



## Sutton Poyntz Biodiversity News



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

June 2021 Garden Bird Watch this month 25 – 31<sup>st</sup> July 2021

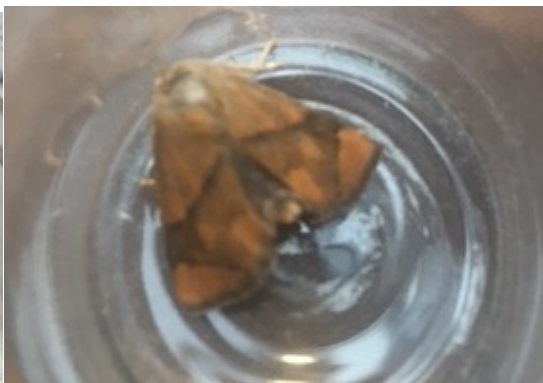
### National Moth Night 8<sup>th</sup> July 2021

Rita, Colin and John joined a number of National Trust moth recorders at Cogden, West Bexington where using two mercury vapour bulbs and two actinic traps, we recorded over 100 species, which was quite special for John as it was the first time in the 22 years living here that number were recorded in one session. We occasionally hit that number with three lights in Rotherham when I lived there. Special moths included both fen and silky wainscot, double lobed and the rare Kent black arches.

Our intention was to run our home moth traps on Friday night and Saturday morning but the weather turned against us. We even tried a small actinic in the waterworks but although it did not get wet that failed too. With the weather against us we were next able to moth trap in our gardens from 14<sup>th</sup> July but the numbers were not good. Our first Jersey tiger, also seen by day on the 16<sup>th</sup> a small blood vein, dark umber, a migrants white satin moth and l-album wainscot. Earlier David had a festoon, which we rarely record. I suppose the star of the show is the one moth we do not want to see, is the Box-tree moth *Cydalima perspectalis* – a pyralid moth imported accidentally into the country in 2007 and spreading. This is a melanic form with the purple tinged under-wing – the more common form can be seen on the Butterfly Conservation web-site. We are grateful to Paul Butter from Lyme Regis for the identification.



Box-tree Sue Campbell's trap Photo John.



Festoon – David Emery

Moth numbers are well down on 2020, probably by half. To the end of June, I merged Rita and Colin's and my 2021 list at just over 220 records. there was a huge gap in May when it was so wet, windy or cold that we did not bother putting the trap out. It would appear Butterfly numbers are also well down. It is not easy for me to compare with 2020 as Butterfly Conservation have issued a new recording app for our smart phones. Since the middle of May, when I started with the new app. I have sent around 130 records. We have of course started the Butterfly conservation Pollard Walk around the Waterworks, which I have appended.



This common mullein growing in my garden is supporting lots of fat mullein moth caterpillars.

### The big butterfly count 2021 16<sup>th</sup> July 20 to 8<sup>th</sup> August

The **Big Butterfly Count** is a nationwide citizen science survey aimed at helping us assess the health of our environment. It was launched in 2010 and has rapidly become the world's biggest survey of butterflies. Over 111,500 citizen scientists took part in 2020, submitting 145,249 counts of butterflies and day-flying moths from across the UK. Big Butterfly Count 2021 runs from Friday 16 July to Sunday 8 August. All the counts can be viewed on the [interactive map](#).



Janet Craig – large skipper



Simply count butterflies for 15 minutes during bright (preferably sunny) weather during the Big Butterfly Count. We have chosen this time of year because most butterflies are at the adult stage of their lifecycle, so more likely to be seen. Records are welcome from anywhere: from parks, school grounds and gardens, to fields and forests.

### Garden Bird Watch June

Results in from fifteen gardens – thank you. One of the things, which has quite fascinated me this wet summer is the number of birds feeding from our small lawn. Occasionally a few goldfinches, then house sparrows and up to eight starlings and two to three blackbirds. The starlings just get stuck in and pack away at the turf. The blackbirds on the other-hand hop about all over the place and occasionally pull out a juicy earth worm. The bit that really annoys me is the blackbird, who awaits me emptying the moth trap. For a few years, this was a robin but in 2021 a male blackbird rules this feeding station. A large elephant hawk-moth – excellent breakfast, It really annoys me when he takes a buff-tip.



At Wyndings, Dot had two young bullfinch, young blue and great tits left the nest, dunnock and both green and greater spotted woodpeckers. There was also three greenfinch and four yellowhammers. Swallows seem to be troubled but five reports of swift, which will soon be returning to their winter home and three of house martin. Nine people reported herring gulls, which have been having a bad press with residents of Bath wanting culling and the Council and Natural England putting hard terms on the activity.

### The Waterworks:

Wessex Water own three areas north of the operational plant; two of which are part of the White Horse Hill S.S.S.I. The middle unit has altered considerably since we did the *Sutton Poyntz Biodiversity Report* in 2009. Common reed is now getting quite dense and starting to knock-out the poisonous hemlock water-dropwort. In addition, willow carr is establishing alongside the gravel bottomed stream. Colin and John surveyed the area this week and have prepared a comprehensive report.



### Miscellaneous

John Crisp has seen brown trout in the River Jordan on two occasions. I mentioned bladder campion in the June report and Ros Evans reports it is doing well in the hedgerow near Donkey Down. We saw golden ringed dragonfly and common chaser by the waterworks area on Thursday (15 – July) and Jon and Sue reported two golden-ringed just east of the Beacon on 8<sup>th</sup> July. Dot reported a painted lady butterfly, which will not appear in the Butterfly Walk sheet.



*Crow garlic in the Waterworks field; 2 Sea radish rare in Dorset at Overcombe Corner, Navel-wort*