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March 2017 Garden Bird Watch this month 25th – 31st March

FHT Spawn Survey 2018

The Freshwater Habitats Trust is collecting data on the whereabouts of frog and toad spawn across the UK and you can help by taking part in the Spawn Survey 2018. The survey takes place from the beginning of February until the end of May. You are asked to record toad and frog spawn in your garden ponds, local community ponds, and any ponds you come across in the countryside. A simple online form can be filled in which can be found, along with more details, at: <https://freshwaterhabitats.org.uk/projects/pondnet/spawnsurvey2018/>

For the first time for ten years, I have seen no squashed frogs on Sutton Road nor have I received any reports of tadpoles.

After the snow: Colin Marsh reported: Largest flocks were crows and rooks (250) in camping field and 100 in field to immediate north. Among crows in latter were six **lapwing** which flew as a group to the east. There were three redwing along path to Osmington. One fieldfare on path in field behind the Stables. One fieldfare, one song thrush and ten redwing plus eight blackbird in the narrow strip between trees immediately north of Osmington Brook next to permissive path. A few long-tailed tits in village. One female llnnet in our front garden on 2/3/18 searching for food. Some 60 fieldfare in the arable off Coombe Valley Road on 8/3/2018 at 8.45am

Bird boxes:



A neighbour has recently bought a web cam. Before the snow he installed the camera in a bird box, which he had cleaned out. This was visited by wrens, who did not like the environment.

For an experiment he found an old cushion and stuffed some feathers into the nest box. Footage revealed a total of six wrens had nestled together amongst the down. Anybody else tried it?

Image © Jack Winspar.



Mill Lane around 8.00am on 2/3/2018



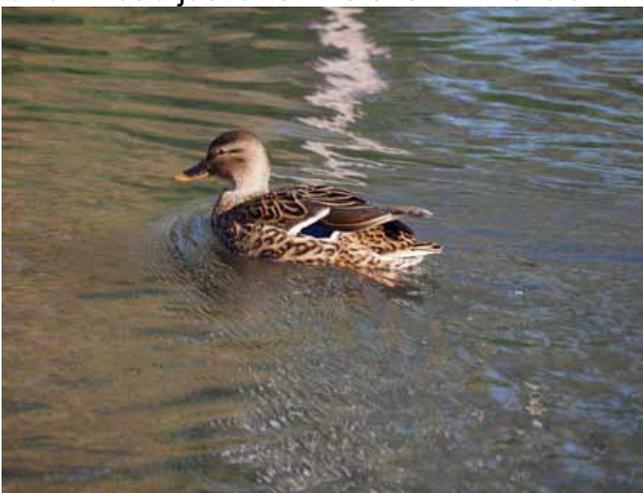
Sutton Poyntz rainbow 23/3/2018

Extremes of weather at the end of February and the beginning of March. John Newbould

Fortunately, garden bird watch happened before the early March snow, which as explained in the paragraph above did bring some different birds to our feeders. One of the last reports received from Bellamy Cottage reported mistle thrush and a kestrel eating a mouse. They also reported fieldfare whilst six people reported redwing and seven reported song thrush and everybody reported blackbirds in increasing numbers.

Only the gardens at the north end of Plaisters Lane reported yellowhammer. Greater spotted woodpecker has been seen hammering away on Puddledock Lane – two on one tree on Cornhill Close. Only six people reported green woodpecker although I keep hearing it off Puddledock Lane. Grey wagtail and pied wagtails were only reported once. These are frail species in hard weather.

David Emery reported hearing a garden warbler at the junction of Puddledock Lane and Sutton Road just after the snow. This is a little early for this migratory bird.



A gadwall was seen on the pond on 15/2/2018. I also saw six Muscovy ducks – pure white on Mill Lane a couple of days later. They were pure white but two of them had bred with tufted duck probably at Lodmoor so I saw two with a pure white tuft.

Roe Deer have been invading gardens in the harsh weather.

Left gadwall on pond J A Newbould.