



Autumn lady's-tresses  
in a lawn on Plaisters  
Lane

### *Autumn approaches*

Colin and Rita have been monitoring the bats emerging from the waterworks museum office roof over the late summer months. It was 120 in July, dropping to 58 common pipistrelle on August 21<sup>st</sup> followed by 20 when we moth trapped for national moth night on 10<sup>th</sup> September. This drop in numbers is typical as this year's youngsters find their own home and also coincides with the dropping numbers of their food – the larger macro moths.

On 2<sup>nd</sup> September, Colin, Rita and I were moth trapping by the reed bed at Cogden using a mercury vapour light when around 10.30p.m. when a pipistrelle bat came overhead. Colin quickly switched on his bat detector and for around 15 minutes, we were treated to a mixed party of pipistrelle bats feeding on large yellow underwing moths and soprano pipistrelle feeding on the numerous midges around our light.

With late September having heavy rain, cold nights and strong winds, the chances of getting any decent moth lists is becoming quite low.

Elephant hawk-moth caterpillar

Janet Craig



Oak bush-cricket

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Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> October 2015

Meet by the red telephone box at 2.00p.m for an autumn walk along the valley.

### **GARDEN BIRD WATCH August 2015**

Late August to early September is always a quiet month for garden birds. However, one small bird has been reported for both July and August, which we have rarely reported on. Nuthatch, which I find widespread across the county, has been seen in the garden at Wyndings in July and Fox Cottage in August. There was also a passing sedge warbler at Fox Cottage. Looking at the numbers, we have again had passage swallows and house martins with numbers falling but as I write in mid-September there are still see a few around. House sparrow numbers have increased following what must have been a successful breeding season but only ten gardens reported blackbird, which seems to disappear into the wider countryside. In my little area of Sutton Poyntz, we have lost three trees, which provided important perching places to honey fungus.

Butterflies seem to have been confined mainly to the whites with just an occasional red admiral and no peacock with small tortoiseshell quite rare. There are some clouded yellows migrating in. The migrant hawk dragonfly has been busy in gardens on sunny days together with numerous bees and hoverflies on sedums and lavender.

Numbers of people contributing to garden bird watch have gone down again this summer. Do you know any who wishes to join?



Migrant hawk

Pat Dodge



# Wildlife Photos from August - September 2015

Inevitably wildlife species do not live in isolation. Even lichens, which are an association of a fungus with algae or cyanobacterium support a number of moth species in the larval state. Lichens generally are pollution sensitive so without lichen such moths will not be found. One group of moths, which we see in Sutton Poyntz are footman group including: dingy footman, rosy footman, common footman, four-dotted footman and one I saw for the first time on National moth night at the waterworks MV trap - scarce footman.



Silver Y Janet Craig



Centre-barred Sallow John Newbould



Scarce footman John Newbould on National moth night



Lichen growing on apple

**National moth night** was set for 10<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> September 2015. Colin, Rita and John all contributed. Colin and John started on Thursday morning with a moth trap left overnight at the West Dorset National Trust office near Morecombelake. We recorded eleven species including 2 gothic, dusky thorn, and purple bar whose food plant is mainly hedge bedstraw, which is plentiful in the area. With rain forecast earlier in the week, we organised a session that evening in the waterworks car park. Using a MV light rather than the twin 30w actinic trap, we recorded 17 species including light emerald, barred sallow whose food plant is willows and poplars, contrasting with the centre-barred sallow in John's 30w actinic trap at his home, which feeds on ash. Just before, we closed down, a small moth flew over the sheet, which I netted. This turned out to be scarce footman (see above). Once again dusky thorn appeared and also a single small wainscot – a moth of wet marshy places. Overnight at home, the twin 30w skinner trap collected another 14 species including an especially well marked lesser broad-bordered yellow-underwing.

Our last Jersey tiger moth was 28 August with the first on 16<sup>th</sup> July giving a six week flight period.