

Archive Page

Sightings and news from January to June 2005

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This page contains sightings details of all the butterflies and moths reported to the [Sightings page](#) between January and June 2005.

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 2005

1 Marbled White seen on **Sunday 26th June**, at **Dane End, Stevenage** - David Anderson

Wednesday 29th June

Marbled Whites out along the west end of the **Barton Hills near Ravensburgh** - in Beds but very close to Herts - and at **Hexton Chalk Pits**, also Ringlet, Meadow Brown and Small Heath. Small Tortoiseshell at Barton Hills. **Dark Green Frits** reported on the **Pegsdon Hills** - Nigel Agar

Brian Jessop at **Tring Park** had two **Purple Emperor** sightings on Monday around 1 o'clock

Broxbourne Woods NR - Just after 1 as the sun came out, a **male Purple Emperor** was seen flying above the willows, perched three times and then not seen again. The White Admiral in Broxbourne Woods were amazing, and its hard to say how many there were including 1 in **Danemead** later. Must have exceeded 10 and 3 in sight at one time - including one massive brute, it was huge! Also looked at Broxbourne Common for territorial activity but just got very wet instead. There were no sightings. - Liz Goodyear and Andrew Middleton

I went to **Broxbourne Woods** this morning. Ringlets very active and a few Meadow Browns and Skippers although a very cloudy morning. However there was a very big butterfly flying high above oaks and willows just inside the wood from the car park on the left of the ride - Nigel Agar

Tuesday 28th June

South Herts, had my first **Purple Emperor** sighting of the year today, watching with Andrew Middleton. Only one male seen and only after watching several oak trees for over 4 hours! We call it patience, others might call it something else - Liz Goodyear

I went with a friend to **Ruislip Woods** today. Got to Ruislip Lido about 2.30 and it was hot - perhaps 27C - with a bit of a breeze but the rides had plenty of dappled sunshine filtering through the trees. We saw 5 speckled woods, a single green veined white, a very pale brimstone (female I assume), 3 meadow browns, **my first gatekeeper** of the year, but most importantly 8 white admirals at least!!! A jogger who passed us said he'd counted a couple of dozen!! It was a super visit and made up for the poor spring I've had so far!! - Ann Piper

Brent Reservoir - after a poor and disappointing Spring things are improving. During yesterday's transect I had 16 Small Skipper, 9 Large Skipper, 3 Large White, 2 Small White, 2 G-V White, 1 Common Blue, 1 Holly Blue, 2 Comma, 2 Speckled Wood, 54 Meadow Brown, and finally 3 Marbled White (the first of the year) - Roy Beddard

Belated notification of first 2005 sightings for **Bunkers Park**: Thursday 23 June Small

Skipper - 4, Large Skipper - 3 and Marbled White - 3 When I got home after our sub-committee meeting last week, my wife had trapped under a tumbler an Elephant Hawkmoth which had been flying round our sitting room - Michael Pearson

Monday 27th June

Went to **Broxbourne Woods** today between 11am and 1.30 pm in perfect still sunny conditions and at 12.15 I had a male **PURPLE EMPEROR** glide over the shallows down the hill towards the bench then disappear to view, Angela see it too it We also had 49 + white admirals [sightings], there were dozens about, 12+ purple hairstreak, 50+ ringlet, 50+ meadow brown, 11 large skipper, 9 comma, 6 speckled wood, singles of small tortoiseshell, red admiral, brimstone, large white and small white - Nick Sampford

Stevenage, field behind St Nick's church 9.30-10am. 14 Meadow Brown, 6 Large Skipper, 1 Small Skipper, 1 Small Tortoiseshell, 1 Red Admiral. **Fairlands Valley** wild flower meadow, 7-7.20pm. 22 Meadow Brown, 4 Large Skipper, 1 Six-spot Burnet, 1 Burnet Companion - Lee Browne

26th June, **Ruislip**, at least 12 White Admiral in Park Wood and 3 in Copse wood. 4 Ringlets on Poors Field - Steve Pash

Robert Callf walked his **Trent Park Transect** today and had 95 Small Skipper (No Essex yet), 15 Large Skipper, 129 Meadow Browns, 48 Small Heath, 1 faded Small Copper, 5 Speckled Wood, 2 Red Admirals and 1 off transect, 3 White-letter, 3 Purple Hairstreak, 10 Small Tortoiseshell, 3 Comma (plus 5 off transect) and 1 Ringlet (plus 4 off transect including a mating pair). Also 2 White-letter at **Oakwood Tube Station**.

26th June, **Wheathampstead LNR**. Butterflies on this site at the moment are Meadow Browns (20), Large Skipper (7), Small Heath (2), Green-veined White (2), Ringlet (5), Marbled White (9), Common Blue (2). Day flying moths were mostly 6-spot Burnets (120), with a few NB 5-spot Burnets (5), some Cinnabar(9), Yellow Shell (2), Burnet Companion (3) and Dunbar (1) - Trevor Chapman

Sunday 26th June

Andrew Middleton saw his first **Purple Emperor** of the year in **South Hertfordshire** today just after 3 - news by text

Following their fairly dismal showing in fairly grim conditions yesterday, the **Horsenden Hill** White-letter Hairstreaks were back on form today in sunny conditions. On the Horsenden West transect I bagged 18 in total, including 11 in section one, where we got at least some views yesterday. There was also one nectaring on bramble at this spot. More interesting, perhaps, I had 3 in Upper Mead (section 4) - an area I have not recorded the species before. Here I was able to watch a female egg-laying. Away from the transect I bagged 6 more further along Horsenden Lane between the Ballot Box and the first stile. I also had two Purple Hairstreak in Horsenden Wood and generally more butterflies today than I've seen for a while. This was helped by a glut of Meadow Browns, of course, but I also saw a few Small Torts and Commas for the first time in a while. Little Owl in the usual Paradise Fields tree this morning. - Andy Culshaw

Letchworth, I thought you would be interested to know that I had a **Red-belted Clearwing** moth in the garden last night (the first Clearwing I have ever seen). Found it yesterday evening, roosting (on Phlox). Was still there this morning, but on a different leaf, but had gone by lunchtime, when things had warmed up a bit - Ian Small

Bramfield Wood 4.15-6pm. 100+ Large Skipper, 100+ Meadow Brown, 50+ Ringlet, 12 White Admiral, 9 Red Admiral, 17 Comma, 20+ Speckled Wood, 1 Large White, 2 Small White - Lee Browne

Visited the RSPB reserve at **Rye Meads** this afternoon and in addition to some interesting bird life saw 10 commas, 2 small tortoiseshells, 1 red admiral, one unidentified skipper and several whites. The commas were mainly nectaring on bramble flowers - Roger Newbold

(some photos later)

Marbled White (7), Ringlet (1), **White Admiral (10)**, Small Skipper (3), Red Admiral (3), second brood Comma (2) all out for the first time on at **Bricket Wood** this week. This is the best single week for White Admirals at this site since 1998. Most were seen nectaring on bramble. Also in addition to Purple Emperor be on alert for Silver-washed Fritillary. After last years record sightings there is always the possibility they have breeding in our area - Malcolm Hull

We walked along part of **Ermine Street (Broxbourne Woods)** and then back along the track where we saw the female Purple Emperor last year and saw **15 plus white Admiral** many small and large skipper, 5 Comma, 1 Red Admiral, lots of Ringlets and Meadow Brown. - Kevin and Sandra Standbridge

Steve Lane went south yesterday and first went to Bentley Wood where he saw 10 Silver-washed Fritillary and at a Somerset Wildlife Trust Reserve Open Day he saw 25+ Large Blues!

Saturday 25th June

I joined the field trip to **Horsenden Hill** today - I didn't keep a record of numbers seen (a couple of others were doing so), but I did manage some photos, 2 of which I've attached. One is a **purple hairstreak** and the other is a narrow-bordered 5-spot Burnet (I am reliably informed) - Paul Gee

Help the Herts Moth Group find Four-spotted moth in Hertfordshire (or Middlesex) for the first time in 53 years! [Read more](#)

Friday 24th June

Ken Willmott the country's true Purple Emperor expert had a sighting today at Bookham Common. "The 2005 Purple Emperor season has begun. A male flew into the Bookham Common, Surrey Annual Territory at 3.00 pm this afternoon as a thunderstorm approached. It settled high in the upper branches of a Hornbeam before being disturbed by two flying pigeons and inevitably taking up pursuit! I had waited in the territory for thirty minutes before the Emperor appeared. My hunch paid dividend - an early sighting 24 June 2005. Not quite that midsummers day sighting!" This means we are now on Purple Emperor alert in Herts and Middx!!! - Liz Goodyear

Short walk around **Great Ashby Park, Stevenage**, warm and sunny now the rain has gone. Saw my first Marbled White of the season, plus, 2 Large whites, Speckled Woods, Meadow Browns and Large Skippers. Didn't take the camera so will look again later - Steve Lane

Thursday 23rd June

Hemel Hempstead - Saw two Holly Blues today and one Large White in the garden also a Large Skipper on Corncockle at the allotment - Malcolm Newland

Did some tetrad bashing today in TL41 (it should be noted that particular deced has no reports of White letter for 2000-2004) and a poorly recorded tetrad near my house! South of **Morley Hall near Wareside**, on a row of elm 10 White-letters including superb aerial clashes high into the sky. Also 1 Comma, 3 Speckled Wood, 12 Meadow Brown, 1 Small Tortoiseshell, 1 Holly Blue, 1 Red Admiral, 1 Large White and a Cinnabar moth. Next in TL41 just **outside Widford** by the old railway bridge and along the old track towards Wareside, 3 White-letter on elm and ash (not so numerous), 1 Ringlet, 10 Meadow Browns, 6 Large Skipper, 4 Speckled Wood, 1 Green-veined White, 2 Comma, 1 Red Admiral egg laying on nettles and 2 Small Tortoiseshell. Spent about an hour in each tetrad in 31 degrees heat! - Liz Goodyear with Andrew Middleton's help finding White letter

Simon Rasch and myself found 5+ white letter hairstreaks on the **Crooked Mile, Waltham Abbey way** nr the round cottage also ringlet. Better than that is a **clouded yellow** at **Wareside** I thought I had one yesterday at Stevenage but this was a 100% I watched it for 2 minutes as it flew across a field. I reckon the first purple emperors will be out next week I predict Wednesday - Nick Sampford

At **Aston Clinton Ragpits** (just out of area, I'm afraid) this morning between 08:30 - 10:30 and saw my first marbled whites (2) and ringlets (6) - Colin Sturges

Had a walk around **Great Ashby Park, Stevenage** today, very hot and sunny and saw 60+ Meadow Browns, Common Blues, Large Skippers, Small Tortoiseshell, Small and Large Whites, Small Heaths, Speckled Woods, Comma, Ringlet and 2 Six-spot Burnets - Steve Lane

This morning I had a look for **White-letter Hairstreak** at the usual **Horsenden Hill hotspots**. I'm pleased to report a successful outing - in total **18** were seen between 07.45-08.15 - Andy Culshaw

Wednesday 22nd June

Hemel Hempstead, Small Tortoiseshell on Sweet William and Spanish Scabious, Speckled Wood on Red Valerian, Red Admiral and Holly Blue (still) flying around the garden but very few whites at present. Have recorded eight H B H M's so far! - Malcolm Newland

Today, **1 Ringlet** in my garden, **Bishop's Stortford** - Andrew Palmer

Ruislip Woods, Middlesex: two **White Admirals** seen this afternoon, one newly emerged and still floppy - Graham Elcombe (*photo below*)

Oakwood tube station, today **2 White-letter Hairstreaks**, also Robert forgot to tell me he saw **2 Small Skipper** at **Trent Park** on the 18th - news from Robert Callf by phone

North Enfield this morning, **10 White-letter Hairstreak** and **1 Purple Hairstreak** - news by text from Andrew Middleton

Ware, a brief garden tour produced 1 Small White, an immaculate Red Admiral and a very tatty Peacock, later sightings to be added 1 Large Skipper on lavender and corncockle, Meadow Brown, Speckled Wood and a fresh Comma - Liz Goodyear

Tuesday 20th June

One **White Admiral** at **Balls Wood** today - Andrew Wood

Went to the **Withey Beds** in Rickmansworth today to check on progress. Did not see a great deal despite the warm - even hot sunshine!! Count was 2 common blue, 1 meadow brown (male), 1 small tortoiseshell, 1 red admiral, 1 cinnabar moth and a batch of caterpillars on ragwort, 2 yellow shell moths, 1 white plume moth and many grass moths. The Withey Beds falls into 4 tetrads!! TQ 08 94 marks the centre point. Again I am surprised at how little seems to be about at the moment - Ann Piper (Ann is decad co-ordinator for TQ09)

I went for a walk over **Balls Wood** at 4 pm and saw a **White Admiral** and a **Ringlet** many Large Skippers and Meadow Browns. I enclose a couple of photos but I was unable to get close as the white admiral was the other side of the ditch and the ringlet was very active and travelled some distance - Sandra Standbridge

Telegraph Hill (10.30-12.00): **1 Marbled White**, 1 Red Admiral (car park), 4 Small Heath, 2 Speckled Wood, 4 Meadow Brown, 1 Large Skipper, 1 Green-veined White. Also 3 Burnet Companion (including a very worn individual looking much like a worn Dingy Skipper), 1 Cinnabar and an immature male Black-tailed Skimmer. No sign of Dingy Skipper adults or caterpillars but three empty egg cases found which although they were milky white/translucent rather than orange, were in all other respects (location on Bird's-foot Trefoil, size and structure), exactly as to be expected (see photograph). The eggshell is not eaten by the caterpillar which leaves and immediately begins to make a tent from several leaves spun together with silk. There is a single curled leaf in the image which may be the first tent (?) along with some more obvious signs of feeding. I assume that the shell is largely transparent (being very thin) and that it is the developing caterpillar that gives the egg its distinctive colouration. It will be interesting to look for caterpillars over the next month - so if anyone wants to continue recording Dingy Skipper outside the flight period I would be very interested in the records. **Hexton**

Chalk Pit (12.25-13.15): 1 **Ringlet**, 1 Common Blue ('blue' female egg-laying), 4 Small Heath, 2 Speckled Wood, 4 Meadow Brown. Again no adult Dingy Skippers. 1 Burnet Companion, 1 Cinnabar. The site looks great - Andrew Palmer

Thundridge, Hummingbird hawk-moth in garden last night - Nick Sampford

Just back from a two-week long trip to Bulgaria. For the first week of my hols it rained torrents but stopped just in time to allow me to stay for almost a week at the lovely Rila National Park (my second visit after five years). I came across at least 24 different butterfly and moth species amongst the meadows of wildflowers and higher up in the mountains - Bob Hazra

Monday 20th June

Robert Callf walked his **Trent Park Transect** on Saturday and saw 180 Small Heath, 42 Large Skipper, 8 Common Blue and 54 Meadow Brown!

Sunday 19th June

Stevenage Garden 2 Large Skippers, and a few Whites in my garden on Saturday 18/6/05 - Steve Lane

Flood plain on Old Knebworth Lane 3-4.30pm. 20+ Common Blue, 20+ Meadow Brown, 2 Brown Argus, 1 Small Copper, 1 Brimstone, 4 Comma, 3 Large Skipper, 1 Small Tortoiseshell and 9 Brimstone Larvae feeding on one tiny sprig of Buckthorn - Lee Browne

Ware garden, a Large Skipper making use of sweet rocket, a new scabious plant bought by my neighbour for looking after her garden whilst on holiday, sage, sweet william and lychnis coronaria (bought from the sales stand!) Also a brief visit from a Small Tortoiseshell - Liz Goodyear

Went for a walk in the **Rickneys and Stonyhills** area Saturday. Literally hundreds of Meadow Browns around the edge of Flowersash Wood, also a few Small Heaths here and there. Several Peacock larval nests, but the breeze kept catching them so photo is rather poor. Also a Yellow Shell and a Cinnabar Moth - Andrew Wood

Saturday 18th June

Hemel Hempstead, over the last two days have had Large White, Green-Veined White, Holly Blues and Speckled Woods in the garden. Yesterday something large and dark was flying north fast at roof - top height, probably a Red Admiral. Today at the allotment a faded but lively Peacock - Malcolm Newland

Finding it a bit quiet lately for butterflies, although on Friday 17th June saw 3 brimstone, large skipper and 2 common blues **Tottenham Marsh** and 1 common blue, **Pymmes Park Edmonton**. Haven't seen a **white-letter hairstreak** in Middx yet, but did see one just over the border at **Yardley Hill, Chingford**, nectaring on bramble this Sat afternoon - Andrew Middleton.

Dark Green Fritillaries have been seen in **Bedfordshire** today - follow the links on left to the Beds & Northants website for more information

Wednesday 15th June

We have made several visits to Balls Wood over the last week and enclose some photos of various moths and butterflies we have seen. Plus we have also had some good sightings elsewhere. In **Balls Wood**, we have seen Large Skippers, Meadow Brown, Speckled Woods, Comma, Elephant hawkmoth in same place as last years spot, Peppered moth (we think), plus 2 others attached (*all photos up asap*) which we are not certain of, a lesser Stag Beetle and lots of Micro moths as well. We have also seen Small Blues in Bedfordshire in large numbers, a 1st for us, also a Small Elephant Hawkmoth, another 1st and a Large Emerald in Surrey - Kevin and Sandra Standbridge

I have had a message this evening from Butterfly Conservation Head Office to say that there will be an item on the Large Blue tomorrow morning on the Radio 4 Today programme between 7 & 9 - Liz Goodyear

Just for the record I saw a male Orange Tip on Monday morning along the bank of the River Stort in **Bishop's Stortford**, it was in a very fresh condition - Jim Fish

Tuesday 14th June

We still need volunteer decadal co-ordinators for our 2005-2009 Mapping Challenge. This is Andrew Middleton's progress - [click here](#). If you can help please email John Murray but copy to me (Liz Goodyear) so I can update the website map. Thanks

As several observers have mentioned Mullein larvae I thought a picture of one, taken today in **Ware Park** might be appropriate. This is one of about eight that had pretty well destroyed half a dozen Mulleins plants. The larvae were a variety of sizes, this one full grown at about 50mm long - Andrew Wood

7-7.30pm a quick search of the flood plain on **Old Knebworth Lane** for roosting butterflies produced 7 Common Blue and 2 Brown Argus. On my walk home from work found my second Lime Hawkmoth of the year in almost the same spot as the last one near **Stevenage Town Centre** - Lee Browne

Waterford Heath - North pit very little to report but south pit yielded 1 Grizzled Skipper and 19 Small Heath, 6 Brown Argus, 8 Common Blue and 1 Meadow Brown. Nearby at **Rickneys** in sunnier conditions, 19 Small Heath, 14 Meadow Brown, 15 Common Blue including several females, 3 Brown Argus, 1 Large White, 1 Mother Shipton and 2 Burnet Companion. Just over the railway line behind housing several mullein plants with Mullein larva munching away - Liz Goodyear and Andrew Middleton

Rothamsted - Painted Lady still in the same area when I walked home (18.00), but I have a feeling it was a different individual - it looked a bit smarter - Richard Harrington

Monday 13th June

I went up to **Balls Wood** today, more Meadow Browns and Large Skippers around as well as plenty of Speckled Woods. Also found a Common Blue, only the second on the transect route since 1997. There was also this rather worn Red Admiral, is it a very tired UK overwintered one or a battered new migratory arrival? - Andrew Wood

1 Painted Lady this morning (Monday 13th June, 08.00) **Rothamsted Estate**. Looked like it had had a long journey! (Also, a rather late orange tip at Ashridge yesterday, and a brown argus, but both by a whisker in Bucks not Herts.) - Richard Harrington

Saturday 11th June

At a site near London Colney: several Small Heath (in serious decline in this part of the county during the past decade), male Common Blue, male Meadow Brown, Small Tortoiseshell larvae and two Burnet Companion. Star beetle was the large longhorn *Agapanthia villosoviridescens*, at the SE edge of its British range in Herts but worth looking out for in early summer on ruderal patches. Nearby at Old Parkbury were larvae of the Mullein moth on Great Mullein *Verbascum thapsus*, some of them full-grown. - Colin Everett

I have been asked by several people recently about the cameras and lens being used for the photos on these pages. I thought I might create a link to these details so that everyone can see what camera has taken what. It's just a thought but I don't want to compromise personal security so it might be pictures with the camera type?

Thursday 9th June

On Tuesday Alan Downie alerted me to a 10 metre strip of spindle hedging in Sacombe Road north of Hertford that had been completely defoliated and covered in a silken web, probably the work of the Spindle Ermine moth (*Yponomeuta caganella*). There were no larvae left but nearby were just a few small webs with larvae still in (see picture). These will emerge at the end of the month as

small white moths with black spots. **Today** one **Meadow Brown** near **Wengeo Lane in Ware** together with a Burnet Companion moth. Not far away a Mother Shipton moth in a field by the A10 - Andrew Wood

On **Tuesday** I walked down the lane south of **Norton Green**. In the clearing by the field gate, I saw a single Brown Argus. As far as I can remember this is my first sighting of this species at this site, which I have watched regularly during the summer months over the past few years. Also 5 Speckled Wood - Alan Reynolds

Nick Sampford in his challenge to photograph all UK species this year has photographed 24 species so far and seen 26

Had a Netted Pug yesterday in the garden moth trap. A few have recently been seen in Herts. Normally they are coastal moths feeding on Bladder Campion. I have also managed to catch (photograph) a few butterflies at rest. The Orange-tip was settled for the evening at Wheathampstead Local Nature Reserve. The Holly Blue came down to drink when I had removed duck weed from my pond. The Green-veined White obliged when I helped out with the Marshall's Heath transect - Trevor Chapman

Hexton Chalk Pit (06.05-09.30 including an hours' snooze in the middle!) - Dropped a friend off at Luton Airport hence the unreasonably early start: **5 Dingy Skipper - 2 very worn, 1 Green Hairstreak**, 1 Common Blue, 6 Small Heath, 2 Speckled Wood, 2 Yellow Shell. Also a Narrow-bordered Five-spot Burnet caterpillar on Bird's-foot trefoil - shame it wasn't the other Five-spot - now that would have been worth an early start! Andrew Palmer

Sunday 5th June - Scotland, arrive at 1.30pm, pouring with rain, so we sat in the car for about one and a half hours, the rain stopped and you could just see the sun starting to come out, so we went into the wood to the clearing and saw several Chequered Skippers and Small Pearl-bordered Fritillary - Steve Lane

Wednesday 8th June

Male Holly Blue flying in front of **Royston library**, this afternoon! Nowhere near any plants (though only one block from Priory Gardens, and possibly heading that way) - Guy Manners

Robert Callf rang to say he had been visiting some poorly recorded tetrads today. He saw a **Meadow Brown** at **Stirling Corner off the A1**. Also seen at this site were 5 Common Blue, 1 female Orange Tip and 1 Small Heath. At **Moat Mount Open Space**, Mill Hill he saw **1 Large Skipper** and 1 Small Copper. **Totteridge Fields** produced 1 male Orange Tip, **1 Large Skipper** and 1 Small Copper. Other **Trent Park transect news** from Robert included **146 Small Heath on the 25th May** decreasing to **68 on the 31st May** when the weather was not so good. **Yesterday** he saw 5 Peacocks at **Vicarage Farm**.

Hunsdon Meads (HMWT Reserve) and River Stort towpath (some on the Essex side!) - sightings included Small Copper, Brown Argus, Common Blue, a Red Admiral seen egg laying, Brimstone, Small White, Peacock, Speckled Wood, Holly Blue, 12 Small Tortoiseshell larvae, also Mother Shipton, Burnet Companion, Yellow Shell and a faded Small Yellow Underwing - Liz Goodyear and Andrew Middleton

Green Hairstreaks on the **Pegsdon Hills** this morning and at **Telegraph Hill**. I met a couple of naturalists that we all know by sight - I think of them as the Essex Two - but don't know their names, one is Dave I think. They had walked from **Pirton to Pegsdon** and seen **GHs** along Wood Lane or near Tingley Plantation Could have been in either county; Beds or Herts - Nigel Agar

Tuesday 7th June

Saw three **Large Skippers** in **Balls Wood** today, Orange Tips and a Peacock still flying, but mainly Speckled Woods. Lots of Nemophora degeerella flying and spotted one Light Emerald moth - Andrew Wood

You ask if anybody's seen this yet. We saw **2 Large Skipper** on **The Warren (Colney Heath)** on **4 June**, both resting because the weather was glum - John Moss

What luck for **Bucks that College Lake, Tring** sits on their side of the boundary (which runs along the road outside)! This afternoon, 3 brimstone, 1 peacock, 1 large white, 1 brown argus, 1 grizzled skipper, 3 small blues (my first this year) and 10+ common blue - Colin Sturges

Monday 6th June

I went for a cold walk this lunchtime near **Ware** but did see several groups of the longhorn moth *Nemophora degeerella* dancing around bushes despite the poor weather. I also found this comma larva under a nettle leaf near **Westmill Road** in Ware.

Whilst in Norfolk at the weekend visited the local churchyard and in a moment of brightness between rain (yes it rained a lot this weekend) was able to experiment with a new camera and lens. Needless to say picked one of the hardest butterflies to photo for my first attempts - Wall Brown! Thanks to the camera was able to prove there were 3 individuals flying amongst the gravestones and nectaring on floral tributes - Liz Goodyear

Sunday 5th June

Walked along the footpath that runs from Bramfield Road to Holly Grove Lane a little to the south of **Bramfield village**. The field alongside is covered with large swathes of cranesbill at its western end and I saw **13 Brown Arguses** despite the overcast sky and blustery wind, also 1 Common blue and 1 Small Heath. At Archer's Spring on the edge of **Hertford** there were a couple of Common Blues, 1 Holly Blue and a Burnet Companion - Andrew Wood

Waterford ~ several small heath, common blue and brown argus, **2 grizzled skippers** N pit and 1 south pit. **Sat 4th June, 7 chimney sweepers North Enfield area**. Have potted on c200 alder buckthorn seedlings, but still have a tray of c300 strong seedlings for potting for branch stand if anyone is interested - Andrew Middleton

North Mymms area - Approx 20 Speckled Wood inc. 14 on path thru Cangsley Wood. Also 10+ Large White, mainly over rape field. 2 Peacock, 1 Orange Tip and some small unidentified brown ones - Rupert Pyrah

Vicarage Farm, Enfield ~ Robert Callf recorded **3 painted ladies on 27th May** and a single on **31st** - news via Andrew Middleton

Friday 3rd June

1 Painted Lady at Ward's Hurst Farm, **Ashridge** at 11.30 ish today - Michael Anderson

Haven't seen any Large Skipper around here yet and only saw one in Dorset at the weekend. Flood plain on **Old Knebworth Lane**, 12-1.30pm. **30+ Common Blue**, 3 Brown Argus, 2 Large White, 2 Small White, 4 Green-veined White, 2 Brimstone, 1 Small Copper, 1 Red Admiral, 4 Burnet Companion, 1 Mother Shipton, 3 Six Spot Burnet pupa and 1 Larva - Lee Browne

Thursday 2nd June

Tring Park, Large white, burnet companion, common blues, **1 dingy skipper and 5 grizzled skipper** - Jez Perkins (Jez is Species co-ordinator for Grizzled Skipper)

Has anyone seen a Large Skipper in Herts or Middlesex yet?

May 2005

Tuesday 31st May

Just got back from a weekend in Dorset, went down in the hope of seeing a few Marsh Fritillary's, and on Saturday I took a trip out and in the space of one hour I saw over 100 Marsh Fritillary, 100 Dingy Skipper, as well as 1 Small Blue, 8 Grizzled Skipper, 5 Green Hairstreak, 2 Adonis Blue, 1 Small Copper and my first 2 Bee Hawkmoths (unsure if broad/narrow bordered) - Lee Browne (photos to go up later)

Aldbury Nowers 11.00-12.10: 1 Common Blue, 2 Brown Argus, 3 Small Copper, 3 Orange

Tip, 9 Small Heath, 3 Brimstone, 2 Peacock, 8 Yellow Shell, 1 Mother Shipton, 3 Cinnabar but failed miserably with Dingy and Grizzled. **Tring Park 12.50-14.10:** 2 Dingy Skipper, 4 Grizzled Skipper, 1 Common Blue, 1 Brown Argus, 8 Mother Shipton, 12 Burnet Companion - Andrew Palmer

Dingy Skippers, Small Heath and Brown Argus on **Pegsdon Hills** on 29 May and Dingy Skippers, Small Heath at **Hexton Chalk Pits** on 30 May - Nigel Agar

Monday 30th May, **Aldbury Nowers** early AM. Wind dropped, yippee!, bit dull still, warming up though. 2 Small Heath, 6 Brown Argus, 1 Grizzled Skipper in pristine condition. Cuckoo calling, hillside looking lovely, if there's a God in heaven this is where he comes on his days off - Ashley Cox

In my **Ware** garden this morning, a Red Admiral hurtling around - Liz Goodyear

Monday 30th May

Fluked a white admiral caterpillar sunbathing today in **Wormley Woods**, first one I've seen, on honey suckle 18" from ground - Andrew Middleton

Went to **Broxbourne Woods** Saturday to see if there were still any Grizzled Skippers about there. Got all excited when I saw a number of brown mottled insects flying about until I managed to follow one by eye and saw it settle. It was a Mother Shipton moth!! I guess the others were also. There were goodly numbers of Speckled Yellow moths as well. The only butterflies I saw were Comma (1) Speckled wood (2) and 2 unidentified whites - Richard Bigg

Sunday 29th May

Redbourn (Herts County Show Ground) - 1 Common Blue found roosting near the Flower Tent - Liz Goodyear

I went up to the **Tring Park** this morning and, using the experience gained with Malcolm on the Nowers, ended up on the escarpment where I saw my first common blue of the season, a couple of grizzled skippers, 2 small heaths and a large white. One of each of the skippers were so "fresh" that the grizzled looked almost like a chequer board, so distinct was the patterning. Beautiful! - Colin Sturges

Saturday 28th May

Saw my first small tortoiseshell larvae on May 25th in **Maple Cross**. Walked several tetrads on Friday May 27th in 30 degree heat! but saw surprisingly little in the **Rickmansworth / Harefield** area. Tally was small tortoiseshell (dead!), 2 peacocks, 4 small /green veined whites, 4 orange tips. I have generally been disappointed this month seeing only ones or twos of most of the common species. Do other recorders think it's been a poor spring? It has been very windy in this south west corner of the county - Ann Piper (*What does everyone else feel?*) ([Ann is decad co-ordinator for TQ09](#))

Yesterday, at last some sun! Fields behind **Great Ashby Park**, sunny, but windy. 10+ Small Heaths, 25+ Brown Argus, 5+ Common Blues, Holly Blue, Peacock, Small Tortoiseshell, Orange tip, Green-veined White, Large and Small White - Steve Lane

Telegraph Hill Car Park (11.30) Single rather faded and worn **Painted Lady**. **Telegraph Hill (11.45)** 3 Dingy Skipper, 7 Small Heath, 3 Brown Argus, 2 Orange-tip, 1 Brimstone, 3 Silver-Y, 2 Burnet Companion - Andrew Palmer and jointly with Stuart Pittman: **Hexton (12.30-13.00)** 7 Dingy Skipper, 1 Green Hairstreak, 3 Small Heath, 1 Burnet Companion. **Private site south of Pirton (13.30)** 2 Dingy Skipper, 1 Green Hairstreak, 3 Small Heath, 2 Common Blue, 2 Brown Argus, 1 Brimstone, 3 Silver-Y, 5 Burnet Companion, 1 Mother Shipton. **Ickleford (14.55-15.20)** 2 Small Copper, 7 Small Heath, 7 Holly Blue, 1 Brown Argus, 2 Speckled Wood, 1 Mother Shipton. Also noteworthy was the fact that I found Kidney Vetch on Hexton for the first time despite looking for the last three years! - Andrew Palmer (Andrew is Species co-ordinator for both Dingy Skipper and Small Blue)

Friday 27th May

Disturbed this slightly tatty Mother Shipton in **Ware Park** on the 26th, its the first one that has ever stayed still for me to photograph - Andrew Wood

Hemel Hempstead, 8.30 a.m. a fresh looking Red Admiral arrived in the garden and spent the next 15 minutes nectaring on one Sweet Rocket plant - Malcolm Newland

A nice lunchtime walk in the sunshine at Norton Green Stevenage but a low butterfly count. 1 Orange Tip, a Green Veined White and the nice surprise of my first Red Admiral of the season, a very nice clean specimen too - Malcolm Penn

Aldbury Nowers this afternoon: 2 brimstone, 2 large white, 2 small copper, **2 dingy skipper**, **1 grizzled skipper** and more brown argus and small heath than you could shake a stick at! - Colin Sturges

Thursday 26th May

Hemel Hempstead, 9.05. a.m. my first Humming Bird Hawk Moth of the year whizzing around the Sweet Rocket. Still plenty of Orange Tips, Holly Blues and Green-Veined Whites in the garden - Malcolm Newland

Hexton Chalkpit 11.30-12.15, **c.7 Dingy Skipper**, 3 Small Heath, 2 Burnet Companion, 1 Cinnabar. **Frogmore Pit**: 4 Common Blue - Andrew Palmer

Wednesday 25th May

North Mymms area, first Small Coppers of the year (3 in total). Plenty of other butterflies - Large White, Speckled Wood, Peacock, GV White, Orange Tips (seem to be a lot around this year) and Holly Blue - Rupert Pyrah

Wednesday 18th May

Photo of an Orange Tip taken in my garden in **Hertford**. What I like about this photo is the insect was being buffeted by a gusty wind and if you look closely you can see how the tips of his legs (feet??) are gripping the edge of the flower petal to stop him being blown away - Richard Bigg (*top right*)

Andrew Wood has sent two more interesting and very 'active' photos of the Cocksfoot moth

Another day of clouds and patchy sunshine. However there was a Green Hairstreak active on the **Pegsdon Hills** plus a Peacock, an Orange Tip and, I think, a Small Heath. No Skippers seen - Nigel Agar

Brian Jessop rang this morning to say he had been to **Aldbury Nowers** yesterday, and despite periods of cloud, he saw 7 Grizzled Skipper, 2 Dingy Skipper, 9 Small Heath, 3 Brown Argus, **1 Common Blue** and 1 Green Hairstreak. He then continued up the hill to **Pitstone** and saw 28 Dingy Skipper!

Tuesday 17th May

Waterford area - an early evening roost count found 29 Brown Argus, 3 Small Heath and amongst the Brown Argus was **1 Common Blue** - Liz Goodyear and Andrew Middleton

My Small Tortoiseshell larvae in **Ware Park** are 6 days older and have started to go out for a walk. Also, saw a Grizzled Skipper halfway along the footpath in the **Waterford South Pit** that runs to the west of the main track across the pit, the first I have seen on that bit for several years. Also my first Red Admiral of the year in **Ware Park** both on Sunday 15th - Andrew Wood

Sunday 15th May

Seen on a walk round **Alexandra Park** on Sunday 16th May: 2 Large Whites, 2 Holly Blue, 8 Speckled Wood, about a dozen Distant Whites, and to my surprise a Small Copper - the first I've seen - Brian Price

Trent Park - Robert Callf walked his transect and counted 72 Small Heath in one hour

but only one Small Copper. He didn't walk the transect last week so doesn't know how many Small Heath were present a week ago though.

I spent 12 - 2.30pm at the **Flood Plain on Old Knebworth Lane**, butterfly numbers were nothing special 1 Brimstone, 1 Speckled Wood, 2 Orange Tip, 4 Green-veined White. But I did count 8 Mother Shipton moths. Later 4.30 - 5.30pm had a wander round **Frogmore Quarry** where I saw 5 **Grizzled Skipper**, 3 Small Copper, 2 Brown Argus, 3 Peacock, Small Whites, Green-veined Whites and thousands of Small Yellow Underwing Moths - Lee Browne

I decided to visit **Tring Park today** (first time for about 18month) and the numbers of Grizzled Skipper were exceptional. I met Brian Jessop there by chance and we walked his favourite route (not the transect route) for 1.5 hours and saw a minimum of 13 **Grizzled Skipper**, 7 **Dingy Skipper** and 3 **Green Hairstreak** plus all the usual suspects except Small Tortoiseshell and Large White - Nick Bowles

Another walk down the Icknield Way Path near Deacon Hill today. 14 Green Hairstreaks 14 Orange Tips (2 female), 11 Brimstones (2 female), 8 Holly Blues, 4 Peacocks, 5 Small/Green Veined Whites and 1 Common Carpet Moth - Steven Penn

Went out today (Sunday 15th) first to **Bison Hill, Whipsnade** (out of our area, sorry), warm and sunny from 10.30am to 12.45pm. 30+ Green Hairstreaks, 6+ Grizzled Skippers, 1 Small Copper, Orange Tips, Brimstones, Speckled Woods, Holly Blues, 6+ Small Heaths, Green-veined Whites, Large Whites and Small Whites, also 1 Mother Shiptons. Then we went onto **Aldbury Nowers**, again warm and sunny 1.15pm to 2.50pm, 6+ **Grizzled Skippers**, 3+ **Dingy Skippers**, 4+ Brown Argus, Small Copper, Small Heath, Orange Tip, Brimstone, Peacock, Comma and Cinnabar Moth - Steve Lane, Ian Hardy and Richard Pople

Late report from Thursday 12th, **Great Ashby Park**, early afternoon, sunny periods and windy. only common species in good numbers, Orange Tip, Small Tortoiseshells, Peacocks, Green-veined Whites, Brimstones, Large and Small Whites - Steve Lane

Saturday 14th May

Aldbury Nowers - despite the unpromising NE wind, a total of 14 butterfly species were seen. **Green Hairstreak**, one of the main target species was seen in both main sections of the reserve & also in a small clearing on the Ridgeway path which links them - 8 adults in total. **Grizzled Skippers** were in the northern clearing - 7 in total. We were also pleased to see **Dingy Skipper (6)** & Brown Argus (5) present in both sections of the reserve. Other species noted included Small Heath, Small Copper, Brimstone, Green-veined White, Orange Tip, Holly Blue, Large White, Speckled Wood, Small Tortoiseshell & Peacock. Moths included Trebble Bar (or possibly Lesser Treble Bar, photo attached, opinions welcome (*photos later*)), Mother Shipton, Cinnabar, Pyrausta Aurata, Small Yellow Underwing & Latticed Heath - Malcolm Hull

Friday 13th May

Did the **Balls Wood Transect** today, despite the wind very good numbers of Green-veined whites in particular. Also, at last, got photos of a female Orange Tip - Andrew Wood

At **Aldbury Nowers** yesterday (12th) I saw my first red admiral and small copper of the year, plus many brimstone and orange tip (male & female), some large whites and a few speckled wood, peacock, holly blue and tortoiseshell. No skippers or hairstreaks but being un-practiced I probably wasn't looking in the right places! - Colin Sturges

Thursday 12th May

St Nick's Church Yard, Stevenage 1.45-2.45pm. I was unable to count the butterflies as there were just so many! By just standing in one place and looking around me I could see at least 10 Holly Blues at one point I stood in front of an Ivy bush which had 6 on it. Large numbers of male (not 1 female) Orange Tips as well as Green-veined, Small and the odd Large White. 2 Speckled Woods and 1 female Ruby Tiger moth. As an estimate I would have to say in that one hour I saw up to 100 Holly Blues the large number probably due to the huge amount of both Holly and Ivy growing in the church yard - Lee

Browne

Wednesday 11th May

Went for a rather cold walk in **Ware Park** today, I found one roosting Orange Tip but Latticed Heath and Small Yellow Underwing moths were flying near the Quarry. I also found a couple of Small Tortoiseshell larval nests - Andrew Wood

I saw my **first Small Blue** (newly emerged) at **Sharpenhoe** today. I also saw for the **first Dingy Skippers [4]** of this year on this same section of the Sharpenhoe transect - David Chandler (news via Beds & Northants branch)

Monday 9th May

I went for a walk down the **Icknield Way Path near Deacon Hill** in Bedfordshire (*but only just*) this afternoon. I saw 10 Green Hairstreaks and 1 Red Admiral - Steven Penn

These pictures show the micro moth called the Cocksfoot Moth *Glyphipterix simplicella*. This is meant to be widespread but there are only a few records each year for Hertfordshire so it is very probably under recorded as it is so small (6mm wingspan) and active by day. It is worth looking on any buttercups from May to July see if you can see it. As the photos show it is very small and much smaller than the hoverflies etc that you will often see on buttercups. This one was in a field in Ware Park on a not very warm or especially bright day today 8th May - Andrew Wood

Can anyone confirm my belief that the caterpillar is that of a copper underwing? I found it on 28 April on some past-their-best sticky buds which somehow, having reached the kitchen door, had not been thrown out. I first noticed the frass which it had dropped all over the counter on which the vase was standing. I had not heard of this insect (or indeed, much else) feeding on horse chestnut leaves. Stupidly, since it still seemed to be feeding, I left it on the twig for one more night and it went walkabout. I hope it survives and I eventually find the moth - Archie Lang (*see above*)

Waterford area - **Saw 3 brown argus, 3 small heath** and one small copper - Andrew Middleton

Sunday 8th May

Hertford, Holly Blue seems to be having a good year. I have had them in my garden, two or three at a time, every reasonable weather day for the last three weeks. I have not seen a Grizzled Skipper on my transect at Waterford yet but that's because I have not been able to do it in good weather. These cold north winds are not helpful - Richard Bigg

Saw a **Duke Of Burgundy** (outside branch area), photo attached. On our way back we popped into **Waterford Heath** (south Pit) and only saw 1 grizzled Skipper but it was Very Windy and Grizzled was being blown all over the place, taking shelter in the Bush Vetch, picture attached - Sandra Standbridge

Waterford Heath - Cloudy with sunny intervals, cold wind Only 2 Speckled Wood on the south pit and 1 Grizzled Skipper on north pits, also 1 Large Red Damselfly. Lots of Orange Tips and Green-veined Whites in **Astonbury Wood** - Steve Lane

Finally caught up with Grizzled Skipper yesterday lunchtime in between the showers, at **Waterford South pit**. Also several Orange Tips and Speckled Wood - Darrel Stanley

May 5 was the day for my first red admiral of the year, which obligingly let me photograph it on this yellow azalea. Gorgeous and seemingly perfect! Unlike the speckled wood, probably younger and less travelled, which was also attracted to the azalea and had clearly (more clearly than this picture shows) had a close encounter of the avian kind. A good day for butterflies in the garden -- holly blues, green-veined

white and orange tip and also this small white which gave me a decent shot. Several butterflies (including this one) attempted to land on these stitchwort flowers, but of course the stems will not support the weight of a butterfly. This one, however, found the stitchwort a good place to rest fairly well concealed, hanging from a bent-over flower.

Friday 6th May

Waterford Heath, South Pit, **2 Grizzled Skippers**, 2 Small Whites, Orange Tip, Large White and Holly Blue - Ian Hardy and Steve Lane

Broxbourne Wood NR - Red Admiral and **Speckled Yellow moth** - Andrew Middleton

Waterford Marshes, on **Sunday the 2/05/05** my wife and I saw several Peacock, 5 Orange Tip, 1 Brimstone, 3 Small White and **2 Painted Ladys** - Ian Hardy

Thursday 5th May

I went to **Waterford Heath** South this morning and again after 3 o'clock. I saw in the morning **one Grizzled Skipper** when the sun came out and many roosting Orange Tips. The afternoon trip was much better as I saw **6 plus Grizzled Skippers**, 1 Large White, 1 Green Veined White, 1 Holly Blue, many Orange Tips (the females busy laying single eggs). I attach 3 photos (*up later*) - Sandra Standbridge

Tuesday 3rd May - *look out for migrants in particular Red Admirals*

Green Hairstreak on the **Pegsdon Hills (just into Beds)** on **May 1** and again **today May 3**. Also today I went after a possible Grizzled Skipper which turned out to be a Common Heath Moth - Nigel Agar

Weekend news

2 Grizzled Skippers on **May 1** at **Aldbury Nowers** - around a month earlier than last year.
. Martin Hicks

Sunday 1st May, we saw our first Orange Tips, Green Veined Whites & our first Speckled Wood on the cherry tree's blossom, in my mother's garden transect in **King's Langley**. The Holly Blues are still around but this Sunday were favouring the buds on the Blackcurrants over the Gooseberries - Dave Chandler

Monday 2nd May - *be ready for Dingy Skipper*

I visited **Hexton** this afternoon. I saw 10 Brimstones (9 male, 1 female), 7 male Orange Tips, 5 Peacocks, 3 Small Whites, 2 Holly Blues, 1 Comma, 1 Speckled Wood and 1 Small Tortoiseshell - Steven Penn

2+ Grizzled Skippers, 3 speckled woods, plus orange tip, holly blue, green veined, small and large white, peacock, brimstone. All at **Waterford north** pit this afternoon - Nick & Angela Sampford and Simon Rasch

Aldbury Nowers - **Green Hairstreak, Grizzled Skipper** and a **Small Copper** were seen today. Also later a **Mother Shipton moth** getting ready to confuse everyone - Liz Goodyear and Andrew Middleton

Sunday 1st May

Waterford Heath - **2 Grizzled Skipper** moving around pretty quickly in the late afternoon sunshine. Earlier we visited **Frogmore Pit** and **1 Grizzled Skipper** was definitely seen. Also lots of Orange Tip and a Small yellow underwing moth - Liz Goodyear and Andrew Middleton

April 2005

Saturday 30th April

Waterford Heath - Arrived around 11 in dull conditions and **2 Grizzled Skipper** were found on the north pit. Walked over to the south pit and one was seen in flight early afternoon in the "usual" place. Also a **Small yellow underwing moth**. Returned to the north pit and 3 were seen, some in

flight. Many Orange Tips, also whites, Holly Blues, Peacocks, female Brimstone and Speckled Wood
- Liz Goodyear and Andrew Middleton with Simon and Stuart Rasch, and Andrew and Jane Wood

Sightings from my **Stevenage** garden, yesterday - Brimstone, Green-veined White, Small White, Peacock, and first appearance of the year for Orange-tip x 3 and Holly Blue x 2 - Steve Lane

Ware garden, to my surprise I had a **female Emperor moth** in my light trap this morning. According to Colin Plant "there are no recent records for the county west of Hertford" - Liz Goodyear

Friday 29th April

Brilliant day huge counts of butterflies Tom and I travelled the lanes around our house (**Thunderidge**) for four hours. We had 47 unidentified white spec, 38 orange tips 32 males 6 females properly more females in the white count, 17 small white, 14 peacocks, 12 green veined white, 12 brimstone, 10 large white, 9 holly blue and 3 small tortoiseshell. There were butterflies everywhere today. The forecast is for a period of sunny warm weather for the next few days so hopefully there is an emergence of grizzled skippers in the next week -Nick and Tom Sampford (*Everyone needs to be on the look out for Grizzled Skipper*)

Just thought I'd let you know, there was a **hummingbird hawkmoth** at Wyvale Garden Centre, **Hillingdon** - Chris Court

Fir and Pond Woods....6 speckled woods today (*Photo attached*) - David Gompertz

Wednesday 27th April

Hemel Hempstead, cannot recall seeing so many Holly Blues. Had three in view at once in the garden today. Large and Small White also seen but Orange Tips few and far between at the moment - Malcolm Newland

Monday 25th April

2 Holly Blues in the garden at **Royston today** - Simon Rasch

Sunday 24th April - HOT NEWS FROM SHARON HEARLE (NOT HERTS BUT SIGNIFICANT) - 3 Green Hairstreak today on Devil's Dyke near Newmarket -If the sun starts shining again be ready for Grizzled Skipper and Green Hairstreak - LG

Spotted a pristine **Speckled Wood** whilst walking in **Wormley Wood** this afternoon. It was the only butterfly we saw but a real beauty - Roger Newbold

News from 21st, **Beech Farm area**: Plenty of Peacocks and Small tortoiseshells. Also.. Brimstone 1, Orange Tip 1, Small White 1, Green-Veined White (My 1st of year). **Fir & Pond Woods area**: Large White. Also 1 in my **Brookmans Park garden** (1st 2 of year), Orange Tip x 2, Comma. Also several Peacocks around the pond and in Pond Wood - Rupert Pyrah

>Saturday 23rd April

Friday 22nd April

Went out around **North Enfield** today and saw 10 species of butterfly plus a **Humming-bird hawkmoth** - Andrew Middleton

14 small white, 13 orange tip, 12 peacock, 8 small tortoiseshell, 4 brimstone and a holly blue all the sightings were around **Sacombe and Sacombe Green**. Angela had 3 holly blue in **Ware** and Tom had 3 orange tip at **Thundridge school yesterday** 21st april - Nick Sampford

I am playing with a new camera, hence flow of pictures. Two more from Balls Wood today where there were Peacock, Comma, Speckled Wood, Orange Tip, Brimstone, Small, Large and Green-veined whites flying - **Andrew Wood**

Friday 22nd April

Fir and Pond Woods this morning, peacocks x 4, small tortoiseshell x 1, orange tip x 1, brimstone x 1, "whites - unidentified" x 2 - David Gompertz

Peacock, Comma, Brimstone and Small Tortoiseshell at **Pegsdon/Telegraph Hill** this morning. No Green Hairstreak as yet - Nigel Agar

Dobb's Weir, nr Hoddesdon, today, 30min at lunchtime whilst sunny: Brimstone 2, Holly Blue 1, Peacock 8, Orange-tip male and female, Comma 1, Green-veined White 1. Also Moorhen chicks and singing blackcaps. My first butterfly of the year was a Brimstone in February in the French Alps and a Comma at Batford Mill 25 March whilst watching the Waxwings - Trevor Chapman

Thursday 21st April

Brilliant counts of butterflies **today**, 23 orange tips [21 males 2 females] first 2 Green Veined White of the year. 12 peacock, 9 small white, 4 small tortoiseshell, 4 brimstone, 2 holly blue, large white and comma by far the best day of the year. The wayside verges are full of flowers all butterflies seen between **Bishops Stortford and Thundridge**. 4 male orange tips in a stretch of lane together - Nick Sampford

Field behind **St Nick's Church, Stevenage**, 1.30-2.45pm. 23 Tortoiseshell, 18 Peacock, 3 Brimstone 2 male 1 female, 1 Large White, **1 Orange-tip female**, 2 Speckled Wood, 2 Holly Blue. Also 1 early **Lime Hawkmoth** (*photo up later*) near **Stevenage Town centre** - Lee Browne

Ware Widbury Hill. Five species today, Orange tip, Holly blue, Peacock, Brimstone, and Small tortoiseshell, I have never had that many on one day before, in my small patch - Ian Edwards

Found this Brimstone egg laying (*photo to be put up later*) on the chalk bank on the **Meads today**, not a great shot but a good record. I would never have seen the Buckthorn in the scrub if the Brimstone had not have been around. Also several Comma, Peacock, Small Tortoiseshell, Holly Blue around **Ware** today and my first Green-veined White of the year - Andrew Wood

Speckled Wood, Wilbury area suburban **Letchworth**; Peacock and Comma, **Purwell Ninesprings NR**; Orange Tip along Ippolits brook Oakfield estate **Hitchin** - Nigel Agar

Sightings from 1st butterfly walk of the season, new site fields behind **Great Ashby Park**. 1 Speckled Wood, 5 Small Tortoiseshell, 3 Peacocks, 3 Green-veined Whites, 1 Comma and 2 Brimstones. All photos taken today (*to be put up later*) - Steve Lane and Ian Hardy

I saw my first orange tip on the 18/04/2005 along the A1000 at TL259039 (**Brookmans Park**) - Ian Hardy

News from **17 April: Ermine Street (on way to Balls Wood)**: holly blue and speckled wood. **Balls Wood**: orange tip and speckled wood. **18 March, Redburn Industrial Estate, Ponders End**: comma and **19 March, Sewardstone Marsh**. Two brimstones, plus four species at 11.50am on the same pollen-laden willow bush in warm sunshine - **red admiral**, (over-wintering?) small tortoiseshell, peacock and comma - Martin Shepherd

Monday 18th April

The **Holly Blue** I took **today**. It's the first female I have seen this year: I particularly like the butterfly's shadow on the rhododendron leaf. The **Peacock** I took on 1 April, but it's not really a record, I suppose. This was a butterfly that was found in November exhausted on the floor in the house. After administering some sugar water it was put on some kitchen paper in a Greek Yoghurt pot and spent the winter in the garage. It seemed to wake up properly for the first time on April Fool's Day. After giving it some more sugar water I took it outside and put it on some pussy willow which I had brought home for the purpose when in bud some weeks before. It fed on this, allowing me to take pictures for a couple of minutes before suddenly flying off - Archie Lang

First **large white** of year in garden at **Thundridge** and **6 peacock, 2 small tortoiseshells, Comma, small white and a orange tip** all at **Sacombe Church** - Nick Sampford

St. Albans garden : **1 Green-veined White** - Malcolm Hull

Ware garden: **1 Large White** - Liz Goodyear

Sunday 17th April

We saw our **first Holly Blue**, a female with her wings half-open on the Gooseberry bushes & our **first Comma** on the Plum blossom, in my mother's garden transect in **King's Langley** - David and Violet Chandler

Trent Park area - **1 male Brimstone, 1 male Holly Blue, 4 Speckled Woods and 1 male Orange Tip** and 174 24-spot ladybirds, also Orange and Pine - Robert Callf

In the **Buntingford area** - **Holly Blue** at **Great Hormead, 2 Orange Tips** at **Cherry Green and Westmill**, also **2 Brimstone, 2 comma, 16 peacock, 12 small tortoiseshell and 4 small white** - Nick Sampford

Shepreth L Moor NR and SSSI (just into Cambs), 14:00-15:39. Weather: sunshine, but with cool breeze **Brimstone: 2-4m, ?1f, Speckled Wood: 1, Holly Blue: 2, Small Tortoiseshell: 3-6, Green-veined White: 4 & Peacock: 1** - Guy Manners

Several **Orange Tips** out this morning - 1 at the **Commons LNR, Welwyn Garden City**, 1 in **Balls Wood** and several at **Hertford Heath** - Christine Shepperson

Ware garden - a nice selection of butterflies this morning - **1 Peacock, 1 Speckled Wood, 1 Green-veined White, both male and female Brimstone** nectaring on Honesty and regular visits from a **Holly Blue**, which at one point was taking salts from a patch of mud on the lawn where the guinea pigs had been a few week previous. However, no Orange Tips yet - Liz Goodyear

One male Holly Blue, Sat 16 April, Melbourn village at 13:55 BST, disturbed by gardening activities - Guy Manners

Wednesday 13th April

On one of my occasional visits to the **Chelsea Physic Garden today** I was surprised to see a **Holly Blue** flying in cool cloudy weather - Malcolm Newland

Ware on **11th April**, along the old Lea Widbury Hill, **one Holly Blue, one Peacock** - Ian Edwards

Tuesday 12th April

I have just come back from a holiday in Rajasthan, India and would like some help identifying some butterflies I saw, photos above, the upper wings of the black and white butterfly were similar to the under wing and the other ones upper wings are white with a single black dot on the front wing, I also saw Plain Tiger, Blue Pansy and Large White. In my garden yesterday in **Stevenage 1 Brimstone, 2 Peacocks and Green-veined White** - Steve Lane

Today, just **1 Peacock** at **Bishops Stortford** - Nick Sampford

Monday 11th April

News from Robert Callf **today, 1 Orange Underwing** moth on a bramble bush in **Trent Park**. Also a **Green-veined white** and 2 unidentified whites. Robert also found a colony of Kidney Spot Ladybirds on a willow he was checking and in the last few days he's seen/found: Pine, 16 spot, 24 spot, 10 spot and the common 7 spot ladybird in Trent Park

First **Orange tip** of the year today in my **Brookmans Park garden**. Also **Small Tortoiseshell, Holly Blue and Peacock** - Rupert Pyrah

News from Nick Sampford - Tom informed me that he had a **Orange Tip** by **Thundridge old church** on **Saturday 9th April** while walking the dogs with a mate and his dad. I asked him to describe it and he said "Shut up Dad it was an orange tip I know what they look like as you've shown me so many!" Tom also has had **brimstone** on **Sunday 10th April** in his Nan's garden [**Wadesmill**] and a **peacock lunchtime today** 11th April which he showed his class mates on the way to dinner - Also from Nick today, **Sunday's news** - all sightings in **Westmill/Buntingford** area: **Brimstone 4, all male; Peacock 4; Small Tortoiseshell 1. Monday's news:** all sightings in **Bishop Stortford/Much Hadham/Thundridge** area - **Brimstone, 17 [16 m 1 f]; Peacock 27; Small Tortoiseshell 11, Small White 4, Orange tip 1 and Comma 1**. The Orange Tip was by Thorley lights Bishops Stortford. Also Angela had **peacock, brimstone and small white butterfly** along Ware Road,

Hertford this morning.

Saw my first **Holly Blue** of the year but not in my garden. Still in **Hemel Hempstead** where I also saw a **Peacock** on Grape Hyacinth. Only one m. **Brimstone** with unidentified white and something very fast which could have been a Red Admiral flying over at home - Malcolm Newland

On **Sunday**, a male **Green-veined White** along Hilfield Lane just south of Patchetts Green near **Aldenham** - Colin Everett

I saw my 1st **Holly Blue** of the year **yesterday** at **Stockers Lake**. Also **4 Small tortoiseshell, 3 Peacock a Comma and a Brimstone** - Steve Pash

Sunday 10th April

Hemel Hempstead, saw my first **male Orange Tip** of the year in the garden today along with several passing male **Brimstones**. At my allotment garden another male **Brimstone** along with two clashing **Peacocks** - Malcolm Newland

Saw our first **male Orange-tip** today at 15:00 hours, just north of the **Amwell Gravel Pit viewpoint**. Several **Peacocks and a Brimstone** also - Phil and Carrin Rhodes

I saw my first **Holly Blue** of the year today. There were two in my garden most of the afternoon (**Welwyn Garden City**). I also saw a few **Peacocks and a single Brimstone** at **Waterend**- Steve Chilton

Saw my first **Holly Blue** of the year in my garden (**Hertford**) this afternoon - Alan Reynolds

Smallford Pit , 11.30 this morning, a **Holly Blue** - Christine Shepperson

I saw a **comma lay on blackcurrant** in my garden this pm (in **Tring** Herts.). A single egg on upper surface of semi shaded leaf about 50cm from ground in a mixed hedge. Also in the garden, the 4 hibernators were joined by my first **Small White** of '04 - Nick Bowles

Monday 4th April

BUTTERFLY TRANSECTS 2005.

To those of you who walk a butterfly transect, this is a reminder that the transect season started on April 1st (Friday), and that therefore all weeks this year start on a Friday and run to the following Thursday. If you know that you are going to have to miss any particular week, please arrange for someone you know to walk it if possible. Otherwise, let me know and I will try and find a replacement walker. This is particularly important in July and the first half of August (weeks 14 to 20) when many species reach maximum numbers. Best of luck, John Murray

These sightings are from me and Simon Rasch - we had a slightly better day yesterday same area around **Westmill/Buntingford**, **19 peacock, 16 small tortoiseshell, 3 brimstone, 2 comma & small white**. Also Simon had a **Holly Blue** at Bullsmoor Lane, **Cheshunt** yesterday morning - Nick Sampford

Sunday 3rd April

Northaw Great Wood, **2 x Brimstone, 4+ Peacock. Tyttenhanger, several Peacocks & 2 Small tortoiseshells. Brookmans Park 1 x Peacock in garden** - Rupert Pyrah

The first transect of the season at **Bricket Wood** produced **eight Peacocks, seven Brimstones (including two females) and single Comma & Small Tortoiseshell**. More impressive was the frequency with which I encountered **orange underwing moths** (*Archiearis spp.*) along the muddy rides: a total of at least 32 were disturbed from such situations along the route, perhaps imbibing fluid or salts. A **male Holly Blue** was also seen on a footpath (although after the transect had been completed, so it will not figure in the results) - Colin Everett

Saturday 2nd April

Had a few butterflies today, **18 peacocks, 8 comma, 4 Brimstone and 2 small tortoiseshell**. They were around the **Westmill/Cherry Green area** with **6 commas** nectaring on blackthorn between **Westmill and Aspenden**. All sightings were from 1.30 to 3 - Nick Sampford

Stevenage, Roebuck Woodland, 2 - 2.30pm. **9 Tortoiseshell, 6 Peacock, 2 Comma, 1 Brimstone. Fairlands Valley**, 4 - 5pm. **7 Peacock, 3 Comma, 2 Small Tortoiseshell, 1 Brimstone** - Lee Browne

Lots of butterflies today. In **Brookmans Park garden** **Brimstone x 1, Holly Blue x 1** (1st of year), **Comma x 1, Peacock x 2**. In the **North Mymms area**, **18+ Peacock** spread around the park, **2 x Small tortoiseshell, 1 x Large White (1st of year), 1+ Comma** - Rupert Pyrah

Haven't noticed a record of these little rascals on the sightings page yet, so

2 Speckled Wood seen at **Railway Fields, Haringey**, this afternoon on another gloriously warm and sunny spring day with a bonus of a **male Small White** nectaring on Lesser Celandine, something I don't remember having seen before - Keir Mottram

Friday 1st April

After a butterfly-less few days, a **Peacock and a Comma** were seen 200 yds south of **Brookmans Park** railway station this afternoon - Rupert Pyrah

A male **Holly Blue** on Cherry Laurel bushes adjacent to a holly hedge in gardens at **Garston** near Watford - Colin Everett

Melbourn butterfly sightings, **Small Tortoiseshell - 1, Brimstone - 1 (poss 2) male and possible Comma**. Tostock Farm (a little before noon) - Guy Manners

March 2005

Monday 28th March

1 x **Small Tortoiseshell** at **Tyttenhanger Farm** this afternoon - Rupert Pyrah

Seen at **Ashridge, near The Bridgwater Monument** (nr Berkhamsted) today for the first time in 2005 **1 Comma** - David Chandler

Sunday 27th March

On **Saturday 26th March** - In **Berrygrove Wood near Aldenham** an unidentified **orange underwing moth** (*Archiearis* sp.) basking for several minutes on a sun-soaked woodland ride. Frustratingly, I had forgotten to bring my net (spring always takes me by surprise!) so I could not confirm beyond doubt my suspicions that it may have been the less common species, *A. notha* (the Light Orange Underwing). The larval pabulum of this species is Aspen, of which a number of trees are extant in this aggressively coniferised wood alongside the birch favoured by *A. parthenias*. Also at the site were a Comma, a calling Tawny Owl and displaying Stock Doves. Nearby in the **Bushey** area were widespread **Small Tortoiseshells and Peacocks** and the occasional male **Brimstone**. The previous weekend (**Saturday 19th March**) a day-long walk between **Berkhamsted and Garston** produced **Small Tortoiseshell in six tetrads, Peacock in four, Brimstone (all males) in three and Comma in two**. Overall the four hibernating species seem to be present in fairly typical numbers - Colin Everett

Can anyone help Toby Austin with identities of these butterflies seen in Namibia in December 2004 - Thanks to Pat Bonham and Torben Larsen via Eddie John for help with identifying these 3 species. **Pat suggested** "that the bluey-grey underwings might belong to the *Mimosa Sapphire* (*Iolus mimosae*) and the "orange-tip" is some *Colotis* sp but too blurred and the yellow thing I really don't know!" **From Eddie John** "I put your question to Torben Larsen, who is about to complete a major book on the Butterflies of West Africa (covering the 15 countries between Senegal and Nigeria, from the tropical rainforests to the edge of the Sahara desert: Mauritania, The Gambia, Senegal, Guinea-Bissau, Mali, Guinea, Sierra Leone, Liberia, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Togo, Bénin, Nigeria, and Niger). So although Namibia is quite some distance away I felt he might be familiar with at least some of the species! He has replied: "We have *Mylothris chloris agathina* (L) and *Colotis euipe omphale* (R). The *Lycaenid* must be a *Hypolycaena*, but the uns markings are quite faint and it lacks the usual black spot of the genus. Hope this helps - Eddie"

Saturday 26th March

Seen at **King's Langley** for the first time in 2005 in Vi Chandler's garden on Saturday **1 Small**

Tortoiseshell - Dave Chandler

Hemel Hempstead, could only manage one **Small Tortoiseshell** (allotment) and one **male Brimstone** (garden) - Malcolm Newland

Today, Holly Blue on peach blossom, **Freezywater, Enfield** - Brian Dawton

3 x Small tortoiseshell in a group 200 yds south of **Brookmans Park station** on west side of track. Also **1 x Peacock** 30yds closer to station. And in my **Brookmans Park garden 1 x Peacock** - Rupert Pyrah

Today in Tring a short walk around the field at the back of house **14 Small Tortoiseshell, 3 Brimstone, 2 Peacock and 2 Comma** - Nick Bowles

Friday 25th March

One **Small Tortoiseshell** on my allotment in **Dark Lane, Cheshunt** this morning and then this afternoon whilst walking around **Bramfield, two Commas, two Small Tortoiseshells and one Peacock** enjoying the Spring sunshine - Roger Newbold

Thursday 24th March

Ware on **18th March**, River Lea - Widdbury Hill area, **Brimstone and Small Tortoiseshell**. Same area **today** a **Peacock** - Ian Edwards

Wednesday 23rd March

Today....Brimstone - **Brookmans Park garden. North Mymms Park** area: **1 Brimstone, 1 Comma, 3 Peacock and 1 Small Tortoiseshell** - Rupert Pyrah

Monday 21st March

North Herts today, 1 very tatty Peacock and an **Orange Underwing moth** (not confirmed but stacks of silver birch nearby) - Liz Goodyear

During a 90min visit to **Aldbury Nowers** on **Friday 18 March**, my first of the year specifically for butterflies, I noted: **Peacock - 3, Small Tortoiseshell - 2, Brimstone - 2 and Comma - 2** - Mike Pearson

Sunday 20th March

On **Sat 19th** at **Bricket Wood Common** in 1 hour I saw **2 Brimstone (both male), 2 Peacock & 2 Comma** - Malcolm Hull

Saturday 19th March

Took advantage of lovely sunny day on **Saturday** to have walk around **Maple Cross and West Hyde** - TQ0292 and TQ0391. Saw **2 commas, 2 peacocks and 21!! small tortoiseshells**. Some were basking but a lot were spiralling in twos and threes. Temp. was 19deg - Ann Piper

Loads of butterflies at **Ickleford on the 18th March, Brimstones x 12, Small tortoiseshells x 8 plus Peacock x 5 and Comma** - Stuart Pittman

Spring is here hurray! Seen at **King's Langley** in Vi Chandler's garden: **March 18th Small White & Green Veined White**, and **Saturday March 19th a Peacock. Watford Cassiobury Park** area:(near the Watford Town Hall) on **Saturday March 19th a Peacock** - David Chandler

Brookmans Park - garden: **1x Comma, 1x Peacock, Beech Farm** - 1 x **Small tortoiseshell** - Rupert Pyrah

Out and about in the **Ware area** - **Small Tortoiseshell, Peacock and Comma** but not one Brimstone although my daughter saw one in my **Ware garden** whilst I was out! - Liz Goodyear

Friday 18th March

On walk round **Maple Cross** Farm Footpath I saw **4 small tortoiseshells** midday. The first of the year! Ann Piper

Hemel Hempstead, first **Peacock** seen in the garden today. Again it was the pale purple crocus which proved attractive. Just need a Small Tortoiseshell to complete the set - Malcolm Newland

I saw a **Small Tortoiseshell** in Wisden Road, **Stevenage** this lunch time - Steven Penn

Manor Crescent, **Hitchin** 10.45 to 11.45, **1 male and 1 female** Yellow **Brimstone**, **Holly Blue**, **2 Comma** and at 14.45 **1 Peacock**. Also 1 Green Lacewing also 9 Ladybirds, numerous gnats and drone bees. I think Spring is here at last! - Val Fullforth

Brimstone (male) today in **Brookmans Park garden**, 1st Spring butterfly - Rupert Pyrah

Here's today's sightings for me and Simon Rasch. We were out together - also first two photos of the year for you (*will go up in a while*). **Small Tortoiseshell and Brimstone at Thundridge**, **Brimstone at Ware [Kingsway]**, **Brimstone, Small tortoiseshell & Peacock at Cherry Green**, **Buntingford** and a **Brimstone at Royston** - Nick Sampford and Simon Rasch

Just had a **Brimstone** in my front garden in **Tring**. Also numerous **Brimstones**. **1 comma and a peacock at Wendover Woods** - just outside our area but very nice all the same - Jez Perkins

News from **Trent Park**, **4 Commas**, **1 Peacock** and **2 Small Tortoiseshells** today - Robert Callf (*Robert had been going out early and missing the butterflies until today and will be sending a weekly report from Trent Park*)

Our first sightings of the season today at **Norton Green, Stevenage**, a pair of **Small Tortoiseshells** and **2 Brimstone** - Malcolm & Christine Penn

Thurs 17th March

Another **male brimstone** at **High Wych** this afternoon - Nick Sampford

Peacock and Small Tortoiseshell at my allotment in **Hemel Hempstead**. In the garden several male Brimstones flew over, two stopping to nectar on purple crocus which also attracted a Comma - Malcolm Newland

Some more sightings today for you. **Single Comma, Peacock, and Small Tortoiseshell** at **St. Albans**. Most interesting of all a **Hummingbird Hawk Moth**, in **Abbots Langley** this afternoon. Seen at close quarters moving along a single story extension, before flying off into the wind - Clive Burrows

This lunchtime at **Ally Pally** in the Conservation Area in gorgeously warm sunshine under cloudless skies though with a stiffish breeze (possible duplicates omitted): **2 Small Tortoiseshell; 2 Comma; 1 Brimstone; 1 Peacock** - Keir Mottram

Today in Garden **N.W. Bishop's Stortford**, **3 Small Tortoiseshell, 2 Comma, 1 Brimstone, 1 Peacock** - Jim Fish

One male Brimstone and **one peacock** in back garden, Woodside, **Watford** - Bob Cripps

A nice male Brimstone in the garden today. At Eliot Road **Royston** - Simon Rasch

One male Brimstone, Abington (Cambs), over A1307, today just before noon - Guy Manners

1 male Brimstone in **Bishops Stortford** this morning and **2 males yesterday** at **Much Hadham** - Nick Sampford

Wed 16th March

1 Comma, 1 Peacock and 1 male Brimstone on **Poors Field, Ruislip** - Steve Pash

Birchall Wood, **Panshanger**, Welwyn Garden City - **2 Comma, 3 Peacock, 4+ Brimstone** - Steve Chilton

I saw **1 male Brimstone and 2 Small Tortoiseshells** in **Ware** today - Andrew Wood

One **Comma** to report "sunbathing" in the garden (**Hemel Hempstead**). By a coincidence it was March 16th last year when I saw my first butterfly of the season - Malcolm Newland

Just to say I saw a **Small Tortoiseshell** today at work in somebody's garden, in **Abbots Langley** - Clive Burrows

Two sightings today, **Brimstone** at **Stanwell Moor**, Middx. Also **Small Tortoiseshell** in my **Ashford** garden, Middx - Ken Purdey

2 **Brimstones** seen this morning in **Berkhamsted**. The first butterflies I have seen this year - Michael Anderson

A **Brimstone** was delighting me in my garden at lunchtime here in **Tring**. I only went out to see if the washing was dry (ahead of predicted rain) and it was flying with difficulty around a clump of ivy. If I had simply looked out the window I wouldn't have been able to see it - Nick Bowles

Today at **Fir and Pond Woods** -2 working party volunteers reported seeing a **Brimstone**. I saw a **Peacock!** -David Gompertz

Around the **Bayford** area this morning, **5 Brimstone and 2 Commas** - Andrew Middleton and Liz Goodyear

Brimstone on the **Pegsdon Hills** this morning -Nigel Agar

Tues 15th March

Just to let you know that I saw my first butterfly of the year today flying past my office window in **Welwyn Garden City** at about 1.30, a **Small Tortoiseshell** - Ian Small

Sat 12th March

Its about time we saw some butterflies - even moths are being elusive!

Tues 1st March

Visitors to this page might be interested in visiting Hitchin Museum to see the 'The "Wild" Life of Brian...' exhibition. This special exhibition is marking the career and retirement of Brian Sawford, Countryside Officer for NHDC, for nearly 40 years and author of the Butterflies of Hertfordshire. I have seen the exhibition and it truly is a wonderful display of Brian's wildlife photos. It is well worth seeing and the exhibition runs until the 19th March - [Click here for more details](#) - LG

February 2005

Sun 5th February - The King's Mead Report 2004 is now online at www.geocities.com/kingsmead2. It contains a section on butterflies - Alan Reynolds

Sat 4th February - Yesterday, on a cold, damp and cloudy day, a **Peacock** butterfly decided to brave the weather and flutter around **King's Mead** - Alan Reynolds

January 2005

Mon 31st January - My pupa had to move with me to Scotland from Ireland since I was reluctant to leave it behind uncared for. But anyway about 3 days ago, a small but interesting moth emerged after spending time in an Altoids tin and being moved from bag to suitcase and so on. It's now flying around my flat in Edinburgh but I'm not sure if it will feed. It'll probably be one of the most travelled moths in the world and I might enter it into the Guinness Book of (Moth) World Records (: - Bob Hazra (see entry 31st December)

Sun 23rd January - Red Admiral in flight today by hedge separating Beech Farm from Hatfield Aerodrome - Rupert Pyrah

12th January - Robert Callf has just rung to say that he saw a Red Admiral flying at Vicarage Farm, Trent Park in Middlesex this morning at 11.40am!