

BADCOG NEWS.

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THE CHAIRMAN WRITES

After our 2019 AGM and Members' Evening in mid-September BADCOG's activities carried on normally with work parties at Howe's Meadow, Buckenham Woods, Walsham Fen, Strumpshaw Stone Pit, Snowdrop Acre and Jary's Meadow.

In October we had a talk by Bob Fossy on the history and restoration of Horsey Mill. This was followed in November by a talk on the Little Ouse Headwaters' project, given by an enthusiastic Ellie Beach, who also offered us a Summer 2020 walk around the area, starting at Lopham Fen. The B113 road between Redgrave and South Lopham crosses the source of the Little Ouse, which flows West past Thetford and the river Waveney which flows East, forming the Norfolk/Suffolk border.

On the 14th December '19 a few of us had a bracing 5 mile pre-Christmas walk from St. Andrew's Church via footpaths through Burlingham Woods, Millennium Wood, Austin Wood and Hare Fen to Fairhaven. We managed to squeeze in for refreshments amidst quite a crowd at their Christmas Fair.

Our first work party of the new year 2020 was, as always, Lingwood Pond. We had wondered how we were going to transport all the cuttings to the green waste site, but fortunately I found I could hire a large trailer from North Burlingham Paving and Fencing for only £20.

On January 25th eleven of us had a hedge planting session along the footpaths East from Peter's Wood and North towards the A47. I had collected 900 native plants, canes and spirals from Blackrow Nursery and pre-marked where the hedge was to go. The weather was mild and all went well on the day.

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Also in January ever popular Dr. Tony Leech gave a talk on the current work of the NNNT. He was followed in February by the Guardian's naturalist writer Patrick Barkham taking us on a trip around the islands of the UK.

The mild Winter allowed us to complete four more work parties, culminating on the 21st March at Holly Lane Pond. Thereafter, our activities came to a halt, for the reason 2020 will be remember, the "lockdown" etc., caused by Covid-19. As the saying goes: – the rest is history; it certainly will be!

During this long period of inactivity we have had time to take stock and observe the natural world, which we hope has benefited from less impact on the environment.

Some work has been carried out on our sites by small groups, thus Southwood Church was mowed and BVCG cleared it. Likewise, Hemblington churchyard was mowed and Sue organised her group to clear it.

Our first proper work party, allowed as restrictions eased, was Blofield churchyard, north side, on August 1st. It was completed successfully and we hope to cut the remainder in October and have help to clear it from Yarmouth Green Gym.

BADCOG has been given two short films of both Blofield and Hemblington churchyard work parties; made by Allen Dye a couple of years ago as part of a contract that he had to film the management of wildlife sites for the NWT: a good addition to our records and something to be shown on a future Members' evening.

Finally, since our usual venues are unavailable for the foreseeable future, we are unable to hold our AGM in September, so we ask members to accept the status quo with the committee for the present.

Thanks to everyone for your work and support and let's hope we can soon look forward to better times.

Since 13th September 2019 (date of AGM), BADCOG volunteers have conducted 17 main work parties with an additional 86 other work parties, or individuals working at our sites. The average number of volunteers in attendance at our main work parties was 8. Ernest Hoyos.

Note: As a result of the current Covid-19 restrictions, there will be no AGM this year. The financial statement for the year will be published in the next News Letter.

CHOUGHS MAKE A COME BACK.

Choughs are experiencing a bumper breeding season in Cornwall this year maybe because fewer tourists have been present around their breeding areas near beaches and cliffs.



These striking black birds with their crimson bills are members of the crow family. With a down-turned bill and broad, rounded wings they typically frequent mountains and sea cliffs.

Young choughs turn over cow pats seeking out the invertebrates in animal dung as an easy food source, favourite food being grubs, worms and beetles. In some areas choughs feed along the strandline on sand hoppers. During autumn and winter months, arable land is important for choughs where they eat grain and forage for invertebrates in the open soil.

Needing safe places to nest choughs may use sea caves, old mine workings, abandoned buildings and even modern agricultural barns. In some areas, they use specially made nest boxes and ledges.

In Cornwall in 2020 fourteen pairs have been confirmed to be breeding and forty-three babies have hatched.

The emblem of Cornwall the chough become extinct in the county in 1973 following a long decline. Small numbers returned in 2001, DNA suggesting they came for Ireland, and this year's breeding figures are among the best on record. Since its reappearance the species has spread to Devon and Wales. In the past, especially during the 19th century, their numbers declined because they were highly persecuted. They were trapped and shot, mistakenly identified as an agricultural pest. They were also persecuted by egg collectors. Changes in management contributed to the decline in some areas where fewer grazing animals on cliffs and slopes meant less good habitat.

For those who like to know the collective noun for creatures - a group of choughs may be referred to as a chattering or clattering.

Work Party dates.

5th September -Howes Meadow

19th September—Howes Meadow

3rd October—Walsham Fen/Jary's Meadow

17th October—Jary's Meadow/Walsham Fen

31st October—TBD

All work parties dates are available to our website and on our Facebook page.

BUTTERFLIES DURING 'SEMI-LOCKDOWN'

TONY MCKIE

In the June issue of the BADCOG News Letter, I wrote an article about the butterflies I'd seen during the first few months of the Covid-19 Lockdown, recording 18 species up to the end of May.

I finished off this article recording a Meadow Brown on the last day of May, and would have to wait a full 2 weeks to see my next, a *Large Skipper* on the 14th June at Walsham Fen. Some Skippers, like the Large, Small and Essex are a bit tricky to identify so I got a quick photo of this subject before checking it later. My next sighting was a *Ringlet* on the 19th June in the Community Woods behind Lingwood church. This new woodland was planted in 2003 and consists of a number of long belts of native trees with wide field margins. It has quickly developed into a nice place for a walk and is a good location to see a number of butterflies and dragonflies. With the impending duelling of the A47, I wonder if this will continue; only time will tell. The next sighting was a bit of a surprise, a *Small heath* on the 22nd June in the meadow between Two Acres and the railway line in Lingwood. This small piece of dry grassland must be a suitable site for this rather inconspicuous little insect which likes areas with fine grasses.

The month of June was a bit disappointing with only 3 new recordings, but July would be much better. After a tip-off from Ernest, my next sighting was a *Silver-washed Fritillary* on the 3rd July at Strumpshaw RSPB. I was fortunate to see this species a few more times on my return to the reserve, and I also caught sight of this spectacular fritillary at Fairhaven and Panxworth. This butterfly is becoming more common in Norfolk and I am sure it is only a matter of time until we see them at some sites BADCOG manage. I think Walsham Fen/Jary's Meadow is a potential site for this butterfly. Its food plant is common dog-violet which maybe we could encourage here.

Next to come along was the *Small Skipper*, seen on the 6th July along the field margins at Buckenham. This whole area with its hedgerows, field margins and small woodland, all within what was once a huge arable field, is becoming an interesting place for both fauna and flora, particularly bee orchids. It was in the same area on the 10th July, close to



Buckenham railway station, that I sighted my first *Gatekeeper* of the year.

This is a lovely little butterfly which is often overlooked in favour of the many peacocks on the wing at the same time. The *Gatekeeper* spends 9 months of its life as a caterpillar, hibernating over winter in grasses before becoming active in the spring to feed at night, emerging as a butterfly in high summer.

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The next to join the list was an *Essex Skipper* in Peters Wood on the 11th July. Now to identify this little butterfly you need to get up close to it, as the only visible difference between this and a *Small Skipper* is that the underside of its antenna are black rather than orange-brown. The next sighting was a bit of a surprise, a *Purple Hairstreak* in Austin's Wood on the 17th July. What was surprising about this sighting was that it was on hazel at eye level, when normally you must look up high into the canopy of mature oaks to see this insect. The butterfly likes to feed on the honeydew produced by aphids high up in the trees. It must have been a good year for this butterfly as I have also seen it at Buckenham Woods, Buckenham Railway Station, Beighton and Lingwood Churchyard. David Pilch has also had one in his garden this year. A butterfly I was hoping to see at Strumpshaw RSPB alongside the *Silver-washed Fritillary* was the *White Admiral*, which seems to like the same type of habitat. However, it was not until 20th July that I saw this species at Fairhaven. It was a bit tatty, but it still made it onto my list. Lee has also seen this butterfly this year and took a nice picture of it on his phone. For such an attractive-looking butterfly, it's a shame that in its caterpillar stage of its life cycle, it covers itself with its own droppings as camouflage!



The next new species recorded was exciting. Despite looking for this butterfly at places like Mousehold Heath, I had never seen this species in the UK before, only on holiday to Southern or Eastern Europe, the *White-letter Hairstreak*. This sighting happened on 22nd July close to Blofield church, and this individual was perched on the roof of my car, enabling me to get a particularly good view of it. At first, I thought it was a *Purple Hairstreak*, but when I couldn't see the distinctive orange eye-spot, I was slightly puzzled until the penny dropped. I could see it had a zigzagging 'W' shape on its wing which is where it gets its name from. Typically, I didn't have my camera with me, so I was unable to get a confirmed record of it, but I am 99% convinced it was this butterfly. The *White-letter Hairstreak* was particularly hard hit by the Dutch Elm Disease, its main food plant, but some colonies survive on the elm suckers which can be found locally along the hedgerows.

So, to sum up, within just few miles radius of my home, I have recorded 28 out of the 59 species of British butterflies. If I had ventured a bit further afield but still within the county of Norfolk, I may well have included another half dozen or so species to my records, which makes me think that Norfolk is a good place to see butterflies.

Writing this article has also got me thinking 'why I have seen so much wildlife locally this year?' and it's all down to time! This year during 'Lockdown', unlike any other year, I have had time to venture out on long walks, in nice weather and to stop, look and listen to nature.

TREE PRESERVATION ORDERS (TPOs) MAKING AN ORDER AND CONFIRMING AN ORDER

A Tree Protection Order or TPO is an Order made by a local planning authority in England to protect a tree, a group of trees in a particular area or a woodland. TPOs are made in the interests of amenity and ordinary members of the public can request them. The list of offences created by a TPO, which include wilfully damaging or cutting down a protected tree, are strict liability offences. This is to say that, claiming ignorance to the protected status of the tree/s in question is not an excuse. The public has access to a register of TPOs. TPO legislation has changed over time. Part VIII of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 was amended by the Town and Country Planning (Tree Preservation)(England) Regulations 2012, with the changes coming into force in April 2012. Section 192 of the Planning Act 2008 and Part VI of the Localism Act 2011 also made amendments to the 1990 Act. Countryside hedgerows and their removal are regulated under different legislation.

Once a TPO is in place it prohibits the cutting down, topping, lopping, uprooting or wilful damage of the protected tree/s without written consent of the Local Authority. It is the view of the Secretary of State that cutting roots is also a prohibited activity. These prohibitive rules place a responsibility on tree owners.

It is possible that a TPO be initiated by the Local Authority themselves, but it may just as easily be anyone else. Anyone can request an authority to make a TPO and other parties will often do this too.

On the issue of 'amenity', the term does not have a definition in law, either statutory or in case law. Authorities are basically required to show that an Order is to the benefit of the public and that this is to a reasonable degree. This benefit may be tangible in the present day or anticipated in the future. When making a judgment on amenity the Authority in question will consider the visibility of the trees or woodland in question. They will also consider the characteristics. This could include the relationship of the wood to the landscape or the size and form of trees which are considered to be in need of protection. Their importance to nature conservation and the response to climate change can be examined as well. Local Authorities will generally have 'Tree Strategies', as well as the existing register – both of which they will refer to when making and reviewing TPOs.

It has to be worthwhile for an Authority to make an Order. If the trees are well looked after and not at risk then they are unlikely to action anything. It must be 'expedient' for them to put an Order in place. Change of ownership or development pressures are two of the more obvious examples of woodland facing the risk of damage or destruction.

Where an Authority chooses to make an Order, notice is served on all people with an interest in the land, whilst a copy of the Order is made available publicly. The Authority invites representations; this is an opportunity to make comments and objections.

The Authority must then make a decision to either confirm the Order, or not, within 6 months. As they are the ones who propose and confirm Orders, the Authority must show on confirmation that they have made it in a fair-minded manner. The Order will have a map annexed to it. So that any future prosecution attempts are more likely to be successful it is important that they are very accurate. Legislation does not state that scientific names of trees are required, but this is an example of something that would help.

All Orders are placed in the local land charges register. The Secretary of State does not hear cases for claimants appealing against a TPO confirmation, though there is a right to appeal to them if an application to carry out work on trees under a TPO is refused (or granted subject to conditions).

Lee Coby

THE SCENT OF RAIN

This year with long spells of dry weather perhaps you have noticed that particular smell when rain falls on dry ground. In hot dry countries that smell can presage rain fall as the scent travels on the wind ahead of the actual shower. The smell has a name. Back on 1964 two Australian researchers wrote an article naming it "petrichor" from the Greek petros for stone and ichor meaning "the fluid that flows in the veins of the gods. An organic compound called geosmin is a key component of petrichor. It lingers in moist soil. Geosmin is the compound which gives flavour to many root vegetables. Drops of water hitting the ground cause geosmin to be released into the air. Geosmin comes from the Greek geo for earth and osme smell. But what is that lovely smell on cotton sheets which have hung outside?

Barbara Pilch

NORWICH-ON-SEA

With global warming constantly in the news, I thought I'd share a story from 30 years ago.

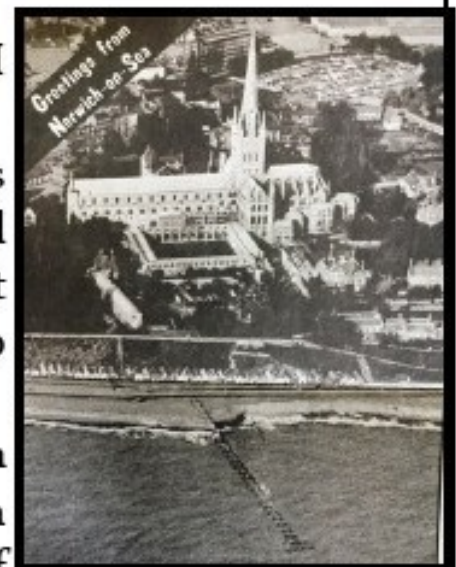
In 1990 I was a reporter on the EDP. A press release came in from an environmental pressure group called Ark. It predicted that sea levels could rise by 7.5 metres within 60 years.

The editor asked our photographic technician to illustrate what such a rise could mean in Norfolk. So he took an aerial photo of Norwich and altered it to show the sea shore next to the Cathedral. A sub-heading read: "Greetings from Norwich-On-Sea."

The story went on the front page and caused quite a stir. My mother, who lived off Cucumber Lane in Brundall, asked me whether she should move to higher ground.

Well, here we are in 2020, 30 years later - exactly half way through that 60 year period. So far, apparently, the sea has risen by a few centimetres. Which isn't to say it won't rise by 7.5 metres in the next 30 years. But let's hope not.

Richard Bond



Main Work Party

Aug 01 - Blofield Church - Conservation areas at NE & NW of church raked and cleared to spoil heaps.

Aug 15 - Walsham Fen - Area D/E raked and cleared to spoil heaps.

Aug 22 - Jary's Meadow - Raked and cleared to fire sites the following areas mown on Aug 19; East Meadow - around fire site by main gate - along the bottom of the S boundary primrose bank - the apple tree area - the low wet area adjacent to Walsham Fen - the fen gate area and path from the gate to the main centre path. West Meadow - the path network. Some bracken in SW corner scythed and cleared.

Additional Work parties

Jun 24 - Walsham Fen - Boardwalk mown

Jun 24 - Jary's Meadow - Footpath network mown

Jun 25/30 - Jary's Meadow - Raked and cleared to fire sites all cut on 24th including bramble patch, area by gate, path to WF gate, area by seat and bracken in NW corner.

Jul 01 - Southwood Church - Conservation area mown. (clearance to be carried out by BVCV)

Jul 01 - Walsham Fen - Boardwalk raked and cleared from Hide, left to first spoil heap and right to stream.

Jul 02 - Walsham Fen - Boardwalk raked and cleared from first spoil heap left of Hide to the gate to Jary's Meadow

Jul 02 - Howes Meadow - Path network mown

Jul 05 - Walsham Fen - The clearance of all boardwalk areas mown on Jun 24 completed

Jul 05/10/11/13/15/17/18/19/21/23 - Howes Meadow - Paths raked and cleared

Jul 11 - Hemblington Church - Conservation area mown. Some vegetation layered from heavy rain not cut 100%. Strands of Knapweed about to flower left to be cut later in year. Scythed around all gravestones.

Jul 15 - Hemblington Church - Conservation area raked and cleared to spoil heaps

Jul 24 - Howes Meadow - Path network clearance completed

Jul 22 - Blofield Church - Conservation areas at NE&NW of church mown - 2 mowers used. Some cut green hay taken and spread around Lingwood Pond.

Jul 30 - Howes Meadow - AM - Middle pile of cut vegetation burnt. Wind conditions halted further burning. Evening - Wind conditions OK - Large pile burnt successfully. Centre of fire pulled out with chrome.

Jul 31 - Howes Meadow - Check on fires carried out

Aug 05 - Walsham Fen - Area D & E and Boardwalk mown. 2 mowers used. Boardwalk completed later when returning to collect second mower

Aug 05 - Howes Meadow - Area A - ½ of eastern area mown.

Aug 07/08/09/10/11 - Howes Meadow - Area A - Raked and cleared bulk of cut vegetation to new fire site at mid-point of area. Final rake over required.

Aug 11 - Walsham Fen - Boardwalk from left of Hide to Jary's Meadow gate raked and cleared.

Aug 19 - Jary's Meadow - Part of meadow mown.

Aug 20 - Howes Meadow - The majority of the large spoil heap, situated in Area A at the NE corner under the oak tree, was moved using EH car towing large sheet to the middle of Area A fire site.

Aug 23 - Walsham Fen - Large bough obstructing access to spoil heap at end of boardwalk removed and cut up using chainsaw.

Note: Lee Coby has written an interesting article entitled, 'A Chocolate Mess -Cocoa Production and Deforestation in the Ivory Coast', which is now available to read on our website on the News Letters page.