



FEBRUARY 2026

Little Boots, BIG Adventures

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PREAMBLE



Wildflower of the Month – Snowdrop (blossoms around 2nd),
then Crocus (flowers around 14th).

Flower of The Month: Primrose

Tree of The Month: The Rowan up to 17th, then the Ash

Full Moon this Month: Snow Moon

"The hush of winter landscape is a poem without words."

Emily Dickinson

Photographers of the Month – Hayley & John Martin

“Excuse Me, That’s My Berry”.



Hayley and John from Hereford managed to capture this superb photo of a fieldfare in an orchard near their home. They stopped in awe to admire its beauty and take it all in.

These fleeting moments in time are what make them all the more magical. A huge thank you to Hayley and John for sharing this photo with us all. What a moment!

Wildly Unexpected: Whacky Sightings from the Natural World

Because nature's weird side deserves the spotlight.

Welcome to Wildly Unexpected – a monthly feature celebrating those wonderfully odd, easily missed, or downright head scratching moments you stumble across when you slow down and really look at the world around you.

This month I am only sharing one item, because it is fascinating. There I was on my totally ordinary daily walk, when I spotted something unfamiliar. On closer inspection I accepted I didn't recognise it, and it would require further research.

I present to you: *Tremella mesenterica* more commonly known as Witches' Butter.



Why is it called Witches Butter?

In British and European folklore, it was believed that witches milked cows from afar. Villagers thought witches could steal milk from neighbouring farms with magic. They'd chant, curse, or use enchanted objects... and the stolen milk would manifest as this buttery substance on trees. So when people found witches butter on a branch, the thinking was:

"A witch has been at work here." And not in a cosy, herbal-tea way. In a lock up your livestock way.

Butter was serious business in rural life. It meant food, wealth, survival. So anything that looked like butter but didn't behave like butter? Deeply suspicious. There was a strong belief that witches could spoil butter, stop it churning, or steal it outright with magic. Witches butter was seen as physical proof of this mischief. In some areas people would burn it, bury it, or throw it into running water. It was essentially treated as magical contraband.

In British countryside lore, Witches Butter was widely seen as a sign of wet, unsettled weather to come – and often proved uncannily accurate. Some believed witches made witches butter to draw down rain to spoil hay, ruin harvests or cause hardship.

So in that worldview, witches' butter was never just a fungus, it was a warning. And once you've seen it, you never quite walk past a tree the same way again.

Little Boots' Big Adventures: February

Hello, winter watchers!

February may be the shortest month, but it's one of the busiest if you know where to look. The days are quietly stretching, the light lingers a little longer each afternoon, and the land is beginning to stir – even if it still feels cold.

This is a month of in-between: winter isn't finished yet, but spring is starting to whisper. Look closely, listen carefully, and February will tell you its secrets.

Candlemas & Snowdrop Spotting

Early February brings Candlemas, a traditional turning point of the year. Folklore says this is when winter decides whether to stay or go – but whatever the weather, nature is already preparing.

Snowdrops often appear around this time, pushing bravely through frozen ground. I have noticed they are way ahead of schedule this year. Have you spotted any?

Can you find:

- Snowdrops peeping out under trees
- Green shoots at the base of trees
- Buds swelling on bare branches

Little Boots tip:

Snowdrops love sheltered spots. Check churchyards, woodland edges, under trees, and shady banks.

Feathered Friends Festival (All Month Long)

February is still a brilliant month for birds. With trees bare and food scarce, gardens and hedges are full of activity.

You might spot:

- Robins defending their winter territories
- Blackbirds searching for worms on milder days
- Blue tits and great tits visiting feeders
- Dunnocks hopping quietly along fences

Listen carefully – cold air carries sound further. You may hear birds before you see them.

Little Boots Challenge

Keep a February nature notebook.

Each time you go outside, write down:

- One thing you see
- One thing you hear
- One thing that tells you the season is changing

Bonus points if you notice:

- A bird singing instead of just calling
- Water dripping or ice melting
- A new plant you didn't see last week

Snow Moon Wonder

February's full moon is known as the Snow Moon or Hunger Moon, named for the long, lean weeks of late winter.

On a clear night:

- Step outside and look up
- Notice how bright the moon looks in the cold air
- Listen — what nighttime sounds can you hear?

Owls, foxes, wind in bare branches... February nights are full of stories.

Bare Branch Detectives

With leaves still absent, trees reveal their true shapes.

Try this:

- Look at the tips of branches
- Notice buds — are they small, fat, or pointed?
- Compare different trees: which ones look ready for spring?

Little Boots tip:

February may feel quiet, but it is watchful, patient, and full of promise.

Keep your boots muddy, your eyes open, and your ears tuned — spring is closer than it looks.

Magic Sightings waiting to happen in February are:

- Badgers
- Barn Owls
- Bitterns
- Brown Hares
- Crocuses
- Dippers
- Fieldfare

- Frog & Toad Spawn
- Frosted Spiderwebs
- Golden Plovers
 - Goshawks
- Great Crested Grebes
 - Hazel Catkins
 - Lapwing
 - Mistletoe
 - Otters
- Pink Footed Geese
- Red Squirrels
 - Redwing
 - Robins
 - Snipe
- Snowdrops
- Snowmen
- Starling Murmuration's
 - Stoats
- Tawny Owls/ Short Eared Owls



Redwing – Photo credit to Jim Bishop

This year February is the perfect time to sow broad beans.

Hardy and dependable, they cope well with cold soil and even snow, using the slower conditions to build strong roots.

Sow now, and they'll be ready to surge into growth as soon as the weather softens.

Trust the cold – the earth is working even when it looks asleep.

**IF YOU ARE
UNSURE OF
IDENTITY DO
NOT EAT. WE
HAVE A
SURPRISING
NUMBER OF
POISONOUS**

- Black Mustard.
- Three Cornered Leek

Please do not forage mushrooms/ fungi unless you are with a qualified professional.

THE SKIES: FEBRUARY 2026

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- 1st: Full Snow Moon
- 17th: Annular Solar Eclipse
- 19th: You may be able to see Mercury



Full Moon:
1st February @ 22:09
Fair & Frosty



3Q Moon:
9th February @ 12:43
Snow if cold enough, else cold rain



New Moon:
17th February @ 12:01
Snow if cold enough, else cold rain



1Q Moon:
24th February @ 12:27
Snow if cold enough, else cold rain



PERIGEE @ 23:03 ON 24th FEBRUARY

APOGEE @ 16:41 ON 10th FEBRUARY

