

Nottinghamshire

Wildlife Trust



WILD

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Local Action Newsletter for Members of Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust



Spring 2011



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Contributions

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Front Cover

Idle Valley Walk by Di Fisher

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Wildlife News - Email Service

Would you like to keep up-to-date with Nottinghamshire's latest wildlife news?

Our informative E-Newsletters will keep you up-to-date with our achievements, activities and what is happening in the county. Our E-Newsletters include:

- Members' Email Update (monthly)
- Attenborough Nature Reserve & Centre (monthly)
- Idle Valley Nature Reserve & Rural Learning Centre (quarterly)

To sign up to our E-Newsletters, please email membership@nottswt.co.uk with your name, membership number, postcode and which E-Newsletters you wish to receive.

Additional news stories are also listed on our website: www.nottinghamshirewildlife.org/news/



MEMBERS MATTER

by Anna-Lisa Hasedzic

Welcome to the first issue of Wild About Notts.

The aim of this brand new Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust newsletter is to showcase the amazing work of our members and volunteers. In each issue contributors from across the county will share their personal volunteering tales, and our Local Groups will update you on their valuable work.

Highlights in this issue include: long-term member and volunteer, Neil Pinder reminisces about Keyworth Meadow; wildlife calling by volunteer receptionist Kate Hill; and Mike Spencer provides an update on the busy Beeston Wildlife Group.

In keeping with its ethos, Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust truly does continue to be an organisation run by local people for local wildlife. As the largest membership-based environmental charity in the county, our members really do matter. Your continued subscription is vital in helping us to manage nature reserves, protect local species and provide wildlife education.

With your additional support we can achieve much more. By recommending us to your family and friends, via our membership referral scheme (details below), you will help us to inspire new people about the wonders of wildlife, strengthen our campaigning voice and raise money to create a Living Landscape rich in wildlife for everyone.

Membership Referral Scheme *Earn a £10 Love2shop Voucher*



Do you know someone who would like to join, but hasn't got round to it yet?

How about giving them a nudge? Let the Membership Team know, and when your friend has joined, you'll receive a £10 Love2shop voucher, which you can spend at a variety of shops – have a look online at: www.highstreetvouchers.com/gift-vouchers/love2shop for a list of outlets.

Please ask your friend to set up a Direct Debit, either on the phone or using the printable form on the website, as this helps us to keep admin costs down. Regular PayPal subscriptions can also be set up via our website.

What You Need To Do

Ring, write, or email the Membership Team with the following information:

- Your name, your postcode, your membership number (if you know it)
- Your friend's name and their postcode

When they join we'll send your voucher to you – it's that easy! For further details, please call us on **0115 958 8242** or email membership@nottswt.co.uk. Website: www.nottinghamshirewildlife.org



“ Why Join The Wildlife Trusts?

There are plenty of great reasons but I'll give you three. They are vocal, they are visible and they are value for money. The Wildlife Trusts are all about getting involved at a local level. Your local Wildlife Trust works within your community and so is looking after wildlife in your backyard. That means you benefit from it so show your support at a local level. And don't just pay your money; turn up and get involved too because by doing that, you'll be supporting the future, both of wildlife and of everyone in the UK too. ”

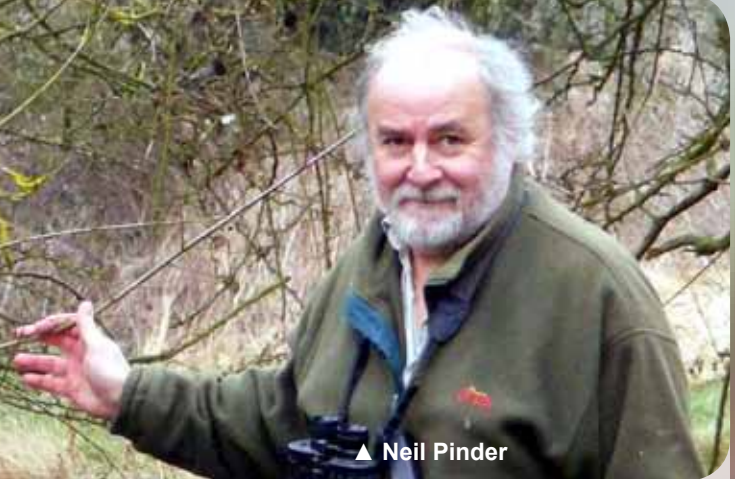
Chris Packham, Vice President of The Wildlife Trusts



VOLUNTEER TALES

Growing Up With Nature

By Neil Pinder,
Treasurer of South Notts Local Group
& Warden at Keyworth Meadow



▲ Neil Pinder

As a Keyworth lad born and bred, what is now known as Keyworth Meadow Local Nature Reserve was a natural adventure playground to a 10-year old, along with most of the fields and woods nearby. But the Meadow was special even then, with Fairham Brook babbling along one side. In the days when public swimming pools didn't exist, the brook was our lido, our paddling pool, our obstacle course and our pond dipping area – all unsupervised by meddling grown ups!



▲ Children playing at Keyworth Meadow, 1930

It was designated a nature reserve in 1985, but it was not until my daughter, then aged seven, fell in love with it in 2000, that I began to appreciate it again and I became involved as a Warden. Having been a full-time Warden (at Rye Harbour in E. Sussex) and a keen naturalist and birder all my life, my skills came in handy.

“ Since 2005 I've been the proud Warden. ”

It is only small at just under four acres, most of which is damp grassland that used to be grazed but is now cut annually. We try to burn off the arisings but weather and circumstances often thwart us -

this is less than ideal. Fortunately, Gaynor Jones Jenkins, a Conservation Officer with Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust, has provided us with advice on how to implement hay removal and aftermath grazing. Gaynor is really helpful in giving advice and ideas about the meadow's management. The reserve is owned by Keyworth Parish Council, and the Wildlife Trust supports the site.

The best job as far as I'm concerned is recording the wildlife. The meadow's claim to fame is recording the first long-winged conehead (a species of bush-cricket) for the county in 2007. Even a small site like this has enough wildlife to keep any broad-minded naturalist busy; a moth-trapping session has found 72 macro species and the bird list stands at 84, with regular breeding turtle doves being the most important of these.

It was through the meadow that I found myself on the committee of the South Notts Local Group of Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust, where I help raise money and promote its work (along with my two little helpers, the captive-bred harvest mice!) and it's a real pleasure to meet and work with the dedicated professionals at the Wildlife Trust.

Visiting Keyworth Meadow



The meadow is on the outskirts of Keyworth village in south Notts. On its western margin flows Fairham Brook, to the south is arable land, to the north is a small pasture and to the east is Lings Lane, an unmade track, via which the meadow is accessed.



VOLUNTEER TALES

Wildlife Calling

By Kate Hill, Volunteer Receptionist

Back in 2008, having previously given up a career to raise a family, I was looking to do something positive with all that time I had to spare, now that the children had grown up. I'd always been a member of Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust and happened to see on their website that they were looking for volunteers. It sounded ideal; an opportunity for me to rediscover my self-esteem while giving something back.

I was offered the chance to work at the reception desk, greeting visitors and fielding and redirecting phone calls. Of course the inevitable panic set in as my first day at work arrived. Once through the door, though, I found everyone helpful and welcoming. Although working on reception was a baptism of fire - I never knew what sort of queries to expect - there was always someone there to help out. The reception desk is a great place to find out about the breadth of the Wildlife Trust activity. Before I'd arrived, I'd been aware that



▲ Kate Hill

Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust managed a number of reserves, but I soon realised that this is just a fraction of what they do, with their tentacles in many aspects of planning and decision-making across the county.

I think of voluntary work like this as what the biology textbooks call a symbiotic relationship. I get a sense of worth, self-esteem and growing self-confidence from playing my small part in the Wildlife Trust's invaluable work (*Editor's note: Every volunteer plays a significant part in helping our work*).

I like to think that the Wildlife Trust benefits from the time given by people like me, who oil the wheels to allow the dedicated, knowledgeable staff to get on with their work that's so important for our environment and the wildlife that depends on it.

TAKE ACTION Do you have administration skills?

We are seeking an efficient and organised volunteer to put their skills to good use in our Membership Team.

Further details available on our website:
www.nottinghamshirewildlife.org/jobs
Or call Julie Reed on 0115 958 8242

TAKE ACTION: Become a Volunteer Warden!

Our 68 Nature Reserves (which cover over 3,400 acres) are special places representing the very best habitats in Nottinghamshire. Maintaining them to a high standard is thanks to the skill, experience and knowledge of our Reserves Staff and the commitment and enthusiasm of our voluntary Reserve Managers and Wardens. We need additional Volunteer Wardens to help on nature reserves around the county including:

- Annesley Woodhouse Quarry
- Breck's Plantation (Clifton)
- Clarborough Tunnel (Retford)
- Calverton Road (Gedling)
- Moorbridge Pond (Bulwell)
- Teveral Pastures (Ashfield)

Further details about the reserves are available on our website:
www.nottinghamshirewildlife.org/nature-reserves

Our Volunteer Wardens help us to:

1. Monitor the Reserve for any damage, pollution and litter.
2. Inform visitors about the Reserve and its wildlife.
3. Record wildlife species and behaviour on the Reserve.

Training and ongoing support will be provided. For further details, please contact our Volunteer Officer, Julie Reed on 0115 958 8242 or email jreed@nottswt.co.uk



▲ Volunteer Wardens on a training day



FEATURED GROUP

The Busy Beeston Wildlife Group

By Mike Spencer, a Member of the Beeston Wildlife Group ▶



◀ *Some of the Saturday morning group taking shelter from the biting February wind and rain in the sumptuously appointed Tower Hide overlooking the Clifton Pond at Attenborough. You can almost hear their whispered conversation “....well I know it’s cold, but bitterns were definitely here yesterday.... OK I’m sorry, but we don’t serve mugs of tea in the hide!!!”*

The 2010/2011 season of illustrated talks kicked-off last September with a captivating view of “Familiar Wild Flowers” delivered by Dr David Glynn Fox, the well-known local botanist and naturalist. His audience, of over 100 nature enthusiasts, was treated to a fascinating insight into the world of wild flowers. The October meeting saw Beeston Wildlife Group (BWG) committee member Nigel Slater give his own particular and highly entertaining slant on the “Mystery of Bird Migration” - always an absorbing topic, to which new and often extraordinary scientific research data is being added all the time.

For the more adventurous amongst the BWG stalwarts, in November, Gordon Gadsby told us about his climbing, cycling and all-round nature exploring tours of the Hebridean Islands, illustrated by stunning slides taken by a consummate photographer. In January this year the Group played host to another even more renowned photographer, Paul Hobson, who recently appeared on the BBC Midlands News slot “Sally goes Wild”! (*Editor’s note: The Wildlife Trust’s very own Tim Sexton, Deputy Manager at Attenborough Nature Centre, is regularly featured as an expert on this new BBC wildlife feature*).

A visit in February from Ed Green, the Chief Executive of Derbyshire Wildlife Trust, brought into sharp focus the threat caused by pollution and the over-exploitation of the marine environment and its wildlife.

Also, in February, David Martin, long-time Attenborough volunteer and BWG committee member, moved home from Chilwell to the wilds of North Norfolk. There’ll be plenty of volunteer work, bird watching and reserve wardening for David and his wife Ann in that wonderful part of the country. But David’s still a dedicated member of Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust and intends to keep it that way!

In March an illustrated talk on “Food for Free” was given by Dr Patrick Harding and this was followed in April by the Keith Corbett Memorial Lecture, this year given by Nigel Slater, covering a subject that was close to Keith’s heart - “Butterflies & Dragonflies” - Attenborough Nature Reserve featured prominently in Nigel’s presentation.

Once a month throughout the year, the Beeston Wildlife Group runs a guided Saturday morning walk around the Attenborough Nature Reserve. Led by Bill Wheatley and ably assisted by the rest of the Local Group committee, these three-hour walks are free of charge and open to all – Wildlife Trust members, the general public, the young, the not so young – everyone is welcome! Just make sure you come well shod and dressed for the weather.

The Beeston Wildlife Group’s events programme is listed at www.attenboroughnaturecentre.co.uk/activities/beeston-wildlife-group

INTERVIEW

Mike Spencer interviews fellow Beeston Wildlife Group member Nigel Slater.

1. How long have you been involved with NWT and in what sort of capacity?

I guess I was involved even before there was an NWT, as I became switched-on to wildlife in my teens, by people like Norman Lewis and Keith Corbett. I joined Norman's bird ringing group and trailed Keith around what was then the local gravel pits - now the marvellous Attenborough Nature Reserve.

Today, I am a committee member of the Beeston Wildlife Group that I helped to form with Keith and Bill Wheatley more years ago than I care to think about. As well as giving the odd talk, I also engage all the other speakers for our meetings. This can be quite time consuming as over the years we have established quite a reputation with our audiences and it's important that we keep up the standard. Along with the rest of the committee, I help to lead the Group's monthly walks around Attenborough Reserve.

2. What inspired you to support NWT?

It was inevitable really. I have a love of all things to do with wildlife – at 52 years of age, I still want to learn everything I can about the natural world. So being part of NWT gives me the chance to meet other people who are hooked on wildlife just like me.



▲ Nigel Slater

MEMOIR

It All Began With Barn Owls...

By Willie Milne, Secretary of Worksop Local Group

I first came across Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust's Worksop Local Group when my wife and I attended a talk on barn owls, which took place in The White Swan in Blythe. Soon we were attending most of their meetings, which at that time were held in the Cricket Club on Central Avenue. A suggestion from me that I was willing to help with posters soon was transformed without my knowledge into being called their secretary - having just retired I was wanting to be rid of responsibility!

My first love is with the topography of the countryside – the beauty of landscapes. To see different birds and wild animals is a bonus. I really like woodlands, waterfalls, valleys, ridges and mountain panoramas. However, I am still a reluctant Munro bagger who hopes to finish them before I am 75. (*Munros are Scottish mountains more than 3,000 feet in height, and munro baggers are people who aim to climb all the munros*).

We are very lucky where we live because within walking distance there are so many green spaces: Clumber Park, Welbeck, Chesterfield Canal, Anston Stone and now, right on our doorstep, the Wildlife Trust's Idle Valley Nature Reserve, where I hope to get more involved.

This summer, the Worksop Local Group will be holding a number of walks. I am looking forward to leading a walk around Sherwood Heath Nature Reserve on 19th July. It will start at 7.30pm and we'll meet in Budby village (SK 617700). For further details please contact me on 01909 472 458.

A full list of Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust events are listed at: www.nottinghamshirewildlife.org/events/



▲ Willie Milne

BRIEF UPDATE

Reflecting the Seasons by Jenny Davies, Secretary of Retford Local Group

February, the time of writing this update, seems to be at a crossroads between the seasons. We look back on the severe winter weather and look forward to the joys of spring, while experiencing all weathers during the month. The old rhyme "If Candlemas day be fair and bright winter will have another bite" comes to mind, but at least the snowdrops and aconites are flowering and the hazel catkins have been out for some weeks now. Geoff Trinder opened our talks programme with an inspirational and informative wildlife gardening talk. His passion and enthusiasm sent us home with plenty of ideas to incorporate into our own gardens. (**Editor's note: See the spring wildlife gardening tips on page 7**). We look forward now to spring and summer and hope to meet members and new friends at the Tim Bowles Memorial Walk (Sunday May 1st 2pm in Gamston Wood) as well as at the Idle Valley summer fair and barbecue on June 18th where the Local Group will have a plant stall. All contributions welcome!



GARDENING TIPS



◀ **By Nadia Ming, Chair of the Newark Local Group**

1. Don't use pesticides. Most pesticides are not selective. You risk killing off the beneficial bugs along with the pests.

2. Spring-flowering plants bring valuable early nectar for insects. Sow hardy annuals and grow nectar-rich flowers for butterflies, moths, bees and other insects to drink from in summer. If you have not already got any, plant common honeysuckle, as this provides nectar for butterflies and moths, which it attracts with its nocturnal scent, and birds also eat the seeds.

3. Include local native plants in your garden. Research suggests native plants are four times more attractive to native bees than exotic flowers. They are also usually well adapted to your growing conditions and can thrive with minimum attention, with a choice of several colors of flowers. Bees have good colour vision to help them find flowers and the nectar and pollen they offer; flower colours that particularly attract bees are blue, purple, violet, white, and yellow.

4. On my allotment a great favorite of mine and of the bees is borage, as it flowers from April to October, is a wonderful source of food for bees and other insects, and also goes very well with Pimms!

5. Finally, if you use netting to cover a pond or vegetable patch, ensure the mesh size is at least 4cm to prevent grass snakes becoming snared.

Do you have some top wildlife gardening tips? If so, email ahasedzic@nottswt.co.uk

Photos by Nadia Ming



CAMPAIGN ACTION

Petition Fish II

The UK's seas are extraordinarily rich in wildlife, home to over 44,000 species – around 50% of our biodiversity. However, our seas are poorly protected and are under increasing pressure. Landlocked Nottinghamshire residents shouldn't ignore the plight of our seas – we all have a responsibility to do what we can to safeguard our marine environment.

United by our vision of Living Seas, The Wildlife Trusts' ambition is to lead the way towards a healthy, productive and wildlife-rich future for UK coasts and seas. Our Living Seas vision is supported by wildlife experts, including Nick Baker (pictured). In 2007 our successful Petition Fish campaign helped generate a Marine Bill. Now, The Wildlife Trusts are campaigning for the Government to commit to establishing a network of Marine Conservation Zones.

With your help we can achieve this through Petition Fish II, which will be launched during Marine Week (30th July - 14th August 2011). Details on how you can help will be published on our website and in the local media. Watch this space!



▲ Nick Baker at the Living Seas Conference © Tom Marshall



▲ Petition Fish I in 2007

YOUR FEEDBACK

Here are a few recent comments from members and supporters.



“ I am so happy to be a member of the Notts W.T. and particularly to receive the really excellent e-mails. My passion really is for wild flowers and I have been reading about Ploughman Wood today. ”

Email from Peter, a new member



“ Great evening exploring the @Nottswildlife Kirton Wood SSSI. ”

A tweet from Rob Brook, one of our volunteer photographers. A selection of his Kirton Wood photographs can be found on Flickr at <http://flic.kr/s/aHsjugKCWL>

www.twitter.com/Nottswildlife

If you have any feedback, please email the editor: ahasedzic@nottswt.co.uk