

Butterflies of Bulgaria

3rd - 11th July 2024
Led by Ben Greenaway & Simeon Gigov



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Introduction

The southwestern region of Bulgaria is one of the most diverse and rich in flora and fauna on the Balkan Peninsula and is home to the impressive Pirin and Rila mountain ranges. The rich biological diversity of these two mountain ranges is protected with the designation of Rila National Park and Pirin National Park, and Pirin is also a UNESCO World Heritage Site. We used two different hotels to enable us to cover the maximum amount of different habitats and sites with the minimum amount of driving. The first base was in western Rhodope Mountains not far from the magnificent Trigrad gorge and for the second we moved to Bansko in the shadow of the Pirin Mountains.

Joining us were guests Roger, Mike and Susan, Antony, Adrian, Andrew, Anne, Clive and Janine, Charles, and Paul.

Day 1

Meeting at Sofia airport was very smooth as the majority of the guests were either on the same flight from Stansted or had already arrived in Sofia ahead of the tour. We met Simeon and were soon on our bus being driven a short distance across Sofia to a restaurant where we could have lunch and prepare for the journey to our first hotel in the western Rhodope Mountains.

From the bus we saw a large colony of European Souslik as we passed a local park. They appeared to be chasing and playing in much the same way as the nearby group of local children that were clearly so familiar with them that they didn't seem to notice their presence. We broke the journey up by stopping at some quarries where we hoped the arid steppe landscape might provide a few



European Souslik © Clive P



Lesser Fiery Copper
© Ben Greenaway

species that could be tricky to locate later in the trip. It was already a little late in the afternoon for puddling butterflies, and a moderate wind worked against us too, but we were able to make a strong start with Adrian finding Meleager's Blue, Charles and Ben Lesser Fiery Copper and Janine spotting the exquisitely beautiful Little Tiger Blue. Just before leaving Simeon drew our attention to a roosting fritillary that turned out to be an Eastern Knapweed Fritillary. An impressive collection of species for a transit stop. At the same spot we also found a couple of species of antlions and one of them was the largest in this family, *Palpares libelluloides*. Birds were less numerous in the middle of this hot day, but we still saw European Bee-eaters, Eurasian Hoopoe, Lesser Grey and Woodchat Shrikes, Corn and Black-headed Buntings, and the songs of the Common Nightingale and Golden Oriole were also adding to the atmosphere.

After a couple of hours further travelling we arrived at our hotel in the western Rhodope Mountains. Over a lovely meal of fresh fish and potatoes and a few drinks the group began the enjoyable process of getting to know one another.

Day 2

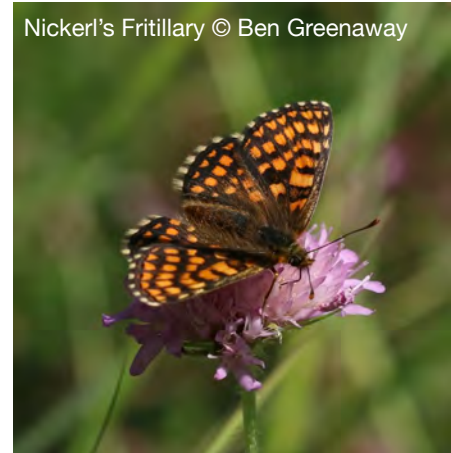
The weather today was overcast and cool and looked to be the most challenging day of the trip. We thought it would be a day for searching for roosting butterflies and perhaps discussing photography and identification tips but as it turned out the cooler cloudy weather produced a perfect day of butterflying. We began on a track that cut across the hillside behind the town. Even in cool conditions we began to find butterflies immediately, with Meleager's Blue and Lattice Brown giving excellent photo opportunities. As we gently walked along the path, the day warmed

up and hundreds of Marbled Whites with almost as many Great Banded Graylings became active all at once. Butterflies were just on the cusp of becoming active, so they would fly periodically and then land and bask which is probably the sweet spot when it comes to photography. They move, so we can spot them, and then they sit with open wings so we can photograph them - perfect!

We found many species along the track but the many Large Blues, a couple of Apollos and a beautifully fresh White-letter Hairstreak female were probably the highlights.

Birding was equally good here and we managed to see Eurasian Sparrowhawk, Sombre Tit, Red-rumped Swallow, Common and Black Redstarts and Yellowhammer.

In the afternoon we moved on to the extensive meadows at about 1200m close to another town. These meadows are heavenly with many Scarce Coppers and Balkan Coppers adding some dazzling colour to the wonderful array of species to be found there. We were particularly interested in distinguishing the Large Ringlets from the Arran Browns and trying to confirm Nickerl's Fritillary amongst the many Heath Fritillaries. As the afternoon wore on, the weather began to head in the wrong direction so we returned to our bus just as a few rain drops began to fall.



Nickerl's Fritillary © Ben Greenaway

Day 3

The weather was much improved today and looked excellent for the remainder of the trip. We spent the morning exploring hillside meadows. Although many butterflies were seen, the highlight was undoubtedly two or three perfectly fresh male Purple Emperors that were attempting to gather salts and minerals from the damp track. When males engage in this activity it only takes a small amount of good field craft to get close views and fantastic photographs. The group were up



Purple Emperor © Ben Greenaway

to the task and before long we were all enjoying a pristine Emperor 'plugged in' and thoroughly absorbed with the task of extracting something particularly appealing from Mike's hat! After some time, and some excellent posing by Mike, Paul took over as Emperor bait and another round of photographs commenced. This was an unforgettable experience for many of us, and although Purple Emperors are often encountered behaving like this, to have one so perfectly fresh and compliant is a rare treat for even the most dedicated Emperor enthusiast. It wasn't all about His Imperial Majesty though, and other highlights in the area included some Balkan Copper eggs found by Adrian and an impressive Tufted Marbled Skipper that patrolled the track with characteristic poise and purpose.

We were mostly focused on the butterflies here, but still this pristine habitat produced species like Common Quail, Pallid Swift, a particularly obliging Red-backed Shrike and a family of Sombre Tits.

After an excellent lunch stop in a restaurant overlooking a lake we moved up to 1800m to look for some higher altitude species. After the heat at lower altitudes it was wonderful to step out of the bus at 1800m and feel the cool fresh breeze drifting across the mountain. The butterflies were good here too with impressive numbers of Large and Ottoman Brassy Ringlets covering the flower heads lining the road. Eastern Large Heath were also numerous here along with specialities in smaller numbers such as False Eros Blue and Balkan Copper. Superb photos were taken by many group members, but particularly noteworthy was Clive's shot of the Balkan Copper that he achieved by patiently waiting for the clouds to part so that the butterfly would open its wings at the perfect angle.



Balkan Copper © Roger C

The star of the day among the birds was the Spotted

Nutcracker, which is closely associated with the high mountain natural coniferous forest. We had a very good view of a bird perched on the top of a tree and a couple of others flying around. Other good birds species seen at this location were Pallid Swift, Coal Tit, Willow Tit, Grey Wagtail and Common Crossbill.

Although the afternoon was drawing on we had time for one last stop at a pretty little village on the way back to our hotel. Here we searched for Hungarian Glider and were immediately rewarded with several sightings. Although temporarily distracted by a low flying Apollo that touched down in a local playground, we all managed excellent sightings of a much sought after species that we only reliably find at this one river valley site.



Freyer's Purple Emperor © Antony W

Back at the hotel this incredible day of butterflying continued as, flying around the cherry trees in the grounds of the hotel were several Freyer's Purple Emperors being harassed by an army of Commas presumably 'tanked-up' on fermenting fruit. In the late afternoon sun the aggressive chases were spectacular and rounded off a day of butterflying that for many of us won't be bettered for a very long time. In the evening we heard a Tawny Owl calling from the nearby forest, which concluded a fantastic day.

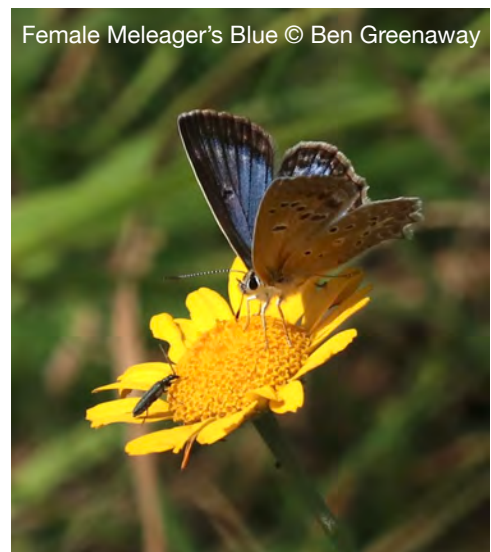
Day 4

Today we planned to visit several sites around the Trigrad gorge. The impressive gorge is a well known tourist destination but the surrounding areas have many paths that cut across the hillsides and wind through fantastically rich butterfly hot spots. We headed to one of these first thing and were soon following a path with spectacular views across the valley. On the way we also managed to see a Black Stork feeding in the river. Again we found many interesting species along the path with Escher's Blue being new for the trip and a stunning female Meleager's Blue being a clear highlight. The path soon entered into a more wooded area that opened into beautiful meadows that were unfortunately just being cut. The meadows had clearly already produced many butterflies however and the uncut pockets of hillside drew in butterflies from all around. Within these high density pockets of activity we found both Alcon and Large Blues flying together and were lucky to observe both species ovipositing. While photographing Alcon Blue laying on Gentians and Large Blue laying on Thyme, we also spent time discussing the fascinating and subtly different relationships that these species have with ants.

On the way back towards the bus we saw Ripart's Anomalous Blue and a noticeably darker Anomalous Blue that Simeon informed us was the Phalakron Anomalous.

After another filling lunch at a restaurant next to a beautiful river we headed to another river site known to be excellent for puddling butterflies. We were momentarily distracted by thousands of tadpoles enjoying the crystal clear waters of the trickling river before getting down to the serious business of working out the puddling butterflies. Upon very close inspection we were able to confirm both the Anomalous Blues that we had already seen at the previous site but also Kolev's Anomalous Blue that had only recently been discovered and is a speciality of this particular area. With a fairly clear white stripe on not only the underside hind wing but also the underside forewing this species is reasonably easy to confirm, but Simeon was able to message Kolev himself and receive immediate confirmation.

As we came back through Trigrad gorge we stopped to look for the ever popular Wall Creeper and were lucky to very quickly locate the breeding pair that return to this site every year. For the next 20 minutes we enjoyed watching parents foraging around the rock face and returning to their nest to feed young - one of which emerged from the nest giving us exceptional views of this behaviour. The sky above the gorge was full of extremely noisy Alpine Swifts along with Crag and



Female Meleager's Blue © Ben Greenaway

Southern White Admiral © Paul L



House Martins that breed on the cliffs. The songs of the Black Redstart, the Wren and the Rock Bunting could also be heard in the gorge.

Our final stop was along another river valley to look for Poplar Admiral. We were soon circled by a very large butterfly that was very likely our target species. Unfortunately the butterfly disappeared after just a few seconds and neither Ben nor Simeon got clear enough views to be able to say with 100% confidence that it was a Poplar Admiral rather than a Purple Emperor. Everything about it suggested Poplar Admiral though, and when we returned to our bus to find that Roger had photographed a Poplar Admiral close to the bus we were further convinced that this is the species we had seen earlier.

On this walk we also enjoyed both White Admiral and Southern White Admiral flying together making it a wonderful location where all three *Limenitis* species can be found together. The walk along the river also produced a pair of actively feeding Dippers and several Grey Wagtails.

Once back at the hotel and for half an hour before our evening checklist many of the group once again enjoyed the captivating spectacle of the many Commas and Freyer's Purple Emperors feeding and aggressively chasing each other around the cherry trees outside our hotel. They were joined by a Red Admiral or two and in the late afternoon sun, fuelled by the fermenting fruit upon which they fed the chases seemed to become ever more aggressive and constant. Not a time for photography but a butterfly spectacle that for many of us will live long in the memory.

Day 5

Today we would leave the western Rhodope Mountains and head further west to the town of Bansko that lies in the shadow of the Pirin Mountain range. Before setting off there was just enough time to once again enjoy the many Freyer's Purple Emperors flying around the cherries growing in the area immediately outside our hotel. In the cool early morning sun the butterflies were calm and could be seen gently gliding around the trees, stopping to bask and beginning to feed once again. This period had an unmistakable 'morning after the night before' feel about it and was a fascinating behaviour to contrast with the activity of the previous evening.

After a couple of hours we arrived at our first meadow site. The season here was very advanced and there was no chance to find the Southern or Eastern Festoons that we know fly here. We did however, find an Eastern Festoon caterpillar and this was well appreciated by those interested in immature stages.

Eastern Festoon Larva © Ben Greenaway



We also found Oberthur's Grizzled Skipper and a few of us were treated to a brief sighting of Cardinal as it nectared on some thistles close to our bus. We saw several Chapman's Blues amongst the many Common and Silver-studded but the star of the show was a female Bronze Glandular Bush Cricket...looking more like an ornamental bronze paperweight!

Bronze Glandular Bush-cricket © Clive P



As temperatures rose above 30°C today, birding wasn't excellent, but we still managed to see Green and Lesser Spotted Woodpeckers at this spot and several Golden Orioles flying over the valley. We heard (and briefly saw) quite a few Cirl Buntings and a very obliging Woodchat Shrike.

We had lunch a little further on close to a dried up river bed. After lunch we moved higher into the Slavjanka Mountains where we took a trail up through a village and into the wooded hillside. There were many puddling

butterflies here including Higgins' Anomalous Blue, our first Chalkhill Blues, Nettle Tree butterflies and an Eastern Short-tailed Blue.

We found Swallowtail caterpillars on the Fennel as we walked through the village and we all enjoyed the many Scarce Swallowtails that seemed to be nectaring all around us.

We also enjoyed our first sighting of the Balkan Grayling that hopped about in characteristic fashion along the woodland path. This area was experiencing an exceptionally dry period and as a result the puddling was much reduced compared with previous years. There were still hundreds of butterflies puddling however, but this is an exceptional area and we had quietly hoped for thousands.



After a long and very productive transfer day we were all glad to arrive at our new hotel for refreshments followed by a wonderful evening meal cooked in front of us on the barbecue in the hotel courtyard.

Day 6



Today we planned to visit some hot dry habitats in the morning, so in anticipation of this we made an earlier than normal start to avoid the worst of the heat. The down side of this of course is that the butterflies are in no hurry to become active so our first site was a little disappointing. We did, however, enjoy Common Glider and Southern White Admiral flying together and the whole group enjoyed exceptional views of the Griffon Vultures that nest on the cliffs.

Our second site was also very hot but it was well worth the effort with Balkan Marbled White, Eastern Wood White and the Hermit being added to the list. We also had fantastic views of a pristine Little Tiger Blue close to the bus.

Here we managed to see the Western Rock Nuthatch, much desired by some members of the group, which despite being quite distant was very actively feeding and singing. A pair of Short-toed Eagles flew low over the cliffs and produced excellent views and some good quality pictures for the group too. Other birds here included Eastern Black-eared Wheatear, Black-headed, Corn and Cirl Buntings, Turtle Dove and Common Hoopoe. In the villages around this area we also saw many White Storks' nests with their numerous and very noisy Spanish Sparrow tenants.

There were also Sombre Goldenring dragonflies flying around at this stop.

After lunch we went in search of mud-puddling butterflies and climbed higher up the western side of the mountains that we had explored from the east on the previous day.

Despite the meadows rather disappointingly having been recently grazed, we still managed to find some impressive puddling. At least ten species of blues were puddling in good numbers with the collection of four species of Anomalous Blue being the highlight.

The small streams around were full of dragonflies and we had good views of and photographed the Eastern Spectre, Balkan Goldenring, Beautiful Demoiselle, Southern Skimmer, and others.

It was a long hot day with a significant drive back, but the promise of ice cream or ice cold beer kept everyone's spirits up. When we arrived back at the hotel it was unfortunately time to bid Simeon farewell and welcome our second local guide Stanislas as he would be taking over and following Simeon's expert itinerary.

Day 7

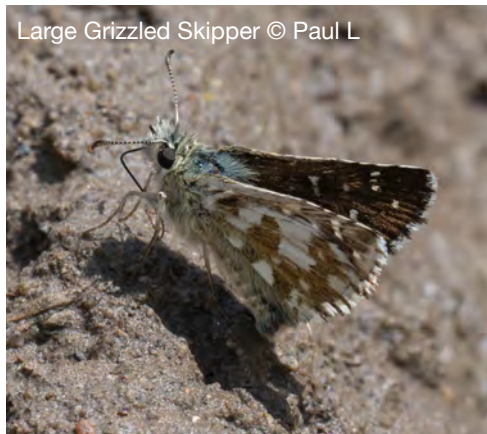
Today we were to spend the morning climbing up towards the highest peak of the Pirin range. Although the peak is at close to 3000m we were only going as far as the car park at 2000m.

Unfortunately at this time of year the car park can become very busy and with our bus somewhat difficult to manoeuvre our driver dropped us a couple of hundred metres from our site.

Access to our site is via a rocky path and some members of the group opted to stay lower down by the cafe. As it turned out the site was a little disappointing, with fewer butterflies than we had hoped. Spring species appeared to have finished at this altitude while possibly the Ringlets that we were hoping for were only just beginning. We did once again see many Ottoman Brassy Ringlets and we had success with one of our main targets at this altitude - the fast flying Balkan Fritillary.

There were many Alpine Chough flying high above one of the nearby peaks and despite the somewhat disappointing return on the butterfly front, many members of the group commented on just how much they enjoyed spending time in this beautiful, wild area.

We didn't stay too long here as we were keen to reunite the group and soon started our gentle descent back down the road to our lunch site. Many Eastern Large Heath and Ottoman Brassy Ringlets were found along the roadside and in the meadows were Balkan Coppers, Mountain Brown Argus and Large Grizzled Skippers amongst others.



Our generous lunch was taken at a restaurant at 1900m and was complimented by ice cold drinks chilled in troughs fed by an icy cold mountain stream.

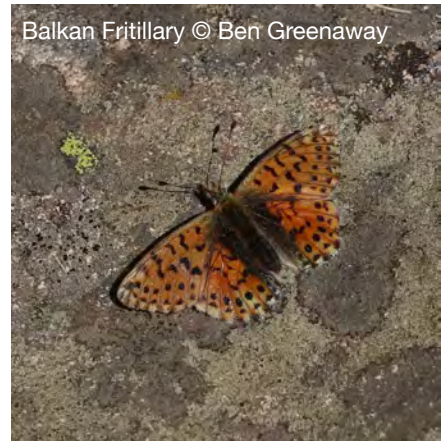
In the area around the restaurant we found a superb collection of mud puddling blues where around fifty perfectly fresh Turquoise Blues were the dazzling highlight. Also present in the impressive congregations were common, False Eros, Mountain Argus, Small, Meleager's, Mazarine, Silver-studded and Ripart's Anomalous Blues.

After lunch we headed to a different site where upon leaving the bus we immediately noticed many large Fritillaries - something that had been missing in big numbers up until now. We soon realised that several Lime trees lining the lane were drawing an astonishing number of butterflies to feed with the large Fritillaries being the most obvious. Hundreds of butterflies were engaged in frantic activity around the Limes with feeding regularly giving way to aggressive chases and in the case of the Silver-washed Fritillaries, couples would regularly break away and display their characteristic courtship flight with the male looping in circles around the female in order to shower her in pheromones.

As well as this captivating spectacle above us, we also found Large Blues nectaring on Mint/Thyme along with Sooty, Scarce, Purple-shot and Small Coppers together on a single plant. We are always very interested in immature stages and so Susan's Small Eggar caterpillar was another highlight. Stanislav also found a young Mantid that Roger was particularly keen to see.

After this incredible site we had just enough time to squeeze in another stop just down the road. Although in previous years this site had produced a couple of species still absent from our list it was unfortunately unproductive this time, and an uninspiring trudge up a winding dirt track seemed to be for nothing. On the way back down however, Ben, Paul and Charles enjoyed finding a pair of Scarlet Tiger moths in cop and a very inquisitive Balkan Goldenring that spent some time calmly investigating them as they walked down the path.

Back by the bus (where several of the group had sensibly waited by some small meadows) a passing bank of cloud gave us a brief break from the sun and provided us with a chance to look



at butterflies in more detail. We found a beautiful Purple-shot Copper and Silver-studded Blue opening their wings perfectly for photography and the many webs of Black-veined White larvae were examined and the life cycle discussed in some detail.

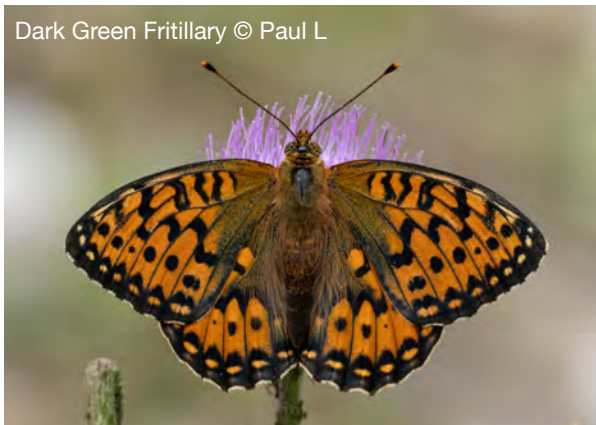
Andrew discovered a Map butterfly and although this led to a frantic dash back to the bus for his camera, he was still able to secure some shots of this attractive small member of the nettle feeding nymphalids.

All in all a superb day of butterflying.

Day 8

Today we headed north to the Rila mountain range. Our first stop was at around 2000m. This was a beautiful alpine setting and another opportunity for us to look for alpine specialists. Stanislav managed to show us several Nicholl's Ringlets amongst the many Ottoman Brassy Ringlets and the whole group had much easier access to the Balkan Fritillaries than had been possible the day before. The fresh breeze and beautiful scenery was enjoyed by all - Anne took full advantage of these excellent walking conditions by heading off for a hike around the hillside and Mike took a leisurely stroll up to the lake. Although butterflies were not found in great numbers up here, there were particular hot spots with a patch of Thyme acting as a magnet for Queen of Spain, Balkan Fritillary, Sooty and Small Coppers along with many Chestnut and Eastern Large Heaths.

There were also several wet flushes in the landscape and these areas seemed to pull in Mazarine and False Eros Blues and the occasional Large Grizzled Skipper.



Dark Green Fritillary © Paul L

After lunch we stopped again at some grassy meadows where incredible numbers of Scarce and Balkan Coppers were found. A single patch of Marjoram found by Adrian attracted large numbers of Queen of Spain and a few Dark Green Fritillaries along with perhaps thirty or forty Coppers of four different species. When a cloud passed over Adrian was treated to the wonderful spectacle of the butterflies settling and opening up together. Photo opportunities do not get much better than this!

Many members of the group picked a path through the meadows together and were able to watch the curious courting display of Balkan Coppers with

the female flying up to meet the male in a flower head before forcefully pushing him down to the base of the stem. We did not observe a coupling but this fascinating process was repeated several times.

On the way back we stopped at a local market for honey and returned relatively early to allow time for packing before our final evening meeting and meal. By this point the species list had grown to an incredible 125 and we still hoped for one or two more close to the airport the following day.

Day 9

Unfortunately today it was time to leave this beautiful part of Bulgaria and head back to Sofia to catch our flights.

After an entertaining detour around the back streets of Sofia we arrived at some meadows on the outskirts of the city to look for our target - the Dusky Large Blue. Although plenty of the food plant (Great Burnet) was quickly located, the flower heads were frustratingly free of Dusky Large Blues. Normally this butterfly is very sedentary and sits on the Great Burnet flower heads for large parts of the day, so it was rather intriguing when eventually a large lycaenid fitting the description was spotted frantically dashing around the meadow visiting all the areas where the food plant grew in greatest density.

Even on the move it was clear that this was indeed a Dusky Large Blue and the best explanation for the behaviour was that the flight period for this species had already passed, and this was a particularly late emerging individual that was in the middle of a panic as no females could be located in the area. The alternative explanation, that this was an early male and the flight period

was yet to begin seemed very unlikely given the advanced nature of the season in evidence throughout the trip.

Although photo opportunities were unusually limited with this particular individual stopping rarely, patience eventually paid off for some members of the group, with Clive and one or two others managing excellent shots of this butterfly during a brief moment of rest.

These meadows were superb for a great number of species and this kind of abundance and diversity was truly remarkable so close to such a major city.

The only negative to this excellent final stop of the tour was the concern of our guide Stanislav, that as Sofia continues to expand these wonderful meadows that are particularly important for the highly range restricted Dusky Large Blue will be gradually lost as building projects will take priority.

We enjoyed a final lunch stop back at the restaurant in Sofia where we began our trip before returning to the airport in plenty of time for us to say our goodbyes and go our separate ways.

Although the species count was undoubtedly superb, for most of us this was not fundamental to the success of the trip and time spent in beautiful areas with excellent wildlife and super company was once again the core component of another highly successful and enjoyable exploration of a fantastic country.

Species Lists

Butterflies			3rd July	4th July	5th July	6th July	7th July	8th July	9th July	10th July	11th July
			day 1	day 2	day 3	day 4	day 5	day 6	day 7	day 8	day 9
Family Papilionidae											
1	Swallowtail	<i>Papilio machaon</i>		✓		✓		✓			
2	Scarce Swallowtail	<i>Iphiclides podalirius</i>	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
3	Apollo	<i>Parnassius apollo</i>		✓	✓	✓					
4	Eastern Festoon	<i>Zerynthia cerisy</i>					✓				
Family Pieridae											
5	Black-veined White	<i>Aporia crataegi</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		
6	Large White	<i>Pieris brassicae</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			
7	Small White	<i>Pieris rapae</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
8	Southern Small White	<i>Pieris mannii</i>						✓			
9	Green-veined White	<i>Pieris napi</i>	✓			✓	✓	✓			
10	Eastern Bath White	<i>Pontia edusa</i>	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓		
11	Berger's Clouded Yellow	<i>Colias alfacariensis</i>		✓							
12	Clouded Yellow	<i>Colias croceus</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
13	Brimstone	<i>Gonepteryx rhamni</i>				✓	✓		✓		
14	Eastern Wood White	<i>Leptidea duponcheli</i>						✓			
15	Wood White	<i>Leptidea sinapis</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
Family Lycaenidae											
16	Green Hairstreak	<i>Callophrys rubi</i>		✓		✓					

Butterflies			3rd July	4th July	5th July	6th July	7th July	8th July	9th July	10th July	11th July
			day 1	day 2	day 3	day 4	day 5	day 6	day 7	day 8	day 9
17	Sloe Hairstreak	<i>Satyrrium acaciae</i>		✓			✓	✓	✓		
18	Blue-spot Hairstreak	<i>Satyrrium spini</i>					✓				
19	White-letter Hairstreak	<i>Satyrrium w-album</i>		✓	✓		✓				
20	Purple-shot Copper	<i>Lycaena alciphron</i>					✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
21	Balkan Copper	<i>Lycaena candens</i>		✓	✓					✓	✓
22	Small Copper	<i>Lycaena phlaeas</i>	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
23	Lesser Fiery Copper	<i>Lycaena thersamon</i>	✓								
24	Sooty Copper	<i>Lycaena tityrus</i>	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
25	Scarce Copper	<i>Lycaena virgaureae</i>		✓	✓	✓				✓	✓
26	Long-tailed Blue	<i>Lampides boeticus</i>		✓		✓		✓			
27	Lang's Short-tailed Blue	<i>Leptotes pirithous</i>	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓			
28	Little Tiger Blue	<i>Tarucus balkanicus</i>	✓					✓			
29	Short-tailed Blue	<i>Cupido argiades</i>						✓			
30	Eastern Short-tailed Blue	<i>Cupido decolorata</i>					✓				
31	Small Blue	<i>Cupido minimus</i>		✓		✓	✓		✓		
32	Holly Blue	<i>Celastrina argiolus</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
33	Alcon Blue	<i>Phengaris alcon</i>			✓	✓					
34	Large Blue	<i>Phengaris arion</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		
35	Dusky Large Blue	<i>Phengaris nausithous</i>									✓
36	Eastern Baton Blue	<i>Pseudophilotes vicrama</i>					✓				
37	Silver-studded Blue	<i>Pebejus argus</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
38	Brown Argus	<i>Aricia agestis</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
39	Mountain Argus	<i>Aricia artaxerxes</i>							✓		
40	Mazarine Blue	<i>Cyaniris semiargus</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	
41	Amanda's Blue	<i>Polyommatus amandus</i>			✓	✓					
42	Adonis Blue	<i>Polyommatus bellargus</i>	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		
43	Chalkhill Blue	<i>Polyommatus coridon</i>					✓				
44	Turquoise Blue	<i>Polyommatus dorylas</i>							✓		
45	Meleager's Blue	<i>Polyommatus daphnis</i>	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		
46	False Eros Blue	<i>Polyommatus eroides</i>			✓				✓	✓	
47	Escher's Blue	<i>Polyommatus escheri</i>				✓					
48	Common Blue	<i>Polyommatus icarus</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
49	Chapman's Blue	<i>Polyommatus thersites</i>					✓	✓			

Butterflies			3rd July	4th July	5th July	6th July	7th July	8th July	9th July	10th July	11th July
			day 1	day 2	day 3	day 4	day 5	day 6	day 7	day 8	day 9
50	Anomalous Blue	<i>Polyommatus admetus</i>					✓	✓			
51	Phalakron Anomalous Blue	<i>Polyommatus eleniae</i>				✓	✓	✓			
52	Higgins' Anomalous Blue	<i>Polyommatus nephohiptamenos</i>					✓				
53	Kolev's Anomalous Blue	<i>Polyommatus orphicus</i>				✓					
54	Ripart's Anomalous Blue	<i>Polyommatus ripartii</i>		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		
Family Nymphalidae											
55	Nettle Tree Butterfly	<i>Libythea celtis</i>					✓	✓			
56	Freyer's Purple Emperor	<i>Apatura metis</i>			✓	✓	✓				
57	Purple Emperor	<i>Apatura iris</i>			✓	✓					
58	Poplar Admiral	<i>Limenitis populi</i>				✓					
59	Southern White Admiral	<i>Limenitis reducta</i>				✓	✓	✓			
60	White Admiral	<i>Limenitis camilla</i>			✓	✓		✓			
61	Hungarian Glider	<i>Neptis rivularis</i>			✓						
62	Common Glider	<i>Neptis sappho</i>					✓	✓			
63	Peacock	<i>Aglais io</i>			✓				✓		✓
64	Small Tortoiseshell	<i>Aglais urticae</i>			✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	
65	Map	<i>Araschnia levana</i>					✓		✓		
66	Comma	<i>Polygonia c-album</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
67	Red Admiral	<i>Vanessa atalanta</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
68	Painted Lady	<i>Vanessa cardui</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
69	Cardinal	<i>Argynnis pandora</i>					✓				✓
70	Silver-washed Fritillary	<i>Argynnis paphia</i>							✓		✓
71	Dark Green Fritillary	<i>Speyeria aglaja</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
72	High Brown Fritillary	<i>Fabriciana adippe</i>							✓		
73	Niobe Fritillary	<i>Fabriciana niobe</i>		✓		✓					
74	Queen of Spain Fritillary	<i>Issoria lathonia</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
75	Marbled Fritillary	<i>Brenthis daphne</i>			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
76	Twin-spot Fritillary	<i>Brenthis hecate</i>		✓							
77	Weaver's Fritillary	<i>Boloria dia</i>		✓					✓		
78	Pearl-bordered Fritillary	<i>Boloria euphrosyne</i>			✓				✓		
79	Balkan Fritillary	<i>Boloria graeca</i>							✓	✓	
80	Small Pearl-bordered Fritillary	<i>Boloria selene</i>		✓							

Butterflies			3rd July	4th July	5th July	6th July	7th July	8th July	9th July	10th July	11th July
			day 1	day 2	day 3	day 4	day 5	day 6	day 7	day 8	day 9
81	Marsh Fritillary	<i>Euphedryas aurinia</i>			✓						
82	Heath Fritillary	<i>Melitaea athalia</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	
83	Nickerl's Fritillary	<i>Melitaea aurelia</i>			✓	✓					
84	Glanville Fritillary	<i>Melitaea cinxia</i>			✓						
85	Spotted Fritillary	<i>Melitaea didyma</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				
86	Eastern Knapweed Fritillary	<i>Melitaea ornata</i>	✓	✓							
87	Knapweed Fritillary	<i>Melitaea phoebe</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
88	Lesser Spotted Fritillary	<i>Melitaea trivia</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			
89	Marbled White	<i>Melanargia galathea</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
90	Balkan Marbled White	<i>Melanargia larissa</i>						✓			
91	Woodland Grayling	<i>Hipparchia fagi</i>		✓		✓					
92	Balkan Grayling	<i>Hipparchia senthes</i>					✓				
93	The Hermit	<i>Chazara briseis</i>						✓			
94	Great Banded Grayling	<i>Brintesia circe</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
95	Scotch Argus	<i>Erebia aethiops</i>			✓						
96	Large Ringlet	<i>Erebia euryale</i>		✓	✓						✓
97	Arran Brown	<i>Erebia ligea</i>		✓							
98	Black Ringlet	<i>Erebia melas</i>							✓		
99	Bright-eyed Ringlet	<i>Erebia oeme</i>			✓				✓	✓	
100	Ottoman Brassy Ringlet	<i>Erebia ottomana</i>			✓				✓	✓	
101	Nicholl's Ringlet	<i>Erebia rhodopensis</i>								✓	
102	Meadow Brown	<i>Maniola jurtina</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
103	Dusky Meadow Brown	<i>Hyponephele lycaon</i>					✓				
104	Ringlet	<i>Aphantopus hyperantus</i>		✓	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓
105	Gatekeeper	<i>Pyronia tithonus</i>					✓	✓	✓		
106	Pearly Heath	<i>Coenonympha arcania</i>		✓	✓		✓		✓		
107	Chestnut Heath	<i>Coenonympha glycerion</i>		✓	✓					✓	
108	Small Heath	<i>Coenonympha pamphilus</i>	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	
109	Eastern Large Heath	<i>Coenonympha rhodopensis</i>			✓					✓	✓
110	Speckled Wood	<i>Pararge aegeria</i>					✓	✓	✓		✓
111	Large Wall Brown	<i>Lasiommata maera</i>		✓	✓		✓		✓		✓

Butterflies			3rd July	4th July	5th July	6th July	7th July	8th July	9th July	10th July	11th July
			day 1	day 2	day 3	day 4	day 5	day 6	day 7	day 8	day 9
112	Wall Brown	<i>Lasiommata megera</i>	✓	✓				✓	✓		
113	Lattice Brown	<i>Kirinia roxelana</i>		✓			✓				
Family Hesperiidae											
114	Grizzled Skipper	<i>Pyrgus malvae</i>	✓		✓			✓			
115	Large Grizzled Skipper	<i>Pyrgus alveus</i>				✓			✓	✓	
116	Oberthür's Grizzled Skipper	<i>Pyrgus armoricanus</i>					✓	✓			
117	Sandy Grizzled Skipper	<i>Pyrgus cinarae</i>						✓			
118	Hungarian Skipper	<i>Spialia orbifer</i>						✓			
119	Mallow Skipper	<i>Carcharodus alcaea</i>		✓			✓	✓			
120	Tufted Marbled Skipper	<i>Carcharodus flocciferus</i>		✓	✓		✓		✓	✓	
121	Oriental Marbled Skipper	<i>Carcharodus orientalis</i>						✓			
122	Dingy Skipper	<i>Erynnis tages</i>					✓	✓			
123	Essex Skipper	<i>Thymelicus lineola</i>		✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	
124	Small Skipper	<i>Thymelicus sylvestris</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
125	Large Skipper	<i>Ochlodes sylvanus</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Birds			3rd July	4th July	5th July	6th July	7th July	8th July	9th July	10th July	11th July
			day 1	day 2	day 3	day 4	day 5	day 6	day 7	day 8	day 9
✓ denotes species seen, 🎵 denotes species heard only											
1	Black Stork	<i>Ciconia nigra</i>				✓					
2	White Stork	<i>Ciconia ciconia</i>						✓	✓		
3	Great Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>							✓		
4	Griffon Vulture	<i>Gyps fulvus</i>						✓			
5	Short-toed Eagle	<i>Circaetus gallicus</i>						✓			
6	Eurasian Sparrowhawk	<i>Accipiter nisus</i>		✓							
7	Common Kestrel	<i>Falco tinnunculus</i>	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓		
8	Common Quail	<i>Coturnix coturnix</i>			✓						
9	Common Sandpiper	<i>Actitis hypoleucos</i>									
10	Feral Pigeon	<i>Columba livia</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
11	Wood Pigeon	<i>Columba palumbus</i>			✓						
12	Turtle Dove	<i>Streptopelia turtur</i>					✓	✓			

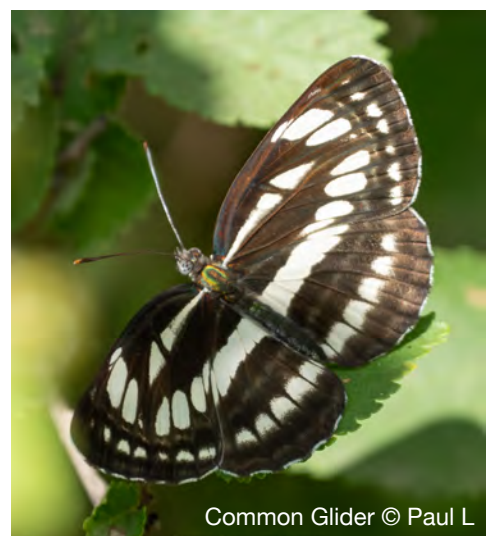
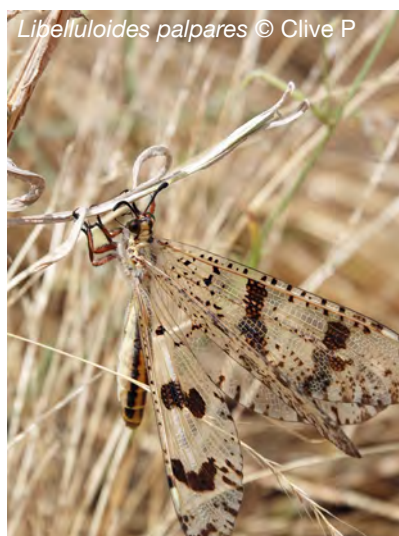
Birds			3rd July	4th July	5th July	6th July	7th July	8th July	9th July	10th July	11th July
			day 1	day 2	day 3	day 4	day 5	day 6	day 7	day 8	day 9
13	Collared Dove	<i>Streptopelia decaocto</i>	✓				✓	✓	✓		
14	Tawny Owl	<i>Strix aluco</i>			🎵						
15	Alpine Swift	<i>Apus melba</i>				✓					
16	Common Swift	<i>Apus apus</i>				✓		✓	✓		
17	Pallid Swift	<i>Apus pallidus</i>			✓						
18	European Bee-eater	<i>Meriops apiaster</i>	✓								
19	Common Hoopoe	<i>Upupa epops</i>	✓								
20	Lesser Spotted Woodpecker	<i>Dendrocopos minor</i>					✓				
21	Green Woodpecker	<i>Picus viridis</i>					✓				
22	Red-backed Shrike	<i>Lanius collurio</i>			✓		✓	✓			
23	Woodchat Shrike	<i>Lanius senator</i>	✓				✓				
24	Lesser Grey Shrike	<i>Lanius minor</i>	✓								
25	Golden Oriole	<i>Oriolus oriolus</i>	🎵				✓				
26	Eurasian Jay	<i>Garrulus glandarius</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓				
27	Common Magpie	<i>Pica pica</i>	✓				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
28	Spotted Nutcracker	<i>Nucifraga caryocatactes</i>			✓						
29	Hooded Crow	<i>Corvus cornix</i>									
30	Common Raven	<i>Corvus corax</i>				✓					
31	Alpine Chough	<i>Pyrrhocorax graculus</i>							✓		
32	Great Tit	<i>Parus major</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
33	Blue Tit	<i>Cyanistes caeruleus</i>					✓	✓			
34	Coal Tit	<i>Parus ater</i>			✓	✓					
35	Willow Tit	<i>Poecile montanus</i>			✓						
36	Sombre Tit	<i>Poecile lugubris</i>		✓	✓						
37	Crested Tit	<i>Lophophanes cristatus</i>									
38	Western Rock Nuthatch	<i>Sitta neumayer</i>						✓			
39	Barn Swallow	<i>Hirundo rustica</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
40	Crag Martin	<i>Ptyonoprogne rupestre</i>				✓					
41	House Martin	<i>Delichon urbicum</i>				✓					
42	Red-rumped Swallow	<i>Cecropis dauricus</i>		✓							
43	Crested Lark	<i>Galerida cristata</i>	✓								
44	Common Chiffchaff	<i>Phylloscopus collybita</i>		✓	🎵	🎵	🎵	🎵			
45	Goldcrest	<i>Regulus regulus</i>				✓					

Birds			3rd July	4th July	5th July	6th July	7th July	8th July	9th July	10th July	11th July
			day 1	day 2	day 3	day 4	day 5	day 6	day 7	day 8	day 9
46	Wren	<i>Troglodytes troglodytes</i>				♪♪					
47	European Starling	<i>Sturnus vulgaris</i>	✓				✓	✓	✓		
48	Blackbird	<i>Turdus merula</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			
49	Mistle Thrush	<i>Turdus viscivorus</i>				✓	✓				
50	European Robin	<i>Erithacus rubecula</i>			♪♪	♪♪					
51	Common Nightingale	<i>Luscinia megarhynchos</i>	♪♪								
52	Black Redstart	<i>Phoenicurus ochruros</i>		✓		♪♪					
53	Common Redstart	<i>Phoenicurus phoenicurus</i>		✓							
54	Eastern Black-eared Wheatear	<i>Oenanthe melanoleuca</i>						✓			
55	Dipper	<i>Cinclus cinclus</i>				✓					
56	Wallcreeper	<i>Tichodroma muraria</i>				✓					
57	House Sparrow	<i>Passer domesticus</i>	✓				✓	✓	✓		
58	Spanish Sparrow	<i>Passer hispaniolensis</i>						✓			
59	Tree Sparrow	<i>Passer montanus</i>					✓				
60	Dunnock	<i>Prunella modularis</i>			♪♪						
61	Grey Wagtail	<i>Motacilla cinerea</i>			✓	✓					
62	White Wagtail	<i>Motacilla alba</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓					
63	Common Chaffinch	<i>Fringilla coelebs</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
64	European Greenfinch	<i>Chloris chloris</i>					✓				
65	European Goldfinch	<i>Carduelis carduelis</i>					✓	✓	✓		
66	Common Linnet	<i>Linaria cannabina</i>						✓			
67	Common Crossbill	<i>Loxia curvirostra</i>			✓						
68	Corn Bunting	<i>Emberiza calandra</i>	✓					✓			
69	Yellowhammer	<i>Emberiza citrinella</i>		✓							
70	Rock Bunting	<i>Emberiza cia</i>				♪♪					
71	Cirl Bunting	<i>Emberiza cirius</i>					✓	✓			
72	Black-headed Bunting	<i>Emberiza melanocephala</i>	✓					✓			

Other Taxa			
Dragonflies and Damselflies		Reptiles and Amphibians	
Banded Demoiselle	<i>Calopteryx splendens</i>	Common Frog	<i>Rana temporaria</i>
Beautiful Demoiselle	<i>Calopteryx virgo</i>	Eastern Green Lizard	<i>Lacerta viridis</i>

Other Taxa			
White-legged Damselfly	<i>Platycnemis latipes</i>	Mammals	
Small Pincertail	<i>Onychogomphus forcipatus</i>	European Souslik	<i>Spermophilus citellus</i>
Balkan Goldenring	<i>Cordulegaster heros</i>	Moths	
Sombre Goldenring	<i>Cordulegaster bidentata</i>	Broad-bordered Bee Hawkmoth	<i>Hemaris fuciformis</i>
Broad-bodied Chaser	<i>Libellula depressa</i>	Hummingbird Hawkmoth	<i>Macroglossum stellatarum</i>
Keeled Skimmer	<i>Orthetrum coerulescens</i>	Crepuscular Burnet	<i>Zygaena carniolica</i>
Southern Skimmer	<i>Orthetrum brunneum</i>	Crickets and Grasshoppers	
Eastern Spectre	<i>Caliaeschna microstigma</i>	Bronze Glandular Bush Cricket	<i>Bradyporus dasypus</i>
Beetles		Bull Bush Cricket	<i>Polysarcus denticauda</i>
Huge Violet Ground Beetle	<i>Carabus scabrosus</i>	Other Invertebrates	
Pine Sawyer	<i>Monochamus sutor</i>	Large Antlion	<i>Palpares libelluloides</i>
A Longhorn Beetle	<i>Purpuricenus sp.</i>	Violet Carpenter Bee	<i>Xylocopa violacea</i>

Photo Gallery



Blue Spot Hairstreak © Antony W



Balkan Copper © Antony W



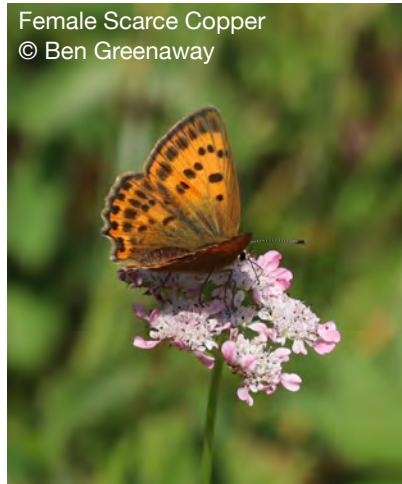
Broad-bordered Bee Hawkmoth © Clive P



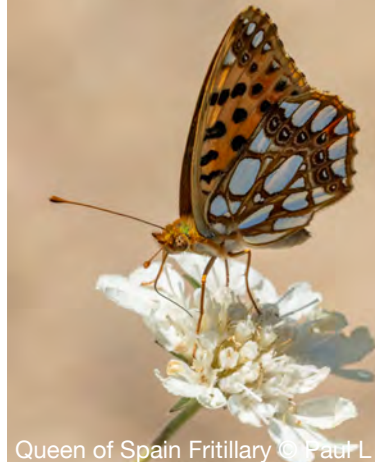
Bull Bush Cricket © Roger C



Female Scarce Copper © Ben Greenaway



© Ben Greenaway



Queen of Spain Fritillary © Paul L

Crepuscular Burnet © Clive P



Common Frog © Clive P

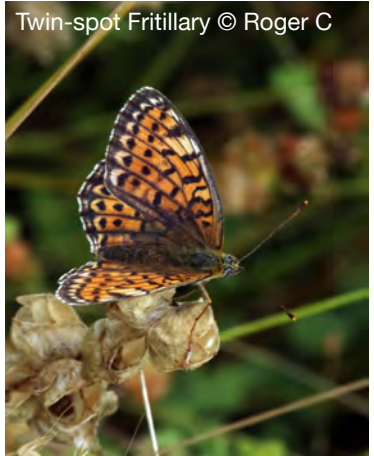
Blue Spot Hairstreak © Paul L



Alcon Blue eggs on Gentian © Ben Greenaway



Twin-spot Fritillary © Roger C



Eastern Wood White © Ben Greenaway



Eastern Green Lizard © Clive P

False Eros Blue © Antony W



© Ben Greenaway



Hummingbird Hawkmoth © Roger



Huge Violet Ground Beetle © Roger C

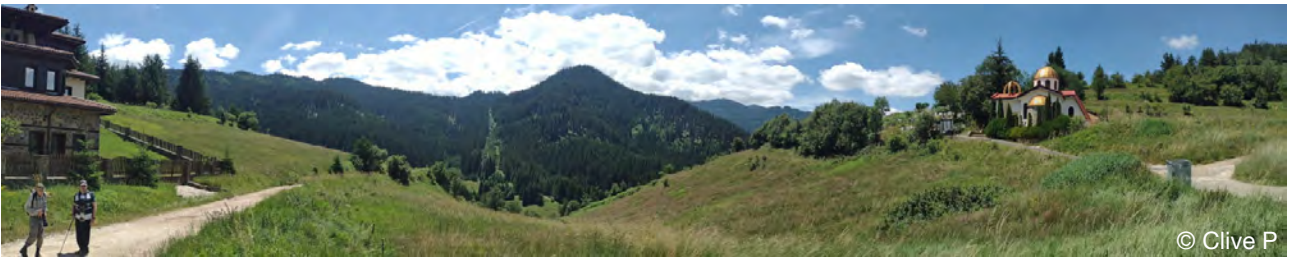
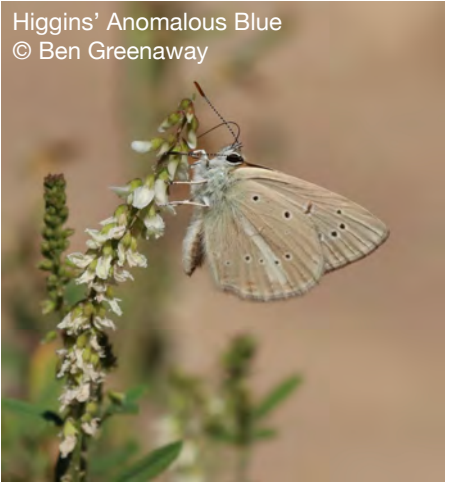
Mountain Argus © Ben Greenaway



Hungarian Glider © Ben Greenaway



Higgins' Anomalous Blue © Ben Greenaway



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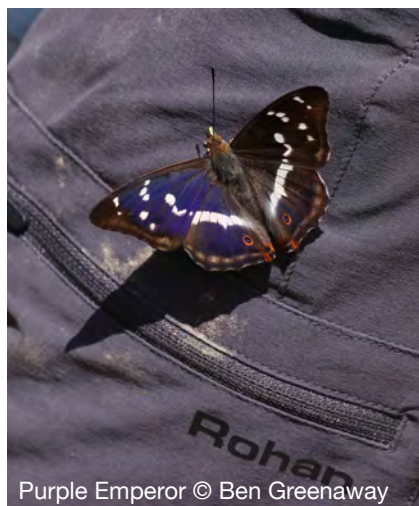
Large Ringlets © Ben Greenaway



Hungarian Skipper © Paul L

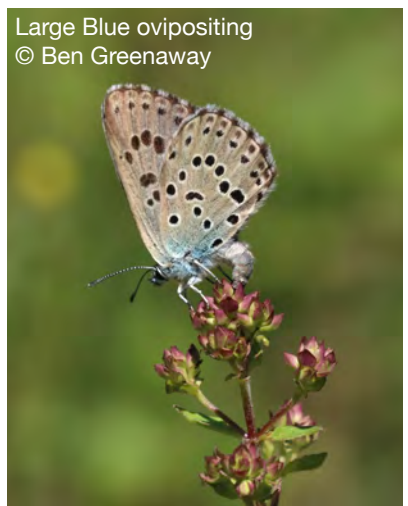


Knapweed Fritillary © Ben Greenaway



Purple Emperor © Ben Greenaway

Large Blue ovipositing © Ben Greenaway



Little Tiger Blue © Antony W



© Ben Greenaway



Purpuricenus sp. © Clive P



Purple-shot Copper © Antony W



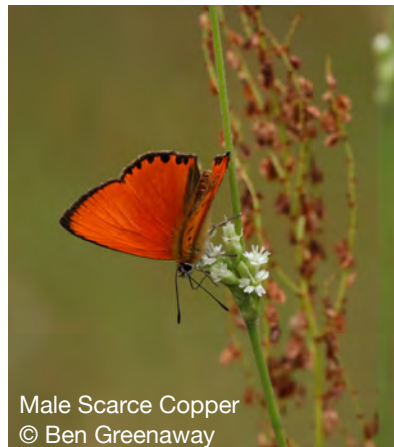
Marbled Fritillary © Roger C



Pine Sawyer © Roger C



© Ben Greenaway



Male Scarce Copper
© Ben Greenaway



Scarce Swallowtail © Paul L

Puddling Blues © Antony W



Large Blue © Antony W



Ripart's and Phalakron Anomalous Blues © Antony W



Turquoise Blues © Ben Greenaway



Valezina form Silver-washed Fritillary © Antony W



White Storks © Clive P



The Hermit © Ben Greenaway



Woodland Grayling © Ben Greenaway

Sooty Coppers © Antony W



Puddling Blues © Ben Greenaway



Turquoise Blues © Ben Greenaway



Spotted Fritillary © Antony W



Violet Carpenter Bee © Clive P



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Hummingbird Hawkmoth © Clive P

Kolev's Anomalous Blue © Paul L

