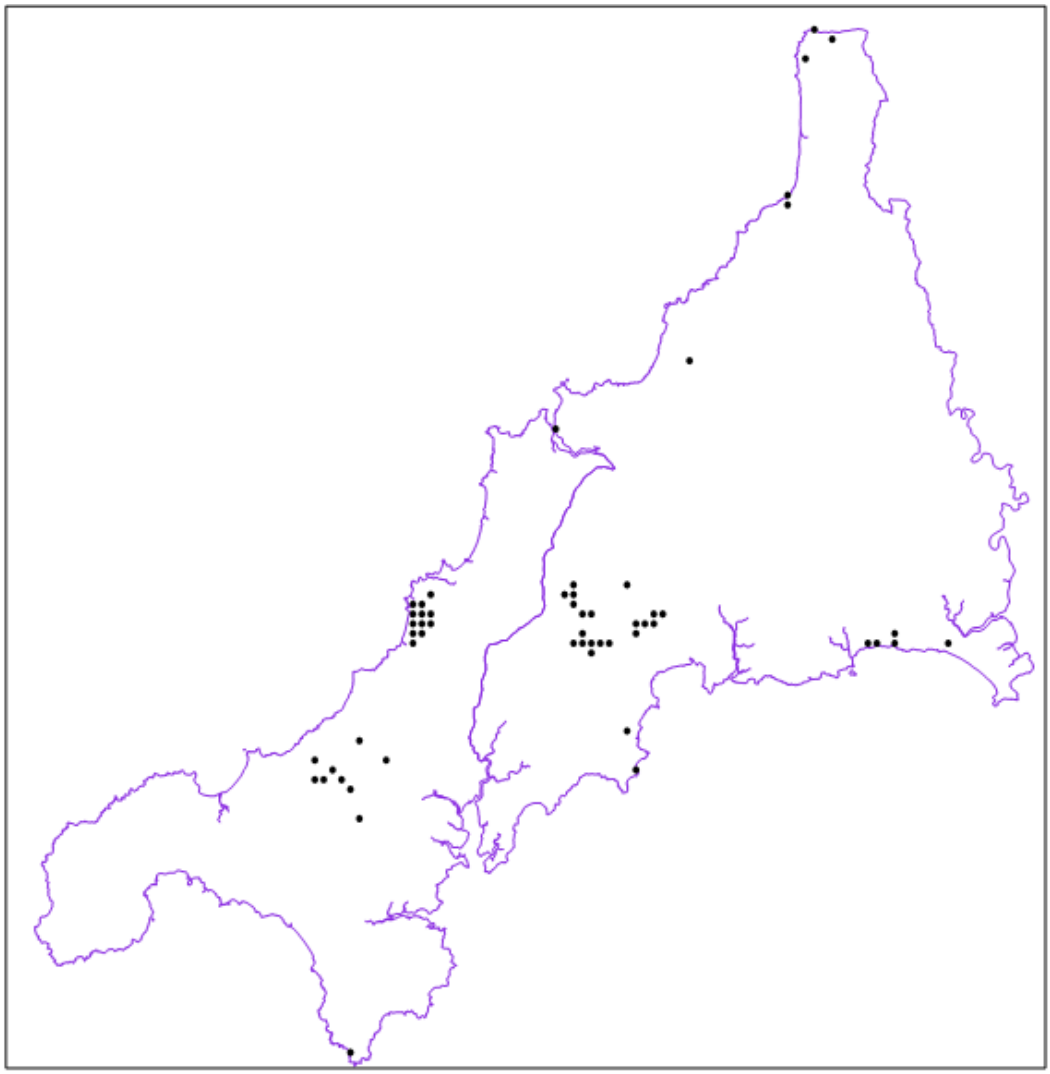
Dingy Skipper butterfly summary

Compiled by Jerry Dennis, October 2022

1. Locations



The 1km squares (56) with records in the last ten years are highlighted.

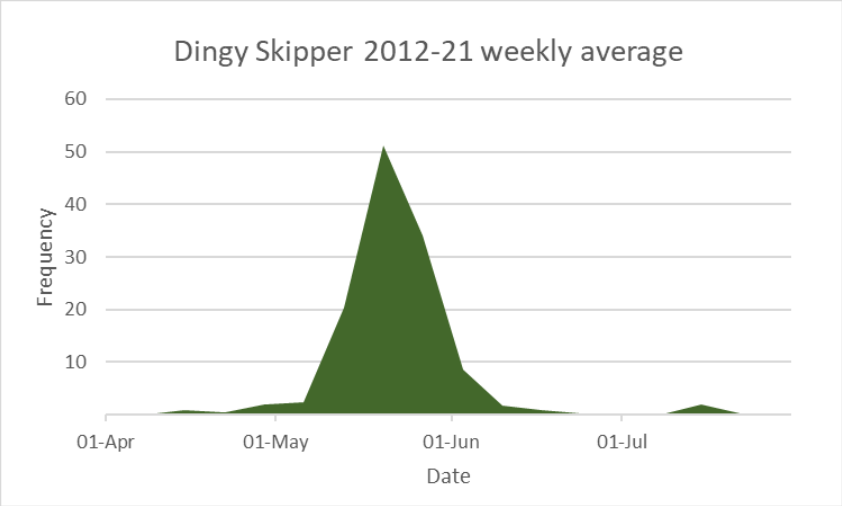
2. Habitat and status

Generally small colonies in sunny, rough grassy areas where Bird's-foot Trefoil or Greater Bird's-foot Trefoil is growing.

The Dingy Skipper is a Section 41 Species of Principal Importance but moved to Least Concern on the 2022 UK Red List after improvements in its fortune in other counties. Recent Cornish analysis shows a 45% decline in occurrence in the last 20 years.

3. Flight period

Average weekly totals are shown graphically. One brood per year with a small second brood seen in some years. The butterfly overwinters as a caterpillar in 5th and final instar and can spend up to nine months in larval stage. The brood begins to emerge in April and peaks in the second half of May. Second brood butterflies are infrequent and seen in July and August.



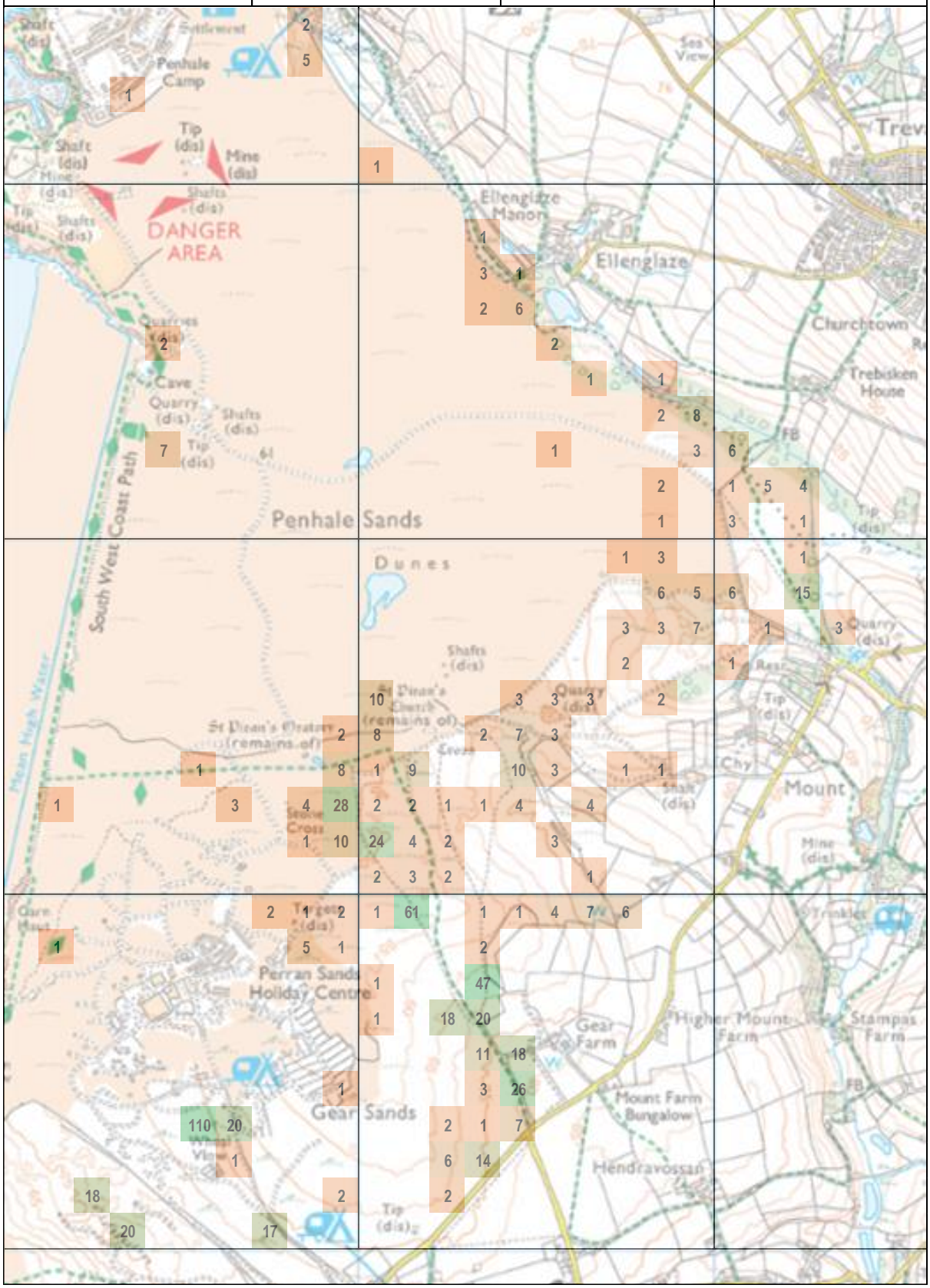
4. Top Cornish locations

The stronghold of this butterfly is on the towans of Gear Sands and Penhale Sands between Perranporth and Holywell. A plot of totals seen per hectare in the last 10 years is shown overpage. There is no evidence that Dingy Skipper colonies in this extensive area have declined in the last 20 years.

Numerous new sites for the butterfly have been found in the last five years as tabulated below. Many of these are located in the former clay mining areas north of St Austell. Ideally, all of these locations should be checked, access permitting.

New locations 2017-21	1km square	100m Square	Total
Nanpean	SW9555	SW954558	16
Drinnick Dryers		SW959550	1
		SW959551	4
Higher Goonamarth	SW9854	SW987546	3
Gover Valley		SW989544	4
		SW989546	1
Blackpool Trail, Watch Hill	SW9754	SW974548	5
Crafthole	SX3654	SX365544	3
Sheviock Lane, Crafthole		n/a	2
Trelavour Downs	SW9657	SW962570	4
Pentreath	SW6912	SW694126	1
		SW695125	1
		SW696126	1
Domellick, Goss Moor	SW9458	SW941587	1
		SW942588	1
Engine House, Carpalla	SW9653	SW963538	2
Lost Gardens of Heligan	SX0045	SX000458	2
Bridwell Point, Millook Haven	SS1800	SS185001	1
Tidna Valley	SS2014	SS201148	1
Stithians	SW7036	SW708367	1
United Mine, Peevor	SW7044	SW705442	1
Penhale Sands	SW7758	SW770580	1
Cubert Common	SW7859	SW784599	1
Trelavour Downs	SW9557	SW957574	1
Goverseth	SW9654	SW962547	1
Carbis Moor	SX0060	SX001601	1

Dingy Skipper	Penhale - Gear Sands	Total 769	2012 - 2021



5. Sites not reported for 5 years

The following locations are in 1km squares that have no records in the last five years. A visit to each of these sites should take place to check for the butterfly.

Locations with no sightings since 2016	1km Square	100m Square	2012-16 total
Carn Brea Summit	SW6840	SW680409	15
Treskilling Downs	SX0357	SX038570	6
Hill top, Carnkie	SW6939	SW691396	5
Bodigga Cliff	SX2754	SX277542	4
Gorran Haven	SX0141	SX014419	2
Little Beside, Poldice	SW7342	SW737426	1
Marsland Mouth	SS2117	n/a	2
Hard Hills	SS2316	n/a	2
Treverbyn	SX0356	n/a	2
Tolvaddon	SW6542	n/a	1