

## Ryburgh Wildlife Group April Newsletter

Well, what a few days that's been. In the past ten days we've had the equinox, the equinox, the clocks have gone forward and we survived the passing of asteroid 2023 DZ2.

Spring is definitely in the air. Besides the usual early celandines and primroses, I've seen carpets of red dead-nettle in flower and on the cliffs at Sheringham, thrift is already in flower. The first Chiffchaffs have started to call and other summer visitors have started to arrive. Although butterflies might still be a bit thin on the ground, bumblebees are definitely out and about. I had some fun watching two Collared Doves sitting on a fence courting each other. They sat alongside each other facing different directions, with the odd fanciful glance at each other, before they flew off to find a more secluded spot. Reminds me of those shy teenage glances.

In the last newsletter I asked about the similarities between wind turbines and snowdrops. Well, it isn't just me. Thank you to Gail who shared this with me.



<https://www.rbsnowdrops.co.uk/shop/p/galanthus-wind-turbine>

There has been much press coverage about water companies and sewage in our rivers. The i newspaper recently reported that in the Broads, just 3% of the Broadland rivers met good ecological status due to pollution from farm run off and sewage. We have come a long way from the 18<sup>th</sup> Century when some rivers like the Fleet in London were no more than open sewers with waste meat and dead dogs being thrown into it. Let's hope that public pressure will drive the improvements from the water companies that our rivers need.

On a disappointing note, the UK Government has again authorised the use of a toxic neonicotinoid (thiamethoxam) pesticide on sugar beet crops in England. There is an active petition to overturn this decision. If you would like to sign the petition this is the link to it.  
<https://petition.parliament.uk/petitions/631948>

I've just received my regular magazine from the Chartered Institute of Highways and Transportation and on a quick skim through it, I've found an interesting article about "green and blue infrastructure" as a way to mitigate climate change. I need to read it thoroughly so I can summarise it in next month's newsletter. It looks interesting though. Also hot off the press this morning I heard a piece on Radio 4's Today's programme where scientists have proven that when they analysed bramble flowers, moths were more effective pollinators than bees and other insects because the moths moved larger quantities of pollen between flowers. Who'd have thought that.

Looking ahead some dates for your diaries.

On **Easter Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> April 10.00am-12.30pm** there will be an Easter egg hunt in the community woodland. At the same time the regular community café will be going on in the Memorial Hall.

**Ryburgh Common walk** led by Ian Wilson on **Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> April 10.00am**. Meet at the Beet Pad at the far end of Highfield Lane. Please let me know if you plan to come along so we have some idea of numbers coming to the walk.

*The Common is an area of around 29 acres of mostly wet woodland plus a small heath. It is held in trust for the village by the Parish Council. It is of ecological importance and the Parish Council have let the land to the adjoining farmer, Mr John Savory, to maintain it to environmental standards prescribed by Natural England. There is a public path across the common which is frequently wet and muddy. In the summer there are briars and nettles. Wellingtons are recommended.*

*Parking is permitted on the concrete hard standing where the metalled Highfield Lane becomes a track alongside Highfield Farm. The track, which is a public footpath, continues for a kilometre to Starmoor Wood. At the entrance to this wood you will see a notice advising visitors as to the origin and extent of the Common. Further information about the Common can be found on the wildlife group's website.*

**Ryburgh Spring Show** on **Saturday 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2.00pm - 4.00pm**. We will have a table in the memorial hall with a display and there will be the opportunity to do some seedling and plant swapping. We do hope you will come along to this.

**Dawn chorus walk** led by Ian Wilson on **Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> May 4.00am**. Meet at the Memorial Hall. After the walk breakfast (minimum £5.00 donation) will be provided by Jane and Mike Rundle. Please let me know if you plan to come along so we have some idea of numbers coming to the walk and for breakfast.

Please note that we have chosen to start the walk earlier this year. This is because the bird song is best at dawn itself and not an hour or so later. I enjoyed last year's walk and I am looking forward to this year's one.

Looking slightly further ahead we will be a couple of events to celebrate the group's 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary. The first is a weekend of activities and a BBQ on June 10-11<sup>th</sup>, followed in November by an evening talk. Details of both these events are to follow.

David  
Membership Secretary