

East Lothian Council Countryside Rangers

July/August 2023

MUD in your EYE



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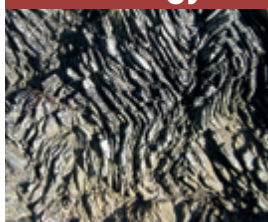
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Mud In Your Eye

July - August 2023

Welcome to the 64th Edition of *Mud in Your Eye*.
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Editorial

Well, we have most certainly been having some wonderful summer weather over the last few weeks! Whilst it's finally nice to have some warmth and sunshine, the lack of water does take its toll on wildlife.

In this edition you will find tips on how to save water for the garden and wildlife, find out how to have your say on nature networks and meet new ranger Kristian!

We'd love to hear from you!

Email ranger@eastlothian.gov.uk or follow us...

 @ELCrangers

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 East Lothian Council Countryside Rangers

Mud In Your Eye is published by East Lothian Council's Countryside Rangers





Nature Networks

East Lothian

Photo: Haugh Park, Musselburgh (M. McGrath, 2023)

Biodiversity is in decline globally and across the UK. One of the driving factors is the fragmentation of habitats and habitat loss, due to pressures like urbanisation, which is on the increase coupled with a growing human population.

Though urbanisation impacts habitats. There are pockets of parks, remnants of natural habitats and other greenspaces that are important for biodiversity in urban and developed areas. When these areas are managed for biodiversity, they can create important nature networks ensuring connectivity and restoration of habitats across both urban and rural landscapes.

What is a nature network?

A nature network connects nature rich sites, restoration areas and other environmental projects through a series of areas of suitable habitat, habitat corridors and 'stepping stones' for wildlife. Increasing resilience and health of our ecosystems.

Nature Scot - Nature Networks explained

These include hedgerows, longer grass, meadows and trees, rain/bog gardens or wetland areas. As well as helping our wildlife, other benefits to nature networks include helping us to adapt to climate change in our urban areas.




Nature Networks East Lothian



Find out about Nature Networks' initiatives in your area at:


www.eastlothian.gov.uk/nature-networks

East Lothian Council are keen to bring nature closer to our communities, by enhancing and extending our nature networks and boosting **biodiversity**  in our parks and greenspaces. This will bring wide ranging benefits not just to nature, but also to the health and wellbeing of our local communities, and will help us tackle the climate emergency.

This project will identify, explore and provide advice on opportunities in parks and greenspaces in our towns and villages, supported by our communities. We will aim to deliver these over the coming years.

Parks and greenspaces are at the heart of our communities, as social spaces, places for sports and exercise, group activities, spaces for play and as spaces to get outdoors and into nature. So community

engagement is important. We want to hear your views of what you would like to see regarding nature networks and biodiversity enhancements in your Local Park and greenspace.

An online consultation has been launched available on the East Lothian Council **website** .

There will also be leaflets available to complete at all local libraries, Council Area Offices and Community Centres. The consultation survey is open until the 5th July, but any other queries about the project can be sent to **naturenetworks@eastlothian.gov.uk**

More information  on Nature Networks East Lothian and how you can get involved with your own nature network.

New Countryside Ranger

Some random facts about myself:

I cycled from London to Edinburgh and back to London last summer in 124 hours (just over 5 days).

I can never pick one favourite bird, but I love Swifts and Oystercatchers, and I have real soft spot for female Common Riders - they are tough and beautiful birds!

My favourite wildflower is Yarrow, it reminds me of my grandparents garden.

My favourite tree is Scots Pine, just the very best trees to sit underneath!

My favourite fish is Perch; I love Pike, which are awesome river tigers, but Perch are just gorgeous.

My favourite invertebrate is probably a peacock butterfly, but leeches are very very cool too!

My favourite tractor is the Kubota EK1.



Hi!

I'm Kristian, the new Ranger at Levenhall Links and Musselburgh area.

I've been lucky enough to work around the country for different conservation organisations - for the Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust, Northumberland Wildlife Trust, Edinburgh City Council, RSPB Scotland, and some of you may remember me as a Seasonal Ranger in 2021 in East Lothian!

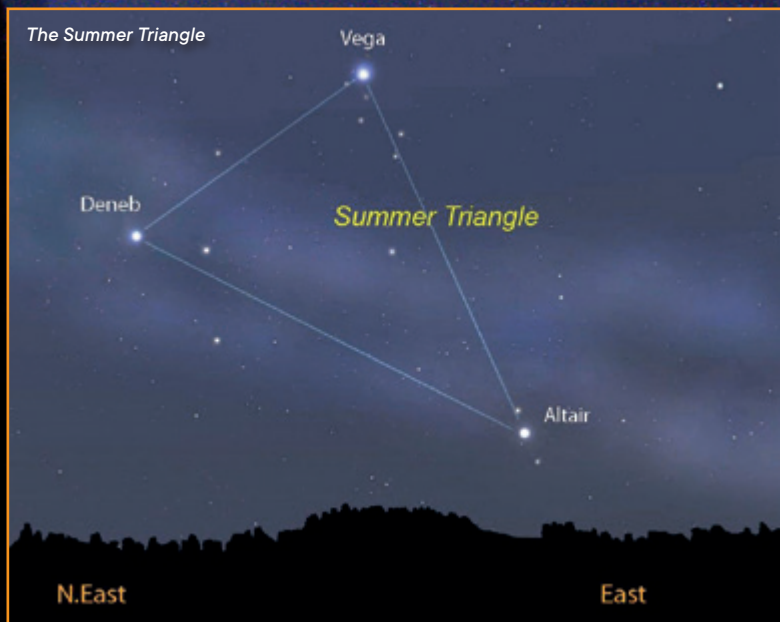


Heavens Above

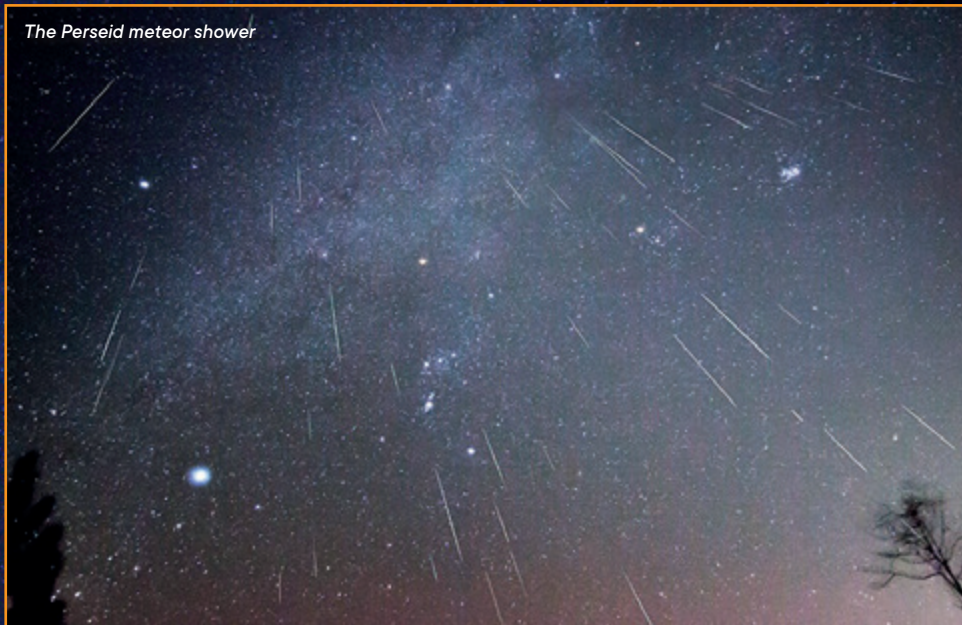
Lots to see this summer in the heavens if you are outside enjoying the balmy summer nights!

The three stars of the **summer triangle** are now very obvious in the night sky. They are all from different constellations. Deneb in Cygnus The Swan, and Vega in Lyra The Harp, are high in the sky by 11pm, with Altair in Aquila The Eagle below towards the South-east. Cygnus forms a cross shape in the sky which can resemble a swan in flight. Deneb is the brightest star in Cygnus and marks the tail of the swan. If the sky is dark enough, you may be able to see that Cygnus appears to be flying along the Milky Way.

In keeping with the mathematical theme, the square of Hercules is directly overhead at the moment. It is known as The Keystone, and to be fair it is not exactly square shaped. It does, however, contain the largest globular cluster visible in northern skies known as M13. Globular clusters are groups of stars bound together by gravity. They can contain hundreds of thousands of stars and are thought to be very old. M13 is 25,000 light years away from us and can easily be seen with binoculars, looking a bit like a hazy star. It lies on one side of the keystone.



The Perseid meteor shower



The Perseid meteor shower peaks around the 12th August. It is one of the best meteor showers for numbers per hour and relative brightness. It should be good this year if skies are clear as it peaks three days before the new moon meaning the sky will be that bit darker. The meteors can appear anywhere in the sky, but tend to look as if they are emanating from the constellation Perseus, which is low in the northern sky at the moment. The meteor shower occurs when the Earth passes through debris left behind by the comet Swift-Tuttle.

There are only two supermoons this year and both are in August, one on the 1st of the month and the other on the 27th. A supermoon is a full moon that coincides with perigee, that is the closest that the moon comes to Earth during its elliptical orbit. This means that the moon appears slightly larger than usual. So maybe a good time to have a closer look.

Finally, Saturn reaches opposition on the 27th August. Being opposite the sun, it will appear much brighter than usual and should be obvious in the night sky. It will reach its highest point in the early hours of the 28th, low in the South-east.



Metamorphic Rock

Laxford

In the last couple of articles we've looked at sedimentary and igneous rocks, which are relatively straightforward. The first group is formed from consolidated sediment, the second from cooled magma. The third major category of rocks – the metamorphic rocks – are an altogether weirder bunch.

As the name suggests, metamorphic rocks have undergone structural and chemical changes, usually as a result of being buried deep underground and subject to varying levels of heat and pressure. The original rock can be sedimentary, igneous or another metamorphic rock. The resultant rock will be dependent on the chemistry of the original and the type and grade of metamorphism. Metamorphic grade refers to the levels of heat and pressure involved the higher the grade, the more intense the heat/pressure and the greater the alteration of the rock. Contact, or thermal metamorphism occurs when molten magma comes into contact with the surrounding country rock. (Incidentally, *country* rock simply means the stuff round about the

intruded magma and doesn't refer to Neil Young, Sheryl Crow or anyone of that ilk). The heat from the magma bakes the nearby rock, causing new minerals to form and recrystallization of existing minerals. Inevitably, the closer the rock is to the magma, the stronger this effect is.

Regional metamorphism is usually a result of massive structural movements of the Earth's crust, such as a period of mountain building causing changes in the rocks over a large area. Rocks formed by the intense pressures involved often show distinct foliation – an arrangement of crystals in bands or layers. Slate is an example of this, as are the magnificently named schist (careful how you say that one) and gneiss (pronounced *nice*).

Metamorphic rocks, like igneous rocks, are formed of interlocking crystals and, as such, are often very resistant to erosion. Some regionally metamorphosed rocks are so hard that they've been around for a wee while – over 3.5 billion years in some cases.

Unfortunately for us, East Lothian isn't blessed with much in the way of metamorphic rock. It is possible to find some altered rock alongside igneous intrusions, in what are termed the baked margins, but these barely qualify as true metamorphic rocks. To see the real deal you have to go a little further afield.

To the south, the Southern Uplands contain rocks that have been subject to relatively low-grade metamorphism. Fine-grained sedimentary rocks, such as shale and mudstone, have been altered to form slate. This is one of the more economically useful metamorphic rocks and has been exploited in several areas, including Stobo and Innerleithen.

However, it's in the far north-west of Scotland that metamorphic rocks really shine. Here you can find metaquartzite and marble (altered sandstone and limestone, respectively) as well as schists. The stars of the show are the heavily banded gneisses found throughout the area. Known as the Lewisian gneisses (after the Isle of Lewis), these are a range of highly metamorphosed rocks formed deep within the crust during mountain building events occurring between 2.5 and 3.3 billion years ago. It's staggering to think of such ancient and, frankly, magnificent rocks being on show in this country.



Ach Gneiss



Arran Schist (Photo Jonathan-Wilkins)



*Slate quarry on Luing, Argyll & Bute
(Photo Anne Burgess)*



Slate Quarry, Innerleithen (Photo Jim Barton)

Amisfield Walled Garden

Tucked away in dense woodland on the outskirts of Haddington in East Lothian lies Amisfield Walled Garden, an imposing 18th century garden that has been restored over the last 15 years from an overgrown wilderness into a vibrant and welcoming community garden by a team of enthusiastic local volunteers.

At 8 acres in size, Amisfield Walled Garden is one of the largest walled kitchen gardens in Scotland. Enclosed by 16 foot high stone walls, and with an ornamental circular pavilion in each corner, the garden was built to impress visitors to the estate as well as

delivering a steady supply of fresh fruit and vegetables to the house. Like many such gardens, the cost of upkeep led to a steady decline from its heyday in the 1800s to a state of dilapidation and neglect in the 20th century.

The garden is managed entirely by local volunteers. It is an inclusive project and brings together people from a wide range cross-section of the local community to enhance their local environment whilst gaining the therapeutic benefits to mental and physical health that comes from working outdoors as a team to a common purpose. Our volunteer group includes



people with additional support needs, health referrals seeking to improve their mental or physical wellbeing, job seekers gaining work experience, classes from local primary and secondary schools, and a range of community groups.

Our Volunteer Co-ordinator organises a programme of practical training in horticultural subjects for volunteers and local groups, tailored specifically to each person's social, educational and support needs.

We continue to welcome new volunteers. There are jobs for all abilities, from dead-heading roses or pricking out seedlings to picking fruit and, if you feel like it, the more physically demanding jobs like digging, weeding and trimming hedges. Some volunteers like to take on the responsibility for a particular area of the garden. There is a lot of satisfaction in working as part of a team to create a beautiful garden for others to enjoy, and Amisfield is a wonderful place to spend a couple of hours in the tranquil peace and security of a walled garden.

At the moment we are very keen to further develop our vegetable growing capacity and would particularly welcome volunteers who would have an interest and/or experience in vegetable growing.

To find out more about volunteering with us, contact the Volunteer Coordinator, Erin Armstrong

t: **07704 049572**

e: **volunteersamisfield@gmail.com**

www.amisfield.org.uk 

Wildlife Gardening

July

Of course July is going to be hot and sunny, so first off, sit back and enjoy your garden!

However, hot weather can be hard for the garden. **Try adding a waterbutt** to collect your own water rather than relying on the garden hose. Also add some buckets and containers around the garden for collecting any rain we do get, which the birds will enjoy using in the meantime (think bird baths and drinking sources). You can also not pour your washing up water down the drain, use it to water your plants in pots and containers.

There is every chance that you may already have a few nocturnal visitors to our garden, but **how about making a bat box?** Many pipistrelle bats live in and around towns and villages and need extra spaces to hibernate later in the year. Check out the **Bat Conservation Trust Information Pack** [↗](#) but keep in mind our northern species are generally smaller so don't be tempted to make the box opening too big.



Top: Install a water butt in your garden
Bottom: Make your own bat box


August

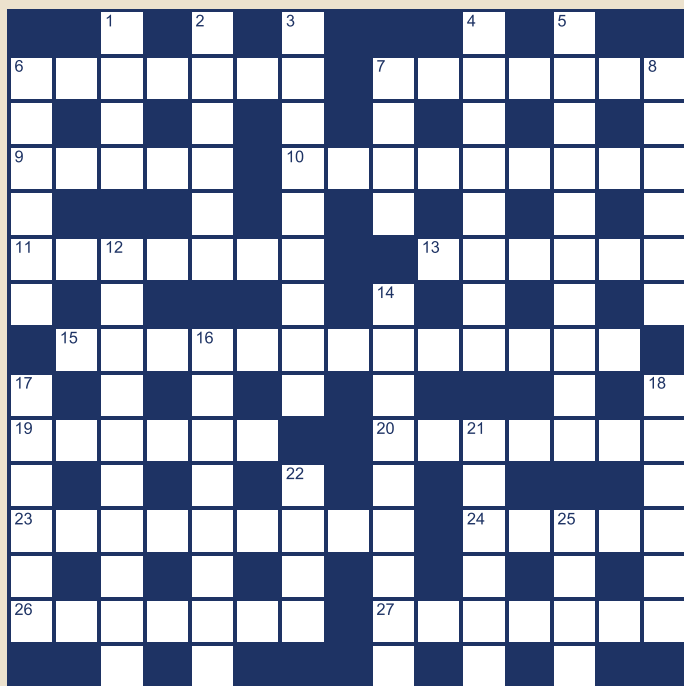
One of the keys to a wildlife friendly garden is not to be too tidy-hooray!

Leave some of the seed heads on herbaceous perennials as these are great spaces for invertebrates to hide in. Also, many birds love the seeds straight from the plants, so be brave and leave those seed heads on-they look like floral arrangements that you might bring into the house too.

Those pesky birds that you have been encouraging into your garden all spring and summer have now got their wee eyes on your lovely soft fruits. So if you are not so keen on letting them have their share, (though next year you may just want to plant more so they can take their share) **try hanging up old CDs** in amongst your fruit bushes to scare them off. You will need to keep moving them around though, as they get wise to it, but it is better than plastic netting that they can get stuck in.

Quick(ish!) Crossword

The answers here are the same as the Cryptic Crossword (p14) – so if you get stuck you could always look at those clues! You can also click [HERE](#)  to complete online. (The solution is on p15)



Across

6. Sorted (2,5)
7. Snake-like (7)
9. How something is done (5)
- 10/27. Biodiversity Officer (9,7)
11. Village near the Lammermuirs (7)
13. What the stomach does (6)
15. Volunteers are doing this at Barns Ness (8,5)
19. Not yet hatched (6)
20. Excluded (7)
23. Triglyceride part of milk (9)
24. Short-legged dog (5)
26. Happen again (7)
27. See 10

Down

1. Several 'volunteer' at North Berwick and Traprain Law (4)
2. The season before Christmas (6)
3. Like a spider or a tick (9)
4. Reaches just above the shin (4-4)
5. Waterless region in China (4,6)
6. Demand (6)
7. It's of special scientific interest (4)
8. Afternoon nap (6)
12. There's a permanent one in the John Gray Centre (10)
14. People who are doubtful about something (9)
16. Euro or Franc for example (8)
17. John Muir's birthplace (6)
18. Not subtracting (6)
21. Financial gain (6)
22. From a great distance (4)
25. Falls mainly on the plain in Spain (4)

Summer's Melody


by Edel T. Copeland

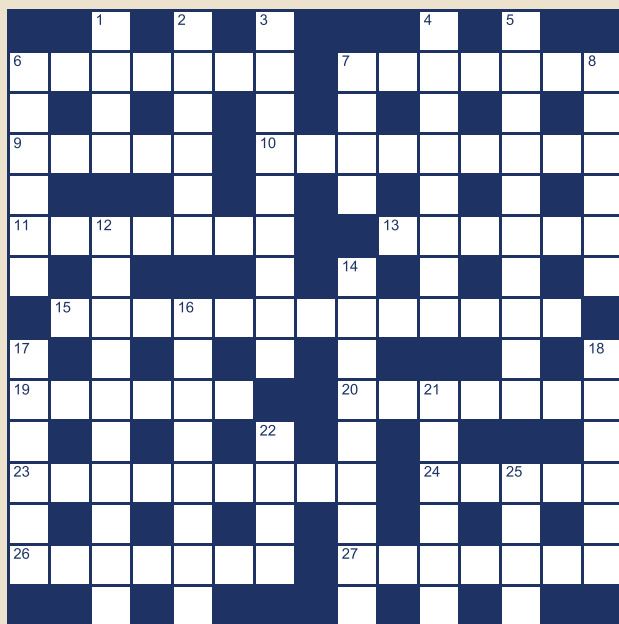
Rippling crystal waters shine like silver to reflect summer's glow.
Soothing and calming in rhythm, echoing its lyrical flow.
Magical music of nature, a symphony of splendid delight.
Skies like blue oceans in paradise, birds soaring to grasp full flight.

Gentle swans glide gracefully, elegant yet proud and strong,
Birds and bees in unison, the joyful hum of nature's song.
Rolling summer meadows shimmer, like jewels in Mother Nature's crown.
Embellishing fields of emerald green draped in its golden gown.

Light sweet air blows softly, scented by sweet cherry blossom in bloom.
Delicate, pretty petals lifting to dance in harmony with summer's tune.
The sounds and scents of summer, its melody light and free.
Sands of gold that glisten, embracing waves of a warm and whispering sea.

Cryptic Crossword

The answers here are the same as the Quickie Crossword (p12) – so if you get stuck you could always look at those clues! You can also click [HERE](#)  to complete online. (The solution is on p15)



Across

6. Properly arranged at home, or by the German (2,5)
7. Weirdly onus is on you sounding like a snake (7)
9. Reportedly steps over fence in a fashionable way (5)
- 10/27. Biodiversity officer processed much gen, I'm certain (9,7)
11. Village son takes shelter (7)
13. Consume summary (6)
15. Report one's arrival at the end of Yellowcraigs mound - it's said of activity at Barns Ness (8,5)
19. Not yet hatched one in France, Belgium or Norway (6)
20. Cathy left Cadet Timothy and came back but was left out (7)
23. Speak of female in a mammal's milk constituent (9)
24. Wow! American soldier is Queen's pet (5)
26. Could cure, or possibly happen again (7)
27. See 10

Down

1. £25 bet on a small horse (4)
2. Notice an opening arrival (6)
3. Can hairdo be re-done like a spider? (9)
4. Short but keen about type of church (4-4)
5. Lives with the Queen but got around region with no water (4,6)
6. Demand it both is and isn't? (6)
7. Locate it in the South-East (4)
8. At first sleeping is easy, specially the afternoon (6)
12. Show inhibition, although formerly not in (10)
14. They don't believe Scots gain in any way (9)
16. Curry containing a small measure of cumin starter might be many rupees or baht (8)
17. Town's brown bear has no end of trouble (6)
18. Supplementary part of Paddington (6)
21. From bitcoin comes financial gain (6)
22. A safari is not a great distance (4)
25. Water drops re-align oddly (4)

Volunteer Diary Dates

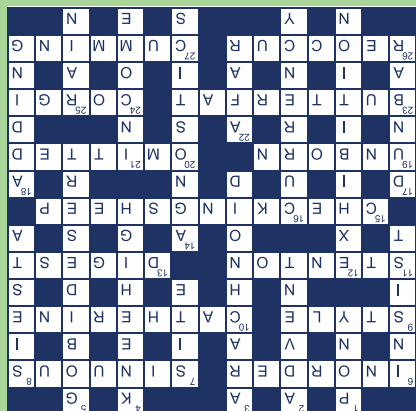


Remember to save the date!

Where	Day	Date	Time
Yellowcraig	Thursday	6 th July	09:30-15:00
North Berwick	Thursday	13 th July	13:00-15:30
Levenhall Links	Tuesday	25 th July	10:00-13:00
Dunbar	Wednesday	26 th July	10:00-13:00
Yellowcraig	Thursday	3 rd August	09:30-15:00
North Berwick	Thursday	10 th August	13:00-15:30
Levenhall Links	Tuesday	29 th August	10:00-13:00
Dunbar	Wednesday	30 th August	10:00-13:00

For information on all events please contact ranger@eastlothian.gov.uk 

Crossword Solution




Get in touch

We'd love to hear from you!

Email us at ranger@eastlothian.gov.uk
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