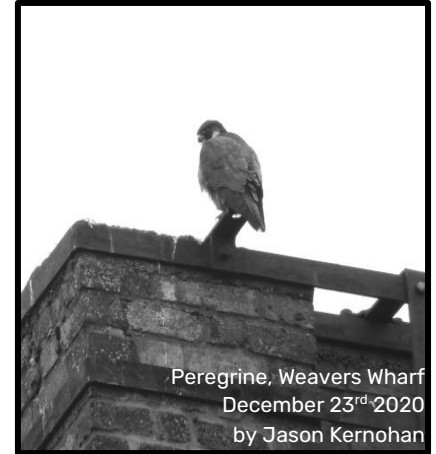




Urban Peregrines

The peregrine falcon is one of our most stunning and well known birds of prey. It is also the fastest animal on the planet, reaching speeds of up to 200m.p.h. when in a dive. A peregrine uses this diving tactic to literally knock its prey (other bird species) dead on impact.

Peregrines are traditionally birds of coastal cliffs but they will also nest inland at former quarry sites and on rocky cliffs along rivers. Over recent decades they have become increasingly a more urban bird, substituting these high cliff top perches for tall buildings in towns and cities. These include Derby Cathedral, the B.T. tower in Birmingham and St Andrew's spire (glover's needle) in Worcester.



In our local area peregrines have been present on the chimney stack at Weavers Wharf in Kidderminster for the last 20 years, with an individual being present on a daily basis all year round. Some years two peregrines are present but, as of yet, there has been no successful breeding there.



Why move into our towns and cities? Alongside there being a multitude of tall buildings to act as substitute cliffs, the prime reason is the abundance of natural food. In particular there are feral pigeons, which form a large part of the urban peregrines diet.

They tend to hunt mostly at dusk and dawn but recent studies of the Derby Cathedral birds have discovered that they will also hunt at night, taking passing migrants. Birds recorded in these studies include woodcock and golden plover

Peregrines can also be encountered in our local rural areas with birds moving around for prey. They often perch up on high vantage points such as electricity pylons. I encounter them a number of times annually on my local patch of Stone/Shenstone near Kidderminster. Most of my sightings tend to come in the winter months but they can be seen at any time of the year.

So, next time you are out for a walk in the local countryside just have a quick glance at the tops of pylons and you may be lucky enough to spot a peregrine.

Jason Kernohan

Thank you, Jason, for this interesting and informative article, Ruth (editor)

Welcome

We would like to extend a very warm welcome to Joan Kearton-Jones who has taken on the role of Chair of the Wyre Forest Local Group. I am sure that you will give her the excellent support you gave me.

Ruth Howell



Indoor meetings

Everyone is welcome to all meetings
Holy Innocents Community Hall at 7.30 p.m.
Admission £2.50

Thursday April 6th

Gillian Hales will bring owls from Chelmarsh Owl Sanctuary.

A different type of meeting. Not to be missed!



Thursday May 11th

Mervyn will lead us on an evening walk in Chaddesley Woods to see the bluebells.
We will return to Chaddesley Village Hall for coffee and cake.

Please note: due to local elections and the hall being in use this is a week later than our normal meeting.

Meet at Chaddesley Village Hall car park and hopefully we can car share to go to the woods.

Hall is just off the A448 Bromsgrove road (opposite Brokencote Hall)
PC DY10 4QA GR 888737

Outdoor meetings



Walks for everyone to enjoy in 2023
All start 10.a.m. Donations to the Trust



Sunday 14th May

Ambling around Astley and Dunley with Hazel Rogers

This is a steady walk with one small hill and a little walking along a lane. We will pass fishing lakes and may be lucky enough to see bee orchids.

A walk of four miles and includes four stiles.

Meet: Astley and Dunley Village Hall car park,
behind the houses on the B4196
DY13 0RF / GR 800687

Sunday 11th June

A plant foraging walk near Bewdley Owen Raybould

Something a bit different this month. We have secured the services of Owen who is an expert on wild plants and their uses for cooking eating, making soft drinks and medicinal purposes.

This is a walk of approx. two miles

THE GROUP WILL BE LIMITED TO 20 at the cost of £5.00 per person (paid in advance).

Booking is essential and is on a first come, first served basis.

If you would like to book a place please contact Glyn on 01562 637556 with payment. Once you have booked, you will receive further details about where and when to meet.

Sunday 9th July

Investigating the varied habitat of the Pound Green area with Chris Morris and Roma Bubb

A circular walk through heathland, flower meadows, common grazing land and woodland in this ancient area.

Approx four miles with one stile

Meet: Pound Green Village Hall car park.
DY12 3LU / GR 757792

For further information about the group please contact
Joan Kearton-Jones joan.kj@sky.com

Editor Ruth Howell

Would you like to suggest a walk or lead one that is special to you? If so, please contact Glyn Walters:
01562 637556