

Recording Butterflies

Why It's Important

Your records go into the BC Glos database and then the County Recorder sends them to the national BC database to assist with nature conservation. Recording is the essential starting point for conserving these beautiful little creatures; if there were no records, it might be too late to take action to save species under threat, after someone finally realises something is wrong. The records are also sent to the Gloucestershire Centre for Environmental Records (run by Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust), where they assist in assessing planning applications hopefully to ensure that land, rich in wildlife, does not get destroyed by building developments. Some of our butterfly records also contribute to the Government's Biodiversity Indicators. So..... recording is not boring at all!

How to Send in Records

Records are sent in several ways: by email, on paper and (by a few people) online using the Universal Nature Recording System (Ref. 1). The latter is quick and easy for County Recorders to process. Apart from that, the **normal preferred options** are to use BC Glos Excel recording forms or Excel output from Mapmate; please only send to one email address (preferably the appropriate one – see below) as otherwise your records might get duplicated. Paper forms are of course fine if you prefer. No matter how you send them, though, all records are good records as long as they contain sufficient information to be utilised (see below). Please send your records in before the end of December if possible.

Casual Forms should be sent to:

butterfly-recorder@gloucestershire-butterflies.org.uk.

Key Site Forms, for those involved, should be sent (for initial checking) to your area co-ordinator (Sue, Ken, Trish and Vic, as appropriate) at:

chair@gloucestershire-butterflies.org.uk	(Sue Smith, Stroud Area)
ken@gloucestershire-butterflies.org.uk	(Ken Cservenka, Cirencester Area)
Vice-chair@gloucestershire-butterflies.org.uk	(Trish Atkinson, Chelt. & Gloucester Areas)
vic@gloucestershire-butterflies.org.uk	(Vic Polley, Wotton- Dursley Area)

The Excel Key Sites forms are collated and processed by Trish into a very convenient format for the county recorders to import.

Paper forms should be sent to Chris Wiltshire at:

The Brambles, Stinchcombe Hill, Dursley, Gloucestershire GL11 6AQ

A new way of recording in the field is with the iRecord Butterfly smartphone app (Refs 2 and 3). The records are sent out by BC Head Office (HO) at the end of the season to county recorders for verification and data entry.

The Essential Parts of a Record

We can't put a record in unless it contains all these items:

Recorder's Name (Christian name and Surname)

Species name

Number seen (please use numbers, but alphabetical codes acceptable for large numbers)

Grid Reference (preferably 6 figures or 8 figures; 4 figures are acceptable for common species)

Place Name (nearest name on the OS map, supplemented by local name, reserve name, etc.)

Date

Additionally, not strictly required but very useful, is the *Habitat Code*, obtained from the table in the Casual and Key Sites forms (e.g. Calcareous Grassland is 34). Things like 'field, hedge, etc.' can't be entered.

The most frequent item missing is the Grid Reference, especially in emails giving news of recent sightings. Please **always give the grid reference** if you want us to treat the email as a record. If not, please say in the email that you intend to send in the record later on a recording form, as we may not realise and put in your record twice. It would help (for records we can directly import) **if the grid reference contains no spaces** e.g. SO678123 rather than, for example, SO 678 123.

Big Butterfly Count, etc.

If you submit butterfly records to BC HO for the Big Butterfly Count, the Wider Countryside Butterfly Survey, the BTO Garden Birdwatch or by iRecord Butterflies, please **don't also email** them to us at the Glos Branch, as we will be getting these records anyway from HO (to verify and enter) and it can be difficult to spot duplications in many thousands of records.

Finally...

Many thanks to all those who have sent in records and if you have any queries don't hesitate to ask Chris, Trish or Vic (contact details at the back of Antennae).

Ref. 1 <http://www.universalquestions.com/nature>

Ref. 2 <http://www.brc.ac.uk/irecord/butterfly-app-summary>

Ref. 3 iRecord Butterfly App, Antennae, Autumn 2014, Issue 50.

Vic Polley, Chris Wiltshire and Trish Atkinson