

Easton Village Newsletter

Issue 43

May 2008

NATURE NOTES 37



Where have all the honey-bees gone? I walked around my early-flowering pears and apples on a lovely warm afternoon this week and counted just four bees when the air should have been full of the sound of their wings. For answer, see below. On the other hand, tawny-tailed bumblebees are quite busy, though they prefer flowers with narrow 'throats', like gooseberry, and weed flowers like white deadnettle and ground ivy. And it's still mostly just the over-wintered queens while they build up their worker colonies. Our summerhouse had six queen wasps emerging from hibernation (as well as two dead hornets); they mostly feed on small caterpillars and other garden pests so are quite useful in another way. March and April have been good months for bird records: a Kingfisher at Angie and Matt's pond, a Reed Bunting in Val Ellis' garden, Little Owls on the church seen by Charles Nixon, Treecreepers creeping up trees in Geoff and Gwen's and the Hyde's gardens; my sighting of both a Kite and a Buzzard in Easton on the same day scarcely merits a mention now! Wendy Kruger found a fine male Great Crested Newt in her pony field in March, and the topped-up ponds this winter should provide good breeding grounds for all amphibians. The first butterfly sighting this year was a Small Tortoiseshell by Val on March 3rd. This used to be one of our most common butterflies and I was surprised to hear it mentioned last week among several that are suffering big national declines following last year's wet summer.



Dawn chorus walk on Saturday 17th May: meet at Brook House at 5.30 a.m. followed by breakfast at the Bell's in Broadweir.

BEE-KEEPING



I looked at the hives on April 22nd - the first warm spring day- and there are two colonies that have survived the winter. One is very small and will need nursing up to full strength; the other one, a swarm from last year, is vigorous but I could see stunted bees and a varroa mite wandering about so they must be treated to reduce the mite population and give the bees a chance to increase their number before the main honey flow. The late spring means we are at least three weeks behind, although I see the rape is out;

however, the best honey comes after the rape, so I hope they will be ready for that.

Peter Gould

49 CLUB

The winner of the March draw was Helen Moyles, whilst Janet Thomason was the lucky winner of the April draw. The 49 Club is a valuable source of income for the Church Fabric Fund and the PCC is very grateful to Caroline and Peter for organising this. Now is the time to renew your membership of the 49 Club so why not sign up for this now?

CHURCH NEWS

A BIG THANK YOU to everyone who so kindly helps to keep the Church clean and all who arrange the altar flowers throughout the year; also to those who cut the Churchyard grass regularly during the summer. We could not manage without your invaluable support and visitors often remark how well cared-for the Church looks. At times with Church-cleaning we do need back-up in the event of illness, emergencies or holidays and if there are any people who might be willing to help out sometimes we should be extremely grateful. (Please contact Stephanie Silcock Tel: 890455).

We also need extra help with the Churchyard grass cutting during the summer months. Is there anyone, please, who could possibly help with one or two cuts a year? (Please contact Peter Gould Tel: 891043).

MAY SERVICES

Ascension Day this year falls on Thursday, 1st May. Holy Communion will be celebrated at 9.00 a.m. in Spaldwick and at 7.00 p.m. in Barham. Other services during May will be:

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| 4 th May | - 9.30 a.m. Sunday Worship; |
| 11 th May (Pentecost/Whitsunday) | - 6.00 p.m. Evensong |
| 18 th May | - 9.30 a.m. Eucharist; |
| 25 th May | - 8.00 a.m. Eucharist |

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ROYAL BRITISH LEGION

A good number of villagers attended the presentation in Kimbolton last month on "A Soldier's Life in Afghanistan" and enjoyed an extremely interesting evening. They will be pleased to know that over £2,000 was raised towards the Royal Anglian Afghan Memorial Fund and the Kimbolton Branch is very grateful for your support.

ROAD SAFETY

Now that the weather is getting better and the children are around the village, may we please remind people to slow down when going through or around the village. There have been numerous occasions where vehicles have gone through the village either to the A14 or away from the A14 faster than the designated speed limit. It is anticipated that enforcement of the speed limit will be conducted by Cambridgeshire police's traffic unit.

CRIME PREVENTION

David Hindmarsh

At the Annual Parish Council Meeting crime prevention was raised as an issue. The PCSO briefly spoke about a product called SMART WATER. However, she didn't really go into much detail with regards this. There are a number of kits that can be purchased and they will invisibly mark any item of property you can think of. The product won't stop your property from being stolen but will give you a fighting chance of getting it back. I have used smart water in a number of police operations and we have recovered every item that was marked. Smart water can also be installed at vulnerable premises, and should the venue be the subject of a burglary, the water is activated spraying the burglar. The water then stays on the skin for around 6 months. There have also been reported cases of people being arrested at night clubs/discos months after committing a burglary, because the ultra violet light used at these venues shows the smart water. If enough people are interested in purchasing the kits it should be possible to get them at a reduced price. Please contact me at Trevellas in The Lane.

HOMES DESPERATELY NEEDED FOR ADULT CATS



St Neots and District Cats Protection are appealing for new and loving homes for a number of adult cats that are being cared for by the branch. They are under pressure as all their pens and fosterers are full and they have many more needy cats on their waiting list. The advantages of adopting an older cat are numerous: all cats from Cats Protection are neutered or spayed, vaccinated, blood-tested and micro-chipped and are ready to go to their new homes immediately, unlike kittens whose owners will have to pay for the various vet treatments costing well over £100. Another benefit of an adult cat is that a new owner who is not at home during the day need not worry as the cat is likely to settle down and sleep until the owner is home and it will revolve its life around you. The cats in the St Neots and District Branch come in all shapes, sizes, colours and temperaments. There really will be one to suit you, so please ring them on 01480-476696 and make an adult cat an offer of a new start!

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