



Wildlife Walks – 7th February when John Newbould will show people some of the mosses and lichens growing in the village. Meet by the phone box at 9.00a.m.

Nature Round-up in 2013.

For the first time since the group was formed in 2008, we have received no reports of barn owl. Usually, we have two or three reports from one being seen at the top of Plaisters Lane. This led me to discuss with Dave Emery and Colin Marsh the results of mammal trapping in the waterworks meadow. They reported a huge crash in the numbers trapped, but anecdotally the numbers in outbuildings and gardens appear to be holding up. Similarly, there has not been the usual number of bats flying at dusk, which may well reflect on the scarcity of moths, especially between March and June. Fox appears to be doing well with numerous reports coming in with Garden Bird Watch. I regularly see one crossing Sutton Road, near Wimslow just after 7.00a.m. and recently have seen one on Preston Road.

2013 – a reflection

The weather in 2013 was most strange. January was the second wettest month with 166mm of rain here, leading to localised flooding in the river valleys. It was a mild month but really cold weather came in February, which lasted until early June. With October, the third wettest month bird watching became quite difficult as many birds sheltered in dark places. This coupled with the St. Jude's day storm left branches of trees broken across Preston and Sutton Poyntz. December was significantly the wettest and possibly the most violent month for winds. The Environment Agency repeatedly had to repair the pebble barrier on the beach road working until dusk on Christmas Eve.

An unusual garden weed:

During an early morning walk through the Seven-Acre estate, I noticed yellow-horned poppy growing in a shingle covered front garden. This is an uncommon wild plant in Dorset associated with the shingle bank of Chesil. (See picture below).

Moth Trapping.

The spring of 2013, was awful for moth trapping. Cold winds and low temperatures meant that many promising nights left us with empty moth traps. Never-the-less late summer produced some better results and between us I have sent 440 records to the Dorset Moth recorders, which was a similar number to 2012. We keep finding new species. A preliminary look at my big data set with over 4400 records since 2008 allows me to highlight a few species. Map-winged swift at the waterworks; small-grass emerald and August thorn on Puddledock Lane; four-dot footman on Old Bincombe and Puddledock Lane and a second hoary footman at Brookmead and I also had Dark Sword-grass twice for the first time in 2013.

Butterflies were late in 2013, but when they arrived members kept reporting good numbers into October with both Peacock and Small Tortoiseshell doing much better than in previous year. For a possible record, I noted Small Tortoiseshell in Osmington Church on 15th December and in sunlight one flew over my roof on Boxing Day.



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GARDEN – BIRD WATCH IN 2013

Firstly the numbers: We received around 3,300 bird records in 2013, which is marginally down on 2012 due to a slight drop in the number of gardens participating. Of these records a total of 51 species were recorded on the annual master list, which is difficult to alter. However, residents living round the Springhead reported little owl breeding, probably around White Horse Lane and there were two or three records of Garden Warbler. Members living on the west side of Sutton Road also regularly report little egret around the pond off Puddledock Lane. Of the birds on the attached list with no records, Whitethroat is not a problem with plenty in the gorse on the hill. Nuthatch and treecreeper only rarely turn up in the village, probably due to the dispersal of trees but we see them at Morton Ford regularly. Thrushes are a disappointment with 18 records of song thrush and 11 records of mistle thrush. Redwing and fieldfare numbers once again have been disappointing although redwing was seen on Came Down in April.

Blackcap has been reported in 11 months. BTO have suggested that the winter garden birds may well have come from the continent. Bullfinch seems to be doing better and although still on the National Biodiversity Action Plan list is no longer a red-data bird. Cuckoo seems to elude us, but recent research is suggesting that it favours reed bunting as its nesting partner. In early January, BTO ran a survey to find the earliest visitors to our garden bird feeding stations at around 8.00a.m. I am rarely home at that time so I had a look what was happening between 7.00 and 8.00am as I walked around. Needless to say, walking up Sutton Road, Robin seems to be singing just after 7 o'clock and blackbirds are scurrying about feeding in leaf litter. I was pleased to see song thrush on Preston Road at least twice feeding in hedge bottoms before it was light. For more information on this survey visit www.bto.org.uk where there is much to interest you.

Of the summer visitors, swift was with us from May until September, with Swallows reported from April and Janet Craig reporting large numbers gathering in the field behind her house in September, feeding up before starting their migration. Chiffchaff seems to have held their ground with similar numbers reported every year since 2009.



Robin © Janet Craig



Little Owl © Ruth Eggerton



Redwing © Ruth Eggerton

Conservation Work:

David Emery has been organising scrub clearance again in the waterworks meadows on Thursday mornings. This should lead to a restoration of the old dam allowing the reed bed to develop. He has also spent many hours preparing a coppice management plan for the wet woodland. This is now awaiting approval from Wessex Water and Natural England. Contact David if you can help.

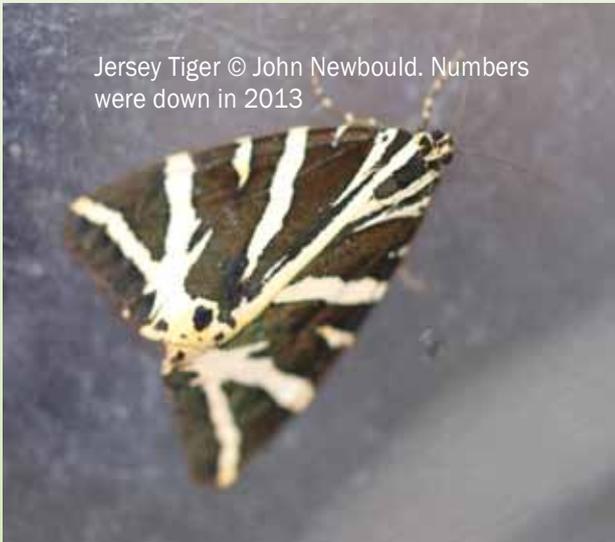
Sutton Poyntz Moths 2013 in pictures.



Four-spot Footman © Christopher Campbell



Black Arches © Chris Campbell

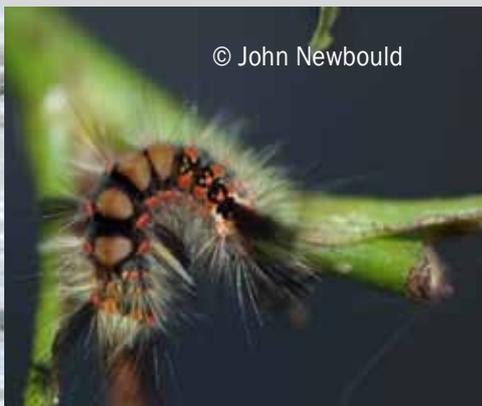


Jersey Tiger © John Newbould. Numbers were down in 2013



Eyed Hawk-moth © John Newbould seen just once in 2013

In early August around dusk, Janet Craig asked me to go to Plaisters Lane where a climber rose was being eaten by larvae. This turned out to be Vapourer moth and there were three adult males on a stonewall. Careful examination of the east-facing wall also revealed small areas of eggs. The field guide says that eggs may be laid on the cocoon of the female, a nearby fence or wall where they overwinter. The larvae hatch out from May onwards with the adult male flying by day from July – September. The females are flightless. We searched around the area for more moths, whose larvae will consume a wide variety of shrubs including Pyracantha. However, no more were found but on a nearby climbing rose were the larvae of the sawfly Arge cracilicornis.



© John Newbould



Vapourer moth, eggs, larvae and adult male.

Sawfly larvae

2013	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December	Total Records
Barn Owl	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Blackbird	21	17	21	15	18	14	14	15	9	17	15	17	193
Blackcap	5	4	10	7	2	1	1	1	1	0	1	2	35
Black-headed Gull	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	5
Blue Tit	19	14	19	16	14	10	9	11	7	12	13	15	159
Brambling	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	2
Bullfinch	3	2	1	1	2	3	3	1	1	0	2	2	21
Buzzard	1	1	1	4	2	5	5	8	4	5	2	2	40
Carrion Crow	11	10	17	8	9	13	11	8	6	10	7	12	122
Chaffinch	14	14	12	12	8	9	8	10	7	7	10	11	122
Chiffchaf	2	2	8	3	1	3	2	3	5	2	0	0	31
Coal Tit	6	6	3	3	2	3	1	1	1	2	3	3	34
Collared Dove	12	12	14	11	12	13	12	11	12	13	13	12	147
Common Pheasant	4	4	6	3	4	7	3	2	0	3	3	8	47
Cuckoo	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Dunnock	13	13	16	15	12	11	11	12	0	9	11	10	133
Fieldfare	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	3
Goldcrest	1	2	5	2	0	0	1	1	7	1	0	1	21
Goldfinch	12	12	11	13	10	11	9	9	8	9	7	7	118
Great Tit	15	13	17	13	15	8	8	8	1	7	13	12	130
Gr. Sp. Woodpecker	4	8	3	4	7	3	4	4	4	2	5	2	50
Green Woodpecker	3	5	5	4	4	8	7	6	4	8	4	4	62
Greenfinch	7	8	6	8	8	6	5	9	3	4	1	2	67
Grey Wagtail	4	0	2	0	0	1	0	0	4	4	3	3	21
Grey Heron	4	2	4	3	2	2	1	1	7	5	5	2	38
Herring Gull	11	10	13	10	9	13	11	10	3	11	11	9	121
House Martin	0	0	0	2	1	1	3	4	13	0	0	0	24
House Sparrow	17	15	18	16	16	15	16	18	9	16	15	15	186
Jackdaw	12	13	15	11	12	12	11	12	2	9	9	11	129
Kestrel	2	3	1	2	2	5	4	1	0	5	5	3	33
Linnet	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	2
Long-tailed Tit	12	10	9	6	0	2	3	3	12	3	6	7	73
Magpie	19	14	18	15	14	12	15	15	1	15	15	17	170
Mallard	2	3	5	1	1	1	0	2	0	0	1	2	18
Mistle Thrush	3	2	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	1	11
Moorhen	2	2	4	0	0	1	1	1	1	3	1	0	16
Nuthatch	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Pied Wagtail	5	8	7	2	1	1	1	2	1	3	3	3	37
Redstart	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Redwing	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	2	5
Robin	19	16	18	14	18	15	14	15	15	17	16	17	194
Rook	9	11	13	12	11	11	8	6	9	8	11	12	121
Siskin	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
Song Thrush	8	1	3	0	1	2	1	0	0	0	0	2	18
Sparrowhawk	1	5	1	5	4	1	3	4	1	0	0	2	27
Starling	4	5	5	6	3	8	4	3	3	3	6	9	59
Stonechat	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
Swallow	0	0	0	7	7	3	3	5	3	0	0	0	28
Swift	0	0	0	0	2	5	3	3	3	0	0	0	16
Tawny Owl	2	1	0	1	2	4	4	4	6	4	3	2	33
Treecreeper	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Whitethroat	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Willow Warbler	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
Wood Pigeon	19	16	20	16	17	15	15	17	12	14	14	17	192
Wren	10	8	9	7	6	5	5	5	7	4	8	5	79
Yellowhammer	5	6	6	5	3	3	0	3	1	1	2	3	38
Counts													3237
Total Species seen	43	39	40	39	37	40	39	40	40	32	36	39	51
Total Records	372	299	349	286	262	266	243	253	208	235	250	268	3291
Average per survey	16.9	18.8	16.6	11.9	14.6	16.6	15.2	14.1	13.9	12.4	14.7	14.1	
No of gardens in survey	21	17	21	19	18	16	16	18	15	19	17	19	18

