

**Time for Some Good News.** After all the uncertainties and worries of recent months and now that those Covid-19 numbers are improving, it is good to draw attention to the better things going on. Reductions in the intensity of human activity have given wildlife some respite: we recall those goats gently exploring the centre of Llandudno and we read of how less shipping activity is reducing underwater noise and helping whales. In Queensland it is reported that the dolphins are offering presents out of sympathy to the smaller number of visitors to the beaches. Locally, our own wildlife seems to be doing well and we have seen much greater interest in our green spaces and hence in our work. In the raised bed at the Crossroads the tulips followed by the alliums have never looked better and, last Friday, while watering there, a gentleman left his place in the queue for the pharmacy to come across to say how much he appreciated our work. Very encouraging!



**Next Steps.** Balancing all the factors, the Government is now intent on easing Lock Down to get the country moving again. From 1<sup>st</sup> June groups of up to six may exercise together in the open air and we believe this enables us to resume limited work sessions while preserving social distancing. Our intention is to proceed with caution by observing closely how the situation develops in the coming days and to review our position on or about 10<sup>th</sup> June to hopefully resume modest activities as quickly as safety considerations for our mature work force allow. In the meantime we shall continue to monitor all our sites and undertake urgent tasks with a couple of volunteers.

**The Old Churchyard.** This iconic site is also receiving many visitors with the pond being a focal point of interest.



One visiting family remarked how wonderful it was to see frogs, tadpoles and newts all on their one visit. No doubt that our work in the winter re-

lining the pond has been a great success. The light coloured pebble effect over-liner provides a good backing for photographs as the fine shot of a palmate newt by Liz Chart shows. The wildflowers in OCY are doing better year by year as illustrated by the buttercups which have followed on from the usual good displays of crocuses, primroses and bluebells.

**Our Website.** Part of our reaction to Lockdown was to launch Garden Watch on our website, initially for birds but soon extended to vertebrates and butterflies. This was made possible by the inspiration and combined hard work of Martin Angel, David Todd and Cameron Sampson. Some useful data has resulted and also good publicity for BCG. In general terms there have been more hits on our website in this period than ever before. You may also have seen the good press release in the Farnham Herald last week with excellent pictures of two of the birds.

**Middle Bourne Lane.** Just before the onset of the Pandemic the Town Council helped us by giving the hawthorn hedge a good trim and just afterwards we managed to re-seed the wildflower meadow. Thus the site has been looking neat and well maintained. Now the Garden is receiving a constant stream of visitors taking a break during their exercise walks. Many have discovered it for the first time and all are enchanted by its peace and tranquillity. Sadly the pond is still leaking (a job for next autumn) but the newts and tadpoles have done well. Simon Bradbury is doing a great job watering the site in this prolonged hot, dry spell. Thanks are also due to

Mike Long for his regular labour with watering cans at the Crossroads.

**Sable Wood.** Thanks to the superb efforts of the owner, our good friend, Bruce Callander, the environment of this woodland is improving all the time and is more and more appreciated by members of the public on their walks. There were some worries about the possibility of increased litter and you will recall we asked members to keep their eyes open for this. Bruce is now back working on the site and took the attached excellent photo of an adder in one of the refuges. With increased usage of all the woods the litter problem has returned and there was a serious fire at Thursley at the weekend. (see grim video link below). Please continue to watch out for litter anywhere in our patch and pick it up if you can. Fires necessitate a 999 call. The Thursley wild fire video is at:

<https://www.getsurrey.co.uk/news/surrey-news/thursley-common-fire-elstead-smoke-18338088>

**Moths.** Martin reports that his activities this year have been affected by the pandemic and by the early spell of wet weather followed by cold nights. This has resulted in smaller catches of the early spring moths. Even so, some species have appeared earlier than in past years, although there have been few notable records. Perhaps the most interesting has been his third record of the Crambid micromoth *Evergestis limbata* (top picture), a species first reported in the UK in 1994 and which he photographed in the Middle Bourne Lane garden in September last year (only the second record for Surrey).

Unusually, he also caught a privet hawkmoth (second picture) in Ten Acre wood in mid-May – a species that is common in North Farnham on the chalk but a rarity in South Farnham.

Please keep an eye open for moths (or any other species) when in your garden or out on your walks, and let Martin know what you spot.



### Future Event (from a parish magazine)

Ladies, don't forget the rummage sale. It's a chance to get rid of those things not worth keeping around the house. Don't forget your husbands.