

Huddersfield Birdwatchers' Club

Registered Charity No. 1098296

NEWSLETTER 2015

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PRESIDENT'S JOTTINGS

It has been an eventful year for the club. John Walker stepped down in December both as Indoor Meetings Secretary, a role he held for many years, and as Treasurer, because of pressure of work. We owe John a huge thank you for his contribution over such a long period.

It left, of course, a big hole as no Treasurer nor meetings organiser meant potentially no club, and you will know that I felt it necessary to write to all members in January appealing for help. I confess that I was concerned for a while, but several members came forward to join us on the Committee and fill these roles and indeed more.

Alf King took over as Indoor Meetings Secretary (in addition to continuing as our web site 'guru') and you will see the excellent programme he has put together for 2015/16.

We decided to split the previous job of Treasurer into two – Nick Mallinson has become Treasurer to manage the Club's finances, and Hazel Sill takes on the new role of dedicated Membership Secretary, with the aim of rebuilding membership, which has fallen in recent years.

And there's more – Reg Senior volunteered to take over the nest box scheme that we started in late 2014 and has done a magnificent job in working with Bridgewood Trust and the various woodlands to which we have donated boxes. Also in achieving publicity for the scheme, if getting his own and the President's mug shots in the Examiner counts as a success!

It has been one of the bees in my bonnet for a while that as a Club we should be doing more to monitor our own area and I am therefore delighted that David Sill has agreed to take on another new job as Survey Organiser. He was quick off the mark to organize a re-run of a survey of the SW of the area, last done in 2004, and to enlist members for the task. I am sure we can look forward to us achieving a successful survey programme each year under David's guidance.

We therefore have new faces and fresh thinking to enrich our Committee and we are already seeing the benefits. My other colleagues and I have been delighted to welcome them. This is not to forget the considerable work of Recorder, Secretary, Conservation Officer, Web Site Manager, Publicity Officer and Patch Outing Co-ordinator all pedaling away furiously if quietly behind the scenes to keep everything ticking over whilst this transition was taking place.

However, it is first and foremost a members Club and I hope that you will all actively support the Committee and play your part in rebuilding the Club and the membership base. This means in the first place helping Hazel by paying your subs promptly (note the new option of paying by bank transfer) and I urge everyone who enjoys the facilities provided by the Club, whether meetings, web site or forum, to contribute to ensure we can continue to provide these. Secondly, we need your help to increase membership – most of us have friends and contacts in the local community with an interest in birdwatching, so please do your part in introducing them to the Club.

Our meetings programme starts on Tuesday 8th September when our speaker is David Gosney, a name known to many of you. I look forward to seeing you there.

Best wishes.

Mike Wainman

NOTE ON THE CLUB ACCOUNTS 2013/2014

These were not available at the AGM last December, but were presented to members at the May meeting. For the benefit of those not able to attend a copy is now enclosed.

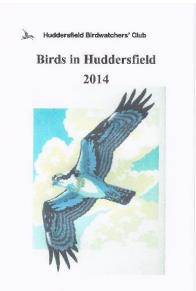
AN ACCOUNT OF THE BIRDS OF THE HUDDERSFIELD DISTRICT S. L. MOSLEY 1915

2015 marks the centenary of the publication of the original and iconic work by Seth Lister Mosley on the birds of Huddersfield and you may remember Mike Pinders' fascinating article in our 2012 report. At Mike's suggestion, to mark the anniversary we are currently investigating the possibility of reprinting this book, originally published as 20 pamphlets, probably as a limited edition by prior order. Much will depend upon whether we can persuade Huddersfield Library to make available their one intact copy for scanning and reprinting. More information in due course, but if you are potentially interested please email Mike Wainman to put you on the list (no obligation at this stage) <u>m.wainman@ntlworld.com</u>.



BIRDS IN HUDDERSFIELD 2014 – ANNUAL REPORT

The annual report is on track for publication in the autumn. David Pogson has left the writing team this time, after being a contributor for several years, as has Russ Boland who has written the annual review for some years. Our thanks go to both for their invaluable contributions. David Sill has joined the team and will write the annual review.



PATCH OUTINGS

Langsett 16th May

I am writing this on a June Sunday morning. Today I have the prospect of going on the patch outing to Digley. Also I have to fit in a visit to the moors to finish my part of the SW Survey. And there is the lawn to mow and fruit beds to cover to prevent the blackbirds eating all my strawberries. But like a lot of this spring, the weather is poor, rain and cloud. With Holme Moss, normally visible from my house shrouded in cloud, it is a day to stay in and reflect.

My mind turned to the Patch Outing to Langsett on 16th May, when it was cold, windy but, mercifully, dry. And unlike previous years, the Open Access areas were not closed for some spurious reason. I was joined by David Marchant, John Palliser, Steve Cook and Roger Mitchell. The benefit of having a number of trained eyes, sharper than mine, was soon apparent as we picked up different species at the same time. I'm not very good at finding nests but JP found a Dunnock's nest with eggs. I rarely see Dipper but the others found one. And again more Treecreepers than I usually expect because we were all looking in different directions. Also Goldcrest was easier to find as unfortunately their call is outside my hearing range.

One of the joys of Langsett is its varied habitat, a few houses in the village near the car park, Mixed Woodland, Reservoir, Moorland, Bracken areas, River, Cropped Pasture. During our five and half hours covering about 4 miles we saw 51 species, including clear evidence of breeding Willow Warbler, Starling, Song Thrush and House Sparrow either entering nests or carrying food. Robins were probably the most numerous species (not Chaffinch or Willow Warbler which I consider more normal). I can usually count on 3 or 4 species of Raptor but only had Buzzard and Kestrel this time. But there are upsides too, 3 singing male Redstarts in our area, 2 pairs of Common Sandpiper, Stock Dove, Curlew, Lapwing, Red Grouse, and Little Grebe amongst other species.

We strayed outside our club area in the Little Don Valley to get good views of Ring Ouzel, Cuckoo and a distant Raven.

All in all a great day, we even managed a laugh as the sun came out and somehow the birds seemed bigger, we spent some time thinking a Robin was large enough for an American Robin and that a male Chaffinch was something exotic.

Thank you guys for joining me. I hope you enjoyed the day as much as I did.

Chris Abell

Blackmoorfoot Reservoir 21st May

The five Club members who met at Blackmoorfoot Reservoir for the patch outing on 21st May 2015, although not "knee-deep" in birds, did at least enjoy favourable weather conditions. After a short preamble on local patch watching from the leader (who led from the back most of the time) the group scanned the water and were rewarded with five Great Crested Grebes, a Heron, 60 Swifts, 20 Swallow, half a dozen House Martins, and four Sand Martins.

A walk into Orange Wood revealed the presence of several common woodland species including Nuthatch, Treecreeper, Willow Warbler, Chiffchaff, Blackcap, and a male Garden Warbler. The latter, not a common species at Blackmoorfoot, had been in residence since 12th May, and will hopefully attract a female.

The party then headed for Potato Lane where, earlier in the day there had been a Hobby, seven Golden Plover, two Oystercatchers, four Stock Doves, and two Wheatears. Typically, the Hobby was not relocated, but the other species were still in residence. There was no sign of a Little Owl, however. This species had been a feature until a few years ago, but occurrences now are very few and far between.

As the two Mike's, Wainman and Denton, walked back towards the reservoir after a well-earned pint in the Will's O' Nat's public house, a Song Thrush was blasting out its beautiful song in the fading light. A fitting end to a pleasant few hours birdwatching.

Mike Denton

Digley Patch Outing around Blackpool Bridge 14th June

No one phoned as requested to say they would join me. The weather forecast was for cloud and rain. On Saturday morning I cancelled the outing by notification on the Forum. On Sunday morning I woke at 6 am and it looked bright and clear. It occurred to me that there could be someone who had not bothered to phone nor read the cancellation, so I went to Digley to find out, with the intention of a short walk if on my own.

Good morning Dave. A bad memory, as two years ago we returned drenched and frozen on the same outing. The U3A walking group had gone around the week before and saw very little so I had no great expectations. Off we went on a 4 hour walk. Dave assured me that Springwatch had declared Sunday to be a fine day. It was as far as the Shooting Lodge, then the drizzle started and increased in intensity. By Issues Road it had almost stopped - and then the mist came down!

Mammal records usually include hare but none were seen, as compensation I spotted a fat vole and we saw a male and female Roe Deer close to Blackpool Bridge, first we had seen in the area although I knew they were present.

We recorded 36 bird species, better than expected. A Snipe was drumming off Nether Lane, others were chipping and there were two male Reed Buntings, around a dozen Mistle Thrushes including a juvenile being fed a worm. There were many Willow Warblers and we noted one carrying food. Only one Chiffchaff was heard. Also heard were Green Woodpecker and Cuckoo and Dave thought he spotted a Cuckoo in the valley above Bilberry. On that reservoir there were three Tufted Ducks and three Mallards, one with a single duckling, also 7 Canada Geese. The wooded areas held at least four singing Song Thrushes.

After Blackpool Bridge we saw very little. Only two Red Grouse and we desperately added Collared Dove and House Sparrow as we entered Holme village. The last record was of a Siskin close to the quarry.

So an inauspicious beginning became a worthwhile cancelled outing.

Steve Cook

2015/16 LECTURE PROGRAMME – AN INTRODUCTION TO YOUR SPEAKERS

The annual programme of lectures has been a key feature of the club for decades and is enjoyed by many club members, particularly through the dark evenings of winter. Not only do they present an opportunity to hear from experts on different aspects of birding, they also provide a forum for members to meet for general birdy discussions either within the meeting itself or over a drink later. These meetings are an integral component of club activity and we would encourage as many members as possible to come along and join in.

Dave Gosney – Bereft of Birds

Dave is known to many British birdwatchers as the face and voice on most of the products sold by Bird Guides including the DVD Video Guide to British Birds, the DVD-ROM Guide to All the Birds of Europe and all the videos in the "Birding in…" series. Prior to co-founding Bird Guides he travelled widely throughout Europe, guiding tours and researching his ever-popular series of books 'Finding Birds in…' which have, for many years, been invaluable aids to travelling birders wanting to find the rarer species throughout Europe, North Africa and the Middle East. Bereft of Birds is Dave's reflections on the state of birds and birding from his historical perspective and will be a great start to our season that every member should do their best to attend. <u>http://www.easybirder.co.uk/Home.html</u>

Jim Almond – "A Guide to Gulls"

Jim hails from Shropshire and is well known to club members having delivered many of his popular and entertaining talks to the club over recent years. An expert and well-travelled photographer this presentation will feature many of his excellent photographs of the larids for the delectation of gull lovers and normal birders alike.

"An attempt to break down barriers and have fun watching these fascinating birds! The problem is, Gulls have unsavoury habits and can be tricky to identify. They also tend to polarise opinion - you either love them or hate them. Their reputation isn't helped by the fact that there can be up to four 'ages' to some species - plus a seasonal variation within each year to confuse the beginner! They can be challenging but enjoyable if a logical approach is used when trying to identify them. This talk looks at the species most commonly encountered in the UK - breeding species and several vagrants. It features some popular inland sites in the West Midlands plus a pictorial guide to each species with tips on identification."

http://shropshirebirder.co.uk/index.html

Reg Senior – "Hummingbirds and Highland Birds of Costa Rica"

Your first opportunity this season to hear a presentation by one of our own club members revealing some of the delights of this must-visit country together with some excellent illustrations of a number of charismatic species featuring particularly the birds of the highlands together with an extensive array of hummingbird species.

Rick Simpson – "Wader Quest"

Rick is the co-founder of Wader Quest with Elis Simpson. Writer, speaker, blogger and artist, he is a life-long birder having followed a circuitous route to conservation from garden birder as a child through local patch watcher, British birder, twitcher, world birder and bird guide. It was being a guide in Brazil that led to him running local community and school conservation projects with Elis in the Atlantic forest. In addition he was involved for several years in making twice yearly survey counts of aquatic birds for the Contagem Nacional de Aves Aquáticas (CNAA) for Wetlands International in Brazil. He volunteered at British Natural History Museum bird collection Tring: volunteer collector (road kill) for MZUSP. He has acted as a bird guide in UK and Spain for Capital Birding Tours and in Brazil as Rick Simpson Birding Services.

Since returning to the UK Wader Quest has taken over his life taking him around the world to six continents, birding on all nine flyways to see one hundred and seventy-five species of wader; giving talks in many places along the way. Wader Quest has become a conservation effort for a group of birds about which Rick is passionate, becoming more and more concerned about the pressures they face and the seemingly low profile their problems have among birders and other wildlife observers. Together with Elis he became Membership Secretary for the International Wader Study Group in March 2014.

Rick will be on his first visit to the club where we can hear about the wonder of waders, their challenges and pressures around the world together with gaining an insight into the work of Wader Quest and ways in which we can all help. http://www.waderquest.org/p/the-wader-quest-team.html

Paul Rogers – Yellowstone

Paul is a most popular presenter to the club having delighted us on many occasions before with a diversity of topics. He has had a life-long interest in natural history, which is underlined by his qualifications in Ecology and Animal Behaviour gained at London University and he is a principal leader for Ornitholidays, having led over 210 tours. For some time now he has had the privilege of living at Shorelands on Anglesey, the former home of wildlife artist Charles Tunnicliffe. He is widely travelled in Europe, North America and Africa and lectures on ornithology, ecology and all aspects of natural history.

Yellowstone takes us on an illustrated journey to one of the most desirable destinations for birders visiting the USA, revealing much about the flora and fauna to be found there with, naturally, an emphasis upon its birdlife.

Alf King – Cuba

Following the club AGM this is another chance to enjoy a presentation by one of the club's most popular and charismatic members. This will be a short talk about the sights to be enjoyed on a birding trip to Cuba, undertaken in November 2014.

Richard Baines – From Goshawks to Humpbacks

We welcome Richard Baines for his first visit to the club. Richard started birding as a child and is the lead tour guide at Yorkshire Coast Nature. At the age of 24 he joined the East Riding of Yorkshire Council's team of walk leaders, organising countryside events, tours and lectures and taking great personal pleasure in showing thousands of people the wonders of the natural world. With a specialist interest in birds and macro-moths, Richard's numerous walks and events for adults and children also look at mammals, reptiles, amphibians, invertebrates, trees and flowers. Additionally, Richard has accumulated 25 years' experience of nature conservation work and in 2007, in partnership with Chris Toohie, set up his own business, Wold Ecology, which specialises in wildlife surveys and farm stewardship schemes. Wold Ecology's sister company Yorkshire Coast Nature followed. Richard's extensive travels have taken him from surveys of rare breeding birds in northern Scotland and the boreal forests of Russia to far-flung birding hot spots in Asia, Africa and the Americas. He is also, as volunteer Conservation Officer for Flamborough Bird Observatory, deeply involved with local wildlife projects.

From Goshawks to Humpbacks is a talk featuring the wildlife of the North York Moors NP. This is an illustrated talk with high quality images focusing on the wide diversity of wildlife from orchids to birds of prey to whales all found in this beautiful National Park. Also featuring a real insight into its ecology together with top tips of where to go and what to find. <u>http://www.yorkshirecoastnature.co.uk/</u>

Jeff Clarke – Birds and Migration

Jeff returns to the club after his popular presentation last year. He is an experienced ecologist, with expertise across a wide range of taxon groups and has a passion for the natural world and loves sharing his enthusiasm with as many people as possible. As an environmental educator

with 26 years of experience he brings innovation, inspiration and fun to presentations. He is an Associate Tutor for the FSC and also leads wildlife holiday tours both independently and in partnership with other organisations.

Bird migration has fascinated mankind for centuries and Jeff's talk will present the history, the how, the why and the where of bird migration. <u>http://www.jeffclarkeecology.co.uk/</u>

John Walker – Ohio

For many years John was the organiser of the club's indoor meetings. Once more he has the opportunity to feature as a presenter of one of his own talks. He has a wealth of knowledge of birdlife in the USA having travelled there on numerous occasions and this talk will feature one of the states that will be less familiar to most British birders.

Peter Dunn – Poland

Peter has visited the club on a number of occasions presenting a range of interesting topics and conveying his passion for birds and other wildlife. He was born in Goole in the East Riding of Yorkshire and is a retired police sergeant with North Yorkshire Police, where he was wildlife liaison officer for 12 years. He has been a keen birder for over 49 years and organised the setting up and running of the Filey Brigg Bird Observatory on the Yorkshire Coast, where he lives close by and looks after the bird ringing. He is a full trainer for the bird ringing scheme in the UK. Peter has birded throughout most of England, Scotland and Wales, whilst overseas trips have included Spain, France, Poland, Hungary, Malta, Norway, the Balearic Islands, Morocco, Israel, South, Central and North America and the Caribbean. Peter's main interest is in Western Palaearctic species (and races) and he gives talks to local bird and natural history groups using his collection of wildlife photographs - another passion of his. Peter is now the report manager and a tour leader with Naturetrek.

Peter will speak about Poland particularly the Bialowieza Forest which is home to over 200 species of birds, as well as mammals such as Wolf, Lynx and Elk. As always his talk will feature a number of excellent images as well as a wealth of information.

David Tolliday – Kruger Park

David is visiting the club for the first time from his base in Cheshire. He is a wildlife photographer having been interested in wildlife for as long as he can remember with one of his first wildlife memories being of a flock of lapwings in a field at Cuckmere in Sussex when he was about ten years old. He was transfixed by these beautiful birds and they continue to remain one of his favourite species.

His presentation will be about a destination that has enticed many a birder and photographer in the past - the people, mammals, birds and insects in and around the Kruger National Park, South Africa.

http://www.davidtolliday.co.uk/

Steve Lovell – Spain's Autumn Migration

Steve is qualified in Garden Design and Landscaping and runs his own business constructing eco and wildlife friendly gardens. He has also taught adult education classes and given lectures to groups and societies for eighteen years. He worked for the RSPB in their Public Affairs Department at their Norwich office being project manager for the 'Aren't Birds Brilliant' campaign for the Peregrines at Lincoln Cathedral, the Wintering Waterfowl and Herons at Hartsholme Park, Lincoln. He is now the volunteer speaker for the RSPB in his role as the local RSPB Group Press and Publicity Officer, which also includes writing a column in the Lincolnshire Echo. This is Steve's first visit to the club.

The area of Southern Spain around Tarifa and Gibraltar is both a bottleneck and a migration spectacle when conditions are favourable with literally thousands of birds passing overhead. There are also many other local sites of great ornithological interest as well as the straits of Gibraltar acting as a cetacean hotspot. This talk will look at them all.

Ian Robinson – Arctic Wildlife

lan is a firm favourite with the club having presented many fascinating talks on birding around the world. He is an enthusiastic traveller and birder (but not lister) as well as an expert photographer and combines these hobbies in the production of high quality illustrated talks. Ian lives in Filey and is one of the founder members and a continuing stalwart of the Filey Bird Observatory Group.

In the past we have heard from Ian on his experiences of visiting the Antarctic so this time he will go topsy-turvy and speak about Arctic Wildlife.

Mike Denton – 2015: A Huddersfield Birding Year in Pictures

Mike is well known to all club members being one of a now sadly dwindling band of original members of the club since its formation in 1966. He has been a committee member for longer than anyone else and, besides having previously served as President, is our long-standing Conservation and Liaison Officer.

Mike will be making use of photographs taken within the club area in 2015 to present a picture of the birding activity and highlights within our area in the previous year.

COMPUTING AND THE CLUB – AN IT UPDATE

Very little has happened or changed in the club's web presence during the year, which is probably good news for most. Whether this is a reflection of getting things about right or a lack of need for change I will leave others to judge.

We have updated the software behind the forum and, despite a couple of small hiccups, this has gone well with satisfactory results. The major impact, probably only felt or noticed by me, is that the security of the site has changed significantly for the better, leaving us less vulnerable to malicious attack and nuisance. What is clear is that the amount of traffic in the form of postings of both messages and images is in decline. This actually mirrors the experience elsewhere as people change their surfing habits and methods of communication.

Very little has changed on the web site over the year and I am aware that it may look a little tired at times. Design isn't my forte though so if someone wants to have a go at making it look better please get in touch. Behind that bland exterior of course lies a wealth of information to be used and downloaded completely free of charge.

We now have a Twitter account which feeds postings directly onto the web site and on which a number of people report sightings. Take up of this technology by club members is very low at present probably reflecting a lack of interest but I must say that the use of Twitter in the general birding community is now widespread and especially useful for rarity hunters etc. We have 86 followers of whom only nine are actual club members. Before anyone might think otherwise, however, you can rest assured that the club isn't wasting any money on this: it is free of cost with the only input being my own time, priceless though that might be.

If you have any thoughts, opinions, suggestions or questions about our use of IT do contact me directly and I will try to respond appropriately.

Alf King alf.king@ntlworld.com Twitter @Hudds_BWC

2016 – THE CLUB'S 50th ANNIVERSARY

It will be 50 years next year since the founding of the Club in mid-1966. To mark this anniversary, we are planning the publication of a major work '*The Natural History of Blackmoorfoot Reservoir, Huddersfield*' currently being written, indeed well advanced, by Mike Denton. Throughout the history of the Club Blackmoorfoot has undoubtedly been the most watched and best recorded site in the area and seen many changes over the years. It will therefore be a fascinating read and a most appropriate way of celebrating this landmark year. More details nearer the time.

PHOTOGRAPHY FORUM

A member has expressed an interest in the possibility of a forum to enable members with an interest in bird photography to exchange information, tips etc. Would any of our photographers be willing to host an occasional get together – if so please contact Mike Wainman?

Thank you to member John Hinchliffe and his company BM Print Ltd for printing this newsletter for us.



Huddersfield Birdwatchers' Club

Chris Abell, Secretary, 57 Butterley Lane, New Mill, Holmfirth HD9 7EZ Tel 01484 681499; email: <u>cdabell@gmail.com</u>

NOTICE OF A.G.M.

The 49th Annual General Meeting is to be held in Meeting Room 1, Huddersfield Town Hall at 7.30pm on Tuesday 17th November 2015.

A full agenda will be issued at the meeting.

The following posts are due for election to serve for 2 years;

- President
- Treasurer
- Indoor meetings Organiser
- Membership Secretary
- Survey Coordinator
- 1 Committee member

Nominations for these posts should be sent to the Secretary, in writing or by email, 14 days before the meeting (i.e. to be received no later than 3rd November)

C D Abell 14/6/15

2015/2016 SUBSCRIPTIONS NOW DUE!

Please send your subs now either:

- To our new Membership Secretary Hazel Sill by cheque using the slip below or
- by bank transfer (BACS) directly to the club account which is: Huddersfield Birdwatchers' Club, HSBC, sort code 40-25-10, account no 40462195 (Please remember to put your name in the reference box and email Hazel to confirm that you have paid)

The Club receives substantial amounts in Gift Aid. Most members have already signed a Gift Aid form and it will still be valid. However, if you are a taxpayer and have not provided a signed form, please help by asking Hazel for one. It costs you nothing and the Club can reclaim a tax rebate from the government.

Address and email update

Please also fill in your postal address, telephone number and email address (whether or not they have changed) so that we can check that club records are fully up to date.

Note: if you are paying by BACS, please email Hazel to confirm your address, email address and telephone no.

Hazel Sill's contact details: Address – see slip below Email hazel.sill@btinternet.com Tel. no 07854 739646

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Huddersfield Birdwatchers' Club
SUBSCRIPTION RETURN SLIP 2015/2016
Name(s):
Address:
Telephone no.
Email address:
Subscription (tick): Single £17 Couple £28
Cheques only please (no cash by post) made out to Huddersfield Birdwatchers' Club
Post to: Hazel Sill, Membership Secretary, Wards End Farm, Marsden, Huddersfield, HD7 6NJ

Thank you your support.

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