

Acclivity's Activities - February 2021

The first half of February did result in a fair bit of garden watching from indoors in the warm! Fortunately, there were some nice sightings. The squirrel sussed out how to tackle our "squirrel-proof" bird feeder! Both male and female Blackcap enjoyed the fat balls.



Three unsuccessful visits were made to the Tidemills area, in search of a lone Avocet which some members of Seaford Natural History Society had reported being present there. My visits didn't produce anything more than the usual Redshank and Dunlin in good numbers. The lighting was not adequate for quality pictures. On the 3rd visit, we continued walking as far as the eastern harbour arm at Newhaven and were delighted to find both Purple Sandpiper and Turnstone.



The Purple Sandpiper was definitely giving me the Paddington Bear Stare!

Greatly improving temperatures later in the month brought the first of the awaited bees and hoverflies to the garden. A few Honeybees (*Apis Mellifera*) were first, followed by some queen Buff-tailed Bumblebees (*Bombus terrestris*), both enjoying the beautiful Crocuses.



A visit to High-and-remote views of Cuckmere Valley, view by the very camera (1365mm

Over gave us very birds down in the brought remarkably into "long lens" on my new equivalent).

Even warmer weather in the last few days of February brought some of my favourite insects out: Hoverflies. In appearance order they were *Episyrphus balteatus*, the Marmalade Hoverfly, so named because of the alternating silver and gold bands, then *Eupeodes luniger*, known as the "Black-tailed Aphid Eater" - so definitely a gardener's friend! and *Meliscaeva auricollis*, which is recognizable by the "delta-wing jet" black areas on the abdomen.



Hopefully more from me next month!

Mike Kerry acclivity2@gmail.com.