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Brett Westwood and Stephen Moss (wildlife authors and presenters)

Britain's Wildlife: ups and downs

Britain's wildlife is constantly changing – but change is speeding up. Climate change means many species from the continent are moving north into Britain. Humans have introduced alien species and others have arrived by themselves. Brett and Stephen, with knowledge and humour, showed us some winners and losers. Iconic species such as poppies, hares, fallow deer and horse chestnuts are in fact introductions. Rare gems like the wasp spider (above) will soon reach Worcestershire. Some species are doing better than ever: pearl-bordered fritillaries (above) are thriving in the Wyre Forest; otters are back in our rivers.

Some aliens are unwanted: American signal crayfish are eradicating the native white-clawed crayfish, Himalayan balsam has colonised our waterways – bees love it, should we tolerate it? When are 'aliens' considered 'native'? In the garden Valencian slugs are munching our plants, harlequin ladybirds are eating the native two-spot, while the tree bumblebee fills an available niche without threatening native species. Brett and Stephen gave us no easy answers but made us think about and appreciate the diversity and change to nature around us.



Pearl-bordered fritillary



Wasp spider