



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

Natural England (NE) has designated the Malverns as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). Most of this land comes under the stewardship of local charity the Malvern Hills Trust (MHT). These varied habitats provide a rich diversity of wildlife including 33 species of butterflies.

The Malvern Hills is in an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). The 14km spine with 22 individual summits runs north-south and straddles the Worcestershire and Herefordshire border. The high hills are typically open acid grasslands, with the lower mixed woodland, bracken and scrub, while the lower commons are primarily rough and wet grasslands.



## BUTTERFLIES AROUND THE MALVERN HILLS

### MONITORING AND RECORDING BUTTERFLIES IS CRUCIAL TO THEIR CONSERVATION

The Malvern Hills attract thousands of visitors every year including a growing number of butterfly enthusiasts and recorders.

Butterflies are monitored once per week between April and September on 14 butterfly transects, typically recording about 30,000 sightings in a season. In addition, local casual recorders submit another 6,000 butterfly records to the Malvern Butterfly Group.

Butterflies are important indicators of the health of our environment, and recording the wildlife, including butterflies, is crucial in planning the management of their habitats by the **Malvern Hills Trust** in partnership with **Butterfly Conservation**. Key species, such as Grayling, Green Hairstreak, Small Heath, Small Copper and Silver-washed Fritillary depend upon the annual cycle of conservation work by a large group of enthusiastic volunteers.



### KEY LOCATIONS AROUND THE MALVERN HILLS



16 6km →  
17 3-5km →



### KEY LOCATIONS FOR NOTABLE SPECIES

**North Hill (1)** is a good site for Small Heath, Green Hairstreak and Small Copper, whilst the rare Grayling is restricted to the rocky ridges on the eastern slopes. Moving south along the spine of the hills, Red Admiral, Painted Lady and Small Tortoiseshell often migrate along the hilltops of **North Hill (1)**, **Sugar Loaf (2)**, **Worcestershire Beacon (3)**, **Midsummer Hill (9)** & **Ragged Stone Hill (10)**. **Pinnacle Hill (4)** is another reliable site for Small Heath, Green Hairstreak and Small Copper, as well as Brown Argus. **British Camp (5)** is a stronghold for Small Heath, whilst further south Silver-washed Fritillary and Purple Hairstreak are locally common on **Hangman's and Swinyard Hills (6 & 7)**. Nearby **Gullet Quarry (8)** and, at the very end of the range, **Chase End Hill (11)** are notable sites for the rare Drab Looper Moth.

The various **Quarries** on the Malverns (marked with ●) are also good habitats for many species including Green Hairstreak. Below the slopes, **Poolbrook Common (12)** records high numbers of Common Blue, Small and Essex Skipper, as well as Six-Spot Burnet and Burnet Companion Moths. **Castlemorton Common (13)** and **Hollybed Farm & Common (14)** also report many common species including Small Copper and Common Blue, while **Holly Bush & Coombe Green Commons (15)** are the lowest sites to see Small Heath. Six km east of Great Malvern, **Old Hills (16)** is the best site for White Letter Hairstreak, Purple Hairstreak, and White Admiral. Slightly closer, many Essex Skipper and Common Blue thrive along the grass verges of **Guarlford Straight & Rhydd Meadow (17)**, whilst **St Wulstans LNR (18)** is an attractive site to visit for all the common species. Dingy Skipper was present in the Purlieu near Park Wood but it is now found on private land on the western fringes of the Hills and further north near Knightwick and at Knapp & Papermill Nature Reserve.



- ☐ Record you 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 of the Malvern Butterfly Group at [mbg.records@btinternet.com](mailto:mbg.records@btinternet.com)

To join Butterfly Conservation go to <https://butterfly-conservation.org>

- ☐ West Midlands Butterfly Conservation's regional website [www.westmidlands-butterflies.org.uk](http://www.westmidlands-butterflies.org.uk)
- ☐ WMBF Facebook [www.facebook.com/groups/westmidlandsbutterflyconservation](https://www.facebook.com/groups/westmidlandsbutterflyconservation)

For information on local events, guided walks and other activities visit: **West Midlands Butterfly Conservation**

\*Titles available from [www.naturearea.co.uk/bookshop](http://www.naturearea.co.uk/bookshop)

Written by local naturalists and sponsored by **MHT** and **AONB**.  
"The Nature of the Malverns", 2018 - Editors: Creed P, Duncan I, Garner P, Wasley R, Williams M. Written by experienced members of **WMBF**.  
"The Butterflies of the West Midlands", 2016 - Editors: Duncan I, Seal P, Tilt J, Tel. 01684 892002 Email: [info@malvern hills.org.uk](mailto:info@malvern hills.org.uk). Cost £5.00.

"The Birds and Butterflies around the Malverns" is an annual publication with up to date information on each species, including abundance and occurrence, and population trends in the short and long term. Written by local naturalists and supported by **MHT** and **AONB**. Available from **MHT** Offices

There are three excellent guides to butterflies around the Malverns:

### DISCOVER MORE

### SPECIES FLIGHT TIMES, STATUS AND HABITATS

Species	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Winter State	Caterpillar Foodplants	Status	Habitats and Hotspots
1. Red Admiral													🦋	Common Nettle	🟡🟢	hilltops, commons, gardens esp. ivy flower, buddleia, rotting fruit
2. Brimstone													🦋	Buckthorn & Alder Buckthorn	🟢	woodland rides & glades, patrolling flight, gardens
3. Small Tortoiseshell													🦋	Common Nettle, Hop	🟢	hilltops, commons, woodland rides & glades, gardens
4. Comma													🦋	Common Nettle, Hop, elms, currants	🟢	woodland rides and glades, quarries, gardens
5. Peacock													🦋	Common Nettle	🟢	woodland rides and glades, quarries, gardens
6. Holly Blue													🦋	Holly, Ivy	🟢	seen around bushes and small trees inc. gardens
7. Small White													🦋	crucifers inc. Nasturtium	🟢	open clearings, commons & meadows, gardens
8. Orange-tip													🦋	crucifers, Cuckooflower & Garlic Mustard	🟢	damp meadows, road verges, woodland rides
9. Speckled Wood													🦋	grasses	🟢	woodland edges, dappled rides & glades
10. Green-veined White													🦋	wild crucifers	🟢	damp meadows, woodland rides
11. Large White													🦋	crucifers inc. Cabbage	🟢	open clearings, commons & meadows, gardens
12. Small Copper													🦋	Common Sorrel, Sheep's Sorrell	🟢	hill slopes, commons
13. Green Hairstreak													🦋	gorse, broom, birds-foot-trefoils	🟡	scrubby areas, quarries
14. Dingy Skipper													🦋	Common Birds-foot-trefoil	🟡🟢	sunny banks to the west and north of the Hills
15. Painted Lady													🦋	thistles	🟡🟢	hill tops, sunny open commons, gardens
16. Common Blue													🦋	Common Birds-foot-trefoil	🟢	commons & meadows
17. Small Heath													🦋	fine grasses, esp. Sheep's-fescue	🟢	grassy hill slopes & paths
18. Brown Argus													🦋	Cranesbills, Common Stork's-bill	🟡	quarries, commons
19. Large Skipper													🦋	grasses	🟢	woodland & scrub margins, quarries
20. Meadow Brown													🦋	grasses	🟢	commons & meadows and woodland rides
21. Purple Hairstreak													🦋	oaks	🟢	canopy of oak trees, sometimes on ash
22. White Admiral													🦋	Honeysuckle	🟢	woodland rides & edges, esp. with bramble
23. Silver-washed Fritillary													🦋	Common Dog-violet	🟢	woodland rides & edges, esp. with bramble
24. Marbled White													🦋	grasses	🟢	long grasses of commons, meadows, hill slopes
25. Ringlet													🦋	coarse grasses	🟢	damp meadows, field margins and scrub
26. Small Skipper													🦋	grasses, esp. Yorkshire-fog	🟢	commons & meadows, quarries, road verges
27. Essex Skipper													🦋	grasses, esp. Cock's-foot	🟢	commons & meadows, quarries, road verges
28. Small Pearl-bordered F.													🦋	Common Dog-violet, Marsh Violet	🟡🟢	dampier grassy lower slopes on southern hills
29. Gatekeeper													🦋	grasses	🟢	grassy commons & meadows, quarries, gardens
30. White-letter Hairstreak													🦋	elms inc. Wych Elm	🟡	strongly associated with elm trees
31. Grayling													🦋	fine grasses, esp. Sheep's-fescue	🟡	eastern rocky ridges on North Hill
32. Dark Green Fritillary													🦋	violets	🟡🟢	bracken slopes, esp. on southern hills, quarries
33. Clouded Yellow													🦋	legumes inc. clovers	🟡	commons & meadows, hill tops
34. Drab Looper Moth													🦋	Wood Spurge	🟡🟢	sunny glades in Gullet Quarry and on Chase End Hill
35. Six-spot Burnet Moth													🦋	bird's-foot-trefoils	🟢	commons & meadows
36. Scarlet Tiger Moth													🦋	Alkanet, Common Comfrey	🟢	road & track verges, gardens with alkanet

Key to Flight Times: Transect Records, Casual Sightings, Lower Abundances between generations  
Key to Status: Widespread, Migrant, Very Local, Rare, Local, Locally Common