



What to look for in November

In **November** winter is just around the corner but there are still sights to look out for in the natural world. In hedgerows and at roadsides look out

for **Old Man's Beard**, with its long silky hairs. Also known as Traveller's Joy, it is a plant often better recognised in the winter, when its fluffy white seedheads stand out strongly against bare shrubs.



Old Man's Beard

The long silky strands remain throughout the winter and ensure that their seed is picked up and dispersed by the wind. Look



out too amongst bushes and shrubs for small birds such as the **Redwing**. This small thrush (the smallest true thrush in the UK) arrives in Britain during October and November to spend the winter. Autumn fungi are still very visible this month. The visible mushroom of a fungus is only the fruiting body; the whole organism is much larger and spreads out over a large area underground or within a tree. Look out for **Milk Caps**. This family



Above: Redwing
Below: Milk Cap Fungus
Lactarius hepaticus



of fungi get their name from the milky-sap they exude if they are damaged, or broken. Milk cap fungi are micorrhizal, meaning that they share a symbiotic relationship with their host plant. The fungi provides their host with water, phosphates and nitrogen, whilst the host plant feeds the fungi with sugar. November marks the start of the mating season for **Foxes**. Adult foxes are solitary for most of the year, but in the winter months, male dog foxes are on the look out for a vixen. Hoping to attract a female, male foxes howl a sharp triple bark, which you might be able to hear on a winters night.