

Janet Turnbull

by Janet Turnbull, 03-Mar-17 12:45 PM GMT

I'm not sure whether I'll be able to keep this up, but now I'm taking so many photos of butterflies in earnest it seems a good idea to use this diary to see what I get over the year. I'm starting with an account of my first 'serious' butterfly hunt last July.

Inspired by an excerpt from Patrick Barkham's book 'The Butterfly Isles' I decided to seek out some of our more exotic butterflies. My husband and I made a visit to my cousin in Pitstone, Buckinghamshire, with a view to spotting butterflies on the North Downs. It was early July 2016 and our most dramatic discovery was the Marbled White, which does not appear to come as far far north as Manchester.



Just down the lane from my cousin's house is a wonderful wild flower meadow which has SSSI status, and the Marbled Whites were in abundance there too. In the evening they settled down on the flower tops to sleep.



On the way home we called at Fermyn Woods and we walked round slowly, not entirely sure what to look for. It came on to rain so we went back to the car. In a short while the rain eased off so I went out again, leaving Alan behind in the car, reading a book. The sun came out and then I was thrilled to see a White Admiral (only the one and briefly, on the ground)



I managed a couple of shots before it flew away and a young man who had come up behind me confirmed it was a White Admiral. He was familiar with the woods and as we walked round together we saw several male Purple Emperors on the ground. The brief shower must have enticed them down.



10 days later I tempted another friend to return to the woods with me with the promise of almost certainly seeing Purple Emperors, and we didn't see a single one. But we did catch a glimpse of a Silver Washed Fritillary.





We did see Commas, Ringlets, Large and Small Skippers and what may have been Essex Skippers.



Are they Small or Essex? Can anybody tell me?

Re: Janet Turnbull

by Wurzel, 03-Mar-17 01:25 PM GMT

Welcome Janet 😊 Great start and I'm looking forward to your future postings. This is a really friendly and supportive group to join so if you need any info about sites or species then don't hesitate to ask. 😊

Have a goodun

Wurzel

Re: Janet Turnbull

by Janet Turnbull, 03-Mar-17 01:40 PM GMT

Thanks for the welcome, Wurzel! I'm new to blogging so I don't know if I'm doing it right. At the mo I want to catch up with myself so I'm going to write about last year's adventures ready to go forward to this year.

Re: Janet Turnbull

by MikeOxon, 03-Mar-17 01:47 PM GMT

I turned away for a moment and while I was away, your first post grew 😊 You clearly had a good day at Fermyn. There's no 'right' way to blog – I simply

use my own pages as a diary and as a spur to trying to improve my photography. Let's hope for a good year ahead!

Mike

Re: Janet Turnbull

by Janet Turnbull, 03-Mar-17 02:00 PM GMT

Thank you Mike - I'm looking forward to the coming year too! Planning to 'do a Barkham'! Btw, what is that gorgeous blue butterfly on you profile picture?

Re: Janet Turnbull

by Goldie M, 03-Mar-17 02:14 PM GMT

A welcome from me has well Janet, your Husband sounds a lot like mine 😊 He'll read a book if necessary I'm the the one who loves looking for Butterflies 😊 Goldie 😊

Re: Janet Turnbull

by MikeOxon, 03-Mar-17 02:49 PM GMT

Janet Turnbull wrote:

Btw, what is that gorgeous blue butterfly on you profile picture?

A tropical species, photographed by a friend when I was visiting the 'Butterflies in the Glasshouse' event at RHS Wisley - *Morpho peleides*
I know someone who was very disappointed on being introduced to 'our' (re-introduced) Large Blue, since they were expecting something more akin to the Morpho 😊

The Barkham book is a great inspiration that brought back many happy memories of my own butterfly explorations with my, then young, son.

Mike

Re: Janet Turnbull

by Janet Turnbull, 03-Mar-17 03:48 PM GMT

Goldie M wrote:

A welcome from me has well Janet, your Husband sounds a lot like mine 😊 He'll read a book if necessary I'm the the one who loves looking for Butterflies 😊 Goldie 😊

Thanks Goldie! I see you saw the Purple Emperor last July too!

Re: Janet Turnbull

by Goldie M, 03-Mar-17 04:03 PM GMT

I did Janet, my first sighting of the Male PE, I 'm going back there this year because it's great to see so many Butterflies on one trip, also saw WA, SWF,PHS and many others ,A great day out! Goldie 😊

Re: Janet Turnbull

by bugboy, 03-Mar-17 07:44 PM GMT

Welcome from me too Janet, like others have said there's no right or wrong way to write your blog, just have fun with it 😊

Regarding your Small/Essex (SmEssex) Skippers, it's difficult to say. To be conclusive you need a clear shot of the underside of the tip of the antennae, or if it's a male, the scent patch in the middle of the forewing. If I were forced to decide I'd go for Small Skips but I'm far from certain.

You'll find the main site (I presume you've already explored that) very useful with sections on identifying the tricky species and up to date maps with the best sites for each species plotted on them.

I look forward to seeing your diary grow over the season 😊

Re: Janet Turnbull

by trevor, 03-Mar-17 07:59 PM GMT

And a warm welcome from me too Janet.

You have got off to a very good start already !. Many will be envious of your Purple Emperor, and that White Admiral made for an unusual shot.

Your Silver Washed Fritillary is a female and could be a Valezina, not sure though.

Given a week or two, and some good weather, you can start to enjoy the Spring species.

Good luck, looking forward to more,
Trevor.

Re: Janet Turnbull

by MrSpOck, 03-Mar-17 08:06 PM GMT

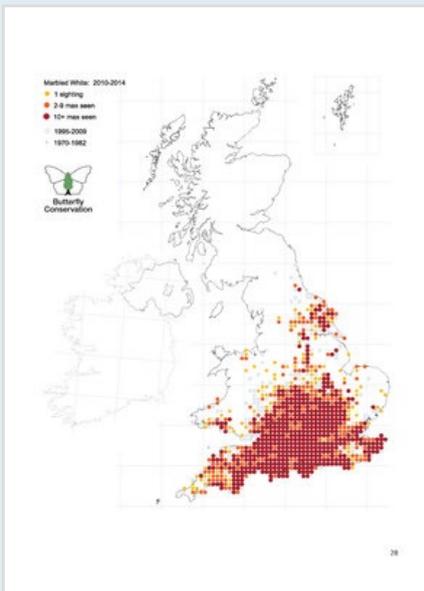
Welcome too

I would go for Small Skippers as the dark upperside to the Antennae rather than the orange/brown upperside with a clear black underside tip on the Essex Skipper.



this shows how obvious an Essex really is, we say 70% are Small Skippers, on a site that has both, if you struggle to see, its a Small Skipper.

The Marbled White is spreading into your area, so in the next decade i would expect it to get locally to you.



Re: Janet Turnbull

by Wurzel, 03-Mar-17 08:18 PM GMT

Alright Janet, you added some more photos which are great 😊. If in any doubt with Small or Essex Skippers just declare them Smessex 😊 Trevor is quite right about your Silver Washed, it's a Valezina, a Greenish Silver Washed Fritillary – still a Silver Washed but a different form – a great find as sometimes you can go a couple of years without seeing one like this 😊

Have a goodun

Wurzel

Re: Janet Turnbull

by millerd, 03-Mar-17 10:42 PM GMT

Hi Janet, a welcome from me too, and I'm looking forward to some more of those excellent photos. 😊 I am also heartily envious of the *valesina* version of the SWF, something that continues to elude me! Green is the word, certainly... 🍀

Dave

Re: Janet Turnbull

by MikeOxon, 03-Mar-17 10:56 PM GMT

More additions, I see! It's up to you, of course, but I suggest that you start a new post when you add more information. That way, it get 'flagged' in the Recent Entries list, which is where many of us look first.

Mike

Re: Janet Turnbull

by Janet Turnbull, 03-Mar-17 11:56 PM GMT

bugboy, Wurzel, MrSp0ck, thanks for helping with the SmEssex - I agree it will be a Small Skipper. Millerd and trevor - thanks for your welcome! And I'm amazed I've scored a valesina...Wow! MikeOxon, how do I start a new post? I thought the PD was supposed to be a single post? I haven't understood something here!

Re: Janet Turnbull

by MrSp0ck, 04-Mar-17 12:01 PM GMT

Other areas like sightings, have useful posts, and the year end Species Best shots are a good read too. your valesina is good, i have only had glimpses of them, and no photos.

Re: Janet Turnbull

by MikeOxon, 04-Mar-17 12:59 PM GMT

Janet Turnbull wrote:

how do I start a new post? I thought the PD was supposed to be a single post? I haven't understood something here!

I simply make new entries by 'replying' to <http://www.ukbutterflies.co.uk/phpBB/viewtopic.php?t=7459&start=720#p117120>. I often put in a title, to give the date and place of each entry. As far as I know, that's how most people do it but I just followed my nose 😊

Mike

Re: Janet Turnbull

by Janet Turnbull, 05-Mar-17 08:47 PM GMT

A Hunt in the Meadows

9th August 2016

Having joined Butterfly Conservation at the end of July 2016 I was really keen to photograph some of our less common butterflies before the summer was over.

I sent an email to Mike, the manager of Ryton Woods Meadows, asking if the silver-washed fritillaries and white admirals were still flying as I was planning a visit in the next two days. They were, replied Mike, although they were getting to the end of the season. As an afterthought he added, 'Do you know the gate code?' Too late I sent a message back asking what it was. I didn't get a reply before I set off from Manchester.

Parking up at Ryton Pools Country Park I purchased a map and enquired at the information desk where the Butterfly Conservation place was. They weren't sure, but park worker Ben found out and set me on the path to the road where he said there was a five-barred gate. 'But it might be locked', he said.

I came to a gate which was secured with padlock and barbed wire, and it looked very industrial so I carried on to the next gate, also padlocked. It looked like the right sort of meadow so with my BC membership card in my pocket I climbed the gate and fought my way round the edge of the field of chest-high grass. There was a track, of a kind, which I realised later was made up of animal runs. I found cinnabar moth caterpillars on the ragwort and dozens of gatekeepers and meadow browns, including a pair who flew off indignantly, still firmly attached to each other. The field was next to a police training ground and I felt I was being watched, so I was relieved to finally get round to the gate again. Climbing over I stopped at the first gate I'd seen and then saw the signs, 'Butterfly Conservation.' I stood by the gate and tried to ring Mike. No reply. So I climbed over and wandered along the tracks. Buzzards were calling and I stood and watched them circling overhead, and spent some time trying to get a decent photo of them.

Eventually I came to a gate - unlocked this time - which led from the field to a pleasant grassy ride and it looked highly suitable for butterflies. I followed it first to the road and then back towards Ryton Pools. Again, numerous meadow browns, gatekeepers, green-veined whites, some pretty moths, but no fritillaries or white admirals. I ate some blackberries. Photographed lots of butterflies on flowers. Surprised a hare. Saw a green woodpecker. And then suddenly, a very large orangey-brown butterfly shot out of a bush as I brushed it. A fritillary! It settled on a fern, watching me from behind four metres of protective brambles. Overjoyed I trained the camera on it and managed just one shot before it flew up into a tree. Nothing would coax it down. The sun went in. It closed its wings. I moved into the brambles to try and get a better view and startled a white admiral which flew away and out of sight.

Eventually the sun came out again but the fritillary wasn't going to play ball, so I bade it farewell and carried on walking, hoping to see another, but my luck was out. Making my way back to the visitor centre I met Ben, out cutting the grass verges. 'Did you find it?' he asked. We chatted a while and on discovering the park would be open for another three hours I went off to find the bird hide and watched a family of little grebes on Pagets Pool. A walk in Ryton Woods to finish the day was an interesting exercise in orienteering. Thank goodness for GPS!

I arrived home to find an email from Mike with the gate codes. Next time, I'll contact the site manager in good time before I go!

S W Fritillary watching me from a safe distance



Common Carpet moth



Shaded Broadbar (thanks Wurzel for corrections!)



(Ready for correction if I'm wrong!)

Re: Janet Turnbull

by Wurzel, 05-Mar-17 10:45 PM GMT

Great read Janet and glad that you got your Fritillary 😊 I think your Moths are Common Carpet and Shaded Broad-bar, but I like you stand to be corrected 😊

Have a goodun

Wurzel

Re: Janet Turnbull

by Janet Turnbull, 05-Mar-17 11:07 PM GMT

[quote="Wurzel"]Great read Janet and glad that you got your Fritillary 😊 I think your Moths are Common Carpet and Shaded Broad-bar, but I like you stand to be corrected 😊

Thanks Wurzel, I think you are right 😊

Re: Janet Turnbull

by David M, 06-Mar-17 07:16 AM GMT

Welcome to UKB, Janet. Best of luck during 2017 and we look forward to seeing what you find.

Re: Janet Turnbull

by MikeOxon, 06-Mar-17 11:52 AM GMT

I really enjoyed your post. You evoke memories of my own similar days, chasing elusive Fritillaries. When I first started looking for butterflies, back in the 1970s, Silver-washed Frits were rather thin on the ground, even in Southern woods, so it has been great to see them spread much more widely. One benefit from global warming, perhaps. My ID skills are not great and, whereas I can manage the limited number of UK butterfly species, moths are beyond me! There are several experts on here, though, who can distinguish one grey-brown insect from another 😊

Re: Janet Turnbull

by Neil Freeman, 06-Mar-17 08:32 PM GMT

Hello Janet and a welcome from me too...a great start to your diary and looking forward to seeing more.

I really enjoyed your report from Ryton wood...as a member of Warwickshire BC this is a site I know well.

Cheers,

Neil

Re: Janet Turnbull

by Janet Turnbull, 06-Mar-17 11:40 PM GMT

Hi David M, thank you for your welcome!

MikeOxon and Neil Freeman - glad you liked the report on Ryton - I enjoyed the day even if I didn't get what I went for. It's a lovely reserve. I intend to write up the rest of my adventures so far - if I don't, I shall forget where I've been and what I've done. I'm delighted to have found a place for an online butterfly diary where I can also access such knowledgeable people

Re: Janet Turnbull

by Janet Turnbull, 11-Mar-17 06:55 PM GMT

Egg Hunting 2017-03-11

Went along to Rixton Clay Pits near Warrington on an egg hunt today - I understand there are Purple and White Letter Hairstreaks to be found there. Wasn't successful - does anyone else know this place?

Re: Janet Turnbull

by Janet Turnbull, 16-Mar-17 01:17 AM GMT

Saw my first butterfly this morning - a Brimstone at Carrington Moss. I had gone out yesterday to look but not only did I not see any butterflies, I lost the lens cap off the camera. Retraced my steps this morning and found it - and almost immediately saw the brimstone. Hope this is a good sign for the year! Later on I saw three Small Tortoiseshells. The one I managed to photograph looks a bit ragged.



Re: Janet Turnbull

by maverick, 16-Mar-17 06:06 PM GMT

Hi Janet and welcome from me

I'm local to you and live in Warrington and do most of my butterfly spotting in the Sankey valley canal area, I've also tried Moore quarry . Well done on your butterflies so far we are always about two to three weeks behind the people down in the sunny south

Re: Janet Turnbull

by Wurzel, 16-Mar-17 10:55 PM GMT

Great stuff Janet – looks like you're onto a lucky streak 😊😄

Have a goodun

Wurzel

Re: Janet Turnbull

by Janet Turnbull, 16-Mar-17 11:41 PM GMT

maverick wrote:

I'm local to you and live in Warrington and do most of my butterfly spotting in the Sankey valley canal area, I've also tried Moore quarry .

Hi Maverick, thanks for your welcome.

If you wouldn't mind company, perhaps we could go hunting together sometime!

Re: Janet Turnbull

by NickMorgan, 17-Mar-17 02:47 PM GMT

Great to see all of the butterflies you saw in Buckinghamshire. I haven't seen most of those species!! I must make a pilgrimage down south some time to look for butterflies. I keep trying to think of an excuse to go to the south of England, but unfortunately we don't have any relatives there. Maybe I could pretend that we have won a weekend break!! 😊

Re: Janet Turnbull

by Goldie M, 17-Mar-17 03:10 PM GMT

Hi! Janet, I live in Bolton area, not seen any thing in our area yet, if you get the chance to visit Gait Barrow in May you'll see Dukes, and Pearl Bordered, also Small PB, also many others, if you don't know the place it's in-between Silver Dale and Arnside. Goldie 😊

Re: Janet Turnbull

by maverick, 17-Mar-17 05:19 PM GMT

That will maybe a threesome then Goldie, I've been once and spotted the dukes there but i didn't have much luck with anything else. It's a nice day out there

Re: Janet Turnbull

by Janet Turnbull, 18-Mar-17 06:17 PM GMT

I went to Gait Barrows last August – Cumbria branch of BC organised a hunt for Brown Hairstreak eggs. I'm going to Dorset and the IOW 19–24 May and then immediately off to Spain for a week. What would we see at Gait Barrows in the weeks before 19th May? Very happy to go there!

Re: Janet Turnbull

by Goldie M, 19-Mar-17 11:32 AM GMT

Hi! Janet, I usually go to GB starting end of April and through May, last year I saw the Duke, Green HS, PBF, and SPBF also Dingy Skippers, and many others.

I've been doing this for a few years and checking back through the shots I've got photo's of the Duke starting from early May into early June. It does depend on the weather, if the Winter and Spring have been wet like last year not many were seen, I got my shots 22nd May and I'd gone up there a few times before that, luckily though the PB were there also the PBF and other's, so if you went up there early May before you go a way there's a chance you could see them, (depending on the weather.)

Did you find any Eggs when you went to GB 🤔 I've yet to see a Brown Hair Streak so I'll be up there this August for sure 😊 Goldie 😊

Re: Janet Turnbull

by Janet Turnbull, 20-Mar-17 08:59 AM GMT

Goldie M wrote:

Did you find any Eggs when you went to GB 🤔 I've yet to see a Brown Hair Streak so I'll be up there this August for sure 😊

Goldie 😊

There were eggs there Goldie, although I didn't find any myself – the ranger had been round earlier and marked the twigs with string. At the end of the day I was thrilled to find my first Grayling – it was after everyone else had left so I couldn't share my joy!

Re: Janet Turnbull

by Goldie M, 20-Mar-17 11:55 AM GMT

Hi! Janet, I've sent you a PP, Glad you got your Grayling, have you got shots of the Large Heath yet? Goldie 😊

Re: Janet Turnbull

by Janet Turnbull, 29-Mar-17 05:01 PM GMT

It was going to be my mission this year to 'do a Barkham' and photograph each of our British butterfly species. But I'm still a rookie and the more I learn the harder I realise it's going to be, so I'll be happy to get over two thirds.

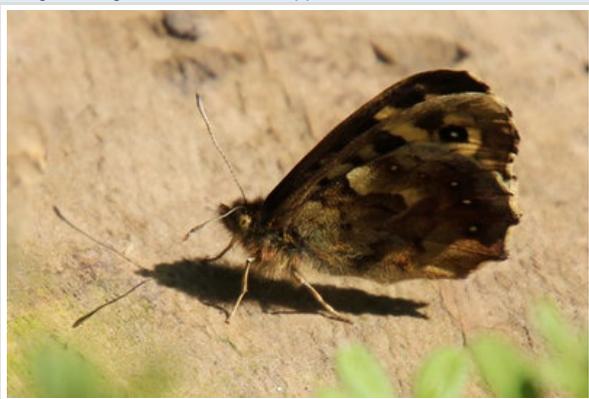
I'm planning to go up to Fort William in June to try and see the Chequered Skipper. I wonder if any one would like to join me? I'd be grateful for any help/advice too.

I went to the BC Recorders meeting in Birmingham at the weekend and was overawed by the huge amount of knowledge gathered there!

Re: Janet Turnbull

by Janet Turnbull, 08-Apr-17 10:58 PM GMT

The first really sunny day for a while so we went for a walk around Chorlton Water Park. A Speckled Wood refused to open its wings for me, and a Brimstone, a Small Tortoiseshell and an Orange Tip managed to evade being photographed but the Heron was happy to pose for me and a male Coot brought a twig for his wife and dropped it on their nest.





After dropping Alan off at home I took a walk along Banky Lane (Ashton on Mersey) and did the circuit of the horse field. A Brimstone kept flying past at high speed and would not settle, but then I saw several male Orange Tips. Two of them disappeared into the woods and another two seemed to be fighting over territory. Eventually one of them settled on a dandelion and I managed a couple of shots before it flew off.



A Speckled Wood landed on a leaf and momentarily opened its wings but quickly snapped them shut. I was intrigued that when I cast a shadow on it, it opened its wings and when I moved my shadow off, it closed them. Yet it had settled in full sun.





Back at the car I was just about to leave when a flutter of blue caught my eye – a male Holly Blue was sucking moisture from the mud.



Across the footbridge over the Mersey, a Green Parakeet attracted my attention



and then a Comma landed in front of me before flying up onto a leaf.



The Brimstone flew past again so I gave chase and eventually it settled on a dandelion



and a Peacock also obliged



As the sun was getting lower a pair of Small Tortoiseshells settled in the dry dead grasses and although they were a male and female they were not mating. I wondered if they stayed together as a pair after mating or if there was going to be a period of foreplay first, but I scared them off before I could find out.



I was pleased with the day's haul although I've a long way to go to catch up with Bugboy!

Re: Janet Turnbull

by millerd, 08-Apr-17 11:07 PM GMT

That's a splendid selection, Janet! 😊 The Tortoiseshells were courting – the male tends to follow the female very closely like that and eventually they usually disappear into vegetation where they will mate. It is very unusual to find them doing so, but there is a photo in Neil Hulme's PD I believe.

Dave

Re: Janet Turnbull

by Wurzel, 08-Apr-17 11:51 PM GMT

Lovely shot of the Holly Blue Janet 🍷 Your Specklie is great too, really dark 😊

Have a goodun

Wurzel

Re: Janet Turnbull

by David M, 08-Apr-17 11:55 PM GMT

Nice selection, Janet, and don't complain about Speckled Woods not opening their wings – their undersides are remarkably beautiful!

Re: Janet Turnbull

by Goldie M, 09-Apr-17 04:57 PM GMT

Lovely shots Janet, your having more luck than I am at present , I've still not seen a Holly Blue or an Orange Tip yet but I'm still looking, 😊 Goldie 😊

Re: Janet Turnbull

by Janet Turnbull, 22-Apr-17 08:29 PM GMT

Out for a Bird Walk today at Sale Water Park. Heard and saw a lot of small birds and learned their songs – but got a bit carried away with the Orange-tips! There were many more males than females and I only managed one (not very good) photo of a female – much flightier than the males who were happy to perch on dandelions. Also spotted my first Green-Veined White for this year.



Re: Janet Turnbull

by Wurzel, 23-Apr-17 07:01 PM GMT

That's one of the dangers of Orange-tips Janet they are so enticing 😊

Have a goodun

Wurzel

Re: Janet Turnbull

by David M, 23-Apr-17 07:48 PM GMT

Must admit, I've only seen three definite Green Veined Whites myself so far this year. I hope they're not having another 'crash' like they did a couple of years back.

The last few springs have been pretty poor for them round my way.

Re: Janet Turnbull

by Janet Turnbull, 23-Apr-17 08:58 PM GMT

The forecast looked as though today might be the best for this week, so I went to the earlier service at church this morning in order to make the most of the day hunting Green Hairstreaks. Saw on the website that Cut-thorn Hill off the A54 near Buxton was the best site in Cheshire so made for that. We took sandwiches, prepared for a long search – and Alan spotted the first one within five minutes of leaving the car. There were many, thinly dispersed on the bilberry bushes. We saw several couples fly up in the air together but didn't know if they were fighting or courting. We didn't see any obvious mating.





Re: Janet Turnbull

by Wurzel, 23-Apr-17 09:54 PM GMT

Glad to see you got some Greenstreaks Janet 😊 The second shot shows a 'punctata' aberrant as well 😊

Have a goodun

Wurzel

Re: Janet Turnbull

by David M, 23-Apr-17 11:51 PM GMT

I'm quite envious of you there, Janet. I've still not clocked Green Hairstreaks on the Gower so it's a puzzle how they're on the wing so much further north!

Re: Janet Turnbull

by Janet Turnbull, 24-Apr-17 08:12 AM GMT

We had two sunny days David. They were sheltered from the cool breeze where I found them. Also it was noted as 'the best place in Cheshire' so I made for there – haven't looked anywhere else yet.

Re: Janet Turnbull

by Goldie M, 24-Apr-17 10:18 AM GMT

Hi! Janet, looks like I'll have to visit Gait Barrow soon now your seeing GHS in Cheshire 😊 Goldie 😊

Re: Janet Turnbull

by Janet Turnbull, 24-Apr-17 11:00 AM GMT

Hi Goldie, speaking of Gait Barrow – I went up on 10th April and saw one Comma! It was too early I guess. But the route I gave you for the BHS may have been the second track we made, in search of something else (can't remember what, but I don't think it was successful). I think the egg hunt track may have been different – your best bet is to message tomdundbar as he led the hunt.

Re: Janet Turnbull

by Goldie M, 24-Apr-17 03:07 PM GMT

Thanks Janet, I've been in touch with Lanc's Conservation (just double checking) and I think I know where to look, having said that they may be having a meet up some time in August so we may go on that, don't know when yet.

Sorry you didn't see any thing on your trip to GB, it's been very cold up there and they've had Snow later than usual that's why I've not been up there before now, I don't think any thing of significance will show up until May, if the weather get's better in the next 2 weeks or so I'll go then. Goldie 😊

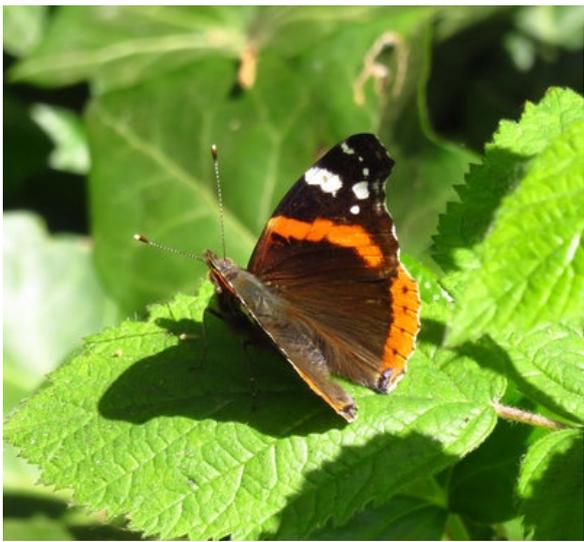
Re: Janet Turnbull

by Janet Turnbull, 09-May-17 09:15 PM GMT

Helped The Conservation Volunteers with vegetation clearance today. Probably the worst thing we could have done... This moth fluttered out of the long grass – I have looked on UK Moths but can't identify it. Any ideas, anybody?



At lunchtime I got a shot of a Red Admiral and there were quite a few Orange-tips about but this neck of the woods seems to be having a slow time with butterflies. Anybody know a good place in South Manchester/Cheshire to go hunting at present?



Afterwards I went across the road to the local Quaker cemetery and got a not-brilliant picture of a Holly Blue. There were two of them spiralling upwards and then one came down to some bushes.



Re: Janet Turnbull

by Janet Turnbull, 10-May-17 09:06 AM GMT

Took a slo-mo video of a female Orange-tip while I was walking along the Mersey. It was about 10 feet away and down a steep bank so I couldn't get any closer, so the quality isn't great - however, it's possible to see she laid a couple of eggs while I was filming. Not sure how to show it on this post but the URL is <https://youtu.be/Yr4fw17Qyoc>

Re: Janet Turnbull

by Goldie M, 11-May-17 02:07 PM GMT

Hi! Janet , I was up at Gait Barrow yesterday and the Dukes are out also GHS and Dingy Skipper, on the 12th Of August there's a meet GB to look for Brown HS, thought you might be interested. Goldie 😊

Re: Janet Turnbull

by Janet Turnbull, 12-May-17 12:19 AM GMT

Hey Goldie, thanks for that – I will try and get to GB in the next few days, weather permitting, and I'll go up for that meet in August! Janet

Re: Janet Turnbull

by Goldie M, 12-May-17 09:23 AM GMT

Hi! again Janet, If you go to GB look out for the Pearl's, when I was there I didn't see any but they've been seen.

Warton Craig seems to be the best place for them at present, if you've never been to the Craig, it's exit 35 M6 and just follow the signs for Warton. Once in Warton you'll see signs for the Craig. You can also get to Silverdale and GB if you keep on the Craig RD after your visit, there's no need to go back into Warton. Hope you see the Dukes, may be I'll see you in August 😊 Goldie 😊

Re: Janet Turnbull

by Janet Turnbull, 12-May-17 05:04 PM GMT

Went to Rixton Clay Pits on Wednesday – it was disappointing as far as butterflies were concerned and I saw only a couple of Orange-tips. I did get a photo of a pretty moth which fluttered out and fastened itself to a tree but I have no idea what it is. (Wurzel offers Small Phoenix – having looked it up, I think it is a very nicely marked specimen, and fresh-looking.)



Yesterday I went back to Cut-thorn Hill where the Green Hairstreaks were out in force. I took a lot of photos and the two here are of a fairly fresh looking specimen with few markings, and an older one with more of a line.





Further along the path towards Three Shires Head there were many Green Veined Whites fluttering low over the grasses and I managed a couple of reasonable pics including a rather odd one in flight.



Back home a tiny Twenty-plume moth caught my eye.



Judging by other people's successes though, it looks like I chose the wrong places to go!

Re: Janet Turnbull

by Goldie M, 12-May-17 06:53 PM GMT

Never mind Janet, you got some great shots, Dukes next and Gait Barrow 😊 Goldie 😊

Re: Janet Turnbull

by Wurzel, 12-May-17 10:37 PM GMT

Great shots of the moths Janet and the take-off Green-veined White. I think your first moth is a Small Phoenix, they often rest with their abdomens curling up 😊

Have a goodun

Wurzel

Re: Janet Turnbull

by David M, 13-May-17 12:23 AM GMT

You're clearly deriving a great deal of butterfly satisfaction right now, Janet. Nice to see that those living some distance from the southern heartlands can still witness decent returns.

19th – 24th May: West Lulworth. Part 1: IoW

by Janet Turnbull, 22-Jun-17 12:06 AM GMT

I booked this holiday with the intention of getting to the IoW to see the Glanville Fritillary. Originally just me, but eventually husband, two sons and one daughter-in-law were also booked in at the youth hostel for a joint butterfly hunt/40th wedding anniversary celebration.

The first day was spent exploring Lulworth Cove and we didn't see any butterflies

The following day we drove to Lymington and took the ferry across to Yarmouth. From the car park at Compton Down we walked up to Afton Down and saw Small Heath



Small Blue



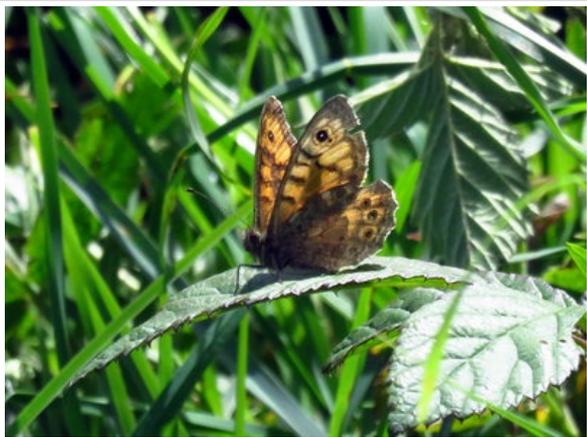
Small Copper



a Silver Y moth



A Wall Brown



and a Dingy Skipper



On returning to the car park we spotted some Brow-tail moth caterpillars



We then went along to Ventnor and parked in the Wheelers Bay car park and walked along the prom where we saw a number of Common Blues and the object of my desire, the Glanville Fritillary which were flying freely along the bank of valerian





It was early evening by this time and husband was anxious not to miss the ferry back, so we wandered back along the prom and had a delicious meal at a mussel shack where the owner was delighted to discover we were celebrating our ruby wedding on her premises.

Re: Janet Turnbull

by David M, 22-Jun-17 12:08 AM GMT

Great that you got your Glanvilles, Janet, and in their natural environment too.

Sounds like a wonderful day.

West Lulworth Part 2: Corfe Castle

by Janet Turnbull, 22-Jun-17 12:26 AM GMT

The following day we went to Corfe Castle



and walked along the ridge to Ulwell where, beyond the fallen-over trig point, there was an abundance of Common Blues which I wondered whether they were in fact Adonis Blues



Suddenly I spotted a much brighter blue flitting among the legumes and realised it must be an Adonis Blue



A Dingy Skipper and a Speckled Wood also posed for me.





Just as we were about to head back, a Red Admiral landed by our feet. It was the first we had seen on the IOW – and in fact seem to have been scarce generally as I have seen very few this year so far.



West Lulworth part3

by Janet Turnbull, 22-Jun-17 12:34 AM GMT

Back at the hostel a Fox Moth clattered into the kitchen, attracted by the light





Re: Janet Turnbull

by Janet Turnbull, 22-Jun-17 12:37 AM GMT

David M wrote:

Great that you got your Glanvilles, Janet, and in their natural environment too.

Sounds like a wonderful day.

It was, David, thank you! Even my family began to get excited about the butterflies.

West Lulworth day 4: Cerne Abbas

by Janet Turnbull, 22-Jun-17 12:58 AM GMT

On our last day we went to Cerne Abbas to see the famous Giant in the chalk hillside.



The local shop had all manner of giant-related souvenirs including a clock on which the second-hand was a penis. Amusing as it was, I didn't really feel I wanted it on the kitchen wall.

However, following the butterfly walk from the Giant's viewing point up Little Minterne Hill I was thrilled to see a Mother Shipton moth



lots of Small Heath



a Drinker Moth caterpillar



a Burnet Companion moth



and several glorious Marsh Fritillaries



Just as we were about to leave, my husband spotted a tiny butterfly on the path and to my delight it was a Grizzled skipper



Re: Janet Turnbull

by Janet Turnbull, 22-Jun-17 01:08 AM GMT

Wurzel wrote:

Great shots of the moths Janet and the take-off Green-veined White. I think your first moth is a Small Phoenix, they often rest with their abdomens curling up 😊

Have a goodun

Wurzel

Thanks, Wurzel - I have only just spotted your reply having been off the website for ages whist out hunting!

Re: Janet Turnbull

by Wurzel, 22-Jun-17 09:25 AM GMT

No worries Janet - I can see that you've been busy and not just as a Chauffeur for Bugboy 😊 Your Blues from Ulwell are Adonis, lush Glanville and Marshies 😊 Looking forward to more reports 😊

Have a goodun

Wurzel

Re: Janet Turnbull

by bugboy, 22-Jun-17 08:21 PM GMT

Nice Fritillaries, I must plan a visit to the IoW myself soon. Your Small heath looks to have an inordinately well developed eye spot!

Re: Janet Turnbull

by trevor, 23-Jun-17 06:00 AM GMT

I'm glad you found the Glanvilles . When you mentioned visiting the IOW sometime ago, I wasn't sure if you and they would coincide, but it worked out well 😊 .

Re: Janet Turnbull

by peterc, 23-Jun-17 07:27 AM GMT

Well done, Janet. You certainly had an eventful trip to Scotland 😊 .

Congrats on your 40th by the way.

ATB

Peter

Re: Janet Turnbull

by Goldie M, 23-Jun-17 12:48 PM GMT

Happy Anniversary Janet, you had a great holiday by the sound of things and what a great selection of species you got 🍷 Goldie 😊

Re: Janet Turnbull

by Janet Turnbull, 23-Jun-17 05:28 PM GMT

Goldie M wrote:

Happy Anniversary Janet, you had a great holiday by the sound of things and what a great selection of species you got Goldie 😊

Thanks Goldie! I did go back to Gait Barrows but failed to find a Duke. I'm planning to go to Heysham Moss tomorrow with BC. Janet

Re: Janet Turnbull

by Goldie M, 23-Jun-17 06:19 PM GMT

Good luck for tomorrow Janet, don't think the weather will be too good but you never know, I was up at Arnside Yesterday it was awful to start with then turned really nice later, if you see any Northern Brown Argus let me know. Goldie 😊

Alpujarras, Spain 28 May-3 June 2017 Part 1 Rio Guadalfeo

by Janet Turnbull, 23-Jun-17 06:26 PM GMT

Must have had a brainstorm to have booked this holiday right at the height of the butterfly season! However, it was wonderful and I did get to see a lot of butterflies. It was a themed week of "Walking with Nature" and the other members of our group of 7 were interested in birds and flowers as well as butterflies. Our villa overlooked a ravine which was filled with birdsong and there was a constant soft 'turring' from the Turtle Doves.



Nearby a goldfinch was busily picking a thistle head to pieces



A very small a ragged-looking butterfly caught my eye; it turned out to be a Mallow Skipper



We were all transfixed by a beautiful Wood Fairy, or Thread Veined Lacewing *Nemoptera bipennis*



A large and powerful Emperor dragonfly, hawking round the edge of a pond, suddenly caught a smaller, red dragonfly and carried it to a perch on a reed where it proceeded to enjoy its catch



I'm not sure if it's just a triumph of hope over reality, but I did wonder if I'd managed to capture a Lulworth Skipper



Re: Janet Turnbull

by bugboy, 23-Jun-17 06:30 PM GMT

Looks like a Lulworth to me Janet 😊

I'm also wondering whether your last Small White is actually a Southern Small White?

Re: Janet Turnbull

by Janet Turnbull, 23-Jun-17 06:36 PM GMT

trevor wrote:

I'm glad you found the Glanvilles . When you mentioned visiting the IOW sometime ago, I wasn't sure if you and they would coincide, but it worked out well 😊 .

Thanks to you for your information, Trevor! I was thrilled to find the Glanvilles.

Re: Janet Turnbull

by Janet Turnbull, 23-Jun-17 06:44 PM GMT

bugboy wrote:

Looks like a Lulworth to me Janet 😊

I'm also wondering whether your last Small White is actually a Southern Small White?

Pleased you think it's a Lulworth! But I'm afraid the difference between the Small White and the Southern SW escapes me 😊

Re: Janet Turnbull

by bugboy, 23-Jun-17 07:03 PM GMT

Janet Turnbull wrote:**bugboy wrote:**

Looks like a Lulworth to me Janet 😊

I'm also wondering whether your last Small White is actually a Southern Small White?

Pleased you think it's a Lulworth! But I'm afraid the difference between the Small White and the Southern SW escapes me 😊

Yes your Lulworth has the distinctive 'sunburst ray' pattern at the tip of her forewings. I'm not sure about the Small White myself but the black tip to the wing looks quite extensive and if I'm reading Guy Padfields guide right 🤔 the hindwing black spot looks right.... I defer to the experts though.

Re: Janet Turnbull

by Wurzel, 23-Jun-17 10:01 PM GMT

As Bugboy has said a definite Lulworth (I go for crescent moon over sunburst 😊) although I'm surprised you didn't pick those up when you were at Corfe Castle - I've seen them in the NT car park there and in the castle as well as at Ulwell 😊 Enjoying your other foreign species. 🇬🇧

Have a goodun

Wurzel

Alpujarras part 2:The Elephant Hill

by Janet Turnbull, 23-Jun-17 10:24 PM GMT

The original plan for the day was to walk around the white villages above Pitres, but since everyone in the group had done this on a previous visit, it was changed to a walk on the Elephant Hill (so called because of its shape) on the opposite side of the ravine.

It proved very fruitful for everybody.

A very handsome Bath White was followed by a Skipper which Bugboy identified as a male Lulworth



A female Common Blue





a Marbled White with a damaged wing and another which was the only shot I managed where its wings were open. Partly concealed, but it looked slightly different from the Marbled Whites I have seen at Pitstone. (Spanish marbled white, *Melanargia ines* – thanks, Padfield!)



After crossing the 'Roman Bridge' I was delighted to find a Queen of Spain Fritillary



Another Mallow Skipper and an armoured ground cricket (I think).



It was definitely the Day of the Spanish Gatekeeper, for there were dozens flitting around and nectaring.



I was lucky to get a shot of this Sardinian Warbler



and almost immediately a very late Spanish Festoon



A Moth (thanks to Bugboy for identifying it as a Yellow Shell)



and an extraordinary Oil Beetle which looked as if it was pulling along its own personal tanker – in fact it excretes a smelly oily substance if threatened.



The afternoon was rounded off with a Small Copper



a Wall Brown (Large Wall Brown - thanks Bugboy)



a Grayling



and a Long-tailed Blue.



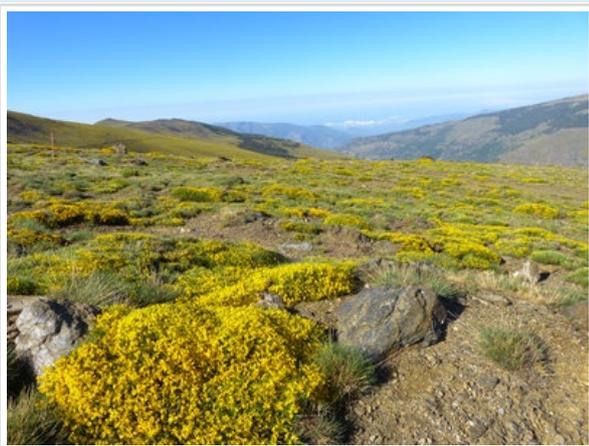
Re: Janet Turnbull

by Andy Wilson, 23-Jun-17 11:03 PM GMT

Beautiful! The Bath White and Queen of Spain remind me of holidays abroad spent many decades ago. Happy days!

Alpujarras 3: Mountain High – Borreguiles

by Janet Turnbull, 23-Jun-17 11:05 PM GMT



We were taken by minibus to Capileira and then by a 'mountain goat' National Park bus to the Alto de Chorillo. From there we walked to the mountain refuge for coffee and then climbed a little, reaching just under 7,000 ft before making our way slowly downhill, watching mainly for birds but also loving the flowers. There were not so many butterflies about, apart from some tiny four-spotted black ones which I think may be either *Eurrhysis pollinalis* or *Anania funebris*. It seemed to like the clumps of legumes.



The altitude seemed to suit this gecko



I was informed there were Fritillaries to be seen, and here they are, although not quite what I had expected:



A Queen of Spain fritillary gave me a much better shot of its underwings than I had managed previously



and towards the end of the day I saw a Painted Lady



Re: Janet Turnbull

by David M, 23-Jun-17 11:18 PM GMT

Janet, this is a most unexpected but welcome surprise. Some lovely natural residents you have captured there.

For the record, I too err towards Southern Small White, although the spring brood isn't as heavily marked as the summer one so I'm not 100%.

Re: Janet Turnbull

by Janet Turnbull, 23-Jun-17 11:20 PM GMT

Wurzel wrote:

As Bugboy has said a definite Lulworth (I go for crescent moon over sunburst 😊) although I'm surprised you didn't pick those up when you were at Corfe Castle - I've seen them in the NT car park there and in the castle as well as at Ulwell 😊 Enjoying your other foreign species. 🍷

Have a goodun

Wurzel

I did look for them, Wurzel - but they must have been hiding!
Janet

Re: Janet Turnbull

by bugboy, 23-Jun-17 11:42 PM GMT

Some lovely images there Janet, those Marbled White are definitely not the species we get in the UK. There's several other species dotted across Europe, someone with more experience with those species will undoubtedly be able to name them.

That skipper labelled as Small, looks like another Lulworth to me, a male this time and your unidentified moth looks like a rather pale washed out Yellow Shell moth.

Also your Wall Brown is a Large Wall Brown form *adrasta* (according to Guy Padfields website 😊)

Re: Janet Turnbull

by Goldie M, 24-Jun-17 08:42 AM GMT

Wow! Janet, what a traveler you are 😊 Great sequence of Butterflies too, looking forward to seeing more 😊 Goldie 😊

Re: Janet Turnbull

by Janet Turnbull, 24-Jun-17 11:40 AM GMT

bugboy wrote:

Some lovely images there Janet, those Marbled White are definitely not the species we get in the UK. There's several other species dotted across Europe, someone with more experience with those species will undoubtedly be able to name them.

That skipper labelled as Small, looks like another Lulworth to me, a male this time and your unidentified moth looks like a rather pale washed out Yellow Shell moth.

Also your Wall Brown is a Large Wall Brown form *adrasta* (according to Guy Padfields website 😊)

Thank you, Bugboy! I agree, having compared the image online, it does look like a yellow shell moth. I probably had the wrong white balance selected on the camera. I will amend my descriptions accordingly, along with the male Lulworth and the wall brown.

Re: Alpujarras 4: Woodland habitats

by Janet Turnbull, 24-Jun-17 01:02 PM GMT

How did this happen? I was logged in, loaded my draft which consisted only of the subject and first line, spent 2 hours writing up – pressed Preview and wow! I'm not logged in any more and it all disappears 😞 Shame the story can't be saved as you go along without having to actually submit. Anyway, let's try again. I'll Submit from time to time and then edit to continue.

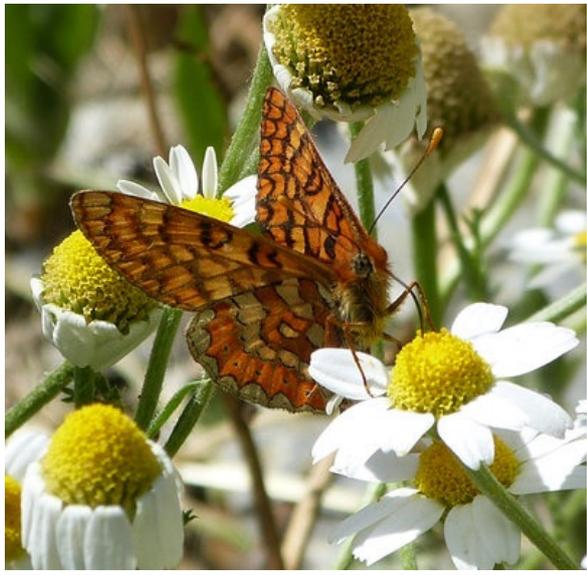
Taken by minibus to Pitres and then walking from Pitres through chestnut and encina (oak – the national tree of Spain) forests. In the woods we spotted many birds and flowers, but no butterflies other than a Speckled Wood which was so much more orange than our British variety it took me a while to realise what it was. Once out of the woods we followed the watercourses which provided lovely habitats for all manner of wildlife.



First off was a pair of Southern Brown Argus (*Aricia cramera* – thanks Padfield!)



and then a Marsh Fritillary *beckeri* form (thanks, David M!)



More in the sun and less in the shade were Small Heath (David M corrects me here – it's a Meadow Brown but 'might be Dusky Meadow Brown. It has that 'stonewashed' look to the hindwing underside'.)



and a Hummingbird Hawkmoth caused a lot of excitement



I was thrilled to capture a Blue Spot Hairstreak which posed beautifully for me



and then spent a while chasing down this Clouded Yellow



I was delighted with the Moroccan Orange-tips



and the Long-tailed Blue which, when I checked the photo, was in the process of laying an egg although unfortunately the egg is hidden from view



I had been disappointed to miss a Swallowtail but then a Scarce Swallowtail arrived and spent some time nectaring on lavender



Meanwhile the rest of the party had moved on, leaving me and Peter concentrating on the Swallowtail. When we looked up there was nobody in sight and it was a while before contact was made by phone and we were reunited!
Another Wall Brown (Large, I think, although much more orange on its upper hind wings than the examples I have seen online)



followed by some gorgeous Common Blues





Finally I saw this lovely fritillary which I think is a Knapweed Fritillary – but as with all of my sightings, I'm open to correction.



Re: Janet Turnbull

by Pauline, 24-Jun-17 01:19 PM GMT

I agree with the others Janet. Lovely images of gorgeous butterflies – very cheering on this overcast day 😊

Alpujarras 5: Wetlands and Time to go home

by Janet Turnbull, 24-Jun-17 02:04 PM GMT

The fifth day we were taken to what the guides called 'Wetlands' but they had really struggled to find anything that approximated to what we think of as wetlands. It was quite good for birding but not for butterflying, and it was so hot that even the birds were taking shelter. The one insect to cause excitement was a stick insect, which was a good four inches long



and my attention was also caught by a goatherd taking his flock for walk



Final Day

Our flight on the last day was not til late afternoon so Alan and I had time for a final wander from the back door of the villa (on which a Large White was roosting), straight onto the old olive terraces.

We saw a Southern Marbled Skipper



Grizzled skippers





another Wall (which I don't think was Large)



another Clouded Yellow



and a Brimstone



Altogether a superb holiday, and not such a shock to the system to come home – it was sunny here too!

Re: Janet Turnbull

by MikeOxon, 24-Jun-17 10:37 PM GMT

Like you, Janet, I've sometimes lost a connection in the middle of posting. Nowadays, I do my write-up in 'notepad' first and then copy and paste the text into the website. You can use the 'Save draft' button to save the text, while you check for editing.

I enjoyed reading the diary of your trip 😊

Mike

Re: Janet Turnbull

by Janet Turnbull, 25-Jun-17 09:40 AM GMT

Goldie M wrote:

Good luck for tomorrow Janet, don't think the weather will be too good but you never know, I was up at Arnside Yesterday it was awful to start with then turned really nice later, if you see any Northern Brown Argus let me know. Goldie 😊

In the end I didn't go, Goldie. I contacted Tom Dunbar who reckoned it would be a long trek for very uncertain returns. I'll go when the weather improves.

Re: Janet Turnbull

by Janet Turnbull, 25-Jun-17 09:43 AM GMT

MikeOxon wrote:

Nowadays, I do my write-up in 'notepad' first and then copy and paste the text into the website. You can use the 'Save draft' button to save the text, while you check for editing.

Mike

Good idea Mike. I'll do that!

Re: Janet Turnbull

by Goldie M, 25-Jun-17 09:44 AM GMT

Janet, that's what I call a fantastic holiday and what beautiful photo's you took of fantastic butterflies, don't bother about the Dukes you'll easily meet up with them next year, may be I'll see you at GB on the 12th of August, I was thinking maybe they might bring that forward with the Butterflies coming out sooner, I must remember to check, Goldie 😊

Re: Janet Turnbull

by Padfield, 25-Jun-17 03:36 PM GMT

Hi Janet. Sorry to join the party so late! 😊 It looks as if you had a wonderful holiday in Andalucía.

Your marbled white is a Spanish marbled white, *Melanargia ines*. Your small white, however, is just that – a small white. I can see why Bugboy suggested southern, and the fault is clearly partly mine, as he kindly referred to my website, but that probably means I have to update my pages. In southern small

white the dark apical patch extends down the outer margin at least as far as the discal spots – at least, in a summer, female, which this is. Bugboy is absolutely right about the large wall. Your brown arguses are southern brown arguses, *Aricia cramera*. This is generally regarded as a good species these days.

Guy

Re: Janet Turnbull

by Janet Turnbull, 25-Jun-17 04:04 PM GMT

Thank you, Guy! Why would southern brown argus be reckoned a 'good species'?
Janet

Re: Janet Turnbull

by Padfield, 25-Jun-17 04:23 PM GMT

Sorry – taxonomy jargon! What I meant was, a species in its own right, as opposed to a subspecies. Older books (Tolman, for example) count it as a subspecies.

Guy

Re: Janet Turnbull

by kevlng, 25-Jun-17 06:03 PM GMT

Janet,

Playing catch up with your diary. Nice to read about your trip and enjoying the photos. I particularly like the Blue Spot Hairstreak and Moroccan Orange Tip (would like to see one of them myself).

Regards Kev

Re: Janet Turnbull

by Janet Turnbull, 25-Jun-17 06:33 PM GMT

Thanks Kev – the Blue Spot HS was a thrill for me too. The Moroccan Orange-tips haven't come out as yellow as they were in the flesh though.
Janet

Re: Janet Turnbull

by Wurzel, 25-Jun-17 09:55 PM GMT

More fantastic shots Janet – my personal favourite has to be the Spanish Gatekeeper 🇧🇪🇧🇪 I would also question your second shot of Marsh Fritillary – I have no experience to base this on of course but could it be Spanish Fritillary, I'm probably wrong but the wing markings look different on the second shot to the first? 😞
Have a goodun

Wurzel

Re: Janet Turnbull

by Janet Turnbull, 25-Jun-17 11:36 PM GMT

Thank you Padfield – I'm quite taken that my Southern Brown Arguses are proper species!
Wurzel – I'm open to opinion from people in the know regarding the Marshie. From the Wiki I would think mine doesn't have the row of white spots with the black centre on the ventral hind wing that a Spanish Frit should have – but it could be my photo doesn't show it properly.

Re: Janet Turnbull

by David M, 25-Jun-17 11:51 PM GMT

I would say that your Marsh Frits are the *beckeri* form, Janet, but part of me wonders whether your Meadow Brown might be Dusky Meadow Brown. It has that 'stonewashed' look to the hindwing underside.

Fort William and the Chequered Skipper hunt

by Janet Turnbull, 26-Jun-17 01:20 PM GMT

Still catching up on my travels...

I booked the Chase the Wild Goose hostel in Banavie, a mile or so north of Fort William, as it was the only place at a reasonable price anywhere near Allt Mhuic. I will admit to being a little nervous of driving the distance up from Manchester but in the event I need not have worried. A stop every couple of hours to refuel on coffee and I was fine. It rained for the whole journey, which was a bit dismal, but it produced a spectacular waterfall at Ballachulish, Glencoe.



Paul hadn't slept the night before, having flown back from Ireland and landed at 1am, so he dozed for much of the journey. We reached the hostel just after 5pm and checked in. There wasn't a great deal to do so we went to the less expensive of the two nearby pubs for a bite to eat. And then it was an early night. Next morning we set out for Allt Mhuic which was reputed to be a real hotspot for the Chequered Skipper. On the way we diverted to Glen Loy as Bugboy's intelligence told us there was another good place there. We drove up the forest track to where the streams crossed it and parked up. We walked slowly along the track searching for the butterflies. The first insect I saw turned out to be a Swift moth.



We did not find any chequered skippers so we decided to continue on to Allt Mhuic. A little further along the road there was a more official-looking turn-off to Glen Loy, so we drove up and parked just before a bridge over a burn. The sun was beginning to show, Paul noticed the presence of Clouded Border moths



and remembered they shared a similar habitat to the chequered skippers, and sure enough found most of the chequered skippers for me before I 'got my eye in'. I was astonished to learn that they were all as individual as a fingerprint - not that I could tell the difference. They were warming up on top of the ferns and were very well camouflaged.



Across the bridge there were several different kinds of orchids, among them a white Heath Spotted orchid



and a Small White orchid, which I had never seen before.



Paul meanwhile had seen some Small Pearl Bordered Fritillaries so I went along the lane and whilst searching for them found a silver ground carpet



and a Common Blue which was nectaring on buttercups. Further along the road a SPBF made its appearance and we followed it until it tried to hide in the grass, where we managed a shot of it.



After munching our lunchtime sandwiches we set off to find Allt Mhuic, but had not gone far when I realised there was something amiss with the car. We had a flat rear tyre. The road was narrow but I pulled into a bigish passing place and we turfed everything out of the boot to get at the spare wheel. However, try as we might we could not loosen the wheel nuts. Just then a gardener's van came by (how lucky was that?) and I flagged him down. He got the nuts undone with sheer brute strength and we learnt about the magic nut and where to find the socket... Having helped us change the wheel, this angel guided us to a garage in Fort William where I was able to buy a new tyre. We had a while to wait and the garage didn't need the car, so we drove back up to Glen Loy and spent another happy hour finding CSs



and I tracked a Small Heath,



Time was up and we trailed back into Fort William to collect the wheel. The garage boys put it on for me and we set off – finally – to Allt Mhuic. It was 5pm.



On arrival we met a group of butterfly hunters who were just leaving – they had seen only three all day. Paul told them about Glen Loy. We walked along the track and almost immediately he spotted a CS but they were very few and far between and my only capture was of a Common Heath moth



Back at the car park we saw a pipit which may have been a Tripit or it could have been a Mipit.



Re: Janet Turnbull

by bugboy, 26-Jun-17 02:44 PM GMT

You got some excellant images there Janet 😊 . I think we'd still be there if the angel in a white van didn't come along!

Re: Janet Turnbull

by Janet Turnbull, 26-Jun-17 08:11 PM GMT

bugboy wrote:

I think we'd still be there if the angel in a white van didn't come along!

Yes – he definitely saved us! What an escapade 😊

Fort William part 2

by Janet Turnbull, 26-Jun-17 10:16 PM GMT

The next day was spent along Glen Loy. On the way we were surprised by a Hercules which suddenly hove over the hill – definitely our biggest sighting! It was cooler and overcast, but there were still skippers to be found.





We wandered further along the road past the bridge until we came to a damp meadow. We spread out to explore, and suddenly Paul was excitedly shouting across to me that he had found an SPBF - and there were many of them, happy to pose.





They were not the only inhabitants of the field and I also found a Silver-ground Carpet



and a large beetle which Paul pointed out



It began to drizzle and I was starting to think about sandwiches when I narrowly avoided stepping on a fabulous Goldenring dragonfly as it nestled in the grass near a Heath Fragrant orchid



Just then we were joined by two more couples who were butterflyers (how can you be so far out in the sticks and yet six people with a common interest arrive at the same time?) They had had no luck with the skippers but Paul found two for them within minutes.

Third Day

The third day we went a little south, to Appen, hoping to find Marsh Fritillaries, but the weather was against us and they didn't come out to play. The first thing I noticed was a grub wrapped round a grass stalk



We did see a couple of sleepy Small Heath,



one or two Skippers,



and a gorgeously fresh Green Veined White.



I thought this was a GVW when I took the photo - but is it?



We motored along to the coast and found a shrivelled raisin bug



and a green beetle



but on the shore was a beautiful Ringed Plover



The journey home threatened to be as wet as when we drove up, but we decided to take a chance and see if we could find any Mountain Ringlets on Irtton Fell in Cumbria. The clouds never parted and the MRs remained firmly hidden.

We had to give up at 6pm when the cloud came down so much that I began to fear we might have difficulty finding our way back, but looking back we could see the cloud was just enveloping the MR habitat. An exciting drive over the Hardknott and Wrynose Passes followed, after which the sun came out fully... but despite Paul's entreaty to go back to Irton Fell we continued with the journey back to Manchester. In full, glorious sun. All the way. It was a great trip (apart from the MRs, which would have been the icing on the cake) and it was good to have Paul's company - without him I doubt if I would even have found the Skippers; I learned a great deal from him. His knowledge of the butterflies and the best places to find them seems encyclopaedic and his version of the trip is well worth reading.

Re: Janet Turnbull

by millerd, 26-Jun-17 10:19 PM GMT

That's definitely a very heavily-marked GWV, Janet. Lovely pictures of the Skippers, and also the last two shots of the SPBF are splendid. 😊

Dave

Re: Janet Turnbull

by Wurzel, 26-Jun-17 10:19 PM GMT

Great stuff Janet, looking forward to the next installment 😊 That's a brilliant place to have to spend time waiting for a tyre - I'm normally left in a small shed with old copies of Autotrader 🤔🤔

Have a goodun

Wurzel

Re: Janet Turnbull

by MikeOxon, 27-Jun-17 10:42 AM GMT

An amazing trip and you certainly made the most of it. It looks as though Glen Loy is holding its reputation as one of the best places in that area for Chequered Skipper, whereas Allt Mhuic seems to be in decline.

Your photo of the GWV looks like the Scottish sub-species *thomsoni*, or possibly *britannica*, (which may both be the same ssp.) *Thomsoni* is described in the 'species' pages, on this site, as having the following characteristics:

1. On the upperside, the veins of the forewings, and sometimes hindwings, are heavily suffused with black. This is especially true in the female.
2. On the underside of the hindwings, a small proportion of adults have a yellow, rather than white, ground colour, which may be tinged with orange. This is especially true in the female.
3. The underside is generally darker, with the dark scaling on the veins appearing more black than grey.

I'm particularly envious of your Small White Orchid, which is one of the species still missing from my own photo collection of UK Orchids.

Those Mountain Ringlets are extraordinarily 'weather sensitive'. I've been on Irton Fell on a cloudy but reasonably warm day and seen nothing, until a small break in the clouds lets the sun shine through. Suddenly, the fell-side is buzzing with them, only for them to disappear like magic, when the clouds close again! And you tackled Hard Knott and Wrynose after everything else. I'm impressed 😊

Mike

Re: Irton Fell and Mountain Ringlets 17th June 2017

by Janet Turnbull, 27-Jun-17 06:28 PM GMT

Having found out about Irton Fell and the MRs, courtesy of Bugboy, I returned to the scene with my husband the following week. The forecast was good, but when we arrived it was overcast at the fell and at first there was a disappointing lack of butterfly activity. We walked up the path and just about where the butterflies were supposed to be, I noticed a Silver Hook moth as it tried to hide in a tussock.



A few minutes later a Small Heath settled on some grey lichen



The sun almost shone for a moment and I saw a small dark fluttering. We watched with bated breath until it settled and sure enough, it was a Mountain Ringlet



Alan tired of wandering about so he offered to stay put while I climbed up to the next colony. The sun came out fully and the MRs and Small Heaths were flying freely



Looking back along Irton Fell. Sellafield can just be made out on the skyline at the right.



I walked on up to Greathall Gill but there did not seem to be a greater abundance than I had already seen but I did not stay to explore, having left Alan for longer than intended, and I met him halfway down, watching damsel flies hovering near a rivulet by the path.



He was as thrilled to have seen the MRs as I was. A very successful outing, but I was almost embarrassed to set this in the diary, knowing how disappointed Bugboy was the previous week.

Re: Janet Turnbull

by bugboy, 27-Jun-17 06:32 PM GMT

Just 🍷🍷🍷

Re: Janet Turnbull

by Janet Turnbull, 27-Jun-17 06:35 PM GMT

bugboy wrote:

Just 🍷🍷🍷

Yes. I'm sorry!

Re: Janet Turnbull

by Wurzel, 27-Jun-17 10:00 PM GMT

Fantastic stuff Janet 🍷 It will be a fair few years before I get to see that species 🍷

Have a goodun

Wurzel

Fernilee Reservoir 18th June

by Janet Turnbull, 27-Jun-17 10:39 PM GMT



However it was Mayfly day and there were a lot of them along the path beside the reservoir, enjoying their brief moment of glory in the sunshine after spending two years under water.

I climbed the hill to the east of the reservoir and found more Mayflies, Meadow Browns and an unidentified (moth?)



Re: Janet Turnbull

by Janet Turnbull, 27-Jun-17 10:45 PM GMT

Wurzel wrote:

Fantastic stuff Janet 🍷 It will be a fair few years before I get to see that species 🍷

Have a goodun

Wurzel

I see the Warwickshire branch of BC is having a weekend in Cumbria 14–16 July 'Butterfly enthusiasts welcome!' to see MR among others Janet

Fossdene Meadow and Priors Marston 19–21 June

by Janet Turnbull, 27-Jun-17 10:59 PM GMT

Next up was a visit to my cousin's farm outside Priors Marston, Warwickshire. On the way we called at Fossdene Meadow. It was fearsomely hot and although there were dozens of Ringlets, Meadow Browns and Marbled Whites they were too excited by the heat to stay still long enough to photograph. However I discovered that they calmed down a little where there was a few metres of shade at the edge of the meadow. I was tracking a Burnet Companion when a bright orange Fritillary zoomed by and alighted momentarily on a knapweed but it did not give me an opportunity to see its underwing.



The following day was Cousins Reunion and was a very sociable day catching up with the family. I was not able to get into the farm fields until the following day – still extremely hot – and found Large Skippers and what I am almost sure was an Essex Skipper. By the fishing lake were some dragonflies which I think were Scarce Chasers, and in the meadow planted with wild flowers there were more Ringlets and Meadow Browns and a moth which I cannot identify.







Re: Janet Turnbull

by bugboy, 28-Jun-17 08:44 AM GMT

Janet Turnbull wrote:

bugboy wrote:

Just 🍌🍌🍌

Yes. I'm sorry!

It was like torture seeing those pictures pop up on your diary!

Your unknown caterpillar is a sawfly larvae.

Re: Janet Turnbull

by Goldie M, 28-Jun-17 09:01 AM GMT

Hi! Janet, really enjoying your posts, I'm no expert but I think your Fritillary is a Dark Green Fritillary Goldie 😊

Re: Janet Turnbull

by Janet Turnbull, 28-Jun-17 01:45 PM GMT

Yes it will be, Goldie – the DGF is known to be in this area and it was just too early for a HBF. Janet

Re: Janet Turnbull

by Janet Turnbull, 28-Jun-17 02:47 PM GMT

[quote="bugboy"

Your unknown caterpillar is a sawfly larvae. [/quote]

Thanks Bugboy – but which caterpillar – the big fat white one?

Fallowfield Loop, Manchester 26/6/2017

by Janet Turnbull, 28-Jun-17 02:56 PM GMT

The weather has definitely turned but it looked like there might be a little bit of sun so I took the Metrolink to St Werbergh's station and from there walked east along the Fallowfield Loop. From the Athol Road bridge it is possible to walk along the top of the bank along the brook and I found it rich with wildflowers. There were Meadow Browns, Skippers Large and Small, a fresh-looking Red Admiral perching and apparently guarding his territory and hundreds of Five-Spot Burnets engaging in mass orgies.



Re: Janet Turnbull

by bugboy, 28-Jun-17 03:56 PM GMT

Janet Turnbull wrote:

[quote="bugboy"

Your unknown caterpillar is a sawfly larvae.

Thanks Bugboy - but which caterpillar - the big fat white one?[/quote]

I was referring to the one under the mayfly but yes the big fat white one is also a sawfly 😊

Re: Janet Turnbull

by Neil Freeman, 29-Jun-17 04:48 PM GMT

Hi Janet,

I really enjoyed reading about your adventures looking for Chequered Skippers in Scotland. I was up there last year to see them for the first time myself and your report brought back some great memories 😊

I have to say that I thought that Glen Loy was easily the best site we visited, I wasn't that impressed with Alt Mhuic and didn't really think it was worth going the extra bit of distance to visit, although having said that there is some beautiful scenery around Loch Arkaig.

We also visited Glasdrum Wood which is a far more compact site but it is also an earlier site and when we were there the skippers had been on the wing longer and were well past their best.

Your Fritillary at Fossdene Meadow would have to be a Dark Green...there are no High Browns to be found in Warwickshire these days.

Cheers,

Neil.

Re: Janet Turnbull

by Janet Turnbull, 29-Jun-17 05:40 PM GMT

Thank you Neil 😊 I didn't think there would be a High Brown at Fossedene but it's nice to know. Have you any idea if the Skipper I found was actually an Essex, or is it not possible to tell from the photo?
Janet

Re: Janet Turnbull

by Neil Freeman, 30-Jun-17 08:47 AM GMT

Hi Janet,

Your photo of the skipper at Fossedene looks like a Small Skipper, Essex's don't have the little pointed extension on the antennae. Also Essex Skippers antennae have a more clearly defined black tip, like the end has been dipped in black paint.

Although I am not very familiar with the site, I would imagine that Essex Skippers could easily be found at Fossedene as they have spread all over Warwickshire and at some sites have been outnumbering Small Skippers in the past couple of years.

Cheers,

Neil.

Re: Janet Turnbull

by Janet Turnbull, 30-Jun-17 02:09 PM GMT

Thanks Neil – that's a disappointment – I'll continue my search for one!
Cheers, Janet

Re: Janet Turnbull

by Neil Freeman, 30-Jun-17 10:03 PM GMT

I don't think it will take you long to track down an Essex Skipper Janet, they are spreading north rapidly. They are already regularly sighted in North Shropshire and Staffordshire, so much so that West Midlands BC is asking people in the region to check all small golden Skippers...it can no longer be taken for granted that they will all be 'Smalls'

Cheers,

Neil.

Re: Janet Turnbull

by Janet Turnbull, 02-Jul-17 12:02 AM GMT

1st July 2017 Fallowfield Loop

I can see this is going to become a favourite local hotspot! The sun shone this afternoon and G and I caught the tram from Sale Water Park to St Werbergh's and walked along the platform. This lovely female Common Blue was nectaring on the bird'sfoot trefoil, but sadly the photo is not up to my usual standard 😞

There was also a Latticed Heath moth in a poor state of repair and a smallish moth that Pauline identifies as a Straw Dot. (Thanks, Pauline!)





Also out were skippers large and small, whites large, small and green-veined; at least two red admirals; meadow browns; speckled woods and commas



Re: Janet Turnbull

by Pauline, 02-Jul-17 06:47 AM GMT

Straw Dot I believe.

Re: Janet Turnbull

by Wurzel, 02-Jul-17 09:54 PM GMT

Great H.Comma sot Janet 😊 They seem to be having a great time at the moment 😊

Have a goodun

Wurzel

Re: Janet Turnbull

by bugboy, 02-Jul-17 10:01 PM GMT

Neil Freeman wrote:

Hi Janet,

Your photo of the skipper at Fossdene looks like a Small Skipper, Essex's don't have the little pointed extension on the antennae. Also Essex Skippers antennae have a more clearly defined black tip, like the end has been dipped in black paint. Although I am not very familiar with the site, I would imagine that Essex Skippers could easily be found at Fossdene as they have spread all over Warwickshire and at some sites have been outnumbering Small Skippers in the past couple of years.

Cheers,

Neil.

Surely those pointy extensions to the antennae make it a Large Skipper 🤔

Re: Janet Turnbull

by Janet Turnbull, 03-Jul-17 12:19 AM GMT

Pauline wrote:

Straw Dot I believe.

Thanks Pauline! 😊 Yes, that certainly looks like it.

Re: Janet Turnbull

by Janet Turnbull, 03-Jul-17 08:37 AM GMT

bugboy wrote:

Neil Freeman wrote:

Hi Janet,

Your photo of the skipper at Fossdene looks like a Small Skipper, Essex's don't have the little pointed extension on the antennae. Also Essex Skippers antennae have a more clearly defined black tip, like the end has been dipped in black paint. Although I am not very familiar with the site, I would imagine that Essex Skippers could easily be found at Fossdene as they have spread all over Warwickshire and at some sites have been outnumbering Small Skippers in the past couple of years.

Cheers,

Neil.

Surely those pointy extensions to the antennae make it a Large Skipper 🤔

I thought it was a Small Skipper when I took the photo, Bugboy, but I can't prove anything now as I didn't photograph the whole insect at the time.

Re: Janet Turnbull

by MikeOxon, 03-Jul-17 10:47 AM GMT

There seems to be some confusion over your recent photos of Large and Small Skippers!

IMG_4808 is definitely a Large Skipper, whereas IMG_4806 is a male Small Skipper, identifiable by the long slanting scent mark (sex brand) as well as by the pale colouration, which is just visible at the extreme tip of the nearer antenna.

Small Skipper antennae tips are often more pointy and less rounded than Essex S, which are always well-rounded and black *all over* but, in the case of males, the shape of the sex brand is conclusive. With females, it is more difficult and the antennae can be very deceptive in the field. A good photo, with a clear view of the underside of the antenna tip, is needed to be sure 😊

I drove around the Motorway jungle in your part of the world, a couple of days ago – made the M25 seem like a piece of cake in comparison 😊

Mike

Re: Janet Turnbull

by bugboy, 03-Jul-17 11:12 AM GMT

MikeOxon wrote:

There seems to be some confusion over your recent photos of Large and Small Skippers!

IMG_4808 is definitely a Large Skipper, whereas IMG_4806 is a male Small Skipper, identifiable by the long slanting scent mark (sex brand) as well as by the pale colouration, which is just visible at the extreme tip of the nearer antenna.

Small Skipper antennae tips are often more pointy and less rounded than Essex S, which are always well-rounded and black *all over* but, in the case of males, the shape of the sex brand is conclusive. With females, it is more difficult and the antennae can be very deceptive in the field. A good photo, with a clear view of the underside of the antenna tip, is needed to be sure 😊

I drove around the Motorway jungle in your part of the world, a couple of days ago – made the M25 seem like a piece of cake in comparison 😊

Mike

It's not those ones that are in question Mike, it's the headon shot of the last post on the previous page.

Re: Janet Turnbull

by Vince Massimo, 03-Jul-17 11:38 AM GMT

Quite right, Paul. Definitely a Large Skipper (in this case, a female) <http://www.ukbutterflies.co.uk/phpBB/viewtopic.php?f=37&t=5300#p46763>
Some of us (including me) were looking at the wrong image.

Vince

Re: Janet Turnbull

by bugboy, 03-Jul-17 02:21 PM GMT

Vince Massimo wrote:

Quite right, Paul. Definitely a Large Skipper (in this case, a female) <http://www.ukbutterflies.co.uk/phpBB/viewtopic.php?f=37&t=5300#p46763>

Some of us (including me) were looking at the wrong image.

Vince

Phew, glad we got that cleared up! Sorry for all the confusion taking over your diary Janet 😊

Re: Janet Turnbull

by Janet Turnbull, 03-Jul-17 06:08 PM GMT

bugboy wrote:

Vince Massimo wrote:

Quite right, Paul. Definitely a Large Skipper (in this case, a female) <http://www.ukbutterflies.co.uk/phpBB/viewtopic.php?f=37&t=5300#p46763>

Some of us (including me) were looking at the wrong image.

Vince

Phew, glad we got that cleared up! Sorry for all the confusion taking over your diary Janet 😊

Well, thank you Mike, Bugboy, Neil and Vince for all weighing in – and I reckon I'll be able to identify an Essex in future if I see one! 😊

Fermyn Woods, Sunday 2nd July

by Janet Turnbull, 03-Jul-17 07:04 PM GMT

The forecast was good so I played hookey from church and went down to Fermyn Woods – I went in the second week of July last year but all the reports said the butterflies were out earlier this year. I arrived about 11.45am and as I walked up the path from the gate opposite the airfield the first butterfly to catch my eye was a Green Veined White which settled in a tree. I saw a small group of people obviously watching something on the ground and edging closer I saw it was a Purple Emperor; it was quite oblivious to our presence. They said it was a female – unusually – as there was no purple on it, and remarked how the males had all stayed in the trees and only females had come down. I got some shots of it and when I examined them later it

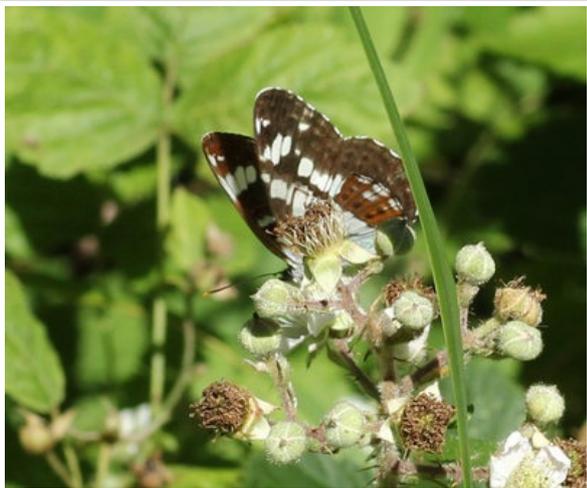
seemed to me that there was in fact some blue/purple sheen, so it must have been the angle.

A hundred yards further on another PE was being admired, and as I walked slowly towards it, the butterfly left the group and flew towards me, landing at my feet. I was thrilled and hardly dared move, but carefully got the camera onto position and got some shots. This one also appeared to be brown, but again, later examination showed a hint of purple.





Continuing along the path I noticed several White Admirals which were flying quite low and nectaring on the brambles – there were so many I couldn't believe I had seen only one last year, not counting the one I accidentally bumped into so that it flew away.



There has been an explosion of Ringlets which were everywhere along the verges – in fact they were the first butterflies to greet me when I parked the car down the road. Meadow Browns were also quite abundant and Speckled Woods flitted in the shadier areas.





I came to a sunny corner which I remembered for being popular with skippers last year, but instead of skippers it had been taken over by Silver Washed Frits. There were six or eight flitting around and nectaring on the brambles, apparently not minding the Commas and Meadow Browns which were sharing the same flowers with them. There were both males and females, which at first I mistook for Dark Greens, but of course their underwings gave them away. I spent a good forty minutes there until a man who had previously spoken to me came back to say there was a Purple Hairstreak round the corner. It was newly emerged and was resting, pumping up its wings in the sun. It gathered quite an audience, and when I left I discovered another flat out on the ground just fifty yards away. It looked in poor shape as though it had been knocked down, but when I gently touched it, it sat up and folded its wings, giving a good view of the streak. I was impressed by the size of some of the lenses which were subsequently trained upon it.







An audience for the Purple Hairstreak

Further on I found Red Admiral – I saw only three all day – and where the trees receded the Skippers appeared. Three Small Tortoiseshells showed up and I thought it might be a colony, but although I watched for a while no more appeared. A Large White flew past, clearly on a mission and although it almost lit on the occasional flower it would not stop. I still haven't managed a record picture of one this year. The two Small Whites I saw were more amenable.



Although I walked all round Ladywood, I did not see any PEs there, or indeed anything which I had not already seen in the first part of the woods. By now it was 5.30pm and back near the entrance gate I found a SW Frit which had just emerged but it seemed to be in difficulties – one forewing was not pumping up. Maybe it just needed more time.

It was a most successful day, clocking fourteen varieties, the most I have ever seen in one day.



Re: Janet Turnbull

by bugboy, 03-Jul-17 07:46 PM GMT

Great stuff Janet, it's been a crazy year for Purple Hairstreaks, I've never known so many people finding them and getting closeups of them! That White you have is a male Green-veined btw 😊

Re: Janet Turnbull

by Goldie M, 04-Jul-17 07:59 PM GMT

That's great news Janet, hope fully I may see one next week when I visit Fermyn, lovely photos too roll on next weekend. Goldie 😊

Re: Janet Turnbull

by Neil Freeman, 04-Jul-17 08:43 PM GMT

Janet Turnbull wrote:

bugboy wrote:

Vince Massimo wrote:

Quite right, Paul. Definitely a Large Skipper (in this case, a female) <http://www.ukbutterflies.co.uk/phpBB/viewtopic.php?f=37&t=5300#p46763>

Some of us (including me) were looking at the wrong image.

Vince

Phew, glad we got that cleared up! Sorry for all the confusion taking over your diary Janet 😊

Well, thank you Mike, Bugboy, Neil and Vince for all weighing in – and I reckon I'll be able to identify an Essex in future if I see one! 😊

Ah! but in my case, I got my pointy bits mixed up 😊 Oh well, I knew it wasn't an Essex.

Great report from Fermyn and some lovely photos. I haven't managed to get there for a couple of years now even though it is only a 90 minute drive from my house. My plans this year have been thrown out somewhat by some species emerging early.

Cheers,

Neil

Re: Janet Turnbull

by millerd, 04-Jul-17 09:02 PM GMT

Great report from Fermyn, Janet – you saw more than I did a couple of days earlier! 😊

Dave

Ashton on Mersey 3rd July

by Janet Turnbull, 04-Jul-17 09:54 PM GMT

Staying local, I parked up in the lane by the sewage works and walked along the Trans Pennine Trail. A red admiral flew up from the ground, circled round and settled back on the path in the sun. A Large White went bombing past and after crossing the footbridge over the Mersey I wandered around Stretford Meadows to the east of the footpath to Urmston. Here it is mainly grass and few flowers apart from brambles around the edge and I saw a few Skippers and a Meadow Brown but very little else. I retraced my steps and went into the western part of the meadow, and was immediately greeted by at least half a dozen Commas, perching on the pestiferous Himalayan balsam and leaping up to chase off anyone who came too close.



Some bindweed with huge white trumpets attracted a Large Skipper which fancied itself as being part of a Georgia O'Keeffe painting while a Small Skipper contented itself with a thistle. I chased after a Meadow Brown for ages and eventually caught it as it settled with its wings open, low in the grass.



I didn't see much else so I left and walked up towards the paddock and noticed a female Common Hawker resting on the brambles.



Returning to the footbridge I decided not to cross back but to carry on along the cycle path which runs close to the hedgerow, instead of along the lower towpath, and was rewarded with my first (British) Gatekeepers of the year, hobnobbing with a number of Meadow Browns and a Speckled Wood. A female Banded Demoiselle caught my eye but she seemed to be alone and I could not find any males.



Re: Janet Turnbull

by MikeOxon, 04-Jul-17 10:39 PM GMT

From the broad ante-humeral stripes and the prominent triangle on segment 2, I'd suggest that your dragonfly (IMG_5189) is actually a Southern Hawker – up near the northern limit of its current range, although global warming is probably changing this boundary! You are well placed to observe these movement trends in butterflies and other temperature-sensitive species.

Mike

Re: Janet Turnbull

by bugboy, 04-Jul-17 10:51 PM GMT

MikeOxon wrote:

From the broad ante-humeral stripes and the prominent triangle on segment 2, I'd suggest that your dragonfly (IMG_5189) is actually a Southern Hawker – up near the northern limit of its current range, although global warming is probably changing this boundary! You are well placed to observe these movement trends in butterflies and other temperature-sensitive species.

Mike

Agreed. You can separate Southern Hawkets from all the others in the UK by looking at the end of the abdomen where the spots join in the final segments to form two coloured bands. All other Hawkets have spots right to the tip.

Re: Janet Turnbull

by Janet Turnbull, 05-Jul-17 09:25 AM GMT

MikeOxon wrote:

From the broad ante-humeral stripes and the prominent triangle on segment 2, I'd suggest that your dragonfly (IMG_5189) is actually a Southern Hawker – up near the northern limit of its current range, although global warming is probably changing

this boundary! You are well placed to observe these movement trends in butterflies and other temperature-sensitive species.

Mike

Thanks, Mike and Bugboy – Actually I did wonder if it was, but then I thought it must be too far north to be a southern hawkker.

White Letter Hairstreak hunt, 5th July 2017

by Janet Turnbull, 05-Jul-17 10:39 PM GMT

I so wanted to see a WLH and determined to try Brockholes, since **Goldie** had such a good day there. Although the forecast was for clouds and sunny intervals, it looked as though there might be enough sunshine to make the journey worth it and I even got my husband interested enough to go with me and bring his spotting scope. We found the spot, and spent almost two hours staring at the wrong tree. There were quite a few other butterflies around: several Commas, Meadow Browns, Ringlets and Gatekeepers, but the WLH refused to show.

we sat on the bench and watched a Red Admiral as it licked the stones on the path by our feet. We were about to leave it, and walk on through the woods and Alan said to have one more look at the brambles. I suddenly realised which tree we should have been looking at and so Alan got the spotting scope out again and set it up, while I scanned the branches with binoculars. And then I saw it – a dark blob on a leaf. Through the scope we saw it was indeed a White Letter Hairstreak – we were so excited! But it looked so odd – as though it had its wings open.

Swapping the scope for a compact zoom camera on the tripod, I eventually found the butterfly again and realised why it looked as though its wings were open.



On a minor key after this, we continued to walk round Brockholes and came upon a Mother of Pearl moth and what I believe is an Emerald dragonfly, which only allowed me one shot before it darted off.



Re: Janet Turnbull

by trevor, 06-Jul-17 12:03 PM GMT

I have just read your report from Fermyn woods. I don't think anyone on UKB can have had a more species rich day out, in one location, than you.

I would love to have soaked up the atmosphere there that day.

All the best,
Trevor.

Re: Janet Turnbull

by Goldie M, 06-Jul-17 03:15 PM GMT

Well done Janet, a mating pair WLHS has well 😊 I'm glad you found the spot alright 😊 Fingers crossed for Fermyn for me now, I'd a similar day to you last year where I saw all those species, it was the 17th July, that's why I thought going back about that time would be okay, just shows you never know.
Goldie 😊

Re: Janet Turnbull

by Janet Turnbull, 06-Jul-17 03:51 PM GMT

MikeOxon wrote:

From the broad ante-humeral stripes and the prominent triangle on segment 2, I'd suggest that your dragonfly (IMG_5189) is actually a Southern Hawker – up near the northern limit of its current range, although global warming is probably changing this boundary! You are well placed to observe these movement trends in butterflies and other temperature-sensitive species.

Mike

I met an entomologist at Brockholes (another 37 miles further north from me) yesterday who told me the southern hawker was one of the commonest dragonflies up here, so they must have migrated north quite rapidly.
Janet

Re: Janet Turnbull

by MikeOxon, 06-Jul-17 04:20 PM GMT

Interesting! I've read somewhere that the 'common' Hawker is actually now relatively scarce – I've never managed to photograph one.

Re: Janet Turnbull

by Wurzel, 06-Jul-17 09:47 PM GMT

Fantastic set of posts recently, I'm playing catch-up as work has been frantic, it looks like Fermyn is the place to be, great Emperor shots 😊👍

Have a goodun

Wurzel

Gait Barrows 9th July

by Janet Turnbull, 09-Jul-17 11:53 PM GMT

The weather looked fair so I went up to Gait Barrows. By the time I was halfway up the M61 the clouds had rolled in. I discovered Warton Crag was on the way so I called in there first – what a gorgeous wildflower haven! – but other than Small Skippers and Ringlets there seemed to be no others on the wing that I could see. Still overcast, I went on to Gait Barrows. There were several cars already there and I had a job finding a parking spot but someone chose that moment to leave so I nipped into his place. Then the sun came out and stayed out for the rest of the afternoon. My first hit was a very tired and tatty Brown Argus, and almost immediately a Grayling landed in front of me, snapping its wings shut and leaning up to the sun. I teased it with a grass stalk and it flexed its wings enough to show me the eye of the forewing before it decided it didn't want to play any more and took off. The next Grayling was so spread out that much more of its forewing was visible.



A much younger Brown Argus appeared and I had difficulty deciding if it is a Brown Argus or a female Common Blue – it seems to be halfway between the two but Goldie pointed out that unspotted NBAs are ssp *Salmacis*.



And then a Northern Brown Argus showed up for me but I didn't get a photo of its underside.



I called in at Warton Crag again on the way back but the butterflies were still hiding. I did find an orchid which I could not identify – it looked different from the ones I've seen up to now.



The traffic was slow as it passed Brockholes so I popped in there to see if the WLHs were about, but no. I noticed several more elm trees along the main path, all with well-chewed leaves, and a patch of nettles with a number of Peacock caterpillars (thanks, Bugboy!) working hard on them.



Re: Janet Turnbull

by Goldie M, 10-Jul-17 10:19 AM GMT

Hi! Janet, I got told once that the Northern Brown Argus without the spots is called (ab Salmacis) it's still a NBA, so well done with the one with the spots, because I think I'll only ever get the salamis at GB before 😊 Goldie 😊

Re: Janet Turnbull

by bugboy, 10-Jul-17 01:13 PM GMT

Goldies' absolutely right, all Brown Argus in that part of the world are Northern Brown Argus form/subspecies *salmacis*. South of the border they usually lack the white spot and look very similar to the southern species but as you saw they do sometimes throw up the occasional white spotted animal. The second one pictured is a male, the thin tapering abdomen shows this (compare it to the white spotted animal which is obviously a female), so a Common Blue female could be ruled out in that case without having to check the underside spotting 😊

Also your caterpillar is a Peacock, Red Admirals are much plumper and rarely if ever venture outside their 'tent'.

Re: Janet Turnbull

by MikeOxon, 10-Jul-17 06:18 PM GMT

I *think* your orchid may be a Heath Fragrant Orchid (*Gymnadenia borealis*) - you have a knack of finding the ones I haven't seen! The long narrow lip points me in that direction but I'd welcome other views

Re: Janet Turnbull

by Janet Turnbull, 11-Jul-17 01:09 AM GMT

Goldie and Bugboy – thanks for telling me about the *salmacis* – and pointing out the difference between the M and F body shape, which is something I had not realised before.

Mike – I googled the heath fragrant orchid but didn't find a photo which appeared to match mine.. I wonder if anyone else knows 🤔
By the way, I'm glad you survived to tell the tale after your foray round the M60 – I find it utterly confusing 😊

Hampsfell 10th July

by Janet Turnbull, 11-Jul-17 01:13 AM GMT

The Cumbria BC organised a trip, led by David Jackson, to Hampsfell in search of Dark Green and High Brown Fritillaries. Despite heavy rain most of the way up the M60/M61, the sun came out for the expedition. Enthusiastic habitat management by the local farmer in conjunction with BC is ensuring the butterflies will be able to extend their breeding ground over a wider area. The leaders of the party caught specimens so that we could get a closer look, and carefully released them where they had been captured

Both the target species were seen, although all my photos turned out to be High Browns.



Other species present included Meadow Browns, Skippers, Common Blues, Northern Brown Argus, one very late and battered Small Pearl Bordered Fritillary and at the end I found a Lacewing moth, *Chrysopa perla*.





Re: Janet Turnbull

by Wurzel, 11-Jul-17 10:39 PM GMT

That must be a terrible situation Janet, all your Frit shots turning out to be HBF 🙄🙄🙄 I think I really am going to have to sort out a northern foray 🙄

Have a goodun

Wurzel

Re: Janet Turnbull

by Janet Turnbull, 15-Jul-17 04:35 PM GMT

Hoping I wasn't too late for the Large Heaths, I went to Whitchurch NNR yesterday. It was too overcast with infrequent sunny spells for much butterfly activity although as I parked the car the sun shone briefly and I was surrounded by ringlets. That didn't last but I did get some shots of a female black Hawker – no males to be seen.



A man out looking for dragonflies told me about Prees Heath so I went over there and apparently a number of Silver Studded Blues had been seen, but I didn't find them. However I think I may at last have an Essex Skipper...





A Six-spot Burnet was examining the heather and a Small Heath shared a ragwort with a couple of Cinnabar caterpillars.



Re: Janet Turnbull

by Janet Turnbull, 15-Jul-17 04:52 PM GMT

bugboy wrote:

Goldies' absolutely right, all Brown Argus in that part of the world are Northern Brown Argus form/subspecies *salmacis*. South of the border they usually lack the white spot and look very similar to the southern species but as you saw they do sometimes throw up the occasional white spotted animal. The second one pictured is a male, the thin tapering abdomen shows this (compare it to the white spotted animal which is obviously a female), so a Common Blue female could be ruled out in that case without having to check the underside spotting 😊

Also your caterpillar is a Peacock, Red Admirals are much plumper and rarely if ever venture outside their 'tent'.

So does that mean the one with the white spots is not an *artaxerxes*, Bugboy?
Confused 😞

Re: Janet Turnbull

by Janet Turnbull, 15-Jul-17 05:49 PM GMT

I'm thinking of trying the Great Orme for Silver studded blues over the next week – does anyone have any good clues where the best places might be – or am I too late?
Janet

Re: Janet Turnbull

by bugboy, 15-Jul-17 07:47 PM GMT

Janet Turnbull wrote:

bugboy wrote:

Goldies' absolutely right, all Brown Argus in that part of the world are Northern Brown Argus form/subspecies *salmacis*. South of the border they usually lack the white spot and look very similar to the southern species but as you saw the do sometimes throw up the occasional white spotted animal. The second one pictured is a male, the thin tapering abdomen shows this (compare it to the white spotted animal which is obviously a female), so a Common Blue female could be ruled out in that case without having to check the underside spotting 😊

Also your caterpillar is a Peacock, Red Admirals are much plumper and rarely if ever venture outside their 'tent'.

So does that mean the one with the white spots is not an *artaxerxes*, Bugboy?
Confused 😞

Hmmm, well this is me thinking aloud. Someone with a much better understanding of genetics may know for sure:

Since *salmacis* and *artaxerxes* are races/subspecies of the same animal I would assume that they both have latent/recessive genes that are dominant in the other giving rise to the differences we see. If this is true then it wouldn't be unusual at all for the odd specimen to show characteristics of the other every now and again. *Artaxerxes* is quite variable visually as well, the ones I saw weren't particularly blessed in the 'white spot dept' compared with some images I've seen. So as far as I understand all yours will come under the *salmacis* umbrella.

Genetics is all very complicated and I have a very limited understanding of it. Of course one person's **species** is another person's **subspecies** and a third person's **race**. It just depends on what geneticist you talk to, in many ways it's quite a subjective science. Sometimes it's best to just let other people worry about stuff...

Janet Turnbull wrote:

I'm thinking of trying the Great Orme for Silver studded blues over the next week – does anyone have any good clues where the best places might be – or am I too late?
Janet

Not 100% but I have a feeling that is an early site so you may be a month late, Neil Freeman visited last year so you could check through his diary and look at dates.

Janet Turnbull wrote:

However I think I may at last have an Essex Skipper...

Yes you have, absolutely, 100%, unequivocally! 😊

Prees Heath 17th July

by Janet Turnbull, 17-Jul-17 11:48 PM GMT

Prees Heath deserved a return visit as it was so late in the day when I went on Friday. It was a perfect day and the heather was humming with blue butterflies. I'm sure most of them were SSB but the silver spots did not show up well, if at all, on most of my examples. However I did eventually manage to find a good example and spent a long time bothering females as they fluttered low over the heather and then crawling deep down to lay eggs. A single shot of a courting couple turned out well but the pair did not hang about.





Re: Janet Turnbull

by Wurzel, 19-Jul-17 10:10 PM GMT

That is an excellent example of what to look for when trying to ID a Essex, it looks like the little scamps have had their dabs taken by the Rozzers 😊
Interesting to see the Silver-studs still hanging on and one looking reasonably fresh.
Have a goodun

Wurzel

Re: Janet Turnbull

by Neil Freeman, 21-Jul-17 08:06 PM GMT

bugboy wrote:

Janet Turnbull wrote:

I'm thinking of trying the Great Orme for Silver studded blues over the next week – does anyone have any good clues where the best places might be – or am I too late?

Janet

Not 100% but I have a feeling that is an early site so you may be a month late, Neil Freeman visited last year so you could check through his diary and look at dates.

Sorry Janet, just seen this so a bit late now. I did go last year in late June and saw loads, the report is on page 89 of my diary. I would definitely recommend a visit but late June/early July seems to be best time.

Glad to see you got your Essex, great shots 😊

Cheers,

Neil

Re: Janet Turnbull

by Janet Turnbull, 23-Jul-17 04:32 PM GMT

Thanks Neil – I will make a point of getting there early June next year as it sounds such a great site for all sorts. I did have some success at Prees Heath though!

Re: Janet Turnbull

by Janet Turnbull, 23-Jul-17 05:09 PM GMT

22nd July – Hunt for new WLH sites at Rossendale

Grenville and I met up with Tom Dunbar and a group from Lancs BC to seek out new sites of the White Letter Hairstreak. Alongside the Irwell at Waterfoot were a number of elm trees and when the sun finally broke through we observed several WLH flitting in the treetops. We then moved on to Whitewell Bottom where we discovered a few more and also managed to get my first photo this year of a Large White which nectared on the Sweet William flowers in a garden.



A Meadow Brown and a Small Skipper also stopped by.

After a while we moved on again to a third site on a main road where there was a very big elm tree but it appeared devoid of WLH during the time we watched, although Red Admirals and a Small Tortoiseshell were nectaring on privet where we had parked the cars. At this point Tom's group went on to Helmshore old railway line, Haslingden where they had a very successful sighting, while Gren and I returned to Waterfoot and wandered up the footpath above the main road and found several Small Skippers.



Thank you Tom et al for a good and informative day out!

Re: Janet Turnbull

by David M, 24-Jul-17 08:55 PM GMT

Good to hear about WLH sites in the north of England, Janet. It's a difficult butterfly to find, and an even harder one to observe. If you can find elms though, you've always got a decent chance of locating the butterfly.

Re: Janet Turnbull

by Janet Turnbull, 25-Jul-17 12:12 AM GMT

David M wrote:

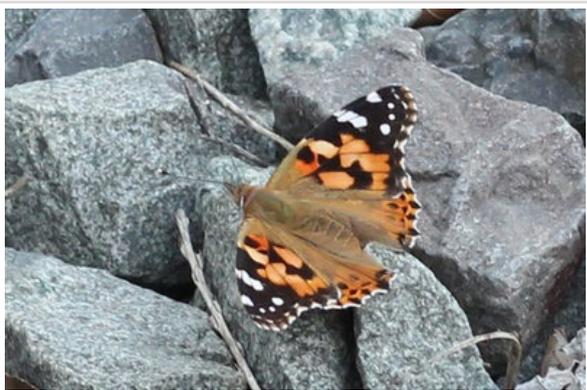
and an even harder one to observe.

They certainly don't make it easy, David! One member of the group had a spotting scope so we were able to get a good look at one or two but the only photo I managed was a silhouette! 😊

24th July: St Werbergh's Metrolink station, Chorlton

I took the tram to St W's and didn't even need to leave the platform. I counted 9 Gatekeepers, 3 Large Whites, 2 Small Whites, a Large Skipper, 2 Commas and a blue which didn't keep still long enough for me to tell which it was. And then there was a tragedy. A Painted Lady was waiting on the platform, and she flew down to sit on the warm stones beside the track. A tram came, she panicked and flew up in front of it... and I didn't see her again. That was the first PL I have seen up here.





Re: Janet Turnbull

by Janet Turnbull, 11-Aug-17 09:00 PM GMT

29th July: St Werbergh's again

Time to do a bit of catching up with the diary!

Another trip to St Werbergh's station in the afternoon where I found Speckled Woods on the bank. Wandering up the Fallowfield Loop I discovered a patch of Lords and Ladies, or Cuckoo Pint. A Small white was resting on some bindweed and a Red Admiral seemed to prefer the warmth of the ground. Along the stretch which follows the stream I witnessed a tussle between two males over a female who was nectaring on a thistle. The victor went for his prize but was given the 'Keep off me I've got a headache' by the female, who pointed her body straight up so that he could not get near. Good for you, I thought.



Small Skippers, Meadow Browns and Gatekeepers were also to be found along that stretch. Taking the tram back to Sale Water Park I thought I'd look in on the wild flower meadow – it has not been specially seeded but it has done very well since the volunteers cleared a lot of scrub. However, I only found blue damsel flies.



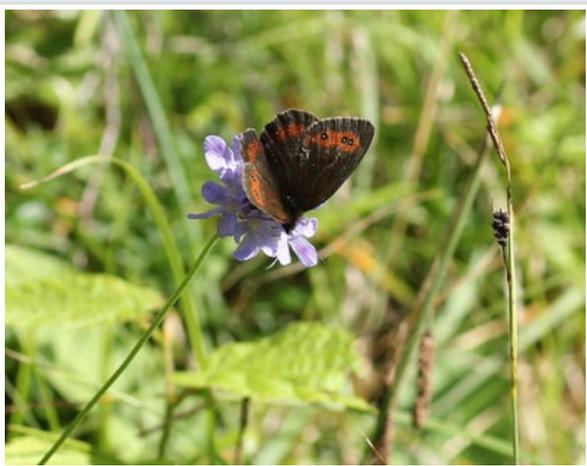
10th August: Scotch Argus at Smardale

by Janet Turnbull, 18-Aug-17 06:10 PM GMT

I managed to persuade Alan to come with me to Smardale and since we stopped at Tebay for lunch I was able to buy a replacement copy of a book to send my son in Norway – the original having been lost in the post. Great news though – Royal Mail paid up! But that's another story. We parked just off the road and walked about 3Km to join the disused railway track. Just before the packhorse bridge, a Dark Green Fritillary teased me by staying just too far away to get a very good picture.



On then towards the viaduct, and the freshest specimen was the first we came across – after that they all seemed a little worn, which wasn't surprising because before reaching the viaduct we met three groups of people who told us that students from Lancaster Uni were catching and numbering Scotch Argus butterflies – the reports varied from 500 to 700 but at any rate, they had caught a lot. At the viaduct itself a man from Cumbria Wildlife Trust was netting them as well, looking to see if any of them had numbers, and further along two men with nets who had no affiliation to anything were doing the same out of curiosity. I felt sorry for the butterflies which were potentially being traumatised three times. The Scotch Argus were certainly plentiful and were mostly fluttering low in the grasses and nectaring on the wild scabious.





And then I discovered I had found numbers 6 and 33



By 5pm we turned back and I did so hope I'd see the DGF again, and although the sun was still strong the butterflies had all disappeared from that area.

Re: Janet Turnbull

by maverick, 18-Aug-17 06:28 PM GMT



Janet Turnbull wrote:

I'm thinking of trying the Great Orme for Silver studded blues over the next week – does anyone have any good clues where the best places might be – or am I too late?

Janet

Just seen your post Janet

I know the silver studded on the orm very well, but I think they will all be gone by now.

The best place is up by the cable car station .you can drive right up past it and into the car park by at the start of the toboggan run .as you pass through the cattle gate to walk up the Orm there is a small blackberry bush on the right they are always in there. Good luck

Re: Janet Turnbull

by Janet Turnbull, 18-Aug-17 10:42 PM GMT

Hi Maverick, thanks for this info – I'll make sure I get there next year! I heard the Orme was an early site so I went to Prees Heath instead, and they were still there.

Janet

Re: Janet Turnbull

by Janet Turnbull, 19-Aug-17 03:07 PM GMT

15th August: Aston Rowant – Silver Spotted Skippers and Chalkhill Blues

I had been monitoring the weather forecast for Oxford hoping for a couple of fine days in order to go hunting for Silver Spotted Skippers and Chalkhill Blues in the Chilterns. On Tuesday it looked as though that and the following day would be reasonably sunny so I booked a bed at YHA Oxford for the night.

I chose Aston Rowant as it seemed to have the greatest range of species and I was not disappointed. From the car park I set off towards Beacon Hill and on emerging from the woods onto the open, flowery hillside, I found butterflies practically flinging themselves at my feet asking to be photographed. I literally had to watch where I walked to avoid stepping on Meadow Browns.





A beautiful chocolate Brown Argus settled on the ground and there were others nectaring on the wild marjoram.





Before long I found the Silver Spotted Skippers behaving very skipperishly and making it difficult to get a photo. Eventually I managed to chase one down until it settled on a bed of rock rose leaves. Studying the photo afterwards I saw there was a single egg on the upperside of a leaf just below the Skipper, and I wondered if it was accidentally hers or if it belonged to a Brown Argus pretending to be a Northern Brown.





The Chalkhills were abundant, some of them looking rather tired and battered whilst others were still in good condition. The males seemed to favour the carline thistles, scabious and achillea, whilst the females were lower down in the grass and leaves.









Past the first meadow there was a lesser density of flowers but I still found a Small Tortoiseshell, Small Heath and a Peacock – I thought there might have been more of them. Up on the top of the hill there were a number of white butterflies which did not stay still long enough for me to ID them.

Re: Janet Turnbull

by Janet Turnbull, 19-Aug-17 04:52 PM GMT

Oxfordshire continued..

Whitecross Green Wood

The following day, by happy chance, the Upper Thames branch of BC was going out on its annual hunt for Brown Hairstreaks. Having followed Tom Dunbar around for nearly a year up at Gait Barrows looking for BrHS eggs and larvae I didn't manage to go on the day of the big hunt, so I was glad of the chance in Oxfordshire.

Whitecross Green Wood isn't too well signposted off the road but I found the butterflyers just in time and within fifteen minutes of setting off, after getting excited about a Purple Hairstreak, the first Brown Hairstreak was spotted midway up an oak tree. I had forgotten to bring binoculars but was the only one to have a scope, and so a queue formed to have a squint. I managed a very long shot with my compact (of course I only had the macro lens on the SLR) and although the quality isn't great, it is enough to identify.



A Purple Hairstreak caused more excitement and must have been newly emerged as it was happy to remain on the twig whilst someone held it steady for all the photographers. Later, another PH fluttered down to the grass in front of me, and again was a willing sitter.



There was quite an abundance of Common Blues and I was pleased to see some quite lovely females but not so many males.





After lunch I joined three other butterflyers who had spotted a BrH on some brambles, and we waited an hour for another sighting but the sun had gone in and so had the butterflies.

I then decided to look for the dragonfly pond, and just then the clouds cleared and the sun made a reappearance. As I stood at the corner of a narrow path I noticed a Meadow Brown in the long grass but on second glance it was a Brown Hairstreak! It flew towards me and landed close by, and I managed a single shot as it spread its wings.



It then flitted around my legs and settled within 12 inches of my feet. It closed its wings and I had a perfect view – although I could not get into position for a snap.

After this I didn't mind that the sun had gone in again, and decided to call it a day. It even sustained me (together with a cup of lukewarm coffee from Warwick services) through the long delays and slow traffic on the M40 and M6N to get home. (Yes – I know I should have taken the toll road!)

Also seen this day:

Peacock, Gatekeeper, Silver Washed Frit both m and f, Small Copper, Red Admiral, Speckled Wood, Large Skipper, Brown Argus

Re: Janet Turnbull

by Wurzel, 20-Aug-17 08:37 AM GMT

Great set of posts recently Janet 😊 Looks like you had a particularly good outing at Whitecross Green – two Hairstreak species in one day is a great result 😊

Have a goodun

Wurzel

Re: Janet Turnbull

by David M, 20-Aug-17 12:13 PM GMT

You've certainly been busy lately, Janet, with a good range of species seen, from the northern specialities to the limestone/chalk species of the south.

Re: Janet Turnbull

by Janet Turnbull, 20-Aug-17 10:30 PM GMT

20th August: BC Butterfly walk at Stretford Meadows

This walk was led by Dave Coleman and had been planned months ago. It turned out to be more of a blackberrying outing with sightings of a few butterflies en route! Due to everything being much earlier this year, the normal summer butterflies which should have been in profusion were hardly to be seen at all. However I did snap a lovely dark Speckled Wood which landed and immediately closed its wings – I persuaded it to open up by casting a shadow on it with my hand.



A Meadow Brown with an identity crisis – is it an ab? It has two white highlights in each eye.



And when I got home, a pair of Large Whites were courting; she was crouched in the grass and he was fluttering and holding a stationary position twelve inches above. Then he landed – and my cat jumped him, so that was the end of that piece of magic.





Re: Janet Turnbull

by millerd, 21-Aug-17 12:13 AM GMT

That's a lovely Speckled Wood, Janet. 😊 They at least will be with us for a few more weeks. Your double-spotted Meadow Brown is something that pops up every now and again – I don't know if it has a name. I'm also envious of your double-Hairstreak day up at Whitecross Green Wood. 🍷

Dave

Re: Janet Turnbull

by Janet Turnbull, 21-Aug-17 03:53 PM GMT

Thank you, millerd! It was a great day indeed! 😊

A bit of moth ID help needed!

I came across two moths at Stretford yesterday and can't ID them. Moth1 might be a Forester..? and Moth2 some kind of Carpet?



And a very well-disguised oth I saw on a limestone wall at Smardale on 10th August



Finally a very sad sight, death of a female full of eggs – but what was she?



Any ideas, anyone?

Re: Janet Turnbull

by Butterflysaurus rex, 21-Aug-17 04:42 PM GMT

Hi Janet,

I think your poor unfortunate moth is a Lesser Yellow Underwing.

James

Re: Janet Turnbull

by Janet Turnbull, 21-Aug-17 05:28 PM GMT

Thank you James – I looked it up and I'm sure you're right! 😊

Re: Janet Turnbull

by bugboy, 21-Aug-17 08:09 PM GMT

Just catching up with your diary, well done with the Hairstreaks 😊

Re: Janet Turnbull

by Goldie M, 22-Aug-17 10:02 AM GMT

Hi! Janet , glad you got your BHS, we trailed round GB on Sunday and saw nothing, I'll be going South next year and trying there before I go to GB in August to make sure I see one 😊 Goldie 😊

Re: Janet Turnbull

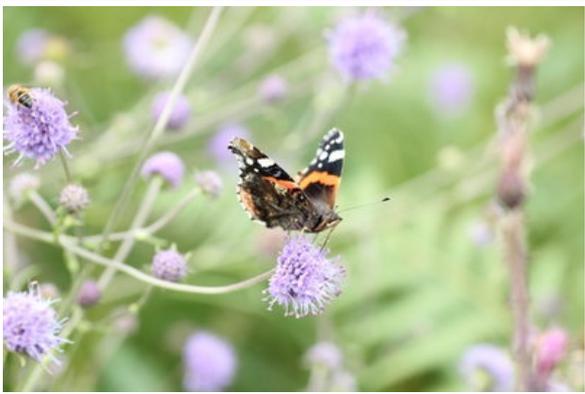
by Janet Turnbull, 22-Oct-17 10:41 PM GMT

Well, I haven't entered anything since August. I have seen a few butterflies but didn't bother to put their mugshots up because I thought it would be boring to see them again – how wrong can you be. So somewhat belatedly, I'll do a bit of catch-up.

24th August: visit to Eyarth Rocks
We found a Gatekeeper who had seen better days



A number of Red Admirals getting excited over the scabious



a Peacock who was happy just to relax on the grass



and a lovely Common Blue on a seedhead



There were also some rather nice mushrooms



Re: Janet Turnbull

by Janet Turnbull, 22-Oct-17 10:57 PM GMT

From 28th August Alan and I were at Grange over Sands to recce some walks before the arrival of the rest of the rambling group. Two days later we found ourselves enjoying a leisurely tour of Lancaster, having been released from the Royal Infirmary after I spent the night in coronary care. So we went to the Butterfly House in Williamson Park. It feels like cheating to put these photos up and I have no idea what they are, but they were definitely butterflies and very beautiful.





Re: Janet Turnbull

by Janet Turnbull, 22-Oct-17 11:09 PM GMT

1st September: Flookburgh

Some orange-peel fungus and a Red Admiral





although I have no idea why the fungus should appear upside down!

Re: Janet Turnbull

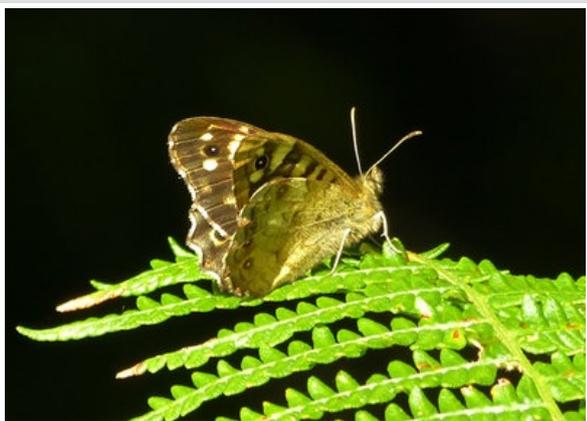
by Janet Turnbull, 22-Oct-17 11:20 PM GMT

2nd September: Gait Barrows

Being with a large group of people who were respectful of nature but not really butterflyers meant I could not devote the time I'd have liked, but nevertheless they were all transfixed by the Red Admirals nectaring hungrily on the hemp.



A handsome Speckled Wood and a dragonfly





Re: Janet Turnbull

by Janet Turnbull, 22-Oct-17 11:26 PM GMT

4th September: Whitbarrow Scar

I really hoped for a bonanza of butterflies on the Scar because last year at this time there were so many to be found. This year I only managed a shot of this Green Veined White, although there were several on the wing.



Re: Janet Turnbull

by Janet Turnbull, 22-Oct-17 11:55 PM GMT

3-13 October: Amalfi Coast, Italy

This was a walking holiday (I've never seen so many steps in all my life!) The temperature was around 23 degrees and the butterflies were very active, giving me little opportunity to snap them.

However, I managed to capture this Lang's Short-tailed Blue (thanks to Bugboy for the ID!) who stayed still long enough - and I was delighted to discover she was ovipositing. It turned out to be quite a common sight as we toiled up the hill to Ravello.



and further along were Long-tailed Blues





The Walls were harder to catch



and I managed one Brimstone in the Villa Cimbrone gardens



and further along the path, a Common Swallowtail



Re: Janet Turnbull

by Janet Turnbull, 23-Oct-17 12:39 AM GMT

Amalfi Part 2

A walk up onto the limestone hill which overlooks the Ieranto Bay was particularly fruitful with a male Swallowtail, a Painted Lady and a Clouded Yellow



I found three kinds of Grayling:
Rock Grayling



Tree Grayling



Woodland Grayling



and in a fig tree was a female Large Wall



While we were away there was a Harvest Moon



It was a great holiday – and now we're into gales!

Re: Janet Turnbull

by Andrew555, 23-Oct-17 10:06 AM GMT

A fantastic array of butterflies Janet, wow those exotics!
Love the Swallowtail, interesting to see the varieties of Grayling and Wall, and the amount of wing that Painted Lady is showing.
All great stuff, I do hope you are well now.

Andrew

Re: Janet Turnbull

by Janet Turnbull, 23-Oct-17 10:36 AM GMT

Andrew555 wrote:

A fantastic array of butterflies Janet, wow those exotics!
All great stuff, I do hope you are well now.

Andrew

Thanks, Andrew! Yes I'm fine now although it was a bit of a scare at the time 😬. I see you're in Kent – a great place for butterflies! 😊

Re: Janet Turnbull

by Janet Turnbull, 23-Oct-17 10:54 AM GMT

Amalfi part 3:

Just one remaining photo – the one which gave us all the biggest thrill when this Red Admiral gave the three of us a very careful look-over and decided Alan was the prettiest flower



After a minute or so it took off, circled round, landed on him again, and looked set to settle. Just then another Red Admiral arrived and ours took off to challenge it. While it was still chasing the other up the road we felt we had to move on. But then it returned, and circled the place where we had been standing, clearly upset that its perch had gone.

Re: Janet Turnbull

by bugboy, 23-Oct-17 12:03 PM GMT

Hi Janet, nice pictures 😊. I could be wrong but I think those first 3 images of ovipositing long tailed blues is actually a Lang's Short-tailed Blue 😊

Re: Janet Turnbull

by Janet Turnbull, 23-Oct-17 12:40 PM GMT

bugboy wrote:

I could be wrong but I think those first 3 images of ovipositing long tailed blues is actually a Lang's Short-tailed Blue 😊

Having looked them up on the wiki, I think you may be right. The first three don't have that distinctive white mark seen on the others. In which case it's another first for me! Thanks Paul!

Re: Janet Turnbull

by Padfield, 23-Oct-17 02:24 PM GMT

Hi Janet. Buggy is absolutely right – that is a Lang's short-tailed blue.

I have made a page here: <http://www.guypadfield.com/butterflyhouse.html> where you will find all the butterfly-house butterflies you posted, and probably most or all of any you didn't post. I leave you the challenge of seeing if you can! 😊

Guy

Re: Janet Turnbull

by Janet Turnbull, 23-Oct-17 11:53 PM GMT

Padfield wrote:

Hi Janet. Buggy is absolutely right – that is a Lang's short-tailed blue.

I have made a page here: <http://www.guypadfield.com/butterflyhouse.html> where you will find all the butterfly-house butterflies you posted, and probably most or all of any you didn't post. I leave you the challenge of seeing if you can! 😊

Guy

Thank you Guy! A wonderful resource – and I have identified my three as: Forest Giant Owl, Tiger longwing, and either a True Cattleheart or an Iphilemus Cattleheart (what a name) as mine isn't showing any edge spots.

Re: Janet Turnbull

by David M, 24-Oct-17 05:27 PM GMT

Nice set of reports, Janet. You've certainly enjoyed an eclectic mix of species lately.

Re: Janet Turnbull

by Chris Jackson, 24-Oct-17 05:39 PM GMT

Hi Janet,

I've enjoyed looking at your photos and reading about your adventures.

The photo of the Woodland Grayling (from Sun Oct 22, 2017 11:39 pm) looks a little like *H. semele*, but I'm not sure – worth a second glance – I stand to be corrected.

Cheers, Chris

Re: Janet Turnbull

by Padfield, 24-Oct-17 06:00 PM GMT

Chris Jackson wrote:

The photo of the Woodland Grayling (from Sun Oct 22, 2017 11:39 pm) looks a little like *H. semele*, but I'm not sure – worth a second glance – I stand to be corrected.

It is indeed *semele* (grayling). On the other hand, the rock grayling looks distinctly like woodland grayling. These two are difficult to tell apart with certainty but I'd definitely lean this way.

Guy

PS – glad you found my butterfly house page useful, Janet.

Re: Janet Turnbull

by Janet Turnbull, 24-Oct-17 08:26 PM GMT

Padfield wrote:**Chris Jackson wrote:**

The photo of the Woodland Grayling (from Sun Oct 22, 2017 11:39 pm) looks a little like *H. semele*, but I'm not sure – worth a second glance – I stand to be corrected.

It is indeed *semele* (grayling). On the other hand, the rock grayling looks distinctly like woodland grayling. These two are difficult to tell apart with certainty but I'd definitely lean this way.

Guy

PS – glad you found my butterfly house page useful, Janet.

Chris, Guy: I looked long and hard and seem to have got them all wrong! 😊 Thanks for the corrections.
Janet

Re: Janet Turnbull

by Janet Turnbull, 26-Oct-17 06:21 PM GMT

25th October

Out for a ramble at Bollington near Macclesfield, Cheshire. Lunch was at the cafe at Clarence Mill – a place so popular we had to sit at tables outside. A Red Admiral was nectaring on the hebe bushes and took little notice of us. Eventually the sunshine moved off and she flew higher up the mill building to where the sun was still warming the walls and settled on a white windowsill.



Re: Janet Turnbull

by Janet Turnbull, 20-Nov-17 05:00 PM GMT

I wonder if anyone can identify this egg – it was on a blackthorn close to a couple of Brown Hairstreak eggs at Gait Barrows On 8th November. It was the BrHS I was trying to photograph but the camera focused on the one I didn't see!



Re: Janet Turnbull

by Janet Turnbull, 20-Nov-17 05:06 PM GMT

Ah – I see Tom Dunbar has already asked the question and it has been ID'd as a possible Green-brindled Crescent moth.