



Butterfly Conservation Dorset Branch
Newsletter No 82

Dorset Butterfly Report for 2015

www.dorsetbutterflies.com



**Butterfly
Conservation**

Saving butterflies, moths and our environment

Counting butterflies

From Nigel Spring, Dorset Branch Chair

Welcome to our 2015 Butterfly Report. We hope you enjoy the new super-colour format! Butterflies are such stunning colourful creatures that it seems logical that our publications should be in full colour too. Many other branches have already gone over to this format and with the recent huge changes in print technology, the cost of colour is very little more than that of black and white. We would welcome members' comments on this.



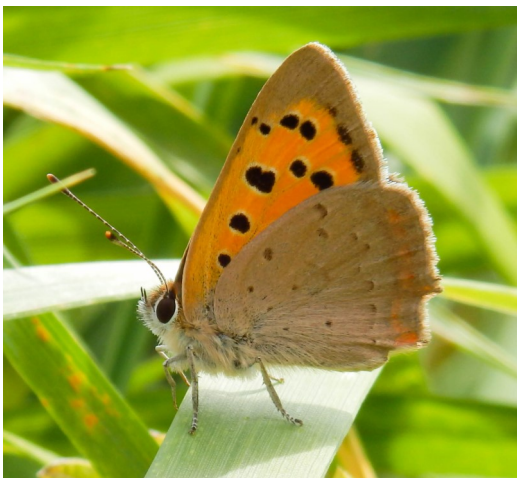
As in previous years, the 2015 records show both gains and losses. Some of these are part of regular fluctuations but some of them are far more dramatic. It is wonderful to see how well the large gaudy species fared in 2015 - species like the Brimstone and the Silver-washed and Dark Green Fritillaries. As in a Painted Lady year (we are still looking forward to the next one!), having large colourful butterflies easily visible in our countryside is a very good way to generate interest among the public.

We can explain some of the fluctuations in numbers by linking them to the oscillations in the abundance of predators or parasitoids, as is the case with Marsh Fritillaries, Holly Blues and others. Other ups and downs can be matched to the variations in our unpredictable climate. We are very grateful to Judy Westgate for providing her meteorological data as usual, even if, sadly, the figures do not make for very happy reading! Several months in 2015, important in the life-cycles of our more critical species, were colder, wetter and had less sunshine than the 30 year average: not good news. The drop in numbers of the Brown Argus may be due to the poor weather in early summer when the first brood females should have been laying eggs.

Much more worrying are the drastic changes that cannot be easily explained. The continuing declines in Wood White and Small Pearl-bordered Fritillary do not seem to be explicable in terms of the lack of suitable habitat. The Chalkhill Blue has crashed in numbers, particularly away from the coast in Dorset (and indeed in Wiltshire). It could be that the same climatic changes which are favouring Adonis Blues and Silver-

spotted Skippers are rendering the same downland habitats less suitable for the Chalkhill Blues. And now it seems that the Small Copper has joined the list of species whose numbers are plummeting.

The graph on page 10 shows that in three of the last four years of counts, the number of species showing declines exceeds the number showing gains. A very sobering picture! Michael McCarthy in his book



Small Copper. Charlie Steadman.

'The Moth Snowstorm' refers to what he calls the 'great thinning', the loss of half the biodiversity of the UK in less than half a century, reflected in the reduction of moth numbers, the almost total disappearance of hayfields, the loss of swallows, martins and bats as a result of the crash in the abundance of dungflies and dung beetles since the introduction of avermectins for worming farm animals and horses, to name but a few. We are very fortunate to live in a very rural county, but much of Dorset is now effectively a wildlife desert, with fields of cereal, rape, maize for silage and intensive dairy pastures, all grown as monocultures with no room for wildflowers or the insects and other animals that rely on them.

We are going to have to work very energetically both as individuals and through organisations like Butterfly Conservation to try to bring about changes in the management of the land around us which will lead to a reversal of these frightening trends.

Finally, huge thanks to Bill Shreeves, Martin Raper and all their assistants who process the vast number of records that are sent in; also to Lyn Pullen for putting together this wonderfully comprehensive and attractive report; and last and most importantly, to all the 'foot soldiers' on the ground who devote hundreds of man-hours to recording butterflies: all your hard work enables us to produce this report and the records on which the future conservation of our butterflies can be based.

Nigel Spring

Counting butterflies

Counting butterflies sounds very simple: go out and note down how many you see. There are, however, two complicating aspects.

Firstly, you need to encourage people to do the counting: virtually all our records are from unpaid volunteers.



Brimstone. Andrew Cooper

Then, what suits one person does not suit another: one needs to keep it simple and just jot down what they see while going about their daily business, another is housebound but can get out into their garden, and

another likes to go out on hunts for certain species.

Secondly, how comparable are all these figures from a multitude of sources? There is no certain answer, but, statistically, the more records we get, the better the overall accuracy. However, there is a method called transect walking which calls for a certain place to be walked every week from April to September, under set rules, which gives us the best data for comparing years.

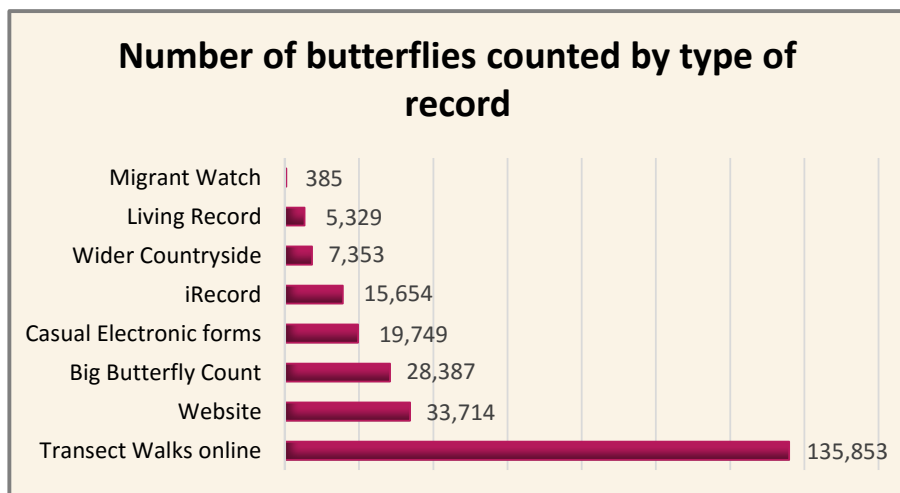
Even how people like to send in their counts varies. Some like to type them into a computer, and some prefer to stick to paper and leave the typing to someone else.

We have a number of counting scenarios and different ways to send in the records, so there is something for everyone. You can see the full range in our “Counting Dorset’s Butterflies” booklet, or on our website.

2015: The number of results

Transsect walking produces the most butterfly data, but there are other sources, as shown in the graph below. While transect results are scientifically good, they are limited to certain months, so our growing number of records via the website, and via national systems such as iRecord and Living Record are important for filling in the gaps.

The Wider Countryside Survey has its own importance, in that it is a truly random survey (albeit only done in July and August), whereas transect walks tend to be at butterfly hot-spots, and there is probably a tendency for these to also predominate on the website. Please remember recording 'ordinary' butterflies is as important as noting the rare species.



The above graph does not include the records we usually receive from the BTO (British Trust for Ornithology), the garden records or any records received on paper, which had not been added when these results were compiled.

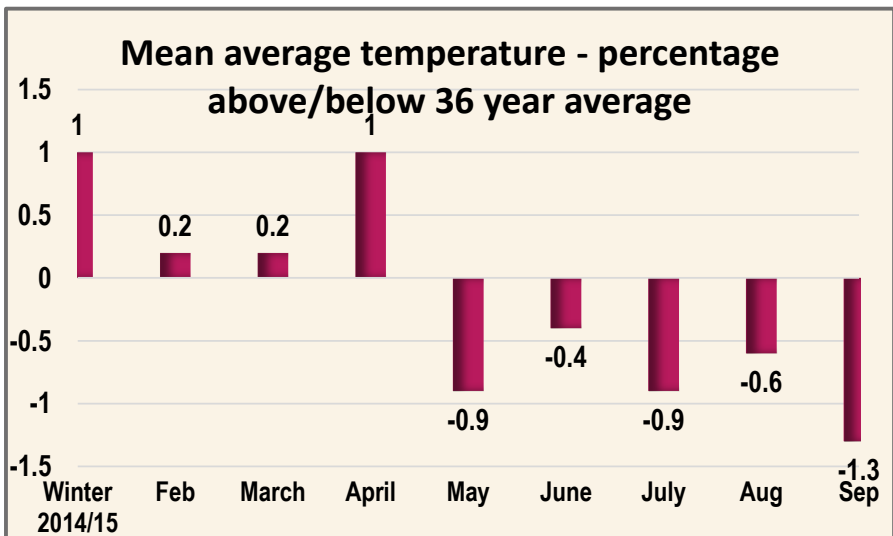
2015: Weather

Whether butterflies flourish or struggle is dependant on a range of factors, one of which is the weather, so what was the weather like in 2015?

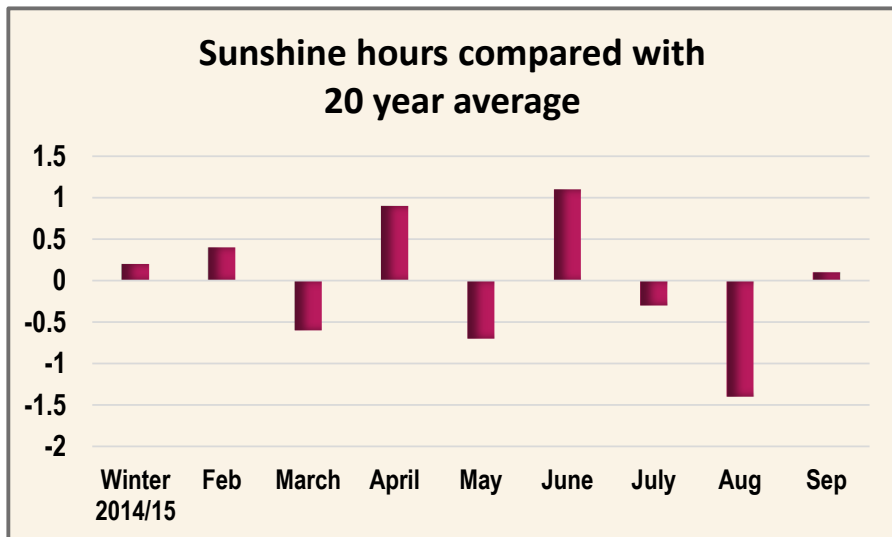
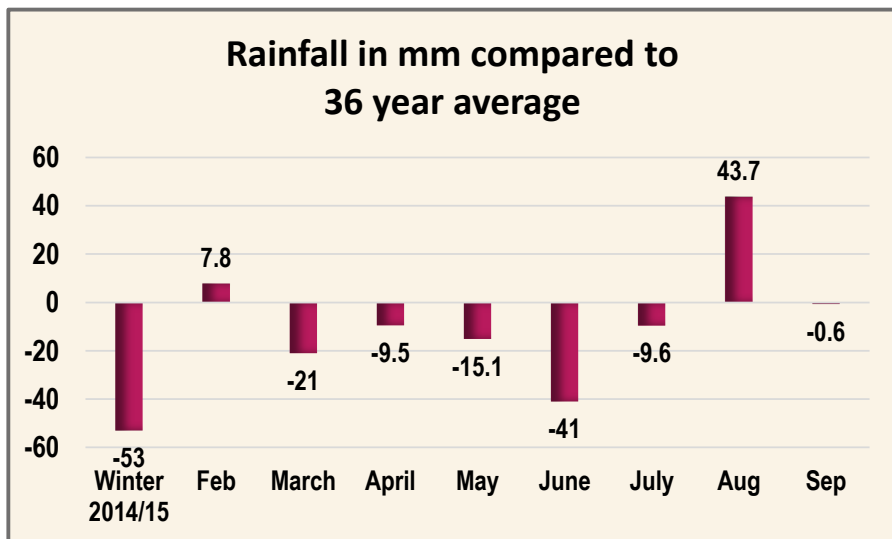
As you can see from the graphs, the temperatures were low, with five months below the average, compared to only one in 2014. These months fell in May, June, July, August and September. Rainfall was also down: six periods below the

average, compared to three in 2014, being winter 14/15, March, April, May, June, July and September. Sunshine hours were below average for four months: March, May, July and August.

How individual butterfly species react to weather is very complex and under-studied, but generally warmer, drier, sunny weather in spring/summer is good, as long as there is no drought or heatwave.



2015: Weather



Our thanks to Judy Westgate for supplying the weather data, which is based on a location in Fontmell Magna, North Dorset.

2015 - How good a year?

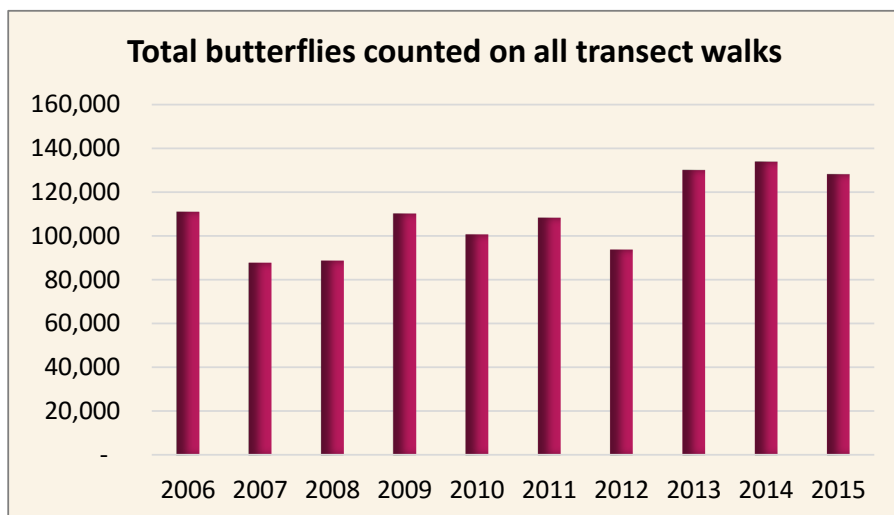
The answer to the question “how good a butterfly year was it in 2015?” is not clear: results were very mixed.

The number of times any specific transect was not walked was greater than in 2014 and 2013: only 22 out of 62 walks produced results for all 26 weeks of the walking season. This may reflect the poorer weather.

62 sites were walked in 2015.
Three walked the previous year

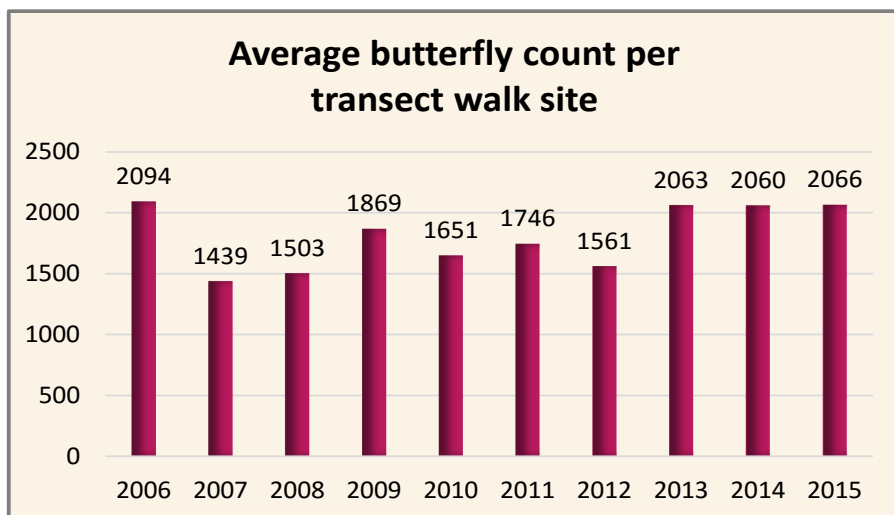
dropped out: Kingcombe Pound, Deadmoor Common, and Durlston Meadows. With an entirely voluntary workforce, it can be hard to keep a walk going, though we try very hard to do so. We are always in need of more walkers, so contact Bill Shreeves if you could help.

The number of butterflies counted was the third best since 2006, with the highest number at one site being 6,543 at Durlston East.



2015 - How good a year?

The average butterfly count per site walked was good - second only in the last ten years to 2006.



An interesting way of looking at a year is to calculate how many species on the combined walks did well by coming up from zero counts in the previous year and how many did badly by coming down to zero. 2015 had equal numbers of species in each direction. The place with the highest number of species up from zero was Ailwood (near Corfe Castle), with six.

The highest number of species falling to zero was at Ferry Road (Studland), with eight.



Silver-studded Blue. John Woodruff

2015 - How good a year?

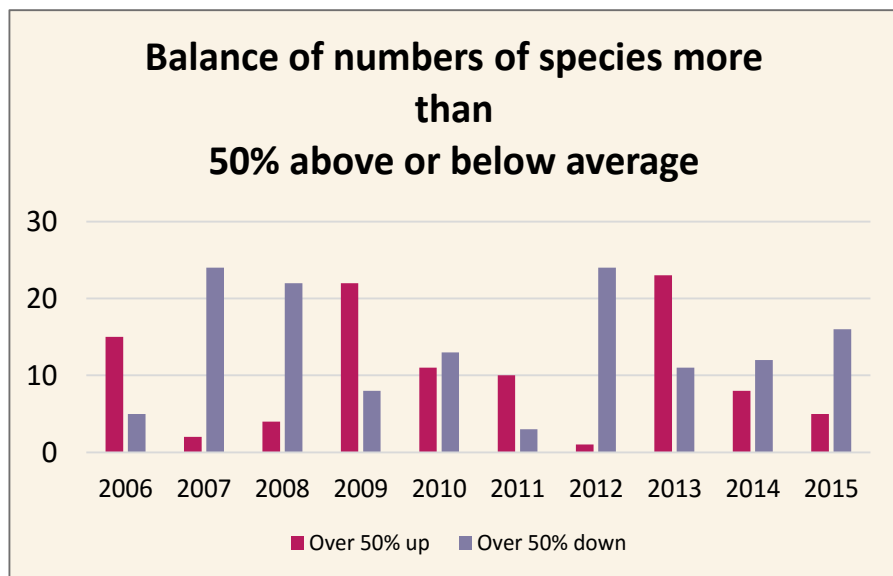
A measure of success or failure we use every year is to look at where over half the transect walks have a large number of species which increase or decrease compared to either or both of the totals for the previous year and the annual average count for the species, which we term “winners” and “losers”.

2015 had far more down than up: 16 as opposed to five, but this statistic does vary

considerably from year to year.

The walk with the lowest percentage of species below 2014 was Kinson Common, with 22%. The walk with the lowest percentage of species below their annual averages was Redhill with 26%.

All the commentary on pages 11-21 is based on transect walk results.



2015 - Winners

BUTTERFLY OF THE YEAR: BRIMSTONE

The Brimstone had a record count of 3,567 if you add the totals on all the transect walks together. Cashmoor (near Blandford) achieved the highest total of 520.

Photo: Nigel Tooth



Five species had gains of more than 50% on both 2014 and their annual averages.

1. Brimstone.
2. White-letter Hairstreak
3. Purple Hairstreak
4. Silver-washed Fritillary
5. Dark Green Fritillary

It is interesting that four of the five species which gained on their annual averages were single-brooded species. The Brimstone is also single-brooded, but is different in that the adult butterfly hibernates through the winter.

The Fritillaries overwinter as caterpillars, Hairstreaks as eggs.

Brimstone

The success of this species might be due to gains for the caterpillar and chrysalis stage in summer (highly unlikely), the warm wet winter of 2014/15 (doubtful) or the extended flying period made possible by the warm, dry and sunny April (very likely).

Brimstones always seem to do better in the spring, when they emerge from hibernation, rather than in the late summer, when the new generation are feeding up to survive the winter: Cashmoor had 337 in spring and 183 in summer; Badbury Rings 151/95 and Moors Valley 213/41.

2015 - Winners

White-letter Hairstreak

This butterfly is only recorded on one transect walk in Dorset: our Butterfly Reserve at Alner's Gorse.

Here it was 100% up on both 2014 and its annual average. A lot of conservation work has been carried out at this location, so hopefully we are getting it right.

Other sites where we know of it include Bindon Hill (Lulworth), Harman's Cross and Wareham Common, plus a new site discovered at Puddletown.

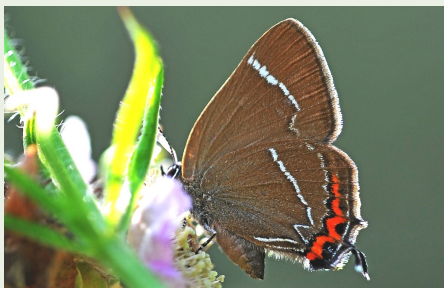
This butterfly uses elm on which to breed and was very hard hit by Dutch elm disease. In the records for 2010-14 it is only recorded in 17 kilometre squares and is declining, though it is probably seriously under-recorded.

Look for the White-letter Hairstreak in 2017.

Although the species prefers wych elm, they will use English or smooth elm. Watch the tops of them in the last week of June and the first week of July (at this time the Purple Hairstreak should not be out, so you cannot confuse them). The males fly around in the tops of trees, so may be around the elm or nearby. In July you may find the butterflies lower down, nectaring on flowers.

See our website for a list of places they have been previously recorded:

www.dorsetbutterflies.com.



White-letter Hairstreak. Mark Pike

2015 - Winners

Purple Hairstreak

This is found on five of our Transect Walks, 60% of which increased by over 50% on 2014.

The top sites were Alners Gorse, where 19 were counted, Moors Valley with 11 and Lydlinch with eight. In the 2010-2014 period, they show as declining, but they are **probably the most badly recorded butterfly in Dorset.**



Purple Hairstreak. Tim Melling.

Like the White-letter Hairstreak, Purple Hairstreaks very inconsiderately spend most of their time in trees. If you are able to access the Internet, there is an interesting article by D E Newland: "Behaviour of Purple Hairstreak butterflies in the canopy of oak trees at Sheringham Park, Norfolk". He was able to watch these butterflies from a platform which looked down on the tree tops, and concluded that they favoured dips in the canopy, presumably because of the shelter afforded.

Look for Purple Hairstreaks.

The butterflies are known to be fairly sedentary during the day, and Mr Newland recorded peak activity as late as 7.00pm, so get those binoculars out and go for an evening stroll to your local oak trees! They are on the wing in July and August.

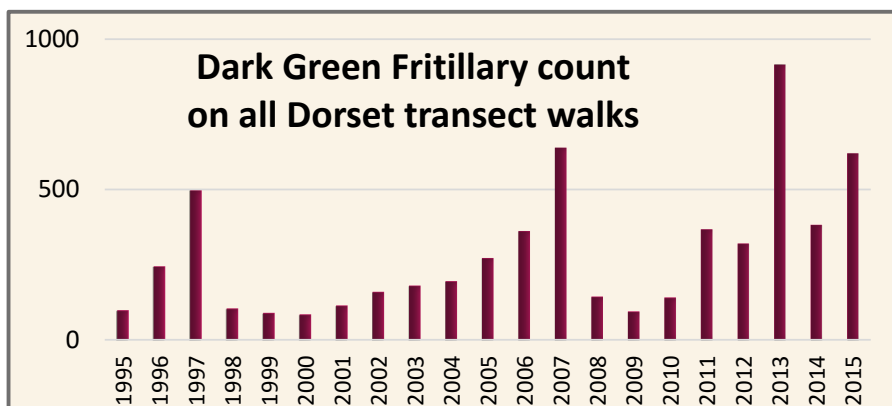
2015 - Winners

Dark Green Fritillary

There are 26 walk sites recording this butterfly, and 69% of them had gains of more than 50% on annual averages. The best site was Melbury Down, with a count of 122.



Dark Green Fritillary. Peter Lister.



Silver-washed Fritillary

59% of sites gained over 50% on annual averages, though the species dropped in the total walks count compared to the last two years.

Top site was Lydlinch with 160. Six Valezina form were identified.



SWF Valezina. Chris Rowland.

2015 - Losers

16 species suffered above 50% losses on either 2014, or their annual average - or both. This compares to 12 losers in 2014 and 14 in 2013.

1. Brown Argus (both)
2. Small Copper (both)
3. Duke of Burgundy (On av)
4. Silver-spotted Skipper (On av)
5. Chalkhill Blue (On Av)
6. Wood White (On Av)
7. Small Pearl-bordered Fritillary (On Av)
8. Painted Lady (On Av)
9. Adonis Blue (On Av)
10. Green Hairstreak (On Av)
11. Wall (On Av)
12. Small White (On Av)
13. Grizzled Skipper (On Av)
14. Small Tortoiseshell (On 2014)
15. Clouded Yellow (On 2014)
16. Green-veined White. (On 2014)

We will look at some of these in more detail.



Brown Argus. Chris Becker.

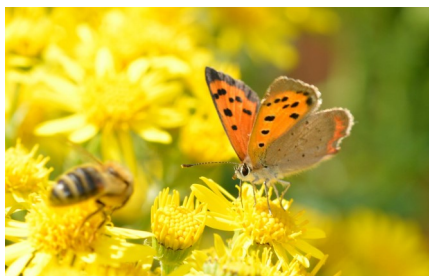
Brown Argus
This collapsed on a majority of its 30 sites: by 67% on 2014 and 80% on its annual averages.

This was probably brought about by the very poor egg-laying weather of early summer, which left the second broods struggling.

The top count was at Ballard Down, with 186.

2015 - Losers

The Small Copper was the other species which declined against both the previous year and its annual average. It declined by over 50% on its 52 sites; 52% of its sites were below 2014 and 79% below annual averages. Top count was 50 at Lorton Meadows. This brought



Small Copper. John Van Crugten

to an end its recovery between 2012 and 2014

The collapse was also probably a result of poor summer weather on egg laying and caterpillar survival. Some experts think that declines in the Wall might be attributed to failed third broods in October. Like the Wall, Small

Coppers have the third brood and there are no transect walks in October to measure this.

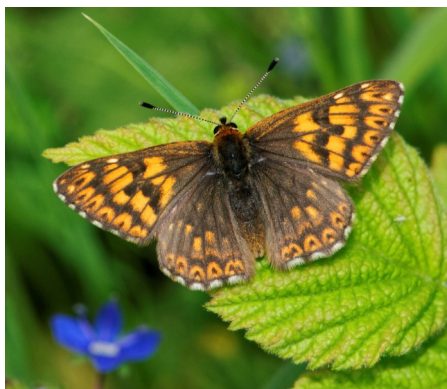
Volunteers were asked to extend the walking season last year but few attempted this in Dorset.

The Duke of Burgundy has been a loser for the last three years. It is now only found on the walks at Wimborne St Giles and Cerne, where it has seen a spectacular revival - hopefully at least partly due to all the conservation work being carried out there for it. They have been lost on the North Dorset sites where they used to be.

Measured by how many kilometre squares in which they have been recorded, which takes in data beyond just transects, there has been a loss of 36% between the recording periods of 1995-9 and 2010-14.

The good news is that a

2015 - Losers



Duke of Burgundy. Adrian Reid.
landscape-wide survival plan has been instigated by Butterfly Conservation HQ for West Dorset. Dukes have also been seen at Brandis Down (opposite Fontmell) for the first time since the 1990s, in the same place as they were then.

Silver Spotted Skipper has remained confined to Fontmell Down except for a colony on Martin Down (really in Hants), plus about three records of ones that strayed on to Clubmen's Down, Compton Down and Melbury Beacon plus an introduced colony on

Hambledon, which failed.

On the transect route at Fontmell, it had its first ever zero since recording started in 1980. It is not extinct but no longer appears on the walk route. This is worrying, because it shows that the bare short swards and rich nectar areas which it likes are probably shrinking. It is also infuriating that, though the management in the past has tried to follow all the research suggestions, the colony has never expanded as is happening in the south east. Possibly their climate has been getting warmer and drier than in the west.

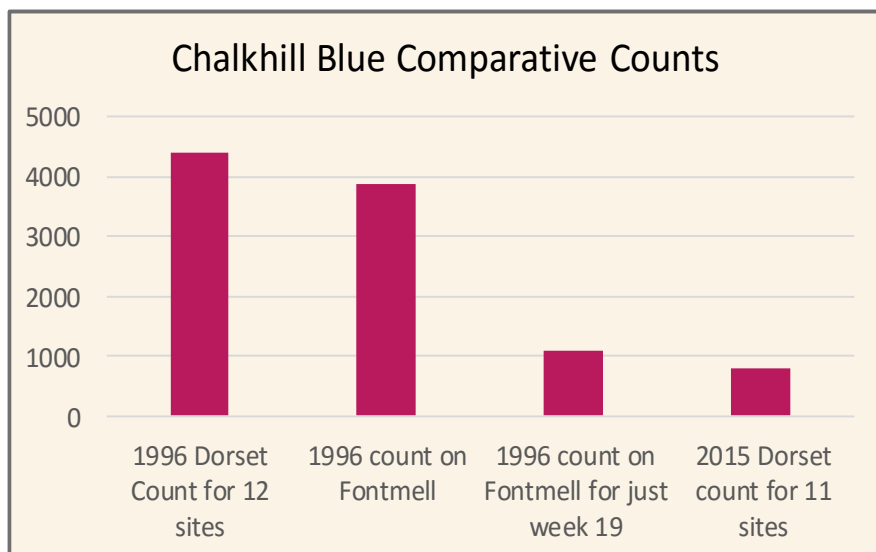


Silver-spotted Skipper. Ken Dolbear.

2015 - Losers

Chalkhill Blue has had four years as a loser with 92% of its 12 sites over 50% below annual average. It has experienced a collapse on its North Dorset walk sites (from before 2000), and the total extinction of West Dorset sites like Cerne, Southfield and Lankham bottom, so that Portland remains the only healthy stronghold. Bindon Hill remains the only flourishing Purbeck site.

The examples in the graph below show the importance of counted data on the walks. It shows that less Chalkhill Blues were counted at all walk sites in 2015 than were counted in one week at Fontmell Down in 1996. The decline has been in the central and southern Chalk, while the colonies on Portland remain strong. The reasons for this collapse are not obvious and need research urgently.



2015 - Losers

The worst stories belong to the Wood White and the Small Pearl-bordered Fritillary.

The **Wood White** is no longer seen on any of our walks, whilst in past years the numbers counted reached 84 (2000) and an even better 92 in 2005.



Wood White. Mark Pike.

We feared the photo above, (not on a walk) would be the last seen in Dorset. However, we discovered late in the year that two had been seen at the start of the coastal walk from Lyme Regis via Ware Cliffs. Further visits to this area would be good if they can be done safely. - there have been a lot of landslips.

Small Pearl-bordered Fritillary

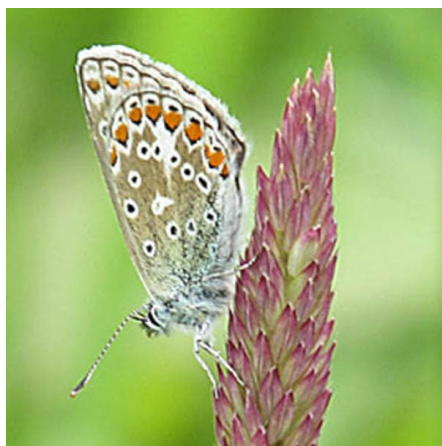
Another butterfly sadly lost from our walks. From 1990-1997 there were still good counts on walks at Powerstock, Kingcombe, Bracketts, Deadmoor & Lydlinch. By 2004 none were being counted. There was a brief revival from 2005 with new walks at Stonebarrow & Bindon Hill, but by 2013 these sites had also collapsed.

Elsewhere the only surviving colony is between Studland Golf Course and Agglestone. The colony is spread quite widely and there is hope that a new National Trust management plan might keep the colony going. There is an outside chance that it may still survive on the Army Ranges or the private area of Bindon Down but special permits are required to visit.

2015 - Around Dorset

East Dorset had three winners:

- Ringlet, up on 67% of its nine sites.
- Silver-washed Fritillary, up on 60% of its five sites.
- Peacock, up 57% on 14 sites.



Common Blue. Penny Hawes.

The spectacular loser was the Common Blue, with over half of sites showing more than a 50% decline on both 2014 and annual averages.

West Dorset had no outright winners, but four

species did manage to come in above their annual averages on over half their sites.

- Silver-washed Fritillary up on 89% of sites.
- Dark Green Fritillary up on 75%.
- Chalkhill Blue up on 67%.
- Brimstone up on 64%.

That was balanced by four losers (percentages refer to 2014 and annual average respectively):

- Brown Argus 89% & 89%.
- Adonis Blue 83% & 83%
- Small Copper 60% & 73%
- Green-veined White 75%, 56%.



Green-veined White. Sarah Faulkner.

2015 - around Dorset

North Dorset had four winners:

- Dark Green Fritillary, up on 78% of sites.
- Small Blue, up on 75% of sites.
- Brimstone, up on 67% of sites.
- Marbled White, up on 57% of sites.

There were two losers in this area:

- Small Copper, 58% down on 2014 and 100% down on annual average.
- Brown Argus, 67% and 89%.

South Dorset has some different transect walks, not walked every week, aimed at measuring the species seen on the Purbeck Ridge, which goes from Bindon in the west to Ballard Down in the

east. We are particularly interested to see if the species can survive right along the ridge, as measured by the chain of nine walks* along it.

Small Heath doing well.

Adonis Blue some decline but still all along the ridge.

Wall still present throughout.

Dingy Skipper down and two gaps in the chain.

Lulworth Skipper counts up but gaps for fifth year in a row.

Chalkhill Blue - a species of great concern - has been lost on all sites except Bindon Hill.

Graying has collapsed at Bindon; only survives at Ballard.

Small Blue only at Bindon.

*Nine walks are Bindon, Grange Arch, Ridgway Hill, Knowle Hill 1 and 2, Corfe West Hill, Corfe Mound, Ailwood Down, Nine Barrow Down & Ballard Down.

2015 - Regular Migrants

Some butterflies are not able to breed in this country because it is too cold, but regularly visit us as migrants. There are also a few odd migrants each year; if these are genuine chance arrivals, they have probably made it to us because of winds and other chance factors. It can be difficult to tell genuine migrants from releases. Some releases are deliberate (though usually unsuccessful) but there is also an increasing use of butterflies at weddings and other events.

The following descriptions continue to focus on numbers counted on transect walks.

The **Painted Lady** is a regular migrant. There is the occasional year when huge numbers arrive, top of which was 1996, when we recorded 18,311 - a wonderful time when fields with thistles or other nectar plants were alive with fluttering wings. 2003 saw

3,123, and 2009 reached 5,035, but 2015 only managed 321. This was despite large numbers of them moving through southern Europe, which we had hoped would reach us, but did not.

The **Clouded Yellow** is another very variable regular, which occasionally breeds here in the summer, and has been known to overwinter on the Bournemouth Undercliff. 90 were seen in 2015 - down from 284 the previous year.



This picture from 2014 was taken by Nick Urch at Langton Herring, when a large brood emerged: this is a female coming out of its chrysalis.

2015 - Regular Migrants

The third of the regular migrants is the **Red Admiral**: once only a migrant, but now over-wintering in this country.

Transect walks counted 884, but the time period for walking is limited to April to September.

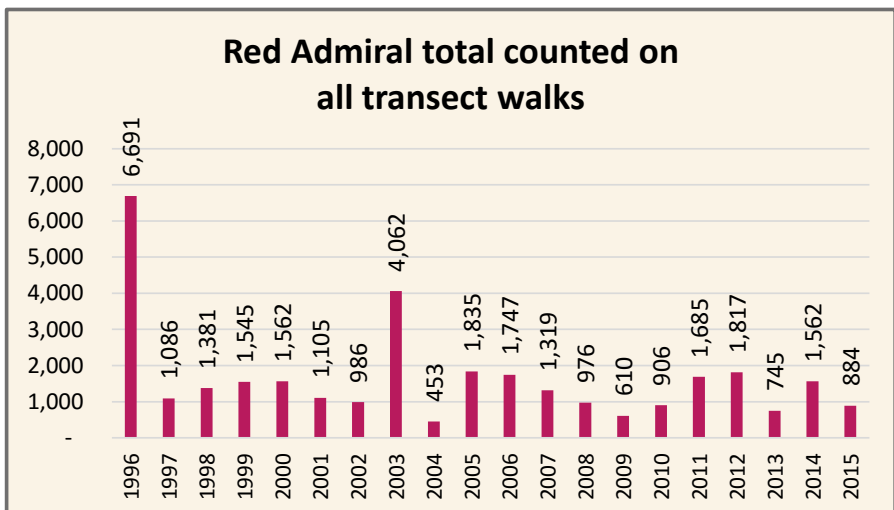
The website, recording all year round, picked up Red Admirals in every month of 2015, suggesting they are becoming better established as a locally breeding species:



- January - 2
- February - 10
- March - 13
- October - 56
- November - 14
- December - 5

Red Admiral taken in November 2006.

Lyn Pullen



2015 - Rare Migrants

The **Map** is an intriguing butterfly, common in central and eastern Europe and expanding in western Europe. It has two broods in a year, and they look very different: the spring brood could be mistaken for a White Admiral, while the summer ones are more Fritillary-like.

A release of these butterflies, described by the person involved as accidental, took place near Swanage in 2014, and the adults were seen to lay eggs, so hopes were high that they might establish, as our climate is suitable for them. However,



Map summer brood. Brian Arnold

visits in 2015 only found three spring individuals and none thereafter.

Swallowtails were less common. The UK version of this gorgeous butterfly is now restricted to the Norfolk Broads, but there is a European race which visits from time to time.



Map spring brood. Neil Hulme.



One of the 2014 Swallowtails, missing its red hind spots. Tim Field.

2015 - Rare Migrants

In 2014 a number were seen at St Alban's Head near Swanage, so there was hope of a breeding colony, but none were seen in the area in 2015.

Only one was seen anywhere in Dorset in 2015, in Poole, which is likely to have been a release.

Monarchs were seen in early August and late September, but so many of this species are captive bred these days that it is impossible to tell if any are genuine migrants. A sighting on 1 August was too early for it to have been a migrant, but there were hopes for a sighting of more than one just over the border at Stourhead in Wiltshire. However, extensive enquiries eventually uncovered a butterfly wedding had taken place at the Apollo Temple.

Long-tailed Blues arrived in some numbers in the south-east of the UK in 2015, with at least



Long-tailed Blue. Photographed by Cath Walker in Dorset in 2013.

60 counted and eggs being found. There were three sightings in Dorset, on 29 August, 5 September and 20 September, but only of the adult stage.

It is worth looking out for it if you buy mange-tout peas, as the non-adult form is sometimes accidentally imported in them and may survive to become an adult if you look after it.

If you want to identify the adult, just look for the small tails at the end of the hindwings.

2015 - Wider Countryside

The Wider Countryside recording scheme

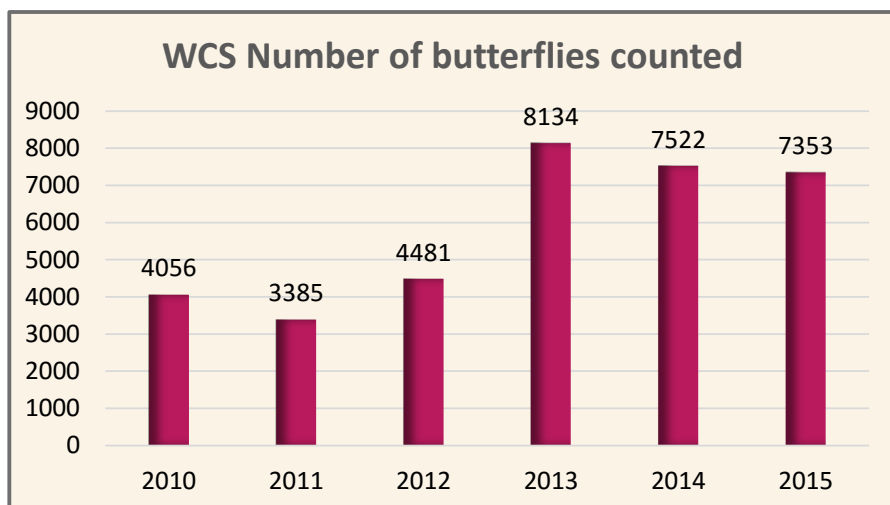
aims to find out how butterflies are doing in ordinary places, rather than in “butterfly hotspots”, so the places searched are selected at random, though there is a set method of searching. In Dorset, we have one of the highest number of squares to cover, so help is always needed: contact Adrian Neil.

2015 saw 34 species recorded, which compared to a high of 37

in 2013 and a low of 29 in 2011.

The top species was the Meadow Brown which was seen in 97% of the places surveyed, with a total count of 2,140. The total numbers counted each year can be seen in the graph below.

Species not reported in 2015 that had been seen before were the Small Blue and Green Hairstreak, while those gained were the Chalkhill Blue and Purple Hairstreak. The Painted Lady did better than it has in the last few years, while the Large Skipper did badly.



2015 - Garden Recording



Essex Skipper. Mark Pike

We have over 100 people recording butterflies in their gardens, with a fairly good spread across the County.

2015 was good in that two more species were reported in gardens than the previous year, with a total of 35.

In terms of actual species, three turned up which were not seen in 2014: the Essex Skipper, the Purple and White-letter Hairstreaks, while one, the

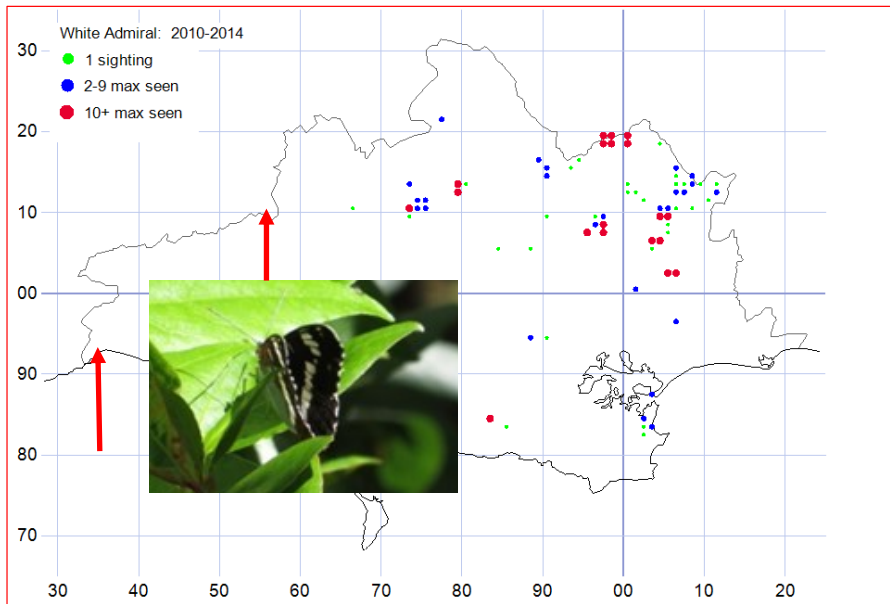
Adonis Blue, was not seen.

Species which did better than in 2014 were the Brimstone, the Comma, the Painted Lady, the Speckled Wood, and the Ringlet.

The Silver-washed Fritillary was seen in 26% of gardens (it reached 34% in 2013).

Three species did badly: the Clouded Yellow, the Common Blue and the Small Copper.

2015 - Unusual Sightings



The White Admiral 2010-14 preliminary map showed that the species no longer occurred in West Dorset, but in 2015, besides unusual sightings in people's gardens fairly close to its known breeding areas in Sturminster Newton, Ferndown Forest and West Brownsea, the arrows show highly unusual sightings to the west of Lyme Regis on the Devon border and in North-west Dorset very close to the Somerset border. This latter was photographed by Ian McNab in his DWT wildlife garden well clear of any woodland.

These sightings join the list in recent years of apparently impossible Chalkhill & Silver-studded Blues in the 'wrong places'.

Transect Walking

Transect walks are very important in monitoring butterfly populations, as they allow counts over a period of time to be comparable by setting rules for how the walk is done and the conditions under which it is walked. The weather has to be within set parameters, while the walker is limited to counting butterflies 5m ahead and to 2.5m to each side - some people imagine themselves walking in a 5m square box. The route is set, and divided into sections, linked to changes in habitat if relevant.

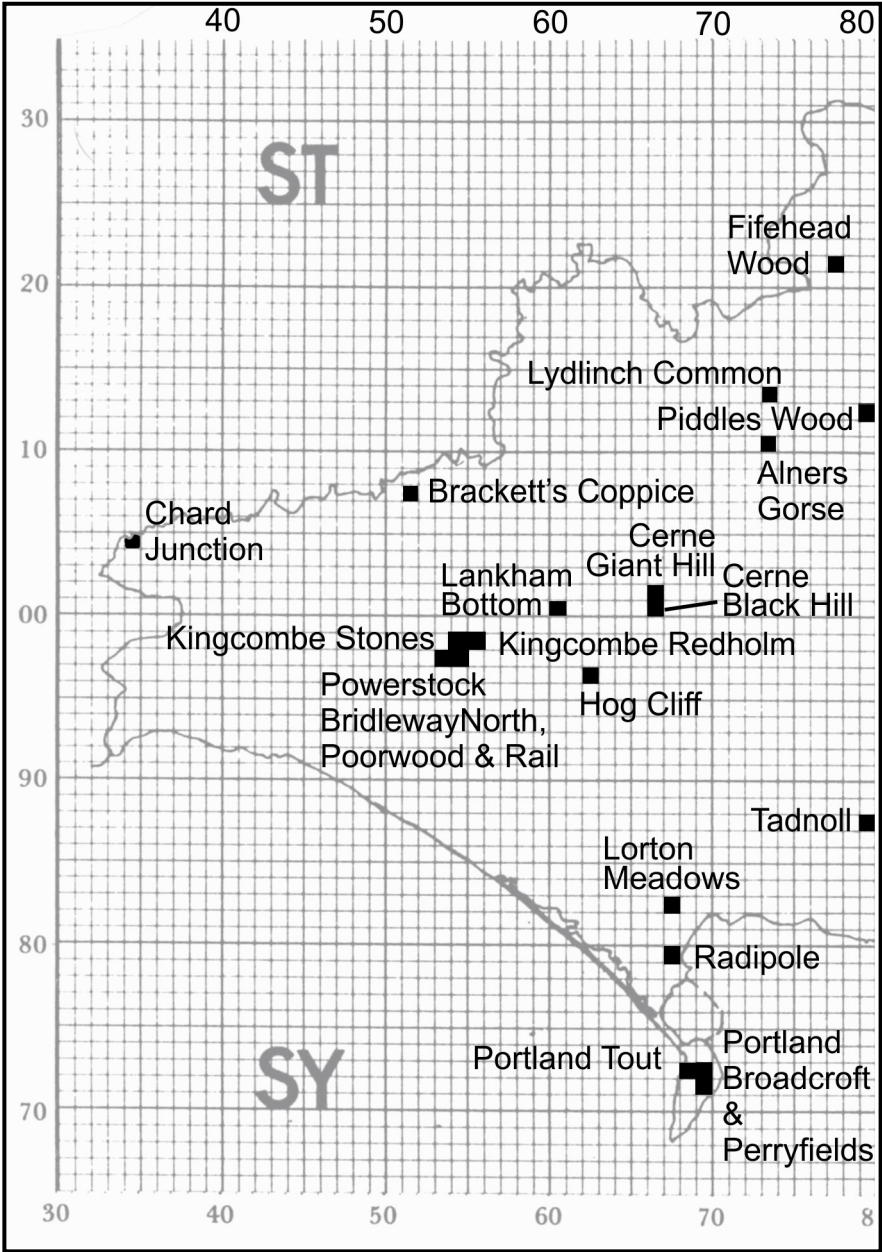
Walks are undertaken every week between the beginning of April and the end of September, often by a team of people taking turns.

Overleaf you will find a map of the current transect walks.

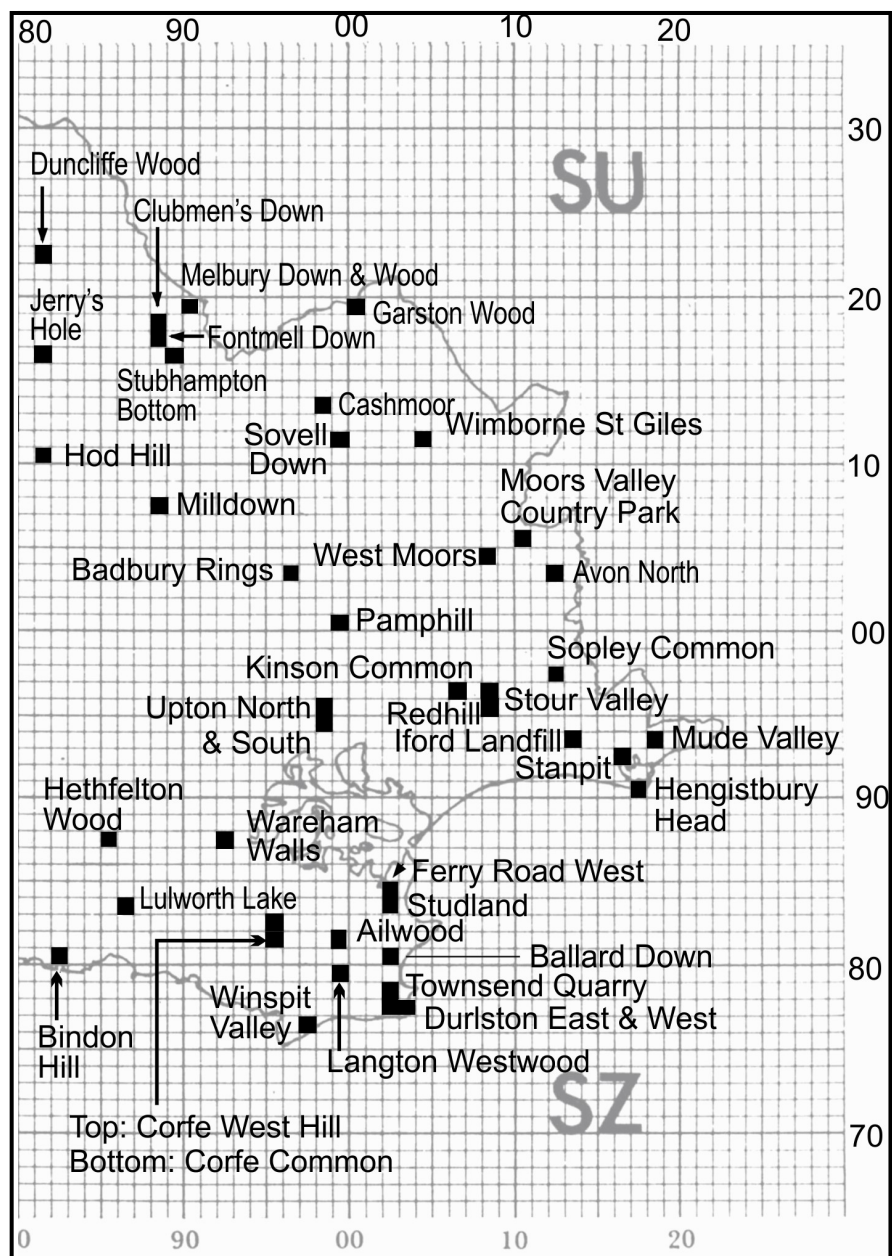


Entrance to Melbury Downs. Lawrie de Whalley

Transect walk map 2015



Transect walk map 2015



Transect Walking



Hod Hill. Carole Drake.

Dorset maintains over 60 transect walks; given they are walked 26 times a year, that's potentially over 1,560 actual walks! You can understand, therefore, that **we need more volunteers to help with transect walking**. You only have to do as many walks in a year as you feel you would like to.

If you are worried about not being able to identify butterflies, it may reassure you to know that

you can have a list of what butterflies have been seen in which sections of the walk previously, so you have a good start to sort out what you are seeing. Take your camera and photograph any species of which you are uncertain, so you can ask for help later.

If you could help, please contact Bill Shreeves (see contact details inside back cover).

Butterfly Recording Cycle

Records from Transect Walks and all the other schemes we have for counting butterflies are pulled together every five years.

We are part of the national organisation - Butterfly Conservation - which undertakes this collation for the whole UK.

This means we record on a five-year cycle, and at the end of it, the slate is wiped clean and we start collecting records all over again. We are now in the 2015-2019 cycle.

We record butterflies in kilometre squares, and at the end of each year we plot which butterflies have been seen in which square, and to see where nothing has been recorded at all. As this report is about 2015 and this was the start of the cycle, the map showing where no records have been reported is

not yet very meaningful. We have therefore included, overleaf, the map for the full 2010-2014 recording period.

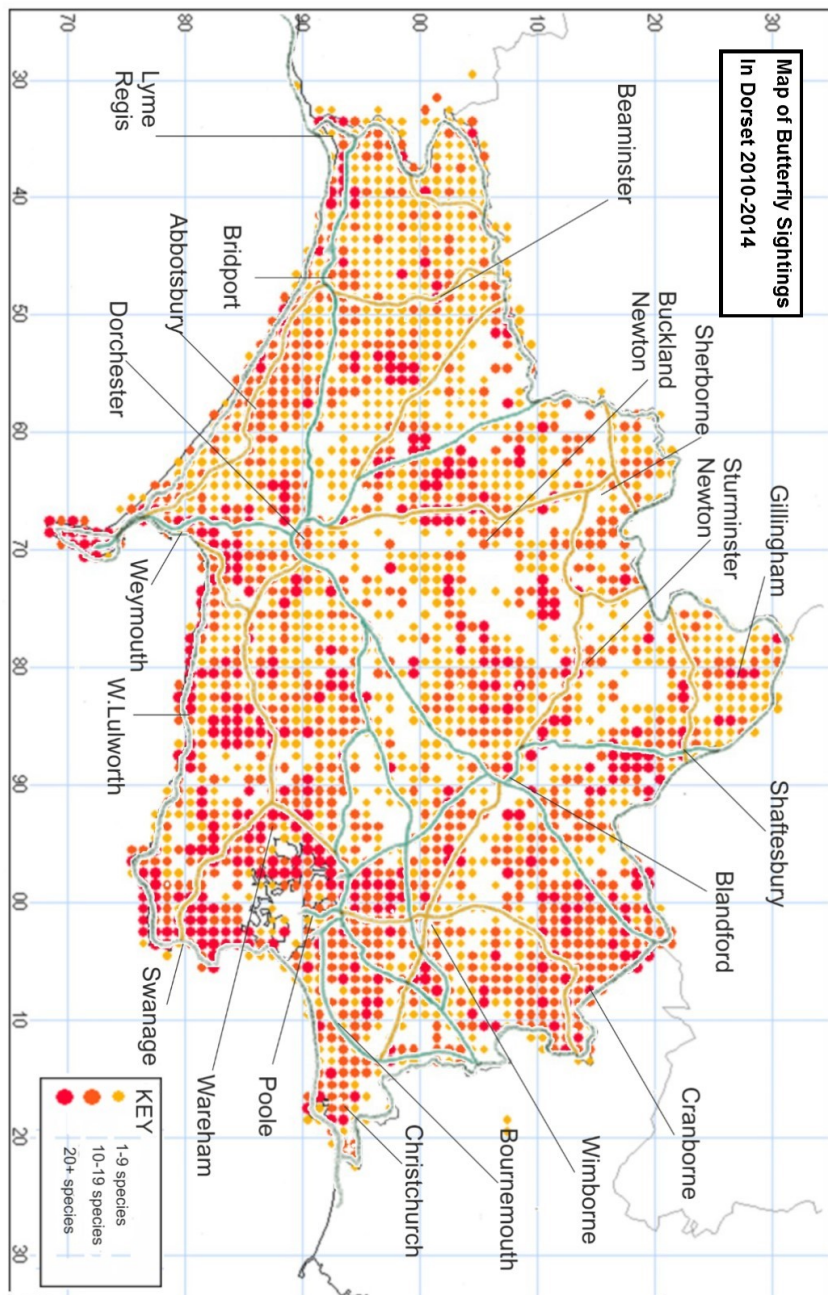
As you can see, there are some “white holes”, where no butterfly records were received, and we are particularly keen that these do not remain gaps in the next five years, so please visit them if you can and send us the records. A few are inaccessible for various reasons.

More detail can be seen on the website.



Red Admirals. Lyn Pullen.

2010-14 Butterfly Records



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Photo on back cover: Mullein Moth caterpillar. Brian Arnold.

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