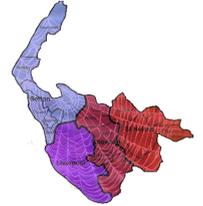


Feb/March 2016  
Issue 34



## Merseyside Nature Friends of Merseyside BioBank



**Created by and for Volunteer Naturalists. Edited by Bob Jude**

*Views expressed in this newsletter are those of individual authors.*

Phil Smith's March wildlife news from the Sefton Coast

Hugh Harris visits Fishlake Meadows, Hampshire

Tony Carter's Spring fungal survey of Freshfield and Ainsdale

Hugh Harris visits Greenbank Park, Liverpool

News from the Biodiverse Society Group

Tony da Silva images from mammal trapping at Scutchers Acre

Tony Parker looks for volunteers for the Knowsley Park mammal trapping survey

An Upcoming 2 part Butterfly Survey Course

MBAN Images

Rachael Sumner's Biodiverse Society Images

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Articles, photographs, real life stories, web links and events from active naturalists are welcome additions to this newsletter. **Please send them in.**

Stories from 250 words with accompanying photographs will take us all on your journey.

Please E-Mail your work to: [newsletter@activenaturalist.org.uk](mailto:newsletter@activenaturalist.org.uk)

**Naturalists are always welcome at MBB  
and can make use of the available library,  
equipment and facilities**



Smew (*Mergellus albellus*) at Lunt 18/4/2016 : Original photograph by Phil Collins.

## WILDLIFE NOTES MARCH 2016 - Dr Phil Smith

A fairly wet start and finish to the month were separated by a prolonged settled spell of about two weeks, rather typical of recent early springs. The dry period caused a fall of about 3.5cm in the sand-dune water-table, according to my weekly measurements at the Devil's Hole slack. However coastal wetlands remained deeply flooded throughout, attracting the usual early breeding amphibians. A visit to Wicks Lake on 10<sup>th</sup> was enriched by the gentle purring of male **Common Frogs** in the reed-bed, while more strident calls came from male **Common Toads** competing for females. Near the brim-full lake were lots of spring flowers, including the first **Primroses** and garden-escapes such as **Siberian Squill**, **Corsican Hellebore** and **Spring Snowflake**.

A couple of days later, large numbers of **Common Toads** were assembling to spawn at Cabin Hill. It was rather disturbing to count 58 individuals recently killed by a predator that had mainly eaten just the back legs. We have seen this kind of mortality at Cabin Hill before but have never been able to identify the perpetrator. It seems to be quite unusual because **Common Toads** are protected by poison glands in their skin.

On 25<sup>th</sup>, I counted 12 **Smooth Newts** in the scrape near Range Lane, Formby. These newts are common and widespread in the dunes but often hard to see because they prefer deep water at this time of year. Through my binoculars, I watched a female trying to eat **Frog** spawn, a behaviour I hadn't observed before, though it is mentioned in the literature. Also new to me was a pale blue "tide-line" around a scrape at Birkdale Green Beach. Closer inspection revealed thousands of Imm-long jewel-like **Ostracods**, a type of planktonic crustacean sometimes known as "**Seed Shrimps**".



**Ostracods**

Other signs of spring included the flowering of several kinds of willows. At Ravenmeols, the male "pussy willow" catkins of **Goat** and **Grey Willow** attracted hosts of queen bumblebees, mainly **Buff-tailed** but also a few **Red-tailed** and **Tree Bumblebees**. I also stopped off at Larkhill, Formby, to photograph the wonderfully colourful catkins of **Purple Willow**, one of my favourite plants.

Nearby, three **Red Squirrels** were showing at the National Trust's "squirrel reserve", one particularly dark individual reflecting the likely continental origin of this population. Another targeted visit was to the Southport Marine Lake dunes, where the nationally rare **Early Sand-grass** is locally abundant. Being only about 3cm tall, it is often described as "the smallest grass in the World" and also has a particularly early flowering season from February to April. Early insects included a **Small Tortoiseshell** on 7<sup>th</sup> and a black beetle I encountered on the frontal dunes at Ainsdale on 13<sup>th</sup>. I knew it was a weevil but this is an enormous family. Nevertheless, it didn't take long to identify it on the internet as the **Black Marram Weevil**, a local insect confined to dunes around the British coast.



**Black Marram Weevil**

A warm sunny Good Friday produced a **Sand Wasp** and a **Groundhopper** at Ravenmeols, while Pete Kinsella reported the first **Vernal Mining Bees** at Hightown, where he also saw three **Wheatears** and his earliest ever **Swallow**.



**Redpoll**

## WILDLIFE NOTES MARCH 2016 - Dr Phil Smith

Other birds on the move included **Crossbills** reported at several places along the coast. A mobile flock of 10 with their unmistakable chipping calls was at Freshfield Dune Heath Nature Reserve on 16<sup>th</sup>, while five **Redpolls** feeding on **Sea Rush** seeds made an attractive picture at Weld Road saltmarsh, Birkdale at the end of the month.

The **Redpoll** used to be a common bird hereabouts but has undergone a massive decline both nationally and locally since the 1970s. **Avocets** continued their spring influx to the RSPB's Marshside Nature Reserve, where I counted 60 on 14<sup>th</sup>.

Remaining winter visitors included 38 **Common Snipe** and three **Jack Snipe** at Cabin Hill, where the flock of curious and surprisingly tame **Herdwick sheep** from the Lake District strolled right up to me. This attractive and hardy breed is ideal for conservation grazing on the National Nature Reserve.

A meeting of the Altcar Training Camp Conservation Advisory Group brought news of Steve Cross's monthly counts of shorebirds for the national wetland birds survey.



**Knot** (*Calidris canutus*): Dick Daniels, WikiCommons

During the winter, up to 37,500 waders flocked to the high-tide roost on the Rifle Range frontage, **Knot** being the dominant species. This is probably the largest single wader roost from the Dee to the Ribble.

It seems many of these birds feed on the north Wirral shore, flying across Liverpool Bay at high-water to take advantage of the disturbance-free beach at Altcar.

The Sefton Coast's reputation spreads far and wide. Recently, I was contacted by the Millennium Seed Bank at Kew to request a sample of **Dune Wormwood** seed for the National Collection. Crosby Coastal Park is one of only two British localities for a plant first found here in 2004.



**Jack Snipe** (*Lymnocyptes minima*): Alastair Rae, WikiCommons



**Recording details of Common Frog** (*Rana temporaria*) at Scutchers Acre, West Lancashire: Image by Tony da Silva, Trainee Ecological Recording Officer.

## FISHLAKE MEADOWS SU3522, TEST VALLEY, HAMPSHIRE - Hugh Harris

### *Opportunities and options for site management*

The Test Valley in Hampshire is a place I have visited for the past 20 years: it is the quintessence of rural England with its rolling downs, meadows and chalk-streams. A pastoral landscape which inspired Norman Thelwell, cartoonist of plump little pony-struck Penelope and gymkhanas as well as a serious Hampshire landscape artist.



River Test, Fishlake Meadows, Andrew Macdonald, WikiCommons

**Fishlake Meadows** is situated to the north of Romsey and is approximately 60 hectares in size. The site is a rich mosaic of wildlife habitats, comprising areas of open and standing water, reedbeds, swamp and flood-plain marsh which is criss-crossed by a network of rivers and ditches.



Fishlake Meadows, Robin Baker, WikiCommons

Local planning authorities may designate areas as Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (**SINCs**) where they are known to support important habitats and species.

Hampshire County Council, through **HBIC**, identifies such sites in collaboration with the local planning authorities, Natural England, and the Hampshire Wildlife Trust. The information is collated and held by Hampshire Biodiversity Information Centre (HBIC) who survey and monitor the sites on a rolling programme each year. The designation of an area as a **SINC** means that it has a degree of protection within the planning system and also opens the way for grants to support effective management.

**SINCs**, usually found on private land, constitute an extremely valuable resource in the natural environment. The Romsey and District Society decided to survey the **SINCs** in Romsey and Romsey Extra in order to raise public awareness of this asset.

As part of planning consent and mitigation package to enable the development of 56 houses on the horse paddocks adjacent to the Barge canal at Oxlease Farm, Fishlake Meadows has been identified as a nature reserve and will be transferred to Test Valley Borough Council to manage as a nature reserve.

This presents a unique opportunity to manage a site rich in history where residents can come into contact with some of the UK's most treasured wildlife. It is a very special place and management will try and balance wildlife and public access.

### **Wildlife:**

Arguably the most outstanding feature is Fishlake's birdlife, with more than 150 species recorded so far. These numbers include 66 bird species listed as either red or amber on the birds of greatest conservation concern. Notable bird species include **Osprey** *Pandion halietus*, **Cetti's Warbler** *Cettia cetti* and **Grasshopper Warbler** *Locustella naevia*.



Cetti's Warbler *Cettia cetti*, Mark S Jobling, WikiCommons

## FISHLAKE MEADOWS SU3522, TEST VALLEY, HAMPSHIRE - Hugh Harris



**Grasshopper Warbler** *Locustella naevia*, Steve Garvie, WikiCommons

Other species including **Otter** *Lutra lutra* and **Water Vole** *Arvicola amphibius* are also resident, as well as 19 recorded species dragonfly and damselfly, and 115 recorded plant species.

Ganger Farm is an important site for arable weeds, which are a disappearing and little-recognised part of our biodiversity. There is a proposal to relocate them to another site, but we are not convinced that this will succeed. Among these are the diminutive sharp-leaved **Fluellen** *Kickxia spuria*, with tiny snap-dragon-like flowers in yellow and purple, and **Weasel's Snout** *Moenchia erecta*, another small plant with a miniature pink snapdragon flower. Arable management is essential for their survival.



**Fluellen** *Kickxia spuria*, Olivier Pitchard, WikiCommons

The wetlands have evolved as a result of the cessation of pump drainage in the 1990s. Without management the quality of habitats and diversity of wildlife which rely on them will decline over time.

Scrub will encroach on the open water areas and reed bed, and the value of the grassland to the north of the site will be diminished. A management plan will be created setting out specific ways in which the site will be managed. This will include detailing where work will take place. Operations will include scrub management, grazing using cattle and reed bed cutting.

### Access:

Fishlake Meadows presents a unique opportunity to protect an accessible natural asset on the edge of the town of Romsey. Improvements to the site could include:

- Site viewing platforms with seating to allow views into the site

- A linear permissive route to allow access into the centre of the site which could be a combination of a raised pathway and boardwalk leading to a central viewing platform promoting visual access to the wettest and most inaccessible part of the site.

- Improvement to the surface of the canal path including an upgrade to a shared walkway and cycle path development. This would offer a safe and scenic route out into the countryside.

- Longer term; a circular path using some existing and some new access routes could be created. An upgrade of the canal towpath to encourage cycling could create an off-road family friendly route from Romsey out into the countryside.

- Visitor car-parking would be located on the Oxlease Farm with direct access to the canal tow path.

- Dogs will be welcomed on the permissive path on a lead to ensure the safety of the dogs and to minimise disturbance to wildlife.

### The community

Educational access including interpretation boards viewing points and dipping platforms could be created to encourage people to learn about the site.

An education programme could be developed to encourage school groups to visit the site and learn more from knowledgeable staff.

Specific interest groups could be supported to continue to work on site.

Volunteer tasks could be organised to encourage participation and a sense of community ownership of the site, with a view to forming a Friends Group.

### And after twelve months ...?

**Sources:** Test Valley Borough Council, Romsey and District Society, Hampshire & Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust

HH@FSC

## FRESHFIELD AND AINSDALE IN THE SPRING – Tony Carter

On the 10<sup>th</sup> April, I led the foray for North West Fungus Group to Freshfield Dune Heath and Ainsdale Sand Dunes Reserve.

The main attraction in spring is the chance of finding morels. Twenty years ago, hundreds grew in the woods. But now that the woods have been reduced to recreate a dune ecosystem and following a severe blow out of frontal dunes during a gale, the number of morels has been severely reduced. I had a look round a week before the foray but saw no sign of morels.



*Geastrum pectinatum* (Beaked Earthstar)

I did find a couple of *Geastrum pectinatum* (Beaked Earthstar). The last record for this species at Ainsdale was in 1972.

The foray produced fifty species, the highlight being four groups of the **Funnel Cap**, *Clitocybe vermicularis*. This species is very rare, there being only 24 national records, most of them from Ainsdale.



*Clitocybe vermicularis* (Funnel Cap)

Only a few gilled species were found, the rest were mostly brackets, crusts or tiny Ascomycetes, which is normal for the time of year. A couple of days after the foray the Reserve Manager contacted me to tell me that he had counted 24 fresh morels on the dune slacks. Not to be missed, I persuaded a couple of colleagues to join me on an expedition out to the dune slacks to see if we could find them. Find them we did. We counted 10 fresh *Morchella elata* (Black Morel) on the back of one sand hill with others spread around the area. We also found many more *Geastrum pectinatum*, a species that seems to prefer the tops of the sand hills. The very common *Geastrum triplex* (Collared Earthstar) can also be found in hundreds all over the slacks but seems to prefer the lower levels. The other species we found in significant number was *Melanoleucea cognata* (Spring Cavalier). To be expected.



*Melanoleucea cognata* (Spring Cavalier)



*Geastrum triplex* (Collared Earthstar)



*Morchella elata* (Black Morel)

## GREENBANK PARK, LIVERPOOL - SJ 3888 - "The Philanthropist's Park" - Hugh Harris

After visiting "**Among the Wildflowers**," a collaborative experience of performances, installations and events, by LJMU Drama students, Liverpool Philharmonic Youth Orchestra and local schools, at the **National Wildflower Centre**, marking the contribution that Eleanor Rathbone made to the welfare and rescue of refugees, I decided to find out more about this inspiring lady and where she came from.

My journey started in **Greenbank Park**, a public park in Liverpool, England, with a focal point of an elegant, placid lake. It is situated in the south of the city close to the borders of Sefton Park.

The area was the former estate of the **Rathbones**, a family of nonconformist merchants and ship-owners who were known to engage in philanthropy and public service. The family acquired nearby **Greenbank House**, and made it their holiday home from 1787 and a hotbed of political and social reform. The main block is a graceful marriage of Georgian and Gothic styles, but the lace-like cast iron screen on the garden façade which forms a verandah and balcony is its most charming feature. This probably dates from about 1815 and is characteristic of the extensive use of cast iron work in Liverpool, a style which spread to the southern states of America and the colonies in Australia and New Zealand. It became their permanent residence and a venue for many distinguished visitors to Liverpool who "*had some special opinion to propagate or philanthropic scheme to advance*". The American artist John James Audubon dined with the Rathbone family at Greenback House during his visit to Liverpool in the 1820s.

**Greenbank House**, is now a Grade II-listed building and stands within the University of Liverpool's Greenback Halls of Residence site, between Greenback Road and Greenback Lane. The house still belongs to the University but its future use is uncertain. The property has been marked by an English Heritage Blue Plaque since 29 July 2001, which honours Eleanor Rathbone (1872–1946), suffragette and pioneer of the state-funded family allowance, and her father, social reformer William Rathbone VI (1819–1902), who created the first system of district nursing. The plaque was unveiled by William Rathbone X at Greenback House.

In 1897 Liverpool Corporation entered into an agreement with the Rathbone family to purchase the piece of land, part of which is now **Greenbank Park** for the sum of £13,000. The agreement required the corporation to maintain this land as open space or recreation ground for the general public, "*but they shall be at liberty to let off the whole or any part of the said land to cricket or other clubs, and to use the lake for boating, skating or other purposes*".

In case the corporation was to develop the land, they were charged with maintaining a roadway or pathway to allow public access to the lake and to prevent as far as possible the destruction of trees.



The park boasts the dual distinction of having the first of the **Old English Gardens** in Liverpool's parks, and the first **Boating Lake**.

The **walled garden** is all that remains of their estate on the park. Now laid out as an **Old English garden**, it contains a memorial tablet to the late Mr. Michael Kearney, the former Deputy Chairman of the Parks and Gardens Committee, who originated the idea of its design. This garden, once famous for its herbaceous borders, has been restored as a move to reflect its former glory.

**Greenbank Park** has a children's playground, football pitches and a fishing



pond, as well as mature trees and a **conservation area**. The pond provides the focal point within the park. Visitors are able to fish and can watch nesting

waterfowl and herons. There is a bridge at the northern end of the pond. The wet area towards this end is used as a **conservation area** and it has been proposed that following improvement works with local schools, this will become an outdoor classroom.

Among the North Merseyside Biodiversity Action Plan (NM BAP) species recorded in the park are the **Song Thrush** *Turdus philomelos*, **Bluebell** *Hyacinthoides non scripta*, **Dragonflies** *Ischura elegans*, **Bats** *Plecotus auritus*; *Myotis daubentonii*; *Nyctalus noctula*; *Pipistrellus pygmaeus* and **Red Squirrel** *Sciurus vulgaris*. Much of the area is open parkland with trees to the perimeter. The wall to the side of the children's playground is a colourful result of a local graffiti art project.

(Sources: 'Liverpool, city of architecture,' Quentin Hughes, 1999. Merseyside Biobank Biodiversity Information Report, 1839 – Greenbank, 2016 and related websites).

HH@MBAN



A Bioblitz at the Mersey Estuary Coastal Reserve is provisionally planned for the 13<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> May. Details to be confirmed following planning meeting on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of May. Further information will be available after this date.

## MAMMAL TRAPPING AT SCUTCHERS ACRE - Images courtesy Tony Da Silva.



Bank Vole (*Myodes glareolus*)



Eurasian Pygmy Shrew (*Sorex minutus*)



Field Vole (*Microtus agrestis*)

The main distinguishing feature of voles (proportionate tail length) is not visible.



Tony Parker's Small Mammal Trapping sessions at Knowsley Safari park on the last Tuesday & Wednesday of each month (26<sup>th</sup>-27<sup>th</sup> April / 24<sup>th</sup>-25<sup>th</sup> May).

*The team at Knowsley Safari Park strive to protect the species that live alongside us, both within the Knowsley Estate and in our local area. We want to enable them to thrive by ensuring we do not take them for granted and conduct our activities in a way that ensures we do not impact on their survival. By encouraging our visitors to explore and appreciate the natural world around them we hope that they will be inspired to care for the flora and fauna in their own backyards. GET INVOLVED! Alongside local experts we host events for visitors to encounter and discover more about species living in their own backyards - keep checking our events page for future announcements. <http://www.knowsleysafariexperience.co.uk/backyardspecies/>, Backyard Species, Online, 26/1/2016*

"Have arranged a number of trapping sessions at the safari park this spring and summer, will be the last week of the month probably Tuesday and Wednesday morning.. They would be happy for any other volunteers to come along, although suggest they contact me first to get some idea of numbers."

Wishing to volunteer? Contact [Tony.Parker@liverpoolmuseums.org.uk](mailto:Tony.Parker@liverpoolmuseums.org.uk)

# Butterfly Surveying 2 part course



Photo Copyright: Ami Weir

**Butterflies are valuable ecological indicators & one of the easiest groups to learn to survey with only 25 species present in N. Merseyside.**

**Many Local Wildlife Sites in N. Merseyside are cited for butterfly assemblages & we need volunteers to survey these sites again.**

**Thursday 19th May - 6 - 8pm**

**Indoor introductory session at Merseyside BioBank, Court Hey Park**

**Friday 20th May - 1 - 4pm**

**Field survey session at Festival Gardens/ Otterspool**

**Booking is essential!  
Contact Julia Simons on  
01772 324129  
[jsimons@lancswt.org.uk](mailto:jsimons@lancswt.org.uk)**

**You must be able to attend both sessions & commit to surveying at least one local wildlife site in N. Merseyside after the training**



**Protecting wildlife for the future**

The Lancashire Wildlife Trust is a registered charity (No. 229325) and a registered company (No. 731548)

## MBAN FACEBOOK IMAGES



**Green Shield Bug** in Court Hey Park (*Palomena prasina*): Image by B. Jude



**Hybrid Goldfinch**: Image by Sue Marley. Previously misnamed by editor in last issue as **Siskin**



*Andrena Clarkella* (male) in Court Hey Park: Image by B. Jude



*Melanostoma scalare* in Court Hey Park: Image by B. Jude



*Platycheirus albimanus* in Court Hey Park: Image by B. Jude



*Epistrophe elegans* in Court Hey Park: Image by B. Jude

FROM THE BIDDIVERSE SOCIETY



Top to Bottom, left to right.

Images from study project by Rachael Sumner, Trainee Biodiversity Project Officer

**Northern Dune Tiger Beetle** (*Cicindela hybrid*)

**Muscovy Duck** (*Cairina moschata*)

**Smooth Newt** (*Lissotriton vulgaris*)

**Bank Vole** (*Myodes glareolus*)

**22 Spot Ladybird** (*Psyllobora vigintiduopunctata*)

**Harlequin Ladybird** (*Harmonia axyridis*)

**Cuckoo Bee** (*Nomada leucophthalma*) stalking nest of *Andrena clarkella*

## NWFG FORAY PROGRAMME 2016(VS3) IN ASSOCIATION WITH THE BRITISH MYCOLOGICAL SOCIETY – Tony Carter

### THE NORTH WEST FUNGUS GROUP



#### About the North West Fungus Group

The North West Fungus Group is a regional *umbrella* group aiming to promote an interest in fungi across the counties of Cheshire, Lancashire, Greater Manchester, Merseyside, Cumbria and North Wales.

Benefits of membership include: two newsletters per year, forays and special events, help and advice on a range of fungi related topics.

#### Officers

**Chair:** Dr. Irene Ridge,

Smalley's Farm, Whalley Old Road, Billington  
Clitheroe, Lancashire BB7 9JF  
Tel. 01254 247274

#### **Treasurer and Membership Secretary:**

Liz Moore,  
48 Alan Road, Heaton Moor,  
Stockport, Cheshire, SK4 4LE Tel. 0161-432-9124

**Group Recorder:** Tony Carter

**Membership** Individual membership - £7.50  
Family membership - £10.00

Members joining after November 1st will receive membership for the following year.

**Please contact the Membership Secretary for a membership form.**

**NWFG Home Page:**

<http://fungus.org.uk/nwfg.htm>

### NWFG Foray Programme 2016(vs3)

**Please Note new updates**

#### In association with the British Mycological Society

Bring strong footwear. Details about terrain and accessibility of sites can be obtained by contacting the foray leader.

Most venues have their own website. Forays are planned so that they can continue into the afternoon. If you intend to so continue please bring food and drink.

If travelling a considerable distance to a foray it is advisable to confirm with the leader that the foray is taking place, as on rare occasions, forays have had to be changed at short notice esp if very dry and changes will be sent round on the email list.

Beginners are welcome at ALL forays.

**Please note that forays are not suitable for very small children.**

#### DOGS ARE NOT ALLOWED.

**Sunday 15th May** - Styal Woods, Cheshire. Nr. M/c Airport.

Meet 10.30, small National Trust car park off road by Styal Village, 600 yds past the Ship Inn on opposite side of road. SJ836836 (Sheet 109) (SK9 4JE). Leader - John Taylor (0161-445-330/07980629063)

**Sunday 19th June** - Clock Face Colliery Country Park, Bold, St. Helens. -

Meet 10.30 at Gorse Lane Car Park. From Jct 7 of M62 follow A57 Warrington Rd. After 2 miles turn left on to A569 Clock Face Road. After 1.5 miles, (passing back under M'way), turn right into Gorse Lane (blue cycling sign Burtonwood). Continue to entrance on right. SD 535915 (Sheet 108) (WA9 4SN). Leader - Tom Ferguson (01744 739774 / 07743 509671).

**Sunday 17th July** - Rostherne Mere.

Meet 10.30. Take the third turn on the left going south on the Chester Road (A556) from the M56 Jct 8. The car park is 200 yards past the church on the left hand side SJ743833 (Sheet 109) (WA16 6SB); or park on the road. Leader - Tim Rogers (07890949997).

**Sunday 7th Aug** - Pennington Flash CP, Leigh.

10.30. The Country Park signposted from the A580 East Lancashire Road-turn off onto A579; after 1.2 miles turn L at traffic lights onto A57; around 100m turn R into Park access road (signposted) to the Main Car Park (small charge) which fronts the lake. SD 643 991 Sheet 109 (WN7 3PA) Good paths, level walking. Toilets on site as well as snack and ice cream vans (usually) Leader-Christopher Bowden (01772 812910/07597 921981).

**Sunday 14th August** - Delamere Forest.

Meet at 10.30 at FC Whitefield Car Park, east off Station Road, B 5152, south of Hatchmere cross-roads; SJ556710 (Sheet 117); 300m north of CW8 2HZ (nearby Station Cafe and station (trains from Manchester.) Group parking concession being arranged. Leader John 07768 043 461.

**Sunday 21st August** - BEGINNERS FORAY at

Risley Moss, north Warrington.  
Meet 10.30. Access from M62 Jct 11. Continue along A574 to first island, turn left. Reserve signposted. Ample parking space. SJ665920 (Sheet 109) (WA3 6QS). Leader - Irene Ridge (01254-247274). A morning foray will be followed by an afternoon microscope workshop.

**Sunday 4th September** - Hay Bridge Nature Reserve, Low Hay Bridge, Bouth, Ulverston, LA12 8JG.

10.30 in the meeting room adjacent to the car park at SD338876 (Sheet 97). By car, leave the M6 at J36 and bear left onto the A590 signposted to Barrow. After 3-4 miles take the first left signposted to Barrow. (NB 60mph speed cameras on A590). At Newby Bridge roundabout take 1st exit, remaining on the A590 signposted Barrow and Ulverston then after ~ 4 miles turn right to Bouth. At Bouth village, turn right at the White Hart Inn

## NORTH WEST FUNGUS GROUP PROGRAMME – Tony Carter

and follow this lane for about ½ mile. Where it swings left, go straight ahead on a small narrow lane signposted 'Hay Bridge Only'. Follow this narrow lane until you reach the car park at the end (about 2 miles). The building immediately before the car park has facilities. Being a private reserve run as a Trust, (Warden, Keith) suggests donations for non-members of £2.00. Leader - Mike Hall (015242-76460).

### Sunday 18th Sept – Lytham Hall.

Meet 10.30 at Lytham Hall, Ballam Road, FY8 4JX.SD 3592864 (Sheet 102). From M55 J4 take A583 (Kirkham) at first roundabout, and take first right (Whitehall Rd) after second then immediately left onto Peel Rd. After 1.6 m turn right onto Ballam Rd and after 0.6 m turn R into Lytham Park and proceed to Hall (free entry for NWFG). Irene (07484 242523)

### Sunday 25th Sept. – Maes y Pant, Gresford.

Meet 10.30 at main entrance car park (9 spaces). Coming from Chester bypass, A55, take A483 to Wrexham. After 2 sets of traffic lights (new) continue for 3+ miles to 1st turn-off. Turn left at top of ramp and then right at roundabout. Continue up the hill until Red Lion pub, then right onto Pant Lane. Continue to car park on right. SJ354551(Sheet 117) which is next to The Conifers LL12 8HU. From East, A534, A5156 to roundabout accessing A483. However continue around roundabout onto Chester Road (5th exit); continue to traffic lights by Plough Inn, turn L into High St continue towards church till Pant Lane on R at Yew Tree pub. Car parking after 400 yards on left after The Conifers and on Pant Lane. Toilets in nearby pubs/inns. This is not the Marford Quarry site, which is just to the north. Leader-Robin 07985 206007

**Friday 30th Sept to Monday 3rd October - Residential Foray** at Keswick Convention Centre. Cost inc. meals, for members and for non members will be announced later. Booking form in Newsletter. Contact Irene Ridge (01254-247274)

**Sunday 9th October - National Fungus Day.** To see events - <http://www.ukfungusday.co.uk/>

**Sunday 16th October** – Dovestone RSPB Reserve - upland woodland and grassland.

Meet 10.30 - Binn Green Car Park (toilets), NOT the main car park: GR SE 018044, Sheet 110; off the A635 at Binn Green, Holmfirth Road, Greenfield Oldham, OL3 7NN. From Greenfield station, go steeply downhill, then along Chew Valley road (A669) into village, past Tesco on left until the Clarence Hotel around 1 mile further on your right. At the mini-roundabout bear left uphill, on the A635 towards Holmfirth - then, DO NOT take the first brown sign to RSPB Dovestone to right, but keep going uphill for around ½ mile until the next brown sign, go into the Binn Green car park on the right there. From Ashton u. Lyne, take the A635 and follow directions from Clarence as above. Leader Ken Gartside (01457 879713/ 07548927633)

**Sunday 23rd October – BEGINNERS FORAY** at Moore Nature Reserve, Warrington -

Meet 10.30. 2 miles south of Warrington on A56 turn north to Moore at traffic lights at Higher Walton. 1 mile turn right, crossing railway and ship canal. Go to end of road to reach entrance. Car park to right of entrance road. SJ578855 (Sheet 108). Leader - Paul Hamlyn (0161-434-1401).

**Sunday 30th October** – Lyme Park, Disley, Stockport.

Meet at 10.00 in car park 200 yards from house; SJ962824 (Sheet 109)(NB early start time). 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 6th November – Turn Slack Clough, Littleborough.

Meet at 10.00 at Clough. Left off A58 onto Whitelees Road approaching Littleborough from west, continue along Calderbrook Road turning left at Clough Road. SD935173 (Sheet 109) (OL15 9JZ). Leader - Norman Bamforth (0161-336-3914).

**Sunday 13th November** - Ainsdale NNR, Merseyside.

### Ken Jordan Memorial Foray.

Meet at 10.00 at car park at Reserve Manager's Office SD303112 (sheet 108) (PR8 3QW). Take A565 north past Woodvale Airport, turn on to Coastal Road, over railway bridge and left into private drive. Leader Tony Carter(0151-724-4600).

## EVENTS SUMMARY



### Events are run throughout the year by Liverpool Museum.

These include Mammal Trapping at Knowsley Park and other venues.

#### Learn all about Ants Saturday 5th December

Please contact [Tony.Parker@liverpoolmuseums.org.uk](mailto:Tony.Parker@liverpoolmuseums.org.uk) for details and to book places. Museum collections are open to amateur naturalists and volunteers (by appointment)

#### Other activity events

**Knowsley:** [www.knowsley.gov.uk/things-to-see-and-do/events.aspx](http://www.knowsley.gov.uk/things-to-see-and-do/events.aspx)

**Liverpool Parks:** [liverpool.gov.uk/leisure-parks-and-events](http://liverpool.gov.uk/leisure-parks-and-events)

**Wildlife Trust:** [www.lancswt.org.uk/what-s-on](http://www.lancswt.org.uk/what-s-on)

**Court Hey Park:** [www.courtheypark.co.uk](http://www.courtheypark.co.uk)

**National Wildflower Centre:** [www.nwc.org.uk/events](http://www.nwc.org.uk/events)

#### North West Fungus Group

There are forays and special events, with help and advice on a range of fungi related topics.

**NWFG Home Page:** <http://www.fungus.org.uk/nwfg.htm>



#### Liverpool Botanical Society

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



#### Merseyside Naturalist Association

The MNA organize informal nature events including field trips, talks and practical sessions

Visit [www.mnapage.info](http://www.mnapage.info) for the programme of events



#### Merseyside & West Lancashire Bat Group

The group runs events and training throughout the year check the group website, twitter or Facebook.



### Facebook links require membership of Facebook

Some links may additionally require permission which can be obtained by contacting the group over Facebook as a pre-requisite. These links are increasingly becoming a major contact point for rapidly expanding naturalist groups and volunteers. Interested then link to:

#### Merseyside BioBank

[www.facebook.com/MerseysideBioBank](http://www.facebook.com/MerseysideBioBank)

#### MBAN

[www.facebook.com/groups/ActiveNaturalists/](http://www.facebook.com/groups/ActiveNaturalists/)

#### UK Hoverflies

[www.facebook.com/groups/609272232450940/](http://www.facebook.com/groups/609272232450940/)

#### WeBS

[www.facebook.com/pages/Mersey-Estuary-WeBS](http://www.facebook.com/pages/Mersey-Estuary-WeBS)

#### Lancashire Lepidoptera

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/119829941488294/>

#### British Wildlife Photography

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/415160405188412/>

#### Lancashire Mammal Group

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Lancashire-Mammal-Group/169476803103866?>

#### BTD Garden Birdwatch

<https://www.facebook.com/gardenbirdwatch>

#### RSPB

<https://www.facebook.com/RSPBLoveNature>

#### British Spider ID

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/829354860449271/>

#### British Mycological Society (BMS)

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/18843741618/>

#### Conopids

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/british.conopids/>



Interested in arranging one yourself next year?

For advice contact

[ben.deed@merseysidebiobank.org.uk](mailto:ben.deed@merseysidebiobank.org.uk)

#### HELP!

#### BIRDERS ALWAYS WANTED

The Mersey Estuary is one of Britain's best wetlands. We know this because each month we count the waterfowl as part of the national Wetland Bird Survey (WeBS).

However, we need 'new blood' volunteers. You don't need to be an experienced wildfowl counter, though you should be able to identify common waders and wildfowl. If you think you can help then please email Dermot Smith at [dermot.smith71@gmail.com](mailto:dermot.smith71@gmail.com) or phone 07505 418832 for further details.

For more information plus recent reports and photos visit the Mersey Estuary WeBS page on Facebook

## SUMMARY of EVENTS PROGRAMME of 2015 at SEFTON COAST PARTNERSHIP [www.seftoncoast.org.uk](http://www.seftoncoast.org.uk)

**Booking is essential for Sefton Coast events  
Call 01519342964**



Walks last around 2.5-3 hours and require good footwear. The walk may include small hills and undulations. It would also be advisable to wear appropriate clothing for the day.

### Heritage & Health Walks

"Discover the heritage along with coastline with a series of walks. Part of the Sefton Coast Landscape Partnership scheme"

"The walks will take you through a variety of habitats including woodlands, sand dunes and beach walks"

### Other Events

Why not visit Facebook page SeftonCoast?



**RSPB** <https://www.rspb.org.uk/discoverandenjoynature/seenature/events/results.aspx>

**RSPB Tel: 01704 226190**

### Digital Photography Workshop

Saturday 19 March to Saturday 17 September 11 am-4 pm. Price: £40 (RSPB members £32): Booking essential. Got a Digital SLR camera and want to improve your wildlife photography? Then come along to this workshop with Mike Malpass, an experienced, published wildlife photographer for guidance, inspiration and tips on field craft (suitable for all levels). Includes an indoor session followed by putting it into practice outdoors. Booking and payment in advance essential. Bring your own camera and notebook, buffet lunch will be provided.

**Directions:** RSPB Leighton Moss nature reserve, Myers Farm, Storrs Lane, Silverdale, Lancashire

### Full list of dates

Saturday 19 March 2016

Saturday 23 July 2016

Saturday 17 September 2016

**The Wildlife Trust for Lancashire, Manchester and North Merseyside. Additional Details from <http://www.lancswt.org.uk/whats-on>**



### THE BIODIVERSITY PROJECT

We are coming to the end of the habitat surveys for 2015 and the trainees will be writing up the survey reports. However there are plenty of opportunities to get out and about and record wildlife. Remember you can get in touch with us anytime in Lancashire 01772 324 129 [cgreen@lancswt.org.uk](mailto:cgreen@lancswt.org.uk) or Merseyside 0151 737 4152 [jsimons@lancswt.org.uk](mailto:jsimons@lancswt.org.uk). You can also follow us on Facebook [HERE](#), tweet us @Lancswildlife & use #wildlifecounts.

**Biodiversity Courses: 1st Wednesday of every month February to November 2016.**

A 10 session course is being run by Hilary Bedford from the West Lancs Wildlife Group. Consisting of indoor theory and some outdoor sessions the course will cover plant morphology, physiology and adaptations and is suitable for beginners or individuals with limited experience who have an interest in plants.

### May 4th: Flowers

The morning will be spent learning about flower structure and pollination methods and in the afternoon we will be practicing identification, time tbc at the Barn, Preston, PR5 6BY.

### June 1st: Plants and Habitats

A look at why some plants only grow in particular places and others are more widespread, 10am-1pm at the Barn, Preston, PR5 6BY.

### July 6th: Field Visit - Silverdale

Limestone pavement and grassland.

### August 3rd: Field Visit - Sefton Coast

Salt marsh and sand dunes.

### Sept 7th: Plant/animal relationships

A look at pollination, herbivory, parasitism, plant responses and defences, 10am-1pm at the Barn, Preston, PR5 6BY.

### Oct 5th: Fruits and Seeds

Seed development, types of fruits and seeds and seed dispersal, 10am-1pm at the Barn, Preston, PR5 6BY.

### Nov 2nd: Preparing for winter

A look at leaf fall and colour changes. Dormancy, bud formation and storage organs. 10am-1pm at the Barn, Preston, PR5 6BY.

**Further Information. This is a 10 session course with a refundable deposit of £50 (£5/session).** Participants will be refunded £5/session after attending a session, a non-show will result in a non-refundable £5 deposit/session. Participants will receive an LWT certificate of attendance.

**Please note booking is essential! There are limited spaces, for more information or to book on please contact Catherine Haddon on [chaddon@lancswt.org.uk](mailto:chaddon@lancswt.org.uk), 01772 324129.**