

## dilettante

by dilettante, 22-Apr-19 06:08 PM GMT

Time to start my diary for 2019, a bit late!

I forgot to record my first sightings of the year of the hibernators, but last week was the start of the spring butterflies for me.

### 17th April 2019

A turn around Cherry Hinton pit LNR turned up Holly Blue, Speckled Wood and Orange Tip – all firsts of the year for me. Also Brimstones, Comma, Peacock. And a Small Tortoiseshell and Green-veined White in the same location the following day. A good start after a long wait.



© dilettante

*Speckled Wood, Cherry Hinton LNR, 17-Apr-2019*

### 20th April 2019

I went for a bike ride and stopped off at Over Cutting, Cambs to look for Grizzled Skipper. It's a small and not very accessible site, but the grizzlies seem to be just about hanging on. I found one fairly quickly, but that was about it:



© dilettante

*Grizzled Skipper, Over Cutting, Cambs 20-Apr-2019*

I was also delighted to see a pair of Small Coppers – I hardly ever see these in this part of the world. The two were squabbling and duelling so not sitting still for photographs much



© dilettante

*Small Copper, Over Cutting, Cambs 20-Apr-2019*

I returned on my way home but neither skippers nor coppers were in evidence.

#### **22nd April 2019**

I went up to Devil's Dyke near Newmarket in search of Dingy Skippers and Green Hairstreaks. It's a big area, with steep grass banks and very few flowers to serve as any sort of magnet for skippers, so it was a bit of a needle in a haystack job. I was going to give up until someone I met said he'd seen a couple so I persevered and managed to find a couple. They weren't posing well, and I'd brought the wrong lens, but at least I found them. And I don't think I've photographed the underside of a Dingy Skipper before, so all good!



© dilettante

*Dingy Skipper, Devil's Dyke, Newmarket 22-Apr-2019*



© dilettante

*Dingy Skipper, Devil's Dyke, Newmarket 22-Apr-2019*



© dilettante

*Green Hairstreak, Devil's Dyke, Newmarket 22-Apr-2019*



© dilettante

**Re: dilettante**

by Wurzel, 22-Apr-19 10:39 PM GMT

A cracking start Dilettante and a cracking selection of shots – especially the closed wing Dingy – don't often see that particular pose 😊👍👍 Things are motoring along nicely now 😊

Have a goodun

Wurzel

**Re: dilettante**

by David M, 22-Apr-19 11:52 PM GMT

As ever, great images, dilettante. Seems everyone is seeing Dingy Skippers except me....even their undersides! 😊

**Re: dilettante**

by Goldie M, 23-Apr-19 08:35 AM GMT

Lovely shots dilettante, 🍷 your off to a great start, Goldie 😊

**Re: dilettante**

by dilettante, 23-Apr-19 12:06 PM GMT

Thanks for the kind comments Wurzel, David and Goldie

**Re: dilettante**

by dilettante, 16-May-19 08:48 PM GMT

**Weds 15th May 2019**

I was supposed to be working from home but the weather was too good, the dog needed walking, and I'd had a enticing report by email of the butterflies of Totternhoe Knolls, so decided to take the afternoon off and take myself there. I'm very glad I did.

The only time I'd been there before was on a damp May day in 2011 when I'd struggled to find a solitary Small Blue skulking in the wet grass and not much else. Yesterday was glorious sunshine, and the butterflies put on a much better show.

I came across this Small Blue very quickly.



I was on the look out also for Duke of Burgundy, but realised I was in the wrong place, with a lack of cowslips. I did see a Green Hairstreak (first of several), and this Holly Blue ovipositing on dogwood:



© dilettante

I moved on and soon found myself in more promising Duke terrain. Dingy Skippers were everywhere – I've not seen so many for a long time – but it took a while to spot my first Duke:



© dilettante

But now I was in the right place there were quite a few to be found, and I spent a very pleasant hour or so poking around.



© dilettante

A bonus Brimstone on a cowslip:



© dilettante

All so much better than working!

**Re: dilettante**

by Wurzel, 17-May-19 10:37 PM GMT

Beautiful shots as always Dilettante but hats off for the Small Blue shot - that is sublime, easily one of the best I've seen 😊👍👍👍 Definitely better than working 😊

Have a goodun

Wurzel

### Re: dilettante

by David M, 19-May-19 09:10 PM GMT

Beautiful detail in that Small Blue image, dilettante. The Brimstone is striking too, with that glimpse of the upperside.

### Re: dilettante

by dilettante, 17-Jun-19 12:21 PM GMT

**16th June 2019**

It was too windy for photographs, but I went down to Therfield Heath, Herts to look for Summer butterflies.

**Meadow Browns** were out in quite good numbers in the more sheltered spot, five or six **Marbled Whites**, and a single fast-flying **Dark Green Fritillary**

In my garden in Cambs, a Painted Lady (there seem to be a lot of these about recently), a fresh Red Admiral, a Large Skipper and a Holly Blue.

### dilettante

by dilettante, 23-Jun-19 08:29 PM GMT

**Sunday 23-Jun-2019**

Living in Cambridgeshire, there are some butterflies that I can't really justify making the trip to see, but I was in Weymouth for the weekend, so coming back via Collard Hill was not much of a detour. I've never seen Large Blues before, so this was an opportunity not to be missed. Yesterday had been sunny and warm; today was cooler, with an East wind and overcast. It didn't take too long to find my first individual, and over the course of a couple of hours I saw probably seven or eight. None was in great condition, but fantastic to see them for the first time.



© dilettante





© dilettante



© dilettante



© dilettante

I think those last two are male and female respectively, if anyone can confirm?

### Re: dilettante

by Wurzel, 23-Jun-19 11:02 PM GMT

Cracking stuff Dilettante – even when a little past their best they're still an impressive butterfly 😊 I reckon you've got the genders correct, males have fewer and smaller spots/flashes than the female 😊

Have a goodun

Wurzel

### Re: dilettante

by David M, 24-Jun-19 06:16 AM GMT

Nice images as ever, dilettante. I guess the recent storms didn't do the butterflies any favours. Normally, Large Blues are still pretty fresh looking around midsummer's day (in some years their flight season has barely begun).

### Re: dilettante

by dilettante, 24-Jun-19 01:58 PM GMT

Thanks Wurzel and David.

While I'm writing, I'll note my first **Ringlet** this morning in Trumpington Meadows, Cambs

### Re: dilettante

by dilettante, 29-Jun-19 06:06 PM GMT

**Saturday 29-Jun-2019**

With temperatures around 30C, I went to Trumpington Meadows, just south of Cambridge . Not long ago this was arable land but is now an amazing meadow full of knapweed, oxeye daisies, grasses, trefoil etc (and divided down the middle by the M11). And so many butterflies – mostly Meadow Browns, Small Heaths and the like, but I haven't seen them in such numbers for a long time.

The heat meant everything was very active and not inclined to open their wings, but here are some mediocre pictures!

Species seen:

Large and Small Whites, Large and Small Skippers, Marbled White, Meadow Brown, Small Heath, Common Blue, Painted Lady, Red Admiral, Small Tortoiseshell.











**Re: dilettante**

by kevlng, 29-Jun-19 07:58 PM GMT

Nice images from your day dilettante. I too was out in a similar habitat today. As you say, you don't need any rarities to have a good time. Just seeing so many butterflies on the wing is what days like this are all about.

Regards  
Kev

**Re: dilettante**

by Wurzel, 29-Jun-19 11:09 PM GMT

Still great photos Dilettante 😊 I know what you mean about the numbers – it's been a pleasure to see so many Small Heaths more than last year so far 😊😊

Have a goodun

Wurzel

**Re: dilettante**

by David M, 30-Jun-19 03:52 PM GMT

That's a real underside fest, dilettante. Very nicely presented (as usual). 😊

**dilettante – some Portuguese butterflies (and id help please)**

by dilettante, 13-Jul-19 01:20 PM GMT

Just back from a holiday on northern Portugal. As usual with family holidays, butterflies weren't the main agenda, but I took my opportunities when I could. Here are some pictures – I would appreciate any correction or confirmation of the IDs.

First stop was near Gerês.

I think this is an Iberian Marbled White? They seemed more glide-y than our regular Marbled Whites



© dilettante

*Iberian Marbled White*

This Wood White was nice and co-operative





© dilettante

*Wood White*



© dilettante

*Wood White*

The following day I grabbed this shot – Spanish Purple Hairstreak?



© dilettante

*Spanish Purple Hairstreak*

And is this a Purple-shot Copper?



© dilettante

*Purple-shot Copper*

Later I rescued this which was floating purple-side-up in the hotel swimming pool. A Purple Hairstreak, *ibericus* form? My wife reckoned the butterfly gods or karma would reward me for my efforts.



© dilettante

*Purple Hairstreak*

You can see its scales look a bit disarrayed from its ordeal in the pool. It stayed on this leaf overnight but was gone by lunchtime the next day, so hopefully it flew off somewhere.



© dilettante

*Purple Hairstreak*

Nearby was this Lulworth Skipper



© dilettante

*Lulworth Skipper*

Moving on to a new location near Guimarães:

I think this is just a Common Blue



© dilettante

*Common Blue*

This was more interesting:



© dilettante

*Sooty Copper*



© dilettante

*Sooty Copper*

We took the cable car up to nearby Penha. Being one of the highest points around, I guessed it might be a good hilltopping site for swallowtails. I wasn't wrong – this one was flying around as we arrived. (A fellow tourist asked me what sort of bird it was :-)



© dilettante

*Swallowtail*

A Queen of Spain Fritillary in the flower beds



© dilettante



*Queen of Spain Fritillary*

Going a bit higher, under a statue of Pope Pious IX, was a major hilltopping site. Swallowtails and Scarce Swallowtails were all around, gliding, duelling and occasionally landing.



© dilettante

*Swallowtail*



© dilettante

*Scarce Swallowtail*



© dilettante

*Scarce Swallowtail*



© dilettante

*Bath White*



© dilettante



*Blue-spot Hairstreak*

I wasn't sure on this one – False Ilex Hairstreak?



© dilettante

*False Ilex Hairstreak?*

While I was watching the swallowtails, something else flew after one, something I have never seen before, wasn't expecting to see, but knew instantly what it was. My wife's prediction about karma had come true.



© diletante

*Two-tailed Pasha*

It wasn't in greatest condition, but such an amazing insect. I spent a long time with it/them (there were at least two TTPs) and the other hilltop residents. I tried to get some open-wing shots of it in flight, but it was too fast for me to focus. Then I tried gently shading it with my hat, and persuaded it to open up a little



© diletante

*Two-tailed Pasha*



© dilettante

*Two-tailed Pasha*

That was a great experience that I won't forget in a hurry.

**Re: dilettante**

by Padfield, 13-Jul-19 02:29 PM GMT

Wonderful shots from Portugal, Dilettante. Yes – false ilex hairstreak, and yes too, that purple hairstreak is ssp. *ibericus*.

Guy

**Re: dilettante**

by dilettante, 13-Jul-19 10:26 PM GMT

Thanks for confirming the IDs, and for the kind comments, Guy

**Re: dilettante**

by Wurzel, 14-Jul-19 08:34 PM GMT

Absolutely fantastic shots Dilettante 😊🇵🇹🇵🇹 I'm off to Guarda in Portugal in a few weeks time – fingers crossed some of those beauties will be hanging around 😊

Have a goodun

Wurzel

## Re: dilettante

by David M, 16-Jul-19 09:43 PM GMT

Tremendous, dilettante. Portugal isn't the best place in Europe to see a wide range of butterflies but it sure knocks spots off the UK, as your images show.

## Re: dilettante

by dilettante, 26-Aug-19 03:27 PM GMT

25/26th August 2019

Just a few photos from the very hot bank holiday weekend, mostly taken at home

I was pleased to get this Small Heath picture while walking the dog yesterday. Normally I find they hide in the grass with their eye spots hidden, so it was good to get this one with a reasonably clear background and eye spot on show. There are quite a lot of these around in my local patch at the moment.



*Small Heath (Sony RX100M3 + Raynox)*

Like everyone else in the country, it seems, we headed to the coast on Sunday, and eventually managed to get parked at Dunwich Heath. As we headed to the beach, this Grayling flew past. I don't often see Graylings, but this one had a very gliding flight, which I wouldn't associate with them. I thought it was a Painted Lady at first.





© dilettante

*Grayling, Dunwich Heath, Suffolk (Sony RX100M3 + Raynox)*

Back on my local dog walk this morning I was pleased with this portrait of a lady. There were many about, some on their last legs/wings, but this one looked in good condition



© dilettante

*Painted Lady (Sony A77 + Tamron 180/3.5)*

Since I had my big camera and plenty of time, I thought I'd get some pictures of the whites which I normally ignore:



© dilettante

*Small White (Sony A77 + Tamron 180/3.5)*



© dilettante

*Green-veined White (Sony A77 + Tamron 180/3.5)*

It was also good to see a few Brown Argus, and lots of Common Blues. It was a bit hot for them to be basking even at 8:30am, so no great photos but it was lovely to watch them.



© dilettante

*Common Blue male (Sony A77 + Tamron 180/3.5)*

**Re: dilettante**

by Wurzel, 28-Aug-19 08:34 PM GMT

Another great set of shots Dilettante 😊 especially like the Grayling – it's unusual for me to see them on anything but a tree/stone/heather 😊🌿

Have a goodun

Wurzel

**Re: dilettante**

by David M, 29-Aug-19 09:00 AM GMT

Lovely images as ever, dilettante, especially the Small White, where the underside colours have come out perfectly.

Good to hear your Small Heaths are doing well. Wish the same could be said for them in my part of the UK. 😊