

YACWAG newsletter



Season's Greetings from YACWAG to all our members and supporters!

Look out for some exciting news soon. We are looking forward to announcing the purchase of more land to extend our reserve and make more space for nature in Yatton and Congresbury. This has been made possible by a bequest to YACWAG from Mrs Owen, who appreciated our work on the Strawberry Line.

YACWAG is anticipating a busy new year with lots of opportunities for the community to be involved. See inside for ways to support our work!

DEADLINE FOR NEXT NEWSLETTER

1st January 2026

articles, photos,
member contributions
always welcome

contact@yacwag.org.uk

FOLLOW US ON SOCIAL MEDIA

YACWAG is active on
Facebook (a private
group of nearly 900
members, mostly local)

and on Instagram

USE THE EVENTS CALENDAR ON OUR WEBSITE

to find out what is
coming up. The winter
will bring talks, walks
and work parties.



Yatton and
Congresbury
Wildlife Action
Group

registered charity
no. 1076362

www.yacwag.org.uk

Newsletter
November 2025



*Mistletoe on black
poplar, Congresbury
Moor*

Six Months Surveying Bats for YACWAG

by Alice Walker and Frankie Bartlett

Alice and Frankie carried out the volunteering part of their Silver Duke of Edinburgh Awards with YACWAG. They have written about their bat surveys carried out at Cobthorn Reserve below.



Alice and Frankie at Cobthorn

Over a six month period, we conducted a series of bat surveys along the edge of the Cobthorn reserve and down towards the river to assess the presence of different species during each month or time of year. Bats are an essential part of the ecosystem, acting as indicators of environmental health and maintaining the balance in the food web. Understanding their activity patterns helps us to inform land management decisions and protect them further.

Over the course of the six months we found that the different types of bats show activity at different times of the year. For example the horseshoe bats were more active in the summer months. This could be due to the higher temperatures making it more comfortable to be out at night. The late summer months were better for the pipistrelles although they presented a lot of activity throughout the six month period.

The bats have also shown that they prefer specific areas of the nature reserve. The Daubentons mainly are found by the river which aligns with the knowledge that Daubenton bats feed on aquatic insects. Our data on the horseshoe bats suggest that they mainly stick to hedges and don't go over open land. The pipistrelles have shown lots of activity over the weir which could suggest there are lots of aquatic insects which are prime food sources for bats. They could also hunt here because it has open space so they can echolocate better and can therefore find prey more accurately.

In conclusion, we have found lots of interesting data suggesting the different activity patterns of bats in the Cobthorn nature reserve. This is probably due to the changing food patterns and weather. We also discovered that the Pipistrelle bats are the most common bats in this area, enjoying specific spaces such as the weir and hedgerows. These patterns highlight the seasonal changes to the bats' behaviours. This data really emphasises the importance of diverse habitats that support the bat population and the conservation of their habitat.

Data from Alice and Frankie's surveys

Months	Pippistrelles	Noctule	Duabentons	greater horseshoe	Lesser hors
April	7	5	26	0	1
May	18	1	6	0	0
June	14	2	12	0	3
July (4th)	6	1	15	0	0
July (19th)	20	5	4	0	2
August	28	5	4	0	2
September	2	0	0	0	0
October	0	0	0	0	0

Thanks to Andrew and Janice Hunter, Graham Lovesey and Michelle Walker for their help with Alice and Frankie's project. The girls completed more than the required 26 weeks of volunteering and provided some useful data for YACWAG as well as some lovely wildlife videos from the trail camera they deployed on the reserve.

We are now welcoming Kerensa and her mum Elinor, who will be carrying out volunteer work on Stowey Reserve for Kerensa's Silver Duke of Edinburgh Award.

YACWAG's Volunteer Handbook

All YACWAG's volunteers have been, or will be, issued with a digital document containing all they have ever wanted to know about voluntary work with YACWAG. There are now almost 50 people working hard to support the charity's work, from organising and running events to keeping an eye on our reserves. If you do voluntary work of any kind and have not received your copy please let us know on contact@yacwag.org.uk. The Volunteer Handbook links to key policies and information to ensure YACWAG is complying with best practice for charities with regard to looking after its volunteers.

Volunteer Vacancies and Member Support

We are so grateful for all of you who have recently come forward to get more involved. We know that volunteering is good for you and invite you to join in. It will help you get or stay fit, physically and mentally! We have got a few roles to fill at the moment, including for a Secretary, a Workparty Leader and Reserves Wardens. Please get in touch if you would like to know more. A new year resolution to do more to help local wildlife, perhaps?

YACWAG is growing in many different ways so our need for workers is growing too. But if you can't help at the moment, don't worry, we are also very grateful for your support as a member.

Members can support us by signing up to :

Give As You Live

This free, easy way to raise money for YACWAG is brilliant. Earn cashback-style donations from over 6000 leading stores. An app makes it even simpler. Find your favourite store on the Give as you Live website, click on it, shop as normal. Everything looks the same but once you've visited the store they will know you are a Give As You Live shopper and a donation is automatically added to YACWAG. Costs you nothing, raises hundreds of pounds for YACWAG. Purchases of flights, holidays, train fares, insurance, hotels, as well as simple shopping. All the big names are there. Please join in! At present we get an extra £5 from every person joining from this link:

<https://www.giveasyoulive.com/refer/R9UuagswjnFKIO7GZYbwqw7aiEK5L9I-3D?incentive=nov2025>

Demonstrate your support by wearing YACWAG branded clothing or giving YACWAG branded gifts

This is great publicity for YACWAG. The excellent quality clothes are made of organic cotton, manufactured in UK factories powered by renewable energy. Best of all when your garment is worn out you can just get a label and send it back to Teemill for recycling. It's a closed loop system. As sustainable as you can get. Non-clothing items also available!

<http://yacwag.teemill.com/>

Sharing your photos or sightings of local wildlife

We have an ongoing need for photos and information about local wildlife. If this interests you, next year borrow a moth trap, a trail camera or a bat detector to record wildlife in your garden.

If you are ready for a bigger role with YACWAG, please consider joining the team of volunteers now and email contact@yacwag.org.uk with suggestions of how you can help.

New Book Coming Soon!

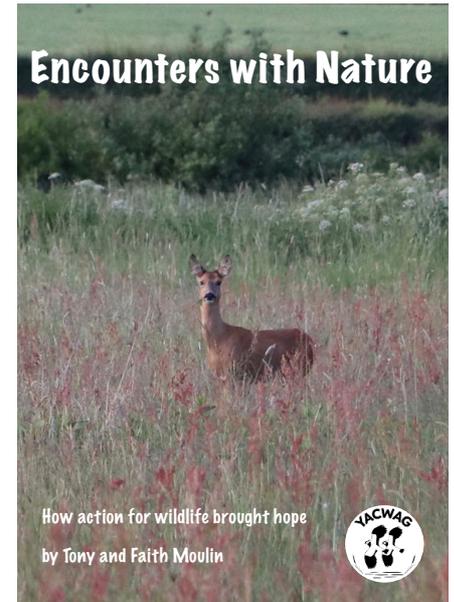
Encounters with Nature -

Action for Wildlife in Yatton and Congresbury

by Tony and Faith Moulin

- with a foreword by Chris Sperring MBE.

This book is a personal account of the authors' journey from *Thinking Globally to Acting Locally*. It contains memorable wildlife experiences and insights into nature conservation and the founding of Yatton and Congresbury Wildlife Action Group. It is illustrated largely with their own photos taken over the last 25 years. Tony and Faith share how YACWAG's habitat creation and restoration has helped local people be amazed, inspired, enthused and energised by nature and makes the proposition that taking action gives them hope for the future of nature in our two parishes.



- * Approximate pages : 200 * Colour photos : over 100
- * Featured species : 31 * Anecdotal and informative

**Price is likely to be around £12-13. Any profit will go to YACWAG funds.
Available in December - please email contact@yacwag.org.uk.**

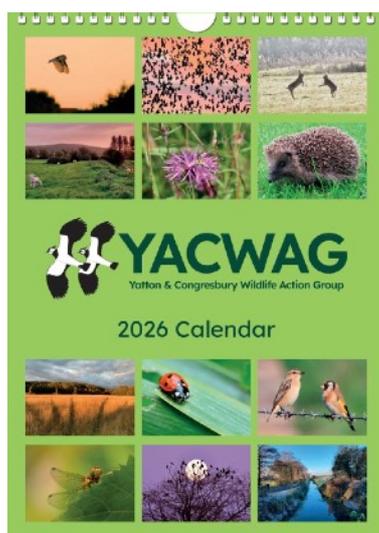
Broad Street Christmas Fair 2025 Wednesday 3rd December

Join the carols with Congresbury Brass and Congresbury Singers from 6pm, Mendip Morris from 7pm. Raffle draw at 8 pm.

YACWAG's stall will include the popular Wildlife Lucky Dip. Come and say hello to YACWAG volunteers!



YACWAG's stall 2024



2026 calendar sales raising funds

Thanks to Carol Tennant and Emily Appleton, YACWAG has been able to offer members a colourful A4 calendar to buy. The 12 beautiful photos were all contributed by members and feature colourful landscapes and local wildlife. All proceeds will support YACWAG's work for nature in the two communities.

Thank you very much to all the talented photographers who shared their work for this purpose. There is a very small number of calendars still available. Please email contact@yacwag.org.uk to buy one (£10).

Congresbury Yeo Catchment Partnership

Yeo is the Celtic word for water, so many of our rivers locally bear the name. The Congresbury Yeo is the most important river of the North Somerset area once known as the Northmarsh. The river's original name was the Wring Yeo, the twisting river, and it was once tidal as far inland as Congresbury, which also had the first crossing place - and still does, in the form of a stone bridge near the Congresbury Arms. Before being straightened for drainage purposes the Yeo meandered over a wide area, closer to Frost Hill and Smallway. The river rises from springs in Compton Martin and is fed by other streams from the north side of the Mendips.



A new partnership project led by Bristol Avon Rivers Trust (BART) has brought many key stakeholders to the table with the aim of improving water quality and biodiversity within the river catchment area, and YACWAG has also become involved. Look out for events and activities for local communities.

Following the inspirational talk by YACWAG member and The Rivers Trust Technical Director, Michelle Walker, YACWAG volunteers will be carrying out water quality monitoring within the catchment, using our own land at first. If anyone is interested in becoming involved, we will be looking for volunteers in the new year. In the first instance please email contact@yacwag.org.uk.