

**BRINSLEY HEADSTOCKS**  
**Heritage & Nature Reserve.**

**BUTTERFLIES and MOTHS**

**2025**

**BUTTERFLIES**

The mix of unimproved meadow, woodland and hedgerows provide an ideal habitat for a number of butterfly species. The total number of species recorded to date is 21, a very respectable total for a site the size of the Headstocks Nature Reserve. The number of species recorded in 2025 was 15 (12 species recorded in 2024).

The spring and summer of 2025 were in complete contrast to 2024. In 2024 the spring and summer were relatively cold and wet, but in 2025 they were hot and dry, with four heatwaves. These conditions suited some species, but the flowers on which the adults feed soon went to seed in the heat and the vegetation on which the caterpillars feed dried up. This will no doubt have a knock-on effect in future years, with reduced numbers.

**SMALL SKIPPER** *Thymelicus sylvestris*

Not recorded in 2025. This species is normally recorded regularly in its flight period, with a maximum of eight recorded in 2015.

**ESSEX SKIPPER** *Thymelicus lineola*

Not recorded in 2025. The first site record for this species was of a single on August 12<sup>th</sup> 2015. There had been a few sightings of “possibles” in the preceding days, but the identity was confirmed by netting and close examination in an inspection jar.

**LARGE SKIPPER** *Ochlodes venatus*

Not recorded in 2025. Normally present in both the long meadow and the headstocks meadow, although not as numerous as small skipper.

**BRIMSTONE** *Gonepteryx rhamni*

Six males were seen on April 28th 2025, with a single male on July 8th. These sightings were encouraging, as this species is not recorded annually.



Brimstone Photograph by John Eyre

**LARGE WHITE** *Pieris brassicae*

This species was seen on most visits in the spring and summer ( first record April 28<sup>th</sup> ). Mostly just two or three were seen on each visit. Surprisingly, this species was not recorded in 2024.

**SMALL WHITE** *Artogeia rapae*

Seen on most visits in the flight period. More numerous than Large White, the average number seen on each visit was five. It is worth noting that on many visits there were as many as thirty white butterflies which could not be identified ( either Small or Green-veined ) as they were very active in the hot weather and passed the observer at speed ! Surprisingly, there was only one record of this species in 2024.

**GREEN-VEINED WHITE** *Aeshna grandis*

This species was encountered on the majority of site visits in suitable weather, with an average of seven seen on each visit. The first record of the year for 2025 was on the early date of April 7th.

**ORANGE-TIP** *Anthocaris cardamines*

Normally a common butterfly in April and May, the first record for 2025 was of four males on April 28th, which was two weeks later than normal. Numbers remained disappointingly low, with a single male seen on May 11th.

**SMALL COPPER** *Lycaena phlaeas*

This is normally a scarce butterfly on the site, but a maximum of six were seen in 2018. We had given up on seeing this species in 2025, but were delighted when one was seen on the late date of September 22<sup>nd</sup>. Disappointingly, this superb little insect was not seen in 2024.

**COMMON BLUE** *Polyommatus icarus*

Not recorded in 2025. Never common on the site, although a site record of five were seen on 19<sup>th</sup> July 2018.

**HOLLY BLUE** *Celastrina argiolus*

Although this species is often seen in gardens in the village, it is not regularly encountered on the Headstocks nature reserve. Singles of this species were seen on July 8<sup>th</sup>, July 24<sup>th</sup> and August 5<sup>th</sup>. There were no records in 2024.

**RED ADMIRAL** *Vanessa atalanta*

There was only one record in 2025, a single on June 27<sup>th</sup>. There was also a single record in 2024, but that consisted of four individuals, feeding avidly on ivy flowers on October 19th.

**PAINTED LADY** *Vanessa cardui*

This species is migratory and a series of blank years can be followed by an irruption year. Unfortunately 2025 was a blank year. The last irruption year was in 2019, with a wonderful sight of five of this species feeding on Knapweed flowers in the Long Meadow.

**SMALL TORTOISESHELL** *Aglais urticae*

This species is seen fairly regularly, but usually in very low numbers. There were two records in 2025, a single on March 3<sup>rd</sup> and three on July 8th.



Small Tortoiseshell Photograph by John Eyre

**PEACOCK** *Inachis io*

There was a single record in 2025, when four were seen on July 8th. We would normally expect to record high numbers of this species – for example on 29<sup>th</sup> July 2019 an amazing total of thirty plus were seen in the Long Meadow, feeding on Knapweed.

**COMMA** *Polygonia c-album*

A much better year for this species compared to 2024 ( when just one was seen ). The first record was a single on April 7<sup>th</sup>, with eight seen on both July 7<sup>th</sup> and July 24<sup>th</sup> 2025.

**SPECKLED WOOD** *Pararge aegeria*

Normally a fairly common butterfly in summer and 2025 was no exception. Seen on most visits during the flight period, the average number was three per visit ( maximum five on April 28<sup>th</sup> ).

**GATEKEEPER** *Pyronia tithonus*

Recorded as a fairly common butterfly in 2000/2002, but may be scarcer now. The numbers seen in 2025 were reassuringly better than 2024. Seven were seen on July 8th, six on July 24<sup>th</sup> and four on August 5<sup>th</sup>. There was a single record of one insect on July 9<sup>th</sup> 2024.

**MEADOW BROWN** *Maniola jurtina*

Normally a common butterfly in summer, which relishes the meadow habitat of the reserve. We would expect to see around 30 of this species on a visit to the site in fine weather in June and July, but the highest daily count in 2025 was 21. The first record for the year was of sixteen on June 17<sup>th</sup>, with an average of fourteen on subsequent visits ( last record August 4<sup>th</sup> ).

**SMALL HEATH** *Coenonympha pamphilus*

Not recorded in 2025. The only site record to date is of a single insect on 20<sup>th</sup> September 2010.

**RINGLET** *Aphantopus hyperantus*

This species is another meadow specialist which suffered badly in 2025. The maximum seen on visits in June and July 2025 was 5, compared with an expected 20+ in a good year.

**MOTHS**

Prior to 2015, only 6 species of moth had been recorded on site. These were mainly day-flying species and the odd nocturnal species accidentally disturbed in the daytime. All this changed on July 10<sup>th</sup> 2015, when a nocturnal evening was arranged on the site, which featured a moth-trapping session organised by DaNES ( Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire Entomological Society ). They considered that a total of 80 species trapped on the night would be a good result, but a total of 113 species were actually trapped !. Four species which had previously been recorded on site were not seen on the trapping session ( due to the fact that they are primarily day-flying species ). These are shown below, with the species recorded in the trapping session being shown in the table which follows. The total species of moth now recorded on site is 117. There is much scope for increasing this total, as I run a regular moth trap in my garden in the village and have recorded 153 species in less than two years. Unfortunately, the trap is powered by mains electricity and cannot be used at the Headstocks site.

**SIX-SPOT BURNET** *Zygaena filipendulae*

**CHIMNEY SWEEPER** *Odezia atrata*

**LUNAR MARBLED BROWN** *Drymonia ruficornis*

**DARK-BARRED TWIN-SPOT CARPET** *Xanthorhoe ferrugata*

<b>Common Name</b>	<b>Taxon</b>
Ghost Swift	<i>Hepialus humuli</i>
Common Swift	<i>Hepialus lupulinus</i>
Pebble Hook-tip	<i>Drepana falcataria</i>
Peach Blossom	<i>Thyatira batis</i>
Buff Arches	<i>Habrosyne pyritoides</i>
Large Emerald	<i>Geometra papilionaria</i>
Common Emerald	<i>Hemithea aestivaria</i>
Small Fan-footed Wave	<i>Idaea biselata</i>
Small Dusky Wave	<i>Idaea aversata</i>
Riband Wave	<i>Idaea aversata</i>
Flame Carpet	<i>Xanthorhoe designata</i>
Large Twin-spot Carpet	<i>Xanthorhoe quadrifasciata</i>
Silver-ground Carpet	<i>Xanthorhoe montanata</i>
Shaded Broad-bar	<i>Scotopteryx chenopodiata</i>
Small Argent and Sable	<i>Epirrhoe tristata</i>
Common Carpet	<i>Epirrhoe montanata</i>
Yellow Shell	<i>Camptogramma bilineata</i>
Purple Bar	<i>Cosmohoe ocellata</i>
Barred Straw	<i>Eulithis pyraliata</i>
Small Phoenix	<i>Ecliptopera silaceata</i>
Common Marbled Carpet	<i>Chloroclysta truncata</i>
Barred Yellow	<i>Cidaria fulvata</i>
Green Carpet	<i>Colostygia pectinataria</i>
July Highflyer	<i>Hydriomena impluviata</i>
Rivulet	<i>Perizoma affinitata</i>
Small Rivulet	<i>Perizoma alchemillata</i>
Sandy Carpet	<i>Perizoma flavofasciata</i>
Foxglove Pug	<i>Eupithecia pulchellata</i>
Wormwood Pug	<i>Eupithecia absinthiata</i>
Mottled Pug	<i>Eupithecia exiguata</i>
V-Pug	<i>Chloroclystis v-ater</i>
Green Pug	<i>Pasiphila rectangulata</i>
Dingy Shell	<i>Euchoeca nebulata</i>
Clouded Border	<i>Lomaspilis marginata</i>
Latticed Heath	<i>Chiasmia clathrata</i>
Scorched Wing	<i>Plagodis dolabraria</i>
Brimstone	<i>Opisthograptis luteolata</i>
Lilac Beauty	<i>Apeira syringaria</i>
Scalloped Oak	<i>Crocallis elinguarina</i>
Swallow-tailed Moth	<i>Ourapteryx sambucharia</i>
Peppered Moth	<i>Biston betularia</i>
Willow Beauty	<i>Peribatoides rhomboidaria</i>

Mottled Beauty	<i>Alcis repandata</i>
Engrailed	<i>Ectropis bistortata</i>
Bordered White	<i>Bupalus piniaria</i>
Common White Wave	<i>Cabera pusaria</i>
Common Wave	<i>Cabera exanthemata</i>
Clouded Silver	<i>Lomographa temerata</i>
Light Emerald	<i>Campaea margaritata</i>
Lime Hawk	<i>Mimas tiliae</i>
Elephant Hawk	<i>Deilephila elpenor</i>
Pebble Prominent	<i>Notodonta ziczac</i>
Common Footman	<i>Eilema lurideola</i>
Buff Ermine	<i>Spilosoma luteum</i>
Short-cloaked Moth	<i>Nola cucullatella</i>
Turnip Moth	<i>Agrotis segetum</i>
Heart and Dart	<i>Agrotis exclamationis</i>
Flame	<i>Axylia putris</i>
Flame Shoulder	<i>Ochropleura plecta</i>
Large Yellow Underwing	<i>Noctua pronuba</i>
Lesser Yellow Underwing	<i>Noctua comes</i>
Ingrailed Clay	<i>Diarsia mendica</i>
Purple Clay	<i>Diarsia brunnea</i>
Setaceous Hebrew Character	<i>Xestia c-nigrum</i>
Double Square-spot	<i>Xestia triangulum</i>
Shears	<i>Hada plebeja</i>
Cabbage Moth	<i>Mamestra brassicae</i>
Dot Moth	<i>Melanchra persicariae</i>
Bright-line Brown-eye	<i>Lacanobia oleracea</i>
Clay	<i>Mythimna ferrago</i>
Smoky Wainscot	<i>Mythimna impura</i>
Common Wainscot	<i>Mythimna pallens</i>
Shoulder-striped Wainscot	<i>Mythimna comma</i>
Shark	<i>Cucullia umbratica</i>
Sycamore	<i>Acronicta aceris</i>
Miller	<i>Acronicta leporina</i>
Dark Dagger agg	<i>Acronicta tridens agg</i>
Small Angle Shages	<i>Euplexia lucipara</i>
Dunbar	<i>Cosmia trapezina</i>
Dark Arches	<i>Apamea monoglypha</i>
Light Arches	<i>Apamea lithoxylaea</i>
Clouded-bordered Brindle	<i>Apamea crenata</i>
Clouded Brindle	<i>Apamea epomidon</i>
Slender Brindle	<i>Apamea scolopacina</i>
Double Lobed	<i>Apamea ophiogramma</i>
Marbled Minor agg	<i>Oligia strigalis agg</i>
Middle-barred Minor	<i>Oligia fasciuncula</i>
Rosy Minor	<i>Mesoligia literosa</i>
Common Rustic agg	<i>Mesapamea secalis agg</i>

Uncertain	<i>Hoplodrina alsines</i>
Mottled Rustic	<i>Caradrina morpheus</i>
Scarce Silver-lines	<i>Bena bicolorana</i>
Green silver-lines	<i>Pseudoips prasinana</i>
Burnished Brass	<i>Diachrysia chrysitis</i>
Silver-Y	<i>Autographa gamma</i>
Beautiful Golden-Y	<i>Autographa pulchrina</i>
Plain Golden-Y	<i>Autographa jota</i>
Spectacle	<i>Abrostola tripartita</i>
Beautiful Hook-tip	<i>Laspeyria flexula</i>
Straw Dot	<i>Rivula sericealis</i>
Snout	<i>Hypena proboscidalis</i>
Fanfoot	<i>Zanclognatha tarsipennalis</i>
Small Fan-foot	<i>Herminia grisealis</i>
Water Veneer	<i>Acentria ephemerella</i>
Mother of Pearl	<i>Pleuroptya ruralis</i>
Small Magpie	<i>Anania hortulata</i>
Mint Moth	<i>Pyrausta aurata</i>
Olive Pearl	<i>Udea olivalis</i>
Bee Moth	<i>Aphomia sociella</i>
Barred Fruit Tree Tortrix	<i>Pandemis cerasana</i>
Bramble-shoot Moth	<i>Notoceliaudmanniana</i>
Knapweed Conch	<i>Agapeta zoegana</i>
Green Oak Tortrix	<i>Tortrix viridana</i>
Yellow Conch	<i>Agapeta hamana</i>