

Butterflies at the Pinetum



Red Admiral

March – October

Originating from North Africa or continental Europe this butterfly visits Britain during the Spring and Summer but a small resident group exists in Southern England. It loves to feast on rotting fruit in the Autumn.



White Admiral

Mid June to Mid August

A large, graceful butterfly with a gliding flight which favours conifer plantations and pine forests. Black, with white bands. Seen in areas of the Pinetum edging the Forest. Has dramatically declined in the last 20 years.



Common Blue

May – October

Whilst the male of this species is a vivid violet blue, confusingly, the female is brown.



Holly Blue

March – August

A small pale blue butterfly which frequents holly in Spring and ivy in Summer.



Brimstone

March – August

The male Brimstone's bright yellow upperwings are possibly where the word butterfly derives from. It lives longer than any other butterfly in Britain, often surviving a full year.



Meadow Brown

Late May – September

One of our most abundant butterflies, Meadow Browns will rise up in large numbers as you walk through the long grass in the Pinetum during the Summer.



Comma

March – August

A small white c or comma on the underside gives this butterfly its name. It is easily identified by its ragged wing shape. The decline of hop fields in the past might have led to a decline in numbers but, unlike most butterflies, its population levels are on the increase nowadays.



Small Copper

May – October

Another small butterfly which loves to bask on the shorter grass and bare ground within the Pinetum. Aggressive and territorial by nature, it will give chase to passing insects.



Dark Green Fritillary

July

A powerful flyer, this brown and orange butterfly is in decline in Southern and Eastern England and is therefore a regional Butterfly Conservation priority.



Silver Washed Fritillary

June – September

A large, graceful butterfly which can be seen swooping amongst the wild flower meadows in the Pinetum. It is also found in the neighbouring Forest, where it breeds.

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Gatekeeper

July – September

Also known as Hedge Brown it is often found in hedgerows along with Meadow Browns and Ringlets.



Green Hairstreak

March - June

Although the underside shows a vivid green colour at rest, this butterfly looks like a flash of silver as rival males engage in spiralling dog-fights.



Small Heath

April - September

Found in Churchill's Wood this small orange and brown butterfly always rests with its wings closed. The underside of its forewing has an eyespot at the tip. Although widespread, its population is in decline and is therefore a Butterfly Conservation priority species.



Orange Tip

March – June

Orange Tips prefer damp places, often seen at the edge of streams or rivers. The male has unmistakable orange tipped wings to warn off predators. Its caterpillars are cannibalistic, so the mother must lay just one egg on each plant to stop them eating one another when they hatch.



Painted Lady

June – August

As a long distance migrant, this butterfly visits Britain in summer from North Africa, the Middle East or Central Asia, occasionally in huge numbers, as in 2009. Over the summer they breed and once the Autumn comes their children and grand-children set off for the long journey home, sometimes catching a high jet stream to help them on their way.



Peacock

March – October

The Peacock's name derives from its eyespots, which evolved to scare predators. It hibernates over winter so is often seen on warm early Spring days in the Pinetum.



Ringlet

Mid June – Late August

The Ringlet is very easily confused with the male Meadow Brown. This common, dark brown butterfly has a row of little circles on the underwings. It loves to feast on bramble.



Dingy Skipper

April – June

Emerging a couple of weeks after the Grizzled Skipper, this small brown butterfly can easily be mistaken for a moth. A good way of telling the difference between butterflies and moths is to check the antennae. Butterfly antennae end in a club or ball shape, moths do not. This is another priority butterfly which is in decline.



Grizzled Skipper

April - June

Another priority Butterfly Conservation species, this butterfly was spotted in the Pinetum in 2014, the first record in this part of Kent for over 30 years. It basks on patches of bare ground with its wings spread wide open.

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Small and Large Skippers

June – August

Seen in the long grass meadows of the Pinetum, these are orange brown butterflies of high summer with an energetic darting flight. They bask with their wings held half open.



Small Tortoiseshell

March - October

Population levels have both risen and fallen over the past few decades.

It overwinters in hibernation and so is one of the first butterflies to be found in the Spring.



Small and Large White

March – October

Often referred to as Cabbage Whites, their caterpillars have a fondness for the leaves of cabbages. Widespread throughout the Pinetum and an enemy of gardeners.



Speckled Wood

February – October

Found in Churchill's Wood, the clue is in the name, this butterfly is common and widespread in shady woodlands.



Clouded Yellow

July – August

Another migrant to our shores, occasionally in massive numbers known as Clouded Yellow Years. It has been seen close to the Bedgebury cafe and lake during July and August. Greenish yellow with two silver white spots on the wings.

Anna Picken – September 2016