

EARLY SIGHTINGS OF THE PAINTED LADY (*Vanessa cardui*)

J M Cheverton

The Painted Lady (*Vanessa cardui*) is a migrant from North Africa occurring sporadically, common some years and scarce in others, normally arriving in this country about the third week of May.

During a walk through Bobberstone Farm on 8 April 1985 my wife drew my attention to a butterfly which proved to be a Painted Lady. In my experience this was a very early date on which to see this species so, having checked in various handbooks, I reported the fact to the Recording Organiser of the British Butterfly Conservation Society. He replied stating that there had been one other early sighting. Gaining interest I collated other early records from the Island. These were:

- 6 April – East Ashey – Mr B. Warne
- 6 April – Nr Crematorium – Dr C. R. Pope
- 7 April – Combley Great Wood – Mr B. Angell
- 9 April – Dodnor – Dr D.T. Biggs
- 10 April – 3 – Rowridge – Dr D.T. Biggs
- 13 April – Eight Acre Copse, St Helens – Dr C.R. Pope
- 17 April – Porchfield – Mr B. Angell
- 17 April – St Catherine's Point – J.M. Cheverton
- 18 April – Porchfield – Mr B. Angell
- 19 April – Centurion's Copse – P.F. Lee
- 20 April – Bembridge Marsh – J.M. Cheverton
- 21 April – Calbourne – P.F. Lee
- 21 April – 2 – Ramsdown – Dr C.R. Pope
- 24 April – Brighstone Forest – P.F. Lee

Early records in the past have been (Goater 1974):

4 March 1928 – Shanklin

23 March 1942 – Ryde

Great influx during March and early April 1952.

References

Goater, B 1974. *The Butterflies and Moths of Hampshire and the Isle of Wight*. Classey.