

HADDENHAM CONSERVATION SOCIETY

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BUTTERFLIES (Lepidoptera) in Haddenham Cambs parish.

As at March 2012.

Collated by Paul Mason from reports by HCS members.

**Skipper Butterflies.** *Hesperiidae.*

Large Skipper *Oclodes venatus.*

Common in all situations. Fields and gardens.

June-September.

Small Skipper *Thymelicus sylvistris.*

Common, especially along New Cut Drain bank from Aldreth to North Fen.

June-August.

Essex Skipper *Thymelicus lineola.*

Regular, but less common than the previous species. Found mainly along New Cut drain bank. Aldreth to North Fen. Needs close inspection to determine from Common.

June –early September.

**White and Yellow Butterflies.** *Pieridae.*

Large White *Pieris brassicae*

Very common in gardens and larvae considered a pest on cabbage plants. Seen elsewhere but not in such large numbers. More some years than others occasioned by immigration from European mainland.

April to October.

Small White *Pieris rapae*

Common everywhere and as previous species the larvae is a brassica pest species.

April – October

Green-veined White *Pieris napi.*

Common everywhere but not a pest. Larvae eat plants like Garlic Mustard and Watercress.

At least two broods spring and autumn. April to October.

Orange Tip *Anthocaris cardamines.*

Common along hedgerows where male fly fast looking for females. Can wander into gardens. Favours damp grassland also.

April-June.

Clouded Yellow *Colias croceus.*

This fast flying species settles rarely and is normally seen fly over fields in a hurry. Mostly only observed in explosion years when hundreds migrate north from the Mediterranean after an exceptional breeding season there.

May to October in 2 or 3 broods.

Brimstone. *Gonepteryx rhamni.*

Mostly seen singly along hedgerows and in gardens. Overwinters in hibernation.

March to May and late July to September.

**Hairstreaks, Coppers and Blue butterflies** *Lycaenidae.*

Purple Hairstreak *Quercausia quercus.*

Found usually high up on oak trees but sometimes on ash where it forages for honeydew. Difficult to see without binoculars or telescope.

July-September.

White-letter Hairstreak *Satyrrium w-album.*

Found on elm trees high up but will come down to feed on bramble flowers in good sunlight. Best place is Hinton Hedges/Fairchild's Meadows. This is a County rarity and its breeding sites are protected.

Late June to August.

Small Copper *Lycaena phlaeas.*

Common along New Cut Drain bank from Aldreth to North Fen but can also be found in short grass areas elsewhere like North Fen Drove near to A1123 to Witcham Toll..

Double or even treble brooded in some years. April-May. June-July and September to early October.

Holly Blue. *Celastrina argiolus*

Regularly seen in gardens in spring and autumn. It has two broods and larvae feed on Holly flower heads in spring but Ivy flower heads in September/early October. Also seen flying along higher hedgerows anywhere.

April-May, Late Aug-Sept.

Brown Argus. *Aricia agestis.*

10 years ago this species would have been unknown in the parish. Suddenly the breeding range extended widely and now it is common in places where its short grass and bare patch habitat exists. The New Cut Drain bank from Aldreth to North Fen is the place where it is most common but North Fen Drove and the Old Railway line to Wilburton is other good place. It is Haddenham's smallest species and can be confused with female Common Blues at time. It has a more whirring flight and looks silvery at times.

Otherwise the males are a brilliant deep chocolate brown with white wing edges.

Late April- end May. End June –July and sometimes another brood in September.

Common Blue *Polyommatus icarus.*

Common along New Cut Drain bank but does wander to flower meadows and sometimes gardens.

May-June and Aug- September in two broods.

**Vanessids** *Nymphalidae.*

Red Admiral *Vanessa atalanta.*

Regular in spring when some individuals may have migrated in but others have overwintered in hibernation. These lay eggs on nettles to produce a second brood in late summer. See everywhere.

April-May, July-August-September.

Painted Lady *Vanessa cardui.*

A regular visitor but more in some years than others when there are large numbers migrating in from the Mediterranean area. The last such year was 2010. There can be up to 3 broods and the last returns south in late autumn.

Late April-early June and late July-early October.

Small Tortoiseshell *Aglais articae*

Common in gardens and along fen drove sides. Two broods. Hibernates. Some signs of decline.

March-May and August-September.

Camberwell Beauty *Nymphalis antiopa*.

There is one record of this rare butterfly in early spring of 1996 by a reliable observer.

This was after a large invasion on the East Coast of England and it is likely to have hibernated. It was found along Aldreth Causeway.

Peacock *Inachis io*.

Common everywhere. Hibernates commonly in buildings. Two broods.

March-May and July to August.

Comma *Polygonia c-album*.

Common everywhere. Overwinters as an adult.

March to May and August to September.

**Browns** *Satyridae*

Speckled Wood *Parargo aegeria*

Treble brooded species now very common even where there are just few trees.

March-April, May to June, August to September.

Wall Brown *Lasiommata megara*.

Probably no longer in the parish. Last record was in September 2008 at bridge over New Cut Drain and Tinkers Lane. Could be still along New Cut Drain bank but none seen since 2008. Double brooded.

May- June and August-September.

Meadow Brown *Maniola jurtina*

Common everywhere

June-September.

Gatekeeper *Pyronia tithonus*

Common everywhere. Particularly like Bramble hedgerow.

July-August.

Small Heath *Coenonymphus pamphilus*.

Common in wildflower and shorter grass situations. New Cut Drain bank from Aldreth to North Fen. Also along old railway lines to Sutton and Wilburton.

May-October in two broods.

Ringlet *Aphantopus hyperantus*.

Common in longer grass situations nearly everywhere.

July-August.