

Let the Grass Grow Under Your Feet

The word 'biodiversity', used as shorthand by conservationists for the multifarious works of Nature, has become something of a yawn. Last year was 'International Year of Biodiversity' but nature needs our helping hand every year if we are not to continue losing species. The butterfly is symptomatic. With their gorgeous shapes and colours, butterflies and moths are among the most distinctive creatures in the natural world. Butterfly Conservation talks about 'a devastating decline'.

Butterfly Tents of Silk

We all enjoy seeing those butterflies go fluttering by and we can help them by leaving some grass areas and nettles to grow. The list of butterflies that lay eggs on grasses, herbs and nettles is a long one and now-a-days roadside verges have become an ever more important habitat due to the loss of land to development and intensive farming. The life cycle of butterflies is extraordinary and that's where we can help. The Skippers, Large, Small and Essex, lay their eggs on grasses. The caterpillar of the Small Skipper lives on 'Yorkshire Fog' and other soft grasses in a 'tent' of grass blades drawn together with silk thread!



The Marbled White, the Gatekeeper, the Meadow Brown, the Small Heath and the Ringlet all also lay their eggs on grasses. The Orange Tip lays eggs on garlic mustard, often found growing by hedges on roadsides. The Red Admiral, Small Tortoiseshell and Peacock lay their eggs on nettles and it is roadside verges on which nettles are most often to be found.

Be Lazy; Help Butterflies

And if friends and neighbours wonder why you're being lazy for not cutting your grass so often or not pulling out nettles or not 'helping' the Council by mowing that roadside verge, you can trump them with your contribution to - International Biodiversity!

**Gwen McConnachie and
Una Fenton**

Milton-under-Wychwood Annual Fete Saturday, 2nd July, 2011

The theme for this year's Fete to be held on the Village Green, will be *Mini Beasties*, which is in keeping with term activities in local schools. Let your imagination run wild! Grand Parade round the village at 1.15 p.m. Various Arena Events, - watch this space, Music - *No Worries* and *Rock School*. BBQ, Bar, Stalls, Children's Fancy Dress, Marquee illustrating Arts & Crafts skills of people in Milton and beyond, W.I. Tea marquee. Races and Tractor Pull. Classic Car Display.

Focus on a Real family day out!

Proceeds to St. Simon & St. Jude's Fabric Fund, Milton Village Hall Fund and, as last year, 10% of proceeds to the Milton Community Grant.