



Rainfall

Anthea tells me that in January we had 166mm, in February, 54mm and March 113mm of rain totalling 333mm or 13.32 inches. As reported in the March *Newsletter* this has had a devastating effect on the coast. The *Dorset Echo* reported a big crack at Redcliff Point, which caused the County Council to divert the footpath some 15 m inland. However just east, we used to walk on the seaside of the Gorse illustrated above until 2011. There is a huge bowl below of wet clay, with more ready to slip down anytime. Take great care walking on Dorset beaches this summer and please do not sit or lie adjacent to cliffs.



Greater-spotted Woodpecker

© David Emery

Garden Bird Watch

Although the weather was very cold for March we had 329 records of 40 species averaging 16 species per garden. Unusually people were reporting the large corvids and gulls attacking the seed feeders used by small birds. Bullfinch numbers were down on 2012, whilst Yellowhammer remained similar numbers to 2012. Blackcap seem to be pairing up with pairs reported from six gardens. Moorhen seems to be missing from the pond, but present in four gardens. Just two records of Grey Wagtail, but I have seen it on a number of occasions around the Cartshed area.



Pat Dodge sent the photograph above of Goldfinch seen in half the gardens. I saw my first Swallow on 4th April at Lower Bockhampton but Anthea and I saw 12 over Brookmead on Sunday 14th. Redwing were present adjacent to Came Wood on 6th April but appear to have departed now.

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

Butterflies: Most people I talk to have not seen a butterfly in 2013 but both Janet Craig and Dorothy Emblem reported two species on the sunny first Saturday in April. The mining bees in our garden have not appeared but I saw a White-tailed Bumble bee on 15th April. Interestingly, on a cold wet afternoon on 4th April, Mike Edwards picked up the Dotted Bee-fly below by my front-door.



Birds nesting: David Emery confirmed my suspicion that many of the small birds were looking at nesting in early March. The subsequent cold weather caused nesting to stop. We would be interested to hear your thoughts on this.

Moths: A friend told me that his recording is 98.5% down this year. I have seen just one moth and that was in February.

Wildflowers: are well behind. Primroses were out before Christmas and seem to have done well. The first Cowslip came into flower on my lawn on 16th April.

Frog spawn is doing badly with just two gardens reporting presence