



Winter 2023 News

Redditch's changing wildlife

Change is constant and I have written about changes many times in this newsletter.

Noticing and recording wildlife is more important now than ever as we struggle with changes affecting the natural world. Our fauna and flora are changing; new (sometimes invasive) species turn up, such as the box-tree moth that has been invading people's gardens all over the county this year.

The population of native or long-established species decrease and occasionally increase. Tom Wilkins, for example, has reported an increase in sightings of roe deer around the green areas of the borough. Some changes are cyclical or annual as species change with the seasons. Many shieldbugs, for instance, overwinter as adults but their bright green colouration would make them easy pickings for hungry birds pecking around in the brown leaf litter. So the shieldbugs change colour to match the leaf hues before they enter hibernation. Moths also change with the seasons and different species appear at different times of year. Jason Waine has been running a moth trap in his Redditch garden for many years and overleaf he looks forward to the changing season that brings old friends to his light trap.

Gary Farmer

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Dates for your diary

Our relaunched talks are going well and we'd love to see you there. We meet at 7.30pm on the second Wednesday of the month. Talks cost just £2.50 per person.

Ded 13th: Christmas wildlife quiz and social

Jan 10th: Fair Isle and Shetland

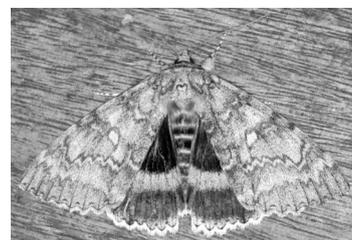
Feb 14th: Abberley & Malvern Hills Geopark - geology and history

Where: Winyates Green Community Centre, Furze Lane, Winyates Green, B98 0SE

<https://rubiconleisure.co.uk/winyates-green-community-centre/>

Autumn moths

When the autumn season, with all its associated glorious leaf colour changes, is upon us something else happens. Largely unseen, a new set of moths that emulate the autumn colours also emerge. Some, like the beautiful merveille du jour (right) match the colours of lichens while the various 'underwing moths' only reveal their startlingly painted hindwing colours when they are alarmed; some bright yellow, red or even blue. To avoid being eaten, the dull upper-wings of the moths allow them to hide amongst the vegetation and if this fails they startle the potential predators with a sudden show of bright colour. One of Britain's largest moths, the Clifden nonpariel (right) does this, revealing bright blue markings when they take flight.



Many autumn moths that hide in the fallen leaf litter or amongst the yellows and reds of the autumn leaves are camouflaged by their yellow and brown patterned upper wings. These include the pink-barred sallow (left) the frosted orange and many other attractive moths usually only seen by the few dedicated moth recorders around the county.

Jason Waine

Learn more about moths at
www.worcswildlifetrust.co.uk/marvellous-moths

Get recording

With improvements in digital cameras on phones, it's easy to get involved with wildlife recording. There are many enthusiasts around the county who are happy to help identify things that you photograph. We just ask that you include the standard "who, what, where, when" with any images that you send in:

- Who found/recorded it?
- What you think it is? If you don't know, there's probably someone who does!
- Where was it found? (grid reference, postcode or What3Words)
- When was it found?

Worcestershire Wildlife Trust, Worcestershire Recorders and Worcestershire Biological Records Centre have been running a wildlife sightings project since 2020 and more and more people are getting involved. Why not join in and start recording wildlife in your area and help us map the changes.

See www.worcswildlifetrust.co.uk/wildlife-sightings for more details.