



Winter 2024 news

Talks galore

Our monthly indoor meetings got underway again in September, kicking off with a fascinating talk about whales and dolphins. It was amazing to learn just how many species can be found in UK waters but it was saddening to hear that some countries are still killing them.

Whales and dolphins were followed in October by something closer to home; we learnt about the creation of a wildlife garden for BBC Gardeners' World Live. As I write this newsletter, we are looking forward to a talk about birdwatching in Europe.

These were all fascinating and there's more to come! The list of talks for the rest of our 2024/25 programme are listed below. We were pleased to see so many people returning to the talks after the summer break and will hopefully see more of you at one of our talks - or our fun Christmas quiz - soon.

Gary Farmer

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Dates for your diary

We meet at 7.30pm on the second Wednesday of the month.

Talks cost just £3.00 per person.

Walks are free but donations are welcome.

Dec 11th: Christmas quiz

An informal evening with a fun quiz

Jan 8th: The art of beekeeping

Take a closer look at the life of a honeybee colony

Feb 12th: The return of the pine marten

Discover the amazing world of the pine marten

Mar 12th: The Heart of England Forest

Hear about the history, wildlife and aspirations of the forest on our doorstep

Apr 9th: Borneo - Land Below the Wind

Explore the wildlife paradise of Borneo

Where: Winyates Green Community Centre, Furze Lane, Winyates Green, B98 0SE
<https://rubiconleisure.co.uk/winyates-green-community-centre/>

Please keep check the events pages of the Trust's website for details of our talks and what's happening across the county www.worcswildlifetrust.co.uk/whats-on

From bats to birds *getting through winter*

We have no outdoor meetings planned as yet but one of our committee members attended a bat walk at Forge Mill Needle Museum and the surrounding Abbey Meadows recently.

The walk was led by Chris Sherlock from Brumbats and was accompanied by two of her colleagues. They shared their knowledge and enthusiasm with participants, as well as a number of bat detector devices. Several species were identified during the walk including common pipistrelle, soprano pipistrelle, noctule and brown long-eared bats. The noctule is the largest bat found in the UK, it is primarily a tree dweller and lives mainly in holes in trees including holes left by woodpeckers. Pipistrelles, on the other hand, are our smallest bats and more likely to be found around houses. People who took part in the walk were thrilled to learn about Redditch's brilliant bats.



As temperatures fall and day-length shortens, bats tuck themselves away and hibernate through the winter (and I have to say this has a certain amount of appeal). There are a few other mammals that do this, including hedgehogs and dormice, but did you know that there are also a great many insects that enter a kind of torpor to survive the cold conditions?

Peacock butterflies, herald moths and droneflies (a type of hoverfly), for instance, will enter abandoned bird boxes, sheds, cold outbuildings and cellars to hibernate. Many other species take shelter under leaf litter and under the flaking bark of dead trees. So try to leave piles of fallen leaves in your garden and stack pieces of deadwood to help insects through the winter. These small actions will help pollinators and other species beneficial to the garden. These will, in turn, provide food for birds.



On the subject of which, you should be noticing an increase in activity around bird feeders at this time of year, especially nuthatches, great and blue tits and a few goldfinches too. Make sure you keep your feeders topped up once you start to feed as the birds will become reliant on them. And always keep them clean as well as making sure your bird baths have fresh water to keep 'your' birds healthy.