

## Summer 2024 no 129

### Open Meetings coming soon!

You'll see from the enclosed programme that we have an interesting series of talks lined up for the Open Meetings. Please join us on Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> September for the first Open Meeting after the summer break, when Simon Ogden will tell us about '**Putting the Sheaf back in Sheffield (and the Porter too)**'

*The Sheaf and Porter are probably Sheffield's most abused rivers, canalised and culverted for much of their length. Yet like the Rivelin they also flow through some of our most well-loved green spaces. The Sheaf and Porter Rivers Trust campaigns to reclaim those rivers in the inner city. Urban historian, Founder and Chair of the Trust Simon Ogden will describe how we lost these rivers and how we can now get them back.*



*The Sheaf culverts at Castlegate known as 'the Megatron'*

The following two Open Meetings are:

**10th October**, local archaeologist Dan Eaton on "From Bell Hagge Green to Carver Fields: The history of a forgotten settlement in Crosspool".

**14th November**, local ornithologist Dave Gosney on "Birds in the Rivelin and Loxley Valleys – past present and future".

All meetings are held at Stephen Hill Methodist Church, 547 Manchester Road, Sheffield S10 5PL, and start at 7:30 pm. Do come and join us for interesting talks, updates on what's happening in the valley and an opportunity to chat over refreshments afterwards.

Sue Shaw

### Contacts

Chair	VACANCY
Treasurer	Christine Roe
Secretary	Jacqueline Diaz-Nieto
Membership	Graham Roe
Task Team	Graham Appleby
Newsletter	C & G Roe
Group Recorder	Joan Buckland
Website	Greg Shaw
Speaker Organiser	Ciarán McInerney
Conservation Advisor	Roger Kite

If you wish to contact us please email

[rivelin.valley@gmail.com](mailto:rivelin.valley@gmail.com)

or visit the website

[www.rivelinvalley.org.uk](http://www.rivelinvalley.org.uk)

## Welcome to Ciarán McInerney

Ciarán says:

"At the previous AGM, I heard how RVCG were struggling to find people to help with some of the regular administrative tasks. I've not long moved to the area but have been a member of RVCG since I found out about it. RVCG is a formidable force, so I wanted to make sure it (we?) had the support that was needed. I couldn't commit to a full committee role, but the tasks of the planning officer and speaker organiser seemed manageable, even with a 9-to-5 job and other commitments. Once a week,



I take an hour to collate the progress of planning submission in the area and submit them to the Committee. As Autumn approaches, I'll get to help out with the speaker events, doing the

very easy but important jobs of opening up, welcoming everyone, and locking up at the end of another great evening with the group."

**RVCG would like to thank Valleyside Garden Centre for their continued support.**



## Task Team

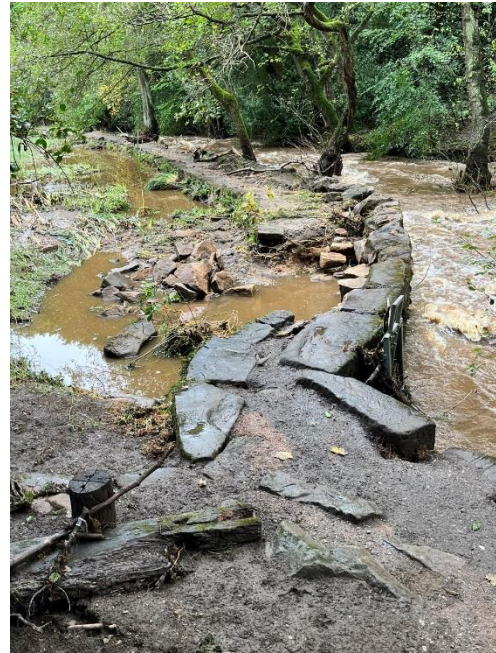
Since the devastation of storm Babet in October 23, the RVCG Task Team have been restoring the Rivelin nature trail between Rivelin Corn Mill at Rails Road and Glen Bridge known locally as the 'S bend' where Rivelin Valley Road crosses the Rivelin. This is now all complete as far as Hind Wheel which itself has been restored by Sheffield City Council. The final section between Hind Wheel and Glen Bridge remains closed. The damage to this section was extreme and repairs are beyond the capability of the RVCG task team and SCC contractors will be required to restore this section.



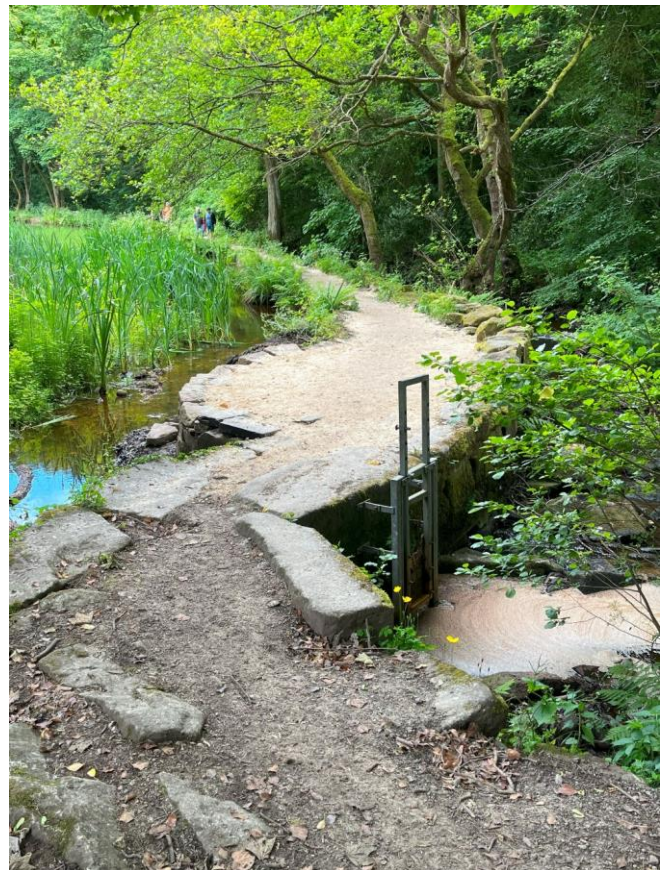
*Hind Wheel (East) flood damage Oct 23*



*Hind Wheel (East) repaired by Sheffield City Council June 24*



*Hind Wheel (West) flood damage Oct 23*



*Hind Wheel (West) repaired by Sheffield City Council June 24*





*Huge stones washed down by the October flood under the bridge at Hind Wheel*



*Sheffield City Council repairs to the foundation of the bridge at Hind Wheel*

## **April**

The April Task Day was deferred for one week until 5<sup>th</sup> May due to heavy rain. A group of 14 volunteers were given the task of moving 20 tons of grit stone (provided by Sheffield Council) in wheelbarrows down to the nature trail beginning at Swallow Wheel and began the long arduous job of resurfacing the footpath.



*A few members of the RVC Task Team take a well-earned break for the camera*



*20 tons of gritstone is steadily barrowed away to the Valley bottom.*





*Footpath repairs at Swallow Wheel weir*



*Swallow Wheel head goit completely blocked with grit and rocks and showing the weir washed away in the background. There is no water flow here anymore and sadly the dam will slowly dry out.*

## May

The end of May task day was a continuation of the footpath repairs. As I was unavailable to run the event Ranger Ryan stepped in to run the event for us with about a dozen volunteers. Light rain was forecast but that didn't dampen the spirits of the volunteers.



*Sheffield City Council Ranger Ryan Atkin leading the footpath repairs at the end of May task day*



*Task Team regular, Hilary, with two colleagues in the background proudly displaying their efforts on a restored footpath*

## June

At the end of June, the weather had improved considerably and the water level in the Rivelin had noticeably dropped. The task was to repair the final section of footpath approaching Hind Wheel. For the past 9 gruelling months, the



RVCG task team had restored over a mile of footpaths, and this would be the final section in the upper Rivelin Valley. However, the distance between the grit supply and the work area was increasing and a barrow run was now taking over 10 mins which was exhausting on a very warm day only slightly tempered by the shade of the trees.



*A section of Rivelin Valley nature trail prior to the June task day*

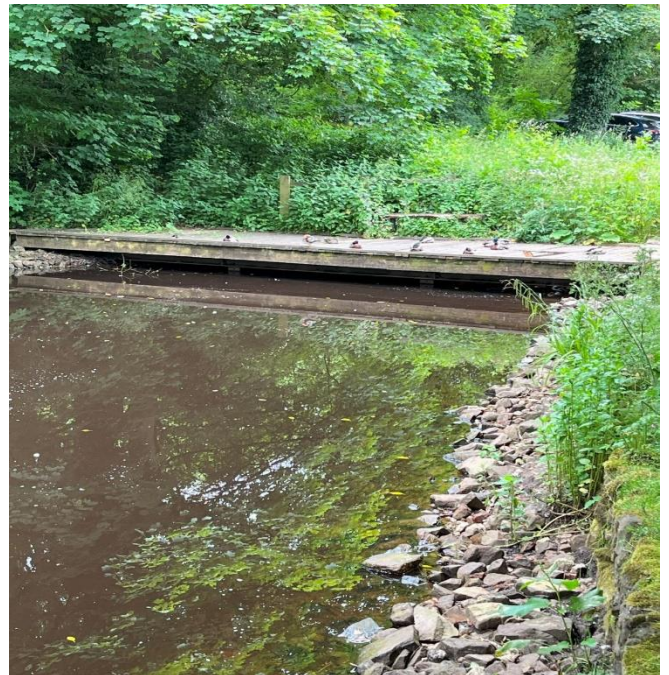


*Similar section following repairs*



*After an exhausting day and with the final hole filled, the task team volunteers still manage to raise a smile.*

Future task team events will focus efforts on footpath repairs at Holme Head Wheel in the section between the S-bend and Rivelin Park, and we will also be returning to Rivelin Corn Mill where the dipping platform built in 2006 by the RVCG is showing serious signs of deterioration. The inaccessible head goit has not been cleared since storm Babet and now that river levels have dropped, the flow of water into Rivelin Corn Mill is at an all-time low. This is being addressed by Ranger Ryan



*Rivelin Corn Mill needing a bit of TLC*  
Graham Appleby, Task Team Leader



## Crosspool Festival 2024

The RVCG supports the local Crosspool Fayre in several ways. The RVCG trailer is used to soak the well-dressing boards for a week before the event. It is then transported to Barbara's home where a team of volunteers spend a few days installing the clay and making up the well-dressing design.



*The Crosspool well-dressing boards soaking in the RVCG trailer*

The RVCG trailer was then used to transport the completed boards to their location at the end of Marsh Lane.



*The Crosspool Well-Dressing board being transported ready for installation*

This year, it was decided to base it on the Olympics and in the form of a word search. There were around 13 sports and 6 symbols

hidden amongst the letters. Did you spot them all



Photo: Crosspool Forum

The RVCG also took its stall to the Crosspool Street Fayre on Sunday 30<sup>th</sup> June where we enjoyed having a chat with visitors and updating them on the Rivelin Valley and ongoing repairs to the nature trail. Unfortunately, the weather was quite chilly and overcast but we did sell a few of our Walking the Rivelin books and took a few new memberships.



*Chatting to visitors is Roger Kite. The model of Nether Cut mill is always an attraction to passing visitors and especially children.*

Well done to the Crosspool Forum organisation and thank you to the RVCG volunteers who attended the stall – Christine and Graham Roe, Sue Shaw, Roger Kite, Joan Buckland with her tank of creepy-crawlies and myself Graham Appleby.



## Stannington Carnival

The RVCG have not been to the Stannington Carnival for a few years but as the new Stannington organisation (SCOFF) contacted me to play guitar at the carnival and after checking that we had enough volunteers, we decided to have the RVCG stall as well. However, just prior to the event, half of the RVCG volunteers went down with Covid and so I sent out a request for help from the task team and my neighbour Roger Goodwin volunteered to help set up. It was an early start at 9am and we were one of the first there and a long day lay ahead until the finish at 5pm



Photo: Mark Bateman



*Graham Appleby performing 'Harvest Moon' at the Stannington Carnival.*  
Photo: Steve Brown.

The event was very well organised, very well attended and most stalls did amazing sales as did the RVCG where we gained 18 new members! The catering was excellent and stall holders could have a drink and a breakfast sandwich for a fiver. The stage and entertainment were also very well organised and run by a professional team. Thank you to Christine Roe, Sue Shaw, Mark Bateman and my neighbour Roger Goodwin. Glad to hear that Graham Roe, Roger Kite and Joan Buckland have now recovered.

Graham Appleby

## Help to record historic plaques

Do you know of any plaques around our area that commemorate a historic site, event or person? Following his success in placing a plaque to honour the Sheffield Blitz victims of the Marples Hotel, Fitzalan Square, local historian Martin Naylor is now on a mission to document as many plaques in Sheffield as possible.

Currently (July 2024) the only plaque recorded in this area is the one commemorating Sandygate, the oldest football ground in the world, home of Hall Football Club founded 1860. So let's see if we can remedy that. We have sent in details of the plaque on the building on Bolehill Road in Walkley that housed the first Ruskin Museum. If you know of any other plaque that could be included, have a look at the Open Plaques website (<https://openplaques.org/places/gb/areas/sheffield/plaques>) to see if it's listed there. If not, you can email details to Martin at [martingnaylor1955@gmail.com](mailto:martingnaylor1955@gmail.com).

## Heritage boosts your wellbeing

Here's proof (if we needed it) that living in or near places like the Rivelin Valley is good for us! Historic England has published new research showing that the overall wellbeing value for people's day-to-day encounters with heritage is estimated to be worth £29 billion every year in England. This new report demonstrates that the very presence of nearby historic places (including 'everyday' local heritage) benefits residents' quality of life, whether or not they participate in heritage activities.

Find out more and read the report on [Historic England's website](#).

## Sheffield Swift City Map

Many of us look forward to the arrival of the swifts each year. Sheffield and Rotherham Wildlife Trust have developed an online '**Sheffield Swift City Map**' where we can find out where they are in the city and get involved with their conservation by logging our sightings. The map displays the distribution of records of

screaming parties and close roof passes associated with swift breeding activity, swift boxes and bricks installed through local conservation activity, confirmed natural swift nest sites and the areas of Sheffield covered by local swift groups.

<https://www.wildsheffield.com/swift-city/#swift-map>

Action is needed to protect these incredible birds and ensure their survival. The hope is that this resource will inspire people to get involved with their local swift group or start their own, identify opportunities to install boxes or bricks for swifts and submit their own records of boxes/bricks, nests and sightings. Longer term, the map and data will be used to determine and illustrate what impact local swift conservation work is having in helping to reverse the species' decline in Sheffield and to help inform future conservation efforts.

Locations of swift boxes, bricks and natural nest sites can also be submitted via the [Sheffield Swift Network](#).

Sue Shaw

## **Rivelin River Health. Our River Rangers encourage you to use the Sheffield River Rangers App.**

It's been over a year since a small army of locals living within the Rivelin catchment were trained in Riverfly monitoring. So far the monitoring spots have been sampled on a monthly basis within the sampling season as we are getting consistently high scores, illustrating the rich biodiversity of invertebrates whose home is the Rivelin. This gives us all the more motivation to keep it that way and do all we can to protect our local river health, especially given what you hear in the news daily these days about the poor state of many of the nation's rivers.



To protect the Rivelin from any emerging threats, and to act as an early warning system for threats to river health, we are asking all the readers of this newsletter to download an App where you can report any concerns that you see on the Rivelin. If you're not sure whether what you're seeing is a pollution incident, or whether it's something to report to the Environment

Agency (on 0800 80 70 60), it is possible to simply capture a few photos on the App without reporting it, but then at least the evidence is there if it turns out to be nefarious for the river ecosystem. You can also just browse what everyone else has uploaded to the App and get a feel for the types of issues that are reported to the EA.

So, we urge you please access this App via your mobile phone app store, or computer.

<https://five.epicollect.net/project/sheffield-river-rangers-p>

It's a really simple two-step process;

- 1) Search for **Epicollect5** (that the mapping and database engine)
- 2) Once in **Epicollect5**, search for the project **Sheffield River Rangers**

Then navigate around the project to view all the entries, or login to submit your own entry.

The Epicollect5 – Sheffield River Rangers App, was promoted on BBC Radio Sheffield on Ellie Colton's Breakfast show on the 11<sup>th</sup> July, and there's also an online article about the App.

Link to Radio show:

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/sounds/play/p0j4w7pt>

Link to news article:

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/c87rpd61g40.amp>

Jacqueline Diaz-Nieto

## **Environment Week Walk**

About 30 people turned up for a guided walk down the nature Trail primarily to look at the damage caused by storm Babet. Most had not ventured down Rivelin since the reports of closures to some footpaths and all were dismayed to see the extent of the loss of footpaths, their supporting structures and important features such as weirs damaged to such an extent we may never get water back into ponds such as Swallow.

Further loss at 1st Coppice has led to a much reduced supply into the head goit which means 2nd Coppice now relies almost entirely on rainwater. The weir at 3rd Coppice is now inaccessible because the stepping stones have disappeared, and a sizable section of that weir has been carried somewhere downstream.

Folk were interested in our programme of footpath restoration but also very supportive of any initiative to get a water supply back into the ponds.

We only got as far as Swallow when it was time to turn back but all expressed their thanks for the opportunity to see the damage and talk with us about the programme of possible restoration schemes.

Roger Kite



## Heritage Open Days returns 6–15 September 2024

Each September thousands of volunteers across the country invite you to experience local history, architecture and culture, all for free. The HOD theme for 2024 is "Routes–Networks–Connections. Search for events taking part in this year's festival on the online event directory at <https://heritageopendays.org.uk/whats-on.html>

### Walkley Heritage Open Day, Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> September 2024.

Instead of holding our own RVCG HOD event beside the Rivelin café this year, we decided to take up the offer to join forces with other groups in Walkley. The event is being held at three venues, Walkley Community Centre, St Mary's Church and Walkley Carnegie Library.

**Walkley Community Centre, 7A Fir Street (Off South Road), S6 3TG.** Open from 12.30 to 16.00

The RVCG stall will be in the Ruskin Hall. Find out about the heritage, wildlife and pathways of the Rivelin Valley. Pick up some trail maps, look at old photos, drawings, current and old maps of the area. Numerous footpaths criss-cross the valley but the 3-mile nature and heritage trail along the river is one of the most popular routes, as described by the book 'Walking the Rivelin', which will be on sale. Children's activities include a nature corner with creepy crawlies, drawing, making dragonflies and an 'animal tracks' game where children can try to match the spoor to the animal. Come and see the 3D model of part of the valley, and a working model of a waterwheel and grinding workshop.

The Community Centre is the former Walkley New Reform Club which has retained many original features in what the Pevsner Guide describes as "minimal art nouveau style". The event will include tours of the building by the Walkley Historians, visiting the Ruskin Hall with its sprung dance floor and stage, the original Snooker Hall, the WW1 memorial window and the Appleyard Room named after founder Councillor Walter Appleyard. The historians will also display a selection of local photos, maps, census material, books and merchandise.

Local Transport Historian Paul Fox has information on the 31/ 95 bus routes and a collection of photographs and memorabilia of trams on South Road.

Information will be available on the Walkley Victorian History/Mystery Tour and the Long Lost Loos from Walkley to the Town Hall.

**Walkley Carnegie Library, South Road, S6 3TD.** Open 10.00 to 16.00.

Walkley Library is the only Carnegie Library in Sheffield and is a Grade II Listed Building, in the Tudor Revival style. There will be various activities, including learning about the links to John Ruskin, Andrew Carnegie and the local community. Trace your family or share your stories with the volunteers helped by local maps and charts. Browse through local books or extensive photo archives and view an amazing model of the shops on South Road over 50 years ago. There will also be craft activities for children and other surprises in the junior library

<https://www.heritageopendays.org.uk/submission-event/walkley-carnegie-library-opens-its-doors-and-its-history-showing-the-connections-to-the-walkley-community.html>

**St Mary's Church, Howard Road, S6 3RX.** Open 10.00 to 16.00.

Open Day with exhibitions of the history of St Mary's and other Walkley churches & cemeteries. Celebrate the beautiful artisan craftsmanship within the building including the Victorian & 21st century stained glass windows. Exhibitions about past and current places of worship and Walkley cemeteries. Visit the bell tower to meet the bellringers.

<https://www.heritageopendays.org.uk/submission-event/st-mary-s-church-walkley-open-day-with-exhibitions-of-the-history-of-this-and-other-walkley-churches-cemeteries.html>

**A Taste of the Rivelin, Sunday 08 September:** Tours: 1100, 1300 & 1500

The day after the Walkley HOD, Siobhan (Shony's Mushrooms) and Calvin (Hidden Sheffield Walks), will be leading walks in Rivelin exploring edible fungi and flora alongside the remnants of water-powered industry. Rivelin Park Cafe, Rivelin Park Road, Sheffield, South Yorkshire, S6 5FE

<https://www.heritageopendays.org.uk/submission-event/a-taste-of-the-rivelin.html>

### RVCG website update

Our website team (Greg, Sue and Mark) have been working on a new 'Arts' section for the RVCG website. This incorporates the existing information about the Rivelin Valley Artists, and now also includes new web pages on Victorian Poetry, Contemporary Poetry and Spoken Poetry. Take a look at

<https://rivelinvalley.org.uk/rivelin-arts/>

Sue Shaw



## THE RECORDER SUMMER 2024

The title says 'summer' but you would be forgiven for thinking it was February or even November with the wet, misty, cool days we have been having. A week ago, the flowers in the garden and the ginnel looked lovely but then the rain and wind came and spoilt them. Compare this to last June which was the hottest June on record. No wonder there are fewer bees, moths and butterflies. It is hard for them to collect pollen and nectar in such conditions.

We are still getting very small numbers of moths in our trap, probably because of the weather. Last year we had very good numbers and many species. I have not mown the lawn since April and, to my mind, it looks very nice with different grasses, clover and Dog Daisies so it must be the weather. The back lawn looks even prettier with Buttercups and Cat's Ears.

In the front garden I have two patches of Monkshood, *Aconitum stoeckianum*. I noticed the leaves on the tops of the plants were folded inwards. On further inspection tiny larvae of the Golden Plusia moth were found inside. This is the only foodplant of this moth. The plant is poisonous and should only be touched with gloves on. I also noticed lots of the big, fat, greenish-blue aphids, which also prefers this plant. As they suck the sap, they must have immunity from the poison which, in turn, seems to protect them from being eaten. Gradually the leaves of the plant turned yellow and died and the plants did not flower. This is the first time I have seen this happen. I decided to dig up the plants and replace them with some *Lychnis* I had grown. I thought the Golden Plusia moth would have perished with the plant but I found six off-white cocoons at the base of some dead stems. I put these back in the ground and, hopefully, moths will emerge.

Another disaster in my garden this year is the appearance of rats, or should I say a rat which has infiltrated the compost bin via burrowing a hole underneath. This creature has eaten all my lovely Leopard Slugs which make my compost. There are usually about thirty slugs in there and I am particularly fond of them. When the weather improves, and I recover completely from Covid, I will put some chicken wire underneath to prevent it getting in. Our friendly neighbourhood fox needs to get its act together!

On a brighter note, more Brown Hares have been spotted in the neighbourhood round Lodge Moor. Roger Kite took a lovely photo of one in a hay field near Flash Lane which you can see on the website. Keep your eyes peeled for these beautiful creatures in the fields around the valley.

My frog rearing was successful, and I put 16 froglets out near the pond. With this wet

weather they should have plenty of little slugs to eat. We should be counting butterflies now for the Big Butterfly Count, details below. Good luck with that!

Big Butterfly Count 12/7 to 4/8

[Big Butterfly Count 2024 | Butterfly Conservation \(butterfly-conservation.org\)](https://www.butterfly-conservation.org/)

If you are feeling 'under the weather' I recommend sitting in a chair with a cup of tea or coffee and watching the birds visiting the bird feeders. It works for me.

Thank you for your sightings:-

Gillian Drinkwater S10 – 21.4.24 – 4 Canada Geese on Hind Wheel; Snakeshead Fritillary in flower in field near bridge to Wolf Wheel.

Philip Walshaw S10 – 6/24 – Philip's Swifts have had young. Have you seen any Swifts – the most I have seen overhead is 3.

Jack Nuttgens S6 – 14.6.24 – 1 Tree Creeper in valley.

Derek Hastings S10 – 4.5.24 – female Sparrow Hawk and male Pheasant in garden.

Graham Appleby – S10 – Great Spotted Woodpecker on feeder; 10 Starlings feeding on lawn; No birds occupied his 6 bird boxes yet.

Vivian Falshaw S10 – 2.5.24 – Had a good view of a Curlew which landed near her on the conduit.

Susan Thackeray, North Anston – up to 17.5.24 – Susan has lots going on in her garden – Chaffinch, small Blue Butterfly, Red Admiral, Long-tailed Tits, pair of Blue Tits, Robins incl. juvenile, Blackbirds nesting and 3 Hedgehogs which visit each night – lucky you.

Neil Porter S6 – Neil saw 24 species in his survey of the valley on the 24.4.24 including 11 Blackcaps which is the highest he has recorded also his highest number of Grey Wagtail at 9; 3 Goldcrest, 4 Nuthatch. Top species Robin, Wren and Woodpigeon. Pair Bullfinch in garden and female Great Spotted Woodpecker regularly visits but no male. Wood Warblers have returned to Wyming Brook despite the extensive tree felling.

Joan Buckland S10 – Regular visitors to garden – Sparrows, Blackbirds, Crows, Blue Tits, Great Tits, Long-tailed Tits, Wood Pigeons Magpies. Juveniles in garden – Robin, Blue and Great Tits, Sparrows, Blackbird and Starlings. Occasional visitors – Song Thrush, Wren, Goldcrest, female Sparrow Hawk, Goldfinch.

Joan Buckland  
14.7.24