

Re: Badgerbob

by badgerbob, 14-Jan-16 05:45 PM GMT

With a very cold night last night I was curious to see if the Wall Brown larva were active in the sunshine!! I was amazed how cold it was in the carpark but as soon as I hit the bank where I find the larva the temperature change was very noticeable with it being in strong sunshine and also being protected from the strong wind. I didn't look too hard, just in the two spots where I had found the larva in December. I found one in each spot as well as a moth larva in the first spot. Both Wall larva were inactive although around 2 inches above ground laying along a blade of grass. The first one still had some dew drops on it. The second spot is at the base of the hill so was a little warmer and this one had slept all night on a blade that it looks as though it had half eaten yesterday with the eating pattern on the grass very evident.

Yesterday myself and Downland Boy had 2 butterflies on Ashdown Forest. A Red Admiral was the first of the year for both of us. The 2nd butterfly flew high over our heads and kept on going which made a positive id impossible. The quick flash of colour made me think it was probably a Peacock, but I cannot claim it as such.



Wall Brown larva 14/1/2016.



Wall Brown larva (2) 14/1/2016



Red Admiral. Ashdown Forest. 13/1/2016

More on <http://bobsbutterflies.blogspot.co.uk>

Re: Badgerbob

by trevor, 15-Jan-16 07:46 AM GMT

Hi Bob,
Let's hope those Wall Brown larva can find a nice cosy spot over the next few nights, although I suspect they are quite hardy.
Well done with that Red Admiral !. I've only seen one Butterfly since Nov.2nd.

Looking forward to the new season,
Trevor.

Re: Badgerbob

by Wurzel, 17-Jan-16 10:10 PM GMT

I hope those butterflies are tucked up again now Bob as things have finally taken a turn for the cooler.

Have a goodun

Wurzel

Re: Badgerbob

by Goldie M, 18-Jan-16 01:00 PM GMT

Hi! Bob you've certainly got your first Butterfly sightings in for 2016 lets hope they've found some where to shelter, we had heavy snow here Saturday Goldie 😊

Re: Badgerbob

by badgerbob, 20-Jan-16 05:19 PM GMT

Just a brief note that yesterday, even following the coldest night of the winter, and with heavy frost and frozen ground, I still found the 2 Wall Brown larva that I'm monitoring. Both were in grassy tussocks about 1 inch above ground. They were both still but certainly alive and well.

Re: Badgerbob

by badgerbob, 02-Feb-16 02:29 PM GMT

02/02/16

At High and Over today, once the rain had stopper and the sun came out, I checked out the Wall Brown larva. 5 seen and were all active with the largest now doubled in size since I first found the first 2 in December being now up to 2 cm. in length. Then in the distance I saw a light butterfly flying amongst the bushes. With the binoculars it was very clearly my first male Brimstone of the year!!

Re: Badgerbob

by Goldie M, 02-Feb-16 07:09 PM GMT

Great sight to see Bob the first Butterfly of a new year. Hope there's none out here tomorrow looks like Snow again. Goldie 😊

Re: Badgerbob

by David M, 02-Feb-16 09:47 PM GMT

badgerbob wrote:

...Then in the distance I saw a light butterfly flying amongst the bushes. With the binoculars it was very clearly my first male Brimstone of the year!!

Wonderful moment for you, Bob. If only the wind and rain would abate then I could check for early emergees round these parts! 😊

Re: Badgerbob

by badgerbob, 03-Mar-16 09:21 PM GMT

A stunning day today, out of the breeze so another larva hunt was the order of the day. I was greeted by my first confirmed Peacock making the most of the warmth of the sun. I then found 7 Wall Brown larvae of which at least 3 were new individuals. My find of the day however was my first Speckled Wood larva. A larva I always expected to find but hadn't until today. The Wall Brown larva were up to 3 cm long whereas the Speckled Wood larva was approx 1 cm long. More on my blog <http://bobsbutterflies.blogspot.co.uk/>



Peacock.



Wall Brown larva



Speckled Wood larva.

Re: Badgerbob

by David M, 03-Mar-16 10:15 PM GMT

Great day's work that, Bob. Your talent for finding these larvae is enviable.

Re: Badgerbob

by Pauline, 04-Mar-16 06:41 AM GMT

Great find Bob and those shots show the difference incredibly well!

Re: Badgerbob

by NickMorgan, 04-Mar-16 01:37 PM GMT

I have just realise that I follow your blog!!!

Great finds and you have inspired me to go and have a look for caterpillars myself now that we have both Wall Brown and Speckled Wood here in East Lothian.

Re: Badgerbob

by badgerbob, 04-Mar-16 10:11 PM GMT

Hi David, Pauline and Nick. I should be doing a little movie sequence with Dan Danahar soon showing the hunt for Wall larvae. Hopefully this will inspire other hunters!!

Thanks very much for your comments.

Re: Badgerbob

by Wurzel, 06-Mar-16 10:31 PM GMT

Good to see someone's seeing butterflies Bob – it's still all quiet over here in Wiltshire 😞 Nice comparison shots – you make the differences really obvious 😊

Have a goodun

Wurzel

Re: Badgerbob

by badgerbob, 25-Mar-16 06:45 PM GMT

The difference a day makes. Yesterday I met up with Gary Norman to show him the Wall Brown larvae. With heavy clouds and a cool breeze we found 3 as well as a Speckled Wood larva. Today, with the sun shining I called back up and found the same 3 as well as a couple of new ones. With the sun shining the larvae were higher on the grass feeding up with 4 being just about fully grown. 2 Brimstone, 1 Peacock and several Small Tortoiseshell were good to see as well.



Small Tortoiseshell.



Wall Brown larva feeding. The smallest of today's larva. Approx 60% growth. Grass well nibbled in the area!!



Wall Brown larva. Near fully grown. Resting following feeding.



Wall Brown larva. Also near fully grown. On nibbled grass.

Re: Badgerbob

by badgerbob, 01-May-16 10:03 PM GMT

I was lucky today to find a smart Green Hairstreak that showed a little of his top-wing. A Small Heath yesterday also performed well for me.



Green Hairstreak.



Small Heath.

Re: Badgerbob

by Jamie Burston, 02-May-16 05:30 PM GMT

Really stunning Bob! To see the Green Hairstreaks top-wing in such detail is fantastic. I really like the shot on your blog of one sitting on gorse, great bokeh and colours, I enjoy seeing a wider glimpse of it's surroundings. I won't give anything else away from your blog just in case you want to post it her, but I will say, wow! All the best,
Jamie

Re: Badgerbob

by Pauline, 02-May-16 06:32 PM GMT

I agree with Jamie. Fantastic image of the Green Hairstreak Bob. Lovely specimen and photo to match 🍀

Re: Badgerbob

by badgerbob, 02-May-16 07:20 PM GMT

Thanks Jamie and Pauline. I was really pleased with the Hairstreak on the gorse you mentioned Jamie. The one I found yesterday though really did pose well for me and I managed a few shots of it that I've now put on the blog.

<http://bobsbutterflies.blogspot.co.uk>

Re: Badgerbob

by trevor, 02-May-16 09:11 PM GMT

Yes, a top class image of the Green Hairstreak. A difficult Butterfly when it comes to getting the exposure right. Judging from the Wall Brown progress, the long trek up to Windover can't be too far off.

All the best,
Trevor.

Re: Badgerbob

by David M, 02-May-16 09:31 PM GMT

Delightful shot of the Green Hairstreak, Bob. It was posing perfectly anyway but to show part of the upperside just adds to its appeal.

Re: Badgerbob

by Gary.N, 02-May-16 10:38 PM GMT

Good shot of the Green Hairstreak, but I am going with the Small Heath. Getting a shot of a Small Heath at this time of year with a good background and not on grass is almost impossible.

ATB,

Gary

Re: Badgerbob

by badgerbob, 07-May-16 09:42 PM GMT

A survey for BC today was generally disappointing except for good numbers of woodland Grizzled Skippers. The last one of which was a fine ab. taras. Unfortunately it only settled on horrid areas. However, it was a real beauty.



Grizzled Skipper ab. taras.

Re: Badgerbob

by David M, 07-May-16 09:51 PM GMT

An absolute stunner, Bob. No doubt about it. 🍷

Re: Badgerbob

by Butterfysaurus rex, 07-May-16 10:52 PM GMT

Great find Bob, I've yet to see an ab. taras even in horrid areas.

Re: Badgerbob

by kevlings, 08-May-16 09:39 AM GMT

Badgerbob,

That is a nice shot of ab. taras. What a great find. I'd be happy to see any GS where I leave in East Anglia, let alone an ab.

Regards Kev

Re: Badgerbob

by badgerbob, 14-May-16 09:17 PM GMT

It was one of those days yesterday when all went to plan and beyond. James (B.Rex) had sent me a message to say he was heading for the bank where we often have good sightings. I was there some time before him and as I was strolling along the base of some bushes I spotted the first Small Copper seen at this site this year. On closer inspection it was clear it was an aberrant. It was also extremely fresh and although it had probably only just dried its wings it was soon battling away with Brown Argus, Dingy Skipper and a Green Hairstreak. After watching it for well over 30 minutes and phoning James to tell him to hurry up it was loyal to one spot until James turned up. At this point it vanished for 10 minutes before returning as it once again chased a Brown Argus. After leaving James I came across a Wall Brown that had also just emerged. It was flying weakly and then did what any respectful Wall Brown doesn't do. It posed for me!!



Small Copper ab. radiata.



Small Copper ab. radiata.



Small Copper ab. radiata.



Male Wall Brown.

Re: Badgerbob

by bugboy, 14-May-16 09:31 PM GMT

badgerbob wrote:

It was flying weakly and then did what any respectful Wall Brown doesn't do. It posed for me!!



Looks like you had an exceptional day!

Re: Badgerbob

by Allan.W., 14-May-16 09:55 PM GMT

That's a cracking Radiata Bob ,perfectly posed ,great picture ,i've been lucky enough to see a couple ,in the past myself but have never managed a picture approaching those
Always windy or spooked,record shots only i'm afraid ,nice one !! regards Allan.W.

Re: Badgerbob

by Hoggers, 14-May-16 10:08 PM GMT

Beautiful !

Best wishes

Hoggers

Re: Badgerbob

by Katrina, 15-May-16 12:39 AM GMT

Superb photos of the beautiful Small Copper and the Wall is brilliant too!

Re: Badgerbob

by Pauline, 15-May-16 06:32 AM GMT

What a great find Bob and fantastic photos too 😊

Re: Badgerbob

by Goldie M, 15-May-16 12:40 PM GMT

Lovely shots Bob 🍷 Goldie 😊

Re: Badgerbob

by badgerbob, 15-May-16 12:55 PM GMT

Thanks all for those comments. I did forget to mention that the wind was blowing and it was only due to the butterfly not being too flighty that I was able to wait for a calmer moment!!

Re: Badgerbob

by David M, 17-May-16 10:20 PM GMT

Love your *radiata*, Bob, and the Wall Brown shot is superb also. I doubt I'll get to see this latter species until mid-June the way things are going with the weather round my part of the UK!

Re: Badgerbob

by William, 22-May-16 12:32 PM GMT

Great pictures of both the taras and radiata, Bob – very jealous 😊

BWs,

William

Re: Badgerbob

by Wurzel, 22-May-16 10:03 PM GMT

That's a cracking find and a cracking little butterfly Bob! 😊 🍷

Have a goodun

Wurzel

Re: Badgerbob

by badgerbob, 10-Jul-16 12:50 PM GMT

The Chalkhill Blues have now started to emerge locally with a single fresh individual seen in the normal 2016 horrid weather!!



Male Chalkhill Blue.



Male Chalkhill Blue.

Re: Badgerbob

by badgerbob, 19-Sep-16 03:05 PM GMT

With such a strong 3rd brood of Wall Brown showing locally I have spent a little time watching them over the past 2 days. Both days I also bumped into Trevor as well as Katrina yesterday. A hunt over a larger area yesterday produced at least 20 including 5 females. Today, a smaller area was covered with around 10 seen, all males today. Just a few photo opportunities with the best one being a female nectaring on Scabious. Many of them are already showing signs of wear but there are still a few gems too. It will be interesting to see if this becomes a widespread 3rd brood similar to 2014, or if it is confined to the Southerly slopes as is usual with a 3rd brood.



Female Wall Brown on Scabious.



Female Wall Brown on Scabious.



Female Wall Brown on Scabious.



Male Wall Brown.

Re: Badgerbob

by Butterflysaurus rex, 19-Sep-16 05:02 PM GMT

That last photo in the sequence is a real stunner Bob! If you ended the year on that one it would be a fantastic way to finish. Knowing you you'll probably pull another couple of great photos out of the bag before it's all over.

All the best

James

Re: Badgerbob

by bugboy, 19-Sep-16 07:03 PM GMT

all I can do is throw a few of these at you for those Walls 🍷🍷🍷

Re: Badgerbob

by millerd, 19-Sep-16 07:41 PM GMT

Definitely worth those 🍷 I hope they last the week - I haven't seen one this year yet. The undersides are stunning. 😊

Dave

Re: Badgerbob

by badgerbob, 19-Sep-16 09:46 PM GMT

Thanks all for the kind comments. I am so lucky living in an area where these great butterflies are still doing well!!! Long may that continue.

Re: Badgerbob

by Neil Freeman, 20-Sep-16 10:10 PM GMT

Great images of the Wall Browns 😊

A species that I have missed this year and one that is no longer found in my part of the midlands. How things have changed since I was a nipper in the 1970s and they used to be common around here.

Cheers,

Neil.

Re: Badgerbob

by Goldie M, 21-Sep-16 01:05 PM GMT

Seems everyone is seeing WB's just now, 🍀 I wish! yours look great 😊 Goldie 😊

Re: Badgerbob

by badgerbob, 22-Sep-16 10:10 AM GMT

Yesterday morning I met up with James, B. Rex when I was hoping I would be able to show him a few egg laying Wall Brown. One surprise was an encounter with a late 2nd brood butterfly showing that there has been an overlap of the broods this year. I managed a grab shot of her to show she is wearing, or even perhaps, not wearing the 2nd brood badge. If she wasn't 2nd brood she had been through a tumble drier!! Hard to see how she was still flying.



2nd brood female Wall Brown!!

Shortly after another female was seen to fly into a scrape and appear to be looking to lay but nothing was found after she flew. This happened a few times until we saw one nectaring on Scabious, she then flew into a scrape and we saw the abdomen curl and almost saw the ova pop out. When fresh the ova has a green tinge to it, as shown in the photo.



3rd brood female Wall Brown.



Wall Brown ova. 3 minutes old.

Following this we went searching for Long-tailed Blues. This was interrupted though when we bumped into Bugboy who showed us pictures of a juvenile Red-backed Shrike he had come across. We then concentrated on this very tame individual which was very approachable and which would fly right up to us if it saw a Bee near us. A magical experience and a great find by Bugboy.



Juvenile Red-backed Shrike.



Juvenile Red-backed Shrike with Devil's Coach Horse beetle.



Juvenile Red-backed Shrike showing well!!!

More shortly on my blog <http://bobsbutterflies.blogspot.co.uk>

Re: Badgerbob

by bugboy, 22-Sep-16 07:38 PM GMT

Great shots Bob, I'm surprised you didn't get it sitting on your finger before you left!

Re: Badgerbob

by badgerbob, 22-Sep-16 09:33 PM GMT

It's still there today and is without doubt the most popular bird in Sussex at the moment. I'm glad I saw it yesterday before the crowds descended on Tide Mills!! All the birders in Sussex owe you a drink!!!!!!

Re: Badgerbob

by bugboy, 22-Sep-16 09:48 PM GMT

badgerbob wrote:

It's still there today and is without doubt the most popular bird in Sussex at the moment. I'm glad I saw it yesterday before the crowds descended on Tide Mills!! All the birders in Sussex owe you a drink!!!!!!

Hahaha, *insert smug face here*! Just as long as they don't go trampling all over the Everlasting Pea!!

Re: Badgerbob

by bugboy, 23-Sep-16 06:30 PM GMT

badgerbob wrote:

All the birders in Sussex owe you a drink!!!!!!

I will happily accept payment in the form of an equally tame, 100% wild LTB 😊

Re: Badgerbob

by badgerbob, 23-Sep-16 08:19 PM GMT

Dream On!!