Bealeswood Local Nature Reserve
May 2026

As reported by Bealeswood Wildlife Recording Group (BWRG)
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Spiders (AB, AC and Darren Hill)

on Thursday May 21, a group of us spent a fascinating morning with Darren Hill, a self-confessed “spider nerd” and Waverley Borough Council Ranger based at Frensham Common, searching for spiders on Bealeswood Common. He taught us to use 'sweep' nets to swing through the grass and trees, revealing spiders as well as insects. Different nets caught spiders on tree branches, and all were then transferred to tubes while we examined them, before releasing. For small and tricky to identify spiders Darren also brought hand lenses and microscopes (conveniently set up in the back of his pick-up!).

Darren Hill and assembled arachnophiles

Philodromus margaritatus or Lichen Running Spider (inside specimen tube- Alan Cox)

In total we confirmed 32 different species on a small area of the common. 16 of these were new records for Bealeswood, including 2 national rarities. These ranged from money spiders to crab spiders (which do actually move sideways); from orb-spinners to comb-footed; and from cricket-bat spiders to mothercare spiders. The last do indeed build nurseries for their young. We learnt that you cannot truly identify a spider until it is mature, and how to tell a male from a female: males have what look like boxing gloves on their front legs. All spiders spin filament, but not all for webs, they also make funnels for catching prey or protecting their young, and threads to travel on, blown by the wind.

The village, and Darren, have long wondered about the “rare jumping spiders” on Bealeswood Common. Just after noon Darren took some tree sweeps and netted a *Ballas chalybeius* also known as the Oak Jumping Spider. Could this be our elusive jumping spider? Two decades ago it was listed as “Critically Endangered” (which fits with local memories) but increasing records over the years suggest that “Nationally Scarce” is a more appropriate status.

This was an eye-opening morning spent with an expert, what else do we have hiding 'in plain sight' on our common? For full list of what we found see below:

List of spiders recorded on 21st May, 2026 with those in bold typeface being new records for Bealeswood Common:

Labyrinth Spider	*Agelena labyrinthica*
Wolf Spider group ncn	*Alopecosa barbipes*
Common Fox-Spider	***Alopecosa pulverulenta***
Banded Comb-Footed Spider	***Anelosimus vitattus***
Common Garden Spider	*Araneus diadematus*
Four-spot Orbweaver	*Araneus quadratus*
Cucumber Green Spider	***Araniella cucurbitina sensu stricto***
Wasp Spider	*Argiope bruennichi*
Oak Jumping Spider	***Ballus chalybeius***
A Sac Spider	***Clubiona comta***
Bark Sac Spider	*Clubiona corticalis*
Scarce Candy-striped Spider	***Enoplognatha latimana***
Candy-striped Spider group ncn	***Enoplognatha thoracia***
Copper Sun-Jumping Spider	***Heliophanus cuprius***
Common Sun- Jumping Spider	***Heliophanus flavipes***
A Money Spider	***Hypomma cornutum***
Common Hammock Weaver	*Linyphia triangularis*
Cricket-bat Orbweaver	*Mangora acalypha*
A Lesser Garden Spider	*Metellina sp.*
Flower Crab Spider	*Misumena vatia*
Cream-backed Comb-footed Spider	*Neottiura bimaculata*
Walnut Orbweaver	*Nuctenea umbratica*
A litter leaf crab spider ncn	***Ozyptila simplex***
Clerk's Thickjaw	*Pachygnatha clercki*
Degeer's Thickjaw	*Pachygnatha degeeri*
Sputnik Spider	*Paidiscura pallens*
Thin-legged Wolf Spider group ncn	***Pardosa pilata***
A money spider	***Pelecopsis mengei***
White-striped Running Crab Spider	***Philodromus albidus***
A Running Crab Spider ncn	***Philodromus dispar***
Lichen Running Spider	***Philodromus margaritatus***
A Mothercare Spider	***Phylloneta sisyphia***
Nursery Web Spider	*Pisaura mirabilis*
Spring harvestman	*Platybunus triangularis*
A Long-Jawed Orb Weaver	***Tetragnatha montana***
A Comb-footed Spider	***Theridian sp.***
Slender Crab Spider	*Tibellus oblongus (cf.)*
Ground Crab Spider group ncn	***Xysticus acerbus***
Common Crab Spider	*Xysticus cristatus*
Ground Crab Spider group ncn	*Xysticus kochi*
Ghost Spider	***Zora spinimana***

An unexpected by-catch was two previously unrecorded ladybirds from the Common adding to the two already recorded. Both of these were tiny; the Cream-Spot at 6 mm and the 16-Spot at just 3 mm in length.

Left: Cream-Spot ladybird (*Calvia quattuordecimguttata*)

Right: 16-Spot ladybird *Tytthaspis sedecimpunctata*

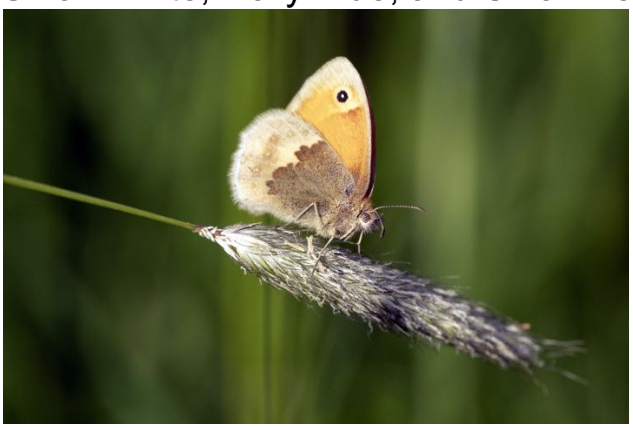
Photos Alan Cox

Butterflies and Moths (PH, AP, AC)

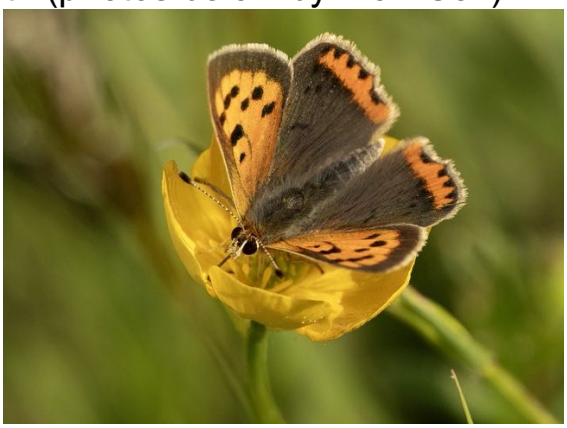
The butterfly team were excited this month when Alex Potts photographed a Dingy Skipper on Bealeswood Common, as this is the first time it has been recorded here. It's a small unassuming butterfly that lays its eggs on Common Birds-foot-trefoil (which occurs in abundance), and its identification is often confused with day-flying moths.

Dingy Skipper (wingspan 30 mm) on Oak leaf (photo Alex Potts)

The May transect walks recorded the following butterflies listed in order of decreasing abundance: Common Blue, Speckled Wood, Skipper, Small Copper, Small White, Holly Blue, and Small Heath (photos below by Alan Cox).



Small Heath resting on Sweet Vernal Grass



Small Copper feeding on Buttercup

Two day-time flying moths were also recorded on the Common in May. The Speckled Fanner occurs in abundance on the Sharp Rush to the west of the Common and occasional sightings were made of the Speckled Yellow (photos Alan Cox):

Speckled Fanner (*Glyphipterix thrasonella)* (Speckled Yellow *Pseudopanthera macularia)*

Philippa's moth trap, put out in a garden adjacent to Bealeswood Common, yielded 54 moth species, 10 of which had not previously been recorded at Bealeswood. Full species list below:

Moth list from Bealeswood Common May 23rd 2026 hot, dry spell

Common Name	**Scientific name**	**Number**	
Drepanidae			
Scalloped Hook-tip	*Falcaria lacertinaria*	1	
Oak Hook-tip	*Watsonalla binaria*	5	
Pebble Hook-tip	*Drepana falcataria*	1	
Sphingidae			
Poplar Hawk-moth	*Laothoe populi*	3	
Geometridae			
Satin Wave	*Idaea subsericeata*	1	
Treble Brown Spot	*Idaea trigeminata*	4	
Cream Wave	*Scopula floslactata floslactata*	2	
Cloaked Carpet	*Euphyia biangulata*	1	
Broken-barred Carpet	*Electrophaes corylata*	1	
Common Marbled Carpet	*Dysstroma truncata truncata*	1	
Green Carpet	*Colostygia pectinataria*	1	
Green Pug	*Pasiphila rectangulata*	1	
Small Seraphim	*Pterapherapteryx sexalata*	2	
Clouded Border	*Lomaspilis marginata*	1	
Sharp Angled Peacock	*Macaria alternata*	1	
Little Thorn	*Cepphis advenaria*	1	
Brown Silver-line	*Petrophora chlorosata*	1	
Scorched Wing	*Plagodis dolobraria*	10	
Brimstone	*Opisthograptis luteolata*	4	
Willow Beauty	*Peribatodes rhomboidaria*	2	
Great Oak Beauty	*Hypomecis roboraria*	1	
Pale Oak Beauty	*Hypomecis punctinalis*	1	
Common Wave	*Cabera exanthemata*	1	
White-pinion Spotted	*Lomographa bimaculata*	1	
Clouded Silver	*Lomographa temerata*	2	
Light Emerald	*Campaea margaritaria*	7	
Notodontidae			
Marbled Brown	*Drymonia dodonaea*	11	
Great Prominent	*Peridea anceps*	1	
Pale Prominent	*Pterostoma palpina*	3	
Buff-tip	*Phalera Bucephala*	13	
Erebidae			

Straw Dot	*Rivual sericealis*	1	
Pale Tussock	*Calliteara pudibunda*	21	
White Ermine	*Spilosoma lubricipeda*	7	
Cinnabar	*Tyria jacobaeae*	1	
Orange Footman	*Eilema sororcula*	20	
Noctuidae			
Coronet	*Craniophora ligustri*	1	
Small Mottled Willow	*Spodoptera exigua*	2	
Treble Lines	*Charanyca trigammica*	37	
Bird's Wing	*Dypterygla scabriuscula*	1	
Marbled Minor sp	*Oligia strigilis*	14	
Middle-barred Minor	*Oligia fasciuncula*	12	
Common Wainscot	*Mythimna pallens*	2	
White-point	*Mythimna albipuncta*	1	
Heart & Dart	*Agrotis exclamationis*	3	
Large Yellow Underwing	*Noctua pronuba*	2	
Setaceous Hebrew Character	*Xestia c-nigrum*	2	
Micro-moths			
Great Tortrix	*Choristoneura hebenstreitella*	12	
Garden Pearl	*Udaea olivalis*	1	
Common Yellow Conch	*Agapeta hamana*	2	
Green Oak Tortrix	*Tortrix viridana*	1	
Meadow Grass Moth	*Crambus lathoniellus*	1	
Common Purple & Gold	*Pyrausta purpuralis*	1	
Black Cloak	*Notocelia cynobatella*	1	
Comfrey Ermine	*Ethmia quadrillella*	1	

Great Oak Beauty (*Hypomecis roboraria*) (wingspan 40-50 mm). Photo Alan Cox

Poplar Hawk Moth (*Laothoe populi*) (wingspan 65-90 mm) Photo Alan Cox

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Speckled Fanner (*Glyphipterix thrasonella)* *(*Speckled Yellow *Pseudopanthera macularia)*

Bealeswood Dawn Chorus (AC)

We complied with the International Dawn Chorus Day May 3rd with two of our group on watch at 04:30 am by the bench. The silence of the predawn period was interrupted by Tawny Owls hooting (6 territories around the village) and a Woodcock whistling overhead on one leg of its woodland circuit. Bullfinch calling softly and other songsters identified in a steady stream until 50 minutes before dawn lift off, a full choral symphony burst forth – completely breath-taking in scale and needs to be witnessed to be believed.

A total of 40 species were recorded before 7am – the highlight perhaps a small flock of Crossbills chip, chipping away low overhead. [Our breeding birds heard included: Stock Dove, Blackcap, Chiffchaff, Goldcrest, Firecrest, Nuthatch, Treecreeper, three thrushes and four each of the tit and finch families.]

This beats our previous Dawn Chorus lists for 2023- 33 species, 2024- 29 species, and 2025- 30 species.

Wildlife Walks on the Common

These start at the notice boards at the end of the lane down past the garden of the Bluebell pub (GU10 4EX). Contact the leader if you wish to join the walk, so that we can keep a track of numbers and in case of bad weather etc.

Butterflies and Bees- July 5th (Sunday) 11 am, led by Philippa Hall and and Alex Potts, contact: phall3422@aol.com

Small Mammals (wood mice, voles etc)- September 26th (Saturday) 10 am, led by Roger Trout, contact: rabbitwise@hotmail.co.uk