

Chairman's report

I have enjoyed my first year as chair, especially the field trips organised by Bill Dickinson. Highlights for me were the Ynys Hir and the two trips to Anglesey. Members have one more year to enjoy Bill's trip until he steps down. So a big thank you to Bill for the running of this year's field meetings.

On the Reserve there have been communication problems with Uniper due to their reorganisation. The main problem areas being the balancing pipe between the bunded pools, the renewal of our lease and the shutters in the West hide.

The ground floor window shutters have now all been serviced and the disabled access door shutter problem has been resolved. Uniper have the other two issues in hand. They wish to reinstate the five-year management plan into the new lease and have sought environmental consultants and an engineer to assess the rebuilding of the balancing pipe.

Please be reminded of the conditions of membership and particularly observe the rules when on site including the 15 MPH speed limit as it has been reported that some members have been exceeding it.

Highlights on the Reserve for me this year were the large flock of Wheatears in April, the occasional Spoonbill and of course the increasing number of Avocet, with three pairs nesting and producing seven young.

Many thanks to all the committee members who help run the Society and I would like to take the opportunity to wish all members a merry Christmas and a happy New Year.

Keith Davies (Chair)

Welcome to our two new committee members, Susi Sheen and Noel Hughes.

Many thanks to the contributors to the December Newsletter: Bill Dickinson, Sue and Peter Haslem, Malcolm Down, Glenn Morris Karen Garnett, Adrian Jenkins and John Briggs and a special thanks to Betty Lee and Noel Hughes for help with the Reserve nestbox maintenance, especially these cold mornings.

Copy is always very welcome to enhance the Newsletter. Have you experienced wildlife encounters recently or indeed from years gone by? Perhaps you would care to compose an article (one or two A4 pages) for the membership to share. I'm thinking an Antarctica report would be awesome !

Alan Smethurst

Rhydymwyn & Coed-y-Felin 20th Aug

For our Field Trip to Rhydymwyn Nature Reserve, Bill managed to arrange a reasonable selection of weather. Cloudy and damp; sunny with just a hint of threatening rain, which didn't really materialise.

It was lovely to see amongst the 29 attending, 2 very young members (toddlers no less!), who walked the 2 miles around the reserve with the grown-ups!

The visit commenced with a brief history of the site, from its WWII mustard gas production, through to the present-day Nature Reserve status. We were given a most informative insight into the current birdlife statistics from Ian Spence, who has been ringing birds on the reserve for more years than he can remember. (18 actually!).

The leisurely walk around the reserve produced an acceptable list of some 27 species. Most summer visitors having already left and winter ones yet to arrive. The remaining usual suspects were logged, three Buzzards circling overhead at one point was notable. The Sparrowhawk juvenile photograph was actually taken in my garden which backs onto the reserve.

A leisurely open-air lunch was enjoyed at the picnic site on the reserve, to be followed by the afternoon visit to Coed Y Felin.



Malcolm Down

After lunch in the picnic area next to the centre eight members completed the day's field meeting at Coed-y-felin, a short car journey from Rhydymwyn. Again, a lovely walk in an ancient oak and ash Welsh woodland planted with sycamore, beech, and sweet chestnut.

Amid the usual woodland species the birding highlights were three Nuthatches that were seen at various locations on our walk with a Raven passing overhead. Two of our members, Karen and Adrian shared their knowledge of fungi, a comprehensive list of which follow on the following page.



I would like to thank the members who attended our August field meeting, and my special thanks to Malcolm and Rhydymwyn Valley Nature Reserve for their hospitality.

Bill Dickinson

The birding side of our day was complimented by a bountiful collection of various fungi from both locations.

RHYDYMWYN

Cap and stem type fungi –

Wood woolyfoot, *Gymnopus peronatus*
Tawny funnel, *lepista flaccida*
An Enteloma species
Stump puffball, *lycoperdon pyriforme*
Spindleshank, *Gymnopus fusipes*
Brown rollrim, *paxillus involutus*

Non ‘cap and stem’ shape fungi -

A postia species - a soft bracket type fungus
Birch woodwart *annulohypoxylon multiforme*
Ergot, *claviceps purpurea* - grows on grass seed.
It can cause ergot poisoning and hallucinations, which historically is a proposed explanation for accusations of witchcraft.

We also identified a number of rust type fungi which grow on the leaves of some plants and trees.

COED-Y FELIN

Fungi with a cap and a stem -

Charcoal burner brittlegill, *russula cyanoxantha*
The deceiver, *laccaria laccata*
Glistening inkcap, *coprinellus micaceus*
A shield mushroom - *a pluteus*
Oakbug milkcap, *Lactarius quietus*
A white funnel species
Stinking dapperling, *lepiota cristata*
Honey fungus, *armillaria mellea*
Blackfoot polypore, *polyporus leptoccephalus*
Sulphur tuft, *hypholoma fasciculare*

Bracket and crust fungi -

Turkey tail, *trametes versicolour*
Lumpy bracket, *trametes gibbosa*
Birch polypore, *fomitopsis betulina*
Blushing bracket, *daedaleopsis confragosa*
Schizopora paradoxa
Hairy curtain crust, *stereum hirsutum*
A rust coloured bracket

Other

Dead moll’s fingers, *xyalaria longipes*
Common stagshorn, *Calocera viscosa*
Beech woodwart - *xylodon fragiforme*



Birch Polypore



Dead Molly's finger



Earth star

As you can see this is quite a lot of species and contrasts with last year when we found very little until around the beginning of October. The wet July has convinced the mushrooms that autumn has arrived already.

Karen Garnett & Adrian Jenkins

North Wales Coast – 16th Sept

We met up on the approach road to the Dee Nat's reserve, one of our number being on reserve since dawn, before heading to our first stop, Pensarn beach.

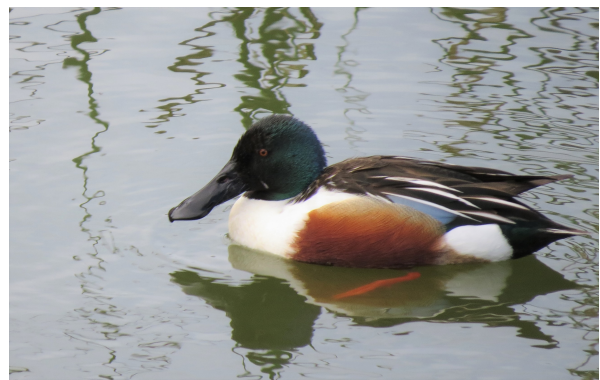
It was a reasonably bright clear morning, so we had good views over the sea, on which there was a hundred plus common scoter. Fly-bys included three sandwich terns, herring gulls, cormorants and oystercatchers, whilst on the stony beach there was a pied and yellow wagtail.

Our next site was Llanddulas beach which produced grey heron, a small flock of linnets, cormorants, herring gulls and further scoters, curlews and magpie. I must thank the pilot of an old spitfire that gave us a nice fly-past.

The last stop before lunch was Rhos on Sea, with good numbers of ringed plovers, oystercatchers and turnstones on the groyne. Herring and black headed gulls were in flight, with cormorants on the sea. A couple of red admiral butterflies were on the shore along with pied and grey wagtail, on the golf course (always good for a birdie!) jackdaw and rook.



Ringed Plover – Bill Dickinson



Shoveler - Bill Dickinson

Lunch was taken at RSPB Conwy prior to doing a circuit of the reserve. On the way to the Carneddau hide we had sightings of blue and great tits. From the hide we saw goosander, mallard, teal, meadow pipit, moorhen, pied wagtail, skylark, little egret, shoveler, and a kingfisher darted into the reeds - never to be seen again. On the grassy islands at the water's edge there were black tailed godwits, curlews, oystercatchers, a cormorant, grey heron and greenshanks.

Walking from the hide to the estuary we heard a cetti's warbler - often heard, seldom seen, and saw robin, magpie, jay, chiffchaff, crow and a fleeting glimpse of a bullfinch. From the Foel Fras hide we saw redshank, dunlin, little stint, little grebe and a spotted redshank.

The day's results were forty seven birds recorded, good views and good company.

Bill Dickinson

Bird report Jun – Sept 2023

Summer on the reserve, hirundine hawking over the Ash pool, a noisy breeding colony of Black-headed gulls and on the island periphery four pairs of Avocet produced eight chicks. Bird flu was evident among the Black-headed gulls and the occasional visiting tern.

Large numbers of Black-tailed godwits roosted with Knot on the edges of the Ash pool throughout the summer. Late summer saw waders on their return migration with 4000 plus Redshank on the Middle bund together with good numbers of Spotted redshank and Greenshank. Searching through these waders produced singles of Curlew sandpiper and Little stint.

Sightings.

June.

Black terns 2, Arctic tern, Sandwich terns, Pair of Oystercatchers with 3 young, four pairs of Avocet produced 8 chicks, Mediterranean gull.

July.

Little ringed plovers, Hobby, Spoonbill, Great egrets, 28 Greenshank, 12 Spotted redshank, Kingfisher, 1000 Black-tailed godwit.

August.

4000 Redshank, 6 Turnstone, 20 Whimbrel, Sanderling, 2 Wheatear, Golden plover, Curlew sandpiper, Little stint, 7 Common sandpiper, Green sandpiper, 8 Chiffchaff, Ruff, 4000 Black-tailed godwit, 400 Knot.

September.

Yellow wagtail, 22 Spotted redshank, Curlew sandpiper, Shoveler, 38 Greenshank, Spoonbill, 2000 Teal, 11 Buzzard (kettling), 24 Bar-tailed godwit, 2 Wheatear, 600 Knot.

Sue and Pete Haslem (recorder).

Christmas Cryptic Quiz

Eg: I am followed by two letters before a line of common heather (*J K*) (*Row*)ling

1. Last testament needs this sort of assessment for some taxpayers.
2. Can be converted to an oligarch - mob him or caravan.
3. Potter's Fisher rides with the hounds.
4. Everest's Edmund finds a place over the fire.
5. Sounds like this truck is neither petrol nor electric.
6. French flower for these TV Enders.
7. On Chesil Beach author had the only Model T car you could have – allegedly.
8. Frightened of a young lady, a rogue lender and an arch's main stone.
9. Baptist in a cottage in Fulham.
10. Chase quizmaster with a toupee and juniper based alcoholic drinks.
11. Our recent Queen needed support to stop the roof falling in.
12. Greene writer can be found near a kiln.
13. Oh Rooney don't lose or get wet when these open up.
14. Be fortunate without Kay gets 3rd place at championships.
15. Any gloomy rent creates the sculptor of Another Place in Crosby.
16. Boy left home alone has a door opener but has gone according to a Geordie.
17. Endless potato snack for this expert in stone.
18. Shake or vibrate after losing ER you will win over all other suites with this card.
19. Sounds like a South Korean car builder is one of a constellation in the French sea.
20. Fairground aunt is linked to Commons speaker.
21. One of a set of drums with a type of key.
22. Rail not roads icon makes this well-known number 7.
23. 46th President may tell untruth before one of the best of five in a grand slam.
24. Have a gamble with the eighth letter and a potent drink of honey.

Conwy RSPB – 17th October

We met up at the visitor centre before proceeding to ‘The Lookout’ and then to the ‘Boardwalk lookout’. From these two locations we had good view over the lagoon, albeit with a rather depleted water level. Several species put in an appearance here including: Blackbird, Robin, Song thrush, Teal, Little Egret, Woodpigeon and a handful of Redwing. The short walk to the feeder station provided us with Goldfinch, Greenfinch and Dunnock. We were somewhat taken aback by being confronted by a rat ten foot up a tree munching on a crab apple! No sign of the resident Bullfinches or Water Rail but were treated to the distinctive call of Cetti’s warblers.



Continuing though the wooded area to the north of the site Blue, Great and Long Tailed Tits flitted amongst the branches and we had a brief sighting of a distant Great Spotted Woodpecker who put in an appearance, and three Buzzards struggling to catch a thermal on the far side of the river Conwy with the imposing Carneddau as their backdrop. The sun's reflection on the water from the ‘Tal-y-Fan’ hide wasn't ideal, so we proceeded to ‘Carneddau hide’.

Visibility was somewhat better from this hide and we were rewarded by the sight of many birds beginning to hunker down on the spits, sheltering from the steadily increasing breeze. Quite a mixture sheltering on the spit included: Black Tailed Godwit, Redshank, Greenshank, Lapwing, Knot, Oystercatcher, Black Headed and Great Black Backed gulls, A couple of Grey Herons, A number of Little Egret and a solitary Snipe. On the water there was again a good selection of birds: Wigeon, Little Grebe, Mallard, Moorhen and Tufted duck. As we were spotting a flock of some 50+ Curlew flew in to settle on the spit.



Making our way around to the river side of the Reserve we had good views of Half a dozen Shoveller and a small raft of Wigeon. A solitary immature Cormorant preened near the water's edge and over on the western bank of the Conwy were some 15 or so Grey Herons enjoying the company of a solitary Great White Egret. We finally ticked off a sparrow as we arrived back at the visitor centre!

Thanks to all who turned up to enjoy a pleasant autumnal day's birding with 44 species seen.

Alan Smethurst

River Clwyd – 11th November

We met in the car park by the Bike Hub before heading out around Horton's Nose. Viewing over the beach we saw oystercatchers, sanderling and three ringed plovers along the shoreline with a few curlews on the sand. In the pools were redshank whilst in amongst the rocks were several groups of turnstones. Looking out to sea in front of the wind turbines we noted small numbers of common scoters.

Walking around the point of Horton's Nose and looking towards the mouth of the river there were three goosanders, cormorants, oystercatchers, herring and great black backed gulls. As the river was rising with the incoming tide groups of turnstones were being flushed off the gravelly banks.

Our next location was the adjacent Marine Lake which produced bar-tailed godwits, lapwings, little egret, great black backed and common gulls, red breasted mergansers, goosanders, grey heron and oystercatchers.

For lunch we moved on to the Brickfield Pond. At the start of our walk looking over the fence onto the sports field there was a flock of over eighty curlews with a few oystercatchers. We had a good view, albeit distant, of a kingfisher in a bush on the edge of the pond. Other birds seen on the pond were tufted duck, mallard, cormorant, coot and moorhen. Smaller birds in the bushes and trees included song thrush, starling, wren, great, blue and long-tailed tits, with a sparrowhawk over.



Photographs – Glenn Morris

The last move of the day was to the riverbank as the tide was receding and exposing large areas of mud. On the west bank were flocks of oystercatchers and lapwing, with starlings and dunlins. On the river were a little grebe, shelduck and wigeon. In the grass were more wigeon, curlews and a black-tailed godwit. As the water level dropped further the waders descended onto the mud and began actively probing for a meal.

Teal, Canada and greylag geese were south of the railway bridge.

Fifty birds were seen on the day, a big thank you to all those that turned out and it was good to see some new faces.

Bill Dickinson

Accounts 2022/2023

Deeside Naturalists Society Accounts for the year ended 31st October 2023 Registered Charity No. 510146

ACCOUNTING STATEMENT Receipts and payments basis

<u>Income</u>	<u>2022/2023</u>	<u>2021/2022</u>
Bank Interest	107.89	6.53
Donations	643.47	298.00
Subscriptions	5134.00	4986.00
Gift Aid Tax Rebate	810.80	894.02
Visits	61.60	59.10
Total Income	<u>6757.76</u>	<u>6243.65</u>
<u>Expenditure</u>	<u>2022-2023</u>	<u>2021-2022</u>
Insurance	215.12	113.28
Printing	1117.00	938.00
Postage	1081.87	1017.60
Stationery	133.75	113.91
New keys / locks	393.48	292.49
Bird Food	800.47	883.40
Lease	1.40	
WOS membership	50.00	50.00
Web Hosting	0.00	0.00
Travel	10.00	10.00
Equipment	35.94	35.94
Repairs & Maintenance	65.83	65.83
New Membership Account	140.00	140.00
AGM	0.00	49.00
Total Payments	<u>4051.68</u>	<u>3710.45</u>
Balance for Year	2706.08	2533.20
Cash funds last year end	21023.10	22319.90
Transfer from Key Deposit Money	-58.00	418.00
Cash funds this year end	<u>23671.18</u>	<u>25271.10</u>

Bob Lee, Treasurer

Field Events 2024

January Sat 20th, **MARTIN MERE WILDFOWL TRUST**, 10.00am meet visitors entrance, pay entrance fee separately. Meet at the Tudor Rose, Two Mills, for carshare 8.30am. Contact Bill Dickinson 07968438121 for more details.

February Sat 24th, **CONNAH'S QUAY RESERVE MEMBERS DAY**, Meet Field Study Centre at 10am 'til 3pm. A warm welcome for all with tea and coffee. Contact Bill Dickinson 07968438121 for more details.

March Thurs 14th, **PENSYCHNANT CONSERVATION CENTRE**. We will be given a tour of the site by Julian. Meet at 9.00am, aiming for a 9.30 start. The grid ref is SH 752771. Contact Alan Smethurst 07896758222 for more details.

April Sat 27th, **RSPB LAKE VYRNWY**. Meet 10.15. Rocky streams, woodland, meadows and moorland, bring RSPB membership cards. Meet at Tinkersdale car park, Hawarden, for carshare 8.30am. Contact Bill Dickinson on 07968438121 for more details.

May Sat 11th, **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. Meet at the Tudor Rose for carshare at 8.00am. Contact Bill Dickinson 07968438121 for more details.

June Thurs 20th, **LLANDEGLA FOREST**, meet at 8pm for 8.30pm start, in the car park at OnePlanet Adventure, Llandegla visitor centre, Grid reference SJ219519. Postcode LL113AA. It's a fairly demanding walk which takes around 40 minutes. Contact Barry Lynes 07923128124 for more details.

July Sat 6th **POINT OF AYR AND GRONANT** The last remaining breeding site for Little Terns in Wales is on the shingle spits of Gronant. Meet in the carpark, Station Rd, Talacre, 9.00am. Contact Bill Dickinson 07968438121 for more details.

August 17th, **FRODSHAM/WEAVER BEND**. Migrants and waders on the settling pools and the Weaver Bend. Meet at Brook Furlong (motorway bridge) Frodsham at 9.00am. Contact Bill Dickinson 07968438121 for more details.

September Sat 21st, **HILBRE ISLAND** over high tide, waders, terns and skuas. Meet at West Kirby Sailing Centre, Dee Lane (SJ213869) at 9.00 am. Contact Bill Dickinson 07968438121 for more details.

October Sun 20th, **WEPRE PARK**, Connah's Quay. Meet at 10.30am near the Visitor Centre, join Karen and Adrian for a FUNGI FORAY. We will hope to find a variety of different fungi and together try to identify as many as we can and learn a bit more about them. Contact Karen Garnett 07910 331502 for more details.

November Sat 16th, **RSPB OLD MOOR** Dearne Valley. A wildlife oasis in the heart of Yorkshire's industrial landscape. Bring RSPB membership cards. Meet at 10.00am at the reserve reception centre. Meet at the Tudor Rose for carshare at 8.00am
Contact Bill Dickinson 07968438121 for more details.

December Sun 15th, **BEDDMANARCH BAY AND INLAND SEA**. Beddmanarch Bay is a SSSI, the site comprises the area of coastal saltmarshes, mudflats and shallow coastal water. The Inland Sea is adjacent to the bay but isolated by the A55. Meet Penrhos Coastal Park at 10.00am. Contact Bill Dickinson 07968438121 for more details.

Bill Dickinson

Membership Matters

Memberships are due for renewal on 1st January 2024. Renewals can be made via the internet link in the join us tab on deenats.org.uk any time from 1st October for the following year. If you would prefer not to use the internet a form can be sent to you by emailing membership@deenats.org.uk For those members without an email address a membership form will be enclosed with this newsletter and should be completed and returned to the address on the form with a stamped addressed envelope. Payment is accepted by Debit/Credit card (On line payments only), bank transfer or cheque. Membership fees remain the same as last year. The key deposit has had to be raised to £12 for new applications for membership and replacement keys due to an increase in the cost of the keys.

Please return the key promptly should you decide not to continue your membership for deposit refund. If membership of the Society is not renewed within 13 months of the date of expiry, the key deposit monies will be forfeited and incorporated into the Society's funds. Keys returned within 13 months will have their deposit refunded. Keys should be returned to the Membership Secretary, email address as above for details.

John Briggs

Committee Members 2024

Keith Davies (Chair)
Ian Spence (Secretary)
Bob Lee (Treasurer)
John Briggs (Membership Secretary)
Peter Haslem (recorder)
Bill Dickinson (Field Trips)
Alan Smethurst (Newsletter)
Dave Colton
Noel Hughes
Susi Sheen

Christmas Quiz - *Answers*

- | | | |
|----------------------|----------------------|------------------------|
| 1. Will Self. | 9. John Craven. | 17. Chris Mason. |
| 2. Roman Abramovich. | 10. Bradley Wiggins. | 18. Judd Trump. |
| 3. Jeremy Hunt. | 11. Liz Truss. | 19. Kier Starmer. |
| 4. Hilary mantel. | 12. Graham Potter. | 20. Sally Lindsey. |
| 5. Van Diesel. | 13. Owain Wyn Evans. | 21. Tom Allen. |
| 6. Fleur East. | 14. Lucy Bronze. | 22. Cristiano Ronaldo. |
| 7. Ian Blackford. | 15. Anthony Gormley. | 23. Joe Lycett |
| 8. Feargal Sharkey. | 16. Kevin Keegan. | 24. Beth Mead |

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

Digital Media

Web site: www.deenats.org.uk

Email address: webeditor@deenats.org.uk

Facebook: MEMBERS OF DEESIDE NATURALIST SOCIETY