

Bringing people, wildlife and wellbeing together

## Nature Thoughts...

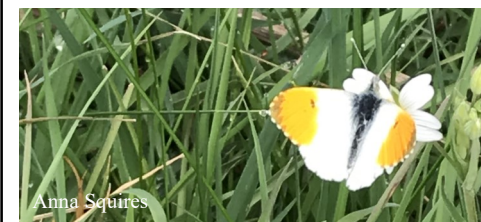
This week Kat, who works for Warwickshire Wildlife Trust (but is currently furloughed) shares her highs and lows of self isolation and a great idea we can all copy!

*"Last week was a hard week. There were no crises. No-one in my household became ill, nothing calamitous happened but as is so often the case there was no point looking for the cause. Maybe it was the extension of lockdown or the prospect of more homeschooling or perhaps it was because the sun wasn't shining as much. Whatever the reason we all felt it; there were tears, tantrums, anger, sadness, loneliness and the desire to be alone.*

*As is so often the case, I found solace in nature. I've been using my daily exercise mainly with my three children; getting them active and moving – bike rides, nature walks, rounders, frisbee and dropping letters at friends. Mixing it up and focusing on their mental health. This week I realised I needed to focus on me and find some balance. We have a busy, noisy house; which ordinarily I love but this week it suddenly felt inescapable. So I left it. On my own, walking straight towards the greenest, wildest, spaces on our doorstep. There's something about being surrounded by all those greens, different hues everywhere that's always brought me peace. At the minute it's no quieter than at home – there seems to be a cacophony of bird song throughout the day this spring, seemingly louder than normal without the human traffic but it was literally music to my ears!*

*I walked at my own pace, a treat in itself. Stopping when I wanted to, noticing new things and going fast when I felt the freedom of the more open landscape. I also took the opportunity to start to identify more of the wildlife around me; so much easier now plants and trees are lush in leaf. I found this great tree ID page really useful (which TEaM are sharing with you) and tested myself before 'checking' on a great free mobile phone app called 'SEEK'.*

*Spending the time to look, photograph and embed these new nature names in my memory helped to silence the other pressures of my world and brought me calm. After my first walk I started a nature diary at home and I've added to it gradually this week. It's given me sense of achievement and positivity at the end of each day when I record in the diary the new things I've found and where. For me there's a lot that's new; I've never felt the need for names before but I'm finding it interesting.*



*Next week I'm going to try(!) and add some watercolour pictures too. My highlights have been the Orange-Tipped butterfly which has been everywhere dancing in the floral Hawthorn along Whitnash Brook and the purple-flowered Ground-Ivy that I've admired for months and can finally name".*

This shows we all have good and bad days and weeks. Thanks to Kat for being so honest. I love the idea of a nature diary and will starting my own this week.

## Spot it!

If you're able to get out for a daily walk or run, keep making nature your focus.

You can also use your garden or look out from an open window to 'Spot it!'

Theme of the week...

### Pollinators

This is a busy old time for our bees as the nectar and pollen rich flowers of our fruiting trees are out and lots of other flowering species too—tempting our flying friends to land on them, get a refreshing nectar drink and a bit of pollen at the same time and then fly off!

But did you know that lots of other insects are pollinators too?

A Pollinator is ANY animal that helps to move pollen from one part of a flower to the other or between two flowers to 'pollinate' or fertilise it.

We tend to think of bees as the most common pollinator, carrying pollen from flower to flower, fertilizing those flowers and making them produce their fruit or seed. It's that process that makes our apples, strawberries, plums—in fact 1/3 of what we eat has been pollinated by these little helpers!

So in fact lots of species of bee, moth, butterfly, hoverfly, fly and beetle pollinate plants too!

So when you see these busy little insects too-ing and fro-ing between plants or when they buzz around your head, watch them, see if you can see small grains of pollen on them, look at how they visit different flowers. And be grateful that they are so busy and doing such a fab job—as they help give us lots of the food we love!

You can find out more here:

<https://www.wildlifetrusts.org/wildlife-and-wild-places/saving-species/save-bees-and-pollinators>



# WILD-WORDSEARCH!

## Butterflies



Extra challenge... Find the two other hidden words that hint at next week's puzzle!

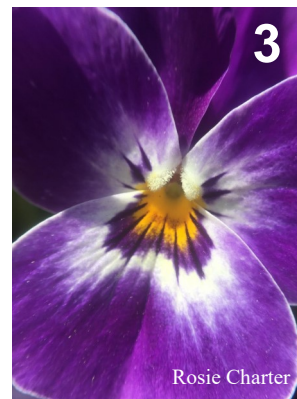
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K	A	S	G	P	Y	N	G	P	O	E	A	A	D	E
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P	O	F	M	O	I	T	P	L	A	C	R	L	L	E
F	R	T	H	L	E	R	A	R	I	N	T	B	I	E
V	R	F	Y	G	W	R	I	E	H	E	S	R	A	K
N	D	A	N	A	I	M	N	C	O	T	R	O	T	E
S	R	A	J	M	D	O	T	B	L	I	I	W	W	T
G	R	U	D	A	T	H	E	I	L	H	A	N	O	A
O	B	A	D	S	H	Y	D	J	Y	W	H	D	L	G
L	I	E	M	J	K	G	L	B	B	D	N	S	L	M
T	R	I	C	O	M	M	A	T	L	O	E	J	A	W
C	R	I	N	G	L	A	D	K	U	O	E	Y	W	V
B	G	K	H	W	D	I	Y	C	E	W	R	B	S	E
P	E	R	C	H	L	F	L	T	E	L	G	N	I	R

"I go to nature to be soothed and healed, and to have my senses put in order"

John Burroughs

## Name it!

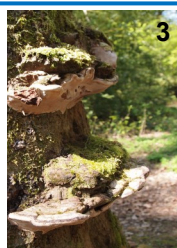
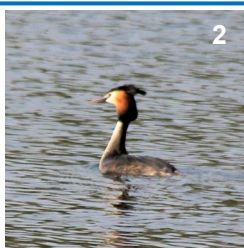
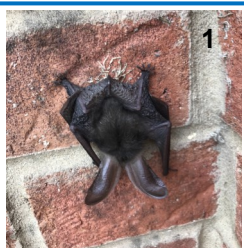
Can you identify the wildlife in these photos?



To help identify this bird use the RSPB bird identification webpage.

<https://www.rspb.org.uk/birds-and-wildlife/wildlife-guides/identify-a-bird/>

To help this bird is found in gardens...



### Issue 5 answers...

- 1... Long Eared Bat
- 2... Great Crested Grebe
- 3... Bracket fungus

You can also follow TEaM on social media for a Daily Dose of Nature...



The Environment and Me



theenvironmentandme



TheEnviroandMe

## **AN UNFORGIVING NATURE? Episode 6**

**By Martin Felstead (TEaM coordinator and bushcraft leader)**

### **SHELTER AND FIRE**

By the time the first signs of a wet dawn highlighted the silhouettes of tall dark pines I was dressed, drier and warmer than I had been since arrival, but after such a challenging night extremely tired.

Around 7:30am Jonny and Brett arrived followed by a trickle of trainees, some of whom had also had a wet night. After breakfast Jonny kindly trekked all the way back to our cars to dry our wet sleeping bags whilst we returned to our camps to complete the much needed fire-shelters.

Around lunchtime the rain began to ease and work started to progress well. The fire shelter consisted of a box-shape (with an open side facing the camp) which was constructed from felled green-wood and then covered with moss and peat lifted from the forest floor—like a carpet of turf over the top.

With a hearth of stones to prevent underground peat-fires developing; a small grass-thatched tipi-like structure on top to smoke meats and a good supply of wood ready (all stripped of moss, de-barked and split with a field-knife) my fire-site was complete.

Back up at the base camp the trainers instructed us on tool maintenance and how to butcher a deer (certified provenance). We then returned to our individual wild-camps where we prepared venison steaks and strips of meat for smoking above the fire (jerky production). When Jonny and Brett arrived doing their evening rounds to check on everyone's progress we examined my hammock set-up and they supplied with me with two metal carabiners for use along the suspension lines to prevent water getting into my hammock. They confessed that this was the worst weather they had ever encountered on the course but that it was set to improve. Subsequently, I spent a dry evening and dined on venison steak cooked over the fire whilst thin strips of meat slowly smoked in the tipi structure above. The lack of carabiners in my kit only served to highlight how small errors can lead to big consequences in a survival setting.



***NEXT EPISODE OUT IN NEXT WEEKS TEAM UP!***

### **Feature Species!!**

#### **The Robin!**

This week we have chosen to feature a bird most of us will get to see or hear at the moment. The loud and cheery robin! Said to be the UK's favourite bird it is a familiar sight to most of us.

Male and female robins look the same, both having the red breast (unlike many other birds where there is a difference between male and females). They sing nearly all year round, so are a common sound in our gardens and do sing at night time next to street lights (I have often wondered which bird it is up at 2am!).

They can be quite territorial birds, seeing off intruders! They are also pretty confident, with many gardeners saying as soon as their spade touches the ground a robin will appear looking for an easy meal. They will feed on worms, seeds, fruits, insects and other invertebrates.



## Your Nature News and Nature Reflections...

After sharing some amazing photos with us last week, this week Becky is sharing a poem she has written, which is simply lovely:

*“When you’re feeling sad a smile is hard to make  
Even if you try to it just looks really fake  
But I realised these past few weeks  
I’ve not seen many smiles  
And if you can just do it you feel better by 1000 miles  
So just a simple smile can change so many things  
From feeling down in the dumps to flying without wings  
We are a mirror to each other so  
Please spread a smile each day  
It could change so many peoples lives you meet along the way”*

This made us smile from ear to ear Becky! I will make sure I spread a smile each day.



We heard from one TEaM member that they were really enjoying Naul's Mill Park at the moment and had seen newts in the pond there! They were also enjoying seeing the urban fox that has been visiting their front garden! Goes to show what great wildlife there is on our doorsteps.

We also heard from Rosalind who said that she has spotted 10 black ducklings on a recent walk. These could have been mallard ducklings, which can look quite dark when they are very young (with lighter patches on the tummy and head). Or they may have been juvenile (young) Coot or Moorhens—both of which have dark/black feathers.

**If you want to share with us a nature moment, somewhere you love or something you have spotted then email [team@cwmind.org](mailto:team@cwmind.org)**

## Taking time in nature...

Did anyone take Simon's advice and get up at dawn to take a photo in the best light? We would love to see any of your photos.

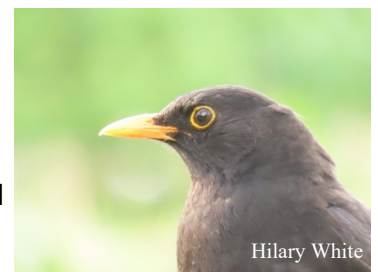
For the next couple of weeks we are going to suggest some activities that focus on our senses. This week it's our hearing.

We are hoping you can find a quiet space for just 10 minutes a day, every day for a week. Sit quietly and close your eyes. Listen to the birds. Listen to the different sounds they make. Are they short and fast sounds? Or slower, longer sounds? Can you hear two calls which sound similar? Is there anything distinctive about a bird call you can hear? Listen carefully every day just for 10 minutes.

Then why not look the calls up? You can use the amazing RSPB website to look up common garden birds and hear their calls to see if you recognise them.

<https://www.rspb.org.uk/birds-and-wildlife/wildlife-guides/identify-a-bird/>

In the 'Where did you see it' box on the website select 'Garden or Park' and look through the list of birds, listening to their calls. The most likely birds you will have heard will be: Blackbird, Robin, Blue Tit, Great Tit, Crow, Wood Pigeon, House Sparrow, Wren, Goldfinch, Greenfinch. Some will be easy to tell apart, others less easy—but the more you listen to their sounds, the easier it is to pick them out!



## MORE THINGS TO HELP KEEP US BUSY:

I have been looking for other things which might help relieve some of the pressures of lock down and isolation.

### LIBRARIES

This week I have seen the amazing array of e-books (online books), magazines, comics and newspapers you can access if you are a member of the library.

So, if you enjoy reading and you are not a library card holder yet its well worth signing up which you can do online by following the link on this page:

[https://www.coventry.gov.uk/info/126/libraries/3213/join\\_find\\_use/1#onlineviathewebsite](https://www.coventry.gov.uk/info/126/libraries/3213/join_find_use/1#onlineviathewebsite)

You will just need to know your nearest library, your name, address, date of birth and provide an email address.



### ONLINE LEARNING

There are some amazing FREE courses being offered by a wide range of places now. There are some great ones on the Open Learn website <https://www.open.edu/openlearn/free-courses/full-catalogue>.

They have free courses on a wide range of subjects from Nature and the Environment to Money and Business. I know a few people who have done some of the natures ones and have really enjoyed them!

### VISIT A VIRTUAL MUSEUM

There are lots of museums opening up their collections for people to enjoy online for free.

The **Tate Modern** in London: <https://artsandculture.google.com/partner/tate-britain?hl=en>

The **British Museum** have an amazing historical timeline you can explore: <https://britishmuseum.withgoogle.com/>

And remember there are services open to help you

**Coventry Wellbeing Hub: 02476 224 417** (open for telephone support between 1pm and 5pm every day)

**Coventry Safe Haven: 07921 876065** or email [coventryhaven.mhm@nhs.net](mailto:coventryhaven.mhm@nhs.net) (Out of hours support)

**Elefriends** (run by Mind) is an online service where people can share experiences and listen to others. You can find out more and sign up at [www.elefriends.org.uk](http://www.elefriends.org.uk)

**Samaritans—24 hour help line. Call free on 116 123.**

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**STAY SAFE - STAY HOME**