

17 June 2009

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A Lepidoptera Report from Italy

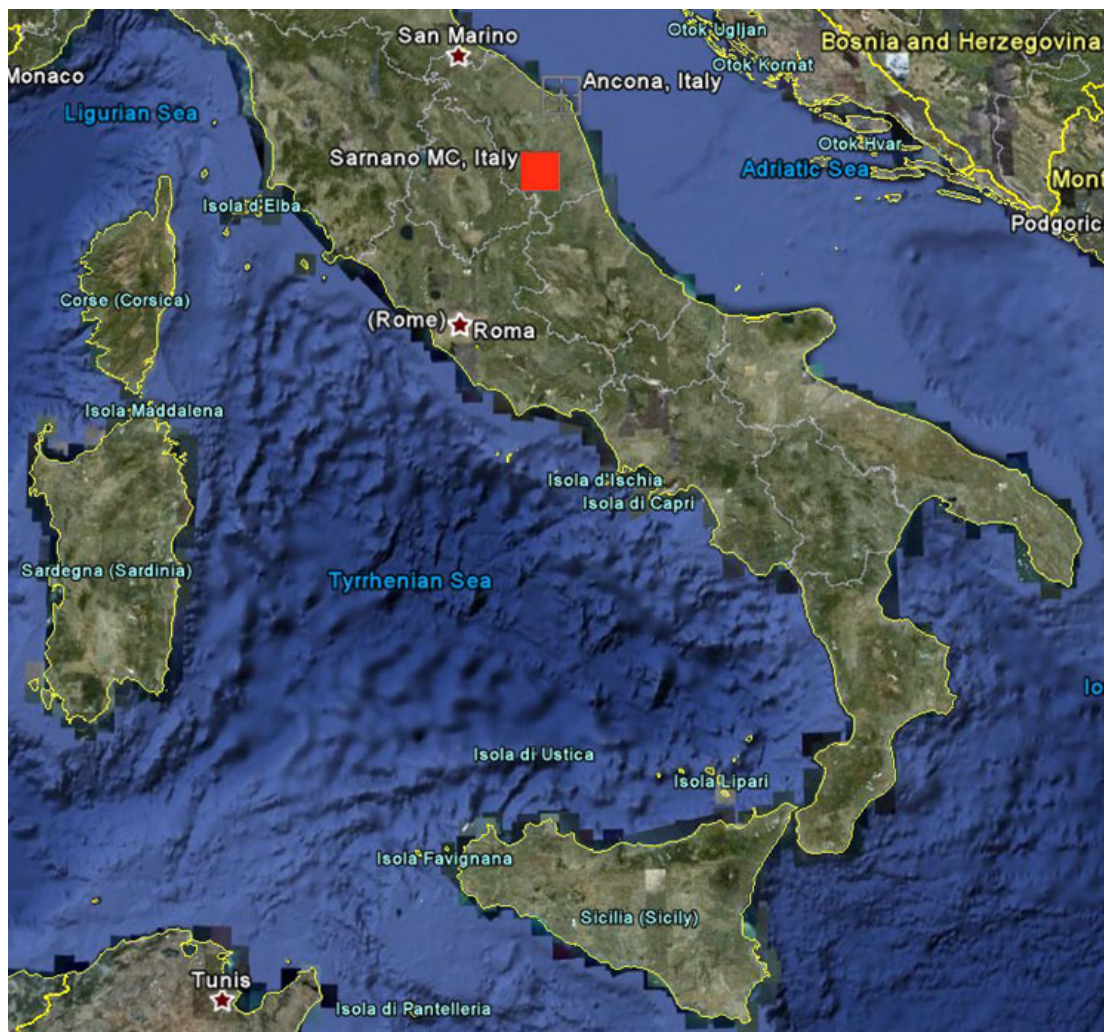
Peter Eeles and Peter Davey

with photos by Dave Green, Peter Eeles and Chris Manley.

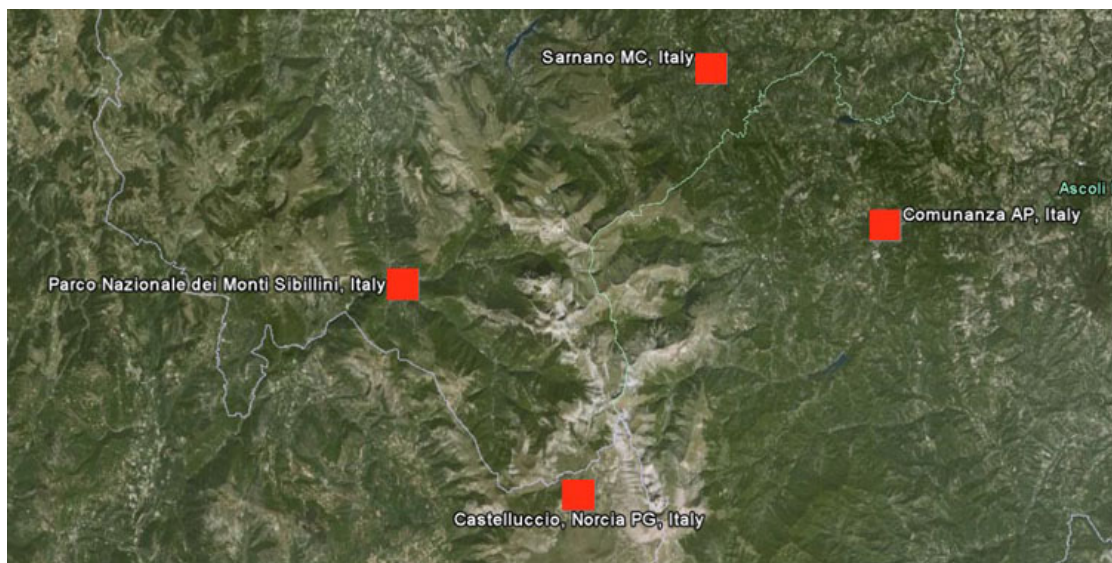
This report details the butterflies and moths observed on a trip made to Italy from 14th to 20th June 2008. The members of the party were Chris Manley, Dave Green, Paul and Susie Butter, Peter Davey, Peter Eeles and Tim Norriss.

The Location

Our base was in Sarnano in north-east Italy.



Sarnano was to the north of most of the areas visited, as indicated in the figure below.



Each site we visited is identified with a letter (A through R) in this report, the details of which are:

Day	Site	Region	Location
1	A	Sarnano	Casa Luisa
2	B	Sarnano	Casa Luisa
	C	Monti Sibillini	Roadside
	D	Monti Sibillini	Alpine meadow
	E	Sarnano	Casa Luisa
3	F	Sarnano	Casa Luisa
	G	Monti Sibillini	Gola del Infernaccio (Hell's Gorge)
	H	Monti Sibillini	Gola del Infernaccio (meadow)
4	I	Sarnano	Casa Luisa
	J	Monti Sibillini	Gola del Infernaccio (meadow)
5	K	Sarnano	Casa Luisa
	L	Castelluccio	
6	M	Sarnano	Casa Luisa
	N		Road between Comunanza and Forze
7	O	Sarnano	Casa Luisa
	P	Monti Sibillini	
	Q	Monti Sibillini	Alpine meadow
8	R	Sarnano	Casa Luisa

Saturday 14th June

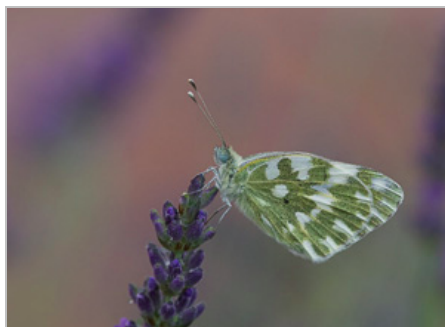
After flying to Ancona, we drove to Casa Luisa, the villa in Sarnano which acted as our base for the trip. The villa was at the top of a hill and the grounds were well-suited to butterflies - especially the whites which were especially attracted to the extensive rows of lavender.



Whites on a Row of Lavender, Casa Luisa, Sarnano
Photo © Peter Eeles

Having unpacked the luggage from the hire van, we surveyed the garden and managed to notch up 8 species - Large Skipper (*Ochlodes*

sylvanus), Small Skipper (*Thymelicus sylvestris*), Eastern Bath White (*Pieris edusa*), Eastern Dappled White (*Euchloe ausonia*), Small White (*Pieris rapae*), Marbled White (*Melanargia galathea*), Meadow Brown (*Maniola jurtina*) and Wall (*Lasiommata megera*). The Eastern Dappled White looked like an over-sized Orange-tip!



Eastern Bath White (*Pieris edusa*)
Photo © Peter Eeles



Eastern Dappled White (*Euchloe ausonia*)
Photo © Peter Eeles

The villa was situated on the edge of deciduous mainly oak woodland and woodland-edge elm, and overlooked herb-rich hay meadow sloping down to the valley with occasional scrub species that included maple and blackthorn, so the expectation for seeing a varied selection of moth species was high. An array of five moth lights were set up around the house to maximise the catch and a total of 67 species were logged despite cool and damp conditions. As well as light traps, the lavender beds proved productive for moth species seeking nectar. A full list of species can be found in Appendix B. Rarities from a UK perspective included: *Chrysocrambus craterella*, *Sitochroa verticalis*, Essex Emerald, Lace Border, Least Carpet, Scarce Blackneck, Pale-shouldered Cloud, Heart, Small Ranunculus, Barrett's Marbled Coronet, Black V, Small Black Arches and Hoary Footman.



Essex Emerald
Photo © Chris Manley



Pale Shouldered Cloud

Photo © Chris Manley



Heart Moths

Photo © Chris Manley



Odonestis pruni

Photo © Dave Green



Rhyparia purpurata

Photo © Dave Green



Barratt's Marbled Coronet

Photo © Chris Manley

Butterfly Day Listing

Site A - Casa Luisa, Sarnano

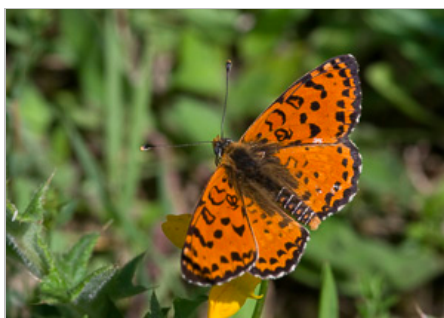
Hesperiidae (skippers)		
Large Skipper	<i>Ochlodes sylvanus</i>	1
Small Skipper	<i>Thymelicus sylvestris</i>	15
Pieridae (whites)		
Eastern Bath White	<i>Pieris edusa</i>	2
Eastern Dappled White	<i>Euchloe ausonia</i>	1
Small White	<i>Pieris rapae</i>	2
Nymphalidae (browns)		
Marbled White	<i>Melanargia galathea</i>	1
Meadow Brown	<i>Maniola jurtina</i>	5
Wall	<i>Lasiommata megera</i>	1

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.

Sunday 15th June

The day started with a survey of the garden which turned up some new butterfly species to add to the previous day's list - Essex Skipper (*Thymelicus lineola*), Swallowtail (*Papilio machaon*), Large White (*Pieris brassicae*), Painted Lady (*Vanessa cardui*), Queen of Spain Fritillary (*Issoria lathonia*), Red Admiral (*Vanessa atalanta*), Small Tortoiseshell (*Aglais urticae*) and Southern White Admiral (*Limenitis reducta*).

Our first full day of the trip had us visiting the Monti Sibillini - a mountain group that are part of the central Apennines. We stopped by the side of the road, at the base of the mountains, and managed to see a few new species for the trip - Scarce Swallowtail (*Iphiclides podalirius*), Clouded Yellow (*Colias croceus*), Spotted Fritillary (*Melitaea didyma*), Large Wall (*Lasiommata maera*) and Small Heath (*Coenonympha pamphilus*).



Spotted Fritillary (*Melitaea didyma*)
Photo © Peter Eeles

The top of the mountains was covered in cloud, so we settled for alpine meadows close to the top. Although conditions were generally overcast, this area proved to be rich in butterflies.



Alpine Meadow, Monti Sibillini
Photo © Peter Eeles

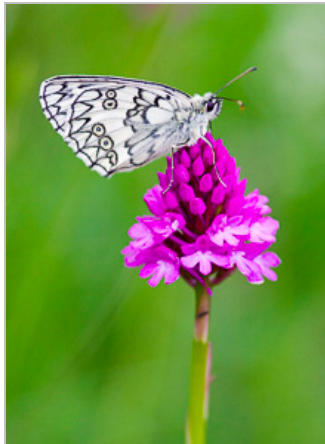
New species for the trip were Amanda's Blue (*Plebeius amanda*), Baton Blue (*Pseudophilotes baton*), Berger's Clouded Yellow (*Colias alfaciensis*), Black-veined White (*Aporia crataegi*), Brown Argus (*Aricia agestis*), Clouded Apollo (*Parnassius mnemosyne*), Common Blue (*Polyommatus icarus*), Dingy Skipper (*Erynnis tages*), Esper's Marbled White (*Melanargia russiae*), Grayling (*Hipparchia semele*), Green-underside Blue (*Glaucopsyche alexis*), Grizzled Skipper (*Pyrgus malvae*), Heath Fritillary (*Melicta athalia*), Knapweed Fritillary (*Melitaea phoebe*), Large Grizzled Skipper (*Pyrgus alveus*), Lesser Spotted Fritillary (*Melitaea trivia*), Marsh Fritillary (*Eurodryas aurinia*), Mazarine Blue (*Cyaniris semiargus*), Moroccan Orange-tip (*Anthocharis belia*), Osiris Blue (*Cupido osiris*), Pearly Heath (*Coenonympha arcania*), Piedmont Ringlet (*Erebia meolans*), Red Underwing Skipper (*Spialia sertorius*), Silver-studded Blue (*Plebejus argus*) and Sooty Copper (*Lycaena tityus*).



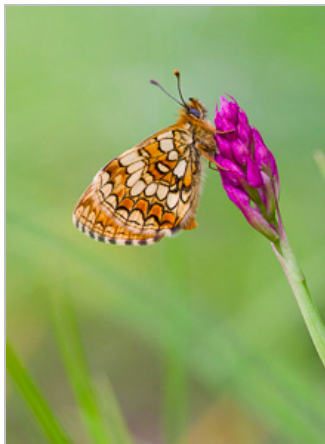
Amanda's Blue (*Plebeius amanda*) - ovipositing female
Photo © Peter Eeles



Black-veined White (*Aporia crataegi*)
Photo © Peter Eeles



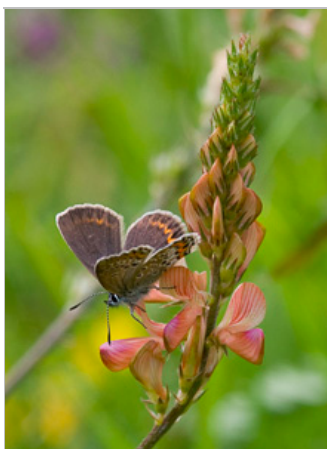
Esper's Marbled White (*Melanargia russiae*)
Photo © Peter Eeles



Heath Fritillary (*Mellicta athalia*)
Photo © Peter Eeles



Pearly Heath (*Coenonympha arcania*)
Photo © Peter Eeles



Silver-studded Blue (*Plebejus argus*)
Photo © Peter Eeles

Some interesting day-flying moth species were seen on the slopes of Monti Sibillini; chief amongst were these were: Feathered Footman, *Hypercallia citrinalis*, Slender Scotch Burnet, *Pempeliella ornatella*, Grass Eggar, Black-veined, Rest Harrow, Tawny Wave, Isle of Wight Wave and Marbled Clover.

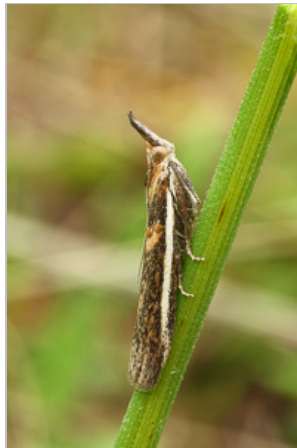


Hypercallia citrinalis
Photo © Chris Manley



Rest Harrow
Photo © Chris Manley

Light trapping overnight in improving conditions yielded more than 100 species. Of interest were: Goat, *Etiella zinckenella*, *Udea fulvalis*, Dorset Cream Wave, Jersey Emerald, Sub-angled Wave, Portland Ribbon Wave, Royal Mantle, Alchymist, Four-spotted, Lesser Belle, Pale Shoulder, Toadflax Brocade, Clancy's Rustic and Nine-spotted.



Etiella zinckenella
Photo © Chris Manley



Jersey Emerald
Photo © Chris Manley



Portland Ribbon Wave
Photo © Chris Manley



Pale Shoulder
Photo © Chris Manley



Alchymist
Photo © Chris Manley



Sub-angled Wave
Photo © Chris Manley

Butterfly Day Listing

- Site B - Casa Luisa, Sarnano
- Site C - Monti Sibillini (roadside)
- Site D - Monti Sibillini (alpine meadow)
- Site E - Casa Luisa, Sarnano

		B	C	D	E
Hesperiidae (skippers)					
Dingy Skipper	<i>Erynnis tages</i>			1	
Essex Skipper	<i>Thymelicus lineola</i>	1			
Grizzled Skipper	<i>Pyrgus malvae</i>			1	
Large Grizzled Skipper	<i>Pyrgus alveus</i>			1	
Large Skipper	<i>Ochlodes sylvanus</i>	1			
Red Underwing Skipper	<i>Spialia sertorius</i>			1	
Small Skipper	<i>Thymelicus sylvestris</i>	25+	5		
Papilionidae (swallowtails)					
Clouded Apollo	<i>Parnassius mnemosyne</i>			1	
Scarce Swallowtail	<i>Ipchicides podalirius</i>		1		
Swallowtail	<i>Papilio machaon</i>	3			
Pieridae (whites)					
Berger's Clouded Yellow	<i>Colias alfacariensis</i>			2	
Black-veined White	<i>Aporia crataegi</i>			20+	
Clouded Yellow	<i>Colias croceus</i>		3	1	
Eastern Bath White	<i>Pieris edusa</i>	5	5	5	
Eastern Dappled White	<i>Euchloe ausonia</i>	1			
Large White	<i>Pieris brassicae</i>	20+		5	
Moroccan Orange-tip	<i>Anthocharis belia</i>			1	
Small White	<i>Pieris rapae</i>	10+	1	4	
Lycaenidae (hairstreaks, coppers and blues)					
Amanda's Blue	<i>Plebeius amanda</i>			5	
Baton Blue	<i>Pseudophilotes baton</i>			1	
Brown Argus	<i>Aricia agestis</i>			1	
Common Blue	<i>Polyommatus icarus</i>			7	
Green-underside Blue	<i>Glaucopsyche alexis</i>			1	
Mazarine Blue	<i>Cyaniris semiargus</i>			5	
Osiris Blue	<i>Cupido osiris</i>			20+	
Silver-studded Blue	<i>Plebejus argus</i>			15+	
Sooty Copper	<i>Lycaena tityus</i>			1	
Nymphalidae (nymphalids and fritillaries)					
Heath Fritillary	<i>Melicta athalia</i>			100+	
Knapweed Fritillary	<i>Melitaea phoebe</i>			10+	1
Lesser Spotted Fritillary	<i>Melitaea trivia</i>			1	
Marsh Fritillary	<i>Eurodryas aurinia</i>			4	
Painted Lady	<i>Vanessa cardui</i>	7		2	
Queen of Spain Fritillary	<i>Issoria lathonia</i>	1			
Red Admiral	<i>Vanessa atalanta</i>	2		5	
Small Tortoiseshell	<i>Aglaia urticae</i>	1		20+	
Southern White Admiral	<i>Limenitis reducta</i>	1			
Spotted Fritillary	<i>Melitaea didyma</i>		2		1
Nymphalidae (browns)					
Esper's Marbled White	<i>Melanargia russiae</i>			10+	
Grayling	<i>Hipparchia semele</i>			1 (sp.)	
Large Wall	<i>Lasiommata maera</i>		1	1	
Marbled White	<i>Melanargia galathea</i>	4	5	15+	
Meadow Brown	<i>Maniola jurtina</i>	50+		50+	
Pearly Heath	<i>Coenonympha arcania</i>			1	
Piedmont Ringlet	<i>Erebia meolans</i>			1	
Small Heath	<i>Coenonympha pamphilus</i>		1	10+	
Wall	<i>Lasiommata megera</i>	6			

Monday 16th June

The usual start to the day revealed a Great Banded Grayling (*Hipparchia circe*), along with the now-familiar residents, in the garden. But today was dedicated to visiting Gola del Infernaccio (Hell's Gorge) in the Monti Sibillini. Although the entrance to the gorge had some

promising meadows, we decided to head into the gorge - knowing that the gorge eventually opened up into alpine meadows further up the mountain (2 hours up the mountain, as it happens!).



Heading into "Hell's Gorge!"
Photo © Peter Eeles

Our walk through the gorge was itself full of surprises. Our first surprise was finding a Clouded Apollo (*Parnassius mnemosyne*) sitting on a leaf and acting very docile.



Clouded Apollo (*Parnassius mnemosyne*)
Photo © Peter Eeles

Further along we found tracks through the mountainside that, apparently, had been formed by relatively-recent avalanches, but which had opened up the dense forest allowing sunlight, plants and butterflies to all flourish! These tracks proved to be havens for butterflies and we saw our first Pearl-bordered Fritillary (*Boloria euphrosyne*) in one of them. Another contained good numbers of Green-veined White (*Pieris napi*) and a single Wood White (*Leptidea sinapis*). We eventually reached the end of the gorge and the alpine meadows ahead, although the weather had beaten us there, with a strong breeze brewing. A surprise first encounter was a single Glanville Fritillary (*Melitaea cinxia*) on the grassy slopes. Several Green Hairstreak (*Callophrys rubi*) were also found fluttering around the many hawthorn and blackthorn bushes in the area. A little further on, we found a relatively-scarce patch of nettles, with several Small Tortoiseshell (*Aglais urticae*) larvae munching away and a couple of Red Admiral (*Vanessa atalanta*) in their characteristic position in a folded leaf. The meadows were good too for burnets, and among the four species identified were Transparent and Slender Scotch.



Slender Scotch Burnet
Photo © Chris Manley



Aethes tessarana
Photo © Chris Manley



Olethreutes arcuella
Photo © Chris Manley

The relic of a Black-veined White (*Aporia crataegi*) larval web was found on a blackthorn bush and a search of the surrounding area yielded 5 pupae on various plant stems.



Black-veined White (*Aporia crataegi*) - pupa
Photo © Peter Eeles

With the weather deteriorating, we decided to head back down the gorge to the meadow we saw on our arrival.



Meadow at "Hell's Gorge"
Photo © Peter Eeles

By the time we arrived, there were few individuals on the wing due to the fading light. However, both Black-veined White (*Aporia crataegi*) and Mazarine Blue (*Cyaniris semiargus*) could be found roosting in good numbers. We also found two new species for the trip - Meadow Fritillary (*Melicta parthenoides*) and Small Blue (*Cupido minimus*) - courtesy of an egg found by one of the party. A surprise find was a

Narrow-bordered bee Hawk, freshly emerged among the grass of the meadow.



Mazarine Blue (*Cyaniris semiargus*)
Photo © Peter Eeles

In rather cool, clear conditions light trapping produced nearly 70 species; nothing new apart from Bright Wave.

Butterfly Day Listing

Site F - Casa Luisa, Sarnano

Site G - Gola del Infernaccio (Hell's Gorge), Monti Sibillini

Site H - Gola del Infernaccio (Hell's Gorge), meadow, Monti Sibillini

		F	G	H
Hesperiidae (skippers)				
Essex Skipper	<i>Thymelicus lineola</i>	1		
Grizzled Skipper	<i>Pyrgus malvae</i>			1
Large Grizzled Skipper	<i>Pyrgus alveus</i>			1
Small Skipper	<i>Thymelicus sylvestris</i>	20+		
Papilionidae (swallowtails)				
Clouded Apollo	<i>Parnassius mnemosyne</i>		1	
Pieridae (whites)				
Berger's Clouded Yellow	<i>Colias alfacariensis</i>	1		
Black-veined White	<i>Aporia crataegi</i>		15, 5(P)	25+
Brimstone	<i>Gonepteryx rhamni</i>		1	
Eastern Bath White	<i>Pieris edusa</i>	3		
Green-veined White	<i>Pieris napi</i>		5	
Large White	<i>Pieris brassicae</i>	20+	10+	
Small White	<i>Pieris rapae</i>	10+		
Wood White	<i>Leptidea sinapis</i>		1	
Lycaenidae (hairstreaks, coppers and blues)				
Amanda's Blue	<i>Plebeius amanda</i>		3	
Brown Argus	<i>Aricia agestis</i>			1
Common Blue	<i>Polyommatus icarus</i>		10+	
Green Hairstreak	<i>Callophrys rubi</i>		3	
Holly Blue	<i>Celastrina argiolus</i>		1	
Mazarine Blue	<i>Cyaniris semiargus</i>		5	5
Small Blue	<i>Cupido minimus</i>			1(O)
Sooty Copper	<i>Lycaena tityus</i>		1	
Nymphalidae (nymphalids and fritillaries)				
Glanville Fritillary	<i>Melitaea cinxia</i>		1	
Knapweed Fritillary	<i>Melitaea phoebe</i>		1	
Marsh Fritillary	<i>Eurodryas aurinia</i>			1
Meadow Fritillary	<i>Melicta parthenoides</i>			2
Painted Lady	<i>Vanessa cardui</i>	1	2	
Pearl-bordered Fritillary	<i>Boloria euphrosyne</i>		5	
Queen of Spain Fritillary	<i>Issoria lathonia</i>	2	2	
Red Admiral	<i>Vanessa atalanta</i>	1	2(L)	
Small Tortoiseshell	<i>Aglais urticae</i>	10+	4(L)	
Spotted Fritillary	<i>Melitaea didyma</i>			2
Nymphalidae (browns)				
Great Banded Grayling	<i>Hipparchia circe</i>	1		
Meadow Brown	<i>Maniola jurtina</i>	30+		
Small Heath	<i>Coenonympha pamphilus</i>	2	6	4
Wall	<i>Lasiommata megera</i>	2	2	

Tuesday 17th June

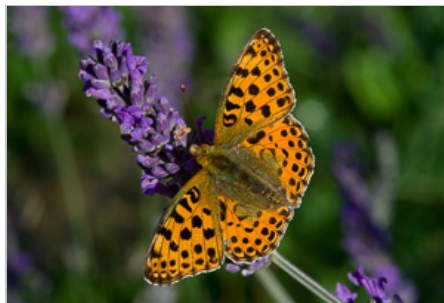
The day couldn't have been a greater contrast with the previous day - with an almost cloudless sky greeting us. The activity in the garden was much higher, with so many butterflies present that we spent a couple of hours just wandering around the garden and surrounding area. Highlights included a helice form of Clouded Yellow (*Colias croceus*), a couple of Ilex Hairstreak (*Satyrus ilicis*), a couple of High Brown Fritillary (*Argynnis adippe*), a Queen of Spain Fritillary (*Issoria lathonia*) that was to become a regular feature in the garden, and a single Southern White Admiral (*Limenitis reducta*).



Clouded Yellow (*Colias croceus*) - form helice
Photo © Peter Eeles



High Brown Fritillary (*Argynnis adippe*)
Photo © Peter Eeles



Queen of Spain Fritillary (*Issoria lathonia*)
Photo © Peter Eeles

After seeing the potential of the meadow at the entrance of "Hell's Gorge" (after yesterday's visit), we decided to pay a return visit. In total, the meadows probably took up the size of a football pitch, so there was plenty of ground to be covered. As soon as we got out of the van, a Large Tortoiseshell (*Nymphalis polychloros*) was seen sitting on a bush - a good start to the trip! Another nice surprise was finding a pair of Duke of Burgundy (*Hamearis lucina*) flitting about. Other new species for the trip were Tufted Marbled Skipper (*Carcharodus flocciferus*), Meleager's Blue (*Meleageria daphnis*), Dark Green Fritillary (*Argynnis aglaja*) and Speckled Wood (*Pararge aegeria*). The Speckled Wood exhibited the typical characteristic of individuals found in countries that are south of the UK, with the spots being a light brown, rather than white. Narrow-bordered bee Hawk was seen again, this time nectaring at the flowers of Verbena. An *Actinotia radios*a moth, in the same genus as Purple Cloud, was found in the meadow too, as was the Handmaid.



Narrow-bordered Bee Hawk-moth
Photo © Chris Manley



Actinotia radiosa
Photo © Chris Manley



Handmaid
Photo © Chris Manley

This was also another location where finding pupae of Black-veined White (*Aporia crataegi*) was simply a matter of looking closely enough! We manage to locate 4 pupae in around 10 minutes of searching on the blackthorn bushes that surrounded the site.



Large Wall (*Lasiommata maera*)
Photo © Peter Eeles



Osiris Blue (*Cupido osiris*) - female
Photo © Peter Eeles



Speckled Wood (*Pararge aegeria*)
Photo © Peter Eeles

Moth activity was evidently on the rise following the warmth of the day; additions to previous nights included: Festoon, *Oncocera semirubella*, *Euchromius bella*, *Nomophila noctuella*, Clay Fan-foot, The Argentine and Plum Lappet.



Euchromius bella
Photo © Chris Manley



Spatalia argentina
Photo © Chris Manley

Butterfly Day Listing

Site I - Casa Luisa, Sarnano

Site J - Gola del Infernaccio (Hell's Gorge), meadow, Monti Sibillini

		I	J
Hesperiidae (skippers)			
Grizzled Skipper	<i>Pyrgus malvae</i>		1(sp.)
Large Skipper	<i>Ochlodes sylvanus</i>		1
Small Skipper	<i>Thymelicus sylvestris</i>	20+	2
Tufted Marbled Skipper	<i>Carcharodus flocciferus</i>		1
Papilionidae (swallowtails)			
Clouded Apollo	<i>Parnassius mnemosyne</i>		1
Scarce Swallowtail	<i>Ipichlides podalirius</i>		1
Pieridae (whites)			
Black-veined White	<i>Aporia crataegi</i>	1	30+, 4(P)
Brimstone	<i>Gonepteryx rhamni</i>	1	
Clouded Yellow	<i>Colias croceus</i>	1, 1(helice)	1
Eastern Bath White	<i>Pieris edusa</i>	2	
Eastern Dappled White	<i>Euchloe ausonia</i>		1
Green-veined White	<i>Pieris napi</i>		5
Large White	<i>Pieris brassicae</i>	20+	15+
Small White	<i>Pieris rapae</i>	10+	10+
Wood White	<i>Leptidea sinapis</i>		2
Lycaenidae (hairstreaks, coppers and blues)			
Amanda's Blue	<i>Plebeius amanda</i>		3
Common Blue	<i>Polyommatus icarus</i>		2
Duke of Burgundy	<i>Hamearis lucina</i>		2
Green Hairstreak	<i>Callophrys rubi</i>		2
Holly Blue	<i>Celastrina argiolus</i>		10+
Ilex Hairstreak	<i>Satyrion ilicis</i>	2	
Mazarine Blue	<i>Cyaniris semiargus</i>		2
Meleager's Blue	<i>Meleageria daphnis</i>		1
Osiris Blue	<i>Cupido osiris</i>		3
Silver-studded Blue	<i>Plebejus argus</i>		1
Nymphalidae (nymphalids and fritillaries)			
Dark Green Fritillary	<i>Argynnis aglaja</i>		1
High Brown Fritillary	<i>Argynnis adippe</i>	2	1
Large Tortoiseshell	<i>Nymphalis polychloros</i>		1
Lesser Spotted Fritillary	<i>Melitaea trivia</i>		5
Marsh Fritillary	<i>Eurodryas aurinia</i>		1
Painted Lady	<i>Vanessa cardui</i>	2	3
Pearl-bordered Fritillary	<i>Boloria euphrosyne</i>		5
Queen of Spain Fritillary	<i>Issoria lathonia</i>	1	1
Red Admiral	<i>Vanessa atalanta</i>	2	2
Small Tortoiseshell	<i>Aglaia urticae</i>	10+	2
Southern White Admiral	<i>Limenitis reducta</i>	1	
Nymphalidae (browns)			
Large Wall	<i>Lasiommata maera</i>		5
Marbled White	<i>Melanargia galathea</i>	2	
Meadow Brown	<i>Maniola jurtina</i>	20+	20+
Pearly Heath	<i>Coenonympha arcania</i>		3
Small Heath	<i>Coenonympha pamphilus</i>		5
Speckled Wood	<i>Pararge aegeria</i>		3
Wall	<i>Lasiommata megera</i>	4	1

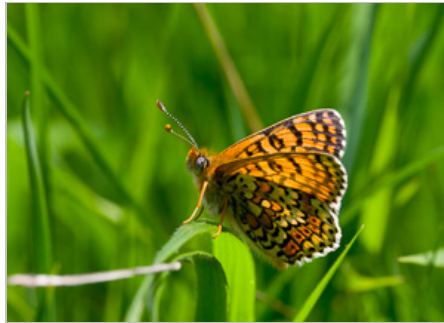
Wednesday 18th June

After the usual foray in the garden, we set off for a day in Castelluccio. We stopped on the way at the edge of what can only be described as the "Castelluccio bowl" - a basin completely surrounded by hills and mountains - presumably the relic of a lake bottom.



Castelluccio "Basin"
Photo © Peter Eeles

At this stop we found a strong colony of Clouded Apollo (*Parnassius mnemosyne*) and, most unexpectedly, a colony of Glanville Fritillary (*Melitaea cinxia*). We also came across a mating pair of Mazarine Blue (*Cyaniris semiargus*). Lulworth Skipper (*Thymelicus acteon*), Orange-tip (*Anthocharis cardamines*) and Peacock (*Inachis io*) were also new for the trip.



Glanville Fritillary (*Melitaea cinxia*)
Photo © Peter Eeles



Mazarine Blue (*Cyaniris semiargus*) - mating pair
Photo © Peter Eeles

We then moved down into the "basin" and found several Small Tortoiseshell (*Aglais urticae*) larval webs on the scarce beds of nettles. We also managed our first sightings of Eastern Large Heath (*Coenonympha rhodopensis*). Clearwing pheromone lures were deployed, and readily attracted Thrift Clearwing.



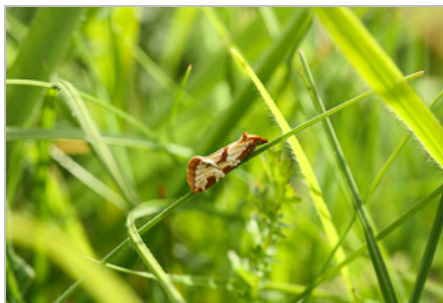
A View from the "Basin"
Photo © Peter Eeles



Eastern Large Heath (*Coenonympha rhodopenensis*)
Photo © Peter Eeles



Thrift Clearwing
Photo © Chris Manley



Aethes piercei
Photo © Chris Manley

After a break in Castelluccio, we stopped off at another edge of the "basin". The flowers were incredible with poppies turning the hillside red in places.



Poppies in the edge of the "Basin"
Photo © Peter Eeles

Several species were found - including an ovipositing Mazarine Blue (*Cyaniris semiargus*).



Mazarine Blue (*Cyaniris semiargus*) - ovipositing female
Photo © Peter Eeles



Mazarine Blue (*Cyaniris semiargus*) - ovum
Photo © Peter Eeles

We make a last stop at another site nearby but at a higher elevation, and that was quickly succumbing to cloud rising from the valley below.



Site Near Castelluccio
Photo © Peter Eeles

At first glance, this site didn't seem to have much to offer. However, we quickly spotted distinctive geranium flowers being visited by Geranium Argus (*Plebeius eumedon*), which seemed to be all around us, making a very pleasant end to the day.



Geranium Argus (*Plebeius eumedon*)
Photo © Peter Eeles



Geranium Argus (*Plebeius eumedon*)
Photo © Peter Eeles

Ground Lackey, Vestal, Ruddy Carpet, Tawny Prominent were new additions to the light traps overnight.



Silky Wave
Photo © Chris Manley



Tawny Prominent
Photo © Chris Manley

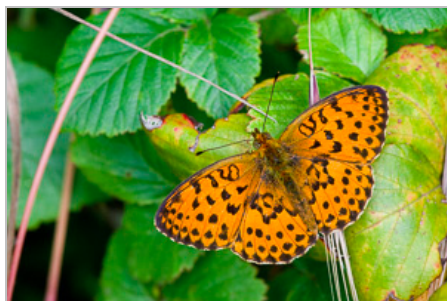
Butterfly Day Listing

Site K - Casa Luisa, Sarnano
Site L - Castelluccio

		K	L
Hesperiidae (skippers)			
Large Skipper	<i>Ochlodes sylvanus</i>	2	
Lulworth Skipper	<i>Thymelicus acteon</i>		1
Small Skipper	<i>Thymelicus sylvestris</i>	20+	
Papilionidae (swallowtails)			
Clouded Apollo	<i>Parnassius mnemosyne</i>		30+
Pieridae (whites)			
Brimstone	<i>Gonepteryx rhamni</i>	1	
Clouded Yellow	<i>Colias croceus</i>		5
Eastern Bath White	<i>Pieris edusa</i>	2	
Large White	<i>Pieris brassicae</i>	20+	2
Orange-tip	<i>Anthocharis cardamines</i>		1
Small White	<i>Pieris rapae</i>	10+	
Lycaenidae (hairstreaks, coppers and blues)			
Common Blue	<i>Polyommatus icarus</i>		3
Geranium Argus	<i>Plebeius eumedon</i>		15+
Green Hairstreak	<i>Callophrys rubi</i>		1
Mazarine Blue	<i>Cyaniris semiargus</i>		6, 1(O)
Osiris Blue	<i>Cupido osiris</i>		4
Nymphalidae (nymphalids and fritillaries)			
Glanville Fritillary	<i>Melitaea cinxia</i>		6
Heath Fritillary	<i>Melicta athalia</i>		5
Painted Lady	<i>Vanessa cardui</i>	6	2
Peacock	<i>Inachis io</i>		1
Pearl-bordered Fritillary	<i>Boloria euphrosyne</i>		3
Queen of Spain Fritillary	<i>Issoria lathonia</i>		1
Red Admiral	<i>Vanessa atalanta</i>		1
Small Tortoiseshell	<i>Aglais urticae</i>	2	4, 500+(L)
Spotted Fritillary	<i>Melitaea didyma</i>	1	
Nymphalidae (browns)			
Eastern Large Heath	<i>Coenonympha rhodopenis</i>		5
Marbled White	<i>Melanargia galathea</i>	1	
Meadow Brown	<i>Maniola jurtina</i>	4	6
Small Heath	<i>Coenonympha pamphilus</i>	2	5
Wall	<i>Lasiommata megera</i>		2

Thursday 19th June

The day started with a couple of new species for the trip in the garden and surrounding area. A sighting of a Silver-washed Fritillary (*Argynnis paphia*) was followed by a Marbled Fritillary (*Argynnis daphne*).



Marbled Fritillary (*Argynnis daphne*)

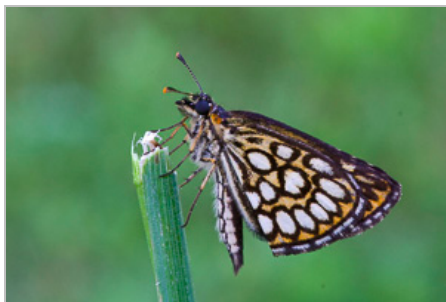
Photo © Peter Eeles

We then decided to have a day of exploring - simply drive off in the van in whichever direction took our fancy! It didn't take us long to park up at the side of a road between Comunanza and Forze, next to a bridge that passed over a stream. This site proved to be very productive, giving us several new species for the trip, including a couple of "gems" - Large Blue (*Maculinea arion*), Large Chequered Skipper (*Heteropterus morpheus*), Mallow Skipper (*Carcharodus alceae*), Mediterranean Skipper (*Gegenes nostrodamus*), Olive Skipper (*Pyrgus serratalae*), Purple Emperor (*Apatura iris*) and Sloe Hairstreak (*Satyrion acaciae*). A Broad-bordered bee Hawk patrolled the boundary

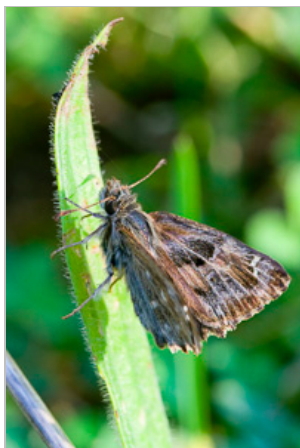
between the open area where all the butterflies were and the woodland bordering the stream.



Baton Blue (*Pseudophilotes baton*)
Photo © Peter Eeles



Large Chequered Skipper (*Heteropterus morpheus*)
Photo © Peter Eeles



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



Sloe Hairstreak (*Satyrium acaciae*)
Photo © Peter Eeles

Light traps produced in excess of one hundred species and dispersal was evident from the appearance of many of the following: Schoenobius gigantella, Willowherb Hawk, Spurge Hawk, Speckled Beauty, Three-humped Prominent, Passenger, Small Marbled and Porter's Rustic.



Speckled Beauty
Photo © Chris Manley



Spurge Hawk
Photo © Chris Manley



Three-humped Prominent
Photo © Chris Manley



Feathered Footman
Photo © Chris Manley



Small Ranunculus
Photo © Chris Manley



Passenger
Photo © Chris Manley

Butterfly Day Listing

Site M - Casa Luisa, Sarnano

Site N - Road between Comunanza and Forze

		M	N
Hesperiidae (skippers)			
Essex Skipper	<i>Thymelicus lineola</i>		2
Large Chequered Skipper	<i>Heteropterus morpheus</i>		4
Large Skipper	<i>Ochlodes sylvanus</i>		3
Lulworth Skipper	<i>Thymelicus acteon</i>		5
Mallow Skipper	<i>Carcharodus alceae</i>		1
Mediterranean Skipper	<i>Gegenes nostrodamus</i>		1
Olive Skipper	<i>Pyrgus serratulae</i>		1
Red Underwing Skipper	<i>Spialia sertorius</i>		1
Small Skipper	<i>Thymelicus sylvestris</i>	20+	15+
Pieridae (whites)			
Berger's Clouded Yellow	<i>Colias alfacariensis</i>		1
Brimstone	<i>Gonepteryx rhamni</i>		2
Clouded Yellow	<i>Colias croceus</i>	7	2
Eastern Bath White	<i>Pieris edusa</i>	1	
Eastern Dappled White	<i>Euchloe ausonia</i>		1
Large White	<i>Pieris brassicae</i>	20+	10+
Small White	<i>Pieris rapae</i>	10+	5+
Wood White	<i>Leptidea sinapis</i>		3
Lycaenidae (hairstreaks, coppers and blues)			
Baton Blue	<i>Pseudophilotes baton</i>		1
Common Blue	<i>Polyommatus icarus</i>	1	1
Green Hairstreak	<i>Callophrys rubi</i>		2
Holly Blue	<i>Celastrina argiolus</i>	1	3
Large Blue	<i>Maculinea arion</i>		2
Osiris Blue	<i>Cupido osiris</i>		2
Silver-studded Blue	<i>Plebejus argus</i>		2
Sloe Hairstreak	<i>Satyrus acaciae</i>		5+
Nymphalidae (nymphalids and fritillaries)			
Heath Fritillary	<i>Mellicta athalia</i>		5+
High Brown Fritillary	<i>Argynnis adippe</i>	1	
Large Tortoiseshell	<i>Nymphalis polychloros</i>	4	
Marbled Fritillary	<i>Argynnis daphne</i>	1	20+
Painted Lady	<i>Vanessa cardui</i>	3	2
Peacock	<i>Inachis io</i>	1	
Purple Emperor	<i>Apatura iris</i>		1
Queen of Spain Fritillary	<i>Issoria lathonia</i>	1	
Red Admiral	<i>Vanessa atalanta</i>	1	1
Silver-washed Fritillary	<i>Argynnis paphia</i>	1	1
Small Tortoiseshell	<i>Aglaia urticae</i>	5	
Southern White Admiral	<i>Limnitis reducta</i>	1	3
Nymphalidae (browns)			
Marbled White	<i>Melanargia galathea</i>		50+
Meadow Brown	<i>Maniola jurtina</i>	3	30+
Pearly Heath	<i>Coenonympha arcania</i>		1
Small Heath	<i>Coenonympha pamphilus</i>		2
Wall	<i>Lasiommata megera</i>	4	

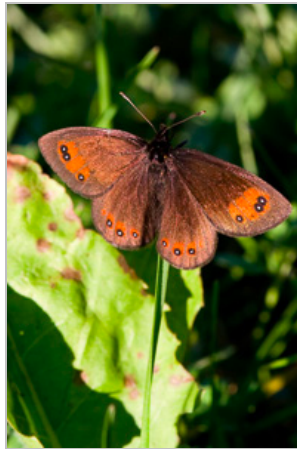
Friday 20th June

We woke to glorious sunshine and decided that this would be our last chance to get to the top of the Monti Sibillini mountains in good weather! We parked as far up the mountain as we could before starting the long climb up, along typical winding paths.



Monti Sibillini Mountains
Photo © Peter Eeles

We immediately noticed several Large Tortoiseshell (*Nymphalis polychloros*) flying around and could only assume that they were "hill topping" in search of a mate since they seemed to be all over the mountainside and one of the commonest butterflies we saw. There were also very good numbers of Small Tortoiseshell (*Aglais urticae*). The frequent *Erebia* encountered all turned out to be Piedmont Ringlet (*Erebia meolans*).



Piedmont Ringlet (*Erebia meolans*)
Photo © Peter Eeles

New species for the trip included Apollo (*Parnassius apollo*), Purple-edged Copper (*Lycaena hippothoe*) and Grison's Fritillary (*Mellicta varia*). The Purple-edged Copper was the high altitude form that lacks the purple flush and had clearly recently emerged since it was the only one seen and very fresh.



Grison's Fritillary (*Mellicta varia*)
Photo © Peter Eeles

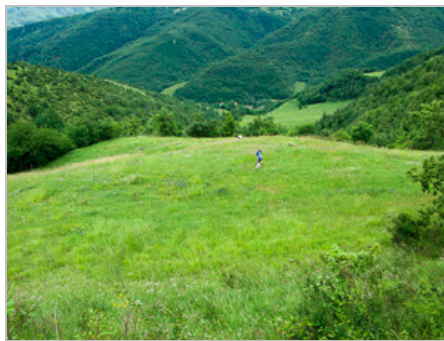


Purple-edged Copper (*Lycaena hippothoe*)
Photo © Peter Eeles



Purple-edged Copper (*Lycaena hippothoe*)
Photo © Peter Eeles

On our way down the mountain, we again stopped at the alpine meadow visited the previous Sunday. New moth species encountered included: Feathered Ear, Spotted Sulphur, the shark *Shargacucullia caninae*, Light Feathered Rustic, the arctiid *Chelis maculosa* and the immaculate red burnet, *Mesembrynus rubicundus*.



Alpine Meadow, Monti Sibillini Mountains
Photo © Peter Eeles



Tawny Wave
Photo © Chris Manley



Feathered Ear
Photo © Chris Manley



Cucullia caninae
Photo © Chris Manley



Mesembrynus rubicundus
Photo © Dave Green

A Small Copper (*Lycaena phlaeas*) was found which was new for the trip. The meadow contained good numbers of Essex Skipper (*Thymelicus lineola*) although, with the light fading, there was not as much activity as earlier in the week.



Essex Skipper (*Thymelicus lineola*)
Photo © Peter Eeles

A Spotted Fritillary (*Melitaea didyma*) pupa was also found by one of the group.



Spotted Fritillary (*Melitaea didyma*) - pupa
Photo © Peter Eeles

The final night's trapping produced the following additional noteworthy species: *Melissoblaptes zelleri*, *Paratalanta hyalinalis*, *Antirrhinum Brocade*, *Bordered Straw*, *Scarce Bordered Straw*, *Lamprosticta culta* and *Lunar Yellow Underwing*.



Cameo
Photo © Chris Manley

Butterfly Day Listing

Site O - Case Luisa, Sarnano

Site P - Monti Sibillini

Site Q - Monti Sibillini (alpine meadow)

		O	P	Q
Hesperiidae (skippers)				
Essex Skipper	<i>Thymelicus lineola</i>			20+
Small Skipper	<i>Thymelicus sylvestris</i>	20+		
Papilionidae (swallowtails)				
Apollo	<i>Parnassius apollo</i>		2	
Clouded Apollo	<i>Parnassius mnemosyne</i>		7	
Swallowtail	<i>Papilio machaon</i>		1	1
Pieridae (whites)				
Brimstone	<i>Gonepteryx rhamni</i>		1	
Clouded Yellow	<i>Colias croceus</i>	1	20+	
Eastern Bath White	<i>Pieris edusa</i>		20+	
Large White	<i>Pieris brassicae</i>	15+	100+	
Moroccan Orange-tip	<i>Anthocharis belia</i>		2	
Small White	<i>Pieris rapae</i>	10+		
Wood White	<i>Leptidea sinapis</i>		1	
Lycaenidae (hairstreaks, coppers and blues)				
Baton Blue	<i>Pseudophilotes baton</i>		1	
Brown Argus	<i>Aricia agestis</i>	1		
Green Hairstreak	<i>Callophrys rubi</i>		3	
Holly Blue	<i>Celastrina argiolus</i>		15+	1
Mazarine Blue	<i>Cyaniris semiargus</i>		5	
Osiris Blue	<i>Cupido osiris</i>		10+	
Purple-edged Copper	<i>Lycaena hippothoe</i>		1	
Silver-studded Blue	<i>Plebejus argus</i>			2
Small Copper	<i>Lycaena phlaeas</i>			1
Nymphalidae (nymphalids and fritillaries)				
Grison's Fritillary	<i>Melicta varia</i>		20+	
Heath Fritillary	<i>Melicta athalia</i>		20+	
Knapweed Fritillary	<i>Melitaea phoebe</i>			1
Large Tortoiseshell	<i>Nymphalis polychloros</i>		50+	
Lesser Spotted Fritillary	<i>Melitaea trivia</i>		1	
Marsh Fritillary	<i>Eurodryas aurinia</i>		1	
Painted Lady	<i>Vanessa cardui</i>		10+	
Peacock	<i>Inachis io</i>		3	
Pearl-bordered Fritillary	<i>Boloria euphrosyne</i>			1
Queen of Spain Fritillary	<i>Issoria lathomia</i>		2	
Red Admiral	<i>Vanessa atalanta</i>	1	3	1
Small Tortoiseshell	<i>Aglais urticae</i>	1	150+	
Southern White Admiral	<i>Limenitis reducta</i>		1	1
Spotted Fritillary	<i>Melitaea didyma</i>	1	1(L)	1(P)
Nymphalidae (browns)				
Eastern Large Heath	<i>Coenonympha rhodopenis</i>		10+	
Esper's Marbled White	<i>Melanargia russiae</i>		5	
Marbled White	<i>Melanargia galathea</i>		5	
Meadow Brown	<i>Maniola jurtina</i>	10+	50+	
Pearly Heath	<i>Coenonympha arcania</i>			1
Piedmont Ringlet	<i>Erebia meolans</i>		25+	
Small Heath	<i>Coenonympha pamphilus</i>		4	1
Wall	<i>Lasiommata megera</i>	1		

Saturday 21st June

There was time for a quick look around the garden at Casa Luisa before we headed back to Ancona airport for the flight home.



Swallowtail (*Papilio machaon*)

Photo © Peter Eeles

All in all - an excellent week and a big thanks to Dave Green for leading the group.

Butterfly Day Listing

Site R - Casa Luisa, Sarnano

Hesperiidae (skippers)		
Small Skipper	<i>Thymelicus sylvestris</i>	8
Papilionidae (swallowtails)		
Swallowtail	<i>Papilio machaon</i>	1
Pieridae (whites)		
Brimstone	<i>Gonepteryx rhamni</i>	3
Clouded Yellow	<i>Colias croceus</i>	1
Large White	<i>Pieris brassicae</i>	15+
Small White	<i>Pieris rapae</i>	10+
Nymphalidae (nymphalids and fritillaries)		
Red Admiral	<i>Vanessa atalanta</i>	1
Small Tortoiseshell	<i>Aglais urticae</i>	1
Nymphalidae (browns)		
Meadow Brown	<i>Maniola jurtina</i>	10+
Wall	<i>Lasiommata megera</i>	1

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 Chequered Skipper	<i>Heteropterus morpheus</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>
Mediterranean Skipper	<i>Gegenes nostradamus</i>
Olive Skipper	<i>Pyrgus serratulae</i>
Red Underwing Skipper	<i>Spialia sertorius</i>
Small Skipper	<i>Thymelicus sylvestris</i>
Tufted Marbled Skipper	<i>Carcharodus flocciferus</i>
Papilionidae (swallowtails)	
Apollo	<i>Parnassius apollo</i>
Clouded Apollo	<i>Parnassius mnemosyne</i>
Scarce Swallowtail	<i>Iphiclydes 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 Dappled White	<i>Euchloe ausonia</i>
Green-veined White	<i>Pieris napi</i>
Large White	<i>Pieris brassicae</i>
Moroccan Orange-tip	<i>Anthocharis belia</i>
Orange-tip	<i>Anthocharis cardamines</i>
Small White	<i>Pieris rapae</i>
Wood White	<i>Leptidea sinapis</i>
Lycaenidae (hairstreaks, coppers and blues)	
Amanda's Blue	<i>Plebeius amanda</i>
Baton Blue	<i>Pseudophilotes baton</i>
Brown Argus	<i>Aricia agestis</i>
Common Blue	<i>Polyommatus icarus</i>
Duke of Burgundy	<i>Hamearis lucina</i>
Geranium Argus	<i>Plebeius eumedon</i>
Green Hairstreak	<i>Callophrys rubi</i>
Green-underside Blue	<i>Glaucopsyche alexis</i>
Holly Blue	<i>Celastrina argiolus</i>
Ilex Hairstreak	<i>Satyrion ilicis</i>
Large Blue	<i>Maculinea arion</i>
Mazarine Blue	<i>Cyaniris semiargus</i>
Meleager's Blue	<i>Meleageria daphnis</i>
Osiris Blue	<i>Cupido osiris</i>
Purple-edged Copper	<i>Lycaena hippothoe</i>
Silver-studded Blue	<i>Plebejus argus</i>
Sloe Hairstreak	<i>Satyrion acaciae</i>
Small Blue	<i>Cupido minimus</i>
Small Copper	<i>Lycaena phlaeas</i>
Sooty Copper	<i>Lycaena tityus</i>
Nymphalidae (nymphalids and fritillaries)	
Dark Green Fritillary	<i>Argynnis aglaja</i>
Glanville Fritillary	<i>Melitaea cinxia</i>
Grison's Fritillary	<i>Mellicta varia</i>
Heath Fritillary	<i>Mellicta athalia</i>

Appendix B - Summary of Moth Species Seen

See [Italy Moth Records Jun08.xls](#).