

Dawlish Warren Recording Group Wildlife Review 2019

Alan Keatley & Kevin Rylands

Birds

A total of 183 species were recorded on site this year with 35 species confirmed breeding including **Stonechat**, **Little Grebe** and three pairs of **Cirl Bunting**.

The annual total was the lowest in 20 years, continuing the recent decline, however 2019 wasn't without its highlights with one new species for the Recording Area and two new site record counts **Black-tailed Godwit** (976 in Nov) and **Cirl Bunting** (12 in Nov).



Cirl Bunting - Simon Thurgood

Unfortunately counts of many other species are going in the opposite direction numbers of wintering birds in continuing decline. Migrants were generally in low numbers with just one **Redstart**, two **Cuckoo**, four **Tree Pipit**, five **Garden Warbler** and five **Spotted Flycatcher**.

Omissions from the year list included Little Stint, for the first time since 1971, Short-eared Owl, Black-throated Diver, Jack Snipe and the now expected absences of Coot, Red-necked Grebe, Dartford Warbler and Spotted Redshank. Other species that appeared in lower than usual numbers included **Storm Petrel**, **Gadwall**, **Avocet**, **Black Tern** and **Brambling**.

Rarities included the 1st site record of **Long-billed Dowitcher**, the 3rd **Glossy Ibis**, 4th & 5th records of **Cattle Egret**, 4th **Red-rumped Swallow**, 6th **Caspian Gull**, 8th **Stone-curlew**, 10th **Cetti's Warbler** and 12th **Marsh Tit**.



Black Tern - Lee Collins



Long-billed Dowitcher - Luke Harman

January

A total of 76 species were recorded in good conditions on the 1st, the highlights including overwintering **Cetti's Warbler** and **Firecrest** as well as Herbert, the only **Slavonian Grebe** of the winter.

Offshore **Great-crested Grebe** peaked at 80 late month with an immature **Velvet Scoter** present from the 10th and the year's only **Black-necked Grebe** late month. Elsewhere **Brent Geese** rarely reached three figures, 80 **Pied Wagtail** roosted in the Golf Course Pond and a **Woodcock** was a surprise find on the Car Park Roundabout on the 13th.



Shoveler - Alan Keatley

February

Overnight snow saw a small scale cold weather movement on the 1st with 183 **Skylark** and 62 **Fieldfare** heading west, followed by 1856 **Lapwing** the next morning, the fourth highest site count. The **Cetti's Warbler** and **Velvet Scoter** remained throughout the month. Elsewhere five **Gadwall** south on the 14th turned out to be the only record of the year, also offshore a peak of 55 **Red-throated Diver** with the first **Sandwich Tern** of the year on the 27th.

The last day of the month saw the third **Glossy Ibis** for the Warren drift overhead with a **Red Kite** also taking advantage of the balmy early Spring conditions.



Red Kite - Alan Keatley

March

Three **Egyptian Geese** flew over on the 1st, the site's 15th record with a **Pomarine Skua** south the next day and the year's only two **Spoonbill**, again in flight only, on the 5th. A **Red-legged Partridge** on Warren Point early in the month was no doubt a released bird but matched the vagrancy window for the site.

The first migrants arrived on the 9th with two **Swallow** and a **Sand Martin**, the earliest and second earliest records respectively. The first **Wheatear** didn't make landfall until the 17th.

A **Barnacle Goose** arrived with a flock of 15 **Pale-bellied Brent Geese** on the 22nd, then joining up with a few remaining **Dark-bellied Brent Geese** for a couple of days.

Another arrival of migrants late in the month saw an early **Yellow Wagtail** overhead on 28th, the first **Willow Warbler** on 30th and the first **Osprey** and the year's only **Redstart** the next day.



Red-legged Partridge - Lee Collins



Pale-bellied Brent and Barnacle Goose - Alan Keatley

April

A second **Osprey** and two **Little Ringed Plover** arrived on the 1st with one of the year's highlights on the 2nd, a **Red-rumped Swallow** feeding around the Main Pond for several hours, the fourth Warren record.



Red-rumped Swallow - Dave Land

Osprey were a regular feature early in the month with the earliest ever **Little Tern** alongside two **Common Tern** on the 6th and an early **Arctic Tern** on the 9th. Five more Arctic Tern but just one Little Tern arrived during the month.

A **Merlin** and **Hobby** coincidentally arrived on the 14th with a **Puffin** the previous day. Foggy conditions on the 19th dropped in a typically brief **Pied Flycatcher** and smart male **Black Redstart** with a **Tree Pipit** overhead. The Black Redstart was still present the next day with the first three **Whitethroat** of the year.

The Warren's 16th **Great White Egret** flew east offshore on the 22nd with another fall of migrants on the 24th including a **Grasshopper Warbler**, a **Lesser Whitethroat**, a **Whinchat** and the site's latest ever **Fieldfare**. The only **Garden Warbler** of the Spring arrived on the final day of the month.



Red-rumped Swallow - Lee Collins



Fieldfare - Lee Collins

May

A very quiet month with migrants in short supply but three **Whinchat**, single **Cuckoo** and **Spotted Flycatcher** arrived early in the month. The only **Avocet** of the year was an unseasonal arrival on the 17th, with four **Cattle Egret** north the next day, the fourth site record. Terns were also largely absent with just a single **Arctic Tern** on the 29th and a complete blank for Common Tern for the first May ever.



Dunlin - Alan Keatley

Two more **Spotted Flycatcher** and a **Yellow Wagtail** arrived later in the month with a **Mistle Thrush** over on the 22nd perhaps the first sign of post-breeding movement. A pair of **Tufted Duck** offshore on the 25th were also unseasonal.

June

A **Puffin** flew south on the 2nd along with only the third **Little Tern** of spring. The same day saw a **Nuthatch** circling the Bight before dropping into bushes behind the hide, a flock of 38 **Long-tailed Tit**, the largest count on site since November 1985 and an unseasonal **Kingfisher** at the Main Pond.



Long-tailed Tit - Alan Keatley

An **Osprey** on the 6th was only the fourth June record, but all since 2011, with Storm Miguel producing the first of just three **Storm Petrel** for the year the next day. The month's highlight was a **Marsh Tit** in Dead Dolphin Wood on the 14th, the first since 2010 and only the 12th site record. A summer plumaged **Golden Plover** on the Golf Course on the 17th was the first June record in 15 years.

Breeding records included three pairs of **Girl Bunting**, although two of the nest sites have since been removed, two pairs of **Little Grebe** and **Stonechat** with **Reed Warbler** holding territory in all four ponds.



Little Grebe - Alan Keatley

July

The start of the month saw the first dispersing juvenile **Sandwich Tern**, **Black-headed** and **Mediterranean Gull** move through and the first **Oystercatcher** project birds returning for the winter.

The first of the month's six juvenile **Yellow-legged Gull** arrived on the 9th. Tern and wader numbers started to build with six **Arctic Tern** on the 19th and the first of six **Roseate Tern** the next day. Despite the low numbers a welcome increase on 2018.

An **Osprey** was present intermittently at the end of the month with two juvenile **Lapwing** on the 27th the first July record since 2013. Offshore a **Pomarine** and several **Arctic Skua** chased the increasing tern flocks and the first two **Balearic Shearwater** of the year flew south.



Roseate Tern (ringed at Rockabill, Dublin) - Lee Collins



Lapwing - Alan Keatley

August

A juvenile **Ruff** on the 1st was the first of the year but was eclipsed the next day when the Warren's sixth **Stone-curlew** was found roosting with **Oystercatcher** on Finger Point.



Stone-curlew - Lee Collins

A **Marsh Tit** also on the 2nd was presumed to be the bird first seen in June. This time it was seen again the next day when a juvenile **Black Tern** started a week long stay.

Two summer storms on the 9th & 10th produced 38 **Balearic Shearwater**, 18 **Arctic Skua** and two **Storm Petrel** with 13 more **Balearic Shearwater** later in the month.

A **Wood Sandpiper** was in front of the hide on the 14th with a juvenile **Roseate Tern** there two days later. Up to three juvenile **Curlew Sandpiper** were present from the 28th with five **Little Ringed Plover** during the month.

The first fall of the Autumn occurred on the 24th with single **Lesser Whitethroat** and **Garden Warbler** amongst other migrants with two **Lesser Whitethroat** and a **Whinchat** the next day. The last few days of the month saw single **Spotted Flycatcher** and **Lesser Whitethroat** in the bushes with a **Tree Pipit** overhead.



Little Ringed Plover - Lee Collins



Curlew Sandpiper - Alan Keatley

September

The change of month saw a distinct change in season with the first five **Wigeon** of the autumn flying in off the sea, but with the exception of a couple of **Curlew Sandpiper** in remained quiet.

A juvenile **Purple Sandpiper** with **Dunlin** in the estuary on the 8th was still present the next day when a **Garganey** was with **Teal** in the saltmarsh. Other migrants were limited until the 14th

when 31 **Pale-bellied Brent Geese**, a **Whinchat**, a **Sedge Warbler** and an **Osprey** arrived. A **Quail** flushed the next day was only the second Recording Area sighting following the first in May 1967. This run continued with a **Wryneck** on Warren Point on the 16th.



Sedge Warbler - Alan Keatley

Mid month saw another **Lesser Whitethroat** and the fifth **Spotted Flycatcher** of the year with 2019's first **Sooty Shearwater** on the 23rd. Seawatching on the 26th also saw 77 **Balearic Shearwater** and a site record 2160 **Gannet** head south.

The same day saw 500 **Meadow Pipit** overhead with the first **Siskin** and **Mistle Thrush** arriving in the following days and the year's first **Little Gull** offshore on the 29th.

October

The 10th site **Cetti's Warbler** was found on the 4th, lingering into November. A **Great White Egret** flew inland over the spit on the 8th with the first **Long-billed Dowitcher** for the Warren present during the afternoon and evening on the 10th. This bird arrived at Bowling Green Marsh on 26th September and remains into 2020. Nice of the north end to share a rarity for once!



Long-billed Dowitcher - Alan Keatley



Long-billed Dowitcher - Luke Harman

Seawatching the next day saw a rare four skua day with single **Great** and **Long-tailed Skua** south with 17 **Arctic** and three **Pomarine Skua**. The 12th saw another first for the Warren with a **Siberian Lesser Whitethroat** in the Entrance Bushes, unlike the Dowitcher it remained the next day.



Siberian Lesser Whitethroat (blythi) - Lee Collins

Vis mig was relatively slow but the ninth **Richard's Pipit** flew through on the 19th with 381 **Jackdaw**, and the third **Great White Egret** of the year headed south the next day. The first big **Wood Pigeon** movement was on the 21st with 3,351 overhead along with 859 **Jackdaw**, the second highest site count and 412 **Stock Dove**, the fifth highest count.

Scarcities included a **Black Redstart** was along the seawall on 24th, a **Sooty Shearwater** on the 26th, a brief **Hoopoe**, the 19th record, three **Pochard** and a **Little Gull** on the 30th and five **Greylag Geese** on the 31st, a day of noticeable wildfowl movement. These were all however eclipsed by a site record 12 **Girl Bunting**.



Siberian Lesser Whitethroat (blythi) - Luke Harman



Slavonian Grebe - Lee Collins Herbert, the resident spent a 13th year on the estuary.

November

The start of the month saw a couple of **Firecrest** and **Merlin** on site, with a late **Wheatear** and **Black Redstart** on the beach and a **Goosander** circling offshore on the 2nd.



Scandinavian Rock Pipit - Alan Keatley . This bird was ringed in on 6th March 2019 on Giske, Møre & Romsdal, Norway, 1,440 km to the NNE.

Vis Mig picked up again from the 3rd but finches still remained virtually absent. around 70,000 **Wood Pigeon** flew west in the next four days with over 1000 **Jackdaw**.

Offshore the first **Little Auk** since 2015 was close in on the 6th with the only **Long-tailed Duck** of the year on the 8th and the first migrant **Slavonian Grebe** since March 2017 the next day.

A **Snow Bunting** was overhead on the 17th, the same day the third **Black Redstart** of the autumn arrived. The sixth **Caspian Gull** for the Warren, a first winter, sheltered from south-easterly gales on Finger Point on the 20th.

The end of the month saw both the exposure of the 2017 Geotube sea defences and a new record tally of **Black-tailed Godwit** in Shutterton Creek with 976 counted on the 29th. This is almost double the previous peak of 512 in December 1984, the majority of the wintering population on the Exe.



Little Auk - Jo King



26/11/19

December

The year ended on a quiet note with reduced numbers of wintering birds and scarcities limited to 19 **Fieldfare** and two **Lapwing** overhead in cold weather on the 1st, a late or overwintering **Whimbrel** on the 2nd and a **Goosander** on the 23rd.

High numbers of **Snipe** were a feature of late month with at least 285 counted on the 22nd and four **Cattle Egret**, the fifth site record, were reported mid-month.



Golden Plover - Lee Collins

Mammals

The once ubiquitous **Rabbit** had a very poor year with a new strain of Viral Haemorrhagic Disease severely limiting numbers and you were more likely to spot a patrolling **Fox** during the summer months.

Most land mammals are however elusive on site, though small rodents, like **Bank Vole** or **Common Shrew** are occasionally seen moving stealthy through the undergrowth to avoid the attention of a hunting **Kestrel**. A **Water Vole** seen early in the year was probably a wandering individual, though signs were also noted later in the year. There was just one sighting of **Stoat** but no **Weasel** were seen but their continued presence of both was often confirmed by tracks on the Dune Ridge. Elsewhere fresh molehills can be seen near to the crazy golf whilst **Brown Rat** seek shelter amongst the boulders along the seawall.

Both **Common** and **Soprano Pipistrelle** could be seen hunting over the Main Pond at dusk.



Fox - Alan Keatley



Grey Seal - Lee Collins

Offshore there has been a complete reversal of fortunes of cetaceans with **Common Dolphin** living up to their name with several pods seen during the year. Up to 2015 there had only

been two records. This compares with previously regular sightings of **Bottle-nosed Dolphin**; a pod of seven in November was only the second record in the last two years. Occasional sightings of **Harbour Porpoise** showed this species also on the up. The resident **Grey Seal** remains faithful to the site, with at least one other individual during the year but the regular Common Seal was not seen.

Reptiles and Amphibians

Both **Common** and the introduced **Sand Lizard** were frequently seen along the Dune Ridge and Warren Point on warm sunny days, but their breeding areas face constant and ongoing threat from erosion. There were no Slowworm sightings reported this year. However after several lean years **Common Toad** were back in good numbers with plenty of toadlets seen making their way through the wet meadows during the summer.



Sand Lizard - Alan Keatley

Bees

The first warm day of the year on 19 January saw several **Buff-tailed Bumblebee** *Bombus terrestris* and **Honey Bee** *Apis mellifera* on early flowering shrubs. Overall however Bumblebee numbers were down this year, with no records of Heath Bumblebee and fewer **Tree** *Bombus hypnorum* and **Red-tailed Bumblebee** *Bombus lapidarius*.

Spring saw the first gathering of solitary bees near their nesting holes, some with attendant cleptoparasite bees. **Fork-jawed Nomad** *Nomada ruficornis* was recorded new for site, a cleptoparasite bee of **Orange-tailed Mining Bee** *Andrena haemorrhoa*.



Fork-jawed Nomad - Alan Keatley



Southern Cuckoo Bee - Alan Keatley

Other cleptoparasite / host pairings include **Painted Nomad** *Nomada furcata* / **Yellow-legged Mining Bee** *Andrena flavipes*, **Gooden's Nomad** *Nomada goodeniana* / **Buffish Mining Bee** *Andrena nigroaenea* and **Southern Cuckoo Bumblebee** *Bombus vestalis* / **Buff-tailed Bumblebee**.

In mid Summer **Black-thighed Epeolus** *Epeolus variegatus* were seen in small numbers with its host **Hairy-saddled Colletes** *Colletes fodiens*, as well as **Large Sharp-tailed Bee** *Coelioxys conoidea* and its host **Coastal Leafcutter Bee** *Megachile maritima*.



Coastal Leafcutter - Alan Keatley

There were also large congregations of **Silvery Leafcutter Bee** *Megachile leachella*, **Sandpit Mining Bee** *Andrena barbilabris* and **Green-eyed Flower Bee** *Anthophora bimaculata* along the Dune Ridge, with several **Pantaloön Bee** *Dasypoda hirtipes* in flower-rich grassland.

Notable finds this year were the first **Hairy-footed Flower Bee** *Anthophora plumipes* and **Long-faced Furrow Bee** *Lasioglossum punctatissimum* for the Recording Area, as well as several sightings of the nationally scarce **Black** *Andrena pilipes* and **Water-dropwort Mining Bee** *Andrena ampla*.



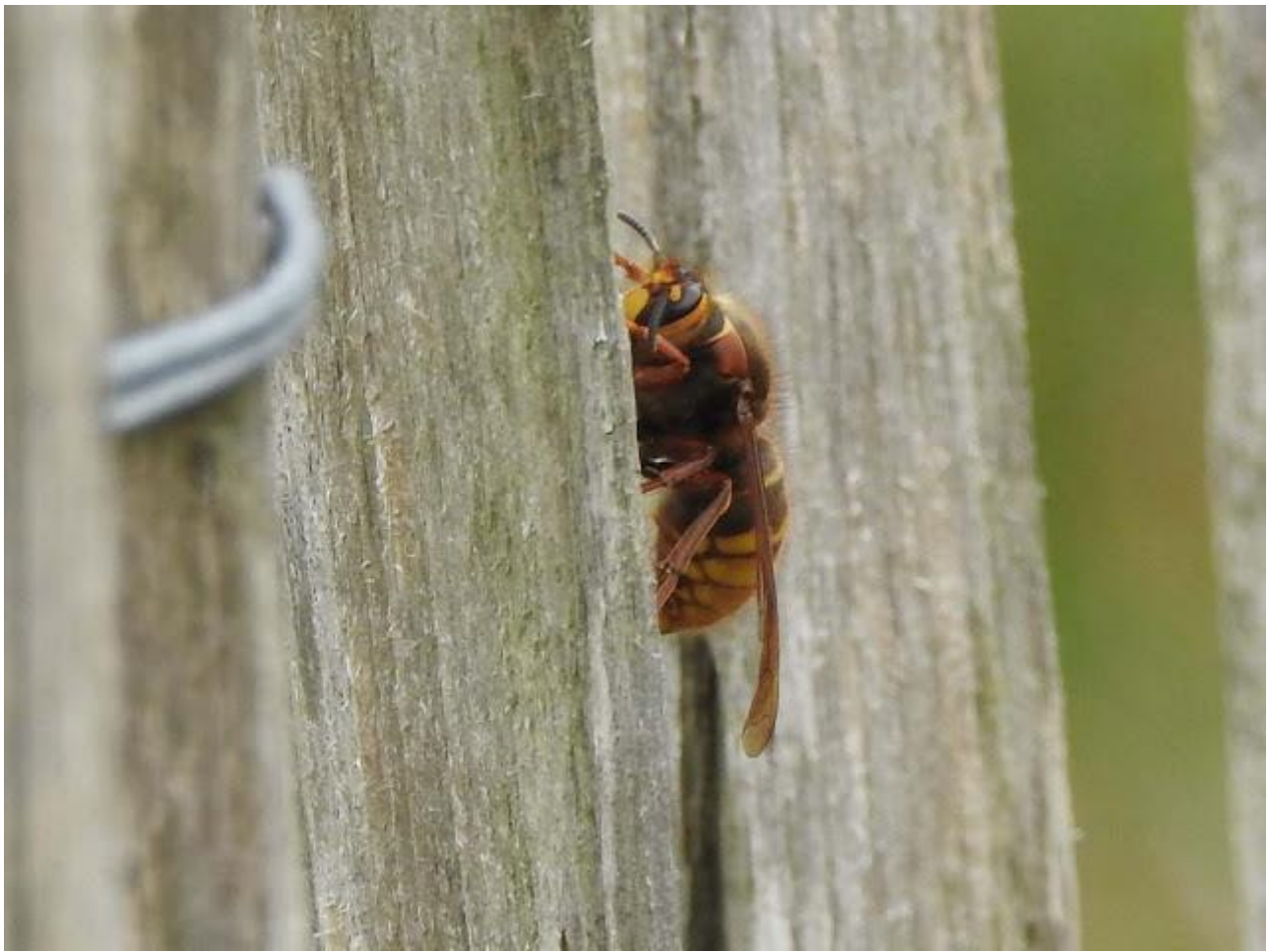
Black Mining Bee - Alan Keatley

Autumn saw the expected emergence of **Ivy Bee** *Colletes hederarum* alongside the remaining nectaring **Honey Bee** and Bumblebees. The season largely ended with the last flowering **Ivy**, but a few winter active **Buff-tailed Bumblebee** remained on the **Hebe** into December.

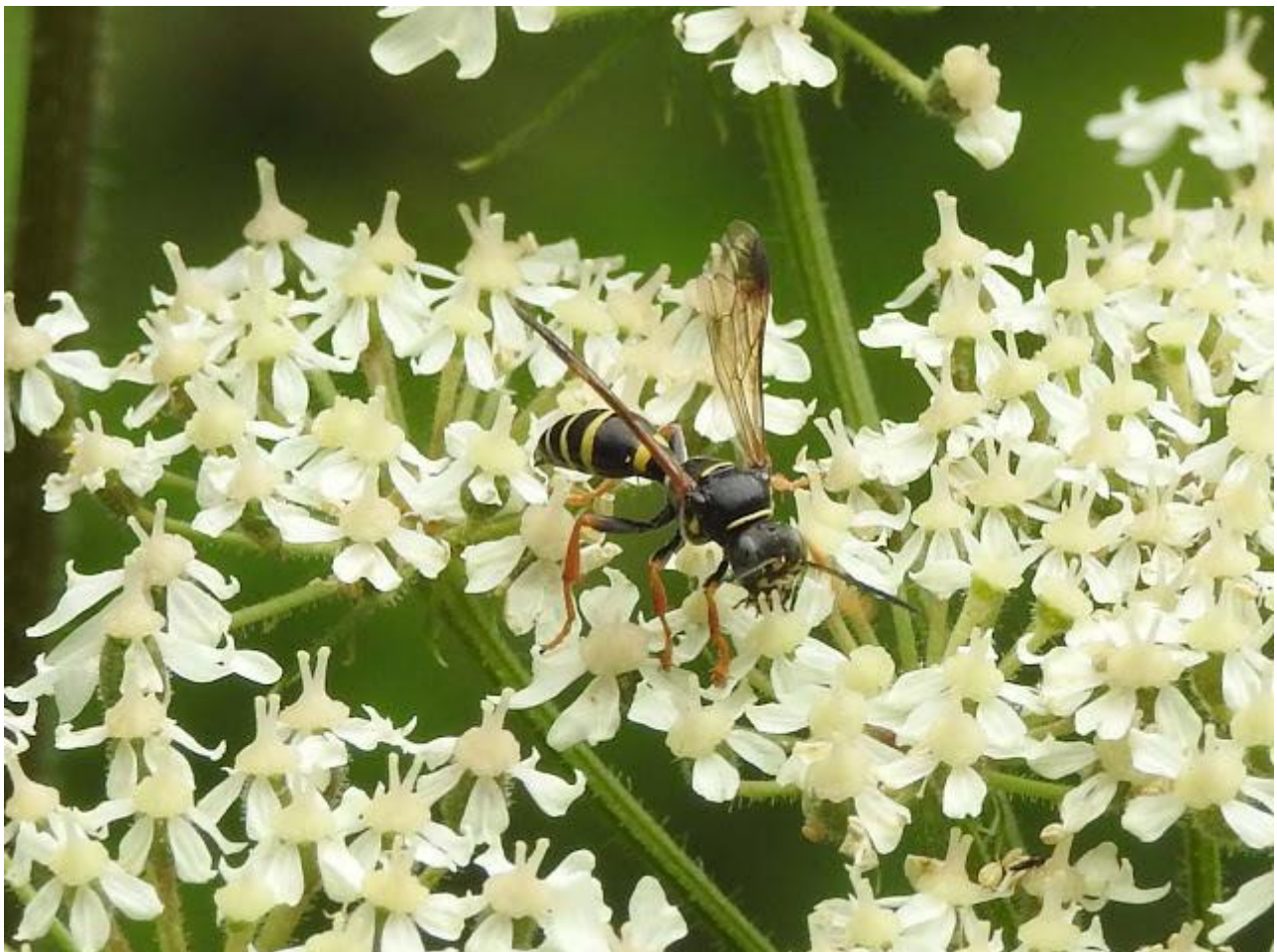
Wasps

A number of **Common Wasp** *Vespula vulgaris* nests around the site meant there were plenty of activity from these social insects throughout the Summer and into the Autumn. A new site species was a **Median Wasp** *Dolichovespula media* found on 18th May, this species has been spreading across Britain since first reported in 1980s, with several **Red Wasp** *Vespula rufa* nests also present. The occasional sighting of **Hornet** *Vespula crabro* maintained this species fragile presence on site.

A feature of the Summer is numbers of nectaring insects including several species of digger wasps on flowering umbellifers with **Astata boops**, **Ectemnius cavifrons**, **Ectemnius continuus**, **Field Digger Wasp** *Melinus arvensis*, **Slender-bodied Digger Wasp** *Crabro cribrarius* and **Four-banded Digger Wasp** *Gorytes quadrfasciatus*. A few **Bee-wolf** *Philanthus triangulum* were also noted, largely favouring **Gypsywort**, but no nests were located this year.



Median Wasp - Alan Keatley



Four-banded Digger Wasp - Alan Keatley

Other solitary wasps recorded included ***Ancistrocerus gazella***, ***Ancistrocerus scoticus*** and **Red-banded Sand Wasp** *Ammophila sabulosa*.

Many of the ichneumon wasps recorded have to go unidentified, but the spectacular looking species, ***Gasteruption jaculator*** was photographed.



Gasteruption jaculator - Alan Keatley

Sawflies

These insects are largely unrecorded on site, so it wasn't a surprise that several relatively common species were found. These include **Bramble Sawfly** *Arge cyanocrocea*, **Alder Sawfly** *Heterarthrus vagans*, ***Macrophya annulata***, ***Macrophya duodecimputata***, **Oak Sawfly** *Periclista lineolata*, **Birch Sawfly** *Scolioneura betuleti* and the recent invasive species **Berberis Sawfly** *Arge berberidis*. Other sawflies noted were the similar looking ***Aglaostigma aucupariae*** and ***Aglaostigma fulvipes***.



Aglaostigma fulvipes - Alan Keatley

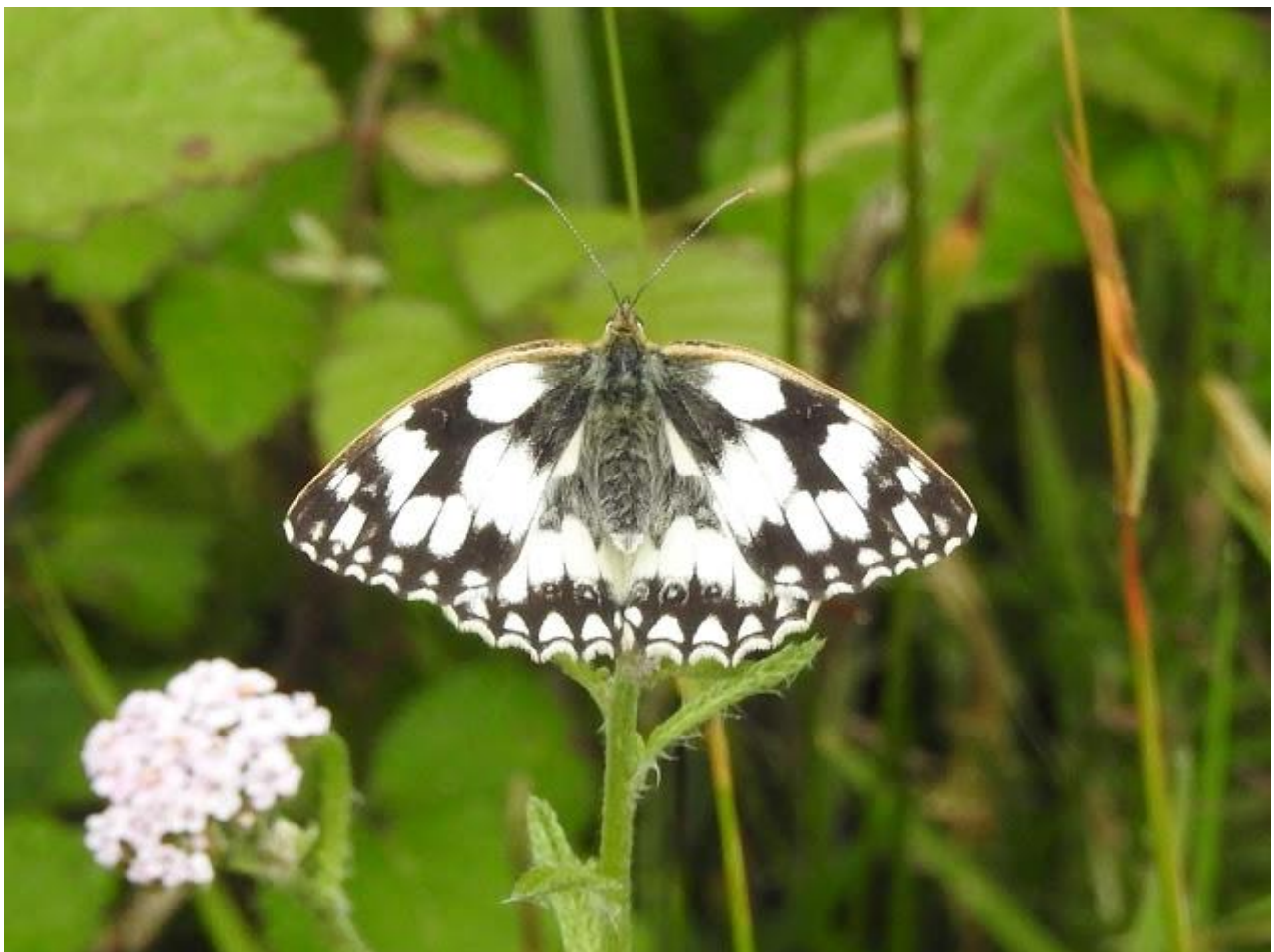
Butterflies

A migrant **Red Admiral** was the first butterfly of year on 23 February, but it was another month until further species appeared with **Comma**, **Peacock**, **Speckled Wood** and **Orange-tip** all noted before the end of March. At the same time single **Brimstone** and **Small Tortoiseshell** (both scarce visitors to site) were seen.

By mid-April **Holly Blue** and **Small Copper** were on the wing, and encouragingly more sightings of **Brimstone**. By mid-May the meadow butterflies appeared with **Wall Brown**, **Common Blue**, **Brown Argus** and **Large Skipper** with **Small Skipper** and **Meadow Brown** all on the wing at the beginning of June. Sadly no sightings of Green Hairstreak were reported this year.



Brimstone - Alan Keatley



Marbled White - Alan Keatley

It was a good year for **Marbled White**, although still only a handful of sightings, **Ringlet** was also present in higher numbers than usual by mid-Summer. However the highlight of the year was third site record of a **Purple Hairstreak** by the Main Pond on 27th July.



Purple Hairstreak - Luke Harman

The exceptionally high summer temperatures saw a large emergence of **Gatekeeper** and the start of the predicted **Painted Lady** influx. However the drought last year seemed to impact on the summer generations of other butterflies with fewer than normal numbers of grassland species such as **Small Copper**, **Brown Argus**, **Common Blue** and both **Large** and **Small Skipper**.

August saw **Painted Lady** passing through in good numbers almost daily, but not in the exceptional numbers seen elsewhere. By then migrant **Red Admiral**, **Small** and **Large White** were more noticeable and the first **Clouded Yellow** of the year was seen on 28th August.

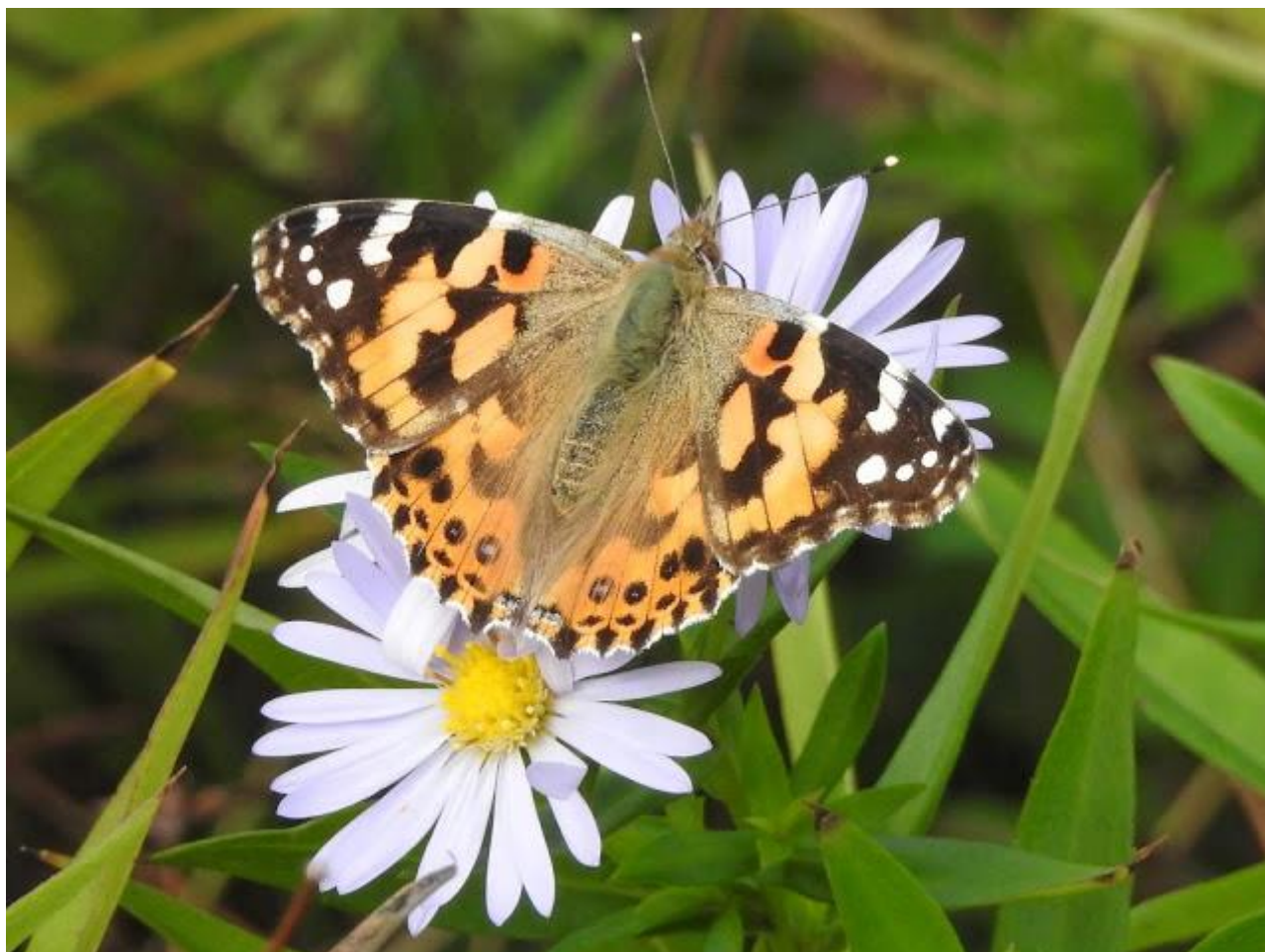


Brown Argus - Alan Keatley



Clouded Yellow - Alan Keatley

More **Painted Lady** were passing throughout September with a fresh generation on the wing, along with another half a dozen **Clouded Yellow**. The second sighting of the year of the once common **Small Tortoiseshell** was both welcoming and depressing at the same time. More encouraging and hopeful were sightings of third generation **Wall Brown**.



Painted Lady - Alan Keatley

Warm days in mid October saw the last **Meadow Brown**, **Small Copper** and **Speckled Wood** out and about with reasonable numbers of **Red Admiral** and more **Painted Lady** on late flowering **Ivy** until the last in mid-November.

Moths

A Devon Moth Group event on 20 July recorded over 100 species, including several sand dune specialists such as **Shore Wainscot**, **Hoary Knot-horn** *Gymnancyla canella*, **Sandhill Knot-horn** *Anerastia lotella* and **Hook-tipped Grass-veneer** *Platytes alpinella*, with **Pine Carpet** and **Water Veneer** *Acentria ephemerella* both new to site and **Least Carpet** found to be well established.

Other new species found this year included **Muslin Moth**, **Triple-spotted Clay**, **Rose Leaf Miner** *Stigmella anomalella* and the locally distributed **Treble-spot Flat-body** *Telechrysis tripuncta*.



Rose Leafminer

The usual day flying species such as **Mint Moth** *Pyrausta aurata*, **Six-spot Burnet**, **Yellow Shell** and **Green Longhorn** *Adela reaummurella* were seen in good numbers, although **Cinnabar** continue to decline.



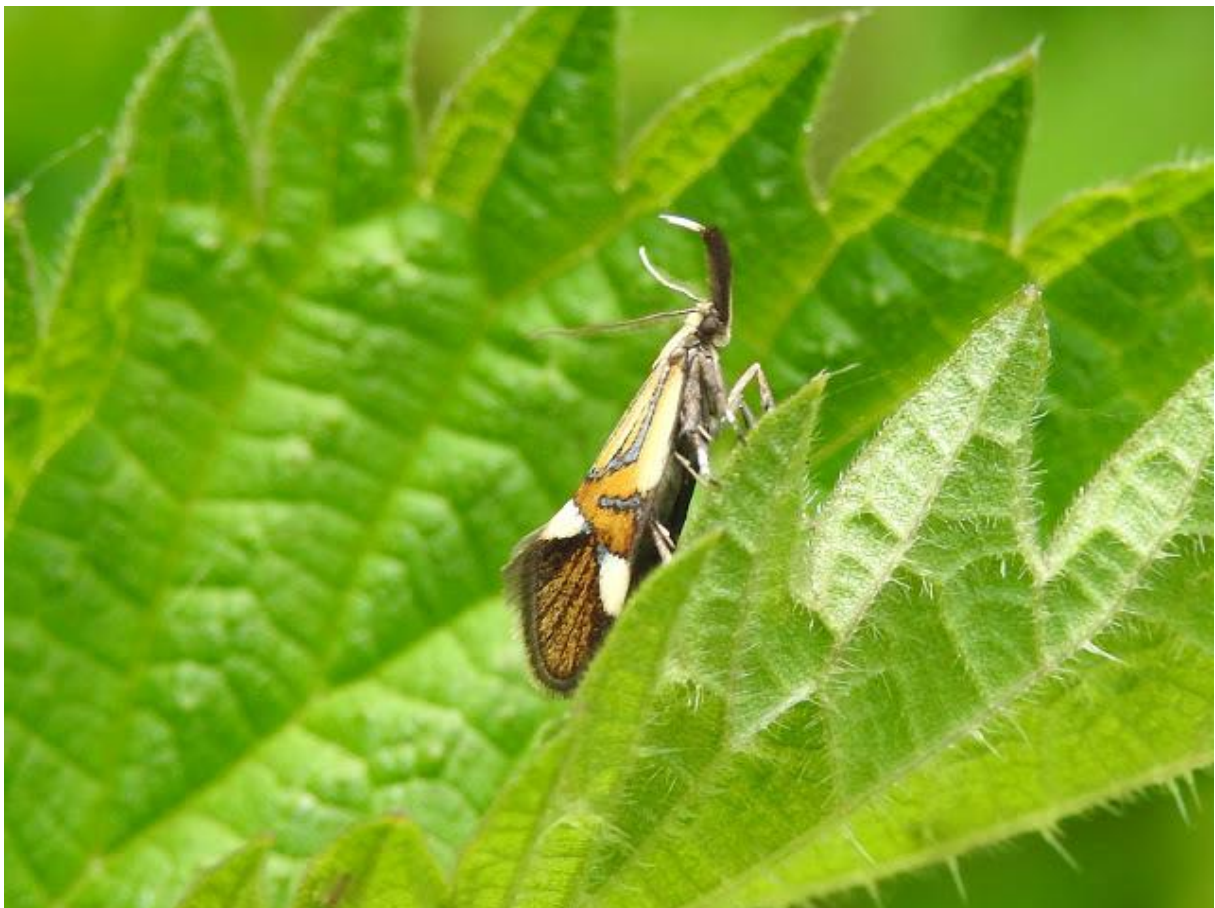
Green Longhorn - Alan Keatley

Regular migrant species such as **Silver Y**, **Rusty-dot Pearl** *Udea ferrugalis* and **Rush Veneer** *Nomophila noctuella* were in short supply, although a couple of **Hummingbird**

Hawkmoth were recorded nectaring on **Red Valerian** and a **Convulvulus Hawkmoth** spent a day on the Golf Course Clubhouse.



Jersey Tiger - Alan Keatley



Common Tubic - Alan Keatley

Other species recorded on site during the day included **Jersey Tiger**, **Eyed Hawkmoth**, **The Sallow** and **Pink-barred Sallow**, **Thistle Ermine** *Myelois circumvoluta*, **Common Alabonia** *geoffrella* and **Sulphur Tubic** *Esperia sulphurella*.

Nests of **Lackey** caterpillars were widespread but the nests of **Brown-tail** caterpillars are now largely confined to Warren Point, much of their favoured bramble having been removed. **Brown-tail** was sponsored by the Recording Group in the new [National Moth Atlas](#).



Lackey - Alan Keatley

Dragonflies & Damselflies

Small Red-eyed Damselfly continued their recovery as a breeding species at the Main Pond, with **Hairy Dragonfly** making a welcome reappearance after a blank in 2018 and the first **Black-tailed Skimmer** since 2016 was recorded. **Emperor Dragonfly** once again held territory at all ponds on site.

Good numbers of **Azure Damselfly** emerged but were less numerous than last year, with **Blue-tailed Damselfly** also in short supply. Other species were also present in reduced numbers with just two **Broad-bodied Chaser** holding territory and there were far fewer **Migrant Hawker** recorded, although **Southern Hawker** remained stable.



Emperor - Lee Collins

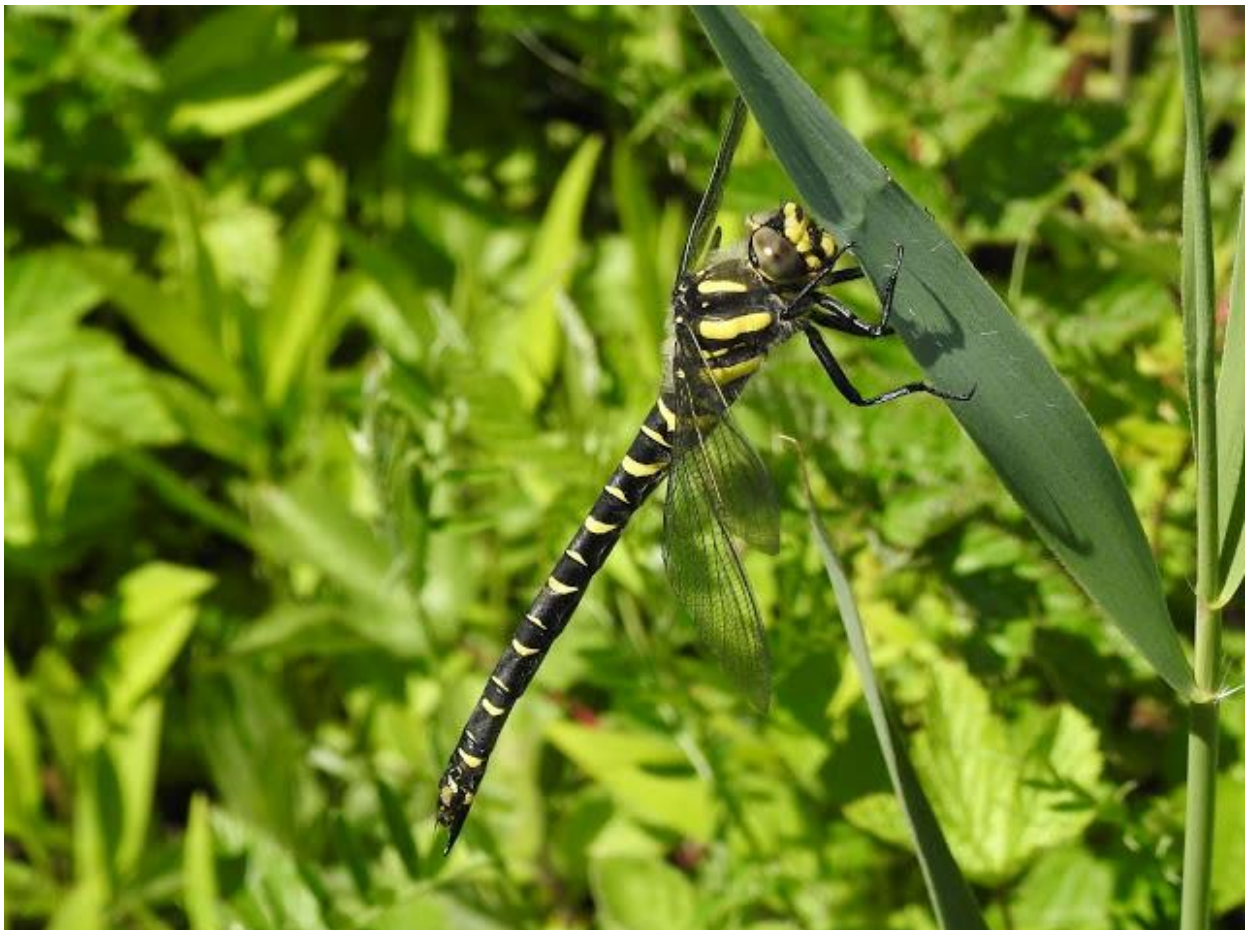


Broad-bodied Chaser - Alan Keatley

Common Darter had an extended season with four, including a pair ovipositing, at the Main Pond on 16 November. However they only exceeded a daily total of ten on a couple of dates this year.



Common Darter - Alan Keatley



Golden-ringed Dragonfly - Alan Keatley

In terms of migrants to the Recording Area there were only two sightings of **Golden-ringed Dragonfly** but more travelled sightings included a **Red-veined Darter** on 6th July, and the fourth site record of **Vagrant Emperor** on 16th October. A probable Vagrant Emperor was also noted on 3rd November.

Bugs - Hemiptera

Fifteen new species were recorded on the Warren this year bringing the overall total to 125. In this diverse group of insects the new species consisted of aphids, damsel bugs, planthoppers and leafhoppers. These new species included **Pea Aphid** *Acyrtosiphon pisum*, **Water Mint Leafhopper** *Eupteryx thoulessi*, **Ant Damselbug** *Himacerus mirmicoides*, **Bay Sucker** *Trioza alacris*, **Elaeaganus Psyllid** *Cacopsylla fulguralis* and **Plain Tamarisk Bug** *Tiponia brevirostris*.



Bishop's Mitre - Alan Keatley

Alongside these new records familiar species present included **Bishop's Mitre**, **Parent**, **Green** and **Gorse Shieldbugs**. **Dock Bug** congregated in some numbers with the occasional **Rhombic** and **Denticulate Leatherbug** found in the short grassland.

The Warren also provides a home for the local **Dune Spurge Bug** *Dicranocephalus agilis* and the ground bug **Beosus maritimus** both of which were found in good numbers along the Dune Ridge



Parent Shieldbug - Alan Keatley.



Dune Spurge Bug - Alan Keatley

Beetles - Coleoptera

It was also good beetle year with seventeen new species recorded. These included rove beetles, ground beetles, chafers and leaf beetles amongst others.



Opatrum sabulosum

Notable finds include **Black Oil Beetle** *Meloe proscarabaeus*, which had emerged from a **Yellow-legged Mining Bee** colony, the nationally scarce **Opatrum sabulosum**, **Summer Chafer** *Amphimallon solstitialis*, **Dune Chafer** *Anomala dubia*, **Figwort Weevil** *Cionus scrophularie*, **Sea Rocket Flea Beetle** *Psylliodes marcida*, **Oedemera femoralis** - a false blister beetle, **Rosemary Beetle** *Chrysolina americana* and the **Bronze Leaf Beetle** *Chrysolina banksii*.

Familiar species recorded included **Common Soldier Beetle** *Rhagonycha fulva*, the Marram weevils **Otiorhynchus atroapterus** & **Philopedon plagiatus**, **Black and Yellow Longhorn** *Rutpela maculata*, **Red-headed Cardinal** *Pyrochroa serraticornis*, **Thick-thighed Pollen Beetle** *Oedemera nobilis* and **Wasp Beetle** *Clytus arietis*.



Bronze Leaf Beetle - Alan Keatley



Wasp Beetle - Alan Keatley

Despite a good year for the **Tree Lupin Aphid**, ladybird numbers didn't recover with just five species recorded, unfortunately most of these were the invasive **Harlequin Ladybird**.

Spiders

Approximately 130 spiders species out of British total of 670 have been recorded at the Warren, however most are old records pre 2000, including *Euophrys herbigrada* at one of only four UK post 1992 locations. With no recent spider surveys there is scope to refine this and no doubt discover many more species. One nationally scarce sand dune specialist recorded was the **Dune Jumper** *Marpissa nivoyi* with the locally rare *Alopecosa cuneata* also discovered this year.



Dune Jumper - Andrew Cunningham

Other new species found year were included **Stealthy Ground Spider** *Haplodrassus signifier*, **Bleeding Heart Spider** *Nigma puella*, **False Widow Spider** *Steatoda bipunctata* and **Cheiracanthium erraticum**.

The majority of records were however limited to common species such as **Garden Orbweaver** *Araneus diadematus*, **Nursery Web Spider** *Pisura mirabilis*, **Dune Wolf Spider** *Arctosa perita*, **Gorse Orbweaver** *Agalenatea redii* and the **Cricket Bat Spider** *Mangora acalypha*.



Flower Crab Spider - Alan Keatley

Elsewhere the **Flower Crab Spider** *Misumea vatia* could be found hiding amongst the flowerheads, the **Missing Sector Orbweaver** *Zygiella x-notata* was around the Amusements and on wooden fencing the ever alert **Zebra Jumping Spider** *Salticus scenicus*. However the spectacular looking **Wasp Spider** *Argiope bruennichi*, once a feature of the nature reserve, was limited to a single sighting. Requiring areas of uncut vegetation over winter, it has been scarce in recent years and next year should be looked for in any undisturbed and uncut areas of grassland.

Other arachnids included five new gall mite species, including ***Aceria megacerus*** on **Water Mint**, two new harvestman, ***Leiobunum rotundum*** and **Spring Harvestman** *Platybunus triangularis* and the Recording Area's first pseudoscorpion ***Chthonius ischocheles***.



Zebra Jumping Spider - Alan Keatley

Grasshoppers & Crickets

There were no new species this year to add to 21 previously recorded at Dawlish Warren, but bearing in mind that the British total is just 34 this was no surprise. The new arrival from last year, Roesel's Bush-cricket could not be found again, confirming the male last year was a lone vagrant. It has however become established at Exmouth so other records can hopefully be expected. However there was still a good selection of species around the meadows and scrubby edges.

The season started with **Common Ground-hopper** in April, with **Grey, Oak, Speckled** and **Dark Bush-cricket** appearing by mid Summer. Although tall vegetation helped to conceal **Long-winged Conehead** and **Great Green Bush-cricket**, their calls give them away and they could still be found with careful looking. No such problem finding the widespread **Common Green, Meadow** and **Field Grasshopper** with their giveaway chirping (stridulation) sound coming from areas of short turf. Unfortunately there was no sound or sign of any Mottled Grasshopper or Slender Groundhopper this year.



Common Ground-hopper - Alan Keatley



Long-winged Conehead - Alan Keatley

Related species included **Tawny Cockroach** and the ubiquitous **Common Earwig**. The nationally scarce **Lesne's Earwig** was relocated but the known wintering population (in umbellifer stems) was unfortunately cut down and then burnt in mid December.

Flowering Plants

The year began as is now traditional with the BSBI New Year Plant hunt which saw a total of 34 species in flower including **Sea Spurge**, **Sweet Violet** and, new for the Recording area, **Winter Jasmine**. Several other new plant species were also found this year bringing the Warren total to over 720. All of these were non-native species or likely garden escapes. **Rose of Sharon** appeared on Warren Point, whilst **Fox and Cubs** flowered just inside the Entrance Tunnel.

Elsewhere **Cockspur** arrived with imported soil and **Lamb's Ear**, **Elaeagnus** and **Daisy Bush** are starting to spread from Council plantings.



120+ Sand Crocus

An exceptionally warm and sunny period of weather in mid-March brought out what may have the best ever display of **Sand Crocus** with over 2000 flowers in bloom, with some rediscovered as far up as the 7th fairway. Other short turf specialists such as **Upright Chickweed**, **Early Forget-me-not** and **Suffocated Clover** also put on a good show.



Sand Crocus

Orchids came to the fore midsummer with a carpets of **Southern Marsh Orchid** and **Marsh Helleborine**, the former have reduced considerably whilst the latter go from strength to strength. **Bee** and **Pyramidal Orchid** showed a year on increase in numbers with 36 and 22 spikes respectively, and the lone **Green-winged Orchid** again flowered with two more found in a new location. The last orchid of the year, **Autumn Ladies-tresses**, were out in exceptional numbers across Greenland Lake. The sea defence works aim to return many of these areas back to a tidal creek, with the vast majority of these disappearing so enjoy them whilst you can



Southern Marsh Orchid - Alan Keatley

Also in Greenland Lake three flowering **Snake's-head Fritillary**, a vibrant mass of **Yellow Iris** and **Meadowsweet**, with **Creeping Willow** and **Small Adder's-tongue** still present and **Devil's-bit Scabious** rediscovered.



Yellow Flag - Alan Keatley

On Warren Point the summer weather again saw the nationally rare **Sea Daffodil** in bloom, one of just three locations in the UK. Also present an exotic escape in the form of Devon's only **Belladonna Lily**, this species was previously lost when the Dune Ridge was reprofiled.

The increased erosion vastly reduced areas of the Dune Ridge and the Desert on Warren Point, this has seen much of the **Sea Holly** take a battering from high tides, but it still manages to cling on in places.



Sea Daffodil - Alan Keatley

Mosses & Liverworts

Petalwort *Petalophyllum ralfsii* remains in good numbers around Greenland Lake but seems to be in decline elsewhere on site. There was positive news with the discovery of **Micheli's Balloonwort** *Sphaerocarpos michelii* and **Blue Crystalwort** *Riccia crystallina* in the Recording Area. This is the second Devon location for these nationally rare liverworts, although the other site is just the other side of the Railway Tunnel. A further discovery concerned the more widespread **Bifid Crestwort** *Lophocolea bidentata* on willows in Dead Dolphin Wood.

Fungi

Dawlish Warren hosts an impressive range of over 450 fungi species ranging from large puffballs to minute leaf spots. One of the more noticeable of these so called microfungi is **Hemlock Water Dropwort Rust** *Protomyces macrosporus* which causes a gall to form on the host plant.

This year several new species were discovered, including **Holly Leaf Tuft** *Pyrenochaeta ilicis*, **Wrack Spot** *Stigmidium ascophylli*, **Sycamore Mildew** *Sawadaea bicornis* and **Mint Rust** *Puccinia menthae*, these groups are often identifiable by association with their host species.



Hemlock Water Dropwort Rust - Alan Keatley



Parasol Mushroom - Alan Keatley

In the main autumn season there were good numbers of **Parasol Mushroom** scattered across Greenland lake with **Sandy Mushroom** *Agaricus devoniensis* and **Dune Brittlestem** *Psathyrella ammophila* on Warren Point. Another good find was the **Bird's Nest Fungi** *Crucibulum laeve*, but Dune Stinkhorn remained absent. The main area for this species has been lost through a combination of erosion and the sea defence work.



Bird's Nest Fungi - Lee Collins

Amongst the larger mushrooms **Ergot** *Claviceps purpurea* var. *spartinae* was found on **Cord-grass** in the saltmarsh along with its hyper parasite **Gibberella gordonii**, **Hypocrea pulvinata** was parasitizing **Birch Polypore** in Dead Dolphin Wood and several **Pestle Puffball** where growing under a willow on Warren Point, these matured leaving behind their distinctive stems.



Pestle Puffball - Alan Keatley

Lichens

Two of the Warren's rarest species both had a poor year with some ***Ramalina fraxinea*** lost when their trees were felled and one of the largest patches of ***Peltigera neckeri*** lost to erosion on Warren Point. On the plus side two brief visits in December found over 20 species new to the Recording Area including ***Aspicilia contorta***, ***Collema tenax***, ***Opegrapha physciaria*** and ***Toninia aromatica***, however three of these new species were found on cut vegetation awaiting burning.

The same visits also saw ten new species of lichenicolous fungi recorded on site including ***Vouauxiella lichenicola***, ***Intralichen christiansenii*** and ***Didymocyrtis slaptoniensis***.