



Butterfly News

The Newsletter of the South Wales Branch
of Butterfly Conservation



Spring 2010



The Butterfly-Friendly Hedgerow Badge, incorporating a green tick, symbolising positive habitat management



Butterfly-Friendly Hedgerows Project

Photos: Contractor work task, with project officer, at a Brown Hairstreak landholding



Contents

Butterfly-Friendly Hedgerows - project photographs	2
Editorial	4
Welcome to New Branch Members	4
Meet new Branch Committee Member: Dr Kathy Seddon	5
John Sherwood: Thanks and Goodbye to a real Branch Treasure-r!	5
The Wider Countryside Butterfly Survey: the first year and beyond	6
Help the South Wales Branch go green	7
One in ten European butterfly species under threat	7
Gower Wildlife Blog	8
Children Wanted for a Butterfly and Caterpillar Creation!	8
New Book by North Wales Branch's Jan Miller	9
Advance Notice of NEW Photographic Competition	10
Events	11
County Butterfly and Moth Recorders and Branch Committee	14
An Insight into the National Museum of Wales Department of Biodiversity and Systematic Biology - Entomology Section	16
Butterfly-Friendly Hedgerows: a pilot community project in the mid Teifi valley	18

Cover Image

Brown Hairstreak butterfly in Carmarthenshire © Mike Clark
Many thanks to Mike for allowing us to use this stunning image.

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Editorial by Andrea Rowe

Welcome to the spring edition of Butterfly News. This time last year I was talking about the warmth of the spring sun and being out in the garden ... it is definitely a lot wetter out there this time around! So it will be interesting to see if the long-term forecast that has made the news recently will actually come to pass. Apparently Positive Weather Solutions, a small five-strong team from Abergavenny, which has 'out-forecast' the Government's weather department for the past two years, is predicting that average temperatures this June, July and August will be at those of 1976, the hottest summer ever recorded with an average of 17.8C (64F). A two-week heat wave at the start of August is also forecast, as is the possibility of record temperatures across the UK. So don't forget your sunscreen this year!

Hopefully our articles this edition will inspire you to get out and about this spring and summer, whether recording, taking part in practical conservation work or attending the numerous Lepidoptera-related events happening. Richard Smith's article about the 'Butterfly-Friendly Hedgerows' project provides a fascinating insight into the development of a project from inception to very successful outcome and shows how important volunteer and community involvement is to a project. We also have a fascinating insight into the work of the National Museum of Wales Entomology Section - a resource maybe more of us could tap into. On top of that we have information about a new book by North Wales Branch's Jan Miller and our first-ever Branch Photographic Competition! Enjoy the read and don't forget to send me any stories you'd like included in future issues.

Welcome to New Branch Members

The Branch Committee once again has the pleasure of welcoming new members to the South Wales Branch. We very much hope that you enjoy your membership and look forward to meeting you at Branch events and our annual Members' Day. If you would like to get involved with any aspect of the Branch's work, please don't hesitate to contact any of the Committee Members. A very warm welcome to:

Mr J L Moore, Knighton; Mrs G M E Neal, Tregaron; Ms C Newton, Swansea; Dr P P Morton, Chepstow; Mr C L Williams, Llanybri, Carmarthen; Mr M Holborow, Machynlleth; Ms S J Siggery, Johnstown, Carmarthen; Miss L G Mattingley, Trefforest; Mr P Hill, Mountain Ash; Dr R E Roome, Cwmbran; Ms E A Edwards, Roath; Mr R F Taylor, Hayscastle; Mrs I Scott, Pontcanna; Miss A M Gambarini & Mr R Coles, Cwmcarn; Mr A G Dyball, Great Yarmouth; Mrs F E Borley, Lisvane; Mr N Gale PhD, Cwmrheidol; Mr A Cole, Ynyslas; Ms G A Arnold, Trapp.

Meet new Branch Committee Member: Dr Kathy Seddon

At last year's Members' Day and AGM, the Committee were absolutely delighted when Dr Kathy Seddon and Grant Taylor both agreed to become new Committee Members. In this issue we find out a bit more about Kathy:

"I have been asked to introduce myself to you and would like to begin by saying how delighted I am to be a member of South Wales BC after many years as a member of the South West BC.

My background is in Education. I taught Biology and Ecology for twenty years and was then very privileged to gain a Churchill Travelling Fellowship. This enabled me to set up a project for schools in seven European countries. I travelled from Arctic Norway (Lofoten Islands) to the Mediterranean (Barcelona) visiting schools and Lepidoptera experts to scope the project. We called it 'Arctic to Mediterranean' and the schools who took part monitored specific butterflies for six years and entered data on a project website. This allowed all schools to use butterflies as indicators of climate change. The results were fascinating and we saw extensions in butterfly range even in this short time and were delighted to work with European experts in each country. We were further funded by the EU through Comenius. We gained several awards and made many presentations including one at the Royal Society www.nmw.ac.uk/tec2000/presentations.htm. We were asked to contribute to journals - by groups who helped us such as ECN www.ecn.ac.uk/ecnnews/ECN%20News%2015.pdf (see page 6) and ASE The Butterfly "Sight" - Using the Internet in Education.

I was able to research 'teacher motivation and learning through the internet' and gained a Doctorate at Exeter. This led to my current work at the National College where I work with aspiring heads in our online environment. One area of my work that is very close to my environmental interests is 'leading sustainable schools' www.nationalcollege.org.uk/sustainable-schools.

I was pleased to take part in the National Butterfly Survey last summer and look forward to helping the work of the branch in any way I can."

John Sherwood: Thanks and Goodbye to a real Branch Treasure-r!

As announced at our last Branch AGM in October, John Sherwood stepped down as Treasurer on 1st April 2010. John has done this invaluable job for many years and in that time he has overseen the finances of some large projects - not least of which being the recent Awards for All grant-funded Brown Hairstreak project. Although he is stepping down as Treasurer he will continue to be actively involved in the Branch through various voluntary work parties. The Branch committee would like to thank John for all his hard work.

The Wider Countryside Butterfly Survey (WCBS): the first year and beyond*

In 2009 the WCBS, the first UK-wide survey of butterfly abundance based on random sampling, was formally launched. The results have provided the first random sample of butterflies in the UK and have established an important new baseline from which to assess future trends.

In total, 1642 visits were made to 763 1km squares by 611 recorders (an almost equal split between British Trust for Ornithology (BTO) and BC volunteers) who collectively walked 3300km, counting 119,000 butterflies of 47 species and generating 12,382 distribution records for the Butterflies of the New Millennium database, including 90 new 10km square records. More than $\frac{3}{4}$ (47 of 59) of the UK's regularly occurring butterfly species were recorded. On average recorders counted around 80 individual butterflies of eight species per survey (during July and August). Over the same period, on average, 130 individual butterflies of 9-10 species were seen on UKBMS butterfly transects (with a mean length of approximately 2km). This indicates that the diversity seen on WCBS squares compares favourably to UKBM transects, especially so given that most transects are located on high quality habitat.

WCBS recorders were also encouraged to record dragonflies and day-flying moths. In total, records were generated from 383 squares - 439 moths of 52 species were counted in 251 squares and 2370 dragonflies of 28 species (plus 3 'unidentified' groups) were counted in 283 squares.

As a result of these successes, it has been confirmed that WCBS will continue in 2010 (again as a collaborative project with BTO and Centre for Ecology and Hydrology). The priority is for existing volunteers to re-survey those squares surveyed in 2009 for at least the next 2 years, so that trends in the wider countryside can be determined and to see whether they differ from transect trends. New participants are also being encouraged to get involved, either to help re-survey old squares, or to survey new ones for the first time.

If you would like to get involved or want advice on the survey please contact survey@butterfly-conservation.org or phone Katie Cruickshanks on 01929 552486.

* This article is based on the full WCBS 2009 – Year 1 Sightings newsletter, which is available to download as a PDF from the Branch website: www.southwales-butterflies.org.uk

Help the South Wales Branch go green

As a Branch, we aim to try to look after the environment in many different ways. One way to reduce our carbon footprint would be to cut down on the amount of paper, ink and transport costs often associated with traditional newsletter production and distribution, by increasing newsletter distribution to members via email (as a full colour PDF document). This will result in significant cost-savings for the Branch too. We completely understand that some members enjoy receiving their newsletter by post and have no desire to receive it by email, which is why a mix and match approach is the one that we favour.

If you would like to **opt in** to receiving future newsletters and Branch updates by email only, please email the Branch Secretary (secretary@southwales-butterflies.org.uk) with your full name and BC Membership number. Your email contact details will be stored for these purposes only and will not be passed to any other parties.

One in ten European butterfly species under threat

Almost one in ten species of European butterflies (37 species) are under threat of extinction and almost one third are declining according to the new European Red List of Butterflies. A further 10% are close to being threatened and one species, the Madeiran Large White, is probably extinct, not having been seen for 20 years.

Butterflies are good indicators of biodiversity, so the results indicate a serious crisis for Europe's wildlife. Around one third of all European butterfly species are unique to Europe, of these 15 are now globally threatened. The main factor causing the declines has been the extensive loss of key habitats such as flower-rich grassland and wetlands, due to agricultural intensification. Changes in habitat management and abandonment of pastures in mountain areas (due to economic reasons) have also taken their toll, as over half of European butterflies rely on traditional grazing to maintain their flower-rich, grassland habitats.

The only British species on the Endangered list is the Large Blue, which became extinct here in 1979 but has since been successfully re-introduced. It is declining rapidly in every other country where it occurs in Europe. Two other British butterflies are in serious decline at a European level (classed as Near Threatened): the Duke of Burgundy and Lulworth Skipper and both had their worst ever year in Britain last year, declining by 65% and 87% respectively since 2000.

The report (produced by over 50 experts from countries across Europe and co-ordinated by Butterfly Conservation Europe and IUCN) is available online at www.ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/conservation/species/redlist

Gower Wildlife Blog

Those of you who live in or love to visit the Gower, Swansea and Port Talbot countryside, will definitely appreciate this blog, run by Barry Stewart. It provides a resource for people interested in sharing wildlife sightings in the area and provides those of us who can't get out and about as much as we'd like to with a great way of staying in touch with local wildlife. To find out more visit www.goweros.blogspot.com.

Children Wanted for a Butterfly and Caterpillar Creation!

Butterfly Conservation has teamed up with children's author Elise Harter to launch a butterfly and caterpillar themed story writing competition for children aged 8 to 11. Elise hopes that the next generation of Lepidopterists will use all of their creative talents to come up with imaginary tales, observations and poems about caterpillars & butterflies. Elise said: "Children might try to imagine what it is like to be a butterfly or a caterpillar or they may prefer to write about their observations of these little creatures. They may wish to write a poem. The main aim is for the children to enjoy writing, imagining and thinking about nature, and to convey that pleasure on the page for others to share."

There are two age categories in the competition: 8-9 years of age (inclusive) and 10-11 years of age (inclusive). Entries can only be accepted in English from residents of the United Kingdom. Parents and teachers (aged 18 and over) are kindly requested to send in entries on behalf of the children by email (scanned or typed).

Entries will be accepted up to and including **Friday 23 April 2010**. Two winners in each age group will be selected by the official judge. These winners will be announced on both Elise Harter's and BC's websites. Great prizes include copies of Nick Baker's book "British Wildlife: A Month by Month Guide", free family tickets to Butterfly World and a bumper pack of butterfly goodies from Insectlore.

For more information about the competition visit www.eliseharter.weebly.com where you can also read Elise's story 'The Life and Times of Charlie the Caterpillar' or visit www.butterfly-conservation.org.

New Book by North Wales Branch's Jan Miller

A new large-format, easy-to-read and dip-into guide all about gardening for butterflies, bees and other beneficial insects has just been written by BC North Wales Branch's very own Jan Miller. It includes colour-coded chapters on a whole range of topics including: how to identify the most useful and beautiful insects that come to your garden; how to make an insectary garden to attract natural pest-predators to your vegetable patch, so you don't have to use pesticides; designs to copy for borders, patio pots, deep beds in urban settings as well as in the countryside; and which plants to use - each with a big colour photo and common name as well as Latin name and growing instructions.

Publication is due in June 2010 - so why not get your order in early and take advantage of this special pre-publication price (books will be sent to you as soon as they are available).

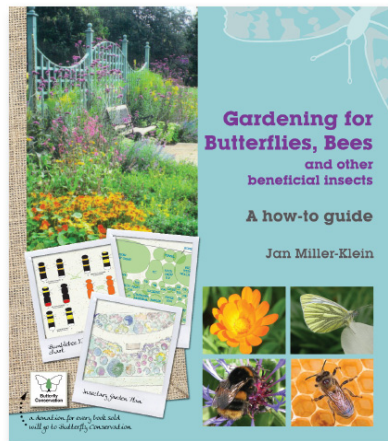


Publication June 2010
Pre-publication offer £17.95! (plus p+p)
(valid until 30th May 2010; normal price £19.95)

A practical dip-into, easy to use guide, with all the latest knowledge about our disappearing insects.

Hundreds of full colour photos of which plants to use, how to identify butterflies, bees and ladybirds and many years of different experts' experience.

With plans to copy from patio pots to garden borders and green roofs.



For more information or to put in an order please visit www.7wells.co.uk

**Butterfly Conservation South Wales Branch
Members' Day and AGM - Saturday 16th October 2010**

Advance Notice of NEW Photographic Competition

At this year's Members' Day in October we will be running, for the first time, a photographic competition. Many of you enjoy photographing your sightings and we hope this competition will encourage you to show off your results!

Closing date for entries is 1st October 2010.

There are three categories:

1. UK Butterflies
2. UK Moths
3. Immature Stages

Rules:

- The entrant must be a member of Butterfly Conservation.
- Entries are limited to 1 per person per category.
- Photographs must be the work of the entrant.
- Photographs submitted must be un-mounted colour 10" x 8" prints. Transparencies and blurred images will not be accepted. Digital images will be accepted but must be supplied as a print.
- Photographs must be printed on good quality photographic or inkjet paper. If necessary please seek further advice from a professional photographic outlet.
- Photographs must have been taken in the year preceding the closing date, in the South Wales Branch area.
- Entries must be clearly labelled, in capital letters, on the back of each photograph with:
 - what the photograph shows
 - the date it was taken
 - the precise location of the photograph (with a 6 figure grid reference)
- Entries will only be returned if a stamped addressed envelope has been supplied, or in person at the Members' Day.
- Copyright remains with the photographer, however by entering, entrants acknowledge that the South Wales Branch will be allowed to use any photograph (with accreditation) for the purpose of general publicity.
- Photographs must be of wild insects, not captive bred stock.

Judging will take place during the Members' Day, the winner being voted for by Branch membership present on the day. Voting will take place throughout the morning session and results will be announced during the formal AGM.

Please send entries clearly marked to South Wales BC Branch Photographic Competition, c/o SEWBRc, 13 St. Andrew's Crescent, Cardiff, CF10 3DB.

EVENTS	
April	
Sat 17th 11:00 - 16:00	<p>Identification of difficult moth species by external characteristics</p> <p>Free workshop led by Norman Lowe as part of the Moths Count project, with Radnorshire Wildlife Trust. <i>Advance booking essential</i> via Laura Wiffen nmrs@butterfly-conservation.org 01929 406009</p> <p>Location: Radnorshire Wildlife Trust, Llandrindod Wells, Powys</p> <p>The workshop will focus on moth identification & recording. Discussion regarding further development of the moth recording group in the county. Bring your own photographs & specimens for identification. For more info: www.mothscount.org</p>
Tues 20 th 19:00 - 20:00	<p>Brown Hairstreak Butterflies - South Pembrokeshire</p> <p>An Illustrated WTSWW South Pems. Group talk by Nikki Anderson, Volunteer Warden for West Williamston reserve, which has an important colony of these rare butterflies.</p> <p>Location: Lamphey Church Hall, Lamphey, Pembrokeshire</p> <p>For more info: www.welshwildlife.org/Events_en.link</p>
May	
Sat 15 th	<p>National Moth Night (NMN): Moths & Bats</p> <p>This year's theme sees joint organisers Atropos & BC joined by the Bat Conservation Trust. You can record moths as usual for NMN, but if you're organising an event for family, friends or the public, why not incorporate bat recording too? Make contact with local bat groups via www.bats.org.uk/bat_group.php. To see local NMN events visit www.nationalmothnight.info.</p>
Sat 22nd 11:00 - 16:00	<p>Moth identification & recording in Breconshire</p> <p>Free workshop led by Norman Lowe as part of the Moths Count project, in partnership with BIS. <i>Advance booking essential</i> via Laura Wiffen nmrs@butterfly-conservation.org 01929 406009</p> <p>Location: Llangasty Village Hall, Llangorse, Powys</p> <p>The workshop will examine contents of a moth trap set nearby within Llangorse Lake SAC & include presentations on issues relating to moth identification & recording. There will also be a discussion on locally important habitats & their conservation including Llangorse Lake. Bring your own photographs & specimens for identification. For more info: www.mothscount.org</p>
Sat 22nd 10:00 - 12:30 (approx)	<p>Walk on the Merthyr Mawr</p> <p>A joint WTSWW & BCSW walk on Merthyr Mawr dunes led by Richard Smith, looking for the Dingy & Grizzled Skippers, but also for all the other signs of spring. Meet in Candleston car park (parking fee applies) & bring your own refreshments, suitable footwear & sun protection. More info: www.welshwildlife.org/Events_en.link</p>

Sat 22 nd /Sun 23 rd	<p>24 Hour Biodiversity Blitz, Bishop's Wood Celebrate International Biodiversity Day by recording flora & fauna observed in woodland, seashore & grassland habitats. Meeting times tbc. Location: Bishop's Wood, Caswell, Gower. Contact Jo Mullett, City & Council of Swansea, 01792 635784</p>
June	
Sat 5 th – Sun 13 th	<p>Wales Biodiversity Week For more info & to search events: www.biodiversitywales.org.uk</p>
Sat 5 th 10:30 - 16:00	<p>North Wales Branch AGM and Members Day Including talk by Professor Chris Thomas, University of York "The Great Orme, Britain's best site for butterflies?" Also field trip to Great Orme in afternoon. <i>Places limited & must be booked</i>. Please visit www.northwalesbutterflies.org.uk for more info.</p>
Sun 6 th 10:00 - 16:00	<p>Caerphilly CBC/SEWBRc Bio Blitz: Nelson Wern Come & join the Bio Blitz survey of 14ha of Nelson Wern (Grid Ref: ST117956) - a mixed habitat of wet woodland, meadows, ponds & streams. Bat detecting & moth trapping sessions are scheduled to run late in the evening on Saturday 5th June, with findings discussed the following day. The event is open to anyone with an interest in biological recording. Register to take part: info@sewbrec.org.uk (029 2064 1110) or David Beverage of CCBC (beverd@caerphilly.gov.uk).</p>
Sat 12 th 11:00 - 16:00	<p>Go Wild - Parc Bryn Bach, Tredegar This year's 'Go Wild!' event is being organised by the Blaenau Gwent Biodiversity Partnership - it aims to promote a greater awareness & understanding of wildlife & the natural environment. The event is free & has lots to see and do for all the family. For more info: contact Claire Pooley (BGCBC Ecologist) Claire.Pooley@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk or 01495 355735</p>
Sat 19 th 10:00 - 13:00	<p>Gwent Wildlife Trust: A Practical Introduction to Moths Join local Lepidopterist Val Jackson at this GWT event. Explore the contents of the previous night's moth trap &, using books & internet access provided, learn how to identify moths. Val will explain various types of moth traps & where to get equipment so you can get started. Further info: www.gwentwildlife.org. Location: Dingestow Court near Monmouth; Cost: £3 members £6 non-members. <i>Booking essential</i>. Please contact Gwent Wildlife Trust on Tel: 01600 740600 or info@gwentwildlife.org.</p>
Sat 26 th 09:00 - 10:00	<p>Collard Hill, Somerset - to see the Large Blue butterfly Join WTSWW's Coach trip to Collard Hill, Somerset (Large Blue butterfly site). <i>Booking essential</i>: please email info@wtswwwcardiff.org.uk or tel 029 2075 2673</p>
26 th June-14 th August	<p>Butterflies of Various Habitats Training Course If you'd like to learn more about identification & habitat requirements of butterflies, then join this course, run by Aberystwyth University. It consists of 8 sessions of 2.5 hours each & includes 7 field meetings. For more info: www.aber.ac.uk/sell, email learning@aber.ac.uk or mth@aber.ac.uk or 01970 621580</p>

July	
Sat 3 rd Meet at 10:00	WTSWW - West Glamorgan Local Group Silky Wave Moth Survey Help survey for the Silky Wave at Overton Mere (Grid Ref SS467852). Meet at Port Eynon car park (parking fee applies). Event led by Russel Hobson, BC. <u><i>Booking is essential</i></u> contact Jo Mullett on 01792 635784 or jo.mullett@swansea.gov.uk . Non-members welcome. Wear suitable clothing & footwear & use public transport or car share where possible please.
Sat 17 th 10:30 - 13:00	Alun valley visit to seek out High Brown Fritillaries Join the WTSWW Cardiff Group's visit to the Alun Valley to look for High Brown Fritillaries & other butterflies, led by Richard Smith. Meet at Grid Ref. SS899763. Please bring waterproofs, walking shoes AND Wellingtons. The trip should finish by 1pm, when we will retire for lunch in a local hostelry. For more details contact info@welshwildlife.org or 01656 724 100
24 th July - 1 st August	National 'Save Our Butterflies Week' This year the theme is 'Parks for Butterflies'.
Sun 25 th 10:00 & 13:00 starts	BC Guided Walk: Cors Caron NNR, Ceredigion. The event consists of two different walks. The walks begin at 10 a.m. & 1 p.m. & start at the Cors Caron Car Park on the B4343, 2 miles north of Tregaron. Grid Reference: SN 693 625. If you are interested, please contact Red Lidford on 01974 282672.
August	
Sat 14 th	Merthyr Tydfil CBC/SEWBRc Bio Blitz: Cwm Taf Fechan Come & join the Bio Blitz at Cwm Taf Fechan (approx. site centre Grid Ref: SO035085). This event is open to anyone with an interest in biological recording. Please register your interest with SEWBRc: info@sewbrec.org.uk (029 2064 1110)
October	
Fri 1 st	Closing date for entries in the BCSW Photographic Competition
Sat 16 th 10:30 - 16:00 (approx.)	South Wales BC Branch Members' Day & AGM Join us for our annual Members' Day get-together & AGM. Don't forget to take part in our new photographic competition too! (See page 10 for details).
November	
Sat 20 th	BC National AGM/Members' Day To be hosted by Cambs & Essex Branch - venue TBC.

Key

BC	Butterfly Conservation
BCSW	Butterfly Conservation South Wales Branch
BIS	Biodiversity Information Service for Powys & Brecon Beacons National Park
CBC	County Borough Council
GWT	Gwent Wildlife Trust
NNR	National Nature Reserve
WTSWW	Wildlife Trust of South & West Wales
SEWBRc	South East Wales Biodiversity Records Centre

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An Insight into the National Museum of Wales Department of Biodiversity and Systematic Biology - Entomology Section

by Dr Michael Wilson

The National Museum of Wales was founded over 100 years ago and celebrated its Centenary in 2008. Two of the original Departments, Zoology and Botany, were merged into a new Department of Biodiversity and Systematic Biology around 10 years ago and at that time Entomology was made one of the six sections. The Department has around 35 full time staff, making it the largest curatorial and research Department in the Museum.

The Entomology Section has four full time staff and two active retired members, making it perhaps the largest group of museum entomologists outside London. In addition current technical expertise lies in biological imaging.

Research interests and projects

Research interests centre on the Hemiptera, Diptera, Coleoptera and British Hymenoptera.

Dr Michael R. Wilson (mike.wilson@museumwales.ac.uk) Head of Entomology Section. Specialises in the systematics and biology of Auchenorrhyncha (leafhoppers, planthoppers etc.) in Palaeartic region and Old World Tropics.

Dr Adrian Plant (Adrian.Plant@museumwales.ac.uk) joined the museum as Diptera Curator five years ago and specialises in world empidoid Diptera (Empididae, Hybotidae, Brachystomatidae etc.).

Dr Brian Levey (Brian.Levey@museumwales.ac.uk) specialises in the systematics and biology of Coleoptera (beetles) with a particular interest in species associated with dead wood microhabitats and especially on the systematics of Buprestidae (Jewel Beetles) of the world.

Mr Mark Pavett (mark.pavett@museumwales.ac.uk) has wide expertise in British Entomology especially British Hymenoptera: Aculeata and Coleoptera and acts as Collection Manager for the Section.

Insect Collections

The insect collections comprise around 1 million specimens, which are mostly dry, mounted specimens. The collection is conveniently divided between the British (600,000 specimens) and the Foreign (500,000 specimens). These

are housed separately in taxonomic sequence for each Order, in unit trays and slats in standard drawers. We have relatively little historic material, which can almost be seen as an advantage. Taken as a whole, the collection is now the fifth largest in the UK (behind London, Oxford, Edinburgh, and Manchester).

British Collection

This collection is a comprehensive collection of all insect Orders, but with emphasis on well-known English localities in some groups. Survey work in the last 20 years in Wales has given some emphasis to South Wales sites. The Bangor Insect Collection (built up by Joan Morgan and acquired from the University in 1999) has substantially improved coverage of species from north Wales.

The British collection contains a comprehensive representation of the Orders Lepidoptera (butterflies and moths), Coleoptera (beetles), Diptera (true flies), Hemiptera: Auchenorrhyncha (leafhoppers, planthoppers etc), Heteroptera (true bugs) and Hymenoptera: Aculeata (bees and wasps). It has good representation of all other groups. The policy towards the British collection is to develop as near a complete British collection as possible, in almost all groups.

Notable British collections include J.R. le B. Tomlin (Coleoptera), H.M Hallett (Coleoptera and Aculeata), A.E. Gardner (includes the F.J. Coulson collection) (Coleoptera), E.J. Pearce, MacNulty.J.B, part of the W.J. le Quesne collection of Hemiptera, C. G. Nurse (Hymenoptera and Diptera) and M.F. Claridge (Hymenoptera).

Counts of numbers of specimens for the larger groups are as follows: Lepidoptera: 194,400, Hemiptera: 70,000, Hymenoptera: 32,000, Coleoptera: 220,000, Diptera: 60,000. Other smaller orders: 14,500.

Foreign Collection

Overall, the foreign collection is relatively small, but offers a good coverage of tropical groups for teaching courses and for public display. Much of this material is based upon the Rippon collection, which must have been one of the first large accessions acquired by the Museum (in 1918). However, in the Diptera and Hemiptera where foreign research interests are strong, the collection has developed into one of international importance.

The non-British collection includes significant holdings of insects from all Orders from many regions, which are used for teaching demonstrations at

various levels. Besides general Lepidoptera, there are also important holdings of Coleoptera, Diptera and Hemiptera, which have developed through the research interests of the staff members. The specimen acquisition policy concentrates on the Palaearctic, as well as the Afrotropical regions, although for research interests the focus may be wider.

Numbers of specimens: Lepidoptera: 48,600, Hemiptera; 110,000; Hymenoptera; 11,800; Coleoptera; 100,000; Diptera: 65,000; Small orders: 16,000.

What do we use the collections for?

In addition to the insect collections, we have good library facilities with an emphasis on the purchase of books dealing with the British fauna as well as our research interests.

As with all museums the collections are used for our taxonomic research and identifications (especially for the UK fauna) and we routinely answer enquiries from the public and other colleagues. We also have art students who frequently come to gain inspiration from insect specimens - especially from the ultrastructure. Despite the proximity of a large University adjacent to the Museum the collections are little used at the undergraduate level.

We regularly host workshops, which focus on taxonomic training in various groups. Visits from anyone wishing to study specimens or use the library are welcomed.

Members Always Welcome to help Branch Committee

The Branch Committee is always on the look out for members to help assist with existing roles and to help us expand in new directions. Members can either choose to get involved with specific roles e.g. publicity, education or fundraising or can put themselves forward to sit on the Branch Committee. We hold around four evening meetings a year, which are kept as short as possible. The Committee manages the budget for the Branch, makes decisions on site management and decides where the Branch should focus its energies, as well as organising the AGM/Members' Day.

Any member of BC can sit on the Committee. There are lots of different roles to get involved with, including website management, events organisation, publicity and accounts. We want the Committee to reflect your views, so why not consider giving up a small amount of your time and getting involved. If you have any skills and are interested in getting involved, or want more information, please contact any of the Committee Members (see page 14) or come along to the Members' Day.



**Butterfly-Friendly Hedgerows:
a pilot community project in the mid Teifi valley**
by Richard Smith

This winter, the Branch was pleased to be able to secure funding from Awards for All to run a pilot project to encourage a local community in the Llangeler & Henllan area of Carmarthenshire and Ceredigionshire (see map on page 23) to promote hedgerow and land management suitable for the Brown Hairstreak butterfly.

Originally, we were hoping to cover two separate local communities, each central to one of the main Brown Hairstreak population landscape areas i.e. the Teifi valley and 'Tywi to South-east Pembrokeshire'. The choice of suitable community was fairly straightforward from previous surveys:

- Llangeler area, close to Teifi, with several known landholdings with low intensity management, a couple of hundred eggs previously found but much more to search;
- Cynnen valley, just west of Carmarthen, with two known landholdings with low intensity management, surrounded by several other farms of varying intensity but where in total we'd found 560 eggs in 2005.

Both localities included one landholding where we already had landowners keen and committed to the Brown Hairstreak cause. In August, I wrote to several landowners in each area and received invitations to follow up from four around Llangeler. So when, in the event, due to timing and severe winter weather delays, we had to focus on just one community area this winter, Llangeler was the obvious choice. Thanks to the BC Wales office, we do however now have some funding for a scaled-down version somewhere in the 'Tywi to South-east Pembrokeshire' population landscape area, possibly Cynnen valley, this coming autumn.

Finding a honeypot

I followed up the four invitations to visit in September, looking at habitat quality, potential for management and owner interest. The aim, broadly speaking, was to encourage sympathetic land management for the Brown Hairstreak (e.g. leaving scrub blackthorn or hedges untrimmed for at least a couple of years, then trimming in rotation) by offering to help with coppicing blackthorn down to ground level once it was too old - thereby keeping a steady supply of young plants/shoots for the Brown Hairstreaks, without having to permanently sacrifice large areas from the fields. It was hoped that those involved would be happy to display the 'Butterfly-Friendly Hedgerows' badge (see image inside front cover and photo on back cover) to tell the world, particularly neighbours, visitors, passers by and potential hedgerow contractors, that wildlife and particularly this distinctive local butterfly, is being encouraged at these sites.

These first four visits went well, finding plenty of excellent habitat in the form of young scrub blackthorn around field edges and/or unflailed bushy hedges which needed some work but with very willing owners. We needed to return, with our band of regular volunteer egg counters in December.

The first three landholdings that we searched revealed massive increases in egg counts compared to five years previously, by a factor of roughly fivefold! Hilary & Paul Kennelly at the West Wales Museum of Childhood (hereafter called the Museum) on the A484 just north of Llangeler village were amazingly helpful. We had struck lucky, big time. Amongst the attributes they brought to the project were:

- The presence of eggs around the edge of their car park
- A nature trail, traversing three fields with young blackthorn and nearly 100 eggs along it
- Positive design input to our logo disc
- Completely positive attitude to management for Brown Hairstreaks
- Use of their car park & café to meet up for local surveys
- Use of their land for habitat demonstration purposes, as part of local village hall based promotional events
- Display of our leaflets and 'Butterfly-Friendly Hedgerows' discs
- A link to our project from their website
- Catering at village hall events
- Welcoming, friendly reception to all and a good knowledge of the local community

Delivering the message

We decided to invite both landowning and non-landowning residents to illustrated talks at the local village hall. The message was aimed at everyone in the community, showing what could be done for the species on a wide range of sites e.g. smallholdings, gardens, community fields and land, green lanes, low intensity traditional farms, modern commercial farms and even country businesses e.g. holiday lets. Lin Gander and I spoke to or delivered invitations to 40 people/properties, with 12 people coming along to our Friday event in late January and a further six to our Saturday event in mid February. Both were held at Pentrecwrt village hall, followed by field visits to demonstrate habitat and eggs at the Museum. The first was promoted, via the local newspaper (Symud Ymlaen) office in Drefach and in the Carmarthen Journal and Teifside weekly newspapers.



Photos: First community event, looking at Brown Hairstreak eggs in the West Wales Museum of Childhood car park.



From the feedback forms and subsequent follow up, we were delighted to be invited to survey 19 land holdings (two landowners surveyed their own land). We were also thrilled when eight new people volunteered to join our survey team, five of whom have since been out with us regularly.

Delivering the management

Three work tasks were identified which would improve habitat for Brown Hairstreaks and were acceptable to, indeed gratefully encouraged by, the private landowners. At a holiday cottage let smallholding, with our able local contractor from Meidrim, we carried out coppicing to ground level of all of the older and taller blackthorn at the back of a developing thicket, having first placed coloured pegs to help identify (and therefore retain) the younger plants at the front which bore the current year's eggs. Four volunteers helped clear away the brash and protect new areas from access by horses. The owner prides himself on his wildlife friendly approach, which helps his business, as clients like to know what wildlife is being fostered.

At another private smallholding, we carried out a similar task. The owner was delighted that three of his smaller valley bottom fields held over 80 Brown Hairstreak eggs. This was another species to add to his holding's total, which through encouragement by Flora Locale and local experts, he already manages for its species-rich hay meadows.

At the Museum, virtually half of the eggs were in the smallest sheltered field ("Cae Bach") alongside the woodland, laid on suckering/seeded young plants. The issue there was rapid and vigorous bramble runners smothering the blackthorn. So with a brush-cutter and hand tools we set to work, to remove as much as possible, over two half days. In so doing, a further 15 eggs were revealed, not accessible during the initial survey. As this field is not cut for agricultural yield, Hilary & Paul have offered us access to search for caterpillars in late May/early June and to watch for the female Brown Hairstreaks descending to egg lay in August and September. We will no doubt eagerly take up their offer.

Displaying the discs and logo

All three of the above landowners have proudly displayed our plastic 'Butterfly-Friendly Hedgerows' discs around their landholdings, together with at least two more people who attended our events. All farms surveyed will receive, in due course, a map showing habitat quality and egg numbers this year, field by field, together with a reminder of suggested management (including a rotation plan where applicable) and a supply of the discs. An electronic version of the disc is also available for use on owners' websites

and letterheads - a great way to promote the project and for the landowners to promote their wildlife-friendly credentials.

So, how many eggs and new sites?

After surveys on 18 different dates (December - March), within a 5km radius of the Museum, we finally notched up a total of 573 eggs on 22 different land holdings. Of these 22, 16 were new sites and these helped put six new 1km grid squares on the Brown Hairstreak records database. At least 90 volunteer days have been put into the project already.

What now?

Although it's still early days, this winter's efforts have been very worthwhile. I'd like to try to ensure that momentum is maintained, with opportunities to develop and widen the project throughout this coming year and through further winter periods. Several unique opportunities have opened up and the area looks set to become established as a Brown Hairstreak success story – but it all depends on people, goodwill and volunteers, of which at the moment, we have a bounteous supply.

Thanks

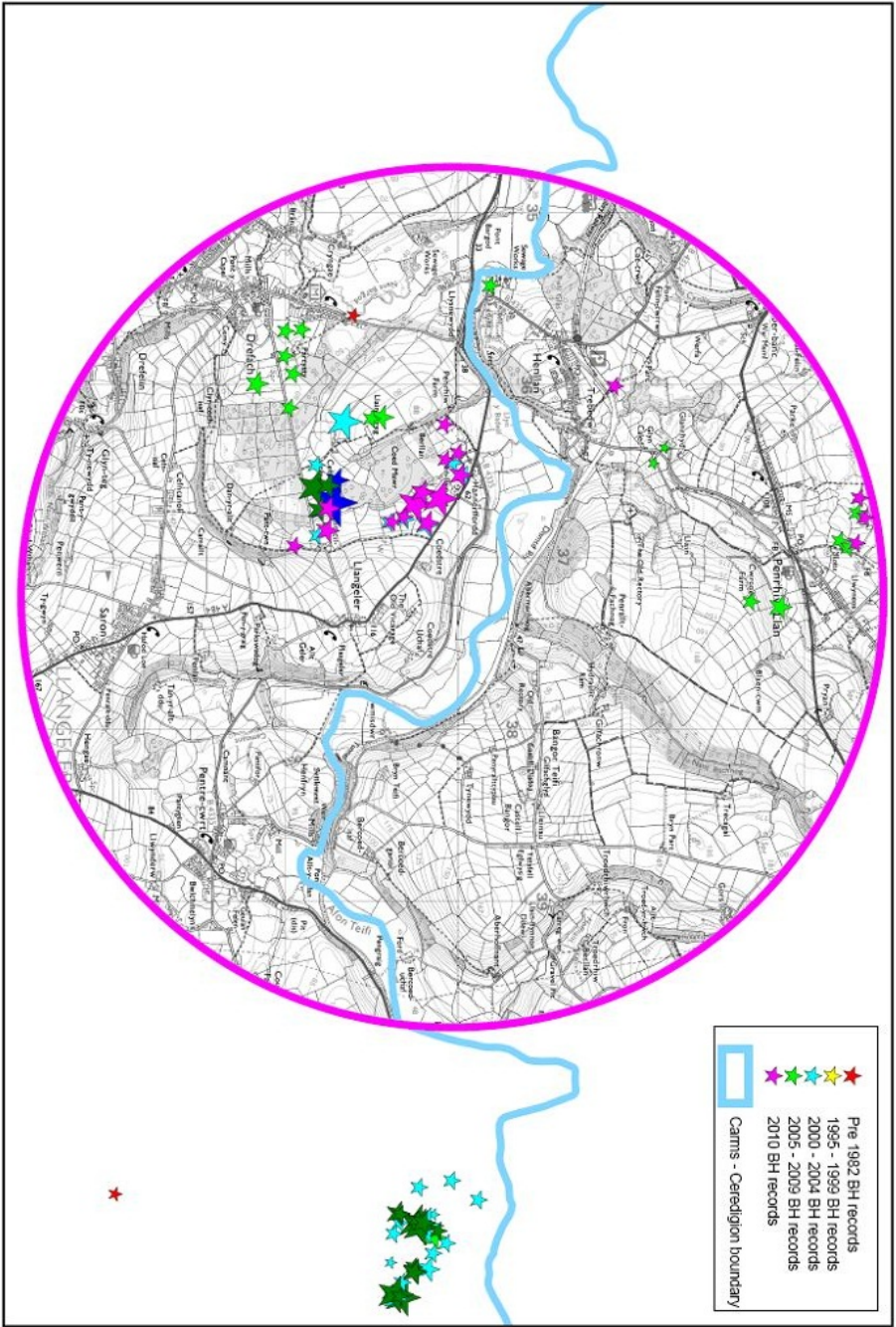
As well as our immense gratitude to Hilary & Paul, I must thank Dai and Lin for helping on the ground locally to get things done, the willing and enthusiastic landowners and new volunteers (including Helen, Jackie, Corinna, Dave and Peter) and those (including Ken & Anne) who I know wish to help as soon as they have the time. Thanks also to Russel at BC Wales and Rosie Carmichael (Carmarthenshire's Rural Conservation Officer) for their professional input. And not forgetting our regular band of volunteer surveyors, without whom, the project would have not got far! Funding for the project came jointly from Awards for All, Carmarthenshire County Council, Countryside Council for Wales, BC South Wales Branch and BC Wales.

Summary of outcomes from Llangeler area community events Position up to & including 17th March 2010

Attended event	18 people
Other contact	22 people
Requested BC to survey	19 farms
Self survey	2 farms
Eggs found	573 eggs (to date)
Area of survey	(tba) hectares
Practical work done by BC	3 farms (5 days)
Asked for advice	23 people
Volunteered for survey team	8 new people
Total volunteer time put into project	90 person days (£4,500 in value)



Llangeler Community Project area coverage





Community event:
learning how to search
for eggs

Volunteers egg
searching for real at
Park farm



A proud landowner
displaying the
'Butterfly-Friendly
Hedgerows' badge