





# Ramsbury and Axford Village Diary

## October 2020



May we have items for the November diary before 10 October.  
They may be left at the Post Office or sent to [diary@ramsbury.org](mailto:diary@ramsbury.org)

### **NATURE NOTES** by *Peter Marren*

Autumn is upon us, so far with a distinct sense of Keats' 'season of mist and mellow fruitfulness'. In the first days of September, insects were still numerous. Summer-brood white butterflies still fluttered by the wayside, and brown Speckled Woods along shady paths. They will disappear as the days grow colder, but the Red Admirals, Peacocks, Small Tortoiseshells, Commas and Brimstones are busy feeding up before they hibernate. Some of them we will see again in six months' time. Autumn moths are plentiful, and many of them have wing patterns that make them virtually invisible when at rest on colouring leaves. Enjoy the poetry of their names: Flounced Rustic, Yellow-line Quaker, Beaded Chestnut, Barred Sallow, Feathered Gothic, Lunar Underwing, Setaceous Hebrew Character. They have born these lovely names for upwards of two hundred years.

My neighbours have a small oak tree which at this time of year is covered in tiny galls. These are coloured swellings produced on leaves and twigs by tiny wasps as homes for their pin-head sized larvae. Some leaves are covered with pretty button galls, so called because they look like miniature, old-fashioned silk buttons. There are also spangle galls, flanged bumps like little cushions, and hundreds of marble galls, brown, cherry-sized balls which were once used to manufacture a black ink. Some of the huge crop of acorns this year have a distorted knobby green growth known as a knopper gall, inside which lurks another tiny wasp maggot. As far as we know, these galls do no harm to the tree. But, all the same, I have never seen so many galls as on my neighbour's tree, and I suspect it is nature's way of telling them that it is not in the best of health.

Fungi are starting to appear under trees, including puffballs, milkcaps, yellow and red britlegills (*Russula*) and little brown jobs known as toughshanks (*Collybia*), though not yet in great numbers. The most dramatic is the huge, rock-hard artist's bracket, which has a taste for beech and our aging London planes, for example on the shady lane near Manor Bridge. This is one of the few fungi that can digest lignin, the tough-as-steel cell-wall material that enables those trees to reach a hundred feet in height. It enables the bracket fungus to become woody too, and so live for months if not years.

Just a final note to mention that our book, *The Consolation of Nature: Spring in the time of the coronavirus* will be out on 15th October, and hopefully signed copies will be available in the Post Office. A third of it (the bit by me) is in praise of Ramsbury!

### **RAINFALL**

Rainfall for August was 82.5 mm, 3.25 ins., well above the average of 66.9 mm, 2.63 ins. September has started very dry, only 4mm in the first 12 days.

## **BIRD NOTES** by Paul Swan

As I write, the swallows and house martins are still with us, but will be gone soon. As they head south we can start looking for our autumn arrivals like fieldfares and redwings to arrive from further north.

As usual, the first birds to start singing after the annual moult have been the robins, and they are lovely to hear. We seem to have one robin that has learned to take food from the bird feeder, rather than from the ground below like most robins. Having put up a new bird feeder in a different part of the garden, we were pleased to see that the coal tit was the first to discover it, with the robin a close second. The coal tits are intriguing as they rush back and forth apparently only taking a single seed at each visit. They hide these seeds and often forget where they are. The coal tit and the jay are the most frequent culprits when we find an unexpected plant growing in an unexpected place.

On a walk to Littlecote we were escorted by a juvenile buzzard, flying from tree to tree and calling insistently to its parents circling high above. I have also been told about a buzzard flying with a slow worm in its beak, being mobbed by a couple of jackdaws.

A Cetti's warbler has been heard at the Triangle and an Eurasian treecreeper at Seven Bridges.

At this time of year many birds go around in mixed flocks, and they are thought to be mostly juvenile birds learning from each other about good sources of food. We have had the pleasure of visits from a family of long tailed tits. I don't think I have ever seen one of these by itself. Their antics always make us smile, as there often seems to be one left behind who chases on noisily to catch up.

Biggest treat for me this month did not involve a bird at all. Sitting in the sun with my arm resting on the edge of our small, raised pond, I was delighted to be 'buzzed' by a stunning bright green dragonfly. It then landed on my arm and stayed for a few seconds while establishing that I was no use as food or a potential mate. A truly magic moment!

### **Holy Cross and St. Michael's Axford**

**New Team Rector:** the Revd Beth Hutton will be licensed on the 19th November. We look forward to welcoming Beth as Team Rector as we seek to serve our communities and share the good news of Christ with all ages.

**Keep informed!** receive all the latest service details and resources by email - please email [pcc@whittonteam.org.uk](mailto:pcc@whittonteam.org.uk) and we shall add you to our regular emailing list. Look us up on our **website:** [www.whittonteam.org.uk](http://www.whittonteam.org.uk) or find us on our **Facebook page:** @whittonteamnews.

Look out for our regular short video reflections "Whitton Wonderings" and the latest information on our planned 'Parish Away Weekend' scheduled for October next year (2021!).

**Holy Cross church is open Every Day!** (between 2pm and 3pm) for private prayer, quiet meditation, or simply to 'be in church'. Please observe all of the notices!

**Sunday Services!** We continue to have a 10am Holy Communion service each week in October - alternating between Holy Cross Ramsbury (11th and 25th) and St Michael's Aldbourne (4th, 18th & 25th). Video recordings of these services will also be made available on our Facebook page.

There will also be an 8am (Book of Common Prayer) Communion Service in Holy Cross Ramsbury on the 4th and in St Mary's Chilton Foliat on 18th.

**Thursdays!** There will be a 10am service of Holy Communion in Holy Cross on the second and fourth Thursdays.

*Please remember that masks are now mandatory unless you are exempt.*

**Online!** We are continuing with our dial-in and internet accessible Services of the Word at 11:30am every Sunday using ZOOM.

Also on ZOOM, our monthly contemplative service 'Reflective Spaces' will be on Wednesday 28th October at 7:30pm.

*Details on how to join our Zoom services are available in the church notices, noticeboards and online.*

## **Methodist Church**

As we move forward in the start of a new year in the Methodist Circuit from September, this is the time when our Methodist ministers begin their new appointments, or an extension as it may be called, and stay in their own circuit. This is also a time for a new start for us all, as we move forward to open our churches for Worship, or a new kind of Worship, they call it the New Normal, I not sure about that. We have to get used to no singing, music on CDs, taking our own Bible, printing our own service sheets, using face masks, sanitising hands, and watching out for social distance stickers on the floor, so much to think about. Some of our churches are open, others are checking the guidelines to open.

Aldbourne will be opening soon, maybe in time for our new magazine out in October. What can we learn from these extraordinary times as we return into our church buildings? We can expect the online service to stay as a new way of connecting with a new audience, some services have been Zoom, many of us are getting used to this new way of connecting to our church. Whichever way we are using, God is there helping, showing us the way, hold us in his hands. Surrounding us with love.

Coffee Morning news. As it sadly seems, the space at the Lychgate has no space for social distancing and is very small, so it seems we cannot use it this year, but we have good news, we have been making use of the lovely weather in our garden, it so special to enjoy friendship, coffee and sunshine in God's creation. As we move in to October, we will pray for more lovely sunny mornings, to hold more coffee mornings, watch out for posters in midway store or the Post office at short notice. We are also open to new ideas, how and where to run the coffee morning as the winter moves in.

## **Recreation Centre 200 Club**

£100 to Catherine Fletcher, £50 to each of Sheila Glass, Lynne Coplestone, Casper Stephenson, Jenny Mantle and Janet Halliday-Stronge, and £25 to each of Mike McNeilage, Chris Snelling, Liz Hawes, Simon Smith, Chris Wilson and Paul Foley. The club costs £60 a year to join. Funds are split 50/50 between prizes and the Recreation Centre. To join, contact Ian Smith on 07977 473975 or [oldtiff@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:oldtiff@hotmail.co.uk)

## **RAGS**

Ramsbury and Axford Golf Society October event at Tidworth Garrison Golf Club on Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> October. For further details contact Robert Osmond on 520568 or email [osmond48@btinternet.com](mailto:osmond48@btinternet.com)

## **Ramsbury Flyer**

The Ramsbury Flyer is back but operating a restricted service to Hungerford Tesco. Wednesday only – maximum with 5 return passengers, leaving The Pond, Aldbourne at 10am, The Square, Ramsbury 10.16am. Strictly by booking in advance. To book please call Janet on 01672 520682/07584 253117. Surgery Transport continues every Tuesday and Thursday.

## **Ramsbury Roxy**

Ramsbury Roxy has been suspended during the Covid 19 situation. We look forward to seeing you all again at our film nights as soon as possible. We welcome suggestions for films you would like to see in our future programmes. Contact us on [roxy@ramsbury.org](mailto:roxy@ramsbury.org)

## **Ramsbury and Axford Poppy Appeal 2020**

Due to Covid 19 and all its uncertainties the British Legion Poppy Appeal have announced that this year's Poppy Appeal will take a different format. There will be NO House to House collection and NO Static Boxes throughout the Villages this year, however, Remembrance Wreaths and Wooden Poppy Crosses will be available. At the moment, due to the Poppy Factory closure earlier in the year there is a reduced stock of Poppies and Poppy Pins, these will only be made available via large stores in retail outlets.

I currently retain a small supply of traditional Poppies which will be available once a legal way is established for me to distribute them. I am also hopeful that I can obtain some Poppy Appeal Gift Aid Envelopes as another avenue of fund raising. Paul Snook 01672 520970.

### ***Ramsbury Lunch Club***

Owing to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, Ramsbury Lunch Club will not meet for the rest of 2020. The situation will be reviewed again early in 2021.

### ***Ramsbury Memorial Hall Caretaker Required.***

After 10 years the Memorial Hall Caretaker, Steve Alder, has decided to take a well earned rest. Thank you Steve for your dedicated work over the years. The Hall has been the centre of village life for 100 years and, although closed at the moment owing to Covid-19, still needs a caretaker. This is a great opportunity to help run this incredible village amenity, and takes only a few hours a week. The workload can vary depending on the number of hires, but most fall into a regular weekly pattern. Don't delay. For more details on hours and pay please contact Robert Osmond on 01672 520568 or email [osmond48@btinternet.com](mailto:osmond48@btinternet.com)

### ***Diary co-editor required***

Caretaking the village hall not your forte? Perhaps you could help the diary team instead! After many years, the time has come for me to step back from editing the diary and I'm sure one of our loyal readers could help John on a bi-monthly basis. We organised our rota around holidays (remember those?!) and other commitments. Interested? Please get in touch [diary@ramsbury.org](mailto:diary@ramsbury.org). Thank you.

***Edited by Emma Jeffery***  
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