

Barry Dyson - My report for the Newbiggin midweek walk

Just myself and Howard attended the Newbiggin Craggs/Holmepark Fell midweek walk on the 30th June.

Weather-wise it was pretty much perfect for this three miles, 4hrs 30 minutes amble with awesome panoramic views.



Birds were thin on the ground but a stunning male Northern Wheatear posed for plenty of images as did a family party of 6 Stonechats. Four Ravens, a Great Spotted Woodpecker, singing Willow warbler, Meadow Pipits and undulating Linnets made up the rest.

Day-flying moths include 100's of micro 'grass moths' while the macro's were represented by Brown Silver-lines, Yellow Shell, Narrow bordered five-spot Burnet moth and July Belle.

Seven species of butterfly were seen which were a single Northern Brown Argus, 2 Small pearl-bordered fritillaries, 2 Small Tortoiseshells, single figure Meadow Browns, c15 Common Blues and Small Heaths, and plenty of Dark Green fritillaries which teased us by never settling for long in order to get that desired image.



Northern Brown Argus

Dark Green Fritillary



Flowers were a plenty with c1,000 Common Spotted Orchids and 100+ Northern Marsh orchids. Others included: Wall lettuce, Squinancywort, Wild strawberry, Heath bedstraw, Ladies bedstraw, Fairy flax, Slender St John's wort, Bird's foot trefoil, Black Medick, Tormentil, Lesser Meadow Rue, Carline thistle, Field Scabious, Harebell, Mouse-ear Hawkweed, Lesser dandelion and my favourite the Dropwort.

Quaking grass, Blue Moor grass and Mountain Melick were some of the choicer grasses while the ferns included Harts Tongue, Rigid Bucker fern, Limestone Polypody and of course Bracken.

All told a very satisfactory outing at this stunning location with its limestone formations and wonderful flora.

Barry Dyson