

Thanks to Nick Miller
for the Masthead



No: 645 August 2025

Stinging nettles are great for wildlife- leave them be!



Stinging nettles are, thanks to their sting and vigorous growth, a much-maligned weed by both gardeners and visitors to the countryside. However, they are known to support at least 40 different insect species, including some of our more familiar and colourful butterflies and less familiar, but equally beautiful, moths. Peacock, red admiral, small tortoiseshell, comma and painted lady butterflies all have caterpillars whose only, or main, source of food is the nettle. These caterpillars, along with the aphids and other insects that feed



upon them, in turn feed our woodland and garden birds throughout the spring and early summer. Later in the year small seed-eating birds, including chaffinch, bullfinch and house sparrow all benefit from the thousands of small seeds which each nettle plant produces.



Unfortunately, the valuable habitat provided by nettles is often destroyed in the name of 'tidying up.' Nettles are not a conventionally beautiful plant, it's true, but very often even those that are not impeding paths or roadways are destroyed in the name of 'tidiness' - and along with them goes the habitat they provide. We do not have the luxury of living in a world where we can do what we like without a thought for the consequences of our actions for the creatures with whom we share the planet. We can take every opportunity, no matter how small, to support wildlife and the small ecosystems that support it in our gardens, our roadsides, our wild spaces. So put away those strimmers, herbicides and insecticides and think twice before giving in to the urge to 'tidy up'!

With thanks to Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust



DISCLAIMER: The statements, opinions and data contained in this publication are solely those of the individual authors and contributors and not the Parish Council, the Editor nor the Publisher of the Worm.

Items for inclusion in the Worm must be with the editor by the 21st of the month by email to: thewormeditor@gmail.com



ART is now closed for the Summer Holidays. We had a wonderful day on the 16th July for our Celebration Day and luckily the weather

was kind to us. The event was attended by The Deputy Lord Lieutenant Rev Janet Nicholls and Deputy Mayor Cllr Andrew Ellis who handed out certificates and medals to our students for their achievements in the past academic year. Awards included Diplomas in Practical Horticulture and certificates in basic carpentry skills

We also had competitions for our participants to enter including Best Vegetable, Flower Display, and a Bake off.



Over the summer we are holding day courses to help raise funds for ART—come and join us!

16th August and 20th September - **one day gardening courses** , £60 per person.

4th August - **knitting Course** , £45 per person.

Tuesdays through August- **an art course** with local artist Peter Francis [dates to be confirmed] - £20 per person

Please email julie.nunn@abbertonruraltraining.org for more details to book your place.

Coming soon...

We are delighted to announce that Fordham Primary has been successful in our bid for funding from the Department of Education for a new school nursery.

The brand new nursery will have 25 spaces for 2-4 year olds and will utilise an existing unused space within the school grounds.

The new nursery will be run by **Little Butterflies**, with opening planned for September 2025.

To find our more about how to apply for a place, please contact the school office or Little Butterflies.

T: 01206 240 251
 E: admin@allsaints-fordham.essex.sch.uk
 E: littlebutterfliespre-school@outlook.com

allsaints-fordham.essex.sch.uk

LIFE Education Trust

SPOTTED FLY-TIPPING? REPORT IT!

We need your help to target fly tippers

If you have spotted someone fly tipping, send us the details:

- Dates and times: precise details help us identify culprits
- Location: exact spot fly tipping has occurred
- Description: details about the waste and any vehicles involved
- Evidence: Ring Doorbell or CCTV footage

Contact Us

Report fly tipping through this link:
colchester.gov.uk/recycling-and-rubbish/fly-tipping/

Or email our Wardens on:
citycentrewardens@colchester.gov.uk

Colchester City Council

colchester.gov.uk/recycling-and-rubbish/

Continuing the charming recollections of life in Wormingford between the two World Wars, by **Muriel Woodhurst** [nee Tokely]. Muriel died in 2017 but wrote her memories down so that they can be shared with all of us.



Father was such a patient man, but Mother always made the decisions in our house, we would climb on Dad's knee and comb his hair, he had nice hair with it curled up in the front. He would drop off to sleep, but us children would soon wake him up and persuade him to play his accordion; to this we sang hymns and songs, Mother's favourite was "After the Ball is over."

Each Sunday we went to church 2 or 3 times; we used to try to get the seat behind Mr Arthur Balls because he would turn round and give us girls 1/2d for the collection bag.

We always dressed up for Church – a straw hat with flowers round it. In winter, Mother would cover the hats with a dark felt material, and put a band of ribbon round. We wore black stockings for school and ginger ones on Sundays. We also wore combinations, a 1-piece garment, you had to put your arms and legs through and the back was left open for obvious reasons. We then wore a dress and always a white starched pinny on top.

I could never quite understand why we weren't allowed to sew on a Sunday, or play with a ball. We were allowed to knit and to walk in the woods. We used to gather flowers in the woods, snow drops and primroses; we would set off with a big cane basket and a ball of wool. The flowers were tied in little bunches, a few leaves in each bunch, we filled the basket to the top, before leaving for home. The flowers smelt beautiful, especially the primroses. These were sent to a little café in Sudbury and used as table decorations, I expect there was a small payment for this, but I don't remember hearing of any.

The buses were very useful, we only got to ride on a bus once a year; this was when we went to town, to buy new shoes and rubber boots - black one year and brown the next. This was a great occasion as we all paid a penny a week into a shoe club for this. But you could send a letter or a parcel on the bus, and it was delivered to the door.

We all had our jobs to do, two of us used to set off very early in the morning gathering mushrooms - we would take a tin bath, a handle each side, and we aimed to fill the bath before leaving the field, these were collected and sold. In the evening there were peas to shell and beans to slice for the next day's dinner.

To be continued.....

What August Did

by Lenore Hetrick

August looked across the land.

"I must be careful," she said.

"I must touch the leaves a little bit –
But I must not turn them red."

She went to the flowers in the summer garden

"Time for you to sleep!

Go to the land of summer dreams,
And there sleep, long and deep."

Last of all she went to the orchard,

She touched the fruit that was near.

It blushed and reddened and August cried,
"I announce that harvest is here!"

"My greatest task is done," said August.

"The harvest has begun,

And now I shall go to my winter rest
Beyond the setting sun."



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The villagers were very saddened to learn of the sudden death in July of Sarah Cook. Our hearts are with her family, friends and all who mourn her.

The Worm will be running a series in which readers can write in to nominate someone as their hero. Please get in touch if you have a hero/ine that you would like to see featured to thewormeditor@gmail.com

“England expects that every man shall do his duty”

Horatio Nelson—My Hero, by Paul O’ Shaughnessy



My hero is honoured by the highest statue in England, with thousands of tourists crowding the base and photographing each other in front of the lions and the reliefs that remember the men who fought and died at the Battle of Trafalgar. Few now pay any attention to the figure at the top of the column in Trafalgar Square, nor have much thought for the man the poet laureate Robert Southey called "England's Darling Hero" and Lord Byron called the "God of War". Out of all our national heroes, the one I most admire is Horatio Nelson.

I joined the Royal Navy in 1982, first serving on diesel submarines during the latter stages of the Cold War. Leaving my home in Liverpool at the age of 17 and adjusting to a life in the Royal Navy was tough. I was homesick, and life on diesel submarines was challenging. We spent weeks at sea in claustrophobic conditions and we did not wash.

Nelson joined the Royal Navy aged 12 in 1771. If life at sea was hard for me as a 17-year-old submariner in 1983, imagine what it must have been like for a slight 12-year-old Norfolk lad who suffered from chronic sea sickness over 200 years earlier in 1771. Such fortitude and perseverance I often found lacking in those I commanded towards the end of my naval career in 2017. Nelson did not complain and, quickly developing a reputation for bravery and tactical brilliance, obtaining his own command by the age of twenty.

Nelson was known for his aggressive tactics and unconventional strategies, as well as duty, loyalty and bravery. Beginning life as rather frail Norfolk boy, he overcame adversity to become a national hero and a Lord Viscount. He inspired fierce loyalty and camaraderie amongst his men, fostering a sense of their being a "band of brothers". He delegated effectively and empowered his officers to act with initiative and confidence, engendering deep trust and strong morale which were crucial to his success at sea. He chased the French fleet to the Caribbean and back, whilst his victory at Trafalgar ended Napoleon's tyranny and ensured the defence of freedom. Nelson involved his men in his decisions, fostering a sense of responsibility. He led by example, leaping from ship to ship, showing bravery and a willingness to take risks. He praised his men publicly, cultivating a sense of camaraderie and trust, which helped men perform well under extreme pressure. He also gave his officers freedom to act decisively when opportunities arose, even if this meant deviating from strict orders. "The Nelson Touch" referred to his unique ability to inspire his men and achieve victory through a combination of strategic thinking, tactical brilliance and strong leadership.

Nelson's achievements are not taught in schools, and as a symbol of the empire he has become somewhat unpopular. If it were not for Nelson, Napoleon could have achieved what Hitler failed to achieve over 200 years later. If not for Nelson, some argue that we would "all be speaking French". Nelson won three remarkable battles, simply by acting like no other admiral before him. He gave fewer signals than other admirals, because he had far more faith in his men and a profound belief in the superiority of the Royal Navy. He did not win the narrow victories of his predecessors. Instead, he claimed total control of his enemy. Nothing held him back, not nervous obedience to naval rules nor the greedy forethought of captured gold. Nelson fought for duty, for glory, for king and country. He could have focussed on winning the wider esteem and approval of his superiors, but he wanted something else. When England stood alone, with Napoleon amassing a great army and preparing to invade, Nelson knew that only the sea stood between England and defeat. He fought for victory and nothing else. For me, Nelson is not only a hero, but a hero of heroes. Nelson's victories were about expanding the British Empire and as such it is now easy to dismiss them. However, the tenacity of a man who battled constant sea sickness, lost the sight in one eye, lost his right arm, learned to write with his left hand and returned to sea less than a year after suffering a life-changing injury simply cannot be dismissed. Nelson had his faults; he was known to be vain but his courage, tenacity and sense of duty cannot be disputed.

If you have news to share, perhaps about a new baby, new neighbours, passing exams or another important event in your life, why not contact The Worm on thewormeditor@gmail.com.

You can also contact The Worm if you would like to talk about an aspect of Wormingford life, make a suggestion or send in an item or photograph for inclusion in future articles.

Rec Trust News

Our summer village funday took place on July 12th at the village hall, supported by Wormingford Wanderers Youth teams, who put on a wonderful football competition. The annual event brings together the local community to enjoy a variety of games, a raffle, tombola, craft and shopping stalls, and a bar and BBQ. This years highlights were 'guess the teddy', with the donated enormous teddy, whose name was 'Chesney', making his way to a very excited little person, as well as the indoor darts game, which brings out the competitive side of everyone! Congratulations to the worthy winner Connor, who achieved the highest score with 3 darts across the afternoon. The raffle was well supported by local businesses, with some fantastic prizes being donated, and a big thank you to everyone that supported it by buying tickets. The tombola and squares game had a queue all afternoon, with smiles all round with many prize winners. The money raised from all the hard work from the Recreation Trust trustees will go towards a longer term project of upgrading the children's play area. The next event in the village hall is Cash Bingo on August 8th, we really hope to see you there!

September

Their summer romance
over, the lovers
still cling
to each other

the way the green
leaves cling
to their trees
in the strange heat

of September, as if
this time
there will be
no autumn.



—Linda Pastan
from "The Months"

St Andrew's Church Services,

August/ September 2025

10th August– 11.00am Holy Communion

24th August– 11.00am Morning Worship

14th September -11.00am Holy Communion

28th September—11.00a, Harvest Festival



Revd Heather writes.....

We owe a lot, in British culture, to John Montagu, 4th Earl of Sandwich (1718-1792), who was the inventor of the great British classic, the humble sandwich. In recent weeks, we have seen Marks and Spencer's launch their summer special, a Strawberries and Cream Sandwich, which rather amusingly led to an argument over VAT, most sandwiches are zero rated for VAT, but sweetened or confectionary items are liable for the standard 20% VAT. Whether it was a savoury or a sweet treat, is arguable, but one fact remains, more than 200 years after his death, sandwiches remain a very popular choice at lunch time.

As I child, I thought I knew exactly why sandwiches were called sandwiches, and it had nothing to do with the 4th Earl of Sandwich, it was simply because having eaten sandwiches on a day trip to the seaside, the sandwich ended up fully seasoned with gritty sand. I assumed they had been named after one such similar outing. It was years later that I would discover that Sandwich is actually a place in Kent, and who 'invented' the sandwich.

Over the coming month, many of us, will hopefully have the opportunity to go to the beach and maybe even eat our sand filled sandwiches. Not only does the sand go in our food when we are at the beach, but it has the amazing ability of getting just about everywhere, falling out of shoes and socks for days after, a lasting memory of a trip to the seaside. It would of course be impossible for us to count the grains of sand in a single handful when we go to the beach, let alone consider how many grains of sand there might be on the beach or on all the beaches in the world. But God promised Abraham in the book of Genesis that his descendants would be more numerous than the stars in the sky and as countless as the sand on the seashore. Against all hope, Abraham in hope believed and so became the father of many nations, just as he had been told. (Gen 22:17)

So when you are next at the beach, why not take a closer look at the sand, and as it runs through your fingers, think about that promise God made to Abraham, and remember that we are those descendants, each one of us, even though numerous, precious and beloved by God.

May God bless you, Heather



Wormingford Parish Council

Report for June/July 2025



This report summarises the meetings of the Wormingford Parish Council held on 19th June and 17th July 2025.

The new Speed Indicator Device has been ordered and hopefully will be installed during August. WPC's share of the old device, which can no longer be relocated between the three villages party to the original arrangement, has been bought out by Aldham where the device is now permanently deployed. With the donations from Aldham, Cllr Darius Laws and hopefully Cllr Lewis Barber, 55% of the cost of the device will already have been met.

WPC has made a submission to National Heritage for a listing of our bridge following the project led by Cllr Janet Bettle to research and prepare the application to attain the best protection for this historic structure. We are supported by the Dedham Vale Society, Suffolk and Essex National Landscapes, Colchester City Council and Sir Bernard Jenkin MP. If this application is successful it will help ensure that the bridge is retained in its current and original configuration. A copy of this research is available to view in the minutes of the July meeting.

WPC were sorry to receive the resignation of Andy Boyce, one of our longest serving councillors. Many thanks to Andy for all his help and input during the last fourteen years! Andy and Liz have relocated to Bures and we wish them both well in their new home.

Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Parish Council will take place on **Thursday, 18th September 2025 at Wormingford Village Hall, commencing at 7:00 p.m.** There will be no meeting held in August.

Contact Information

Members of the public are encouraged to share their views or comments by contacting the Parish Clerk: clerk@wormingford-pc.gov.uk For further information, draft minutes, and past editions of *The Worm*, please visit: www.wormingford-pc.gov.uk

Gill writes....

Using the free Merlin bird app has been a revelation for me.

It has identified birds in and around Wormingford that I just didn't know were here and has extended my appreciation of the variety of birds, many of them rare or endangered, that we have here - and of how lucky we are to have them. There are various owls, ravens, jackdaws, nuthatches, treecreepers, redwings and no end of finches, tits and little brown birds such as the black cap and nightingale which sing so beautifully during spring and early summer.

All of these were identified by Merlin and which I would not otherwise have recognised. Download it for free and prepare to be amazed.

Who's singing?
Merlin Bird ID
can tell you

Best suggestions

- Dartford Warbler
Curruca undata
- Common Chiffchaff
Phylloscopus collybita
- European Stonechat
Saxicola rubicola

Download for free!

Use your local knowledge to help keep vulnerable residents safe

By Claire Monk, Live Safe Manager, Essex County Fire and Rescue Service



As someone who has worked helping the communities for many years, I know just how powerful local knowledge can be when it comes to keeping people safe. You know your community. You notice when something feels off. That's why I'm reaching out to parish councils and community members to ask for your help.

At Essex County Fire and Rescue Service, we're encouraging everyone, especially those working or volunteering in the community, to keep an eye out for residents who might be struggling. A rundown or neglected property isn't always just a sign of disrepair, it can be a sign that someone inside is at risk and may need support.

Here are a few things to look out for:

- *Homes with poor maintenance—overgrown gardens, broken windows, smoke-stained curtains
- *Signs of hoarding—such as cluttered windows or blocked access points
- *Elderly or disabled residents living alone
- *People who smoke at home

These small signs can be clues that someone is vulnerable or isolated, and that's where we can step in. A simple referral for a free Home Safety Visit can make a world of difference. During these visits, our team can fit smoke alarms, offer fire safety advice, help with escape plans, and even link residents up with other services who can offer additional support.

Referring someone is easy, you can do it through our Online Home Fire Safety Check at www.essex-fire.gov.uk/ online, or speak to the person yourself and encourage them to get in touch if you feel it's appropriate.

As my colleague Andrea MacAlister, our Head of Prevention, puts it: "The fire service carries a trusted brand. People open their doors to us, they listen, and they value our advice. That trust gives us a rare opportunity to reach those who may be isolated or overlooked by other services. A simple Home Safety Visit could save their life."

Thank you for everything you do in your communities. Please keep looking out for one another, and don't hesitate to reach out to us if you think someone could use a little extra support.

September, 1918

BY AMY LOWELL

This afternoon was the colour of water falling through sunlight;
The trees glittered with the tumbling of leaves;
The sidewalks shone like alleys of dropped maple leaves,
And the houses ran along them laughing out of square, open windows.
Under a tree in the park,
Two little boys, lying flat on their faces,
Were carefully gathering red berries
To put in a pasteboard box.
Some day there will be no war,
Then I shall take out this afternoon
And turn it in my fingers,
And remark the sweet taste of it upon my palate,
And note the crisp variety of its flights of leaves.
To-day I can only gather it
And put it into my lunch-box,
For I have time for nothing
But the endeavour to balance myself
Upon a broken world.

