



Sutton Poyntz Biodiversity News



Editor: John Newbould 01305 837384 [Johna72newbould\[at\]yahoo.co.uk](mailto:Johna72newbould[at]yahoo.co.uk)

May 2018 Garden Bird Watch this month 20 -26th May 2018

Garden Bird Watch April 2018

Very disappointing number of returns for April, with just twelve replies including mine when I print out the results. Very few reports of swallows during the week, although subsequently people have emailed to say that both swallows and house martins have been seen especially in the middle part of Plaisters Lane. Nest building activity seems to be low. We hear much talk about “a silent spring” but invertebrate numbers seem to be quite low with few mining or bumble bees about. Very few hoverflies etc. It was good to hear of a pair of bullfinch and two gardens at the north end of Plaisters Lane had yellowhammer. Just two gardens with song thrush and one with grey wagtail. Dunnock and house sparrow are both national biodiversity priority species, which are doing well. Nationally BTO report bullfinch are doing well in gardens as well as pied wagtails, goldcrest and goldfinch, which all fits in with our results. The wetland bird survey indicates mallard have been in decline since the 1980s.

Moths

Colin and Rita and I have moth trapped on 4th, 5th and 6th May when it was really warm at night. We were still catching spring moths such as Hebrew character and Quaker moths. Iron prominent, lesser swallow prominent (illustrated), muslin moth and white ermine are the sort of species we expect in May. I had a herald on the 6th. Colin has had a poplar-hawk moth and a seraphin.

We have had many orange tip butterflies through the garden and up to five holly blues, green-veined whites, small whites and peacocks.

Bees seem in short supply with a few bumble bees and Dorothy reporting bee flies.



Generally, bluebells, wood violets, primroses and greater stitchwort have had a good spring with the wet cool weather suiting the flowering time in the wider countryside. For those who walk or drive down Sutton Road towards Preston, there is a good display of yellow daisy flowers on the grass bank between Wimslow Road and Verlands Road. It is a member of the daisy family, more precisely a hawkweed. There are over 400 species in Britain. Some can be eliminated because they are alpine or members of a group with leaves clasping the

stem. Others can be eliminated by reason that they are found only in a specific location or geology. I wish I had time to work this one out. It should be easy with the black tinted leaves, but I have never managed it.

Salsify *Tragopogon porrifolius* is related to the more commonly found goat's-beard or Jack-go-to-bed at noon. Humphry's Bowen's *Flora of Dorset* published in 2000 shows few recent records e.g. East Weare in 1998-90, Ringstead in 1951 and the few listed become even earlier. It is an uncommon casual, which I personally have only seen once before in a similar semi-urban situation in Rotherham.

Here I found it at the junction of the footpath from Puddledock Lane to the Bridge Inn. Please photograph it and do not pick it and there is just one plant with a few flowering heads to come.

Here it is associated with many common casual weeds such as cow parsley, goose-grass and nettle.

