



GARDEN BIRD WATCH

July and August are always poor for garden birds. The seed eating birds migrate to the arable fields for a rich picking of corn seed. Swifts were obviously assembling for the winter migration during the last week in July with gardens overlooking fields seeing quite large flocks. The star of the month appears to be Green Woodpecker seen in twelve out of the eighteen gardens who sent in a return. Maybe the wet weather has flushed ants out of their underground burrows. They have certainly invaded houses with Rentokil reporting a big increase in requests for help. Bullfinch appears to have spread its range, with three gardens from north to south reporting its presence. Ruth Eggerton reported Little Owl.



Jack Norden-Wilkinson was working in his garden, when he noticed a weeping willow with many caterpillars, which were quickly identified by Janet Craig as Buff Tip moth.

OTHER WILDLIFE REPORTS

Moth trapping has improved a little since the end of July. It took three days of warm weather before my catch was at normal August weather, but Jersey Tiger numbers have been down, although I have had reports of them been seen in the village during the day. Interestingly grassland moths such as the Wainscots have been quite scarce. During the last week in July, I was at Ringstead every day where butterflies were only seen in sheltered glades but by Monday 6th August there were good numbers at the Springhead including Dark-green Fritillary.

The big butterfly count had awful weather but David Emery managed to photograph this Wall Brown, which has been present in small numbers during August in the village.



Wildlife Walks – Mondays from Fox Cottage near the Mission Hall at 9.30am. All welcome.

With the sun – back came the Moths - Pale Prominent



Black-headed Gull

The July edition of the *BTO magazine* has taken a close look at Black-headed Gulls. On the face of things the gull appears to be doing well with 10km records through most of lowland Britain and Ireland in winter surveys. It is, however when we look at the summer maps with recording in the breeding season that there is cause for concern as there are very few records of breeding birds, especially in the southeast and southwest with the coastal squares of Dorset and Hampshire being an exception. In Wales, ornithologists are saying that the large breeding colonies have disappeared with one theory being that the gull is under pressure from expanding colonies of Canada Geese. At the time of writing the geese have started flying over the village looking for spilt grain in arable fields.

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