

Butterfly Transect Report to Holme Park Quarry LNR Management Committee – 15th October 2013

The overall count of 603 for 2013 was the highest in the 11 years of recording, but this was due to a dramatic increase in Ringlet numbers from one in 2010 to 229 this year. If Ringlet are excluded the total count of 374 is below average at the seventh highest count.

The cold spring was a very poor start with only 4 butterflies recorded in the first seven weeks. The weather improved by mid-June, in time for the Small Pearl-bordered Fritillary. This priority species increased further to 37.

Continuing good weather came to the rescue of the large fritillaries. High Brown and Dark Green recovered to a combined count of 53* in roughly equal numbers. 28 High Brown (approx) compared with only 3 last year shows that the reserve is still providing suitable habitat for this high priority species.

Other priority species are Grayling, which fell again to 15, Dingy Skipper present at 2 and Wall, absent for the third consecutive year.

Speckled Wood increased to 65, but was still below average.

In spite of a favourable summer Meadow Brown, Small White, Common Blue and Peacock were only present in average numbers. Green-veined White and Large Skipper were better than average. Small numbers of Small Tortoiseshell, Small Heath, Red Admiral, Large White, Small Skipper, Brimstone and Orange Tip were recorded.

Other species recorded previously, but not this year, were Comma, Painted Lady, Holly Blue, Gatekeeper and Small Copper.

Unsuitable conditions resulted in 3 weeks without any records, all in the month of April.

Full details are shown on the Weekly Transect Records 2013 and All Years files.

* The total number of large fritillaries is accurate, as is the presence of both species (confirmed in photos, as netting is very difficult on this site). The record of each species is based on the ratio of definites recorded at each count.

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