

### Main Work Party Reports

**Dec 29 - Railway Wood** - Annual maintenance carried out. General tidying up and some tree/hedge maintenance carried out. Litter pick.

**Jan 05 - Lingwood Pond** - Annual maintenance carried out. South boundary hedge of West Compartment, south side and top trimmed using hedge trimmer and loppers. South boundary of East Compartment (main pond) - hedge and bramble areas scythed back and continued on East boundary between trees. Ivy cut and removed from base of trunk of 2 trees. North boundary - branches overhanging pavement cut down. Grass area by pond scythed. NW corner - fallen tree obscuring village information board cut down. Overhanging branches cut back and small area at end of railings by pond scythed. A fallen willow by pond at N side and another by causeway cut down

All cut vegetation and timber, raked and cleared and removed from site to parish council allotment site, in 3 trailer loads. Litter pick carried out and information board cleaned.

**Jan 19 - Howes Meadow** - Pollarded 2 willow - meadow side of South and West boundary hedges trimmed using hedge trimmer and loppers - Moved lying cut reed around fire site on to the fire pile. Areas of cut reed not cleared at previous work parties raked and cleared to spoil heap and fire site. Installed an owl box in oak tree at NE corner of site.

**Feb 02 - Limpenhoe Church** - Hedge Planting - A hedge was planted on the south boundary of the conservation area. EH marked out the area for the positions of the plants. A total of 95 were planted - 10 field maple, 10 hazel, 10 spindle, 5 holly and 60 hawthorn. Canes and plastic spirals attached.

**Feb 16 - South Burlingham Church** - 12 oaks lifted and removed from the conservation area to the North of the church.

**Lingwood - Peters Wood/Permissive Path to Footpath 3/Footpath 3**  
Oak trees planted - West of Peters Wood by School Rd. - North of Permissive Path and West and East of Footpath 3. Total of 21 oaks and 1 Hornbeam planted. Kind permission of Mr T Gurr current landowner.

### Additional Work Party Reports

**Jan 26 - Plantation Wood** - Cut down bramble

**Martin's Marsh** - Cut down bramble for access.

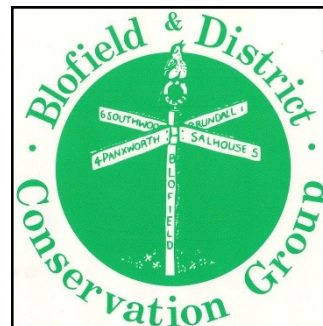
**Jan 28 - Railway Wood** - Fallen trees cleared prior to tree planting.

**Feb 01/05/11 -Howes Meadow** - Cut reed South side of stream/dyke

**Feb 04 - Railway Wood** - Chainsaw fallen timber- continue clearance

**Feb 09 - Railway Wood** - Planted 2 field maple, 4 hornbeam and 4 small leaved lime.

**Feb 11 - Blofield - Heath (Bonds) Farm** - 13 oaks planted in field margins.



## BADCOG NEWS.

No 200: March 2019

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**In recognition of the 200th issue of the BADCOG News Letter, we have reproduced the front page of the first ever issue, dated October 1985.**

BADCOG

BLOFIELD & DISTRICT CONSERVATION GROUP

BADCOG

*Chairman: Dr. David Pilch, The White House, Blofield.*

*President: Mrs. Anne Mackintosh*

NEWSLETTER No. 1

OCTOBER 1985



FROM THE CHAIRMAN...

This is the first of a new-style Newsletter for BADCOG which will be distributed every two months. Its aim is to provide a means of keeping members in close touch with our activities and we hope enable a greater involvement in them. It will consist of a rolling calendar of events with small articles of interest. We hope the latter will be submitted by the membership! Therefore if you have seen or read something of interest or would like to contribute your news in a particular area of natural history, please send the article to the Hon. Sec.

During the past year we have planted about 1000 trees and cared for quite a few more - some of this was in co-operation with Buxton Tree Planting Group and FoE. We have been involved in churchyard conservation schemes. We have been improving the habitat in Howes Meadow and hope eventually to set up a nature trail there. Holly Lane Pond has continued to do well - not surprisingly the water level has been high this summer - and moorhen nested on it this year. It also earned us a Shell Better Britain campaign award - the only one in Norfolk. We have also received financial support from Broadland District Council for which we are very grateful.

Attendance at our monthly meetings has varied but the quality of the speakers has been very good with particularly entertaining talks from Dr. Bernard Watts, David Brewster, Mark Jones and scientific erudition from Dr. Martin George.

We have exhibited at a number of events but perhaps the most notable was the highly successful Butterfly Day at How Hill at the end of June.

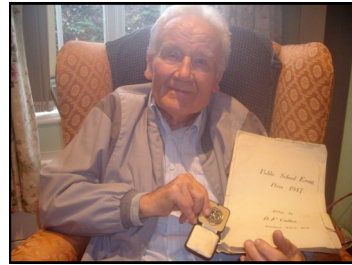
On a smaller scale but equally successful was our BADCOG Children's Day earlier this year when 200 or so children found activities to absorb and challenge them. I hope we shall be able to repeat this. Field trips were less well supported with the exception of the visit to Ted Ellis's home where the highlight for many people was the release of a newly emerged swallowtail butterfly.

**What follows is a continuation of an article started in the last issue of the BADCOG News featuring an essay by David Cullen which he entered into a competition whilst a pupil at Gresham's School back in 1947. The prize for his entry was a medal from the RSPB.**

Now for egg comparison. There is little, if any difference, in the eggs of the Willow Warbler and Chiffchaff. Both lay six eggs as a rule, but one Willow Warbler's nest I found contained eight eggs. They are glossy white, speckled towards the round end with red-brown. The clutch is usually laid by early May, sometimes late April. Two broods are sometimes reared. The Blackcap and Garden Warbler's eggs are also little different. In most eggs I have seen, those of the Garden Warbler are more rounded. There is great variation in colour, & this makes it difficult to identify them. The ground is usually ochreous yellow in colour, & blotched & speckled with various shades of brown. These two birds have eggs larger than the Willow Warbler and Chiffchaff which helps identification. Those of the Blackcap being 19.58 x 14.74 mm & the Chiffchaff about 15.35 x 12.15 mm. The former bird usually lays four or five eggs, at a later date than the Willow Warbler & Chiffchaff – about the middle of May or even later after that. Where the ground colour of the Willow Warbler and Chiffchaff are white, the Blackcap and Garden Warbler are usually yellowish, & rarely white. The Blackcap & Garden Warbler sometimes have two broods in a season.

Although the Willow Warbler inhabits trees to a certain extent, the Chiffchaff is practically dependent upon trees. It is rarely found in lanes and hedgerows except on passage, whereas the Willow Warbler may be found regularly in such places in the breeding season. I have observed also that the Willow Warbler is definitely more common in most parts of the country, & in Notts, I have found at least twelve pairs of Willow Warblers to one pair of Chiffchaffs. Both birds feed mostly in trees where aphids & such-like are often sought after. The Chiffchaff is generally the earlier of the two birds to arrive in spring. I usually expect to hear one during the last week of March, if not earlier. The Willow Warbler is later and usually arrives about the second week in April. The Garden Warbler favours the same sort of surroundings as the Blackcap.

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David with his essay.

## BADCOG Winter Talks.

David Boulton, our speaker at the October meeting, gave us a history of the wildlife pond that he constructed in his garden in 2010. David is a professional photographer and his reason for the pond was to record emerging dragonflies and damselflies, and anything else which turned up. Well, the success of this pond is quite astonishing.

Firstly, the construction – the turf was removed covering an area 16ft. in diameter and then earth was dug out to leave gently sloping shallow spaces round the edges with a deeper part in the centre, 24 inches at the deepest. Then 2 inches of sand covered the whole area before being covered with a layer of geotextile membrane. That was covered by a layer of polythene, with a further layer of geotextile. After a dry spell of weather, rain water eventually filled the pond.

Twenty species of native wetland plants were put in at various levels, including ragged robin, cuckoo flower, bog bean, brooklime, marsh mint, flowering rush, water avens, purple loosestrife, yellow flag iris, lesser spearwort, marsh marigold, branched burr reed, water lily and water cress. After a few years a common spotted orchid appeared, all by itself! Getting the balance right with plants can be tricky but over the years a splendid show has been achieved.

By 2012, David was photographing emerging emperor and common darter dragonflies, several kinds of damselfly and their exuviae. Not only is this an activity which requires staying up into the early hours of the morning with a torch, this particular year was very wet, causing newly emerged wings to stick together: help was required to separate them. In August of that year, an emerald dragonfly turned up. This was surprising as these are not known to visit ponds in urban locations. Large numbers of bees, butterflies, moths, hoverflies, damselflies and aquatic life were also attracted to the pond. Even a horned dauber wasp paid a visit!

Another problem occurred one year when 68 newly emerged broad bodied chaser dragonflies were predated on by sparrows. David took to rescuing many before this happened, in order to release them elsewhere. And finally, there is the story of the astounding number of frogs: 135 in 2013; 158 in 2014; 209 in 2015; 230 in 2016; but only 155 in 2017!

All in all, a great success story – 8 species of damselflies, 9 of dragonflies, expertly photographed and recorded, not only emerging but mating and laying eggs, plus all those other creatures which ....just turned up.

## Eastern Daily Press 4 January 1928

On this day serious flooding took place in Norwich as the Wensum overflowed at Lenwade and the rising water rushed through the city at a "great pace". Made worse by melting snow and heavy rain, the water reached a small under-line bridge on the railway line which collapsed just after the Norwich mail train had passed. Considerable anxiety had been felt in the city the previous night when it was ascertained that the high tide at Norwich was due at about 8.30 am. Luckily, although the wind veered to the north-west, a direction with which extra high tides are usually associated, it was very light.

One veteran waterman with many years acquaintance with the river stated that because of reduced wind, "the water at St Martin's bridge was a foot lower than it had been during the afternoon and that it was passing through New Mills at a rate of about 8 miles an hour". He felt that the water was under control but the city authorities were taking every precaution in their power to minimise the situation. Many people who lived in the Oak Street neighbourhood were anxiously watching the water as it went "whirling through the city."

### WORK PARTY DATES

**2nd March—Buckenham Woods.**

**16th March—Holly Lane Pond.**

**30th March—Walsham Fen/ Jary's Meadow.**

**13th April—Howes Meadow (Hedge).**

**27th April—Walsham Fen/Jary's Meadow.**

**11t May—Jary's Meadow.**

**1st June—Buckenham Woods.**

**15th June—Lingwood Church.**

**29th June—Hemblington Church**

**13th July—Blofield Church**

**Any short notice changes will be published on the BADCOG website @ [www.badcog.co.uk](http://www.badcog.co.uk)**

It does, however, often inhabit places where no trees are present. These seem essential to the Blackcap's existence. The Garden Warbler also frequents osier beds & bushy places. A friend of mine normally gets about four pairs of Garden Warblers in his willow holt. He says he is lucky if he ever hears a Blackcap! The Blackcap is the first of the two birds to arrive in spring. It arrives usually at the end of March or the beginning of April. I heard one on March 24<sup>th</sup> in Notts. The Garden Warbler is here by the second week of April, but it wastes less time in the fulfilment of its summer visit, for it breeds at the same time of year as the Blackcap.

Thus the Chiffchaff arrives first in spring, closely followed by the Blackcap, Willow Warbler & Garden Warbler respectively. The Willow Warbler is probably the commonest of the four, followed by the Blackcap, Chiffchaff & Garden Warbler. These latter three being about equal in distribution. The Willow Warbler & Garden Warbler are found where there are no trees as well as where there are, but the Chiffchaff & Blackcap are usually confined to woods, & are not found in open places. This is the normal distribution of these birds, as I have found them, but the habitat may differ in certain parts of the country.

All these birds referred to, feed on insects of different kinds. They seem to be mostly Diptera, & also larva of different species of Lepidoptera. I have observed that a lot of food is obtained on the wing, and quick darts into the air usually result in some sort of capture. The Chiffchaff and Willow Warbler are especially good at this, and I have observed them to hover under leaves of trees, especially Sycamore, to obtain insects. They may also be seen hovering like humming birds to take small caterpillars suspended on the ends of thin, silken threads. There is evidence, however, that the Garden Warbler and Blackcap eat a lot of fruit of different wild plants especially in the autumn. I have seen them take the following fruits. Elderberries, currants, yew berries, mistletoe berries, privet & ivy berries. They are also said to take cultivated fruits, but I have not observed this. All these birds feed their young on caterpillars & insects, & never on fruits or berries of any kind. Therefore, the Garden Warbler & Blackcap are not wholly insectivorous in their diet, while the Chiffchaff and Willow Warbler are.

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The flight of the above species may be a little help to identification, & I will conclude this essay by writing a few words on their behaviour in the air. They all have rather jerky, flitting flights of short duration. When they fly longer distances I have found that the flight is more undulating & swift. The Chiffchaff and Willow Warbler hover a lot, & also flit their wings incessantly when looking for food in the tree tops.

The Blackcap & Garden Warbler are more heavy on the wing than the first two, but all are swift in their actions when moving from one tree or bush to another. On the whole, I have noted that the Chiffchaff and Willow Warbler are more restless & active than the latter two birds, who move in a slower & more methodical, & generally less conspicuous way, in their search for food.

In the concluding paragraph of this attempt to distinguish the individual identity of the two rather similar pairs of our British warblers, the following observations may seem relevant. I have attempted to emphasise characteristics of the birds discussed, which have struck me personally as being helpful in recognising and distinguishing them. It was in fact my former inability to do so with certainty that made me study the songs & calls of these warblers. With such small and restless birds, whose homes are in the cover of trees and bushes, no one characteristic – colour, behaviour, environment – unless it is song, is sufficient for certain recognition, & a combination of observations is desirable. It is for this reason that the nests and eggs of these four birds have been described & compared, for how frequently are they flushed from their nests, while walking over rough ground, pushing through undergrowth, or scrambling through thickets, when the fleeting glance of the nesting bird is seldom adequate to identify it.



The RSPB medal presented to David.

## New Community Land at Blofield.

Blofield Parish Council is in the process of purchasing four acres of land at its southern boundary. This land, known as Marty's Marsh, is contiguous with Brundall's Cremer's Meadow from which it is separated by Lackford Run dyke.

The plan is to manage this as a local nature reserve with a footpath through it connecting Cremer's meadow with the footpath from Blofield Church to Braydeston Church and onwards.

The site has been grazed in the past but not for a number of years and some of it will benefit from management. There are, however, some areas such as a large bird rich blackthorn thicket which will be undisturbed.

BADCOG may be able to assist in some of the management but it will not be a regular site. The plan is for a subgroup to manage this for the parish council much as The Friends of Cremer's Meadow do in Brundall. I shall be helping to get such a group together and would value any BADCOG members who would like to be involved. I would expect that most management is likely to take place during the week and thus would not conflict with BADCOG activities. If you are interested please get in touch.

David Pilch

### BADCOG Evening Meetings/Talks

March 8th. A Short film, 'A man between three rivers'.  
**Talks and meeting take place ever 2nd Friday of the month  
( October—April only), in the Methodist Chapel, Chapel Road  
Lingwood starting at 7.30pm.**  
Refreshments are available.

### Membership Renewal

Thank you to those of you who have renewed your membership. To those of you who wish to renew (**Individual £5, - family £10**) and have not done so, please forward any cheques made payable to BADCOG to:  
**Frances Milliken, 45 Hearthway, Blofield Corner NR13 4RS.**