

THE BUTTERFLIES OF LIMERICK AND CLARE.

Butterflies (*Rhopalocera*) belong to that division of insects called *Lepidoptera*, a word which signifies that they have *scaled wings*. That this is the case may be seen with the aid of a microscope, under which the wings will be seen to be covered with minute and beautifully arranged scales, varying in shape and colour according to the species under examination. There are many hundreds of different sorts of butterflies in the world, about sixty of which occur in Great Britain, and about forty in Ireland. Of these the following have been recorded from the neighbourhood of Limerick :

- Pieris brassicae* (large white). Abundant everywhere.
- " *rapae* (small white), abundant everywhere.
- " *napi* (green veined white). Abundant in damp meadows, etc.
- Euchloë cardamines* (orange tip). Abundant in Springtime in damp places.
- Gonopteryx rhamni* (brimstone). Apparently not common, but occurs regularly near Scariff, at Cratloe, Finlough, Lloyd's Glen, and Doonass, also at the Docks, Limerick.
- Argynnis aglaia* (dark green fritillary). Taken at Ballyvaughan (probably it occurs all along the coast of Clare), also inland at Finlough.
- " *paphia* (silver washed fritillary). Abundant in Cratloe Wood, Finlough, and other wooded places, like Lloyd's Glen, Glenomra, etc.
- Melitæa aurinia* (greasy fritillary). Occurs in fair abundance, but very locally in damp places where the Devil's Bit scabious grows—Cratloe Wood, Finlough, Kilkishen.

- Vanessa urtica* (small tortoiseshell). Common everywhere.
- " *io* (peacock). Fairly abundant. Adare, Limerick, Cratloe, Finlough, Glenomra, etc.
 - " *Atalanta* (Red Admiral). Locally common late in the year. Clarina, Parteen, Cratloe Wood, Glenomra.
 - " *Cardui* (Painted Lady). This insect occurs in great plenty at irregular intervals, sometimes separated by quite a number of years. Since 1890 only one specimen has been reported, and that at Kilkishen, Co. Clare.
- Pararge egeria* (Speckled Wood). Common in damp wooded places, shady lanes, etc.
- " *megæra* (Wall Brown). Common in warm, sunny situations, dry banks, roadsides, gravel-pits, etc.
- Epinephele ianira* (Meadow Brown). Abundant in all pasture and grass lands, lanes, roadways, etc.
- " *hyperanthes* (Ringlet). Locally abundant in shady, ill-drained localities, where coarse grass and rushes are plentiful.
 - Foynes, Castleconnell, Lisnagry, Cratloe Wood, Finlough, Kilkishen, Glenomra.
- Cænonympha pamphilus* (small heath). Common on dry, heath-covered hillsides, moors, etc. Cratloe Hills, hills at Broadford, Glenomra, etc.
- Thecla quercus* (purple hairstreak). Locally common in oak plantations, where it flies amongst the tops of the trees in July. Examples of this insect are hard to secure, but for its habit of coming near the ground towards evening, when at times several may be taken at one stroke of the net. Cratloe Wood and Glenomra Wood.
- " *rubi* (green hairstreak). Occurs early in the year in low-lying shady places, and is especially fond of being amongst young birch trees, the leaves of which harmonise in colour with the underside of its wings, thus affording it almost complete concealment. Cratloe Wood, Finlough, Kilkishen.
- Polyommatus phleas* (small copper). Occurs everywhere, but seldom in any numbers. From its small size, restless habits, and rapid flight, it is often probably overlooked.

Lycæna icarns (common blue). Abundant everywhere, in fields, lanes, roadsides, etc.

" *argiolus* (holly or azure blue). Said to be common in Ireland wherever holly trees are plentiful. It emerges from the pupa in April, or very early in May, and as yet has only been taken here in Cratloe Wood.

Nisoniades tages (Dingy Skipper). Locally common in May on the outskirts and open spaces of Cratloe Wood, also at Finlough and Kilkishen.

The foregoing is not given as a complete list of local butterflies, and as its extension is most desirable, authentic records of additional species, with localities, will at all times be very gladly received.

LIMERICK, May, 1899.

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