

INSECTS AT CARR VALE IN 2003

This section of the report is concerned only with Dragonflies, Damselflies and Butterflies recorded within the Carr Vale area. As usual the records are drawn from casual observations by M A Beevers, R M Box, D Came, S Came, A Irons and G Potter. It was a better year than 2001 with most of the expected species being recorded including very good numbers of **Painted Ladies**, although once again no **Red-eyed Damsels** were found suggesting that they are no extinct as a breeding species at Carr Vale. During the year 18 species of Butterfly and 13 species of Dragonfly / Damselfly were recorded.

The first Butterflies of the year were two **Small Tortoiseshell's** on 17th March with two more on 22nd March, followed by two **Peacocks** on 29th March and a **Small White** the following day. April was a good month for butterflies with the first records of the year of **Orangetip** (two), **Brimstone** and **Comma** (singles of each) coming on the 4th when four **Peacocks** were also seen. A **Brimstone** was seen on 15th April and the 16th saw further species on the wing including **Large White**, **Common Blue** and **Speckled Wood**. The same day another **Brimstone** and seven **Orangetips** were also noted. A **Comma** was seen on the 18th and 22nd April, then the 23rd produced the first **Red Admiral** of the year along with two **Brimstones** and ten each of **Orangetip** and **Small Tortoiseshell**. Single **Brimstones** were seen on 4th and 28th May, the first **Wall Brown** was seen on 7th May with the first **Painted Lady** of the year noted on 15th May. The first **Small Heaths** were seen on 9th June then on 13th June ten **Small Tortoiseshells**, a **Painted Lady**, the first **Meadow Browns** and **Small Skippers** of the year and ten **Common Blues** were logged. Two **Painted Ladies** were seen on 14th June with two on the 16th and three on the 17th on which date a **Large Skipper** was seen and three **Red Admirals** were seen on the 28th. Two **Red Admirals** were recorded on 2nd July with two more on the 10th and 20th and singles on a further four dates during the month. Ten **Gatekeepers** were on the wing by 7th July when a **Comma** was also seen. Three **Commas** were seen on 10th and 15th July with singles on three other dates and single **Painted Ladies** were seen on 22nd and 26th July. The first week in August was very good with one or two **Commas** on three dates and **Red Admirals** on the 2nd and 4th. However it was **Painted Ladies** that stole the show with six on the 2nd, two on the 3rd, 29 on the 4th, nine on the 5th and one the following day. The count of 29 is the second highest ever at Carr Vale and nine were still in the area on 9th August. Thereafter the only records for the rest of the month concerned single **Red Admirals** on the 13th and 27th with four **Speckled Woods** on the latter date. One or two **Red Admirals** were logged on 12 September dates, a **Painted Lady** was seen on 5th September with another on 23rd September and single **Commas** were seen on the 20th and 25th. The last butterfly of the year was a **Red Admiral** on the rather early date of 29th September.

Dragonflies were also seen more frequently given the good weather experienced during the summer and the first records of the year were on 28th May when two **Large Red Damsels**, a **Blue-tailed Damsel** and two **Four-spotted Chasers** were seen. Two **Emperors** and two **Four-spotted Chasers** were seen on 9th June with three and six respectively on 13th June when six **Black-tailed Skimmers** were also seen. Seven (six males and an ovipositing female) **Emperors**, 20 **Four-spotted Chasers** and nine male and two female **Black-tailed Skimmers** were logged on 16th

June. A late **Broad-bodied Chaser** was seen on 21st June along with three **Emperors**, 15 **Four-spotted Chasers** and ten plus **Black-tailed Skimmers** and a male **Black-tailed Skimmer** was seen on 28th June. The 7th July produced four **Emperors**, five **Four-spotted Chasers** and five male **Black-tailed Skimmers** and the first **Brown Hawker** of the year was seen on 10th July. A female **Broad-bodied Chaser** was seen on 15th July and the only **Banded Demoiselle** of the year was seen on 26th July. The first **Southern Hawker** was seen on 3rd August after which one or two were logged on several dates whilst **Brown Hawkets** were seen on five dates including a count of five on 4th August. One or two **Black-tailed Skimmer** was seen until the 5th on which date there was a count of 35 **Common Darters**. **Southern, Brown** and **Migrant Hawkets** were all noted in September and on 4th September over 70 **Common Darters** were found around the area. A late **Migrant Hawker** was still on the wing on 30th October and four **Common Darters** on 12th November were the latest ever dragonflies at Carr Vale.

Mark Beevers.

12th January 2004.