

Our Vision:

A Parish and its people that are enriched by wildlife, where people enrich the natural world and help to safeguard it for the future.

Our aims are to:

Share knowledge of the wonderful wildlife in the Parish of Chudleigh.

Raise awareness through events and activities that involve and motivate the community.

Encourage positive action by local residents to attract and sustain more wildlife in the town and Parish of Chudleigh.

Conserve and enhance our existing wildlife and local habitats, features and species populations, through working together and with others.

Survey & record what we have, holding and sharing our wildlife records with others.

Advise groups and individuals on biodiversity and land management for wildlife.

Monitor development proposals that may result in damage to important wildlife.

Be environmentally and socially aware and responsible in what we do.

Interested in joining us?

If you would like to be added to our mailing list, are interested in joining the committee, or would like to volunteer, please contact

info.chudleighwild@gmail.com

Talks & Events



Local Wildlife Highlights

**Friday February 18th
at 7.30pm**

A talk by John Walters

in the Town Hall's Woodway Room

Tickets £3.00

Buckfastleigh artist, John Walters will be known to many of you for his wonderful artwork, TV appearances and astounding knowledge of wildlife, particularly in Devon.

His talk will take in some of the amazing things he has seen locally as well as some of the rarer things he has been studying.

Please take a lateral flow test in advance and wear a face mask when not seated.



Hedgehogs, in Need of Your Help

Stephen Powles

Friday March 18th at 7.30pm

In the Town Hall's Woodway Room



Vet Stephen Powles retired early to pursue his passion for filming wildlife and to give talks to the public. For many years now he has been videoing Otters on his local river and much of his footage has been used in various television documentaries. Both he and his brother have been raising awareness of Hedgehogs in their local communities and this talk will contain some of his amazing video footage.

The Fascinating Rocks of Chudleigh Parish

John Evans

Friday April 22nd at 7.30pm

In the Town Hall's Woodway Room

John Evans, our friendly neighbourhood geologist, will give a talk about what's beneath your feet and how it got there, followed by:

A Guided Walk

Saturday April 23rd

(time and meeting place TBA)

Birder alert!

I have been out and about recording our Chudleigh birds and have set up a **WhatsApp group** for local birders. We will be able to share our records and I will let you know when I am going out, so that you can join me if you wish. If you would like to join the **Chudleigh Wild Birds group**, please text me on **07853 216239** making sure you add your name, and I will invite you to join us.

Dave Smallshire



After the success of last year's event, Chudleigh Wild is teaming up with Chudfest once again to organise

Open Gardens

Saturday 25th and Sunday 26th June, 2022

We would like to include plenty of wildlife-friendly gardens, as well as a range of attractive productive, formal and flower gardens. Gardens of any size are welcome.

Garden owners will get a share of the ticket money to donate to a charity of their choice. If you also choose to sell plants, crafts or refreshments, your takings will go to your chosen charity. You may also like to include a display of art or some live music as part of your gardens!

Please note that there must be a way into the garden that isn't through your house or garage, e.g. a back gate. This is for insurance purposes.

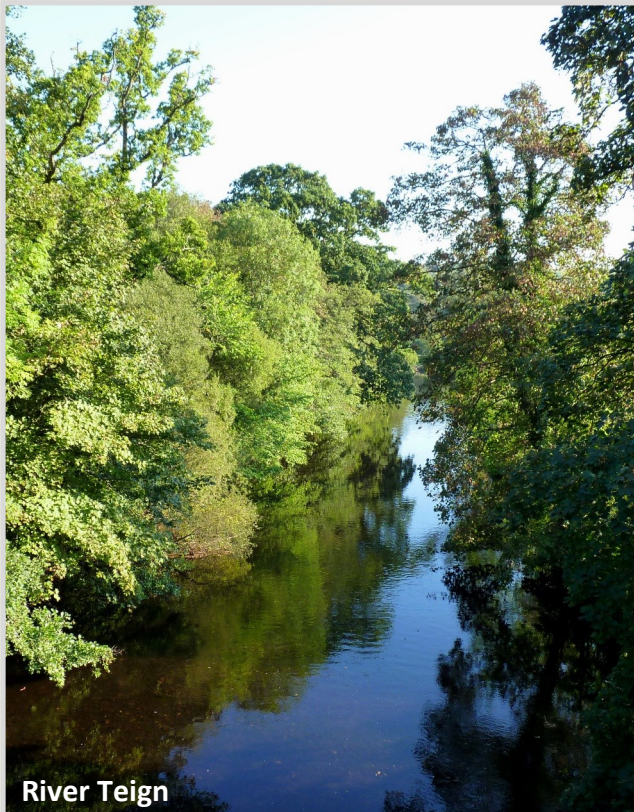
We are looking for up to 12 gardens to open. You can choose to open on either day or both. Gardens are usually open from 10 am to 4 pm.



If you would like to take part, please email Bobby Hughes
bobby@cernywhughes.com



River Teign Restoration Project



Anglers around the UK and throughout the species natural range have been aware of the worrying decline in Atlantic Salmon for a while. Every year less and less Salmon return to their home rivers and, in response to this, here on the River Teign a group of concerned anglers decided they needed to do something about it.

The Teign Angling and Conservation Association formed an alliance with the National Trust, Environment Agency, West Country Rivers Trust, sculptor Peter Randall-Page and MED Theatre, leading to the River Teign Restoration Project (RTRP). In essence, this project aims to improve the River Teign and all of its tributaries for Salmon and Trout, halting their decline and restoring their populations. This will by definition benefit the health of the river, its associated wildlife and of course the communities within the catchment.

Throughout the 4 year project we are looking to carry out a range of actions. We will monitor fish populations and carry out habitat surveys, practical works, pollution monitoring, educational work and much more. You can

find lots more information on our website: www.riverteignrestorationproject.co.uk.

We are looking for volunteers throughout the catchment

There are lots of opportunities on offer, depending on your interests.

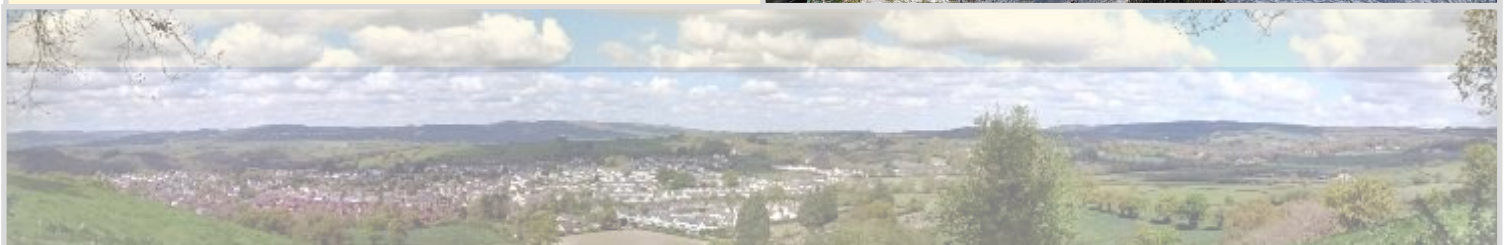
Please do get in touch if you would like to know more - we are always very happy to chat!

Louise Davis (Chudleigh) and Geoff Stephens (Chagford), RTRP Project Officers

Chudleigh Wild's contribution

We have already met with Louise, who is a Chudleigh resident, and agreed that we will contribute to the project by focussing on Kate Brook. Initially we will be testing water quality, doing surveys for Otters, birds and dragonflies and sampling for River Flies. We would love to involve our members and other interested Chudleigh residents in this, so if you fancy joining in any of these activities, we can provide training and equipment. We're starting this month.

Contact Sue: info.chudleighwild@gmail.com



Opportunities to join in!

Gardening for Wildlife



Our Gardening for Wildlife Project was a great success and persuaded many people that leaving a little bit of their garden as a less formal wildlife area could be both exciting and highly beneficial for wildlife. We also found that planting native plants in our gardens was not only beautiful, but provided great pollen and nectar sources for butterflies, hoverflies and bees.

We will be putting flyers through the doors of all the new houses, in the hope that the occupants join in, and if you can spread the word amongst your friends and neighbours, our vision of Chudleigh as a joined-up habitat for wildlife will be even closer.

Well done everyone! We will continue to help and encourage you with your wildlife gardening. If you haven't already signed up, please do - **you can still claim a free sign!**

Volunteers



We have a band of enthusiastic volunteers, but there is always room for more! Apart from managing the wildflower areas, which are now expanding in the town, we manage the Bat Fields hedgerows and meadow habitat. We also plant trees, bulbs and wildflowers and rake the grass from Lawn Drive.

Chudleigh Town Council have recently funded a lightweight battery brush-cutter and a sturdy high pruning saw, both of which will make habitat management much easier. We already have a range of hand tools, but now we are even better equipped.

Litter has been an increasing problem in the town, and we work hard to

keep everywhere litter-free. We are looking for people who might take on an area near their home to keep litter-free.

We're a very friendly bunch, so why not come and join in - it's fun and very rewarding.

Sue Smallshire

info.chudleighwild@gmail.com



Collected from the hedgerow to the Bat Fields





Bat News

Our Bat Group met regularly throughout last season and gathered important information on Chudleigh's bats, especially our protected Greater Horseshoe Bats.

We kept an eye on any lighting problems and reported back to the relevant authorities, as a result of which some progress has been made to lower lighting levels.

We also helped Professor Fiona Mathews to pilot her Motus radio tracking project, by introducing her to local landowners who were happy to house a receiver. Two of us helped to catch and ring the first Greater Horseshoe Bats, all of which were picked up by the receivers, proving that the equipment was working well.

The project will start in earnest in late April and cover our area of the South Hams Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and the sustenance zones within it. The continuing level of development within this area continues to threaten this rare and highly protected species and it's hoped that the data collected will be taken into consideration in further housing developments.

Chair's Chat

Firecrests are back (or have remained?) in woodland close to town, with up to three seen close to the Ugbrooke ridge road. This beautiful mite is a recent colonist and one of a number of species, mostly wetland birds, that have spread northwards as our climate has warmed in recent decades. It would seem that 1°C has been enough to tempt the likes of egrets, Spoonbills and Firecrest to move into Britain. However, at the same time Devon has lost Nightingale and Golden Plover as breeding species, and all but lost Curlew, Turtle Dove, Cuckoo, Lesser Spotted Woodpecker, Wood Warbler and Willow Tit. Cuckoo and Willow Warbler, it seems, have simply shifted their range northwards and are very hard to see locally now.

By feeding our garden birds we have helped many of them to survive in winter and prosper in summer. Goldfinch is now a common garden visitor, while 50 years ago most went to France and Iberia for the winter. Great Tit, Nuthatch and Great Spotted Woodpecker have all increased dramatically as a result of garden feeding, at least the tit and the woodpecker having some detrimental effects on other species, while Greenfinches have suffered from Trichomonosis spread at dirty feeders. Dramatic changes in agriculture have caused huge declines in typical farmland species such as Skylark and Yellowhammer, which can still be found around Chudleigh, albeit in small numbers.

While we're on the subject of bad news, I was very sorry to learn that the White-tailed Eagle that passed over Chudleigh last winter has perished in Dorset recently. Investigations should reveal whether it was poisoned, caught avian influenza or died from some other cause.

I'm sorry for the downbeat tone, but this is the world in which we live nowadays. Rapid changes are happening, but there is still so much wildlife to be enjoyed, if only we go out and look for it. I hope that some of you will take advantage of the new WhatsApp group, share your sightings and join me for some impromptu field gatherings. I have in mind some ventures beyond the parish boundary (shock horror!) in the coming weeks, to great places like Stover Lake and the RSPB Bowling Green Marsh reserve at Topsham.

Dave Smallshire

