

**August 2009**

Although numbers had fallen from the dizzy heights of the last few weeks, the transect walk on a hot and humid 5th still produced 408 butterflies, of which the majority were 91 Gatekeepers. There was a very good total of 76 Common Blues, while 66 Meadow Browns and 59 Large Whites were down on the previous weeks, 'small' skippers were relatively scarce and there were no Marbled Whites. Nevertheless, 10 Brown Argus were recorded and, notably, a Wall Brown was found along the Ancient Highway. 3 Clouded Yellows were on New Downs on the 6th.

Despite overcast conditions on the 12th it was warm and humid and 303 butterflies were recorded on the weekly transect, bringing the total for the year so far to over 4,700, compared to last year's total of just over 3,300. The total included 66 Common Blues, 59 Meadow Browns and 56 Gatekeepers, while 35 Small Heaths was a big improvement on recent weeks and although Painted Ladies had largely moved on, there were still 24 scattered about. On New Downs there were notable counts of 51 Small Heaths and 20 Speckled Woods and, as with the Estate, Red Admirals were a bit more numerous. Another Clouded Yellow was seen on Restharrow on the 14th and on the 17th there were no fewer than 64 Speckled Woods on New Downs, along with 72 Small Heaths and two Wall Browns, of which there were four on the Estate the next day.

279 butterflies were recorded on the transect walk on the 19th, taking this year's transect total beyond 5,000, compared to totals for the whole season of 2,828 in 2007 and 3,310 last year. The total included 61 Small Heaths, 55 Common Blues and 46 Meadow Browns, while a further ten Brown Argus were recorded. Small Heaths were also abundant on New Downs, where 88 were counted on the 25th, and 85 were recorded on the Estate transect walk on the 29th, in a total of 197 butterflies that also included 38 Common Blues and 9 Brown Argus.