

Birmingham
Natural History
Society

Founded 1858

Registered Charity No 500819

President: Mr Bryan Wood

Internet address: <http://freespace.virgin.net/clare.h/bnhs.htm>

NEWSLETTER No 103 – April 2014

AGM

Members are reminded that, following the AGM on 18 April, there will be the last of our 2013-2014 series of talks, when John Reeve will illustrate his involvement in 2005 in a conservation project aimed at the Large Blue and other Lepidoptera in Hungarian national parks.

This will be on Good Friday. Council felt that it would be less confusing to keep to our 'third Friday of the month' schedule than to find another date, and hope that not too many members will be away for the long Easter weekend and will be able to turn up.

Big Garden Birdwatch

Back in January, nearly half a million people – 82,000 in the Midlands – counted 7.2 million birds over one weekend as part of the RSPB's Big Garden Birdwatch.

The house sparrow remained the most commonly reported bird, with an average of four in each garden. Blue tits came in at number two, appearing in nearly three-quarters of all gardens, while starling and blackbird were the third and fourth, respectively. Wood pigeon, chaffinch, goldfinch, great tit, collared dove and robin, in that order, made up the 'top ten'.

House sparrows seem to have a patchy distribution – they are common in some places, absent in others – and despite their position in this survey number are down by 62% since the first Birdwatch in 1979, and it remains a red-listed species. Similarly, starling numbers have dropped by 84% since 1979, and it is also red-listed.

Greenfinch numbers continue a worrying decline, dropping to fifteenth place, probably due to trichomonosis. (Give your feeders, bird tables and bird baths a good regular clean!)

Song thrushes, another on the red list, have declined by 81% since 1979 and are currently in twenty-first place.

However. First quarter results for the West Midlands from the BTO's Garden BirdWatch shows a different ranking: blackbird came first, followed by blue tit, wood pigeon, robin, dunnoek, great tit, chaffinch, magpie, goldfinch and – in tenth position – house sparrow.

One moral to draw from these different results is to take care in interpreting data. We need to take account of such things as participant numbers, survey methods, and length and time of survey (including weather conditions).

Northern Coleopterists' Meeting

This year's Northern Coleopterists' Meeting will take place from 10am on Saturday, 13th September 2013 at Manchester Museum, Oxford Road, Manchester M13 9PL.

Everyone is welcome, even if they only have a passing interest in the beetle fauna of the UK and beyond.

10.00-10.15 **'Welcome'** Tom Hubball & Dmitri Logunov
10.15-10.45 **'The Life-cycle of the Archostemata Beetle *Micromalthus debilis*'** - Graham Proudlove
10.45-11.00 **Tea/Coffee**
11.00-11.30 **'Eco-warriors and eco-indicators: The rise of dung beetles'** - Roisin Stanbook
11.30-12.15 **'Rove beetle recolonisation of mined land, with a lusitanian diversion from this topic'** – Jervis A. Good

12.15-13.00

'Recent experiences with *Hydroporus rufifrons* (Dytiscidae) in the north-west' - Garth Foster

13.00-14.00

Lunch (Either bring sandwiches or visit the museum's Café Muse).

14.00-16.30

Informal discussion and identification session in Entomology Department.

Note - Andrew Duff's **Beetles of Britain and Ireland. Vol. 1 Sphaeriidae to Silphidae**, is now out of print. If you would like a copy, please let me know and I will pass on your details to Andrew so he can ascertain how many reprints are required. These still may not be available until 2015, however, as he is currently working on the next volume.

Tom Hubball
Tel: 01535 678334 after 6.30pm
Email: ukbeetles@blueyonder.co.uk

WARWICKSHIRE FUNGUS SURVEY

Programme for 2014

Sunday 11 May 2014

10.30 am Knavenhill Wood, Landranger sheet 151. Meet in the farmyard of Knavenhill Farm off the minor road from the A422 Stratford/Banbury road to Alderminster at grid reference SP241494 (and move on to park on grass adjacent to wood entrance if weather conditions permit at SP243492).
Contact: Bert Brand. ((01789 267402))

Sunday 17 August 2014

10.30 am Blythe Valley, VC38, Landranger sheet 139. Park in off road car park at SP 138752. From A34 approach the island of the M42, Junction 4, and follow the signs for the Blythe Valley business park. Proceed along private road to first island and note the security building on your left. Park in the lay-by or in the security 'building' car park, ('not on the road!'), and obtain a day permit, free of charge. You will be given instructions on where to park. A more detailed explanation and map will be sent to our members closer to the date of this foray.
Contact: John Williams. ((0121 745 6395))

Sunday 14 September 2014

10.30 am Sutton Park Boldmere Gate, VC38, Landranger sheet 139, grid reference SP105955. Park in car park north of Powell's Pool.
Contact: Bill Moodie. ((0121 5546079))

Sunday 21 September 2014

10.30 am Brandon Marsh, VC 38, OS sheet 140. Meet in the car park of the Warwickshire Wildlife Trust at grid reference SP386758, off the minor road linking Brandon with the A45 at Tollbar End.
Contact: John Sells. ((02476 543217))

Sunday 28 September 2014

10.30 am Hay Wood, VC 38, Landranger 139, SP 204712. Park on roadside verge. Contact: Dave Champion. ((07896 752138))

Sunday 5 October 2014

10.30 am Wolford Wood, Landranger sheet 151. Meet at the entrance to the woodland track at grid reference SP242332 on minor road linking Great Wolford to the A44.
Contact: Bert Brand. ((01789 267402))

Sunday 19 October 2014

10.30 am Whitacre Heath Nature Reserve, VC 38, Landranger sheet 139. Park in the car park on the south side of the road at grid reference SP209931.
Contact: John Williams. ((0121 745 6395))

Sunday 26 October 2014

10.30 am Poors Wood VC38 Landranger sheet 139. Park west of the A4177 in Honiley Road (the road to Fen End) at grid reference SP237736. Cross the main road for the public footpath to the wood with extreme care.
Contact: John Roberts. ((01926 421544))

Sunday 2 November 2014

10.30 am Thornhill Wood, Landranger sheet 150. Meet in the farmyard of Thornhill Farm at grid reference SP059569 off the A422 Alcester to Inkberrow road.
Contact: Bert Brand. ((01789 267402))

Sunday 9 November 2014

10.30am Tasker's Meadow, VC38, OS Sheet 151. Meet at grid reference SP438652 in the car park of the Boat Inn, where the A426 passes over the Grand Union Canal. The Reserve entrance is opposite. Cross the fast Southam – Dunchurch road with extreme care.
Contact: John Roberts. ((01926 421544))

Sunday 16 November 2014

10.30 am Brueton Park, Solihull, VC 38, Landranger sheet 139. Park in the main car park off Warwick Road at grid reference SP164789. There is an alternative car park, should the main car park be full.
Contact: John Williams. ((0121 745 6395))

Sunday 23 November 2014

10.30 am Pooley Fields VC 38, Landranger sheet 140. Turn off the B5000 at SP258023 into Pooley Lane and follow the signs to the Heritage Centre at SP259033. Parking fee was £1.50 coins at the barrier.
Contact: David Antrobus. ((0121 422 8830))

Sunday 4 January 2015

10.30 am AGM.
Contact: John Roberts. ((01926 421544))

If you want to attend a foray, please inform the contact person a few days beforehand. This will ensure that you do not arrive at a foray that has been cancelled or moved to a different location. The contact person will send a reminder by email to group members two days before a meeting. Please reply stating your intention to attend the meeting or not. If the contact person decides to cancel a meeting, he will notify group members by email.

After a foray, please check A Fungus Flora of Warwickshire and the additions to the Flora or the contact person to confirm that any of the less-common species that you have collected have already been recorded for the County. If they have not, PLEASE KEEP DRIED MATERIAL for the herbarium.

Please send lists of species that you have found on the forays in Warwickshire to John Sells, 57 Craven Avenue, Binley Woods, Coventry CV3 2JS or David Antrobus. Where possible, please state the habitat and associated trees and plants for each record. If you find an interesting fruiting of fungi, and think that others would be interested, please ring John Williams at the number below. It may be possible to arrange a foray at short notice.

Permission has been obtained from landowners to collect for scientific purposes. In the interests of conservation, please do not collect more specimens than necessary for your personal use. We do not encourage collection for culinary purposes on our forays.

The Warwickshire Fungus Survey is affiliated to the British Mycological Society. Our web address is:
<http://freespace.virgin.net/william.moodie/wfs.htm>.

Chairman

John Williams
100 Stanway Road
Shirley
Solihull
B90 3JG

Tel 0121 745 6395

Secretary

David Antrobus
55 Gower Road
Halesowen
B62 9BX

Tel 0121 422 8830