

BUTTERFLIES OF NATURE'S WORLD

SKIPPERS

Small Skipper (*Thymelicus sylvestris*): feeds on a range of grasses, with Yorkshire Fog (*Holcus lanatus*) being the main one.

Large Skipper (*Ochlodes sylvanus*): feeds on grasses, mainly Cock's-foot (*Dactylis glomerata*).

Both species of skipper are largely sedentary: it's likely their entire life-cycle takes place within the confines of Nature's World.

WHITES

Large White (*Pieris brassicae*): known to be a garden pest species. Feeding on cultivated brassicas, it will also feed on Nasturtiums.

Small White (*P. rapae*): feeds on a variety of wild brassica species, including Garlic Mustard (*Alliaria petiolata*), it will also feed on Nasturtiums.

Green-veined White (*P. napi*): feeds on a variety of wild brassica species, including Garlic Mustard (*Alliaria petiolata*), Lady's Smock (*Cardamine pratensis*) and Hedge Mustard (*Sisymbrium officinale*), as well as Nasturtiums. Typically found in damper areas.

Orange-tip (*Anthocaris cardamines*): feeds mainly on Lady's Smock and Garlic Mustard. Typically found in damper areas.

All of the whites are highly mobile and able to travel large distances. Numbers of Large and Small Whites are typically boosted each year by immigrants from the Continent.

LYCAENIDS

White-letter Hairstreak (*Satyrrium w-album*): Feeds solely on elm, with Wych Elm (*Ulmus glabra*) being the main species used, but can also breed on English Elm (*U. procera*), and the Dutch Elm Disease-resistant cultivar *U. japonica* Sapporo Autumn Gold. This butterfly is a species of High Conservation Priority, with the main threat being continued outbreaks of Dutch Elm Disease.

Small Copper (*Lycaena phlaeas*): Feeds on Common and Sheep's Sorrell (*Rumex acetosa* and *R. acetosella*).

Brown Argus (*Aricia agestis*): feeds on Dove's-foot Cranesbill (*Geranium molle*) and Common Stork-bill (*Erodium cicutarium*), but may also use Meadow Cranesbill (*G. pratensis*) and Hedge Cranesbill (*G. pyrenaicum*).

Common Blue (*Polyommatus icarus*): feeds mainly on Bird's-foot Trefoil (*Lotus corniculatus*) growing in areas of shorter grass. If the surrounding vegetation is allowed to become overgrown the foodplant may be shaded out and the butterfly disappears.

Holly Blue (*Celastrina argiolus*): two generations a year, with the spring generation (flying in late April-early June) feeding on the flower buds of Holly (*Ilex aquifolium*). These produce a summer

generation (flying in July-August), which feed on flower buds of Ivy (*Hedera helix*). Other shrub species can also be used, including Dogwoods (*Cornus sp.*), Spindles (*Euonymus sp.*) and Snowberry (*Symphoricarpos sp.*). Populations of this species fluctuate cyclically, with numbers increasing for a few years before undergoing a crash. It's thought that this is partially due to a parasitic wasp whose numbers increase with those of the butterfly until it reaches a level where the majority of butterflies are affected. As the butterfly numbers decline, so do those of the wasp, and the cycle begins again.

All these species are fairly mobile and able to colonise new areas where suitable habitat exists. Brown Argus in particular has been spreading northwards for the last couple of decades and colonising new sites.

VANESSIDS

Red Admiral (*Vanessa atalanta*): feeds on Stinging Nettle (*Urtica dioica*)

Painted Lady (*V. cardui*): feeds on Thistles (*Cirsium sp.*)

Small Tortoiseshell (*Aglais urticae*): feeds on Stinging Nettle.

Comma (*Polytonia c-album*): feeds on Stinging Nettle and Wych Elm

Peacock (*Inachis io*): feeds on Stinging Nettle.

All of these species are highly mobile and can travel large distances, with Painted Ladies capable of flying here from North Africa. Numbers of Red Admiral, and to a lesser extent Small Tortoiseshell are also boosted each year by immigrants from the Continent.

BROWNS

Speckled Wood (*Pararge aegeria*): feeds on a wide range of common grasses growing in dappled shade along paths, rides, and woodland edges. Regularly seen in parks and gardens.

Ringlet (*Aphantopus hyperantus*): feeds on a range of grasses growing in damper areas and woodland rides or clearings. Numbers often decline in drought years.

Both these species are mobile and have been increasing their ranges, quite spectacularly so in the case of Speckled Wood which has increased its range by 31% since the 1970s.