

Easton Village Newsletter

Issue 152

June 2017

NATURE NOTE 101

Brian Davis



Last month Wendy Kruger said she had had a marvellous view of a polecat trotting along the road beside Brook House before it darted behind a planter – like this view by Henry Stanier of the Wildlife Trust. And a little earlier, I saw a stoat (with its black-tipped tail) bounding across the Stonely road near the Easton village sign. These both belong in the weasel family, together with the badger, otter and pine marten in this country, and skunk and racoon in America – 57 species world-wide. For comparison, among other Carnivora, the cat family comprises 41 species (from lion down to our moggy), the dog family has 35 species including foxes, wolf and jackal, and the bear family just 8

species including the vegetarian giant panda! The polecat itself can be divided into seven subspecies, including the common polecat, the Mediterranean, Russian and Carpathian polecats, and ferret. This last is really just a domesticated form, and since escaped individuals readily interbreed with polecats, the hybrids are often not readily distinguishable by sight – or even by DNA analysis. Polecats are first known in Britain from the middle Ice Age, while ferrets are mentioned in Greek literature from 350 BC for controlling rabbits. The main prey of polecats is rodents, including rats, but they will also take rabbits and birds – the last making them obvious villains in the countryside for those keeping chickens or rearing game birds. Their numbers have been greatly reduced in the past by gamekeepers, but they seem to be spreading back slowly in Huntingdonshire now; the Cambridgeshire mammal atlas shows a scattering of records across Huntingdonshire, especially around the Nene valley near Peterborough.

This time last year we were enjoying watching Spotted flycatchers feeding their chicks, four of which duly flew the nest. Alas, they have not returned to the nest tray this year, but Michael Holdsworth paid a visit recently and managed to 'call up' at least three different birds using a recording of their tweet – in the gardens of Brook House, Eversden Cottage and Garden Cottage. Stephanie Silcock says they almost certainly have a pair nesting secretly somewhere. So come on, you northern Eastoners! Someone must have a flycatcher.



THE THREE SHIRES WAY

Those of us using the Three Shires Way to Spaldwick will have noticed that due to increased use in the last 12 months, the start of the byway by Townsend Farm had become severely rutted and muddy, making it very awkward to negotiate this first stretch of the track in wet weather. The worst of the ruts in the surface have now been filled in for the first few yards. This work was done on the evening of 13th June by a small gang – JaB, RiB, BD, JJ, GM, ST and CW. Special thanks are due to JJ for finding a source of material, fetching it in a trailer the 20 miles from Bromham, and for negotiating a zero cost to Easton Parish Council.

SUNDAY SERVICES FOR JULY

Sunday 2nd JULY (Trinity III) 10.45 KIM United Parish Communion (Rev N Bland) (and lunch)	Sunday 9th (Trinity IV) 09.30 TIL Family Service (Mrs L Bowring) 09.30 EAS Parish Communion (Rev S Bowring) 10.45 KIM Parish Communion (Rev S Bowring) 16.30 SPA Messy Church (team)
Sunday 16th (Trinity V) 09.00 STO BCP Communion (Rev Dr J Rawlinson) 09.30 COV Morning Worship (Mrs L Bowring) 09.30 SPA Parish Communion (Rev S Bowring) 10.45 KIM Matins (t.b.a.) 11.00 BAR Family Service (Rev S Bowring) 15.00 KIM "Messy Church" (Rev S Bowring) 18.00 EAS Evensong (Rev S Bowring)	Sunday 23rd (Trinity VI) 09.30 TIL Parish Communion (Rev S Bowring) 09.30 EAS Morning Worship (Mr M Baker) 10.45 KIM Parish Communion (Rev R Lancaster) 17.00 SPA Prayer & Praise (Rev S Bowring) 18.00 KIM Evensong (Rev R Lancaster)
Sunday 30th (Trinity VII) 10.45 SPA United Parish Communion (Rev S Bowring)	

A14 MOBILE VISITOR CENTRE



The A14 Mobile Visitor Centre will be in Easton between **4pm and 7pm on Wednesday evening 26th July**. You will be able to view the plans for the A14 Cambridge to Huntingdon road improvement scheme and members of the delivery team will be in attendance. Depending on weather conditions the location will either be in the playing field or on the verge outside the church.

OPEN GARDEN

Beth Davis

About 50 people enjoyed tea on the lawns at Brook House for the Fund Raising Open Garden event on June 11th. The roses were just coming out into bloom and the borders were coloured with poppies, irises, pinks and geraniums. The sum of £228 was raised for Water Aid where Eliza, Brian and Beth's niece, is one of their photographers, most recently photographing open sewers in Delhi and showing how badly this aid is needed. Thanks to everyone who helped on the day.

WOULD YOU LIKE TO EDIT A NEWSLETTER?

Jenny Hyde

If you ever look at the numbering at the top of the newsletter, you will see that I have been doing this little job for 12 years and 8 months! (People must be getting really bored with it...) Actually, that is only part of the story, because long before it appeared in its current form, Mike Baker and I prepared a newsletter for our original 5-parish grouping (Barham-with-Woolley, Easton, Ellington, Grafham and Spaldwick) and the first copy that I have is dated October 1988! Twenty-nine years is a very long time and I do not think I ought to go on beyond September 2018, which will tick the 30-year box. Much has changed in the village over those years: maybe it is time for a new generation to take over the newsletter? Please don't be afraid to come and ask me what is involved!

Deadline for contributions to the July newsletter will be 26th July