

## European Butterflies Group - Chair's Report for AGM 2023

Last year's AGM was held on line and I reported that all activities in the previous period had been cancelled or postponed.

I am pleased to say that we have returned to a more normal situation. We have run a number of surveys ,our membership remains at about 700 and we have a healthy bank balance to devote to the conservation of European butterflies.

Since our last AGM we ran surveys in 2022 to search for Dil's Grayling *Pseudochazara orestes* (unfortunately without success – no butterflies were found) and for Spanish Greenish Blacktip *Euchloe bazae* where we found some colonies close to the established stronghold for the northern sub-species but no completely new sites.

In 2023 we returned after quite a long absence to Romania. We ran 2 trips in May and August to look for Danube Clouded Yellow *Colias myrmidone* . With the aid of maps produced by our German colleagues we were trying to find new sites for the species and I am pleased to say that on each trip we found 2 new sites where myrmidone was flying in good numbers. In July 8 members of EBG joined up with colleagues in Spain to look for Nevada Grayling *Pseudochazara williamsi* a species which seems to be in trouble. Whilst the species was found on a couple of sites numbers and locations seem to have suffered a worrying decline.

I mentioned earlier that we have a healthy bank balance and we have recently had a discussion on how best to use our funds to aid conservation. Our strength has always been in undertaking surveys since one of the first steps in conserving a species is to establish its status and range. We have decided that the new Red List should be our guide to establishing which species to prioritise and then we should use our funds to organise survey work either by our members or by using people in the country in question. Our current view is that the species we should concentrate on are

Dil's Grayling *Pseudochazara orestes*

Nevada Grayling *Pseudochazara williamsi*

Danube Clouded Yellow *Colias myrmidone*

Southern Hermit *Chazara prieuri*

La Palma Grayling *Hipparchia tilosi*

If you are interested in taking part in any of these surveys please contact me or any of the Committee members either today or later at your convenience.

I mentioned earlier the work that Jude Lock and Mike Haigh do on our website and I would encourage you to explore it.

- You will find on the website copies of all of the Newsletters (except the most recent) and here I should thank Nigel Peace our Newsletter editor for his hard work and creativity.
- Graham Revill has compiled an Index of Newsletters – so if you are looking for information from past Newsletters on a particular species or a region which has featured in an article you should be able to find it in the index thanks to Graham's hard work.
- On the subject of the Newsletter; Nigel is always looking for content so please consider writing an article whether it is a trip report, discussion about species or group of species or any subject you may think will be of interest to fellow-members.

Once again we have run a very successful photographic competition for our calendar. I would like to record to my thanks to Anne Spencer and to the judges for their efforts. Last year we sold 150 calendars and I am hoping to sell similar numbers this year. The standard of photographs is amazing – well done to all who submitted.

We continue to work closely with Butterfly Conservation Europe. As part of their ABLE project to promote butterfly monitoring they have produced numerous field guides for various parts of Europe – the most recent being for 3 National Parks in Spain. You can find these guides on our website or Butterfly Conservation Europe's website.

Planned or proposed activities for 2024 include further work on our priority species – to remind you they are Danube Clouded Yellow *Colias myrmidone* in Romania, Nevada Grayling *Pseudochazara williamsi* and Southern Hermit *Chazara prieuri* in Spain and hopefully on Dils Grayling *Pseudochazara orestes* in Greece.

This concludes the Chair's report.

