



Recorders' Conference 2021

Cumbria Wildlife 2020

Butterflies

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The Vital Importance of Recording

- In 2020 our best small blue butterfly breeding site was in imminent danger of being bulldozed and certainly would have been but for our intervention.
- Stewardship agreements are also not being 'policed' and as a result habitat is not being managed appropriately with obvious declining results.



This used to be an important marsh fritillary breeding site – it isn't now!

The Importance of Habitat Management and Connectivity

- Wildlife connectivity corridors
- Essential to maintain species genetic diversity and avoid inbreeding problems which may lead to loss because of isolation
- In south Cumbria many years of woodland management and connectivity have been worked on.



Record Different Areas

- Lockdown has affected our recording routines but has brought some advantages.
- Being restricted to my local walk lead to me recording many different species.
- This included Purple Hairstreak butterflies in 7 master Oak trees within a mile of my home on the southern edge of Carlisle.

The Relief at Having a Better Spring

Early emerging species of butterflies had endured several consecutive late, cold and windy Spring weather conditions which had very much affected species such as Pearl Bordered Fritillary, Duke of Burgundy and Brimstone.

The Pearl Bordered in particular was without doubt very much at the brink of disaster but the spring of 2019 and 2020 has seen an upturn in fortunes





Spending More Time On Some Sites

Places I visited in 2020 tended to be much fewer than usual and for specific purposes

I ended up spending more time at some sites and this led to me to have an amazing count of an extremely rare parasitic plant, Purple Broomrape.

In 2020 I did a longer search and stopped counting at 120, yes, one hundred and twenty. Really made my day it did.