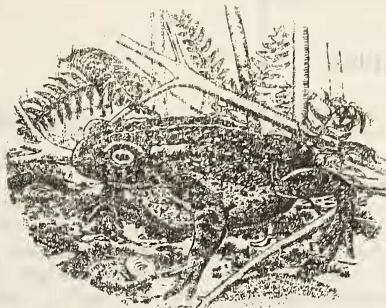


THE NORFOLK

# NATTERJACK



The quarterly bulletin of the Norfolk & Norwich Naturalists' Society

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## CHAIRMAN'S CHATTER

At last we have had day or two of springlike weather, and the first bumble bees, Small Tortoiseshells and Peacock butterflies are exploring the early flowers, themselves at least a month late. What chance of survival will they have this coming year with the weather so variable with hail, heavy rain and high winds etc? No cool April showers to bring forth the sweet May flowers.

All your records will be welcomed however by the specialist recorders who will be only too pleased to identify specimens, but please remember the S.A.E. if sent by post.

The television has brought a great interest of natural history into our homes. I find the general public much more inquisitive, and as our countryside changes decade by decade it is even more important that we can pass on to future generations the records of our time.

When comparing old lists of species with present day lists, one becomes aware of the large number of Flora and Fauna that have either disappeared from our county, or are just surviving in a very few localities.

Your help is required now.

Ken Durrant

## REMOVING THE BUSHES

We know we belong to an active Society but is this widely known? Our recent one-day conference, aimed at and thoroughly enjoyed by committed naturalists, showed that the light is still shining brightly. It is now some time since our equally successful exhibition in Norwich's Assembly House and we must go on trying to reach the interested but uncommitted general public.

So far, we have arranged to take part in three events this summer to do just that. Please do your best to come along and help in any way you can. This may be "only" talking to visitors - but this personal contact can be the most important part of all.

The events are:

Taverham Nursery Centre, on Saturday 21st. June. This is entirely our own show. It will be in the brand new exhibition hall and coffee room. We can guarantee a good crowd so do join us there.

The Riverside at the Cow Tower, Norwich, on Sunday 6th. July. We will be running one stall of the many contributed by local organisations in the Wensum Carnival, 1986.

Butterfly Festival, How Hill, on Sunday 3rd. August. Again, one of many so plenty of helpers required to make our presence felt.

Rex Hancy

## MEMBERSHIP

I would like to see the Society go from a cosy group to a much more go-ahead Society. To do this we must recruit more young members. We are in danger of getting lost in the wilderness. Many present members don't like talking to outsiders about the Society. Why is this? If we don't advertise how will we get new members? It's not up to the few to do this, everyone should be doing it. We must be like evangelists going out to tell people what they are missing by not being with us. I do this and sign up new members and so do some others but we are in the minority. For example I have been writing to places of work to ask the managers to place a letter on their staff notice boards, some have written back asking for a supply of membership forms. If you know of somewhere a notice could be displayed, please tell me or mention it when you see me at a meeting. Can you put a notice in a vacant shop window or house which is by the road? This should be a good place to arouse people's curiosity.

Without a strong membership, how can the Society carry out its objectives?

1: The practical study of natural science. Without research, how can we say if a habitat is worth saving?

2: The conservation of wildlife.

3: The publication of papers on natural history, especially those related to this county.

4: Arranging lectures and meetings and the promotion of fieldwork.

So let's go out and recruit more members and help them develop with us our naturalists' curiosity in the natural history of Norfolk.

Finally, I would like a feedback of information from you about events you feel the Society should be taking part in. Often we don't find out till it's too late!

Colin Dack, Membership Secretary.

On Saturday 19th April 11 members and friends met at the Norfolk Naturalists Trust Cley reserve in spring sunshine, but not spring temperatures, as hats, coats and gloves were needed for most of the day. 4 of the reserve's 9 hides were visited and 30 species of birds seen.

Highlights! The almost constant Lark song, the tumbling flight and calls of Lapwing, the striking chestnut and green head patterns of closely observed drake Teal. Black and white flashes from the wings of Avocets. The sight of a Swallow and 5 Sandwich Terns heading westwards, the pristine plumage of passage Wheatears using turnips put out for cattle as look-out posts to capture insects. The browns and golds of a Short-eared Owl's plumage in the afternoon sun and lastly the Harvest Mouse summer nest that Ann Brewster found in only the second clump of Cocks Foot grass that she searched!

A very enjoyable visit.

Charles Neale

## Annual Subscription

You will have read in the November issue of Natterjack that I had asked the council to agree to an increase in our rates of subscription. The Special General Meeting was duly held on 27 November and the resolution to increase our rates of subscription from 1 April 1986 to those noted below, was passed.

This is remind members that their subscription was due on the 1st April  
New Rates-Junior £3.00 Ordinary £6.00 Family £7.50 Affiliation £15.00

D.A.Dorling, Honorary Treasurer.

## THE AMATEUR NATURALIST IN A CHANGING COUNTRYSIDE

The One Day Conference at the U.E.A. on March 15th was a great success, both in terms of the interest aroused, and financially. Nearly 180 people attended, and heard a variety of view points on the countryside past and present.

Dr. Ellis started the proceedings with a delightful account of the countryside as he knew it over many decades, and of his observations carried out at Wheatfen on the affect of modest management on wet woodland over a period of years. He mentioned some of the changes for the better that he has seen, including the demise of the old punt gunners with their huge 'bags' of waders, and finished by paying tribute to the many amateur naturalists he has known.

He was followed by Dr. Frank Perring, Secretary of the Royal Society for Nature Conservation, who gave some very sobering facts and figures on such things as the mileage of hedgerow lost since the last war, and mentioning that the rate of loss had not slowed appreciably to the end of 1984, and dealing with all aspects of loss in the countryside, such as meadowland, wetland and heathland.

Dr. Tony Irwin took us behind the scenes of Norwich Castle Museum, starting with the bird room, a photograph taken during the 1890's. In the lunch queue, I overheard, "that photograph of the room in the 1890's. The only thing that has been moved since then is the Great Auk!" Tony ranged far and wide over the many aspects of the county's wildlife, finally settling down among the less common woodlice on Snettisham beach, with a couple of barbed harpoons aimed at the AW for certain coastal defence works.

The final speaker of the morning session was Mr. Alec Bull, taking the conference theme as his title. The session chairman, Mr. K. McDougall, Chairman of the NNT, described Alec's talk as "robust and provocative" and said that he agreed with about 75% of it.

After lunch, we resumed with a very polished talk by Mr. Phillip Richardson who farms at Wymondham. He brought us up to date with with legislation which is likely to affect the countryside in the future, and held out hopes for a much closer co-operation between farmer and naturalist in the years ahead.

Mr. N. Dannatt, the Eastern Conservancy Officer of the Forestry Commission and a naturalist, gave us a very interesting talk on the work of the Commission, especially in Thetford forest. He showed us how present policies are now directed at helping wildlife wherever possible. He pointed out that, though considerable restraints are placed on the Commission in respect of leased woodlands, amateur naturalists are always welcome in those woodlands wholly owned by the Commission.

After the afternoon interval, the raffle was drawn. Then Lt. Col. C. N. Clayden took us on a whirlwind tour of Ministry of Defence properties, and showed us how well the MoD look after their wildlife and how much of it they have, including many of the best examples of particular types of habitat in the country. In many cases the average amateur naturalist will get no closer, though of course, there is a willing band of amateurs doing conservation work on each MoD property in the country as there is in our own Stanford Battle Area, where Col. Clayden chose to end his tour.

Everyone felt sorry for Richard Hobbs, as the earlier speakers during the afternoon had overrun their time, and he was left with just fifteen minutes to get through his half hour paper, as we had a five o'clock deadline to clear the lecture theatre by. Never mind Richard! It is hoped to publish at least some of the papers in full, and, as you did not get the chance to say it in full, your talk ought to appear in print in full!



The names of most of the raffle winners appear hereafter.  
"The McMillan Guide to the Nature Reserves of the British Isles."  
Winner Mrs.C.Homke of Dereham.  
A very attractive dish designed,made and presented by Mrs.C.Farrow.  
Winner Mrs.B.Hancy.  
"The Amateur Naturalist" by Gerald Durrell.  
Winner Mr.G.Nobbs of Yaxham.  
"The Life and Times of Arthur Patterson" by Beryl Tooley.  
Mrs Tooley very kindly donated an autographed copy.  
Winner not known.  
"The Wildlife Rangers Handbook" Donated by Mr Dannatt.  
Winner Mr.R.Joslin of Syderstone.  
"Making Nest Boxes." A B.T.O. Handbook. Donated by the B.T.O.  
Winner not known.  
It is hoped that the final figure will show a profit of about £350, to be used for publication of the proceedings.

Carex appropinquata Would members who are acquainted with this species please send any recent records to me including any they may make this year?

#### EXHIBITION MEETING 1987

An error appears in the last issue of Natterjack, on this subject. The mention made of it should have read "Alec Bull has applied for the hire of the Ivory Room for an Exhibition Meeting to be held on a Saturday in mid-September 1987", and not as stated. In fact, the application was turned down, as, apart from a few weeks immediately after Christmas, both the Ivory and Hobart Rooms are only let by the week. Council will be discussing the matter further.

. During the course of a year, the secretary of any Natural History Society receives a large number of circulars, some of interest, others less so. Among these may be catalogues and leaflets of new and secondhand Natural History books, leaflets advertising Nature Holidays at home and abroad, Field Study Centres, and so on. Many of these would perhaps be of interest to someone in the Society, but in many cases only one copy is available. To take such items to meetings still only alerts perhaps 10% of the members to what is available. It occurs to me that an occasional note, such as this, in Natterjack, saying that such leaflets are available if any member requires help in obtaining advice or information on any of the subjects mentioned-or related subjects not mentioned, perhaps-I don't yet know what may come during the year. One provisional thought, to help the Secretary, and the Society's finances, a phone call first, if you are not sure whether the information you require is likely to be available, and then, if you expect an answer, a stamped addressed envelope of suitable size!

Alec Bull, Secretary.

## PHOTOGRAPHIC GROUP

The 8th May photographic lecture brings us to the end of the 1985 winter and spring indoor programme, and I feel sure that all would agree the year has been a most successful one. As will be seen when the 1986/87 Society programme comes to hand the planned outings (24 in number) would appear to provide ample scope for 'photography in the field' and for this reason it was felt that the addition of specific photographic outings would be difficult to fit into such a full programme. With the photographic opportunities presented on these Society outings members should - weather permitting - be able to record subject matter and habitats relative to the particular branch of natural history in which they themselves are most interested. There are so many different facets of nature that attract, and likewise a variety of photographic techniques which ensure that no two pictures are alike, and it is this diversity of interests and of photographic application which makes our lectures so interesting.

### 1986/87 Indoor Programme

- Wednesday Sept 10th                      Assembly House, ( E. Bacon Room )  
" Geology & Natural History in East Anglia " Philip Cambridge.
- Thursday Oct 16th                      Assembly House, ( E. Bacon Room )  
" Photography for the joy of it "                      Bob Robinson.
- Wednesday Nov 5th                      Assembly House, ( Ivory Room )  
" On foot in the Lake District "                      Harry Varden.
- Thursday Dec 11th                      Assembly House, ( Kent Room )  
" The Photography of Insects "                      Tony Irwin.
- Wednesday Jan 28th                      City library Lecture Theatre  
Group entertains Society                      Theme to be announced.
- Friday Feb 27th                      Assembly House, ( E. Bacon Room )  
" The Common Loos through the Seasons "                      Mary & Don Dorling
- Wednesday Mar 18th                      Assembly House, ( E. Bacon Room )  
" Travels in the Galapagos "                      Peter Boardman.
- Wednesday April 13th                      Assembly House, ( E. Bacon Room )  
Members Evening. A Challenge - your slides to match the theme " Water "
- Wednesday May 13th                      Assembly House, ( E. Bacon Room )  
" Travels in the South & West of North America " Max Smith.

As hitherto the final half hour or so of each lecture night is reserved for the showing of members own slides - up to six each please, on any particular theme or subject matter.

Bob Robinson

### UNIVERSITY MARINE BIOLOGICAL STATION MILLPORT

The Station intends to run an extra-mural class in Marine Biology over the period: either 31 July - 5 August or 7 - 12 August 1986. Cost, the course including full board at the Hostel is £145 (inc. VAT) for a shared room, £153 (inc. VAT) for a single room. Contact The Station Secretary, University Marine Biological Station, Millport, Isle of Cumbrae, Scotland. KA28 0EG. Tel: 0475-530581. or send stamped addressed envelope to Colin Dack for photocopy of leaflet.

## NORFOLK BUTTERFLY SURVEY

Please read the enclosed sheet concerning this major project, and start recording now! This survey is for everyone, not just the experts, so please make a big effort to cover your local patch and any other sites you visit during the year.

## MILLIPEDES

The accompanying issue of Transactions contains an account of the county's centipedes. Dick Jones of King's Lynn Museum thanks everyone who has been supplying him with specimens, and hopes now that a steady stream of millipedes will engulf him during the year. He is particularly keen to see specimens from East Norfolk. Please pop your millipedes into a film container, marg. tub or similar and send them (with full data) to Dick or leave them at Norwich Castle Museum. Will your garden be mentioned in next year's account of the Norfolk fauna?

## TOM NORGATE

Tom Norgate died on 21 August 1985. He compiled the annual weather summary for the Transactions from 1970 to 1985, and was Director of the Norfolk Rainfall Organisation since 1963.

Tony Irwin

## REPTILE AND AMPHIBIAN RECORDS

Over the years I have received details of many well-recorded observations from members and these members may be wondering what has happened to their information. Original record sheets and letters have been kept and details of sightings have been transferred to edge-notched cards to make the extracting of information easier. A year or so ago I proposed that a report could be written in 1985 to cover all the species, a decade after previous one, and published in the Transactions. The editor considered that reports on single species or small groups would suit the publication better and following this decision I wrote on Natterjacks in '85 and water frogs in '86. I would like to propose the following reports to take us to the end of the decade:

Adder and Grass Snake '87

Common Lizard and Slow Worm '88

Common, Great Crested and Palmate Newts '89

Common Frog and Common Toad '90

May I take the opportunity to ask members to send in all records of species seen during this year and last. Please send records c/o Castle Museum or to John Buckley, 77, Janson Road, Shirley, Southampton. SO1 5GL

John Buckley.

## BAT YEAR 1986

The Norfolk Bat Group (a special study group of the Norfolk and Norwich Naturalists' Society) has a programme of projects and events for the year aimed at greater understanding for these declining animals. A quarterly newsletter is produced - further details from: John Goldsmith, Natural History Department, Castle Museum, Norwich. Tel: Nor 6611277 ext 287

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE NEXT NATTERJACK should be sent to Ernest Daniels, 41 Brian Avenue, Norwich, Norfolk. NR1 2DP, to arrive not later than 10th July 1986.