

## Wildlife Guide

# Wonderful Wildlife



**Yeovil Country Park is an urban fringe oasis for over 2,500 species of plants and animals.**

Each area of the Country Park has its own unique habitats and therefore a diverse array of wildlife within them. Use the map as a guide to take you around the park to the best wildlife spotting areas.



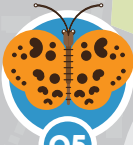
**Pick up a sticker sheet at Ninesprings Café to mark off the wildlife you have spotted**

# Wildlife in Yeovil Country Park

## Penn Hill



04



05



06



07



10

## Ninesprings



01



02



03

02

01

03



08

## Summerh...



## Ninesprings



### Jay (Woodland birds)



Name: *Garrulus glandarius*  
Family: Crows  
UK Conservation Status: ●

In the woodland, look out for specialist woodland birds such as jays and tree creepers.

Nuthatches and tree creepers are notable for their ability to walk up trees looking for insects in the crevices of the bark, but only the nuthatch has special adaptations of its feet to enable it to walk down the trees as well. The tree creeper has to fly back down to the bottom.

You are more likely to hear **tawny owls** in the woodland than see them. It is the female that calls 'kee-wick' and the male that responds with 'hoo-hoo-oo'.



### Daubenton's bats



JUN  
SEP

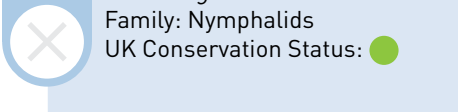
Name: *Myotis daubentonii*  
Family: Vespertilionidae  
UK Conservation Status: ●

Along the streams and at the lake look out for the striking blue of kingfishers as they dart around the watercourses looking for suitable prey. Kingfishers build their nests in tunnels in steep banks that they dig out using their powerful beak.

If you visit the lake on a late summer's evening, you may spot Daubenton's bats flying low over the water to catch insects. Daubenton's bats are water specialists due to their large hairy feet enabling them to pick up insects from the surface of the water.



### Peacock (Butterflies)



Name: *Aglais io*  
Family: Nymphalids  
UK Conservation Status: ●

In the Valley Gardens and look out for butterflies in the woodland glades.

Particular species to spot here include **speckled wood** and **peacock butterflies**. The markings on a speckled wood butterfly help to camouflage it in the dappled light of the woodland.

## Penn Hill

### Great spotted woodpeckers

04

Name: *Dendrocopos major*  
Family: Woodpeckers  
UK Conservation Status: ●

The line of mature beech and lime trees at the bottom of the hill provides fantastic nesting and foraging sites for **great spotted woodpeckers**. Listen out for their drumming, which may be a sign of territory marking, looking for insects or creating a new nesting hole.

### Comma Butterflies

05

Name: *Polygonia c-album*  
Family: Nymphalids  
UK Conservation Status: ●

Follow the path to the top of the hill and look out for butterflies along the way. **Comma butterflies can be seen feeding on a variety of shrubs and flowers.** If you can spot one with its wings closed as it rests you will see that they get their name from the yellow 'comma' shape on their mottled brown underwings.

### Bullfinches

06

Name: *Pyrrhula pyrrhula*  
Family: Finches  
UK Conservation Status: ●

An old allotment site on top of the hill has been transformed into a wildflower meadow and orchard. **This is a good place to spot songbirds such as robins, chaffinches, goldfinches and, if you're lucky, bullfinches.** Bullfinches can be quite shy so if you see a bird flying for cover and you spot a white rump, you have indeed seen a bullfinch!

### Badgers

07

Name: *Meles meles*  
Family: Mustelidae  
UK Conservation Status: ●

In the Headway Garden you may spot the active badger sett that sits under a row of yew trees.

Badgers are very sociable animals and will share the sett with family members. Badgers will often have a few setts that they use throughout the year and a sign that one is actively being used is fresh dirt around the entrance or dry grass that may have been dragged in for use as bedding.

**catch them all**



Place a sticker on the circle when you have seen the particular species.  
Let's go outside and start discovering!

## Summerhouse Hill



### Meadow Grasshopper

08

APR  
OCT

Name: *Chorthippus parallelus*  
Family: Acrididae  
UK Conservation Status: ●

The orchard at the bottom of the hill was planted in 2017 and the grassland surrounding it is one of the best places to search for grasshoppers and crickets. The easiest way to tell the difference between grasshoppers and crickets is the length of their antennae. A grasshopper's antennae are shorter than their body and a cricket's are longer.



### Fox

09

Name: *Vulpes vulpes*  
Family: Canidae  
UK Conservation Status: ●

It is quite common to see a fox searching for voles and rabbits at the top of the hill.

Foxes catch small mammals with a characteristic high pounce and this is one of the first things that the young fox cubs learn as they begin to hunt.



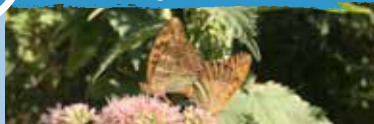
## Wyndham Hill



### Silver-washed Fritillary Butterflies

10

JUN  
SEP



Name: *Argynnis paphia*  
Family: Fritillaries  
UK Conservation Status: ●

In the spring, the banks alongside the old railway line are carpeted in dog violets. Their sweet scent is attractive to silver-washed fritillary butterflies which lay their eggs on the plant.



11

During the winter, look out for seasonal visitors to the alder trees that line the River Yeo. Their small cones provide a feast of seeds for birds such as siskins. You will probably hear siskins before you see this small bird, as they constantly chatter in flocks amongst the tree tops.

Listen out for the unmistakable 'laughing' call of a green woodpecker (which earns it the nickname 'yaffle') as it feeds on ants in the grassland. This is Britain's largest woodpecker and it uses its long tongue to probe for ants in the meadows. Did you know a green woodpecker's tongue is so long it has to wrap around its skull when retracted?



### Green Woodpecker

12



Name: *Picus viridis*  
Family: Woodpeckers  
UK Conservation Status: ●





## Water vole

13



Name: *Arvicola amphibius*  
 Family: Cricetidae  
 UK Conservation Status: ●

The biggest feature of Riverside is the River Yeo that borders along the eastern edge. The soft sandy banks of the Yeo make a perfect home for water voles. Look out for their small burrows along the river banks. Water voles are Britain's fastest declining mammal. Between 1989 and 1998 their population decreased by nearly 90%, mainly due to predation from American mink and habitat loss due to the effect of changes in agricultural practices since the 1940s.



## European Otter

14

Name: *Lutra lutra*  
 Family: Mustelidae  
 UK Conservation Status: ●

Otters also frequent the River Yeo but are harder to spot. Their homes, known as 'holts', are usually found in hollows under tree roots next to the river, but you are more likely to see signs of otters including footprints by the water's edge or 'spraints' on protruding rocks or logs at the water's edge. Spraints are otter poo mixed with scent to mark their territory.



## Emperor Dragonfly

15



JUN  
AUG

Name: *Anax imperator*  
 Family: Aeshnidae  
 UK Conservation Status: ●

The meadows at Riverside, coupled with the abundance of water, make it a fantastic site to look for insects, particularly dragonflies. Emperor dragonflies patrol the grasslands looking for smaller insect prey and rarely settle. The most abundant damselflies to look out for are the Beautiful and Banded Demoiselles. The shimmering green of the males makes them a striking damselfly to see. Did you know that you can easily tell the difference between damselflies and dragonflies from the way they hold their wings? At rest dragonflies will hold their wings out flat but damselflies will close theirs. Also a dragonfly's eyes meet in the middle and a damselfly's are on opposite sides of the head.

### Conservation Status Key

●  
Secure

●  
Vulnerable

●  
Threatened

Information correct at time of print:  
Nov 2018

## More to read...

Further trail leaflets are available at Ninesprings Café to discover easy access trails, heritage, art and more:



Yeovil Country Park  
**Exploring the Park**



Accessibility Guide  
**Easy Access Trails**



Free Children's Activities  
**30 Things to Do**



History & Heritage  
**Journey through Time**

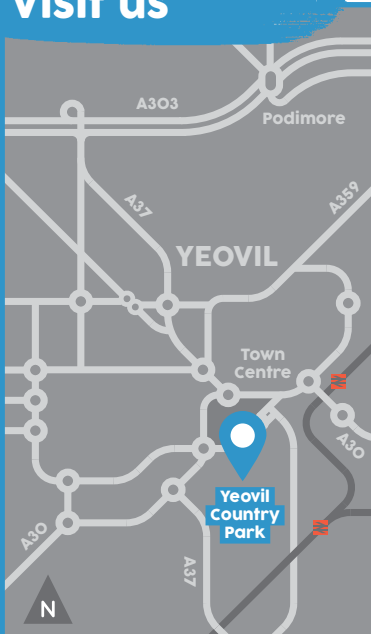


Artistic life Outside  
**Art in the Park**



Nature Trail Activities  
**Ranger Rik's Adventure**

## Visit us



## Further information

Follow us on social media for up to date information and photos:



**Yeovil Country Park**

If you would like more information about the country park, Ninesprings Café, our events & activities, the volunteers or Friends group please contact us:

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