

# *Lye Valley Wildlife News – What to see in the valley in WINTER 2022*

Judy Webb



*Winter sunset in the north fen area of the valley*

This stunning winter landscape view down the valley is by Tony Gillie, who took all but one of the photographs in this newsletter. Fen vegetation scything and raking has mostly finished thanks to a great deal of volunteer work so everything is short and the 'bare bones' of the valley visible. Plants and insects are all asleep; frogs, toads, newts, lizards and slow-worms are all hibernating safe in the habitat piles. What is there to see?

In the autumn, fungi have been spectacular on deadwood in the valley. Here are a troop of Glistening Inkcaps on a rotting log doing their essential job of recycling the wood.



Also on dead wood we find beautiful Scarlet Elf Cups and some attractively frosted Sheathed Woodtufts.



We have had plenty of hawthorn berries to attract winter visitors like Redwings (in the thrush family )



But my favourites are the small brown Wrens who are our constant companions in the winter during our Wednesday conservation work parties– this bird loves all the Lye brook bank repairs with lots of cuttings and woven hazel hurdle-type barriers we make. They are always diving in and out along the banks, must be plenty of good insect food there.

Finally, hot off the press and returning to the winter visitor theme; our thanks to local Tom Bedford for this photo of a Jack Snipe which was taken during the very cold snap in December at the head of the Lye Valley in the interception ponds. A scarce and secretive winter visitor we are privileged to have one drop in on us to have a feed. Read more about it in Tom’s blog and see the video of it ‘bobbing’ at <https://www.outofthebluesky.co/?p=5407>



**A date next year for your diaries Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> June 2023 in the afternoon at Rock Edge –** bring a picnic and have a gentle walk to celebrate the early summer flowers increasing under the care of Friends of Lye Valley... Details will be on our website. <http://www.friendsoflyealley.org.uk/> , where you can always see more wildlife in our **Facebook** and **Twitter**. Thanks to you all for your support for another year and of course a **Merry Christmas!**