



# Bristol Naturalists' Society

Registered Charity No. 235494

## Wildlife News: Week 18 – May 06<sup>th</sup> 2010

### Weather

A colder week, back to 13.7C, with northerly winds as high pressure settled in mid-atlantic Year-to-date reached 8.9C (it is worth noting that in previous years this was a normal average for January!) and the last twelve months is stationary at 13.4C, because it has been as cold or colder than last year. The week did produce 18mm of much needed rain, most of it, of course on May 2<sup>nd</sup> the bank holiday weekend.

### Spring events

15 new events were added to the calculations this week, demonstrating what a little additional warmth from the previous week can do, and the average date moved up to day 94, only 14 days later than the average, though still 19 days later than 2007. Both Adria and Trailing Bellflower have opened, as have Clary, Black medick, Sowthistle, Bulgle, Bloody Cranesbill, Oak and Field Buttercup. Most trees are now in leaf, though Walnut, Mulberry, Robinia and Locust are still bare, as are some Ash trees, and most Oaks are only just opening their buds. These events varied from being 33 days late to being 7 days early. Some early spring flowers are starting to fade- Cherry Plum has gone, wild Cherry is fading fast, Blackthorn has gone, celandine is on its last legs, and the dainty Thale Cress is almost over. Meanwhile the first hawthorn flowers are open on the motorways.

On the Downs 68 species were in flower on my standard walk, fewer than the average for the week of 76 since 2005 but nine more than the previous week. The total number of species in flower at the same time peaks at the end of June at just over 100, so we have two thirds of the maximum.

### Politics.

It is a pity plants and birds don't have votes, but at last there is a Green MP in the house. All strength to her arm, because, despite their hunt for green credentials, the major political parties really have not begun to recognise the changes that are necessary if humanity, along with the rest of the ecosphere, upon which we utterly depend, are to survive. Species extinction has been likened to pulling out the rivets of an airliner one by one in mid-flight. You cannot know when the resulting changes will lead to catastrophe.

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