

# Newsletter



**Issue 133**

**Dec 2013**

**Registered Charity No. 510146**

Firstly, thank you once again to all those who have contributed articles and quiz questions to the Newsletter over the last year. Also a very big thank you to Christine Hamer who is leaving the committee at the end of 2013, for all her work over the years. Both Christine and her husband Roy, who was at one time the secretary, have contributed a huge amount of time and effort in helping the Society to be as successful as it is.

On page ten is an article about Cofnod by its Manager Roy Tapping. Unfortunately, Roy's full article was too long for the newsletter and I have had to use an edited version. However, the full version will be available on the members website under the links page.

Last year, for some reason, a few members did not receive the membership renewal form. To avoid a repeat of this it has been included on the back page of the Newsletter. A copy can also be downloaded from the website. Please make sure you include a SAE when sending it in.

Some may notice that the format of this version of the Newsletter has changed slightly. Since the last edition I've bought a new computer and had to move to a new software package which while having several better features does not include a facility for drop capitals and some of the styling options are different.

May I take this opportunity to wish all members a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year (*Nadolig Llawen a Blwyddwyn Newydd Dda*).

*Bob Must*

## Annual General Meeting 2013

The Annual General Meeting of the Deeside Naturalists' Society took place on Friday 13<sup>th</sup> December in the Connah's Quay Community Centre. The following were elected to the Executive Committee:

Chairman:	Phil Hotchkiss
Secretary:	Pauline Moulton
Treasurer:	Bob Lee
Membership Secretary:	David Ross
Ext Affairs/Newsletter/Website:	Bob Must
Committee:	Carl Boswell
Committee:	Helen Simpson
Committee:	Joan Hotchkiss
Committee:	Dave Colton

# Annual Accounts

Deeside Naturalists Society Accounts for the year ended 31st October 2013  
Registered Charity No. 510146

## ACCOUNTING STATEMENT Receipts and payments basis

<u>Income</u>	2012/2013	2011/2012
Bank Interest	9.68	9.69
Donations	145.00	527.00
Subscriptions	5381.50	6480.50
Bequest (Estate K Gourlay)		501.03
Raffle	43.00	158.00
Gift Aid Tax Rebate	1170.00	1096.95
Visits	281.00	160.00
Iolo Williams Tickets	165.00	1205.00
Easement Fee		750.00
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>7195.18</b>	<b>10888.17</b>
<u>Expenditure</u>	2012/2013	2011/2012
Refreshments		20.14
Insurance	113.00	110.00
Donations		70.00
Printing, Photocopying, Stationery, Postage	2348.44	2213.03
Room Hire	187.00	94.50
Education	8.80	
Repairs & Maintenance	1004.88	3037.69
Guest Speakers	1034.00	476.00
Open Day		11.78
New keys / locks	580.00	195.00
Bird Food	401.93	369.64
Books	26.85	43.02
FLVC Subscription	15.00	15.00
Membership	50.00	50.00
Web Hosting		46.56
Travel	257.70	301.75
Telephone	32.50	72.77
Conferences	47.00	
Equipment	58.99	544.33
<b>Total Payments</b>	<b>6166.09</b>	<b>7671.21</b>
<b>Balance for Year</b>	<b>1029.09</b>	<b>3216.96</b>
Cash funds last year end	20126.83	15229.87
Transfer from Key Money	120.00	1680.00
<b>Cash Funds this year end</b>	<b>21275.92</b>	<b>20126.83</b>

# Annual Accounts

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## ACCOUNTING STATEMENT Receipts and payments basis

	2012/2013
Receipts	7195.18
Payments	6166.09
Balance for Year	1029.09
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Transfer from Key Money	120.00
<b>Cash Funds this year end</b>	<b>21275.92</b>

## Statement of Assets and Liabilities at year end

<u>Cash Funds</u>	2012/2013	2011/2012
Barclays Bank	25935.92	24381.83
Key Deposits	-4660.00	-4255.00
<b>TOTAL CASH FUNDS</b>	<b>21275.92</b>	<b>20126.83</b>

Signed..... *R. M. Lee* 16/11/2013 ..... Treasurer

Signed..... *S. Payne* ..... Independent Examiner

16 November 2013

# Quiz 1

Cryptic bird quiz. (Thanks, again to Hazel Jones for these). Answers are on page 11.

1. Tie up your boat here dear.
2. Fun and games in the air.
3. Great drip.
4. In and out of the burn.
5. Hazel plotting?
6. Rage against fate.
7. Sounds poorly.
8. Nicks Jape.
9. Scarlet beginning.
10. A wizard.
11. William uses one for shaving.
12. Short talk by a small rock.
13. No room for your mother.
14. Romp letters.
15. Gulp!
16. Valuable top.
17. Pearl divers.
18. Call of the wild without aspirate.
19. Famous heather.
20. Dark dolly.

# Chairmans Report

Dear Members, may I welcome all the new members that have joined this year and I hope that you have enjoyed your visit to the reserve and will continue to be members. This year we have had over 120 different birds recorded on the reserve, so if you have only seen 10 or 20 look harder next year.

As another year comes to an end do you remember that night in January at the Iolo Williams talk when we had to finish early because of the snow, it seems a long time ago. Let's hope that the weather is better this year.

This year the Friday night talks have been well attended. Hopefully, this trend will continue as next year's program looks to be even more varied.

The members that regularly visit the reserve will have noticed the improvement to the fields and to the condition of the sheep. This is because there is a new farmer on site and he says that it will take another 18 months to get the fields back in to top condition. This will mean the numbers of sheep on any one field will be up until the fields are back in condition.

We have had a new door fitted to the middle hide, replaced some fence panels and painted all the panels. We are in the process of replacing the hide windows to glass ones that slide up and down.

Please be careful when opening them, use two hands at either end so you don't twist the frame. It should make a big difference in the winter months and windy days. (Most of the time then).

I would like to thank all the members that have given their time to the Society in many different ways and in helping to keep the Society running. In particular the committee members and all their hard work carried out behind the scenes.

I wish you all a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Please remember to send your membership renewal early and don't forget the SAE.

*Phil Hotchkiss*  
Chairman

## On The Lighter Side

Genuine answers given by contestants on TV or radio quiz shows:

**Questioner:**

What type of bear lives in the Arctic?  
Was the Tyrannosaurus Rex a carnivore or a herbivore?  
In which European country is Mount Etna.  
What is the largest carnivore that lives on land?  
What hot drink is *eat* an anagram of?  
What is the worlds largest continent?  
What is the largest Spanish speaking country.

If you throw a red stone into a blue sea what will it become?  
What looks like half an apple?

**Contestant:**

A Penguin.  
Neither it was a dinosaur.  
Japan.  
The whale.  
Hot chocolate.  
The Pacific.  
I'm sorry, I don't know any countries in Spain.  
Wet.  
The other half.



# Reserve Report

Two Green Sandpipers were present on the Reserve for a month between July 31<sup>st</sup> and Aug 27<sup>th</sup>. Usually seen at some distance from West Hide on the Meadow Hide pools, so the photo below was taken elsewhere in the UK.



Following that, a major September attraction was the presence of up to 6 Curlew Sandpipers on the bunded pools between Sep 9<sup>th</sup> and Oct 6<sup>th</sup>.



Other unusual sightings were the third Red Kite of the year on July 27<sup>th</sup> and a late Hobby on Oct 16<sup>th</sup>, the second this year. Three Eider were flying up-river on the high tide of Oct. 22<sup>nd</sup>, a new species for the Reserve, and a Garganey was seen on the ash lagoon on Sep 8<sup>th</sup>, only the 5<sup>th</sup> Reserve record. The Bar-headed Goose now on the estuary visited the Reserve twice on Aug 10/11<sup>th</sup> and Oct 7<sup>th</sup>.

Among the attractions of the Reserve at the time of writing are the Kingfisher which has taken up winter residence on the bunded pools (usually near the western sluice gate), the Spotted Redshank (about 6) and Greenshank (now down to 4 or 5, from an autumn high of 24) also on the bunded pools, and the flock of 50+ Twite that frequents the area around the West Hide, often perched on the fences or drinking from puddles in the car park, before taking off towards Oakenholt Marsh. An excellent variety of duck can be seen too, in small numbers, including mallard, teal, wigeon, shoveler, gadwall, tufted duck, shelduck and goosander.

Most records of birds of prey on the Reserve come from members who spend a lot of time looking for them, since, unlike ducks and waders, these birds rarely stay put for any length of time. So far this year, there have been 4 records of Hen Harrier, 5 of Marsh Harrier, but only 2 of Merlin. This contrasts with 45 Peregrine records and 46 of Buzzard, both much commoner than either Kestrels (12) or Sparrowhawks (10 records).

Observers with sharp eyes, or good cameras, have resulted in some interesting ringing returns. Some of our Twite were ringed on their breeding grounds in Snowdonia, while others were ringed in winter at Flint Castle or Morecambe Bay (R. Beckett). One Little Egret present in Aug/Sep had been ringed at the breeding colony near Bangor just a couple of months earlier (P and S Haslem). A Black-tailed Godwit on April 11<sup>th</sup> was originally ringed on the Wash in 2010 and had spent previous winters on the English side of the Dee, but there were September records of the same bird as far south as western France in 2012 (K Lloyd-Jones, B Hayes).

Many thanks to all members who recorded these observations and details of rings, in the hide logbooks.

*Glenn Morris*

# Butterfly Report 2013

Monitoring this year started early in April with just a few Small Tortoiseshell butterflies being recorded on the Nature Trail and Wetland Meadow during the first two weeks. By the end of the month several Peacock butterflies had been noted in both areas, plus also a couple of Comma butterflies on the Wetland Meadow. May had the numbers and species of butterfly increasing. For the first time Brimstone were recorded in both areas of the reserve during June. One Dark Green Fritillary was recorded during August on the Nature Trail which is a new species for the DNS reserve.

Overall the season was late with the numbers and species peaking in August. Species not recorded this year were Small Heath, Ringlet, Grayling, Dingy Skipper and Small Skipper. These have been seen in previous years. So, although five species were not recorded this year, two new species were. Hopefully all will return in 2014.

During this year a substantial area on the Nature Trail was cleared and fenced by National Grid limiting access to areas where monitoring is normally carried out. This work was completed by August, but further work will be carried out starting in Spring 2014.

Thanks to all the recorders for their work. This year's recorders were: Val and John Ledson, Barbara Rigg, Roy Hamer and Christine Hamer. Observation records are sent to Butterfly Conservation. Their website has lots of information:

[www.butterfly-conservation.org](http://www.butterfly-conservation.org)

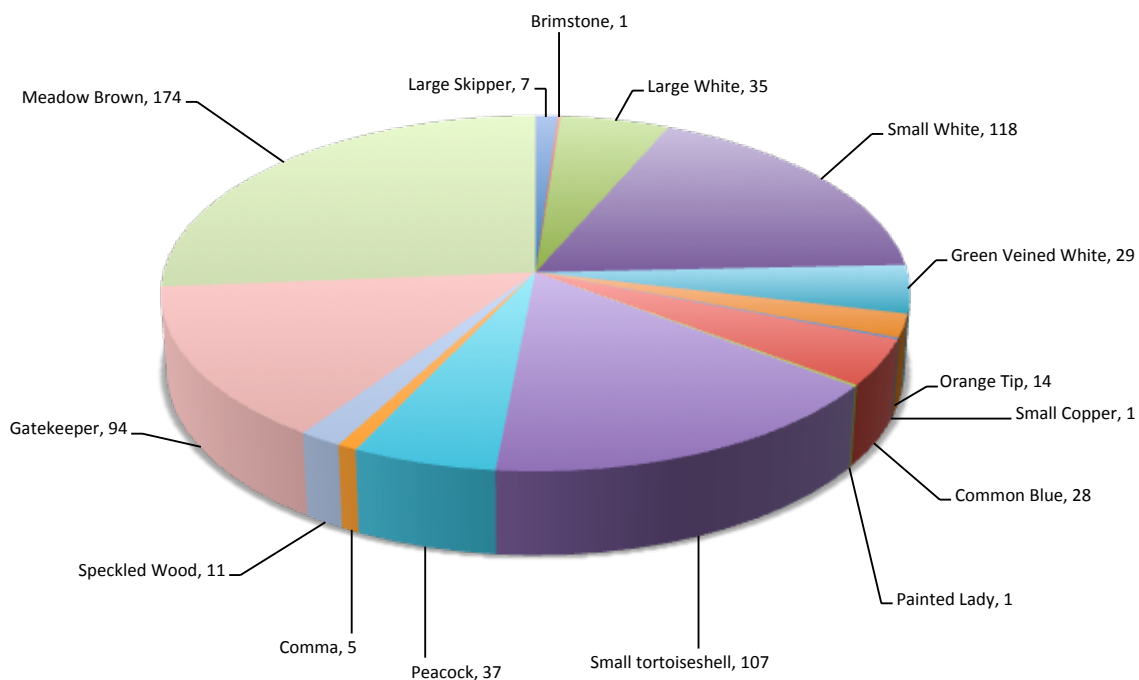
If you would like to be involved in the recording in 2014, which starts in April, please contact me on 01352 716273 or email [c.hamer21@btinternet.com](mailto:c.hamer21@btinternet.com).

*Christine Hamer*

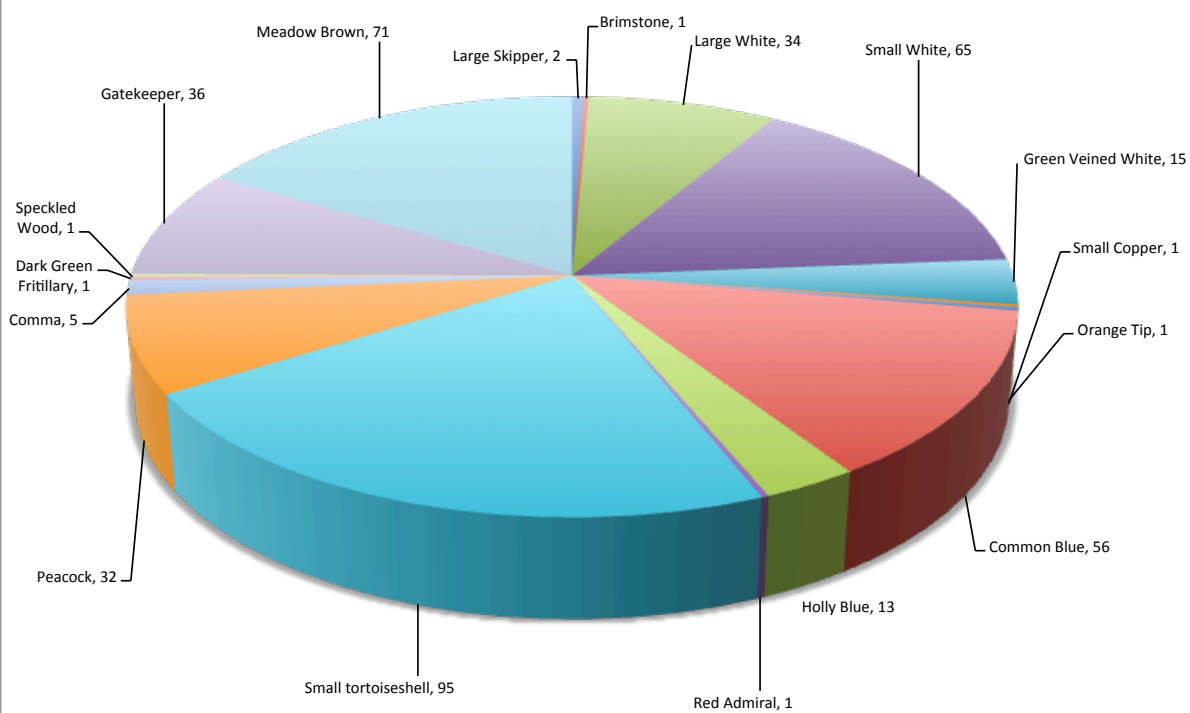
	Nature Trail							Wetland Meadow						
	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Total	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Total
Small skipper							0							0
Large Skipper			1	1			2				7			7
Dingy Skipper							0							0
Brimstone			1				1			1				1
Large White			2	2	30		34			9	3	23		35
Small White	1	2	8	1	45	8	65		10	25	10	69	4	118
Green Veined White		1	8		5	1	15		1	9	2	16	1	29
Orange Tip		1					1		4	10				14
Small Copper					1		1					1		1
Common Blue			4	6	46		56			3		25		28
Holly Blue					13		13							0
Red Admiral					1		1							0
Painted Lady							0					1		1
Small tortoiseshell	6	15	5	31	32	6	95	11	37	4	38	13	4	107
Peacock		4		1	27		32	6	13	4		13	1	37
Comma					4	1	5	2				2	1	5
Dark Green Fritillary					1		1							0
Speckled Wood						1	1		1	1	2	5	2	11
Grayling							0							0
Gatekeeper				2	34		36				15	78	1	94
Meadow Brown				19	52		71				122	52		174
Ringlet							0							0
Small Heath							0							0

# Butterfly Report

## Wetland Meadow



## Nature Trail



# Members Events

## RSPB Reserve Conwy 14<sup>th</sup> September

Due to an error in the newsletter the start time for this trip was shown as an hour earlier than actually scheduled. However, as the Spar shop boasts a well stocked hot food counter the bacon buttie and tea helped pass the time - while waiting for the others to turn up at the time in the programme. Not that anyone else did! So just after 9am two of us set off to Conwy RSPB where we met up with the rest of the crowd. The assembled group of six set off with great determination and will-power to avoid the café at the start - coffee and cake to be the reward at the end of the day.

The day was spent doing a leisurely and rewarding circuit of the reserve in pleasant weather. The Estuary and hides on the far side providing plenty of group discussion whilst sampling the odd Blackberry (fruit not mobile phone).



With the scopes focused on the estuary there was plenty of debate as to the identity of the birds roosting way out on the mud Curlew? Whimbrel? Yes / No? the birds were too far away for the scopes to assist with the identification. But what about the bird on the mud close to shore? Redshank? Spotted Redshank? Greenshank? Ruff? Legs too short! Legs too long! It's a Ruff- get the book out! – It's a Ruff -is that your final answer? Phone a friend? Yes that's the final answer –

the leader has the last say apparently! In that case it is definitely a Ruff. The joy of a group discussion! The last hide produced the predicated good results. Always something to note in that hide. Sharp eyes spotted Snipe five of them, and two Water Rails doing a flyby. The timing of going into the hide was perfect.

The afternoon concluded with a visit to the café to total the species seen over coffee and a bite to eat.

The total seen included three butterflies and two mammals and 33 species of bird. That is 32 feathered birds and 1 metal, the flyby by a spitfire created as much excitement as all the feathered varieties.

Some of the regular readers may have noticed a trend with the recent trip reports - low numbers attending the trips.

WATCH for next year's programme! We are trying some different venues, but attendance may be limited. Any places need to be booked in advance!

*Helen Simpson.*

*Unfortunately due to a problem with the camera (me still trying to work it properly) the photo of the Spitfire failed to materialise. Ed*

## Web Site

If anyone has any ideas for additional information they would like to see on the website please pass them to: [editor@deesidenaturalists.org.uk](mailto:editor@deesidenaturalists.org.uk)

The password to the members area will change on the weekend of the 11<sup>th</sup>/12<sup>th</sup> January to:





# Members Events

## Wetlands Wildlife Trust Martin Mere 26<sup>th</sup> October

The trip started on a fine day before the promised gales.

On arriving at Martin Mere the group were greeted with skeins of 'Pink Foot's' dropping into the Mere, a tantalising taste of things to come for the day.

After briefly checking out the visitor centre we set off for the Swan link and Gladstone hides. The group enjoyed the spectacle of waterfowl en masse. The different species could be counted, 33 in total for the day but the numbers of each species was not as easy to estimate. The most frequent being the Pink foot geese, which were constantly flying in and lifting off. Pink foot geese providing the photographers with opportunity for some good 'action shots'.

The morning was spent on the hides then making our way back through the enclosures to the café. The enclosures enable a close up observation of wildfowl that is usually observed through a lens.

Following a visit to the café for food and coffee the remaining hides were visited. These provided excellent views of hunting marsh harriers.

The day concluded with time sat in the sunshine and a general discussion which concluded that it had been a very worthwhile trip and all were glad they attended.

*Helen Simpson*

# Quiz Two

Find the names of twenty birds, butterflies, objects and places hidden in the grid below. One clue - they are all mentioned somewhere in this edition of the Newsletter. Answers on page 11.

R	E	D	S	H	A	S	E	R	I	F	T	I	P	S	C	C	M
Z	T	L	P	G	C	U	E	Q	K	R	T	X	S	M	M	A	E
P	I	N	K	F	O	O	T	G	E	E	S	E	P	A	L	E	R
R	W	L	P	Z	M	V	I	R	S	L	A	E	T	L	A	R	L
E	T	I	P	L	M	R	K	A	T	R	X	H	A	L	R	E	I
H	U	A	E	L	O	E	D	Y	R	K	O	R	O	S	I	M	N
S	Y	R	D	O	N	D	E	L	E	C	D	F	L	K	M	N	W
I	D	R	I	Q	B	N	R	I	L	O	R	O	L	I	D	I	Y
F	T	E	H	U	L	A	Z	N	I	C	F	O	U	P	A	T	E
G	O	T	T	R	U	S	Y	G	N	A	E	F	Y	P	D	R	R
N	U	A	S	P	E	O	O	G	G	E	R	G	U	E	E	A	L
I	Q	W	E	A	X	O	W	E	T	P	Y	H	C	R	R	M	I
K	T	I	W	D	O	G	D	E	L	I	A	T	K	C	A	L	B

# COFNOD

Cofnod? One of the first questions, certainly outside of Wales, is what does our name mean? It is the Welsh word for record. Next, 'what do you do?' What is a 'Local Records Centre?' 'Will you take my old vinyl albums?'

It's difficult to explain the concept, as our office consists of 6 desks and associated PCs plus a few filing cabinets. Nothing to really grab the imagination, although our walls are plastered with posters of the wildlife we are working towards conserving and occasionally get outside to see. We have a very small team of staff, which is enhanced through regular volunteer involvement either in the office or working remotely, and also occasional staff on short term contract. Based in Bangor our 'Local' area is North Wales, including six Unitary Authorities, the Snowdonia National Park and five Vice Counties (the areas often used to species recording). This is quite a bit compared to many Local Records Centres in England, which may cover a single county. Our area also includes a wide variety of habitats and therefore species recording opportunities, from high mountain to coastal, and although our remit stops at the intertidal zone, we do accept the occasional marine records too.

## **What do we do?**

Our main aim is to bring together, into one database, the vast amount of information which has been, and is being, collected on wildlife distribution in North Wales. The scale of the task itself is impossible to quantify, as this information stretches back for centuries and is increasing daily as one-by-one new records are created by a huge number of different people. The information may be held on paper or in a wide range of different electronic formats, with some of these being quite difficult to extract in a useable format. As a relatively young organisation (set up eight years ago) we have so far prioritised

bringing in electronic data, as entering data from paper records takes a considerable amount of time. However staff and volunteers have already managed to extract large numbers of valuable records from important paper datasets. The Cofnod species database now holds over 1.5 million records - still only a small proportion of the data that we know is out there. We also hold a range of information on the location of habitats, sites with statutory protection and locally designated Wildlife Sites. What happens to the data once it is collated into this vast database? It is supplied to various decision makers, including public bodies like the Natural Resources Wales (NRW) and Local Planning Authorities as well as ecological consultants. Together income generated from these sectors finance our existence through various ongoing agreements or one-off payments for services. We operate as a 'not-for-profit' organisation so we make our charges relevant to budget we know is required to keep Cofnod going. Depending on the conservation status of the species, a record submitted to us may find its way onto one of our weekly 'Planning List Screening' reports submitted to 5 of the 7 Local Authorities in North Wales. Or it may be used by NRW to assess water extraction consents, or Welsh Government to decide if there are any important species to consider when assessing agri-environment scheme applications. All these methods mean that the data is directly contributing to better wildlife conservation throughout North Wales, a process which was virtually impossible before Cofnod existed.

*Roy Tapping - Manager of Cofnod*

Website: [www.cofnod.org.uk](http://www.cofnod.org.uk)

contact details:

email: [contactus@cofnod.org.uk](mailto:contactus@cofnod.org.uk)

Telephone: 01248 672603

# Club Corner

## DNS Photography Group

The group continues to attract around twenty members to meetings which take place on the second Wednesday of each month at 2pm in the Study Centre. Typically we look at different aspects of photography and weather permitting we have photography forays around the Reserve.

For information on the group please contact Carl Boswell on 01352 757309.

## DNS Art Group

We are a small group of members who enjoy painting together each month. We paint in various mediums and gain stimulation and encouragement from each other.

If you would like to join us you would be most welcome. Our meetings are on the second Thursday of the month, from 1-30 until 3-30 pm.

Contact Doreen Boswell on 01352 757309

## Wednesday Group

This group meets at the Field Study Centre on the first and the third Wednesday of the month between 1.00 – 3.00 pm. It is an informal gathering of members who usually have lunch and then go for a short ‘walk and talk’ on the reserve, before returning for a final cup of tea. Topics of discussion range from the flora and fauna found on the reserve to local, national and international issues.

There is a good mix of viewpoints, experiences and ages within the group, and at the end of the day we all go home still friends, having enjoyed each others company.

# Answers To Quizzes

Westhide, Martin Mere, Spittire.  
Other:

Peacock, Small Skipper, Common Blue, Grayling, Red Admiral  
Butterflies:

Goosander, Kingfisher, Red Kite,  
Pinkfoot Geese, Kestrel, Twite, Black-Tailed Godwit, Ruff, Water Rail, Teal, Mallard, Merlin,  
Birds:

answers are given below:  
Unfortunately space does not allow the grid to be shown with the answers here. However, it will be available via the notices in the Members Area of the website in the New Year. Meanwhile the  
Quiz 2.

Quiz 1  
1 Moorhen, 2 Skylark, 3 Partridge, 4 Dipper, 5 Nuthatch, 6 Rail, 7 Ruff, 8 Jack Snipe,  
9 Redstart, 10 Merlin, 11 Razorbill, 12 Stonechat, 13 Fulmar, 14 Storm Petrel, 15 Swallow,  
16 Goldcrest, 17 Oyster Catcher, 18 Owl, 19 Starling, 20 Blackbird.

# Membership Renewal

## DEESIDE NATURALISTS' SOCIETY

Membership Renewal 2014 Membership Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_ Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Post Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone No: \_\_\_\_\_ Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Subscriptions: (please tick the appropriate box)

Basic (inclusive of family if required)	£14	<input type="checkbox"/>	Please also see Gift Aid section below
Over 60 (including family if required)	£12	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Single (over 60)	£10	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Single (under 60)	£12	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Student/Junior	£3.50	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Please make a cheque payable to "DEESIDE NATURALISTS SOCIETY" and send to:

Membership Secretary  
1 Hambledon Close  
Little Sutton  
Ellesmere Port  
Cheshire  
CH66 4YF

**IMPORTANT: PLEASE ENCLOSE A STAMPED, SELF ADDRESSED ENVELOPE FOR YOUR NEW PERMIT**

### GIFT AID

If you pay tax, Gift Aid will return the tax paid on your subscription/donations to the Society with no cost to you. The Society will then receive from HMRC £2.50 for every £10 of the subscription and/or donation paid. If you would like to support the Society in this way please complete the following:-

I would like Deeside Naturalists' Society, Registered Charity No 510146, to treat all subscriptions and/or donations I will make to Deeside Naturalists' Society from the date of this declaration, until I notify you otherwise, as Gift Aid donations. I confirm that I have paid an amount of UK income tax or capital gains tax equal to any tax reclaimed.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Full Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address (inc. post code): \_\_\_\_\_