



Saving butterflies, moths and our environment

**Butterfly  
Conservation**

**PRESS  
RELEASE**  
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## **Rare Butterfly Wins Shropshire MP's Vote**

Conservative MP for Ludlow, Philip Dunne, has 'adopted' one of the West Midlands' rarest butterflies in a bid to boost its numbers.

The Wood White has declined by 88% in the UK since the 1970s and can be found on just 50 sites across the country, with nearly half of these in the West Midlands.

Philip Dunne has joined forces with wildlife charity Butterfly Conservation (BC) to become a 'Species Champion' for the Wood White.

BC's Conservation Officer, Rachel Jones, said: "The Species Champion project is about MPs promoting species, habitats and positive management within their constituency and in Parliament.

"There are now 42 MP Species Champions across England and we're really grateful that Mr Dunne has chosen to support BC and raise awareness of this declining butterfly."

The Shropshire MP recently joined BC staff and volunteers on a visit to a Wood White site in nearby Herefordshire which is owned by the Forestry Commission (FC).

Mr Dunne said: "I was pleased to join local volunteers to seek out some Wood White butterflies on the edge of the Ludlow Constituency, and to see the important work they undertake to protect and support this butterfly.

"Working with Butterfly Conservation, I hope my role as Species Champion will raise the profile of this important rare species and help secure its future."

The Wood White is the smallest of the UK's white butterflies with an average wingspan of just 44mm and can be seen on the wing between May and early July. In warm years, a partial second brood can emerge around August.

The butterfly needs wide, sunny clearings within the woodland to feed and mate successfully and conservation work is needed to help create these conditions. For opportunities to get involved, visit: [www.butterfly-conservation.org/events](http://www.butterfly-conservation.org/events)

### **Contacts**

For further pictures or interviews, please contact Katie Callaghan on 01929 406037, or email [kcallaghan@butterfly-conservation.org](mailto:kcallaghan@butterfly-conservation.org)

### **Notes**

There are now 42 MP Species Champion's across England and each one is partnered with a conservation organisation like BC, who will keep them updated with the issues facing their species and the work being done to save it.

Organisations taking part include BC, the RSPB, Buglife, Amphibian and Reptile Conservation Trust, Plantlife, the Bat Conservation Trust and the Bumblebee Conservation Trust.

The initiative is based on a highly successful scheme launched in Scotland in 2013, involving dozens of MSPs.

**Philip Dunne** is MP for Ludlow [www.philipdunne.com](http://www.philipdunne.com)

**Butterfly Conservation** is the UK charity dedicated to saving butterflies, moths and our environment. Our research provides advice on how to conserve and restore habitats. We run projects to protect more than 100 threatened species and we are involved in conserving hundreds of sites and reserves. [www.butterfly-conservation.org](http://www.butterfly-conservation.org)

Much work is delivered through the charity's regional branches and the West Midlands branch holds an annual programme of events aimed at raising awareness of the region's butterflies and moths. [www.westmidlands-butterflies.org.uk](http://www.westmidlands-butterflies.org.uk)