



Butterflies of Carphin

S.T. Buckland

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I have included all species that I have been able to photograph on Carphin Farm. I'm grateful to Stuart Paul, Briony Marcus, Ross Stuart and Billy Walker for welcoming me to Carphin, and giving me free access.

Steve Buckland

steve@st-andrews.ac.uk

1/August/2026

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Small skipper

This species recently arrived in Fife, occurring near the Forth bridges. This is the first one recorded in Fife that was away from that area. It was at Carphin on 14 July 2026.





Large white

The least numerous of the three common white butterflies.





Small white

A common species, occurring in a wide range of lowland habitats.





Green-veined white

The most common of the whites, occurring in a wide range of habitats.





Orange-tip

A species of spring and early summer that has increased its range in Scotland in recent decades.





Green hairstreak

A scarce species of late spring and early summer that has become less common through habitat loss. These were on Berry Brae, where there is plenty of bilberry (one of its food plants), in mid-May 2025.





Purple hairstreak

A difficult species to photograph, as it usually stays high up in oak trees, and can be seen flitting around the leaves in late afternoon. These were at Carphin in mid-July 2025.





Small copper

A small butterfly that is widely distributed in Fife but seldom numerous.





Northern brown argus

This species has a very restricted distribution in Fife. The ones above and below were on the slopes of Black Craig in July 2025. The one on the right was in Valefield, around 600m further east.





Common blue

Common at Carphin, occurring wherever bird's-foot trefoil grows.





Red admiral

A common species. Some overwinter, while others migrate from the south, with large numbers sometimes arriving in late summer and early autumn.





Painted lady

A migrant from North Africa that arrives in Britain in large numbers in some years. The one above was on Black Craig in June 2025, the one below was by the wildlife pond below the farmhouse in August 2025, and the one on the right was on the track to Nancy's Pond in late May 2026.





Small tortoiseshell

A common species that can be seen in most months of the year, though it is less common than previously.





Peacock

This species has benefitted from climate change. It was just a migrant to Fife, unable to survive winters, but it is now one of the most common resident butterflies.





Comma

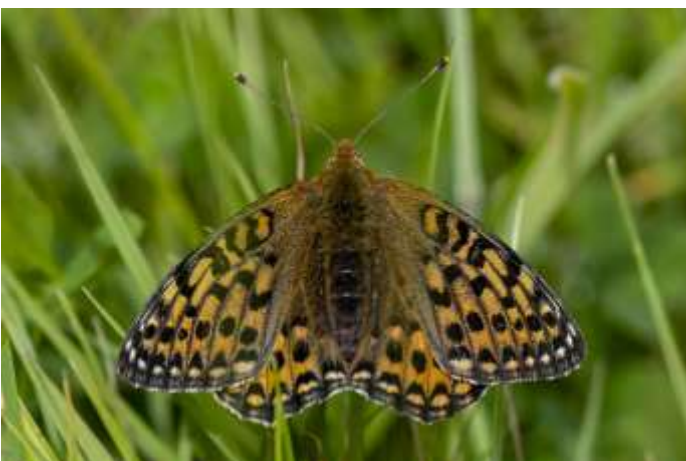
A recent arrival in Fife, spreading from the south. The one below right was near Carphin Farmhouse in early April 2025, the one on the right at the same location in late April 2026, and the others were on ivy in mid-October 2025.





Dark green fritillary

A locally-distributed species in Fife.





Speckled wood

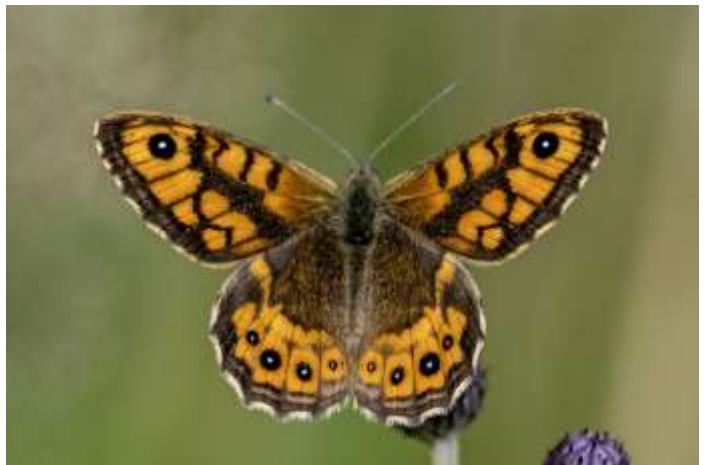
This species is currently colonising Fife. These were at Carphin in September 2024 and May 2025.





Wall brown

Another species currently colonising Fife.
They have become a common sight at
Carphin.





Meadow brown

A common butterfly of grasslands.





Small heath

This locally-distributed species is common on the ungrazed grassy areas of Carphin.





Ringlet

A common grassland species.

