

Archive Page

Sightings and news from July to December 2006

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This page contains sightings details of all the butterflies and moths reported to the [Sightings page](#) between July and December 2006.

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 2006

Thursday 28th December

When you think it is all over for sightings of butterflies this year, it isn't! On the way to **Kew Gardens** for the ice skating today the 28th December on the **Chiswick roundabout**, I spotted a Red Admiral flying past. Then while waiting for the children to get their boots on at the ice rink another Red Admiral flew past, probably disturbed from its hibernation from the massive influx of people, or the fact it was a very warm day for this time of year? If this is the result of global warming, well it's not all bad!! Helen George

My father told me that he saw a butterfly in Bronte Paths, **Stevenage** this morning. I assume it was a Red Admiral (just hope it wasn't a wind blown leaf!). It was very warm today, with lots of insects and one or two bees in my garden but despite all my attention no butterflies appeared - Phil Bishop

Tuesday 26th December

I enjoyed today even more with a totally unexpected Red Admiral flying along the eaves of my house and then the neighbours, at about 10.45 this am - weather was grey, dull and 5C. Evidently looking to get into somewhere warm and presumably lured out of its resting place under false pretence. Not Red Admiral conditions - I was so surprised that I called for a witness to make sure it wasn't simply christmas spirit! My latest ever UK butterfly and not forgetting to mention that I live in **Tring** - not a soft, south coastal location with mild temperatures. Best wishes for 2007, Nick Bowles

Wednesday 20th December

Ware, just returning from the shops at 11 o'clock - got out the car and could see a Red Admiral flying around the front of my neighbours' houses. Air temperature reading in the car was 0 degrees and only an hour earlier I had spent 10 minutes scrapping the ice off it - by 11 o'clock the fronts of the houses were basked in glorious winter sunshine! - Liz Goodyear

Tuesday 19th December

A Red Admiral in **North Watford** this afternoon; it flew around buildings, traffic lights and a bus stop in the St Albans Road opposite Regent Street before heading away down Bruce Grove. The maximum air temperature at Garston was only 4 degrees C but the afternoon was sunny with just a light breeze - Colin Everett

Sunday 17th December

More!! Monthly Working Party **Fir and Pond Woods HMWT NR** - 3 red admirals seen by working party volunteers - David Gompertz

Had a Red Admiral in the back garden **yesterday**, 16th December - in **New Southgate** - Tom Clarke

Saturday 16th December

3.15pm.... **Fir and Pond Woods HMWT NR** ... red admiral flying along the path on the north side

of the meadow - David Gompertz

A good friend of mine travelling on the Circle Line today between Victoria and Paddington stations saw a Red Admiral flying around inside her carriage! An unusual sighting to say the least and a quicker way to get from A to B! - Malcolm Newland

Tuesday 12th December

I had a single Red Admiral on **Saturday** 7th Dec, flying and basking in the sun on euonamus leaves in my **Borehamwood** garden, it was rather pale and worn, if it survived the frost on Saturday night it may even now be holed up somewhere, I wonder is there any idea just what low temps they can endure in the winter hibernation - Jim Terry

Sunday 10th December

I had another Red Admiral on **Saturday** 9th December at about 12:00, in **Garston, Watford** - Bob Cripps

Saturday 9th December: Government Row, Enfield Lock: Red Admiral heading south at 14.04 in cold sunny conditions. It was bumping against brickwork and upper windows - trying to warm up? Martin Shepherd

5 Dec. Red Admiral flitting round my garden in **Hatfield** around 10.30, despite the dull sky & cold wind. I wonder if it was disturbed by birds foraging or shrubs flailing in the wind. This is the 1st sighting since 5 November & latest ever - John Moss

Hampton Middx 11.45am **4th December**, I was so amazed to look out of the window today and notice a Red Admiral butterfly sunning itself on my car that I just had to tell somebody - in addition to my wife that is - Raymond Wren

Hitchin, on Saturday 9 December at 12.30 am, I was cutting down the buddleia 'tree' and removing ivy from the base and obviously disturbed a Red Admiral which flew off into the adjacent beech hedge. This corner of the garden gets all day sunshine and is well protected - Val Fullforth

Robin Law reported two Red Admirals at **Folly Lane Allotments, St Albans** on **Tuesday 5** December. Tom Hull reported a single Red Admiral at **West Hampstead** Siverlink Railway Station on **Saturday 25 November** - news via Malcolm Hull

Saturday 9th December

Hemel Hempstead, Red Admiral on usual Hebe at allotment midday in cold but sunny conditions. I had my camera with me hoping to get a shot of it nectaring but it would not cooperate - Malcolm Newland

1 Red Admiral flying around a pear tree at the junction of Cowper Crescent and The Avenue in **Bengeo, Hertford** at 1315 today - Andrew Wood

Wednesday 6th December

Red Admiral at rooftop height at midday in a garden in **Hemel Hempstead**. Malcolm Newland

Andy Brown (our reserve officer for **Hertford Heath**) saw a red admiral (and a common darter dragonfly) there this morning - Tim Hill

Ware, I was just about to go out but was convinced I should see a Red Admiral in my front garden. I was rewarded almost instantly by seeing one fly from my neighbour's garden and up over the house - Liz Goodyear

Tuesday 5th December

Just to do Steve Murray I have just had a Red Admiral in the back garden, **Woodside, Watford**, today, 5/12/2006 at 13:30. It seemed to me to be looking for a place to hibernate, as it appeared to be looking around the roof space on the kitchen - Bob Cripps

Monday 4th December

During a short visit to my **Hemel Hempstead** allotment this morning I saw a Red Admiral again nectaring on Hebe at 10.15 a.m. before it moved to sun itself on a metal wheelbarrow. This

sighting beats my late record for this species which was 3.12.2001 in my own garden - Malcolm Newland

Started by **west Ware** lunchtime walk in bright sunshine, but by 1230 it was at least 7/8 overcast. I turned into Clarkes Close, a road I have never been down before, to find a Red Admiral flying quite strongly round in circles over the road, before disappearing eastwards. My first ever December butterfly - Andrew Wood

Sunday 3rd December

A Red Admiral was seen today at **Tyttenhanger gravel pits** by Steve Murray - news via Bob Cripps

A single Red Admiral was seen on the **2nd of December** in my back garden (**Chiswell Green** area) I can't remember ever sighting anything but a hibernating butterfly in December before now. Also picked a few raspberries today which is equally unusual - Alan Gardiner

November 2006

Thursday 30th November

2 red admirals and 1 comma recorded in Havers Lane, **Bishop's Stortford** yesterday (29.11.06) Looks like there will be some for December - news via Jono Forgham

Wednesday 29th November

Saw two Red Admirals nectaring on Hebe in brilliant sunshine on the allotment (**Hemel Hempstead**) this morning - Malcolm Newland

Thought you'd like to know I saw a Winter Moth today. As I was staggering along with a brushcutter at **Stanmore Country Park** one floated into the fallen leaves beside me. I picked it up and it crawled around on my hand for a few seconds before floating away into a bramble bush - John Hollingdale

4 Red Admirals and 1 Comma on the west side of **Ware** this lunchtime - Andrew Wood

Ware garden, 1 Red Admiral basking in the early morning sunshine on my house number (which just happens to be a Purple Emperor)- Liz Goodyear

Monday 27th November

Robert Callf called with news of Robin White's November sightings ~ painted lady **Nov 1st north Enfield**, and comma **Nov 4th** Vicarage Farm, **Enfield** - news via Andrew Middleton

I'm slightly dumbstruck (a rarity for me) that I have seen another Red Admiral in my neighbour's garden today (**Hampstead**). Sadly the photo was poor, because of the shade area - the Red Admiral was sunning itself in the sunlit area - it stayed there for a while then fluttered off in a very leisurely way - clearly enjoying the relatively warm sunshine - Mark Barclay

Friday 24th November

1 Red Admiral seen last Sunday pm (18th) in **Benington** on Walkern Road. Seen quite a few late ones this year but that was the last - Richard

Thursday 23rd November

1 active Red Admiral seen morning of 21/11 at **Little Heath** (nr. Potters Bar) bottom of Orchard Way in a front Garden. Weather was sunny and still - David Martens

Sunday 19th November: Red Admiral, 1 on a 'sunny-side' wall at **Hitchin** Cricket Club - Roger Hicks

Hampstead, this year has seen my late record sighting - I started taking photos of Red Admirals in my neighbour's garden on 27th October. I've attached two photos - the first one, if you look carefully, has 4 Red Admirals and the second one, just one Red Admiral - but this was taken on 15th November - what a joy, so late in the year. Quick anecdote re my earliest sighting. It was a cold and frosty (but bright) morning, as they say, on 15th February, 3 years ago. I had to drive to

Worksop on a business trip. I arrived early and parked my car in the open air town centre car park. It was sunny, but certainly cold. To my amazement I saw two Peacock butterflies gently frolicking and then settling happily on the tarmac to absorb the rays. I realise they may have been disturbed from hibernation, but they seemed to be genuinely relishing the sunshine - they obviously breed them tough in Worksop - Mark Barclay

Tuesday 21st November

News from Malcolm Hull: **Sunday 19** - 2 Red Admirals at Folly Lane **St Albans** at 11-11.30, **Monday 20** - Red Admiral on **Harpenden Common** at 11.15

Hemel Hempstead, solitary Red Admiral sunning itself on south facing brick wall at allotment at about 11.30 a.m. No shortage of nectar as right next to the wall is a pale purple Hebe c 6ft tall and of similar width which is in full bloom! - Malcolm Newland

Monday 20th November

I saw a Red Admiral fly across a friend's garden in Grove Hill, **Hemel Hempstead** this morning - Malcolm Newland

Sunday 19th November

A Red Admiral at **Batlers Green (Radlett)** in the early afternoon. Also a queen bumble bee *Bombus* (probably *terrestris*) at nearby Blackbirds Farm and an abundance of moths in woodland at Bricket Wood just after dark (those I checked were Scarce Umber) - Colin Everett

A report of a Clouded Yellow at **Gubblecote** - news via Nick Bowles

...during a successful working party in **Fir and Pond Woods NR**....one red admiral (and 2 common darters) on the meadow - David Gompertz

To my joy, 2 Red Ads sunbathing by the football pitch at back of my house in **Tring** while I watched some Sunday league and one of them laid an egg (19th Nov). So now I have two larvae under observation and yet another egg to watch. Both larvae inside tents so i don't know if they are continuing to grow or simply quiescent -conundrum is that if i open the tent to find out I will probably kill them. Shall have to continue checking and maybe eventually the larvae will move to a new leaf. Tring AFC reserves were losing by 3 goals - so I came home, while the egg laying was still a far greater pleasure than the football was a disappointment - Nick Bowles

Just after 2pm, a Red Admiral seen flying north across a nearby road, then about 2.30 a Red Admiral flew south across my **Ware** garden - Liz Goodyear

Tuesday 14th November

Sunday 12th 1 Red Admiral in the garden in **Bengeo**, **Monday 13th**, 5 red Admirals in various bits of western **Ware**, Tuesday 14th only my second blank day this November - Andrew Wood

Monday 13th November

I had a single Red Admiral in my garden in **Letchworth** on Sunday 12th November - Ian Small

Sunday 12th November

Tring, I took another look at the red admiral eggs I saw laid last week as I couldn't find any butterflies. I was slightly surprised to see two of the eggs unhatched and one now larva. Also one other larvae very close by which was being visited by a wasp (presumed parasitic) that seemed unable to penetrate the larval tent - Nick Bowles (*photos will be posted later*)

Ware garden, 1 Red Admiral on my buddleia - Liz Goodyear

Saturday 11th November

Friday 10th November 1 Red Admiral on the Bourne in **Ware**, **Saturday 11th November** 1 Red Admiral in **Stevenage Station** car park - Andrew Wood

Friday 10th November

Like Clive Burrows, I too saw a **Holly Blue** on **Nov 9th**, flying high in my garden in **Pinner**,

Middlesex. Another (or the same specimen) was seen here two days previously. I have never seen Holly Blues flying so late in the season before - Graham Elcombe

Thursday 9th November

Saw a **Holly Blue** this morning at 1140 hrs. Flew just above head height in the sunshine across garden in Hatfield Road **St. Albans** - Clive Burrows

Today at lunchtime on the west side of **Ware** 9 Red Admirals and 1 Painted Lady - Andrew Wood

Wednesday 8th November

Ware, amazingly a Peacock feeding on white Hebe at 1pm today in a very brief burst of watery sunshine, though it wasn't cold like yesterday - Andrew Wood

IMPORTANT NOTICE: There will be a conservation work day at **Millhoppers Reserve** on **Thursday 9th November** between 10:00 - 15:30. We will be raking the meadow areas after they have been cut. It would be great if you could come along and lend a hand. Tools, tea, coffee (and maybe chocolate biscuits) provided by the Countryside Management Service - Jez Perkins, Projects Officer, Countryside Management Service

Tuesday 7th November

News from **5th November, Cheshunt Marsh**, near Bowyers Water: White Sp at distance (12.05). **6th November**, BP Garage, A10, **Cheshunt**: Red Admiral heading south at 10.10 - Martin Shepherd

Hemel Hempstead sightings: 26/10 Red Admiral 27/10 3 Red Admirals and a Painted Lady (new late record), 31/10 Red Admiral, 2/11 Red Admiral, 3/11 Red Admiral, 4/11 Peacock, 5/11 Red Admiral. Hoping to see more especially on my South African Buddleia Auriculata - Malcolm Newland

We had a very late speckled wood at **Railway Fields November 5th** - at the start of our annual fungus foray (now in its 17th consecutive year!)- David Bevan

Monday 6th November

Over the weekend, and again today, Monday, a single Red Admiral has been patrolling my garden (**Gaddesden Row**); at times with the air temperature below 10C. I have seen it on three occasions nectaring off the sap of a small ornamental tree (Amelanchier lamarkii), at a point on the trunk just below where the crown of the tree branches out; at an area of bark significantly damaged by the activities of a family of Greater Spotted Woodpeckers, which attend my bird-table - Michael Pearson

A single Red Admiral (Vanessa atalanta) seen yesterday, Sunday 5 November, at 12:50 in a garden in **Welwyn Garden City**. Butterfly flying SSW at ca 1.5m/sec. Sunny, warm(ish) at ca 13 degrees C, with a gentle to moderate westerly breeze and another single Red Admiral today - Jon Sharpe

Still pretty good for the time of year as around the west side of **Ware** today over lunchtime I saw 6 Red Admirals, 2 Commas, 2 Painted ladies and 2 Peacocks - Andrew Wood

Stevenage 1 Red Admiral in very good condition in our lounge today - Ian and Sue Hardy

1 Red Admiral in my **Stevenage** garden this morning, for about 10 minutes before flying south, followed 5 minutes later by a Silver Y moth - Steve Lane

Sunday 5th November

Marooned in a sea of desks at work all week I had to wait until today to look for November butterflies but was pleased to find two Red Ads in the garden (**Tring**). One was a female and when it went over the fence I observed it to lay three eggs in field behind my garden - my first Nov egg laying record. I also believe I saw that rare beast a Small Tort - (probably) it was some distance away when it got up from the ground and flew off straight into the low sun but I am fairly sure based on jizz in flight. Have to admit it could have been a Comma (on size alone)- Nick Bowles

Sawbridgeworth Marsh, 1 Red Admiral still coming to Buddleia today - Mike Harris

At least 5 this morning at **Amwell**. Seemed to have lost the urge to migrate. All flying around rather aimlessly - Alan Reynolds

One Red Admiral briefly in the garden (**Harpenden**) this morning, outside temperature 11 degrees. A peacock later on the patio - Robin Pearson

Saturday 4th November

King's Mead - No Red Admirals today, but a super Clouded Yellow at close range - Alan Reynolds

Enfield Island Village near River Lea: **Small White** at 13.55 - Martin Shepherd

Unusual **Bishop's Stortford** news. This picture shows part of the Pupal case on the thorax of a Painted Lady; does this perhaps suggest it has recently emerged - in which case, wouldn't it likely have emerged in the UK? I had 2 Painted Lady's; 3 Peacocks and 2 Red Admirals feeding on an ice-plant in someone's front garden in Thorley Lane Bishop's Stortford around 1.0pm today. I've never seen Painted Lady's this time of year personally, so for me it's a good record. But this particular individual (the other one was 'normal') looks really unusual. Has anyone seen this before? Also, today a Ruddy Darter (male) and Common Darter along the Stort at Thorley Wash - David Sampson

Having spent a couple of days last weekend diving out in Weymouth bay and off Portland I saw about 10 Red Admirals flying straight out to sea towards the nearest land in France. Going SSE quite fast at about 12 feet off the water. Nice to see we can return a few butterflies in a good year - Trevor Chapman

Friday 3rd November

In **Ware** today 3rd November, at lunchtime I saw a Red Admiral and a Comma on ivy in Ware Cemetery and a Painted Lady on buddleia in Fanshawe Crescent. Earlier, four Red Admirals and a Peacock, all but one Red Admiral nectaring on white hebe at 1030 this morning, the other Red Admiral thermoregulating nearby - Andrew Wood

Thursday 2nd November

3 butterflies today, 2 Red Admirals and 1 Peacock. In fields adjacent to **Great Ashby Park**. - Steve Lane

Five Red Admirals and a Comma on my lunchtime walk around the west side of **Ware** today - Andrew Wood

Ware, at the end of my road this morning at 9 o'clock in 4 degrees (but sunny), a Painted Lady was hurtling around - Liz Goodyear

Wednesday 1st November

Late news from **18th October**, 1 Clouded Yellow at **Rye Meads** - Andrew Palmer

Some November butterflies - **Bengeo**, three Red Admirals thermo regulating on the garden fence this morning around 1130 and one about 40 mins earlier on an Alamanchia (photos attached). A Clouded Yellow at **Waterford Heath South Pit** at lunchtime, quite active, but as I have seen one at virtually the same place on 3rd and 18th Oct is there a small colony, or is it one sticking around? Also one Red Admiral flying around the eaves of a house in Cowper Crescent in Bengeo - Andrew Wood

1 Red Admiral in our **Stevenage** garden today - Ian and Sue Hardy

1 Speckled Wood at **Trent Park** this afternoon, also 2 Red Admirals, 1 at Trent Park and the other in **Oakwood** - Robert Callf

One Red Admiral in our garden in **Stevenage 30/10/06** - Ian and Sue Hardy

Tuesday 31st October

A Red Admiral this morning on my allotment in Coldharbour Lane, **Harpenden** - Alan Jackson

Monday 30th October

A pristine Red Admiral was sunning itself on tree trunks at **Bencroft Wood West car park** (Broxbourne Woods) yesterday morning and afternoon as we were coppicing the hornbeams - Alan Jackson

News from Sunday, **Rye Meads RSPB**, 3 Red Admiral, 25 Common Darter, 3 Migrant Hawker.
Sawbridgeworth Marsh, 1 Red Admiral - Mike Harris

Ware garden, got home at 1.30 (100% cloud but 17.5 degrees) to find 4 Red Admiral nectaring on the buddleia, probably 5 around in total - Liz Goodyear

Whilst walking around **King's Mead** on Sunday, 1 Clouded Yellow, 1 Painted Lady, 1 Peacock and 3 Red Admirals - Alan Reynolds

At 2.15pm yesterday I saw a Small Tortoiseshell sunning itself on the wall opposite **Watford High Street Railway Station** - David Chandler

Sunday 29th October

Trent Park - 1 clouded yellow, 1 red admiral, and a pair of fresh-looking speckled woods interacting - Robert Callf

Just a single red admiral to report in **Maple Cross** this afternoon Oct 29. But lovely to see it enjoying yet another sunny day! Ann Piper

Sunday AM on a dead bulrush leaf by the Pond in **Fir and Pond Woods** NR a small copper!
David Gompertz

I've just had **12 red admirals** at once on ivy over the pergola in our back garden in **Harpenden** (09.45 Sunday 29th October). The most I could get in a single frame on the camera was 5. I have certainly never seen so many red admirals at the same instant, and don't usually expect to get one of the best butterfly moments of the year in late October! Also two commas and a peacock in the garden, but not on that stretch of ivy. - Richard Harrington

Ware garden early morning, 5 Red Admirals and 2 Painted Ladies in my front garden. Making use of the warm south facing brickwork to charge up their batteries and then nectaring on globosa buddleia. Later in morning between **Braughing** and Furneaux Pelham, a Clouded Yellow - Liz Goodyear

Friday 27th October

Two Red Admirals flew south across **Hilfield Reservoir** this morning while I was bird watching - Robin Pearson

King George V Reservoir, Middx/Essex border; 35 Red Admirals south between 11.25 and 12.25 in bright cool conditions with increasing high cloud and SW breeze - 25 in the first half hour. All butterflies at around shoulder height and moving quickly - Martin Shepherd

1 Painted Lady and 5 Red Admirals, **Vicarage Farm** and 2 Red Admirals, **Parkside Farm** - Robert Callf

Thursday 26th October

A clouded yellow was seen by Robin White on **24th** at South Lodge Farm, **Enfield** - news via Robert Callf

A Red Admiral made a brief visit to my **Stevenage** garden at 1pm today, unfortunately the sun disappeared and so did the butterfly - Steve Lane

Tuesday 24th October

Butterflies on the increase in **North-Herts** today Despite heavy overnight rain I added a further three species to my list of Saturday making it six in all. The still fresh common blue must be a 3rd brood individual & continues to get closer to the latest ever sighting for the species of 26/10/97 (Hilfield Park Reservoir; S. Murray) if that's Middlesex? (*confirmed in Herts*) Then the Herts record of 19/10/99 (Shepperson) has gone? Still eight red admirals, a nice small copper flying within feet

of the Common blue as were two basking singletons of Brimstone and Peacock tempted out by the midday sun along with a silver y moth which almost fooled me into believing I'd got eight for the day there, but that would have been greedy. Till I got home that is and a Comma was on the Weyriana Buddleia - Stuart Pittman

All I can add is a Painted Lady as well as Red Admiral in my **Ware** garden at 12.30 this morning also after the rain - Liz Goodyear

Sunday 22nd October

Nice crowd of nymphs yesterday at **Ickleford**, Ten Red admirals and 4 Commas all on one Ivy bush. Best sighting the common blue still flying from previous week in fallow field - Stuart Pittman

Saturday 21st October

3 Red Admirals in **Stevenage** during the afternoon, 2 in my garden and the other outside my daughter's house in Tates Way - Steve Lane

A rather worn Red Admiral was the only butterfly I saw [in my **Harpenden** garden] today - Robin Pearson

Two Red Admirals and One Small White (20/10/06) in my **Stevenage** garden - Ian Hardy

Friday 20th October

Ware garden, 2 Red Admirals and 2 Painted Ladies on my buddleia at 2.30 this afternoon - Liz Goodyear

Thursday 19th October

High Wych, 2 Red Admirals not migrating and **Allen's Green**, 1 Comma - Liz Goodyear

Wednesday 18th October

One small copper seen briefly at lunchtime in Shire park, **Welwyn garden City** - Robin Pearson

Monday 16th October

Hemel Hempstead, Red Admiral numbers in the garden have dwindled to just two today together with a Peacock in beautiful condition which kept coming back to nectar on a tall single pale yellow dahlia - Malcolm Newland

Robert Callf saw 2 Peacocks and 2 Painted Ladies whilst walking around **Parkside and Vicarage Farm** today. Also seen 1 Small White settled at Parkside Farm. Only one definite Red Admiral noted today flying south.

Harpenden, fairly quiet weekend, just three Red Admirals in the garden on Saturday 14th Oct - Robin Pearson

Sunday 15th October

Robert Callf saw 5 red admirals and 2 painted ladies on **Vicarage Farm** and 2 red admirals on **Parkside Farm** today, whilst I had a painted lady arrive in my moth trap sometime between 8 and 10pm last night - Andrew Middleton

Saturday 14th October

Borehamwood, 1 Red Admiral, at 10.05am - trying to get into houses gave up and headed south West at about 5 mph wind assisted - Alex Lewis

News from **12th October, Wilstone Reservoir** (12.30 to 2.30) many Red Admirals seen over a 2 hour period, with 2 to 4 in view on any scan of the reservoir - 2 dozen plus seen, probably many more as passing continually right across reservoir slowly but steadily into the light wind - heading S/SSW - Ed Griffiths

Friday the 13th at Ickleford did not prove unlucky for me with Red admirals x 6 , Painted Lady, common blue, Small copper + speckled wood - Stuart Pittman

Friday 13th October

I saw a Humming-bird Hawk Moth on **Wednesday 11th October** in Cowley Road, **Uxbridge**. I watched it for about 10 minutes before the heavens opened and the downpour began. I may have seen it again on Thursday, but the view was too brief to be certain - Dave Parmenter

News from Robert Callf: 1 female Clouded Yellow near the water garden in **Trent Park**, a Peacock flying around Parkside Farm and about 10 Red Admirals flying south in 3 hours. Robert wasn't specifically looking out for red admirals though.

Tony Baumber saw two clouded yellows by the **King George V Reservoir** today, and I saw another two in the **East India Dock basin area**, watching with Mike Messenger and Gary James - Andrew Middleton

Thursday 12th October

Today (12th October) we have seen a very noticeable mass migration of Red Admirals across the **Rothamsted estate in Harpenden**, Hertfordshire. In a timed 40 min count at noon, 45 individuals were seen flying through a 100-m stretch of open field, and they were all going approx south (estimated vanishing bearings varying between about 170 and 200 degrees), flying into a very light wind from the SSW or SW. This migration has been going on from at least 11:00 am (quite probably earlier) and is ongoing as I write, so enormous numbers must be moving through if this migration is occurring across a broad front throughout the country. I would be extremely interested to hear if anybody else out there has witnessed similar movements today (or in the past few days), or indeed sees similar movements in the future. Please email me with as much detail as possible about any migration observations - Many thanks, Jason Chapman, Rothamsted Research (Email: jason.chapman@bbsrc.ac.uk)

I also saw red admirals moving through today, especially from 11am to 2pm. I watched in Durants Park as they moved SSW - timing a few over 300m gave a ground speed of about 20km/hr - Andrew Middleton

Red admirals moving SSW 12th Oct 06

Site	Number	Time	Minutes	Rate min per butterfly
Epping Forest - Wanstead Flats	6	10:40-11:10	30	5
Epping Forest - Chingford Plain	38	11:25-12:05	40	1
Ponders End - Durants Park	17	13:10-13:30	20	1
Brimsdown Marsh	3	13:50-14:00	10	3
Ramney Marsh	7	14:10-15:10	60	9

Total 71

ground speed measured over 300m equiv to 20km/hr

Three Red Admirals **Stockers Farm** near canal bridge on ivy - Sezar Hikmet

I repeated my walk around **west Ware** this lunchtime and in an hour saw **128 Red Admirals**, 3 Commas, 2 Painted ladies, 1 Peacock and 1 Clouded Yellow. All were feeding on or flying around Ivy, apart from the Clouded Yellow. The Ridgeway, a suburban road with much ivy on one side yielded 44 red Admirals in about 100 metres, when a car drove past the number of butterflies flying up was amazing to watch. Incidentally this road was also the location of the Clouded Yellow, which settled briefly on the grass a couple of times, though long enough to be photographed before flying off - Andrew Wood

Popped home at lunchtime to find 14 RA's and a Comma all on one ivy bush (see photo). Also numerous bees and other insects. Location: **East side of Harpenden** - Robin Pearson

Wednesday 11th October

Yesterday (**Tues 10th**) I watched Red Admirals flying southwards past **Steps Hill**. Saw over 40 in 20 minutes. All flying singly in the same direction. Also 1 Painted Lady and 1 Clouded Yellow - Don Otter

1 Red Admiral briefly in my **Stevenage** garden this morning (11/10/6) - Steve Lane

Monday 9th October

Robert Callf's news: **Trent Park**, Small Copper today (also 3rd and 7th) and 1 Comma. 7 Red Admirals at various locations and a Small White near Silver Street Station in **Edmonton** later.

Just to let you know that I saw a **chalkhill blue** at the top of **Royston Hills** while golfing yesterday (8th oct)- David Heath *David has confirmed that this was a definite male, and was disturbed near the 10th tee which is close to Church Hill on Therfield Heath. If anyone would like to go and look, email me for more details LG*

Sunday 8th October

The southward movement of Red Admirals continued today, including some heading across the open water at **Aldenham Reservoir**. At the latter site there is an active Hornet nest in the top of a 5-metre tall split Scots Pine stump next to the perimeter path (just N of the sailing club HQ) - the fine architecture of the nest clearly visible through close-focusing binoculars - Colin Everett

I saw two clouded yellows on **Tottenham Marshes** yesterday, both bright and in good condition - Quentin Given

Saturday 7th October

Hemel Hempstead, at 11.40 a.m. there were eleven Red Admirals in the garden, the most I have seen since I began keeping records in 1986. One was not much more than half the size of a normal specimen. Joining them were a Comma and a worn Painted Lady - Malcolm Newland

Cycling around **Ashridge** with the family this pm I saw single Speckled Wood, Small Copper and Red Ad and a probable Comma (or Small Tort). 4 species seems pretty good for a wood where I often struggle to see 4 species in May - Nick Bowles

20 Red Admirals today on ivy flowers along the track at **Amwell**. Also a wet Red Admiral flying around my **Hertford** garden in pouring rain on **Friday 6th** October. - Alan Reynolds

Thursday 5th October

Red Admirals general on ivy flowers in recent days, especially in the first few hours of the morning (RAs can become active in temperatures several degrees lower than those needed by 'true' hibernators). My records have included one heading S over the A412 in Garston on **Tuesday 3rd** and one flying in rain at **Garston** today - Colin Everett

Coppetts Wood area this morning 2 Painted Ladies, also good numbers of Red Admiral, 40+ heading in S.w direction almost certainly on migration - Tony Clancy

Wednesday 4th October

There were nine Red Admirals in the garden (**Hemel Hempstead**) before 10 a.m. when I had to leave to catch a train to London. Five were on Colletia Armata and the rest on Buddleia Beijing and Michaelmas Daisy. I also had a perfect Painted Lady, my first for over a month and a new late record for the garden. While in London I saw a Red Admiral resting in the sun on some gravel at the **Chelsea Physic Garden** - Malcolm Newland

In an hours walk around the west side of **Ware** this lunchtime I saw **51 Red Admirals**, 2 Small Whites, 1 Large White and 1 Comma. All the Red Admirals were around ivy. In the garden in **Bengeo** 4 Red Admirals were sitting in a plum tree soaking up the sun soon around 8.30 am and there was a Painted lady on buddleia in the front garden - Andrew Wood

Whilst driving through **Ware** this morning at 8.10 (only 10 degrees C and in shade) a Red Admiral was seen flying very strongly across the road in front of me. About 5 minutes later another was seen but this one seemed to be heading for an ivy bush that was in the sunshine - Liz Goodyear

Tuesday 3rd October

Clouded Yellow just over the Middlesex border at **Gunpowder Park, Sewardstone, Essex**, seen at 09.53 - Martin Shepherd

On an hour's walk around **Bengeo and Waterford Heath/Marsh** today I saw 8 red Admirals, 1 painted lady, 1 Clouded Yellow and 1 Small Copper - Andrew Wood

At **Amwell** 25 Red Admirals, also 1 Speckled Wood and 1 Comma and at **King's Mead** 5 Red Admirals and what must be getting a rather late Clouded Yellow - Alan Reynolds

Ware garden, at 10 o'clock this morning there was a Hummingbird Hawkmoth on my buddleia - Liz Goodyear

Monday 2nd October

On Saturday (30th Sept) I saw, along with a dozen or so other people, a Clouded Yellow at **Minet Country Park** in Southall at about midday - Michael Robinson

Another clouded yellow: October 2nd, 1.30, **Porridge Pot Lane near Redbourn** - female I think. Also two red admirals and one large white whilst out on my lunch time run - Richard Harrington

Wheathampstead, Red Admiral - One on the wing in my garden today - Robin Pearson

Sunday 1st October

I saw a fresh looking Clouded Yellow at **Minet Country Park, Hayes**. 2 Red Admiral also present - Steve Pash

I had a couple of Commas in my **Stevenage garden**, when the sun came out between the rain - Steve Lane

On **Saturday Sept 30th** I saw a Clouded Yellow, flying fast but apparently quite fresh, at **Sarratt Bottom**, about 100 metres SE of the Bucks frontier - Graham Elcombe

Vicarage Farm, Robert Callf recorded single small heath, fresh male common blue, small copper and red admiral today and will try for a record 'late' sighting of the small heath over the next few days.

Hemel Hempstead on Saturday, six mint condition Red Admirals and one Comma in the garden at the same time taking advantage of the sunny weather to nectar on various flowers - Malcolm Newland

September 2006

Friday 29th September

News from 27th September. In my mother's garden in **King's Langley** I saw a Small Tortoiseshell flying over the Buddlia. It was nice to see a ST in what I hear has been a poor season for them in the south of England - David Chandler

Wednesday 27th September

Bishop Stortford, I know it's not a moth - and so its not at all important (!) - but I thought that some of you might like to know (so you can keep a look-out in your own areas) that I have just (12.04 hours, Wednesday 27.9.06) spotted a **Camberwell Beauty** butterfly in my garden! It flew off strongly as I rounded the corner whilst returning the moth trap to the lawn - Colin Plant

Tuesday 26th September

I have just had a phone call from Robert Callf to say that he has just seen a **Queen of Spain fritillary** at **Vicarage Farm, North Enfield**. 10.49, seen on the grass with wings at 45 degree angle - he was able to see the 'mirrors' on the hind wing. He had been with Robin White but as he called him back it flew up, gained height, flew over the hedge in a northerly direction never to be seen again. It was in good condition.

Today, **15 Red Admirals** on ivy along a 50 metre section of lane at **Amwell** - Alan Reynolds

Red Admirals are on the move, several seen today going in a southerly direction in TL41 although several were also happy enjoying the late September sun and ivy flowers. Also one Clouded Yellow using the same migration route near **Great Pennys Farm** and one Common Blue at **Allen's Green** - Liz Goodyear

Monday 25th September

News from **Sunday** at **Amwell GP**, 1 Large White, 5 Small White, 5 Red Admiral, 2 Comma, 2 Speckled Wood. All on Ivy, just the other side of river from Watchpoint. Also at least 5 Vapourer's in flight in bright sunlight - Mike Harris

1 clouded yellow - **Tytenhanger gravel pits** - **Sunday morning** - Alex Lewis

Stevenage, I had 1 Comma and 1 Red Admiral in my garden on **Friday the 22nd** - Ian Hardy

Sunday 24th September

Today at **Trent Park** - two Clouded Yellow, one Small Copper, one Small Heath, one Comma and numerous Red Admiral apparently flying south - Robert Calff / Phil Rhodes

Today at **King's Mead** 1 Clouded Yellow and 4 Red Admiral - Alan Reynolds

Ickleford - Common blue, small heath & Small Copper still on wing today, Brown Argus on **17/9** there also - Stuart Pittman

Saturday 23rd September

Brian Day phoned me to say that he saw a **White Admiral** today in Reservoir Road Ruislip, **by Ruislip Lido**. Also I should say that the sighting in Balls Wood on Thursday should be credited to Andy Holtham - Andrew Wood

Visited **Balls Wood** this afternoon. Three commas but no sign of any second generation white admirals - Roger Newbold

Thursday 21st September

Trent Park, New Fields, 7 Small Copper and 4 Small Heath including one that looked fresh - Robert Calff

'Ivy trees' by **Sawbridgeworth cemetery** had over 20+ Red Admirals flying around. 2 Small Copper by **Spellbrook level crossing**. **Hadham Towers** 1 Small Heath and 1 Small Copper but the site has just been landscaped and trees are due to be planted! - Liz Goodyear

I spent this afternoon in Balls Wood and various bits of Broxbourne Woods but did not see anything. However one of the volunteers in an HWMT working party in **Balls Wood** had seen and photographed a **White Admiral** during their morning break. All I saw were a few Red Admirals, Commas and Speckled Woods plus a Peacock and an unidentified blue in **Danemead** - Andrew Wood

Wednesday 20th September

Diane Andrews found a small heath in **Ally Pally** today, her first sightings there and probably the first record for many years - news via Andrew Middleton

News from 19th, **St Nick's Church Yard**, 9.30-10.00am. 7 Red Admiral, 2 Speckled Wood, 1 Small White, 1 Harlequin Ladybird. I am interested to know if anyone else has any records of the Harlequin Ladybird in or around Stevenage - Lee Browne.

Hemel Hempstead: Convolvulus Hawkmoth, found dead by the Redbourn Road on 19/9/06 - probably a traffic casualty - Frank Tuck

This weeks sightings....Today, I went to **Mudchute LNR** for my final lunchtime walk of this butterfly flight season and I saw a Large White, eight Small Whites, two worn-out Green Veined Whites, six Speckled Woods and a Red Admiral. **17th September:** On the way to the Saracens rugby match I saw a Red Admiral in **central Watford** near the Tesco Metro superstore & in The Watford Stadium itself I found a Peacock searching for a hibernation place. **15th September:** In my mothers garden at **Barnes Rise King's Langley** I saw a lone Comma feeding on one of the last few flowers of her Buddlia bush - David Chandler.

Since Sunday, I have managed to see a Clouded Yellow each day in **TL41**, near Gilston, near Hunsdon, near Much Hadham (*Helice* form photoed by Andrew Middleton) and today near

Sawbridgeworth! Also Painted Ladies being seen and numerous Red Admiral on flowering ivy and the occasional Small Copper turning up in places where I least expected! - Liz Goodyear

Monday 18th September

I saw **2 more White Admiral** in the **Ruislip Woods complex** on Sunday morning (**17/9/06**). One in Copse Wood and the other on Poores Field. Also, Red Admiral, Comma, Speckled Wood, Small Copper and Small White - Steve Pash

Trent Park news from Sunday, 1 Clouded Yellow, 2 Comma, 3 Red Admiral also 13 Small Copper and 7 Small Heath - Robert Callf

Sunday 17th September

A Clouded Yellow today heading NW through a narrow semi-wooded gully adjacent to **Bushey Cemetery**. A Small Heath last weekend on rough grassland at **Old Parkbury near Radlett**, a former stronghold for that species but now subject to an application for a massive rail freight terminal. Over at Chiswell Green (St Albans), there are ambitious plans for a major tropical butterfly-house with (I believe) some provision for native species and habitats - Colin Everett

Tetrad bashing beside the River Stort today produced: **TL4612 (west of Sawbridgeworth)** - Painted Lady, Brimstone, Small Copper and the final Red Admiral to complete the 23 tetrads of TL41. Next to **Gilston and the edge of Pole Corner quarry**, 1 Clouded Yellow, 4 Common Blue, 1 Small Copper and on a buddleia near **Latton Lock** 9 Red Admiral. Commas also seen - Liz Goodyear

Rye Meads RSPB, on Saturday 16th Sept, on Ivy outside the Ashby Hide: **15 Red Admiral**, 6 Comma, 1 Speckled Wood, 1 Small White. Also Red Admirals seen in ones and two's throughout the site. Many Migrant Hawker & Common Darter - Mike Harris

Monday 11th September

2nd generation White Admiral seen on my **Balls Wood transect** today **Sept 11th** - Andrew Wood

A modest addition to the Small Heath total around St Albans yesterday: one flying over arable land near **Ayot Greenway**, east of Wheathampstead, mid-morning. Good to see them back in Herts.! - Alan Jackson

After 8 seasons of surveying TL41, I have at last found a Small Heath, two infact just north of **Danebridge** and only about 200 yds short of the dividing line with TL42. Also visited **TL42** and found Small Heath in two tetrads but very little else. In TL4420, I saw only 4 butterflies, Small White, Comma but also Small Heath and a Clouded Yellow. In 30 minutes in fields near the Henry Moore Foundation, I did not see one butterfly! - Liz Goodyear

Sunday 10th September

I saw a **fresh White Admiral** this afternoon (10/9/06) in **Park Wood, Ruislip**. This follows reports of a few recent sightings in the UTB area - Steve Pash

At last a good day when I could get out. But **Bricket Wood** was almost butterfly free! The highlight was a late male Brimstone nectaring on Michaelmas Daisy, also Speckled Wood, Green-veined White, Red Admiral & Comma. More success at **The Warren, Colney Heath** - **34 Small Heath, 13 Small Copper**, 3 Common Blue, Small Tortoiseshell & Comma. Nothing but Speckled Woods & a Large White at **Jersey Farm**. At **Nomansland Common**, 22 Small Copper, 14 Small Heath, 1 Common Blue, 1 small White & a Silver Y moth. These are all sites I have seen Clouded Yellow in previous years, but none today. Still 11 butterfly species is not bad for September & I've never seen so many Small Heath in St Albans District on one day before - Malcolm Hull

Thursday 7th September

Walking down the lane towards **Hunsdon Lock**, we saw a red admiral, then opening the gate to the towpath towards the north end of Hunsdon Meads, a large dark butterfly took off, either from the sunny side of the post, or the bare ground. I was lucky enough to see it in flight from 10-25m, although it was lit from behind by the sun. The most distinctive feature was the pale or whitish thick margin running around both wings. The remainder of the wings were dark, lacking a white apex to forewing or red of a red admiral. I concentrated again and the very pale margin was again

obvious, being lit by the sun from the other side. This time I seemed to detect some claret brown colouring to the upperwings - I imagine the light was shining through the wings to some degree. The butterfly made off through adjacent trees and shrubs. The smell of abundant rotting fruit from a nearby old orchard wafted across the lane. I tried to make it into a red admiral, but I think it was a Camberwell Beauty and I'm putting it in my notebook as one. Wish it had hung around for better views - Andrew Middleton (Liz was distracted by a Large White!!!)

Did some recording in TL41 with Andrew Middleton today. Highlight for me was **18 Small Coppers** on **Hunsdon Meads** mostly TL4010 but a bit of TL4210, also seen Common Blue, Brown Argus, Comma, Red Admiral, Holly Blue, GV and Large White. The highlight for Andrew as I missed it completely was a **probable Camberwell Beauty** by **Hunsdon Lock** - see above for full description. Then went to **TL4212** and the only butterfly was Speckled Wood and to Redericks Lane and walked by the River Stort (**TL4612**). Here we saw 2 Small Coppers, 3 Common Blues, Green-venined White and 2 Commas, all new for the tetrad. Still no Small Heath for the decad? - Liz Goodyear

Wednesday 6th September

By the **A41 interchange at Leavesden Green** (Watford), there is a traffic island (TQ 094 998) built on the edge of the former airfield. With scattered clumps of Red Clover among scabious, yarrow, trefoils, broom, etc, I had thought that it seemed suitable for Clouded Yellow and so it proved this afternoon when one (probably a male) stopped to take nectar before continuing south across the A41. At least as significantly, the island also holds a small colony of the now rather local Small Heath - Colin Everett

Tuesday 5th September

** 4pm on 5th September 06 ** I had been shopping in Central Watford and was walking home along the **Colne Valley path** secretly hoping for a sighting of "a migrant that likes willows" similar to those that border the river, when, as I was turning into Orphanage Road, I found a very fresh male Clouded Yellow on a small patch of waste ground no more that 300yards from my home. It was not the migrant I was hoping for but non-the-less a very exciting find and a splendid sighting to add to my list of species seen in Central Watford this year (13) - David Chandler

Sightings for my **Stevenage garden** for the last few days. When the weather brightens up, the buddlieu comes alive, best counts, 3 Red Admirals, 4 Painted Lady's, 3 Hummingbird Hawk Moths, 2 Large Whites, 2 Small Whites, 1 Peacock, 2 Commas. 2 of these butterflies are much smaller than normal size and are in very good condition, 1 Small White is about the size of a white-letter hairstreak and the Comma (photo attached) about half the size of the other one visiting the buddlieu. **Great Ashby Park** still has lots of Painted Lady's, Common Blues, the odd tatty Meadow Brown and 2 Small Heaths - Steve Lane

Sunday 3rd September

Watched a Hummingbird Hawkmoth at 1230 today nectaring in very strong winds on buddleia opposite Davenport House in Bowers Way, **Harpenden** - Alan Jackson

A recorder from my area **TQ 09** reported an unusual butterfly in her garden in Mill End last **Monday Aug 28**. She described it as very pale green on the underside. Leaf shaped. When it opened its wings they were bright orange and rather square in shape. Then it flew off. I had initially thought of a form of Brimstone but the description almost perfectly matches the Cleopatra! It is probably a release rather than migrant a long way from home! If any one has any comments I would be pleased to receive them! - Ann Piper

Friday 1st September

I know it was a bit of an easy win with the information kindly given to me by Michael Pearson but none the less finding my 37th different butterfly species of the season, a Clouded Yellow in the lower clover meadow at **Bunker 's Park** was a sheer delight. Having not seen a CY since 2003 this slightly washed out male still gave me simple pure pleasure - David Chandler

Fridays seem a good day for butterflies for me. Last **Friday week, 25th August**, I was driving through **Abbots Langley** when this large dark brown butterfly with a thick white border on its front and hind wings flew in front of my car. I was convinced that it was a Camberwell Beauty. What struck me at the time and I believe what attracted me to the butterfly was the way the wing border appeared to flash on and off in flight. Unbelievably today, **1st September**, whilst I was in

the kitchen I noticed this flashing again as a dark brown butterfly flew across my garden. I dashed out and managed to see the strong wing border on all wings. Again I would describe the colour as whitish. I was not able to see the blue on the wing as again it was just a fly by. I would say that the size was slightly bigger than a Red Admiral. The Abbots Langley sighting was at 11:30. I live at **Woodside, Watford**, the sighting time was at 13:45. It had clouded over by this time but there were a few Small Whites drifting about - Bob Cripps

News of a tenth **Camberwell Beauty** right on the eastern border of Hertfordshire at **Sawbridgeworth**. Andrew Wood received a phone call from Lisa Collins to say that her daughter Isobel had spotted one on the windowsill and told her mum, who looked it up and confirmed the sighting. A photo was taken and sent to Andrew with this message "The quality is not too good, but at least we have an image. Hope it is of use and I'm sure that Isobel would love any feedback to use at school" - Lisa and (Isobel Collins age 7)

AUGUST 2006

Thursday 31st August

Saw my first Small Copper of the year in **Hemel Hempstead** today. It looked like a fresh specimen although it did not settle for more than a couple of seconds. Nothing much of interest to report from my own garden apart from a more or less resident H B H M which has been seen nectaring several times a day mainly on my numerous Buddleias since the 14th of August - Malcolm Newland

Visited four tetrads in TL43 today starting at **Great Horstead**. (This is a decad that according to the 2005 report has not had a record reported). Key species of the day was Speckled Wood with over 80 recorded during a 7+ mile walk mostly in Scales Park. Also nice to Small Heath, Common Blue and Brown Argus in the field margins although not in every tetrad. Also seen Small White (large numbers), Large White and 1 Green-veined White, Holly Blue, Meadow Brown, Red Admiral, Comma and a Painted Lady. 12 species in all but distributed over 4 tetrads unfortunately - Liz Goodyear

I thought you would be interested to know I have found a small colony of Brown Argus on the **Brunel University campus in Uxbridge**. On the **24th August** I discovered 2-3 individuals on waste ground. I went back the following day and saw at least 6, some of which were worn but the attached pictures are of one in fairly good condition. The habitat is mainly bramble scrub with a variety of native and non-native plants. Open areas have remained due to illegal horse grazing which has gone on for many years. It is now owned by Brunel University and not open to the public. The university is keen to maintain this land as a wildlife area and I have already suggested a few measures to protect the foodplant, which appears to be Cranesbill. I will be visiting the site regularly to monitor their progress and keep you updated. As far as I'm aware Brown Argus are pretty scarce in the London area. A few years ago a colony appeared at Broadwater GP in Harefield but died out due to scrub invasion. I think at the time it was one of the only colonies in Middlesex. I will do my best to prevent the same thing happening to this colony - Steve Pash

Wednesday 30th August

Another **Camberwell Beauty** report has been received from **SW Middlesex**. I spotted a Camberwell Beauty at **Bedfont Lakes Country Park** near Heathrow on **27th August** feeding on Buddleia. I took some photos - apologies for the slightly ropey picture quality, light was not good and only had my spare camera with me - Richard Staines

Tuesday 29th August

AM at **Fir and Pond Woods NR** seen in the meadow area...3 brown argus (see attached photo), 3 red admirals, several speckled woods, 2 common blue, 1 small copper. A pleasing collection. This brings the species list for the Reserve over 2004-2006 to 25 - David Gompertz

Monday 28th August

Thought you might like to know that last Friday (August 25th) my wife and I visited **Rye Meads RSPB Reserve** where we managed to see one gatekeeper (looking reasonably smart) as well as one female common blue, one comma and several small/g.v. whites - Roger Newbold

At least three Clouded Yellows (both sexes present) among clover at **Bunkers Park** - Colin Everett

Friday 25th August

Camberwell Beauty number eight has been reported and beats the 1995 previous record year. Terry Goddard was with his 6 year old nephew, bird watching at **Cheshunt Park** this morning and saw a **Camberwell Beauty** around willows behind the clubhouse at about 11am.

I went back to **Mudchute LNR** today (August 25th) during my lunch-hour looking for small tortoiseshells which have been scarce in their summer brood in our region. I have seen them at Mudchute earlier in the spring when I've visited the site, but unfortunately none were to be seen by me today. However I did find Commas (2) Speckled Woods (4), Green Veined Whites (8) & Small Whites (14) but not much else - David Chandler

Late news from **Wednesday 23rd August**. A Hummingbird Hawk-moth on a garden Buddleia at **Garston (Watford)** in cloudy conditions just after 1000 hours. - Colin Everett

Thursday 24th August

A **seventh report** of **Camberwell Beauty** has been reported to Butterfly Conservation of 2 visits on **Saturday August 19th** in a **south Herts garden**. This report equals the record set in 1995.

Wednesday 23rd August

I thought you may be interested in a **Camberwell Beauty !** sighting **nr North Acton station yesterday am**. I was walking to work along a footpath that runs from the tube station to the Park Royal road, between the tube line and North Acton cemetery at about 09:30 hrs. There is an amount of bramble on the railway embankment with a large number of ripe Blackberries (most now just out of reach of ones hand!) and walking down the path I put up a large butterfly which I saw was dark with a yellow outline on both wings. It flew over the fence onto the Blackberries but did not alight for long and was soon away down the embankment, flying and with a gliding action that reminded me of a White Admiral. It had a couple of white markings on the top part of the upper wing and initially I took it for a melanic Red Admiral or Tortoiseshell - not really believing it could be a Camberwell Beauty. I really only saw it in flight for about 10 seconds. I was not able to hang around to see if it came back nor was in a position to go looking for it! Looking in the Collins guide last night confirmed it - the white markings are on the Camberwell Beauty along with the dark wings and the prominent yellow border. That was the last thing I would have expected to see in Park Royal! I guess this is another migrant from the recent eruption from Europe. The ripe blackberries were the attraction. Well, its a first for me - now I know they are around I will look out for others. - Graham Dawson

Walking back from **Edmonton** today I crossed the railway by the Montagu Road pedestrian crossing, and saw a sheet of common toadflax *Linaria vulgaris*. I looked down and saw three, what looked like, well grown **toadflax brocade larvae**, going from memory of seeing images. The site is TQ353930 and I imagine there would be plenty more of this plant strung out along the lower Lee Valley railways and brownfields. I trapped an adult in my garden on 23 Jul 2003, but have never found a larva on the purple toadflax I planted, or on the few patches I have found growing wild. The purple toadflax has been a great attraction for bees though - Andrew Middleton

Tuesday August 22nd. Enjoyed a walk in the **Wildhill area** (near Essendon starting in square 2506). Saw 4 speckled woods, 3 small whites and 1 small heath. Disappointing not to see any late gatekeepers or meadow browns; are there any still around? - Roger Newbold

Tuesday 22nd August

Ware garden, I wondered what the cat was watching this evening only to see a Humming-bird Hawkmoth on the front garden buddleia - it stayed for over an hour. Garden butterflies today included a Comma, 3 Painted Ladies and 3 Red Admirals - Liz Goodyear

Robert Callf rang to say that he had a Humming-bird Hawkmoth on buddleia by his flat in **Southgate**

Monday 21st August

I don't normally post UK-leps news but thought this message sent by Chris Van Swaay of the Dutch Butterfly Conservation was extremely interesting. *"First of all N antiopa (Camberwell beauty). The invasion started 4 August, peaked on 6 August (40 observations), and now is more or less stable (depending the weather) on 5-10 per day. The first few days almost all observations were along our west coast, with butterflies reported flying south. For that reason we expect the origin in the*

north (Norway?). Good to read they have reached the UK as well. July gave us an influx of *P. daplidice/edusa* (BathWhite) in the northern part of NL. At some places 15-20 butterflies were reported. It seems possible that some have crossed the northsea, so be alert. Since most butterflies were seen in the north, we expect an eastern origin (Poland?). From the *Colias* species we have had a good influx on *C. croceus*. Numbers look like those in the UK. But also *C. hyale* is doing very well. It's always surprising to see that they hardly seem to reach the UK, where *C. croceus* doesn't seem to have a problem crossing the sea. In Belgium and NL last week three *L. boeticus* (Long tailed blue) have been reported. This is exceptionally high for us. Keep your eyes open, because they might reach your country as well. Once in a while (when appropriate or interesting) I will try to give an update on the situation here in NL as far as it might be interesting for the UK. Thanks to our online input system for butterfly records we have a continuous and updated knowledge on the situation here. Chris van Swaay Dutch Butterfly Conservation"

Confirmation of the third Camberwell Beauty report as follows "Saw a beautiful and unusual butterfly at work on **Weds 16/08/06**, am convinced it was a **Camberwell Beauty**. Dark chocolate brown with quite a deep and well defined creamy-white border to the bottom of the wings. Didn't notice any blue spots, though. Seen in **Hemel Hempstead**, Hertfordshire, next to a busy road on our industrial estate. There is a steep bank of grass outside our large office block, with large clumps of lavender on it. The only trees nearby are silver birch, pines, cypress (the dreaded leylandii!), rowan, crab apples and eucalyptus. The butterfly just rested on the grass for a few minutes with its wings spread out and much to my regret flew off" - Carol McNaughton (news via Peter Eeles)

I had an extremely worn purple hairstreak at Commonwood Common, **Sarratt** on **Wednesday 16th August** - Jez Perkins

Sunday 20th August

I had a **Camberwell Beauty** in my garden in **Berkhamsted** this afternoon (Sunday) 20th, for about 20 minutes - Brian Roberts

The fourth report of **Camberwell Beauty** has been phoned through today from Pat Langford. She and her husband saw it very briefly at 2.15 today in their garden which is between **Tewin and Datchworth!**

A report from one of my Rothamsted colleagues confirms that at least one clouded yellow was still in **Sawyers Field** on **Thursday 17th August**, about four weeks after they were first seen there. Richard Harrington

Netherhall (Glen Faba gravel pit area) Lea Valley, 1 Brown Argus (not seen here before); 1 Clouded Yellow; + a number of Common Blues, 1 Painted Lady - Nigel May

Ware garden - regular monitoring of the buddleia, hasn't produced any Camberwell Beauties (isn't that a surprise!) but I have seen a Brown Argus today nectaring. Over the weekend several Red Admiral and Painted Ladies, a Meadow Brown and Large White also a solitary quite tatty Small Tortoiseshell. One of my sedums is just starting to flower and the butterflies had already found the pink flowers - Liz Goodyear

Friday 18th August

I have now heard of a third report of **Camberwell Beauty** in Hertfordshire (permission is pending to post). A full log of national sightings can be viewed here on UK Butterflies website <http://www.ukbutterflies.co.uk/phpBB2/viewtopic.php?t=619> Thanks to Peter Eeles for the news.

Wednesday 16th August

Thought you'd like to know that I saw a **Camberwell Beauty** in my back garden this afternoon. It was resting on a pile of logs but flew off just as we tried to photograph it, we did catch the end but not much to see. I live in **St Albans**. Me and my dad were very excited as we've never seen one before - Hannah Perryman (*Message to Hannah - I have tried to reply to your email but it wouldn't deliver. Can you email me again with your phone number or ask your Dad to ring me follow links to committee page - Thanks Liz*)

Thought you would like to know I saw a Clouded Yellow this morning (16th August) at **Rye Marsh RSPB**. Other butterflies seen were singles of Common Blue, Holly Blue, Red Admiral, Comma and

Speckled Wood. Incidentally, and rather belatedly I saw three Marbled Whites along what was the River Beane at **Chells Manor Stevenage** on **22nd July** - Phil Bishop

Tuesday 15th August

Bishop's Stortford garden: Thought you might like to know that I had a definite **Camberwell Beauty** feeding on a buddleia in my back garden at approx 1.30 pm this afternoon. It was just a chance sighting because I was only taking a peak out of the kitchen window, when I saw this huge 'blackish' butterfly with creamy white border on the wings, feeding on the buddleia. Of course it didn't stay for long (though I hesitate to guess how long it might have been there feeding before I saw it) and I didn't have time to get my camera before it was away. But there is absolutely no doubt about the record - David Sampson

I had a site visit today at **Bunkers Park** and saw: 3 common blue, 5+ Clouded Yellow. All were in Bottom Field. I've attached a photo of a clouded yellow. I've attached it in 2 formats just in case you have problems opening it - Jez Perkins

Pleased to have a visit from a Hummingbird Hawk Moth in my **Harpenden garden** this am - Geoff Horn

Sunday 13th August

Had a quick walk around **Great Ashby Park, Stevenage**, the rain stop just long enough to walk the dog, did not expect to see much in the conditions. 1 Clouded Yellow, 1 Small Heath, a few Meadow Browns and Painted Lady's. My garden has not had much either, 1 Red Admiral, a few Gatekeepers and Small Whites, 1 Hummingbird Hawk Moth and still lots of Silver Ys - Steve Lane

News from Friday 11 Aug 2006. Walked our usual route in **Bricket Wood**. Saw a 2 Brown Argus & Painted Ladies, 3 Speckled Wood, 1 Peacock, 1 Common Blue, 6+ Gatekeepers and 2 Green-veined White. We also saw a very tatty, weak **Silver-washed Fritillary**. I took one photo and then followed it to try for another when a Hawker (Southern we think) struck and carried it off! End of story! White Admiral caterpillars - No 1 could not be seen, the leaves were all brown and wrinkled (not made into a tent) and we hoped that it had walked up the main stem to fresh leaves. No's 2, 3 and 4 were all OK and one had made a tent. Glen & Moira Barnes [see http://www.hertsmiddx-butterflies.org.uk/photos/2006_photos.html for the pictures](http://www.hertsmiddx-butterflies.org.uk/photos/2006_photos.html)

We're back in France (since 29 June) and it was certainly a good idea to take three days to get here via the Vercors National Park just south of Grenoble, although the fun started in a service station (a small picnic site, not a commercial one) near Dijon. A medium size butterfly was circling us quite low and it took a few seconds to realise that it was a mini-sized ilia (actually only realised when it landed on me), about two-thirds of the size I would have expected. It disappeared for a while but we found it again in the lorry park area where it had been clobbered, more likely by the passing gust of a lorry than by being hit, as it was just about alive. It clambered onto my finger so I could take it to the edge of the site but it clearly wasn't going to survive. I took a few hurried photos (two attached 2024, 2025, not good enough for the public view) at different angles to show the purple iridescence, but felt quite guilty at taking photos of a dying animal.

Just to compound matters, a few minutes later we found a mini-high brown fritillary half-alive in the lorry park, and took him to the edge as well, but I think this was almost dead, too.

If this wasn't bad enough, a few minutes later a majestic iris came down to sample the delights of some dried up diesel fuel on the lorry park. This was still alive when we left, but was so absorbed, I wouldn't give much for its chances.

The Vercors is a superb area and there are two places I would strongly recommend visiting if in that area. There was a flower field at the Col de St Alexis that had nine types of fritillary. We went to Verona last week to see the opera (Aida - fabulous experience) and took in a couple of days around Lake Garda, which produced one iris circling around and again briefly landing on me (well, it was very hot!).

We've just been away (24-30 July) in the Alpes Maritimes, two each in Isola 2000, Rimplas and Le Boreon (northeast of St Martin Vesubie). Isola was great -' scarce and purple-edged coppers in hundreds, mountain clouded yellow, silvery argus and geranium argus in good numbers, and plenty of erebia ringlets but unfortunately 90% were almond-eyed (this seems incredibly common to me) and most of the remainder were common brassy with one or two scotch argus and arran brown. The highlight was a colony of what I believe were balkan fritillaries (3219, 3241).

The Rimplas site has lost many of its species it seems (no provencal fritillary, hermit, striped grayling, or tree grayling) following the apparent flattening of the mountain track and covering the flowery verges with rock, as we saw in May. However, dryad, black satyr, and melegers blues

were in healthy numbers.

Le Boreon was expected to be the highlight, nestling at the edge of civilisation in the Mercantour Park, but was almost bereft of butterflies, even common ones, at altitudes of 1500-2000m. The only real highlight was a small colony of marbled ringlets, also a life tick for me, and one or two were prepared to exchange some of my sweat for a photo posing. There was a magnificent convulvulus hawkmoth settled on the hotel wall in the morning, though.

Finally, an unusual pose from the king of all butterflies (2714), a wood white that almost completely lacks markings (2554) and an apollo (2243) - Roger Gibbons

Saturday 12th August

Belated news from **Tower Hamlets Cemetery**, where Terry, one of the guys whom works at the Soanes Centre within the cemetery, told me that he had another **Silver-washed Fritillary** on **Saturday 5th August**. This individual showed a pristine left forewing, proving it to be a separate individual from the one seen late July, which had a tatty left forewing. This sighting was from "Monument Glade", close to the glade where both I, Phil Hissey & Keir Mottram saw the other individual - Bob Watts

Thursday 10th August

Waltham Abbey garden, large numbers of Silver-Y moths from 25.7, along with 3 to 4 Painted ladies on Buddleia davidii; 28.7 1 Volucella zonaria - apparently Britain's largest hoverfly (identified from article in 'British Wildlife' 4.06); 9.8 1 Hummingbird Hawkmoth on Buddleia and verbena bonariensis. All of the above in my back garden - Nigel May

Wednesday 9th August

I had another sighting of Clouded Yellow near **Frogmore gravel pits St Albans** on the 8th of August on a large area of rough grassland which is an infilled gravel pit - Alan Gardiner

Tuesday 8th August

Hemel Hempstead garden, another first! I was pleasantly surprised to see, for the first time, a female Gatekeeper egg-laying on a patch of reasonably succulent grass where my very small lawn meets the herbaceous border. She must have been desperate! - Malcolm Newland

Weekend Field Trips Reports:

Saturday 5th August - Therfield Heath: Therfield went very well with nearly 40 people in hot sunny weather. We saw plenty of Chalkhill Blue - perhaps 50+ and everyone got a good view. Also Common Blue, Brown Argus, Painted Lady, Red Admiral, Small Heath, Gatekeeper, Meadow Brown, Essex skipper and the whites. No sign of Chalk Carpet - we think the moth is often very localised - Sharon Hearle (Eastern Regional Officer)

Sunday 6th August - Ruislip Woods: Yesterday's branch field trip to Park Wood Ruislip was modestly attended; in partly cloudy conditions six members (including myself) saw ten species: Large White, Small White, Green Veined White, Gatekeeper, Meadow Brown, Speckled Wood, Comma, Small Skipper, Common Blue & Purple Hairstreak. One Purple Hairstreak was very obliging and was perched low enough in the bushes for all the party to have a close-up look with the naked eye - Dave Chandler

Letchworth garden, 1 Silver Washed Fritillary yesterday - David Heath

I took a 20 minute walk in a field in **Great Ashby in Stevenage** this afternoon saw 3 Clouded Yellows, 20+ Common Blues, 6 Small Heath, 2 Peacock and **1 Silver Washed Fritillary** - Ian Hardy

Enfield Lock: Hummingbird Hawkmoth at 18.10 hovering and nectaring on window-box flowers at front of my house - Martin Shepherd

Monday 7th August

Just received a report of a **Striped Hawkmoth** nectaring at Petunias in a garden near **Harefield, Middlesex** last night (6 August) - news via Martin Honey

A clouded yellow was seen in **Trent Park** on **Sunday** - news via Robert Callf

Sunday 6th August

I was lucky enough to record a **Silver-washed Fritillary** in my **Brookmans Park garden** on

July 29th. It was about to settle on a buddleia until a Peacock chased it off. Today around **Essendon** there were 5+ Painted Ladies. Yesterday at **Dame Alice Owens School, Potters Bar** there was a Clouded Yellow, and in my **Brookmans Park** garden a Hummingbird Hawk-Moth - Rupert Pyrah

Great Ashby Park, Stevenage, also forgot to add Small Heath to yesterday's list. At least 2 Clouded Yellows this morning (Sunday)- Steve Lane

Ware garden, a very brief sighting of a Hummingbird Hawkmoth in the early evening. In the last week in Norfolk, 3 (2nd generation) Swallowtails, seen by the river at Horning on the 31st July. Also lots of Graylings, a few tired Dark Green Fritillary and 3 Wall Brown seen on the north Norfolk coast in the Horsey/Waxham area - Liz Goodyear

Saturday 5th August

2.30pm. I've just been back to **Sawyers field at Rothamsted** for half an hour and got four sightings of clouded yellow, I suspect of the same individual each time. So whereas last weekend I reckon there were around 6 in the field, today there is probably only 1. It was a male and hardly settled at all - Richard Harrington

Brown Argus continue to do well locally. I saw 6 on the transect at Bricket Wood - total for all walks in the previous ten years is 3. Two seen in my back garden in **St Albans** (never seen here before this year) & 1 in our local park (first ever record). Two male **Silver Washed Fritillaries** recorded on the transect at **Bricket Wood** - a very tatty one patrolling in the main clearing and a fresher specimen on buddleia in the front garden of one of the houses at **Old Bricket in School Lane** - Malcolm Hull

Female Clouded Yellow at **Roughdown Common near Felden** (Hemel Hempstead); also 100+ Common Blues there. Two further gaps in the west Herts distribution of **Silver-washed Fritillary** were plugged, with one around garden buddleias at the west edge of **Bury Wood** and another patrolling a ride in **Scatterdells Wood near Chipperfield**. Plenty of Painted Ladies, Red Admirals and Silver Ys; Vapourer moths are also common at present. Along a bridleway west of Apsley a worker social wasp was grappling with a grounded Purple Hairstreak; when I placed a container over them they separated, the hairstreak then flying up into the oaks - Colin Everett

Great Ashby District Park, I had a late morning walk around the park today, and to my surprise I found at least 3 Clouded Yellows (3 seen together, but many sightings) photos attached, also many Painted Ladys, Small Copper, Common Blues, Brown Argus, Peacock, Red Admiral, Meadow Brown, Large & Small Whites, Small/Essex Skippers. Whatever wild flower seed mix the developers used on this area has improved the butterfly habitat, with good numbers of many species this year.

I have now finish the challenge of seeing all 58 main land breeding species in a season, starting on May 19th with Chequered Skipper at Glasdrum Wood, Scotland and finishing August 3rd with Lulworth Skipper at Durlston Country Park, Swanage. So I can now get back to watching some local butterflies. It had been a very enjoyable challenge, but I still need to photograph a few I've missed - Steve Lane

Friday 4th August

On **Saturday 29th July** I saw a Marbled White in the meadows adjacent to **Ten Acre wood in Hillingdon**. This is the first time I have seen this species in that area. Also in the same area, 20+ Painted Lady, 8 Red Admiral, dozens of Gatekeeper`s and Meadow Brown`s, Peacock, Small Tortoiseshell, Comma, Purple Hairstreak, Small Copper, Large, Small & GV White and Common Blue. On **Sunday 30th July** I found a rather worn White-letter Hairstreak nectaring on Brambles at the eastern edge of **Ladywalk wood, Maple Cross**. Again lots of Painted Lady, Red Admiral, Gatekeeper and Meadow Brown. A few Large & Small White, 4 Common Blue, a Comma and a Small Copper - Steve Pash

Wednesday 2nd August

I went to **The Chelsea Physic Garden** today where I was lucky enough to see a **Plain Tiger** butterfly on a Sea Holly. Apparently several specimens had developed successfully from early stages present on some imported plants and had hatched in late July. If any others are reported from the London area at least we know the source - Malcolm Newland

Tuesday 1st August

Enjoyed a walk in the west of the county around **Wilstone (N.W. of Tring)**, following the instructions in our "Pub Walks in Hertfordshire" book (for the most part successfully.) It was fairly blustery but we managed to see approx. 20 Gatekeepers, a similar number of whites (mainly small), 14 Meadow Browns, 8 Red Admirals, two Essex Skippers (no sign of orange on antennae), one Comma, one Small Tortoiseshell, one male Common Blue, several Silver Y moths and two Magpie moths. Nothing spectacular but a very pleasant walk - Roger Newbold

Monday 31st July

Visiting a friend's garden at **Grove Hill** today, I was pleased to see a male Common Blue which came to rest on a Love-in a-Mist seed pod. I also noted a single Comma and several Peacocks and Painted Ladies on her three Buddleias. Malcolm Newland

Sunday 30th July

One male Silver-washed fritillary seen on 30/07/06 at **Danemead** on Marsh thistle see photo - Phil Jeffery

News from 20th - Enfield Lock, Middlesex: Painted Lady in the garden on buddleia at 6.10pm - Martin Shepherd

I went to inspect the only 2 clumps of Fleabane at **King's Mead** today to see if I could find any Brown Argus. I was rewarded with 5 Common Blues, amazingly the first that I have seen at King's Mead this year. This was quickly followed by a single Brown Argus, again the first for the site this year. My attention was then drawn to another blue butterfly, somewhat larger than the Common Blues. Unfortunately, although it readily settled on the Fleabane, it was very reluctant to open its wings. Eventually my patience was rewarded and I was able to take the attached photographs of what I believe to be a Chalkhill Blue - Alan Reynolds

Saturday 29th July

Brown Argus, Small Copper and Common Blue among half-a-dozen other species at the far western edge of **Commonwood Common (between Sarratt and Chipperfield)**; a very worn Ringlet along a bridleway **SE of Chipperfield**; widespread Painted Ladies and Red Admirals. At **Croxley Common Moor** I bumped into the Herts Recorder for Spiders, Doug Marriott, who mentioned hundreds of Painted Ladies on the buddleias along the nearby disused railway line (cf Graham Elcombe's similar report from the same site two days previously) and also remarked that in his youth (which he assured me was sixty years ago), Whippendell Wood had been a stronghold for SWF, with large numbers on bramble banks in the so-called 'strawberry fields' (close to my record from last week) - Colin Everett

I went back to Sawyers field at **Rothamsted** today. I reckon there are around 6 clouded yellows in it. Still haven't seen a female. Picture attached. (Panasonic Lumix DMC FZ7 in telemacro mode - ie picture taken approx. 1 metre away) - Richard Harrington

2 Silver-Washed Fritillaries seen in **Stevenage** this morning (one in Whomerley Wood and one at the Shackledell grassland). Attached is the photo taken at Shackledell. Also saw about 80 Painted Ladies mostly in Millenium Wood. - Peter Clarke

1 Clouded yellow seen near **Norton Green**, Stevenage on **Tuesday 25 July** at approx 1pm. 16 painted ladies (probably more but that's the most we could count for sure as they kept moving) in same place on **Friday 28 July** - Christine Penn

Friday 28th July

Hemel Hempstead. In the garden today, seven Large Whites, two Red Admirals, Two Gatekeepers, three Painted Ladies, ten Peacocks, three Small Whites, a Green-Veined White, two Commas, two Meadow Browns, a Holly Blue and a male Brimstone, but at 10.45 a.m a **Silver Washed Fritillary** arrived in belligerent mood chasing away any rivals for nectar. It stayed in and around the garden for over an hour visiting mainly Buddleias Lochinch and Pink Perfection together with Verbena Bonariensis. Luckily I was able to photograph it. If I hadn't had to stay in for the postman as I was expecting a parcel I would have missed this third sighting of a S.W.F. in two years. I also enclose a photo of one of the two Marbled Whites to turn up this year - Malcolm Newland

Yesterday an amazing 20 Painted Lady at **King's Mead** - Alan Reynolds

Three clouded yellows (all males, I think - certainly at least two of them) seen flying at the same moment in Sawyers Field on the **Rothamsted** Estate, Harpenden, today (28th July). Lots of clover there. Although it slopes away extremely gently, the field could just about be described as a hilltop, so I wonder if the males are anticipating the arrival of females at the same site. The males were flying low, and scarcely stopping, although one was kind enough to allow me a photo. I'll try to spend a bit more time up there over the weekend - Richard Harrington

I just thought I'd let you know that here in **Harpenden** centre on Bowers Way, there's an extensive buddleia which, over the last few days, has had multiple painted ladies (> 6 simultaneously), large whites (at least 4 sim.), numerous peacocks (4 sim.) and red admirals (2 sim.). They are flitting around most of the day. There have also been the occasional meadow brown, as well as several 'brown moth-like' fliers (*Silver Y moths*). I was also tidying up a shed at home in Harpenden at weekend and disturbed a bright red and black flier - might have been either a narrow bordered 5 spot burnet moth or a cinnabar moth - it was too quick for me - Paul Gloess

Saw the Shrike today - excellent views but no Clouded Yellows (Croxley Moor). Had to let three Painted Ladies out of the house this morning and they seem to be everywhere this year. Also Brown Argus in my **Chiswell Green** garden - Alan Gardiner

Thursday 27th July

I imagine **Broxbourne Wood** is pretty well covered by various people, but I went there **yesterday** in the rather over-optimistic and, as it proved, vain hope of seeing a Purple Emperor. It was muggy and warm, but mainly cloudy, but a few Purple Hairstreaks flitted around, and in the glade north of the P.E. site there were four Painted Ladies, two Peacocks, a Small Skipper (managed to get the camera eyeball-to-eyeball with it to check), two Ringlets and a Pierid or two which wouldn't come near me - so not too much. Walking through the bracken, I disturbed large numbers of Silver Ys, so it's clearly a good year for them; but they don't seem much to go for moth traps - only one or two have tried out the trap I run sporadically in Highgate Wood. In **Highgate Wood**, the summer generation of Speckled Woods are appearing - they are well-established here, and three were fighting it out for possession of a small sunny glade on the morning of the 25th; one obligingly settled for a photo-opportunity. Haven't seen any Humming-Bird Hawks as yet, but last year in Dorset I was watching one hover at a flower when, to my surprise, it settled on the adjacent stone wall - something I'd never seen before, and very well-camouflaged: I'd never have spotted it if it had just been sitting there. My camera was pleading for mercy by the time I had finished with it - got some great shots, and even a reasonable one of it in mid-hover, which you might like for winter - Michael Hammerson

This afternoon (July 27th) I visited the former railway sidings on the other side of the canal from **Croxley Common Moor**. Painted Ladies were very numerous on the wild buddleias which flourish abundantly over the whole area. Numbers impossible to count but in an approx half mile stretch I must have seen hundreds. Also one Clouded Yellow, and the occasional Comma, Red Admiral and Peacock; but no Small Tortoiseshells - Graham Elcombe

Buddleia Bush in citizens advise bureau, **St.Albans**: Circa 12 Painted Ladies. **Symondshyde Woods nr Sandridge**. Along the Bridle path heading east to west (before going south) 1300 - 1400: **2 (1m) Silver Washed Fritillary** (Geoff took some excellent shots of the male which hopefully he will put on this website soon), 2 White Letter Hairstreak 1 Purple Hairstreak (1st for the site for me, 1 Green Veined White. All I need now is Purple Emperor for this site & I will no longer have to venture to broxbourne woods to see all these lovely butterflies! **Hexton Chalk Pits**: Never been here before. Numerous Chalk Hill Blues & Painted Ladies & 1 tatty Marbled White but no sign of any Dark Green Fritillaries (only stayed for about half hour before the monsoon came.) There may have been a cheeky DGF somewhere!! - Darin Stanley & Geoff Horn

Tower Hamlets, Bob had told me the exact glade where he'd seen it (**Silver Washed-Fritillary**) on Tuesday (by post no.6 on the Millennium Walk round the site), I popped over there after a quick rain shower, and there the little blighter was. In Tower Hamlets! Looking in good nick as well, I thought. It flew and glided around the glade a bit, had a pop at a couple of whites, nectared on a thistle, perched on a dead umbellifer, then popped up into the canopy. I wandered over the path at the back of where it had flew up in to, hoping to see it in another glade a little further on, but managed to put it up from about a yard in front of me off an elder by the side of the path! I just didn't think it would be there, and if only I'd been more careful I could have had even better

views. Staggered but happy - Keir Mottram

News from 25 July 2006. Hot, sunny day. Drove to **Bricket Wood** and parked in School Lane. Walked down path, crossed the bridges and saw and photographed a Brown Argus. Carried on to & turned right seeing Red Admiral, Gatekeepers, Green Woodpecker, Comma and Peacock. Mo was searching for and found 3 more White Admiral caterpillars and I found another Brown Argus. Carried on and checked the first White Admiral caterpillar that Mo Had found. Looks healthy. No sign of the one from the egg. Another Brown Argus seen at 10.50. We were now in the more open area at 10.55 when we saw **a Silver-washed Fritillary**. Pale and very tatty with its wing edges looking fringed. We then saw another much brighter one feeding. Photographed both. As we walked back we saw 2+ Purple Hairstreaks and another 2 Brown Argus. As we carried on we saw another Brown Argus, a Brimstone and a Peacock. At the crossroads we decided to go straight across towards the pub. We saw a Speckled wood and a patch of Violet plants. At the pub we turned and followed the road back to the car. We saw at least 6 Brown Argus, 2 Silver-washed Fritillaries, 2+ Purple Hairstreaks and 4 White Admiral Caterpillars plus one egg - Glen & Moira Barnes

My wife Sandra had a White Admiral at **Ashridge** on Friday. As far as we know, a first. (Unfortunately it turned out to be in Bucks!) - Don Otter

I was at **Bishops Stortford railway station yesterday (Wed 26th)** and have never seen so many Painted Ladies in the sidings and yard on the Cambridge bound side. There were literally Hundreds of them all over the wild Buddleia. They all swarmed up as vehicles drove past and then re-settled. Quite an amazing spectacle - Simon Rasch

Wednesday 26th July

I was at **Croxley Common Moor** today (26/07/2006) looking for the Red-backed Shrike that has been there without success. However I did see a **Clouded Yellow** butterfly. I was with Alan Reynolds at the time - Alan Gardiner

Silver-washed Fritillary. There has been an individual present at **Tower Hamlets Cemetery** since at least Thursday 20th July, and I saw it with Phil Hissey and Terry yesterday, when it was nectaring on bramble and perching on hogweed in a glade early afternoon. The previous day it was seen around the buddleia at the Soanes centre near the entrance. With other records at Highgate & Stanmore it looks like there has been a bit of an influx! - Bob Watts

Ware front garden, 9.15 this morning and the buddleia is 'busy' with butterflies. Almost impossible to count as they keep moving, the buddleia is far too high and if I move around the bushes, the butterflies relocate! Minimum count was 6 Peacock increasing to 10 at 11.15, 8 Painted Ladies, 3 Red Admiral, 1 Comma, 1 Gatekeeper but no Small Tortoiseshell at the moment. Then of course there is also my neighbours buddleia and my back garden....Also a Common Blue nectaring on fleabane (first record since 1998) and Large White egg-laying on garlic mustard. Also 2 Brimstone (male & female), Small & Green-veined White, Meadow Brown & Holly Blue, day's total so far is 12 which then increased to 13 with a Brown Argus. Quite a day and several absentees - Liz Goodyear

Tuesday 25th July

After the sad news that the British population is in decline, I thought I might email you with some good news! I thought I would let you know that this morning, just outside **Hemel Hempstead on the Leighton Buzzard road**, I saw a **Dark Green Fritillary** in the garden feeding on some buddleia. There are lots of other butterflies, including marbled white, peacocks, commas, tortoiseshells and an abundance of meadow browns and gatekeepers. We also have a lot of burnet and cinnabar moths - Katy Rimmer

St. Albans, 15 painted ladies on the buddleias in our street today, 10 peacocks, 5 Large Whites, three Red Admirals, two Commas & only one Small Tortoiseshell - Malcolm Hull

When I help Malcolm at St. Albans recently two separate people came up to the stall and said that they had seen an orange butterfly in their gardens. "Did it have raggy wings" asked Malcolm. "No" was the reply. "Hmm" said Malcolm. Well I saw an orange butterfly without raggy wings today in **Stanmore Country Park**. Yes it was a **Silver-washed Fritillary**. Wow - John Hollingdale

Therfield Heath, a couple of hours spent along the south edge of the golf course produced some good sightings yesterday (Mon). There were at least 100 Gatekeepers, **25 Chalkhill Blues (18 male 7 female)**, 25 Painted Ladies, 40+ Small/Essex Skippers, 20 large Whites, lots of Small Whites and 1 GV White, Numerous Meadow browns, 4 Peacocks, 2 Red Admirals and singles of Marbled White, Ringlet, Comma and Speckled Wood. There were also several hundred Silver Y moths. Simon Rasch

Monday 24th July, 11.45am, Clouded Yellow on thistle at **Rothamsted Research estate**, mint condition. **Tuesday 25th**, Painted Lady caught in Light trap, same address - John Bater

Monday 24th July

Painted Lady's everywhere, had a quick walk around **Great Ashby Park** and must have seen over 100 all in perfect condition, also new brood Common Blue, Brown Argus and Brimstone. In my front garden (**Stevenage**) on the Lavender in 15 mins 11 Painted Lady's together, 3 Brimstones, 4 Gatekeepers, 1 Meadow Brown, 2 Small Whites, 1 Large White, 1 Green-veined White, 1 Large Skipper, 1 Small Skipper, 2 Brown Argus, 1 Comma and 60+ Silver Y moths. I can not remember ever seeing so many Painted Lady's - Steve Lane

Robert Callf's news - Outside his **Oakwood** house today, 1 Peacock and 2 Painted Lady. Outside Asda, Southgate - 3 Painted Lady, 1 Red Admiral. 3 Commas, several Small Skippers and 2 fresh Small Coppers at Grovelands tonight. Several Small Coppers at **Croxley Moor Common** yesterday. 2 Purple Hairstreak at **Oakwood Park** tonight. Also seen today a Holly Blue.

I got back from a late afternoon walk in **Highgate Wood (London, N.6)** a short while ago, and have just calmed down sufficiently to record that I saw a **Silver-Washed Fritillary** there! Absolutely no doubt - I've studied butterflies for half a century, and have seen enough SWFs down in Dorset to recognise them when I see them; and it did settle for a few seconds close enough for me to be sure. Alas, by the time I'd got the digital camera out and operating, it had soared off, but I saw it once more about 20 minutes later, though it didn't settle again. Can't take too much excitement like that in this weather! - Michael Hammerson

12 Painted Ladies on large buddleia, 1.50pm, **Grove Road, Stevenage Old Town**, and seven in my garden at **Enfield Lock**, 5.40pm, also on buddleia. Also many Silver-Y moths in the garden at dusk over the last few days - Martin Shepherd(*looks like my prediction was right?*)

Last night about 9 pm I noticed that the night shift were taking over in the buddleia, all Silver Y moths as far as I could see, about fifteen or twenty of them. It was still perfectly light enough to see, but I thought it was worth seeing if I could freeze their movement (they never land but hover clinging on with their front legs) with the flash on my little digital camera. I went to the top of some balcony steps where I could look over the top of the bush and waited for some moths to come near enough to use the close up. I attach three of the better results. Not exactly Stephen Dalton but good enough for the net, I think. I was particularly struck by the one taken looking directly down on a flying moth. Not close enough to get real detail, unfortunately. The main problem, as ever, is persuading the camera to focus correctly. I went to Bricket Wood on Sat evening with Colin Everett, no photographable butterflies but i did take the attached shots of a male Roesel's Bushcricket *Metrioptera roeselii* which somebody netted, if you are interested. (This is a species which has been spreading, and used not to be found in Hertfordshire,) - Archie Lang

This pm: 2 Clouded Yellow sighted on my **Bunkers Park** transect. These are the first since 2004 - Michael Pearson

Though i'd share these with you - Went up to **North Enfield CC** in Hilly Fields, Enfield and watched the purple hairstreaks flying to and from the master oak situated within the boundary of the cricket pitch. My daughter (aged 4) is fascinated by the lady cabbage cream as she calls it (large white) which has used the nasturians in the hanging baskets on my patio as a nursery for her eggs 2 batches of which are now tiny caterpillars. She decided that we should go to Hilly Fields to catch one or two and raise some eggs. After seeing many small, essex and large skippers, not to mention eight commas, 3 painted ladies and 2 red admirals and a common blue. It was decided to target either some meadow browns or gatekeepers. With the intention of letting them go in the garden after they had completed "their deed". Two female meadow browns were caught - then a RINGLET !!! This was a fresh example and I'm not sure of their regular flight period. In the years that I recorded the transect walk of the area I had never recorded this species so was very suprised to see this - an egg laying female - which was immediately released. So as far as

I'm aware a new species for this area. Will be interesting to see if any turn up next year - Phil MacMurdie P.s. we now have about 2 dozen meadow brown eggs on a large pot of grass in an old fish tank - along with the "hurd" of large white catterpillars which are not being harched in another tank to save them from the ichneumon flies. - not to mention save my nasturtians (SP ?)

Sunday 23rd July

I visited **Aldbury Nowers** on **Friday**, hoping to repeat my sighting of Chalkhill Blue from last year & Martin Hicks sighting of Silver-washed Fritillary last week. I was unsuccessful with both species at this site, but did get two noteworthy records.

1. **Small Blue** - Crossing the field from the layby, I saw a large patch of Birds Foot Trefoil, just before reaching the chalk bank, about 10 metres to the left, at the edge of the field. I spent some time trying to photograph the Brown Argus. One of them perched, opened its wings showing rich chocolate brown wings with no orange markings. It quickly closed up displaying a dull brown underside. I managed three rather poor photos, but was in no doubt it was Small Blue and this is confirmed by the spot pattern in the photos. I saw it twice more in the next 30 mins but it did not settle again. It flew backwards & forth over the BFTrefoil, interacting with the Brown Arguses.

2. **Dark Green Fritillary** - Further along towards Pitstone Hill in the detached northern section of the reserve (clearing in Turlingham Woods) I saw Dark Green Fritillary, floating lazily around bramble bushes - much easier to photo! I then crossed into Bucks & saw another Dark Green Frit on Pitstone Hill, just 10 meters from the county boundary. I saw a further 6 on Pitstone Hill in the next hour & then returned to the Reserve where I met Michael Pearson, who had also seen DGF that afternoon, but on a completely different part of the Reserve.

3. The other photo is from **Bricket Wood** today - **Silver-washed Fritillary** on buddleia in the garden of The Old Fox Public House, School Lane, Bricket Wood Not a bad few days! - Malcolm Hull

Stevenage Transect, saw the first Painted Ladies (2) in Millennium Wood and a Brown Argus was also seen at the Shackledell grassland only yards away from the only other sighting of it about 10 years ago - Peter Clarke

Yesterday, **Saturday 22nd July**, I had two Marbled Whites at **Horsenden Hill**. One was on the south facing slope of the hill and the other on the western meadows opposite The Ballot Box pub. Couldn't find any White-letter Hairstreaks on either the Horsenden West transect or a casual look around - Andy Culshaw

Visited **Westmill Quarry Ware** to count Sand Martins on 23rd July but was distracted by the more prolific butterflies present in the area. These included a single Clouded Yellow (fourth in UK, first in Herts) plus double figure counts of Painted Lady, Peacock and Gatekeeper. There were also a few Meadow Brown, Red Admiral and a single Ringlet - Steve Austin

Green lane between **Bayford and White Stubbs Lane**, parallel with Ponsbourne Tunnel, first a female **Purple Emperor** was seen around willow and then towards White Stubbs Lane a territorial male was seen around an oak. This is a new tetrad - Liz Goodyear & Andrew Middleton

Robert Callf saw a fresh humming-bird hawk-moth visiting buddleja outside his **Southgate** home, and a week ago on Saturday he saw two HBHMs at **Gilston**.

Saturday 22nd July

I had a **Swallowtail** in **Finsbury Park** on **22nd July**. It was there between 1pm and 4pm on privet-like bushes, amongst buddleia. It looked knackered with abraded wings, flying briefly then rain making it settle. I showed it to 5 other people, including the Friends of Finsbury Park Environmental Officer, who photographed it on her mobile phone. It looked very pale, lemon yellow, rather than a dark yellow, so believe it could well be a gorgon. I was right up to it, almost touching it, as it perched tired, during drizzle and after rain in the centre of the park, in the rock garden. It was there at 1pm and 3pm, but had gone by 5pm. - John Palmer

My wife and I visited **Hexton Chalk Pit** this morning at 11.00 am and saw 1500 + Chalkhill Blues, (see attached photos.) We also saw 4 Marbled White, 20 Gatekeeper, 10 Meadow Brown and 6 Peacock - Ian and Sue Hardy

Silver Washed Fritillary, a garden tick and a half! Not a great photo but better than nothing. West side of **Stortford** is a bit of a journey from Hatfield Forest, but it's nice to think that there are now at least two records from this 'neck of the woods' this year - Andrew Palmer

Friday 21st July p.m. at **Aldbury Nowers, 1 Dark Green Fritillary** nectaring on knapweed beside the new fence along the footpath through 2nd compartment. There were large numbers of "browns" & Marbled Whites among which I saw a single Small Heath at the top end of the northern cmpt, close to the boundary with Pitstone Hill. Amongst other spp. seen were 3 Common Blue, 6 Brimstone, 1 Peacock, 3 Brown Argus: & many assorted skippers - Michael Pearson

News from Wed July 19th, Long Marston, 4pm we watched a **silver washed fritillary** in our back garden for at least 20 minutes It was quartering, freshly emerged and a male and absolutely beautiful. Amazing - Margaret & John Noakes

Friday 21st July

Symondshyde woods nr Sandridge 1400 - 1600 Along the Bridleway opposite Symondshyde farm heading East to West (before going south), the following were seen: Highlight: 1 maybe 2 Silver Washed Fritillaries on Brambles at separate ends of the Bridleway, 10+ White Letter Hairstreaks on various different Bramble Bushes, 3 White Admirals 2 Ringlets, 1 Green veined white, Large Whites, Peacocks, several commas, meadow browns, 3+ Speckled woods. A great day out - Darin Stanley

News from 20th, Bricket Wood, 1 SWF patrolling the ride near the sign post to Mount pleasant lane & school lane. My first ever!! Numerous Purple Hairstreaks, many seen at low levels feeding on small saplings & even on the ground giving a glimpse of the lovely purple sheen this butterfly has. No sign of any White Admirals. Buddlia Bush at the 'Old Fox Pub' in School lane, Bricket wood Reading that someone saw a SWF on the Buddlia Bush at this pub, thought I would pay it a visit. Alas between 1700 & 1800 I saw no SWF but I did see the following: 1 Gate keeper, Comma, 2 Peacocks, numerous Meadow Browns several Purple Hairstreaks in the Bush and on the floor around the picnic table & the highlight was 1 White Letter Hairstreak in the bush - Darin Stanley

A field visit in west Herts produced - as I had hoped it would - the first record of **Silver-washed Fritillary** for **Whippendell Wood** since 1982. There were two territorial males at the point where the public footpath running east-west across the centre of the wood opens up into a long birch-dominated flowery glade. The males occasionally met and chased at the point where (as I presume) the two territories intersected. They also chased Commas that tried to settle in the same locations. I did not survey the entire wood so the count of two is a minimum. Also: Red Admiral, Green-veined White, Purple Hairstreak and 2 Holly Blues but I did not see any worker Hornets - and there were no signs of occupation at last year's nest site. Searching ANY larger woods in Herts for SWFs would be a good use of this weekend - Colin Everett

Went to **Hexton Chalk Pit** this morning(the right side of the road this week!), I've never seen anything like it! At least the number Malcolm had and some, I have no experience of surveying this number of butterflies, but there must have been 7 to 9 butterflies in every square yard, between the 3 of us we would estimate 2000+. One female had 10 males battling over her (photo attached) and similar was witnessed nearly a dozen times. Also plenty of Gatekeepers, Meadow Browns, a few Peacocks, Small/Essex Skippers, Small and Large Whites and a Painted Lady. Then we went to **Newton Wood**, had a couple of Purple Hairstreaks, to early in the day for any real numbers (12.30pm) also Small and Essex Skippers, Marbled Whites, Gatekeepers and Meadow Browns, a few Ringlets, Peacocks and a single White Admiral seen by Dave Beer - Ian Hardy, Dave Beer and Steve Lane

Our usual lunchtime walk near **Norton Green, Stevenage**, has been relatively quiet for butterflies this year. This has changed in the last week or so and particularly in the last few days. We have seen significant numbers of Gatekeepers and Ringlets and almost an abundance of Marbled Whites, today we counted at least 6 in the air at once and this is an under estimate of those in the area. Yesterday we saw our highlight of the week, **a Silver washed fritillary**, a good specimen but easily recognised as a it is missing a piece from the rear of the right hind wing - Malcolm Penn

A White Letter Hairstreak *Satyrium w-album* was seen by us on **16th July** close to the SE corner of **Tingley Wood near Pirton**. It looked in good condition with long streamers on the wings and our impression was that it had not long emerged. It was on a bramble feeding on the few remaining flowers and there were a number of I think English Elms *Ulmus procera* in the surrounding hedgerow. There were a good number of Marbled Whites *Melanargia galathea* in grassland both sides of the **B655 Hitchin to Barton road**. It's great to see so many - Steve and Gillian Austin

Had an interesting day in the garden yesterday at **Northaw Great Wood** between 17:30 & 19:00 & thought it would be good to report my sightings. **Silver Washed Fritillary 1**, White Admiral 1, Peacock 5, Painted Lady 2, Large White 3, Large Skipper 2, Small Skipper 1, Purple Hairstreak 6, Meadow Brown 4, Red Admiral 1. I have also attached a couple of photos I took last week in the garden - Chris Beach

Not very good at sending in my observations, and fairly casual about making them! But it occurs to me to record that I had a walk round **Bricket Wood** (I live in Highgate) on July 2, and saw at least four White Admirals - none of which settled for a photograph - and a Marbled White, of which I managed to get an unexceptionable shot at about 10' away. As with one of your other correspondents, I MAY have seen a Silver-Washed Fritillary, but it went by very fast, once, and I cannot swear to it. Purple Hairstreaks are, by the way, present in **Highgate Wood**, as they have been now for several years - Michael Hammerson

Enfield Southgate, 2 Painted Ladies, on buddleia at **11.30 on Wednesday** - Robert Callf

Thursday 20th July

During Saving Butterflies Week there we are holding an exhibition at St Albans Central Library. Themes for the displays include the history of butterflies in Hertfordshire, Butterflies to see in St Albans district (& locations) and Purple Emperor. The exhibition is on until Friday 28 July, hours are 9-5 (closed Sunday) location - second floor, The Maltings Shopping Centre, Chequer St, St Albans - Malcolm Hull

Went looking for **Chalkhill Blues** & saw:

Hexton Chalk Pit - 1225 (15 mins)

Telegraph Hill - 39 (60 mins)

Therfield Heath - 74 (40 mins)

Church Hill (Therfield Heath) looked in good condition after the difficulties of recent years. At Telegraph Hill the grass was tall & dense. At Hexton conditions were perfect and butterflies thick on the ground. I've never seen so many Chalkhill Blues before in Herts Brown Argus also out at Telegraph Hill, Therfield Heath & 2 sites in St Albans, including a first ever record from my garden.

Weds 19 - Two Silver-washed Fritillaries in a large private **wood near St Albans**. I saw the male perch on bramble & patrol along the ride for about 40 mins. Suddenly the female appeared & they flew close together near to the ground circling each other & slowly moving forward for about a minute. Just as I was expecting a coupling, the female flew off & the rejected male (who was a bit tatty) flopped to the ground & lay still for 15 secs before resuming to perch/patrol - Malcolm Hull

Today saw a White Letter Hairstreak feeding on ragwort flowers in a garden in **Dane End**. It was not bothered by me taking photos. I looked around but could see no others, nor could I see elm saplings. I haven't seen one for years! - Mike Sheppard

I went back to **Mudchute LNR** today (July 20th) during my lunch-hour looking for skippers that I may have missed on the previous times I've visited the site. I did find the Small Skipper today, one I had hoped to find. I also saw for the first time at the site the Gatekeeper (12), raising the species sightings for the site to 17 this season. Also seen, Comma (4), Red Admiral (3), Meadow Brown (15) Speckled Wood (1), Green Veined White (4), Small White (4) & Small Tortoiseshell (1) - Dave Chandler

Wednesday 19th July

Moira and I went to **Bricket Wood** on the **18th July**. The butterfly numbers seemed down - no White Admirals, 1 Comma, 1 Brimstone, no Purple Hairstreaks, in fact the commonest butterflies were Little Skippers, Gatekeepers and some Whites. We were pleased to see 6 + Peacocks and delighted with a Brown Argus. The highlight occurred when we were walking back down the Mount Pleasant/School Lane path and had almost reached the 'crossroad' when Mo spotted a **Silver-washed Frit!** It was very obliging and I took a number of photos. It also means that we have seen/photoed both a male and a female there. We hope that they got together! - Glen Barnes

I was phoned tonight by Richard Brown (who saw SWF at Balls Wood a couple of years ago). He saw a **Purple Emperor and White Letter Hairstreak** in **Ermine Street** about 200m south of Balls Wood and a pristine **Silver Washed Fritillary** in **Balls Wood** today - Andrew Wood

Wormley Woods territory GPS cTL3170 0565, up to **4 active male Purple Emperor** on territory (even in this heat!) with several clashes and one clash of three butterflies. Superb! Also I think just 2 White Admiral Walking back along footpath to the southern entrance we were looking at some low growing **ELM**, when we saw at least **8 PURPLE Hairstreak** 'sitting' on the leaves in the shade - Liz Goodyear & Andrew Middleton

Silver-washed Fritillary at **Aldbury Nowers** on **Tuesday** - Martin Hicks

Tuesday 18th July

Last weekend found me back at **Tring Park** on **Sunday 16th July**. Definite PE aerial battle witnessed. 2 males buzzing high up - Tom Dunbar

Field behind **St Nick's Church, Stevenage**, 1.30-2pm. Meadow Brown 9. Gatekeeper 21. Small/Essex Skipper 18. Large Skipper 2. Ringlet 1. Marbled White 6. Small White 5. Large White 1. Tortoiseshell 3. Peacock 2. Red Admiral 1. Painted Lady 2. Silver-Y 5. Walked the same area at the same time on Friday when it wasn't as hot and although I wasn't keeping count the number of butterflies seemed much higher - Lee Browne.

I was at **Wendover Woods** (just outside Herts but close to Tring Park!) yesterday evening and did quite well for butterflies. **3 Silver-washed Frits, a White Admiral and a Purple Emperor** - Don Otter

I gather that you [heard] over the weekend that I'd seen a **purple emperor** in **Paradise Wildlife Park, Broxbourne**. The sighting was on **Sunday 25 June**, on a very hot day. The butterfly came down to capybara poo - surely a first! When it flew off it was chased by a couple of sparrows, but fortunately they didn't manage to catch it, but it was entertaining if heart-stopping to watch. The butterfly was seen by myself and my partner, who manages a butterfly reserve in Hampshire, including purple emperors! - Joan Childs

News from **Saturday 15th July**. Just over the border at **Cornmill Meadows**, Waltham Abbey, a **White-letter Hairstreak** flew down from the canopy and sat next to me on an Elderberry bush for a couple of minutes at 4.20pm while I was fishing - Martin Shepherd

I thought you may be interested to know that I saw a lone, male **clouded yellow**, yesterday (**July 15th**), on one of my regular spotting walks along the line path towards **Brookmans Park** station from Hawkshead Lane. Apart from being the only clouded yellow I have ever seen in our county, it was only the second I had seen anywhere, the first having been on the Isle of Wight nearly 30 years ago ! - Adrian Fillmore

Monday July 17th

SE Herts: Northaw 2 purple emperors, plus a small bat at 13.31; Wormley 3 PEs plus a red kite at 14.54; Broxbourne Wood NR 1 PE into feeding tree with 3 red admirals and a speckled wood, plus one white admiral; 16.50, Bourne Wood, uncertain, probably nothing - Andrew Middleton

Sunday July 16th

At the **Knebworth woods** (Norton Green, Watery Grove and parts of Cannocks Wood) today (16 July) spotted 8 Purple Hairstreaks, about 15 Marbled Whites, numerous Meadow Browns, Gatekeepers, Ringlets and skippers but no White Admiral, Purple Emperor or Silver-Washed Fritillary seen - Peter Clarke

Added Purple Hairstreak to my **Stevenage** garden list, after I managed to scope a couple on Saturday 15th evening, could not get a positive ID on Friday as they did not settle for very long, possibly 4 or 5. - Steve Lane (ps I would like to make a correction to the report on Hexton Chalkpit as I've now found-out I was the wrong side of the road. First time I've visited the site. Duff info! Sightings from the Public Footpath to Fairy Hole, first meadow on the left, behind the wood stacks. Sorry!

Broxbourne Wood NR field trip - 15-20 people attended during the day and sightings were estimated to involve a minimum of c5 **purple emperors** through the day. Flights were seen from 8.45am, and at 9.40 a female flew in to settle on a beech - at 10.45 it moved briefly to the shade of an oak, then back to the beech, then back in to the oak where it stayed until 14.21hrs - almost 5 hrs of perfect weather and inactivity. A silver-washed fritillary was reported in flight and a

second female PE began egg-laying in a willow nearby in the middle of the day. The oak 'feeding tree' near the car-park was again popular, with several visits for sap by PEs during the day, including two males in the vicinity around 3pm. A few white admirals were still around, also many purple hairstreaks, and a fresh male brimstone was seen on betony in the clearing. Thanks to all who came along and helped with observations - Andrew MiddletonOn my return home, a Peacock on Hemp Agrimony and a Small Skipper pottering around the garden in addition to the usuals - Liz Goodyear

Saw a **Purple Emperor** at **Balls Wood** this morning while doing my transect. It landed on the ground briefly in front of me, before flying back down the track and into the trees. This was at a point very close to the sighting two Sundays ago. - Andrew Wood

As mentioned we saw **3 Male Purple Emperors** today on our walk from Goose Green. Arrived at **Goose Green** 10.30, walk into Broxbourne Woods and turned right up the track past the pond, saw our first sighting at the top of the hill at 11.00, it flew around us but did not land, second sighting was at 11.30 on our way back, at the entrance to the track where it is very damp and muddy, it was landed but flew up into the woods. Final spot was as we were about to leave Goose Green car park, another male flew onto the willow tree near the house, stayed there for a minute and then flew into the nearest garden - Kevin and Sandra Standbridge

Yesterday afternoon (July 15th) in **Park Wood, Ruislip, Purple Hairstreaks** were very numerous. There were lots flying along the main ride; and on one oak tree at the Eastern end I saw an estimated twenty flying simultaneously on one oak tree. Several were also clustered together apparently drinking (sap?) from where young acorns were forming. Also saw two elderly White Admirals - Graham Elcombe

Sunday 16th July - I spent an hour in a secluded corner of **Bricket Wood**, where after tantalising me for most of that period a male **Silver-washed Fritillary** eventually settled on bramble flowers. Two **White Admirals** in the same glade including one dogged survivor with large pieces missing from both fore- and hindwings. In adjacent **Garston Park** a Small **Copper and White-letter Hairstreak**, but most of the Wych Elms used by the latter are showing serious canopy-thinning or worse as a result of disease resurgence. Commas again very common over the weekend, including what seems to be a much larger proportion than usual of the form *hutchinsoni* - Colin Everett

Saturday July 15th - A **White-letter Hairstreak** on and around the graves by the east wood at **North Watford Cemetery**, although I could find no elms at the site. Also Purple Hairstreak (plenty of oaks here and known colonies elsewhere in this tetrad) - Colin Everett

I went for a walk in **Bricket Wood** near Watford on Saturday 15th and, just like my report from Park Wood (Ruislip) from Friday, I noticed something strange with the **Purple Hairstreaks** coming down from their oaks to ground level to [presumably] nectar on low-lying plants. I saw six PHs behaving in this way, so I wonder, could this behaviour be something to do with the dry spell causing a shortage of honeydew in the canopy? I haven't seen so many PHs so close to the ground like this for a decade. However, more interestingly after my walk, whilst having a refreshing pint in the beer garden at the nearby Old Fox Inn at the end of school lane (Bricket Wood)- a slightly worn but easily recognisable male **Silver Washed Fritillary** came by landed on one of the buddlias and then stayed around for about five minutes. But even stranger, when I got home from my outing I received a telephone call from my daughter Linda who had been visiting old friends in **Hampstead Garden Suburb** (Borough of Camden?) who told me she had seen a PH at ground level in her friends' garden. Colin Plant's book *The Butterflies of The London Area* does indicate that PHs have been seen in Camden in the 1980s - David Chandler

News from **11 July 2006**

Bricket Wood - Warm, cloudy/bright day. Followed the path leading to Bucknalls Lane and then turned right at the crossway and went down path shown as to Mount Pleasant Lane. The climax of the walk was a Silver-washed Fritillary (image) watched between 10.30 and 11.00, I managed to get a couple of photos before it flew off. We carried on searching and found it again and I was able to take some better shots. It then flew off up into the tree tops. We walked back along the path and Mo saw a White Admiral which was laying an egg (image). She then noticed on the same group of Honeysuckle leaflets a caterpillar! (image) More photos taken. A very rewarding outing - Glen Barnes

Saturday July 15th

Is anyone experiencing an explosion of **Purple Hairstreak** at the moment? In 2005 on the **Kenwood Transect**, we recorded 25 between Week 15 & Week 21. Additionally, we recorded quite a few casually in 2005, including, on one memorable evening, 30 in and around one oak tree. This year, we have picked them up on the Transect one week earlier: 6 in Week 15. Nothing, however, has prepared me for what I have witnessed today (Saturday July 15th) [& what a pity that, due to other commitments that must take priority, we can't do the Week 16 Transect today. Up to today, since recording began in 2005, I have logged Purple Hairstreak as present at 12 different locations around our 112acre site. Today, however I must re-write the book and log them as widespread across the site. Furthermore, the evidence of my own eyes strongly suggests numbers in the high hundreds on the wing *at the same time*. They have been present in oak canopies, flying across open pasture & meadow, over buildings and landing on tall vegetation including nettle & bramble, & they have also been landing on people. I have never seen anything like it! Purple Hairstreak populations do, of course, fluctuate greatly from year to year & here at Kenwood, our mixed broadleaved SSSI woodland offers ideal territory for Purple Hairstreak, so perhaps I shouldn't be taken aback by today's sheer weight of numbers. Nevertheless, what I have witnessed today still comes as a shock. In fact, it seems incredible! - Mike Taylor, Kenwood

On a beautiful sunny morning I went up to **Tring Park** and saw numerous butterflies. Red Admirals and Commas seemed to be very abundant on the brambles just off the main woodland ride. I was very pleased to see in the same area two **Silver -Washed Fritillaries** at about 10.00am with strong orange coloration (male or female?) gliding and settling on the flowers. However the main prize was at 10.30am when I saw a male **Purple Emperor** (purple sheen) feeding off the surface of a leaf on the ground. It seemed very docile and remained in the same position for 5 minutes, completely undisturbed by people walking and running past. It then glided around the brambles for another 5 minutes before flying off. Once again I located it at the bottom of the large lime tree, on the main ride, almost opposite the gate going into an area of thistles and a sallow tree. This seems to be a "hotspot", as it is the third time I have seen it here in 4 years - Phil Woodward

Friday July 14th

Preparing for the field trip on August 6th, I paid a visit to **Park Wood Ruislip** today and saw the following butterflies: Meadow Brown [30+] Gatekeeper [20+] Speckled Wood [5] White Admiral [5] Red Admiral [3] Comma [3] Small Skipper [1] Large Skipper [5] Small White [3], Large White [1] Holy Blue [1] and Purple Hairstreak [6]. Although it was very hot and the butterflies were whizzing about four Purple Hairstreaks in one spot were being very cooperative and were flying low down settling near the ground; one female even opened up her wings on alighting, an event which I've never seen before in the field. And as you might guess, frustratingly I had not brought my camera with me. - David Chandler, ps I was in Grasmere Avenue (HA9) near the Preston Road LT underground station and saw two Gatekeepers in a garden. I thought that might be worth noting.

At least **100 Chalkhill Blue** at **Hexton Chalk Pits** this afternoon. Also Painted Lady and Marbled White. Brown Argus, Small Skippers, Meadow Brown, Gatekeeper, Ringlet. No sign of WL Hairstreaks - Nigel Agar

Bricket Wood Silver-washed Fritillary (2) - the third year in a row the species has been seen there. Purple Hairstreaks (40) all low down, Brimstones (17) mostly males nectaring on bramble, White Admiral (5), Red Admiral (6), Peacock, plus a huge array of browns, Skippers, Whites, Commas & SilverY moths - Malcolm Hull

Ware garden, returned home at lunchtime to see a white letter nectaring on marjoram in my garden, oblivious to my attempts to take a photo but flew off after a pigeon flew over, Also 3 red admirals, 1 large white, 1 small white, 1 gatekeeper, 2 meadow brown, 1 small tortoiseshell, a possible skipper, and a blue butterfly that was probably a holly blue but looked very dark and rich in colour, more like common?. After work disturbed a hummer and from my patio could see 3-4 purple hairstreak in the large oak behind my house - Liz Goodyear

Spent a few hours in **Bramfield Park Wood** and saw 10+ white admirals including a 95% dark individual, plus a white-letter hairstreak, many commas, purple hairstreaks, ringlets, still several large skippers, and a couple of fresh peacocks. Then went to **Wormley** and saw 2 purple emperors, but have a feeling a jay took one from its perch high in the tree-tops - Andrew Middleton

Thursday July 13th

David Gompertz took of the wing-scales around an eyespot of a purple hairstreak wing we found at Fir & Pond Wood

Went to **Public Footpath to Fairy Hole** (correction) this afternoon with Ian Hardy, arrive about 1.40pm stayed for a couple of hours, numbers of butterflies excellent, we saw; **7 Dark Green Fritillaries, 40+ Chalkhill Blues**, 25+ Marbled Whites, 2 Brimstones, 2 Red Admirals, 20+ Small Tortoiseshells, 5 Commas, Essex Skippers, Small Skippers, Ringlets, Gatekeepers, Meadow Browns, Large & Small Whites - Steve Lane

14th July - sightings today were numerous **Chalkhill Blues** at **Therfield Heath**, even seen from the carpark (1st for me)

4+ Dark Green Fritillaries seen at Sharpenhoes Clappers (think this is outside of Herts.) (1st for me).

13th July rear garden, **Batford**: 1 Marbled White. **Bricket Wood**: 5 White Admirals, numerous Purple Hairstreaks & Brimstone along the ride, numerous marbled Whites & Ringlets elsewhere. **<Broxbourne Woods**: 1m **Purple Emperor** came to greet us as soon as we arrived at around 1015 upon entering the famous ride. Flew around us several times before landing on some doggy doo. Able to get clear views of the purple sheen when the light hit it right whilst grounded. The butterfly continued to do this several flying around us & landing. 1 point even landing on my friends (Geoff Horn) smelly shoe. Got so close to your head you could hear the wings beat against each other, similar sound to hearing a bat fly. Also seen was 1 White Admiral & 1 Purple Hairstreak.

12th July Brocket Park/Woods: No sign of a hoped for White Admiral. Plenty of Ringlets. **The Commons, Welwyn Garden City**. Unable to locate the nature reserve & ended up browsing through the woods & the golf course that weaved in & out of them. Was able to catch up with 3 **White Letter Hairstreaks** in an Elm tree & 2 Purple Hairstreaks by a nearby Oak on track between the golf pond & the twelfth Tee. Also plenty more White Letter Hairstreaks at the back of the Caravan site along the footpath on thistles, bramble & an Elm, at least 6. Never seen WLH before so this was a most pleasant surprise. **Batford, Harpenden**: At least 3 Purple Hair streaks on tall oak nearby Aldwickbury irrigation pond (Batford golf pond) around 7 PM - Darin Stanley

I was just coming to the end of my **Balls Wood** transect this afternoon, when I spotted a, too large to be a comma, orange butterfly on a bramble, a brief look confirmed it to be a **Silver Washed Fritillary**. I spent the next half hour after finishing the transect checking the ride where I had seen it, with no luck. But I then saw a way behind the bramble bush it had been on and this led into a small bramble filled glade hidden behind a line of trees. In 12 years I had never seen this feature of the wood. Within 30 seconds I had seen it and it then spent the next 15 mins flitting around the brambles, before flying off high into a nearby oak tree. This link will take you to a photo and a short video [://homepage.ntlworld.com/zoothorn/swf.htm](http://homepage.ntlworld.com/zoothorn/swf.htm) - Andrew Wood

A few items of recent note at **Horsenden Hill**. All records from Horsenden unless noted as Perivale Wood.

7th July Marbled White (1). Apparently there was also another sighting earlier that same week. Nice to get as I dipped entirely last year - I guess its a pretty small population. White-letter hairstreak (2), Purple Hairstreak (6), Essex Skipper (1, netted), Painted Lady (2).

2nd July White-letter Hairstreak (1 Horsenden + 2 Perivale Wood). Nice to see the Perivale colony still survives - they are not particularly easy to view. Holly Blue (1). Purple Hairstreak (1 Perivale Wood).

1st July Purple Hairstreak (4), White-letter Hairstreak (13) - Andy Culshaw

PS Dave Howdon informs me that Peter Edwards had a White Admiral nectaring on bramble at Horsenden Hill, complementing two earlier 'probables'.

Tuesday 11th July - At approx 13.00hrs I saw a **Silver Washed Fritillary** in **Park Wood, Ruislip**. It is the first sighting for me of this species in the Ruislip area although there have been one or two sightings by others in the past. White Admiral, Red Admiral, Comma, Purple Hairstreak, Small Skipper, Meadow Brown and Gatekeeper are all present in good numbers and Marbled White sightings are increasing. After leaving Ruislip I visited **Ladywalk Wood, Maple Cross** to look for **White-Letter Hairstreak**. After quite a bit of searching I found 3 individuals feeding on brambles along the main path in the wood. On the woodland edge and the adjacent fields were large numbers of Marbled White, Meadow Brown, Gatekeeper, Comma, and Small Skipper. Red Admiral (5), Small Tortoiseshell (2), Large, Small & Green Veined White and Small Copper were also

present - Steve Pash

Wednesday July 12th

Upper Thames BC member David Dennis phoned to say he saw a 90% certain **White Admiral** in his garden (near **Cholesbury**) today 12th; and also a 90% **Silver-washed Fritillary** yesterday on the common at Cholesbury, Herts. - news from Nick Bowles

Broxbourne Wood. Glorious weather today but no sightings of PEs while I was there c12.30 - 14.00 hrs

Several sightings of White Admirals. One by the pond repeatedly settled on the water which has a lot of gunge and scum at the moment. Purple Hairstreaks numerous with a tendency to fly low and take an interest in Self Heal flowers. Also Comma and Red Admiral. Red Admiral in my **garden (Hitchin)** settled on a nettle leaf, checked that it really was a nettle by lowering its antennae to gently touch the surface of the leaf and laid an egg. Creates a dilemma as I was just about to pull the nettles out from among the fruit bushes. - Nigel Agar

Butterfly numbers are picking up in my **Stevenage garden**, as the Buddleja and Lavender come into flower, in a couple of hours this afternoon I was; 2 Red Admirals, 3+ Commas, 1 Painted Lady, **1 White-letter Hairstreak, 1 Marbled White**, Large & Small Whites, Large & Small Skippers, Gatekeepers, Ringlets, Meadow Browns, also Silver Y and Hummingbird Hawkmoth - Steve Lane

I went to **Fir & Pond Wood HMWT Reserve** (east of Potters Bar) with site warden David Gompertz to look for **purple emperors**. We began watching the woodland edge from 12.40 and had five clashes of two males, spiralling into the sky over the next 25 minutes. Watching from inside the woodland edge, a half-obscured canopy gap was eventually found where a male was flying its patrols every 2 or 3 minutes. At **Broxbourne Wood NR** mid-afternoon, one female flew over although little had been reported during the earlier part of the day. I didn't see much over Claypits Wood, but in the early evening **Broxbourne Common** had a male on territory, high up on top of the two tallest veteran oaks - Andrew Middleton

Tuesday 11th July

Hemel Hempstead garden - Had nine species in the garden today including a perfect Marbled White, my first since 29th July 2001, which nectared on Verbena Bonariensis and Erysimum "Bowles Mauve" before flying north. My son managed to take a good digital photo of it which I will forward when things return to normal. Making up the numbers were Comma, Speckled Wood, Meadow Brown, Red Admiral, Small Skipper, Large, Small and Green-Veined Whites. Other nectar sources used were Armeria, Scabious, Inula, Lavender and Heliotrope. - Malcolm Newland

Stoke Newington Reservoirs & Conservation Areas ~ Whilst not of national importance, I couldn't resist telling you we recorded our first **Ringlet** on the patch, TQ325874, this morning (as you prophesied). It takes us to an unofficial 21 butterfly sp. for 2006. I'll forward the full list later in the year, of course - Gar for TeRNS

We arrived at **Broxbourne Woods** at 10.00 sunny/cloudy weather, saw 1 **Purple Emperor** flying high above tallows near bench, no other sightings before we left at 12.00. We also saw Purple Hairstreaks, Red Admiral, Commas, Meadow Browns, Small Skippers, Ringlets, White Admirals, Gatekeepers and a beautiful Peppered Moth which was kindly pointed out to us, - Sandra and Kevin Standbridge

South Herts - I recorded two **Purple Emperors** at Northaw and two at private woodlands elsewhere in south Herts today. I'm going out tomorrow around Wornley and Broxbourne looking for territorial activity ~ if anyone would like to join me, my contact details are on the target species, purple emperor page - Andrew Middleton

4th July 06 ~ During this week's transect walk at **Shrubhill Common in Hemel Hempstead** this afternoon, I was amazed to see a **Silver-washed Fritillary**. I watched it patrolling up and down the green lane for several minutes. It did however stop long enough on a bramble for me to have a clear view of the underside through binoculars - Roger Prue

Monday July 10th

In **Broxbourne Woods** today. Sighting of **White Admiral** in flight and several **Purple Emperors** over head. I did not see one on the ground but a visitor who was just leaving got a good pic of a

male PE on the path. - Nigel Agar

Reading the sightings you've posted over the weekend it seems as if the Ringlet is of interest. I have made three visits to **Tring Park** these last two weekends looking for the PE (to no avail, unfortunately) but saw more ringlets than anything else. Being a casual "butterfly", I tend not to count them as I wander about but "dozens" would be a fair reflection. Other species I saw yesterday included meadow brown (20+), speckled wood (10+), comma (5+), red admiral (3+), large skippers (3+), and one each of large white, gatekeeper, small heath, small copper (my first sighting up on the ridge) and a (male common?) blue that flew past and didn't land. Oh, and one fairly large completely white moth that I watched manoeuvre itself onto the underside of a nettle leaf, very close to the ground. As I turned the leaf over, it had its wings spread flat, was about 3cm across and had a very, very faint, wide, diagonal mark across each wing giving the impression of a shallow "V". Probably really common but I'd not seen one before! - Colin Sturges

Sunday July 9th

1 White-letter Hairstreak today c.12pm in the car park at **Chadwell Springs** golf club above Hertford Meads. It was perched on the car sheltering from the breeze. There are 4 medium-sized Ulmus sp. (completely Dutch Elm Disease - free) at the entrance to the Golf Club so the site merits checking by someone more able than me. Nothing of importance on Herts Meads. I'm back to Italy on Tuesday so this'll probably be my last record for 2006 - Paul Tout

I thought you'd be interested in a **Toadflax Brocade** that I trapped last night. I live in **Neasden, NW London, NW10 0DF**, adjacent to Brent Reservoir - Andrew Self

Liz Goodyear and I joined a National Trust butterfly walk at **Hatfield Forest, Essex** today, and the highlight over the ringlets, white-letters and purple hairstreaks, was a **silver-washed fritillary** which the group watched as it disappeared up over the trees - Andrew Middleton

Saturday July 8th

I spent a few hours in the **Abbots Langley, Kings Langley & Chipperfield** areas, recording a total of 14 spp across five tetrads. Conditions were often cloudy with a gentle-moderate breeze and thus just one White-letter Hairstreak was seen (on Wych Elm at Gallows Hill). A rather faded Painted Lady at Sheppey's Lane where also Peacock larvae. Other spp (number of tetrads in brackets) included: Red Admiral (4), fresh Small Tortoiseshells (3), Marbled White (2) and Ringlet (1). The most widespread species was Comma (5 tetrads), including four competing for territory in a bracken clearing in Scatterdells Wood - Colin Everett

Hemel Hempstead garden - Highlight of the butterflies in my garden today was a **White Admiral** which was seen on two occasions by myself, two of my sons and my granddaughter. It is only my second record for this species the first being a worn specimen on 3rd August 1997. My garden backs on to **Woodhall Wood** one of several very small remaining pieces of woodland in the area and which contains lots of wild honeysuckle. The White Admiral which we saw today did disappear into the wood which I will explore in the next few days to see if I can spot any others. Malcolm Newland

Broxbourne Woods NR field trip ~ approx 50-60 people attended during the day, especially during the morning when it was rather cool. There were sightings of white admiral, purple hairstreak, red admiral, ringlet, meadow brown, large skipper, small skipper, comma, speckled wood and small tortoiseshell, plus some whites. Of special interest was a **silver-washed fritillary** that flew along the main track during the late morning, and 3 or 4 sightings were made of this species during the day. **Purple Emperors** began to get active over the sallow breaks from 12.30 as it warmed up and visitor numbers fell, with 1 or 2 male emperors making occasional flights, and two females, including one perched for some time around 14.50 and one exhibiting egg-laying behaviour within a sallow. Another female was seen by BNA field trip members in the central area of the complex. Around 2.30 several of the BC group went to **Brickendon Green** where 2+ white-letter hairstreaks were soon located on top of the elms, then we moved on to **Bourne Wood** territory where a male was present patrolling high up in the oaks sheltered from the wind and mostly from view as well.

ps I (Liz) had a phone call from Jacky George who had been on the CMS walk with me and is a branch member.

Returning to the east carpark with 5 others from the group they saw a **male emperor feeding on the mud on the side of a parked car** (where it had splashed up) by the driver's door. It flew

around and into an oak. Time about 12.30

Estimated safe minimum count for the day on the reserve ~ five

Today Toby Spall and I recorded the second and third records ever of **Ringlet** for the area of **Rye Meads** since records began in c.1960. The butterflies, just three metres apart, were at the southern edge of the south lagoons, close to the river Stort and the county border of Essex. The first record was in 2003. The site is well recorded with a butterfly log done at least weekly by the Rye Meads Ringing Group since the early 1970s - Paul Tout

Bob Cripps' sightings from **Bricket Wood** today: Red Admiral 4, Speckled Wood 8, Gatekeeper 3, Meadow Brown 31, Large Skipper 4, Ringlet 1, Holly Blue 1, Marbled White 4, Purple Hairstreak 2, Large White 7, White Admiral 5, Comma 8

Someone called Brian asked me to send you a little report. I'm totally clueless about butterflies, but helpful people on the website helped me with identification of the purple emperor. We saw it in the woodland in **Tring Park** (SP930105) **Sunday 02-07-2006** about 5pm (a very hot day). It was fluttering ahead of us on the path and looked so large that I knew it was not something I'd seen before. Apparently it's a male as from one angle, the purple sheen was evident - Gillian Bladen-Clark

Friday July 7th

Visited **Danemead HMWT** [Broxbourne Woods NNR complex] for the first time today (with Adam Wilson) at about 16:30 and was pleased to find a freshly-emerged male **Purple Emperor** at the entrance to the clearing with the newly coppiced willows. It performed excellently, perched on bracken fronds and drinking moisture from the ground and the path. Also seen: 2 White Admirals (rather tatty), a Comma and about 20 Ringlets. Adam's first PE. Also seen at the south-east corner of **Bowyers Water (Cheshunt)**: 1 Ringlet. They certainly weren't here 15 or 20 years ago when I was a regular 'down the pits' but I'm not sure when they colonised the floor of the Lea Valley since I moved away in '89 - Paul Tout

We parked at Goose Green and went into **Broxbourne Woods** at approx 9.00am, turned right after the pond and walked to the top of the hill. We saw our first **Purple Emperor** here this year, halfway up the hill, a grounded male, it stayed only for a few minutes, weather cloudy, seen at 9.25. We saw another PE gliding above the trees and a Purple Hairstreak in the same area. Good numbers of commas which looked pristine. We then went to Broxbourne Woods car park at 10.45, a few people there already but no sightings of PE had been seen, very cloudy and wet. The gentlemen who Sandra knows had been there since 9.00. After a downpour it got a little warmer and brighter and we saw 1 sighting above trees near seat at approx 12.15. - Sandra and Kevin Standbridge

Moira and I drove to **Bricket Wood** on on **4 July**, parking in School Lane. Hot day. We did a circular walk through the open area seeing Brimstones, Marbled Whites, White Admirals, Skippers Large & Small, Gatekeepers, Meadow Browns plus Dragons and Grasshoppers. Took some photos. Back on the path we walked to the 'crossroad' where we turned right. Along this path we had a repeat of most of the above plus a Small Copper, a fast-flying large, orange/brown butterfly which may have been a Silver Washed Fritillary - it didn't stop! and Banded Damsels - Glen Barnes

Thursday July 6th

In the **Hemel Hempstead** garden today ~ Comma, Small White and Speckled Wood didn't settle but saw two Meadow Browns on Verbena Bonariensis and Lavender Dwarf Munstead Blue, Small Tortoiseshell on Lavender, Large White on Lavender and Purple Toadflax, Small Skipper on Lavender and white Lychnis Coronaria while the lavender alone provided nectar for over thirty Bumblebees - Malcolm Newland

Sandra and I visited **Pegsdon Hills** today and saw our first **Chalkhill Blues**, 2 males 3 females, also saw **5 Dark Green Fritillaries** (the most we have ever seen there), Small Tortoiseshell, hundreds of Marbled Whites, Essex, Small & Large Skipper, Brimstones, Comma, Speckled Wood, Large Whites, Small White. Lots of Small Heaths, Meadow Browns & Ringlets, Gatekeepers and lots of Silver Y Moths and Pyralid moths, 6 Spotted Burnets. Lots and lots of lovely herbs and flowers which smelt wonderful - Kevin and Sandra Standbridge

taken today at 10.54am after light rain shower. Photo taken 100 yards from 'West' car park at

Broxbourne Woods NR. Other sightings were at 11.15am however not grounded - Chris Lloyd
South Herts - Today I rushed out around 2.30pm as it brightened and saw 2 purple emperors at Northaw, one more over Claypits Wood, Broxbourne Woods, and two clashing at Bourne Wood Celtic Harmony Camp, Broxbourne Woods. There can be some exciting male territorial activity to enjoy at this private site, which I believe is open to the public this weekend for a small charge and through the summer holidays. I haven't seen any PEs at Broxbourne Common yet this year - Andrew Middleton

Wednesday July 5th

I had a look round **Sarratt** to explore a tetrad not yet visited. (TQ 04 98) That morning I saw my first White Admiral of the year in an area near a conifer orchard. The butterfly was nectaring on bramble and stayed for a good while. In a nearby field with grazing horses a marbled white flew by - just a brief glimpse. In several fields I must have encountered a total of 60 + meadow browns! Also seen were a comma, a speckled wood, 3 large whites and several batches of peacock caterpillars in a fairly late stage of development. If anyone else lives in this area it is well worth a visit. I shall certainly be going again - Ann Piper

Hummingbird Hawkmoth seen on **Brunel University** campus in Uxbridge at 17.15hrs. - Steve Pash

Tuesday 4th July

Hexton Chalk Pit NR Monday evening (3rd) and thought I saw a male **chalk hill blue**, so I went back this evening (4th) and they were out in good numbers, at least 12 males seen and a lone female was also seen and photographed. They must have nearly all come out in the preceding 24 hours - Ian Woivod

I had a walk around **Great Ashby District Park** this afternoon, weather not bad, overcast but still very warm. Butterfly numbers still good; 10+ Marbled Whites, Small White, Ringlet, Large and Small Skippers, 100+ Meadow Brown. This morning went to **Fermyn Wood**, Northants, with Ian Hardy, a new site for us, very good butterfly site. 12+ Purple Emperors, 40+ White Admiral (including 2 completely black except for a faint white mark on the upper front wings), 2 White-letter Hairstreaks, 1 Purple Hairstreak, Large and Small Skippers and Whites, Ringlets, Meadow Browns, Comma - Steve Lane

Sandra and I went to **Goose Green** car park, arrived at 8.30 (am) and walked into Broxbourne Woods, turned right after pond and walked to top of the hill, saw usual sightings but no Purple Emperor. Then walked from car park towards Hertford Heath approx 500m saw White Letter Hairstreak. We then went to **Broxbourne Wood NR** arrived at 11.00 saw Female Emperor at 11.10 grounded just before stream, then saw continuous sightings of Males until we left 1.45, We think we saw at least 5 different individuals, 1 Male stayed around for at least 3/4 Hour flying around the trees and people and regularly landing, it also landed on [Sandras leg \(click for image\)](#) and tried to feed and another ladies foot and BOTTOM (I will let you make your own jokes up), Sandra managed to take a picture whilst on her leg, attached. On talking to other people who do not have internet access, other sightings were a Male at 8.50 grounded, 9.30 2 other males seen. Also Roy Cornhill who was very knowledgeable saw **2 Male Silver Washed Fritillaries**. - Sandra and Kevin Standbridge

I thought you might like to see my photo of a purple emperor (click for image) taken this morning 4/7 at **Broxbourne Woods**. We had three sightings early this morning - Chris Lloyd

Doing my Fritillary co-ordinator duty I paid a visit to **Bricket Wood** myself today and saw the following butterflies: Ringlet [40+] Meadow Brown [50+] Gatekeeper [1] Speckled Wood [5] Marbled Whites [4] White Admiral [3] Red Admiral [3] Comma [5] Small Skipper [5] Large Skipper [8] Small White [3] & Green Veined White [1].

Although it was very hot and the butterflies were whizzing about, I managed to get a few photographs of the White Admiral. I did not see a Silver Washed Fritillary, however, I met a couple of our members from St Albans who saw some Small Coppers & a large orange butterfly that was much larger than a Comma. Although they could not be certain, as it did not alight on any of the flowers in the ride, it seems to me from how they described it that it could well have been a **Silver Washed Fritillary** - David Chandler

White Admiral at **Cannock Wood** this morning. Northern part of Newton Wood near Stevenage. Knebworth Woods, also M/Brn Ringlet, L S Skips Marbled White - Nigel Agar

Whilst putting out washing this morning, saw a White-letter Hairstreak fly through garden (**Ware**), then landed on a leaf on the apple tree - Liz Goodyear. Some of Liz's recent purple emperor images, including a male with poorly expanded wings
Later we visited **Symondshyde Wood** and saw 6 white admirals, 9 white letter hairstreaks, 10+ commas mostly on the main track, then a **silver-washed fritillary** was seen patrolling up and down this ride around 11.58 - AM & LG

Monday 3rd July

[This] morning at I had a White Admiral in my Garden in **Ruislip** (Heathfield Rise). It settled on a Hebes bush before flying into neighbouring gardens. On the same evening I visited **Park Wood in Ruislip** where 8 White Admirals were still flying at 19.00 hrs. Also, dozens of Purple Hairstreak, 6 Comma (including 4 together), 4 Red Admiral and my 1st Gatekeeper of the year - Steve Pash

Silver washed fritillary seen **Broxbourne Wood** main drag 1st July - pic taken for positive id, and also 1 female purple emperor in the dip today, 3rd July - Barry Palfrey

Note - Please watch out carefully for **silver-washed fritillaries** amongst all the fresh commas in our woods - I was pretty sure a silver-washed fritillary flashed past searching the bracken beside the Broxbourne Wood main ride on 29th June, and likewise Liz and I saw an almost certain silver-washed travelling at speed through Derrys Wood this morning - Andrew Middleton

Went to **The Commons**, local nature reserve in W.G.C. this afternoon with Ian Hardy and finally caught up with the **White-letter Hairstreaks (image)**, a least 10 feeding on the thistle, also seen in good numbers Meadow Brown and Ringlet, plus Large Skipper, Small Skipper, Comma, Red Admiral, Large White, Small White, Speckled Wood - Steve Lane

Wormley Woods, Derry's Wood area 10am-5pm, grounded female plus female, then male in low trees am, eventually located a territory amongst taller oaks just off the willow panels where two+ males were flying and chasing any bird that dared fly through their canopy gaps (cTL3170 0565) - Liz Goodyear and Andrew Middleton

Took a mid morning walk around **Maple Cross and West Hyde** today and took a good look at the roadside verges. Spotted a small skipper which obliging stayed long enough on a grass stalk for me to see its antennae! It was a definite **Essex skipper**, my first this year. Also saw several others but they could have been small or Essex not sure. Also 2 large skippers, over a dozen meadow browns, 1 small tortoiseshell and 2 pristine red admirals. I'm looking out for marbled whites in the site where they've been the last few years but no luck yet! - Ann Piper

White Letter Hairstreak at **Hexton Chalk Pits** this morning (and again on 4th). Mint condition specimen near the ground probably just emerged. There is a Wych Elm up the slope from the lower seat near the entrance. It is rather overshadowed by an Ash. Hairstreaks were also active in the upper branches of the ash. First record for this site as far as I know. Also M/Brown and Ringlet, Small Skippers and Marbled White. Also Small Tortoiseshell at the **Old Hale Way** allotment site - Nigel Agar

Incidentally, my son Tom who spotted the purple emperor along Ermine Street yesterday decided to take a walk in **Broxbourne Woods** today and saw a Purple Emperor near the west car park. It was on a tree on the left hand side looking down the ride and he said it was a male because it was purple - Roger Newbold

Sunday 2nd July

1 male purple emperor at Broxbourne at 16.40 yesterday, 2nd July. It was about half way between the west car park and the famous seat, swooped low right in front of me, but up again straight away with no sign of landing. I was in the process of leaving the site, but then stayed another half hour. No further sightings. The path was largely shaded by then. Loads of white admirals, commas (var. hutchinsoni) meadow browns, large skippers, ringlets - Richard Harrington

I would like to report a White-letter Hairstreak seen in my fathers garden on Sunday afternoon. He lives near **Hare Street, Buntingford**, Herts - Allan Burrows

Purple Emperor at Balls Wood ~ I was leading a walk for the Wildlife trust in **Balls Wood**

today. At 11.30 I saw a large black and white butterfly fly across the main north south ride and into the trees at the side of the ride. It was too angular for a White Admiral and a bit too large. One of the party managed to locate it in the hornbeam at the side of the ride about 12 feet up sitting facing north west on a branch. It then stayed there while all 30 or so people on the walk got a view of it. After about 5 mins it moved slightly to face North and when we moved off after about 20 mins it was still there. After the walk I did a transect in the wood but there was no sign of it - Andrew Wood

Our Sunday afternoon walk on **July 2nd** took us up **Ermine Street** where it crosses the minor road near Goose Green and into Balls Wood. It was very hot but we saw about 50 Meadow Brown, 20 Ringlet, nine Commas, four Speckled Woods, one Gatekeeper (my first this year), four Red Admirals, one Small Tortoiseshell, five Small Skippers, two Large Skippers, two Small Whites, six White Admirals and last but not least one **Purple Emperor**. The latter was a female on Ermine Street itself about 300 yards from the small carpark (348090) and spotted by my son Tom as it rested on the path (very dry and dusty). Its wings were closed and it was very lethargic although it appeared in otherwise good condition. It didn't appear to be feeding on anything but looked very dazed - Roger Newbold

My wife and I visited **Broxbourne Wood NR** today between 10.00 and 12.30. We parked in the west car park and walking the near rides saw at least 6 White Admirals, 4 Comma, 4 Large skipper, 1 Red Admiral plus several Ringlet, Speckled Wood and many Meadow Brown. On returning to the car we were amazed to see a male **Purple Emperor** land on the bonnet of the car where it stayed for several minutes with its bright yellow proboscis hard at work on what can only be described as bird mess! It returned 10 mins later to the bonnet before sampling another car before heading off down the ride which leads north from the car park, landing on the path several times before it landed in a clump of grass just off the path where it remained to be enjoyed by several other people who had arrived in the meantime. I have never seen a PE before despite several attempts in Surrey/Hants over several years so my wife and I were ecstatic, so thank you for your excellent website! Possibly of interest to you also. We stopped at the Rose and Crown pub in Essendon for a celebratory lunch and as we sat in the garden 2 different White letter Hairstreaks came down from the trees and even landed on the lawn briefly. What a day - Vince and Kelly Kinsler

(It is very much appreciated by the branch when information such as this on all sightings of Purple Emperors and other species is reported to the website and/or recorder - thanks)

Sighting for my **Stevenage** garden **29th & 30th June**; Small Skipper, Large Skipper, Ringlet, Red Admiral, Meadow Brown, Small White, Comma and Painted Lady. **Saturday 1st July**, had a trip to **Cumbria** with Ian Hardy, Richard Pople, Dave Beer and John Tomkins. First stop: 50+ Large Heath, Small Heath, Speckled Wood, Large and Small Skippers, Comma, Ringlet and Meadow Brown. Next stop for about 15 minutes; 2 Northern Brown Argus, 6+ Dark Green Frits, Small White. Third stop; 40+ Mountain Ringlet, many Small Heath and Golden-ringed Dragonfly. Then finally to Arnside Knott; 100+ Dark Green, 4+ High Brown, 10 Small Pearl-bordered Frits, 6 Grayling, Painted Lady, Small Tortoiseshell, Comma, Northern Brown Argus, Meadow Brown, Ringlet, Large Skipper - Steve Lane

On **June 30th**, a quick stop off at **Common Moor** yielded 1 large skipper, at least 7 meadow browns and one small heath. I have not seen this butterfly in my area before but I understand it is quite common on this site so I must investigate further! Otherwise there has been less around than I would have expected. Perhaps I'm going out at the wrong time of day when it is too hot!! - Ann Piper

Saturday 1st July

Ringlets, Marbled Whites and both the common Burnet moths near **Tring station**. It also seems worth mentioning records made today at **Dancersend NR** in Bucks as this site is only one km outside Herts. The highlight there was two Small Blues watched chasing (one seen at rest was identified as a female) at a spot where the sharp eyes of accompanying LNHS botanists subsequently also found the larval foodplant (Kidney Vetch). There were three sightings of one or more male Silver-washed Fritillaries in the **Bittam's Wood** area; eight other butterfly species included 1-2 Common Blues, Red Admiral and a male Brimstone; I netted a Pretty Chalk Carpet moth; and a rather hair-raising *Tabanus* (horse-fly) was caught when it entered a parked car - Colin Everett

12 White Admirals at **Bricket Wood** today - highest single week total for 8 years, also Purple

Hairstreak, Hutchinsoni Comma, Humming Bird Hawkmoth & Small Skipper seen for the first time this year. Ringlets & Large Skippers in good numbers, Marbled Whites also out. Two possible sightings of Silver-washed Fritillary, but no positive ID. More eyes would help, so please join me for the **Field Trip next Sunday 9 July**, meet at 10am in School Lane - Malcolm Hull

1st July, at 12.30, a single white-letter hairstreak on a flower in my back garden in **Croxley Green** - Helen Griffith

Broxbourne Woods NR - white admirals for several observers through the morning; one male purple emperor grounded very briefly near the 'dip' at 12.15. Later a few white-letter hairstreaks over elms by Brickendon Green south edge; no Purple Emperors seen yet nearby on territory over Claypits or Celtic Harmony Camp (note entrance fee to this private site when open to public) - Tony Clancy and friends

Enfield - I went on a purple hairstreak tetrad hunt this evening and found 5 at Picketts Lock and over 100 in ten minutes around oaks along Carrs Lane - Bush Hill Golf Course - Andrew Middleton