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Welcome. This Newsletter focuses on members' travels during the summer. There are seven articles, arranged geographically in an arc from central Spain to NW Greece. Thank you to everyone who has contributed.

My own travels in Europe this year concluded with a trip to the south coast of Spain, where some interesting species fly well into October. One highlight was a colony of Desert Orange-tips (*Colotis evagore*) at Castell de Ferro, where this photograph was taken on 10 October.



Desert Orange-tips (Colotis evagore), male and female.





Consequences of Brexit By Simon Spencer

OK, Brexit means Brexit but what does it mean for EIG and butterflies? For a start our BCE colleagues were very surprised but there was immediately a determination to make sure we continue the cooperation as normal. It may be that the UK will no longer be bound by the extensive EU environmental legislation like the Habitats Directive. This may be a problem for Butterfly Conservation in holding the UK government to account but not for EIG. The rest of EU Europe will still need to comply. We will still be able to assist our partners in Europe with surveys. We probably could not be part of LIFE funded projects but we never have been so far anyway.

Residency

Our small but growing band of EIG expatriate Brits may think about coming home to the UK, thus making the net migration figures even worse, but I suspect the weather will deter them. I doubt whether residency in EU countries for retiring UK citizens will be affected by Brexit but if we put up barriers to the citizens of EU countries then they might reciprocate and bilateral agreements over health care and pensions might in future be less advantageous. It will be a long time before the dust settles. The falling pound might make our foreign trips more expensive but it is bouncing back a bit. Anyone familiar with the Greek debt crisis and similar problems over much of southern Europe might make us expect a further improvement in future.

Crossing borders

My guess is that the Schengen agreement, which the UK is not part of, will gradually fall apart and crossing borders on the motorway at 130kph will be a fond memory. I doubt whether we will need visas for Europe after Brexit but potential border delays have little to do with Brexit and more to do with migrants. We had our papers checked on a mountain road from Spain into France this summer. The recent terrorist outrages were probably the reason for increased checks. We were not inconvenienced. With thousands of migrants arriving in Italy daily it is only a matter of time before more barriers go up.

Calais

Where I think things are going to get frequently difficult is in Calais. For a start French politicians are already keen to ditch the Le Touquet agreement which allows the UK Border Agency to check documents on French soil. They have \checkmark



▶ an election next year. French lorry drivers are blockading Calais as I write (early September 2016). My wife and I currently avoid Calais especially at night as GB cars and lorries are targeted by increasingly desperate migrants. We have had migrants banging on the window and seen the French police pepper spray migrants on the motorway right beside us. There have also been long delays into Dover. My advice would be to book early on a more expensive route that avoids Calais. There was a time when we used to park our small camper in French 'aires' overnight. I would not do so now.

Other places to avoid

There will probably be other borders with unexpected delays and queues and other places where one might not always feel comfortable. I would also probably put off going to see the **Orange-banded Hairstreak** (**Satyrium ledereri**) on Samos and in general avoid the East Aegean islands. I might think twice about crossing the Greece - Macedonia border to see the **Macedonian Grayling** (**Pseudochazara cingovskii**). The problems are much more to do with the migrant crisis than Brexit but Europe faces considerable challenges in the near future.

The best advice is to keep it simple. Single country tours with a hire car and cheap flights are probably less prone to delays than long distance car travel especially with ferries to catch. I feel sorry for transcontinental lorry drivers but I also have considerable sympathy for the poor Syrians who have had their country destroyed around them. There are probably more 'no go' areas now in North Africa and the Middle East than at the height of the Roman Empire. You won't catch me holidaying in Libya, Syria, Tunisia, or probably Egypt. I would also think twice about Turkey after the recent failed coup despite its wonderful butterfly fauna. •

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Bulgaria country pages

Pride of place in the News section on this occasion must go to the chapter on Bulgaria recently added to the 'country pages' section of the EIG website (http://www.bc-eig.org.uk/downloads/EIG%20Bulgaria.pdf). Written by Nick Greatorex-Davies, it is a comprehensive and authoritative summary of the butterflies of Bulgaria.

The chapter starts by introducing Bulgaria, and giving details of relevant books, publications, and websites. It then goes on to present a full analysis of the approximately 216 butterfly species found in the country. Lastly it gives descriptions of 18 areas that are particularly good for butterflies, with examples of some of the species found there, and a location map.

To provide a taster, here is an extract from the section dealing with species endemic to the Balkan Peninsula.

Balkan Clouded Yellow (Colias caucasica)

Apart from Bulgaria this mountain butterfly is only found in northwestern Greece, Macedonia, and in the Dinaric Alps in Montenegro and Bosnia-Herzegovina. In Bulgaria it is found above about 1100m to about 2200m (Kolev) very locally in the Rila Mountains, but also on Vitosha Mountain, just south of Sofia, and in the Osogovska Planina on Bulgaria's western border with Macedonia. Among other differences it has deeper orange uppersides than its common congener the Clouded Yellow (Colias crocea), nevertheless females can sometimes be hard to distinguish. It flies in June and July in areas where its bushy hostplant, Chamaecytisus absinthioides, is abundant. It is protected by law.



Balkan Clouded Yellow (*Colias caucasica*), female. Osogovska Planina, July 2013 ©Nick Greatorex-Davies.

All the country pages on the website have a named EIG contact who will not only be more than happy to provide further information in response to queries but also be delighted by your interest. Nick Greatorex-Davies is the EIG contact for Bulgaria at nickgdlepman@googlemail.com.



EIG Annual Research Bursary

EIG research bursaries (normally of €600) to assist with travel and other expenses incurred in studying European butterflies are again being offered in 2017.

The bursaries are particularly suited to surveys of rare and threatened species. They are open to citizens of any country in the Council of Europe. Although there is no upper age limit for applicants, the scheme has been drawn up with younger candidates in mind.

Applicants should submit a short project proposal and an estimate of overall cost. The deadline for applications for 2017 projects is 15 April 2017. There were no applications in 2016 so give it a go!

Full details including how to submit applications are on the EIG website at http://www.bc-eig.org.uk/downloads/EIG_Annual_Research_Bursary.pdf



Purple-edged Copper (Lycaena hippothoe)

Trips in 2017

French Pyrenees with Jude Lock, 30 June to 7 July 2017

Jude Lock (through her company, Borderline Holidays) will be repeating this year's successful trip the Hautes-Pyrénées, reported on pages 11 to 12.

The week will be spent in spectacular mountain scenery – high peaks, rushing streams, flower-filled hay meadows, high mountain pastures, an exceptional bird life and of course a large number of butterfly species. Records from the week will be incorporated into the online Butterfly Atlas of the Midi-Pyrénées, and other recording schemes.

For more information about the trip please contact lock.jude@gmail.com •

Belarus August 2017

Mike Williams made an exploratory visit to Belarus in July 2016 which proved a very interesting experience. He reports that aside from Bison and a fantastic array of birds, a number of butterfly species were seen which are now scarce in Europe as a whole, including Scarce Fritillary (Euphydryas maturna), Bog Fritillary (Boloria eunomia), Scarce Heath (Coenonympha hero), Cranberry Fritillary (Boloria aquilonaris), Poplar Admiral (Limenitis populi) and Woodland Brown (Lopinga achine). Greatest interest, however, was to be taken to a site in southern Belarus supporting Danube Clouded Yellow (Colias myrmidone). The foodplant (Chamaecytisus sp) was present in considerable quantity but the flight season was too advanced to assess population numbers with just two females seen. According to the local guide, there might be as many as 7-8 populations of Danube Clouded Yellow (C. myrmidone) still surviving which would makes Belarus of considerable importance in terms of the conservation of the species across Europe.

Mike is hoping to return to Belarus in August 2017 (possibly the week commencing 5th or 12th) to undertake survey work on Danube Clouded Yellow on behalf of the EIG. This is a species which is seriously threatened in Europe and a species where EIG involvement has already made a difference in Romania. Anyone who would like to register provisional interest should contact Mike at mike@stagborough.fsnet.co.uk •

Greece 2017

Simon Spencer is planning a big project in Greece in 2017 in conjunction with Lazaros Pamperis, author of the Butterflies of Greece. Lazaros has worked with ▼





Danube Clouded Yellow (Colias myrmidone), male, Gheorgheni, Romania, July 2013 (photo by Nigel Peace)

▶ EIG on several projects, most recently in the Tzoumerka National Park. The objective is to build on work in Greece by visiting several National Parks and seeing if National Park staff and volunteers can be encouraged to monitor and record butterflies. Simon would very much like to hear from EIG members with connections in Greece or who visit it frequently. Simon and Anne will take their campervan to Greece in early May 2017 and would welcome interest from any EIG members who would like to visit Greece at any time between May and early July 2017 to help with butterfly surveys. They will visit Chelmos, Kefalonia and some of the National Parks in the north of Greece.

As part of the same project, **John Salmon** is planning to visit Mt Taygetos in southern Greece in late June, with Lazaros. John would welcome the participation of other EIG members. If you are interested, please contact John at john_salmon@btinternet.com.

The information above is solely to make members aware of planned trips open to EIG members. EIG does not provide or market trips, and does not undertake any obligation or liability in respect of any trip. All trips are at the sole risk of the participating member.

European laterests Group European Butterflies 2017 Calendar

EIG Calendar 2017

The 2017 EIG Calendar is now available at the cost of £8 for one or £15 for two, plus P&P as appropriate. For more details, or to order your copy, please email Anne Spencer rhoslan.anne@gmail.com. Copies can be posted, or picked up at the Butterfly Conservation AGM on 5 November in Nottingham.

EIG AGM 2016

This year's EIG AGM and Members Day was held jointly with Upper Thames Branch at the Parish Hall, Benson, Oxfordshire, on Saturday 29 October 2016. The minutes will be placed on the EIG website. •

EIG on Facebook: www.facebook.com/BC.EuropeanInterestsGroup

We are delighted to report that EIG member Valerie Penny who is based in La Brennes in France has agreed to assist the existing Facebook team (Matt Berry and Simon Spencer) with the EIG Facebook page. Valerie's role will be to encourage use of the Facebook page, oversee editing of contributions, and do the bulk of the postings. So please send contributions (photos plus short text) to Valerie at facebook@bc-eig.org.uk from where they will be forwarded automatically to her private address. •

Mediterranean Red List

News from BC Europe is that the Mediterranean Red List has recently been finalised. This project provides information on the conservation status of the fauna and flora in the Mediterranean region, assessing approximately 6,000 species in different ▼

EIG

Calendar





Zullich's Blue (Plebejus zullichi),
– see report of 2013 field work
for Southern Spain endemics in
EIG 14 p.11-14.

taxonomic groups, according to the IUCN Red List categories and criteria. It identifies species that are threatened with extinction and the main threats that they are facing and is intended as a tool to lead and prioritize conservation actions in the Mediterranean region.

All species assessments can be found here: http://www.iucnredlist.org/initiatives /mediterranean.

Of most interest to EIG members will be the assessments of butterfly species. The related report 'The status and distribution of Mediterranean Butterflies' can be downloaded here: https://portals.iucn.org/library/node/46183

In brief, out of 463 species occurring in the region, 19 are classified as threatened. 7 of these are restricted to Turkey and the Levant region, and 5 to Morocco. The remaining 7 are as follows:

- Four species from the Balkans and Greece. Halicarnas (Thomson's Meadow)
 Brown (Maniola halicarnassus), Karpathos Grayling (Hipparchia christenseni), Brown's Grayling (Pseudochazara amymone) and Balkan Clouded Yellow (Colias caucasica) all live in scattered clearings and areas with shrubby vegetation; they are affected by habitat loss and degradation caused by fires, urbanization, and infrastructure development. All are listed as Endangered.
- One species from Italy. Ponza Grayling (Hipparchia sbordonii) is endemic to the Ponza islands and has a very restricted range on a few isolated islands. It is subject to strong pressures from tourism, urbanization and fires, and is listed as Endangered.
- Two species from Spain. Zullich's Blue (Plebejus zullichi) is restricted to high altitudes in Sierra Nevada. Although its distribution range is included in a protected area, the species is still affected by overgrazing, trampling and infrastructures, and is listed as Endangered. Nevada Blue (Polyommatus golgus), an endemic from southern Spain restricted to a few mountain ranges, is threatened by habitat reduction due to climate change and tourism infrastructure development, and is listed as Vulnerable.

News From France

Contributed by Jude Lock

Butterfly Atlas for the Midi-Pyrénées and Languedoc-Roussillon

Additional contributions are welcomed from EIG members for the Atlas until the end of 2016. After this date the Conservatoires Midi-Pyrénées and Languedoc-Roussillon will be working to produce a printed version of the Atlas in late 2017 or during 2018. If you are able to assist, please contact Jude Lock: lock.jude@gmail.com or David Demerges: david.demerges@espaces-naturels.fr

Distribution maps as they currently stand for the Midi-Pyrénées can be seen on the 'platforme Web'obs papillons en Midi-Pyrénées': http://www.webobs.cen-mp.org/ •

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Butterfly Atlas for the Île de France

Moving north to the Paris region, EIG members will be interested to know that there is an online atlas covering the butterflies and burnets of the Île de France at the following website: http://observatoire.cettia-idf.fr/taxon/rhopaloceres/atlas •

Bibliographie des Lépidoptères de France Volume 4 (2011-2015)

The first three volumes covered the period 1593 to 2010. This 200 page supplement, containing modifications, additions and updates up to 2015, is now available for oreina members at 10€ plus postage, or 15€ plus postage for non-members. All four volumes can be bought for 40€ plus postage. The order form can be downloaded here: http://www.bc-eig.org.uk/downloads/Bon%20de%20commande_20%20juin%202016.pdf

Moth Atlas for Lower Normandy & the Channel Islands

This book covers the 359 moths known in Lower Normandy & the Channel Islands. The sterling price is £37.50 plus postage of £15 (£52.50 in total). The order form can be downloaded at http://www.bc-eig.org.uk/downloads/Souscription%20Noctuelles%20LR%20EN2.pdf

New guide to the butterflies of Switzerland

We have recently received information from **Michel** and **Vincent Baudraz** of Lepido.ch about a new identification guide to the butterflies of Switzerland. The 'Guide d'identification des papillons de jour de Suisse' has 192 pages and covers 216 species, and is priced at CHF 30. Note that the text is in French. Full details are here: www.lepido.ch/guide-d-identification •





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Montes Universales

EIG survey trip to the Montes Universales, Spain, 4 – 13 June 2016. Report by Simon Spencer

I was going to go to the Montes Universales anyway as it is a lovely place and has lots of butterflies, some of them unique to that area of Spain. I asked Miguel Munguira our BCE colleague in Spain if there was anything useful a group of us could do while we there and he suggested a survey for the very localised Spanish Zephyr Blue (*Plebejus hespericus*), for which there are records in the area. It seemed just what EIG is all about: a highly enjoyable butterfly holiday, but also generating records for the Spanish recording scheme including hespericus at 8 sites.

Identification

It was not easy though. For a start identifying *hespericus* was a challenge. It is almost identical to the slightly larger **Escher's Blue** (*Polyommatus escheri*) which flies at the same time and the subtle difference in the shape of the underside hindwing submarginal spots was not always obvious. It is where collaboration and team work is essential. I or one of my colleagues would net them and another would photograph them for confirmation by Miguel. Fortunately Miguel had helped us obtain a net permit which arrived just before we left. This is essential in Spain as it is illegal to catch butterflies in Spain. We actually needed 2 permits from 2 different regional governments.

One major problem was that we recorded usually at least half a dozen species of Blue on each site and though Adonis Blue (*Polyommatus bellargus*), Turquoise Blue (*P. dorylas*) and Mother-of-Pearl Blue (*P. nivescens*) were obviously the wrong colour, Mazarine Blue (*Cyaniris semiargus*), Idas Blue (*Plebejus* •





Spanish Zephyr Blue (*Plebejus hespericus*), male (photos by Kevin Tolhurst)



▶ idas), Osiris Blue (Cupido osiris), Chapman's Blue (Polyommatus thersites), and Common Blue (P. icarus) as well as Escher's Blue (P. escheri) were indistinguishable in flight.

Food plant and habitat

Astragalus turolensis (photo by Diana Hall)





we also found it, usually mud puddling, in places where the food plant was absent or scarce. Much of the Montes Universales is pine forest with areas of grassland in between. Large patches of arable utilize the better ground though much of it seemed to be ploughed but unsown. The subtle interaction of soil, rainfall and grazing that leads to the *Astragalus* being common is still a mystery to me. This protected area is relatively undamaged but I suspect grazing is reduced. We saw little evidence of fire damage and at over 1000 metres they probably get quite a bit of snow as well as rain.

Results

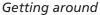
We surveyed about 40 sites all over the national park. John and Diana Winterbottom had

done an excellent job mapping Miguel's historical records. From a previous visit with **Paul Browning**, author of the *Butterflies of the Iberian Peninsula*, we knew several good butterfly hotspots but we also added a few new ones.

The author in search of *P. hespericus*, June 2016 (photo by Philip Jewess)

We were delighted to find *hespericus* at 8 sites. In total we saw 83 species in 10 days, and generated 623 records for Miguel's database. One noteworthy

record, recently confirmed by Miguel, was that of **Iberian Sooty Copper** (*Lycaena bleusii*), which had not been recorded in the area before.



The infrastructure of roads and tracks is amazing. All are well signposted and well maintained but with surprisingly few cars. Unlike many countries it was always easy to get off the road. We stayed at the excellent Albarracin camp site which also has chalets for hire.

I can supply the list of sites to EIG members on a confidential basis.

Simon Spencer cerisyi@btinternet.com



Hautes-Pyrénées

EIG training and survey trip to the Hautes-Pyrénées, France, 24th June - 1st July 2016. Report by Simon Spencer

To learn quickly how to identify butterflies it helps to have colleagues to work with in the field. Working on one's own you never know whether your guess is right. Ideally you should go out butterflying with someone with good local knowledge. They not only know where to go but can help make best use of the weather. In the mountains the weather is always an issue. Some days it is best to go down where it is warmer but on other days you can go up to get above the clouds.

Jude Lock (our EIG Rep for France) has lived in Luz St Sauveur for 30 years. She also knows her butterflies and the exact spot where some of the rarer species can be found. She co-led with me this brief trip which aimed to bring EIG members together for a week of butterfly observation and training, as well as to contribute to local surveys including the Butterfly Atlas of the Midi-Pyrénées. We had up to 14 people who participated at various times in the week, and were accommodated either in Barèges or Luz St Sauveur.

The group in action (Photo by Kathy Foot)



Learning new butterflies

Although it was a late season and the weather was rarely perfect we saw 70 species of butterfly and those that were new to butterflies got the opportunity to learn how to distinguish closely-related species like Essex Skipper (Thymelicus lineolus) and Small Skipper (T. sylvestris), and Green-veined White (Pieris napi) and Small White (P. rapae). The Green-veined White is often very different in southern Europe with only a few grey scales along the veins so if you are not careful it can look just like a Small White. In late June Orange-tip (Anthocharis cardamines), Pearlbordered Fritillary (Boloria euphrosyne) and Green Hairstreak (Callophrys rubi) were still flying but we also had 4 species of Ringlet including Piedmont (Erebia meolans), Brighteyed (E. oeme), and Mountain (E. epiphron). We had both Lesser Marbled Fritillary (Brenthis ino) and Marbled Fritillary ▼









Large Tortoiseshell (Nymphalis polychloros) (Photo by Ken Hall)

▶ (B. daphne), and Mountain Dappled White (Euchloe simplonia). Some of our lower walks in dull weather gave us good opportunities to photograph butterflies including an accommodating Large Tortoiseshell (Nymphalis polychloros) and to see White Admiral (Limenitis camilla). We also saw Large Wall Brown (Lasiommata maera), Wall Brown (L. megera) and Northern Wall Brown (L. petropolitana).

Birds and flowers too

When it was cold and grey we could turn our attention to Griffon Vulture, **Lefebvre's Ringlet** Lammergeier, Short-toed Eagle and other spectacular birds. The mountain flowers (Erebia lefebrvei), male of the Pyrenees were at their best with loads of different orchids and lilies.





Lefebvre's Ringlet

Our last day was one of those where it was best to go up and get above the clouds. At the top of a pass amongst the Alpine Choughs and Snow Finches we saw what was for me a new butterfly, Lefebvre's Ringlet (Erebia lefebrvei), flying low across the scree slopes and occasionally crossing the track. Cloud rising from the valley below occasionally obscured the sun. When we got back to town they had been in cloud all day.

Local knowledge is difficult to beat. A big thank you to Jude Lock for an excellent and most enjoyable week. Jude is not only the EIG representative in France but also now efficiently manages content on the EIG website. She also runs Borderline Holidays (http://borderlinehols.com). •

Simon Spencer cerisyi@btinternet.com

Northern Catalonia

Catalonia's Peaks and Valleys, Late Summer 2016, by Peter Bygate

This was the 20th successive year that Alan Bernard and I had ventured onto the continent in search of butterflies, choosing on this occasion to base ourselves for nine nights in the small French Catalan town of Prats-de-Mollo-le-Preste (P-M-P) at the western end of the richly forested Tech valley, not far from the Spanish border, and overlooked by the towering Mount Canigou.

Canigou Massif viewed from the Col d'Ares.



ur prior research had identified many potential sites at various altitudes radiating from P-M-P making it a perfect node from which to explore the region. We think it proved successful too, yielding about 65 species of butterfly during 8 full days in the field, although many specimens were well past their best (as, indeed, are we). We flew to Perpignan on August 25th and apart from a heavy thunderstorm on the 28th resulting in a cloudy aftermath for the next day and a half, we were treated to blue skies and hot sun for the rest of the visit.

In this account of our trip I'll describe selectively what we saw at altitude, roughly at 1,000m and above - the 'Peaks' - and the remainder below this height in the 'Valleys'.



The Peaks

Although we didn't acquaint ourselves with the detailed complex geology of the region, it was clear from the vegetation that this was primarily an acid habitat indicated by pine, heaths, and bracken. So you can imagine our utter surprise at being met by a Chalk-hill **Blue** (*Polyommatus coridon*) immediately on stepping out of the car at the Col d'Ares (1,513m) straddling the border with Spain! Confusion continued when grey (male) versions of this species also appeared plunging us into an identification crisis but the other possibility, the Provence Chalk-hill Blue (Polyommatus hispanus), is not found

Chalk-hill Blue (Polyommatus coridon), a grey male.

above 1,200m.

In the same family, weary Adonis Blues (**Polyommatus bellargus**) occurred in the company of the Spanish Brown Argus (Aricia cramera). Notable also was the presence of medium-sized Erebias initially intent on seeking out mates in preference to sitting conveniently on flowers, or even the ground. But eventually they did and a strong colony of the **Autumn Ringlet** (*Erebia neoridas*) - a new species for both of us - was added \checkmark



Autumn Ringlet (Erebia neoridas)



▶ to the list. In an area of longer, though dessicated grass, I pursued a smaller insect which suddenly crashed into the sward but left enough of itself visible to be identified from the photo as a **Mountain Ringlet** (*Erebia epiphron*), the only

individual seen on the trip. In fact, 12 of our sightings were of singletons, quite a high proportion we thought.

As is the way with Ringlets, it is always necessary to keep checking them out because every now and again, a gatecrasher turns up. So at the Col d'Ares Alan's persistence revealed a solitary **Piedmont Ringlet** (*Erebia meolans*) and then at a hairpin amongst the beeches and pines beyond La Preste I tracked a further individual 'for ever' until it settled on a scabious flower only to be grabbed by a crab spider on the next one it visited. Alan was later to pick out a sole **Scotch Argus** (*Erebia aethiops*) flying amongst - we think, but can't be certain - smaller sized **Pyrenees Brassy Ringlets** (*Erebia*



Other notable sightings at altitude, although not exclusively so, included **Weaver's** Fritillary (*Boloria dia*), Oberthur's Grizzled Skipper (*Pyrgus amoricanus*), Silver-spotted Skipper (*Hesperia comma*) and probably Rock Grayling (*Hipparchia alcyone*).

On our last full day, September 2nd, still above 1,400m on our descent from the Col d'Ares, we stopped at the 'second hairpin down' to inspect a large uncut meadow even though it was largely parched. A **Short-tailed Blue** (*Cupido*

argiades) was there along with other grassland species familiar to those of us who live in the UK. But then my attention was taken by a fairly large butterfly the like of which I had never ever seen before and I followed it frantically until it settled. I was looking at an albino Meadow Brown (Maniola jurtina ab. cinerea) - for me the outstanding highlight of the trip - and here it is for you to look at as well! It's always great to end a trip with something truly memorable. This last day also turned up our second Provençal Fritillary (Melitaea deione) and our one and only Spotted Fritillary (Melitaea didyma).

The 'Valleys'

The bulk of our species were, understandably, found at lower levels where conditions were warmer and water was more generally present. We/the car received a memorable reception from a huge butterfly just as

we turned up the narrow lane towards Les Fourquets on the edge of La Preste at c735m. Not only did it fly straight at us from its tree perch, it then followed us up the road, buzzed the car again, settled momentarily on the tarmac, and finally came to check us out as we stepped from the car. It was to be our only encounter with a **Lesser Purple Emperor** (**Apatura ilia**). A short way up the next track on the left, just past Saint-Sauveur, Alan found and photographed a **White-letter Hairstreak** (**Satyrium w-album**).



Pyrenees Brassy Ringlet (Erebia rondoui)



Albino Meadow Brown (Maniola jurtina ab. cinerea)





Two-tailed Pasha (Charaxes jasius)

Memorable also were our two meetings with another species with attitude, the irrepressible **Two-tailed Pasha** (*Charaxes jasius*). The first came on the day after the thunderstorm when we decided to leave the Pyrenees and head towards the coast to visit the Gorges de Lavall due south of Argelès-sur-Mer. On a sunless day in dry, dusty, Mediterranean scrub vegetation, the car disturbed a Pasha that had been tucking into faeces to which it soon returned after we'd parked up. It was to turn up later near Rocabruna, this time taking moisture from a stream, and presenting a more socially acceptable composition!

The following day turned out to be one of our best when we drove into Spain, headlights on dip through the post-thunderstorm low cloud atop the Col, hoping that the sun would be shining on the other side. UV levels were certainly much higher and as we pulled off the road for our lunch stop up a rough track just beyond Rocabruna (to the south-east of Mollo) a large black and white Grayling settled on a nearby rock. Our task was now to figure out whether it was the Rock or Woodland version. But as neither Alan nor I were medically qualified to perform the necessary investigative procedure, essential for absolute certainty, we fell back on the useful tips offered in Paul Browning's book, pages 216 and 217. We concluded that we'd found a strong colony of **Woodland Grayling** (*Hip*-



Iberian Marbled White (Melanargia lachesis)

parchia fagi). A couple of happy hours were spent at this spot revealing, amongst others, singles of a Swallowtail (Papilio machaon), an Iberian Marbled White (Melanargia lachesis), Bath White (Pontia daplidice), Provençal Short-tailed Blue (Cupido alcetas), Cleopatra (Gonepteryx cleopatra), and our first Olive Skipper (Pyrgus serratulae) of the trip. Accompanying these were Silver-washed Fritillary (Argynnis paphia) and Holly Blue (Celastrina argiolus), both species being seen every day.

New species turned up unexpectedly on September 1st when we visited San Damond, a vandalised chapel site sitting at c830m at the end of a rubble-strewn road close to the Spanish border to the

east of Coustouges, itself pretty much due east of P-M-P. Alan's bird-watching habits proved useful in spotting a **Purple Hairstreak** (*Favonius quercus*) high up in an oak to which I added a **Lang's Short-tailed Blue** (*Leptotes pirithous*), another of the singletons. Similarly, our sole **Striped Grayling** (*Hipparchia fidia*) also dropped in, settled for a short while on a rock permitting me to take its photo but denying Alan the same opportunity.

In drawing to a close, I should add that both the White Admiral (*Limenitis camilla*) and Southern White Admiral (*Limenitis reducta*) were seen but conspicuous by its absence was Small Tortoiseshell (*Aglais urticae*). And finally, the thunderstorm seemed to wipe out Sooty Copper (*Lycaena tityrus*) and Scarce Copper (*Lycaena vigaureae*) which had been seen on each of the previous days.•

A complete species/day/location spreadsheet is available upon request.

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(All photos by the author)

Woodland Brown

My Observations of the Woodland Brown (*Lopinga achine*) in France, by Graham Revill

During my butterfly quests in Western Europe over the last 50 years I have encountered the **Woodland Brown** (*Lopinga achine*) in several departments in central and eastern France and additionally at one location in the Pyrenees in the Aude department in 1983 and at the same location when revisiting the site in 1996. In Italy I found it at several locations in the mountains around Trento in mid-July 1977.



Woodland Brown

Distribution in France

According to Lafranchis in *Les Papillons de Jour de France, Belgique et Luxembourg et leurs chenilles*, published in 2000, the species has been recorded since 1980 in France in the departments of, from north to south, Moselle, Meurthe-et-Moselle, Haute-Marne, Yonne, Cote-d'Or, Haute-Saone, Haut-Rhin, Cher, Saone-et-Loire, Jura, Doubs, Ain, Haute-Savoie, Isère, Savoie, Drome, Charente-Maritime, Lot, Tarn-et-Garonne, Haute-Garonne and Ariège.

In 2011 it was reported for the first time from the department of the Dordogne by **David Simpson** (Bull.Soc. Linn. Bordeaux, Tome 147, nouv série no.40 (2), 2012: 141-144), where it was found in four communes, from the extreme north-west to the south-east of the department. In that document it is also stated to be found in

the Corrèze department.

(*Lopinga achine*)
A worn example settled
during a cloudy spell on
trackside vegetation at the

Reserve Biologique de Moloy in the Cote d'Or department, 1 July 2016. By this date, specimens are inclined to be in less than perfect condition.

Foodplants

Its foodplants are False-brome grass (*Brachypodium sylvaticum*), Tor-grass (*B. pinnatum*), Moor grass (*Molinia littoralis*), and sometimes White Sedge (*Carex alba*) and Mountain Sedge (*C. montana*).

Easy to overlook

In the field this year (from 27 June to 1 July) I was soon reminded that the Woodland Brown can easily be overlooked. It is necessary to look carefully at all medium-sized brown butterflies in flight, especially the **Ringlet** (**Aphantopus hyperantus**), which looks almost identical in flight, and also the **Meadow Brown** (**Maniola jurtina**), both of which share the Woodland Brown's habitats and flight period.

Limestone hills

My observations in eastern France show that the species occurs in two distinct habitats. In the limestone hills of the Jura Department, it appears to be widespread in low numbers in shady or semi-shaded generally open locations, sometimes rocky, where Box, Hornbeam, Sallow and small Conifers grow. The trees, which, in rocky terrain, grow to only about 5 metres tall, offer shade, which the Woodland Brown •





Wooded hills typical of the Jura department, where the species was found widely in small numbers. round bushes, quickly crossing areas in full sun to reach other bushy areas where it will alight on a leaf in full sun, sometimes with wings open, sometimes closed. These rocky hills are scrubbing over with the absence of grazing, which is likely to stifle the growth of its foodplants.

Deciduous forests

The second habitat is the extensive deciduous forests, stretching from St Dizier (Haute-Marne) south to Dijon (Cote d'Or) and to the north of the Saone-et-Loire department. Here it frequents the edges of woodland rides, settling on bushes

or trees, seemingly searching out spots in dappled sunlight on which to settle. It is conscious of movement and is easily disturbed when approached. Selecting areas of extensive woodland from the map and then exploring them by car, I found the Woodland Brown in about half the locations I chose to walk in, but numbers found were low, on average no more than two specimens were seen in half an hour's walk. The one exception was in the Reserve Biologique de Moloy, near Is-sur-Tille in the Cote d'Or department, where on one stretch of woodland track I counted 30 specimens within a distance of three or four hundred metres.



The woodland ride habitat favoured by the species in the Cote d'Or and neighbouring departments of central France.

I have not observed the species nectaring, despite the presence of flowering Brambles and Privet in both the above habitats. At one location a specimen was attracted for several minutes by the metallic finish of the car and it settled on the paintwork for about a minute in hot sunshine.

Still present

From my limited number of observations over the years it is impossible to conclude whether the population is being maintained, but it does seem to be still present in the same locations I have found it in past years.

Anybody travelling to Europe in June or July would do well to take a close look at medium-sized brown butterflies in the hope of adding new locations for the Woodland Brown.

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(Photos by the author)

The hills are alive.....with butterflies

Discovering butterflies around Lake Fuschl in "The Sound of Music Country" of Austria.

By Keith Heaven



Habitats around Fuschl in Austria.
Sloping meadows, dark
woodland, mountains and some
of the settings for
"The Sound of Music".

Surprisingly, the weather in Austria in June can be almost tropical, with increasing heat in the mornings sparking off intense rainstorms in the afternoons. This is what my wife and I experienced on a recent holiday to Lake Fuschl, near Salzburg, in the second half of June.

The local habitats

Several small valleys feed into the area of the lake, but the hillsides are steep, with extensive areas of conifer plantations though also with more natural deciduous woodland. Even the commercial forests had clearings and wide, sunny, access tracks.

The most productive habitats were the sloping meadows, lightly grazed by cattle. Parts of the meadows retained a specific, natural habitat type, containing native grasses, numerous flowering Fragrant Orchids (*Gymnadenia* species), Marsh Helleborine (*Epipactis palustris*), and other orchid types, as well as knapweed (*Centauria*) and scabious (*Scabiosa*) species, which proved valuable nectar-sources for insects

of all kinds.

One area of meadow, adjacent to a footpath around the lake, was identified by a notice board as an area being conserved for its wildlife value. The plant and insect life was so varied and rich, I could have spent the whole week just wandering around these patches of semi-natural habitat.

Purely in terms of butterfly species, though, the small areas of rough ▼



The village and the hills above. Climbing through the forest towards the distant crag proved quite productive.



Fragrant Orchids were common in the semi-natural grassland.



Marsh Helleborine in a conservation area.



Marbled White (Melanargia galathea)



Large Skipper (Ochlodes sylvanus)

▶ grassland found in neglected corners around the village of Fuschl, such as by the ring road or the local golf course, were as productive as the ancient meadows.

Some familiar species.....

Some familiar species were very numerous including Marbled White (*Melanargia galathea*), Ringlet (*Aphantopus hyperantus*) as well as masses of Small Skippers (*Thymelicus sylvestris*), Large Skippers (*Ochlodes sylvanus*) and a few Essex Skippers (*Thymelicus lineola*).

I only saw a few **Speckled Woods** (*Pararge aegeria*). These had the pale cream spots, more typical of northern specimens.

Vanessids were quite rare, perhaps due to the season. I saw just one Comma (*Polygonia c-album*), one very battered Red Admiral (*Vanessa atalanta*) and five Small Tortoiseshells (*Aglais urticae*). There were only a few Meadow Browns (*Maniola jurtina*) (too early?). I saw only one Large White (*Pieris brassicae*) and just a distant

scattering of other Pierids.

I managed a photograph of one of just two **Blues** seen and I speculate that it was a female **Mazarine Blue** (**Cyaniris semiargus**). The virtual absence of Blues was surprising, given the grassy habitats.

....and some unfamiliar ones

Compensation for these disappointments came in the form of several Fritillary species, and species of Heath butterfly, that were new to me.

In all grassy and scrubby habitats, I saw numerous butterflies that looked like **Heath Fritillaries** (**Melitaea athalia**). •



Mazarine Blue (Cyaniris semiargus), female.



False Heath Fritillary (Melitaea diamina), common around Fuschl.







▶ Living in east Kent, I am familiar with this species from Blean Woods near Canterbury. But the Austrian butterflies were often very noticeably darker than *athalia*, the dark markings sometimes occupying more of the upper wings than the orange background. I concluded that these were

Lesser Marbled Fritillary (Brenthis ino), widespread in local meadows.



High Brown Fritillary (*Argynnis adippe*), seeking moisture.



False Heath Fritillary (Melitaea diamina), lunching on crushed slug.

The grassland also produced numerous Heaths, including Chestnut Heath (Coenonympha glycerion) and, possibly, Pearly Heath (Coenonympha arcania).

IIU)





Chestnut Heath (Coenonympha glycerion)

▶ Feasting on the photographer's leg

One particular walk into the woods followed a wide, sunny track, bulldozed along a hillside. I noticed several large, brown butterflies. They would appear singly, at

regular intervals of 15 or 20 yards along the track. They must have been sunning themselves on the ground but I was never able to spot them before they took off fast into the forest. Then they would wait until I had passed and then drop back onto the track, just to taunt me.

As I turned round to look behind me, another of the frustrating butterflies dropped down from the bank above, hesitated, then shot in my direction like the proverbial Exocet! It landed on my bare leg in seconds! It found no shortage of salty moisture.

The photographs revealed an **Arran Brown** (*Erebia ligea*), a new species for me. I can only speculate how this one had been able to identify a good source of moisture from several yards away when it had already been scared off by me. The **Arran Brown** allowed quite a few photographs to be taken before making off in its own good time.



Arran Brown (*Erebia ligea*), making friends with the author's leg. They seem to occur in forests at higher elevations.

Some conclusions

Austria isn't the Mediterranean so there isn't constant sunshine. But there is still an impressive range of wildlife, including butterflies, even in areas which are not noted for being "hotspots".

Butterfly enthusiasts can visit the Salzburg area safe in the knowledge that their interests can be met while other members of the party can enjoy the same spectacular scenery they so admired in "The Sound of Music". Just remember to take waterproof clothing!

Keith Heaven

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(All photos by the author)



Afternoon clouds gather over the mountains above Lake Fuschl.

Austria and Hungary in July

EIG fundraising trip to Austria and Hungary, 23 – 30 July 2016. Report by Tony Hoare and Nigel Peace, with photographs by Andrew Burns

Twelve of us, including **Mike Williams** as leader, flew to Vienna on 23 July and were met by our good friend **Safi** and his two hard-working drivers, **Martin** & **Marton**.



Woodland Grayling (Hipparchia fagi)

ur first two nights were spent on the Western edge of Hungary near Lake Neusiedl (Lake Fertö in Hungarian), but before crossing the border we stopped at a hillside reserve overlooking the Danube to try to find the **Rock Grayling** (*Hipparchia alcyone*). It was very hot and Graylings were flying in reasonable numbers, but those we identified turned out to be **Woodland Grayling** (*Hipparchia fagi*).

Some target species in western Hungary

In Hungary we particularly wanted to see **Dusky Large Blue** (*Phengaris nausit-hous*) and **Scarce Large Blue** (*Phengaris teleius*). We found both in a reserve specially managed for them and those whose wings were not numbered by felt-tip as part of a study project were very photogenic.

Next we looked for the only known Hungarian population of **Red-underwing Skipper** (*Spialia sertorius*) which flew in a nearby quarry where it proved very difficult to see or follow in the heat. However one or two did settle occasionally and the photographers among us got the shots that we wanted.



The Grayling site above Hainburg an der Donau.



Dusky Large Blue (Phengaris nausithous)



Scarce Large Blue (Phengaris teleius)



Red-underwing Skipper (Spialia sertorius)





Damon Blue (Polyommatus damon)



Common Glider (Neptis sappho)

▶ Eastern Austria

On Monday 25 July we left Hungary and drove to a reserve near Eisenstadt in Austria specially managed for the **Damon Blue** (*Polyommatus damon*) which was there in good numbers, a lovely place. Most of us concentrated on that butterfly and only took a few shots of other species in the short time that we had available but they included **Common Glider** (*Neptis sappho*).

We then drove on into Austria as the clouds gathered and the mountain tops were mostly covered by the time we got to our next destination. We took a rack and pinion railway up to the summit of Schneeberg which was fun but we saw nothing but flowers in the mist and clouds except for one **Shepherd's Fritillary** (**Boloria pales**) which **Safi** found and brought down to us to photograph. We then had a five hour drive to Zell am See where we had three nights as the core of the trip, expecting to look for high Alpine goodies such as **Little Fritillary** (**Melitaea asteria**) and **Small Apollo** (**Parnassius phoebus**) in the Hohe Tauern range and especially on the Grossglockner Hochalpenstrasse.

The high Alps in central Austria

The next day dawned cloudy and largely stayed that way. However we went up to the high dams above Kaprun where the sun appeared briefly at intervals. Every time that it did we were amazed at how quickly the butterflies appeared, giving us a good idea of how rich the area is. A number of **Ringlets** appeared including the localised **Eriphyle Ringlet** (**Erebia eriphyle**) which we were able to identify with Safi's assistance. Another nice insect was the *subalpinus* form of **Sooty Copper** (*Lycaena tityrus*).

Shortly after lunch it came on to rain lightly and that was the end of butterflying for that day. Wednesday was worse and, though we went up the Alpine road, we photographed little but flowers and scenery – a huge pity as it is such a rich area and we had been very much looking forward to taking advantage of our guides' local knowledge.

On Thursday we drove over the Hochalpenstrasse again on our way to our last destination, Villach in Carinthia, but the clouds did not relent and they stayed with us all the way only thinning a bit as we visited the Dobratsch reserve in the afternoon. The top of the reserve was grazed flat but lower down in the woods we put up a few butterflies which gave us hope that the weather was about to improve.



Eriphyle Ringlet (Erebia eriphyle)



Sooty Copper (*Lycaena tityrus* f. *subalpinus*)







White-speck Ringlet (Erebia claudina)



The cable car above Mallnitz.

▶ The sun at last

Our last full day dawned in a cloudless sky – at last! We set off to look for the **White-speck Ringlet** (*Erebia claudina*), an Austrian endemic and a lifer for all of us, in the mountains above Mallnitz. The cable car provided easy access to the site and we soon found our target, flying with a number of other Erebia species just to confuse the issue. However once settled the small white specks on the hindwing make *claudina* an easy Ringlet to identify.

After a prolonged photo session most of us walked down the steep ski trail to the bottom station, picking up butterflies along the way. It was interesting to note how the species changed as we descended the trail but it was exhausting walking and the butterflies (Ringlets in particular) were difficult to approach. However it was our best day so we ended on a high.

Back to Vienna

We had enough time on our last day for a brief search for **Lorkovic's Brassy Ringlet** (*Erebia calcaria*) but our chosen road didn't get us high enough and we had to abandon the search and head for Vienna airport.

The holiday was fun with good food, drink and hotels and the company was excellent but the high-altitude heart of the

trip was torn out of it by the weather. Some of us will have to return for another attempt at finding what we missed this time! •

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(All photos by Andrew Burns except Eriphyle Ringlet by Nigel Peace)

Survey visit to Tzoumerka – Peristeri National Park, NW Greece, 1 – 8 June 2016.

By John Salmon

After similar surveys in 2014 (EIG Newsletter 16, 9-13) and 2015 (Newsletter 18, 23-4), three EIG members (Nigel Peace, Graham Revill and the author) were joined by Rika Bisa, Conservation Officer of the Tzoumerka National Park, and Lazaros Pamperis, author of *The Butterflies of Greece* (2nd edition, 2009), for a further survey in the first week of June.



Rivers and streams were much fuller than they had been in July in 2014, and although the weather was consistently good while we were in the field, that was partly a matter of luck: there was heavy (if relatively brief) rain almost as soon as we had finished; that is not infrequent in this area until a little later in the season. General conditions for butterflies do not seem to have changed significantly since 2014. In what follows, the conservation status of species is noted as follows: Near Threatened (NT).

John Salmon, a Park staff member, Graham Revill, Lazaros Pamperis, and Rika Bisa above the village of Neraida (photo by Nigel Peace)

Papilionidae

We visited more than 30 sites, guided by Lazaros' unrivalled knowledge of Greek butterflies and their habitats. A few were the same as in the 2014 survey in July; but this year we spent much more time in the more remote southeast of the Park. Often we saw similar species, but there were significant differences. Naturally the season was less advanced: we were delighted that Lazaros found an almost fully grown larva of **Apollo** (*Parnassius apollo: NT*) in the Katara Pass, where we had failed to see any adults in 2014. **Clouded Apollo** (*P. mnemosyne: NT*), by

Clouded Apollo (Parnassius mnemosyne) (photo by John Salmon)



contrast, was much more numerous in 2016 than two years before. There were more than 30 at one not very large site, and we often saw more than one at the other 8 at which it appeared. It seemed to be early in its flight period: where we could determine whether females had sphragides they usually did not.

By contrast, **Scarce Swallowtail** (*Iphiclides podalirius*), unusually, lived up to its English name: we saw only one at all its 6 sites but **v**



▶ one, where there were 2. It was, however, more frequent than **Swallowtail** (*Papilio machaon*), of which only one appeared. We saw neither **Southern Swallowtail** (*P. alexanor*) nor any **Festoons** (*Zerynthia spp*).



Hesperiidae

Skippers were generally ordinary but provided one highlight: an extremely cooperative **Yellow-banded Skipper** (*Pyrgus sidae*) invited all of us to photograph not only its upper but its very attractive under side. **Dingy** (*Erynnis tages*) was the most numerous, seen on many sites; there were fewer **Oriental Marbled** (*Carcharodus orientalis*), **Grizzled** (*Pyrgus malvae*), **Hungarian** (*Spialia orbifer*) and **Small** (*Thymelicus sylvestris*). **Essex** (*T. lineola*) and **Oberthür's** (*P. armoricanus*) were more frequent at a few sites.

Yellow-banded Skipper (*Pyrgus sidae*) (photo by John Salmon)

Pieridae

Pieridae were among the most widespread butterflies both in 2014 and 2016. This year, Clouded Yellow (Colias crocea) was seen on all but 3 sites, and Black-veined White (Aporia crataegi) at more than 20. Among species in smaller numbers were Mountain Small White (Pieris ergane) at 2 sites, Clouded Berger's (C. alfacariensis) at 11. and Orange-tip (Anthocharis cardamines) at 6. We saw neither of the other Orange-tips (A. damone, gruneri) nor, in contrast to 2014, any of the Brimstones.



Berger's Clouded Yellow (*Colias alfacariensis***)** (photo by Nigel Peace)



Amanda's Blue (Polyommatus amandus) which happily avoided the spider on the left (photo by John Salmon)

Lycaenidae

Blues were the most numerous species. In 2014 we failed altogether to find Small Blue (*Cupido minimus*), but it was present at a quarter of the sites we visited this year: there were 10 at one of them. Mazarine (*Cyaniris semiargus*) was at more than half our sites, and occasionally very common; we never saw anything like the 500 or so that were found at one site in 2015, but we did not visit that site near Syrrako. We found Silver-studded (*Plebejus argus*) on even more sites; at one of them we gave up counting at 50. No other species were as numerous, but Brown Argus (*Aricia agestis*) and Common Blue (*Polyommatus icarus*) were frequent and well spread over the Park.

Other Blue species were found in small numbers: **Blue Argus** (*Aricia anteros: NT*) at 1 in 6 sites – as many as 8 at one; **Amanda's** (*Polyommatus amandus*) at as many sites but in smaller numbers; **Turquoise** (*Polyommatus dorylas: NT*) was at 8 and **Adonis** (*Polyommatus bellargus*) at 7 sites, never in large numbers. **Eastern Baton** (*Pseudophilotes vicrama: NT*), **Escher's** (*Polyommatus* •



▶ escheri), Lang's Short-tailed (*Leptotes pirithous*) and Green-underside (*Glaucopsyche alexis*) were seen at only one site each. We saw only one species of Copper, Small (*Lycaena phleas*), but it was at 7 sites; there was one Hairstreak: unsurprisingly, Green (*Callophrys rubi*), at 9. Duke of Burgundy (*Hamearis lucina*) was not seen in 2014, but appeared at 3 sites this year, sometimes worn but sometimes fresh.



Nymphalidae

There were far fewer *Nymphalidae* than in July 2014: the most common **Fritillary**, **Glanville** (*Melitaea cinxia*) was at more than half the sites we visited, usually in small numbers but 6 at one; there were 15 **Spotted** (*M. didyma*) at one site, but we saw it at fewer sites. Others appeared in small numbers: **Queen of Spain** (*Issoria lathonia*) and **Pearl-bordered** (*Boloria euphrosyne*) – but both at 8 sites; **Dark Green** (*Argynnis aglaja*); **Knapweed** (*Melitaea phoebe*); **Lesser Spotted** (*M. trivia: NT/EU27*) and **Heath** (*M. athalia*) – 8 of them at one of its 2 sites. We found a single fresh **Twin-spot Fritillary** (*Brenthis hecate*) at one site, which was a highlight of the trip.

Twin-spot Fritillary (Brenthis hecate) (photo by John Salmon)

Satyrinae

Small Heath (Coenonympha pamphilus) was at more than 20 of our sites, and often numerous; the only other Heath was Pearly (C. arcania), but we only saw 3 on 2 sites. We also recorded Large Wall Brown (Lasionmata maera), Wall Brown (L. megera), Meadow Brown (Maniola jurtina), and Speckled Wood (Pararge aegeria). Woodland was the only Ringlet (Erebia medusa), but it was at a quarter of our sites, sometimes in numbers. We only saw a single Marbled White (Melanargia galathea), and none of its relatives Esper's or Balkan (M. russiae, larissa).

Elsewhere in Greece

Grass Jewel (*Chiliades trochylus*) (photo by Nigel Peace) We also had some success in finding butterflies while travelling to the Park. Within a short drive from Athens airport we explored the silver-mining area which in



antiquity was central to Athenian greatness and the Greek victory over the Persian navy at Salamis. We were delighted to be greeted by a handsome fresh **Plain Tiger** (*Danaus chrysippus*) at Thorikos. On the long drive north we saw both the tiny **Grass Jewel** (*Chiliades trochylus*) and the huge and spectacular larva of **Giant Peacock** (*Saturnia pyri*) very near the ancient site at Delphi.

We are as indebted to Lazarus for his both generous and precise advice as to where to look as we are to him and to Rika for their company and knowledge for the whole of a very enjoyable week. •

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Photospot

Any reader
who would like to
submit a few
photographs to
conclude subsequent
newsletters is most
welcome to
do so.

Butterflies of the Hautes-Pyrénées, summer 2016.

stayed in Gèdre in the French Pyrenees this summer from 13 to 18 July, and armed with site information from Jude Lock I expected to find Pyrenean specialities such as Gavarnie Blue and several Ringlets without too much difficulty. Unfortunately things were not so easy, as the season there was very late. Lefebvre's Ringlets (Erebia lefebvrei) were flying, but the first Gavarnie Blues (Agriades pyrenaicus) only appeared towards the end of my stay, and Gavarnie Ringlet (E. gorgone) was not recorded by Jude until 3 August. I could not find Pyrenees Brassy Ringlet (E. rondoui), or at least separate it from the very similar Common Brassy Ringlet (E. cassioides). Of course there were plenty of other nice butterflies to enjoy, including the humble Marbled Skipper (Carcharodus lavatherae), which I had not previously encountered in fresh condition.

Nigel Peace liz-nigel@hotmail.co.uk (All photographs by Nigel Peace)



Gavarnie Blue (Agriades pyrenaicus), 17 July 2016.



Marbled Skipper (Carcharodus lavatherae), 14 July 2016.



Lefebvre's Ringlet (Erebia lefebvrei), male, 15 July 2016.



Common Brassy Ringlet (Erebia cassioides), 14 July 2016.