

# Stroud Nature 2023

Summer of events 1 June - 31 August



**Nature Festival in the Park**  
(picnic in the park)

**Sunday 2 July, Stratford Park, Stroud**

# It's local!

**Welcome to the Stroud Nature 23 brochure. Your guide to three months of events and activities organised by a range of local wildlife organisations through the Stroud Great Green Partnership.**

The emphasis on local is important, as one of our main aims is to promote and celebrate the wildlife species on our own doorsteps. Just outside in the places where we spend most of our days, where we live, work and play.

So familiar are some species to us that we may as a result, take many of them for granted. Our robins, blue tits, house sparrows, the bees, flies and other insects that share our spaces. They all need our help to thrive.

Our gardens, our backyards, our streetscapes, our public spaces, parks, footpaths, towpaths. These have become vital sanctuaries for wildlife.

For many town and city dwellers, these are the only places where we will make a real connection with nature. It is crucial therefore that those who have the resources, the abilities, the responsibilities to promote and conserve nature, recognise this and meet people in their own spaces.

While this festival is based in and around Stroud, it could be anywhere and if you are not local to this area, we invite you to come and take part. True, we are luckier than many. We are surrounded by great wildlife habitats and the countryside is close wherever we live.

But every town, city has or should have its green spaces where people can get closer to the natural world. We should work to look after these just as hard as we do those wilder, celebrated places that we see on our tv screens, but are never likely to see in reality.

**Enjoy the summer!**



*The Goldfinch. A much more familiar garden species than it used to be.*

# Connections

## Urban mosaic

The world changes. Of course it does. But that change seems to accelerate with each passing year. In the aftermath of covid, the changes seem even more significant and they have had a more profound impact on us all.

In 2022, we were all just coming out of the shadow cast by the pandemic. We thought it vital that we held a festival so as to begin to help people reconnect with nature. We also knew that many people had found great comfort and well-being in nature during the pandemic. For some, this may have been a new, enlightening experience.

We need to build and nurture these relationships with nature and we need to do so with some urgency, given the loss of wildlife species across the planet. For most of us, the only practical way of doing this is to look after the wildlife on our own doorsteps. Many of us already do so in our own gardens.

But, as wonderful as a single garden or public green space might be for wildlife, it cannot exist in isolation from other gardens and green spaces.

Wildlife needs natural corridors to move through. A row of back gardens in a single street might be one. If there is a park or green space at the end of the street, so much the better. Maybe a stream runs through the space. It continues between some more housing and a factory, its banks lined with trees. The stream empties into a small pond, then continues on the other side before entering a canal or a larger river. These waterways run for miles in each direction, banks lined with flowers, shrubs and tall trees, connecting and linking a variety of other sites and habitats.

These are the routes that wildlife will prefer to follow as it moves through the urban environment.

This is why it is crucial that we look after all of our green spaces and also our blue ones, the streams, brooks, rivers and ponds.

If we can conserve and improve this mosaic of inter-connected habitats, we can provide for a wider diversity of flora and fauna in the places around us. Your own garden is the best place to start, which is why gardening for wildlife is a feature of Stroud Nature 23 and the Nature Festival in the Park.

It has been estimated that if all of the gardens in the UK are taken together, their combined area is greater than that of all the UK's nature reserves.

No two gardens are the same, so this huge 'garden nature reserve' has a great diversity of habitats for wildlife. There is no one perfect garden. Little things can make a real difference.

You can find out about some of these little things when you visit the Nature Festival in the Park and the museum in particular. This will be your wildlife garden discovery centre for the day.



# Connections

## Partnerships

Stroud Nature is a very small organisation. We like it that way. This has never dented our ambitions however, as we have always placed a high value on partnerships, recognising many years ago that so much more can be accomplished through working with others.

A festival that celebrated nature was an obvious way of bringing organisations together. It began quietly with a single marquee with around 15 stalls as part of the annual Stroud Show in 2008.

In 2011 with the support of BBC Springwatch, the number of exhibitors had grown to around thirty five.

It has continued to grow and while its format remains largely unchanged since, there has been a lot more going on in the background, such as the Stroud Nature Forum, now the Stroud Great Green Partnership. This started as a way of allowing organisations to be involved in the planning of the festival, but grew into a more valuable network.

It has allowed people to explore common aims and consider more effective ways of achieving those aims through a joint dialogue with others

Recent forums have seen all kinds of new associations begin to develop projects together.

While many are local and generally small in scale, they are nevertheless vitally important to local wildlife and therefore to local communities.

Take Garden Guardians, a joint project between Stroud Valleys Project and Stroud Nature with support from Stroud Town Council. With funding from the Heritage Lottery, this is delivering a programme of events and activities throughout 2023 and 2024, some of which you will find in this brochure.

Partnership projects do not come much bigger than the multi-million pound phase 1B restoration of the Cotswold Canals. In addition to a number of organisations involved in the physical restoration, there are several partners whose focus is on wildlife. This is a top priority of the restoration.

Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust are leading on this, bringing their knowledge and experience to the creation of new habitats that will not only conserve, but increase the variety of species present in years to come.

County Nature Partnerships have now been established across the country with nature recovery at the top of the agenda. Increasing biodiversity is embedded in the concept of connectivity, of nurturing and creating joined up spaces and corridors through which wildlife can move. This includes the urban environment.

'Connecting people, places and wildlife' is the slogan for the canal restoration. It could equally apply to all of the organisations involved in this year's celebration of nature.

We connect with each other in order to connect with you, so that you might connect with nature, with the places around you, with the communities that share those spaces.

We are all stronger for it!

# Events: May

Although Stroud Nature 23 officially begins on 1 June, we have included a few introductory events taking place in May.

## Sat 13 May and Sun 9 July Bisley Road Cemetery Nature Walks

A stroll around Stroud's old cemetery to explore it's rich and varied wildlife, plants, butterflies, birds and reptiles. Guided by Mat Allen – Stroud Town Council's Biodiversity Ranger. Discover the secrets of one of the best places to see nature in Stroud. Good paths but some steep slopes. Kids welcome but may not be great for younger kids. Numbers limited and booking essential. Email: [mat.allen@strouttown.gov.uk](mailto:mat.allen@strouttown.gov.uk) Call 07772490216 for further info. **FREE**

**Saturday 13 May at 9-11am.**

**Sunday 9 July at 2-4pm**



## Sat-Sun 20/21 May Wild Stroud Open Gardens

Return of this annual event that allows you to visit a fabulous range of gardens, where caring for wildlife is a priority.

From small and quirky, to steep, and flat and extensive. Many of the locations will be offering activities as well as an opportunity to wander around the garden and see what people are up to. Some of the events must be booked ahead of time.

The gardens open this year can be found here on the web site, where you can also book your visit:

<https://wildstroud.org/open-gardens/>



Wild Stroud Open Gardens

## Saturday 27 May: 2-4pm Archaeology Walk on Minch' Common

Join Stroud Valleys Project and renowned prehistorian and former Minchinhampton resident Professor Tim Darvill for a delve into the common's past. As we walk, Tim will talk us through the many visible archaeological features of the common and will share some of its many fascinating stories with us. This event is being run in collaboration with the National Trust.

**Booking essential; £7.00 per adult, £3.00 per child**  
**Suitable for all ages; sorry no dogs; some steep inclines; walking boots advised; Not suitable for wheelchairs.**

<https://www.stroudvalleysproject.org/events>

Tel 01453 753358 for more info.

## Saturday 27 May: 10 -12pm Seedling Swap

Do you have any spare or unwanted seedlings? Give them a good home through the Stroud Valleys Project's seedling swap/sale. Bring along any seedlings that you have spare and exchange them for others. Both vegetable and flower varieties welcome. Even if you don't have any seedlings to swap, you can still take some for a donation. It's a great way to meet other gardeners and to share advice and knowledge.

**FREE**

**Accessible and open to all.**

**No booking required. Please call 01453 753358 for further info. Or visit our website.**  
[www.stroudvalleysproject.org](http://www.stroudvalleysproject.org)



Severn Vale  
Catchment  
Partnership

# Riverwoods and the Wilder Frome

Thursday June 8 : 6:30-9pm : £2.50  
Stroud Brewery and Taproom, London Rd, Stroud, GL5 2BY



The Severn Vale Catchment Partnership invite you to a screening of the documentary *Riverwoods: An Untold Story* where we will share our vision for a wilder and healthier Stroud River Frome, including conversations about how we can work as a community to achieve this together

Save your space:

**[riverwoods-wilder-frome.eventbrite.co.uk](https://riverwoods-wilder-frome.eventbrite.co.uk)**

All profits from ticket sales will be used to fund projects that directly support the Wilder Frome vision

Image credits: scotlandbigpicture.com

# Events: 1 - 30 June

**Thursday 8 June: 6.30- 9pm**  
**Riverwoods: Feature length documentary**

## **Stroud Brewery and Taproom**

Riverwoods is story about the Scottish forest and an ecosystem that includes the 'King of Fish', the Atlantic Salmon. Healthy rivers are vital for wildlife and people. Meet, greet and discuss our local river wildlife, in particular, the Frome, with representatives from a range of local organisations.

**Small entry fee** with all profits going into projects that support the Wilder Frome vision.

Severn Vale CaBA Partnership



**Friday 9 June: 10am - 11.30am**  
**Mini beasts/pollinators**



Join Stroud Valleys Project and Small World Adventures at the Museum in the Park for a look into the wonderful world of pollinators. This monthly group will give toddlers & Pre-schoolers a chance to take a closer look at the wildlife on our doorstep and join in with craft activities and stories.

**Booking essential; £3.00 per group (max 2 adults, 2 children).**

**Suitable for pre-schoolers. Wheelchair accessible.**

**Please book via website**

<https://www.stroudvalleysproject.org/events>

Tel 01453 753358 for more info.



**Saturday 10 June 10-12pm**  
**Bumblebee Safari: Capels Mill**



Running in collaboration with the Bumble Bee Conservation Trust, our event expert Ron Rock will help attendees to identify the many different species of Bumble Bee found in the UK.

**Booking essential: £7.00 per adult, £3.00 per child (under 16)**

**Suitable for all ages; sorry no dogs. Unsuitable for wheelchairs.**

**Please book via website**

<https://www.stroudvalleysproject.org/events>

Tel 01453 753358 for more info.



**Saturday 10 June: 6-8pm**  
**Edge Common Orchid Walk**

The walk will start with a short introduction from Paul Griffiths (grazier of the common) about the history of the common, what wildflowers and orchids may be seen and a brief intro into the grazing and management of the common for the rare Duke of Burgundy butterfly.

**Booking essential: £7.00 per adult, £3.00 per child (under 16).**

**Suitable for all ages; dogs on lead welcome; some steep inclines; walking boots advised; not suitable for wheelchairs**

**Please book via website**

<https://www.stroudvalleysproject.org/events>

Tel 01453 753358 for more info.

# Events: 1 - 30 June

## Saturday 10 June; 9am-10.30am Small Mammal Safari

Come and meet some of the small furry residents of Stroud's old cemetery. Mice, Voles and Shrews are all possible to find here using live humane trapping. Hear about their lives with Pete Bradshaw – Stroud Town Council Ranger. Kids welcome but may not be great for younger kids. Numbers very limited and booking essential. Email [pete.bradshaw@stroudtown.gov.uk](mailto:pete.bradshaw@stroudtown.gov.uk) to book.

Call 07772490225 for further info.

**FREE - booking required**

## Sunday 11 June: 9.30-1pm Yew Tree farm Nature Day

**9.30 - 1pm:** Explore the our hobby farm's habitats (meadow, orchard, garden and pond) with its owners and other organisations. Also Forest School activities.

**9.30 - 11:00am:** Opening of previous night's moth traps. Over 200 species identified in previous years.

**10.30am:** Family friendly guided walk, identifying the plants on this fantastic wildflower-rich meadow.

**11.30am:** Discover and identify the farm's butterflies. Identify the caterpillar food plants.

Yew Tree Farm is at the top of Brewery lane, Thrupp, Stroud GL5 2EF.

Tea, coffee and cakes all day, in aid of charity.

Wheelchair access for moth event only.

Limited street parking. Overflow car park for Stroud Brewery (at Howard Tenens) on entry to Kingfisher Business Park.

**FREE**

<https://butterfly-conservation.org/events>



## Sunday 11 June: 10.30-4pm Rag Rugging Solstice Wreath

Join Stroud Valleys Project and Sue Ratcliffe in making your very own Rag Rugged Wreath to celebrate the Summer Solstice and longest day of the year. We will provide all materials, but you can bring along your own fabrics to rag as well.

**Booking Essential; £25 per person**

**Suitable for those aged 16 and above; sorry no dogs; not suitable for wheelchairs.**

Please book via website

<https://www.stroudvalleysproject.org/events>

Tel 01453 753358 for more info.

## Monday 12 June: 2 -9pm Stratford Park Bio-Blitz

Stratford Park is a great resource for the community and for wildlife. Join Stroud Valleys Project to find out about the range of species that make the park their home. From bugs to birds, flowers to fungi, we want to find out more about the brilliant wildlife we have on our doorsteps. This event is part of our Garden Guardians project, so there will also be a chance to find out about how you can help wildlife in your own green space.

**FREE but booking essential.**

**Suitable for all ages; Sorry no dogs; Stratford Park is fully accessible, toilets and refreshments available at Museum and Leisure Centre.**

Please book via website

<https://www.stroudvalleysproject.org/events>

Tel 01453 753358 for more info.





# Events: 1 - 30 June

## Wednesday 14 June: 11 - 1.30pm Butterfly Walk - Daneway Banks

A walk to see Large Blue and other butterflies.  
Meet at gate opposite Siccaridge Wood SO936034,  
nearest postcode GL7 6LN.  
W3W:fearfully.farm.dandelions.  
Limited parking is available at SO939033 (not in pub  
car park unless eating there).  
Booking required: sorry no dogs, unsuitable for  
wheelchairs.  
**Contact Chris Wiltshire 01453 545509,**  
[butterfly-recorder@gloucestershire-butterflies.org.uk](mailto:butterfly-recorder@gloucestershire-butterflies.org.uk)  
**Website: <https://butterfly-conservation.org/events>**



## Saturday 17 June: 12-4pm Nectar Garden - Prinknash Abbey

Open day at Gloucestershire Butterfly Conservation  
branch Butterfly Nectar Garden at Prinknash Abbey.  
There will be live moths caught in moth traps and  
activities for children.  
Also a plant stall and planting ideas to encourage  
butterflies and moths into your garden.  
**Park at SO880137, GL4 8EX**  
W3W:apples.broke.salads  
**Contact [events@gloucestershire-butterflies.org.uk](mailto:events@gloucestershire-butterflies.org.uk)**  
**Website: <https://butterfly-conservation.org/events>**

## Saturday 24 June: 10 - 3pm Raptors at Symond's Yat

Midsummer, and the skies  
are at their busiest over  
Symonds Yat. Join local raptor  
expert Steve Watson as he helps  
us spot up to seven species of raptors  
as they go in search of food for their young.  
Peregrine, Goshawk, Buzzard, Red kite, Hobby,  
Kestrel and Sparrowhawk could be seen, against the  
background of magnificent views.



**Booking Essential; £7/ adult £3/child**  
**Suitable for all ages; sorry no dogs; Not suitable for  
wheelchairs.**

You will have to make your own way to Symond's Yat  
– we will be organising car pools.  
Backup Date is Saturday 1 July in the event of bad  
weather on the 24 June.

**Please book via website**  
<https://www.stroudvalleysproject.org/events>  
**Tel 01453 753358 for more info.**

## Sunday 25 June: Time TBC Bug House Building Workshop



Join us at the Museum in the Park's walled garden  
to create to create your very own Bug house. Run in  
collaboration with Garden Guardians and the Stroud  
Buzz Club.

**Booking Essential; £7/ adult £3/child**  
**Suitable for all ages; sorry no dogs.**  
**Please book via website**  
<https://www.stroudvalleysproject.org/events>  
**Tel 01453 753358 for more info.**

## LAST MINUTE ADDITION

**Tues 27 June: Large Blue Butterfly Walk**  
**Rodborough Common with the National**  
**Trust. Meet at Rodborough Fort car park**  
**at 9am. FREE**

# Events: 1 - 31 July

**Sunday 2 July: 11 - 4pm. Stratford Park  
Nature Festival in the Park**

## **Plus PICNIC IN THE PARK**

The main event in our summer calendar. Join a host of local wildlife and environmental organisations to celebrate the natural world. See feature

**Friday 7 July: 10 - 11.30am  
Museum in the Park, Stratford Park**

Join Stroud Valleys Project and Small World Adventures at the Museum in the Park for a look into the wonderful world of mini beasts! This monthly group will give toddlers & Pre-schoolers a chance to take a closer look at the wildlife on our doorstep and join in with craft activities and stories.

**Booking essential; £3 per family group (max. 2 adults and 2 children).**

**Suitable for pre-schoolers; Wheelchair accessible.**

**Please book via website**

<https://www.stroudvalleysproject.org/events>

Tel 01453 753358 for more info.

**Saturday 8 July: 11 - 1.30pm:  
Butterflies of Lower Woods**

Join Butterfly Conservation to explore Lower Woods Nature Reserve, with a chance to spot Silverwashed Fritillary and White Admiral.

Meet at parking area ST746881, GL9 1BY,  
W3W:nature.flatattery.reheat.

**Booking required.**

Contact Vic Polley 01453 842896

[vic@gloucestershire-butterflies.org.uk](mailto:vic@gloucestershire-butterflies.org.uk)

Website: <https://butterfly-conservation.org/events>

**Saturday 8 July: 2 - 4pm  
Otters in the Stroud Valleys**

Join Stroud Valleys Project and local ecologist Simon Pickering as we go mad for Otters. From being persecuted top predator to tourist attraction, Simon will discuss the Otters' ecology and behaviour.

He will try to make sense of their long history of human persecution, both deliberate and accidental, the eventual recovery of their population across England and then consider their future.

**Booking essential; £7.50 per adult/ £4 per child (under 16)**

**Suitable for all ages; Sorry no dogs; Talk takes place at Stroud Brewery, with wheelchair access.**

**Please book via website**

<https://www.stroudvalleysproject.org/events>

Tel 01453 753358 for more info.



**Sunday 9 July: 8pm - 10pm  
Swift Walk, Minchinhampton**

Come and join us for a guided walk around Minchinhampton town centre spotting swifts and their nesting sites with John Crowther, local Swift enthusiast from the Stroud Swift group.

**Booking essential; £7 per adult/ £3 per child (under 16)**

**Suitable for all ages; Sorry no dogs;**

**Walk takes place through Minchinhampton so route can be adjusted to accommodate wheelchairs.**

**Please book via website**

<https://www.stroudvalleysproject.org/events>

Tel 01453 753358 for more info.



# Events: 1 - 31 July

## Wednesday 12 July: 9.45pm - 11pm Glow Worm walk

Ivi Szaboova will guide a walk at nightfall to see our glowing female insects in their local natural habitat. The walk is in the dark on paths so please bring a torch and wear warm clothing.

**Booking essential; £7.00 per adult, £3.00 per child (under 16).**

**Sorry, no dogs. Not suitable for wheelchairs.**

**Please book via website**

<https://www.stroudvalleysproject.org/events>

Tel 01453 753358 for more info.



## Sunday 16 July: 11am Rough Bank

Join Butterfly Conservation to explore Rough Bank Nature Reserve, with a chance to spot Chalk-hill Blue, Dark Green Fritillary and other butterflies and day-flying moths.

Meet at car park SO914087, nearest postcode GL6 7HJ,

W3W:dislodge.football.cracker

Contact Graeme Davis 07881912835

[graeme@gloucestershire-butterflies.org.uk](mailto:graeme@gloucestershire-butterflies.org.uk)

Website: <https://butterfly-conservation.org/events>



## 15 July - 3 September Nature Detective Challenge



Welcome nature detectives! Search for the 10 QR codes on posts around this cemetery where you will learn about the amazing nature and history found here and be set fun challenges. Listen carefully for special clues and there might even be a reward! This audio trail was written and read by local nature enthusiasts from the community and put together by Stroud Town Council Green Spaces Team.

You will need a Smartphone to hear the audio and it is aimed at families with children aged 6+ but "adults" might enjoy it too.

**FREE - no booking required**  
Stroud Town Council Green Spaces Team



**NOTE:** Also on 9 July there is a second Bisley Road Cemetery Walk. For details see Saturday 13 May.

## LAST MINUTE ADDITION

Mon 3 July: Glow Worm Walk and survey.

Meet at Woodcheter Park car park at 9pm. **FREE**

National Trust

# Events: 1 - 31 August

## Wednesday 2 August: Butterflies at Rococo Gardens, Painswick

Rococo Gardens, Painswick. Rococo Family Fun event. Check website for details which are not confirmed yet <https://butterfly-conservation.org/events>.

Car park at: SO864105, GL6 6TH,  
W3W:plant.latter.cubs.

Contact [events@gloucestershire-butterflies.org.uk](mailto:events@gloucestershire-butterflies.org.uk)



## Thursday 3 Aug: 10.30 - 12pm A Stroud Safari



Join Stroud Valleys Project for a canalside walk to discover the array of wonderful wildlife that makes its home right here in Stroud. This event is part of our Garden Guardians project, so there will also be a chance to find out about how you can help wildlife in your own green space.

**Booking essential; £7.00 per adult, £3.00 per child (under 16).**

**Sorry, no dogs. Not suitable for wheelchairs.**

**Please book via website**

<https://www.stroudvalleysproject.org/events>

Tel 01453 753358 for more info.



## Friday 4 August 10-12pm Bumblebee Safari: Capels Mill



Running in collaboration with the Bumble Bee Conservation Trust, our event expert Ron Rock will help attendees to identify the many different species of Bumble Bee found in the UK.

**Booking essential: £7.00 per adult, £3.00 per child (under 16)**

**Suitable for all ages; sorry no dogs. Unsuitable for wheelchairs.**

**Please book via website**

<https://www.stroudvalleysproject.org/events>

Tel 01453 753358 for more info.

## Thursday 17 Aug: 10 - 12pm A Stroud Safari



Ponds are a vital wildlife habitat and are good for people too! Join Stroud Valleys Project for a dip into the amazing underwater world of the pond. This event is part of our Garden Guardians project, so there will also be a chance to find out about how you can help wildlife in your own green space.

**Booking essential; FREE family event.**

**Sorry, no dogs. Site is accessible.**

**Please book via website**

<https://www.stroudvalleysproject.org/events>

Tel 01453 753358 for more info.



# Events: 1 - 31 August

## Friday 18 August: 8 - 10pm Bat Walk in Stratford Park

Encounter Stroud's many incredible types of bats with a local expert. We will listen for bats using bat detectors and will watch them scooping insects over the lake and flying over our heads. Please bring warm clothes and a torch.

**Booking essential;**

**£7.00 per adult, £3.00 per child (under 16).**

**Suitable for all ages; sorry no dogs; the park is fully accessible, toilettes and refreshments at Museum in the Park and Leisure centre earlier in the day. wheelchairs.**

**Times are subject to change, based on time of sunset. See website.**

**Please book via website**

**<https://www.stroudvalleysproject.org/events>**

**Tel 01453 753358 for more info.**



## Sunday 26 August: 11am Stinchcombe Hill

Stinchcombe Hill Walk to see Adonis Blue, Chalkhill Blue and day-flying moths.

Meet at car park, ST744984, nearest postcode GL11 6AQ, W3W:grumbling.blocks.layers.

Contact Chris Wiltshire 01453 545509,

**[butterfly-recorder@gloucestershire-butterflies.org.uk](mailto:butterfly-recorder@gloucestershire-butterflies.org.uk)**

Website: **<https://butterfly-conservation.org/events>**



## Scything in Stroud

**Booking essential; £40 adult**

**Suitable for 16 years and up; not suitable for those with mobility issues; sorry, no dogs.**

**Please book via website**

**<https://www.stroudvalleysproject.org/events>**

**Call us on 01453 753358 for more info.**

**Times are subject to change. Please look out for further updates on our website.**

## Saturday 19 August: Time TBC The Story of an Eel

Eel expert Laura Weldon talks us through the life cycle of freshwater Eels, whilst regaling us with stories and activities for all to enjoy. We will even be DNA testing the water to see if eels are present! This event is part of our Garden Guardians project, so there will also be a chance to find out about how you can help wildlife in your own green space.

**Booking essential; £7.00 per adults £3.00 per child.**

**Suitable for all ages Sorry, no dogs.**

**Site is accessible.**

**Please book via website**

**<https://www.stroudvalleysproject.org/events>**

**Tel 01453 753358 for more info.**



# Landscapes of the Lark Festival

Skylarks are an iconic sign of spring and here in Stroud we are lucky enough to be able to hear and see them when walk on our commons.



Stroud Valleys Project's Landscapes of the Lark festival will run throughout the spring and summer of 2023, and will give everyone a chance to get involved with learning more about larks and the places they call home.

Landscapes of the Lark is supported by the Cotswold National Landscape's Farming in Protected Landscapes fund.

The dates and times of events may be subject to alteration, so please check our website for up-to-date information – <https://www.stroudvalleysproject.org/events>

## Tuesday 30 May: 8.30am Skylarks of Rodborough Common

Join Stroud Valleys Project and keen birder Andy Lewis to discover some of the brilliant birds that make the common their home, including that fabulous harbinger of Spring, and inspiration for our festival, the Skylark. This event is in collaboration with the National Trust.

**Charge - Booking essential; £7 per adult/ £3 per child**

Suitable for all ages (under 16s must be accompanied by an adult); Not suitable for wheelchairs. Sorry no dogs.

Please book via website:

<https://www.stroudvalleysproject.org/events>

Call us on 01453 753358 for more info.

Website - [www.stroudvalleysproject.org](http://www.stroudvalleysproject.org)

Please book via website:

<https://www.stroudvalleysproject.org/events>

Call us on 01453 753358 for more info.

Website - [www.stroudvalleysproject.org](http://www.stroudvalleysproject.org)



## Monday 19 June: 10.30am - 1.00pm: A walk with the Blues

Join Butterfly Conservation and Stroud Valleys Project for a walk around Rodborough Common to see the variety of blue butterflies flying at this time of year, including (if we're lucky!) the recently reintroduced Large Blue. This event is in collaboration with the National Trust and Butterfly Conservation.

**Charge - Booking essential; £7 per adult/ £3 per child**

Suitable for all ages (under 16s must be accompanied by an adult); Not suitable for wheelchairs. Sorry no dogs.

Please book via website

<https://www.stroudvalleysproject.org/events>

You can call us on 01453 753358 for more info.

Website - [www.stroudvalleysproject.org](http://www.stroudvalleysproject.org)

## Wednesday 14 June: 10am - 12pm Wildflowers and grasses of Rodborough

Join Stroud Valleys Project and the National Trust on Rodborough Common to discover some of the array of oftentimes rare wildflowers and grasses that make our commons so special. This event is in collaboration with the National Trust.

**Charge - Booking essential; £7 per adult/ £3 per child**

Suitable for all ages (under 16s must be accompanied by an adult); Not suitable for wheelchairs. Sorry no dogs.

**Wednesday 21 June: 8.00pm - 9.00pm**  
**Midsummer Sunset Skylarks on Selsley**

Join Stroud Valleys Project for a guided walk on Selsley Common, to learn a little about the common's history, how it is managed today, and about some of the species that make the common their home. We will (all being well!) listen to the song of the skylark as we watch the sun set on the longest day of the year.

**FREE event**

**Suitable for all ages (under 16s must be accompanied by an adult); Not suitable for wheelchairs. Sorry no dogs.**

**Please book via website**

<https://www.stroudvalleysproject.org/events>

You can call us on 01453 753358 for more info.

Website - [www.stroudvalleysproject.org](http://www.stroudvalleysproject.org)



**Sunday 16 July: 11.00am - 12.30pm**  
**A Short History of Rodborough Common**

Join Stroud Valleys Project and PhD researcher Sharon Gardham for a delve into the history of Rodborough Common. Using documentary evidence, and the clues left on the land itself, we will cover more than a millennium of history, exploring how Rodborough has been shaped by local, national, and international events, as well as by its non-human inhabitants. This event is in collaboration with the National Trust.

**Charge - Booking essential; £7 per adult/ £3 per child**

**Suitable for all ages (under 16s must be accompanied by an adult); Not suitable for wheelchairs. Sorry no dogs.**

**Please book via website**

<https://www.stroudvalleysproject.org/events>

You can call us on 01453 753358 for more info.

Website - [www.stroudvalleysproject.org](http://www.stroudvalleysproject.org)

**Monday 19 June: 10.30am - 1.00pm:**  
**Cowpats on the common!**

Join Stroud Valleys Project and Stroud Nature to get familiar with cowpats on Selsley common! Cowpats are a little like a Serengeti watering hole in miniature and are an essential part of the ecosystem of our commons, so why not come along and learn more?

**Charge - Booking essential; £7 per adult/ £3 per child**

**Suitable for all ages (under 16s must be accompanied by an adult); Not suitable for wheelchairs. Sorry no dogs.**

**Please book via website**

<https://www.stroudvalleysproject.org/events>

You can call us on 01453 753358 for more info.

Website - [www.stroudvalleysproject.org](http://www.stroudvalleysproject.org)



**Sunday 9 July: times TBC**  
**Marvellous Moths of Minch Common**

Did you know that there are more than 2500 recorded species of moth in the British Isles? Join Stroud Valleys Project and moth enthusiast Graeme Davis to take a look at some of these colourful critters. This event is in collaboration with the National Trust and The Old Lodge.

**Charge - Booking essential; £7 per adult/ £3 per child**

**Suitable for all ages (under 16s must be accompanied by an adult); Not suitable for wheelchairs. Sorry no dogs.**

**Please book via website**

<https://www.stroudvalleysproject.org/events>

You can call us on 01453 753358 for more info.

Website - [www.stroudvalleysproject.org](http://www.stroudvalleysproject.org)

**Saturday 5 August: 2.00pm - 3.30pm**  
**Cattle and the Commons**

Minchinhampton Common has been communally farmed for almost a thousand years, and the commoners (and their cattle) play a vital part in helping to maintain the health of the grassland habitat for people and other species to enjoy. Join Stroud Valleys Project and Hayward Mark Dawkins for a fascinating insight into this ancient, yet very much current, way of life. This event is in collaboration with the National Trust.

**Charge - Booking essential; £7 per adult/ £3 per child**

**Suitable for all ages (under 16s must be accompanied by an adult); Not suitable for wheelchairs. Sorry no dogs.**

**Please book via website**

***<https://www.stroudvalleysproject.org/events>***

**You can call us on 01453 753358 for more info.**

**Website - *[www.stroudvalleysproject.org](http://www.stroudvalleysproject.org)***

**Contact for dates**  
**Landscapes of the Lark Creative Workshops**

Creative facilitators Periscope will be creating a new immersive, public event on behalf of Stroud Valleys Project especially for the 'Landscapes of the Lark' festival. Running for 5 days in August, they will be inviting people of all ages to share their feelings, stories, experiences of skylarks and the Stroud commons that are their habitat, celebrating these special places as a shared space for people and wildlife.

**FREE event**

**No need to book - you can just drop in.**

**Full details available from Stroud Valleys Project and Periscope website.**

***[www.stroudvalleysproject.org](http://www.stroudvalleysproject.org)***

***[www.periscope.wordpress.com](http://www.periscope.wordpress.com)***





# Cotswold Canals Connected

Connecting people, places and wildlife

Cotswold Canals Connected are a partnership of organisations committed to the restoration of the Stroudwater canal. Our mission is to bring the nature and heritage along the canal to the communities that live nearby and offer opportunities for everyone to be involved in the upkeep of this valuable community asset.

We are delighted to be a part of the Stroud Festival of Nature this year and we've collaborated with lots of organisations to bring you an array of activities. These are spread across the summer and designed to get you down to the beautiful canal.

## Tues 18, Wed 20 and Thur 21 July Forage and Feast

We will be starting the programme of events off with something that is sure to be really popular. The Cotswold Forager, Rob Gould, will be joining us for a series of evening forages along the Stroudwater Canal. We will start at Fromebridge Mill and walk for an hour or so searching for goodies. Then we will head to a lovely spot to all have supper together. A local chef will cook a campfire style feast with ingredients foraged along the route. This will all be washed down with cider or apple juice from the ancient orchard nearby that has been restored by Cotswold Canals Connected as part of the project. Does this not sound like the most perfect summer's evening activity?

**6pm Fromebridge Mill car park**

**Adults only**

**Dogs on leads permitted**

**£25 per person. £12 concessions**



## Wed 16 and Thur 17 August Foraging for kids \_ Fromebridge Mill

Don't worry, you won't be coming home with extra children! Again, the Cotswold Forager, Rob Gould, will join us for a foraging walk for families.

This adventure for little ones is along a beautiful stretch of the Stroudwater Canal. Rob will be spotting goodies along the way for us to take back to the campfire and eat.

We will finish at a fire brazier where the kids will make damper bread and dips from the foraged plants.

**Monday 21st August – 11am**

**Tuesday 22nd August – 2pm**

**£5 per person**

**Dogs on leads permitted**

**Date: TBC**

**Bat boats**

We are so proud to have the amazing Boatmobility within our partnership. They have a fleet of boats that are capable of taking people with a range of disabilities out on the Stroudwater Canal.

We will leave at dusk and a local bat expert, with a bat detector, will join us on the water to locate and identify the night time activity.

This event is open to everyone over the age of 8 and we would especially like to invite people with disabilities to join us.

**Booking essential**

**No dogs allowed at this event**

**Leaving from the Boatmobility depot at Ryeford Road North.**



## Weds 23 Aug and Thur 24 Aug Bugs for lunch?

Ever wondered which tiny creatures can be found along our canal? Stroud Valley Canal Company (SVCC) are the custodians of the Stroudwater Canal and they will be partnering with the amazing team at Kids Stuff and The Long Table to bring you a morning of creepy crawly fun.

We would love for families to join us for a walk along the canal with local bug expert Steve Roberts. If you spot a bug Steve can tell you all about it!

**The walk leaves at 9am from The Long Table – booking essential for this. This also includes a free lunch at The Long Table for the kids.**

**Bug related crafts and activities from 10 am to 12pm – everyone welcome!**

**Dogs on leads permit**



## Sat 24 June Pockett's Orchard Bioblitz

Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust are one of the lead delivery partners in the Cotswold Canals Phase 1B restoration project and will be creating new and enhancing existing wildlife habitats at the Western end of the project.



Join expert volunteers from Stroud Wildlife Survey Group and Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust for a day of wildlife discovery.

Pockett's Orchard in Whitminster is a wonderful Traditional Orchard and is home to a wide range of plants and animals. This event will focus on finding and identifying as many species as possible in the orchard's habitats over the course of the day. Throughout the day there will be lots of mini events. We'll invite you to come and discover a range of animal and plants, including: wildflowers, bats, moths, birds, mammals as well as what lies under the surface of the canal, and more!

Pockett's Orchard lies in a rural setting. Access is over uneven ground and is approximately 600m/900m away from parking and welfare facilities.

**The free event is suitable for all with a fascination for wildlife. No previous experience necessary. More details to be released soon, but please contact Peter Savage for more details:**

***[peter.savage@gloucestershirewildlifetrust.co.uk](mailto:peter.savage@gloucestershirewildlifetrust.co.uk)***



<https://linktr.ee/CotswoldCanalsConnected>.

Stroud Buzz Club for families. On one Sunday in every month  
in the Walled Garden, Museum in the Park, Stroud



# Stroud

## BUZZCLUB

at The Walled Garden  
behind the Museum in the Park

For Children and Adults

2023

26th February

26th March

23rd April

28th May

25th June

23rd July

27th August

24th September

22nd October

26th November



FOLLOW US ON [FACEBOOK](#) @BUZZCLUBSTROUD OR JOIN OUR PRIVATE [WHATSAPP](#) GROUP  
PETER 07768881950 | PETERDAWNLEAD@AOL.COM



# An ant, a butterfly, cows, rabbits and a World War

**The ant** is reddish and lives in small colonies in the ground - no flashy ant hills! Its name is *Myrmica sabuleti*. It is very fussy about the temperature in its nest and so the grass height around it is very important.

**The butterfly** is small and blue with black spots, it is called the Large Blue because the other blue butterflies are even smaller. It has always been rare and even in the 19th century there were fears that collectors might cause its extinction. The female butterfly lays its eggs on Wild Thyme buds but not just any buds - they must be just right. After hatching the caterpillar feeds on the thyme flowers until it is about 3mm long and then drops to the ground where it is found by an ant. The ant takes it into its nest and once there the caterpillar feeds on ant grubs.

**The cows** eat grass.

**The rabbits** eat grass.

**The World War** was from 1939 to 1945. At the end the country was short of food, farmers were told to produce more and they had to plough up most of our flowering meadows that had been undisturbed for centuries.

**What happened next.** Conservationists, who were worried about the loss of meadows, fenced off areas and provided wardens to protect the butterflies from collectors. This also kept out the cattle but fortunately the rabbits were still grazing on the grass. Then in 1953 the rabbit disease myxomatosis arrived and wiped almost all rabbits so the grass got longer. Longer grass meant that the temperature inside the ants' nests changed and they started to die. The Large Blue caterpillars had no ant grubs to feed on and so the butterfly became extinct in around 1979.

**Recovery.** The process leading to extinction was only fully understood shortly before the last butterfly died - much too late to prevent extinction. It was decided to attempt re-introduction of the Large Blue butterfly and that, of course, had to begin by re-introducing cattle to graze on the grass so that the ants could recover. Now after about 40 years we have the Large Blue butterfly in the Stroud area on Rodborough Common and Daneway Banks near Sapperton.



*Credit: Butterfly Conservation*

**Lessons.** There are many cases of dependency between different parts of our ecosystem, most of them we will never know about unless something disturbs the balance and causes an obvious problem. We (that means you and me) must protect biodiversity to avoid such disturbance, don't expect anyone else to do it for you.

Visit some of the Stroud Festival of Nature events and talk to people about what you can do. This brochure includes some guided walks to see the Large Blue on Rodborough Common and Daneway Banks.

There is a YouTube video about the Large Blue and its re-introduction at:  
<https://youtu.be/xDclp8C1t5E>,  
It lasts about 40 minutes with some questions and answers at the end.

By Bob Smith, a Butterfly Conservation volunteer

# NATURE FESTIVAL IN THE PARK

## and picnic in the park

# FREE



## Sunday 2 July 11-4, Stratford Park

This is always the highlight of the Stroud Nature summer. While all those taking part recognise the challenges that the natural world faces, this is a chance to come together and celebrate the wildlife around us.

In 2022, we were all emerging from the Covid pandemic and the festival had not taken place for two years. All of us were rebuilding to some extent, reaffirming our messages, re-connecting with our audiences outside of the digital/social media sphere.

There was, we think it is truthful to say, a greater sense of urgency among a wider number of people about the state of nature and its importance, not least in our own lives as a way of improving our health and well-being and the quality of our lives in general.

This event has and will always be a free event with families at its heart.

We invite you to bring your own picnic, find a space among the trees and enjoy time outdoors with family and friends.

# the venue



Stratford Park is one of the best parks in the UK. There are few parks, if any, that provide within a comparable space, so many things for people to enjoy. Just look at the list:

- **Historic Arboretum**
- **Museum in the Park**
- **Lake and lakeside walk**
- **Sensory Garden**
- **Indoor leisure centre**
- **Historic open air lido**
- **Outdoor sports courts**
- **Outdoor astro-pitch**
- **Woodland of pine, beech and wild garlic**
- **Wildflower grassland**
- **Younger children's play area**
- **Older children's play area**
- **Natural play area**
- **Skateboard park**
- **Health and well being trail**
- **Miniature railway**

Even with so much contained within its boundaries, you can still find a quiet space for relaxation and contemplation.

# the exhibitors



*SGS College  
Animal Care and Conservation  
Festival in the Park 2022*

All Things Old

Arboricultural Association

Bumblebee Conservation Trust

Butterfly Conservation

Cotswold Canals Connected

Cotswold Canals Trust

Down to Earth

Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust

National Trust

Stroud District Council 2030 team

Stroud Buzz Club

Stroud College (SGS) Animal Care and Conservation

Stroud Nature CIC/Stroud Great Green Partnership

Stroud Town Council Green Spaces Team

Stroud Valleys Project

South West Funding (Wildlife Trusts)

Carl Linnaeus

Stroud Woodcraft Folk

Movement in Nature Performance

SNAC (Stroudwater Navigation Archive Charity)

Museum in the Park

Stroud School of Art - staff and students

Stroud College -Animal Care and Conservation

Transition Stroud

Schoolosaurus

Wild Acres

DH Crafts

Ubico Ltd

NATURE FESTIVAL IN THE PARK

# and you



## Bring a picnic

Tea and cakes from Miss Daisy

Toilets on site at Museum in the Park

Help us celebrate nature and do your bit for the planet:

**Wear something with an animal or plant design**

**Wear something bright and colourful**

**Maybe walk to the festival**

**How about car sharing or cycling**



# Some Nature Festival in the Park highlights

Creating Wildflower Meadows – Several interactive talks throughout the day from Stroud Town Council's Biodiversity Ranger Mat Allen exploring the principles and techniques used to create Wildflower Meadows. In the Cotswolds we have lost 95% of this valuable habitat since 1930.

Mat talks about what we can do to help to reverse this trend and shows us what he has done in some of Stroud's Green Spaces. FREE



## *Movement in Nature Performance*

Curated by the Stroud Movement Community

A free experience taking place in the Sensory Garden & Orangery at Stratford Park during the Nature Festival in the Park.

Explore the creative process and health benefits of moving outdoors in the natural environment with Sharon Gimpel (Feldenkrais and somatic movement), Claire Miletitch (Nia) and Jemima Bennett (movement in nature) and others. 3pm.

Stroud area movement artists and choreographers offer a contemplative outdoor performance using improvisational techniques, somatic sensibilities and a bit of clowning.

**Workshops:**  
11-2.30pm

**Performance:**  
3pm



# Some Nature Festival in the Park highlights

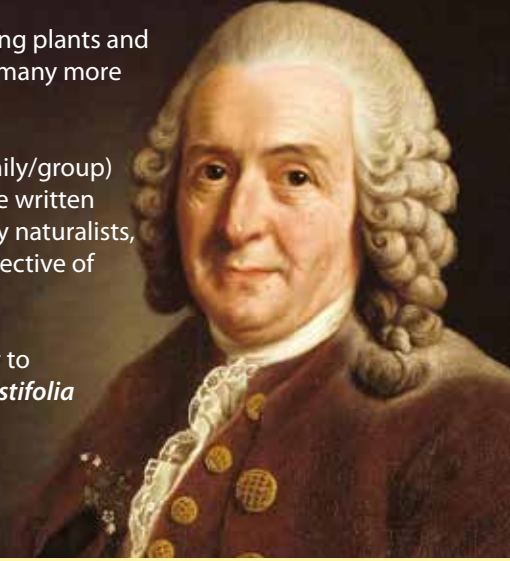
We are pleased to welcome Carl (Carolus) Llnnaeus to the Nature Festival in the Park.

Carl is most famous for creating a system of naming plants and animals. His system is still in use today, although many more species have been identified since his time.

Each species of plant and animal has a genus (family/group) name followed by a specific name. Both names are written in Latin. The latin name is used across the world by naturalists, scientists and others to identify the species, irrespective of language.

Carl will be explaining his system to anyone eager to know about *Bombus rupestris* or *Lavandula angustifolia*

Spaniel in the Works Theatre Company



## Send in your wildlife films

We are gathering people's short (30 second) films on wildlife in Stroud area and combining them into a single movie to show at the Museum in the Park during the Nature Festival in the Park.

If you have footage of insects, bees, birds, mammals or any other marvellous wildlife, taken with your camera or mobile phone and would like it to be included, then email it to:

John Bassett at [info@spanielworks.co.uk](mailto:info@spanielworks.co.uk).



# Connections

## River and canal

If you have ever stood on the thin strip of towpath between the canal and the River Frome at Bowbridge, you may have considered the contrast between the canal on one side and the River Frome on the other.

The canal is in effect, a long series of linear ponds divided by lock gates. Its waters are still. There may be an imperceptible flow westwards due to seepage through the lock gates and of course, there is change everytime a lock gate is opened and the water between each lock gate is refreshed, something that will happen regularly once the Cotswold Canals between Saul and Brimscombe Port are fully restored.

In comparison the River Frome races along. This is really evident at Bowbridge. It is worth considering that both river and canal drop around 240 feet between Sapperton and Wallbridge in Stroud. It takes 28 locks to enable the water of the canal to do this.

River and canal have their own ecosystems and there are species of flora and fauna specific to each. But such is their proximity to each other, that their importance is magnified. Taken together these waterways play a crucial role as natural highways for wildlife and many species move between both.

Kingfishers that nest in suitable bankside holes along the Frome are often seen on the canal. Banded Demoiselles prefer flowing water to hunt and breed, but will nip over to rest on the vegetation lining the canal.

*Dippers are seen all along the higher reaches of the River Frome. They need fast, clear water with stone and gravel beds.*



For years there were isolated reports of Otters (more often or not their spraints), along the Frome. They began turning up in some of the local millponds. They are now a regular sight along one section of canal east of Stroud.

This all sounds great and suggests that our local waterways are thriving. But while the continued presence of otters indicates there is sufficient food at present, we cannot take the health of these waters for granted.

### The state of our rivers

This year the River's Trust produced a report called **State of Our Rivers**. It made for some extremely worrying reading: <https://theriverstrust.org/key-issues/state-of-our-rivers>

Only 14% are in good ecological health and every single river tested, failed to meet chemical standards. Rivers were affected by agriculture chemicals, sewage discharge and other urban and transport pollution.



# Connections

## B-lines

If you did happen to be reading this while walking east to west from the Severn Vale into the Stroud Valleys you following a B-line. You are on a major highway for bees and other pollinators.

Bug Life, Europe's leading insect charity has identified a network of bee highways across the whole country.

These will be bees of all kinds - social and solitary. It will also be a route for many other insect pollinators.

It should be no surprise to many of us, that the Severn Vale and the Stroud Valleys feature on this map. Insects populations will generally follow areas where flowering plants are already in greater abundance. These tend to be more lowland areas along river vale and river valley.



Insects will also follow landscape features such as rivers and hedgerows. They will follow the Canal and its neighbour, the River Frome. These are lined with a range of flowering plants, shrubs and trees. Let's not forget gardens, for while many insects will feed on our wild flowers and shrubs, many are attracted to garden blooms.

While Bug Life has identified these B-lines, the project is seeking to encourage other organisations (councils, conservation bodies, community groups) to build on this. To plant new areas of wildflowers and link to those already existing. We can also help by planting in our gardens and community spaces.



Visit the Museum in the Park at the festival on 2 July and find out about bees, other insect pollinators and what you can do to help. Come talk with the Bumble Bee Conservation Trust, Stroud Buzz Club and Stroud Nature.

*TOM HENDERSON*

# Do you have **the bug ?**

A fascination and enthusiasm for the mini-marvels of this world...

**seven** Nov 2022



in association with



...for stories from the insect nation.

Whether your interest in insects is professional, amateur, educational, one of simple curiosity or just a passing one, this quarterly online magazine is for you. Produced by the Stroud Great Green Partnership in association with Bug Life, it shows you some of the species that belong to the worldwide nation of insects. Its beautiful illustrations are complemented by great photography, some contributed by readers. There are also regular activity pages and offers.

**Available to download at:**

[www.stroud-nature.org](http://www.stroud-nature.org)

**Via email by enquiring at;**

[admin@stroudnature.org](mailto:admin@stroudnature.org)



# Sustainable Futures

A new full-time Level 3 programme for 16-18 year-olds focusing on creativity, sustainability and wellbeing, to bring us closer together as a community to the environment.

Are you interested in learning core skills in drawing, printmaking, photography and film, painting, 3D design and sculpture? Do you want to apply them to:

- designing, creating and maintaining permaculture spaces?
- crafting with sustainable materials including weaving, dying with natural inks, pottery with local clay, whittling and wood turning?
- construction with natural green materials?
- community, environmental and ecology focused projects?

This programme gives you an opportunity like no other, to be a proactive part of a better future with a real qualification to show for it. This programme can lead to careers in the arts, conservation, sustainability, ecology, permaculture, homesteading and more.

More info: [tom.henderson@sgscol.ac.uk](mailto:tom.henderson@sgscol.ac.uk)

Starting  
September  
2023

Two-year  
programme

Roughly  
equivalent  
to A-Levels



South Gloucestershire  
and Stroud College

STROUD SCHOOL OF

**ART**

@stroud\_school\_of\_art  
@sgs\_college

The Stroud Festival of Nature is organised by Stroud Nature CIC, working with the Stroud Great Green Partnership



Stroud Nature would like to thank our Garden Guardians partner organisation Stroud Valleys Project



Stroud Town Council for their continued support...



...and all those local organisations who have been part of the Stroud Great Green Partnership and those who have contributed events and time to this year's festival.

Printed by Wheatley Printers Ltd, Stroud on environmentally sustainable paper.

Supporting the



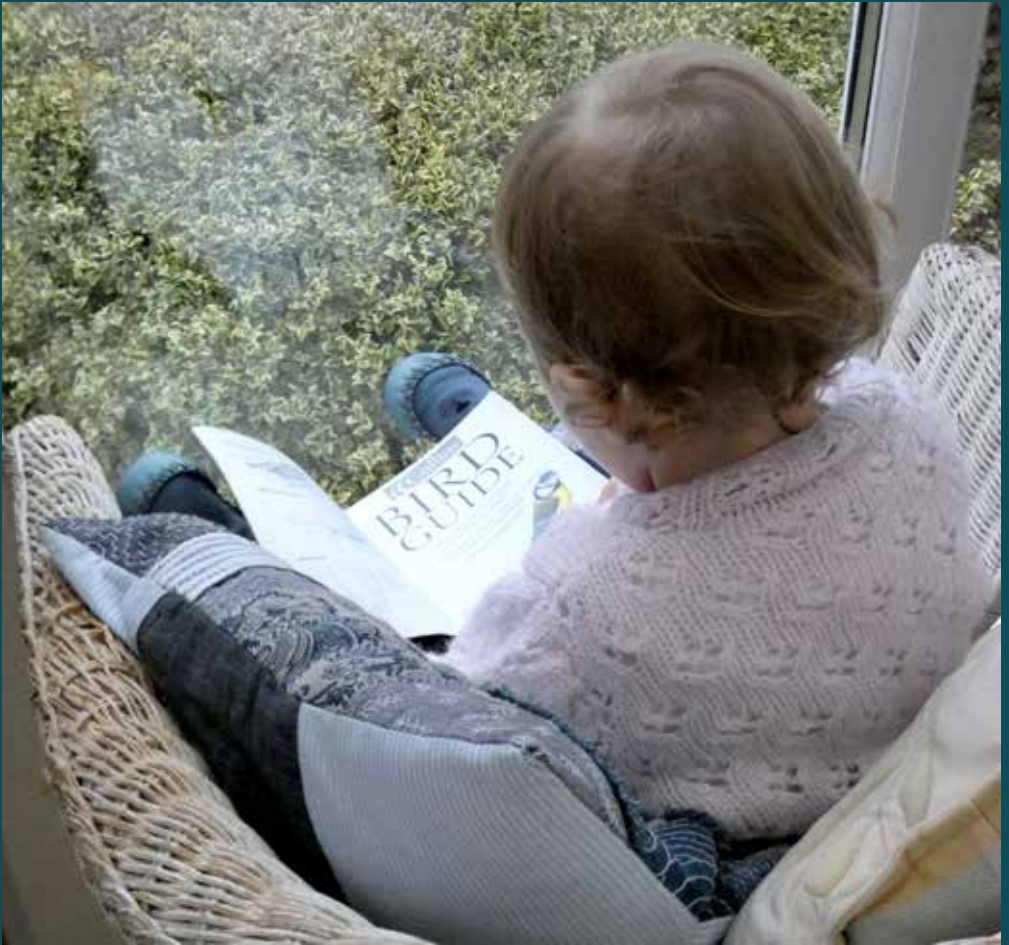
*admin@stroudnature.org*  
*tel 07811 471106*

*https://stroudnature.org/*  
*(Festival and Garden Guardians)*

*https://stroud-nature.org/*  
*(Do you have the bug)*

*twitter.com/stroudnature*  
*www.instagram.com/stroudnature*  
*www.facebook.com/Stroudfestivalofnature*





# W h o s e f u t u r e ?

Sixteen months. Already helping her grandparents put food out for the birds. Takes great delight in watching them come and go at the bird feeders. Favourite bird - the robin.

One of the highlights of the day together - watching hundreds of jackdaws flying over at dusk, making lots of noise.

The jackdaws roost every evening in Stratford Park and are a familiar and fantastic sight and sound in the area.

