

Warren Golf Club: Wildlife highlights Winter 2023/24

All photos from Dawlish Warren Recording Group www.dawlishwarren.co.uk

Weather: **December:** Started with a rare cold spell, but ended mild, wet and stormy, with 60% more rain and nearly 2C warmer than average. **January:** A slightly colder and drier start to the year. **February:** Again wet and mild, but with over twice the average rainfall and temperature 2C above average.

Birds

The winter wader roosts often put on a high tide show by the 7th with around 4,000 birds, mostly Oystercatcher and Dunlin, taking to the air if a marauding Peregrine appeared. On the course a wintering Dartford Warbler, Green Woodpecker often seen on fairways or heard yaffling, and 24 Cirl Bunting, a new site record, on seed by the 18th tee.



Cirl Bunting



Green Woodpecker

Large numbers of Dark-bellied Brent Geese began to graze the fairways, having depleted food elsewhere around the estuary, feeding up before their migration back to Siberia. From the other direction, the Warren's first Lesser Scaup, a rare diving duck from North America, was in the estuary.



Dark-bellied Brent Geese



Grey Squirrel

Other Wildlife

A Grey Squirrel took up residence alongside the 2nd the first one to ever stay on the Warren for more than a couple of days. A quiet time for flowers but 29 species were in flower on the New Year Plant Hunt, with more emerging as the days lengthened. The last Red Admiral of the year was on 11th December with the first of the year on 5th January, Buff-tailed Bumblebee were active on warm, sunny days from 16th January.



Sand Crocus



Buff-tailed Bumblebee

The Warren Golf Club was nominated for the 3rd year running in the national Golf Environment Awards, but sadly failed to hole the big prize, congratulations to all involved., we'll try again this year.

If you see anything of interest whilst out on the course or have any wildlife queries please let Jon know or email dawlish_warren@hotmail.com



The first day of spring!