

Privet hawk-moths *Sphinx ligustre* and “Super twayblades” *Neottia ovata* at Windmill Hill

Terry Knight.

On 8th June, 2014 the Worcestershire Wildlife Trust held a work party at the southern end of Windmill Hill Nature Reserve (grid reference SP070470) near the Littletons, Worcestershire attended by about 20 people. One of the tasks was to replace broken fence posts adjacent to the bridleway at the top of the reserve. On one of these posts I spotted a mating pair of Privet hawk-moths *Sphinx ligustre* (01) at about 10.30 a.m. and they were still there in the early afternoon. Most of those present were thus able to admire them and many photographs were taken.



01. Privet hawk moth mating pair Windmill Hill 08 June 2014. Rob Allen.

2014 was a good year for the five species of orchid on the reserve. In the scrubby grassland in the half below the work area the Common Twayblades *Neottia ovata*, formerly *Listera ovata*, were plentiful as usual but for the first time they were also common in the top half. Amongst these were three or four plants that were significantly more robust than the others and had long thin densely clustered inflorescences. The largest plant was 530mm tall with an inflorescence length of 220mm containing about 200 flowers/buds which is about double the maximum number of flowers usually quoted in floras (see photographs 02 & 03)

Editor’s notes.

First, many apologies to Terry Knight. He sent me this note on disc in 2014 and I put it on one side and forgot it until I found it early in 2016.

Second, Gary Farmer photographed a Privet Hawk Moth in the Vale Heritage Landscape Trust Littleton Meadows Reserve SP068474 about 500m NW of Windmill Hill on 8th July 2014, a month after the Windmill Hill record (04).



02. Unusually tall Common Twayblades *Neottia ovata*. Terry Knight.



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04. Privet Hawk Moth 08 July 2016 Littleton Meadows. Gary Farmer

Images

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