

Roger Umpelby: British Butterflies

WWT Malvern Group, Thursday April 2<sup>nd</sup>



The Malvern Group were treated to a wealth of beautiful butterfly photographs on April 2<sup>nd</sup>, all taken by professional entomologist Roger Umpelby. He showed us most of the 58 native species of the UK, some very common like the Peacock and the Speckled Wood, and some very rare like the Camberwell Beauty and the Purple Emperor. Fascinating facts emerged about many of the species, for example the Chalkhill Blue only feeds on horseshoe vetch, the Wall butterfly is aggressively territorial, and the Small Tortoiseshell suffered a population crash in 2008 because of internal parasites, and is only just beginning to recover. Particular mention was made of several species one is likely to find on Bredon Hill, where Roger lives, including the Common Blue, Brown Argus, Dark Green Fritillary and Small Heath. A newcomer to this area is the Essex Skipper.

Brimstone, Peacock, Small Tortoiseshell and Comma butterflies have already been seen in the Malvern area this spring. Soon there will be many others, including White and Red Admirals, Small Copper, Marbled White (see photo above) and Ringlet. If you are in the right place at the right time, you may see a Green Hairstreak or a Grayling on the Hills. Sadly, the High Brown Fritillary has not been seen for a long time now, and is thought to have died out in this area.

The next meeting is at 7.30 pm on May 7<sup>th</sup> at the Lyttelton Rooms in Church Street. Derek Crawley will talk about Foxes and Badgers.