

Return of the Living Bumblebee!

by Matsukaze, 22-Feb-16 09:45 PM GMT

It's that time of year again – the fluffy foragers are back!







Re: Matsukaze

by trevor, 23-Feb-16 10:04 AM GMT

I've also seen some 'fluffy foragers' this year, but no Butterflies so far. If the weather forecasters are right I think I can forget a February sighting this year. Anyway your lovely images can be looked upon as a foretaste of Spring.

Best wishes,
Trevor.

Re: Matsukaze

by Wurzel, 24-Feb-16 09:31 PM GMT

That's a brilliant sight to see Matsukaze – I reckon I can see 4 definite species there and possibly a fifth? 😊

Have a goodun

Wurzel

Re: Matsukaze

by Matsukaze, 05-Mar-16 12:21 AM GMT

Snow here so no more bumblebees and no butterflies either!

Wurzel, six species in all, though the last one hardly lends itself to identification! The bumblebee was so intent on nectaring that it knocked the flower-head off its stalk and swung there, dangling from the flower above, for quite a while before rebalancing itself and climbing up – I have a sequence of photos which I should post up at some point.

hortorum/hortorum/hypnorum/lapidarius/pascuorum/terrestris(?)/terrestris(?)/vestalis

Re: Matsukaze

by Wurzel, 06-Mar-16 10:33 PM GMT

Yep see you what you mean now, I'm very rusty on my bees 😊

Have a goodun
Wurzel

Re: Matsukaze

by Matsukaze, 13-Mar-16 07:01 PM GMT

The first butterflies of 2016 today – two male Brimstones patrolling the hedgerows at Kilmersdon cutting today. They flew past each other but either did not see each other or were not interested in chasing the other off. The same could not be said of the 3–5 male Yellowhammers I saw a few minutes later, making a racket, chasing and fighting in the hedgerow. It is always a pleasure to see these birds, with their heads looking like they have been dipped in a tin of paint, and they seem to do well in this area.

Bumblebees are making use of the winter-flowering heather in the garden in increasing numbers; this *B. terrestris* queen as an example:



A nearby wall catches the early evening sun, and at least seven bumblebees were making use of it to warm themselves up. Here are some of them:



These two did not seem to mind being right next to each other:



The first *B. lapidarius* queen of the year was also enjoying the wall:

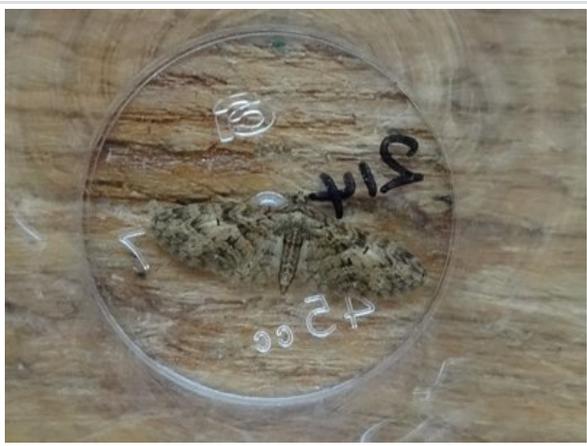


Butterflies bask there as well – Small Tortoiseshell and, at the end of the year, Red Admiral – but none yet this year.

Moths

by Matsukaze, 27-Mar-16 07:23 PM GMT

There may be few butterflies about but there are plenty of moths in the woods at the moment.



Brindled Pug



Brindled Pug



Dotted Border – aberration?



Tawny Pinion

Re: Matsukaze

by Matsukaze, 03-Jun-16 10:25 PM GMT

This is the tortrix moth *Endothenia gentianaeana*. The caterpillars overwinter in teasel seed-heads, in which they pupate, and they can easily be found by collecting the seedheads in late winter and early spring, like I did to find this one. Although only 9 mm long, they must be great travellers as they seem to have no difficulty colonising even isolated patches of teasel.



Re: Matsukaze

by Matsukaze, 21-Jun-16 11:06 PM GMT

Orange-tip larvae...





Re: Matsukaze

by Matsukaze, 05-Aug-16 10:47 PM GMT

Exmoor, July 2016 – not so good for butterflies, but some fine bird and dragonfly life.



Keeled Skimmer



Coastal linnets



Moorland linnets



Whinchat

Re: Matsukaze

by Matsukaze, 06-Aug-16 01:59 PM GMT

A sunny day has brought the butterflies into the garden – whites, plenty of gatekeepers and a painted lady. The patch of small scabious I planted out a couple of years ago is proving especially attractive to them.





Re: Matsukaze

by Matsukaze, 11-Oct-16 08:16 PM GMT

Just emerged – male November Moth (agg.), from caterpillar accidentally collected with fallen elm seeds back in late May.



Re: Matsukaze

by Matsukaze, 17-Oct-16 11:15 PM GMT

I planted a number of buckthorn saplings in my in-laws' Oxfordshire garden a few years back, partly in the hope of attracting Brimstones. The butterflies have not yet bred on them to my knowledge, but this weekend I was delighted to find they had been colonised by the leaf-mining micro-moth *Stigmella catharticella* - a moth I have never come across before and which makes one of the most attractive of leaf-mines.





Re: Matsukaze

by David M, 18-Oct-16 10:17 PM GMT

Where do you get these buckthorn saplings from? I'd love to plant a few around my estate but can't seem to find them for sale anywhere.

Re: Matsukaze

by Matsukaze, 20-Oct-16 09:09 PM GMT

Hi David – it was a few years ago now and I don't recall exactly who we bought the shrubs from, but it was done online from one of the foodplant suppliers that used to be listed on the website. Habitat Aid do them, and so do Chew Valley Trees. I imagine there are a few other suppliers as well.

Re: Matsukaze

by David M, 20-Oct-16 10:00 PM GMT

Matsukaze wrote:

Hi David – it was a few years ago now and I don't recall exactly who we bought the shrubs from, but it was done online from one of the foodplant suppliers that used to be listed on the website. Habitat Aid do them, and so do Chew Valley Trees. I imagine there are a few other suppliers as well.

Thanks for that, Matsukaze. I will look into it.

Re: Matsukaze

by peterc, 21-Oct-16 05:54 PM GMT

David,

I ordered a buckthorn sapling from <https://3fatpigs.co.uk/> (Beechwood Nurseries) in 2014 so you could try them as well.

ATB

Peter