



Butterfly Conservation

Saving butterflies, moths and our environment

Highland Branch News-sheet 2021



Welcome to new members

A warm welcome to all new members who have joined Butterfly Conservation in recent months and have been allocated to Highland Branch. We hope you join in with some of our Branch events, once they are able to go ahead, and will be able to contribute to the recording of butterflies and moths in Highland, Moray, Orkney, Shetland and the Western Isles.

Spring Meeting

The Spring Meeting will be held online via zoom on Saturday the 9th of April 2022. We will start at 10.30am, but the zoom waiting room will be available from 10:15am. Please join with your microphone initially muted. The brief AGM will be followed by two or three presentations. More details will be in the Chequered Skipper and on the website once finalized.

Field Trips and Work Parties

Pete Moore is currently putting together a programme of interesting field trips and work parties for 2022, but if anyone has any other ideas, either a site to visit or a species to see, please contact him, by email to tonuptwitcher@gmail.com or write to 90a High Street, Grantown on Spey, Moray PH26 3EL. You don't have to lead the field trip but are welcome to do so if you like.

Although there were no field trips during 2021, there were a number of work parties, mostly in the Autumn, which took place in a number of different locations aiming to improve conditions for the foodplants of species such as Small Blue and Dingy Skipper butterflies and Dark Bordered Beauty moth. These were all well attended and it is hoped that one or two field trips can be held in the areas next year.

Planting caterpillar foodplants at Glenfeshie



Records

The butterfly season has ended and there are fewer moths about so now is the time to get the rest of your 2021 butterfly and moth records together and sent to the recorder. Ideally records are best sent by email on a spreadsheet and details of what information is needed are on the branch website – see below.

The Vice County Moth recorders and Butterfly recorders were listed in the Highland Branch Newsletter in the spring and are also listed on the branch website – see below.

If you are unsure of which Vice County covers your butterfly records then you can email them to highlandsightings@yahoo.com or post them to Butterfly Records, 19 Culloden Court, Inverness IV2 7DX.

Useful Links

Up to date information about butterflies and moths in the area and news about the Branch is available on the branch website; [Highland Butterflies](#) which has an events list, event reports and Latest News pages.

Items for the home page as well as short snippets of news or information will be welcome, please send to; unicorn64@btinternet.com

Information is also on the “In Your Area” page of the main Butterfly Conservation website: [Highlands & Islands](#)

We now have a Facebook page [Butterfly Conservation Highlands & Islands](#)

We also now have a Facebook group [Highland Moths & Butterflies](#) where you can share sightings, post photos and discuss all things relating to Butterflies and Moths. It’s open to anyone who lives, works, or regularly visits the Highland branch area.

We now are also on Twitter. You don’t need to be a member of Twitter to see the branch Twitter feed, [@BcHighland](#)

Wider Countryside Butterfly Survey (WCBS)

Kirstie Ross is the Highland Branch WCBS champion. If you’d like to be involved in the WCBS or find out more information about it, then please email funkyhaywood@yahoo.co.uk and Kirstie will be able to help you. There’s also some information about the WCBS on the surveys page of the branch website. highland-butterflies.org.uk/surveys.html

Email contact

In order to ensure that you keep getting email reminders about events and details of any changes to the programme, please ensure that my email address, unicorn64@btinternet.com is added to your address book or approved contact lists. This will ensure any emails sent won’t be marked as spam. Emails are sent out as blind carbon copies and email addresses are never shared, given, or sold to anyone else.

Having your email address really helps us keep costs down by sending this newsletter by email. **If you have received this by post but have previously given us an email address, that is because the email address we have for you isn’t working so please send us your current one if you’d prefer to receive this by email.**

The Chequered Skipper - Spring 2022 - Number 27

We would welcome articles of any length for the Highland Branch annual newsletter. Ideally contributions will relate to butterflies and moths in a northern setting, including the Hebrides and Northern Isles. However, we will also welcome items from further afield, for example holiday reports.

Please send items no later than Friday the 14th of January 2022 to unicorn64@btinternet.com or Audrey Turner, 12 Grampian View, Aviemore, Inverness-shire PH22 1TF. Please note that this will be printed in **A5** format, so please design any graphs, charts, or tables to fit that. Please send any photos as separate files, this makes it easier to format.

Volunteers Required

We are always looking for new people who can contribute to the running of the Branch and this year there are opportunities for people to play an active part, we only have 2 or 3 committee meetings per year.

Please contact Audrey if you are willing to help unicorn64@btinternet.com

Winter Butterflies by Pete Moore

Here's a question for you – if summer lasted all year, would we get fed up with seeing butterflies? Well, maybe not fed up exactly, but we would lose the intense pleasure of seeing the first spring butterfly. And we would lose that bittersweet sensation of enjoying the beauty of a summer butterfly but simultaneously being aware of the shortness of the season, especially in the Highlands.

The good news is that we don't have to give up on butterflies entirely in the winter. Two years ago, I was tipped off about hibernating butterflies in an historic building. I went along with a head torch and sure enough there were Peacocks and Small Tortoiseshells



Ardclach Bell Tower - where it all started



Chimney searching

Hibernating Small Tortoiseshells and Herald, Dava Moor



perched on the stonework in sheltered parts of the building. It was something of a revelation for me. Of course, I was familiar with Small Tortoiseshells hibernating in garden sheds and sometimes coming into houses, but I had never thought about them being in other places. I decided to investigate several disused but fairly intact cottages and outbuildings in my local area and discovered hibernating butterflies in most of them. I learned that draught-free nooks and crannies were favoured – locations where the temperature remains relatively stable. Although I have so far restricted my searches to ruined cottages, other locations such as caves, mines and even culverts under roads are worth a look. A good head torch and old clothing is essential. Warning: take great care in entering any of these places and be aware that searching can become quite addictive!

In amongst the butterflies, I found the occasional hibernating Herald moth. If you are interested, there is a [Hibernating Herald's Facebook page](#).

Enjoy your searching and don't forget to send all records to your relevant vice-county butterfly and moth recorders.