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Photo: Richard E Photography

**In this issue: Read about the Mindfulness of Nature  
A Hare-raising Interview with Richard Ellis  
How Tysoe Connects with the World**

## NATURE NOTES—GRASSHOPPERS

I spotted a colony of grasshoppers in the allotments in early June and it reminded me what engaging and relatively noisy insects they can be. They, and crickets, belong to the insect family known as Orthoptera, as do their larger and more voracious cousins, the locusts. There are 27 native species of grasshopper and cricket. They are common in many habitats, cause no apparent damage, and provide a source of food for birds such as skylarks and grey partridge, for lizards and slow-worms, and small mammals such as harvest mice. Crickets also help with pest control by, for example, eating greenfly.



Like butterflies, grasshoppers and crickets are considered important indicators of the state of the natural environment. The *Grasshoppers and Related Insects Recording Scheme* was launched in 1968 and information gathered by volunteers shows how grasshoppers and crickets are responding to changes in land use and climate. Indeed, there have been some enormous changes over the last few decades; several species that were once rare have become more widespread, whilst other more common species have declined. In addition, a number of new species have arrived in Britain, probably expanding their range in response to climate change.

The grasshoppers in the allotments are most likely to be the common field grasshopper. The adults are active from June until late autumn, feeding on grasses and other plants. The males display by rubbing their legs against their wings to create a brief, single chirp, repeated at short intervals. The females lay their eggs in the soil and these hatch in the following spring. In the allotments I saw lots of youngsters, which look like the adult grasshoppers, but are smaller and have no wings.

Rosemary Collier

## MINDFULNESS AND NATURE

There have been unexpected positives of lockdown. For those not run off their feet as key workers, parents or carers, life has slowed down. Living in Tysoe Parish, even if gardens are small, we have this beautiful rural landscape in which to meander. And this year, forced to do less and go nowhere, we've been able to watch spring and summer unfurl in ways that, perhaps, we haven't before.

It's been a stressful year for nature – a wet winter, a dry spring, the winds too often from the north. Yet nature's resilience inspires us: the changing whites of the blackthorn, then hawthorn, then elder blossom in the hedgerows. The rich buttercup yellow of the meadows, the deep pink of the red campion, the fluffy cow parsley, then the mellow blues of the meadow cranesbill on the uncut verges, have been a joy. The dawn chorus has felt louder than ever, with so many baby birds coming into our gardens. Is the reduced pollution making a positive difference, or is it simply that this year we are more aware of the natural world around us?

Perhaps the answer is both. Certainly, many are experiencing the profound value of nature on their own sense of wellbeing. Whether gardening, taking a stroll or just pausing to watch from an armchair or field gate, nature refreshes us. It calms us, centring us, helping us find our feet in the here and now, in the company of the goldfinches, small tortoiseshells, dog roses, busy hoverflies and bumblebees ...

As lockdown lifts, feelings of anxiety are rising, so how can we *not* slide back into a frantic lifestyle? We can decide not to drive (or fly) unless it's really necessary – each one of us helping keep air pollution down, minimising damage to the environment. And, just as valuably, we can resolve to make time every day to pause, to watch nature, and do so for long enough to regain that sense of quiet calm, retaining or regaining the sense of stillness and presence discovered in lockdown.

Emma Restall Orr  
Sun Rising Natural Burial Ground and Nature Reserve

## GETTING UP CLOSE TO NATURE WITH RICHARD ELLIS

Many Tysoe Facebook followers will be familiar with the wonderful images by Richard Ellis. The Record caught up with him to discover the secrets to his art.

### **How long have you been into photography?**

My photography has really taken off in the last 2-3 years after a trip to Utah, USA. If I'm away with work, I'll take a camera with me to places like the Forth Bridge in Scotland or to Ireland and capture cityscapes like Dublin or Belfast in my downtime.



### **What is your favourite type of photography?**

Working in the motorsport industry I can shoot those events for free. I photographed the Rally GB in mid Wales which I really enjoyed, but landscape and nature/wildlife are my favourites. I love the peace and separation of nature away from my noisy world. It's a great balance!



### **What equipment do you use?**

Nikon is my preferred brand, I shoot with both DSLR and Mirrorless. I use various lenses from large telephoto (wildlife) to a really wide angle fixed prime (one length) lens for landscapes/astro. I also use macro lenses (flowers/insects/butterflies) for max magnification. A high, quality general zoom lens is always attached to the camera which covers most general subjects.

### **Tell us about the front cover photo: The Tysoe Hare**

I've followed the same drove of hares for over two years on and off, stopping off virtually every day after work, so these guys (the older ones) are quite used to me lying amongst the grasses with a huge camera and lens. I've managed to capture some very special moments.

### **Have you got any tips for budding photographers?**

The best tips I tell people is to learn your equipment, keep doing what you do but do your own thing, don't follow others. Learn your subject (wildlife) wait watch and listen as 'photography is always more than just the click.'

You can see more of Richard's work at: [richardephotography.com](http://richardephotography.com) or on Facebook and Instagram (see inside back cover for his contact details).

## MEMORIES OF TYSOE FLOWER SHOW

As lockdown has forced us to cancel this year's Flower Show, we thought this would be a good time to celebrate the long history of our traditional country show by winking out the stories and photos hidden away in our memories, attics and cupboards before they are lost to posterity. The aim is to tell the story of the Flower Show, in words and pictures, and to share our memories, the more amusing the better, on the Record's Facebook page alongside a special 'Flower Show' edition of the Record. All contributions welcome.

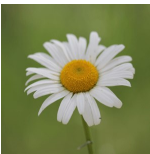


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Bridget Norton

## MAKING SPACE FOR NATURE

The wildflower areas in the Churchyard and School Lane have made good progress during the last few weeks and the area closest to the church has been a blaze of yellow – with buttercups and yellow rattle. The bank in School Lane is starting to reveal a variety of wildflowers, suppressed for many years by the regular mowing, but which have managed to hang on.



Most spectacular in early June were the ox-eye daisies, which are also allowed to flourish in other parts of the village. My gardening hero Dan Pearson, published a lovely blog about them at the beginning of June <http://digdelve.com/leucanthemum-vulgare/>.

This year the wildflower charity Plantlife has been promoting 'No Mow May' to promote the fact that when it comes to providing vital nectar and pollen for bees, butterflies and other pollinating insects, the flowers in an average-sized lawn can produce enough nectar each day to support over a thousand honeybees. We had a small campaign in Tysoe and counted the flowers in some of the unmown areas in the Churchyard wildflower area, a single square metre contained over 500 flowers!

Rosemary Collier