

Wild Essex

march nature news

Wild Essex Diary

For more info or to book a place on any walk, please email me at jmgibson1959@btinternet.com or text 07503240387.

Or you may like to keep in touch via our lively Whatsapp group for lots of shared photos and the way to find out about extra events.

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EVENTS FOR 2023

MARCH

Monday 27th 1.30 – 3.30 £10 per person MISTLEY BIRDS AND ESTUARY WALK

FULLY BOOKED



APRIL

Sunday 23rd 10 – 12 noon £10 per person BLUEBELL WALK – WIVENHOE WOODS Come and see the stunning display of bluebells and other woodland flora, and learn about their ecology.



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MAY

Thursday 11th 11.30 – 4pm £20 per person WRABNESS HALF-DAY EXPLORATION Sample some of the delights of this village – East Grove, House for Essex, Sand Martins, EWT Nature Reserve and much more! Bring your lunch. Hoping for less rain this year!



Welcome....

.....to our March edition of Nature News.

This is our special Spring edition — such an exciting time of the year with the promise of regrowth and renewal. We all need some positives at the moment! However, the temperature has been definitely on the chilly side and, using previous year's photos as comparison, many plants are not as advanced as oftentimes. Not good for invertebrates, nor for our feathered friends that rely on this valuable food source. Hoping for warmer times ahead...soon

Starting this time with your **NATURE NOTES.** Thanks to all of you who have been snapping away and sending us your photos, and for your wildlife recordings.

VERTEBRATES

Frogspawn starting to appear in local ponds, plus a garden fox in Brighton.





FLOWERS



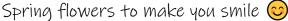




Primrose

Celandine Speedw

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SUMMARY OF FUTURE EVENTS – more info available on request

Sat June 3rd Moth morning at Beth Chattos (book directly with the garden)

Thur June 15th Hockley Woods Butterflies and more

Mon June 19th Sutton and Upper Hollesley Bay Heaths, Nightjars and more

Sat Jun 24th Moth morning at Beth Chattos (book directly with garden)

Wed June 28th Wivenhoe Evening event, Summer Social, Stag Night

Other events planned – Great Bentley Green, Bennison's Farm Nature walk, Lower Lodge Insect Inventory, Wrabness charity event, Brightlingsea walk and chips, Uni fungi, plus loads more....

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PLUS!!

WILDESSEX ON TOUR

Following our very successful group trip away last year to Burnham, we are planning a similar event, this time based in Old Harlow around the Stort Valley Way. Tues 26th Sept to Thurs 28th Sept. Organise own transport and accommodation. £50 per person for Chris' expertise and no extra charge for me!. JUST A COUPLE OF SPACES LEFT. Please get in touch asap if you would like further info.

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WHAT WE'VE BEEN UP TO

LOOKING FOR SIGNS OF SPRING – COCKAYNES NATURE RESERVE

Our annual visit to this special place. #WildEssex Walks – signs of Spring in Cockaynes Reserve | Chris Gibson Wildlife





'Snowflakes in plant form' - geometric patterns of Rue-leaved saxifrage

BIRDS

We have been told of a male Blackcap attracted by fat balls and half-apples along with a Coal Tit in an Essex garden; Blackbirds have been enjoying a bathe in Brighton and further afield Storks were seen displaying and clacking with their beaks, castanet-style, and re-establishing their nests.



Mrs Blackbird



White Stork

INVERTEBRATES



Red Admiral Butterfly



Green Shield Bug

Another in our occasional series 'EMILY'S WILDLIFE GARDEN'

Since moving to our house a year ago, we have been blessed with lots of wildlife in the garden including many birds and a family of hedgehogs. Last October we put out a hedgehog hotel/house and within a few weeks had a new resident. We provided recommended dust-free barley straw in a flowerpot and fed kitten crunchies nightly (there are recommended brands but it's best to check that the first ingredient is protein).

Despite minus temperatures we had visitors up until mid-January and then they disappeared for hibernation, but recently three of the six returned, including Nelson the one-eyed chap.

Our 'Nature Spy' camera has been brilliant, capturing such good footage.





Emily recommends that helping wildlife by feeding is a valuable support to them, but it is equally important to make sure your garden allows them to forage naturally, by leaving some fallen leaves, and untidy areas.

'Nature spy' camera <u>Projects - NatureSpy</u> a 100% not-for profit company who support wildlife projects around the world; dust-free barley straw from Wllcos; hedgehog house from Little Field Country Crafts.

ZOOM – GARDENING WITH WILDLIFE IN MIND. If you missed it here is the link...AVAILABLE UNTIL END OF MARCH.

https://1drv.ms/u/s!ArJb8tGtNUkTkoUi hAKRH1HJEBR5IQ?e=7PNWOg

TALKS

Chris has a large repertoire of fully illustrated presentations, all suitable for giving to clubs, groups etc, in person or by zoom. <u>Talks | Chris Gibson Wildlife</u> Do get in touch if you would like more details.

TRANSITION TOWN

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

CITIZEN SCIENCE UPDATE

Pleased to report Firebugs have been spotted on the base of a lime tree in Frating churchyard ©



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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.

This month liaising with Greater Anglia about sustainable planting in local railway stations.

BIRD OF THE MONTH

A familiar feathered friend.....



Chiffchaff Phylloscopus collybita

This small olive/brown warbler can be spotted from March flitting through trees and shrubs, waggling its tail as it goes, although you will probably first be alerted by its distinctive 'Chiff Chaff' song.

This migrant eats all manner of invertebrates and can be found in woodlands as well as parks and gardens. Most leave our shores in Sept/Oct but some overwinter.

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IN THE NEWS

Interesting but perplexing

https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2023/jan/19/light-pollution-rapidly-reducing-stars-visible-naked-eye-study-finds?CMP=Share AndroidApp Other

Hope for the future? <u>Turning problem sea algae into a replacement for plastic - BBC News</u>

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Our friend Joe has been in touch with updates on various writing projects he is involved with. We have more information we can forward to you if you are interested, but just for starters Rewilding Successes – Inspiring stories about nature's rebounding from all corners of the Earth (ecologicalcitizen.net) are uplifting stories about Rewilding around the globe. Our Chris wrote an article for Joe's Ecological Citizen a while back, which we would like to share with you. Rewilding-the-skeleton.pdf (chrisgibsonwildlife.co.uk)

Thanks to Jenny for her WRABNESS NATURE NEWS — 'SIGNS OF SPRING'
Two Stock Doves are courting on a nest-box gable — one bows low, tail high in the air. Emerald neck-patches sparkle in the sun.

On the river, a skittish male Merganser displays by sky-pointing, then, with red beak open, ducks his body down to make a U, just tail and head above the water. The female watches noncommittally, then dives.

Celandines gleam from damp ditches and there are Primroses beneath the Hawthorns.

BOOK CULL!!

We are sorting out our (rather large) book collection, so expect books to turn up regularly here....all Free to a Good Home (though of course should you wish to make a little donation to our charity of choice Buglife, Buglife | Help Buglife save the planet then don't let us stop you!). Collect from us in Lower Wivenhoe if possible, or we can bring along if you are attending one of our walks.

This time 'Insects of the Northern Hemisphere' by George McGavin. A good basic guide to the 'most commonly observed insect families occurring in North America and Eurasia'. If you'd like it, drop me a line.





NATURETREK WALKS

Chris has been involved in leading holidays, and day walks with this company for a number of years. You may be interested in this? (book directly with Naturetrek)

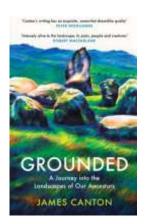
Wrabness 11 July <u>The Wild Side of Essex:</u> <u>Summer by the Stour Estuary (Day Trip) -</u> <u>Naturetrek</u>



AND FINALLY ...

'GROUNDED' the latest superb book by our friend James Canton. James Canton - Author of The Oak Papers

Some of you came along to the Q&A evening where James was in conversation with Chris in Wivenhoe, but if you didn't and haven't yet seen or read 'Grounded' then we thoroughly recommend it!



PLEASE KEEP SENDING US YOUR PHOTOS AND NATURE NOTES!

Special thanks this time to Val Appleyard, Jenny Coumbe, Sam Eagle, Nick Green, Joe Grey, George McKissock, Paul Peak, Emily Poyser-Beesley and Sue Ward

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Wild Essex -Bringing
Nature to You



The Mundon Oaks – chilling eh?

See The Mundon Oaks | Chris Gibson Wildlife