

LONG MEADOW BUTTERFLY SURVEY REPORT 2024

This year's survey was undertaken on a weekly basis from May to September but several weeks were missed because of bad weather. Recording would normally also take place in April but as with last year the weather was unfavourable for recording purposes. Butterfly Conservation confirmed that this Summer had been very poor for butterflies: a third of the species had their worst year on record and no species had their best.

This has been borne out by our own results. Last year we recorded 891 butterflies but this year only 539. Four species previously present were totally missing from this year's count – Small Copper, Brown Argus, Common Blue and Peacock – and we must hope that they reappear in 2025. The numbers of all the other species recorded were down, in some cases dramatically. For example, 117 Speckled Woods were recorded last year but only 33 this year, but even so they were still the fifth most abundant species in this year's count after Meadow Browns, Gatekeepers, Ringlets, and assorted Whites.

Long Meadow Butterflies 2024 Survey period May – September

Date seen &, in brackets, number seen : if no number then only one seen

Small skipper	4/7(3), 11/7
Essex skipper	4/7, 11/7(2)
Small/Essex skipper	26/6, 11/7(3), 17/7(5), 30/7
Large skipper	
Brimstone	8/5, 17/7
Large white	8/5, 4/7(2), 17/7, 30/7, 19/9
Small white	8/5(7), 15/5(3), 29/5(2), 4/7, 11/7(3), 17/7, 24/7(3), 30/7, 7/8, 20/8, 13/9(4)
Green-veined white	24/7, 30/7(2)
Whites	24/5(3), 29/5, 4/7(2), 11/7(8), 24/7(14), 7/8, 20/8, 30/8(2), 2/9, 13/9(4), 19/9(2)

Orange tip	8/5(3), 15/5
Small copper	
Brown argus	
Common blue	
Holly blue	8/5(2), 29/5(2), 26/6, 24/7, 20/8
Red admiral	24/5(3), 29/5(4), 19/6, 17/7, 20/8(2)
Painted lady	
Small tortoiseshell	
Peacock	
Comma	11/7, 17/7, 24/7(2), 30/7(3)
Speckled wood	24/5, 4/7, 11/7(3), 24/7(6), 30/7, 7/8(3), 16/8(5), 20/8(2), 30/8(4), 2/9(4), 19/9(3)
Marbled white	26/6(15), 4/7(8), 11/7, 17/7
Gatekeeper	11/7(5), 17/7(30), 24/7(38), 30/7(23), 7/8(8), 16/8
Meadow brown	19/6(40), 26/6(75), 4/7(32), 11/7(18), 17/7(9), 24/7(9), 30/7(3), 7/8(2)
Ringlet	4/7(31), 11/7(27), 17/7(7)

Key Findings

	First date	Peak count	Peak date	Last date	Total seen
Small skipper	4/7	3	4/7	11/7	4
Essex skipper	4/7	2	11/7	11/7	3
Small/Essex skipper	26/6	5	17/7	30/7	10
Large skipper					

Brimstone	8/5	1	8/5	17/7	2
Large white	8/5	2	4/7	19/9	6
Small white	8/5	4	13/9	13/9	27
Green-veined white	24/7	2	30/7	30/7	3
Whites	24/5	14	24/7	19/9	39
Orange tip	8/5	3	8/5	15/5	4
Small copper					
Brown argus					
Common blue					
Holly blue	8/5	2	29/5	20/8	7
Red admiral	24/5	4	29/5	20/8	11
Painted lady					
Small tortoiseshell					
Peacock					
Comma	11/7	3	30/7	30/7	7
Speckled wood	24/5	6	24/7	19/9	33
Marbled white	26/6	15	26/6	17/7	25
Gatekeeper	11/7	38	24/7	16/8	105
Meadow brown	19/6	75	26/6	7/8	188
Ringlet	4/7	31	4/7	17/7	65