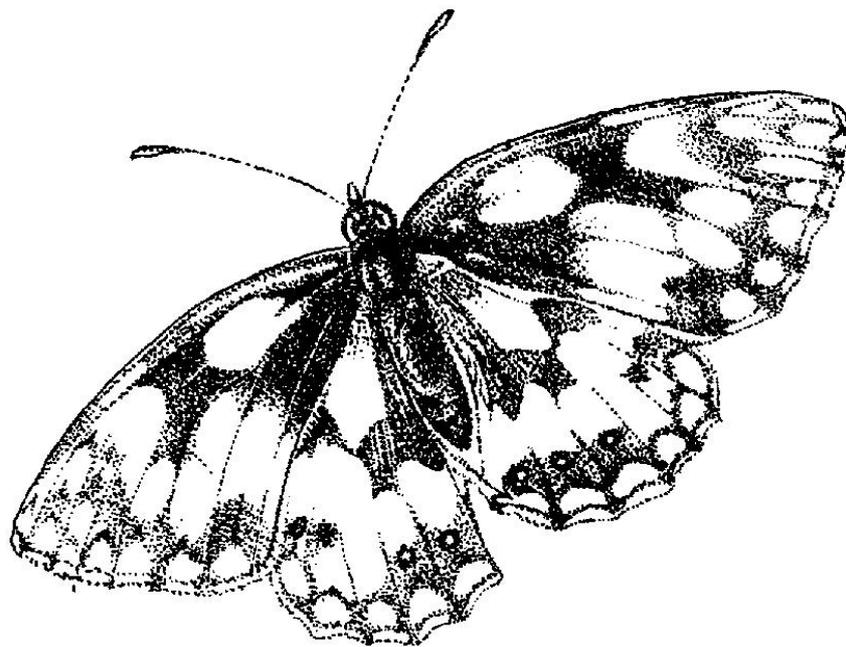


NORTH EAST ENGLAND BRANCH

BUTTERFLY CONSERVATION

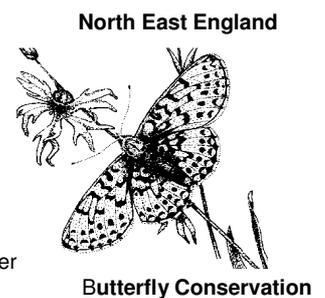


BUTTERFLY SUMMARY

2013



Compiled by Roger Norman, Steve le Fleming & Stephen Lowther



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	(Front cover: Marbled White, Terry Coult)

The latest annual report, newsletter and Branch details are available on the website:
www.northeast-butterflies.org.uk

RECORDERS' REVIEW

A new species order has been decreed by Butterfly Conservation and has been implemented in the layout of this Summary*. Our North-East list still begins with the Skippers, though the Dingy now leads the field, and the 'Browns' now come before the Vanessids among whom the Fritillaries now have precedence, while the 'Blues' are dropped to bottom of the list. This will cause much gnashing of teeth among those of us who are used to finding the Wall Brown or the Holly Blue 'where it's always been', but the new sequence is designed to become official and bring consistency where no two handbooks have used the same one.

Also new this year are the temperature, rainfall and sunshine figures for Durham City on page 5. These generally support the impression that 2013 was a good year, meteorologically speaking. It was apparently half a degree warmer overall than the 1961-1990 average, but month by month it was a bit of a rollercoaster: February was much drier and sunnier than the average, but March was colder, wetter and duller. April was drier, but May had almost twice the average rainfall for that month. Things then began to look up in June with low figures for rainfall, though sunshine was below normal. July was three degrees warmer than its average, 2% wetter, and 12% sunnier. August, September and October were also drier, but somehow managed to be less sunny than average.

We cannot as yet correlate trends in butterfly numbers directly with monthly weather statistics; we may hazard a crude connection between the health of a particular species over the whole region with a meteorological balance sheet of a particular month at a particular site. Inconveniently, flight periods for individual species of butterfly are not contained within particular calendar months. Nevertheless, thanks to the dreadful March, some crude matches can be proposed between some butterflies' anomalous behaviour and the weather: species which normally fly early in the year were noticeably affected. Green Hairstreak which usually flies in April or even March, did not appear until 2nd May. Orange Tip likewise was not seen until late April and Peacock, which comes out of hibernation as soon as the weather allows and has often been recorded on the wing in January, slept in until 3rd April. As the species reports which follow this introduction make clear, several other species made untypically late starts. Perhaps one day we will have daily data for all butterfly sites; we might then be able to match butterfly activity to the weather precisely. And if only we had accurate weather forecasts we would know what we were going to see... which would rather spoil the fun.

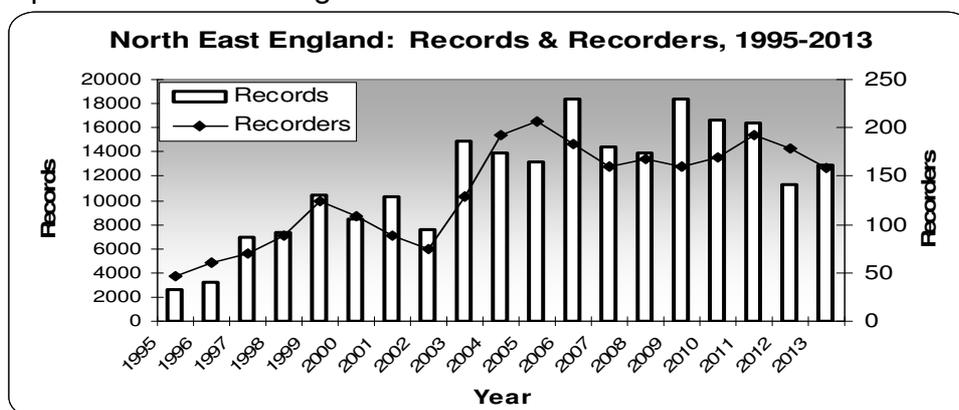
Overall, the late spring was made up by the hot weather in July which continued into August. This gave a welcome boost to the numbers of many species which had been down due to the poor summers of recent years. The accounts will show that many species bounced back, one of which was Grayling whose counts had been worryingly low for the last few years. Northern Brown Argus returned some good counts as did some of our Vanessids, or "garden butterflies".

The records we collect aspire to be accurate; we aim to provide data which help to assess the extent and effects of climate change. We now have a basis of knowledge about the habits of the thirty-three species which are considered native to this region of England. We know, on the basis of observations by hundreds of volunteers, when and where these species are likely to be seen. If a record is submitted which does not conform to the timing of the butterfly's flight period, say, or to the numbers likely to be seen, we would like to have corroboration; if a rare species is seen we would like to have a photograph.

*For those of you interested in taxonomy, the reference is: Agassiz, D., Beavan, S.D. & Heckford, R.J. (2013) *A checklist of the Lepidoptera of the British Isles*. Royal Entomological Society, St Albans.

We had a rarity in 2013, photographed by the lucky observer: a Long-tailed Blue at West Cornforth, just south of Durham City. The Long-tailed Blue, like the other reported in this region, four years ago in 2009, was likely a stowaway in a consignment of fruit and veg, although remarkably, they bred on the south coast in 2013 so the possibility of a genuine arrival exists. We have to question difficult records, but are delighted when they appear to be reliable. Our committee has to reject any that cannot be corroborated or are too unlikely to be credible.

The number of records received from the 200 or so people who in 2013 submitted their sightings as casual records, from Wider Countryside Butterfly Survey and regular transect walkers has bounced back up from the comparatively poor figures for 2012, again a function of the improved summer weather. The total came to 12904. Thanks to everyone who sent in records which have contributed data to another year's summary of the butterfly situation in this region and ultimately in the country. The fuller these summaries become, the more reliable they will be in reflecting annual fluctuations in butterfly populations, and allowing causes for these to be identified. This graph shows that our recording effort is continuing at a level that enables us to assess the health of most of our butterflies. One exception is Large Heath, whose remote habitat of upland bogs does not get visited nearly enough. So please keep the records coming in.



The total number of tetrads, (2km x2km squares on the National Grid), in the region is around 2229, (depending on how you account for partial tetrads around our borders). In 2013, we received records from 526 tetrads and since the year 2000, we have now had records from 1791 tetrads. Some of the accounts and the table on page 45 refer to percentages of these two numbers, not the 2229. Alas some of these tetrads in the more remote western edges of the region or in apparently unpromising farmland have not been explored. Who knows what is being missed?

Please note that Roger Norman is stepping down and that Stephen Lowther is now the Recorder for Northumberland

IMPORTANT NOTICE

The good news is that, following a review of the Branch's financial position and the funding we receive from Headquarters, the committee has decided that we can continue to produce a printed copy of the annual report. We are also able to continue to print two newsletters each year. Members will therefore continue to receive these at the usual times.

For those non-members for whom we have an email address, we will send an electronic copy of the annual report. Additionally, a small number of printed copies will be available at a cost of £3, (incl. p&p).



A remarkable gathering of Holly Blues, photographed by Mike Coates at Northumberland Park, Tynemouth on 7th May 2013.

WEATHER SUMMARY: 2013

Durham University Observatory, County Durham
Elevation: 100 metres (328ft), Grid Reference NZ 267 415

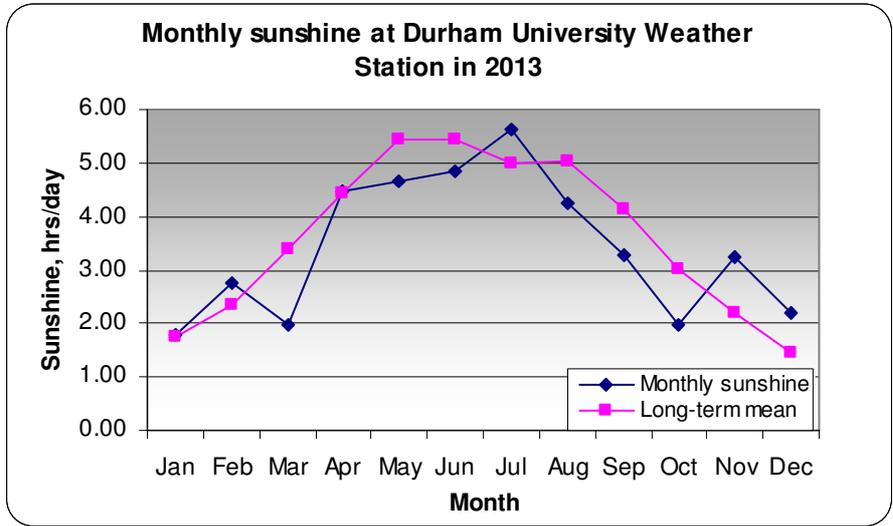
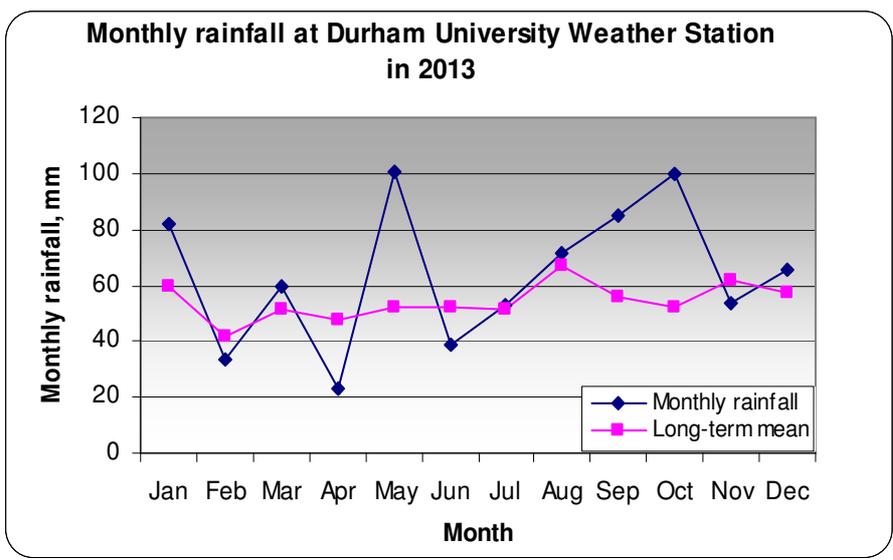
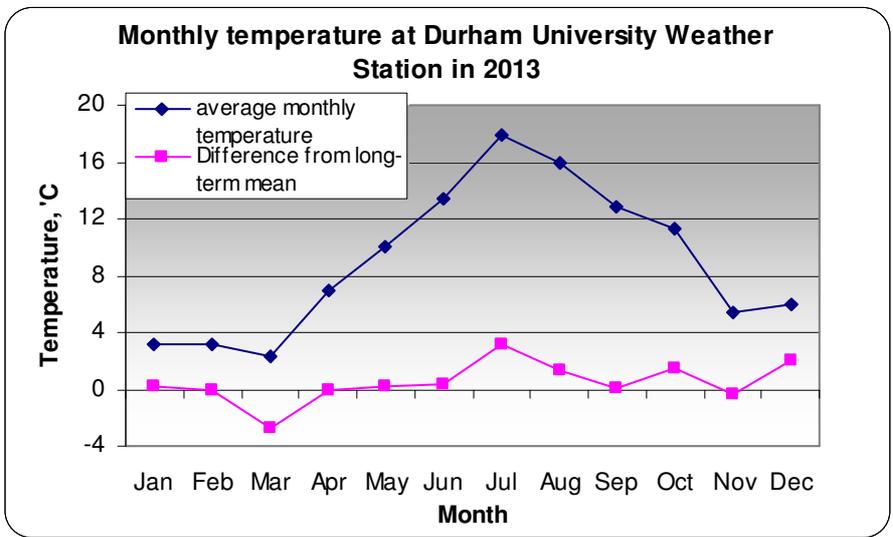
TEMPERATURE, RAINFALL and SUNSHINE and DIFFERENCES from 1961 - 1990 AVERAGES

Month	Mean (°C)	°C Difference	Rain (mm)	% of Average	Sun (hr)	% of Average
Jan	3.2	0.2	82	138	56	104
Feb	3.1	-0.1	33.2	80	77.2	118
Mar	2.3	-2.7	59.4	116	61.7	59
Apr	7	-0.1	22.8	48	134.6	101
May	10.1	0.2	100.8	193	144.6	86
Jun	13.4	0.4	38.4	74	144.9	89
Jul	17.9	3.1	52.6	102	174	112
Aug	16	1.3	71.4	106	131.3	84
Sep	12.8	0.1	84.6	152	98.9	80
Oct	11.3	1.5	100.2	191	60.7	65
Nov	5.4	-0.3	54	87	97	147
Dec	6	2.1	65.4	114	68.2	150
2013	9.0	0.5	650.2	118	1249.1	94

We have changed our weather record information to the Observatory in Durham City as it is slightly more central for the Branch's area, being more northerly and easterly and is at a lower altitude, (100m, 328ft) and should therefore be more representative of the weather that the two counties experience.

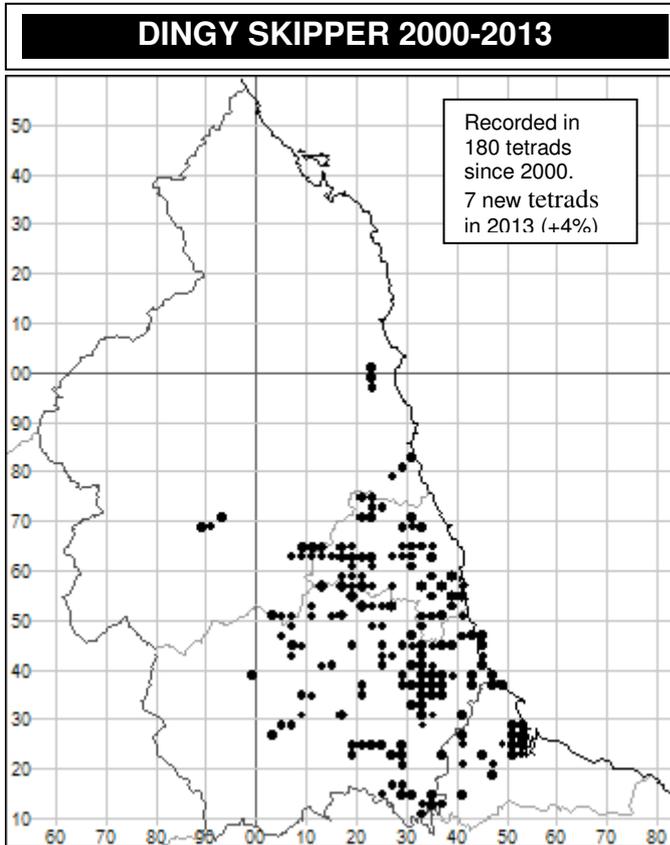
Acknowledgments: The Branch is grateful to Professor Tim Burt of the Department of Geography at Durham University for providing weather data via his website, (<http://www.geography.dur.ac.uk/projects/weather>). Please note that the long-term averages used are those for 1961-1990.

These three graphs show the main features of the weather in 2013. One main feature was the above average rainfall in spring, in May and in the autumn, in October. However, the most noticeable aspect of the weather in 2013 was the very welcome spell of hot weather in July, when temperatures were well above average, especially welcome after the poor summers of recent years. Many species took advantage of this good weather and population recoveries were evident.



Dingy Skipper *Erynnis tages*

2013: The cold spring of 2013 put paid to any hopes of an early emergence by this species in 2013. Dave Wainwright recorded our region's first from Hendon Sidings on the relatively-late date of 9th May. A full week passed before Jonathan Wallace recorded Northumberland's first on May 16th at Paradise LNR in Scotswood. Graham Beckwith recorded Co. Durham's second on the same date at Wingate Quarry.

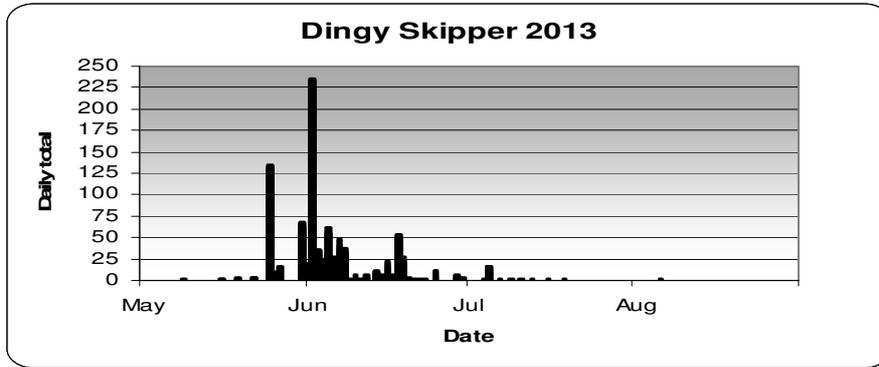


A handful of single-figure counts continued to trickle in until Dave Wainwright recorded a monster haul of 127 adults at Hendon Sidings on May 25th – only to better this with a count of 179 on June 2nd at the same site. These extremely high counts were, as a whole, atypical for the species in 2013 when double-figure counts featured less regularly than in many previous years. However, there were some others and these came from some less-than-picturesque sounding places, such as Brenda Road Sewage Works (20: Ian Bond), Morrison Busty Pit Yard (30: Melvyn Conlong) and Brenkley Pit Head (22: Roger Norman). A count of 25 from the Spetchells, by Keith Smith, was the highest number recorded at this site for many years and was also Northumberland's highest count during 2013. BC's Northeast Branch has been actively managing this site and it is cheering to report that the butterfly seems to be responding.

The flight period peaked on June 2nd when in addition to the count of 179 referred to previously, an additional 56 adults were recorded from around half-a-dozen other sites.

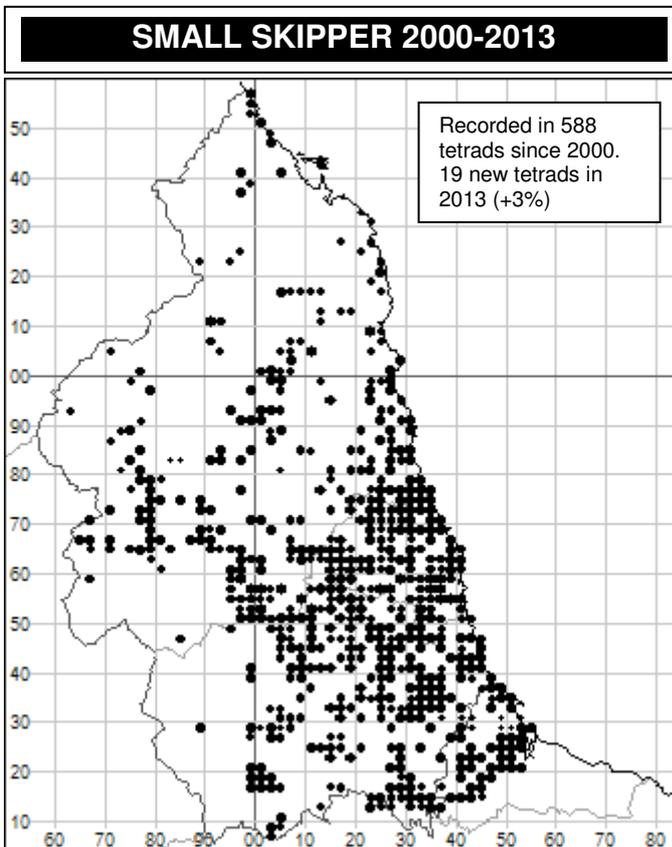
Northumberland's latest recorded sightings were made by Jonathan Wallace at Paradise on June 26th; that of County Durham was over a month later, when Garry Whitton recorded a singleton at Wingate Quarry on August 6th. In some previous years in which flight periods commenced earlier, a partial second brood may have been suspected. However, given the lateness of both the spring and the species' emergence, it seems probable that this butterfly was a late specimen from the first brood.

A total of 926 adult dingy skippers was recorded in 2013, only 11 fewer than in the previous year. However, this total is influenced strongly by the two exceptional counts from Hendon Sidings referred to earlier. If these are excluded, it is apparent that the species did not fare especially well in 2013, although the widespread distribution of the butterfly and its recurrence at several sites from which it had not been recorded for many years gives some cause for optimism.



Small Skipper *Thymelicus sylvestris*

2013: As may be expected numbers are up on 2012. The first Durham sighting was by Howard Ward with four at Billingham Beck Valley Country Park on 8th June. This was 10 days earlier than the 2012 first sighting. The first Northumberland sighting was one at Valley Park Cramlington on 15th June by Dee McKeown. A surprising early sighting was Daphne Alpin's count of 107 at Cowpen Bewley CP on the 16 June.

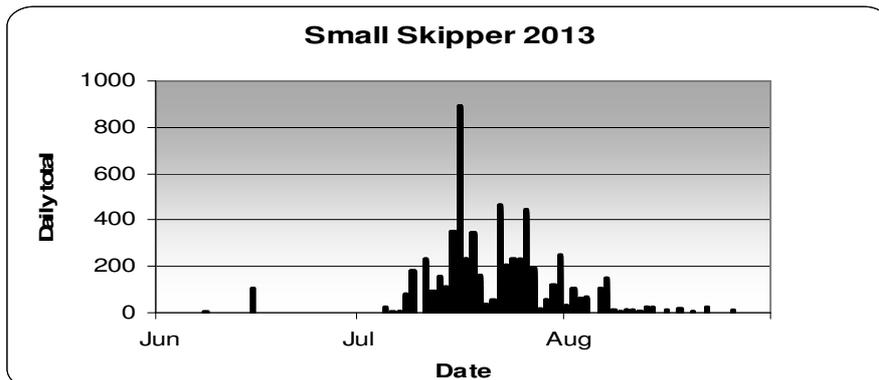


There was a total count of 647 on one day by Joe Dobinson at the Rising Sun CP., north of Wallsend on the 16th July followed by a count of 289 on the 26th July also by Joe at the Rising Sun CP.

The peak daily count for the season was on 16th July when 894 were recorded by 15 recorders. Sightings diminished from the end of July until the final sightings at the end of August. For Durham this last record was 2 by Mark Richardson at Raisby Hill Grassland on 27th. The last Northumberland records were one at Ashington Old Pit by Marty Anderson and Liz Naughton on 26th August and finally one the next day by Kevin Redgrave at Newton Links.

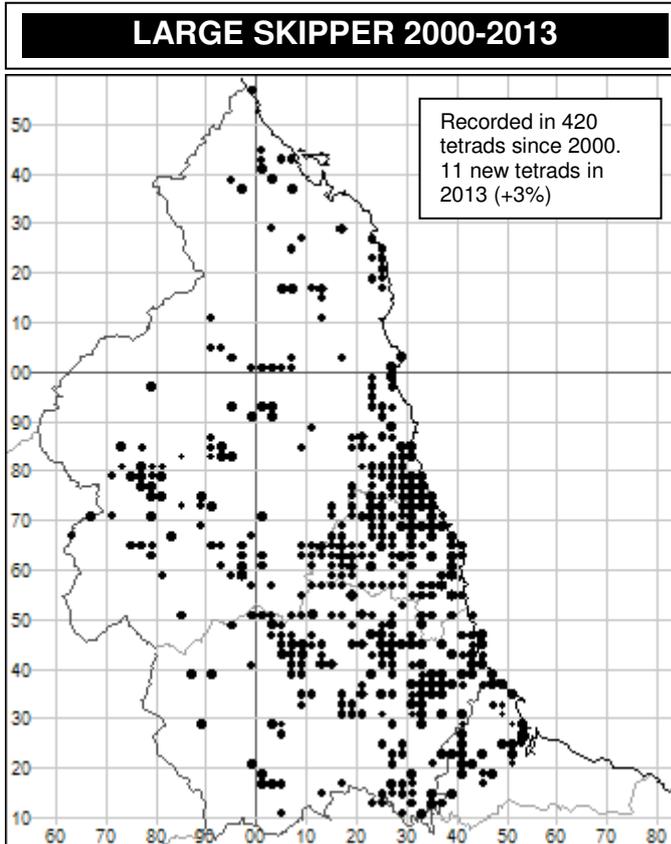
A total of 6016 individuals were recorded over the season compared with 2247 in 2012 and 3684 in 2011. There was an average of 14.9 per report compared with 8.6 in 2011 and 10 in 2009. Small skippers

were on the wing for 81 days and recorded on 55 days – 68%



Large Skipper *Ochlodes faunus*

2013: A total of one hundred and ninety-one records were received. These recorded 758 individual butterflies. The flight period covered 56 days and the Large Skipper was seen on 47 of these days, representing 84% of the flight period.



The number of records received was an increase over the 2012 figures but still a below average year for the Large Skipper. The cold and prolonged spring meant the flight season for the butterfly got off to a late start with the first sightings not until mid-June, about a month later than normal. Hopefully the warm summer weather gave it the chance to breed successfully and next year we may see more on the wing.

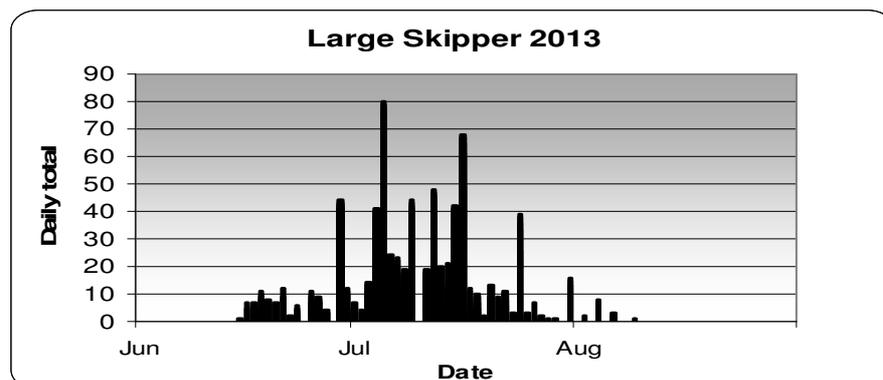
The first record of the season came from Steve le Fleming who saw one at Bishop Middleham Quarry in County Durham on 15th June. Northumberland's first records were just a day later from Hew Ellis and Keith Smith, both seeing Small Skippers in south-east Northumberland. After this sightings flooded in for the rest of June and July. Numbers recorded were generally high throughout July with a peak of 83

sightings for the region on 5th July.

The highest individual count came from Stanley Straughan who recorded 49 at Ashington Community Woodland on 16th July. Another good count came from Joe Dobinson with 28 at Rising Sun Country Park, Wallsend on 5th July.

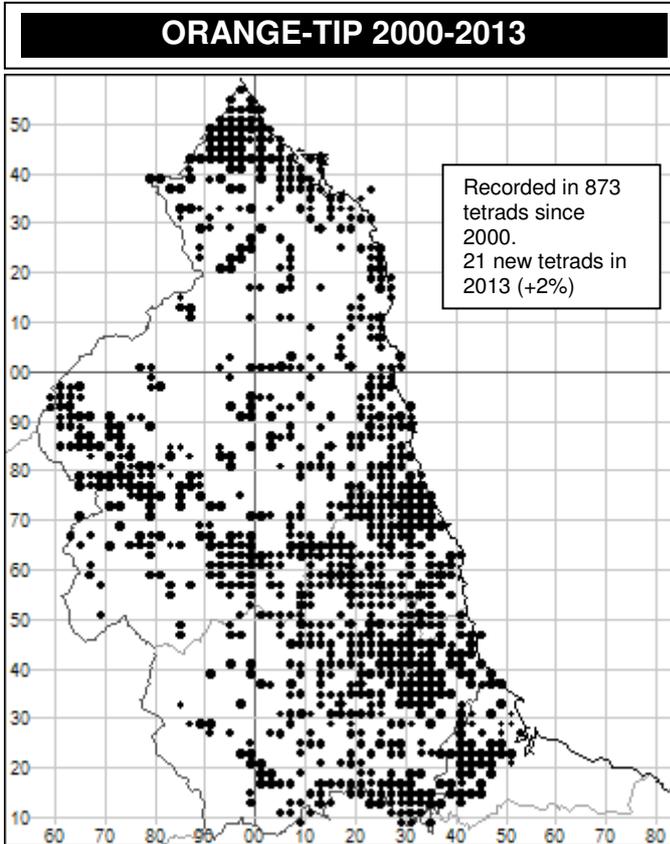
The flight season ended rather abruptly at the end of July with only a handful of records in August. In Northumberland the final sighting of the year was from the same site as one of the first Northumberland record, Northumberland Park in Tynemouth, where Mike Coates recorded one on 4th August. The final sighting of the year for County Durham and the region came from John Olley who saw one at Littlewood LNR near Cassop on 9th August.

Large Skipper was recorded in 82 tetrads throughout the region in 2013. It has been recorded in 420 tetrads (23% of the regions total number of tetrads) in the period 2000-2013.



Orange-tip *Anthocharis cardamines*

2013: For a second consecutive year the Orange-tip fell in numbers with 378 records of 966 individuals (respectively 24% and 22% down on 2012). This may be a reflection of the fact that much of the flight period of this spring flying species was rather cold in 2013. The species was recorded in 152 tetrads and was on the wing for 57 days, of which it was recorded on 61%.

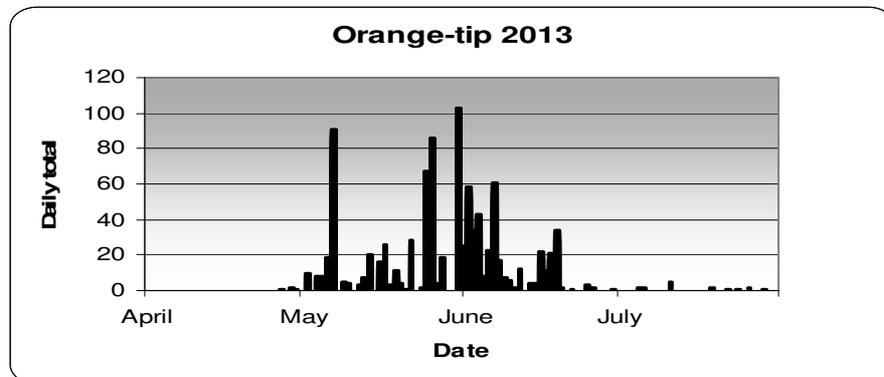


The first Orange-tip of the year in Northumberland was recorded by Jaci Beaven in Alnwick on 27th April whilst County Durham had to wait a couple more days until the 29th when Graham Beckwith recorded one in Aykley Wood, Durham

Perhaps because of the weather during the flight period, numbers did not really show a smooth progression to a single peak but rather produced a number of 'peak' days against a background of low numbers. The first of these was on 7th May when there were 25 records of 91 individuals but the biggest single day was 31st May when there were 30 records, comprising a total of 103 individual Orange-tips.

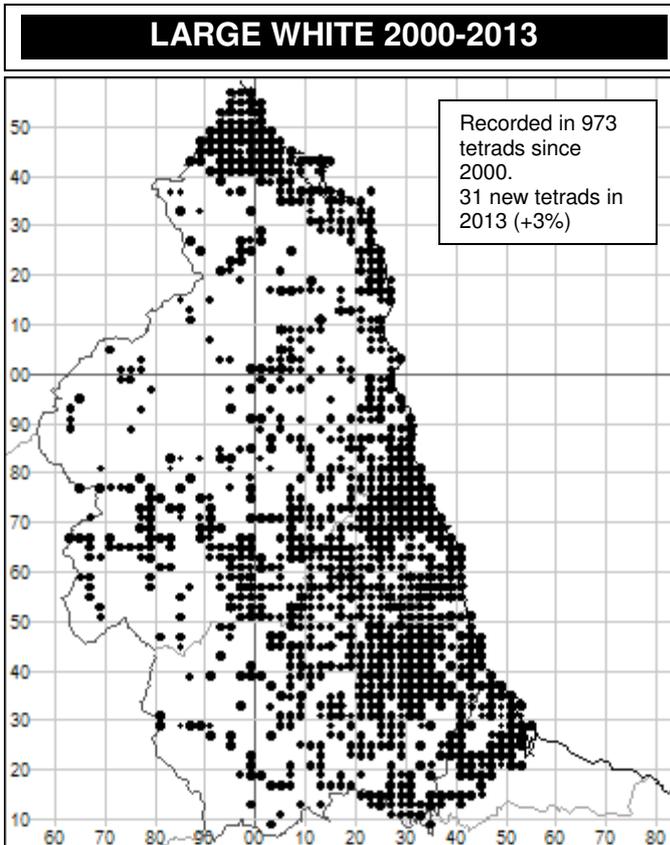
The season was brought to a close by Harry Eales who recorded an Orange-tip at Byers Green Sewage Treatment Works on 29th July whilst the latest Northumberland record was made by Keith Smith at Silverlink on 6th July. The best count of the year was made by Joe Dobinson at the Rising Sun Country Park, where he counted 24 on 31st May. Joe also scored the second highest count of 18, also at the Rising Sun, on 2nd June.

There were 13 records of Orange-tip ova and one larva in 2103 submitted by Hew Ellis. Jonathan Wallace and Mike Hunter also found ova.



Large White *Pieris brassicae*

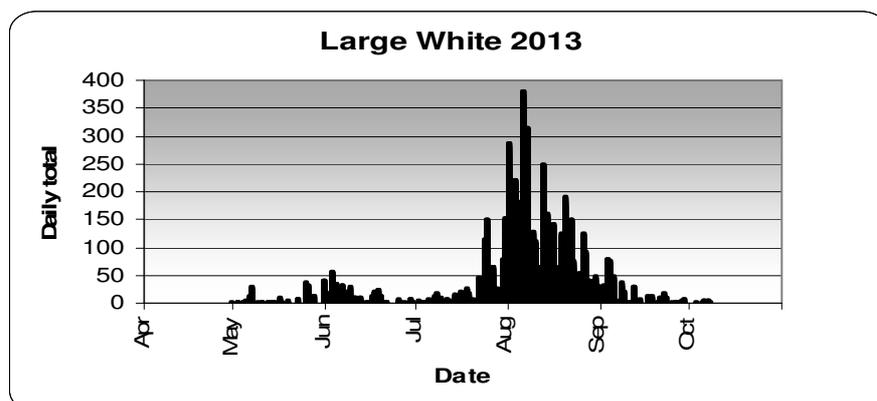
2013: Large White numbers were substantially higher in 2013 than in the previous year with a total of 1289 records of 5903 individual butterflies compared to 749 records of 1646 individuals in 2012. 2013 was in fact the best year for this species since 2009 when there were 2061 records of 7875 individuals. The second generation contributed very strongly to these figures, reflecting the fine weather experienced in the later part of the summer. Large White was recorded in 255 tetrads in 2013 and was recorded on 144 days out of a total flight period of 174 days (83%).



The spring was cold in 2013 and the Large White did not appear on the wing until nearly the end of April, the first one being recorded by Lauren Withrington at the Gibside Estate on the 26th. Ian Kerr followed with another singleton on Holy Island on the 27th. Numbers remained low throughout May and the first generation then reached its peak on 3rd June when a total of 57 butterflies were observed in 14 individual records. As in 2102, the highest individual count of the first generation was made by John Corcoran at the Boldon Downhill Complex where he counted 16 Large Whites on the 9th June.

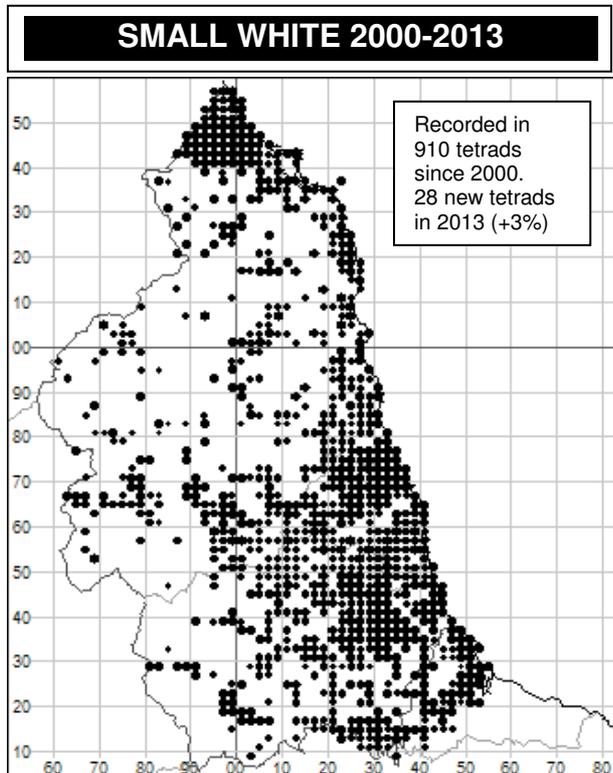
The second generation began to emerge in late June but really started to climb in the third week of July. Its peak was reached on 6th August when there were 28 records and a total of 382 butterflies was recorded. The highest individual count was made by

Lauren Withrington who counted 68 Large Whites at Gibside on the 6th August. Whereas the Large White had a late start in 2013, it made up by having a reasonably long end to its flight season with reports continuing well into October. The final record of the year was on 16th October when Ken Dawson spotted one on the approach to the North Pier in Tynemouth. The only record of an immature stage of the Large White was a pupa found on 27th December by David Howdon at Winlaton Mill.



Small White *Pieris rapae*

2013: A total of 1369 records were received. These recorded 9039 individual butterflies. The flight period covered one hundred and ninety-five days and the Small White was seen on one hundred and fifty-five of these days, representing 79% of the flight period. 2013 was a very good year for the Small White. The number of butterflies reported was the highest since 2009.



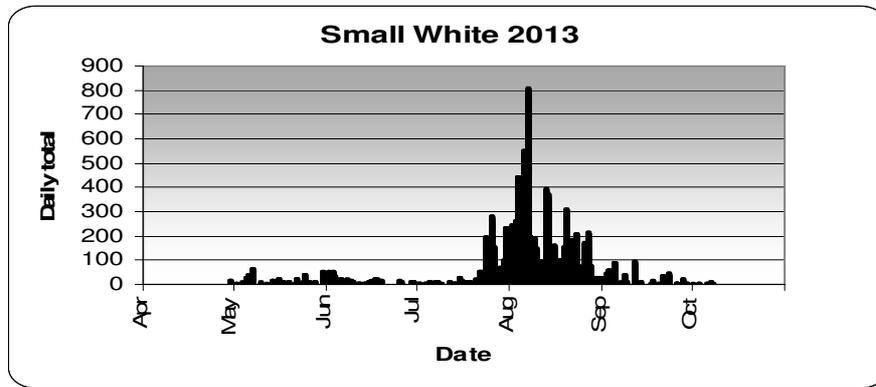
In fact it was the second highest total in the last ten years. However, numbers in the spring generation were well down, no doubt due to the cold and prolonged spring affecting butterflies coming out of hibernation. This was more than made up for by a strong second generation peaking in early August, benefiting from the hot, dry summer from July onwards.

The first record of the season came from Keith Smith who saw one at Shiremoor, North Tyneside on 15th April. Durham's first record was a few days later with Derek Mason seeing a singleton at Stockton on 20th April. These dates are a little later than usual; the first sightings are normally in March. Very few first generation counts were in double figures. Notable exceptions were the 28 seen by Dave Wainwright at Hendon Sidings on the 2nd June and Fiona Aungier of 20 at Tommy-the-Miller's Field transect at Berwick the next day.

The emergence of the second generation started in the last week of July with 23rd July seeing a burst of double figure counts. After this many high counts were reported right up to the end of August. The highest individual totals for the region were 170 seen by Joe Dobinson on 26th July at Rising Sun County Park, Wallsend and 162 by Gill Young at Tommy the Miller's Field on 7th August. In County Durham, Pippa Smaling saw 126 at West Park Nature Reserve in Darlington on 6th August and Alan Edwards counted 115 at Castle Eden Dene on 4th August.

Smaller numbers were reported throughout September and early October as warm weather continued into the autumn. In Northumberland the final sighting of the year was from the same recorder as the first Northumberland record, Keith Smith, who saw one at Newburn, beside the Tyne on 25th October. The final sighting of the year for County Durham and the region came from Joe Dobinson just a day later on 26th October; he saw one at the Jewish Cemetery in Hartlepool.

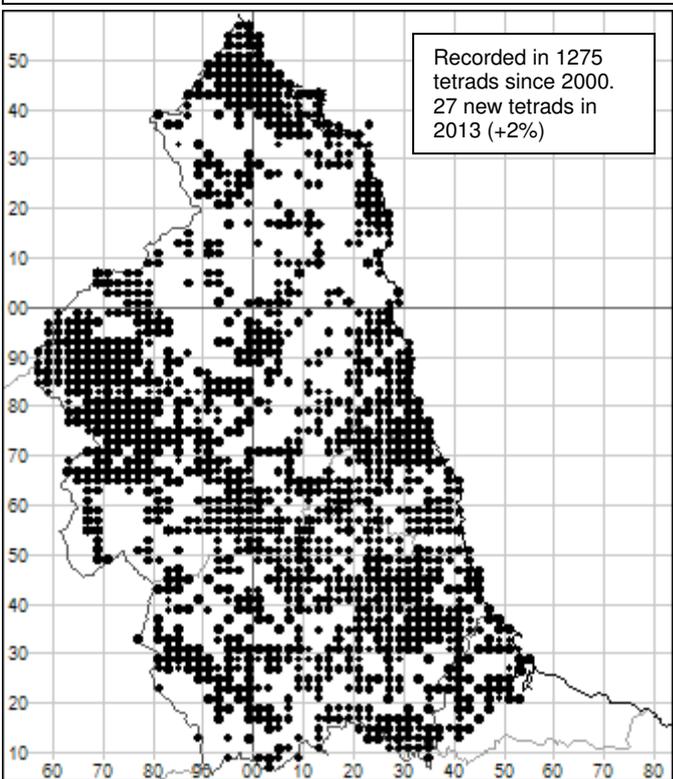
Small White was recorded in 262 tetrads throughout the region in 2013. It has been recorded in 910 tetrads, (51% of the region's total number of visited tetrads) in the period 2000-2013.



Green-veined White *Pieris napi*

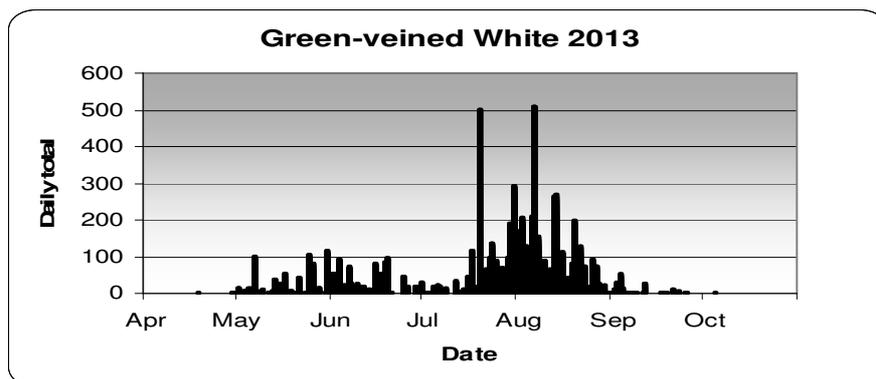
2013: Thanks to a half-decent summer sightings of Green-veined White rose from the 2230 individuals reported in the 732 records submitted in 2012 to 7132 reported in 1147 records in 2013: over three times more from less than twice as many records. The butterfly was first reported on 19th April by A. Edwards at SAFC Academy and by Keith Smith at Shiremoor.

GREEN-VEINED WHITE 2000-2013



There was a week's pause before the first brood began to show itself in earnest, daily totals increasing sporadically in May and June; over 100 were counted on 7th, 25th and 31st May and on 4th June. Numbers fell through June, except for a flush of counts between 16th and 20th June. None were reported on 28th and 29th June, nor on 10th and 11th July, before the second, more numerous brood took over: 118 were seen on July 17th and on July 20th Ian Cowe reported 500 from four sites on Lindisfarne. There were six daily totals in the 200s before the end of the butterfly's observed flight period on 5th October, singletons being reported by Harry Eales at Witton Gilbert and by Keith Smith (again!) at Lemington. The butterfly had been seen on the wing on 135 (79%) of the 170 days spanning its recorded adult life. Mating pairs were seen on 3rd August and 4th and 23rd September. Our most widespread species, Green-

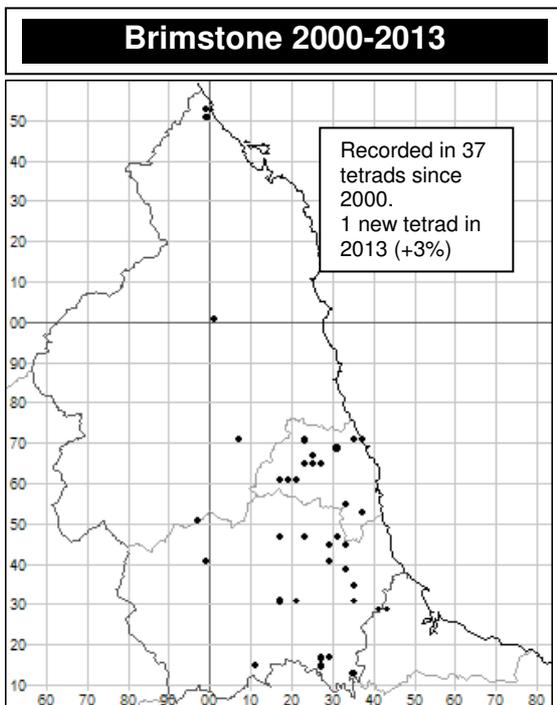
veined White has been recorded in 1275 (71%) of the 1794 tetrads that have been visited since 2000.



Clouded Yellow *Colias croceus*

2013: There was only one report of Clouded Yellow in 2013. This is despite there being a large influx into the south of the country. Approximately 80% of records in the region in the past decade have occurred in National Grid square NZ and to the south of Seaton Sluice. The lucky observer was John Bridges on 4th August at South Hetton.

Brimstone *Gonepteryx rhamni*



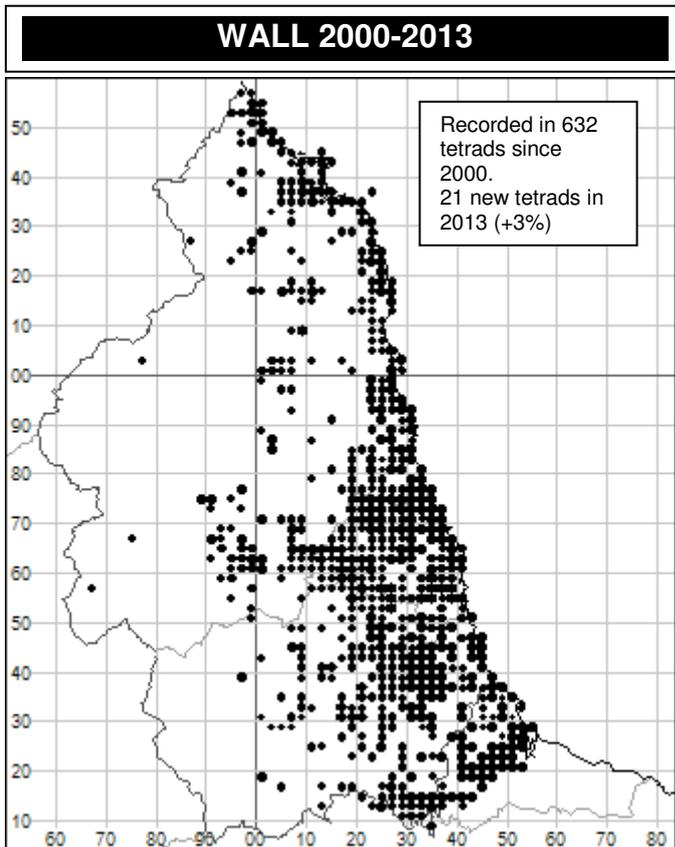
2013: As in 2012 there were only two records of Brimstone submitted in 2013; both of single insects. Dave Chrisp saw the first on 21st July in Whickham. The second individual was found on 4th September at Havannah by Dave Stebbings.



Brimstone, photographed by Dave Stebbings at Havannah LNR on 4th September 2013.

Wall *Lasiommata megera*

2013: A total of five hundred and seventy five records were received which detailed 2910 individual butterflies. The numbers recorded were the highest since 2010 but still below the average of the last ten years, thus continuing a worrying long term decline for this species.



The flight period lasted 158 days and the Wall was seen flying on 88 (56%) of these days.

The first sighting in the region came from Nick Rossiter who saw one at Hyons Wood, south of Prudhoe on 20th April, quite an early date considering the cold spring of 2013. The next records were not until May with Jonathan Wallace seeing one at Paradise LNR in Newcastle on 6th May. Durham's first sightings were not until late May with Dave Wainwright seeing one at Hendon Sidings, Sunderland and Daphne Aplin spotting one at Cowpen Woodland Park near Billingham, both on 25th May. These are relatively late dates and probably reflect the cold and prolonged spring of 2013.

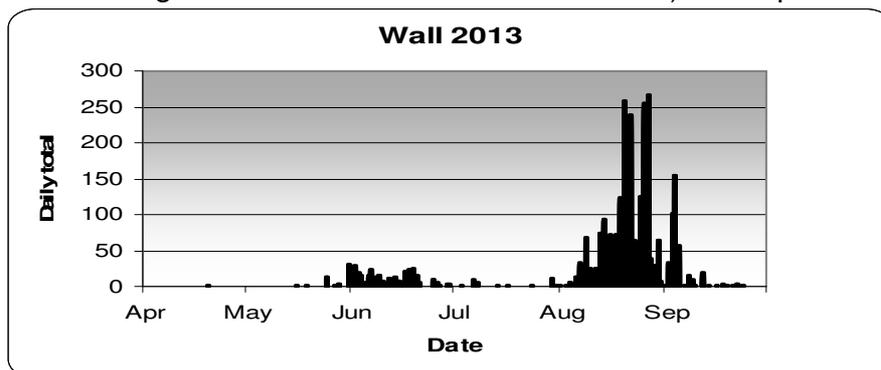
The spring generation was considerably later and fewer in number than normal, not peaking until June, rather than May, again probably due to the cold spring. Only one

count of the spring generation was in double figures.

There was the normal lull in reports during the height of the summer as the second generation was developing. The second generation started to appear in the first week of August reaching a peak in the second half of August and early September. There were some notable counts recorded in August. Graham Beckwith had the region's highest individual count with 82 at Wingate Quarry on 25th August. Other high counts came from Jane Lancaster who spotted 68 at Newton Point on the Northumberland coast on 22nd August and Dave Stebbings 50 at Havannah LNR on 26th August.

The flight season ended rather abruptly after the first week of September, with only a few records after this. The last record for Northumberland was from Philip Jordan and Jane Gray who saw one at Low Newton on 22nd September. Mark Richardson spotted the last one for County Durham and also for the region at Bishop Middleham Quarry on 24th September.

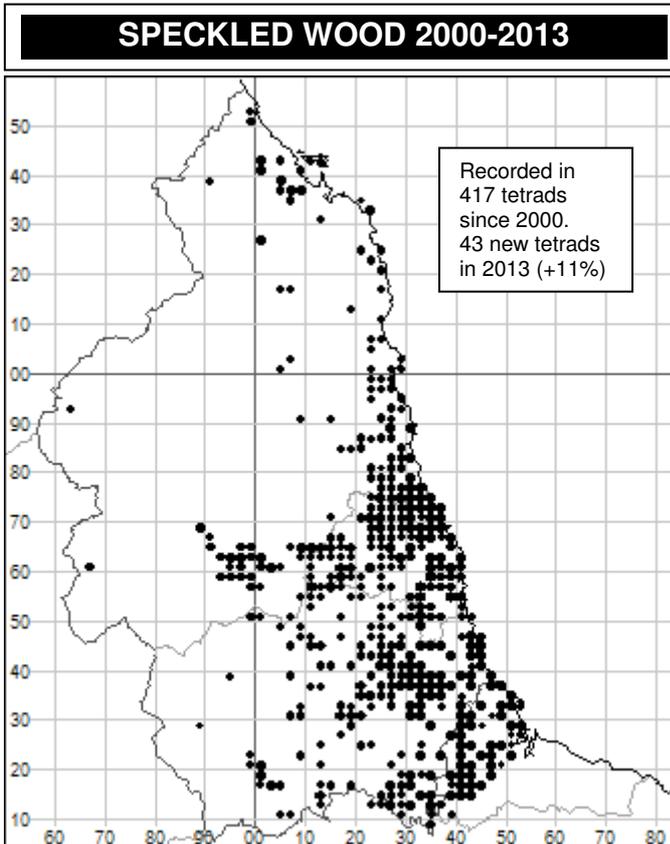
Wall was recorded from 174 tetrads throughout the region in 2013. It has been recorded in 632 tetrads (35% of the region's total number of visited tetrads) in the period 2000-2013.



Speckled Wood *Pararge aegeria*

2013: Speckled Wood has had a better year than in 2012. There were several peaks in recorded numbers with the most notable occurring this year in mid-August and continues its long-term expansion in the region.

A total of 1068 records were received, (a 9% increase from 2012) and these included 4675 individual butterflies, (a 62% increase from 2012). The flight period was, however, slightly shorter than in 2012 lasting only 201 rather than 215 days and the butterfly was seen flying on only 158 of those days.

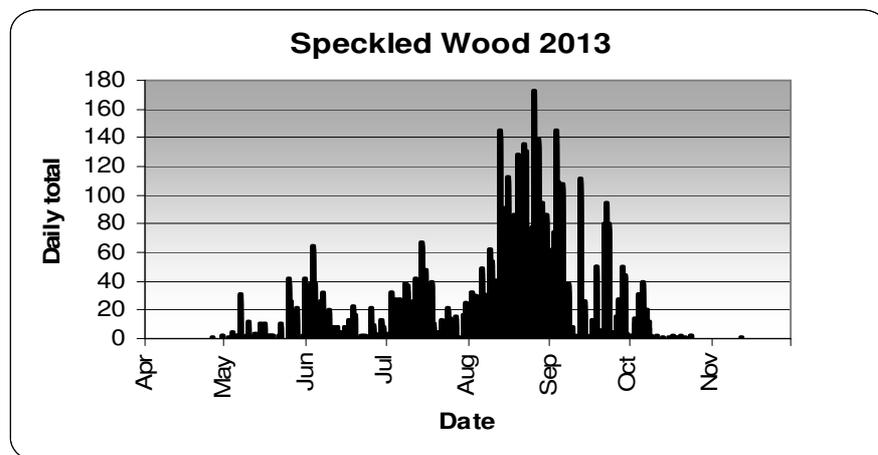


The first record of the year was made in Durham by Derek Mason who had a singleton on 26th April in Stockton. Northumberland's first record of the year was made by Hewitt Ellis, a single specimen on 30th April at Silverlink CP, North Shields.

The first double figure count came from Dave Wainwright with 10 at Hendon Sidings on 2nd June. There were a further 121 records of 10 or more individuals and of these, 10 were counts of more than 30.

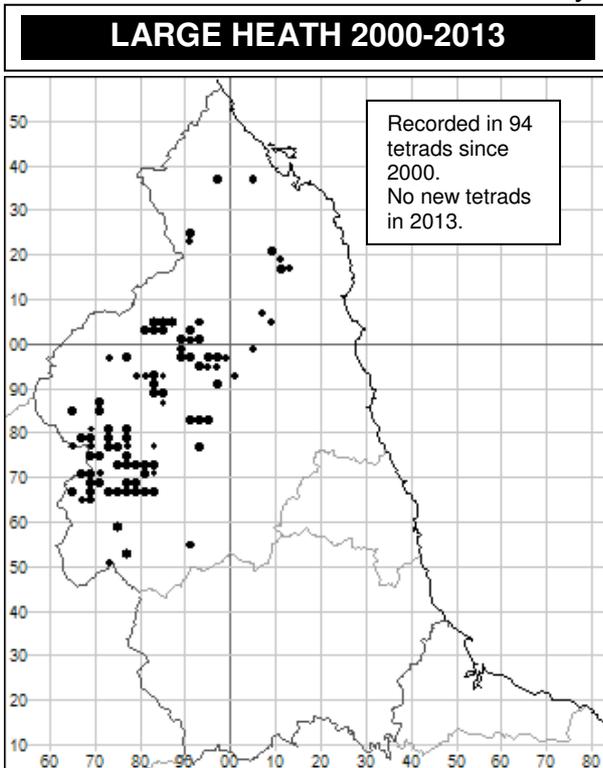
Higher counts started to appear in July but the peak in population occurred in mid-August and the highest count of the year was 54, recorded by Stanley Straughan on 21st at Ashington Community Woodland who also had 51 at the same site on the 29th.

The last record from Northumberland came from Neville Stead who had two at Whitley Bay on 24th October but the last record for the season came from County Durham. Steve le Fleming recorded a singleton near Bear Park on 12th November.



Large Heath *Coenonympha tullia*

2013: This might have been a good year for records for many of our butterflies but this was not true of the Large Heath in our region. Indeed the good weather also failed to bring out the number and frequency of those willing to explore the bogs and moorlands of Northumberland in search of this butterfly.



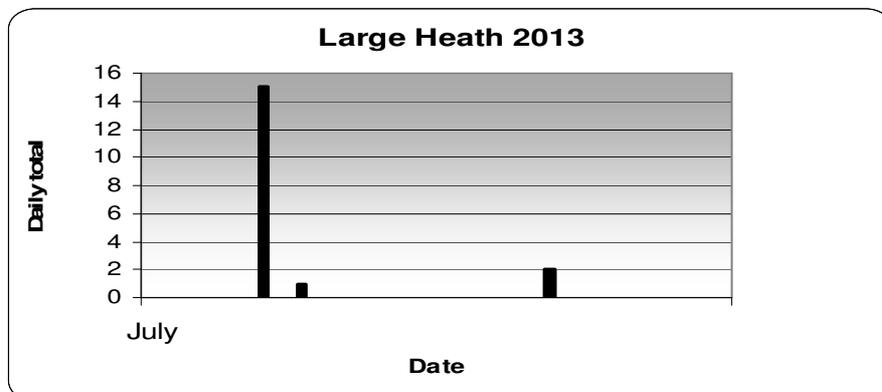
Only 3 recorders submitted records on 3 separate days – one by Joe Dobinson on 7th July at Steng Moss, recording 15 individuals that day; the second by Ken Dawson on 9th July at Muckle Moss, when only a single individual was recorded; and the third by Graham Beckwith on 22nd July near Rothbury recording just two individuals.

Sightings of the Large Heath in our region are traditionally low, but 2013 was exceptional in this regard – only 18 individuals recorded compared to 130 individuals in 2011 for example.

One possible explanation for this may be that the warm summer weather resulted in the earlier completion of the single generation of the butterfly with few adults still on the wing after the first week in July. However, it seems likely that a lack of observers has contributed to the low level of sightings.

Adults were seen on the wing for only 16 days between the 7th and 22nd of July, recorded on only 19% of these 16 days. However, given the paucity of records and data for the species in 2013, it is hard to draw any significant conclusions. By way of comparison, the earliest records in 2011 and 2012 were respectively, the 28th June and 7th July, the latest, the 8th and 14th August.

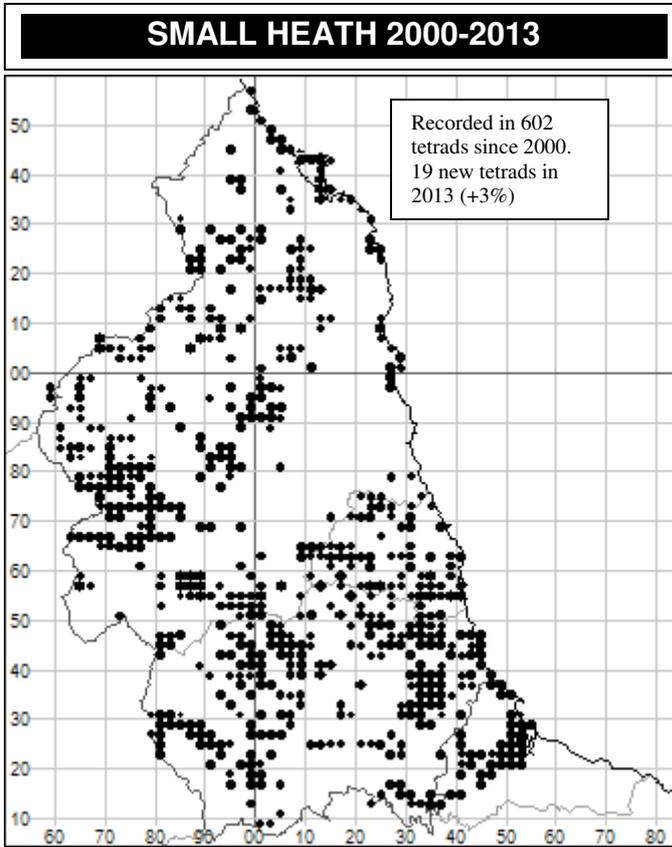
In 2013, the Large Heath was seen in only 3 tetrads, not a true reflection of the species distribution or abundance and a wider search over a longer period would almost certainly have found it in many more tetrads.



Small Heath *Coenonympha pamphilus*

2013: A total of three hundred and sixty-four records were received. These recorded 4090 individual butterflies. The flight period covered one hundred and sixteen days and the Small Heath was seen on seventy-eight of these days, representing 67% of the flight period.

The Small Heath had a reasonable year in 2013, just over four thousand butterflies recorded in the region is only slightly below average for the species. However, given the splendid weather during its main flight period of July, one might have expected more.



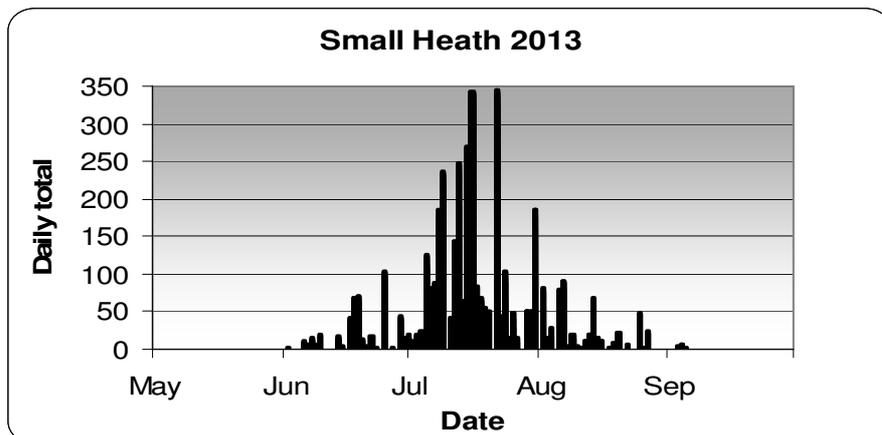
The first record of the season came from Barry and Jean Robinson who saw one at Hylton Castle, Sunderland on 31st May. For Northumberland the first sighting came from Laura Scott who saw seven at Lindisfarne NNR on 8th June. These dates are much later than average for the first records, no doubt due to the cold and prolonged spring of 2013.

Numbers build steadily through June and July, reaching a peak on 22nd July with 345 reported that day before tailing off through August. The highest count of the season in Northumberland was from Kevin Redgrave with 68 at Newton Links, north Northumberland on 9th July. Several higher counts were recorded in County Durham particularly from Wingate Quarry where Dave Wainwright saw 75 on 15th July; Graham Beckwith counted 114 and Garry Whitton 106 both at Wingate on 16th July. Other observers recorded good counts

there right through into August. Dave Liddle also chipped in with a count of 89 from Burn Hill on 22nd July.

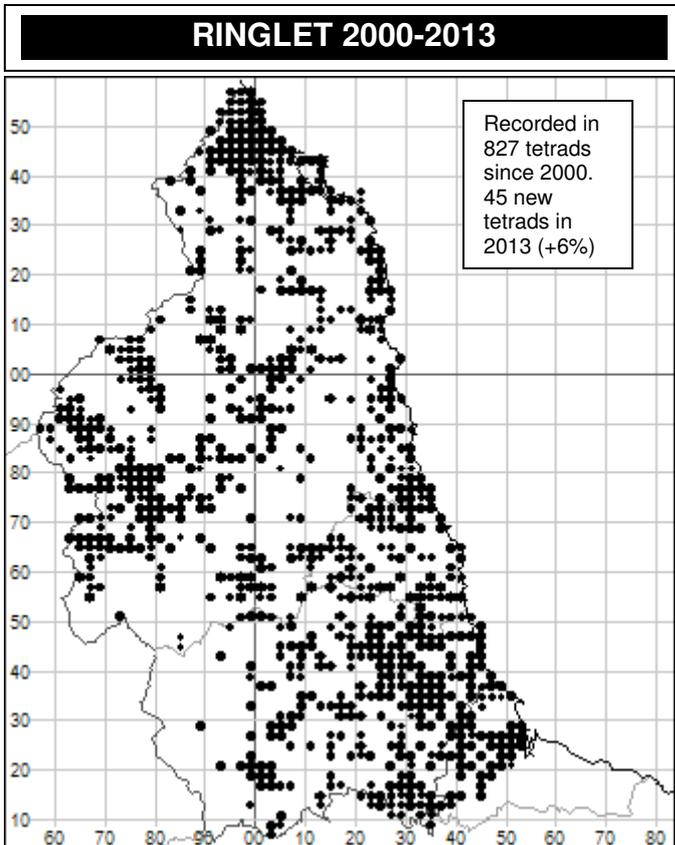
The end of August marked the end of the flight season proper with only eight records received in September. For Northumberland the last record was from Dave Stebbings with one at Havannah LNR, just north of Newcastle on 4th September. In Durham the last sighting was by Neville Stead who saw one at Wingate Quarry on 23rd September.

Small Heath was recorded from 100 tetrads throughout the region in 2013. It has been recorded in 602 tetrads (34% of the region's total number of visited tetrads) in the period 2000-2013.



Ringlet *Aphantopus hyperantus*

2013: In the wet summer of 2012, nationally, the Ringlet was reported as bucking the trend for most butterfly species by faring better, allegedly because the lush grasses which make up the larval food plants, did particularly well. We didn't see this in our region, with recorded adult numbers falling by over 10%, to 7216 compared to 2011.



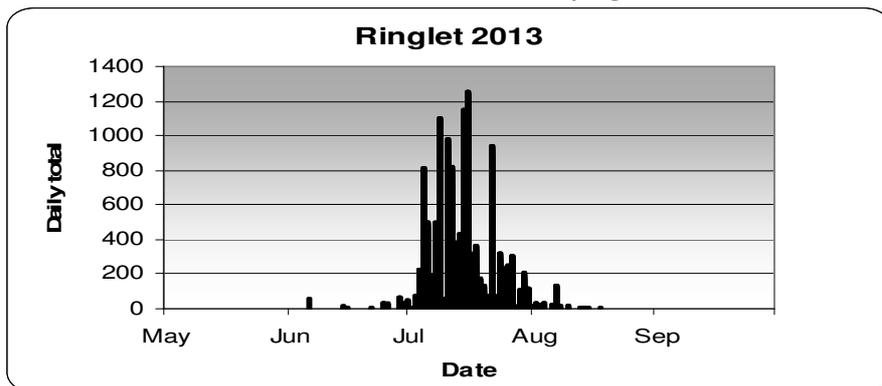
So it was really pleasing to see numbers soar in 2013 to 12,865, an increase of 78%. These totals were from 630 records, only slightly up on the previous year, evidence that the butterfly fared really well and discounting any notion that it was due to more recording taking place because of the beautiful summer.

The first record for Ringlet in the region was a single specimen on 25th May by Barry and Jean Robinson on Tunstall Hills, 11 days later than in 2012, itself a record for the earliest sighting in the North East. The last recorded sighting was late in the year for the region, of 4 adults on the wing, by Paul Tindall on 18th September at Sherburn Railway. The earliest and latest sightings in 2013 were well short of the previous records for the species, of 14th May 2012 and 2nd October 2001, respectively.

The flight period from 25th of May to 18th September, was 117 days and the butterfly was recorded on 53% of days during this period. The former was only one day shorter than the 118 day flight period the year before and exactly the same as recorded in 2011. In 2013, the percentage of days recorded during the flight period was very similar to the last two summers.

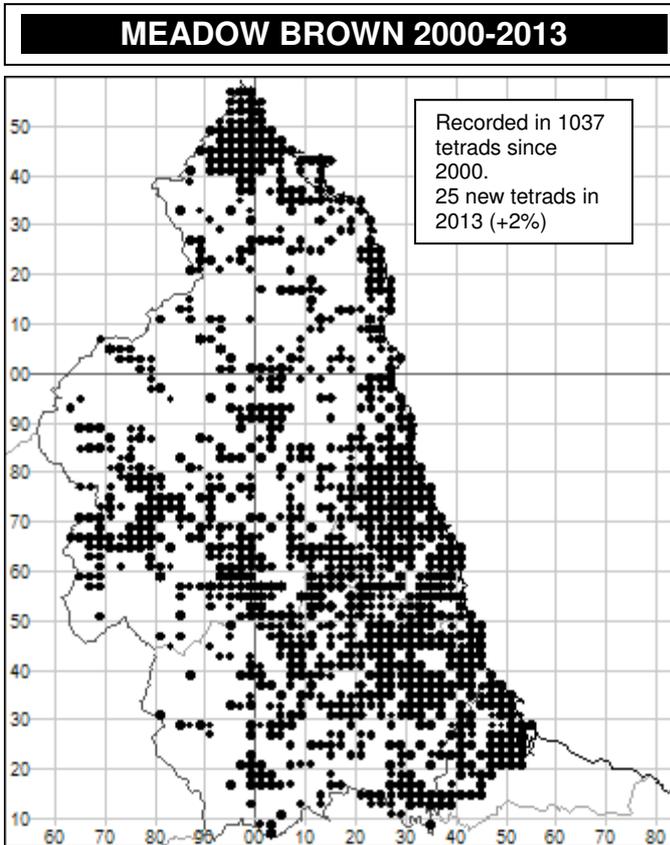
There were a few massive, three figure records on a single day in one location – the first, of 457 individuals by Joe Dobinson at the Rising Sun Country Park on 5th July, and again by the same recorder at the same location on the 11th July, of 544 individuals. Graham Beckwith recorded 374 at Wingate Quarry on the 16th July, the same day that Joe Dobinson recorded another high figure of 292 at the Rising Sun Country Park. These totals compared very favourably with the highest record of Roger Norman's 206 at Harwood Forest on 27th July 2012.

The butterfly is now a common and widespread species and continuing its long-term increase across the region, numbers on transects are shown on page 46.

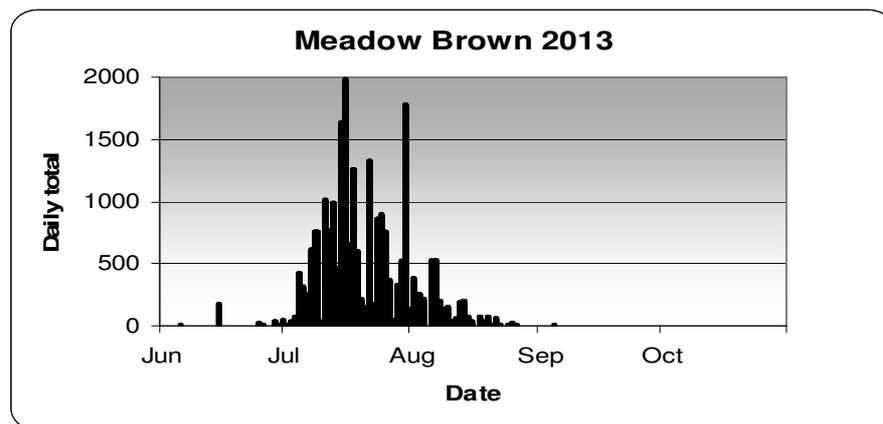


Meadow Brown *Maniola jurtina*

2013: After low counts in 2012, sightings of this normally very common species more than doubled in 2013: from a total of 9077 Meadow Browns logged in 2012 the total jumped in 2013 to 23383 (plus two mating pairs) while the number of records submitted by observers was up relatively modestly from 816 to 927. While in 2012 observers had seen an average of 11 Meadow Browns per outing, in 2013 the average was over 25, reflecting the fine summer.



Reflecting the cold spring, however, the butterfly made a rather late start; the first report (of 8 Meadow Browns) came from Stephen Lowther at Thrislington on June 6th. As if making up for lost time this was followed on June 15th by a count of 176 by Daphne Alpin. But even this was modest in comparison with several later counts: recorded numbers peaked on July 16th when a total of 1983 Meadow Browns was seen by 17 recorders, including Joe Dobinson who found 640 at Rising Sun Countryside Centre in North Tyneside. The season lasted until October 3rd when I.S. Davidson logged the last of 2013's bumper crop at Long Nanny, Beadnell Bay. The butterfly was recorded on 78 days, 65% of its flight period of 120 days, and was seen in 232 tetrads (44% of the 526 covered by recorders in 2013).



Gatekeeper *Pyronia tithonus*

2013: There were no records this year of this butterfly for which we are on the very northern fringe of its range.



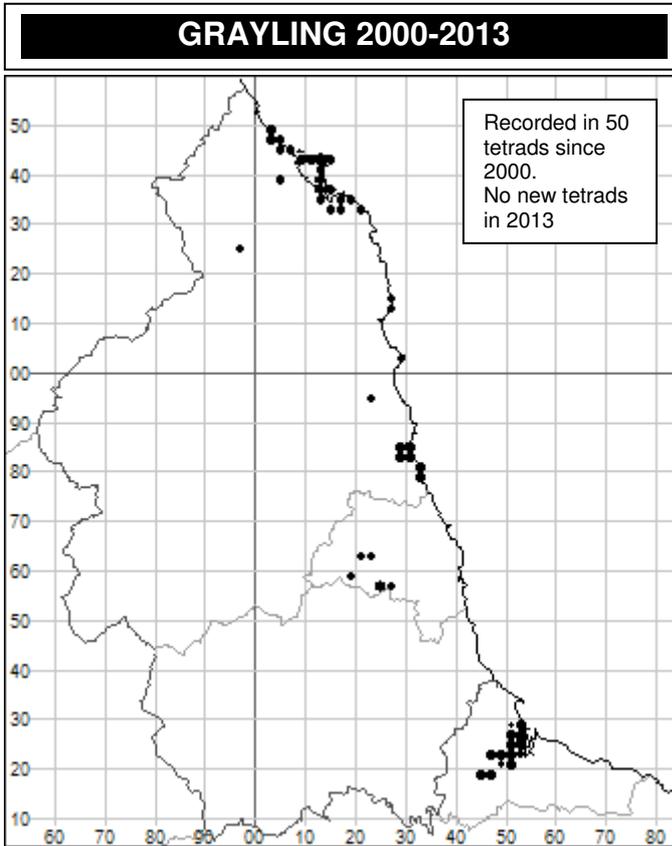
Small Heath, photographed by Jonathan Wallace



Meadow Brown photographed by Jim Asher

Grayling *Hipparchia semele*

2013: Tim and Dorothy Nelson recorded our region’s first Graylings on July 9th, one day earlier than the previous year. The eight specimens recorded by Tim and Dorothy were Co. Durham’s first and were seen at Greatham Creek. Keith Smith recorded Northumberland’s first at Cambois Dunes two days later.

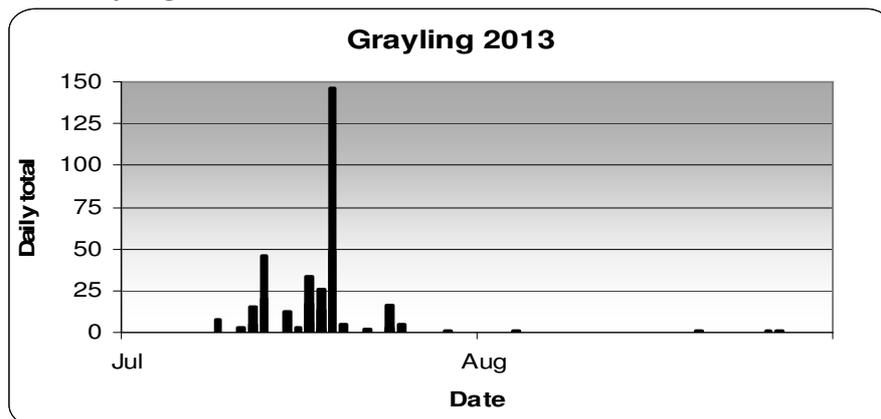


A pleasing aspect of the 2013 flight season was the number of double-figure counts that were made; these almost equalled the number of single-figure ones. Sites occupied by the Grayling are never amongst the most-visited in our region, therefore the fact that surveyors found the species in good numbers during many of their visits suggests that the species did, in fact, experience a reasonably good year.

Notable counts included 20 by Mike Coates at Cambois, 26 at Greatham Creek by Stephen Lowther, 12 at Portrack Marsh by Tim and Dorothy Nelson, 49 and 15 by Roger Norman at Cambois and Holy Island respectively, and the season’s best (97) by Derek Charlton at Greatham Creek. The latter count was made on July 19th which was around the peak of the flight season.

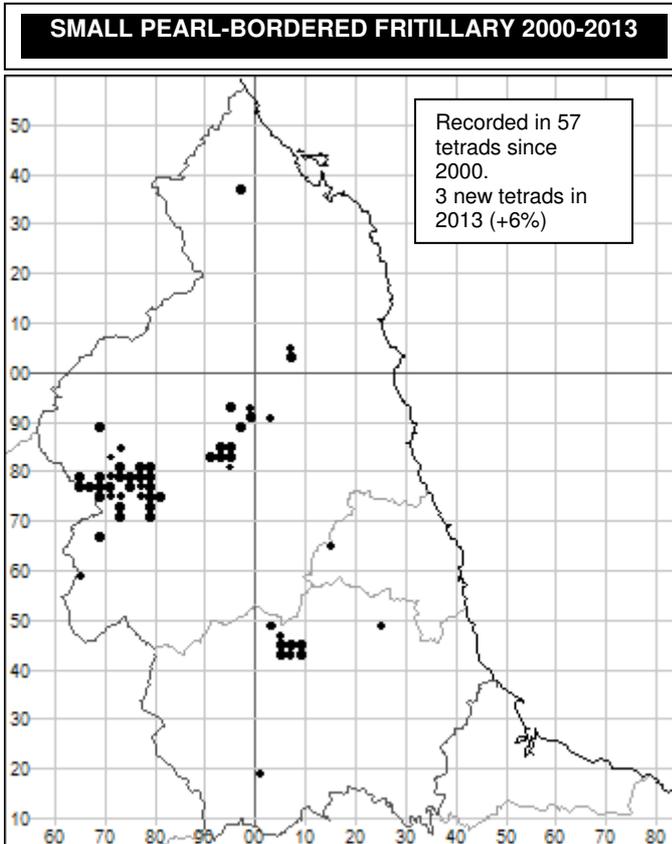
Counts deteriorated fairly quickly thereafter; Northumberland’s last sighting was a singleton at Cambois by Steve Holliday on August 26th; Durham’s last came a day later when Mike Leakey spotted one on his North Gare transect.

The Grayling has fared poorly in recent years. This species is extremely sensitive to poor weather during its flight period and its numbers can decrease dramatically in response. Conversely, it is capable of increasing both its range and its numbers when conditions are good – which they most definitely were during July 2013. While the year came nowhere near being one of the species’ best, it was encouraging to see its numbers improve at many of its core sites. Should the weather of July 2014 be equally good, the year could be a very special one for the Grayling!



Small Pearl-bordered Fritillary *Boloria selene*

2013: A total of twenty-seven records were received. These recorded 361 individual butterflies. The flight period covered thirty-nine days and the butterfly was seen on seventeen of these days, representing 44% of the flight period. The number of records received was low compared to recent years; however the number of individual butterflies seen was quite high meaning that recorders were seeing more butterflies at the visited sites. In fact some quite high counts were received from the traditional sites in central Northumberland and North West Durham.

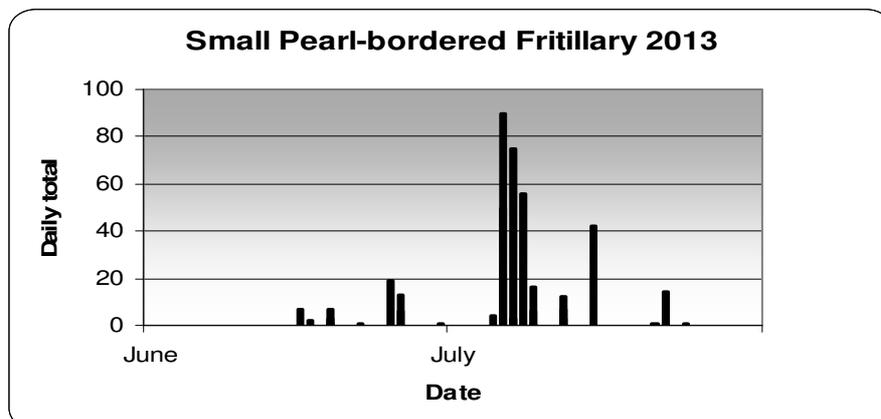


The flight season got off to a late start no doubt due to the cold and prolonged spring of 2013. The first sighting of the year was by Graham Beckwith at Debdon Plantation near Rothbury, who saw 7 on 16th June. Durham's first were just a day later with Dave Liddle seeing 2 at Burn Hill on 17th June. The peak of the flight period was also much later than normal, being in the first week of July rather than late June, again probably a knock on effect of the cold spring.

The highest individual count came from Dave Liddle who recorded seventy-two on the Burn Hill transect on 7th July. Burn Hill produced some other good counts and the Small Pearl is surely benefiting from all the hard work put into improving and extending the habitat for the butterfly in this area.

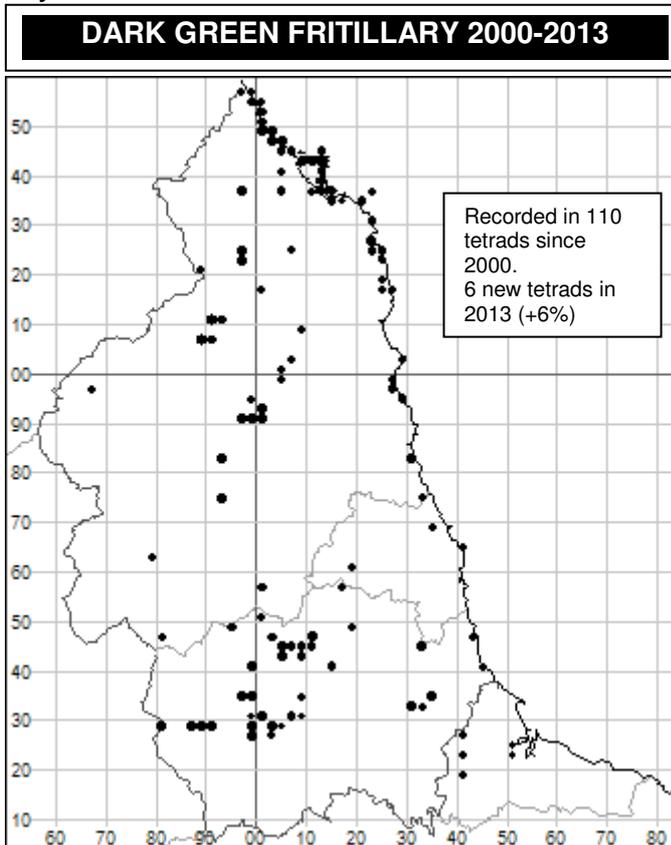
Good counts were also received from Dave Wainwright at several sites in Wark Forest on 6th July and from a number of recorders in the Sweethope Lough area also in early July.

The final sighting of the year in Northumberland came from Keith Smith who saw 5 at Rushy Dene near Sweethope Lough on 12th July. The last record from County Durham was on 24th July from Simon Hodgson who saw one on the Tees Railway Walk. This was an interesting sighting as it is well away from other known sites for the species. However, it may have just been a stray individual.



Dark Green Fritillary *Argynnis aglaja*

The Dark Green Fritillary experienced a better year in 2013 than it had in the previous year with a total of 55 records (9% up) of 727 individual butterflies (35% up), reflecting the rather better weather conditions encountered in 2013. The species was on the wing for a total of 51 days and was seen in 21 tetrads.

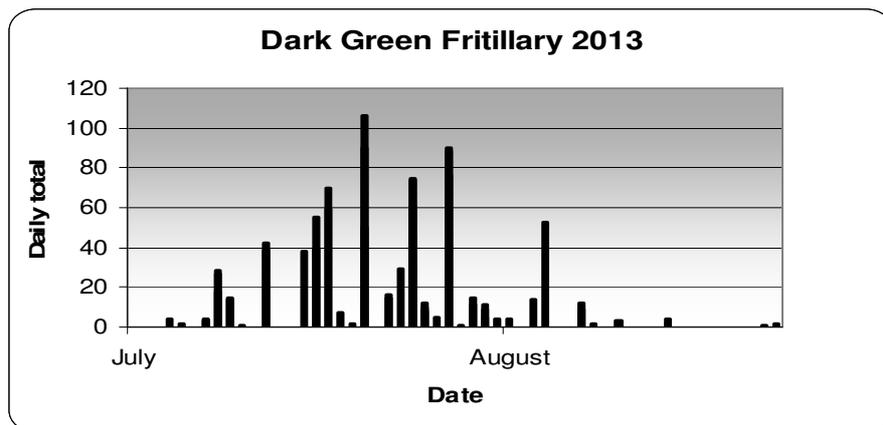


The first Dark Green Fritillary record of the year was produced by John Almond/Alnwick Natural History Society who recorded four at Newton Links, Northumberland on 4th July and this was followed a day later by Chris Powell who recorded two at Lane Heads Quarry.

Peak numbers were reached on 20th July when 106 butterflies were recorded, all by Iain Cowe on Lindisfarne (three separate counts on different parts of the island). Numbers fell away in August and the last record of the year was recorded on 23rd August on Lindisfarne.

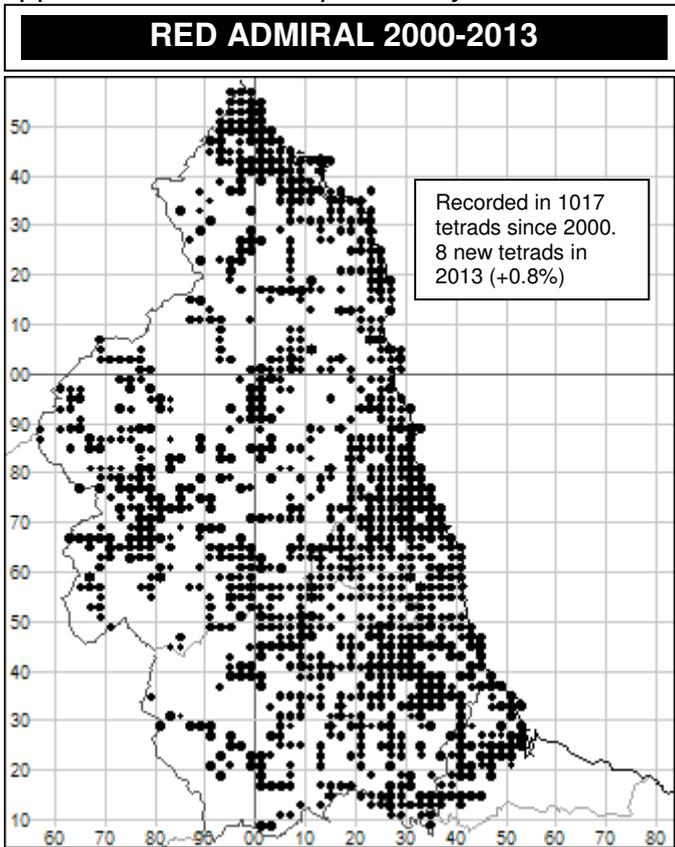
Durham's last record was made one day prior to this on the 22nd August when Ian Findlay recorded one Dark Green Fritillary in Upper Teesdale.

The highest individual count of the year was at Lindisfarne on 27th July for Ian Kerr with 76 and indeed, of the top fourteen counts, only one was not at Lindisfarne. The highest count away from Lindisfarne was made by Dave Liddle who recorded 39 in the Waskerley area on 12th July.



Red Admiral *Vanessa atalanta*

2013: If 2012 was a poor year for this migrant, 2013 was even worse. Only 546 individuals were recorded in comparison with 910 in 2012 and exactly 200 fewer reports (363) were received during the season. The flight period was also a lot shorter with a total of 190 days opposed to 238 in the previous year. The butterfly flew on 112 of those available days, 59%.



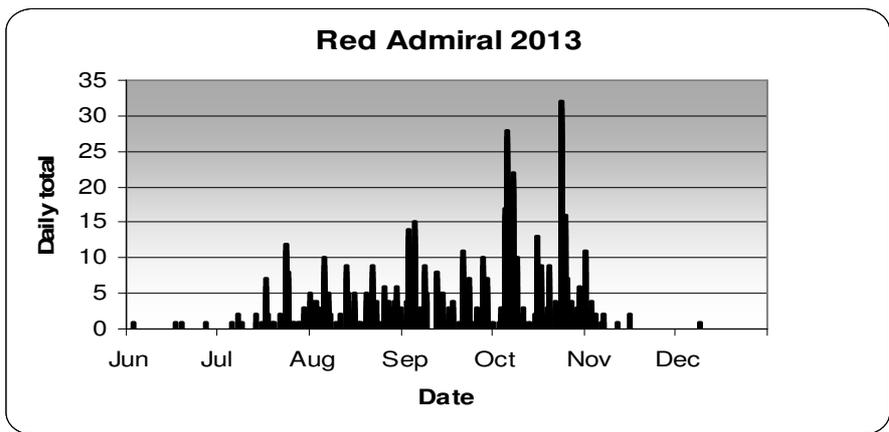
The first one to be recorded was by Stephen Lowther on 3rd June at Blackhall Rocks. This is three months later than in 2012, due entirely to the very cold spring and early summer.

The butterfly did not recover even as the weather warmed up in July and August, although, the last insect was reported at Seaton Carew by Tim and Dorothy Nelson on 9th December, which is a month and a half later than the year before.

September was the marginally better month for sightings with 96 reports compared to August when 86 records being submitted.

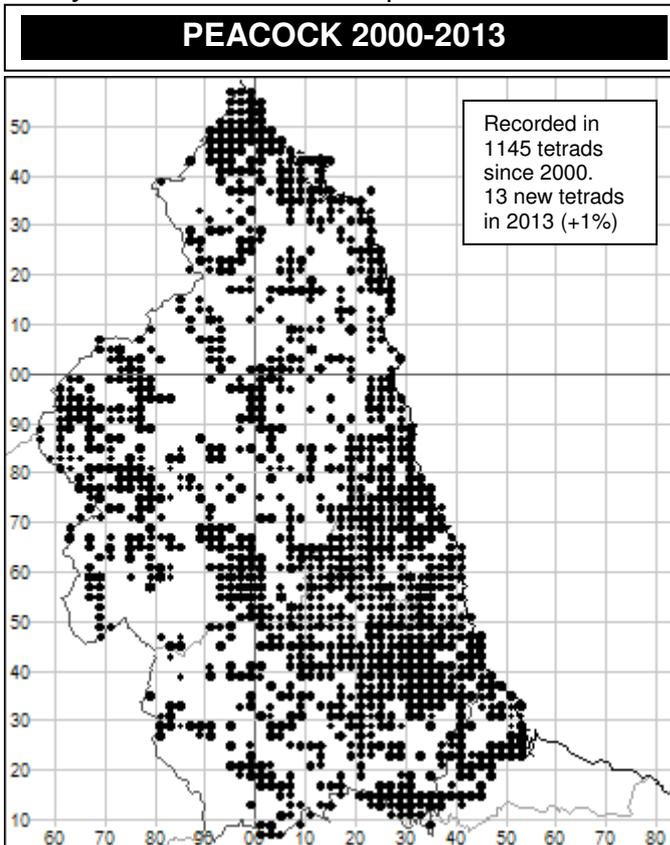
There were 266 records of individual insects from Holy Island to Teesmouth, with only one report of a double figure sighting (12) on 8th October at Preston Cemetery, North Shields, seen by Hewett Ellis.

The Red Admiral flew on 124 of the 526 tetrads recorded in 2013, a total of 24%. The butterfly has previously been reported on 1022 of the 1794 tetrads visited since 2000.



Peacock *Aglais io*

2013: Reported from Teesmouth to Tweedmouth, the Peacock has made a remarkable recovery since 2012. In that year, 2312 individual butterflies were seen, whereas in 2013, the total number of recorded sightings rose to 4631, an increase of 100%. This increase is surely a reflection of the superb weather we had in July and into August.



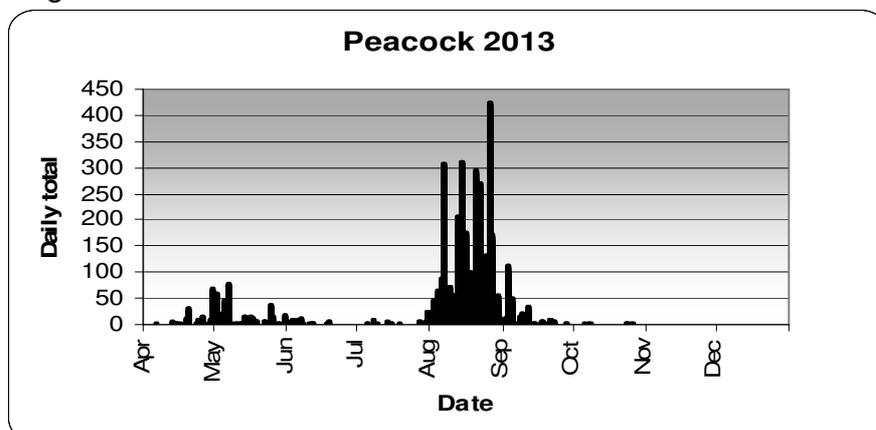
The flight period was only five days longer in 2013 (254 days), although the first one seen was by Graham Mitchell on 3rd April at Sherburn, nearly two months later than the earliest report for 2012. Similarly, the last record, Ken Dawson's sighting at Seahouses on 12th December was a month later than the previous year. The butterfly was recorded on 136 days of that flight period, (54%).

Overall, the Peacock was been reported in a total of 1151 tetrads, 67% of those visited between 2000 and 2013, (1794) and was seen in 264 (47%) of the 563 tetrads visited in 2013.

However, the beginning of the year was not auspicious. As mentioned, the first sighting was not until early April and it was not until 31st July that the butterfly was seen in double figures. There were 470 records for single individuals throughout the season.

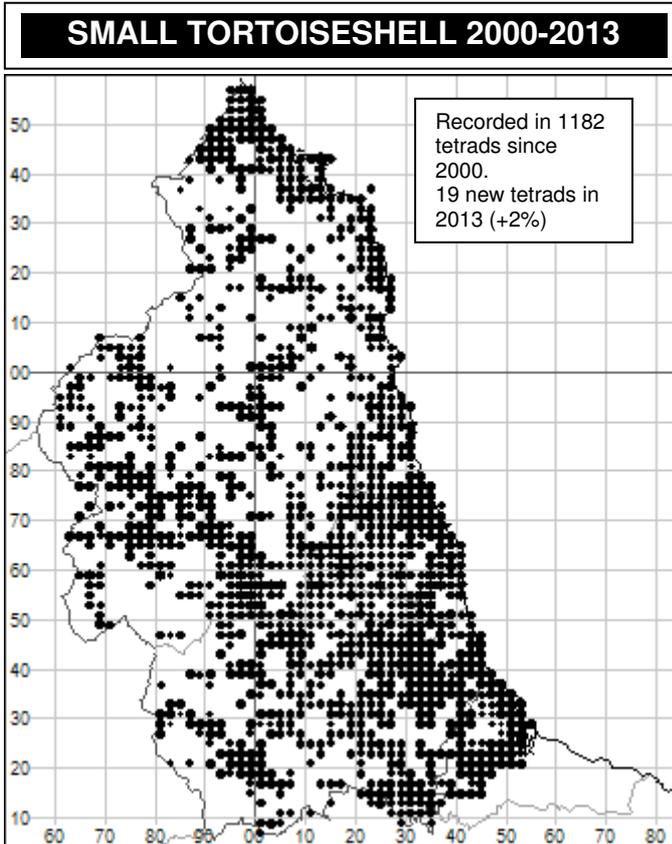
The highest count seen at one location was by Garry Whitton at Wingate Quarry on 20th August, when 72 individuals were recorded. This was closely followed by Michael Holmes at Slaley Hall, with 71 butterflies seen on 26th August and by Den Gregson, 70 insects at Low Burnhall on 13th August. These counts show that August was by far the most prolific month for the Peacock. There were 580 records yielding 3547 sightings spread throughout the month. Records after this tailed away rapidly during the last four months of the year.

In early 2013, with the weather being so cold for so long, the anticipated butterfly counts were predicted to be much lower than they have proved, especially in the case of the Peacock. This insect has certainly shown the capacity to bounce back after climatic setbacks. Hopefully, this is a good indication for 2014.



Small Tortoiseshell *Aglais urticae*

2013: A total of 1184 records were received of 4127 butterflies which is 2 records more than last year yet 1649 more butterflies. As in 2012, almost all of these records were in single figures, with only 79 in double figures, compared with 23 in double figures last year.



The highest individual count in the first flight period was of 12 on 6th May at Holywell by Mike Coates.

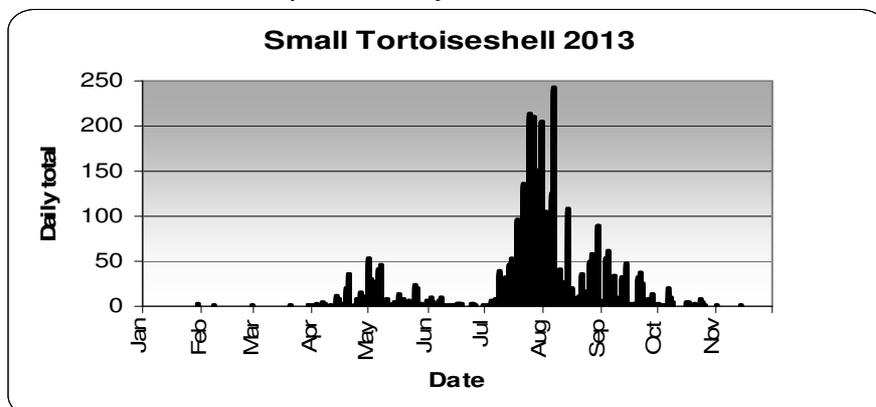
The second brood highest counts were of 78 by John Olley on 19th July at Littlewood LNR for Durham and the highest count of the year of 80 by John Almond and Alnwick Natural History Society on 30th August at Tughall, Northumberland.

In 2013 the highest joint totals recorded in any one day were 54 on 30th April and 243 on 31st July. This is a tremendous increase from 2012 when the highest joint total recorded in any one day was 125 on 27th March.

The first Small Tortoiseshell seen in 2013 was by Keith Smith on 30th January at Seghill and the last recorded was seen by John Almond and Alnwick Natural History Society at Warkworth on 14th November.

Small Tortoiseshells were recorded on 173 days being 60% of the 289 days flight period. They were seen in 274 tetrads in 2013 compared with 260 in 2012. The total number of tetrads that they have now been recorded in since 2000 stands at 1182 with 19 new in 2013, an increase of 2% compared with 29 new in 2012, which was an increase of 3%.

Considering how poor the weather was during previous breeding seasons, 2013 was an encouraging year for this species that had declined in recent years in the south and midlands, due to the attentions of a parasitic fly, *Sturmia bella*.

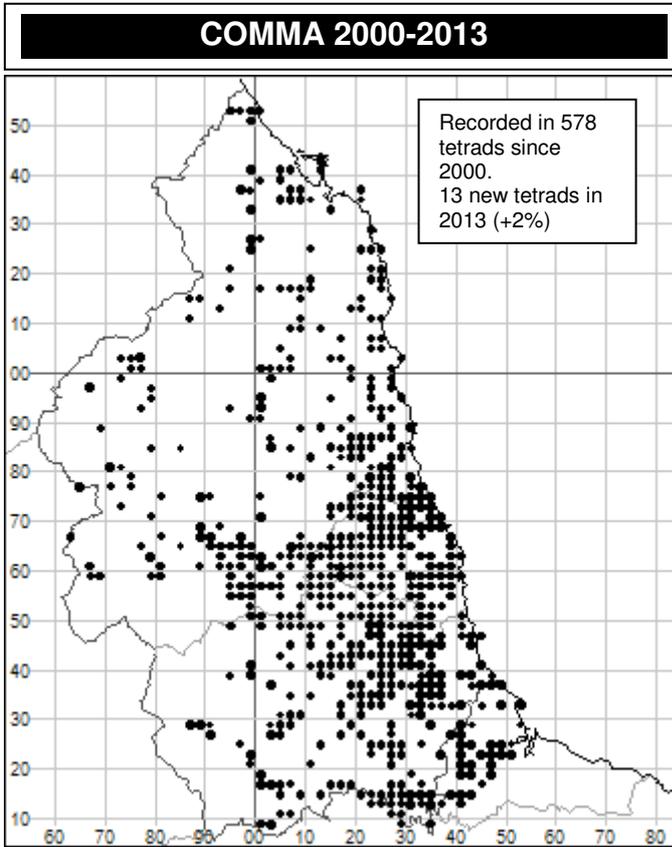


Camberwell Beauty *Nymphalis antiopa*

2013: There were no records of this dramatic vagrant from the east in 2013.

Comma *Polygonia c-album*

2013: David Stebbings recorded the first sighting of Comma at Havannah Nature Reserve on 13th April, a month and a half later than in 2012. The last, seen at Druridge Pools on 10 November by Paul Tankard, was at virtually the same date as last year (14th November). However, in spite of a later start, the numbers reported rose by 231, double the total for the previous year, to 451 individuals.



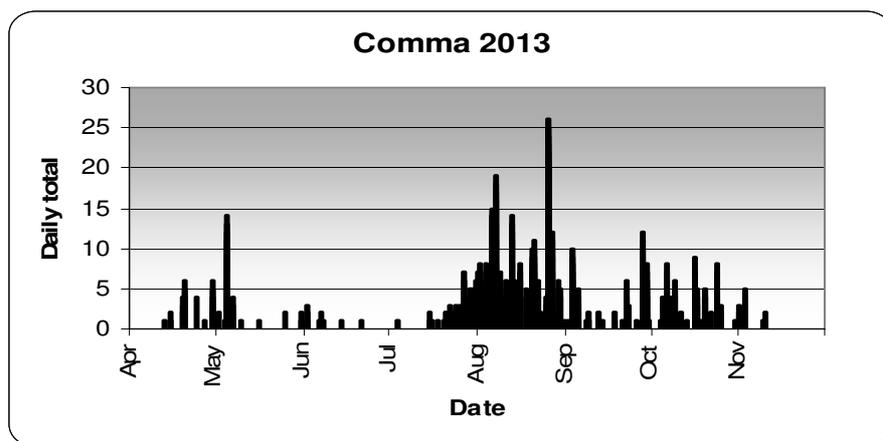
The butterfly was reported as flying on 102 days during a flight period of 212 days, at 48% of the available time, (this compares to the 69 days of flight in 2012).

306 records were submitted over the flight period. There were 226 single insect sightings from Berwick-upon-Tweed to Saltholme during the year and the maximum seen at any one location was 7, by Joe Dobinson at the Rising Sun CP on 6th August.

Comma was recorded on only 22% of the visited 526 tetrads visited by recorders. This is better than 2012, when only 15% of visited tetrads revealed the butterfly.

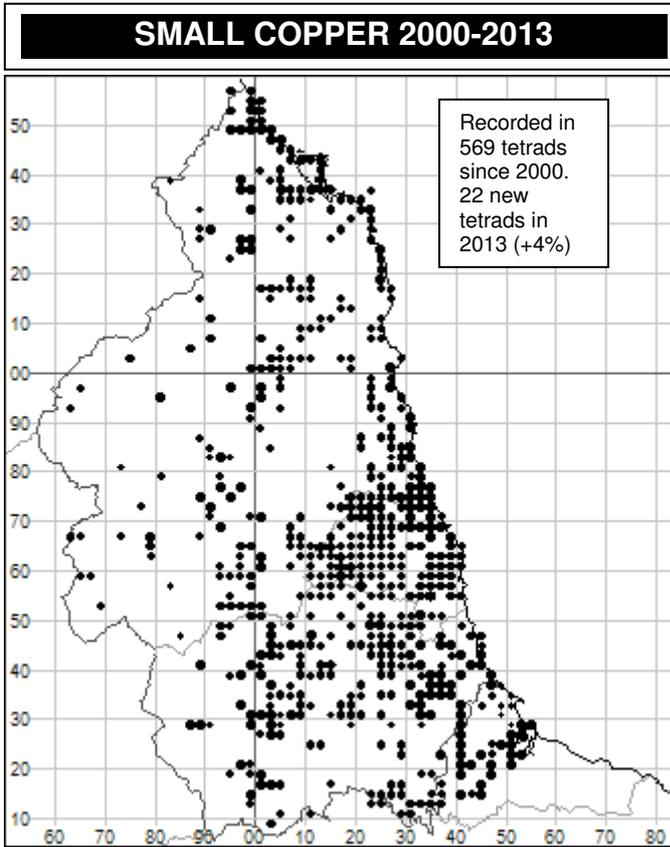
There were no clear “best days” or top recorders, although the butterfly was seen most often during August when 128 reports were sent to the Recorders. Only 18

individuals were seen to the north of Morpeth, so the species is concentrated in County Durham and Tyne and Wear.



Small Copper *Lycaena phlaeas*

2013: As may be expected numbers are up on 2012. The first Durham sighting was one at Washingwell Wood on 16th April by Ian Davidson and the first Northumberland sighting was by Jonathan Wallace with one at Paradise, Scotswood Road on the same day. The maximum seen on any day was on 20th August when a total of 78 were recorded by 16 recorders.



Prior to that there were three peaks – 36 on 31st July, 50 on 7th August and 62 on 14th August. The daily total only once reached 10 once before early August

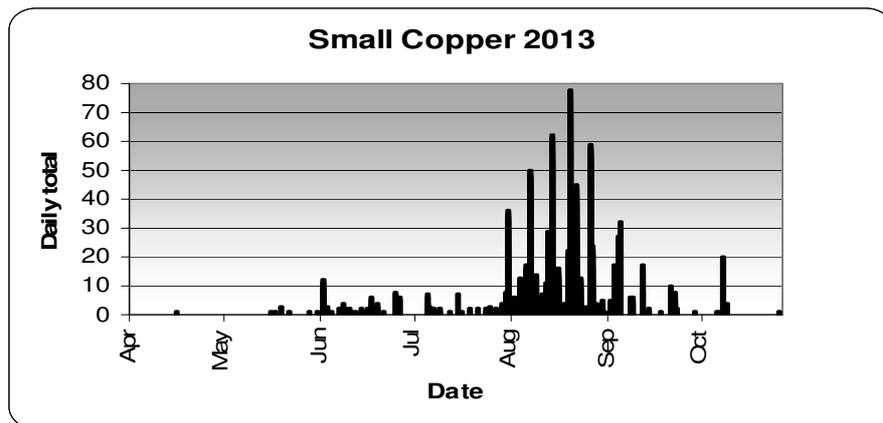
Sightings diminished from mid September to single figures except for the recording of 20 at Seahouses on 8th October by David Blair.

The last Northumberland record was then one by David Blair at Bamburgh the next day. The last Durham record was four by Joe Dobinson at the Jewish cemetery, Hartlepool on 26th of October

A total of 852 individuals were recorded over the season compared with 427 in 2012 and 1435 in 2011.

There was an average of 2.7 Small Coppers per report. They were on the wing for 194

days and recorded on 89 days – 46%.





An unusual variant of Small Copper, (var alba), photographed by at Crimdon Dene by Sue Evison on 18th June 2013.

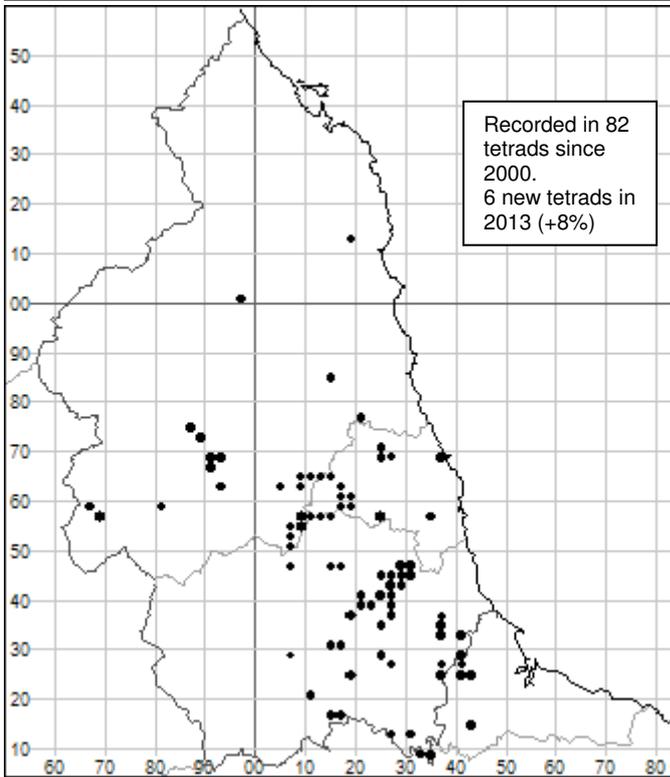


Small tortoiseshell, photographed by Mike Coates.

Purple Hairstreak *Favonius quercus*

2013: Purple Hairstreak had a better year than in 2012. 79 individuals from 18 records in 2013 was an increase of 126% and 38% respectively from 2012.

PURPLE HAIRSTREAK 2000-2013

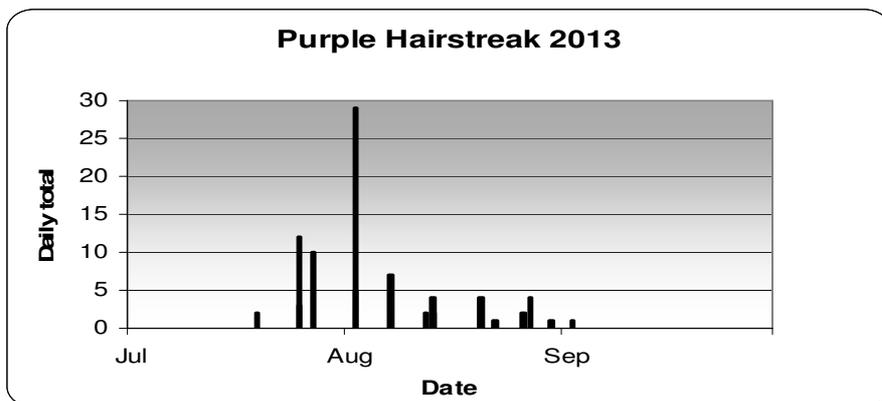


The first record of 2013 came courtesy of Graham Beckwith who recorded two individuals at site at Belmont, just off of the A690 on 19th July. The final record of the year came from Dave Wainwright who recorded a single individual at Low Barns on 2nd September.

The largest count of the year was reported by Nick Rossiter who recorded a remarkable 24 at Towsbank on 2nd August. Purple Hairstreak was on the wing for 46 days in 2013 compared with 66 days in 2012, and was recorded on 16 of those days, (35%) compared to 10, (15%) in 2012.

Mention must be made of the records by Ray Craig who found Purple Hairstreak at a new site in the Coquet valley, substantially further to the north-west of its previously recorded range in Northumberland and the first record in grid square NT. He

comments that warm sunny evenings after 6 pm, (when most observers have stopped recording!) are the best time to find them.



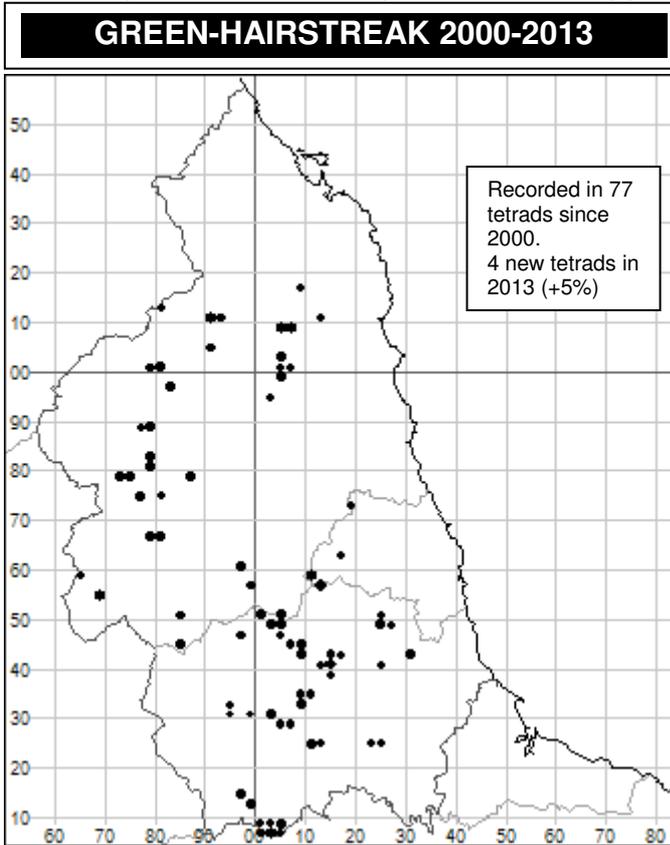


Purple and White-letter Hairstreaks, photographed by Jim Asher



Green Hairstreak *Callophrys rubi*

2013: Only 15 reports were received covering 6 tetrads. In total only 46 individuals were recorded on 13 days between 2nd May and 25th June making this the worst year for Green Hairstreak since 2008. An exceptionally cold and late spring resulted in the poor numbers, and compared with recent years, the late appearance of this butterfly.

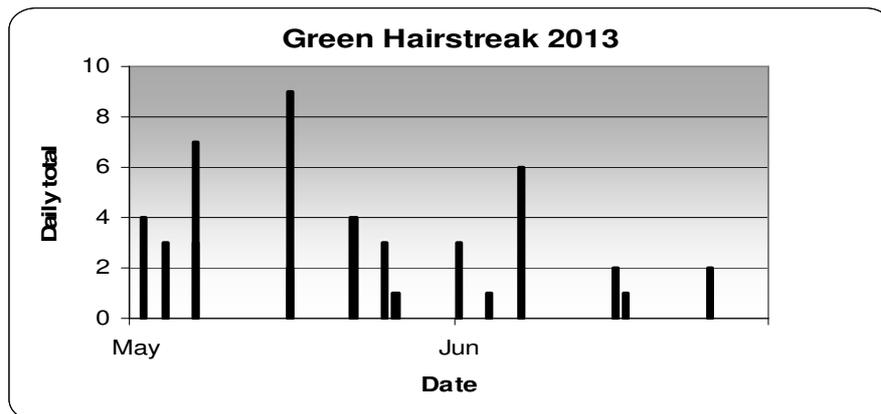


The first record of the year was 4 individuals seen by Keith Smith in Dipton Woods on 2nd May. Keith also recorded the largest number for the year at Dipton Woods with 7 individuals on 16th May. The majority of this year's records came from three sites.

18 butterflies were recorded from Dipton Woods, 7 by Graham Beckwith at Rothbury, and 16 by Dave Liddell at Burn Hill. Gordon Simpson recorded 4 in Wark Forest, Bryan Galloway 1 at a new site, Blind Burn in Coquetdale, and Dave Liddle 1 at Pow Hill.

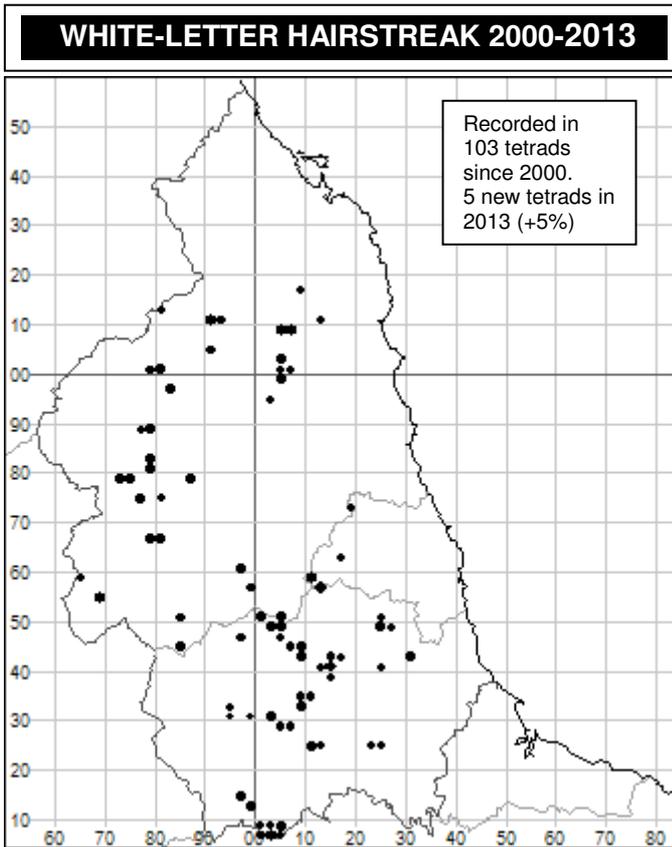
The numbers of Green Hairstreaks recorded each year appears to depend on the spring weather. The dry and sunny Spring of 2011 resulted in 526 individuals being recorded but the poor spring weather of 2012 and 2013 saw a dramatic decrease in numbers.

With only 7 reporters in 2013 and two of the tetrads providing 10 of the 16 reports, it is difficult to draw conclusions. Green Hairstreak remains an under-recorded species which is great pity for such a charming spring butterfly.



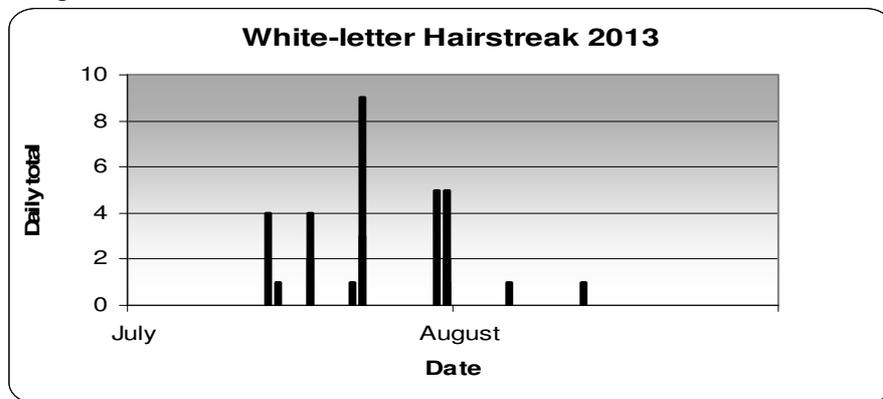
White-letter Hairstreak *Satyrium w-album*

2013: There were 13 records totalling 31 individuals. This compares to 12 records of 25 individuals in 2012.



Dave Wainwright saw the first on 14th July at Pig Hill with a day's total of 4 individuals. The last of the year was recorded by Jonathan Wallace on 13th August at Bywell Bridge, Northumberland. The largest daily count came from Steve Austin who recorded 6 near to the A1 Chester-le-Street roundabout. This site holds good potential for this species as Graham Beckwith also recorded a count of 5 from there. As the graph below shows, sightings of White-letter Hairstreak peaked in late July with the highest counts being recorded between 22nd July and 31st July. The flight period lasted for 31 days with the species on the wing for 9 days (29%) of this period. This compares to a flight period of only 21 days in 2012, however the species was on the wing for 52% of that time.

This is an under-recorded species which needs to be searched for where elms are present and where their tree-tops can be viewed during July and August.



Long-tailed Blue *Lampides boeticus*

2013: An individual was photographed in a garden at West Cornforth in Co. Durham by Lynne Kennedy on 23rd July. Most Long-tailed Blues are considered to have arrived as larvae, accidentally imported in fruit and vegetables. However, breeding was reported on the south coast in 2013, so there is a possibility this might have been a genuine vagrant.



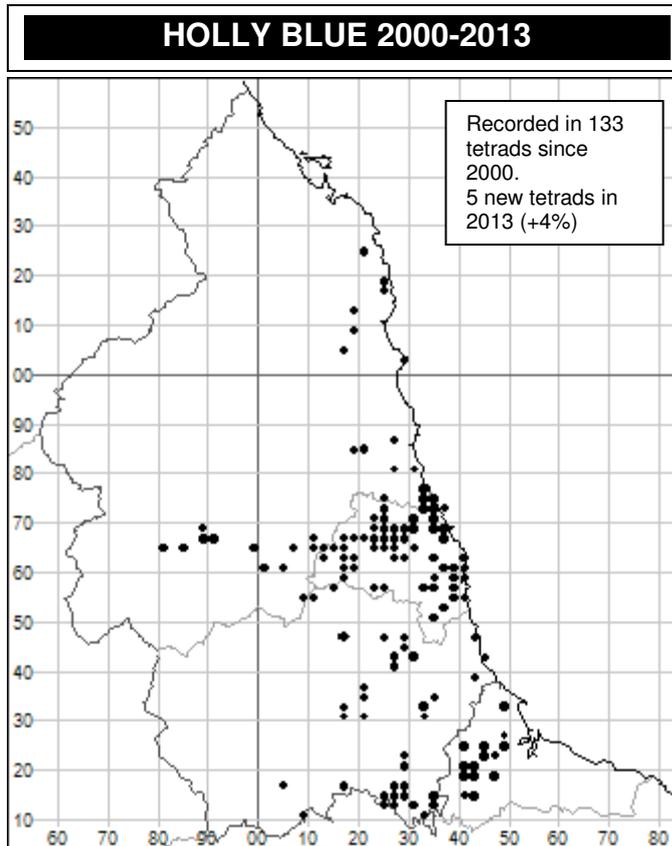
Long-tailed Blue,
photographed by Lynne
Kennedy at West Cornforth on
23rd July 2013.



Ringlet, photographed by
Andrew Warrior near Stockton
on 3rd July 2013

Holly Blue *Celastrina argiolus*

2013: This was a very disappointing year for Holly Blues in our region with only 33 records received of 56 butterflies compared with 128 records and 162 butterflies in 2012 despite that year's appalling wet weather.



Numbers had increased in our region in recent years, only one individual was recorded in 2001, three in 2002 increasing to 284 individuals in 2007, then crashing to only 7 recorded in 2009 with numbers increasing again each year since.

Of the 2013 records 21 were single specimens, 6 were twos, 5 were threes then only one higher record of eight. This highest individual count was by Mike Coates of 8 on 7th May at Northumberland Park, North Shields.

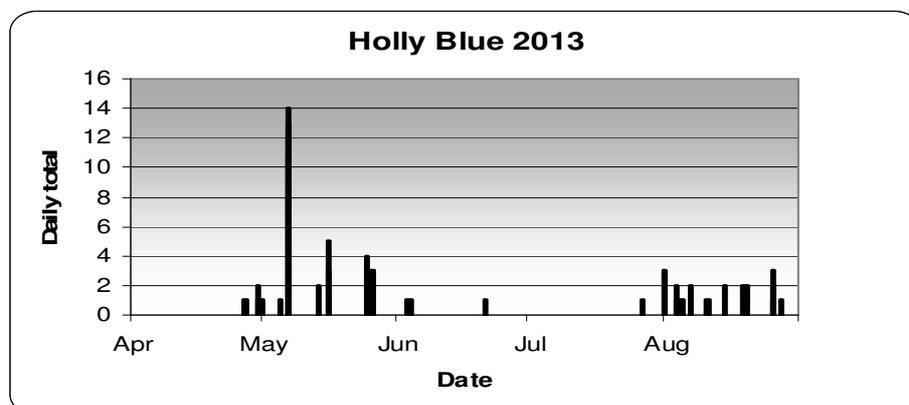
Of the 56 recorded, 5 were south of the Tyne, 7 in Newcastle, 42 in North Tyneside, 1 in Morpeth and the furthest north was 1 at Hauxley.

The first Holly Blue seen in 2013 was by Hew Ellis on 27th April at Tynemouth and the last recorded was seen by Marty Anderson and Liz Naughton in Morpeth on

28th August.

The first brood was seen on the wing from 27th April until 21st June with 36 individuals recorded. There were then almost six weeks without records before the second brood, which was only recorded for four weeks from 27th July until 28th August with a disappointing total count of only 20 individuals.

Holly Blues were recorded on 23 days, being 19% of the 124 days flight period. They were only seen in a disappointing 14 Tetrads in 2013 compared with 31 in 2012. The total number of tetrads that they have now been recorded in stands at 133 since 2000.



Erratum The larvae were omitted and erroneous numbers of ova for Holly Blue were given in the 2012 report. Correct numbers reported by Hew Ellis were one larva and seven ova at Preston Cemetery, North Shields on 6th September and one ovum at Monkseaton the next day.

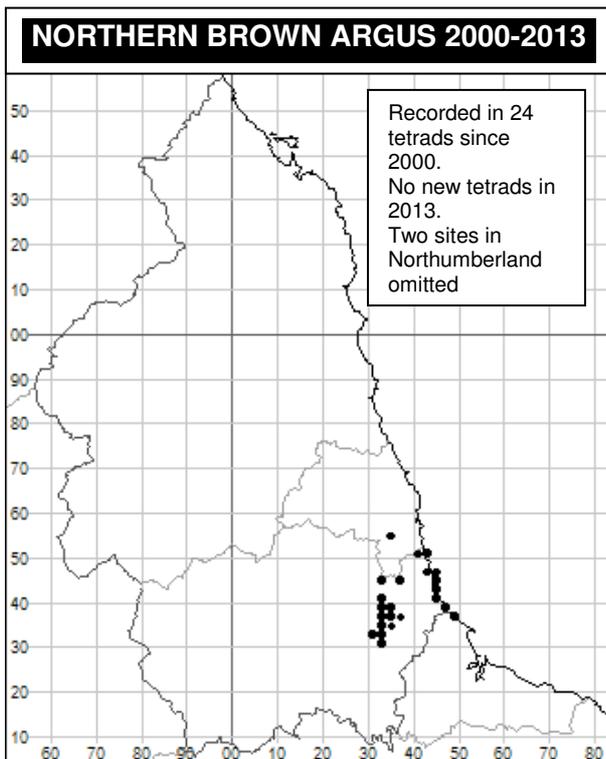
Brown Argus *Aricia agestis*

2013: There were no accepted records for Brown Argus in 2013.

As in previous years, records of Brown Argus at known Northern Brown Argus sites during the flight period of Northern Brown Argus must be supported by documentation, preferably photographs.

Northern Brown Argus *Aricia artaxerxes*

2013: A total of 343 Northern Brown Argus adults was posted for 2013, a substantial improvement on 2012 which was itself an improvement on 2011. The 2013 total was inflated by targeted surveys of our inland sites by various branch members but even allowing for these additional efforts the species appeared to experience a reasonably good year.



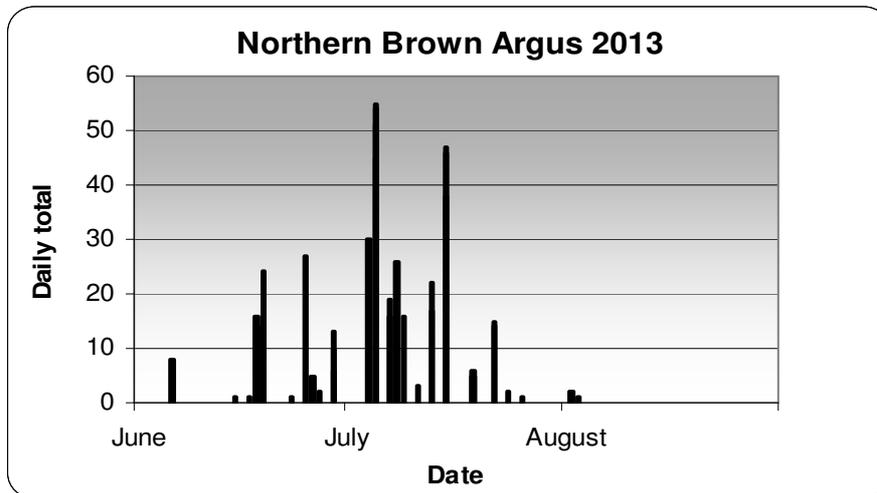
Stephen Lowther recorded the year's first specimens with eight at Thrislington on June 6th – a fairly typical date for this species although no more were seen until June 15th when Steve le Fleming recorded a singleton while walking his Bishop Middleham Quarry transect.

The flight period was a fairly protracted affair. The season's peak was reached on July 5th when a total of 55 was recorded from four different sites. The bulk of this total derived from Dave Wainwright's count of 45 at Silent Bank (the year's highest) which is by far and away the highest number ever recorded from this site where typically only the odd egg is found. Forty-seven adults were recorded from a variety of sites on July 15th which provides an indication that the species was still around in good numbers at its inland sites on that date.

In addition to sites mentioned previously, there were records from Quarrington Hill (Dave Liddle), Pittington Hill (Derek Charlton, Dave Stebbings & Roger Norman), Sherburn Hill (Dave Stebbings & Roger Norman), Littlewood LNR (John Olley), Raisby Hill Grassland (Mark Richardson), Rough Furze Quarry (Dave Wainwright) and Hastings Hill (Barry Robinson).

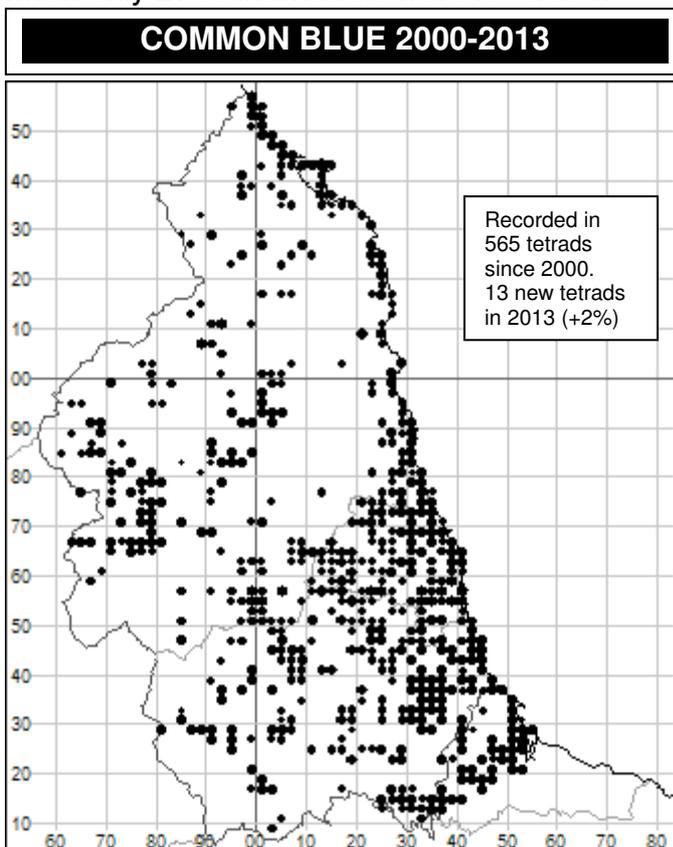
A couple of coastal records were also received. Dave Wainwright recorded six at Hart Warren Dunes while the year's last record came from Foxholes, near Easington, where Barry Robinson recorded a singleton on August 3rd. The latest record from an inland site was of a pair seen by John Scarr at Thrislington Plantation the previous day.

The Branch is continuing to re-survey a large number of Northern Brown Argus sites in 2014 for this important species. Very roughly, these surveys will take place in June (inland sites) and July (coastal sites). If you would like to help – and full training will be provided – contact either Michael Harris or Dave Wainwright, - see back cover for the contact details.



Common Blue *Polyommatus icarus*

2013: There were 496 reports in 2013 from 117 tetrads with 4970 individuals recorded between 3rd June and 8th October. After a slow start to the flight period records increased rapidly in July and the species appeared to have recovered after the poor summer of 2012 when only 2766 individuals were recorded.



The first records of the year came from S.J. Lowther, a single at Crimdon Beach on 3rd June followed by 26 at Thrislington Plantation on 6th June. 58 were recorded from Stargate Ponds and Bewes Hill on 19th June by Jill Stewart and 38 at Bishop Middleham Quarry by Tim and Dorothy Nelson on 18th June.

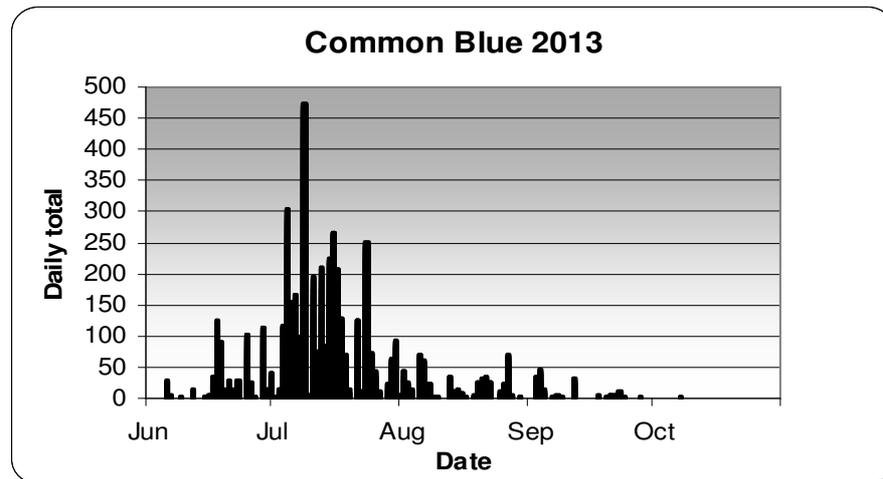
473 individuals were recorded on 9th July at 18 sites including the highest record of the year, 143 by Kevin Redgrave at Newton Links. Kevin also recorded 129 at Dunstan Heughs, near Craster on 24th July and 44 at the same site on 6th August. Dave Wainwright recorded 94 at Hendon Sidings on 13th July.

Although the coastal localities provided a good number of records, Bishop Middleham and Wingate Quarries also saw steady numbers throughout the summer. Gary

Whitton recorded 84 at Wingate on 16th July.

During August, Mike Leakey recorded 33 at North Gare on 21st August and 25 at the same site on 27th August. Mark Richardson recorded 23 at Bishop Middleham Quarry on 27th August and 24 at the same site on 3rd September. Otherwise August and September numbers provided only modest counts suggesting there was a small second generation.

The last sightings were reported by Marty Anderson at Scotswood Road and John Lawson at Stillington Park on 8th October



Acknowledgements We would like to thank our species writers for assisting in the preparation of the annual report: Jaci Beaven, (Red Admiral, Peacock & Comma), Mike Coates, (Holly Blue & Small Tortoiseshell), Brian Denham, (Small Skipper & Small Copper), Steve le Fleming, (Green-veined White, Marbled White & Meadow Brown), Michael Harris, (Ringlelet & Large Heath), Stephen Lowther, (Brimstone, Purple Hairstreak & White-letter Hairstreak), Barry Robinson, (Painted Lady & Speckled Wood), Dave Stebbings, (Large Skipper, Brown Argus, Small White, Small Pearl-bordered Fritillary, Small Heath & Wall Brown), Dave Wainwright, (Dingy Skipper, Northern Brown Argus & Grayling), Jonathan Wallace, (Large White, Orange Tip & Dark Green Fritillary), and Peter Webb, (Green Hairstreak & Common Blue). We are looking for more volunteers, to write up one or perhaps two species for 2014. We are also always looking to receive more photographs for inclusion in the report, (as JPEG files please). Please contact the Recorders.



Painted Lady, photographed by Roger Norman in Kenton, Newcastle

CONTRIBUTORS

J.M. Almond, Gloria & Neville Anderson, Lyn Anderson, Marty Anderson, Daphne Aplin, Fiona Aungier, Steve Austin, Nina Barr, Jaci Beaven, Graham Beckwith, Dave Blair, Stephen Block, Ian Bond, Graeme Bowman, John Bridges, Pam Campion, V. Carnell, Derek Charlton, Dave Chrisp, Pam Chrisp, Mike N. Coates, Trixie Collins, Melvyn Conlong, John Corcoran, Anne Corrigan, Terry Coult, Iain Cowe, Chris Cox, A. Craggs, Ray Craig, Ian Davidson, Alan Davis, Ken Dawson, Brian Denham, Mark Dinning, Joe Dobinson, Harry Eales, Alan Edwards, Arthur Edwards, Hewitt Ellis, Margaret Evens, Sue Evison, Ian H. Findlay, Steve le Fleming, Dave Foster, Jeff Fowler, Andrew Fox, M. Gallon, Jane Gray, Neil Gregory, Den Gregson, C. Hales, J. Hall, Molly Hardie, Jacqui Harle, Brian Harle, Marney Harris, Mike Harris, L.C. Hodgson, Simon Hodgson, Julie Hogg, Steve Holliday, Michael Holmes, D. Howdon, Denise & Mike Hunter, Ann & Malcolm Hutcheson, Steven Hutchinson, Tom Ivison, H. Jackson, Iain Johnson, Pam Johnson, A.J. Johnston, Philip Jordan, Lynne Kennedy, Ian Kerr, Tim Kell, David Lacey, Jane Lancaster, John Lawson, Mike Leakey, Dave Liddle, Mrs. V. Livingston, Graham Lonsdale, S. J. Lowther, Ann & Derek Mason, Barbara Mason, Julie C. Mason, Helen McDonald, Dee McKeown, John McKillop, Graham Mitchell, Fran Mudd, Mike Natrass, Liz Naughton, Tim & Dorothy Nelson, Coralie Niven, Kaye Norman, Roger Norman, Nick Rossiter, John Olley, Russell Pannell, Helen Passey, Brian Pollinger, Chris Powell, Ed Pritchard, John Rae, Kevin Redgrave, Mark Richardson, Trevor Richardson, Mr B.A. Robinson, Mrs J.A. Robinson, John Scarr, Ian Schofield, Laura Scott, Gordon Sirmont, Gordon Simpson, P. Simpson, Pippa Smaling, Keith Smith, Dr Valerie Standen, Neville Stead, David Stebbings, Jill Stewart, Les Stobbs, Steve Stone, S. Straughan, Paul Tankard, Roslyn Tanner, Paul Tindall, D. Turnbull, Enid Turnbull, Dave Wainwright, Jonathan Wallace, Kyra Wallace, K Walton, Howard Ward, Andrew Warrior, Elizabeth Waterston, Margaret Weddell, Gary Whitton, Nathan Wilkie, M. Williams, John Wilson, Lauren Withrington, J. H. Wood, Hannah Woodhouse, Ann & Gordon Young, Gill Young, Alnwick Wildlife Group, Alnwick & District Natural History Society, Berwick Wildlife Group, Natural England, The National Trust, with apologies for any accidental omissions.

Both 'casual' records and transect counts are important for assessing the health of our butterfly populations. We would like to thank the following transect walkers:

<i>Recorder</i>	<i>Transect</i>
Howard Ward	Billingham Beck Country Park
Mark Dinning, Steve Le Fleming, Mark Richardson	Bishop Middleham Quarry
Stephen Hutchinson, Coralie Niven	Brass Castle
Dave Liddle, Coralie Niven	Burn Hill, and Byerley House
Alan Edwards	Castle Eden Dene NNR – West end
Ian Schofield, Coralie Niven	Cater House Colliery
Berwick Wildlife Group*	Cocklawburn Dunes
Daphne Aplin	Cowpen Bewley 2 (Woodland Park)
Dave Liddle	Dolly's Wood
M. Gallon, Kevin Redgrave.....	Dunstanburgh Heughs
Helen McDonald, Lauren Withrington	Gibside (National Trust)
Hannah Woodhouse.....	Hart to Haswell
Dave Stebbings.....	Havannah LNR
Dave Wainwright	Hedleyhope Fell, and Inkerman
Chris Powell	Lanehead Quarry
A. Craggs, Laura Scott, (Natural England)	Lindisfarne NNR
Tom Ivison, John Olley.....	Littlewood LNR
Nina Barr, Chris Cox, Brian Pollinger,	Milkwellburn Wood
Melvyn Conlong, Coralie Niven, John Wilson,	Morrison Busty Pit Yard
David Lacey, Jane Lancaster, Coralie Niven, Les Stobbs,	Newton Hall Junction
Ian Findlay, Kevin Redgrave (National Trust)	Newton Links
Jane Lancaster (National Trust), ...	Newton Point
Mike Leakey, Hannah Woodhouse	North Gare, Teesmouth NNR
Mark Richardson, Mark Dinning	Raisby Hill Grassland
John McKillop, Ed. Pritchard, Nathan Wilkie	RSPB Saltholme
Graham Lonsdale, Graham Mitchell, Paul Tindall	Sherburn Railway
Jill Stewart.....	Stargate Ponds & Bewes Hill

John Lawson.....	Stillington Forest Park
Dave Liddle, Coralie Niven.....	Tanfield Lea Marsh
Simon Hodgson.....	Tees Railway Walk
Pippa Smaling.....	The Whinnies LNR, (near Darlington)
John Scarr.....	Thrislington
Berwick Wildlife Group**	Tommy-the-Miller's Field, Berwick
Ian H. Findlay.....	Upper Teesdale NNR
Alan Davis, Paul Tankard.....	Weetslade Country Park
Pippa Smaling.....	West Park, Darlington
Gary Whitton.....	Wingate Quarry
Jeff Fowler	Wynyard Woodland Park - Pickards Meadow

* Pam Campion, Trixie Collins, Molly Hardie, John Rae, P. Simpson, M Williams.

** Fiona Aungier, Stephen Block, John Rae, Enid Turnbull, Gill Young.

We would like to thank Kevin Redgrave for sending in transect counts from the National Trust for the Northumberland coast and to the following for the photographs and illustrations used in this report.

Front Cover	Marbled White	Terry Coult
Page 5	Holly Blues	Mike Coates
Page 14	Brimstone	Dave Stebbings
Page 21	Small Heath	Jonathan Wallace
Page 21	Meadow Brown	Jim Asher
Page 32	Small Copper	Sue Evison
Page 32	Small Tortoiseshell	Mike Coates
Page 34	Purple & White-letter Hairstreaks	Jim Asher
Page 37	Long-tailed Blue	Lynne Kennedy
Page 37	Ringlet	Andrew Warrior
Page 41	Painted Lady	Roger Norman

We always need new photos. The Branch would also welcome any feedback or suggestions to improve future editions of the Annual Report. Please send us photographs, line drawings, suggestions and articles for both the newsletters and annual reports. They are always welcome. Whilst the photographs are in black & white in the printed version of the annual report, (for cost reasons), they are in colour in the website version which can be downloaded.

Accepting Records

With the increasing number of butterfly records now being submitted, and with it the increasing chances of finding locally rare species, a reminder that photographs and descriptions in support of Brown Argus, Camberwell Beauty, Gatekeeper, Brimstone and any other more unusual butterfly are essential. In the absence of any photographs, a detailed description for rare species should be submitted. A brief description should also accompany any out of place records, such as a species seen outside its normal flight period, e.g. a Small Skipper seen in the first week of June or earlier, or a species seen well outside its currently known range, for example Northern Brown Argus in Northumberland.

The Records Committee may look at any record, particularly for rarer species or species seen at unusual times or places or in unusual numbers. The Committee will assess such records and may decline to accept them.

Feedback

When processing and analysing almost thirteen thousand records, plus comparisons to previous years, it is almost inevitable some mistakes will slip through. If anyone does notice any errors please inform your Butterfly Recorders.

FLIGHT PERIOD TABLE

This table relates to both Durham and Northumberland, and records the first and last flying record of each species for the three-year period 2010 to 2013. Insects found in undisturbed hibernation or in the larval stage have been excluded. For ease of reference, any record early / late sightings during the BNM project period 1995 – 2013 are included in the last two columns. Apart from the Small Blue sighting, no earliest and only 3 latest record dates, (shown in bold) were beaten or equalled in 2013. One or two dates may differ from previous tables due to additional records or reappraisal.

FLIGHT PERIOD TABLE								
	2011		2012		2013		Record earliest	Record latest
Dingy Skipper	22-Apr	5-Aug	28-Apr	22-Jul	9-May	6-Aug	18-Apr-03	22-Aug-09
Small Skipper	29-May	27-Aug	19-Jun	17-Sep	8-Jun	27-Aug	29-May-11	10-Oct-01
Large Skipper	19-May	2-Sep	27-May	11-Sep	15-Jun	18-Aug	19-May-07/11	11-Sep-12
Orange-tip	5-Mar	27-Jun	22-Mar	9-Sep	27-Apr	29-Jul	5-Mar-11	10-Sep-06
Large White	8-Mar	23-Oct	11-Mar	7-Oct	26-Apr	27-Dec	8-Mar-11	27-Dec-13
Small White	5-Mar	1-Nov	19-Mar	9-Oct	15-Apr	26-Oct	3-Mar-99	1-Nov-11
Green-veined White	8-Mar	28-Oct	26-Mar	26-Sep	19-Apr	5-Oct	8-Mar-11	28-Oct-11
Clouded Yellow	28-Jun	11-Oct					23-May-06	15-Oct-00
Brimstone	19-Apr	28-Sep	22-Apr	4-Jul	21-Jul	4-Sep	5-Apr-07	28-Sep-11
Wall Brown	23-Apr	12-Nov	3-May	15-Oct	20-Apr	8-Oct	4-Apr-07	12-Nov-11
Speckled Wood	5-Mar	29-Oct	22-Mar	22-Oct	26-Apr	12-Nov	5-Mar-11	12-Nov-13
Large Heath	28-Jun	6-Aug	7-Jul	14-Aug	7-Jul	22-Jul	4-Jun-96	14-Aug-96/12
Small Heath	22-Apr	28-Oct	14-May	21-Oct	31-May	29-Sep	22-Apr-11	28-Oct-11
Ringlet	19-May	12-Sep	14-May	8-Sep	25-May	18-Sep	14-May-12	2-Oct-01
Meadow Brown	15-May	29-Sep	14-May	22-Sep	6-Jun	3-Oct	4-Apr-99	14-Oct-95
Gatekeeper							14-Jul-06	2-Sep-10
Marbled White	22-Jun	5-Aug	7-Jul	15-Aug	9-Jul	7-Aug	22-Jun-11	26-Aug-08
Grayling	18-Jun	25-Aug	10-Jul	21-Aug	9-Jul	27-Aug	18-Jun-11	11-Sep-05
Small Pearl-bordered Frit.	15-May	30-Jun	18-Jun	8-Aug	16-Jun	24-Jul	15-May-11	21-Aug-07
Dark Green Fritillary	14-Jun	4-Sep	18-Jun	9-Sep	4-Jul	30-Aug	7-Jun-06	9-Sep-12
Red Admiral	22-Mar	24-Nov	28-Feb	22-Oct	3-Jun	9-Dec	23-Jan-06	28-Dec-07
Painted Lady	27-Mar	15-Oct	10-May	1-Oct	31-May	30-Oct	27-Mar-11	7-Nov-03
Peacock	16-Jan	20-Nov	31-Jan	1-Nov	3-Apr	12-Dec	8-Jan-96	23-Dec-05
Small Tortoiseshell	4-Jan	22-Nov	11-Jan	10-Nov	30-Jan	14-Nov	1-Jan-05	27-Dec-05
Camberwell Beauty							6-Jul-06	10-Sep-06
Comma	5-Mar	12-Nov	28-Feb	14-Nov	13-Apr	14-Nov	3-Feb-07	18-Nov-08
Small Copper	12-Apr	29-Oct	26-Mar	21-Oct	16-Apr	30-Oct	26-Mar-12	30-Oct-13
Purple Hairstreak	4-Jul	22-Aug	5-Jul	8-Sep	19-Jul	2-Sep	4-Jul-11	12-Sep-05
Green Hairstreak	9-Apr	26-May	29-Mar	29-May	2-May	25-Jun	29-Mar-12	27-Jul-98/08
White-letter Hairstreak	15-Jun	5-Aug	24-Jul	13-Aug	14-Jul	13-Aug	15-Jun-11	28-Aug-96/08
Holly Blue	6-Apr	27-Aug	26-Mar	19-Sep	27-Apr	28-Aug	26-Mar-12	21-Oct-06
Brown Argus	23-Apr	4-Sep	26-Aug	21-Oct			23-Apr-11	21-Oct-12
Northern Brown Argus	19-May	1-Sep	4-Jun	2-Sep	6-Jun	3-Aug	19-May-11	2-Sep-12
Common Blue	15-Apr	15-Oct	14-May	17-Oct	3-Jun	8-Oct	15-Apr-11	26-Oct-08

New earliest and latest dates in 2013 are shown in bold print.

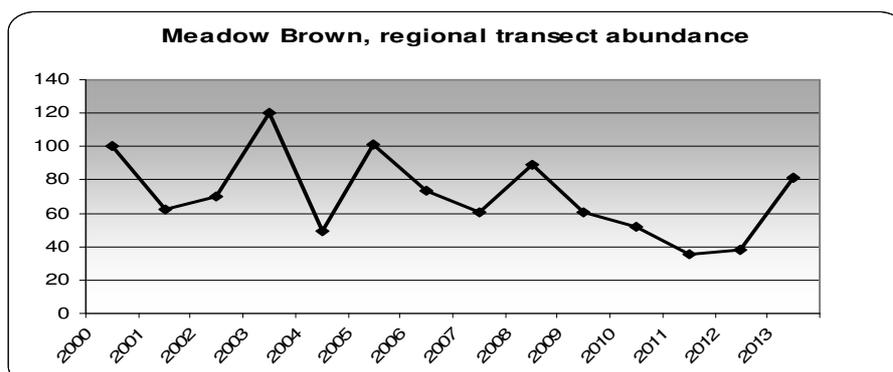
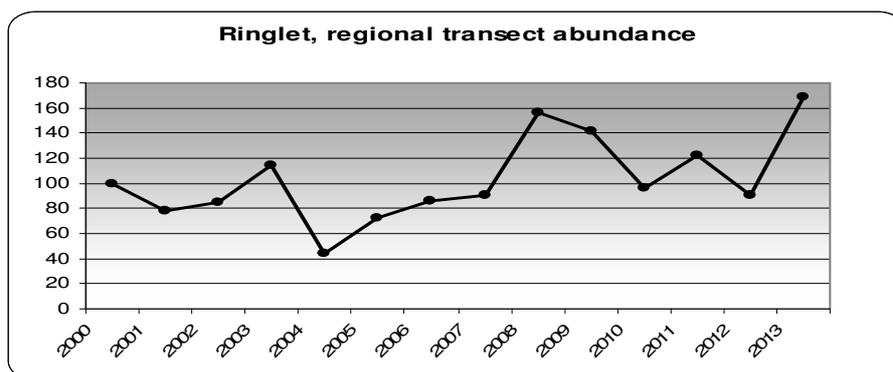
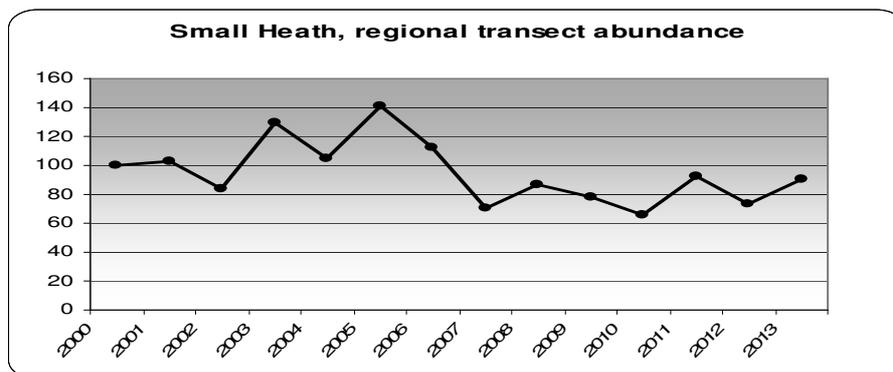
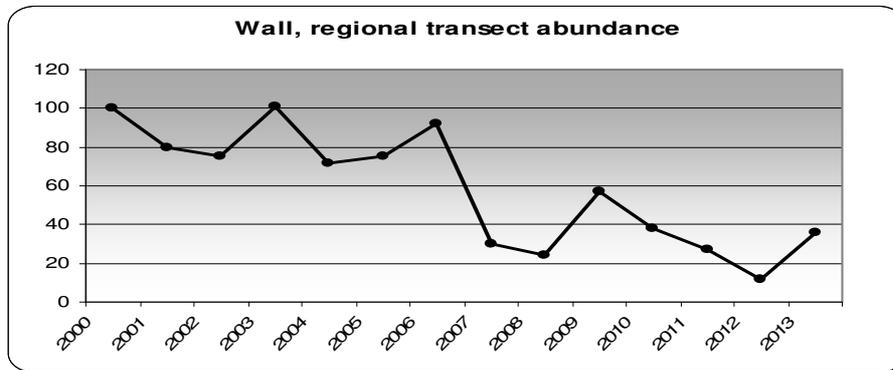
Other species: High Brown Fritillary – 30-July-2006, Long-tailed Blue – 12 / 13-March 2009 and 23-July 2013

**TETRAD OCCUPANCY IN NORTHEAST ENGLAND -
COMPARISONS FOR THE
BUTTERFLIES OF THE NEW MILLENNIUM PROJECT (PHASES 2, 3 & 4)**

PHASE 4 Tetrads in 2010 (% of all 585 recorded tetrads)	PHASE 4 Tetrads in 2011 (% of all 542 recorded tetrads)	PHASE 4 Tetrads in 2012 (% of all 505 recorded tetrads)	PHASE 4 Tetrads in 2013 (% of all 526 recorded tetrads)	Species	Phases 2, 3 and 4 (2000 – 2013) (% of all 1791 recorded tetrads)
321 (55%)	278 (51%)	210 (42%)	285 (54%)	Green-veined White	1275 (71%)
290 (50%)	296 (55%)	260 (51%)	274 (52%)	Small Tortoiseshell	1182 (66%)
280 (48%)	254 (47%)	249 (49%)	236 (45%)	Peacock	1145 (64%)
226 (39%)	224 (41%)	191 (38%)	232 (44%)	Meadow Brown	1037 (58%)
230 (39%)	248 (46%)	158 (31%)	124 (24%)	Red Admiral	1017 (57%)
235 (40%)	221 (41%)	165 (33%)	243 (46%)	Large White	973 (54%)
223 (38%)	211 (39%)	167 (33%)	262 (50%)	Small White	910 (51%)
212 (36%)	216 (40%)	161 (32%)	154 (29%)	Orange-tip	873 (49%)
171 (29%)	184 (34%)	178 (35%)	197 (37%)	Ringlet	827 (46%)
89 (15%)	61 (11%)	34 (7%)	78 (15%)	Painted Lady	792 (44%)
193 (33%)	158 (29%)	134 (27%)	174 (33%)	Wall Brown	632 (35%)
135 (23%)	129 (24%)	93 (18%)	100 (19%)	Small Heath	602 (34%)
140 (24%)	118 (22%)	108 (21%)	134 (27%)	Small Skipper	588 (33%)
146 (25%)	116 (21%)	78 (15%)	117 (22%)	Comma	578 (32%)
150 (26%)	136 (25%)	85 (17%)	116 (22%)	Small Copper	569 (32%)
135 (23%)	136 (25%)	97 (19%)	117 (22%)	Common Blue	565 (32%)
92 (16%)	107 (20%)	73 (14%)	81 (15%)	Large Skipper	420 (23%)
191 (33%)	146 (27%)	164 (32%)	195 (37%)	Speckled Wood	417 (23%)
55 (9%)	46 (8%)	44 (9%)	46 (9%)	Dingy Skipper	180 (10%)
20 (3%)	16 (3%)	31 (6%)	14 (3%)	Holly Blue	133 (7%)
26 (4%)	22 (4%)	22 (4%)	21 (4%)	Dark Green Fritillary	110 (6%)
16 (3%)	13 (2%)	10 (2%)	12 (2%)	White-letter Hairstreak	103 (6%)
7 (1%)	7 (1%)	5 (1%)	3 (0.6%)	Large Heath	94 (5%)
12 (2%)	14 (3%)	13 (3%)	13 (2%)	Purple Hairstreak	82 (5%)
-	3 (0.6%)	-	-	Clouded Yellow	79 (4%)
10 (2%)	17 (3%)	9 (2%)	6 (1%)	Green Hairstreak	77 (4%)
14 (2%)	15 (3%)	8 (2%)	13 (2%)	Small Pearl-bord. Frit.	57 (3%)
11 (2%)	14 (3%)	6 (1%)	12 (2%)	Grayling	50 (3%)
3 (0.5%)	6 (1%)	2 (0.4%)	2 (0.4%)	Brimstone	37 (2%)
9 (2%)	11 (2%)	6 (1%)	10 (2%)	Northern Brown Argus	24 (1%)
4 (0.7%)	3 (0.6%)	2 (0.4%)	-	Brown Argus	11 (0.6%)
1 (0.2%)	1 (0.2%)	1 (0.2%)	1 (0.2%)	Marbled White	10 (0.6%)
2 (0.3%)	-	-	-	Gatekeeper	8 (0.4%)
1 (0.2%)	-	-	-	Camberwell Beauty	7 (0.4%)
33	32	31	30	Tetrads	1791
				Species	

Phase 4 records are for the first four years only of phase 4 of the Butterflies for the New Millennium Project, i.e. 2010-2013. Occupancy figures for the previous phases, (1995-1999, 2000-2004, 2005-2009) are given in previous reports. Other species: High Brown Fritillary - 1 tetrad in 2006, Long-tailed Blue - 1 tetrad in 2009 and 1 tetrad in 2013.

The four graphs on this page provide an analysis of the results of the region's transects. They show indices of abundance starting at an arbitrary value of 100 in the year 2000. Ringlet shows a 71% increase since 2000, the trend for Small Heath is uncertain, whilst Meadow Brown shows a 43% decline since 2000. Worryingly Wall Brown shows a decrease of 80%. This decline does not appear to be fully reflected in the casual records over this period and the reasons for this apparent difference between transect results and casual records will be looked by the Recorders. These and graphs for many other species will appear in the forthcoming Butterflies of Northeast England, which is in preparation. We are grateful to Ian Middlebrook of Butterfly Conservation's headquarters for carrying out the analysis.



SUBMITTING BUTTERFLY RECORDS IN 2014

Records are the bedrock of conservation and the North East Branch welcomes records of all species, for all dates and places, and of course for all forms.

As in previous years, there are two ways of sending your records in. For those without a home computer, the existing yellow paper casual record sheets will continue unchanged. However, if you have a PC, the Branch would strongly urge you to send in your records using a spreadsheet such as Microsoft Excel or equivalent. Each record should occupy one line and the format of the spreadsheet should look something like the following example:

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
1	Name/s of recorder/s	NZ274423	Palace Green, Durham City	22-Aug-2012	Large White	7	
2	Name/s of recorder/s	NZ196858	Morpeth (riverside)	24-Sep-2012	Peacock	2	Very worn
3	Name/s of recorder/s	NZ2514	Baydale Beck Darlington	1-Jul-2012	Comma	1	<i>Hutchinsoni</i> form

Column A - Recorder/s names.

Column B - Grid reference, which should be two letters, (NT, NU, NY or NZ), followed by four or six numbers. The first two (or three) numbers are the Easting, read from the top or bottom of OS maps, the last two, (or three) numbers represent the Northing, read from either side of the map.

Column C - Site name. For obscure place names please include a nearby town or village.

Column D - Date-please try to follow the format shown, **(this is really important)**

Column E - The full name, not abbreviated, of the species seen.

Column F - **Please give the actual number seen if possible**, we prefer not to use letters for abundance, (A,B,C,D,E). For larva (L), ova (O), pupa (P) or mating (M) records, please use the appropriate code letter, optionally adding numbers seen.

Column G - For any comments you may wish to add.

Optionally, you can add a habitat code to an extra column, (column H), if you wish.

A blank spreadsheet, with the date formatted, is available, if needed, from the recorders. Electronic records are most easily sent as an email attachment. However, you can also send them in by post on floppy disc, memory stick or CD. The deadline for records to be included, and credited, in the 2013 Annual Report is 30 November 2013.

Depending on where you live, please send all your records to either:

DURHAM

Steve Le Fleming
 7 Albert Street,
 Durham, DH1 4RL
 0191 386 7309
 lsklef@aol.com

or

NORTHUMBERLAND

Stephen Lowther
 16 Clarence Street, Bowburn
 Durham, DH6 5BB
 0191 377 0682
 stelow4@live.co.uk

please note: Stephen is the new Recorder!

To avoid records being lost on the internet, we will try to acknowledge all emails within 14 days. If you do not hear from us please telephone us.

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Butterfly Conservation

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