

Friday 15th. June 2018 (Breezy north-westerly-wind. Sunny.)
Brendon Bridge to Vealand picnic bench.

Birds



Sedge Warbler © Alan Rowland



Chiffchaff © Alan Rowland

At Brendon Bridge we heard a **Sedge Warbler** sing its characteristic chatty, churring song with an occasional fluty whistle. **Chiffchaff** were singing strongly from three places along the towpath with several **Blackcaps** also singing from both sides of the canal at Vealand. **Willow Warblers** less noticeable but lovely to hear their melodious cascades of song between Vealand Bridge and the picnic area overlooking the old filter bed remains. Near Venn Cottage, two **Great Spotted Woodpeckers** made strident calls. Probably two mates but we couldn't see the diagnostic red napes. A **Great Tit** family was also in the hedge near Venn cottage. At the picnic table with Venn Farm across the field a **Duncock** sang and flitted over the stinging nettles before alighting on a fence post. We heard a **Robin, Wren** and **Blackbird** singing; staunch locals.

Flowers

In the hedge at Brendon Bridge, **Black Bryony's** shiny, heart shaped leaves clambered over **Blackthorn**, tiny green wands of flowers evident. On the canal edge amongst grasses were clumps of **Hemp Agrimony**, not yet in flower but promise of plenty for later butterflies' important food source. **Meadow Roses**, well out, particularly on the boundary with the felled conifer plantation which sported thousands of **Foxgloves**. Near the Bridge at Vealand, **Moon Daisies (Oxeye)** were in flower, with **Tufted Vetch** and **Yellow Pea** climbed through the grasses on the canal edges. Near the picnic site, in the shade of **Ash** and **Sycamore**, on the bank were three spikes of **Tway-blade Orchids**, their green flowers hard to pick out amongst the herbage.



Common Twayblade
© Alan Rowland



Large Skipper © Alan Rowland

Insects

Two fresh **Meadow Browns**, one **Large skipper** on a **Red Campion** flower, its bright orange colouring clashing with the pink flower. Plenty of **Hoverflies**, one identified as the **Footballer** (Marmalade Hoverfly ed.) due to the stripes on its thorax. A lack of **Dragonflies** and **Damselflies** due, perhaps to the brisk and cooling wind,

There were no signs of mammals, nor **Frogs, Toads** or **Grass Snakes**, all of which we have seen in the past.

Sue & Colin Field