

Adastra report 2025

The year began with wet, windy weather and we had to wait until January 11th before the first butterfly was recorded. Unsurprisingly, it was a Red Admiral, which was seen “fluttering under a platform canopy at Barnham railway station”. On the following day, there was a Peacock “basking briefly” in a North Lancing garden and on the 14th, a very early Comma was recorded at Rye Harbour. On the 25th a male Brimstone “put in a brief appearance” in North Lancing.

On February 2nd there were two Peacocks “basking in the sun” at Pulborough Brooks, and on the 3rd the conservation work party volunteers at Rowland Wood came across two Red Admirals “that joined us in the warm sunshine”. Most of February was quiet with an occasional record for Red Admiral and Peacock, and then on the 28th there was a Small Tortoiseshell, nectaring on Snowdrops at Lancing Manor. This record for Small Tortoiseshell was approximately two weeks later than average, adding to our mounting concerns for this struggling butterfly species.

On March 3rd there was an early Painted Lady at Rewell Wood, and on the same day there was an extraordinary record at Tilgate, Crawley, of 18 Red Admirals and a single Comma, nectaring on Winter Heather and Daphne. In recent years, Humming-bird Hawk-moths have been over-wintering in Sussex, and in 2025 the first sighting was at Plumpton on March 4th, with an individual seen feeding on winter-flowering Honeysuckle. The following day, on downland nr The Burgh, there were 7 male Brimstones and 4 Commas, and on the 6th there were 10 male Brimstones at Iping Common. In an East Sussex garden, on the 7th, there were three “first of the season” records for Small White, Large White and Speckled Wood. All three species were very early compared to an average year, and the Large White was a “National First”. There were two Humming-bird Hawk-moths recorded on the 8th; one in Hailsham, was feeding on Pulmonaria, and another in Brighton, was feeding on Primrose. Meanwhile, in Crawley, the spring sunshine was warm enough to encourage a Red Admiral to begin egg-laying. On the 9th there were 20 male Brimstones in the Lancing Ring area. On the same day, the “first of the year” Large Tortoiseshell was recorded (at an undisclosed location). On the 19th, several Small Tortoiseshells were seen at four different locations, including Ferring Rife, a former spring “hotspot” for this species. At North Stoke on the 20th there was a significant emergence of 30 Brimstones, including 5 females (a very early date for female Brimstones). On the 23rd a Humming-bird Hawk-moth was seen in Brighton, feeding on periwinkle, and there was another one at Lewis on the 25th, feeding on Ribes. A very worn Large Tortoiseshell was found at Pagham Hbr on the 25th and on the following day, at Crawley, a Green-veined White was recorded. On the 27th at Etchingham, there was a male Orange-tip, and on the 30th at Friston Forest there were 25 Brimstones (including 2 females) and 22 Peacocks. Also, on the 30th, there was a Holly Blue at Haywards Heath.

In the spring of 2025, Malling Down was the stand-out location to see early species, with a Small Copper and Green Hairstreak on April 2nd and a Grizzled Skipper on the 4th. On the following day there was a “ragged Large Tortoiseshell” at Abbot’s Wood, whilst at Lancing

Ring, there was a high count of 35 Peacocks. At North Stoke on the 6th there were 8 species and a total of 50 butterflies, which included a notable count of 15+ Green-veined Whites. On the 8th there were sightings of a Dingy Skipper at Malling Down and Castle Hill NNR, and at Ashdown Forest there was a Painted Lady. On the 11th, 3 Pearl-bordered Fritillaries were recorded at Rewell Wood, whilst at North Stoke and Burpham Meadows there were 60+ butterflies including 20 Green-veined Whites and 18 Peacocks. On the 12th at Malling Down there were 12 species including a Painted Lady, and on the same day at High and Over, Seaford there was a count of 30+ Red Admirals (which were presumably recent immigrants from mainland Europe). On the 14th there were at least 2 Small Heaths at Malling Down and on the 15th a Humming-bird Hawk-moth was recorded at High Salvington. There were 13 species at Chantry Hill on the 17th, including 10+ Dingy Skipper, and on the same day, at Lancing Ring, there was a male Common Blue. On the 19th at Kithurst Meadow there was an early Duke of Burgundy. On the 22nd there was a magnificent count of 787 Pearl-bordered Fritillaries at Rewell Wood (which was surpassed by an even higher count of 891, on the 27th). At Malling Down on the 24th there was yet another “first sighting”, when 8 Brown Argus were recorded. On the 27th there were 2 Small Blues at Castle Hill NNR, and another single Small Blue at Liz Williams Butterfly Haven, Brighton. On the 28th at Malling Down, both male and female Adonis Blue were found. This brought the total to 25 butterfly species for the county, and all before the end of April! The very warm spring weather encouraged the early emergence of most of these 25 species, some by two weeks or more compared to an average date in this century.

On May 1st, at Chantry Hill, there were 60 Dingy Skippers, and Green Hairstreaks could be found on more-or-less every Hazel bush, with an estimated count of 150 territorial males. On the same day, Wood Whites were recorded in NW Sussex. On the following day there was a significant influx of Red Admirals and Painted Ladies, with some of these migrants finding their way to Rowland Wood. The “work-party volunteers” of Rowland Wood undertook a thorough survey on May 2nd, and recorded 15 butterfly species, which included commendable counts of 40 Pearl-bordered Fritillaries and 47 Painted Ladies, and just a few days later, on the 7th, added a Small Pearl-bordered Fritillary, to the list. On the 8th, there was an exceptionally early Meadow Brown at Kithurst Meadow, which proved to be a “National First” for 2025. At nearby Chantry Hill on the 10th there was a Large Skipper, which was 16 days earlier than an average date. On the 11th there was a count of 10 Pearl-bordered Fritillaries at Stansted Forest, on the 19th there were 7 Small Tortoiseshells in the Bramber area, and on the 28th there were at least 6 Black Hairstreaks, at Ditchling Common. On the 30th there was a Silver-studded Blue at Ashdown Forest, and on the same day at Worthing Seafront, there were many fresh immigrants, including 17 Painted Ladies, 3 Red Admirals and 4 Humming-bird Hawk-moths.

On June 2nd there was a Marbled White at Mill Hill. On the 4th there were three “first-of-the-season” sightings; a White-letter Hairstreak in Brighton, a Dark Green Fritillary at Ditchling Common, and a Small Skipper at Liz Williams Butterfly Haven. On the 9th there were three more “firsts” with a Purple Hairstreak at both Loxwood and Balcombe, and a White Admiral and a Silver-washed Fritillary in Knowlands Wood. On the 12th there was a Gatekeeper at Berwick, a Ringlet in Arundel Park, and a Clouded Yellow at Etchingham. On the 14th there

was a very large count of 50+ White-letter Hairstreaks in Princes Park, Eastbourne. We do not usually see the summer emergence of Peacocks until the first week of July, but this year there was one at North Lancing, on June 14th. On the 15th there were 18 White Admirals and 17 Silver-washed Fritillaries in the Southwater Woods, a Purple Emperor at Knepp, and a Clouded Yellow on the Bepton Downs. On the 17th there were “clouds” of Marbled Whites at Fairmile Bottom, with an estimate of 1000+ for this location. On the same day a second brood Common Blue, at Cuckfield, was 3-4 weeks earlier than an average year. Silver-studded Blues had a good year, and on the 18th there was an excellent count of 630 at Chapel Common. On the 19th an Essex Skipper was recorded at Seaford, and on the 23rd there was a summer emergence of 20+ Comma s at Ditchling Common. On the 28th Chantry Hill was heaving with butterflies, with Meadow Browns (6,000), Marbled Whites (4,000), Small Skippers (2,000) and Ringlets (250+). On the same day, and at the same location, another BC member witnessed a Swallowtail fly-by. Dark Green Fritillary was clearly having a good season, and a survey at Chantry Hill on the 29th produced a count of 150+. On the 30th there were 2 Chalk Hill Blues at Horseshoe Plantation, a Painted lady in Storrington (which was considered to be British-born), and an exceptionally early record of a second brood Wall Brown at North Lancing.

The warm, sunny weather continued into July, and the Sussex butterfly season just got better and better. A Brown Hairstreak was recorded at Knepp on July 2nd, around 3 weeks earlier than an average date. On the 3rd there was a large summer emergence of 40 Peacocks at Rye Harbour, and on the 7th at Hollingbury Park there was a very early second brood Small Blue. On the 8th there was a spectacular sight of 500+ Chalk Hill Blues on the Amberley Downs. On the 9th there were 23 butterfly species in the Black Cap NT area, 6 male Graylings at Deep Dean, and 20 species recorded (in a single day) in a North Lancing garden! In just the first 10 days of July, the butterfly species count at Knepp had topped the 30-mark and included very large numbers of Purple Emperors and the nationally-rare Large Tortoiseshell. On the 16th there were 25 species at Chantry Hill, including the first Silver-spotted Skipper of the year. The next day on the Amberley Downs there were 22 species, which included 7-800 Chalk Hill Blues and several second-brood Adonis Blues, whilst at Kithurst Hill, there was a magnificent 27 butterfly species. On the 18th there were 23 species at Lancing Ring and Steep Down, with highlights of 46 Common Blues and 44 Wall Browns. On the 22nd there were at least 4 of the *Valezina* female form of Silver-washed Fritillary in Abbot's Wood (a very unusual number for this county, where *Valezina* is generally scarce). On the same day at Beachy Head there were 2 Clouded Yellows, the beginning of a modest influx of this species. The next day there were 29 species at Washington Chalk Pits, including 6 second-brood Dingy Skippers and 7 Silver-spotted Skippers (not seen at this location since 2014). On the 24th there was a count of 111 second brood Wall Browns and Seaford's first-ever Brown Hairstreak (in this millennium). On the 25th there was a count of 116 Wall Browns on the Folkington escarpment. On the 24th and 25th there were single Swallowtails in the Brighton area. Between Birling Gap and Horseshoe Planation, one member posted: *“Many thousands of butterflies (particularly Chalk Hill Blue) and masses of wildflowers made this an exceptional stroll”*. At Abbot's Wood on the 26th there was a commendable count of 62 Silver-washed Fritillaries, whilst on the same day at Chichester, there was yet another Swallowtail. There were 2

Clouded Yellows at Pagham harbour on the 28th, and 3 more on Thorney Island on the 30th. It was a very memorable month for huge numbers of butterflies and a wonderful variety of species.

On August 3rd there were 63 Silver-spotted Skippers at Butts Brow nr Jevington, and on the 5th there was a very large count of 20 female Brown Hairstreaks at Steyning Downland Scheme. In the first few days of the month, Clouded Yellows were reported at a number of locations, including 4-5 at Black Cap NT. On the 7th a thorough survey of Medley Bottom and Stoke Bottom produced 26 species, with a total of 3,000 butterflies. Particularly noteworthy were counts of 1116 Chalk Hill Blues and 627 Adonis Blues, with the website post rejoicing “a day of butterflies to transport me back to childhood”. On the 10th the “first of the season” Long-tailed Blue was recorded at Lancing Ring (around four weeks later, compared to recent years). On the 10th, a second brood Dingy Skipper at Warnham Butterfly Fields was a very unusual record (95%+ second brood records, on the South Downs). Clouded Yellow is a species that is mostly associated with the Sussex coastal plain and downland, and so the 15 seen in Blunts Wood LNR was another unusual record. On the 15th there was a count of 31 Clouded Yellows on Thorney Island, and a Continental Swallowtail at Glynn Gap Cliff, Bexhill. On the 18th there was a massive total of 31 female Brown Hairstreaks at Steyning Downland Scheme (a National Record for a daily count at one location). On the 19th “about a million Large Whites” were seen in the gardens at Herstmonceux Castle, (large numbers, on this date, are likely to be recent migrants from mainland Europe). On the same day, there were 1-2 Long-tailed Blues at Pagham Harbour (with possibly a different individual on the 22nd). On the 21st there was a significant count of 27 Small Coppers at Blunts Wood LNR. On the following day there was an interesting record of a Small Tortoiseshell on the shingle at West Worthing/Goring, giving rise to speculation that this was a recent migrant (a rare, recognised event for this species). On the 23rd at High and Over there was a very early third brood female Wall Brown, which was mating with an “aged second brood male” (and quite possibly the first time this has been recorded in the UK). On the 24th at Whitehawk Hill, East Brighton, there was another Long-tailed Blue. On the 25th, in the Beachy Head area, there was a very late, second brood Dingy Skipper.

On September 5th there was a Swallowtail in Chichester, 2 “tatty” Long-tailed Blues at Whitehawk Hill, Brighton and a late Silver-spotted Skipper at Horseshoe Bottom, Birling Gap. On the 8th there were 72 third brood Wall Browns at High and Over, Seaford (the highest-ever third brood count for this location). On the 9th there were 5 Brown Hairstreaks at Blunts Wood and Paiges Meadow LNR, and on the same day there was a very uncommon record of a second brood White Admiral in Manor Gardens, Eastbourne. On the 11th there was a surprising record of a Wall Brown in Cuckfield (a very long way from its usual downland locations), 2 more Walls in a Lewes Cemetery, and two days later, another single in the Herstmonceux Castle Gardens. There was a Humming-bird Hawk-moth at East Preston on the 12th, with another single in Amberley on the 16th. Also, on the 16th there was a male Wall Brown at Amberley Wildbrooks and another at Warningcamp (both locations in the Arun Valley). The 2025 Brown Hairstreak season continued to impress with a record at Cobnor, Chichester Harbour (an extreme, westerly location for this species). In East Sussex, there were 4 third brood Wall Browns in Abbot’s Wood. The 19th was a beautiful autumn

day, and the fine weather brought out 10 fresh male Brimstones on the Amberley Downs, 2 Wall Browns at Rowland Wood, a Humming-bird Hawk-moth at West Worthing and 6 Clouded Yellows, including a *helice*, on Thorney Island. On the 21st there was a female Long-tailed Blue at Tarring, and the next day there was a very early third brood Holly Blue at Lancing Ring. On the 23rd, a single female Wall Brown was reported at Abbot's Wood, and there was another one at nearby Berwick. On the 24th there were 5 Clouded Yellows on Goring Beach, and a Humming-bird Hawk-moth in Hailsham. There were yet more third brood Walls between the 25th and 27th, with 2 females on the Amberley Downs, a female in Central Worthing, and several individuals in the Barcombe area. On the 29th the fine weather encouraged 10 butterfly species at Lancing Ring, the most numerous being 18 Red Admirals, 11 Speckled Woods and 11 Wall Browns, with a single Humming-bird Hawk-moth. Other posts on the 29th included a female Wall Brown at East Worthing, a Humming-bird Hawk-moth on the Amberley Downs, and Wall Browns "they seemed to be all over the place" in the Cissbury/Canada Bottom area. Further fine weather on the 30th produced Wall Browns "all over the place", on the downs south of Firle, whilst in the Lancing Ring/Steep Down area there were 11 butterfly species including 39 Small Whites and 24 Red Admirals.

On October 4th there were still plenty of butterflies in the Lancing Ring area with " 8 Red Admiral, 14 Speckled Wood, 4 Wall, 2 Small White, Painted Lady, Common Blue, Peacock, and a Humming-bird Hawk-moth". The 9th was a glorious day and at Greenway Bank "there were still good numbers of Wall Brown, a couple of Peacock and Red Admiral, Common Blues, a Brown Argus and Meadow Brown, Small Whites, a Clouded Yellow and several Speckled Wood. However, I certainly wasn't expecting to see a very fresh looking Adonis Blue". On the Amberley Downs there were approximately 6 Clouded Yellows, some or all of which probably emerged locally, that very afternoon. On the 12th in the Beachy Head area there was a late record for a single Small Heath. On the 21st there was a Humming-bird Hawk-moth at Whitehawk Hill, East Brighton. On the 22nd, in the North Lancing area, there were 25 Speckled Woods and 3 Holly Blues (third brood Holly Blues were scarce in 2025). Meanwhile at Thorney Island, there were 7 very fresh-looking Clouded Yellows, which given the date, these were probably British-born. In the North Lancing area there was a Humming-bird Hawk-moth on the 24th and another on the 26th, and elsewhere there was a Clouded Yellow near Spithurst. On the 27th, at North Lancing, there were 18 Speckled Woods, 16 Red Admirals, 4 Commas, 3 Clouded Yellows, 3 Small Whites, Common Blue and Small Copper. Also, on the 27th there was a late record of a female Wall Brown at Herstmonceux Castle.

On November 1st at North Lancing, there were 15 Red Admirals, 10 Speckled Woods, 3 Clouded Yellows, 3 Holly Blues, Small Copper, Comma, Small White and 2 Humming-bird Hawk-moths. On the 2nd at the same location there was a fourth brood Green-veined White (the first-ever fourth brood recorded in Sussex). There were quite a few reports of Clouded Yellows on the 2nd, including 4 on the Amberley Downs and 4 on Thorney Island. A Small Copper at North Lancing on the 6th was a late date. A Common Blue at Cuckfield, and a Large White in Combe Valley, both seen on the 12th, were also late dates. At Mill Hill on the 15th there were 10 Clouded Yellows. At North Lancing on the 17th there were late records for Speckled Wood and Small White, and of the 9 Red Admirals seen, 2 were egg-laying. On the 21st, a Red Admiral "flew in strongly off the sea and settled on beach pebbles" at Splash

Point, Seaford, whilst at Cooden Beach, a Clouded Yellow was seen “flitting along the shingle”. Both examples of late migration. On the 30th there was a very late record of a Small White at North Lancing.

On December 2nd there was a Red Admiral in the Barcombe area. On the 10th there were Peacock singles at Whitehawk Hill, Brighton and Pulborough brooks, and a Red Admiral at North Lancing. On the 13th there were 8 posts, sent in from all over the county, with sightings of 7 Peacocks, 5 Red Admirals (one was egg-laying), 2 Brimstones, 1 Painted Lady and 1 Speckled Wood (the latter two sightings were the second-latest-ever recorded, with both seen at North Lancing). On the 19th there was a Red Admiral in Friston Forest, a Peacock at North Lancing, and a Red Admiral and Comma at Pulborough Brooks. Red Admirals have become fairly common sightings in December, but the Comma was the second-latest-ever recorded (the latest was on 27/12/2019). On the 20th there was a Red Admiral at Crawley and a Peacock nr Barcombe. On Christmas Day there was a very late record of a Painted Lady at Pitshill nr Petworth, and on the 30th there was a Red Admiral at North Lancing. To finish the year there were 2 Peacocks at High and Over, Seaford, which took the December tally of Peacocks to 12. In the previous 19 Decembers between 2006-2024 there were just 23 sightings of Peacock. With the second brood appearing a month early this year, we have to think about the possibility that some of these December Peacocks were third brood individuals!

The narrative above is a very brief synopsis of the butterfly records in 2025. If we reflect on the butterfly season as a whole, how did it compare to recent years? Were there any interesting developments? What did we learn?

The weather for most of 2023 and 2024 was poor and very “insect-unfriendly”, and our butterflies struggled to breed successfully. That all changed in 2025 when the spring was the warmest and sunniest since records began, and it was also the 6th driest, ever. This fine weather continued into the summer, and in Sussex we had six months of glorious sunshine and warmth. A little more rainfall would have been welcomed by gardeners and farmers, but the very occasional day of heavy rain was just enough to prevent most larval foodplants from suffering any significant desiccation.

So, how did our 46 resident butterfly species fare? What sort of year did they have? Around 15 species had a very good year, 30 species had an “average year”, and just one species, Holly Blue, had a relatively poor season. The annual fortunes of Holly Blue are largely determined by the prevailing population of its parasitic wasp *Listrodomus nycthemerus*, and it seems likely that wasp numbers have been high in the past year, with Holly Blue larvae suffering heavy predation.

Pearl-bordered Fritillary had a spectacular season at Rewell Wood, with a peak count of 891 butterflies on 27/04/2025. This compares to the all-time record of 914, which was the peak daily count in 2020. Green Hairstreak was another spring species that had an amazing season! At Chantry Hill, in mid-May, they were perched on every bush, and the peak count was somewhere between 300-500 individuals. Colin Pratt (County Recorder) commented as follows: “The number of Green Hairstreak on Chantry Hill this year match or exceed those

found in the county at any time since it was first recorded here in 1848 and is by far the highest level recorded during recent years". Another species that had an exceptional year was Duke of Burgundy, and on May 18th, a thorough survey of the Storrington Downs produced a count of 250 individuals.

The month of June was the "warmest June" (in England) since weather records began. Our hairstreaks clearly enjoyed the warmth, and the 50+ White-letter Hairstreaks at Princes Park, Eastbourne, on June 14th, was a remarkable count. The 12,000+ butterflies on Chantry Hill, on June 28th, was quite staggering, and the 150+ Dark Green Fritillaries counted on the 29th was the second highest total ever recorded at this location.

On July 1st, there was a superb count of 283 Purple Emperors at Knepp. Gatekeepers had a very good season and were widespread and plentiful throughout the county. In August there were very high numbers of Chalk Hill Blue, Adonis Blue, Wall Brown and Brown Hairstreak. Silver-spotted Skippers had a very good season on many (but not all) its usual downland sites.

Second brood Dingy Skippers had their best-ever year with records from July 8th – August 25th. There were 21 posts involving 16 locations, both of which are county records.

The paragraphs above contain many superlatives, and so they should, for it was year to celebrate the richness and bounty of the Sussex countryside.

Two species, Brown Hairstreak and Wall Brown, appear to be rapidly colonising (or in some cases, re-colonising) new areas, in Sussex, and both are worth a special mention.

Brown Hairstreaks had an excellent season and on Steyning Downland the 31 females recorded on August 18th was both a Sussex record and a National record. In recent years, this species has been gradually spreading across the county from its Horsham/Crawley stronghold. As part of this spread, the reports from Weirwood Reservoir, the Cuckfield area, and Lewes, were notable. However, the main story this year were the sightings all along the Sussex coastline, from the Eastbourne area to Chichester Harbour. From east to west there were records for Abbot's Wood (Hailsham), Friston Forest and Windover Hill (Wilmington), Seaford, Newhaven, Hollingbury Park (Brighton), Mill Hill (Shoreham), Lancing Ring, Central Worthing, West Worthing, Salvington, Felpham, Pagham Harbour, Sidlesham and Cobnor (SW of Chichester). Much of this colonisation of the Sussex coast is very recent and for many locations, such as Seaford and Newhaven, these were "first-ever" records.

Wall Brown also had an amazing season and was recorded in many "new locations". In recent years there has been a third brood emergence at a handful of sites, but in 2025 third brood Wall Browns were found in at least 25 locations. Downland sites, from east to west, included Beachy Head, Friston Forest, Litlington, High and Over (Seaford), downland south of Firle, Lancing Ring, Whitehawk Hill (East Brighton), Beeding, Cissbury Hill, Chantry Hill and the Amberley Downs. Away from the downs (although in some cases not far from downland), and again from east to west, Herstmonceux Castle, Rowland Wood, Abbot's Wood (Hailsham), Berwick, Barcombe area, Lewes, Cuckfield, East Worthing, Central Worthing, Goring, Storrington, Amberley Wildbrooks, Warningcamp (Arun Valley) and

Fittleworth. The long, hot, spring and summer clearly suited this species, and it will be very interesting to see if these “gains” are consolidated, over the next few years.

There were three other interesting developments in the autumn months involving Brimstone, Adonis Blue and Green-veined White. All three species had an additional, partial brood. These developments have been driven by climate change.

Brimstones are single brooded, but the sudden appearance of 10 fresh males on the Amberley Downs, on September 19th, suggested (to me) a partial, second brood. I hadn't seen any Brimstones for 4-5 weeks and on the website there were just 3 singles since mid-August (August 15th and 24th and September 6th). There was a total of 24 Brimstones recorded on the website on September 19th and then it went very quiet, again, with 5 records for the rest of September (two of them mine) involving just 8 individuals. If this was a partial second brood (and I am very confident it was) that would make it a “Sussex first” and quite probably a “National first”.

Adonis Blues are double brooded but a record of a fresh male on October 9th, prompted speculation of a possible third brood individual. The Adonis Blue first brood began early on April 28th and finished early. The second brood began on the extraordinarily early date of July 17th and finished by the end of August, which was a month earlier than usual. This allowed enough time for the completion of a third partial brood on October 9th. This partial third brood Adonis Blue was a “Sussex first” and quite probably a “National first”.

A very fresh female Green-veined White was seen on November 2nd in the Lancing area. This is the first time this species has been recorded in November. I am very confident it was a fourth brood individual which is a “Sussex first”, and quite possibly a “National first”.

These partial broods involving Brimstone, Adonis Blue and Green-veined White have been written up in a separate article on the Sussex BC website.

As for the migrant species, what sort of season did they have? Painted Lady, Clouded Yellow and Swallowtail were reported in reasonable numbers, whilst Long-tailed Blue had a second consecutive poor season. Small Whites and Large Whites were bountiful, but my impression was that migrant Red Admirals were slightly below average. Humming-bird Hawk-moths had a reasonable year compared to the low numbers in 2024.

For all of us who enjoy warmth and sunshine, the year 2025 will be remembered with fondness. Most gardeners and all farmers would have welcomed a few more inches of rain, but the butterflies just loved the weather conditions, and it was a year that will live long in the memory of butterfly enthusiasts. Not only were there lots of beautiful butterflies to lift the spirits but there were also some very positive indicators that species such as Brown Hairstreak and Wall Brown are colonising (or re-colonising) many parts of Sussex. On this uplifting positive note, I will end the 2025 annual butterfly report.

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