

Polygonia c-album
photo by Xavier Houard

Temperate plains

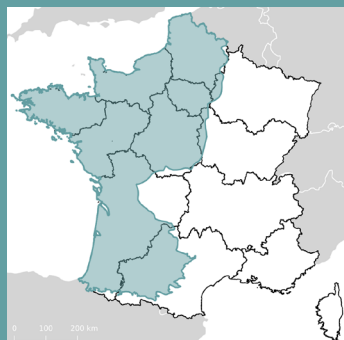
Field Guide for butterfly identification

The French section of the **European butterfly monitoring programme (Sterf-eBMS)** aims to monitor and promote the conservation of these insects. The programme relies on thousands of volunteers who identify and count butterflies using the same simple rules throughout Europe! Thanks to all this information collected by volunteers, we can determine the state of butterfly populations and take action to conserve them.

This Field Guide aims to facilitate the task of field identification of the 95 most common butterfly species seen in Temperate plains of France.

*This Field Guide can be downloaded at the
eBMS website*

www.butterfly-monitoring.net/field-guides



Counting butterflies will help to protect them!

French Butterflies

The aim of this field guide is to present the **95 butterfly species most commonly seen in the temperate plains** of mainland France, and to make it easier to identify them. Beware, that in some cases, the species may require capture or even examination of the genitalia to confirm identification. This mini-guide is designed to help you, but does not cover all the species in the given area. It also describes the Sterf-eBMS protocol for setting up and monitoring transects and counting butterflies.

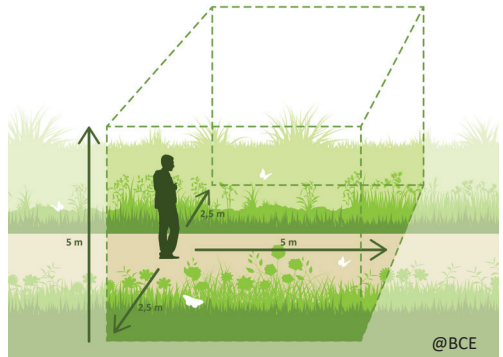
Butterfly Monitoring

Butterflies can be counted everywhere: in a meadow, in a forest, park, garden, along road verge, in the countryside and in the city. Wherever it is, every count is important. As part of the European Butterfly Monitoring Scheme (eBMS), data is most often collected during the “Butterfly Walk”, called a **transect**. This is a fixed route where butterflies are counted regularly (species and abundances), preferably once a week or two. It will be most convenient to set up your transect near your home or work so that you can visit it often. Another option is to record butterflies during “**15-min Count**”. It consists in counting butterflies for 15 minutes in a given area. It can be a path, a restricted area (e.g. a garden) or just a specific point.

You can use the eBMS mobile application, [ButterflyCount](#), to record “eBMS Transects” or “15-minute counts”. For the latter methodology, turn on the GPS and the application will draw your route while counting butterflies. You will need to create an account on the eBMS website and log into the application to record butterflies with the application. More information is available on the eBMS website www.butterfly-monitoring.net/ebms-app.

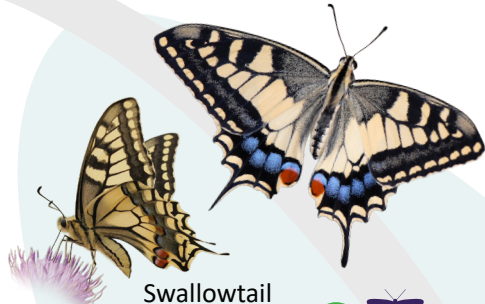
Basic rules when counting butterflies:

- Count all butterfly species and all individuals you encounter in an imaginary cube: 2.5m to the left and right, and 5m in front of and above you
- Walk through the transect/area at a slow, steady pace
- Make observations with good weather (sunny and warm, no rain and strong wind)
- Submit your data to the eBMS database or to the BMS coordinator



How to use this Field Guide

This field guide shows images of the **95 most common butterfly species** currently found in the temperate plains of France. The butterflies are organised by family and relationship to similar species. Every butterfly species has both a common English name and a scientific name (written in *italics*). For better identification look at the flight periods bar below each species shows the months they fly in brown, and the butterfly symbol on the right which shows the approximate size (**small**, **medium** or **large**). Please note that butterfly sizes are not to scale for better observation of details. Check the diagnostic characteristics highlighted in this guide with the arrows or circles and the remarks to help you with the identification. Butterfly identification is often best done using photographs. See also the legend on the back cover of the Field Guide.



Swallowtail

Papilio machaon



J F M A M J J A S O N D

Scarce Swallowtail

Iphiclus podalirius



J F M A M J J A S O N D



♀



♂



white
band
around
the eye

Purple Hairstreak

Favonius quercus



J F M A M J J A S O N D

Brown Hairstreak

Thecla betulae



J F M A M J J A S O N D

Green Hairstreak

Callophrys rubi



J F M A M J J A S O N D



white W-shaped

White-letter Hairstreak

Satyrium w-album



J F M A M J J A S O N D



black spots

Black Hairstreak

Satyrium pruni



J F M A M J J A S O N D



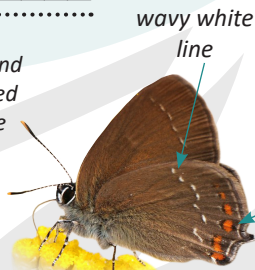
short tail and
well-defined
large blue
spot

Blue-spot Hairstreak

Satyrium spini



J F M A M J J A S O N D



wavy white
line

black
margined
orange
spots

Ilex Hairstreak

Satyrium ilicis



J F M A M J J A S O N D



small
silvery-blue
stain

Sloe Hairstreak

Satyrium acaciae



J F M A M J J A S O N D



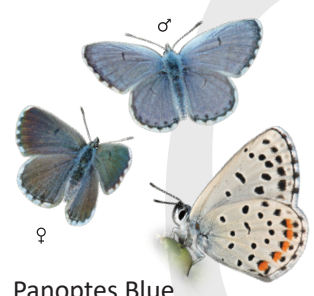
Mountain Argus
Aricia agestis

J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
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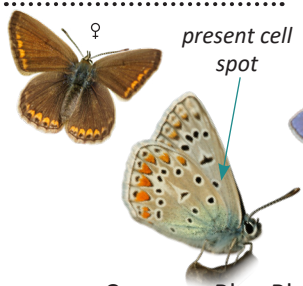
Chalk Hill Blue
Lysandra coridon

J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
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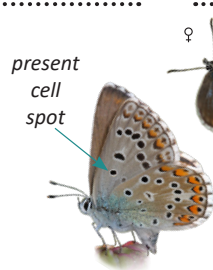
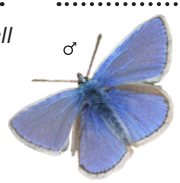
Panoptes Blue
Pseudophilotes baton

J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
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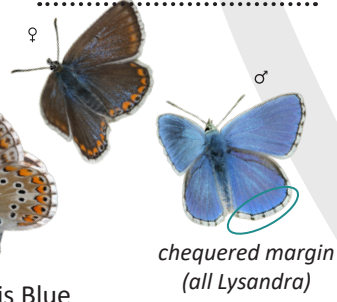
Common Blue Blue
Polyommatus icarus

J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
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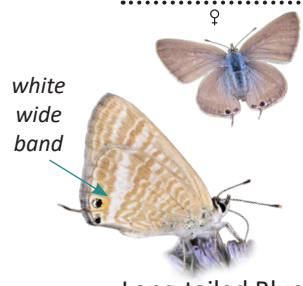
Adonis Blue
Lysandra bellargus

J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
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Geranium Bronze
Cacyreus marshalli

J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
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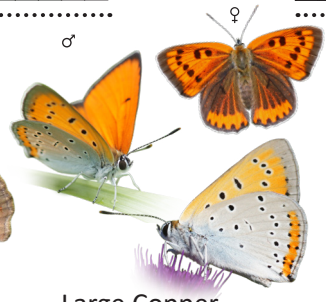
Long-tailed Blue
Lampides boeticus

J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
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Small Copper
Lycaena phlaeas

J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
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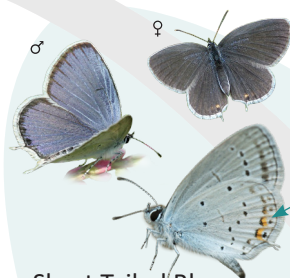
Large Copper
Lycaena dispar

J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
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Sooty Copper
Lycaena tityrus

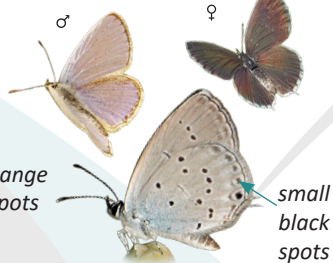
J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
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Short Tailed Blue
Cupido argiades



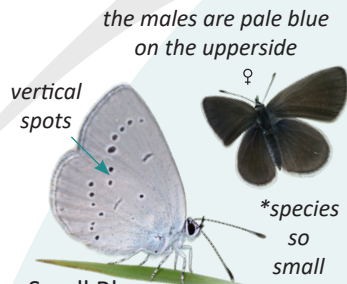
J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
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Provencal Short Tailed Blue
Cupidos alcetas



J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
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Small Blue
Cupido minimus



J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
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Silver-studded Blue
Plebejus argus



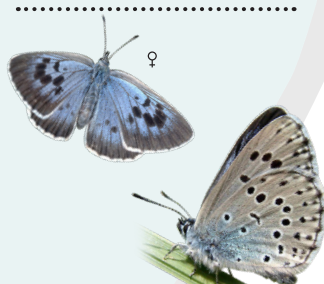
J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
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Holly Blue
Celastrina argiolus



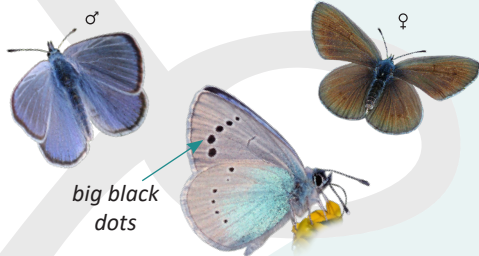
J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
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Large Blue
Phengaris arion



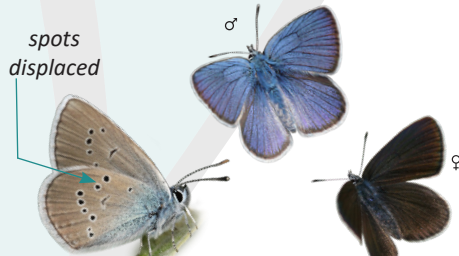
J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---



Green-underside Blue
Glaucopsyche alexis



J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---



Mazarine Blue
Cyaniris semiargus



J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---



Duke of Burgundy Fritillary *Hamearis lucina*

J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---





Red Admiral
Vanessa atalanta



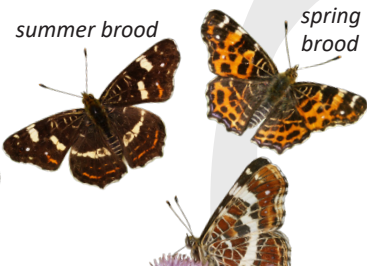
J F M A M J J A S O N D



Painted Lady
Vanessa cardui



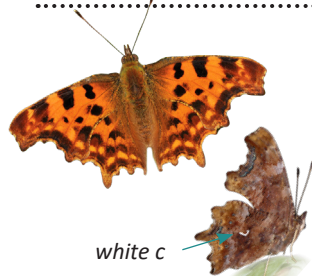
J F M A M J J A S O N D



Map
Araschnia levana



J F M A M J J A S O N D

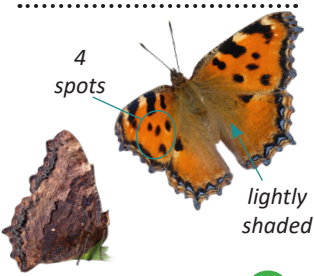


Comma

Polygonia c-album



J F M A M J J A S O N D



Large Tortoiseshell
Nymphalis polychloros



J F M A M J J A S O N D



Camberwell beauty
Nymphalis antiopa



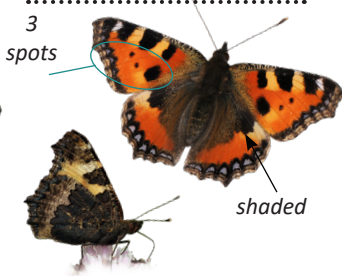
J F M A M J J A S O N D



Peacock
Aglais io



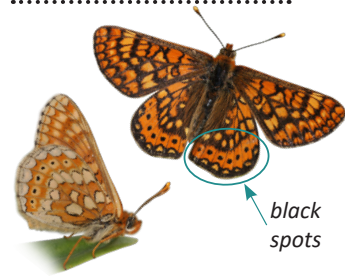
J F M A M J J A S O N D



Small Tortoiseshell
Aglais urticae



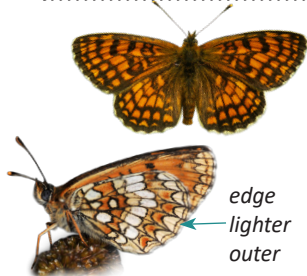
J F M A M J J A S O N D



Marsh Fritillary
Euphydryas aurinia



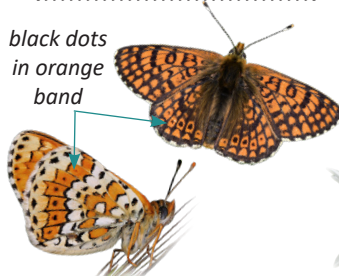
J F M A M J J A S O N D



Heath Fritillary
Melitaea athalia



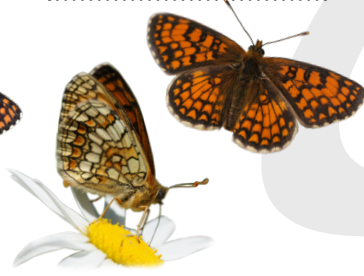
J F M A M J J A S O N D



Granville Fritillary
Melitaea cinxia



J F M A M J J A S O N D



Provencal Fritillary
Melitaea parthenoides



J F M A M J J A S O N D

♀

green with silver stripes

Silver-washed Fritillary
Argynnis paphia

♂ bold sexual bands

J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

Dark Green Fritillary
Speyeria aglaja

silvery spots

J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

High Brown Fritillary
Fabriciana adippe

reddish-brown spots

J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

white pointed spots

Small Pearl Bordered Fritillary
Boloria selene

J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

big black spots

Violet Fritillary
Boloria dia

J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

one white cell

small black dot with yellow outline

Pearl Bordered Fritillary
Boloria euphrosyne

J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

large silver spots

Queen of Spain Fritillary
Issoria lathonia

J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

continuous black band

Lesser Marbled Fritillary
Brenthis ino

J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

separated black spots

purple colour

Marbled Fritillary
Brenthis daphne

J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

♂

black spots on orange background

Spotted Fritillary
Melitaea didyma

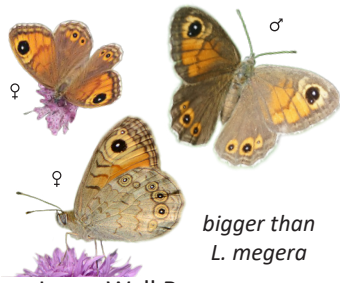
J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

elongated yellow cell

♀

Knapweed Fritillary
Melitaea phoebe

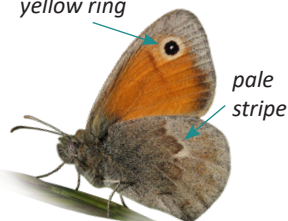
J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
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Large Wall Brown
Lasiommata maera

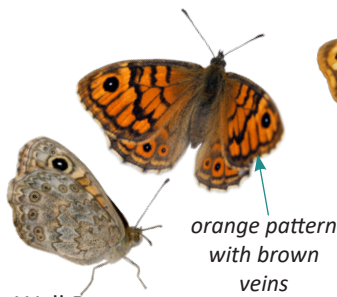
J F M A M J J A S O N D

eyespot with
yellow ring



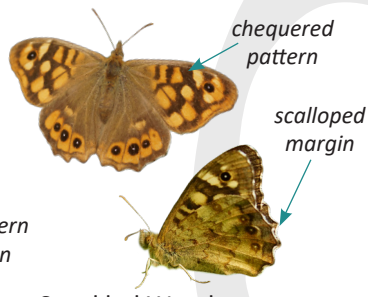
Small Heath
Coenonympha pamphilus

J F M A M J J A S O N D



Wall Brown
Lasiommata megera

J F M A M J J A S O N D



Speckled Wood
Pararge aegeria

J F M A M J J A S O N D



Pearly Heath
Coenonympha arcania

J F M A M J J A S O N D



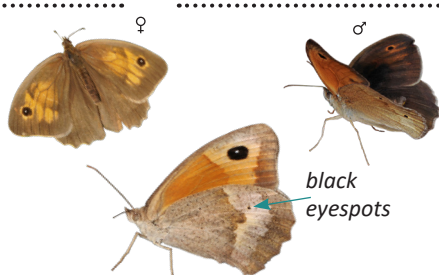
Dryad
Minois dryas

J F M A M J J A S O N D



Gatekeeper
Pyronia tithonus

J F M A M J J A S O N D



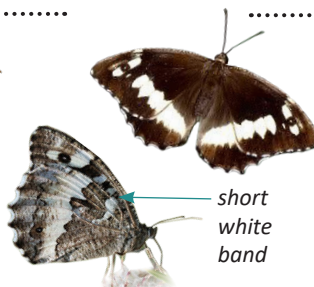
Meadow Brown
Maniola jurtina

J F M A M J J A S O N D



Marbled White
Melanargia galathea

J F M A M J J A S O N D



Great Banded Grayling
Brintesia circe

J F M A M J J A S O N D



Woodland Grayling
Hipparchia fagi

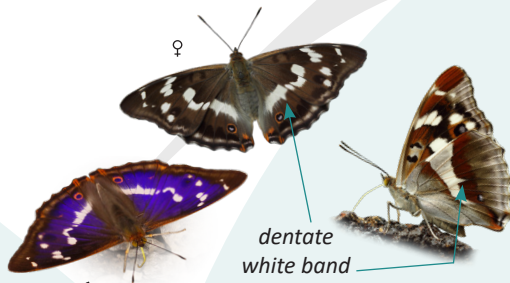
J F M A M J J A S O N D



Lesser
Purple Emperor
Apatura ilia



J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
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♂ Purple Emperor
Apatura iris



J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
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White Admiral
Limenitis camilla



J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
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Southern White Admiral
Limenitis reducta



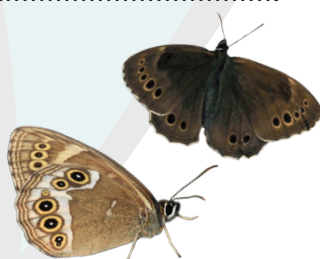
J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
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Poplar Admiral
Limenitis populi



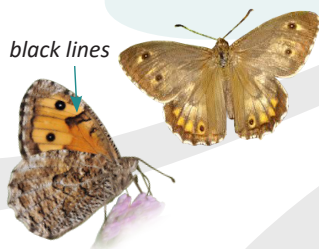
J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
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Woodland Brown
Lopinga achine



J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
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Grayling
Hipparchia semele



J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
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False Grayling
Arethusana arethusa



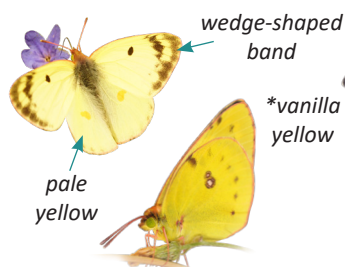
J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
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Ringlet
Aphantopus hyperantus



J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
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Berger's Clouded Yellow

Colias alfacariensis

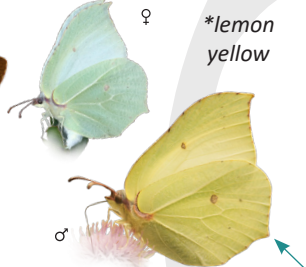
J F M A M J J A S O N D



Clouded Yellow

Colias crocea

J F M A M J J A S O N D



Brimstone

Gonepteryx rhamni

J F M A M J J A S O N D

well-defined black mark and along the margin



well-defined black mark



black mark a bit diffuse and not long



pale yellow



female with more spots

Large White

Pieris brassicae

J F M A M J J A S O N D

Small White

Pieris rapae

J F M A M J J A S O N D

black mark more diffuse and short



dark longer spot and slightly diffuse



quadrangular or concave spot

green highlighted veins



marked black veins



Green-veined White

Pieris napi

J F M A M J J A S O N D

Southern Small White

Pieris mannii

J F M A M J J A S O N D

Black-veined White

Aporia crataegi

J F M A M J J A S O N D

pearly and shiny spots



Western Dappled White

Euchloe crameri

J F M A M J J A S O N D



Orange-tip

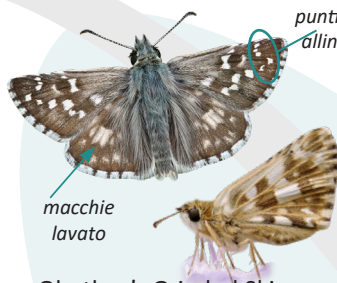
Anthocharis cardamines

J F M A M J J A S O N D

Wood White

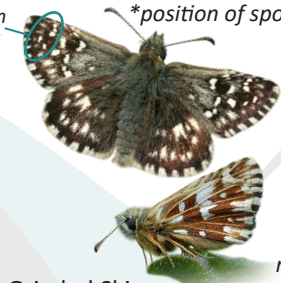
Leptidea sinapis

J F M A M J J A S O N D



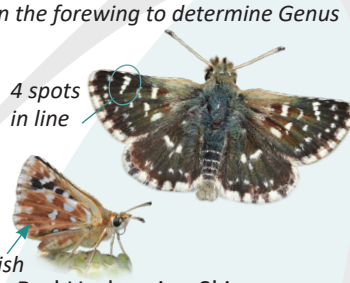
Obethur's Grizzled Skipper
Pyrgus armoricanus

J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
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Grizzled Skipper
Pyrgus malvae

J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
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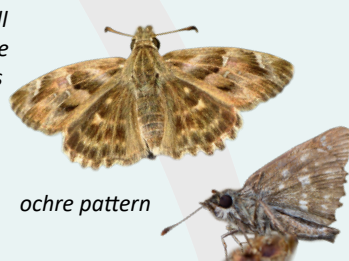
Red Underwing Skipper
Spialia sertorius

J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
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Dingy Skipper
Erynnis tages

J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
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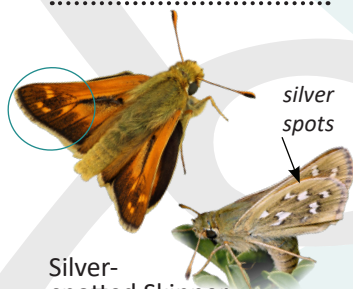
Mallow Skipper
Carcharodus alceae

J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
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Chequered Skipper
Carterocephalus palaemon

J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
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Silver-spotted Skipper
Hesperia comma

J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
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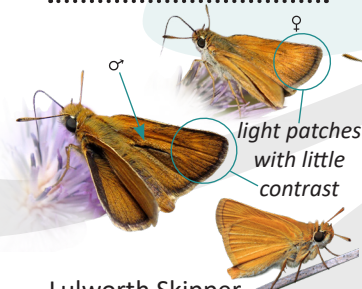
Large Skipper
Ochlodes sylvanus

J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
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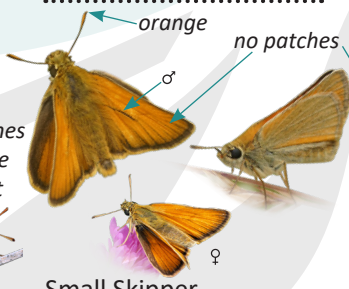
Large Chequered Skipper
Heteropterus morpheus

J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
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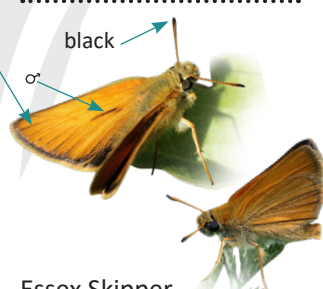
Lulworth Skipper
Thymelicus acteon

J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
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Small Skipper
Thymelicus sylvestris

J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
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Essex Skipper
Thymelicus lineola

J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
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Butterfly Conservation Europe and the **UK Centre for Ecology and Hydrology** (UKCEH) established the European Butterfly Monitoring Scheme (eBMS) to bring together data from different Butterfly Monitoring Schemes of Europe. All member countries share their data annually to the eBMS database, to analyse and produce the population trends of the European butterfly species and European Butterfly Indicators, which provide an expert basis for further action in the conservation of butterflies and their habitats. Visit the website of eBMS, www.butterfly-monitoring.net to get more information about butterfly monitoring and how to submit your butterfly data.

The **Sterf** (*Suivi temporel des Rhopalocères de France*) is a citizen science project launched in 2005, based on the English name, butterfly monitoring scheme (BMS). It is co-hosted by the National Museum of Natural History of Paris (MNHN) and the Office for Insects and their Environment (Opie), and is supported by the French Office for Biodiversity (OFB), as part of of the National Action Plan in favor of threatened butterflies. Contact email at: mathieu.deflores@insectes.org

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Authors: Mathieu de Flores, Benoit Fontaine, Bastien Louboutin, Alexis Borges and Cristina G. Sevilleja.

Photography: Juan Pablo Cancela, Helena Romo, Saba González, Juan Ignacio Arce, Miguel Carballa, Jose Rodrigo Dapena, Javier Olivares, Alberto and José Ramón Sanchís, Carlos Viveiros, Christos Zoumides, Mariano Vindel, Juan Manuel Sanchez; Paolo Mazzei, Marco Bonifacino, Raniero Panfili and Daniel Morel (www.leps.it); Izabella Dziekanska, Martin Wiemers, Albert Vliegenthart and Chris van Swaay.

Graphic design: Cristina G. Sevilleja

eBMS - European Butterfly Monitoring Scheme
SPRING - Strengthening Pollinator Recovery through
Indicators and monitoring

June 2024

Identification difficulty:



easy



capture
needed



genitalia
examination

Flight period: months when butterflies are seen flying,
based on Fauna Ibérica.

J F M A M J J A S O N D

Butterfly size:



Small



Median



Large

Sex:

♀ Female

♂ Male



Symbols:



Specific characteristics to help on
butterfly identification



UK Centre for
Ecology & Hydrology



Dutch
Butterfly Conservation



MINISTÈRE
DE LA TRANSITION
ÉCOLOGIQUE
ET DE LA COHÉSION
DES TERRITOIRES

Liberté
Égalité
Fraternité

