

Invasion of the Ginger Giants

By Nick Hall, Butterfly Transect Walker

A new first for Three Hagges Woodmeadow is the Dark green fritillary butterfly. Locally Dark greens are on the move and we are seeing new colonies popping up all over; even gardens near to some of these new colonies particularly along the magnesian limestone ridge.

The march of climate change combined with another warm, wet winter makes for an excellent violet growth - this year's violet leaves are enormous! (Earlier this spring we enhanced Three Hagges Woodmeadow with some violets.) Add in Ash dieback punching big holes in the impenetrable closed canopy of a modern (so called) woodland we may have achieved a perfect storm!

I have become a little obsessed with the large Fritillaries having discovered the first significant colony of Silver-washed in Yorkshire just 2 years ago in Bishop Wood and I would not be at all surprised if we don't get a visit at Three Hagges Woodmeadow from them this year, in fact in the next 3 weeks.

Both species are immensely powerful fliers and distance is really not an issue if they can keep 'fuelling' as they fly in a spell of good weather. The last two years have seen females roaming far and wide maybe up to 50 miles with colonies popping up in almost every major woodland in Yorkshire.

I think there is every chance that any suitable meadow is quite liable to see a dark green this year as I gather similar explosive migrations are happening on the wolds and moors."

Have you spotted any Ginger Giants near you? If so, share your stories and photos with us at enquiries@woodmeadowtrust.org.uk or via our social media [@woodmeadowtrust](https://www.instagram.com/woodmeadowtrust)

