

## dilettante

by dilettante, 22-Apr-18 08:01 PM GMT

### April 2018

Time to start my diary for 2018. After such a late start, it seems all of Spring has happened in a week. I didn't see my first butterfly until Saturday 13th April - a Brimstone in my South Cambs garden, closely followed by a Small Tortoiseshell

Wednesday 18th brought my first Holly Blue, as well as Peacock and Comma, in Cherry Hinton LNR on the edge of Cambridge.  
Thursday 19th brought Orange Tip and Speckled Wood in the same location, as well as unidentified whites.

Today, Sunday 22nd, I went to Fleam Dyke, Fulbourn to look for Green Hairstreak. The scrub has been significantly cleared, and despite the heat it was quite breezy so I wasn't too hopeful, but on my return journey after the sun had gone in and with a thunder storm looming, I found a single specimen:



© dilettante



© dilettante

*Green Hairstreak, Fleam Dyke, Cambs, 22-Apr-2018*

It's not particularly fresh-looking so must have been out for a day or two.

**Re: dilettante**

by Wurzel, 22-Apr-18 08:32 PM GMT

It's been a bit of Green weekend Dilettante – those are cracking shots of the Green one 😊🇬🇧

Have a goodun

Wurzel

**Re: dilettante**

by David M, 23-Apr-18 10:21 PM GMT

**dilettante wrote:**

...After such a late start, it seems all of Spring has happened in a week...

I can't improve on that, Dilettante. It just about sums things up.

We've had months and months of winter, no 'early' spring, and suddenly here we are expected to cope with 23c temperatures!!

No wonder *rubi* is making hay!

**Re: dilettante**

by dilettante, 03-May-18 07:40 PM GMT

**03-May-2018**

I recently bought a new (second-hand) camera with the intention of it being small enough to be a carry-everywhere camera. With the addition of a Raynox closeup adapter, I tried it out for butterflying at lunch time today. A half hour visit to Cherry Hinton LNR near Cambridge turned into an 10-species treat. A very active Peacock greeted me at the entrance, then one of a number of Commas:



© dilettante

*Comma*

When I got to a patch of Garlic Mustard I found myself surrounded by Orange Tips, a Green Hairstreak, several Holly Blues, a Green-veined White. A Brimstone flew past, and a Small Tortoiseshell and Large White made brief appearances.



© dilettante

*Holly Blue*



© dilettante

*Green Hairstreak*



© dilettante

*Green-veined White*

And on the way out and back to work, this Speckled Wood posed for a few seconds



© dilettante

*Speckled Wood*

A pretty good haul, and the camera performed nicely I think. There were quite a lot of missed shots, but with a bit more practice it should be a viable performer. Not bad for something this size:



**Re: dilettante**

by bugboy, 03-May-18 09:02 PM GMT

based on those results that looks like a sound investment!

**Re: dilettante**

by David M, 05-May-18 07:13 AM GMT

Absolutely! Nothing wrong with those, dilettante.

**Re: dilettante**

by dilettante, 05-May-18 09:55 PM GMT

Thanks David M and bugboy

**Sat 5th May 2018**

I went with my family to the lovely Dunstable Downs in full hot sunshine this afternoon. Nothing very interesting on the butterfly front unfortunately – just a little too early for the Dukes, Grizzlies and Dingies I think, but the 'sunken path' is looking perfect for them. Another week perhaps.



*Dunstable Downs sunken path with cowslips*

The usual early Spring butterflies were around



© dilettante

*Brimstone*



© dilettante

*Peacock*

This Red Kite was flying over the car park





*Red Kite*

And I assume this is a leucistic Rook – it was very brown. I thought it was a buzzard at first



*Leucistic Rook*

**Re: dilettante**

by Wurzel, 05-May-18 11:08 PM GMT

That new camera is certainly producing the goods Dilettante 😊 That Brimstone is a peach of a shot whichever camera you used 😊📷

Have a goodun

Wurzel

**Re: dilettante**

by dilettante, 06-May-18 07:26 AM GMT

I had both cameras yesterday so only the first one was with the new one. The others were with my big SLR and 180mm macro (and the birds in particular were heavily cropped). The new camera is good but has very little reach for distant subjects

**Re: dilettante**

by David M, 06-May-18 02:21 PM GMT

Stunning image of the Kite, Dilettante (and the butterflies aren't bad either). Looks like you had a great day!

**Re: dilettante**

by dilettante, 23-Jun-18 05:50 PM GMT

**Saturday 23-Jun-2018**

Summer butterflies are well under way now, so I went down to Therfield Heath, Herts. Almost immediately saw a Dark Green Fritillary bombing past, one of several to be seen during the afternoon. Unfortunately none showed any inclination to stop for a photo, but great to see them again anyway.

Also, my other targets for the visit, plenty of Marbled Whites. I could watch and photograph these all day. Quintessentially summer for me.



*Marbled White*

I was particularly pleased with this image



© dilettante

*Marbled White pair*

Also around, lots of Meadow Browns, but relatively fewer Ringlets.



© dilettante

*Meadow Brown*

A Brown Argus or two, and this Common Blue.



© dilettante

*Common Blue*

Others seen: Small Tortoiseshell, Small and Large Whites, Small Heath, Speckled Wood. Surprisingly no Large Skippers (or any other skippers).

### Re: dilettante

by Wurzel, 23-Jun-18 10:32 PM GMT

Stunning Marbled White shots Dilettante, great to see the blue spots on the hind wings 😊🍷

Have a goodun

Wurzel

### Re: dilettante

by David M, 27-Jun-18 05:10 PM GMT

Lovely definition in those images, dilettante. You can even make out the red mite in your first picture.

### Re: dilettante

by dilettante, 01-Jul-18 02:12 PM GMT

Thanks Wurzel and David.

#### Saturday 30-Jun-2018

For the first time in a few years I was able to make a trip to Fermyn Woods in emperor season. I parked at the gliding club entrance (parking very busy even at 9:30), and immediately could see a group of people clustered round a grounded emperor on the track. The recent clearing of the woods either side of the track didn't appear as destructive as I'd imagined, and several PEs were seen on that stretch. As in previous visits though, I carried on and spent most of my time in Lady Wood. Sightings here were very frequent, although the very dry ground seemed to mean the PEs didn't stay grounded for long in most cases. But there were enough times where one found something suitably odorous and attractive to stay put for long enough to be photographed. In the heat, they mostly seemed to prefer keeping wings shut, but with a bit of judicious shading we were able to entice them to open up and allow attempts at the all-wings-purple shot which has eluded me in the past.



© dilettante



© dilettante



© dilettante

Not prime specimens but a very lovely experience. I didn't keep close count, but there were certainly a lot of PEs about. I probably saw around 30 in my highly enjoyable three hours there.

Also seen:

- More Silver-washed Fritillaries than in remember seeing there in the past, all very active
- The usual browns: Meadow Brown, Ringlet, Speckled Wood.
- Skippers Large and Small
- Whites various
- Comma, Red Admiral, Small Tortoiseshell. No White Admirals though, although others reported having seen them.
- A few Purple Hairstreaks



© dilettante

Despite the recent hot and dry weather there was standing water in the tyre ruts left by the forest management along the main track from the gliding club. These puddles attracted large numbers of Small Whites



© dilettante

Sunday 1-Jul-2018

I walked around Royston and Therfield Heath with a friend and my dog, so not primarily a butterflying trip, but was pleased to see a fair few Chalk-hill Blues out. Also several Dark Green Fritillaries as well as Marbled White, Meadow Brown, Ringlet, Small Skipper, Small Heath, Small Tortoiseshell, Small White, Large White, Green-veined White.

**Re: dilettante**

by Wurzel, 01-Jul-18 10:16 PM GMT

Fantastic shots Dilettante 😊 Those Emperors are brill and the mud puddling Whites is a brilliant shot, as I look at it in this sweltering heat it could almost be a scene 'from a day on safari' 😊🌿

Have a goodun

Wurzel

### Re: dilettante

by Goldie M, 02-Jul-18 08:51 AM GMT

Fantastic shots of the Emperor dilettante 😊 so glad you saw them up that road, I've been worried that all that work with the trees being felled would have stopped them coming down or damaged them in some way, so great news 😊 Goldie 😊

### Re: dilettante

by Charles Nicol, 02-Jul-18 09:05 AM GMT

glad you enjoyed your day in the Woods ! thanks for sharing the lovely pics



### Re: dilettante

by John W, 02-Jul-18 09:19 PM GMT

#### dilettante wrote:

For the first time in a few years I was able to make a trip to Fermyn Woods in emperor season. I parked at the gliding club entrance (parking very busy even at 9:30), and immediately could see a group of people clustered round a grounded emperor on the track.

Hi Dilettante,

I must have been one of those people clustered round the Emperor as I have the same shot as your first one (though cropped differently).



I guess we were too busy with the Emperors to talk about UKB 😊

Cheers  
John W

### Re: dilettante

by dilettante, 02-Jul-18 11:42 PM GMT

#### John W wrote:

I must have been one of those people clustered round the Emperor as I have the same shot as your first one (though cropped



differently).

I guess we were too busy with the Emperors to talk about UKB 😊

😁😁 I think I prefer your crop.  
There should definitely be a ukb hat!

### Re: dilettante

by Pauline, 06-Jul-18 06:11 PM GMT

Lovely PE shots and Dilettante but my favourite is the Whites mud-puddling 😊

### Re: dilettante

by David M, 09-Jul-18 10:25 PM GMT

#### Pauline wrote:

Lovely PE shots and Dilettante but my favourite is the Whites mud-puddling

Yes, that's not a common sight at all in the UK. I think the only species I've seen doing this at home is Green Veined White.

### Re: dilettante

by dilettante, 26-Jul-18 05:15 PM GMT

18-Jul-2018

I was in Dorset for a couple of days with family last week. Not primarily a butterflying trip, but it was great to see plenty of Walls on the top of Golden Cap. They were very flighty in the heat and seemed to have good hearing, so getting close enough with my little RX100 and Raynox adapter took some patience. I love the underside markings on Walls. 😊



### Re: dilettante

by Wurzel, 26-Jul-18 11:01 PM GMT

That is a cracking shot Dilettante 😊😁👍 Did you have to elbow crawl to get that close to it 😊😁 When I see the underside of a Wall I'm always reminded of the Chaos Butterfly from Terry Pratchett's books 😊

Have a goodun

Wurzel

### Re: dilettante

by dilettante, 26-Jul-18 11:16 PM GMT

Thanks Wurzel. Yes, definitely some snakelike manoeuvres were required to creep up close on my belly

### Re: dilettante

by David M, 27-Jul-18 09:22 AM GMT

**dilettante wrote:**

I love the underside markings on Walls.

Me too, and you've captured them beautifully there, dilettante. They're so intricate and cryptic. Perhaps the loveliest amongst all the UK satyrids.

### Re: dilettante

by dilettante, 09-Aug-18 05:08 PM GMT

**28-Jul to 8-Aug-2018**

Just back from a family holiday to Northern Spain (Cantabria, Biscay). As usual this was not a primarily butterflying holiday but I always keep my eye out.

Clouded Yellows were very common along the coast:



And Speckled Woods, in their more orange continental form



© dilettante

Just a Red Admiral, but nice and fresh:



© dilettante

And I think these are just Common Blues:



© dilettante



© dilettante

This Short-tailed Blue was nice to see on a fairly grey day



© dilettante



© dilettante

In Bilbao, we took the funicular to the top of a hill at Artxanda, where I came across two Scarce Swallowtails hilltopping. One eventually settled for a few seconds.



© dilettante



© dilettante

And in the museum of fine arts, a reminder that great artists often take a bit of licence with realistic portrayal of their subjects! This is a detail from a still life by Juan de Arellano:



© dilettante

### Re: dilettante

by Wurzel, 09-Aug-18 08:24 PM GMT

Great set of shots Dilettante 😊 I'm off to France soon and Scarce Swallowtails are almost top of my hitlist 🍷 I like you will be on a family holiday so most of y sightings will be grab shots whilst out and about doing touristy things 😊

Have a godun

Wurzel

### Re: dilettante

by David M, 09-Aug-18 11:04 PM GMT

Like it, dilettante. The 'common' butterflies on these family holidays are predominantly those we don't see at all in the UK, so even a half hour stroll should turn up something unusual.

Love the Short Tailed Blues. You've captured them really well!

### Re: dilettante

by Goldie M, 10-Aug-18 02:16 PM GMT

Lovely shots dilettante, it's always good to see Butterflies we don't see here, Goldie 😊