

Winter Spotter Close Sartfield



Ivy

With its climbing stems, glossy leaves and round clusters of berries, ivy is a very common plant. Capable of growing up trees or carpeting the ground, this creeping plant is not a parasite, but uses upright structures as a support. The yellow-green flowers are a great source of nectar for autumn insects, such as honeybees and red admiral butterflies. Ivy also provides roosting sites for bats and birds.



Holly leaf Miners

The larvae of the Agromyzid leaf mining fly burrow into holly leaves and produce characteristic white blotches known as mines beneath the surface. The larvae (miners) are parasitized by a number of parasitic wasps and fed on by birds, such as blue tits. Careful inspection of the mine will show the exit hole if the larvae successfully hatched.



Wrens

The tiny wren can be found in almost any habitat where there are insects to eat and bushes or rock crevices in which to build their domed nest out of moss and twigs. In fact, the wren is the most common breeding bird in the UK; there are currently 8.6 million breeding wren territories. This tiny bird weighs about the same as a one pound coin!



Greylag Geese

The greylag goose is a large, pale grey goose with pink legs and an orange bill. Our commonest goose, it can be very territorial while nesting, chasing other geese and large birds away from the nesting site. Greylag geese have short bills and prefer to graze pasture and meadows where cattle or sheep are grazing. They will also take grain, root crops and leafy vegetation.



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Crustose Lichen

Crustose lichens form a crust that strongly adheres to surfaces such as soil, rock, tree bark, etc. Trying to separate it from the substrate it is on is impossible without destroying the lichen. The surface of a crustose lichen has a patchwork or crazy-paving appearance that will close in response to weather changes such as alternate wetting and drying periods.



Fruticose Lichen

A fruticose lichen has a form that is characterized by coral-like shrubby or bushy growth structures. Like all lichens it is made up of both an algae and a fungus. The colour of these lichens lightens as the area they are growing in becomes darker. They are capable of absorbing lots of light in bright sunshine to prevent themselves from drying out.



Elder berries

Elder is a shrub of woodland edges, hedgerows and scrub, but can also be found in cemeteries and even on rubbish tips. Mature elder trees grow to a height of around 15m and can live for 60 years. Despite its reputation as a bad-smelling, opportunistic 'weed', both the flowers and berries have a wealth of culinary uses. Please leave any berries or flowers for our wildlife at the reserve.



Fern clumps

Royal fern is a stunning, giant fern that really lives up to its regal name and is very common at Close Sartfield. In spring, huge, bright green fronds unfurl and filter the sunlight. In autumn, they turn bronze before dying back. The stumps which you see are useful hibernation areas for insects such as ladybirds, woodlice and spiders.

