

**June 2009**

An early **Large Skipper** was found along Worth track on the 1st, with a slight resurgence of Painted Ladies, of which 30 or so were seen. The first **Meadow Browns** were noted on the 7th and the following day a **Small Skipper** was seen in the Whitehouse, with 3 more Large Skippers; a notable number of a species that is currently rather scarce in the area. Warm weather on the 16th induced an increase in Small Skippers and the appearance of a very early **Marbled White** (photograph below, by Vida Madell) ; only a



day later than our earliest record in 2007, while 5 Large Skippers were also evident. The 18th brought fresh impetus to the Painted Lady influx, with over 70 on New Downs and 81 on the weekly butterfly transect, on which there was also a freshly-emerged Small Copper. There was also a welcome increase in numbers of Small Tortoiseshells, of which more than 55 were seen on the Estate, Worth and New Downs; the best numbers for several years, and at least 6 Small Coppers and a freshly-emerged Comma were on the Estate on the 22nd, as numbers of skippers neared three figures.

The weekly transect walk on the 25th resulted in a total of 264 butterflies of 14 species; numbers that have not been evident until a week or two later in the last two years. The main constituents were 101 'small' skippers, 74 Meadow Browns, 27 Marbled Whites and 41 Small Heaths, with everything else - including Painted Lady - in single figures. The butterflies of high summer were in abundance by the 29th, including a record count of at least 250 Marbled Whites on the Estate.