

## Butterflies & Flowers of Bulgaria

20th - 27th June 2019

Led by Patrick Barkham, Yiannis Christofides & Simeon Gigov



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## Introduction:

The southwestern region of Bulgaria is one of the most diverse and rich in flora and fauna on the Balkan Peninsula. This year's trip is divided on two halves. The first half takes place in the famous Rhodope Mountains in southern Bulgaria, close to the country's border with Greece. As we enter the mountain the rolling landscape gradually becomes rugged and occasionally cut by translucent streams winding through deep gorges. One of them is the magnificent Trigrad Gorge – a spectacular crevasse of sheer limestone cliffs, surrounded by old pine forests and lovely flowery meadows.

The second half we spent on Pirin Mountain and in the surrounding river valleys of Mesta and



Pirin Mountains © Ken & Gillian

Struma. Pirin is the second highest mountain in Bulgaria with Mount Vihren ascending to 2,916m. The rich biological diversity of the mountain is protected with the designation of Pirin National Park, Pirin is also a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

We used two different hotels to enable us to cover the maximum amount of different habitats and sites with the minimum amount of driving. The first base is in the small village of Teshel and situated in a narrow gorge with beautiful vertical cliffs. The second base is in Predela area, in the foothills between Rila and Pirin mountains.

We were joined this year by 12 guests; Maggy and Rosa, Christopher and Mary, Gillian and Ken, Anne, Jenny, Phil, Mandy, Kathy, James.

## Day 1, June 20

Our intrepid band of Bulgarian butterfly lovers gathered at Sofia airport shortly before midday and were greeted by Simeon and Yiannis, and ushered to our coach, heading out of the city for the mountainous delights of south-western Bulgaria. After stopping for lunch and swiftly spotting a Comma and a Brimstone on the verges, we drove on. Our journey took us through impressive landscape of mountains and deep gorges until we reached our destination at 2.30pm – a dry limestone grassland around an old quarry.

Although not evident from a distance, the area was rich in a variety of plants, some from Mediterranean areas and others confined to the Balkan area. It was 30°C, with a warm breeze, and Simeon soon pointed out a Crested Lark, Black Headed Bunting and Northern Wheatear.



Painted Lady © Ken & Gillian

Walking slowly up the flower-rich track, we saw our first Swallowtails and dozens of Painted Ladies, some worn and faded and others bright and fresh, in what has been an excellent year for the migratory butterfly. (An unusually wet spring in the eastern Mediterranean ensured its caterpillars that make up the summer generation of butterflies had plenty to eat.)

We found “a Hermit being a hermit”, as Phil put it, hiding from the noonday sun underneath three small rocks as if it was in a

cave. Gillian spotted a Chapman’s Blue female on Sanfoin, and we also saw a male Blue Argus, a female Sooty Copper and the first of a good supply of Red Orbed Underwing Skippers (or Hungarian Skipper) – distinguished by the pale oval orbs on the underside of its wings. Ant Lions of several species were drifting around the hillside. Ken found a pair of Eastern Bath Whites mating, and Mandy was the first to spot a Scarce Swallowtail. We also saw several Spotted Fritillaries, and a Lesser Spotted Fritillary as well as a Knapweed Fritillary. Kathy, who joined our group all the way from Maryland, was amused by the British pronunciation of Fritillary.

One muddy puddle on the edge of the quarry provided us with a useful guide to some blues of Bulgaria. Enjoying the damp and the minerals were Chapman’s Blue, Common Blue, Osiris Blue, Small Blue, Easton Baton Blue and Ripart’s Anomalous Blue. They were joined by a Dingy Skipper and a Silver Studded Blue.

Plants seen here, and on the subsequent shorter stop included: *Centaurea salonitana*, *Centaurea grisebachii*, *Xeranthemum annuum*, *Inula aschersoniana*, *Agrimonia eupatoria*, *Sideritis montana*, *Salvia aethiopsis*, *Acinos alpinus*, *Scabiosa argentea*, *Teucrium polium*, *Paronychia cephalotes*, and *Campanula moesiaca*.

As we climbed into the mountains, we stopped again for a short while just after a tunnel where we found Idas Blue, Pearly Heath, Small Skipper, Heath Fritillary and a ringlet which we suspect was a Woodland Ringlet.

We reached our hotel in a steeply-wooded valley beside a small trout farm, where we enjoyed a nice supper with the typically tasty Bulgarian salad starter (the Bulgarians are rightly proud of their tomatoes but still sell them cheaply – a kilo at the roadside costs about 80p). Our main course was, unsurprisingly, trout, with chips, Bulgarian style.



Pearly Heath © Ken & Gillian

## Day 2, June 21

After a hearty breakfast involving plentiful supplies of cheese, eggs and Bulgarian dumplings, we headed into the mountains and up the Trigrad Gorge. This spectacular limestone gorge rose and narrowed and tightened, and we pulled over at the most dramatic spot, surrounded by sheer limestone cliffs to look for a Wallcreeper. It took 20 minutes of patient waiting, scanning the cliffs and admiring the nearby Crag Martins and the Alpine Swifts high above before we saw what Simeon called “the butterfly bird”. It flew in bouncily, showing spectacular maroon as it flapped, and then crept up to its nest hidden behind a rocky outcrop.



Wallcreeper © Ken & Gillian



Arenaria rhodopaea © Ken & Gillian

Yiannis also showed us some plants in the gorge including *Dianthus petraeus*, *Haberlea rhodopensis* in flower on the walls opposite us and also some nearer, above us, *Geranium pyrenaicum*, *Geranium macrorrhizum*, *Arenaria rhodopaea*.

We drove on, climbing up the valley before stopping where the road turned into a dusty limestone track. Here, at 1,200 metres, we jumped out and wandered by the river, taking in beautiful patches of wildflowers, flowery meadows and craggy corners below the mountainsides, which were mostly covered in pine woods. Simeon spotted a Grey

Wagtail and a Serin. The flowers in the meadows included *Anchusa officinalis*, *Echium vulgare*, *Telekia speciosa*, *Globularia aphyllanthes*, *Hieracium happeanum*, *Asyneuma limonifolium*, *Achillea clypeolata*, *Stachys germanica*, *Campanula glomerata*, *Dactylorhiza cordigera*, *Gymnadenia conopsea* and *Silene fabarioides*

The track and several damp spots were filled with butterflies. Simeon soon identified a Balkan Zephyr Blue, and there were more of the previous day's blues. New species for the day included a Marbled Skipper, first spotted by Ken, and the first of several Apollos, which were seen and photographed by Anne. Escher's Blue was spotted on a hot dry, rocky hillside, exactly where the guidebooks said it would be. There were also some Silver-Y moths which tend to migrate alongside the Painted Ladies (we saw more than a hundred in the day, mostly flying north-west, continuing their migratory journey). Other day-flying moths included the Yellow Spotted Moth, the Black-Veined Moth and the almost all-black Chimney Sweeper Moth. We also saw the first Small Tortoiseshells and Peacocks of the trip on this stop.



Chimney Sweeper moth © Ken & Gillian

We drove a short while further up the valley, and at our third, longest stop of the morning, the group wandered off up different tracks. Gillian (who with Ken formed a formidable photographic team) found the first Adonis Blue, while we also clocked up some familiar species: Small Heath, Large Skipper, and Green Hairstreak, which was one of many butterflies first spotted by eagle-eyed Phil. He also found the pale *helice* form of the female Clouded Yellow.



Queen of Spain Fritillary © Mandy

It was hard to keep up with the procession of butterflies flying past. Mary saw a Large Grizzled Skipper and James identified the first Queen of Spain Fritillary which had earlier been photographed by Mandy. Then we had the lovely surprise of a Chequered Skipper, which was a butterfly that Rosa was very keen to see. The feeling must have been mutual because the Chequered Skipper bounced down and landed on Rosa's boot, where it spent some quality time.

We also saw the Eastern Large Heath and the Pearly Heath, and we finally tracked down some elusive Wall-like butterflies which were enjoying

the rocky slopes that were too steep to climb: these turned out to be the Northern Wall Brown. Our rich haul of blues also included several fleeting sightings of Amanda's Blue, one of the biggest and most dynamic of the blues.

After a lunch consisting of a very tasty cheesy pastry slice with a lightly fried rice and vegetables at a local hotel, we headed to a mountain track leading up through the trees, gradually ascending to more than 1,300 metres. There was a glorious abundance of different flowers on the open patches of steep, scree-like slopes including *Onosma rhodopea*, *Viola tricolor*, *Globularia cordifolia*, *Anacamptis pyramidalis*, *Digitalis lanata*, *Vincetoxicum hirundinaria*, all of which were surrounded by mountainous forest frequented by bears.

On the walk up, we saw our first Brimstones and Commas for the day around Acacia. After seeing a couple of Black-Veined White



Black Veined Whites © Ken & Gillian

flyovers, we found a pair mating. There were some freshly-emerged Silver-Studded Blues along the track and Simeon and Phil identified a Geranium Argus on an attractive steep meadow. Unfortunately the butterfly vanished never to the return before we could all see it. We found some more lovely moths, including a Nine-spot Burnet moth in iridescent black with an amazing iridescent blue body on a bramble flower. Mandy was the first to find a Mountain Small White.

We were embroiled in various debates over whether a female blue butterfly was Amanda's, Escher's or A.N.Other when the

rumble of thunder forced us reluctantly back to the bus. Lightning flashed and the rain came in, and so we retreated back to the hotel. Maggy spotted a pair of Dippers in a mountain stream on the way home. Despite the skies clouding over shortly after 3pm, with the rumble of thunder in the air, we had clocked up a healthy butterfly tally.

Back at the hotel, a couple of the group went for a little wander and found two new species: White Admiral and Green-Veined White. A total of 62 butterfly species after a day-and-a-half demonstrated that Bulgaria really is a bit of a hidden gem for Lepidoptera.



*Anacamptis pyramidalis*  
© Ken & Gillian

## Day 3, June 22



© Ken & Gillian

Before we left the hotel at 8.30am, we admired several White Admirals gliding around the beech woods on the steep slope opposite our accommodation. We drove for an hour south-west past the town of Borino to explore some more meadows by a small river high in the mountains. We twisted up through nice conifer forests with little meadow areas occasionally dotted with well-tended potato patches. It was a Saturday, and some local Bulgarians had come out in their horses and carts to tend to their vegetables and enjoy the sunshine. Simeon told us that many of these little meadows are

still cut for hay in July, although there were far more flowers and yellow rattle than grasses. Beyond the hay meadows, and a nice collection of bee hives, we stopped a short way up a dirt track, beside a stream and some meadows that were not cut for hay through which we could wander. There was a nice variation of rocky dry meadow with lots of thyme and boggy wet meadow beside the river. There were other interesting plants here too including *Silene roemerii*, *Armeria rumelica*, *Digitalis ferruginea*, *Dianthus carthusianorum*, *Neottia ovata*, *Silene vescicaria*, *Dactylorhiza baumanniana*, *Prunella vulgaris*, *Rhinanthus minor*, *Potentilla argentea* and *Geum coccineum*.

The boggy meadows were copper country, and we soon found Sooty Coppers, Scarce Coppers and one or two glorious Purple Shot Coppers. But the real Lord Copper was the spectacular Balkan Copper, with its deep red and iridescent purple border, and we saw more of these butterflies than any other, apart from the ubiquitous Painted Ladies. There were huge variations in the Painted Ladies: we found one which was not simply faded but black and white in colour, while several others were tiny – a sign of the caterpillar running out of food before it was fully-grown either due to drought or so many siblings on the same foodplant.



Balkan Copper © Kathy

Chris spotted the first Black-Veined White of the day, and we also clocked up our first Essex Skipper and Ringlets of the trip. Clouded Yellows periodically raced through the scene as the brilliant morning sunshine sent lots of nice fritillaries buzzing through these meadows: Glanville Fritillaries and Queen of Spain Fritillaries in the dry, thyme-scented meadows, and freshly-emerged Small Pearl-Bordered Fritillaries in the boggy meadows. We also had our first really good views of the Amanda's Blue. Ken and Gillian took some photographs of a fritillary that I was determined to identify as a Nickerl's although Simeon was sceptical and maintained that it was a Heath Fritillary.



Amanda's Blue © Ken & Gillian

Shortly before lunch, James was characteristically alert to spot that what looked like another slightly odd Painted Lady nectaring on an umbellifer by the river was actually a Nettle Tree butterfly. Our picnic lunch by the river was enlivened by White Stork flying into a nearby meadow and two examples of what it was probably looking for: a Slowworm and a Marsh Frog.

After lunch we descended to 1,185 metres and pulled off the twisty road by some pines to look along another broad meadow. This was a beautiful spot, pine tree-clad hills all around, peace and an abundance of butterflies. Within seconds, Simeon had found the first Large Blue of the day. He also spotted an Eros Blue and a Woodland Ringlet. Further on we found Twin-Spot Fritillaries, more Small Pearls, and probably best of all, several Alcon Blues. As the skies gradually clouded over, there was a photographic “golden hour” when the butterflies stopped racing around, calmed down and posed nicely for our photographs. Thank you butterflies.



Twin-Spot Fritillary © Ken & Gillian

Our final stop of the day was an orchid walk into the forest, following a gently winding old road which was probably only superseded 30 years ago but had now returned to nature, with lots of lovely orchids growing along its margins including *Dactylorhiza*

*saccifera*, *Corallorhiza trifida* and *Cephalanthera rubra*. Here we found more Nettle Tree butterflies, a Peacock and it took Phil's butterfly skills to finally turn up the first Meadow Brown of the trip. Some of the group also enjoyed fleeting glimpses of a Lang's Short-Tailed Blue, and I found the first Marbled Fritillary of the trip.



Coralroot Orchids © Ken & Gillian

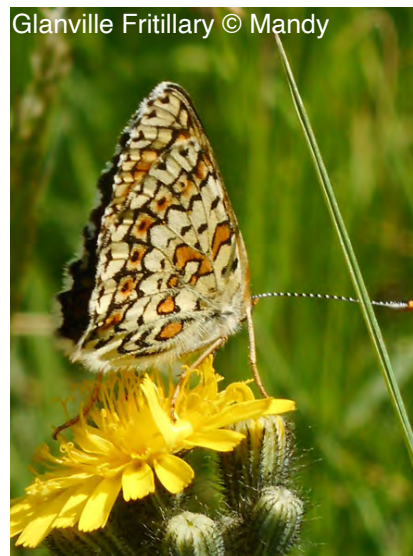
At 3.08pm precisely, the rain came down. We pressed on into the forest in search of a Lady's Slipper Orchid but when the thunder started to crash overhead Simeon wisely decided we should head back to the bus. Those of us who had slipped out without waterproofs (that'll be two of the three guides) were dripping wet by the time we reached the bus. The summer rain was cooling and atmospheric, and we were glad we had made a prompt start and had such a good morning of butterflying under our belts. Our total after barely three days butterflying was an impressive 78 species.

#### Day 4, June 23

We drove east for 30 minutes to explore the Rozhen Pass, stopping where the road became a track beside a beautiful Orthodox church with a domed roof of gold. The grass was still glistening wet from yesterday afternoon's downpour and the first butterflies on the wing were the ubiquitous Painted Ladies, as well as a Large Grizzled Skipper.

We wandered slowly down the track and as the morning warmed up the fritillaries emerged. We soon had a chance to compare Nickerl's Fritillary with the similar Heath Fritillary, which was significantly larger and paler, as well as having an underwing border washed with yellowy cream, unlike Nickerl's which had a subtle but distinct tiny band of yellow contrasting with the cream-coloured lunules around it. We also soon saw Glanville Fritillaries and our first Marsh and Niobe Fritillaries of the trip so far.

There was a buzzard circling overhead and some great green crickets under our feet. These Alpine sunny meadows (we were at the height of Ben Nevis) sang with crickets and grasshoppers. We identified a definite Southern Small White. Despite all the challenges of continental European butterfly identification, we became stuck on the classic British Lepidopterist's dilemma: is a



Glanville Fritillary © Mandy

small golden skipper Essex or Small? A big debate ensued and I think Ken and Gillian won,



Rhodope Lily © Ken & Gillian

convincing the group that we were only seeing Small Skippers, some of which had antennae that could trick you into thinking they were Essex. The male golden skippers we found had the longer, wavy sex brand that is diagnostic of a Small Skipper.

After more Amanda's Blues and Large Grizzled Skippers, we headed off piste up through the steep meadow and beyond a small grove of trees where Yiannis revealed to us the most beautiful Rhodope Lily, bright yellow in colour and in perfect flower. Even non-botanists (like me) could appreciate this charismatic species of the Bulgarian mountains.

The plant highlights here also included *Lathyrus pratensis*, *Tragopogon orientalis*, *Leontodon crispus*, *Anchusa azurea*, *Vicia tenuifolia*, *Potentilla recta*, *Rosa canina*, *Nepeta nuda*, *Trifolium ochroleucon*, *Trifolium pannonicum*, *Veratrum lobelianum*, *Pastinaca hirsuta*, *Vicia pannonica*. Equally beautiful were the Apollos which came sailing past us, gliding and floating through the meadows before accelerating away up the hills.



Apollo © Anne

We spent more than two hours in this tranquil spot, before tearing ourselves away to climb to 1700 metres and inspect the flowery surroundings of a quiet road through native spruce woodland leading to a ski resort. Here we found Northern Wall Brown and some striking specimens of Coral Root Orchid *Corallorhiza trifida*. There were some other nice plants here too including *Moneses uniflorum*, *Ajuga genevensis*, *Linum capitatum*, *Hypericum* sp., *Orchis tridentata*, and Elder Flowered Orchids, *Dactylorhiza sambucina*. We also got excellent views of a Black Redstart, with Pallid Swifts screaming overhead.

We had lunch in a restaurant overlooking a lake in the Smolyan Lakes area, and our two courses of potato salad followed by local-style sandwiches containing potatoes raised a few amused eyebrows. We took a short walk around the lake outside the restaurant and found another new species for the trip: a good old Marbled White.

Then we drove on to another local beauty spot known as Grass Lake because it did indeed contain spectacular bloomings of aquatic grasses and other marsh-loving plants. The lake was surrounded



Four-spotted Chaser © Mandy

by forested hills with fine views to rolling blue mountains that eventually led to the border with Greece. From the lake came the most extraordinary noise which sounded like a cat in pain and turned out to be a chorus of Marsh Frogs. We had excellent views of these charismatic metallic green frogs, which sport what look like gold glasses around their eyes. This was also a superb spot for dragonflies and we saw Four-Spotted Chasers, Large Red Damselflies and Northern Damselfly. As well as the huge purple spikes of Heart-flowered Marsh Orchids, *Dactylorhiza cordigera*, there were *Anthyllis aurea* and *Polygala major* flowering.



As regular as clockwork, just after 3pm, we heard a rumble of thunder. The approaching rain gave us perfect butterflying conditions in the flowery meadow beyond the lake where we had fantastic views of Bright-Eyed Ringlets. James even found a Bright-Eyed Ringlet Egg, laid by its mother just before the ominous thunder rumbles sent us retreating for the bus by 3.30pm. On the journey out of the hills, we stopped in an attractive small town and perused the gift shops for a few minutes, before returning to relax back at the hotel after a surprisingly tiring day in the mountains.

Bright-Eyed Ringlet © Ken & Gillian



## Day 5, June 24



We set off at 8.30am for a half-day drive west, moving from the Western Rhodopes to the Pirin and Rila Mountains. We passed through small towns and wound up and over pine-clad mountain passes before pausing at 9.30am by a steep wet meadow known for its orchids. The grass was still dewy and there was a profusion of lovely orchids including *Anacamptis coriophora*, *Dactylorhiza incarnata* including several white forms, *Dactylorhiza baumanniana*, *Anacamptis elegans*, and *Orchis ustulata*. We also found *Trifolium montanum* and *illyricus* and dozens of Balkan Coppers.

The butterflies were only just warming up and Phil and Chris both found nice Chequered Skippers perching on the grasses and there were also Pearl-Bordered and Nickerl's Fritillary. The butterfly highlight of this lovely stop was our first High Brown Fritillary – an unusual *Cleodoxa* form with a pale, washed-out underside

of subtle greens, greys and browns, and none of the usual silver patterning.

We followed the signs towards the memorably-named town of Drama (actually across the border in Greece), passing through some remote and quite poor-looking towns such as Satovcha. We stopped at the fruit stall and bought delicious apricots and cherries (a bag of apricots cost 1 Lev, or 46p). The petrol station in Gotse Delchev was enlivened by a platform for a stork's nest and we enjoyed nice views of the stork mum and youngster. We stopped at midday by a hot, more Mediterranean lowland meadow a mere 3km from the Greek border. This meadow smelt of warm thyme and was surrounded by scrubby prunus and deciduous woodland. Flowers here included *Geranium sanguineum*, *Anthemis tinctoria*, *Linum pubescens*, *Prunella laciniata*, *Euphorbia cyparissias*, *Dorycnium herbaceum*, *Aristolochia clematis*, *Himantoglossum caprinum*, *Lychnis coronaria*, *Ecium italicum*, *Onosma rhodopea* and *Orlaya grandiflora*.

High Brown Fritillary © Ken & Gillian



What followed was 90 minutes of butterflying that was as intense and energetic as the best football match! Within seconds we were assailed by Great Banded Graylings, which looked like White Admirals in flight but possessed the bouncy flight of a brown rather than the Admiral's glide.

There were dozens of Sloe Hairstreaks nectaring on thyme, Purple Shot Coppers whizzing around with Brown Arguses, Common Blues and Marbled Whites for company. Racing through the scene in hot, humid conditions were Knapweed, Lesser Spotted, Marbled, Niobe and Silver-Washed Fritillaries. Within minutes the shout of “Festoon!” went up, and we had our first sightings of the Eastern Festoon, fulfilling Mandy’s greatest ambition for the trip. After several evaded us, we finally got some good photographs, with males and females flying elegantly around the scrubby borders of the field.



Eastern Festoon © Kathy

We also stumbled upon what we were certain was a new pyrgus (the genus of grizzled skippers) for the trip – it was big and extremely brightly-marked – but we didn’t identify it until we later showed photographs to Simeon who revealed it was a Sandy Grizzled Skipper. Very belatedly we also found and identified golden skippers that were unequivocally Essex Skippers, which also proved that Gillian and Ken were correct and our previous sightings of “Essex Skippers” were almost certainly Small Skippers with unusual grey antennae tips rather than the usual obvious bright brown.



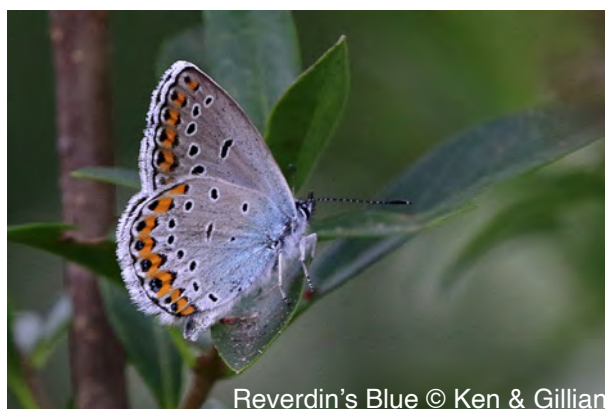
Freyer’s Purple Emperor © Ken & Gillian

When Gillian and I followed a butterfly through the trees at the field edge we assumed at first it was a slightly odd Painted Lady from a distance but Simeon swiftly recognised it was a Freyer’s Purple Emperor. This charismatic woodland butterfly was the shape and size of a Lesser Purple Emperor but orange in colour, revealing iridescent purple when caught in the sunshine. There were at least three and we were all able to admire them performing treetop forays. Each one would then land about four metres up, head down, in prominent places on the top side of alder leaves.

The thunder was rumbling by now but as the cloud moved in the butterflies stopped racing around and gave us some fantastic photo opportunities. Simeon found the first Reverdin’s Blue for the trip perching nicely for us.

“We’ve entered the 90s,” I shouted with excitement as we clocked up our latest new species. “It feels like it,” laughed James in the heat.

There was just time for more lovely close-up photographs of blues and Sloes and Kathy also spotted, hanging low from the stalk of a meadow flower, a beautiful chrysalis which she impressively identified as belonging to one of the fritillaries. American butterfly knowledge is clearly a transferable skill!



Reverdin’s Blue © Ken & Gillian

At 1.30pm, the thunder finally heralded torrential rain and we retreated to the bus, where we had to free two Silver-Washed Fritillaries which had taken shelter with us.

The rain was set in now and we ate our picnic on the bus as we drove on into the Pirin and Rila Mountain area. The roads here were much wider and smoother than in the Rhodope range and much of the ski town of Bansko looked recently-built and affluent, a significant contrast to the undeveloped areas we had been driving through. Beyond the ski lodges of Bansko – and with some June snow still visible on the highest peaks – we turned off the main road abruptly by a sign for an organic farm and proceeded down a very bumpy track through some leafy, intimate countryside of little meadows and scrubby edges of alder until we reached our accommodation, Moravsko Selo, on the farm. The thunder rumbled quietly in the distance as we settled into this bucolic spot, with house martins under the eaves, pallid swifts screaming overhead and the constant atonal chirp of sparrows all around, and epic mountains rising beyond.

A thundery, overcast afternoon didn't bother us – at least, I hope it didn't – because we had squeezed an epic butterfly and orchid day into two stops at two fantastic and very different meadows.

### Day 6, June 25

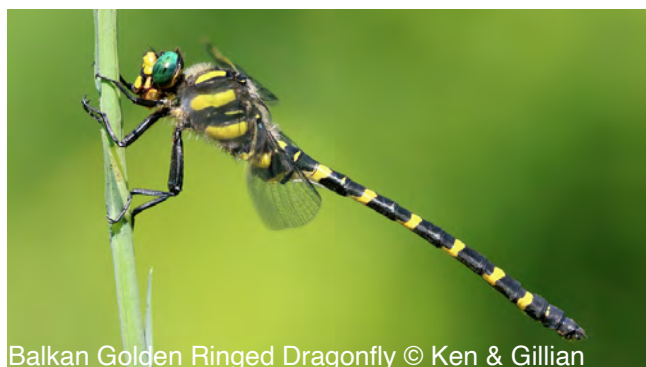
The forecast wasn't good and the morning was very overcast so Simeon took us down the Kresna Gorge, a lowland, "Mediterranean" area where the weather might be kinder. The sun soon burned through the clouds at our first stop, along the bend of an old section of road beside the racing brown River Struma. There were some lovely plant highlights here including *Paliurus spina-christi*, *Xeranthemum annuum*, *Pistacia terebinthus*, *Carduus nutans*, *Allium sphaerocephalon*, *Malva sylvestris*, *Silene latifolia*, *Saponaria officinalis*, *Melilotus albus*, *Alkanna stribrnyi*, *Campanula scutellata*, *Teucrium polium*, *Campanula scutellata*, *Sisymbrium orientale*, *Sisymbrium officinale* and *Reseda lutea*

The first new butterfly species of the day was a Mallow Skipper, basking on mallow. We stumbled across some very beautiful black-and-white lacewings and a spectacular European green lizard which had an iridescent blue head. Simeon also helped us find our first Balkan Marbled White of the trip – bigger and browner than the "normal" Marbled White, with a whiter, more photogenic underside. A Chequered Blue was also a first for the tour and then, flying together in the trees at the side of the gorge we spotted two more new species: a gliding Southern White Admiral and a Holly Blue. Even the humble Holly Blue was greeted with excitement because it was our 95<sup>th</sup> species of the trip.



Green Lizard © Ken & Gillian

Our second stop of the morning was a riverside track between a railway line and the river. The day was really hotting up now, and this wooded track offered some welcome shade and a promising mix of scrubby, woody habitat and fabulous hot patches of flowery grassland and sun-baked stones. Along the Mediterranean riverside were galleries of *Platanus orientalis*, *Salix* and *Alnus*. We also found *Ballota nigra*, *Allium guttatum*, *Teucrium chamaedrys*, *Delphinium balkanicum* and *Stachys palustris* flowering. We came across another common butterfly species that had been



Balkan Golden Ringed Dragonfly © Ken & Gillian

absent from our lists up until now too, the Wall Brown, and then the beautiful Lattice Brown landed on the back of Mandy's trousers. Poor Mandy was the only person not to get a great view of it! There were some promising elms and sure enough, further on we found a White-Letter Hairstreak and also enjoyed good views of the striking, and enormous Balkan Golden Ringed Dragonfly. I nearly stepped on a Large Whip Snake.

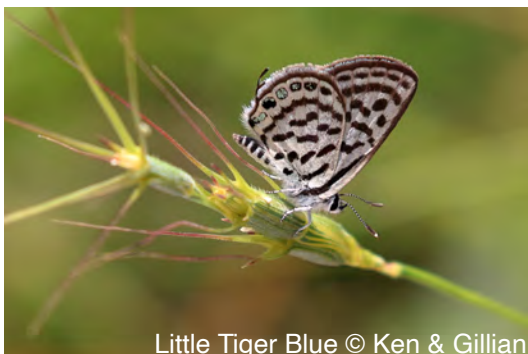
Simeon found our 99<sup>th</sup> species of the trip, at last, a Lulworth Skipper, and as tension mounted, everyone (or was it just me?!) strived to find the 100<sup>th</sup> species. It soon buzzed into a hot stony patch of grassland below a railway bridge: an Oriental Marbled Skipper.

Jenny found a Scarce Swallowtail nectaring on thistle and we enjoyed great views of that just as a Black Stork flew over. On our walk back to the bus we stumbled upon an astonishing sight: 27 Scarce Swallowtails and 2 Swallowtails “puddling” in damp sand by the river. What Ken called a murmuration of Swallowtails was an amazing experience – a Swallowtail saturation that Anne (who wanted to see lots of swallowtails) wouldn’t have dreamed of at the start of the day.



Puddling Scarce Swallowtails © Ken & Gillian

We drove higher into some hot, dry limestone crags and paused by a spring beneath the shade of a mulberry tree for lunch. While we were eating, Simeon spotted our next new species, which he refused to reveal until one of us spotted it – a Little Tiger Blue, a tiny darting jewel of a butterfly which obligingly perched on roadside grasses for us to admire it. This was one of Anne’s special target species (alongside good views of Swallowtails) so it was mission accomplished.



Little Tiger Blue © Ken & Gillian

It was now very hot – almost too hot for butterflies – but we enjoyed views of Sandy and Oberthur’s Grizzled Skippers. There were yet more lovely plants here

including *Ononis spinosa*, *Colutea arbonense*, *Galium verum*, *Inula oculus-christi*, *Jasminum fruticosum*, *Centaurea gravacensis*, *Centaurea solstitialis*, *Inula aschersoniana* and *Trachelium rumelianum*. On our walk down the hill Simeon pointed out a Little Owl watching us from a derelict building. We also heard Hoopoe, watched Kestrels above the crags and listened to Whitethroats and Nightingales. Before we hopped on the bus for home, I was delighted to find three Blue-spot Hairstreaks dashing around some crags.

We had found 51 species in one long hot day that surpassed all our expectations, so we rewarded ourselves with ice creams on the way home. But the best was yet to come. As we turned into the rough road for our organic farm accommodation, Simeon ordered Vasco to stop the bus. On the stony track in front of us was a Poplar Admiral – a big dark beast of a butterfly, and the species that both James and I had most wanted to see. We all jumped out of the bus and found this mighty insect delightfully accommodating. It fluttered its wings at us and deigned to glide into various poses along the track (“Is this my best look?” “My black dress is terribly slimming don’t you think?” “Do you want a flash of my magnificent orange-and-silver undersides? Of course you do!”) while the paparazzi pursued it, snapping hundreds of photographs, and generally enjoying its glamour. Phew. What a day!



Little Owl © Ken & Gillian

## Day 7, June 26

The day started well for Chris and Mary who saw a Hoopoe fly over our accommodation. Unfortunately the forecast was not good but we had to scope out the higher altitudes for mountain-loving butterflies and flowers and so we drove for 90 minutes up the River Mesta Valley, enjoying views of White Storks picking through freshly-cut meadows of hay. We pulled over at 1,954 metres in the eastern Rila Mountains and set off for a stroll up the flowery mountain just above a huge hydro reservoir in cool cloudy conditions.



Dactylorhiza baumanniana  
© Ken & Gillian

It wasn't good butterflying weather but mountain species only require a flash of sunlight to get going and we found plenty of Bright-Eyed Ringlets burrowing down into the grasses. Gimlet-eyed Phil then found our 105<sup>th</sup> species of the tour: a pristine Ottoman Brassy Ringlet, with an attractive silvery-coloured underside. There were plenty of Painted Ladies and Eastern Large Heaths, and we also found Grizzled Skippers and Clouded Yellows on the mountain side, along with pretty flowers such as White Knapweed, *Pinus mugo*, *Acinus alpinus*, *Pseudorchis albida*, *Gymnadenia frivaldii*, *Potentilla crantzii*, *Linum capitatum*, *Dactylorhiza baumanniana*, *Geum repens*, *Veronica rhodopea*, *Veronica chamaedrys*, *Pinguicula bailanica*, *Linaria grandiflora*, *Gentiana pyrenaica*, *Cirsium appendiculatum*, *Cirsium ligulare* and *Linaria grandiflora*.

Our second site was a large flowery meadow at 1,600 metres surrounded by coniferous forest. Here we paused for a picnic and in between finding and identifying plants such as *Ajuga genevensis*, *Centaurea orbelica*, *Silene roemerii*, *Trollius europaeus*, *Pedicularis friderici-augusti*, *Veratrum lobelianum*, *Vicia sepium*, *Geum coccineum*, *Geranium phlaeum*, *Knautia midzeorensis*, *Valeriana officinalis* and *Antennaria dioica*, Yiannis turned up our second new species of the day, a Large Wall Brown in a small ornamental rock garden by our picnic site. Then Simeon found us a Clouded Apollo, a beautiful high-altitude butterfly. One of the benefits of the cloudy conditions was it was sitting still for our photographs and not racing elegantly around the mountainside. Phil went up a forest track and found our fourth new species of the day: a Large Ringlet, which contrary to its name is not particularly large.

When the sun flashed out, suddenly the meadow was alive with ringlets but almost all of them turned



Clouded Apollo © Ken & Gillian



Balkan Copper © Ken & Gillian

out to be Bright-Eyed Ringlets. We found Mazarine Blue, Balkan Copper and Heath Fritillary in the meadow and Pearl and Small-Pearl Bordered Fritillaries on the forest track. The conditions were against us but we still clocked up 19 species, including four new ones, in the day. On the drive home we stopped at some interesting stalls to buy some honey, and admired the locals' home-made jams and freshly-picked wild herbs and fungi.

## Day 8, June 27

Our final day dawned brightly and there were Knapweed and Twin Spot Fritillaries before breakfast on the lovely overgrown meadows around the farm. For our last excursion, we drove through Bansko and steeply up into the Pirin Mountains, a Unesco World Heritage Site. The clouds were just clearing when we reached the tree-line and the end of the road, at 1,972 metres. Up here, the season was still April: there were the last of the crocuses (*Crocus veluchensis*) still in flower, together with squill (*Scilla bifolia*) and butterwort, *Pinus peuce*, *Veronica chamaedrys*, *Aquilegia aurea*, *Campanula alpina*, *Vaccinium uliginosum*, *Centaurea orbelica*, *Scrophularia bulgarica*, *Polygala major*, *Primula elatior*, *Scutellaria alpina* and *Asyneuma canescens*.

We didn't see a lot of butterflies during our morning walk, and no new species at all, but it was very special to be high in the mountains, with pin-sharp light and crisp air and rocky peaks above us, and snow still lying in gullies. Gradually we moved down the mountains into Macedonian pine woods with patches of flowery open rock between. As the heat grew, so Northern Wall Browns became active, alongside Small Coppers and Mazarine Blues.



Mazarine Blue © Ken & Gillian

We were looking for the Balkan Fritillary and undertook many fruitless searches of flowery scree and bushy forest in pursuit of fritillaries that seldom stopped and when they did always revealed themselves to be either Queen of Spains or Pearl or Small Pearl-bordered. We had lovely views of Clouded Apollos and Crossbills and a Nutcracker on a long and gentle walk

down the twisting mountain road.

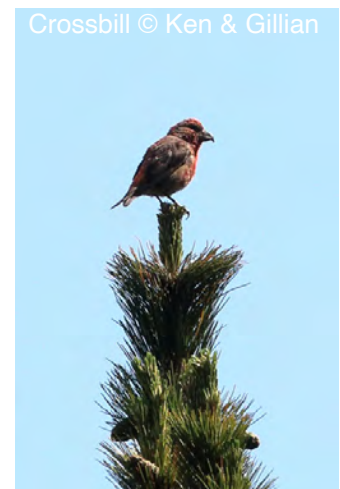
Jenny spotted a beautiful alpine plant that might have been endemic goat-beard and certainly had Yiannis doing a lot of chin-scratching for a while.

It wasn't until lunchtime when indefatigable Phil – constantly on butterfly patrol – discovered our first new species for the day: a Dark Green Fritillary racing through the woods. We headed back to the hotel for 3pm so we could explore the flowery meadows, boggy patches and scrubby woodlands all around. We were looking for Weaver's Fritillary but for ages kept turning up extremely busy Twin Spots, Marbled, Queen of Spains, Lesser Spotted (a mating pair), Knapweed, and Heath. It was a fritillary frenzy.

Turning a corner, Kathy spotted a Black Hairstreak nectaring on elder, another welcome first for the trip. Immediately afterwards, Phil found the Weaver's Fritillary and obtained fleeting photographic proof before this elusive insect promptly buzzed off and refused to show itself again, despite exhaustive chasing down of numerous Heath and Lesser Spotted Fritillaries. Before we headed back to the hotel, Phil spotted and James identified a pair of young Spurge Hawkmoth caterpillars dining on spurge. There was so much to see in these meadows but it was time for our dinner too.



*Crocus veluchensis* © Ken & Gillian



Crossbill © Ken & Gillian

So we concluded the trip with a magical 112 butterfly species. This was good going considering the season was widely regarded as a late one, meaning some obvious target species did not materialise. There were so many highlights, from the mighty Poplar Admiral to the 29 Scarce and ordinary Swallowtails puddling together. Thanks to Vasco for his excellent, calm driving and Simeon and Yiannis for their huge expertise. And thank you to a lovely group who worked as a team and brought so many different skills, aptitudes, perspectives and friendship to a truly memorable trip.



## Butterfly species list

**Total:** 111

**Most-seen:** Painted Lady (3,367)\*

**Seen every day:** Large White, Small White, Clouded Yellow, Painted Lady, Common Blue, Small Heath.

**Best day total:** Day 6: 51 species.

Bulgaria 2019 Butterfly List		
	<b>Papilionidae</b>	<b>Swallowtails and Apollos</b>
1	<i>Papilio machaon</i>	Swallowtail
2	<i>Iphiclides podalirius</i>	Scarce Swallowtail
3	<i>Zerynthia cerisy</i>	Eastern Festoon
4	<i>Parnassius apollo</i>	Apollo
5	<i>Parnassius mnemosyne</i>	Clouded Apollo
	<b>Pieridae</b>	<b>Whites and Yellows</b>
6	<i>Aporia crataegi</i>	Black-veined White
7	<i>Pieris brassicae</i>	Large White
8	<i>Pieris rapae</i>	Small White
9	<i>Pieris mannii</i>	Southern Small White
10	<i>Pieris ergane</i>	Mountain Small White
11	<i>Pieris napi</i>	Green-veined White
12	<i>Pontia edusa</i>	Eastern Bath White
13	<i>Colias crocea</i>	Clouded Yellow
14	<i>Colias alfacariensis</i>	Berger's Clouded Yellow
15	<i>Gonepteryx rhamni</i>	Brimstone
16	<i>Leptidea sinapis</i>	Wood White
17	<i>Leptidea duponcheli</i>	Eastern Wood White
	<b>Lycaenidae</b>	<b>Hairstreaks, Coppers and Blues</b>
18	<i>Satyrium acaciae</i>	Sloe Hairstreak
19	<i>Satyrium spini</i>	Blue-spot Hairstreak
20	<i>Satyrium w-album</i>	White-letter Hairstreak
21	<i>Satyrium pruni</i>	Black Hairstreak
22	<i>Callophrys rubi</i>	Green Hairstreak
23	<i>Lycaena phlaeas</i>	Small Copper
24	<i>Lycaena virgaureae</i>	Scarce Copper
25	<i>Lycaena tityrus</i>	Sooty Copper
26	<i>Lycaena alciphron</i>	Purple-shot Copper
27	<i>Lycaena can dens</i>	Balkan Copper
28	<i>Leptotes pirithous</i>	Lang's Short-tailed Blue
29	<i>Tarucus balkanicus</i>	Little Tiger Blue



## Bulgaria 2019 Butterfly List

30	<i>Cupido minimus</i>	Little Blue
31	<i>Cupido osiris</i>	Osiris Blue
32	<i>Celastrina argiolus</i>	Holly Blue
33	<i>Maculinea alcon</i>	Alcon Blue
34	<i>Maculinea arion</i>	Large Blue
35	<i>Pseudophilotes vicrama</i>	Eastern Baton Blue
36	<i>Scolitantides orion</i>	Chequered Blue
37	<i>Plebejus pylaon</i>	Zephyr Blue
38	<i>Plebejus argus</i>	Silver-studded Blue
39	<i>Plebejus idas</i>	Idas Blue
40	<i>Plebejus argyrognomon</i>	Reverdin's Blue
41	<i>Eumedonia eumedon</i>	Geranium Argus
42	<i>Aricia agestis</i>	Brown Argus
43	<i>Ultraaricia anteros</i>	Blue Argus
44	<i>Cyaniris semiargus</i>	Mazarine Blue
45	<i>Agrodiaetus escheri</i>	Escher's Blue
46	<i>Agrodiaetus amanda</i>	Amanda's Blue
47	<i>Agrodiaetus thersites</i>	Chapman's Blue
48	<i>Agrodiaetus ripartii</i>	Ripart's Anomalous Blue
49	<i>Lysandra bellargus</i>	Adonis Blue
50	<i>Polyommatus icarus</i>	Common Blue
51	<i>Polyommatus eroides</i>	False Eros Blue
	<b>Nymphalidae</b>	<b>Admirals, Fritillaries and Browns</b>
52	<i>Libythea celtis</i>	Nettle Tree Butterfly
53	<i>Apatura metis</i>	Freyer's Purple Emperor
54	<i>Limenitis populi</i>	Poplar Admiral
55	<i>Limenitis reducta</i>	Southern White Admiral
56	<i>Limenitis camilla</i>	White Admiral
57	<i>Inachis io</i>	Peacock
58	<i>Vanessa atalanta</i>	Red Admiral
59	<i>Vanessa cardui</i>	Painted Lady
60	<i>Aglais urticae</i>	Small Tortoiseshell
61	<i>Polygonum c-album</i>	Comma
62	<i>Argynnis paphia</i>	Silver-washed Fritillary
63	<i>Argynnis aglaja</i>	Dark Green Fritillary
64	<i>Argynnis adippe</i>	High Brown Fritillary
65	<i>Argynnis niobe</i>	Niobe Fritillary
66	<i>Issoria lathonia</i>	Queen of Spain Fritillary

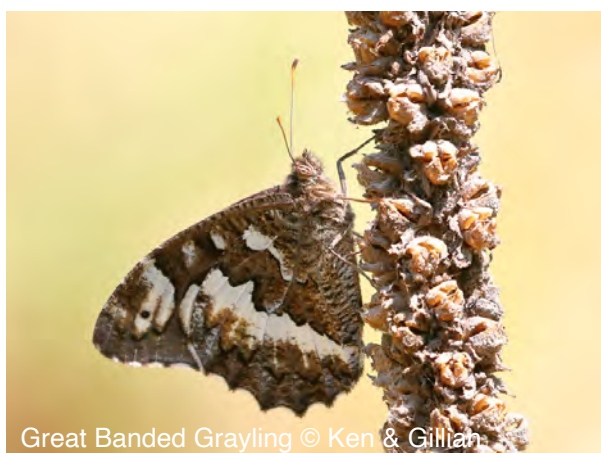
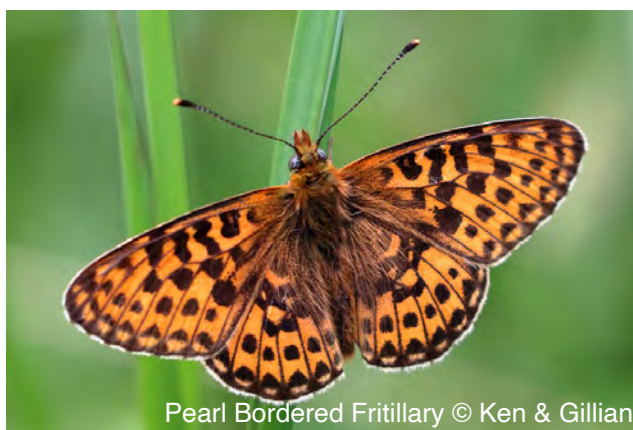
## Bulgaria 2019 Butterfly List

67	<i>Brenthis hecate</i>	Twin-Spot Fritillary
68	<i>Brenthis Daphne</i>	Marbled Fritillary
69	<i>Clossiana euphrosyne</i>	Pearl-bordered Fritillary
70	<i>Clossiana selene</i>	Small Pearl-bordered Fritillary
71	<i>Clossiana dia</i>	Weaver's Fritillary
72	<i>Melitaea cinxia</i>	Glanville Fritillary
73	<i>Melitaea phoebe</i>	Knapweed Fritillary
74	<i>Melitaea didyma</i>	Spotted Fritillary
75	<i>Melitaea trivia</i>	Lesser Spotted Fritillary
76	<i>Mellicta athalia</i>	Heath Fritillary
77	<i>Mellicta aurelia</i>	Nickerl's Fritillary
78	<i>Eurodryas arinia</i>	Marsh Fritillary
79	<i>Melanargia galathea</i>	Marbled White
80	<i>Melanargia larissa</i>	Balkan Marbled White
81	<i>Chazara briseis</i>	The Hermit
82	<i>Kanetisa circe</i>	Great Banded Grayling
83	<i>Erebia ligea</i>	Arran Brown
84	<i>Erebia euryale</i>	Large Ringlet
85	<i>Erebia medusa</i>	Woodland Ringlet
86	<i>Erebia ottomana</i>	Ottoman Brassy Ringlet
87	<i>Erebia oeme</i>	Bright-eyed Ringlet
88	<i>Maniola jurtina</i>	Meadow Brown
89	<i>Aphantopus hyperantus</i>	Ringlet
90	<i>Coenonympha rhodopensis</i>	Eastern Large Heath
91	<i>Coenonympha pamphilus</i>	Small Heath
92	<i>Coenonympha arcania</i>	Pearly Heath
93	<i>Coenonympha glycerion</i>	Chestnut Heath
94	<i>Pararge aegeria</i>	Speckled Wood
95	<i>Lasiommata megera</i>	Wall Brown
96	<i>Lasiommata maera</i>	Large Wall Brown
97	<i>Lasiommata petropolitana</i>	Northern Wall Brown
98	<i>Kirinia roxelana</i>	Lattice Brown
	<b>Hesperiidae</b>	<b>Skippers</b>
98	<i>Pyrgus malvae</i>	Grizzled Skipper
99	<i>Pyrgus alveus</i>	Large Grizzled Skipper
100	<i>Pyrgus armoricanus</i>	Oberthur's Grizzled Skipper
101	<i>Pyrgus cinarae</i>	Sandy Grizzled Skipper
102	<i>Spialia orbifer</i>	Orbed Red Underwing Skipper

## Bulgaria 2019 Butterfly List

103	<i>Carcharodus alceae</i>	Mallow Skipper
104	<i>Carcharodus lavatherae</i>	Marbled Skipper
105	<i>Carcharodus orientalis</i>	Oriental Marbled Skipper
106	<i>Erynnis tages</i>	Dingy Skipper
107	<i>Caterocephalus palaemon</i>	Chequered Skipper
108	<i>Thymelicus acteon</i>	Lulworth Skipper
109	<i>Thymelicus lineola</i>	Essex Skipper
110	<i>Thymelicus sylvestris</i>	Small Skipper
111	<i>Ochlodes venatus</i>	Large Skipper

\* = made-up figure



## Bulgaria 2019 Bird List

1	Mallard	<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>
2	Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>
3	White Stork	<i>Ciconia ciconia</i>
4	Black Stork	<i>Ciconia nigra</i>
5	Eurasian Buzzard	<i>Buteo buteo</i>
6	Common Kestrel	<i>Falco tinnunculus</i>
7	Feral Pigeon	<i>Columba livia</i>
8	Wood Pigeon	<i>Columba palumbus</i>
9	Collared Dove	<i>Streptopelia decaocto</i>
10	Common Cuckoo	<i>Cuculus canorus</i>
11	Short-eared Owl	<i>Asio flammeus</i>
12	Common Swift	<i>Apus apus</i>
13	Pallid Swift	<i>Apus pallidus</i>
14	Alpine Swift	<i>Apus melba</i>
15	Common Hoopoe	<i>Upupa epops</i>
16	Green Woodpecker	<i>Picus viridis</i>
17	Great Spotted Woodpecker	<i>Dendrocopos major</i>
18	Eurasian Skylark	<i>Alauda arvensis</i>
19	Crested Lark	<i>Galerida cristatus</i>
20	Woodlark	<i>Lullula arborea</i>
21	Calandra Lark	<i>Melanocorypha calandra</i>
22	Crag Martin	<i>Pytonoprogne rupestris</i>
23	Barn Swallow	<i>Hirundo rustica</i>
24	Red-rumped Swallow	<i>Hirundo daurica</i>
25	House Martin	<i>Delichon urbicum</i>
26	Water Pipit	<i>Anthus spinoletta</i>
27	Tree Pipit	<i>Anthus trivialis</i>
28	White Wagtail	<i>Motacilla alba</i>
29	Grey Wagtail	<i>Motacilla cinerea</i>
30	White-throated Dipper	<i>Cinclus cinclus</i>
31	Dunnock	<i>Prunella modularis</i>
32	European Robin	<i>Erithacus rubecula</i>
33	Common Nightingale	<i>Luscinia megrhynchos</i>
34	Black Redstart	<i>Phoenicurus ochruros</i>
35	Northern Wheatear	<i>Oenanthe oenanthe</i>
36	Whinchat	<i>Saxicola rubetra</i>
37	Song Thrush	<i>Turdus philomelos</i>
38	Mistle Thrush	<i>Turdus viscivorus</i>

## Bulgaria 2019 Bird List

39	Blackbird	<i>Turdus merula</i>
40	Ring Ouzel	<i>Turdus torquatus</i>
41	Blackcap	<i>Sylvia atricapilla</i>
42	Lesser Whitethroat	<i>Sylvia curruca</i>
43	Common Chiffchaff	<i>Phylloscopa collybita</i>
44	Firecrest	<i>Regulus ignicapilla</i>
45	Wren	<i>Troglodytes troglodytes</i>
46	Great Tit	<i>Parus major</i>
47	Coal Tit	<i>Pariparus ater</i>
48	Blue Tit	<i>Cyanistes caeruleus</i>
49	Sombre Tit	<i>Poecile lugubris</i>
50	Long-tailed Tit	<i>Aegithalos caudatus</i>
51	Wallcreeper	<i>Tichodroma muraria</i>
52	Red-backed Shrike	<i>Lanius collurio</i>
53	Common Magpie	<i>Pica pica</i>
54	Eurasian Jay	<i>Garrulus glandarius</i>
55	Spotted Nutcracker	<i>Nucifraga caryocactes</i>
56	Eurasian Jackdaw	<i>Corvus monedula</i>
57	Hooded Crow	<i>Corvus cornix</i>
58	Common Raven	<i>Corvus corax</i>
59	European Starling	<i>Sturnus vulgaris</i>
60	House Sparrow	<i>Passer domesticus</i>
61	Spanish Sparrow	<i>Passer hispaniolensis</i>
62	Eurasian Tree Sparrow	<i>Passer montanus</i>
63	Chaffinch	<i>Fringilla coelebs</i>
64	European Goldfinch	<i>Carduelis carduelis</i>
65	European Serin	<i>Serinus serinus</i>
66	Eurasian Bullfinch	<i>Pyrrhula pyrrhula</i>
67	Common Crossbill	<i>Loxia curvirostra</i>
68	Yellowhammer	<i>Emberiza citrinella</i>
69	Black-headed Bunting	<i>Emberiza melanocephala</i>
70	Corn Bunting	<i>Emberiza cia</i>

Chiffchaff © Ken & Gillian



Northern Wheatear © Ken & Gillian



## Dragonflies

Banded Demoiselle  
Beautiful Demoiselle  
Scarce Emerald Damselfly  
Blue-tailed Damselfly  
Azure Damselfly  
Large Red Damselfly  
White-legged Damselfly  
Blue Emperor  
Green-eyed Hooktail  
Balkan Goldenring  
Sombre Goldenring  
Downy Emerald  
Four-spotted Chaser  
Black-tailed Skimmer  
Keeled Skimmer  
Southern Skimmer  
Ruddy Darter  
Southern Darter  
Balkan Emerald  
Lesser Emperor  
Northern Damselfly  
Club-tailed Dragonfly

## Other beasts

Red Fox  
Brown Hare  
European Souslik  
Sand Lizard  
European Green Lizard  
Whip Snake  
Adder  
Marsh Frog  
Fire-bellied Toad  
Common Frog  
Bronze Glandular Bush Cricket



White-legged Damselfly © Ken & Gillian



Green-Eyed Hooktail © Ken & Gillian



Downy Emerald © Ken & Gillian



Brown Hare © Ken & Gillian



Trollius europaeus © Mandy



Xeranthemum annuum © Ken & Gillian



Polygala major © Kathy



Banded Demoiselle © Ken & Gillian



Pyramidal Orchid © Kathy



Red Veined Darter © Mandy



Large White © Ken & Gillian



Keeled Skimmer © Ken & Gillian



Banded Demoiselle © Mandy



Marsh Fritillary © Kathy

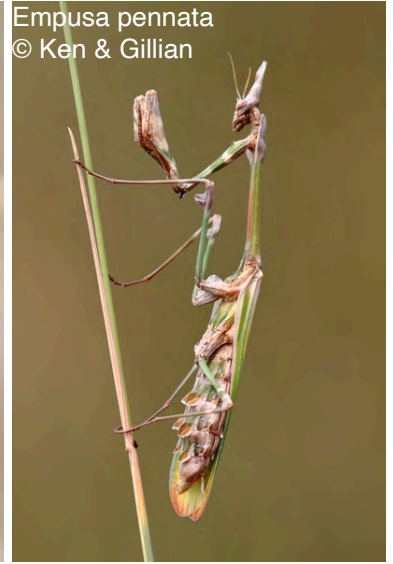


Arran Brown © Kathy

Cotton Thistle © Ken & Gillian



Empusa pennata © Ken & Gillian



Spotted Fritillary © Ken & Gillian



Heath Fritillaries © Ken & Gillian



Gymnadenia conopsea © Ken & Gillian



Queen of Spain Fritillary © Ken & Gillian



Northern Wall Brown © Ken & Gillian



Poplar Admiral © Ken & Gillian



© Ken & Gillian

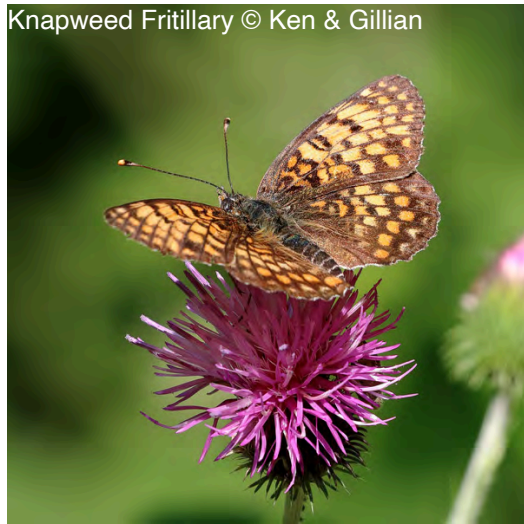


Dingy Skipper © Ken & Gillian

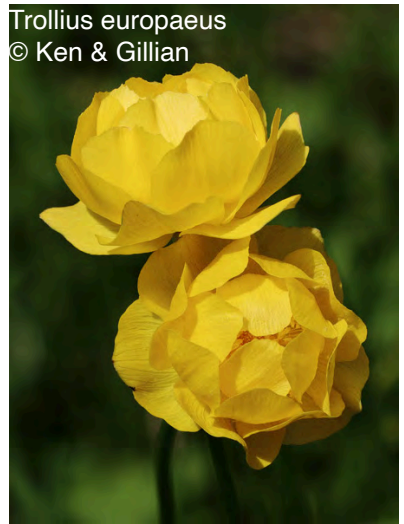




Lamium garganicum  
© Ken & Gillian



Knapweed Fritillary © Ken & Gillian



Trollius europaeus  
© Ken & Gillian



Clouded Yellow © Ken & Gillian



Silene roemerii  
© Ken & Gillian



Red-veined Darter © Ken & Gillian



Weaver's Fritillary © Ken & Gillian



The Hermit © Ken & Gillian



© Ken & Gillian



Bradyporus macrogaster © Ken & Gillian



Holly Blue © Ken & Gillian



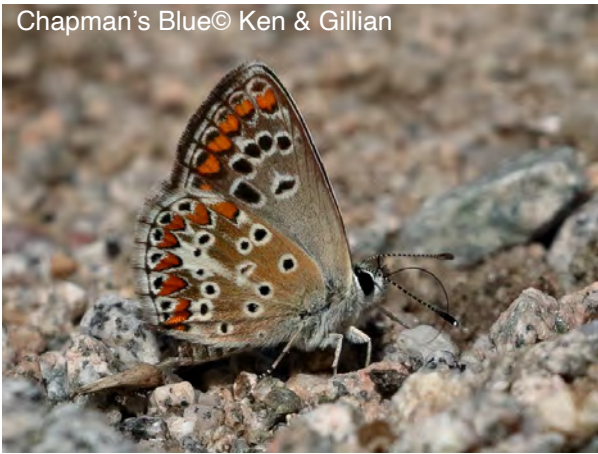
Dactylorhiza saccharifera © Ken & Gillian



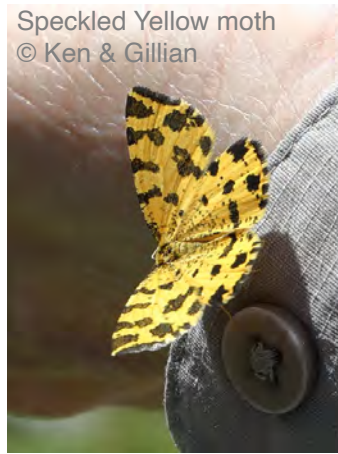
Gladiolus illyricus © Ken & Gillian



Pseudorchis albida © Ken & Gillian



Chapman's Blue © Ken & Gillian



Speckled Yellow moth © Ken & Gillian



Lamium maculatum © Ken & Gillian



Lattice Brown © Ken & Gillian



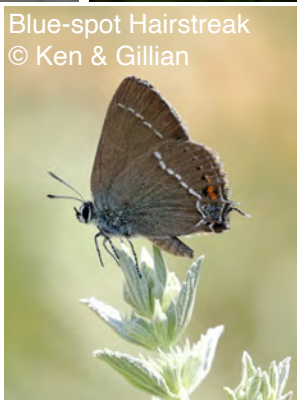
Scorzonera purpurea © Ken & Gillian



Sooty Copper © Ken & Gillian



Linum capitatum © Ken & Gillian



Blue-spot Hairstreak © Ken & Gillian



Orchis ustulata © Ken & Gillian



Geum montanum © Ken & Gillian



© Ken & Gillian



Balkan Marbled White © Ken & Gillian



*Dactylorhiza cordigera*  
© Ken & Gillian



*Gymnadenia frivaldii*  
© Ken & Gillian



*Himantoglossom jankae*  
© Ken & Gillian



Sombre Goldenring  
© Ken & Gillian



*Poecilimon thoracicus*  
© Ken & Gillian



Eastern Bath Whites  
© Ken & Gillian



St Bernard's Lily  
© Ken & Gillian



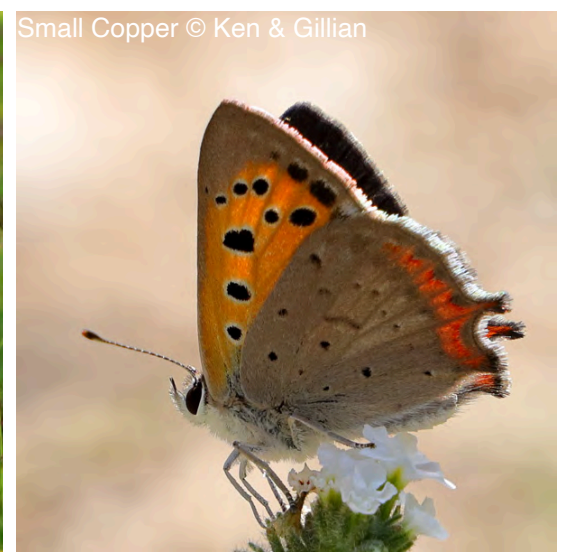
*Anacamptis coriophora*  
© Ken & Gillian



*Dactylorhiza incarnata*  
© Ken & Gillian



*Anacamptis elegans*  
© Ken & Gillian



Small Copper © Ken & Gillian

Gymnadenia rhellicani  
© Ken & Gillian



Cephalanthera rubra  
© Ken & Gillian



Scarce Copper © Ken & Gillian



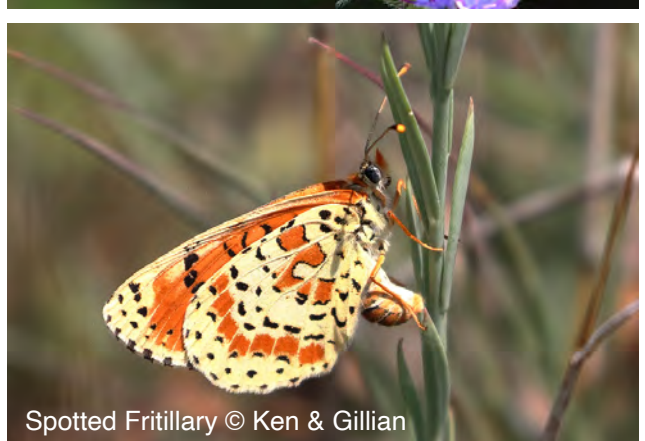
Balkan Marbled White © Ken & Gillian



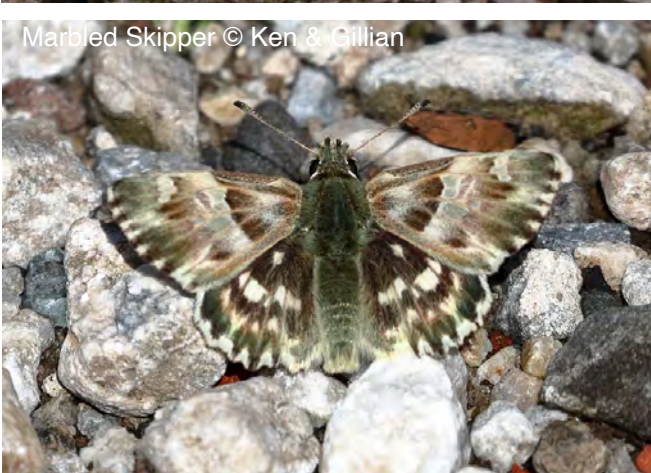
Hummingbird Hawkmoth © Ken & Gillian



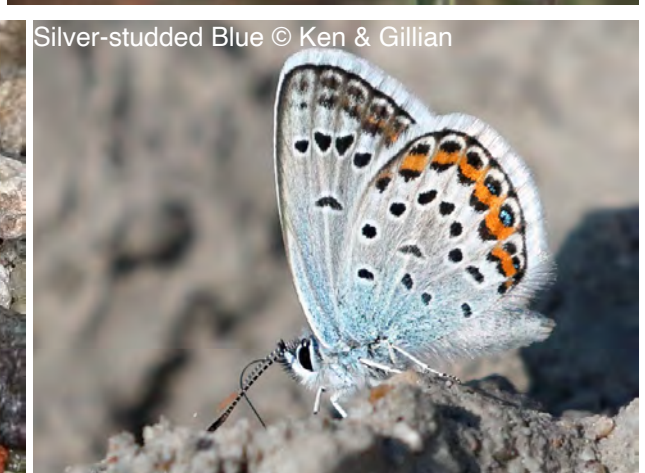
Nuthatch © Ken & Gillian



Spotted Fritillary © Ken & Gillian



Marbled Skipper © Ken & Gillian



Silver-studded Blue © Ken & Gillian



Silver-studded Blue © Ken & Gillian



*Orchis tridentata*  
© Ken & Gillian



*Centaurea orbelica* © Ken & Gillian



Queen of Spain Fritillary © Ken & Gillian



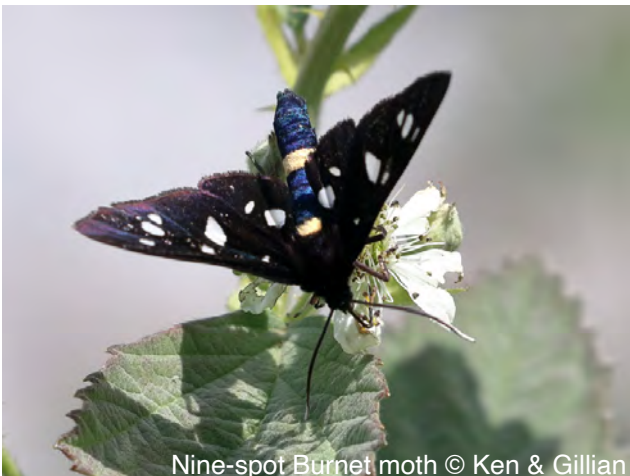
Glanville Fritillary © Ken & Gillian



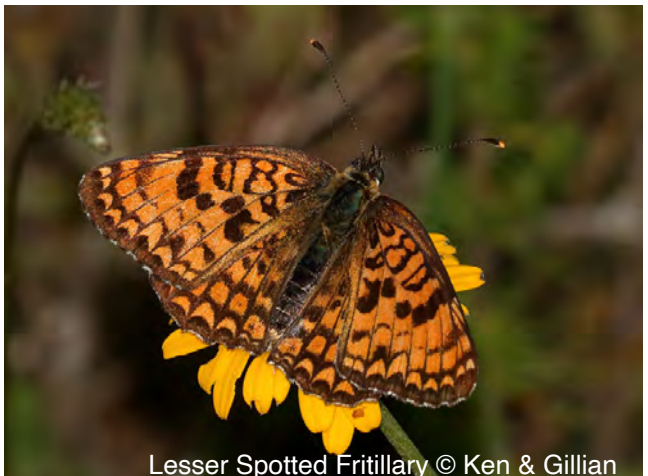
Sand Lizard © Ken & Gillian



*Nigella* sp. © Ken & Gillian



Nine-spot Burnet moth © Ken & Gillian



Lesser Spotted Fritillary © Ken & Gillian



Poplar Admiral © Ken & Gillian



Balkan Copper © Ken & Gillian



Balkan Zephyr Blue © Ken & Gillian



Small Skipper © Ken & Gillian



Black Hairstreak © Ken & Gillian



Chestnut Heath © Ken & Gillian



Brown Argus © Ken & Gillian



Bush-Cricket © Ken & Gillian



Black-veined moth © Ken & Gillian



Mazarine Blue © Ken & Gillian