

Round-about-Buckden

SEASONAL

Autumn

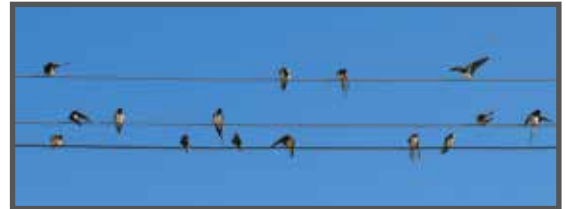


Kingfisher

The autumn leaves, fruits and berries on the trees and hedgerows provide an abundance of colour, but there are lots of colourful creatures too. Kingfishers are busy along the river and on the lakes the additional birds hatched in the summer mean that catching a glimpse of one may be slightly easier than usual! Listen for the high-pitched whistle and look low over the water for a brilliant blue flash speeding past.

Many birds are busy fattening up for their long migration to Africa. Warblers – some that bred locally – others passing through from further afield – eat blackberries and haws.

The last swallows and martins gather on wires prior to heading south. These flocks are a mixture of adult birds and birds hatched in summer, so perhaps all the noise is an exchange of information on the best migration route to help them complete their hazardous journey.



Swallows



Green Sandpiper



Greenshank

Other birds are moving through the area. Common and Green Sandpipers and Greenshanks feed in shallow water on the lakes as they stop for a few days to feed.

The colour from wildflowers is replaced by an array of weird and wonderful fungi. Brackets and the colourful Turkeytail grow on trees and stumps and bonnets. Stubble Rosegills pop up on path sides and on verges, tall Parasols rise from the grassland and woodland floor and many others await discovery if you remember to keep looking down. There are around 17,000 species of fungi in the UK found almost in every habitat so keep your eyes peeled in autumn – the best season for fungi.



Turkey Tail



Parasol



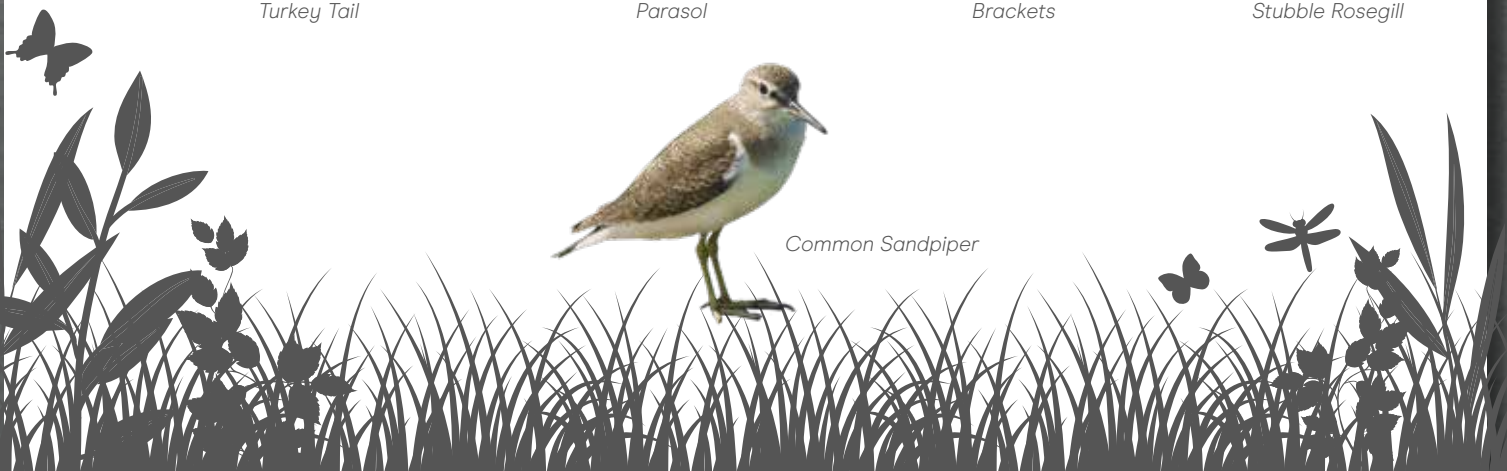
Brackets



Stubble Rosegill



Common Sandpiper





Migrant Hawker

There are still insects to be found, including the last two dragonflies on the wing – the Migrant Hawker that patrols the sky patiently, often in groups, and the Common Darter. They bask in sunny spots to make the most of the last of the sunshine. These two species are regularly found well away from water, so you could see them anywhere on the walk.



Common Darter

Check patches of ivy on the walk. There will be an excellent variety of colourful hoverflies, bees, Hornets and other insects all taking advantage of its late flowers in the sunshine. Spend some time seeing how many species you can spot. Take some photographs, so you can identify them later.

By October, the first winter visitors are coming in daily and numbers of ducks swell on the lakes. Listen for the first whistles of Wigeon and the “seep” of Redwings and the “chuckles” and “chacks” from Fieldfares overhead. On some October and November days, large



Wigeon



Redwing



Fieldfare

flocks of Starlings can be seen flying south overhead. These are birds that have arrived in the UK from as far east as Russia and many follow the Ouse Valley to guide them to their wintering grounds.



Starling

