



With a first winter frost on October 14, 2012, we can expect the autumn colours at parklands such as Stourhead to be in their full glory in the next two weeks.

Wildlife Walks – Mondays from Fox Cottage near the Mission Hall at 9.30am. All welcome.

Grasshoppers and Bush Crickets

Peter Shreeves emailed me towards the end of September to report a Great Green Bush Cricket on his greenhouse door. Bryan Edwards in his *Atlas of Grasshoppers and Bush Crickets of Dorset* (available from Dorset Environmental Records Centre @£14 inc. p & p.) shows that this insect is mainly found in the coastal belt of Dorset with outlying colonies at Hod Hill (where the photograph below was taken) and Habledon Hill in North Dorset. These insects are quite easy to identify if caught, especially using the atlas, although I am reluctant to identify young insects before July. Regrettably, many older people have difficulty hearing their distinctive calls, which can help to locate them in long vegetation. The calls are slightly different between male and female, allowing the male to respond to the female and mate. The *Orthoptera* group in Britain has 37 species including Cockroaches and Earwigs. It is a good group to start identifying insects.



Garden Bird Watch

September appears to have been another quiet month for birds in the village. The good news is the number of reports of Grey Wagtail, which appears to have recovered from the harsh winters of 2010-11. I have seen Grey Wagtail from Fisherbridge, along Puddledock Lane, in the Jordan opposite the Cartshed and by Bellamy Cottage.

House Martins were still around on 13th October at Lodmoor whilst during bird watch week, they were feeding with Swallows at Northdown Farm.

Look out for migrating Jays. David Emery saw five flying SW on 13th October over the Springhead. The BTO website reported a migration, which certainly has hit Dorset. There are no acorns on the continent and nobody told the Jays, there are none here either.

OTHER WILDLIFE REPORTS

Last month we reported on garden slugs and the damage to our plants. Needless to say, nature has a balance with Dorothy Emblem reporting six Slow Worms in her garden. These legless lizards are not as agile as other lizards and consequently eat slow moving animals such as slugs.

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Learn more about bird identification on line with the BTO visit www.birdid.no I had great fun scoring 16 out of 30



Moth trapping has not been easy in September or into October with many nights with heavy showers, or cold or windy and all three. I did manage this Burnished Brass above in mid September. Conversely, unusual plant galls seem to have done well this autumn. The gall below has the scientific name *Kiefferia pericarpicola* and was seen on Wild Carrot at Osmington Mills, during September.

