

Friday 17th July 2015

Waterworks path for summer flowers and butterflies.
Mission Hall 2.00p.m.



Summer time

Peter and Ann have had a difficult time clearing bindweed from their verge on Sutton Road. I was delighted to see this natural planting bloom in time for the village open garden weekend. This type of mix has been developed by Nigel Dunnett of Sheffield University and was widely used on the Olympic site in 2012.

I have also had a number of reports of dragonflies from garden ponds. These have included large red and blue-tailed damselflies together with broad-bodied chaser, which is illustrated below in this beautiful photograph by Pat Dodges.

I was delighted to call at Richard and Judy's garden to photograph two bee orchids. These were over 30cm tall and have appeared for a second year.

The chalk grassland flowers around the Waterworks compound are doing well. the winter grazing seems to have created open areas with both lady's and hedge bedstraw, yellow-wort, bird's-foot trefoil, vervain, slender centaury, squinancy-wort and quaking grass all doing well. White bryony and bittersweet may be found climbing over bramble nectaring many wild bees.

GARDEN BIRD WATCH June 2015

With many small birds having fledged, our members reported thirty-nine species of birds associated with their gardens. IN addition, Jack Winspar reported seeing a red kite flying over the village. He commented that kites are doing so well in the south west that he expects many more sightings in the future. I have also received reports of kites resident around Abbotsbury. Tony Heathershaw reported skylark, yellowhammer and corn bunting, whilst walking from Pixon Barn to Chalbury hillfort. Janet Craig reported a large flock of long-tailed tits in the copse to the north of Old Bincombe Lane.

There were four reports of yellowhammers and two of song thrush. Starling numbers seem to have dropped whilst house martins were reported from gardens near the pond. I suspect with the dry summer and cold winds, house martins have had a hard time attempting to make a nest and certainly, whilst staying in the Yorkshire Dales recently, they abandoned an attempted nesting on a house where they successfully bred last year. Swifts have scarcely made an appearance in the village this summer.

Janet Craig reported many butterflies in the meadow adjacent to Old Bimcombe Lane whilst Dorothy Emblem showed me a Lulworth Skipper from her garden and reported up to 25 marbled whites on greater knapweed. She also reported good numbers of slow-worms.



Broad-bodied Chaser © Pat Dodges



Bee Orchid ©
J A Newbould



Lady's bedstraw
J A Newbould

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Moths from June - July 2015

March - May produced a string of cold northerly winds, which blew down the valley making my garden an uncomfortable place for moths to fly. Since mid-June things have been a little better and moth-trapping activity has picked up with both Colin and Rita and Jon and Sue trapping occasionally. We have a reasonable list from Sutton Poyntz with new species added every year. Below are some examples.



Small Elephant hawk-moth



Elephant hawk-moth



Mullein moth caterpillar



Eyed hawk-moth

During the summer of 2014, Jon and Sue had a visitor who brought a twin 30w actinic mains light trap. Impressed with his list and a continued run of poor lists from my old 6w actinic heath trap, I bit the bullet and invested in a twin 30w Skinner trap from Anglian lepidoptera supplies. These three hawk moths were some of the more interesting species recorded since. The bottom left hand picture is of a mullein moth caterpillar, which is often seen in early July on Mullein, which grows wild in many gardens. In all the years, moth trapping, I have never seen the adult moth. The picture on the right is privet hawk-moth, which I have never seen before but have caught four times since this first attempt in June. It is starting to become dark earlier now and I will arrange to moth trap at the waterworks later this month. Incidentally Colin and Dave counted 125 pipestrelle bats leave the roof space of the museum office on 25th June.



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