



‘What’s About’

No 55
Late Summer 2020 to Winter 2021

- 19/8 Hummingbird Hawkmoth on salvia in KC’s garden.
- 23/8 Muntjac barking near Windy Acres for 1/2hr at around 23.00hrs. LH
- 25/8 48 Black-tailed Godwit on the tideline below the reserve. Greenshank heard over the saltmarsh. PM
- 27/8 5 buzzards circling and calling together over the fields near the church this morning. AV
- 30/8 This female Sparrowhawk killed a pigeon on our terrace close to the house and demolished it, quite unworried by our proximity. It returned three times during 24 hours to complete its meal. JR

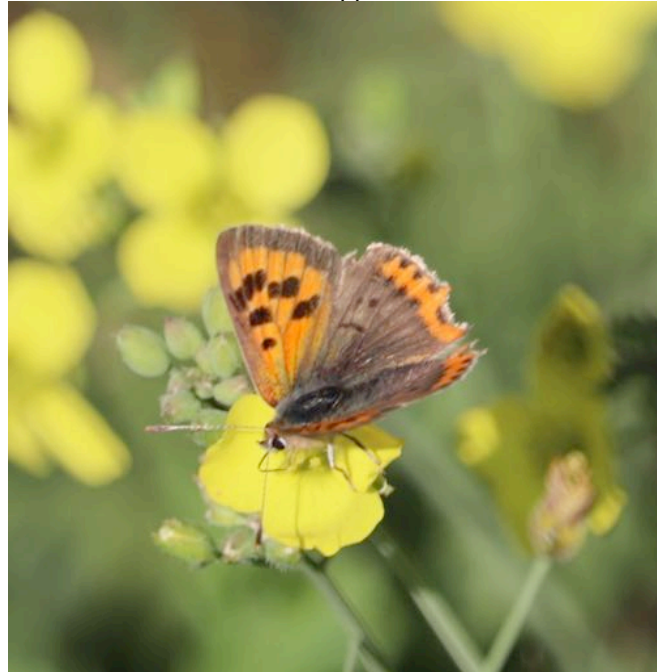


- 3/9 Early morning - Kingfisher seen flying the length of the reserve lagoon. 20 Teal flew off the reserve and out onto the river - nervous autumn arrivals. PM
- 2/9 Goat Moth caterpillar squashed on Woodbridge Road near the elms south of Rudds Barn. A nationally scarce moth. So-called because the larvae emit a strong and rather unpleasant smell, reminiscent of a male goat. The species has the longest larval stage of any British moth, feeding for up to four years, reaching up to 10cm in length. The adult is amongst the heaviest of the UK's moths, with a wingspan of 9.5cm. AM

7/9 Hummingbird Hawkmoth in Kit Clark's garden.

11/9 Lots of Large and Small White, Commas and Holly Blue butterflies in Alexis Smith's garden. Many bats in the garden every evening.

Small Copper. AS



12/9 Osprey reported from near Kyson Point (Suffolk BINS website).

14/9 10 Magpies on School Rd near Oak Garage. AM

15/9 Grass Snake about 18ins long dead on Woodbridge Rd before Hill Farm. AM

18/9 Peregrine over the saltmarsh just downstream of the village. PM

21/9 A pair of Blackcaps are finding ripening grapes irresistible in Christine's garden.

CFK

22/9 Goat Moth caterpillar was crossing the footpath as we were walking between Deben Lane and Sandy Lane today. It was about 2-3 inches long and was near one the big oak trees. AV

Goat Moth caterpillar



23/9 Snipe flew from the river onto the reserve. CB

24/9 Osprey fishing between Methersgate and the island. CB

28/9 5 young Mistle Thrushes having a great time bathing in a big puddle on the farm track near to Oak Tree Farm. CFK

29/9 Two pairs of Stonechat (M+F) seen in Mill Road up from White Hall. Both pairs on different adjacent low trees close to the road. CB

30/9 Barn Owl hunting over the Waller reserve. It dived on to an unseen prey and stayed on the ground eating it while keeping a wary eye open for scavengers. Then it flew off and perched in a tree for more hunting. SR

5/10 3 Sandwich Terns feeding around the moorings. Pm

About 30 Yellowhammers, Chaffinches, Goldfinches and perhaps other species feeding on the stubble field between the reservoir and Whitehall. PM

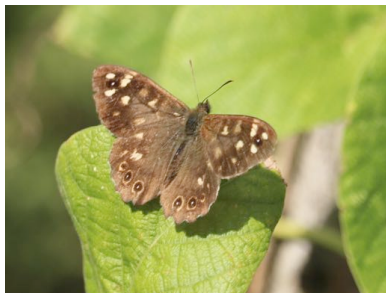
9/10 Waldringfield Heath - 5 buzzards circling overhead in sparkling sunshine at lunchtime. LH

11/10 Today 2 different Speckled Woods sunbathing. The first below stayed for ages & didn't mind me close by. The second below was off as soon as I got close. - [...but rather special. Without the usual marking on the wings this Speckled Wood *Pararge aegeria tircis* is possibly aberration *ab. kulczynskii*]

Alexis Smith



Possibly *Pararge aegeria tircis ab. kulczynskii*



12/10 5+ Fieldfares in the golf course hedgerow along Woodbridge Rd. AM

14/10 I unlocked and opened the driver's door of my Volvo this morning, for the first time in several months, to find this (pic attached). The location of the Mason Bee chambers is the top of the car door frame, just above the line where the compressible, rubber seal of the door closes against the frame. SC



14/10. Badger in garden. JK



16/10 Green Sandpiper on the salt marsh close to the reserve river wall. PM

19/10 About 7.30 a.m. there was what seemed quite a large female muntjac in our garden munching on some prunings I'd left on the grass. It wandered around casually for about 10 mins and inspected everything and the pond before vanishing into the hedge. Other people see lots of muntjacs but it's a while since we saw one in the garden. CFK

Little Owl calling at Hemley T-junction. AM

Grass Snake on Fishpond Rd mid-afternoon. JH

20/10 Saw my first Brent geese of the autumn yesterday, around 3pm - 2 large skeins flying over the Hemley area. SR

20+ Turnstone were jostling for position with 10+ Redshank on the rusty hulk by the reserve at full tide. SR

20/10 A female Ichneumon wasp, which was speculating for some time around the oak log wood pile this afternoon. The logs are about four years old and have many exit holes of various wood-boring beetles. SC



22/10 Fox Moth caterpillar on the river wall path at about 3pm. CC



22/10 Small group of Yellowhammers along Mill Road towards White Hall. CB
Toward the Manor end we saw small groups of Avocet feeding and a lone Common/Arctic Tern diving and feeding in the deep water. CB

23/10 Two muntjac in Driftwood rear and side garden this morning. LW

23/10 On the plough beyond White Hall about 20 curlew and well over 70 lapwing. Towards the wood, a lone dark fallow stag with masses of discarding velvet hanging around the bottom of a very impressive set of antlers – magnificent sight. JO

27/10 7.30am Kingfisher seen perched on one of the dinghies on the beach before it flew on towards the reservoir. CB

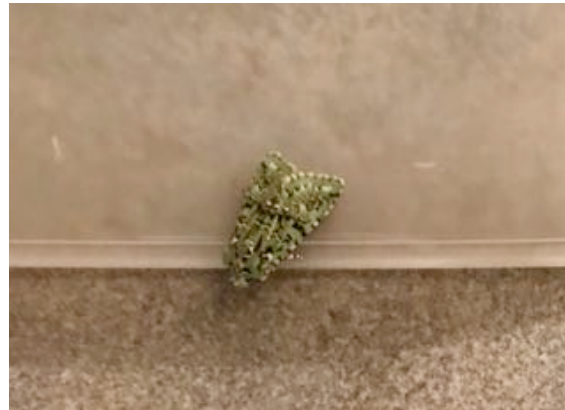
2 Red-breasted Mergansers swimming sedately through the moorings off the beach.

PM

6/11 15+ Avocets feeding along the tideline below the reserve. TL

7/11 Found this rather attractive moth in doors sitting on a plastic container, lovely green colour. KC

‘Merveille du Jour’



11/11 Three Meadow Pipits near the Dinghy Park. With the tide coming up the island was alive with large numbers of Black-tailed Godwit, Turnstone and Lapwing. Close to Manor End a number of Godwit and Curlew were spooked into the air as a female Marsh Harrier flew low over the salting and out across the river. I watched it being hassled by a pair of crows as it flew at tree height downstream. CB

10/11 Large group of Turnstones on the island and lots of Yellowhammers and Goldfinch feeding either side of the river wall opposite the scrape. CB

14/11 Great Spotted Woodpecker female at the bird table today. She has been a frequent visitor this week feeding from the peanut feeder. LW

15/11 In the garden, what I think is a Goldcrest,(Nacton). DR

[Goldcrest 3.mp4](#)

17/11 At 2pm today, watched a sparrowhawk plucking and devouring a pigeon on the grass just outside our front window. I gave up watching after 20 minutes when it was still at it, surrounded by feathers. What a sight! SR

18/11 Female Hen Harrier today. It shot out of the B Owl tree and was chased across the river by a couple of crows before disappearing in the Sutton direction. CB

Large group of Golden Plover on the island. CB

19/11 Bullfinch pair Manor thicket. PM

26/11 Little Owl at the small wood at the Newbourne end of Mill Rd. AM

Queen Buff-tailed Bumblebee around garden plants, crawling amongst base looking for hole to hibernate, or even an overwintering nest site. AM

30/11 26 Curlew feeding on the stubble field at the Walk Wood T-junction. AM

Collared Doves are regular visitors again, haven't seen much of them over the summer. AS



3/12 Between Methersgate and the island, just before the heavy rain: Shelduck 137, Black-tailed Godwit 40+, Pintail 9 males, Avocet 36, Dunlin 150+, Great Crested Grebe 3 pairs, Little Grebe 14. At least 60 Teal on the reserve lagoon. PM

6/12 Pair of Stonechats on the wire fence of the reserve. PM

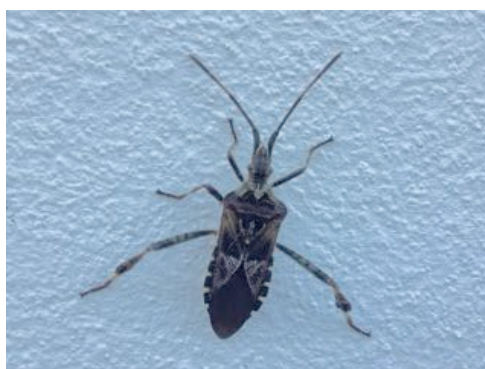
8/12 Along the river wall I heard an unexpected call and a Dartford Warbler popped up onto a gorse top and then flew low into the undergrowth. CB

9/12 Kingfisher on the pond alongside Woodbridge Rd at Howe's Farm . AM

11/12 Fox in the garden mid-morning - in a section in which the dogs are not allowed! AM

12/12 Great-spotted Woodpecker on our bird table last Sunday. We have had them a couple of times this year, but have rarely seen them here before this year. Usually the woodpeckers are Green Woodpeckers. AV

4/12 Western Conifer Seed Bug very slowly walking along our kitchen exterior wall as I write. SC



15/12 Two Mistle thrush were having a barney in and around the Scots Pine in the field between Rivers Hall and Rose Cottage. CB

Today I was rewarded - a Kingfisher at Church Sluice. It was perched on the wood frame preening itself in the bright sun. CB

On the field behind the Beach Huts a Skylark was singing. Lovely to hear them on a winter's day. CB

16/12 Warm enough for bats to be flying in the early morning along Mill Rd near the Church. AM

16/12 Ian uncovered this hibernating Hedgehog in our leafmould pile. As we haven't seen one in the garden for years we were surprised, however I suppose we have such a lot of undergrowth that we don't really know what is in there! We covered it up again quickly with more vegetation etc so hopefully it will sleep on CFK



17/12 Today's twinkling aerial display on the river was provided by the Golden Plovers on the island. It was the most I'd seen. A sail boat put them up and as they turned into the sun it was a great view. CB

20/11 More aerial displays in the sun. This time it was Dunlin on the far bank. At one point there were 3 separate groups flying low down river, each socially distanced from the other in tandem. Then I looked up and watched the most Lapwings in flight I'd seen this year. Unlike the orderly Dunlin they scattered haphazardly high above me, twinkling on and off like fairy lights in the sun for a brief moment, then they were gone just as quick. CB

A stoat ran across the bottom of our garden and then back along the other side of the hedge in the field. BK

22/12 2 Redwing in the garden. PM

23/12 I heard and then saw a Water Rail creeping along the edge of the reserve reeds. BK

25/12 When out for a Christmas Day walk: A Mute Swan pair on the Reserve. AS



Redshank. AS



26/12 Kingfisher perched on Church Sluice. CB

27/12 Greater Scaup which was reported on the BINS website yesterday is within the moorings to the north of the Maybush. PM

Stonechat pair feeding today on the little gorse remaining on the river wall. RE

Kingfisher on Howe's Farm pond. AM

Black-necked Grebe south of the Maybush was reported on the BINS website.

27/12 Two skylarks singing over the fields towards Chapel crossroads B&MS

Same day along Manor river wall at about 4.00pm the Barn Owl was flying low over the meadow before settling in a nearby branch of an ancient oak tree. B&MS

28/12 4 Great Crested Grebes, 2 Common Seals off the Maybush. PM

29/12 About 200 Rooks together with some Jackdaws feeding on the field where sugar beet had been harvested next to Cross Farm drive. AM

Great Crested Grebe fishing in close to the salting opposite the reserve. CB

Great Spotted Woodpecker female continues to visit the bird feeder every day in Driftwood garden. We also watched a fox from our kitchen window preening himself in the warmth of the sunlight, sheltered from the wind. He was in the wilder part of the adjoining plot. LW

Kingfisher and Dabchick on Howes Farm pond. AM

30/12 In the afternoon a Barn Owl was seen hunting on the reserve before it flew off down river. SR

Finally got sight of the Stonechat pair. They flew over me on the river wall at the Manor end of the scrape. CB

30/12 A very agile Starling coming to the feeder, having not seen any in our garden this year. AS



31/12 About 60 Fieldfares flying around the Adastral site and the field on the corner by the crossroads. CFK

1/1/2021 Flock of Redwings feeding on a holly tree-not many berries remaining ! BK
3 Great Crested Grebe seen fishing in front of the island from the sailing club.

2/1 Male Bullfinch, one of a few that flew off as I walked through the path to Manor End. CB

This lovely Great Spotted Woodpecker stayed for a while having a feast. AS



3/1 20 – 22 (they kept overtaking and changing order) Red Deer crossed the Hemley road and stood in the field above the valley towards Newbourne. Mixed group with some obvious grey winter coats and some showing more brown. With the sun behind them I could see breath steaming out of one stag. CB

At long last the goldfinches have returned to my garden. Midday 2nd January four were feeding on the niger seed. CFK

6/1 Two barn owls in the tree hole on the reserve. One came out of the hole and hopped about on the tree, then flew off along the marsh but was hassled by a couple of crows, so abandoned its plans and joined its mate in the hole.

- A male stonechat perched on a grass stem on the reserve.
- about 15 avocets and a similar number of black-tailed godwits feeding at the water's edge.
- A flock of about 100 lapwings swirling over the island before settling down on the island opposite the sailing club.
- Two small flocks of Brent Geese on the water just downriver of the island. Nice to see them now the weather is colder. SR

Cowslip flowering in the grass at the entrance to Sullivan Place and Garlic Mustard flowering on several verges along Woodbridge Rd. AM

9/1 Male stonechat on gorse on river wall. RE

Small group of Linnets feeding on the field behind the Beach Huts and a couple of Goldfinch. CB

10/1 Realised this morning that I can see a red berried tree in Sullivan Place where Liz had seen Fieldfares. Sure enough there was a hive of feeding activity and those that I could make out were Fieldfares. Later, on a walk I came past the end of the Close and spotted 3 Redwings feeding in the same tree (Red Sprite possibly) and resting in a bare tree behind it. CB

Two Barn Owls, one on edge of owl hole in oak tree, second on branch nearby. JW

All morning flocks of Fieldfares feed from the red crab apple tree. The fieldfares are also feeding from the cotoneaster shrub in neighbour's garden but not in such abundance. LW

At Chapel crossroads two Muntjacs deer ran from the undergrowth in the golf club. One went full pelt along the road & turned down the bridle path in front of our house (luckily no cars about). The other ran behind the Baptist Church hall. AS

12/1 A Reed Bunting day, there were a couple in the reeds by the dinghy park and then a large flock followed me the entire length of the river wall, busy feeding off the tall grasses poking above the high tide. Great Spotted Woodpecker was heard hammering away near the fish pond in Fish Pond Road. CB

13/1 Kingfisher on Church Sluice. CB



The Godwit were forced in close to the river wall today, so you can see the Black Tail clearly.
CB



The Teal were in close too. CB



12/1 On several days last week there was a flock of mainly fieldfare over Church Field and the field next to us. A number of them would gather on our old crab apple tree before feeding on the cotoneaster berries. I could then see that there were some redwings amongst them. In amongst them there was also a much larger thrush-like bird - a mistle thrush. They all seemed to tolerate each other. No sightings of them this week and the cotoneaster has been taken over by the blackbirds, tits and robins. JE

13/1 Colder weather and Fieldfares and Redwings - at least 25 - were gorging on the berries around the Sailing Club and Maybush carparks. PM

17/1 Seen swimming on the River Deben at Waldringfield adjacent to clubhouse. A Red-necked Grebe (winter plumage). JB



There were 23 curlews (the least that I could see) on the young wheat in field to the north of Cross Farm. When it snowed, 5 starlings appeared in our garden on fatballs - 3 were juveniles. Also a pied wagtail marching around on the 'lawn' which we don't normally see in the garden. We are regularly getting 2 long-tailed tits, blackbirds, robin singing loudly, collared doves, wood pigeons, blackbirds, dunnocks, coal, blue and great tits and lots of sparrows. CFK

18/1 Observed at low water on the Sutton shore, mostly between The Hams and The Tips: Shelduck 178, Avocet 127, Pintail 24 males, Teal about 200, Wigeon 100+, Black-tailed Godwit 30 +, and at least 300 Dunlin. PM

19/1 A much warmer morning - 9C or so - and at first light two bats were hunting along Mill Rd in the shelter of the Old Rectory trees. AM

The Kestrel and its electricity pole - a favoured view point. AS



19/1 The owl did a u turn when she saw me walking on the river wall! JS



23/1 Avocets opposite the Rocks, an incredible sight, there was another group of about the same number too. I can remember when seeing a pair was special! JY



A white Fallow buck was spotted by our nextdoor neighbour last week, in the field just beyond our gardens in Nacton. DR



Redwings feeding in our front garden on Haws. A goldcrest flew down the side of the house and was feeding in the Conifer at the back of our garden. CB



25/1 Two green woodpeckers flew from the large oak tree near to the start of the track down to Manor House at about 11:30 this morning. They flew out, one after the other, and then away in different directions. SC

A Barn Owl has just flown past my office window 16.45, dusk just falling, heralded by much anxious twittering from the shrubs. CM

26/1 Redwing seen today in front garden. SB



26/1 Several Redwings and a couple of Blackbirds were joined by a Fieldfare as they fed on the Cotoneaster berries on our front hedge. The cropped rapeseed on the path to Mill Road from the village Hall was alive with Linnets (100 +). Tree full of Goldfinches near the Dinghy Park. We spotted a Kingfisher outside the Sailing Club on the retaining wall and it hopped ahead of us in short low flights all the way to the sluice at Waller's reserve. Fantastic sight in the bright sunshine. Black-tailed Godwits were feeding in close on the salting, the high grasses resting Widgeon and Curlew. A Rock/Water Pipit was busy preening itself for a good minute or more on a fence post further along the reserve. Mallard Pair on the scrape along with many Teal. The Swan pair were on the creek in front of Manor End. CB

27/1 One or two Winter Moth flying early morning in sheltered places out of the rain. Five Fallow deer on a field near to Rudds Barn. AM

A Barn Owl was patrolling along the John Waller scrape. RP

The Aconite flowers are out in the woods by Levington church and I saw my first snowdrops flowering in the woods by Nacton Shore.

Spring is on its way! DR



29/1 Footpath behind Kembroke Kennels towards Brightwell alongside field saw flock of Chaffinches and a few Siskin. Further along towards wooded area 3 Egrets flew out of the copse and landed on the field before flying off and perching on some trees. JB

Crocus flowering on the main road verge at Sullivan Place and Sunnyhill. AM

Just before the birdwatch weekend I looked out of the window while pouring a second cup of tea and there was a Sparrowhawk sitting on the fence about 3m away from me. We watched each other for a few minutes and she then flew off into some bushes. Didn't appear for the bird count of course. Great Spotted Woodpecker. I have tried getting a picture through the binoculars and at last got a half decent result. CFK



30/1 Newbourne: Solitary Fieldfare flew into garden and settled onto our hedge tempted by our bird feeders, got spooked and flew off again. JB

There was a small flock of about 20 Yellowhammers in the Parken field by the footpath that leads across to Newbourne Road. CFK

31/1 3 Goldeneye way out on the river towards No10 red channel buoy. PM

Dead Toad on Woodbridge Road near Howe's Farm. AM

During the afternoon a Barn Owl over the meadow at Howe's Farm. AM

While doing my RSPB Big Garden Birdwatch, a couple of Redpolls visited a feeder in my back garden. The first I have seen this winter, so good timing. SR

We have a pair of pied wagtails regularly visiting our garden. Today, this one was on its own for quite a while until its mate turned up and then they both flew off. SB



31/1 This morning, whilst doing the walk between Martlesham Church and Hill Farm/Thatched Cottage, Will and I saw lots of lapwing flying over Martlesham Creek and over the river towards Haddon Hall, as well as a number of curlew grazing in the fields. The real highlight was a woodcock getting up out of the wood just in front of us as we were coming up towards the back of Thatched Cottage. This afternoon overhead our garden at Greenaway the unusual sight of a buzzard being harried by a sparrowhawk, clearly trying to see it off its patch. JO

Near the river wall adjacent to John Waller's nature reserve:
Flock of Black-tailed Godwits, approx 20 feeding near shoreline, one of which was marked on both legs with coloured rings, (details are being investigated). There was also a solitary Grey Plover, numerous Redshank, usual Teal, 2 Curlews, 1 Meadow Pipit and a Cormorant flew past. JB

Black-tailed Godwit



Grey Plover



Redshank



Teal



3/2 A Kingfisher flew up to the Boatyard Jetty and watched it fish off various perches. When I came around to the beach it was on top of one of the scrubbing posts. It flew off a couple of times and hovered above the river before diving in for its catch. It worked its way down river. CB

I saw a flock of about 40 yellowhammers on 3rd Feb when I went to dig for the hedge by the burnt oak tree. There was also a skylark singing overhead doing its very classic song-flight - this was over the stubble field. Also clearly heard a thrush singing at the back of Cliff Road gardens. CFK

4/2

Perched on top of gorse bush was a Dartford Warbler. JB



5/2 The BO was hunting on the Waller reserve for a long time this afternoon. I watched it at around 2.30 and eventually it flew over the river towards the Tips. Its back feathers were quite dark, so it may have been another individual than the one other walkers were reporting, which they said came out of the tree hole. I wonder if the vole population is low this year, so the BO is having to hunt in the day time. SR

Kingfisher. A flash of blue flew low across the water and perched on a low tree branch on the meadow. There was a Kestrel, 2 Buzzards and a Stonechat. JB

Kestrel. JB



Buzzard. JB



Stonechat JB



The Barn Owl entertained several onlookers with its graceful flying/hunting display, at one point it perched on the fence post and posed for a photograph before flying across the river towards The Tips. JB



For this edition I am grateful to the following contributors: Chris Baldry (CB), Jim Brinsley (JB), Kit Clark (KC), Stephen Clover (SC), Pam Crawley(PC), Charles Croydon (CC), Janet Elliott (JE), Rosalind Erskine (RE), Serena Gold (SG), Jane Hall (JH), Les Humphrey (LH), Christine Fisher Kay (CFK), Jan Kelly (JK), Bunny King (BK), Chris and Tony Lyon (C&TL),

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Curlew JB