

Re: Jack Harrison

by Jack Harrison, 13-Feb-12 07:13 PM GMT

Shameless Plug

Two new (but associated) websites of (mainly) Norfolk images. <http://www.normalfore.co.uk> and <http://www.normalforegallery.co.uk>

I will add butterfly pages during the coming season.

Jack

Re: Jack Harrison

by MikeOxon, 13-Feb-12 09:59 PM GMT

Some very nice photos, Jack, I particularly liked the misty view of Thornham.

I also looked at your art collection. I wonder if you know the photo-painting program by Mediachance called 'Dynamic Auto Painter: see <http://www.mediachance.com/dap/> (there's a free trial download available) It's fun just watching it working and the results can be quite good. Here's an example of an Adonis Blue photo 'painted' in the style of Monet:



Dynamic Auto Painter (Monet)

Made from the following original photo:



Lough Down, Berks - 19 August 2009

Mike

Re: Jack Harrison

by Jack Harrison, 14-Feb-12 12:08 PM GMT

Thanks Mike, didn't know about that software. I have downloaded but not yet given it a try.

On an entirely different matter: ukb is so friendly compared with other forums. I just happened to come across this (totally unrelated forum), enough to deter anyone from joining:

Yes... and it has already been dismissed. Please read the discussion before commenting.

Jack

Re: Jack Harrison

by Jack Harrison, 14-Feb-12 09:30 PM GMT

I have now bought the full version of Dynamic Auto Painter. It is huge fun, but a terrible time waster.



Jack

Holiday reading

by Jack Harrison, 30-Mar-12 06:53 PM GMT

My return from hols in Ireland might be delayed if I reckon I wouldn't be able to re-fuel the car when I get back.

Meanwhile, I am reading that splendid book *"Three Men in a Boat"*. Not only is it a great read but it has some wonderful insights into the wildlife along the Kingston/Runnymede area of the River Thames in the late 1800s (Jerome K Jerome wrote the book in 1889). At the beginning of chapter 2:

"...the moorhen's plaintive cry and the harsh croak of the corncrake stirs the awed hush..."

So corncrakes along the Thames in those days? How times have changed.

But more intriguingly is in Chapter 5, Harris complains about being woken up by those *"bally parrots."* George tries to calm things by explaining that: *"A few of those ruffians escaped from London Zoo three or four years ago and they **TOO** seem to have taken a liking for this area; you mustn't blame them."*

Jack

Irish Sea

by Jack Harrison, 05-Apr-12 04:40 PM GMT

We had fun on our journey on Wednesday. Stella (my partner) had been ill on Tuesday with a tummy upset but it seemed to have been on the mend by Tuesday morning. But then an extremely rough crossing of the Irish Sea set it off again and I have had to drive the entire distance today. I was fine on the ferry but I was in the minority in actually enjoying it. The big trouble was we were (sensibly) not allowed outside so I couldn't enjoy the view. Mind you, I would have got wet with the spray covering the decks at times.

They had fun berthing in Holyhead and the ship drifted quite hard into a jetty and did quite a bit of damage. There were some men standing on the jetty and my goodness, didn't they scarp quickly! I suppose a slightly harder whack and the jetty might have collapsed. I guess that poor captain will have some paperwork to fill in!!! He had warned us in advance that it might be tricky and could need more than one attempt at berthing. He had my full sympathy. I know in my career as a pilot that a burst tyre when landing in a gale, although not especially dangerous, means lots of form filling. I don't often miss flying after retiring more than 13 years ago, but while waiting to board the ferry in Dublin, I enjoyed watching a stream of aircraft coming into to land at the nearby airport. It was windy, gusty and not even blowing down the runway. It looked fun. ***Now I do miss that.***

Several Gannets seen (with difficulty) out a spray-covered window plus near land, the inevitable gulls. Ireland had disappointed with the butterflies. Despite perfect weather, only Torties and Peacocks – and not many of the latter.

Jack

Re: Jack Harrison

by MikeOxon, 05-Apr-12 07:29 PM GMT

Sorry to read of your troubled journey, Jack, and I hope your partner is recovering ok. I once had a very similar experience on a cross-channel ferry, even down to hitting the jetty in Calais! I always use the tunnel nowadays but not an option for Ireland!

I find that the Microsoft Flight Simulator can provide an antidote to aircraft withdrawal symptoms! – especially if you customise it a bit; I love my Dragon Rapide!

The weather seems to have turned against butterflies now but I'm sure evolution has ensured their ability to cope.

Mike

Re: Jack Harrison

by Jack Harrison, 05-Apr-12 08:33 PM GMT

I wrote:

Meanwhile, I am reading that splendid book "Three Men in a Boat". Not only is it a great read but it has some wonderful insights into the wildlife along the Kingston/Runnymede area of the River Thames in the late 1800s (Jerome K Jerome wrote the book in 1889). At the beginning of chapter 2:
"...the moorhen's plaintive cry and the harsh croak of the corncrake stirs the awed hush..."
So corncrakes along the Thames in those days? How times have changed.

But more intriguingly is in Chapter 5, Harris complains about being woken up by those "bally parrots." George tries to calm things by explaining that:"A few of those ruffians escaped from London Zoo three or four years ago and they TOO seem to have taken a liking for this area; you mustn't blame them."

No one picked up on that one. The reference about Corncrakes is a direct quote from Chapter 2 of "Three Men in a Boat". But the "bally parrots" didn't appear along the Thames until 100 years later.

April Fools!

Jack

Re: Jack Harrison

by MikeOxon, 06-Apr-12 02:21 AM GMT

"Jack Harrison" wrote:
April Fools!

Afraid I don't remember clearly whether any parrots escaped in 1889.

The pesky Ring-necked Parakeets have just reached Abingdon, however, *via* Henley and Wallingford, so we shall soon have their morning clamour to contend with here!

Mike

Re: Jack Harrison

by Padfield, 06-Apr-12 03:51 AM GMT

You're becoming subtle in your old age, Jack! I found your post interesting but not that shocking and added parrots along the Thames in the 19th century to my stock of anecdotal information about the world.

I'm trying to remember when I first heard ring-necked parakeets in Oxford. It was after I left the university but while I still took summer jobs running language schools (in the Headington Road) – so probably in the late 1980s or perhaps the very early 1990s. I say 'heard' because my first encounter was at night and I thought someone had just been murdered outside my window.

Guy

Re: Jack Harrison

by Wurzel, 06-Apr-12 04:31 AM GMT

Having not read the original work I didn't twig 😞

Have you read "Boogie up the River" by Mark Wallington, it's a modern day parody and is hilarious. The same author also wrote "500 Mile Walkies" to recount his journey round the South West Coast Path, also hilarious.

Have a goodun

Wurzel

Re: Jack Harrison

by NickB, 06-Apr-12 07:12 AM GMT

Got us bang to rights; I couldn't remember the parrots – but I can't remember a lot these days.

At least it was because I *hadn't* forgotten them!

Nice one, Jack – and welcome back!

N

Re: Jack Harrison

by Lee Hurrell, 06-Apr-12 06:21 PM GMT

I was looking at the birds recorded at Sevenoaks Wildlife Reserve the other day and Ring Necked Parakeets have even been seen there! Only 3 this year

though, and it is still much quieter in Kent without them (for now...). They nested opposite my bedroom window in Greenford 😊

Parrots

by Jack Harrison, 07-Apr-12 01:15 PM GMT

Now this is a true parrot story (anecdote for Guy perhaps?)

During WW2 as radar was being developed, a device was invented called: *"Identification Friend or Foe"* as an aid to those watching the radar screens. As is typical of the military, it was given a code word, in this case *"Parrot"*. There was jargon associated with the *"Parrot"*. I can't recall much now as the system was already on its way out when I started flying in the late 1950s but I do remember the wonderful instruction for turning it off: *"Strangle Parrot"*. One phrase however has persisted with the modern-day transponder: *"Squawk"*. Aircraft today are told to: *"Squawk 4427"* (or whatever) meaning change transponder settings to 4427. Many pilots today haven't a clue why the term squawk is used.

The system can be seen in simulated form in the excellent website: <http://www.flightradar24.com/> where flights can be tracked in real time or playback.

Incidentally, my paternal grandmother had the maiden name Parrott.

Jack

Re: Jack Harrison

by Jack Harrison, 10-Apr-12 04:57 PM GMT

I have to go to Dorking area for a couple of days so might see one or two of you on Denbies Hillside on Wednesday or Thursday – weather is quite promising.

Jack

Re: Jack Harrison

by Cotswold Cockney, 11-Apr-12 08:27 AM GMT

"Jack Harrison" wrote:

You are so right Gibster. I briefly joined a Norfolk group but after seeing many posts along these lines:

With the greatest respect: it's only a Black-throated Diver! You either saw it or you didn't: no-one else is really bothered either way!

They were condescending in the extreme and only ever seemed to talk about Olivaceous Siberian Twits (*or something like that*). There was no way you were allowed to get any pleasure from seeing a Robin on your bird feeder; that was beneath contempt.

I no longer bother with that group.

Jack

In the distant past, I've come across that sort of thing with Butterfly watchers.

"A.N.Other" wrote:

. It's *only* a Common Blue

.

When searching the hills for other blues.

To my eyes, the Common Blue is a delight at any time. Some of their very blue females on my little 'reserve' are also a delight to my eyes too. The first Small Heath of the season is also a delight as is the first Speckled Wood in my garden every spring. Having had a number of large mature trees which they lived around removed from my garden last year, I wondered if they would still be around like they have been for over twenty years. Those trees were now simply far too big for my small suburban garden. Pleased to say they are still around. Several sparring males and female so fresh on the garden path the other day that she was not ready to fly having been freshly emerged with wings still a tad limp. I have seen them egg laying and have occasionally found their pupae when working in the garden. Hope they continue to stick around the smaller bushes now.

Where did that superb weather go ... 😞... Hope it returns soon.

Stairway to Heaven

by Jack Harrison, 14-Apr-12 04:41 AM GMT

Many will recognise the gate to this little gem of a site but for those don't, try an inspired guess.

PLEASE UPDATE YOUR
ACCOUNT TO ENABLE
3RD PARTY HOSTING



FOR IMPORTANT INFO, PLEASE GO TO:
www.photobucket.com/P500

Please keep mum if you are familiar – let the others guess.
Jack

Re: Stairway to Heaven

by Pawpawsaurus, 14-Apr-12 07:37 AM GMT

"Jack Harrison" wrote:

Many will recognise the gate to this little gem of a site but for those don't, try an inspired guess.

Please keep mum if you are familiar – let the others guess.

It looks a little like an HMWT site in west Herts which I've visited a few times, but not enough like it to tempt me to guess that it's it.

At any rate, I'd hazard a guess that it's not Norfolk ...

Paul

Re: Jack Harrison

by Lee Hurrell, 16-Apr-12 03:51 AM GMT

Is that a new fence...?

Re: Jack Harrison

by Jack Harrison, 16-Apr-12 04:07 AM GMT

Not sure if it's new – probably is.

Of course it's the entrance to the splendid Denbies Hillside on the North Downs above Dorking.

Went to Denbies Vineyard while in the area. It's well worth a visit. I bought a bottle of their wine. Superb quality for £8.

Jack

Re: Jack Harrison

by Lee Hurrell, 16-Apr-12 04:09 AM GMT

Susie will probably say other areas but I have seen Green Hairstreak to the right of that gate and Grizzled Skipper to the left. And Adonis Blue just behind where you were standing.

Lee

Re: Jack Harrison

by millerd, 16-Apr-12 05:09 AM GMT

The gate and the fence are both new. Take time to amble gently about the whole hillside on three or four days throughout the season, and more than 30 species may be found here.

Dave

Re: Parrots

by Susie, 16-Apr-12 05:35 AM GMT

"Jack Harrison" wrote:

Now this is a true parrot story (anecdote for Guy perhaps?)

During WW2 as radar was being developed, a device was invented called: "*Identification Friend or Foe*" as an aid to those watching the radar screens. As is typical of the military, it was given a code word, in this case "*Parrot*". There was jargon associated with the "*Parrot*". I can't recall much now as the system was already on its way out when I started flying in the late 1950s but I do remember the wonderful instruction for turning it off: "*Strangle Parrot*". One phrase however has persisted with the modern-day transponder: "*Squawk*". Aircraft today are told to: "*Squawk 4427*" (or whatever) meaning change transponder settings to 4427. Many pilots today haven't a clue why the term squawk is used.

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Incidentally, my paternal grandmother had the maiden name Parrott.

Jack

My paternal great grandmother had the maiden name Parrott. 🤪

Re: Jack Harrison

by Jack Harrison, 16-Apr-12 04:49 PM GMT

Can any explain why barbed wire is used here? Or indeed, **why barbed is legal at all?** (except of course in military situations). I ripped clothes once years ago (when young) after stumbling. Recently a cat was seriously injured and cost a fortune in vet's bills?

Surely there are better and **safer ways** of keeping sheep, cattle, etc in the correct place?

Jack

Re: Jack Harrison

by Padfield, 16-Apr-12 06:20 PM GMT

I still have the scars from when I took out a barbed wire fence as I cycled down a mountain track at high speed (<http://www.guypadfield.com/images/arm2.jpg>) 15 years ago (the farmer had forgotten to put the white rag on the wire so it was barely visible in the rain).

Small enclosures are usually fenced off with electric fencing here, but the bigger grazing boundaries, running across the countryside, are still mostly barbed wire. It's cheap and it works.

Guy

Re: Jack Harrison

by Jack Harrison, 16-Apr-12 07:09 PM GMT

Guy:

...barbed wire. It's cheap and it works.

That might be so for the landowner/farmer but an extra penny or two on the cost of meat would be a small price to pay to keep the rest of us safer.

So presumably the landowning/farming world is not covered by "*Health & Safety*" then?

Nasty injury that Guy.

Jack

Re: Parrots

by NickB, 17-Apr-12 07:47 AM GMT

"Susie" wrote:

"Jack Harrison" wrote:

Now this is a true parrot story (anecdote for Guy perhaps?)

During WW2 as radar was being developed, a device was invented called: "*Identification Friend or Foe*" as an aid to those watching the radar screens. As is typical of the military, it was given a code word, in this case "*Parrot*". There was jargon associated with the "*Parrot*". I can't recall much now as the system was already on its way out when I started flying in the late 1950s but I do remember the wonderful instruction for turning it off: "*Strangle Parrot*". One phrase however has persisted with the modern-day transponder: "*Squawk*". Aircraft today are told to: "*Squawk 4427*" (or whatever) meaning change transponder settings to 4427. Many pilots today haven't a clue why the term squawk is used.

The system can be seen in simulated form in the excellent website: <http://www.flightradar24.com/> where flights can be tracked in real time or playback.

Incidentally, my paternal grandmother had the maiden name Parrott.

Jack

My paternal great grandmother had the maiden name Parrott. 🤔

OMG! Does that mean you might be *related* to Jack 🤔

That might explain a lot..... 😊

Panasonic Lumix FZ38

by Jack Harrison, 19-Apr-12 04:25 AM GMT

My Panasonic **Lumix FZ38** needs a new home. There is absolutely nothing wrong with it but as many of you will know, due to my physical limitations, I struggle with a fixed screen. So I have just bought an FZ150 for the simple reason it has a free angle (articulated) screen. I'm happy with the new camera but am pragmatic enough to realise that I won't get better photos but will achieve the same end with more ease.

The two-year old FZ38 is fine and you will have seen the results that it is capable of. The kit that I am selling comprises:

- Camera
- Five batteries (but it was waste of money having more than two - they last perfectly well) plus two chargers
- Close up lens +1 dioptre - simple screw in that enables focus down to 50 cms.
- Graduated filter for darkening skies in landscape photography
- Circular polarising filter

£100 the lot but I would have to charge for postage. No idea what that might be - fiver perhaps? Or collect free (I live near King's Lynn)

Jack

Re: Jack Harrison

by Jack Harrison, 20-Apr-12 01:23 AM GMT

First insect photos with the FZ150 (no butterflies seen since I got the new camera).

This Bluebottle (? is it a Blue or a Green?) was taken at F/8, fill in flash, +2 achromatic close-up lens (which conveniently I already had) at ISO200.

It has not been cropped, merely re-sized to 1/3 of the original.



I had used auto focus and it MIGHT have focussed on the background rather than the fly - not sure. More experiments needed with the very easy-to-use manual focus. Also F/8 probably isn't optimum as diffraction effects can occur at such an aperture with a small sensor. I need to experiment with wider apertures. I hope to try it out on real butterflies over the next few days. Green Hairstreak should be out at for example Holme Dunes NNR near Hunstanton in Norfolk.

In normal use, the FZ150 wouldn't need a close-up lens as the zoom range/close focus is very good. But I wanted to push it to the limit with my test. Incidentally, the camera takes a simple 52 mm screw-in filter with no need for fancy adaptors, etc

Jack

Re: Jack Harrison

by Hugh Middleton, 20-Apr-12 02:35 AM GMT

That is extremely good. Can't wait for your butterfly pictures.

Hugh

Re: Jack Harrison

by Jack Harrison, 22-Apr-12 04:49 AM GMT

Well, I tried three or four times to go outdoors today for a local search for Orange Tip/Speckled Wood/maybe Holly Blue. But every time I was about to step outside, it tipped it down. It really has been an incredibly wet spell here recently. However, this is all very much in accord with the predicted effects of climate change - more of everything. More hot weather, more short-sharp cold, more droughts, more wet spells. Whatever happens to the climate, British weather will never become boring.

Jack

Re: Jack Harrison

by NickB, 22-Apr-12 06:09 AM GMT

In Cambridge, only 22.7mm of rain so far this month; average temp has been only 6.7C with max of 15C only....

<http://www.cl.cam.ac.uk/research/dtg/weather/period-text.cgi?2012-04>

Cold and damp... 😞

Re: Jack Harrison

by Jack Harrison, 23-Apr-12 11:31 PM GMT

23rd April

At last some butterflies here in N.W. Norfolk. A local walk produced a single Peacock, Tortoiseshell, three Orange Tips, one G.V.White and then on return home, a splendid female Holly Blue in the garden. All eluded the camera 😞

Jack

Re: Jack Harrison

by Jack Harrison, 24-Apr-12 04:30 AM GMT

Just outside my house in North Wootton near King's Lynn on my way TO (I stress TO, not coming back from) *The Red Cat* pub, there was the wonderful sight of a RED KITE floating low over the road. I watched it for some ten minutes. Apparently, a pair of Kites have been hanging around North Wootton for a fortnight, so with luck they will breed. That's at least making up for the dearth of butterflies.

So that makes Buzzards, Kites, Harriers all within the bounds of North Wootton. The area used to have Montagu's Harrier but sadly not for several years now.

Jack

Re: Jack Harrison

by NickB, 24-Apr-12 04:46 AM GMT

Well, you have ended-up in Birder's Dream Land.....

Re: Jack Harrison

by Jack Harrison, 24-Apr-12 05:04 AM GMT

And Barn and Tawny Owls. Dawn chorus is currently dominated by Song Thrush followed a little later in the morning by Blackcap. Jay regular at the moment on the feeders and last winter, Marsh and Coal Tit (as well of course as Blue and Great).

Yes, a good spot with Holly Blue and last year, Purple Hairstreak. Could be worse.

Jack

Re: Jack Harrison

by David M, 24-Apr-12 05:08 AM GMT

"NickB" wrote:

Well, you have ended-up in Birder's Dream Land.....

Come and sit in my back garden for an hour or two – the bloody things are almost as common as crows!!

Re: Jack Harrison

by NickB, 24-Apr-12 05:52 AM GMT

Yep – not content with all our water, you've got our Red Kites as well 😊

Re: Jack Harrison

by Jack Harrison, 26-Apr-12 11:22 AM GMT

Little interest so far in my Lumix FZ38:

viewtopic.php?f=29&t=4056&start=320#p58526

I guess I keep it as a back up camera. Image quality is just as good as my new Lumix FZ150 but the FZ38 lacks a flip-out screen, something that I find extremely useful.

Send Private Message if interested in the FZ38 with accessories.

Jack

Re: Jack Harrison

by Jack Harrison, 01-May-12 05:01 PM GMT

The **old Panasonic Lumix FZ38** now has a happy new home.

The **new Lumix FZ150** finally got some butterflies in its lens on Monday at Holme NNR. I have to say that the image quality is no better, no worse than the old camera. But the 150 has the flexibility that I need.

Here is a simple re-size.

Details: No supplementary lens used, max telephoto, shooting distance 100 cms



Here is a tight crop from that photo.



Not stunning resolution but I am still finding the best settings

This on the notice board at Holme about some sea creature amused. What a wonderful user-name that would be for someone.



Jack

Re: Jack Harrison

by NickB, 02-May-12 12:38 AM GMT

Whilst you are getting used to a new piece of kit, are you sure you don't want a medium-format camera, Jack?

This *No.1A Pocket Kodak* should be right up your street... 😊



Re: Jack Harrison

by Jack Harrison, 02-May-12 01:39 AM GMT

I actually had one of those, or similar camera, in my youth. It suffered an unfortunate fate in 1952 (I think that was the year. That would make me aged 13) when I put it on the ground and stepped back in my excitement in seeing my first ever Green Hairstreaks. Cameras with bellows don't come out unscathed after being stood on. I was in tears. Dad took pity on my and bought me a lovely Zeiss Nettar when we got back from our holiday in Somerset.

A butterfly friend (we also share the interest in gliding) Mike Rubin, is staying with me for a few days. The weather today was predictably dreadful so we went to the Butterfly Farm at Long Sutton.

The Glasswings are lovely (pic taken with flash)



The Owls (and the Morphos) rarely open their wings when settled. This Owl pic taken from extremely close distance. No flash. It's a crop to about 1800 x 1800 px then resize.



Jack

Re: Jack Harrison

by NickB, 02-May-12 01:46 AM GMT

Nice ones, Jack!



Re: Jack Harrison

by Jack Harrison, 02-May-12 01:50 AM GMT

Mike (my guest) has just been showing me his butterfly pics and been helping with the i/d of some of these foreigners.

[http://piccies.flybywire.org.uk/Butterf ... ecies.html](http://piccies.flybywire.org.uk/Butterf...ecies.html)

Jack

Re: Jack Harrison

by Hugh Middleton, 02-May-12 02:04 AM GMT

A few years since I visited that butterfly place at Long Sutton – back in the days when my in laws lived at Wisbech. Had some good days there. Is it true it is about to close in the near future?

Hugh

Re: Jack Harrison

by Jack Harrison, 02-May-12 04:38 AM GMT

Is it true it is about to close in the near future?

Sadly yes, at the end of the summer. They require a "Zoo Licence" and will need to erect a secure fence which will cost some £200,000 which they simply can't afford. Great shame.

Blame the bureaucrats and the PC Brigade.

Jack

Re: Jack Harrison

by Jack Harrison, 02-May-12 04:46 AM GMT

Stella, Mike and I had a meal in the local. Here is me relaxing afterwards. Suave!



Jack

Re: Jack Harrison

by Jack Harrison, 03-May-12 12:29 AM GMT

Wednesday 2nd May – more from the FZ150.



Small White

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3RD PARTY HOSTING



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www.photobucket.com/P500

Large White

Both with exposure bias -1.3 (best shots from an exposure bracket sequences) which seems appropriate for "whites". Less bias needed for darker butterflies.

Jack

Sussex 4 & 5 May 2012

by Jack Harrison, 06-May-12 09:38 PM GMT

Just back from freezing Sussex. I had not appreciated just how cold it can be on the coast in the depth of winter. When I left Worthing on Sunday morning, temperature was 4.5°C .

*If anyone wants a recommendation of a hotel in Worthing where **NOT** to stay, send me a private message. The feedback website only allows rating from 1 to 10 stars. It doesn't have a zero option; that is a serious omission.*

Rewell Wood on 4th & 5th May was a great success but without Neil's superb field craft, I would have seen just one butterfly. He is so annoying (in the nicest possible sense) that to echo the user name of another ukb contributor, Neil should henceforth be known as "*The Annoying Kipper*". Dan Hoare and many others made valuable contributions.

Here is the master in action.



FOR IMPORTANT INFO, PLEASE GO TO:
www.photobucket.com/P500

And the royal finger.



FOR IMPORTANT INFO, PLEASE GO TO:
www.photobucket.com/P500

Susie getting close up and personal.

PLEASE UPDATE YOUR ACCOUNT TO ENABLE 3RD PARTY HOSTING



FOR IMPORTANT INFO, PLEASE GO TO:
www.photobucket.com/P500

"Raindrops are falling on my wings" - Mark Colvin's find. (look carefully at the butterfly's forewings).

PLEASE UPDATE YOUR ACCOUNT TO ENABLE 3RD PARTY HOSTING



FOR IMPORTANT INFO, PLEASE GO TO:
www.photobucket.com/P500

Jack

Re: Jack Harrison

by Susie, 06-May-12 10:27 PM GMT

Look at the dust on that lense! No wonder my photos are rubbish! 😊

Re: Jack Harrison

by Jack Harrison, 06-May-12 10:35 PM GMT

Susie:

Look at the dust on that lens! No wonder my photos are rubbish! 😊

Isn't PhotoShop wonderful for adding noise and other artefacts? 😡

Not really of course. I was using flash so I guess it accentuated any minor dust. You can see the raindrops on the lens barrel. I don't think they are an exaggeration.

Jack

Re: Jack Harrison

by Mark Colvin, 07-May-12 01:06 AM GMT

Hi Jack,

It was good to meet you yesterday and, despite the best of Sussex weather, I'm pleased you managed to get a few species under your belt.

Good hunting.

Kind regards. Mark

Re: Jack Harrison

by Jack Harrison, 07-May-12 01:12 AM GMT

Yes, good to met you Mark.

Sadly it was only the one species (PBF) over the two days I spent in Sussex.

Weather is poor here in Norfolk, a mere 6 degrees, apparently the coldest part of the country. This cold seems to follow me around.

Jack

Re: Jack Harrison

by Padfield, 07-May-12 01:17 AM GMT

It's a great picture with the raindrops, Jack.

From the near perfection of the symmetry I wonder if a single drop of water was caught between the wings when it folded them, splitting into two when it reopened. Otherwise – wonderful coincidence!

Guy

CAPTION: 'Why do I always lose my contact lenses?!'

Re: Jack Harrison

by Mark Colvin, 07-May-12 01:19 AM GMT

"Jack Harrison" wrote:

This cold seems to follow me around.

In that case, please stay in Norfolk then 😄😄😄

No seriously, you're more than welcome in Sussex (just don't come during the butterfly season) ...

Re: Jack Harrison

by dilettante, 07-May-12 02:29 AM GMT

"Jack Harrison" wrote:

Weather is poor here in Norfolk, a mere 6 degrees, apparently the coldest part of the country.

And guess where I've been camping this weekend? Grr. Or brr.

Re: Jack Harrison

by Jack Harrison, 08-May-12 01:32 AM GMT

I tried to initiate a small discussion (small being the operative word) when Neil had that PBF on his finger.

"How much does a butterfly weigh?" (or how many PBFs to the gram?)

We didn't have a clue.

Jack

Re: Jack Harrison

by Jack Harrison, 09-May-12 05:15 AM GMT

Tuesday 8th May – the sun shone (for a time at least) and it wasn't cold. Went to Holme NNR to east of Hunstanton.

There had clearly been a mass emergence of Speckled Woods with unusually large numbers to be found in any sunny patch in the pines. Males only, all sparkling fresh.

Also seen one Small White and half a dozen GV Whites. No Small Coppers today and no Green Hairstreaks, the main targets for the day. Two Cuckoos heard.

Early yesterday morning, heard one briefly in the woods near where I live but not since.



Can anyone identify the tiny flowers? Sandy soil in sunny area among the Corsican Pines on the dunes at Holme. Speedwells of some sort I would have thought. I have to admit that I hadn't noticed them until I got home and saw the photos.

Jack

Re: Jack Harrison

by Jack Harrison, 11-May-12 01:11 AM GMT

I am in need of cheering up. (Some of you will know of my medical and other problems).

But this brought a smile to my face. Angel was already in the garden when we moved here but I do think she is rather sweet.



Jack

*PS. We also inherited a concrete dog. That does **not** have pride of place.*

Re: Jack Harrison

by NickB, 11-May-12 07:01 PM GMT

PS. We also inherited a concrete dog. That does not have pride of place..

...is the garden full of little piles of concrete rubble... ? 😊

Re: Jack Harrison

by Jack Harrison, 11-May-12 11:34 PM GMT

11th May

While my partner was on her horse, I went for a little walk along a lane in Heacham. It seemed perfect habitat for whites, but this was a huge surprise in the "wrong place".



I very nearly got the Orange Tip in the same frame, my two favourite butterflies side-by-side.

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Panasonic Lumix FZ150 with +2 achromatic close-up lens. Flash used for the Hairstreak to stop wind shake of the plant.

Jack

Re: Jack Harrison

by Jack Harrison, 14-May-12 02:35 AM GMT

Norfolk BC meeting at Stoke Ferry. About 6 - 8 Grizzled Skipper (many eyes in action - well attended field trip) found along the northern side of the Cut Off Channel at approx: [http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=56 ... 99270&lm=0](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=56...99270&lm=0)

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Also Small Copper in the area.

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I then went on my own to Foulden Common and found another 6 - 8 Grizzled Skippers at approx: [http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=57 ... 00185&lm=0](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=57...00185&lm=0) (that's just in from the car park, through gates and turn right)

Jack

Re: Jack Harrison

by Wurzel, 14-May-12 04:47 AM GMT

Great shots Jack, I spent all day yesterday looking for Green Hairstreak and you just go for a walk and there they are! 🍷

Have a goodun

Wurzel

Re: Jack Harrison

by Padfield, 14-May-12 05:24 AM GMT

Hi Jack,

I was hoping a botanist would identify your 'speedwells' so I wouldn't get it wrong and make a fool of myself. But as no one has, I would suggest they are forget-me-nots – not dissimilar to the field forget-me-not, *Myosotis arvensis* (http://www.plantsystematics.org/imgs/kcn2/r/Boraginaceae_Myosotis_arvensis_14262.html).

As others have said, you're taking some lovely pictures at the moment.

Guy

Re: Jack Harrison

by Jack Harrison, 17-May-12 08:51 PM GMT

I knew you as an egg in 2010, yes **2010** (that's hibernation for two winters).



Jack

Re: Jack Harrison

by Neil Freeman, 20-May-12 04:50 AM GMT

Hi Jack,

I have read elsewhere about Orange Tips, and also some moths, sometimes overwintering twice as a pupa before emerging. I find this very interesting and can't help but wonder what mechanisms decide how and when this happens.

For instance, in the case of your individual above, why did it not emerge last year when we had a much better Spring from our perspective. Instead it has emerged this Spring when it would seem the conditions are not so favourable, but is that true from the Orange Tips perspective ?

The Cuckoo flower and Garlic Mustard around here in the midlands is certainly showing better growth than in last years rather dry conditions at the same time of year.

I am also impressed with your photos with your FZ150. Methinks I will be looking at one of these when funds allow me to replace my FZ38 which I bought second hand 18 months ago.

All the best.

Neil F.

Re: Jack Harrison

by Willow, 20-May-12 05:05 AM GMT

"nfreem" wrote:

I am also impressed with your photos with your FZ150

Agree wholeheartedly, some wonderful images Jack, hope I can deliver similar with my FZ150, but my camera shake is seriously annoying these days, you really need a good steady hand even with the optical stabilisation built into the modern digital camera's, it appears your hands are more than up to the challenge...unless it's a bonus effect of those candy striped 'joints' your into 😄😄😄

Bill 😄

Re: Jack Harrison

by m_galatea, 20-May-12 05:55 AM GMT

Hi Jack,
the flowers you saw on the 8th May are Early Forget-me-not by my reckoning – Guy wasn't far off. They have tiny flowers, are very hairy and live in dry places as you describe.

Alex

Good idea at the time...

by Jack Harrison, 05-Jun-12 07:25 PM GMT

...well so it seemed. Living next to a wood has some disadvantages. Gardening is a nightmare with so many midges; I have had to devise anti-insect protection. I have suffered badly enough but poor Stella looks like she has caught measles.



Corks? Who suggested corks?

Orange Tip photography poses some challenges as they are so restless. The best way I have found is to wait until the sun goes in whereupon they settle almost immediately with wings closed. The moment the sun comes out again, they start to open up and you have a few seconds to snap your picture. This one was taken just too late as the nearest wing shows signs of movement: a millisecond later it was off.



Jack

Re: Jack Harrison

by Jack Harrison, 07-Jun-12 01:57 AM GMT

I'm still sorting through hundreds of photos (few are of butterflies) from my superb holiday on Mull and in the Oban area.

Any ideas about this? Nothing unusual of course. This was a perfectly healthy individual (Glen Loy) but exactly what do antennae do and why was one antenna held at such an angle?



Jack

Re: Jack Harrison

by Padfield, 07-Jun-12 02:34 AM GMT

Since I filmed the poplar admiral last year, testing poo with his antennae, I have paid attention to these organs in other species. They are frequently deployed as what appear to be tasters – touching surfaces like excrement, mud or leaves before feeding or, in the case of females, choosing egg-laying sites. The two antennae are operated independently. What your green hairstreak is doing I don't know, though it's possible it's cleaning the antenna on its hairy body.

The poplar admiral video, showing lots of antenna activity, is here: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-OfHAGvP4_c

Guy

Re: Jack Harrison

by Jack Harrison, 07-Jun-12 02:26 PM GMT

DavidM wrote in another thread:

You missed it, Neil. 24–28 May – a once in a decade weather event where NW Scotland was the warmest part of the UK. Sadly, I missed it too. 😞

I had planned my holiday in NW Scotland as long ago as last September being aware that the period 20–28 May would be fine and warm. It's a little early at the moment in June 2012 to plan next year's holiday, but by September this year it will have become clear which will be the best week for a holiday in NW Scotland in 2013 😊

Piccie from 20 May (Inverary)



Pic from 28 May (Aberfoyle)



And apart from thin high cloud on 22 May, it was hot and sunny throughout.

Being serious for a moment, from mid May to early June, NW Scotland is statistically one of the warmest and sunniest part of the British Isles, that period of the year being when easterly winds are quite frequent (giving shelter and Fohn effect to lee of the mountains).

That statistically fine spell could offer a clue as to the distribution of the Chequered Skipper – the flight season coincides with the best weather of the year.

Jack

Re: Jack Harrison

by Cotswold Cockney, 08-Jun-12 12:25 AM GMT

Antennae deployment in flight.

In one of those million to one chance observations, I was in a Gloucestershire Wood many moons ago when a White Admiral flew directly over my head in a slow flat winged glide less than 50cm above my eyes. I distinctly saw it drop its left antenna and immediately peel off to its left in an accelerated flight.

Possibly Steering and Balancing mechanism plays a part in flight too.

I had exceptional eyesight when much younger. Doubt I would see such things today.

Re: Jack Harrison

by David M, 08-Jun-12 12:38 AM GMT

"Jack Harrison" wrote:

Being serious for a moment, from mid May to early June, NW Scotland is statistically one of the warmest and sunniest part of the British Isles, that period of the year being when easterly winds are quite frequent (giving shelter and Fohn effect to lee of the mountains).

That statistically fine spell could offer a clue as to the distribution of the Chequered Skipper – the flight season coincides with the best weather of the year.

You may have something there, Jack. It's bizarre how this butterfly is totally west-centric when the bulk of the warmer Scottish weather occurs in the east. However, as you say, that period which statistically offers the best chance of easterly winds coincides with Chequered Skipper emergence.

Re: Jack Harrison

by Jack Harrison, 08-Jun-12 12:59 AM GMT

David M:

...the bulk of the warmer Scottish weather occurs in the east...

The warmest and sunniest area of Scotland is probably the Moray Coast from Forres (Kinloss) along to Buckie this area being downwind of the Cairngorms in the prevailing southwesterly winds. Northwesterly winds are also quite frequent in Scotland and then places like Stonehaven, Montrose benefit (*Northern Brown Argus country – for similar reason as outlined before perhaps?*)

I lived in the Dee valley for some five years. As a glider pilot (as well as a professional flying from Aberdeen) I came to understand the weather quite well. Fohn effects, producing sun and high temperatures, are significant in the lee of the largest mountain massifs in Britain. Fohn (*more popularly in geography text books called rain shadow*) controls much of the climate up upland Scotland.

Link rain shadow: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rain_shadow

Jack

Re: Jack Harrison

by Jack Harrison, 12-Jun-12 09:40 PM GMT

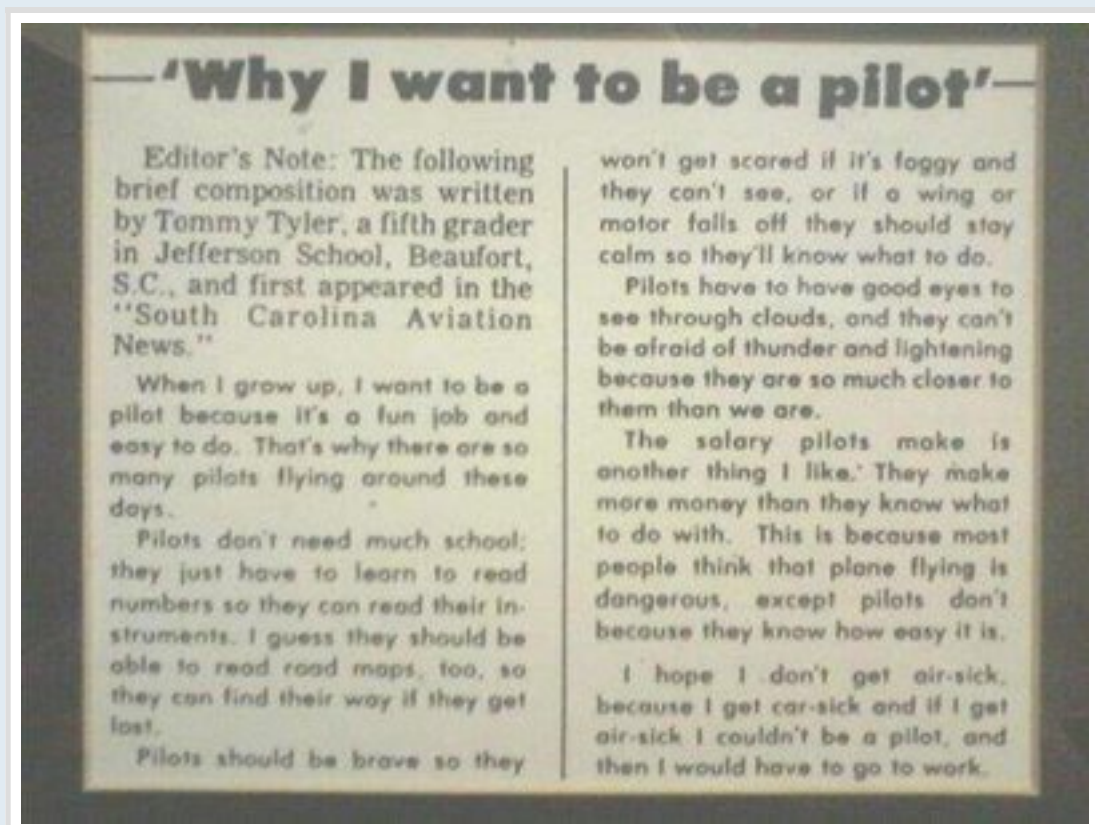
Rain

Ref Sussex Kipper's excessive rainfall problems, we have had something like 100 mms of rain the past fortnight in NW Norfolk but luckily never more than 20 mms in one go.

But there is one problem that defies solution. The rain gauge over-flows and that causes flooding. 🤔! 😊

Re: Jack Harrison

by PhilB, 16-Jun-12 10:20 PM GMT



Jack, I take it that this is an accurate summary of what it takes to be a pilot! 😊

Re: Jack Harrison

by Jack Harrison, 17-Jun-12 01:48 AM GMT

Pretty good essay expect for two glaring errors.

Unless he was referring to the brightening of the sky after a storm, the word he should have used is LIGHTNING not LIGHT.E.NING.

Sadly he is wrong about salaries.

Unfortunately my wife (*ex? still don't know status five days on*) seems to have perpetuated that myth and might have briefed her solicitor that pilots are extremely wealthy and

enjoy HUGE GREAT PENSIONS 😊😊😊 .

Jack

Re: Jack Harrison

by Jack Harrison, 20-Jun-12 06:08 PM GMT

Summer solstice is at precisely 2308 GMT today, 20th June. But that is 0008 BST tomorrow. So which is the longest day?

Not to worry which is the correct interpretation, I was up before dawn to see the sunrise over the sea at Thornham, North Norfolk. No butterflies at that time of course, but plenty of birds. Cuckoos were calling from opposite side of the marsh, Oystercatchers were noisy as always. On the return home, nearly ran over a Sparrowhawk enjoying his breakfast of pigeon.

Not the finest of pictures (unavoidably heavily underexposed shadows), but they do give a flavour.



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Jack

Re: Jack Harrison

by Padfield, 20-Jun-12 08:29 PM GMT

At the latitude of London, June 21st is a little under one second shorter than June 20th this year, measuring from sunrise to sunset.

<http://www.timeanddate.com/worldclock/astronomy.html?n=136>

Guy

Re: Jack Harrison

by Hugh Middleton, 20-Jun-12 09:43 PM GMT

Oh I so love Thornham. Spend hours there when in Norfolk especially in the winter scanning the gulls as they come into roost.

25th June, Northwest Norfolk.

by Jack Harrison, 26-Jun-12 01:47 AM GMT

Castle Acre ancient castle – long established lush grassland with plenty of flowers. Bright but not sunny, 16 degrees. Not a single butterfly see, not even a Meadow Brown. What a dreadful summer.

But what is this beastie? About 8 mms long.

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Just look at those antennae, especially the shot of it about to take off (flash used of course). Nature in miniature at its most amazing.

Jack

Re: Jack Harrison

by ChrisC, 26-Jun-12 01:54 AM GMT

Garden Chafer would be a place to start.

Chris

Re: Jack Harrison

by Gothic_dreams, 26-Jun-12 04:19 AM GMT

Hey Jack, cracking photos, love the shape of the antennae on the last pic 😊

Chris

Re: Jack Harrison

by Jack Harrison, 27-Jun-12 11:06 PM GMT

Ah, caterpillar today in the post for grand-nephew (great-nephew)
Someone sais

I checked the OED, and grand-nephew is there, with the definition *The son of a nephew or niece*.
I then found great-nephew (in the entry for "great"): the definition given is a *son's or daughter's nephew*
I'm now exceedingly confused!



Young lad is my nephew's son, so according to that "grand-nephew" is correct.

Jack

Re: Jack Harrison

by Jack Harrison, 08-Jul-12 04:55 PM GMT

I read regular complaints about weather forecasts, words such as unexpected, or not anticipated, or wrong.

Forecasts today are quite brilliant but do need some interpretation. You cannot expect to hear a forecast that is necessarily correct for a specific location. When for example, widespread slow-moving showers are forecast, Denbies Hillside might escape and have prolonged sun shine. Yet not 50 kilometres away at Chiddingfold, a heavy shower may hang around for hours. But the forecast was not wrong. There is still a tendency among the British public to say "the forecast was wrong again". Accuracy has come on in leaps and bounds over the past few years but it is unrealistic to expect too much.

I give an example. I've been trying to have a boat trip to see the Seal Colonies in The Wash. I made a booking for last Sunday in the middle of the previous week. However, I was concerned then that it might be too windy but not being a sailor, I had little idea what would be acceptable to the boat company. It indeed turned out to be too windy. The forecast was not wrong: I had merely been ignorant of the requirements for what I wanted to do.

Last Sunday, I looked for another possible window for the trip. Friday 6th seemed to be a possibility. However, there was a forecast for heavy rain about 50 kilometres to the north. As it turned out, the centre of the intense rain was some 70 kilometres to the south of that on the long range prediction. Moreover, the rain covered a larger area and was more intense than the earlier prediction. But again, I don't think that forecast was wrong. By the Thursday, the area for the rain had been fine-tuned and turned out to be stunningly accurate. I measured 54 mms on Friday with the clearance late afternoon spot on cue.

Of course, forecasts go wrong but the errors are in the detail. Only very rarely is the general picture wildly out. Who for example could expect a precise forecast of just where the rain would fall (radar picture this Sunday morning)? (image from Met Office)



But don't expect too much. Don't automatically blame the forecasters. Surveys have shown that people listen to/watch weather forecasts but when asked afterwards what might happen, a significant percentage have simply not absorbed the information.

I have numerous website weather pages. This one is basic and simple: <http://www.weatherjackwx.co.uk/pdq.html> (The LOCAL link is for my benefit and in any case, is in aviation code)

Most of the links will work on a smart phone (I think).

I happily plan my activities several days in advance based on forecasts. Yes I do miss butterfly opportunities as I might consider that the weather window is too small for me to think worthwhile.

So give the forecasters a break. They are a good deal more accurate than Horse Racing Tipsters not to mention Economists.

Jack

Re: Jack Harrison

by selbypaul, 09-Jul-12 06:30 AM GMT

"Jack Harrison" wrote:

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Forecasts today are quite brilliant but do need some interpretation. You cannot expect to hear a forecast that is necessarily correct for a specific location. When for example, widespread slow-moving showers are forecast, Denbies Hillside might escape and have prolonged sun shine. Yet not 50 kilometres away at Chiddingfold, a heavy shower may hang around for hours. But the forecast was not wrong. There is still a tendency among the British public to say "the forecast was wrong again". Accuracy has come on in leaps and bounds over the past few years but it is unrealistic to expect too much.

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So give the forecasters a break. They are a good deal more accurate than Horse Racing Tipsters not to mention Economists.

Jack

As an economist, I'll ignore your last comment Jack! 😊 However, you're spot on about the weather forecasters. Unless the atmosphere is extremely turbulent, their 24 hour forecasts are now usually spot on accurate to a very local level

Re: Jack Harrison

by David M, 09-Jul-12 06:38 AM GMT

This may be the case in areas devoid of any substantial relief, but factor in 500m+ hills and nearby coasts and the whole equation suddenly becomes far more complex.

Where I live, in south Wales, I have the sea 6 miles to the south and hills of 500m+ 6 miles to the north. The forecast is often hit and miss here as a result.

Re: Jack Harrison

by Jack Harrison, 18-Jul-12 02:54 AM GMT

Another example of how the articulated screen comes into its own. Camera held above head for this shot over the vegetation beyond the garden fence.

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Jack

Re: Jack Harrison

by CJB, 18-Jul-12 03:55 AM GMT

A great shot Jack and unlike mine, your WA is in tact.

Once I have captured all the species on my mobile I will then upgrade to a good camera and start all over again! 😊

Flutter on!

CJB

Naff Title

by Jack Harrison, 19-Jul-12 10:18 AM GMT

Photographers and artists seem to delight in using corny titles for their masterpieces, such as *"Spring Tide"* or *"Golden Sundown"*

The best I can think of for this is an unimaginative *"High Summer in a Norfolk Garden"*.

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Your better suggestions for the naffest title welcomed.

Jack

Jack Harrison on Mull

by Jack Harrison, 26-Jul-12 04:01 AM GMT

A break from house hunting on Mull threw up a few Scotch Argus:



We might have found our dream house. Stunning views from the bathroom. A little bit of refurbishment needed.



Jack

Comma hutchinsonii

by Jack Harrison, 03-Aug-12 09:39 PM GMT

I had wondered whether the Commas I have been seeing in/near the garden might be the autumn dark form and not *hutchinsonii*. I think this must be *hutchinsonii*.



Taken with my FZ150 from about 150 cms range at full telephoto.

Jack

Why Mull?

by Jack Harrison, 09-Aug-12 02:58 AM GMT

Just enjoyed a mellow 90 minutes with a bottle of Cava while sitting in the garden here in Northwest Norfolk.

Large Skippers galore, Commas a-plenty, brand new Peacock, whites various, Purple Hairstreaks on the Ash and Oak, gulls overhead chasing insects, Jays squawking noisily. Even the distant sound of Red-legged Partridge.

If Peacocks were rare, wouldn't we get excited about such a fantastic creature? Sadly, this most-beautiful of butterflies is taken for granted.



So why do I want to move to the Isle of Mull?

Cos it's even better!

Jack

Re: Jack Harrison

by MikeOxon, 09-Aug-12 04:18 AM GMT

Perfect logic, Jack. Go for it!

Mike

Re: Jack Harrison

by Jack Harrison, 10-Aug-12 03:35 AM GMT

Mellowed by Cava. Follow up from last evening.

The Olympic Spirit has got to me. So when opening the bottle this evening I decided to aim the flying cork at a Comma on the buddleia some 3 to 4 metres away. I know I would miss; the Comma would be safe. What I didn't expect was that my aim would be so bad and the Cava so powerful. The cork carried on high into the Oaks beyond the garden. I didn't actually see any Purple Hairstreak disturbed but it wouldn't have surprised me.

This late afternoon and evening, in addition to those mentioned yesterday, Brimstone, Small and Large White. Holly Blue and Meadow Brown. Sadly the White Admirals seem to have finished some two weeks ago.



Jack

Re: Jack Harrison

by Jack Harrison, 13-Aug-12 03:43 AM GMT

More from NW Norfolk 12 August

Early local walk produced numerous whites, Meadow and Hedge Browns, a few Peacocks, single Small (Essex?) Skipper, single Small Tortoiseshell plus dragons/damsels (Southern and Brown Hawkers, Banded Demoiselle).

Back in/adjacent to garden, new arrivals Red Admiral, Speckled Wood. The Purple Hairstreaks remained at tree top height but very few seen.

I enjoyed this dragon (Common Darter) in the garden when it rested on the bird feeder. (He's watching you!)



Jack

Northwest Norfolk area

by Jack Harrison, 19-Aug-12 01:23 AM GMT

As you know, my life has changed somewhat over the past 18 months. It is about to change again now that we will be buying a house in Tobermory, Isle of Mull, the move being planned for early November.

Now that isn't of huge interest to most people on ukb but what could be of interest that our present place in NW Norfolk will become available for rent in mid-November. You will have heard of the garden list here: Commas by the dozen: White Admirals in July: Purple Hairstreaks on the oaks. Birds over the garden have included Buzzards (heard every day), Tawny Owl, Red Kite. My most unusual garden ticks are Stock Doves and Red legged Partridges (not rare birds of course but unusual in gardens). A mile away on the marshes there are Marsh Harriers and Barn Owls. Of course the fabled (for birds) North and Northwest Norfolk is almost on the doorstep. Snettisham is 20 minutes away, Titchwell just over half an hour and a bit further along are the delights of Cley and Salthouse to mention just two.

So this house makes a superb base for the birdwatcher and it's not bad for the butterfly enthusiast. Property and rental prices are much more affordable here (perhaps just 2/3) than right on the coast.

So if anyone is interested in a move to NW Norfolk, drop me a PM and I will put you in touch with the letting agency.

In no way do I personally get anything out of this. But I just hope that the lease is taken up by a like-minded enthusiast.

Surely "tame" Snow Buntings: Pinkfeet by the tens of thousands: the high tide wader spectacle on The Wash will tempt somebody?

PS decent pub in the village. Must sign off now to go and check in at the *Red Cat* 😊

Jack

Re: Jack Harrison

by Hugh Middleton, 19-Aug-12 04:29 AM GMT

All the very best with your move Jack.

Hugh

Re: Jack Harrison

by Jack Harrison, 14-Nov-12 04:57 AM GMT

Now settled in Tobermory, Isle of Mull. Pictures on the wall, artefacts and ornaments in place – we are organised after just eight days here. And very important – fast internet.

But my goodness, does it rain! I had expected rain and have not been disappointed. 80 mms in the past seven days. Scarcely had time so far to investigate the wildlife, but the resident Otter in the harbour is delightful. No butterflies of course at this time of year but the bird life is interesting. No Magpies, Jays or (so far) Woodpigeons. The very smart Hooded Crows replace the all black Carrion Crows of the south. Haven't yet seen a Rook but Ravens are numerous, especially at the local rubbish tip. No Black-headed Gulls but plenty of other gull species. No eagles yet although saw both species last summer when visiting.

Life here is very different.

Jack

Re: Jack Harrison

by David M, 14-Nov-12 05:34 AM GMT

"Jack Harrison" wrote:

Life here is very different.

I'm sure it is. I used to work in Oban and looked across longingly at Mull every day for 6 months.

I look forward to your updates on what is a fascinating part of the British Isles.

Mull – no butterflies, but.....

by Jack Harrison, 02-Dec-12 09:51 PM GMT

.....stunning scenery. My website (with other pages linked):

<http://www.weatherjackwx.co.uk/normalfo...e-M03.html>

And my weather station Tobermory for temperatures and rain. Wind might under-read but gives an idea:

<http://www.weatherlink.com/user/jackhar...&headers=1>

Jack

Re: Jack Harrison

by Matsukaze, 02-Dec-12 10:54 PM GMT

"Jack Harrison" wrote:

Mellowed by Cava. Follow up from last evening.

The Olympic Spirit has got to me. So when opening the bottle this evening I decided to aim the flying cork at a Comma on the buddleia some 3 to 4 metres away. I know I would miss; the Comma would be safe. What I didn't expect was that my aim would be so bad and the Cava so powerful. The cork carried on high into the Oaks beyond the garden. I didn't actually see any Purple Hairstreak disturbed but it wouldn't have surprised me....

Jack

This looks like a fun hairstreak-finding technique just begging to be experimented with.

Re: Mull – no butterflies, but.....

by David M, 03-Dec-12 04:26 AM GMT

"Jack Harrison" wrote:

.....stunning scenery. My website (with other pages linked):

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And my weather station Tobermory for temperatures and rain. Wind might under-read but gives an idea:

[http://www.weatherlink.com/user/jackhar ... &headers=1](http://www.weatherlink.com/user/jackhar...&headers=1)

Jack

Some fantastic images already, Jack.

This part of the UK is singularly beautiful and I look forward to seeing more of it courtesy of your good self.

Re: Jack Harrison

by Jack Harrison, 10-Dec-12 03:44 AM GMT

I hoped for some starry skies to rival Guy's. As I was going out, partner Stella remarked jokingly: "*Patrick Moore might be looking down at you!*" I don't suppose Patrick believed in an afterlife any more than I do, but "*looking down at me*" somehow struck me as a rather nice thought.

Sadly no Sir Patrick or any other stars – the cloud came in at the wrong moment. Still, I could photograph the lights of Tobermory (where I live) reflected off those clouds.

(Greatly enhanced brightness in the picture).



The loch in the foreground is one of the "*Mishnish Lochs*" apparently named after the infamous incident (it's in all the guide books) when Rogerdodge was thrown out of the *Mishnish Pub*, Tobermory some years ago.

Jack

Re: Jack Harrison

by Padfield, 10-Dec-12 04:33 AM GMT

"Jack Harrison" wrote:

I don't suppose Patrick believed in an afterlife any more than I do, but "*looking down at me*" somehow struck me as a rather nice thought.

In his own words:

"I'm not scared of dying. I believe in some form of afterlife: I just hope my uncle George isn't there — silly, baldheaded old coot. But you've got to make the best of things and that's what I've always tried to do."

He was a great man.

Guy

(The quotation is from <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/celebritynews/9034627/Sir-Patrick-Moore-I-cant-operate-my-telescope-anymore.html>)

Re: Jack Harrison

by Jack Harrison, 13-Dec-12 10:25 PM GMT

Messrs Padfield and Hulme have been showing us some lovely winter scenes.

I must add my contribution from the Isle of Mull. This is Dervaig in the west. Widespread hoar frost recently right down to the shoreline but never bitterly cold.

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Have just about got my Davis weather station working properly although still a few technical issues with uploading. Current weather here:
<http://www.weatherlink.com/user/jackharrison1938/index.php?view=main&headers=1>

Jack

Re: Jack Harrison

by David M, 14-Dec-12 04:12 AM GMT

Nice shot, Jack.

Watch out for the deluge tomorrow. I expect Mull to be +10c by 6pm Friday and no doubt that hoar frost will have been obliterated.

Re: Jack Harrison

by Jack Harrison, 18-Dec-12 03:17 AM GMT

Now I'm not a religious person: far from it. But this is surely "God's own country"?

I think it was Sussex Kipper (Neil Hulme) who described the west of Scotland as the "finest place on the planet in May" (or words to that effect). Not just May Neil. This was Calgary Bay at sunset mid-December, home of Eagles and perhaps Corncrakes (and surely Graylings?) in season.

PLEASE UPDATE YOUR ACCOUNT TO ENABLE 3RD PARTY HOSTING



FOR IMPORTANT INFO, PLEASE GO TO:
www.photobucket.com/P500

Jack

Re: Jack Harrison

by dave brown, 18-Dec-12 03:22 AM GMT

Jack,

All I can is Stunning. The sort of view in real life you can sit and watch for hours.

Re: Jack Harrison

by MikeOxon, 18-Dec-12 03:25 AM GMT

Looks wonderful, Jack. Pleased to know that are enjoying it.

I assume sunset is about 10mins after dawn at your latitude? 😊

Mike

Re: Jack Harrison

by Jack Harrison, 18-Dec-12 03:39 AM GMT

Indeed, sunset is pretty soon after sunrise – about seven hours at this time of year.

Jack

Re: Jack Harrison

by David M, 18-Dec-12 05:16 AM GMT

Very evocative, Jack. Keep'em coming.

E.B. Ford

by Jack Harrison, 20-Dec-12 03:55 AM GMT

In E. B. Ford's classic "Butterflies" (New Naturalists 1945), he hinted at a rumour of **Large Blue** in a totally different habitat/locality to the grassland of SW England. Ford didn't claim this necessarily to be the case, but dropped some tantalizing clues as to the locality.

It later became apparent that he was referring to the Isle of Rum.

Wiki: *For much of the 20th century the name became Rhum, a spelling invented by the former owner, Sir George Bullough, because he did not relish the idea of having the title "Laird of Rum".*

Anyway, the butterfly rumour was not of course substantiated and it was widely surmised that a large and impressive race of Common Blue was the source of the story.

Can anyone throw light on this lovely tale?

I recalled this story yesterday while looking from Mull across to Rum (large mountains at left). In the far distance (right) are the snow-covered Cuillins of Skye. The other islands are the splendidly named Muck (foreground left) and Eigg (middle distance right). The CalMac ferry *Clansman* is on its way back from Tiree to Oban.



Jack

Re: E.B. Ford

by Padfield, 20-Dec-12 05:04 AM GMT

"Jack Harrison" wrote:

Can anyone throw light on this lovely tale?

The large blue record is referred to in passing here (A RUM AFFAIR: How Botany's "Piltown Man" was Unmasked):

<http://naturalscience.com/ns/books/book08.html>

Guy

Re: Jack Harrison

by Jack Harrison, 20-Dec-12 05:39 AM GMT

Thanks Guy.

Jack

Re: Jack Harrison

by Matsukaze, 20-Dec-12 05:51 AM GMT

Funnily enough a friend reported seeing a number of large and brightly-marked Common Blues on Mull a few years back. Is it a form known from the island?

Christmas Round Robin

by Jack Harrison, 22-Dec-12 03:39 AM GMT

Jack Harrison's Christmas Round Robin 2012

Peter's talks at the gardening club have been well received. Especially popular was the one-and-a-quarter-hour session on: "Growing dark blue delphiniums in the shade on heavy clay soils". His gift at the end of the talk of a packet of his own-grown seeds to the three people who attended was well received and the audience left promptly to be able to sow them.

Julia hopes to resume her Bible Classes in the New Year. Although they were much appreciated, one-by-one her students unexpectedly had other commitments and after a few weeks, Julia decided to postpone her Bible Classes for a while.

Algernon was a very good fairy in the school production of "Snow White and the Seven Little People". Jemima has shown great promise as a scrum-half.

We have all received Round Robins like that. (Did he get his children muddled up?) I will tell the truth in my Christmas Missive – straight up, like! Yea! Know what I mean?

My wife divorced me in the summer. The reasons for this are obscure but might have had something to do with the fact that I had set up home with another lady. 27 years of marriage and a little thing like that?.....I'm still confused. **Not quite the truth – it takes two for a marriage to fail**

New home is a long way away from the rest of the world – the Isle of Mull, Inner Hebrides, Scotland. A very common phrase used by the natives here is "No Problem". SNP has nothing to do with politics: it stands for "[I'm] Scottish – No Problem". There are many attractions of the island: scenery, wildlife, lack of crime, cheap travel. But Scotland still doesn't yet seem to have discovered DECENT BEER. I am obliged to drink John Smith's Froth (out of the can), Cava Fizz and other such beverages. Clearly the Campaign for Real Ale hasn't doesn't have a Scottish Branch. However, one brand of lager *"Reaches the Parts Other Beers Cannot Reach"*.

Family details (and in particular health) are always of great interest to others.

I have:

Arthritic spine

Other mobility issues

Hypertension

Both eyes – glaucoma

Left eye – Age Related Macular Degeneration

Anno Domini

Difficulty remembering where I left my bus pass

Moreover, there are on-going issues with my left knee: it seems to be worn out. It has been libellously suggested (watch for the High Court Action) that the extra wear-and-tear could be that I am overweight. More likely – and I am prepared to accept the suggestion – it is a result of *Pigritia* (see: <http://www.encyclo.co.uk/define/Pigritia>), a much mis-understood syndrome.

However on the plus side, a daily walk back from the shops in Tobermory carrying my newspaper involves a 40 metre (130 feet) climb. After several weeks practising, I can now do it WITHOUT HAVING TO STOP FOR A BREATHER ON THE WAY. The climb became easier when I started getting the *"i"* newspaper, the 20 pence cheapo instead of the much heavier full size version of the Independent (£1.20)

My children have not changed their attitudes since divorce – they remain as reluctant as ever to communicate. I think senior son is training to be an airline pilot. Younger son is training to be a....? Lay-about, job-seeker expert??? Daughter is at university studying politics – a qualification guaranteed NOT to offer many job opportunities after graduation. Still, she will be able to hold an intelligent conversation with customers on the other side of the bar (or at the table).

As for my partner Stella.... fit-as-a-fiddle, always-exercising, shuns-junk-food, slim 68 year old. She has an irritatingly healthy lifestyle.

Stella is learning to play the flute. Learning to play the flute. Learning to play the flute. Learning to play the flute. Learning to play the flute. Learning to play the flute. (Thank goodness she didn't try the violin). I'll be quite glad when the learning stops and the music begins. I have countered with a harmonica. I can play *"Colonel Bogey"* with great aplomb (but not much else – give me time!)

The two cats deserve a mention – Fluff and Minnie (part of the package that came with Stella). They kept trying to break the night-time curfew and were determined to wreck the cat flap in their efforts to get out. A bit of lateral thinking and the problem was solved. See link : <http://i888.photobucket.com/albums/ac85...5a3d2d.jpg>

Oh, what the hell. I have outlived both my parents....and a few of my former colleagues. Actually, life is pretty good at age 74.

Jack

Celandine

by Jack Harrison, 28-Dec-12 09:18 PM GMT



Lesser Celandine in flower Tobermory 28th December (not in a garden and seemingly genuinely wild on woodland path). But very mild (11C), although dull, so had to use flash.

Spring is nearly here 😊

In spite of 24 mms rain today, the Tobermory River is still a wee (*note: I am learning the language*) trickle 😊



Jack

Re: Jack Harrison

by Jack Harrison, 30-Dec-12 04:28 AM GMT

Many of us have become side-tracked during the non-butterfly season. I enjoy the “off topic” comments. Let me add my own.

We were sitting in a pub in Oban today overlooking the harbour. An amazingly observant naturalist at the adjacent table insisted on telling me: *“There are a lot of seagulls”*. Wow!

And to think I had never anticipated seagulls at the seaside!

Jack