
FIELD NOTES



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NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY
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Publication fund for 'Flora of Hertfordshire' off to a flying start.

Plans to publish the next HNHS book 'Flora of Hertfordshire' have received a real boost thanks to very generous donations from two HNHS members, but more funds are needed before we can go ahead. **See page 2.**



Pasque Flower – Hertfordshire's 'County Flower', to feature on the cover of the forthcoming 'Flora'. Photo taken at Therfield Heath on 5 April 2009 by Steve Chilton

New HNHS website goes live

Have a look at our fantastic new website at www.hnhs.org which goes live in mid-April. It has been built by specialists Digital Routes to a design by Jack Fearnside of LTD Design Consultants. We aim to keep it up to date with information and news including the Wildlife Calendar of meetings of local natural history interest. The site is also a showcase for photographs of Hertfordshire's wildlife and habitats, changing on a seasonal basis. So please keep those photos coming in to Jack.

Digital Routes are now building the new site for the Herts Bird Club which should go live in a few weeks and will have the facility for online record submission. Once this has been established for bird records we will extend the facility to other wildlife groups.

Balls Wood Saved!

On 1st April Herts & Middx Wildlife Trust announced that its campaign to save Balls Wood had been successful. We are delighted that the Trust has secured a future for this 145 acre (58 ha) woodland - at risk of sale. Balls Wood is particularly noted for its butterfly populations and supports diverse wildlife. When the Forestry Commission decided to sell it last year, HMWT was given first option to buy, but it has been a real challenge over the last ten months for HMWT to raise the money.

The Trust's campaign focused not only on the need to save the wood in its own right but also on its importance as one of a (broken) chain of woodlands that stretch from the Lee Valley to the M25 at Potters Bar. A key link in the chain, Broxbourne Woods National Nature Reserve is a Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and a SSSI. The chain also includes 228 Local Wildlife Sites, four Wildlife Trust Reserves (Fir and Pond Woods, Danemead, Gobions Wood and Balls Wood) and Northaw Great Wood SSSI. This chain of woodland has enormous potential to become linked once more through acquisition, joint management and support. Overall, the area is 96.7 sq. km (37.33 sq miles).

Over ten months the Trust mobilised support from local people and organisations to raise the £130,000 necessary to unlock grants for the additional money needed to buy the wood. This has now proved successful and the rest of the purchase price has been funded by Natural England through Defra's Aggregates Levy Sustainability Fund and Lafarge Aggregates through the Landfill Communities Fund administered by Groundwork Hertfordshire. Hertfordshire County Council contributed funds

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essential to release the money from the Landfill Communities Fund, and a number of charitable trusts also made significant contributions.

HMWT Chief Executive Judy Adams says: "We have been staggered by the response from our supporters. Our thanks go to all our contributors for helping us safeguard this wonderful woodland for future generations of both people and wildlife."



Now that HMWT has the opportunity to manage the whole site, including Hobbyhorse Wood, it will aim to restore and create new habitat to encourage wildlife to move between it and neighbouring Hertford Heath and nearby Broxbourne Woods. Balls Wood has the potential to become a 'wildlife corridor', providing a wider area for species to inhabit and offering them better chances of survival.

Clare Gray, HMWT

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'Flora of Hertfordshire' publication fund gets off to a flying start.

Plans to publish the next HNHS book '*Flora of Hertfordshire*' have received a real boost thanks to very generous donations from two HNHS members: Sylvia Kingsbury and Vernon Taylor, although more funds are needed before we can go ahead.

Members of the HNHS Management Committee agreed at their meeting in February to proceed with publication of the book provided external funding can be secured to underpin the costs of production. The target is £15,000. Building on the experience of *The Moths of Hertfordshire*, the Committee estimate that at least £38,000 will be needed to publish and distribute the *Flora*. Only a proportion of these costs will be recoverable through sales of the book.

Launching the fund raising appeal, Linda Smith said:

'Publication of the Flora will be a fantastic achievement for the Society. It will be the culmination of 25 years of careful survey work by a dedicated team of plant enthusiasts. Sylvia Kingsbury and Vernon Taylor have shown the way with their generous donations towards the funding of the Flora, We hope others will give what they can to enable the project to go ahead. For the Moths book, corporate sponsorship was important but individual donations ranging from £50 to £1000 made all the difference to the viability of the project'

Author, Trevor James has now completed the main text for the *Flora* and designer, Jack Fearnside has started work on the styles for the page layouts.

The book will cover over 2000 species of vascular plants and hybrids recorded in Hertfordshire based on a countywide survey from 1987-2005 by HNHS and other volunteers. The species accounts will include distribution maps by tetrad, analysis of status, and comparison with information from '*The Flora of Hertfordshire*' by John Dony, published in 1967.

There will also be introductory sections setting the scene describing the history of botanical recording, Hertfordshire's physical make up – geology, soils, climate and hydrology, the history of our natural landscape; Hertfordshire's wild plant habitats, their ecology and changing flora. Appendices will cover a Hertfordshire Plant Red Data List, a selected bibliography and sources and a Gazetteer of localities and sites named in the text.

To donate to the *Flora* fund send your cheque, payable to 'HNHS', to Linda Smith, HNHS Secretary, 24 Mandeville Rise, Welwyn Garden City, AL8 7JU, or give on-line at www.justgiving.com. Donations are eligible for GiftAid which increases the value by over 20%.

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Buried natural history treasures – the HNHS book collection at UCL

The 200th anniversary of Charles Darwin's birth and the 150th of *The Origin of Species* coincide with completion of the cataloguing of the Hertfordshire Natural History Society collection, which the Society deposited at University College London in 1935.

The HNHS collection comprises 1300 items published mostly in English, with publication dates going back to 1671. It reflects the widest definition of 'natural history', including not only the study of living plants and animals, their

ecosystems, habitats and distribution but also the study of all the components of the natural world including palaeontology, geology and even meteorology. Its coverage ranges from the general (elementary meteorology, plant and

animal classification and nomenclature) to the national (the history of British butterflies, grasses in Scotland) and the local (Gilbert White's '*Natural History of Selborne*', flora of Herefordshire).

Much of the collection, particularly the serials (journals), consists of the records of local natural history societies – largely comprising amateur naturalists – from the 17th century to the late 20th, and includes painstakingly observed and listed inventories of local flora and fauna as well as meteorological data. This makes them a valuable record of the changing distribution patterns of plants, animals and local climate in the UK since 1671 (though most are late 19th century works).

The collection also contains the records of field clubs, whose areas of interest extend to archaeology and local history, and parts of it provide a visual feast. The camera did not exist during these early years so the skill of illustration was extremely important in establishing what the flora and fauna looked like for members who needed to know what they were looking for and make an accurate count. The resulting woodcuts, copperplates and watercolours are extremely impressive, both as records of living wildlife and as works of art in their own right.

To browse the collection in the new electronic catalogue, link to the library web page www.ucl.ac.uk/library. To access the catalogue directly, the URL is <http://library.ucl.ac.uk/F?RN=276893535>. Searching 'HNHS' brings up the collection. A basic description is at: <http://www.ucl.ac.uk/Library/special-coll/herts.shtml>.

Note: the HNHS collection was established in 1884 and is based on the private library of A. Pryor and other founder members of the Society. It is kept in special environmentally controlled storage at UCL under a reciprocal arrangement with no charge on either side. HNHS members may visit and consult the collection by appointment with the librarian.

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Gower Street, London, WC1E 6BT
Tel: 020 7679 5154
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HNHS 1875 Award

We are delighted that the Society's inaugural 1875 Award was presented to Colin Plant at the AGM for his outstanding contribution to natural history in Hertfordshire. Colin, who has been our County Recorder for Moths for over ten years, is the author of the impressive HNHS book: '*The Moths of Hertfordshire*' published last July.

The name of the award commemorates the founding of the Society in 1875. The hunt is now on for nominations for the 2009 awards

As announced at the AGM, up to two awards will be given each year to recognise:

- an outstanding Hertfordshire naturalist and/or
- someone who has made an outstanding contribution to natural history in Hertfordshire.

Those nominated for awards will be judged against the following criteria:-

- Contribution in a voluntary capacity.
- Recognised expertise in their field.
- Duration of contribution.
- Key achievements, e.g. publications, papers.
- Training or educating others.
- Championing conservation and natural history.

Nominees should normally be HNHS members.

The HNHS Management Committee will assess nominations and make the final decision. The Awards will be presented at the HNHS AGM and Autumn meeting in November.

Nominations for the 2009 Award by 30 May

Please submit your nominations by 30th May 2009 to **Tim Hill, 2 Crosthwaite Court, Stewart Road, Harpenden AL5 4RN**. A nomination form is available from the Secretary or can be downloaded from the HNHS website.

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HNHS Autumn Conference and AGM

Over 70 people attended our autumn conference at Rothamstead in November. We would like to thank Tim Hill for organising another successful event. Well illustrated talks by county experts highlighted surveying, monitoring and recording in Hertfordshire. Speakers included, Sarah Jane Scott on the impact of riparian habitat quality on bats; Ronni Edmonds-Brown on breeding White Clawed Crayfish and John Murray on monitoring and managing butterfly and insect populations in Hertfordshire.

Preceding the AGM, when the existing members of the HNHS Management Committee were re-elected for a further term, was a special event. HNHS Chair, Peter Delaloye, presented County Moth Recorder, Colin Plant with the inaugural 1875 Award for an outstanding Hertfordshire Naturalist (see the news item above) and Michael Clark was made an Honorary Member of the Society in recognition of his significant contribution to the Society over many years.

New Honorary Member Michael Clark writes:

Please pass on my sincere thanks to the Society for so kindly reviving the Honorary Membership category for me, which is a very unexpected and generous gesture. I was also touched by Chairman Peter's kind words, but although we had a crisis of management at the time I took over as Chairman in 2002, years after already doing two terms of office, and long after I should have been put out to grass, the team of volunteers who manage the Society were the real achievers, and look what a wonderful success they have made of things. As I briefly said in my response to Peter on stage, the publication of the latest books by the Society reflects the enormous contribution it is making to help record the natural history of the county. There can be few, if any, counties with such a well-documented natural history. I was also gratified to return to my seat with good-natured grumbles all round about the rest of the members having to pay for my subscription in future. At least we have never lost our appreciation of fun in the Society, and long may it keep its sense of proportion in all matters. Thank you, once again, for this touching gift. Michael Clark

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Herts Bird Club/BTO conference

A heady mix of alien species, mysteriously disappearing birds and surprises in city streets enthralled the audience of over 100 at the annual Bird Club Conference. The afternoon started with John Tayleur from the BTO on Parakeets in Great Britain, the potential impacts of these colourful invaders, and the question should we be pleased or concerned. Chris Orsman RSPB described the decline of the urban House Sparrow and his research to discover the causes and potential conservation measures. Joan Thompson highlighted the fantastic birds we saw or missed in 2008 and Chris Dee reviewed progress with the Herts Atlas one year into the project.

Finally David Lindo, the Urban Birder and presenter on BBC1's 'The One Show' gave a

personal account of his love for birds and how to make the most of city birdwatching.



David Lindo – the Urban Birder with Herts Bird Club chairman Ken Smith, photo by Tim Hill

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Recording and recorders

Just some brief notes: recently we announced that we had a new combined Crustacea and Fish recorder. However, we are now pleased to reveal that we do actually have an extra person, Tom Grayling, to take on the rather daunting task of reviving fish recording in the County. He works appropriately enough, in the Fisheries Division at the Environment Agency, 2 Bishops Square, St. Albans Rd. West, Hatfield, AL10 9EX (e:mail: tom.grayling@environment-agency.gov.uk). The Agency already holds a large amount of data on the fish in Herts main rivers, but there is little data on the smaller streams, let alone lakes, ponds, pits etc. He would no doubt welcome some help!

At the same time, though, we have unfortunately lost the good offices of John Widgery, who has moved to Gloucestershire and was Recorder for both Orthoptera (grasshoppers etc.) and Heteroptera (terrestrial bugs) for a long time: John - you are missed!.

The Orthoptera, in particular, is a gap that needs filling quite urgently, because nationally the Orthoptera Recording Scheme has just launched a new website, and on-line recording, so it needs someone keen locally to co-ordinate field work and get to know the County's species, at a time when climate change is getting things interesting. Contact Ronni Edmonds-Brown if you think you can help! Likewise, we are still looking for someone with both energy and enthusiasm, as well as some skills with databases etc., to take on the Dragonfly Recorder role. Again, nationally, there is a lot going on – so you are needed! Don't be shy!

The full list of Hertfordshire County Wildlife Recorders and their contact details is on the HNHS website at www.hnhs.org.

Trevor James

Obituary: Jeremy Boswell 1930–2008.

It is with sadness that we have to report the death of HNHS member Jeremy Boswell in late December last year.

Jeremy held a lifelong interest in birds which developed during his teenage years when his parents lived near Shoeburyness. Indeed school holidays on that coastline were to initiate his two abiding interests, those of birds and boats.

Jeremy also had a talent for writing and it was his first job, as a reporter for the local newspaper, the Southend Standard, in 1948, which set him on a career path in journalism. Most of his business life was spent working for Glaxo, now GlaxoSmithkline, but he had a break between 1964-66 when he spent two years with the RSPB at Sandy. There he reformatted 'Bird Notes' producing the 'Birds' magazine that we all know today.

Jeremy moved to Berkhamsted and Hertfordshire in 1971 commuting to London until he retired in 1992. By the end of his career he was editing an international staff magazine, Glaxo World, which won several national awards, and led to Jeremy being elected a Fellow of his trade association, the British Association of Industrial Editors.

In retirement Jeremy returned to his interests. His Herts Bird Club/BTO Waterways Survey 'plot' was the stretch of the Grand Union Canal, and adjacent Bulbourne stream, between Berkhamsted and Hemel Hempstead. Jeremy recorded this plot from 1992 to 1997, when ill health curtailed his walking. New knees gave him an extra lease of life, but not enough mobility to continue his survey work. He later suffered kidney failure and required dialysis from 2000.

Jeremy's wife, Hilda, suffered a serious stroke some 6 months before Jeremy died, but was well enough to attend the funeral. We extend our condolences to Hilda and to their son, Tim.

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News notes from Herts BRC

Herts Biological Records Centre is pleased to announce the arrival of a new staff member, Ian Carle. Ian, a keen lichenologist as well as something of an expert with data and computers, has worked in a number of local records centres before and will be strengthening the HBRC's capacity to help Hertfordshire's naturalists with the task of mobilising and managing data. In this role we are particularly pleased to note that he will be guided by a new development group that has HNHS (represented by Ken Smith) at the core. Other key developments with HBRC include:

- new partnership projects with Natural England related to mapping the county's wetland habitats, improving regional biodiversity opportunity mapping, and uploading data to the National Biodiversity Network
- scanning of all of our site files to create a secure backup copy and make some aspects of work easier; and
- continuing support to the National Federation for Biological Recording and the embryonic Association of Local Environmental Records Centres.

HBRC would like to remind everyone that we like getting records! Not getting swamped, but getting information about core species or fascinating studies that we can hold a) as a record of the county's natural history and b) to make sure they get taken into account whenever someone proposes some new kind of damage to the wildlife we all care about.

Simon Odell, Head of Biological Records Centre & Landscape Services, Land Management Group, Herts County Council

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Another 'new' Nature Reserve

Herts and Middlesex Wildlife Trust has recently taken over ownership of Gobions Wood, at Brookmans Park. The handover of the 45 ha wood took place in March after five years working alongside the Gobions Woodland Trust. Their Trustees had been anxious to secure the reserve's long term future, and saw the potential for getting the site formally and fully included in HMWT's register of nature reserves. Gobions Wood has long held an important place in the hearts of the people of Brookmans Park, Potters Bar and surrounding areas. Indeed in 1986 GWT, supported by local people, saved the woodland and adjoining pasture from the very imminent danger of development. The reserve consists mostly of ancient woodland and includes the remains of the 18th century pleasure gardens of Gubbins House, designed by Charles Bridgeman, Royal Gardner to George II. It contains a surprisingly wide range of tree species including some fine examples of Giant Sequoia. The woodland is also renowned locally for its display of bluebells and wood anemones in April.

Material for the next issue of Field Notes should be sent to the Editor by 15th October 2009

THE HERTFORDSHIRE WILDLIFE CALENDAR

April – November 2009

Compiled by the Hertfordshire Natural History Society (HNHS) on behalf of natural history organisations in Hertfordshire.

Visitors (non-members) are welcome at all the meetings listed, the notes indicate where a charge or donation is requested.

For field meetings please wear appropriate outdoor clothing and shoes, take field guides and binoculars if you have them.

HNHS cannot accept any responsibility for details of other organisations' meetings included in this list and you may wish to contact the relevant organisation beforehand in case of any last minute changes.

SAT 18 APRIL: BALLS WOOD N.R. for spring flowers and birds. Morning walk, 3 miles. Meet 10.00 am in The Roundings, Hertford Heath (beside The College Arms SG13 7PW) [TL 351108]. Leader: June Crew. CNHS

SAT 25 APRIL: ASHRIDGE for bluebells. Meet at car park opposite Dockey Wood, Ashridge (SP975147) at 10.00 am Leader: Mike Demidecki (Tel: 01442 823514). Bring packed lunch. BNA

SUN 26 APRIL: HITCH WOOD, bluebell walk. Meet at car park near Hitch Wood [TL198239], 10.30 am Approx 2 km walk to Whitwell - optional pub lunch and return via Stagenhoe. Donation £2.00 per person requested. HMWT (NH)

SUN 26 APRIL: PRYOR'S WOOD Nr STEVENAGE, for bluebells etc. Meet in Gresley Way, Stevenage by the wood [TL266262], 10.00 am, led by Wardens. Donation £2.00 each requested, booking essential, phone HMWT on 01727 858901 HMWT

TUES 28 APRIL: AYOT St PETER, for Seven Springs Bluebell Wood walk. Meet: Ayot St Peter Church [TL218150], 6.30 pm, donation £2. HMWT (WH)

SAT 9 MAY: WATERFORD HEATH, for Grizzled Skippers etc. Meet at car park, Vicarage Lane [TL317150], 10.00 am, finish 12.00 approx. Contact: Andrew Middleton (020 8245 0847) BC

SAT 9 MAY: KING'S MEADS, for dragonflies and Water Violet. Meet: Meet car park, off Hertford-Ware Road, by industrial units, adjacent to flyover [TL347135], 10.00 am Leader: Alan Reynolds. Optional afternoon visit to Scott's Grotto, Ware (bring torch). Recommended donation: £2. HMWT (WH)

SUN 10 MAY: ASHWELL QUARRY N.R. OPEN DAY for chalk flowers, insects and birds. Visiting times between 12.00 and 16.00 pm Stay as long as you want. Car park in Loves Lane, near reserve [TL253397]. Potential for self-guided walks in nearby area in addition. BNA

SUN 10 MAY: ALDBURY NOWERS, for spring butterflies. Meet at lay-by, Northfield Road [SP949128], 2.00 pm Alternative car park at Tring Station, 600m away. Leader: Malcolm Hull (01727 857893). Note: steep slopes BC

TUES 12 MAY: TRING PARK, butterfly walk, for Dinky and Grizzled Skipper and Green Hairstreak Meet entrance to Tring Park from Ridgeway, Fox Road, Wigginton [SP 934105], 11.00 am, finish 1.00 pm Car parking in Park. With Countryside Management Service (contact: 01727 848168). Note: steep slopes. BC

SAT 16 MAY: HIGHFIELD PARK, ST ALBANS, for moth night and barbecue. Meet: at car park off Highfield Road [TL 179062], 9.00 pm Free car parking at Highfield Centre, nearby. Leader: Andrew Wood. For info: John Ely, Highfield Park Trust (Tues-Thurs., 9.00-16.00) (01727 847242) (admin@highfieldparktrust.co.uk) BC

SUN 17 MAY: HUNSDON MEAD for meadow flowers. Meet at Roydon Station car park - off B181 [TL416105], 10.30 am Walk along River Stort Navigation to Hunsdon Mead. Donation £2.00 per person requested. HMWT (NH)

WED 20 MAY: BALLS WOOD, Herb Paris walk. Meet on the green next to the College Arms pub, Hertford Heath [TL352109], 6.30 pm Approx 2 hrs. Leader: Andy Brown (HMWT) donation £2.00 per person requested. Booking essential - phone HMWT on 01727 858901 HMWT

WED 20 MAY: WELWYN. 'Wildlife on National Trust reserves': talk by Stuart Warrington. Meet: at the The Civic Centre, Prospect Place Welwyn [TL232160], 8.00 pm Visitors welcome: £2. WNHS

FRI 22 MAY: LEA VALLEY PARK for migrant birds and flowers. Morning walk. Meet 10.00 am in Fishers Green car park, Stubbins Hall Lane, EN9 2EF, a turn off from Crooked Mile (B194). [TL 377032] Leader: June Crew. CNHS

SAT 23 MAY: PEGSDON HILLS & TELEGRAPH HILL for chalkland flora. Meet near Pegsdon village [TL120303] at 10.00 am Leader: Trevor James (Tel: 01462 742684). Bring packed lunch, hand lenses, field guides etc. This will be a recording day. Joint with Herts Flora Group. BNA

TUES 26 MAY: TYTTENHANGER LAKES, for birds. Meet: Colney Heath Church [TL197062], 7.00 pm Bring binoculars. Donation, £2. HMWT (WH)

SAT 6 JUNE: KINGS MEADS, for Hairy Dragonflies & Water Violet. Meet at the Windsor Industrial Estate (on the Ware Road near the viaduct) [TL347134], 10:30 am Approx 1.5 hrs. Leader: Andy Brown (HMWT) Donation £2.00 per person requested. Sorry but no children under eight. Booking essential - phone HMWT on 01727 858901 HMWT

SAT 6 JUNE: OLD KNEBWORTH for insects. Meet at Knebworth Park Church/Cricket Club car park [TL232209] at 10.00 a.m (entrance off Old Knebworth Lane, at corner). Leader: Trevor James (Tel: 01462 742684). Bring packed lunch, field guide, bug-boxes/lenses/nets. BNA

SUN 7 JUNE: AMWELL N.R., for orchids and dragonflies. Meet: Amwell Lane [TL373124], 2.00 pm Leaders: Ellie Beach and Tim Hill (HMWT) Donation £2.00 per person requested. Sorry but no children under eight. Booking essential - phone HMWT on 01727 858901 HMWT

WED 17 JUNE: AMWELL N.R., for bats, bugs and beasties. Meet: Amwell Lane [TL 373124], 7.45 pm Approx 2 hrs. Leaders: Ellie Beach and Tim Hill (HMWT) donation £2.00 per person requested. Sorry but no children under eight. Booking essential - phone HMWT on 01727 858901. HMWT

SAT 20 JUNE: KING'S MEADS N.R. for dragonflies. Meet 10.00 am at Hartham Common Skate Park, Hertford, SG14 1QR [TL 326131]. Leader: Francis Rogers. CNHS

SUN 21 JUNE: MOOR GREEN area for grassland flowers. Meet at road verge, Moor Green, by track to Moor Hall [TL324267] at 10.00 am Leader: Graeme Smith (Tel: 01438 216438). Bring packed lunch, field guide and binoculars. BNA

SUN 21 JUNE: PEGSDON HILLS, for wild flowers. Meet in lane behind "Live & Let Live" pub on the B655 Hitchin to Barton road [TL121303], 10.30 am. Visiting Pegsdon and continuing to Hexton Chalk Pit (TL107299) - car park in village. Optional pub lunch and afternoon visit to Barton Hills, donation £2.00 per person requested. HMWT (NH)

TUES 23 JUNE: BALLS WOOD & HERTFORD HEATH, guided walk. Meet: by College Arms, Hertford Heath [TL 353108], 6.45 pm Recommended donation: £2. HMWT (WH)

WED 24 JUNE: WELWYN. 'A Heartwood Forest, Sandridge': talk by The Woodland Trust. Meet: at the Civic Centre, welwyn [TL232160], 8.00 pm Visitors welcome: £2. WNHS

FRI 3 JULY: MONK'S GREEN: GLOW-WORM WALK. For car share meet in car park south of Open Air Pool, High Street, Hoddesdon, EN11 8BE [TL 372 079]. Leader: June Crew. Bring torch. CNHS

SUN 5 JULY: BALLS WOOD & HERTFORD HEATH for butterflies. Meet by College Arms, Hertford Heath [TL351109], 10.30 am, 2 hours walk. Leader: Andrew Wood (01992 503571). Minimum donation to HMWT £2.00 per person requested. Sorry but no children under eight. Booking essential - phone HMWT on 01727 858901. HMWT/BC

TUES 7 JULY: PRESTWICK ROAD MEADOWS, OXHEY for butterflies. Meet at entrance [TQ115923],

11.00 am, finish 12.30 pm With Countryside Management Service (01727 848168) BC

THURS 9 JULY: BROXBORNE WOOD, for Purple Emperor and White Admiral butterflies. Meet at West car park [TL324071], 10.00 am onwards (casual basis). Park at East car park [TL329069]. Bring food if staying, binoculars recommended. Information: Andrew Wood (020 8245 0847) BC

SUN 12 JULY: BRICKET WOOD, for White Admiral and Silver-washed Fritillary butterflies. Meet: car park, St Stephens Parish Centre, Station Road, Bricket Wood (note new meeting place) [TL136021], 10.00 am Trains to Bricket Wood Station, 100 yards. Leader: Malcolm Hull (01727 857893). BC

SAT 18 JULY: DANEMEAD N.R., for Helleborines. Meet at Martins Green car park - off Cock Lane, near Hoddesdon [TL347078], 10.00 am Leaders: Mick Velasco & Andy Brown (HMWT). Donation £2 requested. HMWT

SAT 18 JULY: THE COMMONS N.R., WELWYN GARDEN CITY. Meet outside Commonswood School, The Commons, off Howlands, WGC, [TL257112], 10.00 am Morning walk with Peter Oakenfull. Please park along road. CNHS

SUN 19 JULY: THERFIELD HEATH, for Chalkhill Blue butterflies. Meet at Sports Centre car park, off Baldock Road, Royston [TL347406], 10.30 am. Bring picnic lunch & binoculars, distance approx. 3 kms, donation £2.00 per person HMWT (NH)

TUES 28 JULY: TEWINBURY, guided walk and group AGM. Meet: Tewinbury Farm [TL265138], 6.30 pm, wellies advisable. Leader: Robin Cole. Donation: £2. HMWT (WH)

SUN 30 JULY: CROXLEY COMMON MOOR, for butterflies. Meet by entrance, Mill Lane [TQ081951], 11.00 am, finish 1.00 pm, with Countryside Management Service (01727 848168). BC

SUN 2 AUG: HOO WOOD & JOCKEY END for summer wildlife. Meet at Great Gaddesden, park by roadside [TL028114] at 10.00 am Leader: Paula Shipway (Tel: 01296 668639). Bring packed lunch, field guide and binoculars. BNA

SAT 8 AUG: THERFIELD HEATH, for Chalkhill Blue. Meet at Sports Pavilion car park [TL347406], 11.00 am Finish 1.00 pm Leader: Sharon Hearle (Butterfly Conservation Regional Officer) BC

SUN 9 AUG: GOFF'S OAK. Meet at Goff's Oak Library, Valley View, Goff's Lane, EN7 5ET [TL324031], 9.45 am Morning walk 4 miles. Leader Pauline Bishop. Bring elevenses and plenty to drink if hot, car park is free on Sundays. CNHS

SAT 15 AUG: THE COMMONS, WELWYN GARDEN CITY for afternoon insect study/recording & moth evening. Joint with HNHS and Herts Moth Group.

Meet at The Commons, roadside [TL 258112] at 2.00 pm Leader: Merle Gwyn (Tel: 01707 651485). Bring field guides, collecting equipment, bug-boxes etc. Barbecue refreshments will be provided for those staying on. For moth evening, meet at same place 8.30 pm. If intending to come, essential to book by 10th August. BNA

SUN 16 AUG: ALDBURY NOWERS, for late summer downland butterflies, including Chalkhill Blue and Dark-green Fritillary. Meet: lay-by, Northfield Road [SP949128], 2.00 pm Alternative car park: Tring Station, 600m away. Finish 4.30 pm Leader: Malcolm Hull, (01727 857893). Note: steep slopes. BC

SUN 30 AUG: TRING RESERVOIRS for autumn birds. Meet at Startops End car park [SP919141] at 10.00 am Leaders: Merle Gwyn (Tel:01707 651485) & William Bishop (Tel: 01438 716546). NB - pay & display car park. Bring packed lunch, field guide, binoculars & car park money. BNA

SUN 13 SEPT: AMWELL NATURE RESERVE, for dragonflies and birds. Meet: Amwell Lane, 500m from station, Stanstead Abbots [TL376127], 10.00 am Bring binoculars. Donation: £2. HMWT (WH)

WED 16 SEPT: WELWYN 'Birds in Hertfordshire': talk by Brian Sawford. Meet at the Civic Centre, Prospect Place [TL232160], 8.00 pm, £2. WNHS

WED 16 SEPT: GOFF'S OAK. "My - it's getting hot; why is that?" A light-hearted look at global warming, by Edward Eastwood (University of Hertfordshire). Methodist Church Hall, Newgate Street Road, Goff's Oak Refreshments available at a small cost. £2.00. Hall, 8.00 - 10.15 pm CNHS

SUN 20 SEPT: NOMANSLAND COMMON, for Small Copper, Small Heath, and potentially Clouded Yellow butterflies. Meet: car park, Ferrer's Lane [TL171124], 2.00 pm Finish 3.30 pm. BC

TUES 22 SEPT: WELWYN GARDEN CITY. 'A Chilean encounter' a talk by Chris Ward on the birds, mammals and landscapes of Chile, from the Atacama Desert to Patagonia. Meet: at the Chapel, The Commons, WGC, 8.00 pm Entrance: £2, including coffee. HMWT (WH)

SAT 26 SEPT: NORTHAW GREAT WOOD for fungi. Meet at Northaw Great Wood car park [TL 282041] at 10.00 am Leader: Chris James, Bring packed lunch, collecting boxes etc. and field guide. BNA

SAT 27 SEPT: WHIPPENDELL WOOD, fungus foray. Meet at North car park, Grove Mill Lane [TQ080982], 10.00 am, or 1.30 pm Leader: Alan Outen. Joint with HNHS. HFG

FRI 16 OCT: BROXBORNE WOOD, for fungus foray. Meet: East car park, Pembridge Lane, EN10 7QA [TL 328069], 10.00 am Leader: June Crew. Morning meeting, up to 2 miles. CNHS

SUN 18 OCT: ASHRIDGE, Meet: Monument Ride, Ashridge, off B4506 [SP973130], 10.00 am, or 1.30 pm Leader Alan Outen and others. Joint with Bucks Fungi Group, National Trust and HNHS. HFG

WED 21 OCT: GOFF'S OAK, CNHS AGM followed by: "Wildlife of Trinidad and Tobago" by Bruce Bennett Methodist Church, Newgate Street Road, Goff's Oak. Refreshments available at a small cost. Visitors: £2.00, 8.00 - 10.15 pm. CNHS

WED 18 NOV: WELWYN. 'Woodland birds – a three year update': talk by Ken Smith, HNHS. Meet: at the Civic Centre, Prospect Place [TL232160], 8.00 pm Visitors welcome: £2. WNHS

WED 18 NOV: GOFF'S OAK "What's in a name? Why is a daisy called *Bellis perennis*?" An illustrated talk on a wide range of plants and how they are named, by Julie Floyd. Methodist Church Hall Newgate Street Road, Goff's Oak. Refreshments available at a small cost. £2.00, 8.00 p.m, and should finish before 10.15 pm. CNHS

KEY to organisations indicated above and contacts for further information:

- BC Butterfly Conservation (Herts Branch), contact: Liz Goodyear, Tel 01920 487066
- BNA British Naturalists' Association (Herts), contact the local Secretary: Chris James, Tel: 01462 742684
- CNHS Cheshunt Natural History Society, contact June Crew, Tel: 01992 465638
- HFG Herts Fungi Group, contact: Alan Outen, Tel ; 01462 811374)
- HMWT Herts & Middx Wildlife Trust (+ local groups), contact HMWT. Tel:01727 858901; Website: www.wildlifetrust.org.uk/herts/.
- WNHS Welwyn Natural History Society, contact Robin Cole, Tel: 01438-813403).

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