

## Country Notes for September 2025

This is the month when we see the transition from summer to autumn, with the start of autumn this year being 22<sup>nd</sup> September. At the beginning of the month it often feels like full blown summer, which it is! However, by the end of the month there are clear signs that things are on the change. Not only are the days shorter but there can be heavy early morning dews, with mists gathering during the day. Our migrant birds will have started leaving by the end of the month and wildlife will be starting preparations for the colder months ahead.

This is a good time to give the bird table and the feeders a good clean to lessen the risk of disease spreading, and as the days shorten many of us will be starting to feed the birds again, especially if there is a cold snap. I tend to feed the birds only when the weather is particularly bad as food dropped from feeders can attract rats and with chickens in my garden this is something I try to avoid. It can of course be tempting to put rat poison down but this should be done with extreme caution with the rat poison put in small quantities in proper bait boxes to avoid other animals and birds finding it. If at all possible rat poison is best avoided completely as, even with real care, a poisoned rat can still be eaten by dogs, cats and other animals and this can be fatal to them. Rat poison spread around liberally is certainly to be avoided if our furry friends, both wild and domestic, are to be kept as safe as possible.

September is a wonderful month with warm days often a possibility and the countryside looking resplendent as the first leaves begin to colour up, heralding a real change in appearance in October and November. One of the glories of our beautiful Kent countryside is that every season has something of wonder to celebrate.

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