

Gosforth's Wild Web in 2024

9 December 2024

What a year it has been in Gosforth's Wild Web. As 2025 approaches, take a look back at all you've done for local nature this year.



Made possible by the [National Lottery Heritage Fund](#), Gosforth's Wild Web gives everyone the chance to explore, record and enjoy wildlife all across Newcastle. During the first full year of the project, NHSN volunteers and staff have been able to inspire people of all ages through school and community group sessions and citizen science. With more people noticing nature, sharing their [experiences and sightings](#), joining events and getting involved in community sessions, there is so much to celebrate as 2024 draws to an end.

Nature in Your Community

2024 has been an exciting year for Gosforth's Wild Web, and there's so much to reflect on. At the heart of the project are the people—your passion for local nature and involvement truly drive everything we do. This year, the naturalists have reached over 1,900 people through community events. This includes events such as pop-ups and blitzes in local green spaces, engaging with people of all ages and spreading enthusiasm for the natural world.



We were also lucky to be part of Urban Green's Allotment Festival, where we spoke with lots of festival goers, all eager to learn about Gosforth's Wild Web and how they could get involved. Another highlight was our October half-term nature crafts event, at the Great North Museum: Hancock, where young people created eco-friendly bird feeders in preparation for the colder months. It was wonderful to see so many young faces who simply wanted to "help the birds because I like birdies".

In addition, it's been a privilege to collaborate with so many wonderful local community groups. One memorable event was a walk and birdwatching session with Newcastle Carers at Gosforth Nature Reserve. The carers were excited to learn more about the reserve and its wildlife, once again restoring faith that people care about our nature!

Meeting so many people eager to learn about and protect our local environment has been incredibly inspiring. While 2024 may be coming to a close, Gosforth's Wild Web is far from finished. If you're part of a local community group and want to explore our local environment, we'd love to hear from you and help you get involved.





Emily Anderson

Assistant Naturalist

Emily is NHSN's Assistant Naturalist for Gosforth's Wild Web. She loves all things nature, especially birds and woodlands. But most of all, she enjoys sharing her enthusiasm with everyone- hoping to inspire a love for the wild along the way!

Inspiring Young Naturalists

Over the first full year of Gosforth's Wild Web, 13 schools have been involved in the project, reaching 520 children and 48 teachers. It has been such a successful first year, being able to engage hundreds of children and inspire wonder in the natural world.

Primary school children all over Gosforth's Wild Web have been involved in so many nature-related activities which have helped them learn about the natural world, how to identify species and notice more wildlife in their local area. As well as nature journaling, mini bioblitz events, nature art, seed planting and scavenger hunts, many school children have thoroughly enjoyed setting up camera traps in their school grounds and being able to see what wildlife uses their playground and green areas. It is great to see all kinds of birds and mammals using forest school areas and school fields!

Enabling learning outside the classroom environment has allowed interest in the natural world to spark within children and give them an idea of how they can help protect and provide for nature around them. It has been inspiring to see so many young North East naturalists flourish throughout the project, involving their family and friends to learn about, record and observe nature. It is also so rewarding to be able to provide resources for children, teachers and parents to continue their learning about nature and wildlife as well as VIP passes to enjoy Gosforth Nature Reserve. We are so excited to continue into year two of the project, with so many more fun nature-related activities planned.



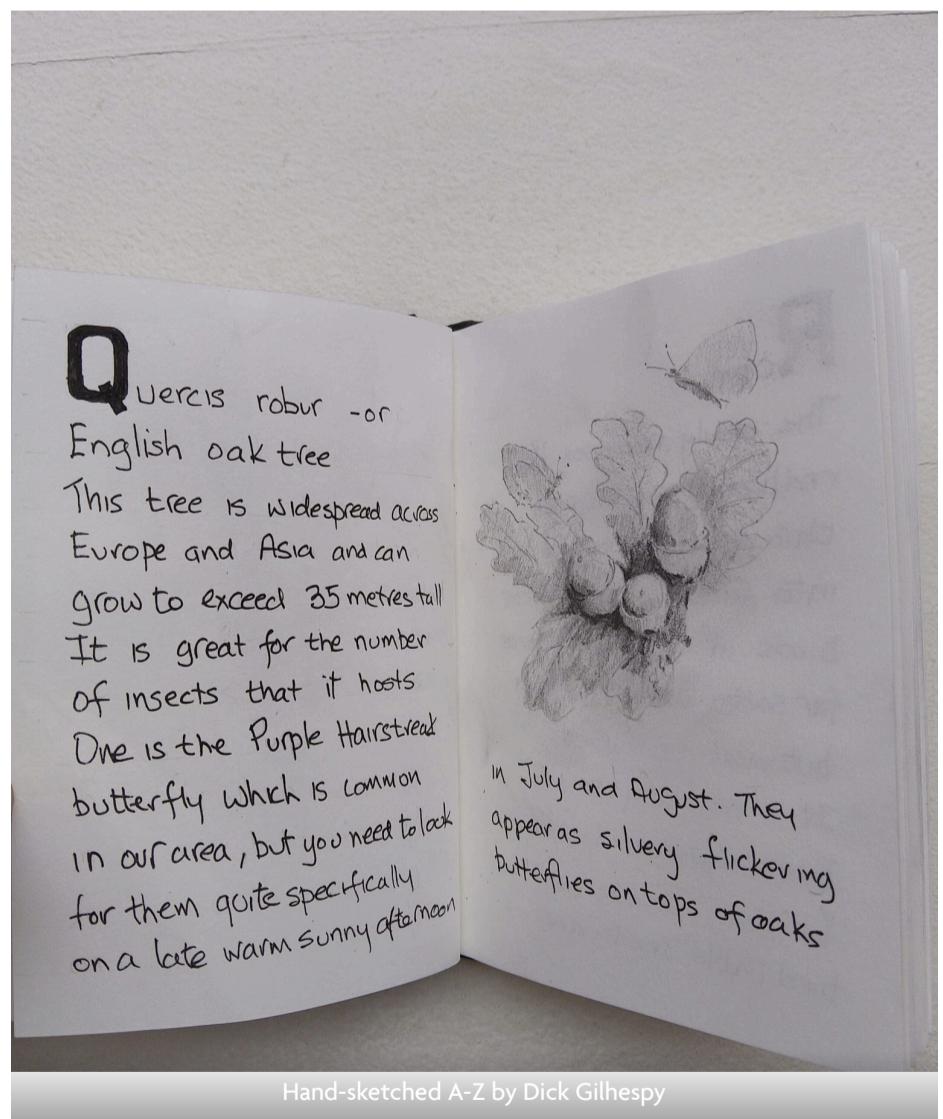
A-Z's of Local Nature

As well as recording your sightings on iNaturalist and iRecord, you have been creating some fantastic A-Zs of local nature! An A-Z of nature is a way of recording what you see by naming species which correlate to all letters of the alphabet and over the first year of the project we have received some fantastic A-Zs.

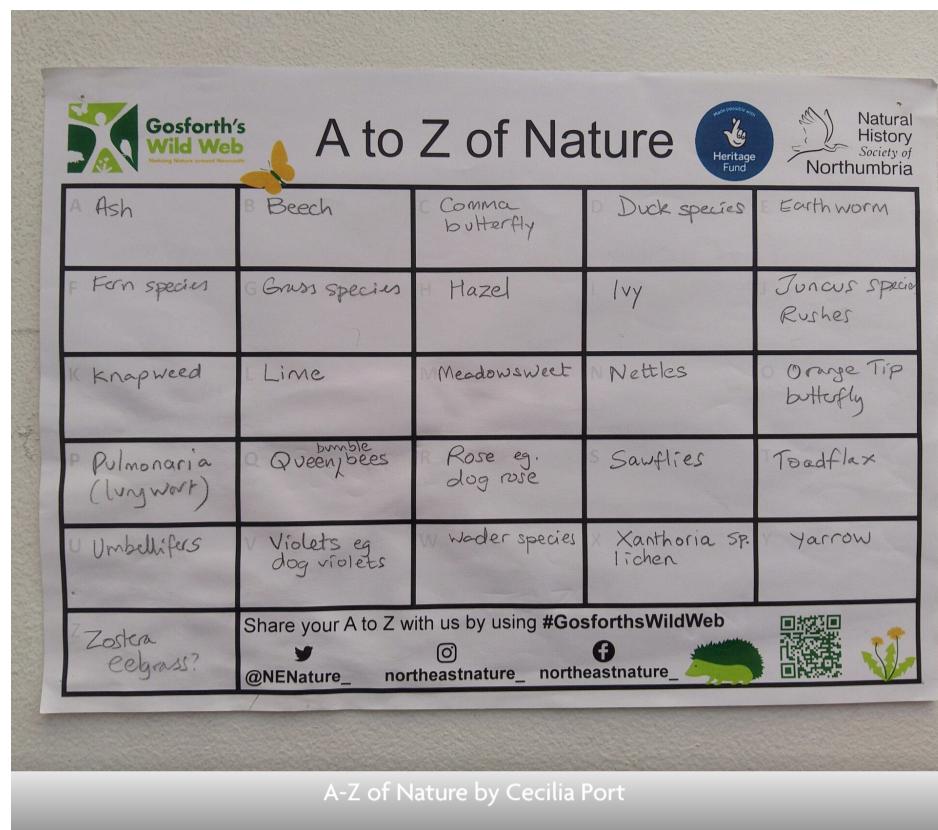
NHSN volunteer, Neil Pont, created a Gosforth Nature Reserve photography book, NHSN member Dick Gilhespy created a hand sketched book and Rising Sun Country Park volunteer, Claire Partleton, created a Rambling Rosy Lego figure A-Z. As well as handmade A-Zs, many of you have been using the Gosforth's Wild Web A-Z of Nature template, like the one Cecilia Port created below. We are looking forward to seeing what you can come up with in the new year. Anything goes!



Photography A-Z by Neil Pont



Hand-sketched A-Z by Dick Gilhespy



Hollie Muir
NHSN Assistant Naturalist

Hollie is NHSN's Assistant Naturalist working on Gosforth's Wild Web project encouraging people to get out and notice nature near them. She is interested in birds and wildlife conservation and spends most of her free time outdoors.

Recording Local Nature

It has been incredible to see all of your wildlife sightings across Gosforth's Wild Web. To date, you have shared a whopping 32,000 records from all corners of the area as you explored cemeteries, parks, city streets, allotments and everywhere in between. Whether we're talking birds, mammals, plants, fungi or any other wildlife group, all of these sightings are very important when it comes to protecting local nature in the future. Thank you so much!

From visiting Red Kites and colonising Cetti's Warblers to rare fungi, there have been too many highlights to count in 2024. Not to mention a suite of unusual plants and wide range of insects. However, rare species are not the only focus of the project and everyday nature matters too. You may be interested to know four out of five of your 'most spotted' species this year are ladybirds (excuse the pun). The fifth species is the unassuming Green Shieldbug – it

seems many of you have been noticing these unusual insects in parks and gardens across the web. Of the flowers, Daisy is your most observed species with 138 sightings and for birds, Woodpigeon comes in top. It is also interesting to see that Roe Deer comes in first place for the mammals!

Another highlight of the year has been the number of local groups taking part by recording the wildlife seen at their favourite haunts. A special thank you to the Friends of Hebburn Riverside Park, Rising Sun Country Park and Jesmond Old Cemetery, as well as to Wild Intrigue and Scotswood Community Garden for their involvement.



Orange Ladybird © Mark Welfare



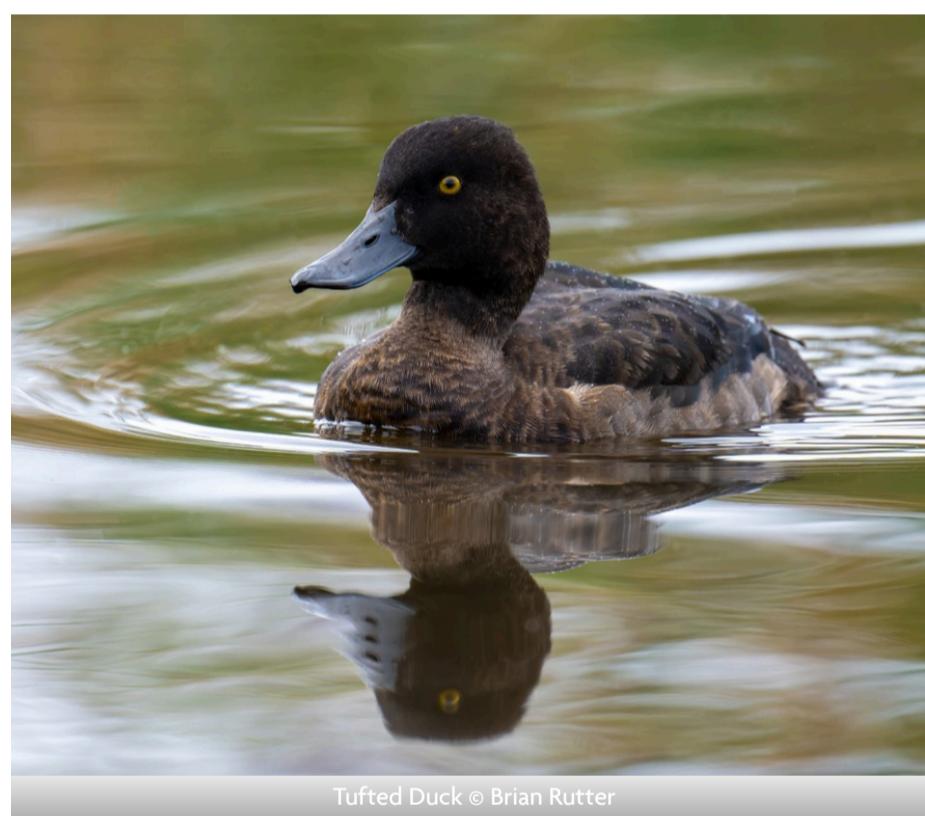
Comma © Chris Barlow



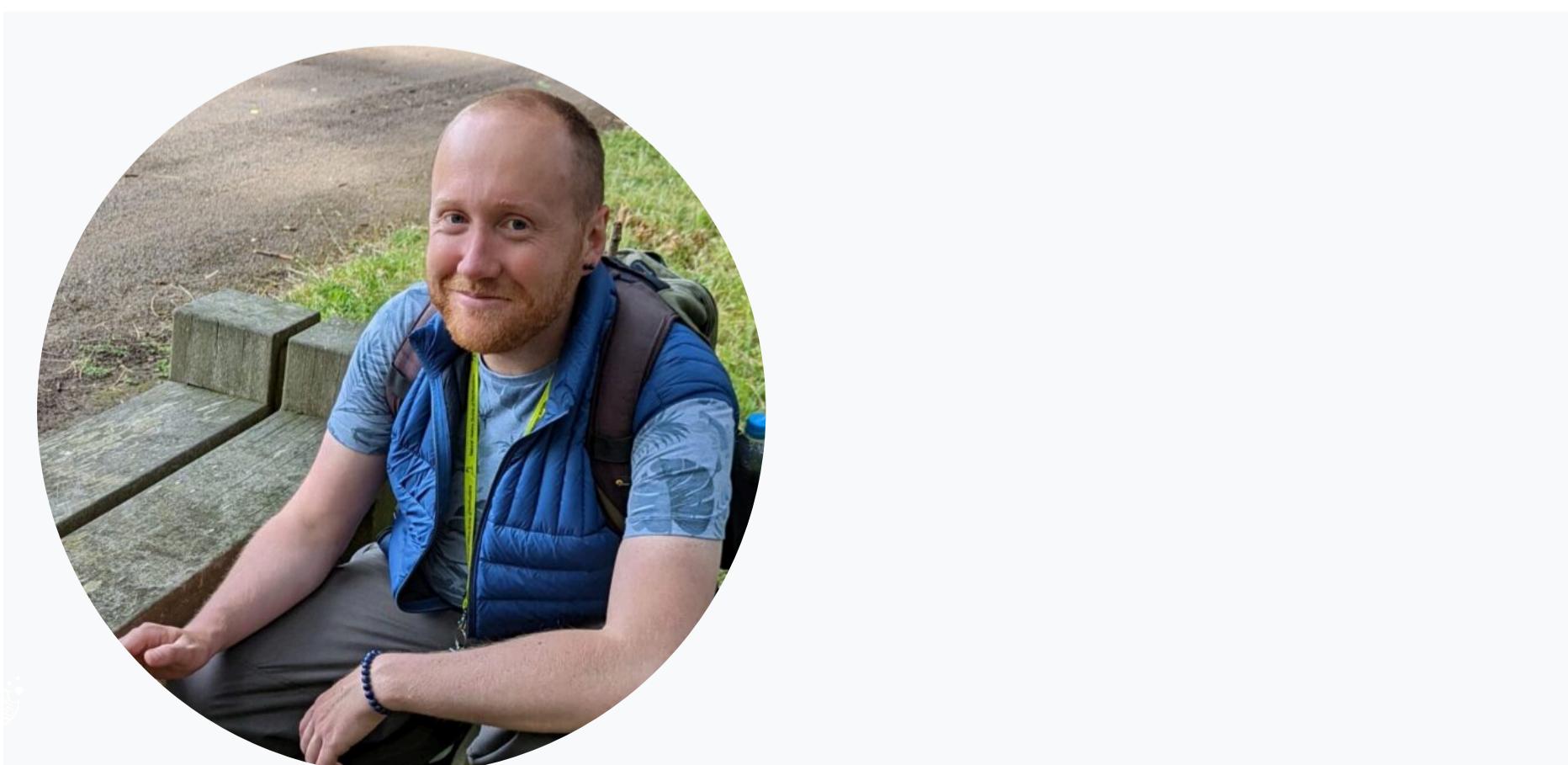
Oxeye Daisy © David Jarema



Otter © Brian Rutter



Tufted Duck © Brian Rutter



James Common
NHSN Senior Naturalist

James is NHSN's Senior Naturalist and a local naturalist passionate about plants and insects. Away from work, he is a botanical Vice-County Recorder for North Northumberland and verifier for the UK Ladybird Survey. He blogs at [Common by Nature](#).

Gosforth's Wild Web in 2025

Moving into year two, we are so excited to be working with 3 more schools. We have lots of exciting nature activities planned and can't wait to start working with the primary school children in their forest school areas.

As well as schools we're looking forward to working with more community groups in and around Newcastle and popping up in parks to chat to locals. Stephenson Railway, Dwellbeing Shieldfield and North Tyneside Library are just a few groups we have sessions planned with so far but if you are part of a local group, please let us know. We would love to visit you too.

And finally, citizen science wildlife walks and identification sessions are planned on orchids, ladybirds, spring flowers, birds, urban plants and lots more. We'll also be visiting more community groups and getting them involved in sharing their sightings. Rumour has it, we'll be hunting for Dingy Skippers at Hebburn, exploring the streets of Shieldfield and even holding bioblitz activities in local greenspaces. Watch this space...



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