

Re: Kev Ling

by kevlng, 09-Apr-20 06:51 PM GMT

At last Easter weekend and I have some limited time off work to enjoy the garden. With Millie the spaniel needing a walk, I have a quiet route planned to hopefully bag my first Orange Tip on the wing. I say on the wing, because I have already seen my first one of the year, albeit in pupal form in my back garden. If you look carefully, the orange markings of a male seem to be showing themselves.



The above is the first of two I have in my garden. This next one was taken last week and hasn't really come on any further in the meantime. I will be keeping a close eye on both of them in the coming days when I am at home.



Hope you all get plenty of visitors to your gardens too.

Regards
Kev

Re: Kev Ling

by Wurzel, 10-Apr-20 09:02 AM GMT

Great shots Kev 😊 I'm pretty envious of anyone that has a garden at the moment 🍷, if it wasn't for exercise walks I'd have gone loony tunes already 😊 How did you find those OT pupae? 🍷

Have a goodun and stay safe

Wurzel

Re: Kev Ling

by kevlng, 10-Apr-20 08:07 PM GMT

Thanks Wurzel,

I was lucky enough to have several eggs laid on my Garlic Mustard. With the help of some fine netting, I managed to protect the final instar caterpillars from predation and kept an eye on where they pupated. No after many months of waiting, I hoep to see my first ever Orang Tip hatch.

Kind regards
Kev

Re: Kev Ling

by Wurzel, 10-Apr-20 08:10 PM GMT

Great work Kev – I hope you get to catch the emergence, I've got my fingers crossed for you 😊😊

Have a goodun and stay safe

Wurzel

Re: Kev Ling

by David M, 11-Apr-20 02:41 PM GMT

Good luck with the Orange Tip pupae, Kev. If you get to see them emerge, at least that's one way of being able to safely photograph them instead of watching them fly endlessly. 😊

Re: Kev Ling

by kevlings, 17-Apr-20 06:52 PM GMT

With days out looking at spring butterflies a no no, I'm happy to have had a magic moment at home with the emergence of a male Orange Tip in our garden. Unfortunately the second one came to nothing. The pupa was translucent and empty. Not sure if it was predated or just didn't develop. Be nice to hear some thoughts on that. I'll leave with the photos of our new arrival.





Regards
Kev

Re: Kev Ling

by Wurzel, 17-Apr-20 07:40 PM GMT

Great stuff Kev 😊 Love the second shot 📷 – it's almost as if he's better off staying in the chrysalis and is trying to eyeing it longingly 😊😓

Have a goodun and stay safe

Wurzel

Re: Kev Ling

by David M, 18-Apr-20 06:36 PM GMT

Nice result (at least for one of them, Kev). Hard though it is, we must accept that all forms of a butterfly's life cycle are heavily predated. That just makes the sight of a freshly emerged adult even more uplifting!

Re: Kev Ling

by Pauline, 19-Apr-20 04:17 PM GMT

Hi Kev

of the 3 wild OT pupa I found one just stopped developing. I didn't provide any sort of protection given that they'd survived outside all Winter but one morning I saw a relatively small spider on the 3rd one. I should have reached for my camera but I instinctively flicked it off. I couldn't see any damage, puncture holes or the like but from that point it didn't make any more progress. I still have it (just in case) but I doubt anything will emerge now.

Re: Kev Ling

by kevlng, 29-Apr-20 08:51 PM GMT

Wurzel: I liked the photo with the chrysalis behind too

David: It's always been a longing of mine to locate a pupa and watch the adult emerge

Pauline: Interesting to reason why these things happen, but happy to have had at least one success story

19th April 2020

My local nature reserve is within a few minutes walk from home, so the perfect location to enjoy wildlife, whilst adhering to Boris's guidelines.

In 2019, I saw my earliest recorded Green Hairstreaks on 20th April. This year I beat that record by a day.

I first discovered them four years ago and even though the 200 yard stretch of ride has many Hawthorn trees, they have remained on the same three trees each year. It is hard to believe that I spent so many years before seeing one, but now I have my eye in, I seem to find them within seconds.



Kind Regards
Kev

Re: Kev Ling

by Wurzel, 29-Apr-20 10:56 PM GMT

Lovely Greenstreaks Kev 😊

"It is hard to believe that I spent so many years before seeing one, but now I have my eye in,"...I though that after a pretty rough patch where I just couldn't seem to find them no matter where or how I looked 😊 Then all of a sudden they were everywhere 😊

Have a goodun and stay safe

Wurzel

Re: Kev Ling

by David M, 30-Apr-20 09:27 AM GMT

The great thing about Green Hairstreaks is that they are reliable in the same places every year. Like you, Kev, I can identify several little stretches of shrubs where I can guarantee they'll appear....although not always as early as this year.

Re: Kev Ling

by kevlng, 01-May-20 07:01 PM GMT

Wurzel/David : It's nice to have a 'go to' butterfly that you know will always be there. As they return to the same spot when disturbed, they are so easy to get up close and personal to with nice photographs to show for it.

#stayathome is certainly paying off in my garden. Having had the Orange Tip emerge, the Garlic Mustard is now in flower and we have had at least one female ovipositing. Here she is choosing her moment and the little gift she left was found a couple of days later.



Next up for ovipositing was this Holly Blue, laying on our Pyracantha. This is the second year we have seen this shrub being used (totally ignoring our Holly).





Kind Regards
Kev

Re: Kev Ling

by David M, 01-May-20 08:51 PM GMT

[quote=kevling_post_id=152979 time=1588356118 user_id=10218]...#stayathome is certainly paying off in my garden. Having had the Orange Tip emerge, the Garlic Mustard is now in flower and we have had at least one female ovipositing. Here she is choosing her moment and the little gift she left was found a couple of days later.

One bonus from all this carnage is that we're seeing more images from people's gardens, and it's heartening to know just how much butterfly activity is going on in them!

Orange Tips certainly are one species that is commoner in gardens than the books would have us believe. If only the wider public could be encouraged to plant a few helpful LHPs to assist these nomadic species.

Re: Kev Ling

by kevling, 02-May-20 03:35 PM GMT

I enjoyed an overdue rest day yesterday, so with Mrs L and Millie the Spaniel in tow, we headed to our local bluebell woods to see them in all their splendour. By the time I next got a chance they would be past their best. As we exited the woods, we spotted an Orange Tip at rest, waiting for the sun to break out. These were the perfect conditions to photograph my favourite species. Catch them in the shade, wings closed and watch them slowly open and bathe in the sun's rays when it appears from behind the clouds. It is a good couple of years since I had a protracted view of a male, wings open, so I revelled in this spectacle whilst I got the chance.





Kind Regards
Kev

Re: Kev Ling

by Wurzel, 02-May-20 05:42 PM GMT

Cracking shot Kev, its great when that happens isn't it? 😊 Mind you the closed wing blending in with the white florets is equally as satisfying 😊😊

Have a goodun and stay safe

Wurzel

Re: Kev Ling

by trevor, 02-May-20 05:49 PM GMT

As you say, Kev, you had ideal conditions to photograph that Orange Tip. When they were at their best around here we had blue sky and full sun, day after day. They sometimes paused to take refreshment in the afternoon.

Keep up the good work, and stay safe,
Trevor.

Re: Kev Ling

by David M, 05-May-20 09:00 PM GMT

[quote=keving post_id=153016 time=1588430133 user_id=10218].These were the perfect conditions to photograph my favourite species. Catch them in the shade, wings closed and watch them slowly open and bathe in the sun's rays when it appears from behind the clouds...

Yep. You summed it up well, Kev.

Don't go chasing them on a warm, sunny day. Wait for part cloudy, cooler conditions and you'll be rewarded. 😊

This spring has been ideal - lots of good days with quite a few cool ones inbetween. Ideal conditions for OT watching.

Re: Kev Ling

by millerd, 05-May-20 11:04 PM GMT

Great Orange Tip shot, Kev. You described the perfect technique - many's the time I've loitered next to a snoozing Orange Tip waiting for the sun to come back out! 😊 You can get some funny looks, mind... 😊

Cheers,

Dave

Re: Kev Ling

by keving, 25-May-20 11:49 PM GMT

Martlesham Common - Ipswich

I have been making the most of my lunch breaks by walking the short distance to a heathland nature reserve and a small colony of Green Hairstreak that are ever present each year. They are becoming a favourite species of mine and it is interesting watching how they behave, including how they tilt their body at an angle to the sun to regulate body temperature (seen in photo 2).



Also seen was this splendid Brown Argus.



Regards Kev

Re: Kev Ling

by kevlng, 26-May-20 06:26 PM GMT

My #stayathome butterflying is going rather well, with plenty of Orange Tip action in the garden this spring. Having safely seen a new arrival into the world, we enjoyed another female ovipositing on our Garlic Mustard late in the afternoon. The photos I got of her at rest proved quite atmospheric.





I have counted 5 ovum on separate Garlic Mustard plants and they are now at differing stages of development. Here are 1st, 2nd & 4th instar examples.





The arduous task starts of trying to find one of them pupating.

Regards
Kev

Re: Kev Ling

by Wurzel, 27-May-20 08:13 PM GMT

Great reports and shots recently Kev 😊 The first female OT from your most recent report is an absolute belter of a shot – beautifully evocative of a late spring evening.

Have a goodun and stay safe

Wurzel

Re: Kev Ling

by David M, 27-May-20 09:19 PM GMT

Good to see an Orange Tip ovipositing in the last week of May, Kev (particularly this year, which has been particularly early).

You look as though you've got your eye in for the larvae too!

Re: Kev Ling

by kevlings, 13-Jun-20 09:25 AM GMT

ORANGE TIP OBSERVATIONS

We have had a bumper spring in our garden for Orange Tip, observing all of the life stages. Pete Eales fantastic book taught us a lot about the differing instars as we tracked their progress.

Please may I also credit Guy Padfield, who's diary this week showed me developments in the pre-pupation larva that I had missed from my own photographs (namely the developing wing buds). I have now re-analysed my photos and am glad to see that I captured them too.

I observed every instar this spring, but also witnessed my first casualty. This second instar example developed a black patch on it's skin. It struggled for over 24 hours on the same seedpod, before finally dying. I'm not sure whether it is diseased or perhaps a victim of attempted predation by a bird.



Here is our first of two adults making it to pupation. Sadly the final transformation happened at first light before I awoke for breakfast.





Kind Regards
Kev

Re: Kev Ling

by Padfield, 13-Jun-20 10:16 AM GMT

Super pictures Kev. You've had a much higher success rate than me. 11 out of 12 of mine died of one thing or another between the egg and the end of 5th instar. I know at least one fell to a spider, some, I'm sure to insectivorous birds, and one, I think, to an aphid that punctured it instead of a stem. On another plant, a ladybird larva was zooming around polishing off all the aphids for several days. I thought this was probably a good thing, until, I think, it finished by eating my larva ... There are, of course, various viruses and other diseases that can affect them.

I'll be interested to know what you do, if anything, with the pupae, to keep them safe and healthy until spring.

Maybe bump into you soon in the Ipswich exotic butterfly park ... 😊

Guy

Re: Kev Ling

by kevlings, 13-Jun-20 12:53 PM GMT

Thanks Guy,

I had two pupae last year. One on a twig like yours and one stayed and pupated on the Garlic Mustard stem. I kept them in my courtyard with a some wire fencing around to stop Millie the spaniel getting to them (as the previous year she found the twig and played with it, inadvertently eating the pupae into the bargain). I filled a jam jar with soil and stuck the twig in and that pupa reached adulthood. The garlic mustard stem was placed in a jam jar of water and lasted all winter too. The pupa did show signs of life, but then perished for some unknown reason.

I have the exact same pupation scenario this week and will do nothing different.

Visited our exotic park this morning. A single Little Blue was seen but no Marbled White just yet.

Kind Regards
Kev

Re: Kev Ling

by kevlings, 13-Jun-20 05:05 PM GMT

Here is the early difference in colouration for Orange Tip pupae. The first one was taken just after pupation was complete a week ago. Seven days later and there is already a marked difference. (NB: Same pupae from different angles).





Kind Regards
Kev

Re: Kev Ling

by kevlings, 20-Jun-20 07:26 PM GMT

Landseer Park - Ipswich

One of my home town's local parks has been receiving a lot of conservation investment in recent years and now boasts a fantastic wildflower meadow area with chalk banks added. For the second year in a row we were treated to Little Blue (named in homage to Guy Padfield, with whom I had the pleasure of observing them with on 25th May). Egg laying females were spotted which hopefully bodes well for next year too.



I returned to the park on the afternoon of 17th June (if the boss asks, I was at work!) to observe a couple of fresh Dark Green Fritillaries. These have been introduced, but for the non-purest, a delight to see as the nearest official colony is some 40 miles away.





Also emerging in large numbers were the resident Marbled Whites.





There was also an explosion of skippers and Meadow Browns in attendance and I was pleased to get a shot of Small and Essex Skipper in each other's company before it was time to leave.



Kind Regards
Kev

Re: Kev Ling

by Wurzel, 21-Jun-20 06:21 PM GMT

Whether those DGFs are introduced or not they're still cracking to see and judging from the other shots the habitat looks perfect for them. It must be great to see this species in your local park 🤔🍷

Have a goodun and stay safe

Wurzel

Re: Kev Ling

by David M, 21-Jun-20 07:12 PM GMT

Lovely when Marbled White season is in full swing, Kev. They are literally plastered all over the purple-coloured nectar sources on the best sites.

Your last image is excellent as well. Those two have temporarily put aside rivalries to simply drink and be merry. 😊

Re: Kev Ling

by keving, 25-Jun-20 08:32 PM GMT

Thanks Wurzel: It certainly is nice to have a bit of exotica in the area.

Thanks David: You are right about them being on all the purple flowers. Up to 150 Marbled Whites enjoying the knapweed now.

24/6/20 – Martlesham Heath, Ipswich

It is those unexpected moments that make my love of Butterflies so memorable. When you least expect it, something happens to brighten your day. This can be said of yesterday, when I broke away from the office and took a walk around the grounds of my workplace, looking for butterflies nectaring on the large swathes of bramble. Apart from a respectable number of Meadow Browns hardly settling, I was surprised to see very few butterflies. Suddenly my eyes focused on some bramble no more than 3 feet away from me, where to my astonishment sat a White Letter Hairstreak. A few minutes were spent watching it hop from flower head to flower head, before it was off into the trees.



Kind Regards
Kev

Re: Kev Ling

by Padfield, 25-Jun-20 10:27 PM GMT

Hi Kev. Great to see the white-letter hairstreak at Martlesham Heath. I've been on lockdown for about a week while my bike has been serviced (chain and various other bits replaced &c. &c.) but it was ready today so I walked to Evans Bikes at Martlesham then decided to have a zoom around the heath myself. I didn't see white-letter but I did see at least half a dozen silver-studded blues. I posted a couple on the June 2020 page. Is it normal for the silver-studs there to have such narrow borders? The ones I saw in my childhood (nearer to where Tesco now is) had normal, thick borders, and the ones I found nearer to the coast last year did too. All those I saw today had linear borders on the forewings.

Guy

Re: Kev Ling

by David M, 27-Jun-20 07:43 PM GMT

[\[quote=keving-post_id=155297-time=1593113526-user_id=10218\]24/6/20 - Martlesham Heath, Ipswich](#)

It is those unexpected moments that make my love of Butterflies so memorable. When you least expect it, something happens to brighten your day....Suddenly my eyes focused on some bramble no more than 3 feet away from me, where to my astonishment sat a White Letter Hairstreak. A few minutes were spent watching it hop from flower head to flower head, before it was off into the trees.

I quite agree, Kev, and it's unanticipated appearances by elusive Hairstreaks that are amongst the finest of those unexpected moments. 🍷

Re: Kev Ling

by keving, 28-Jun-20 09:54 AM GMT

Thanks David and Guy.

Guy, that's an interesting observation about the wing margins on the SSB. I have noticed that there is variation on both the outside wide border and the inner black ones too. Comparing some photographs, this doesn't seem to be site specific either.

Here are some comparisons from two seen at Purdis Heath, Ipswich

1. (Strong black margin/Narrow White Margin)



2. Strong black and white margins



I have looked for SSB by Tesco but not seen any. The colony at the far end of the heath, where part of the runway still exists (which I assume is where you went?) had a set back last year due to a large heathland fire. We estimate that over 50% of the population was lost.

Kind Regards
Kev

Re: Kev Ling

by Wurzel, 28-Jun-20 07:18 PM GMT

That was a great lunch break Kev 🍷 - I bet your productivity was well up that afternoon 😊

Have a goodun and stay safe

Wurzel

Re: Kev Ling

by kevlings, 01-Jul-20 06:55 PM GMT

Thanks Wurzel: It actually had the opposite effect, All I could think about was getting back out there and finding it again 😊

It's been bit gloomy these past few days, however the grassland species don't seem to mind and there have been plenty of browns and skippers to enjoy. A breakfast walk last weekend with Millie the Spaniel led us up to a hilly field with long grass around the edges. With nothing more than my iPhone with me, I hadn't anticipated much in the way of photographs.

A freshly emerged Ringlet caught my eye, so I crouched down and took a picture. When I viewed it later I was taken aback by how stunning this often overlooked species is. The bottom edges of the forewings had a beautiful purple sheen to them, something I had never seen before. With all the exotic species on the wing at the moment, this might just be my photo of the year so far.





Kind Regards
Kev

Re: Kev Ling

by millerd, 01-Jul-20 07:37 PM GMT

That is a lovely Ringlet, Kev. 😊 When they are absolutely new like that, you do sometimes get the sheen you mention – unfortunately it doesn't last long. At least its one butterfly that doesn't mind the cloud and a bit of rain (perhaps that's why it appears in midsummer in the UK... 😊).

Cheers,

Dave

Re: Kev Ling

by Wurzel, 01-Jul-20 08:36 PM GMT

"Thanks Wurzel: It actually had the opposite effect, All I could think about was getting back out there and finding it again 😊😊😊"

Ringlets are cracking value for money butterflies in my book Kev – cracking shots of them especially as they were from an iPhone 😊📱

Have a goodun and stay safe

Wurzel

Re: Kev Ling

by kevlng, 28-Jul-20 07:46 AM GMT

27th July 2020

I was lucky to enjoy another of those moments yesterday when something unexpected happens. The sky was a heavy grey and rain was falling as I took Millie our spaniel for her morning walk. During our 90 minute jaunt I didn't see a single butterfly, until Millie flushed something up from the grass by the edge of the meadow. As it settled on a leaf just above head height, to my astonishment it was a female Brown Hairstreak. Small colonies have appeared in Ipswich in recent years, but sightings of this elusive species are few and far between and I had yet to see one on my local patch. She was agonisingly out of reach for a photo on my iphone, so a quick call was made to Mrs L, who popped down with my camera. I was pleased to observe the Hairstreak for almost 30 minutes. It was only a glimmer of sunshine that warmed her up sufficiently for her to take off to a higher spot in the trees. Here she is.





Kind Regards
Kev

Re: Kev Ling

by millerd, 28-Jul-20 09:07 AM GMT

It's great when something totally unanticipated happens like that, Kev. What a great sighting. 😊

Cheers,

Dave

Re: Kev Ling

by trevor, 28-Jul-20 05:57 PM GMT

The unexpected ones are always the most exciting.
Brown Hairstreaks seem to be emerging everywhere at the moment.
Usually they are an August species.

Well found,
Trevor.

Re: Kev Ling

by Wurzel, 28-Jul-20 08:19 PM GMT

A cracking find Kev 🍷 – the unexpected ones are always the best 😊 Hats off to Mrs L for her very swift courier service 😊😊

Have a goodun and stay safe

Wurzel

Re: Kev Ling

by Neil Freeman, 29-Jul-20 08:58 AM GMT

Hi Kev,

Great find with the Brown Hairstreak on your local patch, especially given the conditions. Just goes to show that you never know what might turn up.

Mrs L sounds like a diamond too, a keeper I reckon 😊😊

Cheers,

Neil.

Re: Kev Ling

by keving, 02-Aug-20 01:49 PM GMT

Thanks for the comments everyone. Mrs L certainly bagged some brownie points from me that morning, that's for sure.

The following day beckoned with much improved weather conditions. Still cloudy but warm. Perfect conditions to go looking for Grayling. I visited Sutton Heath, Woodbridge which is a normally a reliable site. Sightings of this species are reducing in Suffolk, so I hope they stabilise soon. I am always intrigued by how good they are at camouflage. Sometimes you don't know they are there until you disturb them.



Kind Regards
Kev

Re: Kev Ling

by Wurzel, 02-Aug-20 07:28 PM GMT

Cracking shots of the Grayling kev 😊 I've only ever seen them on trees in Portugal but it makes for a shot when you can actually be sure what you're looking at/photographing 😊😊

Have a goodun and stay safe

Wurzel

Re: Kev Ling

by kevlng, 04-Aug-20 09:00 AM GMT

Orwell Country Park, Ipswich - 30/7/20

Having encountered my first Brown Hairstreak of the year on my local patch, I paid a visit to another reliable Ipswich site. As is the case with this species, they can be very elusive and so it turned out to be on this day. However this site is excellent for a wide number of other species and the pick of the bunch was this surprise Clouded Yellow. I'd seen them at this site previously, but with sightings of them quite low in Suffolk, it is always a pleasure when one puts in an appearance.



I've been having a lean year with Common Blue, with only sporadic sightings of the odd male here and there. At Orwell Country park they were out in good numbers, including this pair in copulation.





Kind Regards
Kev

Re: Kev Ling

by essexbuzzard, 04-Aug-20 12:36 PM GMT

Wow, I had no idea you had Brown Hairstreaks near Ipswich, what a great sighting!

Re: Kev Ling

by keving, 04-Aug-20 04:49 PM GMT

Thanks Essex. The provenance of the Ipswich Brown Hairstreaks is up for debate, however they are a great butterfly to see. They have been around for a handful of years now and seem well established, using the A14 corridor between Copdock and Nacton.

Kind Regards
Kev

Re: Kev Ling

by ernie f, 04-Aug-20 05:27 PM GMT

Kev - That's sneaky. You ask me to send you a Brown Hairstreak and now I find you have already seen them in your area and not only that - you got a backlit underside pic of a female. What?!?

Nice Clouded Yellow by the way. I have so far only seen one in flight this year. Blink and its gone.

Er - Could you send me one?...



Re: Kev Ling

by Wurzel, 04-Aug-20 10:29 PM GMT

Great shots of the Cloudy Kev - it's always great when they turn up as they you can never really bank on them 😄 A nice bonus for the year almost 😄

Interesting looking Common Blue - it's got those black spots along the hind wing margin - nice 😄

Have a goodun and stay safe

Wurzel

Re: Kev Ling

by David M, 05-Aug-20 04:16 PM GMT

Well done on finding the *crocea*, Kev. Seems they are quite widespread in England this summer. The way things are going they might outnumber Painted Ladies this year!