



## Sutton Poyntz Biodiversity News



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February 2021 Garden Bird Watch this month is February 21<sup>st</sup> – 27<sup>th</sup>

### Garden Bird Watch January 2021

For the first time for many months, everybody on my mailing list contributed (17 returns) including my new neighbours Penny and Mike at no 4. Thank you. We have had a pretty horrendous weather situation for the past two weeks with strong cold biting winds straight from the Steppes of Russia and the Balkans. I was never as cold when I lived in Edinburgh. However, just short of 300 records with 39 species averaging 17 per garden. There has been a calculating error in the spreadsheet for some time, which I have corrected.

So there has been a slight cheating. Ros saw six yellowhammers in the hedge behind the Stables and I have included that record in Anthea's list. It has been a strange year for yellowhammer, normally recorded at this time of the year from the gardens at the top of Plaisters Lane, but nothing this winter. It is good to see that seven people have had blackcaps with Ros seeing six on a feeder on Puddledock Lane not counted. There have been reasonable number of finches recorded with chaffinch and greenfinch plus ten people reporting goldfinch with one person commenting that they saw a charm of 30-40 flying over.



Pictures from Janet – thank you

Four records of grey wagtail, which is a high priority conservation species and it is declining in its traditional breeding areas. Surprisingly, only 13 people reported house sparrow and it is disappointing to see that a flail has chopped up the bramble at the end of Verlands, where there used to be 30-40 most days. Fieldfare seen on Old Bincombe Lane and a single Redwing at Fox Cottage. However, only three people reported song thrush but there are plenty of blackbirds around.

**In the wider area:**

Rita and Colin reported a goldcrest in the plane tree at the end of Fisherbridge. There has been a garganey on the pond (plenty at Lodmoor). Jon reported six yellowhammers at the top of the Ridgeway on his Wessex Water count but only one stonechat. He saw no skylarks but a walker reported a few on Bincombe Bumps. Most days there are large numbers of herring gull flying inland after roosting on Weymouth Bay overnight and these are often seen following tractors ploughing. A few redwings were seen briefly in a tree on Coome Valley Road 12<sup>th</sup> February.

**Butterflies:**

Dot had a single small tortoiseshell on 22 January at Wyndings.

**Wild Flowers:**



*Winter heliotrope*



*Wild flowers under the beech at Wyndings included primroses, white sweet violet, lesser celandine, snowdrops and some tiny cyclamen.*

Alexanders with the rust *Puccinia smyrrii* in Preston, snowdrops, lesser celandine, groundsel, sweet violet, coltsfoot (Redcliff Point cliffs), three corner-leak Sutton Poyntz, winter heliotrope, European gorse, hairy bitter-cress, petty spurge, common field speedwell, primrose.

**Dave sent this one:**



Dave's daughter was out surveying some woodland professionally. She found this dead pike, which at some point had jumped out of a river after some prey and could not get back.

Its open mouth had been used for a bird's nest.

The natural world moves in mysterious ways.

