

Some butterfly background

If you thought there were only Cabbage White butterflies on the Common, you couldn't be more wrong! 28 different species have been found - only four are mainly white, and many are multi-coloured, like the stunning Peacock butterfly.

Most of the 28 species appear every year, many in large numbers, but some only in ones or twos. While some species are easy to find, others very difficult. In some cases, telling the difference between species can take much practice.

When to look for butterflies

Butterflies generally only fly on warm days (12 degrees Celsius or more) when there is plenty of sunshine, usually between April and September (though given favourable conditions, they can appear in March and as late as November). Some species are present throughout the season, but many only arrive in the summer. The best time of day to look for butterflies is late morning to late afternoon.

Where to look for butterflies

Butterflies can appear anywhere, though most exhibit some habitat preference. The best area is the Scope (the large woodland area on the west side of Trinity Road). Regularly mown areas offer virtually nothing, but uncut verges and areas of long grass and scrub can be fruitful.



Red Admiral

Tamás Nestor

Ones and twos everywhere.

The Friends of Wandsworth Common aim to engage the community in the protection, conservation and enhancement of the Common, recognising its natural beauty and ecological importance. In so doing, to foster a sense of community, mutual respect and understanding among different users. Join at www.wandsworthcommon.org and follow on Twitter and Instagram @wwcommon.

Butterfly Conservation is the UK charity dedicated to saving butterflies and moths, which are key indicators of the health of our environment. Butterfly Conservation improves landscapes for butterflies and moths, creating a better environment for us all. Join at www.butterfly-conservation.org and follow on Twitter and Instagram @savebutterflies.

Wandsworth Common's Beautiful Spring Butterflies

A brief identification guide to the spring butterflies of Wandsworth Common



Peacock

Adam Gor

Seen anywhere. Ones or twos.

This leaflet provides information about the butterflies that occur in the spring, how to identify them, and when and where to best see them in Wandsworth Common.

THE FRIENDS OF
WANDSWORTH
-COMMON-



Butterfly
Conservation



Brimstone

Tamás Nestor
Seen anywhere, but never in large numbers. Females are cream-coloured.



Comma

Iain Leach
Seen anywhere but favours woodland. As many as 5/6 at a time.



Holly Blue

Iain Leach
Very common everywhere. Females have black wingtips.



Small Copper

Bob Eade
Only appears occasionally. In more open areas.

Brown Argus



Iain Leach *Bob Eade*
Only 1 found so far. Flowery grassland.



Speckled wood

Bob Eade
Commonest butterfly on the Common. Favours oak trees and woodland, especially the Scope.



Small Tortoiseshell

Iain Leach
Now scarce. Look near nettle.



Green Hairstreak

Adam Gor
None yet seen, but expected. Flies very fast and is very hard to spot.



Small Heath

Iain Leach
Very scarce here. Open grassland.



Small White

Widespread and numerous.

Green-veined White



(male) Vlad Proklov *(female) Dean Morley*
Widespread and numerous, especially in woodland.

Large White



(male) Dean Morley *(female) Steve Maskell*
Widespread and numerous. Distinguish from other whites by black markings, not by size - the smallest large whites can be smaller than the largest small whites!

Orange Tip



(male) *(female)*
Only a few each year. Seen near garlic mustard in tree lines and woodland edges. Females lack orange wing tips and are not to be confused with green veined whites.

NOTE: Pictures are of butterflies in good condition. The appearance can deteriorate quite markedly with age (just like humans!)