

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 buzy 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 gully, 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
Robert 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 see 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 sallows 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. Ippollyts 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 willow, 11.01 male over willow, 11.20 male over willow and along ride towards car park, 11.22 female high over oak and willow 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 an 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 shallows 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 **Bishps 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 hawk and southern hawk 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 sallows 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 hoards 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 shallows 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 hornety 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 sallows** 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