

Lye Valley Wildlife News – What to see in the valley in WINTER 2024

Judy Webb



This autumn landscape view down the valley is by Tony Gillie, who also took all the other lovely photos. With annual scything and raking of the fen by Friends of Lye Valley volunteers, the 'bare bones' of the valley are visible. Cutting short in winter ensures a wonderful flower-show next spring and summer.

Plants, insects, amphibians and reptiles are all asleep at this time of year; the animals are safe in our habitat piles. Autumn is for spotting fungi and none brighter or more cheery than the Scarlet Elf Cups *Sarcoscypha* sp. which grow on moist deadwood



Winter is the time to see birds in the valley. The attenuation ponds at the valley head are a favourite hunting ground for grey wagtails *Motacilla cinerea* and you may spot a Buzzard *Buteo buteo*, shown here perched and on the look-out for prey.



If you are very lucky, you might even encounter a Little Egret, *Egretta tarzetta* near the top attenuation ponds. This has unbelievably pure white plumage and rather comic yellow feet



Read more about the Valley birds in Tom Bedford's ebird observations. For Lye Valley and Warneford Meadow, go to <https://ebird.org/hotspot/L8899589>

Don't forget to look at the website <http://www.friendsoflyevalley.org.uk/> where you can always see weekly news of the work of the volunteer group and more wildlife in our Facebook pages. **We have recently decided to leave Twitter(X) and now only post on Blue Sky. Find us there at: @friendlyevalley.bsky.social.**

Thanks to you all for your support for another year. I hope 2025 will be better for the valley wildlife and for all of us. Thanks always to the stalwart practical volunteers who are transforming the valley by much weekly hard work. Whatever Climate Change has in store this year, we hope valley wildlife can cope and all that we do in our volunteer work is helping increase resilience to current and future challenging conditions.