

Butterfly Conservation Europe is a partnership organisation aimed at halting and reversing the decline of butterflies, moths and their habitats throughout Europe.



*Dear friends and colleagues,
This is the first newsletter of Butterfly Conservation Europe aiming at improving the communication between the partners, exchange of information, experience and knowledge. Its preparation is possible thanks to a small NGO operating grant from the EC given to BCE for the year 2010, which will allow us to develop our capacities, the partnership network, build public awareness, promote knowledge on butterflies, moths and their habitats and bring these issues to key audiences – political, management or the broad public.*

In the newsletter we will try to provide information on policy, legislation, some of the projects BCE and or the partners are involved in. We would like you to regard it as the newsletter where each of you can present and share your work on butterfly study and protection. Please, send your submissions to the newsletter editor. I am looking forward to hear your fascinating stories.
Josef Settele, BCE Chairman

Newsletter editor: Svetlana Miteva, svetlana.miteva@bc-europe.eu

European Red List of Butterflies

A new European Red List was published in March 2010, following input from BCE partners. For each species the relative risk of extinction is assessed and given a threat status using the IUCN Red List Criteria (IUCN 2001), which is the world's most widely accepted system for measuring extinction risk. All assessments followed the Guidelines for Application of IUCN Red List Criteria at Regional Levels (IUCN 2003). These assessments are based on information from over 50 compilers from almost every country. The results were reviewed and improved during a workshop held in January 2009 in Laufen (Germany) and through discussions and correspondence with relevant experts.

In Europe, there are 482 species of butterflies. Almost a third of these species are endemic to Europe. Overall, about 9% of the European butterflies are threatened in Europe, and 7% are threatened at the EU27 level. A further 10% of butterflies are considered Near Threatened. Despite the lack of good trend data in some countries, the study shows that about a third (31%) of the European butterflies have declining populations, while 4% are increasing and more than half of the species are stable. For the remaining 10%, the current information is too limited to define their overall population trend. Most of the threatened species are restricted to parts of southern Europe. The main current threat to the European butterflies is the loss and/or fragmentation of their habitat due to the changes in agricultural practices, either through intensification or abandonment. Other important threats are climate change, increased frequency, and intensity of fires and tourism development. More information about the Red List you can find [here](#) and at the website of the [IUCN](#)

Chris van Swaay and Irma Wynhoff, BCE

Read more about BCE's policy work:

Agriculture is an important source of income for many people and a significant form of land use shaping butterfly habitats. While traditional agriculture creates habitats rich in biodiversity, modern intensive agriculture often leads to serious losses of plants and animals. With a European Common Agricultural Policy aiming at recovery of biodiversity and landscape quality, subsidizing farmers for sustainable land management and leaving production of food to the market, further losses can be prevented and recovery might start. Therefore, BCE is involved in discussions about the reform of the European Common Agricultural Policy, often working with partners in the European Habitats Forum. Our statement on Common Agricultural Policy after 2013 can be found [here](#). [Background information and details](#): Contribution from Butterfly Conservation Europe to the EU Debate on Common Agriculture Reform.

Sue Collins, BCE

European Red List of Butterflies

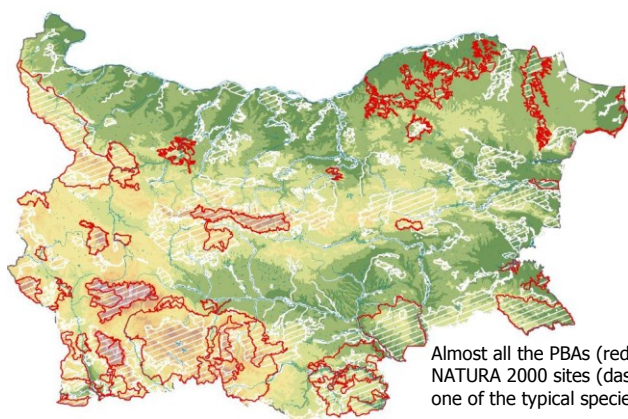
Compiled by Chris van Swaay, Annabelle Corbet, Sue Collins, Dirk Maes, Miguel Lopez Munoz, Martina Satic, Josef Settele, Rudi Vervaeke, Theo Vermaat, Martin Warren, Martin Werners and Irma Wynhoff



Prime Butterfly Areas in Bulgaria

50 PBAs were identified, described and submitted to the Bulgarian government to become part of the future NATURA 2000 network in the country. As a direct result 49 of them are now included and legally protected. The Prime Butterfly Areas are presented in a book and a CD, containing maps, descriptions, lists of the butterfly target species and recommendations for "butterfly friendly" management for each of the areas. The book was distributed during public awareness and capacity building meetings with the stakeholders. The project achieved all the planned results as well as the next very important step – the legal protection of the identified PBAs. This task, required a lot of additional efforts as lobbying, meetings, discussions and correspondence on European Commission level, but was finally achieved. The national leading partner was the [Bulgarian National Natural History Museum](#).

Svetlana Miteva, BCE



Almost all the PBAs (red borders) in Bulgaria are now also NATURA 2000 sites (dashed white) and *Lycaena ottomana*, one of the typical species present should benefit



Photo: Chris van Swaay

Prime Butterfly Areas in Serbia

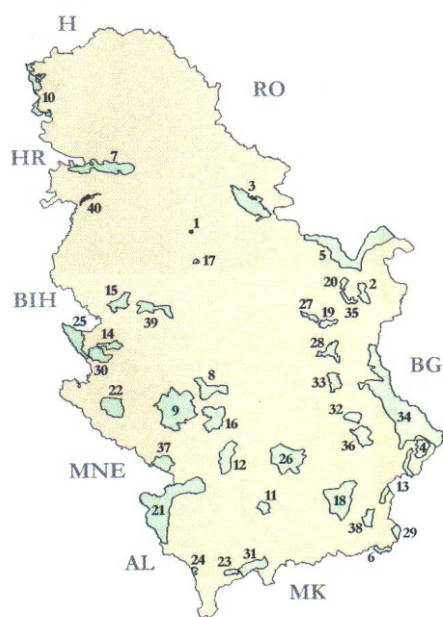
This project aimed to identify and describe the most important sites for butterflies in Serbia. The team had in total two years for all the work to collect the data, analyse it, make the selection of the areas and specify the PBA borders.

The 40 Prime Butterfly Areas PBAs identified and the site descriptions were published in a book and distributed among the stakeholders. The book and the supporting technical information were submitted to the Serbian Ministry of Environment and Spatial Planning and to the Institute for Nature Conservation, responsible for the legally protected areas. Early in 2010, the Serbian Government confirmed that 28 of the 40 PBAs are included in the Serbian part of the EMERALD Network.

The other significant achievement of the project team is that all the 38 Serbian butterfly target species are included in the newly proposed update of the Serbian law on nature protection. The previous version of this law was including only few butterfly species. The national leading partner was the Serbian NGO [HabiProt](#). The devoted work of HabiProt continued after the end of the BCE project in Serbia.

[More on this](#)

Svetlana Miteva, BCE



From the 40 identified Serbian PBAs 28 were included in the national EMERALD Network.



Photo: Kars Veling

The European Grassland Butterfly Indicator

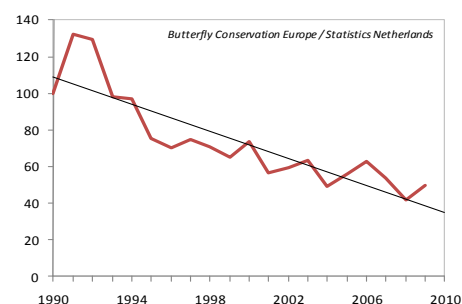
Using the results from the butterfly monitoring counts we wanted to develop a measure for habitat quality of grassland as main butterfly habitat. Such an indicator makes it possible to quantify both deteriorations and improvements of this habitat type since these result in more or less butterflies at the site after the changes. This is the third version of the European Grassland Butterfly Indicator, one of the indicators for biodiversity in the SEBI 2010 (Streamlining European 2010 Biodiversity Indicators), a pan-European initiative led by the European Environment Agency. The indicator is based on national Butterfly Monitoring Schemes in fourteen countries from all over the European Union. The indicator shows that since 1990, butterfly populations have declined by almost 70%, indicating a dramatic loss of grassland biodiversity. This also means that the situation has not improved since the previous version of the indicator. Of the seventeen species in the indicator, ten have declined in Europe and two have remained stable. For five species the trend is uncertain. The main reason for the decline of grassland butterflies is the change in rural land use: agricultural intensification where the land is relatively flat and easy to cultivate, abandonment in mountains and wet areas, mainly in Eastern and Southern Europe. Agricultural intensification, where the management is so intensive, leads to uniform, almost sterile grasslands. The grassland butterflies can only survive in traditionally farmed low input systems, like in the High Nature Value Farmland areas, as well as in the protected nature areas, and marginal land such as road verges. Abandonment is caused by socio-economic factors. When farming of low productivity land brings low incomes, young farmers leave their villages and the land is left unmanaged. The grassland quickly becomes high and rank and is soon replaced by scrub and woodland.

A key conclusion is that the implementation of the Natura 2000 network goals will be most beneficial in the intensively developed parts of Europe, especially North-west Europe, whereas the support of High Nature Value Farmland is vital to stop abandonment, especially in Eastern and Southern Europe.

Butterflies are one of the few species groups for which European wide monitoring is possible. Therefore, we are urging the EU and its member states to endorse butterfly monitoring and the building of indicators on a regular basis. Butterflies offer the possibility to be used as a structural headline indicator, not only for grasslands, but also for other habitats and pressures such as climate change.

[Read more](#)

Chris van Swaay, BCE



The European Grassland Butterfly Indicator shows a dramatic decline of almost 70%.

Science news: European taxonomical *Rhopalocera* list accepted by Fauna Europaea

In 2009, a team of butterfly taxonomy experts was formed with the help of BCE to achieve consensus in the European taxonomical *Rhopalocera* list. The group has since been very busy and discussions and scientific papers have revealed many new insights on taxonomical ranges. We are aware that there will always be ongoing discussion on taxonomical issues as new information becomes available on species ecology and DNA research, and that a final list will never exist. Despite that, an updated taxonomy has been agreed for use in the Red Data Book. This taxonomical list was submitted to Fauna Europaea and has now been accepted and incorporated in their official database in 2010.

One important change in the updated list is that *Maculinea* has become *Phengaris* and there is no distinction anymore between *Phengaris alcon* and *P. rebeli*. For all the changes that have been made, references are published on the Fauna Europaea website. The main credit for this important piece of work go to Rudi Verovnik and Martin Wiemers, for their role in the construction of a complete list of *Rhopalocera*. As taxonomical specialists, they have had the support of many other experts: Martin Warren, Josef Settele, John Coutsis, Miguel Munguira, Niklas Wahlberg, Emilio Balletto, Otakar Kudrna and Chris van Swaay. Their professional knowledge made the consensus on this difficult issue possible.

Access to the complete taxonomical list you will find [here](#). Detailed information and references can be found on the [Fauna Europaea website](#).

Albert Vliegthart, DBC

Butterfly conservation in Turkey

This is an ongoing project of BCE and [The Nature Conservation Centre \(Doga Koruma Merkezi\)](#) in Turkey. The planned project outcomes are a provisional Butterfly's Red List, PBA's, a National Butterfly Conservation Strategy, a butterfly watcher network, increased capacity on active butterfly conservation and raised [public awareness](#). The project team is facing the many serious challenges that Turkey offers nature conservationists, including lack of data, huge areas to survey, severe climatic conditions, underdeveloped nature conservation attitude among authorities and many others. In 2009, a [Butterfly Summer Camp](#) took place in Kaçkar Mountains, northeast Turkey, a biodiversity hotspot where a huge amount of butterfly species can be found. Out of the ca. 380 butterfly species found in Turkey, 201 can be found in this mountain range. A summer camp in this region is a real treat for anyone interested in butterflies.

Svetlana Miteva, BCE

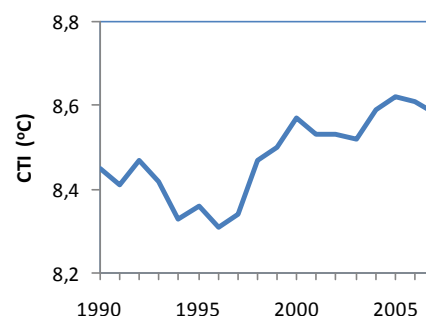


Photo: Chris van Swaay

Butterfly Climate Change Indicator

Two years ago four Butterfly Monitoring Schemes worked together to develop the first Climate Change Indicator for butterflies. The method used the change in the community temperature index (CTI) of the monitored butterfly communities and proved easy to use. Each butterfly species can be characterized by the mean temperature of its range in Europe. These mean temperatures of occurrence are combined according to the butterfly species and their numbers on the monitoring transects. An increase in CTI would reflect butterfly communities becoming increasingly composed of species associated with warmer temperatures. The speed of increase shows how fast butterfly communities adapt. The results show a clear upward trend over the 18 years from 1990 to 2007. In 2010, we hope to update this indicator using as many butterfly monitoring schemes as possible. The results will be published on the BCE website and sent to all partners, as well as relevant European organizations working on this subject.

Chris van Swaay, BCE



Temporal trend of the CTI (Community Temperature Index, weighted by country size) in Europe (represented by Catalunya, Netherlands, United Kingdom and Finland). Butterflies communities are getting "warmer".



Photo: Chris van Swaay

Nature Conservation Education today: "Butterflies at School"

One of the most successful education projects of Dutch Butterfly Conservation (DBC) is 'Butterflies at School'. Since 1989 teachers can order a package of eggs, caterpillars and pupae from the cabbage white. In addition, lessons on butterflies at different levels can be downloaded from the website for free. The children take care of the animals at school, feeding and cleaning their caterpillars daily. This way they can see and experience the whole fascinating development close up as the eggs transform to caterpillar, chrysalis and to the butterfly. It is an experience they never forget, especially when it concludes with a big butterfly release party when the adults are released in a school garden or city park to spread their wings and fly way. We are now sending more than 3,000 packages a year, which means that about 100,000 children each year are made aware of butterflies as an important part of nature! An easy way to get kids in touch with butterflies, the environment they live in and nature in general.

Ineke Koopmans, DBC



The partners of Butterfly Conservation Europe

Andorra	Snow and Mountain Research Centre of Andorra - Marta Domènech Ferrés	Lithuania	Lithuanian Entomological Society - Giedrius Svitra and Dalius Dapkus
Austria	Austrian Society of Entomofaunistics - Helmut Höttinger	Luxembourg	Natural History Museum - Marc Meyer
Belarus	Belarussian Entomological Society - Anatolij Kulak	Macedonia	Butterfly Study Group - Prof. Branko Micevski
Belgium (F)	Butterfly Working Group of Natuurpunt - Dirk Maes	Netherlands	Dutch Butterfly Conservation - Chris van Swaay
Belgium (W)	Wallonie OFFS - Violaine Fichet	Portugal	Tagis - Patricia Garcia Pereira
Bulgaria	National Museum of Natural History, BAS - Stoyan Beshkov, Stanislav Abadjiev	Poland	Association for Butterfly Conservation (TOM) - Marcin Sielezniew
Croatia	Croatian Natural History Museum - Martina Šašić	Norway	Norwegian Entomological Society - Leif Aarvik
Czech Republic	Biological Centre of the Czech Academy of Sciences - Martin Konvicka	Romania	Focal Centre for Biodiversity Monitoring and Conservation - Sergiu Mihut
Denmark	Danish Entomological Society - Michael Kavin	Russia	Russian Entomological Society - Alexey Devyatkin
Estonia	Estonian Lepidopterists Society - Toomas Tammaru	Finland	Finnish Lepidopterological Society - Jasko Kullberg
Slovakia	Institute of Landscape Ecology, Slovak Academy of Sciences - Henrik Kalivoda	Serbia	Ministry of Environment and Spatial Planning - Predrag Jaksic
France	National Museum of Natural History - Cécile Edelist and Luc Manil	Slovenia	Society for the Conservation and Study of Lepidoptera in Slovenia - Rudi Verovnik
Germany	Helmholtz Centre for Environmental Research - UFZ - Josef Settele	Spain	Association Zerynthia - Yeray Monasterio
Germany	Bavarian Academy for Nature and Landscape Conservation (ANL) - Christian Stettmer	Spain (+ Andorra)	Catalonia Butterfly Monitoring Scheme - Constanti Stefanescu
Hungary	Hungarian Society of Lepidopterology - Safian Szabolc Adam Korosi	Sweden	Department of Natural Sciences, University of Gävle - Nils Ryrholm
Iceland	Zoological Museum - Erling Olafsson	Switzerland	Swiss Butterfly Conservation - Goran Dusej
Ireland	Dublin Naturalists' Field Club - David Nash	Turkey	Doga Koruma Merkezi - Evrim Karacetin
Isle of Man	Manx Butterfly Conservation - Garry Curtis	United Kingdom	Butterfly Conservation - Martin Warren
Italy	Zoological Union of Italy - Emilio Balletto		

[For more information check here](#)