



Water for wildlife

Many of us put water out for the birds, usually in purpose-made bird baths. Not only is this essential for birds to drink in hot weather but they also need to bathe to keep their feathers in good condition. They need to do this in all weathers; how many of you have watched starlings splashing in your bird bath during a downpour? As we have said before, keeping the water clean and fresh is vital to avoid the spread of disease and who wants to drink someone else's bath-water anyway? One of our members had a timely reminder during the long dry spell this spring. It's not just birds that need water; a fox was seen drinking from their bird-bath.



Foxes and other wildlife need access to clean water during dry spells. Photo by Anne & Tom Wilkins.

These agile canines are able to take advantage of these water sources but think about other garden visitors. Hedgehogs need access to clean water and amphibians will benefit from a quick dip during their night-time feeding forays. So put out a large saucer (the type used under plant pots) on the ground on your patio or on the edge of the lawn and top it up with clean water each evening.

Don't forget about the many insects that visit your garden; make a safe drinking area for bees, hoverflies and other pollinators. Put a garden saucer on a flat surface off the ground, put in a

few pebbles and fill the saucer with moss; just rake the moss out of your lawn but don't do this if you use any chemicals on your lawn. Then top up with water. The pebbles will give the insects somewhere to land and the moss will prevent them from drowning. Top this up regularly with clean water.

Indoor meetings - autumn 2025

I know it seems like ages until autumn but it will come around all too soon. To help you through the long, dark nights we have a marvellous series of evening talks planned again! And we are delighted that we have been able to keep the same meeting venue as previous years for this season's indoor talks.

Winyates Green Community Centre, Furze Lane, Winyates Green, Redditch, B98 0SE

Talks start at 7.30pm. Members and non-members are welcome. £3.00 entry (cash only)...and bring an extra few pennies for the return of the raffle!

September 10th – Falcons with Steve Woodison

October 8th – Grafton Wood with John Tilt

November 12th – Wildlife of Sri Lanka with Anne and Tom Wilkins

December 10th – Quiz Night

An informal evening with a fun quiz set by last year's winner. Come as a team or join a team on the night.

Check www.worcswildlifetrust.co.uk/whats-on for more details.

Ideas for walks and talks

If you have any ideas for speakers or wild themes you would like to hear about let us know and we'll see if we can arrange something for our next programme. We are also looking for someone to help organise and lead evening walks. Interested? Please get in touch.

Quick quiz - birds of prey

Ellen Boulton

I saw the ospreys at Rutland Water in the spring and they inspired a bird of prey themed quiz!

1) We are starting to see this bird of prey more often in Worcestershire, what is it (see silhouette)?



2) What bird of prey can reach speeds of up to 200 miles per hour when diving for its prey?

3) Following a translocation programme, which birds of prey successfully bred in England for the first time in over 150 years at Rutland Water in 2001?

4) What is the largest resident bird of prey in the UK?

5) What is the UK's most common bird of prey?

(Answers in the next newsletter)

Answers from the spring quick quiz:

- 1) Redwing
- 2) Hedgehogs and dormice
- 3) Murmuration
- 4) Mountain hare and stoat
- 5) A place where animals hibernate (typically during the winter)

Scarlet Tiger

Julie Jenkins

A scarlet tiger moth caterpillar *Callimorpha dominula* appeared on the leaves of a hardy geranium (crane's-bill) in my garden at the start of May.

This was not a caterpillar I had seen before but its striking black and yellow pattern enabled a speedy identification by a member of the committee; thank you Jason.

I was intrigued to discover that the caterpillar hatched last summer when it would have been more selective about its diet, feeding on

common comfrey, green alkanet and common nettle.



Scarlet tiger caterpillar feeding on hardy geranium (crane's-bill), May 2025. Photo by Julie Jenkins.

The crane's-bill it was feeding on was in my 'space for nature' section of my garden where the lawn isn't cut and a number of wild plants are now thriving. It is also the north-facing side of the garden, which is naturally cooler and damper. These caterpillars tend to prefer damp areas such as the edges of marshes and streams. The caterpillar has now disappeared to pupate and I look forward to spotting the beautiful scarlet tiger moth when it emerges (it will have done so by the time you read this).



Scarlet tiger moths have black forewings with white and yellow markings. Their hindwings are bright scarlet. Photo by Gary Farmer.

I was interested to learn that there is a community run scarlet tiger project taking place in nearby Stourbridge.

www.facebook.com/scarlettigerproject/

Committee

We're still looking for more committee members to keep your local group going. If you can spare a little bit of time and want to get more involved in promoting wildlife in Redditch, let us know [garyla@outlook.com](mailto:garyl@outlook.com)