



Craigavon Lakes in Armagh

Photographs from Northern Ireland

Craigavon Lakes and Peatlands Park NNR'S June '22

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Either side of the railway line at Craigavon Lake there are two narrow strips that are nature reserves.



Bee orchids

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Willow Warbler

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Cryptic Wood White (*Leptidea juvernica*).

I came to County Armagh to see this dainty little creature and was not disappointed.

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Cryptic Wood White (*Leptidea juvernica*).

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Cryptic Wood Whites *pairing.*

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A pair of Common Blues.

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Male and female (below) Common Blue.



I met Clifford Sharpe taking photographs who mentioned that Large Heaths' were on the wing at a nearby location and called his friend Ian Rippey, Northern Ireland's chief butterfly recorder for **Butterfly Conservation** for confirmation.

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Peatlands Park NNR *Co Armagh, NI.*

I had not planned to spend Father's Day in an Irish bog yet the prospect of seeing my first Large Heath was reason enough to leave the Lakes and spend my final day in County Armagh exploring the Peatlands.

A strong NW wind blew and with overcast conditions I had little success during the morning, barely a single butterfly, seeing just two Large Heaths passing in the distance like pieces of confetti.

Later in the morning my fortunes changed when two angels, in the form of dog walkers, appeared with a message that an elderly man with a butterfly net was looking for me and had left his mobile number at the Park's ice cream kiosk... I zoomed over at once, called the number and was soon in the company of Ian Rippey who knew the park well (nothing beats local knowledge) and with whom I had the pleasure of spending the remainder of the day and evening, digesting a meal and his wealth of insect knowledge.



Ian Rippey, recorder for Butterfly Conservation.

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Ian amongst the heather where low and behold we got to see dozen or so Large Heaths as the day wore on.

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Large Heath hunkered down on a blustery day.

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Large Heath (*Coenonympha tullia*).

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Large Heath (*Coenonympha tullia*).

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Ringlet (*Aphantopus hyperantus*).

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Ian laying one of three pheromone lures in another area of the park...

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.. soon to be visited by a **Lunar Hornet Moth** (*Sesis bembeciformis*).



Broad centurion - Soldier fly (*Chloromyia formosa*).



Common Blue damselfly (*Enallagma cyathigerum*).

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Common corncockle (*Agrostemma githago*).

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