

YounGnats Newsletter July 2017

Butterflies

There are nearly 60 different butterflies around the UK. However, some of them are very rare, only found in a few locations and sometimes just for a few weeks of the year. Others are quite common and can be seen over several months. So why not try identifying some of the more common butterflies you may see in your garden or when you are out and about over the summer holidays.



Red Admiral



Peacock



Common blue



Small tortoiseshell



Painted lady



Marbled white

For more detailed information on all types of British butterflies visit the Butterfly Conservation website <http://butterfly-conservation.org/>

Did you know.....?

- Different butterfly species live in the adult stage from anywhere between a week and a year.
- Technically butterflies don't hibernate, like some other insects they go into a dormant state when they overwinter. Many butterflies go into this dormant period as an egg, pupa or caterpillar, but some survive the winter months as adults. Red Admiral, Peacock, Small Tortoiseshell, Comma and Brimstone all go through the winter as adults, waiting for the spring when they can breed. You can sometimes see Red Admirals on warm, sunny winter days as generally they don't go into full dormancy, as the others do.
- The weather has an impact on how many butterflies we see. If it is cold, wet and windy, there won't be many butterflies around as they can't feed.
- Some butterflies migrate. Each year we can get an increase in Painted Lady and Red Admiral butterflies from the continent.
- Different types of caterpillars eat different food, some like stinging nettles while others like holly and ivy. Many butterflies can taste with their feet to find out whether the leaf they are sitting on is what their caterpillars like to eat, so they know where to lay their eggs.

A Place to visit this summer – Totternhoe knolls & quarry



The landscape at Totternhoe is the result of many centuries of quarrying, which has developed into flower-rich chalk grasslands. The reserve can be accessed from the National Trust car park off Castle Hill Road (OS ref SP986217). The site is crossed by green lanes and footpaths, allowing lots of exploration. On sunny days, there are also likely to be plenty of

butterflies. The reserve also has Chiltern gentian <https://www.plantlife.org.uk/uk/discover-wild-plants-nature/plant-fungi-species/chiltern-gentian> a rare flower, in bloom in August.

Go and explore and tell us all about your visit. You can record any butterflies and other creatures that you saw at <http://www.bnhs.co.uk/adnoto>

Have you been to one of our YounGnats events? The next one you may like to come along to is:

- Thursday 27th July – RSPB Sandy 10.30am – Walk through restored heathland looking for wildlife. Meet in car park TL191485/ SG19 2DL
- Sunday 13th August – Rushmere Summer Fair 11am to 4pm. – Rushmere Country Park, parking charge applies SP912284/ LU7 0EB.
- Wednesday 23rd August – Harrold 10.30am – A walk in Harrold-Odell Country Park. Meet at visitor's centre car park SP956566/ MK43 7DS
- Saturday 2nd September – Ashridge 10.30am – Walk in Ashridge commons and Woods. Meet outside the Brownlow café SP970130/ HP4 1LX
- Saturday 9th September – Maulden 9.30am – noon – Small mammal trapping at Duck End Nature Reserve, Moor Lane TL051374/ MK45 2DJ

These events are FREE, why not bring along your friends.

See www.bnhs.co.uk/youngnats/ for more details and a selection of interesting articles.