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A Lepidoptera Report from Bulgaria

Peter Eeles and Tim Norriss

with photos by Richard Coomber, Peter Eeles, Gordon Hopkins, Tim Norriss and Mike Wall.

This report details the butterflies, moths and other wildlife observed on a trip made to Bulgaria from 1st July to 8th July 2007. The 8 members of the party were Gordon Hopkins, Juliet Bloss, Mary Talbot, Mike Wall, Peter Davey, Peter Eeles, Richard Coomber and Tim Norriss.

The tour was organised through the British-Bulgarian Friendship Society (BBFS, www.bbfs.org.uk) and was led by Assen Ignatov.

The Route

Each site we visited is identified with a letter (A through U). Our route, with the various sites overlaid, is shown below. The route started and ended at Sofia, the most northerly point of the route.



Details of each of the sites in this report are as follows:

Day	Ref.	Region	Visiting	Overnight
1	A	Struma valley	Gas station near Dupnica	Dobarsko
2	B	Pirin	Dobriniste	
	C	Pirin	Gotse Delcev hut in Dobriniste	
3	D	Pirin	Bunderitsa hut	
	E	Pirin	Izvorite hotel in Bansko	
4	F	Pirin	Predala Pass	Melnik
	G	Pirin	Tissata Reserve, Kresna Gorge	
	H	Pirin	Dry river valley between Melnik & Harsovo	
5	I	Pirin	Melnik - steppe grassland	
	J	Slavianca	Slavianka mountain	
	K	Struma valley	Near Chuchuligovo	
	L	Struma valley	Rupite	
6	M	Struma valley	Petric	Trigrad
	N	Belasica	Belasica Mountain	
	O	Pirin	Rozhen	
	P	Pirin	Melnik meadows	
7	Q	Pirin	Gorno Spancevo	Trigrad
	R	Pirin	Pirin	
	S	Rhodopi	Satovca	
	T	Rhodopi	Trigrad	
8	U	Rhodopi	Trigrad	

Sunday 1st July

Most of the day was spent getting from the UK to Bulgaria's capital, Sofia, and then south travelling to Bansko, a well-known ski resort, where we were to spend 3 nights. Scarce Swallowtail (*Iphiclides podalirius*) and Clouded Yellow (*Colias croceus*) were spotted from the bus as we made our way south. We stopped off at a petrol station between Sofia and Bansko and took the opportunity to explore a very small patch of wasteland which had small numbers of Small Heath (*Coenonympha pamphilus*) and Marbled White (*Melanargia galathea*), together with a single specimen of both Purple-shot Copper (*Lycaena alciphron*) and Lesser Fiery Copper (*Lycaena thersamon*). Tawny Wave (*Scopula rubiginata*), Crested Lark and several Red-rumped Swallows were also seen here.



Purple-shot Copper (*Lycaena alciphron*)

Photo © Peter Eeles

We eventually arrived at our accommodation in Dobarsko, about 15km from Bansko.



The lane beside the hotel

Photo © Gordon Hopkins



View from the hotel balcony, with the Pirin Mountains in the distance

Photo © Peter Eeles

Butterfly Day Listing

Site A - Gas station near Dupnica

Papilionidae (swallowtails)		
Scarce Swallowtail	<i>Iphiclides podalirius</i>	1
Pieridae (whites)		
Clouded Yellow	<i>Colias croceus</i>	1
Lycaenidae (hairstreaks, coppers and blues)		
Lesser Fiery Copper	<i>Lycaena thersamon</i>	1
Purple-shot Copper	<i>Lycaena alciphron</i>	1
Nymphalidae (browns)		
Marbled White	<i>Melanargia galathea</i>	2
Small Heath	<i>Coenonympha pamphilus</i>	2
Total species		6

In this report, first sightings are shaded green in each table, the letters O, L and P refer to Ovum, Larva and Pupa, respectively. "sp." refers to a "species" of butterfly where the actual species could not be determined - such as a "fly by" of "an" Orange-tip species.

Monday 2nd July

An early morning walk before breakfast produced a single Large Tortoiseshell (*Nymphalis polychloros*) in a nearby orchard, together with several Tree Sparrows, Red-backed Shrike, Hawfinch and Eastern Bonelli's Warbler. For our first full day we visited Dobriniste, in the foothills of the nearby Pirin Mountains. Our first stop was actually on the side of the road!



Site B

Photo © Gordon Hopkins

Not expecting anything particularly spectacular, we were immediately proved wrong with sightings of several Arran Brown (*Erebia ligea*), a species that has historically been recorded in the UK, from where it gets its vernacular name (*the Isle of Arran*).



Arran Brown (*Erebia ligea*)

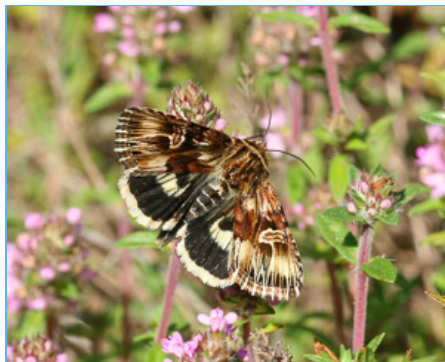
Photo © Peter Eeles

A black and yellow ascalaphid (*Ascalaphus macaronius*) was flying in the warm sunshine and *Actinotia radiosa* was watched nectaring on marjoram. Bright Wave (*Idaea ochrata*) was also seen.



Ascalaphus macaronius

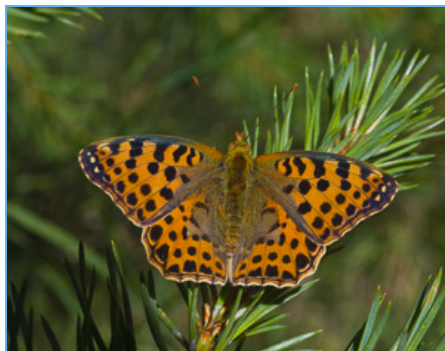
Photo © Tim Norriss



Actinotia radiosa

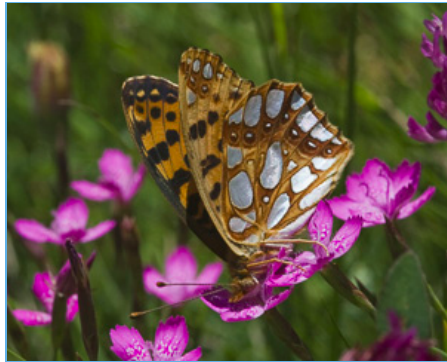
Photo © Tim Norriss

Good numbers of Silver-studded Blue (*Plebeius argus*) were also flying along the roadside. A little further up the road we had occasional sightings of Black-veined White (*Aporia crataegi*), and single sightings of High Brown Fritillary (*Argynnis adippe*) and Queen of Spain Fritillary (*Issoria lathonia*). As is to be expected in many areas in Europe, one of the commonest species seen was the Heath Fritillary (*Melitaea athalia*), quite a rarity back home where it is at the limit of its range. A single Large Blue (*Glaucopsyche arion*) was also seen flying along the rocky verges.



Queen of Spain Fritillary (*Issoria lathonia*)

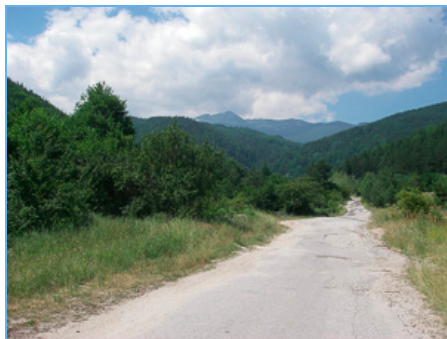
Photo © Peter Eeles



Queen of Spain Fritillary (*Issoria lathonia*)

Photo © Peter Eeles

After our encounters with several other species, we returned back to the bus and made our way further up the road to an absolutely exquisite establishment, in the middle of nowhere, where we were eventually to spend lunch. Surely one of the most remote "restaurants" on the planet! But first, we had an hour or so to explore the surrounding area. As the last of us was leaving the bus, a male Purple Emperor (*Apatura iris*) decided to enter the bus, do a couple of circuits, and then fly out again! It turned out that there were several individuals flying around, but none settling in range for good photo opportunities. The nearby area was quite varied, with patches of bare earth surrounded by lush vegetation fed by water running down from the hills, making some of the area quite soggy under foot.



Site B

Photo © Gordon Hopkins

There were good numbers of Black-veined White (*Aporia crataegi*), including one seen laying on a blackthorn bush. We saw several hairstreak flying around which turned out to be Sloe Hairstreak (*Satyrium acaciae*) and several Feathered Footman of both sexes were disturbed from the grass as we walked along. The highlight, however, was the sighting of a single Yellow-banded Skipper (*Pyrgus sidae*), one of the specialties in the area and that has a distinctive underside.



Black-veined White (*Aporia crataegi*)

Photo © Peter Eeles



Sloe Hairstreak (*Satyrium acaciae*)

Photo © Peter Eeles



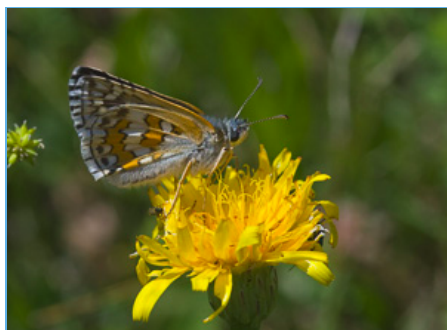
Feathered Footman (*Coscinia striata*) - male

Photo © Tim Norriss



Yellow-banded Skipper (*Pyrgus sidae*)

Photo © Peter Eeles



Yellow-banded Skipper (*Pyrgus sidae*)

Photo © Peter Eeles

Several Amanda's Blue (*Plebeius Amanda*) were seen taking up salts from muddy pools of water, and we also saw several Balkan Copper (*Lycaena candens*), Scarce Copper (*Lycaena virgaureae*), Great Banded Grayling (*Hipparchia circe*), Pearly Heath (*Coenonympha arcania*),

Wood White (*Leptidea sinapis*) and Mazarine Blue (*Plebeius semiargus*).



Scarce Copper (*Lycaena virgaureae*)

Photo © Peter Eeles



Pearly Heath (*Coenonympha arcania*)

Photo © Peter Eeles

Singletons of several species were also seen, including Marbled Skipper (*Carcharodus lavatherae*), Tufted Marbled Skipper (*Carcharodus flocciferus*), Sooty Copper (*Lycaena tityrus*), Lesser Marbled Fritillary (*Argynnis ino*), Lesser Spotted Fritillary (*Melitaea trivia*), Chestnut Heath (*Coenonympha glycerion*) and Large Wall Brown (*Pararge maera*). A Cicada was also found and photographed.



Chestnut Heath (*Coenonympha glycerion*)

Photo © Peter Eeles



Large Wall Brown (*Pararge maera*)

Photo © Peter Eeles

We then had lunch in the "restaurant" which was a very unusual experience. Aside from the occasional sighting of Purple Emperor (*Apatura*

iris), and a Small Copper (*Lycaena phlaeas*) which was egg-laying on some sorrel growing next to one of the seats, we also got to choose our lunch. This entailed pointing out the particular fish we would like our hosts to catch from their lake. It was subsequently grilled and served up with salad! It turned out that this establishment was a fish farm, made up of a series of pools which were fed from large pipes that were protruding from the mountain side.



The fish farm
Photo © Peter Eeles



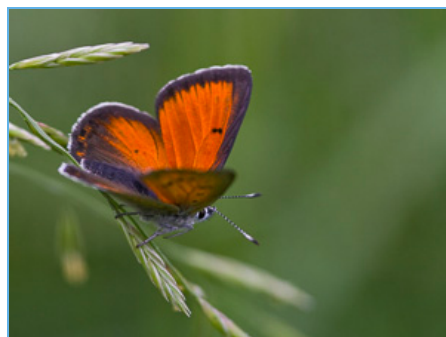
Grabbing lunch!
Photo © Gordon Hopkins

After lunch we moved on to an area know as the "Gotse Delcev hut" in Dobriniste. This site contained very lush meadows with plenty of wild flowers protruding from the tall grasses that were growing.



Gotse Delcev hut
Photo © Peter Eeles

Here we came across a large colony of Balkan Copper (*Lycaena candens*) including an aberration that was as much white as copper!



Balkan Copper (*Lycaena candens*) male
Photo © Peter Eeles



Balkan Copper (*Lycaena candens*) female
Photo © Peter Eeles

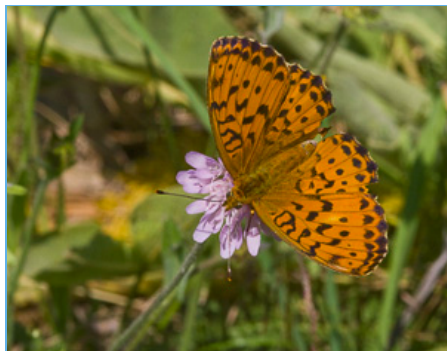


Balkan Copper (*Lycaena candens*) male aberration
Photo © Peter Eeles

We also had our first encounters with several species, including Large Grizzled Skipper (*Pyrgus alveus*), Northern Brown Argus (*Plebeius artaxerxes*), Knapweed Fritillary (*Melitaea phoebe*), Marbled Fritillary (*Argynnis daphne*), Poplar Admiral (*Limenitis populi*), Small Pearl-bordered Fritillary (*Boloria selene*) and Weaver's Fritillary (*Boloria dia*).



Large Grizzled Skipper (*Pyrgus alveus*)
Photo © Peter Eeles



Marbled Fritillary (*Argynnis daphne*)
Photo © Peter Eeles

Butterfly Day Listing

Site B - Dobriniste
Site C - Gotse Delcev hut in Dobriniste
* near Hotel

		B	C
Hesperiidae (skippers)			
Dingy Skipper	<i>Erynnis tages</i>	1	
Large Grizzled Skipper	<i>Pyrgus alveus</i>		1
Large Skipper	<i>Ochlodes sylvanus</i>	5+	
Marbled Skipper	<i>Carcharodus lavatherae</i>	1	
Small Skipper	<i>Thymelicus sylvestris</i>	10+	30+
Tufted Marbled Skipper	<i>Carcharodus flocciferus</i>	1	
Yellow-banded Skipper	<i>Pyrgus sidae</i>	1	
Pieridae (whites)			
Black-veined white	<i>Aporia crataegi</i>	5	10
Clouded Yellow	<i>Colias croceus</i>	4	7
Orange Tip	<i>Euchloe cardamines</i>	1 (sp.)	
Small White	<i>Pieris rapae</i>		1
Wood White	<i>Leptidea sinapis</i>	2	5
Lycaenidae (hairstreaks, coppers and blues)			
Amanda's Blue	<i>Plebeius amanda</i>	10+	
Balkan Copper	<i>Lycaena candens</i>	5	100+
Brown Argus	<i>Plebeius agestis</i>	2	
Common Blue	<i>Plebeius icarus</i>		8
Holly Blue	<i>Celastrina argiolus</i>	1	
Large Blue	<i>Glaucopsyche arion</i>	1	
Mazarine Blue	<i>Plebeius semiargus</i>	2	
Northern Brown Argus	<i>Plebeius artaxerxes</i>		1
Scarce Copper	<i>Lycaena virgaureae</i>	20+	
Short-tailed Blue	<i>Cupido argiades</i>		
Silver-studded Blue	<i>Plebeius argus</i>	10+	20+
Sloe Hairstreak	<i>Satyrium acaciae</i>	10+	
Small Copper	<i>Lycaena phlaeas</i>		5
Sooty Copper	<i>Lycaena tityrus</i>	1	
Nymphalidae (nymphalids and fritillaries)			
Comma	<i>Nymphalis c-album</i>	1	
Dark Green Fritillary	<i>Argynnis aglaja</i>	2	
Heath Fritillary	<i>Melitaea athalia</i>	25+	
High Brown Fritillary	<i>Argynnis adippe</i>	1	
Knapweed Fritillary	<i>Melitaea phoebe</i>		3
Large Tortoiseshell	<i>Nymphalis polychloros</i>	1*	
Lesser Marbled Fritillary	<i>Argynnis ino</i>	1	
Lesser Spotted Fritillary	<i>Melitaea trivia</i>	1	
Marbled Fritillary	<i>Argynnis daphne</i>		3
Painted Lady	<i>Vanessa cardui</i>	1	
Poplar Admiral	<i>Limnitis populi</i>		1
Purple Emperor	<i>Apatura iris</i>	2	
Queen of Spain Fritillary	<i>Issoria lathonia</i>	1	
Red Admiral	<i>Vanessa atalanta</i>	1	
Silver-washed Fritillary	<i>Argynnis paphia</i>	1	
Small Pearl-bordered Fritillary	<i>Boloria selene</i>		1
Small Tortoiseshell	<i>Nymphalis urticae</i>		2
Weaver's Fritillary	<i>Boloria dia</i>		7
White Admiral	<i>Limnitis camilla</i>	1 (sp.)	1
Nymphalidae (browns)			
Arran Brown	<i>Erebia ligea</i>	10	5
Chestnut Heath	<i>Coenonympha glycerion</i>	1	
Great Banded Grayling	<i>Hipparchia circe</i>	7	
Large Wall Brown	<i>Pararge maera</i>	1	
Marbled White	<i>Melanargia galathea</i>	100+	
Meadow Brown	<i>Mamiola jurtina</i>	2	7
Pearly Heath	<i>Coenonympha arcania</i>	5	
Ringlet	<i>Aphantopus hyperantus</i>	15+	100+
Small Heath	<i>Coenonympha pamphilus</i>		3

Tuesday 3rd July

We had set two moth traps the previous evening in the garden of our hotel and though the garden comprised mainly of lawn and swimming pool there were still things of interest to see in the morning. About eighty-five species were trapped including Pine-tree Lappet (*Dendrolimus pini*) and Bordered Gothic (*Heliophobus reticulata*) although most were well-known British species. After breakfast we ventured up into the mountains, to Bunderitsa hut. It took us a good while to get there, with the bus taking a seemingly endless series of turns as we wound our way up the mountain. We passed several ski lifts along the way and several dangerous drops off the side of the road, some of which had been discovered judging by the number of abandoned trucks and cars at the bottom of them!



Pine-tree Lappet (*Dendrolimus pini*)

Photo © Tim Norriss



Bordered Gothic (*Heliophobus reticulata*)

Photo © Tim Norriss



Bunderitsa hut

Photo © Gordon Hopkins



Bunderitsa hut

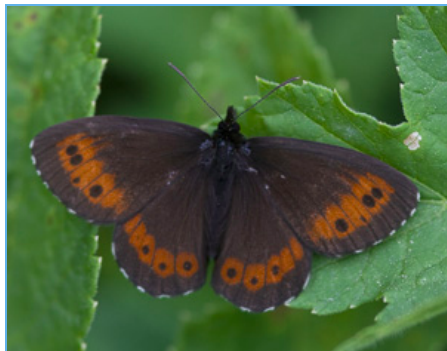
Photo © Peter Eeles

As soon as we had emerged from the van, we were pleasantly pleased to find a Ring Ouzel (*Turdus torquatus*) flying just a small way up the mountain and appearing very tame. Later several Alpine Chough (*Pyrrhocorax graculus*) were seen flying overhead. As we walked along the mountainside, we encountered 2 new ringlet species for us - Ottoman Brassy Ringlet (*Erebia ottomana*) and Large Ringlet (*Erebia euryale*). Telling the various *Erebia* apart was sometimes difficult, but good views of both upperside and underside allowed us to finally identify our find.



Ottoman Brassy Ringlet (*Erebia ottomana*)

Photo © Peter Eeles



Large Ringlet (*Erebia euryale*)

Photo © Peter Eeles

Also in the area of the hut we found a single Turquoise Blue (*Plebeius dorylas*) resting on a flower head. The weather was starting to turn rather inclement by now, with fewer butterflies seen. However, we did get good sightings of Eastern Large Heath (*Coenonympha rhodopensis*).



Eastern Large Heath (*Coenonympha rhodopensis*)

Photo © Peter Eeles

We then walked down the mountain road from the hut, stopping to get refreshments at a café stop that some enterprising soul had set up on one of the bends.



The road down from Bunderitsa hut

Photo © Peter Eeles

While sitting eating lunch we noticed good numbers of butterflies around us - including a sighting of Osiris Blue (*Cupido osiris*). This stop was an absolute magnet for Mazarine Blue (*Plebeius semiargus*). While the individuals we'd seen in the valley were somewhat tatty, I can only assume that the adults flying here had emerged later, possibly due to the cooler climate, and were in absolutely mint condition.



Mazarine Blue (*Plebeius semiargus*) male

Photo © Tim Norriss



Mazarine Blue (*Plebeius semiargus*) female

Photo © Peter Eeles

A short walk after lunch produced several Nutcracker (*Nucifraga caryocatactes*) calling and flying overhead whilst Mike spotted our only clearwings of the trip, a mating pair of what has been tentatively identified as *Chamaesphecia tenthrediniformis*.



Chamaesphecia tenthrediniformis

Photo © Mike Wall

Further down the mountain we stopped at one of the meadows to see what was flying. The change of habitat meant even more new species for the trip. Here we came across some very worn Clouded Apollo (*Parnassius mnemosyne*) together with several Balkan Fritillary (*Boloria graeca*).



Clouded Apollo (*Parnassius mnemosyne*)

Photo © Peter Eeles



Balkan Fritillary (*Boloria graeca*)

Photo © Peter Eeles



Balkan Fritillary (*Boloria graeca*)
Photo © Peter Eeles

Back on the bus, and we were off to our final site for the day - a meadow known for its Mountain Alcon Blue (*Glaucopsyche rebeli*) colony.



A meadow off the Bunderitsa hut road
Photo © Gordon Hopkins

Here we found good numbers of Mountain Alcon Blue (*Glaucopsyche rebeli*) eggs on Cross-leaved Gentian (*Gentiana cruciata*) as well as several worn adults.



Mountain Alcon Blue (*Glaucopsyche rebeli*)
Photo © Peter Eeles

Butterfly Day Listing

Site D - Bunderitsa hut

Site E - Izvorite hotel in Bansko

		D	E
Hesperiidae (skippers)			
Essex Skipper	<i>Thymelicus lineola</i>		2
Large Skipper	<i>Ochlodes sylvanus</i>		3
Small Skipper	<i>Thymelicus sylvestris</i>		15
Papilionidae (swallowtails)			
Clouded Apollo	<i>Parnassius mnemosyne</i>	5	
Pieridae (whites)			
Black-veined white	<i>Aporia crataegi</i>		10
Clouded Yellow	<i>Colias croceus</i>	2	2
Large White	<i>Pieris brassicae</i>		1
Orange Tip	<i>Euchloe cardamines</i>	2 (sp.)	
Wood White	<i>Leptidea sinapis</i>	2	1
Lycaenidae (hairstreaks, coppers and blues)			
Amanda's Blue	<i>Plebeius amanda</i>		1
Balkan Copper	<i>Lycaena candens</i>		5
Common Blue	<i>Plebeius icarus</i>	3	2
Holly Blue	<i>Celastrina argiolus</i>	1	2
Mazarine Blue	<i>Plebeius semargus</i>	50+, ○	20+
Mountain Alcon Blue	<i>Glaucopsyche rebeli</i>		20+, ○
Osiris Blue	<i>Cupido osiris</i>	1	
Scarce Copper	<i>Lycaena virgaureae</i>		1
Silver-studded Blue	<i>Plebeius argus</i>		20+
Small Blue	<i>Cupido minimus</i>		○
Small Copper	<i>Lycaena phlaeas</i>		1
Turquoise Blue	<i>Plebeius dorylas</i>	1	
Nymphalidae (nymphalids and fritillaries)			
Balkan Fritillary	<i>Boloria graeca</i>	5	
Comma	<i>Nymphalis c-album</i>	2	2
Dark Green Fritillary	<i>Argynnis aglaja</i>		1
Heath Fritillary	<i>Melitaea athalia</i>		15
Knapweed Fritillary	<i>Melitaea phoebe</i>		1
Large Tortoiseshell	<i>Nymphalis polychloros</i>		1
Painted Lady	<i>Vanessa cardui</i>	2	
Peacock	<i>Nymphalis io</i>		1
Small Tortoiseshell	<i>Nymphalis urticae</i>	10	
Spotted Fritillary	<i>Melitaea didyma</i>		1
Weaver's Fritillary	<i>Boloria dia</i>		3
White Admiral	<i>Limenitis camilla</i>		1 (sp.)
Nymphalidae (browns)			
Arran Brown	<i>Erebia ligea</i>		3
Ottoman Brassy Ringlet	<i>Erebia ottomana</i>	50+	10+
Eastern Large Heath	<i>Coenonympha rhodopensis</i>	30+	
Large Ringlet	<i>Erebia euryale</i>	5	
Large Wall Brown	<i>Pararge maera</i>	8	2
Marbled White	<i>Melanargia galathea</i>	8	12
Meadow Brown	<i>Maniola jurtina</i>		5
Ringlet	<i>Aphantopus hyperantus</i>	5	10
Small Heath	<i>Coenonympha pamphilus</i>	2	
Wall	<i>Pararge megera</i>	1	
Total species		21	32

Wednesday 4th July

Some of us were up early to look through the moth-traps on our last morning at Dobarsko. About seventy, mainly familiar species, were caught with highlights including Mere Wainscot (*Chortodes fluxa*), Pale-shouldered Cloud (*Chloantha hyperici*), Essex Emerald (*Antonechloris smaragdaria*) and Diasemiopsis ramburialis and the fine Spatalia argentina. Today was spent travelling to Melnik, where we were to spend a few nights, stopping off at various sites along the way. Our first stop was a field next to an old chapel.



Spatalia argentina

Photo © Tim Norriss



Chapel at the Predala Pass

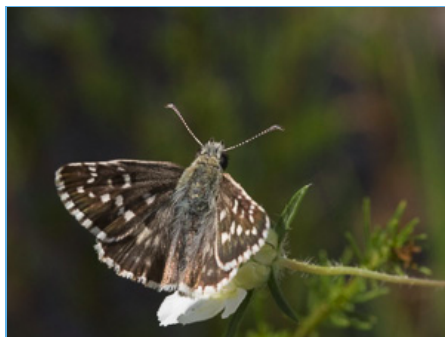
Photo © Gordon Hopkins



Field in the Predala Pass

Photo © Peter Eeles

Here we found several Purple-shot Copper (*Lycaena alciphron*), Scarce Copper (*Lycaena virgaureae*), Silver-studded Blue (*Plebeius argus*), Heath Fritillary (*Melitaea athalia*) and Weaver's Fritillary (*Boloria dia*). We also found a new species for us - Oberthur's Grizzled Skipper (*Pyrgus armoricanus*).



Oberthur's Grizzled Skipper (*Pyrgus armoricanus*)

Photo © Peter Eeles

Our second site for the day was at Tissata Reserve in the Kresna Gorge. We also spent some time "over the road" from the reserve where a crossing over a river led to some nice wooded areas.



Tissata Reserve in the Kresna Gorge

Photo © Peter Eeles



"Over the road" from the Tissata Reserve

Photo © Peter Eeles

The reserve itself had good numbers of Scarce Swallowtail (*Iphiclides podalirius*), Eastern Bath White (*Pieris edusa*) and Southern Small White (*Pieris manii*), all feeding avidly from the various flowers.



Scarce Swallowtail (*Iphiclides podalirius*)

Photo © Peter Eeles



Eastern Bath White (*Pieris edusa*)

Photo © Peter Eeles



Southern Small White (*Pieris manni*)
Photo © Peter Eeles

But the highlight for most of us was seeing our first Little Tiger Blue (*Tarucus balkanicus*), a specialty on the reserve.



Little Tiger Blue (*Tarucus balkanicus*)
Photo © Tim Norriss

Other new species for us included Mallow Skipper (*Carcharodus alceae*) and Eastern Wood White (*Leptidea duponcheli*), distinguished from the Wood White (*Leptidea sinapis*) by the brown tips on the antennae. The previous occupant of a two metre long shed snake skin found by the path wasn't seen.



Mallow Skipper (*Carcharodus alceae*)
Photo © Peter Eeles



Eastern Wood White (*Leptidea duponcheli*)

Photo © Peter Eeles

Several Chapman's Blue (*Plebeius thersites*) and a single Balkan Marbled White (*Melanargia Larissa*) were also found before we crossed over the road to see what we could find in the woodland there. The different habitat came up trumps with different species being seen - our first sightings of both Common Glider (*Neptis sappho*) and Southern White Admiral (*Limenitis reducta*).



Common Glider (*Neptis sappho*)

Photo © Tim Norriss



Southern White Admiral (*Limenitis reducta*)

Photo © Peter Eeles

The distinctive circular pits in the sand formed by antlion larvae were a first for many of us.



Antlion larva

Photo © Mike Wall

Back on the bus and on to our final site for the day - a dry river valley between Harsovo and Melnik. Apart from finding a local tortoise scuttling across the ground, this site also gave us some new butterfly species. Specifically, we had our first sightings of Lulworth Skipper (*Thymelicus acteon*) and Adonis Blue (*Plebeius bellargus*). We also saw good numbers of Clouded Yellow (*Colias croceus*) and Silver-studded Blue (*Plebeius argus*). Small parties of finches and buntings were coming down to drink in the stream and everyone got good views of Hawfinch, Cirl Bunting, Black-headed Bunting and Corn Bunting. A Middle Lace Border (*Scopula decorata*) was also seen and photographed.

We then reached our accommodation in Melnik, a wonderful old village with marble-paved road. Our hotel, which used to be the jail, is sited on the edge of stream which had completely dried up.



Accommodation in Melnik

Photo © Peter Eeles

A search of the surrounding area didn't disappoint - with a new species for the trip - a Meleager's Blue (*Plebeius daphnis*) that has a distinctive scalloped profile on the hindwing.



Meleager's Blue (*Plebeius daphnis*)

Photo © Peter Eeles

In the garden at the rear of the accommodation were various herbs, including fennel, which was host to several Swallowtail (*Papilio machaon*) larvae.



Swallowtail (*Papilio machaon*) larva

Photo © Peter Eeles

Butterfly Day Listing

Site F - Predala Pass

Site G - Tissata Reserve, Kresna Gorge

Site H - Dry river valley between Melnik and Harsovo

* At the accommodation in Melnik

		F	G	H
Hesperiidae (skippers)				
Dingy Skipper	<i>Erynnis tages</i>			1
Large Skipper	<i>Ochlodes sylvanus</i>	1		
Lulworth Skipper	<i>Thymelicus acteon</i>			2
Mallow Skipper	<i>Carcharodus alceae</i>		3	
Oberthur's Grizzled Skipper	<i>Pyrgus armoricanus</i>	1		
Papilionidae (swallowtails)				
Scarce Swallowtail	<i>Iphichides podalirius</i>		7	
Swallowtail	<i>Papilio machaon</i>		2	L*
Pieridae (whites)				
Black-veined white	<i>Aporia crataegi</i>	3	1	
Clouded Yellow	<i>Colias croceus</i>	3	20+	20+
Eastern Bath White	<i>Pieris edusa</i>		30+	
Eastern Wood White	<i>Leptidea duponcheli</i>		5	
Large White	<i>Pieris brassicae</i>		1	
Small White	<i>Pieris rapae</i>		15	
Southern Small White	<i>Pieris mannii</i>		5	
Wood White	<i>Leptidea sinapis</i>		3 (sp.)	2
Lycaenidae (hairstreaks, coppers and blues)				
Adonis Blue	<i>Plebeius bellargus</i>			1
Amanda's Blue	<i>Plebeius amanda</i>		1	
Balkan Copper	<i>Lycaena candens</i>	2		
Chapman's Blue	<i>Plebeius thersites</i>		4	
Common Blue	<i>Plebeius icarus</i>	10+		
Holly Blue	<i>Celastrina argiolus</i>		1	
Little Tiger Blue	<i>Tarucus balkanicus</i>		1	
Mazarine Blue	<i>Plebeius semiargus</i>	5		
Meleager's Blue	<i>Plebeius daphnis</i>			1*
Purple-shot Copper	<i>Lycaena alciphron</i>	5		
Scarce Copper	<i>Lycaena virgaureae</i>	10		
Silver-studded Blue	<i>Plebeius argus</i>	10+		20+
Small Copper	<i>Lycaena phlaeas</i>	2	2	1
Sooty Copper	<i>Lycaena tityrus</i>		7	5
Nymphalidae (nymphalids and fritillaries)				
Comma	<i>Nymphalis c-album</i>			3
Common Glider	<i>Neptis sappho</i>		5	
Heath Fritillary	<i>Melitaea athalia</i>	10		
Lesser Spotted Fritillary	<i>Melitaea trivia</i>		2	2
Painted Lady	<i>Vanessa cardui</i>	1		
Peacock	<i>Nymphalis io</i>		1	
Queen of Spain Fritillary	<i>Issoria lathonia</i>			1
Red Admiral	<i>Vanessa atalanta</i>	1		
Silver-washed Fritillary	<i>Argynnis paphia</i>	1		
Southern White Admiral	<i>Limenitis reducta</i>		7	2
Weaver's Fritillary	<i>Boloria dia</i>	4		
Nymphalidae (browns)				
Balkan Marbled White	<i>Melanargia larissa</i>		1	
Gatekeeper	<i>Maniola tithonus</i>			6
Great Banded Grayling	<i>Hipparchia circe</i>	3	3	
Large Wall Brown	<i>Pararge maera</i>		5	
Marbled White	<i>Melanargia galathea</i>	10		
Meadow Brown	<i>Maniola jurtina</i>	2	3 (sp.)	2
Ringlet	<i>Aphantopus hyperantus</i>	2		
Small Heath	<i>Coenonympha pamphilus</i>	10+	10+	10+
Wall	<i>Pararge megera</i>	1		5
Total species		22	26	18

Thursday 5th July

The only place to put a moth trap at Melnik was in a rather enclosed courtyard garden at the rear, and due to a misunderstanding with the owner the light was switched off in the early hours so the only moths remaining in the morning were a Spotted Sulphur (*Emmelia trabealis*), Sussex Emerald (*Thalera fimbrialis*) and Oak Yellow Underwing (*Catocala nymphagoga*). We set off for the local marble quarry and hadn't gone far when, during a brief stop to scan for birds, a Calandra Lark carrying food, landed a short distance from the bus and then walked to its nest where it unfortunately was hidden from view. A Tawny Pipit was watched song-fighting and Bee-eaters were hunting alongside the bus. We spent the morning at an old marble quarry where the surrounding area was particularly lush, with meadows full of flowers.



Marble Quarry
Photo © Gordon Hopkins

As soon as we emerged from the van we saw a new species for the trip - a Woodland Grayling (*Hipparchia fagi*) basking on a rock. This site was particularly good for various *Colias* species, especially Clouded Yellow (*Colias croceus*) and, a first for us, Berger's Clouded Yellow (*Colias alfacariensis*).



Berger's Clouded Yellow (*Colias alfacariensis*)
Photo © Tim Norriss

Other new species included Grizzled Skipper (*Pyrgus malvae*), Sandy Grizzled Skipper (*Pyrgus cinarae*), Camberwell Beauty (*Nymphalis antiopa*) and Oriental Meadow Brown (*Maniola lupina*). Unfortunately, the Camberwell Beauty was simply a "fly past".



Sandy Grizzled Skipper (*Pyrgus cinarae*)
Photo © Peter Eeles



Oriental Meadow Brown (*Maniola lupina*)

Photo © Peter Eeles

The site also had good numbers of Eastern Wood White (*Leptidea duponcheli*), Silver-studded Blue (*Plebeius argus*), Sloe Hairstreak (*Satyrion acaciae*), Heath Fritillary (*Melitaea athalia*), Lesser Spotted Fritillary (*Melitaea trivia*), Weaver's Fritillary (*Boloria dia*), Marbled White (*Melanargia galathea*) and Meadow Brown (*Maniola jurtina*).

The remainder of the day was focused on the ornithologists in the group. We moved on to a site, near Chuchuligovo, renowned for its colony of Rollers which were seen rather distantly. Butterflies were very thin on the ground, although a couple of Weaver's Fritillary (*Boloria dia*) made a showing.



Near Chuchuligovo

Photo © Gordon Hopkins

We then moved onto a site, at Rupite, where we could watch the bird life and where the locals were relaxing in a natural hot spring. Two Long-legged Buzzards (*Buteo rufinus*) were seen at this site which is remarkable for its Bee-eaters that were nesting in the flat sandy ground next to the path. As far as butterflies were concerned, it was just too windy with the occasional dust storm meaning that most of the cameras were kept firmly in their bags. However, in a sheltered area at the base of one of the hills, a colony of Little Tiger Blue (*Tarucus balkanicus*) was found, making up for a lack of pretty much anything else on the Lepidoptera front.

Butterfly Day Listing

Site J - Slavianca mountain

Site K - Near Chuchuligovo

Site L - Rupite

		J	K	L
Hesperiidae (skippers)				
Dingy Skipper	<i>Erynnis tages</i>	2		
Essex Skipper	<i>Thymelicus lineola</i>	4		
Grizzled Skipper	<i>Pyrgus malvae</i>	2		
Large Grizzled Skipper	<i>Pyrgus alveus</i>	1		
Large Skipper	<i>Ochlodes sylvanus</i>	2		
Mallow Skipper	<i>Carcharodus alceae</i>	1		
Sandy Grizzled Skipper	<i>Pyrgus cinarae</i>	1		
Small Skipper	<i>Thymelicus sylvestris</i>	10+		
Papilionidae (swallowtails)				
Scarce Swallowtail	<i>Iphiclides podalirius</i>	4	1	
Swallowtail	<i>Papilio machaon</i>	1		
Pieridae (whites)				
Berger's Clouded Yellow	<i>Colias alfacariensis</i>	20+		
Brimstone	<i>Gonepteryx rhamni</i>	4		
Clouded Yellow	<i>Colias croceus</i>	50+		
Eastern Bath White	<i>Pieris edusa</i>	10+		
Eastern Wood White	<i>Leptidea duponcheli</i>	10+		
Large White	<i>Pieris brassicae</i>	4		
Small White	<i>Pieris rapae</i>	4		
Wood White	<i>Leptidea sinapis</i>	5		
Lycaenidae (hairstreaks, coppers and blues)				
Adonis Blue	<i>Plebeius bellargus</i>	1		
Amanda's Blue	<i>Plebeius amanda</i>	1		
Balkan Copper	<i>Lycaena candens</i>	1		
Brown Argus	<i>Plebeius agestis</i>	2		
Common Blue	<i>Plebeius icarus</i>	20+		
Holly Blue	<i>Celastrina argiolus</i>	3	2	
Large Blue	<i>Glaucopsyche arion</i>	1		
Little Tiger Blue	<i>Tarucus balkanicus</i>			10+
Purple-shot Copper	<i>Lycaena alciphron</i>	1		
Scarce Copper	<i>Lycaena virgaureae</i>	1		
Silver-studded Blue	<i>Plebeius argus</i>	20+		
Sloe Hairstreak	<i>Satyrium acaciae</i>	10+		
Small Blue	<i>Cupido minimus</i>	1		
Small Copper	<i>Lycaena phlaeas</i>	1		
Sooty Copper	<i>Lycaena tityrus</i>	4		
Nymphalidae (nymphalids and fritillaries)				
Camberwell Beauty	<i>Nymphalis antiopa</i>	1		
Comma	<i>Nymphalis c-album</i>	2		
Dark Green Fritillary	<i>Argynnis aglaja</i>	4		
Heath Fritillary	<i>Melitaea athalia</i>	10+		
Knapweed Fritillary	<i>Melitaea phoebe</i>	2		
Lesser Spotted Fritillary	<i>Melitaea trivia</i>	6		
Marbled Fritillary	<i>Argynnis daphne</i>	2		
Painted Lady	<i>Vanessa cardui</i>	5		
Peacock	<i>Nymphalis io</i>	1		
Red Admiral	<i>Vanessa atalanta</i>	1		
Silver-washed Fritillary	<i>Argynnis paphia</i>	2		
Southern White Admiral	<i>Limenitis reducta</i>	4		
Weaver's Fritillary	<i>Boloria dia</i>	6	2	
Nymphalidae (browns)				
Gatekeeper	<i>Maniola tithonus</i>	10+		
Great Banded Grayling	<i>Hipparchia circe</i>	4		
Marbled White	<i>Melanargia galathea</i>	100+		
Meadow Brown	<i>Maniola jurtina</i>	20+		
Oriental Meadow Brown	<i>Maniola lupina</i>	1		
Pearly Heath	<i>Coenonympha arcania</i>	5		
Ringslet	<i>Anhantonus hyperantus</i>	10+		

Friday 6th July

We managed to keep the moth-trap on all night and there was plenty of interest to photograph in the morning before saying our good-byes to Mary who was leaving us early due to prior commitments. We spent most of our last day in Melnik at Belasica Mountain. This was another site quite high in the mountain, taking us quite some time to get there. A truck that had broken down in front of us, on the single-track road, didn't speed things up!



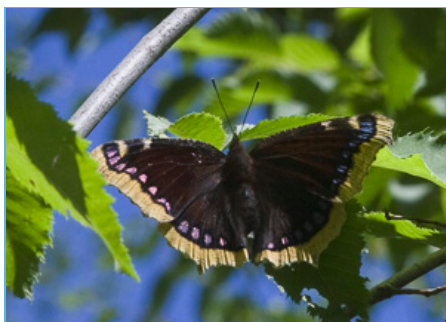
Belasica Mountain
Photo © Peter Eeles

This site was absolutely overrun with Queen of Spain Fritillary, which seemed to be encountered every few yards. Another highlight here was our first sighting of Mountain Small White (*Pieris ergane*). Other species frequently encountered included Wood White (*Leptidea sinapis*) and Green Hairstreak (*Callophrys rubi*).



Wood White (*Leptidea sinapis*)
Photo © Peter Eeles

Further up the mountain we came across our first Map (*Araschnia levana*) for the trip, whose summer brood was just emerging. As we were watching this individual, one of the party noticed a Camberwell Beauty (*Nymphalis antiopa*) in a nearby tree, so all eyes switched to that instead! A little further up the path was the Bulgaria - Greece border. This was the point at which we turned around back to the bus further down the mountain.



Camberwell Beauty (*Nymphalis antiopa*)
Photo © Peter Eeles

The final highlight of the site was encountered within yards of us getting into the bus to leave - a single Nettle-tree Butterfly (*Libythea celtis*), famous for its long "snout", sitting in a tree.



Nettle-tree Butterfly (*Libythea celtis*)

Photo © Peter Eeles

Unfortunately only our guide saw (*and photographed*) the White-backed Woodpecker (*Dendrocopos leucotos*), but a dragonfly, *Ophiogomphus cecilia*, obliged us all on the track on the walk down.



Ophiogomphus cecilia

Photo © Tim Norriss



Ocnieria rubea

Photo © Mike Wall

On our way back to our accommodation we stopped off at a meadow, although it was getting rather late in the day. The entrance to the meadow consisted of several bramble bushes that seemed alive with activity. But another new species for the trip was seen - a White-letter Hairstreak (*Satyrium w-album*). We also had a couple of more sightings of Map (*Araschnia levana*).



White-letter Hairstreak (*Satyrium w-album*)

Photo © Peter Eeles



Supper in the town jail at Melnik

Assen, Tim, Peter E, Mike, Gordon, Richard, Juliet, Peter D, Attila (*our driver*)

Photo © Tim Norriss

Butterfly Day Listing

Site N - Belasica Mountain

Site P - Melnik meadows

		N	P
Hesperiidae (skippers)			
Dingy Skipper	<i>Erynnis tages</i>	2	1
Large Grizzled Skipper	<i>Pyrgus alveus</i>	4	
Large Skipper	<i>Ochlodes sylvanus</i>	2	1
Small Skipper	<i>Thymelicus sylvestris</i>		1
Papilionidae (swallowtails)			
Scarce Swallowtail	<i>Iphiclides podalirius</i>	3	
Pieridae (whites)			
Clouded Yellow	<i>Colias croceus</i>	100+	5
Eastern Bath White	<i>Pieris edusa</i>		2
Eastern Wood White	<i>Leptidea duponcheli</i>	4	
Green-veined White	<i>Pieris napi</i>	4	
Large White	<i>Pieris brassicae</i>	2	
Mountain Small White	<i>Pieris ergane</i>	10	
Wood White	<i>Leptidea sinapis</i>	30+	2
Lycaenidae (hairstreaks, coppers and blues)			
Adonis Blue	<i>Plebeius bellargus</i>		1
Brown Argus	<i>Plebeius agestis</i>	10+	
Common Blue	<i>Plebeius icarus</i>	20+	10+
Green Hairstreak	<i>Callophrys rubi</i>	30+	
Holly Blue	<i>Celastrina argiolus</i>	2	3
Idas Blue	<i>Plebeius idas</i>	5	
Large Blue	<i>Glaucopsyche arion</i>		1
Mazarine Blue	<i>Plebeius semiargus</i>	3	
Meleager's Blue	<i>Plebeius daphnis</i>	1	1
Purple-shot Copper	<i>Lycaena alciphron</i>	2	
Silver-studded Blue	<i>Plebeius argus</i>	20+	10+
Sloe Hairstreak	<i>Satyrium acaciae</i>		2
Small Copper	<i>Lycaena phlaeas</i>	5	
Sooty Copper	<i>Lycaena tityrus</i>	3	1
White-letter Hairstreak	<i>Satyrium w-album</i>		3
Libytheidae (snout butterflies)			
Nettle-tree Butterfly	<i>Libythea celtis</i>	1	
Nymphalidae (nymphalids and fritillaries)			
Camberwell Beauty	<i>Nymphalis antiopa</i>	1	
Comma	<i>Nymphalis c-album</i>	2	4
Map	<i>Araschnia levana</i>	2	2
Marbled Fritillary	<i>Argynnis daphne</i>	5	2
Painted Lady	<i>Vanessa cardui</i>	2	2
Purple Emperor	<i>Apatura iris</i>	2	
Queen of Spain Fritillary	<i>Issoria lathonia</i>	100+	2
Red Admiral	<i>Vanessa atalanta</i>	1	
Silver-washed Fritillary	<i>Argynnis paphia</i>	2	
Spotted Fritillary	<i>Melitaea didyma</i>		3
Nymphalidae (browns)			
Gatekeeper	<i>Maniola tithonus</i>		7
Large Wall Brown	<i>Pararge maera</i>	7	2
Marbled White	<i>Melanargia galathea</i>	50+	15+
Oriental Meadow Brown	<i>Maniola lupina</i>		4
Pearly Heath	<i>Coenonympha arcania</i>	7	
Small Heath	<i>Coenonympha pamphilus</i>	5	10
Speckled Wood	<i>Pararge aegeria</i>	4	3
Wall	<i>Pararge megera</i>	3	2
Total species		37	28

Saturday 7th July

Leaving Melnik behind, we set off towards our last location of the trip at Trigrad. As usual, we made the most of our journey there, stopping

at the side of the road near Pirin. This was quite a mountainous area and, although the land could clearly do with seeing some rain, did have some pockets of greenery. Our first venture took us down a hillside from the road, where a winding path took us to an area where water was visibly running down the hillside. Here we came across a good number of Sooty Copper (*Lycaena tityrus*).



Sooty Copper (*Lycaena tityrus*) male
Photo © Peter Eeles



Sooty Copper (*Lycaena tityrus*) female
Photo © Peter Eeles

A little further along the road we stopped again, this time to look for the Apollo (*Parnassius apollo*) which fly in the area. We weren't disappointed - a single Apollo came floating down from the hillside, over the bus, and then continued further down the hill, disappearing from sight. However, a clearing just off the side of the road that had quite lush vegetation revealed another 6 Apollo, together with good numbers of Silver-washed Fritillary (*Argynnis paphia*) and several Great Banded Grayling (*Hipparchia circe*), including a mating pair.



Apollo (*Parnassius apollo*)
Photo © Peter Eeles



Great Banded Grayling (*Hipparchia circe*)

Photo © Peter Eeles

The steep bank above the road was covered in flowers that were being used by up to fifteen Hummingbird Hawk-moths (*Macroglossum stellatarum*), a Broad-bordered Bee Hawk-moth (*Hemaris fuciformis*) and several Berger's Clouded Yellow (*Colias alfacariensis*). A Geometrician (*Prodotis stolidus*) was disturbed from the vegetation on the opposite side of the road.



Broad-bordered Bee Hawk-moth (*Hemaris fuciformis*)

Photo © Richard Coomber



Geometrician (*Prodotis stolidus*)

Photo © Tim Norriss

We then carried on towards Trigrad and stopped at Satovca to spend some time in an absolutely stunning flower-filled meadow.



Satovca

Photo © Peter Eeles



Satovca

Photo © Gordon Hopkins

This was another excellent site, which included good numbers of Niobe Fritillary (*Argynnis niobe*), Queen of Spain Fritillary (*Issoria lathonia*), Arran Brown (*Erebia ligea*) and Large Ringlet (*Erebia euryale*).



Niobe Fritillary (*Argynnis niobe*)

Photo © Peter Eeles

Between Satovca and Trigrad we pulled over to the side of the road to greet another party that was also on a tour with BBFS, but heading in the opposite direction! As we talked, a Hungarian Glider (*Neptis rivularis*) flew past, giving us another "tick" for the trip.

Our last stop before arriving at our hotel was in the steep Trigrad gorge where we had spectacular views of a pair of Wallcreepers feeding their youngster. The nest was about thirty feet above us on the overhanging rock on the opposite side of the narrow road that we were standing on. The song of the adult male rang out up the valley. What a superb end to the day.



Wallcreeper

Photo © Richard Coomber

We eventually arrived in Trigrad which is set in a valley surrounded by tree-lined mountains.



Trigrad

Photo © Peter Eeles

Butterfly Day Listing

Site R - Pirin

Site S - Satovca

** On road between Satovca and Trigrad

		R	S
Hesperiidae (skippers)			
Dingy Skipper	<i>Erynnis tages</i>	5	
Grizzled Skipper	<i>Pyrgus malvae</i>		2
Large Grizzled Skipper	<i>Pyrgus alveus</i>		1
Large Skipper	<i>Ochlodes sylvanus</i>	2	
Marbled Skipper	<i>Carcharodus lavatherae</i>	1	
Small Skipper	<i>Thymelicus sylvestris</i>	7	3
Papilionidae (swallowtails)			
Apollo	<i>Parnassius apollo</i>	7	
Scarce Swallowtail	<i>Iphiclydes podalirius</i>	2	1
Pieridae (whites)			
Berger's Clouded Yellow	<i>Colias alfacariensis</i>	15	
Black-veined white	<i>Aporia crataegi</i>	1	1
Brimstone	<i>Gonepteryx rhamni</i>		3
Clouded Yellow	<i>Colias croceus</i>	50+	50+
Eastern Bath White	<i>Fieris edusa</i>	2	
Large White	<i>Fieris brassicae</i>	2	
Wood White	<i>Leptidea sinapis</i>	2	8
Lycaenidae (hairstreaks, coppers and blues)			
Adonis Blue	<i>Plebeius bellargus</i>		1
Amanda's Blue	<i>Plebeius amanda</i>		2
Balkan Copper	<i>Lycaena candens</i>		4
Brown Argus	<i>Plebeius agestis</i>	10	
Common Blue	<i>Plebeius icarus</i>		20+
Holly Blue	<i>Celastrina argiolus</i>	2	
Idas Blue	<i>Plebeius idas</i>		2
Mazarine Blue	<i>Plebeius semiargus</i>	2	3
Meleager's Blue	<i>Plebeius daphnis</i>	2	
Purple-shot Copper	<i>Lycaena alciphron</i>		2
Scarce Copper	<i>Lycaena virgaureae</i>		2
Silver-studded Blue	<i>Plebeius argus</i>		20+
Small Copper	<i>Lycaena phlaeas</i>	3	
Sooty Copper	<i>Lycaena tityrus</i>	30+	
Libytheidae (snout butterflies)			
Nettle-tree Butterfly	<i>Libythea celtis</i>	2	1
Nymphalidae (nymphalids and fritillaries)			
Comma	<i>Nymphalis c-album</i>		4
Heath Fritillary	<i>Melitaea athalia</i>	2	8
Hungarian Glider	<i>Neptis rivularis</i>		1**
Knapweed Fritillary	<i>Melitaea phoebe</i>		1
Map	<i>Araschnia levana</i>		1
Marbled Fritillary	<i>Argynnis daphne</i>		5
Niobe Fritillary	<i>Argynnis niobe</i>		7
Painted Lady	<i>Vanessa cardui</i>	4	6
Peacock	<i>Nymphalis io</i>	4	
Queen of Spain Fritillary	<i>Issoria lathonia</i>		20+
Silver-washed Fritillary	<i>Argynnis paphia</i>	8	
Small Tortoiseshell	<i>Nymphalis urticae</i>		1
Southern White Admiral	<i>Limenitis reducta</i>		2
Spotted Fritillary	<i>Melitaea didyma</i>		7
Weaver's Fritillary	<i>Boloria dia</i>		4
Nymphalidae (browns)			
Arran Brown	<i>Erebia ligea</i>		20+
Chestnut Heath	<i>Coenonympha glycerion</i>		10+
Eastern Large Heath	<i>Coenonympha rhodopensis</i>		7
Gatekeeper	<i>Maniola tithonus</i>		5
Grayling	<i>Hipparchia semele</i>	1 (sp.)	
Great Banded Grayling	<i>Hipparchia circe</i>	7	
Large Ringlet	<i>Erebia amata</i>	4	15+

Sunday 8th July

The moth traps were full of interesting things this morning (*certainly the best catch of the week*) including Spurge Hawk-moth *Hyles euphorbiae*, Isle of Wight Wave *Idaea humiliata*, Rhodostrophia *vibicaria*, Netted Pug (*Eupithecia venosata*), Purple Treble-bar (*Aplocera praeformata*) and *Eutelia adulatrix*.



Purple Treble-bar (*Aplocera praeformata*)

Photo © Mike Wall



Eutelia adulatrix

Photo © Mike Wall

The locals also showed great interest in what we had caught overnight and were keen to check our identifications.



Trigrad garden

Photo © Richard Coomber

The morning of our last day was spent walking some of the local mountain paths in Trigrad.



Trigrad

Photo © Peter Eeles

In the short amount of time we had before we had to get going to the airport in Sofia, we encountered a good number of Apollo (*Parnassius apollo*), together with 3 species new to the trip, bringing our total species count to 107. The new species for our list were Geranium Argus (*Plebeius eumedon*), Ripart's Anomalous Blue (*Plebeius ripartii*) and Great Sooty Satyr (*Hipparchia ferula*), rounding off a very memorable week!



Ripart's Anomalous Blue (*Plebeius ripartii*)

Photo © Peter Eeles

As we walked back to bus we noticed a couple collecting hay, with the man of the house directing his wife. Good to see that equality is alive and well in Bulgaria!



Equality in action!

Photo © Peter Eeles

And so ended our trip - and an absolutely marvellous week. I'm sure it won't be long before we all return to this wonderful part of the world while it is still relatively unspoilt.

Butterfly Day Listing

Site U - Trigrad

Hesperiidae (skippers)		
Large Skipper	<i>Ochlodes sylvanus</i>	1
Oberthur's Grizzled Skipper	<i>Pyrgus armoricanus</i>	1
Small Skipper	<i>Thymelicus sylvestris</i>	2
Papilionidae (swallowtails)		
Apollo	<i>Parnassius apollo</i>	8
Scarce Swallowtail	<i>Ipichides podalirius</i>	2
Pieridae (whites)		
Black-veined white	<i>Aporia crataegi</i>	3
Clouded Yellow	<i>Colias croceus</i>	5
Lycaenidae (hairstreaks, coppers and blues)		
Amanda's Blue	<i>Plebeius amanda</i>	1
Geranium Argus	<i>Plebeius eumedon</i>	3
Ripart's Anomalous Blue	<i>Plebeius ripartii</i>	10+
Scarce Copper	<i>Lycaena virgaureae</i>	2
Silver-studded Blue	<i>Plebeius argus</i>	5
Nymphalidae (nymphalids and fritillaries)		
Painted Lady	<i>Vanessa cardui</i>	2
Nymphalidae (browns)		
Great Sooty Satyr	<i>Hipparchia ferula</i>	4
Large Ringlet	<i>Erebia euryale</i>	7
Marbled White	<i>Melanargia galathea</i>	20+
Oriental Meadow Brown	<i>Maniola lupina</i>	4
Woodland Grayling	<i>Hipparchia fagi</i>	3
Total species		18

Appendix A - Summary of Butterfly Species Seen

Hesperiidae (skippers)	
Dingy Skipper	<i>Erynnis tages</i>
Essex Skipper	<i>Thymelicus lineola</i>
Grizzled Skipper	<i>Pyrgus malvae</i>
Large Grizzled Skipper	<i>Pyrgus alveus</i>
Large Skipper	<i>Ochlodes sylvanus</i>
Lulworth Skipper	<i>Thymelicus acteon</i>
Mallow Skipper	<i>Carcharodus alceae</i>
Marbled Skipper	<i>Carcharodus lavatherae</i>
Oberthur's Grizzled Skipper	<i>Pyrgus armoricanus</i>
Sandy Grizzled Skipper	<i>Pyrgus cinarae</i>
Small Skipper	<i>Thymelicus sylvestris</i>
Tufted Marbled Skipper	<i>Carcharodus flocciferus</i>
Yellow-banded Skipper	<i>Pyrgus sidae</i>
Papilionidae (swallowtails)	
Apollo	<i>Parnassius apollo</i>
Clouded Apollo	<i>Parnassius mnemosyne</i>
Scarce Swallowtail	<i>Iphichides podalirius</i>
Swallowtail	<i>Papilio machaon</i>
Pieridae (whites)	
Berger's Clouded Yellow	<i>Colias alfacariensis</i>
Black-veined white	<i>Aporia crataegi</i>
Brimstone	<i>Gonepteryx rhamni</i>
Clouded Yellow	<i>Colias croceus</i>
Eastern Bath White	<i>Pieris edusa</i>
Eastern Wood White	<i>Leptidea duponcheli</i>
Green-veined White	<i>Pieris napi</i>
Large White	<i>Pieris brassicae</i>
Mountain Small White	<i>Pieris ergane</i>
Orange Tip	<i>Euchloe cardamines</i>
Small White	<i>Pieris rapae</i>
Southern Small White	<i>Pieris manni</i>
Wood White	<i>Leptidea sinapis</i>
Lycaenidae (hairstreaks, coppers and blues)	
Adonis Blue	<i>Plebeius bellargus</i>
Amanda's Blue	<i>Plebeius amanda</i>
Balkan Copper	<i>Lycaena candens</i>
Brown Argus	<i>Plebeius agestis</i>
Geranium Argus	<i>Plebeius eumedon</i>
Holly Blue	<i>Celastrina argiolus</i>
Northern Brown Argus	<i>Plebeius artaxerxes</i>
Purple-shot Copper	<i>Lycaena alciphron</i>
Ripart's Anomalous Blue	<i>Plebeius ripartii</i>
Scarce Copper	<i>Lycaena virgaureae</i>
Silver-studded Blue	<i>Plebeius argus</i>
Sloe Hairstreak	<i>Satyrium acaciae</i>
Small Blue	<i>Cupido minimus</i>
Small Copper	<i>Lycaena phlaeas</i>
Sooty Copper	<i>Lycaena tityrus</i>
Turquoise Blue	<i>Plebeius dorylas</i>
White-letter Hairstreak	<i>Satyrium w-album</i>
Libytheidae (snout butterflies)	
Nettle-tree Butterfly	<i>Libythea celtis</i>
Nymphalidae (nymphalids and fritillaries)	
Balkan Fritillary	<i>Eoloria graeca</i>
Camberwell Beauty	<i>Nymphalis antiopa</i>
Comma	<i>Nymphalis c-album</i>
Common Glider	<i>Neptis sappho</i>
Dark Green Fritillary	<i>Argynnis aglaja</i>
Heath Fritillary	<i>Melitaea athalia</i>

