



Central Spain

Southern Hermit *Chazara prieuri*

For many years EBG had offered Research Bursaries (principally aimed at younger butterfly and moth enthusiasts) who brought ideas of projects for which they sought finance. In 2022 we decided to adopt a different approach: we would decide which species needed further research and we would invite candidates to respond to our request for surveys. This approach is particularly appropriate where extensive fieldwork is required but emergence time of the butterfly may vary and it is difficult to plan trips for EBG members at short notice. The motive was to augment our own volunteer surveys not to replace them.

The first example of this new approach was for Southern Hermit *Chazara prieuri*, a species where a sharp decline in sightings had been detected during butterfly holiday trips, a trend, which was confirmed by our Spanish colleagues.



Chazara prieuri Photo Dave Plowman

Through our contacts in Spain, we were able to recruit experienced Spanish MSc students to undertake survey work on this threatened species. In 2024 these researchers undertook 143 timed counts of 15 minutes at 117 sampling points.

Only 17 *prieuri* were recorded in 6 10km grid cells – 4 in grid cells where it had been recorded since 2004, 1 in a grid cell where it had not been recorded since 2004 and 1 in a newly-surveyed cell. A full report was produced and is available [here](#), on our website.

In 2025 surveys were once again undertaken but with revised methodology: the counts were made in June and July (2024 was July and August) and 58 timed counts were made with 48 individuals recorded (with a peak site count of 23). Once again, a full report was produced available [here](#) on our website. It is clear that this species is in trouble and we propose to continue EBG support for more surveys of it in 2026.