

Southeast Worcestershire Local Group

Summer newsletter 2025



Worcestershire
Wildlife Trust

What's in a Name?

While 59 species of butterfly can be found in the UK, there are approximately 2500 moths and they come in all shapes and sizes. The smallest can be just 5mm long and the largest, the hawk-moths, may have a wing length of over 50mm. Many are even more striking than those show-offs, the butterflies, but as most keep their dazzling colours hidden by appearing after dark, they go unappreciated.

It's not just their variety that is fascinating. Some have the most unusual names, originating many years ago, not from science but from those observers who had an appreciation of beauty and a fine turn of phrase.

My particular favourite is the day-flying Mother Shipton. It is a moth of grasslands and is on the wing from May to July.

According to folklore, Mother Shipton was born in the 15th century and has variously been described as a soothsayer, prophetess or even a witch. In the patterns on the wing of the moth is the profile of a hooked nose, chin and beady eye, very much the archetypal witch!



Although there are spectacular moths, there are also moth equivalents of the birdwatcher's "little brown job." One such is a moth called the rustic, which is very like another rather plain species. Early observers found them difficult to tell apart and were not always sure of positive identification. So what did they do? They rather charmingly named it the uncertain, because that's what they were – uncertain! And so the name remains, as do other species that raised doubts all those years ago, the confused and the suspected!



The shark © Wendy Carter

And there are many others - tissue, argent and sable, drinker, shark. From elephants to plumes, the Trust's website has a few more species for you to delight in and spot:

www.worcswildlifetrust.co.uk/marvellous-moths

Welcome to the wonderful world of moths!

John Boon

Summer - autumn programme

Talks take place at the Friends Meeting House, Cowl Street, Evesham WR11 4PN, starting at 7.30pm and cost £3. All are welcome, please do bring along friends and family.

Please see each listing for details of where and when to meet for our regular walks.

Sunday 10th August 2025

Bredon Hill *(walk)*

Join Kemerton Conservation Trust's Support Coordinator Kate Aubury for a wildlife walk on Bredon Hill focussed on arable wildflowers, pollinators and working with local landowners who, through regenerative farming, hope to create nature-friendly farms.

Limited car parking available at the top of Upper Westmancote on the farm track (W3W: mush.imparting.chum). We encourage car sharing. 10.30am start.

Tuesday 9th September

Midweek Ramble – Cleeve Prior Community Orchard *(walk)*

2pm-4pm

Cleeve Prior Heritage Trust, WR11 8JX

Wednesday 10th September 2025

Parasites

with Eden Tanner *(talk)*

A fascinating subject that will leave you itching for more.

Wednesday 8th October 2025

The Lost Fritillaries Project

with Mel Mason *(talk)*

Discover more about this exciting project to reintroduce pearl-bordered fritillary butterflies to the Malvern Hills.

Wednesday 15th October 2025

Midweek Ramble – Lower Smite Farm *(walk)*

Gain an insight into how Worcestershire Wildlife Trust is managing the farm for wildlife on a tour with Caroline Corsie, senior land advisor.

10am WR3 8SZ

Wednesday 12th November 2025

Birds and their colourful conundrums with John Medlock *(talk)*

We'll look first at what colours can birds see and how that affects their lives, then on to how feathers are coloured before leading us into a discussion to prove, or otherwise, Charles Darwin's hypothesis that animals and birds in particular are more colourful the closer one gets to the equator. The talk is illustrated with photographs taken from John's many visits to tropical countries with particular emphasis to those taken in Brazil's Atlantic Rainforest.

Wednesday 10th December 2025

Bats of Worcestershire

with Matthew Terry *(talk)*

Discover the fascinating world of our local bats with the Chair of Worcestershire Bat Group and trustee of Bat Conservation Trust.

The committee would like to thank everyone for their continued support for our events. We are still only a small committee and would welcome anyone who would like to join us.

If you would like to know more about what's involved please contact

Nick nickrose01@btinternet.com

As we were going to press we learnt of the sad passing of John Boon, a fabulous naturalist, wonderful Chair of our group and an inspiration to many. We're sure you'll join us in passing on our heartfelt condolences to his family.