

Raynhams' Newsletter - May 2023

- Friday 5th, 12th, 19th, 26th - West Raynham Village Hall Bar open from 7pm to 10:30pm.
- Saturday 6th - Screening of the coronation of King Charles III in Village Hall & bar open.
- Sunday 7th - Coronation Big Lunch by the Village Hall from midday until 4pm.
- Tuesday 2nd, 9th, 16th, 23rd, 30th - Raynham Art Club in the Village Hall from 10am to 2pm.
- Saturday 6th, 13th, 20th, 27th - 'Knit and Natter' in the Village Hall from 10am to midday.
- Wednesday 10th - Raynhams' Book Club at No. 28, The Street, West Raynham from 6pm.
- Friday 26th - Raynhams' Gardening Club meeting in the Village Hall from 6pm to 7pm.
- Saturday 27th & Sunday 28th - West Raynham Control Tower open from 10am to 4pm.
- Saturday 27th - Sid's Quiz Night in the Village Hall from 7pm.

Church Services

- Sunday 14th - St Mary's, East Raynham, from 6pm.
- Sunday 21st - All Saints, Helhoughton, from 10:30am.
- Sunday 28th - St Martin's, South Raynham, from 10.30am

To hear about regular services and other events in the local churches, please send an email to: coxfordbenefice@gmail.com.

Note: East with West Raynham - Annual Parochial Church Meeting in the Village Hall on Monday 22 May at 5pm. All welcome.

Easter Sunday Service - 9th May

I would like to thank everyone who was involved in the preparation of St Mary's Church for the Easter Sunday service. The church looked lovely. I really enjoyed the service which was very well attended. Much appreciation for everyone's efforts!

Katie Mead.

Raynham Parish Council

Minutes, agendas and reports of Parish Council meetings are available to view and download from the website at <http://www.raynhampc.info>, which also includes the latest news from Norfolk County Council. Parish Council meetings are held in West Raynham Village Hall starting at 7pm, and the dates for this year are:

- 23rd May
- 25th July
- 26th September
- 28th November.

Contact Details & Past Newsletters

- westray.newsletter@gmail.com to send in articles or manage subscriptions.
- <https://www.raynhampc.info/documents> to download previous issues of the Newsletter.

The Raynham's Coronation Big Lunch - 6th & 7th May

To commemorate the coronation of King Charles III, this event will be screened in the Village Hall on Saturday 6th May and the bar will be open. On Sunday 7th there will be a street party by the Village Hall starting at midday. If you plan to attend the street party, then please email westraynham.vhc@gmail.com. More details about the Coronation weekend are in the poster below.

YOU ARE INVITED TO

A RIGHT ROYAL KNEES UP!

YOU'RE INVITED TO:

The Raynham's Coronation Big Lunch
Please bring a dish of your choosing to share and your own cutlery. We will provide:
plates, soft drinks, beer, wine, bubbles and music.
Village Hall bar will also be open.

WHERE & WHEN:

The Street, West Raynham
Sunday 7th May - 12 noon 'til 4pm
[Village Hall if raining]
RSVP and for more info: westraynham.vhc@gmail.com

The Coronation Big Lunch brings neighbours and communities together to share friendship, food and fun.

CoronationBigLunch.com

[f](https://www.facebook.com/godencommunities) [i](https://www.instagram.com/godencommunities) [t](https://www.tiktok.com/@godencommunities) @godencommunities | #CoronationBigLunch

CORONATION big lunch

Iceland

CHARLES III

Allison Henshaw.



West Raynham Control Tower - 2023 Events



Opening times are 10am to 4pm on the following dates:

- Open Weekend - Sat. 27th and Sun. 28th May
- Cockpit Weekend - Sat. 22nd July and Sun. 23rd July
- Open Weekend - Sat. 9th and Sun. 10th September

URL - <https://www.westraynhamcontroltower.co.uk/>

Raynham Estate - Erection of 9 boathouse/lodges

Documents relating to a planning application for nine boathouses to be built on Raynham Lake can be viewed at:

<https://idoxpa.north-norfolk.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=documents&keyVal=RRT3LYLNKXG00>

Alongside the planning application documents are comments and responses from statutory bodies and residents.

Raynhams' Gardening Club

Our meetings for the rest of the year as follows, all on the last Friday of the month at 6 pm in the Village Hall:

- 26th May
- 30th June
- 28th July
- 25th August
- 29th September
- 27th October
- 24th November
- December - to be decided

Just a reminder of the dates for our planned visits.

- Stody Lodge Gardens - Friday 12th May (2-4pm)
- Elsing Hall Gardens - Saturday 10th June

Both visits will involve car-sharing for those taking part.

- Beth Chatto's Gardens near Colchester - Saturday 19th August

For this event we have free coach travel thanks to the Raynham Solar Fund AND this visit is open to anyone in the Raynhams who wishes to come along.

There will be entrance fees to ALL the gardens which you will need to pay.

Bryan Welton.

Subscription to 'Which?' Magazine

The Solar Fund committee have kindly agreed to sponsor an initial year's subscription to the monthly Which? magazine starting from March 2023. The organisation is famous for making comparisons between products and services and is entirely independent. Which? magazine will be available in a plastic cover and placed on the table in the West Raynham Reading Room. Please do not take the magazine away from the building but leave it in place for others to enjoy.

Tony Myers.

Free Range Eggs for Sale

I have fresh eggs for sale at £1 per half dozen at 14 The Drove, West Raynham. The eggs are from free range chickens fed on Garden Mix.

Julie Mayhew.

Zeppelin Raid

The first bomb ever dropped by air on British soil fell on Jordan's Yard in Sheringham on 19 January 1915, although it failed to explode and was picked up and put in a bucket by a local resident.

The German army was quick to see the Zeppelin's potential during wartime, and the British too were alarmed at the country's vulnerability to attack. These massive airships had much greater space to carry bombs than contemporary aircraft and sufficient speed and range to easily cross the English Channel. Powered flight was still new in 1914 and there was certainly no military aviation, so these German airships were able to bomb Britain with impunity for two years. They were to become a regular feature of life along the eastern coast during the First World War.

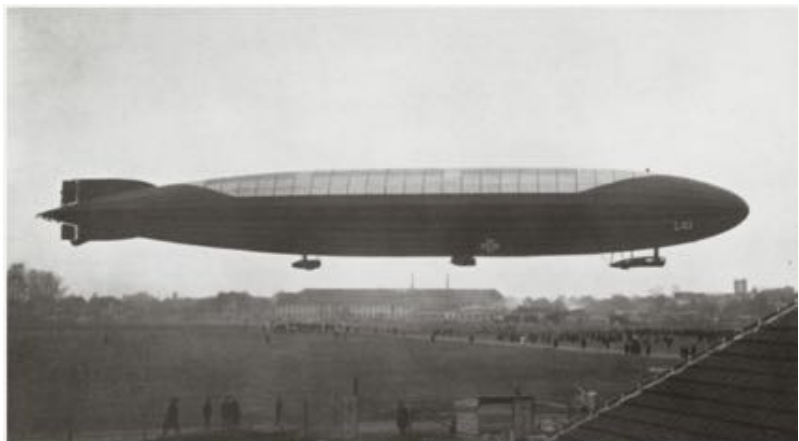
"The airships would loom out of the night sky, some as big as battleships, a terrifying sight. Houses were blasted, people left dead and injured. On the ground, there was no civil defence and little warning. No sirens wailed. Instead, boy scouts blew bugles and policemen on bicycles blew whistles and whirled rattles." (Daily Mail)

Zeppelins were very difficult to track at high altitude; aeroplanes struggled to reach sufficient height and firing solid bullets was ineffectual. The turning point came in 1916, and in September the first German airship was brought down in Cuffley in Hertfordshire. Using new explosive and incendiary bullets the British pilot was able to ignite the hydrogen and send her crashing to earth. He was hailed as a hero and subsequently awarded the Victoria Cross.

The loss of this airship shook the confidence of German High Command and helped drive forward development of their new S class of Zeppelins. Known as 'Height Climbers' by the British, they operated at 16500 feet, but could reach 21000 feet when necessary; beyond the range of defending guns and airplanes.

The first 'Height-Climber' over Britain returned early with engine problems, but the second reached the Raynhams. Six had set out on the night of 23/24 May 1917, hoping to reach London but high winds and a thunderstorm meant that only four reached England.

Zeppelin L43 crossed the coast just north of Felixstowe, passed over Suffolk and into Norfolk, and reached Wellingham by 3.45am. Three high explosive bombs damaged farm buildings, five cottages and the church, and claimed their only casualty of the night. A farm labourer, aged about 45, was heading out to warn his employer that Zeppelins were about, when a bomb fell in the roadway, demolishing a stone wall. His body was afterwards discovered on the road a few yards away.



L43 flew on to South and then East Raynham before turning back towards the coast. The Chief Constable of Norfolk's report on 26 May provides details of the damage sustained.

In South Raynham, windows of the church, of Vere Lodge, the vicarage and 14 cottages were broken. 140 squares of glass, 17 windows and four doors were blown out. Tiles were blown off roofs, and the interior of one cottage wrecked. The estimated cost of damage was £200.

In East Raynham glass was broken in three large houses and seven cottages and tiles blown off roofs. Two hundred and fifty panes of glass were broken in greenhouses at Raynham Hall. A few trees were damaged in Raynham Park and two cart mares killed in a meadow owned by George Tricker. The estimated damage was £300.

"It was no uncommon thing for ceilings to fall in, and in one case a girl of about fifteen years of age was in bed when the ceiling fell and buried her in the debris. She escaped unhurt. A man in one of the cottages stated that he was blown out of bed and fell heavily on the floor. His only injury was a slight cut on the upper lip." (Diss Express).

Most people presume that attacks were directed against major towns and cities, and that always was the intention, but Britain had an effective black out and Zeppelin commanders, flying sometimes over three miles high, would search for any source of light, presuming it indicated a worthwhile target. Many in rural villages did not believe they would be attacked, assuming commanders knew where they were and what they were targeting, and left lights burning.

As terrifying as these aircraft undoubtedly were, they were also a fascinating new phenomenon:

"Chase at Dawn ... The residents of two villages were awakened by the explosions, and many of them turned out to watch the spectacle. It was just before the dawn. After an hour's heavy rainfall, the stars were shining brightly. The country folk were rewarded with a fine spectacle. For a quarter of an hour, they watched the Zeppelin speeding towards the coast, chased by a plucky British airman." (Diss Express).

A total of 84 Zeppelins were built during the war, and bombing raids over Britain claimed over 500 deaths and twice as many injuries. The most important effect of these attacks though was to convince Britain of the significance of airpower. The British Air Ministry was formed in January 1918, and in April the RAF became the world's first independent air arm.

An account of all 103 German air raids on Britain can be found at www.iancastlezeppelin.co.uk. The first two books of Ian Castle's three-volume history are also now available: 'Zeppelin Onslaught - The Forgotten Blitz 1914-1915', and 'Zeppelin Inferno - The Forgotten Blitz 1916'.

I am extremely grateful to Ian for giving me permission to quote from his website and for his help with additional information.

Bridget Howarth.

Insects in the Garden

Cold Spring Weather

I didn't record my first bee-fly until April 8th, and I would normally expect to see these from about the middle of March. None of the solitary mining bees have emerged so far from the south-facing bank where they normally reside. Bumblebee numbers have also seemed low, and I've noted the common carder bee, *Bombus pascuorum*; Early bumblebee, *Bombus pratorum*, and the Red-tailed bumblebee, *Bombus lapidarius* so far. Bumblebees and bee-flies can often be found feeding on Pulmonaria flowers in early Spring.



Dark-edged bee-fly
Bombylius major

Blue Mint Beetle

I am grateful to Rowena Buckeridge for passing on a sighting in early April of several greeny-blue iridescent beetles by the bridge going to St Mary's church. Rowena identified them as *Chrysolina coeruleans*, the blue mint beetle or blue mint leaf beetle. Internet searches indicate *C. coeruleans* was recorded in Norfolk in 2009, and breeding populations of the beetle were reported from Kent, Cambridgeshire and Lincolnshire from 2012. The species has since spread further and is found in damp meadows and along riversides. Both adults and larvae feed on various types of mint.

Moth Trapping

Twelve individuals of five moth species were trapped during three sessions in April. The moths caught were five Hebrew Characters; three Clouded Drabs; two Common Quakers and one each of Early Grey and Lunar Marbled Brown. All these moths have one generation each year (univoltine) and fly as adults between March and May, except for Lunar Marbled Brown which flies between April and May.



Lunar Marbled Brown
Drymonia ruficornis
Larval foodplant:
Pedunculate and
sessile oaks.



Early Grey
Xylocampa areola
Larval foodplant:
Honeysuckles.



Common Quaker
Orthosia cerasi
Larval foodplant:
Broadleaved trees
e.g. oaks, willows,
birches, hazel.



Hebrew Character
Orthosia gothica
Larval foodplant:
herbaceous plants,
bushes and trees.
Black mark on
forewings said to
resemble the
Hebrew letter 'nun'.



Clouded Drab
Orthosia incerta
Larval foodplant:
Broadleaved trees
e.g. oaks, willows,
birches.
Very variable colouring
and markings.

Paresh Shah.

Your River Needs You!

Become a water quality citizen scientist for our iconic River Wensum

Are you concerned about the decline of our rivers and freshwater environment and motivated to make a difference? Norfolk Rivers Trust and the Wensum Catchment Partnership (WCP) need your help with an exciting citizen science project to test river water quality, thereby providing valuable information that will support the development of restoration plans that are based on evidence.

The Wensum Catchment Partnership (WCP) is a partnership hosted by Norfolk Rivers Trust which comprises a range of organisations including the Environment Agency, Natural England, Anglian Water, Norfolk Highways, Norfolk County Council, Norfolk Wildlife Trust and various other local groups. Together with local people, the WCP works to restore the Wensum catchment as a whole for the benefit of people and wildlife.

Sadly, the river is currently classified as 'moderate' and 'poor' for its water quality (WFD, 2019). In order to improve on this, and to ensure we maximise the impact of our interventions, we need to understand water quality along stretches on the river.

Accordingly, the WCP are developing a consistent method to regularly measure the chemistry and flow of the headwaters of the Wensum River along a tributary of the Wensum (the River Tat), and in the main river channel between South Raynham and Fakenham. The data collected will be fed back to the WCP to help shape our plans to restore the health of the Wensum. The WCP will build on this by expanding the approach to cover the whole of the Wensum catchment.

What does being a citizen scientist involve?

You don't have to be a scientist to make a meaningful contribution to our collective knowledge. We're simply looking for people who live near the Tat and/or the Wensum in the areas around South Raynham and Fakenham, to join our team of committed citizen scientists.

Field surveyors:

We ask that citizen scientists are able to conduct water quality tests once a week across 1-3 sites (testing at each site takes about 30 minutes). You would be required to commit at most 2 hours per week of your time.

- Use of a vehicle is not necessary but may be helpful for sites at a distance from your location.
- Access to a smartphone or computer will be essential for submitting data through an app (training will be provided).
- You may need to walk short distances on uneven ground while carrying a light testing pack.
- You will be paired-up with another citizen scientist to ensure safety.

Additionally, occasional 'river blitz' days may be organised to check water quality along a small stretch of river. This will be optional.

Am I the right person?

If you enjoy being out in nature, spending time by the river and making a real contribution towards restoring the Wensum, this is the place for you! You will be fully trained and provided with all the necessary information so that you can feel confident in what you're doing. This will include the water sampling process, how to take care of your equipment and biosecurity best practice. Travel expenses will be covered.

Who do I contact to find out more?

If this sounds like something you'd like to get involved with, please contact Elle Claiborn, Norfolk Rivers Trust, at elle@norfolkriverstrust.org.uk. We would be extremely grateful to anyone willing to commit some time and effort to assist us with this important project.

West Raynham Nature Notes - April 2023

The biggest surprise this month was a report of an unusual mammal submitted by Andrew Howarth. Whilst driving home late one evening in early April, he saw what he first wondered was a pine marten running the along the road near West Raynham. Pine martens do not occur in Norfolk, so we agreed his sighting was most likely of a polecat!



Polecat - library photo © Anne Newton

These are extremely rare but have increased their range in recent years and a few have been recorded in West Norfolk, sadly in most cases as road casualties. Quite often sightings are of polecat-ferrets, as the purest form of the species is primarily in its core distribution of Wales and the West Midlands.

It's definitely a very exciting record for our area and I hope I will be lucky enough to find one. Jan and I did have a great view of a stoat darting in front of our car across the A1065 the other day, but they are relatively common by comparison.

Bird migration

Summer migrants have been slow to get going this year, probably because of the generally cold weather. We've had a steady trickle of swallows since the end of March and the first house martins returned to the village on 8th April, although numbers only picked up from the 22nd, when I counted six over the village.

The first cuckoo was heard along the riverside woodlands on the 15th and regularly since. There are plenty of chiffchaffs and blackcaps signing pretty well throughout our area, but so far, I have only found one willow warbler, up by the Solar Farm, also on the 15th.

A visiting birdwatcher, who I came across photographing sparrows bathing in a puddle on The Street told me about a white wagtail he had seen in a field close to Stables Farm. The black and white birds we normally see are pied wagtails, the British race of white wagtail. The latter is widespread in various forms across Eurasia, but quite scarce on passage in the UK.

The only late staying winter birds were brambling and redpoll. Unusually, there were no fieldfares, which normally hang on well into April.

I am still hopeful that the temporary lagoons from the lake dredging will turn up some goodies. The best so far has been a common sandpiper dropping in on the 16th. Otherwise, there's a regular couple each of shelduck and oystercatcher and plenty of herring, common and black-headed gulls.

There have been very few butterflies so far - it's been too cold and windy.

St Margaret's churchyard

We held our first conservation working session of the year on Saturday 15th April. A big thank you to those who turned out to help us. It was much appreciated.



If you have any unusual nature observations, please let me know:
David Stubbs: davidstubbs1@btinternet.com or WhatsApp me on 07974922197.