

# Wildlife sightings from a Barcombe garden during the government restrictions

Weeks 1-6 (24 March – 4 May 2020)

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On the afternoon of Monday 23 March 2020, the Prime Minister, Boris Johnson, announced unprecedented government restrictions on the public's movement away from home to prevent the spread of the Coronavirus, Covid-19, and thereby help to limit pressure on the National Health Service.

All of the wildlife observations and photos in this document were taken in our Barcombe (Cross) garden during the first six weeks of these restrictions. This time provided an opportunity to study the wildlife in, or within sight or sound of, our garden. For interest, a few garden plant pictures are also included. Seeing spring continue unabated in and around the garden helped provide an antidote to the unfolding news about the pandemic crisis.



**Day 1 - Tuesday 24 March**

***Bright & sunny in light SE wind***

**A total of 30 bird species** was recorded *from* the garden i.e., including fly-overs: a Heron perched on a neighbour's roof (see photo), two Little Egrets that flew NE at 1635, Cormorant, two Canada Geese, a Red Kite flying to the E at 1220, five Buzzards, two Kestrels, Pheasant (heard), four Lesser Black-backed Gulls, Herring Gull, five Stock Doves, Woodpigeon, Collared Dove, a drumming Great Spotted Woodpecker, Wren, Dunnock, two Robins, Blackbird, Chiffchaff (in song and seen fly-catching), Goldcrest, Coal Tit (heard), about eight Blue Tits, Great Tit, two Magpies, Jackdaw, Rook, Crow, Starling, Greenfinch and Goldfinch (including display).

Butterflies comprised singles of male Brimstone, Comma (on heathers in front garden - see photo) and Peacock.



**Day 2 - Wednesday 25 March**

***Bright & sunny in light SE wind***

**Cumulative bird species total = 33.** Birds added included Red-legged Partridge (heard), Song Thrush and Chaffinch. Additionally, there were six Greenfinches, two Stock Doves, a Goldcrest and also a male Kestrel that landed in the oak tree just NE of garden before flying off in fluttering display flight. As is often the case, a Grey Squirrel was also present (photo).



**Day 3 - Thursday 26 March**

***Bright & sunny in light but strengthening NE wind after frosty start***

**Cumulative bird species total = 35.** Birds added were a Green Woodpecker heard calling to the north and a Raven that flew over E at 0930 causing mayhem among the local Rooks.

**Day 4 - Friday 27 March**

***Bright & sunny. Wind light - moderate NE wind. Cool***

**Cumulative species total = 38.** Birds added were Mallard (two drakes and a duck), an 'alba' (Pied or White) Wagtail that flew over E and a magnificent adult Peregrine (see photo) that flew in from the W at 1205, passed over the house quite low before circling up and disappearing high to the SW. The latter was the first sighting here since October 2017. Other sightings included a Heron and an adult Lesser Black-backed Gull in flight, five Stock Doves and a male Pheasant that flew low across garden later on in the day.



**Day 5 - Saturday 28 March*****Bright becoming overcast - moderate NE wind. Cold in breeze***

Nothing new added during the day but a Kestrel and two Stock Doves were seen and three Robins (probably a pair and a male) seemed to be tolerating one another well. A Peacock butterfly was also seen.

**Day 6 - Sunday 29 March*****Changeable with occasional hail showers. Wind moderate NE. Cold. Clocks +1 hour***

The only sighting of note was of two drake Mallards.

**Day 7 - Monday 30 March*****Mainly bright becoming overcast. Wind light – moderate NE. Cool***

**Cumulative bird species total = 41.** There were three new additions to the list today – all gulls: Common Gull (a first year bird and about two adults), Black-headed Gull (two including one in summer-plumage) and a Mediterranean Gull (distinctive call heard late afternoon). Other gulls included an overhead flock of about 100 Herring Gulls of various ages presumably attracted in by local ploughing / cultivation and these were accompanied by an adult Lesser Black-backed Gull. There were three sightings of one or more Pied / White Wagtails, a Mallard that flew in to land on next door's (Tim & Elaine's) pond, six Greenfinches including males in their erratic display flights, five Goldfinches, a Kestrel, Buzzards including in display flight, a Red Kite flying NE high up at 1140, a Chiffchaff in song and a Coal Tit (heard). In nearby pines there appear to be at least three occupied Rook's nests.

**Day 8 - Tuesday 31 March*****Mainly bright. Wind light becoming light – moderate NE***

**Cumulative bird species total = 43.** Birds added were a Blackcap in song early on in the morning and two Linnets that flew over NE, calling. During the morning, a flock of about 100 Herring Gulls circled low over the garden making a lot of noise (somewhat reminiscent of a Cornish fishing village – see photo). Other sightings included a male Kestrel hovering almost overhead before it was chased off by a Jackdaw, an adult Common Gull and a very smart adult summer plumage Mediterranean Gull that flew over east with other gulls at 1620 (see rather poor photo as it was flying away over trees).





**Day 9 - Wednesday 1 April**

***Overnight frost with ice on garden pond. Bright becoming overcast. Calm becoming light N wind***

**Cumulative bird species total = 45.** Birds added were Greylag Goose and Sparrowhawk – the latter shooting low over garden headed N. Other sightings included four probable Redwings flying N, one, or possibly two, Blackcaps in song, a Chiffchaff in song, both Green and Great spotted Woodpeckers heard, a Chaffinch, a female Greenfinch with nest material, a male Pied Wagtail, three Buzzards fighting and a Goldcrest. A Peacock butterfly was present. The Camellia flowers were just about at their peak (see photo).



**Day 10 - Thursday 2 April**

***Overcast most of the day. Wind NW light***

Just the usual species seen during the day.

**Day 11 - Friday 3 April**

***Bright becoming increasingly cloudy. Wind light W***

**Cumulative bird species total = 47.** Birds added today were a Skylark heard in song just to the NW at 0830 and a Tawny Owl heard at 2335 somewhere to the W. Other sightings included a female Greenfinch collecting feathers, scattered on the side lawn from a Woodpigeon that had come a cropper overnight, and moss (see photo), three Blackbirds (two males and a female), three Robins (including one entering the *Pyracantha*, possibly to a nest), two Goldcrests in one of the two oak trees that partly overhang the back garden, a Kestrel, a Buzzard (overhead), two Starlings, a Song Thrush, two Stock Doves, a Jackdaw (collecting nest material from the lawn) and a male Great Spotted Woodpecker (on the peanut feeder).



**Day 12 - Saturday 4 April**

***Fog early then bright. Wind light SE***

**Cumulative bird species total = 50.** Three additional birds were recorded during the day – a male House Sparrow (and, surprisingly, the first one seen this year from the garden), a Grey Wagtail that flew over N showing off its yellow under-tail and a Coot that was heard calling three times flying NE at 2325 (presumably on a territorial circuit). From 1000-1100, the first of a series of weekly back-garden birdwatches across Sussex and elsewhere took place organized by Michael Blencowe of the Sussex Wildlife Trust. A total of 24 species were logged during the hour including both the sparrow (in the first minute!) and the wagtail above. Other species included three Pied Wagtails, a Chiffchaff in song and two adult Lesser Black-backed Gulls; also the usual Collared Doves and Woodpigeons (see photos of both). Rather frustratingly, Magpies and a Goldcrest seen just before the hour started were nowhere to be seen! Later in the day, a Peregrine was circling very high up with a Buzzard and

eventually flew south (51 years to the day since my first - seen as a youngster near the Needles on the Isle of Wight). Also a drake Mallard and a male Kestrel were seen. A Mallard was also heard at 2340. Butterflies seen were a Peacock, a male Holly Blue (photo) and a female Orange-tip.



**Day 13 - Sunday 5 April**

***Bright. Wind light SE***

**Cumulative bird species total = 53.** Three new additions to the bird list today – a female Bullfinch perched in one of our small apple trees in the morning, my first Swallow of the spring flying E at 1635 as we sat in the garden and a flock of about 10 Fieldfares (some of the last departing winter visitors) that flew S at dusk. Other sightings included two Linnets flying over, a Skylark heard to the NW, a male Chaffinch, several Greenfinches (see photo of male), a Red Kite flying S, a male Kestrel, four Black-headed Gulls flying SE (this species is usually absent here from early spring through to mid-summer), two Stock Doves, a Coal Tit calling, several Jackdaws that visited our garden pond (photo), the local Rooks that were busy at a seed feeder in the next garden (see photo), a Wren and, at dusk, a Sparrowhawk. A Tawny Owl was heard after dark. Butterflies seen during the day included at least one male Orange-tip and a Peacock. At dusk, two small bats, presumably Pipistrelles were hunting over the garden.







**Day 14 - Monday 6 April**

***Overcast becoming bright and warm. Wind light - moderate SW***

**Cumulative bird species total = 54.** A very welcome addition today was my first House Martin of the spring (in 2018, the first sighting was not until June). Other records included two Wrens singing at one another (photo of one), a female Chaffinch, two Pied Wagtails on our neighbour's roof, six Goldfinches nibbling their way through the buds on a nearby oak and about 45 Jackdaws flying south at dusk. Butterflies consisted of a Peacock and males of both Orange-tip and Brimstone.



Day 15 - Tuesday 7 April

*Bright and warm. Wind light NE*

**Cumulative bird species total = 56.** Two additional birds were added – a Nuthatch was calling just to the N of the garden early on and at the other end of the day, at 2305, a real delight on a moonlit, calm evening was to hear the first Nightingales of the spring singing clearly, one to the W and another to the NW (presumably on the old railway track). Other sightings included a Sparrowhawk circling to the N, a Green Woodpecker ‘yaffling’ and a Heron that appeared to land on our roof during the evening. Apart from the two Nightingales, other birds heard at that late hour were Tawny Owl, Greylag Goose and, surprisingly, Woodpigeon. Butterflies seen during the day included males of Orange-tip and Brimstone (photo of latter) and two Peacocks. Garden plants in flower included Saxifrage in the rockery (see photo).



**Day 16 - Wednesday 8 April**

***Bright and warm. Calm***

Daytime bird sightings included five Buzzards, a male Kestrel, a Red Kite to the E at 1220, two House Martins, at least six Goldfinches in the nearby oak tree (see photo of one), an adult Peregrine flying east then south at 1625, a pair of Dunnocks, and two Linnets flying over. At 2305, under a full moon, two Nightingales, a Heron and a Mallard were heard. Butterflies today were a male Orange-tip, a Peacock and an unidentified White.



**Day 17 - Thursday 9 April**

***Bright. Wind light E***

Bird sightings included seven Goldfinches, a pair of Dunnocks (see photo of one), a Swallow singing as it flew over, a Skylark flying E overhead calling, a Kestrel, two Pied Wagtails and two Great Spotted Woodpeckers in threat posture with outstretched wings on the small willow tree that holds the peanut feeder. At night, a Red-legged Partridge was heard calling at 2255 in the moonlit conditions.



**Day 18 - Friday 10 April**

***Bright and warm. Wind light E***

**Cumulative bird species total = 57.** A Jay seen and heard at 0800 was new for the list and the first from the garden since 2017. Other species recorded included a Blackcap in song, a Red-legged Partridge calling (sounded surprisingly close), a female Bullfinch, a Goldcrest, a Buzzard in display flight, a Heron sneaking into next door's (Tim & Elaine's) garden to visit their pond, the usual Robin (see photo) and a Stock Dove. Five species of butterfly were noted: several male Orange-tips; a Peacock; several Holly Blues; a male Brimstone; and a Green-veined White. Garden flowers included Pasque Flower in peak perfection (see photo).





**Day 19 - Saturday 11 April**

***Bright becoming warm. Calm***

The second Sussex-wide back garden bird-watch took place between 1000 and 1100 and I recorded 22 species including House Sparrow again (they seem to like these events), four Starlings (photo of one) and a pair of Pied Wagtails on our roof (photo of male). Observations later in the day included Sparrowhawk (photo), three Buzzards, two Swallows or Martins flying N, a Red Kite seen three times, two Linnets in the garden (photo of female), Magpie and Great Spotted Woodpecker. After dark at 2310, the two Nightingales were heard again. Butterflies noted were Holly Blue, Brimstone and Peacock.

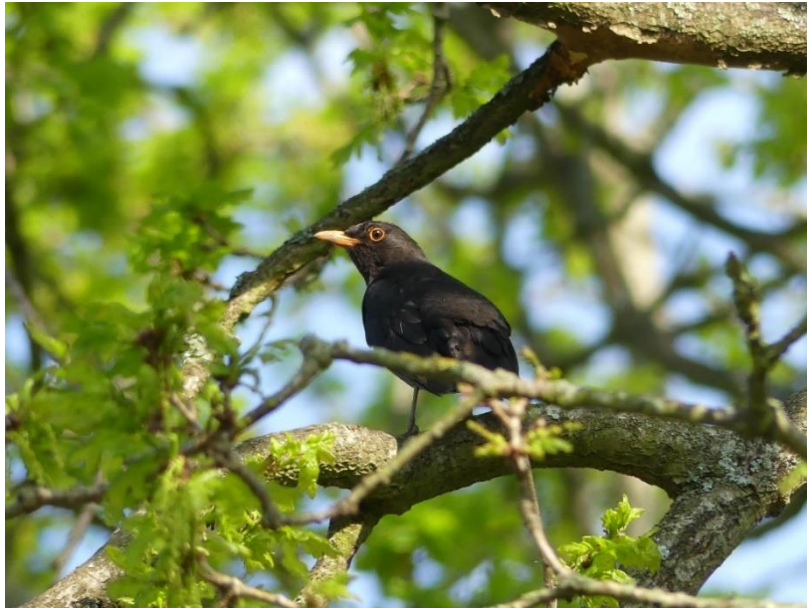




**Day 20 - Sunday 12 April**

***Bright. Calm***

**Cumulative bird species total = 58.** An extra species was added to the list today (Easter Sunday) when a Yellowhammer flew S overhead calling. Other birds noted include a singing Blackcap, a Dunnock taking nest material into the *Pyracantha*, two Bullfinches in the front garden and the male perching briefly, a male House Sparrow on telephone wires in the road, a Skylark singing well to the NW and a pair of Linnets flying to and fro over the garden. Blackbirds in song were much in evidence (see photo). In the late evening, two Nightingales were heard singing and both Mallard and Tawny Owl were heard calling.



**Day 21 - Monday 13 April**

***Overcast becoming bright later. Wind moderate NE. Cold***

A loose flock of about 12 Starlings was the only sighting of note during the day.

**Day 22 - Tuesday 14 April**

***Bright and warm out of the breeze then clouding up from the N before becoming brighter later in day. Wind light NE***

Sightings included a singing male Blackcap near the compost heap, three Buzzards (photo of one), a Sparrowhawk that flew SE, a Swallow that flew N, a Song Thrush, a Lesser Black-backed Gull and a Linnet. A male Orange-tip butterfly was also seen.



**Day 23 - Wednesday 15 April**

***Bright and cloudless after light frost. Calm then wind light NE***

Early in the day, a Starling was heard impersonating a Jay. Two Blackcaps were heard singing, a Red-legged Partridge was calling in the distance, Dunnocks were busy taking food to a nest in the *Pyracantha*, and a Song Thrush was in song. Raptors were represented by: a Peregrine that flew E causing the gulls to panic before circling back to the NW when it was lost to sight at 1150; nine Buzzards (four overhead and five to the N – all in view at once); and two Red Kites – one which flew SE then E at 1220 and was joined by a second individual. The latter seemed to try and catch something in mid-air. At 2315, at least one Nightingale was singing in the distance. Butterflies seen during the day were Holly Blue and males of both Orange-tip and Brimstone.

**Day 24 - Thursday 16 April**

***Bright becoming cloudy with very light showers in the afternoon. Wind light NE***

A Heron flew over and looked to be landing and two Lesser Black-backed Gulls flew S in the evening. A Holly Blue was seen and also a pair of Red Mason Bees on the neighbour's (Paul & Pam's) gate pillar. The queen Red Mason Bee has diagnostic horns that are just about visible in the picture below.



**Day 25 - Friday 17 April**

***Bright becoming overcast with occasional brightness then drizzle and thunder & lightning after dark and some heavy showers (the first for some time). Wind NE light increasing during the day***

At 1800, there was a loud bump on the glass door at the front of our converted garage. On opening the door, I was confronted with a male Sparrowhawk that had caught a Collared Dove in the driveway. Quickly closing the door, I went out of the house through another door and crept around the side of the house. The Sparrowhawk had killed the dove and was 'mantling' it with its opened wings. It was more interested in eating the dove (an extremely large prey item for a male Sparrowhawk which normally catches small birds) and allowed me to take some photographs. I soon withdrew but looked out again at 1830 when it was still there. Looking outside a bit later, I couldn't



see it and had assumed it had flown off with its rather weighty prey. However, a look at 1910 revealed that it had moved the prey under the neighbour's (Paul's) van. Just before dusk, another look showed that it (and its prey) had now definitely gone. It can only be assumed that the hawk was chasing the dove that panicked and flew into the door, stunning itself and allowing the hawk to catch it and then kill it. Wonderful views of this raptor with piercing yellow eyes but a sad end for the Collared Dove and all rather gory!





**Day 26 - Saturday 18 April**

***Overcast and damp becoming brighter later. Wind NE light***

Another Swallow flew N, the Heron put in an appearance, a Song Thrush was singing during the early morning, a Crow had started a programme of tapping on our back window (see below) and after dark, two Nightingales and a Tawny Owl were heard. A male Holy Blue (photo) was seen and after dark, it was a great delight to see a Hedgehog on our side lawn.



**Day 27 - Sunday 19 April**

***Bright. Wind NE light***

A total of 32 species were noted during the day including 25 during the weekly hour-long birdwatch organized by Michael Blencowe. Sightings included three Swallows, a Pied Wagtail, a Bullfinch heard several times during the day, a Chiffchaff in song, a Skylark seen in song flight not that far to the N during the early morning, four Greylag Geese that flew over W, two adult Lesser Black-backed Gulls that flew NE, a Great Spotted Woodpecker heard drumming, at least five Buzzards, a pair of House Sparrows on a nearby telephone post, two Kestrels and three Linnets. The Crow continued to tap on the back window (culprit in photo). Butterflies included a female Large White (photo), Holly Blue and Peacock. Quite a few garden plants were also in good flower including Cowslip and Tree Paeony (photos).





**Day 28 - Monday 20 April**

***Bright. Wind NE light becoming moderate***

**Cumulative bird species total = 59.** A new species for the list was noted during the afternoon – a Swift that made several effortless passes over the garden in the moderate breeze. This is the second earliest arrival over the garden in 22 years of watching here. Despite the Sparrowhawk incident on Friday, there was a great deal of Collared Dove activity including display flights (photo). A male Bullfinch flew over, a Heron (photo) perched on our roof and both Blackcap and Song Thrush song was heard. A male Small White Butterfly was seen (photo).





**Day 29 - Tuesday 21 April**

**Bright. Wind light NE**

A Bullfinch was heard during the day and after dark, at 2325, at least two Nightingales were singing and a Greylag Goose was heard. Additionally, an odd call was heard at this time (possibly of a wader) and a satellite was seen passing over going SE. During the day, a toad was disturbed while I was tidying up some fuelwood, Bumble Bees were enjoying the Bugle flowers (photo) and a (Dark-edged) Bee Fly (photo) was visiting Ground Ivy flowers. Garden flowers included Thrift (photo) while the *Acer palmatum dissectum* leaves (photo) were looking rather fine.



**Day 30 - Wednesday 22 April**

**Bright. Calm, Wind becoming NE light**

A Bullfinch was heard again, as was a Blackcap, and other sightings included Coal Tit, two Swifts (photo of one), a Heron flying in from the E, a Buzzard escorted away by a Rook (photo) and two Chaffinches (including one in song). A Nightingale was heard at 2300.



**Day 31 - Thursday 23 April**

***Bright. Calm***

On yet another wonderfully clear star-filled night, at least one Nightingale was heard at 2305 as was a Tawny Owl.

**Day 32 - Friday 24 April**

***Bright. Wind light NE***

A Skylark was singing to the N / NE from 0730 on, a female Bullfinch briefly landed on our side lawn where there was also a Song Thrush, a Coal Tit was seen and other sightings included four Goldfinches, a Linnet and a male Kestrel. Additionally, two nearly identical feral or racing pigeons were seen perched on our neighbour's (Tim & Elaine's) roof. During the day, three Holly Blues briefly fluttered around together and a female (with dark upper wing tips) was seen plus an Orange-tip. While tidying out the garden pond, two different types of dragonfly larvae (photo of Southern Hawker larva) were seen as were some Palmate Newts (photo of one showing its filament-ended tail); all were quickly returned to the pond.



**Day 33 - Saturday 25 April**

***Overcast becoming bright. Wind light NE***

A Peregrine flew E overhead at 1140 causing one of the local Herring Gull's to give out panic alarm calls. Other species noted during the day included a female Bullfinch, a male Chaffinch in song, a male Pied Wagtail and a Heron. The feral or racing pigeons were still present (photo). Both Magpie and Tawny Owl were heard at 2315. The first of the year's dragonflies flew S over the garden during the day but unfortunately didn't stop to be identified.



**Day 34 - Sunday 26 April**

***Cloudless. Calm***

A total of 26 species (19 seen and 7 heard) was recorded during the weekly 1000-1100 birdwatch (see previous weeks). Including these, highlights from today included the first young (tail-less!) Blackbird of the season that made a brief flight in pursuit of its mother. A Great Spotted Woodpecker was heard drumming, a pair of Pied Wagtails put in an appearance, a Skylark was singing quite loudly at 0745 to the NE, two House Sparrows were on the telephone post in the road (again), a Heron flew E quite low, Goldfinches were drinking at the pond (photo of one taking off from a lily-pad), and both a pair of Bullfinches and a Linnet also flew over. At least two Nightingales and a Tawny Owl were heard at 2305. As often in recent days, Holly Blues were seen. Two first damselfly sightings for the year were a female Large Red Damselfly and a young male Beautiful Demoiselle (see photos). Garden flowers included a real favourite of mine – Gromwell (photo).



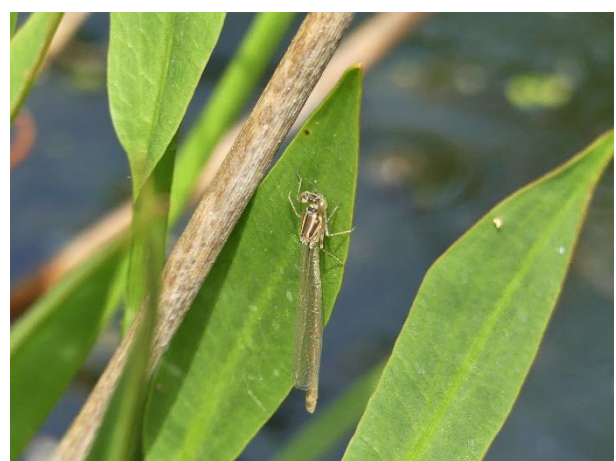




**Day 35 - Monday 27 April**

***Bright then increasing high cloud but becoming bright again later. Wind light W***

A female House Sparrow visited the garden, the Dunnocks were busy feeding their brood in the *Pyracantha*, two Linnets flew over calling and both Kestrel and Red Kite were seen (the latter at 1625 when it flew high away to the W). A female Azure Damselfly emerged from its exuvium case in the pond (two photos taken 55 minutes apart), a pair of Large Red Damselflies in tandem were egg-laying in the pond and a rather fine Broad-bodied Chaser was seen (photo). Garden flowers included Lungwort (photo).





**Day 36 - Tuesday 28 April**

***Overcast with light rain becoming heavy later. Wind light NE***

Amazingly, the first really wet day during this period. Nothing of note recorded in garden.

**Day 37 - Wednesday 29 April**

***Bright earlier, occasionally cloudier with rain during the middle part of the day. Wind light SW increasing slightly later***

Swift, Linnet and House Sparrow (male) were recorded during the day.

**Day 38 - Thursday 30 April**

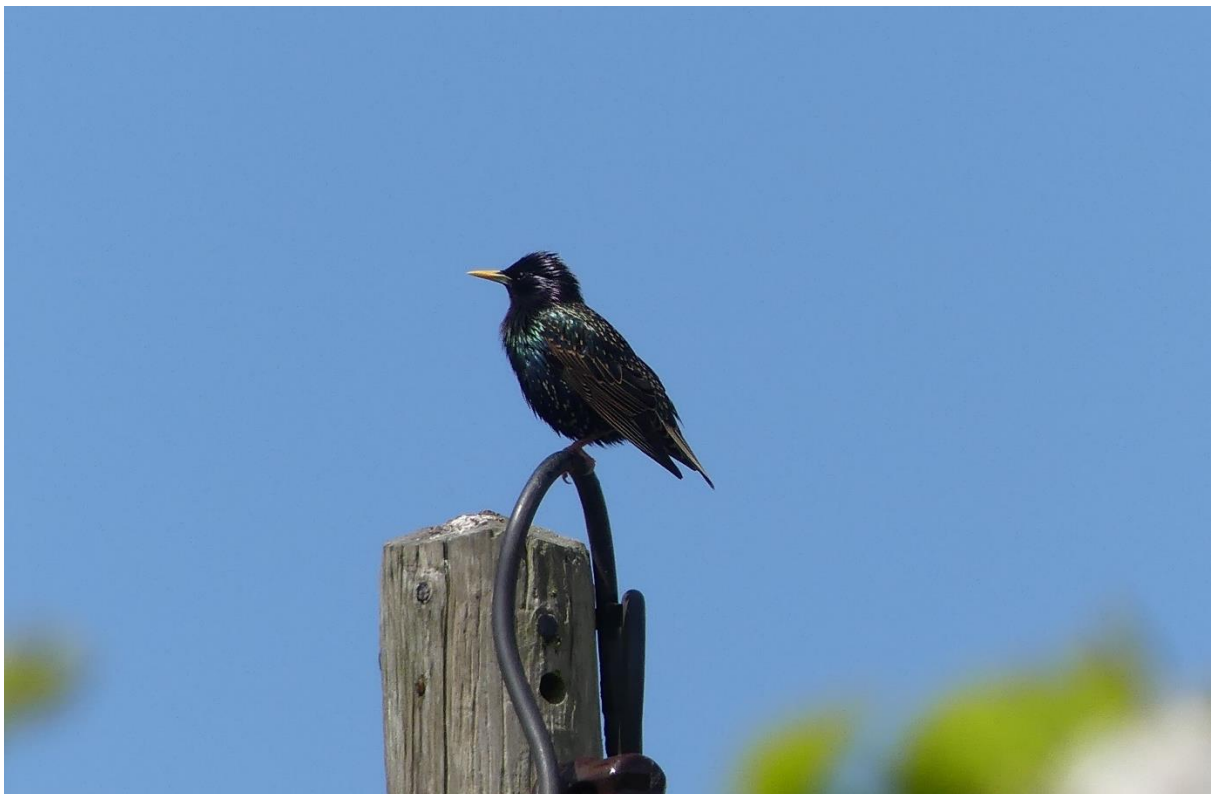
***Heavy rain early becoming changeable. Wind light – moderate SW***

A Blackcap was heard in song again and a Swift flew over the garden during the day. Under a half-moon with some fast-moving cloud in the breeze, at least one Nightingale was heard singing at 2305 and a Tawny Owl was also heard.

**Day 39 - Friday 1 May**

***Partly cloudy with bright spells but torrential rain with thunder and lightning occasionally during middle of the day. Wind light – moderate W***

A House Sparrow was heard as was a Blackcap singing. Other birds seen included a Buzzard overhead, two Swifts, a House Martin, two Linnets, a singing Starling (photo) and a Pied Wagtail. Two possibly three Nightingales were heard at 2315.



**Day 40 - Saturday 2 May**

***Bright. Wind light becoming light – moderate NW becoming calm after dark***

Almost biblical – it's now been forty days and forty nights! Birds seen during the day included two House Martins, a Linnet, two Swallows flying north, a Magpie (photo) and at least one adult Lesser Black-backed Gull. At least two Nightingales were heard at 2230 when a number of Marsh Frogs were also heard. Insects were represented by a Small White, a Holly Blue and a male Broad-bodied Chaser.



**Day 41 - Sunday 3 May**

***Overcast with occasional light rain in morning becoming damp and drizzly in the afternoon. Calm – Wind light W***

**Cumulative bird species total = 61.** The first new birds recorded for the period since 20 April were a Hobby that flew N at 0720 on scythe-shaped wings and a Cuckoo that was heard calling to the NE at 1655 while I was working in the garden. The first Cuckoo heard from the garden each year is almost a mystical experience because they are getting scarcer and you're never quite sure whether they're going to turn up each year. The weekly county-wide (and wider) bird-watch took place between 1000 and 1100. During the hour, I saw 21 species and heard a further two making a respectable total of 23. Overall during the day, 36 species were noted including three Dunnocks fighting on our roof, a Song Thrush, three House Sparrows, three Swifts, three House Martins, a Sparrowhawk, a Kestrel, a Red Kite flying S at 1400, and a Heron flying over. Additionally, Linnet, Blackcap, Chiffchaff, Canada Goose and Greylag Goose were heard.

**Day 42 - Monday 4 May**

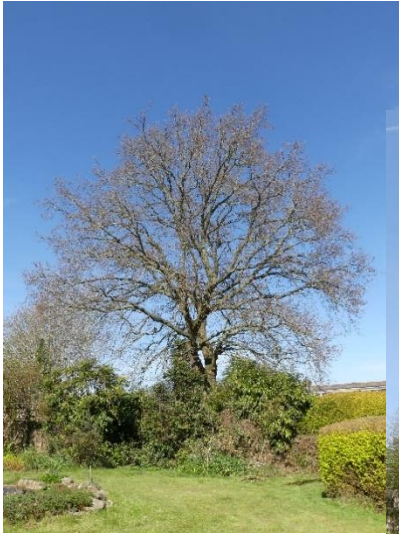
***Overcast becoming brighter. Wind light – moderate NE***

The most surprising thing during the day was a flurry of about 50 Swifts heading N / NE singly or in small groups at lunchtime (photo of one). During the day, about five House Martins were seen most of which were probably local birds, seven Swallows flew N, a Hobby was hawking insects to the S at 1400, a Cuckoo flew low over heading S at 1520, a Blackcap was in song, a drake Mallard flew N, a Coal Tit was heard, four Linnets flew over calling, a male Kestrel hovered over the garden (photo) and at least five Buzzards were seen. Dragonflies were represented by a male Broad-bodied Chaser and two Beautiful Demoiselles while butterflies included a Green-veined White feeding on Thrift flowers (photo). Many St Mark's Flies were on the wing and later in the day, a Ruby-tailed Wasp was found in the house before it was released outside.

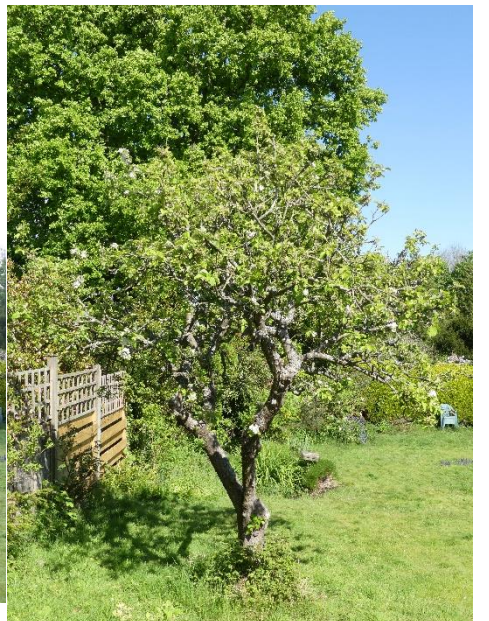
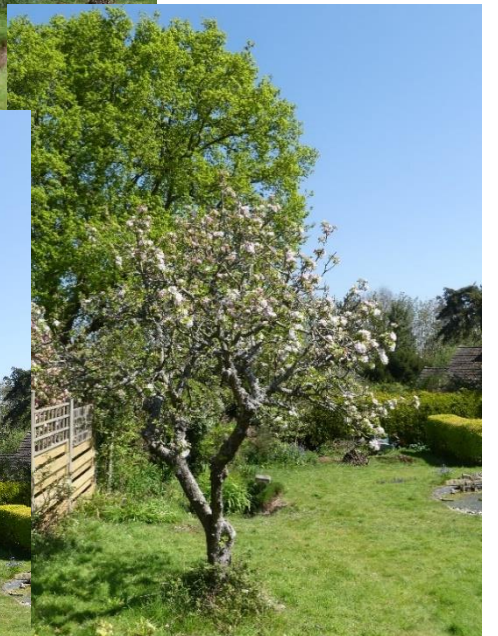
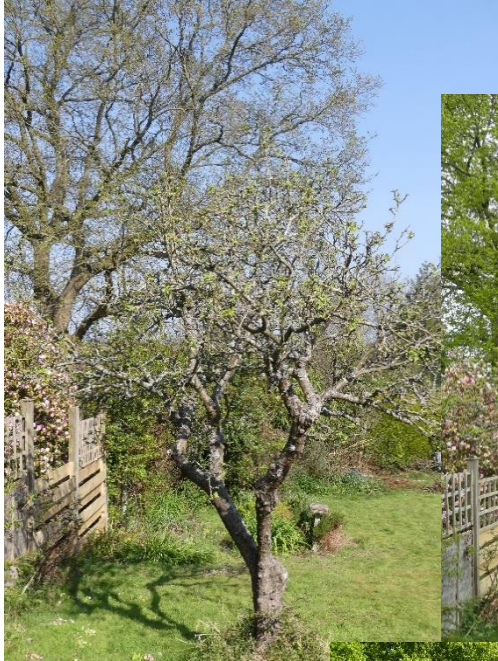


*On day 42, the government restrictions are still in place and heroic efforts continue around the country to steer a path out of the pandemic. With most of the birds I might expect to see in spring having been seen, now seems a sensible time to conclude this diary of wildlife sightings. Being restricted primarily to our house and garden (plus the near environs of Barcombe) has provided a real opportunity to study the local wildlife and to document it for future generations. Under such circumstances, Barcombe, with its interesting wildlife and its real sense of community, is far from the worst place to be confined.*

**Leaf opening in oak tree to NE of garden (7 – 20 April)**



**Apple tree flowering - bud opening, flowering to petal drop (10 – 2 May)**



**Individual apple tree flowers - from bud opening to petal drop (18 – 2 May)**





## Summary of bird sightings

Species	First date	Status during the period
Cormorant	24-Mar-20	Fairly regular during first weeks
Little Egret	24-Mar-20	One sighting of two on this date
Grey Heron	24-Mar-20	Fairly regular
Canada Goose	24-Mar-20	Fairly regular
Red Kite	24-Mar-20	Fairly regular. Usually singles but two on 15 April
Buzzard	24-Mar-20	Regular under good soaring conditions. Max 9 (15 April)
Kestrel	24-Mar-20	Fairly regular. Up to two
Pheasant	24-Mar-20	Regularly heard. One sighting
Lesser Black-backed Gull	24-Mar-20	Fairly regular in small numbers
Herring Gull	24-Mar-20	Regular (several perch on school) but 100 on 31 March
Stock Dove	24-Mar-20	Fairly regular particularly during first weeks
Woodpigeon	24-Mar-20	Regular. Very common
Collared Dove	24-Mar-20	Regular. Very common
Gt. Spotted Woodpecker	24-Mar-20	Fairly regular including heard drumming
Wren	24-Mar-20	Regular
Dunnock	24-Mar-20	Regular. Nesting in <i>Pyracantha</i>
Robin	24-Mar-20	Regular. Probably nesting
Blackbird	24-Mar-20	Regular. Juvenile seen on 26 April
Chiffchaff	24-Mar-20	Fairly regular. Mainly heard
Goldcrest	24-Mar-20	Fairly regular particularly during first weeks
Coal Tit	24-Mar-20	Fairly regular
Blue Tit	24-Mar-20	Regular. Very common
Great Tit	24-Mar-20	Regular. Common
Magpie	24-Mar-20	Fairly regular
Jackdaw	24-Mar-20	Regular. Very common
Rook	24-Mar-20	Regular. Very common. A small rookery is nearby
Carrion Crow	24-Mar-20	Regular. One took to tapping on window pane
Starling	24-Mar-20	Regular. Seems commoner than in recent years
Greenfinch	24-Mar-20	Regular. Common
Goldfinch	24-Mar-20	Regular. Common
Red-legged Partridge	25-Mar-20	Unusual. Heard occasionally
Song Thrush	25-Mar-20	Fairly regular
Chaffinch	25-Mar-20	Fairly regular
Green Woodpecker	26-Mar-20	Fairly regular. Heard
Raven	26-Mar-20	Unusual. One sighting on this date
Mallard	27-Mar-20	Regular. On neighbour's pond and flying over
Peregrine	27-Mar-20	Fairly regular. Several sightings probably of same bird
Pied Wagtail	27-Mar-20	Fairly regular
Mediterranean Gull	30-Mar-20	Unusual. Heard on 30 March and one seen next day
Black-headed Gull	30-Mar-20	Unusual. A few sightings with other gulls in first weeks
Common Gull	30-Mar-20	Unusual. A few sightings with other gulls in first weeks
Blackcap	31-Mar-20	Fairly regular. Mainly heard
Linnet	31-Mar-20	Fairly regular. Mainly flying over but also in garden

<b>Species</b>	<b>First date</b>	<b>Status</b>
Greylag Goose	01-Apr-20	Fairly regular. Four flew over on 19 April
Sparrowhawk	01-Apr-20	Fairly regular
Tawny Owl	03-Apr-20	Fairly regular. Heard at night
Sky Lark	03-Apr-20	Fairly regular. Mainly heard but seen twice
Coot	04-Apr-20	Unusual. Heard on this date calling as it flew over at night
Grey Wagtail	04-Apr-20	Unusual. One sighting on this date
House Sparrow	04-Apr-20	Fairly regular
Swallow	05-Apr-20	Fairly regular. A few sightings
Fieldfare	05-Apr-20	Unusual. One sighting – a flock of 10
Bullfinch	05-Apr-20	Unusual. Heard and seen occasionally
House Martin	06-Apr-20	Fairly regular. A few sightings
Nightingale	07-Apr-20	Fairly regular. Up to two heard at night
Nuthatch	07-Apr-20	Unusual. Just heard once on this date
Jay	10-Apr-20	Unusual. Seen and heard just once on this date
Yellowhammer	12-Apr-20	Unusual. One flying over on this date
Swift	20-Apr-20	Fairly regular after this date. About 50 N on 4 May
Hobby	03-May-20	Unusual. Singles on 3 & 4 May
Cuckoo	03-May-20	Unusual. One heard on 3 May and one seen on 4 May