

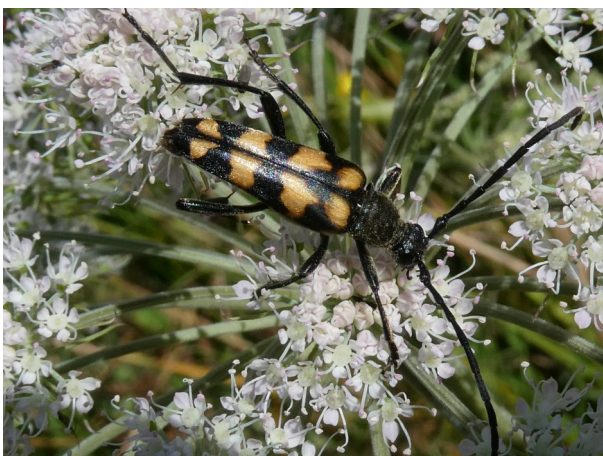
For various reasons I didn't visit the Village Green during July. Although the weather was dull and cool on 1st August I thought I'd go and see what the site was like - I hadn't been since 29th June and felt sure there would be something to see. It was clear that summer was well under way, young Swallows were sitting on overhead wires, Hawthorn and Blackberries were all beginning to show.



Not very promising I thought, but I was wrong. I have commented before on the Dock Beetle (*Gastrophysa viridula*), there is a picture of its eggs in my May note. Now the adult beetles were present and I don't remember seeing so many before. Docks alongside the path edges supported large numbers and the leaves had been reduced to a network by the feeding of their larvae.



These were not the only colourful beetles that I saw. Feeding on a large Hogweed flower was a spectacular yellow and black 'Four-banded Longhorn' beetle. Its larvae develop in dead and decaying wood. The common yellow and black hoverfly 'Helophilus pendulus' was also present on the same flower head.



Four-banded Longhorn beetle.



Yellow and black hoverfly

It was clear that the conditions in July had been good for the growth of the Wildlife Area's vegetation. Clumps of flowers suited to the damp conditions dominated.



Marsh Woundwort



Purple Loosestrife



Common Figwort



Water Mint

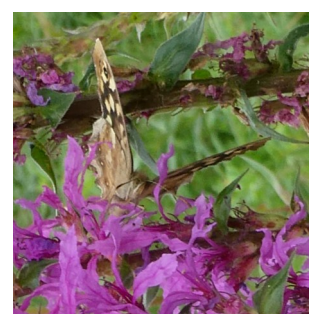
It wasn't an ideal day for seeing butterflies but there were a few 'Whites' feeding on flower heads and there were one or two Speckled Woods. Speckled Woods are relatively new to this part of Cumbria having only arrived here some twenty or so years ago.



Small White



Green-veined White



Speckled Wood



The U.K. has just over 7,000 different species of flies, most of which are difficult to identify even if you have the right books ! However, I am fairly sure that this was a 'Parasitic' fly, belonging to the family 'Tachinidae' (of which there are only 270 species in Britain and Ireland !) This looks very much like *Epicampoceras succincta* which is parasitic on the caterpillars of the Small White butterfly which I had just seen.

Having spent time trying to identify the above fly I then turned attention to this small day-flying moth which was resting on a nearby nettle. Again I couldn't be certain , but I think it is probably a 'Common Carpet' moth.



My visit was a little late in the day for much bird activity and I only recorded the following :-
Wren, Greenfinch, Chaffinch, Blackcap, Carrion Crow, Goldfinch, House-Martin, Swallow, Woodpigeon, and Moorhen.



The growth of vegetation during July had been considerable, making access difficult in places. I was unable to follow my 'normal' route around the pond and had to turn back from by the 'dipping platform'. The pond itself is well provided with marginal reeds, rushes and surface 'weeds', with habitats for many species of plants and animals not dependent on an expanse of open water.



As I was leaving, quite near to the dipping platform, my eye was drawn to some white, frothy deposit low down amongst the ground vegetation. It turned out to be a 'Slime Mould' called Fuligo septica or 'Dog's vomit' ! It is quite harmless and used to be classified as a fungus. It is now recognised as belonging to another group and is neither a plant nor an animal. It is a single celled organism with many nuclei, it can move and feed (on bacteria) as a mobile mass - now known as a 'Plasmodium'. It's amazing what you can find if you look !