

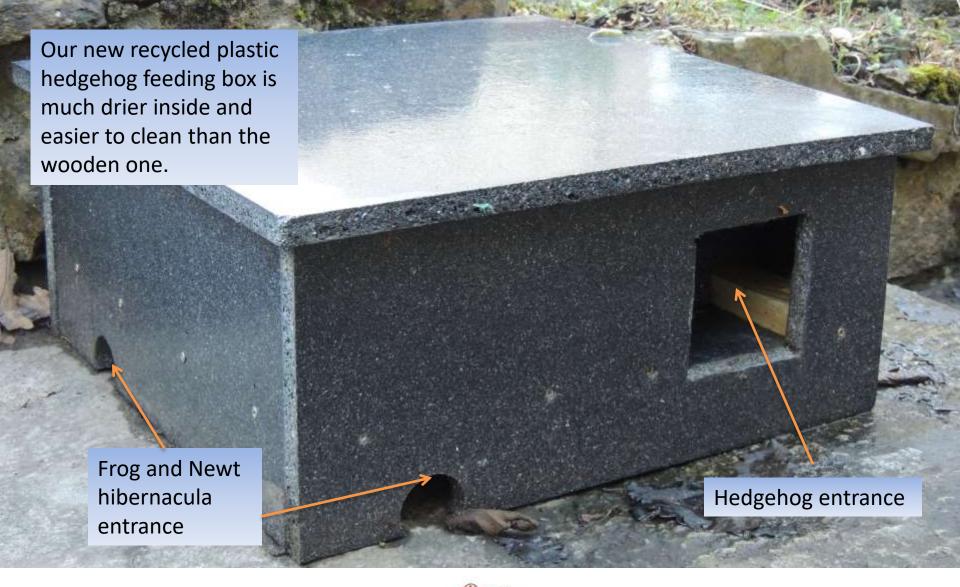


After a pretty warm and wet start to November, the temperatures have now started to drop. In the garden, our hedgehog friend was feeding every night up until 25th November but has now stopped – hopefully a sign that he has put on enough weight to go in to hibernation.

Hedgehogs need to reach a weight of at least 450g to survive the winter.









You may be hearing a lot more Tawny Owls (Strix aluco) calling during November. The reason for all the extra hooting is that there are now lots of young tawny owls coming in to maturity and they are looking for a territory of their own, whilst the more mature owls are trying to hold on to their patch.





To give tawny owls a helping hand in Garnant, I am hoping to erect this nest box for them at the top of the garden.

Tawny owl prefer their next boxes in woodland, but will use boxes on woodland fringe as well – so fingers crossed. Nest boxes can either be upright like this one, which is placed on a tree trunk, or.....



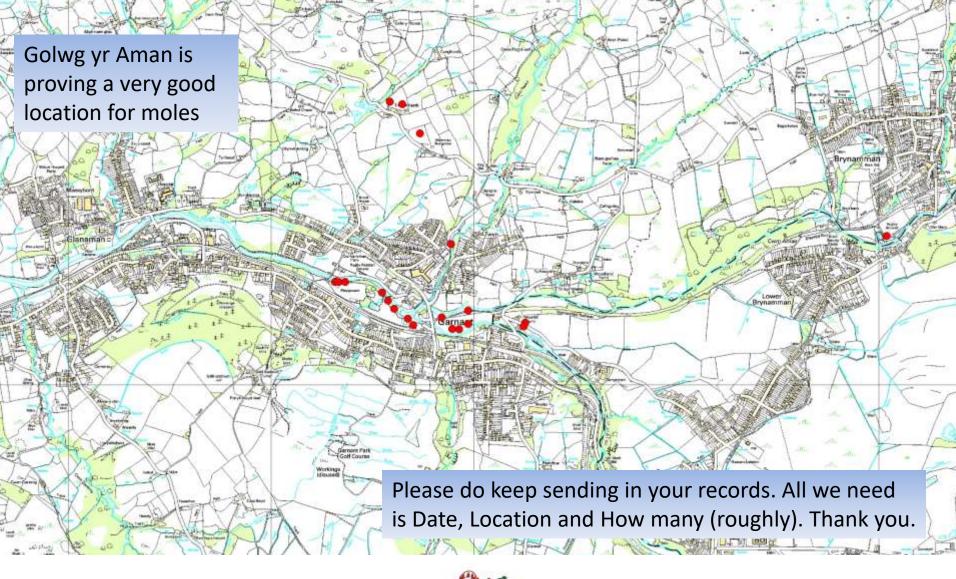




























We also took the opportunity to retrofit some of the entrance holes with metal plates to help protect them from Great Spotted Woodpeckers (Dendrocopus major).

From the 50 boxes checked – 3 had been used by pied flycatcher, which is very good for such a rare bird. There are lots more boxes that need checking over the winter.





As well as pied flycatcher nests, we had blue tit (*Cyanistes caeruleus*), nuthatch (*Sitta europaea*) and a wood mouse (*Apodemus sylvaticus*).



Also seen this month in the marshy grassland habitats of the Amman Valley were Snipe (Gallinago gallinago).

Snipe can be found in the upland habitats and within marshy grassland habitats lower down.
Their defence against predators is to remain completely still and quite often you don't know they are there until the fly up in front of you.



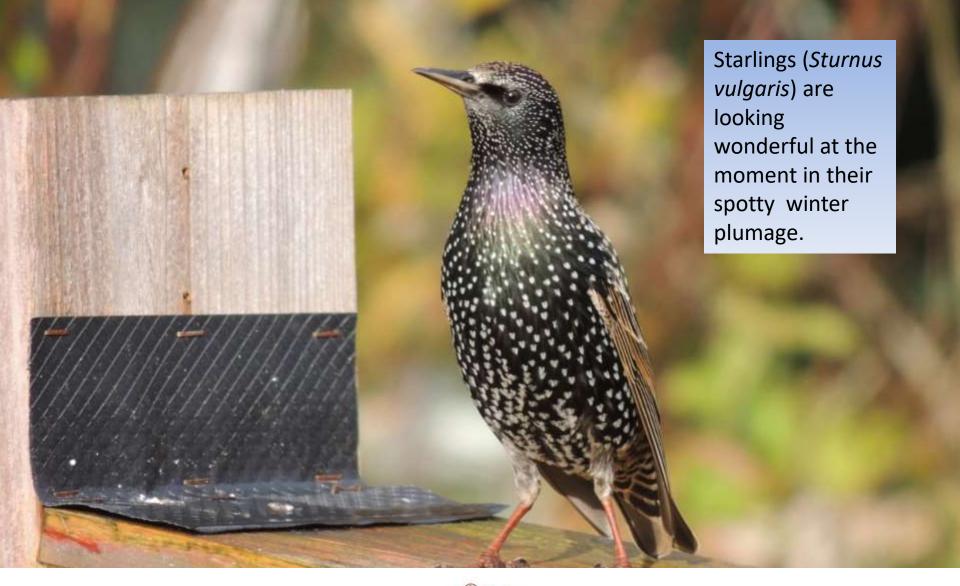








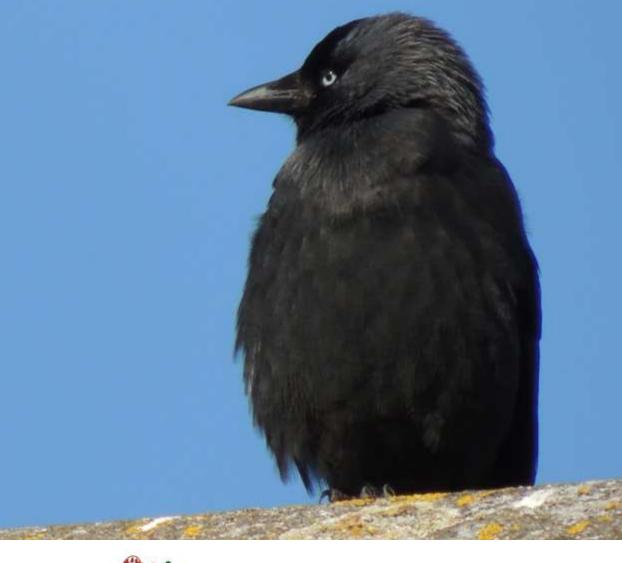






We don't get Starling murmurations in the Amman Valley, but one of the best signs of Winter for me is seeing and hearing the wonderful flocks of Jackdaws gathering in the evenings.

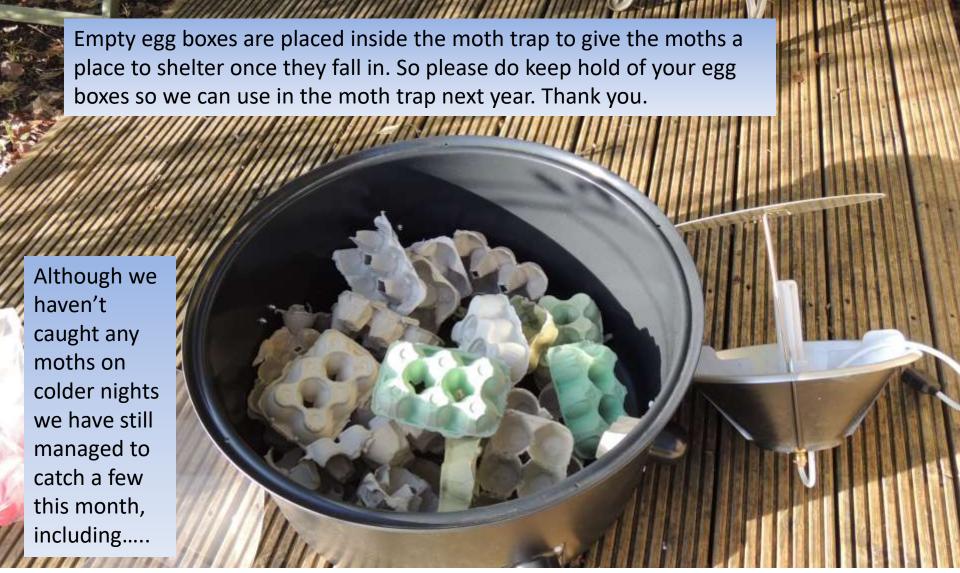
The collective noun for a group of Jackdaws is called a 'clattering' which is very apt.

















Red Green Carpet

























