

Goldie M

by Goldie M, 08-Jan-11 10:22 PM GMT

Just when I was dreaming of Spring, the snow came again on Thursday, even the birds thought Spring was on the way. The Doves had started cooing and walking in the garden I noticed my bulbs were starting to appear, every thing had a cover of snow. Boy was it cold! I did manage to take some bird pic's yesterday,(Friday) then rain followed the snow, lovely! 😞
A nice pic of a Gold Finch though, at least something to cheer me up. 😊



Goldie M Swallow Tail

by Goldie M, 23-Jan-11 10:26 PM GMT

Well I've done it, booked the caravan for a week in June in Norfolk. I've never seen a Swallow Tail. We went to Norfolk last year, we did all the places they were supposed to be, only to find we were too early, (only by a week,) but, a week made all the difference. When I read in Topics about some one going the week after and finding them I was green with envy 😊

I also want to find some Hair Streaks, I don't care what kind has I've never seen one of those either.

In the mean time I'll keep going to the spare ground I spoke of earlier in my diary to see if any thing is there, eggs etc.

It seems we've got some White Hair streaks in Rossendale, Helmshore to be precise on the old Rail tracks so I'll try there as well. It feels like things are moving now and Spring is just around the corner, even my Snow Drops are showing their heads. Goldie 😊

Re: Goldie M Swallow Tail

by grumpy, 24-Jan-11 01:12 AM GMT

Hi Goldie, we visited Norfolk last year to the same ends, visited all the recommended sites. Found that at Hickling Broad although good spot to see them they were buzzing over the reeds at too great a distance to photograph. We tried Strumpshaw Fen and found that they could be photographed round a flower bed planted up with sweet williams. nowhere seemed to have natural flowers for them to feed on at close quarters until we went to How Hill.

Pay a visit to the Marshmans cottage and take a walk alongside the river Ant past the two skeleton windmills, there are lots of thistles growing there that they regularly visit and you get up close and personal with them. Dont worry if its not wall to wall sunshine, it was overcast and warm saw around half a dozen . The wardens were surprised they were flying, take a look round the nature walk there for a small charge and you will see many Dragonflies too including Norfolk Hawker for photo opportunities.

We were there 8th of June camping.

Best wishes for a successful foray

Dave C

Re: Goldie M Swallow Tail

by Jack Harrison, 24-Jan-11 02:09 AM GMT

GoldieM:

I also want to find some Hair Streaks, I don't care what kind has I've never seen one of those either.

Not sure where you live but it shouldn't be too difficult unless you live on a remote Scottish island 😊 Green H will be the easiest to find and indeed, the first to be on the wing.

Jack

Re: Goldie M Swallow Tail

by Goldie M, 25-Jan-11 04:12 AM GMT

Thanks Grumpy, I've taken notes of what you said, and we'll follow your advice. Thanks again for your help, I'll let you know when we get back if we were successful. We go on the 5th till the 12th Goldie M 😊

Re: Goldie M Swallow Tail

by Goldie M, 25-Jan-11 04:33 AM GMT

It might be easy for you Jack to find Hair Streaks, I've only really been interested in Butterflies for about 2 years, I've been all over the country and still I've not seen any. Maybe they are few and far between in Bolton Jack, whatever the reason I'm on the trail again this year. When you say they are first on the wing, we only seem to get early Peacocks and Tortoise-Shell round here. I took pics of both in my garden in March last year. The others don't arrive in our gardens until Sept.

So, it's a fact we've to go out and look for them, so it's not for the want of trying. If you know any places near Bolton they may be hiding please let me know 🤔 Goldie M

Re: Goldie M Swallow Tail

by Jack Harrison, 25-Jan-11 10:02 PM GMT

Goldie M:

It might be easy for you Jack to find Hair Streaks

I can assure you it's never easy to find hairstreaks but Green is probably the easiest species to find. Apart from any other reason, I would argue that it is the prettiest of our five hairstreaks.

I would think that you might have to go to the coast for you nearest GH sites. Perhaps North Wales or Lancashire from Southport northwards. I am not familiar with your area but these are the sort of localities I would search.

Have you looked up the Green Hairstreak species account? This has maps and localities.

<http://www.ukbutterflies.co.uk/species.php?species=rubi>

Jack

Re: Goldie M Swallow Tail

by Goldie M, 26-Jan-11 04:45 AM GMT

Thanks Jack, we live about 1hr from the Lakes and travel up there alot in the Summer, not so much in Spring though. We go up to see the High Brown Frit, Dark Green, Pearl Bord etc . Anyway according to what I've read and the Map , it looks like we'll have to go up much sooner. Seems there are Green Hairstreaks at Warton Craig, also White LHS. Arnside Knot has Purple HS. From the the top of the Knot you get a fantastic view of Morcambe Bay and the Lake District , of course you need really nice weather, lets hope we get some in Spring .I'll let you know if we do and if we see HS.

Sothport dunes are great for Graylings and Common Blues, plus alot of others even the fritillaries, sometimes the Wall, but the latter two are few and far between, I've not heard of anyone seeing Hairstreaks there. If they have I'd like to know as thats much nearer to where I live. Thanks again for help Goldie M 😊

Re: Goldie M Swallow Tail

by Jack Harrison, 26-Jan-11 05:43 PM GMT

One major consideration today is that the flight seasons are now earlier than they used to be. Modern publications get it right but the older ones can be a couple of weeks out. So spring, especially late April and May, has become a much bigger butterfly season than it might have been in the past.

The first new emergences of the year - eg Orange Tips - occur mid-April, give-or-take a week or so. From then until early July, there is a rapid succession of species. But nowadays after mid-July, there is only a handful of new species - Silver Spotted Skipper, Brown Hairstreak and immigrant Clouded Yellows. Sadly in your location, you won't get S S Skippers or Brown Hairstreaks.

At Arnside and those other delightful localities, while summer is certainly good (and I plan a visit this year for High Brown), don't miss out on the goodies to be found much earlier in the season.

Good hunting.

Jack

Re: Goldie M Swallow Tail

by Paul Wetton, 26-Jan-11 10:33 PM GMT

Hi Goldie

I've never seen Purple Hairstreak at Arnside Knott but have seen White-leter hairstreak there. I found one on Bramble last year in one of the clearings close to the path that goes through the small wood near the top of the Knott. It's the wood towards the car park where there is a gate in the wall, if that

makes any sense.

If you walk up the north face of the Knott from the car park you enter the wood through a gate and the first small glade to the left of the path was where I found the WLH.

Re: Goldie M Swallow Tail

by Vince Massimo, 27-Jan-11 12:51 AM GMT

Hi Goldie,

I saw White Letter Hairstreak at Arnside Knott in exactly the same place as Paul. My report dated 10th July 2009 gives exact details of the location. You can find it here:-

viewtopic.php?f=21&t=3322

There are a couple of elms on this part of the site on the edge of the clearing. I reported at the time that I saw a White Letter Hairstreak at different times of the day but, reviewing my photos later, I determined that they were two different individuals.

Vince

Re: Goldie M Swallow Tail

by Goldie M, 31-Jan-11 12:02 AM GMT

Thanks Jack for your Information, last year I followed what the book said about Swallow T, I ended up missing them. So it taught me a lesson. Now I tend to go on how cold the weather is in Spring etc more so where I live.

April 2009 I saw loads of Orange Tips in the woods near where I live, last year it was May before they got there in any numbers, so the conditions around here dictate alot . I was up in Gaits Barrow NP last July around the 21st and it was like a wonderland. We followed the slate trail until we reached a meadow fence, instead of going through the gate there we cut up this quiet slope between the woods, on the slopes thistles were there in large numbers and so were the Butterflies.

Dark Green Frits, High Brown, Pearl Bordered Frits, Pearl Bord, we were amazed. even my husband stood with his mouth openHa! Ha! I hope your has lucky as we were.Goldie 😊

Re: Goldie M Swallow Tail

by Goldie M, 31-Jan-11 12:12 AM GMT

Thanks Paul and Vince, I know where you mean and I'll try there in July, hope fully sooner. Goldie M 😊

Re: Goldie M Swallow Tail

by Jack Harrison, 31-Jan-11 12:57 AM GMT

Goldie, I now seek your advice.

I plan to visit the Arnside/Gait Barrows/Warton Crag area next July, specifically for High Brown Fritillary.

I am not the most mobile of 72 year olds, although I am sure I could manage (slowly) to get up Arnside Knott.

On the maps, it looks a lot steeper and higher today than it did the last time I was there some 35 years ago ! ?

My greatest difficulty today is climbing styles and gates – I can't.

Arnside Knott is not ruled out, but do you reckon I would find Gait Barrows easier? I tried to find out what you mean by the "slate trail", but no luck. So help please.

Jack

Re: Goldie M Swallow Tail

by Liz Goodyear, 31-Jan-11 03:37 PM GMT

White-letter Hairstreak can be found easily in your area – just look for the elm. There are two egg hunters filling in squares in Lancashire at this very moment and the maps will look different again in 4 years to the latest distribution maps. If you look for adults then first look up into the trees just like you would for Purple Hairstreak and look for small 'black' butterflies flicking around in the trees tops! You just have to develop good neck muscles! Not sure when the best time to start looking as their emergence is very regional, depends on altitude as well but I believe that the Arnside reports come in quite early so be prepared from the middle of June. Again the books are not always right about emergence.

As to Swallowtails – where are you staying in Norfolk and which particular week?

Strumpshaw Fen is said to be good – that is an RSPB Reserve.

How Hill is said to be good.

There will be the Catfield Fen Open Day in June organised by Norfolk BC

I always say that the Weavers Way around the south side of Hickling Broad is excellent but..... BESL are doing flood alliviation work at the moment and the footpath will be closed this summer. This is a bit of a nuisance as I was planning a walk for the Broads Society starting at Potter Heigham Church. We have now moved the walk to around Martham Broad which hopefully will be just as good.

However, one other unusual place is Horning Church (it also has a very small colony of Wall Browns). The Swallowtails come up from the marsh below and nectar on the graveyard floral arrangements especially any sweet williams in vases and one grave has some nice bugle planted which they adore.

Hope this helps

Liz

Re: Goldie M Swallow Tail

by Pete Eeles, 31-Jan-11 03:47 PM GMT

"Jack Harrison" wrote:

I plan to visit the Arnside/Gait Barrows/Warton Crag area next July, specifically for High Brown Fritillary. Arnside Knott is not ruled out, but do you reckon I would find Gait Barrows easier?

Hi Jack. While you won't need to climb over stiles at Arnside Knott, it is quite steep in places – and the best spots to see High Brown Fritillary is near the top. Gait Barrows, on the other hand, is pretty flat. Not sure what the slate trail is, but there is a circular route around the site.

Cheers,

– Pete

Re: Goldie M Swallow Tail

by Goldie M, 31-Jan-11 10:05 PM GMT

Hi! Jack, Gait Barrows Nature reserve Issue a permit for parking and it's free. It comes with a map which is very handy and gives information about the different trails. I call the the Lime Stone trail slate (sorry) didn't mean to mislead you. This trail has white markers. The Yew Trail has purple markers, this trail is supposed to be good when looking for the Duke of Burgandy.

I've not been up there in Spring to often (weather was bad) but this year, with all my info on Hair Streaks I'm going.

Arnside Knott, has a car park nearly at the top, so you could get up there, then take your time.

GB has easy access every where, (no climbing gates). The slopes can get slipper when wet however, so you have to be careful. When I saw the High Brown etc, we followed the White Trail .

The entrance to the park is through a gate, with a permit you can drive through the gate and park, without a permit you've to park on the road. The address to write to is Robert Petley Jones, South Cumbria and North Lancashire NNRs,

Natural England, Roundsea Wood Base, Fish House Lane, Haverthwaite, Ulverston, Cumbria, LA12 8PE

The park lies between Silverdale and Arnside. I can't tell you much about Warton Craig, it will be my first time there.

Look out for the Deer at GB, that's if your lucky 😊 Goldie M

Re: Goldie M Swallow Tail

by Goldie M, 31-Jan-11 10:26 PM GMT

Hi! Liz, we are staying "Camping and Caravan Club "site in Norwich, so we're going to be near most of the places we, I want to visit. 5th of June to the 12th. I say we because my husband likes cathedrals etc, so we combine the two, Horning Church should fit in well don't you think 😊

We went to Strumpshaw Fen last year, too early, middle of May, we also went to How Hill, same thing, so I don't go off what the books say any more.

I've got a few sites to visit looking for Hair Streaks, one in particular sounds interesting, Haslingden, Helmshore, in Rossendale, it's on the old train tracks , and I believe Elm tree's are there. I'll go and see if I can see any eggs. Thanks for your info Goldie M 😊

Re: Goldie M Swallow Tail

by Liz Goodyear, 01-Feb-11 12:39 AM GMT

The walk for the Broads Society is on the 11th June so you could manage that as well. Starting at West Somerton then alongside Martham Broad and back – now you can either leave him in the churchyard there or bring him along. West Somerton church has the grave of the Somerton Giant – Robert Hales 😊

Not a great deal in Horning Church to look at apart from a fine view across to Ranworth – you can climb to the top of Ranworth and look at the very old wall paintings. It's not very far by boat but a long way round by road!

Liz

Re: Goldie M Swallow Tail

by Jack Harrison, 01-Feb-11 01:02 AM GMT

Liz spoke about spouses who do not necessarily share a love of butterflies:

now you can either leave him in the churchyard there or bring him along.

Many years ago, I used to bump into a lifelong bachelor, Frank B, when we were butterflying in the Chiddingfold Woods complex. One summer, Frank surprised me by saying that he was engaged. I met him again in the following year and asked if he got had married yet. *"It wouldn't have worked. She has no interest in butterflies. All she is interested in is boring old castles".*

Jack

Re: Goldie M Swallow Tail

by Rogerdodge, 01-Feb-11 01:41 AM GMT

Jack

Arnside isn't that tricky.

From the car park to the highest point is 200m horizontally, with a 43m climb.

The first 100m is a 30m climb or 1 in 3, and the 2nd 100m is only a 13m climb or 1 in 8.

Take it steady and there shouldn't be a problem. There are plenty of butterfly distractions on the way!

The view is really breathtaking on a clear day.

High Brown can be found, however, by continuing along the path out of the car park as a continuation of the entrance lane, and taking a gate after 100 metres or so to a lovely meadow with bracken below the trees on your right.

Jack - I hope we get to meet up again this season!!

p.s. The walk up to Hartsop Dodd (for Mountain Ringlet) is a climb of 600m in the first 2k!

I plan to stop to "enjoy the view" quite a lot!!!!!!

Re: Goldie M Swallow Tail

by Ian Pratt, 01-Feb-11 06:05 AM GMT

Last June I visited the Broads and saw swallowtails at Catfield Fen in early June. I have seen them at How Hill, Strumpshaw Fen and Hickling Broad in previous years. Usually they are about between late May and mid June in my experience. My wife and I also saw black hairstreaks at Brampton Woods on the way to Norfolk! 😊

Re: Goldie M Swallow Tail

by Goldie M, 02-Feb-11 02:57 AM GMT

Hi! Jack and Liz, my husband is long suffering (so he says) 😊 He does like the fresh air and takes his video camera when we go out, he's got some really nice footage of the Butterflies. His best enjoyment really is engineering. When I'd been to the York steam engine museum and spent 2hrs looking around I thought I'd done my bit, so you can see we put up with each other. 😊 I will try to get him interested in the trip Liz, but I doubt I'll succeed, he likes pottering about, while I film' I'll tell him about the other church, see what happens 😊 Goldie M

Re: Goldie M Swallow Tail

by Goldie M, 02-Feb-11 03:04 AM GMT

Hi! Ian sounds like there's hope we may see something going in June. We plan on going to all the places Strumpshaw etc .

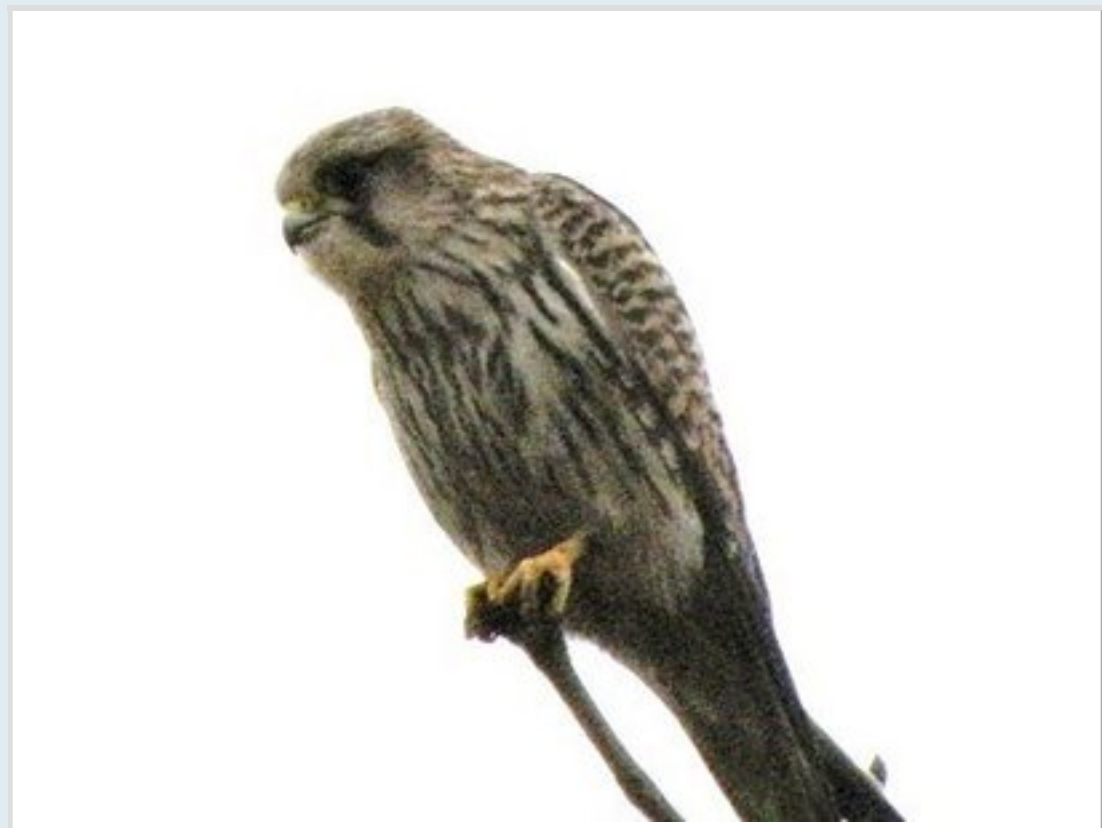
I think I'll try How Hill first then go down by the river, I don't remember going to Catfield Fen so we must try there. Thanks for your help Goldie M 😊

Goldie M Kestrel

by Goldie M, 03-Feb-11 03:36 AM GMT

Nearly every day for a week, I've been trying to take a picture of a Kestrel. Today it rained, but I got what I wanted finally.

I've also been looking for eggs, but I'm not very good about trees with no leaves on them 😊 So wasn't sure which were the Elms etc. I'm going to do some home work on that . 😊 Any way here is my Kestrel Goldie M 😊





Goldie M Long Tailed Tit

by Goldie M, 09-Feb-11 05:10 AM GMT

Today Feb 8th I went to Fleetwood Country Park, it was a lovely day for taking pic's. I took these pics of what I think is a Long Tailed Tit, (never seen one before) I've checked and it looks like one. Can anybody confirm this. ?

Although I looked for Butterfly eggs, etc I saw saw nothing, Thats not unusual if your not too sure ,just, what your looking for 😊 Goldie M





Re: Goldie M Long Tailed Tit

by JohnR, 09-Feb-11 06:53 AM GMT

It is a long tailed tit. In the autumn and early winter you usually see them in a gang working through the tree tops looking for insects like a bunch of trouble-makers, making a din as they go.

Re: Goldie M Long Tailed Tit

by Goldie M, 10-Feb-11 12:39 AM GMT

Thanks JohnR, I didn't see alot of them, more Chaffinch, and Blue Tits than any thing else. Goldie M 😊

Re: Goldie M Long Tailed Tit

by Hugh Middleton, 10-Feb-11 02:35 AM GMT

They are usually very mobile in a flock and often you can hear them coming. When they stop and feed they are delightful to watch. In flight they are also attractive and have the advantage that sometimes scarcer/rarer birds will tag along at the end of the flock.

Hugh

Goldie M

by Goldie M, 06-Mar-11 10:52 PM GMT

I visited the waste ground I wrote about last year and took some pics, thought it a good idea to record it's progress by pics'. Alot of rubbish had been cut down and the trees thinned out, it looked good. I'm just wondering about the Badgers set's and hope they've not become too exposed, there right on the path near the stream. Time will tell of course.

I also visited Pennington Flash near Lea, Wigan, it's a lake made from the old flooded coal mines, now it's become a popular place for bird watchers. I saw these Green Finch and Sparrows from an hide, they seem to be ringed, I'm wondering who did it and where they came from. I can only think it's may be because they're becoming rare Goldie M 🤔





Re: Goldie M

by Gibster, 07-Mar-11 02:07 AM GMT

Hi Goldie M,

your top pic is of Reed Buntings not sparrows. Note your Greenfinch's stout beak, ideal for breaking out of that wire mesh cage! 😊 I visited Pennington Flash many years ago when Britain's first ever Black-faced Bunting appeared with the local Reed Bunting flock. Still an amazingly rare find in Western Europe. I recall that the reserve has its own ringing group, so I expect the majority of ring-bearing birds there have been caught on site. Ask a member of staff, they should be more than happy to explain what they are up to and any results/recoveries they've had.

Cheers!

Gibster.

Re: Goldie M

by Goldie M, 08-Mar-11 05:25 AM GMT

You live and learn Gibster, 😊 I must admit I don't know too much about birds. I bought a book about them but still got it wrong Ha! Ha! I go to Penn Flash on a regular basis, it's a good place to walk as well. I will certainly ask all about the ringing next time I go.

Did you ever get to Mere Sands near Southport? We go there to take pics of King Fishers from time to time. Not too good on Butterflies there though, so it's mainly out of season for them when we go to see the birds.

I took another pic whilst at Penn Flash, is this also a Reed Bunting? It seems to be a bit different than the others around the chest area. Goldie M 😊



Re: Goldie M

by Gibster, 08-Mar-11 06:55 AM GMT

Hi again, Goldie M

I'm Surrey based so can't say I've been to Mere Sands. Sorry. Your latest pic is also of a Reed Bunting. What's happening is that the head and throat feathers were moulted at the end of last year's breeding season (by which time an adult bird's feathers are pretty worn and knackered) and the tips of these 'new' feathers are now being actively abraded to slowly reveal the breeding plumage. In the male Reed Bunting this consists of a black head and breast patch with obvious pale 'moustache'. Give it a few more weeks and the tips will be fully abraded revealing a stunning bird in full breeding livery. Shame the song doesn't quite live up to the plumage! 😊

To be fair, Reed Buntings and male House Sparrows are pretty similar so it's easy to confuse the two. Check the crown and habitat preferences though. Then have a look at Marsh and Willow Tits or Willow Warblers and Chiffchaffs...and if you're still keen after that you've definitely got the birding bug 😊

All the best,

Gibster.

Re: Goldie M

by Goldie M, 08-Mar-11 10:03 PM GMT

Thanks Gibster, seems I've alot to learn!!!!!!!!!!!!!! Can you settle a dispute though, the pic I'll show you My friend says is a Green Finch. I think it looks smaller and could be a Siskin or a Serin, of course with our knowledge we could both be wrong 😊 Goldie M 😊



Re: Goldie M

by Lee Hurrell, 08-Mar-11 10:30 PM GMT

Hi Goldie,

I would say that's a female Greenfinch.

Cheers

Lee

Re: Goldie M

by Paul Wetton, 08-Mar-11 10:33 PM GMT

Hi Goldie

Looks like you have a pair of Greenfinches there. The more streaky bird at the front being the female.

You are correct that Siskin and Serin are smaller birds but this has a bulky Greenfinch bill and looks to be a similar size to the male in the background.

Re: Goldie M

by Gibster, 09-Mar-11 05:23 AM GMT

Hiya again, starting to become a bird ID quiz this thread! 😊

Lee and Paul are both right, it's a female Greenfinch. You broke the back of the ID yourself by narrowing it down to the correct family – finches. The rest is easy with the guide book in one hand (or even better, a notebook with your written description which is the best way to get to grips with plumage detail). You also sussed it was a female since it is duller and streakier than the accompanying male. See, you are getting better! 😊

Siskins have strongly streaked underparts, whacking big pale wingbars, long thin bills and streaky backs. So definitely not one of those.

Serins have tiny stubby grey bills, streaky backs, heavy black bars running down the chest to flanks and pure white bellies. They're also pretty rare in Britain, especially this time of year. So not a Serin either.

I'm eagerly awaiting your next mystery bird pic!!! 😊

Gibster.

Re: Goldie M

by Goldie M, 09-Mar-11 07:55 PM GMT

Thank you every one. I do seem to be improving 😊 If very slightly Gibster, if you want another pic here's one. I've got this down has a Tufted Duck which, I might add I think is right, But, is the other one a lady TD.

My book shows me a much darker colour for the Lady than this pale cream colour Goldie M 🤔



Re: Goldie M

by Paul Wetton, 09-Mar-11 08:03 PM GMT

Hi Goldie

Definitely not a lady tufty but a farmyard escapee. Quite possibly a boy as well. Don't think Mr. Tufty would be too impressed with this one.

Re: Goldie M

by Goldie M, 09-Mar-11 08:34 PM GMT

Escapee Paul, I wonder where from, loads of farms around; Penn Flash is near the West Pennine Moors. I'm looking forward to going again now, who knows what will turn up. We're also planning a trip to Martin Mere wild life centre when the weather settles . I f I see anything unusual I'll definately metion it in my dairy.

Another couple of weeks and we should see some Butterflies, hopefully, the weather has been very cold here, Hale stones today, freezing at night , 😞 it needs to get much warmer before we see them around here.

I'll leave going to the waste land for anther couple of weeks as well, I want to see if it's changed much by then, Goldie 😊

Re: Goldie M

by Paul Wetton, 09-Mar-11 09:14 PM GMT

Hi Goldie

These hybrid farm yard escapes can be a bit of a nuisance as they always tend to be larger than the local Mallards with which they are able to interbreed thus diluting down the wild Mallard genes. I'm not sure they can all produce viable offspring but some hybrid ducks can breed.

Keep up the diary and the bird photos. It's always good to have a look and ID some interesting photos.

Re: Goldie M

by Gibster, 10-Mar-11 12:32 AM GMT

Hiya Goldie M,

Your funny looking duck is indeed a Mallard, and a male as Paul says – that Tuftie definitely wouldn't be amused! Just check that bill shape and colour.

Mutant and cross-bred Mallards are the bane of novice birders when it comes to wildfowl on the local ponds. (Hybrid geese are the other main pitfall, but we won't go there today...) Females don't seem as susceptible to becoming freakishly large or odd-plumaged. I don't know why that is. HmMMM.

Anyway, an easy way to tell if your mystery duck is a Mallard is to look at the tail. Where the wings fold across the base of the tail you'll see a cute little tuft of curled feathers. Regardless of size or plumage aberration, if the curl is present your duck is a Mallard. Easy! Also Mallards tend to hang around with other Mallards.

Google "Cayuga" and "Indian Runner" for a couple of common Mallard freaks. Other commonly encountered mutants are leucistic individuals (pigmentation has a washed-out look and is generally the colour of very weak tea) or very small and white individuals with an annoying non-stop and very loud quack ("call ducks", prized by shooters for luring in wild ducks). Also Google "Muscovy Duck" and note the large size, horizontal resting position, facial wattles and large white wing patch. These come in an assortment of colours from the ancestral greenish (rare in domestic/escaped ducks) through to a largely white or pied appearance. Often seen sitting in pondside trees, usually low down on larger branches.

Good fun this! Maybe if it stays cold the butterflies won't come out this year and you'll become an expert birdwatcher instead! 😊

Gibster. (PS – just kiddin' about the butterflies!)

Re: Goldie M

by Piers, 10-Mar-11 06:02 AM GMT

"Gibster" wrote:

Google "Cayuga" and "Indian Runner" for a couple of common Mallard **freaks**.

That's a little strong isn't it Glibster? Runners are a marvellous breed...! Pure Runners are a rarity now as well, having been polluted by such lesser fowl as Mallard... 😊

Re: Goldie M

by Gibster, 10-Mar-11 06:09 AM GMT

"Felix" wrote:

Glibster

😊😊😊 Too much, Felix, too much!!!!

Next you'll be telling us that Greyslag Geese are wonderful beasties (save it for the Romans) and Morehens means more eggs. 😊

Sorry Goldie M, hope no offence is taken.

PS- The Lost Gardens of Heligan have pure Indian Runners I seem to recall. 'Course I was more interested in the overwintering American Green Heron on one of the ponds...

Re: Goldie M

by Lee Hurrell, 10-Mar-11 08:56 PM GMT

"Gibster" wrote:

Google "Muscovy Duck" and note the large size, horizontal resting position, facial wattles and large white wing patch. These come in an assortment of colours from the ancestral greenish (rare in domestic/escaped ducks) through to a largely white or pied appearance. Often seen sitting in pondside trees, usually low down on larger branches.

I did google Muscovy Duck but I ended up with this?



Cheers

Lee

Re: Goldie M

by Goldie M, 12-Mar-11 09:25 PM GMT

What can I say!!!!!!! You've just killed me with science. I do like your Muscovy duck though Lee, 😊 I must look out for him next time I visit the Country Park . Goldie M 😊

Re: Goldie M

by Goldie M, 12-Mar-11 09:48 PM GMT

Hi! Felix , I didn't mind you getting annoyed with one another, it wakes things up abit . I think we 're all ready to see some Butterflies and get rid of this cold weather Goldie M 😊

Goldie M Waste land

by Goldie M, 13-Apr-11 04:36 AM GMT

I've been to Kent for nearly 3 weeks to my relatives. Whilst there I visited Blean Wood, this would be about the 23rd of March, to my delight I saw Commas, Peacocks, and Red Admirals. I know this will be common place now with everybody having spotted some thing the weather's been so nice, but it's the earliest, I've ever seen so many so just had to put it in My diary.

The waste ground I visted last month has got a name now," Hall Lee Brook" also I spotted Peacock BFs, Comma's and White's I couldn't get near enough to find out if the White BFs were Green veined or Small Whites, they didn't land much, they were very quick. I hope to find out when the weather improves it's been very cold and windy today inspite of the sun, tomorrow we're back in the rain. I've put two pics in to show the contrast between my two visits to Hall LB, It's amazing what a couple of weeks make.





Hall Lee Brook Goldie M

by Goldie M, 20-Apr-11 05:03 AM GMT

I went to HLB again 2 days on the trot, because I found 2 more Butterflies to add to my total sightings , Orange Tips and Green Veined Whites. I spoke to some people who live near by and they were thrilled about the site. I'll be going there again before very long. I wonderd about the OT having the food they need, I certainly couldn't see much for them. Then I found some Blue Bells in the woods and afield full of May flowers, I've not found any Garlic flowers yet though. Goldie M

Goldie M

by Goldie M, 05-May-11 05:14 AM GMT

I went to Gaits Barrow yesterday, May 3 . It was cold to start off with but later it got really warm. We took the Yew Tree trail and followed the Slipper Orchid signs until we reached a fenced off area. Not too many Slipper Orchids but what was there was lovely.

We went back onto the YT trail and a short distance later came to another fenced off area, just what I'd been looking for, (The Duke) There were lots of Primroses and we had to make our way carefully keeping within the the bounderies, What a treat, not only were there Dukes but flying all around were Pearl Bordered Fritillaries, Brimstones, Whites, the odd Speckled Wood. I didn't count them, I was to interested in trying to take some pics as nothing seemed to stay still for 2 sec's. It was a very rewarding day Goldie M 😊





Re: Goldie M

by Gibster, 05-May-11 06:34 AM GMT

If ever a plant oozed raw sex appeal, that's the one...

Re: Goldie M

by Goldie M, 06-May-11 03:12 AM GMT

It's even better in it's natural surroundings Gibster, Goldie 😊

Re: Goldie M

by Gibster, 06-May-11 04:11 AM GMT

Regards the Lady's Slipper....Sami just offered me her stinking trainers, not quite in the same league, I feel! But sweet...kind of... 😊

Re: Goldie M

by Goldie M, 07-May-11 04:23 AM GMT

Very Slippery Gibster 😊 Goldie

Re: Goldie M

by Padfield, 07-May-11 04:27 AM GMT

'A sock by any other name would smell of feet'. *Romeo and Juliet*.

Guy

Re: Goldie M

by Goldie M, 07-May-11 10:08 PM GMT

I think you should both read the poem by " Elizabeth Barrett Browning" 😊 " The Sweetness Of England" My Favorite 😊 Goldie M

Re: Goldie M

by Goldie M, 21-May-11 06:09 AM GMT

Weds 18th May, after two weeks of rain and cold winds the forecast gave us some hope today of better weather, so we set off, our rain coats in readiness. We decided to visit Gait Barrows again , when we got there the clouds had lifted and the sun was out but the wind was still very cold. We went to where we'd last seen the Duke of Burgundy. sad to say the primroses had all gone and the Duke no where to be seen. We hung about for while and then we got a nice surprise, two Small Pearl Borderd Fritillaries arrived chasing one another about. We saw Pearl Borderd as well, but that's all. IT was well worth the trip though.

On the way back we stopped at Warton Crag and saw the Perigrin Falcons on their nest, so all in all it was a pretty good day. 😊 Goldie M

Thursday 19th May We went to Southport today, (make hay while the the sun shines) In the Dunes we saw some Small Heath ,Common Blues even Orange Tips in the Trees by the road side, another good day out. But we're back in the rain today . we'll have to wait for the sun again. Goldie 😊



Goldie M Hall Lee Brook

by Goldie M, 02-Jun-11 04:40 AM GMT

I went back to Hall Lee Brook at the weekend to see if I could find any more Butterflies and to see how the work was progressing. I was amazed to find lots of the grass had been piled to the side to make the foot paths wider, In doing this alot of the places where I'd seen the butterflies laying eggs in the grasses had gone. I took some photo's, I hope they've not disturbed things too much, what, with the weather being so bad, with the high winds and cold temperatures ,poor things have had enough to contend with. Needless to say I saw two BF, I think both were Small Whites, I've put a pic of one incase I'm wrong, I usually am 😊 Goldie M 😊





Goldie M Swallow Tails

by Goldie M, 15-Jun-11 11:03 PM GMT

I got back on Sunday from Norfolk and I'm pleased to say I finally saw the Swallow Tails. We set off on the 5th of June Sun, on the Monday it rained all day, but we checked out the sites where we knew if there were SWT they'd be, also it would save time finding all the different routes for when the weather was nice.

On the Tues it was cloudy and very windy, we decided to call at Strumpshaw Fen first, we saw nothing, so on we went to How Hill where we saw 6 or 7 but none of them settled, anyway on the Wed we went again to How Hill and in the field facing the cottage I managed to get some pics, this time they were flying all around us at intervals. It was funny really, there was quite a few people wanting to take pics, so when any one saw one we all rushed to get a look and take pics.

We didn't go again to How Hill until the Sat before we left, (the weather had followed us from the North) we'd spent the last couple of days dodging showers, but Sat was lovely, temperatures in the 20s, no wind, nothing in the field this time so we walked along the path by the Broads where the windmills are, the Thistles were just about to come out, they weren't out fully but enough for the SWT. So I was able to take more pics, it was the icing on the cake for me and finished my holiday on a high note. It more than made up for the disappointment of last year when we went all that way in May

and saw nothing.

I must say though although some of the SWT did come out early, I took 1 or 2 pic's where you could tell this, a lot were in pristine condition and I was told these were the ones that were out (At the right time) so should any one be going you could still get some good pic's.



Goldie M

by Goldie M, 22-Jun-11 01:39 AM GMT

I went to Walley yesterday 20th June. I was looking for Meadow Brown, I've not seen any around here at all. (Lanc's) the weather as been really bad, cold winds etc, anyway yesterday it wasn't too bad, the only things i spotted though were a Speckled Wood which was too quick for me and a Large Skipper sitting on top of an Orchid 😊 Oh! and a Comma which looked fairly new. It sat on a leaf for ages, it seemed to be drying out it's wings, I'm no expert so I could be wrong, it gave me hope though that maybe things are on the move here.

Last year the weather was nice at this time and the High Brown Fritillary were coming out also the Dark green up in Gaits Barrow, but no one seems to have seen them yet up there, still with seeing those Large Skipper, given a nice day I may pop up to Gaits Barrow to take a look before I set off on my travels to the South East this Week-end.

I also went to Pilling nr Fleetwood on Sunday Large Heath have been seen there before at this time, boy was it cold, we just came home. Pic's of the Comma and the Large Skipper 😊 Goldie M





Goldie M

by Goldie M, 30-Jul-11 01:04 AM GMT

I visited Hall Lee Brook this week, I've found out it's private land given over to the Forestry Authorities to run. I met two rangers who were on the look out for somebody camping there. Horwich country Park was devastated this April when somebody set fires on the Moors which killed a lot of nesting birds also BF. Since then I don't think camping has been encouraged.

I visited the site when I returned home a fortnight ago and saw nothing except, for a few whites. On returning Wed, to my relief I saw Gate Keepers, Meadow Browns, Comma's, Red Admiral, Speckled Wood, Green Veined Whites, Whites Large and Small, also Holly Blues which were too fast for me, no Peacocks though or Skippers. Everything is very late arriving, I suppose because the weather has been so bad up here.

I'm not too good at picking out where places are located, I usually get lost even when they're pointed out 😊 All I know is the spot is situated in Westhoughton, Bolton. Bolton council run HLB also with the Forestry A, they've put wild flowers even on all the roundabouts and by the sides of fields, I've put a picture in my diary to show just what it looks like.

I think it's worth going back to HLB to check each year how the place is progressing and if it's attracted any more different species of Butterfly. It's worth mentioning the fact they've made three little ponds there and these are already attracting Dragon Fly's. I hope when I return again from Kent in three weeks (I'm house sitting) I'll see some Peacocks, they were there in Spring hopefully they'll be back. Goldie 😊



Godie M Thanks

by Goldie M, 30-Aug-11 12:32 AM GMT

I arrived back from Kent last Thursday and I would like to thank "Fishie" for his information about Temple Ewell. I found it ok. I couldn't believe all the butterflies I saw there.

I must have spent about 6 weeks in all this summer which took in June ran into July and the beginning of August. I managed 37 different species and added three new ones to my list. 40 in all. I've not been able to go back and look at Hall Lee Brook yet, the weather's not been too good and I've had to garden, everything was overgrown, but my own garden has been full of Small Tortoiseshells, Red Admirals, Peacocks, Whites, Speckled Woods, the list goes on. I have however missed out on Gates Barrow and the High Brown and Dark Green Fritillaries this year, anybody know if they're still about? I doubt it now, although the weather here has not been as nice as everywhere else, I noticed some species here are later than in other parts of the country. By the way Fishie I got my Adonis 😊 Goldie



Re: Godie M Thanks

by FISHiEE, 02-Sep-11 04:43 AM GMT

Glad you found Temple Ewell ok and got your Adonis Blue 😊

It's really a great site and there's usually clouds of blues when I go. I didn't realise how spoilt I was in Kent for Adonis Blues. Now I'm in Hampshire they're pretty much non-existent here!

Re: Godie M Thanks

by Goldie M, 03-Sep-11 11:00 PM GMT

Hi! Fishiee, I'm planning to visit Hampshire next year, some one said there were Brown Hair streaks and Purple Emp's there. We plan on taking the caravan, so looking for a site. My husbands not too hot on reversing so no hills or difficult sites 😊 We love the New Forest and hope to visit Dorset and Pool, love the natural harbour there.

Thanks again for your help, it's certainly the best site for Blues I've seen, I'd like to find the Silver studded Blue next, in no hurry though.

I visited Hall Lee Brook yesterday, the weather was warm if not too sunny. I only saw Speckled Woods, Whites, but the site is coming along nicely, hopefully in the future more species of BF will arrive. Goldie M

Re: Godie M Thanks

by FISHiEE, 04-Sep-11 01:25 AM GMT

Oh there's plenty of Silver Studded Blues over this way. One of the big draws for me moving to Hampshire! They are now just 20 minutes from my door and I can go before/after work as well as at weekends. I saw about 3 in Kent and they were about an hours drive from home there! Brown Hairstreaks and Purple Emperors were pretty much impossible in Kent. They have a few over here. Brown Hairstreaks eluded me this year as the weather didn't play ball when I had time to go for them. Purple Emperors I found, though the ratio of people to butterflies was about 10:1 which put the shine off those rather for me.

Temple Ewell is an excellent reserve. I perhaps didn't appreciate how good it was until I moved away from it. Did see my First Hampshire Silver Spotted Skippers and Wasp spider today. Adonis Blues are a bit thin on the ground though... ie pretty much none unless I travel all the way to the border with Dorset which is almost as far as Dover is from here I think!

Goldie M

by Goldie M, 25-Sep-11 12:24 AM GMT

The weather 's been horrible here, (Lanc's). I've been concerned, because last year we'd loads of Butterflies in the garden in September and although we've had some, not many of them have been Peacocks. Inbetween the strong winds and rain a couple of days were nice, then we mostly got Small Tortoiseshell's and Red Admiral's, i've enclosed some photo's, also the Peacocks i did see were very small in size compared to what i saw a couple of years ago.

I've seen one Large White, that was yesterday, I'm hoping the weather they've forcast for next week brings out more peacocks, fingers crossed 😊 Goldie M





Re: Goldie M

by Wurzel, 25-Sep-11 04:37 AM GMT

Alright Goldie - I think the last shot of the Small Tortoiseshell is great - it made me smile as it looks like it's having to lift it's feet as the flower is so hot, like those desert lizards 😊

Have a goodun

Wurzel

Re: Goldie M

by Goldie M, 25-Sep-11 09:14 PM GMT

I think Wurzel it's more like the flower was still wet from all the rain we've been having. Goldie 😊

Re: Goldie M

by Goldie M, 03-Oct-11 12:43 AM GMT

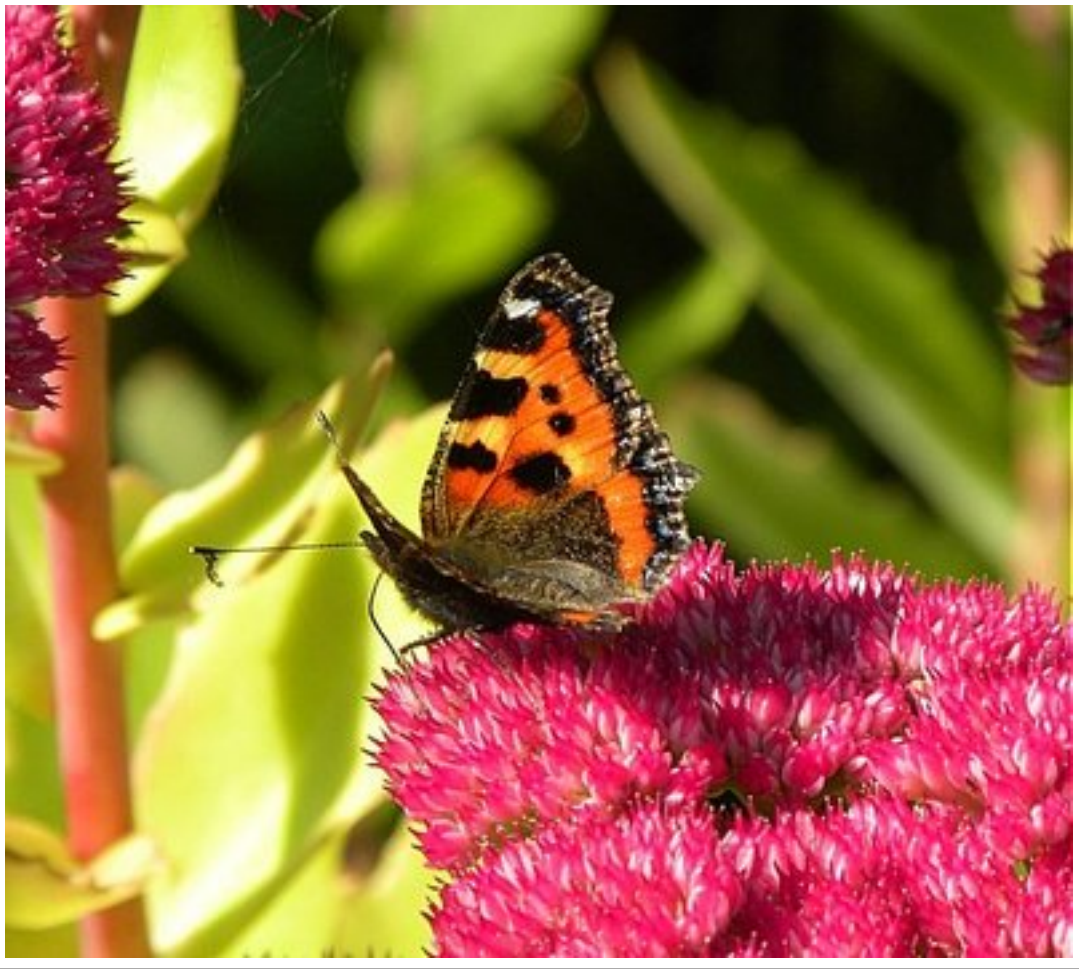
2nd October Fantastic week this week in my garden, I've seen Comm's, Red Admiral's and Tortoiseshell's right up to yesterday. In the rain again today 😞 The photo's should keep me busy for awhile though. 😊

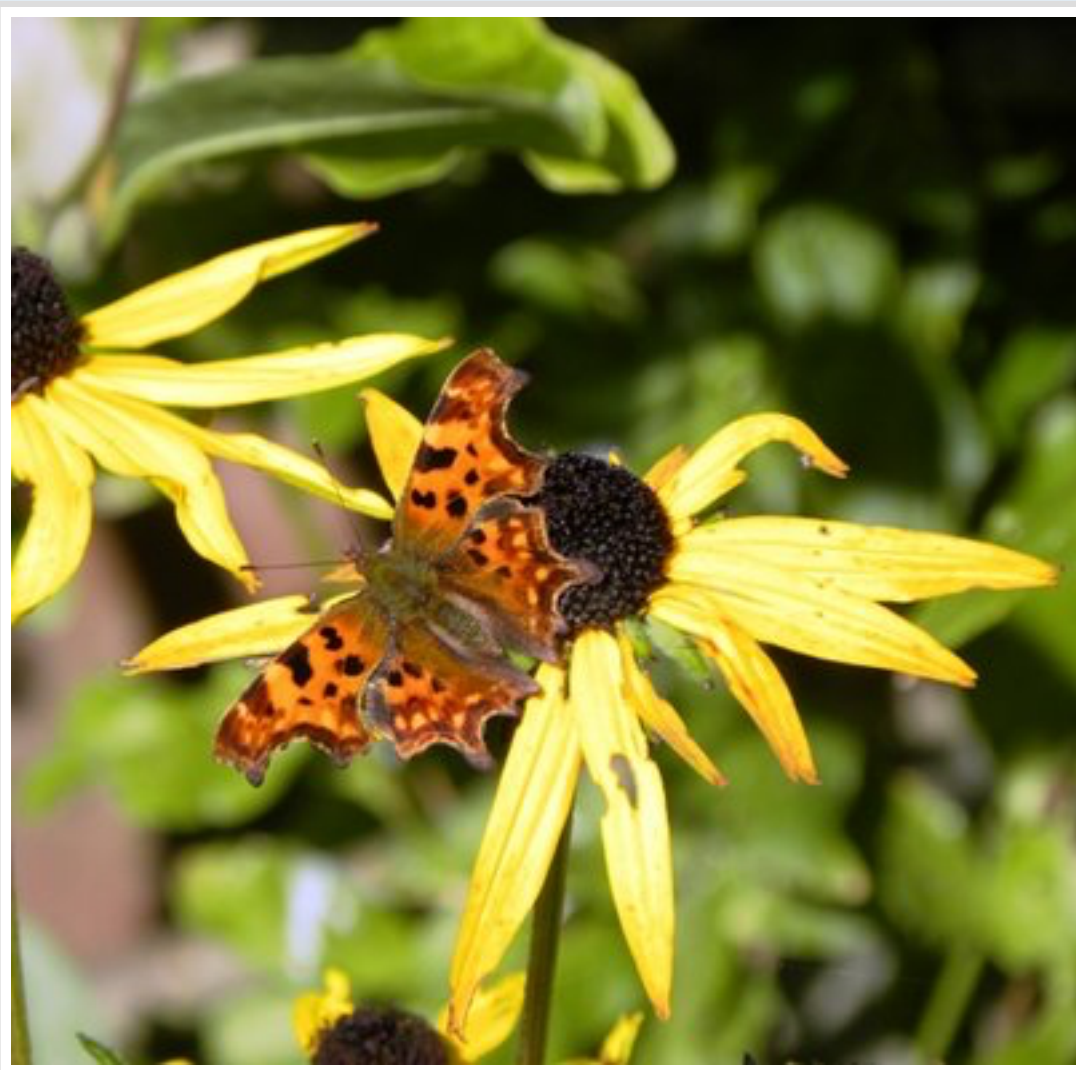
I also managed to go to Hall Lee Brook again but the only thing I saw there was a Speckled Wood, The pond was growing bigger with all the rain and things seem to be settling down (no more paths made are vegetation disturbed) so I'll look forward to Spring and the Orange Tips. The tree's had grown alot , the Silver Birch inparticular was a shiny mass of silver leaves really suited it's name.

I've enclosed a couple of pic's. I've also been interested waching the Butterflies. The first two days when the weather was nice, they landed on old leaves and flowers even my bird table , they didn't seem interested at all in feeding, it was only has the weather became hotter that they flew onto and settled on the flowers that were still nice. I assumed they were getting ready to hibernate and then changed because the weather improved.

I took notice of where they came from in the early mornings, I found the Red Admiral on my Hydranga the Comma's seemed to come from the garage roof, has did a couple of Small Tortoiseshells, they landed on the flowers, had some breakfast did a spot of sun bathing opening their wings really wide then took off again. At night I watched them return .(It was a really lovely week) Goldie M 😊







Re: Goldie M

by Goldie M, 16-Oct-11 01:38 AM GMT

Lovely day today 15th Oct, I didn't expect to see anything in the garden though because the weathers been so bad. Nothing but rain since my last postings, any way I managed to see 2 Red Admiral's and take a picture 😊 Then my husband and I went for a walk and has we went through this ginnel

between the houses I spotted Comma's and more Red Admirals, a total of 3 or more comma's and about 7 Red Admiral's, I hope tomorrows a nice day as well 😊 Goldie M



Re: Goldie M

by Goldie M, 18-Oct-11 10:23 PM GMT

Tuesday 18th Oct, I returned on Sunday to the ginnel where I'd seen the Butterflies. The weather was warmer than Sat had been and I was amazed by the amount of differant insects I found there. I took some photo's but on nearly all of them there appeared an insect. Bee's, Wasp's, Hover Fly's and some i'd never seen before.

A couple of people, (who didn't stay very long frightened of the Wasp's,)told me the Wasp's had a nest there, one woman didn't know about the Butterflies names and said I'd made her day and she'd take more notice next year when she went down the ginnel again. (They both looked at me as If were mad though) 😊

The Red Admiral's were there in force and were not not put off at all by the many insects buzzing them. Only one Comma though, that was all I needed to make my day.

I took a sample of the plant and i've got it in a bottle with some water in , I'll take it to my local garden centre and find out what it's called, unless anybody knows what it is. I certainly want it in my garden. Goldie M 😊



Re: Goldie M

by Pawpawsaurus, 18-Oct-11 11:28 PM GMT

"Goldie M" wrote:

I took a sample of the plant and i've got it in a bottle with some water in , I'll take it to my local garden centre and find out what it's called, unless anybody knows what it is.

It's Ivy.

Its flowers are a major source of nectar at this time of year, hence its popularity with Red Admirals, Commas, bees, wasps, hoverflies and other nectar-seeking insects which happen to be about.

Paul

Re: Goldie M

by Goldie M, 19-Oct-11 12:10 AM GMT

Is it a particular kind of Ivy Pawpawsauras ? I always thought Ivy was just very invasive. maybe I'll leave it and now I know what and where it is check it out each year Goldie 😊

Re: Goldie M

by Pawpawsaurus, 21-Oct-11 04:59 AM GMT

"Goldie M" wrote:

Is it a particular kind of Ivy Pawpawsauras ?

I don't think so. It could possibly be a cultivated variety which has escaped from a nearby garden, but it's more likely to be the plain old wild *Hedera helix*.

At least it looks as though it's still in full flower; most of the Ivy bushes I'm aware of around here are well past their best.

Paul

Re: Goldie M

by Goldie M, 22-Oct-11 11:57 PM GMT

Oct 22nd, Thanks Paul for your information. I like to know the why's and wherefores of different plant life, more so where Butterflies are concerned because it certainly helps you find them. Talking of which, I returned to the Ginnel today . The wind was cold although the sun was out and warmed every thing up. I took my camera (I thought you never know) and I wasn't dissapointed the Red Amiral's were still there and a couple of Comma's has well so I took a few more Photo's, their a real delight to find, just when you think the season's over.Goldie M 😊





Re: Goldie M

by Goldie M, 30-Oct-11 01:08 AM GMT

Oct 29th, I've had a very good week, I've been back to the Ginnel quite a few times to watch the Butterflies; Red Admiral's and still the one Comma they were still there yesterday(Fri) the weather has changed again today we're back into rain, still we've had a good week, it only rained on Thursday. Monday we went to Pennington Flash CP and did abit of Bird watching. There were Cormorants, (i think thats the way you spell it) 😊 loads of Ducks, too far away to get good photo's and if I did I don't know half of them 😊 I did get some shots of Robins and Blue Tits also Great Tits. No Heron's yet ! We also called at Hall Lee Brook no Butterflies there at all. The Ginnel between the houses is popular only i suppose because of the flowering Ivy, the fact it's sheltered must also be a huge plus. If the weather goes milder again I'll have anther look, I'm curious just when the BF will move on, surely it can't be too long now we've had the heating on today 😊

I don't know about other people but we've been struck by the lack of Birds in our Back Garden. We use to have loads of Black Birds but the've disappeared, my husband still keeps putting food out for them and we do get the smaller birds, not the Chaffinch's though, even at PF people were wondering about the lack of our common birds, we do seem to have a lot of Birds of prey around, I hope thats not the reason, I read in the Garden Mag that it may be an infection thats going around, time will tell i suppose. Goldie 🤔





Re: Goldie M

by Lee Hurrell, 30-Oct-11 02:35 AM GMT

Hi Goldie,

I think your juvenile Great Tit is in fact a Willow Tit, or the near identical Marsh Tit, but I think it's a Willow.

Best wishes,

Lee

Re: Goldie M

by jenks, 30-Oct-11 03:58 AM GMT

I agree Lee`s identification of Willow Tit in 3rd photo-- an increasingly uncommon bird so a good sighting.

Jenks

Re: Goldie M

by Goldie M, 31-Oct-11 09:26 PM GMT

Thanks Lee and Jenks, I was hoping it was different but when I looked in my bird book, the description fitted the young Tit so I assumed that's what it was. I counted quite a lot of them coming and going with the Tits, you've made my day now 😊
I'll be dragging my husband back there this week, weather permitting of course 😊 Goldie M

Re: Goldie M

by Goldie M, 05-Nov-11 09:41 PM GMT

Nov 5th, I said in my diary a couple of days ago about the disappearance of birds from our garden, well, I think I've found the culprit, a Sparrow Hawk! I managed to get a photo of him before he flew off, this time unlucky, but the day before I saw him with a Starling in the garden. Question is now, do we stop feeding the birds! This Hawk seems to have us pretty well taped you might say, he sat on the fence watching me in the kitchen. My husband says he's still going to feed them "let nature take its course," he says, I'm not too sure. 😊
I went back to my favourite Ginnel but no Butterflies this time, I think that's it now until next year.
On Nov 1st we went to Mere Sands in the hope there were King Fishers, we didn't see any but the people bird watching had seen some, not as many as before but it's a start. Last Winter killed them all, so this was good news. 😊 Goldie M



Re: Goldie M

by grumpy, 07-Dec-11 02:53 AM GMT

Hi Goldie, my mother in law was bemoaning the fact that all her Blackbirds have disappeared. I think the answer lies with the abundance of berries in the wild at the moment. Blackbirds, Redwings and Fieldfares are having a wild old time feeding up on the hawthorn berries they will end up fat as Tics.

We also have a Sparrowhawk frequenting the garden but our Sparrows are very canny and hide away in the middle of a large buddleia bush and privet hedge. By the way I think that's a female, the male has a redder/pinker chest.

best wishes

Dave (grumpy)

Re: Goldie M

by Goldie M, 10-Dec-11 11:36 PM GMT

Sorry I've not answered sooner been busy Xmas Shopping 😊 Your right Dave about the Black birds, this morning I took these pic's through the kitchen window, we were really pleased to see them back. I didn't know I could miss seeing these birds so much, we've also got a Nut thief that's arrived uninvited 😊 Goldie M



Re: Goldie M

by Goldie M, 17-Dec-11 11:02 PM GMT

Yesterday 16th Dec we got our first snow, it always brings it's own benefits photo wise. For instance, it feels more like Christmas and it brings more birds into the garden to feed, so I thought I'd just share a few photo's Goldie M 😊

All the best everyone Goldie 😊



Re: Goldie M

by Susie, 17-Dec-11 11:35 PM GMT

It's lovely to see the photos of your garden birds, Goldie.

Still no snow here yet.

Re: Goldie M

by Goldie M, 18-Dec-11 09:10 PM GMT

Thanks Susie, this is our 2nd lot, It's forcast rain for tomorrow so it looks like we're back to normal. All the best Susie, Goldie M 😊