

Warren Golf Club: Wildlife highlights Jan-Apr 2023

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

Weather: **January:** 30% above average (30 year) rainfall with average temperature; **February:** less than 10% of average rainfall with temperature 1C above average; **March:** two times the average rainfall and 1C above average temperature; April: Cloudier & wetter than average, with near average temperature.

Birds

With the cold spring wildfowl and waders in the estuary delayed their northerly migration, large numbers remaining into March. A wintering Sandwich Tern preferred the Warren over West Africa and two Spoonbill were long stayers.

Last year's Kestrel continued to frequent the course, from its nest site in Eastdon and Green Woodpecker could be seen on fairways or more often be heard yaffling; from March the first Wheatear were passing through on migration, those arriving into May heading for Greenland. Also out of Africa the pair of Swallow returned to the workshed and Whitethroat moved into the Gorse alongside the residents, Stonechat, Linnet and Cirl Bunting.



Whitethroat



Green Woodpecker

Plants & Insects

The nationally scarce, and bright red, Mossy Stonecrop did not suffer from last year's drought, increasing across the 1st/18th fairways, one of only two Devon sites. Warren Crocus emerged on 25 March, three days later than 2022. Surveys showed thousands flowering, with several new locations and the majority of other populations increasing.



Sand Crocus



Early Forget-me-not

Sunny spells brought out the first butterflies of the year, but with the exception of Orange-tip, they were in very low numbers. Other pollinators included five species of bumblebee, 18 solitary bee, including the nationally rare Black Mining Bee, and 13 hoverfly species, most favouring flowering willows and Dandelions.



Orange-tip



Black Mining Bee

The wet weather may not have benefitted insects but there was a good spread of spring fungi, the most obvious being rings of St George's Mushroom, these rings can be several hundred years old. A further half a dozen new species were found for the Recording Area, including two new to Devon.



St George's Mushroom



Eyelash Fungi (a few mm across)

Ringing recoveries

Over 1,000 ring reads were made from seven species. The majority came from the Exe estuary study with 300 different Oystercatcher, 20 Dunlin, five Curlew and three Grey Plover.

Recoveries from elsewhere included two Dunlin from Poland, three Shelduck from Seaton, two Curlew from Norfolk Oystercatchers from Holland and Wales and a Whimbrel recorded on passage for the seventh spring in succession.

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