

## Re: Buchan Boy

by Buchan Boy, 30-Dec-18 10:03 AM GMT

Its been a while, got some catching up to do.

19th April 2018

Crawley, West Sussex

This year started with the Comma's showing on my side of town.I vaguely recall going after Orange Tips here but I think the beast from the East slowed them up.



*Willoughby Fields Langley Green Comma*



*Willoughby Fields Langley Green Comma 2*

The FZ330 Lumix became the mainstay camera of choice this year,amazes me everytime I take it out.

## Re: Buchan Boy

by Buchan Boy, 30-Dec-18 11:36 AM GMT

6-7th May 2018

[Morfa Dyffryn, North Wales](#)

What was supposed to be a hill walking holiday in North Wales became a nature trip when temperatures rose suddenly. I saw the opportunity to have a sniff around the huge dune system at Morfa Dyffryn,remarkable place.

I know nothing of the butterflies here but it looked good, my optimism was dampened when I could find virtually nothing! The recent cold spell curtailing any butterfly activity.



*Morfa Dyffryn*

I lied, the day was saved by a single Peacock and a couple of Small Coppers



*Morfa Dyffryn Peacock*



*Morfa Dyffryn Small Copper*

The Stonechats were good to keep me company



*Morfa Dyffryn Stonechat*



*Morfa Dyffryn Stonechat 2*

However I do know that this place has one of the few remaining colonies of the Dune Tiger Beetle in the country. A very good showing all at the base of the dune cliffs where the dunes meet the beach, amazing to see these fly away when walking a long, difficult to get close to photograph as well, but perseverance can pay dividends.



*Morfa Dyffryn Cicindela maritima*

**Re: Buchan Boy**

by Buchan Boy, 30-Dec-18 12:47 PM GMT

11th - 12th May 2018

Badbury Rings, East Dorset

A few days down Dorset to locate a colony of Grizzled Skippers on Badbury Rings.

Two days awaiting the sun and I got about half-an-hours worth of photography. The Grizzled Skipper colony is on the East to South East side of the hill fort along with a good showing of Dingy Skippers and Early Purple Orchids, best go on a non-murky day...



*Badbury Rings*



*Badbury Rings Grizzled Skipper 2*



*Badbury Rings Dingy Skipper*



*Badbury Rings Grizzled Skipper*



*Badbury's Ring ditches*

And the Blandford road that passes the hill-fort also has a terrific row of Beech's  
A photographers dream but chances of getting run over are high! Probably best on a very early summers morning.



*The Blandford Road*

## **Re: Buchan Boy**

by Buchan Boy, 30-Dec-18 01:05 PM GMT

Same day 12th May 2018

Corfe Mullen meadow, East Dorset

Always worth noting this huge colony of Green Winged Orchids in this small meadow on the outskirts of Corfe Mullen.

I mean its not as huge as some our Sussex colonies but still impressive, the upper sepal bit always reminds me of that bit underneath baleen whales mouths. 😊



*Corfe Mullen Green winged orchid*



*Corfe Mullen Green winged orchid*



*The Meadow of joy!*  
Beautiful plants.

**Re: Buchan Boy**

by Buchan Boy, 30-Dec-18 01:21 PM GMT

13th May 2018

Holt Heath, East Dorset

This gem of a heath supports a good colony of Sand Lizards, can i find them?...nope

I did manage my first Green Hairstreak of the year on the gorse with that lovely coconuttie wiff all around.



*Holt Heath Green Hairstreak*

And to hear Curlews in Southern Britain is most welcome these days, although I think this is one of last breeding areas for them down sarf!  
Taken from about a mile away but quite distinctive.



*Holt Heath Curlew*



*Holt heath*

NB I have actually now located the Sand Lizard colony here, but really low numbers, I'll be back.

## **Re: Buchan Boy**

by Buchan Boy, 30-Dec-18 02:02 PM GMT

19th May 2018

Newdigate, Surrey

Just to show off how good a £400 camera can do, quite remarkable really, when phones get this good we can dump our cameras.....not long methinks  
😁



*Beam Brook Four-spotted Chaser*

## **Re: Buchan Boy**

by Buchan Boy, 30-Dec-18 02:56 PM GMT

20th May 2018

Kithurst Hill, West Sussex

I needed a Small Blue fix before I headed up to Scotland, I really need to find some new colonies of these beauties but when a quick fix is needed I head on down to Storrington on the A24, then west a bit and up the track to Kithurst Hill where this colony lives. Wonderful little reserve this, there's the small meadow but I've always found the Cupido's on the road verges leading up to the car-park.

What I was completely unprepared for were the Duke Of Burgundy's, darting out from their perch's, just a really cool spectacle. Just sat there and watched them for a little while and then getting my shots when they had settled. Spouse I counted maybe 10... I could see they were hopping between the meadow and the roadside verge, mostly the Southern side verges but a few were on the Northern side as well. This was the most I'd ever seen here, and I'm not sure how the colony has been faring in the longer term (I'll do some reading!), but good to see nonetheless.



*Kithurst Hill Duke Of Burgundy*



*Kithurst Hill Duke Of Burgundy 2*

Then just a bit further on, on the Northern side road verge came the Small Blues, incredibly difficult to track in flight but they were there. I actually wandered into the meadow where I found some fresher individuals enjoying the glorious weather to get the shots I wanted.



*Kithurst Hill Small Blue*



*Kithurst Hill Small Blue 2*  
Also noted a Brown Argus where I tried some arty stuff.



*Kithurst Hill Brown Argus*



*Kithurst Hill Brown Argus 2*



*Kithurst Hill Brown Argus 3*

A lovely day.

Small Blues to the left - Duke Of Burgundys to the right(is that a song lyric? 😊)



*The road verge reserve*

And I get all sneezy around this stuff.



Summer in Sussex

### Re: Buchan Boy

by Wurzel, 30-Dec-18 06:19 PM GMT

But who were you stuck in the middle with? 😊

Great set of reports Buchan with some cracking shots 🤩🇬🇧 The mention of Badbury Rings really cheered me up on this dark cold evening it took me back to when I used to run around there and play 'soldiers' over 35 years ago 🤩🤩 It also made me remember about the Avenue; the local story goes that there are 365 Beeches on one side and 366 on the other as the local Lord (might even have been Bankes himself) had one planted every day - we could do with a bit more of that nowadays 😊

Have a goodun

Wurzel

### Re: Buchan Boy

by Buchan Boy, 31-Dec-18 08:57 PM GMT

That was it Wurzel, I had the melody, Stealers Wheel, 1972....gawd!, I was 4 years old....

26th-30th May 2018

South Shian, Lorn, Western Highlands

A long held ambition finally came to fruition, a drive to Scotland to specifically get some proper Scottish Chequered Skippers shots firmly nailed in my camera. After much deliberation on location of choice I chose the reserve at South Shian. With a handy campsite at Benderloch on Tralee Bay just nearby. I've done this drive before many a time, but never specifically for butterflies, I like walking a lot as well and Scotland is well, walky heaven... someone said summer was arriving and as I was driving up the M6 through terrific down pours I could see summer had definitely arrived 😊

Then as mid afternoon arrived somewhere around the Erskine bridge I noticed the cloud beginning to break and somewhere to the top end of Loch Lomond the sky became blue and the sun beamed down on the beauty of this place. Arrived at my campsite in the evening (long days at this time of year), pitched up, zipped up, midges. Slept...

Awoke first morning the 26th to absolute heaven, beautiful clear skies, no breeze.... more midges...

Popped into the car for the short drive to the reserve, along single tracks to the tiny car park, no one here..



South Shian Nature Reserve

Having never been here I had no idea what to expect, I've read up on the habitat requirements of the skippers, sunny rides, woodland edges etc, Purple Moor Grass, Bluebells. The reserve has it all... I walked through the gate through a dark wooded stretch of path that opened out to a sunny ride, 20 yards into the reserve gate and I was staring at Chequered Skippers doing that hop thing on the floor picking up salts by the muddy pools, unbelievable. Worked my way around them to get the light in the right spot, spooking them all to perches on the billberries, Ash and Birch saplings. That was that..



*South Shian Nature Reserve*  
My first ever Chequered Skipper.



*South Shian Chequered Skipper*

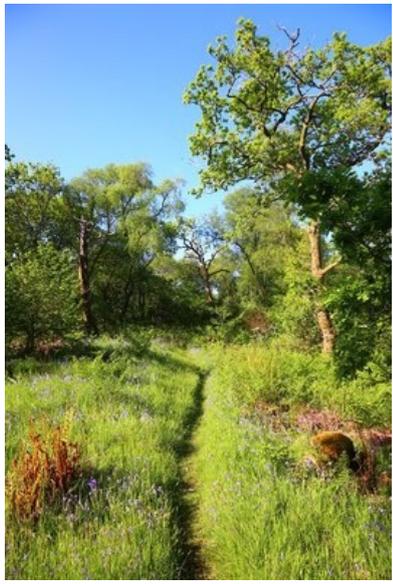
I had four or five of them in this location and did take many shots, thinking this was going to be my only opportunity i stuck around for a while bathing in the sun until the midges(why do they fly straight into your eyes?),told me to move on.

I followed the track around with the Bluebells in full tilt here,they were over down south when I left...and found Chequered in most of the open spots.



*South Shian Chequered Skipper*

Some very fresh, some a bit tatty, but first impressions was that they were having a good year.



*South Shian Nature Reserve*

And still nobody here, I had a good look at the boggy plateau area that caps the reserve here for Marsh Fritillaries, encountering one, but too fast for photos although it did look extremely fresh. I was on the cusp of their emergence as well...



*South Shian Chequered Skipper*

Although all around the edges of the boggy plateau, where the scrub and trees took over, chequered were to be found, remarkable. Bumped into a rather tatty Emperor Moth, like a small bird... 😊



*South Shian Emperor Moth*

The sheer joy was all good for today, everything was perfect, did I mention the midges hehe

As I left I thought I'd have a look just down the Edge of the reserve in this meadow to check out some white butterflies I was seeing scooting across the grass.



*South Shian Nature Reserve*

More Chequered Skippers, pretty much in open meadow, this day will be remembered for a long time..



*South Shian Chequered Skipper*

Primarily because Summer had arrived in Western Scotland and the Chequered Skippers were having a blinder!



*24 degrees C, I kid you not.*

### **Re: Buchan Boy**

by bugboy, 31-Dec-18 09:13 PM GMT

Just shows that timing and weather can make or break a day. I was there nearly a month later and saw a couple of Speckled Woods and possibly a white if memory serves. It was a mostly dull day but I was hoping to come across a Marshie. Even in rubbish butterfly weather it was clear it would be a good site if the sun was out. It's a site I shall keep in mind next time I'm butterflying in that part of the world 😊. I saw my first ever Chequered Skipper last year so I can clearly remember the excitement of seeing your first 😊

### **Re: Buchan Boy**

by Buchan Boy, 31-Dec-18 10:12 PM GMT

Indeedy bugboy, I was amazed, its brilliant when you find your intended quarry within minutes!

26th – 30th May 2018

South Shian,Lorn,Western Highlands

Returned back to the reserve the next day,the 27th, to broaden my horizons as to the extent of the reserve and I had that inkling that the Marsh Fritillaries were just about to explode(they didn't,so I'm not building that one up anymore)...but I scoured the boggy bit at the top for hours hoping...



*Shian Top Plateau*

Then one tantalising glimpse as a Marsh Fritillary flew past me and crashed into the grass,I pounced,just got enough evidence...



*Shian Marsh Fritillary*

As can be seen its as fresh as a daisy, but it was gone in a flash as well leaving me with this one shot..

Another long held ambition is to photograph these up here,I hope to be back next year,thats 2019 in about 2 hours,although a different reserve.

I found this really small opening just close to some of the bigger oaks here and watched a couple of Male Chequered's just dancing for a while,launching off their perch's at anything that came by,Dragonflies, Bird shadows, my shadow...but blimey this was proper midge central and utterly incessant,drove me screaming for the hills,literally...



*Midge free up there*

Fermy, midgy clearing with Skippers!



*Shian Nature Reserve*



*Shian Chequered Skipper*

Just another few hours at the top of the reserve to savour my new species tick off.



*Shian Chequered Skipper*



*Shian Chequered Skipper*

I had another big area to investigate that was more open moorland interspersed with willow/birch. But that was for another day. Need to see Oban for a bag of chips.

Angry Crows and Ringed Plovers for the evenings entertainment and I swam in the sea, at this latitude!



*Tralee Crow shouting at me!*



*Tralee Ringed Plover*



*Tralee Sunset*