

Country Notes for October 2025

October is the first full month of Autumn and the month when the change of seasons can often be the most obvious. This is the month when the leaves really start to turn and the very last of the summer migrating birds leave our shores. Some days we can really feel the change with cold damp days, whereas there will be others when summer feels as if it is hanging on to the very last moment. In fact warm days like this around 18th October, which is St Luke's Day, are often referred to as St Luke's Little Summer. Let's hope that we will be treated to a few days of St Luke's Little Summer this year!

After our long hot summer this year changes began rather earlier than usual. Many trees were showing signs of their leaves changing colour by the end of August owing to the lack of rain through the summer. In order to retain as much moisture as possible they started to shed their leaves to minimise water loss. I also witnessed some gatherings of swallows and martins over the meadows in late August, although whether they were actually gathering in order to leave and head south that early is debateable.

Of course it is not only birds on the wing in early autumn. Bats, which are actually mammals, may also be seen on the wing prior to their winter dormancy. The most commonly seen in our villages are pipistrelle bats and long eared bats. Pipistrelles are easy to identify as they are much smaller than other bats. Others however are much harder and the only real way of sorting them out is with a bat detector. All the species of bats have different pitched calls and a bat detector can easily separate them. However I don't have one!!

Whatever you are looking for and whatever the weather brings, October is a great month to be out and about in our glorious countryside.

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