



Banner image is Cherry Plum *Prunus cerasifera* **Garden Bird Watch 23rd to 29th March.**

We have had many cold nights and early morning frosts over the past ten days. So there has been very few bats flying although earlier in the month Mike reported seeing common pipistrelle as dusk fell.

Dorothy Emblem 1938 – 2025.

Dorothy died in her sleep peacefully, whilst at her daughter's home in mid-February. Dorothy was one of the earliest members of Sutton Poyntz Biodiversity Group reporting on numerous wildlife events in her garden at Wyndings. She has been missed since ill-health forced her to leave two years ago. I shall forever miss the earliest report of frog-spawn from the garden pond. Butterflies seen and slow-worms under stones. Most of all was her excellent bird lists and we no longer hear of yellowhammer from West Hill. Rest in peace Dorothy and thank you for all your reports.

Wood Anemone



For many years, whilst living on Brookmead, in late March a blue flowered wood anemone has appeared in small area of grass adjacent to the common driveway. It has survived the attention of grass cutting. A blue wood anemone is cited in Sell and Murrell (vol I) but our plant is not big enough with a pale blue perianth. I am not convinced this describes our plant. There is a form of *A. nemorosa* var. *caerulea*, which has blue or mauve perianth. However, recently walking round Preston on Sandbourne Road, I found a lawn with both white and blue flowers growing together -see left.

I am certain that what we have is a variety of wood anemone but also in a lawn whereas normally it is a woodland or occasionally a hedgerow plant. Interestingly, there are a few records for blue anemone on the BSBI on line Atlas 2020 in Dorset, but none from the Weymouth area. Whilst the traditional wood anemone is quite common but again none from the Weymouth area. Our Sutton Poyntz plant is very small and is exposed to the mid-day sun whilst the plants illustrated are on a lawn sheltered from the mid-day sun. Both plants require some shade.

Butterflies: are just starting to be seen with a brimstone seen on Puddledock Lane on the 15th. Interestingly on a bitterly cold Tuesday, I spotted a peacock near the Old Harry Rocks, Studland.

Bunches of mistletoe on various trees ranging from poplars, apple, false acacia and ash are all increasing in size and the number of bunches on the trees. The photograph is of poplars off Puddledock Lane, where I counted twenty bunches today. It has chlorophyll so photosynthesises but depends on its host for water as it has no roots.



Birds are reputed to eat the white berries, which become stuck in their mouth. The result is birds try wiping the sticky seeds out on the host.

Garden Birds



House sparrow is still under pressure. Reports from just seven gardens although Fox Cottage did not send a list where a decreasing number are usually present. One morning, I spotted a few in a garden on Sutton Road, but they are not there every morning. Nobody reported a grey wagtail. Although Colin and I saw one in the stream by the Mill one afternoon. Green woodpecker was reported by six people, and we normally hear it calling at this time of the year. Thank you for all the notes about tawny owl, mostly heard from around Puddledock Lane.

There are supplementary reports on black poplar, following a note from Jack and a note on the increasing range of cirl bunting, not seen in Dorset for many years.

Annual butterfly count.

For the past few years, we have organised a standard Butterfly Conservation Pollard walk around the waterworks. This takes between 1.5 and two hours starting from 1st April and finishing on 30th September once a week in favourable weather conditions. We have a rota of four to five people and if you are willing to help, please let me know.

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