

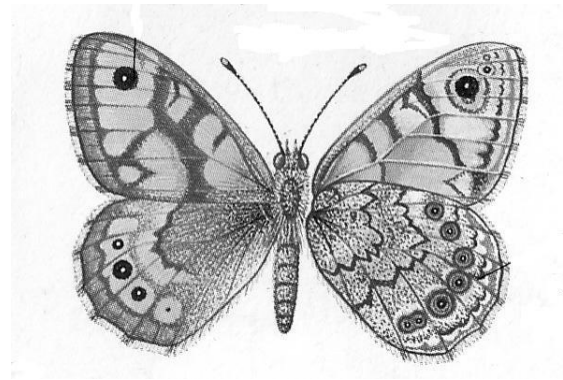
## A Butterfly Summer

As I write this, summer seems to be rapidly spiralling downhill into autumn, with heavy rain and gales. So it is a good time to look back on a summer which had a reasonable amount of sunshine, even if accompanied by chilly breezes. For me, the abiding memory will be that of the butterflies. Not, this year, an influx of Painted Ladies but an abundance of the more common but nonetheless spectacular species such as Peacock, Red Admiral and Small

Tortoiseshell. I have also seen more Comma butterflies in the garden this year than I have seen in the whole of Pembrokeshire during the last 6 years.

But perhaps the most notable feature has been the huge abundance of Wall Browns. They are not an uncommon butterfly here and a few can usually be seen during the two flight periods in May and August. They like rough grassy areas with bare patches and – yes – walls, where they sunbathe. But this year during August they have been visible in much larger numbers than usual. Every step along the grassy cliff-top at St Brides would disturb one or two and they would then flit off over the grass tops with their dashing flight. On one occasion we even had 11 in the garden. It was a real pleasure to see so many of this charismatic little butterfly.

Wall Brown butterflies are more attractive than their name might suggest. They have intricately patterned orange and brown upper-wings which gives them quite a bright orange appearance in flight. In contrast, their under-wings have a complex pattern in brown and grey which provides good camouflage when they are perched on the ground or roosting on a lichen covered wall.



*Upper Wing*

*Under Wing*

*Rosemary Royle*