



Pebble prominent.

National Moth Night 9 - 1st June
Garden bird watch
19th – 25th June 2016
 Please send lists after 27th June
 Moth trapping in the water works 9.30
 10th June

Nature Notes

Colin and Rita have been looking at the wild flowers on West Hill round the Beacon. They have compiled a list of around 35 grassland species with many of them taking advantage of openings arising through winter grazing by horses. The northern end of Plaisters Lane, although cut by the Council, is bright with horseshoe vetch and mouse-eared hawkweed. Although grazing is a preferred management tool, it is impossible on the steep slopes here and horseshoe vetch appears to be increasing. But where are the Adonis blue butterflies?

Another plant illustrated below in the middle is dewberry. Closely related to brambles, it has much larger flowers and whilst the best fruiting brambles have five leaves on each petiole, dewberry has just three and has poor useless fruit. At this time of the year, it is easy to separate from brambles, by its earlier flowering time. A good place to see this plant is by the farm on Puddledock Lane, where it shares its place with dogwood, which is also in flower. On the hot sunny days earlier this week it is ideal for pollinating bees and other insects.



Horseshoe vetch
on Plaisters Lane

GARDEN BIRD WATCH June 2016

I have received returns this month from 16 houses with around 250 records of 38 species. A number of members have reported nesting birds. including 3 nests with house martin on Sutton Court Lawns and long-tailed tits on Old Bincombe Lane. There were good numbers of yellowhammer at Wyndings and also n West Hill. Just two people reported swifts. Is this species in decline even whilst out in the wider countryside this week only one bird has been seen? Tawny owl has been reported from three gardens, mainly from the northern part of the village.

Butterflies seem to be having a bad year with only five common species seen by most people, whilst out. Small tortoiseshell, for example, has been quite scarce this spring. In contrast, on the few occasions I have used the moth trap reasonable numbers of species have been seen. Admittedly, it has mainly been in use on the National Trust’s Golden Cap estate where we are busy collecting data towards a management plan.

Two members reported slowworms in their gardens, whilst the photograph below shows a collection of garden snails on a display pot in my garden. The mild winter obviously suited that species.



Dewberry



Garden snail *Cornu aspersum*

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