

Portland Heights Butterfly Breaks  
Friday June 11<sup>th</sup> – Sunday June 13<sup>th</sup>

**Saturday June 12th**

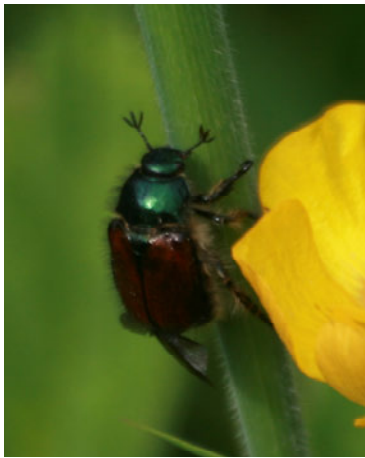
**Weather: Warm sunshine in a fresh northerly breeze**

Kingbarrow Quarry, 0700

We started the weekend with a search for the resident pair of Little Owls but these were only seen by one of us – the one that got up an hour earlier! We did get the butterfly list started though with a few Common Blues in the quarry and a Red Admiral in the hotel car park.

Hogcliff Down, 1000

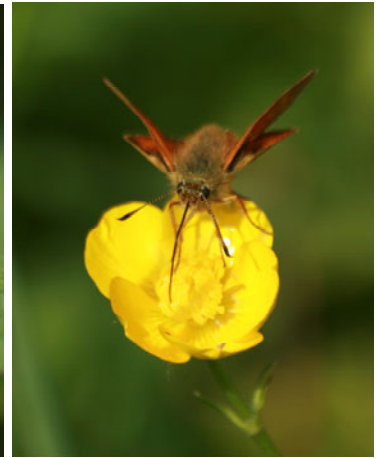
As the sun came out and the day warmed up the butterflies put on a great show with several Marsh Fritillaries and lots of Large Skippers and Common Blues. Garden Chafers were out in enormous numbers, thousands of them flying over the grassy slopes. The hedgerow held both Beautiful and Banded Demoiselles, probably from the nearby watercress beds. Birds were much in evidence as well with Yellowhammers, Buzzards and Ravens. The highlight here though was a singing Quail, which we never quite managed to track down.



*Garden Chafer*



*female Beautiful Demoiselle*



*Large Skipper*



*female Yellowhammer*



*male Banded Demoiselle*

Toller Porcorum, 1300

Our lunch stop was under a huge Oak tree next to a brook which had several fabulous Banded Demoiselles to photograph, including this mating pair.



*mating Beautiful Demoiselles*

Powerstock Common, 1400

Yet more Marsh Fritillaries here plus a host of other new butterfly sightings including Wood White, Grizzled Skipper, Green Hairstreak and a most unexpected Small Blue. Common and Heath Spotted Orchids were everywhere with plenty of other interesting flowers including lots of beautiful Yellow Flag Irises and some very late English Bluebells. Dragonflies were represented by Four-spotted Chasers, Azure Damselflies and Large Red Damselflies. The best bird here was a Red Kite but we also recorded Blackcaps, a Garden Warbler singing very oddly, a Green Woodpecker and a Marsh Tit.



*Common Spotted Orchid*



*Heath Spotted Orchid*



*Marsh Fritillary*

Tadnoll Heath, 2130

A beautiful calm evening produced 2 or 3 Nightjars, a couple of Lapwings and a calling Tawny Owl as well 8 Sika Deer.

**Sunday June 13th**

**Weather: Warm sunshine**

Kingbarrow Quarry, 0700

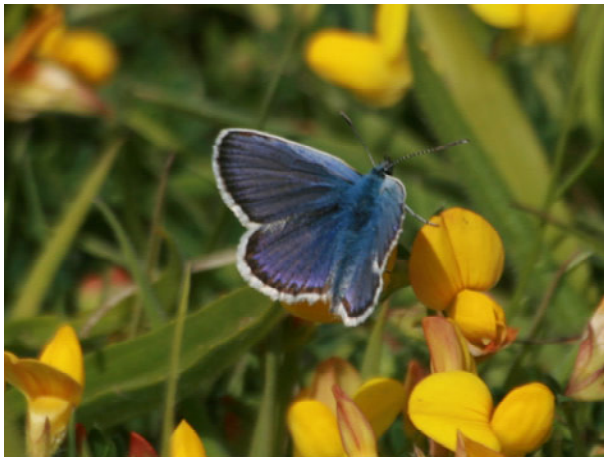
On our second attempt we found the Little Owl most of us missed yesterday, sat dozing in one of the stacks of stone left by the quarrymen many years ago.

Portland Bird Observatory, 0930

The warden, Martin Cade, had kept the results of the night's moth trapping for us to inspect, and we were treated to a superb variety of moths including some breathtakingly beautiful species such as the Small Elephant Hawk-moth, Poplar Hawk-moth and Cream-spot Tiger Moth. Martin often puts photos of the moths on the Portland Bird Observatory web site at [http://www.portlandbirdobs.org.uk/aa\\_latestnews.htm](http://www.portlandbirdobs.org.uk/aa_latestnews.htm)

Admiralty Quarries, 1100

This area includes some very old quarries abandoned when the stone was last quarried for the Portland Harbour breakwaters over 100 years ago, some of which have been more recently infilled. It is in one of these infilled areas that the largest colony of the Portland form of the Silver-studded Blue can be found. This morning there were just a few of the freshly-emerged males to see, but we had excellent views and could clearly see the darker colour of this species compared with the Common Blue.



*Silver-studded Blue*



*Adonis Blue*

Just to the north was the huge bank of the High Angle Battery which holds a small colony of the fiercely territorial Adonis Blue. At least 3 fresh males were seen, all showing the almost impossibly bright blue colour of their upperwings. Several examples of the day-flying Mother Shipton moth were also seen here.

Ferrybridge, 1300

At our traditional lunch spot we could see some distant Little Terns and a couple of Ringed Plovers on the mud in front of the car park.

Portland Bill, 1400

The Gannets obviously didn't mind the crowds that were assembled at this popular tourist destination and were heading east in small number all the time. The cliffs held Guillemots, Razorbills and Kittiwakes with a few Fulmars flying past. The grassy slopes were home to a solitary Bee Orchid and the southern-most colony of Small Blues in Dorset.

Radipole, 1730

A quick look around the reserve before the train arrived produced good views of Cetti's Warbler as well as lots of other birds typical to this site, which can be seen from the lists below. An unexpected addition to the mammal list was a young Field Mouse sat in the middle of the path! We finished the day with a superb male Marsh Harrier hunting over the reedbeds.



*Field Mouse*



*Great Crested Grebes*

**Birds:** 73 species  
(over 2 days)

Fulmar  
Gannet  
Cormorant  
Shag  
Grey Heron  
Mute Swan  
Canada Goose  
Gadwall  
Mallard  
Marsh Harrier  
Red Kite  
Buzzard  
Kestrel  
Hobby  
Quail (heard)  
Pheasant  
Oystercatcher  
Ringed Plover  
Lapwing  
Black-headed Gull  
Herring Gull  
Great Black-backed Gull  
Kittiwake  
Common Tern

Little Tern  
Guillemot  
Razorbill  
Wood Pigeon  
Collared Dove  
Little Owl  
Nightjar  
Swift  
Green Woodpecker  
(heard)  
Skylark  
Swallow  
House Martin  
Sand Martin  
Meadow Pipit  
Rock Pipit  
Pied Wagtail  
Wren  
Dunnock  
Robin  
Blackbird  
Mistle Thrush  
Cetti's Warbler  
Reed Warbler  
Sedge Warbler  
Whitethroat

Garden Warbler (heard)  
Blackcap  
Chiffchaff  
Willow Warbler (heard)  
Coal Tit  
Blue Tit  
Great Tit  
Marsh Tit  
Long-tailed Tit  
Jay (heard)  
Magpie  
Jackdaw  
Rook  
Carrion Crow  
Raven  
Starling  
House Sparrow  
Chaffinch  
Greenfinch  
Goldfinch  
Linnet  
Bullfinch  
Yellowhammer  
Corn Bunting

**Plants:****Saturday – selected species**

Bogbean  
 Cow Parsley  
 Hogweed  
 Burnet Saxifrage  
 Butterbur  
 Common Catsear  
 Common Ragwort

Meadow Thistle  
 Rough Hawkbit  
 Welfed Thistle  
 Yellow Rattle  
 Hazel  
 Yellow Flag Iris  
 English Bluebell

Common Spotted Orchid  
 Heath Spotted Orchid  
 Birdsfoot Trefoil  
 Lesser Stitchwort  
 Silverweed  
 Wild Strawberry  
 Dog Violet

**Sunday – selected species**

Lady's Bedstraw  
 Squinancywort  
 Ivy Broomrape  
 Alexanders  
 Wild Carrot  
 Mouse-ear Hawkweed  
 Dogwood  
 Pale Flax  
 Purging Flax

Common Centaury  
 Early Gentian  
 Wild Thyme  
 Sea Purslane  
 Shrubby Seablite  
 Bee Orchid  
 Southern Marsh Orchid  
 Birdsfoot Trefoil  
 Bush Vetch

Horseshoe Vetch  
 Kidney Vetch  
 Lesser Trefoil  
 Rough Clover  
 Burnet Rose  
 Entire-leaved Cotoneaster  
 Thrift  
 Red Valerian

**Butterflies: 20 species**

Dingy Skipper  
 Large Skipper  
 Grizzled Skipper  
 Green-veined White  
 Small White  
 Wood White  
 Brimstone

Green Hairstreak  
 Common Blue  
 Silver-studded Blue  
 Adonis Blue  
 Small Blue  
 Brown Argus

Marsh Fritillary  
 Red Admiral  
 Small Tortoiseshell  
 Marbled White  
 Small Heath  
 Meadow Brown  
 Speckled Wood

**Moths: 38 species**

Angle Shades  
 Bordered Straw  
 Bright-line Brown-eye  
 Brimstone  
 Brown-line Bright-eye  
 Burnet Companion  
 Cinnabar  
 Common Carpet  
 Common Wainscot  
 Cream-spot Tiger  
 Dark Arches  
 Drinker  
 Heart and Dart

L-album Wainscot  
 Large Yellow Underwing  
 Light Brocade  
 Marbled Minor  
 Mother Shipton  
 Mullein Wave  
 Muslin Moth  
 Poplar Hawk-moth  
 Rustic Shoulder Knot  
 Setaceous Hebrew Character  
 Shears  
 Shoulder-striped Wainscot  
 Shuttle-shaped Dart

Silver Y  
 Six-spot Burnet  
 Small Elephant Hawk-moth  
 Smoky Wainscot  
 Speckled Yellow  
 Square-spot Rustic  
 Thistle Ermine  
 Treble Lines  
 Vine's Rustic  
 White Ermine  
 White-point  
 Willow Beauty

**Dragonflies:**

Beautiful Demoiselle  
 Banded Demoiselle  
 Azure Damselfly  
 Large Red Damselfly  
 Four-spotted Chaser

**Other insects:**

Tawny Cockroach  
 Meadow Grasshopper  
 Garden Chafer  
 Summer Chafer  
 Rove Beetle  
 Nettle Weevil  
 Ichneumon Wasp

**Reptiles/Amphibians:**

Slow-worm  
 Palmate Newt

**Mammals:**

Roe Deer  
 Sika Deer  
 Bunny  
 Field Mouse