

Moths and Butterflies of New Zealand Trust



We hope that you will help Moths and Butterflies of New Zealand Trust members in our campaign to save the beautiful forest ringlet butterfly, *Dododnidia helmsii*. This is a butterfly species only found in NZ and which is the only one of its genus

The poster on the reverse could be displayed where people who enjoy NZ's mountains and back country are most likely to see it. The butterfly is not well known... and how can people be aware of a species if they are unable to identify it? Here are some suggestions where the poster could be displayed:

- Visitor Centres
- Outdoors stores
- Outdoors groups
- Campgrounds
- School libraries
- Wildlife parks
- Backpackers

We appreciate the support of Lottery Environment & Heritage for this project and further donations are welcome. For more information about our project please check out www.nzbutterflies.org.nz

About the Forest Ringlet

- Habitat:** Treetop species, found in native forest, usually beech forest.
- Host plants:** *Gahnia* and *Chionochoa* species (cutty grasses)
- Eggs:** When first laid light coloured/pale, about 1.4 mm – clearly visible. Spherical with about 50 fine, vertical ribs at the top. Lower area smooth or pitted. Eggs darken to yellow-green after a few days. Eggs hatch after about 3 weeks. Shell becomes transparent three days before hatching. Eyes and jaws of the growing caterpillar are visible. Just before hatching the head darkens the upper part of the egg.
- Caterpillar:** Newly hatched caterpillars are 5 mm long, stout, conspicuous black head capsule. Moults after about 30 days and black head is discarded. 2nd instar has “forked” green head. Darker lines on the sides and top of the body. Can be up to 3.2 cm, pointed at both ends. Found feeding largely at night, resting on the underside of the leaf. Well camouflaged – similar green to the leaf. Feeding damage easier to find than caterpillars. Caterpillars will be 2nd or 3rd instar before winter (about May). 5th instar will be about ten months old. Feeding resumes in the spring. 34 mm by mid/late December.
- Chrysalis:** Before pupation caterpillar hangs upside down in a sheltered location for about three days. Chrysalides are brown/green and stout with white edges and reddish outline on wing cases.
- Adult:** Wingspan 40-65 mm, dark brown and orange stripes to exterior wings, eyespot towards the tip of the forewing, two eyespots on the rear wings. When wings are closed, the hindwings appear silver and black stripes, affording camouflage against the thin leaves of the host plant.
- Other names:** Helms' butterfly

Sir Bob Harvey_{QSO}

30 November 2019

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

I have been honoured to be the patron of the Moths and Butterflies of New Zealand Trust for some years and I embrace with enthusiasm the organisation and all it stands for. The concept of saving New Zealand's butterflies and moths seems to me to be a noble and hugely worthy role in a difficult and complex environment.

Butterflies, especially monarchs have been in my life since I was a young boy in the very heart of Auckland. I haven't forgotten those special times, and with my own children we shared the pleasure of rearing monarchs as they grew up. I still do. Now with grandchildren I am teaching them the awe and wonder of the transformation from caterpillar to butterfly. They learn kindness and empathy. They develop a sense of wonder and learn management skills. Monarchs also open doors into maths and science and IT – history and geography too.

Our butterflies have been badly affected by introduced predators and parasites. If these have affected a butterfly that is well known, what have they done to our native butterflies such as the forest ringlet, which is NOT known at all? How can we know that something has been lost, forever, if we didn't know it existed to begin with?

I am thrilled that Lottery Environment and Heritage has seen fit to provide funding to help the Trust with Stage 2 of their Forest Ringlet Project – and I do hope that you will be able to assist in this as well. Thanks to their efforts of there has been a huge groundswell and renewed interest in butterflies and moths, insects and biodiversity in people's gardens.

I am deeply privileged to endorse this project's success. I do hope you can join us to ensure that our New Zealand skies will forever see the wings of the monarch and our other glorious butterflies and moths.

Kind regards

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Bob Harvey', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Sir Bob Harvey