

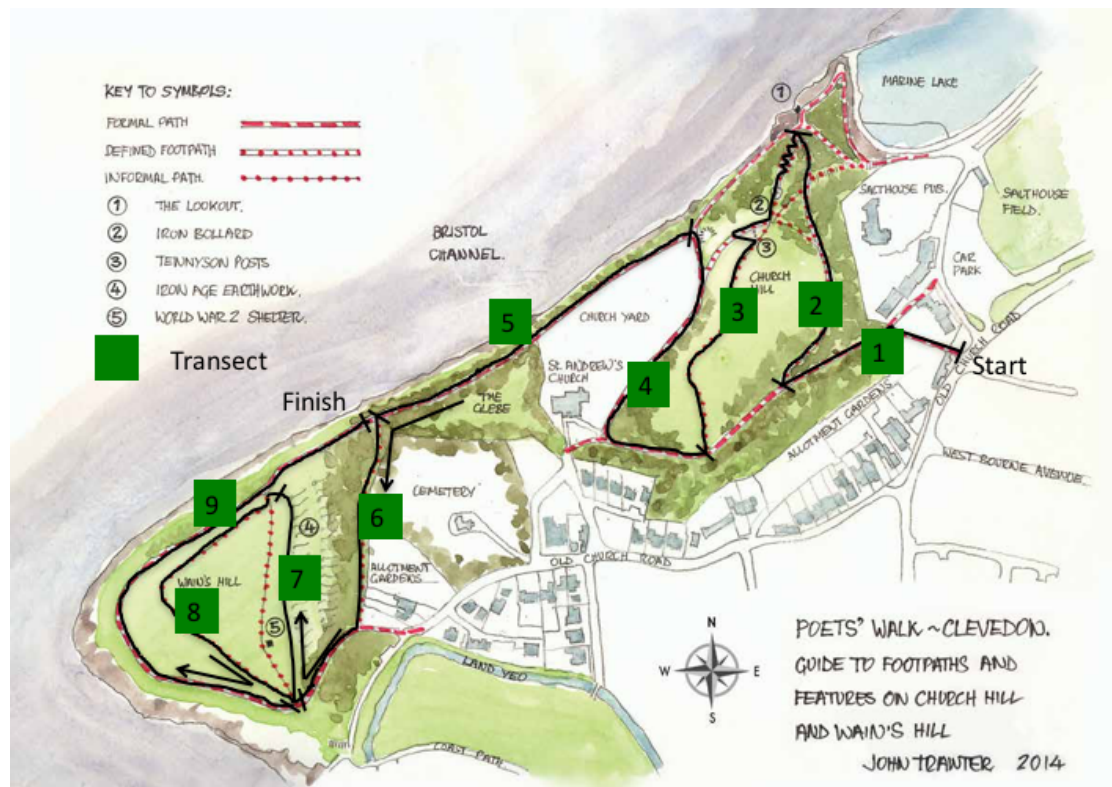
Church Hill and Wains Hill Butterfly Transect 2019

1. Introduction

So, we have completed our fourth year of monitoring on Church Hill and Wains Hill and now have some interesting comparisons to make about the butterfly population locally.

Many thanks again to all who contributed again this year and helped to create the record for the transect on Poets' Walk. Angela Slotte, Sue Batchelor, Catherine Bennett and myself have seen a good year in terms of butterfly numbers with some species making a comeback to our area and in particular the Painted Lady. Well done again everyone.

Church Hill and Wains Hill Transect Sections



2. *Headline Data*

Annual Comparison

This year we recorded a total of 1990 butterflies as compared to 1754 last year.

Chart 1 Annual Comparison

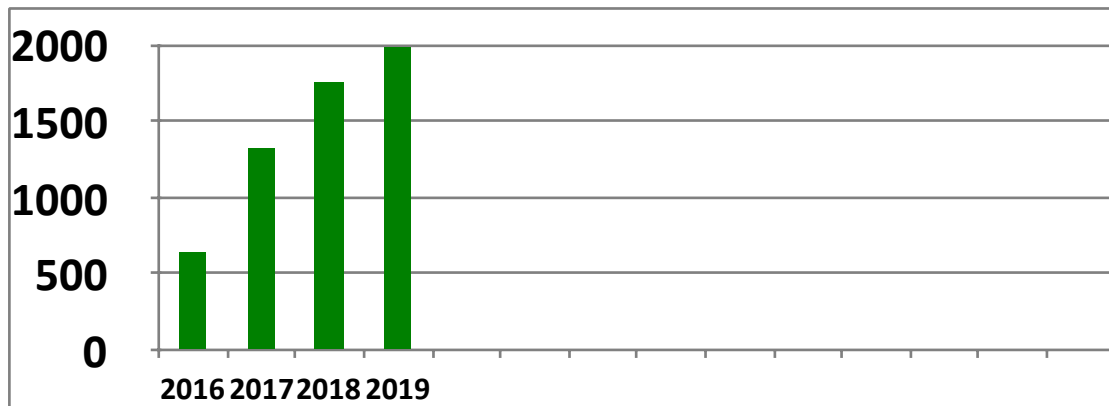
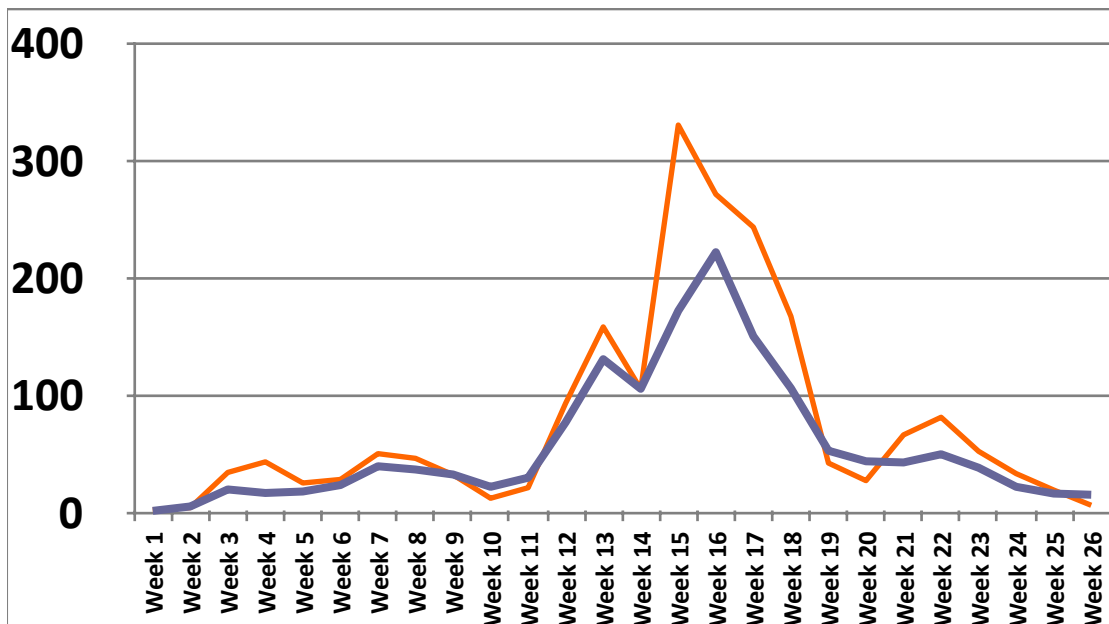


Chart 2 – 2019 Weekly Actuals v Average



2019 

Number of Species and Totals

	2016	2017	2018	2019	Winners and Losers
Gatekeeper	52	71	47	165	
Speckled Wood	39	120	141	142	
Common Blue	12	48	54	78	
Marbled White	30	41	5	76	
Ringlet	19	9	0	49	
Red Admiral	15	57	14	40	
Holly Blue	11	9	3	24	
Painted Lady	10	5	0	20	
Brimstone	6	8	2	15	
Small Copper	2	28	9	14	
Peacock	3	10	2	12	
Small Skipper	0	10	3	4	
Brown Argus	0	0	0	3	
Meadow Brown	129	427	643	627	
Small White	153	192	546	376	
Large White	115	240	231	197	
Orange Tip	8	23	27	4	
Silver Washed Fritillary	0	2	2	1	
Comma	2	18	6	1	
GV White	11	2	14	0	
Small Tort	8	2	5	5	
Small Heath	5	0	0	0	
Wall	4	0	0	0	
Essex Skipper	3	0	0	0	
Dingy Skipper	2	0	0	0	
Clouded Yellow	0	1	0	0	
Grizzled Skipper	0	0	0	0	
Large Skipper	0	0	0	0	
Green Hairstreak	0	0	0	0	
Small Blue	0	0	0	0	
Small Pearl Bordered	0	0	0	0	
Dark Green Fritillary	0	0	0	0	
Grayling	0	0	0	0	

A total of 20 species were recorded this year, compared to 18 last year. The big winners this year were Gatekeeper, Common Blue, Marbled White and Ringlet with the big success story being Painted Lady. The eagle eyed amongst you may notice that

the total numbers shown here differ from the annual total shown for this year, 1853 compared to 1990. This is because we were unable to record every week, therefore I used the yearly average for the weeks concerned to fill the gaps in the record

Section Totals

The transect is nine sections long, with a mixture of allotment gardens, woodland and coastal pathways and open grassland. The following chart shows a comparison between numbers from 2016 to 2019.

Chart 3 – Section Totals and Comparison



The Painted Lady

The incredible inter-continental migrant the Painted Lady has had an excellent year spreading from Africa and the Sahara Desert to Northern Europe with their offspring making the return journey to avoid the winter cold. Large numbers arrived in mid and late June producing a new home grown generation that emerged during the national Big Butterfly Count. We saw many on Poets' Walk and Wain's Hill and recorded 20 on our transects although I think this did not reflect the number seen in general on the hill. A particularly spectacular moment was during the rebuild of the walls around the Battery when a swarm of Painted Lady were seen. Interestingly this section is not on the transect route.

Nationally a total of 420,000 Painted Lady were seen during the Big Butterfly Count, an increase of 2498% over the previous year. Amazing!

Summary

It has been a spectacular year for the butterfly numbers on our transect. We can clearly see that the weather in the early part of the year clearly influenced the numbers and also perhaps the re-appearance of some species. The management of the grassland on Wain's Hill has changed slightly with the bank on section 7 being cut less often and perhaps this had an effect also.

We can definitely see a pattern emerging on our transect that reflects not only weather but the emergence of two broods during the year and it remains the case that we do not appear to have any of the more unusual species on our patch. I personally think this is influenced by the proximity to the sea and perhaps the more windy conditions we experience around Poets' Walk.

Best Regards
Bill Thompson