

Further observations of a Woolaston Garden – June 2020

Most of the month here remained fairly hot and dry, we missed all the thunder storms and heavy rain. I suspect this accounted for having 90 Common Spotted Orchids plants of which only 25 managed to flower, continuing their 5 year decline from a peak of 494 plants in 2014 (375 flowers) Foxgloves and Ox-eye Daisy seemed very good this year attracting many bumble bees and insects, including, I think, this *Lassioglossum leucozonium*, many tiny pollen beetles and some carpet beetle, *Anthrenus verbasci*.



A surprise sighting was a Beautiful Demoiselle flying fairly fast through the garden when I happened to have the camera. Clearing duckweed from our largest pond, with fish, revealed smooth newts, a large dragonfly larva, probably Southern Hawker, and almost mature tadpoles. Tiny frogs were seen as well as a full grown one at our 1m diameter new feature pool which is patrolled by a territorial *Helophilus pendulus*

hoverfly. The large toad which has lived in the greenhouse for some years stays mostly hidden but showed its presence leaving a massive shiny black poo, one night!



Lately, there have been many young Great Tits and at least two young Greater Spotted Woodpeckers; an adult male was feeding from fat balls when it started raining. It flew to the garage and had a look for insects under the eaves, then stayed there for 10 minutes sheltering from the shower. On 22nd June a, still unusual, sighting for here of a Red Kite circled around prior to being chased off by crows. We had a further sighting the following morning.

Butterflies have continued to be good with many Meadow Brown as well as Gatekeeper, Large White and a few sightings of Comma, Brimstone Yellow and Holly Blue.



I was surprised my report of Large Knapweed Aphid, *Uroleucon jaceae* on Knapweed (right) seems to be the first for Gloucestershire! The *Amara plebeja* beetle (left) is only the second record for Grid SO50, the last record being in 1994.

My thanks to several County Recorders for aiding my poor identification skills.

