

**Phil Grey, Lepidopterist** *Langton Matravers '07*

Phil Grey was a dedicated conservationist and founder member of the Dorset branch of Butterfly Conservation. Anyone interested in butterflies and moths, or wildflowers for that matter, living in Purbeck, would most likely have attended one of his field trips or talks.

Phil's collection included all our native species, many European butterflies, equatorial birdwings, aberrations, variations and a large variety of moths, many of which Phil bred himself.

### **Collector and Conservationist**

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Phil named his house after the Chalk Hill Blue.

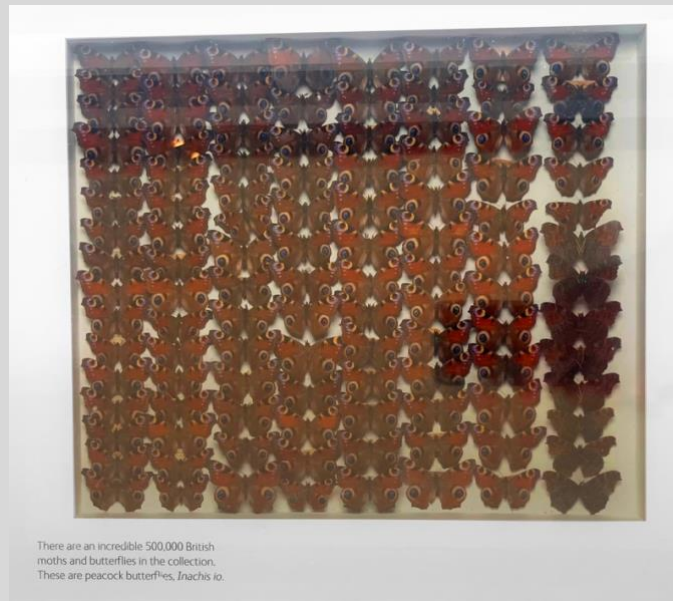


Phil's sunburst display of British butterflies.

Passionate about the conservation of wildlife in general Phil was a founder member of the Dorset Branch of **Butterfly Conservation** leading twice-yearly walks on Ballard Down. There are said to be over 7000 records of his on the database since 1949.

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A drawer of Peacocks in the NHM.

Collecting became popular in the early 17<sup>th</sup> century and private collections of more recent times form the much larger collections that can be seen in our museums today.

In the late 18<sup>th</sup> century there were several Aurelian societies. *Aurelians*, butterfly collectors later became known as Lepidopterists.

There are 18,000 species of butterflies worldwide, 482 can be found in Europe and just 61 of those breed in the British Isles.

The Natural History Museum has in the region of 80,000 drawers of butterflies and moths.. a total of 500,000 British specimens, the oldest dating back some three hundred years.



Monarch *Danaus plexippus*.

*North American butterfly occasionally seen in the south-west of England.*

Towards the end of the 18th century it became common practice of collectors to attach a tiny label to each specimen, with the date, place and captors name. These records have become a valuable source of information when looking into subjects such as climate change.