



MY WILD LIFE

wildlifematters

Summer 2019



Herts and
Middlesex

NEWS FROM YOUR LOCAL WILDLIFE TRUST AND FROM AROUND THE UK

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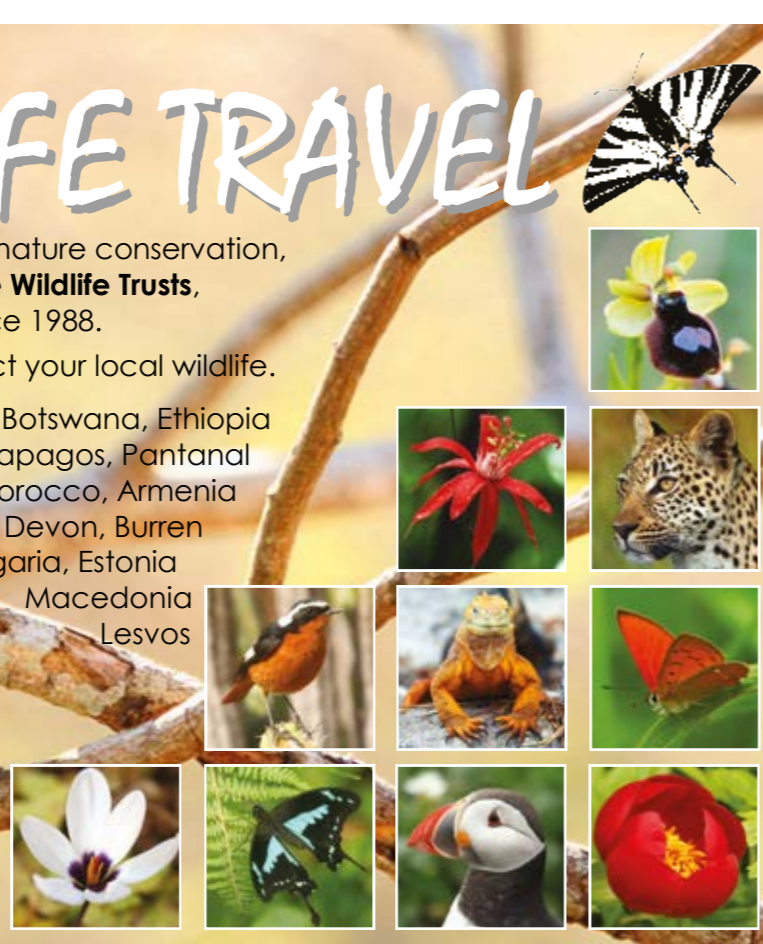
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Bumble bee on bird's-foot trefoil © Jon Hawkins, Surrey Hills Photography

CONSERVATION



The Garden Jungle

Dave Goulson tells us how to save the planet starting in our back garden.
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Delve into the wonderful world of the wildflower meadow



Welcome to the summer edition of Wildlife Matters.

Like me, I expect you have experiences of wildlife that are indelibly etched into your memory, like the first time you saw a particular bird or flower. Recently, I've been lucky to have a few of these moments.



The first was being present to see a tawny owl chick being ringed - what a privilege to see this amazing creature up close. Some weeks later, I joined some of our Fen Appeal donors for a guided walk around Thorley Wash Nature Reserve where water voles put in a splendid appearance happily swimming up and down a channel. It's reassuring to know that wildlife is flourishing on our nature reserves, with meadows full of flowers and insects, fens alive with warblers and dragonflies and woodlands carpeted in bluebells.

However, as we all know, it's not a rosy picture for wildlife on the whole.

Why Not Water?

Some people are surprised when I tell them that our area is home to a globally rare habitat - but that is exactly what our chalk rivers are.

Drier than average weather over the last two years has resulted in low flows in these rivers which support a wide variety of wildlife.

Demand for water in our area is also higher than the national average and local water company Affinity Water has committed to leaving more water in the environment to help sustain these rare ecosystems.

To address these challenges, Affinity Water has launched their #WhyNotWater campaign to help people demand key changes in legislation to introduce mandatory water efficiency labelling on goods and the right to water-efficient housing - bringing water on a par with energy and empowering people to save water.

We're pleased to support this campaign and would encourage our supporters to sign the petition.



Find out more at whynotwater.co.uk

Global Biodiversity under threat

'One million species may go extinct' was the terrifying headline of the Assessment of Global Biodiversity published in May 2019 by the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services. The report underlines that nature is declining globally at rates unprecedented in human history - and the rate of species extinctions is accelerating, with grave impacts on people around the world now likely. The average abundance of native species in most major land-based habitats has fallen by at least 20%

since 1900 and there has been a 30% reduction in global terrestrial habitat integrity caused by habitat loss and deterioration.

The report does say that it's not too late, provided that we act now, and the Trust can play a role in the transformative change needed to reverse the trend. A landscape-scale approach and a sound understanding of wildlife are critical to this change. We work with farmers, statutory agencies and businesses to look at how they can take positive action and we talk with politicians, both national and local, to argue for robust legislation and planning policy. With the level of housing growth due to come to our area, this is all the more important to ensure that wildlife is properly considered and protected. The hundreds of volunteers who support the Trust in so many ways, sharing their knowledge and experience, play a vital role too; we couldn't do it without them.

There's something everyone can do, from reducing the amount of water you use or becoming a volunteer, to changing the management of your garden or farm. By acting together, we can ensure that there is a positive future for our awe-inspiring habitats, and for all those fascinating species that depend on them.

Thank you for your continued support of the Trust and your help for local wildlife.

Lestey Davies



© STEVE KENNY BIRDS & STUDIOS

Restoring the Majesty of the Meads

The Trust has received a generous funding boost from the Thames Water Community Investment Fund to improve King's Meads Nature Reserve near Hertford for wildlife and the local community.

The Trust was granted generous financial support from Thames Water's Community Investment Fund, alongside a new 35-year lease over a large part of the site. The Trust is also working with GlaxoSmithKline, who have kindly given additional land to the Trust as an in-kind contribution to the project.

This support will allow the Trust to pursue further project funding to carry out vital improvement works at King's Meads Nature Reserve to establish the reserve as a site for enjoyment, learning and practical action for wildlife.

Local residents, schools and community organisations will play a key role in shaping the future of this reserve to make it a vital part of the local community.

Located between Hertford and Ware, the reserve is one of the largest and most diverse floodplain grasslands in Hertfordshire and is regionally and nationally significant for its wildlife, including hundreds of wildflowers and more than 100 bird and 19 dragonfly species. It is a vital link in the chain of interconnected wetlands of the Lee Valley and one of the best sites in the county to see water voles and the rare water violet.



Thousands go wild for 30 days in June

For the fifth time, the Trust has asked residents of Hertfordshire and Middlesex to take part in 30 Days Wild, and do something wild every day during June.

The national campaign aims to get people closer to wildlife and participants are encouraged to complete a "Random Act of Wildness" of their choosing every day. This could be a five-minute walk on their lunchbreak or a whole day outside, building a pond or listening to bird songs. Nearly 2,000 people signed up this year and many shared their Random Acts of Wildness with us on social media.

For this year's 30 Days Wild, the Trust launched the #WildWednesdayChallenge: Every Wednesday during June, participants were challenged to do one big wild thing with a different theme every week. The four themes were "see the wild", "create a wild thing", "feel the wild" and "change the world" and the Trust has received many creative submissions.

Nature is evidently good for our physical and mental health and participants have said they felt more connected to nature after taking part in 30 Days Wild.



Have a look at our big 30 Days Wild Round up at hertswildlifetrust.org.uk/30dayswildrecap



Project to restore nationally rare habitats begins

Thanks to generous funding from the Environment Agency, Herts and Middlesex Wildlife Trust is able to undertake a large-scale restoration project to improve and conserve a number of nationally rare habitats such as fen meadows and wet woodland.

The project at Fir & Pond Woods Nature Reserve near Potters Bar will restore and enhance a beautiful ancient meadow through conservation grazing by cattle. Along with pond restoration we will create ideal conditions for a huge array of wildlife, including dragonflies, bats and different birds such as reed bunting and sedge warbler.

The nature reserve supports a number of habitats rare in Hertfordshire, including wet woodlands and lowland fens, the latter being one of the rarest in the county with fewer than 20 hectares left. Much of it has been lost to scrub or become degraded and species-poor due to a loss of grazing and cutting. New ponds will be created to provide open-water habitat for dragonflies, damselflies and amphibians such as great crested newts.

The project, estimated to be completed in spring 2020, will also improve visitors' experience of this precious habitat through guided walks.

Fen meadows are marshy wetlands that receive water and nutrients from rainfall and groundwater. With this restoration project, the Trust will contribute to Environment Agency national targets for habitat creation and the wetland habitat action plan for Hertfordshire.



Chess Valley Challenge

As part of 30 Days Wild's #BigWildWeekend, the Trust held its first annual Chess Valley Challenge sponsored walk.

On Saturday 15 June, more than 40 keen walkers took up the Trust's challenge to walk the 10-mile Chess Valley Walk from Rickmansworth to Chesham, raising over £1,800 for wildlife in Hertfordshire and Middlesex.

The Chess Valley Walk runs through the Chilterns and the walkers enjoyed the rich landscapes, picturesque English villages, country pubs and the Trust's Frogmore Meadows Nature Reserve, awash with wildflowers at this time of year.

The Chess Valley Challenge was kindly sponsored by the Trust's corporate member Affinity Water.

Find out more about the challenge and register your interest for next year's event, at hertswildlifetrust.org.uk/chessvalleychallenge



Tony Juniper urges everyone to stand up for a Wilder Future

An event in April, hosted by Herts and Middlesex Wildlife Trust and the University of Hertfordshire, saw more than 300 people flock to Hatfield to hear the famous environmentalist and campaigner Tony Juniper.

In his talk, he argued that the UK can become a world leader in environmental legislation but had to act now. He pointed out that a major issue alongside climate change was the decimation of wildlife – almost singularly due to human actions.

Tony said "The web of life is being torn apart, often to final extinction on a rapid and global scale. With new environmental legislation on the cards, we are at a crossroads in history. An ambitious Environment Act is needed to not only protect wildlife but support its recovery. It is my sincere hope that during the coming few years we will together finally begin to achieve the historic turnaround for nature that we all know is so desperately needed."

The Trust is asking people to join the campaign for a Wilder Future and take action for wildlife, either by making a positive difference in their local area, for example by creating a wildlife garden, or by getting in contact with their MPs to convince them of the need for a strong Environment Act.



River restoration brings residents closer to wildlife

A partnership project between Herts and Middlesex Wildlife Trust and the Wild Trout Trust has restored river habitat along the River Lea in Wheathampstead for the benefit of wildlife and the local community.

A 30-metre stretch of the River Lea at King Edward Place, a residential community for retirees, has been restored by Herts and Middlesex Wildlife Trust in partnership with the Wild Trout Trust. Over three days, Trust staff and a team of 15 local volunteers built a series of brush wood ledges in the river channel and planted them up with colourful aquatic plants. We also pruned a number of bankside trees to allow more light through to enable for these plants to grow.

This extra habitat will provide food, shelter and breeding areas in and around the river for wildlife such as dragonflies, wildfowl, fish and potentially even the endangered water vole. It also creates a beautiful vista for the residents of King Edward Place who treasure the riverside property and enjoy watching the wildlife that lives there.

The programme was the idea of King Edward Place residents who wanted to see more wildlife thriving in the area. They are happy with the result and expressed gratitude on behalf of them and the local wildlife that will benefit from the restoration.

If you know of similar opportunities to improve the river where you live, please get in touch with Sarah Perry, Living Rivers Officer, sarah.perry@hmwt.org.





A changing Wind in the Willows

Ratty floats downriver in a scene from our new film

The Wildlife Trusts have launched a new campaign calling for a Wilder Future and nature's recovery on land and at sea. To kickstart the campaign and raise awareness of the plight of our wildlife, we've created a film trailer for The Wind in the Willows.

With an all-star voice cast including Stephen Fry, Alison Steadman and Sir David Attenborough, the film brings to life the modern threats facing the beloved characters from Kenneth Grahame's children's classic. A lot has changed on the riverbank since we first met Badger, Ratty, Mole and Toad just over a hundred years ago.

Wild places have shrunk and disappeared, threatening the wonderful wildlife they support. We've lost 80% of our heathlands and up to 49% of our seagrass meadows, crucial nursery grounds for fish and important stores of carbon.

Rivers are in poor condition and water voles like Ratty have become the UK's most rapidly declining mammal, lost from 94% of the places they were once common. Toads have found the last century tough as well, with numbers

dropping by almost 70% in the last 30 years alone.

But the film's message is ultimately one of hope: nature is currently in a bad state, but it's not too late to change things. Our new campaign, Wilder Future, asks people to pledge to take action for nature in whatever way they can, from simple acts like planting wildflowers for pollinators to reaching out to politicians and speaking up for our wildlife.

Stephanie Hilborne, CEO of The Wildlife Trusts, said: "We are a nation of nature-lovers, yet we live in one of the most nature-depleted countries in the world. If we want to put nature into recovery we have to create a mass movement of people calling for change."

Sir David Attenborough, President Emeritus of The Wildlife Trusts and narrator of the trailer, added: "Together we can make the next chapter for wildlife a happier one. Join us to put nature into recovery."

The trailer premiered on social media and attracted over a million views in the first few days. It also played in cinemas across the country.



How can you help?

■ **Contact politicians** - to call for strong environmental laws which help nature recover, including Nature Recovery Networks that connect wild spaces.

■ **Walk in the pawprints of others** - and imagine what wildlife needs to survive in your neighbourhood. Are there gaps for hedgehogs to move between gardens? Woods for badgers to build setts in? Or ponds in which toads can spawn? Take action in your local area to create new homes for wildlife.

■ **Create a Wilder Future where you live** - by checking out events and volunteering opportunities at your Wildlife Trust.



Get involved

Join us on our campaign for a Wilder Future and watch our The Wind in the Willows trailer hertswildlifetrust.org.uk/wilderfuture

Big or small, ponds for all!

For this year's Wild About Gardens challenge, The Wildlife Trusts and the Royal Horticultural Society are urging gardeners to make a splash for wildlife.

We are calling on people to create a pond to benefit their garden wildlife. Whether it's a large sunken pond or a tiny container pond, water is the garden feature that can make the biggest difference to wildlife.

With a rapid decline in natural



freshwater habitats, garden ponds are increasingly important for the wildlife that depends on these watery places, such as frogs, toads and insects. Adding a pond is one of the best ways you can help wildlife and enjoy the benefits of seeing more amazing animals and plants close to home.

You can download a free booklet full of advice on the Wild About Gardens website wildaboutgardens.org.uk



Beavering away

The Wildlife Trusts continue to be at the forefront of work to bring beavers back to our waterways, with reintroduction projects across the UK. Beavers are ecosystem engineers that can improve water quality, reduce flooding downstream and improve conditions

for many other species, including water voles, frogs and dragonflies. Conservation efforts received a boost on the first of May, when the Scottish Government introduced European Protected Species status for the Eurasian beaver in Scotland. wildlifetrusts.org/beavers

UK HIGHLIGHTS

Discover how The Wildlife Trusts are working for you across the UK



1 Water Works

An innovative project is testing new ways to grow food and lock in carbon in Cambridgeshire's Great Fen. The project will use wetland farming to test new crops for food, healthcare and industry, all whilst reducing the amount of carbon lost from the soil. This was made possible by the People's Postcode Lottery Dream Fund.

wildlifebcn.org/news/water-works



2 An osprey anniversary

The Scottish Wildlife Trust are celebrating 50 years of ospreys at the Loch of the Lowes reserve. The reserve became just the fifth known nest site when ospreys recolonised the UK after their extinction in 1916. The current pair fledged 10 chicks from 2015-2018 and returned again this year.

scottishwildlifetrust.org.uk/ospreys-50

3 Seal of approval

A record number of grey seals have been counted at South Walney Nature Reserve. A drone survey spotted 483 seals, 123 more than the previous record. The grey seal is one of the world's rarest seals and around 50% of the world population lives around the British Isles.

cumbriawildlifetrust.org.uk/record-seals



The Garden Jungle

Professor Dave Goulson, ecologist, founder of the Bumblebee Conservation Trust and author of *A Sting in the Tale*, *A Buzz in the Meadow* and *Bee Quest*, has a special place in his heart for bees and their friends. He tells us why we should, too.



© JON HAWKINS - SURREY HILLS PHOTOGRAPHY

In 2017, a paper was published by the Krefeld Society, a group of entomologists who had been trapping flying insects in Malaise traps on 63 nature reserves scattered across Germany since the late 1980s. Malaise traps are tent-like structures that passively trap any flying insects which bump into them. The German entomologists amassed insects from nearly 17,000 days of trapping, a total of 53 kg. They found that the overall biomass of insects caught in their traps fell by 75% in the 26-year period from 1989 to 2014. The study was reported around the world and has been much discussed. Some argue that the data set is not robust as some of the 63 sites were sampled only in one year.

Nonetheless, the pattern is very strong, and it is hard to avoid the conclusion that there has been a major decline in insect biomass. We should also bear in mind that the impacts of mankind on the planet were at play long before 1989, which was 27 years after the publication of Rachel Carson's *"Silent Spring"*. It seems probable that this 75% drop is just the tail end of a much larger fall. We will never know how many insects there were, say, 100 years ago, before the advent of pesticides and industrial farming.

There has been much debate as to whether similar declines in insect abundance are occurring in the UK or whether something peculiar is going on in German nature reserves, but hard data is largely lacking. Only butterflies and moths have been monitored extensively in the UK, and they show pervasive patterns of decline, though not as dramatic as that found in Germany. The overall abundance of larger moths in Britain fell by 28% in the period from 1968 to 2007, with the decline more marked in southern Britain where the overall count fell by 40%. More than one-third of species (37%) declined by more than 50% during the period. Perhaps the best-studied insect populations in the world are the UK's butterflies, which are counted along with more than 2,500 transect walks each year as part of the Butterfly Monitoring Scheme. Butterflies of the "wider countryside" fell in abundance by 46% between 1976 and 2017, while habitat specialists fell by 77%, despite concerted conservation efforts directed at many of them.

Although the bulk of insect species, the flies, beetles, grasshoppers, wasps, caddis flies, froghoppers and so on are not systematically monitored at all, we often

have good data on population trends for birds that depend on insects for food, and these are mostly in decline. For example, populations of aerial insectivorous birds have fallen by more than any other bird group in North America, by about 40% between 1966 and 2013. In the UK, populations of the spotted flycatcher fell by 93% between 1967 and 2016. Other once-common insectivores have suffered similarly, including the grey partridge (-92%), nightingale, (-93%) and cuckoo (-77%). The red-backed shrike, a specialist predator of large insects, went extinct in the UK in the 1990s.

An interesting aspect of these declines of insects and their predators is that most of us have not noticed. Amongst scientists, it is now recognised that we all suffer from the shifting-baseline syndrome, whereby we accept the world we grow up in as normal, although it might be quite different from the world our parents grew up in. A fascinating study of photographs of trophy fisherman returning to Key West, Florida with their catches from 1950 to 2007 estimated that the average size of the fish fell from 19.9 to just 2.3 kg, but the smiles on the fisherman's faces are not any smaller. The only aspect of insect declines that has impinged on the consciousness of significant numbers of people has become known as the "windshield phenomenon". Anecdotally, almost everybody over the age of about 50 years old can remember a time when any long-distance drive in summer resulted in a windscreen so splattered with dead insects that it was necessary to stop occasionally to scrub them off. Driving country lanes at night in high summer would reveal a blizzard of moths in the headlights. Today, drivers in Western Europe and North America are freed from the chore of washing their windscreen. It seems unlikely that this can be entirely explained by the improved aerodynamics of modern vehicles.





© DAVE GOULSON

Early bumblebee

Causes of insect declines

What might be driving the landscape-scale disappearance of insects? Causes of the decline of wild bees have been discussed more than those of other insects, and although there is still debate, most scientists believe that it is the result of a combination of man-made stresses, including massive loss of habitat, chronic exposure to complex mixtures of pesticides, the spread of non-native insect diseases with commercial bee nests, and the beginnings of the impacts of climate change. The disease issue primarily affects only bees, but the others are problems that all insects face in the modern world.

Why should we care?

Understandably, few people bemoan the lack of squashed insects on their car, and for many people, the idea of fewer insects seems attractive, for insects are often associated with annoyance, bites, stings and the spread of disease. When recently asked about the seriousness

of global insect declines on national UK radio, medical doctor, professor and well-known TV presenter Lord Robert Winston replied: "There are quite a lot of insects we don't really need on the planet". This response likely typifies the attitude of many.

I am deeply concerned that we scientists have done such a poor job of explaining the vital importance of insects to the general public. Insects make up the bulk of known species and are intimately involved in all terrestrial and freshwater food webs. Without insects, a multitude of birds, bats, reptiles, amphibians, small mammals and fish would disappear. Eighty-seven per cent of all plant species require animal pollination, most of it delivered by insects. Approximately three-quarters of the crop types grown by humans require pollination by insects, a service estimated to be worth between \$235 and \$577 billion per year worldwide. Financial aspects aside, we could not feed the growing global human population without

pollinators; billions of people would starve. In addition to pollination, insects are important biocontrol agents – often controlling other insect pests – they are intimately involved in the breakdown of organic matter such as leaves, timber, animal faeces and carcasses to recycle the nutrients therein, they help to aerate the soil, disperse seeds, and provide products such as silk and honey.

For many insects, we simply do not know what they do. We have not even given a name to perhaps 80 per cent of the perhaps five million insect species that are thought to exist, let alone studied what ecological roles they might perform. As famous author and environmentalist Aldo Leopold said, "The first rule of intelligent tinkering is to keep all the parts". We are nowhere near understanding the multitude of interactions that occur between the thousands of organisms that comprise most ecological communities and so we cannot say which insects we 'need' and which ones we don't.

How can I help?

There is some good news. Insect populations can recover, and much more quickly than those of large animals such as tigers or pandas. In the UK, not many have actually gone extinct. They just need some habitat and a respite from the barrage of pesticides. Gardens cover half a million hectares of the UK, and if managed in a way that is sympathetic for wildlife, they could form a vast patchwork of tiny nature reserves. Add in better management of parks, road verges and roundabouts and we could create a network of wildlife habitat across the UK.

 It is easy to make your own miniature 'Garden Jungle'. A few suggestions are below:

- 1. Grow wildlife-friendly plants**
Nectar-rich plants provide food for bees, butterflies, hoverflies and more; and don't forget food-plants for butterflies and moths such as nettles, bird's foot trefoil, lady's smock, ivy and holly.
- 2. Provide a bee hotel**
Buy one or make one yourself by drilling some horizontal 8mm holes in a block of wood or bundling together some one-foot-long bamboo. Hang it on a wall or fence in a sunny place.
- 3. Don't use pesticides**
You do not need them in a garden.
- 4. Plant a fruit tree**
They are even available in dwarf sizes suitable for tiny gardens. You will provide blossom for pollinators and produce your own zero-food-miles, pesticide-free fruit!
- 5. Create your own miniature wildflower meadow**
Leave a patch of lawn to grow, or sow with a wildflower mix, and cut just once per year in late summer.
- 6. Dig a pond**
Even a tiny one in a bucket will support insect life. Or make a 'hoverfly lagoon', a tiny habitat for hoverflies to breed in.
- 7. Reduce your mowing**
Allow the dandelions, buttercups, daisies and clovers in your lawn to flower.
- 8. Do nothing**
Leave a corner in your garden where nature can grow wild!
- 9. Build a brash or log pile**
This will provide shelter for animals big and small.
- 10. Build a compost heap**
Recycle kitchen scraps and weeds and your compost heap will teem with insect life



Large-headed resin bee

© OSEB KUBALE

Find more detailed advice on how to turn your garden into a haven for insects and other mini-beasts in Professor Goulson's new book *The Garden Jungle*, out July 2019 (available to be pre-ordered online).

 Meet Professor Goulson and get his new book *The Garden Jungle* signed at our talk on Wednesday 11 September. Find out more and book online at hertswildlifetrust.org.uk/davegoulson

Go Wild Events



© PAUL THRUSS Chalkhill Blue

We are delighted to be offering a huge range of events over the year from workshops to walks, with something for all ages. Discover new activities and our top picks near you.

Booking is essential for most of our events and places are snapped up quickly! Don't delay and book your place today! Visit hertswildlifetrust.org.uk/events for full listings and booking.

Get Closer to Nature

Discover our nature reserves and further afield on one of our popular guided walks. Improve your identification knowledge or just enjoy a stroll in the fresh air! This is a small selection of the variety of events found on our website.

Thursday 25 July and every Thursday in August | 11am - 3pm

Life at the Lake

STOCKER'S LAKE NATURE RESERVE

Discover what lives at Stocker's Lake with the Trust and Affinity Water, from cool camouflaged creatures and watery wetland wonders to fascinating floating flora! Drop in for this series of fun educational activities every Thursday in the summer holidays, with a different watery theme to explore each week. Expect topics including predators and prey, plants and pollution. We will have creatures to study and other activities to help you dive into different and exciting aspects of lake life. No booking required.

Friday 26 July | 2pm - 4pm

Chalkhill Blue Spectacular

HEXTON CHALK PIT NATURE RESERVE

Explore this small but beautiful nature reserve, enjoying the abundance of chalkhill blue butterflies found here at this time of year and identifying the chalk grassland flora. Enjoy lovely views of the surrounding countryside at this hidden gem in the north of Hertfordshire.

Wednesday 7 August | 10am - 12pm

Bug Hunt at Purwell Ninesprings

PURWELL NINESPRINGS NATURE RESERVE

See what insects, spiders and other bugs we can find in the grass and hedgerows around the reserve. Try your hand at using a sweep net and examine your catch up close!

Saturday 17 August | 11am - 1pm

Wild Bee Walk

ALDBURY NOWERS NATURE RESERVE

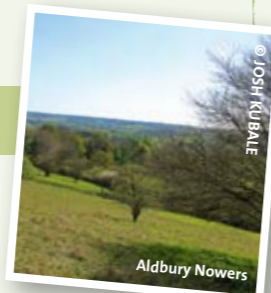
Join our bee enthusiasts for a walk in search of bees and other pollinators. Aldbury Nowers' warm south-facing slopes host the small but beautiful flowers of chalk grassland which support a wide variety of invertebrates. We will take a walk to our chalk scrapes to spot beautiful solitary bees and bumblebees and find out about their fascinating life cycles.

Saturday 7 September | 7pm - 9pm

Marvellous Moths

THORLEY WASH NATURE RESERVE

Come along to our moth evening to discover the nocturnal wildlife of the Stort Valley. There are around 2,500 types of moth in the UK and many are just as stunning to observe as butterflies! We will also be listening out for other nocturnal wildlife and may hear the screech of a barn owl or bats out hunting.



© JENNY HOBBS

Aldbury Nowers

Friday 13 September | 7.30pm - 9pm

Bat Discovery

RYE MEADS NATURE RESERVE

Learn more about the fascinating world of bats. Use bat detectors to search for these nocturnal hunters and learn how to spot the different species.

Sunday 29 September | 10.30am - 2.30pm

Family Practical Work Day

STANMORE COMMON

Help keep the Common a great place for wildlife by undertaking some practical volunteer work as a family. We will be improving the special grassland here by trimming tree saplings. We hope to see lots of wildlife as we work such as toads, frogs, bugs, snails and spiders. Gloves, tools and training will be provided.

Tuesday 22 October | 8pm - 10pm

22 Ideas That Changed the Countryside Talk

WELWYN GARDEN CITY

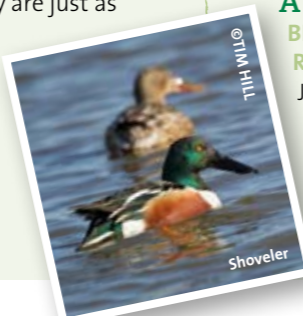
Join Mid-Herts Local Group for an illustrated talk from Peter Waite, the Campaigner for the Protection of Rural England's (CPRE) Chairman, on 22 ideas that changed the countryside.

Saturday 9 November | 12pm - 2pm

A Walk with Winter Wildfowl

BROADWATER LAKE NATURE RESERVE

Join us for a gentle stroll around Broadwater Lake to discover and identify the winter wildfowl found in this important site in the Colne Valley.



© THIM WILCOX

Shoveler

Wild Experiences, Talks and Workshops

We have teamed up with local partners to provide these exciting and diverse events, bringing you and your family closer to nature.

Saturday 20 July, Saturday 31 August and Saturday 5 October | 10.45am - 1pm

Horse Park and Ride

PANSHANGER PARK

Park up and follow an approximately 6-mile off-road route around Panshanger Park Estate using permissive bridleways and paths that are not normally open to horse riders. This ride will allow you to enjoy the beautiful historic park landscape, woodlands and water features along the Mimram valley. £10 per horse and rider. Event offered in partnership with Tarmac and HCC Public Rights of Way Service.

Tuesday 6 August, 20 August, 3 September and 17 September | 2pm - 3pm

Discover Hedgehogs

HARPENDEN

Herts and Middlesex Wildlife Trust are delighted to be working in partnership with Hornbeam Wood Hedgehog



© TOM MARSHALL

Hedgehog

Sanctuary to offer this hour-long introduction to hedgehogs. Learn basic facts - where they live, what they eat, problems they face and why they're in decline. Receive practical advice about how to help hedgehogs in your garden. Meet a rescue hog (if available)

and find out about basic hedgehog care and handling. £8 adults (over 16), £6 children. Children must be accompanied by a paying adult.

Monday 12 August | 6pm - 9pm

Wild Gin Tasting and Formal Gardens Tour at The Grove Hotel

CHANDLERS CROSS, WATFORD

Take a short tour of the beautiful Formal Gardens with The Grove's Senior Gardener. Enjoy the spectacular herbaceous border and see if you can spot the resident little owl. Return to the hotel to be greeted by Ben Marston, Director and Distiller of Hertfordshire-based Puddingstone Distillery. Ben will present an engaging insight into the history of gin, Puddingstone Distillery and how they make Campfire Gin. Enjoy two cocktails from their Campfire Gin menu plus samples, along with a selection of canapes. £50 per person. Over 18s only.

Wednesday 14 August | 10am - 12pm

River Lea Wildlife Cruise

Settle in for a 90-minute cruise onboard Lee & Stort Boat Company's comfortable boat, equipped with toilet facilities and a fully stocked refreshments bar. We will cruise through Ware to the Lee Navigation, which passes the Trust's Amwell Nature Reserve. Along the way, learn about the river and navigation from our Living Rivers Officer. Find out about what lies beneath the water, as well as spend time identifying the wildlife found along the water margins. Adults £15, children (under 16) £8, infants free (on adult's lap).

Thursday 15 August | 11am - 2.30pm

Wonderful Wildfowl: Behind the Scenes Tour, Lunch and Walk

TRING NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM

Take an exclusive behind-the-scenes tour of Tring Natural History Museum with their expert bird curators. After the hour's tour, enjoy lunch in the museum's cafe. Regroup after lunch in the car park next to Wilstone Reservoir, where the Trust's Volunteer Warden will take you for a walk around the edge of the reservoir, spotting the wildfowl found here, as well as keeping a sharp eye open for the hobbies that can sometimes be seen hunting in the fields.

£20 per person. Suitable for adults only.

Wednesday 28 August and Wednesday 9 October | Times vary

Smartphone Safari

ST ALBANS

Learn to use your smartphone to take stunning wildlife photographs with professional photographer Jeanette. If you own a smartphone, then you own a camera, and if you own a camera, you have the ability to take amazing photos. You'll take a stroll through Verulamium Park, learning how to take photographs of the plants, flowers, trees and landscape along the way. Then spend time using a free editing app to get the most out of your images. £15 per person



© JOSH KUBALE

Thursday 5 September | 7pm - 10pm

Wild Gin Tasting

WILSTONE RESERVOIR NATURE RESERVE

Take an evening stroll around the edge of Wilstone Reservoir, discovering this beautiful nature reserve with your knowledgeable guide, looking out for wildfowl on the water and around the margins. Then return to the nearby Puddingstone Distillery for a fascinating talk about the history of gin and how the special Himalayan balsam gin is made. Complete the evening by trying a couple of delicious cocktails from the gin menu along with some samples - a truly "wild" gin tasting! £25 per person. Over 18s only.

Wednesday 11 September | 7pm - 9pm

Dave Goulson "The Garden Jungle" Talk and Book Signing

ST ALBANS

Join us for an entertaining evening talk from the renowned author of "A Sting in the Tail" and founder of the Bumblebee Conservation Trust. Professor Dave Goulson will describe what lives in our compost piles, behind our trees' bark and beneath our lawns, and then explain what we can do to increase biodiversity. His new book "The Garden Jungle: or Gardening to Save the Planet" is due for publication in July 2019 and Professor Goulson will be signing copies of his book which are available to purchase in advance (limited stocks also available to buy on the night). £10 per person (£8 for concessions)



Dave Goulson

Wednesday 30 October | 4.30pm - 6.30pm

Bats from the Boat River Cruise

ST ALBANS

Join us for a unique sunset cruise looking for bats on the River Lea. Learn about the fascinating life of bats from the Trust's bat expert. Spot pipistrelle bats hunting along the tree line, and Daubenton's bat swooping over the water hunting their prey as the sun sets. As it gets darker we will then be using bat detectors to hear them hunt with echolocation. Bring a blanket and experience bats as close as we can - we will have the windows open as we cruise along. Complimentary tea and coffee will be served on board to keep you warm. Not suitable for younger children. Adults £15, children (under 16) £8, infants free (on adult's lap).

Community Fundraising

Green Token Scheme at Watford Asda

A huge thank you to our friends at Watford Asda for inviting us along for a bucket collection day and selecting us for their Green Token Giving scheme earlier this year. Thanks to the generous donations and customer votes, we raised an amazing £648!

Collections at St Albans City Station

Our thanks to St Albans City Station for inviting us for an early morning collection which raised £140 in under two hours – thank you!

Community Matters at Welwyn Waitrose

Thanks to Welwyn Waitrose for donating £300 to the Trust through their Community Matters scheme and a huge thank you to all the customers that voted for us.

Neighbourly clean-up

Thank you to everyone at TK Maxx and Homesense who voted for us in the environmental clean-up grant scheme, administered by Neighbourly. We've been awarded £3,200 which will help us in our challenge to remove Himalayan Balsam from our sites.

Become a fantastic fundraiser!

 If you can help us with bucket collections or by placing collection tins in local shops to help raise even more funds, please contact us on fundraising@hmwt.org



Working for Wildlife Days

We were pleased to welcome Transmission Investment who enjoyed a team away day at Stocker's Lake, creating a pond, raking grassland and building bee towers to create homes for solitary bees.



A warm welcome

A warm welcome to our new Schools Engagement Volunteer, Karl Toombs, who will be volunteering with the Trust as part of John Lewis' volunteering scheme, called The Golden Jubilee Trust. Karl is raring to work with primary schools and youth groups to help children connect with wildlife and raise funds to support the Trust. He is happy to talk at assemblies, provide outdoor practical learning in your school grounds or in our wildlife garden in Verulamium Park.

To find out more, please contact Karl on school@hmwt.org or 01727 858 901



CHARITY GOLF DAY

The Grove Golf Course
21 October 2019

Rally your family, friends, colleagues and clients to enter a team of four and enjoy an 18-hole world championship golf course and five-star hospitality!

hertswildlifetrust.org.uk/golfdays
01727 858 901

Business Breakfast

This spring, we welcomed over 35 guests to our second Business Breakfast, kindly sponsored by Affinity Water. Held at The Grove Hotel & Spa, potential and existing corporate supporters of the Trust enjoyed great networking over a delicious breakfast.

Kind thanks to Rosemary Waugh, CSR Manager at Thames Water, and Verity Wilks, Responsible Sourcing Manager at Jordans Cereals, for giving talks about the benefits of corporate partnerships to wildlife, people and their businesses.

Fen Appeal Thank You Walk

To thank the supporters of our Fen Appeal, we organised two walks to show just how their donations have helped this precious habitat.

Braving a wet and early start at Thorley Wash Nature Reserve, our supporters were rewarded with the chorus of birdsong and even a sighting of water voles. Thanks to everyone who supported our appeal and joined us for our walk.

 You can find out more about our latest appeal on hertswildlifetrust.org.uk/appeal



© DAVID SHEPARD

Water Vole

In Remembrance

We would like to thank **John Cook** and long-standing members **Bosena Taylor** and **Audrey Calveley** for kindly leaving a gift in their will to the Trust. We are extremely grateful for their support over the years and for thoughtfully remembering the Trust in this special way.


Our thanks and condolences to the friends and family of **Dorothy Smith, Gerry Leuty, Mary Hayes** and **Molly Johnson** who are kindly donating to the Trust in their memory.

These donations make a lasting contribution to our local conservation work and help ensure that the wildlife their loved ones cherished is protected for years to come.



Trek Kilimanjaro

Take the challenge of a lifetime and join us in climbing Africa's highest mountain, Kilimanjaro. You'll enjoy the beautiful scenery on your climb knowing every step of the way you'll be protecting local wildlife. We will be taking the northern route featured in this year's Comic Relief Appeal.

 Find out how to get involved at hertswildlifetrust.org.uk/challengeyourself





Barry Trevis

New arrivals at Lemsford Springs

Barry Trevis, Volunteer Warden at Lemsford Springs, tells the tale of a pair of kestrels taking up residence in one of the reserve's nest boxes and having to put up with some noisy and nosy neighbours.

Kestrels hovering over our countryside were once a common sight. However, due to habitat loss, decreasing prey populations and a lack of suitable nest sites, the population of kestrels across the UK has been in decline over the past decades. This has led to the kestrel becoming a species of conservation concern, gaining an unfavourable space on the "amber list".

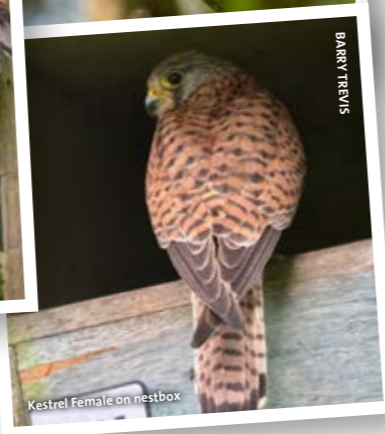
So it was wonderful to see that a pair of kestrels have taken up residence in one of the nest boxes at Lemsford Springs. The box is one of two on a high pole in the reserve and

the kestrels have had to contend with noisy neighbours in the form of jackdaws already in residence in the upper nest box!

Despite the disturbance, the kestrels are doing well and we've followed them closely over the past couple of weeks, from establishing their nest, laying of eggs, the male bringing voles to a hungry incubating female, seeing-off the attentions of potential predators, to the ultimate fledging of four healthy chicks.



Have a look at hertswildlifetrust.org.uk/blog/kestrels for more images and videos.



Common spotted-orchid

Dactylorhiza fuchsia

The most common of all 56 species of orchids in the UK, you can find the common spotted carpeting grasslands, roadside verges, old quarries and marshes in pale pink in summer. It gets its name from its leaves which are green with purple oval spots. The flowers range from white and pale pink through to purple but have distinctive darker pink spots and stripes on their three-lobed lips.

Look out for these and other orchid varieties at Blagrove Common, Tewin Orchard and Hunsdon and Eastwick Meads.



© GUY EDWARDS





© STEVE KENNY BIRDS EYE STUDIOS

Frogmore Meadows

 This marvellous wildflower meadow is a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and has recently been extended thanks to the generous legacy of its Volunteer Warden Gerald Salisbury.

Nestled in the Chess Valley between Chenies and Latimer, Frogmore Meadows is a rare example of a traditionally-managed wildflower meadow, alive with birdsong in spring and shining in all the colours of the rainbow in summer. It is easy to understand why Gerald loved this place so much. He was Volunteer Warden at Frogmore Meadows for over 30 years and long before his death in 2015, he had made arrangements to ensure that future

generations will be able to enjoy this reserve. Through his generous legacy, the Trust has been able to purchase land adjacent to Frogmore Meadows. The enlarged nature reserve now covers 25 acres – three times the size of the original site.

In his role as a Volunteer Warden, Gerald made a huge difference to the reserve, dedicating much of his time to its management by grazing his docile Guernsey cattle and cutting back scrub, which eventually led to the reserve gaining the favourable status of a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). He was always keen to share his knowledge and passion for the reserve which he frequently did on guided walks. In recognition of his dedication to the site, the Trust has named the original reserve ‘Gerald’s Meadow’.

Frogmore Meadows Nature Reserve sits in a floodplain and the soils found there, when managed correctly, support an abundance of grasses, orchids and wildflowers. In summer, Frogmore

Meadows is coloured in the white of meadowsweet, the yellow of lady’s bedstraw, the purple of southern marsh as well as heath spotted orchid and many more beautiful wildflowers providing important food sources for bees and butterflies. Along the banks of the River Chess, a globally rare chalk stream, the highly-endangered water vole has made its home. Nocturnal hunters like barn owls and several bat species are sweeping the floodplains in search of food at night.

Lowland meadows like Frogmore Meadows have suffered a huge decline over the last century. Similar meadows are often ‘improved’ with fertilisers and re-seeded with more productive grasses or drained and used for arable farming. As a result, specialist meadow plants are being outcompeted by more dominant vegetation. To preserve Frogmore Meadows, the Trust uses traditional meadow management techniques to care for this precious habitat which involves traditional haymaking.

The grass is cut with a scythe and made into hay over several dry days in July, turning it daily to let it dry evenly. Once completely dry, the hay is compressed into tight bales with the use of a handmade hand baler. Further down the line, cattle will be brought on site to graze. Conservation grazing is vital for grassland habitats to protect and ensure biodiversity. The animals’ grazing removes

further nutrients, and diversifies the height of the vegetation, creating micro-climates. Their hooves lightly break up the ground, creating bare ground where seeds can germinate. Thanks to the Trust’s continuous management, Frogmore Meadows is a diverse nature reserve supporting a huge variety of wildlife.



MARBLE WHITE

PAUL THURISH



© JOSH KUBALE

Southern marsh orchid

Reserves Roundup

This is just a snippet of the great work that our busy reserves team and dedicated volunteers are doing every day, thanks to the support of you, our members!

Around one hectare of rush was cut back at **Rye Meads**, in order to reduce its dominance, and attract nesting birds such as lapwing.

At **Tewinbury**, the reed bed has been lowered in places, whilst additional hannels have been incorporated to provide the right conditions along the waterways for water voles, reed warblers and Cetti’s warblers. The pollarding of several willows allows more light in to encourage less dominant species such as golden saxifrage and marsh marigold.

A new fence line at **Wilstone Reservoir** aims to protect the wildfowl and

waders along the water’s edge and mud flats by restricting access by dogs and people.

We’re getting **Fir and Pond Woods** ready for grazing by installing livestock fencing on the fen meadow.

Young apple and pear trees at **Tewin Orchard** have received protection from mammals and competition by other species by maintaining the tree guards around them.

Nature's Calendar

July-October 2019

Tim Hill, the Trust's Conservation Manager, highlights some of his favourite seasonal wildlife and makes suggestions for things to look out for and do through the months ahead.



Green-eyed hawk

TOM DAV

July

The green-eyed dragon

There are few better places to spend a few hours on a hot July day than the Trust's dragonfly trail at Amwell Nature Reserve. At this time of year, you will almost certainly be able to experience one of our most recent and spectacular colonists, the green-eyed hawk.

This species was first discovered at Amwell in 2014 but has now become well established. Its most distinctive feature is those emerald green eyes making it unique amongst the Hertfordshire dragonflies. The best way to get a good view of them is to pick a good vantage point on the boardwalk and wait for them to come to you. If you're lucky they will stop and hover in front of you, in which case you will be drawn to look deep into those multi-faceted iridescent eyes. Dragonflies need the heat of the sun to warm them, so visit in the heat of day. It's quite incredible how dragonflies disappear almost instantly when it clouds over. Look hard enough and you can spot them perched in the branches of a tree or thick cover, waiting for the sun to warm them once more.

August

The fast and the furious

By August, most of our birds will have finished breeding and will be on their way back to their wintering grounds. One exception is the hobby, one of our smallest hawks.

Another African migrant, it arrives here in May. Its main food source are large flying insects such as dragonflies, so it is most often seen over the wetlands of the Lea and Colne Valleys. Where food is plentiful, there can be large gatherings – I have seen as many as 16 birds at a time!

In August 2018, a nest was spotted in a pine tree in the north of Panshanger Park where parents were busy feeding young. The Trust together with the park owners Tarmac were swift to react to this rare opportunity and established a 'hobby watch'. Over the course of a few days, we were able to show over 100 people these stunning birds through a dedicated viewpoint and powerful telescopes.

Here's hoping we will be able to repeat the watch this year – keep your eyes peeled on the Trust's website and social media for updates.



Hobby

Tim Hill

September

A vole new world

You may have seen the Wildlife Trusts' animated film revisiting the *Wind in the Willows*.

The shocking images show a world changed beyond recognition from the idyllic landscape of *The Wind In The Willows*. In the book, Ratty was actually a water vole. Sadly, the number of places with water voles in Britain has gone down by 94% in the last sixty years. And voles have become the country's fastest-declining mammal. The Trust has been leading on water vole conservation with local partners and as a result, we still have water voles, although their distribution is limited to wetlands in the valleys of the lower Lea, Colne, Stort, Mimram and Chess. September is one of the best months to look for these gorgeous creatures. It's the end of the breeding season and numbers are at their highest. One of the best places to see them is Thorley Wash Nature Reserve, site of a successful reintroduction in 2015. The habitat is excellent throughout the valley and the voles have since spread along the river. Enter the reserve from the Stort navigation, walk west to where a ditch runs under the path and it shouldn't be long before you see animals chugging back and forth along the waterway.



Water Vole

Russell Savory

October

As seen on TV

Five hundred years ago, King Henry VIII ruled this country and as he was dealing out rather brutal treatment to his six wives, an acorn was germinating on the valley side of the River Mimram.

Over the centuries, that seedling grew slowly as the world around it changed dramatically. It has now grown to be nearly eight metres in circumference and over 18 metres high – the Great Oak of Panshanger Park. It is regarded as the largest 'maiden oak' in this country – a tree that has grown naturally without being cut or managed in any way. It is a living ancient monument, a wonderful link with the past and a gateway to the future. There is an old saying that oaks live for 300 years, rest for 300 years and die for 300 years. If that's true, this mighty oak is only just over half way through its life! Ancient oaks like this are a nature reserve in their own right, with the ability to support over 300 species of invertebrates. Fungal rot creates nesting places for birds and roosting spaces for bats. I had the pleasure of showing BBC Countryfile's Matt Baker the tree in all its glory earlier this year. The best time to experience it is at dusk when its ancient presence is palpable. If you would like to pay homage to this wonderful tree, follow the Great Oak Trail from the old gamekeeper's cottage.



Panshanger Oak

Frieda Rummenhohl



Plan your wildlife-friendly pond for all

We're rapidly losing our ponds, rivers and streams in the UK, so adding a pond is one of the best things you can do to help wildlife in your garden. Kate Bradbury explains how to make your pond a haven for animals, large and small.

Long grass for cover

Allow the grass to grow long around your pond, or grow low-growing herbaceous plants nearby, to provide cover for young frogs, toads and newts and protect them from predators such as birds.

A mix of pond plants

Add a range of emergent, floating and submerged plants to provide the best habitat for wildlife, offering egg-laying habitat and shelter from predators. Submerged plants oxygenate the water, too.

A pond is one of the richest habitats you can create in a garden, providing food, water and a breeding place for a huge range of species, from amphibians to aquatic invertebrates, and birds to small mammals, such as hedgehogs and bats. A pond is also one of the busiest wildlife habitats. Digging one will have an almost immediate effect. Within just two weeks, you might attract water boatmen and pond skaters, bathing birds, thirsty hedgehogs and egg-laying insects, such as dragonflies and damselflies. Amphibians will seek out the water to spawn in spring, and bats will take advantage of the insects dancing over the water's surface in summer.

between larger bodies of water, providing a lifeline to species that are unable to travel long distances.

While large ponds attract the greatest number of species, don't underestimate the value of a small pond. A container such as an old tin bath, Belfast sink or even a washing up bowl can provide a home for aquatic insects. Frogs may use the habitat too – just help them to reach the water by making a 'frog ladder' out of stones outside the container. Add more stones at the bottom and plants to provide oxygen and shelter for tadpoles and other aquatic larvae.

Our gardens take up more space than all of Britain's nature reserves put together. If we all provided some form of watery home, we could create a network of wildlife-rich water highways across the country.

In the wild, ponds, rivers and streams are being lost and degraded by development, drainage and intensive farming, resulting in a huge loss of wildlife. So garden ponds are an increasingly vital habitat for species that may have lost their breeding grounds elsewhere. They can also act as stepping stones

For more pond tips and to add your water feature to our UK pond map, visit wildaboutgardens.org.uk



Kate Bradbury is passionate about wildlife-friendly gardening and the author of *Wildlife Gardening for Everyone* and *Everything in association* with The Wildlife Trusts.

Shallow water

This is where the life is! Here, you'll find tadpoles and other aquatic larvae. Shallow areas warm up more quickly in spring, and frogs lay spawn here.

Somewhere to hide

Make piles of old terracotta pots or loose heaps of stones near your pond to provide shelter for frogs and toads.

Gently sloping sides

Make sure mammals such as hedgehogs can enter and exit the pond safely to avoid drowning. A sloping 'beach' is perfect and will attract birds to bathe here too.

Landing pad

Water lilies will be used by thirsty insects such as bees. Frogs may rest on them to catch insects and aquatic larvae will shelter beneath them.

Emergent plants

Dragonfly nymphs climb out of the water using the stems of emergent plants before transforming into winged adults.

Nurseries for eggs

Toads wrap their ribbon-like spawn around the submerged stems of plants such as marsh marigold. Newts fold individual eggs into the leaves of plants such as water-forget-me-not.

Deep water

In winter, deep areas provide shelter for frogs, which rest at the bottom, breathing through their skin. Toads prefer deep ponds too.

Sheltering stones

In the shallows and deeper areas of the pond, stones provide nooks and crannies for aquatic larvae to shelter from predators. Tadpoles also suck algae off them.

JAMES ROGERSON

ILLUSTRATION: HANNAH BAILEY, KATE BRADBURY, SARAH CUTTLE



The Nature of... a Wildflower Meadow

“How does the Meadow flower its bloom unfold? Because the lovely little flower is free down to its root, and in that freedom bold.” William Wordsworth

A blaze of yellow from buttercups and yellow rattle, the deep blue of devil’s-bit scabious, purple orchids gently nodding in the breeze, the whirr of grasshoppers and crickets, the buzz of bumblebees wobbling from blossom to blossom: colours and sounds fill the senses. A wildflower meadow in summer is a kaleidoscope of wildlife.

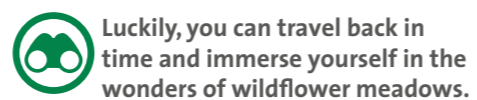
It is one of the most diverse habitats you can find. While the flowers may be the stars of the show, don’t forget the insects; from the tiniest yellow meadow ant that almost goes unnoticed to the colourful whirl of butterflies, like the marbled white or the day-flying burnet

moth, fluttering through the flowers and bumblebees laden with pollen. If there is open water nearby, you might spot dragonflies and damselflies zipping through the meadow. Old meadows are sometimes enclosed with hedges consisting of trees and shrubs, including field maple, hazel, hawthorn and spindle, alive with linnets and whitethroats. Brown hares can be spotted zigzagging through the meadow, a barn owl is sweeping over the meadow.

Meadows are the product of hundreds if not thousands of years of human intervention in the form of traditional livestock farming. The combination of hay cutting and grazing creates unique conditions that enabled a diversity of plants to flourish. Before traditional farming took hold in Britain, wildflower habitats would have existed in areas kept open by the herds of large herbivores that roamed the landscape

such as deer, wild horses and aurochs, a wild ancestor of modern cattle.

Only 75 years ago, you would find a wildflower meadow nearly everywhere you turned. The shortest walk from a village or the edge of a town would have taken you into another world, full of wildflowers in hedges, along road verges and, of course, in meadows rolling over the countryside. Tragically, we have lost 98% of this habitat, a jaw-dropping 7.5 million acres – more than 18 times the size of Hertfordshire. They have disappeared as farming practices have changed and towns and villages have expanded to swallow up flower-rich fields.



Luckily, you can travel back in time and immerse yourself in the wonders of wildflower meadows.

The Trust looks after some marvellous meadows, including Aldbury Nowers and Frogmore Meadows.

Your photos...



Share your wild wanderers!

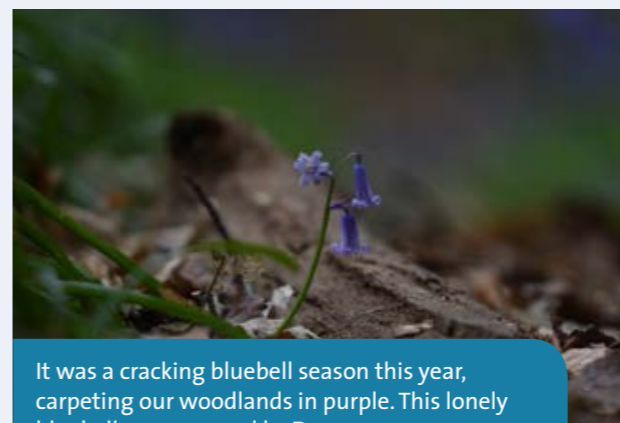
Herts and Middlesex Wildlife Trust

@HMWTbadger

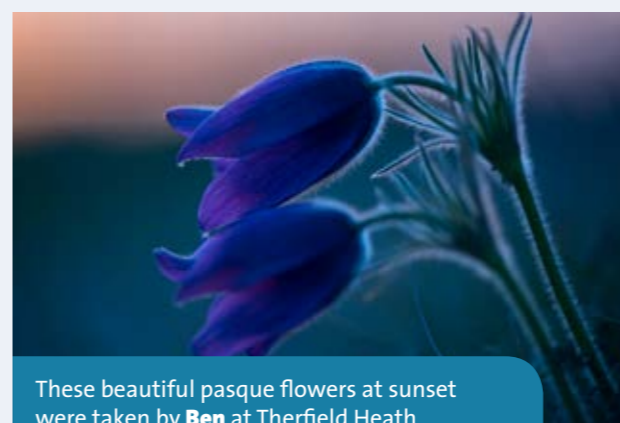
Hertswildlifetrust



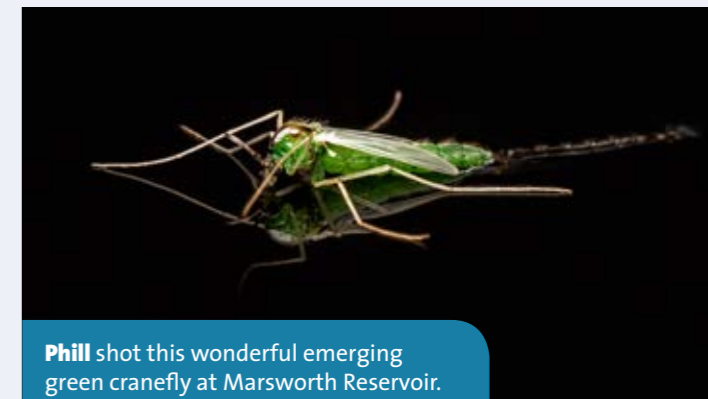
James hit the shutter at the perfect moment, as the kestrel at Amwell Nature Reserve was closing in on its prey.
 @james_wildlife



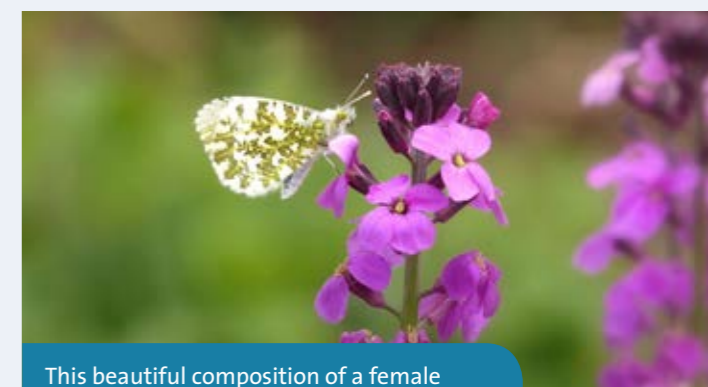
It was a cracking bluebell season this year, carpeting our woodlands in purple. This lonely bluebell was snapped by **Reece**.
 travel_trash



These beautiful pasque flowers at sunset were taken by **Ben** at Therfield Heath.
 @benandrewphotos



Phill shot this wonderful emerging green cranefly at Marsworth Reservoir.
 @DistinctlyAver3



This beautiful composition of a female orange-tip butterfly was created by **Helen**.
 Helen:



A male spoonbill, snapped by **Stuart**, was found residing at Amwell Nature Reserve in May and June
 @StuartFox1



Simon found this slow worm wiggling its way through Balls Wood Nature Reserve.
 @SimonWest26

FESTIVAL of WILDLIFE



Saturday 27 and Sunday 28 July
10am-4pm

Panshanger Park

Join us for a FREE family festival at the beautiful Panshanger Park.
Celebrate the wildlife of Hertfordshire and Middlesex with
a weekend of walks, talks and conservation activities.

hertswildlifetrust.org.uk/festival



In partnership with



In association with

