



Anthocharis cardamines

**Mediterranean
species**

Field Guide for Butterflies Identification

The **European Butterfly Monitoring Scheme (eBMS)** aims to collect data and promote monitoring and conservation of these insects. The BMS network includes thousands of volunteers collecting data following the same protocol.

The aim of this guide is to help field identification of the most common species in the area of Padana Plain. It is also helpful for all volunteers collecting data following the standard eBMS protocol to monitor butterfly species all over Europe.

This guide can be downloaded as pdf file at the following website:

<https://butterfly-monitoring.net/field-guides>

Count butterflies to save them!

Italian butterflies

Italy has a huge variety of butterfly species, thanks to the abundance of very diversified habitats. Around 290 species of butterflies are present all over Italy. This guide contains 92 species especially common in the Mediterranean area.

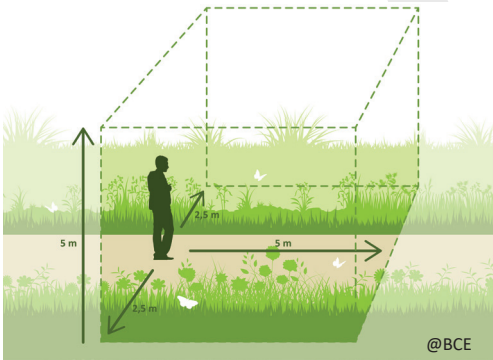
Butterfly monitoring

To monitor butterflies we use the transect method, where a person count all butterfly species and individuals along a path inside an imaginary cube of 5x5x5 meters (see image below).

The transect must be monitored frequently, at least once every two weeks (every 10 days), in a timeframe roughly between 10am and 4pm, and with a temperature between 13°C and 35°C. It may consist of several sections, normally corresponding to different habitats. Before starting and at the end, the recorder has to note temperature, percentage of sun, and wind strength using the Beaufort scale (see the table).

Another method for monitoring butterflies is the 15-minutes count, though the app **ButterflyCount**. It is possible to do the count anywhere, along a path or on a fixed point, following the same instructions as previously described regarding weather and time, and turning the phone GPS on while the app is running.

For more information, please visit the website www.butterfly-monitoring.net/it or contact help.itbms@gmail.com.



Beaufort scale

0 Calm	Smoke climbs vertically
1 Light Air	Direction shown by smoke drift but not by wind vanes
2 Light breeze	Wind felt on face; leaves rustle; wind vane moved by wind
3 Gentle Breeze	Leaves and small twigs in constant motion
4 Moderate Breeze	Raises dust and loose paper; small branches moved
5 Fresh Breeze	Small trees in leaf begin to sway

How to use this guide

This guide shows 92 species of butterflies you can find in the Mediterranean area and surrounding areas. Species are ordered by family and similar species are grouped together to help in their identification. Usually, both upper and under side are shown. For those species with sexual dimorphism (males and females have different appearance), both males and females are shown. For an easier identification, pay attention to flight periods: the bars below each species show in greenish the months during when butterflies are flying. The symbol on the right represents the approximate size of the species (small, medium, or large). Please note that pictures are not on scale, to better show the details of the different species.

Please check the characters highlighted in this guide through arrows or circles to help with identification. Correct identification of butterflies is often easier through pictures or catching them. On the last page of this guide, you will find the complete legend of all the used symbols.



brown colour

Carcharodus alceae

G F M A M G L A S O N D

non-hooked antennae



aligned dots

Spialia sertorius

G F M A M G L A S O N D

reddish



distinct white spots

Carcharodus floccifera

G F M A M G L A S O N D



whitish spots

Pyrgus armoricus

G F M A M G L A S O N D



lighter bottom face of the wings

Carcharodus lavatherae

G F M A M G L A S O N D



non-aligned dots

whitish spots

Pyrgus malvoides

G F M A M G L A S O N D



underside is usually reddish



Gegenes nostradamus

G F M A M G L A S O N D

wings are uniformly orange



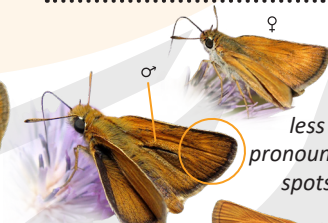
Thymelicus sylvestris

G F M A M G L A S O N D



Erynnis tages

G F M A M G L A S O N D



Thymelicus acteon

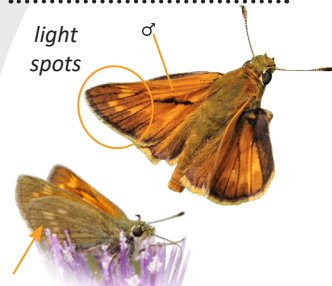
G F M A M G L A S O N D



Pyrgus sidae

G F M A M G L A S O N D

light spots



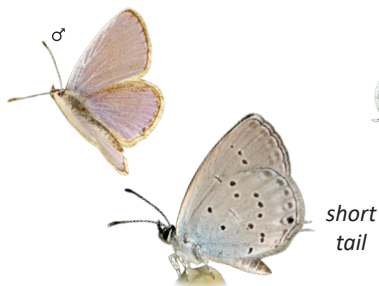
Ochloides sylvanus

G F M A M G L A S O N D



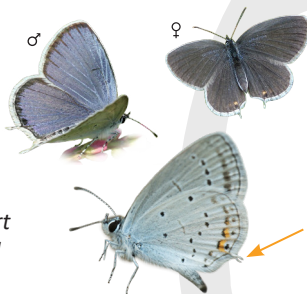
Cupidos osiris

G F M A M G L A S O N D



Cupidos alcetas

G F M A M G L A S O N D



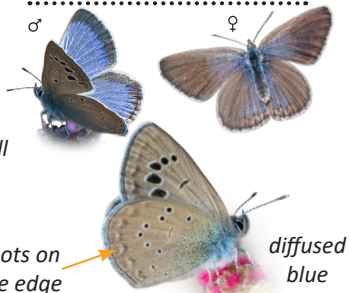
Cupido argiades

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



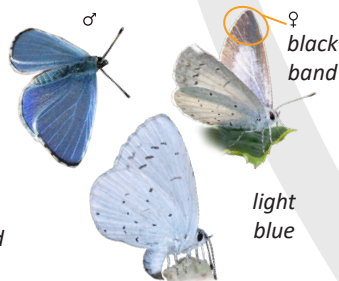
Glaucopsyche alexis

G F M A M G L A S O N D



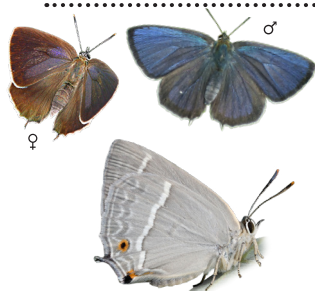
Glaucopsyche melanops

G F M A M G L A S O N D



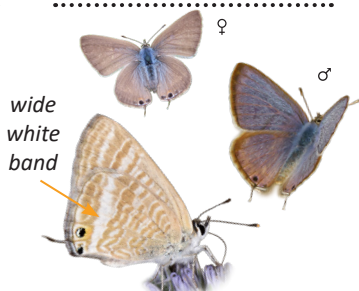
Celastrina argiolus

G F M A M G L A S O N D



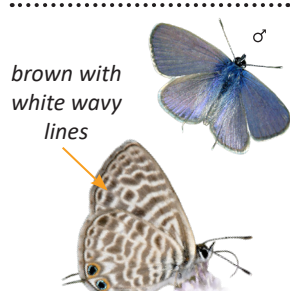
Favonius quercus

G F M A M G L A S O N D



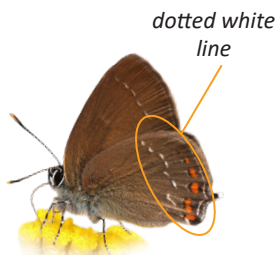
Lampides boeticus

G F M A M G L A S O N D



Leptotes pirithous

G F M A M G L A S O N D



Satyrium ilicis

G F M A M G L A S O N D



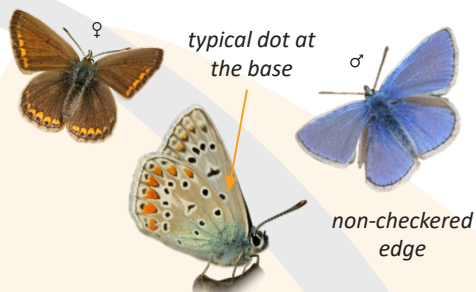
Satyrium spini

G F M A M G L A S O N D



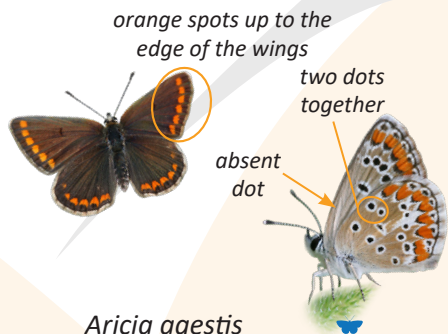
Callophrys rubi

G F M A M G L A S O N D



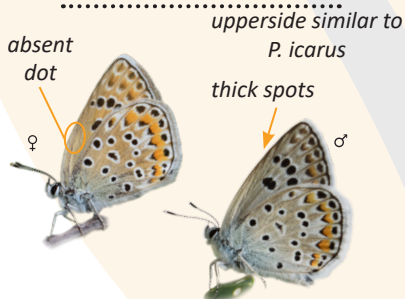
Polyommatus icarus 🦋

G F M A M G L A S O N D



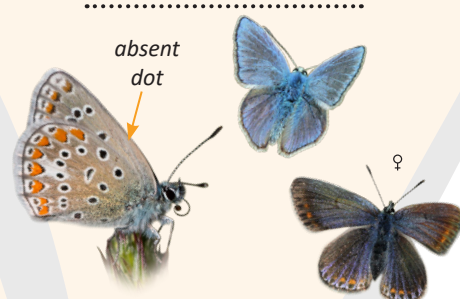
Aricia agestis 🦋

G F M A M G L A S O N D



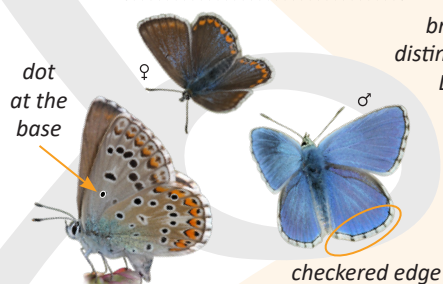
Polyommatus escheri 🦋

G F M A M G L A S O N D



Polyommatus thersites 🦋

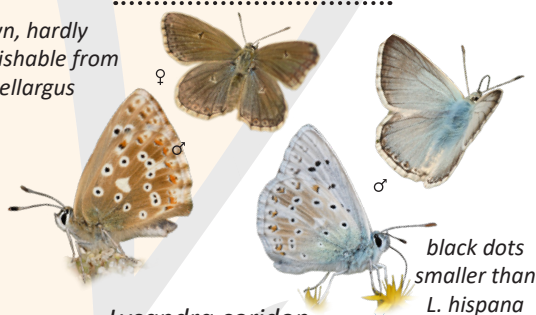
G F M A M J J A S O N D



Lysandra bellargus 🦋

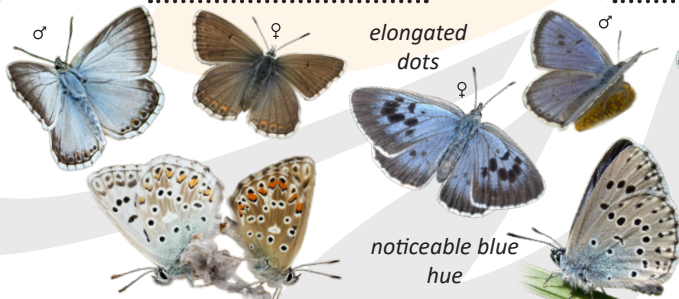
G F M A M G L A S O N D

brown, hardly distinguishable from *L. bellargus*



Lysandra coridon 🦋

G F M A M G L A S O N D

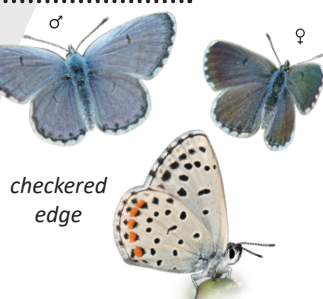


Lysandra hispana 🦋

G F M A M G L A S O N D

Phengaris arion 🦋

G F M A M G L A S O N D

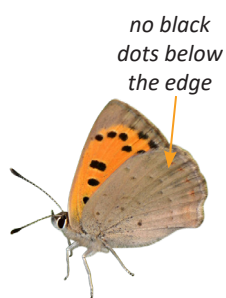


Pseudophilotes baton 🦋

G F M A M G L A S O N D



brown back wings

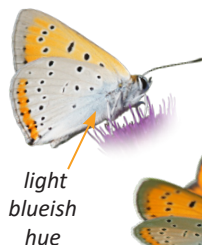


no black dots below the edge

Lycaena phlaeas



G F M A M G L A S O N D



light blueish hue



small black dot

Lycaena dispar



G F M A M G L A S O N D



♂



♀



♂

tail is often present

Lycaena thersamon



G F M A M G L A S O N D



♀

black spots on the upper page



♂

4 dots
jagged edge

Lycaena tityrus



G F M A M G L A S O N D

reddish colour



Limenitis reducta



G F M A M G L A S O N D



Charaxes jasius



G F M A M G L A S O N D

curved front wing



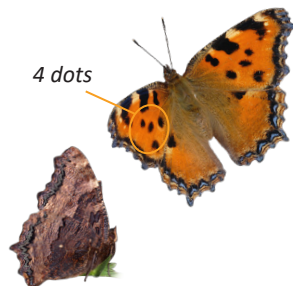
elongated palpi

Libythea celtis



G F M A M G L A S O N D

4 dots



Nymphalis polychloros



G F M A M G L A S O N D

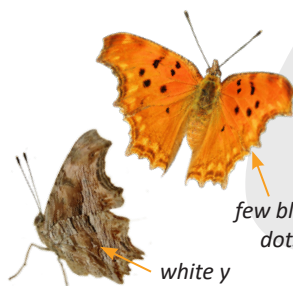


white c

Polygonia c-album



G F M A M G L A S O N D



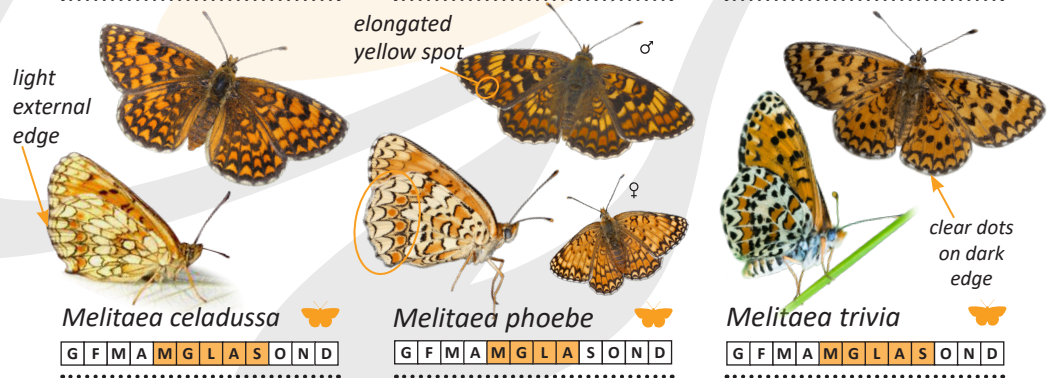
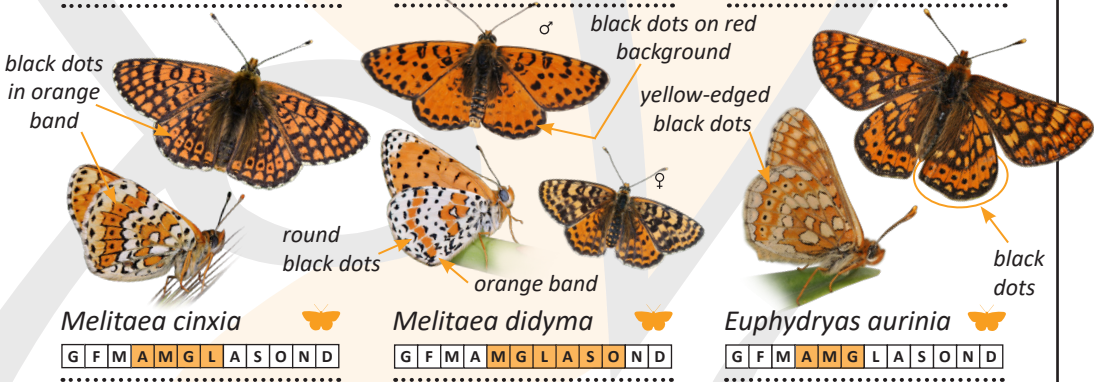
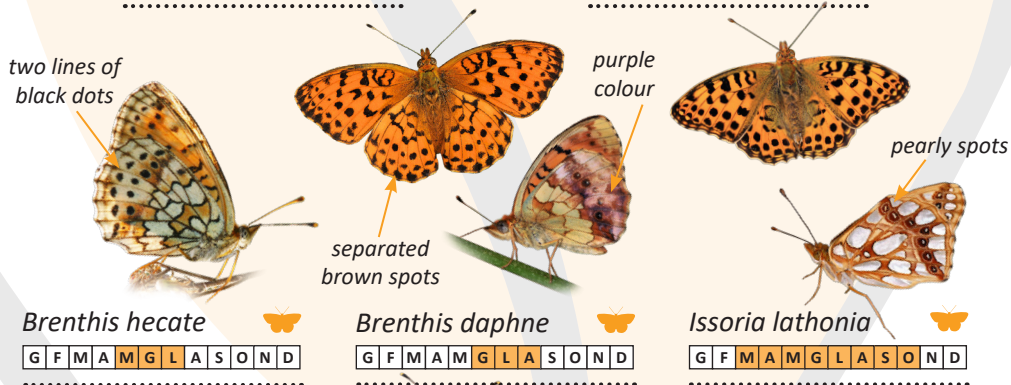
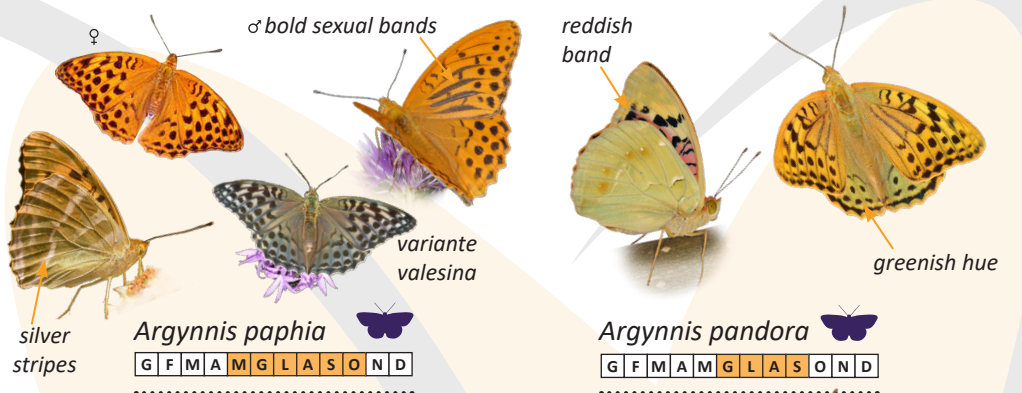
white y

few black dots

Polygonia egea



G F M A M G L A S O N D





bigger than
L. megera

Lasiommata maera 🦋

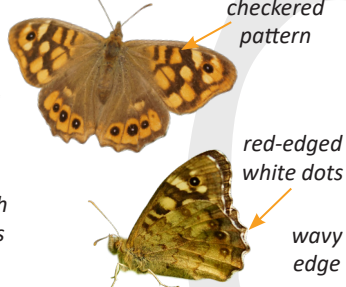
G F M A M G L A S O N D



orange with
brown lines

Lasiommata megera 🦋

G F M A M G L A S O N D



checkered
pattern

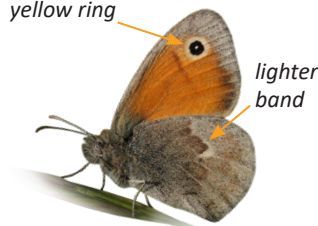
red-edged
white dots

wavy
edge

Pararge aegeria 🦋

G F M A M G L A S O N D

ocellum with
yellow ring



lighter
band

Coenonympha pamphilus 🦋

G F M A M G L A S O N D



light band with
small ocelli

Coenonympha corinna 🦋

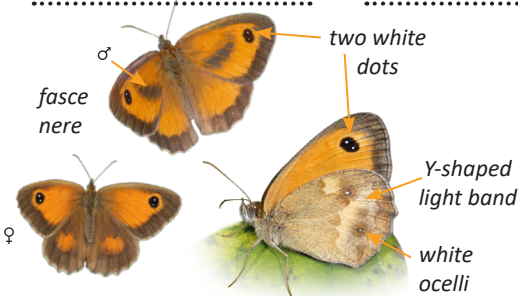
G F M A M G L A S O N D



white band
with big
ocelli on
the edge

Coenonympha arcania 🦋

G F M A M G L A S O N D



fascie
nere

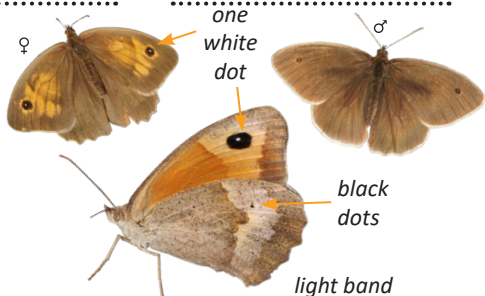
two white
dots

Y-shaped
light band

white
ocelli

Pyronia tithonus 🦋

G F M A M G L A S O N D



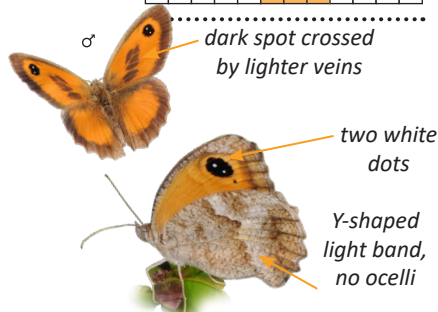
one
white
dot

black
dots

light band

Maniola jurtina 🦋

G F M A M G L A S O N D



dark spot crossed
by lighter veins

two white
dots

Y-shaped
light band,
no ocelli

Pyronia cecilia 🦋

G F M A M G L A S O N D



Aglais io 🦋

G F M A M G L A S O N D



Vanessa atalanta



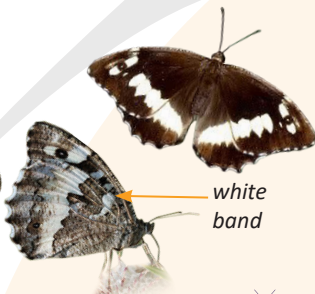
G F M A M G L A S O N D



Vanessa cardui



G F M A M G L A S O N D



white band

Brintesia circe



G F M A M G L A S O N D



Hipparchia neopolitana



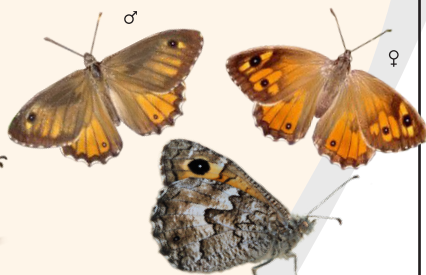
G F M A M G L A S O N D



Hipparchia fidia



G F M A M G L A S O N D



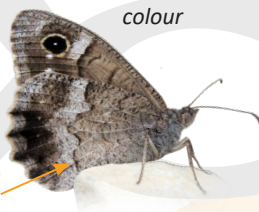
Hipparchia aristaeus



G F M A M G L A S O N D

brown-grey colour

light, non-white scales

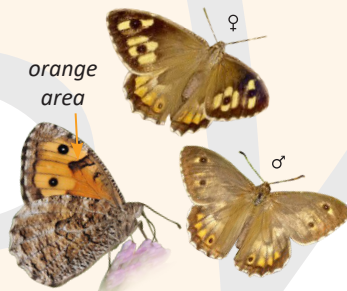


Hipparchia statilinus



G F M A M G L A S O N D

orange area



Hipparchia semele



G F M A M G L A S O N D



Hipparchia fagi



G F M A M G L A S O N D



brown veins

Melanargia arge



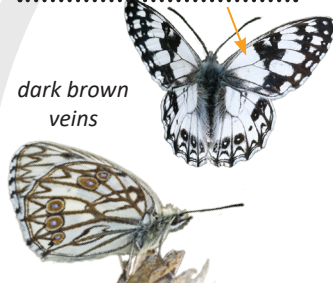
G F M A M G L A S O N D



Melanargia galathea



G F M A M G L A S O N D

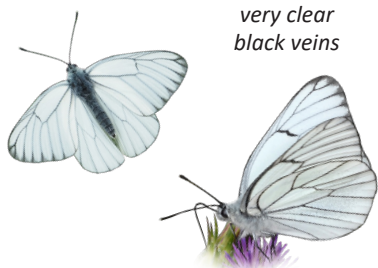


dark brown veins

Melanargia occitanica



G F M A M G L A S O N D



very clear
black veins

Aporia crataegi



G F M A M G L A S O N D

Leptidea sinapis



G F M A M G L A S O N D

long and clear
black border
along the
edge



clear dark
mark



short black border
along the edge



faint
yellow



Pieris brassicae



G F M A M G L A S O N D

Pieris rapae



G F M A M G L A S O N D



short, slightly
nuanced
mark



dark, longer spot on the
outmost edge



*the male
smells like
lime



veins with
green scales



squared or
concave spot

Pieris napi



G F M A M G L A S O N D

Pieris manni



G F M A M G L A S O N D



black spot



black and white spot



Mickey mouse
shaped



pattern of
green spots
with white
insets



green,
smooth
spots



Anthocharis cardamines



G F M A M G L A S O N D

Euchloe ausonia



G F M A M G L A S O N D

Pontia edusa



G F M A M G L A S O N D

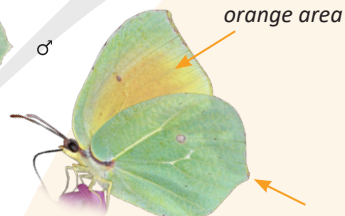
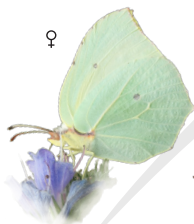


*the male is bright yellow



Gonepteryx rhamni

G F M A M G L A S O N D



Gonepteryx cleopatra

G F M A M G L A S O N D

yellow-orange



wide band



female of f. helice

Colias crocea

G F M A M G L A S O N D



*the male is sun yellow

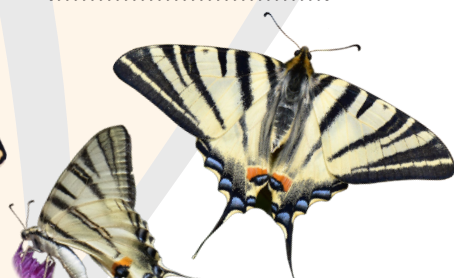
Colias alfacariensis

G F M A M G L A S O N D



Papilio machaon

G F M A M G L A S O N D



Iphiclide podalirius

G F M A M G L A S O N D



Zerynthia cassandra

G F M A M G L A S O N D

Butterfly Conservation Europe and UK Centre for Ecology and Hydrology (UKCEH) have created the European Butterfly Monitoring Scheme (eBMS) to collect data from different Butterfly Monitoring Schemes all over Europe. Each State cooperating to this project shares data with eBMS yearly, in order to analyse and evaluate population trends of European butterflies and European indicators, creating a starting line for future policies to protect butterflies and their habitat.

For more information about monitoring and to upload your data, please visit the eBMS website:

www.butterfly-monitoring.net/it

If you wish to join the Italian butterfly monitoring network please contact help.itbms@gmail.com

You can keep up-to-date with all our initiatives by following our socials: [Facebook \(Butterfly Monitoring Scheme Italia\)](#) and [Instagram \(@bms_italia_\)](#).

This guide can be downloaded as pdf file on the eBMS website

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Pictures: Paolo Mazzei, Marco Bonifacino, Raniero Panfili e Daniel Morel (www.leps.it); Paolo Andreatta, Jose Rodrigo Dapena, Javier Olivares, B. Franssen, Henk Dikkema, Irma Wynhoff, Arthur van Dijk, Izabella Dziekanska, Martin Sielezniew, Sergio Teixeira, Dan Danahar, G. Zoutter, Bert van Rijsewijk, Martin Wiemers, Kars Veling e Chris van Swaay.

Graphis design: Cristina G. Sevilleja, & Stefano Masier

Italian coordinators: Simona Bonelli, Leonardo Dapporto e Stefano Scalerio help.itbms@gmail.com

Flight period: months when butterflies are noticeable

G F M A M G L A S O N D

Butterfly size:



Small



Medium



Large

Gender:

♀ Female

♂ Male

Symbols:



Noticeable characters useful for species identification

eBMS - European Butterfly Monitoring Scheme

SPRING - Strengthening Pollinator Recovery through Indicators and monitoringG

gennaio 2024



UK Centre for Ecology & Hydrology

