

# CONTENTS

## **Where have all the flowers (and everything else) gone?**

Norman Bamforth.....2

**Notice of A.G.M.**.....2

**Society Diary**.....3

## **Rochdale Field Naturalists' Society; A Profile**

Rick Cowley.....5

Contributions are welcomed as e-mail attachments to [patricia.francis@oldham.gov.uk](mailto:patricia.francis@oldham.gov.uk), or on disk, in most PC word processing formats (with a second file in rich text format \*.rtf) or in typescript from contributors who do not have a PC. Illustrations should, ideally, be produced on A4 paper with a margin of at least 2.5cm all round with 'over-sized' lettering (14pt normal/body text, if typed) to allow for it to be photographically reduced to A5 (approx 70% reduction) and still be readable.

# **Where Have All the Flowers (and Everything Else) Gone?**

**Norman Bamforth**

I was browsing through the old Manchester Guardians the other day and came across this letter in the edition of 4 April 1863:

## **THE BOTANISTS' COMPLAINT**

To the Editor of the Manchester Guardian.

Sir, - As the time is fast approaching when a popular Society in Manchester, denominated the Field Naturalists' Society, usually begins its operations, I should, with your permission, like to make a few remarks. The name of the Society appears to be a misnomer, as it should be termed "Habitat of Plants Destruction Society," from the fact that wherever a rare or scarce plant is found it is immediately pulled or rooted up, and its "habitat" immediately destroyed.

As this method of extermination has now been carried out for some years, it seems very desirable that it should be put an end to, except the public really wish that all scarce plants should become entirely wanting, and at last get classed with extinct reptilia and other animals. If such a plan had been carried out during the antediluvian period, we should have no difficulty in accounting for the destruction of so many genera and species, as we find none existing at the present day.

Many scarce plants have been made still more scarce during the last two or three years, mainly owing to the operations of this Society, and it is to be wished that

with their approaching expeditions the practice may disappear, and Nature once more resume her ordinary course. Any attempt to popularise science appears to be attended with anything but the wished-for result, and generally brings science into contempt, being as successful a matter as a royal road to learning generally is – Hoping these few remarks may have some effect in diminishing a great evil, I am, yours truly,

March 31 1863

**A LOVER OF NATIVE PLANTS**

I think it sums up what was going on at the time but no doubt many sites have been destroyed by housing and agriculture. The Manchester Field Naturalists have no connect with the Manchester Field Club.

## **NORTHWESTERN NATURALISTS' UNION**

**Annual General Meeting**

**Saturday 1 March 2014**

**2.00 pm in the Green Room,  
Bolton Library,  
Le Mans Crescent, Bolton**

# SOCIETY DIARY

Please note that members of the Northwestern Naturalists' Union are welcome to attend the meetings of all the affiliated societies.

## ACCRINGTON NATURALISTS' AND ANTIQUARIANS' SOCIETY

Meetings start at 2.30 pm at Antley Methodists' Church Hall, Blackburn Road, Accrington. Enquiries 01254 381236 or 236076. Non-members welcome - £2.00 minimum lecture fee.

**Sunday 29 September : North Norfolk Birding**

Susan and Alan Parker

**Sunday 13 October : Out and About with Tony Robinson**

Followed by afternoon tea

**Sunday 27 October : The Isle of Colonsay – Scotland's Secret Isle**

Janet Niepokozycka

**Sunday 10 November : In Search of Puffins**

Roger Collier

**Sunday 24 November : Off the Beaten Track – Unusual Roads in Britain**

Paul Hindle

**Sunday 8 December : The Island of Madagascar and Jersey Zoo and the Gerald Durrell Connection**

John and Jean Broadbent

Followed by Yuletide Refreshments

## ALTRINGHAM AND DISTRICT NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY

Except where otherwise stated, all meetings will be held at St Peter's Assembly Rooms, Cecil Road, Hale and will be timed approximately as follows: 7:30pm informal gathering, 7:45pm lecture, 9:15pm tea and chat.

All excursions leave from the car park at St Peter's Assembly Rooms, Cecil Road, Hale at the times indicated. If you intend to join the excursion please give three days notice. Food and drink for the day and suitable footwear are advisable.

[www.altnats.org.uk](http://www.altnats.org.uk) or [info@altnats.org.uk](mailto:info@altnats.org.uk) 0161 865 0118

## BLACKBURN & DISTRICT BIRD CLUB

Indoor meetings are usually held on the first Monday of the month at St. Silas's Church Hall, Preston New Road, Blackburn at 7.30 pm. Outdoor meetings are held to observe and study birds in the field, and are usually led by a member of the committee.

## CHESHIRE ACTIVE NATURALISTS

To find out more information about how to join Cheshire Active Naturalists visit [www.cheshireactivenaturalists.org.uk](http://www.cheshireactivenaturalists.org.uk) or email Martyn at [Martyn@czd.org.uk](mailto:Martyn@czd.org.uk)

## **LANCASHIRE & CHESHIRE ENTOMOLOGICAL SOCIETY**

Indoor meetings are at 7.30pm, unless indicated and are at Frodsham Community Centre, Fluin Lane, Frodsham

## **CHEADLE HULME & BRAMHALL NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY**

**Indoor meeting venue: St. Michael's Church Hall, St. Michael's Avenue, Bramhall, Stockport, SK7 2PG at 7.30pm**

**Thursday 19 September : In the Footsteps of David Livingstone (Part 1)**

Brian White

**Thursday 10 October : AGM (7.15pm) + Travels in Patagonia – Glaciers and Gauchos**

Heather James

**Thursday 21 November : Yellowstone & Grand Teton National Parks**

Mike Pettipher

**Thursday 12 December : Winter Watch**

David Taylor

**Thursday 16 January 2014 : Wildlife & Geology of Tenerife**

Nick Martin

**Thursday 20 February : Mammals in the Northwest of England**

Tony Parker

**Thursday 20 March : Le Massif Central**

Joan Potts

**Thursday 10 April : Costa Rica – Nature's Paradise!**

Steuart Kellington

**Thursday 19 September : In the Footsteps of David Livingstone (Part 1)**

Brian White

**Thursday 10 October : AGM (7.15pm) + Travels in Patagonia – Glaciers and Gauchos**

Heather James

## **MANCHESTER FIELD CLUB**

Indoor Meetings are held at Sale United Reformed Church Hall, Montague Road, Sale, M33 3BU, near Sale Metro station, commencing 7.00pm. Free to members, visitors £2.00

Walk organiser: Alan Hill, 15 Merston Drive, East Didsbury, M20 5NT. Tel: 0161 445 1535 Website: [www.manchesterfieldclub.org.uk](http://www.manchesterfieldclub.org.uk)

(Continued on page 8)

# **Rochdale Field Naturalists' Society**

## **A Profile**

**Rick Cowley**

Rochdale Field Naturalists' Society  
Chairman 2011 - 13

Like many northern towns in the 19th Century, Rochdale witnessed the early growth of a number of natural history groups. Quite often, people who had worked all week in the mills would, after finishing work at Saturday lunchtime or after chapel on Sunday, head off to the surrounding moors to explore the local geology, archaeology and natural history.

Records show a botanical society existed in Rochdale well before 1840, but what later emerged as the Rochdale Field Naturalists' Society appears to have been established in 1874. Swearing, vulgarity and discussion of politics or religion was expressly forbidden and in 1886 a prize of £1 was offered for the best collection of over 50 wild flowers!

The society was dissolved in 1891 but reformed shortly afterwards in 1898. This lasted until 1953 when it again closed. The third re-incarnation came in 1971 and the society has flourished ever since, with currently about 90 members. The basic core pattern established in the 1970s of alternating car and coach trips to places near and far; a programme of indoor meetings; recording local wildlife and member newsletters has been followed ever since.

Today we offer one Saturday coach trip each month ranging from Anglesey in the west, the Yorkshire coast in the east, Staffordshire and Derbyshire in the south and Cumbria and Yorkshire in the north, together with a more local Saturday car-based trip each month..

Each month throughout the year we also have a Thursday local walk within Rochdale Borough to see and record the local fauna and flora. Many members also record what they see in their gardens or "local patch". We are thereby gradually building up a detailed bank of information on Rochdale's wildlife, which we share with our recording partner the Greater Manchester Ecology Unit. Since we adopted the new MapMate recording system in 2010, around 30,000 individual records have been sent in.

Indoor meetings are held once a month from September through to April for a varied programme of illustrated talks on natural history from visiting speakers or our own members.

In addition, the Society also gets involved with a number of ad hoc events such as helping local park rangers in their nature walks; contributing to the Healey Dell Nature Reserve Management Committee; arranging other occasional local walks focusing on for example butterflies or geology; supporting the Lancashire Wildlife Trust and responding to the Council's local planning policies and so on.

The depth of knowledge of Society members never ceases to amaze me. Some are particularly keen on flora, some on birds, some on fungi, some on butterflies and some on lichens, but most are fascinated to a greater or lesser degree by all forms of natural history and wildlife.

Perhaps our most notable chairman was Peter Hill, who steered the Society from 1997 until his untimely death in 2007. Peter was a great all-round naturalist who cared passionately for Rochdale's wildlife and produced a number of key booklets of the Borough's birds, flowers and trees. He is greatly missed.

(Continued on page 7)



Rochdale Field Naturalists' Society at Smardale Gill (upper) and Copy Nook (lower)







### Rochdale Field Naturalists' Society At Dovestones

Two new initiatives that have proved successful for the Society that will hopefully be repeated in the future have been a RF-NS calendar that includes the dates of all our events, and a convivial members' evening meal at a Rochdale restaurant.

If asked what is the Society's most memorable moment, I would struggle to select just one from our long history. But most of our events will include at least one such moment, such as seeing the first returning swallow of summer; catching a glimpse of the iridescent blue of a kingfisher as it skims the water; walking through a meadow of wild flowers in early summer;

watching a colourful butterfly flit through a woodland clearing; finding a rare plant or fungi in Rochdale that hasn't been seen here before; enjoying a superb presentation from one of our indoor speakers or just enjoying the delights of the natural world around us.

For more information about the Society, please visit our website, [www.rochdalefieldnaturalistsociety.co.uk](http://www.rochdalefieldnaturalistsociety.co.uk) or contact our Secretary,

Mrs Dinah Francis, 01706 843685 or [secretary@rochdalefieldnaturalistsociety.co.uk](mailto:secretary@rochdalefieldnaturalistsociety.co.uk).

# **SOCIETY DIARY** (Continued from page 4)

## **DERYSHIRE AND NOTTINGHAMSHIRE ENTOMOLOGICAL SOCIETY**

[www.danes-insects.org.uk/events.htm](http://www.danes-insects.org.uk/events.htm)

## **GREATER MANCHESTER LOCAL RECORD CENTRE**

Any queries contact: Steve Atkins, Local Record Centre Development Officer  
email: [Stephen.atkins@tameside.gov.uk](mailto:Stephen.atkins@tameside.gov.uk), Telephone: 0161 342 4121 Mobile 07792 041 528

Greater Manchester Ecology Unit, Council Offices, Wellington Road, Ashton-under-Lyne OL6 6DL

## **LIVERPOOL BOTANICAL SOCIETY**

Indoor meetings are held in the Clore Natural History Centre, World Museum, Liverpool, starting at 11.00am. Unless otherwise stated field meetings begin at 10.30am.

### **Saturday 10 August : Fazakerley Station Old Sidings**

Leader - Dave Earl (01772 437526)

Advise Kirby train & meet at Station (Very limited street parking only).

### **Saturday 7 September : Liverpool City Centre**

Leader – Wendy Atkinson (07808 922363)

Meet outside World Museum, William Brown Street, Liverpool 10.30

### **Saturday 21 September : Southport Coast to Marshside**

Leader - Peter Gateley (0751 868 5807)

Meet at Southport Station car park. Waterproof footwear advised.

### **Saturday 5 October : Fungi of Eastham Woods**

Leader - Steve Cross (0780 734 1220)

10.08 a.m. No.2 bus from Sir Thomas St to Heygarth Rd. Walk to Eastham Wood Car Park around Golf Course for 11.00 am

### **Saturday 9 November : Historic Plants & Botanists of Manchester**

David Bishop

### **Saturday 7 December : Uncommon Trees of Court Hey Park**

Rob Duffy + members' holiday photos

### **Saturday 11 January 2014 : Caledonian Pine Forests**

Peter Gateley

### **Saturday 8 February : AGM + members' field meeting photos**

### **Saturday 8 March : Microbial Diversity at Mere Sands Wood**

Angela Creevy



## **MACCLESFIELD & DISTRICT FIELD CLUB**

Indoor meetings commence at 7.30pm at the Salvation Army Hall, Roe Street, Macclesfield. [www.maccfieldclub.co.uk](http://www.maccfieldclub.co.uk). Starting points for walks are obtainable from the walk leader. Adequate footwear should be worn, no dogs please.

### **Wednesday 21 August : Wollaton Hall and Nottingham**

Leader: Joyce Venables 01625 429239

### **Saturday 21 September : Afternoon Walk**

Leader: Sue Titford 01625429573

### **Saturday – Monday 12-14 October : Weekend in Buckinghamshire**

#### **Bletchley Park, Waddesden Manor & Canons Ashby**

Leader: Sue Titford 01625429573

### **Saturday 19 October : Afternoon Walk**

Leaders: Pat & Paddy Martin

### **Monday 21 October : The History of Sutton Hall followed by AGM**

Thelma Whiston

## **MANCHESTER MICROSCOPICAL AND NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY**

All meetings are held in the Stopford Building (Medical School) University of Manchester M13 9PT, corner of Oxford Road and Aker Street (next to the Holy Name Church), Manchester, from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. **All are welcome** – feel free to bring a friend or two. Non-members and members of other Societies are welcome. The Society's library will be available at all Stopford meetings and includes copies of our Newsletters and literature on microscopic history, as well as many books on microscopy and Natural History.

See also our Internet site at [www.manchestermicroscopical.org.uk](http://www.manchestermicroscopical.org.uk)

## **MARPLE NATURALISTS**

Meetings commence at 8.00 pm at United Reform Church, Hibbert Lane, Marple, SK6 7NN.

## **NELSON NATURALIST SOCIETY**

All meetings are held at Christ Church, Carr Road, Nelson and start at 7.30pm

Enquiries: David Nelson 01282 863012

### **Wednesday 25 September : White-tailed Sea Eagles, an 8 year study in East Europe and Scotland**

Terry Pickford

### **Wednesday 9 October : Flora of North Lancashire**

Eric Greenwood

### **Wednesday 23 October : Dragonflies of Lancashire**

Graham Jones

**Wednesday 6 November : Unveiling the Secrets of Anglesey's Ancient Rocks**

Paul Kabrna

**Wednesday 20 November : A Shot of Wildlife: Images 2011**

Pauline and Ian Greenhalgh

**Wednesday 4 December : Flora of the Ariège, French Pyrenees**

Neil Barrett

**ROCHDALE FIELD NATURALISTS' SOCIETY**

[www.rochdalefieldnaturalistsociety.co.uk](http://www.rochdalefieldnaturalistsociety.co.uk)

Indoor Meetings are held on the second Thursday of the month, September to April, at Cutgate Baptist Church, Edenfield Road, Rochdale. Charges: Members £2.00, Non-members £3.00. Enquiries: 01706 - 630707 and 814884

All Excursions depart from the cul-de-sac at Manchester Road, Rochdale. Time: Coaches 0900hrs, Cars 1000hrs. Coaches return at 1700hrs except during the months of November, December, January and February when return is at 1600hrs. Queries: Field excursions – Secretary 01706 843685 /[secretary@rochdalefieldnaturalists.co.uk](mailto:secretary@rochdalefieldnaturalists.co.uk)

Coach Price: £14.Coach bookings – contact Fred Royle on 01706 644394

**Thursday 10 October: Reptiles of the Fylde Coast**

Ray Lynch

**Saturday 12 October : Bolton Abbey, Wharfedale, Yorkshire Dales – Coach Trip**

Pat & Maggie Culkin

**Saturday 26 October : Foulridge Reservoir, Colne, Lancs – Car Trip**

Charles Flynn

**Thursday 14 November : Northumberland**

Tim Melling

**Saturday, 16 November : Grange over Sands, Cumbria – Coach Trip**

Barbara Waddington/Sheila Simpson

**Saturday 30 November : Brockholes, Preston (Lancashire Wildlife Trust\*) – Car Trip**

Pat & Maggie Culkin

**Thursday 12 December : The Work of the Woodland Trust**

Steve Halliwell

**Saturday 14 December : Clumber Park, Worksop, Notts – Coach Trip**

Bob Newing and Sheila Carr

**Saturday 28 December : Burrs Country Park, Bury – Car Trip**

Pam Jackson

**2014**

**Thursday 10 January : Birdlife Through 40 Pennine Years (Film)**

Gordon Yates

**Saturday 11 January : Potteric Carr, S. Yorkshire (Yorks Wildlife Trust \*) – Coach Trip**

Peter and Dinah Francis

**Saturday 25 January : Dunham Massey parkland (NT\*), Cheshire – Car Trip**

Alan Cross

**Thursday 6 February : Birds of the Wayoh, Turton and Edgeworth Reservoirs**

John Barlow

**Saturday 8 February : Leighton Moss Reserve, Silverdale (RSPB\*) – Coach Trip**

Peter Stevens & Heather Skaife

**Saturday 22 February : Long Preston Deeps, North Yorkshire – Car Trip**

Rick & Karen Cowley

**Thursday 13 March : The Flora of North Lancashire**

Eric Greenwood

**Saturday 15 March : Tophill Low Reserve, Driffield E.Yorks. (Yorks Water\*) – Coach Trip**

**Saturday 29 March : Wayoh and Entwistle Reservoirs, north Bolton – Car Trip**

Sonia Allen

**Thursday 10 April : Members night (A selection of members' slides) All welcome.**

**Saturday 12 April : Cockersand and Glasson, Lancashire – Coach Trip**

Pat & Maggie Culkin

**Saturday 26 April : Hardcastle Crag, Calderdale (N.T\*) – Car Trip**

Sheila Simpson

**Saturday 10 May : Nidderdale and Pateley Bridge, N. Yorkshire – Coach Trip**

Alan Cross

**Saturday 24 May : Ripponden, W. Yorkshire – Car Trip**

Marolyn Colley

**Saturday 14 June : South Stack, Anglesey – Coach Trip**

Sonia Allen and Derek Clutterbuck

**Saturday 28 June : Swallows Wood, Tintwistle – Car Trip**

Derek Clutterbuck

**Saturday 12 July : Brockadale, Wentbridge, N.Yorks (Y.Wildlife Trust \*) – Coach Trip**

Sonia Allen

**Saturday 26 July : Grass Wood, Grassington, Wharfedale, Yorkshire Dales – Car Trip**

Pam Jackson (9am Start)

**Saturday 16 August : Whisby, Lincolnshire (Lincs Wildlife Trust \*) – Coach Trip**

Peter and Dinah Francis

**Saturday 30 August : Oxhey/Buckden Clough, Irwell Valley – Car Trip**

Derek Clutterbuck

**Saturday 13 September : Silverdale Area, Lancashire – Coach Trip**

Steve Pinnington

**Saturday 27 September : Padiham and River Calder, Lancashire – Car Trip**

Fred Royle

**Saturday 11 October : Filey, N. Yorkshire – Coach Trip**

Rick and Karen Cowley

**Saturday 25 October : Dunsop Bridge, Bowland, Lancashire – Car Trip**

Steve Pinnington

\* Please note there may be an entrance fee or parking charge at these venues.

**NORTHWESTERN NATURALISTS' UNION - BRYOPHYTE AND LICHEN SECTION**

**Saturday 14 September : Ricklow Dale, Monyash**

Meet at roadside parking on B5055 1/2 mile east of Monyash. (SK158665).

Leader Martha Newton

**Saturday 12 October : Barden Moor and Reservoirs**

Parking at Halton Moor, on road from Embsay to Barden Bridge (SE038554). 4km NE of Skipton. Duke of Devonshire land so no dogs please.

Leader Gordon Haycock 07814 447122.

**Saturday 16 November : Werneth Low, Hyde**

Meet at Lower Higham Visitor Centre, Higham Lane. (SJ960937) Higham Lane is one way at A560, access via Spring Avenue. - Leader Norman Bamforth 0161 336 3914

**Saturday 7 December : Indoor Meeting at Tony Smith's**

Meet initially at Railway Road, car park adjacent to the recycling centre off A626 by Rose Hill Station. (SJ949887) and walk up to Tony's house (500m). Meeting restricted to about six persons book by e-mail through section secretary.