



Downs Diary

Your guide to watching wildlife

September

With the long summer drawing to a close autumn now begins, bringing rich, vibrant splashes of yellows, browns and reds. In September, birds start seeking safety in numbers, bringing a profound change from territory holding to sociability. As the season changes and the nights grow longer, fast-food berries become a vital source of food for them.



Conker

Conker season has arrived! These prickly **horse chestnut** fruits begin falling over the next few weeks revealing 1-3 smooth, shiny brown conkers (nuts). Great for kids young and old!



Red Admiral

Although some birds are already beginning their annual migrations away from the approaching cold months, September is full of young robins and wrens calling loudly from the safety of bushes. Listen for their shrill alarm calls as you pass by.



Comma



Blackberries

Autumn begins with a feast, as many plants provide succulent fleshed fruits which appeal to hungry birds, insects and mammals alike.

Ripening **blackberries** turn from red to black from late August

On warm, sunny days look out for **comma** and **red admiral** butterflies sipping the juice from rotting fruits.

Blackberries are made up of lots of tiny, round, shiny berries stuck together. Each tiny berry in the cluster has its own seed so one animal eating one fruit spreads many seeds.

Tell us about your wildlife sightings! Contact Mandy Leivers, 0117 9030609, mleivers@bristolzoo.org.uk
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