



**Butterfly  
Conservation**

Saving butterflies, moths and their habitats

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# The **Suffolk** *Argus*

*The Newsletter of the **Suffolk** Branch of Butterfly Conservation*

A pairing of Speckled Wood by Peter Maddison



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**Summer 2013**

**Volume 57**

### Butterflies on buddlejas

See Buddlejas on page 13



Brimstone



Small White



Grayling



Brimstone on B  
x weyeriana



Painted Lady

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### Orange-tip



Orange-tip, male and female,  
on Lady's Smock  
Photo by Trevor Goodfellow



Two Orange-tip eggs on a  
crucifer  
Photo by Bill Stone

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## New Members

We welcome the following new members who have joined the Branch and we look forward to meeting them at our events.

Mrs F & Mr C Boughton	Saxmundham
Mr D Butcher	Bury St Edmunds
Mr R Copping	Bramford
Mr R P Diaper	Ipswich
Ms C Falvey	Hunstanton
Mrs A & P Jespersen	Bungay
Mrs J Kaufhold	Hadleigh
Mrs A Kent	Hadleigh
Ruth & Mr M Kenyon	Lowestoft
Mr Peter & Jan King	Bungay
Mr N Lloyd	Rendlesham
Mrs C & Mr C Lucas	Saxmundham
Mr J MacDonald	Halesworth
Mr R & Mrs Y Marsh & Family	Ipswich
Mr R & Mrs L Mayhew	Ipswich
Mrs E Mitchell	Hacheston
Mr K W J Morgan	Thetford
Mr S Plume	Great Blakenham
Mrs A Russell	Chelsworth
Mr S Tunstill	Wickham Market
Mr N W & Mrs P C Turvey	Stowmarket
Miss S John & Miss K Wallis	Ipswich
Ms E Ware	Ipswich
Miss L Wignall	Stanton
Mr L Williams	Lowestoft
Mrs S Winter	Beccles

## Dingy Skipper - Good News!

*Rob Parker*

The 2013 season was late to start and the search planned for 15th May was called off due to unseasonably cool, wet weather, but under a blue sky on the 26th May a team of 7 recorders found them active. Not only were they flying on the King's Forest archery courses, but also along the adjacent rides, and we counted 21 before our picnic pause. Later we found them close to the corner of ride 204, and searching further east, off the track into bays on either side, where bird's-foot trefoil was doing well in recent forest re-stock areas. We added 43 before walking to the Wordwell ride, where there have been very few sightings since 2005, so it was encouraging to log another 9. This made an amazing total of 83 for the day's team effort.

As individuals visited the Chalk Lane area, scattered small numbers showed they were still flying along Chalk Lane and the parallel ride to the north of it. On Sunday 2nd June, Peter and Diane went for a walk around the eastern end of Chalk Lane around midday and saw 5 Dingys. One was at TL845747 and the other 4 were

TL842753 over about a 100m stretch of the approx N-S ride. One was seen perched on a BFT plant and may have been laying. Later the same day, Rob found another further south, and just 20m from the eastern edge of the forest at TL841731. These sightings are very pleasing, as they suggest a progressive spread east into parts of the forest not regularly used in the past.

The Norfolk Wildlife Trust's reserve at Thetford Heath (closed to the public for Stone Curlew nesting) was the subject of an authorized visit on the same day. A minimum of 7 were active in the north of the site, 2 were seen nearby at the edge of the Thetford Forest, and another 2 were found on the Icknield Way where it passes the edge of Marmansgrove Wood, a spot where they have not been seen since the Millennium.

Perhaps the deferred spring has compressed the flight period into one late concentrated burst, but let's hope they will have bred well as a result, and may re-colonize RAF Barnham and other lost territory for next season.

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## Volunteers Needed

### Treasurer

The Branch needs someone to take over the role of Treasurer from Graham Simister who is stepping down after five years. This requires only a few hours each year and does not require any book-keeping or accounting knowledge - just someone who is happy with numbers.

Please contact the Chairman Mike Dean Email: michael.dean2@virginmedia.com

### Wider Country Butterfly Survey (WCBS).

The WCBS is a national scheme which complements the transects of the UK BMS with mini transects walked in squares randomly selected by the BTO computer. The 2012 Report can be found at:

<http://butterfly-conservation.org/files/newsletter-wcbs-2012.pdf> or through a link in the Suffolk Branch website.

Volunteers from Butterfly Conservation and the BTO need to walk just twice per year in July

and August (with an optional spring walk if you wish). This means that the commitment is not heavy. At present a number of the Suffolk squares are not covered, so now is a good time to join the scheme. Email our WCBS co-ordinator, Peter Dare at peterxema@aol.com to find out if there is a vacant square convenient to you. Peter has been doing the job since the scheme was extended to Suffolk, and is now ready to hand over to someone younger. The co-ordinator is our link with BC's Head office WCBS organizer, and the job does not require any specialist knowledge.

Nowadays, the co-ordinator's main function is to advise new volunteer surveyors on squares available, and to provide BC documentation (instructions, maps, recording forms etc.). Surveyors then send their results online direct to BC, who will then provide a detailed annual Suffolk summary to the co-ordinator.

If you would even consider taking over (perhaps in conjunction with taking a survey square yourself), then why not ask him what it entails?



## 2012 Butterfly Report

by Rob Parker

2012 was *wet, wet, wet*, resulting in a good season for moss, algae and slugs. It was not so good for butterflies, and the verdict of most of our all-species transects showed it to have been the worst year for the past ten (or more) years. Like the previous year, it was a very confused season, but in a very different way, as we had no earliest or latest-ever records. Instead, the season was simply awful for most butterflies and observers alike. Our more widespread species were thin on the ground, and annual indices were lower than usual. There were very few migrants and the total species count was down at 33. On the other hand, the extra rain made the grass grow nicely and all of “the Browns” put in a strong enough performance. There was another silver lining too. The Silver-washed Fritillary continued its expansion and bred successfully in new woods. Good recording effort again resulted in decent coverage in the third year of the current 5-year period.

**Weather.** A generally mild winter turned to drought in time for the announcement that a hosepipe ban was essential to refill reservoirs after 2 dry seasons, but this seemed laughable as we then experienced unusually high rainfall in spring, summer and autumn (see the table below). As usual, the averaging hides the spells of very heavy localized downpours, but it can be seen that spring and summer were cloudy, trending to

cooler than average in autumn. It was the cloudy and wet nature of the season that had the most significant impact on butterflies. Although the grass grew well, and our grassland butterflies did rather better than usual, most other species suffered from the lack of warm, sunny days in which to fly and mate. By the end of the year the aquifers had been replenished and the water table was high, but our butterfly counts were low.

**Residents - Winners & Losers.** A proportion of early sightings were Small Tortoiseshells and others emerging from hibernation in the few fine days at the end of February, but there was then a pause until 23rd March when it suddenly became warm enough for the Peacocks, Brimstones, Commas and a few Red Admirals to appear across the county. Most garden recorders noted fewer butterflies than usual, particularly when commenting on the whole season. As last year, Common Blue, Essex and Small Skippers had a poor year. Green Hairstreak and Orange-tip appearances were limited by the wet spring weather, and sixteen of our regular species were found in fewer than the tetrad count achieved in 2011 - itself a poor year. The Common Blue spring brood arrived late, and was very thin on the ground, whilst its summer brood was also later than usual, and erratic, generally thin, but with a few sites producing good showings. Other

Table 1. 2012 Weather for East Anglia

Season	Mean Temp	Anomaly	Sunshine	Anomaly	Rainfall	Anomaly
	Deg C	Deg C	hrs	%	mm	%
Winter 11/12	5	0.7	221	119	118.8	81
Spring	9.2	0.2	464	99	195	143
Summer	16.1	-0.3	509	86	253.9	158
Autumn	10.3	-0.6	355	109	203.8	114

Source: [www.metoffice.gov.uk/climate/uk/2012](http://www.metoffice.gov.uk/climate/uk/2012)

Anomalies are measured against the 1971 to 2000 averages [as last year].

double-brooded species were also affected, Brown Argus and Holly Blue were both weak, whereas the Small Copper recovered somewhat in its second generation.

**Early & Late.** The humdrum weather resulted in a late spring and a cool, wet autumn, so that not a single earliest or latest-ever species record was broken.

**Monitoring the BAP Species.** There are 7 Suffolk BAP species, including 2 in the “for study only” category.

**Silver-studded Blue.** The annual count was again mistimed; the emergence times fell back to those we used to expect 10 years ago, confounding our expectations of another early year. We assembled a strong team, but once again we missed the peak – this time arriving too early. We returned a week later to find the numbers much closer to the peak, but the second count was curtailed by heavy rain and we had to abandon the afternoon counts. As a result, totals look low, but this is largely down to the number of sites we failed to visit. Only 16 out of a total of 47 compartments were adequately counted, seeing a total of just 1270, compared with 4542 last year. The colony translocated to Blaxhall Common in 2007 was again strong, with a record high one day count of 48, and the first sighting of a Silver-studded Blue on the south side of the road. On the other hand, it was distressing to discover that not a single Silver-studded Blue was seen at Walberswick NNR, despite repeated visits during the flight period. That colony could be lost. Continuing habitat restoration at Purdis Heath by a team of local volunteers is a cause for satisfaction, and a single species transect will be properly established there for 2013.

**Dingy Skipper** was not found at Center

Parcs or RAF Barnham, but the adjacent areas on the fringe of Thetford Forest and in the NWT reserve on Thetford Heath were both active, and a mating pair was seen on the latter site. It is encouraging that the Dingy Skipper is clinging on in this area. In the King’s Forest, they are still breeding around the archery site and a few were seen scattered into the Chalk Lane area, where extensive felling has altered the appearance of the forest.

**White-letter Hairstreak** was one of the species that suffered from the wet summer. It was difficult to find many at the known strong sites, and many visits were fruitless in marginal weather. It was recorded from only 17 tetrads compared to 26 last year.

**White Admiral** also had another good season, being seen in 47 tetrads, including sightings from woods not previously known to house colonies. To some extent, this good result was down to our vigorous search of woodland for Silver-washed Fritillary. The colony in Bradfield Woods has now been present for 8 consecutive seasons, and transect counts were at an all time high.

**Grayling.** Over the past 4 years, the Grayling population has remained stable in about 10% of tetrads, although a decline since the Millennium survey has been evident, particularly in the west. This year it was seen in good numbers at several of its Sandlings sites.

The UK BAP list includes 2 study species for enhanced monitoring. In both cases, Wall and Small Heath, the larval host plant is grass:

**Wall** is in decline in the UK and in Suffolk, and a two-year single species survey was undertaken in 2011/12. The results have

sadly confirmed the severity of the decline in Suffolk. A particular cause for concern is that our strongest population lies along the sea wall between Bawdsey and Shingle Street, where it faces disturbance from essential work on the sea wall in 2013 and more disruption later from the construction of the landfill site at which the cables from an offshore wind farm will come ashore.

**Small Heath** is in a much less critical situation than the Wall, indeed it seems to have benefited from the wet season, and was found in 25% of our tetrads this year. Even so, it has lost ground on farmland amongst fertilized grass.

**Purple Emperor.** The introduced Purple Emperors were still flying in Theberton Woods, although sightings were fewer this year. It is understood that some 2011 larvae were overwintered indoors and released this July ahead of the emergence of totally wild stock. There were no sightings from elsewhere in 2012.

**Migrants.** 2012 was a bad year for migration, with very few Painted Lady sightings in June, and only one Clouded Yellow all year. Only at the end of August and in the first week of September did we have a small scale immigration of Red Admiral, Painted Lady and Large White, probably accompanied by a few Small Tortoiseshell. In the final analysis, Painted Lady reached marginally more squares than it had done in 2011, and there were enough Red Admirals in autumn for us to feel they had had another good year.

**Silver-washed Fritillary.** The silver lining to this gloomy year was the continued spread of Silver-washed Fritillary. Pakenham Wood became the scene of great enthusiasm when visitors were able to count 20 or so cruising around the clearing over the public footpath.

One observer saw 3 mating pairs, and his photograph of one pair included a third Silver-washed flying through the viewfinder. A summary of its status published in Suffolk Argus (Autumn 2012, p.5/6) gave the tally of woods in which it has been found as 17, not counting 4 which received a single brief sighting in 2011. It is definitely breeding in at least 5 of these, and we can hope that it has returned to Suffolk as a resident species.

**Unusual Species.** After last year's freak flurry of non-resident species, 2012 was back to normal, with a total species count of just 33. The only oddity was Marbled White which was again found in Landseer Park. Perhaps that population, presumably an unauthorized introduction, has taken hold; in any event, this year it had spread the short distance to the adjacent tetrad (still within Landseer Park). There were also 3 unexpected sightings of single Marbled Whites spread across the east of the county. Unusually, there were no Swallowtails this year.

**Recording and Geographic Coverage.** Good recording effort in the 3<sup>rd</sup> year of the current 5 year period brought our cover up to 890 tetrads (out of 1089). The results of BC's "Big Butterfly Count" were selectively incorporated. This is an exercise in popular science, with many novice recorders recording one location, so the contribution was mainly common species, in a few cases from tetrads that were previously "black holes". The Big Butterfly Count has stirred fresh enthusiasm, and we have recruited a number of new recorders. The residual black holes and under-recorded areas are scattered across the county with the weakest area remaining the agricultural land in High Suffolk.

**Species Maps.** Distribution Maps for

individual species have been prepared for our 31 regular species, and these are available for reference as required. The average number of species recorded per tetrad was just 9 for 2012, and stands at 11.5 for the current 5 year period.

**Transects.** Analysis of transect results gives a sharp view of trends, and 2012 results have been the weakest-ever, with most individual transects recording their all-species counts as lowest ever, or lowest for the last 10 years. The 19 full transects walked this year all produced poor scores for Small/Essex Skippers and particularly poor for Common Blue. Small Heath and Grayling are not present at many sites and these reflected mixed results. Small Heath actually did well at North Warren and Walberswick, despite long term declines nationally. New transects at Knettishall Heath, Purdis Heath and possibly Lakenheath Fen will come on line in 2013. Thanks are due to the following, who put in dedicated monitoring effort at: North Warren (Dave Thurlow), Minsmere

(Robin Harvey/Katy Smith), Bradfield Woods (Steve Hunt), Center Parcs (Graham Hersey-Green), Cavenham Heath (Michael Taylor), Walberswick (Will Russell), Spring Lane (Rob Parker), Ramsey/Hintlesham and Wolves Wood (Mark Nowers), Newsoms Farm (Frances Bee), Upper Abbey Farm (Trudy Seagon), Alton Water (Simon Waters), Manor Farm (Brenda Hudson), Tythe Farm (Peter Vincent), Dunwich Forest 1&2 (Dayne West), Arger Fen (Gordon Kennett), Black Heath (Linda Hammond) and Nowton Park (Fay Jones). Single-species transects for Purple Hairstreak (Steve Hunt) and Silver-studded Blue (Terry Peake) also produced useful results. In almost every case, additional volunteers (not named individually) assisted the lead walker. The Combs Wood transect remains vacant and awaiting a volunteer walker.

*A series of Annexes covering the BAP species will be published as part of the 2012 Butterfly Report in the next volume of Suffolk Natural History.*

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## Legacies make up a third of BC's voluntary income

Have you ever considered leaving a gift to Butterfly Conservation in your Will? An increasing number of members and friends are choosing to support Butterfly Conservation in this way. All gifts, however small, are welcome and make a crucial and lasting contribution to the conservation of butterflies and moths. Accounting for over one third of voluntary income, legacy gifts make a real difference to the work we can undertake.

So as well as leaving gifts to loved ones in your Will, please consider leaving a gift to

Butterfly Conservation, it will help ensure butterflies and moths thrive in the years to come.

For more information about leaving a gift to Butterfly Conservation and sharing your love of butterflies and moths with future generations please contact Helen Corrigan on 01273 453313 or [hcorrigan@butterfly-conservation.org](mailto:hcorrigan@butterfly-conservation.org) or write to her at Butterfly Conservation, Manor Yard, East Lulworth, Wareham, Dorset BH20 5QP

Thank you for your support.



## Butterflies in Christchurch Park

Richard Stewart

Our butterfly recording in this large park, very close to the centre of Ipswich, has over the last decade yielded few surprises, other than var. *caeruleopunctata* of the Small Copper in the Upper Arboretum and an unexpected Grayling at the town end, near Soane Street. Both were in 2009.

However, recent developments have been positive for increased numbers and species of butterflies. First, large lavender beds have been planted in sunlit areas of the Mansion garden. Second, the management plan now includes leaving large swathes of long grass at the north end, leading to more 'browns' being recorded. Yarrow seems to do well within these areas and it is a favoured nectar plant for the Small Copper, which has increased in numbers.

The third and most publicised change has been the creation of a butterfly garden, with six different butterfly species recorded during its official opening.

I was asked to be involved early on but serious illness prevented me. However, I did pass on the detailed planting plans from the former butterfly garden at Alexandra Park.

Close to the butterfly garden is a tall buddleja next to a good sized bramble and another buddleja is even closer, linked by deep vegetation to the damp meadow at the north end of the Wilderness Pond. Here lady's smock grows, the larval food plant of both Orange-tip and Green-veined White.

Finally, last summer, I at last found Purple Hairstreaks in two of the park's many mature oaks. One of these sightings was right next to the butterfly garden. I intend to make several late afternoon and evening visits during the flight period as I am now convinced they must be present in many more of the park's oaks.



Small Copper by Beryl Johnson

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## Editorial copy date

Contributions for the Autumn edition of our newsletter are very welcome and should be sent to the Editor, Peter Maddison, no later than **Sunday 22nd September, 2013**.

Any piece of writing considered to be of interest

will be published and we also welcome line drawings, prints and photographs.

Contributions (preferably electronic) can be sent to the address on the Contacts page or by email to: [prmaddison@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:prmaddison@yahoo.co.uk)

## An Easy Shorthand System for Recording Butterfly Species

Rob Parker

Every naturalist should keep a notebook/ diary - written up whilst still in the field or at home in his den the same evening (or her den, of course). To keep the butterfly entries compact and to list species with cumbersome vernacular names like White-letter Hairstreak (*Satyrium w-album*) more briefly, you might like to use the code below,

which abbreviates each British species into a one, two, or three letter group.

Most are glaringly obvious, but you need to take care not to muddle Small Whites with Speckled Woods or Swallowtails and Silver-washed Fritillaries.

<b>Species Shorthand</b>			
<b>Suffolk Species</b>		<b>Other British Species</b>	
SS	Small Skipper	CS	Chequered Skipper
ES	Essex Skipper	LS	Lulworth Skipper
LS	Large Skipper	SSS	Silver-spotted Skipper
DS	Dingy Skipper	GS	Grizzled Skipper
SWT	Swallowtail		
CY	Clouded Yellow		
B	Brimstone		
LW	Large White	WW	Wood White
SW	Small White		
GVW	Green-veined White		
OT	Orange Tip		
GH	Green Hairstreak	BRH	Brown Hairstreak
PH	Purple Hairstreak	BLH	Black Hairstreak
WLH	White-letter Hairstreak		
SC	Small Copper		
SSB	Silver-studded Blue	SB	Small Blue
BA	Brown Argus	NBA	Northern Brown Argus
CB	Common Blue	CHB	Chalkhill Blue

HB	Holly Blue		AB	Adonis Blue
			LB	Large Blue
			DOB	Duke of Burgandy
WA	White Admiral		PE	Purple Emperor
RA	Red Admiral		SPB	Small Pearl-bordered Fritillary
PL	Painted Lady		PBF	Pearl-bordered Fritillary
ST	Small Tortoiseshell		HBF	High Brown Fritillary
PH	Peacock		DGF	Dark Green Fritillary
C	Comma		MF	Marsh Fritillary
SWF	Silver-washed Fritillary		GF	Glanville Fritillary
			HF	Heath Fritillary
SPW	Speckled Wood			
WB	Wall		MR	Mountain Ringlet
GR	Grayling		SA	Scotch Argus
GK	Gatekeeper		MW	Marbled White
MB	Meadow Brown		LH	Large Heath
R	Ringlet			
SH	Small Heath			
<b>Also Present locally</b>				
PE	Purple Emperor			
MW	Marbled White			

The table has been split into the Suffolk regulars and the rest of the current British list, which makes it a useful reminder of how many species we lack.

If you are keeping a count for some species, you can record:  
SSB – 39

or if you are not counting precisely, you can use the simple code:

1 = A

2 - 9 = B

10 - 29 = C

30 - 99 = D

100+ = E

However, be systematic, or you can fall into a trap:

B/C might mean 11 Brimstones or 9 Commas!  
The Levana programme can also accommodate early stages:

Ova = O

Larva = L

Pupa = P

and a pair of mating adults = M

Of course, in this modern era of smart phone applications, a generation has skipped the humble nature diary, and does everything electronically. But that can wait for a separate article from Bill Stone. In the meantime, I have a shelf of butterfly diaries going back to 1974 and the secure knowledge that I will not lose them the next time my hard disc fails.

## Recording Butterflies

*Bill Stone*

For a long time I have been fascinated as to how people record the butterflies that they see. Whenever I have been out and about in pursuit of butterflies I have also watched my fellow observers and learnt a great deal as to what methods of recording are in use and the types of information recorded. From my observations it is apparent that there are a number of different types of recording style and methods in use.

There is the traditional use of notebook, wildlife log or diary. This approach to recording also differs widely between each person. In some notebooks I have seen copious written notes, detailed figures and fine line drawings. In others I have seen simple records with brief annotations. A few notebooks seen in the field stand out from others as they have included watercolour or oil paintings of particular species and to capture unique poses or behaviour. Rob Parker's article, which is found elsewhere in this Suffolk Argus, provides a useful overview of a short hand system for recording butterflies in a notebook.

With technology all around us it is obvious that aspects of it have impacted on recording butterflies. I have seen people utilising digital voice recorders in the field, especially where behaviour is being recorded or where particular features need to be recorded. With some video and digital cameras also having recording facilities there is also scope for an observer to provide comment to the photos and video footage that they have taken. In addition, a number of modern devices carry GPS on board and so it is possible to also accurately capture the location that your images were captured.

Perhaps the biggest area of technological impact for today's butterfly recorders has been through the development of

'smart' mobile telephones and portable tablet computers. With the use of specific applications or 'apps' dedicated recording programmes are available instantly on your portable device. Again, as with traditional notebooks, the level of detail that can be recorded is really down to each person. I personally use an iPhone and have 'apps' that I can use to accurately capture details on the wildlife that I see and hear. One 'app' is called 'Easy Recorder British Butterflies'. This 'app' uses the phone's GPS to accurately find your location and then record it in either a latitude/ longitude or Ordnance Survey grid reference format. You can then enter each species encountered along with numbers seen and any other notes or comments that you may wish to make. You can build up a database of sightings, produce maps and then when you need to, export the records by email. Of interest, our own Butterfly Conservation will shortly be releasing their own recording application which is expected to be called 'iRecord Butterflies'. This has been developed in conjunction with the Centre for Ecology and Hydrology (CEH) and Bristol University. This application is expected to have an identification feature, numerous recording functions and also allow the ability to send your records straight into BC.

With technology advancing all the time, methods of recording butterflies will no doubt continue to develop. However, whether you intend to record butterflies with your smart phone, tablet, camera or in your notebook please remember to submit your records to the county recorder. All records are important as they can assist with assessing numbers of particular species and their geographical range. In addition, your records will also help to underpin survey work and efforts to protect vulnerable species.

Happy recording!

## Buddleja

Bill Stone

Like a lot of members of Butterfly Conservation I am a keen gardener and relish the opportunities that exist to support butterflies and other insects through careful planting and growing. Looking at my garden at the moment I would expect to see several *Buddleja* species in flower or just starting to show signs of flowering. However, like a lot of gardens my one is about a month to six weeks behind due to the weather conditions. Now, buddleja is not the only butterfly friendly plant out there but it is one of the most popular and the one that seems to attract the interest of the media whenever a butterfly story comes to notice. But what do we actually know about buddleja? I've planted lots of them in various gardens over the years and of various varieties and colours. However, I didn't really know much about their origin and, therefore, decided to do some digging. Firstly, there is debate as to the name and whether it is *buddleia* or *buddleja*. Modern botanical latin would support it being known as *buddleia*. However, the International Code of Botanical Nomenclature in 2006 suggested that Linnaeus' spelling as recorded in his *Species Plantarum* of 1753 and 1754 should be followed. Linnaeus recorded it as *buddleja*.

*Buddleja* comprises over 100 species of flowering plants with both deciduous and evergreen varieties occurring. Some are even catergorised as trees and can grown to nearly 100 feet tall! They are endemic to Asia, Africa, and the Americas including the Caribbean. Indeed it was from the Caribbean that the first plants were sent to England in about 1730 by a Dr. Wiliam Houston. Houston recommended that the plants be named after a Reverend Adam Buddle who was a pioneering botanist and

rector from Essex. And so the first buddleja, was named *Buddleia Americana*.

Later, in 1774 the well known modern day favourite variety, *Buddleja globosa* or Orange-ball *Buddleja* arrived from Chile. It was sold commercially from a nursery called the "Vineyard" and was run by a Lewis Kennedy. Of interest, the "Vineyard" was situated where the current Olympia stands in West London! In the 1890's a vigorous and colourful variety arrived in Europe from China after it had been noticed growing by French explorer Father Armand David. The plant he sent back took his name and hence became known as *Buddleja davidii*. In 1896, it was introduced to the wider public by appearing at Kew. With it's robust and hardy nature combined with vigorous growth *Buddleja davidii* has been cultivated into new forms and over 180 forms have been documented. In addition, *davidii* has also been crossed with other buddlejas, perhaps the best known being *Buddleja* × *weyeriana* which is the result of *davidii* and *globosa* or, east meets west!

In addition to being a garden favourite, *Buddleja davidii* also gets a lot of bad press. It is considered by some as an invasive nuisance, even classified as a noxious weed by the states of Oregon and Washington in the USA. One of the reasons for it being labeled as a pest comes from the plant's ability to colonize an area very quickly, particularly in urban areas or on brown field sites. A couple of facts regarding *Buddleja davidii*: firstly, one *Buddleja davidii* can produce three million seeds a year and secondly, one flower can produce an estimated forty thousand seeds. Add a bit of wind into the mix and you can understand how quickly it can establish itself over a very wide area. Of note, in 2008,



a Defra report estimated that controlling *Buddleja davidii* cost the British economy £961,000!

As well as a popular garden plant *Buddleja* is also considered in the Far East to have medicinal qualities. In Chinese, the *Buddleja* flower bud is called “Mi Meng Hua” and it is considered to drain “fire” from the body and in particular from the eyes. So, if someone is suffering from an eye complaint a Chinese medicine practitioner would recommend boiling *Buddleja* flower buds and flowers for several hours before drinking the fluid as a tonic. In Korea, the same medicine is given as a cure for irritable bowel syndrome and other gastric problems. *Buddleja* is also used for sinister purposes as the Chinese mix *Buddleja lindleyana* leaves with coal and

throw them into waterways to intoxicate fish which then float to the surface and are easier to catch!

So, next time you walk around your garden and look at your *Buddleja* I hope that this article will give you a little bit more awareness as to their origin.

However, before I finish, let’s get back to *Buddleja* and butterflies. Which one is the best at attracting butterflies and insects? In my own garden it is easily *Buddleja* × *weyeriana*, closely followed by *Buddleja globosa*. But what about your own gardens, perhaps you can keep an eye out and let me know what is the best variety for attracting butterflies and insects where you are?

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## Flowton Brook Farm 25th April 2013

*Stella Wolfe*

A field trip early in the year is likely to be affected by poor weather but hopefully those who ventured out, including several new members, were pleased to see what was stirring in the countryside. After a long period of cold weather it was hoped that warmer conditions would stimulate spring butterflies to emerge and by the time of our visit all the over-wintering species had been seen flying in Suffolk.

At the start of our walk we saw only limited nectar sources for insects, so we searched areas of young nettles for Peacocks and Commas, but there was little activity. Further along the best site proved to be the FWAG initiated hedge in which the blackthorn was in full flower. Here we were rewarded with good sightings of several Peacocks, two of which seemed likely to mate but then had

second thoughts. We noticed a variation in size of the Peacocks flying.

The newer hedges had little range of ground flora and it was not until the final part of our walk that an older hedge bank provided garlic mustard (‘Jack by the Hedge’), one of the food plants of Orange-tips, although none was flying.

During our visit we saw 16 Peacocks, 3 Commas and a Small Tortoiseshell; all hibernating species, as well as a possible Green-veined White.

Our thanks are due again to John Cousins for permission to freely wander his environmentally friendly farm. This was a return visit to add to the sightings of 12th July 2012.

## Training Day for Novice Recorders 4th May 2013

Rob Parker

After a long wait for spring, the weather caused a few pupae to emerge in sunnier days at the start of May. A mixed group of 17 participants turned up at Barnham Village Hall for an indoor training session followed by an afternoon butterfly walk on Barnhamcross Common. It was nice to welcome unfamiliar faces keen to improve their identification skills and to enrol as regular butterfly recorders in one capacity or another. We had BC members and non-members, West Suffolk residents and others from further afield, Norfolk Branch, SWT and RSPB members too. The village hall was an ideal venue, with plenty of space to lay out our displays, a large hall with a kitchen and side room laid out as a dining room, which was perfect for our picnic lunch.

The agenda ran as follows:

- 1000 Assemble, Introductions
- 1030 Why Record Butterflies? Sharon (BC Eastern Region project Officer)
- 1040 First Butterflies of Spring Rob ( County Butterfly Recorder)
- 1100 Handouts/Books
- 1120 True Spring Emergences Rob.
- 1150 Habitat & Ecology Sharon
- 1215 Status, Distribution, Identification Rob.
- 1230 Picnic lunch & coffee, Move outdoors.

### Fieldwork & Recording on Barnhamcross Common

- Observation skills
- Identification practice
- Habitat & larval host plants

1500 Debrief, Depart

Everyone declared the morning session fascinating as well as informative. In bright weather at 16°C we set out on foot in three groups. Tony Prichard's presence was beneficial as we had three leaders, and swapped over midway to share expertise. We all saw plenty of Orange-tips, mostly males, and Brimstones flying near buckthorn which was growing extensively around the site. We saw a female lay an egg on a young buckthorn, examined it with a hand lens and then found another egg on a larger bush nearby. Large, Small and Green-veined Whites appeared on cue to re-enforce the morning's identification session, as did Holly Blues (males only) and Speckled Woods. The Nymphalids were in short supply, but Tony's group did see Comma and Peacock, and a couple of micro moths. Spring was running at least two weeks late, so we did not see any Green Hairstreaks or Small Coppers.

We were pleased to see a high proportion of new recorders, including some younger members, and we look forward to receiving their 2013 records in due course.

The only thing that went wrong was the big, black cloud that closed the show down ten minutes early.

Running a similar event next year is probably going to be worthwhile - somewhere in the east of the county probably.

## One Day at Wheatfen

*Richard Stewart*

I try at least once a year to visit the former Norfolk home of Ted and Phyllis Ellis at Wheatfen Broad in Norfolk. This is normally when Swallowtails are flying and on 27th June 2012, after a long and hot cycle ride from Norwich railway station, I was disappointed to find none in the usual area. I explored right down to the banks of the tidal river Yare without success, then ate my packed lunch and headed back for a second search of the initial area, a moderate breeze having lessened. Again I was unsuccessful but on my way back I met another visitor, who had seen them elsewhere and gave me directions. I was soon there, seeing four in total, nectaring mainly on yellow flag and one flying straight over my head.

As I returned to the main path I met someone I had passed earlier. We got talking and he introduced himself as Greg from Norwich, a 'beginner' who was obviously pleased to encounter someone with a degree of knowledge. I asked if he wanted to see some Swallowtails and in the next few minutes he saw four, two of which flew close by, so he could appreciate their size and beauty. These were his first Swallowtails: ironic since, in the days when he had no interest in wildlife, he had lived close to Hickling Broad, one of Norfolk's Swallowtail strongholds.

We started to walk back together but he obviously wanted to travel at a much slower pace and suggested I go on. However, we were to meet again. As I moved out from tree cover onto the boardwalk adjacent to Home Dyke I became aware of an orange blob, which once my binoculars were in focus materialised into a Chinese water deer, in superb condition, grazing along a narrow strip between tall reeds and the water in the dyke. As I watched, my silhouette hopefully lost in a background of trees, I became aware of her turning round occasionally and there, near her feet, was a small fawn, the first of this species I had ever seen. I have watched these deer, with Marie, on late night vigils across the water at Strumpshaw Fen but this was turning out to be my best prolonged and undetected sighting.

Then Greg appeared, not yet visible to the deer. By a combination of basic but ultimately successful hand signals I was able to tell him to be quiet but get over to where I was as quickly as possible. He succeeded and we both enjoyed good views until mother and young melted back into the reedbed. For him it was three new sightings, for me it was one and we parted feeling very fortunate. I got the impression he was 'hooked' and would soon be back again.

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## Serious Decline of Wall in Suffolk - Can You Help?

The Wall was once common but now is restricted to a few areas of Suffolk, one of these being between Bawdsey and Shingle Street. The Environment Agency needs to cut the grass and has agreed a method to reduce the impact on the Wall. To monitor this, and improve the procedure in future years, we need as many people as possible to walk along this part of the coast and count the number seen. Counting was done for the first flight period, from the end of May to mid June. It is important that

we count the second generation's flight period from late July to the end of August.

Please let Rob Parker know even if you can only participate occasionally. Further instructions on the route etc will be sent to those who volunteer.

Email: [robparker@waitrose.com](mailto:robparker@waitrose.com)

Unless we can halt the decline you might only see the Wall in a museum!

## Bow to you Lady

Marie Stewart

Enwrapped in two pairs of socks inside my walking boots, my feet felt swollen and leaden on this golden September day. Richard and I had travelled first by train to Lowestoft and then by a very slow double decker bus to Winterton. The sky was bright blue but rain was forecast for later so we set off smartly, moving away from the cafe and along the dune paths.

Initially, we were walking along parallel lines calling out the names of butterflies and recording them. It was hot and the dazzling sand made walking hard. The main purpose of our visit was for Richard to find Natterjack toads which hopefully would be in the ponds located in the distance behind some fairly high dunes. He had written a magazine article and to illustrate it, needed some photographs.

Grayling butterflies were everywhere, alighting on our clothes, flickering up from the paths and remaining stationary with wings closed but slanting towards the sun. They do this to regulate their temperature as sandy areas can cool and heat quickly. If the temperature is low, the butterfly leans sideways to the sun to reveal most of its body to heat but if it is too hot it will stand head on to the sun. They seem to like landing on material and I am not convinced that it is always to suck up minerals in sweat. At Belstead Road I had a pile of quilting fabrics outside on the patio when almost instantly a Grayling landed on them. We had never recorded one before in our garden nor after that. Are they attracted to colour or because material is neither hot nor cold?

For those of you not familiar with the Grayling, it is a master of camouflage. It is a marbled, greyish brown colour when the forewings are folded down so that the two black eye spots are hidden. The preference

for dry areas of soil, sand or bark means that it simply melts into the background.

Gradually, Richard got ahead of me. As I later realised, his sense of urgency to take the photographs increased as he saw clouds bubbling up in the distance towards Horsey. Suddenly, I saw something unusual that made me halt in my tracks. The path in front was like a cool tunnel with tall marram grass bending over from each side. From inside this tunnel a settled Grayling soared upwards and began to chase another. It was what happened next that intrigued me. The chased butterfly landed, followed by the first alighting on the ground behind it. After a little while this insect gradually manoeuvred until facing the other so that they were now eye to eye. I had never seen that before. I looked up to call Richard but he was a long way ahead now and 'on a mission'. Soon he would be out of sight behind the dune hill. I started to panic, if I lost sight of him I might not see him again and he had all the money and the train tickets! Nevertheless, I had to see what was going on here.

The first butterfly started jerking its wings so that the orange patch and the two black eye-spots on the forewing showed, which is what it does to frighten enemies. This was very puzzling and it continued to jerk its wings upwards and forwards. Was this an aggressive behaviour, some sort of communication or mating?

Next, perhaps for a minute, it repeatedly opened its quivering wings fully and then closed them. This was most unusual as Graylings do not normally have opened wings and I was amazed at the brightness of the orange patterning. After this flapping, the forewings were held open and it started to bow down to the facing butterfly. It subsequently

seemed to catch the other's antennae inside its forewings which were then closed.

I was in a real dilemma now as Richard had been out of sight for some time so I decided, with great reluctance, that I had better catch him up but I did so want to know what happened next. I backed away very carefully so as not to disturb them and hurriedly marched towards the hill. Behind it were four paths and I was not sure which to take but I knew roughly the direction of the ponds. Luckily, he was there and when I told him what I had seen he wished I had called him back as he had never seen what was the elaborate courtship of Graylings.

When I got home I studied books and it was just as I had experienced. It is the male that sits waiting for a female to pass by. He gives chase and she alights and he settles behind her and then gradually moves so that they face each other. He subsequently jerks his wings showing the eye spots and next opens his wings so that they flap open and closed for about a minute. Now he bows down low and gradually unfolds her antennae in his wings and as he straightens up the tips of her antennae, which are smell organs, get dragged across the male's scent glands, which are dark markings across the leading edge of his forewings. Apparently, the smell is detectable to humans and is similar to

sandalwood. It is a powerful aphrodisiac and usually overwhelms the female. He quickly withdraws his wings and walks behind to pair, which takes place for about forty minutes.

There was another good Grayling year at Winterton not long after this and Richard and I sat on a small, sandy knoll and watched the whole amazing, elegant and lengthy process.

Recently, after watching Silver-washed Fritillaries in Wolves Wood, I did some research and discovered that they have an intricate, aerobic courtship which concludes with the two butterflies facing each other and the male drawing the female's antennae over his sex brands before mating takes place.

I think that my ongoing interest in butterflies, apart from their great beauty, is that although I have seen all the British species, their life history never ceases to amaze me. The very act of changing from a caterpillar to a butterfly is incomprehensible. What goes on in the chrysalis still defies explanation and then there are caterpillars that need ants for protection whilst they get 'milked', caterpillars that are cannibals, chrysalises that can squeak and then these elaborate courtship rituals. It is all a great wonder and mystery and, yes, Richard did manage to get his photographs!

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## The Suffolk Branch website

The website is beginning to hold a considerable amount of information about Suffolk's butterflies, recording, species flight times and larval food plants. It's fun to keep an eye on the Sightings page which is becoming more comprehensive, but it is as up to date as your input, so email your sightings to: [sightings@suffolkbutterflies.org.uk](mailto:sightings@suffolkbutterflies.org.uk)

Remember to send all your records to the county recorder as usual.

Event details and news are to be found on the website, but do contact the leader of an event if you wish to clarify a point.



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Butterfly Conservation

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## Events

### Events July - September 2013

*Sunday 14th July*

**Silver-washed Fritillaries.** A chance to look for this recently returned fritillary

Venue: Pakenham Wood Map Ref: TL930670

Time: 10:00am

Details: Meet Pakenham Church car park.

Contact: Mike Dean 07754 115368

*20th July to 11th August*

**Big Butterfly Count**

See [www.bigbutterflycount.org](http://www.bigbutterflycount.org)

*Saturday 20th July*

**RSPB Minsmere - Big Butterfly Count**

Joint event with RSPB - butterfly walks, displays, information and children's crafts and activities

Venue: RSPB Minsmere Time: 11.00-4.00pm

Contact: Matt Berry 07599 243026

*Sunday 21st July*

**Butterflies in Kent**

Venue: Downe Bank near Biggin Hill in the morning for Silver-washed Fritillary, White-letter Hairstreak and Marbled White. A chalk downland site near Otford in the afternoon for Dark Green Fritillary and Chalkhill Blue

Map Ref: TQ431616 Time: 10:30am

Details: Meeting in centre of Downe village, by the church. Pre-book by contacting Paul Johnson on 01892 516384 or emailing [paul.johnson.1603@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:paul.johnson.1603@hotmail.co.uk)

*Saturday 27th July*

**Butterflies on Knettishall Heath**

Joint event with Suffolk Wildlife Trust - butterfly walks, displays, information and children's crafts and activities

Map Ref: TL956807 Time: 11.00-4.00 pm

Contact: Matt Berry 07599 243026

*Sunday 28th July*

**Wildlife Garden Open Day** An invitation from BC member Mrs Trudie Willis, to visit her 10 acre

garden, including a Buddleja and Honeysuckle collection.

Map Ref: TM452591 Time: 10:30am

Meet & park at Prior Oak, Leiston Road, Aldeburgh (B1122 Leiston to Aldeburgh Road)

*Saturday 3rd August*

**Survey of Lord Cranbrook's Estate**

Meet: Gt. Glemham Farm's gate off the Marlesford to Gt. Glemham Road

Time: 10:30 am

Details: Butterfly Conservation Vice-President Lord Cranbrook has kindly invited us to survey his land. Contact: Rob Parker (01284 705476).

*Saturday 17th August*

**Gardening for butterflies at Flatford Mill RSPB wildlife garden**

Map Ref: TM077332 Time: 11.00 am to 3.00 pm

Details: A joint event with RSPB. There will be butterfly displays plus information and advice about gardening for butterflies and other wildlife. Plants may be available for purchase from RSPB. Contact: Matt Berry 07599 243026

*Sunday 25th August*

**Late Summer butterflies at Alton Water Reservoir**

Map Ref: TM 156355 (Car Park off B1080 in Stutton village)

Time: 10.00 am

Contact: Bill Stone 07906 888603

*Saturday 21st September*

**A.G.M & members evening**

Venue: Bucklesham Village Hall

Time: 6:00pm for 6:30pm start

Details: The A.G.M. will be followed by light refreshments and members' slides.

Details are on the Branch website:

[www.suffolkbutterflies.org.uk/events.html](http://www.suffolkbutterflies.org.uk/events.html)

Suffolk Moth Group events can be found at: <http://www.suffolkmoths.org.uk/events/fieldevents.shtml>