

Warren Golf Club: Wildlife highlights Summer 2024

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

Weather: **June:** Near average temperature, but very dry month with just 16% average rainfall. **July:** Temperature slightly below average, with over double the average rainfall, 40% of which fell on the 8th. **August:** Slightly above average temperatures, with just 58% of average rainfall, with over 60% falling on 24th.

Birds

Breeding birds were again headlined by the nationally rare Cirl Bunting with several pairs in the scrub, with them a couple of pairs of Stonechat, including a showy pair alongside the 15th. Swallows had two broods in the barn with other pairs prospecting elsewhere. Renovations at the clubhouse started after the House Sparrows finished nesting, with their nest sites now blocked, nestboxes will be put up ahead of next year.



Cirl Bunting



Stonechat

Although it was our summer, autumn migration begins early for Oystercatcher with numbers building during July, with colour ringed birds returning from breeding sites for another winter on the Warren. Over 100 birds had returned by the end of August from breeding grounds as far apart as Birmingham, Shetland and Norway.

From late June Sandwich Tern could be heard and seen over the 7th tee moving between the estuary and fishing areas offshore. These came mainly from English Channel and Irish Sea colonies, but others hatched out in Dutch colonies with one from Poland, just the fourth Polish recovery in the UK, all from the Warren. Also from Poland, a Black-headed Gull recorded for the fifth July in succession.



Wryneck



Wheatear

Also pausing on their journey to Africa, Wheatear could be seen along the fairways and several Osprey were seen in the estuary. Other migrants included Pied and Spotted Flycatcher, with a Wryneck a rare visitor. In late August the Wigeon and Teal began to return for the winter as wader numbers, including Redshank and Curlew, increased.

Other Wildlife

The poor weather impacted insect numbers but the presence of several Marbled White and Wall Brown was encouraging. Emperor, Southern and Migrant Hawker dragonflies were recorded breeding in the ponds, with Golden-ringed Dragonfly visiting from the mainland on occasion.

Following the display of Southern Marsh Orchid, another less showy orchid, Autumn Ladies-tresses, also had a good year with a new location found alongside the 8th. New plant species for the Warren included Twiggy Mullein and Many-seeded Goosefoot with several Grass Vetchling around the 17th tee, only the second record in 20 years.



Grass Vetchling



Golden-ringed Dragonfly



Autumn Ladies-tresses

Although no moth light was run, several species were encountered, alongside the day-flying species Cinnabar and Six-spot Burnet. These included Jersey Tiger, Portland Ribbon Wave and the migrants, Silver Y, Rush Veneer and Bright Wave, the latter only the fourth Devon record. Other new discoveries included the nationally scarce ground spider *Zelotes electus*, the first Devon record for over 30 years, the weevil *Orchestes pilosus*, the ichneumon wasp *Heteropelma amictum* and two ruby-tailed wasps, *Hedychrum nobile* and *Chrysis angustula*.



Jersey Tiger



Poplar Hawkmoth

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