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The Heron



Newsletter - October 2008

FOR YOUR DIARY

October 2008

Sunday, 26 October	<i>Outdoor Meeting:</i> THE MANCHESTER MOSSES Skylarks, finches and waterfowl abound in these habitats. Depart at 8.00 am from Duke Street Car Park for an all day trip. Leader: Tricia Thompson 01625 526546
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November 2008

Monday, 3 November - Saturday, 15 November	<i>Special Event:</i> EXHIBITION OF WILDLIFE PHOTOGRAPHY by David Tolliday in the Exhibition Area at Macclesfield Library adjacent to the Combined Charities Christmas Card Shop. If you need an incentive to purchase your Christmas Cards early, this is it! For two weeks only. All profits from the sale of photographs will be donated to The RSPB.
Wednesday, 5 November	<i>CWT Meeting:</i> THE EDEN PROJECT by Roger Hailwood 7.30 pm. St John's Church Hall, Earlsway, Macclesfield SK11 8RS
Friday, 7 November	<i>CAWOS Meeting:</i> 100 YEARS OF BRITISH BIRDS AND BRITISH BIRDWATCHING by Bob Scott 7.45 pm. The Cranford Suite, Civic Centre, Toft Road, Knutsford.
Saturday, 8 November	<i>National RSPB Event:</i> 'FEED THE BIRDS DAY' Join the RSPB Wildlife Explorers and Wildlife Watch at The Pavilion, West Park, Prestbury Road Macclesfield, SK10 3BJ anytime between 2.00 pm and 4.00 pm for a family event making interesting food and feeders for the birds. Contact: Tina Hanak 01625 503572
Sunday, 9 November	<i>Working Party:</i> RSPB COOMBES VALLEY Join us between 10.30 am and 3.00 pm to help the Field Teachers undertake constructive improvements to the Education Field and Shelter. Details below. Meet at Coombes Valley Visitor Centre, Nr. Leek (Grid Ref: SK 009534). Contact: David Beer 01625 619861 or Tina Hanak 01625 503572
Tuesday, 11 November	<i>Indoor Meeting:</i> LESVOS EXPERIENCE by Allan and Susan Parker
Saturday, 15 November	<i>33rd Annual Charities Bazaar</i> 10.00 am – 2.30 pm. Senior Citizens' Hall, Duke Street, Macclesfield. Our Sales Team will be at this event with a selection of RSPB Christmas Cards, Calendars and Gifts.
Sunday, 16 November	<i>WGBG Coach Trip:</i> RSPB LEIGHTON MOSS Depart at 8.00 am from Wilmslow Guild, Bourne Street, Wilmslow
Sunday, 23 November	<i>Outdoor Meeting:</i> PENNINGTON FLASH AND HOPE CARR There is usually something of interest here as well as the waterbirds. Depart at 9.00 am from Duke Street Car Park for an all day trip. Leader: Ray Evans 01625 432635

Programme Change

Please note that the presentation at our Indoor Meeting on Tuesday, 10 February 2009 will be
'BRITISH BIRDS OF PREY' by Alan Gladwin not
'IT'S A FUNNY WAY TO MAKE A LIVING' by Michael Leach as advertised previously.

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CHAT FROM THE CHAIR

Dear Friends,

I make no apologies for devoting the majority of this month's 'Chat from the Chair' to our Wildlife and Outdoor World Extravaganza (WOW 2008) held at Pikelow Farm, Marton on Sunday 14th September. However, another significant event took place recently when David Tolliday received his RSPB President's Award at the Society's Annual General Meeting on Saturday, 4th October in London. I am sure that you will all join me in congratulating David on this well-deserved award. A short report by David about the RSPB Annual General Meeting appears elsewhere in this newsletter along with a photograph of David receiving his President's Award from Julian Pettifer.

WOW – We've done it again !!!

The theme of WOW 2008 was 'Homes for Wildlife' and there was plenty of opportunity for visitors to learn about the wildlife that is all around us, the places where they live, what they need to survive and, more importantly, what we can do to help them within our own gardens. Staff from RSPB Coombes and Churnet Valley Nature Reserve provided the opportunity for visitors to make and take home nest boxes for birds and insects. The RSPB Wildlife Explorers and their Mums and Dads looked after the games area where everyone could have a go at such favourites as Coconut Shy, Golf Putting and Hook-a-Duck. They also provided the opportunity for everyone to take part in the construction of a large 'Insect Hotel' from recycled materials to provide a winter refuge for some of the solitary bees, lacewings, ladybirds and other wildlife at Pikelow Farm. Those who wanted to test their wildlife knowledge could take part in the East Cheshire Bird Brain Quiz in which they had to correctly identify birds' nests, feathers and wildlife homes as well as answer wildlife questions. Some of the RSPB Wildlife Explorers donned brilliant bird costumes to help promote the Group's activities.

The South Manchester Bird Ringing Group were on hand to explain why birds were ringed and what important information could be gained from recoveries of migratory and non-migratory species. Many other conservation groups such as the National Trust, Cheshire Wildlife Trust, British Dragonfly Society, CAWOS and Northwest Fungi Group supported the event with exhibits and demonstrations.

The Salmon and Trout Fishing Association let visitors try their hand at casting while Club AZ Archers provided 'have-a-go' archery. The Mayor, Councillor Mrs Thelma Jackson who, with her consort Mr Jimmy Jackson, were guests during the morning. They spent three hours at the event during which the Mayor visited most of the stalls and exhibits and even had a go at archery. Following the event the Mayor said that they had "had a fantastic time" with "so much to see".

The fine weather resulted in the café area becoming somewhere to relax and enjoy tea or coffee and homemade cakes baked by members of the Group while listening to the music of Bollin Brass, who played sessions throughout the day. In the main barn there were stalls selling plants, homemade preserves, bric-a-brac, RSPB goods and craft items. There were demonstrations of country crafts such as woodcarving with MBC Rangers, woodturning, stick making as well as Ray Rush with his corn dollies.

Sir Nicholas Winterton MP and Ann Winterton MP spent the afternoon with us and showed great interest in all the exhibits and demonstrations particularly the 'Insect Hotel'. Towards the end of the afternoon they kindly agreed to draw the raffle for us after which Sir Nicholas said a few words complimenting us on the event and thanking everyone for their support.

St John Ambulance, Congleton Division were on hand in case of mishap and Cheshire Police were available to talk about wildlife crime and what they were doing to combat it.

We are indebted to our sponsors, Arighi Bianchi, Fisher German, Macclesfield Borough Council, Tarmac and WBB Minerals without whom the event would not have been possible.

Thanks to their generosity and that of everyone who came along to support us, exhibitors and visitors, WOW 2008 raised just over **£5000**, all of which will be used to support 'Homes for Wildlife' and other RSPB initiatives for securing the habitats that our birds, mammals, amphibians and insects require for their long-term survival.

Judging by the number of people who left the event carrying an insect box or bird boxes, the future of our wildlife is already assured in many gardens around the Borough.

Obviously, we could not have held an event such as this without the participation of all our exhibitors, celebrities, conservation organisations and the local Rangers, all of whom gave of their time freely.

An event of this magnitude would not be possible without the vision and tireless enthusiasm of our hosts, David and Ann Taylor, who not only let us take over Pikelow Farm for the day but contribute so much besides.

Last, but not least, a big **'Thank You'** to all our Group members, their families and friends who helped in all manner of ways to make WOW 2008 such a success.

Ray Evans

'FEED THE BIRDS DAY' 2008

Please note that, although nationally 'Feed the Birds Day' this year falls during the weekend 25-26 October, our local event will not be until **Saturday 8 November** at West Park, Macclesfield. The choice of date and a more central venue will hopefully ensure a greater level of public participation. Unfortunately, 25-26 October coincides with local schools' half-term holidays when many children are away or otherwise occupied.

RSPB MEMBERS' DAY AND AGM

The day started with the official business of the AGM including the presentation of the society's financial accounts. This was expertly run by the President, Julian Pettifer and was not a formal affair, as you might expect, but a very entertaining morning, illustrated by fantastic wildlife images, emphasising the great work done by The RSPB, both in the UK and overseas, over the last year. At the end of the AGM seven volunteers were presented with their President's Awards. We were all made to feel very special, but great emphasis was made of the importance to The RSPB of all volunteers.

The afternoon started with a welcome from outgoing Chairman of Council, Professor Ian Newton, followed by three presentations about alternative energy, two talks about RSPB success stories on Rathlin Island, Northern Ireland and Wallasea Island off the Essex coast, the mysteries of migration and finally the importance of encouraging the youth of today to become involved in conservation.

*David Tolliday receiving his President's Award
from RSPB President, Julian Pettifer*



WOW 2008 RAFFLE – ARE YOU A WINNER?

We have three unclaimed prizes associated with the following ticket numbers:

WHITE TICKET No. **924** (Code AS764752)

ORANGE TICKET No. **412** (Code RA39BX4H)

GREEN TICKET No. **832** (Code AS992159)

If you have any of these tickets please contact Ray Evans 01625 432635 to claim your prize.

COMBINED CHARITIES CHRISTMAS CARD SHOPS

Once again The RSPB Macclesfield Local Group will have cards and calendars for sale at three venues around the Borough:

Wilmslow Library	25 October – 6 December
Macclesfield Library	1 November – 6 December
Knutsford Tourist Information Centre	8 November – 6 December

Volunteers from the participating charities look after the 'Shops' on a daily basis with each charity being allocated a specific day.

The RSPB Macclesfield Local Group will be responsible for providing volunteers at the named venues as follows:

Wilmslow Library on Wednesday, 12 November
Macclesfield Library on Wednesday, 26 November

If you can help by giving 4 hours of your time in the morning or afternoon on either of the above dates please contact **Tricia Thompson 01625 526546** (Wilmslow) or **Jen Tolliday 01625 432105** (Macclesfield). You will not be alone but part of a team of five volunteers from the Group at each session. It presents an ideal opportunity for you to meet new and sometimes interesting people.

Organisers of the Combined Charities Christmas Card Shops would welcome volunteers to help on other days also.

REMINDER !!! WEEKENDS AWAY 2009

If you intend joining us on either or both of our Weekends Away next year, you will need to book with **Ray Evans** (North Lancashire Coast, 31 January – 1 February) by the **24 October 2008** or **Graham Palmer** (Anglesey, 15 – 17 May) by the **11 November 2008**. Please note that respective deposits of £15 or £20 per person are required at the time of booking.



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The RSPB Macclesfield Local Group wish to express our grateful thanks to Country Rustics for providing transport for chairs and tables used at our Wildlife and Outdoor World Extravaganza (WOW 2008).

SURPLUS BIRD BOOKS AND VIDEOS

Ray Perry, a regular contributor to our monthly newsletters, is kindly offering to Group members the opportunity to acquire a variety of bird books that he no longer requires. He will be bringing these along to our November Indoor Meeting where they will be available on a 'first come', 'first served' basis. Ray is suggesting that a small donation to Group funds may be appropriate for any books taken. Additionally, there will be a number of bird videos that have been donated to the Group and these will be available on the same basis.

WORKING PARTY AT RSPB COOMBS VALLEY

On Sunday November 9th a Working Party from the Local Group and RSPB Phoenix will be making improvements to the Education Shelter and Field at RSPB Coombes Valley Nature Reserve. We have a very varied list of jobs to tackle - everything from painting storage boxes and building a dormouse house to making pit fall traps and constructing an artificial badger sett.

We will be joined by staff and volunteers from the reserve to carry out a mix of construction, renovation and maintenance projects that will all directly benefit the education scheme at the reserve. The work planned will give the RSPB an even better opportunity to connect visiting children with the magic of the natural world and to spark a life-long interest in nature. It's not just education visits that will benefit - uniformed groups (such as scouts and guides), family events, holiday clubs, day nurseries and even parties of undergraduate students will also be using these facilities.

If anyone has any unwanted gifts of nestboxes or other 'homes for wildlife' (butterfly boxes, bat boxes, insect boxes etc.) and you would like to donate them to the improvement scheme, these would be given pride of place in the Education Field.

If you are able to join us - please contact David Beer 01625 619861. Please wear old clothes and sensible footwear.

Join us between 10.30am - 3.00pm. Please bring your own lunch. (If you wish to bring some food to cook there will be a barbecue at lunchtime).

Please pass on a copy of this newsletter to any member or non-member of the Group that you know who may be interested

Health and Safety

In the event of fire or other emergency necessitating evacuation of the building, please leave in an orderly manner via the nearest available Emergency Exit or as instructed by a designated Committee member. Emergency Exits, indicated by the internationally recognised symbol of a 'running man' on a green background, are situated through the door at the rear of the hall either straight down the corridor or directly on the right through the main entrance with further exits to the right and through the door to the left of the stage.

If required, there is a first aid kit in the kitchen off the entrance corridor. (If you do have an accident, however minor, while here tonight please report it directly to a Committee member who, amongst other things, will ensure that details are logged in the Accident Report Book.)