



Seeing this rare Black Hairstreak on Wormwood Scrubs in West London during the Covid-19 pandemic reminded me of my childhood hobby.



Winspit valley, 1970,

I looked it up in a book that I was given for my 10th birthday, *The Complete British Butterflies* by Mansell and Newman.



Adonis Blue

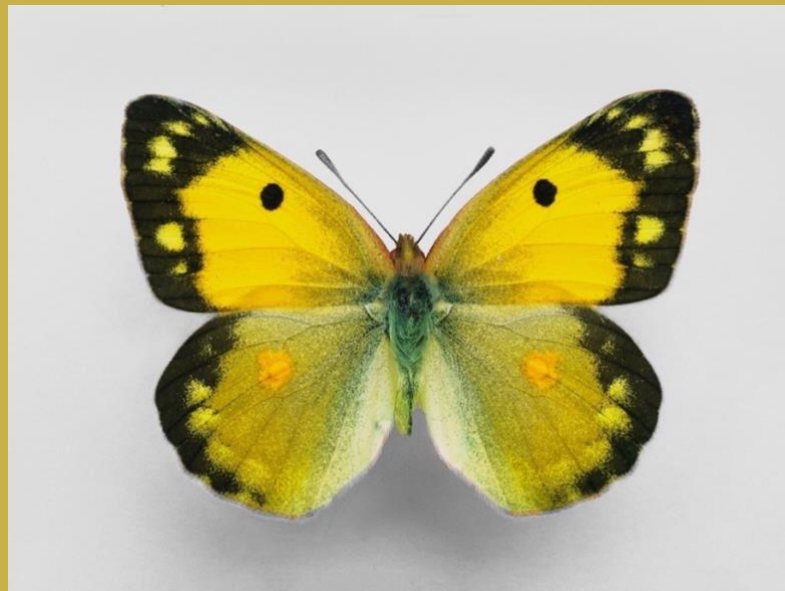
It reminded me of learning about the different butterflies, their lifecycles and food plants. I loved identifying the various blues, browns and skippers that were abundant on the slopes of East and West Man above Winspit and other local places such as Ballard Down, Durlston Country Park and Middlebere Heath.

Rearing various hawkmoth larva, I remember putting clusters of third instar butterfly caterpillars out to feed on the sprigs of an apple tree in our garden having covered them with a leg or two of mum's old stockings and I remember attending an Open Day, celebrating the 10th anniversary of Worldwide Butterflies at Compton House near Sherborne, with school friend Simon Saville, now Chair of the Surrey and SW London branch of Butterfly Conservation.



Glanville Fritillary, IOW, 1978

I also recall my brother and I staying on the Isle of White with a friend of dad's in 1970 who took us to see Glanville Fritillaries at Niton Undercliff and later taking this photograph with my first 35mm camera.



To this day, seeing Clouded Yellows that have crossed the Channel, settling in the fields along Purbeck's coast, feels incredibly special.



Pearl-bordered Fritillary

Preserving and neatly arranging a small collection of butterflies grew into a love of photography and a life time capturing images of various subjects.

Last year I equipped myself with the latest Nikon mirrorless camera which reminded me of the excitement getting my first Nikon FE in 1976 and the rush of blood I felt each time the postman delivered a small package of Kodachrome transparencies from the lab in Hemel Hempstead.

These memories triggered an urge to revisit the subject I most love.