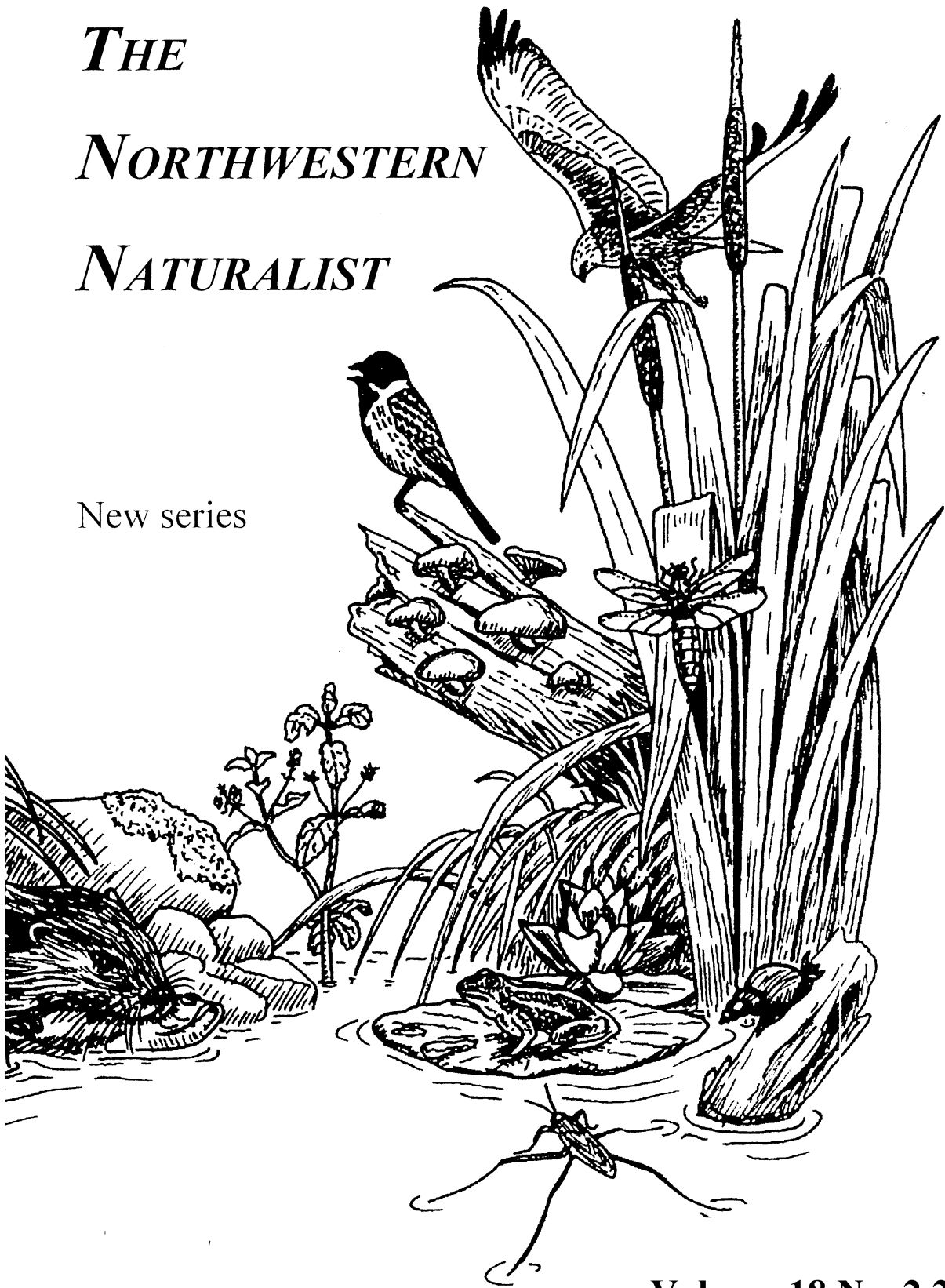


*THE
NORTHWESTERN
NATURALIST*

New series



Volume 18 No. 2 2017

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Contributions for the next issue by the beginning of May please!	

NORTHWESTERN NATURALISTS' UNION

**Annual General Meeting
Saturday 4 March 2017
2.00 pm
Bolton Library Lecture Theatre,
Library Basement,
Le Mans Crescent, Bolton,
BL1 1SE**

This meeting is open to all members and to members of all Affiliated Societies. It would be very much appreciated if each society could send at least one representative.

North Western Naturalists' Union: Bryophyte and Lichen Section Report 2016

We had one or two problems this year when leaders were not able to take their meetings and I would like to thank those who helped out especially Tom Blockeel who lead two meetings despite my name being against one of them. NB

Saturday 13 February : Handforth and River Dean

We visited a small wooded clough off Sagers Road, Handforth and the northern bank of the River Dean; seven members attended. Parts of the stream were inaccessible because recent heavy rain had made the steep banks inaccessible. Nevertheless, some seventy species were recorded, including *Bryum gemmiferum*, *Fissidens incurvus*, *Pleurozium acuminatum*, and *Pohlia lutescens*. One particularly puzzling specimen turned out to be a very robust form of *Didymodon nicholsonii*. Epiphytes were not plentiful, but there was a wide diversity of species. As well as *Cryphaea heteromalla*, *Frullania dilatata*, *Ulotrichum phyllantha*, *U. crispata* and *U. bruchii* we saw five species of *Orthotrichum*, including *O. striatum*. JL.

Saturday 16 April : Mid Lathkill Dale

We began in the side valley of Lathkill Dale east of Haddon Grove, and immediately encountered characteristic limestone bryophytes, including conspicuous species like *Anomodon viticulosus*, *Neckera complanata* and *Porella patyphylla*. Some old logs in the wooded area by the path had a fine growth of *Plagiomnium* species (*P. undulatum*, *P. rostratum* and a little *P. cuspidatum*), along with *Mnium stellare*. *Neckera crispata* was plentiful on a shaded

crag and, unusually, some of the shoots had capsules. A good find on more exposed rocks by the path was *Encalypta pilifera*, a neglected species recently reinstated to the British Flora. The known population of *Targionia hypophylla* at this site was admired, and *Reboulia hemisphaerica* was in fine condition. The open banks along the path had occasional patches of *Entosthodon muhlenbergii*. Where the side valley reaches the R. Lathkill we found two tufts of *Tortula lanceola* on an anthill. From here we walked round the Dale to the area near the foot of Cales Dale. *Bryum canariense* was seen in its recently discovered site on south-facing crags. A *Weissia* growing in rock crevices nearby has been tentatively identified as *W. condensata*, but the capsules were not quite mature enough to be completely certain about the identification. A further visit will be necessary in a few weeks time when the capsules are mature. This would be an exceptional find, as *W. condensata* is not currently known north of Gloucestershire. The NE-facing rocks on the other side of the valley had some nice patches of *Metzgeria pubescens*, and an old log on the open slope had *Riccardia palmata* with a little *Nowellia curvifolia*. Finally we moved onto Lathkill Head cave to look for *Rhytidium rugosum* on stable scree. It was present in good quantity over a limited area. *Ditrichum flexicaule* also occurred here. TB.

Saturday 14 May : Porter Valley

Despite a slight confusion about the meeting point, this field meeting was a great success with nine of us plus a dog - appropriately named Moss! Overall, we had a

good mixture of learning new identification skills and natural history recording throughout the day.

We first spent the morning in the Alder Carr, upstream of the Forge Dam, where the swampy conditions challenged many of us. There, we manage to see a series of mosses and liverworts, mainly epiphytes, typical of this habitat. We looked at the various characters that enable field identification of the common species encountered. Much time was also spent around a few willow trees that had fallen down and that were literally covered with mosses. Although most of this epiphytic moss biomass was quite species-poor, the party was delighted to find next to each other, adjacent on the same branch, *Ulota calvescens* and *Pylaisia polyantha*. These two species appear very scarce when looking at distribution maps (have a look on the NBN gateway!) but they are known to be increasing across the UK. During the quick lunch break overlooking the pond, Joan described to the party how much this water body has changed. She recalls the time where it was possible to hire small rowing boats and spend some time on the water. Today there is a wooded island in the middle and most of the open water is extremely shallow. After this stroll down memory lane, we walk up the valley towards Porter Clough and made frequent breaks to look at bryophytes. The waterfall was a highlight with several 'nice' species such as *Hyocomium armoricum*. Our final stop was in the species-rich meadow just downstream of Porter Clough, where a path leads to the Mayfield brook. A small drain or gully turned out to be absolutely covered with *Pleuridium subulatum*, a minuscule moss species holding its capsules tightly between its long, narrow leaves. After a bit more search along the gully, it proved also host-

ing a healthy population of *Fossombronia* sp., a small liverwort looking just like miniature lettuce.

Many identifications are still pending microscopic examination, mainly because Ambroise lags behind with his specimens. However, without reservation we can already say that we made good progress towards recording all moss and liverwort life in the Porter Valley, with the discovery of several species new to the local area. In short, a fab day greatly enhanced by exceptional sunny weather and good botanical company! JE and AB.

Saturday 3 September : Upper Goyt Valley

Three of us turned up on a day of dreadful rain and wind. We decided that it would be insufferable to spend the day on the high moors and retreated to the Goyt valley. Unfortunately Sam Turner arrived after we had defected and so missed us, but did some solo work and recorded some moorland mosses including three sphagnum species.

We started our lowland recording at the gritstone wall of the reservoir where the most surprising find was a cushion of *Tortella tortuosa*, growing on the wall mortar. *Encalypta streptocarpa*, another basophile, was also found. The reservoir level was high and we did not find the hoped-for *Riccias* etc, but the sandy margin had quantities of *Archidium alternifolium* and, at the border with the grassland, *Climacium dendroides*, *Drepanocladus aduncus*, and *Pohlia annotina*. From there we climbed the woodland path and joined the track running down Shooters Clough to Errwood Hall. In the stream was copious *Scapania undulata* and a few tufts of *Nardia compressa* and the on woodland banks we found *Lophozia ventricosa* and a rotting

log with *Nowellia curvifolia*, also *Sphagnum fimbriatum* and *S. quiquefarium*: scarce in VC58 but previously known for the area. On reaching Errwood Hall we gave up the battle against clouded lenses and sodden notebooks and returned to base. JL

Saturday 1 October : Macclesfield Forest

There was potential on this meeting for some productive recording on the margins of Trentabank and Ridgeway reservoirs, but disappointingly both were full to the brim and we had to content ourselves with an exploration of the plantation woodland, tracksides, and some adjacent grassland. The woodland, being planted, had only common species for the most part, but there were some good patches of *Rhytidiadelphus loreus* in a compartment of sycamores, and *Riccardia palmata* was found on a conifer stump. Most of the usual epiphytes were present, as well as the less common *Metzgeria consanguinea* and *Orthotrichum stramineum*. There was interest on the forest roads and paths, with very fine and abundant *Pohlia lutescens* on a recently excavated trackside and the very scarce *Fossombronia incurva* on moist peaty soil by a path. A short incursion into a pasture at the western end of the forest produced *Ptilidium ciliare* in the turf and *Philonotis caespitosa* with *Pellia neesiana* in a muddy *Juncus* flush. Perhaps the best find of the day was the small moss *Fissidens celticus* new to Cheshire (VC 58), on acid soil on the near-vertical bank of a small stream under pines. We compiled a full list for tetrad SJ97Q, reaching a total of 92 species. TB

Saturday 15 October : Barrow Bridge, near Bolton.

Six members met in the public car park in Barrow Bridge village. Trees around the car park had good epiphyte cover, includ-

ing *Cryphaea heteromalla* and *Metzgeria consanguinea* as well as the more frequent *M. furcata* and *M. violacea*. The surrounding stone walls were also interesting, especially for the presence of 'aquatic' species: *Racomitrium aciculare* and *Hygrohypnum* sp. The wall bordering the stream through the village had a tuft of *Ulota crispa*, another 'habitat' surprise.

Most of the day was spent examining the flora in and around the stream. Both *Hygrohypnum ochraceum* and *H. luridum* were present, and one of the boulders had a small colony of *Fissidens pusillus*. Probably the best find was a large population of *Dicranodontium uncinatum* on a fallen log. JL.

Saturday 12 November : Ilkley Moor

The weather was kind to us after snow fall earlier in the month, and the turn-out was good with eight keen bryologists setting off up Spicey Gill on Ilkley Moor. Eroded banks of the Gill were rewarding with large patches of *Discelium nudum* and *Dicranella rufescens* on crumbling, clayey substrate. The former only has one other known station in Wharfedale, some 19km north at Grimwith Reservoir, so a really good find. The dense heather, occasional rowan and gritstone crags continued to provide good bryophyte hunting and a total of 79 species were recorded from the Gill. After lunch we emerged onto the plateau of Rombalds Moor which is a mosaic of blanket bog and dry heath. The aim was to re-locate a single record for *Ptilium crista-castrensis* recorded near Whetstone Gate in 2011 (the first record in Wharfedale since the late 19th Century). There were shades of the 'hare and tortoise' as the advance party strode off to the allotted grid reference close to the summit, and those wandering up at a more relaxed pace stumbled upon a

fine patch of *Ptilium* growing in leggy heather amongst the ubiquitous *Hypnum jutlandicum*. Once we had re-grouped and admired the deep orange feathery stems, we then searched similar habitat nearby and located another patch! Unfortunately the original record could not be re-found. As we descended in the gathering gloom there was a great deal of speculation about where else this wanderer from the far west might be growing anew in the Pennines. Thanks to all who came on the outing – a grand day out! GH.

Saturday 3 December : Cowbury Dale, Carrbrook, Stalybridge

This area suffered some very severe floods about 12 days before the meeting and the main road from Stalybridge was closed for four days whilst the bridge at Millbrook was checked for safety. Its effect could be seen in the cloughs where the flattened grass showed that vast amounts of water had come down from the moors.

The meeting was to look up Cowburydale and some of its tributaries but first we spent some time at the bowling green wall before heading off up the valley to the reservoir. After lunch at the head of the reservoir we made our way up Near Harehill Clough which produced some interesting bryophytes. Unfortunately by the time we had investigated the Clough the light was going on this short day. The other interesting places at Far Harehill Clough and Iron Tongue will have to wait for another day.

A number of bryophytes are found are worth noting. *Bryoerythrophyllum ferruginascens* was probably the most interesting as there are only three previous records for Cheshire and two in South Lancashire. *Scapania scandica* again has only three records from Cheshire but is plentiful in South Lancashire. Other bryophytes which

I rarely see or walk past because I do not know them were *Hyocomium armoricum*, *Nardia compressa* and *Warnstorfia fluitans*. The total for the day was 80 bryophytes, quite respectable for Stalybridge and in a valley which until recently was only a few hundred yards from a large printing and bleaching mill.

Appeal for Back Issues of the North Western Naturalist

The North West Naturalists' Union committee is not aware of a complete run of our newsletter *The Northwestern Naturalist* in our region. We know several museums and individuals who have large runs of the newsletter but nowhere appears to have the complete run from the 1920s when it was produced as a formal journal to the present day.

As editor I am increasingly being asked for copies of articles from past newsletters. So in an effort to address the gaps the committee is making this appeal. In the first instance we are asking for newsletters produced between 1957 and 1973. I can easily arrange for copies to be made if you wish to keep your originals. There will be future appeals for more recent editions.

If you can help please contact the editor: Patricia Francis 0161 770 4863 or patricia.francis@oldham.gov.uk

NWNU Vascular Plant Section Annual Report 2016

The total number of 2016 vascular plant records added to the Mapmate database thus far comes to just over 22,000. This is a significant fall from the usually figure of around 50,000. There is still a need to capture additional 2016 records from local recorders and recording projects in due course and also to step up our recording efforts during 2017.

2016 was the second year of the Bio-diverse Society Project (run by the Lancashire Wildlife Trust) and some interesting finds were made on excursions including the discovery of 5 plants of *Geranium sylvaticum* (Wood Crane's-bill) in the Brun Valley, near Burnley. Also in this area we found several flushes in the Catlow Valley where *Parnassia* is flourishing and local naturalist Peter Hornby kindly took us to the flush where *Eriophorum latifolium* (Broad-leaved Cottongrass) occurs. Bioblitzs were also held at Freshfield Heath and Cuerden Valley Park. Some Liverpool Botanical Society excursions were linked to the Bio-diverse Society Project including trips to the disused Cronton Quarry where we admired the blooms of *Ophrys apifera* (Bee Orchid) and to the coastal reserve at Garston and Speke finding *Apium graveolens* (Wild Celery) a plant which is a feature of the Mersey estuary salt-marshes. There was also an excursion to Heysham with the Manchester Field Club (linked to the Bio-diverse Society Project) where we ventured down to the shingle to see *Crambe maritima* (Sea Kale) and admired *Asplenium marinum* (Sea Spleenwort) on the cliffs. An excursion with the Lancashire Botany Group took us to Leck Beck where limestone specialists included *Actaea spicata* (Baneberry), *Dryopteris submontana*

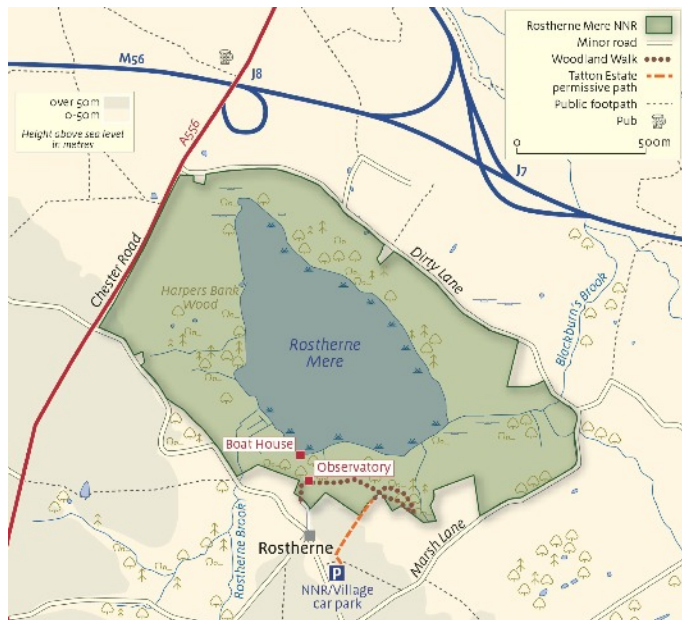
(Rigid Buckler-fern) and *Gymnocarpium robertianum* (Limestone Fern).

Several of the species listed above are rare or scarce in our region. Lists for the Botanical Society of the British Isles (BSBI) of Rare (1-3 sites per vice-county) and Scarce (4-10 sites per vice-county) have now been compiled for vc59 and vc60 and should be available as downloads from the BSBI website which will hopefully encourage local naturalists to monitor the populations of species on the lists. Note also that some species thought to be extinct in a vice county can be discovered as with *Eleocharis multicaulis* (Many-stemmed Spikerush) found this year by Peter Jepson at Belmont Head Flushes.

On the *Rubus* front additional samples have been supplied to Michal Sochar for ploidy level studies and new estimates of chromosome numbers have been obtained from our region particularly for several of our British endemics. Talks relating to this study were given at York University to the Yorkshire Naturalists Union and at the Gateway, Shrewsbury at the BSBI Record-ers Conference. A further *Rubus* recording weekend took place during 2016 in Denbighshire where we were surprised to find *Rubus condensatus* which was a new record for Wales with the nearest known population being in the Wolverhampton area.

Introduction to Rostherne Mere National Nature Reserve

Rupert Randall - Reserve Manager



Rostherne Mere is situated in the North Cheshire parish of Rostherne, 3 miles north of Knutsford close to the outskirts of Manchester. It is the largest, deepest and one of the least disturbed meres in a county noted for its numerous meres.

The mere basin was formed by subsidence thousands of years ago caused by the natural dissolving of salt bearing rocks beneath the plain. These salt subsidence depressions are notable features of the Cheshire salt region and are unmatched elsewhere in Britain.

This large expanse of water (48.5 hectares) is one of the last sites to freeze in hard weather. This makes the site attractive to overwintering wildfowl. The deep (30metres) and cold waters of Rostherne Mere cannot sustain enough food for the large number of wildfowl that frequent it, especially in winter. Therefore most ducks use Rostherne as daytime roost only, flying out to their feeding grounds at night.

Bird Watchers' Year

In the spring look out for courtship displays of great-crested grebe and buzzard. Listen for water rails squealing in the reedbeds; piping of kingfishers; greater-spotted woodpecker drumming and 'yaffling' from green woodpeckers. Then the singing of summer visitors such as chiffchaff, willow warbler and blackcap. Look out for the first sand martins, then house martins and swallows and observe occasional curlews flying across the reserve and nesting mallard, coot and moorhen.

In summer look out for numerous feeding parties of starling and mixed flocks of swifts, martins and swallows catching insects over the mere. See great-crested grebe feeding young and broods of tufted duck. A cormorant colony can be viewed from the Observatory and also sparrowhawk and kestrel can be seen carrying prey to feed their young and also moulting flocks of mallard and tufted duck. Hear reed warblers and sedge warblers calling from the reedbeds and damp meadows.

In autumn duck numbers slowly build. Teal and wigeon are in evidence and nationally important numbers of gadwall and shoveler can occur. During late autumn, starlings gather in large wheeling flocks over the mere before roosting in the reedbeds. These

flocks attract hunting sparrowhawk. Finally flocks of redwing and fieldfare arrive from Scandinavia.

Ducks which over-winter on the mere are pochard, tufted duck, mallard, teal and gadwall, often forming mixed rafts with smaller groups of wigeon, goldeneye, pintail, smew, goosander and scaup. Additionally small numbers of woodcock, bittern and snipe over-winter too. Gulls, jackdaws, starlings and wood pigeons arrive at dusk to roost on the reserve when a hunting peregrine may cause panic amongst the large numbers of birds.

Other habitats on the reserve are reedbeds, woodland and grassland.



The lake and adjacent woodlands were bequeathed to the nation by the late Lord Eger-ton of Tatton Hall in 1961. Since then Natural England has managed the mere, surrounding fields and woodland as a wildfowl refuge to conserve its varied wildlife, peace and tranquillity for future generations.



Natural England who manage the reserve would like to make people aware that there is an excellent facility at Rostherne Mere for observing birds over the mere and generally enjoying the view. There is a good atmosphere and newcomers will be made welcome. Quite a few new visitors to the observatory are already enjoying their own discovery of this hidden away place.

The Reserve Offers:

- A friendly atmosphere with keen naturalists who help in the many different aspects of running the nature reserve.
- An easily accessed Observatory, brick built in about 1961 with excellent views over the 120 acre Mere and the surrounding landscape.
- In the Observatory there is an excellent, in depth, bird report published by the permit holders and volunteers, there are back copies for the last few years.
- There is a kettle if you wish to bring your own tea and coffee tea and also a loo if needed.
- A fixed telescope.
- Panoramic views across the reserve which have just been opened up to reveal areas not seen from the Observatory for many years.

- Winter murmurations of starlings, overwintering bittern
- Ospreys on migration
- The largest inland cormorant roost in Cheshire.
- The reedbeds provide habitat for the in depth studied reed-warblers of which a book has been published and is available on request.

Access and Arrangements

The best place to view the reserve is from the A.W Boyd Observatory which is managed by the Cheshire and Wirral Ornithological Society (CAWOS). Access is via an annual permit (£10 single, £15 family, £5 senior citizens / children. Apply to Mr D. Clarke, 1 Hart Ave. Sale Cheshire. Cheques payable to A.W .Boyd Observatory Fund and please enclose S.A.E.

Away from the Observatory, part of the NNR can be visited via a concessionary path which gives views of the Mere and . This starts from the Natural England car park which is situated on the main village street, opposite Egerton Hall.

Visits to another hide and other parts of the reserve are also possible by arrangement with the volunteers (generally Sunday & Wednesday mornings) for details telephone either Phil Dell (Mob. 07530 532945).

For information on spring and autumn guided walks email Reserve Manager rupert.randall@naturalengland.org.uk.

Please get in touch with any of the above if you want to know more about Rostherne or

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. Non-members welcome - £2.00 minimum lecture fee.

Sunday 12 February : Early Lancashire Maps

Diana Winterbottom

Sunday 26 February : Botswana Wildlife Safari

Steuart & Anita Kellington

Sunday 12 March : The Beauty of Trees and Shrubs

Jack Swan

Sunday 26 March : AGM, Member's slides, refreshments

Sunday 16 April : Easter Sunday

ALTRINCHAM AND DISTRICT NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY

The indoor meetings are held at Jubilee Community Centre, The Firs, Bowdon, Altrincham, Cheshire, WA14 2TQ at 7.30pm. Excursions leave from the Jubilee Centre car park at 6.30pm, or meet at the venue itself. Entrance charges: £2.00 members, £3.50 guests. Please contact us at least 3 days in advance if you wish to attend any of the excursions.

<http://www.altnats.org.uk> info@altnats.org.uk 0161 865 0118

Tuesday 14 February : Scottish Highlands and Islands

Mike Pettipher

Saturday 18 February : Full Day Excursion - Contact us for details

Tuesday 14 March : ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The supplementary Spring/Summer programme will be available at this meeting.

Followed by : **A Local Naturalist** - Margaret McCormick

Tuesday 11 April : Edible and Poisonous Plants and Fungi

David Winnard.

Tuesday 25 April : Social and Supper

Including a Quiz or Member Photos and a Raffle. Contact us for details.

Tuesday 11 July : Annual Barbecue - Contact us for details

Tuesday 12 September : First indoor meeting for 2017/2018

BOLTON FIELD NATURALISTS' SOCIETY

Indoor meetings are monthly between September and April at Bolton Central Library, with generally a guest speaker. Lectures are held on Monday afternoons, commencing at 1:30 – and guests are always most welcome. Outdoor meetings also take place, especially during the summer. For programme details telephone Arthur/Pat on 01204 782853, or visit <http://boltonwildlife.co.uk>

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 or email Martyn at Martyn@czd.org.uk

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 16 February: Wildflowers of East Cheshire

Jack Swan

Thursday 16 March: The Private Gardens of Cheshire

Kevin Pratt

CHORLEY AND DISTRICT NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY

Meetings September - April St Mary's Parish Centre Chorley.

See www.chorleynats.org.uk for details or telephone Phil Kirk 01257 266783

DERYSHIRE AND NOTTINGHAMSHIRE ENTOMOLOGICAL SOCIETY

GREATER MANCHESTER LOCAL RECORD CENTRE

Any queries contact: Steve Atkins, Local Record Centre Development Officer, Greater Manchester Ecology Unit, Council Offices, Clarence Arcade, Ashton-under-Lyne, Tameside, OL6 7PT. Stephen.atkins@tameside.gov.uk 07792 041 528 / 0161 342 4409

LANCASHIRE & CHESHIRE ENTOMOLOGICAL SOCIETY

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

LANCASHIRE WILDLIFE TRUST : CROALL IRWELL GROUP

Indoor meetings are at Prestwich Library, adjacent to Longfield Suite, Prestwich M25 1AY on the first Wednesday of the month, at 7.30pm. Admission and refreshments by £4 donation. Field trips start 10.30am. Details at the indoor meeting or from listed telephone numbers. Programme may be subject to change; please check before setting out. Stephen Harris Mob: 07831 627208, Work: 0845 458 6680

Wednesday 1 February : Wild Orchids

Dr Irene Ridge

Sunday 5 February : Hopton Hall, Wirksworth Derbyshire.

Snowdrop walk (Entrance fee)

Wednesday 1 March : A Swift Recovery

Louise Bentley

Sunday 5 March : Middleton, Heysham. A LWT wetland/grassland project

Wednesday 5 April : Our Reserve - Past & Present (+AGM)

Noëll Leather

Sunday 9 April : Grizedale Forest, South Lakes Woodland & sculpture trails

Wednesday 3 May : Wild Birds of Turton & Edgworth

John Barlow

Sunday 7 May : Rhewl, Vale of Clwyd Bluebell woods

Sunday 4 June : Anglesey Seashore walk

Sunday 2 July : Bell Sykes Meadow, Slaidburn Wildflower walk

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 11 February : AGM (+ members' field meeting photos)

Saturday 11 March : Seaweed Workshop

Geraldine Reid

MACCLESFIELD & DISTRICT FIELD CLUB

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

MANCHESTER AND NORTH MIDLANDS FERN GROUP

Field meetings organised. Contact Leader John Grue: john.grue@virgin.net

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. Members £1.00, visitors £2.00. Chair: Alan Hill, 24 Kingsfield Drive, Didsbury, M20 6JA; awhill@globalnet.co.uk

0161 215 0971; 07719 659 689. website: www.manchesterfieldclub.org.uk

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 <http://www.manchestermicroscopical.org.uk>

MARPLE NATURALISTS

Meetings commence at 8.00 pm at United Reform Church, Hibbert Lane, Marple, SK6 7NN. Visitors welcome: £4 for individual meetings, Children free. For further information: Lynne Shuttleworth – 0161 427 2346 or Derek Clifford 427 4611 or Marple Naturalists Community page on www.marple-uk.com

*Outdoor meetings - arranged separately and announced at meetings.

MERSEYSIDE NATURALISTS ASSOCIATION

Full programme listings are on our website www.mnpage.info and reports of previous trips on our blog at www.NaturalistsNotebook.mnpage.info

NELSON NATURALISTS' SOCIETY

All meetings are held at Christ Church, Carr Road, Nelson and start at 7.30pm.
Enquiries: David Nelson 01282 863012 davidnelson@btinternet.com

Wednesday 1 February : AGM and Members' Contributions

Wednesday 15 February : Saving Small Blue, Marsh Fritillary and other Fritillaries in NW England Chris Winnick

Wednesday 1 March : Enchantment of the Galapagos Rus Hedley

Wednesday 15 March : Over the Seas to Scotland - Wildlife on some Scottish Islands Phil Kirk
Summer trips announced at this meeting

NORTH WEST ENGLAND FERN GROUP

Field meetings organised with an indoor meeting in October at Holehird, Windermere.
Contact Peter Campion: peter@petercampion.com

NORTHWESTERN NATURALISTS' UNION - BRYOPHYTE & LICHEN SECTION

All meetings are on Saturdays starting at 10:30 and will commence whatever the weather. Please bring food and clothing adequate for a full day in the field and check with the leader or Section Secretary a day or so before the meeting in case of venue changes. Beginners are welcome at ANY meeting and there is usually a more experienced field bryologist present who will be more than happy to name and talk through the identification features of species encountered. There will not always be a Lichenologist present.

Section Secretary: Norman Bamforth 1 Corporation Road, Audenshaw, Manchester. M34 5LY (0161 336 3914)

Saturday 18 February : Lyme Park.

Meet in Park Road SJ9629.8470 off the A6 Buxton Road. Leader J. Lowell.

Saturday 11 March : Smithills

Meet at parking bay within Smithills Hall grounds opposite rhododendrons just after the left fork branches from the one leading to the Hall itself. SD699119 BL1 7NP. Leader John Watt.

Saturday 15 April : Holden Clough.

Meet Car Park, Park Bridge Visitor Centre SD939025. Leader N. Bamforth.

Saturday 13 May : Hynning Scout Wood.

Meet at parking on Hynning Road at SD503735. Leader Phil James.

Saturday 10 June : Turton Moor and/or Turton Reservoir,

depending on weather. Park in Green Arms Road (B6391) near the junction with A666, grid reference SD7026.1776. Leader J. Lowell.

Saturday 12 August : Anthony Hill.

Meet in the public car park off the Grinlow Road SK048719 and walk down from there. Leader T. Blockeel.

Saturday 2 September : Hartington Station

Meet at Pay and Display Car Park. Toilets. SK 1496 6108. Leader Joan Egan

Saturday 7 October : Greave Clough / Widdop Reservoir.

Meet at Car park near the dam at SD 937 328. Leader Gordon Haycock

Saturday 11 November: Snorkel Cave, Littondale.

Meet at Giant's Graves (limited parking, please car-share where possible) SD 8559 7331 Leader Gordon Haycock.

A limestone odyssey in this very special place in Yorkshire Dales with the opportunity to admire *Zygodon gracilis* at its most accessible station in UK. Please come prepared for a good hike and unpredictable Dales weather!

NORTHWESTERN NATURALISTS' UNION – VASCULAR PLANT SECTION

Contact: David Earl - david.earl@talktalk.net

NORTH WEST FUNGUS GROUP

Bring strong footwear. Details about terrain and accessibility of sites can be obtained from the foray leader. Forays start at promptly at **10.30 a.m.**(or at 10.00 after the clocks have gone back) - and continue into the afternoon with a pause for refreshments over lunchtime. If travelling a considerable distance please confirm with the leader that the foray is taking place, Beginners are welcome at ALL forays. Please note that forays may not be suitable for very small children. **No DOGS.**

Saturday 25 February : AGM : Risley Moss Reserve

Followed by a talk by Geoffrey Kibby - "Whatever happened to Boletus? - how one genus turned into 23!" Warrington WA3 6QS SJ664920 (Sheet 109).

Saturday 25 March : frdbi.info recording-training day; Risley Moss Reserve

led by Stuart Skeates 10.30 into afternoon; bring packed lunch; bring lap top, if available, to be able to be signed up with password and explore website. NWFG members will have first priority.

Sunday 9 April : Ainsdale NNR, PR8 3QW

Meet at car park at Reserve Manager's Office SD303112 (sheet 108) Leader - Tony Carter (0151-724-4600).

Sunday 21 May : Rostherne Mere,WA16 6SB

SJ743833 (Sheet 109); Leader - Tim Rogers (07890949997).

Sunday 18 June : Moor Piece NR, Bashall Eaves, BB7 3DA

SD696434 (Sheet 103) Leader - Irene Ridge (01254-247274).

Sunday 16 July : Smithills Hall Woods, Bolton BN1 7NP

SD699 119,(Sheet 109). Cafe and toilets on site. Leader – John Watt (07768 043 461).

Sunday 13 August - Hay Bridge Nature Reserve, Low Hay Bridge, Bouth, Ulverston, LA12 8JG

SD336876 (Sheet 97). Leader - Mike Hall (015242-76460).

Sunday 20 August : Microscope Workshop and Beginners Foray.

Risley Moss, nr Warrington WA3 6QS

A morning foray will be followed by an afternoon microscope workshop. Details and bookings to be made with Irene Ridge (01254 247274).

Sunday 3 September : Beginners' Foray at Moore NR, Lapwing Lane, Warrington. WA4 6XE

SJ578855 (Sheet 108). Leader- Paul Hamlyn (0161-434-1401).

Sunday 17 September – Dibbinsdale, CH62 2BJ

Meet at Woodslee Cottages. SJ346828 (Sheet 108)

Leader – Jeanette Maddy (07548 838946).

Sunday 24 September : Clock Face Colliery Country Park, Bold, St. Helens, WA9 4SN

Meet 10.30 at Gorse Lane Car Park. SD 535915 (Sheet 108).

Leader – Tom Ferguson (01744 739774 / 07743 509671).

Friday 29 Sept to Monday 2 October : Residential Foray at Keswick Convention Centre

Cost to be announced. Contact Irene Ridge (01254-247274).

7 / 8 October : National Fungus Day

Events at <http://www.ukfungusday.co.uk/>

Sunday 15 October : Lyme Park, Disley, Stockport

Meet in car park 200 yards from house; SJ962824 (Sheet 109) By road: Entrance on A6 only. SatNav: Use **SK12 2NR** and stay on A6. Ignore any directions other than those to the A6 entrance. By train - Disley ½ mile from entrance. The house, garden & car park are about one mile from main gate.

Leader - Jeanette Maddy (07548 838946).

Sunday 22 October : Wigan Flashes Nature Reserve

Meet at Welham Road entrance SD579032 (Sheet108/Explorer 285).

Leader - Christopher Bowden (01772 812910/07597 921981).

Sunday 29 October : Lytham Hall, FY8 4JX

Meet SD 3592864 (Sheet 102). Leader – Irene Ridge (07484 242523).

Sunday 5 November : Turn Slack Clough, Littleborough

Meet Clough. SD935173 (Sheet 109) (OL15 9JZ).

Leader - Norman Bamforth (0161-336-3914).

Sunday 12 November : Raven Meols Hills, Formby –

(SD275065) Leader – Tony Carter (0151-724-4600)

OLDHAM MICROSCOPICAL & NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY

Meetings at Werneth Centre, Oldham, at 7.30 pm for more information call Jack Slater 0161 626 9311

PRESTON BIRD WATCHING AND NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY

Meetings at St. Mary's Church Hall, Cop Lane, Penwortham.

All enquiries should be made to Kayleigh Roebuck and Dan Hampson, who can be contacted on prestonwildlife@gmail.com or on 07713 975321. www.prestonsociety.co.uk

There is a charge of £2.00 on the door for any visitors.

Monday 23 January : Mammal & Birds of Yellowstone & Teton National Parks

Howard Phillips

Monday 30 January : Mosquitoes : Malaria and Dengue fever and the risk of invasive Mosquito species to the UK

Dr Clare Strode

Saturday 4 February : Inskip, Blue Moor

SD464374, PR4 0UB Carr House Green Common. Park at The Derby Arms, 10.00 am.

Packed lunch required. Flat walk

Monday 6 February : The End -Triassic mass extinction: what went extinct and why?

Dr. Alex Dunhill

Monday 13 February : Members' Presentations

Monday 20 February : Marine Conservation

Joe Moulton

Monday 27 February : Geographical Travels in Peru

Andy Hall

Saturday 4 March : Freckleton Marsh, Pool Lane

SD434286, PR4 1RA Freckleton Naze Park at The Ship, 10.00 am Packed lunch

required. Flat walk.

Monday 6 March: Priory Meadows Reserve

Geoff Wilkinson

Monday 13 March : Alpine Flowers

Irene Ridge

Monday 20 March : Wandering in Wales

Maurice Steele

Monday 27 March : India & Sri Lanka Wildlife

Ian Newton

Saturday 22 April : Saltholme RSPB

Coach Trip - Pick up and park on Kingsway Packed lunch required

1 to 5 May : Cambridge

5 Day Coach Holiday

Monday 8 May : White Coppice

SD617191, PR6 9DF Park on Access Track (Cuckoo Walk) 10.00 am

Monday 15 May : Houghton, Pleasington

SD621268, PR5 0SAPark at the top of Chapel Lane opposite chapel and just over railway, 10.00 am

Saturday 20 May : Borrowdale, Howgills

NY606014, CA10 3XT Park in the car park at the east end of Borrowdale.

Meet in Tebay Village at 9.30 am, NY617047 CA10 3TW Packed lunch required. Some climbing.

Monday 22 May : Wrea Green, Moss Side

SD396313, PR4 2NNWrea Green. Park on south side of the Green, 10.00 am

Saturday 27 May : Jenny Browns Point, Jack Scout

SD475737, LA5 9RZPark at The Allen Pools car park near Leighton Moss RSPB

10.00 am Packed lunch required. Some climbing.

Monday 29 May : Tockholes, Stepback Wood

SD665215, BB3 0PAPark in the West Pennine Moors car park adjacent to The Royal PH 10.00 am Some climbing

Saturday 3 June : St Michael's, The Moss to North

SD462409, PR3 0UOSt Michael's and Pilling Water. Park at The Village Hall

10.00 am Packed lunch required. Flat Walk

Monday 5 June : Twenty Acre Lane, Moss Lane

SD500217, PR26 9AZ Cocker Bar. Twenty Acre Lane. Moss Lane. Park at Cocker Bar Bridge. Meet at The Dunkirk Hall PH. 7.00 pm SD523218 PR26 7SW

Monday 12 June : Hesketh Out Marsh, RSPB

SD422251, PR4 6XP 7.00 pm

Saturday 17 June : Torver Common

SD279938, LA21 8BS M6 then leave at Junction 36. After 5 miles left onto A590. Meet at Gilpin Bridge PH SD471854 LA8 8EP at 9.15 am, then drive in convoy. Packed lunch required. Some climbing

Monday 19 June : Horrocks Wood, Bolton

SD693129, BL1 7NYMeet at The Jolly Crofters PH SD658129 BL6 6QS on Chorley Old Road Horwich. B6226. 7.00 pm Some climbing

Saturday 24 June : Barbondale

SD629824, LA6 2LJPark in the middle of Barbon Village. Meet at Forton Services 9.15 am, Packed lunch required. Some climbing.

Monday 26 June : Brinscall, Withnell Moor

SD628214, PR6 8QRPark at Brinscall Baths. Withnell Moor. Solomon's Temple 7.00 pm Some climbing

Saturday 1 July : Ingleborough NNR

SD772779, LA6 3JF Meet at Forton Services at 09.00 and drive in convoy to Ingleton then Colt Park Reserve Base to meet Colin Newlands, Senior Reserve Manager. Packed lunch required. Some climbing

Monday 3 July : Dean Clough Reservoir

SD706327, BB6 8DS Dean Clough Reservoir. Park on York Road junction from Blackburn & Parsonage Road Wilpshire, 7.00 pm. Some climbing

Monday 10 July : Anglezarke Reservoir Woodlands

SD619163, PR6 9DQ Anglezarke. Park at top of quarry at viewpoint, 7.00 pm

Saturday 15 July : Smardale Nature Reserve

Coach trip pick up and park at St Mary's Church Hall on Cop Lane. Packed lunch required.

Monday 17 July : Jeffery Hill

SD640402, PR3 2TT Park in rough layby opposite Cardwell House, 7.00 pm. Some climbing

Monday 24 July : Bretherton Moss

SD484205, PR26 9AE Park at The Blue Anchor PH. Bretherton, 7.00 pm

Monday 31st July : Rufford, Mawdesley Moss

SD461155, L40 1SB Park at The Hesketh Arms. Rufford just off the A59 7.00 pm
From Preston follow the A59 south for 20 miles

Monday 7 August : Samlesbury, Balderstone

SD618312, BB2 7LE Park adjacent to The Myerscough Smithy PH, 7.00 pm

Monday 14th August : Much Hoole, River Douglas

SD463223, PR4 5JQ Park at Much Hoole Parish Church, 7.00 pm

Monday 21 August : Belmont, Hordern Pasture

SD665158, BL7 8BA Park in viewpoint car park at top portion of Rivington Road overlooking Hordern Pasture, 7.00 pm

4 to 8 September : 5 day trip to Berwick on Tweed

Arrange own transport and accommodation. Information on Society website

Saturday 23 September : Wigglesworth, River Ribble

SD810569, BD2 4RJ Long Preston Floodplain Project. Park at Wigglesworth, 10.00 am
Packed lunch required.

ROCHDALE FIELD NATURALISTS' SOCIETY

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.

Enquiries: 01706 630707 and 814884. Charges: Members £2.00, Non-members £3.00.

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 – Joan Carter Secretary 01706 524255 /
secretary@rochdalefieldnaturalists.co.uk

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

*May be extra charges at these venues

Thursday 9 February: Amazon Expedition into Peru and Bolivia

Brian White

Thursday 9 March : Bumble Bees of the Yorkshire Dales

Tanya St Pierre

Saturday 11 March : Hartington, Derbyshire – coach trip

Pamela Jackson

Wednesday 25 March : Hollingworth Lake – car trip

Adam Clayton

Thursday 6 April : Members' Night

Saturday 8 April : Brimham Rocks to Pateley Bridge, North Yorkshire – coach trip

Sonia Allen

Saturday 22 April Lunt Meadows, Crosby: car trip

Laura Ettrick

Saturday 13 April : Pocklington Canal, Yorkshire – coach trip

Pam & Roger Crofts

Saturday 27 May : Wigan Wetlands, LWT Reserve – car trip

Sonia Allen

Saturday 10 June : Gait Barrows, NNR, Silverdale – coach trip

Jan Kidd & Pamela Jackson

Saturday 24 June : Deeply Vale Wetland – car trip

Pamela Jackson

Saturday 15 July : Ainsdale, NNR – coach trip

Linda Turner

Saturday 29 July : Broadhead Clough YWT Reserve – car trip

Charles Flynn

Saturday 12 August: Grassington, Yorkshire Dales National Park – coach trip

John & Shirley Hall

Saturday 26 August : t.b.c.

Thursday 14 September : AGM and presentation

Saturday 16 September : Stainforth, Ribblesdale – coach trip

Rick & Karen Cowley

Saturday 30 September : Seven Acres LNR, Bolton – car trip

Sheila Carr

Saturday 14 October : Spurn Point, YWT Reserve – coach trip 8am start

Rick & Karen Cowley

Saturday 28 October : Mere Sands Wood, LWT Reserve – car trip

Peter & Dinah Francis

Saturday 11 November : Saltholme RSPB reserve*, Teesdale – coach trip

Kath Smycki

Saturday 25 November : Sabden, Pendle – car trip

Derek Clutterbuck

Saturday 16 December : Potteric Carr, YWT Reserve*,

Peter & Dinah Francis

SADDLEWORTH NATURALISTS

Indoor meetings are held at 7.30 pm at Saddleworth Conservative Club, 75 High Street, Uppermill OL3 6AP.

To assist with venue costs and speakers' expenses a small collection will be made - suggested donations: £2.00 for members, £2.50 for non-members. Guests are welcome - please introduce yourself at the start of the meeting.

More details at <http://www.oldham-wildlife-link.org.uk/saddleworth/>

WEST LANCASHIRE WILDLIFE

Meetings are held in Room B003 in the Business School Building, Edge Hill University, St Helen's Road, Ormskirk, L39 4QP. Please note that you can park in the car parks A & B in front of the main university buildings, and walk to the Business School Building. Please arrive by 19.15 for a prompt 19.30 start. Admission charge (including refreshments): £1.50 members, £2.50 non-members. More details at www.westlancswildlife.org.uk. or contact 01704 83538.

Wednesday 15 February : The Natterjack Toad

Phil Smith

Wednesday 15 March : Beavers

Elsbeth Ingleby

Wednesday 19 April : Members Evening

WILMSLOW GUILD NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY

Indoor meetings held at Wilmslow Guild, 1 Brown Street at 7.45 pm. Visitors welcome to indoor meetings (£3.00) & field-trips (free).

Contact Roy Beacham (secretary) for further information on 01606 891957
rybeacham@aol.com