

Country Notes for January 2021

What a year all of us have just experienced – and one that I imagine we hope we will never see again. Coronavirus and Brexit have dominated our lives, and the virus in particular has caused us to behave and do things in a way we would have thought unimaginable only a year ago. I am sure that for many of this this has been deeply unsettling and we are longing for normality to return to our lives once again.

The wonderful thing is that through all of this our countryside, our gardens and nature itself has remained constant. I am sure that we were all grateful that in the early stages of lockdown the weather was wonderful and enabled us to get out and about for walks in the country. It also gave us the opportunity to enjoy our gardens to the full. What a blessing this was. As I wandered about our villages, I found it really consoling to see everything behaving as usual – and for the creatures in our landscape there was no knowledge of the turmoil going on in the world. Bracken my dog had no idea that anything was different as we walked the byways of our villages and neither did the blackbird in the hedge or the swallow returning from its winter break in Africa. The bluebells flowered in our woodland with their usual splendour and the cowslips on the downs filled our hearts with joy as they always do. Lambs gambolled with their new found friends in the meadows, and calves followed their mothers and explored the new world that they had been born into, as their predecessors have done for generations before them.

As life slowly settles down to some sort of normality this year, we would do well to remind ourselves of how special our immediate environment is and ensure that we do all we can to protect and conserve it in the future, both for ourselves and for all the living creatures and plants which we share it with.

A very happy new year to you all!

Andrew G Snowdon