



# Wild Essex

## december nature news



### Wild Essex Diary

For more info or to book a place on any walk, email me at [jmgibson1959@btinternet.com](mailto:jmgibson1959@btinternet.com) or text 07503240387.

Let me know if you would like to keep in touch via our Whatsapp group.

### DECEMBER

Sunday 11th 7pm **TWO DAYS TO GO!**

**Free Zoom** presentation by Chris 'WILD ESSEX, THIS YEAR & NEXT'. A chance to revisit any walks you joined us on this year, or if you haven't been along with us yet, to give you a taste of what we get up to!

Join us using this link

<https://us05web.zoom.us/j/82541385697?pwd=cGh4Q1R1RVU3eVkrNGpjKzVqVW5Ldz09>

Meeting ID: 825 4138 5697  
Passcode: xN3EU0

### JANUARY 2023

Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> 2 - 3 pm

#### NEW YEAR PLANT HUNT

Come along on our **Free walk** to help us search for the wildflowers that are in bloom on this day. Results will be fed into the Botanical Society of the British Isles' database. Meet at Wivenhoe Jetty. Booking essential please!

[New Year Plant Hunt 2023 – Botanical Society of Britain & Ireland \(bsbi.org\)](https://www.bsbi.org/)

Monday 30<sup>th</sup> 11am - 12noon

#### TREE IDENTIFICATION FROM WINTER BARK AND BUDS.

How many do you know? Join us on King George's Field, Wivenhoe to find out! £5 per person. Local pubs within easy reach if anyone fancies a post-walk drink? Or lunch!

### FEBRUARY 2023

Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> 7pm

**Free Zoom** presentation by Chris 'GARDENING WITH WILDLIFE IN MIND'. Look out for the link in the January newsletter.



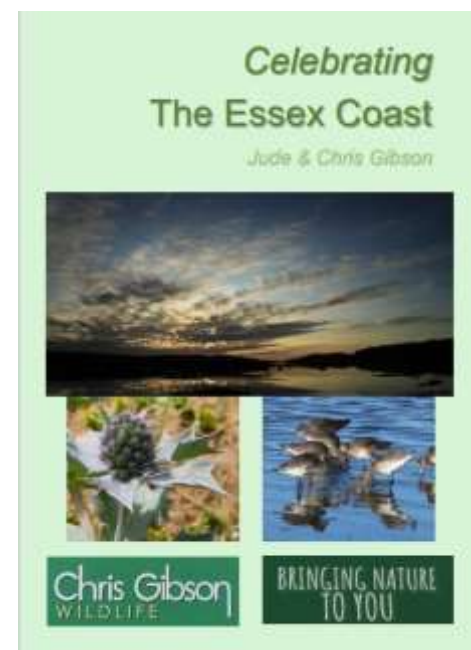
**MERRY CHRISTMAS TO YOU ALL FROM WILD ESSEX**

### Welcome....

.....to our December edition of Nature News.

Christmas and New Year mean different things to different people - and we hope that you all get to spend the festive season in ways that please you most, be it celebrating with family and friends, relaxing in front of the TV or walking in the tranquility that nature can offer all the year round. We hope to be doing a bit of everything!

If catching up with reading is also one of your Christmas pastimes (preferably with a glass of wine or at least chocolate?), then you may like to have a browse through these PDF versions of booklets about our beloved Essex Coast which Chris has written (with a bit of input from me). The first version is more a long read, the second mainly lovely photos. Take your pick.



[https://1drv.ms/b/s!ArJb8tGtNUkTIJ5YVs62wSn\\_9HEu2Q?e=cw40Ya](https://1drv.ms/b/s!ArJb8tGtNUkTIJ5YVs62wSn_9HEu2Q?e=cw40Ya)

<https://1drv.ms/b/s!ArJb8tGtNUkTIJ5Z2gE0ILgH3dxSw?e=ok0kZx>

### IN THE NEWS

Quite a long read, but interesting – make yourself a cuppa and settle down...

[Velcro, bullet trains and robotic arms: how nature is the mother of invention | Environment | The Guardian](https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2022/dec/05/velcro-bullet-trains-robotic-arms-nature-mother-invention)

Lots of varied events are planned for 2023! Including a Charity picnic, Bluebell walk, evening walks, birdwatching at Mistley Walls with pub lunch, plus a possible 'three day event' somewhere in Essex. We will keep you posted.

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## WHAT WE'VE BEEN UP TO

Nothing much on the WILD ESSEX front, apart from thinking about our programme for next year. All will be revealed in next month's 'issue'.

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**TALKS** Chris has a large repertoire of fully illustrated presentations, all suitable for giving to clubs, groups etc. [Talks | Chris Gibson Wildlife](#) Do get in touch if you would like more details.

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## BRINGING NATURE TO YOU

We would be very happy to discuss any ideas you may have for a tailor-made nature experience. Perhaps advice on Rewilding your garden, a moth trapping evening or bespoke walk with a group of friends. General cost £5 per hour per person, usual minimum group of 3 or £15 per hour.

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## HONEYGUIDE HOLIDAYS

Chris has regularly been a leader on these, thoroughly recommended, wildlife holidays for the past 30 years. Next year the following trips are up for grabs (not necessarily with our Chris included though!)

[Morocco](#) 14-21 March 2023.

[Extremadura](#) 14-22 March 2023.

[Crete](#) 11-19 April 2023.

[South of Salamanca](#) 3-11 May 2023.

[Corsica](#) 16 — 23 May 2023.

[Picos de Europa](#) 14-21 June 2023

FOR MORE INFO CLICK ON THE INDIVIDUAL LINKS OR CONTACT

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Views of Autumn from the south coast.

## CITIZEN SCIENCE

### WILDFLOWER HUNT NEW YEAR'S DAY

Join us for a spot of Citizen Science and come along on 1<sup>st</sup> Jan. See top left Page 1 for full details!

### RSPB GARDEN BIRDWATCH

Advanced warning – the annual RSPB birdwatch takes place 27-29 January 2023 [Big Garden Birdwatch | The RSPB](#). You can register from mid-December.

## GARDENING WITH WILDLIFE IN MIND

Be kind to ivy! Often maligned, but crucial for pollinators and birds, and photographers for seasonal photos. Also it is the source of inspiration for poets. We have been sent a beautiful poem 'Autumn Ball at the Old Ivy' by Anne Boileau. We particularly liked this verse, and if it has whetted your appetite see this link for the whole poem [https://1dvv.ms/w/s!ArJb8tGtNUkTIKBVOWhG40\\_A-vSIGQ?e=jf8TNH](https://1dvv.ms/w/s!ArJb8tGtNUkTIKBVOWhG40_A-vSIGQ?e=jf8TNH)

Bees with plump pollen sacks, bumble bees  
and little wasps; with agility they bounced  
from flower to flower, feasting on the nectar;  
and among these revellers, equals among equals,  
danced the flies; their thoraxes shone opalescent  
in the low October sun.



Ivy in all its glorious forms

'For the love of Ivy'...we aren't the only ones...remember the Mamas and Papas? [For The Love Of Ivy - YouTube](#) (guess not written about the *Hedera helix* though 😊)

## NATURE NOTES

Amused to hear of a starling, which entertained a friend on a family picnic on the other side of the Stour, as it hopped from wing-mirror to wing-mirror on each of the parked cars in turn. Unfortunately her camera was safely in the boot so no chance of a photo.

More interesting fungi this month. The *Clavulina* found during a work party in the local woods, and the purple beauty cropped up in Norfolk. This is probably an immature and rare Purple Coral, *Clavaria zollingeri*. Both lovely finds! Our WhatsApp group has been buzzing with lots of fungi pictures. Do sign up if you would like to be part of the action.



Two types of Coral Fungus.

## TRANSITION TOWN

Find out more about what you can do to help the environment locally by contacting Diane at [transwiv@gmail.com](mailto:transwiv@gmail.com) to receive her regular newsletter.

**DONATIONS in 2022**

As you know, we like to support a number of charities – Essex Wildlife Trust for example and of course Buglife ‘Saving small things which run the planet’ [Buglife | Help Buglife save the planet](#)

Thanks to money raised on our charity picnic, through sale of books and cards and generous donations from our group this year we have sent:

£50 to EWT

£400 to Buglife (including the purchase of 6m<sup>2</sup> of land for their B-Lines project [B-Lines - Buglife](#))

£120 to the Ukraine appeal



- 1. Smart **Western Conifer Seed bug** landed on a friend's bedroom carpet recently, originally a native of USA and introduced to Europe in 2007.
- 2. Two Male **Wigeons** from Wivenhoe West Quay.

**KEEPING IN TOUCH**

We are delighted that some of you have joined our WILD ESSEX Whatsapp group. It is a quick and easy way of sharing photos and observations. Just get in touch if you would like to be part of this.

**AND FINALLY...CHRISTMAS QUIZ...SPOT THE CREATURE!**

Email or text me your suggestions by end of December, and the first person out of the virtual hat with the most correct answers will win a 2-hour WILD ESSEX Walk to be taken in 2023.



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**PLEASE KEEP SENDING US YOUR PHOTOS AND NATURE NOTES!**

Special thanks this time to Val Appleyard, Polly Clarke, Helen Chambers, Clive Dykes, Sam Eagle and Sue Ward

**CONTACT US:-**

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