



Account of Purley on Thames

River Wildlife

R200240 18/1/2018

Introduction

The Thames teems with wildlife. Most obvious are the birds which fly above and swim in the river, the animals which live in the river banks, the fish which live in the river, the trees and bushes which grow alongside the river and the grasses and weeds which cover the banks.

There are however many more and varied forms of insects, spiders, slugs, snails and primitive forms of life where the distinction between animal and plant life becomes very blurred.

Most of the species which can be seen in the Purley area are described in the Natural History section together with details of specific sightings of some of the rarer species. There is little point in repeating this material.

In Victorian times it was a popular pastime to kill and stuff creatures so that they could be displayed. Thankfully this is no longer in vogue and the majority of species are now protected by the various wildlife acts.

There have been many naturalists in the Purley area and they have recorded a great deal of interest. Unfortunately their records are private and not easily accessible. A few, particularly the ornithologists, have published some of their sightings but a comprehensive study is yet to be accomplished.

What follows is a simplified view of what you might see on a walk along the river bank during each of the months of the year. Naturally the precise details will depend upon a modicum of luck and the prevailing weather conditions.

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