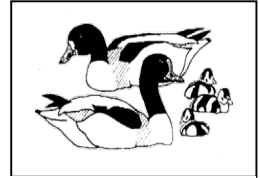


# Newsletter



Issue 139

January 2016

Registered Charity No. 510146



Welcome to the January edition of the newsletter. A heartfelt thank you to two of our committee members, Pauline Moulton, Secretary and David Ross, Membership Secretary who both stood down at the December AGM after serving us for many years. All your hard work was very much appreciated and without which the Society would have been unable to function effectively.

Their posts have been taken over by Julie Rogers in the capacity of secretary, and Bob Lane as membership secretary and we extend a warm welcome to them both and wish them well in their new posts.



Please note the membership renewal form can be found on the last page of the newsletter. The form should be returned to the Membership Secretary by the end of January 2016. For those who would rather not cut the form from the newsletter it can be downloaded from the website. From the Home Page select About Us then Join Us, you will then see a link to the membership renewal at the foot of the page.



Any articles you would like to share with the members in the newsletter are always welcome.



May I wish the Season's Greetings to each and every one of you and may Mother Nature provide you with even more of her spectacular sights and sounds in 2016.

*Alan Smethurst*

# Reserve Report

An unexpected "first" for the Reserve on November 3rd was a White-tailed Sea Eagle which was seen flying from Oakenholt Marsh to land briefly at the far end of the fly ash lagoon, but after that it was not seen again.



The Ring-billed Gull on Oakenholt Marsh on August 29th was also strictly speaking a new bird, although there have been two previous records just outside the reserve boundaries. A logbook record of a Willow Tit near the bunded pools on September 20th would also be new for the Reserve (more details please, since this species is a "local rarity" in NE Wales). A Short-eared Owl on November 11th was seen flying over the Reserve's riverside marshes, rather than just a distant view across the river, which is where nearly all of our recent Hen Harrier and Great White Egret records come from. Marsh Harriers are more obliging with half of the 20 being on our side of the river, often over the fly ash lagoon.

Wader passage was fairly light in September with one Little Stint, one Ruff and two separate Curlew Sandpipers, followed by a Green Sandpiper on October 26th. On the other hand, peak numbers of both Spotted Redshank (25) and Greenshank (17) were quite respectable and several Greenshank were remaining into December.

Passerine passage was also light with a Whinchat on September 13th, a Yellow Wagtail on September 29th and a few Redstart records.

*Glenn Morris*

# Chairman's Report

Season Greetings to all our members and especially all the new members.

Early on in the year we had an EGM because of the possibility of not having enough committee members. After that meeting we managed to recruit new committee members in order to continue running the Society. I would like to thank all that attended.

Pauline and myself attended the management meeting at the end of November to discuss the Management Plan for the next five years. This is now in place, running from July 2015, a copy of this is in the Field Study Centre if anyone would like to look at it.

Last month we had a very successful Open Day, the weather was kind and we had 126 people come through the gate. Out of this, 76 were non members, resulting in 12 new members on the day and others taking away a membership form to fill in.

On the Reserve, if any damage is caused, please let a committee member know in order that we can get it fixed. I am talking about the damage to the windows in the Middle Hide. We have taken them off and are replacing them with new windows at further cost to the Society. This should be completed by the New Year.

Damage has also occurred to the lock at the barrier. It is a simple lock that does not need to be forced to take the key out or lock. This has now been fixed.

The erosion damage by the West Hide has been rectified with new stones being placed there and also by the side of the seat.

Next year we are looking to replacing the picnic benches and looking into providing extra screening on the Reserve.

Just to remind members, we have a Wednesday club meeting every 1st and 3rd Wednesday of the month. Come along, the centre is open for a drink and usually somebody has cake!

On the 2nd Wednesday of the month the Camera Club meet and on the 2nd Thursday we have an Art Group that meet.

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

Please remember to send in your membership renewal early, enclosing a SSAE.

*Phil Hotchkiss (Chairman)*

# The "Old Money" Quiz

Write your answers and their monetary value in pre-decimal terms in the boxes provided to arrive at the sum shown below.

CLUE	ANSWER	£	s	d
Male singer				
Boy's name				
Girl's name				
Old bicycle				
Coronet				
Leather worker				
Unwell sea creature				
Sun, Moon, Stars				
Sort of pig				
Part of an Ape's leg				
total		£17	7s	9 ½d

## Dates for the Diary

### RESERVE MAINTENANCE DAY

This year we will be tidying up the Reserve on **Saturday 24th September** prior to the Open Day the following week.

Help is always needed to carry out tidying and maintenance jobs around the Reserve and all members are welcome to come down to the reserve to give a hand.

Meet up in the Field Studies Centre at 9.30am. For more information please contact Phil Hotchkiss on: 07773 333 346

### OPEN DAY

**Sunday 2nd October 10.00am to 3.00pm**  
**High tide at 12.43pm, 30.2ft (9.2m)**

The Reserve will be open to the public. Volunteers on the day are warmly welcome, if you would like to help out please contact Julie Rogers on: 07858 776 387

# Indoor Meetings 2016

All indoor meetings (except the October meeting) will be held at Connah's Quay Community Centre, Tuscan Way, off Chapel Street, CH5 4DZ and will start at 7.30pm.

## ***Friday 15th January.***

**Mike Lane, "A Lane in Brazil"**

The amazing Pantanal, a huge wetland area in Brazil featuring hyacinth macaw, jaguar, giant river otter, capybara and nut cracking capuchin monkeys.

## ***Friday 19th February.***

**Amanda Davies, Flintshire County Council Biodiversity Officer.**  
Biodiversity and Bats.

## ***Friday 18th March.***

**Steve Palin, bird and wildlife artist.**

will talk and show Butterflies, Moths and Dragonflies.

## ***Friday 16th September.***

**North Wales Police, Wildlife Protection & Rural Crime Team.**

The work of the team including badger digging, bat disturbance, damage to SSSI's etc.

## ***Friday 21st October.***

**Mandy Cartwright, Wepre Park Ranger.**

A talk on the work and wildlife of Wepre Park including specimens and exhibits.  
**NB this talk will be held at the new Field Centre in Wepre Park** and not in the usual venue.

## ***Friday 18th November.***

**Paul Furnborough, N.E. Wales Wildlife.**

The life and times of the great crested newt.

## ***Friday 9th December.***

**AGM**

*Damien Brady*

## An Observation

The other day I spent a few hours in the loft attempting to sort, well, re-arrange, those essential items that need to be kept but which in reality have not seen the light of day for over a decade. In one corner stacked up against a pile of gramophone records I found several pocket size reference books belonging to a very famous set of guides. Including one copy, number eighteen in the series, first published in 1953 and relating to bird eggs.

The Observer's series began in 1937 with *The Observer's Book of British Birds* and finished in 2003 with the one-hundredth title *The Observer's Book of Wayside and Woodland*. Aficionados, of course, will tell you that the 'real series' ended in 1983 when the original publishers Frederick Warne and Co were taken over by Penguin. In fact, Penguin only contributed two new titles during their twenty-year stewardship, the first, which did show some foresight, being *The Observer's Book of Observer's Books!* It was a hugely popular, well respected series and covered a wide range of topics. They were re-printed regularly and I doubt if you could find one person in one hundred today, over the age of forty, who did not at some time, own at least one of the ninety-eight original titles.

Why then would such an honourable series release a book on bird eggs? The clue is in the title. For *The Observer's Book of Birds' Eggs* was not written as a book on collecting but on observing and conservation and protection were uppermost even though most of the recommended practices mentioned in it would today at best be frowned upon and at worse be illegal. The author condemns the barbarous activities of the Victorians and points out how far we had come in fifty years - unaware that in less than another fifty the practices of his day would be treated in much the same way. That started me thinking which led me to my bookshelf and two specific volumes. A 1902 copy of *Hudson's British Birds* and the modern RSPB Handbook of the same. Add to that the 1968 edition of the *Observer's Book of Birds* (also in the loft) and then compare the three. You find some interesting results.

The Canada Goose: Not mentioned in Hudson's; the Observer's talks about considerable numbers which are now quite wild (*although what they are annoyed about it doesn't say*) and the RSPB gives the UK population as 62,000. The Little Egret; Hudson declares it a very rare straggler and a waif from Southern Europe; the Observer's mentions it not at all and the RSPB reports there are 4500.

Finally, the Bittern; Hudson states it has been 'extirpated from Britain and hardly worth a mention' while at the same time including a full colour plate of one – there are only eight colour plates in the entire volume. The Observer's say the numbers are increasing while the RSPB state that they have been decreasing over the last fifty years.

What becomes clear is how much things change and how out of date things can become. It also shows how easily and quickly the acceptable practices of yesterday became unacceptable today. There is nothing new in this of course and it affects most things not just wildlife. With things changing so fast the internet is perhaps the best – and cheapest - way of keeping up to date. You can now download a variety of apps for birds which gives photos, descriptions and examples of their song at a cost that is less than a second-hand copy of the observers book itself. You do, however, lose the historical part and the ability to compare old and new. Perhaps there is room for one more Observer's book - **The Observer's book of how the Observer's Observed.**

*Bob Must*

# Field Meetings 2016

**For all trips (except April 3rd, see below) members will meet at the times stated for each trip at the Spar car park in Queensferry on the B441**

**Saturday 13th February.**

***North Wales Coast, Llanfairfechan and the Spinnies.*** For seabirds and waders.

Meet at the Spar car park at 9.00am. Contact Bill Dickinson 07968 438 121 for more details.

**Saturday 19th March.**

***Gigrin farm and Elan Valley.*** Red kite feeding centre. Feeding is at 2pm

There is a £5.00pp entrance fee.

Meet at the Spar car park at 8.30am. Contact Ron Plummer on 07778 557 402 for more details.

**Sunday 3rd April.**

***World's End.*** Early morning black grouse watch.

**MEET AT WORLD'S END CAR PARK AT 7.00am.** Contact Bill Dickinson 07968 438 121 for more details

**Saturday 16th April.**

***Woolston Eyes.*** A warden led tour of this secluded nature reserve.

Principal breeding site for black necked grebes. Entrance charge - £2.00pp

Meet at the Spar car park at 9.00am. Contact Bill Dickinson 07968 438 121 for more details.

**Saturday 14th May.**

***Lake Vyrnwy RSPB.*** Moorland, woodland and rocky streams for upland birds. Please bring RSPB membership card. Meet at the Spar car park at 8.30am. Contact Bill Dickinson 07968 438 121 for more details.

**Saturday 12th June.**

***RSPB, Bempton Cliffs.*** Yorkshire's premier sea cliff bird colony

Please bring RSPB membership card.

Meet at the Spar car park at 8.00am. Contact Bill Dickinson 07968 438 121 for more details.

**Saturday 3rd September.**

***Frodsham and the Weaver Bend.*** Migrants and waders on the settling pools and the weaver bend.

Meet at the Spar car park at 9.00am. Contact Bill Dickinson 07968 438 121 for more details.

**Saturday 3rd December.**

***RSPB Conwy reserve and estuary.*** Short days and pre Christmas blues! Waders, wildfowl and more. Please bring RSPB membership card. Meet at the Spar car park at 9.00am. Contact Bob Must 07712 713 397 for more details.

*Bill Dickinson*

# 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.

# Website

The password for the members area will change on the weekend 9th/10th January to:



[www.deenats.org.uk](http://www.deenats.org.uk)



# Treasurer's Report

Deeside Naturalists Society Accounts for the year ended 31st October 2015  
Registered Charity No. 510146

**ACCOUNTING STATEMENT**  
Receipts and payments basis

<u>Income</u>	<u>2014/2015</u>
Bank Interest	7.45
Donations	159.00
Subscriptions	5794.00
Gift Aid Tax Rebate	1054.83
Visits	60.00
<b>Total Income</b>	<b><u>7075.28</u></b>
 <u>Expenditure</u>	
Insurance	113.00
Printing, Photocopying, Stationery, Postage	2148.47
Room Hire	135.00
Refreshments	
Education	
Guest Speakers	453.00
New keys / locks	372.25
Bird Food	260.20
FLVC subscription	15.00
Membership	50.00
Web Hosting	36.00
Travel	50.00
Equipment	
Repairs and Maintenance	1818.98
Hide Windows	
<b>Total Payments</b>	<b><u>5451.90</u></b>
 <b>Balance for Year</b>	<b>1623.38</b>
Cash funds last year end	11296.27
Transfer from Key Money	80.00
<b>Cash funds this year end</b>	<b><u>12999.65</u></b>

*Bob Lee , Treasurer*

# Secretary's Report

This year seems to have flown by for me, it seems only a few weeks since the last AGM and here we are again. In the past I have not usually given a report as I felt that much of what I had to say would reiterate the Chairman's remarks, however this being my final year as secretary I would like to have the chance to write a few words to you all.

The Indoor Meetings have been well supported and apart from the odd hiccup have mostly gone to plan. The Field Trips have had varying attendance, some much better than others. The programme for 2016 is already set, but if there is somewhere you would like to go please let Bill Dickinson know so that it can be put on the programme for 2017.

The Art, Photographic and Wednesday groups continue to meet and all members are welcome to come along and see what they get up to! Details of the dates are on the 2016 Programme Card.

We had a successful Open Day in October and I would like to say a big thank you to all those who came along to help on the day, without your support it would not have been possible to run an Open Day.

We have had five group visits to the reserve this year so far and all the participants have enjoyed their visit and appreciated the opportunity to view the estuary and its birds from this side of the river.

I have enjoyed my time on the committee and having completed seven years, I now feel it is time for somebody else to take over. I would like to thank all my committee colleagues both past and present for all their help and support. I will continue to be a member of the Society and to be involved in some events, so I will not be disappearing completely!

Finally I would like to wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

*Pauline Moulton*

# Quiz Answers

CLUE	ANSWER	£	s	d
Male singer	TENNER	£10	0	
Boy's name	BOB		1s	
Girl's name	PENNY			1d
Old bicycle	PENNY FARTHING			1¼d
Coronet	CROWN		5s	
Leather worker	TANNER			6d
Unwell sea creature	SICK SQUID	£6		
Sun, Moon, Stars	THREE FAR THINGS			¾d
Sort of pig	GUINEA	£1	1	
Part of an Ape's leg	APE KNEE			½d
	total	£17	7s	9 ½d

# Committee Members 2016

The AGM was held on the 11th Dec and the following members were elected to serve on the committee.

Chairman:	Phil Hotchkiss
Secretary:	Julie Rogers
Treasurer:	Bob Lee
Membership Secretary:	Bob Lane
Web/Ext Affairs:	Bob Must
Newsletter:	Alan Smethurst
Committee Member:	Dave Coulton
Committee Member:	Joan Hotchkiss

Contact details for the Committee can be found on our website.

## Reserve Bird/Bat Boxes

There has been some discussion regarding the bird and bat boxes on the Reserve and it has been suggested that it would be a good idea to look for volunteers from the membership to get involved by adopting and being responsible for a small number of boxes each with regard to cleaning them out early in the year prior to the nesting and monitoring them during the nesting period to establish how many and what species we may have in residence on the reserve. If anyone is interested in becoming involved please contact:

Betty Lee : [bettylee\\_uk@btinternet.com](mailto:bettylee_uk@btinternet.com)

or

Alan Smethurst: [alansmethurst44@gmail.com](mailto:alansmethurst44@gmail.com)

# MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

## DEESIDE NATURALISTS' SOCIETY

Membership Renewal Year: \_\_\_\_\_ Membership Number: \_\_\_\_\_

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

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

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

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

Subscriptions: (please tick the appropriate box)

Basic (inclusive of family)	£14
Over 60 (including family if required)	£12
Single (over 60)	£10
Single (under 60)	£12
Student/Junior	£3.50

Please make cheques payable to "DEESIDE NATURALISTS SOCIETY" and send to:

### Membership Secretary

**Mr. R. Lane,  
Ael-Y-Bryn,  
Llanfynedd,  
Wrexham,  
LL11 5HH**

**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 subscriptions/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 the 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 claimed.

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

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

Address (inc Post Code) \_\_\_\_\_