

Saving butterflies, moths and our environment

# Butterfly Conservation



## Press Release



**In these times of continued decline in butterfly numbers, it is heartening to hear of one small place where this trend is in the process of being reversed.**

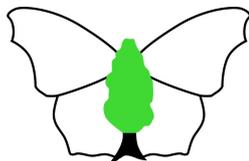
Over the last 3 years, the local Branch of Butterfly Conservation, with support from a local Friend's group, has been advising Cambridge City Council on the management of Mill Road Cemetery for butterflies and moths.

Sightings of Common Blue, reported by local Butterfly Conservation members, actually increased this year, compared to a decline nationally of 61% in the Big Butterfly Count 2011. Sightings of other butterflies in the Cemetery, such as Small Copper, Essex Skipper and Meadow Brown, also increased.

Following suspension of regular mowing, plants, grasses and sedges in the cemetery flourished, and the small resident populations of butterflies quickly took advantage of this new habitat. Recognising the importance of the site, the council's Nature Conservation Officer, together with the Open Spaces Officer, adopted a regime of habitat management that includes a number of recommendations from the Cambridgeshire & Essex Branch.

Branch Conservation Officer, Vince Lea. explained:

*"Mill Road Cemetery provides important areas of habitat that are being lost elsewhere at an alarming rate. Small changes in the way we manage such spaces can have a major positive impact on the populations of butterflies and moths"*



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Students from nearby [Anglia Ruskin University](#) are actively involved in sampling and cataloguing other invertebrate populations in the Cemetery, as well as adding to the 100+ species of wild plant already identified. This may help explain why the Cemetery also boasts sightings of over 20 species of UK butterfly - there are no other places so close to the City centre that support such a variety of undisturbed habitat. It also demonstrates what a unique and special place the Cemetery is, both to Cambridge and all the local residents.

[Butterfly Conservation](#) will continue to support the efforts of [Cambridge City Council](#), [The Friends of Mill Road Cemetery](#), and other groups, as they improve the environment of the site for butterflies, moths and other wildlife.

Nick Ballard, Branch Publicity Officer, commented:

*“This is an excellent example of local voluntary organisations working together with their local authority, for the benefit of wildlife. Improving the environment in this way benefits not just butterflies and moths, but the rich variety of other plants and animals found in the Cemetery”*

Find out more at [www.butterfly-conservation.org](http://www.butterfly-conservation.org)

**Ends**

**Issued by:**

**[Nick Ballard](#),**

Cambridgeshire & Essex Butterfly Conservation Branch Publicity Officer.

**Butterfly Conservation** is the UK charity dedicated to saving butterflies, moths and our environment. Butterflies and moths are important because they respond quickly to change, revealing the health of the countryside. Seven out of ten butterfly species are in decline. Four butterflies and over 60 moths became extinct last century. This early warning to all wildlife cannot be ignored.

**Butterfly Conservation**

Company limited by guarantee, registered in England (2206468)

Registered Office: Manor Yard, East Lulworth, Wareham, Dorset, BH20 5QP

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