

## Country Notes for June 2024

I am writing these notes in mid May when we have just experienced a week of warm, often very warm, weather after a winter and spring which was one of the wettest on record. Many farmers have land that is still so water-logged that they have finally given up any hope of getting any crops into the land this year. Instead they will have to wait until next year and hope that conditions are better then. There will be less income for them and less food for us. Other farmers have land that has not been quite so affected and have now planted crops at this very late stage and will just be hoping that the weather is kinder to them for the rest of the summer. We gardeners who grow crops on a much smaller scale have probably coped as there were few frosts this winter and the temperatures have seldom been very cold.

Nature can be very unpredictable as many of us discovered a few nights ago when we looked into the night sky and saw the northern lights in all their glory above our village gardens. I stood transfixed as purples faded to blues and then greens. What a wonderful privilege to experience what most people have to go to arctic regions to appreciate. That was certainly something I will never forget.

It has certainly been good to welcome back the swallows flying above my garden and good numbers of nightingales this year have delighted many of us with their wonderful songs that go on through both day and night. When do they sleep?! Sadly, although last summer was an excellent summer for butterflies there have, at the time of writing, been very few around so far. Let's hope that things improve in the coming months.

Nature is always different, sometimes worrying and frequently surprising.

Andrew G Snowdon