



Huntingdonshire Moth & Butterfly Group

Newsletter No 8

June 1998

Sightings, rumours of sightings, sales, wants and exchanges should be sent to :—
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Surrey field meeting beats the weather

The Hu.M.B.G. trip to Surrey, attended by a total of 16 people, defied an ominous weather forecast which promised frequent heavy showers. Rain was restricted to one twenty minute burst at lunchtime, with the rest of the day punctuated by sunny spells. Seven butterflies difficult or impossible to see in Hunts were observed by all. They were; **Pearl Bordered Fritillary**, **Small Pearl Bordered Fritillary**, **Wood White**, **Dingy Skipper**, **Grizzled Skipper**, **Green Hairstreak** and **Adonis Blue**. Notable moths included the **Broad Bordered Bee Hawkmoth** (Ova and larvae), and the **Lace Border**. An adder was persuaded to pose for cameras, and a glowworm larva and a Roman (edible) snail were also found. Thanks to Jim Porter and Graham Collins, whose local knowledge helped make the trip a success. A full account will appear in the next annual report.

BARBECUE OFF

The Fauna & Flora Society 50th anniversary barbecue, planned for Brampton Wood on July 4th has had to be cancelled, as insufficient tickets have been sold to cover the cost of food. If you have bought tickets, contact Barry for a refund.

September Brown Hairstreak trip

It is proposed that a trip to Bernwood, Surrey be made on Sunday 6th September. This is apparently the best time of year to see the butterfly close to, when it descends to feed on ripening blackberries. If you are thinking of going, ring Peter on 01480 890784 for rendezvous details.



Moth numbers down

The floods of April, and subsequent cool, wet weather has resulted in fewer species on the wing, and in lower numbers. Moth trappers report less than half the unusual numbers, on nights when trapping is possible. A third dud June in four years (1996 was O.K.) is also contributing to the poor season, and looks set to effect moths for the rest of the summer. You could always watch the World Cup...

Migrants to look out for...

• **The Geranium Bronze**, (*Cacyreus marsheri*), an African butterfly which bred here last year in Sussex on potted geraniums may still be about this summer. The larvae feed on the geranium flower buds.

Newspapers reported it this Spring in the usual shock-horror manner they employ when dealing with matters entomological, suggesting the butterfly is about to lay waste to the gardens of Britain. This

seems unlikely, as it is not hardy enough to survive our winters, but as geraniums are often overwintered in frost free greenhouses, it may just be possible for some to survive. With geraniums transported round the country to nurseries and garden centres, in theory *Cacyreus marsheri* could turn up anywhere. It is a dull brownish bronze butterfly with a pattern on the underside similar to that of the Long Tailed Blue. Originally from

South Africa, the Geranium Bronze was an accidental introduction to Majorca, where it quickly became prolific, and has since spread into Spain and southern France.

• **The Silver Y**, which migrated into the west of the country in May.

• **The Red Admiral**, widely distributed since the Spring.

• **The Camberwell Beauty**, reputedly seen in ones and twos in the south east of the country.

● The next newsletter is due for publication in September. Information should be sent to the address at the top of the page.

Thanks to all those who have supplied information for this newsletter.