



## Butterflies at Tower Hamlets Cemetery Park

We are one of the richest butterfly sites in London. Many years of habitat development work have given us the caterpillar food plants and adult nectar plants needed by the species we have and potential colonists. We have systematically recorded both species and numbers through the National Butterfly Transect Scheme since 1996. 30 species have been recorded.

In cool, cloudy weather at any season, few or no butterflies will be seen. In March and October, the weather needs to be unusually warm and sunny, and in November to February exceptionally so. People often ask what is the natural life-span of an adult butterfly. The answer is, between a week and eleven months. A few species hibernate as adults and these are the longest-lived. Most hibernate as egg, caterpillar or pupa. In summertime there are some brightly coloured day flying moths that could be mistaken for butterflies.

We submit transect records to the [UK Butterfly Monitoring Scheme](#). The transect involves walking a set route, once a week from 1 April to 29 September. The walk is divided into 12 sections, and for each the number of each species seen is recorded. The walk can be on any day in each 7-day period, provided weather conditions permit butterfly flight. Weather uncertainty can sometimes make it difficult, or even impossible, to do a transect in a particular week. This usually happens from 1 to 3 times each year, and numbers are then estimated by averaging the weeks before and after.

Terry Lyle has done the transect for many years, but is looking to hand over responsibility for it, probably from 2018.

We'd like to build up a pool of people who might consider taking over as Transect Recorder, or being able to step in when needed. If you're interested, get in touch. We can train you in identification and recording. We realise that it may be difficult to know at this time whether you would be able to take on the job, so being trained doesn't put you under obligation. If we train several people, one of them may be able to do it.

February 2017