



## February 2022 Garden Bird Watch 20<sup>th</sup> - 27<sup>th</sup> February 2022

February 18<sup>th</sup> – I am putting the *Newsletter* together just as storm Eustace has started to die down. It is many years since I have walked in 80mph gales. Whilst the monthly book club were enjoying coffee and cake, this venerable tree descended into the car park and fortunately the car parked there earlier had been moved. A big skip will be needed to clear this lot away. Interestingly there are a few lichens to look at so hopefully, one of us will have a go.



You will notice a new seasonal banner with snowdrops and primroses. I have been approached by a committee member of the Sutton Poyntz Society to inform the Society about pollinators. It is not all totally desperate with some plants, especially grasses wind pollinated, whilst other plants self-pollinate. However, importantly other plants, especially fruit trees, and soft fruit such as brambles depend on insects pollinating. Whilst most people, consider bees to be the pollinator of choice, this is not always the case with many other classes of insects such as beetles including ladybirds, moths, butterflies, hoverflies *etc.* busy. The daisy family are especially good including dandelions, so leaving areas of lawn to grow as a small wild meadow are really helpful. One of the problems, some insects have is that they only use one type of flower. Others have quite specific habitat requirements, for example furrow bees; family *Lasioglossum*, so the south facing Dorset soft cliff coast is a very important area. Lavender in

my garden, when in flower has many bees and hoverflies nectaring. By October, the flowers of ivy are important for some bees such as the ivy-bee *Colletes hedera*, first found in the UK in 2001 here in Dorset by Ian Cross and is now spreading north.

In last month's *Biodiversity News* I asked people to look out for **mistletoe**. Rita and Colin and myself had a good look round.



This apple tree in a garden off Plaisters Lane was the best example we found in the village. There are some small examples, such as a single apple tree on Sutton Road, look high up in the poplars in the Riley's garden and there are three or four small examples. On Puddledock Lane – the Preston side, many of the Lombardy poplars have bunches, whilst an acacia on Seven Acres has now five bunches. There is also one small bunch in the telephone exchange by the Doctor's surgery.

We have lost some fine examples, for example at what is now Sutton Gate off Wimslow Road, the orchard there with many examples on apple were demolished to build the new houses. In another case, one ancient apple had many bunches but the tree just died. I will provide my list to the Dorset Flora Group survey of mistletoe shortly.

There have been a few insects about **Dot** reported both peacock and small tortoiseshell butterflies inside whilst we had a two-spot ladybird in the kitchen.

### **Sutton Poyntz Birds**

Once again good numbers of redwing in the camping fields at Came Wood with the occasional small flock of meadow pipits. The grey wagtail has been hanging round the mill stream and seen regularly feeding amongst the fine gravel in the north end of the pond. House sparrow numbers have not looked good for a month or two. Possibly due to the very hot spring of 2020, followed by a cool wet May in 2021 reducing insects. I am also surprised how few green woodpecker have been recorded. Whilst there are plenty of large birds, crows, rooks, magpie and the dreaded wood pigeon, the small birds seem to be struggling. Admittedly, my hearing is now poor, and if lucky can hear the teacher - teacher of great tit.

### **We need more people to join our monthly garden bird watch team.**

I have put two posters up in the notice boards on the Mission Hall and the Cartshed if you know anybody interested.

Currently, a group are putting together a Weymouth Neighbourhood Plan. Colin has been involved as he was with our village plan, which will be incorporated in the town plan. However, it is your data that strengthens the Natural Environment aspect. Colin is also hoping to update our village Biodiversity report. We need some software to put our existing .pdf file back into MS Word. Any offers? Finally I attach a poster Jez asked for on behalf of the Sutton Poyntz Society about pollinators.



# Sutton Poyntz Biodiversity Group

## Planting Pollinators



**Get your garden buzzing**

**Wild bees and other pollinators are in decline. One way gardeners can help is by planting garden flowers that provide forage for a wide variety of pollinating insects**

For more information  
[Rhs.org.uk/pollinators](https://www.rhs.org.uk/pollinators)

**Plant a fruit tree for the Queen's Platinum Jubilee**

Produced for the Sutton Poyntz Society by the Sutton Poyntz Biodiversity Group.