



### **Garden Bird Watch 25<sup>th</sup> June to 1<sup>st</sup> July**

We still have had the cold north easterly winds, making moth trapping generally dire as the winds funnel down from Osmington. The lack of rain until 20<sup>th</sup> June when we had 30mm overnight followed by scorching sun. Good news for those with solar panels I suppose. The banner image is field bindweed with flowers just opening as the sun comes out.

#### **Garden Bird Watch**

Ros reports from Sutton Court Lawns that there are several small birds nesting. Sadly she suspects that either the jackdaws or the magpies predated the house sparrows nest in the box next to my patio doors as I found the lid off and upturned. The house martins are busy. One set have managed to build a successful nest on my house but the others are struggling due to lack of wet mud it would appear. They are next door also though. Once again, she comments the bowls of water in the garden are the main attraction.

She does not remember ever seeing as many swifts as there were over Lodmoor at the beginning of the month during the wetter weather. Just in certain areas along Southdown Avenue and over the reeds at the northern end. Lovely to see and hear.

We had reports from 17 gardens despite the holiday season with a total of 36 species, 250 individual records averaging 15 per garden. Interesting, we had one whitethroat, three reports of song thrush, three reports of house martin (including breeding) and five reports of swallows and increased number of reports of swifts. One afternoon, walking down Mission Hall Lane, I thought I saw two martins leaving an old nest on the west side of the three storied house. There is no room on the bench, at the moment to sit and watch, but it is worth keeping an eye on this nest if you are passing.

#### **Butterflies and Moths.**

Both butterfly and moth numbers in my garden have been dire this year, although on the Pollard walks around the Beacon and the Waterworks, there has been increased numbers of green hairstreak. There have been small numbers of Adonis blues and Lulworth skipper numbers seem to be up with the Campbells reporting 12 by the wet patch on the Millennium Walk. It generally has hardly been worth putting our moth trap out. Overnight on the 17<sup>th</sup> my trap managed 15 individuals of five species including five privet hawk and one eyed hawk-moth. The Campbells had a record haul for 2023 of 30 moths on the 19<sup>th</sup>.

Bee numbers seem dire and a few dragonflies are about in wet places. I have had one unconfirmed report of an adder on the hill at an undisclosed location.

### Wild Flowers:

With many people in the village walking round in a determined way to look at the many open gardens, I wondered how many people have realised the spread of wild plants in our verges. This photograph, was taken on Puddledock Lane with ox-eye daisy and rosy garlic in full bloom earlier in May. However, both plants, are doing well in many verges, through Weymouth and West Dorset. I noticed meadow cranesbill in a verge near Winfrith Newburgh on Sunday. Again scarce in Dorset but in full bloom now in the Yorkshire Dales.



### Finally:

**A personal note.** There. was a lot happening on Saturday and Sunday, so very few people will have had time to look at the HM King Charles III Birthday Honour List in the *Telegraph* or the *Times*. With grateful thanks to one of my National Trust volunteer colleagues, Helen, who organised it all, I was awarded the British Empire Medal for voluntary services in Ecological surveying and reporting. A number of people were asked to provide testimonials – thank you to all who did, I have absolutely no idea who you were. In due course the Dorset Lord Lieutenant will present me with the medal.



*The garden sub-species of wood spurge on Silver Street*