

Country Notes for September 2022

As I write these notes in mid-August we have just emerged from another heatwave and, joy of joys, we have actually had some rain. Clearly this is not enough to alleviate the drought, but it has made a difference to the colour of my lawn, and the plants in my garden look a lot happier. Sadly, many of my vegetable plants have given up the unequal struggle, although I did manage to freeze a reasonable amount before the drought really took hold. In the fields of our parishes the harvest is already well underway and some trees have already started to turn in colour as they shed their leaves to try to preserve themselves for next year.

Unfortunately, butterfly numbers have remained very low in our villages at least. All the usual butterflies seem to have appeared but there have been very few of them and my fear is that the continued drought will have damaged numbers for next year, as their food plants have died back in this summers' recent hot and dry weather. The highlight in my garden has been the very regular appearance of Hummingbird Hawk Moths, with sometimes more than one at a time. These Mediterranean moths have obviously found the weather to their liking!

Further afield, the nesting of several bee-eaters in Norfolk would suggest that climate change is well and truly part of our lives as we move further into the twenty first century.

Later this month, on the 23rd September we move into autumn with the autumn equinox. Let's hope that the autumn heralds a return to more usual weather conditions.

Andrew G Snowdon