



Coenonympha dorus
©Xavier Houard

Mediterranean &
Corsica - France

Field Guide for butterfly identification

The French section of the **European butterfly monitoring programme (Sterf-eBMS)** aims to monitor and promote the conservation of these insects. The programme relies on thousands of volunteers who identify and count butterflies using the same simple rules throughout Europe! Thanks to all this information collected by volunteers, we can determine the state of butterfly populations and take action to conserve them.

This Field Guide aims to facilitate the task of field identification of the **98 most common butterfly species seen in Mediterranean area and Corsica** of France.

*This Field Guide can be downloaded at the
eBMS website*

www.butterfly-monitoring.net/field-guides



Counting butterflies will help to protect them!

French Butterflies

The aim of this field guide is to present the **98 butterfly species most commonly seen in the mediterranean area and Corsica** of France, and to make it easier to identify them. Beware, that in some cases, the species may require capture or even examination of the genitalia to confirm identification. This mini-guide is designed to help you, but does not cover all the species in the given area. It also describes the Sterf-eBMS protocol for setting up and monitoring transects and counting butterflies.

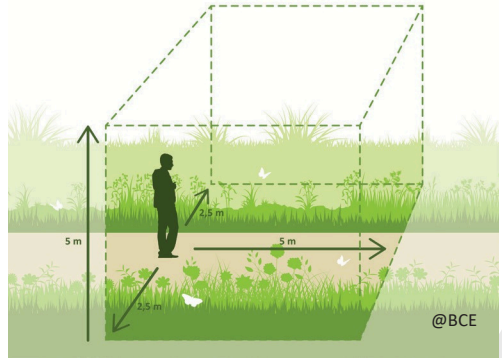
Butterfly Monitoring

Butterflies can be counted everywhere: in a meadow, in a forest, park, garden, along road verge, in the countryside and in the city. Wherever it is, every count is important. As part of the European Butterfly Monitoring Scheme (eBMS), data is most often collected during the “Butterfly Walk”, called a **transect**. This is a fixed route where butterflies are counted regularly (species and abundances), preferably once a week or two. It will be most convenient to set up your transect near your home or work so that you can visit it often. Another option is to record butterflies during “**15-min Count**”. It consists in counting butterflies for 15 minutes in a given area. It can be a path, a restricted area (e.g. a garden) or just a specific point.

You can use the eBMS mobile application, [ButterflyCount](#), to record “eBMS Transects” or “15-minute counts”. For the latter methodology, turn on the GPS and the application will draw your route while counting butterflies. You will need to create an account on the eBMS website and log into the application to record butterflies with the application. More information is available on the eBMS website www.butterfly-monitoring.net/ebms-app.

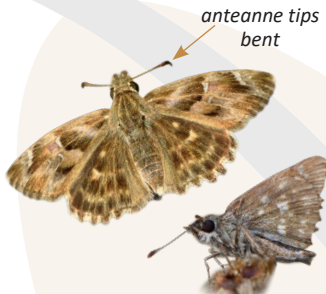
Basic rules when counting butterflies:



- Count all butterfly species and all individuals you encounter in an imaginary cube: 2.5m to the left and right, and 5m in front of and above you
- Walk through the transect/area at a slow, steady pace
- Make observations with good weather (sunny and warm, no rain and strong wind)
- Submit your data to the eBMS database or to the BMS coordinator

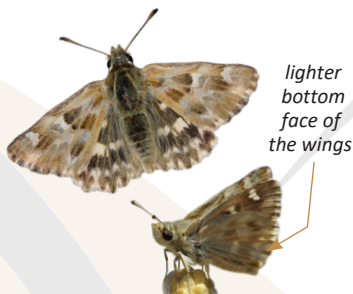




How to use this Field Guide

This field guide shows images of the **98 most common butterfly species** currently found in the Mediterranean and Corsica area of France. The butterflies are organised by family and relationship to similar species. Every butterfly species has both a common English name and a scientific name (written in *italics*). For better identification look at the flight periods bar below each species shows the months they fly in brown, and the butterfly symbol on the right which shows the approximate size (small, medium or large). Please note that butterfly sizes are not to scale for better observation of details. The eye symbol indicates whether identification is easy, requires capture or even examination of the genitalia. Check the diagnostic characteristics highlighted in this guide with the arrows or circles and the remarks to help you with the identification. Butterfly identification is often best done using photographs. See also the legend on the back cover of the Field Guide.





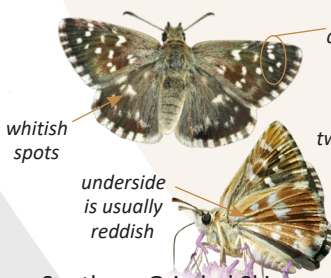
Mallow Skipper
Carcharodus alceae  
 J F M A M J J A S O N D





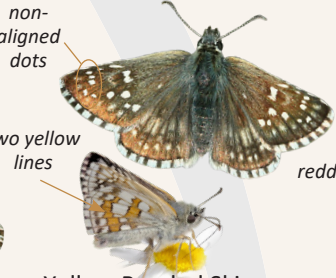
Marbled Skipper  
Carcharodus lavatherae
 J F M A M J J A S O N D





Southern Marbled Skipper  
Carcharodus baeticus
 J F M A M J J A S O N D





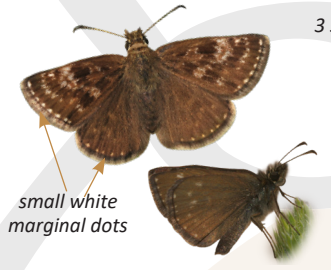
Southern Grizzled Skipper  
Pyrgus malvoides
 J F M A M J J A S O N D





Yellow Banded Skipper  
Pyrgus sidae
 J F M A M J J A S O N D





Red Underwing Skipper  
Spialia sertorius
 J F M A M J J A S O N D



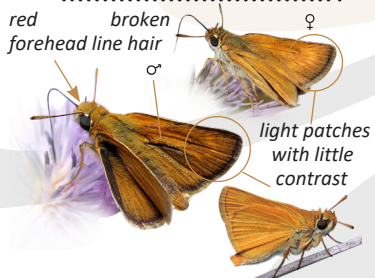
Dingy Skipper  
Erynnis tages
 J F M A M J J A S O N D





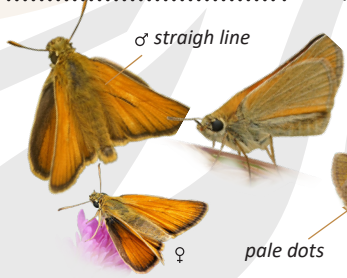
Sage Skipper  
Muschampia proto
 J F M A M J J A S O N D





Silver-spotted Skipper  
Hesperia comma
 J F M A M J J A S O N D





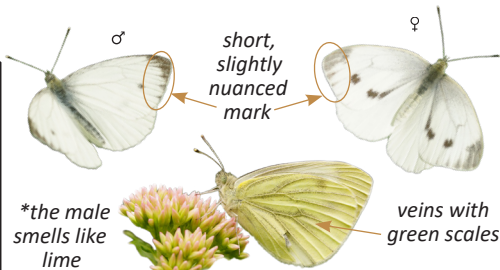
Lulworth Skipper  
Thymelicus acteon
 J F M A M J J A S O N D



Small Skipper  
Thymelicus sylvestris
 J F M A M J J A S O N D

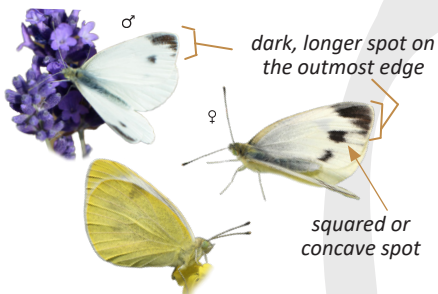


Large Skipper  
Ochlodes sylvanus
 J F M A M J J A S O N D



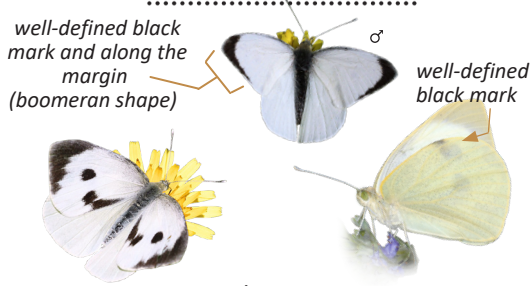
Green-veined White
Pieris napi

J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
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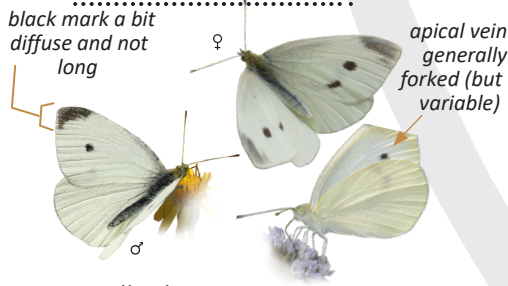
Southern Small White
Pieris mannii

J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
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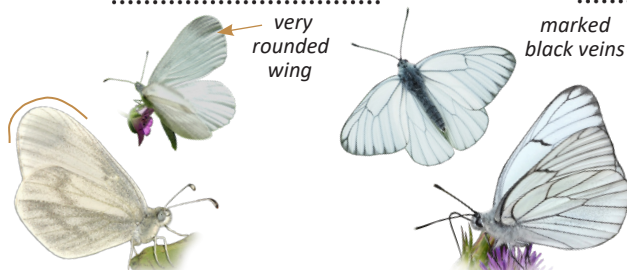
Large White
Pieris brassicae

J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
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Small White
Pieris rapae

J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
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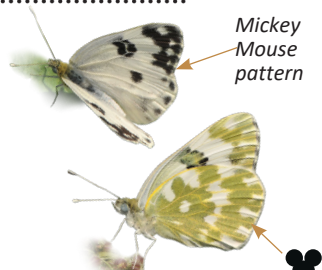


Wood White
Leptidea sinapis

J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
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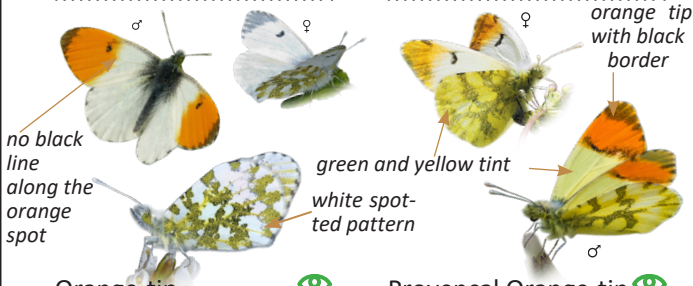
Black-veined White
Aporia crataegi

J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
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Bath White
Pontia daplidice

J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
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Orange-tip
Anthocharis cardamines

J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
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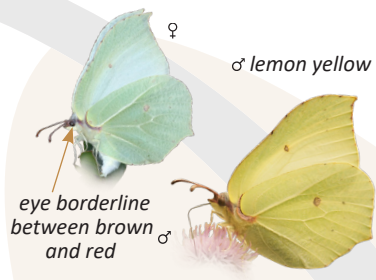
Provencal Orange-tip
Anthocharis euphenoides



J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
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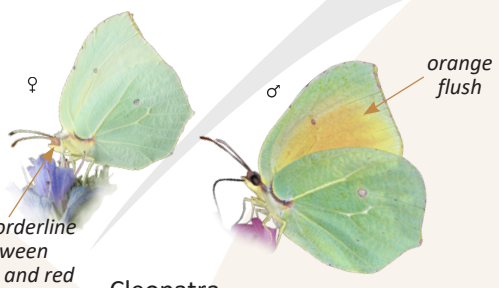




Western Dappled White
Euchloe crameri

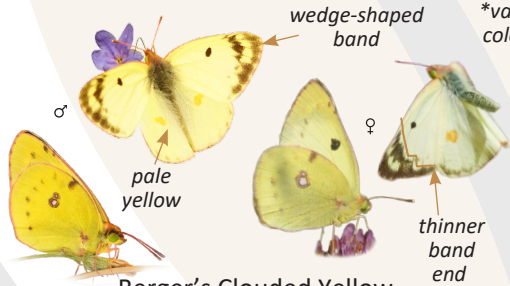
J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
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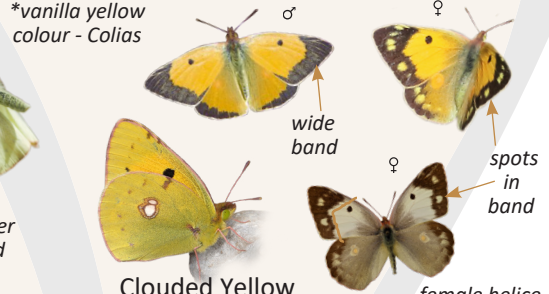
Brimstone
Gonepteryx rhamni  
J F M A M J J A S O N D



Cleopatra
Gonepteryx cleopatra  
J F M A M J J A S O N D







Berger's Clouded Yellow
Colias alfajariensis  
J F M A M J J A S O N D





Clouded Yellow
Colias crocea  
J F M A M J J A S O N D

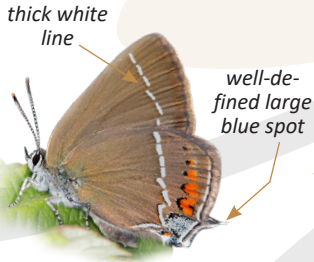




White-letter Hairstreak
Satyrium w-album  
J F M A M J J A S O N D

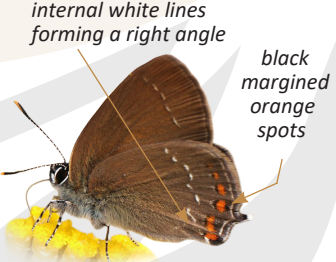
False Ilex Hairstreak
Satyrium esculi  
J F M A M J J A S O N D





Spanish Purple Hairstreak
Laeosopis roboris  
J F M A M J J A S O N D





Blue-spot Hairstreak
Satyrium spini  
J F M A M J J A S O N D



Ilex Hairstreak
Satyrium ilicis  
J F M A M J J A S O N D



Sloe Hairstreak
Satyrium acaciae  
J F M A M J J A S O N D

flying on the top trees;
better search for eggs in
winter on *Prunus spinosa*



Brown Hairstreak
Thecla betulae



J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
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Chapman's Green Haristreak
Callophrys avis



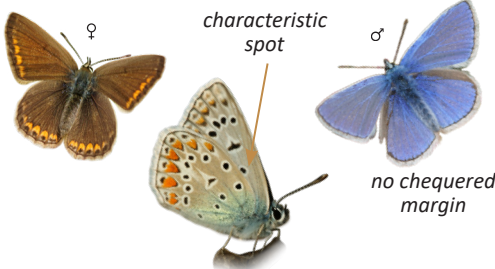
J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
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Green Hairstreak
Callophrys rubi



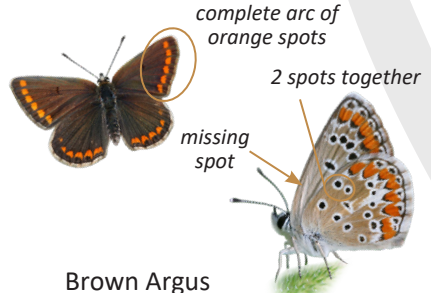
J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
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Common Blue Blue
Polyommatus icarus



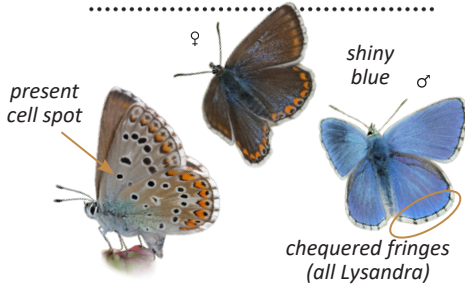
J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
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Brown Argus
Aricia agestis



J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
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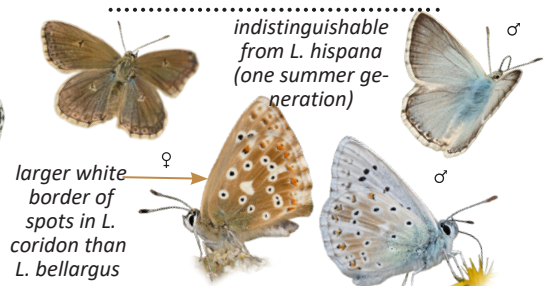


Adonis Blue

Lysandra bellargus



J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
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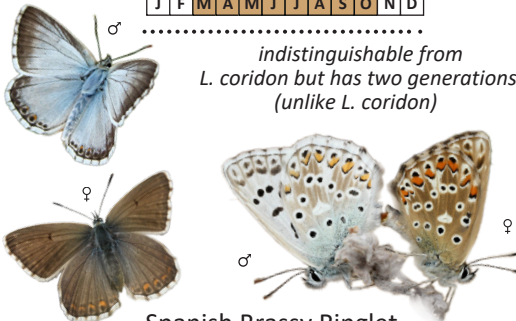


Chalkhill Blue

Lysandra coridon



J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
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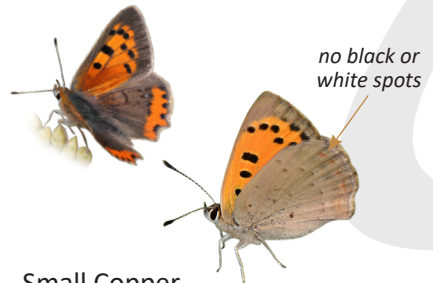


Spanish Brassy Ringlet

Lysandra hispana



J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
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Small Copper

Lycaena phlaeas

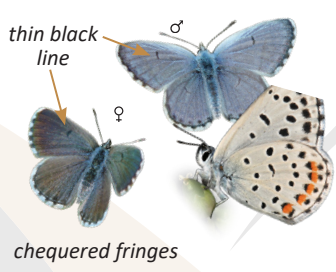




J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
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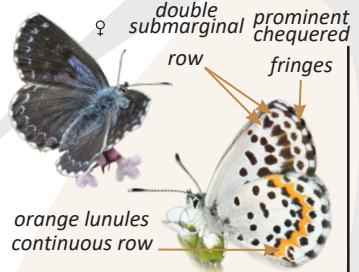
Silver-studded Blue
Plebejus argus  



J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
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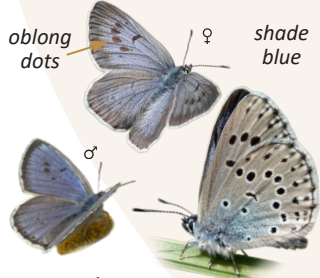
Baton Blue
Pseudophilotes baton  



J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
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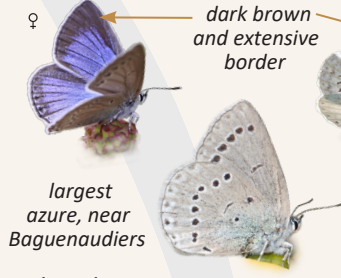
Chequered Blue
Scolitantides orion  



J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
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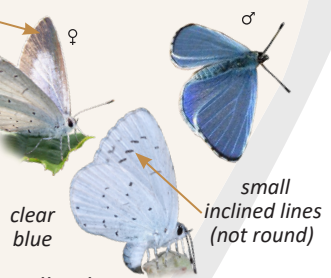
Large Blue
Phengaris arion  



J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
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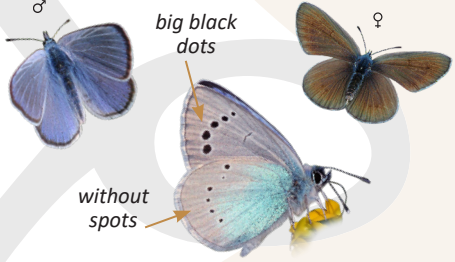
Iolas Blue
Iolana iolas  



J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
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Holly Blue
Celastrina argiolus  

J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
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Green-underside Blue
Glaucopsyche alexis  



J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
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Black-eyed Blue
Glaucopsyche melanops  



J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
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Geranium Bronze
Cacyreus marshalli  



J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
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Long-tailed Blue
Lampides boeticus  

J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
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Lang's Short-tailed Blue
Leptotes pirithous  

J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
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PAPILIONIDAE - SWALLOWTAILS



Swallowtail
Papilio machaon

J F M A M J J A S O N D

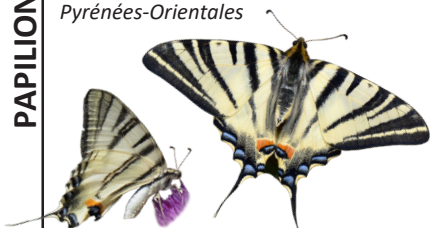
*replaced by *l. feisthamelii* in the Pyrénées-Orientales



Corsican Swallowtail
Papilio hospiton

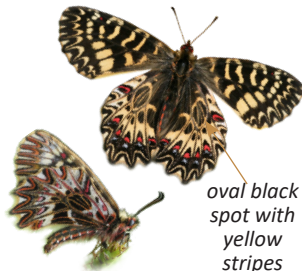
J F M A M J J A S O N D

red dots on the anterior wing



Scarce Swallowtail
Iphiclides podalirius

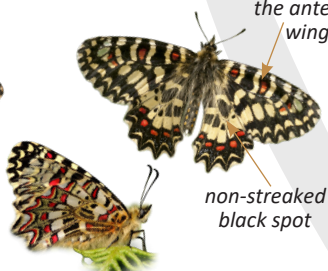
J F M A M J J A S O N D



Southern Festoon
Zerynthia polyxena

J F M A M J J A S O N D

oval black spot with yellow stripes

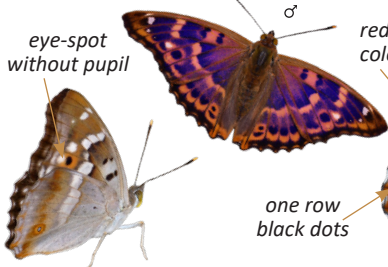


Spanish Festoon
Zerynthia rumina

J F M A M J J A S O N D

non-streaked black spot

NYPHALIDAE



Lesser Purple Emperor
Apatura ilia

J F M A M J J A S O N D

eye-spot without pupil

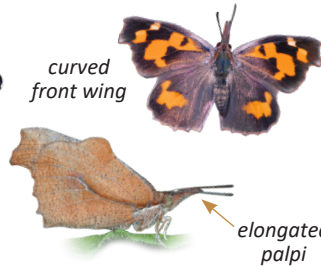


Southern White Admiral
Limenitis reducta

J F M A M J J A S O N D

reddish colour

one row black dots

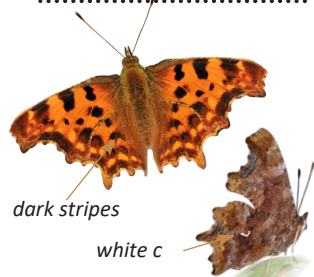


Nettle Tree Butterfly
Libythea celtis

J F M A M J J A S O N D

curved front wing

elongated palpi

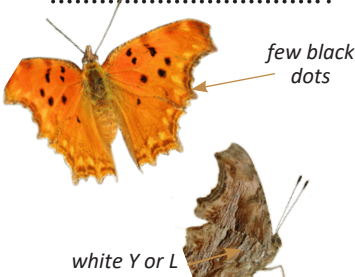


Comma
Polygonia c-album

J F M A M J J A S O N D

dark stripes

white c

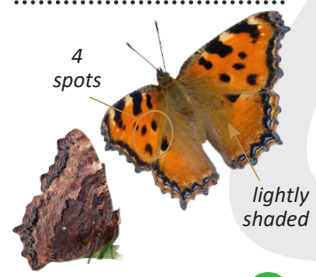


Peacock
Polygonia egea

J F M A M J J A S O N D

few black dots

white Y or L



Large Tortoiseshell
Nymphalis polychloros

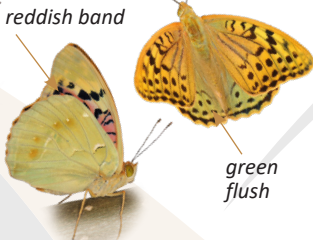
J F M A M J J A S O N D

4 spots

lightly shaded



green with silver stripes



reddish band

green flush



Silver-washed Fritillary
Argynnis paphia

Cardinal
Argynnis pandora

Corsican Fritillary
Fabriciana elisa

J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
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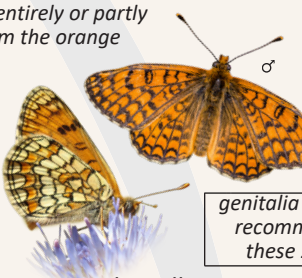
J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
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J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
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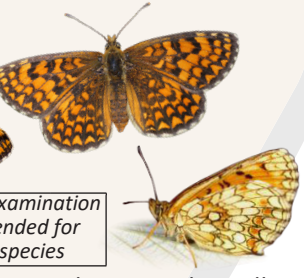
Spotted Fritillary
Melitaea didyma

J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
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Provencal Fritillary
Melitaea deione

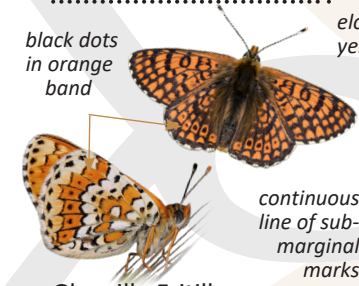
J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
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Southern Heath Fritillary
Melitaea celadussa

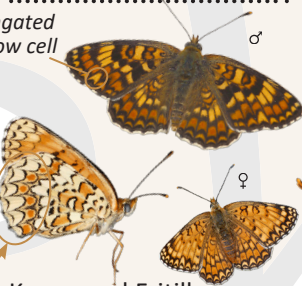
J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

genitalia examination recommended for these 2 species



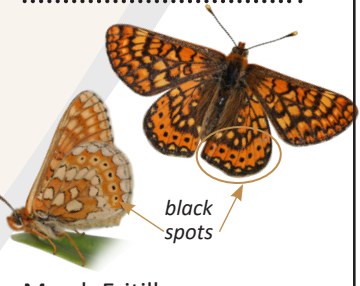
Glanville Fritillary
Melitaea cinxia

J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
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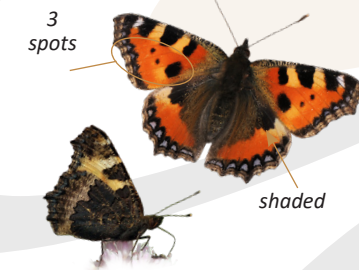
Knapweed Fritillary
Melitaea phoebe

J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
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Marsh Fritillary
Euphydryas aurinia

J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---



Small Tortoiseshell
Aglais urticae

J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
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Red Admiral
Vanessa atalanta

J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---



Painted Lady
Vanessa cardui

J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

black dots in orange band

elongated yellow cell



continuous line of sub-marginal marks

black spots

3 spots



shaded



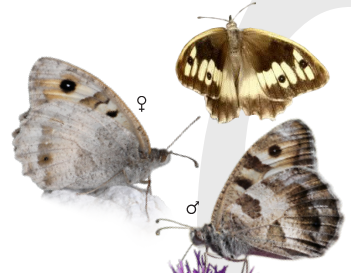
Two Tailed Pasha
Charaxes jasius  



J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---



Plain Tiger
Danaus chrysippus  

J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---





Hermit
Chazara briseis  

J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

3 brown lines at the top of the anterior area

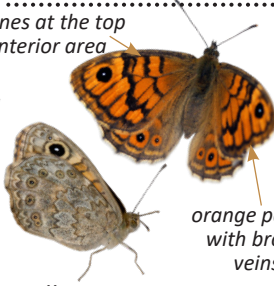
chequered pattern





Dusky Heath
Coenonympha dorus  

J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	P	O	N	D
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

white band with spots in the middle





Wall Brown
Lasiommata megera  

J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

orange pattern with brown veins





Speckled Wood
Pararge aegeria  

J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

scalloped margin




Small Heath
Coenonympha pamphilus  

J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

eyespot with yellow ring

discontinuous pale stripe



Meadow Brown
Maniola jurtina  

J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

pale wide band

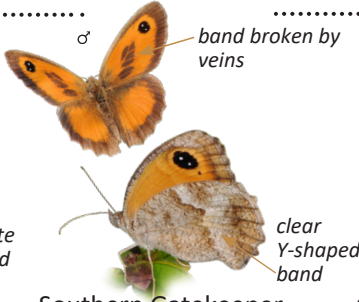
usually one or more small black eyespots



Spanish Gatekeeper
Pyronia bathseba  

J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
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white band





Southern Gatekeeper
Pyronia cecilia  

J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

clear Y-shaped band





Great Banded Grayling
Brintesia circe  

J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---



white band



Rock Grayling
Hipparchia alcyone  

J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---



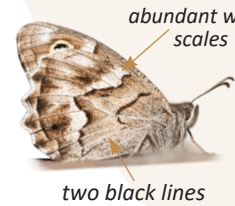
Lesser Rock Grayling
Hipparchia genava  

J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
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Woodland Grayling
Hipparchia fagi  

J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
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Striped Grayling
Hipparchia fidia  

J	F	M	A	M	J	A	S	O	N	D
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Tree Grayling
Hipparchia stalinus  



J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
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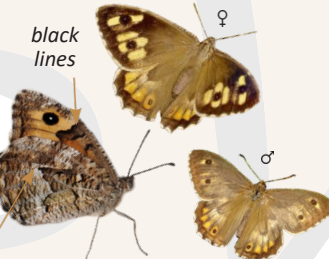
Southern Grayling
Hipparchia aristaeus  



J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
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False Grayling
Arethusana arethusa  



J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
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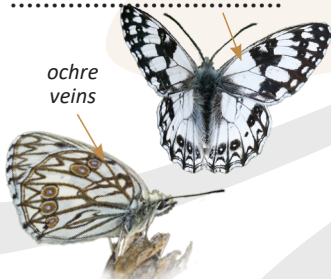
Grayling
Hipparchia semele  

J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
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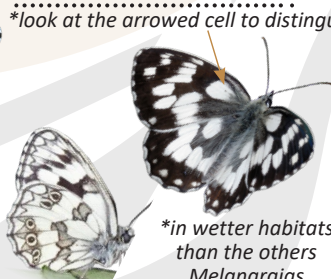
Corsican Grayling
Hipparchia neomiris  

J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
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Western Marbled White
Melanargia occitanica  

J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
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Marbled White
Melanargia galathea  

J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
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Iberian Marbled White
Melanargia lachesis  

J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
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*look at the arrowed cell to distinguish the Melanargias

*in wetter habitats than the others Melanargias

Butterfly Conservation Europe and the **UK Centre for Ecology and Hydrology (UKCEH)** established the European Butterfly Monitoring Scheme (eBMS) to bring together data from different Butterfly Monitoring Schemes of Europe. All member countries share their data annually to the eBMS database, to analyse and produce the population trends of the European butterfly species and European Butterfly Indicators, which provide an expert basis for further action in the conservation of butterflies and their habitats. Visit the website of eBMS, www.butterfly-monitoring.net to get more information about butterfly monitoring and how to submit your butterfly data.

The **Sterf** (*Suivi temporel des Rhopalocères de France*) is a citizen science project launched in 2005, based on the English name, butterfly monitoring scheme (BMS). It is co-hosted by the National Museum of Natural History of Paris (MNHN), the Office for insects and their Environment (Opie) and the French Office for Biodiversity (OFB), as part of the National Action Plan in favor of threatened butterflies. Contact email at: mathieu.deflores@insectes.org

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This guide was created by Butterfly Conservation Europe, eBMS & OPIE.

Authors: Mathieu de Flores, Benoit Fontaine, Bastien Louboutin, Alexis Borges and Cristina G. Sevilleja.

Photography: Philippe Dauguet, Bastien Louboutin, Alexandre Ruffoni; Juan Pablo Cancela, Helena Romo, Saba González, Juan Ignacio Arce, Miguel Carballa, Jose Rodrigo Dapena, Javier Olivares, Alberto and José Ramón Sanchís (Spanish BMS); Paolo Mazzei, Marco Bonifacino, Raniero Panfili and Daniel Morel (www.leps.it); Carlos Viveiros, Christos Zoumides, Mariano Vindel, Juan Manuel Sanchez, Izabella Dziekanska, Martin Wiemers, Albert Vliegthart, Bert van Rijsewijk and Chris van Swaay.

eBMS - European Butterfly Monitoring Scheme

Graphic design: Cristina G. Sevilleja

December 2024



Identification difficulty:



Flight period: months when butterflies are seen flying.



Butterfly size:



Sex:

♀ Female ♂ Male

Species only present in Corsica:



Symbols:

→ ○ Specific characteristics to help on butterfly identification

