The Bromley Biodiversity Survey Report 2025

Created by the *I*dverde and the RSPB on behalf of the London Borough of Bromley

(Appendix A of the London Borough of Bromley Enhanced Biodiversity Report)

Image. B. Jarvis

Contents:

Summary

Bromley is the largest and greenest of the 33 London Boroughs, with an incredible 2,500 hectares of publicly accessible greenspace spread over 150 individual sites, including three Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), five Local nature reserves (LNR) and 119 Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC). These greenspaces are managed by *i*dverde on behalf of the council for amenity value, accessibility and biodiversity. Many of these sites have Friends groups who volunteer their time to assist the idverde rangers in improving their local greenspaces.

1 Carpet of Ancient Woodland wildflowers in Well Wood 2025, Image. B. Jarvis

This report highlights the work being carried out by the idverde ranger team alongside friends' groups across the borough of Bromley to enhance biodiversity, through individual projects, ongoing management regimes and monitoring programmes, this report will also highlight some of the works taking place on controlling non-native invasive species.

Key Highlights from 2025:

- **Woodland Flora**: 182 species recorded across 27 surveyed woodlands, with Ancient Woodland indicators present in many sites.
- **Hazel Dormice** (*Muscardinus avellanarius*): A promising increase from 1 individual in 2023 to 9 (including juveniles) in 2025 at High Elms.
- **Orchids**: 15 species recorded borough-wide, including nationally rare Lizard orchids (*Himantoglossum hircinum*) Warren Road NFV showed notable increases.
- **Glow Worms** (*Lampyris noctiluca*): Despite low female sightings, male captures suggest a viable breeding population remains.
- **Moths**: 1,003 individuals of 173 species recorded, including rare finds like Blue underwing (*Clifden Nonpareil*) and the Scarce Shoot Borer (*Lampronia capitella*).
- **Butterflies**: Meadow Brown (*Maniola jurtina*) was the most recorded species across the borough. Rare species like the Small Blue (*Cupido minimus*) and the Hairstreak butterflies were also observed in improved numbers.
- **Birds**: 55 fledglings from 7 active nest boxes; successful ringing of species like Goldcrest (*Regulus regulus*) and Eurasian Blackcap (*Sylvia atricapilla*).
- **Reptiles & Amphibians**: Hayes Common remains a stronghold for Adder's (*Vipera berus*)(est. 75–100 individuals). Great Crested Newt populations still have good numbers at Jubilee Country Park and Scadbury Nature reserve.
- **Odonata**: High diversity recorded at Keston Common, including breeding evidence for Willow Emerald Damselfly (*Chalcolestes viridis*).
- **Community Engagement**: Expansion of bat box monitoring to allotments and increased volunteer-led surveys across taxa.

Woodland flora surveys

idverde are responsible for the management of over 50 wooded & partially woodland sites, from pocket-sized woods like Aspen Spring and Lilly's Wood in Chelsfield to some of the most extensive wooded areas in London like Crofton wood SSSI & High Elms Country park SSSI, All of these sites are rich with biodiversity, as smaller sites serve as "stepping stones" for priority woodland species to disperse into, connecting fragmented habitats and buffering the effects of climate change and intensified agriculture.

We carry out ground flora surveys between March & May to help assess our woodlands current health and condition; they also help guide our future site management with habitat and biodiversity uplift in mind. Completing these surveys can also help identify rare or protected woodland species like the early purple orchids (*Orchis mascula*) at Darrick & Newstead wood, and the Bird's-nest orchids (*Neottia nidus-avis*) in High Elms Country Park.

The idverde ranger team surveyed 27 woodlands this spring including:

- Aspen wood
- Amhurst Wood
- Bradmanshill Wood
- Cheyne Wood
- Church House Wood
- Covet Wood
- Cupola Wood
- Elmfield Wood
- Foxbury Wood
- Fox Hill Shaw
- Fox Wood (Rushmore Hill)
- Harvington
- High Broom Wood
- Hoblingwell
- Jugg Hill
- Kingswood Glen
- Langley nature reserve
- Lillys Wood
- Mineshaw
- Milkstreet & Newsted Wood
- Mottingham & Elmstead
- Padmall Wood
- Parkfield
- Rushfield Shaw
- South Hill Wood
- Walden and Whytes
- Well Wood

Many of these woodlands featured Ancient Woodland indicator species including Wood melick (*Melica uniflora*), Yellow archangel (*Lamiastrum galeobdolon*), Dog's mercury (*Mercuralis perennis*), Early purple orchid, Bluebells (*Hyacinthoides nonscripta*), Wood

spurge (*Euphorbia amygdaloides*), Wood Anemone (*Anemone nemorosa*), and Wild garlic (*Allium ursinum*).

In total 182 different woodland flora species were recorded across the 27 sites.

2 Ian W surveying in Langley Nature Reserve, Image. A. Earing

Hazel Dormice Surveys

Dormouse numbers at High Elms have sadly decreased by 96% over the last 20 years, falling from over 70 individuals recorded in the early 2000s to just one recorded in 2023. This decline reflects trends seen across Kent, and is likely linked to climate change, habitat fragmentation across South-East England, and the widespread neglect of coppice woodland at a national level since the 1960s.

However, this summer's monitoring programme recorded two adult females and seven pinks (babies) at High Elms, compared with the four adults recorded in 2024. Finding pinks is a very positive sign that the dormouse population may be starting to recover at High Elms.

Recording highlights in 2025 include:

- On the 18th of July a structured nest was found with 4+ active dormice, 1 adult lactating female 18gms and 3 eyes open, grey babies 1 NB male 9gms, 1 NB male dormouse, and 1 escaped.
- On the 17th of September another structured nest was found with 5 active dormice, 1 adult lactating female and 4 pinks, grey with closed eyes.

3,4 Dormouse being weighed at High Elms (left), checking of an active nest box (right)

4, 5 Structured nests found in High Elms (left), Dormice Babies found in High Elms (right)

6 Dormouse Adult female found in High Elms

Orchid Counts

This summer, we experienced extremely dry and hot conditions for prolonged periods, which proved detrimental to the orchids when compared with the very high numbers recorded in 2024. However, the idverde rangers still recorded good orchid numbers across the borough, and the main chalk grassland sites produced the same diversity of species as last year, although the flowering period was significantly shorter.

Recording highlights in 2025 include:

- The nationally notable Lizard orchid population on Warren Road Nature Friendly Verges (NFV) increased from two plants to nine.
- Bee orchid numbers on Warren Road NFV also rose, increasing from one to three plants.
- A total of 122 Pyramidal orchids were recorded on Warren Road NFV.
- Twelve Pyramidal orchids were recorded on Court Road NFV.
- Bradmanshill Wood recorded numerous Early Purple orchids, including 12 rare white variants.
- Bee orchids, Pyramidal orchids, and Common Spotted orchids were recorded along the Willow Walk verge beside Tugmutton Common.
- In Ravensbourne Open space 114 Common Spotted-orchids (*Dactylorhiza fuchsia*) were recorded along with six Southern Marsh- orchids (*Dactylorhiza praetermissa*).

7 Lizard Orchids on Warren Road Nature Friendly Verge. Image. B. Jarvis

In total 15 different species of orchid were recorded across the borough.

- Bee orchid (*Ophrys apifera*)
- Broad-leaved helleborine (*Epipactis helleborine*)
- Bird's-nest orchid (*Neottia nidus-avis*)
- Common spotted orchid (*Dactylorhiza fuchsia*)
- Common Twayblade (*Neottia ovata*)
- Chalk Fragrant orchid (*Gymnadenia conopsea*)
- Early purple orchid (*Orchis mascula*)

- Fly orchid (*Ophrys insectifera*)
- Greater butterfly-orchid (*Platanthera chlorantha*)
- Lizard orchid (*Himantoglossum hircinum*)
- Man orchid (*Orchis anthropophora*)
- Pyramidal orchid (*Anacamptis pyramidalis*)
- Southern Marsh-orchid (*Dactylorhiza praetermissa*)
- Violet helleborine (*Epipactis purpurata*)
- White helleborine (*Cephalanthera damasonium*)

Darrick Orchid Count:

Early Purple Orchid numbers matched last year, with 69 recordings. Bee Orchid numbers increased, with 41 counted compared to last year's 33. Pyramidal Orchids, Twayblades, and Common Spotted Orchids were all still plentiful. The total count is shown in the table above.

Species					Total
Common Spotted Orchid					**979**
Southern marsh					**15**
Hybrid					**190**
Bee					**41**
Twayblade					**15**
Pyramidal orchid					**287**
Early Purple orchid					**69**

5, 10, 11 Early purple Orchid (left), Pyramidal Orchids (middle), Southern Marsh hybrid (right), (Images B. Jarvis)

High Elms Orchid count:

At High Elms, one Greater Butterfly-orchid was recorded (down from two last year), along with numerous Man Orchids, Fly Orchids, Common Twayblades, Common Spotted Orchids, Pyramidal Orchids, Bee Orchids, Bird's-nest Orchids, White Helleborine, Broad-leaved Helleborine, and Violet Helleborine.

6 a Friend of High Elms counting a Fly Orchid (Image. B. Jarvis)

After changes in management and a wet spring led to one of the better years for orchid numbers in 2024, records from the three chalk meadows at High Elms were down in 2025. This can largely be attributed to the prolonged dry period during spring and early summer, with numbers on the higher ground of the Conservation Field suffering particularly badly, dropping to around one-tenth of the previous year's figures. Burnt Gorse records were more in line with those from 2020–23, while Orchid Bank showed only a slight decline, although Bee Orchids fared particularly poorly.

There was some good news, with the return of the Greater Butterfly Orchid and strong numbers of Bird's-nest Orchids in the neighbouring woodlands. With favourable conditions in spring 2026, there is no reason to think orchid numbers will not return to the higher levels seen in 2024.

7, 14 Man Orchid at High Elms Orchid Bank (Left) Greater Butterfly Orchid at High Elms Orchid Bank (right image), (Images. B. Jarvis)

Orchid Bank survey:

	Lowest section			Middle section			Upper section			South Section		
Species name	**50m**	**100m**	**140m**	**50m**	**100m**	**150m**	**50m**	**100m**	**150m**		**Total 2025**	**Total 2024**
Common Spotted Orchid	386	344	188	64	59	118	70	23	58	**64**	**1339**	**1546**
Fly Orchid					15	12		1	10		**40**	**53**
Bee Orchid					2	2					**4**	**34**
Man Orchid	1	1			4	7			2		**16**	**25**
Twayblade	68	125	2	6	6	1	1			**6**	**209**	**598**
Brd Lvd Helloborine	1							9	9		**19**	**26**
White Helloborine											**0**	**0**
Butterfly orchid		1									**1**	**2**
Pyramidal orchid	5		9	7	124	197	23	11	38	**7**	**436**	**73**

Burnt Gorse survey:

Species	Upper Section	Middle Section	Middle Section	Middle Section	Lower Section	Link Track	Total 2025	Total 2024
Common Spotted Orchid	141	24	145	118	56		**484**	**1619**
Fly Orchid	1		2	33	1		**37**	**50**
Bee Orchid	2		1	3			**6**	**51**
Man Orchid							**0**	**0**
Twayblade							**0**	**7**
Brd Lvd Helloborine	2	4					**6**	**15**
White Helloborine	6					8	**14**	**16**
Butterfly orchid							**0**	**0**
Pyramidal orchid		3		6	1	2	**12**	**461**

Conservation Field:

Species	**Lowest section**				**Middle section**				**Upper section**					
	300m	225m	150m	75m	300m	225m	150m	75m	225m	150m	75m	**Triangle**	**Total 2025**	**Total 2024**
Common Spotted Orchid		4						11					15	487
Bee Orchid													0	9
Man Orchid													0	0
Twayblade													0	0
Pyramidal orchid	23	22	21	7	25	17	61	34	51	44	40	40	385	5859

Glow worm surveys at High Elms:

The idverde team completed three nights of glow-worm surveys throughout June and July, with varying degrees of success. The first walk recorded no females; however, sweep-netting in the conservation field and orchid bank collected three male glow-worms.

On 2 July, a couple of rangers and volunteers undertook the survey, allowing for a thorough site search. This resulted in the identification of 10 adult females and 3 adult males. One female was found at Joyce Pitts Glade, two were spotted along Beech Walk, one was found at the back of the burnt gorse, and five females were counted within the bank itself.

The final walk on 4 July did not locate any females, but once again several males were caught through sweep-netting in the conservation field and orchid bank.

Prior to the evening surveys, multiple L. noctiluca larval searches were conducted without success; however, these searches typically have a low detection rate. Despite no larvae being found, there was an abundance of their preferred prey species (rough-lipped snails, pink-lipped snails, and Roman snails) present on site. This is a good indicator that the glow-worms at High Elms have suitable environmental conditions to thrive.

As with last year, numbers remain low. However, given their 3–4-year life cycle, it is possible that recent years have been poor and that a population boom may occur next year. Additionally, females are notoriously difficult to detect for several reasons. Firstly, they glow only once; after a male locates them, they will not illuminate again, providing only a brief window for observation. Secondly, they glow only under ideal conditions—warm, overcast nights with no moonlight. Unfortunately, we were unable to survey during the peak week for glow-worms this season, which undoubtedly contributed to this year's low records.

Reports from across the country indicate increased glow-worm numbers this year due to the hot and dry summer. It is likely that we missed the peak activity window, and hopefully we will be able to survey at the optimal time in 2026.

8, 16 A male glow worm on the left caught in sweep netting, and on right a female glow worm awaiting a male, (Images E. Denniss)

Moths Surveys at High Elms:

As our second year of moth trapping at High Elms, it has been fascinating to see how different this season has been in comparison to last year. In 2023 we recorded 856 moths from 133 species, while this year we have so far recorded 1,003 moths from 173 species.

There are a number of factors that help explain this increase. Firstly, the warm, dry spring and summer allowed moths (like many other insects) to boom in numbers, remain active for longer periods, and in some cases produce second generations. Secondly, thanks to advancements in technology, we have been able to identify many more micro-moths, opening up a far larger field of identification, as there are around 1,500 micro species in the UK. Although they can be difficult to learn, the continued development of our identification skills will enable us to record even more species in the future. Finally, relocating the trap has allowed us to run it more regularly (around twice a week) greatly increasing our chances of capturing a broader range of moth species.

9 Blue underwing (Clifden Nonpareil)

Through the stunning range of moths identified on-site, there have been a couple of notable highlight species captured. Firstly, the Clifden Nonpareil is a particularly exciting find, as this species was considered a UK resident until the 1980s. It only began to return as a rare migrant in 2007. Since then, there have been just 30 records across Kent, and this sighting represents the third recorded occurrence in the borough.

Secondly, the Scarce Shoot Borer, a species only discovered in 1974. There are just five records of this moth in the UK. Although there are small pockets appearing in the South East, it remains a red-listed species and included in the Red Data Book.

The Coxcomb Prominent is generally widespread throughout the UK; however, it is sensitive to pollution and tends to be elusive in built-up areas, with only three other records in the county.

The Small Elephant Hawkmoth was one of only two hawkmoth species recorded this year. While not rare, they are very sensitive to disturbance and have a shorter flight window compared to other hawkmoths. This record is the seventh for the county.

Scare Shoot Borer *(lampronia flavimitrella)(left),* Pea Peach Blossom *(Thyatira batis) (middle-left),* August Thorn *(Ennomos quercinaria)(middle-right),* Lobster Moth *(Stauropus fagi)(right)*

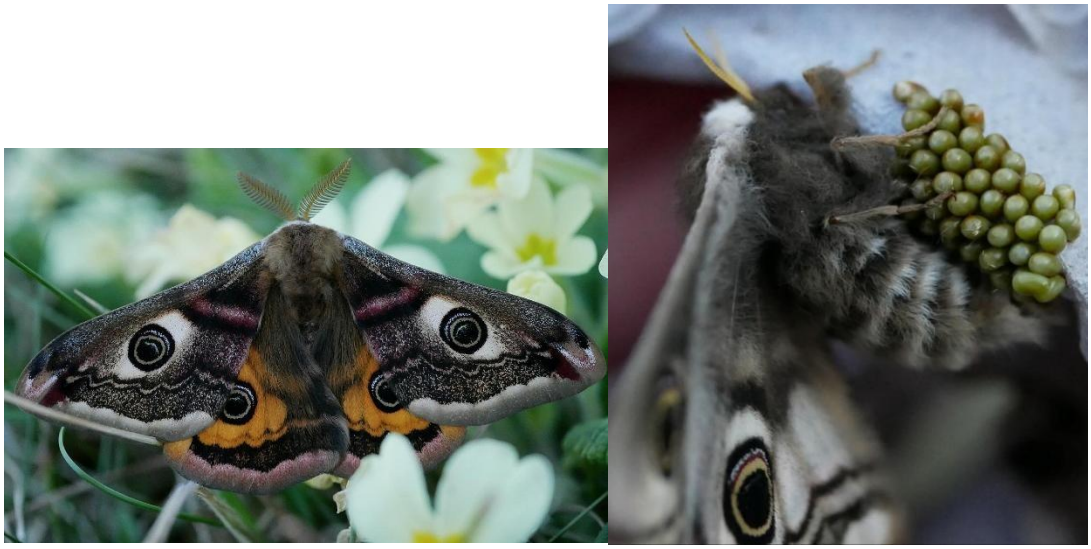
Common Emerald *(Hemithea aestivaria)(lef),* Scalloped Hazel *(Odontopera bidentata)(middle),* Small Elephant Hawkmoth *(Deilephila porcellus)(right)*

The moths listed above are declining across the UK, particularly the Common Emerald, which has now become nationally scarce compared with its cousin, the Light Emerald. The Peach Blossom and the Lobster Moth are woodland specialists; due to their size, especially the Lobster Moth, large areas of mature Beech and Oak woodland are required to sustain breeding populations.

The August Thorn is a grassland specialist and its presence indicates a strong, healthy meadow. Since we began leaving the meadow uncut, this population has increased, reflecting the benefits of allowing more areas to grow naturally.

The Scalloped Hazel recorded is a ‘dark morph’. This is an interesting sighting because, similar to the Peppered Moth, variations in colour can be influenced by atmospheric pollution. A high number of these darker individuals have been recorded across London and Kent this year.

The final highlight comes from Strawberry Bank, located very close to High Elms Country Park. This year, we recorded the UK’s only silk moth: the Emperor Moth (*Saturnia pavonia*). These heathland specialists are making a slow comeback from the brink of extinction, so finding not just one individual but a breeding pair generated a great deal of excitement among lepidopterists across the borough. Observing a successful pairing and the subsequent hatching of eggs shows that they are beginning to return to Kent and London, and we hope to see their numbers continue to rise significantly next year.



Emperor Moth on Strawberry Bank, (Images. E. Denniss)

Hayes Common Moth Trapping:

On the 11th of July 2025, with the assistance of volunteers, Idverde conducted a moth-surveying night using two moth traps at Hayes Common. One moth trap focused on the heathland area and the other was located in the woodland. While waiting for the moth traps to become active, we carried out sweep-netting across the meadows and woodland patches, recording around 25 additional species. A few habitat specialists were caught, including the Beautiful Yellow Underwing and the Ear Moth.

The Ear Moth has only one other recorded sighting in Bromley on iRecord. Although widespread, they are rarely caught in moth traps, which makes them difficult to document. They prefer damp habitats and rely on overgrown vegetation and root systems for their life cycle.

Beautiful yellow underwing *(Anarta myrtillin)(left),* Small Scallop *(Idaea emarginata)(right)*

Species recorded:

- Straminella spp,
- Least blood vein (Scopula imitaria),
- Chinese character (Cilix glaucata),
- Pearlella spp,
- Cream wave (Scopula floslactata),
- The uncertain (Hoplodrina octogenaria),
- Rustic(Hoplodrina blanda),
- Rosy tabby (Endotricha flammialis),
- Square spot rustic (Xestia xanthographa),
- Scarce footman (Eilema complana),
- Ear moth,
- Riband wave (Idaea aversata),
- Agapeta zoegana,
- Early thorn (Selenia dentaria),
- Grey dagger,
- Dunbar (Cosmia trapezina),
- Rosy striped knothorn (Oncocera semirubella),
- True lovers knot (Lycophotia porphyrea),
- Dark fruit tree tortrix (Pandemis heparana) Small scallop,
- Acroxantha spp, Scoparia ambigualis,
- Ruby tiger (Phragmatobia fuliginosa),
- Beautiful yellow underwing,
- Double Square Spot (Xestia xanthographa),
- Yellow shell (Camptogramma bilineata),
- Oak hook tip (Watsonalla binaria),
- Scorched carpet (Ligdia adustata),
- Blood vein (Timandra comae),
- Dark arches (Apamea monoglypha),
- Lesser yellow underwing (Noctua comes),
- Buff footman (Eilema depressa).

Keston Common moth trapping:

Idverde rangers surveyed the Heathland and Bog on Keston common over several evenings using both moth traps and sweep netting surveying methods between April and August, recording 50 species of Moth, this included a few heathland specialists like the Heath rustic (*Xestia agathina*), The beautiful yellow underwing and the True lover's knot (*Lycophotia porphyria*).

10 Surveying at Keston Common

11 Straw underwing *(Thalpophilia matura) left, and* Feathered Gothic *(Tholera decimalis) right*

Species Recorded:

- Least black arches (*Nola confusalis*),
- Treble lines (*Charanyca trigrammica*),
- White-point (*Mythimna albipuncta*),
- Light emerald (*Campaea margaritaria*),
- Cream wave (*Scopula floslactata*),
- Treble Brown Spot moth (*Idaea trigeminata*),
- Grass rivulet (*Perizoma albulata*),
- Straw dot (*Rivula sericealis*) wet/damp meadow specialist,
- Grass veneer (*Chrysoteuchia culmella*),
- Longhorn (*Nemophora degeerella*),

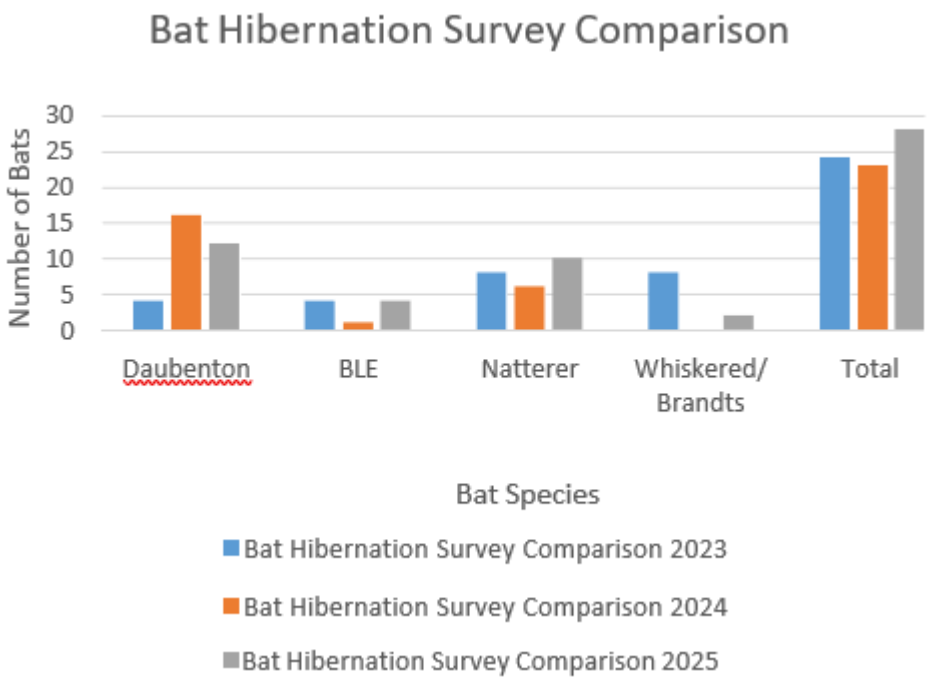
- Common marbled carpet (*Dysstroma truncata*),
- Dark arches (*Apamea monoglypha*),
- Green oak tortrix (*Tortrix viridana*),
- Marbled White spot (*Protodeltote pygarga*),
- Heart and dart (*Agrotis exclamationis*),
- Common wave (*Cabera exanthemata*),
- Common Wainscot (*Mythimna pallens*) healthy meadow indicator,
- Clouded border (*Lomaspilis marginata*),
- Green carpet (*Colostygia pectinataria*),
- L-album Wainscot (*Mythimna l-album*),
- Brimstone moth (*Opisthograptis luteolata*),
- Brown silver-line (*Petrophora chlorosata*),
- White ermine (*Spilosoma lubricipeda*),
- Mottled grey carpet (*Cladara limitaria*),
- Bee moth *Aphomia sociella*),
- Satin wave (*Idaea subsericeata*),
- Meadow brown (*Maniola jurtina*),
- True lovers knot (heathland specialist),
- Marbled grey (*Bryophila raptricula*),
- Beautiful yellow underwing (heathland specialist),
- Rush veneer (*Nomophila noctuella*) wetland specialist,
- Lesser broad-bordered yellow underwing (*Noctua janthe*),
- Oak lantern (*Carcina quercana*),
- Square-spot rustic (*Xestia xanthographa*),
- Silver y (*Autographa gamma*),
- The Snout (*Hypena proboscidalis*),
- Yellow shell (*Camptogramma bilineata*),
- Vine’s rustic (*Hoplodrina ambigua*),
- Large yellow underwing (*Noctua pronuba*),
- Dark-barred Twin-spot Carpet (*Xanthorhoe ferrugata*),
- Angle shades (*Phlogophora meticulosa*),
- Copper underwing (*Amphipyra pyramidea*) Feathered gothic,
- Barred Hook-tip (*Watsonalla cultraria*),
- Heath rustic (heathland specialist),
- Flounced rustic (*Luperina Testacea*),
- Maiden’s blush (*Cyclophora punctaria*),
- Golden-brown fern moth (*Musotima nitidalis*).

Bat Surveys:

In partnership with the Bat Conservation Trust, idverde has continued to input records from bat hibernation and bat box surveys conducted throughout Bromley to the National Bat Monitoring Programme. This vital information ensures that both past and present records are collated and used to gather essential data on bat populations, their health, and overall biodiversity. By engaging volunteers and the public to help raise awareness about bats and their ecological importance, we can continue to build strong community support for conservation efforts.

12 (far left) surveying for hibernating bats in Chalk Mine Image. S.Holland, (middle left) Soprano pipistrelle bat at Keston Common Image. A. Earing, (middle right) weighing a bat at Lilly's Wood Image B. Jarvis, (right) checking for bat presence at Keston Common Image. E. Denniss.

During the winter hibernation surveys conducted across four sites in January and February, 28 bats were recorded—an increase from 2024, when 23 bats were observed at the same locations. Additionally, four species were identified this year, including Brown Long-eared (*Plecotus auritus*), Natterer's (*Myotis nattereri*), Whiskered/Brandt's (*Myotis mystacinus*), and Daubenton's (*Myotis daubentonii*), compared with only three species recorded in 2024.



13 A Bar chart depicting a survey comparison for the different bat species

The spring and summer bat box checks were carried out at Keston Common, Well Wood, Lilly's Wood, Kelsey Park, Whitehall Recreation Ground, High Elms Country Park, and Chislehurst Recreation Ground. This year recorded another low count, with only seven bats found compared with four in 2024 and fourteen in 2023, and only a single species observed—the Soprano pipistrelle.

In September, idverde conducted additional box checks around Crystal Palace Park (managed by the Crystal Palace Park Trust) and recorded their highest number of finds to date, with 19 Soprano pipistrelles found across 17 boxes.

As part of the idverde Bromley Biodiversity Action Plan (iBBAP), Idverde, on behalf of the Council, have increased the number of bat boxes installed across urban, rural, and allotment sites. The Friends of Chislehurst Rec, Harvington Woods, Farnborough Green, and ten new allotment sites have joined our Urban Parks Bat Box Monitoring Programme, with enthusiastic volunteers carrying out regular surveys on the new Kent-style bat boxes installed this summer.

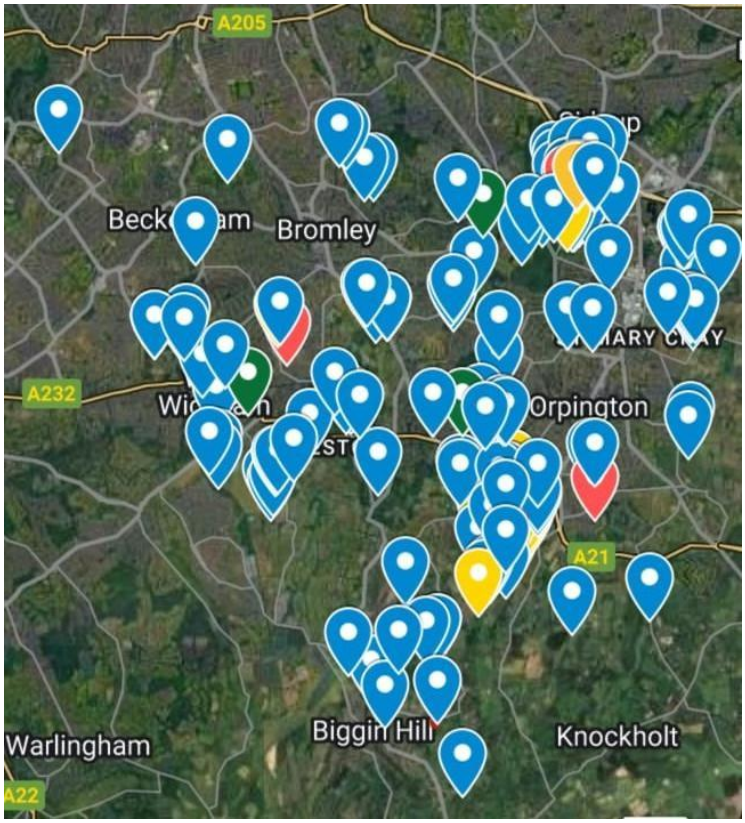
Nine new boxes have been installed at Keston Common, bringing the total to 29 on that site. Three new boxes have also been added at High Elms Country Park, increasing its total to 14.

14 (Far left) installing a new Bat box on Keston Common. Image. B. Jarvis, (middle left, middle right and far right) Idverde team on bat licence and cave ladder training, Images S.Lofting & S.Holland.

To ensure that Bromley's bats can continue to be effectively monitored, it is essential that we train new recruits to carry out both hibernation and bat box surveys. Handling bats requires a licence from Natural England, and trainees must learn species identification, safe handling techniques, and best practices for bat conservation and research. With support from the London Bat Group and the Kent Underground Research Group, four members of the ranger team have been gaining experience handling different species at various times of the year, while also learning to safely and competently access deneholes and caves during hibernation surveys.

This autumn, the BEECHE team organised bat walks and talks for five scout groups, along with seven public evening bat walks across the borough, including at Kelsey Park, Scadbury Park, Keston Common, High Elms Country Park, Priory Gardens, Coney Hall, and Whitehall Recreation Ground. These events reached 397 people, engaging the community in bat conservation, building public support, raising awareness, encouraging sustainable practices, and inspiring the next generation of conservationists. It was also rewarding to learn that some attendees have since purchased and installed bat boxes in their own gardens.

Badgers (Meles meles) in Bromley



15 Confirmed active M. meles sets in Bromley Image D. Russell

During the prolonged drought period this summer, local badger groups experienced higher-than-average numbers of calls from residents and members of the public who were concerned about badgers struggling to dig for their usual food sources, such as worms. In response to these conditions, the Badger Trust encouraged people to leave out bowls of water, and volunteers placed water near local setts to help keep the animals hydrated.

The Bromley Badger Rescuers have been involved in five rescues this year, with four badgers sadly having to be put to sleep and one successfully released.

There have been 30 documented badger fatalities on Bromley's road network so far this year. However, this number is expected to rise in October and November, when individuals venture out more frequently to build winter fat reserves. Last year, 39 badger deaths were recorded on Bromley's roads, and 42 in 2023—totalling a staggering 111 deaths over a three-year period.

Badgers have now been recorded at South Hill Wood after idverde rangers set up a camera trap over a weekend in a location previously thought to be an inactive sett. The video footage clearly showed that badgers are active in this area.

A camera trap was also used at the Avalon Road meadow site, following a volunteer report that badgers had been seen there. The footage, alongside a site inspection,

confirmed the presence of at least 2–3 active setts with around 30–40 holes. This site is now listed as one of Bromley's largest setts, alongside sites south of Withins Wood (Biggin Hill), Wickham Court Farm (West Wickham), High Elms Country Park (Farnborough), and Scadbury Nature Reserve (Chislehurst).

The West Kent Badger Group has recently recruited former Metropolitan Police Wildlife Detective Sarah Bailey as their crime officer. She will be assisting with investigations into any suspicious criminal activity involving badgers and other wildlife in Bromley.

Reptiles and Amphibians –

The rangers and volunteers have been regularly surveying Bromley's parks for reptiles and amphibians using a range of different survey techniques.

The most common survey method we use is the refuge survey, in which small squares of corrugated iron, roofing felt, or similar materials are placed in specific locations around a site. These refuges are then inspected at regular intervals, and each individual reptile found is recorded. This technique has been successful in identifying populations of Common Lizard (*Zootoca vivipara*) and Slow Worm (*Anguis fragilis*) across the borough wherever it has been implemented.

Current sites using refuges:

- Keston Common
- Hayes Common
- Hangrove
- Darrick Wood
- Den Barn
- Hoblingwell
- High Elms (Burnt Gorse)
- Jubilee Country Park

16 Multiple Slow worms found under refuge in Den Barn, Image B.Jarvis

In addition to reptiles, a wide variety of small mammals, such as Common Shrews (*Sorex araneus*) and Field Voles (*Microtus agrestis*), and amphibians, such as Smooth Newt (Lissotriton vulgaris), Palmate Newt (*Lissotriton helveticus*), Common Toad (*Bufo bufo*), and Common Frog (*Rana temporaria*)—have been recorded during these surveys.

More regular refuge transect surveys need to be carried out on several sites, with the support of Friends groups and enthusiastic volunteers, to gain a clearer understanding of reptile populations across our parks.

Adder's on Hayes Common –

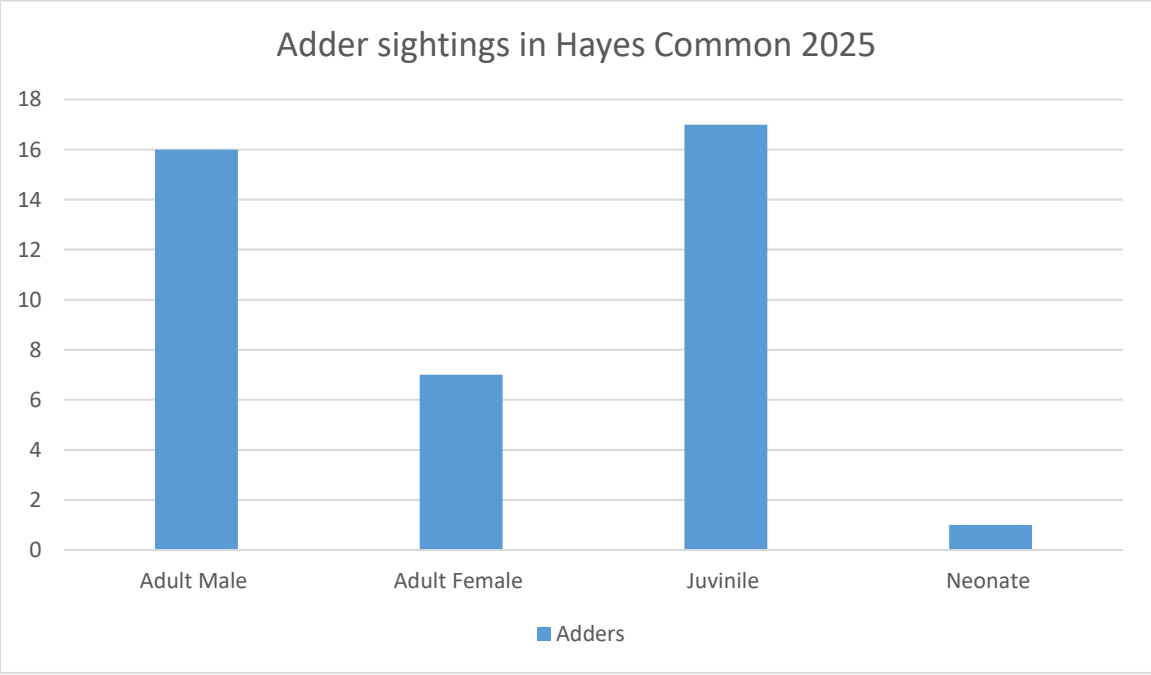
Hayes Common is one of only four known sites for adders in Greater London. The largest population is currently found on Hounslow Heath, where a reintroduction scheme was implemented. The population on Hayes Common is now considered highly significant, with over 100 individuals recorded in the past three years.

Adders have likely been present on Hayes Common for a long time, with evidence and records dating back to the 1960s. In recent years, they have been closely monitored by the late herpetologist Bill Whitaker, alongside naturalist and Friend of Keston Common member Bob Harrop, with support from idverde rangers.

Adders have also been recorded sporadically on Keston Common, with the most recent sightings occurring in 2020/2021.

17 (Left) Male & Female Adder, Image. B. Harrop (2025), (right) Juvenile Female Adder, Image. B. Harrop (2025)

The number of sightings in 2025 were lower than usual, and these results were mirrored by other adder sites in Kent, this is believed to be as a reflection of the dry hot conditions we experienced this year. However, there has still been some evidence of breeding success with 1 neonate recorded in September.



18 A bar chart depicting Adder sighting in Hayes Common in 2025

The maximum number of adders recorded on a single day (March 21, 2025) was 19, including both adults and juveniles. The UK's adder population is experiencing a significant decline, with some sources suggesting they could face extinction by 2032. While adders can still be found across the UK, surveys indicate that a third of remaining populations may consist of fewer than 10 adults. A recent study also estimates that the population has decreased by up to 90%. This data highlights the

importance of Hayes Common as a breeding site for adders, as well as the need for sensitive management alongside dedicated monitoring programmes.

Amphibian surveys –

The idverde team uses a range of techniques to survey and record amphibians within Bromley. In recent years, the focus has been on Scadbury Park and Jubilee Country Park, both of which contain an extensive network of ponds that support populations of Great Crested Newts (*Triturus cristatus*). This year, the rangers expanded their amphibian surveys to include Newstead Meadow in Darrick, Keston Ponds, High Elms Ponds, and Kingswood Glen Pond.

The methodologies we use include:

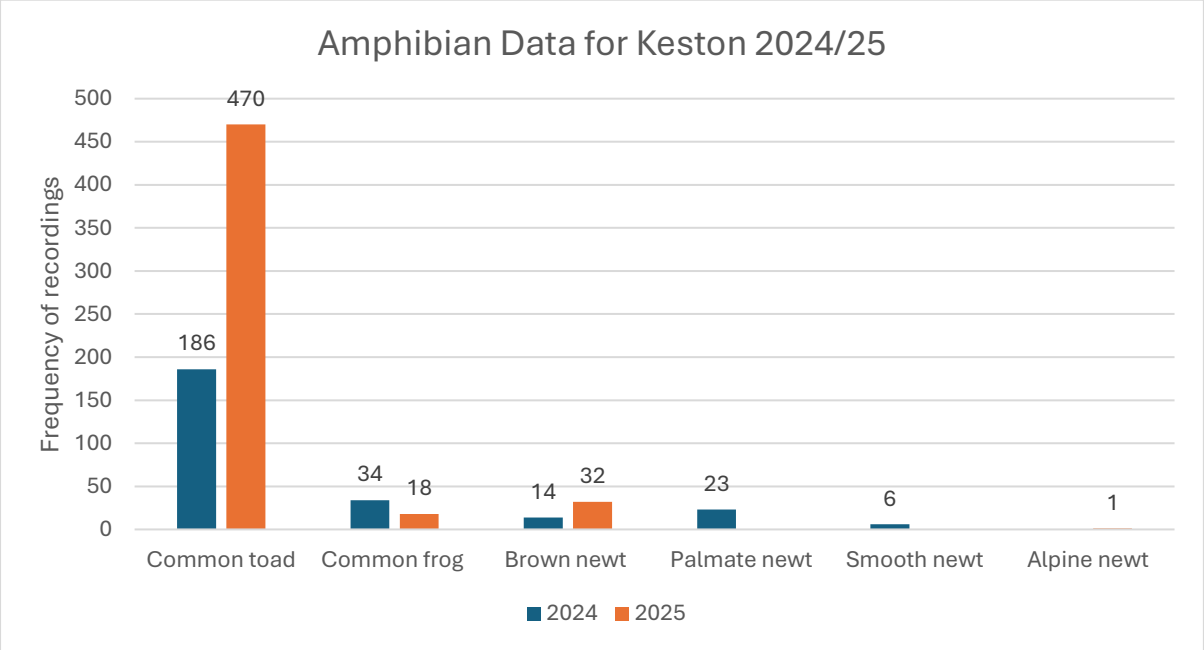
• Torch-lit surveys

• Netting

• Egg searching

• Refuge checking

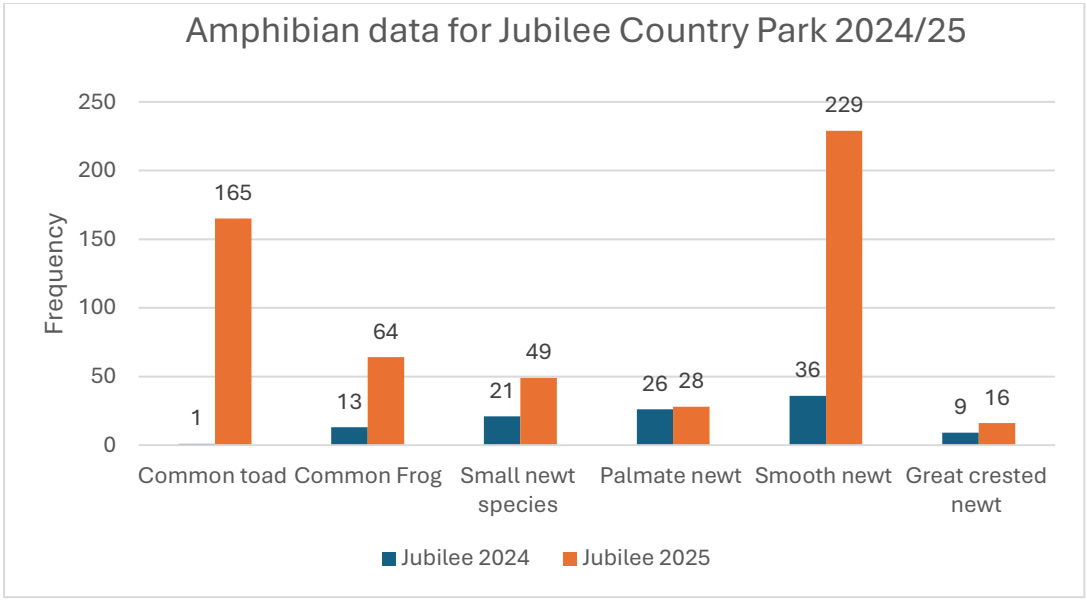
These methods are applied appropriately based on several factors and criteria in accordance with industry best practice. All surveys are carried out with S. Holland and A. Harby, who are suitably licensed to handle Great Crested Newts. Five members of the ranger team are currently working towards gaining their T. cristatus handling licence.



19 A bar chart depicting Amphibian data for Keston Common 2024 and 2025

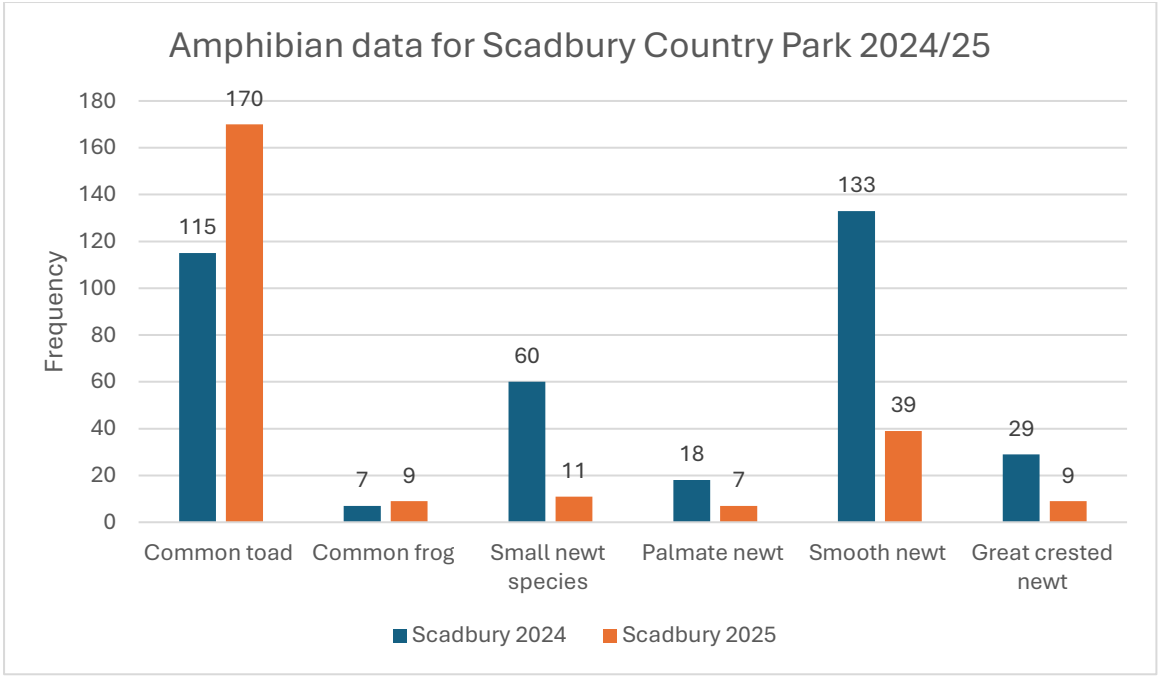
20 Female Great Crested Newt found at Jubilee Country Park 2025, Images. R. Fryer

21 Male Great Crested Newt found at Jubilee Country Park 2025, Images. R. Fryer

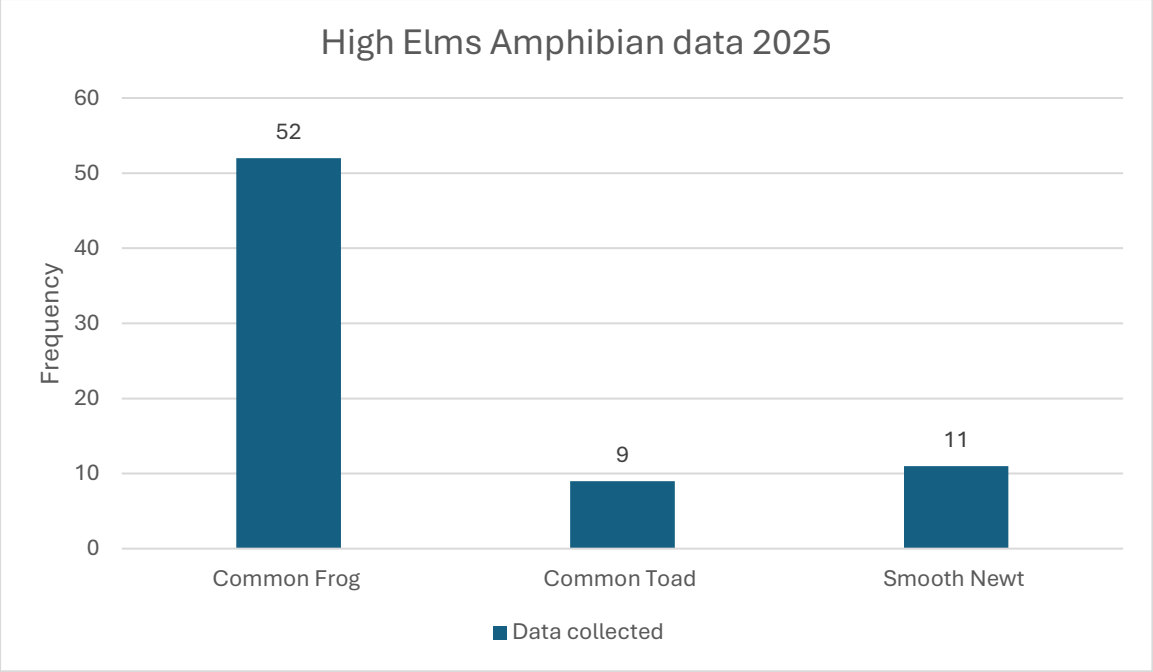


22 Amphibian data for Jubilee Country Park 2024 to 2025

23 (Left) Amplex Toads (Image. B. Jarvis) smaller male, larger female), Scadbury survey evening (Image. E. Denniss) (right)



24 A bar chart depicting Amphibian data for Scadbury Country Park for 2024 and 2025



25 A bar chart depicting Amphibian data for High Elms Country Park in 2025

Darrick and Newstead Woods Pond survey results:

- 6 male smooth newts
- 4 female smooth newts
- 1 unknown palmate newt

Kings Wood Glen Pond survey results:

- 15 male smooth newts
- 12 female smooth newts
- 16 unknown newts

Butterfly surveys –

The idverde ranger team, alongside dedicated volunteers, regularly records butterflies in Bromley's parks and open spaces. A lot of time has been spent establishing transect surveys for volunteers to walk and record on throughout the season, and they aim to cover as many weeks as possible between April and November. The ranger team and volunteers upload all butterfly sightings from these transects to the United Kingdom Butterfly Monitoring Scheme (UKBMS).

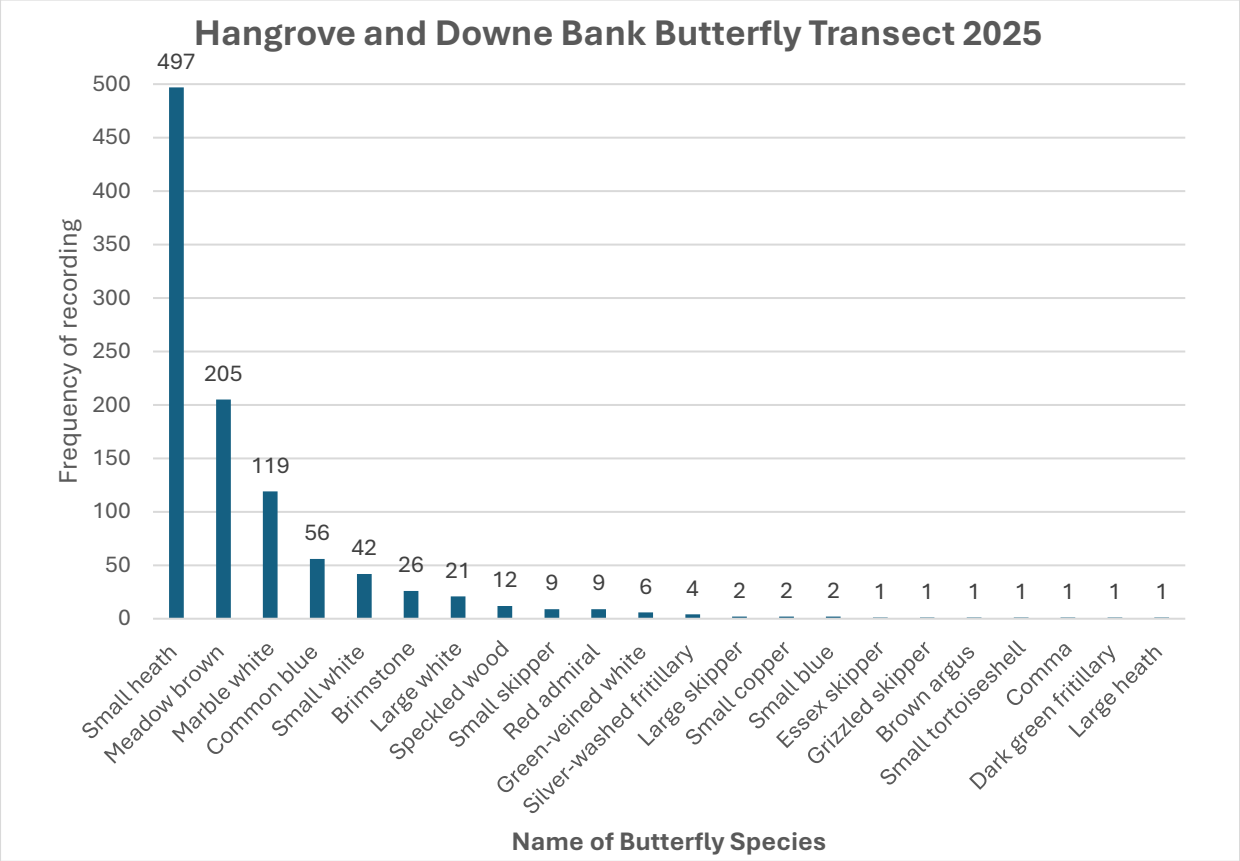
2025 highlights:

- Small blue recorded on the butterfly bank in Coney Hall recreation ground.
- Brown hairstreak (*Thecla betulae*) recordings in Elmfield wood, Hayes Common& Parkfield, Pinewood allotment, Queensmead recreation ground.
- Green hairstreak (*Callophrys rubi*) recordings on Hangrove, Dorset Road allotment, Keston Common Hayes Common & Darrick wood.
- Purple hairstreak (*Neozephyrus quercus*) recordings at Jubilee CP, Hayes Common, Ravensbourne open space, & Elmfield.
- White-letter Hairstreak (*Satyrium w-album*) several recorded at High Elms for the first time in many years.
- White admiral (*Limenitis camilla*) recordings at High elms, Elmfield wood & Padmall wood had sightings for the first time in many years.
- Silver-washed fritillary (*Argynnis paphia*) recordings at High elms CP, Hangrove, Well wood, Hayes common & Keston Common.
- Dark Green fritillary (*Speyeria aglaja*) recordings on Hangrove and High elms CP.
- Long-tailed Blue (*Lampides boeticus*) recorded in Church House Gardens

26 Purple Hairstreak in Elmfield (left), White Admiral in Padmall Wood (right), Images. B. Jarvis.

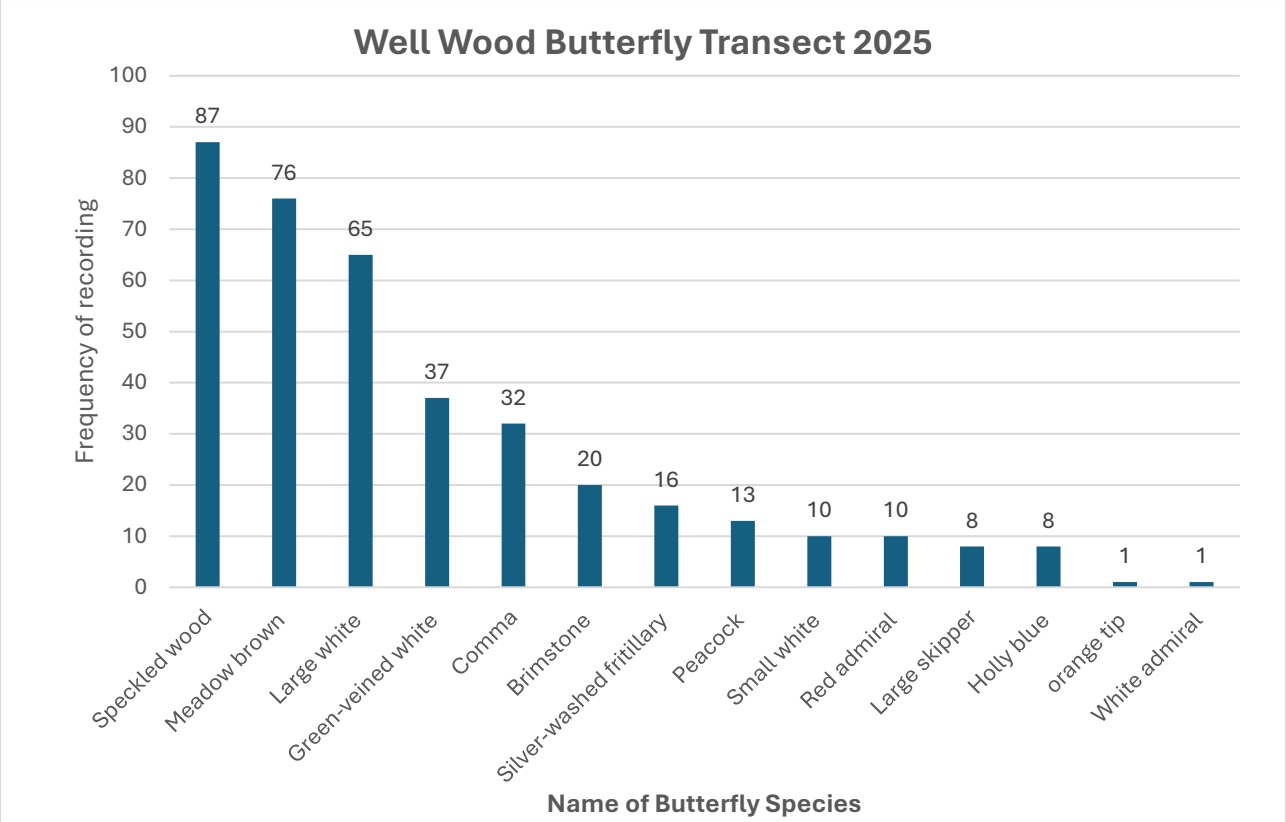
27 Brown Hairstreak in Elmfield (left), White-letter Hairstreak in High Elms, Green Hairstreak in Hangrove. Images. B. Jarvis.

The following data was collected by volunteers during surveys of their chosen transect sites and subsequently uploaded to the UKBMS.



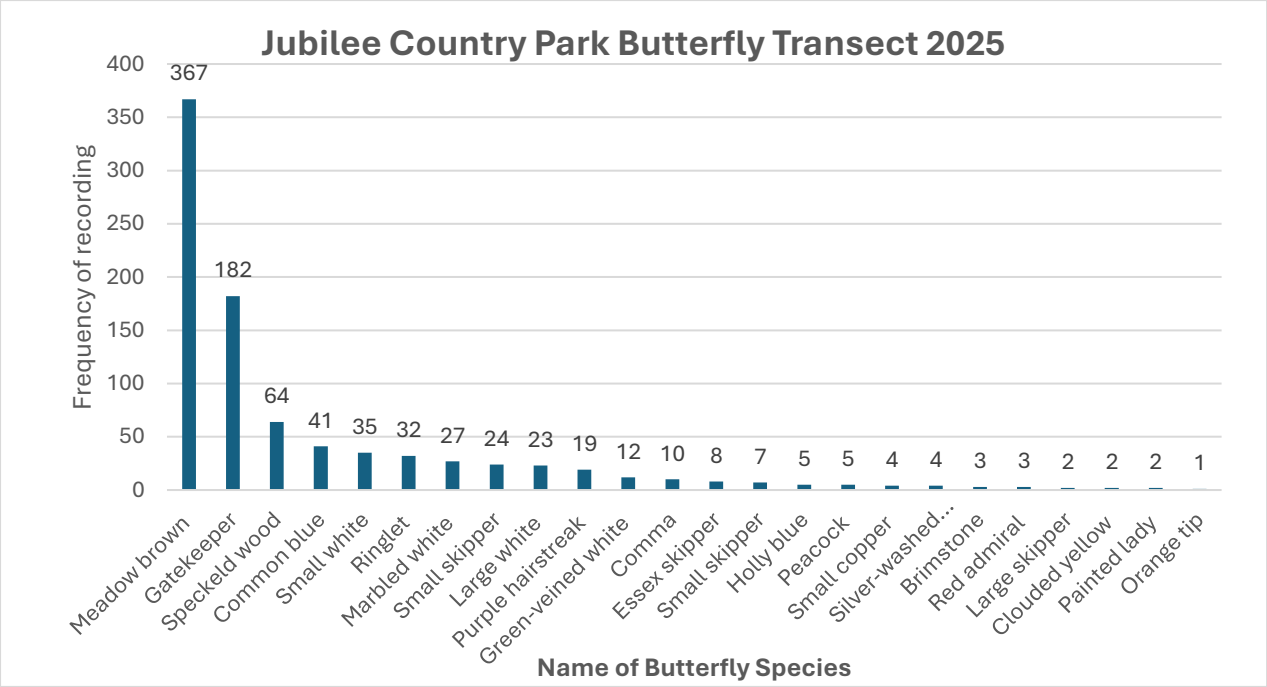
28 A bar chart depicting Hangrove and Down Bank Butterfly Transect data. (2025)

The Small Heath (*Coenonympha pamphilus*) was recorded most frequently in 2025 with 497 sightings, whereas the Meadow Brown was the most sighted butterfly in 2024. Alongside others the rarest butterfly was the Dark Green Fritillary, with only one sighting in 2025 at Hangrove and Down Bank.



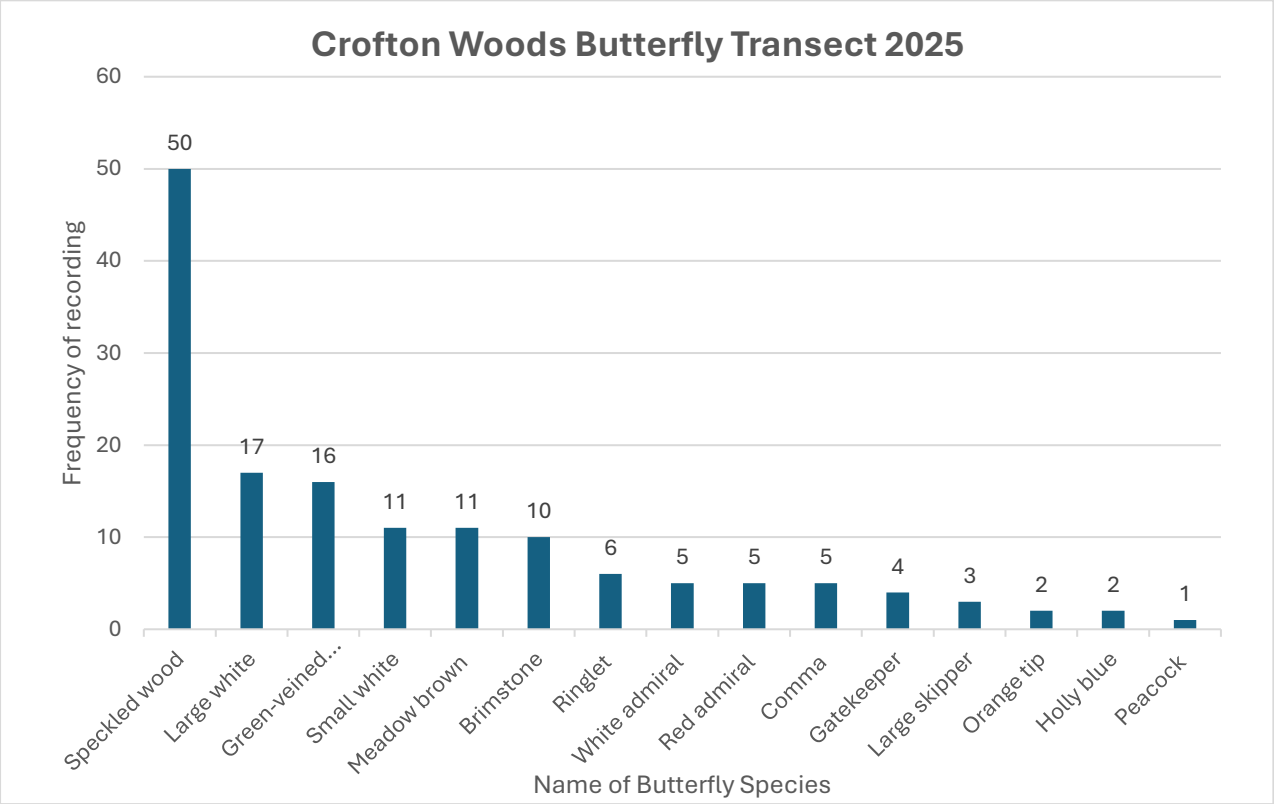
29 A bar chart depicting Well Wood Butterfly Transect data. (2025)

For Well Wood, the speckled wood (*Pararge aegeria*) butterfly was recorded most frequently, with 93 sightings, while the rarest species were the white admiral and orange tip, with only one record. This was the first year the transect was carried out.



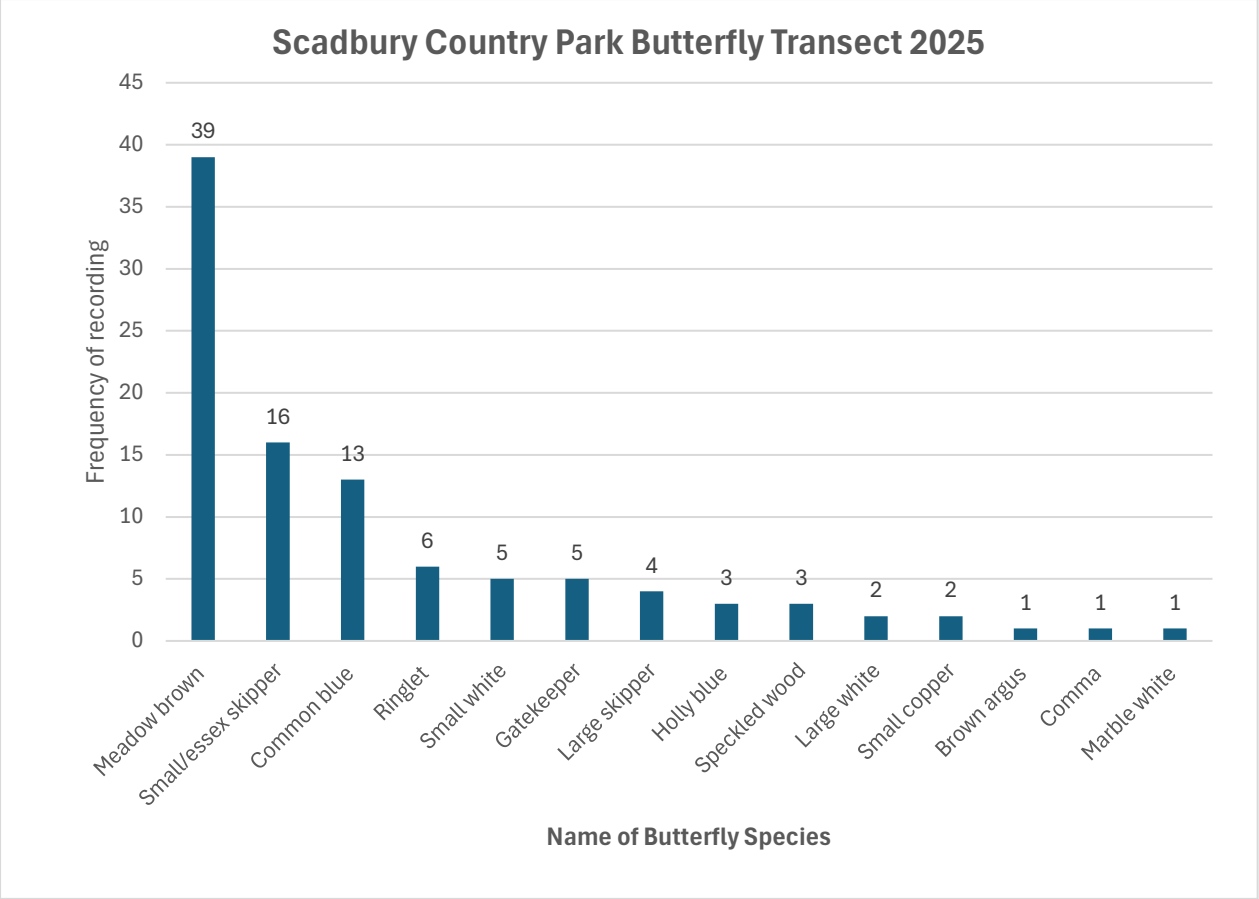
30 A bar chart depicting Jubilee Country Park Butterfly Transect data. (2025)

In Jubilee Country Park, the meadow brown butterfly was recorded most frequently, with 367 sightings, the same as in 2024. The rarest butterfly was the orange tip, with only one recording, whereas the small copper butterfly was the rarest in 2024.



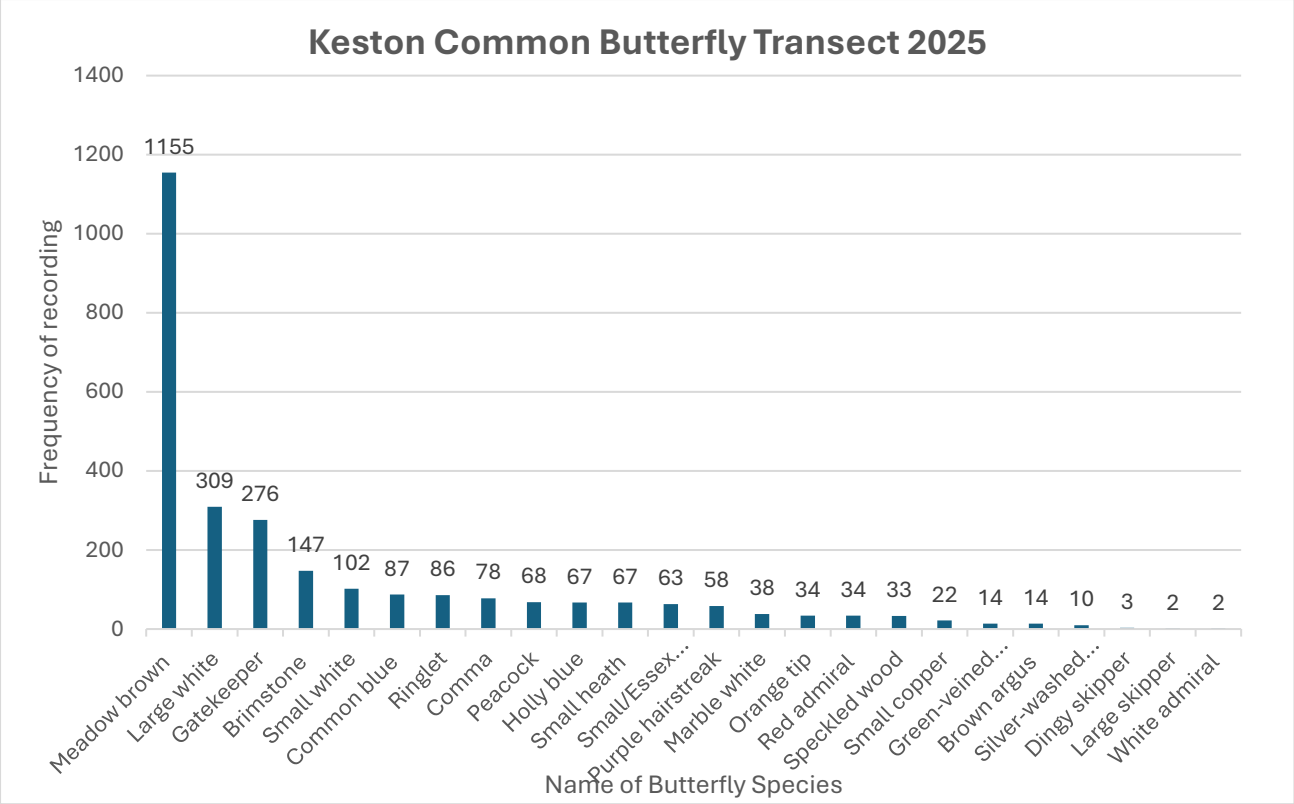
31 A bar chart depicting Crofton Woods Butterfly Transect data. (2025)

In the Crofton Woods site, the Speckled Wood butterfly was recorded most frequently, with 52 sightings in 2025—matching its total in 2024. The rarest butterfly was the Peacock (*Limenitis Inachis io*), with only one record, compared to the White Admiral being the rarest in 2024.



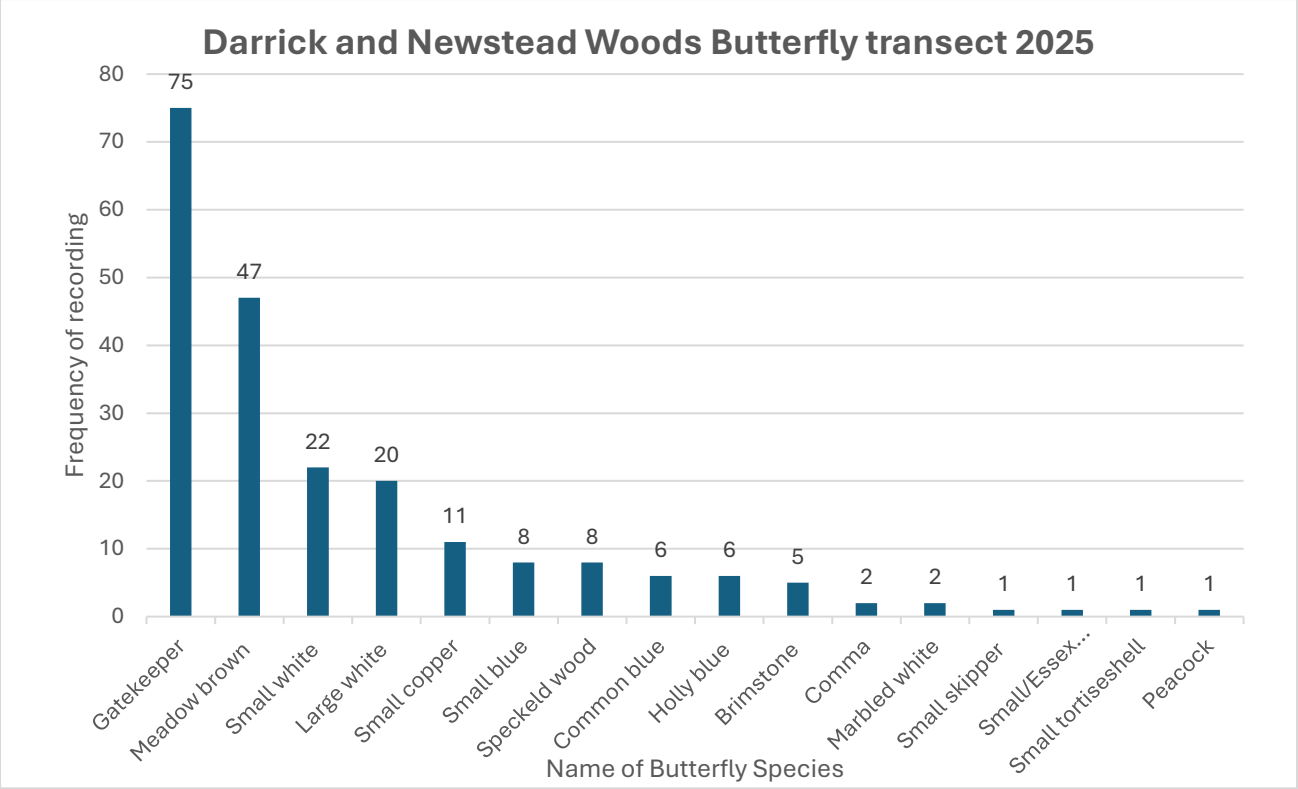
32 A bar chart depicting Scadbury Country Park Butterfly Transect data. (2025)

For Scadbury Country Park in 2025, the Meadow brown was recorded the most frequently with 39 recordings which was the same in 2024. The rarest butterflies were the Brown argus (*Aricia agestis*), Comma and Marble White with only 1 recording. This is compared to the Red admiral (*Vanessa Atalanta*) being the rarest in 2024.



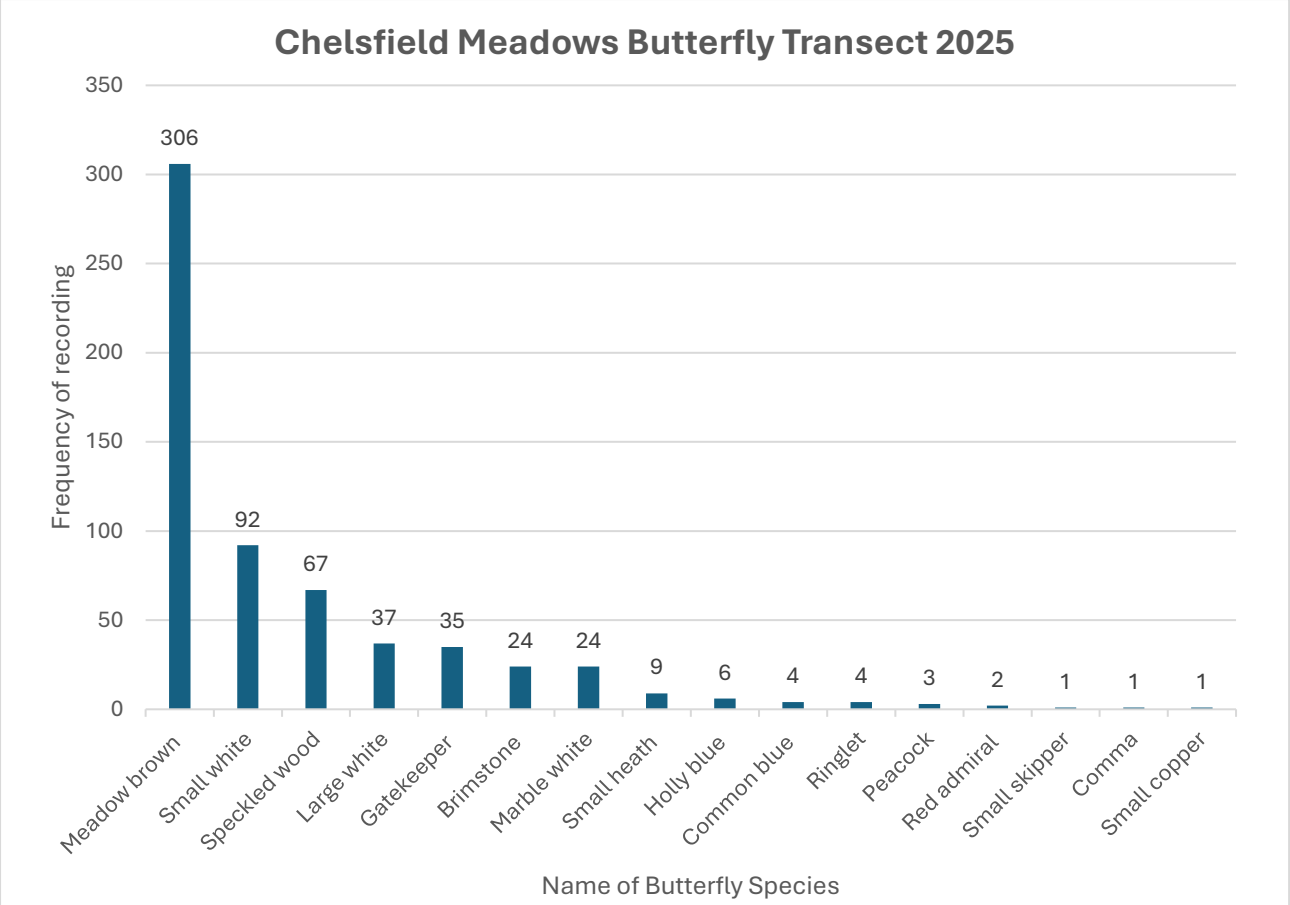
33 A bar chart depicting Keston Common Butterfly Transect data. (2025)

For Keston Common, the Meadow Brown was recorded most frequently, with 1,155 records. This was the most common butterfly in 2024 as well. The rarest butterfly was the White Admiral and Large Skipper with only two records, whereas the Painted Lady was the rarest in 2024.



34 A bar chart depicting Darrick and Newstead Woods Butterfly Transect data. (2025)

For Darrick and Newstead Woods in 2025, the Gatekeeper (*Pyronia tithonus*) was recorded most frequently, with 75 records, compared to the Meadow Brown in 2024. One of the rarest butterflies was the Small Tortoiseshell (*Aglais urticae*), with only one record in 2025, compared the Small Blue butterfly being the rarest in 2024.



35 A bar chart depicting Chelsfield Meadows Butterfly Transect data. (2025)

For Chelsfield Meadows in 2025, the Meadow Brown was recorded the most frequently with 306 recordings. The rarest butterflies were the Small Copper, Comma, and Small Skipper with only 1 recording.

Brown Hairstreak egg hunting –

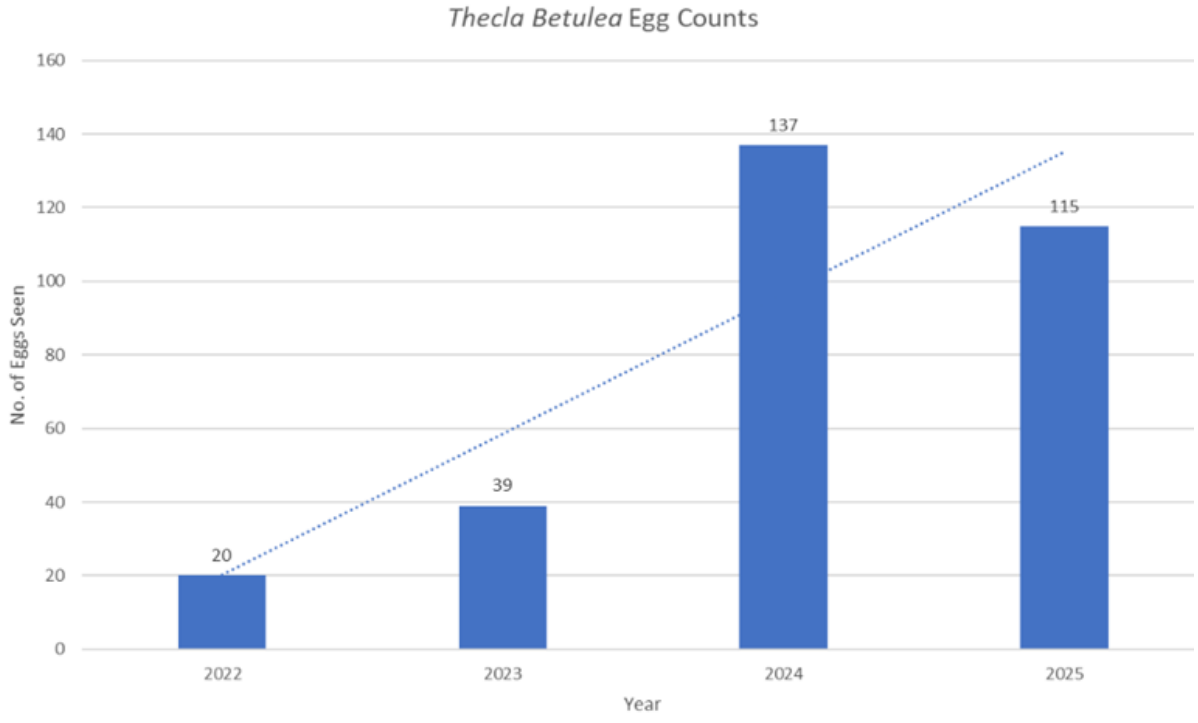
Brown hairstreak butterflies are nationally uncommon, with most of their population isolated in the south of the country. Their numbers have declined by nearly 50 percent since 1970. They were first recorded in Bromley in 2018, and since then local enthusiasts and idverde rangers have been monitoring their spread and population through butterfly sightings and transect surveys.

In 2024, a search in Elmfield Wood found 137 Brown hairstreak eggs. In February this year another egg count was carried out to determine whether their population was increasing steadily or following a boom-and-bust cycle. This year 115 eggs were found, which is 22 fewer than last year, although this difference is not considered significant given the weather conditions.

36, 2 Brown Hairstreak Eggs on a Blackthorn Image S. Lofting

Their eggs are usually found in the branch unions of Blackthorn (*Prunus spinosa*) trees, typically on new growth. A team of rangers and dedicated volunteers carefully searched young blackthorn plants and confirmed eggs using a hand lens.

In 2026 the idverde team will be working with Butterfly Conservation and a group of volunteers to carry out egg searches at three Bromley sites that are geographically close and all contain blackthorn hedgerows with high potential for Brown hairstreak eggs. These sites are Elmfield Wood, Richmal Crompton Fields and Parkfield Recreation Ground.



37, A graph depicting Purple Hairstreak Eggs on Oak Bud - S. Lofting

Bird surveying and nest boxes –

idverde has been carrying out bird ringing in High Elms for the second year, with mixed results. The use of mist nets has decreased this summer due to staff time constraints; however, the team plans to continue the ringing programme in the autumn. Six birds were caught during mist-netting in January this year, including a Goldcrest.and a Blackcap.These species are typically migrants, although many individuals now choose to overwinter in the UK rather than migrate to Africa.

The bird boxes in High Elms have been highly successful this year, with ten active nest boxes and seven clutches of eggs recorded. Due to the warm, dry year, lepidoptera (moths and butterflies) populations have increased significantly, allowing their main predators, such as *paridae* (the tit family) species, to flourish. A highlight was discovering that one of the blue tits that successfully nested this year (APT0975) had been ringed at High Elms as a chick last year. This provides clear evidence that the ecosystem is robust enough to support juvenile birds and enable them to survive into the breeding population. A total of 55 chicks fledged this year, marking a significant success.

Although ten active nest boxes may seem low, as this is less than half of the twenty-five boxes on site, this indicates that the woodland is diverse. It suggests that the woodland is not overpopulated by *paridae* species (blue tits and great tits), which is often the case in areas that contain too many nest boxes. This also means there is space for a wide range of bird species with open nests that compete for the same food resources.

Throughout the winter, several of the existing boxes will be modified into open fronted nest boxes that are suitable for species such as Robins (*Erithacus rubecula*) and Wrens (*Troglodytes troglodytes*). There is also potential to install additional specialist boxes for species such as Treecreepers (*Certhia familiaris*). A few Tawny Owl (*Strix aluco*) boxes were installed earlier this year; however, due to time constraints, they were not surveyed. These boxes were installed in February, which is late for owls to take up residence, but they can be surveyed properly next year.

38 (Far left photo), A clutch of blue tits at High Elms, (Middle photo) Great Tit eggs in the final stage of hatching, (Right) Idverde team holding the ringed chicks

Odonata Survey on Keston Common –

The idverde Biodiversity Manager and an RSPB Biodiversity Adviser conducted an Odonata survey at Keston Common on 7 August 2025 to identify the species present and to assess the condition of the ponds for breeding. Circular transects were completed twice around the ponds and adjacent habitats to account for variations in weather conditions.

The following species were recorded during the site visit:

- Emperor Dragonfly (*Anax imperator*)
- Brown Hawker (*Aeshna grandis*)
- Southern Hawker (*Aeshna cyanea*)
- Black-tailed Skimmer (*Orthetrum cancellatum*)
- Blue-tailed Damselfly (*Ischnura elegans*)
- Common Blue Damselfly (*Enallagma cyathigerum*)
- Azure Damselfly (*Coenagrion puella*)
- Red-eyed Damselfly (*Erythromma najas*)
- Small Red-eyed Damselfly (*Erythromma viridulum*)
- Willow Emerald Damselfly (*Chalcolestes viridis*)

39, Tom Bellamy from the RSPB surveying Keston pond Image. B. Jarvis

The following species were recorded on iRecord at Keston Ponds and Common between 2023 and 2025 and are likely still to inhabit the site, although they were not observed during the survey visit:

- Golden-ringed Dragonfly (*Cordulegaster boltonii*)
- Southern Migrant Hawker (*Aeshna affinis*)
- Broad-bodied Chaser (*Libellula depressa*)
- Four-spotted Chaser (*Libellula quadrimaculata*)
- Common Darter (*Sympetrum striolatum*)
- Downy Emerald (*Cordulia aenea*)
- Large Red Damselfly (*Pyrrhosoma nymphula*)

Although not recorded during the site visit or in previous iRecord submissions, there is a high likelihood that the site also supports Ruddy Darter (*Sympetrum sanguinium*) (suggested in the London Wildlife Trust's Dragonfly Atlas), Hairy Dragonfly (*Brachytron pratense*) (not on the wing at the time of the visit), and Migrant Hawker (*Aeshna mixta*).

40, Southern Hawker found on the Heathland Image. B. Jarvis

Evidence of Willow Emerald breeding was recorded in Ponds 2 and 3, with galling observed on the limbs of young willow and alder trees overhanging the water. Many small red-eyed damselflies were recorded in a teneral (freshly emerged) state, indicating successful breeding within the ponds.

Species such as Brown Hawker, Southern Hawker, and Emperor Dragonfly were observed away from the ponds on Keston Common. Their presence across the heathland and acid grassland highlights the importance of these habitats as foraging areas. Overall, the results were very positive, demonstrating a high diversity of odonatan species.

Allotment Biodiversity champions projects –

During the summer, the idverde Biodiversity Team delivered a training course on bats to the Allotment Biodiversity Champions group. The course included a one-hour presentation on how to encourage bats, the benefits they provide, and how to survey bats on allotments. B. Jarvis and E. Denniss also delivered on-site training on conducting an industry-standard torch survey of a Kent-style bat box and discussed optimal box placement to maximise the likelihood of bat occupancy.

41, B. Jarvis discussing the requirements for a bat box and surveying them correctly and safely (left), B. Jarvis installing the bat box Image. E. Denniss (right)

Every champion who attended the training course was gifted a Kent style bat box for their allotment site. Ben. J has now installed these bat boxes across 11 sites including Poverest allotments, Biggin hill allotments, Pickhurst allotments, Bourne vale allotments, Barnmead allotments, Belmont allotments, Chelsfield allotments, Hall Farm allotments, Turpington lane allotments, Southland Road allotments & Lower road Allotment

Recording and Partners:

Despite London having its own recording office, Green Space Information for Greater London (GiGL), Bromley falls within the vice-county recording area VC16 – West Kent. Therefore, for certain taxa, data is submitted to the appropriate recording bodies responsible.

Information is submitted to the following bodies:

- British Bryological Society
- British Lichen Society
- British Trust for Ornithology (BTO)
- Butterfly Conservation (including the Kent and Southeast London Branch)
- GiGL
- Kent Bat Group
- London Bat Group
- Bat Conservation Trust (National Bat Monitoring Programme)
- Kent Mammal Group
- Kent Reptile and Amphibian Group (KRAG)
- National Dormouse Monitoring Programme (PTES)
- RSPB (including the Bromley Local Group)
- UK Butterfly Monitoring Scheme (UKBMS)


RSPB


idverde


Bromley
THE LONDON BOROUGH