Chequered Skipper

Butterfly Conservation
Saving Butterflies, Moths and our Environment
Highland Branch
Newsletter 20
Spring 2015
Front Cover Photos

Butterflies:

Top Left: Small Tortoiseshell, Covesea - 9th of July 2014

Top Right: Scotch Argus, Boat of Garten - 5th of August 2014

Moths:

Bottom Left: Netted Mountain Moth, Catlodge - 29th of April 2014

Bottom Right: Ruby Tiger (Ex cocoon), Blaven - 9th of May 2014

All cover photos taken and supplied by Mike Taylor
## Contents

Branch Chairman’s Message .................................................. 4  
AGM Reminder ....................................................................... 6  
The Garden Moth Scheme 2014 .............................................. 6  
Here and There: Moths and Butterflies ................................. 10  
Garden Clearwing Moths ....................................................... 13  
Goat Moth Trees in VC106 ..................................................... 14  
Mothing on the Isle of Canna ............................................... 16  
Butterflying in Northeast Turkey ......................................... 18  
Targeting Under-recorded Squares Continues ....................... 21  
Moth Highlights from West Ross & Skye During 2014 .......... 26  
Caption Competition – Wynn a Prize! ................................. 31  
Alternative Ways of Saving Butterflies ................................ 32  
Narrow-bordered Bee Hawk-moth ....................................... 32  
Travels With a Trap .............................................................. 33  
A Trip to Raasay .................................................................. 37  
Day Flying Moth and Caterpillar Recording ....................... 40  
Photo Competition .............................................................. 43  
Young Moth-ers .................................................................. 44  
Northern Brown Argus ....................................................... 47  
In Search of Mountain Ringlets ......................................... 49  
Lochinver Moths .................................................................. 51  
Moth Records: Moray & East Inverness-shire VC95 & VC96 in 2014 ......................................................... 53  
Update on the WCBS in Highland Branch Area .................. 57  
Chequered Skipper Survey 2014 Results ............................ 58  
Members Day Quiz ............................................................. 60  
Silverdale .............................................................................. 63  
Butterflies of the Highlands Leaflet – Reprint ..................... 66  
Field Trips Introduction ....................................................... 66  
Summary of Field Trips for 2015 ......................................... 67  
List of Field Trips for 2015 .................................................... 69  
Branch Committee ................................................................ 81  
Highland WCBS Champion .................................................. 82  
List of Butterfly Recorders ................................................... 82  
List of Vice-County Moth Recorders .................................... 83  
List of Highland Butterfly Species ..................................... 85  
More Information & Acknowledgements ............................ 86  
Quiz Answers ....................................................................... 87
Branch Chairman's Message
Mark Wynn

Welcome to the 2015 copy of *Chequered Skipper*, and a particular warm welcome to the members who have joined Butterfly Conservation and this well established Branch in the last year. Though we are a small Branch in numbers, membership and support makes a huge difference to what the Branch can actively achieve each year.

Last year the Branch ran a full season of memorable well attended butterfly walks, moth nights and practical conservation days. And as you'll read in this edition that's the same again this season. So, please join us on one or more of our regular events. You would be made most welcome. You don't have to be an expert to enjoy butterflies and moths. One of the joys of such get-togethers is the friendliness and sharing of knowledge. So, please check out the excellent list of events. Please remember to investigate 'In Your Area' on the Butterfly Conservation website for late additions to the programme.

On a personal note, a couple of 2014 highlights were the confirmation after some years of the continued existence of the colony of Mountain Ringlet near Dalwhinnie and Northern Brown Argus along the coast beyond Rosemarkie. Most heartening. Nonetheless, it would appear the latter is hanging on with difficulty. Some significant habitat restoration and management needs to be done once we've made an assessment of the extent of the larval food plant – Common Rockrose. Such work is invaluable in making a difference to ensure that our butterflies, moths and our rare 'specialist' species have a hopeful and sustainable future for all of us to enjoy.

This edition of *Chequered Skipper* has the usual high standard of wonderful regular informative articles from scholarly members. The usual butterfly and moth annual reports for 2014 from a highly active Branch. I’ve reported on our successful trip to Cumbria where we are hopefully returning again this year with the same success of finding our target species – this time High Brown Fritillary. Furthermore, for those of you who couldn't attend last Autumn's Members' Day at Battleby we have contributions from some of the outstanding speakers on that day viz Paul Brooks “*Travels with*
a Trap” and James Hammond's “Young Moth-ers” and finally the best of Tom Prescott's famous quiz questions from the past ten years.

To those of you who cannot make the AGM I must take this opportunity to thank the Branch Committee who do an outstanding job. However, they are your Committee and want to listen to your views on how we can further excel.

There are some areas in which we would like to do more as a Branch. However, we don't have all the skills needed. We are keen to hear from anyone, member of BC or not, who may be able to help in areas such as publicity, social media, education, running stands at local shows and fund-raising. If you feel you have something to offer, or know someone offering these skills in any of these areas, please get in touch. We would be pleased to hear from you.

We would like to do more to contact Branch members by e-mail. Please let our membership Secretary (Audrey Turner - unicorn64@btinternet.com) know directly your membership number, your name and postal address (in order to comply with the Data Protection Act). If you later ask, we can always delete your e-mail address from our list. Nonetheless, knowing your e-mail address is immensely helpful to the Branch.

Remember, as a Branch Chairman once said, and it's worth repeating, we are more than a butterfly and moth spotter’s club. We are about recording and monitoring the status of our moths and butterflies in order as a conservation organisation to place the objective of saving valuable habitats above all else.

Thank you all for your continued support of Butterfly Conservation. I look forward to seeing you at the AGM (as always, the second Saturday in April) and/or to encourage you to attend one of our marvellous events.

Finally, I want to mention a big 'thank you' to Audrey Turner, who apart from being our stalwart Branch Treasurer and Membership Secretary, has once again done a sterling job in putting together this newsletter.

Here's hoping for an exceptional Spring, Summer and Autumn for Lepidoptera.
AGM Reminder

Just a reminder that our AGM will be held on Saturday the 11th of April 2014 at Charleston Community Complex, Charleston Academy, General Booth Road, Inverness IV3 8ET.

The AGM will start at 10.30am, but the room will be open from 10am for tea, coffee and a chat. After the AGM business has concluded, we’ll have the talks listed below, followed by lunch and, weather permitting, go through the moth traps and take a short local field trip.

Barbara Prater – “Volunteering with young people”
Pete Moore – “Field Trips: Last Season & This Season”
Stuart Bence – “Pine Tree Lappet Moth”
Tony Mainwood - “Getting to grips with butterflies and moths in the Spanish Pyrenees”

The Garden Moth Scheme 2014
By Heather Young

The Garden Moth Scheme (GMS) runs from the beginning of March to early November, with people recording the numbers of around 300 species of the more common moths in their gardens once a week throughout this period. Further information on the findings of the GMS for the whole of the UK and Ireland, both current and historical, is available in the form of annual reports and quarterly newsletters, which can be found in the Downloads section of the web-site: <http://www.gardenmoths.org.uk>
Heather Young GMS coordinator. e-mail: heather.young@tiscali.co.uk

The Garden Moth Scheme (GMS) welcomes participants from all parts of the United Kingdom and Ireland, and in 2014 received 354 completed recording forms, a slight decrease on 2013. Recorder numbers were stable in Scotland, with 22 complete sets of results returned, including two new participants. GMS members across Scotland counted 20,975 individual moths of 232 species at an average of 948.6 per garden, a decrease of 19.6% on 2013 (1180.1) and 17.8% down on the 4-year average of 1153.9 for 2010-13.
Large Yellow Underwing was once again the commonest moth overall, with numbers down 15.6% on last year, but still 15.8% above the average for the previous 4 years. Its relatives, the Lesser and Lesser Broad-bordered Yellow Underwings, do not seem to be doing as well, with numbers well below average.

The Scottish top 20 are shown below, with the ranking for the previous 4 year period shown in brackets, the percentage change in average numbers per garden across Scotland year on year (2013-14), and the percentage difference between 2014 numbers and the average per garden for 2010-13.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>2014 (2010-13)</th>
<th>Species</th>
<th>Average per garden</th>
<th>Percentage change 2013-14</th>
<th>Percentage difference to 4-year average (2010-13)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 (1)</td>
<td>Large Yellow Underwing</td>
<td>170.6</td>
<td>-15.6</td>
<td>+15.8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 (6)</td>
<td>Bird-cherry Ermine</td>
<td>61.4</td>
<td>+192.2</td>
<td>+50.5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 (2)</td>
<td>Dark Arches</td>
<td>55.2</td>
<td>+21.8</td>
<td>-28.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 (3)</td>
<td>Hebrew Character</td>
<td>37.4</td>
<td>+57.6</td>
<td>-28.4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 (4)</td>
<td>Lesser Broad-bordered Yellow Underwing</td>
<td>34.9</td>
<td>-49.2</td>
<td>-32.5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 (7)</td>
<td>Common Rustic aggregate</td>
<td>30.9</td>
<td>-1.8</td>
<td>-22.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 (8)</td>
<td>Common Quaker</td>
<td>25.6</td>
<td>+62.4</td>
<td>-30.3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 (10)</td>
<td>Dotted Clay</td>
<td>19.4</td>
<td>-49.9</td>
<td>-35.7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 (9)</td>
<td>Lesser Yellow Underwing</td>
<td>16.9</td>
<td>-54.4</td>
<td>-47.4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 (19)</td>
<td>Double Square-spot</td>
<td>16.6</td>
<td>-5.8</td>
<td>+41.6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 (22)</td>
<td>Heart &amp; Dart</td>
<td>14.6</td>
<td>+103.4</td>
<td>+41.3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 (16)</td>
<td>Beautiful Golden Y</td>
<td>14.4</td>
<td>-25.0</td>
<td>+2.6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 (24)</td>
<td>Silver-ground Carpet</td>
<td>12.1</td>
<td>+1.1</td>
<td>+26.4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 (29)</td>
<td>Clouded-bordered Brindle</td>
<td>11.1</td>
<td>+6.7</td>
<td>+34.8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 (33)</td>
<td>Brimstone Moth</td>
<td>10.9</td>
<td>+28.8</td>
<td>+62.4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 (12)</td>
<td>Rosy Rustic</td>
<td>10.8</td>
<td>-58.7</td>
<td>-40.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17 (17)</td>
<td>Agriphila tristella</td>
<td>10.3</td>
<td>-11.1</td>
<td>-23.4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 (46)</td>
<td>Riband Wave</td>
<td>10.3</td>
<td>+40.6</td>
<td>+99.4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19 (37)</td>
<td>Garden Carpet</td>
<td>10.0</td>
<td>+24.3</td>
<td>+58.5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 (21)</td>
<td>Common Marbled Carpet</td>
<td>9.5</td>
<td>-24.4</td>
<td>-10.7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Overall, 95 species were present in greater numbers in 2014 than their average per garden over the previous 4 years, with 155 species ‘in arrears’. 16 moths on the list of target species have not been seen in any of our GMS gardens at all over the last five years, and 2 were recorded for the first time this year – Common Emerald and Dingy Footman. 20 species that had been recorded at some point over the previous 4 years did not make an appearance in 2014. The one species ranked in the top ten over the 2010-13 period that did not make the Scottish top ten in 2014 is True Lover’s Knot, but that is a reflection of a change in geographical composition of the participating gardens rather than a crash in numbers - figures for some locally abundant species can be a little misleading.

Looking at the three Butterfly Conservation regions in Scotland, it seems those in the Glasgow & South-west branch area had a much better year than the others, but with small numbers of gardens involved, particularly in the Highland region, figures can sometimes be misleading. The table below shows the change in the average number of moths per garden from 2013-14 using figures from all participating members, and also the change year on year for those gardens returning records for both years. It still reflects a poor season for those in the East branch area!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Average per garden 2013 all gardens (n=23)</th>
<th>Average per garden 2014 all gardens (n=22)</th>
<th>Percentage change all gardens</th>
<th>Percentage change gardens common to both years (n=19)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Scotland</td>
<td>1180.1</td>
<td>948.6</td>
<td>-19.6</td>
<td>-2.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G&amp;SW</td>
<td>912.3</td>
<td>1092.4</td>
<td>+19.7</td>
<td>+2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East</td>
<td>1195.6</td>
<td>836.3</td>
<td>-30.1</td>
<td>-10.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Highland</td>
<td>1926.3</td>
<td>1062.3</td>
<td>-44.9</td>
<td>+37.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The top 10 for the Highland branch region is shown below, along with their 2014 rank in Scotland, average numbers per garden, and because the small sample makes the percentage change year on year a little unreliable, the percentage difference between the average number per garden in Highland and the Scotland average per garden for 2010-13.
## Table: 2014 Scottish GMS Species Distribution

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Species</th>
<th>Average per garden (Highland) 2014</th>
<th>Percentage difference to Scotland 4-year average (2010-13)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Large Yellow Underwing</td>
<td>137.7</td>
<td>-6.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Dark Arches</td>
<td>90.7</td>
<td>+18.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Lesser Broad-bordered Yellow Underwing</td>
<td>69.0</td>
<td>+33.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4=</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Common Quaker</td>
<td>33.7</td>
<td>-8.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4=</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>Beautiful Golden Y</td>
<td>33.7</td>
<td>+138.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Hebrew Character</td>
<td>33.0</td>
<td>-36.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>Silver-ground Carpet</td>
<td>24.0</td>
<td>+152.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Double Square-spot</td>
<td>23.7</td>
<td>+100.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Common Rustic aggregate</td>
<td>23.3</td>
<td>-41.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Dotted Clay</td>
<td>19.7</td>
<td>-34.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

During the ‘off season’ we have conducted a review of the GMS species lists, taking into account the non-GMS species recorded in reasonable numbers in each region, and expanding the ‘core species’ list (those species recorded in every region across the UK & Ireland). This has resulted in the addition of a further 35 species (or aggregates in the case of the Uncertain and Rustic), some of which we are very unlikely to see in Scotland, but the ‘zero’ count is still of value to the scheme and the new core list of around 230 species will provide a solid foundation for future research.

To compensate, we have also added several species to the Scottish list (taking it to just over 300 species) that were seen in good numbers in our gardens last year, including several.micros (all relatively easy to identify) such as the pretty little tortrix, *Acleris forsskaleana*. This moth was quite numerous in gardens across the central belt in 2014, but does not yet occur in the Highlands, so it will be interesting to see if it is a species ‘on the move’. The larvae feed on Field Maple and Sycamore, and the adult measures 6-8 mm and has a distinctive net-like wing pattern with a dark cross-line, and sometimes a dark dorsal blotch. The present distribution, as portrayed on the micro-moth distribution maps on the East Scotland branch website [http://eastscotland-butterflies.org.uk/sm_Tortricidae.html#49.062](http://eastscotland-butterflies.org.uk/sm_Tortricidae.html#49.062) is shown below, along with one of my own garden visitors.
The new GMS 2015 season begins on Friday 6th March, and new participants can begin trapping any time up to Monday 30th March to stay within the protocol for taking part (at least 27/36 weeks, with no gaps of more than 3 weeks in a row).

The role of coordinator for Scotland for 2015 has been taken over by Audrey Turner, so please contact Audrey on unicorn64@btinternet.com for further information if you would like to take part. We have a Yahoo group, Facebook Group & Facebook Page as well as an annual conference and quarterly newsletters (let Audrey know if you would like to be added to the mailing list, even if you don’t want to take part in the scheme). The vast majority of our members also send their records to the Butterfly Conservation county moth recorders (something we actively encourage); everyone is welcome from beginner to seasoned expert, and help is always available.

Here & There: Moths & Butterflies
By Dot & Ron Ruston

Although we have been recording butterflies at Polmaily on a weekly transect for a few years, 2014 was our first attempt at moth recording with a Skinner trap. As we have no generator the trapping was done in our garden and the results sent in to Mike Taylor on a monthly basis so that anything
‘suspect’ was checked out quickly and wherever possible photographs used for identification. If we had not had Mike’s help in this way, we possibly would have given up on the recording, so a big thanks to him for his patience.

Sunday March 30th was the first excitement when we nearly missed out on a Rannoch Sprawler. We had set the trap outside the conservatory and noticed a largish moth resting on one of the windows. However, when we tried to pot it, the moth fell to the ground, was camouflaged by the pebbles and in the early morning light, we could not find it. When we checked later in the daylight for any ‘strays’ we were delighted to find our missing moth clinging to the roughcast on the conservatory, and identify (with Tom’s confirmation) that it was a Rannoch Sprawler.

A week later we flew off for a holiday in Madeira where the weather was warm but not too bright. We were disappointed that we did not see a large number of butterflies and not one single moth (maybe we should have been more adventurous). However, the quinta we stayed in had a beautiful garden and there were several Monarch butterflies and a pair of Long-tailed blue. Walking one of the levadas the only butterfly we spotted that day were two or three Speckled Wood.
Polmaly transect 31st May was our first field trip of 2014 and although only a small number of members came out we did spot the micro moth *Paratalanta pandalis* which has apparently been seen on a previous field trip. Scrub bashing took place in September, once again with the lure of CAKE and there were a goodly number wielding tools to help keep the broom and gorse at bay. Unfortunately, as we are approaching mid February, there is no sign of any scrub clearance from FCS, so we can only assume that the ‘storm bomb’ weather system has delayed work at Polmaly.

We *thoroughly* enjoyed our weekend away at Ardnamurchan visiting the Isle of Carna where the numbers of moths released from the various traps was
amazing and the weather just improved as the time went on. The visit to the RSPB reserve at Glenborrodale gave us a taste of what hard work it is organizing a field trip, when we offered to help carry some of the equipment onto the site. When light traps have to be set up, switched off and covered over at some unearthly hour, it takes enthusiasm and muscles!! Our thanks go to all those who make it so worthwhile. Further field trips we managed to Balintore and Shandwick and revisiting Aldie Burn were equally enjoyable.

We look forward with anticipation to field trips this year and hope our moth trap comes up with something ‘special’ too.

Garden Clearwing Moths
By Geoff Hiscocks

In my small urban garden in Bath, Somerset, I have two very old apple trees, a mature blackcurrant bush and several gooseberry bushes. All still provide fruit in due season and I regularly run my Heath trap in the garden from March to October. In May 2011 during daylight hours I was lucky enough to come across by chance a live Red-belted Clearwing moth under the cooking apple tree: I have never used any sort of lure and the moth was found crawling on the ground. I could so easily have not noticed it. It appears this species is not found north of the Humber nor in Scotland.

Then in July the following year yet another Clearwing showed up in my garden. While in the process of photographing a Scarlet Tiger moth which had alighted on the blackcurrant bush I noticed less than two feet away on the same bush what at first glance appeared to be a very small parasitic fly. Again I could easily have missed it but on closer inspection realised it was a female Currant

RED-BELTED CLEARWING
Clearwing, a relatively rare moth but one which is probably often overlooked – see the photo I was able to take.

Currant Clearwing is Nationally Scarce B and is only locally recorded in Scotland. I had never seen either of these moths before and to date have not seen any again, either in my garden or elsewhere. I regard myself as incredibly lucky to have been able to observe these scarce moths within a few yards of my back door! Meanwhile I remain on alert since the trees and bushes are still thriving and you never know…..

Goat Moth Trees in VC106
By Margaret Currie & Andy Scott

For a long time we had only known of one Goat Moth tree in VC106, East Ross-shire, and have visited it regularly over the years in the hope of seeing a larva. That never happened, though it was obviously a very active tree with many holes and plenty of frass, and in the warmer months attracting Red Admirals, wasps, etc. It is quite a large birch tree, approximately 5 to 6 feet in circumference.

This tree never looked in good health, and when we visited it in the late spring in 2014 it was dead, killed by the Goat Moth larvae. So what happens to the larvae when the tree dies, none of the other trees in the vicinity show any signs of larval activity? Will the larvae in the dead tree eventually try to find another tree or do they all die?
On the opposite bank of the river, maybe 50 metres away from the first one, there is a small tree that died some time ago; it has clearly been occupied by something that created numerous holes.

Approximately 3 metres away from this dead tree, on the opposite side of the path, is a very active Goat Moth tree. This is a small birch showing extensive damage with a lot of sawdust around the base of the tree. It is tempting to think that due to the close proximity of these two trees that the larvae from the dead one found their way into a new tree. But once again it is the only occupied tree in the area. Of course the caterpillars could all have died when the tree died and the nearby colony is new. Both the dead birch and the occupied one are rather small, the dead one approximately 2 feet round and the other about 3 feet.

We visited these second trees on 23rd September 2014, and much to our surprise saw our first Goat Moth larvae in VC106. Two, only partially grown, approx. 25mm and 30mm, were wandering up and down the trunk of the tree.

On the VC106 database there are 10 locations for Goat Moth trees, all birch. The earliest record is from 1977. Two new trees were found at Contin in 2013 and one new tree in 2014. But despite
being a good area for these moths and placing a trap beside an active tree at the right time of the year we have yet to see the actual moth. Currently there is only one record of the moth in this vice county.

**Mothing on the Isle of Canna**  
*By Mark Wynn*

Last season’s Site Condition Monitoring for SNH meant a few trips to the National Trust for Scotland owned Isle of Canna with the aim of trying to rerecord four important and noteworthy species. Early starts & long days. So we were anxious to have decent weather – if only for a smooth crossing. The first species was Belted Beauty which can be found in the day & meant going over on Easter Saturday.

It was a superb visit in near perfect weather with good numbers of Belted Beauty being found on the NW area of Machair on Sanday – c80 adults in total including one whilst walking back to the ferry on Canna.
Sanday can be explored by crossing the wee bridge. This was done in search of the foodplants of the other two species Tom Prescott had yet to look for – Sea Campion for the Grey and Clover for the very rare micro *Phyllonorycter insignitella*.

We returned for a few days in mid-August and were delighted to light-trap a Grey. The previous owner, John Lorne Campbell, who bought Canna in 1938 and gifted it to the National Trust for Scotland in 1981, was a very famous entomologist – the Roy Leverton of his day!!! He amassed a great number of specimen moths through the use of a mercury-vapour light-trap he started using in his garden at Canna House in 1951 and used fairly intensively until the great rise in the price of diesel oil that began in 1973. More importantly, he kept prodigious notes in his diaries that fill a metre and more of shelf. Not only did we see this record written up in his diaries but there it was in one of the numerous cork-lined drawers in one of many entomological cabinets dating back to 1952, where it also stated it was the first ever record for Scotland.

The collection now consists of 30 cabinet drawers containing 283 species, all catalogued. Some might wince at the thought of so many pinned specimens. However, in those days that was one of the standard means to identify Lepidoptera and now serves as a very interesting archive and helps confirm the authenticity of many rare and unusual sightings. Luckily, in the majority of cases, we can now do this simply by using digital cameras.

Anyway, other highlights trapped during our visit in August were Buff Footman, Square-spot Dart, Bordered Grey & a possible Arran Carpet.
Although I could not make the final visit to Canna in September Tom & Brigid Primrose (SNH) returned to look for the final target species Slender-striped Rufous. A scarce autumn species that is thought to be associated with Meadow Buttercup. Unfortunately the trip was curtailed by a day due to the ferry being cancelled and it was not recorded in the traps specifically set for it on the one night but makes an excellent excuse to return this year!

Butterflying in Northeast Turkey
By Hilary Swift

“Now, a word of caution. Butterflying in the eastern half of Turkey can be both exhilarating and frustrating at the same time. You will often find the butterfly numbers and diversity truly amazing; however, you should not expect to be able to identify each and every individual you encounter in the field.”

This is a quote by the author of the Turkish butterfly field guide and how right he is. In the two weeks that Pete and I spent in the Kaçkar Mountains in July 2014, we saw over 100 species of butterfly. These are the ones that I alone managed to identify (Pete was away trying to find eastern bird specialities, so a fat lot of help he was. And even when he wasn’t birding, he got told off by the national park police for carrying a butterfly net!).

Turkey is a mountainous country. From Erzurum airport, located in a vast flat plain surrounded by mountains, we drove to the Kaçkars where we stayed in three different villages. Meadows and verges were very flowery and the abundance of nectar was evident in the number of bee hives everywhere. The landscape was stunning. Rocks of different colours and
types lay side by side, dissected by the Çoruh River valley flowing through it. This river valley is renowned for its butterfly fauna and it would seem that authorities and local people are aware of this. However, it is threatened by the construction of dams. We saw depressing evidence of scarring in this amazing landscape, where diggers were quarrying the rock and new roads being built.

Away from any large town, rural Turkey is sparsely populated and the lifestyle is traditional. Families may have three homes: a town house in use in winter, a spring and autumn house at higher levels and a very basic summer house for when they move their flocks to the high pastures. The grazing regimes are butterfly-friendly. But, they do have the problem of rural depopulation and some pastures are not being grazed.

These issues aside, let’s move on to the butterflies. I don’t want to be boring and list all the butterflies we saw, but I will throw in some statistics. Turkey has around 344 species of butterfly – of these, many are seen in Europe but others are eastern species. The province of Erzurum, in which the Kaçkar Mountains lie, has 92 species from the family of Blues alone (that includes Coppers and Hairstreaks). Also in this one province are 19 species of White on the wing in July, including 3 species of Green-veined White and 4 of Orange-tip. I could go on, but I’m sure you get the picture.
So where did we see them? You will be pushed to identify butterflies in flight in Turkey. Why? Because, given the heat, they zip past you in a flash. You need to sneak up on them when they are nectaring or, better still, when they are mud-puddling. If any of you haven’t seen this before, mud-puddling is quite something, especially when huge numbers gather to do this. It’s not the butterfly having a mud bath, but it is imbibing mineral nutrients and it can be anywhere or anything that is damp or salty: the edge of a puddle or stream, a damp patch on a track, a gutter, a sandal, my toe, even a pile of cement. Oh yes, and they like dung.

OSIRIS, PONTIC, MAZARINE & OTHER BLUES

The most impressive numbers of butterflies we had mud-puddling were around the villages of Olgunlar and Yaylalar. There would be hundreds at every puddle, stretching into the distance. These would be a mix of many species of blue, fritillary and skipper, and identification was often difficult.
The best thing was to photograph them and identify them later, zoomed in and at leisure. One track edge had mostly Marsh and Heath Fritillaries as far as the eye could see. It was mind-boggling. Being surrounded by so many Marsh Fritillaries, I kept thinking about Tom Prescott and it gave me great pleasure in finding 5 Marsh Fritillaries together on some animal poo which I photographed and later e-mailed to Tom with the message “Saw this and thought of you”.

To re-iterate the author of the Turkish butterfly guide, the numbers and diversity are truly amazing. What more can I say?

If anyone would like a species list or would like more information about where we stayed, please don’t hesitate to contact either myself or Pete Moore.

**MARSH FRITILLARIES**

**Targeting Under-Recorded Areas Continues**

By Tom Prescott

The National Moth Recording Scheme was launched in 2007 and aims to bring together records of all macro-moths across the UK, Isle of Man and Channel Islands; the scheme covers around 900 species. This led, in 2010, to the publication of “*A Provisional Atlas of the UK’s Larger Moths*” which produced UK distribution maps at a 10km resolution for all species. These maps are also available to view online on the Moths Count website [www.mothscount.org](http://www.mothscount.org).

In January 2014 Butterfly Conservation’s Moths Count newsletter announced plans to work towards the publication of an “*Atlas of Macro-moths in Britain and Ireland*” towards the end of 2018 based on records up to the end of 2016. We therefore currently have just two further years of fieldwork to improve coverage before its publication. Not surprisingly Highland is one of the most under-recorded areas in the UK, so in order to improve coverage the Highland Branch committee has again agreed to offer
expenses to cover volunteers willing to record moths in under-recorded 10km squares in our branch area in 2015.

However, there is only a limited amount of money available and claims must be agreed in advance to ensure that the pot is not overspent. It is also important that you contact the relevant Vice-county (VC) Moth recorder to ensure that other recorders have not already hatched plans to target the same squares, details of the VC moth recorders can be found on page 83 and on the Moths Count website www.mothscount.org.

If you are interested in taking up this offer please contact the branch treasurer Audrey Turner (Email unicorn64@btinternet.com Tel: 01479 811517) with details of where you intend to go and approximate costs. All claims must be made by the end of December. The only other condition is that your moth records are submitted to the VC moth recorder.

To help you decide where to go the following map has been produced which gives the number of macro-moth species that have been recorded in each 10km square in Highland. Blank squares are just that, squares where no macro-moths have previously been recorded. For most vice-counties this data does not include 2014 records so some squares may have higher totals than are shown on the map, so another reason why it is important to liaise with the relevant VC moth recorder. It should also be noted that some of these squares are either boundary squares where only a small part of the square lies within Highland, or coastal squares which are predominantly sea.

The number of moths in each 10km square have also been tabulated in three tables. **Table 1** lists squares where less than 10 species have been recorded and **Table 2** 10km squares with 11 to 100 species, both tables are in 2 halves. These tables show that there are 109 squares where 10 or less macro-moths have been recorded, including 6 squares without any records. By contrast there are also 6 squares where over 300 species have been recorded.

Under-recorded squares have been defined as 10km squares where less than 50 species of macro-moth have been recorded.

Although there is only a limited amount of money please do not be shy in coming forward. This is a great opportunity to get out to those under-recorded areas to find new species for your target square and also, possibly,
yourself. For example in 2013 53 species were added to a square which previously had only 48 recorded taking the total to 101 and this included Northern Rustic, Barred Rivulet, Annulet and Treble Bar. Whilst in another square 52 species were added including Old Lady, Slender Brindle, Slender Pug, Blue-bordered Carpet and Brindled Ochre bringing the total to 70.

Good luck and please help put moths on the map in Highland.

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Table 2 showing 10km squares with 11 to 100 species per square
Moth Highlights From West Ross And Skye During 2014 By Brian Neath

2014 was almost certainly the most interesting year for moth sightings so far in this part of the North West Highlands. By contrast it was the poorest year for butterflies that I can remember with only Green-veined White consistently present in good numbers.

April and May produced exceptional numbers of Powdered Quaker with 44 and 61 at two sites in the Inverewe area on 25<sup>th</sup> April (Barry Blake) and 23 and 24 at Portnalong, Skye on 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> May (Keith Sadler).

Barry Blake also recorded the first two V-pugs from north of Lochalsh at Inverewe on 25<sup>th</sup> April and at Badachro on 13<sup>th</sup> July.

On 28<sup>th</sup> April I found my first Brindled Beauty in my trap at Carr Brae, Dornie. It was the first West Ross record since one at Beinn Eighe in 1994.

The first Narrow-bordered Bee Hawk-moth for Skye was found by Dorothy Jackson at Ord on 7<sup>th</sup> May and amazingly a second was found by Terry Swainbank at Ard Dorch on 15<sup>th</sup> June.

My garden at Carr Brae, Dornie is the only site in West Ross where Satin Lutestring has been
recorded. Numbers have gradually increased since the first one in June 2011 and the peak count in 2014 was 15 on 8th June. Surely they must appear somewhere else in the near future.

Terry Swainbank’s site at Ard Dorch is proving to be very productive and other sightings of rarely recorded moths on Skye include a Peach Blossom on 14th June, Clouded Silver on 20th May and 4th June and Poplar Lutestring on 6th June.

It was another good year for Small Chocolate-tip with Keith Sadler recording the second for Skye on 12th June whilst I had the third record of an adult for West Ross at Carr Brae on 15th June. I had a visit from a group of Eastern Europeans courtesy of the Highland Biological Recording Group accompanied by Stephen Moran on the latter date. Needless to say they were more impressed by my Poplar Hawk-moths than my Small Chocolate-tip despite my enthusiasm for the latter!

A Bleached Pug on 13th July was just my third record of this species. Otherwise there are only three old Beinn Eighe records for West Ross.

Two exciting firsts for Skye were a Lunar Hornet Moth at Kylerhea on 27th June (Andy Law) and a Bedstraw Hawk-moth at Dunan (Steve Terry).
Ishbel Cameron's site at Drumbuie is particularly good for Map-winged Swift and she had no less than 22 on 21st June and 25 on 23rd June. Other highlights from Ishbel's site included the only Saxon recorded in Lochalsh in 2014 on 21st June, Great Brocade on 1st, 5th and 16th July, the first two records of Lime-speck Pug for West Ross on 19th and 24th July, a Manchester Treble-bar and a Gothic on 23rd July and a Yellow-ringed Carpet on 4th August. The Lime-speck Pug followed on from the first Skye record last year. The only disappointment was that this was the first year since 2007 that Ishbel did not record any Bordered Greys. Drumbuie is the only site in West Ross where this Nationally Scarce A moth has been found so far.
Barry Blake was having problems with a Robin getting into his trap at Gairloch so decided to try trapping on the nearby coast for a change. This resulted in some extraordinary records of Archer's Dart and Coast Dart. His records of Archer's Dart were only the second and third records for West Ross whilst on 14th August he had an impressive 128 Coast Darts at Firemore along with 28 White-line Darts. There were only three previous West Ross records of Coast Darts. So perhaps we should be grateful to that Robin after all!

Keith Sadler continued to put the Portnalong area of Skye on the map with the first and second records of Double Lobed for the island on 30th July and 3rd August. Keith also found two larvae of the Cinnabar in Glen Brittle on 3rd August, a moth which is surprisingly rare in the North West compared with most of the country. He also had a Pale Eggar at Portnalong on 24th August and a Broad-bordered Yellow Underwing on 30th August, only the fourth record of the latter species for Skye. I also had a Broad-bordered
Yellow Underwing on Carr Brae on 10th September. This is much scarcer than the Large, Lesser and Lesser Broad-bordered Yellow Underwing moths and may be decreasing in our area based on the few records received in recent years.

DOUBLE LOBED BY KEITH SADLER

John Knowler had a successful visit to Raasay in September. He recorded first Northern Rustic and Small Chocolate-tip (larval) for the island and the third Bordered Beauty for Skye/Raasay.

Stephen Bungard has continued to trap regularly on Raasay and was rewarded on 10th September with the first White-line Dart for the island. He also recorded the first Vapourers for Raasay on 11th and 25th July while John Knowler also recorded Vapourer on 1st and 2nd September.

Alison Stables started to get the moth bug in May and obtained a Skinner trap on 13th July. She has proceeded to put the Lower Milovaig area of Skye on the map with a creditable total of 63 species including Pale Eggar, Striped Twin-spot Carpet, Barred Straw, Puss Moth, Brindled Ochre, Grey Chi, Lunar Underwing, Large Wainscot and Lempke’s Gold Spot.
The north west corner of Skye has also benefited from visits by Andy Harding. Among the species he recorded there during 2014 were Double Dart, Dark Swordgrass, Arran Carpet, Light Arches, Grass Rivulet, Gothic and Common Wainscot.

Thanks are due to all those who have submitted moth records for VC’s 104 and 105. It will be interesting to see whether 2015 can live up to the standard set by 2014.

Caption Competition - Wynn a Prize!

During the trip to Canna described on page 16, Brigid Primrose took this photo of our chairman, Mark Wynn, larking around on the beach.

Those of us who have seen it have no idea what he’s up to! So we thought it suitable for a caption competition.

Having decided to have the competition, we thought there had better be a prize to encourage some entries! Various things were thought of and rejected (1st prize a night out with Mark, 2nd prize 2 nights out with Mark), but in the end we decided a decent bottle of plonk would be best.

All entries will be read out anonymously at the AGM on Saturday the 11th of April and the winner will be decided by popular vote (or loudest groan)!

Entries should be sent to me by the 10th of April, either by email to:
unicorn64@btinternet.com or you can phone me on 07450 548862 if you don’t have access to email.

Alternatively, if you are attending the AGM, then you can hand in your entry on the day.

**Alternative Ways of Saving Butterflies**  
**By Irene Wade**

There are ways of saving butterflies, moths and our environment other than those normally found in the “Chequered Skipper”. One of them is to live a “Certified Organic” lifestyle. My attempts to do this include buying organic foods and textiles etc. whenever possible, which is most of the time.

Thus the pesticides in our environment are reduced, which is better for Lepidoptera, other wildlife and, of course, our own health.

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**Narrow-bordered Bee Hawk-moth**

This photo was sent to me by Elisabeth Longley; it was taken by her friend Dr Judy Turner of Durham on the banks of the river Spey on the 4th of June 2014. Last year seemed to be a great year for the moth, I saw three at the same time nectaring on Fragrant Orchids at Insh Marshes and there are reports of others in the articles by Brian Neath on page 26 and Mike Taylor on page 53. Here’s hoping that 2015 will be just as good.
Travels with a Trap
By Paul Brooks

Being a keen hill-walker for over 25 years, it was hardly a surprise when my budding interest in moths began to lean towards trapping in the mountain environment. In fact, it was on a mountain summit in Glen Affric that my interest was first aroused.

Lunch at 3000ft on Aonach Shasuinn, and a small movement amidst Trailing Azalea growing by the cairn revealed a Broad-bordered White Underwing. Of course, I had no idea what it was at the time, and with no books at home, it was a couple of years before I tracked its identity down and realised I’d found a ‘good moth’ - one of the few mountain-top dwellers. It would be 7 years before they turned up again, closer to home on Ben Gulabin, Perthshire.

Another moth of the high tops is the Black Mountain Moth. I’ve been fortunate to find it on a couple of occasions in the Cairngorms, high up on the tops of Beinn a’Bhuird and Beinn Mheadhoin. The plateau at 4000ft and above is scoured by
bad weather the year round, eroding the granite into fine pinky-grey granules. The moths blend into this background colour beautifully, and unless it’s windy and the moths are being blown about liked pieces of charred paper, it takes a keen eye to spot them. Fortunately, for moth-ers at least, it’s often windy up there.

Closer to home, Angus is a county with mountains at its heart. They are almost untouched, when it comes to mothing. The distribution maps are blighted by ‘white holes’ and under-recorded squares. A lot is happening to change that, especially with the advent of the new Atlas of Larger Moths in the making.

The value of tackling these areas was well demonstrated, earlier this season. I had targeted a species, Bordered Beauty, which I had not seen before. It’s not a mountain moth, but I knew it flew at the Creag Meagaidh NNR, a fine mountain group. Permission to trap was sought and granted and I duly went in July – and failed. A week later, and back on my home patch, I went to trap in one of the under-recorded squares and within an hour, two were netted – and a third was caught on a subsequent visit. Not only were the records new to the square, but Bordered Beauty was also a new VC record. Success was achieved only 10 miles from home.

As the season progressed and more under-recorded squares were visited, more new VC records were found. These included Pinion-streaked Snout and Flounced Chestnut among the macros. Both of these were moths I had not seen before. I also trapped the Miller and Merveille du Jour. These, too, were new additions to my personal list. Several micros were also added. Not that these finds were in themselves unexpected, or exceptional, but there is
no doubt that without venturing further afield into these less visited areas, these species would have remained unrecorded.

Working the hills and glens highlights another necessity. Gaming estates are the norm here, and it’s essential that a good working relationship is developed with land owners and workers alike, that permission is sought, and the parameters of any permission granted is closely adhered to. Initially, I found this prospect a little off-putting – even intimidating. But in almost every case, I have found the estate authorities immensely helpful, and they show great interest in the results of any trapping. It’s not unusual for a land-rover to pull up late at night, and a ‘gamey’ or keeper will pass the time, very often furnishing e-mail addresses and phone numbers of their peers on adjacent estates, who may also be willing to help.

Their enthusiasm is well illustrated by the following example. In upper Glen Esk, a long serving Head Keeper who was my contact, moved on to pastures new. In the interim period, before a new keeper was employed, I was given a temporary contact, someone I had never met personally. I received an e-mail from him one morning about something his work party had found. They had been repairing a bridge over a burn that drains a high, mountain coire above the Falls of Damff, Craig Maskeldie. On one of the bridge supports was a large moth. Of course, they had no idea what it was, but my contact thought he knew a man who might. Hence the e-mail, which contained a string of attached photos. They were among the best pictures of Puss Moth I had ever seen.
outside of a guide. The moth was also new to the square. I didn’t even have to step outside the door.

The hills are home to a host of beautiful moths, unlikely to be encountered in the urban environment. The aptly named Beautiful Yellow Underwing, Northern Eggar, Golden-rod Brindle, Light Knot-grass, Dark Tussock and Emperor Moths to name just a few. Often it is the larvae that give their presence away. Check out the heather or Bog Myrtle, especially on a warm, sunny afternoon, and invariably they will be found at the appropriate time of year. I have found the larvae of Dark Tussock at well over 2500ft in Angus, and those of Beautiful Yellow Underwing at similar heights on the hills of Arran.

Scotland’s hills are quite literally alive. From the Black and Red Cuillin on the Isle of Skye, and the Rough Bounds of Knoydart in the west, to the high plateaux of the Cairngorms, and to the more modest hills and glens of Angus in the east, they never fail to deliver something for the lepidopterist. And there is much else besides. If you don’t feel inclined to go up the hills, then just walk in them. Scotland’s Highland habitat will not disappoint. Not only is there a wealth of nature to satisfy every persuasion, we can also go with the assurance that we will enjoy that nature amid some of the best scenery this country has to offer. So why not get out there and have some fun….
A Trip to Raasay  
By John Knowler

A moth-trapping friend of mine in Cumbria, with whom I have shared the joy of Rosy Marsh Moth on her local reserve, Roudsea Moss, is a part owner of a cottage on Raasay. A long term invitation to me and my wife to holiday in said cottage was finally realised in 2014 when, with non-naturalist friends, we rented it for the week of 30th August to 4th September.

The cottage proved to be superb and located on the shore of Holoman Bay just opposite Holoman Island which is close to the shore and joined to it by a spit of exposed land at low tide. For the length of our stay it was the permanent home of about 20 Common Seals. A pair of White-tailed Sea Eagle called the bay their territory and on several occasions sat on the rocky outcrop just above the cottage. On one day, at least 100 Common Dolphin raced up and down the Sound of Raasay chasing the mackerel that were in turn chasing a large influx of sprat. Golden Eagle were not far away on Dun Caan but what about butterflies and moths?

Well there were Red Admiral on the garden Buddleia, Grayling on coastal rocky outcrops, Speckled Wood in wooded gullies and day flying Vapourer Moth were quite common. What really interested me though was the fact that the cottage was surrounded by moorland and I had good reason to believe that here I would finally catch up with Northern Deep-brown Dart. I had squeezed a Skinner trap in with the rest of the luggage and on the first night I put it out of the fresh SW wind, looking out over the coastal moorland but in the shelter of the cottage’s garden wall. The SW wind persisted for the whole week so I never tried any other sites for the trap. Nevertheless, I was not to be disappointed with Northern Deep-brown Dart and was also pleased to catch a good selection of other uncommon moorland moths. The table summarises the total catch for the week.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Taxon</th>
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<td>Stilbia anomala</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Note: On the one day that Ear moths were carefully examined, most but not all were Large Ear. The others were either Ear Moth or Crinnan Ear but their genitalia were not examined.

Caterpillar hunting produced Fox Moth in various instars and Broom moth but was most rewarding when searching stunted Eared Sallow bushes for spun-together leaf tents. Bushes around the bay produced nothing but on the east side of the island I found a few late Ruddy Highflyer larvae and a single Small Chocolate Tip larva. The latter left the Island to complete its development in Milngavie.

Post-script: Northern Deep-brown Dart had not been recorded in my vice counties, vc86, 87 and 99, since 1991. However, in September 2014, Stan Campbell found one on Carman Muir, Renton, and Dunbartonshire. Typical!
Day-flying Moth and Caterpillar recording

By Dr Zoë Randle & Richard Fox

Butterfly Conservation would love butterfly recorders to record day-flying moths and moth caterpillars when they are out and about. In 2018, in collaboration with MothsIreland, we will be publishing a Macro-moth Atlas for Britain and Ireland. The majority of moth recorders use light-traps and, as a result, the many species of day-flying moths may be relatively under-recorded compared to nocturnal ones. Butterfly recorders can make a huge contribution to the forthcoming atlas by submitting records of day-flying moths such as Speckled Yellow (see figure 1 and photo on page 43) and indeed distinctive caterpillars (e.g. Cinnabar) that they encounter while out looking at butterflies.

The National Moth Recording Scheme run by Butterfly Conservation will provide the UK moth data for the forthcoming atlas. The scheme already holds over 17.3 million moth records and geographical coverage of the UK, Channel Islands and Isle of Man at 10km resolution is very good (97% have at least one moth species recorded). There are only 113 10km squares for which we do not have any records from the year 2000 onwards (see figure 2). However, in addition to these, there are 613 10km squares which we consider to be under-recorded - they possess 50 or fewer records of 25 or fewer species. You could really help by targeting these unrecorded or under-recorded squares for moth sightings during your butterfly recording. To find out what 10km squares, or tetrads, are under-recorded in your area or if you wish to venture further afield, please contact the relevant County Moth Recorder: a list can be found on the Moths Count website (www.mothscount.org).

Many butterfly recorders already record the moths they see along their transects. In 2013, the UK Butterfly Monitoring Scheme (BMS) team extracted moth records entered into Transect Walker software. The data extraction exercise revealed data for 109,485 individuals of 123 moth species, with 13,622 records from 403 sites. The five most frequently recorded species (in descending rank order) were Silver Y, Six-spot Burnet, Cinnabar, Burnet Companion and Speckled Yellow. These records will be re-patriated to County Moth Recorders in due course.
Participants in the Wider Countryside Butterfly Survey are also encouraged to record day-flying moths in their squares. In 2014 a record of Blood-vein in Gloucestershire was only the second for SP10 and the first since 1974.

In the run up to the forthcoming *Macro-moth Atlas for Britain and Ireland* all butterfly recorders can help boost coverage by recording moths, whether on butterfly/WCBS transects, during ‘casual’ butterfly recording or by specifically targeting areas that are under-recorded for moths. Your help will be very gratefully received. Records are best submitted to your local County Moth recorder on an annual basis by the end of the year to enable incorporation into local datasets and ultimately the National Moth Recording Scheme.

**FIGURE 1:** NMRS PROVISIONAL DISTRIBUTION MAP OF SPECKLED YELLOW AT 10KM RESOLUTION. OPEN CIRCLES PRE 2000 RECORDS AND SOLID DOTS 2000 ONWARDS RECORDS
FIGURE 2: MAP OF NATIONAL MOTH RECORDING SCHEME ‘WHITE-HOLES’ AND UNDER-RECORDED 10KM SQUARES FROM 2000 ONWARDS.
Photo Competition

We are inviting Branch members to submit their photos of Lepidoptera taken this season to be judged. The winning photo will appear on the cover of the 2016 issue of our newsletter *Chequered Skipper*.

Please e-mail your entries to Mark Wynn at: markwynn@highland-butterflies.org.uk

Closing date Friday 16 October.

Good luck.
Young Moth-ers
By James Hammond

The purpose of this article is well, unsure to even me, but it’s a wee idea of what it’s like to be a teenager and a moth-er, one of our smaller demographics in the lepidopteran community.

I currently live in Forres, VC 95, and attend Forres Academy where I’m currently studying 5 Highers, which is a thorn in my side in respect to my mothing activities, as the two mix like oil and water.

My interest in moths began in late summer 2009 when I decided to diversify my natural interests from birding - though prior to this I have also had various ‘phases’ including an interest in Fungi and Stellar constellations. I was initially inspired by the Butterfly Conservation booklet ‘Garden Moths’ which showed a cover of the Elephant Hawk-moth \( (Deilephila elpenor) \), and within a fantastic Green-Silver Lines \( (Pseudoips prasinana) \) This made me for the first time aware of moths other than the ‘Little Brown Jobs’ I was used to seeing, and I promptly scrapped my new found interest in butterflies for a far more diverse hobby. With hindsight, I suppose my interest is a testament to the success of BC propaganda!

Shortly after, I bought a moth trap, a Robinson which was at the time 2x30W actinic bulbs but I have since upgraded to an MV – much to my neighbour’s annoyance. Since then I have also acquired a 15W heath-trap which has been my faithful companion ever since.
Over time my interest grew, catalysed by the appearance of attractive species like the Burnished Brass (*Diachrysia chrysitis*) and Lime-Speck Pug (*Eupithecia centaureata*) in my traps. However, one finds that over time your ‘taste’ in moths does, well, go downhill. Whereas once I found great excitement in the Garden Tiger (*Arctia caja*) I found in the bottom of the trap, now my mind is preoccupied with visions of the coal-black Northern Arches (*Apamea exulis assimilis*) that crawled out of the trap with a saintly aura to meet me. Whilst striking, it’s hardly worthy of Vogue-cover status, which doesn’t help explain my excitement over the thing, when trembling, I show the poorly-focused, under-exposed images to my friends.
Now would seem a good time to address the elephant in the room, the views of my peers.

Most photos I get from my peers requesting ID of moths are of the last images of that moth before it died a tragic, painful death. They are viewed as pests, creepy and oft described as ‘satanic’, hence explaining why mention of my mothing is sometimes accompanied by jokes about exorcisms.

The stereotypes accompanying the hobby are generally in the region of a white-linen clad stately gentleman travelling the tropics in pursuit of bizarre insects, or of devious and bizarre bachelors pinning live insects to boards in some bizarre ritual to bring gratification. Thus, it is no small surprise that I am perceived as eccentric by my peers, until very recently they had only poor guesswork as to what my weekends were like.

In truth, they don’t really comprehend how enjoyable the whole process can be, the long two-hour forced march to the site, the tedious search for the quarry, the lengthy ID process, then the wry satisfaction that you have
successfully identified a worn Large Yellow-Underwing (*Noctua pronuba*), and that all your efforts and hopes of a spectacular new species were in vain. Or even better, doing this as a group!

Happy Mothing folks.

NORTHERN ARCHES, CAUGHT ON THE DAVA MOOR AT 15W LIGHT, 2014

Northern Brown Argus - Rosemarkie Cliffs
Martin Hind: Highland Council Ranger Easter Ross

I have been looking out for this wee butterfly over the years and finally got my first sighting of it at Shandwick towards the Well of Health one day along with Colin Dingly who had some cracking images.

Knowing that it laid its eggs on Common Rock Rose and it had been recorded along the Rosemarkie Cliffs towards the South Sutor in the 90’s I have been looking out for the bright yellow of the flowers during the summer when leading a guided walk or recce. The first few years I noticed
some small patches of Rock Rose on the cliffs but no sign of NBA’s so just thought that there wasn’t enough of the food plant around to provide good habitat for the butterfly. Well two years ago the weather and my timing must have coincided as on one walk Rock Rose seemed to be much more abundant than on previous visits. That was it, there must still be a chance of a small population amongst that lot so I got in touch with Peter Moore and talked about possibility of a survey during the summer.

Pete arranged a trip and I think I put it at the back of my mind or had something else to do on that date but sure enough Pete and some of the local group made a visit and searched in vain finding a few patches of Rock Rose but striking lucky on the way back at the Through Cave where some NBA’s were spotted dozing around. Funnily enough I led a walk along to the Through Cave a few days later and had a good look but only found Grayling and some of the more common butterflies. The Common Rock Rose wasn’t as obvious as in the previous year and I suspect with the hot and good weather of the preceding months the Rock Rose had flowered and now passed over. A side note on the Grayling. I thought this was my first sighting of one only to find out when I was looking at my images on the computer that I had taken a picture of one in the past but where I don’t know.

Back to the Northern Brown Argus and recent developments and future possibilities at Rosemarkie Cliffs, I was contacted by Mark Wynn about looking at some habitat management of the site to improve things for the foodplant. A visit was organised to identify suitable habitat where work could be carried out. This took place at the beginning of December and with the use of binos was able to spot a lot of Common Rockrose on the cliffs. It appears to grow well on steep drier buttress and crags where not swamped by ivy, gorse and grass and at the top of scree slopes where conditions were suitable. Any bits of cliff with too much tree cover or sheltered, shaded and damp lacked CRR but out in the open on rock ledges exposed to the sun and wind it seemed to be thriving.

With regards to management only a few sites were identified as being easily accessed for gorse and other plant control although I did make the suggestion that the local Coastguard Cliff Rescue Team might want to have some practice in lowering some unwilling volunteers down the cliff to reach the less accessible locations to remove the encroaching gorse or ivy.
Mark Wynn is going to see about possible funding and talk to SNH about the project. Also needing done is landowner’s permission and to arrange a date at a suitable time for the work.

Hopefully by then there will be two volunteer groups ready to assist as the Highland Biodiversity Project have applied for funding to assist The Conservation Volunteers to set up local Green Gym Groups throughout the Highlands and also I hope to have a less formal group of volunteers for the Black Isle and Easter Ross. Currently still in the early stages.

So the prospects for the Northern Brown Argus at Rosemarkie are looking up: hopefully the climate is kind to them this coming year. It’s great that they have a group such as yourselves to look out for their wellbeing.

In Search of Mountain Ringlets
By Audrey Turner

Whilst 2014 was heralded as the warmest since records began, that doesn’t mean it was wall-to-wall sunshine which is what is needed when looking for Mountain Ringlets. After postponing a couple of times whilst waiting for a bright sunny day, eventually Mark Wynn and myself headed to the slopes of Meall Liath near Dalwhinnie on Tuesday the 14th of July as the forecast was promising.

As is often the case, the actual weather turned out to be a bit different; there was some sunshine, but there was cloud as well and the forecasters forgot to mention the cool breeze. However, we set out hoping conditions would improve.
We followed a forest track, climbing steadily up through trees for some time before turning off and starting a steeper climb alongside a burn running down through a grassy ride between the trees. Mark searched up one side of the burn whilst I headed up the other side and found an ordinary Ringlet, the 1st butterfly of the day.

Carrying on we reached the treeline and went through a gate to the open hillside beyond and started searching the area where Mountain Ringlets have been seen previously.

Unfortunately the cool breeze turned into a stronger wind with quite a cold edge to it. Despite searching for a couple of hours the only things seen were a Grey Mountain Carpet.
Carpet and a Small Heath Butterfly, although the views down to the valley below and the mountains beyond were impressive.

We decided to have lunch and I saw a few Heather flies – *Bibio pomonae* – whilst we were eating. We resumed searching for a short while but decided to head back downhill.

As before, we searched on opposite sides of the burn and about half-way down I spotted a brown butterfly low down in the grass. Thinking it was just an ordinary Ringlet, I decided to have a closer look anyway. Success at last, a rather tatty Mountain Ringlet.

After taking photos and admiring it for a few minutes, we carried on back downhill seeing another couple of Small Heaths, another Ringlet and the micro moth *Udea lutealis*. Another highlight for me was seeing my first ever Adder basking by the side of the track when we were almost back to the car.

**Lochinver Moths**

By Geoff Hiscocks

Although I live in Somerset, I like to visit Sutherland regularly and in particular the area around Lochinver. I have used my portable Heath trap beside the river Inver with some success but this piece concerns two sightings of day flying moths, made more enjoyable by their unexpected nature. Although I understand the species concerned are by no means uncommon in north west Scotland I have not seen them very often myself.

I’ve walked from Inverkirkaig along the well-used path up to the Falls on many occasions and sometimes proceed beyond them to get a better view of Suilven across Fionn Loch. On this particular occasion at the beginning of
June 2012, I came across several Argent & Sable moths at loch side which were being buffeted by the stiff breeze. Although this made photography a bit difficult it did mean the moths were not as active as usual and I was able to get the shot I wanted. I’d never seen the species here before, only down near the river in Lochinver when decent photos proved impossible. On the way back I saw several male Northern Eggars and Golden-ringed dragonflies and lost count of the many Small Pearl-bordered Fritillaries on either side of the path.

ARGENT AND SABLE

Another favourite walk, this time to the north of Lochinver, is the one from Raffin around the coast past the lighthouse to the Old Man of Stoer. Here, at the beginning of August 2013, not far away from the Old Man I came across several Manchester Treble-bars, a moth

MANCHESTER TREBLE-BAR
which I had only seen before in Cumbria and a species we don’t get down south. They were fairly active in the sun but I was able to capture some photos of this small attractive moth flying low and then settling in the heather etc. On the way back with the sun now out I had the bonus of seeing six butterfly species, including Grayling, Dark Green Fritillary and Common Blue. The weather had been kind and it was another great day spent in the Highlands.

Moth Records from Moray and East Inverness-shire
VC95 & VC96 in 2014  By Mike Taylor

The number of records received at the time of writing is 3,727 for Moray and 6,431 for East Inverness-shire. There are more records to come in and I would expect the combined totals for the two VCs to be somewhere between 11,000 and 12,000.

There was one new macro moth species found in VC95 Moray. Following a period of warm southerly winds Britt and I went to Lossiemouth on 9th October looking for migrant moths, we succeeded by finding a Gem near an outside light during daytime. This is a scarce migrant for our part of the UK and coincided with a number of sightings of the somewhat more common Rusty-dot Pearl, another migrant but in this case, a micro moth. For VC96
East Inverness-shire there were three new species of macro moth. On 14th June Jane Bowman trapped a Buff Ermine in her garden in Glen Moriston. A Blomer’s Rivulet was trapped in Invermoriston by Doug Gilbert and Julie Stoneman on 21 June, the same weekend as the successful Blomer’s Rivulet Highland Branch event at Lochaline. A few days later on the 27th Doug and Julie went on to find two Bilberry Pugs at Inverwick in Glen Moriston at only the third site for Scotland.

In addition to the macro moths four species of micro moth were added to the Moray list. On 8th June an *Argyresthia glaucinella* was found by Mark Young at Logie House, south of Forres. On 29th July and again on the 30th James Hammond trapped a Beautiful China Mark at Chapelton Marsh, Forres. This was followed by an *Exapate congelatella* on 31st October trapped by Pete Moore in Grantown. Finally on 13th November Stewart Taylor found a cased larva of a *Narycia duplicella* on the bark of an aspen tree near Skye of Curr.

Similarly four micro moths were added to the East Inverness-shire list. On 14th May a *Rhopobota stagnana* was trapped in Glen Feshie by Mike Dale, a visiting recorder who was here for the Kentish Glory and Small Dark
Yellow Underwing weekend. An *Endothenia quadrimaculana* was trapped on 13th July at RSPB Insh Marshes by Robert Arnfield, another visitor. On 27th August an *Ypsolopa sequella* was trapped again at RSPB Insh Marshes and again to a visitor, Martin Evans this time. At least the final new species fell to a local recorder, Tom Prescott found six occupied larval cases of *Coleophora virgaueae* feeding on Golden-rod at Newtonmore on 11th October.

Records received so far for the area’s resident specialities and UKBAP species are summarised below:

**Rannoch Sprawler**, so far there are thirty six records covering the period 19th March to 8th April. The most significant find was one trapped by Mark Young on 1st April at Logie House four miles south of Forres in a new 10km square for the species. The previous year the species was found at Dulsie Bridge in a new area for the moth in square NH94, Mark’s find was in a diagonally adjacent square NJ05 begging the question is the species more widespread? Due to the early flight period it may be that no one has specifically looked for Rannoch Sprawler in this area. It is possible but unproven at present that the species has been here for some considerable time with it being cut off from the relatively large populations in Strathspey when Dava Moor was deforested for country sporting purposes. Further trapping in adjacent squares would be helpful to establish whether there is a widespread population of the moth within this area.

**Sword-grass**, six records, all in April from RSPB Insh Marshes, RSPB Ballinllaggan, Aviemore, Lochgarthside, Kiltarlty and Boat of Garten. Unlike 2013 which had a late spring but a very creditable 31 Kentish Glory records this year the spring was on time or perhaps even a little early, therefore by the time of the Kentish Glory and Small Dark Yellow Underwing weekend the adult’s flight period had ended and consequently no moths were found during the event. There were two records of adults prior to the event, I trapped one in our garden in Boat of Garten on 18th April and a second one was trapped in a Carrbridge garden by Toby Green on 24th April. Dave Grundy and team found a fresh egg-batch in Culbin Forest on 12th May as a small consolation for not seeing an adult Kentish Glory whilst here.

**Netted Mountain Moth** and the increasingly elusive **Small Dark Yellow Underwing** are usually on the wing during April and May and it is pleasing to report that both were recorded this year. The previously mentioned
Kentish Glory and Small Dark Yellow Underwing weekend on 10th & 11th May was extremely well attended and whilst it was too late for the former it was spot on for the latter. Everyone got to see a Small Dark Yellow Underwing at the event meeting place in Kingussie prior to splitting up into groups to search likely areas. Dave Grundy and team found three the day before the event at a known site just above Carrbridge, this site was visited over the following week with many getting to see the moth. Another one was found at a site a few kilometres north of Nethy Bridge by Paul Chapman who had also seen the moth there in 2005, there being no records from the site during the intervening years. There were twelve records for Netted Mountain Moth from various sites within Strathspey between 20th April and 12th May.

**Narrow-bordered Bee Hawk-moth** either had a very good year or recorders are getting better at finding them and perhaps being more aware of the species. There were thirty five records of adults between 7th May and 24th June from a widespread selection of sites throughout Strathspey, the Strathfarrar/Cannich area, the Kiltarlity/Aigas area, just south of Dallas and Nairn.

**Pine-tree Lappet** continues to be monitored by Butterfly Conservation and Forestry Commission Scotland with records in from two known sites at Kiltarlity and Beauly, there are more records to come but it appears to be stable within its known range.

There were two records for **Welsh Clearwing** both in Glen Moriston by Jane Bowman and both on 22nd June, one at Ceannacroic and one at Dundreggan both from known sites.

**Northern Dart**, no records received to date.

**Dark Bordered Beauty**, Pete Moore hosted a ‘Moth Mania’ event at RSPB Insh marshes on 26th July specifically targeting Dark Bordered Beauty. This was a well attended event and everyone got to see this scarce resident breeder. A total of five males were trapped the evening before the event, in addition to these there were a further 11 records with 44 Dark Bordered Beauty found at RSPB Insh Marshes during the week leading up to the event. The species hangs on at the Moray site with two males being trapped on the single night they were looked for.
Cousin German, just three records so far, all in the last week of July from Insh Marshes and Glen Feshie.

Portland Moth, just a single record this year for one trapped by Nick Littlewood on Findhorn Dunes at the end of August.

Under-recorded squares continue to be targeted with steady progress being made. Should anyone wish to take on a square within Moray or East Inverness-shire then please contact me and I shall be more than happy to provide a list within your chosen area.

(See the article about Under-recorded areas starting on page 21 for a list of 10km squares with 0 to 100 species recorded.)

Update on the Wider Countryside Butterfly Survey in the Highland Branch area By Ewan Munro

Many thanks to everybody who took part in last year's Wider Countryside Butterfly Survey (WCBS): hopefully you enjoyed the experience, saw a few butterflies, and will take part again this year!

Unfortunately, 2014 was, overall, a poor year for WCBS coverage in the Highlands and Islands. Despite the excellent summer weather, only nine squares were surveyed. This compares badly with the 17 squares visited in 2013.

(Please note that the above figures do not include WCBS surveys done in Breeding Bird Survey squares – these are organised by the British Trust for Ornithology, and I have not received the data from them in time for publication. Likewise, I do not yet have information on the numbers and species of butterflies recorded last year.)

Let’s see if we can have a better performance in 2015! Taking part involves making just two visits each year to a 1 kilometre square, walking two transects across it, and recording all butterflies within 5 metres. Recording moths and dragonflies is also encouraged if you have the skills. For further information, and to be assigned a square, please get in touch with me at wcbs@highland-butterflies.org.uk.
Chequered Skipper Survey 2014 Results
By Tom Prescott

Originally the Chequered Skipper survey was scheduled to run for a single year in 2012. However, due to the great interest and exciting results it continued in 2013 and then again last year, 2014, its third and final year. Fortunately, this was justified as interest in the survey did not diminish in 2014 despite being the third year of the survey.

Throughout the three years the aim of the survey remained the same, to test predictions based on computer modelling that the iconic, rare and beautiful Chequered Skipper was under-recorded by as much as 80% at a 1km resolution. This was to be achieved by encouraging recorders to look for the butterfly in the top 100 1km squares that were predicted, by the modelling, to be the most suitable for the butterfly in Scotland, but where it had not previously been recorded.

Over the three years 57 of the top 100 1km squares were visited with the butterfly being recorded in just over half of them, 32 (56%) but not in 25 and thus leaving 43 squares unsurveyed. Furthermore, the butterfly was also recorded over the three years in 72 additional new 1km squares where it had never previously been recorded, giving a total of 104 new 1km squares. This has increased the known range of the butterfly at a 1km resolution by almost 42%, a remarkable result for what was formally thought to be a very scarce and localised species.

Table 1 below summarises the annual totals, whilst Map 1 shows the distribution of the new 1km squares (green squares) against the former distribution of the butterfly prior to the survey in 2011 (yellow dots).

The map clearly shows that the majority of new 1km squares are infilling within the butterfly’s known range, whilst clusters of records indicate successful targeted recording in these locations usually by individual recorders. However, there are a few minor range extensions particularly at the very south of the butterfly’s range and the far north–west corner, but the most obvious is along the Ardnamurchan peninsula with Chequered Skipper being recorded for the first time to the west of Salen, in three new 1km squares near Glenborrodale and a single sighting much further to the west, near Sonachan.
Table 1: Summary totals over the three years of the survey

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>No. of 1km target squares where CS was recorded</th>
<th>No. of 1km target squares surveyed but CS was not recorded</th>
<th>Other new 1km squares where CS was recorded</th>
<th>Total no. of new squares</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>25*</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>104</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*This column does not add up due to repeat visits to the same squares.

Map 1: Distribution of the new 1km squares where Chequered Skipper was found (green squares) against former distribution of the butterfly prior to the start of the survey in 2011 (yellow dots).

More detailed results from the survey, including a list of the new targeted and other 1km squares where Chequered Skipper was recorded, as well as the unsurveyed squares, will soon be available on the branch website in case anyone wants to search for Chequered Skipper in 2015 and beyond. Finally
a big thank you to everyone who has taken part in the survey and help put Chequered Skipper on the map.

Members Day Quiz – Revision is Futile!
By Tom Prescott

For those of you who have not made it down to Perth for Butterfly Conservation’s Annual Members’ Day then you will have missed out on a very enjoyable and entertaining day, packed full of enthusiastic talks from knowledgeable speakers and hear news about sightings, events and some of the projects that BC is undertaking in Scotland. It is also a great opportunity to catch up with friends and make new ones.

One part of the day that has become a tradition is the branch quiz, so much so that 2014 was the tenth edition. Teams of up to six do battle testing and pushing their knowledge of lepidoptera to the limit, and often beyond, in order to win the much coveted and priceless Kindrogan Cup, so called as it was awarded for the very first time when the meeting was held in Kindrogan in 2005. Highland Branch were the first winners and went on to win it again in 2007 and 2012.

Jimmy McKellar being presented with the Kindrogan Cup in 2005
Highland Branch’s winning team in 2007 Above & 2012 Below
Our esteemed current branch chair thought that it would be a good idea to share some of the questions with Highland members via Chequered Skipper. However, I’m sure this is just a ploy to help the branch return to winning ways in 2015, by using it as a recruitment exercise. So if you are able to answer all or most of this selection he will be pleased to hear from you. If you can’t then don’t worry it is probably not something to boast about!

1: How do you say butterfly in Esperanto?

2: What did the Very Hungry Caterpillar eat on Thursday?

3: Identify this famous moth-er Agnesë Gonxhe Bojaxhiu?

Identify the following butterflies and moths

4:

5: I’d recommend this one!
6:

7: Why did the caterpillar eat the candle?

8: Why don’t butterflies put their money in a bank?

9: Which caterpillar won the silkworm race?

10: A Six-spot Burnet goes to the doctor and asks “Will this ointment clear up my spots?” – What is the doctor’s response?

Answers are on page 87

Silverdale, 23 - 26th May 2014
By Mark Wynn

A small group of Highland Branch members had a most successful weekend away in Silverdale, South Cumbria.

On their first day the Chairman of the Cumbria Branch very kindly took us to the best places to discover butterflies & moths in this area of outstanding natural beauty. Each site visited exhibited a very different precious landscape & he could have recommended another 10!!! sites. However, that was enough to keep our group busy. The good news was that they’re all very close. No long drives & all very accessible. Some we could easily ‘self-guide’. However, we were immensely grateful for his tips at other sites.

The following day we went to a very favourable site in search of Duke of Burgundy – & were successful in seeing this very attractive wee insect, together with Dingy Skipper. For some the highlight was observing a spectacular long horn moth, Nemophora degeerella. The male was
especially stunning. After their evening meal the group were given a Powerpoint presentation on the re-establishment of colonies of Marsh Fritillary in Cumbria. Finishing up with some breath-taking magic!!!

The following day the Highland Branch group joined the Cumbria Branch for their AGM & various talks. However, the first event was the opening of moth traps & some real delights were to be observed. Moreover, as part of the day we walked a number of a farmer’s fields where in the sunshine literally dozens of Marsh Fritillaries were freshly emerging. Awesome & some were lucky to see Forester moths too.

Later that same day we were taken to a brown field site – wind factory – & got to see Small Blues & Wall Browns, amongst other butterflies.

Our last day we explored a site with panoramic views shown to us on that first afternoon. Here, Fritillaries were flitting about. The consensus was they were Small Pearl-bordered Fritillaries. Then we saw another butterfly enthusiast’s photo taken minutes earlier which was of a Pearl-bordered Fritillary. Ahhhhh well. A Green Hairstreak was spotted as well as a small number of female Brimstone butterflies & at least one male.
All in all a wonderful sojourn & thanks to the party’s convivial company.

Species list and photos for this article by Ewan Munro.

**MARSH FRITILLARY**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Total Butterfly List</strong></th>
<th><strong>Total Moth List</strong></th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Brimstone</td>
<td><em>Adela cuprella</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Common Blue</td>
<td>Brimstone Moth</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dingy Skipper</td>
<td>Brindled Pug</td>
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<tr>
<td>Duke of Burgundy</td>
<td>Brown Silver-line</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Green Hairstreak</td>
<td>Cinnabar</td>
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<tr>
<td>Green-veined White</td>
<td>Clouded Silver</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large White</td>
<td><em>Coleophora serratella</em> (larval case)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marsh Fritillary</td>
<td>Common Carpet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orange-tip</td>
<td><em>Crambus lathoniiellus</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peacock</td>
<td>Cream Wave</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small Blue</td>
<td>Drinker (caterpillar)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small Heath</td>
<td>Forester</td>
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<tr>
<td>Small Pearl-bordered Fritillary</td>
<td>Little Emerald</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small Tortoiseshell</td>
<td>Mother Shipton</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small White</td>
<td><em>Nemophora degeerella</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speckled Wood</td>
<td><em>Pyrausta cingularis</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wall</td>
<td><em>Pyrausta ostrinalis</em></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Silver Y</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Silver-ground Carpet</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Small Phoenix</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Small White Wave</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Speckled Yellow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>White Ermine</td>
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</table>
Butterflies of the Highlands Leaflet - Reprint

The original version of this very popular leaflet was published in 2007 and featured a Scotch Argus on the cover, however, stocks are currently exhausted. We also now have a far better picture of the flight periods and distributions of Highland’s butterflies mainly due to the “Atlas of Butterflies in Highland and Moray”, published by the branch in 2008. To reflect this the leaflet has been updated and reprinted. It also includes an additional species, the Comma, as it can now rightfully claim to be a Highland butterfly.

Copies of the leaflet will be available at the Branch AGM, as well as at our field trips. It is also available electronically as a pdf file. Contact Tom Prescott if you would like to be sent a copy. (Email: tprescott@butterfly-conservation.org Tel: 01540 661469).

BC Highland Branch Field trips and events – 2015

These are listed below in chronological order. There will be additional events, the details of which had not been finalised before this newsletter went to print. These events will be advertised on the BC Highland Branch
website and e-mailed to those members for whom we have an e-mail address. Apologies to those who do not have ready access to a computer.

If you are not on our e-mail list and would like to be added, please contact Audrey Turner, Branch Membership Secretary, unicorn64@btinternet.com
If you have any ideas for future field trips or other events please contact Pete Moore, Events Organiser, theconfused@btinternet.com. If you would like a field trip to take place in your local area, get in touch and we’ll see what we can organise.

Please note that these events are open to both BC members and non-members.

**Car sharing.** For environmental and social reasons it would be good if people car shared when attending events. If you are travelling by car and happy to give someone else a lift or if you would like a lift to an event, please contact the event leader beforehand and they will try to match people up.

### 2015 events at a glance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event Description</th>
<th>Page</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sat March 21 or Sun 22</td>
<td>Glen Orrin near Muir of Ord: Scrub bashing work party. See Page 69</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sat May 2 or Sat 9</td>
<td>Kiltarlity: Moth trapping for Barred Tooth-striped. See Page 69</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Sat May 16 &amp; Sun 17</td>
<td>Various locations: Cairngorms National Park Nature Festival. See Page 70</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Sun May 17</td>
<td>Glen Orrin, near Muir of Ord: Field trip for Pearl-bordered Fritillary. See Page 70</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sat May 23</td>
<td>Glen Marksie, near Contin: Field trip for Pearl-bordered and Small Pearl-bordered Fritillaries. See Page 71</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sat May 30</td>
<td>Loch Arkaig: Allt Mhuic BC nature reserve Family Fun Day. See Page 72</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Sat May 30 or Sun 31  Polmaily, near Drumnadrochit: Field trip for Pearl-bordered Fritillary and Dingy Skipper.  See Page 72

Sun May 31  Glen Nevis, Fort William: Moth and butterfly surveying field trip with a focus on Chequered Skipper and Pearl-bordered Fritillary.  See Page 73

Fri June 19 & Sat 20  Kiltarlity: Moth trapping for Pine-tree Lappet.  See Page 73

Sat June 20  Dundreggan, Glen Moriston: Moth trapping & butterfly field trip. Moth targets are Bilberry Pug, Welsh Clearwing & Rannoch Looper.  See Page 74

One day between Thursday July 2 and Tuesday 7  Dalwhinnie: Field trip for Mountain Ringlet.  See Page 75

Sat July 11 or Sun 12  Rosemarkie: Field trip for Northern Brown Argus.  See Page 76

Sat July 18  Grantown on Spey: Field trip for Northern Brown Argus.  See Page 77

Friday July 24 to Sunday 26 or Fri Aug 1 to Sun 3  Silverdale, Cumbria. Long weekend away for High Brown Fritillary.  See Page 78

Sat Aug 1 or Sun 2  Glenborrodale, Ardnamurchan: Field trip for Purple Hairstreak.  See Page 78

Sun Aug 2 or Mon 3  Glenborrodale, Ardnamurchan: Moth trapping.  See Page 79

Sat Sept 12  Polmaily, near Drumnadrochit: Scrub-bashing work party.  See Page 80
GLEN ORRIN SCRUB CLEARANCE WORK PARTY

Organiser: BC Highland Branch

Target Species: To benefit Pearl-bordered Fritillary

Date: Either Saturday 21 March or Sunday 22 March, date to be decided nearer the time dependent on weather forecast.

Time: 10.30am

Meeting place: Car park at NH474514 (OS sheet 26 – Inverness & Loch Ness). From Marybank on the A832 take the minor road south for 1.5 miles to Aultgowrie. On the south side of the bridge turn west for 200 yards to a small car park for visitors.

Description: A work party to cut back and clear trackside vegetation to improve the habitat for Pearl-bordered Fritillary.

Approx duration: 5 or 6 hours but you are welcome to join in and leave whenever you want. Every little helps so if you only do an hour that will still be very useful.

What’s needed: Bring lunch and wear old clothes. If you have them bring work gloves, secateurs, bow-saws and loppers. If you don’t have them they will be provided.

Leader name: Margaret Currie
Leader contact details: Tel 01349 877223
email: moths.vc106@btinternet.com

KILTARLITY MOTHS

Organiser: BC Highland Branch

Target Species: Barred Tooth-striped – a very rare and localised species associated with ash trees.

Date: Either Saturday 2 May or Saturday 9 May, date to be decided nearer the time dependent on weather forecast.
Time: 10am

Meeting place: Kiltarlity Garden Centre NH502401 (OS sheet 26 Inverness & Loch Ness). Turn off A833 for Kiltarlity village at Brockies Lodge Hotel (NH515419). At end of Kiltarlity village, turn left at Post Office Brae and follow signs to Garden Centre. Park in the Garden Centre car park. Follow signs to moth trapping location in the Garden Centre.

Description: Moth traps will be set on Friday evening in the Garden Centre and other likely areas in the vicinity for Barred Tooth-striped. All traps will be brought into the Garden Centre on Saturday morning.

Approx duration: 3 hours.

Any other information: Tea and coffee will be provided

Leader name: Malcolm Harvey
Leader contact details: Address: Clach Bhan, Loaneckheim, Kiltarlity, Beauly, Inverness-shire, IV4 7JQ. Tel. 01463 741328
email: malcolmi.harvey@btinternet.com

CAIRNGORMS NATIONAL PARK NATURE FESTIVAL


GLEN ORRIN

Organiser: BC Highland Branch

Target Species: Pearl-bordered Fritillary

Date: Sunday 17th May

Time: 10:30 am

Meeting place: Car park at NH474514 (OS sheet 26 – Inverness & Loch Ness). From Marybank on the A832 take the minor road south for 1.5 miles
to Aultgowrie. On the south side of the bridge turn west for 200 yards to a small car park for visitors.

**Description:** We have been counting the Pearl-bordered Fritillaries here every year since they were first found in 2009. This year, after your fantastic scrub clearing efforts we would like you to join us. There is a short uphill section to get onto the track, followed by a gentle climb to the start of the forestry. Hopefully good numbers of PBF to be seen plus day flying moths.

**Approx duration:** 4 hours depending on weather.

**What’s needed:** Lunch, boots and waterproofs.

**Any other information:** We have always called this area “tick hill”, so be warned.

**Leader name:** Margaret Currie  
**Leader contact details:** Tel 01349 877223  
**email:** moths.vc106@btinternet.com

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**GLENMARKSIE**

**Organiser:** BC Highland Branch

**Target Species:** Pearl-bordered and Small Pearl-bordered Fritillaries

**Date:** Saturday 23rd May 2015

**Time:** 10:30 am

**Meeting place:** Turn off A835 about 1km NW of Contin, signposted Loch Achilty. Single track road for approx. 4 miles to Luichart Power Station. Park just beyond in vicinity of bridge. Grid ref NH393571, OS sheet 26 (Inverness & Loch Ness). There are two small car parks further on which we may be able to access.

**Description:** A walk mostly on tracks with some short steep uphill sections. Through woodland to the open hillside where both PB and Small PB Fritillary have been recorded. The open area is excellent for day flying moths.
moths such as Mother Shipton, while the ponds lower down have several species of dragonfly.

**Approx duration:** 4-5 hours depending on weather.

**What’s needed:** Suitable footwear as we will be going onto the hillside. Lunch.

**Any other information:** For anyone who cannot walk far it would be possible to drive up to the dam, (Mon-Sat only), but there is still a steep section of track to walk beyond the dam. If undertaken the complete circuit is approximately 3 miles.

**Leader name:** Margaret Currie
**Leader contact details:** Tel 01349 877223
**email:** moths.vc106@btinternet.com

### ALLT MHUIC BC RESERVE FAMILY FUN DAY

Sat May 30. Probably 11am to 3pm. Details yet to be finalised but there will be plenty of games and activities for the whole family, along with guided walks etc. See Forestry Commission Scotland website for details nearer the time.  [http://scotland.forestry.gov.uk/](http://scotland.forestry.gov.uk/)

### POLMAILY BUTTERFLY WALK, NEAR DRUMNADROCHIT

**Organiser:** BC Highland & Islands Branch

**Target Species:** Pearl-bordered Fritillary and Dingy Skipper

**Date:** Saturday May 30 or Sunday May 31

**Time:** 10.30

**Meeting place:** The end of the forest track into Polmaily, about 2 miles west of Drumnadrochit on the A831 towards Cannich. Grid ref NH 484304 (OS sheet 26 – Inverness and Loch Ness)

**Description:** A visit to see the rewards of previous habitat management undertaken by members of Highland branch.

**Approx duration:** Up to 4 hours
What’s needed:  Bring a packed lunch

Any other information:  Whether the trip will be run on the Saturday or the Sunday will be decided nearer the time, dependent on the weather forecast. Please phone Mark a few days beforehand for the final decision.

Leader name:  Mark Wynn (Branch Chairman)
Leader contact details:  01463 729977
email:  markwynn@highland-butterflies.org.uk

CITIZEN SCIENCE MOTH TRAPPING AND BUTTERFLY SURVEYING – GLEN NEVIS

Organiser:  Nevis Partnership & Butterfly Conservation Scotland

Date:  Sunday 31 May

Time:  10.30am

Meeting place:  Woollen Mill car park at the entrance to Glen Nevis, Fort William. Grid ref NN 113742 (OS map 41 – Ben Nevis)

Description:  Learn about surveying for moths, butterflies and the plants that they feed on with a focus on Chequered Skipper and Pearl-bordered Fritillary.

Approx duration:  Until lunchtime

What’s needed:  Sensible footwear, warm clothes and a sense of humour!

Leader name:  Tom Prescott
Leader contact details:  Tel: 01540 661469. Mob: 07979 785665.
email:  tprescott@butterfly-conservation.org

KILTARLITY AREA PINE-TREE LAPPET MOTH SURVEY

Date:  Friday June 19 and Saturday June 20

Time:  8.30pm till late

Description: Further targeted trapping to ascertain the status and distribution of Pine-tree Lappet moth.

What’s needed: Bring your own moth traps if you have them.

Any other information: Depending on the number of people, traps and generators, we will split into groups to trap as many different local sites as possible.
To help effective co-ordination of the survey please inform Tom Prescott before-hand if you plan to attend.
If you cannot attend but would like to look for this moth at another time during its flight period (latter half of June to mid- July), please also get in touch with Tom who will help arrange sites and access permissions.

Leader name: Tom Prescott
Leader contact details: Tel: 01540 661469. Mob: 07979 785665
email: tprescott@butterfly-conservation.org

DUNDREGGAN FOREST (TREES FOR LIFE), GLEN MORISTON, BUTTERFLIES AND MOTHS

Organiser: Butterfly Conservation Highland Branch & Trees for Life

Target Species: Bilberry Pug, Welsh Clearwing, Rannoch Looper.

Date: Sat 20 June or Sun 21 June

Time: 10:00 am
Meeting place: Dundreggan Forest public car park. OS Grid Ref: NH332146 (OS sheet 34 – Fort Augustus).

Description: Meet at the car park. We will walk up to the lodge (approx 300m) to look through moth traps that have been set out at several sites around the forest area the night before. Bilberry Pug was discovered nearby last year at only the third Scottish site so is one species that we are hoping to see. After that, in the company of Doug Gilbert the Dundreggan Forest Operations Manager, we will look for butterflies and day flying moths plus
anything else of interest. Welsh Clearwing has regularly been recorded at Dundreggan and we will attempt to find these.

**Approx duration:** 3 to 4 hours

**What’s needed:** Suitable footwear and clothing for variable weather, insect repellent, packed lunch, plenty of sunshine.

**Any other information:** In the event of particularly bad weather being forecast we may postpone the event to the following day, therefore if you are intending to come along please make contact a couple of days beforehand to confirm the final date.

**Leader name:** Mike Taylor  
**Leader contact details:** Tel: 01479 831060, Mobile: 07753 607287,  
**email:** mst.taylor@btinternet.com  
**Trees for Life contact:** Doug Gilbert  
**Trees for Life contact details:** Office: 01320 340242

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**DALWHINNIE FOR MOUNTAIN RINGLET**

**Organiser:** BC Highland Branch

**Target Species:** Mountain Ringlet

**Date:** One day between Thursday 2 July and Tuesday 7 July, date to be decided nearer the time dependant on weather forecast.

**Time:** 10.30am

**Meeting place:** Lay-by at the junction of the A889 and the Glen Truim minor road just north of Dalwhinnie. Grid ref NN 640859 (OS sheet 42 – Glen Garry).

**Description:** A walk onto the lower slopes of Meall Liath. The same trip in 2014 was successful in seeing Mountain Ringlet.

**Approx duration:** Into the afternoon

**What’s needed:** Stout footwear, waterproofs (just in case) and a packed lunch/refreshments.
Any other information: The trip will run on one day between the Thursday and the Tuesday depending on the best weather forecast. So you will need to phone Mark a couple of days before the Thursday to find out which day he’s going for.

Leader name: Mark Wynn
Leader contact details: 01463 729977
email: markwynn@highland-butterflies.org.uk

ROSEMARKIE CLIFFS, BLACK ISLE

Organiser: BC Highland Branch

Target Species: Northern Brown Argus and Grayling

Date: Sat July 11 or Sunday July 12, date to be decided nearer the time based on weather forecast.

Time: 10.30am

Meeting place: Parking is available at the northern end of the sea-front road in Rosemarkie. Grid ref NH 738577 (OS sheet 27 – Nairn & Forres)

Description: We will walk north along the shore-line cliffs. When we did this trip in 2014 we saw an amazing twelve species of butterfly, including the target species.

Approx duration: Approx 5 hours, until mid-afternoon.

What’s needed: Stout footwear and a packed lunch.

Any other information: The trip will take place either on the Saturday or the Sunday, dependant on weather forecast. Therefore you must contact Mark a few days before the weekend to find out which day it’s going to be.

Leader name: Mark Wynn
Leader contact details: 01463 729977
email: markwynn@highland-butterflies.org.uk
BUTTERFLIES IN GRANTOWN-ON-SPEY

Organiser: BC Highland Branch

Target Species: Northern Brown Argus, Ringlet, Dark Green Fritillary & any day flying moths

Date: Saturday 18th July 2015

Time: 10.30am

Meeting place: A layby on a minor road just south-east of Grantown-on-Spey at the south end of the Old Spey Bridge, grid ref NJ039262. There is more parking at the end of this minor road at NJ041262. To get here head out of Grantown on the A95 towards Cromdale and cross the Spey Bridge. After a couple of hundred metres there is a turn-off on the right signposted for Nethybridge. Don’t take this road but take the next turning on the left part-way around a bend. Follow this road when it curves to the right and the meeting place is about 150 metres further on.

Description: There is an interesting meadow just across the Old Spey Bridge with a variety of wild flowers along the edge of it beside the Spey. We can also walk back along the minor road where there are a couple of areas which are home to the Northern Brown Argus. Depending on the weather and enthusiasm of the party, it would also be possible to walk a short distance south along the Speyside Way to where I’ve seen Six-spot Burnet previously.

Approx duration: 3 to 4 hours, maybe longer.

What’s needed: Packed lunch, stout footwear

Any other information: There are also a couple of other interesting sites nearby which could be visited if time permits.

Leader name: Audrey Turner
Leader contact details: Mobile: 07450 548862 Home: 01479 811517 email: unicorn64@btinternet.com
SILVERDALE, CUMBRIA

Organiser: BC Highland Branch

Target Species: High Brown Fritillary

Date: Either Friday 24 July to Sunday 26 July OR Friday 31 July to Sunday 2 August

Description: This is a long weekend trip leaving early Friday morning and returning late on the Sunday. Attendees will stay at Challan Hall B&B (see http://challanhall.co.uk) and visit several sites around the Silverdale area. Last year’s trip, which ran earlier in the season to see Duke of Burgundy, was a great success and so it was decided to run it again this year but later in the season to see different species of butterflies and moths. This is a beautiful area and well known for its wildlife. Up to 29 butterfly species per day can be seen at this time of year.

In order to book the accommodation, Mark needs to know how much interest there is in this trip by the time of the Highland Branch AGM on April 11. If you are interested in going or need more information please contact Mark as below.

Leader name: Mark Wynn
Leader contact details: Tel: 01463 729977
email: markwynn@highland-butterflies.org.uk

PURPLE HAIRSTREAK AT GLENBORRODALE, ARDNAMURCHAN

Organiser: BC Highland Branch

Target Species: Purple Hairstreak
Date: Sat Aug 1 or Sun Aug 2, date to be decided nearer the time based on weather forecast

Time: 3pm

Meeting place: RSPB Glenborrodale reserve car park (grid ref NM 601609 OS sheet 40 – Loch Shiel), one mile west of Glenborrodale on the B8007 Salen to Kilchoan road.
**Description:** We will walk through the reserve looking for butterflies (e.g. Speckled Wood, Dark Green Fritillary and Scotch Argus) and anything else of interest, such as Golden-ringed Dragonflies. Then, late afternoon/early evening we hope to see Purple Hairstreak butterflies as they habitually gather in the tops of oak trees.

**Approx duration:** 4 - 4½ hours, finishing around 7 to 7.30pm

**What’s needed:** BINOCULARS, essential for looking into the treetops for Purple Hairstreaks. Midge repellent. Welly boots are recommended because the path can be wet and muddy even in the summer. For the Purple Hairstreak we need a sunny evening as well as patience and a good eye.

**Any other information:** Purple Hairstreaks were only discovered in Highland in 2003 though because of their elusive nature, they may well have been previously overlooked. They are currently confined to the oakwoods of Ardnamurchan and Morvern. Do not expect great views. Even if the weather is good i.e. sunny, their habit is to flutter around high up in the treetops and they rarely descend to lower levels. Remember to contact Liz a couple of days before the weekend to find out which day the event is going to be run. A moth trapping event is scheduled for the following morning – see details below.

**Leader name:** Liz Macdonald  
**Leader contact details:** 01972 500700 or 07543 545276.  
**email:** liz@adelphidistillery.com

**MOThS AT RSPB GLENBORRODALE, ARDNAMURCHAN**

**Organiser:** BC Highland Branch

**Target Species:** Whatever is there.

**Date:** Sunday Aug 2 or Monday Aug 3 (Bank Holiday)

**Time:** 10am
**Meeting place:** RSPB Glenborrodale reserve car park (grid ref NM 601609 OS sheet 40 – Loch Shiel), one mile west of Glenborrodale on the B8007 Salen to Kilchoan road.

**Description:** A look through moth traps run the night before. When we moth trapped here in June 2014 we recorded 76 moth species (58 macro-moths and 18 micro-moths).

**Approx. duration:** Up to lunchtime

**What’s needed:** Midge repellent!

**Any other information:** The exact date of this event will be decided nearer the time because it will tie in with the Purple Hairstreak field trip (details above) which is weather dependant.

**Leader name:** Pete Moore  
**Leader contact details:** 01479 872261 or 07866 578079  
**email:** theconfused@btinternet.com

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**POLMAILY WORK PARTY, NEAR DRUMNADROCHIT**

**Organiser:** BC Highland Branch

**Date:** Saturday 12 Sept

**Time:** 10.30am until about 4pm

**Meeting place:** The end of the forest track into Polmaily, about 2 miles west of Drumnadrochit on the A831 towards Cannich. Grid ref NH 484304 (OS sheet 26 – Inverness and Loch Ness)

**Description:** Another session of cutting back and clearing trackside vegetation to improve the habitat for Pearl-bordered Fritillary and Dingy Skipper.

**Approx duration:** 5 or 6 hours but you are welcome to join in and leave whenever you want. Every little helps so if you only do an hour that will still be very useful.
**What’s needed:** Bring lunch and wear old clothes. If you have them bring work gloves, secateurs, bow-saws and loppers. If you don’t have them they will be provided.

**Any other information:** This will be the fifth Polmairy work party. Previous ones were good fun, well attended and with plenty of cake!

**Leader name:** Tom Prescott  
**Leader contact details:** Tel: 01540 661469. Mob: 07979 785665.  
**email:** tprescott@butterfly-conservation.org

## Branch Committee

- **Chairman**  
  Mark Wynn  
  Email: markwynn@highland-butterflies.org.uk

- **Membership Secretary**  
  Audrey Turner  
  Email: unicorn64@btinternet.com

- **Minute Secretary**  
  Barbara Brodie

- **Treasurer**  
  Audrey Turner  
  Email: unicorn64@btinternet.com

- **Events Organiser**  
  Pete Moore  
  Email: theconfused@btinternet.com

- **Committee Members**  
  Malcolm Harvey  
  Mike Taylor  
  Ewan Munro WCBS
Highland Branch WCBS Champion

Ewan Munro
Email: wcbs@highland-butterflies.org.uk

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Shetland Amenity Trust,
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Email: taib@mallorcanet.net  Tel 01595 760250
## Resident and regular migrant Butterfly species in Highland and Moray

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Species Name</th>
<th>Scientific Name</th>
<th>UK BAP Status</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chequered Skipper</td>
<td><em>Carterocephalus palaemon</em></td>
<td>Priority species</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dingy Skipper</td>
<td><em>Erynnis tages</em></td>
<td>Priority species</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large White</td>
<td><em>Pieris brassicae</em></td>
<td>Not listed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small White</td>
<td><em>Pieris rapae</em></td>
<td>Not listed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Green-veined White</td>
<td><em>Pieris napi</em></td>
<td>Not listed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orange Tip</td>
<td><em>Anthocharis cardamines</em></td>
<td>Not listed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Green Hairstreak</td>
<td><em>Callophrys rubi</em></td>
<td>Not listed</td>
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<tr>
<td>Purple Hairstreak</td>
<td><em>Neozephyrus quercus</em></td>
<td>Not listed</td>
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<tr>
<td>Small Copper</td>
<td><em>Lycaenias phlaeas</em></td>
<td>Not listed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small Blue</td>
<td><em>Cupido minimus</em></td>
<td>Priority species</td>
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<tr>
<td>Northern Brown Argus</td>
<td><em>Plebeius artaxerxes</em></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Common Blue</td>
<td><em>Polyommatis icarus</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>Red Admiral</td>
<td><em>Vanessa atalanta</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>Painted Lady</td>
<td><em>Vanessa cardui</em></td>
<td>Not assessed</td>
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<tr>
<td>Small Tortoiseshell</td>
<td><em>Aglais urticae</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>Peacock</td>
<td><em>Inachis io</em></td>
<td>Not listed</td>
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<tr>
<td>Small Pearl-bordered Fritillary</td>
<td><em>Boloria selene</em></td>
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<td>Pearl-bordered Fritillary</td>
<td><em>Boloria euphrosyne</em></td>
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<td><em>Argynnis aglaja</em></td>
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<td>Marsh Fritillary</td>
<td><em>Euphydrias aurinia</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>Speckled Wood</td>
<td><em>Pararge aegeria</em></td>
<td>Not listed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mountain Ringlet</td>
<td><em>Erebia epiphron</em></td>
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<td>Scotch Argus</td>
<td><em>Erebia aethiops</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>Grayling</td>
<td><em>Hipparchia semele</em></td>
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<td><em>Maniola jurtina</em></td>
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<td>Ringlet</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large Heath</td>
<td><em>Coenonympha tullia</em></td>
<td>Priority species</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Where to find more information

For up to date sightings and information please visit our “In Your Area” page on the main Butterfly Conservation website;


For more information about Butterflies and Moths in the Highlands, Islands and Moray please visit our website,

http://www.highland-butterflies.org.uk

or visit our Facebook page, Butterfly Conservation – Highland Branch;

https://www.facebook.com/ButterflyConservationHighlandsIslands

Contact us

To contact Highland Branch with contributions for “Latest news”, or on any matter relating to Butterflies and Moths in our area, please send an email to;

webmaster@highland-butterflies.org.uk

You can also contact any of the committee members, names and contact details are available on the Branch Committee page, page 77.

Acknowledgements

This publication wouldn’t be possible without contributions from all those who supplied articles and photographs, so a huge thank you to all of those people.
Thanks also go to our printers;
“For the Right Reasons”,
60 Grant Street,
Inverness,
IV3 8BS
fortherightreasons@rocketmail.com

Quiz Answers from page 62 - 63

1: Papilio
2: 4 Strawberries
3: Mother Teresa
4: Dingy Skipper
5: Orange-tip
6: Angle Shades
7: Because it wanted a light snack
8: Because they have antennae.......................... (Because they haven’t any)
9: None of them won as they ended up in a tie
10: I never make any rash promises

Edited by Audrey Turner, all photos are by the authors of the articles they appear in unless otherwise indicated. Thanks to Malcolm Harvey, Ewan Munro and Hilary Swift for proofreading.
Your lasting legacy

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;

Tel: 01273 453313 or email: hcorrigan@butterfly-conservation.org or write to her at:
Butterfly Conservation,
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