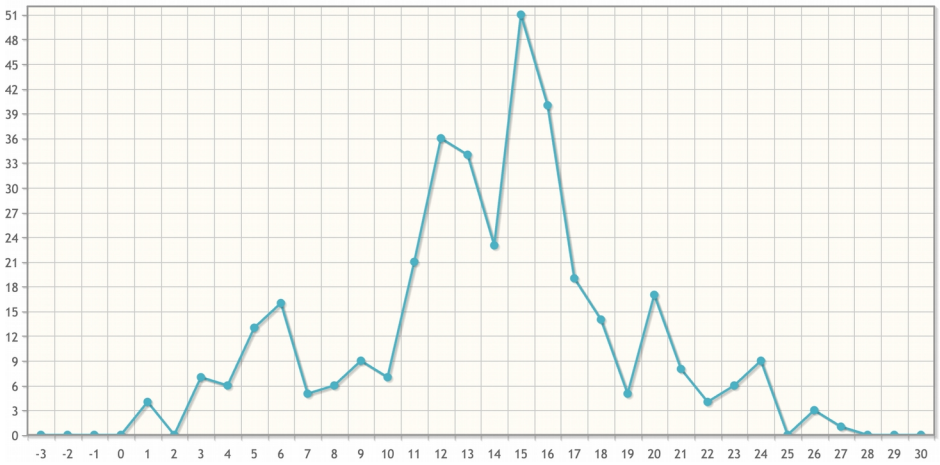
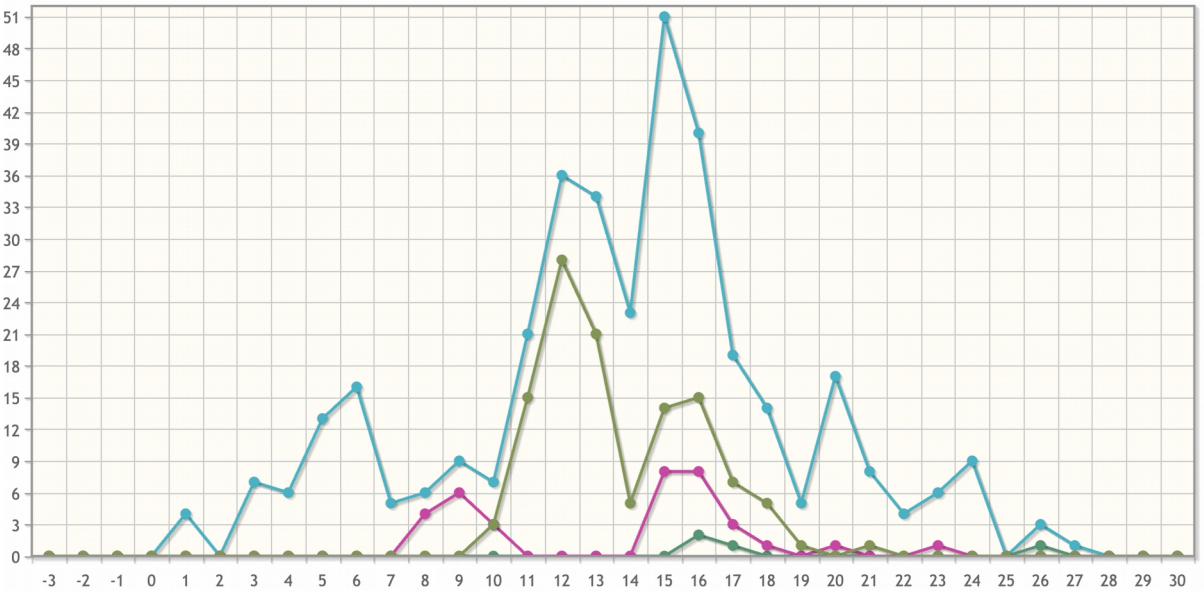
BUTTERFLIES IN NORTH MEADOW SUMMER 2026

We have eight transect walkers walking North Meadow covering each week through the summer from April 1 to the end of September. Five walkers complete a transect once a month and we have three walkers who can fill in, if necessary. We managed to do a walk every week this year. For the walks, the weather must be good in terms of temperature, sunshine and wind. We use the UKBMS survey forms which I collect and enter the data on the website from which I have taken these graphs.



This year has been remarkable for butterflies especially clouded yellows and painted ladies arriving from abroad. The graph above shows the total number of butterflies seen in the meadow week by week. The highest numbers are seen in mid-July.

The graph below shows the totals but also meadow browns in pale green, common blues in purple and clouded yellows in dark green. Meadow browns are the most common butterflies most years. We are fortunate to have a resilient colony of common blues which peak twice in the year. (We also see holly blues easy to distinguish by their colour and dark spots on their underwings). The clouded yellows arrived late. Most years we do not see them on North Meadow. Even these small numbers are remarkable.



I have been asked for a prediction about what will happen next year. It is possible that the drought has adversely affected food plants for the caterpillars. But we shall have to wait and see.

Sarah Gregory