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**Contributions for the next issue by December 15 please!**

**Please do not throw your envelope away  
See page 15**

Contributions are welcomed as e-mail attachments (to [patricia.francis@bolton.gov.uk](mailto:patricia.francis@bolton.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 'oversized' lettering (14pt normal/body text, if typed) to allow for it to be photographically reduced to A5 (approx 70% reduction) and still be readable.

# Modern Vandals

Tony Smith

1 Carr Meadow Cottages,  
Glossop Road, Little Hayfield,  
High Peak, SK22 2NR

In 1860, John Ruskin, near the conclusion of his mammoth work "Modern Painters" (1), wrote: "Wherever I look or travel in England or abroad, I see that men, wherever they can reach, destroy all beauty. They seem to have no other desire or hope but to have large houses and to be able to move fast. Every perfect and lovely spot which they can touch, they defile".

In September, 2004 the Countryside and Rights of Way Act came into force in the High Peak.

In 1844 William Wordsworth was living in Rydal Mount, overlooking Grasmere. He had been informed that a railway link was to be made between Kendal and the Lancaster and Carlisle Railway, with an extension to Lowood on Windermere. He was very much dismayed by this because, as he wrote: "Is there no nook of English ground secure from rash assault?" (2)

Years later, when the Lake District was already the destination of thousands of visitors each year, the M6 motorway was extended to Carlisle and beyond.

Nearer to home, the Middlewood Way is being extended through Brabyns Park. The track cuts down from the canal through some of the best woodland in the park and is intended to be "multi user". This means

horses, cyclists and walkers, none of whom mix comfortably. The existing Middlewood Way "improvement" involved resurfacing with Tarmac the section from Rose Hill (probably with the loss of the great crested newts) and the kerbed track exits on to the pavement on Wood Lane. The Americans with, for once, more sense, call it the "sidewalk".

In Brabyns, the river bank is fast disappearing because of the activities of fishermen and dog-walkers. The last plant of meadow saxifrage has probably gone and the sand martins nest site was lost to trampling by dogs and people. It seems to me that very few of the "multi-users" are local people. Certainly most of the dog-walkers arrive by car and so do many of the cyclists and bikers. (So much for sustainable transport). Meanwhile, many footpaths are suffering badly from neglect and abuse.

I just wonder how much the increased access is appreciated by most of those who visit these areas. I have learned to shudder at the words "rights" and "access". This usually means that minority pressure groups such those who represent as the ramblers, the cyclists and the horse-riders, not to mention the Fishermen and the BMX riders, have gained the right of access to more tracts of our beleaguered countryside.

It seems to me that it is the walkers and, of course, naturalists, who simply want to enjoy the peace of the countryside, who are losing out in all this frantic activity. Am I alone in thinking this?

Ruskin J: *Modern Painters*: V. 5; 1860

In: Barker, Juliet: *Wordsworth - A Life*; 2000

## Good News for Once

David Farnworth, 15 Penn Street,  
Horwich, Bolton, BL6 5NR

One bird which has spread its wings locally is the Nuthatch (*Sitta europaea*) or to use its correct name the Wood Nuthatch.

This delightful small bird (for it only measures 14cm [5 1/2"]) often sounds loud for its size, and I always expect it to be as big as a woodpecker. The male betrays its presence by a loud "chwit-chwit" call around March to April. when the male can be easily observed, normally climbing upwards on a tree trunk or along branches. It should not be mistaken for the smaller Treecreeper as these use their tails to move downwards or go upside down along branches. However, care in identification is needed as both species can swap their mode of feeding, I have only once ever seen the two species together in order to appreciate their climbing differences and that was this year at Brock Mill Nature Reserve near Garstang. Two trees were close together and had one of either species on each. The Nuthatch normally prefers old deciduous trees with holes in which they can nest. If these prove to be too large they are neatly reduced in size at the entrance with mud.

Feeding on a mixed diet, they often wedge acorn, beech-mast or hazelnuts into bark crevices to hammer the food open with their bills. The nuts often resemble some squirrel signs, but the holes are more irregular, depicting bill marks.

In my locality the species seems to have been observed in Chorley around 1979, and around Bolton in the late 1970's. My first sightings were in Duxbury Woods (between Adlington and Chorley) where it could regularly be seen and my first observation in Bolton was in 1980. Since then it has spread and despite being a slow wanderer, the dispersal seems to have been steady, with breeding birds taking residence between the Upper and Lower Barns at Rivington where I saw two juveniles on the 15th June 2005. My only observation in Horwich has been of single birds, mainly in the wintertime, but no doubt a pair will be breeding in some location.

Liking sunflower seeds they will be attracted to bird-tables, and lets hope that this colourful bird continues to spread and delight many a garden with its antics

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## A Naturalist by Default?

Tony Smith, 1 Carr Meadow  
Cottages, Glossop Road, Little  
Hayfield, High Peak, SK22 2NR

My next door neighbour would laugh if anyone were to call her a naturalist - her idea of raptors is "those hook-nosed horrors that upset the small birds". Nevertheless she is fond of sitting in her conservatory and, despite her years, is a keen observer of anything unusual. She thought nothing of and did not mention the two Camberwell Beauties which visited her Buddleja a couple of years ago



until a couple of days afterwards when, to my dismay, they were long gone. A “dear grey bird” was the Great Grey Shrike which had been seen up on the moor a day or so before . . . . .

The other day she was amused by an adult Dunnock, accompanied by two young, which was seen to collect cat’s hair (a good “moustache-full”) and to deposit this on the paving near the small bird table outside the conservatory. She (?) then fluffed it

out into a loose pad. The bird then fetched moss and was seen to “mix” this with the hair to form material, presumably, for a nest. The young watched whilst this was going on and the mixed material was just left - to be rescued a couple of days later. The whole operation took only a few minutes. (squares = 1inch)

What really intrigued my neighbour was the keen attention of the young to what the adult was doing. Her observation was sufficiently acute to note the slightly speckled appearance which distinguished the young from the adult - something which has passed me by until she pointed it out. And I call myself a naturalist.

I have never heard of anything like this before and neither had two friends who have spent much time in dedicated bird-watching.

Now is my neighbour a good naturalist or not?

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## THE SPIDERS IN YOUR HOUSE

### An Update

S. Dobson, Moor Edge, Birch Vale,  
High Peak, Derbyshire, SK22 1BX

Some time ago, our editor mentioned to me that she had found *Pholcus plalangioides*, the 'daddy-long-legs' spider in her house. Now, had she lived in the south of England or South Wales, it would have been unusual if she had told me that she had not found *Pholcus*, as it is very common in the south, becoming very uncommon in the north.

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This conversation reminded me that, twenty-five years ago, I had written an article entitled 'The Spiders in Your House' for The North Western Naturalist, and I thought it might be interesting to reproduce this and comment on how things had changed. I must say at the outset that these notes are not based on any research, merely on personal observation and anecdotal evidence, with a bit of information gleaned from the recently published 'Provisional Atlas of British Spiders'.

The italicised sections below are what was in the original article, followed by comments.

As far as the majority of people are concerned, there are two kinds of spiders in houses - big ones and little ones! Big ones are not very nice, they have long legs and run fast, also they leave unsightly webs around the place, therefore they have to go; little ones have to go too because they grow into big ones!

In fact, in the average house there are probably about half a dozen species which live there regularly and many more which wander in from time to time. Most spiders can live for weeks or even months without food but very few can survive more than a few days without water. A dry living-room, particularly with central heating, is no place for such a creature: very few spiders can survive in such a hostile environment and this is the reason why only a small proportion of the several hundred species found in this country are house-dwellers. Of course, if the definition of 'house' includes outside walls, open porches, damp cellars and so on, the list is greatly extended, but these notes will be confined to the normal living areas.

The typical house spider is one of a number of species of the genus *Tegenaria* which have become adapted to dry conditions. In the north-west, almost the sole representative is *T. domestica*, the other members of the genus being uncommon or absent. This spider, with a body length of up to nearly half an inch, is the usual one to inspire dread although, like all other British spiders, it is completely harmless to humans. It is responsible for the hammock-like webs slung

across corners (Figure 1); closely woven to tangle unwary feet. These webs soon become dusty and debris-filled and few housewives tolerate them, consequently *Tegenaria* is usually confined to lofts, rarely-used cupboards and other out of the way places.

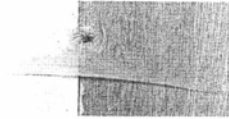


Figure 1

When these paragraphs were written, it was substantially true for the north-west. In the south, there was a much larger spider with a body length of over half an inch, *T. gigantea*, found quite commonly and also found out of doors. Since then, it has been discovered that this is, in fact, two species, *T. gigantea* and *T. saeva* (Figure 2), which are difficult, if not impossible, to separate without high magnification. Both of these have now spread rapidly northwards, *T. gigantea* appearing to predominate in the east and *T. saeva* in the west of the country. Where I live in North Derbyshire, both occur, though I find far more *saeva* than *gigantea*, and the previously common *T. domestica* appears to be being superseded; I find it at home very rarely these days. It is these large spiders which cause such alarm, although, like the smaller *T. domestica*, they are perfectly harmless.

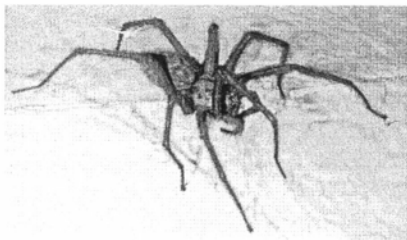


Figure 2

*A much smaller species, common in houses, rejoices in the name Zygiella x-notata (Figure 3). (one of the few hyphenated scientific names). Zygiella is in the same family as the common garden spider, Araneus diadematus, which builds the large orb-webs which are such a feature in some gardens. The web of Zygiella is much smaller, the largest being about eight inches in diameter, but has a very characteristic feature - one of the top segments is completely missing (Figure 4). These webs can be found in places not too dry, corners of windows, crevices in the kitchen and so on, ranging from tiny ones spun by immatures, to full-sized ones if they are left undisturbed. Many people tolerate these because the webs are not unsightly and the spiders themselves are relatively inconspicuous, the largest being the size of a small pea and quite short-legged. They are very attractive when examined closely, being patterned in various shades of grey and brown. Their most annoying habit is to leave their eggs encased in very sticky egg-sacs in the corners between walls and ceiling, at the edge of windows and similar places, and they are quite difficult to remove.*



Figure 3

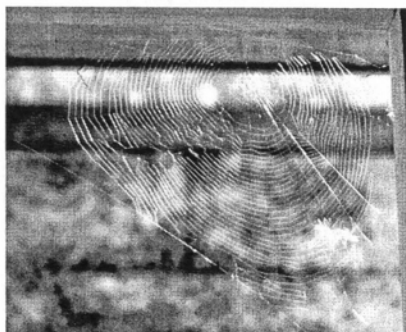


Figure 4

*There are few other web-builders to be found indoors, but neglected ceilings soon pick up a festoon of dusty cobwebs caused by roaming males. By and large, females are inconspicuous, keeping themselves to themselves in small retreats spun close to their webs; males, on the other hand, once having reached maturity, spend most of their time looking for females, and it is these which can be seen meandering across walls and ceilings on summer evenings or lurking in the bath in the morning. All these wanderers leave*

safety-lines as they go and it is these, invisible at first, which pick up dust and leave trails.

Males of most spiders are easily recognisable as such. Corresponding to the antennae on insects, spiders have two palps at the front of the head and, in males, the tips of these are swollen to a greater or lesser extent; in most spiders seen indoors, the swelling is usually conspicuous. In their wanderings, many males come in from outside so that the list of spiders seen in the house is greatly augmented by some normally found in the garden. *Araneus diadematus* has already been mentioned, characterised by a white cross on a brown or ginger abdomen. I have found the male indoors several times, but never the female. Two others about the same size (a quarter of an inch) live under stones or in cracks in walls: *Segestria senoculata* has a zig-zag, adder-like mark on its long abdomen and *Amaurobius similis* has a distinctive black mark on a grey abdomen. These are easily identifiable, especially the first two, but there are a few of the family Theridiidae and many of Linyphiidae which come in frequently but are difficult to see, let alone identify. The latter family in particular accounts for the tiny 'money-spiders' which are more often overlooked than noticed. At times, especially in spring and early summer, there are other wanderers. These are the immatures which have just hatched and are off to seek their fortunes. The egg-sacs of *Zygiella*, for instance, will darken as the eggs

develop, then, one day, there will be dozens of spiderlings running about, eventually building tiny webs. They will gradually disperse, but the wandering babies are usually too small to excite much comment.

The situation outlined in these paragraphs does not seem to have changed much, although I now find that *Amaurobius* seems to be a permanent resident in our kitchen..

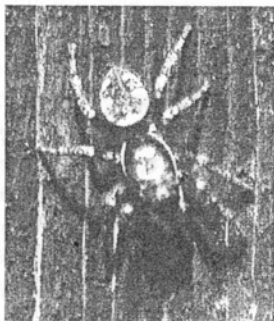


Figure 5

A fascinating visitor which sometimes comes in from outside through open windows is the little jumping spider, *Salticus scenicus* (Figure 5). The black and white striped 'zebra spider' is common on outside walls, particularly on sunny days, and, because it hunts by prowling about looking for prey, it occasionally strays indoors. It is worth looking at closely through a lens. Two of the eight eyes are huge and forward-facing, giving it acute binocular vision. Put the spider on a flat surface and hold a pencil point an inch in front of it, then move it about. *Salticus* will follow the movement by moving its head or rotating its body. Now re-

*lease the spider and watch it dart away, jumping easily over gaps many times its own length.*

*Salticus* is still as common, but there are two more jumping spiders found in buildings which are gradually spreading. These are *Sitticus pubescens* (although a decline in numbers has been noted recently) and, less frequently, *Pseudophrus lanigera*. Both these are easily distinguished from *Salticus* as they are small and brown, but very attractively marked when seen through a lens.

*My favourite house spider is the tiny Oonops domesticus. A couple of years ago, I was standing in the bathroom late one night, cleaning my teeth and idly gazing round, when the tiniest of movements caught my eye on the bathroom wall. I had to peer closely to make sure it was not imagination, but there, sure enough, was this minute, pale-pink creature, so small that I had to examine it through a lens even to be sure that it was a spider. This was my introduction to Oonops and it turned out to be a new record for Derbyshire. It is said to be not uncommon in the north-west, but it is very easily overlooked. Since that first occasion, I have found about five others in the house but never when I have been looking for them, and I have seen none elsewhere.*

This has now been recorded from three other sites in Derbyshire, all occupied by 'spider watchers'. I still see it once or twice a year at home. When my daughter was a student in

Nottingham, one day one walked across the page she was writing on and this turned out to be the first record for Nottinghamshire!

*So far, I have a list of sixteen species found actually inside my own house and I am continually adding to this. It was rather disconcerting when I identified the latest addition (a tiny Linyphiid) to find that 'British Spiders' said of it, 'Occurrence: in damp places, water meadows, marshes, etc'. I really must get that leaking roof fixed!*

My home list now stands at about forty, and, in case you were worried, you will be pleased to know that the roof has been fixed, but as I can't remember the species referred to, I can't tell you if it still turns up.

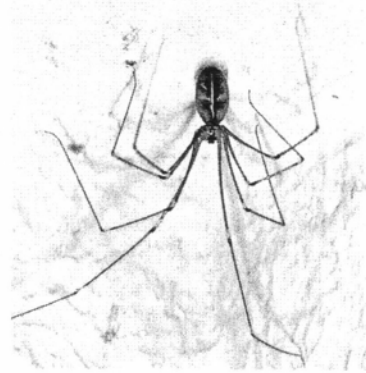


Figure 6

Notice that in the original article, there was no mention of Patricia's *Pholcus* (Figure 6). This was regarded as an exclusively indoor species, though, with the apparent warmer climate, it could be starting to



live outdoors as it does on the Continent. Although it is extremely common in the south, in 1980 I knew of no local records, but it is turning up more and more often, possibly as people move house and take their furniture with them. It is worth looking out for, and, as its common name of ‘daddy-long-legs spider’ suggests, it resembles a harvestman more than a spider. It lives quietly in the corners of rooms up by the ceiling causing no alarm, and in the places where it is common, most people seem to tolerate it.

(The original article was illustrated with line drawings. These have now been replaced by photographs, with an additional one of *Pholcus*).

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## VC59 Vascular Plants Update Autumn 2005

David Earl, 2A Ash Street,  
Southport, PR8 6JH

This year has seen a change of emphasis from recording to documentation of historic records and the compilation of species accounts for the vascular plants section of the forthcoming South Lancashire Flora. It will soon be the case that the historic records held on the Botanical Society of the British Isles (BSBI) card index system for VC59 will have been entered to Recorder 3.3. The card index system includes almost all of the records quoted in Savidge et al (1963) and numerous records entered onto the card system post 1963 by Vera Gordon.

Additional checking of BSBI records cards compiled pre 1995 will be undertaken soon, although most of the data held on these cards is considered to be available in electronic form and simply needs to be added to the datasets used to compile the provisional species maps for the flora.

It is intended that sets of data for VC59 held by Dave Earl (BSBI), Bolton Museum, Lancashire County Council, Liverpool Museum and Manchester Museum will be merged to produce revised species maps in the near future. From the revised species maps and the underlying data it will be possible to produce concise but informative provisional species accounts. In due course it is intended that sets of provisional species accounts will be circulated a number of recorders and organisations associated with the VC59 flora project in order to encourage feedback and hopefully additional details. For example the historic occurrence of species such as *Andromeda polifolia* Bog Rosemary can be somewhat vague “All mosses in the neighbourhood of Manchester” (Buxton 1849) and it is thought that a more detailed estimation of the historic distribution could be obtained from herbarium specimens. To this end I would encourage museum staff and volunteers to continue to investigate and provided data relating to noteworthy species within VC59. Please note that we will soon reach a stage where we will not be able to incorporate additional records for the flora so do provide data as soon as possible to avoid disappointment.

It is always the case that records will be overlooked, omitted or erroneous and that additional records will be obtained. We know this from projects such as Atlas 2000 but we now have the opportunity to rectify any errors and omissions and to provide additional records via the BSBI Atlas Update Project (AUP). This is an online mapping programme with the following series of data classes: -1970; 1970-1986; 1987-1999 and 2000

onwards, note that details are only provided at the 10km scale. Over the next few months I will steadily supply species lists for each 10km for the date class 2000 onwards. This will help to demonstrate the results of our recent recording activities post 2000 and hopefully attract considerable interest to the VC59 flora pre publication.

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## SOCIETY DIARY

### ACCRINGTON NATURALISTS' AND ANTIQUARIAN' SOCIETY

Meetings start at 2.30 pm at Antley Methodists' Church Hall, Blackburn Road, Accrington. Non-members welcome - £1.00 minimum lecture fee.

#### **Sunday 4 December : Way out West in the USA**

Dr. Paul Hindle

#### **Sunday 11 December : Members Slides and Exhibits**

Seasonal refreshments

#### **Sunday 8 January 2006 : The Natural History of Canada's Eastern Seaboard**

Ian Green

#### **Sunday 22 January : Adventures in Mexico and Guatemala**

Steuart and Anita Kellington

#### **Sunday 5 February : The Magic of Swans**

David Cummings

#### **Sunday 18 February : New Zealand in Brief**

Tom Barkley

#### **Sunday 5 March : The Lost Gardens of Heligan**

Donald Metcalf

#### **Sunday 19 March : 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Osprey at Loch Garten**

Stewart Taylor (RSPB Loch Garten)

#### **Sunday 2 April : From Birth to Death – Plant Names and Lore**

Jack Smith

#### **Sunday 23 April : Annual General Meeting**

Slides and Exhibits welcome - refreshments

## **BOLTON FIELD NATURALISTS' SOCIETY**

Meetings are held in the Dido Suite, Albert Halls Complex, Civic Centre, Bolton from 7.15pm. Non-members welcome - £1.50 admission

**Monday 5 December : Festive Fun** (soft drinks & mince pies – members' families and friends welcome)

Joan and Eric

**Monday 9 January 2006 : Brazilian Adventure**

Chris Schofield

**Monday 6 February : to be announced**

Steve Garland

**Monday 6 March : AGM and Members' Evening**

**Monday 3 April : Bird Habitats of the Pennines and Scotland** – sponsored by Doris Critchley

Gordon Yates

## **FYLDE NATURALISTS' SOCIETY**

Lectures are usually fortnightly from September to March and start at 7.30 pm at the Fylde Coast Alive Church Hall, Raikes Parade, Blackpool

**Wednesday 30 November : Wildlife in Madagascar**

Malcolm Edmunds

**Saturday 3 December : Levens Circular Coach Trip**

Gerry and Melody Stephen £6.00

**Wednesday 14 December : Members Your own slides and raffle**

**Wednesday 11 January 2006 : Birds of the Russian Tundra**

Charlie Liggett

**Wednesday 25 January Nature Conservation – The Challenge Ahead**

Tim Mitcham

**Saturday 28 January: Lancaster to Heysham Coach Trip**

Carole Thaw £5.50

**Wednesday 8 February Farmers – A Strange Breed**

Lorna Tyson

**Wednesday 22 February : AGM and talk – South Africa part 2**

Gerry Stephen

**Saturday 25 February : Longridge Circular Coach Trip**

Alan Hunter £5.50

**Wednesday 8 March : Swifts in the Tower**

Chris Hawkins

**Saturday 11 March : Garstang Coach Trip**

Lois Tetlow £4.50

**Wednesday 22 March : Travels in China – plant hunting in the footsteps of Farrer and Wilson**

Dr. Brian Barnes

**Saturday 25 March : Silverdale Coach Trip**

Gerry and Melody Stephen £5.50

**Friday 12 May : 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration Dinner**

Stanley Park Café 7.00pm for 7.30pm

**ROCHDALE FIELD NATURALISTS' SOCIETY**

All excursions depart from the cul-de-sac at Manchester Road, coaches 9am, cars 10am. Coaches start the return journey at 5pm during BST, otherwise 4pm.

**Saturday 26 November : Ramsbottom car-trip**

Alan Tennant

**Saturday 10 December : RSPB Leighton Moss coach-trip**

Peter & Ann Schofield

**Monday 26 December : Alkington Woods car-trip**

Peter Hill

**Saturday 14 January 2006 : RSPB Conwy coach-trip**

Barbara & Pat Waddington

**Saturday 28 January : Roddlesworth car-trip**

Allan Cross

**Saturday 11 February : Winterset Reservoir coach-trip**

Sheila Carr & Bob Newing

**Saturday 25 February : to be announced**

**Saturday 11 March : Loggerhead Valley coach-trip**

Eileen & Derek Clutterbuck

**Saturday 25 March : Barley car-trip**

Fred Royle

**Saturday 15 April : Levens coach-trip**

Barbara & Pat Waddington

**Saturday 29 April : Wigan Flashes car-trip**

Jim Taylor

**Saturday 13 May : Birches Valley, Rugeley coach-trip**

Jim Taylor

**Saturday 27 May : Norden car-trip**

Kate Sutton & David Winnard

**Saturday 10 June : YWT Potteric Carr coach-trip**

Allan Cross

**Saturday 24 June : Stannally Stones, Todmorden car-trip**

Charles Flynn

**Saturday 8 July : Lytham St. Annes coach-trip**

Peter Hill

**Saturday 22 July : Shaw car-trip**

Helen Bibby & Margaret Mitchell

**Saturday 5 August : Lathkildale, Derbyshire coach-trip**

Sonia Allen

**Saturday 19 August : Chatburn/Downham car-trip**

Eileen & Derek Clutterbuck

**Saturday 16 September: Lune Area, Lancaster coach-trip**

Suzanne Blatcher

**Saturday 30 September : Delph car-trip**

Sonia Allen

### **NORTH WESTERN NATURALISTS' UNION**

**Saturday 4 March 2006 : Annual General Meeting**

**2.00pm The World Museum, Liverpool.**

### **NORTH WESTERN NATURALISTS' UNION – BRYOPHYTE & LICHEN SECTION**

All meetings start at 10.30 am unless otherwise stated. Bring food and clothing for a full day in rough country and bad weather. Please check with section secretary a day or so before the meeting in case of cancellation or changes.

Section secretary : John Lowell tel. 0161 485 6892.

**Saturday 10 December : Wormhill**

Meet Hargate Hall SK 119 751 Leader Joan Egan

### **SADDLEWORTH NATURALISTS**

Indoor meetings are at Brownhill Visitor Centre starting at 7.30 pm

**Wednesday 11 January 2006 : Identifying Trees in Winter**

Nick Martin

**Wednesday 8 February 2006 : Impressions of Equador**

Peter Hill

**Wednesday 8 March 2006 : Hedgehogs**

Sue and Ken Lewis

**Wednesday 12 April 2006 : Annual General Meeting**

Election of officers, subscriptions due, light refreshments, raffle

### **LYMM ORNITHOLOGY GROUP**

**Friday 25 November : White Wings over the Arctic / Indian Ocean**

Gordon Yates

**Sunday 27 November : Carsington Water coach-trip**

**Friday 9 December : Sun, Stilts and Storks (& Christmas Party)**

Rev. Hugh Linn

**Sunday 11 December : Pennington Flash car-trip**

**ALTRINCHAM AND DISTRICT NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY**

**Tues 22 November: Rare Plants in NW England and N Wales**

**Illustrated lecture by Colin Twist**

**Sat 10 December: Pre-Christmas walk, Marbury. Pub lunch at 'The Kilton'**

Details from the Committee. Leave Cecil Road Car Park at 9.30 a.m

**Tues 13 December: Arctic Summer - Greenland and Spitsbergen**

Films with Gordon Yates

**Tues 10 January 2006: Old railway habitats**

Illustrated lecture by John Sears

**Tues 24 January: Phil Newton Memorial Lecture - The Bollin Valley**

Illustrated lecture by Keith Warrender

**Tues 14 February: Mongolia - a land without fences**

Illustrated lecture by Margaret Ledger

**Tues 28 February: Ethiopian Highlands**

Illustrated lecture by Mike Pettipher

**Tues 14 March: A night on the tiles**

Hilarious illustrated lecture by Jeff Clarke

**Tues 28 March: AGM**

With a short slide show to conclude the evening. Natural history exhibits welcomed. The supplementary programme of Tuesday evening walks will be issued at the meeting.

**Tues 25 April: The Tittesworth Trail - a living landscape**

Illustrated lecture by the Ranger, Chris Fry

**Sat 6 May: Consall Nature Park, Staffordshire**

A full day excursion to this beautiful River Churnet Valley leaving Cecil Road Car Park at 9.15 a.m. Contact Anne Mason 0161 980 8645. A moderate walk with some steps to climb and, hopefully, a ride on 'The Churnet Valley Railway'

**Tues 9 May: The moral dilemmas of a tree contractor**

A thought provoking illustrated lecture by Chris Frankland

**Sat 17 June: The Sefton Coast, Lancashire**

A full day excursion in search of the plants of the sand dunes leaving Cecil Road Car Park at 9.15 a.m. Contact Mike Pettipher 0161 865 0118. An easy walk in an area of rich flora and fauna.

**Sat 1 July: Five Dales walk round Millers Dale, Derbyshire**

A full day excursion in search of the plants of the carboniferous limestone leaving Cecil Road Car Park at 9.15 a.m. Contact George Allen 0161 973 8088.

**NEW MILLS NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY**

Indoor meetings are at Sett Valley House starting at 7.30 pm

Outdoor meetings require a packed lunch unless a pub lunch is indicated. Unless indicated all field meetings start at 10.00 am at the Town Hall. Meetings graded \* have at least part of the outing suitable for the less able, \*\* indicate an intermediate grade and \*\*\* indicate a walk requiring reasonable fitness..

**Saturday 26 November TBA\*\*\***

Chris Lees and Liz Honeybell

**Saturday 10 December : Brian Fox Memorial Walk**

Tony Smith (pub lunch – booking required)

**Tuesday 13 December : Joint Walk\*\*\* with RSPB**

Meet Hyde Bank Road 9.30am (pub lunch\*- booking required)

**Friday 16 December : Christmas Party**

Bring a dish

**Friday 30 December : Walk it off!\*\*\***

**PUBLIC LIABILITY INSURANCE FOR  
AFFILIATED SOCIETIES**

I am currently seeking quotations for insurance cover with an increased limit of liability of £2 million or a liability of £5 million.

When I have the quotations, I will write to affiliated societies who subscribe to the present scheme asking them which of the options they prefer. If your society currently subscribes to the insurance scheme but the member who is responsible for paying affiliation subscriptions and insurance contributions has changed in the last year, please send the current details to me, *Mike Walton*, at

*Ivy House, Wheelock Street, Middlewich, Cheshire CW10 9AB*

or by email at [mikea.walton@virgin.net](mailto:mikea.walton@virgin.net).

If your society does not subscribe to the insurance scheme but would like to do so, please contact me as above.

**Mike Walton**

## Subscriptions

To save costs - and to reduce the workload of the Treasurer - the Executive has decided that, from 2006, membership cards will no longer be issued as an acknowledgement of payment of subscriptions. Instead, the address label will show the year in which a subscription was last paid.

If you look at your current address label, you will note that the year for which you last paid follows your name. (Please ignore the figure in brackets, which indicates the number of copies that are sent to you.) If the figure on the current label is less than 2006 then would you please send the appropriate subscription to the Treasurer (see inside front cover) - e.g. if the figure is 2005, please send £5; if it is 2004, please send £10 etc.

## Gift Aid

### Payment of subscriptions or other donations by UK members

The Inland Revenue has agreed that the Union can reclaim basic rate tax on subscriptions paid, or other donations given, to the Society, by individual members who are UK taxpayers\* and who complete the Gift Aid Declaration that is included with this newsletter.

(\*The tax paid can be income tax or capital gains tax at any rate and can include tax paid on savings and income or tax credits on dividend income)

This means that, at the present basic rate of income tax, the NWNNU can reclaim £0.282 from the Inland Revenue for every £1 paid as a subscription under Gift Aid (e.g. £1.41 for a £5 subscription) at no cost to the member who will continue to pay the unchanged subscription for the grade of membership.

Additionally, members who wish to make a donation towards the publication costs of the VC59 Flora will have their donation increased by 28 pence for every pound if they sign and return the declaration.

If you are unsure whether or not you qualify for the scheme you can obtain further information from Inland Revenue Booklet IR65 which you can obtain

- from your local Tax Office,
- or from the Inland Revenue web site:
- ([www.inlandrevenue.gov.uk](http://www.inlandrevenue.gov.uk)),
- or by e-mail from [charities@inlandrevenue.gov.uk](mailto:charities@inlandrevenue.gov.uk).

**So, please complete and return the form now or with your next subscription if you want the Union to benefit from the extra income.**