

Climate and Sustainability Newsletter for Hennock Parish

July 2024

We have a full and colourful newsletter this month with details including how to install your own mini pond, a number of activities we hope you can join us on over the next few weeks, updates on what has been seen in the Parish and some exciting news!

In the last few days we've finally had a glimpse of the summer although as I write this the cloud is back overhead and the odd drop of rain is in the air. It's not just us who have been unhappy with the weather however – it has had a very real effect on nature in our Parish. Butterfly numbers have been down and a survey of ground nesting birds in the last few weeks showed we had at least four pairs of nightjars in or around the Parish - but each bird was underweight due to the lack of moths flying as due to the weather. You may also have noticed that there have been fewer House Martins than usual and again, weather is a large factor. The British Trust for Ornithology (BTO) 's records show that in May, normal migrating numbers were arriving but once the weather turned, their numbers dropped off considerably. This can happen in any year but unusual weather patterns are becoming the norm due to climate change so every little thing we can do to help offset this in the Parish is worth exploring and each record you send to us of the birds/animals/flowers you see in the Parish helps us monitor their condition. We have details of how you can help monitor this year's butterflies below.

Things to look out for in July

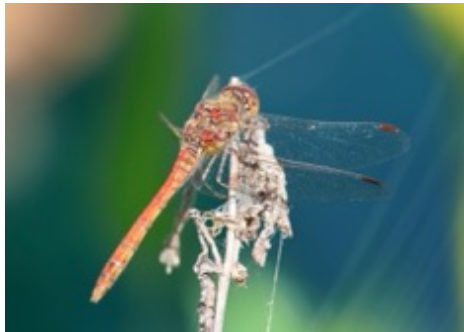
The Spring migration is now over and many of the birds will have had their first brood of young however butterflies such as the Gatekeeper and Marbled White are now appearing in the Parish and dragon and damselflies are also laying their eggs in or around water. Dragonflies were on this planet before the first dinosaurs, with fossils having been found that are over 300 million years old and as we are running an outside event this month to help identify them (see future events) I have added a few photos below of species to look out for.



Emperor Dragonfly



Beautiful Demoiselle Damselfly



Common Darter






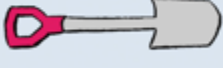
A used Dragonfly larvae case

After giving a recent talk about the Parish Flora and Fauna it was interesting that over half the questions were about how to add a pond to a small garden. As a result I have added the instruction sheet about creating a mini pond from the wildlife trusts website below. If you have room for a larger one, you can also find details on this excellent site.

How to build a mini wildlife pond



You will need:

- a watertight container* 
- old bricks, rocks and pebbles 
- pond plants 
- spade 

* Is there anything that you can upcycle? It could be an old washing-up bowl, sink or even a plant pot. Aim for 20-30cm deep.

- 1 Choose a spot. Your pond will need light, but not full sunlight all day. You can dig a hole and sink your container, or just have it sitting on top.
- 2 If the container isn't watertight, e.g. an old plant pot, then add a piece of pond liner.
- 3 Add a layer of gravel and rocks.
- 4 Fill your pond with rainwater (tap water contains chemicals).
- 5 Start planting... you only need two or three plants.
- 6 Now watch and wait! Wildlife will come to your pond of its own accord.

One vertical growing plant that reaches out of the water e.g. flowering rush

Use logs or stones to create a range of depths and a slope for creatures to climb in and out

One submerged plant e.g. hornwort or spiked water milfoil

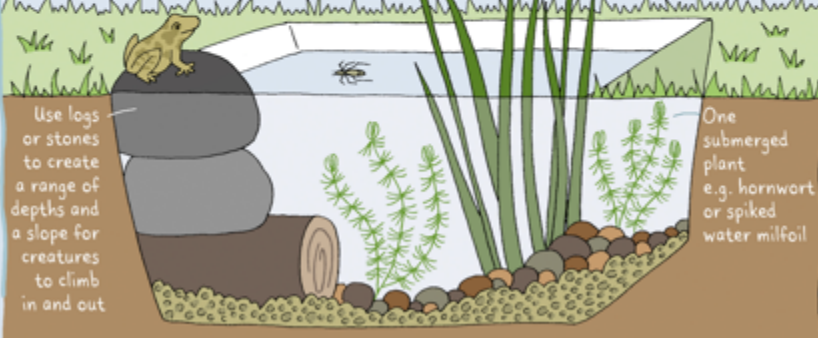


Illustration: Corinna Welch © Copyright Royal Society of Wildlife Trainers 2014 and Royal Horticultural Society 2017

www.wildlifewatch.org.uk

Don't introduce frogs, fish or even water from another pond as this can spread disease.

Forthcoming Events

July

Identifying damsel and dragonflies.

Come and join us for a short walk on July 14th and help identifying any dragon or damselflies we see.



DRAGONFLY WALK

Sunday
14th July
10:30-12:30



Where?
Bovey Heathfield
Junction of Cavalier Rd,
Fairfax Rd and Dragoon CIs
What3Words:
///retraced.priced.tadpoles

Join us to learn about, and hopefully spot, the stunning dragonflies and damselflies that live on Bovey Heath.

Please bring binoculars if you have them.





A Henock Parish Council Climate & Sustainability Group event
www.henockpc.org.uk/climateandustainability

Contact kate.willett@henockpc.org.uk

Butterfly count



Gatekeeper

Most people have heard of the RSPB's garden birdwatch where people record what birds they see for an hour in their garden but did you know that the Butterfly Conservation Trust did something similar from July 12th – August 4th? If you click on the link below it will take you to the Butterfly conservation Trust site and you can download posters of butterflies and moths and you can submit a list of what you have seen over a 15-minute period.

https://bigbutterflycount.butterfly-conservation.org/?_cldee=nPxj6oWgcQgX6DivSR2jw-6ovYIM3Ss68ZDmH7fZMn9gzE48nf0YpNiT5wDx1ufh&recipientid=contact-543fdebbd8eb11bacb00224841e747-7ef184e25cf24b75af509e18042b862f&esid=9584f573-2d35-ef11-8e4e-6045bdd28f2e

Can I ask you to also forward any sightings to us so we can monitor how our local butterflies are doing? You can do this by copying and pasting your sightings to the form on the parish biodiversity database <https://www.henockpc.org.uk/parish-flora-and-fauna>

August – Spotting sheets and Ant trail activities

Throughout the school holidays we shall be running two ongoing events that everyone is welcome to join in with!

The first is in the spirit of the old i-spy books and there will be a different spotting sheet for the heathland, hedgerows and reservoirs that can be found in our Parish with the species will be scored to reflect the difficulty you might have finding them. The front page of the Heath spotting sheet is attached below and the full version, along with the other sheets and details of the Ant trail activity walk, can be downloaded from the Parish Website on this link: <https://www.henockpc.org.uk/activities-talks-presentations>

Are you a Super Spotter? Things to see on.... a Heath



Hedge bedstraw 15 points →
 Heather 10 points ←
 Marbled White butterfly 20 points
 Stonechat 15 points ↗
 Song thrush 15 points →
 Wood ant 10 points ←
 Slow worm 40 points ↓
 Green tiger beetle 20 points ↗
 Narrow headed ant 30 points ↗
 Cinnabar moth 20 points ↗

Up to 50 points - Special Spotter
 50 - 70 points - Super Spotter
 70+ points - Supreme Spotter

The second event is a walk along the Ant trail just outside of Chudleigh Knighton and as you walk along it.....

September – Climate stories – Will be held in Hennock with further details to come

November/December - Green Christmas – some tips on how to have a sustainable Christmas.

Walks - We are also looking at arranging some walks locally, possibly looking at the trees and fungi in the Parish.

Parish Biodiversity Database

We have had the following confirmed sightings this month of species previously not recorded in the Parish and these will all be added to the biodiversity database shortly:

- [Ivy leaved toadflax](#)
- [Dark Sailor Beetle](#)
- [Southern Wood Ant](#)
- [Zebra Jumping Spider](#)
- [Lesser Stag Beetle](#)
- [Slow worm](#)
- [Pellucid Fly](#)
- [Common European Scorpion Fly](#)
- [Nursery Web Spider](#)



The nest of a Nursery Web Spider

In truth, These species were all found in my garden or in the local hedgerow whilst I was walking around it throughout the month and it's been fascinating discovering some of the species and every time I find something new it makes me appreciate just how many species we have, and haven't yet identified in the Parish...

Species seen

Due to how full this newsletter already is and the number of species seen last month, we shall not be publishing a list of the species seen in the Parish in June this year but instead will post an update to the Biodiversity database that will include both the new species seen and a record of existing species reported again in 2024.

News

I've previously mentioned the reintroduction of the Pine Martens to Dartmoor and the other day had it confirmed that 40 of them will be released in suitable habitats on Dartmoor by the end of this summer, with a similar number on Exmoor next year. The goal is to ultimately link up with the population that has now been re-established in the Forest of Dean. The species used to be fairly common throughout England and was only lost due to human intervention. Its return will help restore a natural balance to the environment and research has shown that it causes a reduction in existing predators, such as the introduced grey squirrel. If you are interested, do have a look at Devon Wildlife Trusts info page by clicking on this link.

<https://www.devonwildlifetrust.org/bringing-back-pine-martens>

