



### *Future events:*

#### **Pebble Bed Heaths at Ocean Thurs 16 January 6-7pm**

An evening event for people interested in finding out more about the Lower Otter Restoration Project.

#### **Exmouth Tiny Forest: Friday 17 January from 10am**

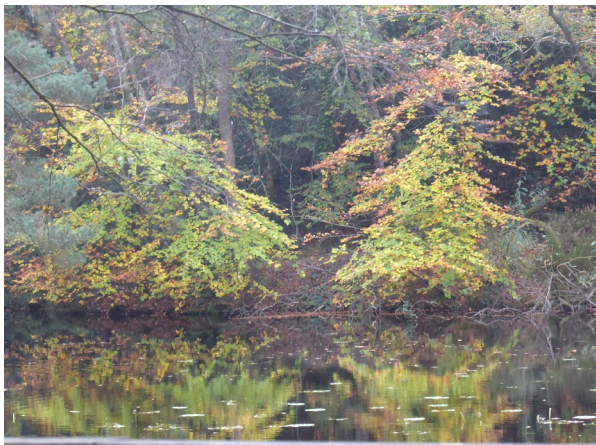
Volunteers wanted to help with tree planting for a new Tiny Forest in Brixington Park.

If you would like to help just turn up any time from 10am – stay for an hour or all day. Follow Exmouth Tree Project on Facebook  
<https://www.facebook.com/ExmouthTreeProject>

### **PAST WALK-AND-TALKS**

#### **Bystock walk-and-talk on Saturday 2 November**

There were 19 of us who set out on the Bystock walk on a Saturday morning, and it was a really special atmosphere with the still, calm conditions and the damp autumnal air.



*Bystock Pools*

Below is a photograph of a gall known as 'Robin's pin cushion' or the rose bedeguar gall.



*Diplolepis rosae*

It is harmless to the wild rose (*Rosa canina*) on which it forms, and is caused by a species of gall wasp (*Diplolepis rosae*). The adult wasp lays eggs in the developing buds or leaves during summer, and the eggs hatch into small white larvae that secrete chemicals that cause the abnormal growth. Instead of buds developing into normal shoots and leaves, they are converted into hard woody structures that have an outer covering of moss-like leaves, which are either reddish pink or yellowish green. The internal part of the gall contains a number of chambers in which the grubs develop. The galls are fully developed during August and the insects overwinter inside the galls as pupae. During the autumn the outer covering of moss-like leaves tends to decay and this leaves the hard woody centre exposed.





# Exmouth Local Group

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There were fewer fungi than we expected, but we did find this Bracket fungi (*ganoderma applanatum*) which is a very recognisable fungus that looks as though it's been dusted with cocoa.



Bracket fungus: Photo by Bay Leahy

There woods contained some beautiful mosses on the trees and along the old Devon bank in the wood below the meadow, including this feather moss species.



Feather moss

We also spotted some haircap mosses, with its distinctive 'haircut' at the top of each stem..



Haircap moss

There were plenty of ferns in the autumn, and a good number of these Deer Fern throughout the site.



Deer Fern

We made good use of our phone apps to help us identify different species, and spent some time comparing our favourite wildlife





# Exmouth Local Group

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apps. The Seek app told us that this trail on a leaf was made by a 'Madrone Skin Miner' *Marmara arbutiella* which is a moth of the *Gracillariidae* family known from Canada and California. Their larvae feed on *Arbutus menziesii*, *Arbutus unedo* and *Arctostaphylos* species. I suspect this may have been an incorrect ID by the app – can anyone help?



Trail of a miner moth larvae

We saw and heard surprisingly few birds during the walk, but the Merlin app helped us to identify the calls of the long tailed tit, and we managed to spot them feeding in the treetops.

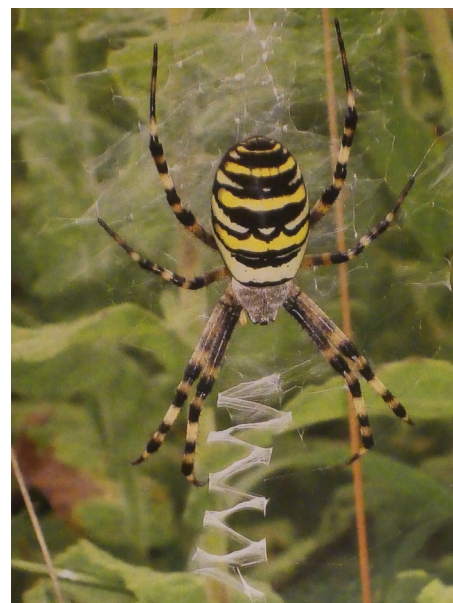
The intrepid group who opted to take the muddy route were rewarded by the discovery of a

wasp spider egg sac, beautifully photographed for us by Diane Gee.



Wasp spider egg sac

The wasp spider (*Argiope bruennichi*) is widespread along the south coast and in the south-east. The large female, whose body is 11-15mm long, dwarfs the male at 4-4.5mm). The female spins a large urn-shaped egg-sac (13-18mm) resembling a large poppy seed-head. She dies in the autumn, and the eggs hatch before winter but the spiderlings do not emerge until the spring.



Female wasp spider





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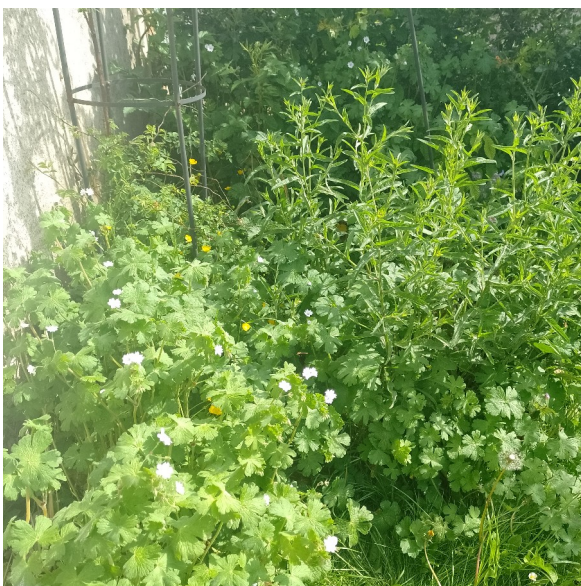
We finished the walk with a picnic, and quite a few of us sat on the benches around the pond. We were entertained by some juvenile grebes who were diving in the pond.

There were several dragonfly, and we identified an emperor dragonfly which passed by us several times while skirting the ponds for food.

It was a lovely day and we hope to have another walk in the new year. If you have any favourite local walks you would like to share, do let us know!

### **My Wild Patch**

A couple of years ago I decided to let a patch of my garden 'go wild'. Not that any of my garden is particularly neat, but the idea was that this particular patch would be kept for wildlife all year round. I don't cut it back in the autumn, but leave the grasses and stems for insects to overwinter.



*Cranesbill (foreground) May 2024*

I started with a small native hedge in which I planted hawthorn, hornbeam and a holly to provide cover and food for the birds. The area is edged with a couple of layers of bricks and mud to provide nooks and crannies for various insects, and there is a pile of old wood there too. I also planted a dog rose last year, and it is now firmly established and producing some vibrant red hips.

I spend quite a lot of time out walking, and in the summer I often collect a few wild flower seeds. As a result I have knapweed, meadowsweet and wild geranium (cranesbill) providing prolonged colour.



*Knapweed, June 2023*

Each year I leave sections of the lawn to grow and have an abundance of self heal, cranesbill,

dandelion, ribwort plantain and hawkbit, which all look great. I cut these back in October, and sprinkle on yellow rattle seed to encourage more wild flowers the following year.

I have never been a 'tidy' gardener, so I don't do a lot of digging. Most of my time is spent taming any unruly growth, so that all the plants can get a bit of the sunshine. I hope the birds, bees and butterflies will continue to visit me in the years to come, and maybe bring along some of their friends!

*Mary Turner.*

### Events at SideShore Community Hub

Queen's Drive Space (EX8 2GD)



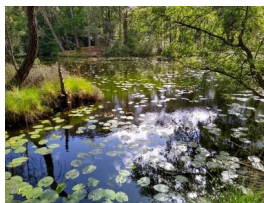
**COMMUNITY HUB WINTER REGULARS**

 <p><b>DEVON REAL NAPPY PROJECT</b> Learn more about reusable nappies and try some out. Run by Bostom Buddies &amp; Exmouth Town Council.</p> <p>4TH TUESDAY 9.30 – 11</p>	 <p><b>SIDESHORE COMMUNITY DROP IN</b> Join Nicky, Community Lead at SideShore, to share ideas, chat about the legal action against SWW &amp; much more...</p> <p>EVERY TUESDAY 2 – 4.30</p>	 <p><b>ENERGY ADVICE DROP IN</b> How can you improve energy efficiency at home? Free advice to help you, from ECOE.</p> <p>3RD WEDNESDAY 2 – 4.30</p>	 <p><b>ZOEY, CLIMATE CHANGE OFFICER</b> Meet Zoey and learn more about Exmouth Town Council's Carbon reduction plan, and your part in it!</p> <p>EVERY WEDNESDAY 2 – 4.30</p>
 <p><b>TRANSITION EXMOUTH</b> New to Exmouth? New to eco living? Find out what initiatives you can join in Exmouth and how TrEx can support your group.</p> <p>EVERY THURSDAY 2 – 4.30</p>	 <p><b>RESTORE NATURE NOW</b> Be a voice for nature: connect with our elected officials and NGOs to make a difference.</p> <p>2ND &amp; 4TH FRIDAY 1 – 4</p>	 <p><b>BEACH CLEANS</b> Start at either end of the beach &amp; work towards the middle. Meet new people &amp; have coffee at the end!</p> <p>EVERY SUNDAY 08.30</p>	 <p><b>PLANT-BASED EXE-CHANGE</b> Bring a vegan dish to share with others. Learn new ideas &amp; recipes. Bring a friend, a plate &amp; fork!</p> <p>2ND SUNDAY 12.30 – 2.30</p>

Check for updates. Dates & times subject to change.  
www.sideshore.co.uk/community

SIDESHORE COMMUNITY

### Follow DWT Bystock Reserve Volunteers on X (Twitter):



@DWT\_ExmouthLG

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Do please let us know about local events that may be of interest to our members, and we will try to include them in our newsletter.

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The latest Bystock newsletter, sent separately alongside this, is full of information about species to look out for in Autumn.