

Re: Lee Hurrell

by Lee Hurrell, 10-Jan-14 01:22 PM GMT

Taking a break from 2013, which I will return to, please sign and share these petitions!

"Sussex Kipper" wrote: Save Our Woodlands Again!

The latest madcap government proposal concerning the environment is to allow offsetting of ancient woodland. This would mean developments could potentially go ahead on ancient woodland sites if enough trees were planted elsewhere in mitigation. I won't insult your intelligence by explaining how that couldn't possibly work. It is probably the single most ridiculous and flawed scheme I have ever heard of. Bearing in mind the complexity of some of the issues back then, I personally consider this proposal a much greater threat to our wildlife than the proposed state-owned forest sell-off a few years back. Please sign and share. https://you.38degrees.org.uk/petitions/..._1388957757

Here's another petition for the same outcome, from The Woodland Trust. With this one you email the Prime Minister directly.

http://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/campaig...er_jan2014

Thanks

Lee

Re: Lee Hurrell

by Lee Hurrell, 30-Mar-14 11:26 PM GMT

Bit out of season, but am now getting there, finally. 😊

Sunday 28th July 2013

An enjoyable hour or so at Denbies.

150 Chalkhill Blue, including 5 female and a few abs.



Chalkhill Blue, male, Denbies, Surrey, 28th July 2013



Chalkhill Blue, male, Denbies, Surrey, 28th July 2013



Chalkhill Blue, male, Denbies, Surrey, 28th July 2013



Chalkhill Blue, female, Denbies, Surrey, 28th July 2013



Chalkhill Blue, male, Denbies, Surrey, 28th July 2013



Chalkhill Blue, male, Denbies, Surrey, 28th July 2013 (Left side).



Chalkhill Blue, male, Denbies, Surrey, 28th July 2013 (Right side).

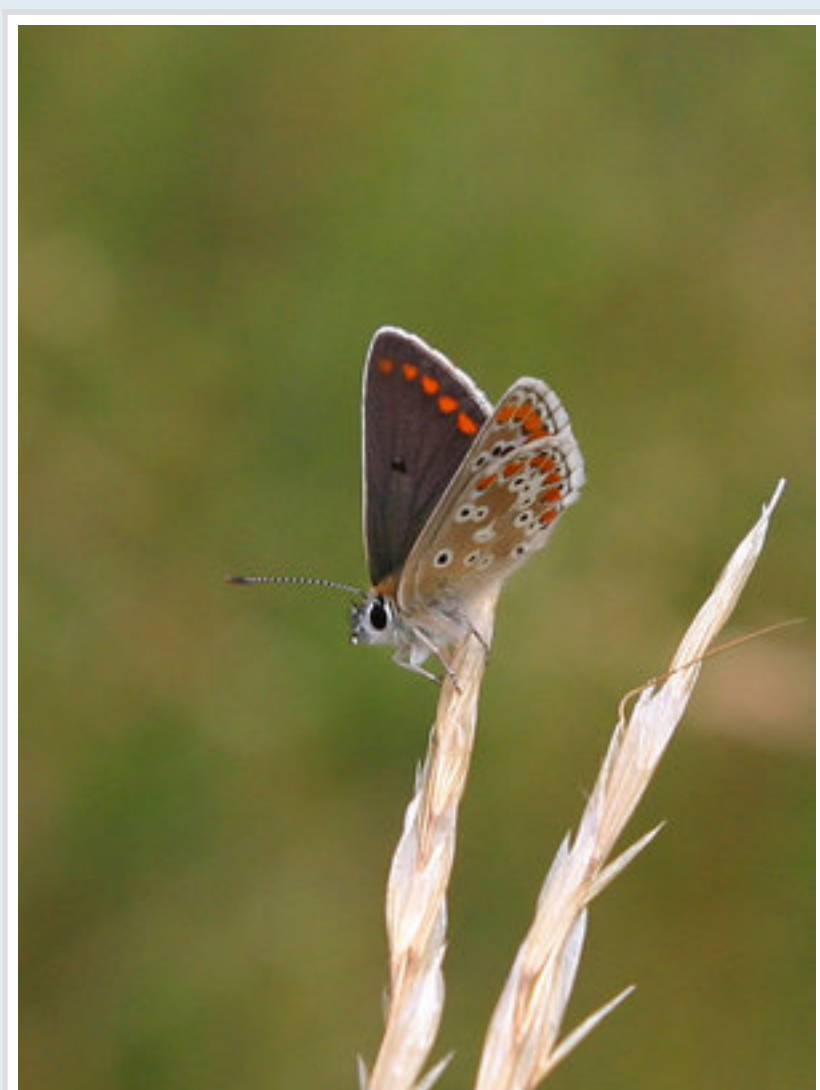


Chalkhill Blue, male, Denbies, Surrey, 28th July 2013 (He was normal on the upperside).

5 Brown Argus, 10 Marbled White, 50 Meadow Brown, 30 Gatekeeper, 2 Small Heath, 4 Large White, 15 Small Skipper and 4 Silver Y also seen.



Brown Argus, male, Denbies, Surrey, 28th July 2013



Brown Argus, male, Denbies, Surrey, 28th July 2013



Brown Argus, male, Denbies, Surrey, 28th July 2013



Marbled White, male, Denbies, Surrey, 28th July 2013

Re: Lee Hurrell

by Lee Hurrell, 01-Apr-14 11:08 PM GMT

17th August 2013

After a two week convalescence following an operation, during which I was not really allowed to go out (during high summer!), I was understandably ready for some butterflies. A return to Denbies was what the doctor ordered. I won't comment on self-medication. 😊

Silver Spotted Skippers were about in good numbers, although not stopping for long.



Silver Spotted Skipper, Denbies, Surrey, 17th August 2013

There were many female Chalkhill Blues.



Chalkhill Blue, female, Denbies, Surrey, 17th August 2013



Chalkhill Blue, female, Denbies, Surrey, 17th August 2013



Chalkhill Blue, female, Denbies, Surrey, 17th August 2013

Males too of course, some with some lovely undersides. I just love Chalkhill Blues. 😊



Chalkhill Blue, male, Denbies, Surrey, 17th August 2013



Chalkhill Blue, male, Denbies, Surrey, 17th August 2013



Chalkhill Blue, male, Denbies, Surrey, 17th August 2013



Chalkhill Blue, male, Denbies, Surrey, 17th August 2013

Common Blue seemed common once more but I saw just the one male Adonis.



Common Blue, male, Denbies, Surrey, 17th August 2013

What a lovely return to the field.

Sightings: 10 Silver Spotted Skipper, 1 Small Skipper, 200 Chalkhill Blue, 20 Common Blue, 1 Adonis Blue, 10 Brown Argus, 50 Meadow Brown, 1 Ringlet and 1 Gatekeeper.

Re: Lee Hurrell

by Wurzel, 01-Apr-14 11:19 PM GMT

Good to see you're posting once more and catching up. Fantastic shots well worth the wait 😊

Have a goodun

Wurzel

Re: Lee Hurrell

by Lee Hurrell, 02-Apr-14 11:02 PM GMT

Thanks Wurzel 😊

Hope you're having a goodun.

Best wishes,

Lee

Re: Lee Hurrell

by Lee Hurrell, 07-Apr-14 11:17 PM GMT

August Bank Holiday Weekend 2013 – Isle of Wight

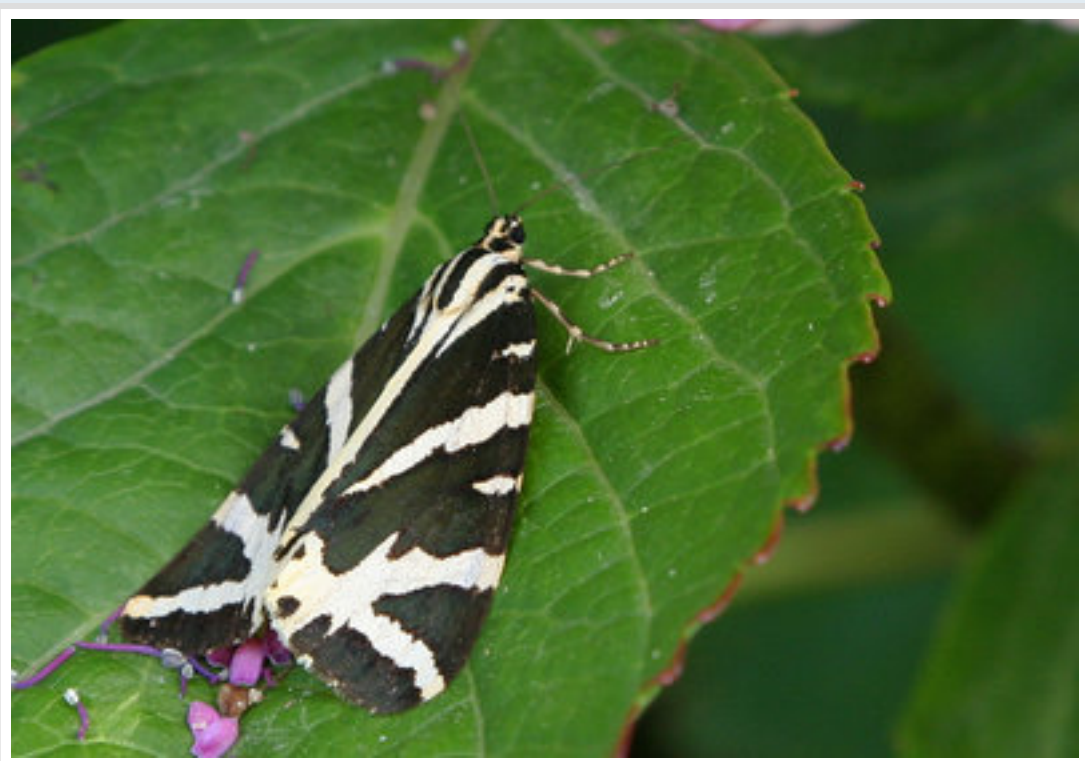
Our first ever trip to the Isle of Wight just happened to coincide with around 7000 mods and scooters – we had no idea this was the annual scooter ride. We saw them at Ryde, on their annual procession across the island and then again at Shanklin. There were some brilliant scooters. However, we stayed at a lovely farm at Chale Bay on the south coast, with views all along the coast to the Needles. This is the view looking inland though. Note the dinosaur; here was a Wall flitting around the feet of this fearsome predator!



Chale Bay, Isle of Wight, 25th August 2013

Seen at Chale Bay: 5 Small Tortoiseshell, 3 Wall, 1 Clouded Yellow, 10 Small White, 5 Large White.

The next morning outside the room, I saw a what I thought at first was a odd looking Painted Lady. It turned out to be a Jersey Tiger – very striking.



Jersey Tiger, Chale Bay, Isle of Wight, 26th August 2013

A wonderful pre-breakfast walk along the cliff tops at Chale gave us even more; 1 Painted Lady (a real one this time), 3 Small Tortoiseshell, 5 Wall, 3 Meadow Brown, 4 Clouded Yellow, 20 Small White, 6 male Common Blue, 1 Small Copper. The views were stunning.



View from Chale Bay, Isle of Wight, 25th August 2013

A short drive along the coast we stopped at Hanover Point for another walk along the coastline. Here we saw 5 Small Tortoiseshell, 3 Wall, 5 Meadow Brown, 1 Small Heath, 10 Chalkhill Blue, 25 Common Blue, 3 Large White, 50 Small White and 1 Silver Y.



Common Blue, female, Hanover Point, Isle of Wight, 26th August 2013



Common Blue, male, Hanover Point, Isle of Wight, 26th August 2013

Again, the views were beautiful.



View from Hanover Point, Isle of Wight, 26th August 2013

We drove on toward the Needles and parked up. After a mooch about the shops we started the long walk up to the summit, the cold war relics and the views. Of course there were plenty of butterflies too. Here we saw, 1 Painted Lady, 1 Small Tortoiseshell, 2 Gatekeeper, 10 Meadow Brown, 10 Wall, 3 Small Heath, 30 Chalkhill Blue, 50 Common Blue, 10 Brown Argus, 1 Small Copper, 10 Clouded Yellow, 10 Large White and 50 Small White.



Common Blue, male (and I think, female), Needles Headland, Isle of Wight, 26th August 2013

We also heard the unmistakable call of a Raven.



Raven, Needles Headland, Isle of Wight, 26th August 2013

The walk up was beautiful.

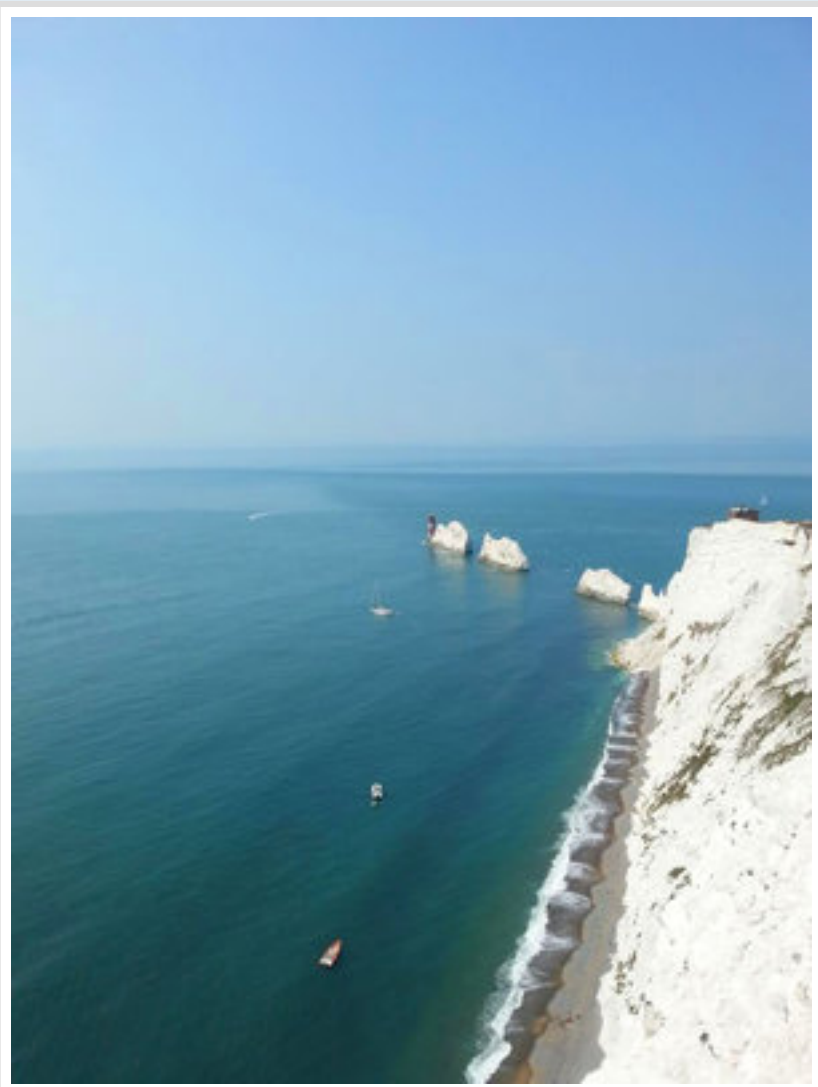


View from the Needles Headland, looking toward the mainland, Isle of Wight, 26th August 2013



View from the Needles Headland, looking toward the mainland, Isle of Wight, 26th August 2013

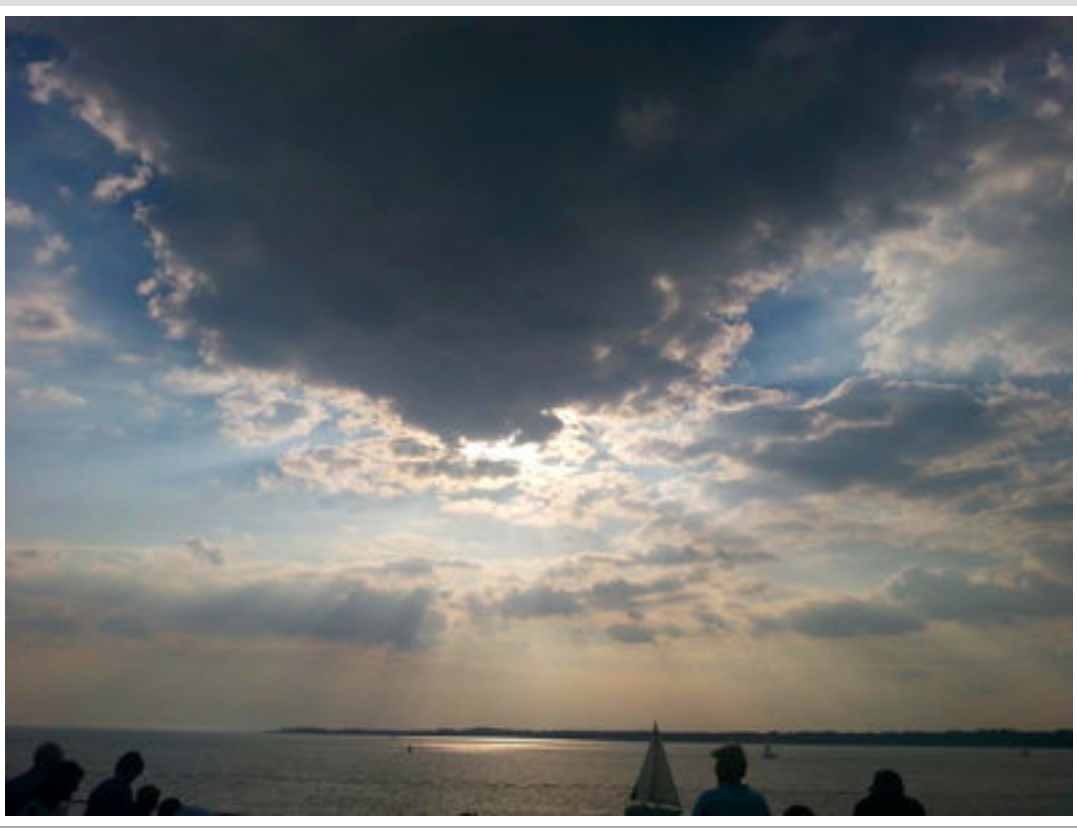
Here they are!



The Needles, Isle of Wight, 26th August 2013

A fantastic two days spent on the Isle of Wight. I will be back and of course, would like to see some Glanville Fritillaries too. And a Red Squirrel next time!

On the return ferry, the sun and the clouds over The Solent were really pretty.



The Solent, 26th August 2013

Re: Lee Hurrell

by William, 08-Apr-14 07:52 AM GMT

Some lovely shots there Lee, and not just the Butterflies 😊😊

Re: Lee Hurrell

by Chris Jackson, 08-Apr-14 09:30 AM GMT

Thanks for your Bank Holiday photos Lee. I've never been to the Isle of Wight but it looks good for walking and nature. Some stunning views, if you've got a head for heights!
Cheers, Chris

Re: Lee Hurrell

by Lee Hurrell, 08-Apr-14 01:24 PM GMT

Thank you William and Chris.

I would go back any time, it is a lovely place. Yes, those cliffs are quite high...

Best wishes,

Lee

Re: Lee Hurrell

by Lee Hurrell, 09-Apr-14 10:35 PM GMT

September 1st 2013

A walk from Juniper Bottom in the Surrey hills through to Box Hill for a picnic gave a late Dark Green Fritillary, 1 Speckled Wood and 1 Meadow Brown whilst on Box Hill itself 1 Small Heath, 20 Meadow Brown and 1 female Chalkhill Blue were seen.



Chalkhill Blue, female, Box Hill, Surrey, 1st September 2013

Re: Lee Hurrell

by Wurzel, 10-Apr-14 07:54 PM GMT

Lovely shot of the female Chalkhill 😊 I was wondering if it was an aberrant but then I realized that she has a little chunk out of the hind wing 😞
Looking at the date I reckon you're almost there catching up wise.

Have a goodun

Wurzel

Re: Lee Hurrell

by Maximus, 11-Apr-14 08:54 PM GMT

Fantastic photos in your recent posts Lee and the Isle of Wight remains a favourite of mine, especially at Glanville time 😊

Mike

Re: Lee Hurrell

by Neil Freeman, 11-Apr-14 09:04 PM GMT

Nice photos Lee 😊 Enjoyed looking at the Isle of Wight ones, especially as I will be heading there for a few days end of May for the first time 😊

Cheers,

Neil.

Re: Lee Hurrell

by Lee Hurrell, 14-Apr-14 01:30 PM GMT

"Wurzel" wrote:

Lovely shot of the female Chalkhill 😊

"Maximus" wrote:

Fantastic photos in your recent posts Lee and the Isle of Wight remains a favourite of mine, especially at Glanville time 😊

"nfreem" wrote:

Nice photos Lee 😊 Enjoyed looking at the Isle of Wight ones, especially as I will be heading there for a few days end of May for the first time :wink

Thanks chaps. I will be definitely be going back. Have a lovely time Neil, look forward to your sightings – keep an eye out for Clouded Yellows!

"Wurzel" wrote:

Looking at the date I reckon you're almost there catching up wise.

Ah...but I still have Turkey to do (plus this year) 😊

Best wishes,

Lee

Re: Lee Hurrell

by Lee Hurrell, 18-Apr-14 11:18 PM GMT

Kalkan, Turkey, September 2013 – Part One

For the middle two weeks in September 2013, we stayed in Kalkan in the south west of Turkey. Sitting between Fethiye and Kas on the coast, it has a natural harbour and was originally a Greek fishing village but in the 1920s the Greeks left after the war with Turkey. It remains untouched by mass tourism and is all the better for it. The local people pride themselves on being very friendly, welcoming and especially non-pushy when it comes to trying to get you into their restaurants or buy their goods. This is lovely after the hassle you get in other places!

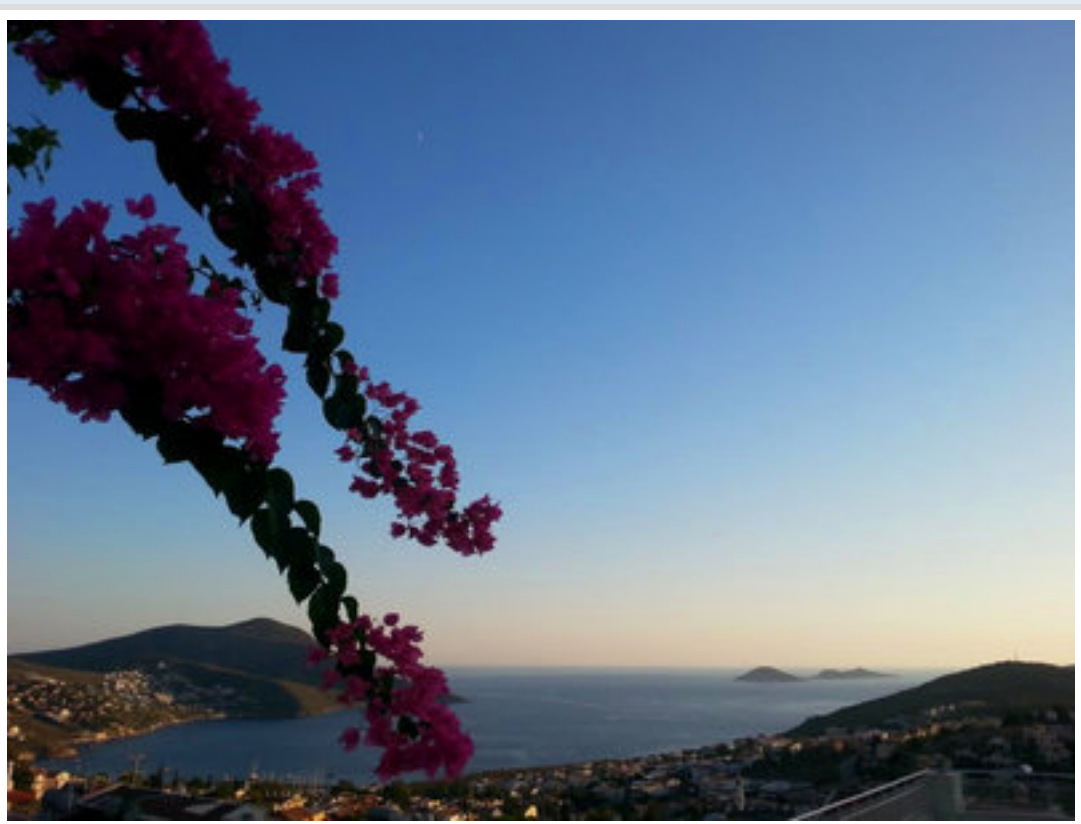
Kalkan is famous for having many restaurants, many with wonderful night views over the harbour. We ate in a different authentic restaurant every night and all were fantastic. Everything about it was wonderful – I would thoroughly recommend a visit.

This is taken from above the town. The two islands in the distance are known as Snake Island and Mouse Island.



Kalkan, Turkey, September 2013

This is from our balcony nearing sunset. You can just make out a "Turkish Moon".



Kalkan, Turkey, September 2013

As for the wildlife...It was hot and dry, similar to when I've been in southern Spain at this time of year and indeed, I saw many of the same plants. Nectar sources were limited, but of course there were butterflies 😊 I'd go for a daily walk around mid morning and come back after an hour or two and jump straight in the pool to cool down.

One of the first species I found was this Scarce Swallowtail. It just sat there for ages and eventually floated around for a bit and then went back to its perch.



Scarce Swallowtail, Kalkan, Turkey, 9th September 2013

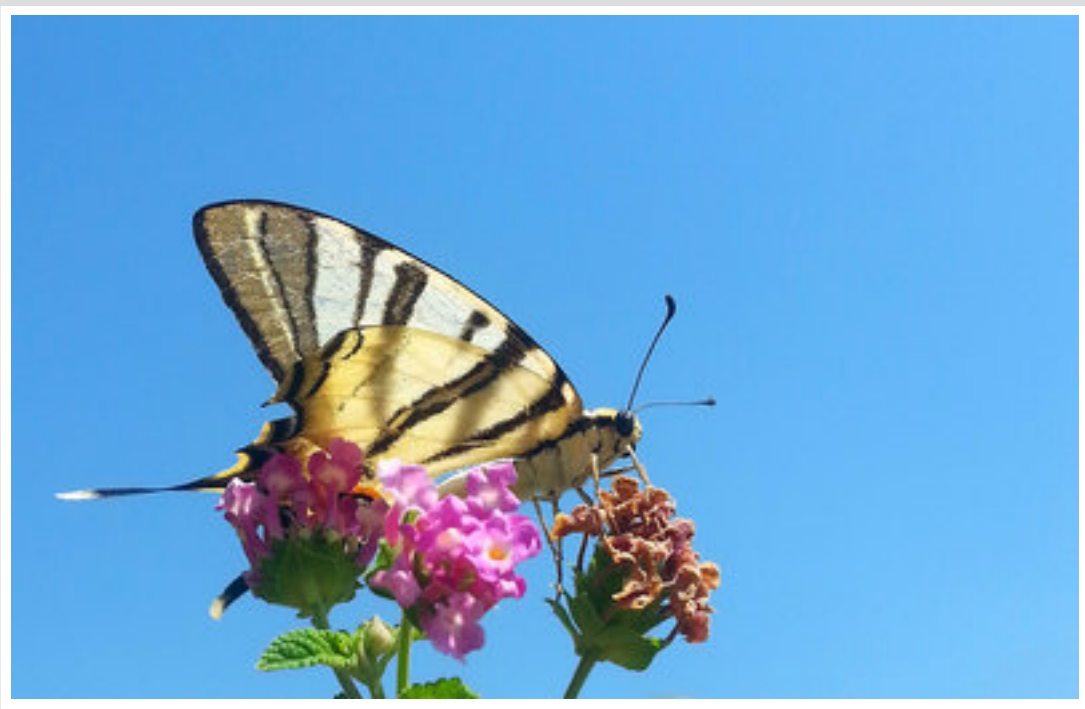


Scarce Swallowtail, Kalkan, Turkey, 9th September 2013



Scarce Swallowtail, Kalkan, Turkey, 9th September 2013

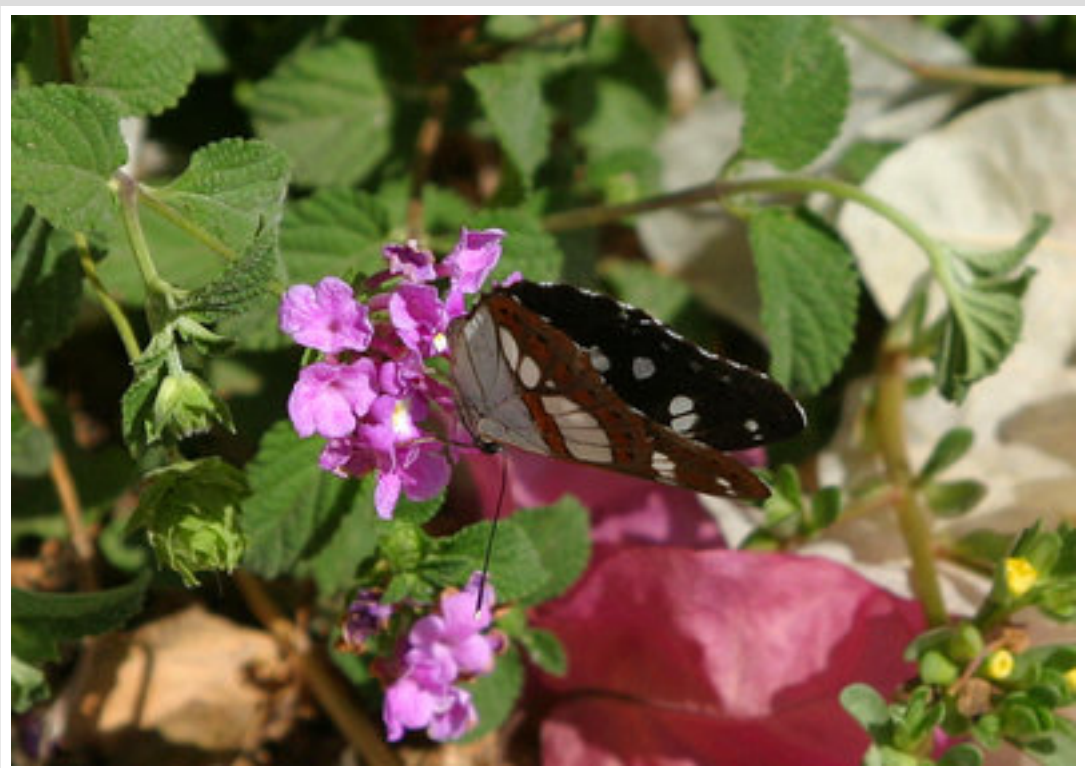
This next picture was taken with my mobile phone (which has more mega pixels than my Canon!) and I was pretty impressed with it. To this day it remains saved as the background image on my phone screen.



Scarce Swallowtail, Kalkan, Turkey, 9th September 2013

I saw more European Swallowtail (*machaon*) than Scarce Swallowtail (*podalirius*) during the holiday but none were feeling photogenic.

Whenever I go away, I always go through books and resources to see what I may see. So it was a surprise to see a Southern White Admiral, which should have been over by August according to Tolman.



Southern White Admiral, Kalkan, Turkey, 17th September 2013



Southern White Admiral, Kalkan, Turkey, 17th September 2013

Another surprise was the Plain Tiger (*Danaus chrysippus*) although I had overlooked that this species was a possibility and I saw several.

Re: Lee Hurrell

by Lee Hurrell, 19-Apr-14 11:36 PM GMT

Kalkan, Turkey, September 2013 - Part Two

Browns were few and far between although Great Banded Graylings would sometimes hove into view, like some huge aircraft shadowing out the sun. They really *are* that big 😊

A single Small Heath was seen near the sea and two Meadow Browns made me run around after them, securing only a record shot. However, I can confirm Freyer's Grayling (*Neohipparchia fatua*) as I saw the upperside. I saw a few Graylings but this was the only one that stopped long enough for me to identify.



Freyer's Grayling, Kalkan, Turkey, 16th September 2013



Freyer's Grayling, Kalkan, Turkey, 16th September 2013

Whites were represented by Small, Large and Green Veined.

Blues were particularly thin on the ground with only one Brown Argus, three Holly Blue and a handful of Long Tailed Blue seen. The males were busy defending and fighting but this female was busy and didn't mind me watching.



Long Tailed Blue, female, Kalkan, Turkey, 16th September 2013

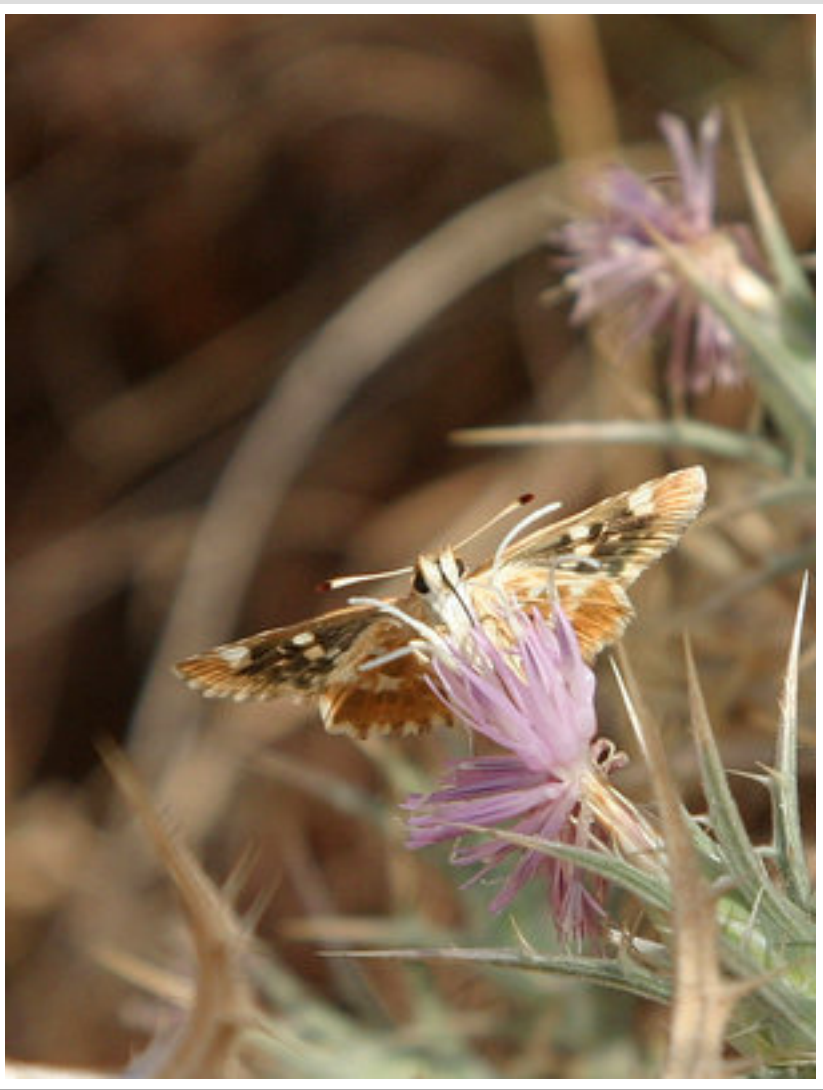


Long Tailed Blue, female, Kalkan, Turkey, 16th September 2013

There were loads of skippers: Sage Skipper, Millet Skipper, Pygmy Skipper, Mallow Skipper and possibly one or two others. The Sage Skipper was a lovely orangey brown colour.



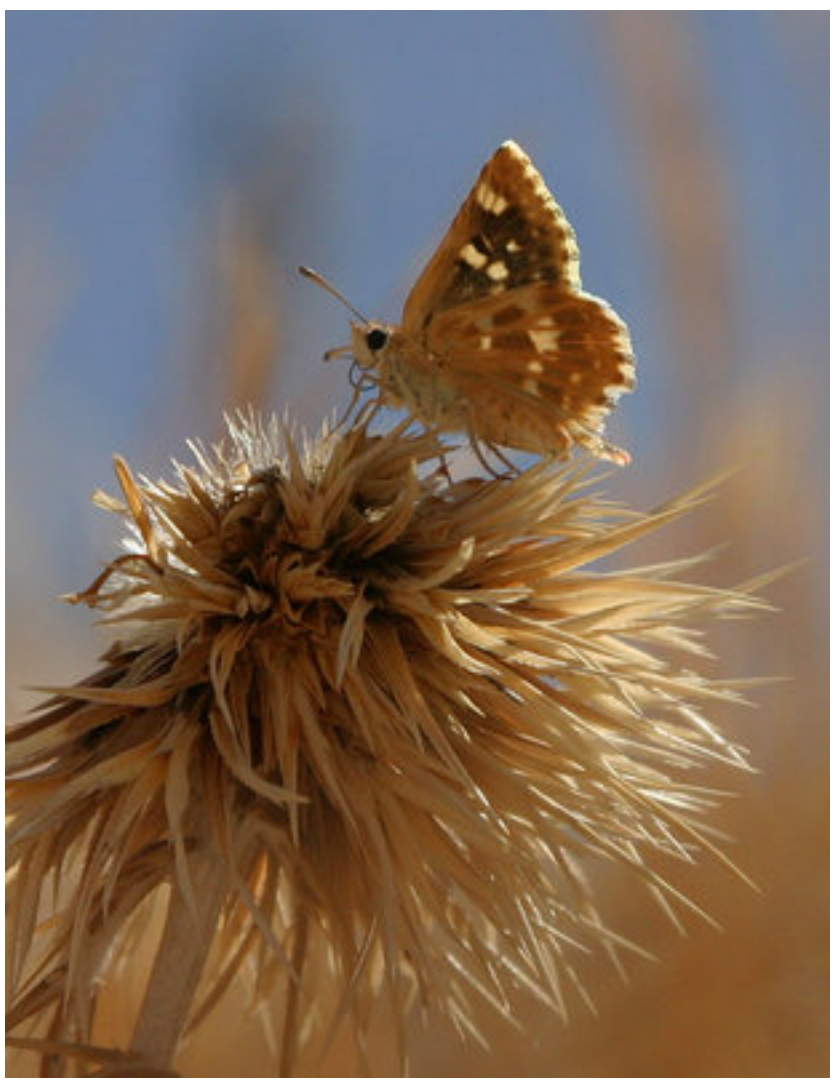
Sage Skipper, Kalkan, Turkey, 14th September 2013



Sage Skipper, Kalkan, Turkey, 13th September 2013



Sage Skipper, Kalkan, Turkey, 13th September 2013



Sage Skipper, Kalkan, Turkey, 13th September 2013



Sage Skipper, Kalkan, Turkey, 14th September 2013



Sage Skipper, Kalkan, Turkey, 14th September 2013



Sage Skipper, Kalkan, Turkey, 14th September 2013

Despite looking similar, the Millet Skipper and the Pygmy Skipper behaved completely differently. The Millet Skipper is slightly larger and was only ever seen nectaring, although I think I only have pictures of females.



Millet Skipper, Kalkan, Turkey, 9th September 2013



Millet Skipper, Kalkan, Turkey, 13th September 2013



Millet Skipper, Kalkan, Turkey, 19th September 2013



Millet Skipper, Kalkan, Turkey, 19th September 2013

Whilst the Pygmy Skipper was only ever seen defending a perch or stretch of road, typically male behaviour.



Pygmy Skipper, Kalkan, Turkey, 13th September 2013

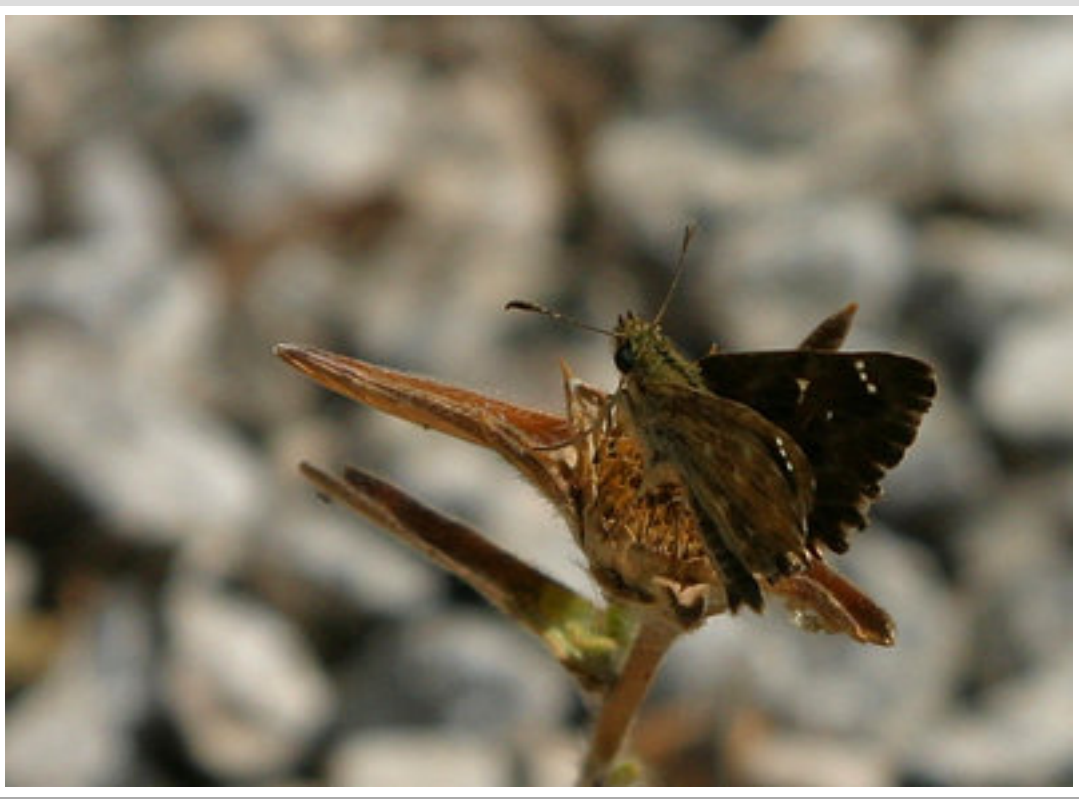


Pygmy Skipper, Kalkan, Turkey, 14th September 2013



Pygmy Skipper, Kalkan, Turkey, 14th September 2013

I only saw a couple of Mallow Skippers.



Mallow Skipper, Kalkan, Turkey, 15th September 2013



Mallow Skipper, Kalkan, Turkey, 15th September 2013



Mallow Skipper, Kalkan, Turkey, 16th September 2013

Lastly for this part, a couple of shots of the harbour.



Kalkan, Turkey, 19th September 2013



Kalkan, Turkey, 19th September 2013

Re: Lee Hurrell

by Susie, 20-Apr-14 09:06 AM GMT

Beautiful photos from Turkey Lee 😊

Re: Lee Hurrell

by Lee Hurrell, 20-Apr-14 09:16 AM GMT

Thanks Susie. 😊

One more part to come.

Re: Lee Hurrell

by Lee Hurrell, 20-Apr-14 08:08 PM GMT

Kalkan, Turkey, September 2013 – Part Three

I only saw a few moths, with Hummingbird Hawk Moths being quite common.



Hummingbird Hawk Moth, Kalkan, Turkey, 16th September 2013



Hummingbird Hawk Moth, Kalkan, Turkey, 16th September 2013

The only others were a Leopard moth and this pretty little thing.



Unknown Moth, Kalkan, Turkey, 16th September 2013

Dragonflies were common and I love the way they make such willing subjects! They lift off if you approach oh so slightly too fast, but get it right and I swear they would perch on your finger. Beautiful.



Red Veined Darter, Kalkan, Turkey, 13th September 2013



Red Veined Darter, Kalkan, Turkey, 13th September 2013



Red Veined Darter, Kalkan, Turkey, 13th September 2013



Red Veined Darter, Kalkan, Turkey, 16th September 2013

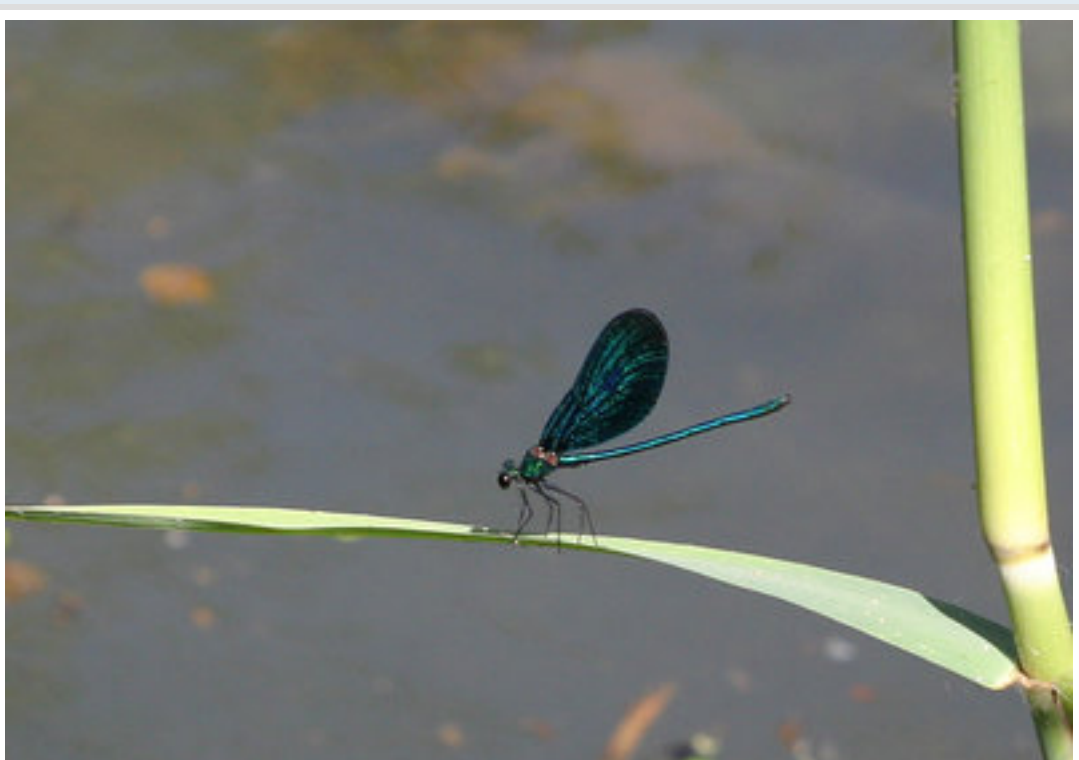


Red Veined Darter, Kalkan, Turkey, 19th September 2013



Red Veined Darter, Kalkan, Turkey, 19th September 2013

This Beautiful Demoiselle was seen at Saklikent Gorge (the third highest in Europe and well worth a visit).



This lizard was seen on the same day but at Xanthos, where there are some spectacular Roman ruins.



Lizard, Xanthos, Turkey, 12th September 2013



Lizard, Xanthos, Turkey, 12th September 2013



Roman Amphitheatre, Xanthos, Turkey, 12th September 2013

This large toad made us jump on the way back from dinner one night!



Toad, Kalkan, Turkey, 18th September 2013

While I'm not sure what this is, perhaps a stick insect or mantis of some sort.



Mantis? Kalkan, Turkey, 9th September 2013

Last up, this fearsome looking thing would have taken my finger, honest.



Unknown, Kalkan, 14th September 2013

Thank to you Guy, Paul Wetton and Wurzel with IDs.

Finally, there were some stunning sunsets over the bay. Here's one to end with.



Sunset over Kalkan, Turkey, 20th September 2013

Re: Lee Hurrell

by Chris Jackson, 20-Apr-14 09:20 PM GMT

A lovely set of photos all round Lee. 😊
Chris

Re: Lee Hurrell

by Wurzel, 20-Apr-14 11:02 PM GMT

A great set of reports and shots Lee 😊 Your Stick Insect looks like a Mantis (are they present in Greece?) and the stripey abdomen reminds me of the Mint Moths we get over here on Downland from the genus *Pyrausta*?

Have a goodun

Wurzel

Re: Lee Hurrell

by Padfield, 21-Apr-14 07:55 PM GMT

Hi Lee.

Your dragonflies are female and male (respectively) red-veined darters, *Sympetrum fonscolombii*. The damselfly is a beautiful demoiselle, *Calopteryx virgo*.

Guy

Re: Lee Hurrell

by David M, 21-Apr-14 09:15 PM GMT

Those shots of Pygmy Skipper are particularly interesting, Lee, given that it's a butterfly thought to now be extinct in France.

Re: Lee Hurrell

by Lee Hurrell, 21-Apr-14 10:59 PM GMT

Many thanks, Chris and Wurzel for your kind comments, much appreciated.

Guy, thanks for the ID and also the earlier butterfly IDs from an earlier post, I forgot to thank you in here and I do usually! Also much appreciated. I don't know much about dragonflies (you can tell, can't you...).

David, Pygmy Skipper is not species I've seen in France, these Turkish specimens were my first. I have seen their close cousin the Mediterranean Skipper in Spain though, but it is a shame if that is true and they are extinct in France. I think like you, France is a country I would like to explore a lot more!

Best wishes,

Lee

Re: Lee Hurrell

by LancsRover, 21-Apr-14 11:01 PM GMT

Hi Lee,
Great photo's of your trip to Turkey, and the couple of the Hummingbird H/M are superb, I must have taken 100's of pics of them but nothing like yours.

Cheers Russ.

Re: Lee Hurrell

by Lee Hurrell, 21-Apr-14 11:12 PM GMT

Many thanks, Russ, you're being kind 😊

I think the HBHM shots were with a shutter speed of 1/4000 as it was so bright, which might explain why they are the only shots of a Hummer I have where the wings aren't blurry!

Best wishes,

Lee

Re: Lee Hurrell

by Maximus, 23-Apr-14 09:14 PM GMT

Great photos from Turkey Lee, brilliant Pygmy Skipper shots. France is a great country and we also would like to explore it more.

Mike

Re: Lee Hurrell

by Lee Hurrell, 23-Apr-14 10:19 PM GMT

Many thanks, Mike, much appreciated. I do adore France and can't wait to go back.

Best wishes,

Lee

Re: Lee Hurrell

by Lee Hurrell, 23-Apr-14 10:43 PM GMT

29th September 2013

Denbies today had a real end of season feel about it, the leaves were turning and the grass was going over, the meadows having lost their high summer glorious lushness. It is always with a tinge of sadness I venture out at this time of year with winter just around the corner. (However, 2013 had a couple of surprises to come...but back to today).

Unfortunately it was more than just the season that had ended for this female Brimstone, which stood out in the hedgerow, hanging lifeless from a garden spider's web.



Brimstone, female, (deceased), Denbies, Surrey, 29th September 2013

A few Brown Argus were still showing.



Brown Argus, Denbies, Surrey, 29th September 2013



Brown Argus, Denbies, Surrey, 29th September 2013

Common Blue too.



Common Blue, male, Denbies, Surrey, 29th September 2013

This Chalkhill Blue was, I think, the last one recorded in Surrey in 2013. I had noted male at the time but I think this is actually a female.



Chalkhill Blue, Denbies, Surrey, 29th September 2013

Meadow Browns are wonderful with their protracted flight season. Several females looked quite fresh.



Meadow Brown, female, Denbies, Surrey, 29th September 2013

She was soon joined by a friend. Now, now ladies.



Meadow Brown, females, Denbies, Surrey, 29th September 2013

This different female seemed to have a hole in her forewing.



Meadow Brown, female, Denbies, Surrey, 29th September 2013

Just the one Speckled Wood was seen. Some of the leaves looked very autumnal.



Speckled Wood, female, Denbies, Surrey, 29th September 2013

Sightings: 1 Chalkhill Blue, 2 male Common Blue, 2 Brown Argus, 10 Meadow Brown, 1 Speckled Wood, 1 female Brimstone (deceased).

What else did 2013 have left...?

Re: Lee Hurrell

by Wurzel, 23-Apr-14 10:47 PM GMT

Lovely report Lee – it's almost better reading it now with the new season ahead of us, I don't feel quite as sad about the images if that makes sense 😊 I'm wondering now what was left in store – a blue or a yellow or both??

Have a goodun

Wurzel

Re: Lee Hurrell

by Lee Hurrell, 25-Apr-14 11:20 PM GMT

Thanks Wurzel, I know what you mean. There's not much to be sad about at this time of year!

Lee

Re: Lee Hurrell

by Lee Hurrell, 26-Apr-14 12:13 AM GMT

5th October 2013 – Comma Crazy

When at my mum's in Somerset for the weekend, I always go for a walk in the local fields and woods. They hold some fantastic memories; Commas and Peacocks in spring, Red Admirals, Speckled Woods and Small Tortoiseshells, the occasional Brimstone. Finding local colonies of Small Copper and Common Blue. Usually my first Orange Tips and Swallows over Easter. The sheer number of whites in a damp meadow. My first ever Silver Washed Fritillary in 2007. A day trip to Collard Hill to see my first Large Blue (and still only single UK sighting) in 2008. I went in search of Heath Fritillary once, which live nearby, but didn't find them. I swear there must be Brown Hairstreak just down the lane too. So although it is the right thing for my mother and step father to move away from the south west, I will miss it. But that is all for early 2014.

Back to October 2013 and I can usually guarantee a fantastic autumnal display of all the hibernators, with some stocking up on blackberries. Speckled Woods last well into October too. I've also seen and photographed Comma *ab. neole* and *ab. obscura* in and around the village too:

But on this day in my favourite field, next to Stone Wood, I saw more Comma butterflies in one place than I ever have before. I counted at least 25. Every bramble bush held at least one, sometimes more. They were everywhere! 😊

This is the field (photographed on my mobile phone in March 2014) to give you an idea. I only covered the first half.



Field next to Stone Wood, Brompton Ralph, Somerset, 8th March 2014



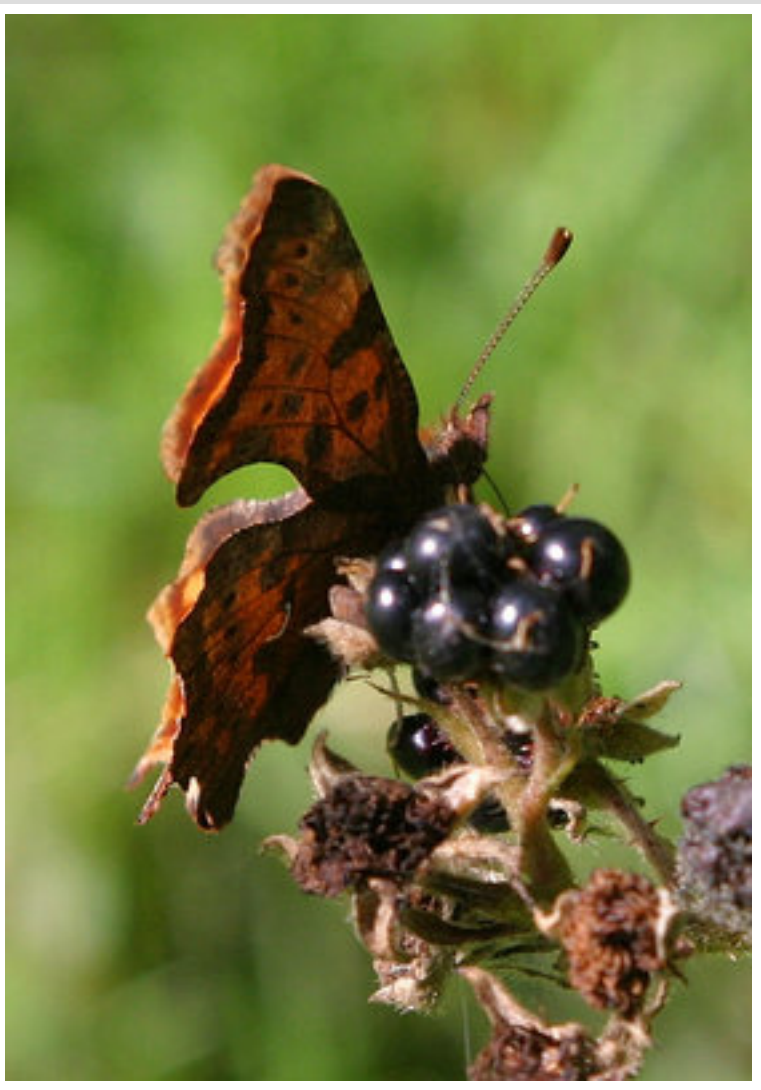
Field next to Stone Wood, Brompton Ralph, Somerset, 8th March 2014



Field next to Stone Wood, Brompton Ralph, Somerset, 8th March 2014



Comma, Brompton Ralph, Somerset, 5th October 2013



Comma, Brompton Ralph, Somerset, 5th October 2013



Comma, Brompton Ralph, Somerset, 5th October 2013



Comma, Brompton Ralph, Somerset, 5th October 2013



Comma, Brompton Ralph, Somerset, 5th October 2013



Comma, Brompton Ralph, Somerset, 5th October 2013



Comma, Brompton Ralph, Somerset, 5th October 2013



Comma, Brompton Ralph, Somerset, 5th October 2013



Comma, Brompton Ralph, Somerset, 5th October 2013

This one could be *ab. neole*



Comma, Brompton Ralph, Somerset, 5th October 2013

While this one is new to me, with extra black markings on the hindwings.

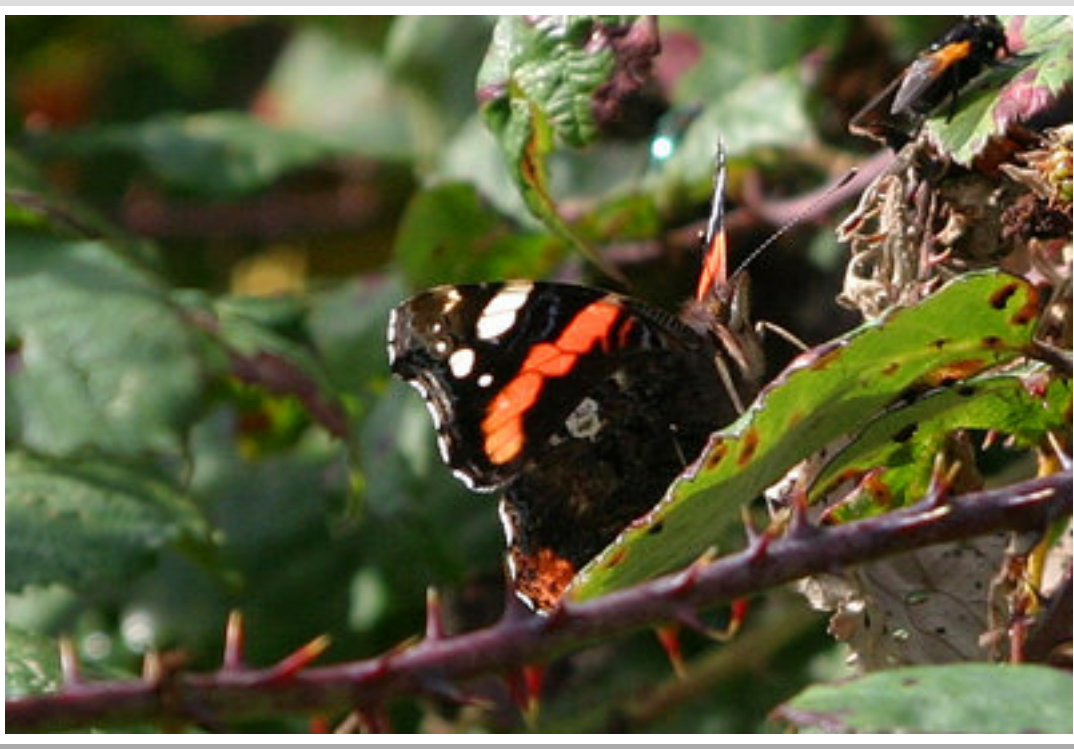


Comma, unknown aberration, Brompton Ralph, Somerset, 5th October 2013



Comma, unknown aberration, Brompton Ralph, Somerset, 5th October 2013

Of course it wasn't only Commas, 2 Red Admiral were seen but at complete opposites of the freshness scale.



Pretty Red Admiral, Brompton Ralph, Somerset, 5th October 2013



Pretty beat up Red Admiral, Brompton Ralph, Somerset, 5th October 2013

10 or so Speckled Wood were also there. This male's yellow spots had worn off, leaving little shiny holes.



Speckled Wood, male, Brompton Ralph, Somerset, 5th October 2013

It was quite a day, and another that will stay in my memory.

Re: Lee Hurrell

by Wurzel, 26-Apr-14 08:25 AM GMT

Some of those Comma Lee look like they're fresh spring ones and the difference in the wear of the Red Admirals is shocking – really interesting shots.



Have a goodun

Wurzel

Re: Lee Hurrell

by Lee Hurrell, 05-May-14 12:08 PM GMT

Thanks, Wurzel.

Re: Lee Hurrell

by Lee Hurrell, 08-May-14 12:27 PM GMT

Thursday 17th October

Work commitments and then poor weather had until now kept me from a journey in search of British Long Tailed Blues. I had religiously kept an eye on the weather forecasts for the last few weeks and last weekend it seemed likely I would be having a day off on Thursday 17th October. Luckily the forecast stayed the same and first thing Thursday I was heading for Minnis Bay. Despite early cloud and rain, I expected the day to brighten.

I found the site easily thanks to Dave Brown's excellent directions. Upon reaching the raised footpath adjacent to the railway, I was initially concerned that the recent cold spell had finished the everlasting pea, it seemed to have gone over and I could see none in flower. The first sighting I had were of dragonflies; there were a lot of different ones buzzing about. After what seemed like ages of watching the dragonflies but little else, I saw a female Small White, the first butterfly of the day.

Here's a few of the dragonflies; Common Darters and Migrant Hawkers (thanks aeshna5 for the IDs):





A little while later and further along the path, I chanced upon Nigel and Bill, two Fermyn Woods regulars. They were lovely chaps, nice enough in itself but best of all they were watching a Long Tailed Blue! They had already seen one male earlier in the morning and were now watching 2 or 3 others around a nice sheltered spot containing a few pea flowers. There were two very fresh females that must have emerged Thursday morning along with at least two males. I am being conservative as males would come and go along the railway line and I don't want to over count. But the females were very fresh:



Long Tailed Blue, female, near Reculver, Kent, 17th October 2013

By now the sun was blazing and out of the sea breeze it was really warm. We stood and watched the Blues for a while, chatting away. All of a sudden, one of the males found a fresh female and seemed interested...he landed next to her and fluttered away, trying it on. He was quite persistent and as she moved a short distance away, he would follow and try his luck. His persistence paid off and eventually she relented and they coupled. We couldn't believe our luck!



Long Tailed Blue, female, near Reculver, Kent, 17th October 2013



Long Tailed Blue, male and female, near Reculver, Kent, 17th October 2013



Long Tailed Blue, male and female, near Reculver, Kent, 17th October 2013



Long Tailed Blue, male and female, near Reculver, Kent, 17th October 2013



Long Tailed Blue, male and female, near Reculver, Kent, 17th October 2013

They moved about quite a bit.



Long Tailed Blue, male and female, near Reculver, Kent, 17th October 2013



Long Tailed Blue, male and female, near Reculver, Kent, 17th October 2013



Long Tailed Blue, male and female, near Reculver, Kent, 17th October 2013

My favourite photo of the day. 😊



Long Tailed Blue, male and female, near Reculver, Kent, 17th October 2013



Long Tailed Blue, male and female, near Reculver, Kent, 17th October 2013

I knew that I would be lucky to see anything today so see British Long Tailed Blues, let alone a male and female meet, court, mate and eventually separate was simply stunning.

While the Long Tailed Blues were paired, UKB's own Hoggers came along and saw his second mating pair in a week! Nice to see him again, the last time was in Wrecclesham a couple of years ago.

We all took plenty of photos and watched as the pair separated until we lost them.

We walked further along to where Nigel and Bill had seen a male earlier in the morning, seeing a few more Small Whites on the way.

Fellow UKB member Keith Wootton and a colleague appeared and reported a Clouded Yellow and a Comma. I then found this male Long Tailed Blue and a large Peacock flew around us.



Long Tailed Blue, male, near Reculver, Kent, 17th October 2013



Long Tailed Blue mating site, near Reculver, Kent, 17th October 2013



Long Tailed Blue habitat, near Reculver, Kent, 17th October 2013

After another check of the area where the mating had taken place and with no new sightings, Hoggers and I headed back to the car park having a good talk about butterflies.

My sightings – 5 Long Tailed Blue (3 male, 2 female), 5 Small White and 3 Peacock.

For a day out butterflying in mid-October, today was a day I won't forget in a hurry.

Thanks to Marc Heath for finding/publicising the site, Dave Brown for directions and Neil for advice.

Lee

Re: Lee Hurrell

by Lee Hurrell, 08-May-14 01:08 PM GMT

Christmas Day 2013

I spent Christmas in Spain and even saw a (probable small) white driving to my Dad's from the airport!

I woke on Christmas day to this wonderful present; a moth in the porch, which had come to light over night. (I had left the light on for that reason 😊)
The beautifully named Olive-tree Pearl.



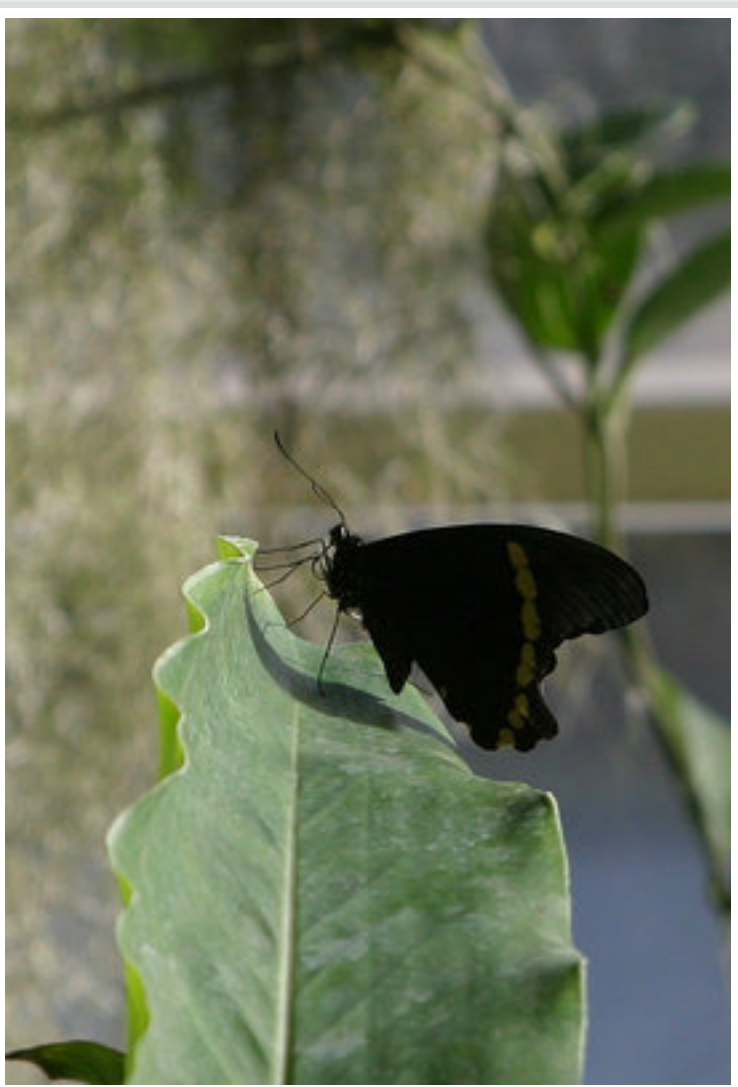
Olive-tree Pearl, Ciudad Quesada, Spain, 25th December 2013

Re: Lee Hurrell

by Lee Hurrell, 08-May-14 04:01 PM GMT

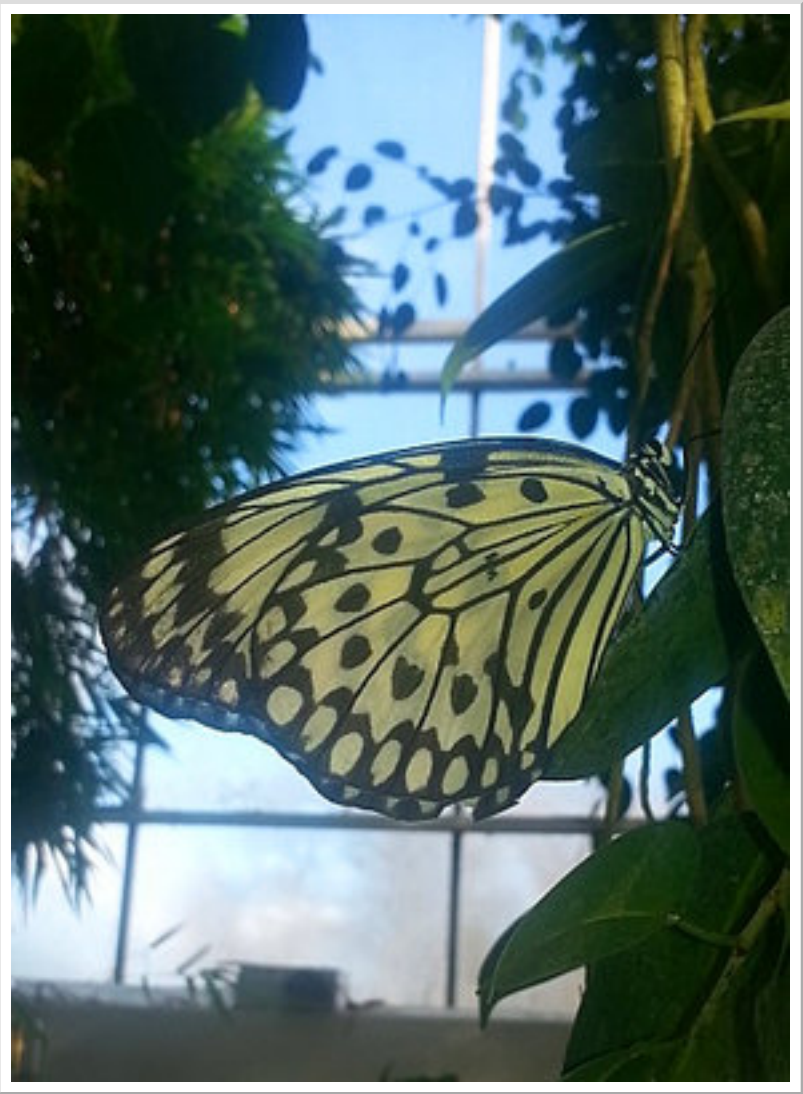
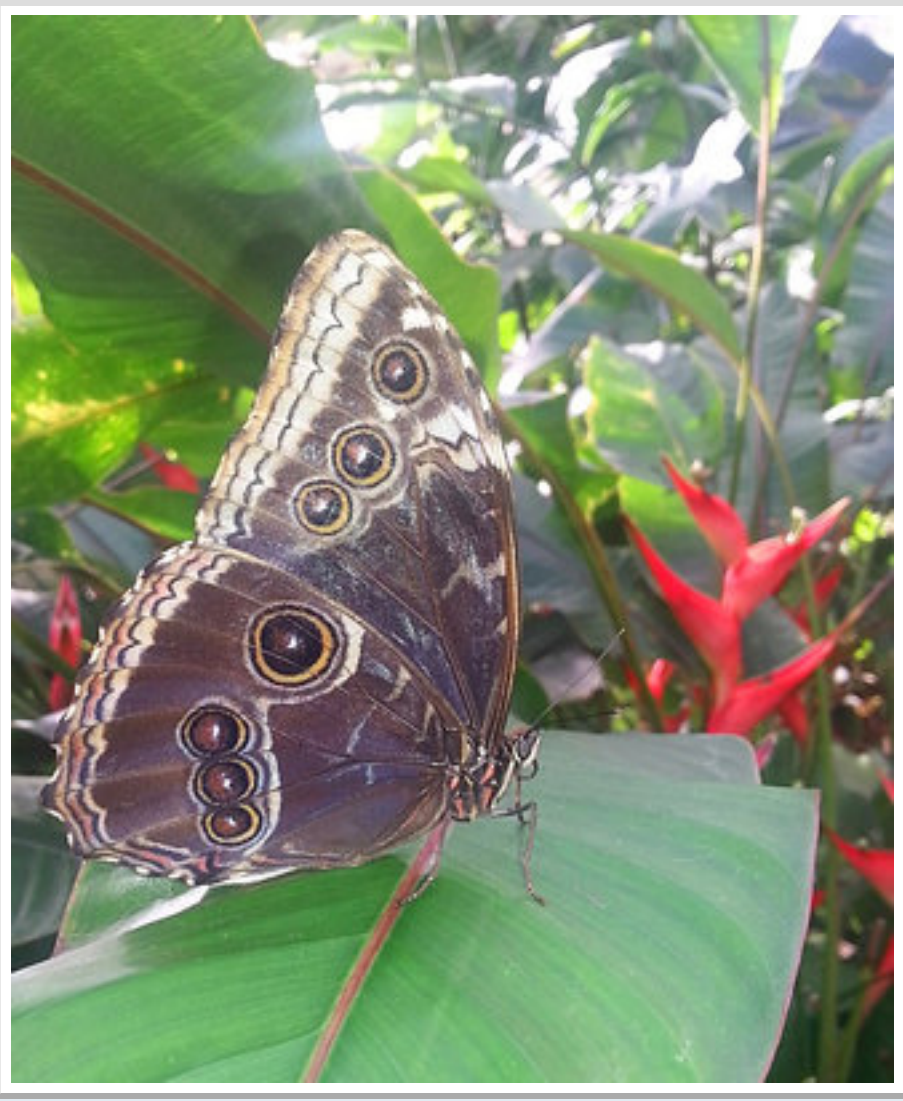
And so to 2014.

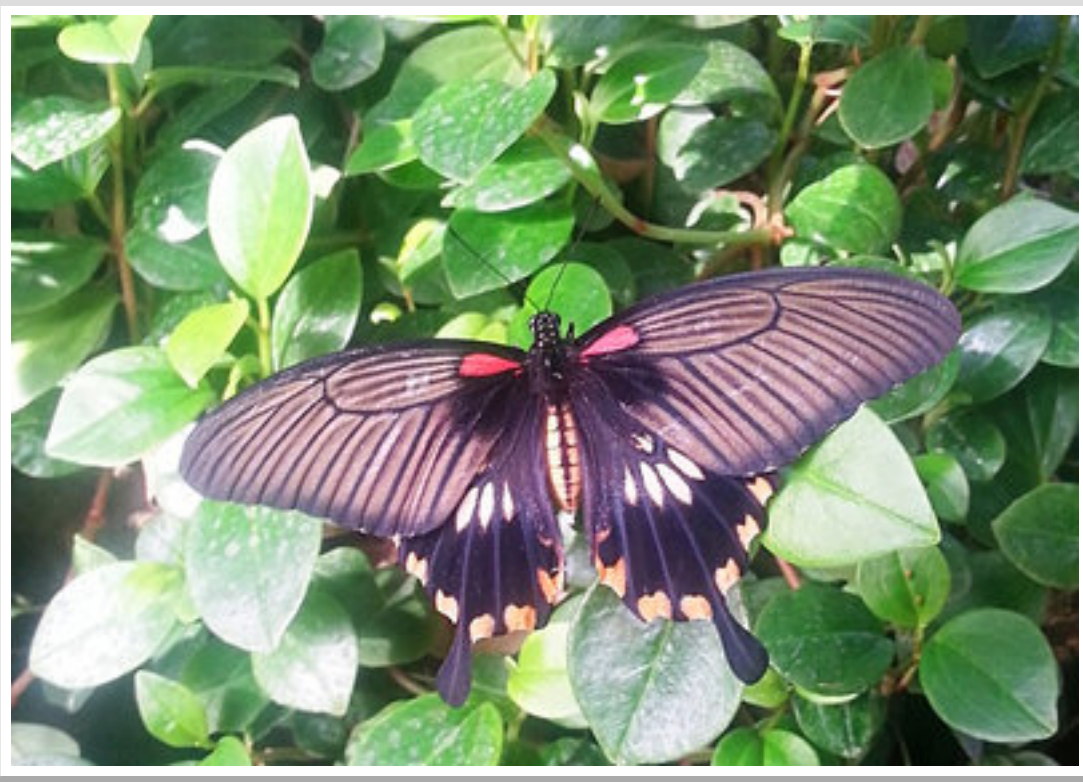
In February, I visited RHS Wisley and the butterfly house. Unbeknownst to me at the time, it was here that my Canon 10D died. I took many photos, most of which ended up plain black. These pictures were taken before the camera's demise.





In a coincidental foretelling of how I would be photographing butterflies for the early part of this season, I also started experimenting with my mobile phone while I was there. With 8MP, my mobile has more than the Canon's 6MP. I found out later you can also adjust ISO, exposure value, take burst shots and macro images. As you can tell, I had some way to go!





Re: Lee Hurrell

by Lee Hurrell, 08-May-14 06:59 PM GMT

1st March 2014

I didn't get to explore my new home too much last year, something I am determined to put right this year. To start, I visited Howell Hill NR in Ewell, not very far from home, even walkable. It is managed by Surrey Wildlife Trust and looks like a very lovely site. It's a chalk grassland site which holds Small Blue and Green Hairstreak and I aim to pay return visits to watch what happens throughout the seasons. All 4 Surrey Hairstreaks have been recorded here and that fills me with excitement!

No sightings on this day though.

Unless otherwise stated, all photos from here on will have been taken on my mobile phone.



Howell Hill, Ewell, Surrey, 1st March 2014





Howell Hill, Ewell, Surrey, 1st March 2014



Howell Hill, Ewell, Surrey, 1st March 2014

Re: Lee Hurrell

by Susie, 08-May-14 07:41 PM GMT

Happy birthday Lee 😊

Re: Lee Hurrell

by Neil Hulme, 08-May-14 09:00 PM GMT

Happy Birthday from me too. And thanks for such a vivid reminder of those heady days last autumn when, for a short while at least, the Long-tailed Blue was a British butterfly! 😊😊😊
Best Wishes, Neil

Re: Lee Hurrell

by David M, 08-May-14 09:06 PM GMT

Happy birthday from me too, Lee. Keep the images and reports coming.

Re: Lee Hurrell

by Pete Eeles, 08-May-14 09:51 PM GMT

"Lee Hurrell" wrote:

I didn't get to explore my new home too much last year, something I am determined to put right this year.

Good man! And Happy Birthday, Lee!

Cheers,

- Pete

Re: Lee Hurrell

by Lee Hurrell, 08-May-14 11:39 PM GMT

Thanks Susie, Neil, David & Pete. I've had a wonderful day, despite the weather.

There are *many* reports and photos to come 😊

Lee

Re: Lee Hurrell

by Lee Hurrell, 09-May-14 12:19 AM GMT

8th March 2014 - Season Under Way 😊

A visit to my Mum's in Somerset in lovely spring weather just *had* to produce my first sighting of the year. I wasn't disappointed 😊

On 8th March, in the village I saw a Red Admiral and a Comma. My first species of the year had gone back to being a Red Admiral; it had been a Peacock for the last two years. 2014 was off to a start!

I went for a longer walk but saw nothing else, despite going to my favourite field and where there were many Commas last autumn. This really is one of my favourite places to visit and I never see a soul there. Complete tranquillity.



Field next to Stone Wood, Brompton Ralph, Somerset, 8th March 2014



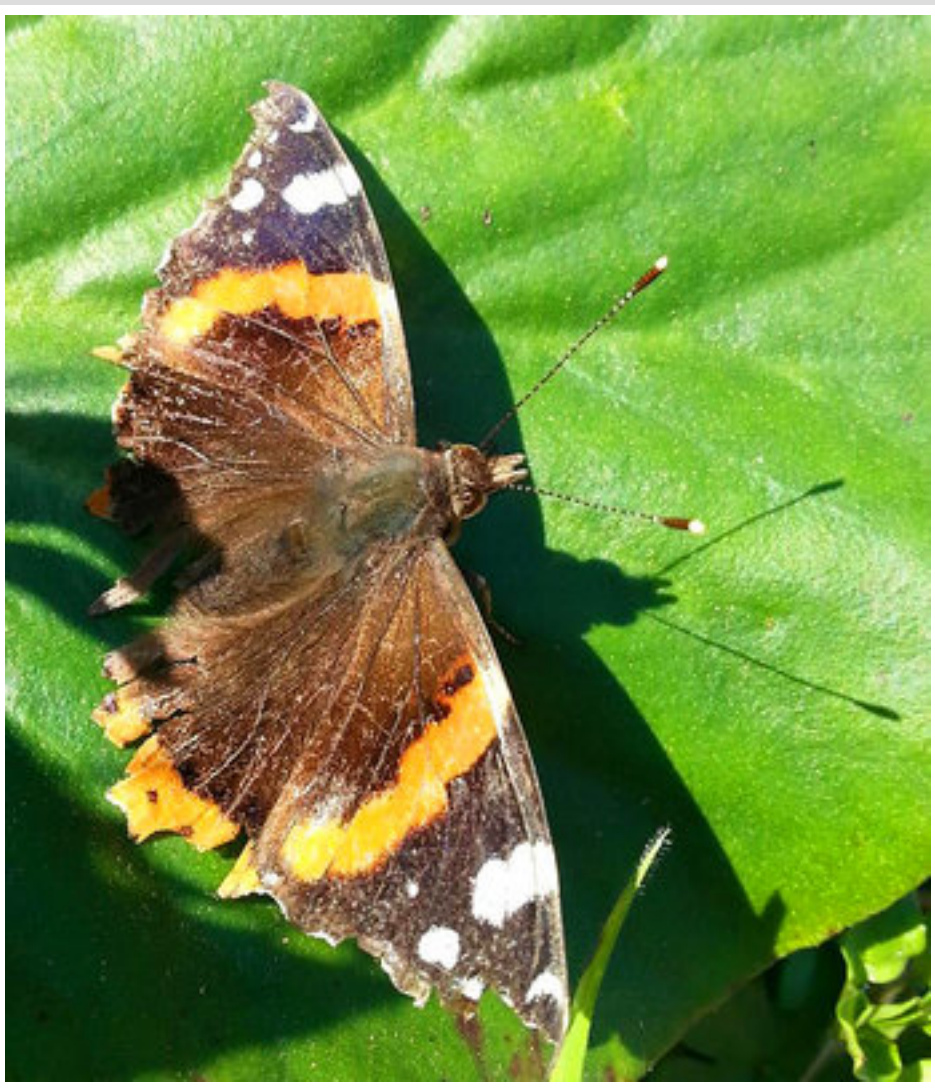
Field next to Stone Wood, Brompton Ralph, Somerset, 8th March 2014



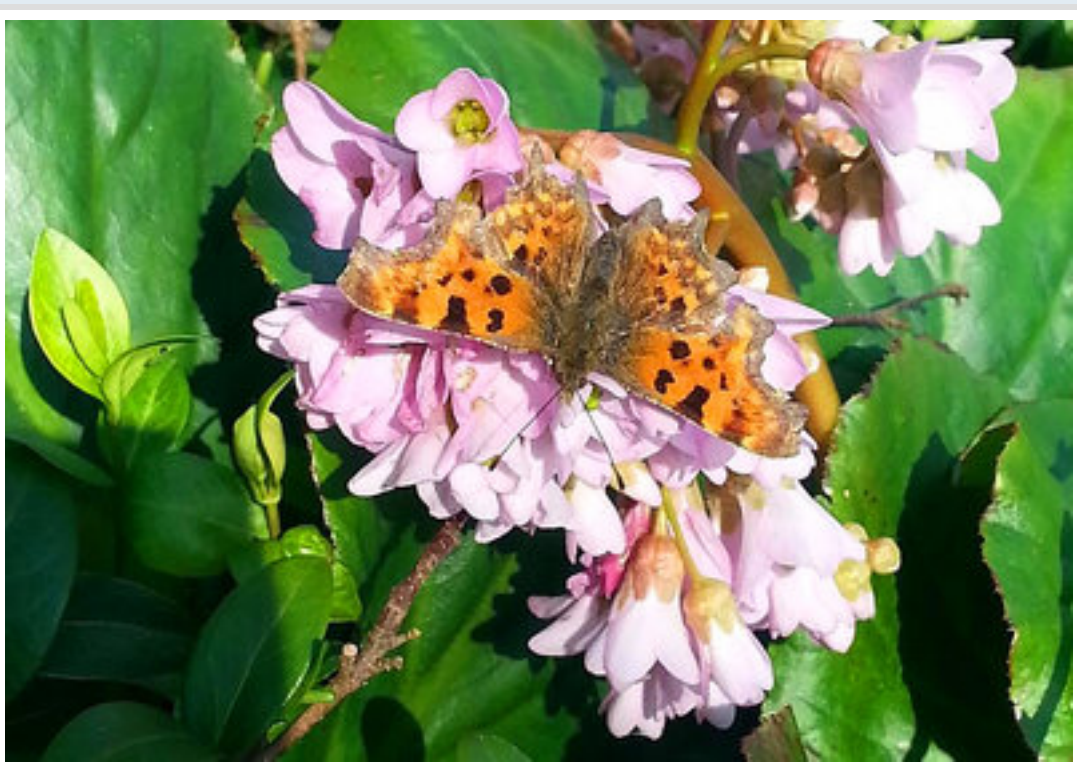
Field next to Stone Wood, Brompton Ralph, Somerset, 8th March 2014

9th March 2014

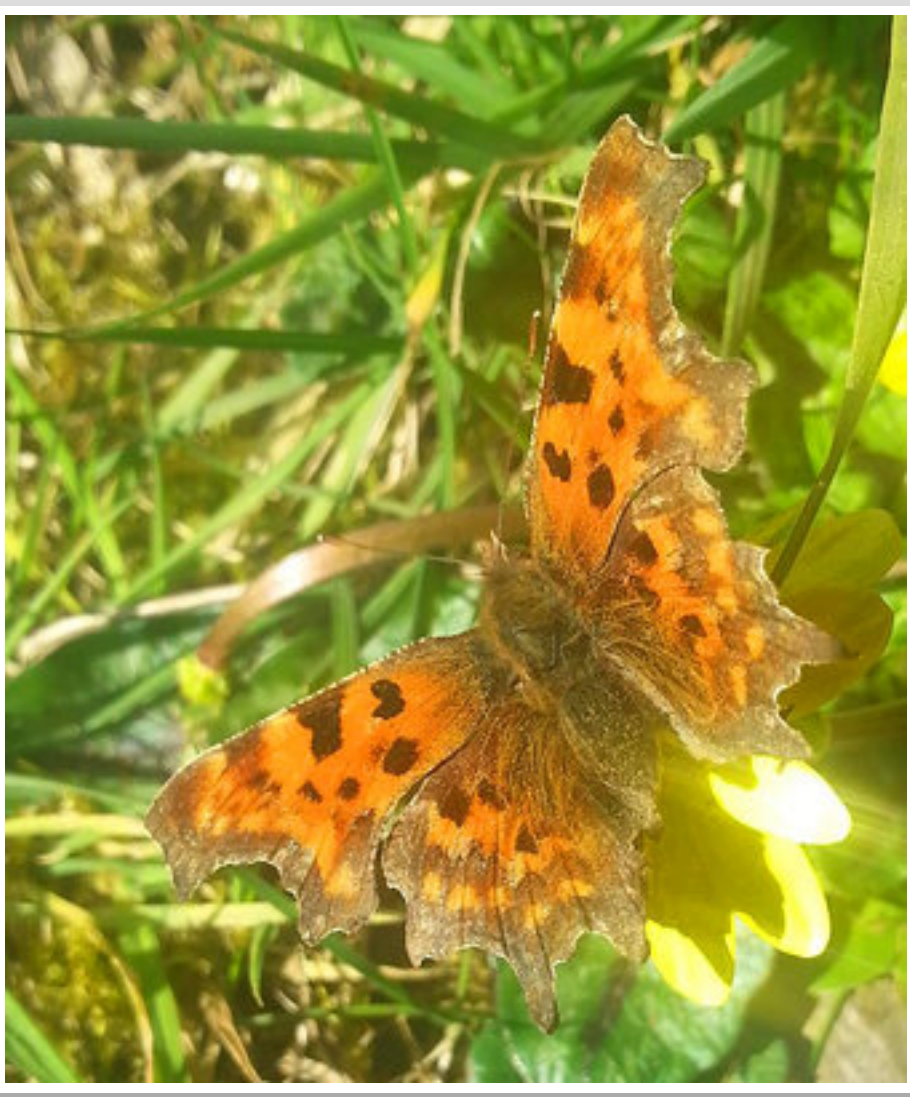
The next day things had really woken up with all 5 hibernators seen. I saw a male Brimstone flying through the garden while just around the house there were 6 Small Tortoiseshell, 5 Peacock, 3 Comma and 4 Red Admiral.



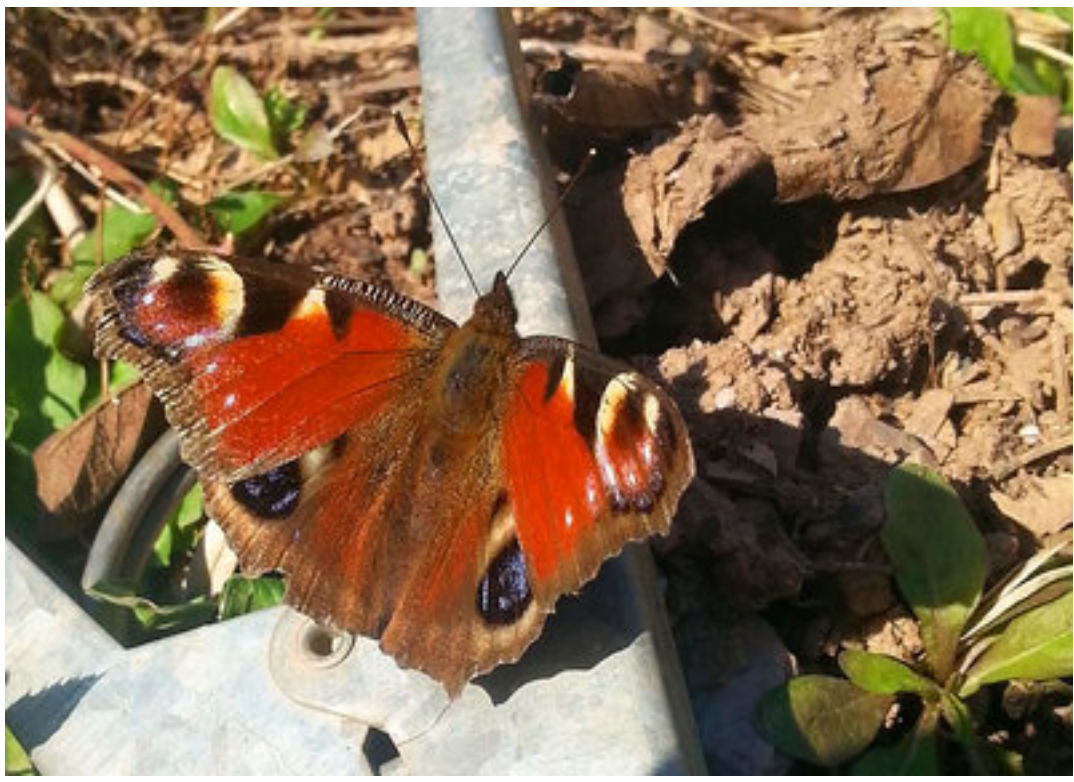
Red Admiral, Brompton Ralph, Somerset, 9th March 2014



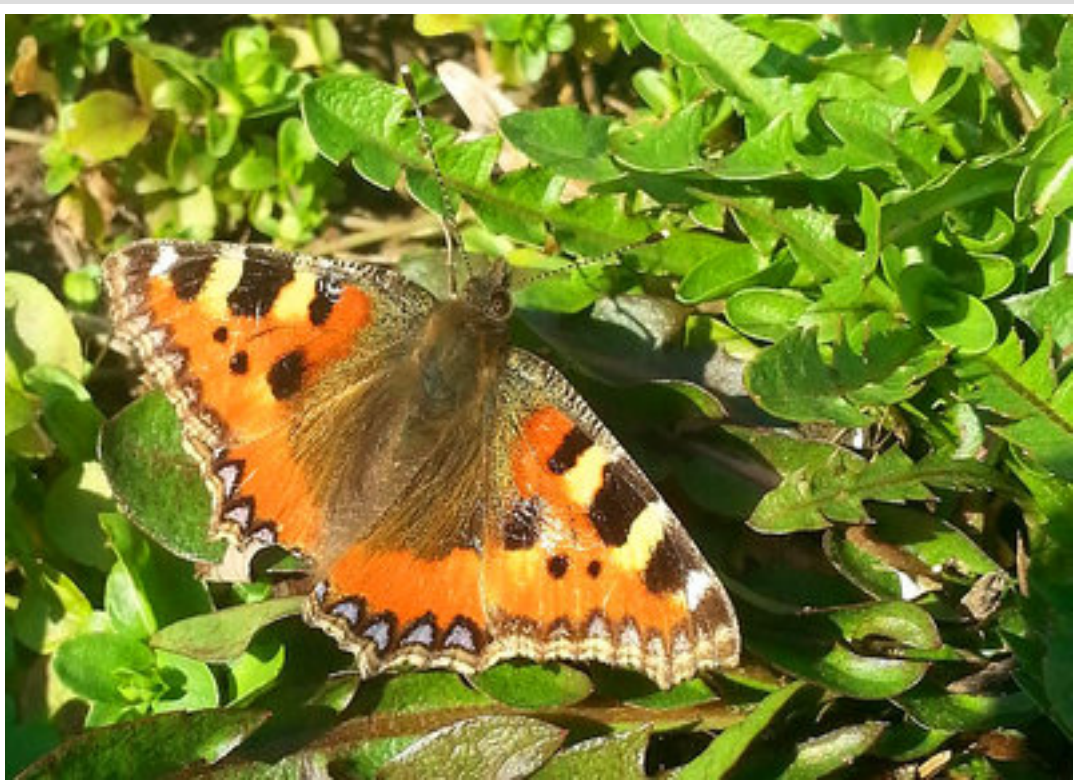
Comma, Brompton Ralph, Somerset, 9th March 2014



Comma, Brompton Ralph, Somerset, 9th March 2014



Peacock, Brompton Ralph, Somerset, 9th March 2014



Small Tortoiseshell, Brompton Ralph, Somerset, 9th March 2014

The photos do get a bit better... 😊

Re: Lee Hurrell

by Hoggers, 09-May-14 04:55 PM GMT

Hi Lee, I really enjoyed your Long Tailed Blue entry it brought back memories of a very exciting day!

Best Wishes,

Hoggers.

Re: Lee Hurrell

by Lee Hurrell, 14-May-14 09:26 PM GMT

Thanks Hoggers, it was a day to remember, that's for sure!

Re: Lee Hurrell

by Lee Hurrell, 15-May-14 09:35 PM GMT

16th March 2014 - Surrey wakes up

After seeing 5 male Brimstone from my bedroom window on the 15th March, Sunday 16th was going to be a good walk. 3 male Brimstone were seen in Epsom on the way to Howell Hill, nearby in Ewell.

A further 15 male and 1 female Brimstone, 1 Peacock, 2 Small Tortoiseshell and 10 Comma were seen.



Comma, Howell Hill, Ewell, Surrey, 16th March 2014

Another new site isn't far away: Warren Farm. This old farmland borders Nonsuch Park with its manor house and a good walk around both (huge) made me want to come back again later in the year to look for hairstreaks. Warren Farm, like Howell Hill, also holds a Small Blue colony. Today though, 2 male Brimstone, 2 Peacock, 2 Small Tortoiseshell and 5 Comma were seen.



Peacock, Warren Farm, Ewell, Surrey, 16th March 2014



Comma, Warren Farm, Ewell, Surrey, 16th March 2014

I will certainly be visiting again.

NB – the photos on this post only were taken with a Canon compact (not sure of the model, it wasn't mine). Back to mobile phone photos from here.

Re: Lee Hurrell

by Lee Hurrell, 15-May-14 10:12 PM GMT

More Howell Hill

19th March – 2 Small Tortoiseshell were seen but no other sightings.

29th March – I have found a new way to reach the nature reserve, which takes me around some local field margins, woodland edges and mature hedges, which again look worthy of future investigation later in the year. Today though, they held my first spring emergee; a male Small White 😊 Also seen in the way to the reserve; 10 male Brimstone, 5 Peacock, 5 Small Tortoiseshell and 3 Comma.

In the reserve itself, 7 male and 1 female Brimstone, 3 Peacock and 2 Comma.

Re: Lee Hurrell

by Lee Hurrell, 15-May-14 10:14 PM GMT

9th April 2014

My first Holly Blue of the year at Barons Court underground station (which is above ground and has some big ivy bushes along one wall).

Re: Lee Hurrell

by Lee Hurrell, 15-May-14 11:10 PM GMT

Spring has Sprung (12th/13th April)

On the weekend of 12th and 13th April, I spent a family visit in rural Worcestershire. Spring officially started on Saturday 12th when a male Orange Tip flew through my nan's garden 😊

The village is only 5 minutes from Grafton Wood, a BC reserve I always visit when I am there (although to date this has not coincided with the star attraction, the Brown Hairstreak. I may put that right this year). On Sunday 13th, in and around the wood, the number of butterflies was astonishing. 19 male Orange Tip, 2 Green Veined White (with other unidentified whites), 2 male Brimstone, 26 Peacock, 1 Comma, 1 Small Tortoiseshell, 3 Speckled Wood and 1 Holly Blue. Phew!

Some mobile phone pictures:



Grafton Wood, Worcestershire, 13th April 2014



Orange Tip, male, Grafton Wood, Worcestershire, 13th April 2014



Brimstone, male, Grafton Wood, Worcestershire, 13th April 2014



Speckled Wood, female, Grafton Wood, Worcestershire, 13th April 2014

On the way home driving south on the M40, at 4pm it was still blazing sunshine, so I figured it be rude not to stop at Aston Rowant 😊 I was glad I did, as along with the 3 Small Tortoiseshell and 5 Peacock seen, a Green Hairstreak landed at my feet when I was heading back up the slope to the car park.

That makes 11 species by 13th April!

I couldn't resist this wise old tree.



Aston Rowant, Oxfordshire, 13th April 2014



Aston Rowant, Oxfordshire, 13th April 2014



Aston Rowant, Oxfordshire, 13th April 2014

Re: Lee Hurrell

by Lee Hurrell, 20-May-14 10:46 PM GMT

18th April 2014 (Good Friday)

In somewhat overcast conditions, I had a long walk and explored the area around Howell Hill in Ewell, Surrey. On my new route to the reserve along one of the field edges, I found 4 larval nests of Small Tortoiseshell caterpillars, all in close proximity. Luckily there are a lot so nettles so they won't go hungry. I look forward to watching them develop in return visits. Nearby could have been one of the parents as 1 Small Tortoiseshell along with 1 Peacock and 7 Small White were seen.

I think these are both Small Tortoiseshell:



Small Tortoiseshell larval nest, Ewell, Surrey, 18th April 2014



In Howell Hill itself, just 1 male Orange Tip, 1 Peacock and 4 Small Speckled Wood were seen. With the paucity of butterflies, I took to trying my mobile on some of the flowers.



Buttercup, Howell Hill, Ewell, Surrey, 18th April 2014



Speedwell, Howell Hill, Ewell, Surrey, 18th April 2014



Hawthorn, Howell Hill, Ewell, Surrey, 18th April 2014



Dandelion, Howell Hill, Ewell, Surrey, 18th April 2014

Tomorrow's weather looked a bit brighter...

Re: Lee Hurrell

by Lee Hurrell, 22-May-14 11:08 PM GMT

Saturday 19th April 2014

Surrey Skipper(s)

I was hopeful of my first spring skippers today and Denbies didn't disappoint. I only visited the Silver Spotted Skipper field and searched well. After a male Orange Tip and a female Brimstone, first up was a Dingy Skipper.



Dingy Skipper, Denbies Hillside, Surrey, 19th April 2014

A grey blur could only mean one thing...



Grizzled Skipper, Denbies Hillside, Surrey, 19th April 2014



Grizzled Skipper, Denbies Hillside, Surrey, 19th April 2014



Grizzled Skipper, Denbies Hillside, Surrey, 19th April 2014

It was what the forecasters call sunny spells, so the periods of cloud cover meant I could find and approach the butterflies when they stopped flying and they were quite docile. I spent a lovely couple of hours with the skippers.

Sightings for Denbies; 1 male Orange Tip, 1 female Brimstone, 3 Dingy Skipper, 2 Grizzled Skipper and this fearsome looking beast.



Agalenatea redii (Gorse Orbweaver), Denbies Hillside, Surrey, 19th April 2014

Sheepleas

I then moved on to Sheepleas "Nettle" Meadow, in between East and West Horsley, which I had been reading about in the Surrey BC magazine (also called Surrey Skipper). The branch has been trying to make it the county's second reserve (Oaken Wood at Chiddingfold is the first) but for now the meadow remains managed by Surrey Wildlife Trust as part of the wider Sheepleas complex. It is essentially a large square area surrounded by mature hedges, woodland and what looked like a stable. Sheepleas is a large area of many meadows with different flora types as a result of being farmed, or not. The "nettle" meadow contains mainly just that thistles and grassland. It is marked as simply "farmland" on the notice board map so presumably has been farmed until fairly recently with the farming resulting in the "weedy" (I read good for wildlife) plants. Another meadow that had escaped the plough holds primroses and cowslips for example. The wider woodland also holds hairstreaks, emperors and admirals, which means I will be returning in high summer 😊

But for today, it had clouded over by the time I had arrived and no (adult) butterflies were seen. No matter, I came to explore after reading about it and I will be back later in the year. I walked the perimeter and did find a Small Tortoiseshell larval nest though although I didn't do a thorough search.



Small Tortoiseshell larval nest, Sheepleas "Nettle" Meadow, Surrey, 19th April 2014

Just some of the many nettles.



Sheepleas "Nettle" Meadow, Surrey, 19th April 2014

Re: Lee Hurrell

by Maximus, 23-May-14 08:56 AM GMT

Very nice photos of the Skippers at Denbies Lee 😊 a site I have yet to visit.

Mike

Re: Lee Hurrell

by Lee Hurrell, 24-May-14 03:22 PM GMT

Many thanks, Mike, very kind of you to say. Not bad for my mobile!

I'd be happy to show you around Denbies if you do visit, it's a wonderful place.

Best wishes,

Lee

Re: Lee Hurrell

by ChrisC, 24-May-14 04:00 PM GMT

agalenatea redii for your spider Lee.

Chris

Re: Lee Hurrell

by Lee Hurrell, 24-May-14 04:15 PM GMT

That's great, thanks Chris. I'll edit the post.

Best wishes,

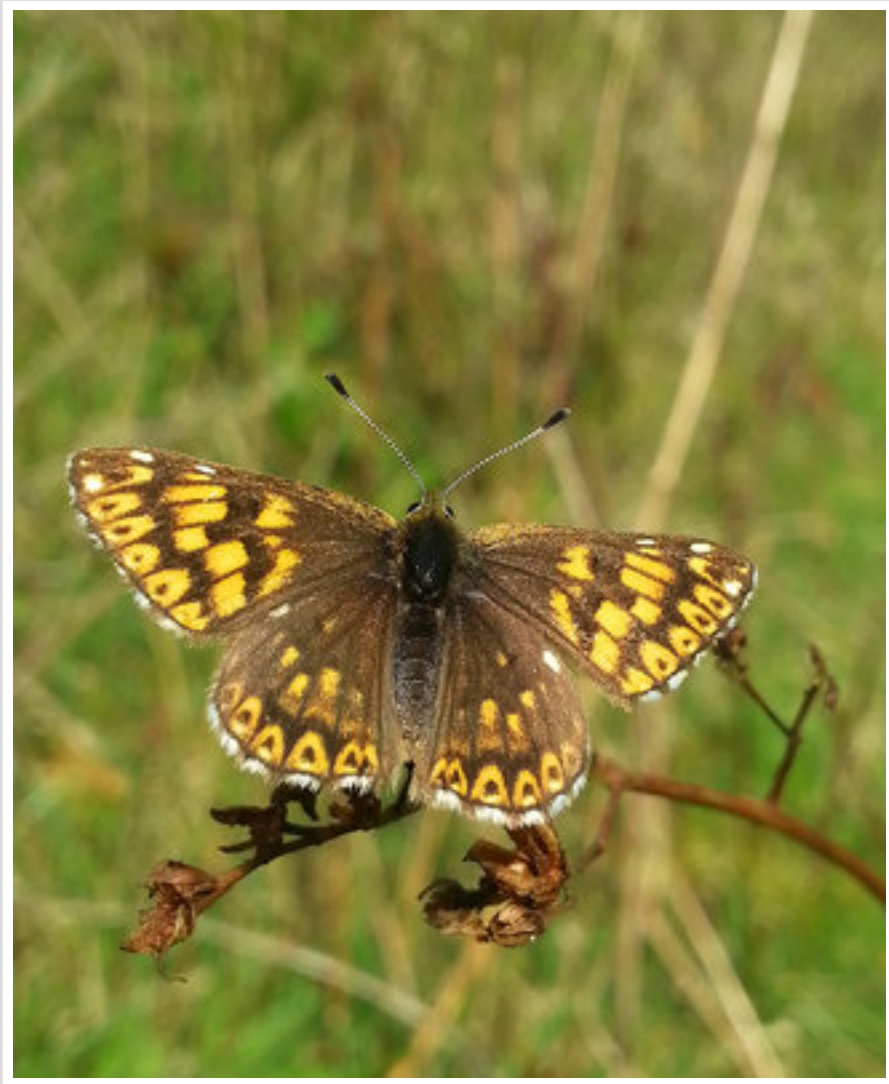
Re: Lee Hurrell

by Lee Hurrell, 24-May-14 05:41 PM GMT

21st April 2014 - Part One

Easter Monday and warm sunshine resulted in a trip to Noar Hill to see his Grace. I hadn't been in his presence since 2011, so it was time we caught up.

A kestrel carrying a fresh kill followed me up the path and a pair of marsh tits were seen. Also heard were nightingale and skylarks. Despite the number of cars along the road there was no-one on site until I met a couple who had come looking for birds. We chatted for a bit, I explained I was here to see to see the Duke of Burgundy and the lady pulled out a small Collins guide and looked him up. Having found it in her book, it was gratifying a while later to show them both the real thing as here was my first Duke for a few years.



Duke of Burgundy, Noar Hill, Hampshire, 21st April 2014

Dingy Skipper were also about.



Dingy Skipper, Noar Hill, Hampshire, 21st April 2014

A few more people were wandering about as the morning wore on and I got chatting a chap (I think called Mike, sorry if you read this), who knew who I was from this diary 🤪 We were talking away with a couple of Dukes at our feet. They became grounded under a few clouds and were very photogenic.



Duke of Burgundy, Noar Hill, Hampshire, 21st April 2014

This Duke was resting up against an anthill and gave me some lovely "Padfield picturesque" images.



Duke of Burgundy, Noar Hill, Hampshire, 21st April 2014

It was a lovely picture from both sides.



Duke of Burgundy, Noar Hill, Hampshire, 21st April 2014

One final image as I wound my way back down. I found lots of the site I didn't see last time I was here and pleasingly, Dukes were found all over.



Duke of Burgundy, Noar Hill, Hampshire, 21st April 2014

Sightings for Noar Hill: 7 Duke of Burgundy, 2 Peacock, 8 male Orange Tip, 1 Green Veined White, 4 female Brimstone (1 ovipositing) and 2 Dingy Skipper.

A lovely way to spend a morning.

Re: Lee Hurrell

by Lee Hurrell, 25-May-14 11:26 PM GMT

21st April 2014 - Part Two

Heading back to Surrey I stopped at Chiddingfold Forest.

I walked from Botany Bay to Oaken Wood and back and saw 5 Wood White, 3 Green Veined White, 13 male and 2 female Brimstone, 4 male and 1 female Orange Tip, 1 Small Tortoiseshell, 5 Peacock and 2 Speckled Wood.



Green Veined White, female, Chiddingfold Forest, Surrey, 21st April 2014

I hadn't appreciated just how long the proboscis is on a Brimstone.



Brimstone, male, Chiddingfold Forest, Surrey, 21st April 2014

A few early purple orchids were out.



Early Purple Orchid, Chiddingfold Forest, Surrey, 21st April 2014

It wasn't until I was back at the bridge that I finally found a Wood White staying still. Then I found another close by, making 7 in total for the visit. There was an artist on the bridge portraying the ride in a charcoal image and I sat in his view for a while watching the Wood Whites. He didn't mind though and we had a quick chat about how beautiful this forest is.



Wood White, Chiddingfold Forest, Surrey, 21st April 2014



Wood White, Chiddingfold Forest, Surrey, 21st April 2014

Re: Lee Hurrell

by Lee Hurrell, 26-May-14 11:50 AM GMT

26th April 2014

A day of sunshine and showers and so I took the umbrella out with me today on a local walk around Howell Hill (and needed it). Consequently, not much was seen so I enjoyed the flowers of the field edges.



Ewell, Surrey, 26th April 2014



Ewell, Surrey, 26th April 2014



Ewell, Surrey, 26th April 2014



Ewell, Surrey, 26th April 2014



Ewell, Surrey, 26th April 2014

The larval nests of Small Tortoiseshells were doing well.



Small Tortoiseshell larval nest, Ewell, Surrey, 26th April 2014

1 (adult) Small Tortoiseshell, 1 Small White and 1 male Brimstone the only sightings.



Brimstone, male, Ewell, Surrey, 26th April 2014

Re: Lee Hurrell

by Lee Hurrell, 26-May-14 01:50 PM GMT

27th April 2014 - South of the Border

As I was in Tunbridge Wells overnight and therefore halfway to Sussex I headed south on Sunday to one of my favourite places, Windover Hill, with a plan to stop at Abbots Wood on the way. Unfortunately, the sun wasn't playing ball and it was resolutely grey and chilly upon arrival at Abbots Wood. Still, I walked round for two hours but didn't see a single butterfly. So much for Pearls. 😞

This caterpillar posed nicely on a bluebell though.



Unknown caterpillar, Abbots Wood, East Sussex, 27th April 2014

While this one wasn't looking so well, having reached some grisly end.



Unknown caterpillar, Abbots Wood, East Sussex, 27th April 2014

By the time I reached Windover Hill, there was a little more blue in the sky which raised my hopes. The most bio-diverse/bumpiest car park in the world had changed somewhat since I last visited; the fence had gone and it seems people had been parking on a slope of at least 45 degrees. 😲

Anyway, I set off up the hill and saw my first butterfly of the day, a Dingy Skipper. By the time I reached the top the sun was nearly there...



View looking north from Windover Hill, East Sussex, 27th April

Then it broke and turned into a lovely afternoon. Enough to bring 5 Dingy Skippers and most excitingly, 2 Walls out to play 😊



Wall, male, Windover Hill, East Sussex, 27th April 2014

I still have no idea how I got so close 🤪

By the time I left around 16.00 it was full sun and as I had to pass Abbots Wood on the way home....

For my second trip round the wood (similar route in half the time) I saw 1 Speckled Wood, 1 male Orange Tip and 1 Speckled Yellow moth but no Pearls. I will be back.

Re: Lee Hurrell

by Lee Hurrell, 26-May-14 06:01 PM GMT

30th April 2014

Working from home, I walked to a nearby recreation ground at lunchtime. It had some lovely mature trees and hedges and importantly, some wild areas along a shady path, left alone by the council. I was delighted to see my first Large Whites of the year, a male and a female. A fresh Red Admiral, 3 Holly Blue and 3 Speckled Wood making up the other sightings. Two males were really going for each other, I've never seen such ferocity in butterflies! They were dog fighting for at least ten minutes, all the while I was watching them, seemingly oblivious to all else, including me as they flew into me.

Re: Lee Hurrell

by Lee Hurrell, 26-May-14 06:28 PM GMT

3rd May 2014

A glorious sunny day. In my local fields, 1 male Large White, 10 Small White, 2 male and 1 ovipositing female Orange Tip, 1 ovipositing female Green-veined White, 2 male and 1 female Brimstone, 3 Small Tortoiseshell and 2 Peacock gave a marvellous display. At one point, a courting Brimstone couple were buzzed by 2 Small Tortoiseshells, to which a Peacock then took exception and buzzed them all, at which point I had all 5 in front of me. 😊



Orange Tip, female, Ewell, Surrey, 3rd May 2014

The Small Tortoiseshell larval nests have dispersed and the nettle bed looks like this. You can just make out a few larger caterpillars.



Small Tortoiseshell Larvae, Ewell, Surrey, 3rd May 2014



Small Tortoiseshell Larva, Ewell, Surrey, 3rd May 2014



Once inside Howell Hill, it looked gorgeous in the spring sunshine.



Howell Hill, Ewell, Surrey, Surrey, 3rd May 2014

The hawthorn was beautiful from a high vantage point.



Howell Hill, Ewell, Surrey, Surrey, 3rd May 2014



Howell Hill, Ewell, Surrey, Surrey, 3rd May 2014

Brimstones were everywhere, omnipresent. I counted at least 25 males and 4 females. The most I had in view at any one point was 8. There was much courting going on.



Brimstone, male and female, Howell Hill, Ewell, Surrey, Surrey, 3rd May 2014



Brimstone, male, Howell Hill, Ewell, Surrey, Surrey, 3rd May 2014

I watched this egg being laid and marked the twig it was on. (Embarrassing story for next time...).



Brimstone, ovum, Howell Hill, Ewell, Surrey, Surrey, 3rd May 2014

Perhaps best of all though, were my first local Green Hairstreaks. 😊



Green Hairstreak, Howell Hill, Ewell, Surrey, Surrey, 3rd May 2014



Green Hairstreak habitat, Howell Hill, Ewell, Surrey, Surrey, 3rd May 2014

Sightings: 2 Green Hairstreak, 1 Speckled Wood, 1 Peacock, 25 male and 4 female Brimstone and 1 male Small White.

Re: Lee Hurrell

by millerd, 26-May-14 10:05 PM GMT

You can tell the rain has been persistent today – you've caught up a bit, Lee! That phone of yours really does take brilliant pictures – I'm not sure why I bother with a camera at all... 😊

Dave

Re: Lee Hurrell

by maverick, 26-May-14 10:29 PM GMT

well done on your green hairstreak , im still waiting for mine.
apparently they like mature oak trees, well they do'nt like mine at the bottom of my garden. 😊

Re: Lee Hurrell

by Lee Hurrell, 26-May-14 11:30 PM GMT

Thanks Dave. Yes although it's been raining, I've been surrounded by butterflies today!

Best wishes,

Lee

Re: Lee Hurrell

by Lee Hurrell, 26-May-14 11:32 PM GMT

It made my day, Maverick. You could try some scrubby hawthorn if you have any nearby, I'm not sure on oak for Green Hairstreak.

Best wishes,

Lee

Re: Lee Hurrell

by Wurzel, 27-May-14 09:54 PM GMT

Fantastic shots Lee, love the Greenstreak 😊 Looking forward to the Wiltshire site photos 😊 Philzoid and I must have just missed you 😊

Have a goodun

Wurzel

Re: Lee Hurrell

by Lee Hurrell, 28-May-14 11:05 PM GMT

Thanks Wurzel. I'm looking forward to sorting through them!

It can't have been by much.

Best wishes,

Lee

Re: Lee Hurrell

by Lee Hurrell, 29-May-14 09:46 PM GMT

May the 4th 2014 - Part One

A lovely sunny day today and I took a return trip to Warren Farm in Ewell this morning. The first creature I found was this charming little bee.



Unknown bee, Warren Farm, Ewell, Surrey, 4th May 2014

The second creature I saw was a dead grass snake and the third was a fox. I also saw a pair of Blackcaps in a wooded area.

However, it wasn't long before I saw quite a few butterflies. Spurred on by early Small Blue sightings reported on UKB, I wanted to check my local sites. Not out yet in Surrey though. 3 Peacock, 1 Small Tortoiseshell, 3 Speckled Wood, 1 male Large White, 2 male Orange Tips, 3 male Brimstone and 2 Small White were seen around the field that holds the Small Blues. They will be out here soon.

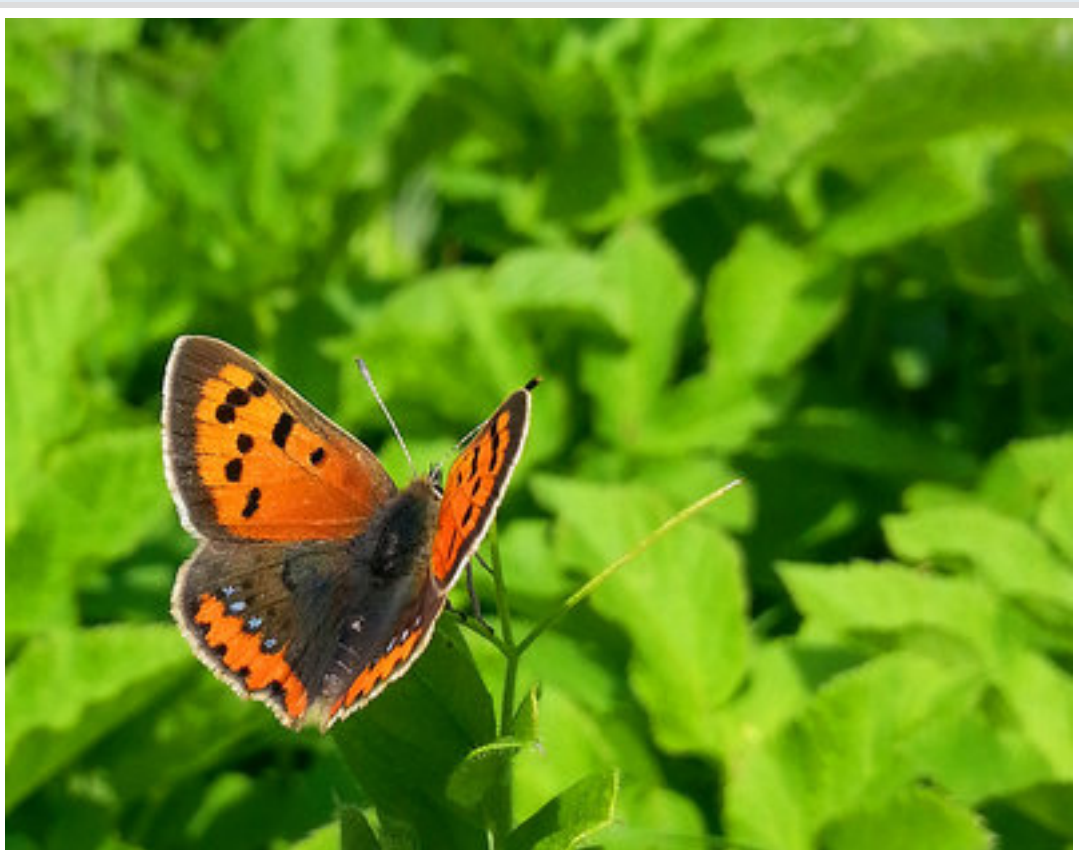


Warren Farm, Ewell, Surrey, 4th May 2014

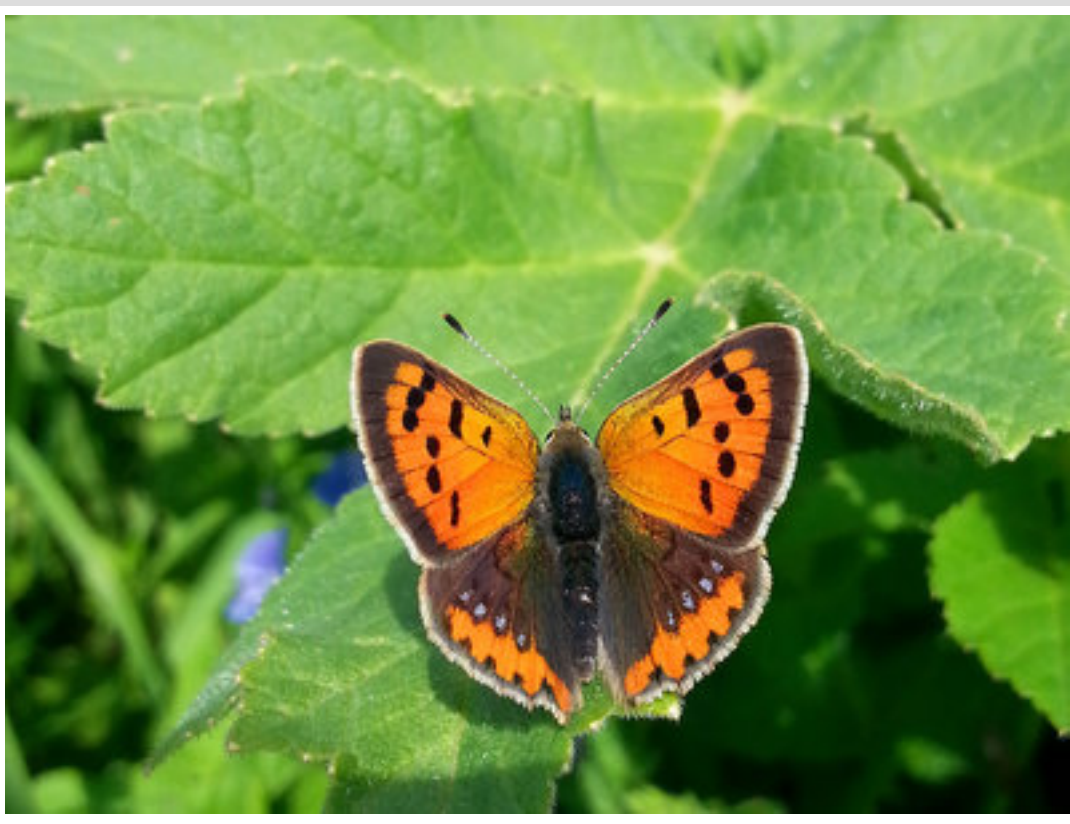
But best of all was a flash of orange, which could only mean one thing 😊



Small Copper, male, Warren Farm, Ewell, Surrey, 4th May 2014



Small Copper, male, Warren Farm, Ewell, Surrey, 4th May 2014



Small Copper, male, Warren Farm, Ewell, Surrey, 4th May 2014

I saw two and he's there in the first picture of Warren Farm above.

Re: Lee Hurrell

by Willow, 29-May-14 10:04 PM GMT

Crickey Lee! I thought I was behind on my travels reports, but I'm feeling quite upto date compared to you 😊 lovely images to go with your interesting reportage.

Bill 😊

"When in doubt...venture out"

Re: Lee Hurrell

by Lee Hurrell, 29-May-14 10:15 PM GMT

I am a little behind, Bill. But I am enjoying reliving the days out and all the photos 😊

Thanks for your kind comments, much appreciated.

Best wishes,

Lee

Re: Lee Hurrell

by Lee Hurrell, 29-May-14 10:44 PM GMT

May the 4th 2014 - Part Two

This afternoon, I visited another new site not far from me – Tolworth Court Farm Fields, which I'd read about it in the Surrey BC magazine. It's a grassland site, bordered by the Hogsmill river on one side. It's huge, with lots of meadows and mature trees and hedges, like many other Surrey sites I've been to this year and which may repay a return visit!



Tolworth Court Farm Fields, Surrey, 4th May 2014



Tolworth Court Farm Fields, Surrey, 4th May 2014



Tolworth Court Farm Fields, Surrey, 4th May 2014



Tolworth Court Farm Fields, Surrey, 4th May 2014

I was hopeful of an early Common Blue or Brown Argus but I saw neither. I was too early for any grassland species but I would imagine it is teeming with browns and skippers later in the summer. There was also a long, thin, almost secret meadow (it reminded me of Bernwood). In this meadow was one of the most worn butterflies I have ever seen flying. But fly strongly he could!



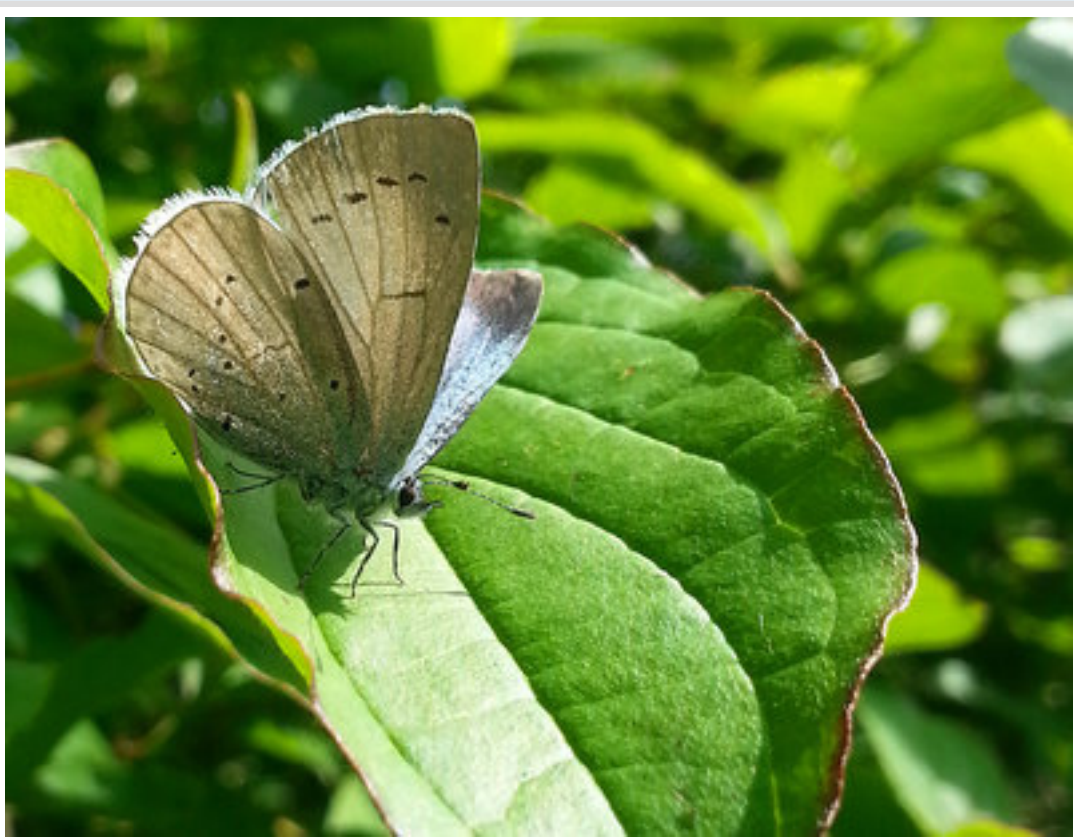
Peacock, Tolworth Court Farm Fields, Surrey, 4th May 2014

I love the way Peacocks seem to give out a "Lord of all they purvey" vibe.



Peacock, Tolworth Court Farm Fields, Surrey, 4th May 2014

Near the river, this female Holly Blue posed nicely.



Holly Blue, female, Tolworth Court Farm Fields, Surrey, 4th May 2014

The highlight for me though was a flash of blue and red just around the corner from the Holly Blue; the first Kingfisher I have seen in about 30 years. It made my day.

Sightings to go with my Kingfisher: 8 Peacock, 2 Small Tortoiseshell, 2 Comma, 1 Speckled Wood, 1 female Holly Blue, 1 male Brimstone, 1 male Orange Tip, 3 Green-veined White.

Re: Lee Hurrell

by millerd, 29-May-14 10:48 PM GMT

That's a lovely Small Copper, Lee. I haven't seen many yet this year, but one like that would do nicely...

Dave

Re: Lee Hurrell

by Lee Hurrell, 29-May-14 10:55 PM GMT

He certainly is, Dave. I seem to have found a little hot spot for them at Warren Farm. More photos to follow of course. 😊

Best wishes,

Lee

Re: Lee Hurrell

by Wurzel, 30-May-14 09:30 AM GMT

I agree with Dave that is a lovely marked Small Copper, I've never seen a caeruleo-punctata that well marked myself 🍷 You're catching up now Lee, those Marshies must be getting closer 😊

Have a goodun

Wurzel

Re: Lee Hurrell

by Neil Freeman, 30-May-14 03:00 PM GMT

Hi Lee, just doing some catching up, great post and photos 😊

I have to agree with Dave and Wurzel about that Small Copper, I don't think I have ever seen one with such well defined blue spots, a lovely individual.

Cheers,

Neil.

Re: Lee Hurrell

by Lee Hurrell, 30-May-14 09:10 PM GMT

Thank you Dave, Wurzel and Neil. 😊

Nearly there Wurzel, but much more to come first!

Best wishes,

Lee

Re: Lee Hurrell

by Lee Hurrell, 30-May-14 11:09 PM GMT

5th May 2014

I visited Hutchinson's Bank today as another Surrey reserve I had heard a lot about and as I was heading to Tunbridge Wells again for the evening. It's another chalk downland site with all that you would expect (and some things you wouldn't) but with much more scrub cover. It falls within Greater London, being near Croydon.



Hutchinson's Bank, Surrey, 5th May 2014



Hutchinson's Bank, Surrey, 5th May 2014

It was a little chilly at times and not that sunny but I still saw plenty. I was too early for any blues but this was made up for by this little chap, who landed in front of me and then posed nicely.



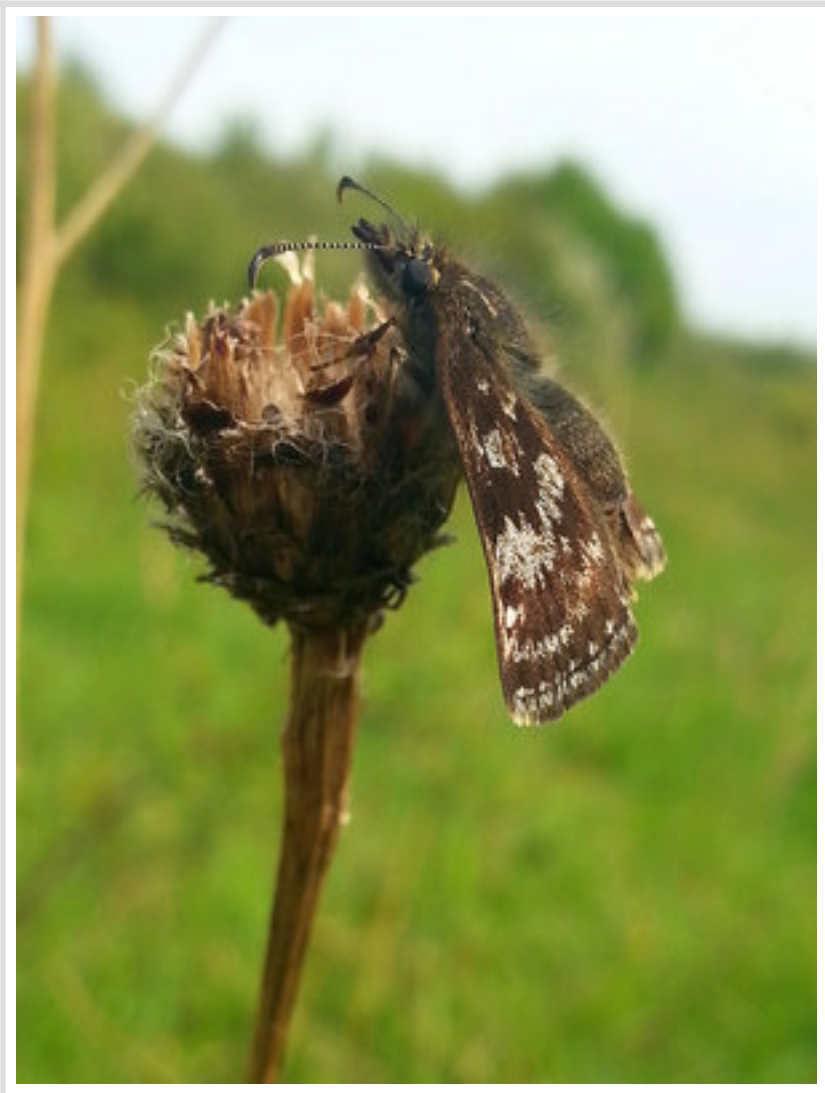
Green Hairstreak, Hutchinson's Bank, Surrey, 5th May 2014

Can anyone say which snake this is? I presume it's either grass or smooth but I missed the head as it slinked into the grass. Around 60cm long.



Unknown snake, Hutchinson's Bank, Surrey, 5th May 2014

I saw a couple of Grizzled Skippers but Dingy Skippers were more numerous. They are anything but dingy when fresh!



Dingy Skipper, Hutchinson's Bank, Surrey, 5th May 2014



Dingy Skipper, Hutchinson's Bank, Surrey, 5th May 2014



Dingy Skipper, Hutchinson's Bank, Surrey, 5th May 2014

Sightings: 12 Peacock, 1 Speckled Wood, 1 Large White, 2 Green Hairstreak, 2 Grizzled Skipper and 10 Dingy Skipper.

Later, at my friend's house in Tunbridge Wells, he has been clearing out his garden and has befriended a pair of Robins that are nesting there.



Robin, The Pantiles, Tunbridge Wells, Kent, 5th May 2014

Re: Lee Hurrell

by Wurzel, 31-May-14 07:49 PM GMT

I think I have an inkling of the things you wouldn't expect 😊 Great Greenstreak shot Lee and the Dingy is a cracker too 😊🏆

Have a goodun

Wurzel

Re: Lee Hurrell

by Lee Hurrell, 31-May-14 11:49 PM GMT

Thanks Wurzel. I was particularly pleased with the Green Hairstreak and the first Dingy shot!

Best wishes,

Lee

Re: Lee Hurrell

by Lee Hurrell, 01-Jun-14 01:23 AM GMT

6th May 2014

Being in Tunbridge Wells overnight meant I was halfway to Windover Hill and Abbots Wood...accompanied by my friend Michael, we set off south. The weather this time was much more like it and the first thing we saw in Abbots Wood was a glow worm larva.



Glow worm larva, Abbots Wood, East Sussex, 6th May 2014

We only saw one Pearl Bordered Fritillary in the end along with 1 Red Admiral, 1 Peacock, 1 Speckled Wood, 2 male Orange Tip, 8 Green-veined White, 1 male and 1 female Brimstone and 1 Speckled Yellow moth.



Pearl Bordered Fritillary, Abbots Wood, East Sussex, 6th May 2014



Pearl Bordered Fritillary, Abbots Wood, East Sussex, 6th May 2014

After a while, we set off for Windover Hill. Checking the car park and the chalk pit opposite yielded 3 male and 1 female Orange Tip, 2 Green-veined White and 5 Dingy Skipper, including this well marked individual.



Dingy Skipper, Windover Hill, East Sussex, 6th May 2014

Setting off up the hill, it was so windy I didn't go to right to the summit this time but took a different route back down. 1 female Wall and 7 Dingy Skipper were seen.

This really is one of my favourite places.



View looking east from Windover Hill, East Sussex, 6th May 2014



Wall, female, Windover Hill, East Sussex, 6th May 2014



Wall, female, Windover Hill, East Sussex, 6th May 2014



Wall, female, Windover Hill, East Sussex, 6th May 2014



Dingy Skipper, Windover Hill, East Sussex, 6th May 2014



View looking east from Windover Hill, East Sussex, 6th May 2014



Cowslips, Windover Hill, East Sussex, 6th May 2014

Re: Lee Hurrell

by Wurzel, 01-Jun-14 08:18 AM GMT

Great Wall shots Lee 😊 I'll have to look more carefully as I've never seen a Glow worm larvae before.

Have a goodun

Wurzel

Re: Lee Hurrell

by Lee Hurrell, 02-Jun-14 08:52 PM GMT

Thanks Wurzel 😊

Re: Lee Hurrell

by Maximus, 02-Jun-14 09:11 PM GMT

Lovely Wall shots Lee, not the easiest to get, nice Shots of East Sussex too, also nice to see what a Glow worm larva looks like 😊

Mike

Re: Lee Hurrell

by Lee Hurrell, 02-Jun-14 10:35 PM GMT

Thanks Mike 😊

I'm still surprised I got so close and that's twice for a Wall now...given I have to get right on top of anything to get a good shot with my phone.

That view alone is worth the drive, in my opinion – I love it.

Best wishes,

Lee

Re: Lee Hurrell

by Lee Hurrell, 09-Jun-14 11:31 PM GMT

7th May 2014

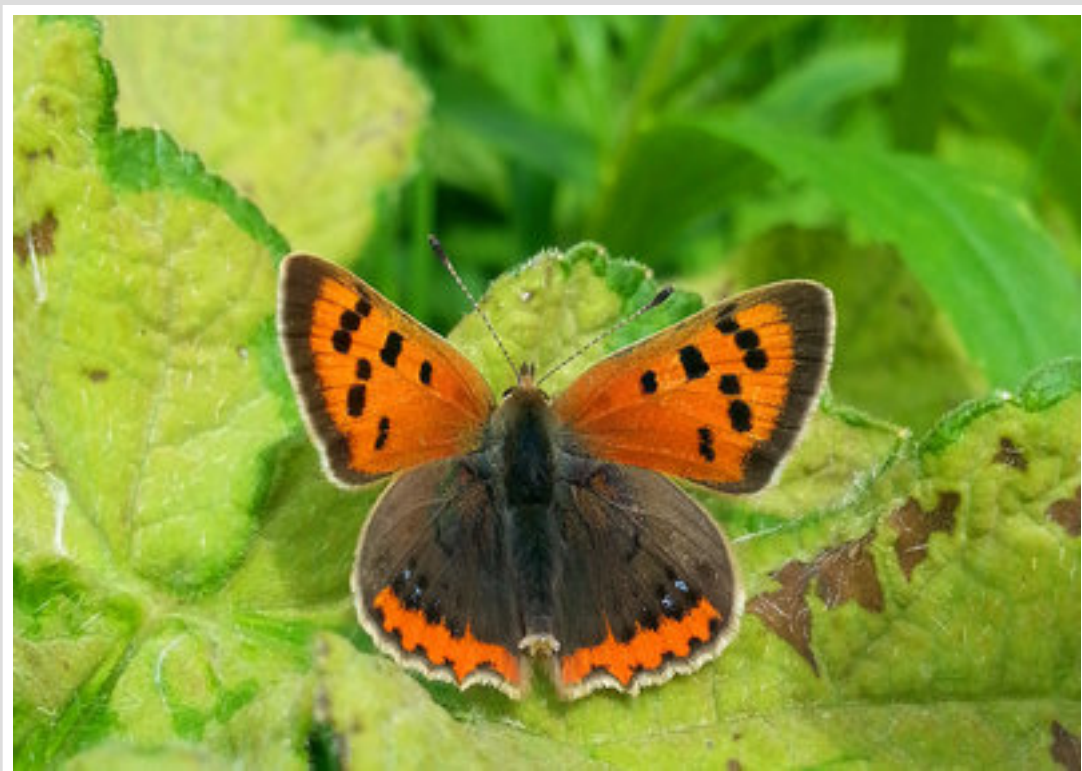
A gloomy day but with some brightness, so I headed over to Warren Farm in Ewell to see if any more Small Coppers had emerged. They had. 😊

I saw three, but these were my only sightings in the hour I was there. Still, what a sight they were.



Small Copper, male, Warren Farm, Ewell, Surrey, 7th May 2014

Perhaps this male was freshly emerged, as he was flexing his, ahem, bits.



Small Copper, male, Warren Farm, Ewell, Surrey, 7th May 2014

Re: Lee Hurrell

by Wurzel, 10-Jun-14 12:00 AM GMT

Beautiful fresh Small Coppers Lee 😊 I was looking back at your mystery snake and I reckon it could be a Slow Worm as they can grow to up to 50cm and have a more uniform beige appearance 😊

Have a goodun

Wurzel

Re: Lee Hurrell

by Willow, 10-Jun-14 12:25 PM GMT

Hi Lee,

I'll go along with Wurz on the 'snake' 😊 Super **Small Copper** images, they really are jewels when fresh.

Bill 😊

"When in doubt...venture out"

Re: Lee Hurrell

by Lee Hurrell, 20-Jun-14 10:40 PM GMT

Thank you Wurz and Bill! 😊

Re: Lee Hurrell

by Lee Hurrell, 23-Jun-14 10:55 PM GMT

16th May 2014 – Denbies Part One

After seeing reports from Susie that Adonis Blue, Common Blue, Brown Argus and Small Heath were out and finishing early on a Friday, I had to visit after work, arriving at 18.00. I spent an hour and a half on site, walking parts that I hadn't on many previous visits; this really is a such a superb site.

There wasn't a great deal flying, most things seemed to have bedded down but eventually the flash of brilliant blue led me to a male Adonis Blue. I found several and spent some time just watching them. Common Blue were also about in good numbers along with Small Heath, which I couldn't get near to. They seem to have a sixth sense! A single Grizzled Skipper, a handful of Dingy Skipper and an odd looking Brown Argus rounded off a lovely evening.

With his forewings tucked away, the Brown Argus looked normal.



Brown Argus, male, Denbies Hillside, Surrey, 16th May 2014

But when his wings popped up, it revealed a elongated spot, which made a square shape on the underside.

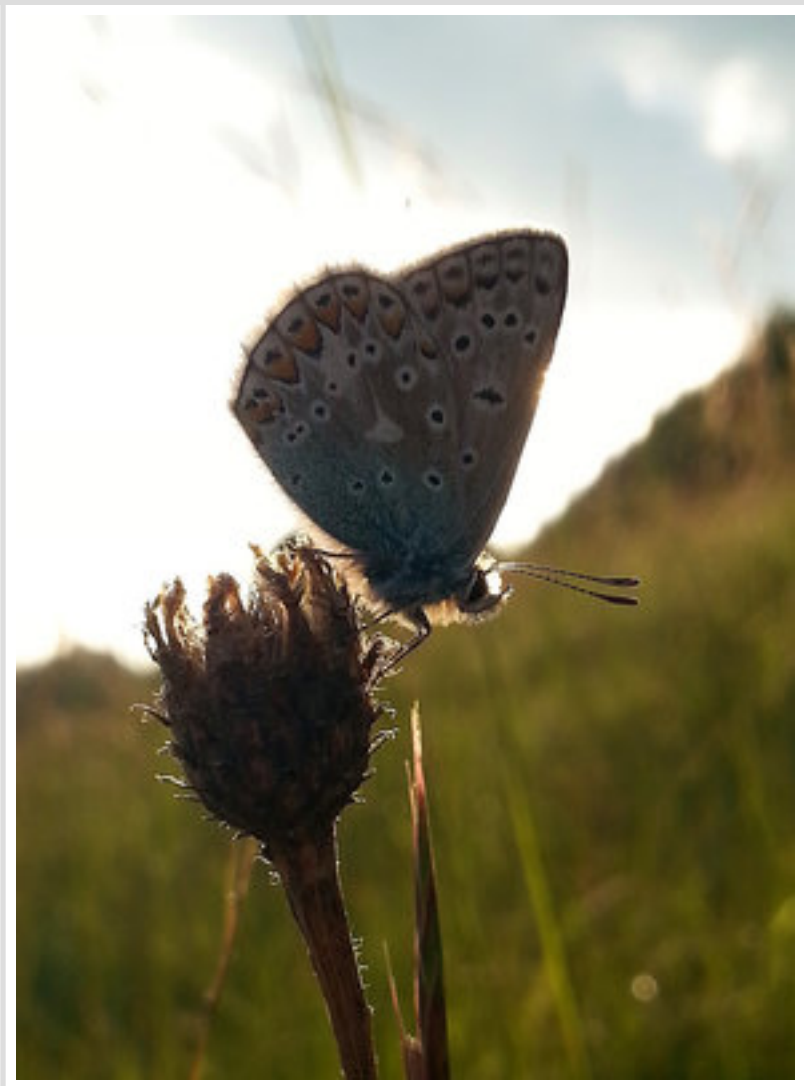


Brown Argus, male, Denbies Hillside, Surrey, 16th May 2014

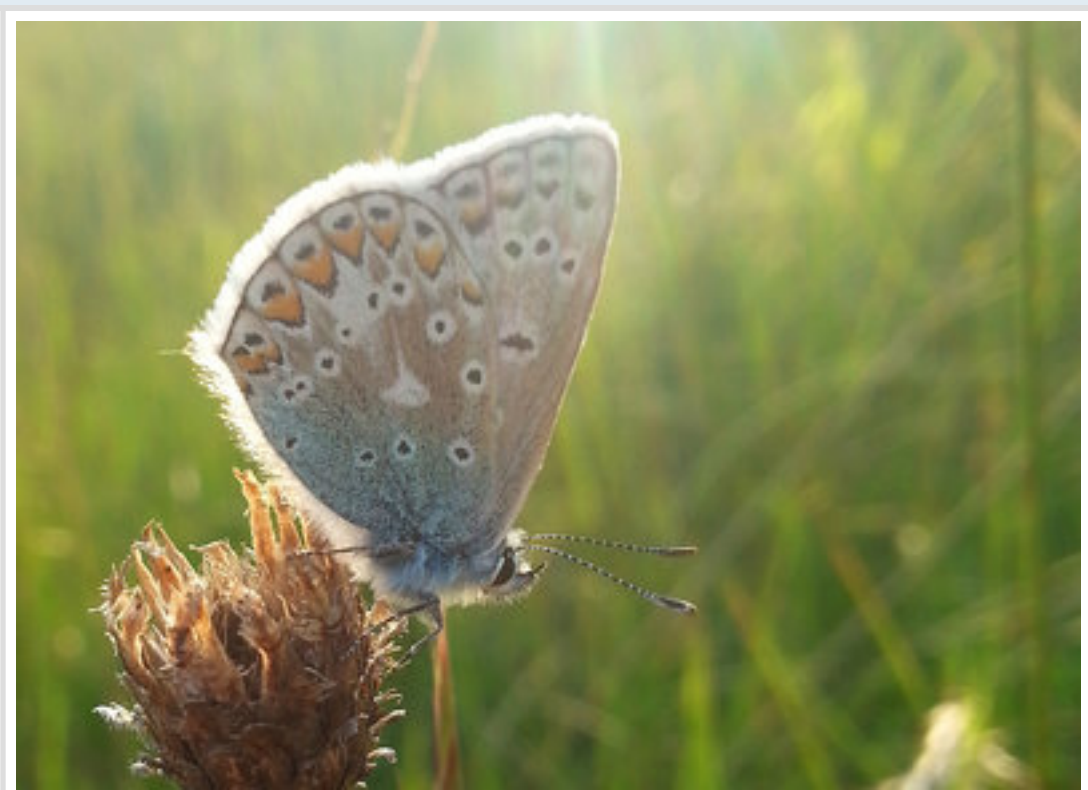
Both sides were the same.



Brown Argus, male, Denbies Hillside, Surrey, 16th May 2014



Common Blue, male, Denbies Hillside, Surrey, 16th May 2014



Common Blue, male, Denbies Hillside, Surrey, 16th May 2014

However, apart from the view, which never fails to take my breath away, the star of the show tonight were Adonis Blues. There is just *something* about the light at sunset. Gets me every time.



Adonis Blue, male, Denbies Hillside, Surrey, 16th May 2014



Adonis Blue, male, Denbies Hillside, Surrey, 16th May 2014



Adonis Blue, male, Denbies Hillside, Surrey, 16th May 2014



Adonis Blue, male, Denbies Hillside, Surrey, 16th May 2014



Adonis Blue, male, Denbies Hillside, Surrey, 16th May 2014

Just part of that stunning view.



Sunset view from Denbies Hillside, Surrey, 16th May 2014

Sightings: 10 Adonis Blue, 12 Common Blue, 1 Brown Argus, 10 Small Heath, 1 Grizzled Skipper, 5 Dingy Skipper.

Re: Lee Hurrell

by Wurzel, 23-Jun-14 11:02 PM GMT

Lovely atmospheric shots Lee, gorgeous evening light and butterflies to match 😊 Great ab as well 😊

Have a goodun

Wurzel

Re: Lee Hurrell

by Willow, 25-Jun-14 08:43 PM GMT

I agree wholeheartedly with Wurz on the sense of atmosphere, a quality that's often hard to convey...nice one Lee 😊

Bill 😊

"When in doubt...venture out"