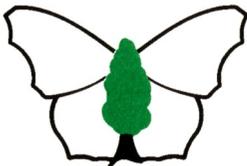


HERTFORDSHIRE AND MIDDLESEX BRANCH NEWSLETTER



ISSUE 29

MARCH 2002



**BUTTERFLY
CONSERVATION**SM

Branch Conservation Effort...

by Gavin Vicary

Since I joined the branch I have always been keen for us to play an active role in conservation. A number of butterfly species disappeared from Hertfordshire and Middlesex in the Twentieth Century and if we are to change this trend in the next, then efficient monitoring and conservation will play an important role.

As part of our conservation effort, we have recently tried to encourage individuals to take responsibility for a particular species

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and co-ordinate the conservation and monitoring work for the Butterfly (or Moths) involved.

This follows the example set by Christine Shepperson with the work that she has done on the Grizzled Skipper over recent years. Christine soon “press-ganged” a small army of helpers and drew up a hit list of sites to be surveyed during its flight period in April and May. These sites included historical ones and others which it was felt had potential for grizzled skipper to be found at.

The results were remarkably successful as there are now several sites in the branch area from where the Grizzled Skipper is recorded. This contrasts with John Murray’s First Butterfly Report in 1995 when no Grizzled Skipper sightings were received and the butterfly was feared to be on the verge of extinction in Hertfordshire and Middlesex.

Having established the location of Grizzled Skipper colonies, it is now possible to influence management of these sites to ensure that they survive and flourish. The branch have been asked to advise at one site and a trial work party was recently held at another by branch volunteers. This involved removal of sycamore seedlings, which are very invasive and were shading out the butterfly’s foodplants. A long section of south facing bank was cleared and this should ensure the survival of Grizzled Skippers at this site in the short term at least.

Practical conservation of this nature will make a real difference and is essential if we are to prevent further losses of our butterflies and moths. The following are species that people have “signed up” to take responsibility for:-

Grizzled Skipper	-	Christine Shepperson
Purple Emperor	-	Elizabeth Goodyear / Andrew Middleton
Small Copper	-	Gavin Vicary
Fritillaries	-	John Whiteman
White Admiral	-	Andrew Wood
Dingy Skipper	-	Brian Jessop
Green Hairstreak	-	Nigel Agar

If anyone wishes to help out with a particular project or take responsibility for any other butterfly or moth, then we would be pleased to hear from you. Brown Hairstreak, Wall and Small Blue are other species that we are particularly keen for people to volunteer to take responsibility for.

[See separate leaflet from Andrew Wood on the White Admiral, and article on p.7 from Brian Jessop re the Dingy Skipper - Editor]

Recruitment of Regional Staff Strengthens Butterfly Conservation's Work in the London Area

Butterfly Conservation have recently appointed a London Regional Development Officer (RDO), Emily Funnell, to strengthen their work in the Greater London area. Emily is working with the branches in the region to deliver Butterfly Conservation targets, including the implementation of Regional Action Plans. She is also working to raise awareness of Butterfly Conservation throughout the region. This post is funded by The Bridge House Estates Trust Fund, who support a wide range of environment and community projects in the London area.

Emily's background

Emily has a Master's Degree in conservation biology and has a particular interest in invertebrates. Her previous job as the Invertebrate Biodiversity Co-ordinator for The Natural History Museum has given her a good understanding of the issues relating to invertebrate conservation in Britain. Emily also worked for three years as a Senior Project Executive for the 'Volunteer Action' department of WWF-UK. This experience,



combined with a long history of working as a conservation volunteer herself, has given Emily a good understanding of the value of volunteers and the issues that are important to them. She writes 'I am really looking forward to working closely with Butterfly Conservation branch members as they have immense knowledge of the butterflies and moths in their regions. They are aware of the problems that are facing our Lepidoptera, and often have a good idea as to what action needs to be taken to conserve them. I am sure that by working together we will be able to build on the excellent work already done to conserve butterflies and moths in the London area.'

Working with branches

Emily will be working with five branches of Butterfly Conservation; Surrey, Kent, Upper Thames, Hertfordshire and Middlesex, and

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Cambridgeshire and Essex. Sven Rufus, the newly-appointed South-East RDO, will also be working with the Surrey, Kent and Upper Thames Branches. Emily spent her first few weeks setting up an office in the region and developing a wide range of contacts. Meeting all the branches in her area was a top priority, as it was essential to find out what Lepidoptera conservation work had been carried out in the region and who was involved. These meetings pinpointed what action is needed, what opportunities exist for future work and what support the branches require.

Butterflies and moths in the London area

A great deal of London consists of urban areas, however there are still many good areas of butterfly and moth habitat. It is a surprising fact that over two thirds of London is made up of green spaces and water! London possesses many lovely old parks and gardens and seventeen national priority habitats are found in the region. Several of these priority habitats are important for butterflies and moths, for example lowland meadows, lowland heathland and ancient (or species rich) hedgerows.

London is a stronghold for some nationally rare species of Lepidoptera, such as the Buttoned Snout moth, which is a Biodiversity Action Plan priority species. Over 60 species of butterflies have been recorded in the London area (plus another 10 or so that have been deliberately released or are of non-native origin). Much of London's remaining good butterfly and moth habitat is threatened by development and other human-related pressures. Over the past 50 years several species of butterfly have disappeared from London, including the Small Pearl-bordered Fritillary and the Marsh Fritillary. But it's not all bad news! Several species of butterfly and moth are expanding into the London area, for example the Purple Hairstreak.

Parks and gardens, nature reserves, railway lines, tree-lined roads, road verges and derelict land all provide precious wildlife habitat in London, and support the city's butterflies and moths. Emily says 'A great deal of good work has been done to conserve the butterflies and moths of London, but there is always plenty more to do! I am working



Buttoned Snout *Hypena rostralis*. Photo: David

with a wide range of organisations and individuals and am always keen to hear from people who have an interest in these beautiful insects.'

Contact details:

Emily Funnell, Regional Development Officer (London), Butterfly Conservation, 94 Lion Lane, Haslemere, Surrey, GU27 1JH
Tel/Fax: 01428 654343
E-mail: efunnell@butterfly-conservation.org

Obituary - Brian Wildridge

We regret to announce that Brian Wildridge, who was one of our Branch's oldest members, died recently aged 85. He worked as a self-employed gardener until his mid-seventies and took a great pride in his own "butterfly garden" in St. Albans. A keen recorder of his local area, he took a particular interest in the elusive Brown Hairstreaks of Bricket Wood and was convinced of their continued existence there. During his long life, Brian was fortunate enough to have seen the butterflies which have sadly been lost in our region. In the last war he was a P.O.W. in Silesia and recounted how observing the numerous Purple Emperors made his ordeal more acceptable.

Brian is survived by three daughters, a son and his niece Flo, who lived with him.
*Malcolm
Newland*

Nature Photography – A Talk by Les Borg, 19 January 2002, by Ian Small

There was a disappointing turnout for this, the first of two talks to the Branch by Les Borg, a professional wildlife photographer. Those who did attend were treated to about 200 excellent slides from Les's collection. The subject matter was wide-ranging, with bird- and wild flower- photography the only categories which were omitted. In their place, Les included a section on landscape photography, which he used to illustrate both the 'rule of thirds' and also the usefulness of warm-up filters.

We were treated to images of a wide range of mammals, including otters, badgers, foxes, wolves, mountain hare, deer, rabbits, wild cat and squirrels. A number of these had been obtained through visits to wildlife sanctuaries which, although providing access to animals more difficult to locate or approach in the wild, had their own difficulties in making the resulting images look 'natural'. On the other hand, Les also regularly uses a hide. One 'trick of the trade' shared with the audience was his imitation of a rabbit's distress call, which he had used to coax both foxes and a stoat in front of his lens.

Another section of the talk was devoted to smaller mammals e.g. mice, shrews, newts, frogs and toads during which Les described how best to use an aquarium to provide a 'window' into an artificially-created natural habitat, when it was not possible to obtain photographs in the wild. For some species, working with a trained and licensed handler is essential as the species are protected in law. A further section of the talk covered sea life, including whales, dolphins and seals. Amongst the latter were some very appealing images of seal pups taken on sandbanks in Lincolnshire.

Not surprisingly, a large part of the talk was devoted to invertebrate photography, in which we were treated not just to excellent butterfly photographs, but a superb collection of images of moths, caterpillars, damselflies and dragonflies. These included two series showing the emergence of adult dragonflies from the nymph, one sequence for the Downy Emerald and the other for the Emperor. Throughout, Les was keen to give advice on composition, encouraging us not to concentrate on having the subject too large in the frame, in order that habitat elements could enhance the image. The ability of an out-of-focus,

neutral background to enhance the subject was amply demonstrated, and Les was always quick to criticise his own slides where they did not live up to the expectations that he sets himself.

Throughout the talk, and in questions afterwards, Les offered technical tips on how to create publication-quality natural history photographs, including detailed discussions of film types and exposure compensation for subjects which would fool a camera's automatic exposure meters. It would be wrong, however, to give the impression that this was a talk only appreciated by photographers – any lover of natural history would have greatly enjoyed the afternoon.

Dingy Skippers, by Brian Jessop

I have just volunteered to be co-ordinator for the above species! I would appreciate any information from members or non-members of sightings, colonies or singletons. Other information required would be:

- grid reference where seen
- what food plants available
- temperature and/or weather
- time of day

The Dingy Skipper is an earlyish flying species, on the wing from early May to end of June, depending on the weather. It is moth-like in appearance and a very fast flyer – not at all easy to follow.



Larval foodplants are birdsfoot trefoil, horseshoe vetch and greater birdsfoot trefoil. Any information on eggs, larvae or chrysalis would be very welcome.

Please send any records to: Brian Jessop, 22 Okeley Lane, Tring, Herts, HP23 4HE. Apologies to you 'e-mailers', but I am not on computer.

My Nature Reserve, by Alan Cockburn

Chancing to pick up the December issue of the Branch Newsletter open at the page where Kitchener's disembodied hand points an imperative finger, my wife turned to me. "That means you!" she said. In such ways, authority claims its volunteers.

For some time I had been hoping to establish a sort of nature reserve in the paddock adjoining our garden. It is a long narrow field of nearly two acres, but no more than thirty-five yards wide, bounded by overgrown hedges and sloping gently along its length. A 1633 parish map shows the boundaries to have been just as they are today. Over the last 38 years we have kept a succession of animals: cows, donkeys, ponies, sheep, goats and geese. But in March 2000, when our daughter removed two dales ponies and a Shetland to a nearby farm, my opportunity had arrived.

Our son, a few years earlier, had presented me with a hole in the ground as a birthday present. Before we could puddle the bottom, rain filled the hole. With a few introduced native aquatic plants the pond soon attracted a diverse fauna.

The ponies left behind them a bare field of wet mud, and we had to wait until the end of May to get a tractor and harrow onto the ground. I had selected a grass and wildflower seed mixture closely matching the flora of Weston's Church Meadow, a nearby pasture managed as a site of scientific interest.

A green carpet soon began to cover the mud. This proved to be an almost pure stand of toad rush, but as summer advanced this gave way to a mixture of sown species and the recovering population of the old sward.

I cut a meandering grass path through the field the better to observe developments. Among some 20 grass species, buttercups and knapweed grew in abundance, and bird's foot trefoil and clovers had become common and widespread. Those great survivors, nettles, thistles and docks, grew close to the hedges where they had escaped the attentions of ponies and machinery. Some species, like yellow rattle and ladies' bedstraw failed to appear.

The flowers attracted three species of bumble bee and, among the more common kinds of butterfly, a few Large, Small and Essex

Skippers and Common Blues, one Ringlet, a Small Copper, up to nine Gatekeepers, 16 Meadow Browns and 13 Speckled Woods. Most unexpected visitors were two small blues in August and two Painted Ladies in September.

That autumn I cut the somewhat thin vegetation with a lawn tractor, but had to rake and collect the mown grass by hand.

The resident family of little owls enjoyed a plentiful supply of voles and field mice, as did our cat which also brought in shrews, moles, rats and rabbits. Several village cats, which visit the field, between them take a heavy toll.

Despite a wet winter, the 2001 growing season brought an increase in numbers of various plant species, notably ox-eye daisy and wild carrot. I had to shelve plans to control plant growth by grazing because of restrictions in livestock movement. Among the fauna 19 Broad-bodied Chasers emerged from the nymph stage. Azure damselflies had become plentiful, and Common Darter and Southern Hawker deposited eggs in the pond.



Azure Damselfly

Maximum counts of Meadow Brown butterflies, Gatekeepers and Ringlets were respectively 142, 56 and 8, and the three Skipper species had noticeably increased since the previous year. A Marbled White arrived in July. Numbers of Common Blues remained small.

Despite several healthy stands of kidney vetch, Small Blues stayed away. A few Small Coppers appeared in August, but Small Tortoiseshell sightings dwindled in 2001 to one or two of single individuals. Two narrow-bordered five-spot Burnet moths stayed for some days in July, and in August a Burnet Companion, fortunately identified by Colin Plant from my very poor photograph, and so correcting my over-enthusiastic speculation.

In terms of variety and number, moth trapping has been more



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rewarding in the garden and orchard, but some species have been recorded only in the paddock.

Grasshoppers, reintroduced in the late 90s through the agency of small boys and 5p pieces, became well established.

In late September, a contractor cut most of the meadow, much earlier than I had wanted, but the vegetation was too thick for my own tackle. I had to rake up and collect the hay, and was able to take a couple of late cuts before the ground became too wet for mowing.



Burnet Companion *Euclidia glyphica*. Photo: Rob Petley-Jones

One of my uncertainties is what to do with mole-hills. I don't wish to discourage moles, but they invade ground once the water table has fallen. Their mounds make mowing more difficult. I generally level most of them, but with the thought that they might provide a niche for fauna and flora that like drier conditions.

This season I intend making a more thorough survey of the flora, and hope to see increases in the fauna and a return of some of the species, like Lesser Whitethroat, that used to give such pleasure.

At this stage of its development the field hardly merits attention, but, if you are interested and passing this way, you would always be welcome to look round.

Alan Cockburn, February 2002, Tel: 01462 790349

Garden Butterflies Count, by Malcolm Hull

BC is launching a major new campaign to raise gardeners awareness of butterflies (see p.17). The campaign features TV personality and BC supporter Alan Titchmarsh. The aim is to improve garden habitats for butterflies. Herts & Middx Branch will be promoting this campaign at a series of public events across the two counties during the spring and summer. Ways you can help:

- ◆ Introduce butterfly friendly plants into your garden. Information and plants available from Malcolm Newland (01442 267200) or Alan Downie (01992 309621)
- ◆ Distribute copies of the leaflets to friends or display an A3 size poster. These are available from Malcolm Hull (01727 857893) or Beverly Evans (01929 400209)
- ◆ Visit one of this summers butterfly stalls listed below. An updated list will be posted on the branch website. More details from Malcolm Hull (as above)

Friday 5 – Sunday 7 April Capel Manor Spring Gardening & Country Show, Bullsmoor Lane, Enfield. Admission £6.

Thursday 11 – Sunday 14 April London Garden Show, Alexandra Palace, Hornsey. Admission £10 (Display stand only)

Saturday 18 – Sunday 19 May Three Rivers Environment Fair 2002, Three Valleys Water, Church St Rickmansworth Lock, Rickmansworth. Admission Free.

Saturday 25 – Sunday 26 May Herts County Show, The Showground, Dunstable Road, Redbourn Admission £7.50

Friday 7 – Sunday 9 June – Hatfield House Festival of Gardening, Hatfield House, Hatfield. Admission £9.50 (Display stand only)

Sunday 7 July Environmental Market, St Peters St, St Albans. Admission free

We are always on the lookout for new events to attend. If you know of one that might be suitable, please contact Malcolm Hull.

Winter Holidays on the Island of La-Palma (Canaries), 1-15 February 2002, by Brian Jessop

La Palma is a beautiful and very mountainous island. The temperature was mainly in the low 70's with the odd day around the high 70's.

This is their winter time, so I was not expecting to see too many butterflies. I was quite surprised at the variety of species seen. Easily the most common was the Small White – they were literally everywhere. I could not understand why they were laying eggs on small plants growing between the cobbles on pathways, when a few feet away there were larger, healthier plants growing. The next most common was the endemic Large White. I really looks something, flying about with its large splashes of black front wing markings. I was very lucky to witness one female laying her eggs on *Nasturtium foliage*. While she was laying, I took some photos and even touched her without her flying off because she was so engrossed in her egg-laying.

Speckled Wood seemed to be about the next abundant along with Clouded Yellow. Painted Lady was fairly common in certain areas and I couldn't figure out what was different about them. They were smaller than usual, and after referring to my book I realised that it was the American Painted Lady.

Only two Brimstones were seen, which again are endemic to the Canaries. Also the Red Admiral (endemic) was fairly common in places. They look an absolute picture, flying or settled. I only managed to see one Small Copper.

Plain Tigers were seen in one's and two's. A few Hummingbird Hawkmoths were seen while out on walks and the only blue butterflies (or hairstreaks) seen were two flying like the clappers and disappearing up the mountainside!

Towards the end of our second week, Bath Whites began to appear. One evening out, having a meal in a 'posh' restaurant, I was looking at the décor as you do and there, hanging from an electrical cable, was this hawk moth. It was too high up to get a close look, but it looked like a Spurge or Bedstraw Hawk



Bath White

moth.

On our last morning before leaving for home, we decided to go for a last drink at one of the many cobbled street bars. While sitting outside in the lovely sunshine, what should flutter by but a beautiful Monarch. Of all the places to see one it had to be in the middle of town!

As a matter of interest the highest point that we saw butterflies was at about 6000 ft, where we saw one Small White, one Clouded Yellow and one unidentified Brown.

La-Palma looks to be a butterfly lovers paradise in summer, but stout walking boots are needed. The island is not commercialised and not much English is spoken or understood. With a little Spanish it is easy to get by. It takes roughly 4 hours to fly there, and we stayed in Santa Cruz. The locals are friendly and we even made friends with a local shepherd on our walks. It was also a very good opportunity to get accustomed to using the Euro!

The Small Copper, by Gavin Vicary

As part of our conservation focus, I have volunteered to take a look at how the Small Copper is faring in Hertfordshire and Middlesex. This has resulted in one or two raised eyebrows because the Small Copper is a common butterfly isn't it?...well, we might like to think so, but it may be worth monitoring as the Small Copper is perhaps not as common as we might like it to be.

My own experience of the Small Copper in Hertfordshire and Middlesex is that it is a butterfly that I only really expect to see when I visit nature reserves. I can recall seeing Small Coppers in the last few years at Albury Nowers, Balls Wood, Hunsdon Mead, Fir and Pond Wood and in The Lea Valley Park. I cannot however think of a single occasion where I have come across it, in our branch region, away from such reserves.

In order to see just how common this attractive small butterfly is, Michael Healy who enters results on the database, kindly provided a summary of all the records received by the branch for the year 2000, which was the latest full year available. In this particular year a total of 296 sightings were received for the Small Copper in Hertfordshire and Middlesex.

These were received from 71 different sites of which 65 were nature

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reserves and 6 were gardens. This represented records from approximately fifteen percent of the tetrads that Hertfordshire and Middlesex covers. Of these records over one third came from a single site, Trent Park and half were from three sites; Trent Park, Patmore Heath and Commonswood LNR.

Michael Healy did point out, however, that the Small Copper may be slightly under recorded as the third brood is after the transects and hence the main recording effort, has finished in September.

Patmore Heath is where I walk my own transect and is the place I most often see small coppers. One of its foodplants sheep's sorrel is very common on the heath as it favours the dry acid conditions. I had noticed a considerable decline in the six years that I have been walking it. The numbers attained being:

Whilst the above results might look quite alarming Patmore Heath is a site where there are a number of factors which could have been having an affect. A reasonable amount of conservation work has taken place in recent years such that the amount of scrub, open heath, woodland and cleared areas has been constantly changing. In addition sporadic grazing and cutting over this time could also have led to anomalies.

I therefore started looking at other reserves and transects where the small copper occurs. I soon found in the 2000 Butterfly Report that John Murray had commented on the low numbers of Small Copper

Year	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001
No. Small Copper seen	82	100	87	52	23	11

being seen. He had however looked at some of the longer running transects. The results quoted are given below;

These clearly suggested that two or three years around 1995-97 had been exceptional ones for the Small Copper. The number of records for these years was also significantly higher. These had coincided with very good summers which many people may remember for the record numbers of migrants such as Painted Lady, Clouded Yellow and Camberwell Beauty.

The starting of my transect at Patmore heath seems to have coincided with this peak giving the illusion of a large decline in the following

years.

This illustrates the importance of the branch butterfly reports. As the number builds up (they have now been produced for the last seven

Number of Small Copper Seen										
Year	91	92	93	94	95	96	97	98	99	00
Colney Heath Common	3	1	5	17	88	41	30	11	3	3
The Warren	26	16	6	26	24	75	65	30	2	7

consecutive years) these will clearly become a powerful tool for monitoring trends in individual species. This information can then be used as a basis for conservation activities.

In addition further historical information is available in *The Butterflies of Hertfordshire* (Published in 1987) by Brian Sawford. In this he draws attention to a decline in Small Copper numbers over the previous forty years as ancient grasslands were lost and grazing was reduced with the result that populations became more restricted.

Brian Sawford also highlights that in drought years such as 1996 the food plants became desiccated resulting in low numbers. This contrasts with comments made by Ken King in the 2000 report suggesting that wetter conditions led to lush vegetation shading the foodplant also leading to low numbers. Thus a “happy medium” between the two would appear to be preferred.

From all the information available a number of conclusions concerning the small copper might be drawn. It appears that numbers have declined as a result of habitat loss and changing land use such that it is now a butterfly that is only likely to be infrequently encountered in Hertfordshire and Middlesex. In our densely populated area the pressures on land leading to this decline might well be expected to continue.

The Small Copper now appears to be very reliant on a small number of “stronghold” nature reserves particularly in years when conditions are not favourable. As such the conservation of these sites has

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become increasingly important.

Fluctuations in numbers can be expected depending on conditions such as the weather. A happy medium perhaps being preferred with desiccation of foodplant leading to low numbers in excessively hot years and shading of foodplant and slower larval development leading to low numbers in cooler, wetter years.

In future the Small copper might well act as a good indicator of how well the environmental balance is being maintained within Hertfordshire and Middlesex.



New BC Garden Survey - the Garden Butterflies Count

Recording and monitoring the changing fortunes of our butterflies and moths is what Butterfly Conservation does best. Many members take part in projects such as the existing Garden Butterfly Scheme, Butterflies for the New Millennium or transect recording. Not only does all this effort produce information that is the cornerstone of efforts to conserve butterflies and moths, but recording schemes also provide an important method of raising awareness and getting new people involved with BC's work.

BC have identified a clear need for a colourful, easy, accessible project aimed at the general public and one focused on recording common butterflies and moths in gardens is an obvious choice. The survey would raise awareness, inform, stimulate and allow the public to participate directly in scientific studies. Interest in wildlife gardening has never been higher. A recent offer of a BC Garden Butterfly ID chart in the Daily Telegraph resulted in 2000 requests, and illustrates the potentially huge audience for a high profile UK garden butterfly survey.

The new garden survey will begin in April 2002 and will be run centrally, imposing no additional demands on Branch volunteers. Although it is a huge undertaking, we are confident that it will attract the attention that it deserves, giving us the opportunity to communicate with many thousands of new people. It will also build upon the Millennium Atlas in raising awareness of the plight of butterflies and their role as indicators of the health of the countryside and urban areas. Not least, it will encourage people to think about their gardens as habitat for butterflies and moths and encourage them to grow larval foodplants and good nectar sources.

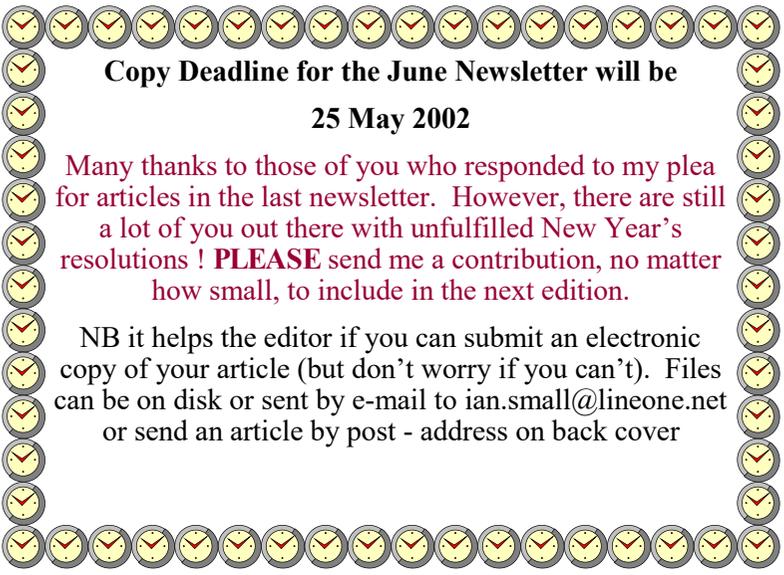
The survey will be promoted via the media, with features and news articles appearing from April 2002 onwards. Alan Titchmarsh, BC Vice-president and celebrity gardener has kindly agreed to be the public face of the survey, ensuring a high profile in the media. BC will also be promoting the survey at various major events this year, such as the Chelsea Flower Show and 'Gardener's World Live' in Birmingham. The free survey pack will include information on butterfly gardening, a survey form, colour identification chart and information about other BC recording projects. We hope that the survey will be a useful tool for the Branches to engage members of the

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public at events, talks, guided walks etc. Posters and flyers have been circulated to Branches for use at such events.

Although aimed primarily at the general public, we would be happy, of course, for any BC members to take part in this new survey. However, we are conscious of the enormous amount of work already undertaken by Branch volunteers and would not like this new project to distract from other activities. The existing garden butterfly survey, which has generated a wealth of useful information over the past 10 years, will continue along side the new scheme.

Richard Fox (Surveys Manager) & Beverley Evans (Membership Development Officer) - BC Head Office, Dorset.



Copy Deadline for the June Newsletter will be

25 May 2002

Many thanks to those of you who responded to my plea for articles in the last newsletter. However, there are still a lot of you out there with unfulfilled New Year's resolutions ! **PLEASE** send me a contribution, no matter how small, to include in the next edition.

NB it helps the editor if you can submit an electronic copy of your article (but don't worry if you can't). Files can be on disk or sent by e-mail to ian.small@lineone.net or send an article by post - address on back cover



Conservation Dates

Conservation work is one of the most important activities of the Society, as loss or neglect of suitable habitats is one of the major reasons for the decline in many of our butterflies as well as other wildlife.

Below are a series of dates across Herts. and Middlesex where you can help with essential management that aims to maintain the correct conditions on these sites for the wildlife that inhabits them. Several of the dates are run by the HMWT on their nature reserves.

Millhopper's Pasture SP 900149. Fourth Sunday of the month. Meet at 10.30 am. John and Margaret Noakes need your help. (01296) 660072.

Therfield Heath, TL 335400 First Sunday of each month from 10.00 a.m. - 1 p.m. Details from Vincent Thomson (01763) 341443.

Duchies Piece (Aldbury Nowers) SP 952131. Third Sunday of each month. Meet 10.00 a.m. in the lay-by, near Tring station. For details ring Alan Strawn (new reserve warden) on (01442) 232946

Hertford Heath TL 354111. For details ring Anthony Oliver on (01992) 583404.

Fryent Country Park - details from Leslie Williams at the Brent Ecology Unit on (0181) 206 0492

Patmore Heath TL 443257. Meet at 10.00 a.m. on the last Sunday of each month. Further details from Gavin Vicary (01279) 771933

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