

Ryburgh Wildlife Group November Newsletter

The clocks have gone back and we are up to the third named storm of the year so we are definitely on the downward slope to Winter. Now's the time to keep an eye out for Winter visitors like Redwing, Fieldfare, Brambling and of course, geese. I've certainly heard and seen Pink-Footed Geese but had no luck with Brambling, Redwing or Fieldfare yet.

I know gulls are not everyone's cup of tea, but they can look really smart with their gleaming white and grey plumage. The British Trust for Ornithology is running a winter gull survey. If gulls are your thing and you fancy taking part, please use the link below to get more details.
<https://www.bto.org/our-science/projects/winter-gull-survey/taking-part>

Our newly installed bug hotel in Ryburgh has been positively commented on by a number of people. If you haven't seen it in situ, do try go and have a look. It really will help give a positive boost to the local insect pollinators. We are already planning a second bug hotel for the village, and are looking for material to fill it. If you have any dry fir cones, or spare bits of cane, do please bring it along to the community café in the village hall on the morning of Saturday 11th November.

If you are out and about do keep your eyes open for fungi. I was recently walking recently round the Kelling Heath area and came across a number of different fungi. These are just a few of the species we saw.



Photos by Julie Bunker

These ones on right reminded me of potatoes or kiwi fruit. The woodland floor was covered in them.



Photos by Julie Bunker

The camera can sometimes lie. These pictures really don't convey the size of the fungi. The species on the left was about twelve inches tall and the one on the right was only about three inches tall.

If you are a fungi expert and can identify these, please let me know their names so I can share with the group.

Something else I found that I haven't seen for a while was a lovely colourful oak apple. Normally by the time the leaves have fallen and they become more visible they have gone brown. It reminds me of the "apple" in the marzipan fruits you get at Christmas.



Photo by Julie Bunker

Talking of fruit, Maxine Castleton, sent me this image of a hornet having a lovely feast on some fermenting grapes in her garden. Thank you Maxine. If anyone has something they would like to share with the group, please do send it to me and I will circulate it.



Photo Maxine Castleton

I'm afraid we are all too used to hearing bad news stories about wildlife and the environment. This is the link to the State of Nature Report 2023. As the report says, it was only possible through volunteers recording and monitoring wildlife. If you are interested in recording wildlife, it does contain contact details that you might find useful.

<https://stateofnature.org.uk/>

It's not all doom and gloom. I had to visit Swanton Novers recently and I saw that one of the landowners had planted a new roadside hedge for about ¼ of a mile to fill a gap between two existing hedges. The new hedge may take a few years to grow and connect with the other hedges, but you have to start somewhere, and wildlife will love it.

You may not have noticed it, but our website has temporarily disappeared. The committee discussed the idea of putting copies of these newsletters and committee meeting minutes on the website, so I went to have a look at it, and I found it wasn't there. We are on the case with the company that manages our website. Fingers crossed it should be back soon.

Dates for your 2023 diary:

Saturday 11th November

Community café in Ryburgh village hall – do please bring along any dry cones and pieces of cane for our next bug hotel.

Saturday 18th November

Barn Owls & Bumble Bees -The Wildlife of Ryburgh - A look through the seasons and the years" – illustrated talk by Steve Cale

Over the last 33 years Steve has lived in either Ryburgh or Colkirk, and during those years he has made a long-term study of the natural history of our area. Species have declined and others increased during that time, largely unseen by most humans, some very special creatures have come our way. Over the years Steve has been lucky enough to have photographed many of the animals and birds that have visited, or call our area home, and in his slideshow and talk, he will share with us something of this amazing hidden world.

The talk will be held in the village hall in Ryburgh starting from 7.30pm. Drinks and nibbles will be available in the hall from 7.15pm. There is no charge for this talk, but donations are always welcome.

This looks a fantastic evening so do come along if you can. Although there is no need to book, please let Gill Waldron or myself know if you plan to go, just so that we have some idea of the numbers to cater for. You'd hate to miss out on the last cheese straw!

As we close 2023 the committee is looking at events for next year. Some of the ideas being discussed include a wild goose walk, a quiz, a talk, and possibly a trip to Dersingham Bog.

More details to follow.

David

Membership Secretary