

LOWER MILL ESTATE WILDLIFE CALENDAR



LOWER MILL
COTSWOLDS

— DISCOVER THE WILDLIFE ON THE ESTATE BY MONTH —

JANUARY

- Flocks of Blue, Great and Long-tailed Tits, Chaffinches and Goldcrests feed on wildflower seed heads
- Great crested grebes, Pochard, Shoveler, Gadwall, Shelduck, Pintail, Wigeon, Lapwing & Mute swan and large flocks of Meadow pipit and Linnet can be seen over the next couple of months
- Badgers will be pregnant
- Wrens will be frantically hopping around looking for food
- Fox breeding season is in full swing, listen out for their high-pitched screaming as they try to attract a mate



FEBRUARY

- Badger cubs will be born
- Bustling families of Long-tailed Tits begin to make their intricate nests, collecting feathers, small twigs, and lichens
- As things begin to warm up some of the more eager Bumblebees will begin to venture out from their winter dwellings, looking for places to start a hive



MARCH

- Bird breeding season starts
- Great crested newts start congregating in breeding ponds for mating
- Barn owls start nesting in our boxes
- Great Crested Grebes start performing their elaborate courtship dance.
- Soprano Pipistrelle bats are awakening from their slumber after hibernating over the winter months
- Ospreys will start appearing in the UK, you may be lucky enough to see one stopping off at one of our specially designed Osprey platforms



APRIL

- Badger cubs appear above ground
- House Martins begin to arrive after migrating from Africa. If you're lucky, you might see one scooping up mud from one of our House Martin banks which they will use to build their nests
- Cuckoos can be heard
- Grass snakes return to Lower Mill Estate after hibernating
- The Swift makes its arrival and on Lower Mill Estate, we have a specially designed Swift box which can be found on an island on Minety Lake



MAY

- Brown Hairstreak Butterfly caterpillars emerge from their eggs. We are one of only a few places in Gloucestershire where this declining species breeds
- Brilliantly coloured Dragonflies and Damselflies begin to appear from the lakes where they have spent up to the last three years as a ferocious larvae
- Hobbies can be seen hunting dragonflies above the water's surface



JUNE

- Young barn owls start to hatch
- Ducklings begin to appear across our lakes
- Beavers are more active during the summer. Dawn and dusk will be the best times to spot these furry critters
- Look out, or maybe even listen out, for Bittern. They can be heard through their characteristic booming calls which they use to establish their territory



JULY

- From July-September, young Great crested newts start to leave ponds
- Kingfishers are more active during the summer months as they are hunting for small fish to feed their young
- The Estate attracts a variety of different species of butterfly, varying in shapes and colours



AUGUST

- Brown Hairstreak Butterflies emerge from their cocoons
- Do you see rustling in the reeds? It could be Starlings who like to roost within the reeds or elusive Reed buntings and Reed warblers



SEPTEMBER

- Make the most of the House martins zipping around above, gaining a few more calories before heading off on their long journey back to Africa
- Fieldfares, Redwings, and Linnets start to arrive from their northern breeding grounds, enjoying our comparably mild winter
- Enjoy the vibrant colours of the changing season, as trees start to harbour brilliant oranges, yellow and red leaves



OCTOBER

- Beavers will be out collecting branches and storing them in caches inside their lodges for winter
- Great crested newts go into hibernation
- Jays begin to stockpile for winter; if you see a Jay hopping along the floor it's likely looking for a place to stash its acorns.
- Hedgehogs will be getting ready to hibernate, fattening up ready for the winter months ahead



NOVEMBER

- Otters often visit waterbodies around the Estate with Spinney Lake and Mill lake being particular hotspots
- Wigeon, Teal, Goosander, Pochard, Shoveler and Goldeneyes begin to arrive at Lower Mill Estate. These ducks will spend their winter with us and head back to their breeding grounds in the spring



DECEMBER

- Starlings can be seen flying above, performing wonderful acrobatic displays which create a mesmerising spectacle called a murmuration
- Grey herons get ahead of the game early and start to build their nests

