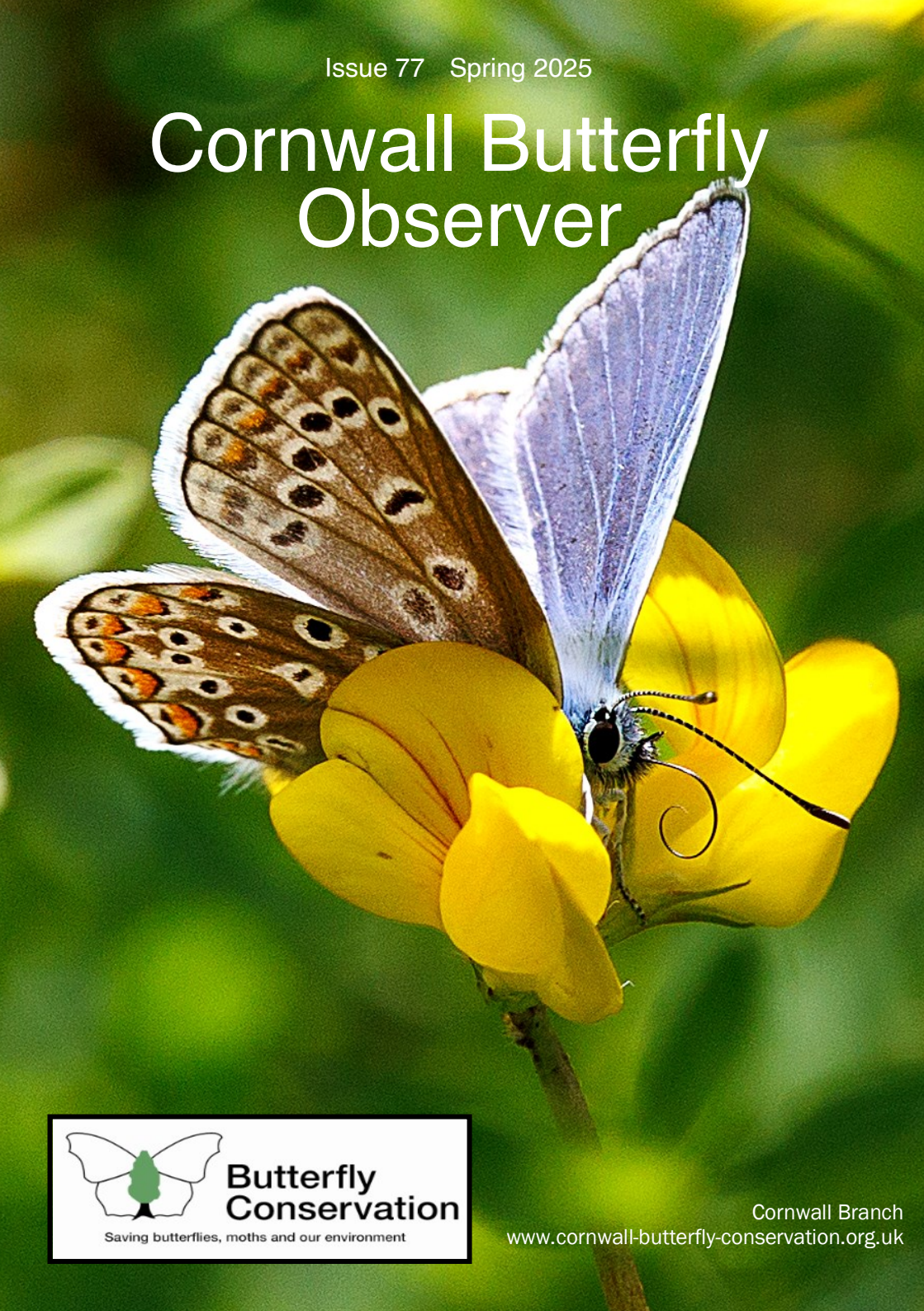
Issue 77 Spring 2025

Cornwall Butterfly Observer



Butterfly Conservation

Saving butterflies, moths and our environment

Cornwall Branch

www.cornwall-butterfly-conservation.org.uk



Editor's Note

Cornwall Butterfly Observer welcomes contributions from members and supporters of Cornwall Butterfly Conservation. We are keen to publish information relevant to butterflies or moths in Cornwall, whether it's news of an event or development, or an in-depth article.

Cornwall Butterfly Observer is careful to check the information that it publishes. Whilst content attributed to a named individual will normally have been reviewed by fellow volunteers, the information and its interpretation, together with the views expressed, are those of the author and do not necessarily represent the settled position of Cornwall Butterfly Conservation

If you would like to contribute to the *Cornwall Butterfly Observer,* please get in touch via email at chair@cornwall-butterfly-conservation.org.uk

Front cover: Commom Blue Photo: Steve Batt
Inside front and back covers: Cubert Common Field Trip Photos: Tristram Besterman
Back cover: Grizzled Skippers Photo: Steve Batt

Contents

Page

Post from the Chair 4

Moths 6
Highlights of records received for 2024

Trelusback Foundation 10
The two charitable aims of Trelusback Foundation for Wildlife Conservation

Butterfly Recording in 2024 12

Cornwall Butterfly Conservation Field Trips and Events 2025 16

A Good Year to Celebrate our Cornish Skippers 23
Jerry Dennis explores these butterflies With moth like features

The Small Tortoiseshell 26
Jerry Denis delves into the life cycle of the Small Tortoiseshell

Volunteer Coordinator Report 32

Volunteer Opportunities 33

Post from the Chair

Dear Reader

The Cornwall Branch committee has changed personnel since Andrew and Liz retired as joint chairs last summer. I extend a big thank you to both for their hard work and positive attitude and they managed to take on far more than the chair's role during their time in charge. I also thank them for their continuing work as Pearl-bordered Fritillary species champions.

I now find myself in the chair. I joined the branch committee after becoming County Butterfly Recorder in 2022 and I am continuing to perform that role until someone else comes along who would like to take it on. I retired in 2017 after three decades of working in Scotland and we moved to Cornwall to live in a place that we love and to enjoy a bit more sunshine than we did in the wilds of Aberdeenshire. Retirement has allowed my lifelong interest in butterflies and wildlife generally to grow and to find a meaningful purpose.

I'm delighted be leading a committee who have knowledge and experience to help to ensure the wellbeing of our butterflies in Cornwall. We are currently adapting our committee's work to fit in with some changes in Butterfly Conservation, these changes being brought about by the challenges ahead to secure future funding for the organisation's national work. The good news is that the charity is continuing to support local conservation work and we have some important projects in the pipeline.

We will sadly be saying goodbye to our Volunteer Coordinator, Georgie Paul who has been with us for three years.

She is planning a new life and career in North Wales and we will miss her skills and enthusiasm and we wish her the very best of luck in her future endeavours.

Field trips and events

As usual, we are organising an extensive programme of field excursions with you in mind, some 19 trips from May to August, each with an expert guide who will be on hand to identify the butterflies and other interesting wildlife at the best sites in the county. We have a good mix of old and new places for you to enjoy and all of Cornwall's rare and localised butterflies can be seen on at least one trip. I do hope you will be able to join us on one of them, they can be great fun and you will learn a lot. Please see our website for booking arrangements.

Conservation work

As I write this, we are busy with a winter schedule of conservation maintenance at key butterfly locations, mainly focused on selected sites in two areas: Bodmin Moor where strongholds of Pearl-bordered Fritillary and Marsh Fritillary persist, and the Cornish Mining World Heritage Sites of Camborne/Redruth and Gwennap where Dingy Skipper and Silver-studded Blue are the target species. This ongoing work is important, both in terms of monitoring specific butterfly populations and the condition of their habitat and performing prudent conservation work as and when necessary. We are always in need of volunteers to help with these tasks and if you feel that you could help us, please email secretary@cornwall-butterfly-conservation.org.uk .

Recording butterflies and moths

Recording butterflies and moths is one of the most important elements of Butterfly

Conservation's national monitoring. Its value applies to all species, from the most common to the most threatened. The difference between seeing and enjoying butterflies and recording them is that you need to write down what, where, when and how many of each species seen, either doing so straight into a phone app such as iRecord Butterflies or iRecord, or like me, into a notebook and then into an app on a computer. There are so many schemes in which you can participate. For those of you with busy lives and not much time, the Garden Butterfly Survey and Big Butterfly Count are ideal and the computer apps are easy to use and you can just use apps whenever you see a butterfly whenever and wherever you are.

The County Butterfly Recorder, and here I feel a bit like Pooh-Bah in The Mikado, has requested that we focus on the four Skipper species this year and I hope you will be able to join in at a site near you.

Moth trapping is a great hobby and with a modest outlay on equipment and reference books you can discover a fascinating new world of nocturnal biology with a dazzling number of different species on your own doorstep. We have expert help and advice available at leon.truscott47@gmail.com .

For those of you that want to do more, surveying that is extremely valuable includes visiting a particular site near you regularly through the year, monitoring one of our rarer species at its specific sites, or being able to walk one of our UKBMS transects on a weekly basis. If you need some help and guidance, please get in touch at records@cornwall-butterfly-conservation.org.uk.

Thank you for your continued support and dedication. Together we can make a significant impact on conserving our Lepidoptera.



Buff Tip Moth on Mullein Photo: Steve Batt

Moths, 2024

The following highlights are of records received for 2024 (at the time of writing, late January, 2025).

At Pentillie on 9 June, Chris Vincent (CV) recorded *Nemapogon koenigi*, the 6th Cornish record. At Penquite Wood on 25 October, Chris Iles found leaf mines of both *Phyllonorycter froelichiella* and *Phyllonorycter klemannella* on Alder, the 5th and 6th Cornish records respectively. At Kynance on 3 June, Finley Hutchinson (FH) found the rare *Bryotropha dryadella*, our first record since 1999. At Cury on 21 July, Frank Johns (FTJ) trapped *Caryocolum vicinella*, the first record of an adult since 2004. FTJ also recorded *Coleophora adjunctella* at Cury on 16 May and 21 June and at Mayon Cliff on 16 August, our first records since 2019. At Prideaux Wood on 23 May, John Cook and Marilyn Edyvean trapped *Elachista gleichenella*, a species New to Cornwall. At Cury on 16 May, FTJ trapped *Elachista albifrontella*, the first confirmed Cornish record since 1992. Before this year, there was only one record of *Stenoptilia inopinata* (Scarce Plume) in Cornwall: St Mary's, IOS in 2020. Darren Taylor (DT) recorded one at Kynance on 15 October, our first mainland record. *Eana incanana* is a scarce species in Cornwall, with only four previous records. 2024 produced a run of five records: three from Steve Nash (SN) at St. Mellion in June & July and two at Pentillie on 14 July (CV, Karen May & Dave Pakes).



Elachista gleichenella Photo: Marilyn Edyvean

The erstwhile rare *Acleris umbrana* was rediscovered in 2006 at Downderry, since when it has increased in Cornwall (mostly in the southeast, especially Downderry and Menheniot, but also occasionally farther west). St Mellion has become another regular site, with 19 records in 2024 from SN. I was also recorded at Trussel, on 3 November by Andy Adams. The first Cornish record of *Acleris logiana* was in Menheniot in 2009 by John Nicholls (JCN) and it has since been found annually at that site. Until 2024, there were only 3 records elsewhere, but SN recorded it at St Mellion on 8 November, thus our 4th site. *Brevicornutia pallidana*, nationally scarce, was found on eight occasions on St Mary's, IOS: adults were trapped by John Headon on 3 June and by Chris Lewis (CL) on 7 & 10 June;



Breviconutia pallidana Photo: Chris Lewis



Ancylis gemania Photo: Finley Hutchinson

larvae were found in seedheads of *Jasione montana* at 5 sites between 26 & 29 July by Bob Heckford. At Croft Pascoe on 3 June, FH found *Ancylis geminana*, the first Cornish record since 2016. There were two records of the scarce *Epiblema foenella*: from Tom Clark at Downderry on 25 June and from Julian Clarke (JHC) at Porthallow on 6 August. At Pentillie on 9 June, CV recorded *Strophedra nitidana*, only the fourth record for Cornwall.



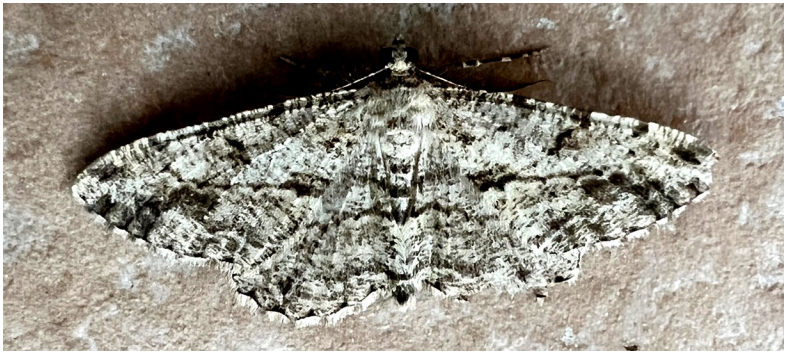
Etiella zinckenella Photo: Bob Cross

At Roseland on 16 October, Bob Cox (BC), trapped *Etiella zinckenella,* the fifth Cornish record and new to VC2. At St Mellion on 25 June, *Acrobasis repandata* (2) came to light (SN.) The rare (possibly endangered) *Agrotera nemoralis* (Beautiful Pearl) has been shown to be breeding at Mt Edgcumbe in recent years, and has turned up at other local sites, including Kilminorth Wood. In 2024, it was trapped at the latter site on 21 May and 29 June by Rogan Jones & The Friends of Kilminorth Wood (RJ & FKW). *Diplopseustis perieresalis*: one was found dead on a window sill in Penzance on 1 November by John Worth (PJW). Some of the six Cornish records of *Duponchelia fovealis* are thought to have resulted from imported plants bought at supermarkets. One trapped at Maenporth on 8 May by George Davis (GD) was probably a migrant. *Herpetogramma licarsisalis* is a scarce migrant with records here from 2001 to 2019. Two records were received this year; from CL on St Mary's, IOS on 23 October and from Royanne Wilding at Carnmellis on 27 October.



Oleander Hawk-moth Photo: Martin Hodgetts

Ten records of Death's Head Hawk-moth (*Acherontia atropos*) were received: Porthleven 25 May (Emily Hobson), a larva at Tregadjack on 29 August (David Hoskin), St Mary's, IOS on 6 October (2), 15 October & 24 October (all CL), Penzance on 14 October (PJW), Bosome on 14 October (Andy Jones), St Agnes, IOS on 15 October by Robin Hemming (RH), Old Pound on 20 October (Justin Heasman) and Rospannel on 9 November (Bernard Hocking). Martin Hodgetts



Feathered Beauty Photo: George Davis

photographed an Oleander Hawk-moth (*Daphnis nerii*) in his garden at Pensilva on 12 August, the seventh Cornish record. David Williams found a Silver-striped Hawk-moth (*Hippotion Celerio*) on his car at Woodfield, Carbis Bay on 14 November. At Maenporth on 8 September, GD trapped a Feathered Beauty (*Peribatodes secundaria*), a nationally rare species and new to Cornwall. At Gerrans on 21 August, Chris Raper found and photographed a Scarce Chocolate-tip (*Clostera anchoreta*), another species new to Cornwall. In 2022 and 2023, Crimson Speckled (*Utetheisa pulchella*) enjoyed a couple of successful years, but only a single record was received for 2024: Robin Dryden found one on 16 October on Tresco, IOS.



Green Drab Photo: George Davis

George Tordoff & Jenny Plackett surveyed the far north of the county for Scarce Blackneck (*Lygephila craccae*) and found larvae at Sharpnose Point on 17 June, the first confirmed presence since 2007. The rare migrant Levant Blackneck (*Tathorhynchus exsiccata*) was trapped by SN at St Mellion on 29 November, the sixth Cornish record and new to VC2. One Purple Marbled (*Eublemma ostrinia*) was recorded on St Agnes, IOS on 15 October by RH. A Rosy Underwing (*Catacala electa*) came to light at Kilminorth Wood on 13 September (RJ & FKW), the sixth record for Cornwall. At Porthallow on 6 August, JHC trapped a Dark Crimson Underwing (*Catocala sponsa*), another species new to Cornwall. At Maenporth on 20 October, GD recorded the adventive species Green Drab (*Ophiusa tirhaca*), also new to Cornwall.



Sprawler Photo: Nick Banks

The migrant Ni Moth (*Trichoplusia ni*) has been scarce in recent years. BC recorded one at a pheromone lure at Roseland on 14 October. The scarce migrant Slender Burnished Brass (*Thysanoplusia orichalcea*) was recorded at three sites: two came to a pheromone lure at Roseland on 14 October (BC), one at light at St Mellion on 6 November (SN) and one at Sennen on 9 November (Martin Elliott (ME) & Mike Spicer (MLS). A Golden Twin-spot (*Chrysodeixis chalcites*) came to light at Penzance on 10 November, (ME & MLS). A Scarce Merveille du Jour (*Moma alpium*) was recorded again at Kilminorth Wood on 17 June (RJ & FKW). Sprawler (A*steroscopus sphinx*) is widespread in England and Wales, but is rare in Cornwall. Nick Banks recorded one at Trenault on 29 October, the sixth Cornish record and the first since 1984.



Sallow Nycteoline Photo: Chris Lewis

The once-scarce Orange Sallow (*Tiliacea citrago*) enjoyed a successful period from 2008 to 2016, when it was recorded regularly. Since then there have only been three reported, including one on 14 September at Downderry (JCN). There were two records of Lesser-spotted Pinion (*Cosmia affinis*): from St Minver on 3 August (Anthony McDonald) and Sladesbridge on 26 August (Peter Floyd-Spong). Since the first Cornish record of Sombre Brocade (*Dryobotodes tenebrosa*) in 2011, it had increasingly become a regular, with sixteen records in the last four years, but only one record has been received for 2024, from DT at Mullion 15 October. Most Cornish records of Dog's Tooth (*Lacanobia suasa*) are from the Lynher Valley. 2024 produced records from two new sites, not too far from the Lynher: from St Mellion on 24 July (SN) and Torpoint on 11 August (Alan Pease). On St Mary's, IOS, CL recorded a Sallow Nycteoline (*Nycteola degenerana*) on 18 October, the second British record.

Trelusback Foundation for Wildlife Conservation



The North end of the lake

Our charitable aims

The two charitable aims of Trelusback Foundation for Wildlife Conservation (TFWC) are to preserve the site for wildlife and to provide a place where students studying conservation can complete their practical work. This has been made possible by the donation of 29 acres of land and three barns. The land is a mosaic of pasture, wildflower meadows, marsh, stream, mine spoil, woodland, ponds and a lake.

Students and researchers from Exeter University and local colleges are already taking advantage of this facility. One of the Trustees of TFWC is an internationally known professor who now works at the University of Exeter.

A proactive approach to conservation

The fragmentation of our countryside is in the Charity's opinion one of the main reasons for the continuing decline in the numbers of our butterflies, moths and other wildlife. We therefore believe that we need to proactively manage our dwindling wildlife sites.

One example of our proactive approach is to carry out properly managed reintroductions coupled with habitat improvement. We are fortunate to have access to many knowledgeable people including those with knowledge of invertebrates, plants, fungi and mammals. TFWC also has a close working relationship with many wildlife organisations and is a Corporate Member of the large national charity Buglife.

Reintroductions by TFWC

TFWC has carried out three introductions to date and all have been successful.

Our first project was to plant a variety of disease resistant elms obtained from France, Spain and Italy. These have thrived and are potentially suitable to support some of our butterflies and moths. For example, elm trees are used as larval food plants by Comma, Large Tortoiseshell and White-letter Hairstreak butterflies. Further research on elm trees and their suitability for Cornwall's insects is planned.

Our second project was to introduce Pond Mud snails and we were fortunate to have the assistance of the large invertebrate charity Buglife. They were very helpful.

The third project was the introduction of Water Voles and this was carried out very successfully by the community interest company Kernow Conservation. This company was started by students who had previously worked as volunteers at Trelusback and they now use the site for their storage of equipment.

The Charity's other projects have been research and carrying out habitat work for fungi, owls, woodland, wild flowers, butterflies, water shrews, dragonflies, harvest mice and moths.

There are some rare fungi at Trelusback but otherwise the site mainly contains common species of invertebrates, fungi, birds and mammals which are local to the area. These once common species are sadly becoming increasingly rare and endangered. It is hoped that by protecting the "oasis" we will ensure that at least one site will retain those species which are vulnerable.

We cannot claim to have the rare species such as High Brown Fritillary or Pearl-bordered Fritillary but the species that we do have including Marsh Fritillary and Five-spot Burnet moth are being protected.

Sponsorship of Research

The owners of Trelusback have funded a number of butterfly and moth research projects in cooperation with other organisations.

This includes a donation of £20,000 which was used to help fund a PhD project to research Silver-studded Blue butterflies on mine sites. This project was carried out by Dr. Marcus Rhodes who has since helped Butterfly Conservation with habitat work at mine sites.

The other funders were Cornwall Butterfly and Moth Society, Spalding Associates, Wheal Jane Limited and Exeter University.

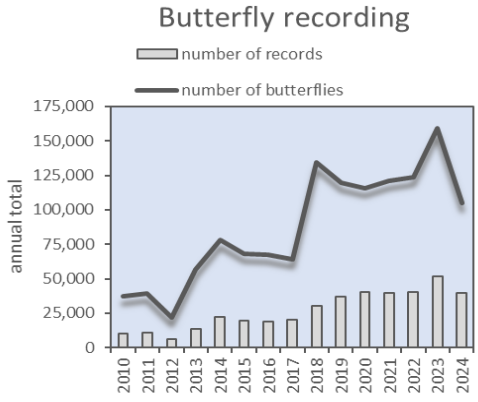
Trelusback Foundation Website

The TFWC website is under construction but a temporary free to use Weebly website can be found easily on the internet. Details of our wildlife projects can be found on the website.

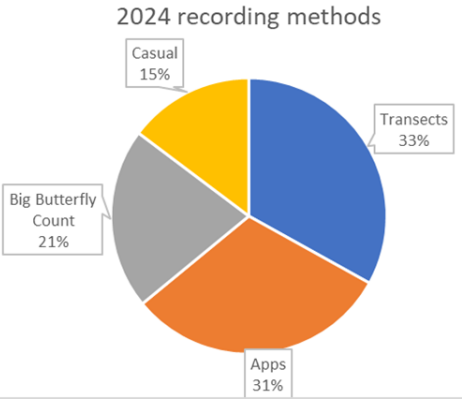
Trelusback Foundation for Wildlife Conservation: Charity registered in England (1196741)

Butterfly recording in 2024

Jerry Dennis, our county butterfly recorder, reports on a poor year for butterflies in Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly. Please email him with any queries at records@cornwall-butterfly-conservation.org.uk



We have just experienced the worst year for butterflies in Cornwall for more than a decade. Only a handful of species had higher-than-average abundance and for the rest it was a question of how badly they did, and some did very badly.



Recording

In terms of local recording, there was a tremendous amount achieved in this difficult year and once again I must thank all individuals who carry out surveys of various sorts and submit their data. Your records are vital to the monitoring of our butterflies and we could not do this without you.

This year nearly 40,000 records were received describing 105,000 individual butterflies of 38 species. The graph opposite confirms the lowest butterfly numbers since 2017 but that the amount of recording remained high and on par with recent years.

A breakdown of the 2024 recording methods is shown on the pie chart and confirms that online apps e.g., iRecord Butterflies and iRecord, are increasing in popularity with 31% of the total records submitted in that way in 2024 compared to 23% in 2023. They are proving easy to use and worth investigating.

The number of transect records was 20% lower than in 2023 but from a record 66 transects, explained by the paucity of butterflies on many weekly walks.

Results

The following table shows each species' 2024 abundance compared with the average abundance in years 2018 to 2023. The index is the ratio of this year's abundance divided by the average abundance. I have arranged the table in four categories in decreasing order of relative abundance.



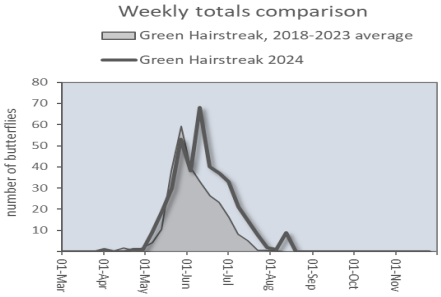
A 2024 male Orange-tip on Three-cornered Leek Photo by Jerry Dennis



A late Green Hairsreak at Porthgwara on10th August 2024 Photo Jerry Dennis

Species	2024 total	Index	Category
Orange-tip	1,600	148%	Highest
Green Hairstreak	386	143%	
Grayling	3,019	146%	Higher than average
Large White	10,758	123%	
Marbled White	335	108%	
Green-veined White	2,335	106%	
Speckled Wood	9,973	105%	
Gatekeeper	15,140	94%	Lower than average
Large Skipper	1,019	94%	
Small Heath	1,842	92%	
Heath Fritillary	479	91%	
Small White	8,010	91%	
Brown Argus	227	90%	
Red Admiral	7,843	80%	
Peacock	2,245	78%	
Brimstone	243	66%	
Small Pearl-bordered Fritillary	733	66%	
Holly Blue	707	61%	
Pearl-bordered Fritillary	255	51%	
Grizzled Skipper	36	38%	
Silver-studded Blue	3,185	36%	
Painted Lady	728	24%	
Clouded Yellow	15	6%	
Meadow Brown	23,813	90%	Lowest
Wall	811	65%	
Ringlet	2,976	59%	
Small Copper	1,234	56%	
Purple Hairstreak	42	49%	
Dingy Skipper	58	48%	
Comma	561	47%	
Common Blue	2,304	47%	
Silver-washed Fritillary	277	46%	
Small Skipper	834	43%	
Dark Green Fritillary	186	38%	
Marsh Fritillary	149	34%	
Small Tortoiseshell	909	31%	

Two species provided the highest yearly totals yet recorded in Cornwall – the Orange-tip and Green Hairstreak, both with an index more than 40% above average. This was a surprising and colourful development in spring and early summer in such a poor year. The Green Hairstreak brood was unusual with a late peak and a long duration into September as demonstrated on the plot below.





A male Grayling at Lizard Downs on 14th August 2024 Photo: Jerry Dennis

Five species had higher than average totals. The high index value for the Grayling perhaps reflects the amount of recording in 2024 with over 3,000 sightings. For this I was largely responsible as species champion for this butterfly. Similarly, recording of the Marbled White was good in 2024. This leaves three common species, Large White, Green-veined White and Speckled Wood, all with higher-than -average totals.



One of a courting pair of Red Admirals in willow canopy, 2nd November 2024 Photo: Jerry Dennis

The remaining 29 species were either below average (16) or the lowest since 2018 (13) with an index range for our non-migrant breeding species between 94% and 31%. The abundance of our six resident fritillary species was disappointing, three species below average with the Heath Fritillary faring the best, and three species with lowest totals since 2018 and an index less than 50%, with the Marsh Fritillary lowest at 34%.

Our regular migrant species had differing fortunes. The Red Admiral numbers were only down 20% and they were seen throughout the year. There were some late sightings into November and it was observed that individual butterflies were not seeking nectar prior to migrating. Instead, they seemed to have adapted, having missed the usual migration window, and were exhibiting breeding behaviour. On one occasion, I observed two in courtship in willow canopy at Marazion Marsh

Numbers of Painted Lady were 85% down and only fifteen Clouded Yellow were spotted in the whole year. I was lucky enough to see five of these, four of which were at Porthgwarra.

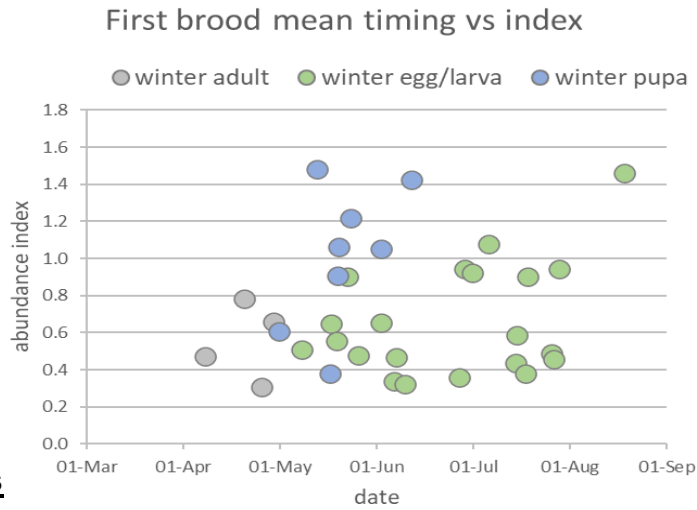


One of fifteen Clouded Yellow recorded in 2024. This one on 22nd October at Porthgwarra Photo: Jerry Dennis

Of our less frequent visitors, there were two Long-tailed Blue seen at Wadebridge and Cape Cornwall on the same day – 27th October. Two Large Tortoiseshell were seen – one at Marazion on 7th March and the other at Veryan on 26th July.



A worn Large Tortoiseshell seen at Marazion Marsh on 7th March Photo: Jerry Dennis



Analysis

From a butterfly perspective, the simplest explanation of the main cause of widespread low numbers in 2024 is that the wrong sort of weather occurred in the early parts of the year. Rainfall in February, March and April was persistent and in each of these months more than double the average. This is the time that butterflies are waking from their winter hibernation.

The graph above cross-plots the average mean timing of the first brood or adult awakening of each species against the abundance index with the data points coloured to show in which stage the species spends winter (using Cornish data). There are some interesting patterns that give an insight into what might have happened.

The species spending winter as pupae (blue circles) generally fared the best and it is perhaps the waterproofing of the chrysalis that gave these species a bit of an advantage in the very wet spring. The four species spending winter as an adult (grey circles) fared poorly, perhaps experiencing high mortality in the wet conditions, with the Small Tortoiseshell having an extremely poor winter survival (index of 31%).

The abundance of the first broods after larval diapause (green circles) provided some different patterns. For the earlier first broods, index values were clustered between 30% and 65% for such species as the Small Copper, Marsh Fritillary and Common Blue. The later first broods showed wider variation and split into two groups. The first group, containing the Dark Green Fritillary, Small Skipper and Ringlet, had low index values on par with the early first broods. The second group, including such species as the Large Skipper, Gatekeeper, Small Heath and Grayling, did much better and had abundance index values higher than 0.8. Perhaps the timing of awakening in relation to the occurrence of the wettest weather had a bearing on their first brood abundance.

Unfortunately, our results were repeated in many other counties throughout Britain. The Big Butterfly Count results were poor this year, despite nearly a million butterflies having been recorded. The nationwide statistics showed that seven of our commonest butterflies had their lowest numbers in the count's 14-year history, including favourites such as the Common Blue, Small Tortoiseshell and Painted Lady. There were 9,000 counts where people saw no butterflies at all. And the low numbers were not confined to butterflies, with many moths and other insects having a bad year.

Is there anything that can we do to help butterfly numbers recover? A very powerful consideration is to make your garden as insect friendly as you can. Humans tend to like tidy borders with no weeds, short lawns, and all dead plant material removed during winter. Insects like weeds, grasses that are allowed to grow and seed naturally, and winter plant debris to provide shelter and cover when hibernating. Many of the caterpillars of our common butterflies live on grasses such as Cock's-foot or Yorkshire Fog, or on nettles, and so if you can tolerate these in a corner of your garden then you may attract female butterflies looking to lay their eggs. There is a great sense of wellbeing in giving nature a helping hand and there are lots of excellent online tips for improving your gardens for wildlife.

Please keep up your excellent work on butterfly recording as this is greatly appreciated by Butterfly Conservation. I look forward to learning about your interesting sightings in 2025.

CORNWALL BRANCH
FIELD TRIPS AND EVENTS 2025

Welcome to Cornwall Butterfly Conservation's programme of field trips for 2025; an exciting mix of new sites and old favourites. As before, we have also organised a few trips in partnership with other local conservation organisations. Increasingly, the importance of recording is recognised so we will be encouraging everyone to note what they find on these field trips so that we can continue to build a better picture of lepidoptera distribution across Cornwall.

Our field trips are fun and friendly and open to all - including accompanied children - whatever level of experience you have and you do not need to be a member of Butterfly Conservation. Please always come prepared for Cornwall's changeable weather and mixed terrain – waterproofs, good walking shoes or boots, sun cream etc., as well as water and lunch/snacks.

Please be aware that we would prefer dogs not to be brought because we are in wildlife sensitive areas.
Postcodes have been included. However, please bear in mind that they may not be as accurate as 6 figure grid references in pinpointing meeting places, and What 3 Words can take you right to your parking place! www.gridreferencefinder.com and www.what3words.com

Please check our website and social media prior to each field trip in case of cancellation due to weather or other complications. You can also check our website events page http://www.cornwall-butterfly-conservation.org.uk/events.html for upcoming events.
Or contact Sue Allen on 01872 240246, 078849 74528 or events@cornwall-butterfly-conservation.org.uk

We are also looking further afield for our butterfly experiences and have teamed up with Devon Butterfly Conservation who have kindly invited us to look at the field trip list on their website https://butterfly-conservation.org/in-your-area/devon-branch

Devon has several butterflies not found in Cornwall, including Small Blue, Brown Hairstreak, High Brown Fritillary, White Admiral and Wood White. They also have several colonies of White-letter Hairstreaks.



Wood White Photo: Steve Batt

Saturday 10th May:

DE LANK AND PENDRIFT

Near St. Breward 12 noon

A meeting where we are likely to see some of the UK's most declining and endangered butterflies, the Pearl-bordered Fritillary, and the Small Pearl-bordered Fritillary at this hillside known to be reliable for them. Because there is very little parking at Pendrift please meet at the Camel Trail car park (free) next to the Snails Pace café. SX08583 75102 w3w resides.cried.frown. We will transport people from there. Please bring a packed lunch. **NB wellington boots are recommended**!

Leaders and contact: Liz and Andrew Thomas (07799 247144 or 01503 221105)



Small Pearl Bordered Fritillary
Photo: Steve Batt

Thursday 15th May:

THE BUTTERFLIES OF PENHALE

Near Cubert 9:45 for 10am

This is a joint walk with Cornwall Wildlife Trust (CWT) which will be led by Jon Cripps, CWT ranger. We hope to find Brown Argus, Dingy Skipper and the Grizzled Skipper which is now only located on this site in Cornwall. Please meet by the M.O.D. South Gate near Treworthen Farm (SW783567). Postcode for Treworthen Farm, TR8 5PZ. W3W busy.nest.degrading Please bring a packed lunch. Places are limited so booking is **essential** for this one. Please note there is no phone signal at the South Gate.

Leaders Jon Cripps and Steve Batt. Booking essential Contact: Sue Allen events@cornwall-butterfly-conservation.org.uk (01872 240246 or 0788 4974528)

Saturday 31st May:

CHAPEL PORTH

Near St Agnes 11am

Join us looking for Green Hairstreak butterflies along this beautiful cliff walk. The terrain can be steep and rough in places, so we advise a walking pole and sturdy footwear, but the views are spectacular. Meet at Wheal Coates National Trust (NT) cliff top car park (not the beach car park) (SW702500) TR5 0NT. W3W flute.baguette.crucially Please note that there is a parking charge for non-NT members. Please bring a packed lunch.

Leaders and contact: Kathy Wood (01872 864344) and Sue Allen

Thursday 5th June:

GOONHILLY DOWNS

Near Helston 11am

Join us on an exciting field trip in partnership with the Natural England (NE) team on The Lizard. Goonhilly Downs house a significant number of our rarer butterflies including Marsh Fritillary, Grayling, Silver-studded Blue, Small Heath and Small Pearl-bordered Fritillary. The NE team will lead us to a location in Central Goonhilly where Marsh Fritillary were recorded last year. Meet at Dry Tree car park in the National Nature Reserve (near the Earth Station) on the B3293 St Keverne road (SW730212)

W3W magpie.marathons.ticked Bring a packed lunch and wellies in case it's wet underfoot!
Leaders Duncan Lyne and Sarah Board (NE). Contact: Sue Allen (0788 4974528)

Sunday 8th June:

GREENSCOOMBE WOOD

Near Luckett 10:30

Come and join us on a field trip to Cornwall's only site for the nationally rare Heath Fritillary butterfly which is now established here after a successful reintroduction in 2006. This walk has several steep inclines that can be slippery, so we advise a walking pole and sturdy footwear. Local expert on the species, Richard Vulliamy will be leading the trip. Meet in Luckett Village car park, (SX 38915 73657). PL17 8NJ. W3W: shorter.bring.agreement. Please bring a packed lunch.

Leader: Richard Vulliamy. Contact: Liz and Andrew Thomas (07799 247144 or 01503 221105)

Tuesday 10th June:

CHURCH HAY DOWN

Near St Breward 11am

Alan Stapleton our Marsh Fritillary Species Champion is leading us through the colonies on his doorstep at Church Hay Down, Churchtown Marsh, Irish Farm and Lady Down. We may also see Small Pearl-bordered Fritillary. This is very rough terrain, wellies are essential and walking poles advised. Please bring a packed lunch. Anyone attending the event is invited to have another look around the area afterwards and join Alan and Jonquil for afternoon tea and cake at around 4pm in the garden room which has direct access to Church Hay Down. Parking at "Treverran", St Breward, PL30 4PE (SX101771) W3W tearfully.comic.fuel
Leaders and contact: Alan Stapleton (01208 850085) and Sue Allen

Tuesday 17th June:

CUBERT COMMON

Near Crantock 11am

Cubert Common is one of the few enclosed commons in England. It is a gently undulating area of sandy grassland owned by the National Trust (NT) and designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest. We will be looking out for a wide variety of butterflies (including Brown Argus, Dark Green Fritillary, Silver-studded Blue and Small Heath); moths; other invertebrates



Brown Argus Photo: Steve Batt

and rare plants. Meeting point is the NT Car Park near Polly Joke beach, (SW776599) TR8 5QS. W3W dusty.advances.duplicity This is a relatively small car park so car sharing is advised. Directions: Drive through Crantock village and shortly after turn left onto the road to Treago farm. Drive through the farm and follow the track and park in the NT car park (note that at Treago Farm there is a gate crossing the track which you will need to open and close). Please bring a packed lunch.
Leader and contact: Tristram Besterman (077966 60057) and Steve Batt

Thursday 26th June:

UPTON TOWANS

Near Hayle 11am

Join us on a walk through this extensive sand dune complex situated between Gwithian and Hayle: a Cornwall Wildlife Trust (CWT) reserve and a Site of Special Scientific Interest. The main target species will be Dark Green Fritillary and Silver-studded Blue but there will be many other lepidoptera species and other wildlife to see. Meet by the gate, in front of the large chimney at the entrance to the CWT reserve (SW580396) TR27 5BJ W3W last.sprinkler.fortunate Please bring a packed lunch
Leaders and contact: Dick Goodere (01736 753077) and Jerry Dennis



Silver-studded Blue Photo: Steve Batt

Sunday 29th June:

GWENNAP HEAD AND PORTHGWARRA

Near Land's End 10.30am

This beautiful location boasts stunning views and an abundance of butterflies, including Green Hairstreak, Silver-studded Blue, Small Pearl-bordered Fritillary, Small Copper, Clouded Yellow, Small Heath and many more. Meet in the Porthgwarra car park (SW370217) where charges apply TR19 6JR (café) W3W stop.dragonfly.path Please bring a packed lunch.
Leaders and contact: Jerry Dennis (079560 41263) and Sue Allen

Thursday 3rd July:

CARNON VALLEY

Near Devoran 11am

Join us for a walk along the Carnon Valley in a landscape still dominated by the mining industry. The area has been visited regularly for our Mining for Butterflies project. This gentle walk uses the Coast-to-Coast cycle/walking track from Carnon Valley Car Park in Grenna Lane, to Bissoe Bike Hire and St Piran Cafe (where there are toilets) and back. We hope to see plenty of common butterflies and near the pools along the way, dragonflies, maybe even the Scarce Blue-tailed Damselfly. We will explore Cornwall Wildlife Trust Bissoe Valley Nature Reserve and the Arsenic Works where the Silver-studded Blue butterfly has been recorded. Please bring a packed lunch. Directions: From the A39 at the Devoran roundabout take the road heading towards Bissoe. Go straight over the first cross roads, under the viaduct then take the next left and the car park is on your right. (SW783408) TR37LN W3W thrilled.whispers.clinking
Leader: Sue Allen (0788 4974528

Wednesday 9th July:

CABILLA WOODS

Glyn Valley (3 miles east of Bodmin) 12 noon

Join us for this walk through the Cornwall Wildlife Trust (CWT) reserve described as "one of the largest and possibly finest ancient woodland in Cornwall". Our target species is the Silver-washed Fritillary with a

chance of seeing the aberration f. valezina. There should also be many other butterflies including Comma, Ringlet and Gatekeeper. We will be joined by CWT ranger Stuart Mathieson who will tell us about the practical conservation work he is doing. Please bring a packed lunch. Directions: Proceed along the A38 from the A30 heading towards Liskeard. About a mile past the Bodmin Parkway junction, turn left down Le Ball Hill. Cross over a small bridge and immediately turn right. There are some places for parking (SX129652) PL30 4BE but these are limited, so car sharing is advised. W3W recliner.elbow.nurses
Leader: Kelly Uren. Contact Sue Allen (0788 4974528)

Sunday 13th July:

PENLEE RESERVE AND PENLEE POINT

Near Rame Head 11am
We expect to see a meadow full of Marbled Whites, Meadow Browns and Gatekeepers, as well as seeing Small Heath and Dark Green Fritillary, on this walk. Spectacular views from this south coast meadow that is buzzing with life! Six-belted Clearwing moths are also recorded here and we hope to lure some for you to see! Please bring a packed lunch. Meet in Penlee Battery car park (SX437491) PL10 1LG. W3W outfit.power.butternut
Leader: Steve Batt. Contact Sue Allen (0788 4974528)

Wednesday 16th July:

MOTH EVENT

Near Helston 9am
Two Cornwall Branch volunteers have kindly invited us to visit their lovely garden and adjacent meadow and wood. Weather permitting, they will put the traps out on the night of 15th July. The traps will be closed early in the morning and kept in the shade until we are ready to unpack them and identify the moths. Because of limited parking space booking is **essential** and we will send out the details near the time. (This event will take place on 17th in case of bad weather.)
Leaders: Kathy Wood and Sue Allen. Booking essential Contact: Sue Allen events@cornwall-butterfly-conservation.org.uk (01872 240246 or 0788 4974528)


Grayling Photo: Steve Batt

Saturday 19th July:

CHURCHTOWN FARM

Saltash 1pm
We are joining Friends of Churchtown Farm (FOCF) for a walk identifying and learning about the butterflies and moths that make their home at this Cornwall Wildlife Trust (CWT) reserve on the banks of the river Lynher. A donation of £2 is suggested for those not members of CWT or FOCF. Directions: Meet by St Stephen's Church opposite The Cecil Arms on the junction of St Stephen's Road and Farm Lane. (SX417583) PL12 4AR W3W transcribes.toasters.alike It is about a mile from Saltash Railway Station, there is a local bus link to St Stephen.
Leaders and contact: Kelly Uren (074293 54011) and Sue Allen (0788 4974528)

Wednesday 23rd July:

WHEAL FORTUNE AND CUSVEY

Near Twelveheads 11am

This walk in the heavily mined area of the Carnon Valley starts steeply and is uneven throughout. We may be lucky enough to see Purple Hairstreak at the top where we can look down on the oak trees. Some of the tracks are very rough and the space shared with cyclists, so caution is required. There is also the hope that we will catch some late Silver-studded Blues and this area supports a population of Grayling. As we descend to the heavily polluted tailings dam we will see dragon and damselflies. Please bring a packed lunch and hand wipes.
We have been given permission to park in the Methodist Church car park at Twelveheads TR4 8SJ (SW760422) W3W vibrating.morphing.passage
Leader and contact: Sue Allen (078849 74528)

Sunday 27th July:

GODOLPHIN WOODS

Near Godolphin 1.30pm

Join us for this interesting walk, through Godolphin Woods. There will be a wide variety of lepidoptera but the target species will be the Purple Hairstreak. Directions: Coming from Leedstown, turn left at Townshend, then at Godolphin Bridge the road swings to the left. A little further along the road a track runs down to the river on the left. Drive down the short track and park in the car park at the bottom at (SW600324) TR13 9RE W3W cabbage.lifeguard.sung
Leaders Jerry Dennis (07956 041263) and Sue Allen

Sunday 3rd August:

TRELUSBACK

Near Stithians Reservoir 11am

We are invited to visit the Trelusback Foundation (see article in the Spring Cornwall Butterfly Observer) to look at the work that has gone on to create a haven for nature. We hope to see late summer butterflies, dragon and damselflies. You may like to bring a packed lunch. Directions: From Redruth take the B3297 Helston road, at the top of Buller Hill (before Four Lanes) take the minor road on the left. Follow this road to Penhalvean and at the sharp right hand bend take the track, on the left, to Trelusback Farm, Penhalvean, Redruth, TR16 6TQ (SW712383) W3W verge.situated.nanny
Leaders Keith Wilson, Alan May and Dave Cooper. Contact Sue Allen (07884 974528)



Male Emperor Dragonfly Photo: Steve Batt

PLEASE CHECK OUR WEBSITE AND SOCIAL MEDIA BEFORE EVERY EVENT IN CASE WE HAVE HAD TO MAKE CHANGES OR CANCELLATIONS

Thursday 7h August:

NEWLYN DOWNS

Near St Newlyn East 11am

Join us in exploring this SSSI and Special Area of Conservation. Newlyn Downs is a large area of wet and dry heath with four heather species, including the nationally rare Dorset Heath Erica ciliaris. It has previously been mined and quarried, resulting in bare ground and areas of gravel. We will be searching for Grayling, Silver-washed Fritillary, Wall and Small Heath and hope to see heathland plants and insects including dragonflies and damselflies. Meet in the layby opposite the



Silver Washed Fritillary
Photo: Steve Batt

entrance to East Wheal Rose Farm TR8 5LQ (SW836552) W3W bulldozer.ditching.arose Bring a packed lunch.
Leaders and contact Sue Allen (0788 4974528) Mac McLeod and Carly Hoskin

Friday 15th August:

WINDMILL FARM NATURE RESERVE MOTH EVENT AND BUTTERFLY WALK

Near The Lizard 9 30am

Windmill Farm was purchased jointly by the Cornwall Bird Watching and Preservation Society and Cornwall Wildlife Trust (CWT) in 2001. This 85ha (210 acre) farm is home to an array of habitats including wet and dry heaths, hay meadows, wetland, ponds, and arable land. The mix of habitats means the site is home to a huge variety of plant, bird, and invertebrate species.
Dougy Wright CWT volunteer warden is going to introduce us to the moths found in the area. Join us in the Field Studies Centre at the reserve as Dougy opens the traps.
After the moth event we will go for a walk through the reserve where we would hope to see late summer butterflies, including the Small Pearl-bordered Fritillary and the Grayling, and, around the pools, dragonflies, and damselflies. There is also the chance of seeing Marsh Fritillary larval webs. Meet at the car park by the windmill which is down a lane off the A3083 (SW693152) TR12 7LH W3W lamp.sparkle.prevented Please note dogs are not allowed anywhere on this site. If you want to stay and walk around the reserve, please bring a packed lunch.
Leader: Dougy Wright CWT volunteer warden. Contact: Sue Allen (0788 4974528)

Details of all these field trips can be found on our CBC website: http://www.cornwall-butterfly-conservation.org.uk/events.

Don't forget to have a look over the border to get the chance to see some different species in Devon (whose field trips need to be booked.)

2025 – a good year to celebrate our Cornish Skippers!

The Skipper family (Hesperiidae) contains butterfly species with moth-like features with some having club-shaped antennae and others that perch with wings in different planes. It is a big group worldwide, with eight British species, four of which are found in Cornwall.

We have two rarer species in the sub-family Pyrginae – the Grizzled Skipper and Dingy Skipper. We also have the two common golden skippers (Hesperiinae) that were the subject of an article in the last Cornwall Butterfly Observer magazine – the Large Skipper and Small Skipper.

We currently have a vacancy for a species champion for the Grizzled Skipper and please use the email address below if you are interested. There is only one site to monitor for this butterfly, near Perranporth. We will be able to offer help and support and a field visit to get you started and it is up to you to decide how much time you can devote to the task.

Although they are diminutive, all four species are attractive and energetic fliers and even the unfortunately named 'Dingy Skipper' is a great sight on a spring walk. I would like you to consider looking for these species this year and to try to see all four if you have time. I will give you some details that will help you to find them. I will be delighted to hear about any skippers that you see and please email your sightings to records@cornwall-butterfly-conservation.org.uk.

Grizzled Skipper



Now only found in one area in Cornwall on the towans east of Perranporth through Gear Sands and Penhale Sands. A walk to St. Piran's Church from the parking at SW77325516 (see P on map below), choosing any of the well-walked paths may lead you to an encounter. You might mistake the first one that you see as a day-flying moth and so wait until it lands and check carefully for black and white markings. More than 10 can be seen on a good day, so keep looking. As a species champion, we will be able to arrange access so that you can also search the adjacent MOD land where the butterfly is present.

Large Skipper



This is a common species that can be seen in any part of Cornwall. Best places to look are in sunny, sheltered places where grasses such as Cock's-foot and Yorkshire Fog are allowed to grow naturally and are not cut. This species flies earlier than the Small Skipper and so the first golden skipper you see may well be a Large Skipper. The butterfly is usually seen in small numbers. Please check to article in the last edition to see where the Golden Skippers can be found.

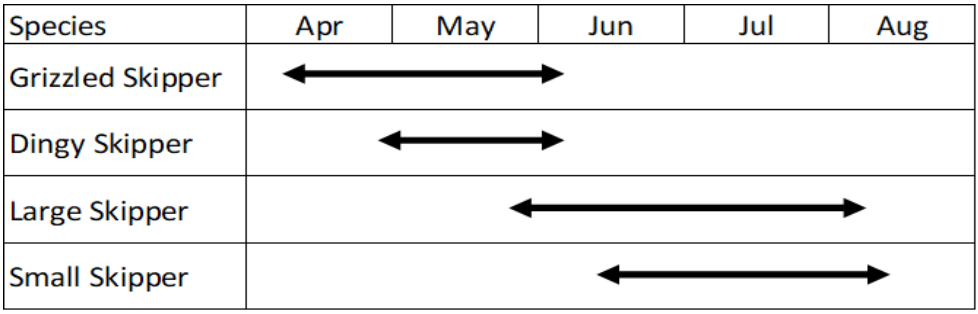
Small Skipper

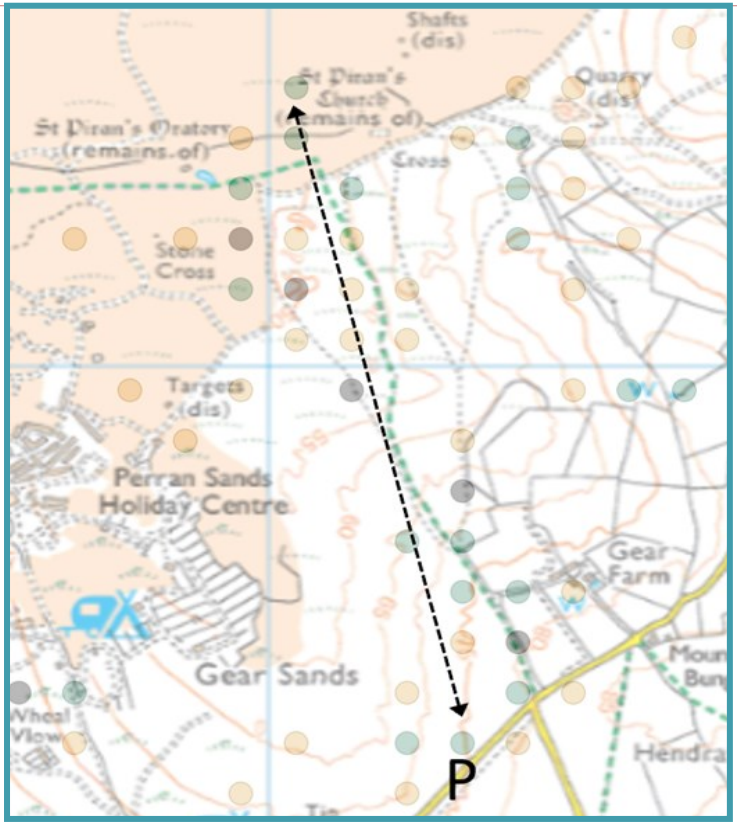


The Small Skipper is the last Cornish skipper to emerge and it does so in June. You may be lucky to encounter more than 10 on a good day if the weather conditions are good and the brood is near to peak flight. If you have time, please wait for a flying golden skipper to land before you decide which species it is.

It can be surprisingly tricky to decide which one it is and there is not much difference in the size despite the names. The Large Skipper has distinct mottling patterns on its wings, and a greenish colour on the underwings; the Small Skipper lacks these but has black striations.

Here is a quick guide to when these species are flying:





Dingy Skipper



This species is also found at Gear Sands and a walk in May as described above will also take you through places where many Dingy Skippers have been seen. The map above is a suggested route to find both of these early skippers. The circles are places where Dingy Skippers have been seen recently, grey circles signify more than 20 seen.

The Dingy Skipper can also be found in several other places and please contact me to discover the nearest known place to where you live.

Good luck with your 2025 skipper searches! I will update you on what was seen in the next edition.

Jerry Dennis, County Butterfly Recorder, Cornwall Branch

Exploring the life cycle of the Small Tortoiseshell

Jerry Dennis delves into the fascinating world of this beautiful common species.

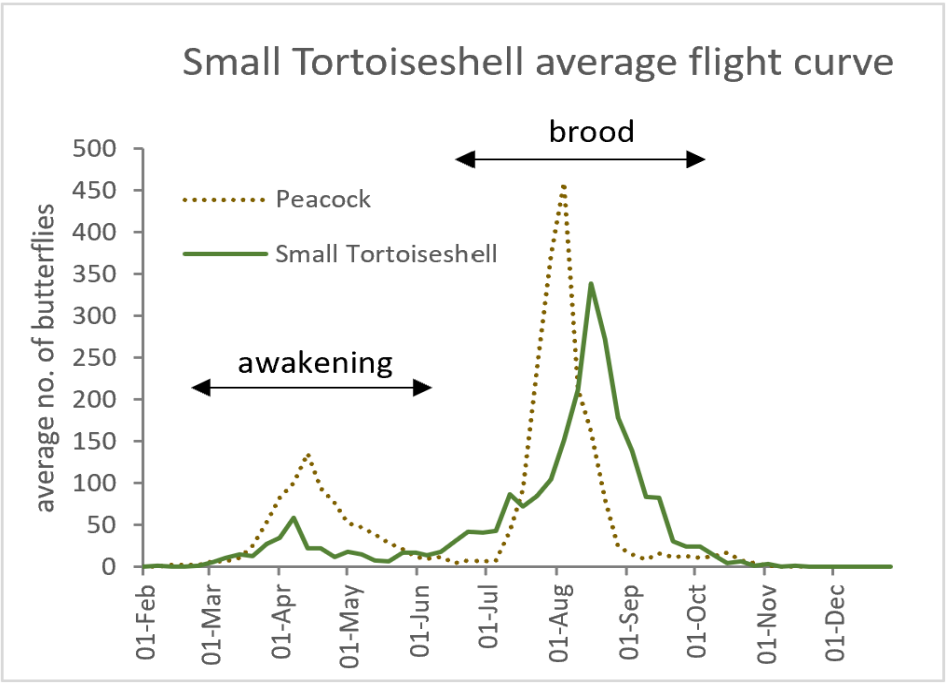
There is national concern about the plight of the Small Tortoiseshell that has lost nearly 80% of its abundance since monitoring began in 1976. Data from our Cornish butterfly transects shows that the lowest summer totals since 2013 have occurred in the last three years. Thankfully, the butterfly remains common and widely distributed in the county and it is one you should see this year.



Small Tortoiseshell on common nettle, its larval principal host plant Photo: J. Dennis

In terms of its life cycle, the Small Tortoiseshell is one of only four British butterfly species that survives winter in hibernation as an adult butterfly. This remarkable adaptation requires the insect to do all the things that an adult butterfly does: to find a mate, for males to establish territory, and for females to find suitable egg-laying sites and to lay batches of eggs; and all of this after surviving for up to nine months of waiting and hibernating. Adults need to find suitable places that are sheltered and dry in which to hibernate, such as outbuildings, churches and woodpiles. It is a countryside butterfly not tied to any specific habitat and the adults can roam relatively long distances in the short breeding phase that completes their lives. The colourful open-wing appearance of both sexes is almost identical and contrasts with the drab camouflage of the underwing markings, the latter necessary to avoid being discovered by predators during winter.

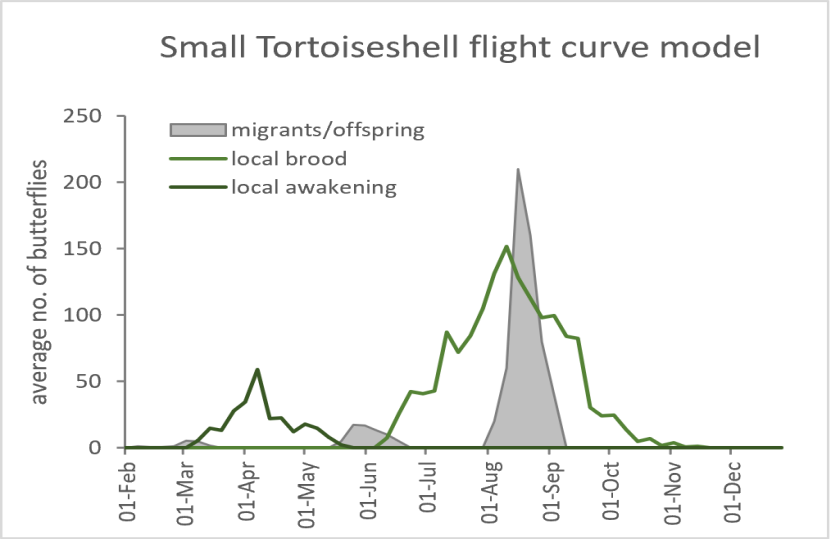
Awakening is triggered by warmer temperatures and on sunny days in any month from January to May you may see Small Tortoiseshells on the wing, warming their bodies, finding early flowering plants to recharge their energy or exhibiting breeding behaviour. Adults can be seen in any month and have been recorded on 80% of all days in the year in the last ten years.



The principal larval host plant is the common nettle and batches of up to 100 eggs are laid by the females. The caterpillars develop by eating the nettle leaves, with the early instars gaining protection from a larval web. There are five larval instars and then pupation takes place over 2 – 4 weeks. Like several other 'Vanessid' species, the predation of caterpillars by a variety of other parasitic insects including Ichneumon wasps and the Tachinid fly *Sturmia bella* is significant.

I have used a novel technique to derive a 10-year average flight curve for the Small Tortoiseshell that works well for most species. Briefly, I use numbers of butterflies seen and not just numbers of records submitted (other references tend to use number of records). Secondly, I analyse the populations in the awakening phase and brood phase separately, to first find the mid-point date of each population for every year (2015 – 2024), and then to migrate the records for each yearly population backwards or forwards by the required number of days to make all years align their mid-points on the average mid-point date. Finally, I average these aligned yearly populations to create the flight curve.

The average flight curve of the Small Tortoiseshell (first graph) is complicated. I have dotted in the much simpler flight curve of the closely related Peacock that also spends winter in adult stage and that exhibits two obvious populations of awakening adults followed by a peaky summer brood. There is also a dribble of



Peacock records through October that represent a small, partial second brood. The average Small Tortoiseshell awakening period is of long duration from March until the end of May with a peak occurring in early April. In individual years, there may be gaps between pulses of spring sightings. Numbers of the brood begin to ramp up again in June to peak in mid-August, producing a strongly late-skewed distribution.



Small Tortoiseshell larval web on nettle Photo: J. Dennis

Written accounts of the Small Tortoiseshell suggest that two quick-fire, largely overlapping summer broods are possible in the south of England. In addition, Small Tortoiseshells are also known to migrate into these locations and numbers recorded may be boosted by adults arriving in the early part of the year and again in autumn, either as migrant offspring or passing migrants.

My analysis doesn't find any compelling evidence for two summer broods in Cornwall as there are just not enough Small Tortoiseshell adults around in June and July. The average flight curve instead suggests a drawn-out and late-skewed brood commencing gradually in June, peaking in late August and then declining through September. Individual years often exhibit a spike of sightings in any time in late July and August that are likely to be migrants. Like the Peacock, there may be a small, partial second brood emerging through October and November.



Perching Small Tortoiseshell showing drab underwing markings Photo: S. Batt

There is a strong possibility that migration behaviour is causing the skewing and irregularities in the brood flight curve. I have analysed the average number of butterflies per record (third graph) as a guide to when migrants may be flying by identifying periods when numbers per record increase. The Small Tortoiseshell struggles to be seen in numbers averaging more than two for most of the year but there are three periods when numbers increase. There are two windows during awakening and a third during the brood in late August. I have constructed a simple model based on attributing and separating out parts of the overall flight curve that may be migrants. The results are illustrated on the second graph.

This is perhaps as close as I can get to rationalising the flight curve in Cornwall.

The findings are:

- The Small Tortoiseshell is unlikely to have two summer broods, instead a prolonged local brood produced by a prolonged awakening population boosted by influxes of migrants. There may be a small, partial second brood in September and October.

- Peak flight occurs on average in early August. An estimate of average life cycle duration using local awakening peak to local brood peak duration is c. 18 weeks, slightly longer than that of the Peacock at 16 weeks.

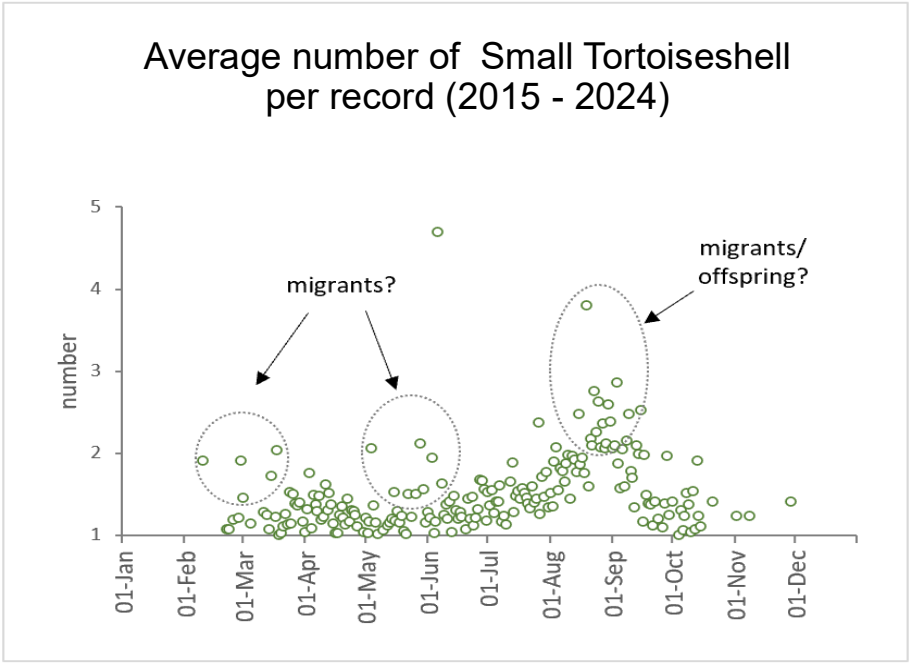
- The flight curve contains and is distorted by episodes of Small Tortoiseshell migration, both incoming and outgoing. Each year the pattern and extent may vary but evidence suggests this is most likely to occur in three windows: February-early March, Late April-early May and late August. Pulses of awakening and influx explain the uneven character to the brood population as an alternative to having two closely spaced and overlapping summer broods. Most years show a pronounced spike of migrants in late July or August.

- The ratio of awakening population size to brood size is 17%, implying that winter survival rates are low. This may be an underestimate, firstly because awakening takes place early in the year when there is less recording effort and secondly, there may be more adults migrating out of Cornwall in August and September than assumed and thereby fewer adults entering hibernation in the county.

- Small Tortoiseshells are usually seen in ones and twos and only rarely above 20. This suggests that individuals may not often gather in significant numbers, the exception being when adults congregate in our gardens and parks in summer to find nectar prior to hibernating. Adults may need to spend longer searching for a mate than those of more gregarious species.

It is a concern that numbers of this delightful butterfly are falling. With nettles being common and widespread, it is difficult to conclude that loss of habitat, i.e. removing nettle patches, is a major cause of decline, although this could be key in some areas with intense agricultural development. The Dipterous parasitism that plagues the species is also unlikely to be anything other than a contributory factor.

Perhaps it is the effects of climate change that are the biggest threat to the butterfly. Recent weather patterns have seen more variable and extreme winter and spring weather followed by warmer summers. Such changes will tend to bring awakening forward into periods when bad weather may increase mortality, or to promote earlier brood emergence thereby extending the length of time that adults must survive before winter hibernation. One would, however, have thought that this would be mitigated by an increase in the size and importance of the partial second brood. Perhaps also a better understanding of the migration behaviour of the Small Tortoiseshell will help to rule in or out how important this is in maintaining the British populations.





An autumn adult nectaring on Ivy Photo: J. Dennis

Volunteer Coordinator Report

It is with a heavy heart that I share some bittersweet news—I will be stepping down as Volunteer Coordinator for the Cornwall branch this April due to a lack of central funding. However, I am choosing to see this as a new opportunity and will be relocating to North Wales, trading coastal views for mountain landscapes.

Working with you all over the past three years has been an incredible experience, and I am truly saddened to be leaving both this role and the important work we do. However, my passion for butterflies and conservation remains strong, and I am excited to continue volunteering with the North Wales Branch.

This past year has been a learning curve for us all, especially as we adapted to new systems and processes. Thankfully, we are now on the other side of the Assemble learning curve, and the system is making event organization and volunteer recruitment much more efficient. As we continue integrating Assemble into our volunteering efforts, it will become a central hub for communication, coordination, and collaboration—making it easier than ever to connect and share our work.

We Need a New Volunteer Coordinator!

To ensure the Cornwall branch continues to thrive, we are now recruiting a **voluntary Volunteer Coordinator**—and I cannot recommend this role enough! As Volunteer Coordinator, you will:

Advertise volunteering events through Assemble, with full support from the committee.

Be a central contact point for volunteer activities across Cornwall.

Gain valuable skills in organization, communication, leadership, event planning, health & safety, butterfly identification, habitat management, and survey techniques.

Have the option to expand the role, getting involved in student recruitment, educational visits, and teaching.

This position is flexible and can be done in as little as two days per month, spread across multiple days. While emails need to be responded to regularly, you can manage them at times that work best for you.

If you are passionate about conservation or looking to build experience for a career in the field, this is an **incredible opportunity** to develop transferable skills for almost any conservation role.

If you're interested in ensuring our vital work continues at its current level, please find more details here:
www.volunteer.butterfly-conservation.org/opportunities/83345-volunteer-co-ordinator-volunteer-co-ordinator-2025-02-15

Thank you all for the wonderful memories—I will miss this branch dearly but look forward to hearing all the fantastic work you continue to achieve!

Georgie Paul

Volunteer Opportunities with the Cornwall Branch

Would you like to get more involved with our work as a branch committee member or other volunteer? Joining our team is both fun and rewarding—you'll play a vital role in supporting our efforts and making a real difference. Our Branch thrives thanks to the dedication of our committee members, and we need passionate individuals like you to help us continue our work.

We currently have several committee vacancies, including both specific role-based and general positions. If you're interested, you can find more details and apply through Assemble by navigating to Recruitment – Opportunities. Alternatively, visit the Butterfly Conservation website (www.volunteer.butterfly-conservation.org/opportunities) and search for Cornwall within a 100-mile radius to explore available opportunities.

Current Cornwall Branch Vacancies:

General Committee Member – 4 vacancies

Engagement & Education Events Coordinator – 1 vacancy

County Butterfly Recorder Verification Assistant – 1 vacancy

Volunteer Coordinator – 1 vacancy

Survey Volunteer – Unlimited vacancies

Practical Conservation Volunteer – Unlimited vacancies

Your support makes a real impact — join us today!




BUTTERFLY
&
ASH
Sunday 18th May
10 - 4
OPEN DAY
Sunnybank,
St Breward, Bodmin
PL30 4LP


Join us for a day of walks, talks, storytelling and workshops to celebrate local Ash Trees and the Pearl Bordered Fritillary Butterfly.
For more details:
St. Breward Wildlife and Conservation Group on Facebook
Or call 07974633320

Committee Members and Contacts

Cornwall Branch Committee of Butterfly Conservation

Chair:
Jerry Dennis
chair@cornwall-butterfly-conservation.org.uk

Secretary:
Mac Mcleod
secretary@cornwall-butterfly-conservation.org.uk

Treasurer:
Sarah Board
treasurer@cornwall-butterfly-conservation.org.uk

Membership Secretary:
Kathy Wood
membership@cornwall-butterfly-conservation.org.uk

County Butterfly Recorder:
Jerry Dennis
records@cornwall-butterfly-conservation.org.uk

Wider Countryside Butterfly Survey Champion and Joint Transect Coordinator:
Kelly Uren
transect@cornwall-butterfly-conservation.org.uk

Health and Safety Officer and Social Media:
Beth Giles
handsofficer@cornwall-butterfly-conservation.org.uk

Lead on Landscapes:
Sue Allen
events@cornwall-butterfly-conservation.org.uk

Marsh Fritillary Species Champion:
Alan Stapleton
alanstapleton52@gmail.com

Miriam Christine
mim001122@gmail.com

Other key contacts

County Moth Recorder:
Leon Truscott
Leon.truscott47@gmail.com

Volunteer Coordinator:
Vacant

Joint Transect Coordinator:
Jim Barker
jimfrances@talktalk.net

Social Media

Website: http://www.cornwall-butterfly-conservation.org.uk

Like us on Facebook:
ButterflyConservationCornwall/

Follow us on X. @Cornwall_BC



