



La Société Sercquoise Report 2024
Entomology Section
By Lynda Higgins



Silver studded blue 10 June 2024 by Sue Daly

5th March 2025

Introduction

It's been a strange year. By the second week of February night-time temperatures were above 9 degrees centigrade. There was an early emergence of insects but then the weather turned cold, wet and windy and everything disappeared. It wasn't until May that temperatures became warmer. The insects collected in the malaise traps during the very wet July and August were more than 50% down. The Pollinator Project bee survey field study struggled to find enough bees, but in October there was an explosion of moths, butterflies, caterpillars, bees and mosquitos. Great green bush crickets were still appearing on the data collected for the Bailiwick Bat Survey at the end of October.

Pollinator Project

La Société Sercquaise took part in the research for the Pollinator Project again in 2024. This was the fifth year of this exciting seven-year project. Insect data was gathered from Charles Maitland's garden and also from the meadow site at Le Vallon d'Or. The study took place between 9th July and 5th August 2024. Bat data was also collected to find the correlation between the two. The volume of insects was 50% down on previous years. This is why data is needed over a seven-year period to smooth out the vagaries of weather from year to year. The research is being carried out in conjunction with Bristol University.

Dr Miranda Bane visited Sark to carry out a bee survey with Alex Hayward and research assistants Taliesin Valencia and Lauren Giroux. This proved difficult because of the wet and stormy weather. Researchers had problems finding the required twelve buff-tailed bumble bees in some of the grids due to lack of insects.

Moths

The moth trap was set less frequently in 2024, mainly due to the wet and windy weather. Moths prefer the warm, dry and still nights. Moths were recorded from the trap in April, May, July and August. Incidental sightings were also recorded. A list of moths is attached as Appendix 1.

Butterflies

Sightings were recorded by members and these are listed in Appendix 1. Andy Smith (Butterfly Conservation's County Recorder for VC113 Guernsey, Herm and Sark) also conducted surveys in April, May and July and recorded sightings in Appendix 2.

The first painted lady (*Vanessa cardui*) was recorded on 15th May.

Red admirals (*Vanessa atalanta*) were recorded in reasonable numbers throughout the year. Specific records in April, May, July, August and October.

The first peacock (*Inachis io*) was recorded on 11th March and again on 3rd and 6th April, 8th May and 19th July.

Large white (*Pieris brassicae*) were seen throughout the year. Specific record on 6th October.

Only one record of Small white (*Pieris rapae*) was recorded on 24th May.

Meadow brown (*Maniola jurtina*) were recorded on 7th, 11th and 19th July and, 3rd August.

Small Heath (*Coenonympha pamphilus*) was recorded in small numbers in May and July.

Three green-veined white (*Pieris napi*) were seen on 6th October.

The first speckled wood (*Pararge aegeria*) was seen on 21st March. Further speckled woods were noted throughout the year until 6th October.

Wall brown (*Lasiommata megera*) was recorded April, May and July and the last record was on 6th October.

Seven Small Copper (*Lycaena phlaeas*) were recorded on 19th July.

Gatekeeper (*Pyronia tithonus*) was recorded in good numbers on 19th July and 13th August.

The first common blue (*Polyommatus icarus*) was recorded on 17th May. On 18th May another was recorded in Little Sark on 18th May and again on 24th May. Fifteen were recorded on 19th July. Holly Blue (*Celastrina argiolus*) were recorded in April and May.

There were seven records of grayling (*Hipparchia semele*) on 19th July 2024.

An orange-tip (*Anthocharis cardamines*) was seen at Seigneurie Gardens on 22nd May. Another one was seen the following day in Harbour Hill.

Silver-studded (*Plebejus argus*) is found on coastal heathland at L'Eperquerie and Pilcher Monument. It was not recorded at Hog's Back in 2024. Sue Daly recorded the silver-studded butterfly on 9th and 10th June. Andy Smith recorded twenty-two on 19th July.

Two very fresh large tortoiseshell (*Nymphalis polychloros*) were recorded in La Forge area on 12th July. They were also recorded on 5th April and 4th and 17th July.

Brown argus (*Aricia agestis*) was recorded at Vallon d'Or on 17th May and on 24th May and Little Sark on 19th July and, 7th and 13th August.

The comma (*Polygonia c-album*) was recorded on 6th April, 19th and 23rd July and 14th October.

One Purple hairstreak (*Neozephyrus quercus*) was seen on 19th July.

Butterflies not Found in 2024

The dark green fritillary (*Speyeria aglaja*) was not recorded on the Gouliot Headland in 2024.

The green hairstreak (*Callophrys rubi*), Queen of Spain Fritillary (*Issoria lathonia*), Geranium bronze (*Cacyreus marshalli*), Clouded Yellow (*Colias croceus*), and Long-tailed blue (*Lampides boeticus*) were not recorded in 2024.

Bush - Crickets

The data for bush - crickets was collected during the bat surveys. There were over 58,000 rows of data recorded for the great green bush-cricket. They appeared at various sites around the island. Large Conehead bush-cricket (*Ruspolia nitidula*), was recorded as a new species for the Channel Islands through the Bailiwick Bat Survey project in 2021, at locations in Guernsey, Alderney and Lihou. It was discovered in Herm in 2022. However, it was recorded for the first time in Sark in 2024 at one site in Mill Lane with 12 rows of data recorded on 15th/16th October. This is a continental species which is spreading northwards (Newson et al 2023).

Spiders

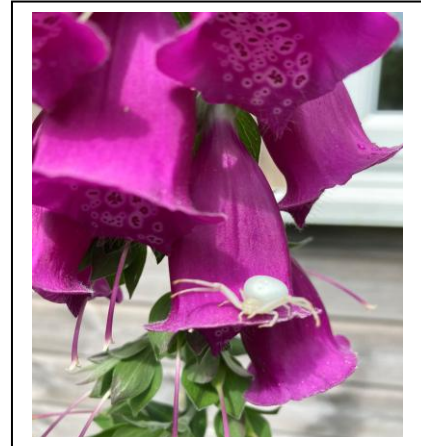
Orbweb spider (*Zilla diodia*) was recorded on 22nd May.

Female Goldenrod Crab Spider (*Misumena vatia*) (see photo by Sue Daly) was recorded on 18th & 21st May.

Garden Cross Spider (*Araneus diadematus*) was recorded on 21st September.

A Giant House spider (*Tegenaria domestica*) was recorded on 15th September.

Wasp Spider (*Argiope bruennichi*) was recorded on 11th October.



Beetles

2 Black Oil beetle (*Meloe proscarabaeus*) was recorded on 2nd April.

2 Black Oil beetle (*Meloe proscarabaeus*) was recorded on 6th April.

2 Rose chafer (*Cetonia aurata*) were recorded on 20th May.

2 Soldier beetles (*Cantharis rustica*) were recorded on 24th May.

Rose chafer (*Cetonia aurata*) was recorded on 19th July.

There were no records for the Small Bloodynosed beetle.

Shieldbugs

Brassica shieldbug (*Eurydema oleracea*) was recorded on 20th May.

2 Minstrel bug (*Graphasoma italicum*) was recorded on 25th May.

Minstrel bug (*Graphasoma italicum*) was recorded on 13th June.

2 Minstrel bug (*Graphasoma italicum*) was recorded on 19th July.

Scarce Tortoise bug (*Eurygaster maura*) was recorded on 19th July.

Gorse shieldbug (*Piezodorus lituratus*) was recorded on 19th July.

Ladybirds

Orange ladybird (*Halyzia sedecimguttata*) was recorded on 4th April.

8 24 spot ladybird (*Subcoccinella 24-punctata*) were recorded on 5th April.

7 - spot ladybird (*Coccinella 7-puncta*) was recorded on 16th May and a further 2 on 19th July.

There were no records for the 14 - spot ladybird.

Solitary Bees

Hairy-footed Flower bee (*Anthophora plumipes*) was recorded on 3rd April.

Ashy mining bee (*Andrena cineraria*) was recorded on 17th May.

Wool Carder bee (*Anthidium manicatum*) was recorded on 19th July.

Tachnids

2 Giant Tachinid (*Tachina grossa*) was recorded on 19th July.

2 (*Ectophasia crassipennis*) was recorded on 19th July.

Bee Flies

3 Dark-edged Bee flies (*Bombylius major*) were recorded on 4th April.

2 Dark-edged Bee flies (*Bombylius major*) were recorded on 6th April.

Other insects

Firebug (*Pyrrhocoris apterus*) was recorded at Seigneurie Gardens on 26th March.

Caddis fly (*Trichoptera species*) was recorded on 6th April.

Black burrowing bug (*Cydnus aterrimus*) was recorded on 20th May.

Smokey - winged dayglower (*Xanthogramma dives*) was recorded on 22nd May.

Tenthredo vespa was recorded on 23rd May.

Araniella species was recorded on 25th May.

House centipede was recorded on 2nd June.

Muscid fly with fungus Entomophthora was recorded on 5th June.

4 Emperor dragonfly (*Anax Imperator*) was recorded on 19th July. There were no records for Migrant Hawker (*Aeshna mixta*) or Common Darter (*Sympetrum striolatum*).

Belted Hoverfly (*Volucella zonaria*) was recorded on 19th July.