

## Thorndon Birdlife, June 2020

On 26th April I saw a male large red damselfly in my garden. Although this is not an uncommon damselfly, it was the first one I'd seen in my garden. Remember that when at rest, damselflies hold their wings closed parallel with the body, whereas dragonflies hold their wings at right angles to their bodies. I heard great spotted woodpecker drumming from somewhere near The Oaks on the same day.

I was very pleased to receive a report of birds of prey recorded by one observer during April, which included 13 common buzzards, five red kites, three sparrowhawks, one peregrine and an osprey. I've only ever seen one peregrine in Thorndon myself and, as far as I know, this is the first osprey to be recorded here. This might seem a surprising record, but we do get ospreys in Suffolk in the spring and the autumn, on their way to and from their breeding grounds (they spend the winter in West Africa).

I received no fewer than four reports of a cuckoo on 4th May, when there were also four swifts over Stoke Road. Five days later I heard a cuckoo from my garden, calling on the south side of The Street, which is the first one I've heard from here for 11 years. There do seem to have been more cuckoos heard and seen around the county this spring than for several years.

On 6th May a Cetti's (pronounced 'Chetty's') warbler was seen and heard singing near the Bowls Club, which is not far from where one was reported a couple of years ago. Although not a striking bird to look at (chestnut brown above, greyish white on the underparts and with grey on the neck), the song of the Cetti's warbler is extraordinary and quite unmistakable; a loud and explosive "I'm Chetty, I'm Chetty, I'm Chetty - if you don't like it tough luck!" In Suffolk, Cetti's warbler is very much a bird of reeds and scrub in freshwater areas and, unlike most other warblers, it is present here all year round. It's a rare bird in this part of the county.

I saw my first swifts of the spring in my part of the village on 7th May and, like last year, there were three together. I presume that these birds are a pair and either an unmated adult or an immature birds that is not yet ready to breed. There's every chance that they are the same three individuals.

On the insect front I have seen good numbers of orange-tip butterflies, a few holly blues and a few peacocks. I've also seen several crane flies (the 'daddy long-legs'), which I have to say has been a bit of a surprise as I expect to see them later in the summer.

There have been reports of turtle doves and spotted flycatchers elsewhere in the county, but I have not yet come across either of them here, so if you have them where you are I'd be very interested to hear.

I've got two pairs of blackbirds and a pair of robins nesting in my garden, so I hope to see the fledged juveniles very soon.

As ever, I'm always pleased to receive reports of birds and other wildlife of interest in Thorndon, Rishangles, Hestley Green and Braiseworth.

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