



# Buckinghamshire & Milton Keynes Environmental Records Centre

Newsletter—5th Edition

Winter 2021

Winter can be a time of reflection, and that has never been more true than after the events of the past year. As we returned to lockdown in December, many of us turned to nature again to find solace.

While the spring and summer green foliage makes the landscape look fuller and denser, in the winter we can see through woodlands and across vegetation. That makes the winter the perfect season to look for elusive birds and mammals. Birds of prey can't hide in the canopy and you can often see the still and ghostly shadows of buzzards, kestrels and owls silently looking down at you. A quiet walk in nature will also reveal shy creatures that normally hide in the undergrowth such as shrews, voles and deer.

All of us here at BMERC are looking forward to spring, in particular because we have great news to share about our Annual Recorders' Seminar—it's the first article up in this winter issue and it will be going ahead in 2021!

We are also making tentative plans for the survey season, in line with guidance and required safety precautions. If we are able to open our survey projects up to volunteers this year, you will be the first to know.

We hope you are starting the new year happy, healthy and safe and we look forward to seeing many of you (whether online or, hopefully, in person) in 2021.

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Do you want to develop your career in Ecology in one of the most beautiful counties in Britain, boasting a wealth of wildlife? If so, our colleagues in the Ecology team are currently recruiting a new Ecology Officer. You can view the job description and apply here, feel free to share:

[jobs.buckinghamshire.gov.uk/job\\_detail/193581/](https://jobs.buckinghamshire.gov.uk/job_detail/193581/)



**Buckinghamshire  
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Would you like to write for our next issue? For more information, email [erc@buckinghamshire.gov.uk](mailto:erc@buckinghamshire.gov.uk)



## BMERC Annual Recorders' Seminar: Home is where the wildlife is

*Saturday, 13<sup>th</sup> March 2021, to be held online*

**Great news everyone! The BMERC Seminar will go ahead in 2021 and it will be from the comfort of your home (and sofa).**

This year's seminar, *Home is where the wildlife is*, will be held online on Saturday, 13<sup>th</sup> March.

We have a range of speakers and presentations that you are going to love! Here is a sneak peek at some of the speakers lined up to present:

Dr Deborah Harvey, Royal Holloway  
Martin Harvey, Centre for Ecology & Hydrology  
Nick Marriner, Chilterns Conservation Board  
Dr Pascale Nicolet, Freshwater Habitats Trust  
Prof Carl Sayer, University College London  
Tom Thomson, Buglife

Plus updates from our recording community, the BMERC team, and more speakers to come! We will be circulating the seminar programme and instructions for registering soon.

For the second year, we are also holding our BMERC Photo Competition, so get ready with your best shots! The theme this year is *The Beauty and Magnificence of Buckinghamshire & Milton Keynes: 2020 and beyond*.

We will ask attendees to vote for your favourites at the seminar, with prizes for 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> place. You can find out more information about the photo competition and download the application form on the BMERC website:

[www.bucksmkerc.org.uk/seminar-2021](http://www.bucksmkerc.org.uk/seminar-2021)

We will be keeping that page updated with the most recent information about the seminar, but if you have any questions, you can also get in touch with us by phone or email:

[erc@buckinghamshire.gov.uk](mailto:erc@buckinghamshire.gov.uk)

01296 282431

We look forward to seeing many of you in March!





## BSBI New Year Plant Hunt—Revelations and Roundabouts

*Julia Carey*

**I wonder how many of us start the New Year standing on a traffic island or roundabout; I have a feeling it may be a minority sport.** We were introduced to the New Year Plant Hunt at the cusp of 2012-2013, when a founder and friend introduced us to this novel event's first outing. For many years since, I may have been seen doing just this or something equally odd. Run by the Botanical Society of Britain and Ireland (BSBI) this annual event has become a firm and quirky part of many people's calendar, and a great way to walk off some of the excess Christmas pudding or trifle whilst getting some gentle mental and physical exercise. Whether you are an absolute beginner, an expert naturalist or anything in between this is a fun thing almost anyone can do.

Naturalists across Britain and Ireland again took to the wilds and towns alike for a four day period over the new-year break, this year's was 1-4 January. The rules are simple, to spend three hours looking for as many wild or naturalised plants (not garden plants) as you can find. The only caveat is they have to have an open bloom showing. It's a gentle process, the

rules allow you to take as many breaks as you like stopping the clock in between sessions of searching, and walking as far or as little as you like in that time. Year after year a team of largely volunteers (including our very own Ryan Clark) support the small team of BSBI staff putting in a huge effort to filter, sort, log and report the many and varied results which come in. Some of the things you find are expected, some less so. The top 10 finds (9 of which I've seen within a few hundred meters of my house) are:

- Daisy
- Groundsel
- Dandelion
- Annual Meadow Grass (yes grasses count too!)
- Common Chickweed
- Smooth Sow-thistle
- Red Dead Nettle
- Shepherd's-purse
- Gorse
- Petty Spurge

It's always such a smorgasbord of possibilities which is why the event appeals to many it seems. It doesn't matter if you are traipsing the wilds of the North York Moors or a car park in Slough there are still many possibilities for finding a flowering gem, many in tucked away corners. This year recorders found Common Chickweed flowering through artificial turf, Bugloss and Meadowsweet plants we usually associate with a much later period, and even a flowering Harebell in the Chilterns.

Kerbs are always a good place to look. No luck in this case although a great crop of Winter Purslane seedlings, a species often under recorded. (All photos by Julia Carey).



Despite the obvious challenges and social distancing requirements this year a massive 1,195 lists have been submitted nationally, a total of 714 species and 21,425 unique records thus far; no doubt there will be a few more in the final count once pockets and pocketbooks are emptied. The top score was a staggering 86 species, I can only dream of this, and quite a way shy of the famous 115 from a few years back. Much more planning needed there I think, were I the competitive type.

This year weather-wise has been an odd one, with many species flowering late or starting very early. Since November we have had wild primroses flowering in our north facing front garden and in several spots the more discoid varieties of Narcissus were in bloom a month before Christmas. A friend locally even has a Flowering Quince in full flower, a good month or two early. Previously we have seen a 5 metre length of old blackthorn hedge in Milton Keynes flowering, but none at all either side. A closer inspection revealed it was sat above a service trench, a sombre reminder to us all that the utilities we all use can have quiet but very real effect on our environment. Within 500m of home every month since last March there has been Yarrow in flower somewhere, a useful resource for wildlife but perhaps one of many markers of how seasons are changing. I even saw a single Bulbous Buttercup braving the hoar frost in our local churchyard last week.

Some participants use this as an opportunity to increase a life list, gain knowledge of some more unusual species, or just some gentle competition with friends. It's also become a great opportunity to dig out some exotic bobble hats or new jackets and

jumpers to give them a first field trial. It's great to know that the information gleaned is used for national work to understand the distribution and habits of less mainstream taxa, and to build into larger bodies of data used to study phenology of species.

For those walking the more wild and woolly areas of the country these can be very fruitful, like rocky coasts and dune systems. In the richer lowlands arable fields, hedgerows and woodland complexes can be good hunting grounds. Before Christmas we had seen a sizable stand of native Dogwood on a rural road verge which had obviously been in full bud for weeks. Not visited at new year but I'm sure if I'd tried for long enough I'd have been able to find some flowers open, even just one will do! Although a search of hazel catkins unusually failed to locate the well-hidden and intriguing bright red squid like female flowers.

If it's oddities you seek to improve your botany skills (or lists) or didn't want to wander too far from home this year, then in Bucks some of the best hunting grounds are landscaped areas around industrial estates, ex-quarries, waste grounds and yes, we are back where we started: the old faithful traffic island (full yellow jacket required).

*If you would like to know more, please visit the BSBI's dedicated web pages:*

[nyph.bsbi.org](http://nyph.bsbi.org)

[bsbi.org/new-year-plant-hunt](http://bsbi.org/new-year-plant-hunt)



Tops of walls and along railway bridges are other likely places. 4



## Bats in your church's belfry?

*Sue Hetherington*

**Does your local church have bats in the belfry? The answer is probably “no” because, contrary to the saying, bats are not particularly fond of belfries – they are too exposed with too few nooks and crannies.** But lots of other parts of churches can be attractive to bats and sometimes problems arise when there is a large roost. Problems such as creating unmanageable cleaning burdens leading to a reduction in the functionality of the church and damage to heritage items of high cultural value.

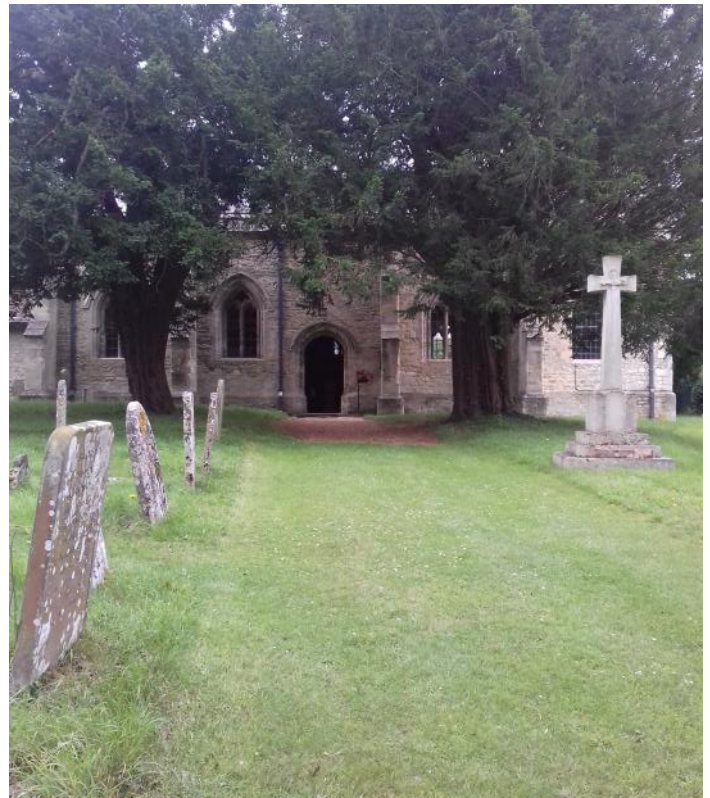
A project called “Bats in Churches” has been set up to address these issues. A good place to start to find out more about the project is by visiting the website: [batsinchurches.org.uk](https://batsinchurches.org.uk)

The project will be running until 2023. Anyone can volunteer to take part, be they expert or novice. No special equipment is needed. The survey limped along as best it could during the pandemic year 2020 but all being well, it will resume in summer 2021. If you would like to volunteer to take part, firstly you need to register, which you can do on the [Get Involved](#) page of the website.

You can get a preview of which churches are available near you before registering by checking the map provided on the website. Churches awaiting surveys are marked by dots in blue or purple. The key explains which is which but basically they are either one or two visit churches. You will notice that there are plenty of churches awaiting their survey visit!

I mentioned that the project surveys were hampered in 2020. This was because for much of the summer our churches were actually closed for the first time in 800 years! This was when “bad” King John (he of Magna Carta infamy) argued with Pope Pious III and was excommunicated. Since that time, nothing closed them until Covid-19 – not the English Civil War, the Black Death or either of the two World Wars. It makes you stop and think that a tiny virus achieved what was not achieved in 800 years.

I should add that the project isn't about looking for bats, it's about finding data. So it's not a “disappointment” if your church doesn't have bats, a negative result is useful data in building up a national picture of how many churches are used by bats and how.



The door to All Saints, Wotton Underwood is open again, with signs of bats in the vestry (below). Photos by Sue Hetherington.



For those of you who use Facebook or Twitter, that's another way you can use to keep informed about the project's activities.

Twitter: [@BatsInChurches](https://twitter.com/BatsInChurches)

Facebook: [BatsInChurchesProject](https://www.facebook.com/BatsInChurchesProject)



## Buckinghamshire Amphibian and Reptile Group

*Sam Knowles, Protected Species Officer, Buckinghamshire Council*

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**The recently re-launched Buckinghamshire Amphibian and Reptile Group (Bucks ARG) is looking for new members to help grow the group and establish some local amphibian and reptile projects such as toad patrols, population monitoring and surveys and conducting habitat works on various sites.**

In late 2019 the dormant Bucks ARG was re-invigorated in an attempt to help generate more public awareness of reptile and amphibian species within Buckinghamshire and to bolster the number of species records to better inform our understanding of the presence of different species' populations across the County. However, due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic that began in 2020, growth of the new group was paused as projects and surveys were unable to go ahead.

Bucks ARG is currently looking to fill several positions within the group to help organise projects and volunteers within Buckinghamshire in the months and years to come. These roles include:

- Deputy Chairperson, to represent the group alongside the Chairperson and guide progress and overall responsibility of activities and projects

- Secretary, to provide a point of contact for group, look after membership, volunteer forms and insurance
- Treasurer, to administer the BucksARG's accounts
- Event's manager
- Website manager
- Publicity Officer

New projects are currently being planned in collaboration with other environmental organisations and groups within Buckinghamshire and it is hoped that activities can commence in the near future.

If you are interested in taking up one of the above positions or as a potential volunteer please contact myself at [Sam.Knowles@buckinghamshire.gov.uk](mailto:Sam.Knowles@buckinghamshire.gov.uk)

You can also follow the Buckinghamshire Amphibian and Reptile Group Facebook page:

[www.facebook.com/groups/bucksarg](https://www.facebook.com/groups/bucksarg)



# Buckinghamshire Pond Project

*Claudia Bernardini & Marcus Militello*

**British ponds support a wide variety of wildlife including some of the rarest freshwater creatures. Their biodiversity value is often underestimated.** They support a wide range of ecosystem services and can help mitigate water pollution, flooding and climate change. A large number of ponds across the UK have disappeared in the 20<sup>th</sup> century and many are in poor condition. Pollution, abstraction, invasive species, recreational activities, fisheries, agriculture, development and climate change are amongst the main threats. “Alongside general land drainage, loss of specific wet features on farmland has been substantial. Up to 90% of lowland ponds in the UK were lost in the 20th century, through neglect or direct human intervention. Those that remain face increasing pressure due to agricultural land drainage, pollution, isolation and urban development” (State of Nature Report, 2019).

The main objective of the Pond project is to fill gaps in the database by mapping any ponds that could be identified from OS maps, air photos and local information but are missing from BMERC database. A survey has been devised to assess and record any associated wildlife and the project is supported by the county Protected Species Officer, the Berks, Bucks, Oxon Wildlife Trust (BBOWT) Hedgerow Havens Project and the Chalk, Cherries and Chairs Project. The project includes a citizen science element, that for this first year involves a selected number of volunteers and sites. The project aims to:

- Determine location of ponds throughout Buckinghamshire.
- Establish condition of those ponds.
- Determine reptile & amphibian presence and monitor populations.
- Train and develop a team of volunteers to assess pond condition and survey for reptiles and amphibians with the opportunity for volunteers to work towards gaining a protected species licence for Great Crested Newt.



Working in partnership, we have already identified and selected nearly 30 landowners willing to take part in the survey. Importantly, some landowners will also take part in the project by surveying and monitoring their land. Most volunteers have also already been identified although there might be the need to recruit additional volunteers. BMERC, BBOWT and Chalk, Cherries and Chairs are all providing staff resources and equipment to the project.

The surveys will be carried out between March and October 2021, depending on COVID-19 related restrictions. Each survey will involve one initial comprehensive assessment of the pond and surrounding habitat, followed by several visits in spring and summer to monitor for reptiles and amphibians using refugia. Artificial refugia (carpet mats and metal tins) act as shelter from predation and disturbance while also providing heat. All data collected during the site visits (records of reptiles, amphibians and any other wildlife) and management advice will be included in a final report that will be made available to each landowner.

**For any queries please contact:**

Claudia Bernardini, Environmental Project Officer, BMERC: [claudia.bernardini@buckinghamshire.gov.uk](mailto:claudia.bernardini@buckinghamshire.gov.uk)  
Marcus Militello, Hedgerow Havens Project Officer, BBOWT: [marcusmilitello@bbowt.org.uk](mailto:marcusmilitello@bbowt.org.uk)  
Sam Knowles, Protected Species Officer, Buckinghamshire Council: [sam.knowles@buckinghamshire.gov.uk](mailto:sam.knowles@buckinghamshire.gov.uk)



Images by Claudia Bernardini. From top: a frog contemplates life on the edge of a pond; Great Crested Newt surveying in progress; and, reptiles like slow worms benefit from ponds too.



## Silverstone Dormouse Project

Joanne Makin, Ecology Officer, Buckinghamshire Council

A dormouse project is underway in Silverstone, following an initial delay to due to Covid-19. The survey area is the ancient woodlands near to the Silverstone racetrack with an aim to find signs of the protected and rare dormouse.

This project involves a series of tracking tunnels being placed and checked for footprints. Buckinghamshire Council is working in partnership with the Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire & Northamptonshire Wildlife Trust and Forestry England to deliver the project.

The dormouse footprint tunnels were set up at the start of September on suitable vegetation within the woodland. The tunnels contained some plain white paper and an inked area at either end made from charcoal and olive oil which is harmless to wildlife. Dormice have very distinctive footprints due to the triangle shaped pads on their feet. Any dormice or other wildlife such as birds, insects or woodmice, which enter the tunnel will step in the ink and leave their footprints behind on the paper as they pass through the tunnels. The tunnels were checked every two weeks for footprints and to replace the ink.

Regular checks were carried out from September until November, when dormice start to enter hibernation. Unfortunately no dormouse footprints were found last year, but we will be trying again in the spring as we know dormouse have been found in the past not too far away. The aim of the project is to confirm dormice are present by these unique footprints, with a long-term aim of setting up a monitoring project with nestboxes to support the conservation of any dormouse population we find.

You are most welcome to join us on a survey this spring. A survey involves a 5-6km walk which equates to approximately 3 hours activity within a wooded setting. For anyone wishing to take part and volunteer to check the tunnels, please email the ecology team ([ecology.av@buckinghamshire.gov.uk](mailto:ecology.av@buckinghamshire.gov.uk)) and Gwen ([gwen.hitchcock@wildlifebcn.org](mailto:gwen.hitchcock@wildlifebcn.org)) from the BCNWT, and ask to be added to the volunteer mailing list.

We also have a Buckinghamshire Dormouse Group Facebook Page that is free to join where updates are shared for those with an interest in the project: [www.facebook.com/groups/bucksdormice](https://www.facebook.com/groups/bucksdormice)



From top: preparing the paper; the footprint tunnel *in situ*; checking the strips; and, what we hope to find! (Don't worry: this dormouse has been safely bagged by trained volunteers.)





## Getting Bucks Buzzing

Rhiannon Flemming

**Bucks Buzzing is a community pollinator project that helps residents and communities across Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes to create and enhance habitat for insects and other wildlife.** It's a project run by the Buckinghamshire & Milton Keynes Natural Environment Partnership.

Each spring I look forward to getting out in the field, planting and recording insects, although these activities had to be severely curtailed in 2020. I spent the time instead working on new resources, which you can download from [the Bucks Buzzing website](#). There are info sheets for our gardening heroes, schools and community groups, as well as activities to do at home, such as butterfly colouring sheets and British bee bunting.

In October I was able to supply wildflower seeds for two projects run by Chiltern Rangers and I was very pleased to be able to safely attend one of their Forest School sessions at King's Wood Primary School, High Wycombe. Under Ranger Paul's direction, I helped the students rake and prepare a



meadow area before planting with a selection of wildflower seeds. The raking also uncovered all manner of insects and crawly critters, which I helped the students to identify. Everyone had a lot of fun!

We still have some funds available for projects this spring. If you are part of a community group, school, street association or other organisation and would like to support pollinator habitat in your community, please drop me a line. I'd love to hear about your project and Bucks Buzzing may be able to help. Email [rhiannon.flemming@buckinghamshire.gov.uk](mailto:rhiannon.flemming@buckinghamshire.gov.uk)

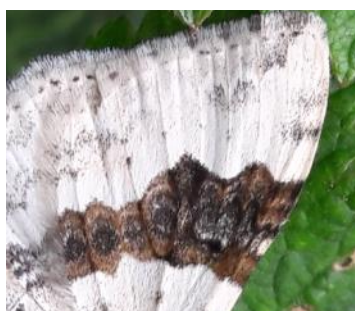
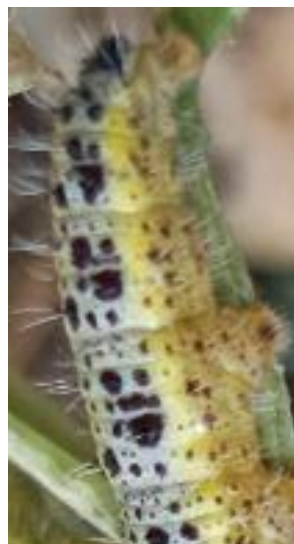
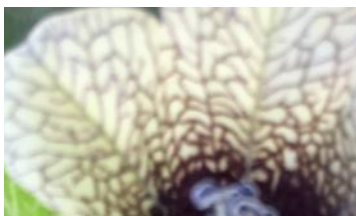
Find us on [Twitter](#) or [Instagram](#): @BucksBuzzing



## What on earth is that?

The BMERC Team

Can you identify these species found in Bucks or Milton Keynes from these close-up photos?



Answers from last issue:

- 1) Large house spider (*Eratigena* species): Bill Parker, one of our guest authors from last issue, provided this photo and some ID tips: *it's in the autumn that the males go wandering about looking for the females and hence, are encountered more frequently. There are three species in the UK (Eratigena duellica, E.saeva and E.aticra) although the latter is only found in the north-east. In Bucks, it is most likely to be Eratigena duellica but one can only be certain by microscopic examination of the male's palps or the female's epigyne.* For more information, see the [British Arachnological Society factsheet](#).
- 2) Wild Carrot seed head (*Daucus carota*)
- 3) Fruit of a Medlar tree (*Mespilus germanica*)



Answers will appear in our next issue!



## What to look for in winter

*The BMERC Team*

**With shorter days it would be very easy to just pull up the duvet and hibernate until the clocks go forward again. But that would be missing out on everything that winter has to offer.** The starkness of the trees set against a glorious sunset or even against a grey sky – an image in black and white with a skeletal beauty all its own.

And life does still go on. Your bird table will probably be as busy as ever as your visitors squabble over the fat balls and seed. Don't forget to clean your feeders regularly to minimise disease spread and also provide fresh, clean water daily for both drinking and bathing. Our winter bird visitors are always a welcome sight. Perhaps you are lucky enough to have flocks of Redwing and Fieldfare stripping the berries near you, or maybe you have been treated to a visit from the stunning Waxwing, over here to escape the worst of the Scandinavian winter?



Snowdrops in bloom and bee orchid foliage



Snowdrops always bring a bit of joy to the winter months and there are several places across the county that put on a splendid display: Hughenden Manor, Stowe, Waddesdon Manor and Cliveden (COVID allowing!) You may have your favourite sites; we'd love to hear about them and see your photos.

Primroses and Cowslips will start to emerge in sheltered spots soon after, adding a welcome splash of colour to our woodland floors. As a bit of a challenge, keep an eye out for those orchids that wintergreen (the leaves persist throughout winter). Bee Orchids are the ones you are most likely to find, even on town verges, as can be seen from the above photo taken in Aylesbury. Several other orchids



Sugar water can revive a tired bee, but don't feed bees honey!

begin to emerge in January and February. The Natural History Museum has produced an excellent [Beginner's Guide to Vegetative Identification of British Orchids](#), a good starting point for this tricky group.

Queen bumblebees are the only members of the colony to survive the winter and on mild days, you may spot (or hear!) one out on a foraging trip before burrowing herself back in her nest. Among the first bees to emerge will be the Buff-tailed Bumblebee and Early Bumblebee, while the delightfully-named male Hairy-Footed Flower Bees have been spotted on the wing as early as February.

This is also a great time of the year to get your camera out. The light on some crispy, sunny winter days can be incomparable! The winter light at sunrise and sunset also offers magical opportunities. The winter is the time to reflect and there is no better time than these cold days in nature to do that.





## What have we been up to in lockdown?



Rhiannon has been finding solace walking along the canal, and also planning which pollinator-friendly plants to add to her garden this spring.



After a difficult field season Fiona rounded it off with a trundle around Great Brickhill churchyard to investigate the fungi. There are a number of sites that have a similar acidic vegetation and which may support a good variety of fungi, but we just don't have the data. Next fungus season we could be looking for volunteers to help us out recording this intriguing kingdom...

Like everyone else, Julia is enjoying lengthening days and looking forward to spring and seeing some actual scenery as the last seasons have been very computer bound. Julia was intrigued this week by an optimistic pigeon looking for a nesting spot in her garden hedge, complete with starter stick. Like Fiona, Julia has been peering at a few churchyards, and taking way too many photos of lichens and intriguing stonework.



Emma is very busy with her Master's!

Neil has used the time over Christmas and New Year to start work on his backlog of unidentified specimens, starting with beetles, lacewings and hoverflies. He has looked at almost 150 so far, over a third of which were new species for him. A New Year's day challenge to find and identify as many different invertebrate species was just that, challenging. Neil only found 15 species, but did include this marvellous hairy fungus beetle *Mycetophagus quadripustulatus*, found under the bark of a large fallen beech branch.



With the holidays over, Claudia is looking forward to the longer and warmer days of spring. Meanwhile, the plans for the survey season go ahead and fingers crossed that the survey timetable will not be upset by further restrictions...

Highlights of the last couple months: some beautiful frosty and snowy mornings, spotted a badger and ran into a stoat!





## Resources Round-Up

We've included a lot of links to projects and more information in this issue. Here's a round-up of those links, plus other projects, ways to get involved and general interest:

### BSBI New Year Plant Hunt

[nyph.bsbi.org](http://nyph.bsbi.org) or [bsbi.org/new-year-plant-hunt](http://bsbi.org/new-year-plant-hunt)

### Buckinghamshire Amphibian and Reptile Group

[www.facebook.com/groups/bucksarg](http://www.facebook.com/groups/bucksarg)

### Buckinghamshire Dormouse Group

[www.facebook.com/groups/bucksdormice](http://www.facebook.com/groups/bucksdormice)

### Hedgerow Havens

[www.bbwt.org.uk/wildlife/wildlife-conservation/hedgerow-havens](http://www.bbwt.org.uk/wildlife/wildlife-conservation/hedgerow-havens)

### Chalk, Cherries and Chairs

[www.chilternsaonb.org/projects/CCC.html](http://www.chilternsaonb.org/projects/CCC.html)

### Bucks Buzzing

[www.bucksmknep.co.uk/bucks-buzzing](http://www.bucksmknep.co.uk/bucks-buzzing)

### Chiltern Rangers

[chilternrangers.co.uk](http://chilternrangers.co.uk)

### NHM British Orchid Vegetative ID Guide

[www.nhm.ac.uk/content/dam/nhmwww/take-part/identify-nature/british-orchids-vegetative-id-guide.pdf](http://www.nhm.ac.uk/content/dam/nhmwww/take-part/identify-nature/british-orchids-vegetative-id-guide.pdf)

### British Arachnological Society House Spider factsheet

[britishspiders.org.uk/wiki2015/images/e/ef/House\\_spider\\_preview\\_rev18.pdf](http://britishspiders.org.uk/wiki2015/images/e/ef/House_spider_preview_rev18.pdf)

### FSC Biolinks Online Courses & Events

[www.field-studies-council.org/biolinks-courses](http://www.field-studies-council.org/biolinks-courses)

Many are free to attend, on a range of topics including: Beetles in Moth Traps; Defence Mechanisms in Lepidoptera; and Invasive Plants of the Future.

### Milton Keynes Natural History Society Webinars

MKNHS are currently offering no obligation tasters of their Spring Programme, please visit their website for more details: [mknhs.org.uk/programme/](http://mknhs.org.uk/programme/)

### RSPB Big Garden Birdwatch (29-31 January)

[www.rspb.org.uk/get-involved/activities/birdwatch](http://www.rspb.org.uk/get-involved/activities/birdwatch)

### Woodland Trust: Nature's Calendar

[naturescalendar.woodlandtrust.org.uk](http://naturescalendar.woodlandtrust.org.uk)

### WWF Big Winter Wander

[www.wwf.org.uk/events/winter-wander](http://www.wwf.org.uk/events/winter-wander)

### New rewilding project teaches tour guides to offer

fresh look at travel: [www.theguardian.com/travel/2021/jan/22/new-rewilding-project-teaches-tour-guides-to-offer-fresh-look-at-travel](http://www.theguardian.com/travel/2021/jan/22/new-rewilding-project-teaches-tour-guides-to-offer-fresh-look-at-travel)



## Our Final Thoughts

We received a lot of wonderful comments from you in response to our postcards in December, which we really appreciate. We enjoy reading your feedback and we hope you enjoyed this issue too!

Thank you to our fantastic guest authors this issue:

Jo, Marcus, Sam and Sue.

Our next issue will be the Spring Issue in April. If you have an idea for an article or a project you'd to share with our readers, please get in touch.

We hope to see many of you at our virtual seminar in March. Until then, stay safe!

*Best wishes from the BMERC Team,  
Claudia, Emma, Fiona, Julia, Neil & Rhiannon*



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