

Wild Essex



april nature news

Wild Essex Diary

For more info or to book a place on any walk, please email me at <u>imgibson1959@btinternet.com</u> or text 07503240387.

If WhatsApp is your thing you may like to join our group for lots of interesting photos and lively discussion. Just let me know your telephone number and I will add you.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS -

MONDAY 24TH JUNE from 8pm

SUMMER SOCIAL AND STAG NIGHT, WIVENHOE KGV

Enjoy a relaxed evening with other nature fans. We will arrange a couple of short walks then as dusk falls be on the lookout for Stag Beetles and Bats. Bring chairs and refreshments and we will make a night of it.

FREE but BOOKING ESSENTIAL PLEASE – in case the weather isn't

good and we can let you know should we have to cancel!





Lovely to see this Comma butterfly on the humble dandelion - such an important flower, and a timely reminder of the wildlife benefits of No Mow May! <u>Plantlife's No Mow May Movement</u>

Welcome....

.....to our April newsletter

What a wonderful few weeks it has been nature-wise! We are delighted to have received so many messages and emails from you, telling us about what you have seen/heard for the first time this year. Nightingales, Swallows, Cuckoos, House Martins; Peacock, Holly Blue, Brimstone and Tortoiseshell butterflies, along with Hummingbird Hawk moths. Bee-flies are appearing in lots of gardens as are Rose Chafer beetles.



(BOTH MAY AND JUNE 20TH WALKS FULLY BOOKED)

The amazing world of lichens. They form as a result of symbiosis between an alga and a fungus, and come in an amazing array of shapes, sizes and colours. For more photos of these most peculiar growth-forms see

<u>Lichenscapes – epitome of 'the world within' | Chris Gibson</u> <u>Wildlife</u>

BETH CHATTO'S GARDEN

'MEET THE NATURALIST'

FRIDAY 17TH MAY 11am - 1pm

Chris will be leading (weather permitting) some FREE wildlife walks around Beth Chatto's Garden (Elmstead Market) on the above date. (Please note entrance fee to

the garden still applies). No need to book. Meet at 11.00 or 12.00 outside the Visitor Information Centre.

'MARVELLOUS MOTHS'

SATURDAY 22ND JUNE AND 20TH JULY 9am – 11am Marvellous Moths! - Beth Chatto's Plants & Gardens (June) Marvellous Moths! - Beth Chatto's Plants & Gardens (July) Come and explore the insect life in this wonderful garden and see our moth trap (set overnight) opened. Have the first hour in the garden to ourselves!

\pounds 25 per person Book directly with the garden



This month we give a special shout out for **LOCAL NATURE RECOVERY INITIATIVES** – could you get involved?

WIVENHOE PLANT AND SEED SHARE – meet the team and swap plants/seeds outside WILLIAM LOVELESS HALL between 10am – 2pm ON 8th June. (see Facebook)

WIVENHOE GARDENING FOR NATURE – using simple, and money-saving ideas, i.e. avoiding pesticides and fertilizers, mowing less frequently; and by planting pollinator-friendly flowers you can encourage all manner of wildlife into your sanctuaries. (see Facebook)

WIVENHOE BIODIVERSITY GROUP – a council-led group helping to protect and increase local habitats for wildlife. For more info email Glyn or Mark (cllglyn.evans@wivenhoe.gov.uk or markhalladay1@outlook.com)

TRANSITION TOWN WIVENHOE – to receive an interesting newsletter full of ideas to help your local community, as well as the planet, contact <u>transwiv@gmail.com</u>.

WILDLIFE GARDEN – see what has been happening this month in your local wildlife garden. If you would like to join in with the next Wildlife Garden working party, email Stephen Novy <u>stephennovy@outlook.com</u>



NATURE NOTES

Thanks to everyone for your contributions this month, sorry we haven't been able to include all your photos...



Woodlice! Interesting little things working hard in your garden behind the scenes breaking down decaying

K. Samera M.

LOOKING AHEAD:-

THURSDAY 18^{TH} JULY 2.15 – 4.15, meet at Mistley Railway station

£10 per person

OLD KNOBBLY AND OTHER ANCIENT TREES, MISTLEY

A lovely walk taking in some historic woodland.

plant material. This superb photo illustrates

their way of moulting – shedding half their skin at a time. Bottom half first (leaving a rather ghostly white exoskeleton – centre). The one at the bottom left is clearly about to shed the top half too! Also, what do you call them? A survey showed over 250 local names <u>Slater or chucky pig? Survey charts different names for woodlice</u> -<u>BBC News</u>. Let us know what you call them! (Not sure if the censors will be after me but our family name for them was 'Willy Biters'...not sure quite why !)





Dark-edged bee-fly Rose Chafer beetle Common Mourning bee Insects which herald the Spring!

CITIZEN SCIENCE

Join the Natural History Museum's mass community science project investigating the impact of noise pollution on insects near roads.

Nature Overheard: Tune in to Your Streets | Natural History Museum (nhm.ac.uk)

WHAT WE'VE BEEN UP TO

COCKAYNES IN SPRING

<u>#WildEssexWalks: Cockaynes</u> <u>Reserve at the height of Spring | Chris</u> <u>Gibson Wildlife</u>



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> Subjects include 'Gardening with Wildlife in Mind'; 'The Wild side of Beth Chattos'; 'Creatures of the night' plus many others on topics concerning the coast, botany, invertebrates etc. Do get in touch if you would like more details.



Fungi! L. *Peniphora incarnata* growing on a dead tree locally. R. the 'Orange Brain fungus' is a parasitic jelly fungus which feeds off the *Peniphora* genus and often envelopes it completely. 'Big fleas have little fleas' etc....



Found in a Colchester garden: lizard or newt? It can be tricky, but things to look for in the newt (in this case a Smooth Newt) are the rounded snout, shorter fleshy toes and smooth (rather than scaly) skin, and its more sluggish movements.



NATURETREK

Join Chris at Hockley Woods to see the amazing Heath Fritillary Butterflies

<u>Heath Fritillaries - Hockley Woods,</u> <u>Essex (Day Trip) - Naturetrek</u>

14 June is the date most likely to run, unless there is a sudden run on 15th!

Know your Whites! Small, Large and Green-veined

PODCAST

An interesting listen about working land for nature <u>Deepdale Podcast - Jake Fiennes (Holkham) & Deepdale Hygge</u> <u>Soundscape - March 2024 (castbox.fm)</u>

BRINGING NATURE TO YOU

We would be very happy to discuss any ideas you may have for a tailormade 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 – TAKING A GROUP OF FRIENDS ON A WOODLAND WALK

POETRY

Many thanks to Berenice Tregenna for a beautiful poem about Oak Marble Galls. She was inspired on a WildEssex walk last summer and has kindly given us permission to reproduce it here. We include a couple of Chris' photos too.

Oak Marble Gall

on the twig proudly <u>sits</u> a perfect sphere

leaf bud compelled to <u>grow</u> and host a tiny egg hatched into wasp larva once warm within this wooden crib

a tell-tale hole at one end escape route from their oak <u>nursery</u> now they've <u>left</u> a brown bauble an empty nest on display

the wasp had a gall!

FUTURE EVENTS

Please let us know if you have any ideas of places you would like to visit on a WildEssex walk, or ideas for future free zoom sessions. We were wondering about doing a quiz at sometime...anyone interested?





AND FINALLY.....

..... LITTER

One of our pet hates, why do some people think it's OK to discard their rubbish any old where (what happened to 'take it home with you'?).

This article from EWT has horrifying statistics - 2.9 million small mammals get stuck in our rubbish every year !- a reason to get out there and litter picking! We've rather missed the boat for their targeted campaign, but it's never too late to start - just take a plastic bag (& gloves) with you on nature walks and send us a photo of what you find.

Join the fight against litter (b) (mailchi.mp)

PLEASE KEEP SENDING US YOUR PHOTOS AND NATURE NOTES!

Special thanks this time to all in our Whatsapp group for their interesting posts throughout the month plus Val Appleyard, Sally Chandler, Wendy Constance, Clare Kendrick-Robinson, George McKissock, Sue Minta and Berenice Tregenna

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