

# WILDLIFE SURVEY

OCTOBER – DECEMBER 2013



Upper picture - Comma butterfly  
Lower picture - Peacock butterfly

Butterflies taking advantage of  
the sun and ivy flowers in the first  
days of November

## **Butterfly Survey**

Proper surveying of butterflies has finished for this season. It is usual not to survey this late into the year as there are both small numbers flying and most species have finished their flight period.

There have been some late flying butterflies seen on those days which were warm and sunny. Three days in particular are notable. Seeing butterflies out in October is unusual, but to still see them in November is much rarer.

### **15<sup>th</sup> October 2013**

The second sighting this year of the Painted Lady butterfly occurred today on the Ivy covered Hawthorn by the turning circle. This ivy is fully in the sun most of the day and as a result flowers profusely and attracts a range of insects including butterflies. This sighting has been reported to Butterfly Conservation via their website. The two reports from us are the only sightings for the Bognor Regis area in 2013 of this migrant butterfly.

### **17<sup>th</sup> October 2013.**

Again there were butterflies on the ivy covered hawthorn near the turning circle. This time there were four Red Admiral butterflies using the ivy as a source of nectar.

The southern bank of the reservoir also catches the sun very well. As the bank is allowed to grow wild it has got many flowering Bristly Ox-tongue plants. The combination of a warm sunny south facing slope and a supply of nectar had attracted a group of butterflies of three different species. There were three Small Copper, one Small Tortoiseshell and a Clouded Yellow butterfly all together in this favoured spot.



**Small Copper warming itself on the ground**



**Small Tortoiseshell on a Bristly Ox-tongue flower**

The Small Coppers are probably from the third generation of this species this year which only happens when weather conditions are favourable into the autumn. The Clouded Yellow is a migrant species flying over from the continent every summer, then later in the season specimens are likely to be the offspring of earlier migrants. It is these late flying individuals that could lay eggs that may survive if a winter is particularly mild. In recent years this has happened in the south of England and perhaps this may be possible here.

### **2<sup>nd</sup> November 2013**

This was another warm day with plenty of sunshine. The ivy covered hawthorn was still in flower and today had three species of butterfly feeding on it. They were Comma, Peacock and Red Admiral. In total there were six insects present. All three of these species overwinter as adults so these insects will have been taking advantage of the nectar to boost their reserves for their winter hibernation.



**Red Admiral on the ivy covered Hawthorn beside the turning circle**

## Bird Survey

The table below details the birds seen on the site during 2013, a total of 39 species. Over the two years this survey has been run 40 species have occurred. Seven new species were spotted this year and one, the Bullfinch was not seen this year but was in 2012.

<b>BIRD SURVEY DATA 2013</b>				
<b>SPECIES</b>	<b>JAN MAR 2013</b>	<b>APR JUNE 2013</b>	<b>JULY SEPT 2013</b>	<b>OCT DEC 2013</b>
BLACKBIRD	✓	✓	✓	✓
BLACK CAP	✗	✓	✓	✗
BLACK HEADED GULL	✓	✓	✓	✓
BLUE TIT	✓	✗	✓	✓
BULLFINCH	✗	✗	✗	✗
BUZZARD	✓	✓	✓	✓
CANADA GOOSE	✗	✗	✓	✓
CARRION CROW	✓	✓	✓	✓
CHAFFINCH	✓	✓	✓	✓
CHIFFCHAFF	✗	✓	✓	✗
COLLARED DOVE	✓	✓	✓	✓
CORMORANT	✗	✗	✓	✓
DUNNOCK	✓	✓	✓	✓
GREAT SPOTTED WOODPECKER	✗	✗	✗	✓
GREEN WOODPECKER	✓	✓	✓	✓
GREY HERON	✓	✓	✓	✓
GREY WAGTAIL	✗	✗	✓	✓
GOLDFINCH	✓	✓	✓	✓
GREAT TIT	✓	✓	✓	✓
HERRING GULL	✓	✓	✓	✓
HOUSE SPARROW	✓	✓	✓	✓
JAY	✗	✗	✓	✓
KESTREL	✓	✓	✗	✗
LINNET	✓	✓	✓	✓
LITTLE GREBE	✓	✓	✓	✓
LONG TAILED TIT	✗	✓	✓	✗
MAGPIE	✓	✓	✓	✓
MALLARD	✓	✓	✓	✓
MOORHEN	✓	✓	✓	✓
MUTE SWAN	✗	✗	✓	✗
PIED WAGTAIL	✓	✓	✓	✓
ROBIN	✓	✓	✓	✓
SWALLOW	✗	✓	✓	✗
SWIFT	✗	✗	✓	✗
SONG THRUSH	✓	✓	✗	✗
SPARROW HAWK	✗	✗	✗	✓
TUFTED DUCK	✓	✓	✓	✓
WHITETHROAT	✗	✓	✓	✗
WOOD PIGEON	✓	✓	✓	✓
WREN	✓	✓	✓	✓
<b>SPECIES COUNT PER SURVEY</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>SPECIES COUNT FOR THIS YEAR</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>39</b>
<b>SPECIES COUNT FOR ALL YEARS</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>40</b>

The list is now looking pretty impressive for the size of the site and the sorts of habitat available. In broad terms our site contains habitat that is typical of suburban parks and gardens. The species seen are definitely starting to reflect a bias towards species typical of these sorts of environment.

For small birds there is a need to be close to cover such as a hedge, tree or dense herbaceous plants. This provides the necessary security for when danger threatens, suitable resting and roosting positions and places to nest build. This sort of habitat is mainly present around the perimeters of the site and this is where most of the birds are seen. A continuing recognition of the need to care for the existing trees and hedges is essential.

In areas where there is little cover such as the centre of the site, only birds that have little to fear from predators such as Herring Gulls and Carrion Crows will normally be present. Any effort to get birds further into the site will have to include suitable planting to make the environment appropriate.

The outstanding bird for this period was a sighting of a Sparrowhawk outside the office complex. The bird was probably chasing a pigeon which flew into an office window, stunning itself and was then caught by the Sparrowhawk. There are a lot of Wood Pigeons around the site and hawks often learn to specialise in taking one particular species which is common within their home range. Therefore it is quite possible that this bird is responsible for other pigeon kills seen around the site.

## Mammals

The usual rabbits and foxes are visible around the site. Mole hills are appearing mainly in the grassy areas beyond JKL/MNO and between Lake Lane and 14-17.

## Wild flowers

The table below shows the up to date list of flowers known to be present around the site, a total of 55 species

<b>WILD FLOWERS - ERIC WALL LTD BARNHAM</b>			
Birds Foot Trefoil	<i>Lotus corniculatus</i>	Hogweed	<i>Heracleum sphondylium</i>
Biting Stonecrop	<i>Sedum acre</i>	Honeysuckle	<i>Lonicera periclymenum</i>
Black Medick	<i>Medicago lupulina</i>	Ivy	<i>Hedera Helix</i>
Black Nightshade	<i>Solanum nigrum</i>	Jack-by-the-hedge	<i>Alliaria petiolata</i>
Borage	<i>Sympytum spp</i>	Mayweed	<i>Matricaria recutita</i>
Bracken	<i>Pteridium aquilinum</i>	Meadow Buttercup	<i>Ranunculus acris</i>
Bramble	<i>Rubus fruticosus</i>	Lesser Celendine	<i>Ranunculus ficaria</i>
Cleavers	<i>Galium aparine</i>	Lesser Stitchwort	<i>Stellaria graminea</i>
Common Centaury	<i>Centaurium erythraea</i>	Lords and Ladies	<i>Arum maculatum</i>
Common Fleabane	<i>Pulicaria dysenterica</i>	Purple Loosestrife	<i>Lythrum salicaria</i>
Common Knapweed	<i>Centaurea nigra</i>	Ragwort	<i>Senecio jacobaea</i>
Common Spotted Orchid	<i>Dactylorhiza fuchsii</i>	Red Campion	<i>Silene dioica</i>
Common Vetch	<i>Vicia sativa</i>	Red Clover	<i>Trifolium pratense</i>
Cow Parsley	<i>Anthriscus sylvestris</i>	Red Leg	<i>Persicaria maculosa</i>
Creeping Buttercup	<i>Ranunculus repens</i>	Ribwort plantain	<i>Plantago lanceolata</i>
Creeping Thistle	<i>Cirsium arvense</i>	Scarlet Pimpernel	<i>Anagallis arvensis</i>
Crosswort	<i>Cruciata laevipes</i>	St John's wort	<i>Hypericum spp</i>
Cut leaved cranesbill	<i>Geranium dissectum</i>	Self-heal	<i>Prunella vulgaris</i>
Daisy	<i>Bellis perennis</i>	Smooth Hawksbeard	<i>Crepis capillaris</i>
Dandelion	<i>Taraxacum officinale</i>	Sow Thistle	<i>Sonchus spp</i>
Dock	<i>Rumex spp</i>	Spear Thistle	<i>Cirsium vulgare</i>
Field Bindweed	<i>Convolvulus arvensis</i>	Speedwell	<i>Veronica spp</i>
Field Forget-me-not	<i>Myosotis arvensis</i>	Stinging nettle	<i>Urtica dioica</i>
Field Rose	<i>Rosa arvensis</i>	White Clover	<i>Trifolium repens</i>
Great Willowherb	<i>Epilobium hirsutum</i>	White Dead Nettle	<i>Lamium album</i>
Ground Ivy	<i>Grechoma hederacea</i>	Wild Teasel	<i>Dipsacus fullonum</i>
Hedge Bedstraw	<i>Galium mollugo</i>	Yarrow	<i>Achillea millefolium</i>
Hedge woundwort	<i>Stachys sylvatica</i>		

## **Habitats – possible improvements**

### **Gravelled track leading to telecommunications mast**

This track is very well drained because of repeated applications of stone and gravel to make a hard road. The result is a soil environment that is very dry in summer, low in nutrients and quite probably alkaline from limestone in the gravel. This has allowed a large area of Biting Stonecrop to become established. This is especially apparent in the area beside the last two spans of 6-9. This species is a slow and low growing plant of dry well drained places that flower profusely in summer. The flowers are very attractive to bees and butterflies.

There is only one thing needed to enable this colony to flourish and possibly spread further. Keep the herbicide treatments away from this area. Although it is normal policy to maintain a herbicide strip beside all the glasshouses the area with the stonecrop is almost entirely free of other plants. Therefore the only plant being sprayed off is both slow growing and un-invasive. As this plant has value as a nectar source this small area could be left unsprayed.

### **Field between Lake Lane and 14-17**

This field margin contains mainly native trees and shrubs all along the boundary beside Lake Lane and the farmhouse. At present the field is close mown as close to the trees as is possible. The area would be improved as wildlife habitat if a strip against the trees about two metres wide was left uncut all along this perimeter from the SE corner of the farmhouse property around to the footpath access. Long grass and flowers on the south side of the trees will make excellent warm places for insects including bees and butterflies.

### **The traffic island on the entrance drive**

This island at present contains three Holly trees and bare soil with a smattering of weeds. There is a periodic effort to keep this area tidy that involves weed removal through the growing season to keep a tidy appearance. This often coincides with an important client visit.

I propose that the bare areas are planted up with plants that will attract insect pollinators and especially bees. I think that planting the whole area up with lavender plants would be neat and simple. Lavender especially *augustifolia* types are very attractive to bees while not being a plant that rabbits are fond of eating. The lavender once established will crowd out the weeds and require only a few cuts per year to keep them tidy and presentable. The end result could be an island border that looks presentable to our visitors is attractive to bees and without creating a border that requires lots of attention to keep it looking good.

### **Supplementary bird feeders**

The grassy area around the reservoir beside 6-9 has a lot of suitable bird habitat. There are the hedges along Lake Lane, the mature Birch trees and the unkempt plot of land that adjoins the nursery. All of this makes for a good place for birds to be. I think that bird feeders here would draw more birds and probably some new species on to site. There would be some continuous costs in bird feed. 12.5kg sacks are about £25.00 for basic seed mixes and more specialist seeds rather more.

A trial period through the latter part of the winter would show whether we were attracting birds and what sort of costs were involved and any potential problems.

If this is successful a second feeding station could be placed somewhere near the main office where it visible from the meeting room. There it could provide an entertaining distraction for visitors.

## Interaction Board

This is the latest panel for the interaction board and although out before this plant begins to flower it is right beside the footpath and very obvious to anyone coming past.

### RED CAMPION *SILENE DIOICA*



Red Campion is a herbaceous perennial plant that is found throughout Britain and can be locally abundant. Red Campion is dioecious so plants are either male or female.

There is an established clump here beside the footpath on the reservoir bank.

This plant has a long flowering season that can extend from May to October with a peak in June and July.

The flowers are attractive to bees and butterflies and the foliage is the food for several species of moth including the Sandy and twin-spot Carpet and the Lychnis Moth.

Eric Wall LTD

### INTERACTION BOARD TIMELINE

panel	start	finish	panel	start	finish
notice board header version 1	29.10.2012	21.07.2013	butterfly surveying version 3	30.09.2012	
The irrigation water reservoir version 1	29.10.2012	07.10.2013	trees and shrubs version 1	07.10.2013	
The hedgerow boundaries version 1	29.10.2012	15.05.2013	wild flowers version 1	20.01.2013	
butterfly surveying version 1	29.10.2012	21.07.2013			
A working nursery version 1	29.10.2012				
The leaf organisation version 1	29.10.2012				
Bird life version 1	15.05.2013				
butterfly surveying version 2	21.07.2013				
notice board header version 2	21.07.2013				