

What to look for on Scadbury in September

In **December** winter truly starts to set in. For many species, the winter is a time of dormancy, with little food, less daylight and freezing conditions.



Yew Cones

Animals and plants are trying to save energy, only some species are able to continue as normal. Conifers are standing out proudly in the landscape in December. There are only three native conifers, **Scots Pine**, **Juniper** and **Yew**. Yew trees are one of the oldest trees in Britain and can live for hundreds, possibly thousands of years. You can see plenty of these on Scadbury Park.

Yew trees produce round pink fruits, known as cones. Their

seeds are poisonous and bitter tasting but are still eaten by some bird species such as the **Great Tit**.

Other evergreens such as **Holly** and **Ivy** are abundant at this time of year. Their year round foliage provides shelter for nesting birds and bats. The red berries of the holly also provide an important food source for small birds in the harsh winter months. Ivy



Holly and Ivy berries

berries appear in December and will remain through the winter months. They are eaten by many birds, including Blackbirds and Thrushes. Another decorative plant that provides winter food is the **Teasel**. Their spiny seed heads are a favourite food of small birds such as goldfinches, whose beaks are small enough to reach the seeds inside.



Teasel

If you spot anything interesting on Scadbury Park, we'd love to hear about it. You can find us at:



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www.scadbury-park.org.uk