

Re: Kev Ling

by kevlng, 26-Mar-16 07:57 PM GMT

At last. After reading everyone's posts of early sightings in 2016, it took until 25th March for me to finally break my duck. A warm Good Friday at Orwell Country Park in Ipswich produced a Small Tortoiseshell nectaring on Blackthorn blossom.

After a slightly disappointing 2015 weather wise, I'm keeping my fingers crossed that this year will make up for it. There are a few 'first timers' on my wish list this year including Wood White, Duke of Burgundy and Marsh Fritillary. We have a holiday to Wiltshire at the end of May, staying near Salisbury, so hopefully the Marshies will hopefully still be in abundance, along with some other notable spring species. If the weather plays ball, I will be paying my first visit to Bentley Woods for PBF and SPBF.

Regards Kev

Re: Kev Ling

by Wurzel, 26-Mar-16 11:02 PM GMT

PM me nearer the time Kev and I can give you some inside info on Pearls and Dukes in Wiltshire 😊

Have a goodun

Wurzel

Re: Kev Ling

by kevlng, 01-May-16 11:02 AM GMT

After a prolonged spell of wintry weather across the UK, I was in danger of not seeing an April orange Tip for the first time. Thankfully the weather gods had a change of heart and on April 30th, we enjoyed our first Butterflying afternoon of the year 😊

We returned to our traditional Orange Tip hot spot in Ipswich, where despite the lack of flowering Garlic Mustard compared to other years, we saw several including a female. Also seen were several Peacocks, Small Tortoiseshell, Comma and Green Veined White.

Spring has finally started. Cue huge sigh of relief.

Regards Kev





Re: Kev Ling

by kevlng, 02-May-16 05:55 PM GMT

First Green Hairstreak of the year today at Spring Wood in Ipswich. That's nine species seen over the weekend.

Regards kev

Re: Kev Ling

by kevlng, 08-May-16 07:48 PM GMT

Well I can certainly live with this weather. Spent the afternoon butterfly watching with my daughter (aka Pretty Butterfly). I won't even offer any of my photographs of mating Green Hairstreaks as she has totally outdone me with her images (see her new diary) 😊

We did encounter plenty of Orange Tips though, with a good number of both male and female. This female did encounter a would be male suitor, but was not having anything of it. I hope some couples get it on, so there are some eggs to be found over the next few days.





Regards Kev

Re: Kev Ling

by David M, 08-May-16 10:39 PM GMT

Lovely juxtapositioning of those male and female Orange Tips, Kev.

Yes, this is a special time in the calendar, made all the better when we have 24c temperatures to complement it!

Re: Kev Ling

by Butterflysaurus rex, 09-May-16 06:53 PM GMT

Very nice Orange Tip sequence there Kev, not easy to capture the action as well as you have done.

ATB

James

Re: Kev Ling

by keving, 09-May-16 07:31 PM GMT

Thanks David and James;

I felt fortunate to see them together and the action was fast and frantic. I popped my camera to 1000/sec shutter speed and hoped for the best 😊. Within 10 seconds the male had got the message and it was all over.

Regards Kev

Re: Kev Ling

by bugboy, 10-May-16 07:39 PM GMT

Great Orange-tip action, something I've failed to record to date even though I've witnessed it several times! I know what you mean by ramping up the shutter speed and hoping for the best though 😊

Re: Kev Ling

by Goldie M, 10-May-16 07:52 PM GMT

Love the sequence of Orange Tips Kev, when you see this activity you know it's Spring for certain Goldie 😊

Re: Kev Ling

by keving, 05-Jun-16 10:14 AM GMT

Wiltshire Holiday Part 1; 28th/29th May

Just returned from a family holiday to Wiltshire and Dorset and with some brownie points banked a couple of butterfly trips were enjoyed. With the west of the UK enjoying the sunny conditions, I was hopeful of adding a couple of 'lifers' to my list in the shape of Duke of Burgundy and Marsh Fritillary.

First stop on 28th May was Bentley Wood's East clearing to catch the Pearl Bordered Fritillary before they ended. We noted approximately 15 worn examples;



We were then treated to high speed flyby of a Small Pearl Bordered Fritillary, a brilliant orange colour compared to the PBF. Unfortunately the two examples we saw never settled, although just before leaving we did see this example (not sure if it is SPBF or PBF). Happy for someone to confirm for me.



As we approached marker point 4, we saw a couple of small butterflies in an aerial display. As one landed, it proved to be my first ever Duke of Burgundy.



Also noted at Bentley Wood were Brimstone, Speckled Wood, Comma and a large number of Speckled Yellow Moths.



A fine start to the holiday, if a little muddy 😊

Regards Kev

Re: Kev Ling

by Andy Wilson, 05-Jun-16 11:42 AM GMT

Hi Kev. My Fritillary radar says that your 3rd pic is a Pearl, not a Small Pearl. However, it's good to know that the Small Pearls are there. Great to see Dukes there too.

Re: Kev Ling

by kevlings, 06-Jun-16 07:54 PM GMT

Andy; Thanks for confirmation on PBF. I thought it may have been but the outer wing margins looked different to the others I saw 😊

Wiltshire Holiday Part 2

On Sunday 29th May, we ventured over to the Warminster area to an area kindly suggested to me (Cheers Wurzel 😊). This was to see my first ever Marsh Fritillaries. I was not disappointed, with c 40 seen during a circular walk.





Another highlight for me was Grizzled Skipper



and this fine looking Brown Argus



Other species noted were; Adonis Blue, Small Blue, Dingy Skipper, Orange Tip, Green Hairstreak, Brown Argus, Peacock and Small/Large White. This was a great day, having finally caught up with the beautiful Marshies that I have yearned for so long.

Regards Kev

Re: Kev Ling

by millerd, 06-Jun-16 08:15 PM GMT

Nice selection from that famous hill, Kev. 😊

I didn't know you were there – Philzoid, me and Wurzel himself were all out on that very hillside on the 29th... Shame to have missed you!

Dave

Re: Kev Ling

by David M, 06-Jun-16 09:08 PM GMT

Those are beautifully marked Marshies, Kev. Ours near me often lack the hindwing spots and aren't usually anywhere near as photogenic.

Re: Kev Ling

by Wurzel, 07-Jun-16 08:08 PM GMT

Great shots Kev – always glad to have been of assistance 😊

Have a goodun

Wurzel

Re: Kev Ling

by kevlng, 08-Jun-16 08:08 PM GMT

Dave/Wurzel; Thanks. It's a shame I we didn't see you. It would have been nice to meet.

David: Thanks. I never knew they differed form area to area.

Wiltshire Holiday Part 3

Our final Butterfly encounter took us to the fabulous Fontmell Down over the border in Dorset.

My first photo is of a marsh Fritillary that looked a lot different from any other seen (and any photo I can find on this site).

I am wondering if I have encountered an aberration? I notice it has very small/faint yellow marginal spots and dark orange postdisical markings compared the cream ones on others that I saw.



This example differs greatly to the preceding image



Also seen were Adonis Blue, Grizzled Skipper, Small Heath and Brimstone.



A great time was had in the West Country seeing species I can only dream of in Suffolk. The Dukes and Marshies added two new species to my life tally too.

Regards Kev

Re: Kev Ling

by Wurzel, 09-Jun-16 10:42 PM GMT

You filled your boots with Marsh Frits Kev 😊 I reckon that your Marsh is an aberrant - 😊 much darker and less well marked than usual 😊

Have a goodun

Wurzel

Re: Kev Ling

by David M, 09-Jun-16 11:32 PM GMT

Although Marsh Fritillary is a highly variable species, your dark example is spectacularly beautiful.

Re: Kev Ling

by kevlng, 10-Jun-16 05:24 PM GMT

David M / Wurzel : Thanks for you comments. Glad to see an *ab*, my first that I'm aware of 😊

Regards Kev

Re: Kev Ling

by kevlng, 26-Jun-16 04:35 PM GMT

A local field trip this weekend to see the continued emergence of Silver Studded Blues on the Ipswich Heaths. A personal count at Purdis Heath delivered 20+, which was the most I had personally witnessed there. As near back as the 1980s, it was not unusual to see numbers in their thousands, however with loss of habitat, that number was reduced to just 4 in 2010. Habitat management work by Butterfly Conservation and other groups has increased the area of heath land since then from 0.1 hectares to over 1 hectare, so this beautiful butterfly has seen a vastly improved prospect of saviour. This first trio of photographs is of the only female seen.





The best of the rest



Kind Regards
Kev

Re: Kev Ling

by Wurzel, 26-Jun-16 10:09 PM GMT

Great shots Kev – hope the comeback continues 😊

Have a goodun

Wurzel

Re: Kev Ling

by kevlng, 03-Jul-16 01:56 PM GMT

With the Great British Weather doing it's worst recently, I resorted to doing a little bio-blitz in my urban garden.

Holly Blues, Green Veined Whites and Orange Tips have all been egg laying, although I am yet to find a pupa from the Orange Tips/GVW caterpillars that have reached that stage. Although only a small garden, the phrase 'needle in a haystack' still comes to mind. Recent additions to the garden have also been Small Tortoiseshell, Meadow Brown and Speckled Wood.

I've included some other insect photographs too in the hope that someone can fill in the question marks. But despite the wet weather, the garden is thriving with insect activity. A reward for the planting that we have added over the past couple of years.
First the caterpillars;

Orange Tips



Green veined White



Mullein Moth



Fresh Small Tortoiseshell



Meadow Brown



Spotted Crane Fly



Unable to identify the these last two (any helpers?)



Kind Regards
Kev

Re: Kev Ling

by MikeOxon, 03-Jul-16 02:20 PM GMT

Good to see how you have turned the bad weather into an opportunity for a garden safari! I'll jump in with both feet and suggest your first unidentified beastie is a Ladybird larva – possibly a 14-spot – and the other is [not – see Vince's post below] a Chafer Beetle – possibly Rose Chafer. Others will doubtless rush in to correct me! As I have mentioned before in my own diary, my wife is much better at finding mini-beasts than I am – I must get her to help me find such interesting critters at home 😊

Re: Kev Ling

by Vince Massimo, 03-Jul-16 09:19 PM GMT

I would agree with Mike on the first image being a type of Ladybird larva, but would suggest that the second is a Rosemary beetle which is regarded as an invasive foreign pest. <https://www.rhs.org.uk/advice/profile?PID=555>

Vince

Re: Kev Ling

by MikeOxon, 04-Jul-16 12:22 PM GMT

I fear you are probably right, Vince. Looking more closely, it does not have the branched antennae of a chafer. I admit I did not know about the Rosemary Beetle but it looks as though it is a pest that should be reported. Pleased you were able to put me right 😊

Mike

Re: Kev Ling

by kevlng, 04-Jul-16 07:43 PM GMT

Thanks Mike & Vince for your input and advice.
I shall go a hunting in my herb garden and get rid of the little blighters!

Regards Kev

Re: Kev Ling

by Pete Eeles, 07-Jul-16 08:10 PM GMT

kevlng wrote:

As near back as the 1980s, it was not unusual to see numbers in their thousands, however with loss of habitat, that number was reduced to just 4 in 2010.

That is truly shocking 😞

Let's hope the comeback continues!

Cheers,

– Pete

Re: Kev Ling

by kevlng, 21-Jul-16 08:17 PM GMT

17th July 2015

I lead my first ever Butterfly walk for Butterfly Conservation today. A party of 36 accompanied me to Bonny Wood in Suffolk on the lookout for woodland species, including Purple Emperor.

After a cloudy start, which the Ringlets didn't mind, the sun finally broke through in short bursts and we were soon treated to Silver Washed Fritillary (Male & Female) and White Admiral on bramble, whilst Purple Hairstreak darted around the oak canopies above.

A fellow BC colleague had laid some bait in an adjacent ride to tempt a Purple Emperor to the ground and it proved successful with a rather battered male tucking into it.





Some further sightings of Purple Emperor including female were enjoyed throughout the wood, mainly at height. Other species seen included Red Admiral, Large White, Green Veined White, Essex Skipper & Small Skipper.

Regards Kev

Re: Kev Ling

by kevlng, 21-Jul-16 08:27 PM GMT

18/7/16

No butterflies this time, but a couple of notable visitors of the moth variety to my garden.

Elephant Hawk Moth





Common Emerald



Regards Kev

Re: Kev Ling

by kevlng, 04-Sep-16 02:36 PM GMT

All work and no play has left my diary bereft of activity lately.

A holiday in Snowdonia did little to enhance things with Butterfly numbers hampered by cloudy conditions. However things did take a turn for the better on the cliffs of Beaumaris (Anglesey), where I came across my first ever Painted Lady Larva.





A walk to the beach through Newborough Forest saw an improvement in numbers, with plenty of Red Admiral, including this fine specimen.



Speckled Wood – Newborough



Whether it is a sign of a damp summer that Wales experienced, but on a hot sunny day we found ourselves exploring Llyn Padarn in Llanberis. Along the banks of the lakes were large numbers of flowering Buddleia (but not a single butterfly to be seen).

Shocking lack of Butterflies on this Buddleia



Regards Kev

Re: Kev Ling

by Wurzel, 04-Sep-16 10:09 PM GMT

Cracking Red Admiral Kev 😊 There does seem to be a paucity of butterflies – even when the weather is good – hopefully they've all bred and the next generation is developing ready for next year 😊

Have a goodun

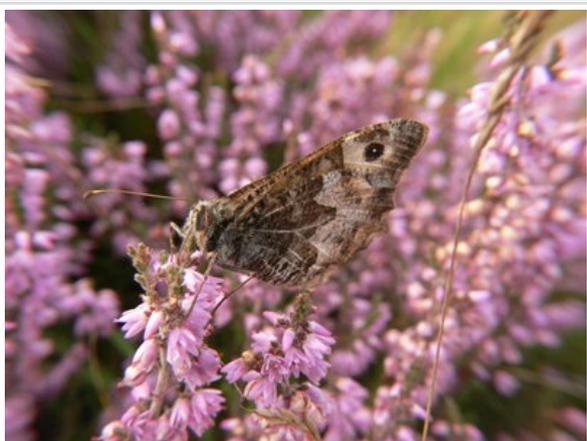
Wurzel

Re: Kev Ling

by kevlng, 07-Sep-16 07:51 PM GMT

Thanks Wurzel. Let's keep our fingers crossed

Some late Summer sun around my local patch and a chance to catch up with Small Coppers that have been evading me this year. Good numbers seen on the heaths around Woodbridge and Ipswich, along with Graylings (including this mating pair)





Regards Kev

Re: Kev Ling

by trevor, 07-Sep-16 08:37 PM GMT

Nice partially open wing Grayling Kev. You are now a member of an exclusive club.
(I'm not in it , as I missed a shot like that by being too slow .) 😊

Best wishes,
Trevor.

Re: Kev Ling

by keving, 28-Dec-16 02:54 PM GMT

With another year at an end, I got my final fix today during a walk in the country near home in Ipswich.
After a couple of hours searching, I found my first ever Hairstreak egg. This one belonging to the Brown Hairstreak.



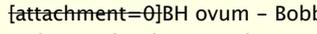
I'm still a bit of a novice when it comes to early stage sightings, but happy to have rounded off 2016 with this 😊

Regards and Happy New Year for 2017
Kev

Re: Kev Ling

by Padfield, 28-Dec-16 06:58 PM GMT

kevling wrote:

With another year at an end, I got my final fix today during a walk in the country near home in Ipswich. After a couple of hours searching, I found my first ever Hairstreak egg. This one belonging to the Brown Hairstreak.  I'm still a bit of a novice when it comes to early stage sightings, but happy to have rounded off 2016 with this 😊

Regards and Happy New Year for 2017
Kev

That's amazing! I know of historical locations for brown hairstreak near Ipswich but in recent years I've never heard of a sighting. Was this a known (new) site or did you come across it by chance? There's so much blackthorn in the region I'd always hoped brown hairstreaks would move in.

Guy

Re: Kev Ling

by David M, 28-Dec-16 08:03 PM GMT

Indeed. In fact, the UK distribution map for *betulae* is notable for the absence of this butterfly in East Anglia:

<http://www.ukbutterflies.co.uk/distribution.php?species=betulae>

Re: Kev Ling

by kevling, 28-Dec-16 08:23 PM GMT

Hi Guy,

The site I visited was a locally known one. Over the past 18 months, there has been a good number of Brown Hairstreak sightings along the stretch of A14 between Copdock and Nacton, the provenance of which is still being established. They may have been introduced, but strong colonies now seem to be establishing themselves in several locations and the egg counts performed this winter lay testament to that. One thing is sure, the habitat is ideal and abundant, so there is optimism that the future could be good.

Regards Kev

Re: Kev Ling

by Padfield, 28-Dec-16 08:45 PM GMT

That's good news. Last winter I spent some time checking blackthorn near Woodbridge – just in case – never really expecting to find anything (and I didn't find anything). If they're thriving Nacton way it shouldn't be too long before they reach the heaths north of Ipswich too. Female brown hairstreaks wander considerable distances to lay their eggs.

Guy

Re: Kev Ling

by kevlng, 29-Dec-16 06:00 PM GMT

Guy,

Interesting that females travel distances to lay eggs. Do they habitually always move distances in respect that current colonies may relocate en-masse to new locations or is it a matter of them potentially increasing their overall range.

Regards Kev

Re: Kev Ling

by MrSp0ck, 29-Dec-16 10:12 PM GMT

We have been monitoring the Surrey/Kent Boundary, where the Brown Hairstreak is spreading back into Kent, and eggs were found in 2015, in Kent at Nash. The first Kent record since the 1970s. The Colony based at [Hutchinsons Bank] at Farleigh Dean Crescent, where the BH has been for about 10 years, seems to be where the master tree is, and egg counts on suitable sites around 1/2 mile away had good numbers of eggs, further away the number of eggs dropped into single figures. 5 eggs were found on semi-suitable blackthorn on the Kent Border.

I would expect the distant eggs will find a new Master Tree when they produce adults, and a new colony will form around that area and the spread will continue on from there.

The Brown Hairstreak does seem to be more widespread than thought, so may have been in areas without being seen for years, and egg counts are only just getting more widespread.

Details and maps of the Surrey Egg Hunts here. The Map is out of date, as the BH has been found in many new squares this winter.

<http://butterfly-conservation.org/10506/brown-hairstreak-egg-hunts.html>

<http://butterfly-conservation.org/files/bh-records-20160224.pdf>

Re: Kev Ling

by bugboy, 29-Dec-16 10:38 PM GMT

kevlng wrote:

Guy,

Interesting that females travel distances to lay eggs. Do they habitually always move distances in respect that current colonies may relocate en-masse to new locations or is it a matter of them potentially increasing their overall range.

Regards Kev

I think it may be just that the females are so fussy as to where to lay they need to search far and wide to find just the right piece of Blackthorn. What is perfect one season may well have aged to much the next.