

CFB

by CFB, 18-May-14 01:10 PM GMT

Yesterday along the Piste de Darbousson I encountered my first Spotted Fritillary of the year, a female. There was also a male not far away, but he didn't seem to want to be photographed.



Pearly Heaths were being particularly helpful. Even if they flew away now and then, they tended to return to the same Cistus bush.



I only saw one somewhat camouflaged Spanish Festoon. This was at my primary Festoon site, where I have never seen any *Aristolochia* plants, its larval host-plant. But at my secondary site, there are plenty of *Aristolochia* but fewer Festoons.



There were several Speckled Woods, a few Wall Browns, a couple of Glanville Fritillaries, a Scarce Swallowtail and a few Provence Chalkhill Blues. Today in the Parc de la Brague, I found a fresh-looking presumably male Spotted Fritillary.



Once again there were some friendly Pearly Heaths. This one seems to have a forewing slightly bent over.



Also seen: my first Knapweed Fritillary of the year, a Scarce Swallowtail, Speckled Woods, Wall Browns, Glanville Fritillaries and a few Provence Chalkhill Blues.

--
Colin

Re: CFB

by Chris Jackson, 18-May-14 03:23 PM GMT

Hi Colin,
Its refreshing to see your Pearly Heath photos, mainly because PHs don't seem to make it as far west as Marseilles, the closest we get to here is Dusky Heath which has just come out now.
I agree that your 'male' Spotted Fritillary is a male, they have been out in Marseilles for a good month now. I see a lot more males than females for some reason.

I love the colouring of Spanish Festoons – you're lucky to have a regular spot, I think I'm too close to the coast.
Cheers, Chris

Re: CFB

by CFB, 18-May-14 04:57 PM GMT

Hello Chris,

The Dusky Heath is apparently plentiful in the Alpes-Maritimes as well, but further north and at higher altitudes than my patch 😞 .

--
Colin

Re: CFB

by David M, 18-May-14 07:39 PM GMT

Nice shots of male and female Spotted Fritillary.

This is one species that takes sexual dimorphism to its extreme.

Re: CFB

by CFB, 20-May-14 02:18 PM GMT

Yesterday it was cloudy, cool and very windy at times, with some rain. I didn't go out 😞 .

Today it started off being very cloudy, but by 10 a.m. the sun and the butterflies started coming out, and I was able to make up for yesterday by seeing five first-sightings of the year 😊 . These were all near the Pont des Dones on the way to Roquefort-les-Pins. This is where last year I managed to photograph a Black-veined White in the process of ovipositing. Today was very similar, with a Black-veined White clinging to the underside of a Hawthorn leaf, presumably ovipositing, though I didn't see any ova:



There were several other Black-veined Whites in the vicinity, including this male taking advantage of the numerous *Aphyllanthes monspeliensis* plants:



The surprise of the day was however a Chequered Blue, as I don't often see any of these, and have never seen them at this location:



There were several Heath Fritillaries for the first time:



And a Bath White:



Amongst species already seen this year was this beautiful Marsh Fritillary:



Also seen flying around were two Canadair aircraft on a forest fire-fighting mission:



--
Colin

Re: CFB

by David M, 20-May-14 06:04 PM GMT

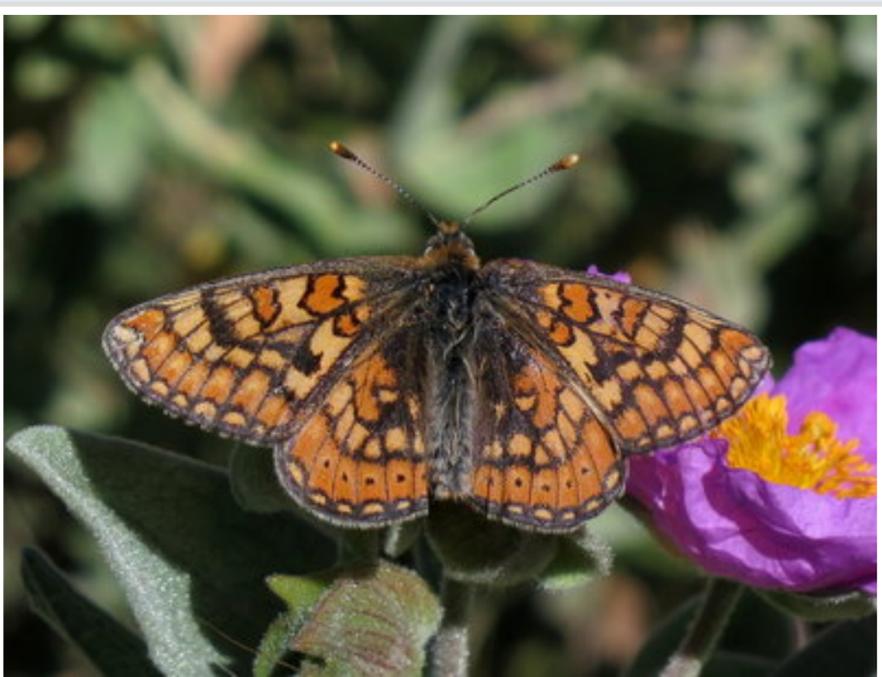
Amazing how different your Marsh Fritillaries are to ours.

Re: CFB

by CFB, 20-May-14 07:02 PM GMT

Yes David, I've just looked at the photos in the Species-Specific Albums, and I see what you mean.

Here's another one from exactly a year ago, which is markedly different from the one I posted this morning.



Colin

Re: CFB

by Chris Jackson, 20-May-14 07:43 PM GMT

Hi Colin,
I find that not many butterflies feed on Blue Grass Lily, such as your Black-veined White does.
I would love to see a Chequered Blue around my way 😊.
Chris

Re: CFB

by CFB, 22-May-14 02:13 PM GMT

Yesterday I went to Gagāi to see if there were any Chequered Blues flying, and to see the *Lilium pomponium*. I didn't see any Chequered Blues, and the lilies were well past their best. So here are two photos from last year instead!



This lily was photographed exactly a year ago:



This morning I walked along the Piste de Curnier where I saw my first Painted Lady of the year, and I saw another one later on. No photo unfortunately. But there were a couple of Knapweed Fritillaries:



and several Small Heaths:



Then I saw my first Five-spot Burnet of the year:



While I was still a few kilometres from my car, the sky started to rapidly darken, and the thunder that I had been hearing in the distance was getting ominously louder and nearer. So I put myself into overdrive and headed back. I almost made it in time, but it started to rain when I was 10 minutes from the car. But I avoided the heaviest rain and arrived home only slightly damp.

--

Colin

Re: CFB

by CFB, 23-May-14 06:54 PM GMT

Not much at all this morning. It was sunny but with big clouds obscuring the sun for long periods. There was a Swallowtail which flew past at great speed, several Western Dappled Whites,



and my first photo of the year of a Painted Lady:



And just for a change, here's a photo of a badger:



For nearly a year there was evidence that a badger was coming into our garden somehow or other, and causing damage. We found someone who had a badger trap, which we baited with cake, honey and apple. On the first night a large rat was caught by the trap. The second night the badger was caught. The owner of the trap came and collected it, and took it a long way away and released the badger. I would point out that the trap causes no damage at all to the badger who, once inside, treads on something which causes the door to shut behind it.

--
Colin

Re: CFB

by Chris Jackson, 24-May-14 08:11 AM GMT

Hi Colin

Your Five-spot Burnet and that Painted Lady seem to tie in with my sightings over the last couple of days. Yesterday I even saw 2 Clouded Yellows on the Island of Frioul, just off Marseilles, whereas I haven't seen any on the mainland for months. Cheers, Chris

Re: CFB

by CFB, 24-May-14 04:49 PM GMT

This morning it was sunny and warm with very little wind, so I hoped to see some new butterflies. I wasn't disappointed as along the Piste du Moulin de l'Ange I saw one Ilex Hairstreak and many Blue-spot Hairstreaks, both for the first time this year. I think the plant they are on is *Lotus dorycnium*.



Other species included Southern White Admiral, Painted Lady, Wall Brown, Speckled Wood, Meadow Brown, Wood White, Heath Fritillary, Spotted Fritillary, Holly Blue, Adonis Blue, Provence Chalkhill Blue and Pearly Heath.

Also it's the time of the year for my favourite orchid *Cephalanthera rubra* to be in flower:



Re: CFB

by David M, 24-May-14 05:00 PM GMT

Nice images of the Hairstreaks, Colin. You are making me envious on a **very** wet afternoon in south Wales. 😞

Re: CFB

by CFB, 24-May-14 05:56 PM GMT

"David M" wrote:

a **very** wet afternoon in south Wales. 😞

So that's why they shut the roof of the Millennium Stadium for Toulon v. Saracens which we are watching on the TV. It's the half-time at present and Toulon are winning. 😄😄😄

--
Colin

Re: CFB

by Chris Jackson, 25-May-14 08:33 AM GMT

Hi Colin and David,

I find that the Ilex (or False Ilex (I have a job differentiating them)) and the Blue-spot Hairstreak both appear at exactly the same time, and I always spot them together. Peculiar !

Cheers, Chris

Re: CFB

by CFB, 26-May-14 05:28 PM GMT

"cjackson" wrote:

I have a job differentiating them

Hello Chris,

Some time ago I compiled the following, probably from information here on the UKB site:

Satyrrium esculi (False Ilex Hairstreak) compared to S. ilicis (Ilex Hairstreak):

- the size of the orange/red spots is uniform as they approach the leading edge of the hindwing (whereas they typically get smaller on S. ilicis)
- the white line is finer and appears broken but more regular
- the orange markings are smaller, brighter and red (little hint of orange), clearly lined black internally but without any black on the outer site of the red spots
- the hindwing marginal white line is narrow or absent

Even so, I'm sure that there exist many specimens where it is difficult to differentiate between the two 😞 .

--
Colin

Re: CFB

by CFB, 26-May-14 05:52 PM GMT

All day yesterday it was overcast and I saw very few butterflies, and photographed none.

Today was fine and warm and sunny. I saw several Black-veined Whites, once again on *Aphyllanthes monspeliensis*:



There was a solitary, still very colourful, Spanish Festoon at my secondary Festoon site, but none at my primary site. Perhaps it is the end of the season for Spanish Festoons? In fact a quick look at my Festoon photos shows that I have never photographed any after the merry month of May.



Also seen were a late male Orange-tip and a latish male Cleopatra, a Southern White Admiral, several Heath Fritillaries and two Marsh Fritillaries. And to add a bit of variety, lots of *Anacamptis pyramidalis*:



--
Colin

Re: CFB

by Chris Jackson, 27-May-14 10:04 AM GMT

Thanks for your explanations Colin regarding *esculi* and *ilicis*. I can see your's is *ilicis*, and I think I tend to get *esculi* across in Marseilles. And wow ! your Orange Tip sighting is late – they finished over here a good 2 weeks back.
Cheers, Chris

Re: CFB

by Roger Gibbons, 27-May-14 10:52 AM GMT

I think it is *ilicis* on balance but it is not 100% typical.

There are some clues based on my observations on my *esculi* page.

Roger

Re: CFB

by CFB, 27-May-14 05:26 PM GMT

It was sunny and warm and dry again as I walked along the Piste de Peical this morning.

There were plenty of *Filipendula vulgaris* (Dropwort) plants waiting for the Twin-spot Fritillaries (Nacré de la filipendule in French), but I still haven't seen any this year. They seem to appear at the end of May or the beginning of June, so perhaps it's still a bit early.



I saw a very smart Spotted Fritillary which posed for me on three different plants, this one being a *Heiracium* of some sort.



There was also a solitary very small Small Copper:



Other species seen include Pearly and Small Heaths, Ilex and Blue-spot Hairstreaks, Heath Fritillaries, Common and Provence Chalkhill Blues, and some Speckled Woods.

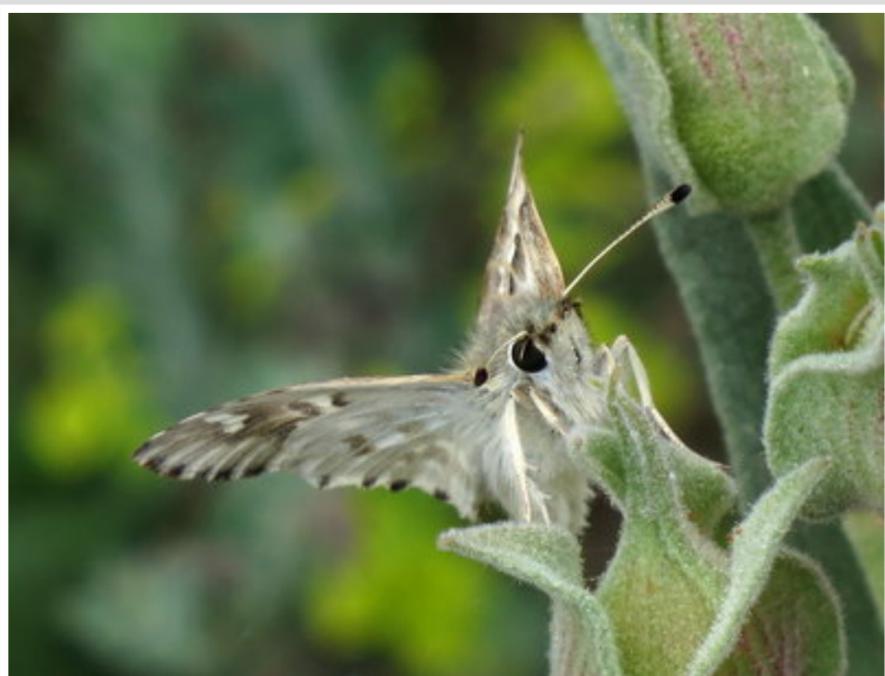
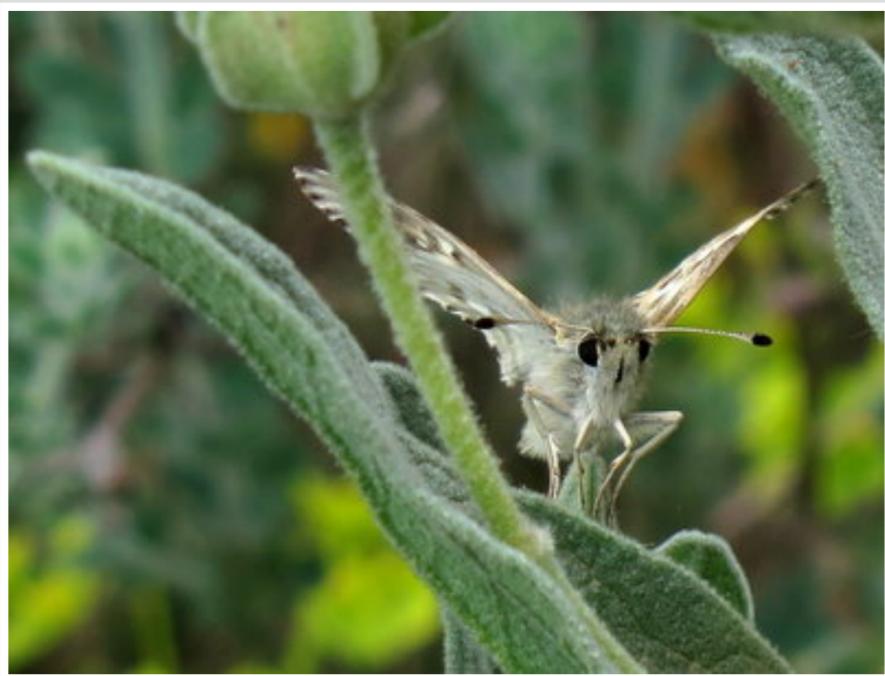
--
Colin

Re: CFB

by CFB, 28-May-14 02:31 PM GMT

This morning it was warm and sunny, but quite cloudy now and then as I strolled along the Piste du Collet de l'Espères.

I was delighted to find my first Marbled Skipper of the year. I had to follow it for a few minutes before it decided to settle down, and then I was able to take several photos of it. And ten minutes later when I came back, it was still there.





Further on there were many Adonis Blues and Provence Chalkhill Blues. This one is, I'm pretty sure, a female Adonis Blue:



On my way back to the car, there were several species enjoying *Centranthus ruber*, including a Swallowtail



and a Green-veined White:



Also seen were Large Whites, Knapweed and Heath Fritillaries, and Pearly Heaths.

--
Colin

Re: CFB

by David M, 28-May-14 03:29 PM GMT

That Marbled Skipper is positively glowing, Colin. Sadly, I've never seen a 'fresh' specimen but your image makes me determined to do so.

Re: CFB

by Chris Jackson, 29-May-14 08:46 AM GMT

Hi Colin and David,

Swallowtails are very thin on the ground (or in the air) around Marseilles so far this year, and the Adonis Blue is also proving elusive 😞 .

At least the weather is good for the moral at the moment 😊 .

Chris

Re: CFB

by CFB, 29-May-14 04:20 PM GMT

This morning it was sunny, but now (tea time 😊) it is cloudy with some thunder.

I went along the Piste du Collet de l'Espères again, hoping to see some more Marbled Skippers. I didn't, but I did find my first Marbled Fritillary of the year. It was among the brambles (of course) which prevented me from getting close, and it soon flew off up into the trees.



There were a few Blue-spot Hairstreaks around, but no Ilex Hairstreaks, and I still haven't seen a False Ilex Hairstreak this year.



I found a solitary Spanish Fescue, which turned out to be the same individual that I saw three days ago (see above) at exactly the same place.



And then I encountered a couple of Black-veined Whites indulging in frantic love-making 🤪 :



Among others also seen: two Scarce Swallowtails; Heath, Spotted, Glanville and Knapweed Fritillaries; Adonis and (many) Provence Chalkhill Blues; Pearly and Small Heaths; a Southern White Admiral.

--
Colin

Re: CFB

by Chris Jackson, 29-May-14 05:33 PM GMT

I can associate with the Blue-spot at this time Colin, and I know that there are Marbled Fritillary around, but they are lively creatures to photograph.
Chris

Re: CFB

by CFB, 30-May-14 02:21 PM GMT

I didn't manage to take many photos today as the butterflies were not being particularly helpful 😞.

I did however see my first Large Skippers of the year 😊 along the Piste de Peical. There were several of them at two different places. Here is a male:



There were several Knapweed Fritillaries:



And of course, many Provence Chalkhill Blues:



I also saw, amongst others, two Scarce Swallowtails flying together, a Southern White Admiral and some Blue-spot Hairstreaks.

--

Colin

Re: CFB

by Lee Hurrell, 30-May-14 09:17 PM GMT

Hi Colin,

I would say your male Small Skipper is in fact a Large Skipper.

I'm enjoying your reports!

Best wishes,

Lee

Re: CFB

by David M, 30-May-14 10:05 PM GMT

"Lee Hurrell" wrote:

I would say your male Small Skipper is in fact a Large Skipper.

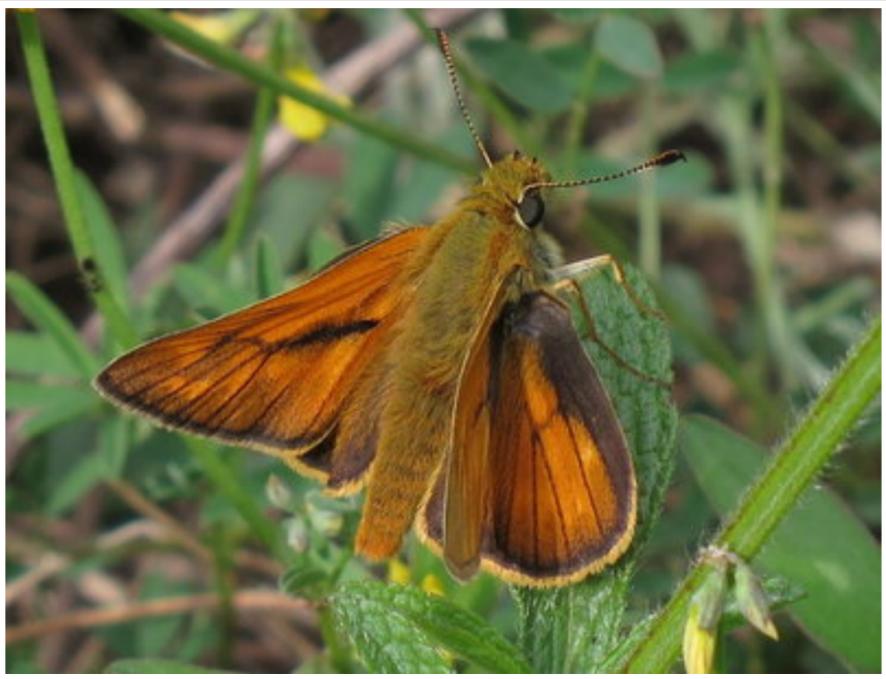
Absolutely. 100% male Large Skipper.

Re: CFB

by CFB, 31-May-14 09:58 AM GMT

Thanks Lee and David for the correction. I'll get them right one of these days.

This Large Skipper was from this morning:



Although it was quite cloudy with some wind, there was a surprising number of butterflies around, in particular Adonis and Provence Chalkhill Blues, Pearly and Small Heaths, and a few Spotted Fritillaries.

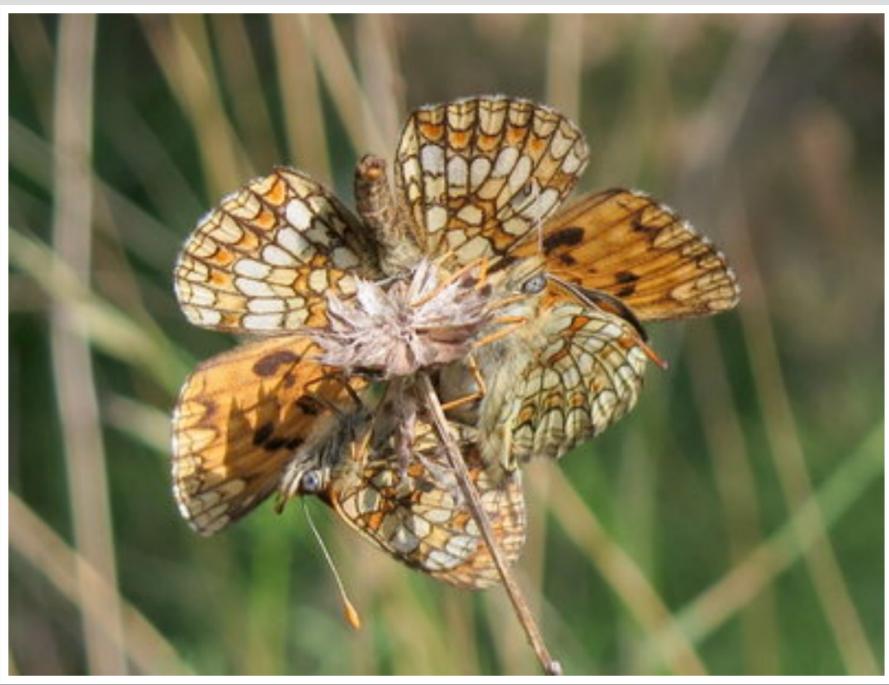
--

Colin

Re: CFB

by CFB, 02-Jun-14 02:13 PM GMT

This morning was marked by a trio of Heath Fritillaries, two of them mating and the third trying to join in. When I first saw them they were in a windmill formation on a dry stem:



Later on they moved into a different configuration:



Then the intruder decided to call it a day:



And the original couple were finally left alone:



There were many other Heath Fritillaries, including this one, which was more interested in its flower than anything else:



And there was a solitary Scarce Swallowtail:



--
Colin

Re: CFB

by Chris Jackson, 02-Jun-14 02:40 PM GMT

Hi Colin,
That photo of the "windmill formation on a dry stem" really deserves a prize - great!!
Chris

Re: CFB

by CFB, 04-Jun-14 02:28 PM GMT

Yesterday I went along to la Roche d'Ardy near Roquefort-les-Pins. No new year-sightings, but some photos, starting with this Marbled Skipper:



Nearby I met this gorgeous Black-veined White:



She then went off in search of somewhere to do some ovipositing, and she found the underside of a Hawthorn leaf.



I continued on my way, and when I came back ten minutes later, she had disappeared, but had left fifteen or so ova on the leaf 😊😊😊 .

Later on I found a mating-couple of Provence Chalkhill Blues:



I also saw two fresh-looking male Cleopatras (no photos 😞).

Today I went back to the same spot to see how things were progressing. The ova were still there. How long does it take in general for the larvae to hatch?

Amongst butterflies photographed today were this Scarce Swallowtail with bent tails,



a Green-veined White,



and one of several Spotted Fritillaries:



Also seen today were many Provence Chalkhill Blues, with in second place, Pearly Heaths, Adonis Blues and Heath Fritillaries.
--
Colin

Re: CFB

by CFB, 05-Jun-14 02:06 PM GMT

This morning, in the Parc de la Brague, I saw for the first time this year a solitary Marbled White,



and a solitary Lulworth Skipper.





There were also several Cleopatras, including this female,



a Scarce Swallowtail, Blue-spot and Ilex Hairstreaks, Heath and Spotted Fritillaries, Adonis Blues and of course many Provence Chalkhill Blues.

--
Colin

Re: CFB

by Chris Jackson, 05-Jun-14 02:42 PM GMT

That's good news about the Marbled White, Colin. I'll keep my eyes open across my way although last year they didn't appear until the very end of June (another 3 weeks yet). The Grayling should be out very soon, and I think I have missed out on the Adonis Blue this year.
Chris

Re: CFB

by CFB, 06-Jun-14 06:39 PM GMT

Four first-sightings of the year along the Piste du Darbousson this morning 😊😊😊 . The first was a Small Skipper, which was quite happy being photographed, letting me get quite close:



The second was a male High Brown Fritillary, which seems to like brambles as much as the Marbled Fritillaries do:



The third was a male Silver-washed Fritillary who was accompanied by a female:



The fourth was a Two-tailed Pasha which flew around me at great speed and then disappeared, so no photo 😞 .

Others seen included a Red Underwing Skipper, a Southern White Admiral, Marbled Fritillaries and Meadow Browns.

--
Colin

Re: CFB

by Roger Gibbons, 06-Jun-14 06:54 PM GMT

For the Pashas, try tempting them with alcohol!

I use rum mashed into a banana to stop it evaporating. Put it on something flat, in an open-ish space, even at a height of about 1-1.5m handy for taking a photo.

They will sniff it out and then circle around checking for predators (a magnificent flying display) and when they are ready they will come down onto the bait. Best to stay absolutely still while they are doing this. After a few minutes they become engrossed and can be approached quite closely.

We had three Pashas on the bait at the same time in our small garden today, followed by a Great Banded Grayling.

Roger

Re: CFB

by CFB, 06-Jun-14 07:36 PM GMT

Hello Roger,

Two years ago I tried with some brandy, if I remember correctly, on ripe figs. Without success. But last year they seemed to be attracted by ripe figs on a fig bush (its only six feet high or so, so I can't call it a tree) in the garden. I must try your recipe.

We have a very big *Arbutus unedo* in the garden, and I regularly look for ova and larvae on it, but with no success.

--

Colin

Re: CFB

by David M, 06-Jun-14 10:48 PM GMT

"Roger Gibbons" wrote:

Best to stay absolutely still while they are doing this. After a few minutes they become engrossed and can be approached quite closely.

We had three Pashas on the bait at the same time in our small garden today, followed by a Great Banded Grayling.

Must you torture us like this, Roger? 😞

Re: CFB

by Chris Jackson, 07-Jun-14 11:37 AM GMT

Hi Colin,

I don't get High Browns over my way, perhaps its too dry. So your photo is about as close as I'll get to seeing one 😊.

I should get one sighting of a vagrant Silver-washed though.

I'm still waiting for a Grayling (*semele*) - perhaps this afternoon?.

Cheers, Chris

Re: CFB

by Mikhail, 07-Jun-14 12:16 PM GMT

I have just seen your posting of 4 June. Take another look at your Southern Small White. I think you'll agree it's a Green-veined White.

M.

Re: CFB

by CFB, 07-Jun-14 01:49 PM GMT

Thanks Mikhail, I see what you mean.

--

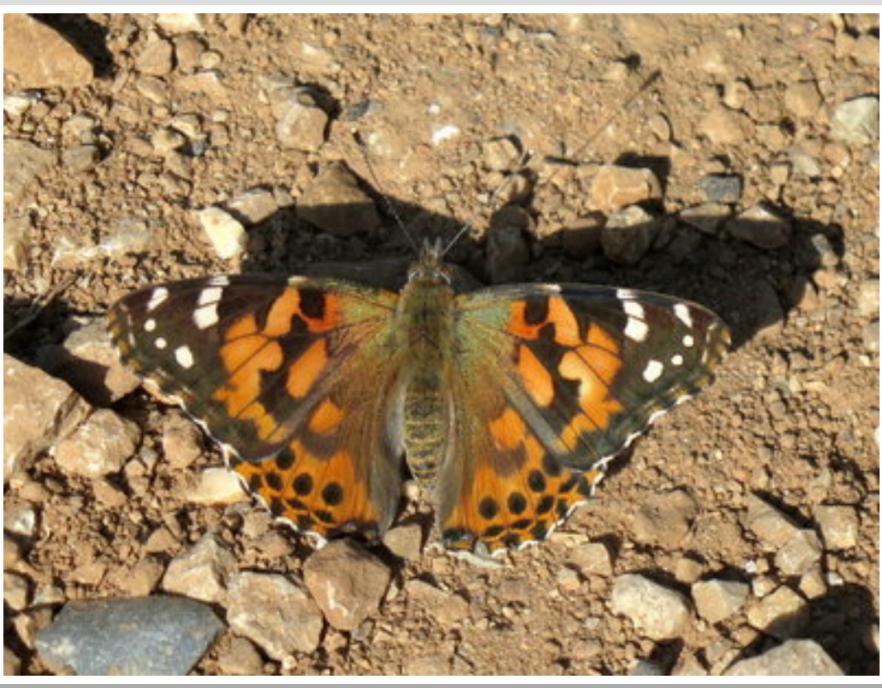
Colin

Re: CFB

by CFB, 07-Jun-14 02:13 PM GMT

Once again along to see if the Black-veined White ova (oviposited June 4, see above) have hatched. Alas, they haven't 😞.

A fresh-looking Painted Lady kept me company for a while:



They do have intriguing undersides:



Similarly, a Heath Fritillary stayed patiently on this flower, enabling me to take a decent photo:



And finally a male Cleopatra to go with the female of yesterday.



And then home in time to see the second half of New Zealand v. England and all of Australia v. France.

--

Colin

Re: CFB

by Roger Gibbons, 08-Jun-14 01:07 PM GMT

I think it's interesting to compare the reports of Chris and Colin with what I see here in Var. Les-Bouches-du-Rhône (Chris), Var (myself), and Alpes-Maritimes (Colin) are the three south-eastern départements (=counties) of France in a similar sort of arrangement as Hampshire/Sussex/Kent are in England.

Les-Bouches-du-Rhône is perhaps the least-endowed département but I'm prepared to be that Chris is finding species in locations not previously known. The Alpes-Maritimes is very rich but includes a wider variety of terrain from sea-level up to 2500m so there is a wide scope for a great variety of species. Var is more limited, going up to only about 1000m at the most northerly point, but is extremely rich in terms of variety of species; I have seen (David M look away now) 96 species so far. Strangely, several of the species recorded by Guy have not been seen around here yet, whereas you would expect the more southerly location to get them first.

Niobe Fritillary (*Argynnis niobe*) has just emerged here and is the predominant *Argynnis* species here, a few *paphia* (SWF) so far and no *pandora* (Cardinal) as yet.

Mikhail makes a very good point about *Pieris napi* (GVW). They can be very deceptive across the broods and the southern form is *meridionalis* which is very lightly dusted on the underside hindwing and needs a good look to see that it is even green-veined. A while back I confused *napi* with Large White (*P. brassicae*).

Regarding Eastern Wood White (*Leptidea duponcheli*), I was about to post that "you will know it when you see it", but Mikhail said it first. I have searched far and wide in Var for *duponcheli* without success. By coincidence, one day after Chris's post we went to Digne-les-Bains in the Alpes-de-Haute-Provence and saw two; it is the first generation that is so uniquely and solidly marked, and the two I saw were rather worn at the end of the flight period but still unmistakable. According to the Atlas and other databases, it would be very unlikely to see *duponcheli* in the Marseilles region.

I can't really post any photos from here as my communal wifi dies every two minutes and only just makes 0.5mbps when it's running flat out. It struggles just to post just a few lines of text.

Re: CFB

by CFB, 08-Jun-14 02:20 PM GMT

"Roger Gibbons" wrote:

96 species so far

And I thought I was doing well with 64. But seriously I'm very satisfied with my score so far, particularly as they are all at less than 250 metres altitude, so I am missing the very many species living up in the hills and mountains.

This morning I went again into the Parc de la Brague. Most of the butterflies seemed very restless, perhaps because of the temperature, which was b****y hot. I was glad when I got home and (David look away again!) could get into the swimming pool 😊.

I did however take a few photos. The first is the underside of a Heath Fritillary, where the thickening of the black mark in forewing S2 is clearly visible, which differentiates it from the Provençal Fritillary:



The second is one of a few Marbled Whites that I saw:



There were several Silver-washed Fritillaries but they were too busy chasing each other for me to get any photos.

--

Colin

Re: CFB

by Chris Jackson, 08-Jun-14 02:50 PM GMT

Hi there,
I think that with Roger on 96 species and Colin on 64, there is little chance of me catching up (only 53 species for the moment). The *département* of the *Bouches du Rhone* where I live is much poorer in species than the *Var* and *Alpes Maritimes*.

We seem to be in phase Colin for the Marbled White, and I also am seeing new arrivals of Painted Lady after quite some weeks without a sighting. I think you have a lot more different fritillaries over your way, further east, and a little further inland and uphill. You're right about the temperature Colin, 30° + yesterday and not much less today. How lucky you are to have a pool 😊 .
No Grayling (*semele*) yet?
Cheers, Chris

Re: CFB

by CFB, 09-Jun-14 07:19 PM GMT

Nothing much today. It is still very hot and I tried to keep to paths with a canopy of tree branches to make things a bit cooler. There were however a few Marbled Fritillaries chasing each other at the Pont des Dones. This one stopped to rest, and allowed me to take a photo or two of its underside.



I saw one Scarce Swallowtail, but no photos of it.

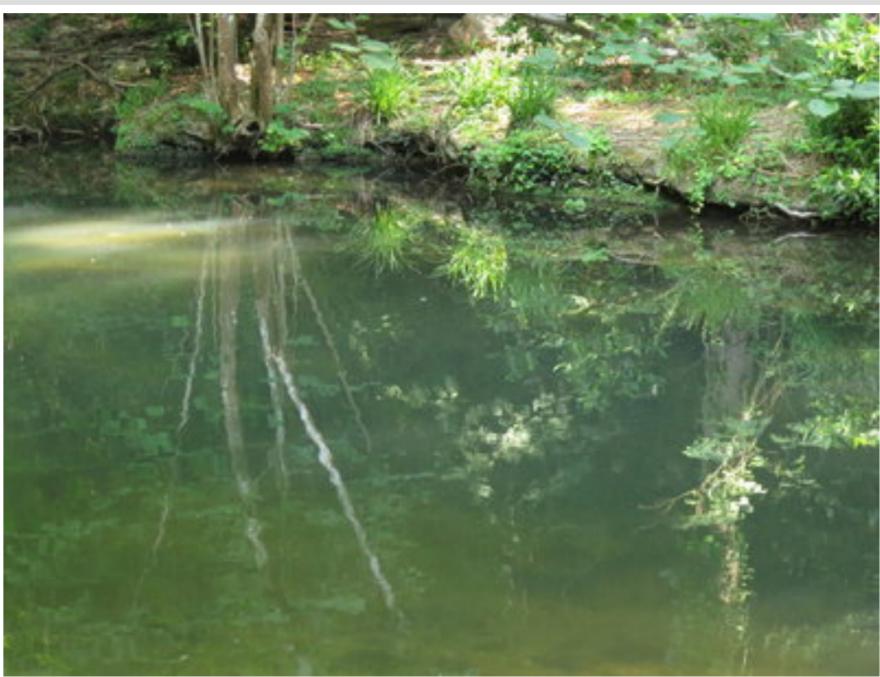
--

Colin

Re: CFB

by CFB, 11-Jun-14 01:37 PM GMT

Yesterday it was still very hot, so I decided to walk along the Brague, a river which ends up in the Mediterranean Sea near Antibes. There are plenty of trees on each bank, so it was a bit cooler there. There was not much variety in the way of butterflies. In fact I only saw very many Speckled Woods and a few Pearly Heaths. Here's a couple of photos of the Brague:



It is still very hot today, but I went out this morning armed with my bottle of water. I was intrigued when I saw what looked like an Enormous White (a new species 😊), but it turned out to be a mating couple of Cleopatras. My presence didn't disturb them, and neither did a brief visit by another male Cleopatra.



At the Pont des Dones I was very pleased to see a Bath White, as I don't often see them.



When nearly back to my car I found this Meadow Brown (ssp. hispulla?):



I also saw a Two-tailed Pasha and a Swallowtail, but no photos.

--
Colin

Re: CFB

by Katrina, 11-Jun-14 04:55 PM GMT

The Enormous White shot made me smile and I like the colours in the Bath White 😊

Re: CFB

by CFB, 11-Jun-14 05:52 PM GMT

Hello Katrina,

I like the colours of the Meadow Brown as well.

Incidentally Vince Massimo said about the Cleopatra pair in a private message "It looks like they are mating on a pupal case".

--
Colin

Re: CFB

by David M, 11-Jun-14 07:36 PM GMT

Glorious image of the Cleopatras, Colin. 🧐

Re: CFB

by Chris Jackson, 12-Jun-14 08:36 AM GMT

That cool stream looks inviting, Colin, and the cleopatra shot is very artistic.

It should be reaching 33°C in Marseilles today and 36°C in Vitrolles 🧐

Chris

Re: CFB

by CFB, 12-Jun-14 07:33 PM GMT

Thanks Chris and David for your comments.

Today in the Parc de la Brague I saw two species for the first time this year. The first was a Twin-spot Fritillary, for which I have been waiting a couple of weeks. And it wasn't in the place where I expected it to be. Sorry, no photo. I did take some but they are all of very low quality 😞 .

The other was a False Ilex Hairstreak, in fact several of them.



Amongst others seen were two or three Large Whites:



a Knapweed Fritillary:



and a Weaver's Fritillary:



And it is still very hot here, but it's supposed to become cooler on Saturday.

--

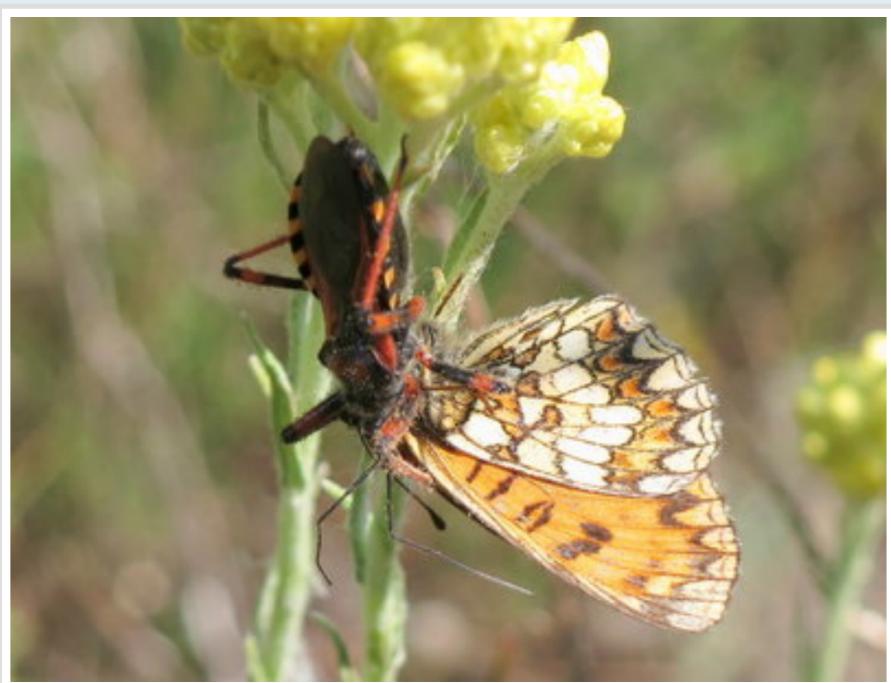
Colin

Re: CFB

by CFB, 13-Jun-14 02:42 PM GMT

Still very hot so I didn't stay out as long as usual.

The sight of the morning was a Heath Fritillary in the grips of what I think is an Assassin Bug (*Rhynocoris iracundus*). The fritillary seemed to be moving, or perhaps it was just the wind, so I carefully removed it from the predator. But I think it was more or less dead.



There were a few Silver-washed Fritillaries around but they didn't seem to want to be photographed, except for this one:



There were also a few Marbled Skippers. This one looks a bit like a one-eyed ghost 😊 :



To finish off, a beautiful Marbled White:



The most frequently seen species was probably Heath Fritillary, well ahead of Cleopatra.

--
Colin

Re: CFB

by Chris Jackson, 13-Jun-14 05:57 PM GMT

Hi Colin,
Your False Ilex looks like those that I see over here 😊 .
And I'm hoping to see at least one vagrant Silver-washed this season. I suppose they travel from the Alpes Maritimes and the Var towards Marseilles.
Chris

Re: CFB

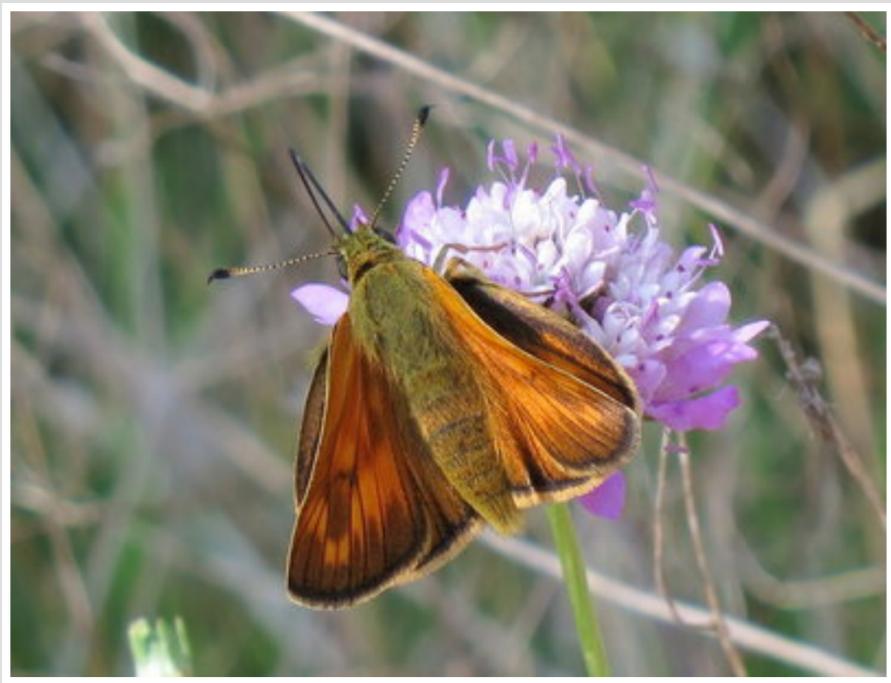
by CFB, 14-Jun-14 07:37 PM GMT

This morning was sunny and hot, but in the afternoon there was thunder and lightning and rain, and it's now much, much cooler 😊.

Many butterflies were taking advantage of the scabious species shown in the photos below. Usually I don't have much success with Clouded Yellows, but this female stayed attached to her flower, even though it was quite windy, long enough for me to get a reasonable shot:



I only saw one Clouded Yellow, but saw several Large Skippers, including this female:



And last but not least there were many Cleopatras, including this backlit male:



Other species seen included: Heath, Spotted, Marbled and Silver-washed Fritillaries, Blue-spot and False Ilex Hairstreaks, and Marbled Whites.

--
Colin

Re: CFB

by David M, 14-Jun-14 08:23 PM GMT

Beautiful Cleopatra image, Colin.

I sincerely hope to see a few of these when I visit France next month.

Re: CFB

by Chris Jackson, 15-Jun-14 12:01 AM GMT

Hi Colin, nice photos – Clouded Yellows are very discrete across my way this year. I m sure that there were many more last year!! 😊

David, *cleopatras* are no sweat – the least of your worries. 😊

What is your travel program?

Chris

Re: CFB

by CFB, 15-Jun-14 01:50 PM GMT

After yesterday's thunder storm it was much cooler this morning, with quite a lot of clouds.

My mission of the morning was to see the state of the Black-veined White ova which were oviposited on 3 June. Well, they are still in ova-mode after 12 days 😊 , but seem to be in good condition 😊 :



As I was in Spanish Festoon territory I had a look at some *Aristolochia pistolochia* plants and soon found my first ever Spanish Festoon larvae 😊 . There were only two on this particular plant, and I didn't find any on any other plants:



There were still plenty of Pearly Heaths:



Later, at home, my wife came in from the garden and told me there were butterflies on the *Helichrysum stoechas*. These turned out to be False Ilex Hairstreaks, which, as noticed in previous years, spend a lot of time on these plants:



Other species seen today include Weaver's, Marbled, Spotted and Knapweed Fritillaries.

--
Colin

Re: CFB

by Chris Jackson, 15-Jun-14 08:17 PM GMT

Hi Colin,
Those Spanish Festoon caterpillars are interesting – I will now know what they look like if ever I see one!
And I agree for the False Ilex Hairstreaks, they really do have a preference for *Helichrysum stoechas* – Immortelle in French, Curry Plant in English.
Stormy weather today in Marseilles, and its not finished tomorrow. The upside is that the temperature has dropped 10°C 😊
Chris

Re: CFB

by CFB, 16-Jun-14 05:19 PM GMT

This morning I went back to see how my Spanish Festoon larvae were getting on. Assuming that this is one of the two I saw yesterday, it has changed colour somewhat from green to pink. Perhaps it's a different one. Just above him is what I assume must be a Spanish Festoon ovum 😊 :



There was also a smaller green larva who was eating a chunk out of a leaf:



I managed to get a postable photo of a Twin-spot Fritillary



and of a male Silver-washed Fritillary:



There were also Heath, Marbled and Knapweed Fritillaries, Marbled Whites and Provence Chalkhill Blues, and so on.

--

Colin

Re: CFB

by Lee Hurrell, 17-Jun-14 01:52 PM GMT

Hi Colin,

I love the backlit Cleopatra. That was the first overseas species I remember seeing, in Italy when I was 12. With the two mating on a pupal case, (very nice shot) notice the difference in eye colour between the sexes!

Enjoying your reports.

Best wishes,

Lee

Re: CFB

by CFB, 17-Jun-14 02:09 PM GMT

Hello Lee,

Thanks a lot for your comments.

Is the eye of the female always that clear, or was there an invisible smiley at the end of your sentence?

Best regards,

Colin

Re: CFB

by Lee Hurrell, 17-Jun-14 02:35 PM GMT

Hi Colin,

I'm afraid I don't know, I just noticed it in your photo. I wonder if Brimstones are the same?

Best wishes,

Lee

Re: CFB

by CFB, 17-Jun-14 02:58 PM GMT

Once more this morning I went to see my Spanish Festoon larvae. I found three, on three different *Aristolochia pistolochia* plants. My photo shows a larva which was actually moving, as opposed to staying still and/or eating.



While searching for more larvae, I saw a single Marbled Skipper:



There are still loads of *Satyrion* species dashing around, including this Ilex Hairstreak with a couple of bits missing from its wings:



A lovely female Silver-washed Fritillary allowed herself to be photographed:



Other Fritillaries seen included Marbled, Heath (in great quantities), Knapweed and Spotted. There seemed to be fewer Adonis and Provence Chalkhill Blues, but still many Pearly Heaths.

--

Colin

Re: CFB

by CFB, 18-Jun-14 02:27 PM GMT

Once again I went to see the Spanish Festoon larvae. I only saw one this morning 😞 . And the Black-veined White ova still haven't hatched 😞 .

In places, particularly those with brambles or scabious, there were incredible numbers of butterflies. But as a rule they kept chasing each other so they were difficult to photograph. But I did get this Marbled Fritillary:



There were a few Adonis Blues:



But I was surprised to see a couple of Common Blues as I don't think I have seen any so far this month:



In addition, there were loads of Cleopatras, and quite a lot of Silver-washed Fritillaries. I saw one *valesina*, but she flew away and I never saw her again.

--

Colin

Re: CFB

by CFB, 19-Jun-14 05:52 PM GMT

This morning I went along the Chemin du Bruguet, where I photographed a Silver-washed Fritillary *valesina* for the first time this year. She was amongst the scabious plants together with several other Silver-washed Fritillaries and many Cleopatras.



Nearby, in another clump of scabious was a Marbled Fritillary also in the company of Cleopatras.



Further on I found a Marbled White, probably form *procida*. It took many shots to get an acceptable photo due to the bright white and the dark black colours working against me.



--
Colin

Re: CFB

by David M, 19-Jun-14 06:35 PM GMT

Wow. That's a mightily impressive Marbled White, Colin.

Re: CFB

by CFB, 19-Jun-14 06:48 PM GMT

Thanks, David, I'm glad you liked it 😊.

--
Colin

Re: CFB

by David M, 19-Jun-14 10:14 PM GMT

I think 'Marbled Black' would be more apt.

Re: CFB

by Chris Jackson, 20-Jun-14 09:57 AM GMT

Hi Guys,
Personally I prefer the *valesina*, it looks silvery and "ghostly". Its not every day you get a photo like that, Colin.
I am back in Leicester for 1 week, and I have to look very hard to find butterflies – not an easy hobby here!!
Chris

Re: CFB

by Lee Hurrell, 20-Jun-14 01:36 PM GMT

First wow – Valensina
Second wow – Marbled Frit
Third wow – Marbled White

Wonderful! 😊

Best wishes,
Lee

Re: CFB

by CFB, 20-Jun-14 02:10 PM GMT

Thanks for the comments Chris and Lee.

Have a nice time in Leicester, Chris. My dad was born there, but I have never been there.

Just a short walk this morning from home down a path to and alongside our local quarry. I had hoped to see Dingy Skippers which I have frequently seen down there, but which I haven't seen this year. I didn't see any, but I did see my first Queen of Spain Fritillary of the year. I don't think they get as far as Marseille do they, Chris. I was lucky to get such a sharp photo, as it was quite windy which caused the scabious on which it was installed to be in almost perpetual motion.



The only other photo that I kept is that of a Lang's Short-tailed Blue. And the only reason I'm keeping it is that I very rarely see them in June. I see them mainly in October to January!



There were lots of Cleopatras which, in places along the narrow path, almost got walked on.

--

Colin

Re: CFB

by CFB, 21-Jun-14 01:16 PM GMT

This morning I walked along to Roche d'Ardy again via the Pont des Dones. I found two Spanish Festoon larvae. The Black-veined White ova are still ova, and it looked as if they have been attacked by many very small spiders 🤢🤢🤢.

On the way back I took another backlit photograph of a male Cleopatra. Once again the number of Cleopatras seen was incredible, with up to four on the same plant.



There were many Silver-washed Fritillaries including a few *valesina*. Here is an underside to go with Thursday's upperside. You can see where it got the

Silver-washed part of its name from.



There were also many Meadow Browns. I'm sure this one must be a *hispulla* as it's identical to the drawing in T&L.



--
Colin

Re: CFB

by CFB, 22-Jun-14 01:23 PM GMT

This morning I went to Terme Blanc at Biot. This is a hill composed of volcanic rock, as a result of which it has vegetation differing from most of the surrounding area. And with this vegetation, the numbers and species of butterflies is also different. At this time of the year one can generally see Southern Gatekeepers and Great Banded Graylings. Also, even though there are no *Arbutus unedo* trees, there are usually one or two Two-tailed Pashas at the top of the hill. My aim was to see my first Southern Gatekeepers and Great Banded Graylings of the year.

I succeeded 😊😊😊 . I saw at least twenty Great Banded Graylings. Generally they are seen on rocks or on bushes, but this one fancied a scabious:



I only saw a few Southern Gatekeepers, all males:



I didn't see any Two-tailed Pashas however 😞 , even though I saw them there on 19 June last year.

P.S. Another False Ilex Hairstreak from the garden:



--
Colin

Re: CFB

by Chris Jackson, 22-Jun-14 04:26 PM GMT

Good sightings Colin. Its true that you have to change environment to catch the different species – the Southern Gatekeeper and Great Banded Grayling have been around near Marseilles and Vitrolles for more than 3 weeks now. I am returning to Marseilles from Leicester tomorrow – I'm really chuffed because I saw a Ringlet here this afternoon – something I won't see in Marseilles!!

Cheers, Chris

Re: CFB

by CFB, 23-Jun-14 01:28 PM GMT

Today in the Parc de la Brague I saw my first Small Tortoiseshell since May 07 2012 😊😊😊 .



It was amongst these scabious plants in the company of very many Cleopatras, several Silver-washed Fritillaries including a *valesina* and some Meadow Browns:



Later on I saw a Swallowtail, with most of its right-hand tail amputated:



--
Colin

Re: CFB

by Chris Jackson, 24-Jun-14 07:01 AM GMT

So it seems to be holding true then Colin, this year is exceptional for Small Tortoiseshells in the South of France. I have even seen 3 together in my garden which was very surprising.

I still haven't seen a Silver-washed Fritillary yet.

I am now back from Leicester, so I will be out again at lunchtime today with my eyes open.

Chris

Re: CFB

by CFB, 24-Jun-14 11:54 AM GMT

Three Small Tortoiseshells together in your garden is certainly surprising, Chris.

This morning I visited my Spanish Festoon larvae. I saw three of them on two of my usual three *Aristolochia pistolochia* plants. I assume that this larva is one that I've previously seen. It's getting quite fat.



--
Colin

Re: CFB

by CFB, 26-Jun-14 02:59 PM GMT

After some early rain I managed to get out this morning. I saw the usual selection of butterflies, but what impressed me most was this minute (about 20 mm. wingspan) moth. It is probably a Common Purple and Gold Moth (*Pyrausta purpuralis*):



There were several Marbled Whites, but they generally flew away at my approach. This one was a bit more helpful:



There were also quite a few Silver-washed Fritillaries including this female:



Apart from that there were still plenty of Cleopatras, False Ilex Hairstreaks and Blue-spot Hairstreaks.

--

Colin

Re: CFB

by CFB, 27-Jun-14 02:31 PM GMT

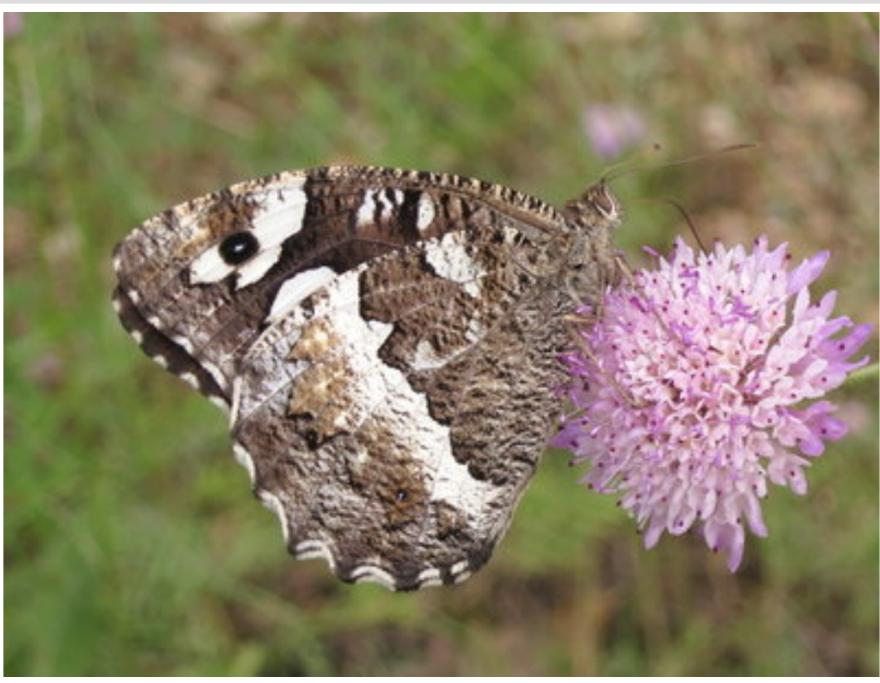
I went for a shortish walk in the Parc de la Brague this morning. It was sunny and hot, but big clouds were starting to gather.

Marbled Whites now seem to be in greater numbers than Cleopatras, though perhaps False Ilex Hairstreaks are in even greater numbers, but as they are less noticeable, they don't appear to be so numerous.

My favourite patch of scabious was still populated by many butterflies, but I only saw one female Large Skipper:



And to my surprise there was a solitary Great Banded Grayling. We must have spent ten or so minutes together, perhaps helped by clouds between us and the sun encouraging it to stay there.



--
Colin

Re: CFB

by Chris Jackson, 27-Jun-14 05:18 PM GMT

Hi Colin,
The Great Banded Graylings are so impressive. I've seen up to 3 on my buddleias in the garden at the same time. They are quite curious as well, and they come and check me out (attack me ?) when I come into the garden.

"CFB" wrote:

... though perhaps False Ilex Hairstreaks are in even greater numbers ...

Surprisingly the False Ilexes peaked *chez moi* a long time ago, and I only saw one in the scrub today. My records from last year show that next week (week 27) is their final week of the season here.
Chris

Re: CFB

by David M, 27-Jun-14 05:54 PM GMT

Yes, Great Banded Graylings love buddleia in the same way our vanessids do. When I was in the Massif Central in 2012, practically any well placed buddleia would have one or two, and the best placed ones could harbour double figures.

Their behaviour is enchanting too. They really DO interact with you, swooping around and investigating you (and occasionally landing on your body).

Re: CFB

by CFB, 28-Jun-14 02:29 PM GMT

Nothing much seen today along the Piste des Bouillides except many Cleopatras, Marbled Whites and Meadow Browns, and two Scarce Swallowtails:



--
Colin

Re: CFB

by Chris Jackson, 29-Jun-14 08:01 AM GMT

Hi Colin,
I immediately checked to see whether your Scarce Swallowtail was an *alexanor*, but I don't think so 😞.
Chris

Re: CFB

by CFB, 30-Jun-14 05:53 PM GMT

This morning I went to see how my Spanish Festoon larvae are faring. I found two of them in good condition on the same plant. I wonder how long they stay in a larval state? This is the larger of the two.



Nearby there were one or two Common Blues:



There were still many Cleopatras, Marbled Whites and False Ilex Hairstreaks:



Also some Silver-washed Fritillaries:



I also saw a Marbled Skipper, a very tatty Southern White Admiral and several Wall Browns.

This afternoon in the garden there were three or four male Common Blues and one female.

--
Colin

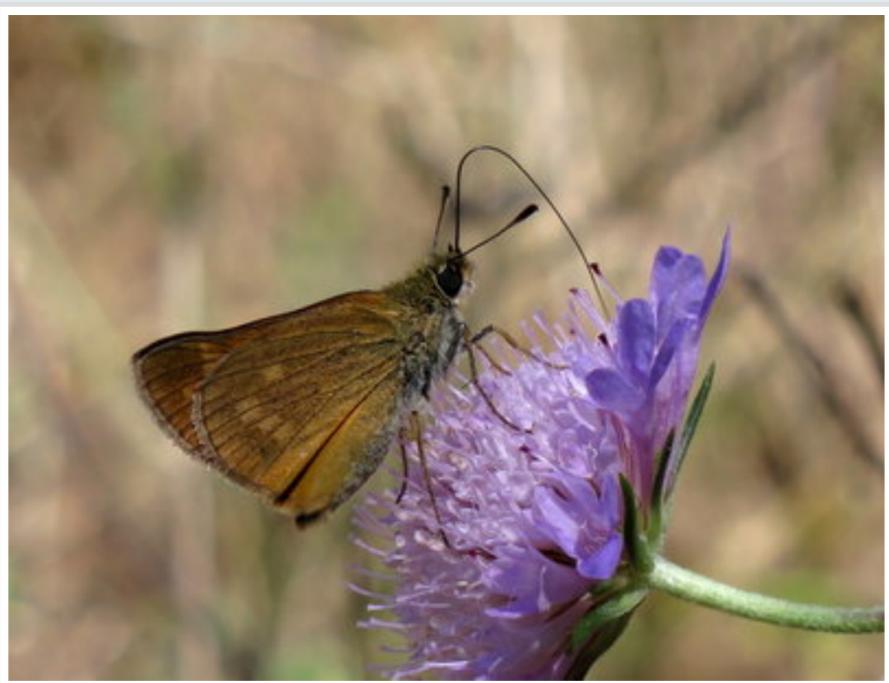
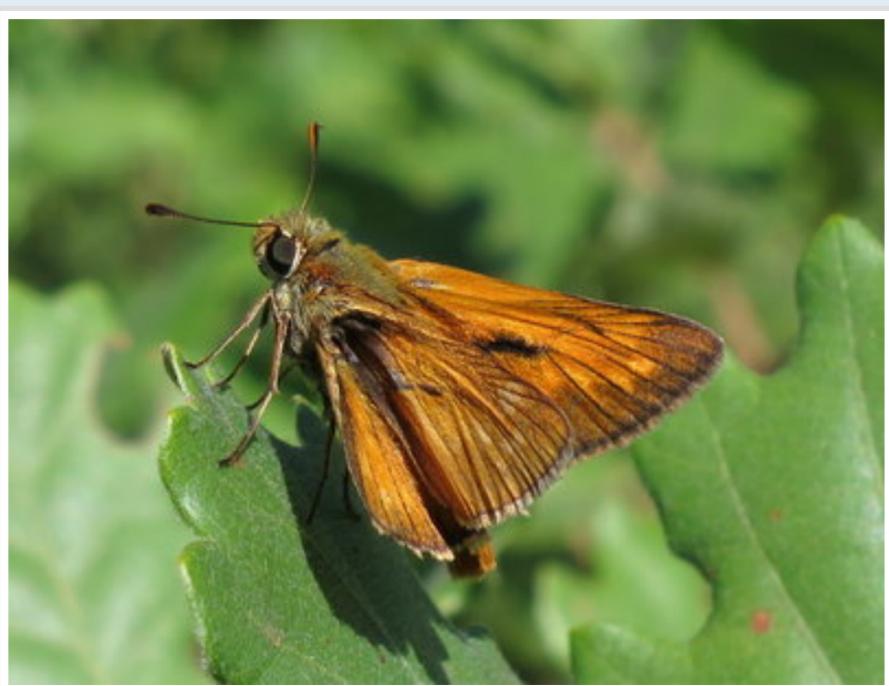
Re: CFB

by CFB, 02-Jul-14 01:10 PM GMT

Yesterday along the Brague I saw for the first time a Marbled White, form *leucomelas*. The rear underside is white with hardly any markings, though the upperside markings do show through. There were many other Marbled Whites just about everywhere.



I saw several Large Skippers:



Other butterflies seen include Cleopatras, Wood Whites, a Weaver's Fritillary and quite a few Lulworth Skippers.

--
Colin

Re: CFB

by CFB, 02-Jul-14 01:30 PM GMT

This morning it was at first very cloudy with some light rain. But soon the clouds and rain disappeared, so I went for my walk in the sun somewhat later than usual.

I visited my Spanish Festoon larvae. I saw two of them, on the same plant as two days ago. This one seemed to be resting after having eaten quite a lot of the edge of a *Aristolochia pistolochia* leaf.



At the same place was a Marbled Skipper, which didn't move all the time I was taking photos of it and the larvae.



I saw a solitary, tatty Knapweed Fritillary.



Others seen were Spotted Fritillaries, False Ilex Hairstreaks, Cleopatras, Marbled Whites...

--

Colin

Re: CFB

by Chris Jackson, 02-Jul-14 02:39 PM GMT

"CFB" wrote:

Yesterday along the Brague I saw for the first time a Marbled White, form *leucomelas*.

That Marbled White is curious - I will keep my eyes open for one of them.

Chris

Re: CFB

by David M, 02-Jul-14 10:22 PM GMT

That Marbled White is amazing, Colin. I've probably seen 2,000 or so within the last week but none of them have shown aberrations like this.

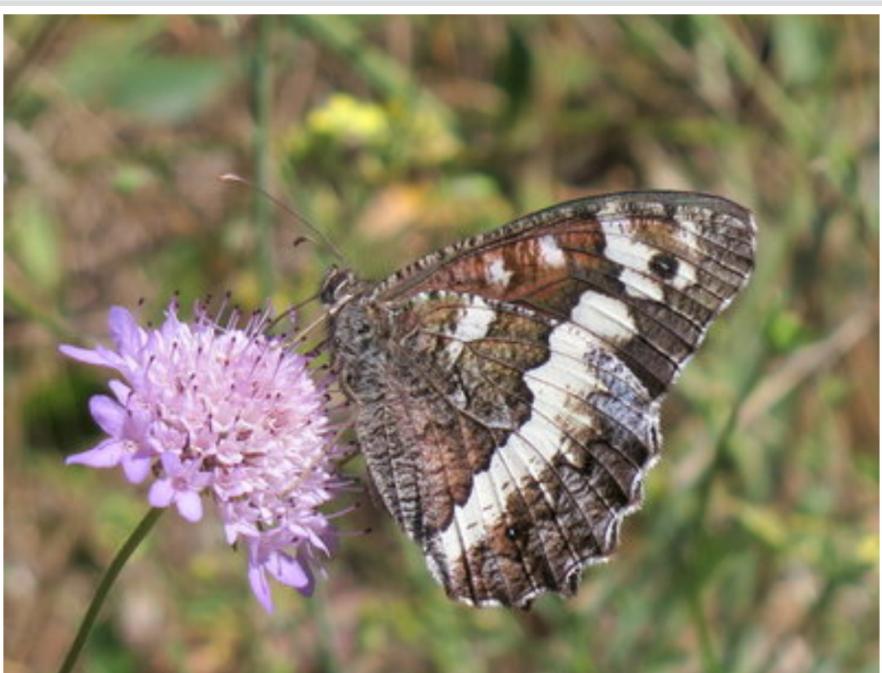
Re: CFB

by CFB, 03-Jul-14 02:30 PM GMT

David, according to T&L *leucomelas* is commoner in the south, so perhaps there aren't any in your area 😞 . To corroborate T&L's statement, this morning I went to the same place and saw at least three, and photographed two of them 😊 .



In their company was a Scarce Swallowtail, a regular Swallowtail and a Great Banded Grayling:



Elsewhere I saw this magnificent Berger's Clouded Yellow (?):



Also flying where many Silver-washed Fritillaries and a couple of Southern White Admirals, and no doubt others that I have forgotten.

--
Colin

Re: CFB

by David M, 03-Jul-14 05:54 PM GMT

"CFB" wrote:

David, according to T&L *leucomelas* is commoner in the south, so perhaps there aren't any in your area

Well, I'll be in your part of the world next week, Colin, so I'll keep an eye out for them.

Re: CFB

by CFB, 05-Jul-14 01:59 PM GMT

After rain and thunder yesterday, this morning was sunny and warm/hot with some clouds. So along to Roche d'Ardy. I didn't see any of my Spanish Festoon larvae. I don't know if they were hiding, had been eaten, or had been washed away by the rain.

Nearby was a solitary, fresh-looking male Lang's Short-tailed Blue:





There were still many False Ilex Hairstreaks, this one looking particularly new:



And still plenty of Cleopatras, Wall Browns, Marbled Whites and assorted skippers, and in the garden a Scarce Swallowtail and a Geranium Bronze.

--
Colin

Re: CFB

by Chris Jackson, 05-Jul-14 09:02 PM GMT

That LSTB does look fresh Colin, and I think my False Ilex around Marseilles must be finished now.

We arrived at our holiday destination in the Massif Central this afternoon (a village called Parent, 25 km South of Clermont Ferrand), so I will be looking out for any original species.

Cheers, Chris

Re: CFB

by CFB, 06-Jul-14 10:01 AM GMT

Wishing you good luck Chris in your search for original species.

--
Colin

Re: CFB

by CFB, 08-Jul-14 01:54 PM GMT

During this morning's walk I went to the site where last Thursday I saw three Marbled Whites, form *leucomelas*. The first Marbled White I saw there today was a *leucomelas* 😊.

upperside:



and underside:



Due to the wind there were fewer butterflies around than usual. But I did see a Scarce Swallowtail being blown all over the place clutching desperately to a scabious. During a less windy moment I did manage a photo or two:



There were one or two Southern White Admirals, including this one:



Apart from that there were many Wall Browns, several Cleopatras and Large Skippers, a few Lulworth Skippers and a Silver-washed Fritillary form *valesina*.

--

Colin

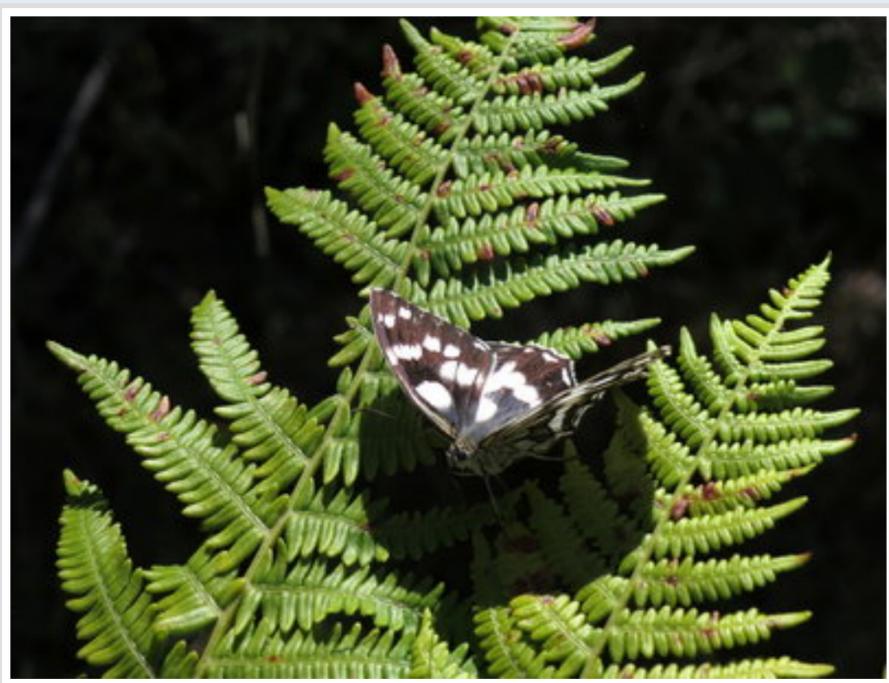
Re: CFB

by CFB, 09-Jul-14 04:58 PM GMT

I wasn't out for long this afternoon, but did manage to get a nice photo of the underside of a Southern White Admiral:



Also this photo of a Marbled White:



This morning it was sunny and cloudless, but windy and a bit cooler than the previous couple of days. Now it is still windy but is raining. At least I don't have to water the garden today 😊😊😊.

--

Colin

Re: CFB

by CFB, 10-Jul-14 07:49 PM GMT

Even though it was sunny this morning with no clouds, it was (relatively speaking) quite cool, due to the wind. So the number of butterflies seen on my way to la Roche d'Ardy was quite low.

There were several Wall Browns, mostly males, including this one which stayed in place long enough to be photographed:



There were just a few Common Blues, and I only managed photos of this male:



However there were still several Brimstones, and great quantities of Cleopatras, both male and female, including this male:



Also seen: many Marbled Whites, a few Small Heaths, several Large Skippers, one Spotted Fritillary, a couple of False Ilex Hairstreaks, and a couple of dragonflies:



--
Colin

Re: CFB

by CFB, 11-Jul-14 01:31 PM GMT

This morning along the Piste des Tamarins there were even fewer butterflies than yesterday, even though the sky was cloud-free and there was not much wind. I wonder where they all are 😊 . One exception was the number of Wall Browns – they seemed to be everywhere. There were also a fair number of Marbled Whites:



Apart from that there were a few Cleopatras, a couple of Speckled Woods, and this Small Copper:



--
Colin

Re: CFB

by Chris Jackson, 11-Jul-14 08:47 PM GMT

Few butterflies Colin? Not as few as here in rain-lashed Auvergne 😊
Better luck next week I hope.
Chris

Re: CFB

by CFB, 13-Jul-14 12:42 PM GMT

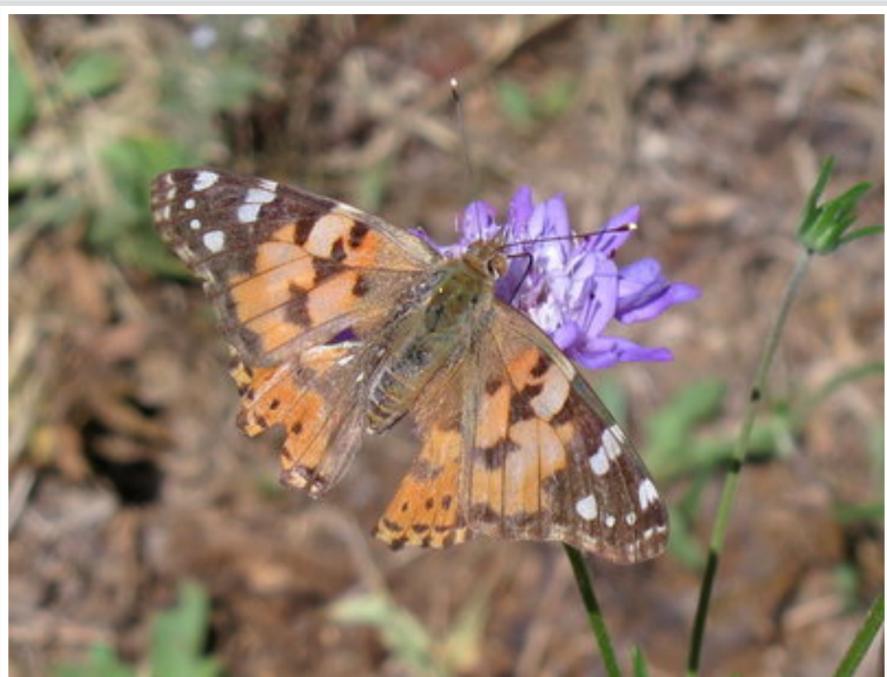
There were still relatively few butterflies in the Parc de la Brague this morning, but it was quite cloudy at times. The most numerous were Wall Browns, Meadow Browns and Marbled Whites, followed by Large Skippers and Cleopatras. Also seen were one Weaver's Fritillary,



one Scarce Swallowtail,



two tatty Painted Ladies,



and a Common Blue.



--
Colin

Re: CFB

by CFB, 14-Jul-14 01:36 PM GMT

It was mainly cloudy this morning in the woods towards Roquefort-les-Pins, but during a brief appearance of the sun I did manage to see, and photograph, my first Dingy Skipper of the year. In previous years I'd seen them from as early as March. This one, female I assume, looks to be a very fresh specimen, and anything but dingy:



In fact she arrived a foot or so away from a Weaver's Fritillary I was photographing. There were two others in the neighbourhood but this one looked just as fresh as the Dingy Skipper:



There were also a few Small Heaths and Large Skippers, several Marbled Whites and Cleopatras, and a Spotted Fritillary or two.

--
Colin

Re: CFB

by CFB, 17-Jul-14 06:30 PM GMT

It's starting to get very hot again, and the number of butterfly species flying in my area is quite small. This morning I went to the Parc de la Brague. There were several Small Heaths including this bright, fresh specimen:



There weren't many Silver-washed Fritillaries, but there was this magnificent *valesina*. The iridescence on the body and the wings was quite remarkable:



A male wasn't far away, but they didn't seem very interested in each other 😊 :



Marbled Whites are still plentiful. This one is on, I believe, some sort of heather bush:



I also found a *leucomelas*, in the same place as those shown in previous posts. It's a pity about the piece missing from the wing:



Other species seen include Large Skippers (very many), Southern White Admirals (two or three), Speckled Woods (a couple), Wall Browns (many) and Meadow Browns (several). How do you others manage to keep an exact count of many species seen in a day 🤔🤔🤔😞😞😞

--
Colin

Re: CFB

by CFB, 21-Jul-14 05:05 PM GMT

Even though it was sunny with very little wind there were few butterflies seen this morning along the Piste du Collet des Espères.

There was one mutilated Scarce Swallowtail,



one male Clouded Yellow,



several Dingy Skippers,



three or so Weaver's Fritillaries, although perhaps it was the same one seen three or so times,



some Small Heaths, a Red Underwing Skipper, a few Marbled Whites, a few Cleopatras, a few Wall Browns, a few Meadow Browns and two Silver-washed Fritillaries, one of which was a *valesina*.

--
Colin

Re: CFB

by Chris Jackson, 21-Jul-14 08:16 PM GMT

Clouded Yellows are very scarce over my way Colin this year. I saw only one in early Spring, otherwise nothing !!
Chris

Re: CFB

I've only seen a handful of Clouded Yellows myself, Chris, certainly fewer than last year. Perhaps it's a bit early, as in October 2013 I saw loads of them. (Yes I know "handful" and "loads" are not very precise, but you know what I mean).

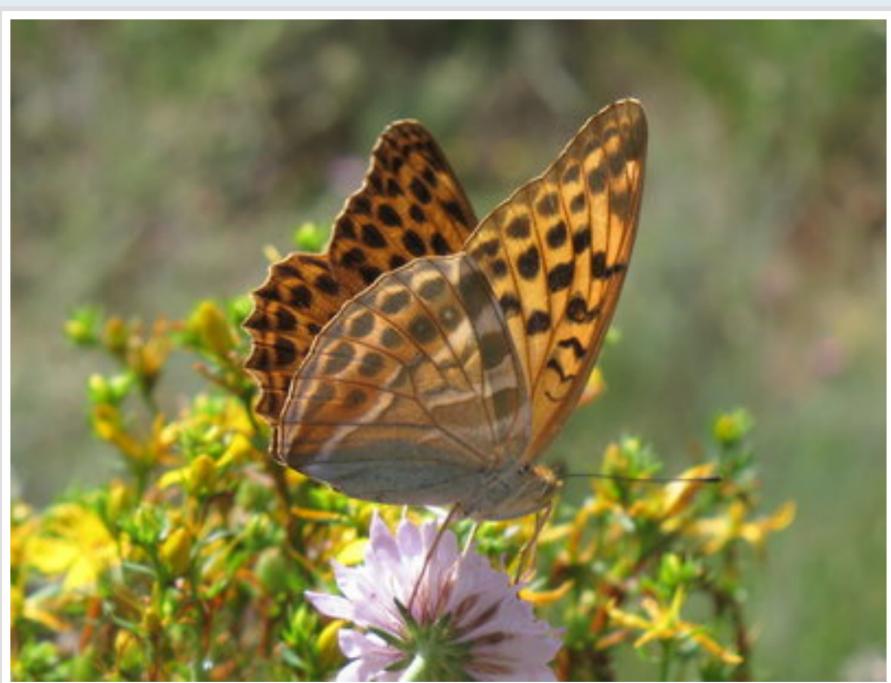
Today started off cloudy and cool, and I thought I was never going to see any butterflies. And then the sun started to shine through the clouds, and I met this impeccable male Wall Brown. Why did this make me think of Elizabeth Taylor?



After seeing a male Berger's Clouded Yellow I saw a solitary Provence Chalkhill Blue. At least I assume it wasn't a regular Chalkhill Blue as I don't think there are any at low altitude in my zone.



There were still one or two Dingy Skippers around. Then I saw two female Silver-washed Fritillaries, one of which was a *valesina*, just as I had seen yesterday, but not at the same place.



Apart from that I also saw a female Southern Small White, a couple of male Cleopatras, some Marbled Whites and a large Skipper.

--
Colin

Re: CFB

by CFB, 23-Jul-14 01:23 PM GMT

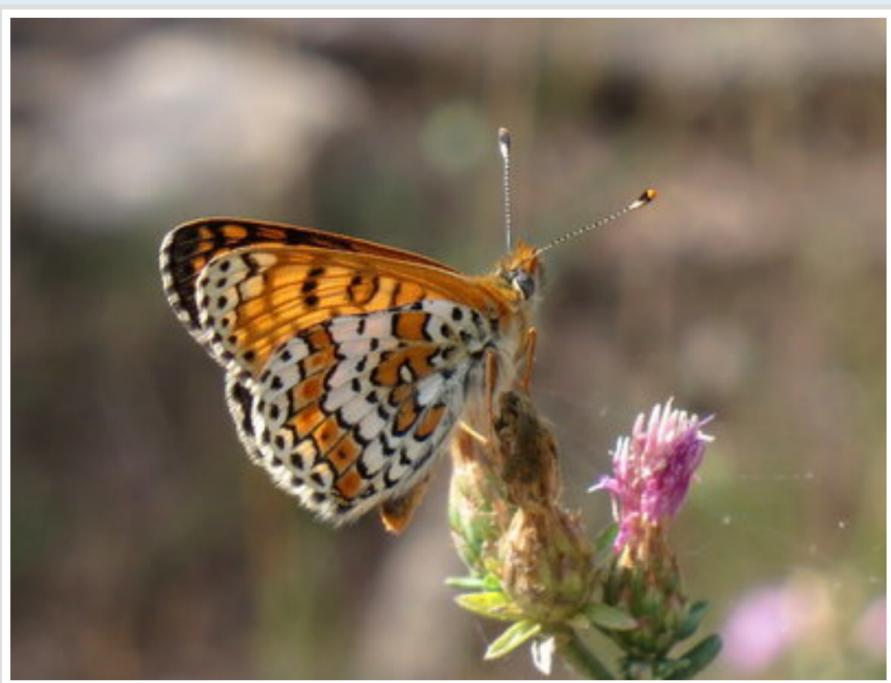
This morning was like yesterday morning, cloudy at first, then sunny and warm.

More or less the first butterfly I saw had me baffled 😊 . It had an underside like a Wall Brown and it was about the same size as a Wall Brown, but the upperside was not that of a Wall Brown. I only managed two photos before it flew away 😞 .



When I got home and consulted my books, I realised that it must be a Large Wall Brown even though it seemed to be the same size as a regular Wall Brown. I thought for a moment that it might be a Northern Wall Brown, but these fly at higher altitudes than where I was, and they have a faint dark postdiscal line on the hindwing upperside. Even so, this is only the third Large Wall Brown that I have seen.

Another unexpected sighting was that of a Glanville Fritillary which looked brand-new. I hadn't seen any, or at least hadn't photographed any, since the end of May.





In addition, I saw a couple of Cleopatras, a few Marbled Whites, some Small Skippers and two or three Silver-washed Fritillaries.

--

Colin

Re: CFB

by CFB, 28-Jul-14 02:25 PM GMT

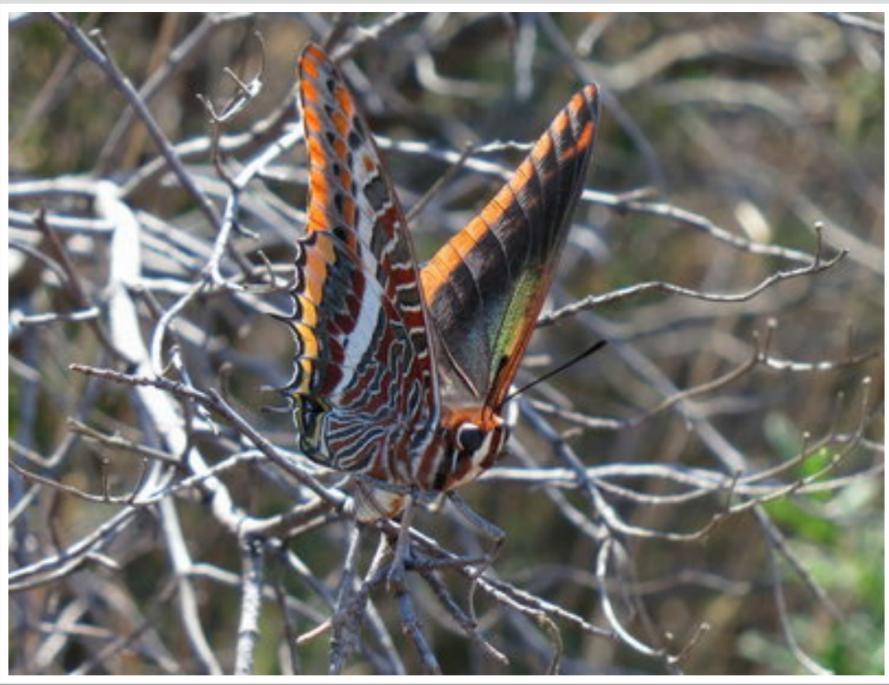
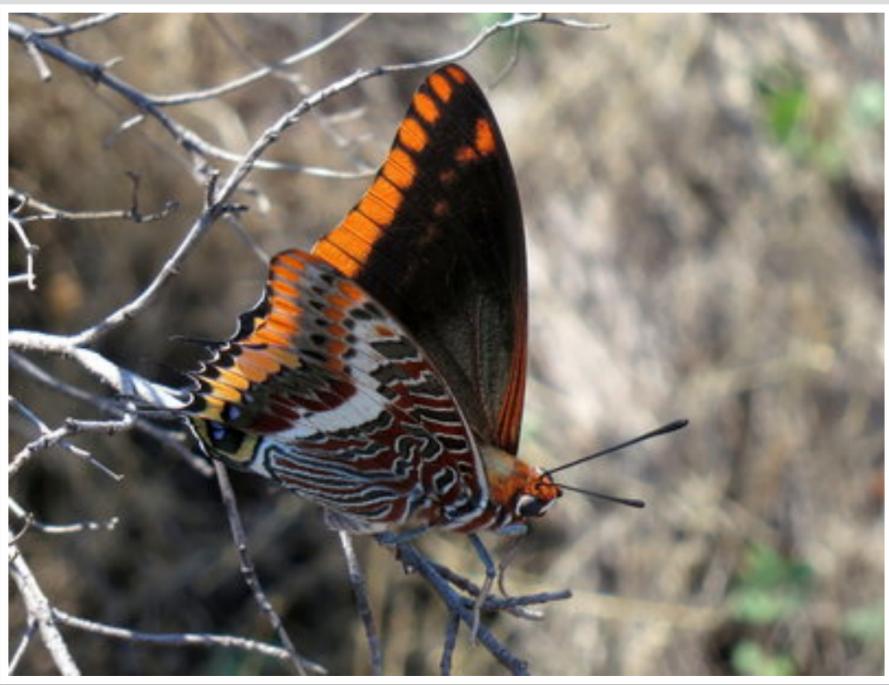
After a few days of seeing hardly any butterflies, I decided to see if the Southern Gatekeepers and Two-tailed Pashas were flying at the Terme Blanc. This is the top of a hill with volcanic origins from where the 360 degree view covers: Nice and the hills inland from Nice; Corsica if it is a very clear day, which it wasn't; Antibes; the Iles de Lérins, a couple of kilometres south of Cannes; the hills above Grasse; and the Alpes on the French-Italian border, with some snow still on the Gêlas and the Clapier.

Well there were dozens of Southern Gatekeepers 😊😊. With each step along the path two or three flew off. They were very difficult to photograph, either because they flew away or because they were at almost ground level between waist-high bushes. In fact there was only one which was helpful, a female, who stayed at arm's length for some time.



However there was only one magnificent Two-tailed Pasha, though in fact all Two-tailed Pashas are magnificent *n'est-ce pas?* At first it was being chased by what I believe were a couple of Large Wall Browns. After a time my Two-tailed Pasha alighted on a bush and stayed there while I took photo from various angles.





Note the iridescence on the left fore-wing in the last photo.

An interesting cactus which grows in this region is the Prickly Pear (*Opuntia ficus-indica*):



There were hardly any other butterflies to be seen, just two Spotted Fritillaries and a Common Blue.

--
Colin

Re: CFB

by Chris Jackson, 28-Jul-14 03:03 PM GMT

Colin,

I still have plenty of Southern Gatekeepers flying in Vitrolles (at work) and around Marseilles, however I can hardly believe that the 2nd generation 2-tail Pasha is flying already 🤔.

I thought that mid August was the earliest for them! *Incroyable!*

Well, I must keep my eyes open for that.

Cheers, Chris

PS : I put "Terme Blanc alpes maritimes" in Google maps but couldn't identify your view-point.

Re: CFB

by CFB, 28-Jul-14 04:46 PM GMT

Chris,

Try copying

43.644200 7.101774

just like that into Google. This gives the top of the hill even though Terme Blanc is not mentioned on the map. The IGN map 3643 ET names it though.

Whilst waiting for my Tree Grayling, here's what I believe to be a male from last year 😊 :



--

Colin

Re: CFB

by Chris Jackson, 29-Jul-14 07:27 AM GMT

"CFB" wrote:

... Try copying

43.644200 7.101774

just like that into Google ...

That works fine, Colin! Nice view from up there I bet 😊

Your last year's *statilinus* does look like a male.

I will be out on the plateau of Vitrolles at lunch today looking for a 2nd brood Pasha, but it seems a bit early to me.

Chris

Re: CFB

by CFB, 29-Jul-14 02:39 PM GMT

This morning was sunny and a bit cooler 😊 as I walked along towards Roche d'Ardy.

The most common butterfly today seemed to be the Large Skippers, but there were probably even more dragonflies.

There were several Glanville Fritillaries, but fewer Spotted Fritillaries, including this one:



I saw two Common Blues, a male and a female. This is the male:



There were several Berger's Clouded Yellows, but only one regular Clouded Yellow:



There are still quite a few Cleopatras, but today they were somewhat elusive. But I managed to take a reasonable photo of this male. It's a pity about the missing bit of wing 😞 .



I saw an even more elusive Wood White which hardly ever stopped flying, and didn't stay for very long on the few occasions it did land. There were also a couple of Marbled Whites, and quite a lot of Wall Browns.

--

Colin

Re: CFB

by CFB, 30-Jul-14 01:46 PM GMT

After thunder and heavy rain late yesterday afternoon, this morning was cloudless and not too hot. I went to the Parc de la Brague. There are still very few species around, once again the Large Skippers being the most abundant. However the first butterfly I saw was a Southern White Admiral, and I saw one or two more later on. This is the first time that I've noticed the grey spot on each hind-wing, on which there are also traces of red.



Some time later I saw this male Provence Chalkhill Blue. In fact I suppose it could be a regular Chalkhill Blue which flies at about this time, but these are generally further north and at higher altitudes than where I was. Any definite ID would be much appreciated.



There were also several Small Heaths:



Apart from that I saw a Scarce Swallowtail, a few Spotted Fritillaries, one Weaver's Fritillary, many Wall Browns and a Southern Small White. But no Cleopatras or any sort of Clouded Yellows.

--

Colin

Re: CFB

by CFB, 05-Aug-14 02:01 PM GMT

After a few days of seeing very few butterflies 😞 , this morning on the way to Roche d'Ardy there were surprisingly many.

Amongst the Fritillaries were one male and two female (of which one was *valesina*) Silver-washed, two or three Spotted, a couple of Heath, one Weaver's and one Knapweed:



There were several Large Skippers, one Dingy Skipper, and my first Silver-spotted Skipper of the year 😊 :



Several Small Heaths were seen including this one:



I saw my first two Tree Graylings of the year 😊 . This is one of them:



A Clouded Yellow flew past at great speed, so no photo 😞 , as did several Berger's Clouded Yellows. But this one let me take a few photos:



Apart from that there was a male Adonis Blue, probably a Common Blue, a couple of Cleopatras and several Wall Browns.

--
Colin

Re: CFB

by Chris Jackson, 06-Aug-14 12:37 PM GMT

Congratulations Colin on your first Tree Graylings of the year. For me, this species usually marks the end of my yearly check-list, apart from any vagrants that may pass through later.

I photographed my first 2nd-brood Pasha this lunchtime.

Cheers, Chris

Re: CFB

by CFB, 07-Aug-14 07:07 PM GMT

This morning it was quite hot so I walked along the Chemin du Bruguet, which has some trees on each side of the road to give some shade.

The first butterfly seen was a Southern White Admiral followed closely by a Silver-washed Fritillary, form *valesina*:



and a bit further along, a male Silver-washed Fritillary:



There were a few Spotted Fritillaries, a very tatty Weaver's Fritillary, several Small Heaths, a Grizzled Skipper, several Large Skippers, and this cute Silver-spotted Skipper:



I am still waiting to see my first Purple Hairstreak of the year. It shouldn't be long now.

--

Colin

Re: CFB

by Chris Jackson, 08-Aug-14 08:40 AM GMT

When you find your Purple H., Colin, please post a photo of its environment so that I know where to look out for one.
Thanks, Chris

Re: CFB

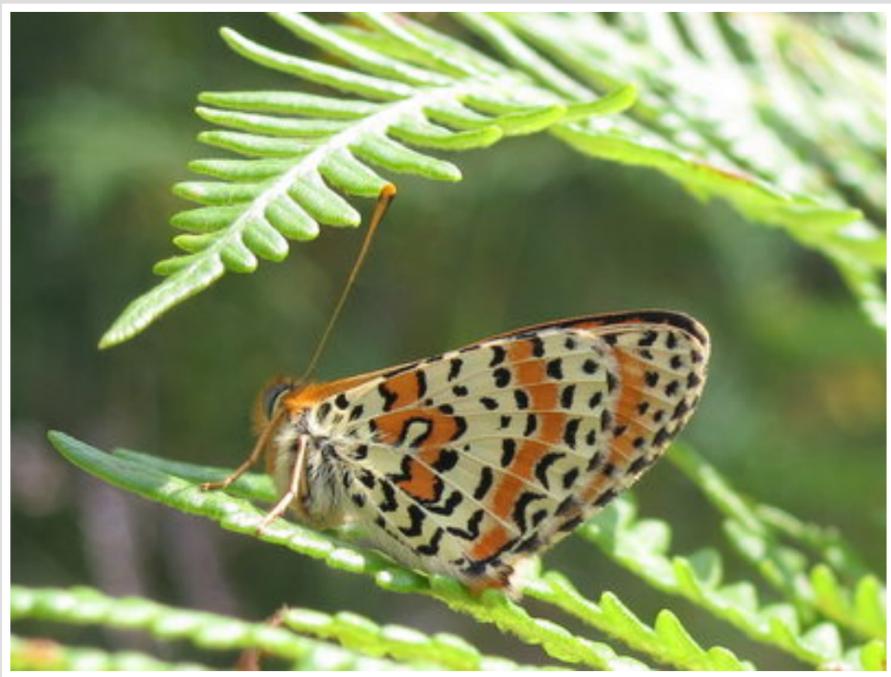
by CFB, 11-Aug-14 07:06 PM GMT

OK Chris, I'll try to remember to do that. Incidentally, in 2011 we had several Purple Hairstreaks in and around the swimming pool. They seemed to try to get low enough over the pool to drink some water, in the same way that swallows do, but occasionally they misjudge things and end up in the pool. I have a photo of one which was rescued by my good wife. After drying out, it flew off. It probably helps that there is a large oak tree in a corner of the garden. Then in 2012 they were again seen in the garden, on hydrangeas I think.

This morning it was very hot once again, so I tried to keep on paths amongst the trees. My first photos were of a delightful Wood White. There must have been something special about the scabious plant, as the Wood White was still there half an hour later when I was going back. At least I think it was the same one as there weren't any anywhere else.



Further on there was a solitary Spotted Fritillary trying to hide in the bracken. It seemed to be in very good condition even though there appears to be only one antenna.



There were several Berger's Clouded Yellows. This one is a female:



She was busy with her scabious when along came a male. And I managed to get a photo of the upper-sides of both:



I was quite surprised to see a couple of male Cleopatras, and I got this back-lit shot:



Also seen were several Large Skippers, several Wall Browns, a Tree Grayling and a Speckled Wood.

--
Colin

Re: CFB

by Chris Jackson, 11-Aug-14 08:45 PM GMT

I like the upper-side shot of the Cloudies, Colin, it is one my favourite challenges.
Chris

Re: CFB

by David M, 11-Aug-14 09:30 PM GMT

"CFB" wrote:

I was quite surprised to see a couple of male Cleopatras, and I got this back-lit shot

Not an image often seen on here, Colin, but nonetheless extremely attractive.

Re: CFB

by CFB, 12-Aug-14 02:43 PM GMT

Still very hot, but with a little bit of wind to cool it down a bit.

Today's first picture on my way towards the Pont des Dones was a Tree Grayling. Being a dark-coloured butterfly, not being lit by the sun, on a light-coloured stone lit by the sun, is not very helpful for the photographer 😞



A Glanville Fritillary in excellent condition, on a suitably coloured stone was much more helpful 😊



However the only Adonis Blue seen was not in excellent condition:



Today there were more Berger's Clouded Yellows than any other species. Most of them were males. But there were few females, one being in this photo:



Other species seen included several Large Skippers, one or two Silver-spotted Skippers, one Dingy Skipper, some Small Heaths, Wall Browns and Meadow Browns, Spotted and Silver-washed Fritillaries, and a Scarce Swallowtail.

--

Colin

Re: CFB

by CFB, 13-Aug-14 07:18 PM GMT

This morning there was heavy rain with thunder. So I didn't go out. However in the afternoon the sky started to clear so I went down to the Mardaric, a stream which is currently dry.

On my way there I saw this Red Admiral, which was quite an event as the last photo of one was at the end of February.



Another event was seeing a Comma, the last one I saw being at the end of April. I didn't manage to get very close today, so this is a highly cropped photo:



And yet another event, a Small Copper, although I do see more of these than the two previous species:



On the way back, by which time the sky had cleared completely, I saw what could perhaps be a Scarlet Darter:



Apart from these, I also saw a few Heath Fritillaries, and several Spotted Fritillaries, all of which seemed to be males, and all in very good condition.

--
Colin

Re: CFB

by CFB, 14-Aug-14 02:03 PM GMT

It was several degrees cooler this morning compared to the previous few days, but with a cloudless sky, as I walked towards la Roche d'Ardy.

There were two or three Tree Graylings. Although they are easily disturbed, they don't fly very far away before coming to land, which is a good thing as they are not easy to see once on the ground. Why are they named Tree Graylings? They are hardly ever seen on trees in my experience.



There were quite a few Silver-spotted Skippers around. They seemed to spend a lot of time chasing various fritillaries.



A very smart Red-underwing Skipper allowed me to get quite close,



as did this Large Skipper.



One Weaver's Fritillary, many Spotted Fritillaries, a courting couple of Knapweed Fritillaries,



and several Glanville Fritillaries were spotted.



Other butterflies seen included a Southern White Admiral, Wall Browns, Speckled Woods, and nearer home, a Common Blue.

--
Colin

Re: CFB

by CFB, 16-Aug-14 01:42 PM GMT

Yesterday - Parc de la Brague

Southern White Admiral:



Heath fritillary under-side:



Male Adonis Blue:



Male Common Blue:



My first Purple Hairstreak of the year. Very tatty, but what else could it be? Sorry Chris, no photo of its habitat as I didn't realise that it was a Purple Hairstreak until I saw it on my computer at home.



Today - Near la Roche d'Ardy

Weaver's Fritillary:



Female Berger's Clouded Yellow:



Female Long-tailed Blue. My first of the year, a few days later than Chris.



--
Colin

Re: CFB

by Chris Jackson, 16-Aug-14 07:56 PM GMT

That Purple Hairstreak must have been around for a while already, Colin – perhaps a fresher one will turn up soon.

At least we have confirmed the arrival of the Long-tailed Blue. 😊

Chris

Re: CFB

by CFB, 22-Aug-14 05:18 PM GMT

With the visit of three grand-daughters I haven't taken many photos these last few days, even though on our walks we did see quite a few butterflies.

But I'm not complaining – they are such delightful girls 😊😊😊 .

However I did get shots of three Fritillaries. There were one or two Spotted Fritillaries, including this one,



several Silver-washed Fritillaries, including this courting couple,



and, this morning a Knapword Fritillary on a Knapweed:



Also seen were Berger's Clouded Yellows, Silver-spotted Skippers, Meadow Browns and Adonis Blues. And when we were having lunch today there was a Two-tailed Pasha in our Arbutus tree. I dashed out with my camera, but failed to get a photo 😞 .

--
Colin

Re: CFB

by Chris Jackson, 24-Aug-14 07:45 PM GMT

Better luck next time with the Two-tailed Pasha, Colin.

Things are very calm butterfly-wise around Marseilles, however with the reappearance of one or two species that have been absent for a few months:

Painted Lady, Red Admiral, Clouded Yellow ...

Last year in September there was a pick-up in the number of BFs when some autumn plants flowered and the buddleias flowered for the last time.
Cheers, Chris

Re: CFB

by CFB, 25-Aug-14 07:29 PM GMT

Chris, yesterday near Gourdon at about 850 metres altitude we saw a few Clouded Yellows.



But the most frequently seen butterfly was easily the Meadow Brown; we must have seen hundreds of them.

Today, lower down, there were a few Adonis Blues,



Several Meadow Browns, but nothing like yesterday,



and a few Weaver's Fritillaries,



Also seen were a Southern White Admiral, Spotted and Knapweed Fritillaries, Berger's Clouded Yellows, and Large and Silver-spotted Skippers.
--
Colin

Re: CFB

by David M, 25-Aug-14 09:03 PM GMT

It's great that you're still seeing plenty of species, Colin. Here in the cold and wet UK it feels more like early October. Meadow Browns have all but gone and most other species still lingering are worn and elderly.

Re: CFB

by CFB, 29-Aug-14 01:49 PM GMT

It's still hot and dry here, David 😊😊😊.

This morning during a short walk along the Piste de Darbousson, I saw my first two Woodland Graylings of the year, bringing my year count to 76. I couldn't get very close to either of them, but did at least get a photo or two:



The most frequently seen butterflies were Berger's Clouded Yellows and Silver-spotted Skippers:



Also seen were Meadow Browns, Wall Browns, Small Heaths, a Common Blue, and Spotted, Knapweed and Heath Fritillaries.

This afternoon while watering the garden (yes, there are some disadvantages in living down here) I saw this brand-new-looking Scarce Swallowtail on a Red valerian (*Centranthus ruber*) plant. It didn't seem to be bothered by my presence, perhaps because it was somewhat cloudy at the time (yes, we do have clouds down here):



--
Colin

Re: CFB

by Chris Jackson, 30-Aug-14 09:33 AM GMT

That's a respectable tally Colin, 76. And I must put some Red Valerian in my garden – a good idea – perhaps its no too late in the season. Do you think that Red Valerian from a garden centre would be as effective as some taken from the wild ?

Cheers, Chris

Re: CFB

by CFB, 30-Aug-14 01:25 PM GMT

Chris, I don't know whether Red Valerian is sold in garden centres. My wife considers it to be a weed.

It's very hot again here. This morning I visited the Parc de la Brague. No Berger's Clouded Yellows, fewer Silver-spotted Skippers. I think there were more Wall Browns than any other species. Here's a male:



There were still the occasional Weaver's Fritillary,



the occasional Spotted Fritillary, and two Silver-washed Fritillaries, including this *valesina*:



Also seen were a couple of Adonis Blues, a couple of Provence Chalkhill Blues, several Wood Whites and some Small Heaths.

--
Colin

Re: CFB

by CFB, 31-Aug-14 02:32 PM GMT

There was a surprising variety of butterflies around la Roche d'Ardy this morning, starting with a courting couple of Heath Fritillaries. They don't seem to be in the most comfortable of positions 😊 .



Several other Heath Fritillaries were seen, as were several Spotted Fritillaries:



There were many Wood Whites, and once again a courting couple engaged in the activity described [[url=http://www.ukbutterflies.co.uk/species.php?species=sinapis:3dpmc5iw](http://www.ukbutterflies.co.uk/species.php?species=sinapis:3dpmc5iw)]here[/[url:3dpmc5iw](http://www.ukbutterflies.co.uk/species.php?species=sinapis:3dpmc5iw)],



and a fresh specimen all by itself:



As usual at this time of the year and this location there were a few camouflaged Tree Graylings:



Also photographed were Adonis Blues, including this male,



and a solitary Southern White Admiral:



Also seen were very many Silver-spotted Skippers and Berger's Clouded Yellows.

--

Colin

Re: CFB

by CFB, 01-Sep-14 06:02 PM GMT

Very hot. Short walk in afternoon. Not many butterflies. No photos. But I did see two male Cleopatras, which is a bit unusual for this time of the year. Well perhaps not all that unusual, I just checked photos in previous years and I found one on 3 September 2010 and one on 20 September 2013.

The European Bee-eaters seem to be getting ready to go back to where they came from in the spring.

--

Colin

Re: CFB

by CFB, 04-Sep-14 06:35 PM GMT

Some photos from the last three days.

One of several Adonis Blues:



One of several Spotted Fritillaries:



Another Adonis Blue:



One of many Tree Graylings, this one with a very unmarked underwing:



One of a few Knapweed Fritillaries:



One of very few Weaver's Fritillaries:



Also seen, several Provence Chalkhill Blues, many Silver-spotted Skippers, a few Silver-washed Fritillaries, several Meadow Browns and a few Berger's Clouded Yellows.

--

Colin

Re: CFB

by Chris Jackson, 04-Sep-14 09:30 PM GMT

I'm amazed you see so many Adonis Blues, Colin, I've not seen one at all this year, and I saw very few in 2013.

For info, this week no more Southern Gatekeepers are flying across my way. Their season has ended 3 weeks earlier than last year.

I'm impressed by the open-wing Woodland shot you posted in my thread. 😊

Cheers, Chris

Re: CFB

by CFB, 09-Sep-14 01:56 PM GMT

There are still not many butterflies flying around here. And one which is presumably no longer mobile is the Two-tailed Pasha which lost this piece of wing 😞😞😞 found in the garden yesterday:



Today in the Parc de la Brague the most frequently seen butterflies were male Provence Chalkhill Blues. These two photos are of two different individuals. (If anyone says that these are regular Chalkhill Blues, I won't argue.)



There were several Burnet Moths (*Zygaena fausta*), including this very photogenic one:



Also seen were Meadow Browns, Small Heaths, a Southern White Admiral, a Speckled Wood, Wall Browns, Wood Whites, a few Berger's Clouded Yellows and a couple of Silver-washed Fritillaries.

--
Colin

Re: CFB

by CFB, 10-Sep-14 05:53 PM GMT

The weather forecast had predicted rain for this morning, but it was sunny 😊 . So I walked along to la Roche d'Ardy. The Yellow Odontites (*Odontites luteus* or *lutea*) attracted, as usual, several butterflies in particular Provence Chalkhill Blues and Adonis Blues. This photo is of one of the Adonis Blues:



I only saw one Tree Grayling. It was in really bad shape, and had trouble flying 😞 . But at least I was able to see, for the first time, most of the underwing 😊 :



There are still several Berger's Clouded Yellows around, including this female:



I was pleased to see, and photograph two male Cleopatras, both in very fine condition. This is one of them:



Also seen were a few Knapweed Fritillaries, a Mallow Skipper, several Silver-spotted Skippers, Meadow Browns and Wall Browns, and a Wood White.

Perhaps the rain is for this evening, as it is now thundering.

--

Colin

Re: CFB

by David M, 10-Sep-14 06:29 PM GMT

Do Cleopatras and Berger's Clouded Yellows hibernate as adults down your way, Colin?

Re: CFB

by CFB, 10-Sep-14 07:03 PM GMT

David,

According to T&L, Cleopatras hibernate as adults and Berger's Clouded Yellows hibernate as small larvae.

According to Wikipedia, the adult Cleopatra hibernates in evergreen trees and shrubs.

Cheers,
Colin

Re: CFB

by David M, 10-Sep-14 08:14 PM GMT

Thanks, Colin.

Not surprising that Cleopatras and Brimstones hibernate in much the same way. Must be lovely to see one in February down there.

Re: CFB

by CFB, 16-Sep-14 02:14 PM GMT

After a few days of seeing very few butterflies, this morning in the Parc de la Brague there was quite a choice. The most frequently seen were probably Provence Chalkhill Blues, including a courting couple:



There were also many Meadow Browns and Wall Browns, but no photos of these. There were several Common Blues, and I managed to photograph a male and a female:



I saw one or two Tree Graylings and three Woodland Graylings. This is one of the Woodland Graylings:



Also seen were one or two Small Heaths, two male Berger's Clouded Yellows and an unidentified White.

--

Colin

Re: CFB

by Chris Jackson, 16-Sep-14 03:17 PM GMT

Good upperside shot of the Provence Chalkhill Blue pair, Colin. I wish I had a few of your species across my way, including the Woodland Grayling. Cheers, Chris

Re: CFB

by CFB, 16-Sep-14 05:33 PM GMT

Chris, I could swap a couple of mine for a couple of your Striped Graylings and Dusky Heaths if you like 😊😊😊.

--

Colin

Re: CFB

by CFB, 18-Sep-14 06:50 PM GMT

There are fewer and fewer butterflies around as we approach autumn, the most common still being Provence Chalkhill Blues:



Several Common Blues were also seen:



And each day I seem to find one or two Burnet Moths (*Zygaena fausta*):



That's about it except for one male Berger's Clouded Yellow, and one or two Wall Browns.

--
Colin

Re: CFB

by David M, 18-Sep-14 07:08 PM GMT

I was wondering why you weren't seeing many butterflies, Colin, but then you don't seem to encounter too many of the UK vanessids in your part of the world. At the moment over here, Tortoiseshells and Red Admirals are very common sights.

Re: CFB

by CFB, 19-Sep-14 02:10 PM GMT

Even though it was cloudy all this morning, there was quite a good selection of butterflies to be found. Once again, Provence Chalkhill Blues were the most plentiful:



There were several Common Blues:



and several Adonis Blues:



The surprise of the morning was to see two or three Green-veined Whites. It's the first time I've seen any in September. In fact I don't think I've seen any later than June before:



There were three or four Silver-washed Fritillaries:



several Meadow Browns, this one perhaps being ssp. *hispulla*:



and one or two Tree Graylings:



Apart from that I saw several Wall Browns (elusive), two or three Berger's Clouded Yellows (very elusive!) and yet again some Burnet Moths (*Zygaena fausta*).

--

Colin

Re: CFB

by CFB, 21-Sep-14 01:46 PM GMT

This morning I walked along to la Roche d'Ardy. It was mainly sunny with a few clouds, and cooler than the last couple of days.

There were still many Provence Chalkhill Blues, but fewer Common Blues. This one was drying out after yesterday's rain. You can still see some drops of rain on the edge of the wing nearest the top of the plant. It was still on the same plant when I came back twenty minutes later:



I was watching some Lang's Short-tailed Blues on some *Odontites luteus* plants ...



when I realised that one of them wasn't a Lang's Short-tailed Blue but was a Long-tailed Blue. This was the best photo I managed to take of it ...



Another surprise was seeing Bath Whites ...



and Green-veined Whites ...



on Fleabane (*Dittrichia viscosa*) (thanks, Chris) together with Common Blues, an Adonis Blue and a Mallow Skipper.

Also seen were a couple of Silver-spotted Skippers, several Wall Browns, one or two Tree Graylings, a couple of Berger's Clouded Yellows and some Meadow Browns.

--

Colin

Re: CFB

by Chris Jackson, 23-Sep-14 06:46 PM GMT

Hi Colin,
I agree over my way with your sightings of Lang's STB, Long-tailed Blue, Bath White, Wall Brown and Yellow Cloudies all going crazy over those yellow flowers coming into bloom right now - what I believe to be *Dittrichia viscosa* or Fleabane in English, or *Inule visqueuse* in French. (Check that plant out on the Web !!)
Cheers, Chris

Re: CFB

by CFB, 24-Sep-14 11:40 AM GMT

Thanks Chris for the plant identification. I wasn't really happy with it being *Jacobaea erucifolia*.

An interesting quote from Wikipedia:

It is an important plant in Catalan tradition, often mentioned in adages and proverbs. One adage says that: "els raïms són madurs quan floreixen les olivardes.", the grapes are ripe when the Yellow Fleabane blooms.

A few photos from the last couple of days, but none this morning which was cool and cloudy:

Quite a lot of Small Heaths ...



Still many Provence Chalkhill Blues around. I think that this female is a Provence Chalkhill Blue, not an Adonis Blue, but I could be wrong ...



A solitary female Bath White ...



And a Meadow Brown ...



Also seen were Common Blues, Berger's Clouded Yellows, a Small Copper, Silver-washed Fritillaries, a Wood White, a Woodland Grayling, some Tree Graylings, Lang's Short-tailed Blues and a Silver-spotted Skipper.

--
Colin

Re: CFB

by CFB, 28-Sep-14 05:13 PM GMT

Some photos from the last three days.

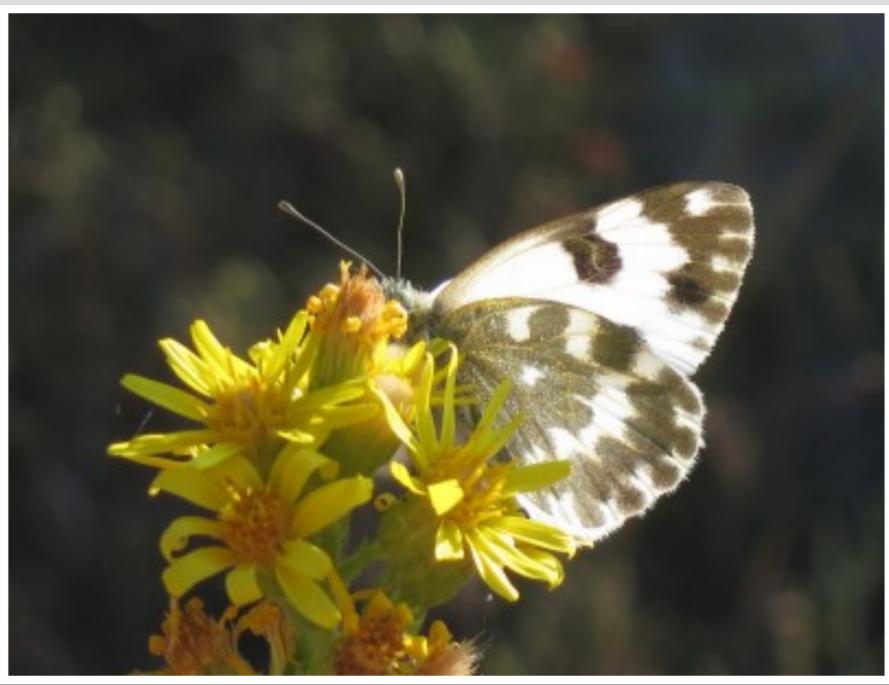
Several Lang's Short-tailed Blues were flying even though the Rosemary (*Rosmarinus officinalis*) plants they seem to like so much are not yet in flower. So this one had to make do with *Odontites lutea*...



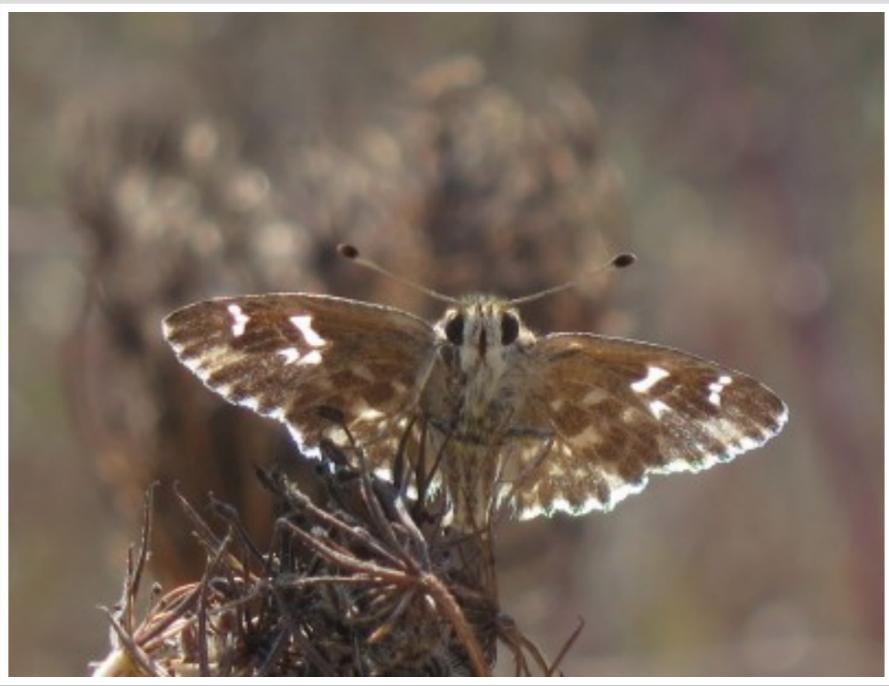
In a couple of places I saw Long-tailed Blues in the company of Lang's Short-tailed Blues. But still no upper-sides of either...



One or two Bath Whites...



This afternoon (I didn't go out this morning as I had two rugby matches to watch on the television 😊) I took this photo of the back-lit underside of a Mallow (?) Skipper...



There are still a few Berger's Clouded Yellows around, including this male...



I was however surprised to see a Clouded Yellow, as I hadn't seen any since mid-August...



Also seen: one Red Admiral 😊, Green-veined Whites, Small Whites, Silver-spotted Skippers, Common Blues, Provence Chalkhill Blues, Wall Browns, a Speckled Wood, Meadow Browns, Silver-washed Fritillaries (including form *valesina*) and two Great Banded Graylings.

--
Colin

Re: CFB

by CFB, 02-Oct-14 05:01 PM GMT

Today was a really nice day: sunny, no wind, not too hot, and a surprising number of butterflies.

I was pleased to see some more Bath Whites. I don't think I've seen as many in previous years. This female is enjoying the Fleabane (*Dittrichia viscosa*), as are the butterflies in all the following photos...



There were once again more Provence Chalkhill Blues (no photos) than any other species, closely followed by Berger's Clouded Yellows. I managed to get a photo of the upper-side of a female...



And of course there was a male not very far away...



This female was very helpful, allowing me to get a couple of nice photos...



I only managed one photo of this Large (???) Wall Brown...



I saw just one Clouded Yellow, a female, just before getting back to my car...



Also seen were many Wall Browns, a Speckled Wood, several Lang's Short-tailed Blues, some Adonis Blues, a very damaged male Silver-washed Fritillary and a Southern Small White. But no Meadow Browns or Skippers.

--

Colin

Re: CFB

by David M, 02-Oct-14 06:01 PM GMT

Great images, Colin. I'm still yet to see a female Bath White. They're so much more attractive than the males.

Re: CFB

by CFB, 02-Oct-14 06:36 PM GMT

Thanks, David. I agree, they are really beautiful.

--

Colin

Re: CFB

by CFB, 03-Oct-14 01:42 PM GMT

This morning I went to la Roche d'Ardy. It was nice and sunny, but now there are a few clouds.

There were many Lang's Short-tailed Blues in and around the Odontite plants. This one is a male...



I'm pretty sure that this one is also a male...



I saw a couple of Small Heaths...



and one male Cleopatra...



I also saw many Provence Chalkhill Blues, a few Adonis Blues, one (or perhaps two) Red Admirals, several Wall Browns, a few Berger's Clouded Yellows and one Clouded Yellow.

--

Colin

Re: CFB

by CFB, 06-Oct-14 04:30 PM GMT

Three more October butterflies from Saturday:

A Small Copper (I saw them as late as November 20 two years ago)...



a male Wall Brown...



and a male Common Blue...



--
Colin

Re: CFB

by CFB, 19-Oct-14 01:15 PM GMT

Yesterday there were two Red Admirals on and around our Arbutus tree, taking advantage of the numerous flowers on it. But no photos.

This morning in the Parc de la Brague I thought that I was never going to see any butterflies. But then I found a couple of Fleabane plants still in flower. On one such plant at the same time there was a female Bath White...



and a female Clouded Yellow...



A Small Copper put in a brief appearance, but didn't want to be photographed.
Not far away were several Lang's Short-tailed Blues. They all seemed to be males...



When I got home there were some more Lang's Short-tailed Blues on the Rosemary (*Rosmarinus officinalis*) plants just outside our front gate.

I also saw some male Provence Chalkhill Blues. And that was all 😞

--
Colin

Re: CFB

by Chris Jackson, 20-Oct-14 06:47 AM GMT

Hi Colin,
My sightings over in Marseilles agree with what you're seeing at the moment: Red Admiral, Clouded Yellow, Lang's STB, Bath White. There is also a surprising presence of Berger's CY, or it is probably just that I never noticed them before, and my eyes are better tuned with experience to spotting them 😊

The Sticky Fleabane is beoming fewer and far between.
Cheers, Chris

Re: CFB

by CFB, 27-Oct-14 05:05 PM GMT

This morning I walked up the Piste des Tamarins along which is my main Lang's Short-tailed Blue colony. And they were there in their dozens 😊😊😊. But they were very active and difficult to photograph 😞. However I did manage to get a couple of shots. This is a very damaged male...



and this a female in much better condition...



There were a few Speckled Woods, including this one taking advantage of the sun to do a bit of sunbathing...



There were also several Wall Browns flying, but nothing else.

--
Colin

Re: CFB

by Chris Jackson, 28-Oct-14 08:18 AM GMT

It does feel like the end of the season Colin.

I too am seeing relatively large numbers of active Lang's STBs whereas the other species are dwindling.

Chris

Re: CFB

by CFB, 01-Nov-14 05:17 PM GMT

There is however still some activity going on. Together with a Berger's Clouded Yellow that I didn't manage to photograph, I saw the following butterflies:

Several Lang's Short-tailed Blues, including this male...



one Speckled Wood...



several Wall Browns...



and a solitary Red Admiral...



Today was sunny, cold in the shade but warm enough in the sun to be in a t-shirt. A nice way to start the month of November 😊😊😊.

--
Colin