

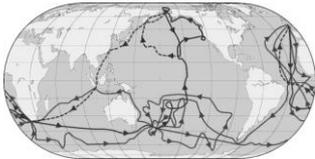


Linkline

Autumn 2013 Issue 44

Newsletter of the Gainsborough Area Group of the Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust

WE'VE BEEN OUT AND ABOUT



Visit To Idle Valley Nature Reserve, Retford Wednesday 8 May 2013

Hilary Harris reports: Encouraged by the talk at the April indoor meeting several members gathered in the evening sun at the new Visitor Centre which looks out over one of the many lakes: a perfect place for spotting wetland birds in comfort. We were then taken for a guided walk by reserve officer Martin Fisher - past a willow tunnel, under huge metal "bug arches" and further into the wilderness of Tiln Wood and Chainbridge Pit areas. With the possibility of spotting reed and sedge warblers, blackcap, white throat, and even a grasshopper warbler, among many other birds, those who were wise enough to bring their binoculars enjoyed searching for the source of some intriguing birdsong. We saw the water vole's favourite habitat and learned of the efforts to encourage otters to return despite the resident mink population. With so many habitats and miles of paths to explore, the temptation of making a return visit to see what else can be found will be hard to resist!



Visit To The Gelder Group Environmental Project Wednesday 24 July

Karin Negoro writes: Some two dozen Area Group members and friends arrived at the Gelder Group HQ on Tillbridge Lane to be met by Simon Blaydes, the Group's Environmental Project Warden, who led the walk along with his colleague Kate Brown, a fellow nature enthusiast. The Project has been in development for some 8-10 years, covers 16 acres and is planted up with 3800 native trees of 15 species, plus extant trees and hawthorn hedges, all providing habitat for a wide variety of mammals, birds, amphibians, reptiles and fish. Spectacular and visible was a family of Kestrels - as we entered the network of paths, two of the surprisingly large and recently ringed, newly fledged chicks could be seen and heard on the roof of the brick-built Kestrel/Owl tower, with an adult perched nearby. Next we came to the amphibian pond, which Simon told us contained frogs and toads, and hopefully newts will soon find it. We also saw a variety of butterflies: Large White, Small White, Meadow Brown, Comma, Small Tortoiseshell, Large Skipper and Gatekeeper. At the Lake, which contains mostly Rudd, Ghost Carp, and Skimmer Bream along with Gudgeon, Roach, and Ide, a pair of Yellow Wagtail and a youngster were bathing at the base of the reeds. Further along the path we noted several plants of Bristly Ox-tongue and towards the end of the walk - on the bank of the river Till - Yellow Water Lily was spotted.

After a group photo and an invitation from Alison and Rodger Brownlow to come for refreshments at their Westwood home, we left the site, having enjoyed a most interesting and pleasant visit. This enjoyment continued at the Brownlows with homemade cake, home-grown cherries and cuppas which were much appreciated.

by Karin Negoro with additions from Simon Blaydes.

[This is a brief synopsis of Karin's report which can be found in full on our website:

<http://gainsboroughwildlifetrust.webs.com/Gelder%20Visit-1.pdf>

Thanks to Hilary and Karin for taking the time and trouble to submit these reports - Ed.]

SIGHTINGS & SNIPPETS:

WHAT YOU HAVE SEEN AND HEARD



* In August a Lea garden was visited by an uncommon butterfly - a male Silver-Washed Fritillary. The nearest known colony of these is at Gamston and Eaton Woods near Retford, so the garden owners were curious to find out more. A friend from the Lincoln Butterfly Conservation branch told them that for some reason this summer, the species had been turning up in new locations around the county (always males for some reason), so they were glad it had passed their way and they were around to see it!

* There have been no reported (to the editor) sightings of either grass snakes or adders in and around Laughton this summer but in late September two 'boot lace-size' baby grass snakes were found run over a few yards apart on the Scotter Road entrance to the village. Does anyone know the breeding season for grass snakes as the young are usually seen much earlier in the summer?

* Very many thanks to Mary Sargent of Scotter who has been delivering Trust mailings regularly for over 20 years to around two dozen members in and around her village. With much regret she has decided that the time has come to hang up her postie hat, but hand deliveries will still continue, thanks to Janice Stewart of Scotterthorpe who has kindly agreed to take over Mary's round as well as her own.

* The Area Group, along with other regular users of Morton Village Hall, was invited to stage a table top exhibit as part of Morton Feast. Committee members Hilary and Joy gathered together various items of wildlife interest, plus LWT publicity material, to create an attractive display and 'manned' the stall for a couple of hours before handing over to Linda Woodward for the remainder of the session while they hot-footed it back to Laughton where they had a pressing engagement at Laughton Feast!!

* Deer, we are told, are on the increase but sadly the Laughton Forest area's population has decreased as recently a muntjak deer was found dead at the side of the road just outside the village - the result of a road traffic accident.

GALLS GALORE!

Alison Brownlow writes: While strolling through the woods I was surprised to spot "red berries" on an oak tree. A closer look showed red growths on the underside of the oak leaves. These are cherry gall caused by a tiny wasp. Also on many leaves were smaller spangle galls and silk button galls, again both caused by different wasps.

Galls are abnormal growths on plants caused by a parasitic organism. The parasites have intriguing life cycles, some unbelievably complex. The cherry gall wasp has two generations, a sexual and an asexual stage both causing different gall growths.

Other widespread galls are Robin's Pincushions on wild roses, Knopper galls on acorns, Spiral galls on Lombardy poplar leaf stems and swollen stems on creeping thistles.

Cold December brings the sleet, blazing fires and Christmas treat, while January brings the snow, making feet and fingers glow. Seasons greetings to you all from the Linkline editorial team. We'll be back with another issue in the Spring!

Joy and Dave.

Dates For Your Diary - INDOOR MEETINGS

WEDNESDAY 19 FEBRUARY 2014: Bird Recognition.



Don't know a wren from an owl? Tonight Andy Sharpe's illustrated talk takes a light hearted look at why we birdwatch and the variety of things we might come across on the way. Andy is leader of the Far Ings NNR bird group. SALES STALL - Mystery Parcels. As last year, for our New Year fund raiser we invite you to wrap up an item to the value of at least £1.00 which super saleswoman Hilary will sell (yes, for £1.00!) on her sales table. What fun - especially if you bag a bargain! The more parcels we have the better, as the ££££££s come flooding in for Trust funds.

WEDNESDAY 19 MARCH 2014: All aboard for an evening's cruise on The Chesterfield Canal.

John Lower is a committee member of The Chesterfield Canal Trust and his illustrated talk will tell us about the canal's history and the work involved in getting all 46 miles of its towpath walkable - and possibly seeing some waterside wildlife along the way. SALES STALL - Pre-loved books and quality magazines, not necessarily wildlife themed, on a sale or return basis, please.

WEDNESDAY 23 APRIL 2014: AGM (don't be put off - it's always short!) followed by an illustrated talk on The Dormouse Project and supper (no, not micepies!).

A volunteer from this successful re-introduction programme at Chambers Farm Wood, near Wragby, will tell us about the fascinating work they do there. Later in the year there'll be a field trip to see the dormice (we hope) for ourselves! SALES STALL - Plants (potted up, please) and all to be priced at 50p.

All indoor meetings are held at Morton Village Hall and begin at 7.30pm. Members and non-members equally welcome. Entrance by donation (minimum £1.00 which includes tea/coffee and biscuits. Raffle, sales table and bird food (please pre-order - see below). Volunteers to help serve refreshments/clear up afterwards always appreciated!

PROGRAMME SECRETARY: Linda Woodward, 24 Cromwell avenue, Lea, Gainsborough DN21 5HX. Tel: 01427 614915. E-mail: wooden tops@darther.plus.com



Bird Food Sales:

Our local distributor is Clare Holmes. Regular customers are still welcome to call at her home as before, but if you wish to buy bird food from the stall at indoor meetings please pre-order from her in good time - 01427 613128 - and she will bring your order to the meeting. In the past Clare has often lugged quantities of bird food to meetings, sales have been poor ...and she has had to lug the stuff home again. By pre-ordering you will save Clare much time and effort.

Weight	Peanuts	Mixed seed	Black sunflowers	Niger seed	Sunflower hearts
Kg	£	£	£	£	£
2.5	6.75	3.00	4.15	5.30	5.50
5	12.50	5.25	7.30	9.20	10.25
20	-	20.00	26.00	-	40.00
25	55.00	-	-	42.00	-
Fat Balls	30p each				
Charcoal	4.75 per bag				

Please note supplies and prices are subject to availability and change.



More Notes From An Uphill Garden:

Once again we are privileged to share in the life of a very special garden in uphill Gainsborough which has been created by two Area Group members. This relatively small garden backs onto established deciduous woodland and the aim has been to attract a variety of wildlife throughout the year. Here is an extract from the Summer diary:

2013 Summer

1 July – Oystercatcher flew over, travelling from north to south. We guess they commute between the golf course and the Trent.

8 July – Large Red Damselfly perching on the flower heads of Water Plantain in the pond.

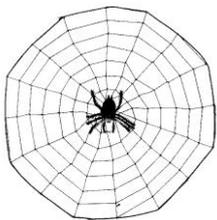
9 July – First sighting this year of Hornet, just a single insect. Like Wasps, they have been in short supply, no doubt due to the effects of two cold winters and the late spring this year.

18 July – Weather sunny and hot. Butterflies on the wing: Purple Hairstreaks, keeping close to the oak trees on the wood edge, Gatekeeper, Ringlet, Meadow Brown, Large and Small Whites, Speckled Wood and an occasional Small Tortoiseshell. A Brown Hawker dragonfly patrolling the hedge and woodland margin. Three young Blackbirds “sunning” on the garage roof were joined in this behaviour by a Wren, which sat in the guttering and hung one wing out over the edge. We have also seen a Dunnock sunning on the gravel path earlier in the summer. A Chiff-Chaff visited the bird bath, which is very popular with the small birds in this weather. Young Blue and Great Tits exploring the garden very actively. A juvenile Great Spotted Woodpecker hammered at a young Elm trunk in the wood and there were occasional snatches of the agitated call of a Nuthatch.

15 August – First sighting of a Red Admiral – fewer of these butterflies than usual seem to have made it across the Channel this year.

27 August – Male Brimstone and several Large White butterflies taking nectar from the scarlet flowers of the Runner Beans.

9 September – Nuthatch and Robin make a colourful pairing, bathing in the bird bath at the same time.



Gainsborough Area Group On The InterWeb!

www.gainsboroughwildlifetrust.webs.com

STILL NOT LOGGED ON YET?

The Area Group's website has all the latest information about the Groups activities:

Latest copies of Linkline.

Meeting programme with links to related items and handouts.

Reports on previous events.

Members photographs.

LWT Tweets and Facebook items (they ARE interesting!).

Suggestions for improvements to the website welcomed. Take a look!

www.gainsboroughwildlifetrust.webs.com

Please send your wildlife sightings
or other info to the Editor,
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or
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