



Garden bird watch

19-25th February 2017

Please send lists after 26th February 2017

In putting together this newsletter, I welcome photographs of interesting plant and animals and other aspects of the countryside around Sutton Poyntz

Nature Notes

It took an extra week for snowdrops to appear around 7th February and there are many about associated with primrose. By the bridge over Osmington Brook, winter heliotrope is in flower and in the hedgerows goat willow is struggling to flower. By 14th February, we have started to find lesser celandine leaves but very few flowers.

On 14 January, Colin and Rita collected a few snails from the chalk grassland, which were sent to the National recorder. These turned out to be striped snail *Ceriuella virgate*, wrinkled snail *Candidula intersepta* and hairy snail *Trochulus hispidus*.

Colin and Rita have also done two 30 minute farmland field observations. On 26th January in the horse field 24 species with five red data species including: herring gull, house sparrow, 25 redwing, two song thrush and four starlings. On 11th February, just 1 species from the field between Wimslow Hill and Osmington Brook with two red data birds, herring gull and 50 redwing. Early in February, I am pretty confident one Monday morning there was a barn owl calling from the same field.

GARDEN BIRD WATCH January

The first two or three days of the week were cold, dark, foggy and generally miserable and I wondered about extending the period of garden Bird Watch. I need not have worried with four people listing over 20 birds with Colin and Rita on the Puddledocks scoring 25 species.

Key species included two people under the hill on Plaisters Lane recording yellowhammer, which have been scarce amongst the gorse at the top of the hill. Everybody reported blue tit and only one garden failed to record robin, which I hear walking along Sutton Road every morning in the dark around 7.00am. There are also a few blackcap taking advantage of winter feeders and two people reported overwintering chiffchaff. Interestingly a grey heron turned up round the Puddledocks. There were good numbers of greenfinch on Old Bincombe Lane where I had a grandstand view through the front window one afternoon. Nobody reported bullfinch, although we have been seeing it in west Dorset and the Frome Valley.

There were large numbers of rooks over the Weymouth Pine of the Waterworks at the end of the week. The redwing from the Puddledocks were in the horse field opposite and with eight people reporting song thrush, is this bird on the increase? We certainly see it most weeks at least once whilst on the Golden Cap Estate. Nuthatch is still frequenting Fox Cottage. Seven people reported starlings, which seem to be moving into gardens in the bad weather.



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