

The member magazine for Avon Wildlife Trust

Issue 122 • Spring 2024

WildAvon

The alarm is sounding

Is it time to wake up to our shifting seasons?

Turning the tide

A warning of a return to the dirty history of UK waterways



Avon
Wildlife Trust

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© JON HAWKINS

6 ways to get involved with your local Wildlife Trust

Help us to bring wildlife back across 30% of land and sea by 2030 by increasing your membership donation today, so that we can all benefit from nature on our doorstep: avonwildlifetrust.org.uk/increasedonation

Be part of Team Wilder

Become a part of our growing community of local people who take action for nature as part of their everyday lives: avonwildlifetrust.org.uk/team-wilder

Campaign We need your voice to raise awareness for urgent local issues such as fighting the ecological emergency, reversing insect decline and creating a connected network of habitats for wildlife: avonwildlifetrust.org.uk/campaign

Fundraise Set yourself a challenge or organise an event to fundraise with family and friends to help wildlife in our region: avonwildlifetrust.org.uk/fundraise

Give the gift of land

Help to secure 30% of land for wildlife by 2030 by contributing land or the money to make a purchase: avonwildlifetrust.org.uk/gift-land

Include a gift in your will

Celebrate your love for local wildlife by giving a gift that could last for generations. A gift in your will, no matter how big or small, can make a real difference: avonwildlifetrust.org.uk/giftinwill



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Welcome



to your spring edition of *Wild Avon*. I hope you enjoy hearing about the work that's going on across the region, made possible with your support, to make Avon a wilder place for both people and wildlife.

Since our last edition, we have seen the alarming headlines from the 2023 State of Nature report of 1 in 6 species in the UK facing extinction, had last year confirmed as the hottest year on record and entered 2024 with extreme rain and flooding. Protecting the natural world has never been more important and I want to thank each and every one of you for being champions for wildlife.

In the winter, we launched our Help Out Hibernators appeal to protect our charismatic and vulnerable hibernating species. Your donations have helped fund surveys, monitoring and habitat regeneration in projects like Wilder Woodlands in Goblin Combe, where we are creating a more diverse woodland for creatures such as dormice and bats to thrive. Find out more about this on page 23. Creating a more biodiverse woodland, with rides and an understorey, will also help reduce flooding and make the site more climate resilient.

In a general election year, it is also important that we make sure our leaders and representatives know how we feel about the ongoing climate and ecological emergency and ask them to defend nature. The Wildlife Trusts have published their priorities for the next government, whoever that may be, asking them to: bring back Britain's lost wildlife, end river pollution, fund wildlife-friendly farming, enable healthy communities and tackle the climate emergency.

Action from our government is crucial but so is action on a local level. Team Wilder continues to grow and inspire action for nature across the region, thanks to inspiring people like you making change for wildlife. Whatever you are doing to protect nature this spring, I want to say a big thank you. Together we can make a difference.

Ian Barrett
Chief Executive of Avon Wildlife Trust
Follow me on X @IanBarrettSW

Avon Wildlife Trust Get in touch

Wild Avon is the membership magazine for **Avon Wildlife Trust**, your local wildlife charity, working to secure a strong future for the natural environment and to inspire people to care for it. With the support of around 18,000 members and over 600 volunteers, the Trust cares for over 30 nature reserves, runs educational and community programmes, advises landowners and campaigns on issues that threaten wildlife habitats.

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Follow us on social media for the latest news and events. Please share your wildlife pictures and experiences! You can also subscribe to our monthly newsletter online through our website to hear about our latest news and events.



Facebook, X, Instagram @avonwt

Registered charity number 280422
Registered company number 1495108

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YOUR WILD **SPRING** SPECIES AND HABITATS

Your wild spring

The best of the season's wildlife and where to enjoy it across Avon



Thank you

Your membership helps maintain our local woodlands and glades – improving habitat for bats, dormice and the whole woodland web of life

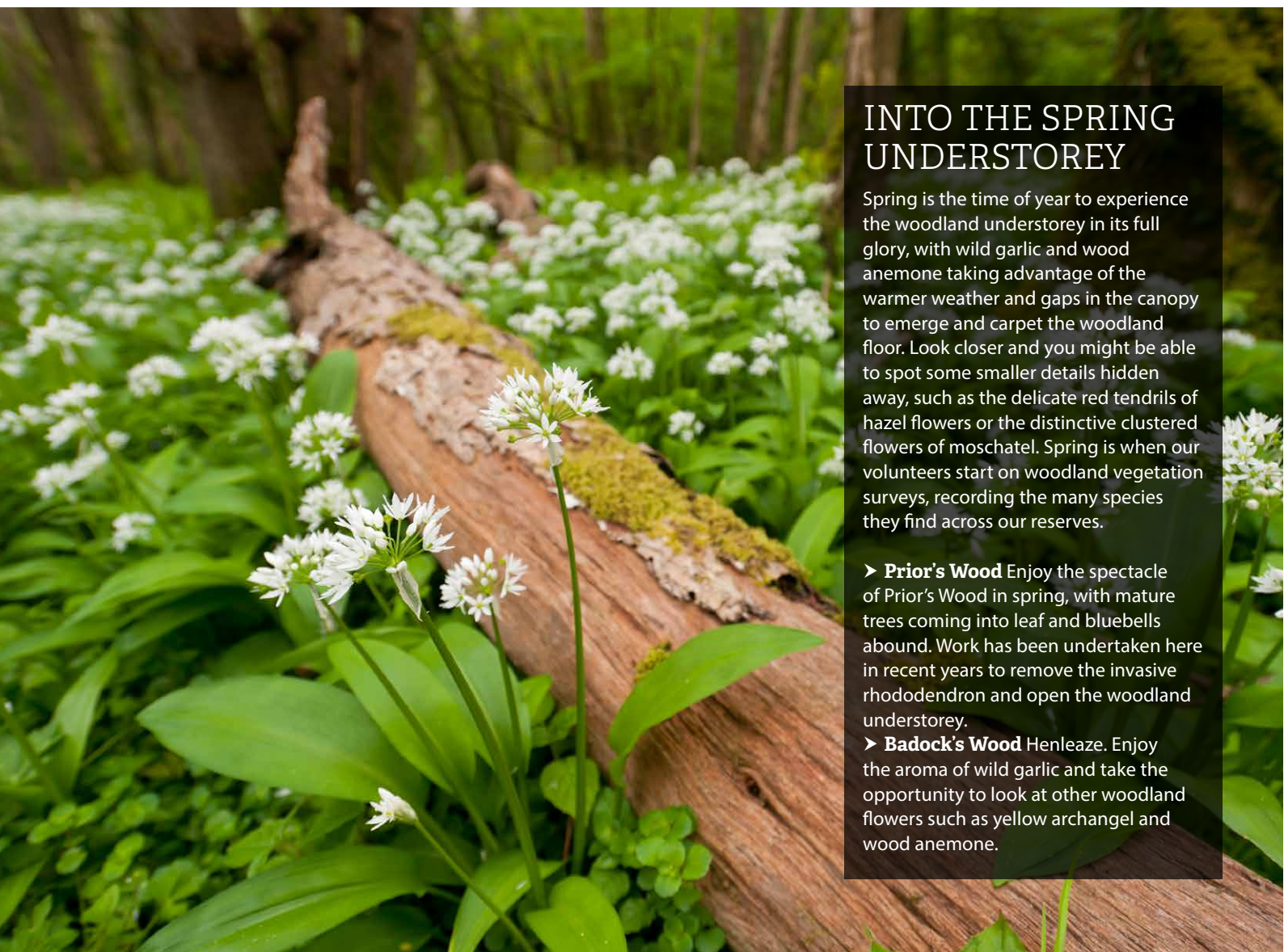
AWESOME AVON SPRING

The perfect purples of a bluebell wood are a must-see each spring. The spread of flowers covering a forest floor is a truly iconic spring sight. However, these beautiful blue carpets are not quite as natural as you might think. Bluebells are slow-growing, taking between five and seven years to develop from a seed to a flower, and spread slowly. Because of this, they often indicate an ancient woodland. They are very sensitive to disturbance and trampling. It's why we encourage visitors to stick to paths when visiting as the damage could last years. In a truly natural and wild ecosystem, herbivores such as wild boar would disrupt bluebells and potentially prevent perfect carpets of undisturbed flowers from developing, although they can help spread the plants across a wider area.

SEE THEM THIS SPRING

- **Prior's Wood** Prior's Wood is an ancient woodland full of oaks, hazels and wonderful woodland birds such as garden warbler and spotted flycatcher.
- **Ashton Court** Close to Bristol city centre, Ashton Court is a popular place to visit. Whilst you're enjoying the deer park, visit the Rownham Plantation to enjoy some bluebells near the city.
- **Lower Woods** This Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) is one of the largest ancient woodlands in the south-west. Enjoy the bluebells and butterflies, with 32 species reported here!

DID YOU KNOW Over half the world's bluebells grow in the United Kingdom. They're considered so important they are a protected species and it is illegal to pick or disturb the flowers. Our native British bluebell (*Hyacinthoides non-scripta*) is being threatened by the introduced Spanish bluebell (*Hyacinthoides hispanica*) which is out-competing and hybridising with the native flower. If planting in your garden, make sure you plant the native, English variety, especially if near wild bluebells, to prevent hybridisation from pollinators.



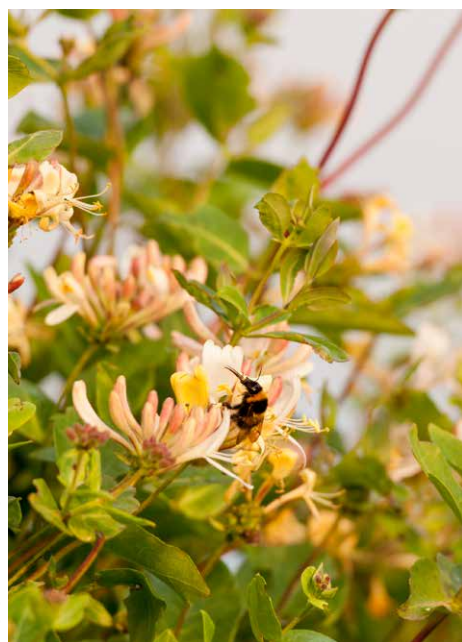
INTO THE SPRING UNDERSTOREY

Spring is the time of year to experience the woodland understorey in its full glory, with wild garlic and wood anemone taking advantage of the warmer weather and gaps in the canopy to emerge and carpet the woodland floor. Look closer and you might be able to spot some smaller details hidden away, such as the delicate red tendrils of hazel flowers or the distinctive clustered flowers of moschatel. Spring is when our volunteers start on woodland vegetation surveys, recording the many species they find across our reserves.

► **Prior's Wood** Enjoy the spectacle of Prior's Wood in spring, with mature trees coming into leaf and bluebells abound. Work has been undertaken here in recent years to remove the invasive rhododendron and open the woodland understorey.

► **Badock's Wood** Henleaze. Enjoy the aroma of wild garlic and take the opportunity to look at other woodland flowers such as yellow archangel and wood anemone.

© ROSS HODDINOTT/2020VISION



URBAN FIELDCRAFT

Moths and Butterflies

Butterflies and moths have suffered huge declines in recent years through a fusion of problems including habitat loss, climate change and pesticide use.

Their decline is worrying as they help support the entire ecosystem as a food source and as important pollinators. Many species, including bats, birds, hedgehogs, amphibians and other wildlife, feed on them and their caterpillars. As the insects start to take wing and our bats and hedgehogs begin to wake up from their winter hibernation, we can help them out by making sure our gardens are full of food for moths and butterflies to enjoy.

► **Leave it long:**

Allowing your garden to grow a bit wild can provide shelter for butterflies and moths to lay their eggs. Species seen as 'weeds', such as nettles, dock, dandelion and brambles, can often be food sources for caterpillars. Hedges or plants climbing up fence panels can also provide some security for the insects.

► **Night-scented flowers:**

Most moths fly at night. Encourage more moths to your garden by planting night-scented flowers, which provide important sources of nectar that they can find in the dark. Plants like honeysuckle, jasmine or evening primrose are all great examples. Get some of your own from Grow Wilder!



avonwildlifetrust.org.uk/explore/grow-wilder



SEE THIS

From June, look out for the common-spotted-orchid with its pink and purple flowers and spotted leaves

DO THIS

Set the alarm early and head out before sunrise to enjoy the magic of the dawn chorus

© MARK HAMBLIN

SPECIES SPOTLIGHT

Hazel dormouse

Dormice get around a bit like Tarzan, moving high up between the trees. However, unlike the vine-swinger, dormice are just three inches long with large eyes, a fluffy tail and a tendency to sleep a lot! Britain's native hazel dormouse is one of our few true hibernators.

Unfortunately, it is facing a number of different threats from habitat loss to climate change.

Treetops and hedgerows

Of the 20-plus dormouse species around the world, only the hazel dormouse – also known as the common dormouse (*Muscardinus avellanarius*) – is native to Britain. This adorable creature, as long as an adult human's finger, lives in trees and hedges mostly across southern England and Wales. Dormice are expert climbers, an essential ability for reaching their food, most of which lies at the thinner ends of branches: nuts, insects, berries, flower petals, nectar and pollen. As well as keeping to their treetop habitat, dormice are rarely seen by humans due to being nocturnal animals.

Zzzzzzz

Sleep is so special to dormice that they spend almost three-quarters of the year in some form of it. Sometimes even snoring! This is perhaps how they got their name, too, as 'dormir' is the French verb to sleep, and 'dormeuse' is a female sleeper.



© AMY LEWIS



© DANNY GREEN

More importantly, in addition to sleeping through the day, the hazel dormouse is one of Britain's few hibernating mammals. After having a litter of babies in late summer, dormice spend weeks fattening up so that by autumn they can start to bed down for the winter. They either hibernate in a nest of their own weaving under piles of logs or leaves or in a clump of pine needles, or in an abandoned bird's nest. Like all hibernators, they do it to avoid the winter months when food becomes more scarce.

Why they're important

Hazel dormice are what's known as a flagship species, which means that if they are present in a habitat, it is likely to be suitable for a wide range of other species, from birds and bats to butterflies. Dormice are highly sensitive to the weather and to the changing climate, which affects their feeding patterns and the availability of food. They are particularly affected when their habitat becomes fragmented or deteriorates, so unfortunately they are now vulnerable to extinction and are a protected species in Britain, where numbers have declined by over two-thirds since 2000.

Did you know?



EYES

As a nocturnal animal, big eyes make it possible to see in low light.



TAIL

Although they are rodents, dormice are not actually mice! They have much fluffier tails which sometimes end in a white or grey tip.

PAWS

Like their squirrel cousins, dormouse paws are turned outwards for climbing, helped by long toes and sharp claws.

Thanks to your support and responses to our Help Out Hibernators appeal, we are working hard to survey and restore habitats to help this beloved mammal bounce back!

Written by **Oliver Hail**, communications volunteer

PHOTOS: © TERRY WHITTAKER / 2020 VISION

HEAR THIS

Listen for the singing chiffchaff calling out its name from the treetops 'chiff-chaff-chiff-chaff'

GROW THIS

April is a great time to sow your wildflower seeds to ensure they are in bloom come summer!



© CHRIS GOMERSALL / 2020VISION

NOT JUST FOR KIDS

Five ways to enjoy spring

Do you celebrate the changing of the seasons? Deepen your connection with nature by trying out these suggestions!



1 LEAVE THE LAWN FOR POLLINATORS

Many people start mowing lawns regularly in spring, but you may decide to join the growing trend of leaving all or parts of it uncut. This will allow clover, daisies and other species to flower and provide nectar and pollen for bees and other pollinating insects. Even better, diversify your lawn by planting yarrow, clover, or wild marjoram which bees love. Search 'No Mow May' for more information on the benefits of natural lawns.

© VAUGHN WILLIAMS



© ALLIE IBBOTT

3 Make a gift for the goddess of spring

On 1st May a tree was customarily decorated with ribbons and danced around. At this 'May Pole' celebration, people would ask for the blessing of the spring goddess. Why not find a small branch and decorate it with newly-awakening greenery, buds and flowers to make your own goddess gift?

It was said that placing the offering outside your front door would bring fruitful blessings to the household.

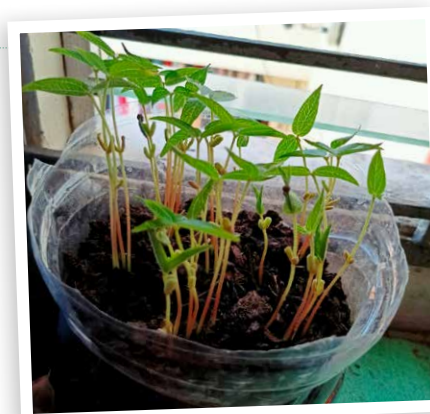


4 Bring nature into your home

Notice, celebrate and reflect on the changes happening around you by creating a nature table. Find a beautiful cloth, pick a bunch of budding flowers, add greenery or other symbols of growth. Maybe even add a candle to represent the sunlight coming back. Perhaps set the intention to add a new item each day, to encourage you to take daily walks and look closer at the beauty in the changes happening around you.

5 Prepare your garden

Mulch outside soil with cardboard to hold the weeds at bay and begin planting seeds indoors. If you have never grown from seed before, give it a go! Lettuce, kale or tomatoes are tasty starters. Buy or use your own organic, peat-free compost and even up-cycle plastic food containers. Do remember to add drainage holes! Then keep them warm on a sunny windowsill.



Amie and Eric, our two expert ecologists, answer some of your most asked questions!

Ask an Ecologist



Can I enhance my garden lawn even though it is frequently trampled?

Yes! A 'flowering lawn' is appropriate in areas which are regularly mown or trampled as some flowers, such as selfheal, can withstand this disturbance. Appropriate 'flowering lawn' seed mixes can be found on some supplier's websites, such as Emorsgate Seeds, or you can also ask at our Grow Wilder nursery where you can find some suitable species.

I don't have space for a large pond, can I attract amphibians to my garden in other ways?

You don't need to have a large pond to encourage wildlife to your garden. You can just use a washing up bowl, a large plant pot or a disused sink to create a 'mini pond'. All you need to do is add a layer of gravel/rocks/stones to create a range of depths and slopes for creatures to climb in and out. Rainwater can fill your pond. Then add one or two local, native plants to your mini-pond. All you need to do next is sit back and wait for wildlife to fill your pond!

What are the right locations for bird boxes and what kind of designs are best?

Bird boxes can go on the northern or eastern sides of trees or buildings at least 2 meters above the ground to protect them from predators. The design depends on the species of bird that you want to attract as there are specific box designs for certain species. 'Sparrow terraces' (boxes with two or three holes) are available for sparrows as the species is a colonial breeder so nest in groups. Other garden birds such as robins or blackbirds prefer an open fronted box. Find more information and instructions on how to build your own on our Team Wilder website!



Visit our website for more actions you can take to help wildlife this autumn:

avonwildlifetrust.org.uk/team-wilder-resources

Our pick of your photos

We're lucky that so many supporters are also talented photographers! It's been such a joy to see what wonderful wildlife you've been able to capture and how nature has caught your eye. Sharing photos like this is a great way to take action for nature and be part of Team Wilder, as it's a sure-fire way to inspire others:



◀ Grey heron

© Simeon Bennett
@simeon_bennett_photography

Robin ▶

© Tony Kirby



◀ Mute swans

© Amy Collyer
@amy.louphotography



Daffodils ▶

© Elizabeth Cooksey
@Elizabe77372721



◀ Firecrest

© Matt Hobbs
@MigrationMatt

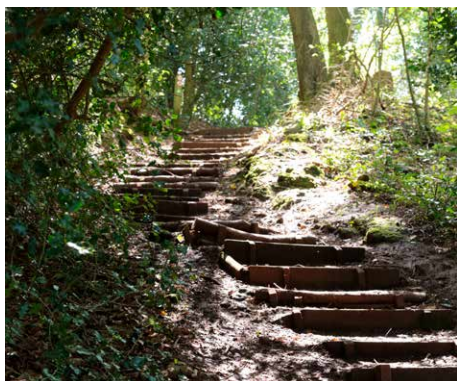


Send us your ecology questions and photos to [@AvonWT](https://twitter.com/AvonWT) on social media or to communications@avonwildlifetrust.org.uk



Visit Weston Big Wood

Weston Big Wood is a 43-hectare ancient woodland and Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) located to the west of Portishead and is a great place to enjoy woodland birds, invertebrates and a wide variety of plant species.



© CHRIS DAVIES

This wildlife-rich woodland is a fragment of ancient woodland that would once have covered the whole Clevedon-Portishead ridge. Of course, one of the main things to enjoy in any woodland is its wonderful trees. Weston Big Wood is mostly dominated by English, or pedunculate, oak but has some other interesting species, including ancient-woodland indicators such as small-leaved lime and wild service tree. Pedunculate oak is so-called because its acorns hang down on stalks or 'peduncles' and is one of two native oak species in the UK, along with sessile



© JIM HIGHAM

oak. These large trees can grow up to 40 metres tall, live for a thousand years and provide a habitat for an incredible 2,300 wildlife species. No wonder that this oak-dominated woodland is called one of the most wildlife-rich woodlands in Avon.

Throughout the woodland there is also evidence that there was some coppicing carried out in the past. Coppicing is a traditional practise of woodland management that dates back to the Stone Age, where trees are cut down at the base to make use of the timber. The coppiced tree doesn't die but instead grows back multiple new shoots from one stump.

Thanks
to your continued
support we can care
for this nationally
important woodland
and all the wildlife that
calls it home.



© CHRIS DAVIES



© THOMAS JOHNELLIS

See if you can spot these multi-stemmed stools as you wander the woodlands.

There is always something to see in an ancient wood and each season brings change and new things to look for. One of the most obvious in spring is the unfurling of the new, vibrant green leaves on the deciduous trees. In the centre of the woodland is an open woodland ride, a linear track in the wood to allow access. Here more light can reach the forest floor, resulting in a mix of scrub and grassland that young coppices can flourish in, providing habitat and shelter for a wide range of wildlife. In spring, wrens and robins will nest in the scrub and as the months get warmer plants such as St John's-wort, tall melilot and marjoram bloom, providing pollen for butterflies and other insects. One of the highlights is the silver-washed fritillaries that favour the sunny glades and rides in large oak woodlands like Weston Big Wood. Look out for them feeding on the nectar of brambles in scrubby areas or their caterpillars feeding on common dog-violet. The moths and midges of the wood also act as an important food source for the lesser and greater horseshoe bats that are awakening from their winter hibernation.

As you explore the woods this spring, keep your ears open for the deep croak of the raven or the mewing 'kee-ya' call of a soaring buzzard overhead.



© NEIL WYATT



© CHRIS GOMERSALL / 2020VISION

1 Visit Weston Big Wood

KNOW BEFORE YOU GO

The public footpaths that allow access through the reserve can be steep and muddy with some steps so not suitable for wheelchairs and pushchairs. Dogs are allowed by on leads.

TOP WILDLIFE TO SPOT

► **Tawny owl** At dusk listen out for the classic iconic 'too-wit too-woo' call of the largest and most common owl in the UK. This famous call is actually made up of a male and a female calling to each other. The female calls 'too-wit' and the male answers 'too-woo'!

► **Nuthatch** Look out for this woodland bird that resembles a woodpecker as it climbs headfirst down tree trunks. It is the only bird in the country that can do this!

► **Wild garlic** Follow your nose in early spring and you should be able to discover the white flowers of wild garlic growing throughout the woodland along with other species such as bluebells, wood anemone and lesser celandine.

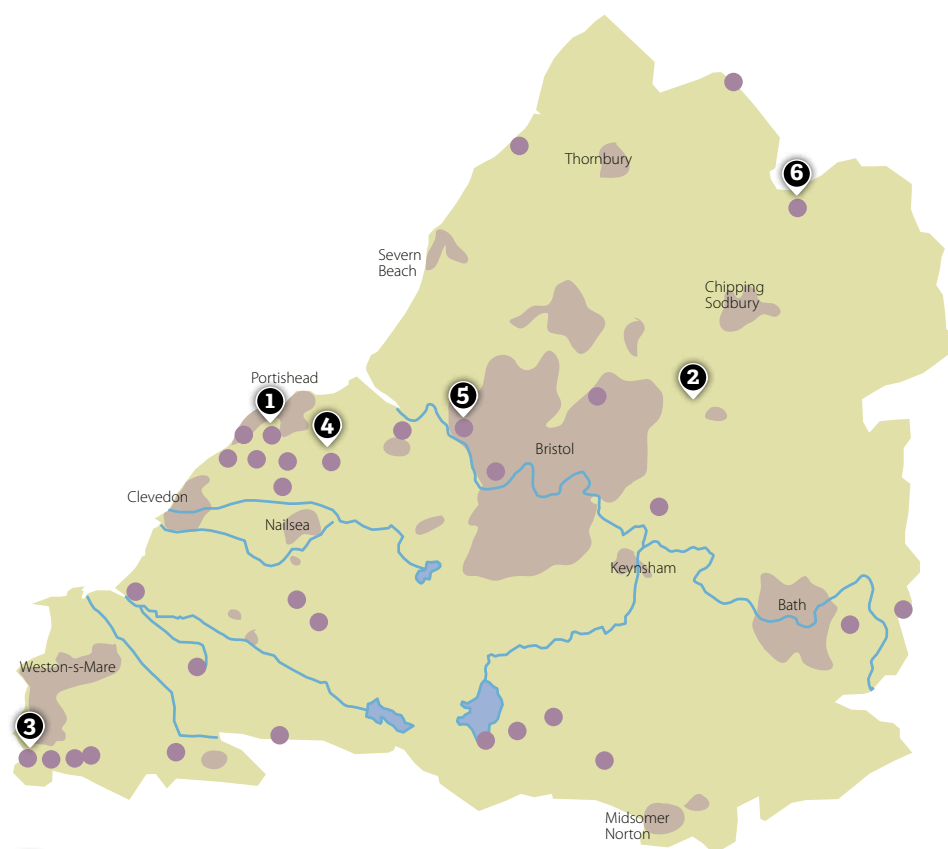
DID YOU KNOW?

► Weston Big Wood is home to a number of 'phoenix trees'. These are trees that have fallen down but continue to grow from a new position. Look out for lime trees that look like they have been planted in a straight line. A tree likely fell down in the great storm of 1987, but because it was still partially rooted, it sprouted up again at 90 degrees. As the fallen stem rotted away, the sprouts became separate trees which are all genetic clones!



© GEORGE COOK

More nature sites to explore for a **spring day out**



2 Warmley Forest Park

Warmley Forest Park, located on the site of old clay quarry, is a mix of woodland, grassland, the Siston Brook and a large pond. In the spring, it's a lovely spot to explore and look for wildlife. Listen out for singing song thrush, chiffchaff and garden warbler. As the spring progresses, look out for black-tailed skimmers and four-spotted chasers over the pond.

With free parking available on Station Close, not far from the Bristol and Bath cycle path, and with refreshments available from the nearby Warmley Waiting Room, Warmley Forest Park is a good choice to explore this spring.

Warmley Forest Park is managed by South Gloucestershire Council, who we're also working with on a new Nature Action Zone for Warmley. This project aims to create a wildlife corridor across the area by connecting people's gardens to nearby green spaces.

 Find out more here:
[avonwildlifetrust.org.uk/warmley-nature-action-zone](https://www.avonwildlifetrust.org.uk/warmley-nature-action-zone) or contact Alex Dommett, Community Engagement Officer, on **Alex.dommett@avonwildlifetrust.org.uk**



© ANDREW GODDARD



© FERN ELIAS-STAGG

3 Walborough

Walborough is a special place to visit in all seasons. However, the spring is particularly lovely as the flora and fauna start to kick into gear after the long, cold winter months. On a clear crisp morning, the expansive view over the River Axe out to Brean Down is breathtaking.

Walborough nature reserve is nestled between the mouth of the River Axe, Uphill nature reserve and Bleadon levels. These ecologically significant sites add great value to the area, which is populated by abundant and rare plant, bird and invertebrate life. The site offers a dramatic, exposed view from the top of the hillock (Bronze Age burial mound dating back to 1500 BCE). Walborough is comprised of a mosaic of habitats including rich scrub, where you can observe many visiting and resident birds nesting and feeding. The saltmarsh spilling out from the River Axe is home to exciting salt-tolerant plant communities and invertebrates which feed populations of wading birds such as redshank and dunlin.

Throughout spring and summer, the calcareous grassland (occurring on chalk or limestone) abounds with wildflowers including small scabious, kidney vetch, salad burnet, pyramidal and common spotted-orchids. This vibrant carpet of colour supports great numbers of butterflies – 36 species have been recorded, including grizzled skipper, small blue, small heath and grayling.

For more nature filled days out, visit these wonderful spring woodlands

- 4 Prior's Wood
- 5 Ashton Court
- 6 Lower Woods

See page 5 for more details.

 Find out more at
[avonwildlifetrust.org.uk/nature-reserves](https://www.avonwildlifetrust.org.uk/nature-reserves)



Maddie Moate

   @maddiemoate

Technology isn't the enemy



Children have a huge appetite for nature. There's an enormous world of wonderful wild things for them to discover, if they're given the opportunity. The right experiences can build a connection to nature that will last a lifetime.

But as children get older, there are more distractions. Interests and hobbies are more likely to be influenced by friends than parents, or by the content they view online. If nature hasn't fully captured their attention by now, that interest can slip away – though it often resurfaces later in life. So it's important that we foster that connection to nature from as young an age as possible.

We worry about children's access to technology being a blocker to spending time outside and connecting with nature. But I think technology can actually play a helpful role in breaking down barriers. As with everything, it's all about balance. Often we're out and about in nature, there's wildlife around us, but we don't really know what we're seeing. Putting a name to the things we see or hear can help build an interest, and there are some incredible apps available to help with that, like Merlin Bird ID. You can even use them as a family and learn together.

The way we interact with the world has changed. Computers, apps, social media – they aren't going away anytime soon. We can embrace them to spark children's creativity. You can go online and find a tutorial for making pinecone creatures or other wildlife-inspired crafts, or follow role models using their digital platforms to inspire change. We're seeing a fantastic rise in young nature activists, almost mini celebrities amongst young people. It's a wonderful thing.

The more our young people care about the environment and nature, the better hope we have for a green and sustainable future. But it's about far more than that. There's so much evidence to show that young people who have that connection to nature, who experience nature in their daily lives, are happier and healthier. There are many reasons to encourage children to pursue an interest in nature, and happier children is a big one.

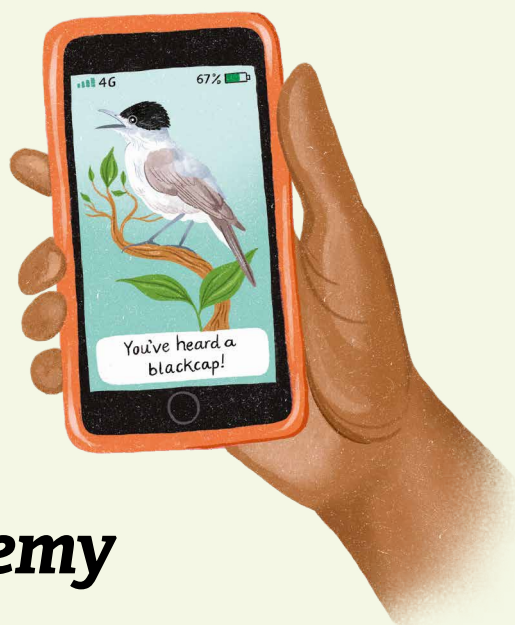
Knowledge of the natural world – and the state it is currently in – can sometimes feel like a burden as well as a blessing. Many of us worry about the future. The climate is changing and we're seeing huge losses of wildlife. Children are not immune to these fears, and we shouldn't try to hide the truth from them. But the way we present these facts matters. It's easy to drown in the negative, but that won't help to change things.

The most important thing we can do as adults is empower young people to feel like they can actually do something, and that their voice matters. We can help alleviate their climate anxiety by showing them that they can get involved with doing something good for the planet, wherever they live. The best place to start is by setting an example for them to follow, in the way we view nature and the actions we take to help it. If children see the adults around them caring, listening to the concerns, and taking meaningful action to help, it can be a huge inspiration.

Technology can help you connect with wildlife from the comfort of your own home. Check out our webcams



wildlifetrusts.org/webcams



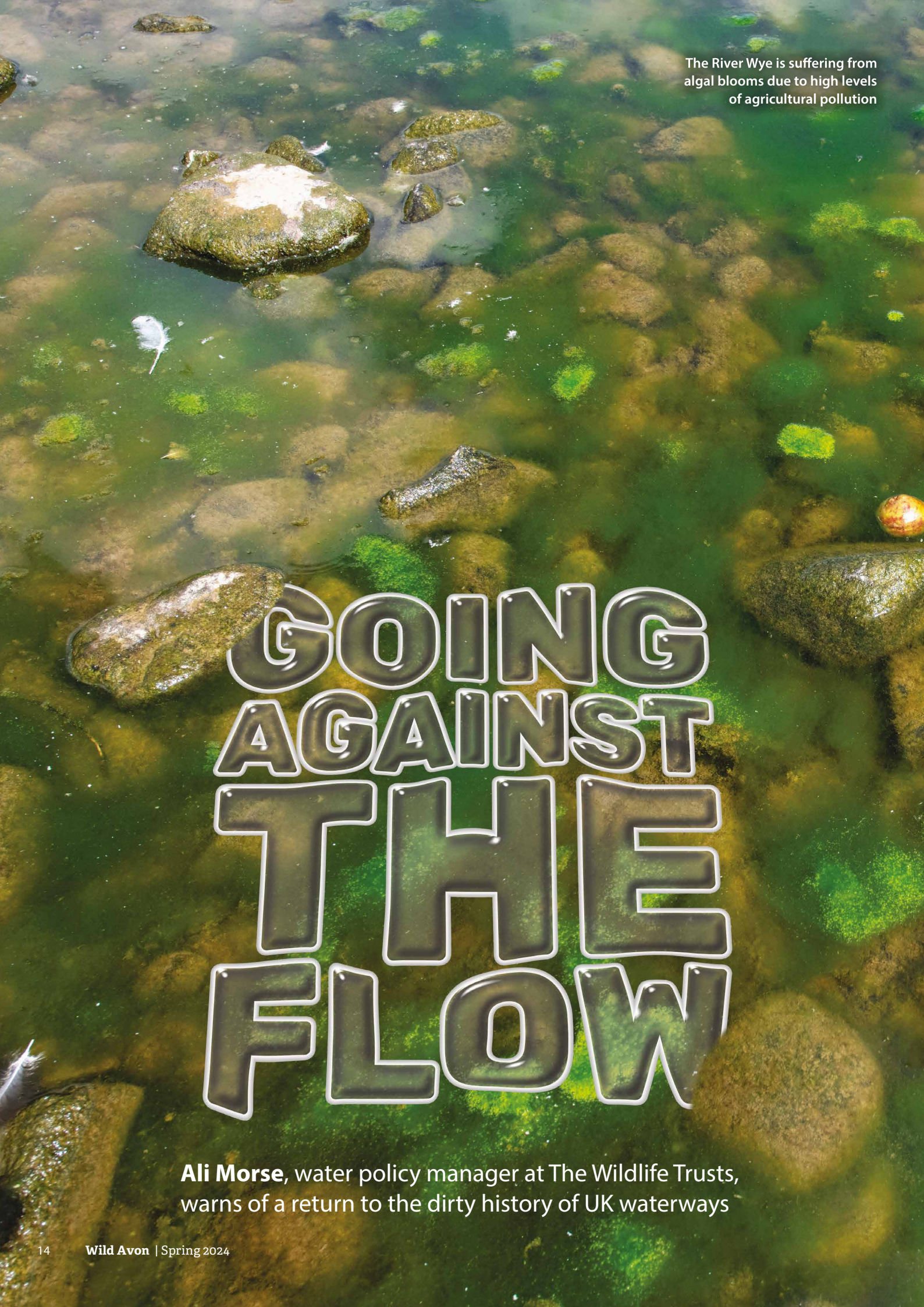
GET INVOLVED

For ways to help the young people around you to nurture a connection to nature, visit The Wildlife Trusts' Wildlife Watch website. You'll find downloadable wildlife spotter guides, self-guided activities and actions to help wildlife and more.

Get inspired at
wildlifewatch.org.uk

Maddie Moate

is one of the few family-focused 'Edu-tubers' in the UK and has been creating fun educational science videos for the past eight years, amassing more than 210,000 subscribers and over 56 million views on her own YouTube channel.



The River Wye is suffering from
algal blooms due to high levels
of agricultural pollution

GOING AGAINST THE FLOW

Ali Morse, water policy manager at The Wildlife Trusts,
warns of a return to the dirty history of UK waterways



Sewage spills are harming wildlife and wild places



Water voles are one of the species at risk of habitat loss

The history of UK rivers has seen raw sewage, waste chemicals and heavy metals poured into watercourses day in, day out. Great rivers like the Mersey were practically devoid of life, and as recently as the 1950's the River Thames was considered 'biologically dead'. Today our rivers don't (usually) resemble putrid open sewers lined with dead fish. Yet many problems remain – poor water quality poses a threat to nature, human health and our economy.

Sewage spills

Headlines have exposed sewage spills, but the harm caused to wildlife is little understood. The UK Government's Environment Act 2021 now requires water companies to monitor impacts and to prevent the most harmful spills. But even when wastewater is treated, the effluent from sewage treatment works may contain industrial chemicals, pharmaceuticals, household cleaning products, illicit drugs and microplastics. It's also high in polluting nutrients like phosphorus, which fuel algal blooms, depleting oxygen and harming aquatic plants, insects, fish and other species.

Thanks to campaigning by supporters of The Wildlife Trusts and others, the UK Government was recently blocked from weakening water protections in places where nutrients are already harming sensitive rivers and coasts. These rules are known as nutrient neutrality and require developers to offset additional pollution from sewage from new housing. They help to prevent development from harming our most important wildlife sites.



Ali Morse

is water policy manager at The Wildlife Trusts. She works collaboratively across the movement, with all Wildlife Trusts and with other organisations, to call for better protections for the water environment.

Farming failures

Farming is the sector responsible for the greatest number of waters failing ecological standards. Excess fertiliser, manure, slurry and eroding soil can all deliver harmful doses of nitrogen or phosphorus to our rivers. Pesticides and veterinary medicines add into the mix. This toxic cocktail of chemicals also flows downstream, contaminating our seas.

Grants can help farmers to provide sufficient storage capacity for slurry and to manage rainwater from yards and roofs that contributes to runoff. Essential environmental schemes encourage farmers to plant cover crops and riverside 'buffers' to prevent soil erosion.

Despite these efforts, collectively these pressures mean our waters are under huge strain. Across the UK, only 36% meet ecological standards and are in good enough condition for wildlife. In England, where pressures are greatest, the figure is just 16%. Phosphorus pollution is the most common cause of failure, so water companies are required to upgrade numerous treatment works by 2030 to strip out phosphate, and more action will be needed from farming too.

Working with nature

From Dorset to Durham, Wildlife Trusts are finding novel ways to prevent nutrient pollution reaching our waters and creating habitat where nature can thrive. In Wiltshire, a chalk stream with habitat for spawning brown trout and endangered water vole is being protected by a restored wetland where road runoff and nutrient-loaded sediment is now captured from fields before it reaches the River Avon.

In Scotland, Warwickshire, Shropshire and Herefordshire, Wildlife Trusts are creating wetland features in farmland, river valleys and towns that capture water in the landscape, reducing flood risk downstream and stopping sewers from being overwhelmed. In other areas, beavers are doing this work for us. Termed 'nature-based solutions', these approaches see nature playing a central role in helping to tackle pollution, whilst also creating spaces where eels, kingfishers, otters and other aquatic life can thrive.

The old adage 'the solution to pollution is dilution' only works up to a point. Instead, the priority must be prevention of pollution at source – all UK governments, farmers, water companies and even the public all have a role to play. But then, when we've exhausted all efforts but still have pollution to tackle in our river systems, we know that nature can help.

Ask your local MP what they intend to do about river pollution and whether policies to protect clean rivers are part of their election manifesto. To find out more about our general election priorities visit wildlifetrusts.org/end-river-pollution

Folly Farm flowers



Since the 1930s, 97% of wildflower meadows have been lost across the UK. These now rare habitats provide food and shelter for a wide range of different wildlife, from tiny invertebrates and vital pollinators to the many birds, bats and small mammals that feed on them.



Folly Farm, in the Chew Valley between Bath and Bristol, is a 250-acre nature reserve where you can find wildflower meadows so unspoilt by pesticides and fertilisers that they are listed as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). In the summer these meadows are filled with colour from wildflowers such as betony, oxeye daisies, black knapweed, devil's-bit scabious and heath spotted-orchid. The air hums with the buzz of bees and the chirps of grasshoppers and crickets, whilst ringlet, gatekeeper, small skipper and marbled white butterflies gently flap between the delicate flower heads. As well as the wildlife, many visitors, wedding guests, school children and nature lovers of all ages enjoy these stunning meadows each year.

Last summer, Avon Wildlife Trust worked with an organisation called Emorsgate Seeds to improve and further spread these meadows across the reserve. Emorsgate Seeds are a family-run business, established by Donald MacIntyre in 1980, that produce and sell wildflower seeds. They grow some single-species crops and mixes for a variety of

different habitats, which they use to aid ecological restoration and rejuvenation across the country.

When they visited Folly Farm last year, they brought their special brush harvesters, developed by Donald in 1986, to carefully collect the seeds from the wildflowers in the meadow.

Laurie from Emorsgate, and Donald's daughter, explained how the brush harvesters work, by "brushing off the mature seed with a forward rotating brush that is soft to avoid harming invertebrates. There is an optimum time for brush harvesting meadows, aiming to catch the peak heading date which is usually between late June and late July." The brush harvester was driven back and forth over the meadow, carefully



brushing the flower heads and removing their seeds.

Once collected, the seeds will be processed to remove any 'chaff', including the seed covering and other debris. Then the seeds will be used to create new areas of meadow and to improve the existing meadows. We are looking forward to seeing how the new meadows will further enhance biodiversity.

Help wildlife at home by creating your own mini meadow

If you want to help wildlife at home, you could try creating your own mini meadow. Laurie's advice on how best to grow wildflowers is to "choose a mixture of generalist flower and grass species. It's also a good idea to add cornfield annual species, as they provide a lovely display of colour in the first season and also act as a nurse cover for the developing perennial meadow species."

"Wildflowers can be grown on any size plot; a window box or balcony setting can still provide colour and a valuable pollen and nectar source for invertebrates. Leaving corners of your garden to go wild

is a great way of helping pollinators and other wildlife, with very little effort involved and maximum reward for bees, butterflies and birds."

No Mow May is a nationwide campaign hoping to encourage people to let their lawns and gardens grow long over the month of May to help provide food and shelter for insects and wildlife. However, if you can leave sections of your garden long and wild for longer e.g. the corners or edges, you will be helping provide habitat for wildlife for more of the summer. Leaving your lawn long will also help it retain water and be more resilient to droughts as our summers continue to get warmer.

Whether you have a large garden or a small one or even just a few plant pots, every action for wildlife will add up and can help out wildlife.

Unsure about what wildflowers to start growing in your garden? Visit Grow Wilder and their wildflower nursery and speak to the team for advice on what species will grow well in your garden.

If you are growing wildflowers and creating space for wildlife, we would love to see what you are up to.

 Tag us on social media or send in your photography to **communications** [@avonwildlifetrust.org.uk](mailto:communications@avonwildlifetrust.org.uk)





Is it time to
wake up to our
shifting seasons?

JON HAWKINS

Spring is a joyous time of year

The dreary, dark and damp days of winter dissolve into warm spring sunshine, accompanied by the buzz of bees, the whiff of blossom and the bleating of newborn lambs. The continuous, sweet melodies of skylarks fall from the sky and verges begin to erupt into colour as wildflowers peek their heads out from the green carpet. For a nature-lover, spring is a time of excitement and hope as we look forward to enjoying more time outside in nature. However, in an ever-changing world, with spring creeping forward each year, are the signs of spring now starting to stir up less positive emotions?

Does the sunshine yellow of a daffodil still spark the same joy when it arrives before Santa?

This winter, Avon Wildlife Trust has been highlighting the needs of some of our most threatened and climate-sensitive species, our hibernators. These charismatic creatures, including hedgehogs, dormice and bats, have spent their winter sheltered away, patiently waiting for spring. Now is the time of year when they emerge and see a world transformed from the winter wonderland they left behind to a lush green paradise filled with colour and plentiful food. As the hedgehogs start to stir, is it time for us to also wake up to the immediate and present threat of a changing climate?

Does the sunshine yellow of a daffodil still spark the same joy when it arrives before Santa?

Breaking Records

Driven by human-caused climate change and heightened by El Niño weather patterns, 2023 was officially the warmest year on record. Our planet was 1.48°C warmer than the time before humans began burning fossil fuels, worryingly close to the 1.5°C targets set out by the Paris Agreement, a threshold that is likely to be passed within the next year according to the Copernicus Climate Change Service (CCCS).

As the hedgehogs start to stir, is it time for us to also wake up to the immediate and present threat of a changing climate?

Between August and December last year there was a continuous period of 116 days where every single day broke the record for global air temperature for that time of year. This record-breaking year was finished with the wettest winter in 130 years in the UK, and large areas of the country started the new year under water. As the temperatures continue to rise, more extreme weather events, storms and floods are going to become more common. The alarm is now ringing very loudly.

So how does the record-breaking temperature increase impact spring? Spring is all about timings. Over the millennia, the ecosystem and everything within it have evolved together to be perfectly in sync. The swallows need to arrive on our shores when the insects are flying so they have enough food to replenish themselves after their mammoth 6,000-mile migration. The blue tit chicks need to hatch when the caterpillars are out so there is enough to feed them. The emergence of the bumblebee must coincide with the opening of the flowers. The hedgehog needs to wake up when there are plenty of beetles around to feed on. The wood anemone growing on the forest floor needs to flower after the winter frost, before the trees above shade them out.

Spring is all about timings. Over the millennia, the ecosystem and everything within it have evolved together to be perfectly in sync

Speed of change

Ecosystems have always adapted to changing climate over the millennia, but it is the speed of the recent change that is the problem. NASA research of ancient 'paleoclimate' "reveals that current warming is occurring roughly 10 times faster than the average rate of warming after an ice age". These rapid changes and extreme events can cause chaos across the ecosystem. In the interconnected web of life, when the planet heats up and the timings of spring change, can species keep up?

Phenology

The study of the timings and cycles of the natural world is called phenology. Scientists have been recording how wildlife is already shifting its behaviour to try and adjust to the rapid changes. A Royal Society report into flowering plants used more than 400,000 observations from as far back as 1753 and found that a 1.2°C rise in temperature brought spring forward by a month. How much earlier will it be in the next few years if we break the 1.5°C mark? The warmer weather also means more erratic weather, with warm spells followed by frost, damaging new plant growth and killing chicks and eggs.

A big favourite of all spring sights is the purple carpet of a bluebell wood. However, even this spring staple of the British countryside is at risk. Some studies warn that we might lose these flowered carpets as the bluebells start to bloom earlier due to warmer temperatures and outside of optimal conditions. This shift in the start of spring is leading to some dramatic changes in animal behaviour too, such as seeing blackbird and great crested grebe chicks as early as January. These early chicks could face difficulties if we experience late January frosts, like we did this year, and they cannot find enough food.

What can we do?

To help combat the growing problem of climate change we need large-scale ecological restoration. Nature can be our ally in combating this emergency. Healthy ecosystems and all the biodiversity within them can act as carbon sinks and provide



PHOTOS: © GEORGE COOK



'nature-based solutions' to climate change. Healthy forests, peatlands, wetlands, oceans and seagrass meadows can all absorb large amounts of carbon.

At Avon Wildlife Trust, thanks to support from our wonderful members and supporters, we are working to create these healthy ecosystems through projects such as Wilder Woodlands at Goblin Combe, Wilder Waterways and our work with beavers. We need more of these large-scale ecological restoration projects here and across the country.

Nature is a major part of the solution.

With these big problems that face the entire planet, it's easy for us as individuals to feel powerless when we are just one person in a global community of eight billion. However, all changes make a difference and your actions can inspire others. Get involved locally by joining Team Wilder.

Team Wilder can help you find inspiration and ideas on how to support nature in your area, discover motivated local people and groups and get guidance from our staff who can provide expert support.

As well as reducing our personal impact on the planet, we can continue to put pressure on decision makers and leaders and

demand action on the climate and ecological emergencies. Sharing campaigns, attending demonstrations and getting involved in conversations are all ways to help.

Taking part in citizen science projects can also contribute to our understanding of how the seasons are changing. The Woodland Trust runs a project called Nature's Calendar, an ongoing project that asks people to submit their sightings to help monitor the impact of climate change on the seasons and wildlife.

Ecosystems have always adapted to changing climate over the millennia, but it is the speed of the recent change that is the problem

As we celebrate spring this year in all its wonderful glory, let us think about how lucky we are to enjoy it. The spectacle of the dawn chorus, the sight of the swooping swallow, the bees, the bugs and everything in between. So, this year as the hedgehog and the dormouse start to stir, let us, too, wake up to the emergency at hand and be part of the solution.

Get involved



Contact your MP and ask them to Defend Nature

www.wildlifetrusts.org/defend-nature

Record your shifting signs of spring:

www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/visiting-woods/things-to-do/natures-calendar



FOCUS ON...

Woodland Homes for Wildlife

If you'd like to help adapt more land into woodland homes for wildlife, Thursday 18th April marks the beginning of The Big Give's Green Match Fund



© DON SUTHERLAND



© AMY LEWIS



© HUGH CLARK

1 in 6 UK species are at risk of extinction. Our changing climate contributes to this, along with the reduction in traditional habitats. This is a storm that many species can't afford to weather.

Unless we adapt, more species that rely on woodland for their homes will be at risk.

We've all noticed trees dropping their leaves later and plants flowering earlier. Our seasons are shifting rapidly.

As we wake up to these challenges, it's important to know that there are steps we can take to help wildlife **adapt**.

Wilder Woodlands is an example of how we can manage landscapes in more diverse and nature-friendly ways. Taking our lead from nature, we can deliberately introduce a variety of trees and plants dotted with glades and ponds.

Poor, fragmented habitat and the loss of traditional management practices such as coppicing are already putting pressure on vulnerable woodland. After decades of planting trees like crops, we urgently need to adapt.

Wilder Woodlands will demonstrate that a more natural environment with deep-rooted trees and strong, healthy plants at their base can reduce soil erosion and reduce the impact of heavy rainfall. We can help slow the flow of water and bring the light back in to the forest floor. This approach can nurture

life throughout local woodlands.

To harness the solutions that nature can offer and create landscapes that can stand up to the challenges of the climate crisis, we need to restore and connect areas.

Unpredictable, milder weather is difficult for species that traditionally hibernate. Broken sleep or waking early comes with a risk of missing the alignment with natural food sources, and a knock-on impact during spring breeding seasons. The increased risk of flooding also presents a huge risk to the dormice on our doorstep, who nestle down in ground nests for the duration of their winter snooze.

Transforming rows of trees into blooming, biodiverse woodland creates homes for wildlife. It is a huge task, but it is possible, and it can reverse declines.

In the future, spring could unfurl across our woodlands. Carpets of nectar-rich flowers could grow towards the light



Vulnerable woodland species like the marsh tit rely on smaller trees and shrubs for food and shelter. These simply don't grow where the canopy blocks out the light and since the 1960s we've witnessed their population decline by 80%

© AMY LEWIS

in the canopy and visitors could catch a glimpse of insects darting through sunbeams. We'd all love to see more creatures waking from their winter shelters to a world alive with potential.

As a member of Avon Wildlife Trust, your support helps staff and volunteers on nature reserves, through rain and shine. **Thank you.**



Between 18 - 25 April 2024
The Big Give's Green Match Fund will double the first **£5,000** donated online. Visit [avonwildlifetrust.org.uk/woodland-homes](https://www.avonwildlifetrust.org.uk/woodland-homes)



© GEORGE COOK

Wilder Woodlands

We are delighted to announce the launch of a new woodland improvement project. Initially based at Goblin Combe and the surrounding woodlands, the first phase of 'Wilder Woodlands' (funded by Natural England's Species Recovery Programme Grant Scheme) will breathe new life into a dense, mixed forestry plantation and start the process of creating a diverse, dynamic, native woodland. Species that will particularly benefit include lesser horseshoe, greater horseshoe and

barbastelle bats and dormice, but many other species are also expected to thrive.

The existing plantation mostly comprises only six tree species which are closely planted, shading out and smothering ground flora, shrubs and understorey trees. The work currently taking place includes thinning a large block of Lawson's cypress, Japanese larch and beech, and opening up wide woodland rides. These rides (corridors of open space in the woodland) and

edges allow flowers, shrubs and small trees to flourish, providing a larder for invertebrates and dormice. New fencing will allow us to introduce a small number of free-ranging cattle to help manage rides and increase dung beetle populations, a crucial food source for breeding horseshoe bats. Veteran tree management and veteranisation will improve nesting prospects for tree-dwelling bats, birds and small rodents. Stay tuned for survey updates and chances to get involved!

Nextdoor Nature

The Nextdoor Nature projects in Bristol and the Somer Valley empower and resource people to take action for nature on their doorsteps. Since 2022, we have been working with communities in Redcliffe and Barton Hill. Recently, communities have been accessing our support fund for exciting projects. Redcliffe Gardening Group is planting hedging for birds and getting in more planters for food growing. Alive Gardening is hoping to install a pond ready for

spring, and The Beehive Centre is building accessible planters for the community to use for food and flower growing. Meanwhile, our work in the Somer Valley has made great progress since starting in the summer of 2023. Following a call for applications for community-led wildlife project ideas, we have now selected four projects. We will be working with Bath College in Radstock, community groups in Paulton, The Hive in Peasedown St John and residents in Writhlington; we are excited to work with these communities to take their ideas forward. All of this community-led work will bring together a



© STEPHANIE SHARKEY

range of people to act for nature, enabling a sense of local pride and helping wildlife thrive long after this project is finished.

Be part of Team Wilder

Team Wilder is a growing movement of people who notice and celebrate nature in their everyday lives. It supports and empowers them to take action for nature at a local level. All actions, no matter how small, all add up and collectively can make a huge difference. We are inviting everyone to be part of Team Wilder!

Share what you do to inspire and encourage others

There are currently over 500 entries on the Team Wilder actions map! Whether you are putting up bird boxes, growing wildflowers or creating a hedgehog highway, upload what actions are happening in your neighbourhood to celebrate what's happening locally and to inspire others to get involved.



Share how you are supporting wildlife

At home

Do you have a wild patch, dead hedge, hedgehog hole, bird feeders or pollinator friendly plants? Just imagine if all your neighbours did the same.

Within the community

Community actions for nature could include litter-picking, planting flowers in an unloved spot or creating a community garden. Team Wilder can help organise whatever activities local people want to be a part of, support your different talents and help build a stronger community together.

At school

Does your school encourage actions for nature? Are you part of a eco-club or a green team?

Whatever you are up to, add your actions to the Team Wilder map avonwildlifetrust.org.uk/team-wilder



Wildlife Champions

When faced with large-scale challenges like the climate and biodiversity crises, it is easy to feel overwhelmed. Yet when we start to notice and celebrate nature in our day-to-day lives and realise the potential of collective community action, things start to become more hopeful. This is the basis of our Wildlife Champions Programme, in which individuals and communities across the region (Bristol, Bath, South Gloucestershire and North Somerset) are being supported and upskilled to become ambassadors for nature in their local communities.

The Wildlife Champions Programme launched in spring 2023 and over 20 people with a passion for nature and

their community have joined as 'Wildlife Champions', sharing knowledge, experience and skills with each other. The champions have nature-based ideas and projects relating to community gardens and orchards, nature photography, recycling, wildlife corridors, wildlife walks, permaculture gardening and more! The aim is to have Wildlife Champions inspiring others and supporting nature's recovery in every postcode in Avon by 2030.

To find out more about the programme and keep up to date with inspiring local stories, check out Avon Wildlife Trust's Wildlife Champions website and The Team Wilder Podcast on Spotify.



MY WILD LIFE

Shaun Waycott

Since the Wildflower Nursery at Grow Wilder opened in 2014, Shaun has helped to sow countless wildflowers. Join us in celebrating a decade of Shaun's wildflower wisdom and meadow creations.

© NICK TURNER



Love of the natural environment, and in particular plants and growing plants, has been a strong thread running through my life. Working with plants has been a strong part of that, thanks to my grandmother for giving me my first plant – an easy-to-grow and reliable busy lizzie houseplant. Both my grandfathers grew their own vegetables and I helped out and started to learn a bit about growing. Childhood holidays were out enjoying the natural environment in the various wilder parts of the UK – the Lake District, Wales, Scotland.

Love of growing led to me growing my own vegetables on shared allotments in various parts of the country where I lived. I worked as a gardener and landscaper, followed by a period working in desk-based jobs completely unrelated to growing, but I continued to grow vegetables and help others with land management.

Shortly after moving to Bristol in 2013 I

came across Grow Wilder, seeing it from a passing bus. The sign on the gate and the glimpse of what was beyond was enough for me to come back a few days later and find out what it was all about.

I was welcomed and immediately joined in the day's jobs. One thing I remember from that day is the colourful, edible flower-adorned communal salad served at lunchtime from vegetables grown on site. An early job I remember well was helping to place turves to make the roundhouse green roof.

I soon became one of the key volunteers helping to organise and run the daily tasks, which could be food growing, land management or any of the daily jobs required to keep a busy site like Grow Wilder going.

When the wildflower nursery started in 2014, funding was found to employ me for one day a week to help produce wildflowers to be given away as part of

Bristol Green Capital 2015. This led to me becoming a project assistant, helping with all aspects of the on-the-ground running of Grow Wilder.

Then, in 2018, I was given the opportunity to run the wildflower nursery, managing a team of up to 20 dedicated volunteers producing thousands of wildflowers each year. These are bought for people's gardens and allotments and local projects large and small, as well as being planted out on site at Grow Wilder.

We also take our plant stall out to support annual events such as the Bristol Seed Swap, the Festival of Nature and the Bee & Pollination Festival, as well as supporting organisations with their on-site planting projects.



Visit the Wildflower Nursery at Grow Wilder [avonwildlifetrust.org.uk/explore/grow-wilder](https://www.avonwildlifetrust.org.uk/explore/grow-wilder)

ACTIONS FOR NATURE

All over the region, members and supporters just like you are doing brilliant things for nature as part of **TeamWilder**. Together these actions add up and make a real difference for wildlife. Thank you for everything you do for nature!



◀ Young wildlife champion Rosie, took to the kitchen to bake some delicious cakes and raised £10 for Avon Wildlife Trust. Thank you, Rosie!

Wheatfield Primary School in South Gloucestershire is doing its bit for nature by creating hedgehog highways, putting up bird and bat boxes, planting trees and hedgerows, and it even has a rain garden! Well done to all staff and students at Wheatfield. ➤



◀ A community group set up by the residents of Meere Bank (nicknamed the 'Meerkats') have set up a community garden and began the year by planting bulbs and hedges. Well done and best of luck with the garden going forward, Meerkats!

One of our Wildlife Champions, Luke Cooper, won the award for adult volunteer of the year at the Love Your Park Volunteer Awards in February for his hard work in Hartcliffe and Withywood. Congratulations Luke and keep up all your fantastic hard work! ➤



◀ Helen Mohan has grown a wonderful wildlife garden at her home in Westbury-on-Trym. She has three ponds, nest boxes for a variety of different bird species, wildflowers, wood piles and a mini-meadow on her lawn that she lets grow long. Well done, Helen!

Bebhinn has become one of our first hedgehog champions in Lockleaze and is signing up members of her community to take action for hedgehogs in her street. Thank you, Bebhinn! ➤



🕒 Get in touch

Are you doing something wonderful for wildlife? Fundraising for frogs? Planting for pollinators? Whatever you are up to, we would love to hear about it. Send in your #ActionsForNature to **Communications@avonwildlifetrust.org.uk** or tag us on social media **@avonwt**

VOLUNTEERING



It's thanks to the support and hard work from volunteers across the Trust, that we are able to do the work we do to restore nature across Avon.



Young Volunteers
Thank you to the 30 young people who have taken part in our young volunteer programme this year.

Nature Reserves Officer, Frances Clinch, wanted to thank all the volunteers carrying out practical work over the winter:

As we come to the end of winter, it's amazing to reflect on all the hard work that our nature reserve volunteers have been carrying out. Winter is an incredibly busy time on our reserves; with much of the wildlife less active or even hibernating, trees having dropped their leaves and plants no longer in flower, it is the perfect opportunity to get a lot of the practical work done without causing much disturbance.

Practical tasks include winter cuts and scrub management on our grasslands, donning waders for pond restoration and making repairs to infrastructure to name just a few. We want to extend a huge thank you to all of our reserve volunteers who have been working hard to care for our nature reserves this winter! Come rain or shine (mostly rain this winter!), our wonderful volunteers are endlessly enthusiastic and dedicated! You all contribute so much to keeping the reserves in good condition for the benefit of wildlife and for people to enjoy, and it just wouldn't be possible without you!



Get involved

We have a range of volunteering opportunities available, from practical conservation to administrative roles. It's a brilliant way to make a real difference to wildlife, improve wellbeing and meet other like-minded people who also want to help nature. To find out more about our opportunities, why not sign up for our quarterly volunteer newsletter? Visit avonwildlifetrust.org.uk/volunteering-opportunities to sign up and find out more about our current opportunities to get involved.

Thank you to Keith Giles!

Keith has been involved with the Trust since its inception nearly 40 years ago. He was Reserve warden for Walton Common and later, warden and 'guardian' for Tickenham Hill and also led both the Gordano Valley Group and the Friday Group.

Keith's contribution to the Trust over the years has been massive, and not only that, but he has been a joy to work alongside and he will be greatly missed by everyone on the Reserves team and beyond! Thank you Keith.

Volunteer Forum

We recently hosted the first Volunteer Forum of the year which brought together volunteers from across the Trust, both physically and virtually, to discuss upcoming projects and address any questions. We gathered at Great George Street, where we delved into the changes occurring within the Trust and provided insights into the upcoming Volunteer Management system, Team Wilder initiatives and answered any questions our volunteers had. Abbie Wiberg, Volunteering Manager, said "Having recently joined the Trust, it was really valuable to connect with some of the volunteers. A massive thank you to all the volunteers who attended; it was delightful to see you, and I eagerly anticipate our future interactions!"

If you are a current volunteer and would like to participate in the next Volunteer Forum, please email the Volunteering Manager at volunteer@avonwildlifetrust.org.uk.



If you'd like to find out more about our local groups, get in touch:

Chew Valley

Andy Davis:
01275 332 601

Gordano Valley

Sarah Kennedy:
01275 817 565/
07853 248 476

Keynsham

Kathy Farrell:
07850 508 702

Portishead

Cynthia Dorn:
01275 843 160

Southwold

Tim Fairhead:
01454 323 608

Build a brighter future for the wildlife you love

A gift in your will could help let the light in to local woodlands for generations to come. Every single gift, large or small, can make a real difference.

Find out more at:
avonwildlifetrust.org.uk/giftinwill



Avon
Wildlife Trust