

Diary

October 2006

Weather

October, with just over 100mm of rain was the wettest month since August 2004 and was 50% higher than the average for the month. The total accumulation for the first ten months of the year now amounts to 97% of the average for the period. The wettest day was the 18/19th when 33mm fell.

Minimum temperatures were well above the average for nearly the whole of the month by as much as 5 or 6 degrees. The closest approach to freezing was 2.5°C on the night of the 26/27th. A similar picture applied to maximums which were generally above average too.

Birds

The highlight of the month was the regular appearance of a confident Water Rail which seems to have set up its winter home under the Privet bush in the bed below the old mill. Of the rest there is little to report – Red Kites and Buzzards (pictured) have been in evidence together with the more usual “garden” birds such as Blue and Great Tits, Wrens, Robins etc. and a couple of visits by a small flock of Long-tailed Tits. Swallows and House Martins have all left for their sunnier winter homes in Africa as have our Warblers.



Butterflies



We are fast approaching the end of the butterfly season with only two species seen during the month and only odd sightings of these. As to be expected one of the two species was Red Admiral but the other was the migrant, Painted Lady (pictured).

Etc

Des reported the sighting of a Mink but, despite deploying traps in the area it seems to be still on the loose. We can only hope that it was passing through – quite possible as it would not find any Water Voles to feed on. On the American mammal front the Grey Squirrel was also more obvious than usual – probably collecting food for its winter cache.

