

wildlifematters

Winter 2021

Celebrating the wildlife of Hertfordshire and Middlesex



Herts and
Middlesex

What's Inside?

The eyes have it

Will Jobbins' jumping spider wins
Wild Snaps photography competition. 10

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Welcome



Over the last year we've taken a good look at where the priorities for the Trust will lie in the next decade so that we can see a genuine and sustained recovery of nature alongside an

increase in the number of people who are taking action for wildlife. If, over the coming years, we see a collaboration of people who care about wildlife and want to see change, this will turn the tide on the declines in species and habitats. From our members, volunteers and campaigners, to farmers and local authorities, if we all work towards nature's recovery, we can see a genuine and sustained reversal in the fortunes of wildlife.

The Trust cannot turn the tide for wildlife alone and over the coming months we will be laying out the challenge to our partner organisations to see how they can support our vision of a *Wilder Herts & Middlesex*. We will share our vision and goals for the coming decade in the spring edition of *Wildlife Matters*.

Looking outside our local area, the UK is hosting the United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP26) in Glasgow this autumn. This conference is a real opportunity for the UK Government to commit to action. The future of wildlife is inextricably linked to addressing the climate crisis and we will be calling on our local decision-makers to take action too.

Wildlife has an intrinsic place on the planet, but a healthy natural environment is vital for people too. Imagine you are spoilt for choice in where to go to see clouds of butterflies, flocks of lapwings wheeling in the air, and meadows alive with the sound of grasshoppers. Imagine that children choose to go for a wildlife walks, gardens are humming with bees, and birdsong fills our early mornings. That's my vision for our area.

Thank you so much for caring about wildlife and supporting the Trust. I hope that you continue along this journey for nature's recovery with us over the coming years.

Lesley

Lesley Davies
Chief Executive

Cover: Wild Snaps competition winner!
Jumping spider © Will Jobbins



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Wild News

Nominations collected to create a Wilder St Albans

We asked for your nominations to make spaces in St Albans wilder, and you spoke loud and clear.

Wilder St Albans is a project led by the Trust and delivered in partnership with St Albans City and District and Council.

The wilder spaces initiative encouraged residents across the St Albans District to nominate potential sites which could be left to grow in spring and summer to allow wildflowers, bugs and invertebrates to thrive. Suggestions could include 'greens' in cul-de-sacs, footpaths, verges and areas in local green spaces. We've received over 120 submissions for the wilder spaces initiative.

Nominations were made on the Wilder St Albans webpage and will be reviewed over the coming months and discussed with the relevant landowner. Thank you to everyone who nominated a wilder space, we will let you know by the end of this year if your patch will become wilder in 2022. Wilder Spaces nominations will reopen again next summer.



FIND OUT MORE

Online

Find ways to make your home, gardens and grounds wild and wonderful on the Wilder St Albans web page at hertswildlifetrust.org.uk/wilderstalbans

A noble discovery

The noble chafer beetle was recorded in Hertfordshire for the first time at Dunsley Orchard, near Tring.

Martin Hicks, ecologist and expert on orchards, owns Dunsley orchard, a Local Wildlife Site.

On 21 July Martin found a noble chafer after a pheromone lure was set out in the orchard, as part of a survey led by the People's Trust for Endangered Species.

Often confused for its lookalike, the rose chafer, this sighting of a noble chafer is the first in Hertfordshire. The beetle is classified as 'vulnerable' in the UK and faces extinction due to their populations being isolated from one another, usually found in traditional orchards and wood pastures. The beetle is a bronze-green with white speckles and can be found in traditional orchards like Dunsley. The larvae live in decaying trees for around three years before developing into adults.

Martin said, "The orchard has been subject to regular pruning courses for last ten years, which are maintaining the longevity of the old and more recent trees, as well as ensuring standing and fallen deadwood is left, which is what these beetles need."



HARRY GREEN



FIND OUT MORE

Online

Read about the noble chafer on The Wildlife Trusts website at wildlifetrusts.org/wildlife-explorer/invertebrates/beetles/noble-chafer



PETER FINNEY

Lively Lemsford Springs

We've seen some brilliant recordings at Lemsford Springs over the summer, including the first greenshank recorded on the site in the last 50 years.

And that's not all. A speedy sandpiper travelled all the way from Lemsford Springs to Santander, Spain, in just one day! Trust warden for Lemsford Springs, Barry Trevis, spotted the ringed-bird on 23 August at 4pm, and later received an email from Juan Manuel Pérez noting a sighting of the same bird in Las Llamas, northern Spain, the next day at around 6pm. This means the bird travelled 963km from Lemsford to Las Llamas within 26.5 hours!

Warden of Lemsford Springs, Barry Trevis said:

"After ringing and studying the Lemsford Springs Green Sandpipers for 38 years, it was very exciting to have a report of only our second-ever bird migrating south, and the first ever as far as Spain. Also, the speed at which it travelled the 600 miles was very impressive. Although the time between the two sightings was twenty-six and a half hours, we know from the timing taken from our satellite tracking of ten of them to their breeding grounds in Scandinavia that the bird that went to Santander was likely to have left Lemsford later on that day, probably at night, and was likely to have arrived in Santander much earlier than the early evening sighting there."

Green Recovery Challenge Funding awarded to the Trust

Herts and Middlesex Wildlife Trust have been awarded a grant from the Government's £40 million second round of the Green Recovery Challenge Fund. The grant of nearly £200,000 has been awarded to support the Living Rivers and water vole projects to continue to run until March 2023.



FIND OUT MORE

Online

Read the full story at www.hertswildlifetrust.org.uk/news

Hello to our new Trustees!

Officially welcomed to the Trust at our recent Annual General Meeting (AGM) in September, we are delighted to introduce Lisa Clavering, Laura Horton and Louise Turner to our board of Trustees.

Lisa Clavering is a consultant working in the charity sector, specialising in digital engagement and fundraising. Lisa's interest in the local wildlife sector stepped up a gear in 2021 when she became a proud frog "mum" after creating a tiny garden wildlife pond. She has big ambitions to help grow the reach of the Trust's work in the local community, especially among school-aged children.

Laura Horton has worked in the charity sector for over 10 years in human resources and operations roles. She is currently Senior Head of Operations at The Prince's Trust where her team help support young people into roles in the health and social care sector. Having lived in Hertfordshire and Barnet most of her life, she's passionate about our local wildlife and nature reserves.

Louise Turner is a television producer and journalist driving Channel 4 News' environmental coverage, with a particular focus on highlighting the biodiversity crisis we face. Louise also runs the Film Fund, commissioning filmmakers from around the world to produce features that appear within the nightly news. Raising awareness of the many threats to nature is what drives Louise both at work and in taking on the role of Trustee.

A warm farewell to Amy Jankiewicz and Paul Knutson who are leaving our Trustee board after two and thirteen years of service respectively, thank you for all of your dedication to the Trust.

Water voles are back on the Ver

In August, we partnered with the Ver Valley Society and landowners in St Albans to reintroduce 150 water voles to a stretch of the River Ver.

Water voles were once abundant in rivers throughout Hertfordshire, but populations have declined by over 90% in the last 50 years due to habitat loss and through predation by American mink, an invasive, non-native species. Water voles are the fastest declining mammal in the country and face extinction. Increases in the population have only been noted in recent years where habitats have been improved or through carefully planned reintroduction programmes.

This reintroduction was made possible through generous funding from the Debs Foundation, Linder Foundation and Affinity Water, we are so grateful for their support.



FIND OUT MORE

Online

Read more about the reintroduction of water voles to the River Ver and how the Trust deliver species reintroductions on page 8, or by visiting our website at hertswildlifetrust.org/news/watervoles



PAUL THRUSH

Did you catch our AGM?

Our Annual General Meeting was held on the 18 September this year, where we invited members to attend and discuss the Trust's progress made over the last year and formally introduce our new Trustees.



FIND OUT MORE

Online

If you couldn't make the AGM this year, you can watch a recording of the event at <https://my.demio.com/recording/orfhZwe>

UK NEWS

We can't COP-out on nature

Nature has a vital role in combating the climate crisis



This November, world leaders are gathering in Glasgow to discuss action to tackle the climate emergency. The 26th UN Climate Change Conference of the Parties, known as COP26, will bring together more than 190 world leaders and tens of thousands of representatives to find solutions to the worsening crisis. Countries will set out their latest plans to reduce emissions and attempt to limit global warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius, as well as adaptation plans for the changes that are now inevitable.

There is a sense of urgency around this conference, with the effects of current warming becoming increasingly evident, from record temperatures and widespread wildfires to an increase in episodes of very heavy rainfall and flooding. Changes to the climate are not just dangerous for people, but are also threatening wildlife, including here in the UK. In the run-up to COP26, The Wildlife Trusts have been working hard to raise awareness of the connection between nature and climate, and to encourage Government to take ambitious actions that focus on the restoration of nature, as well as a reduction in emissions and improved resilience.

Nature must be at the heart of action on climate. Healthy natural landscapes can take in carbon and store it, whilst damaged habitats often release even more carbon into the atmosphere. Only

by integrating climate action with nature's recovery can we achieve a net zero (where the amount of greenhouse gases emitted balances with the amount taken out of the atmosphere), climate resilient UK where nature is thriving, by 2050. We need all of our national policies to be contributing to nature's restoration, not degrading it further; this includes affording better protection to the wild places we already have, such as upgrading Marine Protected Areas to Highly Protected Marine Areas, and designating new sites to create more space for nature.

Our 30 by 30 vision, which would see the UK restoring at least 30% of land and sea for nature by 2030, is a minimum requirement for nature's recovery and depends on commitment and funding from the UK's governments. Nature can't thrive in fractured pockets, we need to think bigger and link up our wild places.

However, it's not just the UK governments that need to act. We can't achieve nature's recovery without wide support, which is why The Wildlife Trusts are so passionate about empowering people to take action. We want to see a wildlife-rich natural world at the heart of everybody's education and learning journey, inspiring a connection to nature that lasts a lifetime.

To help teachers inspire students about the habitats that can help combat

Among other asks, The Wildlife Trusts are calling on Government to:

- Reform the planning system so that it helps to address the nature emergency, by establishing Nature Recovery Networks and creating a new Wildbelt designation that protects land that is being restored for nature.
- Sustainable land use practices are adequately incentivised through the new Environmental Land Management schemes to allow UK agriculture to significantly contribute to meeting net zero targets and 30% of land in recovery for nature.

the climate emergency, we recently launched a new climate education tool for Key Stage Two, Nature's Climate Heroes. Not only is it packed with information, it also provides students with positive action to take, so that they can make their own contribution to tackling the issue. For those out of the school room, we've also created some advice pages, about actions you can take in your own life. Together, we can ensure a wilder future — and to find out how you can play your part visit [wildlifetrusts.org/taking-climate-action](https://www.wildlifetrusts.org/taking-climate-action)

Big vision, high ambition – a year of progress

This September marked the first anniversary of 30 by 30, our vision for 30% of land and sea to be restored for nature by 2030. In the past year we've launched some inspirational projects to restore land for nature, from saving meadows for mountain pansies in Shropshire to restoring rhos pasture in Radnorshire — marshy grasslands home to rare butterflies, curlew and snipe. Thanks to your generous support, we will continue to bring nature back across the UK — to link up wild places and protect and repair others. Our latest projects include securing more land for nature in Somerset's Avalon Marshes, an internationally important wetland landscape home to waders, wildfowl, and rare insects

and plants, and establishing England's first large-scale community rewilding project, on 170 hectares of land near Bere Regis, Dorset.

Discover more of our 30 by 30 projects at [wildlifetrusts.org/30-30-30](https://www.wildlifetrusts.org/30-30-30)



SUNFLOWER © MATTHEW ROBERTS, WHITING INSIDE OF JELLYFISH © IAN WATKIN & CORNWALL WILDLIFE TRUST, SNIBE © ANDY ROUSE/2020VISION



Vine House Farm grow over 100 acres of sunflowers

Sunflower power

Birdfood suppliers, Vine House Farm has generated £2 million to support the conservation work of The Wildlife Trusts. For the past 14 years, The Wildlife Trusts have been in partnership with the wildlife friendly farm in Lincolnshire, with a percentage of each purchase of their bird seed going to local Wildlife Trusts and helping wildlife across the UK. This year saw the

contribution pass the impressive milestone, with the Covid-19 pandemic prompting more people than ever to purchase food for their garden birds. Vine House Farm grows 400 acres of bird seed crops, including the ever-popular sunflower seeds, as well as being a haven for wildlife in itself, with a thriving population of tree sparrows and other farmland birds.

UK HIGHLIGHTS

Discover how The Wildlife Trusts are helping wildlife across the UK



1 Great news for gulls

Gull chicks have fledged at South Walney nature reserve for the first time since 2015, thanks to a new predator-proof fence. Since 2017, no chicks have survived longer than a week, but this summer Cumbria Wildlife Trust recorded over 100 large and healthy chicks of lesser black-backed gulls and herring gulls — a red-listed and declining species.

2 Tadpole triumphs

The northern pool frog has been successfully reintroduced to Norfolk Wildlife Trust's Thompson Common, the last place it was recorded before its extinction in Britain in the 1990s. Since 2015, more than 1,000 pool frog tadpoles have been released on the site, with early indications promising that the frogs will form a self-sustaining population.



3 Jelly jeopardy

Cornwall Wildlife Trust supporter Ian Watkins spotted the unusual sight of a whiting trapped inside the bell of a compass jellyfish, whilst on a walk during National Marine Week. Juvenile fish often hide amongst jellyfish tentacles for protection from predators, but are occasionally stung and eaten.

Water voles are back on the River Ver

In August, the Trust released 150 water voles into the River Ver, just outside of St Albans. Working in partnership with the Ver Valley Society and local landowners, we were able to bring back a once abundant species to another river in Hertfordshire.

In the 1980s, water voles were a common sight for passers-by around waterways across the country. Now, only 10% of the former population survives in the UK. Such drastic declines have come about through habitat loss, water pollution and predation by invasive non-native American mink. American mink are highly effective predators and were brought over to the UK in the 1920s to supply the fur trade. They subsequently escaped, were released by animal rights activists and have spread across the country at a rapid rate, which has been detrimental to our native water vole population.

Bringing water voles back to our

waterways will support the restoration of natural processes to rivers across the UK. Water voles act as mini ecosystem engineers, they keep river banks in good condition by munching back vegetation and are a vital part of the animal food chain. In fact, so many predators enjoy the taste of water voles that they have been dubbed 'nature's chocolate biscuit' by conservationists – lots of species like eating them!

So, it is crucial that we see the return of water voles across rivers in Hertfordshire, for the benefit of our wetland habitats, the wildlife that lives there and to achieve a wilder future for the region.

Reintroducing water voles requires comprehensive planning to ensure the survival of the species once they have been reintroduced. Water Vole Officer, Josh Kalms, shares details about the planning and delivery of the Trust's latest reintroduction:

"To plan the water vole reintroduction, the first thing we did was find a suitable habitat. Whatever the species, for the reintroduction to be successful, the animals will need sufficient food, shelter and to be reasonably safe from predators. For water voles, suitable habitats are usually rivers with plenty of vegetation which allow the voles



MOVING WATER VOLES TO THEIR RELEASE PENS

to feed and hide from birds of prey and mammals which like to eat them. This is why we chose a particular 2km stretch of the River Ver just outside St Albans."

Josh continues, "After we located the habitat, we conducted surveys with volunteers to ensure the species would survive its reintroduction. We surveyed for the presence of American mink using mink-monitoring rafts and found that this stretch of the river was clear of the predator, making it a suitable place for the reintroduction.

Once the habitat had been identified and made safe, we sourced 150 water voles from a licenced breeder in Devon.

Then came the time to release the water voles into the river. Once the voles arrived at the location of the release, they were put into 30 groupings for 'soft release' pens, which were left at the side of the river so the animals could acclimatise to their new surroundings. This process took just under a week and involved modifying the pens using a baffle, which allowed the voles to come and go as they wanted. We also provided supplementary food – apples and carrots – for the voles throughout this period, to make the reintroduction as successful as possible. A few of the older voles were selected for what we call 'hard releases'. This simply involves releasing the voles straight into the river to make a home for themselves.

The final stage in a reintroduction is maintaining monitoring



DID YOU KNOW?



To monitor water vole reintroductions, conservations look for their uniquely shaped droppings which look like dark green tic tacs!

for mink and the voles themselves after the release. With the help of our trained volunteers, we will conduct regular surveys to record sightings or signs of the voles at the reintroduction site to evaluate the success of the reintroduction."



JOSH, WATER VOLE OFFICER

PETER WHITE

A huge thank you to our supporters

In the Trust's most recent reintroduction of water voles on the River Ver, funding was generously provided by The Debs Foundation, the Linder Foundation, and Affinity Water's Invasive Non Native Species (INNS) Out programme to source the voles from specialist breeders. We are so grateful to our funders for making this reintroduction possible. On the day of release, volunteers from the Ver Valley Society lent a helping hand to set the soft release pens up for the voles to live in before finally making a home on the river. Volunteers also put apples and carrots into the pens until the voles were released and will carry out monitoring in the years ahead.



GIAMPAOLO MASSERANO

The future starts here...

Over the next eight years, we want to deliver more reintroductions of water voles to see their return to every river in Hertfordshire. Reintroductions on this scale require partnership working with landowners, local river and wetland societies like the Ver Valley Society, and support from volunteers.

Do you share our passion for a wilder future in Hertfordshire and Middlesex? There are several ways you can act to support this vision:

1. Record and submit your sightings of water voles
2. Train to be a water vole surveyor
3. Are you a landowner? Get in touch with us about a waterway or wetland site which could be the perfect place for a water vole reintroduction
4. Sponsor a water vole



FIND OUT MORE

Online

Visit our brand-new water vole webpage at [hertswildlifetrust.org.uk/watervoies](https://www.hertswildlifetrust.org.uk/watervoies) to find out how you can support their conservation.

Days Out

NATURE RESERVES

1. Stockers Lake

Stockers is a beautiful lake in the Colne Valley, located just outside of Rickmansworth.

Away from the noise of the UK's capital city, this nature reserve is a space for people to connect with nature and for wildlife to thrive. Stocker's Lake is owned by Affinity Water and is one of the oldest gravel pits in the Colne Valley. Much of the gravel extracted from here in the 1920s and 30s contributed to development in the city, particularly the old Wembley Stadium. Since extraction ceased, the lake has filled with water which has created the nature reserve you find today, rich in wildlife.

Visit the reserve in the winter months to see wildfowl which have migrated from places

such as Russia, Iceland and Scandinavia.

As you travel around the reserve, you'll hear Cetti's warblers singing their melody from the reeds. Look to the northeast side of the reserve towards to the alder trees and you'll spot siskin – in the winter the site is filled with these wonderful finches.

Stockers Lake is a fantastic place for all to visit. Come along with the family and take the circular route around the reserve, or bring your binoculars and visit one of the hides on the south side of the lake.



AMY LEWIS

CETTI'S WARBLER



FIND OUT MORE

Online

Find out more at hertswildlifetrust.org.uk/nature-reserves/stockers-lake

Why now?

November through to February is a fantastic time of year to visit Stockers Lake and see the nationally important numbers of wintering birds.



Know before you go

RICKMANSWORTH, WD3 1NB

OPEN AT ALL TIMES
Cafe at nearby Bury Lake.

Wildlife to spot

Wigeon, gadwall, pochard, mallard and shoveler.

EMMA MATTHIAS

2. Rye Meads

Rye Meads is a site of special scientific interest (SSSI) for its diversity of habitat including grasslands, reedbeds and fen vegetation. Listen out for the reedbeds

rustling in the winds and immerse yourself in the tranquillity of this reserve. If you visit the reserve at dawn or dusk, you're in with a chance of seeing, or more likely hearing, otters

splashing about in the water. For a daytime visit with the family, follow the moorhen, kingfisher and otter trails to see which wildlife you can spot.



FIND OUT MORE

Online

Find out more at hertswildlifetrust.org.uk/nature-reserves/hertford-heath

Why now?

The acidic grasslands of Hertford Heath create a perfect environment for heather to grow in the winter and shroud the reserve in purple flowers.



Know before you go

HERTFORD, SG13 7PW

Please note that there is no official parking for this reserve but parking can be found on The Roundings near to The College Arms pub.

Wildlife to spot

Heather, heath bedstraw, tormentil and gorse, common frogs and toads, great crested newts.



CHARLOTTE HUSSEY

3. Hertford Heath

Hertford Heath is a beautiful site nestled just outside of Hertford. The reserve is split into two sections, The Roundings, a rare open heathland, and Goldingtons, a diverse woodland. The heathland section of the site is filled with hardy heather which blooms even in the harsh winter months. The northern part of the reserve is a wonderful woodland filled with hornbeam coppice and oak and birch trees. Visit this reserve early in the morning to catch the fresh winter air and refraction of sunlight through the trees.



FRIEDA RUMMENHOHL



FIND OUT MORE

Online

Find out more at hertswildlifetrust.org.uk/nature-reserves/rye-meats

Why now?

Visit Rye Meads at this time of year to see the winter wildlife on this ancient flood meadow such as wintering birds, otters and, if you are lucky, peregrine falcons.



Know before you go

HODDESDON, SG12 8JS

OPEN FROM 10AM TO 5PM EACH DAY.

Closed on Saturdays in November and between 24 – 27 December Christmas and Boxing day. Use the RSPB car park for a small fee and access the reserve through the RSPB turnstile from the Lee Valley Innings and from Rye Road.

Wildlife to spot

Green sandpiper, otter, peregrine falcon, snipe, teal.



Gulls just *wanna* have fun

Gulls are misunderstood by many as the nifty thieves of chips on beaches. The common phrase to describe these creatures, seagull, is actually an umbrella term for many gull species. There is really no such thing as a seagull. The gulls you commonly see around the coasts of Britain are usually herring gulls, with bright yellow beaks and a loud call.



Our area is a refuge to gulls during the roosting season: There are five species of gulls recorded across Hertfordshire and Middlesex. These are the great black-backed, lesser black-backed, herring, common and black-headed gulls.

In the past gulls only wintered in Herts and Middlesex, roosting on larger water bodies but black-headed gulls are now an established breeding bird and the number of breeding lesser black-backed gulls is increasing.

Gull roosts

Being witness to a gull roost is one of the most memorable of all wildlife spectacles. Gulls need somewhere safe to spend the night. They find night-time refuge on reservoirs and large water-filled gravel pits, spending the hours of darkness floating around on the water where predators are less able to reach them. In the depth of winter, they spend up to 14 hours bobbing about on the water roosting and as the initial glow of dawn appears they will take flight, leaving the water-filled gravel pit to head off to their favoured feeding areas – rubbish tips, arable fields and playing fields which may be over 30 miles from their roost. It's this morning flight which we see as we're leaving home, otherwise known as gull o'clock!

Gull o'clock

If you normally leave home as it's getting light in January, take a look skyward. Overhead there will be a scattering of gulls making their way purposefully to somewhere unknown to us. If you look up again anytime from 2pm onwards there will be gulls again, heading the other way. This is the ebb and flow of the gull tide.

One of the most interesting things about gull species is how long it can take to develop their adult plumage. Juvenile gulls across species can take up to two years to reach adult colourings, with the winter periods being integral to this development. There are notable differences between the first and second winters of juvenile gull species, which allows bird watchers and conservationists to note their life stage.

Here come the gulls

Five common species of gull to spot around Hertfordshire and Middlesex

1. Great black-backed

This species of gull is very large and has a powerful beak. Their plumage is black on the back, as the name suggests, and white on the belly in the summer.



3. Herring

Our frequent beach-visitor and chip thief! Herring gulls are pale grey on their backs and sharply white on their bellies. Look out for the white-spotted black tips on the edges of their wings.



2. Lesser black-backed

Similar to the great black-backed gull, lesser black-backed gulls are darker on the top and white on the belly. The two species can be difficult to tell apart. The key difference is that lesser black-backed gulls are more of a dark grey than black on their backs. This can be seen with a good pair of binoculars. Another difference is size, great black-backed gulls are larger and bulkier than most other gull species.



4. Common

The dainty looking cousin to our sturdier gull species, the common gull is smaller in size than the three previous gulls. They have a smaller, yellow beak and very similar colouring to the herring gull, with a pale grey top and a white underbelly and head. Common gulls also have white-spotted black tips on the edges of their wings.



5. Black-headed

The most common gull in our area. These are slightly more distinctive than our other gulls found locally, in summer bearing a dark brown head and red bills and legs. In winter their heads lose the dark hood, leaving just a small dark spot behind the eye, making them reasonably easy to distinguish from other species.

ILLUSTRATIONS ALAN HARRIS AND RICHARD ALAN

Wild Community

Find out how people have been champions for wildlife in Herts and Middlesex

Lolly's reading challenge

During the Summer term, the wonderful Lolly (7) decided she wanted to raise money to protect nature and wildlife.

She took on a challenge to read 100 books in less than two months and raised an incredible £115. Out of all the books she read, her favourite book was The Owl and the Pussycat, by Edward Lear. Well done Lolly – you're a superstar! This money will help us to protect local wildlife, including the hedgehogs that you love.



Jamymah's wild summer

Thank you so much to Jamymah (6) who fundraised a fantastic £300 over 30 Days Wild this year. Jamymah took part in a number of wild activities and raised awareness of local wildlife on her Facebook page. She even organised a litter pick after being disappointed that people would leave rubbish knowing it could hurt wildlife. We're incredibly grateful for all your hard work Jamymah!

Chess Valley Challenge

Thank you so much to everyone who joined the Chess Valley Challenge as part of Great Big Green Week. Walkers raised over a thousand pounds to help protect our local wildlife and wild places. The Trust's 10-mile sponsored walk, took place in partnership with Affinity Water and with funding from The Climate Coalition.



Take on a challenge

A challenge event is great way to get fit, have fun! Why not take on your own challenge and raise vital funds for wildlife?



ALICIA SANCTUARY



In memory of wildlife enthusiast: Ann Hirst-Smith

Ann was born in Inverness in 1945 into a Scottish family but spent her teenage years in South London. She pursued a career in journalism and lived in Muswell Hill until 1979 when she and her photographer husband Peter moved to a fairly isolated cottage on Northchurch common, Berkhamsted.

Living in Hertfordshire, surrounded by her cats and Labradors, she developed an enduring love of the countryside. She befriended the badgers, watched out for the deer and kept a well-stocked bird table. A keen gardener, Ann loved to cook from the produce grown in her extensive veggie patch.

Ann will be sadly missed by her family and friends, but their generous donations to the Trust will provide a lasting legacy reminding us of her love of wildlife and passion for nature.

In remembrance

We would like to thank Christopher Lake for kindly leaving a gift to the Trust in his wills. We are extremely grateful for his support over the years and for thoughtfully remembering the Trust in this special way.

Our thanks and condolences to the friends and family of Bruce Banks, Bernard Oak and Fred Aylott who kindly donated 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.



Donate

Could you leave a gift in your will for the Trust? Get in touch with us at fundraising@hmw.org.

Wild gifts

Our wildlife sponsorship packs and gift membership are great alternative gifts for a birthday or Christmas. Check these out at hertswildlifetrust.org.uk/shop



Reception class buzzing about bees

An enthusiastic reception class at St Michael's C of E primary school in Bishop's Stortford have been learning all about bees and how to protect them. They made clay bees, gift boxes and bee guides to raise an amazing £160! Thank you!



Donate

If these wonderful wildlife champions have inspired you to raise money too, please get in touch with Sarah in our Fundraising Team at fundraising@hmw.org.





Fabulous fungi

Fungi is a fantastic eco-warrior for wildlife. Many species of fungi are excellent recyclers and put back nutrients into soil, feeding the plants around them.

What you are looking at when you see fungi on woodland floors is actually the fruit-body which forms on top of a larger and much more complex mycelium, which lies underground. These fruiting bodies are called mushrooms.

There are many species of fungi which do not have large and visible fruit-bodies but are small, dark and appear like coverings of a cob-web. There are around 3000 species of the larger fungi with fruit-bodies in the UK which are more commonly known.

The fruiting fungi species which like to grow at this time of year love the rain and humid conditions of woodland floors in and around deadwood.

? Mushrooms can release up to 2.7 billion spores a day.

DID YOU KNOW?

Chris James from Hertfordshire and Bedfordshire Fungus Group helps us to identify some of the more common species you may spot when out on your woodland walks:

Fungi are often hard to identify and can be poisonous.

Rather than pick them, it's better to enjoy looking at what you find and leave them there for other wildlife to benefit from.

Five species of fungi to look out for

1 Sulphur tuft *Hypholoma fasciculare*

The caps are bright-lemon yellow and they have a black spore deposit. Usually found in clusters growing on stumps or fallen logs, they are an important decomposer of dead wood.



4 King alfred's cakes *Daldinia concentrica*

On dead trunks and branches of ash, look out for King Alfred's Cakes! After Alfred's Cakes, continue sentence as say 'which are round, hard blackish lumps without caps and stems of typical fungi species.



2 Oak bonnet *Mycena inclinata*

These have quite small and delicate beige caps attached to thin reddish stems. Always found on oak logs and stumps – again, several in a cluster.

3 Magpie fungus *Coprinopsis picacea*

This is one of the inkcap family and has a dark-brown, bell-shaped cap covered in patches of white on its veil. Look out for this species in beech woodlands.

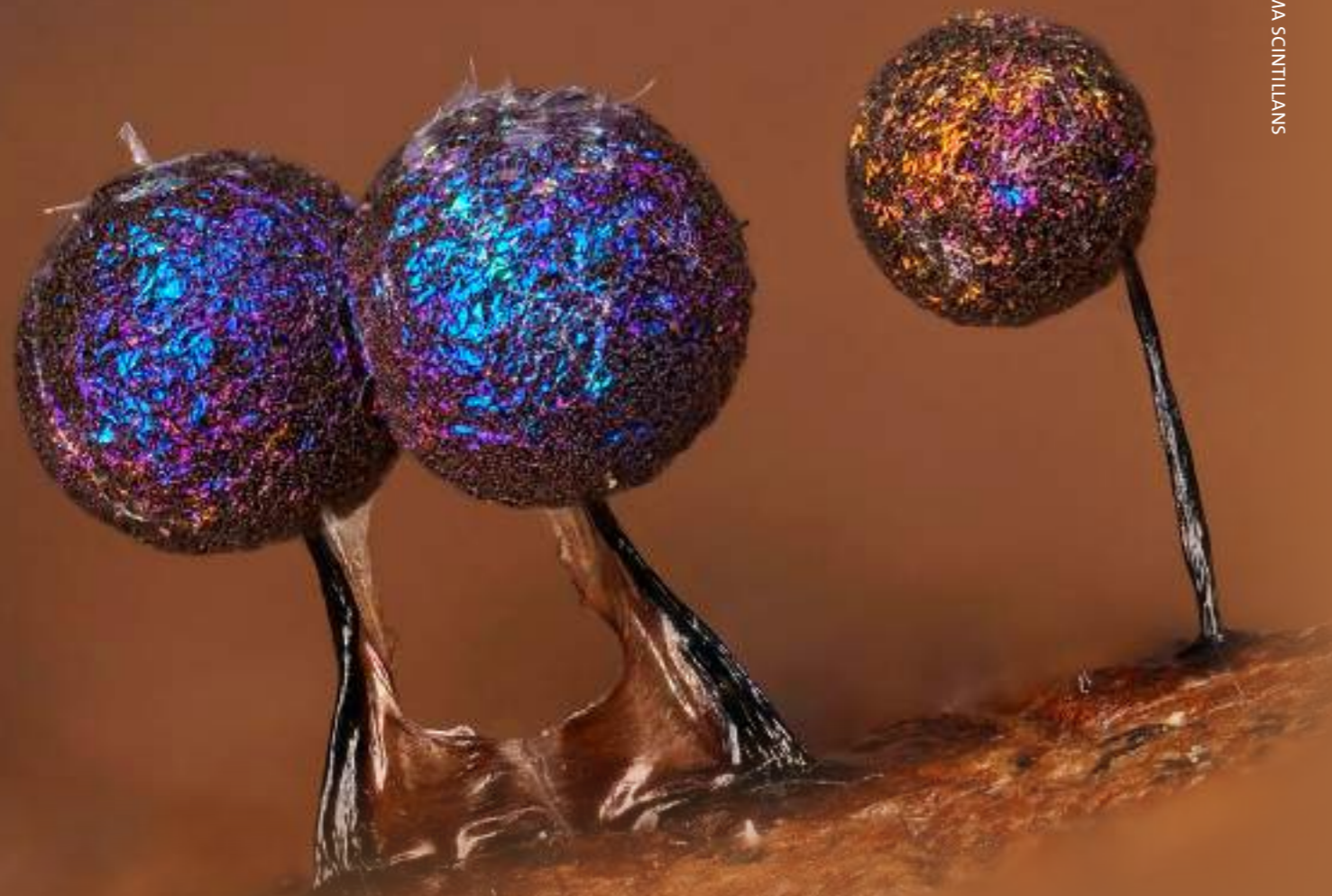


5 Turkey tails *Trametes versicolor*

A very common species, Turkey Tails is a thin multi-zoned bracket fungus found on stumps. Nearly always growing in tiers of brackets and resembling a turkey's tail. The edges of each bracket are whitish but the other zones will be shades of brown, becoming paler towards the outside edge.



If you are interested in learning more about fungi, join the Hertfordshire and Bedfordshire Fungus Group to go on trips with fungi experts and identify different species. Find the group online at hertfordshirefungusgroup.org



LAMPRODERMA SCINTILLANS

Weird and Wonderful Wildlife: Slime Moulds

Andy Sands, award-winning wildlife photographer who specialises in high-quality macro photography, dives into the world of slime moulds: single or grouped organisms which are absolutely fascinating.

Slime moulds have bizarre life cycles and shape shifting abilities, there aren't many life forms as weird as slime moulds.

The Myxomycetes, as they are collectively known, number around 850 species worldwide but this

number is growing as more research is undergone. They are not moulds nor fungi, not plants and not even animals, they are in fact protozoa. They spend most of their time as single celled amoeba in the soil, feeding on bacteria, before coming together in their millions to form a "supercell"

which moves around in a plasmodium feeding on fungi. Then, when the time is right, they reproduce and change into sporangia, tiny structures that look a bit like toadstools. The sporangia ripen and burst, releasing spores, some of which develop into amoebae, and then the cycle begins again.

COMATRICHA NIGRA



Slime moulds can appear wherever there is organic matter in wet conditions, usually a few days after rain is the best time to search. I can often be found with a torch and magnifying glass searching under rotten logs in my local woods. They make great photographic subjects for their rarity and often intricate structures which can be very colourful. Slime mould sporangia, unlike fungi, often form in evenly spaced groups or neat rows along the edge of a decaying leaf. This can add to the photographic composition and make photos look like miniature alien landscapes.

Fossil records show that slime moulds have been around, unchanged for a good 100 million years. The fact that you can find many species of slime mould pretty much anywhere on the planet is fascinating to me. I often spend months searching for slime moulds under dead logs in the woods local to my home. They were almost certainly around before the single landmass broke up into continents. They make up about 50% of microbial life in the soil, a good part of where most biodiversity is, beneath our feet. And yet, they are painstakingly difficult to find. There is a lot of research

into slime moulds at the moment. Scientists study them to work out how they have the ability to problem solve without a brain. Some species are able to learn, possess memory and can find the fastest route through a maze.

Photographing them is certainly a challenge as most sporangia range from around 1 to 3mm tall. I use a 60mm macro lens and extension tubes to capture the tiny sporangia. This feature takes a series of photographs moving the focus a tiny fraction between frames, these are then combined into a single image using specialist software at home. To photograph the individual sporangia, I mount a microscope objective to a special tube lens assembly and a specialist auto focus rail. This gives an image of around 30x life size and is usually done in the studio at home. This magnification requires around 250 images just to get 1mm of focus from front to back, a long process called focus stacking, the camera has to be moved just a few microns between images. The resulting pictures show detail that cannot be seen even with a strong magnifying glass.

?
DID YOU KNOW?

Some species of slime mould, such as Physarum polycephalum, can grow up to a centimetre a day in search of food.



STEMONITIS SPLENDENS



PHYSARUM LEUCOPHAEUM



LAMPRODERMA SCINTILLANS

Join Andy for an exploration of the macro smile moulds and fungi found on plants, trees and rotting wood in your garden and nearby local wild spaces. Discover a hidden world of tiny forests and beautiful shapes and colours from the comfort of your own home at this online event taking place on 2nd December at 8.00pm.



FIND OUT MORE

Online

Visit [hertswildlifetrust.org.uk/events](https://www.hertswildlifetrust.org.uk/events) for full listings and booking.

Wild Snaps

On World Photography Day, 19th August 2021, we launched our annual wildlife photography competition, *Wild Snaps*.

Amateur wildlife photographers around Hertfordshire and Middlesex entered their very best photos of wild species in the region. We received over 400 photos of wildlife and the top 30 were chosen for the final shortlist. Those top 30

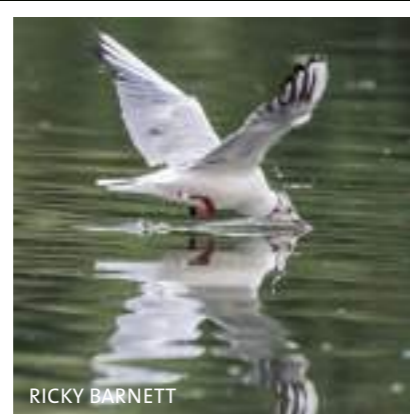
images were put to an open vote, for the public to decide a competition winner and two runners up. The public spoke loud and clear with over 1,800 votes being counted in total and the winners of *Wild Snaps* 2021 are...



WILL JOBBINS

Will Jobbins

1



RICKY BARNETT

Ricky Barnett

2



BARRY LOCKWOOD

Barry Lockwood

3



JULIA HAWKINS

Julia Hawkins

Taking part in Wild Snaps is a fantastic way to get outdoors and connect with wildlife. Julia Hawkins, shortlisted photographer to this year's competition, tells us what the experience meant to her:

"It was a friend of mine who suggested I submit a photo to this year's Wild Snaps competition and I'm so glad that she did. I was nervous at the prospect of entering a competition, however, as the saying goes, 'you've got to be in it to win it'. Also, in entering, I am able to promote the wonderful work of The Wildlife Trusts, particularly the Herts and Middlesex branch.

Being a keen birder, lover of wildlife and green spaces, I regularly visit reserves looked after by Herts and Middlesex Wildlife Trust, especially my local one at Oughtonhead. I appreciate the work done by all the volunteers to preserve these essential areas.

Four years ago, I took early retirement from teaching. I bought my first DSLR camera and I haven't looked back. I absolutely love taking photos, mostly of birds but have branched out to capture all manner of flora and fauna. I enjoy improving my photographic skills and looking at the results. I also share my photos on Instagram where I use them to promote a love of wildlife and, where possible, educate and encourage people to help the wildlife in their local patch and beyond.

It's been a real thrill to be shortlisted for Wild Snaps 2021. I've enjoyed looking at and admiring the work of my fellow finalists and all the support I've received both at home and via social media. I hope people enjoy my 'Robins' photograph, it was a beautiful and exciting moment that I felt blessed to witness."

With thanks to our sponsors, Opticron and Jet Black Squares.



ROBIN CLAYDON

Robin Claydon



JAMES BALL

James Ball



Find out more

We will be back

Next year there will be more opportunities to take glorious wildlife photos and win wonderful prizes. Keep an eye out for Wild Snaps 2022, launching on World Photography Day on 19 August.

You can see the top 30 shortlisted photos in this year's Wild Snaps competition. Visit hertswildlifetrust.org.uk/wildsnaps

Upcycle your garden for wildlife

Wildlife gardening needn't be expensive. There's nothing more rewarding than upcycling old, broken or unused household items into wildlife habitats for the garden.



Use hessian bags to grow bee-friendly plants
Many bee-friendly plants grow well in pots and hessian bags make excellent alternatives that you can pack away in winter. Choose drought-tolerant catmint, lavender and Mediterranean herbs like oregano and mint.


Tin can bee hotels
Fix an old tin can to a fence or wall and pack it with dried, hollow plant stems from 1mm to 12mm in diameter, to attract a range of solitary bees and wasps. Make sure the can overhangs the stems so they don't get wet.

Upcycling is a fantastic way to reduce the amount of waste sent to landfill, while saving you money, too. Who needs to buy expensive plant pots when there are old saucepans, wellington boots or even basins and toilets that can be used instead? Or how about making a pond from your old bath or kitchen sink?

There are no limits to what you can do with old, broken and unused items. Use your imagination to find creative ways to find new uses for forgotten possessions in the loft or shed. What can you use to make a cosy bird box for a blue tit or a refugia for slow worms? Do you have enough old bits of wood to knock up a hedgehog or bat box?

Whatever you choose, make sure you use materials safely and effectively. Upcycled gardens look fun, quirky and unique. They can make fantastic wildlife habitats, too.

Get more wildlife gardening tips on our website wildlifetrusts.org/actions



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

A teapot bird house
An old teapot can make the perfect nest site for a robin or wren. Hang it with the spout facing down, in a sheltered site away from cats and other predators.



Pallet herb garden
An upturned pallet can add height to your garden. You can paint it a nice colour and simply wedge plants in their pots between the slats.

Grow plants in saucepans
Drill holes in old saucepans and other kitchen containers to make plant pots. They're perfect for salad crops like lettuce and radish, plus herbs like chives and parsley.

Old sink pond
A Belfast sink or old baby bath make attractive mini container ponds, or sink a full-sized bath into the ground for a bigger pond. Pile up logs or stones to make sure wildlife can get in and out safely.

Plant tray bird bath
Fill an old plant pot tray with water to make a bird bath. Stand it on old bricks to raise it from the ground or leave it low to provide water for hedgehogs. Add a stone to help bees escape if they get stuck.

REBUGGING OUR HOMES



Several species of spider thrive in houses

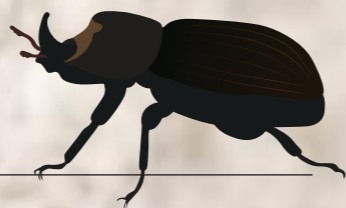
I've always loved bugs, from the ants in my garden to the huge rhinoceros beetles that wander our woodlands. Concerned by their alarming signs of decline, I've tried to share my love and encourage everyone to do what they can to help save them.

We can all benefit — humans and bugs alike — by rebugging our lives and homes; starting with how we think and view bugs, to how we eat, garden, what we buy and even how we talk about them.

Wildlife is all around us: it's not just out in the countryside, in woodlands or other remote wild places. It's in our towns, our gardens and even our homes! Here I explore — and celebrate — some of the tiniest housemates that have moved in with us, either permanently or just for a short stay (and that you might not even know about)...



Vicki Hird has been working on environment, food and farming issues for over 25 years. She explores more insect stories in her new book, *Rebugging the Planet: The Remarkable Things that Insects (and Other Invertebrates) Do — And Why We Need to Love Them More*



Sharing your space

Your home and garden can be wonderful places, and not just for you. Thousands of creatures, visible and hidden share these spaces with you. From the fly catching spiders sheltering in the corners of your bedroom, to the worms wriggling through your garden soil, the teeny pollinating wasps in your window box, and the cavity-nesting tree bumblebees tucked into a gap in your eaves. Not only do these creatures live peacefully and often unnoticed around you, but they also contribute much to your life. They are gardeners that help your flowers flourish, farmers that lend a hand with your home-grown veg, and bouncers that get rid of other less welcome house guests.



Eight-legged lodgers

Do you shudder with fear when you see a spider? It's worth giving that reaction a rethink, as these wonderfully diverse and useful creatures are very unlikely to harm you. You are a far bigger threat to them and if you can resist the urge to hurt them, that's a great start. Your home and garden provide cosy spaces for these handy housemates.

Spiders make great neighbours as they munch through huge volumes each year including ants, mosquitoes, cockroaches, aphids, flies, and even fleas. They are food too for your garden birds. Welcome the spiders with open arms (even if it is at arm's length!)



Nooks for nature

The cracks and crevices around our houses are hugely important for our bugs. They serve as everything from a nesting place for bees and wasps, to a lurking space for others. One species that may move in is a centipede. Centipedes, whilst harmless to us, use their huge jaws to feast on other bugs you won't want around like silverfish, carpet beetle larvae, and cockroaches. They will hide in cracks around your house, in drains and damp dark spaces. If you spot a centipede scurrying from its hiding place, take a close look as they are fascinating to watch.



The hidden underworld

Your garden soil is home to many more critters than worms. The soil, in which we grow most of our food, is created largely by the guts and jaws of worms, mites, springtails, termites, beetles and many more. If you can imagine the soil as a cooking recipe, the bugs basically do all the cutting, grating, mashing, grinding and, given their role in moving fungus and microbes about, they ensure fermentation happens too. They also help draw down air, water and nutrients; your flowers, grass and spuds would not grow without the huge array of hard-working hidden beasts beneath your feet.



HOUSE SPIDER © STEPHEN DALTON NATURE PL

IMAGES CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: TREE BUMBLEBEE © KIM TAYLOR NATURE PL; CELLAR SPIDER © VAUGHN MATTHEWS; GLOBULAR SPRINGTAIL, CENTIPEDE © ALEX HYDE NATURE PL

Your Wild
WINTER

Tim Hill, the Trust's Conservation Manager gives some ideas for going wild this winter in Hertfordshire and Middlesex.



Walk the chalk

By the end of the year, the landscape of the chalk in northern Hertfordshire is bare. Trees and hedgerows have lost their leaves and grasslands have become flattened by the early winter frosts.

Autumn-sown fields are grey, the underlying white rock diluting the soft brown of the soils. In places the fields look frayed, the chalk spilling through where the soil is thin. Patches of woodland punctuate the rolling fields and it is here that herds of fallow deer seek quiet refuge during the day. Our fallow deer are most probably the descendants of animals introduced to England by the Normans in the 11th century. Deer parks became popular in mediaeval times and animals which escaped these confines established the groups of wild deer we see today. Unless disturbed they rarely stray from the woods but like us, on blue sky days they can be seen sunbathing, on the woodland edge, making the most of any warmth in the short winter days. Occasionally however, they are scared into open country and will stampede, steam drifting from the herd, until they feel secure again. Deer are pack creatures and there is a strong social hierarchy within the groups. The matriarch normally leads

the group with a string of different aged individuals following closely behind. In the Therfield area my favourite vantage point is looking east from Coombe Road. It can be bitterly cold here, with no cover to soften the easterly winds, so prepare well with a flask of hot drink, plenty of provisions and wrap up warmly – the more layers the better! Take your binoculars and a telescope if you have one, and scan slowly across the fields. If you don't see the deer you may have the consolation of spotting a hare hunkered down in its form, waiting for spring, waiting, just waiting. If you're very lucky you may also glimpse our smallest bird of prey, the merlin, dashing low across the fields in pursuit of a meadow pipit. It's also worth looking at every fence post – merlins spend much of the day perched, hunched low against the wind. Merlins don't breed locally, arriving in autumn from their breeding grounds on the uplands of northern Britain.

An alternative place to search for fallow deer in the north of the county and not far from Therfield, is Hawkin's Wood near Dane End. The wood is best approached via the Kelshall Lane footpath. From the track, look towards the wood and the deer are often laying or standing in the fields adjacent to the trees. Whilst the north of the county remains the stronghold, fallows are now being seen further south. Whilst driving past Stocking Springs Wood I have seen small groups crossing the road, slipping silently out of and then back into the hedgerows, like ghosts.

SPECIES SPOTLIGHT

A Wetland Wonderland

In 2000 the Lea Valley was designated as a 'Special Protection Area' - recognised as being internationally important because of the numbers of gadwall and shoveler, which winter in its wetlands along with important numbers of bitterns.

For 25 miles, from Ware in Hertfordshire to its confluence with the River Thames, the Lea Valley is dominated by water-filled, former gravel pits and water supply reservoirs. With more open water than the Norfolk Broads it's no wonder that wildfowl flock to seek refuge here.

January is a great time to go looking for these birds of the wetlands.

At a distance, drake gadwall look plain grey but get close and their plumage is vermiculated - a stunning wavy mixture of black and pale brown stripes. Gadwall are vegetarians, reliant on a variety of water plants. One of my favourite names for them is the coot-mugger – a colloquialism for their klepto-parasitic behaviour of hanging around with coots, watching them diving for water weed and then stealing it from them as they bring it to the surface.

Shoveler are our largest ducks weighing about the same as three large apples. On the water they look squat but the giveaway identifying feature is their large shovel-like bill. Up-close the bill has comb-like structure along its side. The shoveler is what's known as a dabbling duck,

feeding in shallow water, taking mouthfuls of water then squeezing it through these combs which trap food items such as small invertebrates and seeds which it then swallows.

Of all our wintering birds, the bittern is definitely the trickiest species to spot. This is a bird of reedbeds, its plumage of brown, cream and black giving it perfect camouflage amongst the dead leaves and stems. Feeding primarily on fish such as perch and rudd, it stalks the margins of reedbeds silently, slowly before snatching unwary fish with unexpected speed and violence - in the blink of an eye, victims are in the belly of the bittern. In recent years there have been two reliable places to see bitterns in Hertfordshire – Amwell and Marsworth Reservoir, both Trust reserves. With binoculars or a telescope, scour the edge of the reedbed where they meet open water and be patient...

3 species to spot



Drake gadwall



Shoveler



Bittern



See

Look closely at trees and the soil, seeking out buds and new shoots growing, waiting for spring to arrive before they burst forth!

Smell

Standing next to a hedge, close your eyes and take deep breaths through your nose try to identify every aroma you smell. If it's acrid and cloying you may be standing close to fox droppings.

Hear

As night settles listen to the rather mournful winter song of robins from lamp-posts as they establish and maintain their winter territories.

Feel

Get out early for a walk after snowfall and experience the crudge, crudge, crudge – creakiness of compacting millions of tiny ice crystals beneath each step.



Five ways to experience and enjoy winter

1. Watch the world come alive

Get into the garden or your nearest open space before it gets light and watch as birds come out of roost. I stand in awe of wrens, weighing just 10 grams, as they appear after a 14-hour night when temperatures may have been below freezing. Birds adopt many strategies to survive in winter. Some will seek out holes in trees or nesting boxes and roost communally, transforming themselves into a larger body whereby they share one another's body heat and benefit from a comparatively smaller surface area. Nature is truly extraordinary.

2. Listen to the ducks' chorus



TIM HILL

When you go out looking for ducks, stay on as dusk begins and listen to the wonderful chorus as the ducks call to one another. The chorus normally reaches a crescendo at sunset and then the wetlands normally fall silent about half an hour later.

3. Look up! Go outside as the sun sets, look up and listen watch birds as they fly to their nigh-time roosts. In my home town of Harpenden, from mid-afternoon the jackdaws gather, and after passing the time of day calling to one another from local rooftops, they fly off to local woods, 'jacking' as they go.

4. Get reddy

In our chalk rivers from November to January brown trout will be breeding. Try to find a river with bare gravel then look out for the commotion as female trout create their



ALEXANDER MUSTARD

'redds' – hollows which they create by wriggling their bodies into the substrate into which she lays her eggs. See if you can spot the males fighting it out to fertilise the eggs.

5. Every little helps, every big helps more!

Do five things to help turn around the nature crisis. If you have your own garden, winter is the time to plan ahead and increase the wildlife you will be able to experience and enjoy.

- **Plant a tree** – choose a native species such as rowan and both flowers and fruit will provide food your local insects and birds.
- **Create a pond** – no matter what size or shape, wetlands will help nature with the added bonus that you get to watch frogs, newts and dragonflies in due course.
- **Install and keep dead wood** in your garden, ideally some of it buried – many insect larvae live in and eat rotting wood, including the spectacular stag beetle.
- **Make a home for solitary bees** by drilling holes in a lump of wood – use an 8mm drill bit and go 10cm deep.
- **Diversify your garden** to ensure that you have flowers throughout the year – there are insects in need of food in every month. Do them a favour and provide them with food in the form of pollen and nectar – if you grow it, they will come!

UNSPLASH

Go wild from the comfort of your own home

Learn to Sketch Workshops

These monthly online sketching workshops continue to be hugely popular – grab your pencils and join in for a relaxing couple of hours sketching wildlife in the comfort of your home.

Learn to sketch birds of prey TUESDAY 23 NOVEMBER

Settle down with your sketch pad and pencils, and accompany us on an online tutorial on how to begin to observe and sketch birds. Local artist, Martin Gibbons, will show you how to sketch some of most magnificent birds in the sky, raptors.

Suitable for all ages, £5 suggested donation

Learn to sketch robins TUESDAY 14 DECEMBER

Nestle up indoors in chilly December for a Christmas-edition sketch workshop. Martin Gibbons will be demonstrating how to sketch robins from the basics of shape to layering with form, depth and finer details of this beloved garden bird.

Suitable for all ages,
£5 suggested donation



FIND OUT MORE

Online

Visit [hertswildlifetrust.org.uk/events](https://www.hertswildlifetrust.org.uk/events) for full listings and booking.

Give the Gift of Wildlife this Christmas

This year, why not gift someone a better future for wilder. We all know that one person who is impossible to shop for, giving a wild gift will support nature on your doorstep and give them the joy of knowing wildlife near them is being looked after.

There is so much to choose from inside our Christmas shop; from wildlife sponsorships to gift memberships and badger experiences, there is a wild gift for everyone.

Wildlife sponsorships

By sponsoring a local species such as hedgehog, barn owl or water vole you can help us create suitable habitats to protect our precious wildlife. Choose between our postal and digital packs. Psst... Our digital wildlife sponsorships are the perfect last-minute gift and will arrive straight in your inbox.

- Digital wildlife sponsorship | £15
- Postal wildlife sponsorship | £20



Gift membership

Give the gift that keeps on giving. Treat a loved one to their own membership of supporting the Trust for a whole year. With individual, family and joint memberships available, there is a gift membership for all your loved ones.



RUSSELL SAVORY

Individual membership | £42



RUSSELL SAVORY

Joint membership | £48



RUSSELL SAVORY

Family membership | £54



Badger watching experience

Give the gift of spending a magical evening watching badgers up close - a special night they'll be sure to remember!

Our comfortable hide nestles in the depths of an ancient orchard. As well as our resident badgers, foxes, owls and a variety of other wildlife spend time in the natural surroundings by the hide.

Purchase a badger watching experience for £50 at hertswildlifetrust.org.uk/badgerwatching, but hurry, visits to our badger hide are very popular and sell out quickly.



FIND OUT MORE

Online

Explore the full range of Wild Gifts online at hertswildlifetrust.org.uk/shop or by scanning this QR code

