



EUROPEAN
BUTTERFLIES
GROUP



eNewsletter

CONTENTS

Wonderful Memories.....	3
Spanish Greenish Black-tip (<i>Euchloe bazae</i>).....	6
Photographing Butterflies - A Learning Curve.....	9
Something completely different	12
Surveys for the Nevada Grayling in South-East Spain.....	14
Archiving Photos.....	17
Late-season butterflies of the Aegean Island of Rhodes.....	18
Danube Clouded Yellow (<i>Colias myrmidone</i>).....	25
Tristan Lafranchis 1960 – 2025.....	29

I am sorry that this issue of the Newsletter is the first since Spring last year. As you may know from an email I sent out in March we have unfortunately lost our Newsletter editor Nigel Peace who did a sterling job for more than 10 issues. This issue has been assembled and edited by Anne Spencer to whom I am immensely grateful. Anne has taken on the role in a temporary capacity so we are still looking for an editor – would you consider taking on the role? You do not need to be a Committee member nor do you need to be a butterfly expert. If you are interested please contact me at mikeprentice7@gmail.com. Thanks also to our hard-working graphic designer Trish Connolly Morgan (<https://morgancreative.carbonmade.com/>)

I am particularly grateful to those who have answered the call and submitted articles. In this packed issue we have articles on a late Autumn break to Rhodes, a butterfly photographer’s progress over the years and articles on three species on which we have spent considerable time and effort helping to establish their conservation status and range – **Nevada Grayling** (*Pseudochazara williamsi*), **Spanish Greenish Black-tip** (*Euchloe bazae*) and **Danube Clouded Yellow** (*Colias myrmidone*). David Griffin reminds us of the thrill of the first sighting of a species you have longed to see and Simon Spencer asks whether there is a need for a catalogued collection of butterfly photographs. Bill Raymond has contributed a short article on aberrations and we include Simon Spencer’s obituary of Tristan Lafranchis whose books were so influential.

We had hoped to include an article on the new Red List of butterflies but there is an embargo on publication until IUCN have presented it to the European Union so the article will have to wait until the next Newsletter. At the last AGM Sam Ellis told us a little about the process but the article when published will reveal the results and will be a catalyst for action for the future. I am sure that with a significant increase in the number of threatened species we will need to undertake further surveys in the years ahead.



Mike Prentice, May 2025
Email: mikeprentice7@gmail.com



Notes from the Chairman

Contact details

Chairman: Mike Prentice

Email: mikeprentice7@gmail.com

Tel No: 07831 280259

Secretary: Simon Spencer

Email: cerisyi@btinternet.com

Tel No: 07866 428875

Membership Secretary: Anne Spencer

Email: Rhoslan.anne@gmail.com

Tel No: 01691 649615

Treasurer: David Moore

Email: dcmoore67@hotmail.com

Newsletter Editor: Vacant

Other Committee Members:

Martin Davies

Email: mdavies854@btinternet.com

Nick Greatorex-Davies

Email: nickgdlepman@googlemail.com

Roger Gibbons

Email: gibfam@ntlworld.com

Dudley Cheesman

Email: dudleycheesman@icloud.com

Sam Ellis

Email: sam.ellis@bc-europe.eu

Martin Partridge

Email: martingpartridge@googlemail.com

Dave Plowman

Email: suedaveplowman@btinternet.com

Marian Thomas

Email: bc.brd-nlc-824181@virginmedia.com

Bernard Watts

Email: br.watts@btinternet.com

Mike Williams

Email: wmbutterflies@gmail.com

EBG WEBSITE:

www.european-butterflies.org.uk

Website content: Jude Lock

Email: lock.jude@gmail.com

Website Manager: Mike Haigh

Email: webm@european-butterflies.org.uk

EBG Facebook Page:

www.facebook.com/ButterflyConservations

[EuropeanButterflyGroup/](https://www.facebook.com/EuropeanButterflyGroup/)

The AGM and Members' Day will once again be held in Birmingham at the Ibis Hotel on Ladywell Walk (also known as the Birmingham New Street Ibis) on 25 October from 14.00 until 17.00. After the formal business Dan Danaher will give a talk on the development of Corfu Butterfly Conservation and there will be one other talk (yet to be decided) and plenty of time to network with fellow-members. We will arrange a pub lunch beforehand. Full details will appear on the website in due course.

As ever there is a wealth of information on the website ranging from a report on a migration flyway through the Pyrenees to a new spreadsheet of all European butterfly species sortable by country. My sincere thanks to Jude Lock who manages the content and Mike Haigh who deals with all technical aspects.

Once again we will hold a photographic competition for the 2026 calendar. Entries should be sent direct to Anne Spencer (rhoslan.anne@gmail.com) and not by a reply to this email, by 1st September 2025. There is a maximum of 3 photos per entry. The size of each photo must be 1 MB or more. The English common name of the butterfly should be included with each photo, and details of where the photo was taken.

Later in this Newsletter I have written an article on **Spanish Greenish Black-tip (*Euchloe bazae*)** and the news of a newly-found population only some 15km from the well-known population in the Hoya de Baza. The paper describing the status of the species and news of the newly-found population is entitled **Contributions to the distribution, biology, and conservation of *Euchloe bazae* Fabiano, 1993 (Lepidoptera: Pieridae): discovery of a new population and new host plant in the province of Granada (Andalusia, Spain)** and can be found on our website.

In the article I mention that *Euchloe bazae* has been granted the highest degree of protection by the Spanish Government (the only other species to share that are **Nevada Blue (*Polyommatus golgus*)** and **Dusky Large Blue (*Phengaris nausithous*)**).

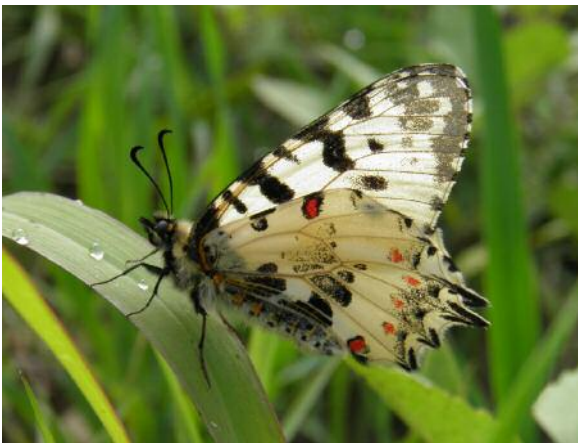
I have now received some important news: on 12 May the Spanish Government announced that they were expanding this highest level of protection to also include **Pigmy Skipper (*Gegenes pumilio*)** and **Violet Copper (*Lycaena helle*)**. In addition a slightly lower level of protection has been granted to **Zullich's Blue (*Agriades zullichii*)**, **Sandy Grizzled Skipper (*Pyrgus cinarae*)** and **Yellow-banded Skipper (*Pyrgus sidae*)**. This is a major step forward for butterfly conservation in Spain. Help from EBG members to record the distribution of any of these species would be greatly appreciated. ***Gegenes pumilio*** is on the brink of extinction in Mallorca and the distribution of the two skipper species is extremely limited. Other species where records would be particularly welcome are **Canary Large White (*Pieris cheiranthæ*)** in Tenerife, **El Hierro Grayling (*Hipparchia bacchus*)** and **La Palma Grayling (*Hipparchia tilosi*)**. Any records can be sent to me or to Yeray Monasterio of ZERYNTHIA at yeridoptero@hotmail.com

Wonderful Memories

When Anne asked for articles for the EBG newsletter I have to admit to a pang of guilt, as I really enjoy reading these, so should be prepared to contribute. So, this made me think what could I produce, and led me down a slightly different angle than most articles have previously used. There are so many facets of our incredible hobby that make it so enjoyable and time consuming (at least for me), however I wanted to write something from a different angle.



Twin-spot Fritillary (*Brenthis hecate*), Mount Falakro, Greece. 29.5.2014



Eastern Festoon (*Zerynthia cerisy*), Mount Falakro, Greece. 29.5.2014

One of the things I love about this interest are the stories that often go with finding (or not finding) a particular species for the first time. I realise readers will not be necessarily interested in my anecdotes, but I hope that by writing some down it encourages us to think about the experiences we share finding some of these magnificent animals and perhaps view those experiences from the background story perspective as well as wanting to see the butterfly in the first place. A little bit like everyone remembers where they were when they first heard about the death of Princess Diana, or 9/11; that's how I recall my first sighting of something, I know exactly where I was when I saw my first **Purple Hairstreak** (*Favonius quercus*) for example.

I can still recall, 50 odd years later, that shiver down my spine and great sense of excitement as if it was yesterday as a 7/8-year-old boy, the first time I saw a **White Admiral** (*Limenitis camilla*) as it flew off the page of my Observer's book of Butterflies (that I still have) and literally flew past me on the Isle of Wight in that wonderful lazy way of flying/gliding they have. I thought all my Christmases had come together. This mythical creature that I had read about actually did exist. Wow! I still get that spine tingle even now that reinvigorates the thrill of living (who needs drugs when life can give you this high) when I see my first whatever, only now they leap off the pages of a Tolman/Lewington field guide (which replaced my very worn & ageing Higgins & Riley).

So, from a list of dozens, I will pick out one particular memory.

When I visit Europe, I usually have to combine my love of butterflies (and all natural history) with a family holiday that also caters for my very understanding wife and children (when they were younger) with things they enjoy (beaches, swimming pools, Tavernas, nice gites or hotels, good food, sun). One such destination which could allow both is Khalkidhiki on mainland Greece. So it was in late May 2014 that was our holiday destination for the year. So, after some persuading, Denise gave in and let me rent a car to drive up into the mountains. I had done some research before leaving the UK but not enough. So, at 4 am in the morning I set off from Casandra Bay on Khalkidhiki to drive to Mount Falakro, in the Rhodope mountains, close to the Bulgarian border. I didn't realise it would take me 4 hours but off I set all on my own passing other holiday makers just ending their day spilling out of clubs & tavernas just as my day was starting out. ▼



Wonderful Memories cont.



Blue Argus (*Aricia anteros*), Mount Falakro, Greece. Approx 1600 metres. 29.5.2014

Leading up to where I had planned to go on a very basic map I stopped at a few promising sites in lowish altitudes where the butterflies seemed to be just beginning to warm up, and quite quickly had notched up quite a list but mainly species that I would be used to seeing such as **Small Heath** (*Coenonympha pamphilus*), **Queen of Spain Fritillary** (*Issoria lathona*), **Black-veined White** (*Aporia crataegi*), **Green Hairstreak** (*Callophrys rubi*), **Small Blue** (*Cupido minimus*), **Amandas Blue** (*Polyommatus amandus*), **Meadow Brown** (*Maniola jurtina*), **Large Wall** (*Lasiommata maera*), **Glanville Fritillary** (*Melitaea cinxia*). Also, lots of **Silver-studded Blue** (*Polyommatus argus*) or **Idas Blue** (*P.idas*) but I can never be sure which. If anyone can give me a dead cert way of identification other than the leg spine (which is impossible in the field) between these two, I would appreciate it (davegriffin450@gmail.com).



Blue Argus (*A. anteros*), Mount Falakro, Greece. 29.5.2014

But at one stop there were a lot of Fritillaries flying that at first sight I dismissed without looking too closely as **Pearl-bordered** (*Boloria euphrosyne*), fortunately a desire to get a good photo made me look again and they were **Twin-Spot Fritillaries** (*Brenthis hecate*) and in big numbers. A first for me. I should have learnt from this lesson, do not assume and to look again and not learning it nearly cost me a wonderful experience a few hours later. I also saw my first **Eastern Festoon** (*Zerynthia cerisy*), and **Lesser Spotted Fritillary** (*Melitaea trivia*). On climbing to a higher altitude again stopping I also recorded a new species for me with good views and photos of **Blue Argus** (*Aricia anteros*) at approx. 1600 metres and **Turquoise Blue** (*Polyommatus dorylas*) at approx. 1500 Metres.



Turquoise Blue (*P.dorylas*), Mount Falakro, Greece. 29.5.2014

However, on arriving at the ski lift car park that I had identified on a map as somewhere I may be able to walk to some higher altitudes or better still use the ski lift and save my legs. Unlike the Alps they don't have a lot of call to use them outside of ▼



Turquoise Blue (*Polyommatus dorylas*), Mount Falakro, Greece. 29.5.2014



Wonderful memories cont.



Clouded Apollo (*Parnassius mnemosyne*), Mount Falakro, Greece. Approx 1600 metres. 29.5.2014



Eastern Dappled White (*Euchloe ausonia*), Near Alistrati, Serres, Greece. 29.5.2014

the ski season so was very disappointed. The area looked lifeless and dull without any hint of what may be around the next corner, but undeterred I set off up the piste, still hoping for some inspiration. There were butterflies flying but numbers were low and nothing jumped out at me as exciting. There were very few flowering plants, and no trees. It all looked like a waste of time going on but I walked upwards for probably about an hour before giving up, feeling dejected, and walked back down for another hour or so back to the car.

I had parked just off the road (there was no traffic at all. I would think the Greeks that saw me driving up there must have thought I was mad, as there was nothing there except the idle ski lift). I decided to sit down and have some lunch before setting off to lower altitude in the hope of finding somewhere more worthwhile. Whilst eating a hot cheese sandwich and some fruit that was also very hot from the heat of the day, I sat on a log overlooking a small valley on the other side of the road. There was some intermittent cloud cover that day. The small valley contained a few sparse bushes, and was mainly longish grass vegetation, but I saw several **Large Whites** (*Pieris brassicae*) skimming over the long grass. Being familiar with the Large White obviously in the UK, I took very little notice, although I did notice that as soon as the cloud covered the sun they dived down into the grass and were lost from sight, but very quickly got back up as soon as the sun reappeared.

Anyway, lunch finished, thank goodness as a melted cheese sandwich wasn't very appetising, I got back in the car to drive back hoping to find a more suitable spot. What made me get back out to investigate the Large Whites I don't know, it may have been

because sub-consciously deep down their behaviour wasn't typical to Large Whites I'm used to, and perhaps habitat was wrong also. But was I glad I did ! As when I got close it was obviously not Large Whites and another first for me was **Clouded Apollo** (*Parnassius mnemosyne*) and they were very photogenic. So, I had to learn that lesson twice that day, after all that driving I could have been so close and completely missed them. It makes me think how many other species have I been a few meters away from and missed completely all because I thought I knew what I was seeing.

There was one final surprise also on the way back to Khalkidhiki, somewhere near Serres, stopping for a call of nature break, an **Eastern Dappled White** (*Euchloe ausonia*) settled on some nearby flowers and stayed long enough for me get back to the car for my camera and get some good photos of another new species for me.

I finally got back to my long-suffering butterfly widow around 9 pm, a long and tiring day and lots of driving but really enjoyable with lots of highs and new species for me. I probably saw around 40 species that day of which six were species I had never seen before.

I hope you enjoyed my trip down memory lane.

Dave Griffin

Spanish Greenish Black-tip (*Euchloe bazae*)

This butterfly has an interesting history and EBG has had an involvement with it during its short life.

If you look in the earlier field guides such as Higgins and Riley (my "Bible" when I started looking at European butterflies) you will find reference to *Elphinstonia charlonia charlonia* in North Africa and the Canary Islands and *E charlonia penia* in Greece and Yugoslavia but no mention of any presence in Spain. By the turn of the century the butterfly appears in maps in field-guides in two areas of Spain but is still generally described as *Elphinstonia charlonia* or *Euchloe charlonia*. In 1996 two Spanish authors (Olivares and Jimenez) had suggested that this was a different species endemic to Spain and this was subsequently confirmed by studies in 2005 and 2006.




Euchloe bazae iberae on its larval foodplant *Vella aspera* (photo K Tolhurst)

The butterfly has two distinct sub-species which fly in different areas one *Euchloe bazae bazae* in Andalusia in the Hoya de Baza to the east of Granada and the other *E bazae iberae* in two areas to the south-east of Zaragoza. All areas have a dry almost semi-desert climate but they vary in vegetation; in the north a Mediterranean scrub and in the south it is sparse esparto grassland.

Interestingly the larval food plants for each sub-species are different; the southern sub-species relies upon *Eruca* ▼



Barren gypsum habitat of *E.bazae* in Andalusia (photo M Davies)



Spanish Greenish Black-tip
(*Euchloe bazae*) cont.



E. bazae iberae showing pink fringe behind the head
(photo K. Tolhurst)



Habitat of *Euchloe bazae iberae*
with foodplant (photo M Davies)

vesicaria (the wild version of the popular salad plant rocket) whilst the northern subspecies lays on *Vella aspera* (formerly known as *Boleum asperum*) – both plants are brassicas but they are very different.

Perhaps even more interestingly the two subspecies are also different morphologically as *iberae* has a small pink fringe behind its head.

In 2012 and 2013 EBG helped with fieldwork on the MAVA-funded project to produce Species Recovery Plans for 4 Spanish endemics including *E. bazae*. Subsequently we asked all members to submit their records of any *bazae* sightings to Javier Olivares (*E b bazae*) or Yeray Monasterio (*E b iberae*). These records helped our Spanish colleagues to persuade the Spanish government to include all of the populations in the Spanish Catalogue of Endangered Species in the highest threat category. Almost all of the northern populations range is included in the Natura 2000 network but the area occupied by the southern population has no protection.

In 2018 at the request of Yeray Monasterio of ZERYNTHIA (one of BCE's partners in Spain) we sent a small team of volunteers to the area of the northern population to see if we could find any populations outside its known range. We were provided with maps showing the distribution of *Vella aspera* and after acquainting the team with the butterfly and the foodplant we spent the next 9 days locating the foodplant but only finding the butterfly close to its known haunts.

In April 2019 we once again travelled to Los Monegros for a further 8 day survey checking previous known localities and spreading the search

out further from its stronghold in the Valcuerna valley. We found further colonies in this area as well as finding **Sooty Orange-tip** (*Zegris eupheme*) flying swiftly along the fields in the valley floor.

COVID put paid to our planned survey trip in 2020 but we resumed our surveys in 2022 where we found *bazae* on nearly all of the hilltops along the Valcuerna valley but failed to find any at a small site about 40km away where we had seen them in previous years.

In 2024 Butterfly Conservation Europe held its Board meeting in Granollers (just north of Barcelona) and we arranged to use the few days following to undertake ▼



Spanish Greenish Black-tip
(*Euchloe bazae*) cont.

fieldwork for *bazae*. With Board members, advisers, partners and some local students we were a party of nearly 25 and once we had visited the best site so that all could see the species we split into groups to survey most of the lower Valcuerna area and we found the butterfly in reasonably good numbers.

As mentioned earlier whilst the area occupied by the northern populations are in Natura 2000 sites the area where *E b bazae* is found does not enjoy any legal protection. In early 2024 we were alerted that there was a proposal to install power lines across the most important southern *bazae* areas. ZERYNTHIA organised a petition to object to the proposals and you may remember that this petition was circulated to BC and EBG members and as a result signatures increased dramatically with several thousand signatures from UK. Fortunately the petition has had the desired effect and the power company has agreed to reroute the lines to avoid the best *bazae* area.

E. bazae bazae - note the absence of pink fringe (photo M Davies)



In December 2024 came some dramatic news: a fourth population of *bazae* had been discovered. This newly-discovered population is also in Andalusia and only 15 km from the original population in Hoya de Baza. More interestingly its larval foodplant is neither *Eruca vesicaris* nor *Vella aspera* but a closely related plant *Vella pseudocytisus*. Despite the closeness of the two areas there have never been any sightings of the butterfly in between. More surveys will be undertaken.

The species is sensitive to change and the intensification of agriculture in the Andalusian populations is worrying; the priority now is to attempt to ensure that its southern populations' habitat gains legal protection.

Mike Prentice



Habitat of the newly discovered population (photo Y Monasterio)

Photographing Butterflies - A Learning Curve

Some years ago I noticed an advert in 'Butterflies' magazine for a guided butterfly watching trip to the French Pyrenees. This is an area of France that I am very fond of and had enjoyed taking photographs of the butterflies that I had encountered on my walks in the area. But the thought of being guided to the best locations to find the maximum numbers of butterflies was irresistible and I signed up. The trip was a great success and in addition to seeing lots of lovely butterflies and flowers I made some good friends with fellow enthusiasts on the trip.

Black-veined white (*Aporia crataegi*), Prades, France. Olympus E-M5, 43mm f/9 1/200sec



At the time I had a digital SLR camera with a 12-50mm lens which also had a macro facility which I thought would serve me well and indeed I managed to capture many pleasing images of the butterflies that we found. The mountain meadows that we visited were full of wild flowers which attracted many nectaring butterflies and I was able to approach butterflies that were busily feeding to get my shots.

One Step forward ?

One of the other guests on the trip was using a 'crossover' camera, that is a digital camera which has a fixed lens rather than interchangeable but with an amazing zoom capability (up to 50x magnification) and I was very impressed by his ability to capture full frame images of butterflies without having to creep up close to them so I determined to check this option out on getting home.

Dusky Heath (*Coenonympha dorus*), Queyras, France. Olympus E-M5, 60mm f/7.1 1/500sec



I was soon the proud owner of a 'crossover' camera and I went back down to France to my usual haunts to try it out. I must admit that at first I found zooming in on the butterflies a little more tricky than I had imagined but I soon got the

hang of it and managed to get some good pictures. On returning home, though, and downloading these onto my computer I was a little disappointed with the quality of the shots, they were not up to the standard achieved with my SLR so it was back to square one for me.

A macro view – but too far down the queue ?

For my next trip, this time to the French Alps I added a dedicated 60mm macro lens to my equipment to see what improvement to the image quality this might bring and I was very pleased with the results it gave. ▼



Photographing Butterflies
- A Learning Curve cont.

Spanish Chalkhill Blue (*Lysandra albicans arragonensis*), Sierra de Albarracin, Spain. Olympus E-M5, 60mm f/6.3 1/500sec



Next I was off to the Montes Universales another butterfly paradise in central Spain around the lovely old town of Albarracin. Again I was using my SLR with the 60mm macro lens and this was fine for the majority of butterflies encountered in the meadows. However, when a rarity was spotted, usually by our keen sighted guide, a kind of protocol was observed (by most of the guests) whereby those with long

lenses would be first to get some shots of the butterfly before those of us using macro lenses would approach closer and finally those taking photos with mobile phones would get a chance if the butterfly was cooperative enough to still be there. Often as not though the butterflies were gone before we were able to approach closely and I missed out on getting a photograph of the iconic **Zapater's Ringlet** (*Erebia zapateri*) as it flew off after only a few seconds.

I therefore determined to invest in a telephoto lens and on returning home I ordered a 40-150mm zoom lens and this served me well on a couple of subsequent trips to Greece.

Telephoto lenses

I then decided to spread my wings further and went on a trip to South Africa again with my 40-150mm zoom and was pleased to note that one of the other guests on the trip was using the same camera that I was but with a 300mm telephoto lens and he very kindly offered to let me use his lens for a day as he thought that I would be impressed by what it could achieve. I was, and yes, you've guessed it, on returning home the 300m lens was soon on order.



Sooty copper (*Lycaena tityrus*), Peloponnese, Greece. Olympus E-M5, 60mm f/6.3 1/500sec

This has now become my standard lens for use in the field and I have managed to get excellent images of everything from the tiny **Grass Jewel** (*Freyeria trochylus*) to **Golden Birdwings** (*Troides aecus*) in Thailand and India. I find it be very versatile in that I can get good shots of roosting, nectaring or puddling butterflies without having to get too close and putting them up as well as being able to capture images of butterflies which don't stop when nectaring but are always on the move. It also has the bonus that if an interesting bird is spotted that can be photographed too. I generally shoot on manual as I like to be in control of the shutter speed and aperture allowing the camera to select the ISO number and I find this generally works well although in poor light it can lead to some noise in the background. ▼



I have also added a 90mm macro lens to my line up which I use mostly when I go out in the early mornings or on overcast days to hopefully find roosting butterflies and this gives excellent close up images full of detail although it does not have the versatility of the 300m telephoto.

Swallowtail (*Papilio machaon*),
Norfolk. Olympus E-M1, 300
f/5.6 1/500sec



Should I use flash ?

On my last couple of trips I noted that the guides, who were both excellent photographers, were using diffused flash for their photos and they both encouraged me to try that out as the flash softens any shadows and brings out the true colours of the butterfly. So the learning curve goes on and I now have just acquired a flash and am looking forward to seeing how I get on with that. So watch this space for further developments.

Throughout my journey I have always been grateful for the friendship and advice received from both leaders and fellow guests, many of whom are much more experienced and skilful photographers than I. But then photographing butterflies is not all about technique and equipment it's about capturing an image that encapsulates the pleasure of the time spent with these fascinating insects out in landscapes where they are still relatively abundant. Let's do all we can to ensure that future generations will be able to experience this same joy.

Allan Ferguson



Little Tiger Blue (*Tarucus balkanicus*),
Kerkini, Greece.
Olympus E-M1,
300mm f/4.5
1/320sec



Apollo (*Parnassius apollo*), Picos de Europa. Olympus E-M1, 300mm f/6.3

Something completely different....

It is always exciting to experience something new and out of the ordinary when butterflying. This usually occurs when encountering a new or unexpected species. Aberrations also create the same reaction. I will not attempt to define 'aberration'. For the purposes of this brief article let us assume that it applies to a butterfly that is noticeably different from the accepted typical specimen or one of its forms.



Dolmen

In recent years I have encountered and managed to photograph two, what I consider to be, stunning examples of such aberrations. The first was in the Dordogne in mid June 2023. It was a dull day and the site contained a prehistoric dolmen which added to the mystery of the encounter. Whilst following a few fritillaries which were flying amongst the tangled, somewhat spiky scrub there was a flash of very bright blue - but it didn't look right! Was that chequered wings with orange spots? After chasing for over an hour and accumulating a number of painful scratches the 'little blighter' finally posed for her photograph to be taken. According to Russwurm this beauty is female **Adonis Blue** (*Lysandra bellargus ab. ceronus*)

Adonis Blue
(*Lysandra bellargus*)



The second magic moment was last year in the Jura. I was walking along a narrow strip of flowery meadow between a fence and a forest when this pale ghost-like insect got up, whizzed past me and over the formidable barbed wire fence and out of reach. What was that? Was it a moth? I waited to see if it would return to the flowers it had been feeding on but no luck. I marked the spot for my return journey. An hour later I cautiously approached the ▼



Adonis Blue female (*L. bellargus ab. ceronus*)

Something completely different.... cont.



Marsh Fritillary (*Euphydryas aurinia* ab. *atratu*)



Marsh Fritillary (*E. aurinia*)

same area and there it was - a worn Marsh Fritillary? Not quite, this handsome, near perfect individual would appear to be a very pale **Marsh Fritillary** (*Euphydryas aurinia*) aberration. If anyone can provide a more exact identification please get in touch. Unfortunately, I was unable to get a view of the underside which may have been equally spectacular.

Have you had similar memorable encounters? If so, please share it with your fellow members. Send in your photos with an accompanying paragraph giving some background information.

Bill Raymond
billraymond@hotmail.co.uk



Surveys for the Nevada Grayling (*Pseudochazara williamsi*) in South-East Spain

The Nevada Grayling (*Pseudochazara williamsi*) is endemic to Europe and one of only six species listed as Critically Endangered in the new European butterfly Red List. In earlier Red Lists, it wasn't even listed because at the time it was considered a subspecies of an Asian butterfly, *Pseudochazara hippolyte*, which was previously assessed as Least Concern.

The Nevada Grayling's entire range has always been restricted to the mountains of south-east Spain, including the Sierra Nevada. The paucity of recent observations could have been attributed to under-recording but two of our Spanish colleagues, José Miguel Barea-Azcón and Javier Olivares, suspected otherwise and hypothesised climate change might actually be having a similar impact as it already has had on several other endemic butterflies in the region.

José Miguel and Javier began to re-survey known sites but many of these are on mountain peaks between 2,100-2,400m though it can occur as low as 1,800m and as high as 2,700m. Walking these peaks is arduous and only a few sites can be accessed by vehicle. Together with the vagaries of mountain weather, this means that a couple of surveyors are only going to cover a proportion of the sites each year. So that's when EBG offered to help and we organised week long surveys, working alongside our Spanish colleagues, in both 2023 and 2024.


Nevada Grayling
(*Pseudochazara williamsi*),
Underside



Nevada Grayling (*Pseudochazara williamsi*) is Critically Endangered and restricted to a few mountain ranges in south-east Spain where it is threatened by both climate change and changes in grazing management.

Organising these surveys was challenging to say the least as we tried to coincide with the peak flight period of the butterfly and we had to organise accommodation in several villages as the sites are spread across the provinces of Granada, Almeria and Murcia. To make matters worse, I had to pull out of the 2023 survey for personal reasons at the last minute. I am enormously grateful that Dave Plowman stepped in and coordinated EBG volunteers. You may recall Dave reported on that survey in EBG eNewsletter 34 October 2023.

Fortunately, I was able to participate in the 2024 survey and was accompanied by EBG members, John Austin, Robert Bleay, Harry Clarke, Martin Davies and Jon Hopes. Harry ▼



Surveys for the Nevada Grayling cont.



Clarke was also on the 2023 tour and deserves a special thanks for his contribution, not least because he proved the fittest of us and was able to scale all the peaks with Javier. Mind you three of us caught Covid-19, so that's my excuse for not participating in every ascent!



Spanish Argus (*Aricia morronensis*), Male Underside

Other high altitude specialities

On the first day (14th July), those of us arriving early went to the well-known Veleta site at the western end of the Sierra Nevada to try and find some of the other threatened mountain endemic butterflies. We were lucky enough to see **Spanish Argus** (*Aricia morronensis*), **Nevada Blue** (*Polyommatus golgus*), **Spanish Brassy Ringlet** (*Erebia hispania*) but were too late in the season for **Zullich's Blue** (*Agriades zullichii*).

Between the 15th July and 20th July we surveyed eight sites, mostly further north-east of the Sierra Nevada, but returning at the end of the week to the eastern end of that mountain range. Nevada Grayling had been previously recorded at six of the eight survey sites, but we also visited two sites at lower altitude and recorded the other threatened endemic **Andalusian Anomalous Blue** (*Polyommatus violetae*) at one of these.



Nevada Blue (*Polyommatus golgus*), Male Underside

Overall, we recorded 60 butterfly species, although for some, only a single individual at one site was seen. Nevertheless, I think everyone saw and photographed most of the specialities, including the Nevada Grayling which was recorded at three of our six target sites. However, at Sierra de Maria only 11 adults were seen and in a relatively small patch of habitat – which was estimated by Javier and Harry to be even smaller than in 2023, so not good news. We didn't see another Nevada Grayling until four days later when just three were recorded at Sierra Seca, but we saved the best until last with 19 adults recorded at El Buitre in the Sierra Nevada. ▼



Surveys for the Nevada Grayling cont.

A species that is struggling

Our surveys and other work by José Miguel and Javier confirmed the butterfly has been lost from seven of the eleven mountains on which it had occurred. So this species really is on the verge of global extinction.

Spanish Brassy Ringlet (*Erebia hispania*), Male Upperside



What factors are driving these losses? Like other Spanish mountain endemic butterflies, climate change is the chief culprit, although the precise mechanism is not known and needs further research. Whatever, the mechanism, the altitudinal distribution has shifted upwards in a relatively short period of time and on all occupied sites, the Nevada Grayling has nowhere else to go.

The habitat of this butterfly is open and dry, where grassy vegetation alternates with bare, sandy or pebbly ground, sometimes with scattered bushes. The larval hostplant is probably Somerset Hair-grass *Koeleria vallessiana* but other grasses may be used. At El Buitre the vegetation look more suitable with both larval hostplants and nectar sources in abundance, but on most other sites with low numbers or where it had become extinct, the preferred habitat has been degraded by overgrazing. Where the vegetation is shorter the microclimate is hotter still and it seems likely overgrazing is exacerbating the climate change problem.

Is there more potential undiscovered habitat ?

The data collected during 2023-24 has been used by José Miguel to model its current and predicted distribution. Whilst most of the mountains are predicted to have even less suitable habitat in future, and which will be even more isolated, there is a glimmer of hope in the Sierra Nevada. This is the largest of the mountain ranges and the model predicts there may be suitable habitat where the species might persist, so further surveys will be undertaken by Spanish colleagues to see if there are extant populations awaiting discovery.

There are also plans to produce a species recovery plan which EBG are contributing to and which we hope will persuade the Spanish authorities to implement urgent conservation action. Whilst climate change is a global problem, at the local scale, bringing overgrazing under control might well make a significant difference for this species by allowing recovery of larval hostplants, nectar sources and by creating cooler microclimates within the vegetation. To that end, trials using grazing exclosures will be established soon to provide the evidence that overgrazing must be prevented.



Andalusian Anomalous Blue (*Polyommatus violetae*), Underside

Working on this project has been an enormous privilege. Of course, there is a great deal of enjoyment to be had from seeing these butterflies, walking through these stunning landscapes and making new friends in Europe, but we all found it really satisfying to feel that our efforts will make a difference to one Europe's most threatened butterflies.

Sam Ellis



Archiving Photos

I don't take photographs though I do take a few pics of people and places on my phone. The only exception is moths for which I need the ID confirmed. A long time ago I realised that photographing butterflies was not my forte and that there were many people better at it than me. I also found carrying a camera an encumbrance in the field. I carry a net where allowed and occasionally catch *Pyrgus* skippers or *Melitaea* fritillaries and even in the UK Green-veined Whites to be sure of the ID. I carry a walking pole. I am constantly scribbling butterfly names in a notebook. I use binoculars. I have not enough hands for a camera. For me working with others in the field, especially photographers has been a very useful experience. Leading Greenwings tours or EBG surveys I have met many very good photographers and am delighted to shine my laser pointer near a butterfly so they can see it and photograph it. We work as a team, two pairs of eyes are better than one. A preliminary joint decision on ID may be revised later with the aid of photographs. I need an accurate list of records. They want great photos. The EBG annual calendar competition has attracted great photos of butterflies and is a money earner for EBG. The competition is fierce. Many of these photographers are really skilled and they take some exquisite photos. Some have spent a fortune, not only on equipment, but visiting far flung corners of the globe and have computers with thousands of images of beautiful butterflies. Some of these people, usually men, are getting on a bit. What to me would be tragic is for all those images to be lost and their PC consigned to the tip. One chap (KB) invited an author to copy any images he wanted for a book on the insects of Europe. A generous gesture that ensured that those images were put to good use.

I suspect that many photographers have named their images, allocated them to folders and indexed the lot. This will not always be true. Some images will be misidentified and a few will not be top quality. For European Butterflies Bill Raymond, whose excellent ID guides are on the EBG website, has struggled for decent images of some species. This is despite Matt Rowlings, whose excellent website has many great butterfly images of almost every species in Europe, and several others, being very generous with their images. The IUCN Red List needed photos. To me a library of images held by a responsible person or organisation donated by people for conservation purposes is badly needed. It would help if the donor is still around for queries: a photo would need a who, what, when and where every time.

I may have found a volunteer to take this on. There needs to be guarantees to donors about the recipient not using them for personal gain. There needs to be rules about accreditation, tact about what constitutes a useful photograph and care over ID. However for someone with the knowledge and time it could be a rewarding occupation. I feel that especially in the current climate, BC HQ does not need to be involved. I also suspect that with intelligent publicity it could be a useful resource for academics, conservationists and NGOs. We should market calendars to commercial companies with the money going to conservation.

The sheer beauty of the 20,000 species of butterfly is staggering. Nature is usually a better artist than humans. We need to use these gorgeous images to enthuse the next generation and help to conserve them, not just in the UK, but around the world.

If it is to be worth doing it needs the generosity and cooperation of photographers and there needs to be a general acceptance by butterfly photographers that this is the way to go. There may be an online platform that would be more suitable. I would welcome your views.

Simon Spencer cerisy@btinternet.com

Late-season butterflies of the Aegean Island of Rhodes

At the end of a poor butterfly season in the UK, and with Autumn rapidly closing in, postings of sightings of interesting species still on the wing in the Eastern Mediterranean, particularly the Aegean Island of Rhodes, prompted a late-season exploration (27th Oct – 6th Nov) in search of some sunshine and butterfly activity, including the prospect of a few 'new' species for our European list!

Dark Grass Blue
(*Zizeeria karsandra*)



Dark Grass Blue
(*Zizeeria karsandra*)

The eastern Mediterranean had endured a prolonged heatwave with temperatures peaking well into the 40s on Rhodes during the high season, and by early November, with the seasonal rains yet to materialise, the landscape was pretty parched - locating any flowering vegetation was likely to be challenging! We based ourselves in the town of Kolymbia half way down the east coast of the Island of Rhodes. This late in the season, the tourist industry was definitely scaling down with many hotels and restaurants already shutting-up shop, despite the continuing wall-to-wall sunshine and temperatures in the mid-20s!

The irrigated gardens of our beach front hotel produced an oasis in this baked landscape and without leaving the hotel grounds we located, amongst others, **Lang's Short-tailed Blue** (*Leptotes pirithous*), **Geranium Bronze** (*Cacyreus marshalli*), **Painted Lady** (*Vanessa cardui*) and **Plain Tigers** (*Danaus chrysippus*) in reasonable numbers, with a small neglected rockery supporting the first of our target species, the **Dark Grass Blue** (*Zizeeria karsandra*), within sight of the hotel pool! Until relatively recently this was considered a sub-species of the **African Grass Blue** (*Zizeeria knysna*) which is widely distributed across South Eastern Spain, North Africa and the Canary Islands. The 'Dark' species, which is also recorded from Crete and Sicily, has more distinct underside markings and is a more attractive form. It was seen widely on this trip in coastal regions of Rhodes, particularly in the urban environment.

Exploring dried-up riverbeds

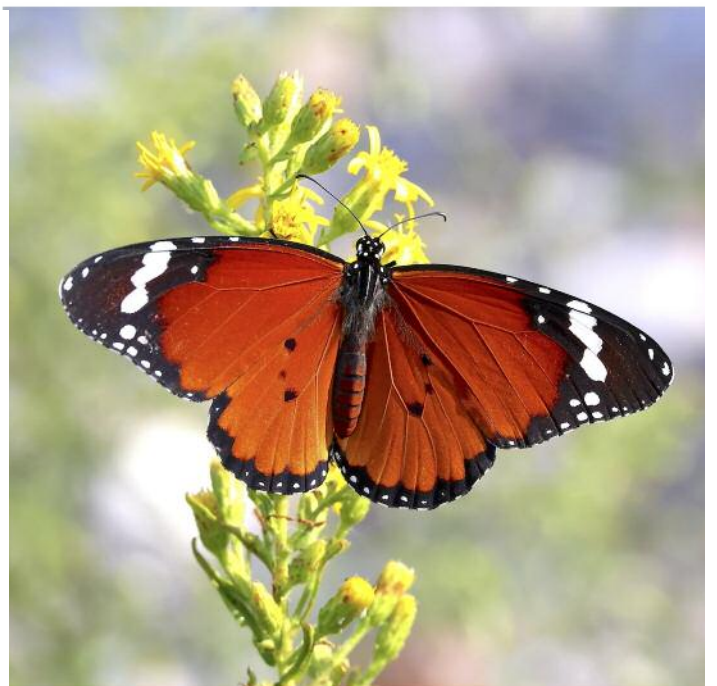
Our fortuitous choice of location placed us close to several dry riverbeds north along Afantou Bay in the direction of Faliraki, several of which supported extensive areas of the sticky yellow-flowering Woody Fleabane (*Dittrichia viscosa*). This late season species attracted good numbers of **Swallowtails** (*Papilio machaon*) and ▼



Late-season butterflies of the Aegean Island of Rhodes cont.



Swallowtail (*Papilio machaon*)



Plain Tiger (*Danaus chrysippus*)



Late-season butterflies of the Aegean Island of Rhodes cont.



Eastern Bath White (*Pontia edusa*)



Long-tailed Blues (*Lampides boeticus*)





Late-season butterflies of the Aegean
Island of Rhodes cont.



Pygmy Skippers (*Gegenes pumilio*)



Millet Skipper (*Pelopidas thrax*)



Aegean Meadow brown (*Maniola telmessia*)





Late-season butterflies of the Aegean Island of Rhodes cont.



Lesser Fiery Copper (*Lycaena thersamon*)



Lesser Fiery Copper (*Lycaena thersamon*)

Plain Tigers (*Danaus chrysippus*), as well as **Clouded Yellows** (*Colias crocea*), **Eastern Bath Whites** (*Pontia edusa*), **Long-tailed Blues** (*Lampides boeticus*) and a few fresh **Common Blues** (*Polyommatus icarus*). The sandy/stony riverbeds with sparse vegetation were the ideal Mediterranean coastal habitat for supporting an abundance of **Pygmy Skippers** (*Gegenes pumilio*), good numbers of **Mallow Skippers** (*Carcharodus alceae*), and our second target species the **Millet Skipper** (*Pelopidas thrax*), the latter in much smaller numbers. This is a specialist of the Aegean Islands and SW Turkey, and has more recently taken hold in Corfu. It's more extensive and brighter spot pattern, larger size and distinctive olive green colouration readily separates it from the sandy Pygmy Skipper. The scrubby margins of these hot, dry riverbeds revealed a few tatty late-season **Eastern Rock Grayling** (*Hipparchia syriaca*), and the third of our targets, the **Aegean Meadow Brown** (*Maniola telmessia*), a species found only on a few of the Southern Aegean Islands (Lesbos, Samos and Rhodes). The female is particularly attractive with more extensive orange patches on the forewing than its close cousins. She aestivates in the hot summer, to reappear late in the season to lay eggs. Of the half-dozen seen, all were colourful females.

A few miles north of our base we discovered a narrower riverbed draining in to Afantou Bay, but bone-dry at this stage of the season! Although overgrown in many places, some open areas adjacent to a section of south-facing riverbank supported more of the ubiquitous Woody Fleabane and an extensive area of Straggly Knot Grass (*Polygonum aviculare*) with its tiny attractive pale pink flowers attracting a small colony of stunning **Lesser Fiery Coppers** (*Lycaena thersamon*) ▾



Late-season butterflies of the Aegean
Island of Rhodes cont.

Eastern Baton Blue
(*Pseudophilotes vicrama*)



Grass Jewel
(*Freyeria trochylus*)



basking in the early morning sunshine. This species was a strong contender for our 'butterfly of the year'; even in early November, many of the colony (perhaps 8+) were very fresh specimens, including a few fabulous fiery red males!

Further afield, an excursion to the Old Town of Rhodes at the northern end of the Island yielded the only **Large Wall Browns** (*Lasiommata maera*) of the trip in some flowerbeds on the harbour side of the town ramparts. A visit to Rhodes wouldn't be complete without a day exploring the Acropolis and archaeological sites around Lindos Bay. The dry, scrubby hillsides sloping towards the Bay, and across to Cape Agios Emilianos and the Kleoboulos Tomb, yielded little flowering vegetation, so observations were very limited over quite a large area, give or take a few Pygmy Skippers and some very tatty Eastern Rock Grayling. In contrast, a few well-tended gardens, driveways, and drainage channels on the margins of the town supported patches of more verdant vegetation and yielded a variety of species, many already described, but notably an unexpected ▼



Butterfly Conservation
Europe cont.



Mediterranean Skipper
(*Gegenes nostradamus*)

mint-condition female **Eastern Baton Blue** (*Pseudophilotes vicrama*). This species is found widely across Eastern Europe and the Balkans and is described as bivoltine (April/May and then July/August), but this fresh specimen in early November suggested a small, late third-brood.

A brief glimpse of a jewel

One species we were particularly keen to spot, though likely at the end of its flight season on this trip, is reported in very small numbers from Rhodes, and from a few other southern Greek Islands and areas of the Greek mainland. It has been recorded on the hot, dry slopes around Lindos where its larval food plant Hairy Heliotrope (*Heliotropium hirsutissimum*) can be found in small patches on barer ground. After searching for many hours, and successfully finding the food plant thinly spread over a large area, we were disappointed not to locate our prize! However, a very useful tip from Matt Berry led us to a site up the coast to the north of Faliraki around some dry grassland adjacent to a small olive grove on sloping, stony terrain where plenty of flowering Heliotrope was evident. After

several hours of searching and circling around, a tiny male **Grass Jewel** (*Freyeria trochylus*) made an all-too-brief appearance, only to leave us dangling for a few more hours in anticipation of a second sighting. Alas, it wasn't to be!

A new species for Rhodes

Far and away the most abundant species seen across the Island this late in the season was the Pygmy Skipper, estimated in the many 100s in some spots. It's close cousin the **Mediterranean Skipper** (*Gegenes nostradamus*) is known from the Greek mainland, Crete and the Northern Aegean Islands but is unconfirmed from Rhodes. The two species are readily confused in the field so good quality digital images are critical in separating the two. A prominent tuft of hairs on the hindwing costa and a largely unmarked underside hindwing are cited as distinguishing features of the latter. Careful scrutiny of images from three sites on the east coast, with some confirmatory data from Matt Berry, and subsequently verified by Lazaros Pamperis, indicated that this species has, indeed, reached the Island of Rhodes and may well have been under-reported amongst the large colonies of its Pygmy cousins (Berry, M., Searle, M. (2025) *Parnassiana* Archives 13: 3-4).

In conclusion, it had been an excellent 10 days on Rhodes, and despite the extremely arid conditions, but fabulous late-season weather, we identified 25 species, including 5 new species to add to our European list, with the added bonus of one new species for the Island!

Mark & Caroline Searle
marksearle1959@outlook.com



Danube Clouded Yellow (*Colias myrmidone*)

This beautiful butterfly once widespread in Central and Eastern Europe has long been a target for EBG surveys. In fact our very first Newsletter published in Spring 2007 contained an article about a search which confirmed that the butterfly was now extinct in Hungary but referred to the thriving population in Transylvania.



Danube Clouded Yellow
(*Colias myrmidone*),
(photo K.Woonton)

EBG's first foray into Transylvania in Romania to search for *myrmidone* was in 2009 but despite the "thriving population" none were found ! Since that first unsuccessful attempt EBG has not only helped fund work by German, Romanian and Czech experts and volunteers but carried out no fewer than 9 survey trips to Romania as well as searches in Bulgaria (unsuccessfully) and in Belarus where the population appeared to be quite healthy.

Myrmidone was once very widespread in Romania and in the winter of 2014/15 we gathered all of the historical records of the species and localities it had inhabited in Romania. We shared this information with Matthias Dolek, the German expert who co-authored the Species Action Plan for the **Danube Clouded**

Yellow (the first adopted by the EU for any butterfly species). We made survey trips in May and August 2015 as the species is normally double-brooded (although there is also sometimes a third brood).

In consultation with Matthias and local experts our survey work in 2015 helped to establish that there now appeared to be three main populations of *myrmidone* in Romania – one in the northern Carpathians and two in the Apuseni area to the west and south-west of Cluj-Napoca.

As a result of the survey work we carried out in 2015 the Romanian government scheduled the three areas as Natura 2000 sites which affords the butterfly some measure of protection although it's habits and lifestyle are complex which make it difficult to fully protect. ▼



Danube Clouded Yellow
(*Colias myrmidone*)



An information board at one of the protected sites

The butterfly's larval food plants are three species of *Chamaecytisus* a broom-like legume. The butterfly lays eggs singly on the leaves often on new growth at the end of shoots which unfortunately are the parts of the plant that grazing animals like to eat. The butterfly however relies upon a certain amount of grazing to keep scrub down and to allow the *Chamaecytisus* to survive. *Chamaecytisus* also tends to flourish best where the ground has been broken whether by vehicle tracks or animal trampling so some human and domestic animal presence is important to it's survival. As far as we can tell a regime of light to medium density grazing works best and often the food plant flourishes in the steeper areas which the animals have difficulty reaching.



A freshly-laid *myrmidone* egg on the larval foodplant

Our survey work was inevitably disrupted by COVID but we resumed our efforts in 2023. Matthias Dolek had produced a model which predicted over 80 sites where the butterfly might be found and we set out to "ground-truth" the model. We decided to concentrate on the areas to the west of Cluj an area we had got to know well from our 2015 surveys and a workshop which had taken place in 2019.

On our first trip in May 2023 we took Google Earth maps of 24 sites to investigate. As I was the

only participant who had previously seen *myrmidone* we first went to one of the Natura 2000 sites so that the volunteers could see and confidently identify the butterfly and distinguish it from **Clouded Yellow** (*Colias crocea*) and also see the larval food-plant.

Despite some weather problems we visited 21 of the sites over the next 10 days and although we drew blanks on many, we did find the butterfly on two new sites (more than 45 on one of the new sites) and found three sites with good quantities of food-plant but without seeing the butterfly. A problem with looking for *myrmidone* is that it only flies when the sun is shining so even on a warm but overcast day it remains obstinately out of sight.



Danube Clouded Yellow
(*Colias myrmidone*)



Typical *myrmidone* habitat

Our second trip in 2023 followed a similar pattern to the first and once again we found two new *myrmidone* sites close to the sites we had discovered in the Spring. It seemed as if we had discovered a new meta-population a few kilometres away from the previously-known localities.



Alcon Blue (*Phengaris Alcon*), eggs on Marsh Gentian *Gentiana pneumonanthe*

In 2024 we again visited the Cluj area in both May and August and investigated some new sites and resurveyed the sites we had discovered in 2023. On the second trip we were joined for a day by Professor Laszlo Rakosy the leading lepidopterist expert in Romania and we were able to show him *myrmidone* on a couple of sites he was unaware of. In turn he showed us a nearby population of **Scarce Large Blue (*Phengaris telejus*)** and he is proposing to ask the Romanian government to schedule the whole area - the *myrmidone* sites (where we also found **Alcon Blue (*Phengaris alcon*)**, **Large Copper (*Lycaena dispar*)** and **Marsh Fritillary (*Euphydryas aurinia*)** and the *telejus* site as a new Natura 2000 site. We will keep our fingers crossed !

Whilst we have been surveying in the Cluj area there have been surveys carried out further east by Belgian and Romanian volunteers which have discovered a new population some distance south of the previously known areas. We propose to visit this area in 2025 to try to establish the range that the butterfly occupies. ▼



Danube Clouded Yellow
(*Colias myrmidone*)



Group relaxing after a hard day's surveying work in the field

In case this article sounds like undertaking these surveys is "all work and no play" it has to be said that Romania is a great place to visit for butterflies and to see a rural way of life that steps back in time with horses and carts on the roads, large flocks of sheep guarded by fierce dogs and plenty of unspoilt countryside. On our last four visits as well as monitoring **Danube Clouded Yellow** we have seen more than 120 species of butterfly including **Pallas's Fritillary** (*Argynnis laodice*), **Violet Copper** (*Lycaena helle*), **Spinose Skipper** (*Muschampia cribrellum*), **Fenton's Wood White** (*Lep-tidea morsei*) and **Woodland Brown** (*Lopinga achine*). Even on the days when we are principally looking for *myrmidone* we normally see 25 – 35 other species.

Mike Prentice

Tristan Lafranchis 1960 – 2025

It is with profound sadness I report the death of my special friend Tristan Lafranchis, the eminent French naturalist and entomologist, whose books changed for ever the study of butterflies. It was a great privilege and a very special time for Anne and myself to explore Greece with him, his wife Tatiana and his young children, camping in the mountains and using his 'Butterflies of Europe – a new field guide and key' to learn how to identify European butterflies. This book was a game changer for European butterflies and though identification keys were normal in Entomology they had never been done for European butterflies before.

This book states on the front cover "Identifying Butterflies is Easy" – and Tristan certainly seemed to find it so. This book is still the 'Bible' of European butterfly people and I have often met people carrying it on butterfly sites in Europe. It is available as a free download <https://diatheo.weebly.com/butterflies-of-europe.html>



Tristan had already published 'Les Papillons de jour de France, Belgique et Luxembourg' so was well known to French entomologists. He was very against collecting and though he often handled butterflies they were always released immediately. He taught me to examine, very gently, the genitalia of male *Melitaea fritillaries*, using a hand lens which is the easiest way to separate some members of this group.

Tristan was also an expert botanist and his approach to butterflies was always informed by the plants he found. He would examine *Gentiana cruciata* for the eggs of **Alcon Blue** (*Phengaris alcon*). Sanfoin (*Onobrychis Sp.*) would always get him excited as it is the foodplant of many rare blues.

2011 David Dennis, Tristan Lafranchis and Simon Spencer Marsh Award Ceremony (photo Jim Asher)

Tristan taught me not only about butterflies but about life. He followed his passion, living frugally on his book income and doing tours for Greentours and then Greenwings. We had the luxury of a campervan, they had ancient tents and a battered Renault. The camping places were magical and butterflies unforgettable. ▼



Tristan Lafranchis
1960 – 2025 cont.



Tristan rarely came to England but made an exception when he was one of the first recipients of the Marsh European award for services to Butterflies in 2011.

His presence as a speaker at the European Butterflies Group conference in Digne les Bains in 2013 was crucial for bringing the Butterfly people of France together for the first time and was his only recent public appearance at a conference in France. True to form on the field trip which followed the conference he showed us an Osiris blue egg on Sanfoin.

He will be sorely missed by a lot of people.

For full biography in French <https://diatheo.weebly.com/biographie.html>

Simon and Anne Spencer



Some of Tristan's Books

Tristan Lafranchis looking for butterfly eggs (photo Jim Asher)



Osiris Blue egg
on Sanfoin
(photo Jim Asher)