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## Rare blue butterfly returns home



**One of Britain's rarest butterflies has returned to a spot where it has not been seen for more than 40 years.**

The Adonis Blue, classified as a priority species, is usually only found at a few places in southern England.

But it has returned in numbers to a former site in the Cotswolds, Gloucestershire, after a National Trust campaign to restore its habitat. The insect's numbers were decimated 50 years ago when a lot of its natural habitat, chalk grassland, was lost.

The Adonis Blue likes to live in habitats with short grass, and it is unusual for the butterflies to fly far from their home base.

*"It is one of our loveliest butterflies and we are delighted to have it back in the Cotswolds"*

**Matthew Oakes, National Trust**

When the rabbit-killing disease Myxomatosis broke out in the 1950s, the lack of rabbits meant grass grew too long and the Adonis Blue's former habitats became unsuitable.

But now large numbers of the species have moved back to its former home around Rodborough and Minchinhampton Common, as trust officers have brought in cattle to keep the grass down.

**Suitable weather**

Matthew Oakes, butterfly expert and adviser for the National Trust said: "Never underestimate a butterfly.

"We think that the Adonis Blue may be benefiting from milder winters and hotter summers and that it should produce a bumper brood this August and September.

"It is one of our loveliest butterflies and we are delighted to have it back in the Cotswolds."