Butterflies are flying in Cornwall!

Now is a good time to be looking for early butterflies. Nine species have been spotted so far this year with the Peacock top of the list with 26 sightings and the Red Admiral next with 13. Both species have spent winter as adult butterflies. There has been a small influx of migrant Painted Lady butterflies (8).

A Peacock at Prussia Cove on 27th February 2024 *(photo by Jerry Dennis)*



Two early Holly Blue butterflies have already been seen, one male at Nanquidno on 16th February and one female at Cotehele on 19th February. If you want to find one, try walking where there is mature ivy amongst shrubs in sunny sheltered places, and you may see this pretty blue butterfly. Other species flying are Small Tortoiseshell, Comma, Brimstone and Speckled Wood.

An exciting rare migrant species, the Large Tortoiseshell has already been spotted in Cornwall. Our butterfly recorder Jerry Dennis saw and photographed this one on 7th March at Marazion Marsh. This is a worn individual and may have hibernated locally through the winter. It has now woken up and is looking for food and a mate. Keep an eye out for this exotic large butterfly in lightly wooded areas and clearings and particularly near willows. They can be seen anywhere in Cornwall.

Large Tortoiseshell *Nymphalis polychloros* seen on 7th March at Marazion Marsh (*photo by Jerry Dennis)*



Other species to watch out for are the Small Copper, Wall and common whites.