

# Southeast Worcestershire Local Group

Winter newsletter 2024



**Worcestershire  
Wildlife Trust**

As summer passed into autumn many were asking “where have all the insects gone?” This year seems to have been particularly bad, which brought the question to the forefront of our minds. Buddleias that should have been full of red admirals, commas and small tortoiseshells were deserted. August ice creams were enjoyed without pestering wasps and so much more. The cold, wet spring undoubtedly had a detrimental effect on wildlife, particularly invertebrates, but the decline in numbers has been happening steadily and stealthily for many years. In his book *Moth Snowstorm*, the environmentalist and author Michael McCarthy remembers his father driving at night in the 1950s and having to use the windscreen wipers to clear so many insects. We can probably all recall splattered car grills of the past. But not now. The loss of so much wildlife has crept up on us and it is shocking, particularly for those of the older generation, to remember how things used to be.

Hopefully many of us are now aware of the current depletion in the nation’s wildlife and we should ensure we don’t sleepwalk into an even worse situation by recording nature in our own small corner of the country. The Trust’s own Wildlife Sightings project and the RSPB’s Big Garden Birdwatch are good examples of public engagement in nature. But we could each do more by regularly noting what we see in our gardens or in our woodlands and parks. There are county recorders for many of the wildlife families and by collating records sent to them they are able to identify changes in populations. The more records that are sent, the fuller the picture. So why not start by checking out [www.worcestershirowildlifetrust.co.uk](http://www.worcestershirowildlifetrust.co.uk) and don’t worry if you are unsure of the exact identification. There are always experts on hand to help.

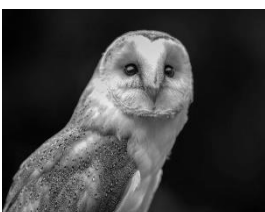
*John Boon*

## Midweek ambles

Our field meetings and ambles have proven to be very popular. Back in June, enthusiastic spotters identified Monkwood’s first purple emperor butterfly.



In August, bumper attendance at our Bats and Moths evening at Lower Smite Farm recorded multiple species including an oak eggar moth. Thanks to the Worcestershire Bat Group for their assistance.



In July, we spent an afternoon at Wick Care Farm. A relaxed family- friendly event, we were treated to an informative tour of the farm. Those attending were also afforded the opportunity to get up close to two of Britain’s most iconic birds – the barn owl, pictured right, and the kestrel. Many thanks to Tom Mickle for his hospitality.

Photos: Kevin Williams

## Autumn – winter programme

All talks take place at the Friends Meeting House, Cowl Street, Evesham WR11 4PN. Talks start at 7.30pm and cost £3. All are welcome, please do bring along friends and family.

**Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> November 2024** *(talk)*

**Johnny Birks – Pine Martens**

Johnny is a member of the Worcestershire Mammal Group and will talk to us about the recovery of pine martens in Britain, including their reintroduction into the Forest of Dean and the hope that they might one day spread back into Worcestershire.

**1<sup>st</sup> January 2025**

**New Year's Day Amble** *(walk)*

2pm at Avon Meadows, Pershore  
Why not start 2025 with an afternoon of wildlife spotting beside the Avon?  
Meet in the lower section of the Asda car park and bring your wellies.

**NOTE** If Avon Meadows is too wet we will adjourn to Tiddesley Wood, a short drive away.

**Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> January 2025**

**Roger Umpleby – A Year on Bredon Hill, a nature-lover's view** *(talk)*

The inclusion of Bredon Hill in the Cotswolds National Landscape is richly deserved. But we do sometimes take the constituent component parts of the landscape for granted. This extensively illustrated talk shows the beauty and the diversity of the flora and fauna found on Bredon Hill, mainly through the medium of macro photography.

**Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> February 2025**

**Terry Green from the Hedgehog Preservation Trust – Hedgehogs and How We can help them** *(talk)*

**Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> March 2025**

**Steve Bloomfield – Birds, Bats and Bricks** *(talk)*

Steve is the Trust's Senior Conservation Officer – Planning. Modern development is often vilified for its effects on wildlife and these can certainly be serious. However, Steve will explore the opportunities, as well as the risks, inherent in the planning system and consider why new building can also be a force for good.

**Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> April 2025**

**Wendy Carter – Spotting wildlife near you** *(talk)*

Worcestershire Wildlife Trust's Wendy Carter will take a closer look at some of our most common wildlife and explore why it's important to record, how easy it is to do so and what to spot in our gardens and while we're out and about across our beautiful county.

**Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> April**

**Midweek Ramble – River Avon, Evesham**

10 am at the far end of the upper car park of The Valley Shopping Centre, Twyford WR11 4DS

We will follow the Avon to the Worcestershire County Council-owned New Farm Nature Reserve. For more details of the site visit Roots in Time – Worcestershire Archive & Archaeology Service ([explorethepast.co.uk](http://explorethepast.co.uk))

The committee would like to thank everyone for their continued support for our events both indoor and out during the past year. We are still only a small committee so we would welcome anyone who would like to join us in planning and organising future meetings. If you would like to know more please contact either Nick; [nickrose01@btinternet.com](mailto:nickrose01@btinternet.com) or John; [john.boon13@gmail.com](mailto:john.boon13@gmail.com)