

WYCOMBE



WILDLIFE GROUP

Issue 55

W
N
L
E
D
W
I
S
E

JANUARY
2008



Spindle (see suggestion for a New Year's Resolution on page 16). Photograph by Roger Wilding.

RESERVOIR AND CANAL WALK

IN THE WILDLIFE GARDEN

ORCHIDS IN GARDENS

SEASONAL GARDEN HINTS

TALK ON TREES AND PEOPLE

PENN WOOD WALK

FAMILY GROUP REPORTS

VISIT TO POLAND TALK

A TALE OF POLYPROPYLENE

BIG CAT TALK AT CHRISTMAS PARTY

WINTER TREE IDENTIFICATION

FUNGUS WALK IN KINGS WOOD

BIRDS RECORDED ON THE RYE

MOTH TRAPPING REPORT

WILDLIFE OBSERVATIONS



Heron - photographed by Michael York on the reservoir and canal walk (see page 15)



Ring-necked Parakeet - one of the birds in Observations on the back page. Now very common in the London suburbs and spreading out along the Thames Corridor. Photograph by Roger Wilding.

Contact address, telephone and e-mail :
see page 23

Registered Charity No : 1075175



Wycombe Wildlife Group is a registered charity with the following objects:

To conserve the environment, mainly using volunteers, for the benefit of the public.

To educate the public in the principles and practice of conservation.

Within **Wycombe District** the Group:

Surveys wildlife habitats and their associated flora and fauna, giving those taking part plenty of opportunities to increase their knowledge and identification skills.

Helps manage local wildlife sites, undertaking practical conservation work on local nature reserves.

Provides advice to schools, other bodies and individuals on all aspects of wildlife.

Stimulates public interest in wildlife and its conservation.

Organises walks, talks and other activities covering a wide range of wildlife topics.

Provides advice on and encourages wildlife gardening.

Organises activities for young children and their parents.

Co-operates with other groups with similar aims and supports the Environment Centre on Holywell Mead.

Wycombe Wildlife News

is published 3 times a year to promote the Group and wildlife issues and inform members and the public of its activities.

Editor: Pat Morris

Produced by: Roger Wilding

Illustrations: Pat Morris and Frances Wilding

Printed by: Design & Print, Wycombe District Council

COPY DATE

Friday, 7th March 2008

Registered Charity No : 1075175

- In this issue -

Editorial / New members	14	Report - A tale of polypropylene	21
Reservoir and canal walk	15	Talk on big cats at Christmas Party	21
In the wildlife garden	16	Winter tree identification	22
Orchids in gardens	17	Fungus walk in Kings Wood	22
Seasonal garden hints	17	Birds recorded on the Rye	23
Talk on trees and people	18	Moth trapping 2007	23
Penn Wood walk	18	WWG contact details/Membership form	23
Family Group reports	19	Wildlife observations	23
Report - Visit to Poland talk	20	Local environmental groups	24

Editorial

Successes and failures of 2007

The weather affects us all, from perhaps where we choose to live, to how we feel and what we do, but it is never so important as it is for wildlife. Hopes of a good butterfly season, which started well in the unusually warm weather of April 2007, were soon dashed, when the coldest May for almost 60 years followed, succeeded by the wettest June since 1914, and the coldest July for 14 years. For insects this was a recipe for disaster. The weather affected birds too, ensuring success for those which bred early or, conversely, failure for those which were caught up in the floods and had their nests washed away. Plants in 2007, however, loved the rainfall and flourished. Trees put on huge amounts of growth and those that had flowered and been pollinated in spring when the weather was sunny, were able to produce bumper crops when autumn arrived.

Wycombe Wildlife Group has had its successes and failures too. The visits to the London Wetland Centre and to Highgrove were both huge successes, blessed thankfully by fine weather on both days. However, outdoor activities closer to home met with less success, often being supported by a low attendance or, in one case, no-one at all. (Did people really think our walk advertised as "The Homebase Trail" was a shopping expedition or did the weather put everyone off?) In most cases, the weather on wet days improved in time for walks to take place. All that was needed was a little courage. Numbers attending talks started out well. (Was that because the weather was reasonable and encouraged those attending to turn out of their homes?) but dwindled over the year. There have been some excellent talks, worthy of far higher audiences, and it is a pity that so few people came along. Again, is this because the cold and damp, and later the dark, discouraged them? The Trustees of Wycombe Wildlife Group will need to review the situation and maybe the activities of the Group will need to be modified. Let us see what the response is to the 2008 programme. Amongst the new events is a wildlife gardening exhibition at The Environment Centre in June. Interest in wildlife is what unites us all, whether we attend meetings or not, and wildlife gardening one of the best ways to sustain this. The exhibition will take place whatever the weather, and it is indoors, so we hope everyone will be able to support it in some way. See you there!

A Happy New Year.

Pat Morris

New Members

We welcome the following new members, and look forward to seeing them at future meetings.

Master Józef Batterberry

Mrs Anne Ives

Views expressed in this newsletter are those of the authors and not necessarily those of the Group.

For the purposes of management of the Group, membership information is held on computer.

Circular reservoir and canal walk - Saturday 1st December



Photographs taken by Michael York showing Wilstone Reservoir and some of the WWG members who braved the winter weather for the walk.



Torrential rain and blustery winds on the Friday night did not bode well for this walk. However, we woke to a lovely day and there was not a cloud in the sky as nine of us gathered by Wilstone Reservoir on the Saturday morning. Roger Wilding explained that all four of the Tring reservoirs had been created to replenish water as it was lost from the summit locks of the nearby Grand Union Canal built in the late 18th century. Some 4 million gallons a day were needed at peak times to cater for the needs of the barges passing down to London and in the other direction to Birmingham. Nowadays, apart from feeding the canals for the pleasure boats, the reservoirs are used for fishing, bird watching and pleasure walking.

Kevin Holt, a member of Bucks Bird Club, joined us for the whole walk to help us identify the various species we saw. As we set off we immediately saw a Greater Spotted Woodpecker, Redwing, Pied Wagtail, Kestrel and other more common birds. On the south side we stopped at the hide and were fortunate to catch a glimpse of several Snipe well camouflaged in the reeds close by. We saw plenty of Lapwings and, on the open water, there were Wigeon, Goldeneye, Pochard, Teal and Cormorant to name but some. We then made our way across the fields to the Wendover Arm of the canal, the restoration of which is proceeding well. Apparently, before it was closed, the Wendover Arm used to leak water into Lord Rothschild's house. Hopefully the restoration work will be done in a way that will prevent anything similar happening again. No work was being carried out on the day of the walk but we could see that clay had been puddled in the bottom to enable the canal to hold water. Hundreds of men, mainly Irish, known as navigators, worked on the original

canals to "paddle" the clay (hence the names "navvies" and "paddies"). Further along we came to the already restored section of the Wendover Arm and, across the water, we could see the pumping station which maintains the water level in the canal. Due to the restoration work, we were unable to cross the canal at this point and had to divert through Tring Wharf past the flour mill and return to the canal a little further on. In a short while we joined the main Grand Union Canal and made our way back to the Marsworth and Startops reservoirs where we were overflowed first by a noisy flock of Canada Geese and then by a flock of Greylag. At this point the weather started to turn nasty and some of us took respite with a baked bean or two in the Bluebell cafe nearby. As we were leaving the cafe, the heavens opened and we were pounded by an almighty hail storm so we had to return for another cup of tea! Finally, we made our way in gloomy drizzle between the Marsworth and Startops reservoirs, crossing the road to pass the trout fishing Tringford Reservoir. As we entered a field we were set upon by a noisy flock of farmyard geese and Roger was attacked in a most indelicate place.

So after a total walk of about six miles and about five hours, we arrived back at our cars. We were all rather soaked but feeling on top of the world as the day had started well and we had seen a good variety of birds, all in all a very enjoyable and worthwhile outing. The complete list of birds, listed in the order seen, can be found on the WWG website.

Finally a word of thanks to Roger for organising and leading the walk and to Kevin for bringing along his bird spotting telescope which added so much to the interest of the walk.

Michael York

In the wildlife garden - an update

I have written before about my little garden which exists as far as I am concerned simply to provide a home and feeding stations for various kinds of wildlife. Where wild creatures are concerned, nothing stands still, and they have been causing the usual frights and delights this year as they have in the past.

The first excitement of the year was when large numbers of Frogs arrived in my tiny pond, as usual with mating in mind. With my resident six, they formed fourteen amorous pairs and they got down to serious work immediately. Large mounds of frogspawn soon appeared, but unfortunately there was suddenly an unseasonal icy spell, and all the Frogs dived for cover. As soon as the weather got better, they reappeared and continued where they had left off, but a lot of the earlier spawn looked unhealthy and did not seem to be developing properly. The excess Frogs soon disappeared again, but I watched the pond anxiously, as very few tadpoles had appeared and I was afraid it would be a wasted year. The ones that did survive seemed to take a long time to develop, though I finally did see two or three froglets, all of which soon disappeared and I thought that the year was a dead loss. There was a sequel to this story, however. I mentioned my concern to my neighbour who laughed and said "there are two or three in the nursery!". I quickly popped next door and there was a small china bowl with a tiny pump and some pebbles, and disporting inside were two tiny Frogs. Apparently they found this more to their taste than the larger pond next door. Pauline's cat, Thomas, was watching them gravely.

Last time I wrote, I was exasperated by the birds, none of whom would stick to the special food I bought for them. This trend has continued this year, particularly as far as the Sparrows are concerned. They used to love the Sparrow food I bought for them, but unfortunately no one seems to stock it any longer so I bought them some general bird food that

looked something like the original Sparrow food and put it out hopefully. The Sparrows, of course, ignored this offering totally, and decided that what they really liked was Blue Tit food, and with their superiority of numbers (17 counted recently) the unfortunate Blue Tits were unable to get near it. However, the tables were turned on the Sparrows a couple of weeks ago when I looked out of the window and saw a magnificent Sparrowhawk standing by my pond, plucking and eating a Sparrow. I was sorry to lose a Sparrow, but a Sparrowhawk is not seen every day, and I still have sixteen Sparrows. I rushed for my camera, but just as I raised it to my eyes, the hawk saw the movement at the kitchen window and made off with its victim, or its dinner, according to your point of view.

At present, my main concern is Hedgehogs. A couple of years ago I used to put food out for them, though problems with the local cats made this difficult and I did not see any last year. This year, however, I have had four around, a very large one (Mum?), a medium sized one, and two quite small ones. I immediately bought them some biscuity type food, and for several days could hear them crunching away just outside the kitchen window. However soon the cats caught on, and they were always there first. Now courtesy of St Tiggywinkles, I have purchased a little Hedgehog house, painted it and put it behind the shed with a pile of leaves and hay, as they apparently like to build their own nests. I have also made a "feeding station" consisting of six bricks, making a narrow passage, and putting their food inside. I have noticed the cat sniffing round it, but apparently it will not go into a small narrow hole but the food is gone next day as the Hedgehogs can go and eat, and pass right through (they can't turn round and come back). The house is still vacant but I hope to have a tenant soon.

Mary Williams



A suggested New Year's resolution for the wildlife garden

Why not plant an attractive berry-bearing shrub ready for next winter. Suitable species include:-

Pyracantha
Privet
Mezereon

Cotoneaster
Guelder-rose
Wayfaring-tree

Berberis
Spindle

Orchids in gardens

I was interested to read about Harry Wheate's orchids but can say, at least with Bee Orchids, he is not alone. They arrived on my front lawn some years ago in Hughenden Valley (and are still with me), as they did in Milton Keynes. Two years ago, some appeared on a lawn in Wendover and maybe 15 years ago in central High Wycombe. However, I don't know of Pyramidal Orchids turning up in this way. I suspect more would be found if people cut their lawns less often and, if they could distinguish the rosette of orchid leaves from those of a "weed" when they saw one. I record all the plants in the High Wycombe 10km grid square SU89 and do the recording by 2km squares (tetrads) so I have records from 25 local tetrads. Neither orchid is rare: Bee Orchids were recorded from 12 tetrads and Pyramidal Orchids from 18, but you can add one more to each total, because, interestingly, I had no record of either from the Downley tetrad, where Harry lives. They are on my card now and there may well be some I have missed elsewhere but they need chalk soils and so are missing from Hazlemere, Holmer

Green and the Kingshills, for example. (Can anyone prove me wrong, please?).

As to how they arrived, I am not convinced the seed came from Harry's car mat. The seeds are like dust and don't have far to travel on the wind - Bee Orchids are at Millfield Wood, Cryers Hill, Hughenden, Naphill, Bradenham and West Wycombe and Pyramidals are in the same areas and there are many more of them (a lot for example on the waste land by Asda at Handy Cross). Remember too, a new orchid, the Small-flowered Serapias, was discovered in Cornwall some years ago. Nearest known site? France. (No car mats for that one). But let's not worry too much about how they arrived. Let's just enjoy them!

Alan Showler

Editor's note: There are around 30 White Helleborine plants growing in a member's front lawn, east of Amersham Hill. It is believed they migrated there from under a neighbour's 50 year old Beech tree.



Photograph by Roger Wilding of Serapias accidentally introduced with Loose-flowered Orchids at Wakehurst Place in Sussex. This is probably the best place to look for both of these orchids on the British mainland.

Seasonal garden hints

Birds need a supply of clean water for drinking and bathing. Keep the bird bath clean and, if frost is likely, empty it at dusk to avoid the water freezing, and it will be ready to refill next morning. There is now a product to prevent water from freezing (down to -4C): it is eco-friendly and birds can drink and bathe in it. A 250ml bottle of ICE FREE costs £5.99 and is available from CJ Wildlife.

If the pond is frozen, sit a pan of boiling water on the ice until it bores a hole through, to allow noxious gases to escape. Some people find that floating a ball on the surface of the water keeps a sufficient area unfrozen.

Remember to wash your hands after tending your birds as a number of bird diseases can be transmitted to humans.

Keep bird feeders and surrounding areas clean and disinfected. Move the feeders around if possible, to vary feeding positions. The more bird feeders you have, the more birds can feed at once, and the risk of infection by contact will be lowered. Avian pox is the latest problem.

Pat Morris

PS A huge influx of birds was noted by members of Bucks Bird Club around Ivinghoe during October 2007 and some of these were already appearing in our local gardens by the beginning of November. It could mean an exciting winter of bird-spotting for us all, especially if the weather is cold, as it was just before Christmas.

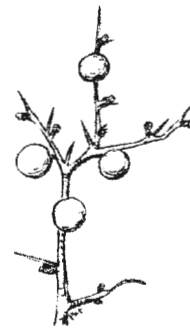
Talk on trees and people - Monday 8th October

We met at the Environment Centre on Holywell Mead to hear an informative and entertaining talk by John Tyler about man's relationship with trees.

The talk traced how trees have been used by man in these islands from the time of the earliest Britons to the present day. In ancient times trees provided shelter, warmth, food and even spiritual inspiration. John explained that archaeological finds have shown how the Hazel nut was a staple food for Britain's earliest settlers. This contrasted with a modern recipe that John recommended that involved adding Sloes to melted dark chocolate. Mention was also made of the significance of trees to the people of the Chilterns. Many place names in this area refer to trees in some way, parish boundaries have been marked by trees and trees have provided the basis of the furniture industry for which High Wycombe is famous.

All elements of John's talk were illustrated with excellent slides. The hour long talk was packed with interest. We thank John for sharing with us his great enthusiasm for his chosen subject.

Paul Bowyer.



*Blackthorn
(Prunus spinosus)
with a few
remaining
"Sloes".*

Several members have made "Sloe" chocolate following John Tyler's talk. We only know of one who left some uneaten long enough for the uncooked fruit to develop a mould. One way of avoiding this might be to use Sloes after making Sloe gin (giving double benefits).

Penn Wood walk Saturday 27th September

This walk was led by Loren Eldred, Area Manager of the Woodland Trust. It was a dry day, with some fleeting sunshine, excellent for walking. Loren began by outlining the past history of the wood as pasture woodland, source of timber, chalk, clay and sand, and later as a military training area, before becoming privately owned. It was purchased by the Woodland Trust to save it from being turned into a golf course.

First the management of the wood was discussed, the primary aim being the restoration of the original pasture woodland. To this end, conifers planted as commercial timber would be gradually removed, while taking care not to damage the woodland fauna already in existence. Heavy horses, which would cause less harm to the woodland floor, are used for this purpose, though sadly they were not at work on the day of the walk. Removal of the invasive Rhododendrons was also discussed, though it was discovered last year by members of Bucks Bird Club that the Rhododendrons provide a nationally significant roost for visiting Bramblings. The Club counted 900 birds among the foliage, a fact mentioned in Bird Table, the

national British Trust for Ornithology magazine. Rhododendrons have therefore to be controlled with care. And people like them! The other aspect of management is grazing. Though cattle were also absent on this day, because of Foot and Mouth restrictions, they are responsible for opening up and maintaining the woodland glades. The acid grassland is an important feature of the wood and supports a range of butterflies, from Marbled Whites, Ringlets and other Browns on the grass itself, to Purple Hairstreaks in the Oak canopy. During the two and a half hour visit, we saw an ancient oak tree with examples of children's art nearby, the Penna where a Beech sapling donated by the Prince of Wales is planted, and the cattle grazing area where many butterflies can be found in summer. A few fungi were spotted, in particular numerous Waxcaps on the cricket pitch outside the wood itself.

Many thanks to Loren for a most interesting and informative morning.

Pat Morris

*Ancient Oak in
Penn Wood*



Wycombe Wildlife Family Group Meetings - Autumn 2007

Report by Julie Hopton

Saturday 8th September - "Funday at Funges Meadow"

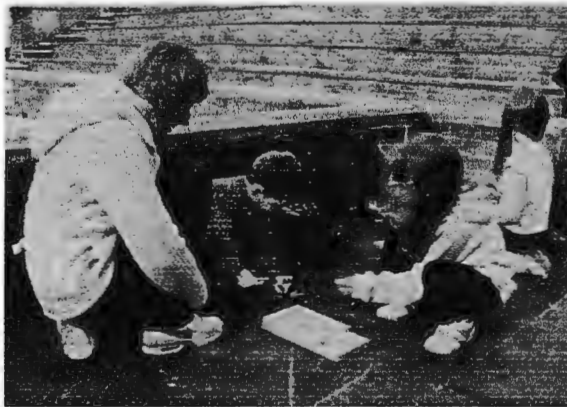
Unfortunately this event had to be cancelled as the Group leader was ill and there was only one Ranger on duty.

Saturday 13th October - "Things that go bump in the night"

We had a good turnout for the October session, with an attendance of 15 children and 9 adults. The children made pumpkins, ghosts, bats and spiders to take home and adorn their homes for Halloween.

Saturday 10th November - "Making bat boxes"

On this rather dull, but crisp day, the children worked outdoors making bat boxes. Some were intended to be placed in their own gardens, some in their grand-parents' gardens and, where children just wanted some hammering practice, their works of art were left behind to be placed in one of the WDC woodlands. A total of 9 adults and 12 children made 8 boxes in all.



Photographs by Julie Hopton

Future of the Family Group

We appealed for help in running the Family Group when it almost folded up once before due to a lack of leaders. Since then, this very important part of Wycombe Wildlife Group has had some very well attended meetings due to the efforts put in by the Environment Centre to encourage parents and children visiting the Centre to join in the Family Group activities on offer, and to the input of Julie Hopton and the Ranger Service. Unfortunately, the pressures on the Ranger Service are now such that they are unable to continue to support the Family Group and, if we want to continue to provide events for parents with young children, we need to find people able to organise and run suitable events. Although, currently, these activities are held monthly, Julie has suggested that perhaps one event each quarter might make it easier to find a new leader. If we could find additional people willing to help run events on a rota basis, the commitment would be even less.

At the moment we have no choice but to discontinue the Family Group but hopefully we will find people willing to give up an occasional Saturday afternoon to enable our children's activities to resume as soon as possible. Please contact me if you feel you might be able to help in some way.

Our grateful thanks go to Julie Hopton and other members of the Ranger Service for all their past support and enthusiasm.

Roger Wilding

A visit to Poland and some of its wildlife

A talk by Michael York on 11th September 2007

Michael began his talk by explaining Irénke's connections with Poland and the reasons for wanting to visit the National Parks and see the wildlife in the north of the country. He recounted how, with the help of the Internet and the Polish Tourist Office in London, he had made contact with a National Parks warden and guide called Artur Wiatr who had made all the necessary arrangements. In the event, they visited two National Parks with their Polish niece Magda over a period of five days in September 2005. The first, the Bialowieza Forest (a world heritage site) lies 190km north-east of Warsaw and spreads across the border into Belarus. It covers an area of some 100 square km on the Polish side of the border and is the only remaining part of the forest which once spread across the European Plain. They were shown around by a very enthusiastic warden called Slawek who showed them the famous giant oaks, the oldest about 450 years old, 118 ft high and 22 ft in circumference. They also saw rare species of Woodpecker and other birds and were taken to the conservation area (for rearing rare breeds) where they saw European Bison, Wild Boar, Wolves, and Tarpin (wild horses). The forest is also renowned for its birdlife containing around 250 species.

Biebrza National Park was the second park visited. This lies about 60km further north and covers an area of about 600 square km. Here they stayed in a bungalow in a village called Goniadz and food was provided by a local lady who cooked traditional meals each day. Artur showed them around this area where they saw the famous Biebrza River Marshes which are the most precious part of the Park. They contain vast peat bogs which are untouched by civilisation and have a unique variety of plants, birds and animals. They saw Elk and a variety of birds, including White-tailed and Lesser-spotted Eagles, Osprey, and Marsh and Montague's Harriers. Overall, the area contains 270 species of bird, of which 180 breed permanently, and is best visited in the spring when many migratory varieties can be seen. Michael said that Artur was incredibly helpful. He made it a really worthwhile experience and they hope to return in the near future. He rounded off the talk by showing some pictures of the return journey and of Warsaw and its Botanical Gardens.



Top: Magda, Irénke and Michael in the Bialowieza Conservation Museum..



Left: Looking for Bison in the Biebrza marshes.

Right: Bird watching in the Biebrza marshes.



For more information visit www.biebrza-explorer.pl
Artur can be contacted on nature@biebrza-explorer.com.pl

Currently bird watching tours are available at around £450 pp for eight days, including Polish transport, guides, full board and all permits. Flights, drinks and tips are extra.

“A tale of polypropylene”

Report on a talk by Angus Idle on 12th November 2007

As might have been expected from Angus, the talk's title was more like cryptic crossword clue than an accurate description of what was to follow. Angus eventually explained that his stay in Tanzania in the 1960s was to help find a replacement crop for Sisal, which had been one of Tanzania's major exports and used in the making of cord, twine and rope. The use of the newly developed polypropylene in the manufacture of these products had reduced world demand for Sisal considerably.

Accompanied by some wonderful slides, Angus told the story of how he and his family had moved to Tanzania for 2 years. The talk evoked the hopes and aspirations of a newly independent

African state. There were slides of Angus's working and domestic life with stories about a Lion in the garage and Baboons in the back garden. There were photos which showed the Tanzanian climate, the rain and heat and their effects upon the country roads. There were photos of the plants, flowers, mammals and insects of the area. Perhaps the most impressive slides were those of the vast landscapes of the Tanzanian interior, showing mountain ranges and tropical grassland.

Many thanks to Angus for sharing part of the Idle history with us.

Paul Bowyer

Talk on big cats at the Christmas party on 10th December 2007

This talk was given by professional wildlife photographer and safari leader Rodney Griffiths, in which he spoke principally about the Leopard, his particular interest.

Rodney stated that the Leopard was fourth in the jungle hierarchy, with the Lion at the top, followed by the Wild Dog and the Hyena. The Cheetah was below the Leopard in the hierarchy. With its powerful chest muscles and retractable claws, the Leopard had the advantage amongst predators in that it could climb trees, and thus escape its enemies. It could also rest, or watch out from this vantage point and drag its food, once caught, onto a branch, safe from Vultures or other would-be thieves. The Cheetah, once its prey was caught, had to bolt down as much food as it could, before it was stolen by another more powerful enemy.

The Leopard's solitary nature was stressed. It had to avoid confrontation at all costs because, if wounded, there would be no other Leopard to catch prey for it, as would be the case with Lions. The female Leopard even ate her food, refusing to

share it with her cub, until she had had enough. The cub, meanwhile had to sit by and watch.

During the mating process, the amorous male is often given a swipe as soon as he has dismounted from the female, and he has to leap away quickly. Scenes such as this were caught on Rodney's camera, as was the Leopard's athleticism, the most remarkable shot being of a Leopard leaping over a river.

Rodney pointed out that successful wildlife photography depended on knowing one's subject and being able to predict what it would do next. Thus he was able to get a shot of a Leopard drinking, knowing that, after eating, it would be thirsty.

This was a fascinating talk, the photography was superb and it all added greatly to the enjoyment of the Christmas Party. Thank you Rodney for your support of Wycombe Wildlife Group.

Pat Morris

Winter tree identification

If you go for a walk in the woods in the winter, or even round the streets of the area where you live, it is far harder to identify the trees and shrubs without their leaves. Some trees, of course, will have a few leaves remaining, which makes identification easier, and some, such as Beech, may keep all or some of its leaves until the spring, especially if forming part of a hedge. There may be other clues also, such as a few of the fruits (London Plane, Lime), berries (Common Hawthorn) or "keys" (Field Maple, Ash) still hanging from the branches, or, as in the case of Alder, its little cones. Others may have catkins, either old ones, or others waiting to burst into flower (Hazel). A twig may have thorns (Blackthorn, Hawthorn and Cherry Plum) or even hairs (White Poplar).

London Plane
(*Platanus x hispanica*)
Photograph by Angus Idle.



Ash
(*Fraxinus excelsior*)



Alder (Alnus glutinosa).
Photograph by Roger Wilding.



Some twigs are easy to recognise. Everyone knows the "sticky bud" of the Horse Chestnut, the hard, black buds on the greenish-grey twigs of Ash, the long, pointed shiny brown buds of Beech. Elder buds are also easily identified, the new leaves often poking out through the bud scales in winter, as if they can't wait for spring. Another way to identify a twig is to look at how the buds are placed. Are they in opposite pairs, are they arranged alternately, or in a spiral along the twig? Do the terminal buds occur in a cluster, in pairs or on their own? This is where a good field key is useful, such as the Aidgap guide to the identification of deciduous broad-leaved trees and shrubs in winter, produced by the Field Studies Council. This book is excellent, slim and easy to understand. The Woodland Trust produces identification sheets obtainable from its website, but they are not so helpful.

Why not visit our website, where some of the photographs of trees taken by Angus Idle in Hughenden last year are featured.

Barbara Rippington, Hon. Curator of Priestfield Arboretum, is giving a talk at The Environment Centre on 28th January, where you can learn even more, and a winter tree identification walk is planned - see programme for details.

A guide to the identification of deciduous broad-leaved trees and shrubs in winter by Andrew May and Jonathon Panter (2000) may be ordered through the post from:-
F.S.C. Publications, Field Studies Council, Preston Montford, Shrewsbury SY4 1HW. Tel 01743 852140
E-mail fsc.publications@ukonline.co.uk

Pat Morris

Autumn fungus walk report

The fungus walk which took place in Kings Wood on Saturday 10th November was a joint event with Friends of Kings Wood and led by Roger Wilding. A total of 25 species of fungi were found and identified. 25 people attended, including three members of WWG.

Birds recorded on the Rye during October and November 2007
by Roy Barkes and Kevin Holt

October 15th

Mute Swan (49) Mallard (189) Coot (19) Moorhen (17) Tufted Duck (18) Black-headed Gull (16)
Mistle Thrush (4) Nuthatch (2)

November 7th

Mute Swan (52) Mallard (204) Coot (27) Moorhen (21) Tufted Duck (29) Heron (1) Nuthatch (4)
Black-headed Gull (87) Mistle Thrush (9)

November 19th

Mute Swan (53) Mallard (211) Coot (33) Moorhen (26) Tufted Duck (38) Heron (2) Nuthatch (2)
Black-headed Gull (112) Mistle Thrush (5) Cormorant (1) Common Gull (2) Grey Wagtail (1)
Little Grebe (2)

Moth trapping report 2007

The best result from the 2007 moth trapping programme was at Hughenden when 32 species were recorded on June 22nd. From three to sixteen species were attracted to the lights at the other venues. Many thanks to those who hosted these events, and also to moth-trappers Paul and Ellis Bowyer and Karen Roberts who identified and listed the moths caught. Lists can be found on the WWG website.

Pat Morris

WWG Contact Details

Postal correspondence should be addressed to:
Chairman, Wycombe Wildlife Group,
c/o 129 Deeds Grove, High Wycombe, Bucks, HP12 3PA

Chairman & Site Management Co-ordinator:
Roger Wilding 01494 438374
w.w.group@btopenworld.com

Newsletter Editor: Pat Morris 01494 529484
roymorris@freeuk.com

Membership Secretary: James Donald 01494 637877

Treasurer: Peter Hazzard, 15 London Road,
High Wycombe, Bucks, HP11 1BJ

Wycombe Wildlife Family Group:
Contact WDC Ranger Service 01494 421825

Biological surveys: Angus Idle 01494 563673
angusjanet@yahoo.co.uk

Website: www.wycombewildlifegrp.co.uk
Webmaster: Malcolm Pusey
mac@mpusey.freeserve.co.uk

To join Wycombe Wildlife Group, please complete the forms below (or photocopies) and send to the Membership Secretary, 73 Carver Hill Road, High Wycombe, HP11 2UB.

Subscription rates: £6 per annum, if paid by standing order or £7 per annum, if paid by cash or cheque.

Please enrol me as a member of Wycombe Wildlife Group

Name:.....
Address.....
.....
Telephone:..... Email.....

Payment options

EITHER Payment by bank standing order

To Bank
..... Branch
Address.....

NEW standing order instruction:
Account to be debited (your account details)

Sort code:
Account number:
Account name:

Beneficiary bank and payee details

HSBC 1 Com Market High Wycombe HP11 2AY
Sort Code: 402417
Account number: 92116685
Account name: Wycombe Wildlife Group
Ref:

Payment details

Amount of payment: £6.00 Six pounds
Frequency: Annually
From: Date in box below
Number of payments: Until further notice

Signature Date

OR Payment by cheque or cash

I enclose my cheque/cash for £7.00, payable to Wycombe Wildlife Group.



WILDLIFE NOTICE BOARD



Observations



September

- 02/09 Harlequin Ladybird on Laurel - Amersham Hill
- 22/09 Brimstone - Amersham Hill Drive
- 22/09 Red Kite (tag no 13!) mobbed by 4 Magpies - Fennels Wood
- 24/09 Pale Tussock Moth larva - The Dyke
- 25/09 Red Admiral - Hazlemere Rec. Ground (also 30/10)
- 26/09 Red Admiral - Amersham Hill Drive (also 29/10)

October

- 03/10 Water Rail - Temple End
- 06/10 Young Grass Snake in compost - Kingswood Road
- 10/10 12 Long-tailed Tits - Carrington Road
- 10/10 Pale Tussock Moth larva - Common Wood
- Orange Ladybird - Common Wood
- Fly Agaric (not common this year) - Common Wood

November

- 02/11 Harlequin Ladybird - Amersham Hill Drive (also on 11/11 and 25/11)
- 05/11 Brambling in garden - Tylers Green
- 22/11 Ring-necked Parakeet - Penn
- 30/11 3 Blackcaps feasting on Callicarpa berries - Deeds Grove

December

- 03/12 Red Admiral in Ivy - Amersham Hill Drive
- 05/12 Brambling - Tylers Green
- 06/12 8 Redwings - Hughenden
- 11/12 Brambling on feeder - Amersham Hill Drive
- 13/12 Brambling on feeder - Deeds Grove.
- 17/12 Sparrowhawk at pond at dusk - Amersham Hill Drive
- 18/12 Blackbird defending Cotoneaster berries from Redwings - Amersham Hill Drive

Other records - see website

Contacts for Wildlife, Conservation & Environmental Groups in Wycombe District

Bassetsbury Group	David Reed	01494 439665
Berks, Bucks & Oxon Wildlife Trust	(Oxon Office)	01865 775476
Booker Common & Woods Protection Society	Ron Walker	01494 444824
British Naturalists' Assoc. S. Bucks Branch	Ann Jones	01494 675196
British Trust for Conservation Volunteers	Alison Smith	01296 330033
British Trust for Ornithology (Regional Rep.)	David Lee	01844 347576
Bucks Invertebrate Group	Mike Palmer	01296 624519
Bucks Badger Group	Mike Collard	01494 866908
Bucks Bird Club	Roger Warren	01491 638691
Bucks Community Association	Francis Gomme	01844 274865
Bucks County Council Countryside Initiatives Team	Anna Humphries	01296 382288
Butterfly Conservation	Jaci Beaven	01494 444158
Chiltern Society	Angus Idle	01494 563673
Chiltern Chalk Stream Officer	Allen Beechey	01844 355502
Chilterns AONB	Steve Rodrick	01844 355500
Chilterns Conservation Board (Activities and Education)	Cathy Rose	01844 355506
Chilterns Woodland Officer	John Morris	01844 355503
Downley Common Preservation Society	Bill Thompson	01494 520648
English Nature Conservation Officer Bucks	Jenny Young	01635 268881
Frieth Natural History Society	Alan Gudge	01494 881464
Grange Action Group	Dave Wainman	01494 716726
High Wycombe Beekeeping Association	Christine Hazell	01494 531599
High Wycombe Society	Frances Presland	01494 523263
Lane End Conservation Group	Bärbel Cheesewright	01494 882938
Marlow Society	Bob Savidge	01628 891121
National Trust	(Office)	01494 755573
Pann Mill Group	Robert Turner	01494 472981
Prestwood Nature	Tony Marshall	01494 864251
Ramblers Association	J.L. Esslemont	01494 881597
Princes Risborough Countryside Group	Francis Gomme	01844 274865
St. Tiggywinkles	Les Stocker	01844 292292
Swan Lifeline	Wendy Hermon	01753 859397
The Environment Centre on Holywell Mead Co-ordinator		01494 511585
Woodland Trust (voluntary speaker)	Michael Hyde	01628 485474
Wycombe District Council Ranger Service	Julie Hopton	01494 421825



For queries about **BATS** contact the **WDC Rangers** : 01494 421824

