

SMALL BLUE *Cupido minimus* (ABH 61.010) UK BAP: Priority Species

The very restricted distribution of the Small Blue is in part linked to that of its specific larval food plant, the Kidney Vetch. Although the plant is found quite widely on both sides of the region, Small Blues are confined to the eastern mainland.

Distribution trend. There is very little change since the 2007 atlas. Colony size can fluctuate strongly, but most coastal colonies seem to be thriving, along with the inland River Spey population.

Habitat. Sandy or gravelly sites with exposed bare ground which has been colonised by Kidney Vetch. Mainly coastal, with a small number of inland sites typically on disused railway track or river shingles.

Flight period. Mid-May to end of July.

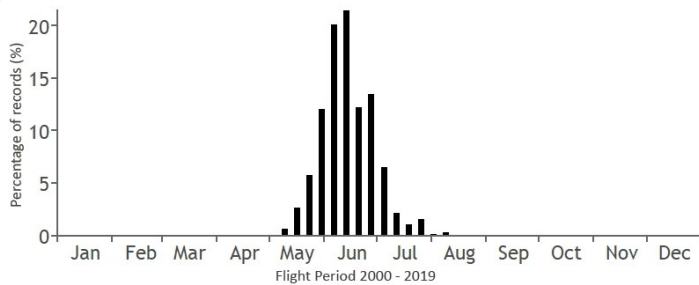
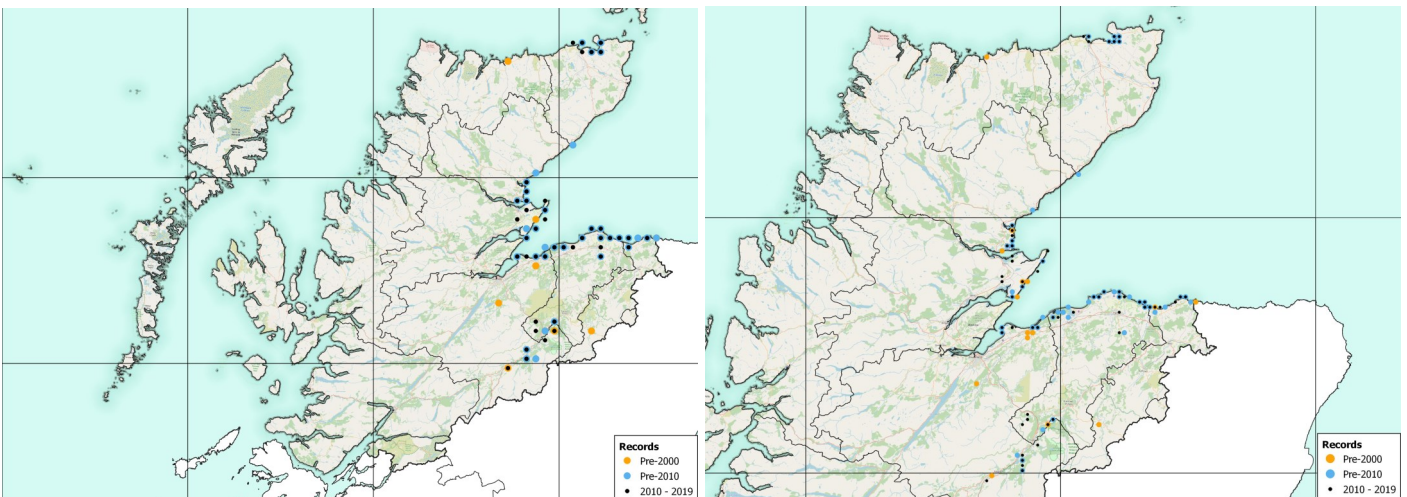
Larval food plant. Kidney Vetch *Anthyllis vulneraria*.

Appearance and behaviour. An inconspicuous small butterfly which flutters close to the ground, seldom far from its food plant. The dark grey-brown upper wing colour and pale bluish undersides are distinctive. In cloudy weather, or in the evening, it may be found roosting in numbers together on Marram-grass etc.



Bob Turner

Left, map at 5KM square resolution, right, map at 2KM square resolution. There are no records from the Northern Isles.



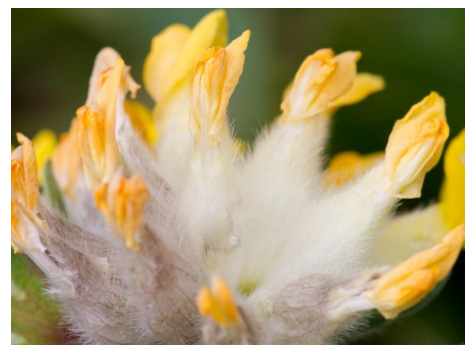
Number of Records	
Pre-2000	237
2000 - 2009	384
2010 - 2019	330



Jim Black



Egg-laying on Kidney Vetch - Audrey Turner



Egg on Kidney Vetch - Peter Eeles