

April 2011

Both **Small** and **Green-veined Whites** were recorded on the 3rd and in warm weather on the 6th at least 33 Peacocks were recorded on Worth, the Estate and New Downs. The first **Speckled Woods** of spring were seen on the Estate and along Worth track on the 7th but the outstanding highlight of this lovely spell of early spring warmth was an **Orange Tip** at the Observatory on the 8th; the earliest ever recorded at the Bay. 2 **Holly Blues** were seen along Worth track on the 11th, a **Painted Lady** was fluttering about at the



Observatory on the 13th and a **Small Copper** was seen on the 15th, equalling the earliest date for this species at the Bay. As the warm spell became summer-like on the 20th another Painted Lady was seen in the Oasis and an influx of Red Admirals was evident, including one that flew along the beach then climbed almost vertically into the sky until lost to sight more than 200 feet above the shore. Red Admirals continued to arrive on the 21st and our first **Large White** of the season appeared in the Elms, but the highlight of the day (and probably of the year) was a **GREEN HAIRSTREAK**, nectaring on rosemary in the Observatory garden. This lovely spring butterfly

was last seen in the recording area when a colony persisted in the gorse at Mary Bax until 1948! (Photo by Ian Hodgson).

The fourth transect walk of the season was notable for the absence of butterflies from the more open, arid

parts of the route; most butterflies being confined to the shadier and still relatively moist sections. The first **Small Heath** was seen on the 27th, only the third year in which it has been seen here for the first time in April, and a **Brown Argus** was seen in the gullies on the 29th; the earliest date for this species at the Bay. The month came to a close with the welcome sight of a **Wall Brown** along the Ancient Highway near the Elms; this species is just about clinging on at the Bay.