



November – December walk
to be arranged see poster
Garden bird watch 22nd to 28th November

GARDEN BIRD WATCH October 2015

Winter approaches

Nobody reported fieldfare or redwing, but there are a number of flocks about in the County at the moment with smaller numbers of redwing including some at Came Wood. There was only one report of starling but again, we have seen flocks of 50+ whilst out. Song thrush seems to have disappeared, which is to be a matter to research.

There have also been many Canada geese flying back and forth over Preston and the village during October and early November.

Dorothy reported red admiral from her garden during the last week of October, whilst I saw a single brimstone butterfly. Colin and I continued moth trapping until 20th October when rainsqualls caused me to pack equipment away for the winter. October records included black rustic, feathered ranunculus and bearded chestnut.

Interestingly I have seen both holly and dogwood in flower, which is most unusual.



Sparrow hawk eating a herring gull
© Pat Bellis

Jack Winspar commented that October has been quite an interesting month. He had the first Grey Wagtail of the year and first Coal Tits for nearly 2 years. Also, he stopped buying mixed feed a few months ago and changed to straight seeds. Coincidence or otherwise Goldfinch have not departed to the fields as they usually do at this time of year but have remained in good numbers. At one point he had over 40 on his roof! The cause of this seems to be, not Niger seed, but sunflower hearts. They don't seem to be able to get enough of the stuff.

Although, sparrow hawk does not appear on your list of garden birds, one clever bird managed to kill and eat a herring gull in her garden. (See the picture on bottom left). Dorothy Emblem commented that her usual flock of house sparrow is not using her garden for roosting and I have to say I am seeing less in my garden. Dorothy also report nuthatch, for the fourth month since June and it is now likely this bird is resident. Grey wagtail numbers seem to be up; with six on a roof on Puddledock Lane and we certainly saw singles at least four places on our monthly Frome Valley survey. Blackbird seemed to have disappeared from my garden since July, the I noticed one feasting on berberis berries at the end of the month.

We have lost a number of trees due to honey fungus, which seems to have reduced habitat for small birds.



Radipole Lake
December 2014



Holly in flower
October 2015



Black rustic moth John Newbould

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