

## Nature Notes June 2012

June, named after Juno the Roman goddess of the moon, women and childbirth. In Welsh-Mehedin, Midsummer; in Gaelic-An t'Og mhios, the young month and in Anglo Saxon-Litha, the month of the Midsummer moon.

A dry May and a rainy June, puts the farmer's pipe in tune! Well farmers should be a-piping well! June gives us the feast days of St Barnabas, St Anthony of Padua, St Vitus's Day, St John the Baptist and St Peter. The Summer Solstice is on Wednesday the 20<sup>th</sup>. We also have, of course, Mid Summer's day and it is so nice to know that we are there! Remember that Midsummer Eve is the witches night and you are strongly advised to protect your house and stock against unwanted attention from fairies and evil spirits et al.

Warm June evenings (assuming we have some) are ideal for watching badger and fox cubs and it is a month when young birds and furry things can be seen at their best. Sheep will have been shorn by now and can look quite different without their woolly coat.

Not surprisingly foraging gets off to a good start this month with an increasing number of plants etc available. Dog rose and elder flowers are appearing as will be field rose although we start to see the end of wild garlic. Cherries are beginning to form on trees around Croxley and we should be seeing new nettle leaves coming from plants cut back a few weeks ago.

Those of you that have been through Stone's Orchard will have noticed the real wealth of plants in the meadow area and it has been looking really splendid this year. The uncut areas around the trees and the field perimeters are all adding to the variety and quantity of insect life that, in turn, adds to the same to the bird life. The foxes are busy in the Orchard and the school field. Bats have been sighted flying in and out of the old School House in Yorke Road and I understand that the Bat Group have been notified accordingly.

Crops in the field are growing well and will be benefiting from the rain and comparative warmth as is grass in the pastures. Certainly the sheep seem to be enjoying the new grass.

I was delighted to spot a Red Kite over the Green the other day and I have seen more green woodpeckers than usual. Do we have more or is it just that I am noticing them more often?

Those of you that keep your ear to local ground will have picked up noises about the potential development of Stone's orchard in regard to planting of more trees etc. Some are for and some are not but TRDC seems keen that we have a community orchard and there are a few enthusiastic local followers. However, it is important that all these things are thought out carefully and the on-going maintenance considered both from a cost and an expertise perspective. Amateur and professional minds are coming together on this and there is discussion on both sides. Please do let the Parish Council know if you have an opinion on the issue.

The Revels are soon upon us and I have no doubt the our Parish Rangers will make their usual first class job of preparing the Green. Let us hope for fine weather and some of the fabled "flaming June."

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Take time this month to get out into the countryside and whilst there take time to stop, watch and listen and most of all, enjoy!