

Recording Now



Issue 6 - May 2019

Hello and welcome to the latest version of 'Recording Now' bringing you Isle of Wight species recording news, events and updates.



Spring in Full Swing!

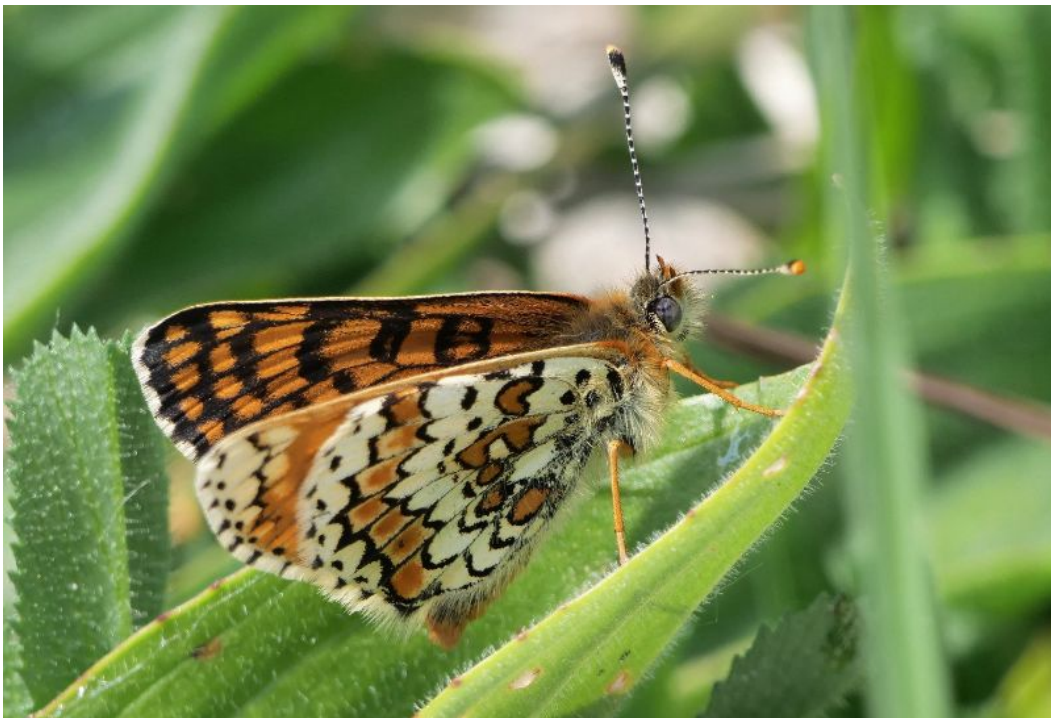
At last, Spring is with us and as well as bringing old favourites such as the Bluebell and Swallows, it's brought along some interesting, more exotic visitors too.

The most unusual and most watched has to be the Great Spotted Cuckoo down in Ventnor. This attractive bird has been with us throughout April, steadily munching through scores of brown-tailed moth caterpillars along with Glanville Fritillary larva on the cliffs above Wheeler's Bay and generally hanging around being photogenic. This has triggered a steady stream of onlookers hoping to catch a glimpse of this rarity to our shores and even inspired a piece of artwork by artist and IWNHAS member Vidya Wolton!

Picture: Great Spotted Cuckoo painting by Vidya Wolton



Great Spotted Cuckoo images by [Nick Edwards](#)



Early Glanville Fritillaries

Despite the predation of Glanville fritillary larvae at Ventnor by our celebrity Great Spotted Cuckoo, Andy Butler spotted three butterflies along Bonchurch revetment on a sunny day on 22nd April, the earliest record to date.

Picture: Glanville Fritillary by Andy Butler



New Environmental Records Officer

In April, we welcomed the new Environmental Records Officer for the IW - Lucy Temple. Lucy says "I look forward to working with the Island's recorders to ensure that the record keeping is undertaken to the highest possible standards and to ensure that the data collected is used as a force for good to protect and enhance our local wildlife and habitats and to look for innovative ways to halt/reverse any existing or emerging declines in our local flora and fauna."



Sea Eagles are Go

You will be aware by now that Natural England has granted a licence to the Roy Dennis Wildlife Foundation to undertake the White-tailed Eagle project on the Isle of Wight.

A Project Officer based on the Island has now been recruited, to ensure that the Foundation has the ability to communicate with all stakeholders at a local level and to organise the implementation of the release.

Dr Tim Mackrill, who will be leading on the project, says that 'We are currently putting together two groups to oversee the delivery of the White-tailed Eagle Project - a steering group and monitoring and evaluation group. The steering group will oversee all aspects of the project, while the monitoring and evaluation group will coordinate the implementation of the project's monitoring and evaluation plan which we are currently reviewing with Natural England'. This will cover several key areas as follows:

- White-tailed Eagle ecology, including habitat use, ranging behaviour, diet and survival in the study area;
- Interactions with other components of local biodiversity, protected sites and species, including features of protected sites including Natura 2000 sites, e.g. birds on SPAs;
- Impact of eagle watchers on protected sites including SPA, SAC, SSSI interest features and monitoring of the success of any mitigation measures implemented;
- Evaluation and mitigation of direct and indirect, potential, actual and perceived impacts of eagles on livestock, game and fisheries;
- Socio-economic impact, including economic appraisal of costs and benefits;
- Public perception of the project.

You can find out much more about the project, including Frequently Asked Questions here www.roydennis.org/isleofwight.

Picture: White-tailed Eagle by Mike Crutch



Species of the Month 2019

Here are the iWatchWildlife featured 'Species of the Months' through until September. We welcome records on any of these species at any time of year. Tag us on Facebook @iwatchwildlife or email iwatchwildlife@gmail.com.

March **Hare** / April **Orange-tip Butterfly** / May **Emperor Dragonfly** / June **Stag Beetle** / July **Hedgehog** / August **Barn Owl** / September **Two-spot Ladybird**

*Picture Credits: **Hare** Nick Edwards, **Orange-tip** Andy Butler, **Emperor Dragonfly** James Gloyn, **Stag Beetles** Ross Bower (PTES), **Hedgehog** Graham Hendey, **Barn Owl** Danny Vokins, **Two-spot Ladybird** John Caws
(All pictures were taken on the IW except Stag Beetles)*

iWatchWildlife needs Record Champions

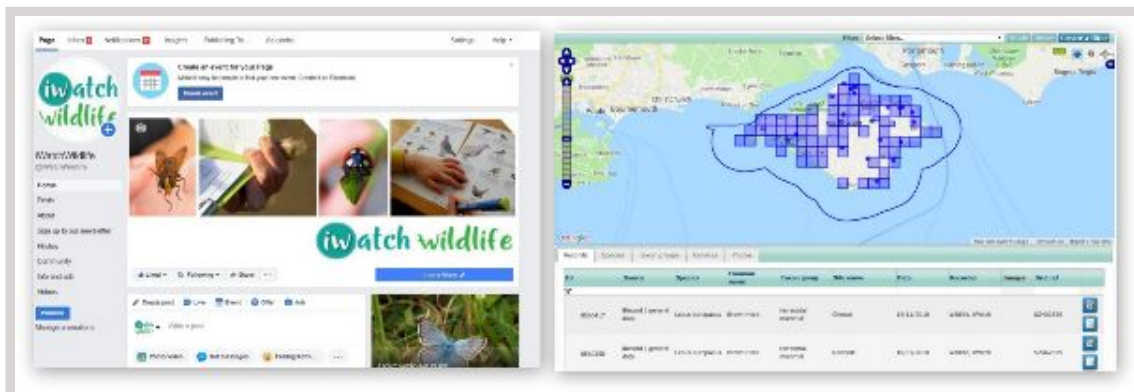
iWatchWildlife is looking for help with capturing wildlife observations shared on Social Media and converting them into permanent records to help boost the IW County Species Database.

Users of Social Media are excellent at sharing their wildlife encounters, but all too soon,

observations are superseded with few making it as species records.

There is a huge bank of potential untapped wildlife records and we'd love your help in trying to capture some of these. We tend to contact the individual via their Social Media post and ask for their permission to store the observations. We then request any additional details necessary for making a robust record e.g. location, numbers, date.

If you have a particular species group you are interested in and would like to help engage with the wider public through Social Media, then please do get in touch with Tina at iwatchwildlife@gmail.com.



Hare alert

Alarmingly, it is looking as though a strain of the rabbit haemorrhagic disease, which has knocked back rabbit populations, has been transmitted to brown hares. Brown hares have experienced a decline of more than 80% in the UK over the past century due to changes in agricultural practice, so this new threat is particularly worrying. If you come across a dead brown hare with no visible injuries, please contact Jamie Marsh at the Wildlife Trust, jamie.marsh@hiwwt.org.uk. Dr Diana Bell at UEA is anxious to obtain specimens for analysis to determine the cause of death.

Citizen Science Saltmarsh Monitoring Opportunity

Research project C-SIDE (Carbon Storage in Intertidal Environments) is looking for volunteers to help with collecting lots of soil samples from salt marshes across England, Scotland and Wales looking into the importance of salt marshes in absorbing CO₂ to combat climate change. Find out more at cside@bangor.ac.uk.



Dragonflies & Damselflies update by Jim Baldwin

The recording season had an unexpectedly early start when Andy Butler and Dave Nordell saw a rare Vagrant Emperor (*Anax ephippiger*) along the revetment between Wheelers Bay and Bonchurch on 23rd February. They managed to get close views of the dragonfly before it flew up the cliffs and out of sight.

This is the fourth record for the island and the first since November 2011 at Tennyson Down.

Our first record of a local odonate was of three emerging Large Red Damselfly (*Pyrhosoma nymphula*) seen by Peter Hunt at Bouldnor on 10th April

Picture of a Large Red Damselfly by Peter Hunt

Improvements at Hersey

Hersey Nature Reserve [SSSI/RAMSAR] in Seaview may be small, but local recorders are proving it supports a remarkable number of species which, in turn, has led to habitat improvement projects.

The bird hide in the public area is opened daily by a team of 17 volunteers. Last year 84 species of birds were observed from the hide. Hundreds of visitors logged over 1800 observations which were entered on MapMate and submitted to the Local Records Centre.

The local Bat Group, supported by volunteers, started carrying out annual acoustic surveys in 2016. They have detected 10 of the 18 species of bat found in the UK, including the migratory *Nathusius' pipistrelle*. Now, bat boxes have been installed to encourage bats to roost on site.

Kingfisher use the Reserve every winter and three kingfisher nesting tunnels have been installed in the hope of encouraging them stay and breed, a tern nesting raft has been built and launched by volunteers and during routine flood defence de-silting, a roosting island was created in the southern sector of the reserve.

Jim Baldwin, the Island Recorder for Dragonflies, Damselflies and Beetles, has started an entomology survey. Iain Outlaw, the County Moth Recorder, started a moth survey in April and a botanical survey is due to start, led by Colin Pope, Island Recorder of Vascular Plants.

If you would like to get involved in any of these surveys as a volunteer, or have photos you wish to share, you can email friendsofhersey@birdlover.com.

Kingfisher Tunnel installation at Hersey (left) and Tern Raft installation (right)



Beetle Recording update by Jim Baldwin

One of the top coleopterists in the country, and pan-species recorder, Mark Telfer and his family paid a visit to the Island during February. Although a family break, Mark still managed to record 62 species of beetle; nine had not previously been reported on the Isle of Wight and were found in a pile of woodchips at Yaverland on 13th February! This included a Nationally Scarce species (*Omalium rugatum*) - a rove beetle.

Mark also found another Nationally Scarce species (*Licinus punctatulus*), which is a ground beetle. This is the fifth record for the Island and the first since September 1984 at St. Catherine's Point.

While viewing the Great Spotted Cuckoo at Wheeler's Bay, Owen Cass photographed a large beetle at the Bonchurch end of the revetment. This was identified by myself as Great Silver Water Beetle (*Hydrophilus piceus*), only the fourth record for the Island and a cracking beetle.

The biggest surprise so far was a report of a male Stag Beetle (*Lucanus cervus*) at Ryde Mead Lawn Tennis Club on 5th April, our earliest ever record. Coincidentally the previous earliest record was on 7th April 2006 from the same location!

Picture: Great Silver Water Beetle by Owen Cass



Summer Recorders' Event - BioBlitz 2019

For our annual Summer Recorder's Event this year, we will be running a **BioBlitz** at **Haseley Manor** by kind permission of Anthony Roberts on **Sunday 7th July**. Though not a public event this time, we welcome anybody with an interest in species recording and identification to join us.

The recording will kick-off the evening before with moth trapping and a bat survey. It will then be an early start on Sunday for some bird ringing, followed later in the morning by botanical recording and pond dipping; hopefully with lots of other species groups being covered throughout the day.

As the majority of recording will take place during the morning, we invite folks with a general interest to drop in from 2pm at the hub to see what's been found as we start to ID and log observations and specimens. We will keep participants updated with species highlights during the day, but the proper collation of records will be done post-event to ensure everyone has the opportunity to get involved and enjoy the day.

Further details will be released nearer the time.



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