



# MALVERN HILLS CONSERVATORS

## MANAGING THE HILLS

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Director: Duncan Bridges

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BBPR2015.08.11 Grayling Butterfly

### **PRESS RELEASE: Rare butterfly maintaining stronghold on the Hills**

It's looking like another successful year for one of Worcestershire's rarest butterflies. Early records from this summer indicate that with the help of conservation work, the grayling butterfly population on the Malvern Hills is stable.

Nationally, numbers of grayling are declining but with help from the Malvern Hills Conservators and their volunteers they continue to have a hold here.

Cutting back scrub from rocky outcrops on the eastern slopes of North Hill and the Worcestershire Beacon is particularly important. The graylings are highly camouflaged and like to bask on the exposed rocks where they attract mates.



To help monitor the population, the Malvern Hills Conservators are again asking walkers to keep an eye out for the grayling butterfly. Members of the Malvern Butterfly Group continue to be an essential part of the monitoring project each year,

but the Conservators are hoping that records from visitors to the Hills will build an even clearer picture of how the butterflies are doing.

One observer counted thirty individual grayling butterflies in one trip onto the Malverns; evidence that they've done well this year.



Nicky Quinn, MHC Warden, says 'We're so lucky to have such a good population of grayling butterflies here but they need constant monitoring so that we can see how they respond to our management. 'One of the best places to see the grayling is up the hill from Ivy Scar Rock as you walk onto North Hill from North Quarry car park. You'll need a good eye as they can be difficult to see when they're perched on the rocks!'

If you do see any grayling butterflies on the Hills, then please email the Malvern Butterfly Group at [mbg.records@btinternet.com](mailto:mbg.records@btinternet.com) or let the Conservators know via Twitter or Facebook (search Malvern Hills Conservators).

A recent meeting held by the Conservators with the West Midlands Branch of Butterfly Conservation, a charity dedicated to the conservation of Britain's butterflies and moths, has been held to discuss management of these important sites into the future.

Throughout the winter months, volunteers and MHC field staff will continue to work to clear areas of scrub to conserve the grayling's habitat.

**END**

#### **Notes for editors**

- 1) Contact Beck Baker (Community and Conservation Officer) on 01684 892002 for more information and images.
- 2) The **Malvern Hills Conservators** manage over 1,200 hectares (3,000 acres) of land on the Hills and Commons of Malvern. The Conservators were established under the Malvern Hills Act 1884. There have been four subsequent Acts in 1909, 1924, 1930 and 1995. The Malvern Hills Acts were set up to protect the rights of Commoners and the public and to prevent encroachment on the Malvern Hills, lands and commons.  
Under these and other relevant Acts the Malvern Hills Conservators shall manage the Hills to:
  - Preserve the natural aspect
  - Protect and manage trees, shrubs, turf and other vegetation
  - Prevent unlawful digging and quarrying



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- Keep the Hills open, unenclosed and unbuilt on as open spaces for the recreation and enjoyment of the public
- Conserve and enhance biodiversity, Sites of Special Scientific Interest and Scheduled Ancient Monuments on its land.

The Conservators are also a registered charity (charity number 515804)

- 3) Butterfly Conservation are a registered charity dedicated to the conservation of Britain's butterflies and moths [www.butterfly-conservation.org/](http://www.butterfly-conservation.org/)
- 4) The Malvern Butterfly Group are a group of volunteers who survey and submit records of local butterfly and moth sightings. Records are compiled in the annual 'Birds and Butterflies of the Malvern Hills' book and are also sent on to the national database. A number of individuals are also involved with the regional branch of Butterfly Conservation.