

Pamber Forest Nature Reserve

Quarterly Newsletter

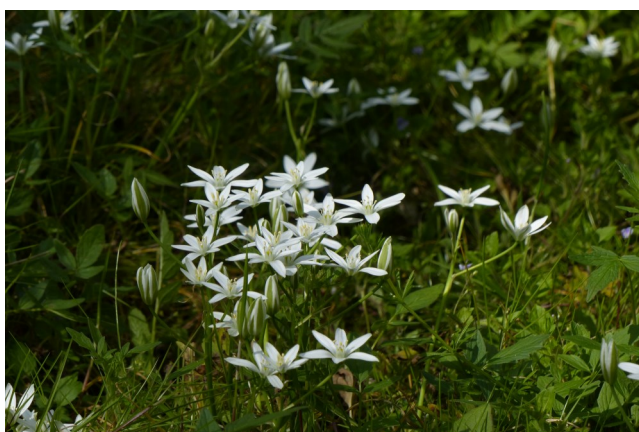


Hampshire &
Isle of Wight
Wildlife Trust

July 2019

The spring was cool and dry which contributed the season being slightly late with the first swallow on 7th April but the bulk of the migrants arriving much later in April. This spring there have been encouraging numbers of spotted flycatchers with 5 territories noted and at least one of these producing young. Garden warblers arrived on 22nd April and were soon much in evidence in the coppice. I carried out a survey of the territories and counted 33 a big improvement on last year. Cuckoo's could be heard daily from 19th April until the end of May.

Much of the coppicing is carried out in the two stream valleys and this benefits the spring flora. This April there was a stunning show of star of Bethlehem, the most I have ever seen here. Sweet briar a type of wild rose has been doing well in the grazed area; I knew of only two plants but this year I found 5 and all were flowering very well (making them much easier to find). Aspen produced vast numbers of catkins this year which has led to a bumper crop of seed, coating the ground under



Star of Bethlehem

the trees in a layer of fluff. There have been some good moth sightings including a narrow-bordered bee hawk-moth on 2nd June, the first one for about 5 years.

The most significant record so far this year has undoubtedly been the discovery that otters are using the site. After a few cattle escapes I had to do some fence repairs where the fences cross Bowmont's Brook

and as I was doing this I happened to notice a small mound next to the stream that had been flattened and on closer inspection found a spraint (faeces) on it, a quick sniff and I was onto the phone to our rivers expert. He confirmed that the fishy smell meant that the spraint belonged to an otter. Further checks downstream revealed further spraints of both otter and



Sweet Briar

mink giving a useful comparison.

Volunteers have been busy putting the finishing touches to the winter work programme before concentrating on fence checking and repairs during the bulk of the nesting season. During the three months they put in 138 work days but this includes a cancellation due to heavy rain in early June, so a great effort all round.

Graham Dennis

Basingstoke Area Reserves Officer

07770891126 Graham.Dennis@hiwwt.org.uk



Basingstoke
and Deane