

## Cyprus

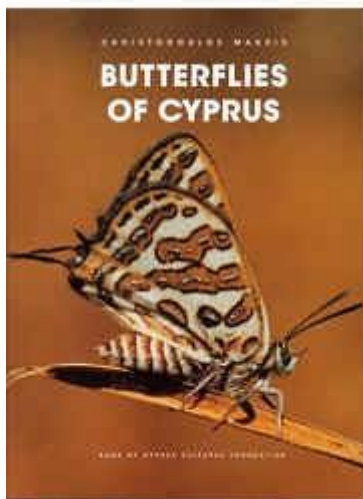
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European Butterflies Group Contact	Eddie John ( <a href="mailto:eddiejohn100@gmail.com">eddiejohn100@gmail.com</a> )
Local Contact	None
Butterfly Conservation Europe Partner	Eddie John ( <a href="mailto:eddiejohn100@gmail.com">eddiejohn100@gmail.com</a> )
Local Recording Scheme	Eddie John ( <a href="mailto:eddiejohn100@gmail.com">eddiejohn100@gmail.com</a> )
Butterfly List	Please see the website <a href="http://www.cyprusbutterflies.co.uk/page3.html">http://www.cyprusbutterflies.co.uk/page3.html</a> for a species checklist

## Books

**The Butterflies of Cyprus** by Christodoulos Makris. 2003. Bank of Cyprus Cultural Foundation, Nicosia (In English).

This extensively illustrated book includes colour photographs of butterflies in natural surroundings, life-size photographs of set specimens and distribution maps from the Cyprus Butterfly Recording Scheme. It is in large scale format and is not a field guide. Extracts from a couple of reviews are reproduced below.



“Given the number and lavish quality of the photographic plates in this work one could almost be forgiven for regarding it, at least on first glance, as a coffee-table publication. However, there is also a scientific content - and one that is of equally high content.” *Entomologist's Rec. J. Var.*, Vol 115 part 6: 295-296.

“In short, if you are interested in the butterflies of the Mediterranean, you should order this book immediately. Particularly when you consider all this is available for less than £30!



The endemics are not illustrated in Tolman and Lewington's Collins Field Guide to Butterflies of Britain and Europe, so if you are thinking of visiting Cyprus, this book is essential." *Bull. amat. Ent. Soc.*, Vol. 62, No. 449: 168-169.

**Butterflies of Cyprus 1998** (Records of a year's sightings) by Eddie John. 2000. Amateur Entomologists' Society, Pamphlet No. 15.

This 46-page booklet lists all species known to the author at the time of his stay in Cyprus in 1997-1998, together with notes and distribution maps on each of the species. A phenology chart tracking weekly sightings is also provided.

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**John, E. & Parker, R. 2002.** Dispersal of *Hipparchia cypriensis* (Holik, 1949) (Lepidoptera: Nymphalidae, Satyridae) in Cyprus, with notes on its Ecology and Life-history. *Entomologist's Gaz.* **53:** 3-18.

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**John, E. & Merit, X. 2008.** *Chilades galba* (Lederer, 1855) and *Aporia crataegi* (Linnaeus, 1758): significant contributions to the Cyprus Butterfly Recording Scheme, April / May 2008. *Atalanta* **39**. Band, Heft 1-4: 165-171

## Websites

Please refer to the website 'Butterflies of Cyprus' for further details:  
<http://www.cyprusbutterflies.co.uk>

The aims of the website are:

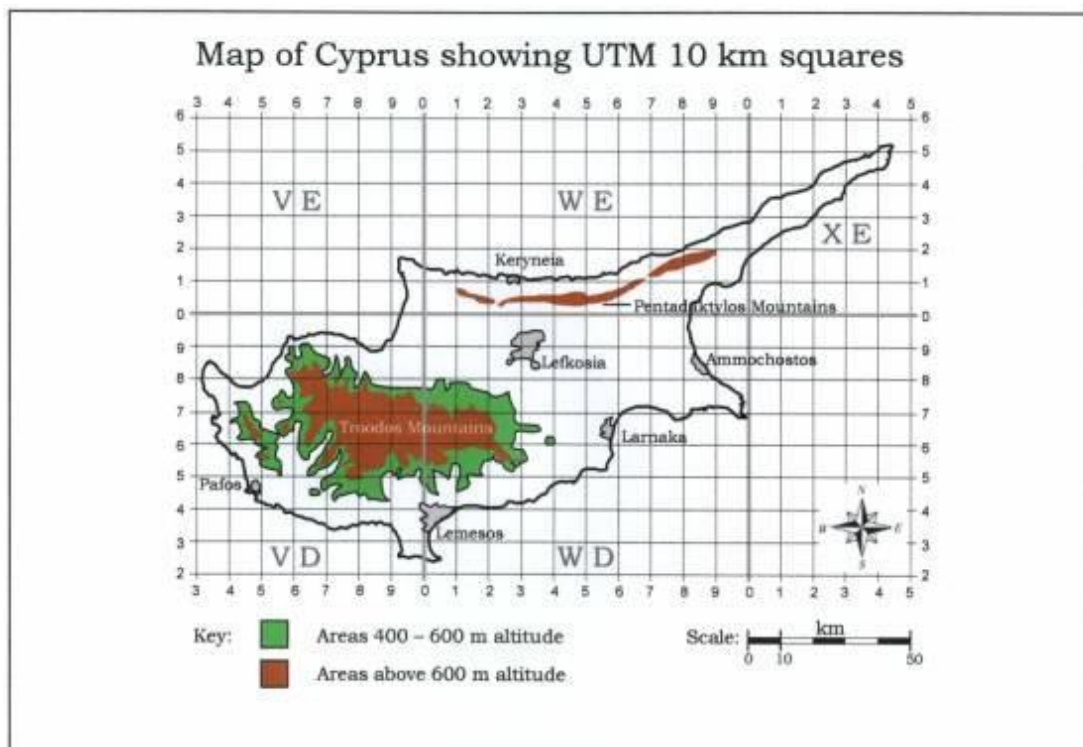
- to provide an accurate Cyprus butterfly species list, accompanied by brief notes on all species.

- to aid identification by listing key distinguishing characters of certain species, especially the smaller Lycaenids.
- to provide photographs of the less familiar butterflies such as the Levantine Leopard (*Cigaritis acamas*), Small Desert Blue (*Chilades galba*) and the endemic species, e.g. the Cyprus Meadow Brown (*Maniola cypricola*) which are rarely, if ever, referred to in the popular European butterfly books.
- to offer assistance to visitors and a point of reference for our network of existing recorders and future contacts.
- to provide guidance on obtaining a **Permit** to allow the study of butterflies (and all other invertebrates) in Cyprus, following the introduction of a recently introduced law which prohibits collection of invertebrates without a Permit.

## Holidays

There are no known, organized butterfly tours as species' numbers are too few. However, The Travelling Naturalist Wildlife Holidays visit Cyprus each spring and note butterfly sightings in addition to their prime interest - "Birds and Flowers on Aphrodite's Isle." See website at <http://www.naturalist.co.uk/index.htm> .

## Sites & Species





Although a relatively large island (9253 km<sup>2</sup>) the location of Cyprus on the crossroads of Europe and Asia, 70 km from the nearest mainland country (Southern Turkey) and with a typically arid eastern Mediterranean summer climate, combine to restrict the number of confirmed butterfly species to 52 (reduced from 53 in Makris 2003 - see John *et al.* 2006), although not all are resident.

Nevertheless, the island is relatively rich in endemics, which represent nearly 10% of the island's butterfly fauna. There are three endemic species:

- Cyprus Grayling (*Hipparchia cypriensis*)
- Cyprus Meadow Brown (*Maniola cypriicola*)
- Paphos Blue (*Glaucopsyche paphos*)



Cyprus Grayling  
(*Hipparchia cypriensis*)  
© Alison McArthur



Cyprus Meadow Brown  
(*Maniola cypriicola*)  
© Eddie John



Paphos Blue  
(*Glaucopsyche paphos*)  
© Don Wilks

and two endemic subspecies:

- Eastern Rock (or Syrian) Grayling (*Hipparchia syriaca cypriaca*)
- The Hermit (*Chazara briseis larnacana*)



Eastern Rock Grayling (*Hipparchia syriaca cypriaca*)  
© Christodoulos Makris



The Hermit (*Chazara briseis larnacana*)  
© Alison McArthur

## Phenology

No fewer than 14 species have been recorded in all months of the year, with 16 species possible in January and 20 in December. However, the key months to visit are May and June, with 49 (94% of total number recorded) and 48 (92%) species recorded respectively (CBRS data). Spring weather in Cyprus can be unpredictable – heavy rain may occur both in



coastal and mountainous areas (as in 2007) or there may be so little rain that the countryside becomes parched very early in the year, as was experienced in 2008.

## Where to see butterflies in Cyprus

While some species are confined to lowland areas (e.g. Little Tiger Blue (*Tarucus balkanicus*), Small Desert Blue (*Chilades galba*) and Millet Skipper (*Pelopidas thrax*)) others may only be encountered at higher altitudes (e.g. Southern White Admiral (*Limenitis reducta*), White-banded Grayling (*Pseudochazara anthelea*) and Lattice Brown (*Kirinia roxelana*)).

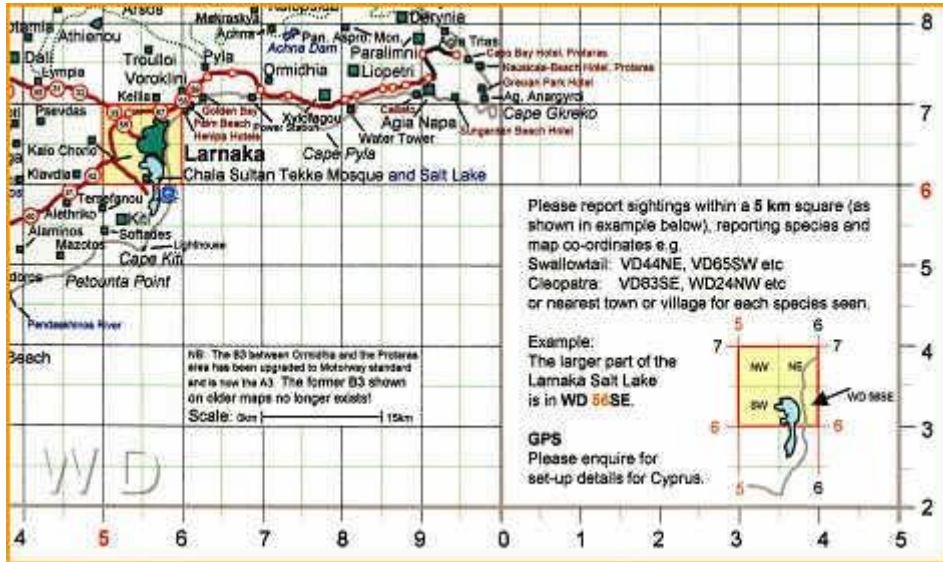
Prime sites are generally to be found at the intermediate to higher altitudes of the Troodos and Pentadaktylos (Kyrenia) Mountain ranges and in lowland areas in the vicinity of water.

The absence of records of Black-veined White (*Aporia crataegi*), Purple Hairstreak (*Neozephyrus quercus*) and Nettle-tree Butterfly (*Libythea celtis*) from northern Cyprus seems to indicate the presence of a greater number of species in the higher mountains of the Troodos Mountain range (Mount Olympos 1951 m) in the south of the island. However, it should also be recognized that the Pentadaktylos Mountain range (highest peak Kyparissovouno 1024 m), along with the remainder of the north may not be as well researched as the Troodos range in south of the island. The Pentadaktylos Mountains are shown on the map running parallel to the northern coastline of the island. The geology of the two described mountain ranges are dissimilar, perhaps also contributing to the absence in the north of species such as Small Bath White (*Pontia chloridice*) (John *et al.*, 2008).

## Cyprus Butterfly Recording Scheme

At the time of writing, the CBRS has records from 125 contributors. These comprise published records and unpublished data from visiting and resident lepidopterists, some of whom report their sightings each month. Feedback to recorders, in the form of a monthly phenology chart, together with comments on the month's sightings, is sent to key recorders each month.

The recording system is slightly hindered by the absence of commercially available maps showing UTM 5 or 10 km squares and appeals to the Cyprus Tourism Organisation for assistance have met with only partial success. Potential recorders are therefore sent an A4 computer-drawn copy of a 'map' which displays key towns/villages/landmarks in order to help with the placement of sightings. Recorders are encouraged to report sightings within a 5 km square, although 10 km distribution maps are also maintained. An enlarged section of the map is shown below.



The system is not automated, as no commercially available recording software is known for Cyprus. However, the scrutiny afforded every record ensures that potential errors of identification (or sightings from unlikely locations) are correctly interpreted before entries are added to the distribution maps. Anyone wishing to contribute records - either holiday records or on a routine basis - is requested to contact Eddie at the email address given above.

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