

## Nature Notes

### Wild About Barrow in January

#### What to see

It is comforting to be able to see the first flowers of the New Year. Look out for snowdrops, winter Jasmine (from Humphreys to KGV) and catkins. Those on hazel trees are beginning to lengthen and become floppy like lamb's tails. When the catkins expand it means the male hazel flowers are opening. Look closely at the expanded catkin and you will see the anthers for yourself. Later in the year you can find the catkins of other trees; hornbeam, willow, birch, poplar, alder, oak, beech and sweet chestnut.

I am delighted to see so many birds at my garden feeders. Blue tits, great tits, the occasional goldfinch and, of course, sparrows. I was overjoyed this week to see a visit from a small flock of redwings in our garden feasting on the holly berries.



#### What to do

More people are realizing that nature needs our help and, in the awful lockdowns we have, value the refuge and sanctuary that the natural world provides. *Plantlife* has a roadside campaign which aims to transform the way verges are managed throughout the country, bringing back colour and providing space for all the bees, bugs and butterflies which rely on wild flowers.

- If you want to help, sign Plantlife's petition to keep our road verges safe for wildlife. Just follow this link: <https://plantlife.love-wildflowers.org.uk/roadvergecampaign>
- Trim hedges if they are too straggly, only once the birds have eaten the berries
- Build nest boxes
- Check birdbaths and ponds, and remove ice in cold weather
- Put out fresh water for birds

If you have any ideas of what to see or what to do for the natural environment please send contributions to [wildaboutbarrow@gmail.com](mailto:wildaboutbarrow@gmail.com).