

# SIMPLY OUTSTANDING FOR BUTTERFLIES

SOUTH SHROPSHIRE IS AN EXCEPTIONAL PART OF THE COUNTRY IN BEING HOME TO OVER HALF THE SPECIES FOUND ANYWHERE IN THE UK.

## 3 REASONS FOR SOUTH SHROPSHIRE'S AMAZING BIODIVERSITY

**1**

South Shropshire remains a largely rural and green landscape, as it has been for thousands of years.

**2**

Its geographic position, industrial heritage and underlying geology means that the landscape offers many different places for butterflies to colonise.

**3**

Because traditional farming methods have largely continued, butterflies have survived here while becoming increasingly rare and threatened elsewhere.

**RESULT**

South Shropshire still contains species of butterfly like the Wood White, Small Pearl-bordered Fritillary and Grayling which have been lost from many parts of the UK



Butterfly Conservation is working to ensure that appropriate management takes place to enhance and extend the special habitats on which these species depend.

Efforts are being made to record and monitor key species and involve the local community in learning more about butterflies and their requirements.

Flight Times	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Winter	Caterpillar Foodplants	Status	Habitat	
Dark Green Fritillary														caterpillar	Violet sp.	very local / under-recorded	Unimproved damp grasslands
Silver-washed Fritillary														caterpillar	Common Dog Violet	local	Rides & tracks, often on bramble flowers
Pearl-bordered Fritillary														caterpillar	Violets	very local	Newly coppiced areas & ride edges
Small Pearl-bordered Fritillary														caterpillar	Violets	local	Damp, grassy meadows near streams
Red Admiral														butterfly	Common Nettle, Hop	partial migrant	Flowery meadows & orchards
White Admiral														caterpillar	Honeysuckle	local	Rides and forest tracks with bramble
Comma														butterfly	Common Nettle, Hop, elms, currants	widespread	Woodland rides & glades
Painted Lady														migrant	Thistles mainly	migrant	Sunny, open habitats with thistles
Peacock														butterfly	Common Nettle	widespread	Woodland rides & glades
Small Tortoiseshell														butterfly	Nettles	widespread	Open areas often in vicinity of nettles
Gatekeeper														caterpillar	grasses	widespread	Hedgerows, grassy areas, woodland
Meadow Brown														caterpillar	grasses	widespread	Flowery open grassland, woodland rides
Grayling														caterpillar	fine grasses	local	Quarries, screes and brownfield sites
Wall Brown														caterpillar	fine grasses	local	Quarries, screes and brownfield sites
Ringlet														caterpillar	coarse grasses	widespread	Field margins & scrub
Speckled Wood														cat'r/pupa	grasses	widespread	Dappled rides & glades
Small Heath														caterpillar	fine grasses	widespread	Open grassland and heathland areas
Marbled White														caterpillar	grasses	very local	Flowery meadows (recent colonist)
Dingy Skipper														caterpillar	Common Bird's foot-trefoil	very local	Brownfield sites with open swards
Grizzled Skipper														pupa	Strawberry, Bramble, Cinquefoil	very local	Sunny rides, short turf & bare patches
Small Skipper														caterpillar	grasses	widespread	Grassy areas & meadows
Essex Skipper														egg	grasses	local / under-recorded	Grassy areas & meadows
Large Skipper														caterpillar	grasses	widespread	Ride margins & scrub
Common Blue														caterpillar	Common Bird's foot-trefoil, Clovers	widespread	Unimproved grasslands
Holly Blue														pupa	Holly, Ivy	widespread	Seen around bushes and small trees
Brown Argus														caterpillar	Cranesbills, Common Stork's-bill	local	Flowery meadows
Small Copper														caterpillar	Common Sorrel, Sheep's Sorrel, Dock	widespread	Flowery pastures, heathland
Green Hairstreak														pupa	Gorse, Broom, Bird's foot-trefoil	widespread	Scrubby areas, heathland, upland
Purple Hairstreak														egg	Oaks	widespread	Canopy of oak trees, sometimes on ash
White-letter Hairstreak														egg	Elms	local / under-recorded	Strongly associated with elm trees
Large White														pupa	crucifers	widespread	Open clearings, flowery meadows
Small White														pupa	crucifers	widespread	Open clearings, flowery meadows
Green-veined White														pupa	crucifers	widespread	Damp meadows, woodland rides
Wood White														pupa	legumes	local	Woodland rides/glades, variable sward
Orange-tip														pupa	crucifers	widespread	Damp meadows, woodland rides
Brimstone														butterfly	Alder Buckthorn	widespread	Scrubby areas and ride edges
Clouded Yellow														migrant	legumes	migrant	Flowery meadows - very occasional

## DISCOVER MORE

### 30 Butterfly Walks in the West Midlands

A guide to the best places to see butterflies in Shropshire and the surrounding counties is available from; West Midlands Butterfly Conservation, 2 Dewberry Close, Stourport, Worcestershire, DY13 8TB.

**£5.95**  
inc. p&p

Please make cheques payable to: Butterfly Conservation (West Midlands branch).

There are many excellent identification guides to British Butterflies available through bookshops or the internet including:

- **Britain's Butterflies: A Field Guide to the Butterflies of Britain & Ireland** by D. Newland (ISBN978-1903657126 ).
- **British and Irish Butterflies** by A. Riley (ISBN 978-0955392801).
- **Shropshire Butterflies: a poetic and artistic guide to the butterflies of Shropshire** edited by Nadia Kingsley (ISBN978-0-9568275-0-0).

All available from the following bookshops:

Wenlock Books 2 High St, Much Wenlock, Salop TF13 6AA t: 01952 727877	Art and Artisan Books 26 High St, Bishop's Castle, Shropshire SY9 5BQ t: 01588 630435	Castle Bookshop 5 Castle St, Ludlow, Shropshire SY8 1AS t: 01584 872562
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For those who prefer to access information via their computer:  
**Jewels in the Air - DVD.** To order go to [www.jewelsintheair.com](http://www.jewelsintheair.com).

For information on local events, guided walks or how to become involved with survey and monitoring tasks and/or work parties delivering improved habitat management visit West Midlands Butterfly Conservation's website:

[www.westmidlands-butterflies.org.uk](http://www.westmidlands-butterflies.org.uk)

There are links from this site to the national Butterfly Conservation website which contains membership details and ways you can support our work.

By joining Butterfly Conservation you can make a real difference to the survival of butterflies, moths and their habitats. Butterflies and moths are a crucial part of our heritage and valuable indicators to the health of the environment. The more members we have the more we can achieve.

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# SOUTH SHROPSHIRE

## FIND OUT HOW YOU CAN HELP SAVE OUR WONDERFUL BUTTERFLIES

South Shropshire, most of which falls within the Shropshire Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, stretches from the Welsh border in the west to the rugged Cleve Hills in the east. It includes a range of habitats which support a wealth of butterflies including some that are now rare in other parts of Britain.

This leaflet provides information about the butterflies that occur, how to identify them and when and where to see them.



## SURVEYING & RECORDING BUTTERFLIES IS CRUCIAL TO THEIR CONSERVATION



Butterfly Conservation has projects throughout the UK which have been very successful in safeguard and increasing populations of scarce and declining species. In South Shropshire, we are working hard, alongside other partner organisations, on a number of initiatives aimed at improving habitats for nationally important butterflies like the Wood White and Small Pearl-bordered Fritillary (see website below for more details).

Butterfly Conservation's strength derives from its 31 regional branches, and the 14,500 members they embrace. The huge efforts of these branch members currently enable Butterfly Conservation to map the distribution and abundance of butterflies throughout the British Isles. This work is crucial as it allows Butterfly Conservation to concentrate its efforts where the need is greatest, as well as safeguarding and protecting the most vulnerable sites from development and damage. In south Shropshire, we need volunteers and the support of the local community to assist with recording and monitoring tasks. Help is also needed to ensure that sites remain suitable for butterflies over time by carrying out practical habitat management.

Butterflies are generally not too difficult to identify and this leaflet includes an identification guide to all the species you are likely to come across. Each species is only on the wing for a limited time and, although there may be slight changes according to annual weather patterns, these flight times are usually predictable. The flight chart shows when different butterflies can be seen. Recording forms are available to send in all sightings and these can be downloaded from the regional Butterfly Conservation website:

[www.westmidlands-butterflies.org.uk](http://www.westmidlands-butterflies.org.uk)

## KEY LOCATIONS FOR BUTTERFLIES IN SOUTH SHROPSHIRE



## BEST PLACES TO SEE BUTTERFLIES

Location	OS Grid Ref
Bury Ditches	SO334839
The Bog	SO357978
Cardingmill Valley	SO443945
Catherton Common	SO622778
Mortimer Forest	SO494741
Wenlock Edge	SO583975



# IDENTIFICATION GUIDE TO THE BUTTERFLIES OF SOUTH SHROPSHIRE

**Dark Green Fritillary**  
*Argynnis aglaja*

Upperside golden orange with black spots. Line of chevrons along wing edges.

Underside hindwing mainly green with silver spots.



**Silver-washed Fritillary**  
*Argynnis paphia*

Underside, both sexes, silvery-green with silver streaks.

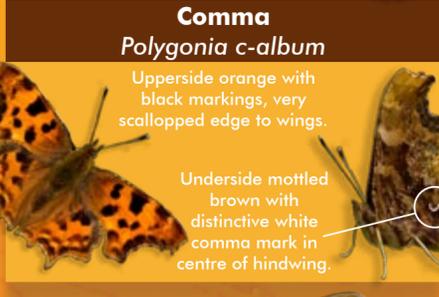
Upperside male, bright orange, black streaks and spots, female, dusky orange and black spots.



**Comma**  
*Polyommatus c-album*

Upperside orange with black markings, very scalloped edge to wings.

Underside mottled brown with distinctive white comma mark in centre of hindwing.



**Gatekeeper**  
*Pyronia tithonus*

Underside darker inner band on hindwing then paler towards wing edge, white spots within paler area.

Upperside eyespots double-pupilled, smaller than Meadow Brown. Male has prominent brown scent brand across forewing.



**Dingy Skipper**  
*Erynnis tages*

Upperside brown with pale markings. Underside similar. A small butterfly which is generally moth like in appearance.



**Small Skipper**  
*Thymelicus sylvestris*

Underside of antennae tip orange.

Upperside solid orange, oblique brown/black scent brand on male.



**Large White**  
*Pieris brassicae*

Underside similar to Small White but generally more grey scaling.

Upperside well marked, wide black tip to forewing extending further down wing edge than other whites.

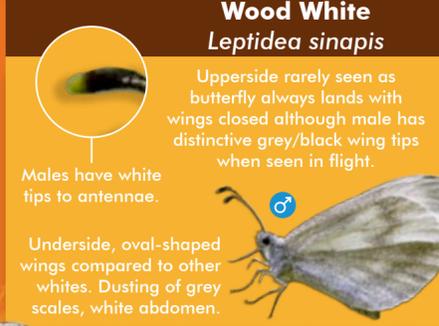


**Wood White**  
*Leptidea sinapis*

Upperside rarely seen as butterfly always lands with wings closed although male has distinctive grey/black wing tips when seen in flight.

Males have white tips to antennae.

Underside, oval-shaped wings compared to other whites. Dusting of grey scales, white abdomen.



**Brimstone**  
*Gonepteryx rhamni*

Upperside rarely seen as butterfly always lands with wings closed.

Male upperside bright buttercup yellow, pointed tips to wings. Pale central spot in both wings.

Female similar to male but ground colour pale greenish white. Can be confused with Large White in flight.



**Red Admiral**  
*Vanessa atalanta*

Underside, mottled, grey, brown and black, well camouflaged.

Upperside, velvet black with red diagonal stripe, white spots near wing tips.



**Painted Lady**  
*Vanessa cardui*

Underside, cryptic colouration with row of eye spots towards edge of hindwing.

Upperside, shades of orange and brown with black tips and white spots to forewings.



**Meadow Brown**  
*Maniola jurtina*

Upperside dark brown with splash of orange more extensive on the female around single-pupilled eyespot.

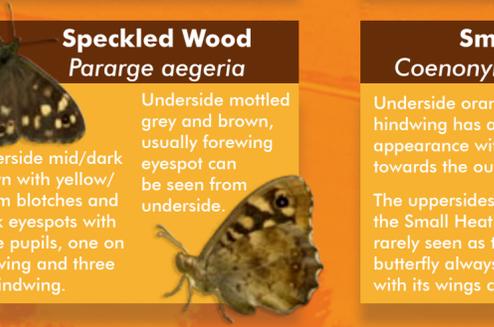
Inner margin of underside mid brown, paler towards wing edge with small black dots noticeable on some specimens.



**Speckled Wood**  
*Pararge aegeria*

Underside mottled grey and brown, usually forewing eyespot can be seen from underside.

Upperside mid/dark brown with yellow/cream blotches and black eyespots with white pupils, one on forewing and three on hindwing.



**Essex Skipper**  
*Thymelicus lineola*

Upperside similar to Small Skipper except scent brand on male is parallel to wing edge.

Underside tip of antennae glossy black giving the appearance that they have been dipped in ink.



**Small White**  
*Pieris rapae*

Upperside marked with black spots and dark grey/black wing tips.

Underside dull yellow dusted with grey scales.



**Orange Tip**  
*Anthocharis cardamines*

Upperside male, bright orange tips to forewings, females grey/black tips both with central black spot.

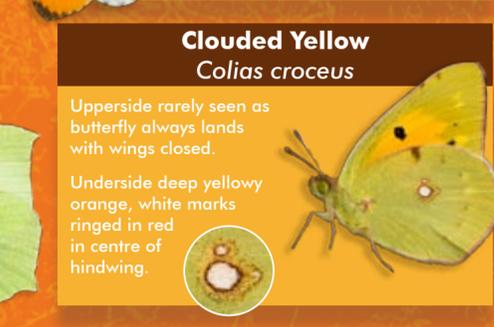
Underside mottled green hindwings very distinctive.



**Clouded Yellow**  
*Colias croceus*

Upperside rarely seen as butterfly always lands with wings closed.

Underside deep yellowy orange, white marks ringed in red in centre of hindwing.



**White Admiral**  
*Ladoga camilla*

Underside similar to upper pattern but lighter in tone with blue/grey patch on inner margin of hindwing.

Dark chocolate brown upperside with distinctive white bands across all four wings.



**Peacock**  
*Inachis io*

Underside, very dark brown/black.

Upperside, mainly maroon background with large peacock eyespots on all wings.



**Grayling**  
*Hipparchia semele*

Upperside seldom seen except in flight. Generally orange-brown with two widely separated eyespots on forewing.

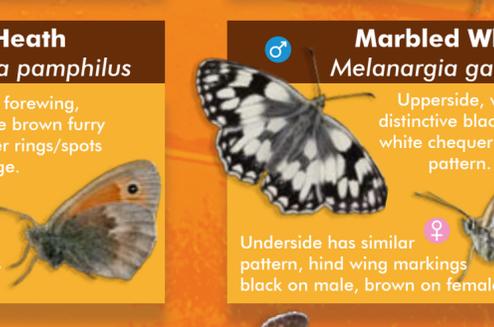
Underside forewing orange with two spots, hindwing mottled brown usually with white irregular streak.



**Small Heath**  
*Coenonympha pamphilus*

Underside orange on forewing, hindwing has a pale brown furry appearance with paler rings/spots towards the outer edge.

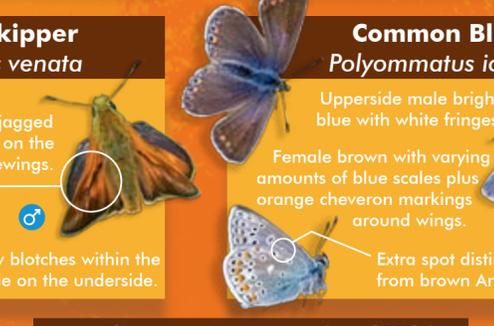
The uppersides of the Small Heath are rarely seen as the butterfly always lands with its wings closed.



**Large Skipper**  
*Ochlodes venata*

Male has jagged sex-brand on the upper forewings.

Upperside paler yellow blotches within the orange, also noticeable on the underside.



**Green-veined White**  
*Pieris napi*

Underside distinctly veined markings, usually visible from the upperside as well, paler in summer brood.

Upperside white with light grey wing tips.



**Green Hairstreak**  
*Callophrys rubi*

Upperside rarely seen as butterfly always lands with wings closed.

Underside, bright metallic green sometimes with a white line crossing the hindwing.



**Purple Hairstreak**  
*Neozephyrus quercus*

Upperside black overshot with iridescent purple. male has extensive purple colouration while the female has a patch of purple on the upper forewings as shown.

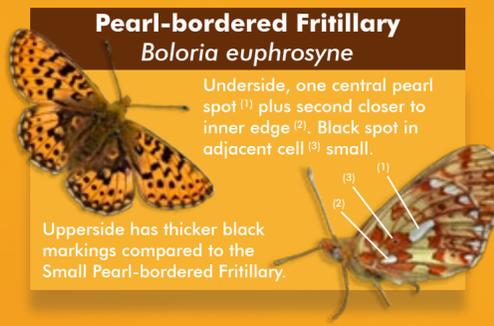
Underside, silver grey with white line crossing both wings with dark pupilled orange spot near base of hindwing.



**Pearl-bordered Fritillary**  
*Boloria euphrosyne*

Underside, one central pearl spot (1) plus second closer to inner edge (2). Black spot in adjacent cell (3) small.

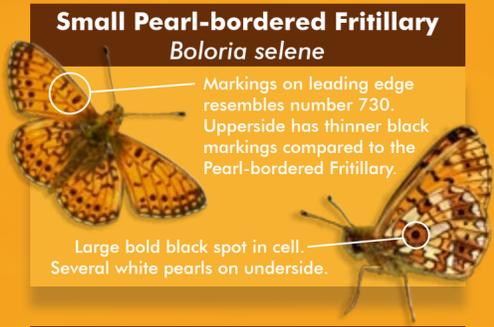
Upperside has thicker black markings compared to the Small Pearl-bordered Fritillary.



**Small Pearl-bordered Fritillary**  
*Boloria selene*

Markings on leading edge resembles number 730. Upperside has thinner black markings compared to the Pearl-bordered Fritillary.

Large bold black spot in cell. Several white pearls on underside.



**Small Tortoiseshell**  
*Aglais urticae*

Underside, wide black inner band, narrower and paler outer band with dark margin.

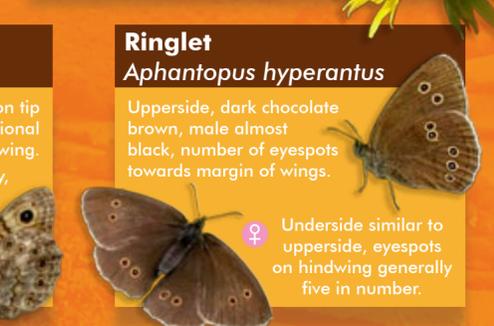
Upperside orange with black spots and a margin of blue crescents on all four wings.



**Ringlet**  
*Aphantopus hyperantus*

Upperside, dark chocolate brown, male almost black, number of eyespots towards margin of wings.

Underside similar to upperside, eyespots on hindwing generally five in number.



**Grizzled Skipper**  
*Pyrgus malvae*

Upperside, black or dark brown with white spots on all four wings.

Underside, white splashes on greenish/brown background.



**Holly Blue**  
*Celastrina argiolus*

Upperside male pale blue with chequered fringes.

Underside silvery blue with tiny black spots.

Upperside female, similar ground colour to male but black borders to tips of forewings.



**Brown Argus**  
*Aricia agestis*

Upperside similar to female Common Blue but lacks any trace of blue scaling.

Underside similar to Common Blue but arrangements of spots differ. Missing spot on forewing.

Central eyespot on forewing.

Orange lunules on all four wings.



**Small Copper**  
*Lycaena phlaeas*

Upperside, coppery metallic orange forewings with black spots, brown hindwings with orange band along margin.

Underside pale brown with small black dots and orange band on edge of hindwing.



**White-letter Hairstreak**  
*Satyrion w-album*

Upperside rarely seen as butterfly always lands with wings closed.

Underside, brown with white line crossing both wings. Line on hind wing W-shaped, orange margin with silvery blue spot to hindwing.

