

Easton Village Newsletter

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NATURE NOTES 77

Brian Davis



Watch out! It's not just Muntjac that could be browsing your cherished shrubs but a herd of Sika deer. This photograph was taken on a field edge near Woolley at dusk on 22nd February by Jane Watson (who used to play the organ for us). There was one stag with good antlers and six hinds, apparently escaped from (or released by) a local farmer. There are only two native species of deer in Britain – Red deer and Roe. Fallow were introduced from mainland Europe by the Normans while feral Muntjac and Sika deer are escapees from Woburn Park and other collections. A fourth species, Chinese water deer, which is intermediate in size between Roe and Muntjac, similarly

escaped from Whipsnade Zoo nearly a hundred years ago and has established colonies in places like Woodwalton Fen and the Norfolk Broads. The impact of feral deer in woodlands in East Anglia is really quite severe as they prevent regeneration of young and coppiced trees, and remove the undergrowth of brambles etc, reducing nesting habitat for some birds. A friend and former colleague has made standardised counts of Muntjac and Chinese water deer in Huntingdonshire for many years. He only had to make a cursory glance round my garden to spot the tell-tale browse line from Muntjac. Hopefully, these Sika deer will not cross the A14 to Easton. This is lethal for mammals: I have seen two dead badgers between the Woolley turn and Ellington already this year – and a dead Muntjac on the verge by Shepherds Close.

SERVICES DURING MAY

5 th May	-	9.30 a.m.	Sunday Worship
12 th May	-	6.00 p.m.	Evensong
19 th May	-	9.30 a.m.	Pentecost Eucharist
26 th May	-	No service in Easton.	

Nearest services are at Spaldwick (9.30 a.m.) and Ellington (11.00 a.m.)

A CHALLENGE FROM JOHN HILL!

These are the birds we have seen feeding in the garden since we came back from holiday on March 18. Any challenges?

Jay, Wren, Pheasant, Kestrel, Wagtail, Great tit, Willow tit, long tailed tit, Coal tit House sparrow, Tree/Hedge sparrow, Magpie, Chaffinch, Bullfinch, Fieldfare, Pied woodpecker, Green woodpecker, Ring necked dove, Wood pigeon, Blackbird, Thrush, Starling, Robin, Goldfinch, Greenfinch, Rook, Crow, Jackdaw, and a Sparrow hawk (we think) and overhead a buzzard and a Kite.

DOES ANYONE IN THE VILLAGE OWN A LARGE GREY/SILVER TABBY TOM CAT?

If anyone owns or knows who owns a large, grey/silver tabby tom cat could they please give Melissa or Charles Nixon a call on 890382. We are not sure if it is a stray and would like to find out if anyone owns him. Thank you.

