



Number 32

THE NORFOLK NATTERJACK



February 1991

The quarterly bulletin of the Norfolk & Norwich Naturalists' Society

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING of the Society will be held at 19.30 hours on Wednesday 27th March 1991 in the City Library Lecture Theatre, Norwich.

AGENDA

1. Apologies for absence.
2. Minutes of the last Annual General Meeting. (14th March 1990)
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 1990.
6. Presentation of the Council nomination for the President of the Society for 1991-92. Professor H. Lamb.
7. Presentation of Officers and Council. The Secretary has received the following nominations, all nominees having consented to serve.

Vice-President. (As Vice-Presidents are elected for life, only new nominations are subject to election.)

Vice-President:-

Chairman

General Secretary

Assistant Secretary

Treasurer

Assistant Treasurer

Chairman, Membership Committee

Secretary, Membership Committee

Chairman, Programme Committee

Secretary, Programme Committee

Chairman, Publications Committee

Secretary, Publications Committee

Chairman, Research Committee

Secretary, Research Committee

Honorary Auditor

Elected Council Members to serve for three years, D. Richmond Dr. R. Hamond

(Retiring 1994)

Mr. R. Evans.

Mrs. A. Brewster

A. L. Bull

Mrs. J. Negal

D. A. Dorling

M. J. Woolner

R. Hancy

C. R. Dack

M. J. C. Ewles

Mrs. C. W. Haines

R. Jones

R. E. (Dick) Jones

P. R. Banham

E. Cross

J. E. Timbers

C. Neale Mrs. M. Cooper

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)

8. Any other business.

Following the A.G.M., The Presidential Address: "British Galls" Postponed from 6th February.

Mr. Reg Evans - Nomination for office as a Vice President

Proposed by Colin Dack, Seconded by Reg Jones.

In the past fifteen years since their return to Norfolk Reg & Lil Evans have collected over 27,000 records (from all over the county) covering over 2,300 species.

Reg has contributed to various surveys both here and in Europe.

In 1988 he received the Benefactor Medal from the British Mycological Society. This is a great honour in recognition of work done in the field of Mycology.

His studies also include insects associated with fungi, he also has added several species of fungus gnats to the Norfolk list.

Reg is a past President of the Society, his Presidential Address was "Curiosities of Nature". He has given many talks illustrated with his own clear and informative drawings. He has also taken part in Exhibitions and led numerous fungus forays. His knowledge and enthusiasm has been passed on to many members, not only in the study of fungi but also insects, spiders, galls and plants.

We would like it to go on record just how much his wife Lil has supported, encouraged and worked with Reg.

Colin Dack and Reg Jones.

TED ELLIS NATURE RESERVE AT WHEATFEN

Describing his home in the beautiful marshes, carrs and wild woodlands of Wheatfen, Ted Ellis once said his aim had been "to look after it by not looking after it". For him, the over-tidying of natural areas until they had lost their rambling, untamed character was the worst of sins. On the other hand Ted had worked hard to study and record what was there, and to actively protect its diversity by encouraging the rarer plants and animals where possible.

One of his surveys in the mid nineteen thirties was on the flora of Old Mill Marsh when he recorded over 93 species of flowering plants. The Society re-surveyed this marsh with Ted over the summer of 1972 when only 88 species were noted. Dorothy Maxey observed that "the whole fen has degenerated botanically and really needs mowing or grazing to increase the numbers of species again".

Since the Ted Ellis Trust acquired the Reserve in 1987 it has attempted to manage it to meet both Ted's wishes of an untamed Broadland environment yet to balance this with the creation of diverse habitats to encourage a variety of plants and animals to flourish. Over the last three years Old Mill Marsh has seen extensive scrub clearance and planned management of selected areas through different mowing patterns. The dykes, long infilled since the nineteen thirties, have been re-dug and the drainage of the fen returned to its previous system. In the summer of 1990 Alec Bull walked the marsh with me and recorded over 100 different plant species. Charles Barstad and John Tooly also surveyed the marsh and added one or two species to the new list. The five species of orchids recorded in 1934 had been reduced to one by 1972 and today none remain. However, other species have colonised the marsh and we are hopeful that in time orchids will once again flourish in the fen.

The changing flora of Old Mill Marsh covering the last fifty years is being collated and will be available to visitors and botanists in the near future. The Society is planning a visit to Wheatfen this summer so botanists be warned that we shall be looking for your help in the continuation of the surveys.

Roy Baker.

MEMBERS OF THE NORFOLK NATURALISTS' TRUST

A Members Conference has been arranged for Saturday 13th April 1991 at the University of East Anglia. The theme will be "The Changing Environment - the Role of the Trust."

Details and booking form form Jill Benfield, Conference Organiser, Norfolk Naturalists' Trust, 72, Cathedral Close, Norwich. NR1 4DF.

FUNGUS FORAY

A meeting had been arranged for 4th November at Bridgham picnic site, which we had visited several times before. In spite of the cold, showery weather, 42 members attended, including several from the British Mycological Society.

At least 4 new records for Norfolk were made and a total of 155 species were identified. Most of these were of the larger fungi, but David Fagg added a new record by looking for the smaller fungi *Discomycetes* in the leaf litter.

We believe all the forayers saw good examples of the very poisonous Death Cap *Amanita phalloides* which was present in fair numbers. Beginners seem to have been surprised at the considerable range of fungi in the area.

Next year (1991) we shall have another meeting at this site, since it continues to produce new records on each visit.



Come to the next foray!

Reg & Lil Evans.

House Martins

Following the article in the last Natterjack I received the following from B.D. Harding.

Nesting adaptability of House Martins Two instances in summer 1990 seem to indicate that House Martin *Delichon urbica* has no problems in adapting to a new nesting environment when its original mud nest has been dislodged. In the first case, a nest containing young in Brundall, Norfolk, was dislodged in strong winds from under the apex of a semi-detached house. The houseowner recovered the young and the remains of the nest from the lawn and placed them in a plant-pot; this was then placed in a 'Kodak' photographers' bag and hung from the latch of the bedroom window. The adults were soon feeding the young, which eventually fledged. A second nest later replaced the original, and held young, but it is not known whether the same adults were involved. In the second case, The Eastern Daily Press published an article concerning a pair of house Martins at Saxthorpe, Norfolk, whose nest became dislodged. The owners of the property replaced the nest with a 2-litre plastic squash bottle with a hole cut in the side and a smaller one in the bottom to enable water to drain away. The nesting material and four young were transferred to the makeshift nest, which was fixed under the eaves of the bungalow by string attached to a cup-hook; before long, the adults were feeding the young. B.D. Harding. This appeared in British Birds Vol 77 157-158.

About 1980 a friend ask me to look at the North end of his house, a pair of House Martins were trying to build a nest, but they had it all wrong. The foundations of the nest went from the apex to almost the end of the sloping eaves. Had they got their drawing the wrong way up? C.R.D.

Spiders - A Workshop for beginners

An evening workshop session will be held in the Natural History Department, Norwich Castle on Thursday 12th September 1991 at 7.30 p.m.

To clarify the aims of this first meeting of a projected series, we will try to answer the following questions:

- Why should I look for spiders?
- Where?
- What equipment do I need?
- What can I read?
- How many can I expect to identify?
- How do I begin to sort them out?
- Where do I go next?

We hope part of the answer to the last question will be Workshop No.2.



PHOTOGRAPHIC GROUP

Will members please note the April meeting is on Wednesday 17th not 7th, as my typing mistake in Natterjack No. 30. The Illustrated talk is "In the Eye of the Beholder" by Mrs. Joyce Robinson.

EXCURSION TO HOLKHAM

Sunday 27 January 1991

Eighteen members gathered at Lady Anne's Drive at Holkham to look for any winter migrants in the area. The weather was cloudy and cool but otherwise ideal for a winter walk along the shore and through the woods.

We began by walking over the extensive beach towards the distant shore-line noticing, as we went, the formation of an embryo salt-marsh in the area of beach between the inner and outer dune systems. It was in this area that we noted a large party of small birds feeding on the seeds washed up by the tides and were pleased to see that there were a number of **Snow Buntings** amongst them.

Off shore we saw a party of diving ducks made up of 9 or so **Goldeneyes** including some fine male birds, a drake **Red-breasted Merganser** and two **Long-tailed Ducks**. Seeing these three species together was a great pleasure. Various gulls were also seen with small numbers of **Sanderling** feeding near to the tide-line.

Later we looked across the fresh water marshes from the dune tops and were treated to the distant sight of hundreds, if not thousands, of geese. There was one large party of **Brents** feeding in their characteristically tight-packed flock whilst the many **Pink-footed Geese** were spread more widely with constant activity as small parties moved about the area.

Walking through the pines did not produce as many birds as we had hoped, but were able to see, at close quarters, a large flock of **Wigeon** in one of the pools recently created on the marsh. other species of duck were also present in small numbers.

A large party of **Twites** were seen near the car park and many geese were, in view whilst we had lunch. The hardy few who stayed on to the bitter end were given a frustratingly brief sighting of a flock of **Redpolls** but they refused to allow close inspection to confirm their identity as Mealy or even Arctic!

It was a pleasant outing and 50 species were recorded, including a **Barn Owl** seen along the roadside towards Wells at dusk.

Don Dorling.

MICROSCOPY GROUP

Programme for 1991

All meetings are held in the Castle Museum, Norwich, at 7.30 p.m. unless otherwise stated. All include opportunities for "Gossip" as well as the featured items.

Tuesday Derek Excell will illustrate some of the fascinating history of the instruments used in microscopy.
19 February

Thursday Entomological Gossip evening. Malcolm Thain has some extraordinary photographs of moth antennae under the
4 April scanning electron microscope. Bring along samples, queries, exhibits on everything entomological.

Saturday An afternoon expedition to Marston Marshes to sample the freshwater life. Meet at the reserve entrance on
1 June Marston Lane (TG217056) at 1.30. Return to Castle at 3.30 to sort and discuss our finds.

Tuesday Spiders under the stereomicroscope. Demonstrated by Rex Hancy. We may find some interesting specimens behind
23 July the bookcase!

Thursday Animals in the house. Please don't bring Tiddles or Fido! Anything else that wriggles runs or crawls in and around
19 September the house. Don't forget to look in the old nests under the eaves.

Tuesday General Gossip Evening. A quick review of the year and a look ahead to plan for 1992. Bring anything else you
19 November would like to discuss, exhibit or query.

NORFOLK MOTH SURVEY

The following meetings are to be held in the Castle Museum at 7.30 p.m.

21st March 1991 - Moss Taylor will be presenting a "Beginner's view of Moths"

25th April 1991 - A workshop, led by Gerry Haggett, about identifying carpet moths (the ones that look like carpets, not the ones that eat them).

A very full programme of field meetings is planned for 1991. For details write to Tony Irwin at the Castle Museum, Norwich NR1 3JU.

GALL RECORD FOR FOXLEY WOOD, FOXLEY, NORFOLK

TG051228 29 September 1990

GALL MITES: Eriophyes tetanothorax

E	avellanae	Sallow
E.	similis	Hazel
E.	macrochelus	Blackthorn
E	macrorhynchus	Maple
Cecidophyopsis	atrachus	Maple
E.	goniothorax typicus	Stitchwort
E.	varius	Hawthorn
E.	tiliae typicus	Poplar
		Lime



GALL MIDGE:

Rhabdophaga	rosaria	Sallow
Harmandia	globuli	Aspen
Syndiplosis	petiola	Aspen
Dasyneura	marginemtorquens	Sallow
D.	ulmariae	Meadowsweet
D.	fraxini	Ash
D.	crataegi	Hawthorn
Macrodiplosis	dryobia	Oak

SMUT:

Urocystis	pompholygodes	Buttercup
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SAWFLY:

Pontania	proxima	Sallow
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PLANT LOUSE:

Psyllopsis	fraxini	Ash
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AGROMYZID FLY:

Phytomyza	ilicis	Holly
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GALL GNAT

Jaapiella	veronicae	Speedwell
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GALL WASP

Diplolepis	eglantariae	Rose
D.	nervosus	Rose
D.	rosae	Rose
Diastrophus	rubi	Bramble
Andricus	quercus-folii	Oak
A.	kollari	Oak
A.	lignicola	Oak
Biorhiza	pallida	Oak
Neuroterus	numismalis	Oak
N.	quercus baccarum	Oak
N.	albipes	Oak
Andricus	ostreus	Oak
A.	curvator	Oak
Cynips	divisa	Oak
Xestophanes	brevitarsis	Tormentil



GREY SQUIRRELS

I recently observed a Grey Squirrel sitting beside a small private lake, in the process of eating a dead roach, which it left behind on my approach.

I had previously no idea that fish formed part of the diet of the grey squirrel. I thought that possibly readers of Natterjack may be able to help with comments on this matter. Any correspondence would be most welcome.

Please send any letters to Tony Brown 16 Mariners Park Close, Hopton, Gt. Yarmouth, Norfolk. NR31 9DQ
Tony Brown.

WHAT'S ON OF INTEREST TO MEMBERS

Forestry commission

Thetford Forest Park:- The Ecology of a Pine Forest

New Hall, Cambridge. Saturday and Sunday 13th & 14th April.

The Symposium will draw together the results of ecological research carried out over the past twenty years in Thetford Forest, one of the largest man made forests in Europe. The aim is to discuss research studies in the context of the management, ecology and conservation value of the forest.

There are twenty four papers to be presented covering the whole range of wildlife in the forest from Lichens to higher plants to butterflies and moths, rabbits and deer. In some cases several speakers will be involved with any one subject, including some of our members. e.g Peter Lambley, Mike Hall and Nick Gibbons.

The conference fee is £5. The two day course can be fully residential, i.e full board and accommodation in which case the total is £97.30, or one can pay the conference fee and for as many meals they wish to participate in. There are 160 places, so early application is advised to:- Miss. C.A. Woods, Wildlife to Conservation Research Branch, Forestry Commission, Forest Research Station, Alice Holt Lodge, Farnham, Surrey, GU10 4LH

HALT HALL

An Introduction to the Plants of Coastal Habitats

19th-21th July 1991

Tutor. Mr. P.J. Wanstall B.sc., M.I.Biol., F.L.S.,

The 20th and 21th of July will be spent studying the plants of coastal habitats followed by practical sessions and discussions at the end of the day. Cost, £55 per person. Booking forms available from:- The Warden, Holt Hall Residential and Field study Center. Kelling Road, Holt NR25 7DU.

Posters would any member who can have a one or more Society Posters displayed please contact Colin Dack.

Production

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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 1991. Contributions sent after this date will not be accepted for the May Natterjack.