

Re: CFB

by CFB, 04-Feb-16 04:08 PM GMT

This morning I saw and photographed my first butterfly of the year, a slightly damaged solitary Red Admiral. Last year I had to wait until the beginning of March before my first sighting, a Cleopatra. But the year before that I saw a Lang's Short-tailed Blue on the first day of the year. It was cold (3°C) this morning when we got up, but the sun soon warmed things up, and this afternoon I sat outside in the garden and read a Jack Reacher book. What more could one want 🤔🤔🤔.



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Colin

Re: CFB

by Goldie M, 05-Feb-16 07:23 PM GMT

You lucky devil Colin, apart from the lovely butterfly whether damaged or not, you could actually sit out, WOW! Goldie 😊

Re: CFB

by CFB, 08-Feb-16 02:18 PM GMT

After rain all day yesterday (and quite a lot of snow in the mountains) it was sunny 😊 with a few clouds this morning. Along the Piste de Darbousson I encountered my second butterfly of the year, a solitary Painted Lady. I was a bit surprised, as in previous years I've had to wait until the end of April or mid-May to see one.



It is now overcast 😞.

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Colin

Re: CFB

by CFB, 20-Feb-16 06:38 PM GMT

Things are progressing very slowly in my area. In the last few days I saw a few Painted Ladies, mostly in fast flight, and that's all. Today I saw my first Wall Brown (#3) of the year, but no other butterflies 😞.



But there are lots of *Anemone hortensis* 😊 .



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Colin

Re: CFB

by David M, 20-Feb-16 11:07 PM GMT

Is this 'slow progress' normal for your part of the world, Colin? I understand that parts of southern France have experienced a particularly mild winter in 2015/16.

Re: CFB

by trevor, 21-Feb-16 07:27 AM GMT

Magic!. Your season has started 😊.

Best wishes,
Trevor.

Re: CFB

by CFB, 21-Feb-16 10:49 AM GMT

David M wrote:

Is this 'slow progress' normal for your part of the world, Colin?

David, I think that it's more or less normal based on the last four or five years. And yes, we have had a particularly mild winter so far.

This morning I saw two Wall Browns at the same place as yesterday. I had expected to see other species, as it is sunny and warm here at the moment.

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Colin

Re: CFB

by CFB, 01-Mar-16 04:47 PM GMT

This morning in the *Parc de la Brague* there were several Cleopatras (#4) and more than several Brimstones (#5). I only managed to take photos of one

of them, which I think is a female Brimstone, trying to hide behind a leaf.



I also saw what were probably a Red Admiral and a Painted Lady.

During the weekend it rained almost without stopping, and in the mountains it snowed. This is a photo of the *Crête du Cheiron*. The ski resort *Gréolières les Neiges* is just on the northern side of these mountains.



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Colin

Re: CFB

by CFB, 12-Mar-16 11:43 AM GMT

This morning in the *Parc de la Brague* I saw my first Green Hairstreaks (#6) of the year. There were 3 or 4 of them, and this one was quite happy to let me approach it 😊.





I also saw many Brimstones and Cleopatras, one Wall Brown and a few unidentified Blues, but no decent photos of any of them 😞 .

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Colin

Re: CFB

by Goldie M, 12-Mar-16 12:08 PM GMT

Hi! Colin, your Green Hair Streaks look great though 😊 Goldie 😊

Re: CFB

by CFB, 12-Mar-16 06:38 PM GMT

Thanks Goldie. Another specimen wasn't in such a good condition, but at least it shows some of the upper-side, which we don't usually see.



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Colin

Re: CFB

by CFB, 15-Mar-16 02:01 PM GMT

Two days ago the temperature was 10°C at 8 o'clock in the morning and it was sunny, so I thought I would see more butterflies than I did. But I only saw four or so Wall Browns, two Brimstones, one Painted Ladies and one Small Copper (#7) the first of the year. But no photos.

This morning once again there weren't many butterflies around, just a couple of Speckled Woods, the first of the year (#8), and a few Brimstones including this male in the garden.



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Colin

Re: CFB

by Chris Jackson, 15-Mar-16 07:06 PM GMT

Hello Colin,
Considering the relatively small (but somehow significant) distance between us, it is interesting to see your Brimstone – a species I have never seen in the *département* of the 'Bouches du Rhone'. Your Rock Roses are also flowering ahead of ours, and I am still looking out for a Small Copper and my first identifiable 'blue' of the year. Looking forward to following your season, Colin.
Best wishes,
Chris

Re: CFB

by CFB, 15-Mar-16 07:45 PM GMT

Hello Chris,

I seem to remember that Roger once said that Brimstones were relatively rare in his part of the Var.

The Rock Roses are not yet abundantly in flower here, just a couple of flowers.

Best regards,
Colin

Re: CFB

by CFB, 19-Mar-16 02:27 PM GMT

I'm still not finding many butterflies. Yesterday I saw many Brimstones, one Cleopatra, two unidentified Whites, one unidentified Blue, a probable Speckled Wood and a probable Painted Lady. And no photos 😞.

This morning, even though it was sunny with no clouds, I saw even fewer species: a few Speckled Woods and a few Green Hairstreaks. But I did get a decent photo of the latter.



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Colin

Re: CFB

by CFB, 28-Mar-16 01:19 PM GMT

During the last few days I saw my first Holly Blues (#9) and Orange-tips (#10) of the year, but no photos of either. There were also Brimstones, Speckled Woods, Green Hairstreaks (including this one with the tip of a wing bent over), a couple of Cleopatras and one Small Copper.



This morning the only butterflies seen were a few Orange-tips and my first Western Dappled White (#11) of the year.



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Colin

Re: CFB

by CFB, 02-Apr-16 04:23 PM GMT

After a couple of days of cloud, wind and rain, and also rain this morning, I went out this afternoon even though it was cloudy. I went down to my local quarry on the outskirts of which I saw a couple of Orange-tips, several unidentified whites and this female Wall Brown, the only butterfly that stayed put long enough to be photographed.



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Colin

Re: CFB

by CFB, 06-Apr-16 03:38 PM GMT

This morning was quite warm, which was confirmed by the number of butterflies, but still a limited number of species.

Many Wall Browns and Orange-tips,



a couple of Speckled Woods, several Green Hairstreaks,



my first Peacock of the year (#12), in fact the first since two years ago,



one Painted Lady with a chunk missing from one wing,



several Cleopatras and several Brimstones, this one being a male.



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Colin

Re: CFB

by David M, 07-Apr-16 11:20 PM GMT

CFB wrote:

...my first Peacock of the year, in fact the first since two years ago...

Amazing statistic. I wonder why Peacocks are so scarce in that part of SE France?

Re: CFB

by CFB, 08-Apr-16 12:06 PM GMT

Hello David,

I seem to remember Chris saying that they were somewhat uncommon around Marseilles as well.

This morning in the Bois de Darbousson I saw my first Wood Whites (#13)



and Provence Orange-tip (#14) of the year. Isn't she cute!



There were also several Wall Browns, regular Orange-tips and Brimstones, and a few Speckled Woods and Cleopatras.

And when I got home I saw my first Swallowtail (#15) of the year among the Violas in the garden. But no photo.

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Colin

Re: CFB

by Chris Jackson, 08-Apr-16 01:43 PM GMT

You lucky devil seeing a Peacock, Colin 🍷, I wonder where it came from. They are not uncommon over my way, they are non-existent. That is almost worth a Provence Orange Tip - and you have both !! 😊
Cheers, Chris

Re: CFB

by CFB, 09-Apr-16 03:56 PM GMT

It was raining this morning, and when I went out this afternoon it was cloudy and windy, but I encountered a solitary male Provence Orange-tip. Half an hour later it was still in the same place.



The only other butterfly seen was a tatty Painted Lady.

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Colin

Re: CFB

by essexbuzzard, 10-Apr-16 10:08 PM GMT

Is it possible Peacocks are scarce because the nettles shrivel during the summer, just when they are needed by the caterpillars? If there are any nettles!

Re: CFB

by David M, 11-Apr-16 12:24 AM GMT

CFB wrote:

It was raining this morning, and when I went out this afternoon it was cloudy and windy, but I encountered a solitary male Provence Orange-tip. Half an hour later it was still in the same place.

So, cloud, rain and wind is crucial to obtaining stunning open-wing images of male Provence OTs? Shame they don't occur in Wales as we have plenty of the aforementioned. 😞

Lovely shot, Colin.

Re: CFB

by CFB, 11-Apr-16 11:25 AM GMT

essexbuzzard wrote:

Is it possible Peacocks are scarce because the nettles shrivel during the summer, just when they are needed by the caterpillars? If there are any nettles!

What is strange is that nettles are probably more uncommon than Peacocks in my area 😞 .

David M wrote:

Lovely shot, Colin.

Thanks David.
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Colin

Re: CFB

by CFB, 11-Apr-16 01:45 PM GMT

Another lovely sunny day with four first-sightings of the year 😊.

Clouded Yellow (#16):



Green-veined White (#17):



Small White (#18) (though I won't argue if someone says it's something else):



Mallow Skipper (#19) on Common mallow 😊 (*Malva sylvestris*):



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Colin

Re: CFB

by CFB, 13-Apr-16 11:32 AM GMT

In the Parc de la Brague this morning there were several Small Heaths, the first of the year #20,



many Wall Browns and Speckled Woods, and several Green Hairstreaks. They seem to like French lavender (*Lavandula stoechas*),



Several Orange-tips, a few Brimstones, this one being a female,



and a couple of Wood Whites.

Also two Speckled Yellow Moths (this photo is from a couple of days ago),



and several Green-winged Orchids (*Orchis morio* or *Anacamptis morio*)



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Colin

Re: CFB

by David M, 13-Apr-16 11:42 PM GMT

Seems to be a productive period for you down there right now, Colin.

I wish we had a similar diversity of species here in the UK. 😞

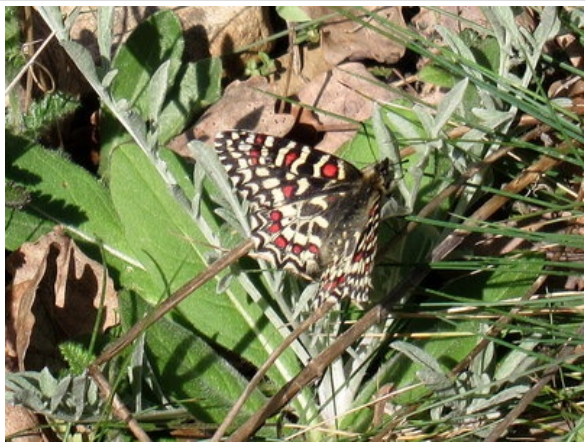
Re: CFB

by CFB, 15-Apr-16 01:03 PM GMT

This morning around the Pont des Dones I saw three firsts-of-the-year: what is probably a Grizzled Skipper #21,



a Spanish Festoon #22, which wouldn't let me get close up,



and a few Bath Whites #23, this one being a male.



I also saw Wall Browns, Speckled Woods, a Red Admiral, Wood Whites, Orange-tips and some Brimstones.

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Colin

Re: CFB

by Chris Jackson, 15-Apr-16 05:59 PM GMT

Hi Colin,

You are seeing more and more species. Spring seems to be gathering speed over your way.

Lucky you for the Brimstone, I have to go outside the Bouches du Rhone to see one 😊.

I have potential spots within 40 kms from Marseilles for Southern and Spanish Festoon, so I can't wait to get back home from *La Drôme* to go and check them out, because now is the moment.

Your Skipper may be 'Southern Grizzled Skipper' (*Pyrgus malvoides*). Nowadays, they seem to make a difference between malvae / malvoides = north / south. I'm no expert, just passing on info. 😊

Cheers, Chris

Re: CFB

by CFB, 18-Apr-16 01:41 PM GMT

This morning, despite quite a strong wind, I saw three more first-of-the-years. First of all, Baton Blues (#24) in three different locations,



a Scarce Swallowtail (#25), no photo, and when I got home I saw another one in the garden, floating around in the wind.

And a female Green-underside Blue (#26). I think the underside distinguishes it from Black-eyed Blue even though the upper-side is bluer than usual.



I also saw a couple of Spanish Festoons. I followed this one for several minutes before I was able to get a good shot of it,



many Orange-tips and Wall Browns, several Green Hairstreaks and Brimstones, and a couple of Wood Whites and Small Whites.

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Colin

Re: CFB

by Goldie M, 18-Apr-16 03:03 PM GMT

Wish we had them over here Colin 🍷 Goldie 😊

Re: CFB

by Chris Jackson, 18-Apr-16 03:19 PM GMT

CFB wrote:

... I think the underside distinguishes it from Black-eyed Blue even though the upper-side is bluer than usual ...
Colin

Hi Colin,
Here is an interesting observation made by Guy:
<http://www.ukbutterflies.co.uk/phpBB/viewtopic.php?f=20&t=8715&start=60>
Scroll down to Wed Mar 30, 2016 9:12 am if it doesn't show directly.
Cheers, Chris

Re: CFB

by CFB, 18-Apr-16 04:39 PM GMT

Hello Chris,

Now I have some doubts, so I've posted the two photos to the Identification forum.

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Colin

Re: CFB

by Chris Jackson, 18-Apr-16 06:14 PM GMT

Hi Colin,
I see that your butterfly is indeed *alexis*. I'm glad your original analysis was correct and am looking forward to seeing more images.
I will be keeping an eye open for *alexis* over my way.
Cheers, Chris

Re: CFB

by CFB, 19-Apr-16 11:37 AM GMT

This morning around the Pont des Dones I saw my first Weaver's Fritillary (#27) of the year.



Also seen were a couple of Scarce Swallowtails,



one Spanish Festoon, which on comparing photos turned out to be the same one as yesterday, a few Baton Blues, Small Heaths, Wood Whites, Green Hairstreaks and Brimstones, and several Orange-tips and Wall Browns.

Also in flight were some Owlfly Sulphur (*Libelloides coccajus*), a sure sign that it is getting hotter.



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Colin

Re: CFB

by CFB, 20-Apr-16 11:53 AM GMT

This morning in the Parc de la Brague I saw my first Berger's Clouded Yellow (#28) of the year. In fact I saw perhaps ten or twelve of them. This one is a male.



There were also many Orange-tips, both females and males,



a few Wood Whites. I think this one was still asleep,



a few Brimstones, this is a female,



and also Speckled Woods, Green Hairstreaks and many Wall Browns.

--
Colin

Re: CFB

by Chris Jackson, 20-Apr-16 12:41 PM GMT

A lovely set of photos, Colin.

I wish we had more Berger's over my way, I'll be lucky if I get just 1 sighting around Marseilles / Vitrolles.
Cheers, Chris

Re: CFB

by CFB, 20-Apr-16 02:08 PM GMT

Thanks, Chris.

I was pleased to see that your week in the Drôme was very successful.

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Cheers,
Colin

Re: CFB

by CFB, 21-Apr-16 10:48 AM GMT

It was very cloudy this morning along the Piste du Curnier, so there only a few butterflies to be seen, and fewer photos to be taken 😞. But I did get a close-up of my first Southern Small White (#29) of the year 😊.



There were also several Wall Browns, a couple of Brimstones, Berger's Clouded Yellows and Orange-tips, and a Green Hairstreak.
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Colin

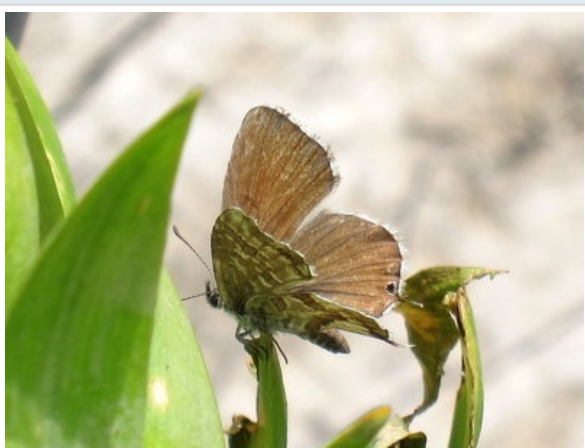
Re: CFB

by CFB, 22-Apr-16 04:05 PM GMT

Two more firsts of the year today: several Common Blues (#30),



and, in the garden, a Geranium Bronze (#31).



Also seen were a Scarce Swallowtail,



many Wall Browns; several Baton Blues, Wood Whites, Orange-tips and Small Heaths; a few Berger's Clouded Yellows and Brimstones; two or three Spanish Fестоons; and one Weaver's Fritillary.

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Colin

Re: CFB

by CFB, 25-Apr-16 02:12 PM GMT

Today it is sunny, but cooler due to the wind, which accounts for the relatively few butterflies seen.

I did however see my first Glanville Fritillary (#32) of the year:



Also seen were two Scarce Swallowtails, many Wall Browns, a few Berger's Clouded Yellows, one Weaver's Fritillary, a few Orange-tips and a few Small Heaths.

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Colin

Re: CFB

by CFB, 26-Apr-16 01:23 PM GMT

Another lovely sunny day, with a slight breeze.

No "new" sightings today, but I did get better photos of a Glanville Fritillary,



and a Weaver's Fritillary.



I also saw one Spanish Festoon,



one Common Blue, several Berger's Clouded Yellows, two Scarce Swallowtails including one in the garden, several Small Heaths, a few Wood Whites and Orange-tips, and an abundance of Wall Browns.

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Colin

Re: CFB

by Goldie M, 27-Apr-16 04:04 PM GMT

Your weather is much better than ours Colin enjoy it. Goldie 😊

Re: CFB

by CFB, 27-Apr-16 05:30 PM GMT

Goldie, I'm doing my best to enjoy it, out walking and looking for butterflies for two hours this morning, and watering the garden (yes!) this afternoon. I saw a few butterflies, Wall Browns, Speckled Woods, Brimstones, Orange-tips and so on, but no photos, the butterflies kept on moving 😊. And it was sunny all day, with some clouds far away in the Southern Alps, but quite windy.

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Colin

Re: CFB

by Goldie M, 29-Apr-16 11:44 AM GMT

Awful here in the north, it's been snowing on and off all morning. Goldie 😞

Re: CFB

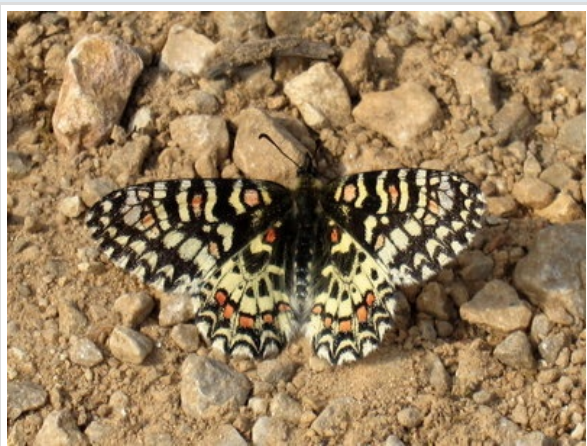
by CFB, 30-Apr-16 12:15 PM GMT

Yesterday I saw, for the first time this year, a Comma (#33) and a female Black-eyed Blue (#34). I don't see many of these butterflies, and didn't get photos of either.

Today I saw, and photographed, my first Adonis Blue (#35) of the year.



Also seen these two days were Spanish Festoons,



a slightly damaged Green-underside Blue,



a Scarce Swallowtail, Orange-tips, Brimstones, Berger's Clouded Yellow, Wood Whites, Wall Browns, Speckled Woods, Common Blues and Small Heaths.
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Colin

Re: CFB

by CFB, 02-May-16 01:20 PM GMT

In the Parc de la Brague this morning I saw my first Spotted Fritillary (#36) of the year, a female.



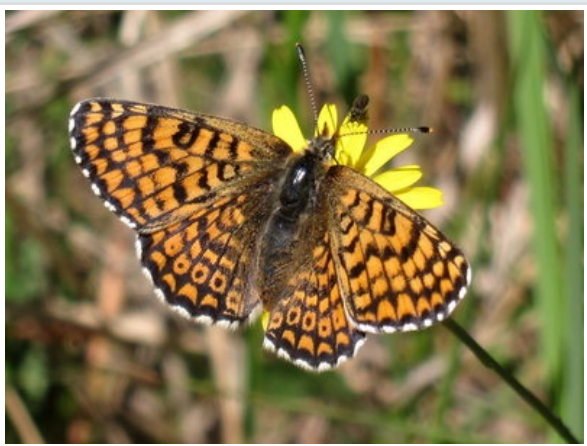
Nearby there was a Swallowtail



in the company of a Scarce Swallowtail, both in very good condition,



and not far away a Glanville Fritillary.



I also saw several Common Blues and Adonis Blues, a Green-underside Blue, fewer Wall Browns than usual, Small Heaths, Orange-tips, Speckled Woods and Wood Whites.

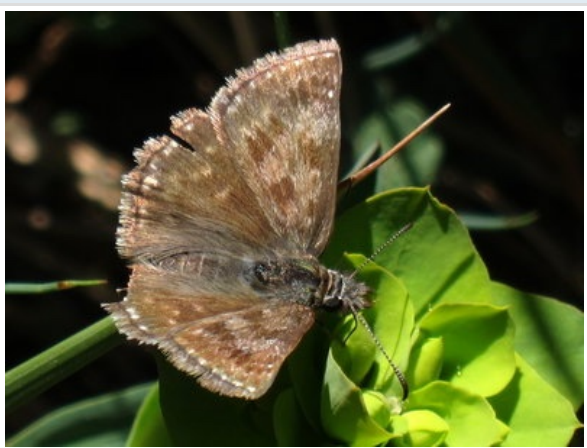
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Colin

Re: CFB

by CFB, 06-May-16 11:51 AM GMT

Oops, a bit behind with my diary!

On wednesday the first Dingy Skipper (#37) of the year,



on thursday the first Meadow Brown (#38),



and this morning the first Marsh Fritillary (#39).



Also seen during these three days were Provence Orange-tips, Berger's Clouded Yellows, Spanish Festoons, Orange-tips, Scarce Swallowtails, Baton Blues, Glanville Fritillaries, Adonis Blues, Wall Browns, Cleopatras, Brimstones, Wood Whites, Green-veined Whites, Southern Small Whites, Common Blues, Small Coppers, Speckled Woods and Green-underside Blues.



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Colin

Re: CFB

by Chris Jackson, 07-May-16 09:07 AM GMT

Hello Colin,

I think I too may have seen a Meadow Brown out the corner of my eye yesterday, but wasn't sure. I will be on the lookout for them as this will make them 2 weeks earlier than last year according to my records. This does feel rather early.

Cheers, Chris

Re: CFB

by Roger Gibbons, 07-May-16 09:45 AM GMT

I saw a Meadow Brown on 2 May, just one of a number of species emerging earlier than usual. Definitely an early season in the far south (60 species so far here), although reports from Lyon say it's a normal year.

We went to a friend's house a couple of days ago and the commonest species in their garden was lolas Blue (*Iolana iolas*). Not many gardens can match that....

Re: CFB

by David M, 07-May-16 09:30 PM GMT

Roger Gibbons wrote:

We went to a friend's house a couple of days ago and the commonest species in their garden was lolas Blue (*Iolana iolas*). Not many gardens can match that....

That's just rubbing it in, Roger! 😊

What did they have growing there which tempted this species in?

Re: CFB

by CFB, 10-May-16 04:40 PM GMT

A couple of days ago I saw this colourful female Common Blue in the garden.



Due to the wind I didn't expect to see many butterflies this afternoon down by my local quarry, but in the end I saw several Brown Argus (#40, the first of the year),



several Common Blues, one nicely coloured Spanish Festoon (at 15 minutes on foot from home!),



several Clouded Yellows, a couple of Adonis Blues, several Brimstones, a Glanville Fritillary, and one tatty Camberwell Beauty (#41, the first, and quite likely the only one of the year).



I stayed with it for 15 or so minutes during which time it swooped down at high speed and touched the top of my head on two occasions. On the ground it stayed mainly with its wings closed, which was a pity, but did open them now and then.

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Colin

Re: CFB

by CFB, 12-May-16 01:23 PM GMT

Not much today due to a strong wind, even though it was sunny and warm.

But I did see a couple of Adonis Blues,



several Berger's Clouded Yellows, one or two Clouded Yellows,



a warn Scarce Swallowtail through a wing of which the colour of the thistle can be seen,



a few Small Heaths, a Spotted Fritillary and a couple of Wall Browns. And also a Small Purple-barred moth.

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Colin

Re: CFB

by CFB, 13-May-16 11:02 AM GMT

Very few butterflies this morning, and the only one photographable was one of a few Knapweed Fritillaries, the first of the year (#42) 😊 .



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Colin

Re: CFB

by CFB, 14-May-16 01:03 PM GMT

Two more firsts of the year in the Parc de la Brague this morning: a few Southern White Admirals (#43)



and a lot of Provence Chalkhill Blues (#44).



There were also a Scarce Swallowtail, a few Adonis Blues and Brimstones, several Glanville Fritillaries and Berger's Clouded Yellows, a Meadow Brown, Wood Whites, and Wall Browns.

And yesterday I saw this magnificent Beetle 😊 :



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Colin

Re: CFB

by CFB, 15-May-16 01:54 PM GMT

This morning I saw my first Pearly Heath (#45) of the year.



Otherwise much as the preceding days: a few Provence Chalkhill Blues, one Southern White Admiral, one or two Meadow Browns, several Adonis Blues, Glanville Fritillaries, and Berger's Clouded Yellow, a couple of Baton Blues, a few Small Heaths and Brimstones, one male Orange-tip.

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Colin

Re: CFB

by CFB, 20-May-16 01:08 PM GMT

My first Heath Fritillary (#46) of the year, seen along the Piste des Tamarins.



Amongst others seen were Glanville Fritillaries, a Red Admiral, a few Small Heaths and a couple of Meadow Browns.

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Colin

Re: CFB

by CFB, 25-May-16 02:03 PM GMT

A couple of days ago I saw my first Large White (#47) of the year. In fact there were three or four of them together.



This morning along the Piste de Darbousson I discovered what must have been at one time a field of some sort, but which is now abandoned by man, but not by butterflies 😊. There were dozens of Common Blues



and Provence Chalkhill Blues, a few Knapweed Fritillaries,



and a couple of Heath Fritillaries.

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Colin

Re: CFB

by CFB, 28-May-16 07:18 PM GMT

This morning in the *Parc de la Brague* I saw my first Blue-spot Hairstreak (#48) of the year. There were many of them but they were difficult to photograph.



There were several Spotted Fritillaries (this one seemed to be asleep),



several Clouded Yellows including a female *f. helice* and this dead male 😞 (at least it gave the possibility of seeing the upper-side),



one Swallowtail, a few Large Whites, a few Meadow Browns and a couple of Wall Browns.

I also saw a dragonfly (*Gomphus pulchellus*?)



and some lovely Pyramid orchids (*Anacamptis pyramidalis*, unless they have changed their name).



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Colin

Re: CFB

by CFB, 31-May-16 01:25 PM GMT

It was very windy this morning, so there weren't many butterflies and only a couple of photos.

This female (?) Clouded Yellow stayed around long enough for me to get a few photos,



as did this Southern White Admiral which seemed to like the oak leaves, repeatedly flying away and coming back to sometimes the same leaf.



There were also many Provence Chalkhill Blues, a couple of Glanville Fritillaries, a Knapweed Fritillary, some Meadow Browns, a few Heath Fritillaries and a Swallowtail.

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Colin

Re: CFB

by Pauline, 31-May-16 02:19 PM GMT

You're posting some lovely images Colin, of butterflies I can only dream of seeing, such as that gorgeous Pearly Heath and the Blue-spot Hairstreak – wouldn't half like to see one of them 🍷

Re: CFB

by Padfield, 31-May-16 02:54 PM GMT

Hi Colin. Your dragonfly is *Onychogomphus* – in my opinion *uncatus*, despite slightly anomalous thoracic markings. The anal triangle is clearly visible on the left hindwing and is 4-celled. The only similar dragonfly is *forcipatus*, which is typically 3-celled. To me, everything fits *uncatus*, including the generally bright appearance, except the thoracic markings. My book states of *uncatus*: 'The yellow antehumeral stripe dorsally connects with the broader yellow stripe before it. Thus the black stripe separating them is not connected with the black along the middorsal keel.' In yours, the black stripe is (just) connected. But I still go for *uncatus*.

Guy

EDIT – there's a nice illustration of the thoracic difference here: http://guillaume.doucet.free.fr/doc/uncatus_versus_forcipatus.jpg

By that alone, yours would be *forcipatus*. But then again, the yellow collar is broken by black, an indication of *uncatus*. I'm not expert enough to know which criteria are truly diagnostic and which just good guides.

Re: CFB

by CFB, 31-May-16 06:39 PM GMT

Hello Pauline,

Thanks for your kind words. I find that Pearly Heaths are particularly photogenic, provided of course that you have the patience or luck to find one willing to stop flying and let you get close enough to photograph it 😊.

Hello Guy,

Thanks for your helpful analysis and comments concerning my dragonfly. I didn't realise that the number of cells in the anal triangle entered into the identification 😊.

Colin

Re: CFB

by CFB, 07-Jun-16 11:05 AM GMT

I haven't been able to go out much these last few days, but today in the garden I saw my first Great Banded Grayling (#49) of the year. It stayed around the *Centranthus ruber* (Red valerian) flowers for quite a time in the company of a couple of Meadow Browns.



[EDIT] I saw the same specimen the following day, in camouflage mode:



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Colin

Re: CFB

by CFB, 13-Jun-16 05:27 PM GMT

Another first of the year in the garden, an Ilex Hairstreak (#50) enjoying the *Helichrysum stoechas*.



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Colin

Re: CFB

by CFB, 19-Jun-16 01:46 PM GMT

The Ilex Hairstreaks seem to have been replaced by False Ilex Hairstreaks (first of the year #51) on the *Helichrysum stoechas* flowers.



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Colin

Re: CFB

by CFB, 21-Jul-16 05:54 PM GMT

For various reasons my Personal Diary has been neglected during the last few weeks.

To bring my list of first-sightings-of-the-year up to date:

- Jun 28: Lang's Short-tailed Blue (#52)
- Jun 29: Two-tailed Pasha (#53) in the garden 😊
- Jul 01: Silver-washed Fritillary (#54)
- Jul 03: Marbled White (#55)
- Jul 09: Large Skipper (#56)
- Jul 21: Southern Gatekeeper (#57)

I did however manage to take some photos:

Speckled Wood



Wood White



Silver-washed Fritillary



Geranium Bronze



Provençal Fritillary



Marbled White



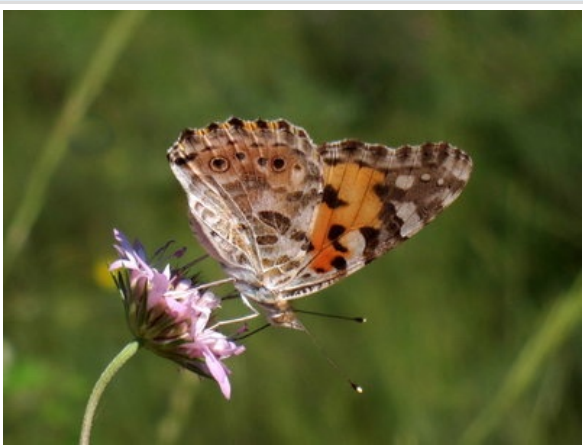
Large Skipper



Weaver's Fritillary



Painted Lady



Southern White Admiral



Marbled White



Scarce Swallowtail



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Colin

Re: CFB

by Roger Gibbons, 21-Jul-16 08:28 PM GMT

Colin,

Are you sure that Fritillary is Knapweed? It has a distinct look of Provencal about it. Actually more than a distinct look - it looks spot on (there are some clues in the markings) and I can see reasons to eliminate all other candidates.

I'm just working from gut feel as I am on the road with no books to refer to. Perhaps Guy will pick this up and comment.

Roger

Re: CFB

by Padfield, 21-Jul-16 08:41 PM GMT

I'm with Roger 100%. Female *deione*.

Guy

Re: CFB

by CFB, 22-Jul-16 10:07 AM GMT

Thanks Roger and Guy for the correction. I'll now go through all my photos labelled phoebe to see how many are in fact *deione*.

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Colin

Re: CFB

by CFB, 23-Jul-16 02:29 PM GMT

This morning it was hot and humid when I visited the Parc de la Brague.

I saw a couple of Silver-washed Fritillaries,



a few Berger's Clouded Yellows,



two or three Scarce Swallowtails,



a Provence burnet moth (*Zygaena occitanica*),



and two Glanville Fritillaries.



I also saw several Large Skippers, two or three Marbled Whites, one Southern White Admiral, a few Meadow Browns, several Wall Browns, one male Cleopatra, a couple of Wood Whites and several Small Heaths.

--
Colin

Re: CFB

by CFB, 24-Jul-16 01:19 PM GMT

This morning I visited the *Bois de Darbousson* thinking that it might be cooler under the trees. But I don't think it was 😊.

I saw one Common Blue,



one Southern Small White,



and a few male Cleopatras, this one leaving its wings slightly apart when feeding, which is unusual for this species 😊 .



I also saw a couple of Silver-washed Fritillaries, a couple of Marbled Whites, a couple of Large Skippers, one or two Berger's Clouded Yellows, one Southern White Admiral, a few Meadow Browns, many Wall Browns and a few Wood Whites.

--
Colin

Re: CFB

by CFB, 30-Jul-16 11:57 AM GMT

This morning along the Chemin du Bruguet it was mainly cloudy, but still very hot, and there were not many butterflies.

I did however see one Tree Grayling (the first of the year #59),



several Small Heaths,



a few Adonis Blues,



a couple of Heath Fritillaries,



a few Southern Small Whites, this one being a female,



and many Wall Browns.

--
Colin

Re: CFB

by Chris Jackson, 30-Jul-16 03:48 PM GMT

Hello Colin,
Nice photos.

I too am seeing Tree Grayling, it is probably the most common and resistant butterfly in the scrub at the moment with the heat over here near Marseilles.

I notice your Small Heath which is possibly form *lyllus*. I may be posting a photo of one soon.

Cheers, Chris

Re: CFB

by CFB, 30-Jul-16 05:12 PM GMT

Hello Chris,

Here it's still Wall Browns which are the most numerous species.

I was in the middle of watering the garden this afternoon – I guess it's as hot here as it is with you – when this Lang's Short-tailed Blue came and visited a nearby plant.



Incidentally this photo was taken with my old Canon PowerShot S90, as I've abandoned the PowerShot S100 which developed a lens error for the second time 😞😞.

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Cheers,
Colin

Re: CFB

by CFB, 01-Aug-16 01:24 PM GMT

Due to the continued heat there are fewer and fewer butterflies to be seen, and the rivers are drying up. This is the Brague, which enters the Mediterranean between Nice and Antibes.



Seen today were several Speckled Woods, which are quite happy to stay in the shade of trees, several Wall Browns, which are not too bothered by the heat, a single male Spotted Fritillary, a few unidentified Blues, and one Silver-spotted Skipper (first of the year #60).





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Colin

Re: CFB

by David M, 02-Aug-16 08:58 PM GMT

I'm always envious of you in spring and early summer, Colin, but the aridity of your region is not conducive to the kind of mid and late summer bonanza seen in the mountains.

Still, you could be here in the UK with 17c and rain.....



Re: CFB

by CFB, 03-Aug-16 05:40 PM GMT

Hello David,

I hope that your weather gets warmer and dryer, and that our's gets cooler and wetter in the near future 😊😊😊.

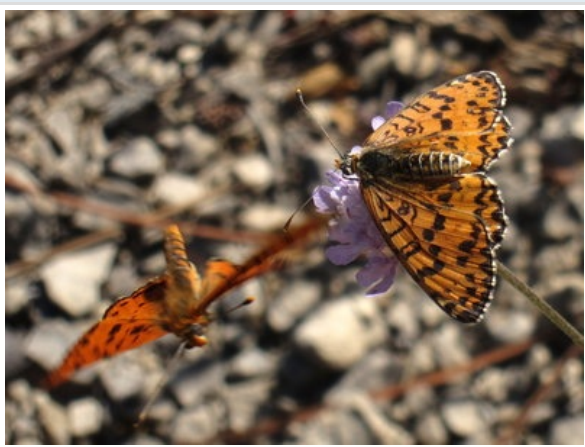
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Colin

Re: CFB

by CFB, 14-Aug-16 02:17 PM GMT

Yesterday:

I saw very few butterflies until I reached my local quarry where I found a crop of scabious amongst which there were many Spotted Fritillaries, including this couple,



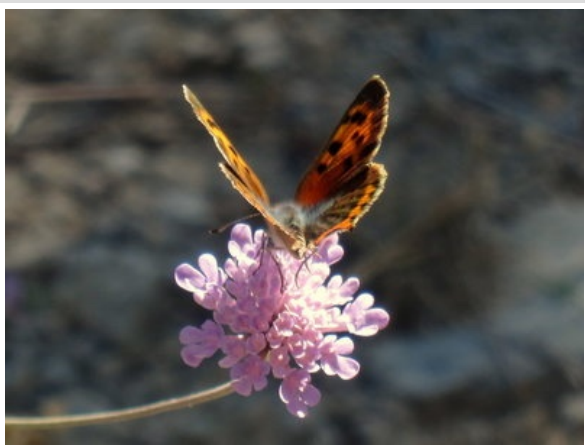
just one Bath White,



at least one Southern Gatekeeper,



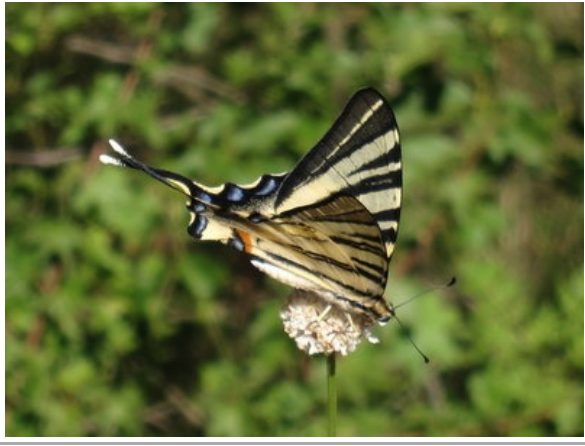
a few Small Coppers,



and some Meadow Browns.

This morning:

One Weaver's Fritillary, one Scarce Swallowtail,



and what I think is a male Provence Chalkhill Blue.



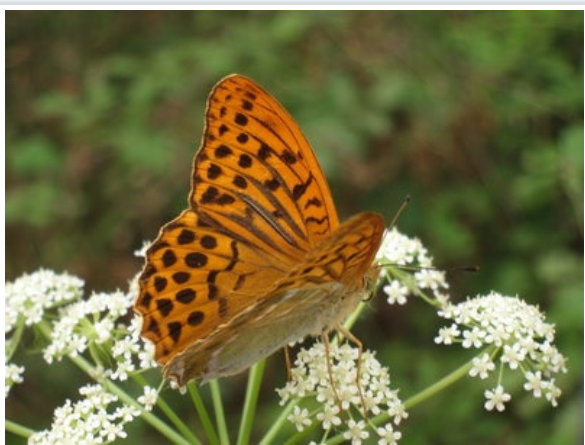
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Colin

Re: CFB

by CFB, 17-Aug-16 05:36 PM GMT

Just a few butterflies seen today, and even fewer photographed.

One Silver-washed Fritillary,



a couple of Adonis Blues,



and a couple of Weaver's Fritillary, this one allowing me to get a close-up of its intricate under side.



Seen but not photographed included one Tree Grayling, many Spotted Fritillaries and a few Meadow Browns.

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Colin

Re: CFB

by David M, 18-Aug-16 10:11 PM GMT

Is this lack of numbers normal in your 'patch' at this time of year, Colin?

Re: CFB

by CFB, 19-Aug-16 01:38 PM GMT

David,

I think it's a bit abnormal, probably due to the heat, which in itself is not exceptional but has been the same more or less every day for the last couple of months, with very few clouds and hardly any rain.

Re: CFB

by David M, 21-Aug-16 09:59 PM GMT

Thanks, Colin. I guess that's the main pitfall of living in a relatively dry, arid area.

Re: CFB

by CFB, 22-Aug-16 01:17 PM GMT

It was a bit cooler this morning along the Piste de Darbousson.

I saw many Spotted Fritillaries, several Provence Chalkhill Blues, Weaver's Fritillaries, Meadow Browns and Silver-spotted Skippers (at one point there were three of them on this flower),



a couple of Adonis Blues, Heath Fritillaries and Tree Graylings (this one being a female),



one male Cleopatra, one Large White and a couple of Silver-washed Fritillaries.



EDIT: This afternoon, in the middle of watering the garden, I took this tatty Purple Hairstreak, the first of the year (#61):



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Colin