



George Chemilevsky



Mistletoe *Viscum album*

Officially known as the European white-berried Mistletoe, it is commonly found on cultivated (not wild) apple trees but also occurring on many other trees including limes, poplars and hawthorn. Not found in woodlands or forest plantations it prefers open spaces with plenty of light around the tree.

Druids in pre-Christian times are thought to have introduced the tradition of bringing mistletoe into the home. Supposed to possess mystical powers which bring good

fortune to the household and ward off evil spirits, it was believed that a sprig placed in a baby's cradle would protect the child from goblins.

A hemi-parasitic plant that depends on its host tree for water and nutrients but is able to photosynthesise (produce its own carbohydrates using sunlight) because it has green leaves and stems. It is possible to estimate the age of a mistletoe plant by counting the number of times that the branches fork and adding two years (one fork is produced in each year from the third year after germination). Mistletoe relies entirely on winter birds for seed distribution, the seeds have a sticky coating and when they come into contact with a stem they adhere to the surface like glue.



Removal of the grass prior to rotivating and sowing wild flower seeds

Summer Returned in 2014, but our migrant birds didn't

After the deluges in 2012 and the freezing temperatures in spring 2013 the weather may have improved but results indicate that 2014 was another poor year in terms of the number of birds returning to the UK to breed. The abundance of long-distance migrants, species that winter south of the Sahara was generally lower than average over the previous five years (Willow Warbler, Sedge Warbler, Whitethroat and Reed Warbler).

Blackcap and Chiffchaff - short distance migrants that typically winter around the Mediterranean and into North Africa show very different trends. While the Blackcap mirrored the drop in numbers exhibited by long-distance migrants. Chiffchaff abundance was much higher than average.

Robin and Wren numbers in 2014 were significantly higher than the five year average. Blackbird, Chaffinch, Greenfinch, Goldfinch and Long-tailed Tit all experienced a significant drop in abundance in 2014, which may be related to the poor breeding success recorded in both 2012 and 2013. Blackbird and Long-tailed Tit may have suffered particularly badly as both are early breeders and conditions were much worse at the start of the season.

(extract from BTO Preliminary report on the 2014 breeding season)

Work Parties for December – February 2014/15

Date	Meeting Point
Thursday 4 th December	The Old Hedgerow. Footpath between Coniston Road & Down Grange, behind 77-155 Coniston Road.
Sunday 14 th December	. Down Grange Meadow Homestead Road interpretation board
Thursday 8 th January	Old Orchard. Kendal Gardens
Sunday 18 th January	The Old Hedgerow. As above.
Thursday 29 th January	Down Grange Meadow Homestead Road interpretation board
Sunday 8 th February	Old Orchard. Kendal Gardens
Thursday 19 th February	The Old Hedgerow. As above.

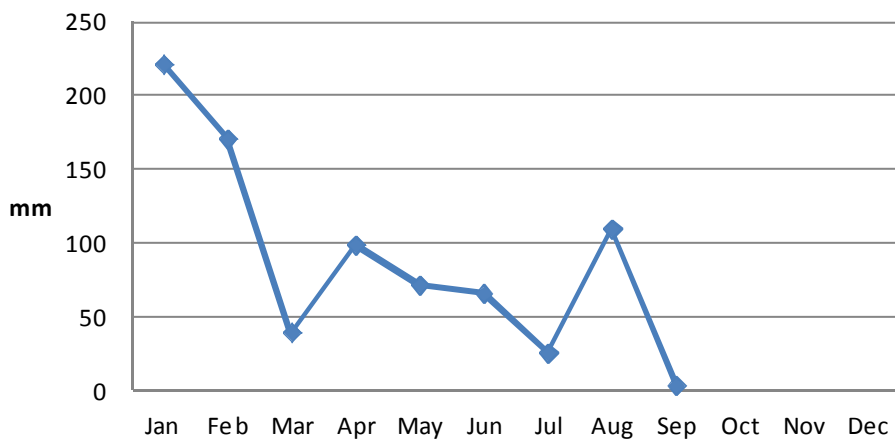
Times: - Sunday's 10:00 - 13:00. Thursday's 14:00 – 16:00.

If you would like to join us for the first time please ring Marion on 470171.

Please bring work gloves, tools are provided.

Contact us:- By e-mail on kempshott-conserve@tiscali.co.uk or via the website www.kempshotconservationgroup.org.uk. For anything that requires urgent action, such as fallen trees on any of our sites please contact Marion Wolstencroft on 470171

Rainfall 2014



Min - Max Temp 2014

