

Easton Village Newsletter

Issue 88

January 2012



NATURE NOTES 69



My October issue of *British Wildlife* contained an article on 'Large house spiders in the British Isles: past, present and future' and, as I had just photographed one in our living room, I thought I might pass on a few facts you've always wanted to know! There are three large species in England and ours here is clearly *Tegenaria gigantea*, with body lengths up to 16 millimetres and leg spans about four times that (2½ inches). As the article says, "their size, hairiness and habit of stopping in the middle of floors make them the *bête noir* of those suffering from arachnophobia." They mature in the autumn and the males then wander around looking for females, "racing across rooms and falling into sinks and bathtubs". With the onset of cold weather the males die but the females

overwinter in a chosen retreat and lay up to ten egg sacs in the spring. The author ends by asking for live specimens to be sent from northern England and Scotland to study distributions and hybridisation, so next time you head north be sure to take a large empty matchbox with you!

On a less hairy but more prickly note, if anyone has seen a hedgehog this year, please let me know.

ROYAL BRITISH LEGION

The annual collection in the village for The Royal British Legion Poppy Appeal amounted to £124.51 - a really good sum. Many thanks to everyone who gave so generously.

WOOLLEY HILL WIND FARM INQUIRY

The Woolley Hill Wind Farm Inquiry is being held at the Council Offices, Pathfinder House, Huntingdon from 10th January and is expected to last until around 20th January. The Action Group now has a barrister, Peter Jennings, to represent them. Beth Davis has been asked to supply a written statement on the Landscape and History of the site; she has found that Weybridge Forest, that abuts the site, was the hunting forest of James I. A document and seal giving the wardenship of the forest to Sir Oliver Cromwell of Hinchingbrooke House is in the Huntingdon Record Office. The wind farm site shares an ancient boundary with the forest, and Weybridge Lodge, formerly in the forest, is the hunting lodge perhaps built for James I and is largely intact. It is now surrounded by later buildings.

CHURCH NEWS

We would like to thank everyone who participated in the Christmas celebrations at St. Peter's, particularly those who decorated the Church so beautifully and those who provided refreshments for the Carol Service. There are a number of special events taking place during January, notably the Christingle Service on 8th January and for the first time in recent memory, Easton is hosting a Group Eucharist at the end of the month. Please come and make our neighbouring parishes feel welcome.

Services during January will be:

- 1st January - No service in Easton. Nearest services are 9.30 a.m. in Ellington and 6.00 p.m. in Spaldwick
- 8th January - 4.00 p.m. Christingle Service
- 15th January - 9.30 a.m. Eucharist
- 22nd January - 6.00 p.m. Eucharist
- 29th January - 10.00 a.m. Group Eucharist in Easton



ANNUAL QUIZ NIGHT

This popular annual event will take place on Saturday, 4th February in Spaldwick School. Tickets will be on sale shortly so please get your teams together (6 to a team, please; larger teams may be penalised!) and be ready to purchase your tickets when they are available.

REPAIRS TO BRIDGES & CARRIAGEWAYS – A14

The Highways Agency wish to make you aware that there will be repairs taking place over the next 3 months between Junction 23 (Spittals Interchange) and Junction 24 (Godmanchester). The first part of the work will involve weekend closures of the Westbound carriageway and the latter part, weekend closure of the Eastbound carriageway. Further details are available on the Parish Noticeboard.