



## Sutton Poyntz Biodiversity News



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### April 2021 Garden Bird Watch this month 24<sup>th</sup> April – 1<sup>st</sup> May 2021



What a difficult month for the area's wildlife. On many mornings, I have woken up to a frost covered lawn and we have had consistent cold northerly winds making migration delayed. Only a few martins and swallows have been seen in the west of the County but birds such as wheatear seem to be coming in. Moth trapping has been pretty useless with three traps out one night and not a single moth. Grass is not growing due to no rain.

*Spoonbill at Lodmoor © Janet*

### Garden Bird Watch

Once again, we have returns from all contributors with 278 records of 38 species from 16 gardens – Thank you.

Seven people recorded great-spotted woodpecker (Janet's photograph) and even I heard one drumming away on Puddledock Lane. There were also eight records of green woodpecker. Reports of starlings have increased with the records but only two of song thrush. House sparrow continues to do well and I suspect it is not just my garden where they are nesting, although I did see a magpie pecking away furiously in my Leylandii hedge and would not be frightened away. A small birds brood destroyed by a bigger predator.



Goldfinch appear to have split into smaller groups. I am certainly seeing more in my garden. Sue and Jon have had two greenfinches on their feeder, with three of the four records from Old Bincombe Lane. This bird is probably going to be added to the red list along with house martins. I am hearing plenty of great tits and chiffchaff, although there are few insects about due to the cold.

### Wider Countryside Birds.

Sue and Jon noted a whinchat on Bincombe Bumps, wheatears are moving in but few house martin and swallows yet. Yellowhammer amongst the gorse on West Hill along with linnets and stonechat. Meadow pipets above the waterworks and below Chalbury Hillfort with a single swallow over the Ridgeway whilst Janet had one fly over her garden. Skylark in small numbers below East Hill with song thrush and a single yellowhammer in hedges.

### Butterflies and moths:

This year we have started a Butterfly Conservation Transect walk. We really should have done this years ago. However, with Sue and Jon, Rita and Colin, Penny and John, the one hour mainly in SY7084 but also a smaller walk in SY7083, this is only once every four weeks. However, the weather needs to be sunny preferably a temperature above 13°C, and a low wind speed the walk takes around one and a quarter hours. The objective is to record the butterflies within 5m each side of the path. We start at Wyndings, walk, past the Beacon, down to the Waterworks railings, round the waterworks to the track from Margaret's seat to the foot of Wimslow Hill. Here we turn right and take the footpath back to Sutton Road.

What have we seen? Peacocks, speckled wood, a few orange tip, brimstone butterfly, small whites. In addition, comma on Puddledock Lane.

Nothing has been hopeless. One night we had three traps out with nothing. Occasional Hebrew character, early grey and clouded drab. This year, I have managed only six nights against 16 in the same period last year.

### Wild flowers:



Masses of primroses in the operational area of the Waterworks with a good display of cowslips and a few false oxlips, which are a hybrid of primrose and cowslips in my lawn. Blackthorn is going over and greengage, which has no prickles and flowers with leaves is doing well. There are many white hedgerows. Sycamore and hawthorn are about to flower.