

**Re: SimonC69**

by SimonC69, 07-Feb-17 10:44 AM GMT

This winter seems to have been the longest I've known for a while (and it's not over yet) but spring must surely be in sight now and with that in mind, I felt it was time to "set out my stall" as it were and make public the goals I've set myself for this season (the penultimate one before my 50th birthday, so I need to get a wriggle on) with the hopes that telling you all will give me an extra incentive. I currently need 21 species to complete my 50/50 quest and, these long, dark months have given me time to plan 10 species I can (somewhat) realistically hope to get under my belt (given good weather and a hell of a lot of luck!)

Those species are:

- Swallowtail
- Dingy Skipper
- Grizzled Skipper
- Dark Green Fritillary
- Duke of Burgundy
- Green Hairstreak
- White-letter Hairstreak
- Small Blue
- Silver Studded Blue
- Adonis Blue

I have sites in mind for most of these (a lot of my Butterfly trips will coincide with family trips to satisfy my Wife's passion for archeology – so lots of earthworks and barrows will be on the cards ;) ) but I'm sure I will be calling on some of you for tips 😊 Of course, I also want to get better photos of a lot of the ones I've got already, so they'll always be a reason to take my camera out.

Let's see what the season brings eh?

And, just because, here's some reminders of summers past:



And this is probably my favourite butterfly photo so far. No idea why!?



Cheers

Simon

**Re: SimonC69**

by bugboy, 07-Feb-17 12:00 PM GMT

Hi Simon, in all honesty the majority of those shouldn't cause you too many problems at all, especially based in the home counties. Five of them, Small Blue, G. Hairstreak, Duke, Grizzled and Dingy Skippers you could do in one trip if you choose the sites wisely! Silver Studded Blues are still relatively easy to find on many of the heathland nature reserves to the south west of London and I have an excellent site for W.L. Hairstreak (complete with remains of a ruined castle for the other half). With a family holiday to Norfolk I'd be very surprised if you drew a blank with any of your targets 😊

**Re: SimonC69**

by SimonC69, 07-Feb-17 12:54 PM GMT

**bugboy wrote:**

Hi Simon, in all honesty the majority of those shouldn't cause you too many problems at all.....I'd be very surprised if you drew a blank with any of your targets 😊

I know, I know. I've chickened out a bit and gone for the "soft option" 😊

**Re: SimonC69**

by bugboy, 07-Feb-17 01:30 PM GMT

**SimonC69 wrote:**

**bugboy wrote:**

Hi Simon, in all honesty the majority of those shouldn't cause you too many problems at all.....I'd be very surprised if you drew a blank with any of your targets 😊

I know, I know. I've chickened out a bit and gone for the "soft option" 😊

No shame in that, two years ago I was yet to see all but two of that list myself!

**Re: SimonC69**

by trevor, 08-Feb-17 08:02 AM GMT

Hi Simon,

All the species on your list can be found in East/West Sussex.  
But, Totterhoe Quarry and Dunstable Downs in Bedfordshire are both good locations, and not too far from you. Flight times vary so several trips throughout the season will be necessary .  
It will be down to pure luck if you find a Swallowtail anywhere !.

Good luck,  
Trevor.

**Re: SimonC69**

by SimonC69, 08-Feb-17 08:23 AM GMT

**trevor wrote:**

.....It will be down to pure luck if you find a Swallowtail anywhere.....

Are they not "nailed on" in the Doctor's Garden then? ;)  
TBH, all these would be "lifers" for me so even just seeing one or two this season would be good.

EDIT: Just realised, my vernacular gives me away as a birder. But I guess I'm not alone in that here 😊

**Re: SimonC69**

by trevor, 08-Feb-17 08:25 AM GMT

PS. Please excuse my amnesia, Norfolk Broads for the Swallowtail.  
A trip I have yet to make myself.

Trevor.

**Re: SimonC69**

by SimonC69, 08-Feb-17 08:30 AM GMT

**SimonC69 wrote:**

.....a lot of my Butterfly trips will coincide with family trips to satisfy my Wife's passion for archeology – so lots of

earthworks and barrows will be on the cards ;) .....

There's quite a lot of this sort of thing in Wiltshire isn't there?

Now, who can I ask about that part of the world?.....



### Re: SimonC69

by Wurzel, 10-Feb-17 10:33 PM GMT

😊😊 I'll expect a PM soon then Simon 😊 I didn't get back to you before now on this thread as all the species could be closer to home but if you're after hillforts, barrows etc then I reckon Wiltshire is probably a better bet...I'll start looking through my OS Maps.

Have a goodun

Wurzel

### Re: SimonC69

by David M, 10-Feb-17 11:10 PM GMT

I'm confident you'll fulfil your stated goal fairly comfortably, Simon. Here's wishing you good luck in 2017 and I'm sure we'll all enjoy the reports!

### Re: SimonC69

by Wurzel, 10-Feb-17 11:29 PM GMT

Just posted on Trevor's page and the following info might be useful...His daughter runs the Bell Inn at Great Cheverall which might be a good base - it's nearish to Stonehenge, Silbury Hill, Avebury etc as well as some great butterfly sites.

He said that "Anyone wishing to stay at the Bell should contact my Daughter, Lorna on 01380 813277." Hope this helps

Have a goodun

Wurzel

### Re: SimonC69

by SimonC69, 11-Feb-17 06:33 PM GMT

Thanks wurzel,

yeah, the pm will be arriving soon. Just need to finalise with the better half which sites she wants to visit (Stonehenge is a given obviously - somewhat of a biannual pilgrimage of late anyway)

I'll be striving for a Marse frit coincidence I think 😊

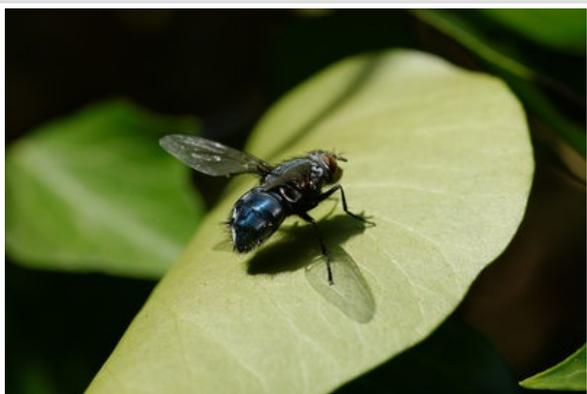
### Re: SimonC69

by SimonC69, 16-Feb-17 01:29 PM GMT

Today was the first lunchtime walk this year in weather that could be described as "springlike" and my hopes were secretly high for an early awakened hibernator or two.

As it turned out, that wasn't to be but it never ceases to amaze me how much better I can feel after just half an hour of sunshine and birdsong! The Great and Blue tits were all on great vocal form, chasing each other around, A blackbird was limbering up (quite an early one for me) and of course the ubiquitous Robins and Dunnocks were all getting a bit more "urgent" 😊

I did find one insect to aim my lens at though.



*Bluebottle warming up*

Missed the focus slightly, but I'm fairlypleased with the sharpness here.

roll on spring, that's what I say

Cheers  
Simon

**Re: SimonC69**

by David M, 16-Feb-17 05:05 PM GMT

**SimonC69 wrote:**

Missed the focus slightly, but I'm fairlypleased with the sharpness here.

Looks good to me! Let's hope your next one is of a Tortoiseshell/Peacock/Comma!

**Re: SimonC69**

by Wurzel, 16-Feb-17 11:16 PM GMT

It's the vitamin D kicking in Simon you're shrugging off SAD 😊 Seeing flies and bees around is always a good sign that the butterflies won't be too far behind...

Have a goodun

Wurzel

**Re: SimonC69**

by SimonC69, 09-Mar-17 02:08 PM GMT

Finally! I'm off the mark. A lunchtime walk near work, in 16° (and crucially – no wind) I spent a pleasant twenty minutes not managing to photograph any of the 10+ Brimstones or 2 Small tortoiseshells 😊 The Torts were too far away but the Brimstones were just not playing ball and were just in far too much of a hurry. They all appeared to be males and I would guess they had more pressing matters than sitting still. Before I got back to work though I did find a rather tatty Comma who was happy to sit for me. I'll be walking around work with a bit more of a spring in my step this afternoon now. Roll on spring!



*Nikon D200. Sigma 105mm F2.8 EX DG OS HSM, ISO 220 f10 1/200*

Cheers  
Simon

**Re: SimonC69**

by David M, 09-Mar-17 06:40 PM GMT

**SimonC69 wrote:**

I'll be walking around work with a bit more of a spring in my step this afternoon now. Roll on spring!

I know exactly what you mean, Simon. The first sightings, particularly when they appear on the same day, lift your mood no end.

PS – that Comma is in absolutely classic pose – end of a twig, antennae pointing forward....like a torpedo about to be launched. 😊

### Re: SimonC69

by Wurzel, 09-Mar-17 07:24 PM GMT

Good to see another off the mark Simon 😊 I got my first Brimstone today so as far as I'm concerned Spring has now definitely Sprung 😊 Still to see a Comma though 🐛

Have a goodun

Wurzel

### Re: SimonC69

by bugboy, 10-Mar-17 10:18 PM GMT

Only 5 or 6 weeks and you should be bagging your first lifer of the year! Be prepared, this site gets very busy once the season gets started 😊

### Re: SimonC69

by SimonC69, 13-Mar-17 12:27 PM GMT

#### bugboy wrote:

Only 5 or 6 weeks and you should be bagging your first lifer of the year!

I know 😊 Getting itchy shutter finger

#### bugboy wrote:

Be prepared, this site gets very busy once the season gets started 😊

I'm looking forward to drawing inspiration from the collective enthusiasm.

### Re: SimonC69

by SimonC69, 13-Mar-17 03:37 PM GMT

Another good lunchtime walk today, with 5 more Brimstone, two more Small Torts and a Comma. Only managed photos of one of the Brimstones but completely stuffed them up by forgetting my aperture was set wide open! Oh well, every day is a school day. Today's lesson: Check settings before you set off.

Heard my first Chiffchaff of the year though, so that's another milestone passed.



*not even sure if any of this is in focus actually. Oh well*

### Re: SimonC69

by David M, 13-Mar-17 06:15 PM GMT

Fear not, Simon...at least you saw them grounded! That's always an achievement in itself at this time of year.

### Re: SimonC69

by SimonC69, 22-Apr-17 08:51 PM GMT

Well, I haven't been anywhere near as active on here as I thought I was going to be. Life. just as you think things are ticking over nicely it has this habit of kicking you right where it hurts. Hard.

I did get out today though, with one species in my sights and thankfully, I got it.

Not sure how many of the outings I had planned will actually happen now but I will still be keeping up with everybody's progress (sometimes with a tad of jealousy no doubt!)

Anyway, A short trip to Waterford Heath this afternoon bagged me one of my most wanted lifers 😊



*Still need to learn to get head/eyes/antenna in focus but, I'm pleased with this as a first attempt*

Hoping to have a chance to go looking for DoB next weekend, but we shall see

Cheers

Simon

#### **Re: SimonC69**

by David M, 22-Apr-17 09:19 PM GMT

It's a nice, fresh specimen, Simon, so who cares about the obstructions?

Good luck with your Dukes. If you find the right kind of spot I'm sure they'll be there.

#### **Re: SimonC69**

by SimonC69, 22-Apr-17 09:27 PM GMT

##### **David M wrote:**

It's a nice, fresh specimen, Simon, so who cares about the obstructions?

Good luck with your Dukes. If you find the right kind of spot I'm sure they'll be there.

Thanks David. Yeah, the photos don't do the iridescence justice, it really was stunning.

#### **Re: SimonC69**

by SimonC69, 23-Apr-17 06:08 PM GMT

Had a family walk out at a local reserve today, not expecting to get any decent shots, just out enjoying the weather.

There were lots of butterflies on the wing, mainly whites and Orange Tips.

I've never had any luck with Orange Tips (too flighty) but I decided to stalk one anyway.

Then the sun went in.

And what do Orange Tips do when the sun goes in?



*At this point, this was the best shot I'd ever taken of an Orange Tip....*

They go to 'roost' 😊

And then what happens if the sun slowly starts peeping out from behind the clouds?



*A few seconds later though, this shot surpassed my personal best....*



*Until this one. This is (in my opinion) the best shot I've ever taken of an Orange Tip. I still want to better it :)*

So. Kids and dog exercised and a smile on my face now.

Cheers

Simon

### **Re: SimonC69**

by Wurzel, 23-Apr-17 07:25 PM GMT

Orange-tips are like that Simon – you always want more, you can never have enough 😊 That is a cracking shot 😊

Have a goodun

Wurzel

**Re: SimonC69**

by bugboy, 23-Apr-17 07:40 PM GMT

Yep, they are little buggers to get but once you get the knack of it you can soon build up a fantastic catalogue of images, and they are so addictive! I quite literally cannot pass up the opportunity of taking their picture whenever one presents itself, I've managed a shedload already this year and we still have a few weeks left in their season I'm sure 😊

**Re: SimonC69**

by SimonC69, 23-Apr-17 07:43 PM GMT

**Wurzel wrote:**

Orange-tips are like that Simon – you always want more, you can never have enough 😊 That is a cracking shot 😊

Cheers Wurzel, too right. My ideal shot would be a roosting male on cuckoo flower or bluebell (the classic)

**Re: SimonC69**

by SimonC69, 23-Apr-17 07:52 PM GMT

**bugboy wrote:**

Yep, they are little buggers to get but once you get the knack of it you can soon build up a fantastic catalogue of images, and they are so addictive! I quite literally cannot pass up the opportunity of taking their picture whenever one presents itself, I've managed a shedload already this year and we still have a few weeks left in their season I'm sure 😊

Yep, I can imagine I'll be stalking a few more over the next few days. Though they're not one I needed for my 'quest' they were (still are?) on my (quite long) 'better shot required' list 😊

**Re: SimonC69**

by SimonC69, 28-Apr-17 09:13 AM GMT

Not a report of anything new, more a 'warning' that if all goes to plan this weekend (and the weather sorts itself out in a big way!) I shall (hopefully) be swamping this thread with photos and over-excited ramblings.

Following some good 'gen' from a friend, I shall be off in search of His Grace (DoB) and Green HS at some point over the next few days.

Both will be lifers if I get them.

Hoping against hope that the weather warms up miraculously.

p.s. any species specific fieldcraft tips would be much appreciated 😊

**Re: SimonC69**

by Wurzel, 28-Apr-17 11:31 AM GMT

May your efforts be rewarded with bucketfuls of butterflies 😊 All the best!

Have an extra good goodun

Wurzel

**Re: SimonC69**

by bugboy, 28-Apr-17 12:43 PM GMT

Males of both those species are highly territorial so if you find one in the morning you should be able to have a good audience with them. In flight green Hairstreaks actually look rather brown. Look out for them flying low to the ground.

Dukes are probably our laziest butterfly. They generally don't become active until late morning, around 11 and have all gone to bed by 3pm. If you find a male you'll just have to watch for his favourite perch and you'll get as many pictures as you want. They are ridiculously aggressive to literally everything that flights into their airspace but unless it's a female duke he'll always return to his spot. They generally perch quite low down, below waist height in my experience.

Hope that helps 😊

**Re: SimonC69**

by SimonC69, 28-Apr-17 03:57 PM GMT

**bugboy wrote:**

Males of both those species are highly territorial so if you find one in the morning you should be able to have a good audience with them. In flight green Hairstreaks actually look rather brown. Look out for them flying low to the ground.

Dukes are probably our laziest butterfly. They generally don't become active until late morning, around 11 and have all gone to bed by 3pm. If you find a male you'll just have to watch for his favourite perch and you'll get as many pictures as you want. They are ridiculously aggressive to literally everything that flights into their airspace but unless it's a female duke he'll always return to his spot. They generally perch quite low down, below waist height in my experience.

Hope that helps 😊

That's some excellent info there, ta very much. Just need some good weather now 😊

**Re: SimonC69**

by SimonC69, 28-Apr-17 04:44 PM GMT

**Wurzel wrote:**

May your efforts be rewarded with bucketfuls of butterflies 😊 All the best!

Have an extra good goodun

Wurzel

Cheers Wurzel.

**Re: SimonC69**

by SimonC69, 30-Apr-17 12:41 PM GMT

Yeah..... I'll put that down as a recce visit then 😊

Started out in brilliant sunshine, only for it to cloud over after a couple of miles so by the time I got to site there was thick cloud cover, which persisted all day. Oh well, I know how to get there now at least.

**Re: SimonC69**

by bugboy, 30-Apr-17 08:37 PM GMT

**SimonC69 wrote:**

Yeah..... I'll put that down as a recce visit then 😊

Started out in brilliant sunshine, only for it to cloud over after a couple of miles so by the time I got to site there was think cloud cover, which persisted all day. Oh well, I know how to get there now at least.

I know that feeling very well. I got the Duke as a lifer two years ago and had a couple of 'recce' visits to the sites before I hit gold. Trust me though, if you're in the right place with good weather you will find them! It is still early for the Chiltons colonies though, I got my first sightings on the 16th May and 13th May respectively over the past two years.

**Re: SimonC69**

by SimonC69, 02-May-17 10:40 AM GMT

**bugboy wrote:**

..... It is still early for the Chiltons colonies though, I got my first sightings on the 16th May and 13th May respectively over the past two years.

ah, that's reassuring, cheers.

**Re: SimonC69**

by millerd, 02-May-17 10:19 PM GMT

I'd agree with that. Noar Hill in Hampshire (where a lot of the sightings posted have been from) is a really early site, and is well ahead of places on the Chilterns like Ivinghoe, Dunstable and Totternhoe. Mid-May as Buggy says is perhaps the best time and there is plenty else to see at all these locations too. Get it right at Totternhoe and you could see Small Blues and Common Blues as well as Dukes, GH, and both Dingy and Grizzled Skippers.

Dave

### 3 Lifers in 30 minutes

by SimonC69, 07-May-17 06:35 PM GMT

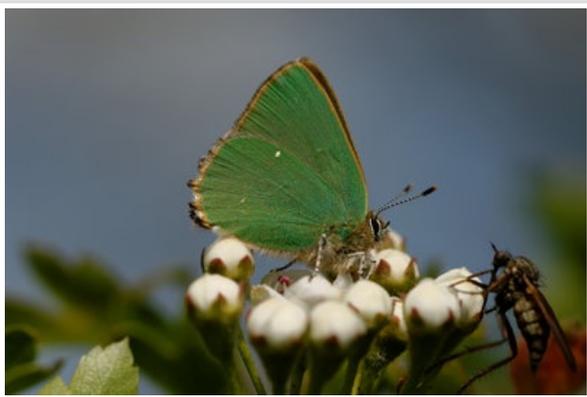
Mrs C and I took a trip over to Bison Hill (Dunstable/Whipsnade) this afternoon, hoping to finally catch up with "His Grace" (well, I was hoping for an audience, Mrs C was just out for a walk 😊)

We'd only been out of the car about 5 minutes when I spotted my first lifer!

A clump of three small Hawthorn bushes had at least 6 Green Hairstreaks buzzing around them (spotted by Mrs C!) and after a little patience I had several shots in the bag.



*I'm happy with these as my first shots (but obviously, there'll always be room for improvement)*



*Can anyone ID the fly here?*

A bit further on and a grey blur caught my eye. Grizzled Skipper. While no longer a lifer, they're still enough of a novelty to justify a bit of stalking.



*I still haven't got "The Shot" of these yet*

after a few more grizzlies, a different "skippery" blur caught my eye. I knew before it landed that it would be my second lifer of the afternoon, and I wasn't wrong.



*Again, not technically brilliant, but it's good enough to put a smile on my face*

These two lifers made the trip worthwhile, so, even though his Grace hadn't put in an appearance, I wasn't too disappointed. A quick chat with a couple of fellow "butterfly-ers" put me in the right direction for the Dukes though, so within 5 minutes I had my original target in the bag. Though I never did get in a position to get a killer shot, I got enough to be worth the journey.



*These will definitely need improving on in future seasons, but for now, They'll do.*



So, an hour and twenty minute round trip, plus around 45 minutes searching, bagged me three more towards the 50 (up to 33 now) Thanks to the two guys that put me onto the Dukes (they may be on here?)

Off to see how everybody else has got on now.  
Cheers  
Simon

### **Re: SimonC69**

by bugboy, 07-May-17 07:10 PM GMT

Well done with those lifers, they were all lifers for me in 2015 so I can clearly remember the excitement of seeing the first one 😊

Your mystery fly is an Empid fly. *Empis tessellata* is a common species but there are almost certainly many similar species. I saw lots when I was last chasing Green Hairstreaks a few days ago.

### **Re: SimonC69**

by David M, 09-May-17 07:13 AM GMT

Your excitement is palpable, Simon! Well done with your hunting and let's hope you continue your run of success!

## At last! Another lifer.

by SimonC69, 21-May-17 02:31 PM GMT

After a couple of weeks of lunchtime visits (when it hasn't been raining) to the site of the nearest Small Blue colony, I finally found some today! I attribute this success entirely to the fact I was wearing my "Lucky Sabbath T-Shirt" I was wearing it every time I got a lifer this year! 😊 It's a shame that the time I was there was also the cloudiest period all morning, so didn't really get much chance of full "open wing" shots (and also a shame, that, yet again, I forgot to check my camera settings beforehand, meaning it was left on spot metering)

Despite that, I did get a few shots that I am quite happy with.



*A typical view I presume?*



*This one seemed quite happy with my presence.*



*This is as close as I got to the desired shot.....huge room for improvement*

So, I'll be going back in my lunchbreaks this coming week, in search of the "perfect" shot. And, if I get away to Strumpshaw as planned next weekend, I'll be wearing my Black Sabbath T-Shirt 😊

## Re: SimonC69

by David M, 22-May-17 09:39 PM GMT

That last individual has quite a smattering of blue close to its body, Simon.

Keep persevering. Small Blues are normally pretty obliging subjects.

**Re: SimonC69**

by SimonC69, 24-May-17 08:01 PM GMT

**David M wrote:**

.....Keep persevering. Small Blues are normally pretty obliging subjects....

They were a little more obliging today (and there were a lot more on the wing today)



*Finally got the first "in Cop" photo for my collection :)*

I think these may be on their way to knocking Small copper off the top of my "favourite british Butterfly" list 😊 (Until I see my first Small copper of the year that is maybe)

**Re: SimonC69**

by bugboy, 24-May-17 10:14 PM GMT

That's a great in cop shot, I especially like the shape made by their joined abdomens, very arty 😊

**Re: SimonC69**

by Wurzel, 25-May-17 10:18 PM GMT

Great stuff Simon 😊 They certainly are throwing an interesting shape with their abdomens 🤖

Have a goodun

Wurzel

**Re: SimonC69**

by millerd, 25-May-17 10:23 PM GMT

A nice shot of the pairing, Simon, however uncomfortable it might look... 😊

Dave

**Re: SimonC69**

by David M, 31-May-17 10:11 PM GMT

**SimonC69 wrote:**

**David M wrote:**

.....Keep perservering. Small Blues are normally pretty obliging subjects....

They were a little more obliging

That's more like it! 😊

## up to 36/50

by SimonC69, 19-Jun-17 09:26 AM GMT

Well, I've not been keeping this dairy updated quite as much as I'd hoped to be doing, but, as it always seems to do, life dealt me and (more specifically) Mrs C a really crappy hand back in April so my my plans for butterfly visits have been severely restricted.

We did manage a trip to Strumpshaw fen a few weeks ago (where I only managed very distant views of Swallowtail) but the few trips since haven't really produced the goods.

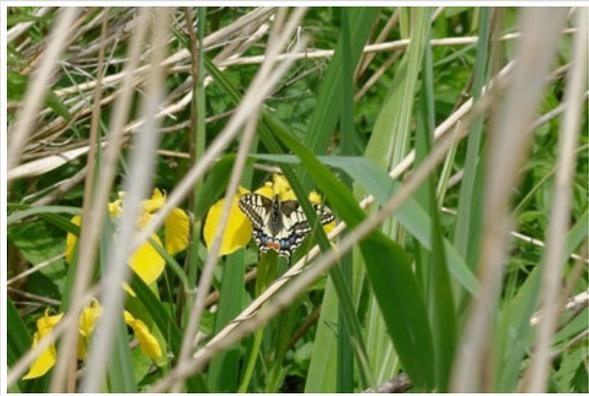
I did, however finally get round to visiting a very local site for White-letter Hairstreaks this morning before work.

I might have looked a bit odd standing looking at a group of Elm trees in the middle of town at 6.30 this morning but I don't care, as after a few false alarms (who knew Meadow Browns liked basking on Elms!?) I managed to spot at least 3 (possibly 4 or 5) WLHs.

I was happy enough to just see them through my bins, but luckily one did come down low enough for me to get a few shots that are at least mediocre. But they get me closer to 50.

Cheers

Simon



*This is heavily cropped. But it's a swallowtail, it counts!*



*Not as good as I'd have liked to get, too high for me to get the angle. But it'll do.*

## Re: SimonC69

by bugboy, 19-Jun-17 10:02 AM GMT

Yup that Swallowtail most definitely counts 😊

## Re: SimonC69

by David M, 19-Jun-17 05:50 PM GMT

Yes, unambiguously Swallowtail and White Letter Hairstreak, which in anyone's book is an enviable pairing.

**Re: SimonC69**

by SimonC69, 20-Jun-17 08:03 AM GMT

Cheers chaps.

Realised yesterday that all 7 lifers this year I was wearing a Black Sabbath T-Shirt.  
I don't think I dare go looking for the next couple without it's Talismanic properties. 😊

**Re: SimonC69**

by jenks, 20-Jun-17 08:34 AM GMT

Simon, 7 lifers in one year is good going ! Good luck in your quest to photograph all the UK species before you reach 50. I had to make this point, however. You have given me a mental picture of Black Sabbath`s Ozzie Osborne out looking for butterflies ! An image that I`m having difficulty in shaking off ! And of course he would have to be searching for Black Hairstreak, wouldn`t he ? Me, I`m more of an old folkie so I`ll have to wear my Fairport Convention and Cropreddy t-shirt when butterflying. Who knows where the time goes ?

Regards,  
Jenks

**Re: SimonC69**

by peterc, 20-Jun-17 08:50 AM GMT

**jenks wrote:**

Simon, 7 lifers in one year is good going ! Good luck in your quest to photograph all the UK species before you reach 50. I had to make this point, however. You have given me a mental picture of Black Sabbath`s Ozzie Osborne out looking for butterflies ! An image that I`m having difficulty in shaking off ! And of course he would have to be searching for Black Hairstreak, wouldn`t he ? Me, I`m more of an old folkie so I`ll have to wear my Fairport Convention and Cropreddy t-shirt when butterflying. Who knows where the time goes ?

Regards,  
Jenks

Don't get me started, Jenks 😊. Sandy Denny had a dream of a voice and of course THAT song was one of her best.

ATB

Peter

**Re: SimonC69**

by SimonC69, 20-Jun-17 09:48 AM GMT

Hahaha. Yeah, I've been to Cropreddy a few times in my youth. And Cambridge folk festival (do they still do the chair jump challenge on the last night? :) ) and going to my fourth Folk by the Oak this year (Kate Rusby!) But yeah, I'm more an aging rocker with a wider taste in music. (The hair started going 20 odd years ago so I'm compensating with the beard 😊)

**Re: SimonC69**

by Goldie M, 20-Jun-17 02:50 PM GMT

Hi! Simon, your one up on me with the Hair Streak i've yet to see one, I hope to put that right this year. Goldie 😊

**Re: SimonC69**

by Wurzel, 21-Jun-17 06:15 PM GMT

Any photo of a White-letter is worthwhile Simon - I've seen them the last 6 years but only got photos from two of them 📷

Have a goodun

Wurzel

**Re: SimonC69**

by SimonC69, 21-Jun-17 06:22 PM GMT

**Wurzel wrote:**

Any photo of a White-letter is worthwhile Simon – I've seen them the last 6 years but only got photos from two of them 🍷

Have a goodun

Wurzel

Thanks Wurzel.

The first three shots that morning were the classic "where's Wally" type shot but luckily (because I decided I could afford to get to work a few minutes later than usual) that one came tantalisingly close to ideal height. I might try again soon.

### No new species, but...

by SimonC69, 23-Jun-17 08:44 PM GMT

I went out this lunchtime hoping for an (early?) Essex Skipper, without success but I came a bit closer to getting some of the "extra" shots that are on my wishlist.

Overcast and a bit too windy really but the Marbled Whites were still far too flighty to get anything decent on. Except one.

I found one newly emerged right by the path and as this is one of the shots on my wishlist (newly emerged, still "pumping" up) I thought I'd struck gold. It wasn't until I saw the ant through the viewfinder (and then later, on the pc screen, the ominous "blob" poking through the hindwing, I realised this one might not have made it 😞



*Almost certainly an ex-marbled white*

A bit further on I spotted a golden blur. It turned out to be a Small Skipper, but it was interesting nonetheless, due to the evidence of it's previous nectaring.

A week or two ago, this site was awash with Pyramidal Orchids and I have been on the lookout for a butterfly with pollen sacs stuck on the proboscis. The Orchids have all but disappeared now, so I thought that photo was gone for the year.

It's not a perfect shot, there's vast room for improvement, but it's a start 😊



*Small Skipper with (presumably) Pyramidal Orchid pollen sac stuck to it's proboscis*

As I only get 30 minutes for lunch (and this site is an 8 minute drive from work) it was time to head back (whilst still on the look out for Skippers)

I did see 2 more, but both were Smalls.

I did like this shot though. Not sure why.



*Small Skipper on Kidney Vetch*

Off to Sutton Hoo tomorrow, then off in search of Silver-studded Blues. Black Sabbath T-shirt is ready and waiting, wish me luck 😊

Cheers

Simon

**Re: SimonC69**

by Wurzel, 23-Jun-17 10:04 PM GMT

Good luck 😊 I've found listening to 'Fairies with boots on' brings me that extra little bit of luck 😊 That or some Leafhound 😊

Have a goodun

Wurzel

**Re: SimonC69**

by David M, 23-Jun-17 11:19 PM GMT

Good luck, Simon. Remember, if you're out in the field, then you've always got a fighting chance!!

**Re: SimonC69**

by SimonC69, 24-Jun-17 08:35 PM GMT

The Sabbath T-Shirt does it again 😊

It was a family trip to Sutton hoo today (to satisfy Mrs C's archaeology cravings) with a short detour to Sutton and Hollesley commons on the way home. We got to Sutton Hoo mid morning, in overcast and windy (but warm) conditions. There were a few Meadow Browns and Ringlets flying around the overflow car park and a very elusive skipper (which I never got on properly)  
Out on the heath, on the circular walk around the burial mounds I found a few Small Heath



and my first Small Copper of the year.



*A bit battered but it's a year tick*

on one section of the walk, there were Viper's Bugloss everywhere and it seemed every one had an attendant "Golden" Skipper



*If anybody knows a better flower to get a photo of a Skipper feeding on.....*

I diligently checked all those I could and was finally rewarded with a rather flighty Essex



*Year tick number 2*



*Year tick number 2*

There were plenty more Skippers to entertain me on the walk back to the car and our lunch, then it was time to head home, via the commons. Just a 5 minute drive to the next car park and a 2 minute walk from there and I'd bagged my 8th lifer of the year.



*My first Silver-studded Blue (and species #37 in my photo quest)*



*An "insurance" shot, in case my initial ID was off :)*

All in all, a very successful day all round. ancient history & natural history all rolled into one.

Off out before breakfast to look for SWFs tomorrow morning.

Cheers  
Simon

**Re: SimonC69**

by David M, 24-Jun-17 08:43 PM GMT

Yup, Essex and SSB without a doubt! Well done.