



A very secretive, camouflaged butterfly, the **green hairstreak** is a bit of a speciality here, hiding amongst the gorse in sheltered spots.



left: The **green hairstreak** has what is probably one of the largest range of foodplants of any British butterfly.

Along the coast many birds are back nesting on the cliffs and small off islands. With good binoculars at certain points along this stretch of coast you may well be lucky enough to see **guillemots**, **razorbills** and, if the gods favour you, a **puffin**. **Fulmars** and **kittiwakes** will be nesting on the cliff edges as will **oystercatchers**, usually associated with estuaries but preferring isolated locations in which to rear their chicks.



above: **Fulmars** are long-lived petrels, relative of albatrosses and shearwaters.

**Peregrines**, **buzzards** and **kestrels** are often seen flying high above the cliff tops.



Other birds you are likely to see on a coastal walk would be **stonechats**, **jackdaws**, **ravens**, **skylarks** and **linnets**. You may well hear rather than see the diminutive **whitethroat** and catch the chirring of the grasshopper warbler.

left: As their name suggests, **stonechats** utter a sharp loud call that sound like two stones being tapped together.

## JULY / AUGUST

Many of the flowers, butterflies and birds already mentioned are still about, but with high summer comes many more flowers and insects.

On the cliff tops look out for **English stonecrop**, **heath bedstraw**, **dyer's greenweed**, **devils bit scabious**, **sheep's bit**, **vipers bugloss**, **common century**, **common restharrow**, **rock sea lavender**, **wild thyme** and **field scabious** to name but a few.



above: **Sheep's bit** is a member of the teasel family.

The hedgerows, fields and meadows are also covered with a wide variety of wildflowers including **valerian**, **meadowsweet**, **hay rattle**, **corn marigold**, **hemp agrimony**, **creeping thistle**, **tansy**, **purple loosestrife**, **dog rose** and **honeysuckle**.

Insect life is very abundant with butterflies, day flying moths, **dragonflies** and **damselies** darting around. A walk through a woodland glade will enable you to catch sight of the showy **silver-washed fritillary**. Fresh broods of pristine **red admiral**, **tortoiseshell** and **gatekeepers** attract your attention. In the field's **ringlet**, **meadow brown** and **common blue** abound. Certain conditions may enable migrant butterflies and moths to cross over from Europe. **Clouded yellow** and **painted ladies** often land in huge numbers. People report seeing **humming birds** amongst the flowers – it is only a **moth**, but one that travels long distances to play their trick.

right: The beautiful **demoiselle** is one of only two species of damselfly in Britain to have coloured wings.



## September / October

Many of the wildflowers of high summer are still flowering including **toadflax**, **autumn squill**, **self-heal**, **yarrow**, **bindweed**, **common dogger**, **golden rod**, **bush vetch** and **rock samphire**.

Early autumn is the time when many of the fruits and nuts appear in the hedgerows. Lookout for **blackberries**, **rosehips**, **haws**, **rowan berries**, **sloes**, **hazelnuts** and **acorns**.

below: **Bindweed** are regarded by some as problematic weeds.



above: An old, lichen covered **Cornish hedge**, lined with **rooks**.

On the warm autumnal days many butterflies can still be seen including the beautiful copper coloured **comma** butterfly.

Damp weather of autumn brings forth many **mushrooms** and **toadstools**. Autumn sees the departure of the summer migrants such as the **swallows**, **house** and **sand martins** and the arrival of the **redwings** and **fieldfares** to feed on the hedgerow berries.

**Grey seals** pup at this time of the year; often they appear on the beach. Please do not disturb them, their mums are usually not far away and will come back to them once all is quiet.

## WINTER

At this time of year there are not many flowers about, but it is surprising how many do keep flowering all year. You will often see in the hedgerow **red campion** in the middle of December and by January the first **daffodils** and **snowdrops** are flowering.



above: **Daffodils** and **spurge**, a welcome splash of colour on a dark day.

Many birds over winter here in north Cornwall. A walk along the Camel Trail at low tide between Wadebridge and Padstow can be very rewarding with all the wading birds foraging for food. If you go up to Davidstow airfield at dusk you can watch the spectacular sight of the **starlings** coming in to roost.

■ Please call in to either **Boscastle** or **Tintagel Visitor Centre** and report any sighting of **seals**, **basking sharks**, **dolphins** or anything unusual. In the two visitor centres there is a wide range of books on wildlife, so if you have forgotten yours or feel that you would like to know more about what you are looking at, please do call in to see the range or just ask a member of staff about what you have seen and they will do their best to help you identify it.



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