

## Charles Nicol

by Charles Nicol, 25-Jul-10 01:46 AM GMT

Arrived in France yesterday. Weather warm but cloudy. Quite windy.

Have put some pics from today on flickr:

<http://www.flickr.com/groups/809803@N24>

the internet is v.slow so will transfer some pics onto this site when i get back.

if anyone can say what the moth is i would be grateful 😊😊

Charles

## Re: Charles Nicol

by Padfield, 25-Jul-10 02:58 AM GMT

Hi Charles,

The moth is *Zygaena occitanica* – beautiful!

I hope the weather picks up for you. Here in the Alps it has suddenly turned grim. But the good news is that the recent good weather has brought huge numbers of butterflies onto the wing, so whenever the sun comes out you should be able to find things!

Happy hunting,

Guy

## Re: Charles Nicol

by Charles Nicol, 25-Jul-10 03:19 PM GMT

Thanks Guy !! At first i thought that the moth was one of those brightly coloured shield bugs...

I was thrilled to find the fresh Large Blue. It was quite happy to pose for pics.

Am looking forward to intensive butterfly hunting. Have purchased replacement straw hat ( 5 euros ) for one i left at home.

Charles



## Re: Charles Nicol

by Charles Nicol, 25-Jul-10 09:49 PM GMT

the weather is improving...should be hot & sunny tomorrow onwards. today i visited a remote poplar wood & was thrilled to see a Lesser Purple Emperor. Magical.

Unfortunately i did not get the pic due to the high wind...will try again sometime.

Charles

## Re: Charles Nicol

by Padfield, 25-Jul-10 10:19 PM GMT

Here's my experience of photographing lesser purple emperors.

When males land on a forest track, it is invariably a little distance from their target poo and they spend some time walking around, slowly homing in on the poo. During this walkies period they are flighty and any close approach might disturb them. When they find their poo, though, they tuck into it with relish and you can comfortably get right in close, even touch them!

So be patient. Wait, watch and enjoy until they are happily guzzling, then go in for the piccie.

Sometimes, especially if you are sweaty, you will find the target is not poo but you. Then, too, it is best to wait until they reach your shoe or trouser or T-shirt or whatever before making movements.

Guy

## Re: Charles Nicol

by Charles Nicol, 25-Jul-10 11:17 PM GMT

Thanks for that info Guy... this one did not descend to the track but flew past me & perched for 30 seconds about 5 feet up a small poplar tree. Maybe it was a female...

I have put some more pics on flickr ( <http://www.flickr.com/groups/809803@N24> ) ...maybe someone could identify the two moths & the hairstreak ? the marbled white looks different from the UK variety.

Charles

## Re: Charles Nicol

by Charles Nicol, 26-Jul-10 02:48 AM GMT

So far i have seen...

Wood Whites 2

Red Admirals 5

Meadow Browns 2

Gatekeepers 20+

Walls 20+

Clouded Yellows 6

Silver Washed Fritillary 6

Heath Fritillary 4

Grizzled Skipper 2

Small Skipper 1

Marbled White 50

Large White 6

Small White 6

Comma 1

Lesser Purple Emperor 1

Large Blue 1

Common Blue 12

Scarce Swallowtail 6

Machaon Swallowtail 3

Graylings 4

Great Banded Graylings 20

Southern White Admiral 4

So far no Pashas. Hugely reduced numbers of all Fritillaries. Hardly any of the Grizzled Skippers which were abundant in previous years. Marbled Whites more than previous years.

The highlight so far is today's Lesser Purple Emperor... a wonderful sighting

Charles

## Re: Charles Nicol

by Padfield, 26-Jul-10 06:47 AM GMT

Hi Charles.

The moths are not my area, but the hairstreak is surely false ilex (*Satyrium esculi*). The marbled white is an extremely pale *Melanargia lachesis*. I can't remember where you said you were, but if these two IDs are right you have to be in the extreme south of France. If you're not, I'll revise them!!

Guy

## Re: Charles Nicol

by Charles Nicol, 26-Jul-10 05:53 PM GMT

Spot on Guy... i am 10 miles south of Carcassonne !!

Thanks for the IDs. I thought that the Marbled White looked unusual.

In a minute i am going to Rennes le Chateau for the afternoon. This is higher up so should get some new species...

The weather is still cloudy but not so windy. Plenty of rain last night.

Charles

## Re: Charles Nicol

by Charles Nicol, 27-Jul-10 03:55 AM GMT

Today i went to Rennes le Chateau , elevation 500m.

The Walls seemed to be replaced by Graylings. Otherwise the composition was similar to other locations.

New species = the Satyr ( see pic on flickr ). A very fresh Grizzled Skipper was photographed too.

Charles

### Re: Charles Nicol

by Padfield, 27-Jul-10 04:26 AM GMT

You have false grayling (*Arethusana arethusa*) in those pictures too, which I don't think you've mentioned.

Guy

### Re: Charles Nicol

by Charles Nicol, 27-Jul-10 03:54 PM GMT

thanks Guy... there did seem to be different sizes of Grayling.

i also saw a single Queen of Spain fritillary yesterday but it flew off before i could photograph it.

It is already sunny here so should be a productive hunt today.

Charles



### Re: Charles Nicol

by Charles Nicol, 28-Jul-10 04:53 PM GMT

The weather is now fabulous...it will be in the 90s at least today.

Yesterday i saw a new skipper ( ? Mallow )...pic on flickr

Charles



### Re: Charles Nicol

by Charles Nicol, 29-Jul-10 03:27 AM GMT

Possible sighting of Two Tailed Pasha flying over the river at 5pm

also large moth ( pic on flickr ) on tree trunk.

Charles

### Re: Charles Nicol

by Charles Nicol, 31-Jul-10 02:00 AM GMT

Today went to Montsegur which is 1250m above sea level. Saw this beautiful blue ( <http://www.flickr.com/groups/809803@N24> )

Charles

### Re: Charles Nicol

by Charles Nicol, 01-Aug-10 02:46 AM GMT

Just saw my first ever Hoopoe fly over the roof of the place i am staying.

Charles

### Re: Charles Nicol

by Charles Nicol, 02-Aug-10 03:04 AM GMT

Hot & humid today leading up to a violent thunderstorm just now which lasted over an hour.

New pics on flickr of...

Wall

Silver Spotted Skipper

Clouded Yellow

Silver Washed Fritillary

Purple Hairstreak

also saw first Painted Lady of the trip.

Charles

**Re: Charles Nicol**

by Padfield, 02-Aug-10 03:48 AM GMT

Hi Charles.

Great pictures, as ever! You haven't mentioned knapweed frit, which you have pictures of, so I hope you have clocked that one up on your list!

Guy

**Re: Charles Nicol**

by Charles Nicol, 02-Aug-10 03:25 PM GMT

Glad you are enjoying the pics Guy. I did not realise that Knapweed Frit was there... bonus !!

The storm did not stop after 1 hour... it regathered strength & lasted all night... things are a bit soggy at Butterfly HQ this morning 🤪🤪🤪🤪🤪🤪

Charles

**Re: Charles Nicol**

by Charles Nicol, 05-Aug-10 02:42 AM GMT

the weather has settled now.

have seen first Spotted Fritillary

& probable Male Lesser Purple Emperor flying across the river

Charles

**Re: Charles Nicol**

by Charles Nicol, 17-Aug-10 08:31 PM GMT

This morning saw 2 hairstreaks . the pics are on flickr at <http://www.flickr.com/groups/809803@N24>

if you can help to identify them.

Charles



**Re: Charles Nicol**

by Padfield, 17-Aug-10 10:14 PM GMT

Hi Charles,

That's purple hairstreak.

Guy

**Re: Charles Nicol**

by Charles Nicol, 17-Aug-10 11:59 PM GMT

Thanks Guy !!

Charles



**Re: Charles Nicol**

by Charles Nicol, 21-Aug-10 03:06 AM GMT

the smaller fritillaries are showing well now. I have put some on flickr ( <http://www.flickr.com/groups/809803@N24/> ). not sure exactly what the first one is. Upperside and underside shots included. the upperside hindwings are a gorgeous pinky orange colour.

Charles

**Re: Charles Nicol**

by Michaeljf, 21-Aug-10 03:39 AM GMT

There's several shots of Queen of Spain Fritillaries and either Spotted or Lesser Spotted Fritillary (possibly both Male and Female Spotted Fritillary). But best wait until some folks that know what they're talking about weigh in 🍷 . I do love the Queen of Spain Fritillary, and was frustrated not to see any in Andalusia this August 😞 .

### Re: Charles Nicol

by Charles Nicol, 21-Aug-10 03:39 PM GMT

thanks for your helpful reply Michaelgf

i have only seen 3 Queen of Spains this trip.

Charles



### Re: Charles Nicol

by Charles Nicol, 22-Aug-10 01:21 AM GMT

Was having lunch at a restaurant in Carcassonne when we noticed a small butterfly flying around the hanging baskets. It was a Geranium Bronze; my first ever.

No camera unfortunately.

Charles



### Re: Charles Nicol

by Charles Nicol, 23-Aug-10 11:43 PM GMT

managed to get a pic of the Geranium Bronze...



Charles

