

The monthly wildlife walk for August took place on Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup>. Weather was fine with some sunny spells which brought out a few butterflies, including Small Heath which is a new one for the park list and Brown Argus which looks like it is breeding in the park. The Brown Argus, despite being brown as you can see in the photos, is actually a member of the “blue” butterfly family. Its main habitats are chalk and limestone grasslands so this is a very good record for the park. We did see 1 in 2020 but this year saw 3 on the walk, one of which looked like it was trying to lay eggs. Having a colony of these beautiful butterflies in the park is great news. We also saw a splendid hoverfly (see photo.) We managed to identify this as *Helophilus pendulus* and a bit of internet research later found that it is known as the “Footballer Hoverfly” because of its stripy thorax. It is also called the “Sunfly” because it often sits on leaves out in the sun – which is exactly what it was doing when we saw it. Birds were quiet again but as we head into autumn things should start to liven up. However, we did see good numbers of Swallows and House Martins over the lake and what looked like a family of Great Spotted Woodpeckers in the hedgerow near the boardwalk. We did not see many dragonflies but had a nice Brown Hawker flying at the lake, which is a first record for this year and a couple of Migrant Hawkers. Surprisingly, we did not see a single damselfly. Details of our sightings are below:

**Birds – 17 Species**

Common Name	Scientific Name	Date	Total Count	Comments
Barn Swallow	<i>Hirundo rustica</i>	25/08/2021	12	Good numbers over the lake with odd birds overhead during the walk.
Carrion Crow	<i>Corvus corone</i>	25/08/2021	2	Surprisingly low number of Crows seen.
Common Chiffchaff	<i>Phylloscopus collybita</i>	25/08/2021	4	Mainly juveniles heard cheeping in the hedgerows.
Common House Martin	<i>Delichon urbicum</i>	25/08/2021	30	Seen mainly over the lake.
Common Moorhen	<i>Gallinula chloropus</i>	25/08/2021	4	At the lake
Common Wood Pigeon	<i>Columba palumbus</i>	25/08/2021	7	The usual wood pigeons flying around.
Eurasian Blue Tit	<i>Cyanistes caeruleus</i>	25/08/2021	6	A few in the hedgerows.
Eurasian Magpie	<i>Pica pica</i>	25/08/2021	7	In the grass and fields.
Eurasian Reed Warbler	<i>Acrocephalus scirpaceus</i>	25/08/2021	1	One seen feeding in the reeds by the lake.
Eurasian Sparrowhawk	<i>Accipiter nisus</i>	25/08/2021	1	One seen by Colin early.
Eurasian Wren	<i>Troglodytes troglodytes</i>	25/08/2021	1	Just one heard singing.
European Goldfinch	<i>Carduelis carduelis</i>	25/08/2021	7	A few seen and heard.
European Robin	<i>Erithacus rubecula</i>	25/08/2021	2	One seen on the wooden gate to the park and one heard at the back of the lake.
Great Spotted Woodpecker	<i>Dendrocopos major</i>	25/08/2021	3	3 birds seen/heard in the hedgerow near the boardwalk.
Lesser Black-backed Gull	<i>Larus fuscus</i>	25/08/2021	1	Just one overhead.
Mallard	<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>	25/08/2021	4	At the lake.
Song Thrush	<i>Turdus philomelos</i>	25/08/2021	1	Flew past as we walked along the path.

**Butterflies – 8 Species**

Common Name	Scientific Name	Date	Total Count	Comments
Brown Argus	<i>Aricia agestis</i>	25/08/2021	3	One seen behind the large mound and 2 seen in the pavilion gardens. One possibly laying eggs.
Common Blue	<i>Polyommatus icarus</i>	25/08/2021	2	Seen together at the back of the large mound.
Gatekeeper	<i>Pyronia tithonus</i>	25/08/2021	13	A good number of these seen mainly on brambles but also in the grasses.
Large White	<i>Pieris brassicae</i>	25/08/2021	6	An estimate amongst the many “whites” seen.
Meadow Brown	<i>Maniola jurtina</i>	25/08/2021	6	The peak of these has now passed but there are still a few around.
Small Heath	<i>Coenonympha pamphilus</i>	25/08/2021	2	One seen just outside the main park gates and another near the lake. First record for the park.
Small White	<i>Artogeia rapae</i>	25/08/2021	21	Most of the “whites” seen will have been this species.
Speckled Wood	<i>Pararge aegeria</i>	25/08/2021	9	A good number seen including 2 together – see photo.

**Dragonflies – 2 Species**

Common Name	Scientific Name	Date	Total Count	Comments
Brown Hawker	<i>Aeshna grandis</i>	25/08/2021	1	A nice specimen of this large hawker seen at the lake.
Migrant Hawker	<i>Aeshna mixta</i>	25/08/2021	2	A couple hunting along the hedgerows. Will be the most common dragonfly during the autumn.

As previously mentioned, the next walk will take place on Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> September, meet in the Pavilion car park at 11.30am.

regards

**Martin**

**PHOTO GALLERY – pictures taken by Martin Singleton**

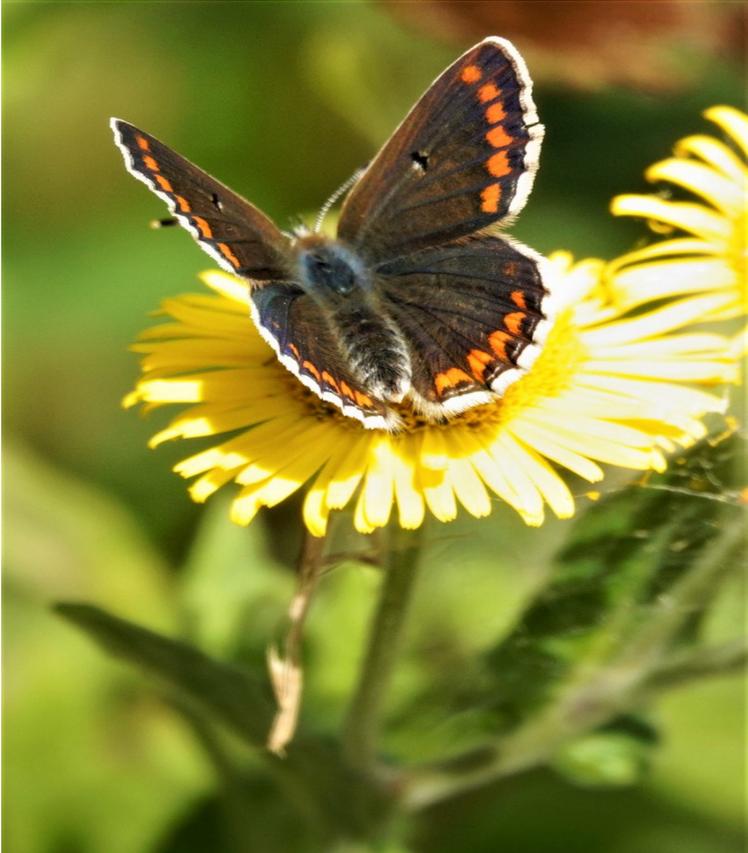
*Brown Argus*



*Hoverfly*



*Brown Argus*



*Speckled Wood*

