

Further observations and notes of a Woolaston Garden – July-October 2020

David Priddis

Wildlife does not always do what we would expect. Not surprising really as it does not read the same books we do.

This Green Woodpecker, a juvenile female, I think, enjoyed searching on a dead plum tree. It missed this large spider, (*below*) spotted one night low on the trunk.



The following day, a Greater Spotted Woodpecker decided to search for ants on the edge of our drive.

The diversity of spiders is amazing. The late David Haig identified some 70 species of spider, which I collected for him, just from various parts of my garden, house and shed in under two years. A number were Notable 'B' species or not previously recorded locally.

I found this crab spider, (*Right*) it was well concealed by the stem of an apple, but really conspicuous when in the open to photograph.



A 'first' for us this Summer was this Small Copper on Golden Rod. In this instance copper out-shone the gold.

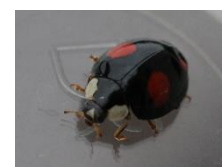
Holly Blue seemed numerous this Summer.



Golden Rod seems to attract a great many insects including this spectacular ichneumonid wasp, I think, *Gasteruption jaculator*?

There seemed to be few ladybirds this year but we did have this 10-Spot (*Right*) as well as a number of 7-spot.

What did surprise me was the sheer variety of colour patterns of some of the invasive Harlequin seen (*Below*).



David Scott-Langley identified this *Calathus fuscipes* beetle which, although deemed widespread and common, was the first recording for 'my' 10km square in the County.



This leafy gall on the stem of French Beans is apparently caused by a bacterium, possibly, *Rhodococcus fascians*.

My thanks to Robert Homan for his research on this.



It has been good to see more Song Thrush this year, although there are always some wildlife casualties. My finding this freshly dead specimen with growth on its left eye was of sufficient interest to BTO for them to carry out a *Post Mortem*.



They concluded it *seemed* to be Avian Pox, which is unusual in Song Thrush. I don't think they were certain of the diagnosis.



I actually identified this Kite-tailed Robberfly correctly (!) according to John Phillips. I did see one here previously, also in early August, 8 years ago.

It was good to see a Southern Hawker



Dragonfly egg-laying in September. It always seems strange they lay above the water rather than in it, usually in damp moss. This one was laying on an old, timber 'frog escape ramp' in an old bath, a legacy from when we kept geese.



Having had a good wash in our birdbath, this Chiffchaff flew to an adjacent perch on an ornamental metal heron's head' but it seemed confused by what it was standing on.

With the weather turning to a wet Autumn, various fungi have sprung up. No Fly Agaric this year but I did see this, which I assume to be a *Clavariaceae* sp.

