

Mammals

Large mammals noted are badgers, foxes, roe deer and otters.

Otters have made a major comeback in the county- a DEFRA survey of 2001/2002 reported widespread signs of them on the River Frome.

Smaller mammals noted include the dormouse, the water vole and the water shrew. (Bats...)

Reptiles and Amphibians

All 3 British Snakes have been sighted (Adders, Grass and Smooth Snakes-the last near Thornecombe Wood)

Palmate and Smooth Newts (in ponds).

Fish

With good water quality reported there are a number of species seen including brown trout and salmon. Grayling, dace and roach breed in the Stinsford Branch of the River Frome. Eels (personal sighting) and lampreys have been seen.

Birds

Again many of the species are associated with water.

Notably kingfisher, water rail, grey wagtail, marsh tit and mute swan.

Also reed, sedge and Cetti's warblers.

Local raptors include little, barn and tawny owls as well as

Sparrow hawks and kestrels, with buzzards being the most often seen.

Large numbers of jackdaws roost in the oriental plane next to Stinsford Church.

There is a large rookery next to the A35 south of Higher Kingston Farm.

Insects and spiders

Butterfly Conservation has recorded 28 butterfly species within the parish.

Of these the most spectacular is the Silver Washed Fritillary (Thornecombe Wood), a species noted for its spectacular courtship flight.

A less common species is the Silver Studded Blue found on the dry heath near Thornecombe Wood.

Also the dry heath the green tiger beetle is noted.

The watery habitats are good for dragonflies including Emperor and Golden Ringed Dragonflies and the less common 4 Spotted Chaser.

Also associated with water are the Wolf Spider and the more fully aquatic Raft Spider- one of Britain's largest species.

Plants

to be inserted