

## Discover more

There are many excellent identification guides to British butterflies readily available. Three that are currently available are:

- Pocket Guide to the Butterflies of Great Britain and Ireland by R. Lewington.
- Britain's butterflies - A Field Guide to the butterflies of Britain and Ireland by D. Newland, R. Still, D. Tomlinson and A. Swash.
- Butterflies of the West Midlands (2016) Editors: I. Duncan, P. Seal, J. Tilt, R. Wasley, & M. Williams. Written by experienced members of West Midlands Butterfly Conservation.

### West Midlands Butterfly Conservation

For information on local events, guided walks and other activities in the region, visit the West Midlands Butterfly Conservation website: [www.westmidlands-butterflies.org.uk](http://www.westmidlands-butterflies.org.uk) or find us on Facebook: [www.facebook.com/groups/westmidlandsbutterflyconservation](http://www.facebook.com/groups/westmidlandsbutterflyconservation)

To join Butterfly Conservation go to: [www.butterfly-conservation.org](http://www.butterfly-conservation.org)

### Recording your sightings

Record your sightings on iRecord using a smartphone app or online at: [www.brc.ac.uk/irecord](http://www.brc.ac.uk/irecord)

### Share your sightings with local recorders:

- Staffordshire Ecological Record: [ecology@staffs-wildlife.org.uk](mailto:ecology@staffs-wildlife.org.uk)
- County Butterfly Recorder - John Bryan: [johnpbryan15@aol.com](mailto:johnpbryan15@aol.com)
- County Moth Recorder - Dave Emley: [recorder@staffsmoths.org.uk](mailto:recorder@staffsmoths.org.uk)

Records will require the following information: What (the species), Where (the location), Who (the recorder), and When (the date).

For more information on becoming a Butterfly Conservation recorder, contact John Tilt: [john.tilt2@btopenworld.com](mailto:john.tilt2@btopenworld.com)

## Become a volunteer with Butterfly Conservation

Volunteers make a big difference to the conservation of our butterflies and other wildlife. To find out how to get involved, contact Rhona Goddard: [rgoddard@butterfly-conservation.org](mailto:rgoddard@butterfly-conservation.org)

## Surveying and recording butterflies and moths is crucial to their conservation

The recording of wildlife, including butterflies and moths, is crucial in planning the management of their habitats. Without knowing what species are present at any given location, it is impossible to plan the management that may be required.

In addition, the monitoring of species abundance and distribution is important in order to understand both how species are faring over time and also whether the management at any given site is proving beneficial. Records are gathered locally and nationally by Butterfly Conservation, other conservation organisations, and individuals; everyone can help with the collection of data. Recording can take many forms, from just noting

what you see on an afternoon stroll to going out specifically in search of particular species, whilst respecting other wildlife in the area. A sunny day is best, but butterflies will fly in cloudy conditions providing it is warm enough.

Butterflies are relatively easy to identify, and this leaflet provides some tips to help you identify those you are most likely to see on Cannock Chase, as well as some important moths. Each species of butterfly and moth is only on the wing for a limited period of time each year. The flight times of adult butterflies and moths is usually predictable, although can vary slightly depending on weather conditions each year.

The flight chart in this leaflet shows when each of the butterflies can normally be seen, and the stage in which each species overwinters. You will also find information on the caterpillar foodplants, how common each species is on Cannock Chase,



■ Cannock Chase is one of only a few locations in Staffordshire to support the Small Pearl-bordered Fritillary. Targeted scrub control and bracken management helps to maintain open areas where violets can thrive, and on which this butterfly lays its eggs.



■ The Green Hairstreak has the widest range of foodplants of any British butterfly species. On Cannock Chase they are found in areas dominated by Bilberry such as around the Glacial Boulder.



■ Cannock Chase supports one of only two known populations of Welsh Clearwing moth in England. They depend on the presence of mature birch trees, and appropriate woodland and tree management.

# The butterflies and moths of Cannock Chase

Cannock Chase lies at the heart of Staffordshire and boasts ancient woodland and rare heathland habitats. It offers abundant opportunities to encounter many different species of butterfly and moth on a warm summer's day. This leaflet provides information about what these species are, tips on how to identify them, as well as when and where to see them.

If you require further information, the leaflet has details on recording on the back page, and also refers to some key guides that are widely available.

**Remember** – when watching wildlife, stay on paths to avoid disturbing rare wildlife, particularly during the breeding season.

■ Cannock Chase is a vital refuge for the Adder.

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## Cannock Chase is home to many rare and endangered plants and animals

Formerly a Royal Forest, Cannock Chase now contains the largest surviving area of lowland heathland in the Midlands, following a long history of hunting, grazing and mineral mining. Cannock Chase was designated as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty in 1958 thanks to its beautiful landscape and special wildlife and history, and it is currently owned and managed by multiple stakeholders including Forestry Commission England, Staffordshire County Council and the National Trust.

Cannock Chase is visited by millions of people each year, but many visitors do not realise that the site

is nationally and internationally important for the rare and threatened habitats and associated species it supports. These include habitats such as lowland heathland, valley mires and ancient woodland, and species such as White-clawed Crayfish, Adder and Nightjar. As a result, areas within Cannock Chase have been designated collectively as a Special Area of Conservation and Site of Special Scientific Interest.

Given the immense recreational pressure faced by Cannock Chase today, it is vital that visitors keep to the main paths as they enjoy the area, to avoid damaging sensitive habitats and species that live here.

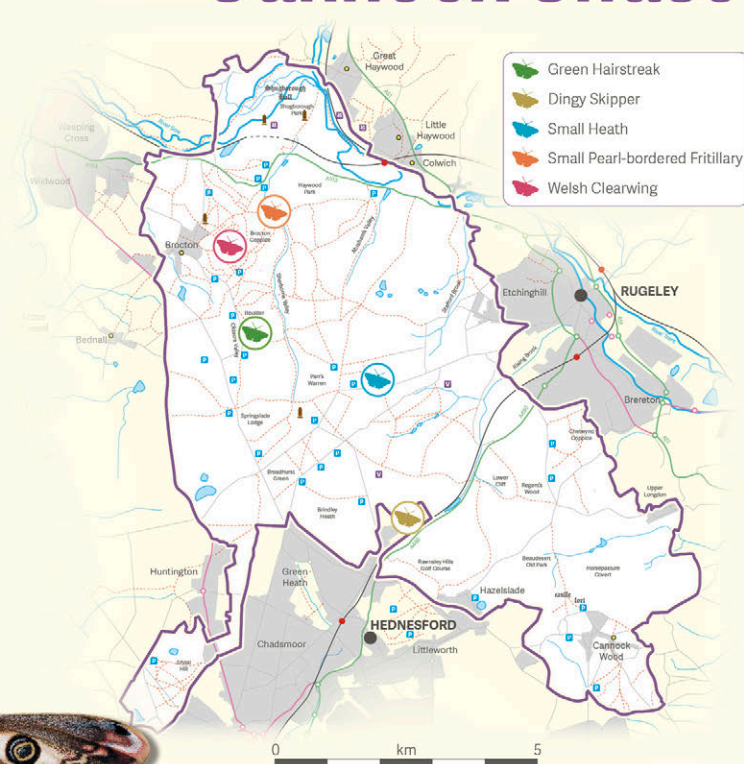
Important butterfly and moth species that occur on Cannock Chase include the **Small Pearl-bordered Fritillary**, **Green Hairstreak**, **Welsh Clearwing moth** and **Emperor Moth**.

Protecting the habitats and foodplants of these and other rare species requires sensitive and targeted management works. Such work depends upon an annual cycle of conservation work by a large group of hardworking volunteers and staff, and Butterfly Conservation has been working closely with Forestry Commission England, Staffordshire County Council and other landowners to do this for many years with support from the Cannock Chase AONB Partnership.



■ The male Emperor Moth shown here can be seen on the wing on Cannock Chase in April and May.

## Key locations for butterflies and moths at Cannock Chase



The map above shows important areas where key butterfly and moth species can be seen on Cannock Chase. Ordnance Survey Explorer map 244 covers the area.

Species	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Winter State	Caterpillar Foodplants	Status	Habitats
1. Red Admiral													🦋	Common Nettle	🌐	woodland edges, rides and glades
2. Brimstone													🦋	Buckthorn & Alder Buckthorn	🌐	woodland rides and glades
3. Small Tortoiseshell													🦋	Common Nettle, Hop	🌐	hilltops, heathland, woodland rides and glades
4. Comma													🦋	Common Nettle, Hop, elms, currants	🌐	woodland edges, rides and glades
5. Peacock													🦋	Common Nettle	🌐	woodland rides and glades, grasslands
6. Holly Blue													🦋	Holly, Ivy	🌐	seen around bushes and small trees, woodland
7. Small White													🦋	crucifers inc. Nasturtium	🌐	open clearings, heathland, grassland
8. Orange-tip													🦋	crucifers, Cuckooflower & Garlic Mustard	🌐	damp grassland, road verges, woodland edges
9. Speckled Wood													🦋	grasses	🌐	woodland edges, rides and glades
10. Green-veined White													🦋	wild crucifers	🌐	damp grassland, woodland rides
11. Large White													🦋	crucifers inc. Cabbage	🌐	woodland, heathland, grassland
12. Painted Lady													n/a	thistles	🌐	sunny open habitats
13. Small Copper													🦋	Common Sorrel, Sheep's Sorrell	🌐	heathland, woodland rides, road verges
14. Green Hairstreak													🦋	gorse, broom, bilberry, birds-foot-trefoils	🌐	heathland, scrubby slopes, associated with bilberry
15. Dingy Skipper													🦋	Common Birds-foot-trefoil	🌐	sunny slopes, heathland, open glades
16. Common Blue													🦋	Common Birds-foot-trefoil	🌐	woodland glades, damp grassland
17. Small Heath													🦋	fine grasses, esp. Sheep's-fescue	🌐	heathland, rough grassland
18. Wall													🦋	fine grasses	🌐	short, open grassland
19. Brown Argus													🦋	Cranesbills, Common Stork's-bill	🌐?	heathland, rough grassland, road verges
20. Large Skipper													🦋	grasses	🌐	woodland and scrub margins, rough grassland, road verges
21. Clouded Yellow													n/a	legumes inc. clovers	🌐	heathland
22. Small Pearl-bordered Fritillary													🦋	Common Dog-violet, Marsh Violet	🌐	damp grassland flushes
23. Meadow Brown													🦋	grasses	🌐	heathland, woodland rides, road verges
24. Purple Hairstreak													🦋	oaks	🌐?	canopy of oak trees, sometimes on ash
25. Silver-washed Fritillary													🦋	Common Dog-violet	🌐	woodland edges and rides
26. Marbled White													🦋	grasses	🌐	long grasses, woodland edges, road verges
27. Ringlet													🦋	coarse grasses	🌐	woodland glades, damp grassland
28. Small Skipper													🦋	grasses, esp. Yorkshire-fog	🌐	rough grassland, woodland edges, road verges
29. White-letter Hairstreak													🦋	elms inc. Wych Elm	🌐	strongly associated with elm trees
30. Essex Skipper													🦋	grasses, esp. Cock's-foot	🌐?	rough grassland, woodland edges, road verges
31. Gatekeeper													🦋	grasses	🌐	woodland rides, heathland
32. Dark Green Fritillary													🦋	violets	🌐	bracken slopes, damp grassland
33. Orange Underwing													🦋	Birch and Rowan	🌐	woodland, heathland, associated with mature birch trees
34. Emperor Moth													🦋	mainly heather	🌐	heathland, scrub
35. Clouded Buff													🦋	Various herbaceous plants	🌐	heathland, open woodland
36. Welsh Clearwing													🦋	Birch	🌐	strongly associated with mature birch trees

Key to Winter State 🦋 Egg 🐛 Caterpillar 🐛 Chrysalis 🦋 Butterfly

Key to Status 🌐 Widespread 🌐 Resident/Migrant 🌐 Migrant 🌐 Local 🌐 Very Local ? Under-recorded

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# Identification guide to the Butterflies and Moths of Cannock Chase

**Dingy Skipper**  
*Eymis toges*



Upper side brown with pale markings. Under side similar with fewer markings. A small butterfly which is generally moth-like in appearance.

**Orange Tip**  
*Anthocharis cardamines*



Male upper side white with distinctive orange tips to the forewings. Female similar to male but lacks orange markings. Both sexes have a small black eye spot in centre of forewing. Under side mottled green hindwings of both sexes very distinctive.

**Clouded Yellow**  
*Colias eraceus*



Upper side yellow with black margins rarely seen except in flight as the Clouded Yellow always lands with its wings closed. Under side deep yellow-orange, black spot on forewing with white spots fringed in red in centre of hindwing.

**Ringlet**  
*Aphantopus hyperantus*



Upper side, dark chocolate brown, male almost black, number of eyespots towards margin of both wings. Under side similar to upper side, eyespots on hindwing generally five in number.

**Wall**  
*Lasioommata megera*



Upper side single eye spot on tip of forewing. Male has additional scent band across forewing. Under side mottled grey, with numerous eyespots.

**Red Admiral**  
*Vanessa atalanta*



Upper side velvet black with red/orange diagonal stripe, white spots near wing tips and red border to hindwings. Under side mottled grey, brown and black. Very well camouflaged!

**Comma**  
*Polygona c-album*



Upper side orange with black markings. Distinctive scalloped edge to wings and white comma mark on underside.

**White-letter Hairstreak**  
*Satyrus w-album*



Uniform brown upper side of wings rarely seen as butterfly always lands with its wings closed. Distinctive underside brown with white line crossing both wings. Broken line on hind wing. W-shaped. Orange margin with silvery blue spot towards the tail of the hindwing.

**Welsh Clearwing**  
*Synanthedon scoliaefornis*



Large size for clearwing with a distinctive black discal mark on the forewing pointing inwards, two pale bands across body and an orange-brown tuft on the tip of the abdomen. Look for it on the trunks of old birch trees.

**Essex Skipper**  
*Thymelicus lincolna*



Upper side similar to Small Skipper except sex band on male is shorter, straighter and finer. Under side tip of antennae glossy black giving the appearance that they have been dipped in ink.

**Large White**  
*Pieris brassicae*



Upper side white with black tips to forewing extending further down wing edge than other whites. The female also has two black spots that are absent in the male. Under side similar in both sexes, pale yellow, dusted with grey scales.

**Brimstone**  
*Gonepteryx rhamni*




Upper side rarely seen as the brimstone always lands with its wings closed. Male bright lemon yellow, female pale greenish white, easily confused with large white in flight. Both sexes have a pale brown spot on underside of both wings.

**Meadow Brown**  
*Maniola jurtina*



Upper side dark brown with splash of orange which is 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.

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



Distinctive marks on left forewing resemble the number 730. Upper sides orange/brown with dark brown/black spots and veins. Under side large bold black spot in central hindwing cell.

**Painted Lady**  
*Vanessa cardui*



Upper side spotted with shades of pinkish orange and brown with black tips and white spots to forewings. Under side brown with black and orange markings.

**Small Copper**  
*Lycena phlaeas*



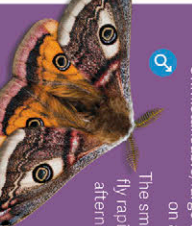
Coppery metallic orange forewings with black spots, brown hindwings with orange band along trailing edge. Under side pale brown with small black dots and orange band on edge of hindwing.

**Holly Blue**  
*Celastrina argiolus*



Upper side male is pale blue with narrow black margin. Female has broader, distinctive black margins on upper forewings. Under side silvery pale blue with tiny black spots.

**Emperor Moth**  
*Saturnia pavonia*



Unmistakable, large in size with prominent eye spots on all four wings. The smaller males which fly rapidly mainly in the afternoon look orange in flight.

**Small Skipper**  
*Thymelicus sylvestris*



A small golden brown butterfly. The male has a faint oblique black sex band on each forewing. Under side of antennae orange.

**Small White**  
*Pieris rapae*



Upper side marked with two black spots and dark grey/black wing tips. The male has a single black spot on each forewing. Under side similar to large white but generally more grey scaling.

**Speckled Wood**  
*Pararge aegeria*



Upper side mid/dark brown with series of yellow/cream blotches and black eyespots with white pupils, one on forewing and normally three on the hindwing. Under side mottled grey and brown, usually forewing eye spot can be seen from underside.

**Gatekeeper**  
*Pyronia tithonus*



Upper side double pupilled eyespot, smaller than Meadow Brown. Upper side male orange with prominent brown sex brand cutting across forewing. The female is similar but lacks sex brand. Under side darker inner band on hindwing then paler towards wing edge, white spots within paler area.

**Silver-washed Fritillary**  
*Argynnis paplia*



Male bright orange, black streaks on the forewing. Female dusky, greenish-orange black spots on forewing. Under side, both sexes, greenish with silvery streaks.

**Peacock**  
*Inachis io*



Upper side mainly maroon with unmistakable large peacock eye spots on all four wings. Under side dark brown/black.

**Purple Hairstreak**  
*Favonius quercus*



Upper side black overshot with iridescent purple. Male has extensive purple colouration while female has a patch of purple on the upper forewings. Under side, silver grey, with white line crossing both wings with dark pupilled orange eye spot near base of hindwing.

**Brown Argus**  
*Aricia agestis*



Upper side uniform brown with orange lunules along the outer edge of all four wings. Under side similar to Common Blue but the arrangements of spots near leading edge of hindwing resemble a colon punctuation mark.

**Orange Underwing**  
*Archicaris parthenias*



Generally seen flying around tops of trees during day occasionally at rest on ground. Mottled brown upperwings with white markings, orange on hindwings.

**Large Skipper**  
*Ochlodes venata*



Female upper side golden brown with pale spots. Male golden brown with distinctive diagonal black sex brand on the upper forewings.

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



Upper side white with light grey wing tips and black spots. The male has a faint black spot on each forewing. Under side yellowish with distinctly veined markings, often visible from the upper side. Markings generally paler in summer broods.

**Small Heath**  
*Coenonympha pamphilus*



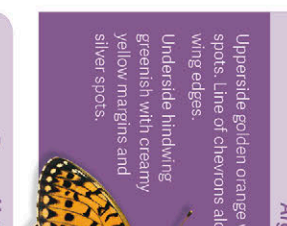
The upper sides of the Small Heath are rarely seen as the butterfly always lands with its wings closed. Under side orange on forewing. Hindwing has a pale brown furry appearance with paler finger spots towards the outer edge.

**Marbled White**  
*Melanargia galathea*



Upper side, very distinctive black and white chequerboard pattern. Under side has a similar pattern, hindwing markings black on male, brown on female.

**Dark Green Fritillary**  
*Argynnis aglaja*




Upper side golden orange with black spots. Line of chevrons along wing edges. Under side hindwing greenish with creamy yellow margins and silver spots.

**Small Tortoiseshell**  
*Aglais urticae*



Upper side orange with black spots and a margin of blue crescents on a black band along outside edges of all four wings. Under side wide black inner band narrower and paler outer band with dark margin.

**Green Hairstreak**  
*Callophrys rubi*



Upper side of wings uniform brown but rarely seen as the Green Hairstreak always lands with its wings closed. Under side bright metallic green sometimes with a line of white spots crossing the hindwing.

**Common Blue**  
*Polyommatus icarus*



Upper side of the male is bright blue with obvious white fringes while the female is brown with varying amounts of blue scaling and orange chevron markings on edge of wings. Extra spot here distinguishes the Common Blue from Brown Argus.

**Clouded Buff**  
*Dicraetis sannio*



Males, which are more often seen, are frequently disturbed during the day. Yellow forewing with pink fringes and large spot on forewing. Females are more orange and rarely seen.