



The Cam Valley Wildlife Group

Newsletter

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New Data Protection Regulations

What has it meant for the group?

On 25th May, the EU's General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) came into force. The main purpose of the GDPR is to protect new rights for citizens and customers in the European Union and to give people control over their data. It applies to all controllers or processors of personal data. It applies to all organisations operating within the EU. It does not apply to personal data used purely for personal or household use.

In Cam Valley Wildlife Group, the personal data of both members and non-members is both controlled and processed. Personal data is information that can be used directly or indirectly to identify a person; controlling data is deciding how and why the data is used; and processing data is using it in various ways, including storing it in both electronic and non-electronic forms, even in well-organised notebooks! Personal data includes images of people. Why we use the data we hold has not changed, but we have had to make sure that how we use it is consistent with the new regulations.

The citizens' rights that are protected through the regulations are the right to be informed; right of access; right to rectification; right to erasure; right to restrict processing; right to data portability; right to object; and rights in relation to automated decision making and profiling. The Coordinating Team has been coordinating the effort to comply with GDPR.

So what have we done?

The Coordinating Team has updated our Data Protection Policy and posted it on the website. In order to make sure that members and non-members know their rights, the group's communications administrator and the Membership Secretary have issued and posted 'Privacy Notices' in the form of letters to existing members and contacts. The website administrator has posted privacy notices with the contact form and the blog joining and comment return messages and as a sign-off message on the camvalleywildlife@gmail.com email account, and added a notice to the membership form. We have made an Action Plan so that we can check that we have done everything we need to do and people have been informed about how to access our Data Protection Policy - on the website, from the communications administrator and from the Membership Secretary.

How does it affect existing members?

For existing members, it means that your data is protected pretty much as it was before, but you have now been told in a privacy notice what we hold, why we hold it and how we use it; that you can check it, have its use restricted, ask us to change it if it is wrong or have it permanently erased (the right to be forgotten); and that you can complain to the regulator if you think that it has been misused. For members who are acting on behalf of the group, it means that they must follow the terms of the regulations when they are holding and using the personal data of both members and

non-members in connection with a CVWG activity, such as administration, events and group projects. Quite a few members act on behalf of the group. Our group constitution sets out how various responsibilities are discharged by teams and particular individuals on behalf of the group. If a member has the personal data of someone else in the group or a non-member involved in a CVWG activity, but they have it in a personal or household capacity (e.g. a friend, or someone who has done a job for them), GDPR does not mean that they have to get rid of it or obtain permission to use it for personal or household purposes - that has nothing to do with how GDPR affects CVWG.

How does it affect new members and non-members' data?

New members will be informed in accordance with their rights under GDPR when they join and non-members are sent privacy notices.

What about information already out there?

There is some historic personal data already in the public domain and it is OK to retain publications, such as newsletters, that include personal information in the public domain or in a public archive.

What's next?

We will continue to look at any further information about GDPR and will update policies and other group documents where necessary.

Deborah Porter

Trip to Long Wood

On Sunday 22 April, nine of us gathered at 10.00am on a beautiful morning for a walk at Long Wood, Black Rock at Cheddar. The late Spring meant that the bluebells we'd come to see were only just coming out, and provided a blue shimmer rather than a spectacular display. We also only saw one butterfly – a female orange tip. However, there was lots more to enjoy. At the entrance to Long Wood, a black cap sang on a low branch to welcome us. We also heard frequent calls from green woodpeckers, and the surprisingly loud call of nuthatches. There were cuckoo flowers galore, and wood anemones, and Tony even found us a small patch of moschatel. We also saw several toothworts at the foot of hazels. A good start to our season of Spring and Summer activities!

Judy Hampshire

Botany walk to Silver Street Nature Reserve

On a fine spring evening on 2nd May, 22 keen naturalists turned up to explore Silver Street Nature Reserve. This walk was part of the programme of weekly Botany Walks led by Helena Crouch for Cam Valley Wildlife Group, but the good turnout indicates that interest in our Local Nature Reserve extends beyond members of CVWG. Although the canopy trees of the woodland are predominantly Sycamore, with some Ash, the varied ground flora suggests that the woodland here has a long history. Bluebells were just coming into flower: near the edge of the wood there are some hybrid Bluebells, commonly seen in gardens, but most plants at Silver Street are native Bluebells and the differences between the two was studied. A particular speciality of the reserve is Goldilocks Buttercup, with a variety of different leaf shapes and flowers which often lack some petals; this was looking stunning in several parts of the wood. Like Bluebell, this species is an "Ancient Woodland Indicator", as are some other species seen, including Soft Shield-fern, Wood

Anemone, Solomon's-seal, Redcurrant and the attractive grass, Wood Millet. Recent clearing at the top end of the wood had resulted in a lovely display of this species. We visited the pond, where a huge clump of Marsh Marigold was in flower. Other pond marginal included Yellow Flag Iris and Fool's Watercress. The native Spiked Milfoil has been introduced to the pond and Common Duckweed has also arrived. The pond edge was wriggling with a mass of tadpoles! The pond, stream and springhead have all been cleared and much improved since CVWG first visited.

We emerged into the adjacent meadow which is also part of the reserve. Although a perfect time to explore the woodland flora, it was more challenging to find species of interest in the meadow, but Cowslips were in full flower together with Cuckoo-flower (also known as Lady's-smock or Milkmaids). Two early meadow grasses were flowering: Sweet Vernal-grass and Meadow Foxtail. Along the edges of the meadow we observed the unwelcome seedlings of Himalayan Balsam which the Friends of Silver Street do their best to control. This admittedly attractive alien has spread dramatically in recent years and is no longer confined to river banks. It can grow to 3m tall and out-competes native species, leading to loss of biodiversity. It is very attractive to bees, which visit it in preference to other species, resulting in reduced pollination of native species. Thankfully most of the meadow is free of this invasive alien and has a number of attractive natives. Relying on vegetative identification, we found Common Knapweed, Meadowsweet, Sorrel, Oxeye Daisy, Meadow Crane's-bill, Red Clover, Meadow Buttercup, Bugle and Sorrel. Diminutive Ground-ivy and Common Mouse-ear were in flower at the edges of the meadow.

Returning through the wood, Helena pointed out some garden escapes: Lungwort and Snowdrops. As we left the wood, another more unusual alien was spotted: a number of plants of Honey Garlic on the bank of the footpath. It was obvious that these had escaped from the adjacent garden, where it is grown. The proximity of the woodland to gardens means that the arrival of non-natives is probably inevitable; luckily these are relatively innocuous additions to the reserve in comparison with Himalayan Balsam.

Silver Street Nature Reserve has always been a treasured place, with a good variety of native woodland and meadow species just a few steps from the town centre. The work of the Friends, creating paths and areas to sit and enjoy the wood, has enabled more people to discover and appreciate this small but interesting reserve.

Helena Crouch

Visit to Ham Wall

On Sunday 20th May, eight members met up at Ham Wall RSPB Reserve on the Somerset Levels for a glorious



Tawny Owl chicks

afternoon. Bitterns were booming in the reeds, and we also heard cuckoos and warblers, including Cettis. Among the birds we were lucky enough to see were Hobby, Marsh Harrier, Great Egret, Grebe, and Lapwing. Among the damselflies was the Red-Eyed Damselfly (see photo).



Red-eyed Damselfly

We saw a few butterflies, including Holly Blue, Orange Tip, Brimstone and Red Admiral. The highlight of the day however, was the sight of two Tawny Owl

chicks high up on a branch, not far from the Avalon Hide. What a lovely surprise it was to see them! See photo attached. Photos were taken by Diana.

Judy Hampshire

Solitary bees you can identify with confidence – part 2

Part 1 of this series featured Spring mining bees. Part 2 features bees from two families, the Colletidae and the Megachilidae, which can be found in our area in the later part of the bee year, in August and September. One of them, the Ivy Colletes, is a quite recent colonist and can be found into November - it is Britain's only true autumn bee.

Colletes hederæ, the Ivy Bee

This solitary bee is the last solitary bee to emerge and is one of the genus Colletes, the Plasterer bee. It flies from late August to November and is an ivy specialist. At first glance, it is possible to confuse it with the honey bee, which is a similar size and can look quite striped, or even with a social wasp. Taking a closer look will allow you to tell the difference, especially if you make yourself familiar with the close-up views of honey bees and solitary wasps in the preceding months. The worker honeybee has a more cylindrical abdomen. Whereas the female ivy bee, in common with many solitary bees, has hairy pollen brushes on its hind tibiae between which the pollen grains are packed, worker honeybees have very well developed pollen baskets on their hind tibiae that are very like those of a bumblebee, where they hold sometimes very large quantities of pollen held together with a little nectar. Honey bees also have very long and relatively narrow marginal cells in the wings (the cell that is furthest towards the tip of the wing on its leading edge - highlighted in photograph), whereas the Colletes' marginal cells are much shorter and similar to the *Andrena* marginal cell illustrated below (marked *m*).



Colletes hederæ male



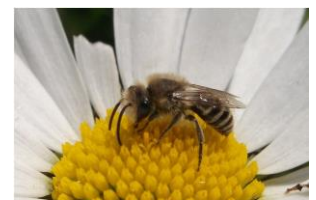
Marginal cell of honey bee

Fresh female *C. hederæ* are unmistakable and magnificent close up. They have bright orange-buff hairs on the thorax and on the sides of the first abdominal segment (nearest the thorax) and a black abdomen with five bold stripes of buff hair that completely obscure the black integument below. The males, which are generally smaller and have longer antennae, are similar to the females and appear about a week before them.



C. hederæ female

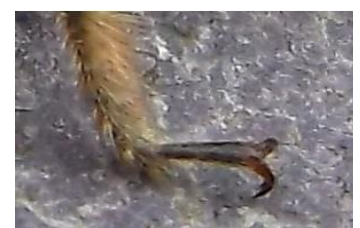
The only other Colletes you are likely to see in our area is *Colletes daviesanus* (right), which flies from late May to early September but is much smaller, the female wing length being only 6.5-7mm and the male 5.5-6.5mm.



C. daviesanus male at Oxeye Daisy

Leafcutter bees

Leafcutter bees of the genus *Megachile* have very substantial jaws with three to five 'teeth' for excavating wood. Like the Small Scissor bee, there are only two sub marginal cells in the forewing. The two



Ligniseca foot

claws at the end of their tarsi (foot segments) do not have an ariolum (a pad-like lobe) between them, unlike some other members of the family Megachilidae. The males will commonly be seen throughout the season defending the nesting area, to which the females will deliver pollen to stock the nest cells, and sub-circular leaf segments to make the cell sides and partitions. I know of four leafcutter bees in our area.

Megachile ligniseca, the Wood-carving leafcutter bee

M. ligniseca, is a very large brownish leafcutter bee with quite a big head that flies until early September. It nests in dead wood and cavities and can be seen frequently in gardens and urban greenspace. They will use artificial nests made by drilling 7mm holes into wood with a long drill-bit. The males and females are fairly similar in appearance, the main differences being the longer antennae of males and the large pollen brush on the underside of the female abdomen. The females can have a body size as large as 18mm with a wing length of 12mm - you could fit two small Scissor-bees end-to-end on that wing! If you have a leafcutter bee as large as that, you are looking at a *ligniseca*. They can be smaller (down to about 12mm body length, 10mm wing length), and that's where looking at more than the size comes in, so as not to confuse them with other *Megachile*. The tip of a female *ligniseca*'s abdomen is rounded, nearly truncated and the hairs on the dorsal surface of its last abdominal segment lie more or less against the segment, with no outwardly projecting black hairs, like *willughbiella*. The male *M. ligniseca* is about 12-15mm long with a wing length of 8.5-11mm and has a very distinctive V-shaped notch in the tip of its final segment, which can be used to distinguish small males from large males of *M. versicolor* and *M. centuncularis*. Its unmodified front tarsi distinguish it easily from *M. ligniseca*.



Male M. ligniseca



Tip of the male M. ligniseca abdomen



Freshly completed M. ligniseca nest

Megachile versicolor, the Brown-footed leafcutter bee, and Megachile centuncularis, the Patchwork leafcutter bee

These bees are on average smaller than Willughby's and Woodcarving leafcutter bees and fly into early September. The female *M. versicolor*, like *M. ligniseca*, does not have the projecting black hairs on the dorsal surface of its last abdominal segment. A look at the pollen brush projecting beneath the abdomen will show that *versicolor* has a largely orange pollen brush with the end two segments black, however,

whereas *ligniseca*'s pollen brush is usually much paler. Females of *M. versicolor* and *M. centuncularis* are about 10 - 13mm in length with a wing-length of 7-9mm, and 9-12mm in length with 7-8.5mm wing length respectively. The *M. centuncularis* female has



Megachile centuncularis female by Gail Hampshire



Megachile versicolor female at nest

projecting black hairs on the final dorsal abdominal segment (like Willughby's), but has a pollen brush which is golden all the way up to the tip and even extends up the sides of the abdomen,

giving it a sort of orange halo, whereas that of the broad-built *M. willughbiella* is more like *M. versicola*'s pollen brush, orange with a black tip.

The males are smaller on average, the largest of them being the same size as the smallest *ligniseca* males. They look very similar to one another and need microscopic examination to distinguish them with certainty.

Megachile willughbiella, Willughby's leafcutter

This bee flies into late August and averages smaller than *M. ligniseca*, with females reaching 15mm in length and 10.5mm wing length. Females have black hairs projecting out on the last dorsal abdominal segment (*ligniseca* does not). The male *M. willughbiella* is smaller than the biggest *ligniseca*, but larger than the smallest. It can't be mistaken, though, due to its expanded white or creamy front basitarsi and mainly orange front femora. It is the most common leafcutter, but the one of the four I see least often in my own garden.



M. willughbiella male nectaring at Meadow Cranesbill

The Small Scissor bee, Chelostoma campanularum

This small and slim mason bee flies from June to August and is one of Britain's smallest bees, with a wing length of only 4 - 4.5mm and body length of only 5-6mm. Its small size makes it the trickiest bee of those featured in this article to identify. It is very strongly associated with bellflowers (species of *campanula*) and is not uncommon in gardens, where it uses a variety of cultivated campanulas for pollen, but is known to visit a few other plants. Early in its flight season, bunches of males can be seen 'licking' at a bellflower clump, all dashing about madly. Later, females may be seen in numbers gathering pollen for the same clump. These bees will often shelter inside the flowers when the weather is dull. Females can also be seen at piles of sand, collecting small grains to mix with soil and saliva for their cell-partitions in small nest holes in wood, such as woodworm holes. Although these tiny bees could be confused with small furrow-bees at first glance, they have different wing venation and a different body shape from the furrow bees. The females store the pollen they gather in a hairy pollen brush beneath the abdomen, like the leaf-cutters and mason bees. Female furrow-bees do not have this pollen brush on their undersides and have a bare-looking furrow that parts the dense hairs at the back of their abdomens, which generally have proportionally broader abdomens. The female scissor-bees are more likely to be confused, however, with male furrow bees of the genus *Lasioglossum* than with females at first glance, but these have much longer antennae than both sexes of the small scissor-bee, which have quite short antennae. The wings have only two sub marginal cells, whereas the furrow-bees, like the *Andrena* species in Part 1, have three. This is illustrated below - the sub marginals (sm) lie below the marginal cell (m) and the pterostigma (Pt). Please note that due a formatting error, the *Andrena* wing venation diagram in Part 1 was 'stretched'. The furrow-bees nest in the ground and in vertical faces, such as mortar in walls.

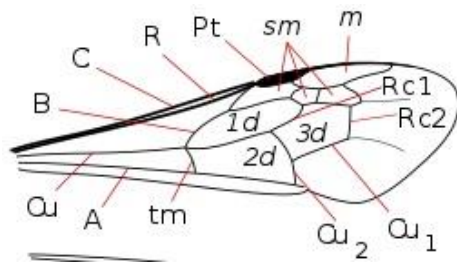


C. chelostoma collecting sand

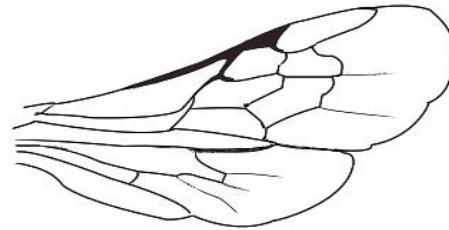


Lasioglossum sp. male at Astrantia

To see the wing and abdominal features usually requires catching the bee and either killing it (freezing it for a few minutes should do it) or cooling it (in the fridge) in a small soda tube, so that you can look at the features through a hand lens...unless you find one sleeping or resting on a dull day in a flower and have very good eyesight or a good camera! To know what body shape the bee has, and as this is such a small



Andrena wing venation by Giancarlo Dessi - 3 sub marginal cells



C. campanularum wings- two sub marginal cells

bee, I would strongly advise visiting Stephen Falk's excellent online site for good photos and descriptions at <https://www.flickr.com/photos/63075200@N07/collections/72157631518508520/>. Having said that, if you have seen the males lecking at bellflowers and the females collecting pollen from them at the right time of year and they are the right size and general shape and there are plenty of other flowers for other bees, you can be pretty sure that you are looking at *Chelostoma campanularum*, especially if you can identify the woodworm nest and see them collecting sand for it.

Deborah Porter

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Next Newsletter: The copy date for the next Newsletter is **15th September 2018**.

This Newsletter is published four times a year by Cam Valley Wildlife Group, an independent, volunteer-run wildlife group, covering Midsomer Norton, Radstock and surrounding villages.

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