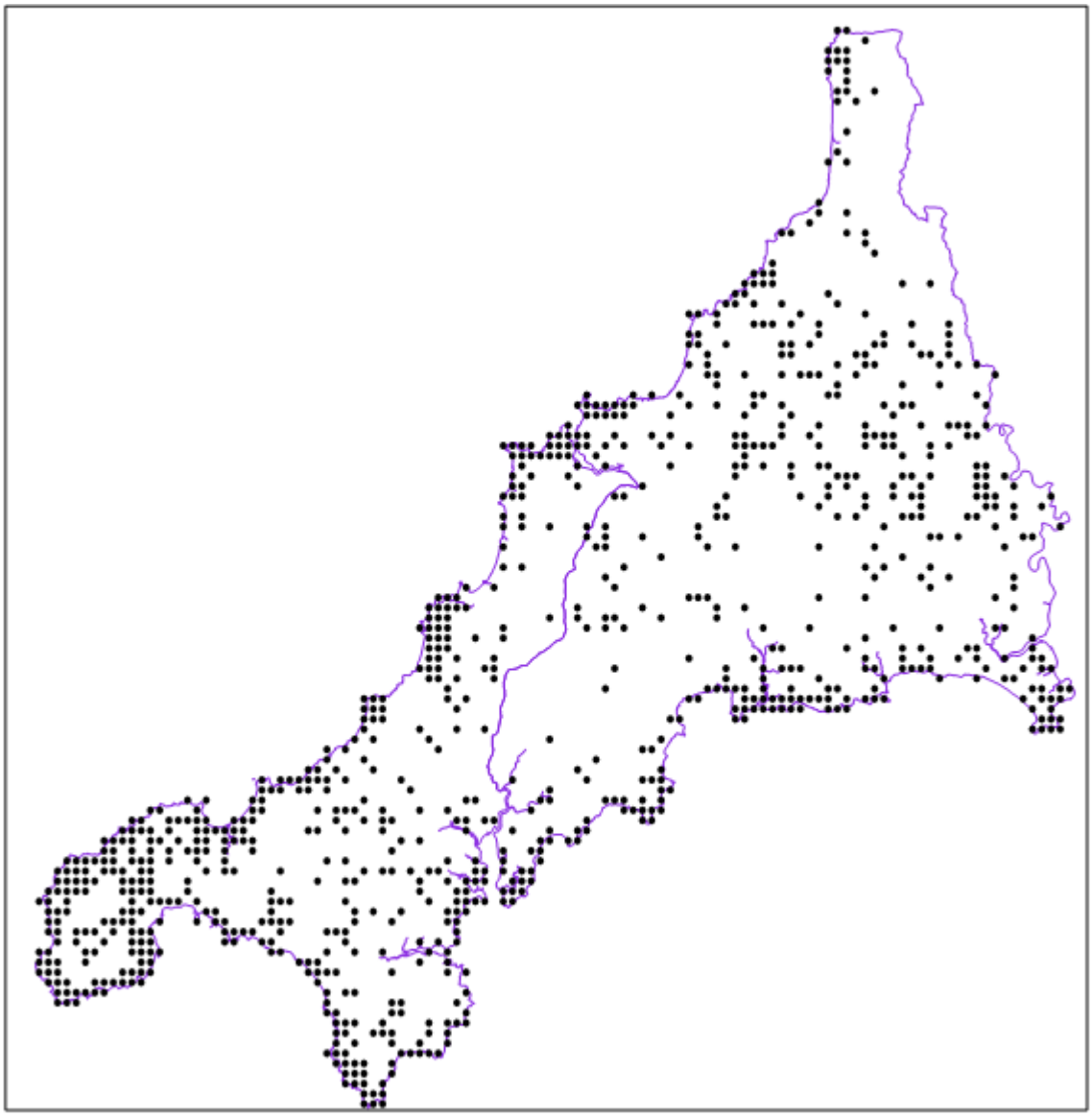
Wall butterfly summary

Compiled by Jerry Dennis, October 2022

1. Locations



The 1km squares (934) with records in the last ten years are highlighted.

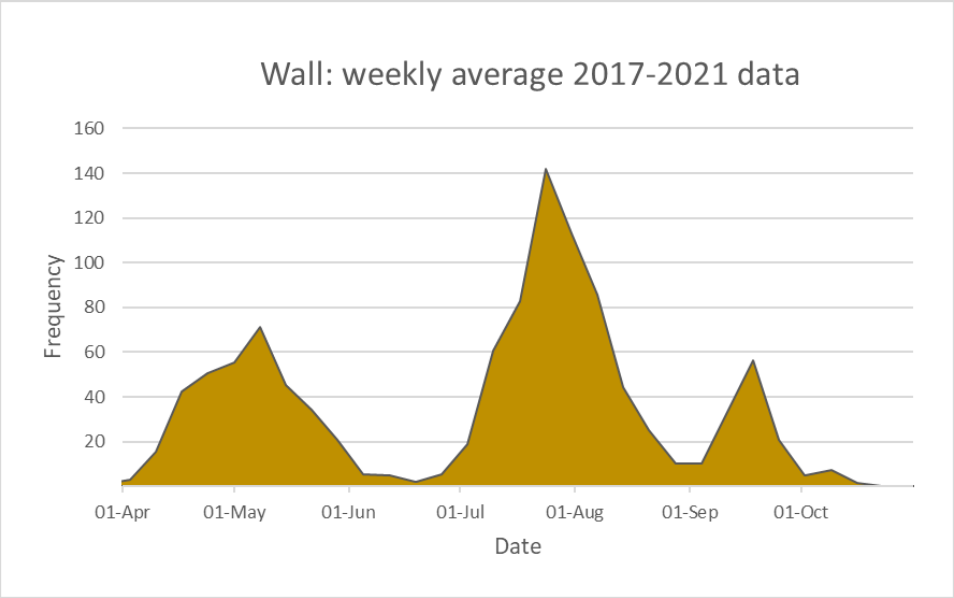
2. Habitat and status

Generally small colonies in grassy areas. Host plants are coarse-leaved grass species such as Cocks-foot and Yorkshire Fog. Areas of bare or stony ground, outcrop or indeed walls required for basking and social gathering. Many Cornish sites are located on or near the coast path. Inland sites include former mining sites, quarries and the environs of Bodmin Moor.

Butterfly is a Section 41 Species of Principal Importance and is Endangered on the 2022 Red List. Recent Cornish analysis shows a decline in occurrence of 15% in the last 20 years. More recent trends are for a more pronounced decline.

3. Flight periods

Three broods per year. Average weekly totals are shown graphically. The butterfly overwinters as a caterpillar, usually in 3rd instar. First brood begins to emerge in early April. The second brood is a full one and peaks in late July. The third brood is a partial one peaking in mid-September. Typical second and third brood populations have a pronounced peak over 1 – 2 weeks, timing of such can vary by more than two weeks each year depending on the weather. For small colonies, population peaks and entire broods can be missed and frequent surveying is required.



4. Top Cornish locations

Best recorded Cornish sites	Type	Last 5yrs ave.
Pentire Point	Transect	133
Nare Head	Transect	80
Dodman Point	Transect	39
Treluggan Cliffs	Transect	32
Penlee Battery/Point	Casual	25
Porthgwarra	Transect	25
Cudden Point	Casual	24
Gear - Penhale towans	Casual	18

Five of the top eight recorded locations contain a UKBMS transect with weekly surveys. Pentire Point is the most prolific.

5. Sites not reported for 5 years

Sites with no records since 2016	1km square	2012-16 Total
Tregonnie woodland, Falmouth	SW7932	53
Woodland, Alsia Farm	SW3925	47
Rock Dunes	SW9276	36
Portheras Cove and coast path	SW3935	34
Lady Elizabeth Hall, Porthgwarra	SW3722	28
Bartinney Downs	SW3928	19
Kiberick Cove	SW9238	17
Carnsew Pool, Hayle Harbour	SW5537	14
Ding Dong Mine	SW4334	13
South Tehidy	SW6542	13
Poldhu Cove (south)	SW6619	13
Little Seaureaugh	SW7337	13

These sites in western and central Cornwall have not reported Walls for five years. They should be visited to confirm that these colonies are still present. Total numbers for the previous 5 years are shown.

6. Sites not reported for 10 years

Sites with no records since 2011	1km square	2002-11 total
St Germans Longfield Lane	SX3557	81
Loveny Nature Reserve	SX1875	74
Carn Grey Quarry	SX0355	30
Menabilly Barton	SX0951	30
St Germans Hut, Downderry	SX3354	30
Backways Cove	SX0485	29
Tumulus, Whipsiddery	SW8363	27
Carlyon Bay	SX0552	25

These sites, mostly in east Cornwall, have not reported Walls for ten years and should be visited to confirm that these colonies are still viable. Total numbers for the previous 10 years are shown.