

Adventures of a Butterfly Spotter

This was the title of the talk given to Berwick Wildlife Group at its first indoor meeting of the session on 10th November. The speaker was Jaci Beaven who is a very active member of Butterfly Conservation. Since Berwick Wildlife Group conducts regular butterfly surveys throughout the summer, and has done since 2006, this was a topic of particular interest.

Jaci began by tracing the history of Butterfly Conservation and then talked about "what she does in the summer", illustrating her talk with excellent photos of many different species of butterfly. She began looking for butterflies in Buckinghamshire, and her experience has been different since she came to live in Alnwick. Many of the species she saw down south have not made their way as far as Northumberland, although she explained that some of them are now scarce in the south and are appearing up here, presumably as a result of climate change. Two of these are the Speckled Wood and Holly Blue. There is now an established colony of Speckled Wood in Detchant Wood and they have been seen near Eyemouth, near Holburn and once on the New Road. The group has as yet no records of Holly Blue in the area, but we would be delighted to hear of any. They are a similar bright sky blue to the male Common Blue on the upper surface of the wing, but have no orange markings and just small un-ringed black spots below. During discussion it emerged that a member of the audience had twice seen Brimstone butterflies in Berwick, another southern species newly appearing in our area. If you see these or any other unusual species please send an e-mail with date and location to mail3@berwickwildlifegroup.org.uk or phone the number below.

Molly Hardie