

INTRODUCTION

Contributed by Jos
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The Baltic States are characterized by an extremely diverse selection of butterflies, this especially true of Lithuania in the south. At the season's peak in early July, the range and abundance of species is truly dazzling, a tantalizing 50 species possible in eastern Lithuania on an exceptional day, including many species of fritillaries, blues and coppers.

Including such stunning classics as Swallowtail, Camberwell Beauty, both Purple and Lesser Purple Emperor and Poplar Admiral, a typical active year (April through to September) will see me recording 60-70 species during the season, the previous highest ever total being 78 in 2010. Setting myself a target for 2016, I had thought the holy grail of 100 species was hugely over-ambitious, but by including Latvia and Estonia into the recording area, I was certainly aware that it was at least theoretically possible. In reality, I would have been happy to break my existing record of 78 species and to hopefully also find a few new species of butterflies for me, chiefly amongst them the rare Clouded Apollo, a localised species that can be found in parts of all three Baltic States. That I actually found 109 species during the year astounded me, even more so that it included a new species for the Baltic States, namely Meleager's Blue. [CLICK HERE](#) to return to the full account of the year.