

Re: Alex Berryman

by ABerryman, 05-Apr-14 07:41 PM GMT

It seems ages since I was last on here; looks like everyone's season has got off to a good start; I had my first Orange Tip this morning though it as not keen at all on having its photo taken!

Last year was my first proper season with butterflies and I learnt so much, especially from a number of people on here, so thank you! I am looking forward to the season ahead, with numerous places planned (including my first trip to Bentley Wood!).

Anyway, happy butterflying everyone!!

Alex

Re: Alex Berryman

by Pauline, 05-Apr-14 08:22 PM GMT

Good to see you back Alex. Was just thinking 'bout you the other day when I found myself within arms reach of an owl and no camear!!! 😞

Re: Alex Berryman

by ABerryman, 05-Apr-14 08:33 PM GMT

Oh dear, I know exactly how that feels, it is very infuriating!! Hope you and your animals are well? Hopefully seen you again at some point this year.

I have spent the last few months photographing almost exclusively birds so butterflies are beginning to make a welcome change! Photos from recent trips can be found on my flickr page (apologies for shameless plug!)

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/alexberryman>

Re: Alex Berryman

by Wurzel, 07-Apr-14 09:54 PM GMT

Good news about the first Orange-tip 😊 I'm still searching for mine 🍷 If you can try to make a couple of visits to Bentley Wood, one for fresh Pearl Bordered, then a few weeks later for Small Pearls and finally in mid to late July for Purple Emperor (unless you have a better site that is as Bentley is good but can be hit or miss). If you're constrained by family then one visit might be enough for both Pearl and Small Pearls but the Pearls might be slightly worn by then. 😊 Good luck with it, might even see you there.

Have a goodun

Wurzel

Re: Alex Berryman

by ABerryman, 07-Apr-14 11:02 PM GMT

"Wurzel" wrote:

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Have a goodun

Wurzel

I will try and make at least a couple of visits, though unfortunately exams are going to be a real pain this year (certainly for Pearl-Bordered). I should be able to get over there in the first week of June, so should hopefully get Small Pearl Bordered and maybe some late Pearl Bordered (maybe even Marsh Frit if they are around?). The last two years I have visited Alice Holt/Chiddingfold for Purple Emperors – though this year I should have a bit more time to hopefully explore some new areas such as Bentley!

all the best,

Alex

Re: Alex Berryman

by MikeOxon, 08-Apr-14 11:19 AM GMT

"ABerryman" wrote:

Photos from recent trips can be found on my flickr page (apologies for shameless plug!)

Thank you for the 'shameless plug' - I really enjoyed your photos 😊

I liked the way you included the location in your Grey Phalarope pic - too many bird shots could be taken 'anywhere'. These birds occasionally turn up at my local Farmoor Reservoir and are always extremely confiding. I joked to a friend that a wide-angle would be more useful than a tele, when one wanted to investigate his lens hood!

Mike

Re: Alex Berryman

by ABerryman, 09-Apr-14 10:34 PM GMT

"MikeOxon" wrote:

"ABerryman" wrote:

Photos from recent trips can be found on my flickr page (apologies for shameless plug!)

Thank you for the 'shameless plug' - I really enjoyed your photos 😊

I liked the way you included the location in your Grey Phalarope pic - too many bird shots could be taken 'anywhere'. These birds occasionally turn up at my local Farmoor Reservoir and are always extremely confiding. I joked to a friend that a wide-angle would be more useful than a tele, when one wanted to investigate his lens hood!

Mike

Hi Mike,
Grey Phals are fantastic birds and it seemed a shame to come away without having shots of the bird in its habitat (even if that was totally ridiculous!!). I was up your way today then, I came to Farmoor to see the Red-Necked, and what a beauty it was. Also try to visit otmoor at least once a year for the Turtle Doves. Still haven't been in search of butterflies up that way though, anything worth investigating?

All the best,

Alex



Re: Alex Berryman

by MikeOxon, 09-Apr-14 11:31 PM GMT

"ABerryman" wrote:

Still haven't been in search of butterflies up that way though, anything worth investigating?

Nice photos of the beautiful RINGREBE – I went back for another look myself this afternoon.

I would rate Oxon as a great County for butterflies!

The County has all 5 Hairstreaks, for example. The Bernwood Forest complex, NE of Oxford city is regaining a lot of its former glory, thanks to good management aimed at butterflies and, in addition to Brown and Black Hairstreaks, has Purple Emperor and Silver-washed Fritillary, all of which have been doing well in recent years.

In the South of the County, Hartslock reserve, near Goring, has Green Hairstreak and Adonis Blue, while Aston Rowant, right alongside the M40, is a great place to see Silver-spotted Skippers and Chalkhill Blue.

All worth investigating 😊

Mike

Re: Noar Hill

by ABerryman, 05-May-14 10:52 PM GMT

My first proper outing of the season! After two full days of revision (exams start a week today which is frankly rather terrifying) I decided a few butterflies were in order, so my mum agreed to take me to Noar Hill. I'd never been before but I must say it is a fantastic site and definitely one to visit again in the future.

We didn't arrive until about 2pm but after about 200m the first **Duke of Burgundy** was showing! Over the next couple of hours we enjoyed over a dozen Dukes across the area along with 5-6 **Dinghy Skippers**. No Green Hairstreaks though one had been seen earlier.

Getting photos of the Dukes proved really rather difficult; I now have huge admiration for those who get fantastic shots of these beauties! They never seemed to settle off the ground, is there a certain time of day to get them nectaring/landing higher up?

Anyway here are a couple of photos; a rather boldly marked Dinghy...



And of course one of several dukes...



Re: Alex Berryman

by Wurzel, 05-May-14 11:08 PM GMT

Great shots Alex 😊 I asked a similar question about Dukes in Pete's PD so if you have a read through his reply there are some great tips about when and where to find them posing nicely.

Good luck with the Exams, and just think that once they're over you'll have loads of time for butterflying just as the summer wave of butterflies emerges 😊

Have a goodun

Wurzel

Re: Alex Berryman

by Pauline, 06-May-14 06:13 AM GMT

Very nice Duke Alex. Good luck with the exams and hope to see you out and about afterwards.

Noar Hill (Round 2)

by ABerryman, 11-May-14 02:23 PM GMT

Well despite the fact I was meant to be revising all day I somehow accidentally ended up back at Noar Hill yesterday morning! Heavy showers were forecast but thankfully these failed to materialise and in the 2 hours I was there the weather was fantastic (apart from the strong winds).

Amazingly not a single other person was seen in the time I was there! Totals for the day:

14 Duke of Burgundy (conservative estimate) including at least 4 females.

9 Dinghy Skippers

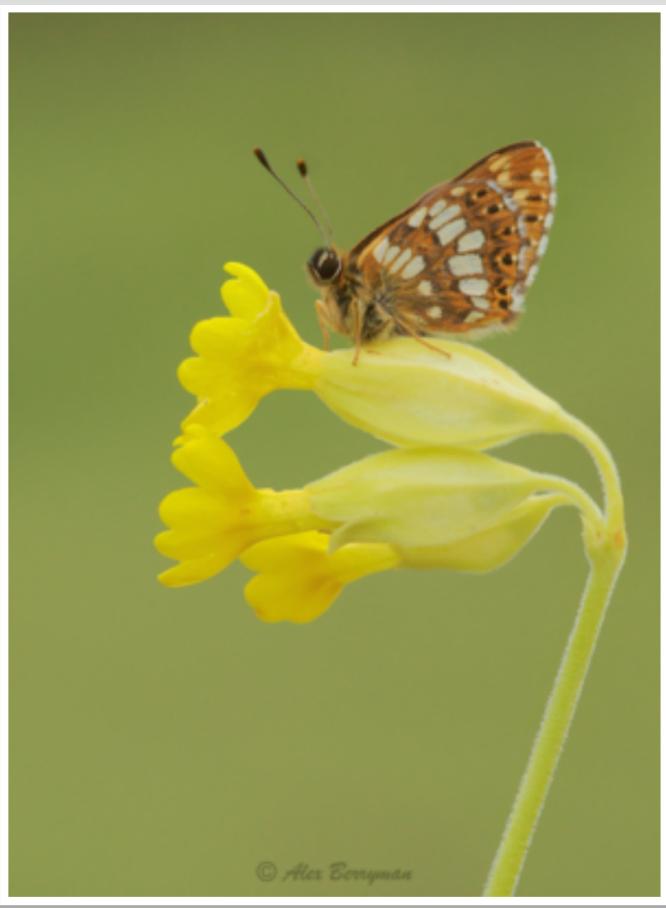
1 Green Hairstreak

1 Common Blue

1 Small Copper

Photography was challenging due to the high winds but the dukes posed beautifully on the Buttercups and Cowslips...





As a side note, does anyone know the reason why a number of butterfly's antennae are striped black and white (for example both Dukes and Brown Hairstreaks seem to have this)?

Re: Alex Berryman

by Wurzel, 13-May-14 06:32 PM GMT

Great shots and good to see you being so constructive with your revision breaks 😊😄 I hope the exams are going well. I tried a brief search into why a lot of butterflies have black and white antennae but it didn't reveal anything – as they're important organs I can only suggest the stripiness breaks up their outline perhaps offering some protective camouflage? 😊

Have a goodun

Wurzel

Green Hairstreak Help!!

by ABerryman, 15-May-14 05:08 PM GMT

A small number of Green Hairstreaks are found each year on in my area and yesterday afternoon I decided to try and get a rough idea of population size. No less than 14 individuals were seen which was very encouraging including 5 in an area I had never found them previously. It was here I noticed and watched a female ovipositing at the top of a small Broom.

Rather annoyingly I only had my binoculars so decided to return this afternoon with my camera.

I arrived to find the council wombles, whose inadequacy and incompetence never fail to astound me, strimming the area. Apparently the area needed 'tidying', and 1 of the 4 brooms the Hairstreak had laid on was now in pieces on the floor. I kindly informed the man that not only was he tearing through butterfly habitat but also was about 2m away from destroying a Chiffchaff nest I had also found yesterday afternoon. 'Oh' he replied, 'I better stop then'. He laughed. I didn't. Thankfully the remaining 3 brooms are intact and the council have assured me that they will only carry out maintenance in the area if it is 'essential'...whatever that actually means.

I decided to search through the destroyed broom and found 1 G.Hairstreak egg. I was in a bit of a hurry but will go back tomorrow morning and search through it a little more thoroughly. I have brought the egg home (pic below) and I will do my best to try and rear it before releasing next spring. Here is where I need some help! I have reared a few species before, though never from ova! It seems unlikely that the broom will survive very long (though it is now in water and looking OK) in which case it is going to be difficult for when the larvae bore into the leaves/buds of the plant. Any advice? (And any other general advice for rearing this species is much appreciated!)



Re: Alex Berryman

by Pauline, 15-May-14 05:39 PM GMT

Well done Alex, both on stopping the strimming and saving the egg. I am sure there will be folk on this site who can give you the guidance you need. I shall be fascinated to watch the progress having reared 3 other Hairstreaks.

Re: Alex Berryman

by ABerryman, 16-May-14 05:18 PM GMT

Still lots of G.Hairstreaks around – at least 7 today on a quick circuit including this one about 50m from the front door!



Re: Alex Berryman

by David M, 16-May-14 05:46 PM GMT

"ABerryman" wrote:

Still lots of G.Hairstreaks around – at least 7 today on a quick circuit including this one about 50m from the front door!

Wow! I have them within walking distance of my house but not **that** close!

Nicely marked individual too.

Re: Alex Berryman

by Maximus, 18-May-14 10:40 AM GMT

Nice photos in your recent posts Alex and well done for stopping the council workers strimming the Green Hairstreak area, far too much of this goes on.

Mike

Re: Alex Berryman

by ABerryman, 18-May-14 10:21 PM GMT

Thanks guys. Some G.Hairstreaks looking very fresh today including this lovely *caecus* (?) individual ...



Great shots and good to see you being so constructive with your revision breaks 😊😄 I hope the exams are going well. I tried a brief search into why a lot of butterflies have black and white antennae but it didn't reveal anything – as they're important organs I can only suggest the stripiness breaks up their outline perhaps offering some protective camouflage? 😊

Have a goodun

Wurzel

Thanks Wurzel; despite my research I to have failed to come up with a definitive answer, though your suggestion seems the most likely. Note with the photo above the legs are also this striped pattern!

Re: Alex Berryman

by Pauline, 19-May-14 06:50 AM GMT

That's got to be one of the best Green hairstreak shots I have ever seen Alex. I love the way the colours and shape of the leaf mirror the butterfly wings. When I see a photo like that I find myself thinking 'how on earth did they do that?' – a perfect butterfly in a perfect position 🍷

Re: Alex Berryman

by ABerryman, 23-May-14 04:36 PM GMT

It's hatched...so much for 2-3 weeks! Absolutely tiny!!!



Re: Alex Berryman

by Wurzel, 23-May-14 11:23 PM GMT

Good luck with your charge 😊

Have a goodun

Wurzel

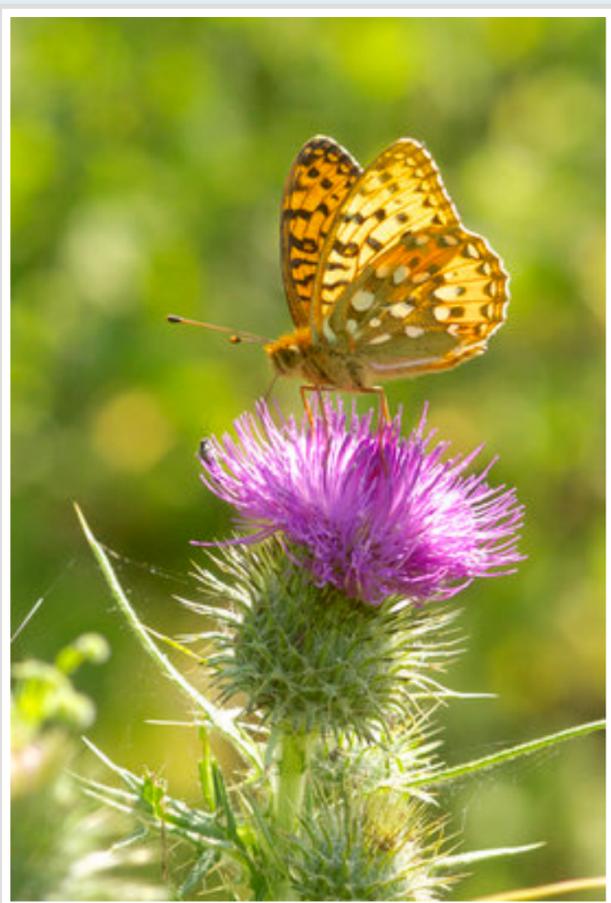
Re: Alex Berryman

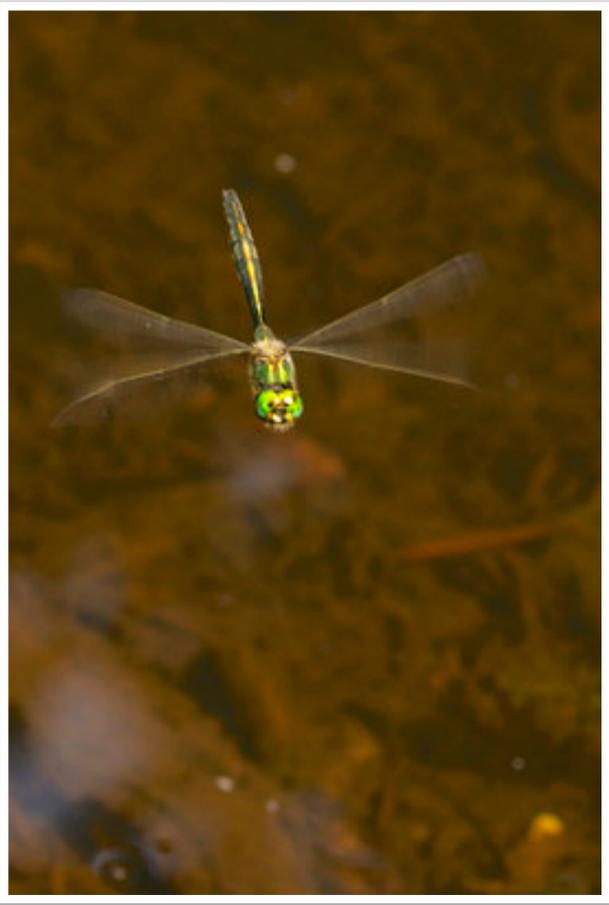
by ABerryman, 12-Jul-14 10:08 PM GMT

It has been far too long since I posted on here! Butterflies have had to take a back seat the past few weeks as I have been focussing on a few bird-related projects (including visiting the Farne Islands the past week which was just amazing!). I did however take a trip to Botany Bay last weekend and saw 4 Purple Emperors, though unfortunately none descended.

I have since begun spending a large amount of time at a local site which is proving to be rather special! In just 2 hours this morning I clocked up 20 species. For an area of this size I find it rather astonishing, no more than 200-300m of path! Given the total size of the area, it seems likely other species such as G.Hairstreak, P.Hairstreak etc. occur, I just need to find them!). Perhaps most impressive is the presence of Marbled Whites (very scarce in NE Hants) and even more so Dark Green Frits. I first discovered this colony last year and this morning there were once again at least 6! Considering the habitat is predominantly coniferous woodland with small clearings made up of a few bits of bramble and thistles, this seems rather surprising! As far as I am aware, this is the only colony of this species in NE Hampshire (certainly in the extreme NE of the county) so I am pretty pleased to have found them! If anyone knows otherwise please let me know as it may give a clue as to where exactly they have originated from.

In addition this, over 25 species of Odonata can be found on site including the Nationally rare Brilliant Emerald, no less than 4 individuals today! If anyone wants to combine superb lepidoptera and odonata, this is the place for you! I just wish access was a little easier, only 1 nearby car parking space (otherwise 3+ mile walk) and this is on a private road; thankfully I know the landowners! If anyone wishes to come and have a look just let me know!





Re: Alex Berryman

by Wurzel, 13-Jul-14 09:42 PM GMT

Good to see you back Alex – and some cracking shots on your return 😊

Have a goodun

Wurzel