

# CAN YOU HELP US FIND THE MOUNTAIN RINGLET?

If you're out and about in the Lakeland fells this summer, we'd like you to help us find out more about the elusive **Mountain Ringlet** butterfly. We at Butterfly Conservation's Cumbria Branch seek your help in learning more about its distribution and habitats in Lakeland.



## Where to look

With just a few exceptions, the Mountain Ringlet is found between 500m and 750m altitude and usually where the underlying rocks are of the Borrowdale Volcanics group. This covers most of the high fells with the exception of the Skiddaw, Grasmoor and Coniston groups. Search on gently or moderately sloping grassy sites where Mat grass is abundant

## What to look for – recognising the species

Look for a small dark brown butterfly flying close to the ground; they tend to fly in sunshine and drop into the grass at the first hint of cloud cover, so are easily overlooked. On closer inspection, a butterfly sitting with its wings closed is about 15mm across, has a black furry body and brown / orange tinged wings – see photo above. A butterfly sitting with its wings open is about 30mm across, the dark brown wings having a row of orange blotches around the edges of both the fore and hind wings and the body is black and furry – see photo right.



**PLEASE TURN OVER**



The only other butterfly species you're likely to encounter in any numbers at these altitudes is the **Small Heath** – It is slightly smaller than a Mountain Ringlet and is a light orange colour when flying. When resting it always closes its wings and shows a two-tone grey hindwing, where the orange forewing is also sometimes visible – see photo left.

## When to look

Search for Mountain Ringlets anytime between early June and late July, but the peak time is late June / early July. You're only likely to see them on warm days with sunshine or at least some sunny periods and without too much wind.

## How you can help

If you're able to help with full day surveys please let us know and we'll supply survey forms and instructions. For casual records please try to let us have the following information:

- Your name and contact telephone number and / or email address
- Date of sighting
- Location (name of fell) with 6-figure grid reference (8-figure if GPS used)
- Approximate number of butterflies seen
- And a digital photo would be great if you can get one.

Please send records as soon as possible to:

Steve Clarke Lowcray, Gosforth, Cumbria CA20 1EB or email

[clarkelowcray@btinternet.com](mailto:clarkelowcray@btinternet.com)

(First contact for areas to west of A591 Kendal to Keswick road)

Martin Tordoff 1 Fletcher Drive, Kendal LA9 7DL or email [mt@vmst.fsnet.co.uk](mailto:mt@vmst.fsnet.co.uk)

(First contact for areas to east of A591)

You can find more information on the Mountain Ringlet butterfly on:

[http://www.cumbriabutterflies.org.uk/species/butterflies/mountain\\_ringlet.htm](http://www.cumbriabutterflies.org.uk/species/butterflies/mountain_ringlet.htm)

**On behalf of Butterfly Conservation's Cumbria Branch  
thank you for your help.**