

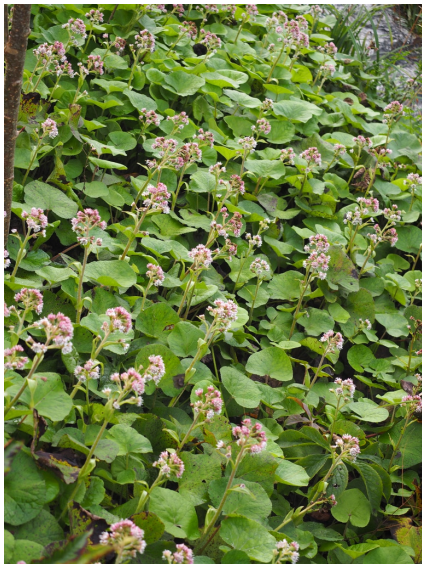


## Sutton Poyntz Biodiversity News



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January 2020 Garden Bird Watch this month 20<sup>th</sup> – 26<sup>th</sup> January  
Wild Flowers



Some forty years ago, along with friends in Yorkshire, we belonged to an organisation known as The Wild Flower Society (<https://www.thewildflowersociety.com>).

This is an organisation for amateur naturalists interested in wild flowers and amongst their activities they organise what a child would call I-spy wild flowers in various competitions. One of which, was to see how many wild flowers are out during the first week of January in a 10km square. A report in the *Dorset Echo* about one such event at Durlstan Country Park brought back to me, that one could think is a pointless exercise. Except, thinking about it; this is one way of measuring global warming. Except is it? Some years ago, I noted lesser celandine in flower on New Year's Day here in Sutton Poyntz. Last year, the earliest I noticed it was the last week of the month. I look forward to this year's date with interest.



The upper photograph is winter heliotrope by the bridge. The lower photograph is sweet violet by Caroline in her garden along with many primroses also out in my garden. She also drew my attention to daffodils in flower on the same day. Snowdrops are just in flower. My garden desperately requires grey field speedwell and common field speedwell pulling out before seeding along with a few petty spurge. Amongst our trees both hazel has its female flowers whilst the single alder on Puddledock Lane has both male and female flowers. There is plenty of European gorse in flower across Dorset.

In the meantime, fields are knees deep in mud so wild flowering is going to be confined to grass verges and gardens.

## Birds

Whilst there has been little happening in Sutton Poyntz this month, with approximately half of the garden bird returns saying how disappointing their list is, I keep hearing of black swans at Lodmoor along with good numbers of lapwing and a few snipes. One person mentioned good numbers of bearded tit in the reed bed. Turnstone have been seen on the promenade at Greenhill. Dave recently observed four singing song thrush on an early morning run down Church Lane and Rita recalls hearing one at dawn on Puddledock Lane. There has also been a gadwall on the pond.

Winter thrushes have been scarce. It was Monday 6<sup>th</sup> of January, we saw some reasonable numbers in the Tincton area whilst it was Friday 10<sup>th</sup> before Colin and I witnessed a flock of around 50 redwings in the fields adjacent to Came Wood with the barrows.

Jon has had difficulty fitting in the Wessex Water bird survey due to the constant rain finally doing a late afternoon survey on the 22<sup>nd</sup> December. No linnet, yellowhammer and few stonechats but bullfinch in the northern wood.

### Garden Bird Watch:

Very disappointing in that only 11 people took part making it the worst month of 2019 whilst the best months were September and October with 15 taking part. It was good to see that yellowhammer were back in two gardens on Plaisters Lane, song thrush present in two gardens, whilst small birds such as wren and goldcrest were scarce. Green woodpecker was scarce after having being present in over half November's gardens and no grey wagtail. Chaffinch present in five gardens but we have seen some quite large flocks in the wider countryside and three sightings of greenfinch.

With this report you also have the yearly summary. The yearly records total was down due to less people taking part. We also saw 52 species against 53 in 2018. It would appear that we had one record of brambling in 2019, which would be the first for many years. Grey wagtail. Records down to seven from 17 in 2018, which is not a good trend. Three records of mistle thrush against four in 2018 but four records of siskin against none in 2018.

Garden Bird Watch this month is **20 -26<sup>th</sup> January 2020**. Forms for reporting are attached with excel being the easiest to drop into a spread-sheet. Daily bird seed will help increase the numbers although I am aware that rooks and carrion crows believe the feast is for them. If you have a friend or neighbour who is willing to take part, please ask them to email me and I will forward the forms and instructions.



Look out for frogs, toads and newts in garden ponds. Photographs are always welcome.

Best wishes for the New Year: