



**Affpuddle & Turnerspuddle Parish
Wildlife Newsletter
No 2023/07 12 April 2023**

Deer crossing the River Piddle -
from the bridge in Briantspuddle.
Photo by Lesley Haskins.

Dorset Deer

Lesley Haskins: One evening last week I was lucky enough not to be spotted by a deer having a wade in the water as I approached the main bridge out of the village.

Here in Briantspuddle I mostly see Sika deer, and the deer netting we put up on Erica Trust land has to be 1.8 metres to be effective.

However, at my own home in Wimborne and on Erica Trust reserves at Merely, Ferndown and Verwood, we get pretty much only Roe Deer. So we need only a 1.5-metre netting - which is easier to handle.

I am told that Sika are sometimes seen in these more easterly regions, but they never seem to occur in significant numbers.

I rather imagine them taking one look at the great deer over Stag Gate along the A31 and deciding the competition is too great and bolting back west!



(photo from wikipedia)

Ian Cross: we can summarise Dorset deer distribution as follows:

- **Sika** – stronghold is Purbeck and the Poole Basin, the most abundant deer in the parish.
- **Roe** – throughout Dorset, common in the parish.
- **Fallow** – mainly West Dorset and North-east of Blandford, scattered elsewhere. Not in the parish.
- **Muntjac** – widespread but scattered and infrequent, probably under-recorded.

Rove Beetle

Adrian Middleton: Recently (on Easter Saturday) I found a small, slender black beetle on a white ledge inside my back door. Chris Nother and I believe this to be a small type of rove beetle. It was about 7-8 mm long. Its flying wings were initially hidden under the short pair of wing cases. Under more normal circumstances I expect it would have been better hidden.

Quite recently Ian wrote an interesting account about the Devil's Coach Horse a large rove beetle (newsletter 2022/ 62) and did say we have about 1000 different kinds of rove beetle which I anticipate could make species I.D. difficult. I shall be interested in his comments.



Rove Beetle Photos by Adrian Middleton

Ian Cross: Instantly recognisable as a rove beetle. Probably a species of Staphylininae or Paederinae but these two subfamilies alone contain roughly 50 genera in the UK, so even putting it down to genus is difficult.

Is that fungus wearing mascara?

Ian Cross: With such a lovely set of lashes as these, the answer is, yes, of course!

This is a fungus I have wanted to see for many years. As so often happens, I only came across it by accident, when I wasn't particularly searching for it and, of all places, here in our garden.



Eyelash Fungus – easy to see how it gets its name Photo by Ian Cross

This is the Eyelash Fungus, Eyelash Cup or Common Eyelash (*Scutellinia scutellata*). It's one of the disc fungi, in the same general group as the Orange Peel Fungus or Scarlet Elf Cup. This species has a shallow, orange disc but is particularly distinctive as the edges of the disc are lined with black bristles. Though easy to identify it does tend to be overlooked as it's fairly diminutive: less than a centimetre across. It's quite common on wet, rotting wood or damp ground.

Signs of Spring

Lesley Haskins: There is a short time in the spring when the primroses, celandines and wood anemones are still looking lovely and the bluebells are just starting to show - and it is now, so if you want to get the full hit list for the old woodland belt along the northern edge of Erica Trust woodland, do go up soon. But if you wait a little longer the bluebells will be magnificent.....



Spring Flowers Photo by Lesley Haskins

Many thanks to: Ian Cross, Wildlife Advisor,
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Please send your contributions to macheetham@hotmail.co.uk.
I will confirm receipt. If you don't hear from me it means I haven't received
your email, so please make contact through
Briantspuddle Community Website and we'll sort out a Plan B.