

## Gardening in a changing climate



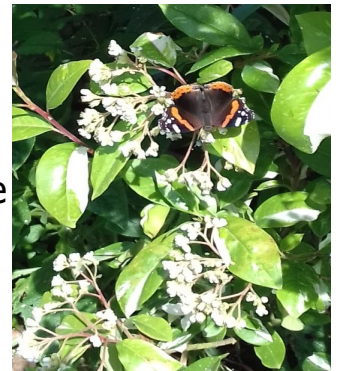
When I look at my garden at the moment I think it must be September or even October. Everywhere trees are looking autumnal and even dropping their leaves. I am struggling to keep plants flowering. Today's rain was the first for a very long time but we need a lot more to make any real difference. Climate change seems to be having a huge effect

and higher temperatures are having a huge effect on wildlife.

Warming seas are not only melting icebergs, many sea birds are struggling because the food chains in the sea are changing and fish like cod and salmon are suffering. Land animals are changing their behaviour,



some are moving north, some like swallows are arriving earlier and leaving later. Insects such as the red admiral opposite and the chaser dragonfly on the left are moving north while the northern species and upland species have more difficulty in moving. Smaller bees can cope with higher temperatures but bumble bees need to move north or uphill.



I was really excited when I saw the first caterpillars of the Toadflax Brocade Moth, opposite, in the garden but this is in fact rather worrying as it has been spreading in recent years due to temperatures changing.



The Humming Bird Hawk Moth on the left is another welcome visitor to the garden but another sign of change. It has been a migrant for a while but more are arriving now and some are surviving our warmer winters by hibernating.

One of the big problems is a mismatch between when an insect appears and when the plants it needs are in flower, sometimes there is no nectar or food plant when needed. Also plants cannot move with the animals, they need years to establish a new area and space to move into. This is where gardeners can help by growing food plants for caterpillars and flowers which provide nectar and pollen. Allowing wild flowers to grow helps the plants to establish in new areas. This creates wildlife corridors to allow movement of plants and animals to more favourable habitats which are free from pesticides.