

May I wish the Season's Greetings to each and every one of you and hope you all have a great year ahead observing and appreciating the wonderful wildlife our country has to offer.

This has been a busy year for maintenance projects on the Reserve including the reflooring of the Middle hide, repainting the Dee hide floor, repair work to the West hide screening and many smaller but necessary jobs vital to keeping the Reserve functioning effectively. Improvements in the pipeline include the remodelling of the Middle hide windows to enable all four to be opening and the provision of screening from the sluice gate to the Dee hide to help keeping bird disturbance to a minimum.

Open Day was well attended this year with numbers of around 80 attending including some 35 non-members, of which a good number took out membership. We were treated to a cameo performance by the fox who spent the best part of an hour relaxing in the sun right in front of the Field Study Centre. On cue the male Kingfisher treated us to his usual Open day appearance on the Field Study Centre pool.

Many thanks to all the members who donated bird feeders, they will be all be put to good use. A Tawny owl nest box, kindly donated by Paul Rochester has now been sited in one of our wooded areas and hopefully we can have a new tenant before too long.

Over the past year we have sited 35 nest boxes in wooded areas on local farmland within a mile of the Reserve. A further 6-9 will be sited early in the New Year in the wooded area bordering the millpond at Oakenholt, papermill.

There have been plenty of sightings of the Stoats again this year and in lesser numbers Polecat/Ferret crosses. In recent months we have had regular visits of a female Hen Harrier quartering the Bunded pools and the Ash pool.

Our Facebook page (*Members of the Deeside Naturalists Society*) run by Ron Plummer has increased to 96 members since being set up some twelve months ago. Why not sign up and see what other members are recording on site and elsewhere and keep up to date with the latest Society news and notifications?

Alan Smethurst

Indoor Meetings 2019

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

Friday January 18th: *David Winnard, 'Discovering the Wildlife of Flintshire'*

Friday February 15th: *Trevor Davenport, 'Nature Far and Near'*

Friday March 15th: *Keith Offord, 'The Wild Wood'*

Friday September 20th: *To be confirmed*

Friday October 18th: *Kevin Briggs, 'Confessions of a lunatic'*

Friday November 15th: *A.G.M.*

Corinne Williams



Cryptic Celebrity Quiz

Solve the clue to give the name of a well known celebrity

1	EXAMPLE: Dead king in a car park was an ordnance guy	<i>Richard Osman</i>
2	Australian guy jumps up with a youngster	
3	Little Stephen is one of seven in the world	
4	Dad's hoax with lawn trimmer	
5	Does he go to Hollywood with an abscess?	
6	Yellow fruit with on off coupled with iconic guitar	
7	Dance movement and egg layer linked to burger royalty	
8	It sounds like a pirate radio station came in for a great deal of criticism	
9	Slight cut for a man who hacks down trees	
10	Gaelic speaker has trouble in one of these perhaps	
11	Special cereal munched in between 20 hundredweights	
12	A manufacturer of jeans adds a raincoat	
13	Beak asks for a reason old boy	
14	Rice fields lead to a Scot with an Irish bevvy	
15	Animal noise makes Scot unwell Mr Hattersley	
16	Full name of man who's often said to be your uncle wants to set the seed	
17	The sound of paper screw-up with Conan Doyle's doctor	
18	Lady from the Arc is gun running	
19	University teacher is lacking experience	
20	Paul Simon is said to call him this, father in casual trousers	
21	A dial is mixed up with domesticated camelid	
22	Moray town produces a sort of curd	
23	A local area network for this popular mode of transport	
24	Orwell wrote of his road to one in a trendy sportscar	
25	Royal palace link with originator of peerage book	
26	Girl's toy is not fully functional	
27	Window ledge plus one snooker ball	
28	Little Catherine with the parable of burning one	
29	The wolf's companion wears a hat in a supermarket	
30	Two mules for this girl who leads a crew	
31	Belong to me, there's no fat with this group of pupils	
32	The elephant song girl – pelt with hot drink and much of this about nothing	
33	Shakespeare's wife sketched with old tool – its not on	
34	She's usually with Punch together with a famous walker	
35	Masculine cat with endless pavement edge and top tile	

Field Meetings 2019

Sunday 13th JANUARY, **LLANFAIRFECHAN AND THE SPINNIES**, for winter seabirds and waders. Meet in the beach car park by the Pavilion Cafe, off junction 15, A55 at 9.00am. Contact Bill Dickinson on 07968438121 for more details.

Sunday 24th MARCH, **POINT OF AYR AND BIG POOL WOOD**, coast and woodland birds. Meet in the Station Rd car park Talacre at 9.00am. Contact Alan Smethurst 07896758222 for more details.

Saturday 27th APRIL, **RSPB LEIGHTON MOSS**, Spring migrants and woodland birds. Bring RSPB membership cards. Meet at the Allen and Morecambe hide car park, off New Rd, Warton at 10.00am. Contact Bill Dickinson 07968438121 for more details.

Saturday 11th MAY, **YNYS HIR RSPB AND CORS DYFI**, estuary, woodland birds and osprey. Bring RSPB membership cards. Meet in Ynys Hir car park, off A487 at 10.00am. Contact Bill Dickinson 07968438121 for more details.

Thursday 13th JUNE, **LLANDEGLA FOREST**. Nightjars. EVENING MEETING 8.00pm at Llandegla Forest visitor centre (SJ240524). Contact Bob Lane 07985704963/01352770633 for more details.

Sunday 30th JUNE, **SOUTH STACK AND CEMLYN BAY**, sea bird spectacular. Bring RSPB membership cards. Meet South Stack car park at 10.00am. Contact Steve Palin 01248 471116 for more details.

Sunday 11th AUGUST, **RHYDYMWAN AND COED Y FELIN**, woodland birds. Meet at 10.00am in the car park, Nant Alyn Rd off the A 541 (SJ205689). Contact Bill Dickinson 07968438121 for more details.

Sunday 15th SEPTEMBER, **CONNAH'S QUAY RESERVE**, high tide watch, Members day, Meet Field Study Centre at 9.00am. Contact Bill Dickinson 07968438121 for more details.

Sunday 24th NOVEMBER, **GREENFIELD PARK AND DOCK**. Woodland and estuary birds. Meet at Greenfield Park car park, off Greenfield Rd at 9.00am. Contact Alan Smethurst 07896758222 for more details.

Sunday 8th DECEMBER, **DEE MARSHES**, a walk out onto the marsh, birds and beer. Meet Quayside, Little Neston, just after the Harp public house, at 9.00am. Bring wellingtons. Contact Bill Dickinson 07968438121 for more details.

Please consider car sharing where possible.

Bill Dickinson

Burton Mere Wetlands, 12th Aug

Today's meeting was scheduled for Frodsham Marsh and the Weaver Bend, but thanks to an earlier recce it was discovered that the settling pond was devoid of water, so it was decided to opt for the RSPB reserve at Burton Mere Wetlands. It is an extensive area of fresh water lagoons, scrapes, reedbeds, wet fields and woodland with several hides. To quote the RSPB: A mosaic of wetlands and beautiful woodlands.

My thanks to Jennifer who began the visit with a walk through Gorse Covert Wood, whilst I went to Frodsham to meet up with anyone who was unaware of the change to the programme. Within the woods we saw Jackdaw, Goldfinch, Goldcrest, Wood pigeon, Great spotted Woodpecker, Swallow and Buzzard.



After returning from the short walk we spent a short time in the reception hide from where we saw Tufted duck, Green Sandpiper, Moorhen and Coot on the reception pool. The scrape held good numbers of Avocets, who are increasing their range northwards, also on the scrape were Lapwing, Shoveler, Heron, Black head gull, Black-tailed Godwit and Ruff, together with a number of Canada geese along with a few Greylag geese. Over the reeds, to the right in the direction of the IMF hide came a female Marsh Harrier gliding and occasionally "hovering" before dropping into the reeds.



Making our way to the gorse covert hide we saw Nuthatch, Treecreeper, Blue and Great tit and Goldfinch. From marsh covert hide we observed Yellow and Pied Wagtails, Little Egret, Gadwall and Little Grebe.

Walking to the IMF hide, where we saw Cattle Egret, Snipe, Ring Plover, Redshank, Cormorant and Dunlin, and then on to the hill fort at Burton Point we had the following:- Chiffchaff, Greenfinch, Chaffinch, Swallow, Sedge warbler, Linnet and Buzzard.

The trek up to the Point was worth it, looking over Burton Marsh we had a good view of Great White Egret with a Peregrine perched on a post, along with Lesser Black Back gull, Great Black Back gull, Wood Pigeon and Stock dove.

As a late alternate venue, RSPB BMW, did not let us down, we had a total of fifty two species.

Bill Dickinson

Reserve Report Aug-Dec

As summer fades into autumn on its journey into winter so do some of our birds leave us on their own journeys. In August we still enjoyed swifts, martins and swallows. Swifts are the first to leave while swallows can linger through to October. The bunded pools are relatively quiet awaiting the returning waders passing through on their way south and some choosing to spend the winter with us. Some migrating sea birds may get blown into the estuary on a north westerly. Common terns finish their breeding and once more head out to sea. Winter ducks return in their 'eclipse plumage' to overwinter on the Dee estuary.

Many bird species move in search of a less harsh environment and available food, including birds we believe are with us all year. We see increased numbers of Robins, Blackbirds and Finches while experiencing an influx of winter Thrush, Linnets and Twite. The raptors that rely on the moving populations of prey birds and rodents move along with them.

Sightings on and from the reserve:

30th July: Curlew Sandpiper.

2nd August: Little Gull.

6th August: 4 Great Egrets,

12th August: 2 Whimbrel on passage.

22nd August: Common Redstart.

Common Whitethroat and Lesser Whitethroat.

21st September: Leach's petrel (SH).

23rd September: Gannet, Guillemot and Goosander.

By 5th October: 24 Spotted Redshank and 27 Greenshank.

6th October: 20 Golden Plover.

26th October: A second Leach's petrel (DW).

29th October: Yellow browed warbler (DW), a reserve first.

6th November: 15 Twite on west car park.

9th November: 52 Snipe on bunded pools.



A Hen harrier has been seen regularly quartering the pools and Marsh Harriers can always be seen on Burton marsh along with Merlin.

Amazing numbers of duck have already been recorded with counts of 5000 Pintail, 7000 Wigeon and 5000 Teal.

Thank you for your kind donations of bird feeders, they will all be used in due course.

Peter Haslem

King's Gap, Hoylake 9th Sept

The shore at Hoylake at the end of King's Gap road is a high tide roost for waders during spring to medium high tides. Hundreds, if not thousands of Oystercatchers, Knot, Dunlin, Bar-tailed Godwit and Redshank should be seen, peak numbers occur in mid-winter but good numbers of waders can also be seen in late summer, particularly Dunlin and Ringed Plover with Curlew Sandpipers always a possibility.

We met up at the south end of Hoylake promenade and before the tide began coming in walked for a short distance towards Red Rocks. We hadn't been walking long before a Peregrine flew above us, one of three sightings on the day. On this stretch we had Pied and Grey Wagtails, Great Black-backed, Black headed and Common gulls, looking out to sea was a flock of Scoter and Cormorants.

Back on the promenade as the tide came in, gradually the birds were pushed closer making viewing easier. Of the waders the Oystercatchers were by far the largest number, there were good numbers of Dunlin and Ringed plover, together with Knot, Sanderling, Grey Plover, Curlew, Black and Bar-tailed Godwit. There was a flock of Sandwich terns on the shore, not long before they would be flying south.



After lunch we set out from Meols Parade along the dunes to Leasowe lighthouse. The rocky groyne at the corner of the concrete embankment was the high tide roost for redshanks, oystercatcher and turnstone and five Little Egrets. We then headed past the lighthouse, down Lingham Lane and around the horse paddocks, where we saw Blackcap, Moorhen, great tit, Robin, Dunnock and Crow. At the bridge over the River Birkett we had a Sparrowhawk zooming through the bushes.

Walking through the dunes and returning back to the cars we saw Collared dove, Goldfinch, Wood pigeon and Meadow pipits. In total nearly forty species on the day.

The estuary WeBS count was being undertaken that morning and some of their sightings were:-
Oystercatcher 2,500, Dunlin 500, Ringed plover 105, Grey plover 5, Knot 25
Sanderling 35, Black-tail Godwit 1, Bar-tailed Godwit 2, Common gull 66, Black-Headed gull 150,
Lesser Black-Backed gull 2, Great Black-Backed gull 30, Sandwich terns 26. Also Curlew Sandpiper 4 and Yellow-Legged gull 1.

The last two not seen by us unfortunately.

Bill Dickinson

Wildlife Report

During a two month period in the summer a moth trap was put out on the Reserve (for 2019 it is hoped weekly moth trapping will produce a comprehensive list of moths on the reserve). A full roundup of all the moth and butterfly species recorded on the reserve during 2018 will be published soon. 146 moth species were recorded in 2018, highlights have included;

Dog's Tooth (*Lacanobia suasa*) - on the evening of 23rd June 121 were counted at the trap, the highest count of the year with other counts in high double figures; the previous highest count in a single night at any site in North Wales is just 9.

Saltmarsh Grass-veneer (*Pediasia aridella*) - recorded a number of times through the season, a species last recorded in Flintshire over 40 years ago.

Round-winged Muslin (*Thumatha senex*) - one on the 1st July appears to be the first record in Flintshire since 1976.

Two-coloured Bell (*Eucosma obumbratana*) - not recorded in North Wales since 1979, 2 were in the trap on the 1st July.

Fenland Pearl (*Anania perlucidalis*) - one was in the trap on 1st July, the third record for North Wales, a species which seems to be spreading.

Scarce Silver-lines (*Bena bicolorana*) - not a particularly common moth in North Wales, but is certainly one of the most spectacular, a single was in the trap on the 22nd July.

Apple Pygmy (*Stigmella malella*) - the leaf mine of this moth was found on the leaves of an apple along the meadow trail on 19th June, a new species for Flintshire.

Large Tabby (*Aglossa pinguinialis*) - Peter & Sue Haslem found a specimen during the day on the 28th June; there is only 1 other known site in Flintshire where this species has been recorded.

Butterflies had a year of mixed fortunes, there were some standout winners and losers during this long hot summer.

Small Copper seemed to have a very good year with records right through the summer and well into late autumn. **Meadow Browns** peaked at 86 along the meadow trail in June and **Gatekeeper** at 63, **Comma** was another species to have a good summer with up to 5 together along the meadow trail during July. 2 **Wall Browns** were near the West hide on numerous days in July. **Small, Large and Green veined Whites** were out in force throughout the year but **Peacock, Small Tortoiseshell and Red Admiral** were very thin on the ground. **Painted Lady, Orange-tip, Common Blue, Holly Blue, Brimstone and Speckled Wood** were also recorded.

Other species of note during the year included;

Bee Orchid (*Ophrys apifera*) - a single specimen was under the barrier at the entrance to reserve in June.

Stone Parsley (*Sison amomum*) - an uncommon plant across the UK, but with a stronghold in North Wales, a large stand of the plant was near to East Hide in August.

Haw Goblet (*Monilinia johnsonii*) - a small fungus which occurs in spring on rotting hawthorn seeds, numerous were found under a hawthorn opposite Middle Hide in April. There are no previous records in North Wales.

Thimble Morel (*Verpa Conica*) - a number of this weird fungi were found along the Meadow Trail in April. An uncommon species.

Arrhenia rickennii - a small mushroom that occurs on mossy footpaths, a number of specimens were along the meadow trail in early November, no Flintshire records.

Migrant Hawker (*Aeshna mixta*) - two of these late flying Dragonflies were seen from Middle Hide during the last week of October.

Photos: top to bottom, Dog's Tooth, Scarce Silver-lines, Bee Orchid and haw Goblet.

David Winnard



Treasurer's Report 2017/2018

Deeside Naturalists Society Accounts for the year ended 31st October 2018
Registered Charity No. 510146

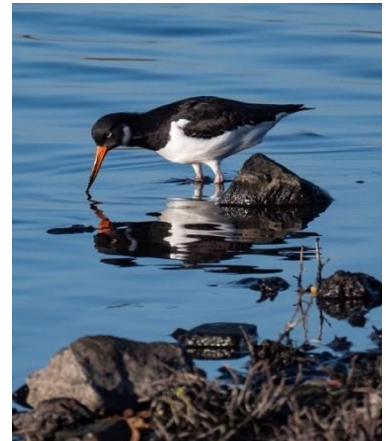
ACCOUNTING STATEMENT Receipts and payments basis

<u>Income</u>	<u>2017/2018</u>	<u>2016/2017</u>
Bank Interest	25.03	1.87
Donations	279.00	613.90
Subscriptions	5113.50	5343.00
Gift Aid Tax Rebate	1040.47	1076.41
Visits	46.00	86.00
Business Rates refund	434.13	
Total Income	<u>6958.13</u>	<u>7121.18</u>
<u>Expenditure</u>		
Insurance	113.00	113.00
Printing, Photocopying, Stationery, Postage	1868.40	2353.06
Room Hire	125.00	150.00
Refreshments	30.00	
Guest Speakers	339.76	170.00
New keys / locks	355.46	552.15
Bird Food	338.28	175.89
FLVC subscription	15.00	15.00
Membership		50.00
Web Hosting	150.84	
Travel	25.00	50.00
Equipment	730.81	1094.78
Repairs and Maintenance	6865.64	93.52
Business rates		434.13
Books		1.95
Total Payments	<u>10957.1</u>	<u>5253.48</u>
Balance for Year	-3999.06	1867.70
Cash funds last year end	18586.34	13973.64
Transfer to/from Key Money	65.00	2727.00
Cash funds this year end	<u>14634.28</u>	<u>18568.34</u>

Bob Lee, Treasurer

Pennington Flash 17th Nov

For those who have not been to Pennington Flash it is a nature reserve located near Leigh, Manchester and is just off the East Lancashire Road (A580). Around forty-five minutes from Chester. For those who like good food then Bents Garden Centre which is about 10 minutes from the Flash serves excellent meals. A word of warning though their restaurant becomes very busy at weekends and traditional meal times.



The Flash is a 490-acre park with a lake covering 170 of those acres. It was formed around the turn of the 20th century - as the name implies - when Bickershaw coal mine suffered subsidence. The park was opened to the public in 1981.



The park was opened to the public in 1981 It now sports sailing clubs, a nine-hole golf course, several hides all easily accessible with good paths running between them and has over 230 species of bird recorded. The Leeds Liverpool canal also crosses the reserve.

It has a large main carpark (pay and display) that is located alongside the lake and close to most of the main hides.



Several of the hides overlook various aspects of the lake and one has been set-up specifically to view a number of different types of bird feeders. These attract a large number of species

Seven DNS members attended the field trip and the weather which had, for once, listened to what the BBC Weather Forecasters had been saying about it remained sunny and dry.

While we did not see all 230 species, we did spot quite a few with a Kingfisher, Green Sandpiper and Willow Tits being the highlights of the day. We also saw a Speckled Wood.



Unfortunately, the Kingfisher and Willow Tits were too fast for me to obtain any decent photos and the Green Sandpiper was too far away as well. However, I did manage to take a few reasonable shots of other species – albeit common sightings – including, however, two squirrels inside supposedly squirrel proof bird feeders at the Feeder hide!

Bob Must

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 Field 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 Phil Hotchkiss on 07773 333 346

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 in the Field Study Centre from 1-30 until 3-30 pm. Contact Kay Mattocks on 01244 821810

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.

Digital Media

The password for the members area will remain the same until the April Newsletter

User Name	dnsuser
Password	rtnb5834

Web site: www.deenats.org.uk

Email address: webeditor@deenats.org.uk

Facebook: THE MEMBERS OF DEESIDE NATURALIST SOCIETY

Don't forget to renew your membership for 2019

MERRY CHRISTMAS