

# SUTTON POYNTZ BIODIVERSITY GROUP

JANUARY 2012 NEWSLETTER

## GARDEN BIRD WATCH

With the Biodiversity Group formed in July 2008, one of our first actions was to institute a monthly bird count in village gardens. This started in January 2009 with just ten households taking part increasing to seventeen by the year-end. By the end of 2011 there are twenty-five households taking part in this monthly survey and we have three years of results. Numbers of records have shot up from 2268 in 2009 to 4000 in 2011 but there has been a decline in the average number of birds seen each month.



**Bullfinch** © British Trust for Ornithology

Bullfinch has been an undoubted winner, Sutton Poyntz matching BTO figures with birds seen every month in 2011, compared with 8 months in 2010 and just 3 months in 2009. This national increase means that the bird has lost its red-data status and is now amber listed. Yellowhammer has been seen in gardens in most months up to June in all years, returning in November in 2009-10 but December in 2011.

We had regular records for Nuthatch in one garden in 2009, but none since. Treecreeper was added to the list in January and February 2010, but has only been seen once since in the Waterworks coppice. Dorothy Emblem's garden being next to the chalk downland has the largest diversity with Linnet, Kestrel and many House Sparrows. Garden birdwatchers keep a

close eye on the migrants with few House Martin 2011 due to little mud to build nests.

Song Thrush is doing well as 2011 closes with the editor seeing birds in Preston, at Lodmoor as well as three reports from the village on the December returns plus two other records. Mistle Thrush seems to be increasing in 2011 with eight records in January but at the close of the year, we have seen very few Fieldfare or Redwing.



**Redwing** © Janet Craig

## BIRDS in the wider countryside.

David Emery and Jon Campbell have continued to undertake a six-point survey on Wessex Water land adjacent to the Waterworks and also on West Hill. Whilst Yellowhammer, Linnet and Whitethroat together with the more common birds such as Chaffinch have been present on the gorse in reasonable number, the hard winter of 2011 did not suit Stonechat, which turned up smaller numbers.

On the Monday walks, the highlight was Firecrest in February spotted by Andrew McLarty adjacent to Osmington Brook. During the winter of 2011, Lodmoor has not frozen up and around 200 Lapwing have remained resident there, together with small numbers of Snipe. The hedges below Wimslow adjacent to Osmington Brook are good for other small birds and Green Woodpecker in the pasture.

David and Jon would welcome help with these surveys. Contact David Emery.

### Regular surveys are undertaken for bats using bat detectors. (Colin Marsh)

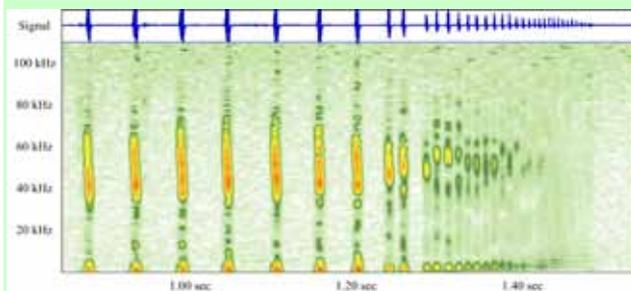
An increased number of people have been involved in carrying out further bat survey work. The primary aim has been to identify additional species using heterodyne detection and wave analysis. Additional people have undergone training in the use of the monitoring equipment, which will assist in increasing the number and geographical scope of surveys in the village. Key activities undertaken during 2011 were-

- Display at a village coffee morning
- Monitoring during visits by Dr John Knight (consultant to Wessex Water)
- Monitoring of bat emergence from a roost at the waterworks in August/September.
- Two public bat awareness evenings.
- Fixed location surveying for possible roost sites in the village and surrounding area.
- Garden surveys to determine location of specific species.



*Daubenton's Bat* Image Wildlife Extra.

We have been able to get some good recordings of common pipistrelle, soprano pipistrelle, serotine, grey long eared, daubentons, natterers and noctule bats.



This graph shows Daubenton's Bats flying over the village pond at dusk. Seven species are considered resident in the area.

### SMALL MAMMALS (Colin Marsh)

The group have continued to carry out the 100 metre transept surveys during the spring and autumn months in the meadow area above the waterworks along with additional randomised surveys of the newly laid hedge. These have

confirmed that a significant population of wood mouse continues to thrive and have also indicated an increased number of bank voles, although with a continued absence of shrews. This data has been submitted to the British Mammal Society for recording and the Dorset Mammal Recorder.



*Badger* © Janet Craig

Other casual mammal records, received with the garden bird scheme, are forwarded to the Dorset Mammal Recorder. In addition, one member is using a motion detector on an infra-red camera to detect nocturnal visits. We have not yet produced convincing evidence that Otter is present despite the Environment Agency installing an Otter holt along Osmington Brook. Many people in the village are reporting an increase in Roe Deer raiding their garden.

Gardens are an important resource for wildlife with orchids turning up in lawns; even new garden ponds are soon humming with wildlife including frogs, toads dragonflies, butterflies and moths.



*Broad-bodied Chaser*  
© Peter Shreeves

Dragonfly records for the village are submitted to the British Dragonfly Society's Atlas Recording Scheme.

## CONSERVATION WORK



*West Hill December 2010.*

During the winter of 2010-11, Natural England managed to borrow some ponies to graze the newly fenced area on West Hill. These certainly assisted by removing some of the rank To-grass, we were disappointed that so far this winter they have not re-appeared.



*Northdown Farm 2011*

In early part of 2011, the new owner of Northdown Farm replaced arable fields with grass, and subsequent conversion to beef cattle. New gates have been installed along the western track. It is important that these are kept closed in order that cattle are grazed in the correct area, including the gorse scrub area of East Hill. Gradually the Gorse mosaic will be softened over a period as part of a chalk grassland restoration.



*A village work party in action December 2011*

Our own biodiversity work force, buoyed the successful restoration of a hedge line in the waterworks meadow have tackled a much larger adjacent hedge in the winter of 2011-12 funded by Dorset Biodiversity in a project managed by Peter Shreeves and David Emery. Over 500 whips need to be planted in February to replace all the dead elms.

## MOTH RECORDING

Our moth-recording season started on 18<sup>th</sup> February in 2011 and finished on 2<sup>nd</sup> November. I am still waiting for the final lists to come in, but I have over 650 records, mostly from gardens but also from the waterworks. Until the complete list is available, I have not done a detailed data analysis, but a quick count-up shows eighteen new species so far.



*The Herald April 2011.*

The mild later winter and spring meant that my actinic trap was out earlier than usual, whilst the warm autumn meant that I kept going until early November with Feathered Thorn being the last new species recorded. We also had our fair share of the more common species with the perennial favourites such as Poplar Hawk-moth



*Poplar Hawk-moth May 2011.*

with plenty of reports of Jersey Tiger and the occasional report of Humming-bird Hawk-moth being emailed through to me.



*Bee Orchid* © John Newbould  
Turned up in a lawn on Puddledock Lane in  
May 2011.



Butterfly Records are sent each year to the  
Dorset branch of Butterfly Conservation.

### What data is required?

It is important to know what has been seen; the place it has been seen at; a national grid reference for the place and who saw it. For people who are willing to record birds and butterflies in the wider village, we can supply maps or aerial photographs, which will allow the recorder to locate exactly where birds (for example) were seen. This helps us to map species for conservation. For some rare or difficult species it may be necessary to get an expert to confirm the identification. See: <http://www.nbn.org.uk/Guidebooks.aspx>

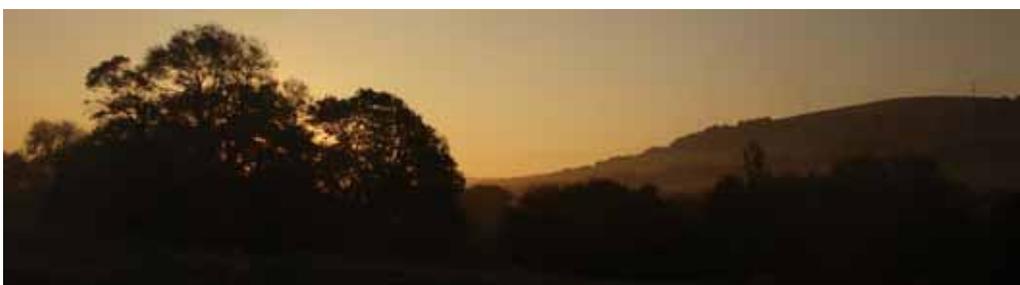


Distribution map for House Sparrow in Sutton Poyntz and Preston 2011 © DERC

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

Newsletter – John Newbould who welcomes your notes and pictures 01305 837384

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2011	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December	Total Records
Barn Owl	0	1	0	2	0	0	1	0	1	1	0	0	6
Blackbird	20	19	24	20	21	20	19	16	14	16	20	23	232
Blackcap	10	7	5	4	2	2	1	1	0	0	1	3	36
Black-headed Gull	1	2	2	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	8
Blue Tit	19	17	21	17	18	16	16	15	15	19	18	20	211
Brambling	2	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	6
Bullfinch	2	1	3	5	4	5	3	1	1	1	2	5	33
Buzzard	5	6	8	7	5	9	7	9	5	6	5	4	76
Carrion Crow	13	14	17	14	12	16	12	11	7	11	13	12	152
Chaffinch	17	17	19	14	12	10	11	10	8	15	11	17	161
Chiffchaf	1	2	6	8	2	2	2	4	2	1	1	1	32
Coal Tit	7	10	8	4	7	6	6	3	5	8	2	5	71
Collared Dove	17	13	20	17	17	13	14	15	15	19	15	16	191
Common Pheasant	7	6	7	2	3	2	1	3	0	5	5	8	49
<b>Cuckoo</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Duncock	14	15	20	16	16	12	14	14	0	14	16	13	164
Fieldfare	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	4
Goldcrest	2	2	3	3	0	5	2	2	7	1	1	2	30
Goldfinch	10	13	15	13	10	11	11	8	12	11	12	10	136
Great Tit	14	15	19	14	18	16	15	11	1	14	12	19	168
Gr. Sp. Woodpecker	6	6	5	2	5	7	5	4	3	4	6	6	59
Green Woodpecker	5	3	3	2	1	4	6	7	6	5	4	3	49
Greenfinch	11	11	14	10	10	10	9	7	2	8	9	10	111
Grey Wagtail	4	1	0	2	1	0	0	0	5	2	2	0	17
Grey Heron	4	4	4	0	1	3	2	8	5	7	5	7	50
Herring Gull	10	8	8	11	10	9	6	9	0	5	5	8	89
House Martin	0	2	0	0	2	8	6	4	17	0	0	0	39
<b>House Sparrow</b>	13	18	21	21	20	17	18	20	6	17	18	23	212
Jackdaw	13	13	16	16	14	13	10	11	1	13	13	13	146
Kestrel	1	2	2	3	3	2	0	3	0	1	2	1	20
Linnet	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	3	2	0	0	7
Long-tailed Tit	8	10	6	3	7	1	6	9	15	4	5	8	82
Magpie	17	18	20	20	19	19	17	19	1	18	17	20	205
Mallard	2	3	4	3	3	2	1	0	0	1	2	1	22
Mistle Thrush	8	3	0	3	1	1	1	1	0	0	2	2	22
Moorhen	3	3	3	1	0	3	3	3	2	2	4	6	33
Nuthatch	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Pied Wagtail	9	5	7	7	9	4	1	1	0	5	3	4	55
Redstart	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Redwing	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3
Robin	21	20	23	21	17	18	18	17	18	21	19	23	236
Rook	10	13	17	18	17	14	13	12	7	10	9	11	151
Siskin	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	2
<b>Song Thrush</b>	16	2	2	1	1	1	1	3	2	1	1	3	34
Sparrowhawk	3	5	2	1	2	4	3	7	0	4	4	1	36
<b>Starling</b>	8	6	6	8	8	7	8	3	3	3	4	6	70
<b>Stonechat</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Swallow	0	0	0	6	6	4	6	9	0	0	0	0	31
Swift	0	0	0	2	3	6	5	1	0	0	0	0	17
Tawny Owl	2	2	4	2	1	0	0	3	1	3	2	0	20
Treecreeper	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Whitethroat	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
Willow Warbler	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Wood Pigeon	19	20	24	19	19	19	17	19	17	17	19	21	230
Wren	11	10	12	4	5	9	9	8	8	13	11	11	111
<b>Yellowhammer</b>	4	4	5	42	4	2	2	0	0	0	0	3	66
<b>Counts</b>													3994
Total Species seen	44	44	40	42	40	40	42	41	36	38	38	40	
Total Records	419	355	407	349	336	332	310	313	231	308	300	352	4012
Average per survey	19	19	16.3	13.4	16	16.6	16.3	14.9	11.6	14	13.6	14.1	
No of gardens in survey	21	20	25	21	21	20	19	21	20	22	22	25	21.4