



Sutton Poyntz Biodiversity News



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April 2019 Garden Bird Watch this month 26th May to 1st June 2019

Another interesting month. Jack and David came across Cetti's warbler in the wet Waterworks wood. This appears to be another new species to add to the village list. This is a bird, which has undergone a huge expansion in its range over the past three decades, although recent hard winters have caused some set-backs. We regularly hear it on our monthly Frome Valley winter bird counts at Woodbridge, and Lower Bockhampton.

In the middle of the month, John C observed a red kite circling over the village and then the Downs. He also observed a 2nd year male marsh harrier migrating north along the Ridge. Generally, the Wessex Water bird survey had bullfinch, linnet at three stopping points, whitethroat, skylark in a couple of places and yellowhammer.



Janet Craig

Plenty of evidence of garden birds successfully hatching young, including the larger birds such as wood pigeon and magpie we could do without. You have supplied over 250 sightings from fifteen gardens averaging 12 birds per garden. Two people recorded bullfinch including a record from the Puddledocks, which I suggest is a first for the area. What surprised me is the low numbers of chiffchaff, which not so long ago were so numerous their call irritated me. Ten people recorded goldfinch but generally not in flocks but small numbers. Two reports of house martin and five reports of swallow but swifts appeared on the Puddledocks in the middle of

May. I first saw swifts in Falmouth on 12th May when two flew by the hotel we stayed in. Dave reported garden warbler, not on the list.



Wild flowers

Ros supplied this photograph of ragged Robin from the water meadows by Osmington Brook another food plant for the orange-tip butterfly. On the hedge banks of Plaisters Lane, bird's-foot trefoil, horseshoe vetch and mouse-eared hawkweed are important pollinators.

The hedgerows are full of cow parsley and in some places red campion, but white campion is rarely seen. The cold evenings mean that hawthorn seems to be in bloom much longer than usual with many bushes still covered with white flowers.

Early purple orchids have been seen on West Hill but just one in the Waterworks wood. Cowslips have done well in my garden rapidly hybridising with primrose to form false oxslip.

There are very few bees pollinating dandelions in contrast to April.

Butterflies and moths.

Colin and Rita recorded around a dozen small heath on the southern footpath to Osmington last week along with holly blue and orange tip, which seem to have peaked.

There have been occasional sightings of common blue and small copper. Nobody has checked the hill slopes for spring butterflies yet but Adonis blue, grizzled skipper and dingy skipper are about.

Moth trapping has been hopeless with many poor cold nights yielding only moths such as a garden carpet or light brown apple moths. This morning there was a green carpet and brimstone. The only good result was on Friday 17th, Colin picked up an eye hawk-moth from his trousers. This moth survived a weekend at the National Trust's Spring Tide Festival at Hive Beach.



