

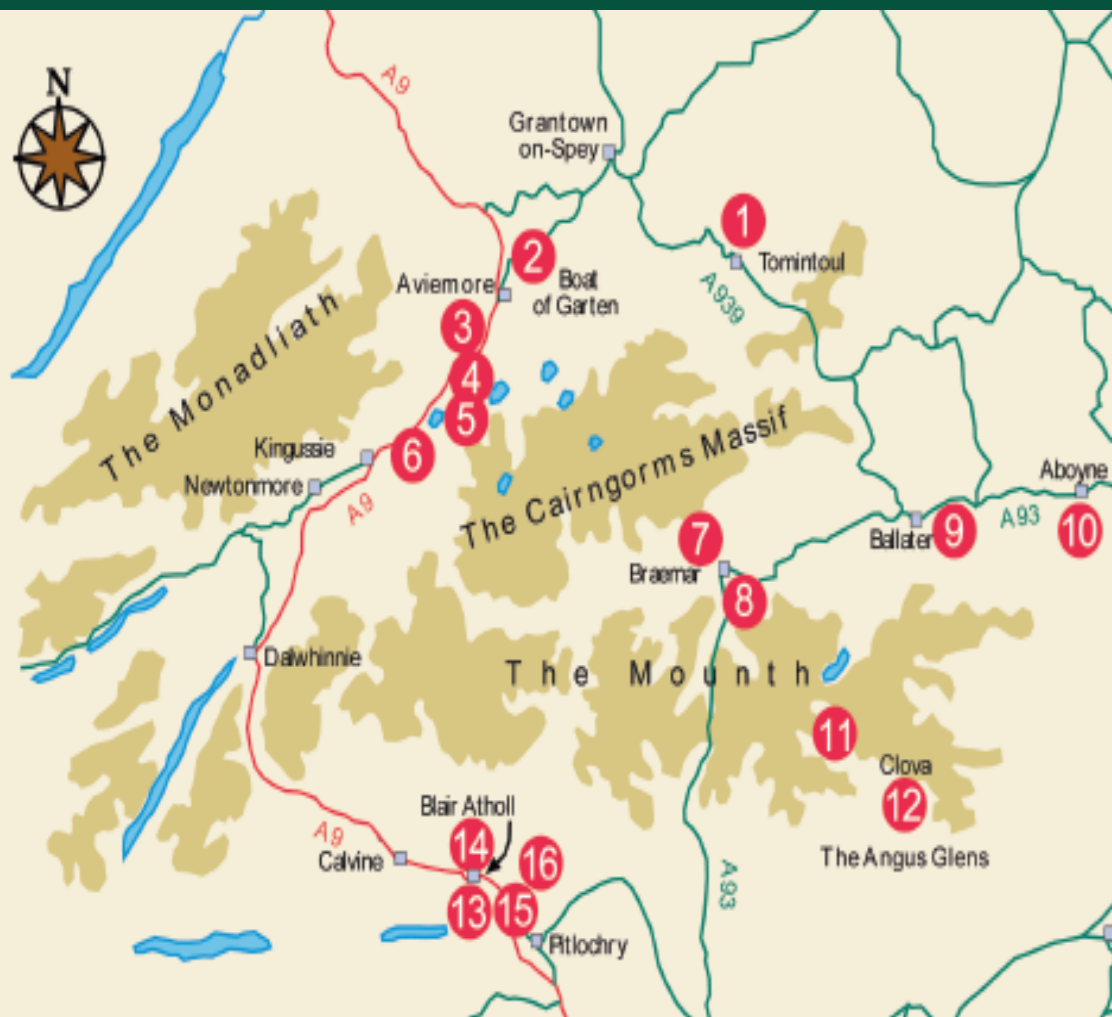
Top sites to see butterflies in the Cairngorms

Choose warm, sunny days to look for butterflies, when they are more active. Always take a map and in more remote sites, a compass. Many of the paths are uneven so wear footwear with good ankle support and for longer walks take warm, waterproof clothing as weather conditions can change quickly. A mobile phone, snack and drink are good safety precautions. Remember to take a notebook and pen too, to record your butterfly sightings!

Get involved! Send in your butterfly sightings!

Contribute to Butterfly Conservation's general recording scheme for butterflies - 'Butterflies for the New Millennium' (BNM). Records of all butterflies are important, even of the most common species, so we have up-to-date information on the locations of butterfly colonies to help to direct conservation priorities and action in Scotland. All you need to do is send in your records to the relevant BNM Co-ordinator. You must provide details of which butterflies you saw and roughly how many, the site name and grid reference from an Ordnance Survey map, your name, and the date. More information is available from Butterfly Conservation Scotland (see contacts on back page) or visit www.butterfly-conservation.org.

BNM Co-ordinator for Highland and Moray:
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BNM Co-ordinator for Aberdeenshire, Perthshire and Angus:
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Quick guide to flight periods

Species	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Dingy Skipper												
Clouded Yellow												
Large White												
Small White												
Green-veined White												
Orange-tip												
Green Hairstreak												
Small Copper												
Small Blue												
Northern Brown Argus												
Common Blue												
Red Admiral												
Painted Lady												
Small Tortoiseshell												
Peacock												
Small Pearl-b'd Fritillary												
Pearl-bordered Fritillary												
Dark Green Fritillary												
Speckled Wood												
Mountain Ringlet												
Scotch Argus												
Meadow Brown												
Ringlet												
Small Heath												
Large Heath												

Site name	How to get there	Main interest	OS grid ref and map no. of car park and other location details	More information
1 Glenlivet	Via A939 from Grantown on Spey or Ballater/Braemar. Via B9008 from A95 at Ballindalloch	Variety including Scotch Argus and Northern Brown Argus	11 waymarked walks from Estate Information Centre in Tomintoul NU172183 (36)	Glenlivet Estate Office Ph 01807 580283
2 Circular walk, Boat of Garten (Sorry, no dogs)	Follow signs to Boat of Garten off A9	Variety including Scotch Argus and possibly Green Hairstreak	Village hall NH942189 (36). Walk up hill, enter wood on left opposite shop, take footpath straight ahead to Creag Beag, over railway line to Dalvout and back to village.	Highland Council Ranger Service Ph 01540 673907/01479 873914
3 Craigallachie NNR	Follow signs to Aviemore from the A9, park at the tourist information centre	Small Pearl-bordered Fritillary, Scotch Argus	TIC car park NH 894119 (36). Then walk between the youth hostel and the caravan park and under the A9 subway. Please stay on the paths	Scottish Natural Heritage, Aviemore Ph 01479 810477
4 Loch an Eilean	From Aviemore take the B970 and turn right towards Insh, then follow signs to Loch an Eilean	Variety including Scotch Argus, Small Pearl-bordered and Dark green Fritillary	Main car park at NH897084 (36) and follow footpath round loch	Rothiemurchus Ranger Service Ph 01479 812345
5 Feshie Bridge	From Aviemore take the B970 towards Insh	Variety including Small Blue, Scotch Argus, Dark Green Fritillary	Feshie Bridge Forestry Commission car park at NH848047 (36)	Leaflet available from Glenmore Visitor Centre Ph 01479 861220
6 Lynachlaggan Birchwood	On B970 (Coylumbidge to Kingussie) just east of Insh village	Variety including Small Pearl-bordered Fritillary, Scotch Argus, Orange-tip	Small parking bay opposite entrance to wood at NH818019 (35)	RSPB office, Insh Marshes Ph 01540 661518
7 Clais Fhearnaig	From Braemar take the Linn of Dee road to Glen Quoich	Pearl-bordered Fritillary (unusual, bracken-free site on south facing slopes)	National Trust for Scotland Car Park at Glen Quoich NO118912 (43). Walk c.5km up Glen and take track left	National Trust for Scotland Ranger Service Ph 013397 41669
8 Morrone Birkwood	From Braemar take road to Linn of Dee and turn left up one-way road at "Taste" restaurant for c. half a mile	All three fritillaries, Northern Brown Argus, Common Blue & Small Heath	Use car park on left by duck pond NO143910 (43). Waymarked paths start nearby	Aberdeenshire Council South Marr Ranger Ph 013398 85751 / 07787 583976
9 Cambus O'May	From Ballater take A93 4 miles towards Aberdeen. Can also walk from Ballater or Dinnet on Deeside Way	Variety, including all three fritillaries, Scotch Argus and Ringlet	Cambus O'May bridge car park at NO 422975 (37/44). From old station house below car park, follow riverbank path downstream or Deeside Way (old railway line) to Dinnet	Aberdeenshire Council South Marr Ranger Ph 013398 85751 / 07787 583976
10 Loch of Aboyne	From Aboyne take A93. 1 mile towards Aberdeen. Can also walk from Aboyne via old railway line and/or golf course	Variety, including all three fritillaries, Northern Brown Argus and Orange-tip	Layby at Lodge on the Loch sign at NO539998 (37) or patrons may park at lodge. Take track to Lodge, then path on north side of loch & explore area between golf courses or join waymarked route to Mortlich hill	Aberdeenshire Council South Marr Ranger Ph 013398 85751 / 07787 583976
11 Glen Doll Forest West Loop	From Kirriemuir follow the B955 to Clova and turn left to Glen Doll	Small Pearl-bordered Fritillary, Dark Green Fritillary, Ringlet	Use Forestry Commission car park at the end of the road NO285761 (44)	Angus Glens Ranger Service Ph 01575 550233
12 Lower Glen Clova	Take B955 from Kirriemuir and turn off on the B956 road to Rotal	Northern Brown Argus (less than 50m from road between plantation and birch woodland)	Pull off road by plantation after Adielinn Cottage at NO353715 (44)	Angus Glens Ranger Service Ph 01575 550233
13 Linn of Tummel	2 miles north west of Pitlochry on B8019	Pearl-bordered Fritillary (look under power line at NN905603) and other woodland species	Garry Bridge Car Park NN913610 (43). Then follow path to where the Tummel and Garry meet. Walk up the Tummel for 10 mins, through deer gate	National Trust for Scotland Ranger Service Ph 01350 728641
14 Jubilee Rifle Range	From Blair Atholl take the minor road north to Old Bridge of Tilt, turn left under bridge - car park is c.100m on left	Variety including Orange-tip and Dark Green Fritillary. Possibly Northern Brown Argus	Glen Tilt car park NN874663 (43). Then walk 2 miles via Old Blair and Blairuachdar	Atholl Estate Ranger Service Ph 01796 481355. Phone to check when range in use! (signs also in car park)
15 Craigower Hill	From Pitlochry take the A924 to Moulin. Turn left just after the Moulin Inn to the golf course - or park at Moulin and walk from there	10 species recorded including Scotch Argus, Green Hairstreak and all three fritillaries	Small parking area at NN937593 (43 & 52) Then take path to north of golf course and follow steep, clearly-marked path	National Trust for Scotland Ranger Service Ph 01350 728641
16 Ben Vrackie	From Pitlochry take the A924 to Moulin. Turn left just after the Moulin Inn, then immediately right to car park, c. 500m on right	Woodland and heathland species including Scotch Argus, Small Heath and Dark Green Fritillary	NN943597 (43 & 52). Then follow well-signed path up mountain	Perth and Kinross Council Countryside Section Ph 01887 820297



Butterflies of the Cairngorms



Small Blues

An identification guide

Butterflies are beautiful insects and a joy to observe as well as identify. This guide will help you identify all 25 species of butterfly that occur in the Cairngorms National Park. It also provides a table so you can easily see what species are "on the wing" at any given time. We hope this leaflet will encourage you to help record the National Park's important butterfly populations.





SKIPPERS

1 Dingy Skipper
PS 27 - 34mm
 In sunshine this is an active butterfly, but in dull weather and at night it perches on the tops of dead flowerheads in a moth-like fashion. It can be found in places with bare ground and bird's-foot-trefoil, the caterpillar's food plant. However, it is currently only known from two or three sites along the River Feshie. It flies in May and June.

WHITES AND YELLOWS

2 Clouded Yellow
m 52 - 58mm, f 54 - 62mm
 A migrant to the UK from the Continent, this butterfly is well-known for its mass immigrations when they arrive in huge numbers in "Clouded Yellow years". Less common in Scotland, but in good years may be seen between May and September.

3 Large White
m 58mm, f 63mm
 Our largest white butterfly and a strong flier. Feeds on brassica crops as caterpillars and therefore disliked by gardeners. Differs from the Small White by its larger size, darker black wing tips which extend down the wing edge, and bolder spots. Flies April - September.

4 Small White
38 - 57mm
 The caterpillars feed on brassicas, but they cause less damage than those of the Large White. Easily confused with the more common Green-veined White which is similar in size, but the upperside has dark tips to the forewings, and it lacks the "green veins" on the underside of the wing. It is often one of the first butterflies to be seen and flies all summer.

5 Green-veined White
40 - 52mm
 The most common of the whites, this species feeds on wild crucifers and is not a garden pest. The green veins on the underside of the wing distinguish this from other white butterflies, but they can fade with wear and are less distinct in second generation butterflies. Flies April to June and July to September.

6 Orange-tip
40 - 52mm
 Feeds on wild crucifers such as cuckoo flower and garlic mustard. Males are unmistakable with their bright orange wing-tips, but females have no orange so could be confused with Small or Green-veined Whites. However, Orange-tips have distinctive mottled green undersides that can also be seen faintly from above through the upperwing. Flies mid April to June.

HAIRSTREAKS, COPPERS AND BLUES

7 Green Hairstreak
27 - 34mm
 Despite the bright green appearance of this small butterfly, which always sits with its wings closed, it can be difficult to spot. It prefers warm, sheltered sites in open birch woodland, moorland and edges of clearings of conifer plantations where its caterpillar food plant, blaeberry (bilberry), is found. Flies from mid April to June.

8 Small Copper
m 26 - 36mm, f 30 - 40mm
 This dainty butterfly is a widespread species found in a range of habitats. Its caterpillars feed on common and sheep's sorrel. The spring and summer broods can overlap, so it can be seen from late April through to late September.

9 Small Blue
PS, LBAP 18 - 27mm
 The smallest butterfly in the UK, this dusky-coloured species is often overlooked. There are only a few known sites but there may be other colonies. It is found in places where kidney vetch (the caterpillar food plant) grows, usually on dry sheltered grasslands. It is similar to the commoner day-flying Chimney Sweeper moth, but Small Blues have a white border extending all around the wing. Flies mid May to late July.

Codes
PS Priority Species in the UK Biodiversity Action Plan (UKBAP)
LBAP Local Biodiversity Action Plan species
 Wing spans, m = male, f = female

10 Northern Brown Argus
PS, LBAP 26 - 35mm
 This small butterfly can be easily identified by the gleaming white spot on each forewing. Adults fly from early June to August, but it can also be found by searching for its conspicuous white eggs laid on the upper side of the leaves of its food plant, common rock-rose.

11 Common Blue
29 - 36mm
 A widespread butterfly found in a variety of grassy habitats from sea level to mountainsides, almost anywhere that its caterpillar's foodplant, bird's-foot-trefoil, occurs. The brightly-coloured males are conspicuous, but females are browner, often with little or no blue. In Scotland it usually has one generation a year, the adults flying between June and September.

VANESSIONS AND FRITILLARIES

12 Red Admiral
m 64 - 72mm, f 70 - 78mm
 A familiar and distinctive garden butterfly that migrates to the UK every year from southern Europe and North Africa. It can breed in Scotland but cannot survive our winter. The major influx starts in late May and is re-inforced until August, with adults being seen until November. The caterpillars feed on stinging nettles.

13 Painted Lady
m 58 - 70mm, f 62 - 74mm
 Another migrant, this species is unable to over-winter in any part of the UK and re-colonises each year from mainland Europe, sometimes in spectacular numbers (such as in 1995 and 2003). They can often be seen congregating in areas with thistles, which serve as both a food plant for the caterpillars and a nectar source for the adults. The peak of immigration usually occurs in June, and adults can be seen until October or November.

14 Small Tortoiseshell
m 45 - 55mm, f 52 - 62mm
 This well-known butterfly can be seen in any month of the year in almost any habitat. It is familiar in gardens and feeds on stinging nettles as a caterpillar. It over-winters as an adult and is one of the first butterflies to emerge in the spring. Adults are regularly found in houses, sheds and outbuildings seeking hibernation sites.

15 Peacock
m 63 - 68mm, f 67 - 75mm
 An unmistakable butterfly and a regular garden visitor, feeding on nettles as a caterpillar. It colonised the Cairngorms from the south in the mid 1990s and is now a common garden butterfly. Often one of the first butterflies to be seen in the spring having over-wintered as adults, its summer broods can be seen from July to September, in much larger numbers.

16 Small Pearl-bordered Fritillary
PS, LBAP
m 35 - 41mm, f 38 - 44mm
 This species occurs in damp, grassy habitats, woodland clearings and moorlands. The caterpillars feed on marsh violet. It can be confused with the much rarer Pearl-bordered Fritillary or the Dark Green Fritillary (see below). Flies from late May to August.

17 Pearl-bordered Fritillary
PS, LBAP
m 38 - 46mm, f 43 - 47mm
 This is a comparatively rare species in the area. It can be distinguished from the much more common Small Pearl-bordered Fritillary by close observation of the underside of the hind wing: It has a smaller central spot, two (not seven) white central cells and all cells have a much paler border compared to the black border of the Small Pearl-bordered Fritillary. In addition, this species has more specific habitat requirements, mostly being found in dry glades, on south-facing slopes with bracken. It flies earlier in the season (late April to early June) and its main food plant is common dog violet.

18 Dark Green Fritillary
LBAP 58 - 68mm
 This is a large butterfly that feeds on violets as a caterpillar. It is widespread and is often found in flower-rich habitats with patches of scrub. It can be confused with the other two fritillaries in the area but is a more powerful flier, is much larger and has a green background to the underside of its hind wing. It flies from June to August.

BROWNS

19 Speckled Wood
m 46 - 52mm, f 48 - 56mm
 A butterfly of shady woodlands, this species spread into the northern part of the Cairngorms in the early 1990s. Males are often seen perched in sunlit spots ready to defend their territory or intercept females. The caterpillars feed on various grasses. Flies from late April to late October.

20 Mountain Ringlet
PS, LBAP
m 28 - 36mm, f 28 - 38mm
 Our only true montane butterfly, this species is found above 350m, usually on south-facing slopes where the caterpillars feed on mat grass. It only flies in bright sunshine, but can be disturbed from the ground in quite dull weather. It is similar to the larger and brighter Scotch Argus, but does not have white eyespots. In the Cairngorms it has been recorded at Craig Meagaidh, Glen Doll in the Angus Glens, and in the south west, around Loch Erich, but there may be other colonies. Usually flies from late June to August.

21 Scotch Argus
LBAP
m 44 - 48mm, f 46 - 52mm
 This butterfly is widespread in the Cairngorms and can be found up to an altitude of about 600m. The Scotch Argus breeds in tall, damp grassland where the caterpillars feed on a variety of grasses. In sunshine males can be very active, but cloudy weather can cause them to stop flying completely. It flies late in the season, from July to early September.

22 Meadow Brown
m 40 - 50mm, f 42 - 60mm
 One of the most common butterflies in the area, the Meadow Brown can be seen in many grassy habitats flying even in dull weather when most other butterflies are inactive. The caterpillar feeds on a variety of grasses. Males tend to be much darker than females, but the amount of orange on both is variable. The spotting pattern on the underside of the hindwing is also variable. Flies from late June to early September.

23 Ringlet
m 42 - 48mm, f 46 - 52mm
 Another recent colonist to the Cairngorms, the Ringlet has a very dark, velvety appearance when newly emerged. Males tend to be smaller and darker than females with hardly any markings on the upperwings. The "ringlets" on the underwings vary in number and size and can be virtually absent. It favours tall grassland on damp, heavy soils, where the caterpillars feed on coarse grasses. It flies, even in dull conditions, from late June to August.

24 Small Heath
PS m 33mm, f 37mm
 A bright but inconspicuous butterfly that flies only in sunny conditions and always keeps its wings closed at rest. It occurs on grasslands in dry, well-drained situations where the sward is short but sparse and there are fescues, meadow grasses and bents upon which the caterpillar feeds. In Scotland it only has one generation from mid May to early August.

25 Large Heath
PS, LBAP 35 - 40mm
 The Large Heath is restricted to wet, boggy habitats where its main food plant, hare's-tail cottongrass grows. It always sits with its wings closed and can be distinguished from the Small Heath by its duller colour, spots on the hind wing, and larger size. Flies from early June to mid August.



Why Not Join Butterfly Conservation?

Butterfly Conservation is the UK charity that takes action to save butterflies, moths and their habitats. You can directly support us by joining Butterfly Conservation. Annual membership entitles you to our colourful magazine 'Butterfly' three times a year. It also includes membership of your local BC branch who organise field trips and talks. For a membership form or further information, please contact us or visit our website www.butterfly-conservation.org where you can join online.

Butterfly Conservation Scotland - What we do

We work closely with the Scottish Government, Scottish Natural Heritage, local communities and conservation partners to safeguard Scotland's butterflies and moths, by:

- ◆ Advising landowners on managing land for butterflies and moths.
- ◆ Carrying out surveys of our most threatened species.
- ◆ Training volunteers to enable them to take action for butterflies and moths.
- ◆ Making recommendations to the Scottish Government on its environmental policies.
- ◆ Encouraging everyone to cherish butterflies and moths.

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