

## LEPIDOPTERA - Butterflies

The Glen Moss habitat is not very suitable for butterflies. However, on the drier grassland areas surrounding the Moss six species have been regularly seen and are therefore assumed to breed. No effort has been made to look for eggs, caterpillars and pupae to establish breeding.

### **Green Hairstreak** (*Callophrys rubi*)

This is the first species to emerge in springtime - usually at the beginning of May. The stronghold used to be on the heathland at the eastern edge where they were always to be found. An increase in self-seeded pine has altered the ecology of this ground and the hairstreaks are no longer to be seen in this area. They are still to be found flying around the southern boggy areas.

### **Green-veined White** (*Pieris napi*)

When the cuckoo flower is in flower around the Moss in May, green-veined whites are much in evidence. They spend a lot of time feeding on individual flowers before fluttering to the next flower. Second generations are normal and this species may be seen flying later in the year.

### **Small Heath** (*Coenonympha pamphilus*)

This small butterfly is seen regularly on grassy areas bordering the Moss. Favoured haunts are the small field in the N.E. corner and the drier ground around the outlet at the S.W. corner.

### **Meadow Brown** (*Maniola jurtina*)

The drier grassy areas mentioned above are also frequented by this species which has often been seen pairing. It is usually abundant during the summer months and may be seen flying on duller days unlike most other species of butterfly which require sunshine to be active.

### **Common Blue** (*Polyommatus icarus*)

A few individuals appeared over many years in the grassland in the S. E. corner adjoining the Golf Course. It was never abundant and was not recorded in 1999 which had poor summer weather. None were seen in 2000 despite a regular and careful search. Suitable legumes for the larvae to feed on still grow in the grassland. The common blue should now be considered extinct at Glen Moss.

### **Small Pearl-bordered Fritillary** (*Boloria selene*)

This butterfly is often seen within the S.S.S.I. boundary. A small colony survived for some years near the N. E. corner. In 1990 a large colony was discovered in a wetland area near Lawfield Dam. A drainage ditch runs from the golf course in the direction of the Dam. The site is very sheltered and secluded. The fritillaries feed on marsh thistle, hawkweeds and marsh cinquefoil flowers. This site has large carpets of *Equisetum sylvaticum* which is unusual in the area. In recent years the small pearl-bordered fritillary is seen in large numbers, around the end of June and the beginning of July, in most areas of Glen Moss where bog violet grows among the sphagnum

