

Bromsgrove & NE Worcestershire Summer 2020



**Worcestershire
Wildlife Trust**

Taking notice of nature

I hope this newsletter finds all members in Bromsgrove, as well as elsewhere, well and finding their way through this unfortunate time of disruption. As for me, I have been lucky in having Chaddesley Woods on my doorstep as well as Longmore Farm, which is a place I have visited over the last 35 years. In those places I have been able to carry on with my nature interest.

Throughout these unprecedented times many people have had a very different experience with nature in the way of hearing more of it and seeing more of it. I have noticed a decline in my bird sighting records and yet more of other species. The small tortoiseshell butterfly has been reported to be on the decline and yet I have seen them everywhere in their dozens. It's been the same with regards to the marbled white in Randan Meadows yet I have not seen a single kingfisher this year even in their regular

haunts, despite looking for them.

Some local people have reported seeing water voles in places they have not been seen before. This is unusual as official records show them in very few places in Worcestershire - in fact, our corner of the county is their last refuge!

At Longmore Farm, Trust member and nature sympathetic farmer, Roger Yardley, has long talked about white-clawed crayfish in his local streams that he had caught when he was a boy. Two have been seen recently and the man who is responsible for recording crayfish in the county was more than pleased to hear of this record because he only knew of one other place in the county where they're hanging on, which I think is the Wyre Forest.

The next time we meet at our local group, whenever that will be, there is much to consider. I hope you all have interesting sightings and experiences of wildlife to report on. It will be great to finally see this affliction on society done with so we might once more fall back into the routine of our meetings and reserve visiting. Nature shows her hand in many different ways and I can only hope that this disruption into our lives causes us to investigate and respect the natural world more in future years, which will be to the advantage of all species including ourselves.

Best wishes

Gordon



Marbled white © Wendy Carter

Indoor meetings

At the time of going to print we're not sure whether indoor meetings will resume as normal this coming autumn. Our booked talks are below but please check

www.worcswildlifetrust.co.uk/whats-on

as we're working with other Local Groups to produce a series of online talks if physical meetings aren't possible.

Wed Oct 7 Gordon Forrest – Local Farm Wildlife

Wed Nov 4 Steve Bloomfield – Birds, Bats and Bricks

Wed Dec 2 Robin Shaw – Drawn from the Wood

Our meetings take place at Bournheath Village Hall, Claypit Lane, Bournheath, B61 9LA

All meetings start at 7.30pm, cost £2.50 and we welcome both members and non-members

Visiting our nature reserves

Many of us re-connected to nature during lockdown. Our nature reserves were closed and the wildlife got used to not having us around. Following the easing of restrictions and re-opening of reserves, more people are visiting as they try to remain closer to nature. Sadly, we've also seen more anti-social and anti-wildlife behaviour. Please will you help us to spread the following to anyone you know who may be visiting these wonderful places for wildlife...

- **Keep dogs on leads at all times.** Even the friendliest of dogs are threatening to wildlife and may cause a bird to abandon its nest, whether that's on the ground or low in vegetation along a path. Please also take dog mess away with you.
- **Stick to paths.** Whether it's a public right of way, a bridleway or a permissive path, please stick to these and don't make your own routes. Only take horses or cycles on designated bridleways.
- **Stay alert.** If a bird is calling 'at you', you're too close to the nest. If it's carrying food, let it feed its young. Don't pause, keep on walking.
- **Report bad or suspicious behaviour.** If you see anything suspicious – wildlife crime, fly-tipping, fires, motorbikes or more, please report this: 101 (non urgent) or 999 (urgent).

Thank you!

A wild Bromsgrove lockdown

Like everywhere else, much of Bromsgrove has been out of bounds through spring and into summer - the closures and restrictions made entertainment and exploration difficult but not impossible.

Within my garden and walks along the Tardebigge canal path close to where I live there has been plenty of wildlife entertainment. The award for Longest Running Drama went to the red mason bees who were buzzing around my garden from when the males emerged in mid-March to late May when the last of the females sealed up her egg cells lined with pollen. The females had the constant challenge of fending off unwanted attention from males whilst trying to remember which cells they had laid claim to and making countless journeys to and from nearby blossom.

The award for Best Action went to the swifts that arrived in May and were seen most nights feeding on along the canal, weaving and swerving as they snatched up insects whilst making loud piercing screams. Best Romance was won by the two hedgehogs that visited the garden most nights, exploring and investigating and even venturing into the pond together - this inseparable pair have been adorable to watch. Many other wildlife awards were in the offing - each time I ventured out there was something to take my mind away from the struggles of the situation we were all in.

Nick Packham