



Essex
Wildlife Trust

Uttlesford Local Group

May 2025 Newsletter

The Uttlesford Local Group runs weekday work parties on Tuesday and Thursday mornings between 9:30 and 12 noon at the nine nature reserves in our district, moving around them as the seasonal work requires. Broadly speaking in the winter months this involves woodland coppicing, in summer meadow management and in the autumn hay cutting and raking. Additional meetings are held at Shadwell Wood on the second and fourth Sunday mornings from September to April to carry out the winter coppicing. These events are a great way of learning how habitats work and seeing wildlife, and are sociable and great fun.

West Wood Leaf Mine





This leaf was spotted at our West Wood nature reserve: it's a bramble leaf, with a 'leaf mine' in each leaflet. These 'mines' are made by tiny micro-moth larvae: they live inside the leaf, eating a meandering tunnel that gets wider as they grow! They stay inside the leaf until it is time to pupate – it's a great strategy to keep safe from predators. These leaf mines are likely to have been made by *Stigmella aurella*, a micromoth with a pretty metallic sheen and a wingspan of just 6mm. These moths will be on the wing in May and into the summer.

Story and Photo; Alice Whitaker.

Hadstock Wood





As part of the ongoing project to help Hadstock Parish Council with it's Sustainable Hadstock project, our volunteers and local residents visited Hadstock Wood in April with the owner's consent to survey its condition and begin to build a species list.

It is known that this is an Ancient Wood, defined as woodland that has existed since at least the year 1600. We have begun with tree surveys, to be followed later by wildflower surveys as the year progresses.

In our previous Newsletter we featured the fungus Scarlet Elf Cup, and at Hadstock a brown version of this was found, which we initially thought was an old example of that species which had lost it's colour. Upon further research we discovered that this was actually a different species called "Brown Ear" *Otidea cochleata*. We have never come across this in any other local wood that we have visited.

For further information see;

<http://englishfungi.org/Species/Otidea%20cochleata>
Story; Tony Morton Photo ; Hadstock Parish Council

Saffron Walden Wildflower Group

The Saffron Walden Wild Flower Group is a long established informal group of enthusiasts who arrange a programme of different monthly field walks from April to September, taking no more than about an hour and a half each. We enjoy exchanging views on the identification of the many species we find (rarities in particular!) which not only adds to our knowledge but the lists we make provide a detailed record of continuity, or change, and these records are welcomed by the Saffron Walden

Museum to add to its archive of our local environment.

- this season we start our outings on site at 5.30 pm
- In June and July we now go on 2 outings in each month, three of these meetings will be at 10 am in the morning.

21 May - Hadstock Wood, Hadstock.

18 June - **10 am** - Carver Barracks

25 June - **10 am** - Dunmow Roundabout near Tesco

9 July - **10 am** - Fulbourn Fen <https://www.wildlifebcn.org/nature-reserves/fulbourn-fen>

23 July - Hadstock Recreation Ground

13 August - Felsted Nature Area <https://felsted-pc.gov.uk/news/felsted-nature-area/>

10 September - Hildersham Bridle Path, upper end and Roman Road

(T-junction of Bridle Path and Roman Road)

If anyone is interested in joining any of these visits please contact Gertrud on this email address;

wildflowergroupsw@gmail.com

Swifts are back

Spotted flying over Saffron Walden for the first time this year on May 2nd, the Swifts are back from their migration to the south and will be with us through the summer.

Also heard in Thaxted on the 3rd, keep an eye, and an ear, open for them.

An Evening Talk

Saffron Walden Museum Society is hosting a Talk on **May 12th at 8.00 p.m.** in St Mary's Parish Rooms, Museum St, about the **Sustainable Hadstock Initiative**. The

Speakers are Councillor John Lockton from Hadstock Parish Council and Tony Morton from the Uttlesford Local Group of Essex Wildlife Trust, and will set out how Hadstock Parish Council identified Climate Change as a significant threat and looked at what could be done locally to reduce carbon consumption and increase nature and biodiversity in the Parish. The speakers will explain what has been achieved so far and their further plans.

Members of Saffron Walden Museum Society £1. Visitors Most welcome £3.
Cash only-sorry no cards



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