

Butterflies & Botany of the Eastern French Pyrenees 2018

Holiday Report 24 May-31 May

Led by David Moore and Yiannis Christofides



Provence Orange Tip (male) © G Elsom

Greenwings Wildlife Holidays

Tel : 01473 254658

Web : www.greenwings.co.uk

Email : enquiries@greenwings.co.uk

Introduction

This butterflies and botany holiday was based in the foothills of Mt Canigou, the sacred mountain for Catalonians on both sides of the French - Spanish border. Rising to 2,784 metres it dominates the eastern end of the Pyrenees near the French border with Spain and Andorra. The area is often referred to as French Catalonia and a minority of the population still speak the Catalan dialect. The dominant climatic influence of the Eastern Pyrenees is the Mediterranean and so the climate is warmer and the days sunnier than elsewhere in the Pyrenees. The area boasts a wide variety of habitats, including Mediterranean Garrigue, Holm, Downy Oak and Beech woods, schist and calcareous grasslands and alpine scree, all of which are home to a wealth of interesting butterflies and plants. The holiday was led by David Moore and Yiannis Christofides. We stayed at a privately-run hotel in the town of Prades. The guests joining us were Neil & Jan, Kirsty & Jonathan, Gillian & Ken, Ralph & Claudette, Elisabeth and Dave.

What follows is a daily diary for the week, followed by gallery and detailed species lists.

Day 1, Thursday 24th May: Arrival at Perpignan airport, hotel transfer and visit to Sahorre.

Day 2, Friday 25th May: Road to Nohèdes and Torre de Goa

Day 3, Saturday 26th May: Sournia

Day 4, Sunday 27th May: Towards Andorra

Day 5, Monday 28th May: Força Real

Day 6, Tuesday 29th May: Towards Col de Mantet

Day 7, Wednesday 30th May: Col de Jau

Day 8, Thursday 31st May: Return to UK.



Day 1, Thursday 24th May, arrival at Perpignan and visit to mountain.

Our guests came through the gates at Perpignan Airport without any serious delays and so once everyone had got acquainted, we made the 50-minute drive to our hotel. After unloading our belongings and a quick chat about the week's programme, provisions were purchased from the supermarket across the road and we went out in search of butterflies. The weather was largely cloudy with occasional sunny bursts, and fortuitously such conditions meant we could get much closer to many normally skittish butterflies, with the group getting good, close up sightings of Provence Orange Tip (see cover photo), Clouded Apollo, Tufted Marbled Skipper, Green Underside Blue, and Duke of Burgundy.

The meadows beyond Sahorre had thankfully not yet been cut, and walking through them naturally disturbed many butterflies, which could often be inspected at close quarters. On those occasions when the sun burst through, it was amazing to see the grassland literally come to life, as the insects quickly shrugged off their torpor and took to the air. It was quite a gentle introduction for everyone, but in spite of less than perfect conditions the butterfly tally in the evening from this stop alone was a commendable 34!!

Plants of note seen today included Red Clover *Trifolium pratense*, Hedgerow Cranesbill *Geranium pyrenaicum*, Black Medick *Medicago lupulina*, Greater Stitchwort *Stellaria holostea*, *Vicia onobrychioides*, Rock Soapwort *Saponaria ocymoides*, Cowslip *Primula veris*, and Greater Celandine *Chelidonium majus*.



Duke of Burgundy © D Moore



Green-underside Blue © D Moore



Tufted Marbled Skipper © J Philpot

Our evening meal was the first of many enjoyable occasions. The hotel restaurant is for sale meaning that outside caterers were brought in specifically for our group and we had the place

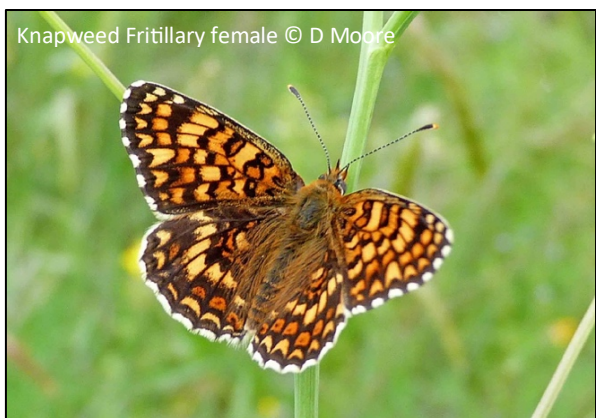
to ourselves. Dinner was of good quality and everyone made their way to bed eager for the first full day's action on Friday.

Day 2, Friday 25th May, Road to Nohèdes and Torre de Goa

What started out as a frustrating day eventually turned into an excellent and most enjoyable one. The first stop was a stretch of grassy roadside on the extremely quiet road to Nohèdes.

Skies were ambiguously half-bright, half-dark when the group left to head through the village of Conat, and by arrival at the roadside stop the clouds had very few breaks. The party walked along the roadsides, admiring the lush greenery and the many beautiful flowers which were on display. Gradually though, the odd bright spell emerged, and Kirsty won points for locating a roosting Spanish Festoon, a much-coveted species on this trip.

Soon after, the sun made an appearance and the butterflies began to take flight, with a couple of Provençal Fritillaries attracting much attention. Weaver's Fritillary was also seen along with Chapman's Blue. On the way back to the vehicles a torpid Marsh Fritillary was found posing perfectly with its wings shut. A fine Knapweed Fritillary was also located nearby. Sadly, the weather closed in at this point and during lunch it began to rain. With things not looking like improving, the guide suggested the group move on to the other side of the N116 main road, as there was potential to get above the low-lying cloud by ascending to over 1,000m.



Taking the scenic road through the village of Casteil, the cloud gradually thinned but the Torre de Goa is only 1,100m and the group weren't quite above it. However, the wind kept blowing this swirling mist back down the valley and many sunny breaks were enjoyed, which meant that the group had their first real taste of true butterfly activity.

Some of the group opted to walk up the gravel path to the tower at the top, whilst others headed downwards on the other track. These latter ones were treated to good numbers of Chequered Blues, which Dave rushed down to acquaint himself with having taken the other walk at the beginning. More delightful Provençal Orange Tips were encountered, with the female of the species putting in an appearance this time. Ken managed to photograph an Apollo, but most of the group didn't see it. However, Neil registered a Camberwell Beauty, although, as is usually the case, by the time others arrived this skittish butterfly had moved powerfully on. There were a fair few Green Hairstreaks flying, the only member of this family seen during the trip, whilst the occasional Iberian Scarce Swallowtail drifted elegantly by. The hilltop saw Red Admiral and Painted Lady active, with Small Tortoiseshell also recorded. These species are most often seen in this type of habitat in southern France, and two other altitude-seekers, Wall Brown and Large Wall were also noted.



Large Wall © D Moore



Provence Orange Tip © D Moore

The views from the top were quite ethereal, as the mist rolled back and forth, often unveiling the 2,784 snow-clad peak of Mt Canigou, which was a backdrop several of the group used for their photographs. With 14 new species added and finally a bit of sunshine and blue sky to enjoy, the group headed back to the hotel satisfied with a productive day's work, in spite of the challenging late morning.



Chequered Blue. © J Philpot

Plants of note today from stop 1: *Silene italica*, Herb Robert *Geranium robertianum*, Wood Avens *Geum urbanum*, Spindle *Euonymus europaeus*, Wild Mignonette *Reseda lutea*, Tufted Vetch *Vicia cracca*, Grass Pea *Lathyrus sphaericus*, White Campion *Silene alba*, Yellow Pea *Lathyrus aphaca*, Spiked Star of Bethlehem *Ornithogalum pyrenaicum*, Cypress Spurge *Euphorbia cyparissias*, *Scabiosa integrifolia*, Kidney Vetch *Anthyllis vulneraria*, Tassel Hyacinth *Muscari comosum*, Common Rockrose *Helianthemum nummularium*, and Pyrenean Bellflower *Campanula speciosa*. Stop 2: Creeping Cinquefoil *Potentilla reptans*, Jack-go-to-

bed-at-noon *Tragopogon pratensis*, and *Geranium cicutarium* Common Storksbill.
Stop 3: French Lavender *Lavandula stoechas*, Narrow-leaved Helleborine *Cephalanthera longifolia*, Smooth Rupturewort *Herniaria glabra*, and Silver Cinquefoil *Potentilla argentea*.

Day 3, Saturday 26th May, Sournia

This was a practically guaranteed day of good weather, so the guide flagged up the Sournia visit as being one of the most important and after a collective supermarket visit to purchase lunch and other provisions, the group was on its way by 9.45am.

A brief stop was had at one of the highest points of the journey, to allow guests to take in the spectacular vista of Mt Canigou dropping down precipitously all the way to the valley floor. Once all had taken their fill of this, the vehicles moved off and 20 minutes later everybody was stepping out onto a dry hillside track covered in lemon thyme with the song of nightingales providing a choral welcome.

This site is the only one in France which is known to harbour the incredibly rare Spanish Fritillary, but in spite of a full morning's search, none were found. Compensation was on offer in the shape of a few new species for the trip though. Perhaps the most visible was Western Marbled White, although getting one to settle was not an easy task! More accommodating were the Osiris Blues- which are fairly common at this site - attracted by the copious Sainfoin that grows here. This is also the larval hostplant of Chapman's Blue, which was present too on these dry, rocky slopes. So, it wasn't a bad start and the guides pressed on, determined to do their best and find more species.



The sunny conditions led to a blitzkrieg of butterfly activity, with individual specimens proving hard to observe. Many *beckerii* form Marsh Fritillaries were present. This is very unlike the form we see in the UK, and indeed quite different to any other form of this butterfly. It is large and very brick red in colour, and its behaviour is more akin to Duke of Burgundy, with the males preferring to perch at around 1-2m on shrubs, launching themselves at interlopers as if their lives depended on it.



Marsh Fritillary form *beckerii* © D Moore

Green Underside, Adonis and Chequered Blues were conspicuous, whilst Clouded and Berger's Clouded Yellows tantalised everyone with regular fly-pasts. The guide, Kirsty & Jonathan risked an ascent of the adjacent hill to search for Dusky Heath, which has traditionally been quite reliable at this site in years gone by. However, the conclusion was that the season was too early and none were seen, although Bath White and Baton Blue provided solace for this absence, along with several Cleopatras and Brimstones.

Plants here included an endemic of the western Mediterranean *Aphyllanthes de Montpellier* *Aphyllanthes monspeliensis*, Blue Lettuce *Lactuca perennis*, Man Orchid *Orchis anthropophora*, White Rock Rose *Helianthemum apenninum*, Sawtooth Spurge *Euphorbia serrata*, a species of Sainfoin *Onobrychis supina*, *Astragalus monspessulanus*, *Dianthus pyrenaicus*, Felty Germander *Teucrium aureum*, Thyme Rock Rose *Fumana thymifolia*, *Helichrysum stoechas*, Mediterranean Spurge *Euphorbia characias*, Pyramidal Orchid *Anacamptis pyramidalis*, *Euphorbia exigua*, *Dipcadi serotinum*, Perennial Flax *Linum narbonense*, St Bernard's Lily *Anthericum liliago*, and Shrubby Hare's-ear *Bupleurum fruticosum*.

After lunch, we stopped at a nearby quarry...two quarries in fact; the first a small, sheltered cove followed by the main quarry that, sadly, had a digger interrupting the peace. Firstly though, the group were temporarily entranced by the sight of a Southern White Admiral in the gully below the



Southern White Admiral © D Moore



Pyramidal Orchid © G Elsom

bridge and many images were taken. Claudette was determined to nail down one of the Dingy Skippers seen in the first quarry, whilst the whole group had good views of the delightful male Turquoise Blue. Things got a bit breathless with a myriad of different species taking to the air to defend their territories. Another couple of Spanish Festoos were seen, whilst Queen of Spain Fritillary and Red Underwing Skipper proved to be interesting diversions.



Turquoise Blue © D Moore



Spanish Festoon © D Moore

Onto the main quarry and despite the wind, things continued to be productive. More Cleopatras were seen, and Common Swallowtails were encountered nectaring greedily from the valerian blooms to be found on the rocky earth. Many more Chequered and Turquoise Blues were seen, and there was much Fritillary activity further up the grassy track at the top end of the site.

However, the greatest excitement arrived when a stunning solitary Spanish Fritillary arrived in the lower amphitheatre, leading to the guide completely forsaking the nectaring Swallowtail and Cleopatra nearby. The bulk of the group were able to see and take photographs of this incredibly rare French butterfly, whilst at the same time the gentleman

driving the digger had to wait to continue his work for fear that it would disturb the insect. Plants here included Horseshoe Vetch *Hippocrepis comosa* (the LHP for Adonis and Chalkhill blue in the UK), Pitch Trefoil *Bituminaria bituminosa*, *Urospermum dalechampii*, *Cneorum trionum*, *Pallenis spinosa*, and Rough Star -thistle *Centaurea aspera*.



Spanish Fritillary © J Philpot

A brief stop on the way back saw the group get acquainted with a nectaring Broad Bordered Bee Hawk Moth. Plants at this spot included Globularia sp., Armeria sp., Musk Thistle *Carduus nutans*, and Crimson Clover *Trifolium incarnatum*.

We then returned to the hotel for another excellent meal and news that the total butterfly

count had now hit 61, which included a Geranium Bronze that Ken had photographed when away from the rest of the party.



Queen of Spain Fritillary © G Elsom



Shrubby Globularia © G Elsom

Day 4, Sunday 27th May, Towards Andorra

The guide did not have much confidence that Violet Copper would be sighted and had hoped to leave this visit till as late as possible during the week. Having been to the site the previous Wednesday, the vegetation seen was way behind what one would expect at this time of year and numbers of general butterflies were very low. However, cooler weather was to sweep in from Monday, which would see daytime maxima of just 13 Celsius at 1,500m altitude, so given that Sunday's high was forecast to be 19c, there was only one decision to make. Arriving at 10.40am, the group duly explored the higher, drier slopes at first, but amazingly, a male Violet Copper was located in the boggy field at the bottom of the site within two minutes, meaning that everyone got the opportunity to take a close look at this rare little jewel.



Violet Copper © J Philpot



De Prunner's Ringlets © D Moore

Elsewhere, the more familiar form of Marsh Fritillary was seen, much more akin to those in

the UK rather than the redder, bigger *beckerii* form seen the day before. A few De Prunner's Ringlets and a handful of Grizzled Skippers were present too, but overall, butterfly numbers were a little disappointing as these slopes normally harbour hundreds.

An excellent selection of flowering plants at the first stop included White Dead-nettle *Lamium album*, the wonderfully scented Poet's Narcissus *Narcissus poeticus*, Germander Speedwell *Veronica chamaedrys*, Kingcup *Caltha palustris*, Burnt-tip orchid *Orchis ustulata* and Water Avens *Geum rivale*.



Narcissus poeticus © G Elsom

The group moved on to nearby Llo, and whilst everybody marvelled again at the scenery, butterflies weren't exactly buzzing all around like they usually are here. However, the group DID get a welcome surprise when a Camberwell Beauty made two fly-bys in the car parking area, with most of the group remaining on high alert whilst taking lunch. Of the plants, the most noteworthy were the pretty blue Spring Gentian *Gentiana verna*, and Common Sainfoin *Onobrychis vicifolia*.

A stop at Carançás Gorge on the way back was also undertaken, after first having to negotiate the roadside Customs Officials!! However, sunny periods gave way to increasing cloud

and a little light rain but it at least gave everybody the chance to sit and relax with a drink from the bar in the car park area. Plants of interest here included Saw-leaved Speedwell *Veronica austriaca*, Hay Rattle *Rhinanthus minor*, White Swallow-wort *Vincetoxicum hirundinaria*, and Trailing Snapdragon *Asarine procumbens*. Just one addition to the overall butterfly count then, but what an addition! The beautiful Violet Copper took the tally to 62. Flowers of course don't mind grey skies and offered wonderful photo opportunities.



Spring Gentian © G Elsom



Trailing Snapdragon © G Elsom

Day 5, Monday 28th May, Força Real

We opted to head towards the coast to Força Real, which is an 500m peak standing in isolation from where spectacular views in every direction can be enjoyed. It is also a spot where some of the Mediterranean species can be more easily seen.

The weather remained resolutely cloudy during the first roadside stop a few hundred metres up the road leading to the summit. However, there were several successes, most notably the handful of Spanish Gatekeepers located by the enthusiastic group. The odd White and Brimstone were encountered, but Neil's sharp eye noticed a golden skipper resting on a grass stem, which upon inspection turned out to be the only Lulworth Skipper of the trip! Those butterflies that were found proved to be willing photography subjects, with one Western Marbled White being particularly accommodating, basking wings open for several minutes which is at odds with the normally highly flighty behaviour of this species.



Plant species here included Small-flowered Catchfly *Silene gallica*, Italian Thistle *Carduus*

pycnocephalus, Pelisser's Toadflax *Linaria pelisseriana*, Purple Milk Thistle, *Galactites tomentosa*, French Scorzonera *Reichardia picroides*, South African Ragwort *Senecio inaequidens*, Starry Clover *Trifolium stellatum*, Buck's-horn Plantain *Plantago coronopus*, Mallow-leaved Bindweed *Convolvulus althaeoides*, and Cretan Bryony *Bryonia cretica*.

Once at the car park near the top, the skies were constantly scanned for signs of brightness, and the group DID get a few windows of opportunity and even the occasional, short-lived burst of sunshine. However, apart from a solitary Red Admiral and a few Wall Browns, not much was hill-topping so the group spread out in different directions to investigate any likely-looking terrain. One notable find was a roosting male Bath White, which is another species normally impossible to get close to. A burst of warmth saw it open its wings to the delight of everyone and many images were taken of this pristine specimen.

Neil provided the finest moment however after stumbling on a Western Dappled White as well as taking images of what proved to be Southern Small White, which is largely overlooked due to its resemblance to its close cousin, Small White.



Wall Brown © J Philpot

Plants seen here included Grey-leaved Cistus *Cistus albidus*, Sage-leaved Rock-rose *Cistus salviifolius*, Montpellier Cistus *monspeliensis*, Prostrate Canary Clover *Dorycnium pentaphyllum*, Osyris *Osiris alba*, Wild Clary *Salvia verbenaca*, and Etruscan Honeysuckle *Lonicera etrusca*.

So, although it wasn't a day for a great range of butterfly species, nonetheless four new ones had been recorded bringing the aggregate tally for the tour to 66. That was more than satisfactory given the weather conditions, which deteriorated enormously during the drive back to Prades, with fierce storms making driving a challenge.



Bath White © D Moore

Day 6, Tuesday 29th May, Col de Mantet

Another predominantly cloudy day was forecast, so it was imperative to drive beyond the little village of Py to try to nail down a few more Apollos after having recorded just one thus far.

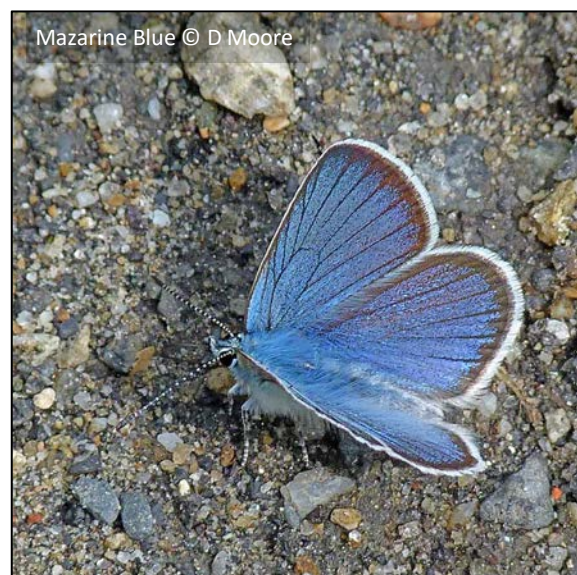
Again, it was frustrating having to wait 20 minutes for each small burst of blue sky, but at the first stop, which was the highest in altitude, Meadow Fritillary was finally encountered along with a few Sooty Coppers and fly by De Prunner's Ringlets. The landscape seemed still to be quite behind where it ought to be in late May, so the guide suggested dropping down a couple of hundred metres in altitude where the vegetation would be more advanced.

This proved a good choice, as immediately much more was on the wing, with many Fritillaries whizzing around a steep, rocky slope near the parking area. An area beyond a hairpin bend was explored, and finally a couple more Apollos were sighted, with one very unselfishly deciding to bask on a tree allowing those assembled to finally get close and take images.

Claudette had earlier found a Pearl Bordered Fritillary, and was one of the few in the group to get reasonably close to Large Wall Brown, a species notoriously difficult to approach.



A beautiful female Sooty Copper was recorded, along with Iberian Scarce Swallowtail and there were plenty of Provençal and Glanville Fritillaries to keep everyone interested. Another stop was made at the place where the trip began – the meadows above Sahorre. A Large Skipper was new from the trip, but sadly the main two meadows had been fenced off, leaving the group forced to explore the ones on the far side of the bridge. However, it was here where the week's first Mazarine Blue was spotted, a beautiful, fresh male searching for minerals in the damp area along the path beside the bridge.





Iberian Scarce Swallowtail © G Elsom



Carthusian Pink © G Elsom

We made a stop to allow the guests to take a look at the medieval walled town of Villefranche de Conflent, whilst during the evening's review, Gillian proffered a surprise by showing an image of a female Holly Blue – the first of the trip. With a day to go, the species tally had now reached 71.

Plant species today: Forked Spleenwort *Asplenium septentrionale*, *Potentilla montana*, Silver Cinquefoil *Potentilla argentea*, Livelong Saxifrage *Saxifraga paniculata*, Carthusian Pink *Dianthus carthusianorum*, *Thymus sp.* *Sedum brevifolium*, Thick-leaved Stonecrop *Sedum dasyphyllum*, and the very beautiful Greater Butterfly Orchid *Platanthera chlorantha*.

Day 7, Wednesday 30th May, Col de Jau

In spite of some poor weather during the week, the group managed to avoid the worst of things but, sadly, that fortuitous run came to an end on this final full day. It was a great shame as the site visited first is perhaps the best example of a montane flower meadow on the itinerary and upon arrival at 10.30am the conditions weren't especially bad. In fact, for a while, the sun shone and a handful of Mazarine Blues were observed, as well as Small Heath, Pearl-bordered Fritillary, Oberthur's Grizzled Skipper, Sooty Copper, Meadow Fritillary and Red-underwing Skipper.

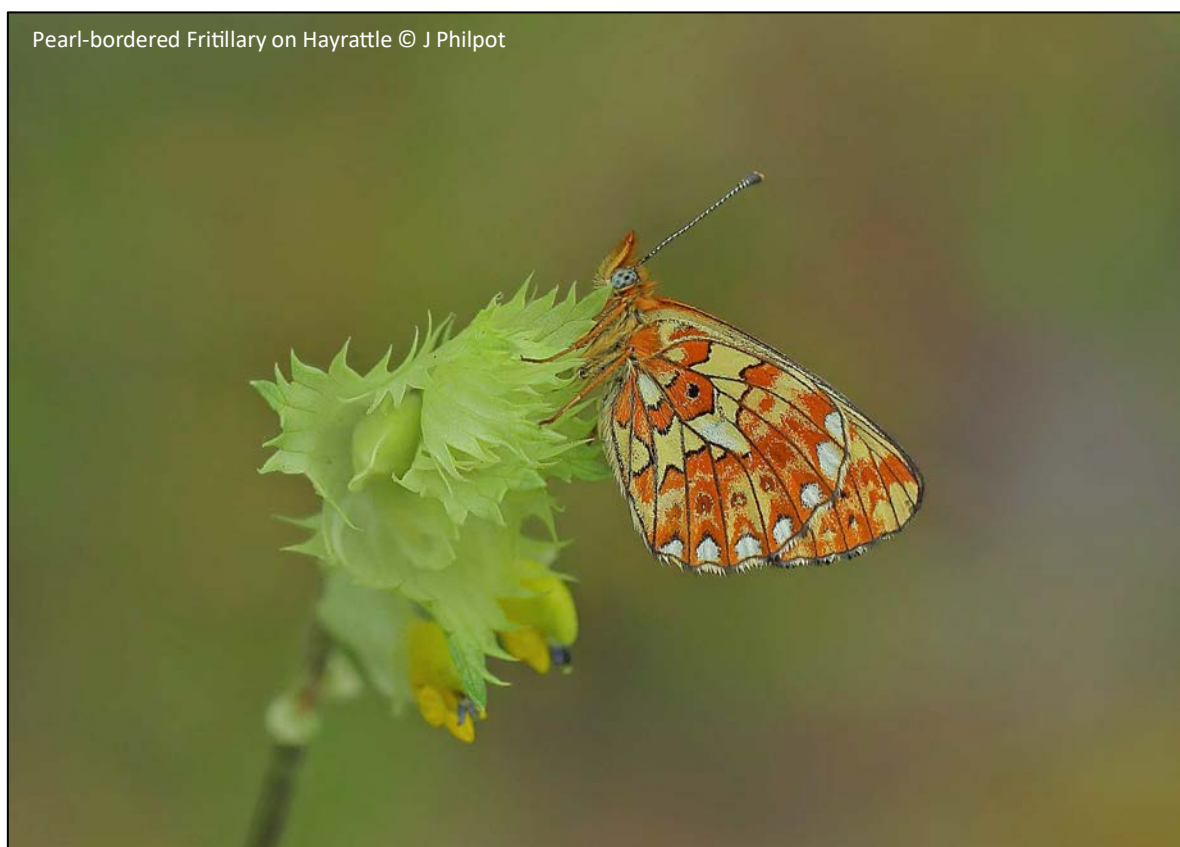


Meadow Fritillary © D Moore



Oberthur's Grizzled Skipper © D Moore

Nobody was to know how quickly the clouds would roll in, and half an hour later persistent rain had begun leading the guides to agree to ascend in the hope that the group could again get above the mist. The plan wasn't completely unsuccessful; the sun poked through several times but the air temperature was stuck at about 10c, so it was agreed that the group would descend on the northern side of the col (into the Aude Departement) in an attempt to escape the grey conditions. Unfortunately, the rain increased in strength, and with the arrival of electrical storms, there was no option but to call a halt to proceedings. Yiannis and his three travelling companions turned back and enjoyed a couple of hours amongst the stunning plants at the first stop, with Ken, Gillian and Elisabeth having the site to themselves. The rest had no option but to return to the hotel, as if anything the weather was worse towards the coast than it was in the mountains. At least this gave everybody the opportunity to get some rest and have time to prepare for the following day's departure. Unsurprisingly, no additional butterfly species were added to the week's tally so the final total remained at 71.



Plants today included Southern Early Purple Orchid *Orchis mascula* var. *olbiensis*, Elderflower Orchid *Dactylorhiza sambucina*, Mountain Clover *Trifolium montanum* subsp. *gayanum*, White Asphodel *Asphodelus albus*, Purple Toothwort *Lathraea clandestina*, Moorland Spotted Orchid *Dactylorhiza maculata*, Stemless Gentian *Gentiana acaulis*, Alpine Clover *Trifolium alpinum*, Narrow-leaved Helleborine *Cephalanthera longifolia*, Spiked Rampion *Phyteuma spicata*, Fly Woodbine *Lonicera xylosteum*, Man Orchid *Orchis anthropophora*, Common Twayblade *Neottia ovata*, Butterwort *Pinguicula vulgaris*, Sweet Woodruff *Galium odoratum*, *Viola* sp., Bird's-nest Orchid *Neottia nidus-avis*, and *Daphne* sp.

One final delicious evening meal was enjoyed by all with the outsourced caterers well

deserving of the whip-round had for them and as darkness fell, the group made their way back to their rooms for a good night's sleep in readiness for the return home.

Footnote

The total number of butterfly species seen was 71, and a little disappointing but the good news was that all the 'iconics' were sighted - Violet Copper, Apollo, Provence Orange Tip, Spanish Fritillary, Clouded Apollo, Camberwell Beauty and Spanish Festoon. Given the unseasonable weather, it was therefore quite a successful return, and the regular overcast skies meant guests were able to approach and photograph species that are normally only accessible via 'zoom', resulting in some superb photos. The cool spring had clearly retarded emergences, and it would be safe to say that the 'Beast from the East' that descended upon western Europe in February was largely responsible for the relative lack of butterflies. A fantastic array of plants was also seen.

Acknowledgements Greenwings would like to thank all their guests on this trip for convivial company throughout the week. The hotel staff did a great job ensuring everybody was comfortable and the meals provided in the private restaurant were enjoyed by all. Thanks also to Monsieur Perez, the hard-working owner, who generously opened up the lounge room on the Saturday evening so that guests could watch the Champions League Final.

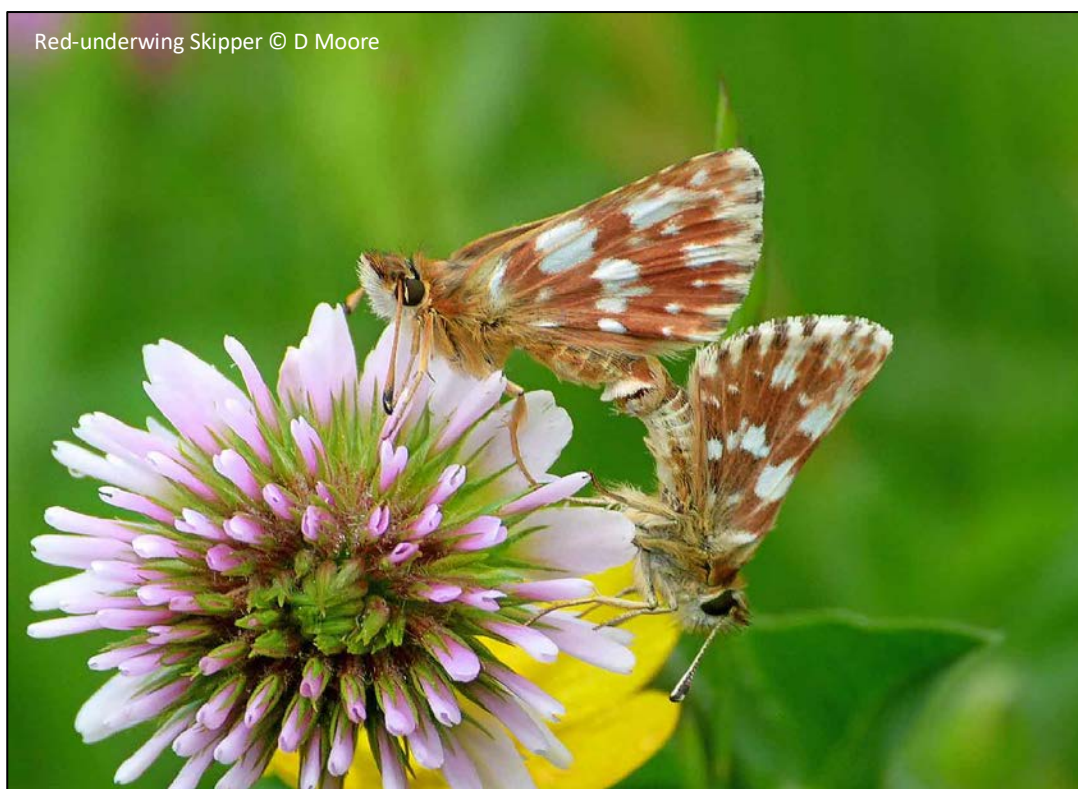


Photo gallery and species lists overleaf





Black-veined White © G Elsom



Violet Copper © G Elsom



Iberian Scarce Swallowtail © G Elsom



Adonis Blues © J Philpot



Provence Orange Tip © D Moore





Swallowtail on Centranthus lecoquii © G Elsom



Chequered Blue © J Philpot



De Prunner's Ringlet © J Philpot



Provence Short-tailed Blue © D Moore



Weaver's Fritillary © J Philpot



Spotted Fritillary © J Philpot

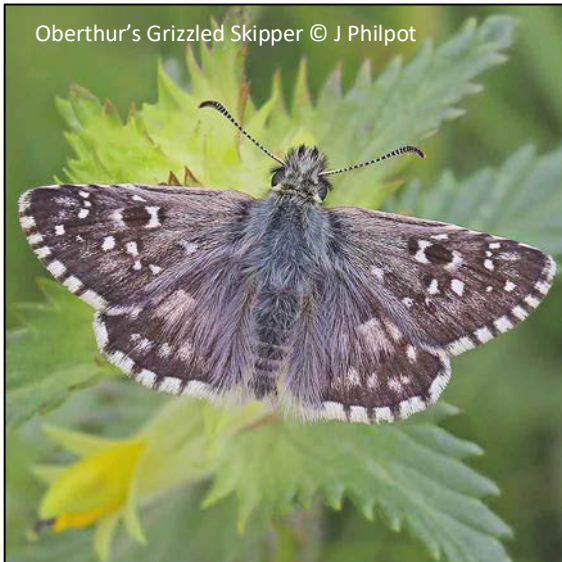
Tufted Marbled Skipper © D Moore



Knapweed Fritillary © J Philpot



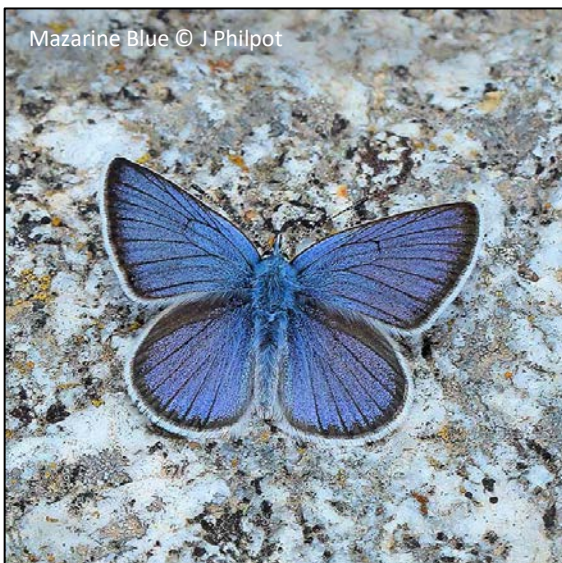
Oberthur's Grizzled Skipper © J Philpot



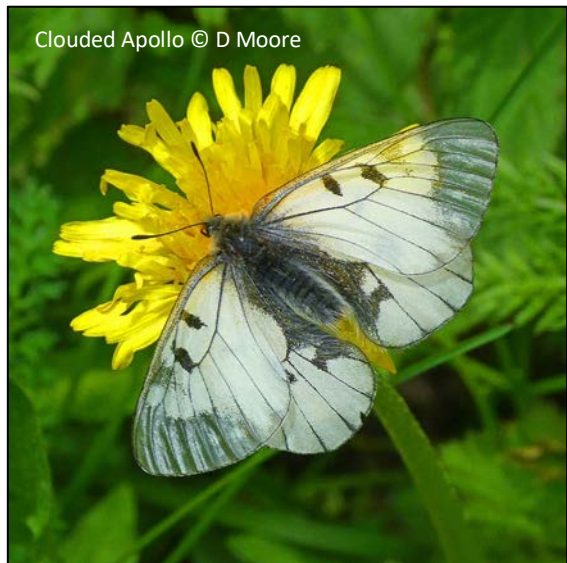
Green-underside Blue © J Philpot



Mazarine Blue © J Philpot



Clouded Apollo © D Moore





Large Grizzled Skipper © D Moore



Grizzled Skipper © G Elsom



Provence Orange Tip © D Moore



Safflower Skipper © J Philpot



Red-underwing Skipper © J Philpot





Swallowtail © D Moore



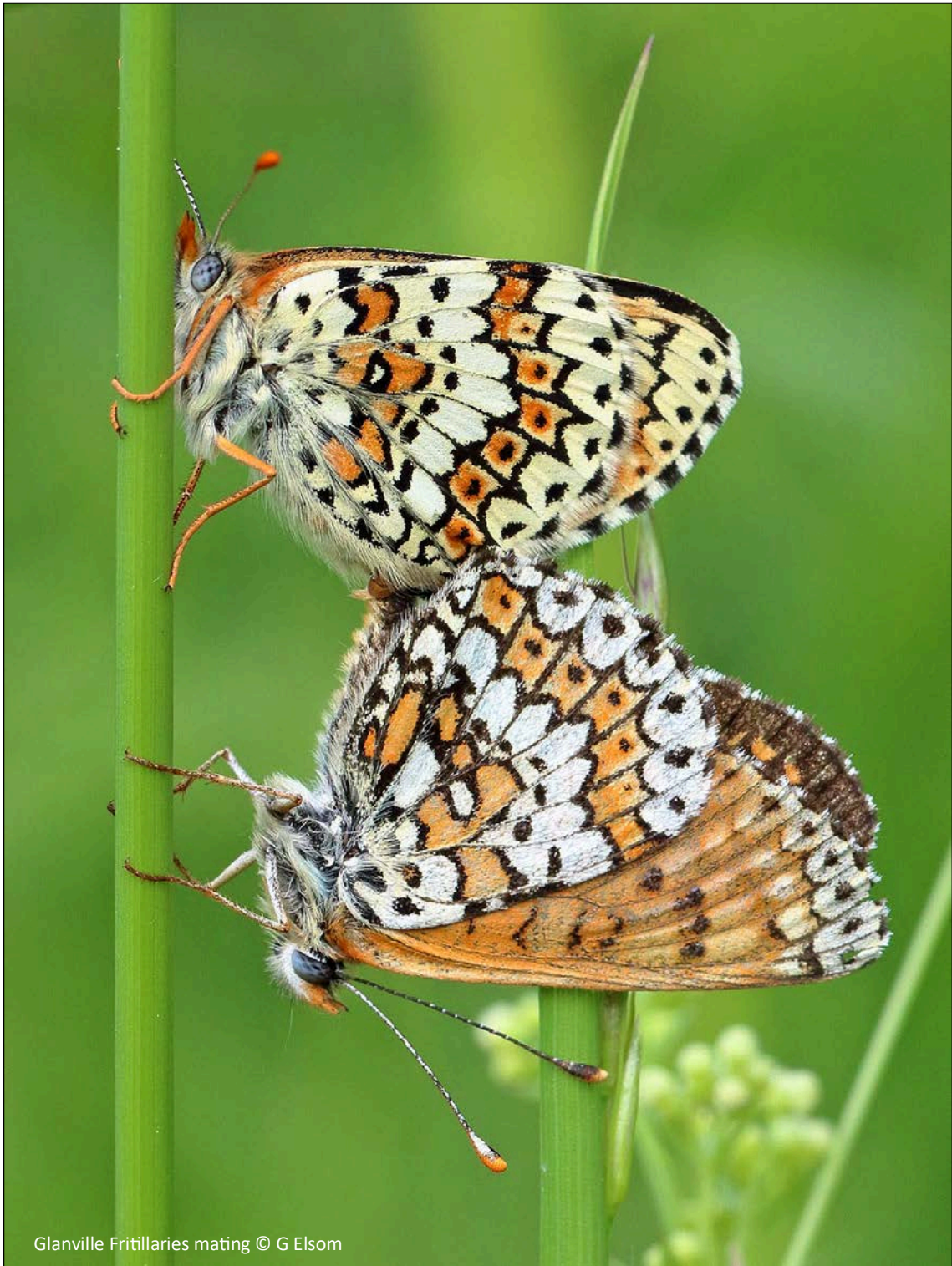
Painted Lady © J Philpot



Red-underwing Skipper © G Elsom



Chequered Blue © D Moore



Glanville Fritillaries mating © G Elsom



Dactylorhiza sambucina © G Elsom



Dactylorhiza sambucina © G Elsom



Dactylorhiza maculata © G Elsom



Dactylorhiza majalis © G Elsom



Neotinea ustulata © G Elsom



Pinguicula grandiflora © G Elsom



Cephalanthera longifolium © G Elsom



Trifolium alpinum © G Elsom



Neottia nidus-avis © G Elsom



Trifolium montanum ssp. gayanum © G Elsom

Butterfly species list 24-31 st May 2018			Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5	Day 6	Day 7
			Sahorre Meadows	Conat Tour de Goa	Sourmia	Eyne/Llo Carançás Gorge	Força Réal	Col de Mantet	Mosset/ Col de Jau
	Hesperiidae Skippers	Principal LHP(s)							
1	Tufted Marbled Skipper (<i>Carcharodus flocciferus</i>)	Yellow/limestone/downy woundwort, betony (stachys recta/alpina/germanica/officinalis)	✓		✓	✓		✓	
2	Dingy Skipper (<i>Erynnis tages</i>)	Bird's foot trefoil/horseshoe vetch (lotus corniculatus/hippocrepis comosa)	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓
3	Large Skipper (<i>Ochlodes sylvanus</i>)	Cock's foot/flattened meadow grass/Tor Grass (dactylis glomerata/poa compressa/brachypodium pinnatum)						✓	
4	Large Grizzled Skipper (<i>Pyrgus alveus</i>)	Common rock rose/strawberry-leaf cinquefoil (helianthemum nummularium/potentilla sterilis)	✓		✓		✓		
5	Oberthür's Grizzled Skipper (<i>Pyrgus armoricanus</i>)	Tormentil/spring cinquefoil (potentilla reptans/potentilla tabernaemontani)	✓					✓	✓
6	Safflower Skipper (<i>Pyrgus carthami</i>)	Spring cinquefoil (potentilla tabernaemontani/hirta)	✓			✓			
7	Southern Grizzled Skipper (<i>Pyrgus malvoides</i>)	Wild strawberry/tormentil (fragaria vesca/potentilla reptans)	✓	✓		✓		✓	
8	Red-underwing Skipper (<i>Spialia sertorius</i>)	Salad burnet (sanguisorba minor)		✓	✓			✓	✓
9	Lulworth Skipper (<i>Thymelicus acteon</i>)	Tor grass/false brome (brachypodium pinnatum/brachypodium sylvaticum)					✓		
	Lycaenidae Blues, Hairstreaks, Coppers								
10	Brown Argus (<i>Aricia agestis</i>)	Common rock rose/white rock rose (helianthemum nummularium/apenninum)	✓	✓				✓	✓
11	Provençal Short Tailed Blue (<i>Cupido alcetas</i>)	Black medick (medicago lupulina)	✓	✓		✓		✓	
12	Holly Blue (<i>Celastrina argiolus</i>)	Holly/ivy (ilex aquifolium/hedera helix)					✓		
13	Small Blue (<i>Cupido minimus</i>)	Kidney vetch (anthyllis vulneraria)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
14	Osiris Blue (<i>Cupido osiris</i>)	Sainfoin (onobrychis viciifolia)			✓				

			Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5	Day 6	Day 7
15	Mazarine Blue (<i>Cyaniris semiargus</i>)	Red clover/white clover (<i>trifolium pratense/repens</i>)						✓	✓
16	Baton Blue (<i>Pseudophilotes baton</i>)	Wild thyme (<i>thymus vulgaris</i>)			✓				
17	Geranium Bronze (<i>Cacyreus marshalli</i>)	Rose-scented pelargonium/king pelargonium (<i>pelargonium capitatum/grandiflorum</i>)			✓				
18	Green-underside Blue (<i>Glaucopsyche alexis</i>)	Milk vetch/lucerne (<i>astragalus glycyphyllos/medicago sativa</i>)	✓		✓		✓		
19	Adonis Blue (<i>Polyommatus bellargus</i>)	Horseshoe vetch (<i>hippocrepis comosa</i>)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
20	Turquoise Blue (<i>Polyommatus dorylas</i>)	Kidney vetch (<i>anthyllis vulneraria</i>)			✓				
21	Common Blue (<i>Polyommatus icarus</i>)	Birds foot trefoil/black medick (<i>lotus corniculatus/medicago lupulina</i>)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
22	Chapman's Blue (<i>Polyommatus thersites</i>)	Sainfoin/rock sainfoin (<i>onobrychis viciifolia/onobrychis saxatilis</i>)		✓	✓				
23	Chequered Blue (<i>Scolitantides orion</i>)	Orpine/white stonecrop (<i>sedum telephium/sedum album</i>)		✓	✓	✓	✓		
24	Small Copper (<i>Lycaena phlaeas</i>)	Common sorrel/sheep's sorrel (<i>rumex acetosa/rumex acetosella</i>)		✓		✓			✓
25	Violet Copper (<i>Lycaena helle</i>)	Bistort (<i>polygonum bistorta</i>)				✓			
26	Sooty Copper (<i>Lycaena tityrus</i>)	Common sorrel/french sorrel (<i>rumex acetosa/rumex scutatus</i>)	✓				✓		✓
27	Green Hairstreak (<i>Callophrys rubi</i>)	Prostrate canary clover/lucerne/yellow restharrow (<i>dorycnium pentaphyllum/medicago sativa/ononis striata</i>)		✓	✓	✓	✓		
	Nymphalidae Aristocrats & Fritillaries								
28	Provençal Fritillary (<i>Mellicta dejone</i>)	Creeping toadflax/snap-dragon (<i>linaria repens/antirrhinum latifolium</i>)		✓	✓			✓	
29	Weaver's Fritillary (<i>Boloria dia</i>)	Sweet violet/hairy violet (<i>viola odorata/viola hirta</i>)	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓
30	Pearl-bordered Fritillary (<i>Boloria euphrosyne</i>)	Early dog-violet/common dog violet (<i>viola reichenbachiana/viola riviniana</i>)						✓	✓
31	Marsh Fritillary (<i>Euphydryas aurinia</i>)	Devil's bit-scabious/small scabious (<i>succisa pratensis/scabiosa columbaria</i>)		✓	✓	✓	✓		

			Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5	Day 6	Day 7
32	Spanish Fritillary (<i>Euphydryas desfontainii</i>)	Scabious (cephalaria leucantha)			✓				
33	Queen of Spain Fritillary (<i>Issoria lathonia</i>)	Field pansy/heartsease (viola arvensis/viola tricolor)			✓			✓	
34	Glanville Fritillary (<i>Melitaea cinxia</i>)	Ribwort plantain/broadleaf plantain (plantago lanceolata/plantago major)	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓
35	Spotted Fritillary (<i>Melitaea didyma</i>)	Ribwort plantain/yellow woundwort (plantago lanceolata/stachys recta)	✓	✓	✓			✓	
36	Meadow Fritillary (<i>Melitaea parthenoides</i>)	Ribwort plantain/alpine plantain (plantago lanceolata/plantago alpina)						✓	✓
37	Knapweed Fritillary (<i>Melitaea phoebe</i>)	Lesser knapweed/greater knapweed (cantaurea nigra/centaurea amara)	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	
38	Small Tortoiseshell (<i>Aglaia urticae</i>)	Stinging nettle (urtica dioica)		✓	✓	✓			
39	Comma (<i>Polygonia c-album</i>)	Stinging nettle/common hazel (urtica dioica/corylus avellana)	✓			✓		✓	
40	Peacock (<i>Inachis io</i>)	Stinging nettle (urtica dioica)	✓					✓	
41	Southern White Admiral (<i>Limenitis reducta</i>)	Etruscan honeysuckle/evergreen honeysuckle (lonicera etrusca/lonicera implexa)			✓		✓		
42	Camberwell beauty (<i>Nymphalis antiopa</i>)	Goat willow/white willow (salix caprea/salix alba)		✓		✓			
43	Red Admiral (<i>Vanessa atalanta</i>)	Stinging nettle/annual nettle (urtica dioica/urtica urens)	✓	✓			✓		
44	Painted Lady (<i>Vanessa cardui</i>)	Creeping thistle/spear thistle (cirsium arvense/cirsium vulgare)		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Papilionidae Swallowtails & Fестоons								
45	Spanish Festoon (<i>Zerynthia rumina</i>)	Spanish birthwort (aristolochia pistolochia)		✓	✓				
46	Iberian Scarce Swallowtail (<i>Iphiclides feisthamelii</i>)	(prunus spinosa/prunus mahaleb) Blackthorn/St Lucie cherry	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
47	Swallowtail (<i>Papilio machaon</i>)	Fennel/wild carrot (foeniculum vulgare/daucus carota)	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	
48	Apollo (<i>Parnassius apollo</i>)	White stonecrop/orpine (sedum album/sedum telephium)		✓				✓	
49	Clouded Apollo (<i>Parnassius mnemosyne</i>)	Fumewort/spring fumewort (corydalis solida/corydalis bulbosa)	✓			✓		✓	

	Pieridae Whites & Yellows		Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5	Day 6	Day 7
50	Orange Tip (<i>anthocharis cardamines</i>)	Cuckoo flower/garlic mustard (cardimine pratensis/alliaria petiolata)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
51	Provence Orange Tip (<i>anthocharis euphinoides</i>)	Buckler's mustard (biscutella laevigata)	✓	✓				✓	
52	Black-veined White (<i>Aporia crataegi</i>)	Common hawthorn/whitebeam (crataegus monogyna/sorbus aria)			✓			✓	
53	Berger's Clouded Yellow (<i>Colias alfacariensis</i>)	Horseshoe vetch (hippocrepis comosa)			✓	✓		✓	
54	Clouded Yellow (<i>Colias crocea</i>)	Lucerne/trifolium pratense/trifolium repens (medicago sativa/red/white clover)	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	
55	Cleopatra (<i>Gonepteryx cleopatra</i>)	Mediterranean buckthorn (rhamnus alaternus)			✓				
56	Brimstone (<i>Gonepteryx rhamni</i>)	Mediterranean buckthorn/alder buckthorn (rhamnus alaternus/frangula alnus)	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	
57	Wood White (<i>Leptidea sinapis</i>)	Meadow vetchling/tufted vetch (lathyrus pratensis/vicia cracca)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
58	Large White (<i>Pieris brassicae</i>)	Field mustard/wild cabbage (sinapis arvensis/brassica oleracea)			✓		✓		
59	Green-veined White (<i>Pieris napi</i>)	Garlic mustard/field pepperwort (alliaria petiolata/lepidium campestre)		✓		✓		✓	
60	Small White (<i>Pieris rapae</i>)	Field mustard/wild cabbage (sinapis arvensis/brassica oleracea)	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	
61	Southern Small White (<i>Pieris manni</i>)	Candytuft/perennial wall-rocket (iberis linifolia/diplotaxis tenuifolia)					✓		
62	Western Dappled White (<i>Euchloe crameri</i>)	Buckler's mustard (biscutella laevigata)					✓		
63	Bath White (<i>Pontia daplidice</i>)	Wild mignonette/hairy bittercress (reseda lutea/cardamine hirsuta)			✓		✓		
	Riodinidae Metalmarks								
64	Duke Of Burgundy (<i>Hamearis lucina</i>)	Cowslip/primrose (primula veris/primula vulgaris)	✓	✓		✓		✓	

	Nymphalidae Browns, Heaths, Ringlets, Graylings		Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5	Day 6	Day 7
65	Small Heath (<i>Coenonympha pamphilus</i>)	Annual meadow grass/crested dog's tail (poa annua/cynosurus cristatus)	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
66	Large Wall (<i>Lasiommata maera</i>)	Sheep's fescue/smooth meadow grass (festuca ovina/poa pratensis)	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	
67	Wall (<i>Lasiommata megera</i>)	Sheep's fescue/mediterranean false brome (festuca ovina/brachypodium retusum)		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
68	Spanish Gatekeeper (<i>Pyronia bathseba</i>)	Phoenician tor grass (brachypodium phoenicoides)					✓		
69	Western Marbled White (<i>Melanargia occitanica</i>)	Tor grass/sheep's fescue (brachypodium pinnatum/festuca ovina)			✓		✓		
70	Speckled Wood (<i>Pararge aegeria</i>)	Annual meadow grass/smooth meadow grass (poa annua/poa pratensis)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
71	De Prunner's ringlet (<i>Erebia triaria</i>)	Sheep's fescue/european feather grass (festuca ovina/stipa pennata)	✓	✓		✓		✓	
	Daily Total		34	37	42	34	27	39	16
	Running Total		34	48	61	62	67	71	71

Plant species list overleaf

Special thanks to Yiannis and David for providing a wonderful plant list and spending time to where possible to explain the larval hostplants of the butterflies which were seen on this holiday.

Notable Plants		
	PTERIDOPHYTES	Day seen
	Aspleniaceae	
1	<i>Asplenium septentrionale</i> - Forked Spleenwort	6
2	<i>Asplenium trichomanes</i> - Maidenhair Spleenwort	1
	Polypodiaceae	
3	<i>Polypodium cambricum</i> - Welsh Polypody	2
	GYMNOSPERMS	
	Pinaceae	
4	<i>Pinus sylvestris</i> - Scots Pine	5
5	<i>Pinus mugo</i>	3
	Cupressaceae	
6	<i>Cypressus sempervirens</i>	6
7	<i>Juniperus communis</i>	3
	ANGIOSPERMS	
	DICOTYLEDONS	
	Apiaceae	
8	<i>Bupleurum fruticosum</i> - Shrubby Hare's ear	3
9	<i>Ferula communis</i>	5
10	<i>Foeniculum vulgare</i> - Fennel	5
	Asclepiadaceae	
11	<i>Vincetoxicum hirundinaria</i> ssp. <i>intermedium</i>	4
	Asteraceae	
12	<i>Centaurea aspera</i>	3
13	<i>Centaurea pectinata</i>	2
14	<i>Galactites tomentosa</i>	5
15	<i>Lactuca perennis</i>	3
16	<i>Leucanthemum vulgare</i>	7
17	<i>Pallenis spinosa</i>	3
18	<i>Tolpis barbata</i>	5
19	<i>Tragopogon pratensis</i>	2
20	<i>Urospermum dalechampii</i> - Smooth Golden Fleece	3
	Boraginaceae	
21	<i>Echium vulgare</i> - Viper's Bugloss	5
22	<i>Echium plantagineum</i> - Purple Viper's Bugloss	2
	Brassicaceae	
23	<i>Arabis hirsuta</i>	7
24	<i>Biscutella cichoriifolia</i>	3
25	<i>Capsella bursa-pastoris</i> - Shepherd's Purse	6
26	<i>Cardamine pratensis</i> - Lady's smock	1

	Campanulaceae	
27	<i>Campanula speciosa</i>	2
28	<i>Phyteuma spicata</i>	7
	Caprifoliaceae	
29	<i>Lonicera etrusca</i> - Etruscan Honeysuckle	3
30	<i>Lonicera xylosteum</i>	7
	Caryophyllaceae	
31	<i>Dianthus carthusianorum</i> - Carthusian Pink	6
32	<i>Dianthus hispanicus</i>	2
33	<i>Herniaria glabra</i>	2
34	<i>Saponaria ocymoides</i> - Rock Soapwort	1
35	<i>Silene alba</i> - White Champion	2
36	<i>Silene dioica</i>	7
37	<i>Silene gallica</i>	5
38	<i>Silene italica</i>	2
39	<i>Silene vulgaris</i> - Bladder Champion	2
40	<i>Stellaria holostea</i> , Greater Stitchwort	1
	Celastraceae	
41	<i>Euonymus europaeus</i>	2
	Cistaceae	
42	<i>Cistus albidus</i>	4
43	<i>Cistus laurifolius</i> - Laurel-leaved Rockrose	3
44	<i>Cistus monspeliensis</i> - Montpellier Cistus	5
45	<i>Cistus salviifolius</i>	5
46	<i>Helianthemum apenninum</i>	3
47	<i>Helianthemum nummularium</i> ssp. <i>glabrum</i> - Common Rockrose	2
	Convolvulaceae	
48	<i>Convolvulus althaeoides</i>	5
49	<i>Convolvulus arvensis</i>	3
	Crassulaceae	
50	<i>Sedum brevifolium</i> - rounded leaves, white flowers	6
51	<i>Sedum dasyphyllum</i>	6
52	<i>Umbilicus rupestris</i> - Navelwort	2
	Cucurbitaceae	
53	<i>Bryonia cretica</i> - White Bryony	5
	Dipsacaceae	
54	<i>Knautia integrifolia</i>	2
	Euphorbiaceae	
55	<i>Euphorbia characias</i>	1,3
56	<i>Euphorbia cyparissias</i> - Cypress Spurge	2
57	<i>Euphorbia exigua</i> - Dwarf Spurge	3

58	<i>Euphorbia helioscopia</i>	2
59	<i>Euphorbia serrata</i>	3
60	<i>Euphorbia</i> sp	4,7
	Fabaceae	
61	<i>Anthyllis vulneraria</i> ssp. <i>forondae</i> - Kidney Vetch	2
62	<i>Dorycnium pentaphyllum</i> - Prostrate Canary clover	5
63	<i>Hippocrepis comosa</i> - Horseshoe Vetch	3
64	<i>Lathyrus aphaca</i>	2
65	<i>Lathyrus pratensis</i> - Meadow Pea	1
66	<i>Medicago minima</i> - Bur Medick	5
67	<i>Onobrychis supina</i>	3
68	<i>Onobrychis viciifolia</i> - Common Sainfoin	4
69	<i>Psoralea bituminosa</i> - Pitch Trefoil	3
70	<i>Spartium junceum</i> - Spanish Broom	2-7
71	<i>Trifolium alpinum</i>	7
72	<i>Trifolium incarnatum</i> - Crimson Clover	3
73	<i>Trifolium montanum</i> subsp. <i>gayanum</i> - red mountain clover	7
74	<i>Trifolium pratense</i> - Red Clover	1
75	<i>Trifolium stellatum</i>	5
76	<i>Vicia cracca</i> - Tufted Vetch	2
77	<i>Vicia onobrychioides</i>	1
78	<i>Vicia sativa</i> - Common Vetch	1
79	<i>Vicia sepium</i> - Bush Vetch	1
80	<i>Vicia villosa</i> - Fodder Vetch	2
	Fagaceae	
81	<i>Quercus coccifera</i> - Kermes Oak	2
	Gentianaceae	
82	<i>Gentiana verna</i> - Spring Gentian	4
83	<i>Gentiana acaulis</i>	7
	Geraniaceae	
84	<i>Erodium cicutarium</i> - Stork's Bill	2
85	<i>Geranium pyrenaicum</i> - Mountain Cranesbill	1
86	<i>Geranium robertianum</i> - Herb Robert	1
87	<i>Geranium rotundifolium</i> - Round-leaved Cranesbill	2
88	<i>Geranium sanguineum</i> - Bloody Cranesbill	3
89	<i>Geranium sylvaticum</i> - Wood Cranesbill	1
	Globulariaceae	
90	<i>Globularia</i> sp	3
	Lamiaceae	
91	<i>Ajuga pyramidalis</i> - Pyramidal Bugle	7
92	<i>Lamium album</i> - White Dead-nettle	4

93	Lavandula angustifolia - Lavender	3
94	Lavandula stoechas - French Lavender	2
95	Salvia verbenaca	5
96	Stachys recta	2
97	Teucrium aureum	2
98	Thymus serpyllum - Wild Thyme	6
99	Thymus vulgaris - Thyme	6
	Linaceae	
100	Linum narbonense	3
	Malvaceae	
101	Malva sylvestris - Common Mallow	5
	Orobanchaceae	
102	Lathraea clandestina, Purple toothwort	7
103	Orobanche gracile	3
	Oleaceae	
104	Jasminum fruticans - Wild Jasmine	3
	Papaveraceae	
105	Chelidonium majus - Greater Celandine	1
106	Papaver rhoeas - Corn Poppy	2
	Plantaginaceae	
107	Plantago holosteum - with grass-like leaves	2
	Polygalaceae	
108	Polygala vulgaris	2
	Polygonaceae	
109	Persicaria bistorta	1
	Primulaceae	
110	Anagallis arvensis - Scarlet Pimpernel	2
111	Primula veris - Cowslip	4
	Ranunculaceae	
112	Aquilegia vulgaris - Columbine	1
113	Caltha palustris	4
114	Ranunculus bulbosus- reflexed sepals	2
	Resedaceae	
115	Reseda lutea - Wild Mignonette	2
116	Reseda phyteuma - Corn Mignonette	5
	Rhamnaceae	
117	Rhamnus alaternus - Mediterranean Buckthorn	5
	Rosaceae	
118	Geum rivale - Avens	4
119	Geum urbanum - Herb Benet	2
120	Potentilla argentea - Silvery Cinquefoil	2

121	Potentilla montana	6
122	Sanguisorba minor - Salad Burnet	2
	Rubiaceae	
123	Cruciata laevipes	1
124	Galium odoratum - Woodruff	7
125	Sherardia arvensis - Field Madder	3
	Rutaceae	
126	Cneorum tricoccon - Spurge Olive	3
	Santalaceae	
127	Osyris alba	5
	Saxifragaceae	
128	Saxifraga granulata, Meadow saxifrage	4
129	Saxifraga paniculata	6
	Scrophulariaceae	
130	Antirrhinum siculum - Sicilian Snapdragon	1
131	Asarina procumbens	4
132	Linaria pelisseriana	5
133	Rhinanthus minor	4
134	Veronica austriaca	2
135	Veronica beccabunga	6
136	Veronica chamaedrys	1
	Solanaceae	
137	Hyoscyamus niger	4
	Thymelaeaceae	
138	Daphne sp.	7
	Valerianaceae	
139	Centranthus lecoqii	3
140	Centranthus ruber	2
	Violaceae	
141	Viola arvensis	3
142	Viola sp.	7
	MONOCOTYLEDONS	
	Amaryllidaceae	
143	Allium lusitanicum	3
144	Narcissus poeticus - Poet's Narcissus	4
	Liliaceae	
145	Anthericum liliago - St Bernard's Lily	3
146	Aphyllanthes monspeliensis - Blue Grass Lily	3
147	Dipcadi serotinum - Dipcadi	3
148	Muscari comosum - Tassel Hyacinth	2

149	<i>Ornithogalum pyrenaicum</i>	2
150	<i>Polygonatum multiflorum</i> - Solomon's Seal	4
	Orchidaceae	
151	<i>Anacamptis pyramidalis</i> - Pyramidal Orchid	3
152	<i>Cephalanthera longifolia</i> - Sword-leaved Helleborine	2
153	<i>Dactylorhiza maculata</i>	7
154	<i>Dactylorhiza sambucina</i> - Elderflower Orchid (Red and Yellow forms)	7
155	<i>Neottia nidus-avis</i>	7
156	<i>Neottia ovata</i>	7
157	<i>Ophrys lutea</i> - Yellow Bee Orchid	3
158	<i>Ophrys scolopax</i> - Woodcock Orchid	3
159	<i>Orchis anthropophorum</i> - Man Orchid	3
160	<i>Orchis olbiensis</i> -Southern Early Purple	7
161	<i>Orchis ustulata</i> - Burnt-tip Orchid	4
162	<i>Platanthera chlorantha</i> - Greater Butterfly-orchid	6
	Xanthorrhoeaceae	
163	<i>Asphodelus albus</i>	7