Butterfly Conservation
Saving butterflies, moths and our environment

Cornwall Branch e-Bulletin Winter 2025

Tribute to Roger Hooper – One of a Kind (Kelly Uren)

The next time that you are out if there's a butterfly fluttering a little closer to you, it's probably because Roger has sent it.

He had that rare gift - the ability to make everyone, and everything, feel a little more at ease. Whether you had two legs, four paws, or delicate wings, Roger had time for you.

A proud member and supporter of Butterfly Conservation, Roger didn't just talk about nature - he lived it. He could turn a simple walk into a masterclass on migration routes, wing patterns, and had the best binoculars for spotting a butterfly at fifty paces. Somehow, he managed to make you laugh while doing it, and his humour was gentle but sharp, often sneaking up on you like a rare moth in the night.

Butterflies and birds were amongst Roger's wildlife passions. His enthusiasm and love for nature were infectious, whether he was leading a bus trip across the border to Devon and the River Exe, or helping on a Butterfly Conservation scrub bash, Roger had that most special ingredient, he could ignite a room and couldn't help but inspire those around him.

He was endlessly kind to animals, people, and to the world around him. His generosity of time and knowledge made him a magnet for questions and curiosity, which he always welcomed with that knowing twinkle in his eye.

Roger's love for travel took him far and wide - not for beaches or big cities, but for birds and butterflies. He'd come home full of stories: of

vibrant wings seen in far reaching climes, of early mornings spent waiting for the perfect sighting, of locals baffled by the British man quietly stalking a hedge with binoculars. He was the only person who could identify a butterfly while simultaneously eating a sandwich and telling a story about his latest trip. Of course, he never went anywhere without his binoculars, even the supermarket, just in case something rare flew by.

Those who knew him will miss his warmth, his humour, and that unmistakable spark of wonder he carried with him everywhere. Roger reminded us that the small things - a butterfly, a kind word, a shared laugh - are often the most special and important.

For all that you brought to our lives Roger we are incredibly honoured to have known you, and feel very lucky to have had you in our lives, but for those reasons too we are going to miss you beyond words.

So, as we say goodbye to dear Roger, we will look for him in the flutter of wings, in the flash of a bird across the sky, and in every moment of quiet joy that nature offers.

Roger will always be there in our hearts - smiling, binoculars and a cup of tea in hand, ready to tell us something fascinating and funny that we didn't yet know. Our condolences to Lynn, his partner.



CBC Open Day and AGM, Saturday 14th March 2025, St Erme Community Centre, Trispen near Truro

The business of the AGM will occupy only a very short time at the beginning of the day, then the packed day of interesting talks and demonstrations begins. Speakers already booked include:

Richard Fox "How climate change is impacting our butterflies and moths."
Adrian Spalding "Climate change and coastal erosion drive changes in populations of Sandhill Rustic Luperina nickerlii in Britain and Ireland."

Lesley Strong (Stakeholder Engagement Officer, Cornwall and West Devon Mining Landscape World Heritage Sites.) will tell us about the sites. These are important sites for Lepidoptera and other invertebrates and are the scene of much of our conservation work, so it will be interesting to learn more about them.

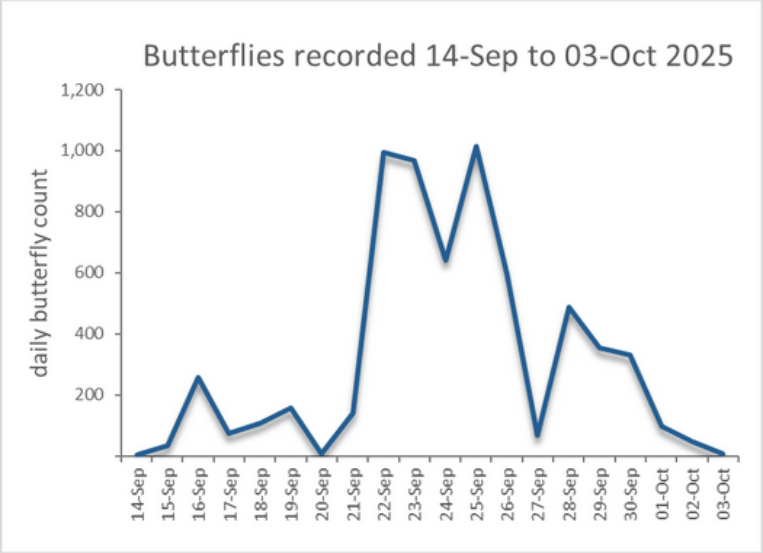
We also hope to have some Exeter University students telling us about their work on Marsh Fritillaries and showing us their film, plus, as usual, representatives from partners and other likeminded organisations with displays about their work, and reports from Branch Officers.

Please do your best to attend, and bring any friends, relatives and students who have an interest in conservation.
Is there anyone who could help with our Audio-Visual system on the day? Any volunteers to contact Kathy, membership@cornwall-butterfly-conservation.org.uk

Late September butterflies

JerryDennis, CountyButterfly Recorder

After a very good summer, the weather broke in Cornwall on 26th August and there followed nearly four weeks of rain. These unsettled conditions led to dwindling numbers of butterflies flying and it appeared that ‘summer was over’ as the broods of many species were coming to a natural end. There then followed a warm and settled period from 22nd September into early October and suddenly the butterflies were back on the wing again in high numbers. This was an unexpected bonus for them and an immense pleasure for us, prompting many last week transect walks and visits to our favourite haunts.



Over 5,500 butterflies of 21 species were recorded in tendays from 22nd September, something that is very unusual for this time of year. More than 1,000 were recorded on 25th September alone.

Red Admirals on ivy at Predannack Wollas on 25th September



The Red Admiral accounted for a third of the total, foundnectaring in gardens, along roadsides and in the countryside onplantssuchas ivy in preparation for its annual southerly migration. Ourothercommon migrants the Clouded Yellow and Painted Lady werealsoonthemove each with more than 100 recorded and there were alsomanysightings of common species: Speckled Wood, Large White andSmallWhite. The timing coincided nicely with the peak of the thirdbroodofthe Wall and an impressive 225 of this species were counted–arecordfor this brood at this time of the year. Several Nymphalid speciesmadetheir last appearance of the year such as the Small Pearl-borderedFritillary, Grayling, Small Heath and Gatekeeper. Lycaenid specieswerealso flying, including Common Blue, Brown Argus, Holly BlueandSmall Copper.

A Clouded Yellow nectaring on Devil's-bit Scabious, CrousaDowns



Late Grayling on 22nd September in Dry Tree Car Park, Goonhilly Downs



It is hard to judge the importanceofthislatewindowofopportunity for these butterflies, but it can onlyhavehelpedtheircauses. It just might have enabled thousands of breedingopportunitiesthatotherwise would have been missed. It mighthavegiventhousandsof migrants the chance to charge up with nectarbeforemigrating.Itmight have given larvae a window to feed andgrowtosufficientmaturity to successfully pupate or hibernatethroughwinter. Wedoknow that it did provide a wonderful ten daysforusnearthe endofthe butterfly season and let's hope that a fewmorebutterflies willbeon the wing next year because of it.

Prizes neededforChildren's Game

We use a very low cost, 'Prize everytime'children's game to encourage families at public eventstostopand engage with the volunteers manning our stall andoncewehave their attention, we can talk to them about our aims andactivities.The game involves a board with a pack of cards laid out singlyinorder,and a small prize on each one. Since before Covid, we havenotboughtany new items because we don't want to help create a marketforcheap plastic. Therefore, we

rely on donations of small stationery items, stickers, ornaments and toys which people already have but no longer want. So, if you have unwanted cracker prizes this festive season or your children or grandchildren have a sort out and find small items in very good condition in which they are no longer interested, please give those items to any member of the committee, or bring them to the AGM. Many thanks.

New conservation volunteerSue Earnshaw has written about her nature journey, illustrated with some of her favouritephotos.

"ChasingWings,FindingWonder"

A sporty youth and a long career in IT and Health meant plenty of travel — but not much time for other pursuits. Having parents who were keen gardeners clearly rubbed off, though. Wherever I lived, there was always space for at least a pot of herbs, and once I had my own home and garden, the green fingers came naturally.

A love of wildlife and a need for a hobby to balance out work stress led me to photography, and combining the two soon felt effortless. Retirement has brought more time for both gardening and photography — and what better place to find inspiration and subjects than, quite literally, my own backyard?

Now based in the beautiful county of Cornwall, I'm passionate about the environment and all the creatures that share it. My garden, tucked away in a wooded valley, is slowly transforming into a little sanctuary for wildlife — a place where bees hum, birds chatter, and inspiration is never far away.

I love being outdoors, wherever that happens to be — in my garden, tucked into a photography hide in Finland, driving through the vast open spaces of Australia, bumping along in a jeep in Kenya, or simply wandering through the woods. Being close to nature just feels right; it feeds my soul.

Lately, I've been increasingly drawn to macro photography. The small world around us is endlessly fascinating — every tiny detail, every hidden pattern. My garden provides an abundance of inspiration, and I'm always adding new plants to attract pollinators and make it even more wildlife friendly.

Butterflies, of course, are among nature's most beautiful creatures — elegant, endlessly varied, and blessed with the superpower of flight. For a photographer, they're also a challenge: how to capture their delicate detail, that graceful movement, that fleeting moment of stillness? How do I encourage them to linger in the garden long enough for a photograph — and how can I help their caterpillars thrive, so their numbers grow?

Attracting butterflies soon became a mission. Many hours of reading — including plenty of research through Butterfly Conservation — led to new planting and seed sowing to complement the existing wildflowers, Buddleia, lavenders, verbenas, and flowering herbs already doing a fine job. Devils-bit scabious and lady's smock have now joined the ranks, alongside a growing mix of nectar-rich blooms. This year, I've been fortunate to welcome 16 different butterfly species into the garden — and even managed to photograph each one. With a few more carefully chosen additions, I'm hoping that number will rise next year.

Volunteering for the Cornwall branch of Butterfly Conservation felt like a natural next step. My garden will probably never be "finished" (does any garden ever stop evolving?), but it feels like the right time to look beyond its boundaries — to give something back to the wildlife that's

given me so much joy, and to keep learning from the very creatures that inspire me most.

Ultimately, my garden, my photography, and my love of wildlife are all part of the same story — a way to connect with the natural world, slow down, and appreciate the small wonders around me. Every visit from a bird, every butterfly that lands, every tiny detail captured through the lens reminds me how much life there is to notice, nurture, and celebrate. It's a journey without an endpoint, but one that continues to inspire, teach, and bring joy every single day.

Sue Earnshaw Photography

www.sueearnshaw. co.uk







Giving NatureaHelping Hand

As the nights have been drawing in our committee have planned our autumn/winter programme of habitat management, aimed at improving and connecting habitats to benefit biodiversity. This year we are working at a variety of sites in the mining districts and on Bodmin Moor and we are already halfway through the list!
People often ask me “Why are you cutting down Buddleia? Butterflies love it.” Yes, they do, but caterpillars don’t! It is a non-native invasive species that shades out our locally adapted wildflowers, which provide nectar for the butterflies and food for their caterpillars. One of the “special” butterflies on our mine sites is the Silver-studded Blue. They need a plant to lay eggs on near some “friendly” ants who live in symbiosis with them. Here they choose heather (mostly Ling, which is tolerant of the toxic minerals in the soils). They also need bare ground, which heats up when the sun shines, and something to nectar on which other wildflowers provide. The caterpillars are the eating machines and they can be very fussy! So…Buddleia is fine in parks and gardens but not welcome on our mine sites. We will never be able to get rid of it all, but take out some, every year!

Your garden will benefit by having single bloom flowers which bees and butterflies can nectar from, plants that fruit and flower all through the year and a few of our native wildflowers. Even a patch of nettles will be useful, a variety of colourful butterflies, including Peacocks, lay their eggs on them, and don’t forget No Mow May next year! For more information, look for Wild Spaces online.

On Bodmin Moor we have been concentrating on improving sites for 2 of our endangered species, the Pearl-bordered and Marsh Fritillary. We have been removing gorse and bramble from Church Hay Down to improve connectivity across the site for the Marsh Fritillary. At various other sites around St. Breward we have been working to improve habitat for the Pearl-bordered Fritillary, by widening rides and

removing gorse. We have also been monitoring violets, the larval food plant and hope to get some plug plants to help connectivity between sites.

To sign up to our conservation days please register on Assemble, our volunteer portal and look under Event Invitations.
https://volunteer.butterfly-conservation.org/opportunities/77707-practical-conservation-group-volunteer-cornwall-2024-12-07

Dates for your diary next year:

10/01/26 Fellover Bodmin Moor : 14/01/26 De Lank Bodmin Moor : 22/01/26 Church Hay Down Bodmin Moor : 24/01/26 Wheal Maid Mining District: 31/01/26 De Lank Bodmin Moor. We also have a couple of unconfirmed dates in the mining district in February. Watch our website for updates!

Picture of a common wildflower that sustains early bees and butterflies and continues to throughout the year!



Dandelion

Sue Allen events@cornwall-butterfly-conservation.org.uk

Correction to Autumn 2025 edition of Cornwall Butterfly Observer

The article by Tristram Besterman on pages14-16 of the magazine should have included the following photo credits: The image of the artist Mark Anthony at work is by Global Street Art; all other images are by the author. We apologise for this omission.

Opportunities to help

We have vacancies on the committee and need a secretary. We meet every 2 months and if anyone has experience of taking minutes it would be a great help. Press, publicity and fund raising are other areas we are short of expertise. Please contact Sue Allen for a chat about any of the above at events@cornwall-butterfly-conservation.org.uk

A big thank you to all who helped and supported us throughout the year.

Merry Christmas see you next year!



Your committee wants to keep you posted on what we're doing for butterflies and moths and for you in Cornwall. You will receive the e-Bulletin in addition to the twice-yearly *Cornwall Butterfly Observer*, which you receive in spring and autumn.