

Brian Anderson

by Brian Anderson, 16-Aug-11 03:40 AM GMT

I have just joined the forum, having been a keen birder for a couple of years and always taken a keen interest in nature of any kind I have now discovered how interesting the various butterflies can be. This interest was born from watching them visit a budliea bush in my garden. I started counting the variety that visited and then took an interest in how many different species we get visit this island...and now i'm hooked. I go birding now and find myself looking as much for the butterflies as I do the birds. I have to say it's added a new dimension to the trips for me and i've started building a nice little list of species seen. (Sadly i think i missed the business end of the butterfly year so will have to start over next spring with the agenda to see as many as I can. I took a trip this weekend to Vange marsh and have attached a few pictures from the visit along with a southern hawker that emerged from my garden pong yesterday. I've spent a couple of days at Devils Dyke this month and a day at Aston Rowant and built a little list of species thus far that reads... COMMON, SMALL AND CHALKHILL BLUE. MEADOW BROWN, GATEKEEPER, SMALL, ESSEX AND SILVER SPOTTER SKIPPERS, SMALL AND LARGE WHITE, RED ADMIRAL, PEACOCK, SMALL TORTOISEHELL, SMALL HEATH, BRIMSTONE, PURPLE HAIR STREAKSPECKLED WOOD.BROWN ARGUS The list may not be very exciting to those of you that have been doing this a while but I didn't even know half of these existed a month ago. I'm enjoying catching them on film too.....and have attached a few of my pics.



I think this is a common blue..saw 2 at Vange



Small Heath



Small Skipper i think.....loads of these down at Vange Marsh



Southern Hawker in the garden...nice to have these guys visit the garden



Wasp Spider at Vange....a real brute of a spider

Re: Brians diary page

by Brian Anderson, 16-Aug-11 04:02 AM GMT

I forgot..Comma and Small Copper

Probably one or two more that will come back to me later 😊

Re: Brians diary page

by ChrisC, 16-Aug-11 04:06 AM GMT

welcome to the diarists Brian. if you're not careful it'll be moths next 😊

look forward to more entries.

Chris

Re: Brians diary page

by Brian Anderson, 16-Aug-11 04:12 AM GMT

Tell me about it Chris...already i'm collecting photos of the ones i see and giving the missus the task of trying to ID them.....still it keeps me out of trouble.

Re: Brians diary page

by Lee Hurrell, 16-Aug-11 04:39 AM GMT

It looks like you're off to a flying start, Brian!

Welcome to the forums.

Best wishes,

Lee

Re: Brians diary page

by Brian Anderson, 21-Aug-11 03:22 AM GMT

Been to the bird fair at Rutland today. Picked up a nice wall chart for the wife (common garden butterflies) from the conservation stand and visited Richard Lewingtons stand where i purchased a signed copy of his Butterflies guide which he's illustrated so well. (He paints them better than the real thing)

Also picked up a collins bird guide and had that signed by the artist (Killian Mullarney) Other faces I stoped to chat with..Simon King, Simon Barnes, Jonathan Scott (big cat diary) lot's of other TV wildlife guys about.

Great to see the ringing tent and all the birds they netted and rung today. Beer tent was a welcome stop too £3.50 for a beer is not too bad but £4.30 is stretching it a bit for a small burger! (why do they need to do that to you after they've charged you £12.50 to walk round).

5 Osprey seen from the main road on the way home too but only a few large whites seen as far as the butterlies went.

All in all a good day out and i'll be going back for more next year.

Re: Brians diary page

by Brian Anderson, 22-Aug-11 04:37 AM GMT

Went down to Coulsdon today, lovely meadow and i'm sure at the right time of year it's alive with a good variety of butterflies. My motivation for the trip was to try to catch up with a Hoopoe (A bird thta has given me the slip thus far) I arrived at 6.30am and walked the area until 10.30am with no sign of the bird despite locals telling me it was there yesterday. Good views of Lesser Whitethroat though which is always nice and 3 ring necked parakeets flying over was also good to see> (and hear)

As for the butterflies: Loads of small heath and meadow browns, a single small copper and common blue along with a few large whites.

I'll go back next year a little earlier in the season and my search for the Hoopoe continues. (I've dipped on NINE now)

Saw an extremely large snail on the downs too and i've no idea what it was...see the attached picture. (It was about 50mm tall...2 inches in old money)



Small Copper



Meadow Brown



Edible Snail



Small Heath

Re: Brians diary page

by Gibster, 22-Aug-11 05:20 AM GMT

Hiya Brian,

your snail is an Edible (aka Roman) Snail. Never tried one, so can't really comment! (Actually I think they're protected?) Shame about the Hoopoe though. Missed NINE??? They can be surprisingly elusive, especially if just sitting low in the grass. Check the edges of the short-cropped pathways through the longer grasses. Dog walkers seem to get quite close – so if you've got one, bring it along next time (dog that is, not the walker!) 😊

Fingers crossed it'll be tenth time lucky 🙄

Gibster.

Re: Brians diary page

by Brian Anderson, 23-Aug-11 04:34 AM GMT

Here's hoping Gibster! and as for the snail...i think i needed protecting from it. Nice to know what it is though, thanks. No butterflies today but a quick stop at Abberton to see the Spoonbills was a bonus.

I'm left wondering what Butterfly will have me running around like the Hoopoe....i guess time will tell 😊

Re: Brians diary page

by Brian Anderson, 24-Aug-11 01:04 AM GMT

Rain (and man flu) stopped play today 😞

Re: Brians diary page

by Brian Anderson, 28-Aug-11 02:41 AM GMT

Had an early morning trip down to Dungeness today...sitting on the beach at 6am watching Arctic Skuas, Black Terns, Little Gulls, Sandwich Terns, Gannets etc fly by. Quick walk around the moat at the observatory revealed a few warblers but very quiet. Butterfly count was a little better with Painted Lady, L & S whites, Small Copper all in the moat. Moved on to Cheriton Hill where I had loads of Blues (small and what i believe to be Adonis perhaps somebody would be kind enough to let me know from the picture below), loads more whites, plenty of meadow brown and small heaths along with a couple of speckled wood and a couple of small tortoiseshells.

came home to find a red admiral in the garden so not a bad count today.

Got stuck on the M20 coming back which was a drag but didn't spoil what was a good morning in Kent.



Painted Lady



Small Copper



Small tortoiseshell



Adonis Blue



Adonis Blue

Re: Brians diary page

by Lee Hurrell, 28-Aug-11 02:47 AM GMT

Hi Brian,

Lovely photos – definitely 2 male Adonis Blues.

Cheers

Lee

Re: Brians diary page

by Brian Anderson, 28-Aug-11 05:44 AM GMT

Thanks Lee, i'll put a tick against them in my little bookthought they must have been as they were so bright. Contemplating another trip tomorrow but not sure where i'll be heading!
Thanks again for confirming the Adonis's for me (Or should that be Adoni?) 😊

Re: Brians diary page

by Brian Anderson, 29-Aug-11 12:14 AM GMT

Another early birding trip..down to Cliffe Pools (Kent) first thing and it was freezing....well really cold anyway. Good birding with Greenshank/Redshank/Ruff/Avocet etc all showing well. Only caught a few whites/small heath and red admiral there.(Also took the picture below of what i think is a gatekeeper but it was tiny and at the time looked like and behaved like a small heath)
Moved on to Tilbury Fort and caught a few Dunlin and ringed plover there with a single wheatear. (Not great timing today as the tide was just about in when I arrived) As for butterflies I picked up more whites, small heaths and red admirals along with the single skipper pictured which i'm guessing is a small.
Rain stopped play again....Still i'm told September is the new August and i have two weeks off so here's to getting a little sun sometime soon.



Small Skipper i think...put me right guys if i'm wrong



Small Heath Tilbury



Think this is a very small gatekeeper



unknown Caterpillar



Red Admiral at Cliffe

Re: Brians diary page

by Lee Hurrell, 29-Aug-11 01:07 AM GMT

Hi Brian,

Red Admirals at this time of year are a real highlight aren't they?

Certainly a Gatekeeper and I *think* the Skipper is a female Small. I can't see any trace of black on the underside of the antennae that would suggest Essex, but I could be wrong.

Cheers

Lee

Re: Brians diary page

by Brian Anderson, 29-Aug-11 02:56 AM GMT

Thanks Lee.

thought it was a gatekeeper but it was tiny and that had me doubting myself.

Re: Brians diary page

by Brian Anderson, 03-Sep-11 06:38 AM GMT

Brief stop at Fen Drayton today while in the area....first vist here but i'll go back.

Hundreds of dragon fly /darters etc on the wing today.

As for butterflies only Comma, Whites, Speckled Wood, Red Admiral and a single small heath. Watched as a pair of Bull finch took a bath in a puddle close by too.

Highlight of the day a first on my garden bird list....Ring Neck Parakeet.

Small group flew over this morning followed by a larger noisier group a little later..takes my garden list to 58! (Happy Days...don't get new birds on the garden list often so got to be happy with these, hope they'll drop in at some point to feed.) 😊 I'd be happy for anybody to put a name to the two dragon flies...i'm a lot happier with bird ID than i am these but have to say i'm enjoying watching them just as much.



Re: Brians diary page

by Gibster, 03-Sep-11 07:34 AM GMT

I'd go with Common Darter for both pics.

And you wouldn't be so keen for the Para-rats to drop into your garden if you had as many there as I do here, lol!!!

Cheers,

Gibster.

Re: Brians diary page

by Brian Anderson, 03-Sep-11 04:40 PM GMT

I can see that Gibster having worked around that area and had the pleasure of the constant noise they make. Still nice to get another garden tick tho...It got me thinking of a garden list on the butterfly front which doesn't read so well...Comma, Peacock, Red Admiral, Gatekeeper, Small White, Large White, Small Tortoiseshell and Painted Lady...making a total of 8. (Still now i know what i'm looking for i might find a few more? up to 2 months ago i didn't even know we had "little"ones like small heath and skipper etc...i would have called them moths and moved on)

Looking forward to next spring and a full season with my camera over the shoulder birding and the appreciation of the butterflies around has given my birding another dimension i didn't see coming until i bumped into a guy in a hide at Minsmere who was sharing his excitement at having found a purple emperor that morning. (And now i'm hooked)

Re: Brians diary page

by ChrisC, 03-Sep-11 05:37 PM GMT

your walks get longer in duration and yet shorter distance wise, so be warned 😊

also do you have any other pictures of the caterpillar? closest i can get so far (if it is a single stripe down the back) is Star-wort *Cucullia asteris*

Chris

Re: Brians diary page

by Brian Anderson, 04-Sep-11 01:06 AM GMT

No Chris, I only took the one pic of the caterpillar..think it was a single line down the back tho....i've checked a few sites but had no joy seeing anything like it..i'll look up your call tho...and yes the walks do take longer...but i suppose as winter draws in i'll be getting quicker again.

This is a good time of year this for birding even if the butterflies are getting harder to find.

Day at home today but still found time to spot a few flying around the garden enjoying the bright skies. (red admirals and whites) Oh and a vey large moth that flew over without landing ...sort of large white size and dark in colour.....no idea what it was tho.

Re: Brians diary page

by Brian Anderson, 05-Sep-11 01:33 AM GMT

Short trip to Cliffe Pooles in Kent today with Curlew Sandpiper on the agenda..found 13 of the little fellas early doors. Butterflies were hard to come by today..a few whites, red admiral and a single small heath but very dissapointing....did see one in flight across the pools at Tilbury which was very yellow but it never settled to ID it..could have just been a yellow ish white?. or that elusive clouded yellow. (i'll never know)

😊 Did pick up yellow legged gull at Tilbury though so worth the trip.

(Other birds seen: Avocet, Ruff, Greenshank, Redshank, Spotted redshank, Dunlin, Ringed Plover, Bar and black wits etc etc)

Re: Brians diary page

by David M, 05-Sep-11 01:58 AM GMT

"Brian Anderson" wrote:

did see one in flight across the pools at Tilbury which was very yellow but it never settled to ID it..could have just been a yellow ish white?. or that elusive clouded yellow. (i'll never know)

Orange would be the first colour to mind if you saw a Clouded Yellow at a distance. They're a far, far deeper colour than male Brimstones.

Re: Brians diary page

by Lee Hurrell, 05-Sep-11 03:54 AM GMT

I'd call it mustard yellow.

Cheers

Lee

Re: Brians diary page

by Brian Anderson, 05-Sep-11 03:42 PM GMT

Yep, wishful thinking i guess.....i think i saw clouded yellow a couple of years back whilst birding along the sea wall at Brightlinsea but at that point i had no idea/appreciation for what i was looking at.....so if I stumbled across them once I'm sure i can again....here's hoping I have the camera with me next time.

thanks for your continued tips guys

Re: Brians diary page

by MikeOxon, 05-Sep-11 08:26 PM GMT

"David M" wrote:

They're a far, far deeper colour than male Brimstones.

Just one caveat for you, Brian – there's also the *helice* form of the female Clouded Yellow, which is very pale! See below:



helice form - Tyneham, Dorset - Aug.96

Mike

Re: Brians diary page

by Brian Anderson, 06-Sep-11 02:30 AM GMT

Thanks for that, i can see these are going to bring similar challenges as some of the bird groups.....bring it on!

TWO WEEKS OFF NOW

Refurb work to do on my sons house but i'm going to find some time for myself to get out with the camera. Watch this space!

Re: Brians diary page

by Gibster, 06-Sep-11 02:41 AM GMT

"Brian Anderson" wrote:

i can see these are going to bring similar challenges as some of the bird groups.....bring it on!

Ha, and you thought Acro's and immature gulls were fun...female blues, flying whites, canopy height hairstreaks...just wait till you get into moths!!!! 😄

Re: Brians diary page

by David M, 06-Sep-11 03:00 AM GMT

"MikeOxon" wrote:

"David M" wrote:

They're a far, far deeper colour than male Brimstones.

Just one caveat for you, Brian - there's also the *helice* form of the female Clouded Yellow, which is very pale!

Mike

Very true, Mike.

Anyone who spots one of those in this country passes 'GO' ten times and wins 2 hotels on Mayfair!

Re: Brians diary page

by Gibster, 06-Sep-11 03:59 AM GMT

I'm probably talking twaddle...but that pic of *helice* Clouded Yellow has markings/wing shape very much like Pale Clouded Yellow...any thoughts either way anybody?

Gibster.

Re: Brians diary page

by Neil Hulme, 06-Sep-11 04:07 AM GMT

Hi Gibster,

You can see through the forewing that the thick black margin (continuation of black apex area) runs much of the way down the wing margin..... which means it's *helice*. In PCY and BCY this dark margin rapidly thins away from the apex.

Neil

Re: Brians diary page

by Gibster, 07-Sep-11 02:50 AM GMT

So it does. At least my level of twaddle is up to scratch, if not my butterfly ID!!! 🙄

Re: Brians diary page

by Brian Anderson, 07-Sep-11 04:32 AM GMT

Knee deep in bricks and associated dust....Flash floods whilst we're patching up the roof following a chimney coming down.....And yes i'd rather be walking with my camera!

I have to say this site is such an education.....i'm learning daily about things i'd not heard off....."pale clouded yellow, helice!" i think i'm going to have to push the delete button to make room in the brain for this stuff.

Thanks for all the advise guys...i'm sure it will pay off one day.

Re: Brians diary page

by Brian Anderson, 10-Sep-11 03:33 PM GMT

another day on the refurbishment Friday, pulling down the old ceiling and it has to be the dirtiest job imaginable!....50 years of dust all coming down on me!.....i must be mad giving up my holiday to do this for my son when i could be walking the coast and all the fresh air that brings.

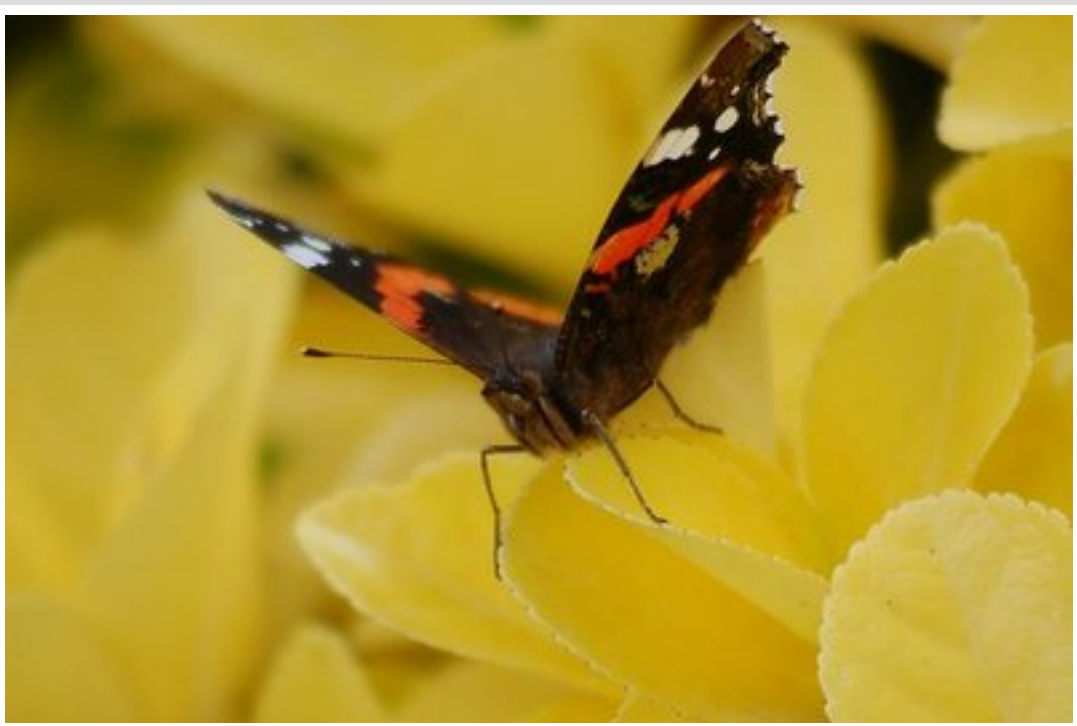
Whilst pulling down the ceiling i found the wasp nest pictures below (well acually my son found it and took a few hits for his trouble.

During a rare break for coffee i also noticed a lovely red admiral in the garden so grabbed the camera for a quick pic.

Off to Norfolk Sunday for a couple of days...here's hoping!



Wasp nest



Red Admiral

Wryneck

by Brian Anderson, 11-Sep-11 03:27 AM GMT

Short Essex trip today to see if I could catch a local Wryneck, which i did.

picked up a little pic of it (a record shot and a first for the year) and on the walk back found a sleeping dragonfly. (ID welcome?)

Early start tomorrow up to Titchwell. (Planned the trip for a while but now it's this close i can't help hoping the little bittern hangs about for another day)



Wryneck



Dragon fly

Re: Brians diary page

by essexbuzzard, 11-Sep-11 05:49 AM GMT

Hi Brian.

The dragonfly in your picture is a male Migrant Hawker. This is often the last of the larger dragonflies to be seen in autumn.

Love the Wryneck pic-i've never seen one in the county.

Regards, Mark.

Titchwell

by Brian Anderson, 13-Sep-11 07:32 PM GMT

Thanks for that.....saw loads of the same Dragon flies whilst at Titchwell on Sunday. Caught up with a rarity too as the LITTLE Bittern stayed and waited for me. (Count of 103 birds for the day, always nice to break the ton) Really windy up there so the only butterfly seen was a large white....treated to a new one for the garden at home this morning though as a speckled wood drifted in and out sitting a while but not long enough for me to grab a camera.

Good trip to Titchwell, Cley and Sheringham.....really close good views of Curlew Sandpiper, couple of little stint, ten Spoonbill...watched a Peregrine take a Redshank and within ten minutes of that counted, Merlin, Kestrel, Sprawk, Marsh Harrier and Hobby and when added to the Buzzard seen on the way in made for a nice raptor count.

Strange to see a Black Swan come in off the see too at Sheringham too.

Dipped out on the KGV Sabines gull...ouch (only 5 miles from home).

Dungeness

by Brian Anderson, 16-Sep-11 05:16 AM GMT

Trip to Dungeness today. Missed the long tailed skua but did find a Greater Flamingo (i'll let the experts decide if it flew over on the recent high winds(if Cranes and Spoonbills can then i suppose it'll not be long before Flamingos do too) or has escaped from some collection somewhere)

Lot's of birds getting ready for the big off down there...Wheatears, Warblers. swallows and martins galore!

As for butterflies two small coppers, a common blue and lot's of whites down there. Got home and the speckled wood was in the garden again with a passing red admiral and more whites abound.

Included a couple of pics of Dungeness as it's one of the strangest places with the random collections in everybodys garden etc.



Dungeness



Dungeness



Dungeness



Speckled Wood in the garden



Common Blue



Small Copper

Burgess Hill

by Brian Anderson, 18-Sep-11 06:21 AM GMT

Boxhill, Burgess Hill and Brighton run on Friday, Peacock, Lot's of Whites, 2 Small Coppers, 2 meadow browns and my first Wall.

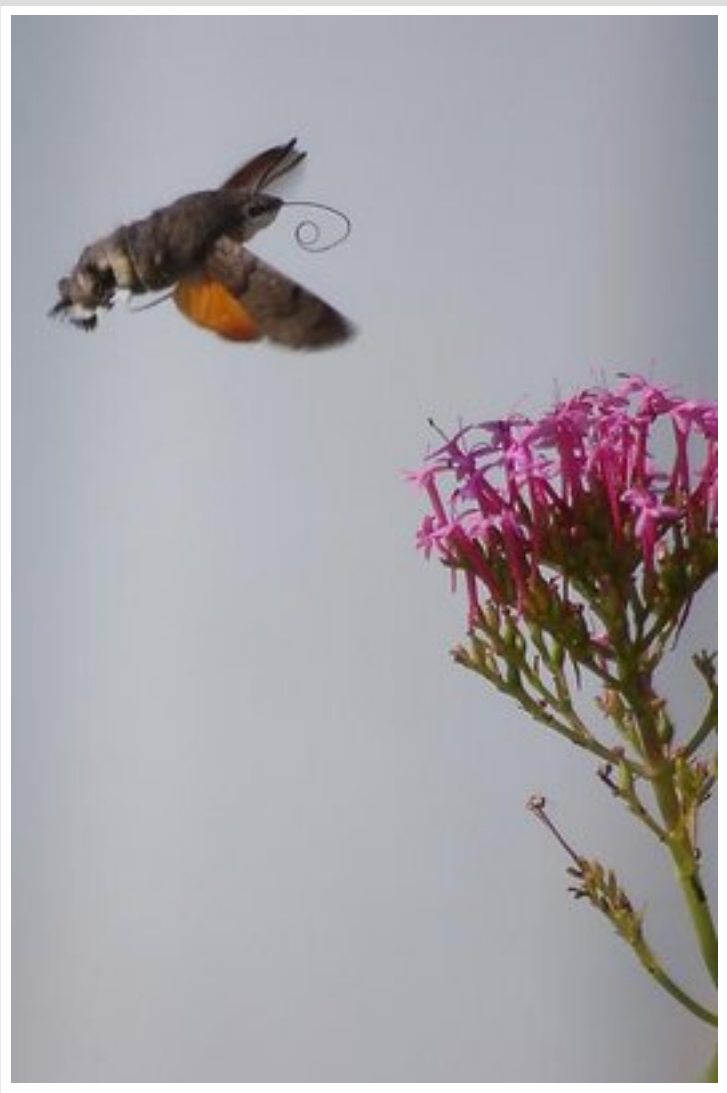
Today a quick trip to Colne Point to pick up a lifer....Pallid Harrier! and a bonus Short eared owl too!....weather Friday was great..today couldn't have been wetter...got soaked waiting for the harrier to fly but it was worth it. 😊

Dungeness

by Brian Anderson, 25-Sep-11 02:19 AM GMT

Another trip this morning down to Dungeness. Few hours sea watch presented a balearic shearwater and a black throated diver along with a good few arctic skuas and a black turn. A walk round the observatory provided good views of 3 black redstart and we found a robin trapped in a net which was duly removed by the warden once reported. A pit stop for coffee and a bacon roll was followed by a search for Rose Coloured Starling in which we failed but whilst sitting outside the Britannia I observed Small and Large Whites, Red Admirals, Painted Ladies, Small Heaths and a Peacock. Of note was several Humming bird hawkmoths feeding in the garden opposite the pub. I managed a couple of pics but they are a little difficult to lock on. On the way out we had good views of Black necked grebe on ARC pit and 3 Marsh Harrier at close quarter.

A good at the office all round.



Hummingbird Hawk Moth



Hummingbird Hawk Moth

Frinton

by Brian Anderson, 26-Sep-11 01:46 AM GMT

Took the wife and dog to Frinton today...The Red Backed Shrike showed well and allowed a record shot. The wife now thinks birding is easy, you just turn up take a short walk in the sun and the the bird sits in the open twenty feet away for you to see it. (She hasn't eperienced the 6mile walk to Blakeny point in the rain yet!) Nice day in good weather and the dog loved the run in the sea as she always does. Despite the good weather we only had a few whites flying which was dissapointing but with a good week forecast i'll have to see if i can get out and do what i enjoy...Walking and looking at what's there to be seen and stick to my motto...."if you get out you'll see more than if you don't"



Red Backed Shrike

Rochester

by Brian Anderson, 01-Oct-11 11:16 PM GMT

trip to Rochester this morning. Found a lovely spot to walk the dog which looked perfect for butterflies (chalk hill full of wild flowers and berry bushes) but not a single butterfly about between 10 and 10.30am.

Moved on to Elmley for a quick Buff Breasted Sandpiper....be rude not to while i was so close. Little more butterfly activity here with loads of whites and a single blue (too far away to ID) Lots of hawkers about.

and really hot!...just seen report of a semipalmated sandpiper in Essex..now can i slip out again? 😊

East Tilbury

by Brian Anderson, 02-Oct-11 11:34 PM GMT

Back to Elmley early doors and no sign of the Buff Breasted sandpiper but the place was alive with small whites, red admirals and a couple of small coppers. Moved up to East Tilbury as the tide went out and managed to find the Semi Palmated sandpiper with a little help from the guy that find it yesterday. (Needed him to pick it out from the various little stints that were causing ID issues amongst the small crows)Lot's more whites and red admirals about and what looked liked a couple of walls mobile around the water tower.

Weather is great but it's put the butterflies on the wing and finding anything sitting still has been difficult over the last couple of days.

But two lifers on the bird front this weekend so who's complaining.....Hoopoe just reported within an hour (now can i get away from the BBQ?) 😊

Speckled Crimson

by Brian Anderson, 17-Oct-11 05:25 AM GMT

Trip to Dunwich Heath on Saturday looking for a Shrike that had been seen on the Friday...no joy for me and the other thirty odd birders that turned up looking for it at 7am. But i did get to see the Speckled Crimson moth that was trapped the night before..very smart looking thing....a short walk along the shore revealed two shorte eared owls on the beach along with a small copper and a couple of red admirals.

Good views on the heat of Dartford warblers and a yellow browed warbler showed briefly too....no sign of the red flanked bluetail reported since Thursday but not a bad days work all in all...onwards and upwards! 😊