



THE NORFOLK NATTERJACK

The Quarterly bulletin of the Norfolk & Norwich Naturalists' Society

No.28

February 1990

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ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING of the Society will be held at 19.30 hours on Wednesday 14th March 1990 in the City Library Lecture Theatre, Norwich.

AGENDA

1. Apologies for absence.
 2. Minutes of the last Annual General Meeting. (8th March 1989)
 3. Matters arising from the minutes.
 4. Presentation of Chairman's Report.
 5. Presentation of Treasurer's Report and the Income and Expenditure Account for 1989.
 6. Increase in subscriptions.
To consider, and if thought fit, to adopt the following resolution:
"That in accordance with paragraph 6, of the Laws of the Society, the following annual rates of subscription shall apply to all subscriptions becoming due on or after 1st April 1990:
Junior £3 per annum, Ordinary £8 per annum,
Family £10 per annum, Affiliation £15 per annum.
 7. Presentation of the Council nomination for the President of the Society for 1990-91. Mr. K. C. Durrant.
 8. Presentation of Officers and Council.
Council offers the following nominations, all nominees having consented to serve.
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| Chairman | Mrs.A.Brewster. |
| General Secretary | A.L.Bull. |
| Assistant Secretary | Mrs.J.Negal. |
| Treasurer | D.A.Dorling. |
| Assistant Treasurer | M.J.Woolner. |
| Chairman, Membership Committee | R.Hancy. |
| Secretary, Membership Committee | C.R.Dack. |
| Chairman, Programme Committee | M.J.C.Ewles. |
| Secretary, Programme Committee | Mrs.C.W.Haines. |
| Chairman, Publications Committee | R.Jones. |
| Secretary, Publications Committee | Dr.A.G.Irwin. |

Chairman, Research Committee
 Secretary, Research Committee
 Honorary Auditor

P.R.Banham.

E.Cross.

J.E.Timbers.

Elected Council Members to serve
 for three years, (Retiring 1993)

G.Maybury, Miss.J.Smith.

Dr.M.P.Taylor, Miss.J.Wakefield.

Any other nominations may be received from members for any of the above posts other than Vice-presidents, duly proposed and seconded and with the nominees written consent, not less than seven clear days before the A.G.M. to (Gen. Sec)

9. Council proposes that Dr.M.George should be made an Honorary Member of the Society, upon his retirement from the Nature Conservancy Council, for whom he has been Regional Officer based in Norwich for many years.
10. Any other business.

Following the A.G.M. , "Oystercatchers". Illustrated talk by Dr.W.Sutherland.

SUBSCRIPTIONS

The Council at it's meeting on 22nd November 1989 reviewed the finances of the Society with particular reference to the level of subscriptions.

Although the finances of the Society are in a healthy state, as can be seen in the accounts enclosed with this issue of Natterjack, this is largely due to a surplus earned on sales of the Bird and Mammal Report and generous gifts to the Peet Fund. In recent years subscription income has not met the cost of transactions and other general expenses and the Council considered that this was not a satisfactory state of affairs in the long term. Therefore, it was agreed that a Special Resolution should be submitted to the Annual General Meeting on 14th March 1990 to increase Ordinary and Family subscriptions to £8 and £10 per annum respectively. Those for Junior and Affiliated Membership will remain unchanged.

The Council hops that you will support these changes. The subscription to the Society represents excellent value bearing in mind the quality of our publications and the extensive programmes of meeting and field visits.

D. A. Dorling.

Honorary Treasurer.

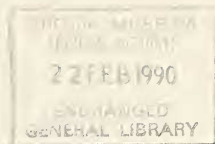
PROGRAMME CHANGE

Wednesday 14th February 1990 1930 hrs. **"British and European Butterflies"**
 Illustrated talk by Dr. B. R. Watts. City Library Lecture Theatre.

Wednesday 11th April 1990 1930 hrs. **"Marine Life in Close-up"**
 Illustrated Take by Miss. J. E. Harris. City Library Lecture Theatre.

HERPETOFAUNA (REPTILES AND AMPHIBIANS) RECORDS

Please send all records to Mr. John Buckley C/O Natural History Dept., Castle Museum, Norwich. Would members make a special effort on Frog and Common Toad records as John needs these for the next paper.



TOWARDS A TETRAD FLORA OF NORFOLK

Why do we need a new Flora? The Petch and Swann Flora of the county appeared more than twenty years ago, with a supplement being published in 1975. Since that time there have been great changes in the countryside, which, in many places, now bears no relationship to that described in the last flora.

Why a Tetrad Flora? One of the main aims will be to map as accurately as possible the present distribution of our native flora within the county, plus any truly naturalised species, e.g. Himalayan Balsam, which may be spreading quite rapidly. The Tetrad, a block of four 1 kilometre squares, offers the best option when trying to study the distribution of most forms of wildlife. Mapping by 10 kilometre squares can be misleading. An uncommon plant occurring at 20 sites, might show on a 10 kilometre map as 20 squares, or one third of the county. By tetrad mapping, this might become 20 dots out of a possible 1,400. Opening Petch and Swann at random, I find:- *Pedicularis sylvatic* Lousewort:- Native. Common. Bogs and wet heaths. I am prompted to ask "How common is either a bog or a wet heath?" The plant is likely to be less so. "*Acinos arvensis* Basil Thyme. Native. Common. Dry places." So far progress has been made in tetrad mapping, which started in West Norfolk in 1987, this species seems now, to be almost confined to Breckland. Tetrad mapping will also reveal differences in geological structure on quite a small scale, and point to former land use. For instance, Small Leaved Lime (*Tilia cordata*) - in the Flora:- "Doubtfully native". In the supplement:- "Appears to be native." In Dr Oliver Rackham's book "The History of the Countryside", this species is, in Norfolk, in the centre of his Lime Province, stretching as far north as the Humber, being one of the major constituents of ancient forest. I know of trees in woods and coppice stools in hedgerows from Honingham to Hoe and from Mattishall to Foxley Wood. Now we need to join the dots up!

How long will it take? Ten years is the figure I have in mind for east Norfolk, as Gillian Beckett in the west has mentioned the year 2,000 as a possible publication date. Impossible? No, not if we can find an average of twenty botanists willing to do four tetrads per year for that length of time! Not the same twenty all the time perhaps, as people tend to come and go, and we shall no doubt get some outside help from holidaying botanists. IT CAN BE DONE. ESPECIALLY IF YOU DO YOUR SHARE!

To whom do I write? For this project, we are abandoning the Watsonian vice county boundary and using the line 0 on the National grid. If you live to the west of that line, write to Mrs G. Beckett, "Bramley Cottage", Stanhoe, Kings Lynn, PE31 8QF. If to the east, to Alec Bull, Hillcrest, East Tuddenham, Dereham, NR20 3JJ. When? Now! We are the vice county recorders for the Botanical Society of the British Isles.

THETFORD FOREST RESEARCH SYMPOSIUM

The attention of members is drawn to a Research Symposium, designed to bring together all those who are currently engaged in projects concerning the Natural History of Thetford forest. This is to be held at the Carnegie Rooms in Thetford on Friday 19th October 1990, and members who might be willing to put on a display, or to present a short paper, be it on mammals, birds, plants, insects, or any other facet of natural history, are asked to get in touch with me before next spring.

Alec Bull.

THE VAPOURER MOTH *Orgyia antiqua*

My front garden is planted all round the perimeter with Queen Elizabeth hedging roses, now growing at a height of between three and five feet. Each year since they have been planted, there have been attacks by caterpillars of the Vapourer moth. Out of around forty bushes, only five are subjected to their attacks and these bushes have become somewhat stunted, being some eighteen inches less in height than the rest. At the end of the growing season they have been devastated. This of course could be avoided by dealing with the pest, but I have chosen not to do this being more interested in observing their activities.

The caterpillars feed on trees and shrubs of all kinds in the garden, but in my case are confined exclusively to the hedging roses.

The mating habits are well known. The wingless female leaves the dusky yellow chrysalis and crawls onto the outer surface and pairing occurs. She lays her eggs on the surface of the cocoon or in the close vicinity and then dies. All of this has been quite evident in my garden. The eggs hatch out and the caterpillar, which is covered with very long hairs, starts his eating campaign and the bushes start to take on a very ragged appearance.

I have often seen dead or dying females on or around the bushes and I have counted as many as forty caterpillars of varying sizes on one bush at one time.

In my observations of this species, I have noticed that the caterpillars appear to start at the top of the plant and work downwards. One plant for example this year, growing at a height of almost three and a half feet, was almost devoid of leaves and flowers on the upper two feet but there was still plenty of foliage and around thirty blooms on the lower eighteen inches.

I often find the male moths around the outside of the house since they fly during the daytime. Almost the only distinguishing marks they bear are the white eye spots on the rear of the reddish brown forewings.

Tony Brown.

RARE EARTH STAR AT SAXTHORPE

When looking for chestnuts in one of the Saxthorpe Woods on the 1st November 1989 two very good specimens of the Earth Star *Astraeus hygrometricus* (*pers.*) *morg.* were found, confirmed by R Evans.

Of the genus *Astraeaceae*. The fruiting body 1 - 5cm globose - splitting into 6 - 15 pointed rays, closing and becoming hard and leathery when dry. County records are rare although it is possible that it has been found at some other time and not reported. Rackheath Oct. 1863, Holt Dec. 1927, Bury St. Edmunds undated (see N.N.N.S. Transactions May 1981 Vol.25. Part 3. Earth Stars in Norfolk and Suffolk by E.A. Ellis.)

Anne Brewster.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE NEXT NATTERJACK should be sent to Colin Dack, 12, Shipdham Road, Toftwood, Dereham, Norfolk. NR19 1JJ, to arrive not later than **1st April 1990**. Contributions sent after this date will not be accepted for the May Natterjack.

FUNGUS FORAY AT BUXTON HEATH

Sunday 5th November 1989

About 25 members attended this meeting on the fifth of November, and were pleased to see many interesting fungi in a final total of 111.

They saw Ugly Caps, Fly Agarics, Brown Roll Rims and False Chanterelles. There were beautiful Boletes - one had bright red pores and flesh which on cutting turned rapidly from yellow to blue.

There were Poison Pies and Deceivers, Peppery Boletus, Cramp Balls, Birds Nest Fungus and Ergots on grasses.

Candlesnuff Fungi, Earth Balls and Puff Balls, Milk Caps, Horsehair Fungus and Earth Fans.

Also on view were False Death Caps, Wood Blewitts, Birch Polypores and Honey Fungus .. and the rare *Stropharia aurantiaca*.

One of our members Gordon Meake found a male Minotaur Beetle *Typhaeus typhoeus* which bears three horns on the thorax.

Come to the next Fungus Foray!

Reg and Lil Evans

NORFOLK FUNGUS SURVEY

There are many of our members who can identify on sight some of the common fungi.

We would appreciate records of the following to produce maps showing their distribution. Please give the name of the fungus, location, host and date.

Daldinia concentrica / Ash tree / Dec 12th / Tg 061091 or location.

"Orange Peel"- *Alevria aurantia* : orange coloured cups on ground brittle flesh.

"Cramp Balls"*- *Daldinia concentrica* : brown to black, round hemispherical. cut in half shows concentric silvery zones.

"Beef Steak"*- Tongue shaped, fleshy, thick at base, gelatinous reddish brown.

"Fly Agaric"*- red cap spotted with white scales, white ring on stem.

"Jews Ear"*- *Auricularia auricula judae* : Reddish brown ear shaped, inner surface veined flesh gelatinous.

"Shaggy Ink Cap"- *Coprinus comatus* : cap cylindrical, surface fleecy, edges turning black and liquid.

* Please indicate host tree.

Reg Evans.

A PARASITE NEW TO BRITAIN

We collected two cocoons of a Sawfly *Trichiosoma lucorum* in Norfolk. An adult sawfly emerged from one, but the second was parasitised by an Ichneumon.

This Ichneumon had not been recorded before in Britain, and little is known of its biology. It has been reared once before in Russia from the same sawfly host.

Reg Evans

AN UNKNOWN SPECIES OF FUNGUS

A collection of a fungus was taken from a fallen branch and were identified as probably belonging to the genus *Rosbably* but of unknown species.

It is not known at Kew and a specimen has been sent abroad to a specialist in this group.

Reg Evans.

GRASSHOPPERS AND CRICKETS

1990 is the final year for records to be included in the national distribution atlas for grasshoppers and crickets. More details about how you can help will be included with the May Natterjack. In the meantime you might like to look out for one of the following as an addition to your library. Grasshoppers and bush crickets (Shire Natural History Series) by A. Mahon - £1.95; or Grasshoppers [including bush crickets] (Naturalist's Handbooks Series) by V.K. Brown - £5.95. The Norfolk Orthoptera recorder is Dave Richmond, 42 Richmond Rise, Reepham, Norfolk. NR10 4LS. Write to him if you have any queries.

SOME DATES FOR YOUR 1990 DIARY

JUNE 2nd F.M. 16th F.M. 20th F.M.E. 24th F.M.

JULY 1st F.M. 8th F.M. 18th F.M.E. 21st-22nd U.E.A. 28th F.M.

AUGUST 12th F.M. 18th F.M.

SEPTEMBER 2nd F.M. 7th P. 12th L. 29th F.M.

OCTOBER 1st L. 7th F.M. 8th P. 15th L.

NOVEMBER 2nd P. 4th F.M. 10th Social Evening 14th L. 25th L.

DECEMBER 5th L. 10 P.

F.M. = Field Meeting / Excursion. F.M.E. = Field Meeting / Evening Excursion.
L. = Lecture / Illustrated Talk. P. = Photographic Group Meeting.

Will members please carry on collecting the petrol / oil gift vouchers. Vouchers collected will be used to exchange for prizes for the Society Social Evening Raffle. Please give the vouchers to Rex Hancy or Colin Dack.