



Worcestershire Wildlife Trust



Scarlet tiger moth

Stourbridge & Hagley Local Group

Summer 2024 newsletter

Welcome to the summer newsletter

As I write it is mid-June and we have just arrived home from a three week break in Scotland. Apparently it has rained much more here than in the north so the growth in the garden during those three weeks is amazing.

During the first few days back at home I was quite surprised to record a ring-necked parakeet in the garden for my BTO Garden Bird Watch list. I know that Wendy Wilkins has seen them a few times when she has taken her dog, Maisie, for her daily walk.

A few members of our group volunteer on the Scarlet Tiger Project on the Roman Road/Sandy Lane. The project was set up to protect this day-flying moth and improve conditions for all wildlife. Our house is only a short distance from the Roman Road but I have only ever seen one scarlet tiger moth in our garden. Yesterday I saw a scarlet tiger moth in a nearby front garden, though.

Stourbridge & Hagley local group activities programme

August - December 2024

Walks

A Wordsley wander

Wednesday August 7th at 10.30 am
Join John Homer on a walk to explore his local patch, walking down to the River Stour in an area of the green belt under threat from development. Meet on the car park at King George V Park on Lawnswood Road Wordsley, almost opposite the Lawnswood Pub. Post code DY8 5NA.
OS explorer 219 Grid ref. 885871.

Talks

At St. Saviours Church Hall, Hagley. £3.

27th September at 7.30pm
Wildlife of Worcestershire in a time of change
a talk by Gary Farmer.

25th October at 7.30pm
All bugs bright and beautiful
a talk by Roger Umpelby.

22nd November at 7.30pm.
Wildlife and work at Upton Warren
a talk by Gordon Forrest.

For details of group events please visit the Trust's website at

www.worcestershirowildlifetrust.co.uk/whats-on

Looking back.....to 2011



Wendy Larmour sent me this photo recently of our group on the walk she led on May 13th 2011 looking at wood and the uses of wood around Bewdley. Wendy had arranged a visit to the grounds of a hotel to see a magnificent sweet chestnut tree. A plaque near the tree stated that 'The Tree Council in celebration of the golden jubilee of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II has designated the Bewdley Sweet Chestnut one of fifty Great British Trees in recognition of its place in the National Heritage June 2002'. The girth of the tree in 2003 was measured at 9.6 metres.

Avril Williams

Another good read

The Land of Maybe

A Faroe Islands Year by Tim Ecott

"Maybe we'll go fishing tomorrow - maybe we'll try and do a bit of haymaking - maybe we'll get married".

If you live in the Faroes everything is weather dependent! In fact, until I read this book, all I

knew about the Faroes was gained from childhood, listening to the BBC Radio shipping forecasts, which always ended: Fair Isle, Faroes, South East Iceland, and might warn of 'wind southeast backing northeast 4-6 becoming cyclonic 6-gale 8 later', so I pictured wild, stormy desolate lands.

Ecott spent a year living on the Faroes, of which 17 of the 18 islands are still inhabited and one island by eight generations of the same family. He tells of the beautiful, wild, harsh landscape, the cliffs teeming with seabirds and the seas with fish. He writes of close-knit communities, proud of their Viking heritage, with their own unique customs and language, and dependent on each other to be able to survive on subsistence farming and what nature provides. Everything is shared and nothing wasted.

Evocative and carefully observed, Ecott's accounts of important moments in the calendar of the islands are interspersed with descriptions of the progress of a pair of ravens, nesting on one of the cliffs and struggling to rear young. It is a challenging read too in that Ecott witnesses the traditional whale hunt and the capturing of seabirds for food.

This was a magical book that really captured my imagination so that I was reluctant to put it down. I got my copy from Stourbridge library but it is available in book shops too.

NB: You might enjoy browsing the internet for information about the BBC radio shipping forecast. It seems it has developed a cult following. There is information about its history, recordings of the haunting theme tune and renditions of the litany of the forecast by various celebrities such as John Prescott. Such fun!

Wendy Wilkins

Indications of spring

In 1736 Robert Marsham, the owner of an estate in Norfolk and the founding father of phenology, started to record the earliest appearance in spring of cuckoos, snowdrops, swallows and brimstone butterflies, in all a total of 27 indications of spring. He recorded these dates for the next 60 years and his descendants continued to record these events for the next 200 years. This built up an invaluable set of phenology records.

Even in our own gardens it is obvious that the earliest appearance of birds, flowers and other wildlife seems to be getting earlier as the years go by. We inherited a rhododendron bush when we moved into our house just over 50 years ago and missed its flowering for many years when we were away for spring bank holiday

week. This photo was taken on 21st April this year, over a month earlier than it used to be in flower.



Have you noticed this is your own garden? Please let me know.

Avril Williams

Penorchard Meadows update

In March the volunteers made a determined effort to rake as much of the debris left by the robo-flail before any re-growth made it impossible. April saw one group doing running repairs to fences, a second group checking the integrity of stock fences and removing vegetation that was hanging over the boundary. A third group was employed cutting back bramble regrowth. In May further checking of fences and repairs were carried out while another group carried out a random botanical survey in one of the new fields. For reasons beyond our control there was no work party in June.

As always, many thanks to the volunteers for all their hard work at Penorchard.

Ian Williams

Volunteer days at Penorchard Meadows

Work parties are held on Mondays 10am – 3pm on

August 5th September 2nd October 7th
November 4th December 2nd

Current volunteers will get an email giving details of our meeting place for each work party.

New volunteers should contact Andy Harris on andyh@worcestershireswildlifetrust.org. Bring lunch and a drink for mid-morning and for lunchtime if you are staying all day.

Volunteer days at Romsley Meadows

The volunteer days at Romsley Meadows are held on the third Monday of the month from 10am – 3pm on

August 19th September 16th October 21st
November 18th December 16th
