

WOODPECKERS

The 'life stories' of Great and Lesser Spotted Woodpeckers were described to the Banbury Ornithological Society recently by expert Ken Smith. The latest records from the 'patch' covered by the Ornithological Society, including the parish of Tysoe, reports only 4 sightings of Lesser Spotted Woodpeckers in 2019, compared with almost 500 sightings of their 'Great' cousin. Great Spotted Woodpeckers are a 'good news' story; their numbers increased rapidly



in the 1970s and it is thought that they benefited from the outbreak of Dutch elm disease; feeding on the beetles that were spreading the fungal disease, and nesting in the dead trees. They started to increase again in the mid-1990s and this time they seem to have benefited from the decline in starlings, which compete with them for nesting holes in dead trees, and also by being fed in gardens; they like peanuts and suet/fat blocks. One possible future threat is climate change, which may de-synchronise the timing of breeding with the greatest availability of caterpillars for chick food.

Less is known about Lesser Spotted Woodpeckers, which are the size of a sparrow, and are harder to study because they are so scarce. They nest in woodland and seem to be more abundant in well-wooded areas and where there is a lot of dead wood. They have gradually declined due to poor breeding success, which again may be partly due to lack of synchronisation with the occurrence of peak numbers of caterpillars to feed their chicks. Generally inconspicuous, they only call and drum regularly in February-March. They may also benefit from supplementary feeding and it is possible that ash dieback, leading to an increase in the number of dead trees, may help both species.

More information:

Rosemary Collier

[Woodpecker Network - Home \(woodpecker-network.org.uk\)](http://woodpecker-network.org.uk)

MAKING SPACE FOR NATURE

Spring is definitely on the way and some of the 'trees' in the new wildlife hedge in St Mary's Churchyard have started to sprout. Apart from the magnificent display of primroses in the churchyard, there are some patches of tiny violets on the bank at the top of School Lane, and celandines have started to flower on some of the verges. There are plenty of wild arum plants in the churchyard and under hedgerows. A number of wild birds are starting to nest.

More than 30 households took part in Mother Nature's Quiz on Mothering Sunday and we raised over £500 for the Wildlife Project in Tysoe – which is amazing! A big thank you to everyone who took part and to those who sent donations. There were 8 rounds

of questions on a diversity of topics associated with wildlife and some appropriate 'wildlife' prizes were awarded to those with the highest scores. Again, a big thank you to those who donated prizes and to all who helped to organize the event.

There will be more to report next month when both the existing and new wildflower areas should be underway and we will be preparing for 'No Mow May'.

Rosemary Collier



POP-UP PLANT & PRODUCE STALLS

SATURDAY 1st-8th MAY

Pop-up Plant Stalls near you
Gardeners - please sow now ready to donate plants

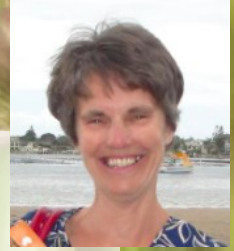
PLANTS & PRODUCE WANTED PLEASE
Please deliver donations of plants to Fudge Ramsay at Burmington Grange or your village coordinator. Donations of home produce welcome.

Please see our website for a list of stall locations
at www.shipstonhomenursing.co.uk/events

For details of how to donate or volunteer to host your own stall - please contact Rebecca Mawle on 01608 674929
Fudge Ramsay 01608 680000 or Caroline Gunn 01608 663508

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Poetry Challenge 2021
WINNER



Hope Springs

By Linda Leonard

Sometimes snow is falling
And often times it rains.
Mist lies heavy on the hills.
Fallen leaves block drains.
Autumn chill is long replaced
By heavy frost or ice
For Winter holds us in a grip
As strong as any vice.

Then suddenly I see the snowdrops
Lighting up the world
And small green shoots of daffodils
And trees with buds unfurled.
I hear the drill of woodpeckers
As they prepare for Spring
And listen to the heavenly sound
Of all the birds that sing.

I feel a warming in the air.
I see the days grow long
And all these signs of nature
Fill my weary heart with song.
At times when life seems dreary
And we're struggling to cope
The Spring's impending coming
Fills the hearts of all with hope.

Photo by Jan Ledermann

Dandelions by Allison Aves



Poetry Challenge
2021
Runner up

Along the lane, beside the stream,
Their yellow petals shine and gleam.
In swathes of golden sunshine sit
The dandelions, where insects flit
And sparrows chirp along the banks.
I wander slowly and give thanks
For all the wondrous bright green springs
Before the heat of summer brings
The jaded colours of the trees
And butterflies and honey bees.



Welcome to Lili-Pegs Plants! We're Josh & Lee, two life long friends, with a passion for plants and a plan to bring colour to your garden.

'Lili-Pegs' is our new business venture, named in honour of our late grandmothers Lilian Welsby and Peggy Wyles, who both loved spending time in their gardens and introduced us to the world of horticulture. Our range includes summer bedding upright and trailing, hanging baskets, succulents and vegetable plants.

Deliveries will start at the end of April, follow us on [Fb@Lili-Pegs Plants](#) for our latest updates and deals! See the website:



www.lilipegsplants.co.uk. We look forward to helping to add a splash of colour to your gardens

Lee and Josh