Castlemorton Butterfly Transect on 8th July 2022 by Jeremy Hubbard

(No butterflies were harmed during this adventure)

It was an auspiciously glorious sunny day as we met at Swinyard Car Park with our leader, Roger Bates, mostly not knowing what we were letting ourselves in for. There were no butterfly nets and no khaki shorts, although sunhats were in abundance.

Roger explained that a transect is a route followed at regular, weekly or fortnightly, intervals – in this instance to observe the types and numbers of butterflies spotted on the route. This information is collected by many volunteers across the Malvern Hills and country-wide and collated centrally by the United Kingdom Butterfly Monitoring Scheme. The appearance and increase, then decrease in numbers and then disappearance of species of butterflies is tracked year on year, providing valuable information on trends, which in turn indicates changes to climate and habitat.

Well, we had a brilliant time and a lovely walk. Here are the butterflies we saw (the ones that I can remember):

- Dark Green Fritillary – quite rare



- Small Coppers – quite rare



- Silver Washed Fritillary – rare



- White Admirals – quite rare



- Meadow browns – lots of these



- Ringlets – even more of these



- Small Whites (or small Large Whites)



- Large Whites (or large Small Whites)



In total we saw 109 butterflies: comprised of 14 different species! … plus some Hummingbird Hawk Moths.



The icing on this delightful cake was tea and biscuits to finish – a very rewarding and pleasant way to spend a couple of hours on a Friday in the Summer.

Many thanks to Roger and Beth for a great walk and for sharing your extensive knowledge on these wonderful creatures. For me the enjoyment continued as I found my sight was tuned in to butterflies for many days afterwards – hopefully forever.