

Warwick Natural History Society

Snippets

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70TH ANNIVERSARY – A DATE FOR YOUR DIARY!

Our visit to Brandon Reserve is now arranged for **FRIDAY 18TH OCTOBER**.

We will be meeting at 11.00 am in the courtyard and tickets will be £5 each to include a sandwich lunch and refreshments in the Barn, followed by a talk. Tickets will be available at all meetings prior to the 18th October. There will be no charge for access to the Reserve for all those joining us for lunch.

We would like to see as many members as possible coming along to celebrate this Anniversary, so please contact either Barbara (barbaracuttell@gmail.com) or myself (wesandlinda@btinternet.com) in order that we can have accurate numbers of those attending.



July is a busy month for bat rescue as the baby bats become toddlers and find their way into places they shouldn't. I've had some success this year with reuniting pups with their mothers but ended up attempting to hand rear 8, the last of which will be released by the end of August.

During August this year's young are teenagers and start trying their flying and insect-catching skills with variable success and I get called to rescue juveniles that members of the public find in the open during the day or trapped in buildings. Mostly these bats just need rehydration and a good feed to be good to go. This photo is a juvenile male soprano pipistrelle.

17th August TS

Newbold Comyn visit – 18th August

As part of the WNHS Summer Walks programme we visited Newbold Comyn to look for butterflies and wildflowers. Fortunately it was a sunny warm afternoon but like much of this season, butterfly numbers were down.



However as we walked through the various habitats of the Comyn we saw Meadow Brown, Large and Small Whites, Speckled Wood and Common Blue on the Bird's-foot Trefoil. A couple of day-flying moths were observed and the distinctive orange and black striped Cinnabar Moth caterpillars munching on ragwort.





19th August LD

Although most of the wildflowers were past their best there was still plenty to see in the ragwort field including Great Willow Herb, Teasel, Spear Thistle and Bristly-ox Tongue. The meadow area on the Comyn which was the old model aeroplane flying field is developing nicely over the years into a rich habitat alive with butterflies earlier in the summer. Plenty of activity was seen as we walked past a wasp's nest in a hole by the side of the path.

Sightings:

Butterflies :- Common Blue, Large White, Small White, Meadow Brown, Gatekeeper, Comma, Speckled Wood

Moths :- Common Carpet, Mother of Pearl (micro), Grass Veneer (micro), Cinnabar caterpillar on Ragwort

Wildflowers :- Ragwort, Great Willow Herb, Creeping Thistle, Spear Thistle, Bristly Ox Tongue, Tongue, Bugle, Common Centaury, Teasel, Knapweed, Mallow, Field Scabious, Devil's Bit Scabious, Yellow Rattle, Plantain, Water Mint, Angelica, Burdock, Meadow Sweet, Birds-foot Trefoil, Tare, Marsh Cudweed, Redshank, Salad Burnet, Marsh Woundwort, Woody Nightshade, Yarrow, Melilot (white), 'Lord's and Ladies'/'Cuckoo-pint' Arum, Orange Balsam

Birds :- Robin, Wren, Crow, Magpie, Wood Pigeon, Feral Pigeon, Lesser Black-backed Gull, Black-headed Gull, Blue Tit, Great Tit, Long-tailed Tit, Swallow, Reed Bunting, Chiffchaff, Buzzard, Goldfinch, Greenfinch

*In July I joined a Hoverfly Lagoon Project run by Sussex University's BuzzClub. Every month I fill out an easy sheet to say what I have found in the lagoons. I managed to video a Batman hoverfly, *Myathropa florea* laying eggs in a lagoon and about three weeks later found two pupa which I put in a jar. After about 3 days, first a male then a female Batman hoverfly emerged. Success and much excitement!*

My lagoon: cut top off an empty juice carton; an inch from the top punch a hole in each side; pack grass cuttings into 1/3 and fill with rain water (do not use tap water); tie carton about 2ft off the ground OR on the ground place lagoon in a tray with drainage and surround it by leaves; put 3 or four sticks in the lagoon to allow larvae to climb out using their 'prolegs'.

The first link below, the Batman hoverfly laying eggs followed by links to the BuzzClub and the project.

<https://youtu.be/z618DFbTfPM>

<https://www.thebuzzclub.uk/>

<https://www.thebuzzclub.uk/hoverfly-lagoons>

21st August SG





On July 23rd I saw a Water boatman right side up in a tank at the Odibourne Allotments which I lifted for a photo and find is a Notonecta species. I have since learned these have a very nasty bite. I now carry protective gloves should I have another opportunity to see one close up.

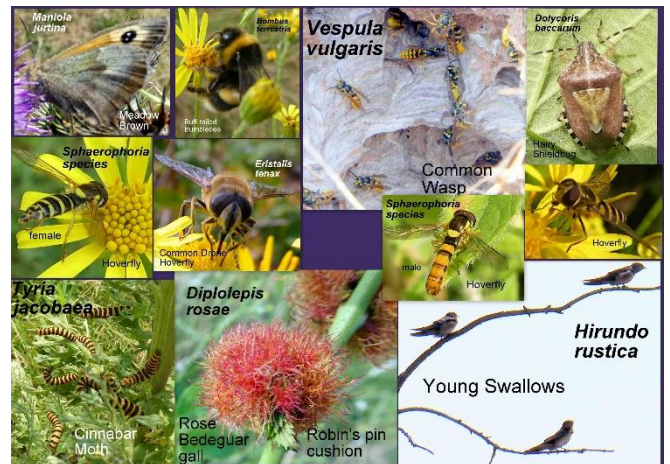
I also learned that if I lift the wing with a sharpened pencil, I will be able to identify it to species level. Pencil now handy too.

21st August SG

The walk around Newbold Common took us through a couple of big fields of Ragwort which had an abundance of Cinnabar moth larvae and some welcome hoverflies. A few Meadow Browns around and one, top left of collage, had two spots instead of the usual one.

In the meadow area we avoided disturbing a big Common Wasp nest in which the wasps busily added to the construction. Towards the end of the walk a flock of birds in a far tree caught our attention and these were young swallows not yet sporting the long adult tails.

27th August SG



Tougher rough on the golf course!

Golf clubs are being urged to stop trimming the rough on courses in order to boost bee and butterfly numbers as the tall grass can be a haven for rare species and help improve biodiversity.

More than a dozen clubs across Sussex are trying a renaturing initiative to help protect rare chalk grassland and encourage the growth of wildflowers. In a survey last year, ecologists discovered these sites had 34 species of butterfly including rare species such as the Adonis blue, Brown hairstreak and Grizzled skipper. The introduction of a 'cut and collect' system for the grass cuttings rather than leaving them on the ground will reduce the nutrients in the soil, helping a variety of wildflowers to grow and provide habitat for bees, butterflies and other insects.

It should even be easier for the golfers to pick out their ball in the rough!

(Daily Telegraph)

Snippets to Linda please at: wesandlinda@btinternet.com

www.wnhs.info