

Chairman's Report

Summer is here!

We have had a busy couple of months here in Fishbourne Parish, with judging for the Best Kept Village Award likely to have taken place by the time you read this. To that end, we held another Parish Spruce up day in April, and we continue to engage the services of DT Ground Care to look after the raised flower beds across the parish. I bumped into Dave at work last week, and thanked him for his efforts in the hot weather.

Myself and other parish councillors were invited by members to the Hampshire & Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust to visit the Community Garden at Quarr Abbey, which HIWWT has recently taken over responsibility for. It was very interesting to speak to the team about their plans for the Community Garden, which is funded as part of their Reaching Communities Project. We are looking forward to hearing more from them over the coming months, including about how local residents can get involved.

As part of the Isle of Wight Biosphere Festival 2026 in June and July, the Friends of Quarr helped us to lead a guided walk around historic old Quarr. The walk was limited to 25 people which were

easily filled, and we have a longer write up of the event elsewhere in the newsletter.

The abandoned car on Kite Hill/Ashlake Farm Lane has finally been removed. It is a long, slow process to get abandoned vehicles taken away so it is good that it has finally gone.

On a final note, I am pleased to welcome Dr Ramesh Babu to the Parish Council. We are looking forward to working with Ramesh, and his appointment brings us back up to full strength with 6 councillors.

Ed Hopper (Chairman)



Editorial

As I write, we have just been knocked out of the World Cup, our beautiful planet is burning up and nation is fighting nation. The news is full of doom and disasters, and it is hard to find good news stories and remain positive.

We hope you will find stories that cheer you up and make you laugh within these

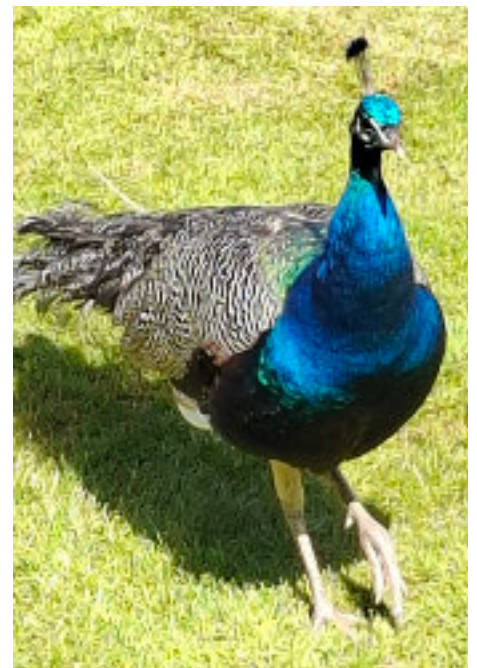
pages: articles that inform and challenge you to try new things, and reminders that the world is full of good people, wonderful wildlife and opportunities to make a difference.

A cousin recently stayed with us for a week or so, and as a retired librarian she was delighted to see our 'Community Library'. A few days after her return to Norwich, a parcel arrived in the post. It contained books for our little library and some postcards, featuring the words 'Hope Lives Here'. The card featured a QR code and web address millionactsofhope.org and urged the recipient to put it in their window.

I will attach one to our library for you to scan if you wish, or you may like to visit the website.

We need hope for ourselves and future generations. Perhaps we can all try to live with a little more hope in our lives.

Sarah Talbot



One of several resident peacocks, photographed by Chris Edwards in his garden

This is your Newsletter!

Are you happy with the content? Do you find the articles interesting or informative? Please let us know what you would like to see in the Newsletter. Contact: sarah.talbot@fishbourneiow.org.uk

People you may need to contact on the Parish Council

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Lazy Summer Live Music Sundays

Sunday 26th July – Claydon Connor

Sunday 2nd August – Greg Barnes

Sunday 9th August – Ruby

Sunday 16th August – Blue Brown

Sunday 23rd August – Ollie Ducie

Sunday 30th of August – Sunny Brown

Live on the Patio

2:00 PM - 4:00 PM

For further details contact the website:

www.thefishbourne.co.uk

‘Land’

by Maggie O’Farrell

Maggie O’Farrell fans have been eagerly awaiting her latest book which tells the story of the mapping of Ireland. Set in 1865, Tomás and his reluctant son, Liam, are working for the great Ordnance Survey project to map the whole of Ireland. Ireland has recently suffered the cruel privations of the Great Hunger and the project is difficult and challenging. It is a story of a family tested and tried by the process of creating the maps and is primarily a story of magnificent landscapes and of survival which speaks to subsequent generations.



Our new Councillor

Dr Ramesh Babu

I am writing to introduce myself following my recent co-option to the Fishbourne Parish Council. It is a true privilege to join the council, and I look forward to serving our community and helping make Fishbourne an even better place to live.

About Me

I have lived in Fishbourne for over 11 years, and I am deeply invested in our local community. In my professional life, I am a specialist Breast surgeon at St Mary's Hospital, and I have been working in the hospital for over 22 years.

As a local doctor, I have spent my working life listening to patients, listening to their worries, to frustrations, to hopes, and to moments of real difficulty.

I chose this area to live as it is a place with a strong sense of identity, community spirit, and natural beauty. Over the years, I have come to deeply value the people who live here – their resilience, kindness and the quiet pride in where they belong.

I am passionate about local environmental initiatives, supporting local businesses, and improving community spaces.

My Role as Your Councillor

As a parish councillor, my goal is to be a strong voice for you and ensure our community remains vibrant and well-supported. Parish councils play a vital role in local decision-making – from reviewing

planning applications to organizing community events and maintaining local amenities.

Get in Touch

I am always keen to hear your thoughts, ideas, or concerns regarding the local area. Please do not hesitate to reach out to me or any of the team. You can contact me directly at ramesh.babu@fishbourneiow.org.uk

You can also find the latest updates, meeting schedules, and agendas on the official Fishbourne Parish Council website.

Thank you for the opportunity to represent you, and I look forward to meeting many of you in person at upcoming village events or council meetings.

Warm regards,

*Dr Ramesh Babu
Parish Councillor, Fishbourne*



Village Picnic on the Oak Tree Village Green!

Saturday 1st August from 2pm

Bring a blanket, a basket, and your picnic.

Everyone in the village is warmly invited to a jolly picnic beneath the old oak tree. Come along with your good food, friendly faces, and a chance to catch up with neighbours old and new.

■ Pack your favourite picnic treats to share or enjoy.

■ Bring a blanket, folding chair, sunhat, and reusable cup.

■ Children, neighbours, friends, and well-behaved dogs are very welcome.

Local guitarist and singer, Chris Hawker, will kindly entertain us for an hour or two.

This is a combined Village and Parish council Summer Event.



Cllr Ed Hopper with Dave Trickey

Clerks Corner

I wonder whether you were lucky enough to attend the "Old Quarr" walk on Saturday 4th July as part of the Biosphere Festival? This was the 2nd year in its running and led by Dr. Dominic Fontana, Chairman of the Friends of Quarr. We received so many requests to attend the event that we had to limit participants to 25 and so apologies if you weren't successful, hopefully it is something we might be able to offer again next year, and if so, please apply early!

If you missed out this year, don't forget there is a monthly parish walk led by local residents Carolyn and Ann. The group welcomes new members and if you would like to join, please contact Carolyn (07771767897/carolyn.dugdale@iow.org.uk) or Ann (07779349228/anniemhodes@gmail.com) for further details.

New Police Officer for Fishbourne, PC Andy Emery, and colleagues PCSOs Karen Allen and Jack Dyer attended our meeting in July. PC Andy Emery heads up the Rural East Neighbourhood Policing Team and is happy for members of the public to contact him directly to discuss any issues via his phone 07392 289467 or email andrew.emery.27557@hampshire.pnn.police.uk but stressed the importance that this was not for reporting crimes. Crimes must be reported through the website *Contact us – Hampshire and Isle of Wight Constabulary* or by calling 101.

Thank you for all your favourite tree nominations, they have been lovely to read and a reminder of what a beautiful parish Fishbourne is. We endeavour to look after and improve the parish wherever and whenever we can and if there is anything you notice that we might be able to help with, please do get in touch.

I think you will agree the planters are looking fabulous this year thanks to our

contractor Dave Trickey who is keeping them regularly fed and watered. The sea wall has been repaired, and we are in the process of replacing the big white noticeboard at the end of Fishbourne Lane. The new one should be in place by the end of the summer and I would like to say thank you to Mr Martin Gulliver, Wightlink's Operation Manager, for his assistance overcoming our problems shipping the board to the Island!

Some of the reports we've received and responded to lately are as follows:

- A smell around the café at Quarr – this was because of a grease trap in the biodigester which was being cleared but is now working properly with no further reports

- Cars still persistently parking illegally during the 8am – 9am parking restriction on the Lower Green – local residents have kindly offered their driveways for Parking Services Officers to use in order that they can carry out their enforcement duties

- We received requests to implement a 20mph speed limit on Fishbourne Lane following too many red squirrel deaths, and the relocation of the bus stop at Kite Hill. Both would need to be added to the wish list of Traffic Regulation Orders for review at the end of the year by the Isle of Wight Council, though Island Roads have confirmed they would not support the relocation of the bus stop on safety grounds

- Overflowing bins on the Lower Green. We have checked and made sure they are

being emptied 3 times a week and have asked our Environment Officer to keep an eye on things as he has reported an excessive amount of litter everywhere recently

- I have reported vehicles frequently parking on Ranalagh Drive to the companies who are responsible, asking their drivers not to wait in this location, and have generally received very positive responses

I hope you will be able to attend and enjoy the mid-summer party at Oak Tree Green from 2pm on 1st August. Our next Parish Council meeting is on the 8th September. Wishing everyone a lovely summer break.

Katie Riley



Volunteers for Spruce up Day, enjoying a snack at RVYC

Fishbourne Book Group

Fishbourne Book Group meets once a month at Quarr Abbey in the summer months and at the Fishbourne Inn during the winter. We meet at 10.30 usually on the last Thursday of the month to discuss our chosen book. To date we have read a wide selection of texts with July's choice being "Pachinko" by Min Jin Lee, followed by August's selection "Life After Doom" by Brian McLaren, described as an "analysis of how things stand in relation to climate breakdown, and a deeply insightful

exploration of the challenge of living well, maintaining resilience and growing in wisdom and love in the face of nations, ecosystems, economies, religions, and other institutions in disarray."

If you are interested in joining us, you will be warmly welcomed for coffee, discussion and the company of very pleasant people!

Contact Cheryl on
cherylfontana1959@gmail.com
or 07910649302.



Bernie-the-Bolt

Continuing our Confessions of a Cat-sitter series, from a local author, columnist...and cat-sitter

When cat-sitting, there are some very important rules regarding entering other people's houses. The golden rule is that you're allowed to be there in the first place so, obviously, I broke that rule...

A few years ago, I looked after a cat named Bernie-the-Bolt* (he was always named Bernie, but his owners added 'the Bolt' after he was hit by lightning**) and on my arrival one day, Bernie walked past me, out of his front door in a row of terraced houses, and immediately began stalking a squirrel. Squirrels here are obviously red and therefore there's an obligation to guard them with our lives. So, I tried to lay my life down immediately by running out of the door straight into the path of a passing cyclist, only to see Bernie chase the squirrel back towards the house. The cyclist took it well, and taught me a great new word, but I had a squirrel to save so I frantically scoured the street.

No tabby or squirrel were to be seen. Could they have run in through the open door? I also legged it full pelt through the open door, but have you ever noticed how terraced houses in a row can all look identical? Yes, I'd run into the house next door, sprinting through the lounge into the kitchen, before spotting a mass of ginger fur, belonging not to a squirrel but to a ginger-tom who stopped mid-wash to regard his breathless intruder, and then continued licking his backside as if nothing had happened (cats will never make effective guard dogs, will they?). I looked around in disoriented surprise, realising for the first time that this wasn't Bernie-the-Bolt's kitchen at all, and so ran back into the lounge to find an elderly couple sitting in armchairs, staring at me, very calmly in the circumstances.

'Can we help you?' one asked.

'Sorry! Sorry! I was looking for a squirrel, but I got the wrong house!' I blurted out at high speed, realising at once I'd just provided a pretty much deranged reply.

'Oh, really?' replied the elderly lady, with the hint of a smile. 'And what number does this squirrel live at?'

The ginger-tom appeared in the kitchen doorway, just as Bernie-the-Bolt, happily sans squirrel, appeared at the open front door. All four appeared to be awaiting my answer with great interest.

'Number 28,' I finally replied and, realising I was appearing crazier by the second, managed to add, 'Sorry, I mean, the cat lives at 28, not the squirrel.' Well good, that cleared everything up then.

Ten minutes later, I sat having a cup of tea with my new-found friends, along with the ginger-tom (he goes by the name Albie) and Bernie, all of us having a good old laugh at my antics. Story of my life, really...

**I know nothing about this at all, but apparently the original Bernie-the-Bolt used to fire a crossbow on a TV game show. TV game shows must've been tougher in those days.*

***It's by no means certain Bernie was hit by lightning – apparently, he staggered indoors during a thunderstorm with his fur standing completely on end, cartoon-style but without rising smoke. If there'd been rising smoke, I'd believe it.*

Fishbourne Parish Biosphere Walk 2026

Fishbourne Parish Council contributed to the Biosphere Festival this year by organising a walk around the ruins of the 12th century Cistercian monastery at Quarr. The walk was led by the the Chair of The Friends of Quarr, Dr Dominic Fontana, who gave the background to the establishment of the modern monastery and then led the group around the ruins, explaining how the ancient abbey would have fitted into the landscape and how the two abbeys are connected across the centuries by their adherence to the Rule of St Benedict. The modern monastic community remains an important part of Island life and continues to be steward of the estate, caring for the environment and protecting the landscape. There were about 30 walkers in the group, but we also had a waiting list of interested people. Clearly, there is an interest in the old Abbey, which is only accessible by guided tour. There are tours available at other times of the year and if you are interested, look on Quarr Abbey web site under events and you should be able to see what has been arranged.



Copy for the next issue of the Newsletter by 15th October 2026 at the latest. Please send to sarah.talbot@fishbourneiow.org.uk



Royal Victoria Yacht Club

What an incredible summer we are having both on and off the water this year and as I write we are congratulating a local Fishbourne resident – Nigel Talbot owner of Sanity, a Farrier F82 as the Multihull National Champion for 2026. The performance of the Club fleet in the Round the Island Race was equally brilliant. Line honours for Jim Holder in UNO and 1st place overall for James O'Callaghan in 'Nice Tri'.

We are enjoying a summer of amazing activities afloat with our Adult Sailing running to capacity on a Wednesday; both Illusion and Scow fleets enjoying their weekly racing and the RC sailing boats just retiring from the pontoon to make way for summer visiting boats

Our OnBoard Programme for under 18's has gone from strength to strength in 2026

with 28 youngsters exploring what it means to be safe and have fun on the water. Our incredible volunteer instructors and helpers teams do an amazing job in encouraging participation.

Ashore, we have been enjoying a lovely summer menu from the bar and galley and supported several private events such as BBQs and wakes. We are always open to non-members who can visit RVYC up to six times a year – as long as they are signed in by a member.

On July 18th we hosted the annual Open Day for People with Disabilities. This year we had over 130 guests visiting us for what is always a brilliant day ashore and afloat, supported by the generosity of volunteers' time and boats from our members and by Wet Wheels Hamble, Cowes Sailability and Disabled Sailing's

yacht, Spirit of Scott Bader. Huge thanks to the Fishbourne Parish Council for their generous donation and all our other sponsors and visiting dignitaries for supporting this annual event .

Some dates to note for your August diary:

■ Our Onboard Summer Camp is from Thursday 13th August until Saturday 15th August.

■ The spectacular annual Creek Race is on Sunday 16th August

■ The Merrydown Regatta is on Sunday 30th August.

Any Fishbourne residents wishing to see what we do, please contact us office@rvyc.org.uk to arrange a guided visit. Enjoy your Summer

Jane Barrett Bellingham
Commodore commodore@rvyc.org.uk

Autumn talks at The Royal Victoria Yacht Club *All Welcome.*

September 9th **RVYC Quiz**

September 16th *Julian Doyle*
One Step Beyond the 'Da Vinci' Code

September 23rd *Sue Lowday*
Dickens and the Isle of Wight

September 30th *Martin Thomas*
Florence Nightingale

October 7th *Roger Wilkins*
The History and Development of the Mobile Phone

October 14th **RVYC Quiz**

October 21st *Phil and Sue Holland*
Air Ambulance – Operation Airbase.

October 28th *Katie Daysh*
Leeward and More

November 4th **RVYC Quiz**

Talks Start at 19.30 Food Available Beforehand

James O'Callaghan in 'Nice Tri'

Dates for your diary

Parish Council Meetings

RVYC 18.30 (2nd Tuesday)

NB. There is NO Full Parish Council Meeting in August.

September 8th-October 13th

Parish Surgeries

RVYC 09.30 (4th Tuesday)

NB. No Surgery in August

Sept 22nd, October 27th

Coffee Mornings 10.30 –12noon
(1st Thursday)

August 6th, September 3rd and
October 1st





The Parish Church of the Holy Cross Binstead

(in plurality with St Peter's Havenstreet, All Saints' Ryde and St John's Ryde)

The thick walls and subdued lighting have made the church a cool place to be during the very warm weather that we have been experiencing so far this summer. However, the advent of summer also brings the return of Sunday afternoon teas, available from 2.30 till 4.30 in the churchyard every Sunday until the middle of September. The picture above shows a group enjoying

a shady spot under a tree. Do come and partake of homemade cakes and a cup of tea if you have a free Sunday afternoon.

Holy Cross has been very busy since Easter with baptisms, weddings and funerals, together with four visits by pupils from Binstead School who spend a morning in the church learning about the various parts of a church, eg the font, the lectern or the pulpit, and how they are used. Two of the graves outside are usually of particular interest, the 'smuggler's grave' and the 'giant's grave'. Thomas Sivell was a local man who was shot by the Portsmouth customs officers in 1785 while sailing his sloop down the Solent. The epitaph written by his widow makes it clear that she believed that he

was innocent, and her grief and anger speak powerfully to the reader even after 240 years. Samuel Landon was reputed to be the tallest man in Britain when he died in 1844. His grave is certainly by some way the largest in our graveyard. Plans are currently in hand to provide a squirrel box in one of the trees at the rear of the church and to build a small hide so that visitors can enjoy watching the red squirrels who inhabit the churchyard.

We are fortunate at Holy Cross to have a well-established pastoral team. In addition to organising a Food and Fellowship lunch for those who live alone on the second Tuesday of each month (except in August) in the Community Centre at Havenstreet, they make monthly visits to Kite Hill, Hazel Lodge, Northbrooke House and Merrydale care homes to give communion to the residents as well as visiting a number of people in their own homes who are unable to get to church. If you, or someone you know, would like to avail yourself of any of these services, do let us know.

Please do check the weekly pew sheet on the website (www.holycrossbinstead.org.uk) to keep in touch with all the services and events that are happening. Additionally, remember that Holy Cross Church and its churchyard are open every day for visitors and for those who are seeking a quiet place in which to reflect or pray – or, indeed, just to pop in and read the notices about what's happening in the church.

Rodney Fox (Reader in the parishes of Binstead, Havenstreet and Ryde)



Fishbourne Wednesday walkers

We've been walking together on the second Wednesday of every month since the Spring and we'd be delighted to welcome anyone who'd enjoy a convivial stroll in good company with a coffee, cake – or something stronger – to look forward to after an hour or so's good walking and talking.

In August and September, we are going to be exploring Wootton.

On Wednesday August 12th at 10.30am – meet at the Cedars pub in Station Road.

On Wednesday September 9th at 10.30am – meet at the entrance driveway to the Lakeside Hotel

*For more details contact Carolyn Dugdale
07771 767897 or Ann Hodges
07779 349228*

Fishbourne Parish Council Annual Parish Award

At the recent Parish Annual General Meeting the Parish Council were delighted to present the annual Parish Award to Ann Hodges in recognition of her initiative in setting up the Fishbourne Wednesday Walking Group and her continued support of other Parish activities throughout the year.





Quarr Abbey

Races and Tours and Journeys

We spend a large part of our daily lives on the move – even Benedictine monks who have taken a vow of stability. Perhaps it is no surprise then, that a number of events in the Summer Programme at Quarr Abbey celebrate mobility.

On August 21 and 22 we are hosting traditional sports days as part of the Wight Games Festival. Sacks and eggs and spoons will bring joy to children and all the family, while raising welcome funds for the Mountbatten Hospice and other Island charities.

For those who want something a little less energetic there are guided tours of the Abbey at 11.00 on Wednesdays throughout the Summer. Visitors are taken on the historical journey of Quarr from its beginnings in 1132 when monks of Savigny first established a monastery on the Island to the coming of the monks of Solesmes, who settled here in 1907 when seeking a place of exile from an anti-clerical government at home. A gentle walk between the courtyard and the Church accompanies the mind as it traverses the centuries.

Another journey can be undertaken in the Courtyard Gallery. For a second year we are showing an exhibition of reproductions of paintings from the National Gallery in London. Thanks to the generosity of its Director, Sir Gabriele Finaldi, and of Dr. Dominic Fontana, Chairman of the Friends of Quarr, we can tell the story of Holy Week: The Journey of Jesus from this World to the Father.

The exhibition relates the last days of Jesus' life on earth, his suffering, death and resurrection from the dead, his Paschal Mystery, which for Christians is the central mystery of their faith.

Eighteen paintings have been chosen to portray the most significant events of

these days. They were painted over the course of some three hundred years from the early fourteenth to the mid-seventeenth centuries and represent the more important schools of painting of the time. Most Galleries show their collections in chronological order. We are doing something unusual in ignoring historical sequence to tell a story.

In some ways it is a supremely distressing story. In many paintings we see Jesus suffering intensely. But if we view Jesus

with the eyes of faith we can receive consolation. For here is a mystery of love. We read in Saint Paul that love is first patient. Love endures everything before it does anything. And so to suffer patiently out of love for the Father and for us is the most powerful thing in the world. It does not degrade or diminish Jesus' humanity. Rather it leads to its exaltation in eternal life in God. The journey of Jesus holds out hope for the journeys of us all.

Br Duncan Smith

Quarr Abbey Art Gallery Exhibitions July to October

July 2026

9 – 15 July, **Anya Stickland**
16 – 22 July **Andrew Dowden**
23 – 29 July **Christian Beasley**
30 Jul – 4 August **I Love Wight – Summer Artisan Exhibition**

August 2026

6 – 12 August **Charlotte Hodge Thomas**
13 – 19 August **Lis Toft**
20 – 26 August **Freya Conway**
27 August – 2 September **I.O.W.A.C.**

September 2026

03 – 09 September **Triple Effect**
10 – 16 September **Angela Sowden**
17 – 23 September **Wight Printmakers**
24 – 30 September **Art of Recycling**

October 2026

01 – 07 October **Peter Allen**
08 – 14 October **Anne Axford**
15 – 21 October **Wendy Houghton**
22 – 28 October **Beatrice Lihou**
29 October – 4 November **Suzanne Whitmarsh**

Calling all Choral Singers!

Every year in December Ryde Chorus organise a Scratch Messiah performance to raise funds for Mountbatten. This could be the perfect opportunity to dust off your old score and come along and sing!

Ryde Chorus members meet once a week at 7.15pm on a Thursday at the Isle of Wight United Reformed Church on the corner of Upton Road and Corbett Road, Haylands, Ryde, PO33 3LE, to rehearse pieces for public performance. They are a warm, enthusiastic, and friendly bunch who are always happy to welcome new singers.

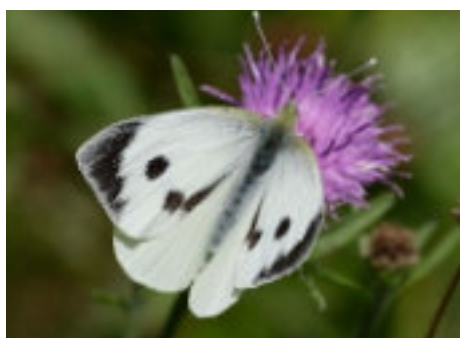
For the new term starting on 3rd September the first half hour of rehearsal, from 7.15pm to 7.45pm, will concentrate on Messiah. If you are interested in learning or revisiting Messiah and singing in the scratch performance on 15th December, then do come along.

You may wish to stay on as the Chorus will then spend an hour or so rehearsing new pieces for the repertoire for performance at the Christmas Concert on 11th December.

More details can be found on the Ryde Chorus website – rydechorus.org – and on the Ryde Chorus Facebook page, and you can email them at rydechorusiow@gmail.com



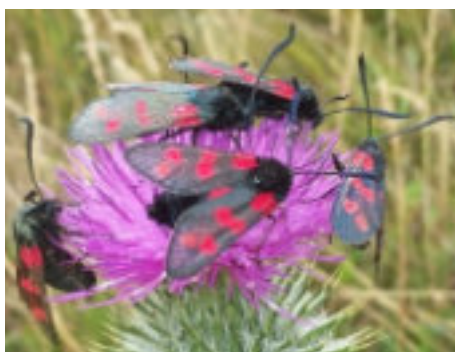
Nature Notes from Natural Links



Big Butterfly Count

The annual survey, organised by Butterfly Conservation, is a nationwide citizen science survey aimed at helping us to assess the health of our environment. Launched in 2010, it has rapidly become the biggest survey of butterflies in the world, with 125,000 people taking part in the initiative last year, with over 1.7 million butterflies and day-flying moths counted. The top 5 in 2025 were 1. Large White 2. Small white 3. Gatekeeper 4. Red Admiral 5. Meadow Brown. This year the Count period runs from 17 July to 9 August 2026, but records are still welcomed by Butterfly Conservation at any time of year.

The summer months are the best time to look for day-flying moths, especially Cinnabar, Six-spot Burnet and Silver Y moths. Counts are based on sightings over only a 15-minute period and can take place anywhere, in your garden, local park or on your local walk. For more information and how to take part see bigbutterflycount.butterfly-conservation.org



Adults in Miniature

The Grass Snake is the largest snake in the UK, growing to a length of 1.5 metres. They are the only egg-laying snake in the UK and the prime time for laying their clutch of between 10 and 40 eggs begins in June through to the end of July. They will often lay their eggs in rotting vegetation, such as compost heaps and deep leaf litter, giving added warmth for incubation until they hatch out in early autumn. The young are miniature versions of the adults.

Just like their parents, young grass snakes are proficient swimmers, taking to the water shortly after hatching, an alternative name for them is Water Snake or Ringed Snake, referring to the yellow and black collar. They are a long-lived reptile, capable of reaching 25 years of age.



Sea and Shore in the Spotlight

National Marine Week actually runs for a full fortnight, 25 July to 9 August, to accommodate different tide times across the country. It is an annual celebration of our marine environment organised by the Wildlife Trusts. Rock pooling and shore searches allow us to get close to this often-hidden world under the waves. Chitons are ancient molluscs, with fossil records going back at least 400 million years.

They are often referred to as 'coat-of-mail' shells as they have 8 interlocking plates along the back. These allow the animal to move with a degree of flexibility as they feed across submerged rocks on algae and bacteria. For more information on Marine Week [#nationalmarineweek](https://www.nationalmarineweek.org)



Porpoises with Purpose

August is a very active month for Harbour Porpoises as this the peak time for mating and many females will also be giving birth to their single calves. Adults can grow up to a length of 1.7 metres and weigh up to 70 kilograms and calves can be between 0.7 and 0.9 metres at birth.

A calf is able to feed for itself by about 3 months old but will still continue to take milk from its mother for up to 11 months. Though still fairly common, Harbour Porpoises have suffered a long-term decline and are a focus for conservation action. The continental shelf population is estimated at about 390,000 animals with the main areas around UK waters in north-west and north-east Scotland, south-west England, Wales and the southern and western coasts of Ireland.

