

## BUTTERFLY REPORT FOR 2001

(Medina Valley Centre Nature Reserve)

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The butterfly index for 2001 is given in figure 1, together with the previous years' records for comparison. The transect was walked on 25 out of the 26 weeks of the recording season; one week in August was unfortunately missed due to staff absence and figures for this week have been estimated using Butterfly Conservation's Transect Walker programme and included in the totals. No butterflies were seen on 4 of the walks – on two of these conditions were not considered suitable for recording as the temperature was below 13 °C.

The 2001 season gave a total species count of 20, which is in line with that observed in recent years. The total count was 528 individuals which is an improvement on the last two years, but not dramatically so.

Temperatures for April were average with a couple of ground frosts but well below average sunshine hours. The first butterfly appeared in the last week of April, a *peacock* which had presumably over-wintered here. May was much warmer with average sunshine hours and *orange tips* were seen in comparatively high numbers along with the occasional *large white*, *small white* and *speckled wood*.

The summer was good with June and July having temperatures and sunshine hours above average and fairly low rainfall. Many species made a good recovery on the last two years including *gatekeeper* and *comma*. However, numbers were down on recent years for a few species, notably the *small skipper* and *marbled white*.

August and September also had average amounts of sunshine and warm temperatures, and October was exceptionally warm with temperatures well above normal levels. This accounted for some species being able to extend their season well into October, such as the *small white* and *small copper*. *Small white* saw their highest total since 1997 and *small copper* the highest since 1995.

23rd July gave the highest number of individuals seen on one walk with 89, spread between an astonishing twelve different species including a *purple hairstreak*, a high flying butterfly which feeds on oak.

Overall, the higher than average temperatures and better sunshine total during the 2001 recording season has meant that many species of butterfly have fared much better than in the preceding season.



**Figure 1. Butterfly species list and sightings at Medina Valley Centre (SZ503909) for 2000 and 2001.**

Species	2000	2001
Brown Argus	-	-
Brimstone	*	*
Clouded Yellow	10	-
Comma	7	13
Common Blue	14	17
Dingy Skipper	-	-
Gatekeeper	99	163
Green Hairstreak	-	-
Green-veined White	1	1
Grizzled Skipper	-	-
Holly Blue	-	3
Large Skipper	9	14
Large White	28	23
Marbled White	44	23
Meadow Brown	129	120
Orange Tip	2	6
Painted Lady	2	3
Peacock	4	5
Purple Hairstreak	-	2
Red Admiral	5	7
Ringlet	-	-
Silver-washed Fritillary	-	-
Small Copper	13	44
Small Heath	-	-
Small Skipper	15	5
Small Tortoiseshell	1	2
Small White	25	60
Speckled Wood	15	8
Wall Brown	14	9
White Admiral	*	-
Number of species recorded	21	21

\* indicates that the species was seen during the year, but not during a transect walk.  
 - indicates that the species has been recorded on the reserve, but not seen this year.

**Reference:**

Institute of Terrestrial Ecology (1981) *Butterfly Monitoring Scheme*