

The Butterflies of Three Hagges Wood Meadow



These are some of the butterflies and moths you can expect to see at the wood-meadow today. How many can you tick off your list?



Meadow Brown, *Maniola jurtina*
You may see this butterfly drinking nectar from several of the meadow flowers. Look for the female among the grasses. She lays her eggs on meadow grasses - the food source for her larvae.



Common Blue, *Polyommatus icarus*
This butterfly appears often in the wood-meadow, and Bird's foot trefoil, the yellow flower in the picture, is one of the food plants of the larvae.



Ringlet, *Aphantopus hyperantus*
This butterfly loves damp meadows and is often seen at the woodland edge. The ring patterns vary, and the background colour can also be very dark, almost black in some cases. It uses several meadow and woodland grasses and sedges as larval food plants.



Gatekeeper, *Pyronia tithonus*
Just as the other 'Brown' butterflies do, the Gatekeeper relies on meadow grasses as a larval food plant. It often nectars on knapweed, as shown here. It isn't as common in the meadow, but you might just be lucky.



Brown Argus, *Aricia agestis*

This lovely butterfly is one of our less common species in the wood-meadow. Here, it is perching on a plantain flower, but it uses geraniums and several of the knapweeds as a larval food plant.



Small Copper, *Lycaena phlaeas*

Sheep's Sorrel and Common Sorrel – and there's plenty of both in the wood-meadow, are the main larval food plants of the Small Copper. It's a fast flier and you may glimpse it flying past – the very bright colour makes it easily recognisable.



Small Tortoiseshell, *Aglais urticae*

You may have seen this butterfly in your garden. But we also see it the wood-meadow, and numbers will probably increase later in summer here. The female lays her eggs on the larval foodplant, the common nettle.



Six-spot Burnet moth, *Zygaena filipendulae stephensi*

This day-flying moth is a frequent visitor to the wood-meadow, as it loves the nectar from our knapweeds. It is one of the 132 species of invertebrates that uses the Bird's foot trefoil as a larval food plant.

