

Archive Page

Sightings and news from July to December 2003

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This page contains sightings details of all the butterflies and moths reported to the [Sightings page](#) between July and December 2003.

Note: These pages have been copied from the original sightings page and some links will no longer work. All images of butterflies or moths have been removed, but most can be found in the [Photo House](#)

December 2003

Thurs 18th December - Had some great news today. **Red Admiral** seen at **Ally Pally** today in the arboretum by Michael Conway. Latest ever site record (as I remember). Have a great Christmas - Tom Clarke

Tues 9th December - My wife reports having watched a **Peacock** flying in **Letchworth** town centre at lunchtime on **Saturday, 6th December** - probably having been disturbed from its hibernation site - Ian Small

Thurs 4th December - Had a very late **Red Admiral** on **Sunday (Nov 30)** at **Beech Farm (east of St. Albans)** - Rupert Pyrah

Mon 1st December

November 2003

Fri 28th November - Imagine my surprise after week of rain and frosts whilst on a lovely walk on the **Hexton Hills** near Ravensburgh Castle, to see a lively butterfly on a secluded track. I chased it thinking it was one of the three obvious nymphalids but no it was a **RED ADMIRAL**. Certainly my latest ever . Who says winter walks don't get results!!! - Stuart Pittman

Thurs 27th November

Wed 19th November - Harpenden, both my wife and myself had many sightings of humming bird hawk moths this season, the latest being on 1st November on a few late petunias and pansies. On the **16th November** I was surprised to see a **painted lady** pass through the garden - Albert Callewaert

Some more very late news, which Andrew Middleton received today, sent to him when I was holiday in August!

Amwell gravel pits: 1 Brown Argus - **12th August** 1.30 p.m. - P. Smith

Tues 18th November - Just to round off a good year, I watched a **Hummingbird Hawk Moth** under the canopy roof on the garage opposite the Thistle Hotel (Noke?) **St Albans**...near the M25.....whilst I filled with petrol....the temperature was about 16.5 degrees and dry...the time about midday - Jeff Davies - *Jeff also thinks that Malcolm's picture is a Marbled Skipper*

Small Tortoiseshell nectaring on Buddleia Weyeriana at **Folly Lane, St Albans** on **Sunday 16 November** at 11.15, conditions sunny but cold. Can anyone suggest which species of Grizzled Skipper this is, taken in the Cadi National Park in the Catalan Pyrenees last June? - Malcolm Hull

Sun 16th November - **1 Red Admiral** in our garden in **Letchworth** this morning - Ian Small

Sat 15th November - Ware garden, 9.45 this morning, **1 Red Admiral** in front garden then flew off over house - Liz Goodyear

Fri 14th November - We saw a **red admiral** today at **Wardens Walk near Fishers Green**. You will probably get this email in the spring!!! Kevin & Sandra Standbridge

Robert Callf saw a **red admiral** in **Trent Park area** yesterday (**Thursday**)

Thurs 13th November - This email arrived in my "in box" this evening, 4 months after it was sent. Sandra and I decided to go to **Pegsdon Hills** for our 1st visit (**23rd July 2003**). Weather was cloudy but warm, we have only ever seen chalkhill blues in small numbers but here there was an awful lot, majority males but saw half a dozen females at least. Lots of gatekeepers, meadow browns and large whites, the odd ringlet, we then saw approx a dozen marbled whites, a small heath and 2 firsts for us, a Brown ARGUS and a **busy dark green fritillary**, quite lovely and very busy. Also saw 4 brimstones all males, common blues, small and large skippers, peacocks. Lots of moths but we are not great on those yet. Beautiful valley and a great day out. Ps majority of butterflies on a pink flower in their droves, not sure what plant it is, any ideas? Kevin & Sandra Standbridge

Sun 9th November - At the stall yesterday a gentleman reported seeing a **Red Admiral** in **St Albans** that morning (**Sat 8**) - news via Malcolm Hull

Fri 7th November - Park Farm, **Enfield**, **peacock** sunning itself - Robert Callf

Thurs 6th November - Just news of a **Red Admiral** on **The Meads, Ware**, this morning @ approx. 11am - Les Borg

King George V Res - painted lady and red admiral - Andrew Middleton

Probable red admiral flying over, **North Enfield** area - Robert Callf

Tues 4th November - This is a gentle reminder that the deadline for the 2003 butterfly report is this weekend (9th November). So if you have not already done so, please send me your transect sheets and butterfly mapping records to arrive by the end of the week at my address. These should preferably be on the forms enclosed in last year's report, but both transect and mapping forms can be downloaded from the website at: - John Murray
Sightings news sent to this website will be forwarded to John Murray unless I know that those records will be sent in on recording forms - LG

Mon 3rd November - On a mild and sunny but extremely windy day in early November, I was quite surprised to see a pristine **female Brimstone** flying around brambles down the lane south of **Norton Green** - Alan Reynolds

Insect News: HERTFORDSHIRE - Hummingbird Hawk-moth on north side of **Bishop's Stortford** trapped and released from Boardman's shop window at 11:00 - news via Andrew Middleton

Dagenham Chase, belated news (working hard, honest) from **last Monday 27th October**. 1 butterfly, probable Red Ad but silhouetted so didn't get the colour. Late record over here I think - Tom Clarke

October 2003

Fri 30th October - **Red Admiral** seen in my **Hertford** garden this morning - Richard Bigg

I think the butterfly season has finally come to a end what a shame I've not seen anything since Sunday - I've attached some late summer photos for the web page - Nick Sampford

Tues 28th October - Sunday 26th, Red admiral at Rib Valley Lakes near Ware. Angela also saw a butterfly but didn't clinch it possible red admiral but not 100% - they are not giving up this year are they! Nick Sampford

Mon 27th October - Trent Park area, Painted Lady - Robin White

In my shed in **St Albans** this morning I was rummaging around for some tools. I was puzzled by an unusual sound, a bit like someone banging slowly & repeatedly, producing a slightly muffled sound with a bit of a hiss. Looking round I could see nothing until I glanced up to see a Peacock on the underside of the roof slowly opening & closing its wings in time with the sound. I must admit the noise & sudden appearance of the eyespots when the wings opened would have been pretty scary if I'd been much smaller! On searching I found 2 more Peacocks & 4 Small Tortoiseshells, though none of these appeared to take any notice of me. I think this is the first time I've heard a butterfly make a noise. Is this unusual? Malcolm Hull

Fri 24th October - I saw a **Speckled Wood** and a **Red Admiral** at **Stanmore Country Park yesterday** when I was up there working - John Hollingdale

Wed 22nd October - News from Tuesday, Small Copper at Trent Park - Robert Callf

Mon 20th October - News from **Saturday 18 October, Cornmill Meadows:** Red admiral near wooded stream - Martin Shepherd

Fri 17th October - Humming Bird Hawk Moth in **Hoddesdon** at the top of West Hill. It seemed a bit confused, kept flying at a wall. First one I have ever seen! Andy Foy

Thurs 16th October - Enfield Lock: two red admirals in the garden mid-morning - Martin Shepherd

Some news from the **11th October**, where I saw single Painted Lady, Comma and Speckled Wood at **Horsenden Hill** - Andy Culshaw

Tues 14th October - Sewardstone area, c10 Common Blue (both male and female in variable condition!) and **1 Clouded Yellow** this morning - Andrew Middleton

Mon 13th October - KGV Res & Brimsdown, Middx - clouded yellow, perhaps female, peacock, red admiral, speckled wood, 2 small whites - Andrew Middleton

Still amazing amounts of butterflies about. **Saturday; Sacombe park** area had 2 small coppers, comma, painted lady, 4 red admirals, speckled wood and 3 whites they looked like small but not 100%. **Sunday; Fishers Green area of Lea Valley**, small copper, comma, speckled wood, red admiral, 2 whites - Nick Sampford

Sun 12th October - At **Kings Mead yesterday** in summer-like temperatures, 2 Peacock, 1 Red Admiral flying purposefully south (3 metres/second) and a few whites, also a Speckled Wood and Red Admiral in my **Horns Mill garden** - Alan Reynolds (*Alan commented that he wouldn't call Sunday "summer-like!"*)

Sat 11th October - In **Letchmore Heath** area one Small Copper, one Comma and two Speckled Woods (one worn); another Speckled Wood by **Hilfield Park Res;** Red Admiral flying SW at **Elstree Aerodrome;** many worker Hornets at both **Otterspool and Aldenham School** - Colin Everett

Sewardstone area, Essex - clouded yellow, 2 common blue, 2 speckled wood, 2 small white, red admiral, small tortoiseshell - A. Middleton, K. Murray and C. Fentiman

Trent Park area, clouded yellow, brown argus, comma, **7 small copper**, red admiral, speckled wood, 3 common blues - Robert Callf & Robin White (12 species for RW)

Navestock area, Essex, **clouded yellow today**, **Pale clouded or helice** here one day **last week** - Colin Jupp

Had a **Clouded Yellow** flying on the **King George V reservoir** today and an early Smew! Never had sight of these two in the same day before! Also Red Admiral - Helen Bantock

Fri 10th October - Chingford Plain, 1 Red Admiral today, also 2 seen earlier by Richard Cope flying past at **Connaught Water** (possibly one was the one seen later further south!) - Andrew Middleton

No significant butterfly records during the past few days although at **Garston** one Red Admiral on **8th** and a Large White on **9th** (my father still has sprouts in the garden) - Colin Everett

Wed 8th October - I saw a small copper on **Sunday** (October 5th) on my allotment at the dark lane site in **Cheshunt**. I was surprised considering it was quite chilly - Roger Newbold

Tues 7th October - Bob Clift's photos of the butterflies of St. Michael's Mead, Bishops Stortford this summer (*memories!*) - see *2nd October for report*

Mon 6th October - At **Watford Link Road** a full-grown Poplar Hawk-moth larva searching for a pupation site beneath mixed willows fringing the largest lake - Colin Everett

At **Fishers Green yesterday** me and Angela saw, speckled wood, red admiral[2], comma [2], painted lady, small white, large white and a red admiral at **Sacombe Church**. **Today** just one very wind blown red admiral at **Watton at Stone** - Nick Sampford

Mon 6th October - Found this one crawling across the pavement on 01 October 2003, Took it home (Waterford, Ireland) and gave it a bed of dry leaves in a box. It's been busy spinning a yellowish silken cocoon over the last 2 days. Could be a Pale Tussock caterpillar but not certain?

Sun 5th October - Sewardstone Marsh: Comma at 12.40 - Martin Shepherd

On **Friday 3rd**, a late Speckled Wood at **Kings Mead** - Alan Reynolds

Fri 3rd October - Sightings from **October 1st**, small copper at **Great Munden** also 3 unidentified whites and a small tortoiseshell, small copper, painted lady [3], red admiral, comma [2] at **Sacombe Church** - Nick Sampford

Thurs 2nd October - Summary of interesting records for the month of **September**: Strongest showing of Small Copper since the mid-1990s; female Common Blues still present at two sites in the last week of the month; visible migration of Red Admirals on 7th (two S near Bedmond), 27th (one SW near St Albans) and 28th (three S at Aldenham). The behaviour of these migrants (flying fast and low to the ground, often across cereal fields or other open habitats) is distinctive. Observers searching grassland or arable habitats for late butterflies can expect to flush examples of the Rush Veneer *Nomophila noctuella*, a migrant micro-moth which is illustrated in most good field guides to insects (e.g. the Collins Pocket Guide) or Lepidoptera (e.g. the Blitz Editions guide); it is common this autumn and may continue to be seen for several more weeks. - Colin Everett

Matt Perry of CMS writes a regular wildlife article for the St. Michaels Mead Resident's Association newsletter which I design, and the subject of his Summer article was the common blue butterfly. This prompted me to go in search of the common blue in the Southern Country Park area of **St. Michaels Mead (Bishops Stortford)** at the beginning of **August**, and I was not disappointed. It was a very hot, sunny and calm day and I came across hundreds of them, together with a similar quantity of the painted lady, and many small tortoiseshells, gatekeepers, common skippers and day-flying moths all in a feeding frenzy on an area covered in swathes of knapweed, thistles, scabious and birds foot trefoil. I walked over most of the Park, but didn't come across any other areas with such an abundance of knapweed and the butterflies mentioned. There were of course other areas where the meadow brown was more prolific - Bob Clift (*Bob will be walking a new transect at St. Michael's Mead next year, it is well worth looking around during the next few months for similar areas, that could be monitored next year*)

September 2003

Tues 30th September - Had a **Clouded Yellow** yesterday down by the Thames on **Barking Reach** - Tom Clarke

Mon 29th September - **Today is the last day of Transect Recording week 26 - another season is over! Whilst the weather stays fine keep on visiting your transect though for those after season records which are just as important** - LG

Fri 26th September

Wed 24th September - On yet another hot day in late September (**Sunday 21st**), 2 Small Copper and a few whites at **Kings Mead** - Alan Reynolds

Sun 21st September - I was at **Frogmore Gravel Pit** on **Saturday morning**. I saw 7 Small Coppers, 3 Red Admirals, 12 Common Blues (M & F), 1 Brown Argus, 1 Small Tortoiseshell and many Small Whites. I also saw what I believed to be 3 *Pyrausta aurata* moths and the caterpillar of a Knot Grass Moth. I have attached photos of both - Steven Penn (*photos will be up later*)

Enfield Lock: painted lady on buddleia at 09.25 in Rifles car park. Red admiral in garden 13.30. News from **19 September, Enfield Lock:** 10 red admirals, mid morning, feeding on ivy species on canal towpath - Martin Shepherd

Dane Bridge area, nr Much Hadham - watched a long strand of blackthorn but only saw Vapourer moths! Worth watching again next year though. Between 10.30 and 2 o'clock saw a **Clouded Yellow**, 8 Red Admirals flying south, 1 flying north and 2 nectaring. 2 Painted Ladies, 2 Speckled Wood, 3 Small Copper, 2 Small Heath, 1 Peacock, 2, Small White, 1 Green-veined White, 14 Common Blue and in one field 9 Brown Argus but 10 in total. Later my neighbour (**Ware**) reported that a Humming-bird hawkmoth had spent most the day in their garden (note the garden had been watered that morning and the nectar more favourable than my garden's which is bone dry!) - Liz Goodyear

Had a Painted Lady in **Essendon** opposite the school on **Saturday** - Rupert Pyrah

For details of the recently completed Purple Emperor project report, [click here](#)

Thurs 18th September - Enfield - The one the cat caught. What a whopper - having never one of these beasties, the wife was alarmed to see the cat attacking yet another unsuspecting victim, and at first thought it may be a bat or a frog as it was jumping up and down, only for it to turn out to be a **Convolvulus Hawk Moth**. It has suffered a small injury, plus the loss of all of its wing and scales body colouration, apart from the two tufts behind its wings. We have a huge amount of honeysuckle which is in full flower again at the moment, which attracts all sorts and have released the mighty visitor. Fingers crossed it will survive - Phil MacMurdie

Wed 17th September - I saw a Painted Lady, a Comma, a Small Tortoiseshell plus Large & Small Whites on the Buddlias at my mother's garden in **King's Langley** today

Two Purple Hairstreak seen at **Amwell gravel pits** on **Sunday**. They were near to the road south of the pit. Certainly my first sighting at this site and possibly a new record for the site? Toby Austin

Sun 14th September - King's Langley, this **Saturday** (13th September) I saw several Red Admirals, a Painted Lady, a Small Tortoiseshell, a Comma and numerous Whites in my mother's late-flowering buddlia bush in her garden in King's Langley - Dave Chandler

Small Coppers. Out and about **near Ardeley and Cottedred** yesterday saw three Small Coppers as well as a Brimstone, three Red Admirals and a good sprinkling of various whites. Then today am

90% sure I saw another Small Copper on our allotment in Cheshunt only it didn't settle and I lost sight of it - Roger Newbold

Today we have identified a visitor to my parents garden in, **Stevenage**, as a Hummingbird hawk moth. So far we have been watching the moth for approximately 4 weeks regularly visiting my mums Bizzie Lizzies - Lesley Syme

Sat 13th September - Clouded Yellow at Frogmore pit, Stevenage...nectaring on buddleia and wild mint...the mint patch is hosting loads of butterflies.....**dozens of small copper**, common blue (M. and F.). a few brown argus, loads of red admirals, painted ladies, commas, peacocks, green veined whites and small tortoiseshell. No sign of second brood grizzled or dingy skipper - Jeff Davies

I live in **Enfield** and have seen a pair of Small Coppers (one male one female) last weekend - regularly have had Red Admirals, Small Tortoiseshells, Painted Ladies, Commas, and Peacocks throughout the summer. The Small Copper sighting was my first in the UK and the first time I have seen a pair - Richard Earney

Small Coppers, are more common now than for many years. 3 seen on the **Bricket Wood** transect this afternoon. I've never seen more than one before on a single day. In fact the average is one a year over the last 7 years! Also **5 SC** today at **Saffron Green**, Borehamwood, 2 at **Mayne Avenue**, St Albans **last Sunday** & 1 at **Jersey Farm**, St Albans. This is a real turn around in fortunes, presumably due to good weather over the summer? - Malcolm Hull

Ware garden, despite lovely sunshine, very few butterflies around today, although I did get a glimpse of male Brimstone as it passed through very quickly - Liz Goodyear

Fri 12th September - Welwyn Garden City, hummingbird hawk-moth, one feeding on verbena in our hanging basket this afternoon. Only seen them once before in Menorca - Peter Clark

Playing cricket on **Tuesday 9th** at the Honourable Artillery Company ground at **Moorgate, Central London**, saw 2 Red Admirals flying south, 1 Painted Lady again flying south, 2 Large Whites and 1 small white - Phil MacMurdie

Thurs 11th September - Please note that the [Herts Moth Group trip to Kensworth Quarry](#) this coming Saturday, 13th September 2003 IS CANCELLED

Tues 9th September - I saw one Small Copper during lunchtime at **Bushy Park**, Teddington. It's the first time that I have come across this particular species on this site - Peter Collins

Humming-bird Hawk-moth in my garden **Norwood Green**, Southall, Middx, 1:30 p.m. today. It was feeding on a buddleia bush, feeding in flight & flying from flower to flower for several minutes. It flew away to the west before I could get my camera. It did not settle. I will watch for its return - Ian Day

Bob Hasra's Figure 2 is a Pale Tussock, *Calliteara pudibunda*. I think figure 1 is the Gold Spot, *Plusia festucae*, as the lower apical streak looks pointed to me. However, the other possibility, Lempke's Gold Spot, *Plusia putnami*, can't be entirely ruled out. The only certain way to separate these two species is to examine their genitalia, however I would go for the commoner Gold Spot - Ian Woiod

Can you help Bob Hasra with some moth ids below

Sun 7th September - Whilst watching my son play football today at the Gosling Sports Centre, **Welwyn Garden City** I saw three individual Red Admirals flying quickly and resolutely southwards. All were fairly close to the ground and seemed intent on reaching warmer climes before the Autumn sets in - Roger Newbold

Sat 6th September - 14 Small Copper in 20 mins on the heather at **The Warren, Colney Heath**. I've never seen so many at a site near St Albans. Conditions were quite overcast. Also 3

Small Heath. There was a flush of new Green veined Whites & Speckled Woods on the **Bricket Wood Transect** this afternoon. Large White, Small White, Painted Lady, Red Admiral, Comma also still about - Malcolm Hull

Fri 5th September - Waterford Heath north pit, looked hard to see whether there were any possible second generation Grizzled Skippers around. The answer was probably no but did see 3 Brown Argus and lots of whites. **Rickneys Quarry**, 1 female Common Blue - Liz Goodyear and Andrew Middleton

We spotted what we were pretty certain was a **Wall Brown** on the **Pegsdon Hills NR August 17**, just inside Beds, though it was very close to the Western edge bordering on Herts. Unfortunately it was over some very scrubby stuff and wouldn't settle, so we could not get close enough to be absolutely certain - Hugh Griffiths (*news via Beds & Northants Branch*)

My parents saw a Hummingbird Hawk Moth in Lonsdale Road, **Stevenage** on **Wednesday 27th August** - Steven Penn

Thurs 4th September - Ware garden, by 9 am I have 6 Red Admirals and a Small Tortoiseshell around front garden buddleia or on brickwork - Liz Goodyear

Tues 2nd September - On a buddleia in a Pay and Display car park in **Harpenden** I saw 4 Red Admirals, 1 Painted Lady, 1 Tortoiseshell and 1 Comma. On a buddleia near the King Pin public house in **Stevenage** I saw 3 Red Admirals, 3 Painted Ladies, 1 Comma and 1 Speckled Wood. I am not sure if you are familiar with the circular walk starting in **Hexton**, Hertfordshire. This is near the Raven public house and across the main road. I have visited this area **three times this July and August** and have seen a variety of Butterflies. These include great numbers of Common Blues, Painted Ladies, Tortoiseshells, Peacocks, Commas, Speckled Woods, Large Whites, Small Whites, Brimstones, Gatekeepers and Meadow Browns. I also saw a few Small\Essex Skippers, 1 Large Skipper, 1 Chalk Hill Blue, 1 Brown Argus, 1 Small Copper and 1 Silver Y Moth. This place is definitely worth visiting next year! Steven Penn

Malcolm Hull's photo of a Silver-washed Fritillary that he saw near St. Albans on 3rd August

August 2003

Sun 31st August - Getting towards the end of the season on a cooler day in **TL43**, 1 Red Admiral at **Old Manor Farm**, 8 Speckled Wood, 3 Comma, 1 Meadow Brown, 2 GV White and 1 Red Admiral at **New Lake**, 3 Comma, 1 Red Admiral and 1 Small White at **Cole Green Farm** and 1 Comma and 1 GV White at **Brent Pelham Hall** - Alan Reynolds

Here is a picture taken at Beachy Head last weekend not that great but I have never seen a hummer at rest before - Tony Clancy

I was in **Norfolk** today, and saw **14 Red Admirals** on and around ivy flowers in less than 50yds and in about 5 minutes - Liz Goodyear

Todds Green - The other 2 visits of a Humming-bird Hawk-moth were on **Tue 19th and Thurs 21st August**. Also had another visit yesterday **30th Aug**...feeding on geranium - Angeline Taylor

Sat 30th August - I have just stumbled on your site after messing around on the tv internet to see what it would come up with re buzy lizzies. I tried impatiens but nothing interesting!! I am a lover of buzy lizzies especially as they do not make me sneeze!! anyway the point of this message is that a humming bird moth visited us on Monday **25th August** 2003. a beautiful little creature, which in our ignorance thought was a humming bird till we found out on internet what it actually was! I live in **Luton**, We also had a couple of dragonflies darting overhead the weekend before - Pam

Thurs 28th August - Seen and photographed in my garden in **Todds Green**. One of 2 Hummingbird Hawk Moths seen in the garden in the last 2 weeks. Best images below - Angeline Taylor

Richard Bigg has sent the website a picture of a female Orange Tip - a challenge set in the spring

Today in my garden **N.W.Bishop's Stortford**, Peacock (1) Speckled Wood (1) Red Admiral (3) Comma (3) Small Tortoiseshell (3) Painted Lady (1) and numerous Small and Large Whites not counted - Jim Fish

Dagenham Chase, a few small coppers around at the moment - Tom Clarke

Wed 27th August - Have been at work today (**Sat 2 August**) for an event in the **Museum Wildlife Garden** and I came across several larvae of Humming-bird Hawk Moth, almost fully grown (little stunners). As far as I can tell (not a botanist) they are also on *Galium verum* (will get it checked). Nice breeding record for the garden. **The news now (27th August)** is that both pupated and both emerged over the last few days and have been released back in the Wildlife Garden - Martin Honey (*sorry Martin the first part of this email never got posted - LG*)

Mon 25th August - On **Saturday, 23 August**, had a hummingbird hawk moth in our garden in **Letchworth** - the first seen here since we moved 12 years ago - Ian Small

A **Clouded Yellow** at **Hatfield Aerodrome** today - Rupert Pyrah

A particularly small Small Copper today at **Kings Mead** - Alan Reynolds

Sun 24th August - I have a small estate garden on Foxholes estate, **Hertford**. Today I saw this amazing moth drawing nectar from my geraniums. It was so beautiful and hovered like the humming bird. Looking through your website, I think this must have been a hummingbird hawk moth? Interesting as it is the very first time I have seen one!!! Andrew and Alison Shepherd

We saw a large moth on **Friday 22/8** at about 1900 that we had to get a friend to help us identify. It was hovering between the flowers in the garden and appeared to be collecting the nectar. We described it as best we could and our friend has suggested that was a Hummingbird Hawk Moth. Having looked at pictures on the internet we can positively say that it was. The location is next to **Shrubhill Common** in Hemel Hempstead - Calum

Ware, just visited the nearby "wild area" which I have been watching now since 1998. In September 1998, I saw 2 Small Copper, and despite looking for Small Copper every year since then, none had been seen that is until today when I saw 2 on ragwort. Also 2 Common Blue - both Common Blue and Brown Argus seemed to hang on despite several winters when this area of rough grass was a swamp but the Coppers disappeared. How nice to see them back. Also saw a small brown butterfly disappear out of my garden as I approached it - was this a Small Copper as well? Liz Goodyear

Correction from **Wed 20th August - Trent Park** - Robert Callf **counted 125 small heath not 25** as originally stated

Fri 22nd August - A Hummingbird Hawk-moth at Petunia flowers in a garden at **Garston** near Watford from at least 2000 hours until 2015 hours. - Colin Everett

The Herts Moth Group are holding a Moth Night at Millhoppers Reserve this Saturday

Thurs 21st August - Thundridge, you ain't gonna believe this. I was sitting in my office when I looked up there was a hummer lookin at me through the window. It was nectaring on the buzzy lizzies in the window box and in the pots around the garden. I've attached a couple of images it was a shame as the sun had all but gone - Nick Sampford

King George V Reservoir, hummingbird hawk-moth at rest for at least an hour today - Robert Callf

9.00am humming bird hawk moth at hanging basket Chestnut Road **Enfield** - Brian Dawton

I've been hunting brown hairstreaks in my spare time but haven't seen one in near perfect habitat nr Cherry Green. I need to photograph humming bird hawk moth - would you put a note on your page with my number if anybody has one in there garden and wouldn't mind me coming round would they kindly ring me 01920460227 or 07779581015 - Nick Sampford

Wed 20th August - Trent Park - Robert Callf counted 125 small heath and 11 small copper on transect, plus one purple hairstreak. **Yardley Hill**, Chingford Essex, 3 holly blues and 3 purple hairstreaks - A Middleton

Ware garden, a change of species, Small Tortoiseshell down to just 2, but 4 Red Admiral, 3 Comma (all on the buddleia in the back garden whereas all the other Nymphalidae are in the front garden) and 2 1/2 Painted Ladies (one has a body but very little else left) - Liz Goodyear

News from 11th August, there were a dozen or more big hawkmoths on the southern edge of **Hammons End Wood**, today (11th Aug). I'm no good at moths, but these were about 30mm long with broad blunt ended abdomens with two white spots side by side at the rear end - Michael Healy (*confirmed by Colin Plant and John Murray as Hummingbird Hawk-moths*)

Tues 19th August - We sighted a large Hummingbird Hawk Moth In my garden in Chells in **Stevenage** at between 19:00 and 20:00 hrs - I managed to capture several good close-ups on my Hi 8 video camera as well. It came and went at intervals during this time - and was a regular visitor three or four times that evening - John & Kate

Seeing a **Clouded Yellow** briefly in my garden today prompted me to let you know what else was present, today in my garden **N.W. Bishop's Stortford**, Clouded Yellow--1, Red Admiral--5, Painted Lady--4, Small Tortoiseshell--1, Large White--7, Small White--6, Gatekeeper--1, Comma--1, also this evening a Hummingbird Hawk moth nectaring on Summer Jasmine - Jim Fish.

Sun 17th August - Fewer butterflies this weekend than last but still widespread scattered individual Painted Ladies and Red Admirals. Single Brown Argus at **Bunkers Park** (nr Hemel Hempstead) and **Moor Mill** (nr Radlett) but no Small Heath at the latter site where three-figure counts could be obtained in the early 1990s. At **Garston** >a Lime-speck Pug moth, a formerly common species recently suggested to be declining. - Colin Everett

In **Letchworth** today, had **12 Small Tortoiseshells** on my white buddleia at the same time (the purple buddleia has almost gone over) - I think this is the highest I have seen at one time in the garden for the past 10 years or so. Red Admirals also very common, plus fewer Peacocks and the odd Comma. Painted Ladies now becoming rare whereas 7-10 days ago they were constantly present. Never seen so many Silvery Y's since I moved here 12 years ago - Ian Small

Ware - was called over to my neighbour tonight. They had had 2 Hummingbird Hawk-moths in their garden. When I arrived I saw only one but I reckon there was at least **20 Silver Y** moths nectaring on some red valerian. In my garden I could find only 1 Silver Y - Liz Goodyear

In TL41 today 6 Small White, 1 Speckled Wood at Broadmoor Pond, 10 Small White, 1 Red Admiral, 1 Painted Lady and 1 Small Tort at Mardleybury Manor Farm, 3 Red Admiral and 1 Small Tort at Slate Hall Farm and 5 Small White at Gannock Green and news from 11th, From TL43, 1 Red Admiral, 2 Small Torts, 1 Comma, 5 Small White, 2 Peacock at Old Manor Farm, Sharpenhoe, 1 Common Blue, 5 Small White, 1 Painted Lady, 1 Small Heath at New Lake, 1 Red Admiral at Cole Green Farm, 1 Red Admiral at Anstey, 1 Large White, 1 Small Heath at Brent Pelham Hall and in TL41, 1 Common Blue at Spellbrook - Alan Reynolds

Sat 16th August - Ware garden, 7 Small Tortoiseshells on my buddleia today, the highest garden total since 1998 - Liz Goodyear. Later a very brief visit from a Hummingbird Hawk-moth. AT LAST!

Fri 15th August - Dagenham Chase, had a **clouded yellow** today. First of the year over here - Tom Clarke

Here is a picture of a **Convolvulus hawk-moth** seen in a house at **Northfleet**, near Gravesend, Kent on Wednesday morning **13th August** and then found dead in the garden of the same location last night 14th August. It was brought to me at work. The eyeballs and some of the fur on the head have been eaten by ants but otherwise its in good nick - Andy Culshaw

Had a phone call from Joan Clarke of Palmers Green to say that she and her husband had been visiting **Ware** a few weeks ago (believed to be Tuesday 5th August). On a buddleia near St Mary's church she had been amazed to see and count **50 Painted Ladies**. Returning this **Tuesday 12th**, all she saw was a few whites (*Dates might be wrong*)

News from 4 August - Manor Crescent, Hitchin 10.30 am 28 deg. Couldn't believe eyes - on buddleia shrub counted **20 Painted Lady's**, 6 Small Tortoiseshell, 1 Peacock and 2 Comma. Also 6 Large White around the garden. 2 Gatekeeper feeding on marjoram and mint flower. Today, **5 August** 2003 09.45 to 10.00 am counted only 15 Painted Ladies, 3 Small Tortoiseshell, 2 Peacock and 3 Red Admirals, with 3 Gatekeepers keeping well out of the way of the commotion on the buddleia. 1 Holly Blue seen on 2nd, 3rd and 4th when things had cooled down a bit at 17.30 hours, the first since April.

Telegraph Hill HMWT Reserve 3 August 2003 approx. 14.15 hours, a new brood of **Brimstone**. In one sheltered area in the old drovers gulley, all 12 were settled on various scrub growth. Counted 47 Chalkhill Blues, 13 Painted Lady, 3 Small Tortoiseshell, 3 Peacock, 2 Red Admiral and 1 Comma, plus an assortment of the brown varieties. 30 Large White. A total for the day of 133 on site - Valerie Fullforth

Wed 13th Aug Ponders End, Enfield, hummingbird hawkmoth this afternoon and **again 14th August** - Andrew Middleton

Tue 12th Aug Trent Park, 150 small heath, 28 common blues, 9 small copper, 60 meadow browns, 6 gatekeepers, also quail on Vicarage Farm - Robert Callf

Sun 10th Aug Therfield Heath Amongst about **50 Chalkhill** blues today at Therfield Heath, there was a solitary Brimstone and a small Tortoiseshell. - Les Borg

Sat 9th August - Stevenage transect. First **Small Copper** seen for at least 5 years at around 11:30 am. Common Blues and Painted Ladies were common (probably their best years since I started recording there in 1992). I saw 14 Peacocks last weekend the first sightings of the summer brood (2 August) but only one yesterday (9th). Where have they all gone? Surely not into hibernation yet? Peter Clarke

Sewardstone: five clouded yellows between 11.12 and 12.05: To continue recent run of silver Y reports, there have been up to 10 in my garden (**Enfield Lock**) mainly on buddleia but also on lavender late pm/dusk over last few days - Martin Shepherd

Nrth Finchley garden - **hummingbird hawkmoth** nectaring on buddleja for about 5 minutes pm - Tony Clancy

7th August, Nrth Finchley garden, 12+ Silver -Y on Buddlia in back garden, also 6 Red Admiral, 2 Painted Lady. Tony Clancy
Robet Callf reports c20 silver Ys nectaring in an **Enfield** garden pm

6th Aug 03 - Abbots Langley ~ 13 Painted Ladies on buddleia bushes at home. Also **Clouded Yellow** flying in garden. regards - Clive Burrows

Tues 5 August - Central **Enfield**. Counted 12 silver y moths in our small garden, out numbering the typically three painted ladies on the budlia over the weekend. Phil Rhodes.

Sun 3rd August - Near **Harrow Weald** (Middlesex) a purposeful SW movement of **Painted Ladies** (rate of up to one per minute) down hillsides in late morning; also the Notable ant *Lasius brunneus* on an oak. At **Bentley Priory** (Middlesex) a Purple Hairstreak on the ground and the Notable bark beetle *Platypus cylindrus* on an oak. Near **Bushey Heath** (Herts) one Brown Argus. - Colin Everett

Sat 2nd August North Enfield ~ 1 clouded yellow, 36 painted ladies, all over the place, 8 red admiral, 7 comma, 19 purple hairstreak, common blue also doing well after several years of poor numbers (7 on Sunday 3rd August) + a host of gatekeepers. Also 1 male **Purple Emperor** at **Forty Hall Enfield** - sighting on **Sunday 20th July**, by my father (he has been away for the last week and a half). I quizzed him about it and he was quite categorical about the sighting, and said that he had only ever seen one once before. It was sitting in a clearing at Forty Hall near a small brook. - Phil MacMurdie

Dear All, The number and variety of butterflies seems to be around maximum at the moment, with particularly spectacular numbers of Painted Ladies being reported. It is an ideal time to go "**tetrad-bashing**". If you have the time, could you please use the Meadow Brown distribution map on page 39 of the 2002 butterfly and moth report to choose blank tetrads to record in the next week or two, or whilst the present high temperatures last. Otherwise, telephone me on 01582 833544 for a site near you. As usual, there are vast blank areas in both north Hertfordshire and the Hertfordshire/Middlesex border which need a visit or visits. Forms can be downloaded from the web at <http://www.btinternet.com/~michael.goodyear/BCHM/records.htm>
Good hunting, John Murray

Mon 4th August Trent Park 163 small heath & 19 small copper in 1hr, **Covert Way** new species for transect holly blue, common blue, small copper - R Callf
Broxbourne Wood NR 11.30-1.30pm, 1 white admiral, 1 ringlet, c5 purple hairstreaks.
Cheshunt Park pm 1.5hrs, c90 small heath (two images below), 15 common blue, 5 small coppers - A Middleton

Sun 3rd August Sewardstone, 12.15-13.30: **two clouded yellows**, 82 painted ladies, 20 small tortoiseshells, **c1,700 common blues**...(estimate only, but there were considerably more than my 1,260 count at this site on 31 May.) **Enfield Lock**, pm: 40 painted ladies spread over five buddleia bushes in Government Row - Martin Shepherd

St Albans area This afternoon I saw a **Silver Washed Fritillary** in a wood in the St Albans area. I arrived 13.50 pm ~ I walked through one grassy clearing and into a second clearing at around 14.00 pm where the main vegetation is bracken. The butterfly was gliding slowly round the clearing, pausing & perching on bracken with wings closed. I got very good views & am positive it was not dark green. No green on the underside & indistinct silvery lines on the underside hindwing. I had a good deal of practice telling the species (& 20 other sorts of Fritillary) apart in Spain in June. After 20 mins it flew off over the trees & I followed it to a second bracken-floored clearing 10 yards further on. I then observed it for another 40 mins until approx 15.00 pm. Behaviour was as before, flying up & down from one perch to the next, often landing in the same perch. Any other butterfly or dragonfly entering the clearing was immediately intercepted & chased off. He (presumably) was very aware of my presence & repeatedly flew straight towards me at head height veering away right at the last minute to pass only an inch or two above my hat. This happened 15-20 times & was so close I could touch it, tho it never landed nearer than 10 feet. I then decided to kneel down to avoid attack & fortunately the butterfly settled closer. The photos aren't great, as it never landed with its wings open & I'll send on as soon as I can locate my downloading device. I searched a number of other clearings in the wood, but saw no other Frits - Malcolm Hull (*SWF number four or five for Herts this summer*)

Trent Park transect - Robert reports a staggering **118 small heaths** (I couldn't find one on my 'best' site just over Essex border-AM). Also 1 brown argus, oak eggar - R Callf
Just over the border in Essex - **Gilwell Park** area - c90 painted ladies mostly flying SSW, 20 common blues Yates Meadow. 100+ common blues in a small area at Sewardstone LVP. A Middleton

Sat 2nd August Today in my garden **N.W.Bishop's Stortford**, **35+ Painted Lady**, 5 Small Tortoiseshell, 2 Peacocks, 2 Red Admiral, 1 Comma, 1 Brimstone, 7 Gatekeeper, 1 Holly Blue, 2 Meadow Brown, 1 Speckled Wood, 7 Large White, 5 Small White. Jim Fish.

Thundridge ~ I had 10 species on my buddleja today ~ painted lady, red admiral, small tortoiseshell, comma, peacock, meadow brown, gate keeper and all 3 whites. Best count was of 9 painted ladies together. My dad in Croft Road **Ware** has had **20 painted ladies** on his buddleja today Nick Sampford

Trent Park, clouded yellow south, 20 painted lady, 8 red admiral, 5 brown argus, 6 small copper - R Callf & R White

Honeylands, Waltham Abbey area, Essex **130 painted ladies** SSW 10.30am-4.45pm plus 20 nectaring, female brimstone, 17 species butterfly. **Brimsdown** Middx 55 painted ladies mainly on buddleja, small heath, 15 small tortoiseshell - A Middleton
Weald, Essex, **c120 painted ladies** S/SW 11am to 16.30 + 30 nectaring - Colin Jupp

July 2003

Richard Revels's photo of a pair of Dark Green Frit. was taken on the joint field trip with Beds & Northants Branch to **Sharpenhoe Clappers (Beds) on Sunday June 29th 2003**. It was nice to hear, later in July, that as the DGFs dispersed from their Bedfordshire strongholds that some of them made their way towards the Herts border near Hexton. Dave Chandler

Thu 31th July - Sewardstone area, Lea Valley, c. 400 common blues counted in an hour in slightly less cloudy conditions - Andrew Middleton

Mon 28th July - Broxbourne Wood NR, 2 or 3 white admirals

Sun 27th July - Harold Crt & Tylers Common areas, Essex, brown argus, 50 painted ladies, 15 fresh small torts, 18 sp butterfly - Colin Jupp
Horsenden Hill - A rather tatty and late-ish **White-letter Hairstreak** today near Horsenden Farm was my first at the site for two weeks. Sixteen species recorded in about two hours in initially rather cool conditions: Red Admiral (1), Painted Lady (5), Small Tortoiseshell (5), Speckled Wood (4), Gatekeeper (74), Meadow Brown (ca. 200), Large Skipper (1), Small Skipper (2), Small Copper (1), Common Blue (4), Comma (1), Small White (1), Green-veined White (1), Large White (2), Small/Green-veined White (5), Purple Hairstreak (4). A bit off-topic, but yesterday I had a Kingfisher flycatching on one of the ponds at Horsenden. Does anyone know how normal this is? It had one go at a Black-tailed Skimmer, two goes at a large hoverfly and another swoop at an unidentified insect, all within a couple of minutes - Cheers, Andy Culshaw

Sun 27th July - Brimsdown/KGV Res area, Middx, **52 small tortoiseshells** in thistle & nettle field (13 minutes count), c15 painted ladies, **possible wall brown** by reservoir but it didn't hang about for certain ID - Andrew Middleton

In last week - up to **10 wall browns** at **Rainham Marshes**, Essex - Alan Bell

Sat 26th July - Trent Park, **45 small coppers** plus 17 other species of butterfly on yesterday's walk - Robert Callf

Ken Rirsch led a Butterfly and Bird Walk at **Jersey Farm Open Space in St Albans** on **20th July**. This is Ken's report sent in by Malcolm Hull: "A really good day spotting butterflies but the birds were not so forthcoming. Charlie our bird expert really struggled to spot anything feathered. The really promising feature of the day for me was the numbers of blue butterflies. Last year the best I saw was two in a day but this time we saw at least 20! We recorded 14 different species: Red Admiral, Painted Lady, Peacock, Small White, Green veined white, Meadow Brown, Gatekeeper, Ringleet, Marbled White, Common Blue, Brown Argus, Small Copper, Small skipper and Speckled Wood. The real treasures were the small copper and **Brown Argus** which I had not seen for two years on the park- Ken Rirsch" Malcolm adds Brown Argus is a rare sight in St Albans District these days!

For details of the recently completed Purple Emperor project report, [click here](#)

Thurs 24th July - Some good news I've had **2 wall browns** in 2 different locations. **Park Road, Ware** on the grassy edges to the road just before the junction with Fanshawe Crescent on **Tuesday** and in Jewsons yard **Hertford** on **Wednesday**. Both were sunning themselves for a few seconds before flying off. Simon Rasch has had holly blue and painted lady in his **Royston** garden - Nick Sampford

Trent Park, **31 small coppers**, **23 small heath**, **oak eggar moth** - Robert Callf

Andrew Middleton and Marcel Ashby have both caught a **Toadflax Brocade** (see picture below) in their **Middlesex (north London)** gardens in the last few days. Colin Plant says "This is a very rare species confined to shingle beaches on the coast between the eastern tip of Kent and the Isle of Wight, with isolated records at Swanage and Portland. I seem also to recall an Essex coastal record? It is very rare inland and is certainly new for the Middlesex list. Presumably it was a wanderer or an immigrant? Keep your eyes peeled when going through the catch tomorrow morning. Can we add it to the Hertfordshire list I wonder!!!"

Wed 23rd July - Some news from **Horsenden Hill** for **last Saturday 19th July**. Sorry for the late submission - our phone has been on the blink so no internet! First of all I had a Marbled White again. This time it was on a new area (Batts Field) which is to the west of Horsenden Lane. I got an email from Neil Anderson saying he had two on 20th, both to the east of the site. Batts Field is also one of the preferred areas for White-letter hairstreak, although I saw none there on Saturday (they seem to have been early and not as easily seen this year). Other butterflies: Holly Blue (1), Green-veined White (8), Gatekeeper (197; counted in blocks of ten so pretty accurate. I covered most of the suitable habitat for this species in the area), Meadow Brown (not counted, more common than Gatekeeper), Purple Hairstreak (1), Small Skipper (6), Small Copper (3), Peacock (2), Painted Lady (9), Small White (2), Large Skipper (1, must've been more!), Comma (5), Large White (3). **Outside the area on Sunday 20th at Warburg BBONT reserve**, near Henley: Purple Emperor (1), Silver-washed Fritillary (2) - Andy Culshaw

Tues 22nd July - Sunday 20th July- Purple hairstreak in oak tree, and resting on bramble. **Sewardstone Marsh** 12.45 (see photo) - Simon Rawlinson

Haven't sent in anything for a while so I thought I might burden you with a few piccies and a sightings report from **Aston Clinton Rag Pits** (on **Saturday 19th July**, sorry its a bit late). I dropped in on the Rag Pits for half an hour, during a busy Saturday. There were many insects on the wing enjoying the fine weather. In the small amount of time that I spent there I managed to see what I was looking for. Chalkhill Blues. 27 males and 4 females, all in mint condition. It was interesting to watch the contrasting behavior of the two sexes. The females, sitting low in the sward in between bouts of egg laying, the males fluttering tirelessly millimetres from the ground in search of females. It amazes me how they manage to breed at all because I found more females than the males did!! Other butterflies on the wing were:- 1 Gatekeeper, 14 Ringlet, 12 Meadow Brown, 5 Marbled White (all very worn), 2 Large Skipper, 21 Small/Essex Skipper, 3 Large White, 2 Small White, 1 Brimstone, 2 second brood Common Blues, 2 Red Admiral, 3 Peacock, 1 Comma & 2 Painted Lady. Not bad in half an hour!! I took a couple of the photos today (Chalkhill Blue, Common blue and the roosting Painted Lady). The other Painted Lady photo was taken on the 19th - Allen Beechey (*photos will be up later!*)

Report from the Norfolk Branch on their visit to **Therfield Heath (20th July)**. At Therfield the weather was really sunny and breezy. We enjoyed a great walk, full of butterflies, with several male Chalkhills and a fresh **Brown Argus**, though we couldn't find any Marbled Whites despite visiting several likely-looking spots - Pat Bonham

Broxbourne Wood NR - Arrived just after 12 to find Andrew Middleton, Ian Woiwod and 2 work colleagues, watching at the favourite spot. Ian had seen White Admiral and a possible **Purple Emperor**. Within 5 minutes of my arrival we were treated to the sight of a **male** flying around above the seat. It then settled on a sallow leaf for some seconds, allowing time for Ian to get a photo and then flew off towards the conifers. A brief possible sighting about 10 minutes later and then we all left seeing another White Admiral on the way back to the carpark. No sightings in **Wormley Wood** although one huge White Admiral tried to trick us! - Liz Goodyear and Andrew Middleton

In **TL33** on **Saturday 19th July**. 1 Painted Lady, 1 Red Admiral, 1 Peacock, 3 Small Tort, 5 Gatekeeper, 5 Meadow Brown, 2 Large White, 5 Small White, 1 Comma, 1 GV White with 1 pair **at Lyle End Farm**, 1 Red Admiral and 5 Small White at **Hyde Hall Farm**, 1 Small Skipper and 10 Small White at Cave Bridge, and 1 Brimstone and 1 Comma at **New Barn Throcking** - Alan Reynolds

Mon 21st July - News from the 16th (*sorry my mistake, Nick I did receive email but somehow it never got "put up" LG*) been to **Broxbourne** this morning 10 to 1 **Had 5 sightings of**

emperors. 12.04 male above willows briefly, 12.05 male joined by female clashed briefly female seemed to chase male off and then laid 2 eggs in willow opposite the bench on both occasions I see the abdomen point towards the willow though I never actually see an egg, the eggs were roughly 6 foot apart she then flew off strongly down the ride. 12.07 male over the willows, 12.09 male over the willows, 12.11 male over willows then up and down the ride it was as if it was looking for the female it clouded over at about 12.20 and rained we never see any more sightings. Spent 2 hours at fritillary site in poor weather [no sunshine] with out any luck also went to **Therfield Heath** for chalkhill blues with no luck either - Nick Sampford

Covert Way - latticed heath, 18 speckled woods, 20 gatekeepers - Robert Callf

Dark-green Fritillaries on the **Pegsdon Hills** are confirmed. There was one there this afternoon and about 15.30 hrs along with lots of Chalkhill Blues, Gatekeepers, Meadow Browns Small Skippers, some Common Blue, one Marbled White and Small Heath on the lower grassland. I did not go as far as Telegraph Hill today and all the butterflies seen were in the valleys and on the lower slopes - Nigel Agar

A bit quiet in my garden for butterflies so far this year but pleased to say that white admiral seen on and off for at least 1 hour on **Saturday (19th)** in my back garden backing onto **Sherrardswood**, Welwyn Garden City - favouring same area as one seen 2 years ago. Also at least 1 painted lady feeding on buddleia for 2-3 hours - David James

Sun 20th July - Horsenden Hill, leading a botany walk for London Nat Hist Soc up Hill today I was delighted to see 2 Marbled Whites, the 1st fairly inactive in same area as previous sighting + other above wood in long grass. Also seen 60+ Meadow Brown, 30+ Gatekeeper, 4 Speckled Wood, 6 Sm Skipper, 2 Painted Lady, 8 Red Admiral, 6 Peacock, 2 Comma, 5 G.v. White, 1 Sm Copper, 5 Common + 1 Holly Blue - Neil Anderson

I did Val Fulforth's transect this morning on **Telegraph Hill**. Small Skipper 8, Essex Skipper 2, Brimstone 3, Large White 3, Small White 16, Sm/GV White 7, Common blue 2, Chalk Hill Blue 8, Small Tort 1, Comma 3, Marbled White 4, Gatekeeper 23, Meadow Brown 15, Ringlet 11. Outside the transect area Painted Lady and Small Heath both on **Pegsdon Hills**, Beds. - Nigel Agar

Broxbourne Wood NR, joint field trip with the Norfolk Branch. We were joined by 12 members of the Norfolk Branch today (although I believe one lady was an Essex member). Unfortunately, the **Purple Emperor** did not co-operate and there were only about **6 fleeting glimpses** and then unfortunately not everyone present was lucky enough to see them. However, White Admiral were still showing well and thanks to Dave Watson, several present were able to observe a very sedentary Purple Hairstreak through his "scope" feeding on honey dew. Dave Chandler was thrilled to see his first ever Purple Emperor if only briefly. The Norfolk Branch were returning home via Therfield Heath and I hope to hear later how many Chalkhill Blues they saw and whether they found another target species; Marbled White - news via Liz Goodyear

Sat 19th July - Government Row, **Enfield Lock**: painted lady, peacock, small tortoiseshell, red admiral, and comma visited buddleia bush in the garden this afternoon - Martin Shepherd

Trent Park 34 small coppers in 1.5hrs, 15 small heath, 160 meadow brown, 53 gatekeepers, 8 common blues - Robert Callf

Berkhamsted Common (B) & Ashridge Park (A): 18 butterfly spp including Purple Hairstreak (**A & B**), Small Copper (**2 at B**), Marbled White (**A**), Common Blue (**A**) & Ringlet (**B**). Red Admiral, Comma & worker Hornet all on sap run at **B** - Colin Everett

Broxbourne NR, several observers from 11amish, **3 brief sightings of Purple Emperor** over willows, 12.55, 2.25 and 2.40. Also 3-5 white admirals seen, and one red admiral landed on Jeremy Gaskell for about 30 minutes or more - news via Andrew Middleton

Swarms of Purple Hairstreaks around oaks, **Coppetts Wood** 19.30 this evening - Tony Clancy

Bishops Stortford garden, 1 Painted Lady - Andrew Hardacre

Had a second **Small Ranunculus** last night 18th July in **Ponders End** after one one 11th June. Both were very fresh - Andrew Middleton

Fri 18th July - Broxbourne woods 12.05 White admiral on wooden seat - on ride, running west & parallel to emperor ride (near pond). 12.30 Red Admiral near log pile, just down from West car park - Les Borg

Bramfield Park Wood - 18 species including 3 White Admiral, Brimstone and Common Blue - Andrew Middleton

Female Purple Emperor seen at 1.50 on **Tuesday 15 July** at **Broxbourne Woods** flying up path past bench at eyelevel then into trees - Tony Clancy

Wed 16th July - Robert Callf saw his first ever hummingbird hawk-moth on buddleja outside his **Southgate** residence today

Diane Andrews rang to say her husband, Richard went to **Broxbourne Woods** today, he left the Reserve (not necessarily intentionally) and between 11.30 and 12 observed a **male Purple Emperor** grounded on a damp patch of the track he was walking along. Later he saw a **female** around tallows in the Reserve

Some observations from **Commonswood** this morning between 11.30 and 12.30: 3 Comma, 4 Common blues, 2 Red Admirals, several Gatekeepers - 2 of which were mating, several Essex skippers, several Large Whites, 2 Green veined whites. Numerous Meadow Browns - Les Borg

Ermine Street north of Goose Green, before it rained, I went to see whether I could find Kevin and Sandra Standbridge's sap run. With help of their instructions, I found it about 10.50 and first noticed 2 Red Admirals. Then at 11 o'clock, the most **worn Purple Emperor** I have ever seen flew in and settled on the tree (I couldn't tell the sex, not helped by the sun being in my eyes most of the time). I watched the tree, and every now and then it flew out and re-positioned itself. I tried to take a photo but was unsuccessful and then to video it. At this point it flew out and I was unable to see whether it returned. It was there for at least 45 minutes just like the other day - Liz Goodyear

Tues 15th July - We had **2 Dark Green Fritillaries** at **Pegsdon Hills** on **Thursday 10 July**. The first I've actually seen on site - Andy Fleckney (news via Beds & Northants Branch) Dave Chandler comments the grid reference was "within a mere 100 metres of the Herts border at **Noon Hill, Hexton**"

Marbled White, 1 at **St. Ippolyts Electricity Transformer Station** at 2045 - habitat seems suitable for larger numbers - David Russell

I just heard from Rachel Terry that she also had a Marbled White on her **Horsenden** transect on **Saturday 12th** - presumably the same one I had. Even more interesting, one of the green keepers reported a White Admiral at **Horsenden Hill Golf Course**, very close to the spot where I had a 'probable' high overhead on 22nd June. I've yet to get the precise details on this one - Andy Culshaw

Derry's Wood (south of Wormley Wood): Purple emperor found at 12.28 at south end of Derry's Wood at the edge of a clearing with oak and willow. The butterfly - I think it was a male but no close views - was on willow and flew south. It then reappeared at 12.45 and landed on oak, and flew north and out of sight at 12.50. Also white admiral, two purple hairstreaks, and several ringlets and red admirals - Martin Shepherd

*On Sunday, I received the following email and rang John Murray immediately. He has been in touch and there is a photo. My wife and I saw a **Large Tortoiseshell in our garden today - Sunday 13th July**, at lunchtime. Never having seen this butterfly before in 60 years, it*

reappeared in the early evening, sunning itself on the patio wall. How unusual is this sighting? We live in **Gustardwood**, near Wheathampstead - David Eberstein

We visited **Tring Park** for the first time during the Purple Emperor flight period today (previous visits limited to habitat observations in winter). Eventually we were rewarded with the sight of **Purple Emperor** flying up the escarpment and then flying off down the hillside again. However, the prize sighting went to a **Silver-Washed Fritillary** (its getting a bit of habit) on bramble. Unfortunately Brian Jessop wasn't able to meet us on site, but we stopped by at his workplace on the way home to tell him. Needless to say he was going to go there after work - Liz Goodyear and Andrew Middleton

I didn't see the full significance of the Ringlet observation at Ally Pally (*see Saturday 12th*). Have a look at what Colin Plant says about the species' status as a London insect. It's a good year for them but normally you wouldn't expect to see them much nearer to St Paul's than Broxbourne. Difficult morning at Broxbourne today nothing seen. Lack of fresh dog poo to blame? Also W-letter Hairstreak at **Brickendon Green**, unfazed by stiffening breeze, appeared to be ovipositing - Jeremy Gaskell

Bricket Wood transect 103 butterflies of 17 spp including 1 White Admiral, 2 Purple Hairstreaks, 2 Marbled Whites, 2 Peacocks (1st of new brood), 1 Common Blue and 1 Ringlet. A male **RED-TIPPED CLEARWING** moth to a combination pheromone lure among osiers and mixed willows by river Colne at **Otterspool** (Aldenham) at 3.34 pm. Local experience shows that many sites with osier have this overlooked species - Colin.Everett

Thought you might both be interested in another Middlesex record of **Small Ranunculus Hecatera dysodea**. I've just been brought one that had flown in to someone's lounge in **Hounslow** on Sunday, **13 July** (Pat Haynes via MRH) - Martin Honey

Mon 14th July - Here's today's sightings from **Broxbourne Wood**. **Purple emperor @ 1pm, 1,40pm, 2.30pm & 3pm**. White admirals - several sightings between 10.15am & 4pm - now looking a bit tatty. Red admirals - just 2 sightings all day, 1 @ 11.40am & another @ 1.50pm - Les Borg

Nick Sampford has just rung to say, he is pretty sure he has just seen a **Silver-washed Fritillary/Fritillary** in the same wood, **north of Ware**, where he had a sighting last year. The wood is full of violets. Also seen in this wood was a White Admiral and Purple Hairstreak. Here is his report:

After recent sightings with purple emperor I was expecting a bit of a quiet time locally and I decided to look at woods local (North of Ware) to me for any purple emperor activity. I have access to some local woods which are strictly private and this is where I looked. I found a white admiral and many purple hairstreaks in the first area I looked and was well pleased as I don't think white admiral has been recorded in this place before. I moved to the second place where I wanted to look and watched a heron fly low across a field between me and the wood. That's when I noticed a large orange insect flying along the edge of the wood - I watched fly fast and purposely along the wood for at least 100 yards, it looked like a fritillary but oak eager couldn't be ruled out as I was watching at 100 yard range it was lost to view after about a minute. 5 minutes later it was there again flying again fast this time up and down the trees it clashed twice with large whites and chased one and was lost to view again this time I had it in view for a good 2 minutes. I had to wait a further 12 minutes before I saw it again it was like it was patrolling the edge of the wood it was in view for a further 2 minutes before it disappeared again. I was quite excited by now as I feel a oak eager wouldn't clash and drive off a large white - this is fritillary behaviour. 10 minutes later and what i can describe as the best sighting was of 2 fritillaries the bright orange one was circling what seemed to be a darker one [female] I watched them for 1/2 minutes until they seemed to disappear into the wood. I waited another 40 minutes with out anymore sightings I had to leave to do the school run and returned at 5.45 with Angela and Tom. We were there for about 2 minutes when a fritillary species flew past us at 25 yard range it was flying with the strong wind behind it and was so fast no positive id could be gained. We also had another 4 very distant sightings one of which clashed with and dwarfed a comma. The nature of the site is very private and little has changed in the last 50 years when my Dad was a boy they do not seem to use pesticides as the fields are full of flowers in spring the woods are managed for pheasant shooting and have good growth of violets. Today's sightings are with in view of the area where I see a fritillary last year - I will return tomorrow - Nick Sampford *The way Nick describes the flight*

and attitude to other butterflies is identical to that seen last Thursday in Essex by LG & AM when we had our Silver Washed sighting

News from **Tring Park** - Brian Jessop had **5 sightings of Purple Emperor** on **Saturday** and Philip Woodward saw **one on Saturday and one last Thursday**

News from **Horsenden Hill** for **Sunday 13th July**: Speckled Wood (15), Meadow Brown (abundant), Small White (1), Large Skipper (12), Gatekeeper (140+), Green-veined White (14), Small Tortoiseshell (1), Purple Hairstreak (2), Holly Blue (1), Large White (5), Red Admiral (4), Small Skipper (17), Essex Skipper (1; netted and released), White-letter Hairstreak (3), Comma (5), Small Copper (5), Common Blue (1) - Andy Culshaw

Sun 13th July - News from Broxbourne Wood, we see **5 sightings of purple emperor** in 4 hours it was a lot slower than yesterday I decided to count every butterfly I see so here goes: purple emperor - 10.21 male ? very brief view over fallow, 11.01 male over fallow, 11.20 male over fallow and along ride towards car park, 11.22 female high over oak and fallow opposite the bench it was much larger than the male we had just seen, 12.25 male flew low up the ride towards the car park watched for a good minute and a half but never landed. Stayed 10 till 2 o'clock but no more sightings. Also seen: peacock 1, small tortoiseshell 1, red admiral 12, white admiral 18, comma 11, meadow brown 117, ringlet 52, gatekeeper 18, essex skipper 25, small skipper 17, large skipper 3, unidentified skipper 65, small white 29, green veined white 13, large white 35, unidentified whites 48, purple hairstreak 23 - 16 species in total - Nick Sampford

Today we walked around **Balls Wood** and saw 3 White Admirals and large numbers of Ringlets, Meadow Browns, Gatekeepers and Skippers large and small. We then walked towards **Goose Green on Ermine Road**, halfway between Elbow Lane Farm and Goose Green, we spotted a White Letter Hairstreak on the right hand side. Then about a hundred yards on the left, we spotted various butterflies feeding on sap about 25 feet up on an Oak tree. 3 Red Admirals, 3 Commas, 1 Speckled Wood and a **PURPLE EMPEROR** (unable to id sex). It stayed on sap for at least 45mins from 11.30am. We left to get scope to take photos however on our return an hour later it had gone. The other butterflies were still there, it could therefore be a regular sap sight. Very enjoyable day loads to see little owl, thrushes blackcap, dragonflies etc. We also had a Male Brimstone in our garden today at **Hertford Heath** - Kevin and Sandra Standbridge

We have had a report that a **Purple Emperor** was seen today in **Wormley Wood** by Brian Dawton

9 July 2003, Therfield Heath: four marbled whites in warm, humid conditions seen between 13.00 and 14.00 on grassy slopes approaching the hilltop beechwood west of the car-park - Martin Shepherd

Yesterday, Saturday 12th July, 11.30 - 12.30 near **Alexandra Palace**: single White-letter Hairstreak and 1-3 Ringlet (identified in flight and but also seen settled). It sounded a very good day at Broxbourne yesterday - Jeremy Gaskell

Sat 12th July - News from **Horsenden**, a brief walk this AM resulted in my first Marbled White for the site just south of the summit of the hill. Long expected after the recent records from Brent Res and (last year) Greenford Country Park (and there are several older records from Horsenden itself). It was rather small and so was presumably a wandering male. Also today Small Copper (1), Red Admiral (1), Speckled Wood (4), Gatekeeper (abundant), Meadow Brown (abundant), Small Tortoiseshell (1), Large White (2), Small White (1), Purple Hairstreak (6) [didn't have time to check the best spots for White-letter]. Of interest nearby 6 Slow Worms in the composter in my back garden (a joint site high!) - Andy Culshaw

More news from **Broxbourne**, Malcolm Hull, Andrew Middleton, Robert Callf and Kevin & Sandra Standbridge were treated to the sight of a **male Purple Emperor** at a probable sap flow in the late afternoon and a Marbled White

I visited a couple of sites on the edge of **Hertford today**. Firstly the old cricket pitch area at **Goldings** now long grass, and creeping thistle in the main and saw: from about 10:30 to 10:45, 30 Small Essex skippers of which one was definitely and Essex, 1 Large Skipper, 20 Meadow

Brown, 24 Gatekeeper, 1 painted lady, 1 red Admiral, 2 Ringlet, 1 Small White, 3 Small Copper, 1 Common Blue, 2 Comma, 1 large White. Then on to **Archer's Spring** which was to be a Sports Centre but the contractors removed the topsoil and then left, so we have a classic brownfield site right next to Sele farm housing estate. There are short grass areas maintained by scrambling and rabbit grazing bare soil, some areas of long grass and masses of creeping thistle, ragwort, buddleia, bramble and goats rue. There are also so good lengths of elm and oak hedge. Here between 11:10 and 11:45 there were 3 Green-veined Whites, 4 Small whites, 6 Large whites, 6 Commas, 5 red Admirals, 5 Small Tortoiseshells, **1 fresh summer brood Peacock** (first I have seen this year), 2 Small Copper, 1 Common Blue, 1 Purple hairstreak, 2 painted lady, 12 Ringlets and well over 100 of each of Small/Essex Skipper, Gatekeeper and Meadow Brown (I gave up counting). Disappointingly no White Letter hairstreaks. Also 20 burnt out cars, all of which looked as if they had been there some time - Andrew Wood

Broxbourne Wood Nature Reserve, joint field trip with Countryside Management Service. At one point over 30 people gathered around the seat half way down the main ride. Many were rewarded with several sightings of a **male Purple Emperor** patrolling the willows and even better when it landed on the ground. **A female** was also seen along the ride and appeared to be egg laying. Other butterflies included several White Admiral, a male Brimstone and a Small Copper. Diane Andrews also reported that on **Wednesday** with Jeremy Gaskell they had seen a Marbled White near **Brickendon** - many observers (*if any one present would like to add to this report please send me an email - LG*)

Far less exciting but in my **Ware** garden on my return, **a fresh Peacock** and Large Skipper and later I found a Speckled Wood in the downstairs toilet ! - Liz Goodyear

I saw a butterfly in the garden (on an ornamental poppy, don't ask me what sort) this afternoon. I tentatively ID'd it as Large Skipper. Does this sound OK for a **Bishops Stortford** garden? (*confirmed*) - Andrew Hardacre

More news of sightings from **Broxbourne Wood NR**, the **purple emperor sighting yesterday (11.7.03)** Les Borg was photographing it (a male) at about 12.05 pm as it sat on the path in the dip where the brook goes under the main ride (just west of where we were standing this afternoon.) A couple reported seeing a female purple emperor in the forest ride behind where we were standing (that was yesterday). Other butterflies seen along the main ride yesterday were gatekeeper, ringlet, speckled wood, meadow brown, small skipper, large white, green-veined white, comma, red admiral, painted lady, white admiral (at least 8 sightings). **Today**, while I stood by the brook in the dip, I had 3 white admirals circling around me. **Yesterday**, at about 12.20pm Les Borg returned to the car park for his lunch and was told that a **purple emperor** had been perched on his car feeding on squashed insects. I thought they could only suck. Maybe it was sucking up juices. An interesting observation? - June Crew and the Cheshunt Natural History Society Field Trip

Fri 11th July - Sightings for **Broxbourne woods: Purple emperor** - several sightings during the day from - the first at 12.08 1 male on ground near the lowest point on the ride. approx 1.30. Further sightings of flying emperors up to 3.30pm. A couple in the car park reported a male settling on car bonnets, possibly to feed from fly squash. One of the cars was mine. White admirals - at least 4 individuals seen during the day and Red admirals as well. Purple hairstreak spotted by Nigel Taylor along the same ride. Four commas also seen - Les Borg On a sour note, I accidentally left my binoculars somewhere in the wood on Thursday afternoon. They are a pair of Green, Kowa, 8 x 45 with a black strap. I can be contacted on 01438 717841 (there is a reward)

Broxbourne Woods pm, 4 sightings of **Purple Emperors** from West car park [**1 male sighting in Sallows, 2 females also**], 1 fresh **female** gave superb views with open wings on pine trunk below bench - Tony Clancy

Broxbourne Woods, male Purple Emperor towards bottom of main track from West Car Park at 12.08pm. **Female** seen at 1.10pm, ten yards up from bottom of track. Also purple hairstreak, four commas, eight + white admirals, gatekeeper, small skipper, red admirals, ringlets, large white, small white, brown hawker and southern hawker dragonflies and probable broad bodied chaser - Nigel Taylor

A Hummingbird Hawk-moth visited the hanging flower baskets of the Old Crown pub in **Great Hadham** at 19.00 this evening. A pleasant distraction from my very pleasant pint of Adnams! - Murray Orchard

Hummingbird Hawk-moth seen in **Walkern**, again. This time feeding on geraniums...might be the same one....on the other hand it might not! - Jeff Davies

Thurs 10th July - Broxbourne Woods, brilliant view of an egg-laying female **Purple Emperor** in Brox woods this afternoon. On sallow by the path just down from the west car park. Also White Admiral and a Comma near the seat and barricade at the end of the first sector of the woods - Nigel Agar

Broxbourne Woods, I've found the area, thanks to a gentleman who I believe is a member of the butterfly society. He pointed out an emperor for me, but it was too high up to photograph. The count was:- 3 White Admirals, **1 Purple Emperor**, 3 Comma, 3 Red Admirals and c20 Meadow Browns - Les Borg

I thought you would like to have another record of the sighting of **Purple Emperor** at **Broxbourne Woods** today, the 10 July, at 12.05 for about half an hour, along the main ride from the west car park. On the muddy strip for about 15 mins then flying and settling on horse droppings for the rest of the time. Several White Admirals also seen - Iris Newbery

Went out of county today and visited a private wood, "**over the border**" in **Essex**. Didn't find what we were looking for, but the wood was heaving with Commas but then suddenly amongst them, we saw a **male Silver-washed Fritillary** acting extremely territorially over brambles - Andrew Middleton and Liz Goodyear

Showed a friend some of the faunal + floral delights of **Horsenden Hill** this pm (**9th July**) + 1 of highlights was my 1st ever sighting of Marbled White for the site. I know in recent years they have been appearing in new sites in London; I've recorded them at Runnymede, Wimbledon Common + Richmond Park in recent years but it was satisfying to see 1 on my doorstep! Few vanessids today- just 1 Comma + a large dark butterfly (probably Red Admiral /Peacock) which rapidly flew over at height; I suspect it was former sp. as I've not seen any new emergents of latter yet. Also: Meadow Brown -abundant, Gatekeeper -40+, Speckled Wood- 8, Large Skipper- 4 Small Skipper- 40+ (no Essex found on examining 10+ settled on plants) Holly Blue- 2, White Letter H- 2/3 - Neil Anderson

Wed 9th July - Chalk-hill Blues and Marbled Whites both active at **Hexton Chalk Pits** this afternoon - Nigel Agar

We arrived at **Broxbourne** around 9.30 and walked down the ride from west car park where we met Dave [the school teacher]at the bench there were many commoner butterflies about and we soon see a odd white admiral fly past. There was some fresh dogs muck and horse muck on the ride. At about 10.20 Angela noticed a butterfly around the tall sallow when it finally showed to all of us we agreed it was a purple emperor it flew over the tallows and was lost to view, we waited for a few minutes and Angela decided to walk down the ride at about 10.25 just before the damp area she noticed a large dark butterfly on the path and called me and Dave to come see it. Angela shouted its a male emperor I think when we got there we were giving amazing views of a male emperor feed on the ground I took about 10 photos of it head on when it flew up the track towards the bench it settled again on the ground 10 foot in front of me allowing me to take more photos. Again it decided to fly again this time high over our heads and along the track directly behind the bench Angela followed it and found it again on the ground until 10.40 where it flew up the track back towards the bench and high over it and it was lost to view. Angela walked down the ride to where it was first to see it had returned and by a amazing bit of luck it had it showed there for 2 minutes and flew slowly up the track stopping every now and then as if posing for photos I was having problems with low shutter speeds and missed a few great shots it continued up the to about 30 yards past the bench when it decided to turn tail and fly back down the track where it stop on some old dogs muck at 10.47 it stayed in the same position until 11.02 when it flew slowly off down the track stop for a few seconds approx every 5 yards me and Dave followed it through the damp patch and along the ride it disappeared in to the wood at 11.09 and wasn't seen again. What a brilliant sighting I knew sitting and wait at the bench would pay off in the end

the times are exact due to my camera recording the time of each shot I have allowed 2 minutes for me getting to the butterfly from when Angela called it and 5 minutes the time it took me to walk from where I last see it to the bench in total it was in constant view for 49 minutes. In total I took 267 photos but many were slightly out of focus due to low light/shutter speed but I've attached what I feel represent the best shots - Nick Sampford

Just a quick note on today's joint field trip with **Surrey branch at Bookham Common**: - well, it did exactly what it said on the tin! Very hot, humid, mostly sunny conditions saw many, many Silver-washed Fritillaries and slightly less White Admirals giving good, occasionally excellent, views to a group of c.30 people, including someone who got up at 5.30 in the morning to do a day-trip from Chester! Post-lunch saw extended views of three, probably four, male Purple Emperors patrolling the canopy and giving superb views perched on the end of the topmost twigs of the master tree. Unfortunately, they could not be tempted down to a lower level - lucky Nick Sampford! - Keir Mottram

This may seem hard to believe, but I was sitting at my desk in **Welwyn Garden City** this afternoon and something caught my eye as it flew past the window - it was unmistakably a White Admiral. I saw it repeatedly over about a 30-minute period (4.00 - 4.30 pm). My office is on the first floor and looks out over an enclosed courtyard which has a few shrubs and small trees - the butterfly was flying around happily and then resting on the foliage - whilst I could look down on it from above. The wing pattern and flight are unmistakable. I cannot think where it might have come from. The office is right in the centre of Welwyn, about 300 m from the train station. I can't imagine how many miles this is from its nearest known colony. Very warm day, but no wind to speak of which could have blown it in from anywhere - it obviously came of its own accord - Ian Small

Broxbourne Wood Reserve, Nick Sampford had a **male Purple Emperor grounded** for nearly 30 minutes today, enjoying the delights of some "dog muck!" - he took about 300 photos, *watch this space for the best shot LG*

Saved a painted lady from an untimely end at **Liverpool Street station**. Having found a fresh individual on the steps on the way out of the station I carefully picked it up to save it from being squashed by the hordes of commuters. Having reached nearby Finsbury circus it was duly released on to the flowering heliotrope. It was last seen enjoying the facilities. Also seen this morning: Meadow brown (4), small white (1) and large White(1), flying in grasses just outside **Drayton Park (North London)** railway sidings. - one of the few joys of rail delay - Phil MacMurdie

Tues 8th July - Broxbourne Wood Reserve, 1 purple emperor 1.50 [female] lots of still fresh looking white admirals + smaller numbers than normal of all 3 skippers and whites ringlet meadow brown gatekeeper no commas but there wasn't any sun yesterday - Nick Sampford

There were around **40 male and 4 female chalkhill blues** at **Hexton** this afternoon - two females were coupled with males. Two pairs large whites also coupled. Meadow browns also seen - about ten - Les Borg

Wormley Wood (south side) 7 White Admiral (3 in one clearing, 4 in another clearing), loads of Ringlet, also Red Admiral, Comma, Gatekeepers, Meadow Browns, Green-veined White and Large Whites - Liz Goodyear and Andrew Middleton

Sunday 6 July, Ickleford - 1/2 Marbled White. Small White. **Oughtonhead**, 1 Marbled White. 2 Gatekeeper. 1 Red Admiral. Also Small Skipper, Large Skipper, Comma, Meadow Brown, Ringlet, Small Tortoiseshell, Green Veined White. I do not know if Marbled White are regular at these sites but I cannot remember reading of them there - Dave Cording

Mon 7th July - On Sunday 6th July, Kathryn and I went up to **Tring Park** for a look around. During the course of our walk we saw 100+ Ringlets, 70+ Marbled Whites, 15 Meadow Brown, 2 Small Heath, 5 Speckled Wood, 40+ Small Skipper (I checked several to see if there were any Essex Skipper amongst them but to no avail), 7 Large Skipper, 2 Red Admiral, 2 Small Tortoiseshell, 2 Comma (one egg laying), 1 Painted Lady and finally almost at the end our walk, **2 Purple Emperors (probably males)**. Unfortunately ever so slightly out of range of my

camera!! However I did take a couple of photos of some more approachable specimens - Allen Beechey & Kathryn Graves

Trent Park area (yesterday), 4 small copper, 25 small heath, **2 oak eggars**, - **new fields area**, 7 ringlets, 12 comma. **Today**, 2 marbled whites, 9 fresh painted ladies - Robert Callf and Robin White

Rare sighting of a marbled white next to labs at **Rothamsted** this lunch time, presumably a wanderer from the cutting on the Redbourn Road. **30+ male chalkhill blues** were seen this afternoon at **Hexton Chalk Pit** but only a single female. Dark green fritillaries still very plentiful over the Beds border at **Sharpenhoe**. If anyone wants to be certain of seeing one that's the place, probably the best site for it in UK at the moment - Ian Woiwod

Took a walk down the lane by **Norton Green** this lunchtime. Having watched what were presumably a couple of Purple Hairstreaks flitting around the oak canopies, I went into the flower meadow. The mowing the other year obviously did it the world of good as it is now a blaze of colour with Lady's and Marsh Bedstraw, Yellow Meadow Vetchling, Marsh Thistle and plenty of Knapweed still to flower. As is normal for this meadow, Ringlets were abundant (100+), with Meadow Browns a very poor second. There were also a few remaining Large Skippers, being replaced by dozens of Small Skippers and the first flush of Gatekeepers. However, the highlight of my lunch-hour was my target species, a Marbled White - Alan Reynolds

Broxbourne Wood Nature Reserve, both male and female Purple Emperor observed today - various recorders

Sun 6th July - Today's excursion into **TL43** produced 1 Small Skipper, 1 Ringlet, 4 Meadow Brown and 1 Gatekeeper at Old Manor Farm, **Sharpenhoe End**, 2 Small Skipper, 2 Meadow Brown, 2 Ringlet, 1 Red Admiral, 1 Large White, 1 Small White and 4 Large Skipper at **New Lake West**, 5 Small White, 2 Gatekeeper, 1 Painted Lady, 10 Meadow Brown, 10 Ringlet and 2 Large Skipper at **New Lake East**, 4 Ringlet at **Puttocks End Cottages**, and 1 Gatekeeper, 5 Ringlet and 2 Small White at **Brent Pelham Hall** - Alan Reynolds

The insect in the photo is *Urocerus gigas*, a Hymenopteran related to the sawflies and variously referred to as the Horntail or Giant Wood Wasp. It is entirely harmless and should be present in most Herts woods with some conifers - Colin Everett

A warm afternoon for a walk around **Maple Cross**. Plenty to see. Evidence of small tortoiseshell caterpillars in abundance and also some peacocks too. Butterfly sightings as follows - 18 small tortoiseshells, 7 small skippers (or maybe Essex!) 9 meadow browns, 7 large whites and 2 small whites, 1 comma, 1 red admiral and 1 marbled white. Earlier today I saw a comma egg laying on nettle just outside the house! I'm surprised I have not seen any peacock butterflies in view of the numbers of caterpillars around - Ann Piper

Ware garden, very few butterflies visiting the garden at the moment, but just had a garden first - a Ringlet - Liz Goodyear

Nice to get White letter-Hairstreak and Purple Hairstreak in the **Highdown area** today - Stuart Pittman

Broxbourne Wood Nature Reserve, had **first female purple emperor** over the willows along the ride from the carpark yesterday at 1.55 in no sunlight there were many white admirals [20+] sightings and lots of small & large skippers, meadow browns and ringlets and a hornet looking thing which landed on my shoulder - Nick Sampford *I understand it gave Nick a fright (slight understatement)*

Sat 5th July - Thundridge garden, I have had a hummingbird hawk moth in my garden on lavender twice this week once on **Monday** and again **yesterday** - Nick Sampford

Fri 4th July - On Friday afternoon at **Kings Mead**, 11 Meadow Brown, 4 Red Admiral, 14 Small Tortoiseshell, 1 Painted Lady, 1 Large White, 1 Ringlet, 1 Comma, 5 Large Skipper and a pair of GV White mating - Alan Reynolds

Did my **Balls Wood** transect in mainly dull but warm weather today. The total of **434 in 45 minutes** which was the highest in 8 years of walking this route. However **301 were Ringlets**. Just **one White Admiral**, a Small Tortoiseshell and numbers of Comma, Meadow Brown, Large, Small and Essex Skippers - Andrew Wood

The insect I had on 16th June (or another) returned on **28 June**. I again saw it in our back garden in **Puckeridge** feeding, as before, on white campion. It appeared twice at about 18.30 and then at 20.15. On each occasion it spent several minutes feeding and I was able to watch it extremely closely, noting the yellow hindwings, grey body with black and white pattern on the rear and the huge proboscis. The noticeable eyes made it look even more like a hummingbird! - Murray Orchard

Not much news from **The Chase** this week as its been rather damp. Lots of small/essex skippers around. Also Red Admiral caterpillars are out, I saw them on Wednesday - Tom Clarke

Wed 2nd July - On my farm walk today in **Maple Cross** I saw 8 different species :- 20 tortoiseshells, many flying as pairs, 10 meadow browns, 2 commas, 5 skippers (small) 7 large whites and 3 small whites, 1 red admiral and my first sighting of a marbled white. It was hot and rather humid - Ann Piper

Robert Callf reported seeing up to 18 Commas recently

Tues 1st July - Saturday Trent Park area, 1 gatekeeper, 10 ringlets. Recently up to 1 commas, several white letter hairstreaks over elms opposite **Oakwood tube** plus one around a flowering elm tree - Robert Callf & Robin White

June 2003

Mon 30th June - (Some of Nick's news was "lost in transect") **29th June, Broxbourne woods from east car park** [10.30 to 1.30], white admiral [12 sightings], **purple hairstreaks [10]**, ringlets[12], meadow brown [60+], large skipper[20], comma [3], small skipper, small white, large white, holly blue, red admiral, speckled wood, 4 species of dragonfly. **No sign of purple emperor along willows** but did watch for a hour or so female white admirals laying flat on the willow branches waiting for males to come along the males were flying very fast in and out the branches covering vast areas in short spaces of time when the pair met they would fly into the woods I see this happen 4 times in a hour. **28th June, Broxbourne woods from east car park** [1.30 to 4], **white admiral [30 sightings]**, **purple hairstreaks [3]**, ringlets[6], meadow brown [60+], large skipper[4], comma [5], small white, large white, holly blue, painted lady, speckled wood. 2 species of dragonfly and a hornet, **23rd June**, comma at **Dane End**. **24th June**, painted lady at **Thundridge**. **22nd June, Park Wood Bramfield**, ringlets[16], meadow brown [23], Large skipper[14], small white [12], comma, small tortoiseshell, speckled wood, **Broxbourne woods from east car park**, white admiral [9 sightings] excellent views of one nectaring on bramble flowers, ringlets[17], meadow brown [33], large skipper[4], comma, painted lady, speckled wood. - Nick Sampford

Maple Cross, on **June 25th**. I saw 2 red admirals and a painted lady in the farmland near my house. The weather was only moderate with a hint of rain in the air, quite cloudy but warm. They were in the undergrowth, mostly nettle and grasses and not heading in any particular direction. That afternoon I also saw 1 small/Essex skipper, 2 large whites, 1 small white, 14 tortoiseshells, a pristine comma, and 6 meadow browns. Not bad for variety! - Ann Piper

Horsenden Hill, summary of **yesterday's** sightings; Large Skipper c.10, Small Skipper c.40(no Essex Skipper positively IDed), Meadow Brown 100+, Gatekeeper 3male, Speckled Wood 4, Common Blue 1, White-letter Hairstreak 4 together at **Horsenden Farm end**, Comma 10, Red Admiral 3, Green-veined. White 3, Silver-Y 1 - Neil Anderson

I don't seem to have sent you my records for last weekend which are 1 Meadow Brown at **Goodfellows Farm**, 1 Large White at **Mardleybury Manor**, 1 Small Tortoiseshell at

Mardleybury, 1 Small Tortoiseshell at **Slate Hall Farm**, 1 Meadow Brown at **Gannock Green**, 1 Meadow Brown at **Notley Green** - Alan Reynolds

Sun 29th June - 2 White Admirals and a Marbled White amongst butterflies at **Bricket Wood**, this morning - Clive Burrows

Purple Hairstreaks have even reached **Crouch End**! Perfect specimen in my garden today. Also Holly Blue - Helen Bantock

Horsenden Hill News, 29th June Purple Hairstreak (1), Gatekeeper (2), White-letter Hairstreak (7; including at least 3 nectaring), Comma (5), Small Tortoiseshell (2), Painted Lady (3), Red Admiral (2), Speckled Wood (3), Large Skipper (25+), Small Skipper (8), unidentified Skipper (14), Large White (4), Small White (5), Green-veined White (1), unidentified White (2), Meadow Brown (numerous, not counted), Common Blue (1). **In nearby Perivale Wood** an additional **1 Purple hairstreak** and 1 White-letter Hairstreak. The Purple Hairstreaks and Gatekeepers were my first of the year. News from outside the area from **Brampton Wood**, Cambridgeshire, **28th June**: White Admiral (ca. 10), Black Hairstreak (4) - Andy Culshaw

Broxbourne Woods, first **Purple Hairstreaks** seen today, yesterday at least **30 White Admiral** sightings, but fewer today - Nick Sampford - more news to follow

Brian Jessop has just rung to say he saw 3 Purple Emperor at Tring Park yesterday!

I've just had a look at your site as a result of seeing a **Humming-bird Hawk Moth** on my lavender in my back garden in **Ickenham** (6.30 pm this evening **24th June**). First time I've ever noticed one in this country, and I hope to have pictures of my very good views! Very pleased to find the entry on your pages from Wednesday 18 June to reassure me that I wasn't going mad. Good black and white markings on back end and overall hazy orange effect of rapidly beating wings. Amazingly long proboscis! Liz Ackroyd

Sat 28th June - A further foray into the wilds of **TL33** brought 2 Meadow Brown, 2 Small Tortoiseshell and 1 Large Skipper at **Lyle End Farm**, 1 Red Admiral at **Hyde Hill Farm**, 3 Small Tortoiseshell, 3 Meadow Brown, 1 Ringlet and 1 Comma at **Cave Bridge**, 1 Small Tortoiseshell at **Southfields farm**, 30 Meadow Brown, 1 Painted Lady, 1 Small Tortoiseshell, 10 Large Skipper, 1 Large White, 1 Green-veined White and 10 Ringlet at **Broadfield Hall**, and 1 Small Tortoiseshell at **Southern Green farm** - Alan Reynolds

Archive Page

Sightings and news from January to June 2003

 [Archive Index](#)

 [Photo House Index](#)

This page contains sightings details of all the butterflies and moths reported to the [Sightings page](#) between January and June 2003.

Note: These pages have been copied from the original sightings page and some links will no longer work. All images of butterflies or moths have been removed, but most can be found in the [Photo House](#)

JUNE 2003

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Sun 29th June - 2 White Admirals and a Marbled White amongst butterflies at **Bricket Wood**, this morning - Clive Burrows

Purple Hairstreaks have even reached **Crouch End!** Perfect specimen in my garden today. Also Holly Blue - Helen Bantock

Horsenden Hill News, 29th June Purple Hairstreak (1), Gatekeeper (2), White-letter Hairstreak (7; including at least 3 nectaring), Comma (5), Small Tortoiseshell (2), Painted Lady (3), Red Admiral (2), Speckled Wood (3), Large Skipper (25+), Small Skipper (8), unidentified Skipper (14), Large White (4), Small White (5), Green-veined White (1), unidentified White (2), Meadow

Brown (numerous, not counted), Common Blue (1). **In nearby Perivale Wood** an additional **1 Purple hairstreak** and 1 White-letter Hairstreak. The Purple Hairstreaks and Gatekeepers were my first of the year. News from outside the area from **Brampton Wood**, Cambridgeshire, **28th June**: White Admiral (ca. 10), Black Hairstreak (4) - Andy Culshaw

Broxbourne Woods, first **Purple Hairstreaks** seen today, yesterday at least **30 White Admiral** sightings, but fewer today - Nick Sampford - more news to follow

Brian Jessop has just rung to say he saw 3 Purple Emperor at Tring Park yesterday!

I've just had a look at your site as a result of seeing a **Humming-bird Hawk Moth** on my lavender in my back garden in **Ickenham** (6.30 pm this evening **24th June**). First time I've ever noticed one in this country, and I hope to have pictures of my very good views! Very pleased to find the entry on your pages from Wednesday 18 June to reassure me that I wasn't going mad. Good black and white markings on back end and overall hazy orange effect of rapidly beating wings. Amazingly long proboscis! Liz Ackroyd

Sat 28th June - A further foray into the wilds of **TL33** brought 2 Meadow Brown, 2 Small Tortoiseshell and 1 Large Skipper at **Lyle End Farm**, 1 Red Admiral at **Hyde Hill Farm**, 3 Small Tortoiseshell, 3 Meadow Brown, 1 Ringlet and 1 Comma at **Cave Bridge**, 1 Small Tortoiseshell at **Southfields farm**, 30 Meadow Brown, 1 Painted Lady, 1 Small Tortoiseshell, 10 Large Skipper, 1 Large White, 1 Green-veined White and 10 Ringlet at **Broadfield Hall**, and 1 Small Tortoiseshell at **Southern Green farm** - Alan Reynolds

Fri 27th June - Following noted near our house at **Puckeridge** on **June 21st 2003**:- Painted Lady 1 Red Admiral 1 Meadow Brown 4 Small Tortoiseshell 4 Ringlet 7 Speckled Wood 2 Comma 1 Brimstone 1 Large White 1 Skipper sp 1 (Large/Essex/Small) - Murray Orchard

Just a quick line to say that at 08.15am, **26/06/03** I had the pleasure of seeing my 1st Humming bird Hawk Moth. This was in my terraced garden in **Walthamstow** just south of the north Circular Road. It was feeding on summer flowering Jasmine and stayed approximately 15 minutes - Nick Farrer

Weds 25th June - Brian Day phoned me today to report seeing **11 White Admirals** in **Park Wood Ruislip** on Monday 23rd - Andrew Wood

Tues 24th June - Balls Wood, Herts, ten white admirals and around **90 ringlets** - Martin Shepherd

Mon 23rd June - First Marbled Whites of year seen on **Bunkers Park** today. 3 were reported to me by D & T Miller; I recorded one only during a transect walk this pm - Mike Pearson

Sun 22nd June - Ringlet at **Ninesprings Way, Hitchin today**. also at Old Hale Way allotment site last week. Small Heath abundant on **Pegsdon Hills** yesterday in Beds - did not get to the Herts section - too hot - Nigel Agar

At **Broxbourne** today saw 5 **White Admiral**, one at the top of the main ride and four flying around the ferns down the bottom on the right before reaching the bench. Also saw 3 Comma, 2 Red Admiral, 1 Tortoiseshell, several Meadow Brown, Ringlets and just a few Skippers - Lissa Smith

News from **Horsenden Hill**. A total of 10+ White-letter Hairstreaks at two different locations. Most (7+) were around the recently coppiced area to the rear of **Horsenden Farm** on the south facing slope of Horsenden Hill. They were tending to perch on the usual ash tree and spiral high over the nearby elms, but I saw one nectaring on bramble and a couple egg-laying on small (ca. 15foot) elms. The other three were in the traditional spot west of **Horsenden Lane** on the regenerating elm hedge (known locally as Batts Field). They typically emerge slightly later at the latter location as its east facing. Didn't get a chance to check any of the other areas but will hopefully get time to carry out a full survey next Sunday. Other butterflies included comma (5), common blue (1), small skipper (8), large skipper (36), **meadow brown (190+)**, unidentified

white (2). Also got 4 silver Y's and about half a dozen narrow-bordered 5-spotted burnets. Dragonflies included a Black-tailed Skimmer and two Four-spotted Chasers - Andrew Culshaw

White Admiral seen feeding on Bramble, on **Sat 21st June** along Back Lane, Nicolson's Wood (part of **Bramfield Woods**) - Dave Webb

Northaw Great Wood. 1 newly emerged White Admiral in private garden, also 1 Large White, 1 Red Admiral, 2 Meadow Brown & 1 Large Skipper - Chris Beach

Sat 21st June - Hemel Hempstead yesterday, Red Admiral on Cotoneaster Rothschildianus at 7.10 a.m. Then moved on to Hebe, Yarrow and Common Valerian. Large White on Cotoneaster and Sweet William, also Small Tortoiseshell again on Cotoneaster followed by Wild Privet and Hebe. Large Skipper on Scabious and Sweet William. Lastly a faded Painted Lady on Sweet William - Malcolm Newland

2 white letter hairstreaks in **Poles Lane** in elms by the scout hut entrance also comma small skipper and meadow brown 12+ white letter hairstreaks crooked mile near White Round House there were at least 4 showing all the time I was there, feeding on creeping thistle with many eggs laying on the elm and buzzing around the ash trees. Also red admiral 3 comma 10+ small skippers speckled wood small green veined and large white 30 + meadow brown, I was there for about 2 hours - Nick Sampford

Yesterday (**20th June**), on a hot but breezy day at **Kings Mead**, I saw 1 Red Admiral and 13 Small Tortoiseshell along just 80 metres of New River bank by White House Sluice, a further 6 Small Tortoiseshell from White House Sluice to the flyover, with 6 Meadow Brown and 40 Large Skipper under the **flyover** between the New River and the River Lea - Alan Reynolds

Thundridge - I had in my garden **yesterday** 6 small tortoiseshells and 2 painted ladies this a higher count of small tortoiseshells than I had last year so I'm chuffed also had 2 painted ladies 2 large whites and a brimstone at Widford. Last Saturday my dad had a painted lady in his garden which he reckons was half the size of a normal one my first thoughts were a American painted lady but I'm a optimist after talking to Andy he says he's seen specimens in a museum which were like this and they are just stunted specimens. I would of like to of seen it he's looked for it everyday this week but with no luck as of yet - Nick Sampford

Went to my local patch - **Weston Hills**, just outside Baldock. Saw a single male Marbled White - my first for the year. Also fresh Ringlet, Commas, Large and Small Skippers - Ian Small

We spent an enjoyable three hours over at **Tring Park** today and saw 1 White Admiral, 3 Marbled White, 4 Painted Lady, 3 Tortoiseshell, 2 Red Admiral, 5 Small Blue, a large amount of Ringlets, Speckled Wood, Meadow Brown, both Large and Small Skippers, some burnet moths, and 4 Silver Y. Also treated to the sight of a Roe Deer - Lissa Smith

Fri 20th June - Broxbourne Woods, today - **1 White Admiral**, 1 Comma, 1 Large Skipper, numerous Meadow Browns and Speckled Woods, also 1 Peacock Moth - Jim Fish

One pristine **White Admiral** at **Balls Wood today**. The earliest date by four days in my eight years recording here. Also **Ringlet**, comma, meadow brown, Painted lady and large Skipper out in reasonable numbers. Also an observation on late flight dates. **Yesterday** in **Ware Park** I saw a rather ragged Peacock and **today** at **Balls Wood** another two, all of these are 2 weeks later than my latest dates for the over wintering Peacocks. As Peacocks generally emerge end July and with things being about 2 weeks early this year there could be a tiny gap between the last of last year's and the first of this year. **This morning** I had a Painted lady and a Red Admiral both feeding on a Ceanothus in the front garden (**Bengeo**) at 08:15, I don't recall ever seeing butterflies on this bush before and the early flight after a relatively cool night was a bit surprising. The Painted Lady was almost transparent - Andrew Wood

There is a strong Small Tortoiseshell colony at the Old Hale Way allotment site in **Hitchin**. Also Red Admiral and Small White - Nigel Agar

Brentford, 1 newly hatched Comma, 4 Painted Lady & 3 Red Admiral so far, and I haven't left the office yet. The PL & RA heading north showing no signs of stopping. Has there been another migrant influx? Chris (still working hard) Court

Thurs 19th June - This afternoon was hot but windy. Saw **26 small tortoiseshells** in a walk round local farmland in **Maple Cross**. Many were basking out of the wind but several pairs appeared to be courting! Also my first sighting this year of 2 large skippers. One small white looking rather the worse for wear. Plenty of peacock caterpillars well developed by now feeding off nettles. Plus a very active silver Y moth - Ann Piper

Trent Park, yesterday, 1 male Essex Skipper and a **>male Orange Tip** - Robin White (news via Robert Callf)

Wed 18th June - Toby Austin, has sent some wonderful pictures taken in Costa Rica - they are on the World Butterfly Photo House page - please look at them and help Toby identify the species please (*I had wanted to put them up on this page but there is isn't enough space at the moment, sorry LG*)

I finally managed to get in a short visit to one of my favourite sites on Tuesday. I went to the **Aston Clinton Rag Pits** to catch some roosting butterflies (on film!!). I found; **2 fresh Marbled Whites** roosting on a flower head - Allen Beechey

Trent Park, 1 ringlet, 3 red admirals, small heath, several small tortoiseshells - Robert Callf and Robin White

Ponders End - Painted lady emerged between 12:00 and 13:00 hours, then became active around 4pm and flew off strongly from the garden. Watched it pump out some fluid several times, then antennae straightened out, then nothing for 2 hours, then began shivering its wings and opening them - Andrew Middleton

Wed 18th June - I enjoyed stunning and prolonged views of a **Hummingbird Hawk-moth** in our back garden at **Puckeridge** on **Monday evening 16th June**. It first appeared at 19.15 for a couple of minutes and then again at 21.15 for about 5 minutes. It was feeding on the flowers of white campion (*Lychnis*). I was able to note the yellow hind wing as it hovered and the black and white pattern on the rear end of the otherwise grey body, plus extraordinarily long proboscis. A superb insect! This is the third record for our back garden: one around kitchen window flower basket on 1/9/96 and one around runner bean flowers on 18/7/00 - Murray Orchard

Tues 17th June - Dagenham Chase, another good butterfly day today - at least until the rain came. More Meadow Browns out than last couple of days. 10+ small torts, which is much better than I was getting at Ally Pally. Best sighting of the day was a beautiful beautiful demoiselle. First sighting for me and nice to know it lives up to its name - Tom Clarke

Mon 16th June - Work is now moving back to **Stevenage** so I took the opportunity today to have a look down the lane from **Norton Green**. In half an hour I saw 1 Red Admiral, 1 Common Blue, 1 Comma, 12 Meadow Brown, 10 Large Skipper and 1 Painted Lady - Alan Reynolds

Some butterfly/moth news from **Horsenden Hill** over the weekend: **15th June** (Friends of Horsenden Hill butterfly walk) 10am-12.30pm
Common Blue (6), Painted Lady (2), Large Skipper (30+), Small Tortoiseshell (6), Comma (4), Speckled Wood (4), Red Admiral (1), Meadow Brown (30+). No sign of White-letter Hairstreak at the usual haunts yet. Most remarkable was a **Clouded Buff (*Diacrisia sannio*)** netted and potted by Rachel Terry and seen by all. Very unusual in Herts/Middx and usually found on heathland. Other moths seen on the walk included Silver Y (2), and Cinnabar. **Today 16th June** (evening) Small Tortoiseshell (5), Painted Lady (1), Red Admiral (1) - Andy Culshaw

Oaklands Tube Station - White-letter Hairstreak today. Trent Park area, 17 Painted Ladies, 19 Small Tortoiseshell, 28 Small Heath, 1 Small Copper also on **Friday 13th, 56 Small**

Heath in one hour - Robert Callf. Also news via Robert, Robin White saw a **Hummingbird Hawk-moth** on the edge of Williams Wood

Sun 15th June - Over the border in Beds - good site for **small blue** - **Sundon Quarry** had at least six before put off by packs motorbike riding youngsters (now I know where all our stolen cars end-up also). Noted single **marbled white** at **Barton Hills** - Phil Rhodes.

Walkern garden, a **Hummingbird Hawk Moth** has been feeding in my garden over this weekend (**14th & 15th June**)....often returning to Honeysuckle and other herbaceous plants. At **Frogmore Estate near Stevenage**, at the **end of May, 3 or 4 Grizzled Skipper** and a couple of Brown Argus, 10 Common Blue, Cinnabar, plethora of Painted Ladies - Jeff Davies

Sewardstone Marsh, 13.00hrs. **Eight white letter hairstreaks** giving superb views, found earlier today by Enfield Lock Conservation Group and **13 June, Ermine Street/Balls Wood**, (12.00-14.00hrs) Speckled wood (14), large skipper (20), small tortoiseshell (4), comma (3), meadow brown (4), red admiral - Martin Shepherd

Dark Lane, **Cheshunt** allotments, Saw three Small Tortoiseshells, four Meadow Browns, one unidentified skipper and one white butterfly in the distance whilst taking a break from weeding and watering on my allotment. The butterflies were at the bottom end by a wood where there is a lot of grass, nettles and brambles - Roger Newbold

Dagenham Chase, had first Meadow Brown today, lots of **Small/Essex skippers**, 1 small copper and a few small tortoiseshell - Tom Clarke

Sat 14th June - A few records from site visits today, **Tring Park**, Herts: **2 Dingy Skipper**, 3 Brimstone, 1 Common Blue, 1 Brown Argus, 4 Painted Lady, 2 Small Tortoiseshell, 1 Red Admiral, 24 Meadow Brown, 12 Speckled Wood, 16 Large Skipper, 21 Burnet Companion, 8 Silver-Y, **4 Yellow Shell. Totternhoe Quarry: Over 1000 Small Blue** on or at the base of the high north-facing cliff, just north of the village (actual count 1035 but this is an under-estimate). Counted between 3.30pm and 5pm with 700 counted on the slopes (but many would have been missed higher up the slopes especially as count mainly refers to flying individuals) and over 300 associated with the roosting area at the base of the cliff. Also counted here 3 Dingy Skipper, 7 Small Tortoiseshell, 5 Large Skipper, 2 Common Blue, 4 Meadow Brown, 6 Cinnabar, 1 Silver-Y, 5 Burnet Companion - Andrew Palmer

I would like to report the sighting of around a **score of small tortoiseshells** earlier this evening at the Radlett Road recreation ground (junction of Radlett Rd and Balmoral Rd, **Watford**.) Although I have previously seen individual specimens on this site this was far and away the largest grouping. Marvellous. As they have become rare in this part of Watford from being extremely common a few years ago. On the plus side we now have orange tips, holly blues and occasional common blues in North Watford when previously their were none to my knowledge - John Liberty

Also, **3 white-letter hairstreaks** chasing over an elm and flying to nectar on lime flowers along road between **King George V & William Girling Reservoirs (Middx)** this afternoon. **Sewardstone** - c 5 fresh comma - Andrew Middleton

Tom Brereton of BC Head Office asked Transect walkers to record when they first saw Marbled Whites, but what may be of more interest locally is that the first **dark green fritillaries** are emerging on Sharpenhoe. Seeing the entry for DGFs on the Hertfordshire Butterfly & Moth Report (just received) it might be useful for our members to, quote "*start looking for the butterfly in those parts of Hertfordshire that stick into Bedfordshire around Barton le Clay*". Angie & I did the **Sharpenhoe Clappers** (Beds) Transect at lunchtime today (Saturday June 14th) and are pleased to report the first **Marbled White (male)** of the season on the site. Also looking newly emerged today, we saw four Dark Green Fritillary (three male one female). Angie & I stopped and watched a particularly darkly marked (upperside) male Dark Green Fritillary finish off pumping up his wings on the ground. Other newly emerged species seen this weekend on Sharpenhoe are Large Skipper and Meadow Brown. NB: Small Blue & Green Hairstreak still flying too - Dave Chandler (news courtesy Beds & Northants Branch)

Another hot day, this time in TL43. Very little butterfly activity with only 2 Small Tortoiseshell at **Old Manor Farm**, 1 Painted Lady at **Abbotsbury Farm**, 1 Painted Lady, 1 Large White and 1 Meadow Brown at **New Lake**, and 1 Speckled Wood and 1 Painted Lady at **Brent Pelham Hall** - Alan Reynolds

Dagenham Chase, Okay, not really in Herts & Middx but thought I might as well continue to pass on news from this sight (my new place of work). Today, **small skippers** and common blues in good numbers, a couple of painted ladies, speckled wood, red admiral and a few commas - Tom Clarke.

1 o'clock, **Sewardstone Marsh, White-letter Hairstreak 1** out on Wych Elm - Andrew Middleton

Took my son to a cricket match at **Hertford** (Balls Park) on **Friday** evening. Spotted a Speckled Wood and two Large Skippers, the latter on some bramble flowers - Roger Newbold

Andrew Middleton's Painted Lady pupa has been added to life-cycle photos below

Fri 13th June - Hemel Hempstead, My **first Humming-bird Hawk-moth** of the year on Red Valerian and Sweet William. Painted Lady, Small Tortoiseshell and a Large White also seen - Malcolm Newland

Just like old times. During my weekly foray at **Kings Mead**, I counted no less than **30 (yes thirty) Small Tortoiseshells in 5 minutes** on the New River bank by White House Sluice. This must be the most I have seen in such a short time since I was a boy (more than 10 years ago !!). Further along the New River towards the flyover, a further 3 Small Tortoiseshells and a male Brimstone! (a little odd?) (*I had 1 in my garden today as well - LG*). Under the flyover, along a 200 metre stretch, I counted 26 Large Skipper, 1 Small Tortoiseshell and 4 Painted Lady resting on the vegetation. Also 4 Meadow Brown on Kings Mead itself. Earlier, in my garden (**Hertford**), 2 Painted Lady flying due west at 10 feet/second. The one on the left had the map - Alan Reynolds

News from **9 June, Rammey Marsh**, mid-morning: Cinnabar - Martin Shepherd

Andrew Middleton trapped a **Small Ranunculus** (a moth once considered extinct) on the night of **11th June** in **Ponders End**.

This is a message from Colin Plant. This spread away from the Thames is expected, and the Lea Valley could easily allow it to reach Herts. The green caterpillars feed on Prickly Lettuce and Great Lettuce (*Lactuca virosa* and *L. seriola*), sitting on the developing flower heads and being EXTREMELY camouflaged until you get your eye in. These are typical plants of derelict land, railway yards, etc. However, adults are on the wing NOW and they do come to light readily. EVERYONE SHOULD LOOK OUT FOR THIS IN HERTFORDSHIRE - we have not yet recorded this species in the county, so first one to find it gets the credit for adding a new macro to the county list. Look it up in the book so you know what to look for. It looks remarkably like an incorrectly coloured Broad-barred White (no surprise there - its the next species along in the checklist). If you catch one, please keep it (will be fine in a tube in the fridge) since someone will need to confirm the identity. If you telephone me, I may be able to come and look the same day

Ware garden this morning, 1 Small Tortoiseshell, 1 Red Admiral, 1 Large Skipper and later male Brimstone - Liz Goodyear

Thurs 12th June - Out for a quick break and rescued a freshly emerged Comma inflating its wings from the road, **Brentford** Middlesex - Chris Court

1 female and 1 male common Blue at different sites either side of **Ware Park Quarry** and one on the verge of northbound slip between the A10 and A602 in Ware. 8 meadow Browns near Ware Park Quarry. 3 Painted ladies in Ware Park and 3 **off Westmill Road, Ware** along with a Small Tortoiseshell - Andrew Wood

Brimsdown/King George V Res/Sewardstone - 12 small tortoiseshell, 4 painted lady - Andrew Middleton

Speckled Yellow moths frequent in **Broxbourne Woods**. Meadow Brown out this afternoon in **Danemead** (part of Brox woods.) - Nigel Agar

Wed 11th June - I thought I should share an interesting report of local butterfly abundance with you from Greg Herbert. Greg visited **Totternhoe Knolls & Quarry (Beds)** tonight and, between 6pm and 6.30pm and on the old chalk quarry face counted an amazing total of **814 Small Blue**. This site is known for its strong colony of "*cupido*", but this total is exceptional - news via Dave Chandler, Beds & Northants Branch

Bunkers Park, 5th June: Painted Lady 10, no particular direction of flight and **9th June: Painted Lady 2**, plus **Meadow Brown and Large Skipper** on the wing now - Dr. Paul Clack

The Painted Lady caterpillar has now pupated and the image will appear later - Andrew Middleton

Tues 10th June - Ponders End, large skipper - Andrew Middleton

Mon 9th June - Hemel Hempstead, got back from the allotment to find **4 painted ladies** at once all on red valerian. This is the greatest number that I have ever seen together since I started keeping records. Thought you might like to see the photo which my son David took with his digital camera - Malcolm Newland

At lunch time today I saw a painted lady in my **Ware** garden, and this afternoon a Red Admiral in **Widbury Hill** - Ian Edwards

Today, walking in the vicinity of **N.W.Bishop's Stortford**, **7 Small Tortoiseshells**, **3 Large Skipper**, 1 Common Blue, 4 Speckled Wood, 1 Brimstone, 1 Small Heath, 1 Painted Lady, **6 Red Admiral**, and **1 Cinnabar Moth**. Also in the **garden N.W.Bishop's Stortford**, 1 Small Tortoiseshell, 1 Painted Lady, and 1 Red Admiral, all were nectaring on a small Hebe - Jim Fish

Sun 8th June - A couple of Painted Lady sightings from this weekend: **Sat. 7th June: 1 Bentley Priory**, Middx - not obviously migrating. **Sun. 8th June: 1 Barnes WWT**, Surrey - flying east at high speed (wind assisted) - Andy Culshaw

Sat 7th June - Further to my recent notification of 164 Common Blues counted for Bunkers Park on 2 June, I have just been given CB figures which put mine in the shade. Dulcie & Tom Miller, co-walkers of the **Bunkers Park** transect, did a walk on the hot **Saturday, 31 May**, and counted over **400 Common Blues**. I find these numbers extraordinary in view of the very sharp drop in 2nd brood sightings I reported for August last year; have you any thoughts? Mike Pearson

Ramsey Marsh East: Meadow brown (13.30hrs), 30+ common blues, two red admirals on bramble flowers. Also, three painted ladies from this site nectaring on bramble flowers on **5 June**, 09.30hrs - - Martin Shepherd

Today, whilst on dragonfly Atlas duty, I saw 1 Painted Lady, 1 Orange Tip and 2 Red Admiral at **Cave Bridge**, 1 Red Admiral at **Southfields Farm**, 1 Painted Lady at **Broadfield Hall**, 1 Peacock, 1 Red Admiral and 2 Orange Tip at **Southern Green** - Alan Reynolds

Alexandra Palace news from **5th June** - 5 Painted Ladies, 1 Red Admiral, 1 Peacock, 1 Small White, 1 Holly Blue, 2 Commas and 11 Speckled Wood - Diane Andrews (news by phone)

Thu 5th June & Fri 6th June, single Painted Ladies seen both days in **Welwyn Garden City** - one flying down the road as I returned from lunch, and the other from my office window, apparently undeterred by the wind and rain - Ian Small

News from **Monday 2 June**, I recorded **164 Common Blues** on my **Bunkers Park** transect. This is by far the highest single visit total during June that I've recorded since the transect started in 1999. I also note that this is still in week 9; in previous years, June peak counts have been during weeks 10 or 11 - Mike Pearson

Thurs 5th June - 1 Painted Lady basking on the track at **Kings Mead** - Alan Reynolds

At **Balls Wood** today I saw my first **Large Skipper and Meadow Browns** of the year (one of each), also a Small Tortoiseshell which is never numerous in the Wood. There were also a couple of Painted Ladies and as ever plenty of Speckled Woods. Also saw a Small Tortoiseshell in **Ware Park Road** on the **3rd**. - Andrew Wood

Trent Park & Vicarage Farm, Enfield, **male Meadow Brown, 29 small heath, 7 small copper, 8 painted lady**, emperor species of dragonfly, smallish, bright blue base to otherwise brown abdomen, seen for c5 minutes - Robert Callf

I've just counted 4 Painted Ladies in our front garden, here in **Harrow**, feeding on Red Valerian. Margaret and I saw 5+ on yellow rape flowers in the **Hampden Valley**, Bucks on **Tuesday** - John Hollingdale

On my way to check the "Palace trap" (**central Middlesex**) this morning there were no fewer than **17 Painted Ladies** on a probable Buddleja alternifolia plant growing in the garden. Many were very faded but some were remarkably fresh - Martin Honey

Saw my first Painted Lady of the year in my **Ware garden** this morning at 8.45 - Liz Goodyear

Tues 3rd June - I forgot to mention that I saw a **Meadow Brown** on **Sunday** too. It was flying down the main path from the car park at **College Lake** - Allen Beechey

Mon 2nd June - **Hemel Hempstead** garden, saw four Painted Ladies today, two were heading northwards in a hurry, one stopped briefly before carrying on, while the fourth one decided to stay for the afternoon, nectaring on Chives, Delphinium, Knautia, Sweet Rocket and pink, white and red Valerian. No other species seen - Malcolm Newland

Brimsdown, Middx, **3 painted ladies, 1 buttoned snout** flew onto a bush and wrapped itself around a twig - Andrew Middleton

News from Robert Callf - **The Trent Park area**. First a correction the Large Skipper was seen on the 26th May and not 27th. Robert was thrilled to report that he has confirmed his sighting of **2 Brown Argus** at Trent Park today. The first one was seen by Robert and Robin White on Friday but he/they were able to get a positive id today. This is a new species for the site. Also seen today, 3 Common Blue, **10 Silver Y moths**, and 1 Small Copper. **2 Large Skipper** were seen by Robin White today. On **30th May** Robert saw **9 Small Copper and 40 Small Heath** in less than one hour

Harold Court, Essex, **15 painted ladies, first meadow brown** - Colin Jupp

Today I saw **2 Painted Lady** in the MBDA car park at **Stevenage** and another at **Kings Mead** - Alan Reynolds

Today Mon, **2 Painted Lady's** in my garden **N.W.Bishop's Stortford** nectaring on Valerian and basking on Gravel. Possibly another migration coming up with the storm last night ? - Jim Fish

I went out on **Sunday** to **College Lake nr. Tring**, to look for, ...well anything small and airborne! Although the weather was brewing up for a storm I managed to see quite a bit. In total I saw **14 Small Blue** (see pictures), 30+ Common Blues, 1 Painted Lady, 1 Brimstone, 1 Female Orange Tip that failed to land thereby robbing me of the chance to complete Liz's photo challenge, 1 Speckled Wood and finally 1 male Chalkhill Blue. I am 105% certain of this last sighting as a) it landed on my foot! (almost!) and b) it was considerably larger than any of the Common Blues that

it was fly with. One of the reserve wardens had also seen one earlier in the week. Oh and still no Green Hairstreaks by the way!! :- (- Allen Beechey

North Harrow, Colin Plant has just informed me that the odd moth I sent to him on Sunday was an **Orange Footman**. This is a rare visitor to Middlesex. It turned up in my garden trap on Saturday night, **May 31st** - John Hollingdale

Sun 1st June - Hertford, it's all a bit worrying. After the early spots of rain, I started some gardening at 11.00am and carried on, with lunch in the garden, until 4.00pm when rain stopped play. In all that time, on a sometimes sunny and warm (24 degs C) day, I did not see a single butterfly. However, thanks to the photographs on the website, I was able to identify a **Burnet Companion** which settled on the grass - Alan Reynolds

East Warwick Res: Painted Lady - 1, **Lockwood Res:** Painted Lady - 5+. **31 May, Tottenham Marshes, Clouded Yellow** - David G Darrell-Lambert

May 2003

Sat 31st May - After 5 hours carrying out dragonfly Atlas work on a hot and sunny day in **TL33**, all I managed to see were 1 Large White at **Mardleybury Manor**, 1 Small White at **Gannock Green**, 1 Common Blue and 2 Orange Tip at Roe Green, 1 Red Admiral, 1 Peacock, 2 Orange Tip and 1 Large White at **Lyle End Farm** and 1 Orange Tip at **Hyde Hill Farm**. Fortunately, dragonflies were rather more numerous - Alan Reynolds

Sewardstone area: **1,260 common blues** between 15.45 and 18.00. Also two small coppers and painted lady - Martin Shepherd

I went over to **Ivinghoe Beacon** (UpperThames Branch NT site in North Bucks) today [May 31st] to see if the butterfly collectors were still around and am very pleased to report that none were seen. However, I did meet a lovely couple from BC's Suffolk Branch who were photographing Duke of Burgundy butterflies. We saw a freshly emerged male and, very pleasing, an egg-laying female. However, even more surprising was a very very early male **Dark Green Fritillary**. It's the first time I've ever seen Dukes & DG Frits on the same day on the same site. I also saw Green Hairstreak, Brown Argus, Common Blue, Brimstone, Small Heath & Large White - Dave Chandler

Ickleford: 2 Small Copper, 25 Common Blue, 1 Orange-tip, 2 Burnet Companion, 3 *Sitochroa verticalis* (pyralid). **Hexton Chalk Pit:** 1 Painted Lady, **2 Dingy Skipper**, 1 Silver-Y, 4 Common Blue, 1 Brimstone in a brief visit (me, not the Brimstone), **Pegsdon:** 1 Painted Lady, 6 Small Heath and over just the border nearby 1 Green Hairstreak, 1 Mother Shipton, 1 Dingy Skipper. Over the border at **Sharpenhoe:** **8 Small Blue (plus 3 eggs)**, 1 Painted Lady, 1 Green Hairstreak, 2 Dingy Skipper, 22 Small Heath, 1 Mother Shipton, quite a few Common Blue - Andrew Palmer

Wed 28th May - I went up to **Tring Park** this evening to look for Grizzled Skipper and Green Hairstreak. Missed out on the Hairstreaks again but did find one very photogenic **Grizzled Skipper** along with **3 Dingy Skipper**, 5 Common Blues and 1 Large White. I did also find three Red Admiral Caterpillars up at the top of the site and several 5 spot Burnet moth caterpillars pupating on grass stems. I also saw a interesting green moth that I couldn't identify. Any ideas? (*It's a Green Carpet, see below*) - Allen Beechey

Frogmore Quarry: In good sunshine only one **Grizzled Skipper** seen after one hour search. Also seen **Common Blue 10, Brown Argus 1**, Small White 1, Orange Tip 1. **26th May, Wheathampstead Education Centre:** **Common Blue 8**, Large White 1, Orange Tip 3 (one feeding from Ragged Robin). Day flying moths Burnet Companion 4, **Cinnabar 1** and a Burnet caterpillar - Trevor Chapman

Tues 27th May - News via Robert Callf, **Trent Park** area **1 Large Skipper** seen by Robin White (*now confirmed as being seen on the 26th May*)

'Quote of the week' from Alan Reynolds - "Anything about Alison?" " Not really, apart from the Green Hairstreaks in my garden." Alison Jones, Holme Norfolk WT, 26th May 2003

Mon 26th May - Ivinghoe, 4 Duke of Burgundy, 1 Brimstone, 2 Common Blue, 2 Brown Argus, Burnet Companion and Mother Shipton moths but no sign of Green Hairstreak. Nearly forgot, lots of Small Heath - Malcolm Newland

Tingley Wood (Highdown), nice to find at least one **Green Hairstreak** in it's traditional spot on the slope - Stuart Pittman

Sun 25th May - Wheathampstead Education Centre: Common Blue 4, Orange Tip 2 - Trevor Chapman

Sewardstone area - 200+ common blues in an hour, also one or two orange tip, large white, peacock and small tortoiseshell. Found brimstone larvae on alder buckthorn and 'my' painted lady (*see image below*) caterpillar is feasting back home on its thistle. Hatched after a week and is now about 6mm long a week later - Andrew Middleton

Sat 24th May - Barton-le-clay: Green Hairstreak 1, Brimstone 4, Dingy Skipper 1, Common Blue 2, Brown Argus 1, Small Heath 3, Large White 1, Orange Tip 2, Common Heath moths 5. **Sharpenhoe Clappers:** Dingy Skipper 2, Common Blue 5, Small Heath 6, Peacock 4, Brimstone 5, Orange Tip 2, Painted Lady 2, Holly Blue 1, plus one probable female Common Heath moth - Trevor Chapman

Ickleford, nice to see a pristine **Brown Argus** at the site today always scarce hereabouts - Stuart Pittman

Fri 23rd May - As a result of perfectly timing my free time and holidays with the worst of British weather, I haven't had the chance to visit any local butterfly sites until recently. Today, though I managed to pay a visit to Aldbury Nowers and a little known site called the Aston Clinton Rag Pits (in Bucks). In the short periods of sunshine I managed to see; **Aldbury Nowers:- 2 Male and 1 female Common Blues** (see pictures), **3 Brown Argus** (one sat still for long enough to have its photo taken!), a Small Heath, 1 Brimstone & 1 Large White. All were seen on the isolated area of grassland in Turlhanger Wood. However, I singularly failed to see my target species; Green Hairstreak and Grizzled Skipper. **Aston Clinton Rag**

Pits:- Just over the border in the badlands of Bucks, this is a cracking little site which as far as I know is relatively unknown to Butterfly recorders. In a brief sunny interlude 8 male and 2 female Common Blues appeared along with 2 Dingy Skippers. The female Common Blues at this site seem to possess a wide variety in wing pattern between individuals (see pictures) - Allen Beechey

Thurs 22nd May - In the recent fine spell before the rains came I visited 35 Tetrads in under-recorded areas of Herts. and recorded Orange Tips in 30 Tetrads, Peacock in 16, Small White in 11, Green Veined White in 9, Brimstone & Small Tortoiseshell in 8, Large White in 7, Holly Blue in 5, Red Admiral in 2, & Comma in 1. Most were singles and there were rarely more than 3 of any species at any site. Many of the sites are roadside verges with Garlic Mustard. I have records of most of these sites from 1985 & 1986 when recording for Brian Sawford's book and I remember seeing swarms of Orange Tips on many of these roadside verges then, but unfortunately we did not record numbers. The very thin scattering of butterflies now was noticeable - Charles Smith

A nice surprise to see a Painted Lady on **Rothamsted Farm** on May 21st. It didn't seem to be going anywhere - Michael Healy

Wed 21st May - Trent Park area, Silver Y, 5 burnet companion moths, several mother shiptons, **7 small copper, 11 small heath**, speckled wood, small yellow underwing. **9 common blues** on old golf course, painted lady - Robert Callf, also Robin White

Cheshunt Park area, over approx 2 hours period came across 1 Mother Shipton, 2 Burnet Companion, 9 Small Yellow Underwing moths, 4 Small Copper, 2 Small Heath, 1 Peacock and 6 Common Blue including a female - Liz Goodyear and Andrew Middleton

Grizzled Skipper at **Bunkers Park, Hemel Hempstead**. On **Thursday 15 May**, at about 15h30, I had just completed an uneventful transect walk and was putting off a few spare minutes walking through the meadow which is bounded by sections 1-3 of the transect route. I saw this small brown butterfly/moth flying very close to the ground through the longer grasses. It settled quite near me on a grass stem and I was able to approach within a couple of feet (I could even have touched it) before it flew off. It was obviously a butterfly, not a moth; at rest it held its wings in a "V" position and gently opened and closed them. The underside of the wings was a mottled pale brown; the upper side, which I could not see all of, appeared to be dark chocolate brown (not black) with vividly contrasting white spots; the description "chequered" pattern seemed entirely appropriate. A confirmatory sighting of a single Grizzled Skipper was made in the same area on the following **Saturday, the 17th**, by Dulcie & Tom Miller, who also walk my transect - Michael Pearson

Orange Tips at **Amwell Pit** including a female egg -laying on Wild Turnip (16th May) - Nigel Agar

Sun 18th May - Pegsdon Hills Rather disturbingly - no GHs on their master hedge on the **15th**. Perfect day in high season. Possibly heavy rain squalls had wiped out the individuals seen on the 4 - 5 May. Also an assiduous party of Long tailed Tits were working the site! **Brown Argus** on **Telegraph Hill** - Nigel Agar

Fri 16th May - There were **Painted Ladies** on **Thursday 15th May** at **Shenleybury and Radlett** - Colin Everett

Here's yesterday's sightings in the **Bishops Stortford area**, 1 Holly Blue (Kent Crescent), 1, Brimstone (Cambridge Road) and a white species in West Road - Nick Sampford

Thurs 15th May - Broxbourne Wood NR - 2 speckled woods nectaring on garlic mustard, **c10 speckled yellows**, **2 mother shiptons**, orange tip, large white, couldn't find any grizzled skippers - Andrew Middleton

Finally last week saw 5 Speckled woods in **Darlands NR** on **Tuesday 7th** at between 1/1.30pm - Frank Johnson

Had three butterflies yesterday and here goes: Male orange tip **Sandon**, Painted Lady at **Ashwell** and Green-veined White at **Buntingford** - Nick Sampford

MIGRANT BUTTERFLIES - There have been reports of Painted Lady and other migrant species over the weekend, so as usual, when you see a migrant species, record the direction of flight as exactly as possible. If several keep appearing, switch to the stopwatch function on your wristwatch (if you have one) and time the flight over two identifiable boundaries, such as the two sides of a garden, which can then be used to get the flight speed. Other information such as wind direction, wind speed (Beaufort scale - see transect instructions on the website) and weather conditions are also useful.

TRANSECT WALKERS NEEDED - Denis Shepperson will be unable to walk The Warren and Colney Heath transects next year. These were among the first transects to be established in Hertfordshire - in 1991 and 1992 respectively, and are thus important when measuring long-term trends in species abundance. If you can help, either by taking over, or just standing in to walk the transect now and then, please let me know. The transects are both near Smallford, which is close enough to Hatfield, St Albans, Welwyn or Potters Bar -John Murray

Wed 14th May - Just a single butterfly species to report from urban Middlesex **a male Common Blue** was seen in **The Natural History Museum Wildlife Garden** yesterday (**13/5/03**) and, despite last night's heavy rain, it was still there **this morning at 7am** - tightly hugging a flower stalk - Martin Honey

Mon 12th May - I saw a painted lady on **5/5/03** adjacent to **Aldbury Nowers**, and **two Green Hairstreaks** on **9/5/03** along with another **grizzled skipper** in a different part of the site than before. Several possible dingy skippers but I remain to be convinced they are not moths - Martin Hicks

Sat 10th May - Horsenden Hill Butterfly News; Small Copper (3), Common Blue (3), Orange Tip (4), Large White (1), Green-veined White (2), Peacock (1), unidentified White (Small/G-veined)(2) - Andy Culshaw

Had my first red admiral of the year - it was at **Sewardstone Marsh**, Essex, on **9 May** at 10.15hrs, flying north before settling some distance away - Martin Shepherd

Fri 9th May -Trent Park area 29 small heath, 10 small coppers 1 red admiral, **3 painted ladies**, Also holly blue, 3 small tortoiseshell. - R Callf

Small Heath (2) Common Blue (1) Mother Shipton (3) - lunchtime today on site at work in **Stevenage** - Trevor Chapman

A day off work allowed me to walk the **Highdown** transect,a lovely **Wall** at the top of the Lane and a bonus Painted lady flying. No green Hairstreaks yet though at Tingley wood slope, it is very scrubbed up there now - Stuart Pittman

Thurs 8th May - Searched for Green Hairstreaks and Dukes at **Ivinghoe Beacon yesterday**. Perfect weather but no sightings. Did not check Bison Hill - Nigel Agar

One (probably more but only saw one at a time) at **Marsworth reservoir** in the reed bed on **Sunday**. Also present speckled wood, green veined white - Ian Burrus

Yesterday, Wednesday, on a walk between **Wickham Hall and Bourne Brook** nr Bishop's Stortford, 1 Painted Lady, 1 Small Tortoiseshell (Egg Laying), 1 Brimstone, 5 Orange Tips and 2 Small Whites - Jim Fish (*sorry Jim missed this one, if anyone sent in anything and it's not up - please shout!*)

Wed 7th May - Trent Park area, Vicarage Farm 6 painted ladies. Trent Park 'new fields' - 20 small heath, 4 small copper. Also red admiral, brimstone and c 5 small tortoiseshell - Robert Callf

Yardley Hill, Epping Forest 1 painted lady - Andrew Middleton. Also visited **Waterford Heath/Rickneys** area today, a controlled field walk near railway line in **North Pit**, lasting about an hour produced **10 Grizzled Skipper with 2 more** right up in the north end. **Rickneys**, 1 Small Copper, "**several**" **Painted Ladies**, 1 Red Admiral, Peacocks, whites, Orange Tips (male + female), Brimstones, 2 Holly Blue, 2 Small Tortoiseshell, and the following moths - **several Small Yellow Underwing, 1 Latticed Heath, Burnet Companion and Mother Shipton** - Andrew Middleton and Liz Goodyear

Spent 2 hours up at Waterford (south pit) today and saw **9+ grizzled skippers, 2 small coppers, 20+ orange tips**, 3 brimstone, 2 large white, 10+ peacocks, 1 small tortoiseshell, 10 whites (either green veined or small) - Nick Sampford

Hemel Hempstead garden, first male Brimstone seen since 4th April stopped to nectar on Honesty flowers. My first **Red Admiral** of the season paused briefly before continuing its northward progress. Many Orange -Tips seen with an increasing number of females, also Small and Green-Veined Whites. Forget-Me-Nots equalling Honesty in popularity - Malcolm Newland

Frogmore Quarry nr Stevenage lunchtime today 7/5/03. **Small Copper (1)**, Green Veined White (1), Small White (3), Speckled Wood (1), Peacock (1) and **Common Blue (4)**. Then what I was looking for.....**Grizzled Skippers grand total of 16**. Oh, and 3 burnt-out cars - Trevor Chapman

Three Green Hairstreaks yesterday at the usual master hedge site on the **Pegsdon Hills**. Not easy to see as the hawthorn there is only just coming out and that is where they were nectaring. They seem to take no notice of the Wayfaring Tree which has been out some time. **Dingy Skipper** also present on old chalk pit and **Small Heath** on new grassland. **Unfortunately all the sightings were on the Beds side of the border**. I think we must think of **Telegraph/Pegsdon** as one site. Orange Tip also and Holly Blue reported - Nigel Agar

A very good start to the season, significant rise in brimstone sightings - (from nil). I seem to be finding them all over the place. Also early holly blues + painted ladies flying north (at speed) yesterday, both on the **North Enfield Transect** and in **St. Albans** (whilst playing cricket) - Phil MacMurdie

Tues 6th May - One **Painted Lady** on the **Meads near Sacred Heart school at Ware** about 17:00 today - Andrew Wood

Bedfords Park, (Essex) 10 species of butterfly inc **red admiral**, holly blue, small tortoiseshell, small copper - C Jupp

Trent Park/Vic Farm total 12 species of butterfly inc **4 small coppers, 15 small heaths, 20 speckled woods, painted lady** (Trent and one Vic farm) - Robert Callf & Robin White

Benington Monday pm, farmland: **2 Painted Ladies** along with more usual of which Small Tortoiseshell most numerous - P. Smith

Hemel Hempstead garden, had my first **Painted Lady** this year, 9.30a.m. which stopped to nectar on Viburnum Carlecephalum before continuing its flight northwards. At lunchtime had four Orange Tips in view at once including a pair mating on a Garlic Mustard plant (good choice!). Plenty of Holly Blues on warmer days plus a few whites - Malcolm Newland

3 Painted Ladies seen today all in the vicinity of **Bishop's Stortford** - Jim Fish

Ware Old Lea - This morning I saw one male Orange Tip, noticeably smaller than others I have seen in this area - Ian Edwards

I had **two Painted Ladies** yesterday **5th May: Perivale Wood**, Middlesex - the insect was stationary (it was early and quite cool!) although was doing some sunning. **Broadwater Gravel Pit**, Middlesex). This one was on nettles at the side of the River Colne but then flew out of sight (heading west and gaining altitude over trees) very rapidly - Andy Culshaw

Mon 5th May - Trent Park area, 3 Small Heath, 2 Small Copper. 2 Painted Ladies one Trent Park Church wood area, one Vicarage Farm - Robert Callf, also Robert reports that John Whiteman saw a **Small Heath** at Trent Park on **Sunday**

Saw a **Painted Lady** and **Red Admiral** spiralling together today on **Patmore Heath** - Gavin Vicary

Brimsdown (Mossops Creek) 3 Orange Tips - Helen Bantock

Nice views of **Painted Lady** today at **Tyttenhanger**. Definite near A414 entrance to Fishing club. Then another probable in a rape field between **Tyttenhanger Farm and Colney Heath** - Rupert Pyrah

On a lovely sunny day, if a bit windy, **(May 4)** I saw 4 large whites, 3 small whites, 3 orange tips (2 male, 1 female) 10 peacocks and 8 small tortoiseshells. This was on my usual walk along a farm footpath in **Maple Cross**. I also spotted 3 groups of caterpillars on nettles, quite small still, but almost certainly tortoiseshells not peacocks. I will keep an eye on their progress! - Ann Piper

Red Admiral, 1; Whitehall Bishops Stortford, Painted Lady 2 Near Bishop's Stortford - Looks as if you were right, migrants have come in in the last two days - Jim Fish

Wall Brown sunning in pathway leading to flood channel South end of **William Girling Reservoir** (just Middx!) - Tony Clancy (*Tony has told Andrew Middleton many times that Wall was fairly common around south end of WG Res not so long ago {in early 1990s}*)

Sun 4th May - Along the bank of the River Stort **N.W. Bishop's Stortford** today **two Red Admirals**, and numerous Orange Tips all Male - Jim Fish

At **Kings Mead** today, on a very warm and sunny but windy day, I managed to see 1 Brimstone, 20 White sp, 1 Small White, 1 Large White, 7 Orange Tip, 1 Blue sp (presumably Holly), 1 Small Tortoiseshell and 1 Peacock - Alan Reynolds

Out a bit today and saw the following: Bengoe St, **Hertford** Holly Blue 1; **Sacombe Rd Bengoe** Holly Blue 1, Orange Tip 1; **Waterford Heath South Pit Grizzled Skipper 1**, Speckled Wood 1; **Waterford Heath North Pit** Large White 1, Brimstone 1, Orange Tip 1, Green-veined White 1, **Ware Lock** Orange Tip 2 Peacock 2; **Mead Lane Hertford** Orange Tip 1; **Meads near end of Mead lane Hertford Red Admiral 1**; **Ware Park Red Admiral 1**, Peacock 1, Green-veined White 1, Waterford Heath South Pit Peacock 1 - Andrew Wood

Nomansland Common near Wheathampsted - 1 Small Copper - Robert Callf

Fri 2nd May - Had a **Wall Brown** at **Rainham Marshes** on **Wednesday** - Howard Vaughan

I saw an Orange Tip while I was working in my mother's garden (Violet Chandler) in **King's Langley** on Wednesday afternoon (**30th April**) - Dave Chandler

Thurs 1st May - Bishops Stortford, my first Speckled Wood of the year in my garden this morning, choosing the compost heap / wood pile to enjoy a brief spell of sunshine - Andrew Hardacre

Ware garden, a strange event this year - a butterfly - 1 Comma at lunchtime - Liz Goodyear

April 2003

Wed 30th April - 2 Orange Tips today at **Great Hormead** one of each sex - Nick Sampford

Tues 29th April - Ware Old lea Two male Orange Tips this morning - Ian Edwards.

Green Hairstreaks active on the **Pegsdon Hills** this afternoon. None seen at Telegraph Hill or Hoo Bit on the Herts side but the weather was not ideal and I don't know where there is a 'master bush' in this area - unless of course there is just the one that we know about on the Beds side where all the males congregate - Nigel Agar

Trent Park area, 4 Orange Tip - Robert Callf

Mon 28th April - Aldbury Nowers transect (**27th**), thought you might be interested to know that I recorded at least one confirmed **grizzled skipper** on the very last stretch, which I was quite pleased with. I have never seen one before, but clear ID - it was on my finger at one point - Martin Hicks

Sat 26th April - I am still walking over Darlands Nature Reserve, but as yet nothing to report, seen a few butterflies on way over. On Tuesday **22 April** I was in **Mill Hill** and saw two Orange Tips around ten past one - Frank Johnson

Wed 23rd April - Essex, Noak Hill area various sites, **30+ orange tips** inc. 9 males and a female around lady's smock in sheltered spot by farm. 2 brimstone, 8 green-veined.whites, **12 speckled woods**, several peacocks, only single small tortoiseshell, comma and holly blue - Colin Jupp

Rickneys Quarry area, 1 Small Copper - Andrew Middleton and C. Shepperson

Just back from **Waterford Heath, 2 Grizzled Skipper** on north pit near railway line (one was malformed!), left Andrew Middleton and C. Shepperson looking for more although South pit on Sacombe Road side had earlier drawn a blank - Liz Goodyear

Whilst searching the surrounding countryside for JM's elusive Orange-tips, I saw an early **Small Copper** on a site alongside Oxhey Lane near **Watford**. Incidentally I evicted the fourth *Aphomia sociella* (Bee Moth) from our front room this morning. Must be a bee-nest under the floorboards - John Hollingdale

Saw the first **Grizzled Skipper** on the **Waterford North** transect yesterday - Richard Bigg

Tues 22nd April - I'm back at work now and I'm buzzing around the countryside, seen today. **Orange Tips** seen at **Thundridge** [1 m], **Braughing** [2m], 5 between **Braughing and Furneux Pelham** [4m 1f], **Ware** [1 m], **Tonwell** [1 m], **Sacombe park** [2m 1f]. **Bennington** [2 m]. Green-veined white and holly blue at Park Road, **Ware**. 2 small white together at **Furneux Pelham** - Nick Sampford

I saw my first Holly Blue of the year today at lunch time. It was flying round a hawthorn in the car park at the **University of Hertfordshire**. Denis saw his first Holly Blue of the season on his transect at **Smallford Lake** in TL10Y, together with his **first Small Coppers (2)** - C. Shepperson

Mon 21st April - **c20 larvae of white-letter hairstreak** on just the lower seeds and bursting leaves of a roadside elm between the King George and William Girling Reservoirs (**Ponders End**) - Andrew Middleton

Over a period of 2 hours at **Kings Mead** today, I saw 3 Small Tortoiseshell, 2 White sp, 1 Small White, 4 Orange Tip and 1 Peacock - Alan Reynolds

Denis and I took advantage of the warm weather on **Good Friday** to explore parts of East Herts for butterflies. We visited some well known sites as well as some more off the beaten track. Here are the results, some of the Brimstone or Orange Tip records from the NE of the County might fill in a tetrad or two. **Bencroft Wood** (TL3206) - one each of Peacock, Small White, Gv White, Speckled Wood, with lots of Lily of the Valley on the banks of the pond (not yet in flower) and a lot of flowering Oxalis.

Broxbourne Woods - (TL3206) - One Speckled Wood, 2 Peacocks, 2 male Orange Tips, lots of fragile Wood anemones in flower and a Grass snake a good 18" long swimming in the pond.

Much Hadham - (TL4216), a male and female Orange Tip on a lovely stand of Cuckoo Flower on the roadside verge just north of Hadham Mill. **Hadham Mill** - (TL4216) - 4 Orange Tips, 2 GV Whites, 1 Peacock and 2 male Brimstone's. **Hadham Hall** - (TL4422) - Only a Brimstone and 2 Comma's despite bright sunshine and a nice sheltered area of flowery scrubland, which ought to have attracted something! Despite Jack by the Hedge being in evidence along 'The Causeway' nearby, there were no Orange Tips

At **Patmore Heath**, (TL4424), where sheep were grazing peacefully behind an electric fence on part of the site, we only saw a **single Large White** fly swiftly by - no other butterflies although the sun was blazing down. As we drove further north we saw a few butterflies 'en passant' all in, or around, **Stocking Pelham**. At **(TL4226)** we saw a single male Brimstone and at **(TL4428)** two male Orange Tips - C & D Shepperson

Sun 20th April - **Horsenden Hill** butterfly news, **Friday (18th)** a good butterfly walk in the sunny conditions, with 5 Orange Tips, a Brimstone, 2 Holly Blue, and multiple Peacock, Small Tortoiseshell, Comma, Speckled Wood, a Green-veined White, and **a Large White**. Bluebells are almost at their peak in Perivale Wood if anyone fancies a look - Andy Culshaw

Sat 19th April - **First Dukes and Grizzled Skippers seen in the Upper Thames region** - news from Tom Dunbar UTB webmaster. I saw first Dukes of Burgundy in Bucks yesterday. April 18th. Sharpenhoe - The first Green Hairstreak of the season was seen pumping up its wings on a Hawthorn bush. David & Peter Chandler.

12 April - **Whomerley Wood, Stevenage**. 2 Speckled Wood **18 April** - **Whomerley Wood, Stevenage**. 1 Orange Tip together with 10 Speckled Wood - Peter Clarke

Essex news, Harold Court - Tylers Common, Butterfly totals for day various places **1 large white**, 6+ small white, 3 green-veined white, 8 orange tips, 3 holly blue, 3 small tortoiseshell, c20 peacock, 5+ comma, 10+ speckled woods, Colin Jupp

Essex news, Fairlop 2 orange tips, **Hainault**, brimstone, 2 orange tips. - **Sewardstone**, total 8 species of butterfly including **Large White** (missed out on small white and small tort) - sightings by Alan Bell

Fri 18th April - Don't forget the 2003 SPRING CHALLENGE - The 2000-2002 Herts & Middx distribution map for Orange Tip is now online. Please look at it and try and visit as many of the empty tetrads NEAR YOU as possible during the next few weeks. Please email John Murray if you would like more information - Liz Goodyear

>Reported on the UKleps, Grizzled Skipper seen in Cambridgeshire today

Aston End, 4 Brimstones (3m 1f) **3 Orange Tip** (2male **1 female**), 1 Green-veined white, 1 Small White, **Thundridge**, 2 Brimstone (m & f) and Small White and Brimstones at **Tonwell** (2 male) and **Watton at stone by pass** (m & f) - Nick Sampford

Thurs 17th April - Bennington - 1 Orange Tip, **Dane End**, 1 Orange Tip and Brimstone - Nick Sampford

A brisk 20 minute walk in **Broxbourne Woods** resulted in; one Holly Blue, one Speckled Wood, two Peacocks, one Orange Tip and an unidentified white - Roger Newbold

Visited one of John's empty tetrads **on 15th. (TL3416 - off B158 between Wadesmill and Tonwell)** saw no Orange tips but did see the following, Peacock 4, Brimstone 1, S/Green-Vein White 2, Speckled Wood 1, Comma 1, and best of all two Small Tortoiseshells. Is this a sign of their return? - Richard Bigg

Wed 16th April, Lots of butterfly news from Nick Sampford. **16th April, Bennington:** 4 Brimstone (3 male 1 female), 2 whites, Green-veined White. **Ware:** 1 male Brimstone, **Cold Christmas:** 1 male Brimstone, 1 white, 1 male Orange Tip. **A10 by Hanbury Manor:** 1 male Brimstone, 1 male Orange Tip. **Much Hadham:** 1 male Brimstone, 1 male Orange Tip. **Thundridge:** 1 male Brimstone, 2 whites. **15th April, Bennington** 2 Brimstone, m & f, 3 whites, Holly Blue. **Tonwell:** 2 Brimstone male, **Thundridge:** 1 male Brimstone, Ware: 1 female Brimstone, white (poss female Orange Tip), Small Tortoiseshell, **A10 by Hanbury Manor:** 1 male Brimstone, **Dane End:** male Brimstone. **Aston:** 1 white

2 PM today, I saw my first Small White, it was flying through **Finsbury Circus, London** - Dave Chandler

KGV Reservoir area 4 Small tortoiseshells, peacock, male brimstone - Robert Callf.

Trent Park area, 2 brimstones Robin White

Yates/Yardley Hill, 8 speckled woods, holly blue, brimstone, 4 peacock, comma, green-veined and small whites - Andrew Middleton

On **Saturday 12th and Sunday 13th April** I went to the **St. Albans Watercress Beds LNR** and saw the following: Comma x 2, **Red Admiral x 1**, **Small tortoiseshell x 3**, at least 4 x Peacock, Small white x 1, Brimstone x 2 and 1 x Orange tip butterfly - Chris Bowden

Ware - Week 3 of the Transect season, and I have just seen my first butterfly, a Brimstone! An awful start to the year - Liz Goodyear

Sun 13th April - Fishers Green, Essex: **Orange tip**, mid-afternoon, just north of car park on track up to sailing club. Also **Speckled Wood** near **Holyfield Weir** - Martin Shepherd

Trueloves, Epping Forest, Male Brimstone and 3 Peacocks - Helen Bantock

Three butterflies seen in **Vi Chandler's garden in King's Langley** on **Saturday 12th April**: A Peacock, a Comma and a freshly emerged male **Holly Blue** who posed, wings slightly open, on the gooseberry bushes in the warm sunshine - David Chandler

Several sightings of **Holly Blue** in **Ponders End** garden - Andrew Middleton

During 3 hours of recce work in TL33 for the Dragonfly Atlas yesterday (**12th April**) on a beautiful day, all I saw was a Peacock at **Southern Green** and a long distance high speed white. And **today**, during 4 hours of gardening in **Horns Mill, Hertford** on a sunny and warm but windy day, I did not see a single butterfly - Alan Reynolds

Sat 12th April - After looking at your distribution map for **Orange Tips** for 2000-02 we went to **Lemsford Mill in TL21B** and saw **two males** together with 4 Peacocks and a Comma just over the River amongst scrub and brambles at the start of the footpath across Bocket Park. So that's one less tetrad to cover! D & C Shepperson

Just a record of a Brimstone in my **Tewin** garden, early afternoon - Les Borg

Tue 8th April, Speckled Wood at **Weald Park**, Essex - Colin Jupp

Mon 7th April, Small Tortoiseshell at **Brimsdown**, Enfield - Andrew Middleton.

Sat 5th April - Sewardstone Marsh, Essex: Had a productive couple of hours this afternoon, 13.15-15.15, in warm, sunny conditions with a slight northerly breeze. Saw **14 peacocks, 13 commas, 11 small whites, four brimstones, two holly blues, two small tortoiseshells, and a speckled wood** - Martin Shepherd

Ware, Widbury Hill two Brimstones, one in the morning along the river. One in the afternoon by the allotments. Also one Peacock. Ian Edwards

Sighted **Waterford**;- Brimstone, Peacock and Comma - Richard Bigg

Holcroft Springs is a woodland area between Harpenden and Kimpton where I do a transect. It is currently a sea of Wood Anemone and I was delighted today to see a **Speckled Wood** nectaring on one of the flowers - Michael Healy

Trent Park area - Small tortoiseshell, **Green-veined white** & peacock - Robert Callf

Sewardstone Marsh, 2 speckled wood - Andrew Middleton, Helen Bantock, Tony Clancy

Orange tip in **Ponders End** garden - Andrew Middleton

Nothing in my Ware garden - Liz Goodyear!

Fri 4th April - Speckled Wood at **Garston** near Watford today - Colin Everett

While at work today released small tortoiseshell from shed and saw my first **speckled wood** of year, both **Kings Langley**. Released 2 peacocks from another shed and saw an **orange tip** in **Abbots Langley**, all today - Clive Burrows

1 Small White south end **W. Girling Reservoir** this afternoon. Tony Clancy

Trent Park area, total 6 Peacock & 4 Comma - Robert Callf

Essex news, Rochetts Farm 3 small whites, small tortoiseshell. **Noak Hill** 4 peacock, comma. **Priors GC** 3 small white, 4 peacock - Colin Jupp

North Harrow, a **Speckled Wood** turned up in the garden just now. First sighting for me - John Hollingdale

At **Kings Mead** today, on a sunny day with a cool breeze, 1 Comma, 1 Small Tortoiseshell, 1 Peacock and 2 male Brimstone - Alan Reynolds and C.Shepperson

Fishers Green, Essex: small white at 12.22 between Bittern Watchpoint car-park and the left turn to Hayes Hill Farm - Martin Shepherd

Todays sightings from Nick Sampford, Brimstone (2 males together) and a Peacock at **Thundridge**, and a female Brimstone **Hanbury Manor** (by A10).

Thurs 3rd April - On April 1st, UK-Leps reported that 2 Green Hairstreak were seen at Eldwick (VC64) on 30th March. Nigel Agar (Species Co-ordinator) asks "All members please look out for them"

March 2003

Just a reminder that in the butterfly world, April 1st has another significance: the start of the transect season. If you need recording sheets or transect instructions, these are downloadable from the website at [HERE](#) - It's perfect weather for it at the moment - I hope that doesn't mean rain tomorrow **Remember that this year, each week starts on a Tuesday**. If you are planning to start a transect, please read through the transect instructions (on the website) thoroughly before doing so. And if you live near Highdown (north Hertfordshire), Therfield Heath (near Royston), or the St Albans area, we do need someone to help with important transects there. Similarly, if you would like to help with a transect but cannot commit yourself to doing it every week, please let me know as there are plenty of transects near you that need the odd week filling in during holidays etc. Best of luck for a sunny, butterfly-friendly summer - John Murray

Mon 31st March - On walk around footpath near farmland in **Maple Cross** on last day of March saw a small white, 2 commas, **5 peacocks** and **over 20 small tortoiseshells** many flying in pairs or even threes! - Ann Piper

Ware area, my attempt to see 10 species in March failed but I did reach eight with a **Green-veined White** in The Hyde, Ware and best of all a **male Orange Tip** feeding on aubrieta in the garden of a flat in Broadmeads, Ware. I also saw Brimstone, Peacock, Comma and Small Tortoiseshell in various parts of Ware this lunchtime - Andrew Wood

Some recent sightings from Nick Sampford - **Today**, 2 small whites (**Ware & Thundridge**), **female brimstone (Bishops Stortford)**, **Holly Blue (Wadesmill)**. **Sunday 30th**, 1 small white (**Thundridge**), 1 Brimstone (**Rib valley**)

Trent Park, 2 Small Tortoiseshells - R Callf

Bernard Page wrote "After helping at the Disabled Garden with the Wednesday Club, I walked round the garden at **Capel Manor, Enfield** and was lucky to see feeding in full sunshine on aubrieta and magnolia, 2 Comma and 2 Peacock butterflies on **27th March** at 1.30pm"

Sun 30th March - Walthamstow Marshes, Peacock; 2 Small Tortoiseshells. chasing; Small White - Jeremy Gaskell

1 Speckled Wood Coppetts Wood today -Tony Clancy

Holly Blue of my own at home here in **Tring** today. Usual other hibernators as well (i.e. not Red Admiral) Nick Bowles

Brimsdawn, 2 Small White, Peacock. **Essex - Long Running** 2 Peacock. **Sewardstone Marsh** 2 Brimstone, c5 Peacock, 5 Comma, 2 Small White, 2 Small Tortoiseshell, 1 **Speckled Wood**. Tristan & Helen Bantock, Andrew Middleton

North Harrow - saw a **Holly Blue** in the garden today, but no sign of Speckled Woods yet - John Hollingdale

An earlyish **Small white** at the Valley School wildlife garden, **Stevenage** on **27th March**, and a very nice count of **15 Brimstones** at my **Ickleford** site on **23rd March**. Roll on the spring for Small Blues - Stuart Pittman

Ware garden, virtually no butterflies apart from a **Small White**, but later visits from a male Brimstone, Comma and a pair of Peacock either clashing or pre mating but not totally sure what the behaviour indicated! - Liz Goodyear

Fri 28th March - There was a **Painted Lady** at **Langleybury** near Watford on Thursday afternoon (**27th**). Also **Red Admirals** at three sites on **23rd-24th** and an unidentified white sp near Watford on 26th - Colin Everett *(There have been several reports of migrants so we'd better keep our eyes peeled for immigrant species generally. - John Murray)*

Tring town - John Wyatt rang to say that he had seen a **Green-veined White** on **18th March**. Also **Red Admiral** on **18th March**, **Small Tortoiseshell**, **15th March** and **Brimstone** since the **15th March**

Henry Stroyan rang to say that he saw a **Red Admiral** on **25th January** on his patio before it flew off over **Harpenden Common**. He has also seen **2 Brimstone**, **2 Comma**, **2 Small Tortoiseshell** and a **Peacock** in the last week

Belated news from **Hampton Hill**. Two & half sightings so far this year; much earlier for me personally than last year - but that's down to awareness more than anything, I suspect. The "half" sighting was too distant to id so I'm down to two: **Comma: 16th March**, basking in the sun on earth in flower beds. Quick feed from a daff then off over the fence. **Comma: 18th March** and possibly same individual. Weather on both days fine, sunny and still - Amit Chaudhuri

One **Comma** at Watery Grove, **Newton Green** lunchtime today - Trevor Chapman

Thurs 27th March - **Trent Park area**, **5 Small Tortoiseshell**, **Small White**, **2 Comma** - Robert Callf

I saw a couple of **Small Whites** in the vicinity of **Harefield yesterday** but they are probably not the first sightings this year. A **Brimstone** also visited our **Harrow** garden **last weekend**: a welcome sign of spring - John Hollingdale.

Wed 26th March - On **Sunday**, I walked the **Aldbury Nowers** transect (*Allan will be walking the transect this year*) and saw **2 Commas** (both male I think as they had both set up territories with favourite perches. I have enclosed a photo of one of them plus the resident!), **3 Brimstones** and **1 Small Tortoiseshell**. I'll keep you posted on developments at this site throughout the year! I have also enclosed a picture of a Male Brimstone that I took this past weekend in my garden in **Chesham** (Bucks). It was determined to have a midday kip under an Ivy leaf so I took advantage of it and took a shot or two - Allan Beechey

Ware garden - Another butterfly at last, **1 Peacock** - Liz Goodyear

Tues 25th March - **Harold Wood** area **6 Comma**, **4 Peacock**, and in garden **2 Comma & Peacock** - Colin Jupp

1 Small White, Wengeo Lane, **Ware**, **1 Red Admiral Hanbury Manor**. I don't think I have ever seen 6 species in March before and still a few days to go! Andrew Wood

Comma at Fairlands valley park, **Stevenage** - Trevor Chapman

Mon 24th March - Had a **Holly Blue** today at **Stanstead Abbots gravel pits**. It was found by Simon Rasch while we were photographing great crested grebes and id by **ME**, also a brown butterfly probably a Peacock - Nick Sampford

Well a slow start but **15 Brimstones** at **Ickleford** on the **23rd** must be worth a mention a solitary **Small Tortoiseshell** was my first of year and the usual **Comma** duo - Stuart Pittman

Some news from Valerie Fullforth - **6th March, Hitchin garden, Comma; 23rd March, Patmore Heath NR, 4 Brimstone and 1 Comma, West of Patmore Heath, 1 Small Tortoiseshell, South of Furneaux Pelham, 1 Peacock**

Sun 23rd March - Wheathampstead garden, Brimstone and peacock - Trevor Chapman

Walthamstow Reservoirs, 1 Red Admiral Stephen Harris

Harold Wood garden - **Brimstone, Comma, Small Tortoiseshell, Brentwood** Honeypot Lane-Weald Rd **6 Peacock, 3 Comma, 3 Small Tortoiseshell** (inc nectaring in prunus & aubretia). - Colin Jupp

Ponders End - Small White, Lippitts Hill - Comma - Andrew Middleton

Saw my first three butterflies of the year today - a **male Brimstone** flying across the road by **Cheshunt golf course** and then a **Comma** and a **male Small White** back home in our garden in **Cheshunt** - Roger Newbold

Ware. This morning in the cemetery at the top of Watton Road I saw a **Small White**. I saw a **Peacock** this afternoon by Widbury farm - Ian Edwards.

Peacock, Comma, and Small Tortoiseshell seen in the **Fishers Green** area this afternoon - Martin Shepherd

2 Commas Wadesmill/ Fishers Green and a **Brimstone** in **Ware** - Nick Sampford

At **North Mymms Park 2 Comma and 1 Peacock**. At **Tyttenhanger Farm, 2 Peacock** - Rupert Pyrah

I had to wait until the **22nd** for my first butterfly - a **Comma**. **This morning, 9 Brimstone and a Peacock** on my walk around **Bloodhounds Wood /Wickham Hall farm** near Bishops Stortford. This is just inside Herts although the boundary does run through the wood! - Andrew Hardacre

Sat 22nd March - Coppetts Wood 1 Comma - Tony Clancy

Fri 21st March - Humming-bird Hawkmoths have been seen in gardens at **Digswell (20th), Datchworth (19th)** and **Enfield(18th)** - news via Colin Plant

Thurs 20th March - The Hyde, **Ware - Brimstone 2, Comma 2, Peacock 1, 1 Small White (seen at rest so a definite)**. Interestingly a walk along the Lea, across Amwell Gravel Pit and back across fields and allotments on Wednesday in good weather produced 0 butterflies. Does this say something about the state of the countryside compared to unkempt urban areas? - Andrew Wood

Trent Park area, total **4 Comma & 1 Peacock** - Robert Callf

Southbury Leisure Centre, 1 Comma near flats - Andrew Middleton

Brimstone news from Hertfordshire's arctic north, **2 males** 'sparring' in our garden in **Ashwell** on Sunday (**16th**) afternoon. Also a **male** flying around Buckthorn at **Ashwell Quarry NR** yesterday **19th** - Chris James

Wed 19th March - Harold Hill, Essex - **Small White** and **Small Tortoiseshell** - Colin Jupp

Brimsdawn, 2 Comma, 3 Small Tortoiseshell & Ponders End garden, **1 Comma** - Andrew Middleton

Yesterday at 11.00hrs, saw a **Comma** in **Welwyn Garden City** garden and later 13:30hrs **Peacock** at **Amwell Nature Reserve** - Michael Worby

News from **Berkhamsted, Peacock on Monday** and a **Brimstone today** - Michael Anderson

Hertford - a **male Brimstone** in my garden today - Alan Reynolds

Tues 18th March - Had my first butterfly sighting of the year yesterday (**Monday 17th**) - a **female Brimstone** in **Welwyn Garden City** - Ian Small

I have had quite a few butterfly 'firsts of the year' this week: **Friday, 1 Small Tortoiseshell (Horsenden Farm), Sunday, 1 Brimstone** in my garden at **Barnet, Monday, 1 Peacock. (Horsenden Farm)** and **today** in **Horsenden Farm Wood, 1 Comma** - Rachel Terry

Trent Park area, totals of 3 Comma, **Peacock, 2 Small Tortoiseshell, Red Admiral** for Robert Callf and Robin White. Robert would also have had 3 Orange Underwings but one was snatched by a Robin!

Epping Forest, Comma and Small Tortoiseshell - A Middleton

Mon 17th March - Mudchute Farm area, **Isle of Dogs** (Middx) 1 Brimstone - Sean Huggins and **Weald Park** (Essex) 2 Brimstone and 6 Comma - Colin Jupp

In **St Albans** on **Sunday, 4 Small Tortoiseshells & 3 Comma**. I thought everyone else would have seen similar species, but it appears that apart from Tring, ST's aren't around much in Herts! - Malcolm Hull

10.40 Admiral's Walk Lake, near **Hoddesdon**, 1 Small Tortoiseshell, 11.50 **Feilde's Lock** on start of River Stort, Brimstone - Jeff Butcher

Ware, 1 Brimstone, Walton Road and 1 at Amwell End, **1 Peacock** and **2 Small Tortoiseshell** on **the Meads** near Sacred Heart School. **Balls Wood - 3 Brimstone, 7 Comma**, also 3 **Orange Underwing/Light Orange Underwing** moths - Andrew Wood

Important Orange/Light Orange Underwing info from Colin Plant- Charles Watson has just brought me a male Orange Underwing (unfortunately from Hatfield Forest, over the border in Essex). This was fluttering about amongst grasses under an ash tree at 14.30 hours today, 17th March, in the hot bright sunshine. It is clearly worth getting out and looking for this birch feeding species (and its aspen feeding cousin the Light Orange Underwing) this week and next - in lunch breaks or whenever. Don't forget that although the foodplant is a guide, if both trees are present in a wood then you really do need to catch the moth and look at the UNDERSIDE to separate the two. See Skinner page 16 for the appropriate details of how to do this. Please report sightings even if you cannot separate the species out - other people may be able to make repeat visits and sort them later. Both species are hopelessly under-recorded in Hertfordshire. Click here for a picture

Had **Brimstones today** - **Ware**, 1 Park Road and Poles Lane, 1 at **Sacombe Park**, 2 at **Hanbury Manor** [all males], also Emma had 2 male and **1 female Brimstone** at **Presdales school** dinner time, she was well pleased to tell me - Nick Sampford Widespread male Brimstones about in mid and south Bucks today (**Sunday 16th**) as I drove home from a conservation task and then another in my own garden - **Tring**; along with an estimated **18 Small Tortoiseshell** (very definitely 16 could have been over 20) in the field behind my house. Last year the first week of April turned up 22 ST here, so 16 in mid March is encouraging. Several courting couples among a largely male assemblage, but no sign that the females were interested in playing along - busy nectaring on lesser celandine and wild plum - Nick Bowles (news via UK Leps)

St James's Park, Central London. **3 Brimstones** at lunchtime - I don't recall seeing this species here in previous years - Stephen Harris

Ware, at last I've seen some butterflies! I had just got to the point where I had decided if the butterflies weren't going to come to me, I would have to go to them, when a male Brimstone flew quickly through the garden. Walking down my road, I noticed the sound of what seemed like a lot of bees, looked up and saw a Comma, nectaring on a pink ornamental prunus blossom. A few minutes later, by Dark Lane, **2 male Brimstone** were patrolling the footpath and **2 Comma** were fluttering around. One of the Brimstone could have been the same one that passed through my garden continuing its circuit as all the butterflies were very mobile! No more after that but I then took about 15 attempts to find *Endothenia gentianaeana* in a massive patch of teasels (ouch) - Liz Goodyear

Marshalls Heath, I saw my first butterfly of the year in the garden on **Saturday**: a Comma. I saw nothing on Sunday despite it being warmer - John Murray

Sun 16th March - Ware, in my garden **1 Brimstone** - Ian Edwards.

Denis and I saw our first butterfly of the year today in the car park at **Oxhey Wood LNR**, a **Peacock** in a sunny patch of bracken & brambles - C. Shepperson

Sewardstone Marsh 1 Brimstone - Brian Dawton

Trent Park & Vicarage Farm area, **2 Commas, Peacock, 2 Small Tortoiseshells** (one nectaring on sallow blossom) - Robert Callf

Brookmans Park garden, **1 Brimstone** - Rupert Pyrah

Bengeo, 1 Brimstone & 2 Peacocks in the garden - Andrew Wood

Lippitts Hill area, Essex, **3 Commas** in sheltered spots - Andrew Middleton

Here in **Berkhamsted**, we have seen **1 Brimstone today** and on **Saturday, 1 Comma** - Michael Anderson

Sat 15th March - Trent Park, Orange Underwing (moth) - Robert Callf

Comma 150yds east of St. Marys Church, **North Mymms** - Rupert Pyrah

Mossops Creek, **Brimsdown, Small Tortoiseshell** sunning itself - T Clancy & A Middleton

Fri 14th March 2 Commas in The Hyde ware and **1** in Poles Lane **Ware**. Also a report from a member of Bishops Stortford Natural History Society at the meeting I spoke at last night of a **Small Tortoiseshell** in the **Bishops Stortford** town centre on the weekend of **8/9 March** - Andrew Wood

Thurs 6th March - Rye Meads RSPB, Small Tortoiseshell - R. Cope

Sat 1st March - My first of the year. A **Brimstone** at **Kings Mead (Ware)** today, and then it rained - Alan Reynolds

Ware, just a report of a **Small Tortoiseshell** in my Dad's garden on **Monday 24th**. He said it was flying around his conifer hedge which is a sun trap. Roll on Summer - Nick Sampford

February 2003

Thurs 27th February - Ally Pally, Brimstone, seen yesterday afternoon - Tom Clarke

Wed 26th February - Ware (Chauncy Pool Car Park), **Brimstone** - Andrew Wood

Weald Park (Essex), **Comma** - Colin Jupp

Tues 25th February - Ally Pally, Red Admiral on **Monday 24th** and a **Comma today**, about time too - Tom Clarke

Fri 21st February - Nick Bowles emailed to say that Upper Thames Branch investigated the Large Tortoiseshell and suggested to the owner, the butterfly was put into a box in his garage. On calling around the box was empty but on being shown a set specimen of SMALL Tortoiseshell, the owner decided that the captured butterfly had been a Small not Large - *thanks Nick was letting us know - this is good tip for anyone finding a butterfly that has come out of hibernation early*

Fri 7th February - Anyone interested in a book about the **Butterflies of Russia** - [click here](#)

Wed 5th February - Some news from Stuart Pittman via Dave Chandler (Bed & Northants Branch) (*even though it is just over the border in Bucks*). Had a very intriguing phone call from **Chesham** in mid January was of a Large Tortoiseshell disturbed from a shed. I put the the Bucks branch onto it for a confirmation visit

January 2003

Thurs 30th January - Third hand report of a 'brown butterfly' feeding on a shrub in a garden in **Crouch End** on **Monday 27th**. Comma maybe??? (*or Small Tortoiseshell?*) Also another third hand report of a **Red Admiral** in **Islington** on **Sunday 26th** - Tom Clarke

Wed 29th January - I've had a sort out and found this photo taken at Noar Hill in 2001, of a Brown Hairstreak laying an egg - zoom in for more detail - Nick Sampford >>>

Mon 27th January - Ally Pally (Alexandra Palace), 1 Brimstone reported today at 1.30pm - Tom Clarke

Sat 25th January - Just had a report of a **Red Admiral** in the **Stanmore** garden of Peter Peretti today. Peter is the warden of Bentley Priory Open Space, Stanmore - news via John Hollingdale

Sun 19th January - No butterfly news yet, but here are some photos from Clive Burrows - thanks Clive

Fri 10th January - Here are three more butterflies from India. The Common Baron (*Euthalia aconthea*) and Black Rajah (*Charaxes fabius*) are feeding from decaying pawpaw, which I used to attract them. The third butterfly is a Common Grass Yellow (*Eurema hecabe*). I would like to acknowledge the help received from Isaac Kehimkar, co-author of 'Common Butterflies of India' (WWF-India/OUP), in identifying the Black Rajah - Bob Hasra

Tues 7th January - Thanks to Roger Kendrick in Hong Kong for identifying Bob Hazra's unknown Indian butterflies, and Bob has just sent me another image taken in his garden

Thanks for your mail and for forwarding Roger Kendrick's message. After sending you the pictures, I had an opportunity to visit the Indian Museum in Calcutta, where I had a look at the lepidoptera collection. *Cepora nerissa* too is the closest I could come to in terms of identifying the white butterfly, but most museum specimens weren't preserved well enough. I couldn't find the blue and black one in the museum's collection but I think we should go ahead with Roger's tips and label them both as such. I've had luck with more butterflies and shall definitely send you more soon. East Indian winters are like the British spring so there are a couple still flying around. I've managed to 'bait' a few with rotting pawpaw and fermented palm sap. Here's a recent photo; this is *Catopsilia pomona* feeding from a marigold in the garden - Bob Hazra

Sun 5th January (*Not quite Herts or Middx but getting close*) - Just spotted **1 Small Tortoiseshell** sunning itself 2 houses down from mine in Fenny Stratford, **Milton Keynes** - Les

Hill (Also had a Grey Shoulder-knot on 1st January)

The name of your unknown taken in picture from Toby Austin is "*Adelpha gelania*" I have seen them in a restricted area in the unique pine forest left in Haïti called "Forêt des pins" about 3 1/2 hours drive from Port-au Prince. It is an abundant but very restricted. If it's host plant (a type of tropical thistle) is destroyed which I wouldn't be surprised of; then the butterfly will be extinct. You can also encounter "*Anetia numidia*" (*briarea*) and "*Anetia jaegeri*" in the same forest. I hope this will help you - Bertin Bernard, Quebec City, Canada