

Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> April 2018 (Breezy southerly wind. Very Warm.)  
Brendon Bridge to Burmsdon.

**Birds.** Heard a **Willow Warbler** at Brendon Bridge, singing from towpath hedge, East side. Later on we heard at least three more. **Chiffchaffs** singing from various spots along the way. One female “shivering” her wings, a “come- hither” sign. **Black Caps** sang from some scrubby places nearer the old filter beds. Cock **Chaffinches** tumbling songs added to the concert.

**Flowers.** Pockets of **Blue Violets** were in flower at the edges of the towpath where the grass is short. Shining celandines were everywhere responding to the welcome sunshine. Near Vealand farm (now called ‘Owls Oak,.) on the bank, under a tall beech, **Lesser Periwinkle** were abundant, bluest of blue flowers, with their five blunt petals dotted along their trailing stems. Further along under another beech tree, was a patch of **Barren Strawberry** plants which have little white flowers, look closely – they resemble Tudor roses. Beyond and closer to the old filter beds, **primroses** carpeted the towpath on both sides. More brilliant yellow regaled us, produced by a mass of King Cups (**Marsh Marigolds**) spread along and over the stream that runs below the towpath. Looking down on such a sight was really amazing, never having seen so many in such a fine array.



Violets



Primroses



Marsh Marigolds

**Insects.** A male **Orange Tip** butterfly flew all round Brendon Bridge, perhaps searching for the flowers of Milk Maids (**Cuckoo Flowers**) or for a female Orange Tip. We saw two more on our walk. Basking on drying mud was a faded **Peacock** butterfly opening and closing its wings rhythmically. No doubt this one had over-wintered. Down the Incline Plane flew a **Speckled Wood**. Many large, dark **Hover Flies** were about, mostly resting on sun-warmed leaves. There were also some Crane Fly like insects, though smaller, floating by.

**Flowerless Plants.** **Mosses** and **Liverworts** were still prolific in the shaded, wet areas of the bank. One or two **Scarlet Elf Cups** on almost submerged rotten branches in the canal bed alongside the boardwalk.

Sue & Colin Field