



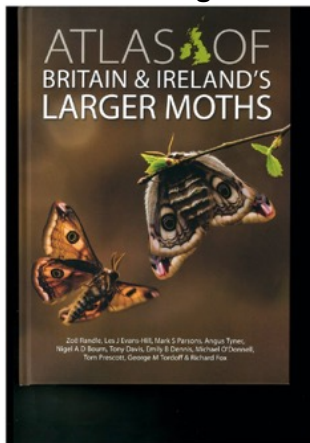
Sutton Poyntz Biodiversity News



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December 2019 Garden Bird Watch this month 27th December to 3rd January 2020

Moth Recording:



Over the past fifteen years or so a few members of the Biodiversity Group have operated moth traps mainly in their gardens but also in the wider countryside around Sutton Poyntz. Over the years, these records have been supplied to Butterfly Conservation's larger moth group, either directly or through Dorset Environmental Records Centre. These records have been combined with data from all over Britain, Ireland and the Channel Islands to establish a data set of over 25 million records. Whilst our individual names are not in print, if you look for the dots to the north-east of Portland, our contribution may be found. Whilst most people have seen a Jersey Tiger moth, few realise that we have some 500 species pollinating our flowers.

Large fungi recording:



Crimson waxcap Hygrocybe punicea

Some three years ago, Rita, Colin and John went to a grassland fungi training session held at Corfe Common. Here we learned the importance of collecting information on waxcap fungi. This group of fungi are only found on unimproved grassland preferably with the soil having a slightly acid pH. The grass around Sutton Poyntz tends to be nearer alkaline, so we see fewer examples of this group than say Golden Cap estate, never-the-less, they found an area on West Hill with five species making the area locally important.



Hairy curtain crust *Sterium hirsutum* on hazel.

Woodland is another area very important for fungi. Rita and Colin have looked in both the lower (Veteran's wood) and the very wet northern wood where the wet autumn weather, coupled with Wessex Water not using the spring has increased the water flow through the woods widening the stream and in the process felling many of the streamside trees. Here they have identified around a dozen woodland fungi with the promise of many more in years to come and the up-rooted trees start to rot.

For field guides we use:

Sterry, P and Hughes, B. (2009) *Collins Complete Guide to British Mushrooms and Toadstools*. Collins, London

Wood, E. and Dunkelman, J. (2017) *Grassland Fungi – a field guide*. Monmouthshire Meadows Group, Monmouth.

Garden Bird Watch.

We should now be approaching a prime time for winter thrushes such as redwing and fieldfare. None have been reported nor have I seen any on the edge of Came Wood, where usually at this time of the year many redwing roosts. Reports from 14 member with a total of 34 species seen, when I would have expected around 40 species. No yellowhammer, but five gardens held song thrush and one reported mistle thrush. Although nearly everybody recorded blackbird, they have seemed scarce in my garden. Other birds not making an appearance, include grey wagtail, bullfinch and starlings.

Why are we not seeing these birds? Is it the wet weather with dark days or have some species we normally see crashed? My groups have not been as active bird watching this autumn as usual but with the exception of one location where many pounds of seed are put in feeders' daily numbers seem to be quieter than usual. When we have seen redwing, for example, it has rarely been more than twenty.

On the Wessex Water survey, Jon reported stonechat in the usual places, but no skylark or yellowhammer and only a single fieldfare flying over.

Seasons' Greetings for Christmas and the New Year. I look forward to receiving your Christmas garden bird list in early January.