

April 2015

SUTTON POYNTZ BIODIVERSITY GROUP NEWSLETTER

May 2015 – depending on weather watch for posters
Butterfly Walk & Waterworks
Moth Trapping

Signs of Spring

A few people will have seen the nationally notable dotted bee-fly *Bombylius discolor*. This bee mimic is a true fly, which uses its long proboscis to obtain nectar from flowers. Unlike bees, the bee-fly has just two wings, whilst bees have four wings. They do not sting and are harmless to humans. They lay their eggs in the nests of cuckoo bees, mining bees or spiders and their young eat the eggs and larvae of their prey.

On the woodland walk, in April we saw early spring flowers with both ransoms and bluebells just starting to flower. There were plenty of wood violet, patches of dog's mercury and kingcups by the stream. Primroses abound in churchyards and hedge banks all over Dorset, whilst cowslips are just starting to flower and where the two meet (as in my garden) there is the hybrid of the two known as false oxlip. Cuckooflower is out in the damp meadows. Blackthorn is showing strongly in many hedges (see photograph to the right).

Again there have been few reports of frogs and little frog spawn. I have rarely seen a sea trout in the River Jordan.



GARDEN BIRD WATCH March 2015

Only 16 people sent returns this time but interestingly as people returned from holiday I was receiving emails about seeing their first swallows but no house martins or swifts. I saw my first swifts on 19th April passing north east over Hambledon Hill. Half the gardens have reported green woodpecker with Janet Craig sending the picture below of one in her garden. Both pied and grey wagtail records are quite low, which is surprising as they are both breeding. Disappointingly there have been no records of thrushes.

During the winter large areas of gorse have been cleared on West Hill. David Emery has reported reduced numbers of both linnet and yellowhammer both red data birds dependent on scrub. He does report increased usage of the upper Waterworks wood by birds following the winter coppicing.

Many people have been reporting butterflies with brimstone, small white, peacock, small tortoiseshell and speckled wood. I have not moth trapped with these cold north-easterly winds.



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