

It is feared that swifts have had little success breeding this year because of a lack of flying insects to feed their young. Swifts are one of our last summer visitors to arrive – and one of the first to go, so only get the chance to rear one brood whilst they are here. Unfortunately a wet June and July meant that adult birds found it difficult to find the flying insects that they and their chicks depend on. Many adults had to abandon their nests as they were struggling to find enough food for themselves – and many even abandoned the UK earlier than normal.

On a more positive note, the recent hot weather has seen an increase in flying insects (including the horse fly that took a chunk out of my leg the other day) giving swifts the opportunity to feed up in preparation for their imminent departure.

To help assess the fortunes of swifts, the RSPB are keen to hear if you think they are nesting near you – For more details visit www.rspb.org.uk



City Wildlife Care

I hope other Argus readers were as impressed as I was after reading of City Wildlife Care rescuing ducks affected by a fuel leak following another lorry accident in Newport. City Wildlife Care is our local wildlife rescue charity and we are very fortunate to have such a valuable service available to us. Check out their website at www.citywildlifecare.org.uk

Birdwatching Walk

Argus readers are invited to join a guided birdwatching walk along the Monnow Valley on Saturday 11th August. Meet walk leader John Coleman at Waitrose car park, Monmouth at 8.00am for a 2 – 3 hour ramble along the river, keeping an eye out for birds such as kingfisher, dipper, grey wagtail (pictured), sand martin and common sandpiper. There is no need to book a place – just turn up. Remember to bring boots and waterproof clothing, refreshments, drinks and binoculars if you have them.

If you would like more details visit www.gwentbirds.org.uk or give Steve Butler a call on 01873 854583.

Coming Up...

GOS have some fantastic talks lined up for the autumn, kicking off with a presentation on the majestic and elusive harpy eagle – keep following this column for more details.

Keep in Touch

Thank you to all readers that have taken the time to get in touch. I always enjoy hearing from you and can be contacted at smegstevens@gmail.com