

Re: False Apollo

by False Apollo, 07-Apr-15 05:08 AM GMT

As far as I'm concerned the butterfly season proper started for me today. I started in the back garden and waited, it was a case of Brimstone after Brimstone, then Comma, then continuous sightings of Peacocks, and Small Tortoiseshells. Star butterfly for me was a Small White which dallied around the flower bed but did not stay too long. My missus took the family to Dorchester while I went to Martin Down, she had a male Orange Tip, I didn't, but the whole area from Christchurch to Martin Down was awash with Brimstones. At Martin the Peacocks and Small Tortoiseshells were very active along the hedgerows.

I believe Matthew Oates had a Green Hairstreak today in Gloucestershire so it is starting to happen.

I have had earlier sightings this year, but now the temperature has risen a bit, it's getting exciting.

Earlier this week I had a male Brimstone which flew in the conservatory, before I let it out, I managed to get a lucky photo of it with its wings open.

Both my hibernating Peacocks (a male and a female) have been let out the garage and flew off successfully, and there was the bonus of a Small Tortoiseshell which was also in the garage hibernating which I also let out, see photo.



Small Tortoiseshell, 'let me out'.



Brimstone in conservatory.

Re: False Apollo

by bugboy, 07-Apr-15 05:41 AM GMT

Fantastic Brimstone, I thought it was a pinned one for a split second!

Re: False Apollo

by False Apollo, 07-Apr-15 05:51 AM GMT

Hi Bugboy,

Thanks re-Brimstone pic. I was lucky to get the pic before I let it out. It flew off non the worse for it's spell in the conservatory!

Re: False Apollo

by Wurzel, 07-Apr-15 06:35 AM GMT

That Brimstone is a blinder of a shot Mike 🍷🍷😄 Hopefully the Orange-tips will make their way Wiltshire-wards 🍷

Have a goodun

Wurzel

Re: False Apollo

by David M, 07-Apr-15 07:26 AM GMT

Mike, that's the best open wing Brimstone shot I've ever seen! How did you 'capture' it? Was the butterfly beating its wings?

Re: False Apollo

by False Apollo, 07-Apr-15 08:26 AM GMT

Yes it was, as you can see from the slight movement on the right forewing and hind wing, it was on the conservatory door at the time, just lucky with the timing.

Re: False Apollo

by False Apollo, 25-Apr-15 04:04 AM GMT

I visited Hengistbury Head on Tuesday 21/4/15, mainly looking for migrant birds which were around in reasonable numbers, with 6 Redstart and 12 Wheatear showing off in the sunshine. On the way back I noticed a small butterfly fluttering around my feet which soon settled, it was a Green Hairstreak. This species is pretty scarce here and is probably overlooked so I was very pleased to see one.

I then decided to visit Noarhill in the afternoon, it did not take long to see my first Duke, they were certainly into double figures and were showing in almost every suitable area, they were revelling in the fine weather, one even attacking a Peacock that got too close. I hope the weather can hold out while more emerge as these seemed to be mainly territorial males.

Regards
Mike



Duke of Burgundy, one of many.



Green Hairstreak, Hengistbury Head.

Re: False Apollo

by False Apollo, 04-May-15 05:03 AM GMT

Good old Bentley Woods never fails to deliver, well I say that, I went yesterday and saw nothing! Today was a different story however, In the East Clearing I saw at least 6 Pearl-bordered Fritillaries, including females. They were only active when the sun came out and led me a merry dance. Excellent management has opened up further areas, and the most popular areas were sheltered from the wind and sunny. Also saw Orange Tips, Brimstone and Large White. I am hoping for Marsh Fritillary tomorrow if the sun stays out!

Regards
Mike



Pearl-bordered Fritillary, Bentley Wood.

Re: False Apollo

by Wurzel, 04-May-15 05:47 AM GMT

Great shot Mike 😊 Philzoid and I must have just missed you as we were there today too, got 6 Pearls and a Painted Lady but no Large White 😊 Have there been any reports of Marshies yet, my site is usually an early one but nowt from there yet...

Have a goodun

Wurzel

Re: False Apollo

by Pauline, 04-May-15 02:50 PM GMT

Some lovely shots recently Mike, especially the Duke – must just have missed you at NH.

Re: False Apollo

by False Apollo, 05-May-15 04:22 AM GMT

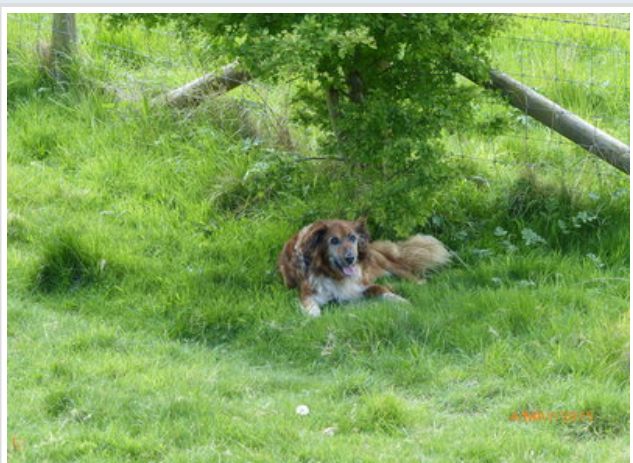
Nice to hear from you Wurzel and Pauline. I was told that Marsh Fritillaries were out at Cotley Hill, Wilts yesterday, I thought this might be a little early until I was shown the photos, and yes, they are out here.

I visited Cotley Hill today, I have never visited here before, and wow what a site! Marsh Fritillary larvae were absolutely everywhere. The path down to the road was littered with them, it really was a matter of minding where you walk in case you trod on one. Could be a phenomenal year here, even if some of these don't make it.

So I was quite relieved when at last I saw an adult in a warm sunny spot where I believe one was seen yesterday. It did not hang about long due to the sun being out at this point, it was cloud, sun, cloud most of the day. I was pleased as this was my main target species. It is very interesting that adult butterflies and different instar larvae were seen, there must also be some in pupation somewhere too.

However species numbers started to hot up as I walked around with a special bonus on the way back.

Green Hairstreak numbers seem to have gone through the roof, they really are doing well, a lovely sight of flickering beauty around the bushes and over the hill. I also saw Small Heath, Orange Tip, 3 Small Tortoiseshells, Green-veined Whites, Grizzled Skippers, Dingy Skippers, and 3 or 4 Peacocks. One of these Peacocks landed in front of me, and it did not look right, the hindwing blue eyes were wildly exaggerated by the surrounding cream circles, it did stand out from all the others I saw. I managed a few photos before it flew off up the hill.



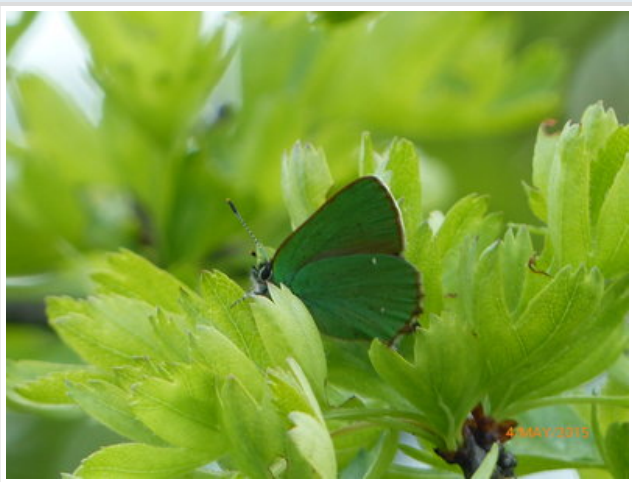
Ben, faithful hound



Marsh Fritillary larva



The view



Green Hairstreak



Grizzled Skipper



Dingy Skipper



Peacock



Peacock, aberration

Re: False Apollo

by False Apollo, 25-Jun-15 07:33 AM GMT

Saw my first Purple Hairstreak tonight at the top of the highest oak adjacent to my garden. It was very active to at least 19.40 flying by itself around the uppermost branches. I have seen my first Purple Hairstreaks in this tree most years, but the other oaks nearby are ignored, even though they are large but not as tall as this one. It seems a bit like a master tree as I am likely to see them here most warm summer evenings. They do seem to go over earlier than most other nearby sites though.

I popped into my local Silver-studded Blue site at St Catherines Hill, Dorset at lunchtime and saw 10 - 15 (no camera). This is fantastic due to the fact that another nearby colony was destroyed by a terrible heath fire earlier this year, and will take years to recover. I am leading a guided walk soon, so at least others will be able to see them on the visit.

Regards
Mike

Re: False Apollo

by False Apollo, 12-Oct-15 02:31 AM GMT

I made the journey into deepest West Sussex today to try to find the Beeding Long tailed Blues. Considering the lovely weather, myself and a few other enthusiasts could not see any. It was great to meet UK Butterflies Katrina there, putting a face to the name is always good. Apparently people had been looking all day with no success. Indeed, the security man behind the fence seemed quite suspicious as we eyed each other through binoculars. However I did see 2 Red Admirals, 1 Painted Lady, 1 Large White and a Speckled Wood. Others also saw a Comma and Small Copper. The star of the show was a helice Clouded Yellow which flew north along the B283 towards Upper Beeding. I have not seen many Clouded Yellows actually moving at this time of year, they normally seem to stay put in Dorset. I left on my way back to Dorset quite pleased and keen to have another go. I have yet to see a Long tailed Blue in the UK so I am avidly hoping there may be some seen from Brighton westwards.

Regards
Mike



Painted Lady at Beeding.