

Archive Page

Sightings and news from January to June 2004

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This page contains sightings details of all the butterflies and moths reported to the [Sightings page](#) between January and June 2004.

Note: These pages have been copied from the original sightings page and some links will no longer work. All images of butterflies or moths have been removed, but most can be found in the [Photo House](#)

JUNE 2004

Wed 30th June - I went down **Ermine Street** today, no Emperors I am afraid but I did see a White Letter Hairstreak in **Goose Green Car Park**, but I could not get a picture. Also saw along Ermine St, Large Skippers, **White Admiral**, Meadow Browns and lots of Ringlets - Sandra Standbridge

Bricket Wood transect in dry and reasonably warm conditions with periodic sunshine but a stiff SW breeze: 42 butterflies of 13 species including one **White Admiral** (but more elsewhere on the site), three Purple Hairstreaks all put up from ground level possibly having emerged this morning (and perhaps pointing towards a good year to come for this species), the three common Skipper species including a freshly-emerged **Essex** with wings not yet expanded, two Ringlets (which have been recolonising the site since 2002 having been absent during the 1990s) at widely separated locations, two Marbled Whites, one male Brimstone and a Red Admiral.

At the edge of the site was a male *Oedemera nobilis*, a beetle which is spreading in south Herts and is well worth looking out for. The males are distinctive, as they have swollen hind femora and elytra which do not wholly cover the abdomen; they are bright green and about nine millimetres in length (there is an illustration in the Collins Pocket Guide to Insects). Any records should be sent to the HNHS Coleoptera recorder Trevor James.

On Sandra Standbridge's moth photos: that in the lower right picture is the common Tortricid *Agapeta hamana*, the larvae of which feed in the roots of thistles. The moth in the upper right is heavily worn (note the scales missing on the thorax) but appears to be a Pyralid. In the lower centre is a Pyralid of the sub-family Crambinae (a 'grass moth') (possibly *Crambus pascuella*) but again a more precise ID is not really possible - Colin Everett

Tues 29th June - There was a **Marbled White today** at the **Minet Country Park**, Springfield Road, Hayes (Middlesex). This is the first record for the site, which I, and others have been visiting for several years - Colin Conroy

The first **Purple Emperors** were seen in **Hertfordshire today**, 1 male was seen on territory and perched in view for 20 minutes. Unfortunately increasing cloud cover this afternoon reduced potential activity. At another site a male was disturbed by a hornet during cloudy weather - Liz Goodyear & Andrew Middleton (confirmed reports have also come from Surrey, Upper Thames and Kent where I received this message with photos which I shall forward to BC Kent "*Thought you might like to know that a Purple Emperor, male, visited my garden, near Ide Hill, Kent, this afternoon. It flew around and settled in the patio area several times. It had no problem with my taking photo's, even from two inches away. Magic. First time that I've seen one. I have attached four photo's, in which it was drinking moisture from the moss that is in between the bricks on the patio*")

I went over the **Cornmill Meadow** and saw, mating Small Skippers, Large Skippers, Meadow Browns, Small Tortoiseshell, 2 Commas, mating Burnet Moths and 2 unidentified moths of same species (*Shaded Broadbars*) - Sandra Standbridge

News from **Sunday**, during Dragonfly Atlas work, I recorded 1 Meadow Brown and 1 Speckled

Wood at **Batchworth Heath**, 8 Meadow Brown at Moor Park Golf Club, 1 Large Skipper, 1 Red Admiral, 2 Small Tortoiseshell, 1 Comma and 1 Brimstone at **Hampermill Lake** and 2 Speckled Wood at **Cassiobury Park** - Alan Reynolds

Mon 28th June - I found this moth outside my flat in **Stevenage 21st June** - Steven Penn (see below *Buff Ermine*)

Broxbourne Wood NR, today, at least **10 White Admiral** some looking very fresh as well as a tatty aberrant. Also in the area Large Skipper, Small Skipper, Comma, Speckled Wood, 2 Common Blue, Red Admiral, Ringlet & Meadow Brown but no Purple Emperor yet - Liz Goodyear, Andrew Middleton with Nigel Agar (however Purple Emperor were flying in Hampshire yesterday!)

News from **25th, Telegraph Hill** Marbled White, Large and Small Skippers, Ringlet, Small Heath & Meadow Brown. Nearby on the **Pegsdon Hills** in Beds, all these plus Painted Lady and Small Tortoiseshell - Nigel Agar

Sun 27th June - 5 or so ringlets seen in **Hatfield** House grounds this morning, first time I have seen them there. **Whipsnade Downs** (afternoon) ringlets in their hundreds, also around 40 marbled whites - Roger Gibbons

Visited **Bentley Wood near Salisbury**. PE are not yet out & the site had been well visited by people looking for them today. Masses of Silver Washed Frit, White Ad, Ringlet & Meadow Brown. Small Pearl Bordered Frits still hanging on. Marbled Whites, WLH, Red Ad, Comma Small Torts, small skips, a Brimstone, Large & Small Whites, Small heath & Speckled Woods also seen - Malcolm Hull

News from Monday, Marbled white at Bishop Stortford on the embankments of the by-pass by the tea kiosk watched for 3/4 mins before disappearing over the bank. **Today's sightings [Sunday 27th June] - Crooked mile nr Waltham Abbey** 4/5 white letter hairstreaks around the ash by the round bungalow. **Spent 2 hours in Broxbourne Woods** looking for a early purple emperor [no luck]. But here are the totals: **white admiral** 40+, meadow brown 100+, ringlet 10+, large skipper 10+, speckled wood 3, plus singles of **purple hairstreak** [around oak by bench], comma, peacock, small tortoiseshell, red admiral, small white, large white. Most of the white admirals are going over and look pretty tatty, the purple hairstreak was first for the year - I've attached a few photos - Nick Sampford

Horsenden Hill, today's event passed off pretty well. The weather cooperated and we had a total of 16 participants (including myself and Rachel). Rachel set the ball rolling with a selection of moths from the MV trap that was run overnight at Horsenden Farm. We had some pretty good crowd pleasers like Elephant Hawk, Lime Hawk, Peach Blossom and Burnished Brass. I'll include a fuller list of moths when I send in the report. As for the walk itself, we got most of the things we were hoping for: 10.00-12noon **White-letter Hairstreak (9 individuals at two locations including 3 nectaring on Creeping Thistle), Purple Hairstreak (6)**, Small Tortoiseshell (3), Comma (3), Speckled Wood (1), **Marbled White** (1 on southern slope of Horsenden Hill "Home Mead"), Large Skipper (14), Small Skipper (11), Painted Lady (3), Red Admiral (3), Large White (3), Meadow Brown. Day-flying moths: Narrow-bordered Five-spot Burnet (4), Cinnabar (2), Heart and Dart (1), Large Yellow Underwing (1) - Andrew Culshaw

Saw my first **small skipper** of the year whilst weeding on my allotment in **Cheshunt** this afternoon. Also several whites. Otherwise fairly quiet - Roger Newbold

Sat 26th June - news from Friday, Broxbourne Wood NR - 4 White Admiral, 1 Ringlet, 3 Large Skipper, 1 Comma and 19 Meadow Brown. **Brickendon Green, 1 White-letter Hairstreak** on bramble - Diane Andrews

Sandra and I went for a late evening walk over **Balls Wood** and saw an elephant hawkmoth, a few straw dots, many micro moths, ringlets low in the grass and lots of other moths - Kevin and Sandra Standbridge

James Fish's observation that his Humming-bird Hawk-moth at Balls Wood may have been ovipositing on Cleavers (see news for Wed 16th June) is of some interest as the one I saw near **Bushey** three days earlier was also taking an interest in this species of plant. At the time this puzzled me as Cleavers isn't a potential nectar source (although had the moth wanted such, it could have found many suitable flowers in the nearby gardens or allotments). It may be worth checking Cleavers for larvae in several weeks' time.

Sandra Standbridge's moth is a male *Archips podana*, a common and very attractive member of the micro-moth family Tortricidae. The larvae are polyphagous (i.e. are not fussy about what they eat). The adults are familiar in moth traps during high summer but can also be found by day resting on foliage. - Colin Everett.

Fri 25th June - Millhoppers Transect today- mating pair of Essex Skipper seen - Margaret Noakes

Correction Monday 21st June, Wormley Open Spaces, entry should have read Large Skipper not Essex Skipper - none reported as of today - LG

Thurs 24th June - Sandra went to **Balls Wood today** and saw **six White Admirals**, some of which are already starting to look very worn - Kevin and Sandra Standbridge

Tues 22nd June - I recorded first **Marbled Whites** of this year at **Bunkers Park (2); and Long Deans (6)**. Also first sighting on Bunkers Park of **Small/Essex Skippers (3)**, one of which was positively identified as a Sm. Skipper, the other two were most likely Smalls - Mike Pearson

Spent 3 1/2 hours scouring tetrads in **TL41** today, before the sun went in! Grand total of 2 Large Skipper in 8 tetrads visited. Visiting times depended on how quickly one was seen. All in all rather poor, especially since 5 years ago, in two of today's blank tetrads, at the same sites visited one was seen almost immediately - Liz Goodyear

At **Horsenden Hill** (1130-1330) I saw **White-Letter Hairstreak (1), Ringlet (1), and also Large Skipper, Small Skipper**, Meadow Brown, Comma, Speckled Wood, Red Admiral, Small Tortoiseshell, Common Blue, Large White. I have never before seen a Ringlet in the Ealing area - John Eborall

On June 21st near **West Hyde** church saw over a dozen small tortoiseshells basking in the sun. Looked very fresh! Also my first Large Skipper this year and a Speckled Wood. **June 22nd.** large batch of Peacock caterpillars along **Maple Cross** farm track but only a couple of small tortoiseshells despite having seen many batches of caterpillars a couple of weeks ago - Ann Piper

Ickleford area, Small heath on **13/6** first record to my knowledge for the site. Small copper, brown argus and common blue all doing okay there also - Stuart Pittman

Mon 21st June - News from 19th, in and around **Rickmansworth Aquadrome** as part of the Dragonfly Atlas Project, 1 Meadow Brown, 4 Small Tortoiseshell and 2 Speckled Wood at Bury Lake, 1 Small Tortoiseshell by the **River Colne**, 2 Red Admiral and 1 Speckled Wood at **Batchworth Lake**, and 1 Comma, 1 Red Admiral and 4 Speckled Wood on the **Grand Union Canal** - Alan Reynolds

Wormley Open Spaces, Small and Essex Skipper (error should have read Large Skipper) observed - Andrew Middleton

News from Saturday 19th June - Gutteridge wood, Hillingdon 1 **White Admiral** on the south east corner of the wood. As far as I am aware this is only the 2nd record for this species in that area. The 1st was by Ann Rix on 8/7/98. On the same day close by in the meadows to the **north of Ten-Acre wood** were **3 Gatekeeper, 12+ Small Heath, dozens of Meadow Brown and Large skipper (the most I have seen for a long time in that area), 4 Common Blue, 3 Small Tortoiseshell, 1 Small Copper, 1 Red Admiral and 1 Painted Lady** - Steve Pash

Trent Park 14th June transect, 121 small heath, 6 small copper, 24 large skipper. One small skipper on Sat 19th - news from Robert Callf

Harold Hill/Weald area, Essex, Sat 19th 50+ white-letter hairstreaks in several good colonies so far - Colin Jupp

Sun 20th June - Horsenden Hill News - Not much time for a full swing around the area, but **4 White-letter Hairstreaks** on elm and ash on the south facing slopes of Horsenden Hill on Saturday 19th June. The first one was seen on **Wednesday (16th)** in the same area by Rachel Terry, so it looks like we should have something to show people **on the LNHS/Butterfly Conservation walk next Sunday** (weather permitting) - Andy Culshaw

White Admirals on my transect at **Bricket Wood**. By far the most seen in a single week in the last 6 years and 10 days earlier than usual. Fairly good numbers of Large Skippers - In **St Albans, 3 White-letter hairstreaks** on Wych Elm at **Folly Lane & 1 on Wych Elm at Everlasting Lane** - Malcolm Hull

We went over to our local **Balls Wood** in Hertford Heath, saw **6 White Admirals, 8 Ringlets, 2 Small Skippers, Meadow Browns, Large Skippers, Speckled Woods, 2 Red Admirals** and a small moth which we are trying to identify, Have enclosed various photos, including the mystery moth!! Sandra went to Cornmill Meadow yesterday and saw a mass hatching of small skippers and 5 spotted burnet moths - Kevin & Sandra Standbridge

Bob Hasra has just returned from a holiday in Italy - this is his report. My first sighting of the Green Hairstreak was near Lake Tovel on 4 June. Here I came across at least a dozen of them. Some of them were laying tiny eggs on the heather growing around the lake. I also saw what I believe to be a small fritillary species but it was too fast for me to make a definite id. Also present were the familiar Orange-Tip, Small Tortoiseshell and Red Admiral. The lake environs were also host to a number of day-flying moths of which I have one on video. About 1820m altitude in Merano, I came across two skippers- the Grizzled Skipper and another species I've yet to find out about. Both were basking in sunshine on the banks of a small mountain stream. Although I didn't see any wild strawberry plants at that altitude, there were plenty around the cablecar base-station and I certainly helped myself to the fruit (:

Near Trento I came across the Common Swallowtail for the first time. In fact a Scarce Swallowtail was flying around in the same area too. It flew close to my head and back a number of times. Has anyone else noticed this behaviour ? I later saw the butterfly feeding from Valerian but from inside the cablecar so couldn't get any pictures. Around this area I came across some unfamiliar species of 'blue' butterflies (Lycaenids) but need to get my pictures back from the lab before I can identify them or post them to you. Wish I could've stayed in Italy longer to find out what butterflies were coming out of the large chocolate-brown chrysalises hanging from the roof of the cablecar station in Sardagna ! - Bob Hasra

Sat 19th June - Hot news from across the border, I saw my first **(3) Dark Green Fritillaries** on **Sharpenhoe/Moleskin** today in their usual haunts. Two of the three looked like freshly emerged males. Also other first flight sightings this year for the site were Marbled White & Ringlet - David Chandler

Fri 18th June - Today I saw the most unusual moth, that I had never seen before, searching the internet I found this to be a Elephant Hawk Moth. I see that this is quite a common moth, but all the same one that I had ever seen before, sitting on the front wall of my house, at 15:00 on the 18th June in **Sandridge** - here is a photo taken on my mobile phone, may not be the best quality, but now I have found your website will take pics and try to identify everything that I see - Craig Henderson

Thurs 17th June - Did a transect training run at **Balls Wood**. Highlight was **5 pristine White Admirals** in 53 minutes. Very good views probably as the weather was less than perfect for high flying. Plenty of **Large Skippers, Meadow Browns** and **Speckled Woods** and a couple of **Ringlets** and **Red Admirals**. Also several Bloodvein and Straw Dot moths - Andrew Wood

Weds 16th June - News from 15th; Pheromone, clearwing record: **Hexton Chalkpit 1st Six-belted Clearwing** came 11.33am (lure put out 11.29), 2nd at 11.38. Lure 150mm above ground.

Another location on site 12.02, single individual came after 4 minutes. Also **Humming-bird Hawkmoth** at site - Andrew Palmer

Thundridge, news from 14th; I've had first **meadow brown** in garden - Nick Sampford

Balls Wood. Large Skippers (many) **Speckled Wood, Meadow Brown, Ringlet**, also **Hummingbird Hawkmoth** (the Hummingbird Hawkmoth appeared to be egg laying on Comon Cleavers, although this is not listed as a food plant it is in the same family as the Bedstraws, unfortunately I did not have a hand lens with me to search the plant) - James Fish

Saw my first summer brood **Small Tortoiseshell** on **Widbury Hill** today. Also Burnet Companion and a few **Meadow Browns** and a **Large Skipper** - Andrew Wood

Mon 14th June - First **Large Skipper** seen in the garden - John Murray

Robert Callf rang to to say Robin White had seen a **Purple Hairstreak** on a blackthorn, this morning at **Vicarage Farm**

From **Horsenden Hill, Painted Lady (3), Large Skipper (13), Common Blue (5), Comma (1), Meadow Brown (7** - my first of the year), **Small Copper (1)**. Also Burnet Companion (8) and Narrow-bordered Five-spot Burnet (10) **12th Highlights** (personal preference) of 80+ species from a moth trap run at **Horsenden West Meadows** (with Rachel Terry and David Howden) - Elephant Hawk Moth (1), Small Elephant Hawk Moth (2), plus Blotched Emerald, Beautiful Hook-tip, Bird's wing, Barred Straw, Blue-bordered Carpet - Andrew Culshaw

Sun 13th June - A **Hummingbird Hawk-moth** along a footpath in parkland/pasture near **Bushey** at 1420 hours. Later at 1615 hours a male **Red-tipped Clearwing** moth came to a combination pheromone lure along the **River Colne near Watford** (a new tetrad record) - Colin Everett

In 3 hours at **King's Mead** on a hot sunny day, I still managed to see only **2 Common Blue, 8 Large Skipper, 1 Small Tortoiseshell, 1 Painted lady, 2 Meadow Brown** and **1 Peacock** - Alan Reynolds

Saw **two white letter hairstreaks** at 10.10 on and around prunus species at **Sewardstone Marsh** - Martin Shepherd & Enfield Lock Conservation Group

Sat 12th June - In 5 hours on a fairly reasonable day, the only butterflies I saw were **2 Speckled Wood** at **Maple Lodge** and a **Speckled Wood** and **Painted Lady** at **Pynesfield Lake** - Alan Reynolds

Saw my **1st large skipper** this morning in my **Greenford** garden, initially basking on Calceolaria flower +c.O.5 hr later nectaring on herb robert. Possibly same individual seen in pm nectaring on red valerian. The only butterfly I did see today! I did find a 6-spot burnet larva beside some bird's-foot trefoil + possibly about to pupate on thrift flower stalk - Neil Anderson

Fri 11th June - Just seen a **Meadow Brown** at **Telegraph Hill**. First for us - Sally and John Foster

2 Painted Lady and Red Admiral Coppetts Wood this afternoon - Tony Clancy

1 White letter Hairstreak seen between reservoirs, **Ponders End** - Andrew Middleton

Went over our local **Balls Wood in Hertford Heath** this morning, saw 10 speckled woods, 1 red admiral, 3 large skippers, lots of moths, which we are still trying to identify and will send pictures at a later time. 1 female emperor dragonfly, 3 male broad bodied chasers and 2 females. We then went to a site in **Northants** for the first time and were amazed at the number of **Black Hairstreaks**, Sandra attaches a photo showing one that has recently emerged from its chrysalis,

which it is standing on. We also saw a painted lady, a meadow brown, 5 large skippers, a worn comma, and loads of the oak rollers - Sandra & Kevin Standbridge

Ramney Marsh, Middx: painted lady (08.43) and red admiral (09.43) both at rest on bramble. Also five large skippers and two common blues - Martin Shepherd

We saw a Painted Lady in **Whitton** (Middlesex) just outside our house (**8th June**). It was evening so it was resting and difficult to say which way it was going - Eleanor Lawrence

I also saw painted lady (my 1st UK this year) at noon (**9th June**) flying determinedly along tube track at **Ravenscourt Park Stn** in E.direction. In my own **Greenford** garden I disturbed a **silver-Y** whilst watering some pots (again 1st of year) - Neil Anderson

I had another **4 Meadow Browns yesterday (10-6)** at **Brent Reservoir** on the transect I share with Andrew Self, also 1 Painted Lady there. 1 Painted Lady and 3 Red Admirals in and around **Barnet** on mapping visits (**9th June**). None were in any great hurry with one Red Admiral on a house wall and the other three insects all on Bramble. I had a very early **Meadow Brown this afternoon (10th June)** at **Potters Lane Barnet**. Another feature of the past three or so weeks has been the large number of Small Copper, I've had it in 9 out of the 11 tetrads that I am visiting in TQ29. On one walk (**23rd May**) **Whitings Hill/Dollis Valley West** I had **19 Small Coppers!** - Roy Beddard

2 Painted Ladys and **Red Admiral** seen in **Coppetts Wood** - Tony Clancy

Thurs 10th June - The answer to the picture link below is *Actias luna* (*Saturnidae*), the Luna Moth - thanks to the ukmoths newsgroup for the identification - LG

Had a brief walk round the **Museum's Wildlife Garden** before I left **yesterday evening** and was pleased to see lots of Six-spot Burnet larvae and cocoons (the colony seems to be doing very well now) but was even more pleased to add a new species to the list for the garden, Burnet Companion. I saw at least three, possibly four, including a pair in cop. A nice moth for urban Middlesex - especially so close to Cromwell Road - Martin Honey

Ware garden - another Painted Lady this morning, a much larger individual - Liz Goodyear

3 Large Skippers & 2 Painted Ladies recorded on **Bunkers Park yesterday, 9 June**. The P Ladies were loitering and not going anywhere particular. 14 Common Blues were seen. In spite of 30C temperatures on Tuesday, this number was 93% down on the same week last year - Mike Pearson

I saw a Painted Lady **yesterday** (8 June) while doing my **Colney Heath transect** around 1400 hrs. It wasn't flying anywhere much, more browsing on Bramble in a sheltered spot (wind c4). It looked tatty & tired. Saw Large Skipper **Sun 6 June** on **The Warren**, unfortunately off-transect - John Moss

Wed 9th June - We went for a walk today at **Balls Wood in Hertford Heath** and saw 5 large Skippers, 5 Speckled Woods, a pair of White Ermine moths, a Treble Brown Spot and possibly a cream bordered green pea or Green Oak roller (our moth knowledge is not great and we have included pictures of these to help identification). We then went to **Wicken Fen in Cambs** and saw another unusual moth which we think is a Silver Barred moth, we also saw 5 Brimstones, 5 Speckled Woods, 3 Large Skippers and hundreds of dragonflies. Sandra got her first photo of an Emperor Dragonfly and we also saw 2 other firsts, Scarce Chaser and Four spotted Chaser - Kevin & Sandra Standbridge

Weald Park, Essex, 1 meadow brown, 39 common blues, painted lady, plus two more **Harold Hill (plus 2 Sewardstone)** - Colin Jupp

Trent Park area, 8 painted ladies, 1 meadow brown, brown argus **Vicarage farm** - Robert Callf

On **Monday** 1 Red Admiral in **Ware Park**. On **Tuesday 8th** on **Kings Meads near Ware 11 Large Skippers** and 1 Common Blue at **Chadwell Springs Chalk Bank**. **Today:** 7 Common Blues, 3 Large Skippers and a Cinnabar Moth at **Ware Park Quarry** and one Painted Lady on the entrance to the **Quarry footpath on Westmill Road Ware** - Andrew Wood

Stevenage - my parents had a Red Admiral in their garden this afternoon - Steven Penn

I received an email today with this message "this is on my door. Can you tell me what it is?" Click here for picture - Answer will be posted tomorrow and the sender lived in North central Pennsylvania if that is a clue! - LG

Saw a Small Copper at Glade Lane Meadow, **Ealing** this afternoon. This is the first Small Copper I have seen since 2001. Also 2 Common Blues - John Eborall

We saw large skipper, speckled wood and **ringlet** yesterday for the first time this year at **Aldbury Nowers**, as well as **grizzled skipper** which still around. I have previously picked up green hairstreak and dingy skipper on the transects, which is good although few in number - Martin Hicks

One **Painted lady** seen in my **St. Albans garden**, 4.25pm, **yesterday** - Liz Anderson

Ramsey Marsh, Middx: large skipper and red admiral this morning (08.35) - Martin Shepherd

I also saw several Painted Ladies on The Lizard last week so they are certainly "on the way". One **Large Skipper at Horsenden Hill** on **Sunday 6th June** allowed close approach and a quick photograph - Andy Culshaw

It may be that a migration has arrived in Britain. Can you please keep a look out for this and other butterflies, not forgetting to record direction of flight (as exactly as possible rather than just North), numbers seen in a given time, where you saw them, and the date and time. It would also be very useful if you can make records of the speed of flight, by using a stop watch or digital watch to time the passage of the butterfly between two points, such as one side of your garden to the other. These records are very rarely made but are of extreme interest - John Murray

9.50 am, **Painted Lady** in **Ware** garden nectaring - Liz Goodyear

8 o'clock this morning **Painted Lady** in my garden **N.W. Bishop Stortford** - Jim Fish

Tues 8th June - Just to let you know that I found a Mother Shipton moth when walking along the public footpath through the fields of **Harrow School** on **Sunday 6 June** - Michael Robinson

Barnet area, 1 Painted Lady at National Institute for Medical Research in the grounds at 10.40 am 2nd June - Frank Johnson

Mon 7th June - Frogmore Quarry - just **2 Grizzled Skippers** found this lunchtime. Had almost given up searching. Also 7 Small Copper, 8 Common Blue (all males). On what is left of the lake there were 2 Emperor Dragonflies, 5 Broad-bodied Chasers and plenty of Azure damselflies. News from 6th June - **Wheathampstead LNR** (nr. Development Centre) - Small Heath on the up this year with ten plus in the grassland area. Common Blues also doing well. Caterpillars of burnet moths getting very large now. Also first Mother Shipton moth from this site - Trevor Chapman

King's Langley Garden Transect, yesterday, we saw our first **Painted Lady** of 2004 in my mother's garden in King's Langley - David Chandler

Sun 6th June - Today walking the disused **Allotments Rye Street Bishops Stortford** and in the vicinity of Wickham Hall. Speckled Wood 3, Holly Blue 1, Common Blue 3, Orange Tip 1xM, 1xF, Red Admiral 1, Small White 5, Small Copper 1, Mother Shipton 2, Yellow Shell 2, and numerous colonies of Small Tortoiseshell caterpillars - Jim Fish

Thurs 4th June - Sandra Standbridge's Large Skipper photos see below have been identified as a Large Skipper *ab pallida* - see Natural History Museum's Cockayne Data Base website for more details Identification was helped by contributors of uk-leps

Had small copper and common blue at **Grovelands** today - Andrew Middleton, Robert Callf and Bill Cutts

Last year, on 2 June 2003, I counted a record single visit total of 164 Common Blues on my **Bunkers Park transect**; **yesterday**, 2 June 2004, I saw just 3 !!! - Mike Pearson

Tues 1st June - 2 Red Admirals yesterday in Potters Crouch Plantation, **near St Albans** - Malcolm Hull

May 2004

Mon 31st May - Trent Park, c75 small heath, plus small coppers today, and mating Brown Argus yesterday - Robert Callf and Robin White

Saw a **red admiral** steaming north through **Tring** (Herts.) today. Presumably a migrant from warmer shores - Nick Bowles

Therfield Heath, late afternoon (17:45 for about 50 minutes), with alternating cloud and sunny spells. Obviously still a little cool for evening sunning by butterflies! Church Hill, Small Heath, 1 at western end of hill. Many undistinguished silvery "micro" moths. Treble-bar moth species (Common or Lesser), 1-2 on lower slopes at eastern end of hill - Guy Manners

News from **Sunday**, a **Red Admiral**, Hoggates Wood, **Bishop Stortford** - Jim Fish

Some sightings from the weekend. **Friday 28th, Digswell railway cutting, Welwyn North Station** - Good amount of wild strawberry no Grizzled Skipper's unfortunately. 3 burnet companion, 1 large white, 1 common blue. Also numerous Speckled Woods in **Hamergreen Wood**. **Sat 29th, Aldbury Nower's** - 5 Common Blue, 2 Large White, 6 Burnet Companion, 1 Small Copper. **Sun 30th, Tring Park** - 3 Grizzled Skipper (hurrah) 2 Dingy Skipper, 2 Common Blue, 1 Orange Tip, 3 Large White, 3 Brimstone, 5 Mother Shipton, 10 Burnet Companion - Jez Perkins

Green Hairstreak, Dingy Skippers and Small Heath have been active at **Telegraph Hill**. Grizzled Skippers reported but not found by me. Common Blue flying at **Pegsdon Hills last week**, also Brown Argus at **Telegraph Hill** - Nigel Agar

I thought you might be interested in some photos I took last year of Variations, I think the silver washed is called an *Valezina* (we saw it at Bentley Wood and the Skipper in the woods at Hertford Heath - Sandra Standbridge

Some photo's taken last week. The Grizzled Skipper, at Waterford, and the Common Blue, near Hertford. The mating Privet Hawk moths were on an old post in my garden and were 'busy' all Friday morning. They parted around mid-day and spent all afternoon and evening till dark recovering - Richard Bigg

Sun 30th May - Today, **Westbrook Hay, Boxmoor**, Large White, small copper, common blue & **painted lady** (and lots of those micro moths with the huge antennae). I will keep you informed in future of any other notable sightings in Hemel - Dave Hutchinson (*we met Dave at the Herts County Show*)

Went for a walk this afternoon around the set aside fields along the River Rib between **Ware Park and Bengo** and before the rain saw 1 Brown Argus, 3 Peacocks, 2 Orange Tips, several unidentified whites and these moths: 1 Mother Shipton moth, 1 Lime Speck Pug actively feeding and 1 Garden Pebble - Andrew Wood

Sat 29th May - Went to the **Cornmill Meadow** today and saw mating buff-tip, **1 large skipper**, cinnabar moth, small copper, 2 Burnet caterpillars, getting ready to cocoon at the top of grasses - Sandra Standbridge

Fri 28th May - At work, **Stevenage**. 8 Small Heath with 7 Cinnabar and 1 Burnet Companion moth, and 4 Azure Damselflies. **Frogmore Quarry** lunchtime - only **2 Grizzled Skippers** but not that warm, 3 Small Coppers, 1 Large White and 2 GV White. 3 Azure and 1 Large Red Damselfly. Then on to Astonbury Golf Club lily pond to see 3 Red-eyed and 50 Azure Damselflies. Also a nice Little Owl - Trevor Chapman (more Dragonfly news)

One of my 'local moth-ers' in **Ealing** finally managed to buy his own trap. On its second outing in the back garden, it turned up a rather nice record- **Buttoned Snout**. There is a reasonable sized patch of hops growing on Horsenden West, where the old cottages were. So this could well be a resident species for the site. His garden is not that far away from the area in question. Moth was taken by David Howdon, but the pictures mine - Rachel Terry

Thurs 27th May - Decided to try and visit two more tetrads today, but unfortunately forgot my binoculars! Visited **TL3610** between Hertford Heath and the A10 and after over 40 minutes saw my first Orange Tip, also seen, were Green-veined White, a Peacock, Large White and Speckled Wood. Then drove to **Dobbs Weir** and had a lovely walk by the river but saw only a pair of mating Green-veined White. Then walked towards the railway line and found an amazing field of moths mostly Burnet Companion and Mother Shipton. The lack of "bins" was very frustrating! Eventually after spending 40 minutes again in the same tetrad saw 2 Orange Tip (they are like buses you don't see any for ages and then 2 come along!) Nice to see a Brown Argus and Common Blue as well plus a fox - Liz Goodyear

We went into **Bedfordshire** on **Saturday** and saw in excess of 3 Dukes, mating Brown Argus, 2 pairs we think!, 6 Grizzled Skipper, 3 Brimstone, 3 Orange Tip. Then went to **Ivinghoe Beacon** and saw our first Dingy Skippers at least 8. 25th May - Over the **Cornmill meadow** I saw a tree full of I think Lackey caterpillars (Photo attached). I also saw 2 common blue and 2 small coppers and hairy dragonfly - Kevin and Sandra Standbridge

I was in **Langley** on **Tuesday** lunch time. I saw 3 Orange Tips (2 male, 1 female), 1 Large White and 1 Small Tortoiseshell. I have attached a photo of the female Orange Tip - Steven Penn

Wed 26th May - Are you going on holiday to Europe this year? If so visit this website which has been set up by Butterfly Conservation - LG

Visited **Aldbury Nowers** after work yesterday about 6 o'clock and had 4 Brimstones, 1 Large White and numerous Common Blues. It clouded over as I got there so it wasn't hugely productive - Jez Perkins

Mon 24th May - Small Copper, 1 at **Amwell** this pm. My first here for a number of years - Toby Austin

Thurs 20th May - Some pictures including moths to look for during the day including:- I found a small group of Small Yellow Underwings near **Ware Park Quarry** on **Tuesday**, went back with the camera yesterday and found only one. Here is a picture - Andrew Wood

Wed 19th May -Stevenage (lunchtime walk at work) - **4 Small Heath, 1 Common Blue, 5** Burnet Companion, 6 Cinnabar and 5 Blue Damselflies (one confirmed Common) - Trevor Chapman

" Dukes" I've put some of the pictures on the web page - link below. I think they're mostly males, but the variation within the colony seemed quite dramatic - especially the darkest one. Not that I've ever seen so many in one place that I could make the comparison! Note that they're nearly all sitting on very low bramble leaves - Roger Gibbons

Telegraph Hill yesterday on my transect - **4 Brown Argus**. Also heard reports of **Dingy Skipper, Grizzled Skipper and Green Hairstreak** been seen, also **yesterday** on the same site and **Pegsdon Hills** where I noticed another 2 Brown Argus and 3 Small Heath - Valerie Fullforth

Tues 18th May - Lunchtime today **Frogmore Quarry**, after 70min searching found **6 Grizzled Skippers**. Plenty of Tormentil and a single patch of Wild Strawberry down from the NE corner. Also 4 Small Copper, **1 male Common Blue**, 2 GV White, 4 Orange-tip, **1 Red Admiral**. Plenty of Pyrausta moths flying too. And the constant sound of Cuckoo, Whitethroat, Lesser Whitethroat, Blackcap, Goldfinch and Yellowhammer - Trevor Chapman

Aldbury Nowers - 10.30-1.30pm, **c.8 Grizzled Skipper (west meadow near Pitstone Hill only) including one egg laid under leaf of agrimony, 7 dingy skipper** total spread through all meadows, **2 green hairstreak, c16 small copper** also egg laid under edge of sorrel leaf, brimstones, orange tips, holly blue, **6 Brown Argus**, Small Tortoiseshell, comma, speckled wood, various whites, cinnabar, mother shipton, burnet companion, small yellow underwing, *pyrausta sp.*
Pitstone Hill pm - **c.15 green hairstreak, 5 dingy skipper, 1 small heath** - Andrew Middleton & Liz Goodyear

I went walking the dogs in balls wood **Hertford Heath today**, saw 4 male brimstones and a comma. Also went to Fishers Green today and just outside Pinders car park, I saw my first Puss Moth - - Sandra Standbridge

Mon 17th May - Green-Veined White feeding on Forget-me-nots in my **Brookman Park** garden today - Rupert Pyrah

During a Dragonfly Atlas recce in TQ09 on Sunday 16th May, 2 Orange Tip, 2 Peacock, 1 Small Tortoiseshell and 3 Small White at Piper's Farm - Alan Reynolds

Some butterfly news for last weekend: **16th May, Aldbury Nowers, Herts, Grizzled Skipper (3+ in the paddock to the right of the path as you walk up the hill from the road)**, Brimstone (10+), Orange-tip (5), Comma (1), Peacock (4), Small Tortoiseshell (1), **Small Copper (6)**, Holly Blue (1). Also Cinnabar (6) and Garden Carpet (1). **15th May Horsenden Hill, Middx, Common Blue (1), Small Copper (1)**, Large White (1), Small White (11), Green-veined White (12), Small/Green-veined White (9), Orange-tip (8), Peacock (6), Holly Blue (1), Small Tortoiseshell (1), Comma (1). David Howdon and I ran a light in **Perivale Wood on Friday evening (14th May)** - confirmed identifications were Brimstone moth 2, Sandy Carpet 3 (in trap) + 4 (on the wing about the site), Ruby Tiger 1, Sallow Kitten 1, Lychnis 1, Oak Hook tip 1, Pale Tussock 1, Chinese Character 1, Tinea Trinotella 1, Brindled Pug 3, Twenty-Plume moth 1, White Shouldered House Moth 1, Least Black Arches 1. One unidentified micro is with Rachel Terry to see if she can work it out! Andy Culshaw

News from **Sat 15 May and Sun 16 May - Whipsnade Downs**: generally warm 20-22 C but mostly cloudy pm - "**dukes**" recently emerged and looking very fresh - counted 20 total (on each day) in about five separate locations over several hundred metres - very active in the brief spells of sunshine - met someone who had just come from **Ivinghoe Beacon** and counted 31 - also 2-3 grizzled skippers and 2-3 green hairstreaks although the master tree seems more dead than alive - lots of brimstones and orange tips and the odd green-veined white - Roger Gibbons

Aldbury Nowers, arriving just before 10 a.m. I quickly saw Brimstone 2, Orange Tip 5, Green Veined White 1, **Small Copper 3**, Holly Blue 1, **Brown Argus 1**, Peacock 1 and several Pyraustra micros (*aurata* and *purpuraris* - I believe) plus 2 Mother Shipton but no Grizzled Skipper in 30 minutes - Nick Bowles

Many tetrads were visited over the weekend - please check the updated map when done (it will take a little while) - The main area now is central/north Middlesex. These tetrads are more random, with many having little potential habitat or places to park. If you can visit any of these please let myself and John know. Thank you to everyone that went out and filled the map so superbly

Sun 16th May - Went over to **Ivinghoe Beacon** on **Sunday** to photograph Dukes : Mainly below bend in road saw **10 Duke of Burgundy** mainly, **2 Dingy Skippers, 1 Green Hairstreak, 5**

Brimstones, 2 Orange tips, 1 Small Tort, 1 Mother Shipton, 2 Burnet Companion, Cinnabar and a Tree Pipit. Last week no sign of Grizzled Skipper at Frogmore Quarry but I bet they have emerged now - Trevor Chapman

Weekend Field Trips Roundup

Sunday - Waterford Heath - 6 people attended and went home very happy! In total **13 Grizzled Skipper** were seen, 11 on the south pit and 2 on the north pit. Everyone found one for them self! Total species seen in addition to Grizzleds were 2 Cinnabar moths, 2 Brimstone, 1 Green-veined White, 2 Latticed Heath (so everyone was able to see the difference), 4 Orange Tip, 7 Burnet Companions, **1 Small Copper, 1 Small Heath**, 2 Holly Blue, 1 Peacock, 1 Comma, 1 Speckled Wood, 1 Large and 1 Small White, and 2 Roman Snails - Alan Downie

Saturday - Aldbury Nowers, after the 2 previous years events were dogged by bad weather, Saturday, was a lovely sunny day. Unfortunately no Grizzled or Dingy Skippers were seen, but 9 people attended and were rewarded with sightings of WHITES: Brimstone 11, Large White 5, Small White 4, Green Veined White 11, Orange Tip 14. BLUES & COPPERS: **Green Hairstreak 4**, Holly Blue 1, **Small Copper 5**. ARISTOCRATS: Small Tortoiseshell 1, Peacock 3. BROWNS: Speckled Wood 1 and several species of moth - Dave Chandler (*Thanks to everyone who came along and in particular the field trip leaders - next week is National Moth Night and 23rd May - Bedfont Lakes*)

Sat 15th May - North Herts, nice to see **Green hairstreak and dingy skipper** hanging on there today (**Sat 15 May**) My last records for Dingy Skipper on this private site were back in 1997!! - Stuart Pittman

A walk around the **Ashridge Estate** in the afternoon was notable chiefly for the fact that I saw only one Speckled Wood in this apparently prime location. Earlier Malcolm Hull and I found a **Silver Y** in a gully on **Ivinghoe Beacon** in Bucks - Colin Everett

Aldbury Nowers, visited today after the branch field trip & saw **Green Hairstreak 2, Grizzled Skipper 5**, Comma 4, Speckled Wood 1, Orange Tip 9, Green-Veined White 15, Peacock 3, Holly Blue 3 Large White 1, Brimstone 19, **Small Copper 1, Mother Shipton & Burnett Companion Moths**, Over the border in Bucks at **Inchcombe Hole** I saw **4 Small Heaths** & at **Ivinghoe Beacon** a **Duke of Burgundy** & **Silver Y moth** - Malcolm Hull (*sorry forgot to credit this earlier*)

Trent Park, 4 small copper, 3 small heath, 3 mother shipton, 2 burnet companion - Robert Callf

Thundridge garden - 12 orange tips, **small copper**, green veined and small white in garden today - Nick Sampford

Friday 14th May - Waterford Heath, had **3 grizzled skippers** by the bench at **Waterford** late **yesterday** afternoon plus 20+ orange tips large, green veined and small white, female brimstone and holly blue - Nick Sampford (*Nick has a new macro lens!*)

Rickneys area, Hertford this afternoon, **4 Small Copper, 2 Burnet Companion & 1 Latticed Heath moth**. Tetrad bashing in East Herts again didn't produce anything spectacular apart from a **Small Yellow Underwing** moth in a field at **High Wych!** - Liz Goodyear

Thurs 13th May - are, along the old Lea this morning 3 male Orange tip, 1 female Orange tip, peacock - Ian Edwards

Lunch time walk near **Norton Green** today. I saw 2 small whites and 1 orange tip - Steven Penn

Tetrad bashing in East Herts before the cloud took hold didn't produce anything extra ordinary, although Orange Tip seemed to be in good numbers. Did see a **Cinnabar** moth near **areside** and on my return there was a fox in my garden, watching the guinea pigs! - Liz Goodyear

Mon 10th May - A couple of casual sightings from the Tube in blank Spring tetrads on the way home this evening: - **East Acton Tube station** - Large White and Orange Tip and near Park Royal Road, North Acton - Orange Tip. Hardly counts as 'covering' the tetrads, but it's better

than nothing - John Eborall (*these tetrads were not just blank spring tetrads but had **no records at all** - help like this is continually welcome; thanks John - LG*)

Graham White and myself have produced a King's Mead Bird Report for 2002, which not only covers that year, but also breeding records back to 1994 and beyond. Copies of the report can be down-loaded from the King's Mead website at: www.geocities.com/kingsmead2- The website (and future reports) also covers butterflies - Alan Reynolds

Late news from the 7th May - visited **Kensal Green Cemetery** this morning and saw 3 Orange Tips, 1 Holly Blue, 2 Speckled Woods, 1 Peacock, 2 Green Veined Whites, 1 Small White and a number of unidentifiable whites - Andrew Wood

Now had orange tip in all three tetrads if you are marking them on the map. Found this **white-letter larva** today on elm flowers near **Cuffley (Soper's Viaduct)**. Picture's a bit poor but may be of interest - Andrew Middleton

Ware garden, the sun came out and almost immediately 2 female Orange Tips checking out my garlic mustard - later 1 male - Liz Goodyear

Sun 9th May - Waterford Heath this afternoon (3.30 - 4.30) in 100% cloud and rain, **3 roosting Grizzled Skipper** - Liz Goodyear

Fri 7th May - south Norfolk, in really quite dull conditions, **4 Grizzled Skipper** seen, in flight and roosting before the "rain" - news via Sharon Hearle (BC Anglia RO)

Thursday, are, along the old Lea I saw my first definite sighting of a Green-veined White, also each day this week there have been 3+ Orange tips about, as well as this years first Grass snakes - Ian Edwards

Fir and Pond Woods Nature Reserve (HMWT) 10.00 to 13.00, Orange tips (several), Green veined white 1, speckled woods 2, brimstone 1 male, peacocks 2 - David Gompertz

Wed 5th May - First speckled wood seen in the garden this year in **Barnet** - Nigel Taylor

Ware garden, in a brief moment of sunshine, one male Orange Tip seen near the honesty this morning - Liz Goodyear

Tues 4th May - Sewardstone, Essex, 2 small coppers on the roadside verge on **Sunday 2nd May** Sewardstone Road - Simon Rawlinson

Mon 3rd May - On **May 2nd** I was walking along the **Chelsea Embankment** towards the Tate gallery when I was passed by a Holly Blue which was flying westwards. I had previously seen several Small/Green-Veined Whites in the **Chelsea Physic Garden**. Still haven't recorded Holly Blue in my own garden - Malcolm Newland

Sun 2nd May - 21 Orange Tips on the **Bricket Wood** Transect **today**. Highest total recorded for any week since it began in 1997 - most years I haven't recorded that number at the site all season. Today's other highlight - two Ruby Tiger Moths in my back garden (**St Albans**). Never seen one there before - Malcolm Hull

APRIL 2004

Tues 27th April - I spent four hours at **Waterford** yesterday and despite excellent weather didn't see a grizzled skipper. I did have 10 orange tips, 4 peacocks, 3 small tortoiseshells and a small white - Jez Perkins (**Branch Grizzled Skipper co-ordinator - in addition to the 2004 challenge, we do need everyone out looking for Grizzled Skipper when they emerge as well, at new and old sites - LG**)

Mon 26th April - More Grizzled Skipper sightings in the Upper Thames Branch region today - news via Tom Dunbar (UTB Grizzled Skipper species champion)

Ware - I took a walk along the river, and over Widbury Hill after work today and saw the following: 5 Orange Tip, 1 Speckled Wood, 1 Comma, 1 Peacock, 5 Small Tortoiseshell, 2 Small White. **Yesterday** on the track from Widbury farm to Priors Wood I saw 8 Small Tortoiseshell and 1 Brimstone - Ian Edwards

We were at **Waterford** on **23rd April**, but did not find any Grizzled Skipper. Denis and I saw our first Orange Tip (male) at **Bullens Green on 16 April**, but then saw no more of them until **23rd April** when there was a male over the grassland at **Hertford Heath**. Also on **23 April** Denis spotted his first Holly Blue at **Essendon**. On the **24 April** we saw a Speckled Wood at **Smallford Pit** and yesterday a Small White at **Berrygrove Wood** near **Aldenham** plus lots of Green-veined Whites and an abundance of Small Tortoiseshells (37 in all) along the River Colne near **Otterspool**, mostly basking on sunny clumps of nettle. The same afternoon Denis saw his first **Large White** at King George playing fields in **Welwyn Garden City** - Christine Shepperson

Sun 25th April - Wendover Bucks yesterday Nick Bowles saw on his transect **his first Grizzled skipper** of the year - news via UKleps

Went on to **Waterford Heath** - spent about an hour there but no Grizzled Skipper for me. Robert Callf told me that Jeremy Gaskell saw a **Humming-bird hawkmoth** at **Vicarage Farm** on **Saturday**. I saw orange tip lay eggs on garlic mustard at **Fairlop, Essex**, with Alan Bell, and a Holly Blue there was his first site record in 26 years - Andrew Middleton

Maple Cross, in my garden in the last few days I have seen both Holly Blue and Orange Tip. My first of the season. Both seem to be patrolling through my area. Also visited by Peacock and Small Tortoiseshell - Ann.Piper

Group Visit to **Houghton Head Common, Hitchin** starting at Ref. TL178308 and walking to TL162300 (just under 2 km). Time: 10.30 - 12.30. Temp: 19 deg - 10 Yellow Brimstones, 10 Orange Tips, 1 Small White, 5 Holly Blue, 1 Small Tortoiseshell, 3 Peacock, 8 Speckled Wood - Val Fullforth

I see someone else also had a **Common Blue** on Sat 24th April, in North Herts. I saw one at **Ickleford** and can't recall them ever being out earlier there. Good *pieridae* numbers, 16 Orange tips, 10 brimstones and some G-V Whites, although some were Orange Tip females I'm sure but couldn't get on them long enough to be dead certain - Stuart Pittman

King's Langley Garden Transect, transect week 4 - Today we saw our first Holly Blue in my mother's garden in King's Langley. On Friday 23rd, we saw a male Peacock & Large White. The only other species seen this year at this site in King's Langley were Small Tortoiseshells recorded in transect week 3 - Dave Chandler

Ware garden, hard to believe but I have just seen the first butterfly in my garden since the 31st March, a Holly Blue (okay I have been out on some of the better days but even when at home "on good days" I have seen nothing!) - Liz Goodyear

Sat 24th April - Bramfield, 2 Holly Blues, 1 Orange Tip, at the Horns Bull Green 1 Brimstone, at **Bramfield Wood** 1 Brimstone and 1 Orange Tip. **Recent news, on 19th April** a **Red Admiral** in **Ware Park** and **23rd April** at **Balls Wood**, 1 Green-veined White, 1 Small Tortoiseshell, 12 Peacocks, 2 Commas and 8 Speckled Woods. **On 23rd April**, 2 Holly Blues and an Orange Tip in **Bengeo** (Jane Wood) - Andrew Wood

Ware, walking along Musley Lane this morning I saw a female Small White. During the past week I have had daily sightings of Orange Tip along the old Lea - Ian Edwards

I have a few sightings to send you later but I thought you would be interested in one in particular. I saw a **male Common Blue** near **Hexton** today - Steven Penn

Orange tip, holly blue and green-veined white in my garden today in **Barnet**. Orange tip first seen about four days ago - Nigel Taylor

Enfield garden adjacent to Enfield Playing Fields - Orange-tip, Speckled Wood, and Holly Blue now on the wing - Phil Rhodes

During a beautiful sunny and hot day at **King's Mead**, I saw 11 Small Tortoiseshell, 7 White sp, 4 Peacock, 5 Orange Tip, 3 Brimstone and 2 Holly Blue. In the afternoon at **Maple Lodge Nature Reserve**, 2 Brimstone, 4 Holly Blue, 6 Small Tortoiseshell, 1 Speckled Wood and 4 Peacock - Alan Reynolds

Male Orange-tip "breezed" through garden in **Melbourn** this morning - Guy Manners

Fri 23rd April - I saw a couple of Peacocks opposite the pub in **Norton Green today** - Steven Penn

Barnet, this **Orange Tip** photo was taken at my home address on the **16th April**. Have also had my first **Large White** on **22nd April**, with a nice fresh peacock - Rachel Terry (*this record of an Orange Tip means there is now one less square on the "map" to visit between now and the end of May for more details of the 2004 Mapping Challenge - LG*)

I had a look for Green Hairstreaks on the **Pegsdon Hills** today but could not find any. None on the usual master hedge. Brimstone and Peacock were flying. Small Tortoiseshell at Old Hale Way allotments in **Hitchin**. Orange Tip at Silvermead, **Broxbourne yesterday** - Nigel Agar

Shepreth Moor NR (S Cambs) 1-2 males Brimstone, 2 (1 poss. female brimstone) White sp(p)., 3 Speckled Wood. **Church Hill (Fox Covert NR,)** 2 males Brimstone, 2-4 Peacock, 1 Comma, + 2-5 strong-flying nymphalids, (maybe overlap with Peacock count) + 1 Seven-spot Ladybird - Guy Manners

Thurs 22nd April - Therfield Heath NR: 1 Speckled Wood, **Church Hill:** 2-4 Peacock, 1 Comma, **Church Hill-Fox Covert border:** 1 Peacock, **Fox Covert NR:** 1 Peacock. I was well displeased with the weather: glorious sunshine in Melbourn all morning... Then it clouded over literally as I was donning my trainers at the edge of the reserve complex! Nearly missed the Speckled Wood, as it flew across the path and landed about 4-5 m up a tree. Peacock at E side of Church Hill was very jumpy. Sometimes interacting with Comma, could not tell if the same insect was following me or I had 2 or 3. Definite 2nd at W end of the Hill. Plenty of Pasque Flowers, along with "violets" and Cowslips. Still precious little offering nectar to our beautiful friends. Guess what? It's now sunny again! Guy Manners (*there is "a law" to describe this type of weather - LG*)

Wed 21st April - News from 17 April - male Holly Blue at Commonswood Reserve, **Welwyn Garden City** - Roger Gibbons

Tues 20th April - Orange Tip, nice to get the "lady of the hedgerow " at **Ickleford** today a few weeks later than 2003 though, along with my first **Cuckoo** - Stuart Pittman

One **Holly Blue and one Small White** this morning (**20th April**) in the front garden of my house in **Pinner** - Graham Elcombe

Sat 17th April - Visited **Tetrad TQ0472** this afternoon. It is largely filled by **Staines Reservoir**. Stanwell Burial Ground and Staines Cemetery had seemed likely butterfly areas but produced nothing, too breezy perhaps. Having said that I did get 1 Small Tortoiseshell on the reservoir bank. So this square is up and running (limping?) - Dick Middleton (*This area is in desperate need of visits so any offers of help is really appreciated - LG*)

Nice female **Holly Blue** in **Tring** today, my first and I have seen **Green Hairstreak** already but **5 miles over our border in Bucks** - Nick Bowles

Today, during an excursion into **TQ09 for the Dragonfly Atlas**, saw my first **Orange Tip** at **Croxley Green**, and 13 Small Torts and 2 Peacock at The Grove Golf Course, **Watford** - Alan Reynolds

Ramney Marsh: speckled wood at 11.34 on the edge of Turkey Brook - Martin Shepherd

Fri 16th April - Hemel Hempstead, was working on my allotment this morning when I saw a Comma fluttering around my gooseberry bushes. It stopped several times and I was able to approach it closely enough to see that it was a female ovipositing. I am not aware that this is a recognised larval food plant and the choice is even more strange with a large clump of lush nettles only a couple of metres away - Malcolm Newland

I had a walk at lunch time today and I saw 4 Peacocks near **Norton Green** and also saw a Peacock in **Stevenage** on the **14th** - Steven Penn

Ware, along the Old Lea this morning one Peacock. In my garden late morning my first **Orange Tip** of the year a male - Ian Edwards

Cheshunt Park, 1 male Orange Tip, Holly Blue & Peacocks. **Tetrad bashing** in the **Theobalds area, 1 female Brimstone**, pair of mating **Green-veined Whites**, plus Small Tortoiseshell, Comma, Small White and Peacock. **Cuffley area near Sopers Viaduct**, Peacocks, Comma, Small Tortoiseshell and a white. Apart from the first Orange Tip and Holly Blue, no more although it did get cloudy and no Speckled Wood - Andrew Middleton

Thurs 15th April - One of the volunteers working in Pond Wood said they had an **Orange Tip** & a Brimstone in their **Potters Bar garden yesterday** (13th). Today in the **North Mymms Park** area my first two Commas of the year (also several Peacocks in the vicinity). Also my second Small white - **Brookmans Park** - Rupert Pyrah

Wed 14th April - *Still no Orange Tip report in our branch area but they are flying in other areas - LG*

Today at **Pond Wood, Potters Bar** - 6 Peacocks, plus my first Brimstone. And in my garden **Brookmans Park**), a Peacock and my first **Holly Blue** - Rupert Pyrah

Walked the **Icknield Way from Pirton to Lilley** & saw **Brimstone 31, Peacock 27, Small Tortoiseshell 16, Comma 5**, A good deal of work on track widening has taken place recently, which should improve this section of the path as a butterfly habitat over time - Malcolm Hull

Garston (near Watford): Holly Blue flying strongly in the sunshine and news from **Mon 12th April, Radlett area**: one unidentified (small) white species; one male Brimstone; Peacock & Comma well represented; Small Tortoiseshell the commonest species. A Stoat (not a frequent sight in this part of Herts) flushed a Little Owl near Field House Farm - C M Everett

Tues 13th April - Even more butterflies in **Folly Lane today**, including Comma, which was absent yesterday. Also had a Comma in my **St. Albans garden** (quite a rare event) which appeared to be nectaring on *Clematis Almondi* - Malcolm Hull

On a short walk along a farm footpath in **Maple Cross** today around 4.30pm I saw 12 tortoiseshells mostly basking in late sunshine and 2 commas. Ann Piper

Hummingbird Hawkmoth feeding on Aubretia this morning 11.30am in Julian's garden in **Bishop Stortford** - Jim Fish

Yesterday had a brimstoneat **Amwell** flying north along the canal by the watchpoint at about 3.30pm - Nigel Taylor

Mon 12th April - I was in **Walkern** today and I saw 2 Brimstones, 2 Peacocks, 1 Comma and 1 Small Tortoiseshell - Steven Penn

Had a few more **today** - 4 peacocks in the Potwells area (**North Mymms**), 2 at **Tyttenhanger Farm**, plus my 1st **Small White** there also - Rupert Pyrah

At **Folly Lane, St Albans** this morning **24 Small Tortoiseshells** - 10 sunning themselves on a single patch of nettles, other nectaring on damson & dandelions, 4 Peacocks, 1 Small White, 1 Brimstone - male patrolling up & down a hedge, **1 Speckled Wood** - my first of the year. At **Bricket Wood** this afternoon 11 Peacocks, 8 Brimstones (7 of them male), 6 Comma, 1 Small Tortoiseshell. Both Peacocks & Commas nectaring on Blackthorn - Malcolm Hull

Small Tortoiseshell sunning itself at **Tyttenhanger GP** on **April 9th** - my 1st (and only) sighting of the year. Looking back at last year's records, they're very late this year. I've been birding for 3+ hours for the last 4 days, and not a sausage otherwise - Rupert Pyrah

Sat 10th April - Yesterday I visited the two blank squares in the NE Uxbridge area, Small Tortoiseshell (1) in Swakelys Park, Ickenham. Small Tortoiseshell (6), Comma (1) and Brimstone (1) along the **River Pinn, adjacent to Ruislip Golf Course at West Ruislip** - Dick Middleton (*Thanks Dick - if everyone watching this website could do this, it would really help our challenge! If you watch outside our branch area, all other BC branches need help as well, just contact your local branch organiser*)

Yesterday, 9 April Sewardstone Marsh: small tortoiseshell. **Cheshunt Marsh:** small tortoiseshell. **Ramsey Marsh:** four small tortoiseshells. Late news from **31 March - small white**, near Lytton Way, **Stevenage**. - Martin Shepherd

Tues 6th April - If you are feeling short of butterflies at the moment try **Wormley Wood**. On **Friday 2/4/04** there were **12 peacocks and 20 commas** plus probable small tortoiseshell fighting over territory in the open glades in the middle of the wood. These are minimum numbers as I did not note them all as I was trying to catch *Eriocrania* at the time and ignoring things over a couple of mm in size! Mark Cooper (*Mark is a moth person!*)

Sun 4th April - Rye Meads, 1 butterfly seen on a sheltered warmer bank, could have been Small Tortoiseshell but not able to get close, otherwise too cold - Liz Goodyear

Sat 3rd April - *Whilst helping at Capel Manor Gardening Show today, we were told on two occasions by local people that they had seen **Holly Blue last week - LG***

Sightings news from Nick Sampford - **2nd April**; Small tortoiseshell at **Ware** & Brimstone at **Colliers End**. **31st March:** Peacocks at **Much Hadham, Thundridge & Ashwell**. Small tortoiseshell at **Much Hadham & Ashwell [4]**. Comma at **Much Hadham [2], Thundridge, Buntingford & Ashwell**. Brimstone at **Puckeridge [f], Buntingford, Sandon [2], Ashwell**.

Fri 2nd April - First **Small White** of year for me, today 2nd April in front garden in **>Melbourn (Cambs)**, feeding on Common Dandelion (15:28 onwards) - Guy Manners

News from the **31st March**, saw a **Small White** in **central London (close to Waterloo Station)** this lunchtime - Paul Johnson (*Paul has confirmed that the butterfly was south of the Thames!*)

This is to remind you that as of the day after tomorrow [**now yesterday**], butterflies will be dusting off their wings and sallying forth in their millions to grace fields, woods and derelict urban wastelands, just so that you can have the pleasure of counting them...Transect weeks begin on a Thursday this year. If you are planning to start a transect, please read through the transect instructions (click here) on the website thoroughly before doing so. If you need recording sheets or transect instructions, these are also downloadable from the website. And if you would like to just help out on a transect now and again, please Email me and I will put you in contact with a transect near you.

Finally, 2004 is the last year of our second "Butterflies for the new Millennium" project, so butterfly mapping is a priority this year, and there are dozens of blank and poorly-recorded areas waiting for a visit. The Branch Annual Report is going to be late this year, so if you would like more information on where to record, please Email me. Wishing you a sunny and butterfly-filled summer - John Murray

Thurs 1st April -

Ponders End garden, 1 Red Admiral this lunchtime, in poor sunshine - Andrew Middleton
Therfield Heath-Fox Covert NR complex news from **30th March, 2-3 male Brimstone, 1 Small Tortoiseshell, 1-2 Comma, 2 Peacock**, also **Therfield Heath NR, 1 male Brimstone** - Guy Manners

To the records already sent in **yesterday** on such a beautiful spring day, I can add from the lane by **Norton Green 10 Brimstone, 1 Comma, 8 Small Tortoiseshell and 6 Peacock** - Alan Reynolds

March 2004

Wed 31st March - I'm sure you'll get loads of emails after today's glorious weather. For what it's worth, I saw the following in **Ally Pally [Alexandra Palace]** this lunchtime (12-2):- **5 Small Tortoiseshell, 3 Brimstone, 2 Comma, 2 Small White, 1 Peacock**. Good to see so many reports of Small Tortoiseshell. Maybe its troubles of the last few years in the southeast are over - Keir Mottram

Took an hour's walk from **Ware down the river to Amwell Pit and back over Widbury Hill** and saw in total **2 Commas, 3 Peacocks, 2 Brimstones and 23 Small Tortoiseshells** - Andrew Wood

Be ready for Small White (Norfolk & London, Waterloo) and Orange Tip (Warwickshire) News via UK-Leps - LG

Ware garden, now seen three butterflies this year, a **male Brimstone** flew through the garden and I found a **Comma** nectaring on Grape Hyacinth when putting out the washing. Incidentally, a white towel is now covered in "black bug like things." - Liz Goodyear

Tues 30th March - Brimstone male by **Thundridge Hall** news via Tom - he was really pleased to tell me he'd seen a brimstone - Nick Sampford

Essex, Bedfords Park, (Metropolitan Essex) ~ 2 brimstone, 1 red admiral, 33 small tortoiseshells, 28 peacocks, 22 comma - Colin Jupp

I have been out and about in Hertfordshire and have also seen my first butterflies of the year today. I saw **two Brimstones** on the outskirts of **arpenden** and **two in Stevenage**. I then saw **two Small Tortoiseshells** in my parent's garden in **tevenage**. I saw **4 Brimstones** as I drove between **Hitchin and Hexton** this afternoon. Over the road from **Hexton** (part of the circular walk) I saw **4 Brimstones, 4 Peacocks, 3 Small Tortoiseshells and 1 Comma** - Steven Penn

Went for a walk west of **Ware** at lunchtime and saw at various different locations a total of **3 Small Tortoiseshells, 1 Peacock, 3 Brimstone and 4 Commas** - Andrew Wood

Peacock here this afternoon, at **Berkhamsted**. Also here a **Brimstone** on **Tuesday, 16 March**. Sorry this one is late. Also a **Brimstone** this morning near **Tringsford Reservoir** - Michael Anderson

Brilliant day drove from

Bishops Stortford to Harlow via Allen's Green then Harlow to Ware via Roydon around 12 - 2 and had **Brimstone (7 including 2 female), Comma (4 including 2 together), Small Tortoiseshell (1). Brimstone** also Park Road, **Ware** [Angela's sighting]. Off now to do school run might see a few more - Nick Sampford

Wormley and Broxbourne Wood. Counted **ten Comma, four Peacock, one Small Tortoiseshell and one male Brimstone** - first butterflies I've seen on the wing this year! Phil Rhodes

I saw my first butterfly of the season at 1pm today - a washed out **Small Tortoiseshell** in **Finsbury Circus**, central London - Dave Chandler

Ware garden, at last I have just seen my first butterfly of the year, **1 Peacock** - Liz Goodyear

Tues 23rd March - Here are two pictures from my archives; the first moth (pearl-like wings) came to fluorescent lighting one evening in eastern India. The second is a Blue Pansy I saw one spring morning in NE India. The *Glyphodes bivitalis* was about an inch and a half to two across from wing tip to tip. By the way, I saw my first butterfly of the year today (**22nd March**) in Ireland. I'm in **Waterford** and saw a Small Tortoiseshell fly by - Bob Hasra (*Thanks to the ukmoths email group and Martin Honey for help with identification*)

Some late news, reported to me by a friend **1 Yellow Brimstone and 1 Small Tortoiseshell** flying over gardens of cottages along Chalkdell Path, Lucas Lane, **itchin** - Val Fullforth

Sun 21st March - At **Garston** this morning a female **Small White** found on a garden pavement, presumably having emerged from a shed or other warm environment. She is unlikely to survive the weather which is forecast for the coming week - Colin Everett

Thurs 18th March - I saw, rather surprisingly given the cloud and breeze, one **Small Tortoiseshell** today flying around flowering blackcurrant in Buryfield Way in **Ware** - Andrew Wood

Few more butterflies from **yesterday**, **Brimstone** at **Sawbridgeworth by train station** and **Brimstone Ware** in Croft Road in Dad's garden. **Thundridge**, Tom saw a **Peacock** on the way to lunch yesterday [he described it as the brown one with big eyes]. Don't look like there be any about today - Nick Sampford

Wed 17th March - **Cobbins Brook, Essex, 4, Peacock, Comma, Small Tortoiseshell, Ponders End, White Species (smaller)** - Andrew Middleton

2 Orange Underwing species (moth) Williams Wood, **rent Park** - Robert Callf

Ware (Old Lea Widbury Hill) I sat by the river for half an hour this morning, and watched a **Small Tortoiseshell** sunning its self. Also three times a **Brimstone** flew past me, not sure if it was three separate butterflies or one on a circuit - Ian Edwards

One **Brimstone** near **Sele Mill, Hertford** @ approx. 09.45hrs. **Small tortoiseshell** outside Herts at the **Bittern watchpoint** this morning - Les Borg

2 Small Tortoiseshell yesterday(16/3/04) at Brunel University, **Uxbridge** - Steve Pash

I was passing my local launderette in **Muswell Hill**, North London last night (**16th March**) when I noticed the inmates pointing at something on the door frame inside - it turned out to be a fresh **Lime Hawk-moth** *Mimas tiliae*, months early - Brian Price

Welwyn Garden City, 11.00hrs, saw **comma** in garden - Michael Worby

10am, phone call from Nick Sampford to say he had just seen his first **Brimstone** of the year, flying around the **Rush Green Roundabout near Hertford**

Had a **Red Admiral** yesterday (**15/3/04**), in the **Turnford Brook** area - Jez Perkins

Tues 16th March - **Peacock** at 12.05 in St James' Churchyard, **Enfield Highway** - Martin Shepherd

It felt like Spring for the first time today, and I saw my first butterfly of the year - a **Red Admiral**, which flew past my office window in **Welwyn Garden City**, just after lunch. It seems rather early for a migrant to have arrived, so I assume it is probably one which managed to overwinter somewhere - Ian Small

Went up to Balls Wood for half an hour at lunch time and saw **5 Brimstones, 6 Commas** and **Peacock**, but no Orange Underwing Moths - Andrew Wood

London N18 (Edmonton area), 2 Small Tortoiseshells in the yard this morning - Gavin Vicary

Ponders End garden, 1pm, brief sighting of an orange butterfly, possible Comma but not definite - Andrew Middleton

Mon 15th March - My cousin was down **Saturday** and had a **Peacock** at **Thundridge** along the river - Nick Sampford

Wed 3rd March - Yesterday I saw a **Red admiral** on the western edge of Ladywalk Wood, **Maple Cross**. It was basking in the early afternoon (13.10) sun on the footbridge over the M25. I know this record is close to the county boundary but I think it just falls into Hertfordshire - Steve Pash

Mon 1st March - are (Widbury Hill) **Thursday 26/2/04**. I found a **Peacock** at work, it was on a pallet outside in the frost. I took it into the warmth of my office and gave it some sugar water on a saucer, it fed from this and flew about the office. Its still OK **today** (1.03.04) I will release it tomorrow once the frost has cleared - Ian Edwards

February 2004

Sun 29th February - Winter Meeting, a big thank you to everyone for coming despite the forecast of bad weather (which didn't happen). We hope you all enjoyed it, despite the technical hitches and it was nice to see so many new faces! - Liz Goodyear

Sun 15th February - While the generally cloudy days may have temporarily dampened hopes for the appearance of further overwintering butterflies, a MV moth-trap operated in a back garden at **arston (Watford)** overnight from the 14th produced a single **Common Quaker**. The first adults of this common spring species typically appear in the 2nd or 3rd week of March (occasionally in late February in advanced years). If the moths are making an earlier start to this year, I suggest the moth-trappers do so as well! - Colin Everett

Thurs 12th February - Put the trap out in **Stanmore Country Park**, last night. Two points: had an early **Double-striped Pug** and three Dotted Borders. The last look very much like Scarce Umbers. **About 60 macros in total**. Small and Pale brindled Beauty, March Moth, Spring Usher, one Early Moth, Chestnut and Satellite were the the other species. I'm still sorting out the micros - John Hollingdale

Wed 11th February - Hitchin, today at 13.25 a **Red Admiral** flew up against conservatory window, fluttered and then disappeared in garden vegetation. Believe the squirrel who was scurrying around in the beech hedge, may have disturbed it - Val Fullforth

On **Monday (9th Feb)**, Tony Bliss and 9 others in a walking group watched a **Painted Lady** sunning itself on the south side of **Flamstead** church at 1pm that day - news via Charles Baker (Beds & Northants Branch)

Sun 8th February - First Butterfly of the year yesterday in **Hyde Park**, Westminster - a **Red Admiral**, fairly pecked - Malcolm Hull

Sat 7th February - 11.25, **Painted Lady** at Harold Hill, Essex - Colin Jupp news via Andrew Middleton

We saw a very fresh looking **Red Admiral** at **Fishers Green** today. It was sunning itself on a path - Kevin and Sandra Standbridge

Fri 6th February - Must be getting warmer**Humming-bird Hawk Moth yesterday** - seen at Crews Hill Nursery (Middlesex - near Whitewebbs Wood) by John Widgery - News via Colin

Plant

Thurs 5th February - Watford, I thought I would send this record to you. It was of **Small Tortoiseshell** in my front garden **today**, approx 12:00. It was either in or on a lavender plant when I disturbed it. It flew up, settled on the wall, then moved off - Bob Cripps

Wed 4th February - Vicarage Farm, **Trent Park area** 11.15am, **PPeacock** in good condition, fluttered along field-edge and settled briefly - Robert Callf and Robin White
2 o'clock, just saw a **Small Tortoiseshell** in The Hyde at **Ware** flitting around a sheltered bit of the A10 embankment - Andrew Wood

January 2004

Fri 23rd January - North Harrow, I tried the Heath trap in a different part of the garden last night and lo and behold not one but two moths were in it this morning; the Chestnut and Dark Chestnut - John Hollingdale

Sat 17th January - Late news from the **11th January** - Diana Furley on a local BNA walk was surprised to see a **Red Admiral** flying in Graffridge Wood, **Knebworth** last **Sunday**

Mon 12th January - *(news via John Murray - In view of the weather yesterday, the observation below doesn't surprise me. I expected to see butterflies yesterday too. Did anyone else see anything?)* **Wheathampstead area**, You might be interested that I saw a butterfly this morning (**11th January**) at the top of Marshall's Heath Lane, where it joins The Slype! I tried, but failed, to get a really close view of it when it landed briefly. From its size and what I could see of its appearance I am sure it was a **Peacock**, though I did not get a clear view of the "eyes" - Peter Wilkinson

Thurs 1st January - Harrow, at 7.30 this evening Margaret spotted a **Large White** flying around the kitchen. Is this a record? We think it came from a tray of plants brought to the Ruislip Barn in September by Alan Downie. Under one pot was a pupa and I put it in a flower pot full of compost took it home and forgot it. I've put it in the garage now but I don't think it will survive - John Hollingdale