

Speckled Wood

Pararge aegeria

Insects · On the wing Apr-Sep



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A dark brown butterfly generously dappled with creamy-yellow blotches, patterned to match the broken light of a woodland floor. Speckled woods live in dappled shade — woodland rides and clearings, shady hedgerows, mature gardens — and are one of very few butterflies genuinely at home out of full sun. They have spread north and are now well established around Dumfries.

BEHAVIOUR

Males hold sunlit patches on the woodland floor and defend them vigorously: two males meeting spiral tightly upward together until one gives way, and the resident almost always wins. The species is unique among British butterflies in being able to overwinter either as a caterpillar or as a pupa, which produces a long, muddled succession of emergences rather than clean broods.

WHEN TO SEE IT

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QUICK FACTS

FAMILY	Browns (Nymphalidae, subfamily Satyrinae)
WINGSPAN	4.5-5 cm
STATUS	Native; expanding north strongly

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