

IW2020 Species Recording Challenge

Contributed by Iain Outlaw

April 2020

Over the course last year I recorded 1026 species on the Isle of Wight. A reasonable tally without making too much effort but surely it would be possible to do better. As the year closed I wondered how I might challenge myself and decided on trying to record 2020 species on the Island in 2020.

Hopefully it would incentivise me into getting out and about and provide the opportunity for me to learn more about the wonderful wildlife we have here. Having only ever recorded 2552 species in the UK it was going to be proper challenge.

Of course it began with the traditional New Year's Day bird count which got the challenge off to a good start but to succeed I was going to have to look at all types of flora and fauna.

One thing I had never tried before was rockpooling and that has been a revelation. The diversity of our coastline is incredible. With just a few visits to the coast I'd recorded more than 50 species including the fabulous **Snakelocks Anemone** and a bizarre crab *Pisa nodipes*, that disguises itself with seaweed.

With seemingly relentless rain in January and February my moth traps didn't get much use but I spent a lot of time wandering around woodland at night, turning over logs and looking under bark. No doubt making for quite a sight but it proved to be very productive, particularly for spiders and beetles. Both of these groups represent a steep learning curve but armed with the right guides and some excellent online resources it has been possible to identify almost all of the finds. Many, like the spider *Leptyphantes minutus* from Sibden Hill and the carabid beetle *Ocys tachysoides* from Shanklin Manor, are species I'd never seen before. The latter a new species for the Island. Day trips turned up some great plants including **Portland Spurge** at West High Down and **Toothwort** at Eaglehead Copse.

Warmer weather in March boosted recording opportunities. A very enjoyable morning at Mottistone Down providing fabulous views of an **Adder** along with **Black Oil-beetle** and **Minotaur Beetle**. Then everything changed as we went into lockdown and for the final fortnight of March recording was almost exclusively from the garden. Thankfully activity at the moth traps has been good, keeping the challenge on track and continuing to provide new species for the garden list like a fabulous **Water Carpet**.

By the end of March I had recorded 516 species, that's 25.5% of my target so bang on schedule. More importantly, I've seen some fabulous plants and animals.



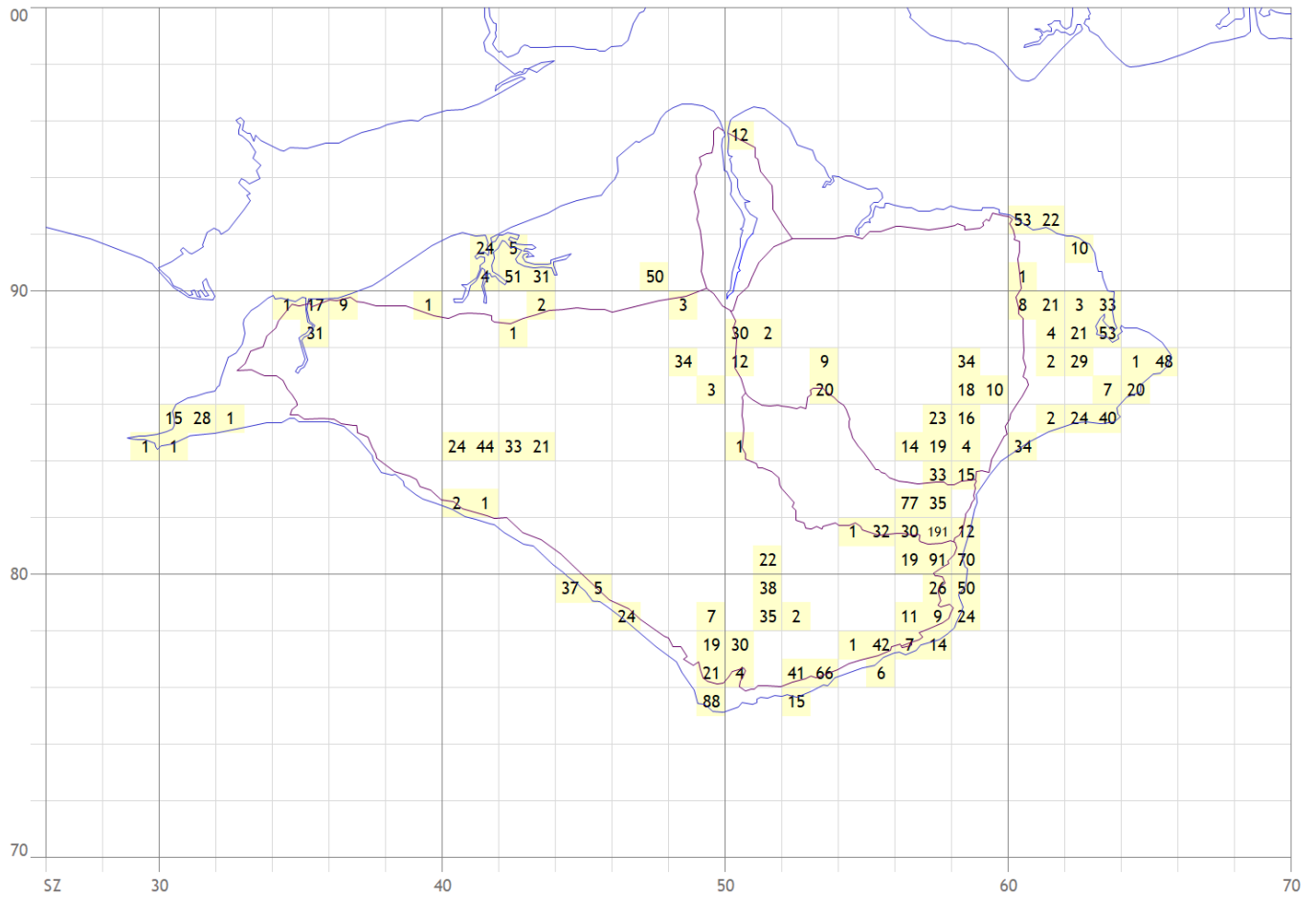
Snakelocks anemone



Ocys tachysoides



Water Carpet Moth
(*Lampropteryx suffumata*)



IW2020 Totals by taxonomic group

Mites	3	Butterflies and moths	46
Anemones	3	Lichens	12
Seaweeds and other algae	9	Mammals	11
Amphibians	2	Centipedes, millipedes and woodlice	13
Spiders and harvestmen	27	Slime moulds	2
Birds	114	Lacewings	
Bryophytes	5	Dragonflies and damselflies	
Earthworms	1	Crickets, grasshoppers and allies	2
Beetles	42	Fishes	2
Springtails	3	Vascular plants	113
Crustaceans	10	Bristle worms	1
Flies	17	Barklice	
Echinoderms	1	Reptiles	1
Fungi	20	Flatworms	2
Slugs and snails	21	Caddisflies	1
Shieldbugs, leafhoppers, aphids, etc.	12	Bristletails	1
Bees, wasps, ants and sawflies	18	False scorpions	1