

Briantspuddle Wildlife News No.4

If you did not receive the November Wildlife News I apologise. I have had many failed deliveries because of email service providers anti-SPAM filters.

So as from January 2026 the Briantspuddle Wildlife News will only be on the Parish website www.briantspuddle.info/wildlife-in-our-parish

Please keep sending your wildlife news, as long as it is within the parish of Affpuddle, Briantspuddle, Throop and Turnerspuddle.



Crossbill



Snowdrops at Turnerspuddle

Working Party on Turnerspuddle Heath



Our working parties on TURNERSPUDDLE HEATH will restart on Thursday 8th January from 9am to 2.30pm, and will run until the end of March. So if you would like to join us we always need some extra help give me a ring on 07870937108 Roger Hewitt.

Birds at Christmas



Cattle Egrets, Little Egrets at Moor Lane



Male Goosander

As we approached Christmas the weather turned cold with a north easterly wind, and we started to get a few more birds. Egret numbers shot up, I counted 17 one day plus 4 CATTLE EGRETS. A pair of RED KITES took up residence near MOOR LANE, a nice male GOOSANDER showed well at Throop Meadow.



Red Kite with remains of a snake or a rats tail



Tundra Bean Goose

On Christmas Day I heard that the south of England had an influx of Geese from Europe. So while dinner was cooking I walked to Throop meadow and low and behold I found a TUNDRA BEAN GOOSE with three GREYLAGS. It was never far from the Greylags so made the identification a bit easier as it is slightly smaller and does not have a big orange beak as the GREYLAGS do. It was present on the 25th, 26th, 27th and 28th then not seen again by me. The last TUNDRA BEAN GEESE we had was when I found four almost in the same place on the 27th December 2006, 19 years ago, my how time flies!



Tundra Bean Goose (middle) and Greylag (front) for comparison, with Egyptian Goose (back)

Also there has been quite a lot of birds in the Moor Lane fields - lots of LAPWINGS, PIED WAGTAILS, a nice GREEN SANDPIPER, four SHOVELERS, a WIGEON and a GADWALL.



Glossy Ibis at Waddock Cross Water Cress Beds

Winter work on Erica Trust land

Winter is the busiest time for carrying out management to maintain the wildlife of the Heathland and Woodland owned by the Erica Trust on the south side of Briantspuddle. The photos show some of these works undertaken in the 2025/26 winter season.



Having cleared exotic conifers to restore heathland we need to stop them returning from the seed bank in the soil. These are Monterey Pines being removed from Starmoor Heath.



Another section of the old broadleaf woodland being coppiced to encourage bluebells and other special Woodland flora and fauna.



Above The Hollow Track we have done more gorse control whilst encouraging native trees to return.



Great White Egret
Moor Lane Meadow 12/1/26



Goldfinch
Not a rare sight but a memory of the frost in the garden when the Goldfinches arrived to feed.

Electro Fish Survey on the River Piddle at Throop

	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2013	2015	2017	2019	2021	2025
Brown / sea trout [Salmo trutta]	295	221	236	161	139	132	91	84	114	124	125	87	65
Atlantic salmon [Salmo salar]	29	11	55	12	2	14	11	28	6	65	24	15	11
European eels > elvers [Anguilla anguilla]	15	1	13	2	4	1	2	1	4	9	4	1	2