on over-ripe fruit on the Victoria plum tree in our back garden one Autumn in the mid 1990's. We hadn't a clue at the time that it was of any significance, but Doug Taylor's reaction, when we showed him the picture in David Godfrey's U3A class, was one of the triggers for our enthusiasm for butterflies ever since—and therefore responsible for all these Newsletters over the last eleven years!]

On 7 June, near Holworth House in Purbeck the 34th **Large Tortoiseshell** seen in Dorset since 2005 was watched through binoculars by John and Carolyn Kennedy. Between 2005 and 2008 there had been 32 sightings along the Dorset coast ending with just one in 2009 in Broadstone. It may or may not be relevant that nine were seen on the Isle of Wight between 7 March and mid April 2011.

In August **Continental Swallowtails** were seen. The first was photographed by Nigel Burton on the 3 August at Bindon Hill. The picture appeared in Dorset Branch News No 69 Autumn 2011, where detail about these three unusual Dorset sightings (Camberwell Beauty, Large Tortoiseshells and Swallowtails) was published on pages 20-25. Although

Continental Swallowtails were thought once to have bred on the Dorset Chalk in the late 1940s, records lately have been scarce – since 1995 this was only the third. Another was seen by Mike Wells and others in Marnhull gardens on 16 August and it seemed probable that one observed over Shaftesbury on 14 August by Sarah Gregory was the same insect.

On 10 September at Ringstead, Dorset's tenth **Monarch** since 2005 was recorded and photographed by Shelley Cunningham and Shane Austin. Although there are now breeding Monarch colonies in Spain and in the Azores and Canary Islands, most Monarchs seen in Britain are blown across the Atlantic from America in late September to early October. On the other hand many have escaped from Butterfly Houses so the origins of this butterfly cannot be known.

Finally a **Long-tailed Blue** was reported by the Portland Observatory around Easton on 28 September, and Roy Eden reported the **Pale Clouded Yellow** in his garden at West Bexington on 17 September 2010.

Unusual Early and Late Sightings in 2011

It is the record officer's duty to verify the accuracy of records and at one time a reliable indicator that a recorder might be mistaken, was the date. After I had queried many records on the grounds that such a date must be impossible and then had to eat humble pie as more and more came in, including those I saw myself, it became clear that 2011 was out of the ordinary! The record which made this absolutely certain came in a list of species seen on 28 April at Durdle Door sent in by an unchallengeable authority, Martin Warren (Chief Executive of our parent body, Butterfly Conservation.) He had watched 12 **Lulworth Skippers** (usually late June at the earliest) in the unlikely company of 23 **Dingy Skippers**, 22 **Small Blues**, 5 **Common Blues** with a backing of one **Brown Argus** as well as **Walls** and **Small Heaths**. From then on more and more species were reported early so that by the end of June there seemed little left to make a first appearance. However, the cold June, July and August gradually put on the brakes until species like **Chalkhill Blue** were only a few days early and **Silver-spotted Skipper** not at all.

Then in September came further records, impossibly late this time, which seemed to suggest that the flight period tables might have to be thrown out of the window. On 15 September came the first of several **Marsh Fritillaries** at Cerne Giant, and on 1 October a fresh **Marbled White** at Durdle Door. Even more unlikely, a **Silver-studded Blue** was seen on 9 October near the East Dorset Golf Club. Unaware that the cynicism of the Dorset Records Officer had by then been totally exploded, most of the

records came with photographs from recorders who did not expect to be believed! The most likely explanation for these and other late sightings is probably that they did not come from second broods but from delayed development in caterpillars. Half starved by the drought earlier in the year, helped into maturity by more rain in July-August, they were encouraged to emerge eventually from the chrysalis stage by a warmer September

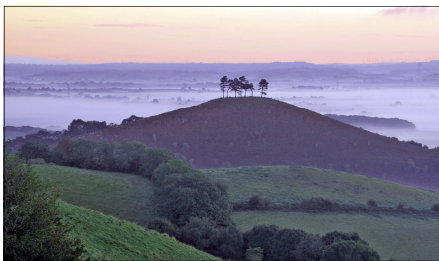
Important 2011 Sightings

Brown Hairstreaks had, as has been mentioned, an excellent 2011 on the Transect Walks at Alners Gorse, Deadmoor and Lydlinch but on 6 March 2012 came news from Roger Smith that they had also colonised another part of Dorset. Evidence was a single egg discovered on the Dorset side of the border with Somerset at Hummer near Trent, to the NE of Yeovil and east of Mudford. There had been reports of a Brown Hairstreak not far away in previous years - but in Somerset.

Sadly in 2011 there was no trace of the **Duke of Burgundy** found on the old railway line between Toller Porcorum and Maiden Newton the previous year. However three more squares did emerge in 2011: 3 May at the edge of Fontmell Wood (Nigel Kemp) not far from old colonies; 5 May at Black Hill, photographed by John Down, in a completely new km square at ST 667006; and 11 May at Lankham Bottom, counted on the Transect Walk by Kathy Henderson in another entirely new km square. At Cerne Giant the Transect Walk registered a record count of 32 in 2011.

Although 2011 was not a very good year for **White Admirals**, Richard and Lyn Lambert saw an amazing 32 during a visit to Horton Wood on 14 June, which is by far the highest number (other than on Transect Walks) ever recorded on a single Dorset visit. In 2011 there were continuous sightings of **Purple Emperors**, both males and females between 4 and 16 July in the same Chase Woods locality as they were discovered in 2010. Sadly, in admittedly very poor weather, a joint Dorset/Wiltshire visit on 17 July failed to find any Emperors and none were seen after this, despite many visits. Nick Butt took numerous photos including one of two males together. Analysing all his photos later, he believed that he had seen four different females. Hopefully, by means uncertain, Dorset may at last have regained the Purple Emperor as a species but much work will be needed on all stages of the butterfly to ascertain whether this colony has a future. At the much earlier date of 24 June Hilary Chittenden glimpsed a Purple Emperor near Verwood (SU 089108) but the earlier date makes it seem likely that this may have been a home-bred release.

For the third year running **Pearl-bordered Fritillaries** appeared again at Powerstock. This time they were as early as 24 April (no Dorset **Small Pearls** were around until late May). The photos once again looked like Pearl-bordered. So it seems as if an attempt by persons unknown to re-introduce Pearl-bordered Fritillaries at Powerstock may have succeeded and that small numbers could now be breeding. Sadly it now appears that Powerstock Small Pearls have in the meanwhile gone extinct with their passing blurred by the ‘introduction’ of the Pearls. From 2012 onwards more research is clearly needed. Genuine **Small Pearl-bordered Fritillary** colonies survive at Stonebarrow Hill in West Dorset and at Bindon Hill, the Purbeck golf course site, and near Studland in south Dorset.



Many thanks to Keith Miller for this atmospheric photo of Colmer's Hill

With falling **Wall Brown** Transect Walk totals in 2010-11 and the species becoming very rare in North Dorset, it was a real joy to receive a ‘feel good’ report for 3 August 2011 from Dudley Hull. He and his wife had walked up the quaint story book Colmer’s Hill near Symondsburry, west of Bridport (SY 441932). Near the top they were welcomed by around 40 Walls which were clearly taking part in the little

understood custom of ‘hill topping.’ Many other species like Painted Ladies and Red Admirals often head for the highest ground in the same way that Hairstreaks head for the tops of trees. Do the local Walls gather on Colmer’s for both broods in every year, or was this just a one off?

Recorders in West Dorset might like to do some research!

How well is recording doing for the 2010-14 Dorset and UK Atlas?

This year has certainly been an improvement on 2010 when 868 kilometre squares of the Dorset map recorded at least one species of butterfly. 2011 has at present achieved 1,029 with an unknown number of late records still waiting to be verified and put on the map. Currently the combined 2010-11 map has 3,633 km squares covered. An important part in 2011’s improvement was played by the Big Butterfly Count which covered 350 km squares. Do please take part in this year’s count, from 14 July to 5 August. There is, however, no room for complacency: 1,570 km squares still need to be surveyed in 2012-14. A new colour map of the situation in 2010-11 can be viewed and downloaded from the Branch website (www.dorsetbutterflies.com) as can a helpful list of the km squares which still have no butterfly records for the new atlas.

Grateful thanks to all 2011 recorders, surveyors, inputters and co-ordinators, and to the computer team

There is insufficient time or space to thank individually all those who have kept the rambling Dorset recording band wagon on its tracks. Special mention must be made of those who are partly or wholly retiring: **Rees Cox**, now hanging up his Transect walking and co-ordinating boots after 35 years of service which put him in the top five for the whole of UK; **Anna Barwick** who founded and set up our website which has enormously increased the flow of records; **Colin Nunn**, who retires as Purbeck walk records co-ordinator and organiser of the south Dorset annual meetings and now hands over to Jon Bellamy; and last and by no means least, **Bobby Knowles** who, as our newsletter editor, has for so many years patiently waited for our data and statistics, often late and coaxed them into meaningful reports for the Branch News [*Thank you, Bill—but it was only the dreaded tables which used to make my heart sink, Ed.*]

This year I would like to pay special tribute to: **Martin Raper** who has volunteered to co-ordinate the new Dorset Environmental Centre's 'Living Record' data entry maps into our already complex system; **Robin George** who can now use her new Access Dorset database to give answers to an increasing range of queries about butterfly records from local farmers to Natural England; **Adrian Neil** who runs both Dorset Garden Recording (see page 16-21 below) and is Dorset Champion for the Wider Countryside Survey; **Lyn Pullen** who has recently completed the 2012 sixth edition of Counting Dorset's Butterflies and Moths, the 'bible' for all recorders, and is now, with **Jane Smith**, co-ordinating the website raw records while we wait for a 'nirvana' automatic solution to the problem of converting them for the website and entry into the Dorset Butterfly distribution atlas.

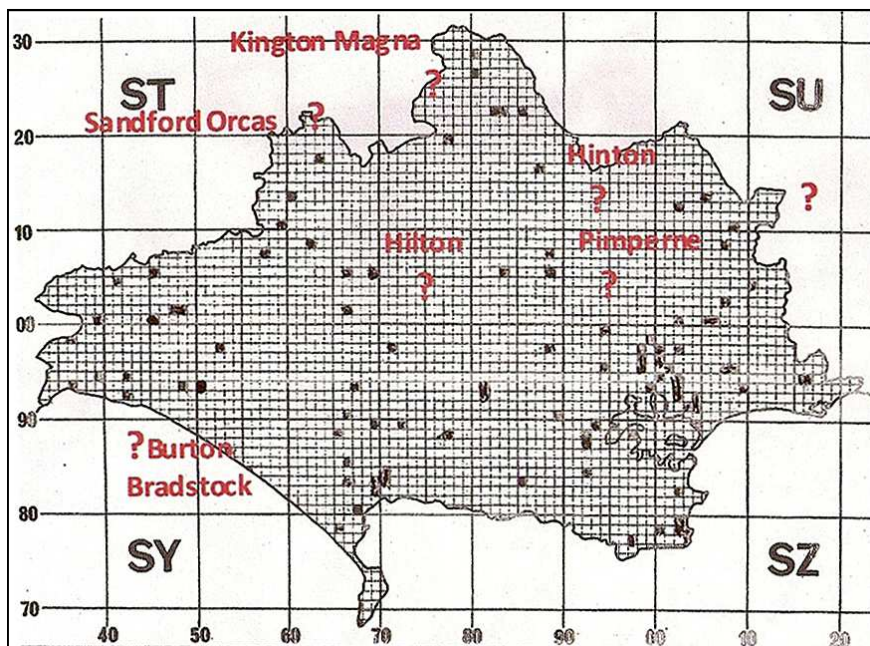
At the time of writing, a new committee for modernising Dorset's butterfly transect walking system is about to convene. Those who have got lost while trying to follow the old walk maps will be pleased to hear that one job for the new committee is to bring these up to date not only geographically but also with new mapping technology. Another major aim is to find ways of making the data do more to help with conservation management. It is ironic that at present it is playing a major role in research on climate and biodiversity but is under-used in helping local sites and reserves. Anyone interested in mapping, GPS, photography, computing and writing walk descriptions should please get in touch to help the committee. Finally, it goes without saying that the never satisfied demand for butterfly records means that we still need more walkers, surveyors, recorders and data inputters: **please volunteer!**

Dorset Garden Butterflies in 2011 - an Update

By Adrian Neil

I wrote the interim report which appeared in the Spring issue of the Branch News (No.70) at the end of December last year based on the 80 or so records that I had received by then. Subsequently I received a number of forms from Margaret Vickery that had been sent to her for inclusion in her national survey and a few more came in to me (some as a result of gentle prompting as I was reluctant to lose records from locations that had produced good results in previous years!). The final total for the year was 114 and all of them will be included in Margaret's report. This was much the same as in recent years and, interestingly, amounts to about 10% of the national total. It is a great achievement by Dorset's enthusiastic recorders and thanks to everyone who submitted their records.

They cover 102 one-km. squares which, as the map below shows, are spread fairly well across the county, leaving only a few 10-km. squares empty.



The number of ‘gaps’ has been declining in the last few years and it would be excellent if we could fill in the remaining ones. If you live in one of the areas of the county not yet covered by the survey it would be a great help if you could take part and send in any records from your garden. I was impressed by the remarkably good coverage achieved by the Big Butterfly Count last year and, as nearly half of the records came from gardens, there may be a number of those contributors who might be interested in recording throughout the season.

After the warm early spring in 2011 it was not a particularly good year for butterflies and quite a few people commented that they were less numerous than usual. As garden records are a better measure of prevalence than abundance, Bill Shreeves’ report (pp 7-15 above) gives a better indication of how the different species fared. The subjective impression I gained as the records came in was that, despite seeing fewer butterflies, the number of species that people observed in their gardens had held up fairly well. However, on closer examination that conclusion has to be qualified slightly. I had a look at the total of species reported from each garden and the peak of this distribution was at 13. In statistical terms this is known as the mode, and in other words it means that the number of species most frequently seen by the recorders in this survey was 13. In both 2009 and 2010 the mode was 14 so it does look as though there was a slight reduction in the number of species appearing in gardens in 2011.

Nevertheless, at the top end of the distribution ten gardens reported seeing 20 or more species in 2011 and this was the same number as in 2010. In addition to the five mentioned in the interim report, 23 species were seen by Jeremy Burge at Gillingham and in the Portland Bird Observatory garden. Malcolm Wemyss at Yetminster, Lyn Pullen at Winfrith Newburgh and Jane Newdick at Cerne Abbas all recorded 20 species.

The total number of species recorded overall was 36, just one less than in 2010. ‘Gains’ were **Small Blue** (not seen in gardens since 2009) and **Adonis Blue**, another rather infrequent visitor to gardens and last reported in 2008. In fact there were no less than four records of Small Blues so they did well. *[We were delighted that eight were recorded on the Badbury Rings Transect; the only previous records were small numbers in 1999, 2004, and 2005, Ed.]* ‘Losses’ were **Silver-studded Blue**, **Chalkhill Blue**, and **White Admiral** (the latter after sightings in both 2009 and 2010). Of course all these are very seldom seen in gardens and it is a fluke if one turns up.

Over the last three years an amazing total of 41 species has been recorded. Sadly this year there were no exotic species such as **Large Tortoiseshell** or **Monarch**, but they may well be seen again so, along with other rare species, it is conceivable that in a bumper year we might get as many as 40 species. Dorset must be one of the best counties for garden butterflies and I wonder how it compares with other parts of the country.

This year Robin George kindly produced for me a frequency distribution from the data and this can be turned into a rank order of butterflies from the most common to the least seldom seen, as in Table 1 below. This enables a comparison to be made, both with the order in 2010 and with the national results.

Table 1: % of Gardens			%		
1.	Red Admiral	98.2	19.	Marbled White	21.9
2.	Small White	92.1	20.	Wall Brown	20.2
3.	Large White	91.2	21.	Small Skipper	18.4
4.	Speckled Wood	89.5	22.	Silver-washed Fritillary	15.8
5.	Peacock	88.6	23.	Small Heath	10.5
6 =	Orange Tip	86.8	24 =	Green Hairstreak	4.4
	Holly Blue			Brown Argus	
8.	Brimstone	84.2	26 =	Clouded Yellow	3.5
9 =	Small Tortoiseshell	81.6		Small Blue	
	Gatekeeper		28 =	Purple Hairstreak	2.6
11.	Meadow Brown	80.7		Dingy Skipper	
12.	Comma	75.4	30 =	Grizzled Skipper	1.8
13.	Green-veined White	63.2		Grayling	
14.	Common Blue	51.8		Dark Green Fritillary	
15 =	Small Copper	41.2	33 =	Essex Skipper	0.9
	Painted Lady			Marsh Fritillary	
17.	Ringlet	25.4		Lulworth Skipper	
18.	Large Skipper	23.4		Adonis Blue	

So nearly everyone saw a Red Admiral in their garden, but there were only single sightings of Essex and Lulworth Skippers, Marsh Fritillary and Adonis Blue.

Comparing the order in 2011 with that in 2010, most species stayed fairly much in the same position, at most only moving up or down one or two places. The biggest ‘risers’ were **Orange Tip**, up six places from 12th in 2010, and **Holly Blue**, up five places and coming into the top ten, having been in 11th position the previous year. The latter is presumably in an upturn of its periodic cycle and it is encouraging to note that they were seen in nearly 87% of gardens. Orange Tips shared the same place and the rise from 69% in 2010 supports Bill Shreeves’ nomination of them as ‘Butterfly of the Year’ for 2011.

The largest falls were recorded by **Brimstone**, **Small Tortoiseshell**, **Meadow Brown**, and **Dark Green Fritillary**, all dropping four places. Brimstone and Small Tortoiseshell are still in the top ten and seen in over 80% of gardens, so the decline may not be all that serious although it is disappointing that the latter may not be sustaining the recovery noted in the previous year or two.

On inspecting the forms as they came in, it appeared to me that **Ringlets** had done well, but on checking the figures they were down slightly in terms of the number of gardens in which they were seen, from 26.7% in 2010 to 25.4% last year. Nevertheless, for them to be seen in a quarter of gardens is quite surprising (to me at any rate) as one doesn’t think of this habitat as being particularly suitable for them. I was also interested in looking at how **Silver-washed Fritillaries** had fared after a very successful year in 2010



when they were seen in nearly one fifth of all gardens. Last year they were down to just under 16% so there has been a decrease, but again this is quite an impressive total and higher than the 9% or so reported in the national survey. As with Ringlets, one doesn’t really associate them with gardens.

A Grayling on the back wall of your Editor’s house in Broadstone on 26 August 2008: one of our best garden sightings

Going on to compare the top rankings with those in 2010, both for Dorset and nationally, the table overleaf gives the top ten species for that year. 2010 is the latest year for which I have seen the national figures.

Table 2: Top 10 Garden Butterflies 2010

Dorset	National
1. Red Admiral	1. Peacock
2. Large White	2 = Small White
3. Small White	Red Admiral
4. Brimstone	4. Large White
5. Small Tortoiseshell	5 = Small Tortoiseshell
6. Speckled Wood	Comma
7. Meadow Brown	7. Speckled Wood
8. Peacock	8. Orange Tip
9. Gatekeeper	9. Holly Blue
10. Comma	10. Meadow Brown

It can be seen that in Dorset eight out of the ten species are the same in 2011 and 2010. **Orange Tip** and **Holly Blue** came in and **Meadow Brown** and **Comma** dropped out, but only to 11th and 12th place respectively.

If we now look at the national picture, some interesting differences emerge. In Dorset, **Red Admiral** is the species consistently in top spot whereas nationally it is **Peacock** (although only by a small amount). However, Red Admiral is also in first position in Wales so this species may be rather more prevalent in the western parts of the country. **Gatekeeper** and **Brimstone** both appear in Dorset's list whereas nationally they are just outside, lying in 11th and 12th position respectively. In fact both species are seen in more than 80% of Dorset gardens whereas nationally Gatekeepers were only seen in 73% and Brimstones in only two thirds of gardens.

In 2010 **Orange Tips** did well in the British Isles as a whole. appearing in 79% of gardens, a full 10 percentage points higher than the figure in Dorset. However, we more than made up for that in 2011 when they were then seen in nearly 87% of Dorset gardens. We will have to wait for Margaret Vickery's report to find out whether they did as well nationally. The results for 2010 make it appear that **Holly Blues** fared better generally than in Dorset, but whilst they only came in 11th position here they were recorded in 76.7% gardens, slightly more than the national figure of 75%. Moreover, they improved both their position and percentage in 2011 so again we will have to see what happened nationally.

Further down the table, **Common Blues** put in an appearance in about half of Dorset gardens, but Margaret Vickery reported that the national figure of 47% in 2010 was 10% up on the previous year and the highest it had been for seven years. Thus this species seems to do relatively well in Dorset. It surprised me a little that **Green-veined Whites** were not so frequently seen in Dorset (57.8% compared with 64% nationally) as they seem quite a widespread and relatively common butterfly here. **Painted Ladies** were understandably up on the national figure (46.6% against 39%), but of course the numbers of this migrant butterfly vary greatly from year to year. **Marbled Whites** are more common in Dorset gardens (18.1% compared to 8% nationally) as are **Walls** (17.2% and 13% respectively), populations of which now appear to be coming increasingly concentrated in coastal areas.

After such variable weather in the spring and summer of 2011, it is hard to tell what the prospects are for butterflies this year. By the time you read this we will all have a better idea. Many thanks to everyone who sent in garden records last year and I hope that you will not be discouraged from continuing to record this year. New garden recorders too are always welcome. Unlike other forms of recording, you can do it on the spur of the moment whenever it is warm and sunny in your garden and moreover you don't have to walk very far! I would appreciate it if records could be sent to me by the end of November or soon after that. My contact details are on the back cover.

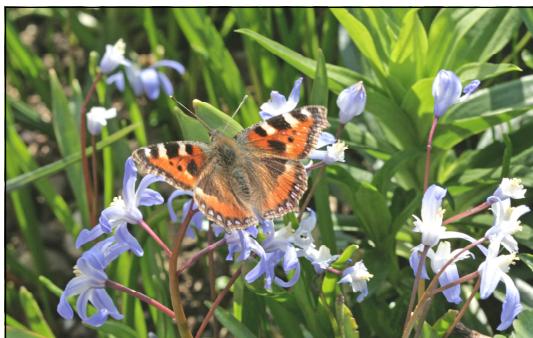
The Weymouth Relief Road: a wake-up call from President Brian Dicker

It is very disappointing that the embankment of the Weymouth Relief Road between the Ridgeway, South of Dorchester, and Weymouth has not filled the Branch as a whole with the enthusiasm that it has inspired in me and several other members. Elsewhere in the country such a landscape project would have been badly done and greeted with protests of desecration and environmental destruction. Here we have all the signs of excellence, and Branch members are not rushing to monitor its success. This summer we are running walks on 23 June, 22 July and 18 August to see the progress of the habitat and record the incoming species. Come along and look: Richard Belding, Georgie Laing, Adrian Neil and I will be pleased to share our enthusiasm and ideas for the future. Please see the Events List for details.

[Editor's Note: If you have last summer's Newsletter, DBN 68, you can re-read the article on pp 20-22 by Dr Phil Sterling, Dorset's County Ecologist, whose vision was responsible for the scheme.]

Glory of the Snows

By Lawrie de Whalley



Butterflies have been busy nectaring on elegant pale blue Chionodoxa flowers this March in our mid Dorset garden. A pair of Small Tortoiseshells spent 15 minutes thrusting their proboscis into the flower heads. Later several Brimstones hung on the plants drinking for even longer, their complementary colours adding to the joy for the observer.

Nectar flowers for butterflies are few and far between in our garden in March, making this an important addition to our attempt to prolong the nectar season. Regular use by butterflies and bees has been our pleasure to watch for many years on these plants, not only the 2012 hot spring.

The plant is a bulb which divides and also sets seed readily on our light frequently disturbed soil in a south west facing bed. Belonging to a family where names Scilla and Siberica are also used and disputed in the horticultural press, it may be we are fortunate to have a good strain. On a recent visit to Kew Gardens there was a triangle of Chionodoxa 100 yards each side naturalised in grass. The comment by our guide was: "they hybridise so readily names are not straightforward." They were buzzing with bees on a hot day.

Earlier purchases labelled Siberica lasted only a couple of years. Chionodoxa really increased in numbers (200 plants in a 12 inch square) when I scraped the soil back from a concrete path edge to let water run off. The Chionodoxa seeded there and now have spread across the bed. The height is about 4 inches. Not bad for a £1 packet of 10! They all die down in May so the bed is free for other plants and they thrive on soil disturbance. As I write on 5th April hundreds more onion-like leaves have pushed up from self sown seed. We will be happy to share our nectar producing hybrid with members.

The name Chionodoxa is Greek and translates as Glory of the Snows. I have visions of Small Tortoiseshells and other butterflies migrating through mountains and finding these flowers at the snow melt edges to top up with vital nectar to continue their journey north or west. As the ice age retreated 18000 years ago the bare ground colonised with this type of nectar plant lured our favourite butterflies towards Europe.

Lyn Pullen updates us on what's happening with our website

The website was first set up by Anna Barwick and has been run superbly, by her (thanks Anna!), but the demands of her work coupled with ill health have meant that recently she has not been able to give it the time it needs. She has therefore handed the role over, and it will now be undertaken by me with the help of “techie” Steve Bennett. Steve will do all the complicated stuff with the website as a vehicle for our information, and I will co-ordinate and input the actual information.

I want us to have a good website, but I want to avoid taking on more than we can maintain. My priority will be keeping the events and the sightings up to date, as they are of interest to a lot of visitors to the website and to Dorset.

We are aware that BC HQ are working on ways of helping all branches with their websites, whilst still allowing a considerable degree of freedom for local approaches. They are consulting with the branches at the moment, so nothing is going to happen overnight, but this could be a useful future development.

My thoughts on the various sections of the website are:-

Species. We will only keep butterfly species listed on the site, and this will be aimed mainly at helping people to know where certain species can be seen in Dorset (excluding those we want to keep quiet about, of course). For moths, we can't hope to do as good a job as the Dorset Moth Group website does, so we will link through to it rather than trying to duplicate its effort, but I will try to ensure moths are well represented on our website.

Places. There are numerous great places in Dorset to see butterflies and day-flying moths and I'd like to get a good number of them on the site, but I will need considerable input from those who know more about the various places. I'll probably start by putting up the various sites we feature in the species list and the events list, so these two sets of information tie in together, and add any transect sites that are suitable.

Dorset Reserves (part of the “Places” tab). We have information up about each Reserve, but it would be good if the text was more welcoming - I'll get to that in due course. We really need maps; I think HQ have aerial photos of each, though personally I prefer maps.

News. This page had reduced to only give links to our latest newsletters. I've started to put other snippets in, helped by receiving sightings destined for the

website and having attended the AGM, but I'll be asking for other input. My health is such that I'm not currently attending Committee meetings, though I'm hopeful that when I drop my hours at work in June, I'll be able to start going to some of them again.

Events. I've been talking to Arthur Bryant and we'll be putting dates up in batches as he finalises them and will be able to add short-notice events.

Sightings: An important part of the website, but hard work to maintain. Being able to use this method of reporting sightings definitely helps encourage the public to add what they have seen, but they need to see what they have reported published on the site to encourage them to keep going. Unfortunately, this part of the site had fallen by the wayside, but several of us are working to pick it up again, and sightings from the beginning of this year are now shown (as this is written in early April). The current system calls for all the information sent in via the website to be re-typed, so the top priority we have given Steve Bennett is to come up with an automated system, and we've discovered Hampshire Branch already has one and are willing to share it. There will always be a slight delay built in, to give Bill a chance to query unlikely records.

Recording. Bill Shreeves and I produce the "Counting Dorset's Butterflies and Moths" booklet between us, so I'll be using it as the basis for this part of the site. There is a danger of it seeming complex and possibly putting people off, so I will be thinking about how to best approach it.

Photos. I cannot access the page which should be linked to the "photos" tab



A group in Bulgaria, taking special photographs..... Recognise anyone?

at the moment, and until I can, nothing will happen in this section. Having bounced ideas around with a few Committee members, my intention is to make it a space for Branch Members only to have their photos put up: we could not cope with the numbers of photos we might receive otherwise. I'm proposing a limitation of two photos being the most sent in at any one time (unless there are exceptions, like a sequence of photos showing an event), and

we will have a set space for photos, so when more new ones are received, old ones gradually drop off. We will ask that we are given the right to use the images in our publicity, for our sale goods (e.g. photographic greetings cards) and our Branch collection of photos; we will be able to attribute them, if required, on the website, but not otherwise: it's too complex and we do not have the resources. If these terms are not acceptable to anyone, they will not be able to have their photos put up. Sorry if this sounds a bit harsh, but our resources are limited, and therefore it needs to be kept simple.

Committee. I intend to re-label this section "Dorset Branch" and expand it to talk about the branch and what it does, as well as list the committee members.

Gardening. What is up there now was originally supplied by me, so I'm fairly happy with it (!) and will be leaving it as it is for now. I'd love to add a gardening-for-butterflies blog in due course, but first things first....

Links. These are very limited at the moment, and I've no strong feelings about what we put here - something may evolve in time.

Join. This currently takes you straight through to the joining form on the HQ site, and I'll be leaving this as it is at least for now.

General Points

I know a major problem for Anna in keeping the site fresh was lack of items being sent to her to put on it. I'm aiming to be a bit more pro-active, but I can't write it all, so please contribute.

There are issues with the site at the moment, the most obvious of which is the lack of pictures in some places that are obviously intended to have them. Steve knows about the problem, but unfortunately he is currently unwell, so we are not sure when this will be solved. I'm replacing species pictures where I can, but I do not hold photos of our reserves.

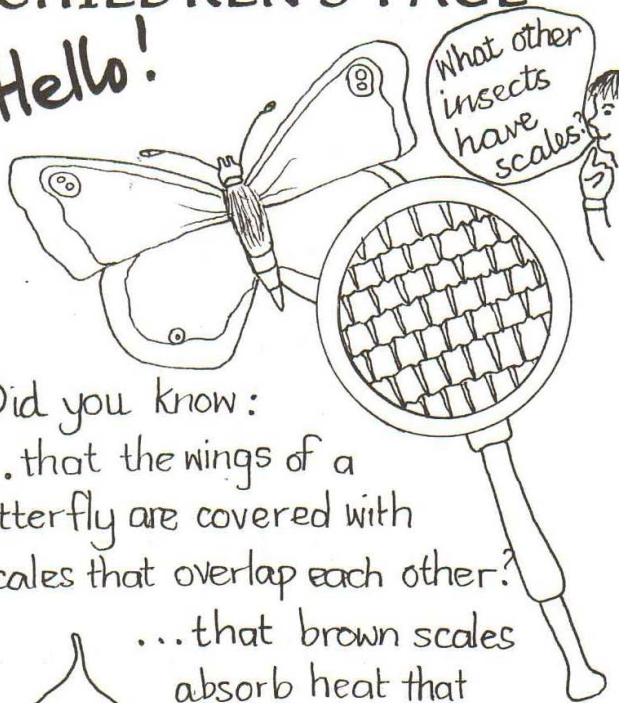
As I add more information, it will become all the more important to have a clear structure for the site and the ability to find all pages from the tabs, as well as a site map, so I'll be working on this with Steve.

Please tell me of any typos or broken links you find within the website, but more importantly, please contribute ideas, information, photos etc. We all prefer to read lively websites, but you only get out of anything what you put in, and that means we need input from multiple contributors.

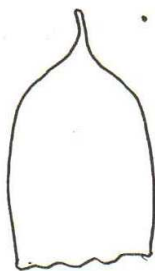
I'm looking forward to seeing the website move forward, and I hope you enjoy it too. You can contact me, Lyn Pullen, on cobblers@btinternet.com, with comments or ideas.

CHILDREN'S PAGE

Hello!



Did you know:
...that the wings of a
butterfly are covered with
scales that overlap each other?



...that brown scales
absorb heat that
helps the muscles make
the butterfly fly?

See you soon!
Bridget

Answer: Moths!

Bournemouth Naturally

An introduction to this new undertaking by Project Officer Heather Dixon.

Bournemouth Naturally is a new and exciting project that aims to build up a picture of the biodiversity in the green spaces of Bournemouth by getting people out there recording and discovering the wildlife on their doorstep.

Funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund Bournemouth Naturally has been set up by the Bournemouth Natural Science Society in partnership with Bournemouth Borough Council and Dorset Wildlife Trust, and with the support of conservation organisations including Butterfly Conservation and Amphibian and Reptile Conservation.

The project is aimed at everyone who has an interest in wildlife, experienced surveyors and complete beginners. We hope to get many more people observing wildlife on the many wonderful sites around Bournemouth and using online recording systems to build up a more complete database of wildlife records. We will be running a series of species ID workshops covering a diversity of species groups, giving talks to community groups, promoting biodiversity and the importance of recording at family events around Bournemouth and we will be offering a range of Bournemouth Naturally guided walks on green space sites.

If you can help in any way or would like to find out more about the project then just get in touch with me, the project officer, Heather Dixon, heatherdixon@bnss.org.uk, or visit our webpage www.bnss.org.uk/bournemouth-naturally.html which will give details of all of our planned events. We are also holding drop in sessions 2-4pm on the first Wednesday of every month at our BNSS base (39 Christchurch Road, Bournemouth BH1 3NS). All are welcome to come along for a chat and find out more about how you can get involved.

The Branch supported the funding bid, and is very pleased that the project is now getting under way. Many Branch members live in the Poole-Bournemouth conurbation, so this could be for you!

Brian Dicker commented a couple of years ago that "Bournemouth has half a dozen local sites where butterflies are regularly monitored, with locally important species which reflect some of the habitat types of 60 or 100 years ago. If you add the neighbours of Christchurch and Poole the area is of even more significance. It was also important as having the first documented overwintering of the Clouded Yellow caterpillars in 1998... We believe that this also occurs at Durlston, Portland and Lyme undercliff, because of synchronous sightings of the butterfly in March, but have not actually observed the larvae." See overleaf for more on Clouded Yellows.

Is the migrant Clouded Yellow now breeding in Dorset?

Adapted from a press release by Lyn Pullen

The Clouded Yellow is a butterfly mainly seen in southern Europe and North Africa, but it spreads north each summer and variable numbers reach our southern shores, usually in May or June. The Dorset Branch has, however, received three reports of sightings already this year. The earliest was in Weymouth 19 March 2012, followed by two spotted on 24 March at Dursilton Head and another on the South West Coast Path near Swanage on 27 March. A fourth was reported on the wing at Chesil Cove on 29 March on the Portland Bird Observatory website, www.portlandbirdobs.org.uk.

There was evidence of Clouded Yellows overwintering as caterpillars on the Southbourne cliffs in Bournemouth in the late 1990s, discovered and documented by Branch member Michael Skelton, and these early 2012 sightings might suggest it has succeeded again in Dorset. Or perhaps we are in for a bumper migration year like 1996, when hundreds were seen? The butterfly does breed in this country later in the year, after the first arrivals lay their eggs on legumes, particularly clover.

Bill Shreeves commented: "Our cool and damp winters usually prevent this lovely butterfly from making it through to the next year, but we have just had a very mild winter, so maybe this time it has survived. Global climate change is having its effect and although it is often negative, for our enjoyment of this butterfly it may be a good thing."



The Clouded Yellow is a very distinctive butterfly, looking almost orange when on the wing. Richard Lewington calls it marigold yellow. The only similar butterfly in this country is the male Brimstone, which is a more lemon yellow colour. When settled, the Clouded Yellow hardly ever opens its wings, so the rich orange uppersides with broad black borders are rarely seen close to. The deep yellow

underwings have a bold black spot in the centre of the forewing, and in the centre of each hindwing is "a pair of silver spots outlined in reddish brown forming a conspicuous figure of 8," as Jeremy Thomas describes it.

Wind Speed reporting on Transect Walking Forms

By President Brian Dicker

Wind speeds, or wind force, can be a vexed question, especially when walking in woodland, in the shelter of trees [*for the ramparts and ditches of Badbury Rings, Ed.*] but common sense must rule.

The Beaufort scale for wind speed or wind force is a set of numbers from 0 to 12 devised in 1805 to standardize references to the effects of wind on the sails of a man-of-war, then the main ship of the Royal Navy, from "just sufficient to give steerage" to "that which no canvas sails could withstand." At zero, all sails would be up; at six, half of the sails would have been taken down; and at twelve, all sails would be stowed away. Later it was changed to help sailors report sea conditions, relating wind speed to wave height, as it still does.

When used on land, however, it has been adapted to tree behaviour and this will be your point of reference. A table is given in the Transect Walking booklet 'Counting Dorset's Butterflies and Moth,' quoting the effects on trees and equating the scale with miles per hour. Butterfly walking takes place in wind speeds from 0 to 4, often referred to as Force 4. The point of this note is to relate the Beaufort scale to the BBC daily weather forecast as given on the television weather charts or retrieved from the BBC website. The wind speeds are given there in miles per hour, miles/hour or mph, but usually just as a number, with the units left off.

While in sheltered areas, the wind speed will be less than that forecast in an open landscape, the forecast will give you an idea of the value and direction to enter on the form. And please do not enter a range of wind forces! It is tempting to tell your co-ordinator that the wind varied from 1 to 3, for example, but regrettably only one figure can be entered into the Transect Walker database. Bill Shreeves confirmed at the round of Walkers' Meetings in March that it is the wind force at the end of the walk which counts

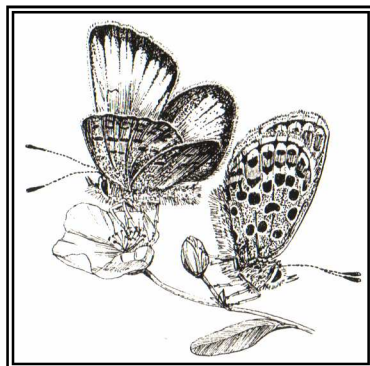
Here is the scale again:

<u>Beaufort scale</u>	<u>Wind Speed (mph)</u>	<u>Scale</u>	<u>mph</u>
0	<1	4	13 to 17
1	1 to 3	5	18 to 24
2	4 to 7	6	25 to 30
3	8 to 12		

[After some research in Wikipedia, your Editor cannot resist adding that (a) in areas much affected by typhoons, such as Taiwan and China, the Beaufort scale is extended up to Force 17, (b) "The scale devised in 1805 by Francis Beaufort (later Rear Admiral Sir Francis Beaufort), while serving on HMS Woolwich had a long and complex evolution, from the previous work of others, including Daniel Defoe a century before, to when Beaufort was a top administrator in the Royal Navy in the 1830s," and (c) it was first used during Darwin's voyage on HMS Beagle.]

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 M Adams	Shillingstone
Mr K & Mrs K Butler	Dorchester
Mr M Chettleburgh	Poole
Mrs S Davis	West Coker, Somerset
Mr B Dewstow-Newitt	Broadstone
Mr J & Mrs B Dixon	Bournemouth
Mr P & Mrs S Fereday	Ferndown
Mr H & Mrs H Gent	Bridport
Miss B Gillings	Bournemouth
Mrs S Gledhill	Portland
Mrs H & Mr T Green	Tincleton
Ms L Hamilton	Weymouth
Mr A King	Bridport
Mr D Lambert & Family	Fordingbridge, Hampshire
Miss M Lowe	Wimborne
Ms S Mitchell	Bournemouth
Mrs T Nash	Christchurch
Mr A & Mrs B Page	Charminster
Mr S Parekh & Ms D Blake	Melplash
Miss J Parvin & Mr L Bevis	Wimborne
Miss C Squibb & Mr J Spokes	Bournemouth
Mrs K Stone	Bournemouth
Mrs J Thorne	Hamworthy



Silver-studded Blue pair, drawn by Branch Member Eric Rose

Newsletter Deadlines

31 August

for mid October
Publication

31 December

for mid February
Publication

15 April

for mid June
Publication

Don't forget! These are latest possible dates. Please try to assist by sending your material to the Editor sooner if at all possible.

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

Treasurer's Note

**Bank balance at
31 March 2012:**

**£20,838.11
(Including grant awards for
specific purposes)**

Committee Meetings

**All members are welcome to
attend Committee Meetings!**

**The next meeting is
at 7.15 pm on**

Thursday 12 July 2012

**in the Community Room, Town
Clerk's Office, Church Lane,
Blandford DT11 7AD
(near the main Post Office)**

**PLEASE check beforehand
with Sue Rawles on
01305 268471 for directions and
to ensure that there have been
no last minute changes
(sometimes there are!)**

BUTTERFLY CONSERVATION

Company limited by guarantee,
registered in England (2206468)

Registered Office: Manor Yard, East Lulworth,
Wareham, Dorset BH20 5QP

Charity registered in England & Wales (254937)
and in Scotland (SCO39268)

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Some of the illustrations used in this
Newsletter courtesy of Readers Digest, from
their publication "Field Guide to the
Butterflies and Other Insects of Britain"

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

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Dorset Branch Who's Who

www.dorsetbutterflies.com

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** = Branch Committee Member*