



**Issue 85**  
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**COPY DATE FOR THE NEXT ISSUE**  
**Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> April 2018**

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.

Produced by: Roger Wilding

Drawings: Frances Wilding

Photographs: Richard Jones (*Geissorchiza radicans*), Roger Wilding (*Protea*, Walk views and garden photos), Karen Roberts ( Box-tree Moth and Merveille du Jour photos) and John Hoar (Setaceous Hebrew Character moth).

Proof-reading: Frances Wilding

Printed by: Greens, Lincoln Rd, High Wycombe.

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.

**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 and around 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, organising walks, talks and other activities covering a wide range of wildlife topics.

Provides advice on and encourages wildlife gardening.

Co-operates with other groups with similar aims.

## Chairman's Chat

I hope you all enjoyed Christmas and the New Year holiday period and are now looking forward to 2018.

The Programme Planning Committee has been busy arranging speakers for our monthly indoor meetings from January to April and from September to December, as well as organising walks and other outdoor events. There will be opportunities in the Spring and Summer for members interested in the Round Wycombe Walk to undertake some or all of this planned new walk in a series of short strolls around the circular route, as well as visiting adjoining areas of wildlife interest.

Following member consultation, the format of the wildlife observations page was changed in the September issue of the newsletter, and I received some positive comments about the new format. Unfortunately, there have been insufficient wildlife sightings reported to warrant the allocation of space for observations in this issue, especially as the few that I have received are referred to in articles elsewhere in this newsletter. To compensate for the lack of observations, Frances has extended the scope of her regular "garden tweets" article, calling it "Garden tweets (and beyond)" on this occasion to cover some interesting bird behaviour, albeit not local.

The recent spell of Winter weather, following so soon after a warm unseasonable late Autumn took us all by surprise, but it has prompted me to include a reminder in the newsletter relating to our event cancellation policy. We try to avoid cancelling events, but very occasionally this becomes necessary when, for example, travelling conditions are affected, or there are safety issues. Please read the reminder on the back page and, if in doubt, contact the event organiser shown in the events programme.

I hope you enjoy reading this newsletter and perhaps feel inspired to write something for inclusion in the May issue.

Wishing you all the very best for 2018.

Roger

## New members

We are pleased to welcome as new members:-

Paul Goby from Downley, and Dr. John Lloyd-Parry from Cookham.

## Obituary

We regret to inform members that Jenny Bottrill, who has been a Wycombe Wildlife Group member for many years, passed away recently.

## Unwanted guests

Our speaker at the September 2017 meeting was David Pinniger MBE, who is a professional entomologist specialising in advising those responsible for the conservation of the contents of historic houses and museums. In some cases this has required action to deal with the cause of an existing problem, but his aim is to give advice that will prevent further attacks by pests.

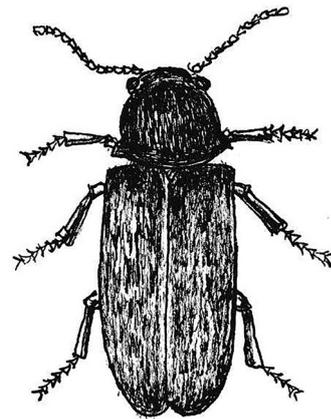
During the first part of his talk, David amused us with stories relating to the development of his personal interest and work experience relating to invertebrates. He told us that his father was an entomologist and that this had probably helped to develop his early interest in butterflies and then dragonflies. When he left school, he decided to apply for a job in the Scientific Civil Service and was accepted by the Selection Board, a decision which he thought might have been influenced by the fact a member of the Board knew his father. Following a three month training course he was appointed to a post which involved inspecting cargoes of imported goods. Having condemned a shipment of imported tea which was infested with beetles, the company concerned passed a large sack of the affected tea to David's team asking if it could be tested to find out whether or not the beetles were harmful and if there was any way of dealing with them. David and his colleagues identified the beetles and found they were harmless, that they floated to the top of the cup if any were present when the tea was used and that they did not effect the taste of the tea. When the company was informed of the findings, it realised that it couldn't sell the tea to the public, so it packed it in teabags and exported it. Presumably, as a result, the users never saw any floating beetles when they enjoyed their cup of tea. David added that the company didn't want the large sack of tea, passed to his team for testing, back, so he and his colleagues didn't need to buy any tea for about a year. He then told us that his MBE had been awarded in recognition of the contribution his work had made to the preservation of historic and valuable items in museums and stately homes. He added that when he had received his award from the Queen, she had asked him what exactly he did and that he had replied saying he advised people who owned big houses like hers how to deal with problem pests, and she had laughed.

David went on to talk about his work of advising organisations with a responsibility for looking after historic houses and museums containing valuable

items ranging from old books and documents to items of furniture, tapestries, carpets and costumes. Some of these are in private collections, some belong to national organisations such as the National Trust, and some belong to the nation.

David stressed the importance of identifying the cause of the problem, and wherever possible to take preventative action, as merely disposing of pests will not prevent further attacks. He stressed the importance of distinguishing between species which are pests and those which are harmless. The pest species that he regularly has to advise on include Death-watch and Furniture Beetles, Silverfish, Carpet Beetles and Clothes Moths. Carrying out regular inspections and cleaning, and controlling temperature and humidity are all important factors that need to be addressed. Dealing with blocked-up chimneys and old bird nests is also important as these may be harbouring pests.

There are lots of companies providing pest control services, and it is good to know that there are people like David who are promoting the use of environmentally-friendly methods whenever possible, to prevent as well as deal with invertebrate pest problems.



Above: Death-watch Beetle (*Xestobium rufovillosum*) - a reddish brown beetle 5-9 mm in length. The larvae attack damp Oak and Willow hardwood. They can cause severe damage to the woodwork in old buildings.

## Flower power

The speaker at our October 2017 meeting was Dr Brenda Harold, who leads one of the two wildflower walks around the Hotspur Bank Local Nature Reserve each year. Her talk covered ways in which flowers defend themselves against predators and make use of animals, and the small number of plant species that are carnivores.

We were informed that both plants and animals (including humans) possess the same number of genes in their DNA, although there are many differences between them. Whilst plants cannot move, they make their own food. Animals, other than humans, can move but cannot make their own food. Both plants and animals use each other to overcome their shortcomings and to survive. Plants manufacture their own food in the form of sugar, by photosynthesis. Water from the soil is taken to the leaves, which absorb carbon dioxide breathed out by animals. Chlorophyll in the leaves absorbs energy from sunlight which turns the water in the leaves to oxygen and hydrogen. The latter blends with the carbon dioxide in the leaves to create sugar and the oxygen surplus to the plant's needs is released into the air for animals to breathe.

Plants have adopted various ways of defending themselves against excessive predation by animals. Some plants have prickly leaves and/or stems, some have sharp thorns, and some sting. When a plant has produced ripe seeds or berries, however, it is in the plant's interests to disperse them and indicating to birds that berries are ripe enough to eat helps to disperse the seeds via the bird's droppings. Many ripe berries are bright red to indicate they are ready to eat, although elderberries rely on a red stalk for this purpose.

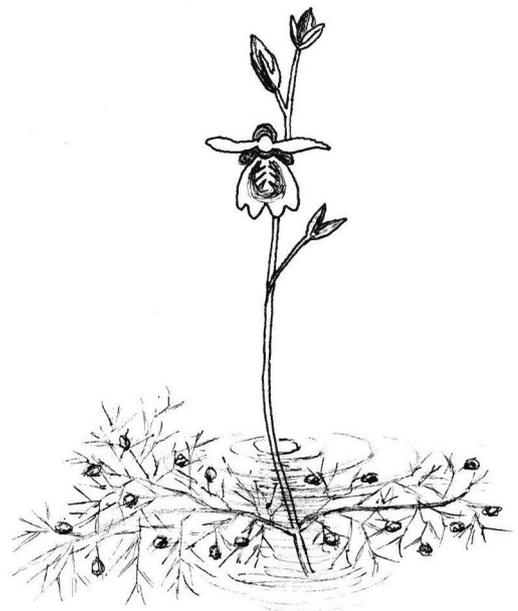
Many plants are poisonous, some such as Deadly Nightshade, Henbane, Monkshood, Hemlock and Hemlock Water-dropwort dangerously so. Brenda thought it likely that the plants developed these poisons as a chemical defence against animal predators. Today many of the substances produced by poisonous plants have medicinal uses.

Plants make use of animals, particularly insects, to help them reproduce by attracting them with a supply of nectar. In taking the nectar from a flower, the insect collects pollen on its body which it transfers onto the stigma of the next flower of the same species it visits. Many flowers make their nectar difficult to reach, which increases the likelihood of the visiting insect taking pollen. This system is more effective than wind dispersal, which requires far more pollen

to be produced to allow for the much larger wastage that occurs. Whilst some plants are self-pollinating and some rely on wind dispersal of their pollen, the majority rely on fauna to transfer their pollen from one plant to another of the same species. As well as bees, many other insects including butterflies and moths perform this task. In some countries birds, especially humming-birds, and mammals, especially bats, are important pollinators. Some plants attract pollinators by more complex means. A few orchid species produce a scent which mimics that of the female of the pollinator species and the shape of the Fly, Bee and Spider Orchids convinces the visiting pollinator that he is mating with a female of his own species. Plants such as Marjoram has a smell that attracts insects whereas other species, such as Water Mint, has a smell which is repellent to many insects.

Many animals eat plants, but only a few of our native plants eat animals. The exceptions are the three species of Sundew, three species of Butterwort and six species of Bladderwort, all of which attract, trap and digest insects. The Sundews and Butterworts grow in wet or boggy habitats, and the Bladderworts are aquatic plants which use bladders on their stems to trap small aquatic fauna which they then digest.

Our thanks go to Brenda for her interesting talk.



Above: Greater Bladderwort (*Utricularia vulgaris*) - a rootless submerged plant found mainly in peaty marsh or bog pools. Has numerous 2-3mm bladders on its submerged leaves and large-lipped yellow flowers appear on aerial stems in late Summer.

## Flora and fauna of the Western Cape

At our November meeting we enjoyed an excellent illustrated talk by Richard Jones on the flora and fauna of the Western Cape.

Richard told us that he had been a teacher for 38 years, mainly teaching science. Since retiring in 2007, he and his wife have travelled to many parts of the world and seen lots of interesting places and a wide variety of plants and animals. His visit to the Western Cape was undertaken as an organised trip led by experienced guides with an intimate knowledge of the locations visited and the flora and fauna to be seen. As a result of this trip and Richard's photography, we were given a wonderful opportunity to get to know more about the scenery and natural history of this distant location.

As the talk progressed, it became clear how important the Western Cape is for both flora and fauna: the number of plant species found there is enormous and the animal life so varied. Richard's Western Cape trip included the 528ha Kirstenbosch National Botanic Garden on the eastern slopes of Table Mountain. Kirstenbosch is considered to be the most beautiful garden in Africa and one of the greatest gardens in the world, containing an amazing 22,000 species of indigenous plants. The fynbos habitats around Table Mountain support around 9,000 plant species, of which some 2,000 (more than the number of species found in the UK) are found on Table Mountain alone. The area receives heavy rainfall in Winter, has its peak wildflower season in Spring, and experiences hot dry Summers. We were informed that 650 species of *Erica* grow in the fynbos region. We were treated to photographs of a huge range of unfamiliar orchids such as species of *Disa*, *Bartholina* and *Satyreuma* and colourful flowers such as *Geissorhiza radicans* (Wine Cup), *Moraea aristata* (one of the Cape Tulips), Spider Lilies, Diascias and *Gladious lilaceus*.



We were informed that the latter changes colour and becomes fragrant at night to attract pollinating moths. Some of us may have seen *Proteas* and *Zantedeschia aethiopica* (Altar Lily), which were shown in the talk, growing in botanical gardens in the warmer parts of SW Britain.



As well as the huge variety of plants mentioned in the talk, the coverage of the fauna to be seen in this part of southern Africa is amazing. The species illustrated in the talk ranged from invertebrates such as the Monkey Beetle and amphibians such as the Clicking Stream Frog to mammals including Cape Porcupine, Baboon, Bontebok, Greater Kudu, Eland, Cape Mountain Zebra and Southern Right Whale.

Among the birds illustrated were the colourful Yellow Bishop and the Southern Red Bishop, and we were shown a short movie of a Secretary Bird killing a snake. Other birds illustrated included Jackal Buzzard, African Spoonbill, Black-winged Stilt, Cape Sugarbird, Pale Chanting Goshawk, Spotted Eagle-owl, Fork-tailed Drongo, Ludwig's Bustard, African Penguin, Cape Cormorant and Blue Crane (the national bird of South Africa).

It was interesting to hear that one of the overnight stops on the speaker's trip was at a very isolated location where there were no lights for miles, resulting in the darkest skies and the best stargazing opportunities he had ever experienced.

Our thanks go to Richard for his interesting and well-illustrated talk and for introducing us to so many different species of flora and fauna in a single talk.

Photographs:-

Left: *Geissorhiza radicans* (Wine cup)

Above: *Protea* growing in Tresco Abbey gardens, Isles of Scilly.

## Bus walks

### Thames walk - Marlow to Hambleden Weir

The weather was perfect for the bus walk from Marlow to Hambleden Weir on Saturday 26<sup>th</sup> August. There were plenty of riverside flowers to see along the Thames, the herd of white deer on the Culham Estate were grazing quite close to Culham Court, and there was a good view from the footpath



of the new chapel which has been built on the site of a demolished building on the Estate



After a short stop for a packed lunch, the end of the walk was soon reached, and a stroll across the weir and past Hambleden Mill led to Mill End and the bus back home. It was certainly a very enjoyable walk but a shame that no-one else turned up to share it with me. I did receive apologies in advance from most of those who regularly support the Group's walks, however.

### Hillside and chalk stream walk - West Wycombe to High Wycombe

Our walk on 11<sup>th</sup> October had a dual theme - a look at an area of open access chalk grassland with views over West Wycombe and beyond, and a look at the locations where the Wye chalk stream can be seen between West Wycombe and High Wycombe town centre.

We met at High Wycombe bus station and caught a bus to West Wycombe village. We first walked westwards out of the village to the point where the Wye can be seen when it flows towards the A40 from springs along the Radnage valley. Unlike in 2014, when the stream was flowing all the way from the Stokenchurch side of Bennett End, the only sign of the streambed on this occasion was a wide dry ditch running across the field where cattle were grazing on the grass and other non-wetland vegetation. Roger produced a photograph showing the wide stream flowing at this point in early 2014.

After admiring some of the old buildings in the National Trust-owned village, including taking advantage of a rare opportunity to see inside the Church Loft, the oldest building in the village: this dates from the 15<sup>th</sup> century, when it was used as a stopping place for travellers, including pilgrims. As we approached the Pedestal roundabout, named after the old, but now very much neglected, stone signpost at the side of the road, Roger produced another photograph taken in early 2014 showing a stream which he explained had flowed continuously from springs near Saunderton Station and followed the A4040 through Bradenham and across the field near Flint Farm before crossing the A40 and disappearing into the grounds of West Wycombe House. As we crossed the road by the Pedestal, Roger said that the old stone signpost had originally stood in the middle of the roundabout and that the writing on it directed travellers to London, Oxford and the County Town (then Buckingham).

We then walked up Cookshall Lane and turned right across open grassland below Branch Wood to admire the views over West Wycombe Hill, West Wycombe Village, and over the grounds of West Wycombe House towards Toweridge. We were surprised to find large numbers of both Small Scabious and Field Scabious and a few other wildflower species still blooming on this south-facing chalk grassland. On

reaching the eastern end of the open access land, we descended to the site of the former West Wycombe railway station, and crossed the old cattle bridge over the railway line, admiring the large number of Wall Rue ferns growing on the brickwork. After crossing the busy A40, we turned down Park Farm Road and crossed the Wye to enter Park Farm, which is part of the West Wycombe Estate, the former farm buildings now being used as a base for the National Trust estate management staff and their equipment. We admired the view looking westwards towards the former West Wycombe Mill House and eastwards



over unspoilt wetland areas towards Chapel Lane, but were concerned about the very low water levels in the stream beds on the day of the walk.

Moving on to Chapel Lane, we looked at the wonderful view westwards from the Pepperpots Bridge and looked at the places where the Wye and a mill leat created to drive the mill wheels at the former Francis Mill and Fryer's Mill can be seen before they both enter culverts within industrial areas before

reappearing in Mill End Road as they approach Desborough Recreation Ground.



Having looked at the habitat improvements along the streams on either side of Desborough Recreation Ground, we followed the new riverside path created alongside Waterside (a new housing development between Fryers Lane and Desborough Park Road). Between the latter and the town centre we looked at the locations where the river can be seen and where current planning applications offer scope for improvements to and possible future access to the river.

We looked at the site of Lords Mill in Oakridge Road and where the Wye currently enters the town centre culvert by Westbourne Street on the site of the former Ash Mill. We then returned to the bus station.

Although only six people attended this walk, they all appeared to enjoy it, and one has done the walk twice since.

Roger

## Christmas Special members' meeting

As we were unable to have the use of St Thomas' Church hall at Holtspur on the second Friday of December, and the only convenient alternative date was only 11 days after the previous meeting at our High Wycombe venue, we decided to book the earlier date of 1<sup>st</sup> December but make it a free social event.

Although the attendance level was below average, those who did come enjoyed the evening. John Hoar took on the role of M.C. for the evening and the planned activities filled up the evening, whilst leaving time for members to get their tea or coffee and sit at one of the tables where a selection of edibles, including mincepies and home made biscuits, had been set out. All the "games" and other activities had a wildlife theme, including a wildlife challenge (which

was a form of picture quiz), and a really challenging wildlife version of "Call My Bluff".

Would we hold a similar event in the future? Probably yes: it does help those attending to talk to and get to know more people than at a normal meeting. We could consider whether such a meeting could be arranged in the daytime and held at a venue accessible by public transport, so that members who do not drive or are unable to drive after dark could attend. If you have any views on the matter, we would love to hear from you.

Thanks to all those who helped to make this event run so smoothly.

## 2017 moth events

Our first moth evening of the year was in May in Stan Armstrong's garden in Loudwater. The highlight of the evening however was not a moth but a male Stag Beetle which stayed for hours and was filmed and photographed on numerous occasions by Stan. Other wildlife found were some Cockchafers, Mayflies and a Frog. Some of the moths encountered were the Mocha, Orange Footman, Pale Tussock and Figure of Eighty.

The June moth meeting was held in Flackwell Heath in the garden of Karen Roberts and Paul Bowyer. During daylight that day we had already seen a Hummingbird Hawkmoth in the front garden nectaring on Red Valerian - a splendid sight. In the evening we caught a number of our usual visitors for this time of year including Heart and Dart, Brimstone, Common Marbled Carpet, Flame Shoulder, Dark Arches, Peppered Moth, Straw Dot, Small Elephant Hawkmoth and Light Emerald. My favourite for the evening was the Scorched Wing, the colour of which looks as if it has ventured too near a fire.

During the second half of June and the first half of July we had some hot weather and good moth nights. John Hoar had borrowed the Group's moth trap and was trapping in his garden in Beaconsfield. Amongst the pictures of moths he sent me was one of an insect which had what seemed to be an easily recognisable shape and pattern. A few days later we had the same species in our trap. Both Karen and I searched all our moth books with no success. The following afternoon we phoned Wycombe Wildlife Group member and Bucks moth recorder, Martin Albertini. He answered straight away that it was a Box-tree Moth. The species was first recorded in this country in Kent in 2007. It is thought that it had been accidentally imported on Box trees from continental Europe. The moth is indigenous to China and Korea. Recordings of this moth have become widespread and local sightings are increasing. I expect new editions of British moth books will include this species. When our group visited the Stoke Poges Memorial Gardens we

found damage on the ornamental Box hedges on which the larvae of the Box-tree Moth had fed.



Above: Box-tree Moth - recorded in both John Hoar's garden in Beaconsfield and in Paul and Karen's garden in Flackwell Heath.

Our July moth trapping had to be cancelled because of rain, so the next one was at the Loudwater Orchard at the Derehams Lane sports complex where frequent showers cut short the meeting. We did see a few moths, amongst them the Maple Prominent and Dusky Thorn. In September we went to John and Joan Hoar's garden in Beaconsfield on a cool, still evening. The Lunar Underwing, Dusky Thorn and the Snout were some the species seen.

"Butterfly Conservation" had arranged the National Moth nights to take place on October 12<sup>th</sup>, 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup>. Wycombe Wildlife Group held their meeting in Flackwell Heath in our garden on the 12<sup>th</sup> October, and only one other person attended and only three moths were attracted to the trap.

The next night was 5 degrees warmer and a lot more moths flew in. The Black Rustic, Burnished Brass, Blair's Shoulder-knot and Red-Green Carpet were seen, and late in the evening the Merveille du Jour came to the light.

I would like to thank Martin Albertini for the help he has given us over the last few years and helping me in getting out of a few scrapes.

Paul Bowyer



Left: Merveille du Jour

Right: Blair's Shoulder-knot

The latter is often found on conifers, especially Leyland Cypress.



This last species has a stunning green and white pattern and is the first I have seen in our garden. It has always seemed to be a moth we would never see, but it is relatively common and all that was needed was to trap later in the year.

## The Setaceous Hebrew Character

Among the moths attracted to the light trap in my garden during this past month has been the handsome Setaceous Hebrew Character. What a marvellous name! But what exactly is a setaceous Hebrew character when it is not a moth? I put the question to the minister of my church, knowing that his linguistic skills extended to a knowledge of Hebrew. He could throw no light on the meaning of "setaceous", however, which made me suspect that it was an adjective describing the moth, not the Hebrew character. Consultation of the dictionary confirmed that this was indeed the case; "setaceous" means "having bristles", and distinguishes the moth from another, which is known simply as "Hebrew Character". The Hebrew character is the mark on the forewings of both species, which resembles the Hebrew letter nun (נ), as Google readily informed me – though, being pedantic, it is the correct way round on the left wing only, being in mirror image on the right.

The light trap concerned belongs to WWG and was made available to me by Paul Bowyer. I do not have an exclusive right to it, so if anyone



reading this would like to discover what moths inhabit their own property, let Paul know and I will pass it over – but will hope to borrow it again. Moth trapping gets under your skin!

John Hoar

## Garden tweets (and beyond)

We have an extended family of Crows in the tall trees nearby and in the garden, and they have been calling to each other night and morning. (Is this a *Corvus chorus*?)

Two young Robins have been fighting over possession of the nest box they both came from in the Spring.

Looking out of the French windows in the dark one evening I found I was 'eyeball to eyeball' with a Fox that was peering in at me! It is a very handsome one with a white tip to its tail, and it often comes for food.

I don't know whether we will be responsible for a lack of Woodpigeons in 2018! We have taken down our pergola which was starting to deteriorate, but it was the main courting and mating perch for a pair of Woodpigeons.

Whilst working in our garden, I heard the guttural croaking of Ravens overhead. Although I didn't see them in time, their sound is unmistakable.

A Black-headed Gull has been taking the bits of chicken that we put out for the Red Kites: I think it probably comes from the population on the Rye. Unlike the local population of Herring Gulls and Lesser Black-backed Gulls which usually land to eat, the Black-headed Gull hovers daintily over the lawn then dives down like a Red Kite. The gull snatches the chicken pieces very deftly with its beak, unlike the Red Kites which use their talons and then pass the food to their beaks in mid flight.

Whilst walking past a Hawthorn bush along the towpath at Marlow on a mild and sunny November day, I heard the sound of a Chiffchaff in full Spring song. In the same bush was a Fieldfare busily rattling and gobbling up haws.

During a short holiday in North Wales in the Autumn,

I went to the Great Orme Head and saw a family of Peregrine Falcons. The parents were teaching the youngsters to hunt. Impressively, they even scattered a group of four Ravens! Walking along the prom at Rhyl after the evening meal, I noticed large loose flocks of black birds winding their way to the inland lake. I didn't realise what they were until the third evening when they passed above me and I saw that they were Cormorants. I didn't realise that Cormorants flocked: there were upwards of 150 each evening.

More tweets in the Spring.

Frances Wilding



Our garden in late Nov and mid Dec 2017



### WANTED

#### Help with site management tasks

Although our Group undertakes far less practical conservation tasks than we undertook in the past, conserving the environment remains one of our charitable aims and there are plenty of opportunities for such work. It is appreciated that many of our members are not able to undertake such tasks and will not be interested, but anyone who is interested in undertaking an occasional task when the need arises could contact me to register their interest.

One of our supporters donated some money for improving the area of land between Little Marlow cemetery and Sheepridge Lane, which our Group used to manage as a nature reserve until most of the site was taken over for cemetery and car parking use. The site still has some wildlife interest, however, and some of the donated funding has been used to purchase and plant a selection of suitable wildlife-friendly wildflowers. This is not an easy site to get new plants established, so some of the funding has been retained for a second planting session during 2018.

The member who has shared the brushcutting work at Kingswood Cemetery with me for several years, was unable to help this year, so I was very pleased to have an offer of help from another of our members who is a trained brushcutter operator. I managed to fit in two days work strimming and raking up on the cemetery banks, which are managed for wildflowers, and the two of us spent a day strimming the chalk grassland glades within the land set aside for future cemetery use. A further day was spent raking up the cut vegetation from the glades and hand cutting a steep bank, which I consider is unsuitable for brushcutter use.

If any other members are trained brushcutter users or would be willing to assist with tasks such as raking up, litter clearance and wildflower planting, please let me know.

### **Volunteers to help publicise Wycombe Wildlife Group and its activities.**

Wycombe Wildlife Group has not had a publicity officer since 2012 when the late Pat Morris gave up this role, along with her responsibility for editing the newsletter, a short while before she and her husband Roy moved away from High Wycombe. No-one was willing to take on the publicity role then, and we are still having difficulties finding someone with the time to take on this important role, which often requires tasks being undertaken quickly and at short notice.

At the last Executive Committee meeting it was agreed that the need for a publicity officer should be mentioned in the newsletter, listing some of the tasks needing to be undertaken with a view to seeking volunteers willing to undertake individual tasks rather than take responsibility for all the publicity work. To achieve the latter would require someone with plenty of spare time and who would be available at short notice to deal with publicity issues as a matter of some priority whenever they occur. Nowadays there are few people in a position to undertake such a commitment, whereas a small group of volunteers willing to undertake one or more of the tasks, with perhaps a member of the Executive Committee acting as team leader and adviser to ensure that the publicity work is undertaken in a way that contributes to Wycombe Wildlife Group's aims and policies, might be worth considering.

#### Individual tasks which would contribute to the current publicity needs of WWG

##### *Press liaison*

Notify local press in advance of any event WWG wishes to publicise.

Submit an account to the local press of any WWG event which has taken place and which may be of public interest.

##### *Distribution of WWG information*

Distribute posters and other WWG publicity material in advance of events, which our Group wishes to publicise, to libraries, shops, tourist offices, venues in which meetings are to be held, etc.

Distribute copies of WWG events programmes and newsletters to locations such as libraries and doctors' and dentists' waiting rooms.

Approach libraries, tourist offices, garden centres and other suitable outlets, to arrange for WWG membership leaflets to be available to the public, and ensure that the leaflets are replenished as necessary.

##### *Creation of displays for WWG events*

Liaise with other WWG members to create a collection of photographs and other items relating to WWG activities (ensuring that WWG has permission to use them for publicity purposes), and create interesting displays for members' meetings and at any events which WWG is attending that offer an opportunity to publicise our Group and its activities.

NB

There are other publicity-related issues which will need further discussion by the Executive Committee. These include making the best use of our Facebook page and liaising with our webmaster to make more use of the WWG website, the use of which at the moment tends to be limited to publicising our events programme and providing a home for our newsletters. If anyone has any views on the website content, we would very much like to hear from you. The website is important to WWG as a means of communicating what we do to a much wider audience than just our members, so we need to make sure we are making the best use of it.

If you would like to help WWG by undertaking or sharing any of these tasks, please have a word with either James Donald or Roger Wilding.

