






Here are 10 different birds, insects and plants to look out for in autumn on the walk. If you spot one, tick the left-hand column. If you spot 5 or more you're doing well!

 <p>Source: Steve Gozdz, Goring Wildlife Walks</p>	<p>1. Robin.</p> <p>These commonly found birds are often spotted on the sides of the railway embankment. You might hear the robin's song before you spot one. They will be looking out for fruit to eat from the trees and shrubs as well as insects and worms. Robins are fantastic parents, so much so they are sometimes seen feeding other babies birds such as blackbird or thrush fledglings.</p>
 <p>Source: Wikimedia under creative commons license</p>	<p>2. Red Kite.</p> <p>These large birds are easy to spot in our skies. They are a beacon of hope for conservation in the UK. Introduced back into the Chilterns in 1990 after near extinction, they have thrived since then. They eat carrion (dead animals) as well as worms and some small animals. You might see them following a plough in the fields looking for worms to eat.</p>
 <p>Source: Wikimedia under creative commons license, image cropped</p>	<p>3. Fieldfare.</p> <p>This large colourful thrush has chestnut-brown back and yellowy breast, streaked with black. It has a black tail, dark wings and pale grey rump and head. They can be seen in autumn and winter in flocks feeding on late fruit and berries along the sides of the old railway line. They return to Scandinavia to breed in spring.</p>
 <p>Source: Wikimedia under creative commons license</p>	<p>4. Red Admiral Butterfly.</p> <p>These attractive black, red and white butterflies can be found for a long period of the year; February through to November. They fly from North Africa and Europe over spring and summer and lay eggs on plants such as nettles. New broods of butterflies then continue feeding into the autumn. On dry, sunny days, they can be found on ivy flowers and rotting fruit through October and November.</p>
 <p>Source: Kieron Humphrey, HUGS</p>	<p>5. Hawthorn.</p> <p>This deciduous tree and shrub can support hundreds of species of insects and animals. The red berries are important for birds in autumn and winter. The leaves, flowers and fruits are edible for us and can be used for preserves and drinks. It's been used as a herbal remedy for many different problems including heart disease.</p>



Source: Kieron Humphrey, HUGS

6. Walnut Tree.

There are several along the railway line of different sizes. The leaves are food for moth species and the nuts are eaten by mice, squirrels and by us. The trees were introduced in Roman times for the nuts. They are also grown for timber. Some say that several of the trees have grown from previous train passengers throwing walnuts out of the carriage window.



Source: Wikimedia under creative commons license

7. Ivy.

This common plant likes to carpet the ground and grow up trees. In doing so it supports at least 50 species of wildlife. Its flowers are out from September until November and are a life source for pollinators into the autumn. You can find ivy in the shadier spots along the walk and where its flowers are in the sun, you may well see bees, butterflies, hoverflies and wasps enjoying its nectar.



Source: Caroline Hunt, HUGS

8. Spider on cobweb.

Autumn is a good time of year to notice cobwebs as they tend to have either dew or frost on them. We have around 650 different species of spiders in the UK and they are amazing creatures. They spin silk from their abdomens and use it to catch prey, protect eggs or to weave a shelter. Spider silk is rather incredible and medical scientists are now investigating how it can be used to help us.



Source: Wikimedia under creative commons license

9. Wasp

There are many different types of wasp, both solitary and colony forming. They do a great job of eating flies, aphids and other invertebrates. They're also pollinators. Wasps are incredible architects making paper nests out of chewed up wood. In the autumn they will be out looking for nectar from flowers as they're no longer fed within their nests. Look out for them on ivy flowers on the walk.



Source: Wikimedia under creative commons license

10. Brown-lipped Snail.

These beauties are common along damp longer grass along the Sustrans Track. Take care not to tread on them as they cross the path! They like to eat nettles and buttercups. They prefer the plants that are dead and decomposing so they do a great job in recycling dead material. They are also a food source for birds, (thrushes in particular), hedgehogs, slow worms and even earth worms and insects.