

EAST MIDLANDS BRANCH MEMBERS DAY & AGM 16th November 2014

Bill Bacon introduced himself to those present which included the following members:

Bill Bacon (Chairman), Simon Jenkins, John Roberts, Al Roberts, Suzanne Halfacke, Max Maughan, Christine Maughan, Richard Rogers, Ann Brown, Andrew Brown, Eliot Taylor, David Anderson, Les Purnell, Brian Webster, Barbara Webster, Brian Johnson, Marilyn Johnson, Sylvia Green, John Green, Jane Broomhead, Malcolm Broomhead, June McConnell, Andrew Harrop, Adrian Russell, Laurence Archibald, David Gibbons, Margaret Gibbons, Rubin Old, Kay Old, John Clarke, David Foulds, Geof Adams, Margaret Adams, Richard Jeffery, Richard Penson, Patricia Orpe, Ken Orpe.

Apologies for Absence: John Phillips, Win Walsh, Ron & Barbara Overton, Colin Bowler.

Minutes of the 2013 AGM: These were taken as read.

Matters arising from these minutes: There were no matters arising.

BRANCH OFFICER'S REPORTS

I am very pleased to be able to report that the strength of the branch has increased once again. You will hear summaries from committee members which include information about advancement or development in a number of areas. Following the meeting there will be two presentations on projects which exemplify our direct involvement with butterfly conservation

As conservation initiatives increase the need for a dedicated conservation officer has become increasingly apparent. Richard Penson, with his extensive understanding and experience of ecology and, as a professional, of planning issues, has taken on this new position, initially for Nottinghamshire and Leicestershire. I am pleased to say that Richard Rogers has replaced Richard Penson as recorder for Nottinghamshire and been co-opted on to the committee. Richard Jeffery who was elected to the committee last November is our National Forest officer. This month Sophie Churchill steps down as CEO of The National Forest Company to be replaced by John Everitt, the much respected chief executive of the Notts. Wildlife Trust. This should mean that emphasis on conservation should at the least rank alongside amenity and heritage concerns.

Many of you will be aware from the Autumn Newsletter that Simon Jenkins has decided to stand down as editor of the newsletter. Over the years I have received numerous compliments about our newsletter and, on behalf of the branch, I thank Simon for his ten years of invaluable service. Simon is continuing his vital work as the branch web designer/site master. We are looking for a replacement editor for

the newsletter. As Simon says you do not need to have any previous editing experience, he can advise on what is required.

Nationally there has been an important development with Butterfly Conservation's "20/20 Vision" which has positive implications for our branch. Dan Hoare, currently South-East England Senior Regional Officer, has been appointed as Head of Regions. Dan has contacted the branch to say "I look forward to working with you in the spring and helping with project development in your area." This is most welcome news although we are aware that his time available for the East Midlands will be limited.

Although the pressure on the natural environment shows no sign of abating, we will continue to exploit opportunities as they arise. I conclude by thanking all of you who make extra individual contributions, your help is very much appreciated

Of course, we can always do with more.

Bill Bacon, Chair and Branch Organiser

Treasurers Report

Treasurers Report AGM 16th November 2014

I present to the AGM the final audited accounts for the year ending 31st March 2014 on behalf of the branch treasurer who is currently out of the country on business. A copy of the Statement of Account for the last financial year has been handed out if you require a copy there are surplus copies on the front desk.

The end of year accounts was in a much healthier position than the previous year/s that enabled a large amount of the cash surplus to be used on conservation projects, £5,000 was spent on the following projects;

- [£1,000 for the Aston Brickyard Project,
- [£1,000 for the Northants Wood White Project
- [£1,000 for the Leicestershire Grizzled Skipper project
- [£2,000 for the Nottinghamshire Grizzled Skipper project

The increase in income is due to two main factors. Firstly as always our main income is from subscriptions which continue to increase with total branch individual membership up 10% on previous year. However the accounts presented show the actual income from subscriptions down slightly from the previous year but this anomaly was due to benefactor memberships where a significantly higher membership fee applies that distorted the figures for that year.

Secondly income from sales continues to increase year on year thanks to the sterling efforts of Jane Broomhead with total sales at £1,965 up 12.3% on the previous year and profit margins from the sale of goods up from 34% in 2012/13 to 46% in 2013/14.

Expenditure from general running costs is significantly down from the previous year this was largely due to the purchase of presentation boards at £839 and the East Midlands Branch having to fund the National AGM costs of £1,607.50, the costs of which are charged to the individual branches on a rotating basis so we are unlikely to see these costs for at least the next 20 years.

Finally the forecast for this financial year currently shows a similar level of surplus cash available for donations & conservation work with £2,000 already designated for the ongoing maintenance of the Nottinghamshire Grizzled Skipper Project and a further £3,000 for other conservation work.

Jonathan Phillips
Branch Treasurer

Sales & Display Report

The total sales for 2014 is £2463.38 (so far), from 12 events. This includes 200 plants at 50p. We also received £180 donation from Carol and David in Derby, many thanks to them for a super party. I try to ensure that all profits from the sales goes to the enhancement of habitat for butterflies and moths in the East Midlands. This year one of our donations went towards the purchase of a wildlife meadow by Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust at Treswell Wood near Retford. During October I was invited to the official opening by the Wildlife Trust and, although the meadow and newly constructed pond, are still evolving the setting is truly stunning and well worth a visit during the **summer of 2015. On a cloudy cool day we even had a red admiral fly over our heads. Our thanks go to Mary Chester who helps me with my sales stand, who mentioned such a worthwhile project to the committee. Please check out the display boards for some photographs.**

I have been doing the sales and display for about 7 years and now have my regular shows and helper's which I look forward to. Although we are all volunteers it is very rewarding to think we are making a difference to our butterflies and moths here in the east midlands, and we get to spend an enjoyable day together. My thanks go to Pat & Alison, Mary, Geof & Margaret, Simon, Max & Christine and Malc. I look forward to another busy season next year.

Jane Broomhead

Recorder's Reports

Nottinghamshire – Richard Rogers thanked Richard Penson for all his hard work over the past 10 years with the Nottinghamshire Records. So far 4 ½ transects have been set up in Notts. Anyone interested in doing a transect please contact Richard. Richard, as well as his weekly 'Blog', has set up a Twitter and Facebook page for the whole of the East Midlands Branch.

Richard Rogers

Red Admirals 20 managed to over-winter in the County in the first 3 months **Brimstone** emerged with 130 sightings on the 9th of March 2014 alone, more than the whole of the month of March 2012.

Holly Blue first appeared on the 11th of March (a new County record) but numbers never really built up, despite a partial third brood sighting on the 31st of October 2014 (another new County record)

Dingy Skipper did well in the County yet again with sightings in late April, which has now occurred in 6 of the last 18 years, and consequently it appeared at 9 new sites in Lowland Derbyshire during 2014.

Wall Brown was first seen in N E Derbyshire on the 6th of May and had a good season with the first brood lasting to the middle of July 2014 in the Peak District. The second brood also did well with sightings up to the beginning of October 2014.

The Hairstreaks had a reasonable year with the **Green Hairstreak** appearing at another site in South Derbyshire, at Long Eaton Railway Sidings in May 2014. Both the summer hairstreaks, the **White Letter** and the **Purple** also had a good year thanks largely to the fine weather in July 2014.

Unfortunately the blue family did not have a good year with the **Brown Argus**, including the **Peak District** version, the **Common Blue** and the **Small Copper** all being well below normal numerically, despite a partial third brood of both the Migrating Brown Argus and the Common Blue in the lowland areas and even a few second brood individuals of the Brown Argus in the Peak District being seen at the end of September 2014.

Ringlets had yet another good year – it even outnumbered the **Meadow Brown** by 10 to 1 at some sites. Indeed both species had their earliest ever dates – the Meadow Brown appeared on the 21st of May and the Ringlet on the 9th of June 2014.

Unfortunately the **Dark Green Fritillary** had a poor season in the Peak District with a very staggered emergence and although about a dozen **Silver Washed Fritillaries** were seen again in the County, some of them may have been the result of releases, especially in the North East of Derbyshire.

The third week of July saw large numbers of **Peacocks** appearing on buddleia bushes and also the **Whites** made a dramatic comeback on some transects. The skippers had a reasonable year at the grassland sites with the highlight being the appearance of the **Essex Skipper** at both Lathkill Dale and at 2 sites in Wirksworth at the southern end of the Peak District.

Migrant butterflies had a below average year with about 100 sightings of the **Painted Lady** and some 50 sightings of the **Clouded Yellow**, most of which were seen in both June and also August/September on the Blackwell Trail.

Finally late September saw Roy Frost doing his annual count at Pleasley Park and he noted a massive 119 **Red Admirals** there, which is second only to the 166 seen in September 2003, so it bodes well for this species to remain with us as they prepare to 'over-winter' in the County yet again with some 2 dozen sightings made during the first week of November 2014..

BUTTERFLY TRANSECTS IN 2014

The method of carrying out butterfly transects is a great way of finding out what butterfly species are present at a particular site and the current interest amongst members and friends is fantastic. During this year, Pat and I did three 'teach ins' at Carsington Water for Severn Trent Water, at Hicks Lodge, N W Leicestershire for the Forestry Commission and also at the offices of the Derbyshire Wildlife Trust in Belper

A total in excess of 70 volunteers attended which meant that we were able to set up a total of 21 new transects in Derbyshire. This has allowed for surveys to be done on property owned by the Forestry Commission, the National Trust, the Peak District National Park, the University of Derby, Derby City Council, Amber Valley District Council as well as private Companies such as Tarmac and Bardon Aggregates.

Already a couple of new transects have been set up for 2015 – Deep Dale, Sheldon for Plantlife, and at the National Stone Centre in Wirksworth..

The results of the full transects during 2014 in the County are as follows:-

Total of 58 sites surveyed; 55,238 butterflies seen; a total of 32 species seen; 1326 transects walked involving 270 volunteers, average of 42 butterflies seen per transect and average of 952 butterflies seen per site

Other Surveys

We organised the continuing success of the WCBS Surveys in Derbyshire which now stands at 12 sites under Butterfly Conservation together with a further 10 sites monitored under the BTO. Also 10 sites were surveyed on both the High Peak Trail and the Tissington Trail for the Peak District National Park

Total Sites under survey in Derbyshire during 2014 = 90 Sites (see map).

DERBYSHIRE BUTTERFLY LINE

There is a great deal of interest in receiving up to date information on butterfly sightings, and other relevant items, and to date the number of people who receive my Updates is 520, which is a lot more than the half a dozen friends who agreed to swap sightings over 15 years ago!!

Please let me know if you would like to be added to my distribution list.

My email address is :- ken@malaga.plus.com

Leicestershire - Adrian Russell

Adrian said his report was similar to Ken & Richard's. He is still waiting for many records to come through for 2014 for Leicestershire & Rutland. In 2013, the Silver Washed Fritillary had been recorded in 23 sites throughout the county including gardens (he did not think that releases could have accounted for all these sightings) and the good news is that this species had also been seen in Launde Big Wood in 2014. This used to be 'the place' to see this species in the 1930's to 1950s. Many of the woods in the County are still under recorded and could harbour colonies of this and other interesting species. A Purple Emperor was seen in

the car park at Rutland Water, the first record from the county in many, many years. The Dark Green Fritillary is doing well in Rutland and there were also reports of a Yellow-legged Tortoiseshell. Now Adrian is retired he will have more time and will endeavour to provide more feedback to recorders in the future. His main interest is still moths, and there have been records of quite a few interesting species in 2014, such as the Obscure Wainscot at Rutland Water. This is part of a continuing trend of southern species establishing themselves in the county, with some of the northern species disappearing from the county, undoubtedly due to climate change.

Bill thanked all the Recorders for their hard work.

Publicity

EMBC Publicity 2014

In January I designed a banner which was used at The University of Derby's 'Go Green Week' event, which was attended by Ken Orpe who did a talk explaining the work involved in doing butterfly transects.

Ken Orpe also did an interview on BBC Radio Derby and had his picture in the Derby Evening Telegraph with a brief reference to butterfly numbers in 2013.

The branch leaflet was again produced to publicise the branch's field trip programme.

Adrian Russell did an interview for Saturdays Breakfast Show on BBC Radio Leicester in February.

Bill Bacon did a talk about the Grizzled Skipper project at the Notts B.A.G. Annual Forum event in March.

We had a good article in the Nottingham Evening Post about butterfly numbers in 2013.

This year Christine Maughan began sending out emails to our membership to inform them of field trips and other events.

Our field trip to Hicks Lodge in The National Forest was featured on the National Insect Week Website.

Nationally our Grizzled Skipper project in the Vale of Belvoir was featured in the Spring Appeals leaflet.

In July Bill Bacon had an article published in the Bingham advertiser about the Marbled White returning to Bingham Linear Park.

Press releases were sent out to our 3 main regional newspapers (The Leicester Mercury, The Nottingham Evening Post and The Derby Telegraph) to publicise 'The Big Butterfly Count'. Following on from this Adrian Russell did an interview for the Leicester Mercury, which was very well received.

At the beginning of October the SITA Trust put out a press release about the award of £15,288 for the funding of the Grizzled Skipper Project in the Vale of Belvoir in which their appears a quote from Bill Bacon.

Following on from this Bill did an interview on Ben Jackson's drive time programme on BBC Radio Leicester. There is a possibility that a longer item will take place on location during the 2015 flight period.

There was also a nice piece in the Leicester Mercury and on their website, about the Grizzled Skipper Project in Leicestershire.

Eliot Taylor

BC Field Trip Summary 2014

There were 16 day trips and 1 weekend away in Somerset.

Of the day trips, 5 were either cancelled beforehand or on the day because of adverse weather conditions. A pity that these included both of the walks designated as new members events. The other 11 trips were successful in seeing the target species that were hoped for.

Of the 11 day trips that ran a total of 211 people attended altogether with an average of 19 per trip. There were some very high attendances with 37 for Cotgrave Forest and 36 for Toton Sidings.

The Somerset weekend was a success with a pleasing number of 14 people attending.

Despite the cancellations due to the weather it was, I feel, a successful season and I would like to thank all the leaders who volunteered to lead the trips.

I would be very pleased to hear from anyone who would like to lead a field trip in 2015. They can be local or further afield.

Max Maughan

Field Trip Organiser

Membership Secretary's Report 2014

The following data is based on statistics provided by Butterfly Conservation up to 1 November 2014.

For the organisation as a whole, membership has continued to rise dramatically. The national total now stands at well over 25500 individual members from over 19000 households.

Since 1 November 2013, recruitment within the East Midlands Branch has also been very positive with 128 new household members recruited (the 8th highest of all branches nationally), representing a net gain of 69 new households for the period after taking lapsed/cancelled memberships into consideration.

Total branch membership figures at 1 November 2014 were 893 households compared with 824 at 1 November 2013 (an increase of 8%), representing 1222 individuals compared to 1112 last year (an increase of 10%). This compares very well with the national increase of 10% in household membership, and 12% in individual members.

The branch has retained its rank as the 8th biggest within Butterfly Conservation by household membership, and has risen to 7th place in terms of overall individual membership nationally, a move from 8th position in 2013.

At a local level, a breakdown of branch membership by county shows that 27.2% of our total membership is from Derbyshire, 32.3% from Nottinghamshire, 33.2% from Leicestershire and Rutland, and the remaining 7.3% from other areas.

These figures are very encouraging, and show a great strength of interest.

Finally, we are now operating an email communication link with our members which is used to notify people of forthcoming events and activities. Hopefully, this helps to keep everyone more closely involved with the branch. If you have not been receiving our regular e-newsletters during the summer and would like to be included on the register, please let me know.

Christine Maughan

Membership Secretary

Butterfly Distribution Maps Co-ordinator's Report 2014

I am finally pleased to report that the upgraded mapping software has now been installed on my computer to enable me to produce distribution maps of our local butterfly species.

I am currently working on bringing the data displayed on our website up to date. Subject to liaison with Simon, I hope this will be available in the not too distant future.

Christine Maughan

Newsletter

Simon Jenkins reported that he had been doing the Newsletter for 10 years. He started with Issue 36 in 2005 which was the same size as it is now. He is thinking that the Newsletter may now need a new design. Distribution has more than doubled, this is now handled by Head Office who also organise the printing of the magazine, although it may be possible to print it cheaper locally. Simon stepped down as Newsletter editor at the AGM as he wanted to concentrate on the Branch Web site.

Simon Jenkins

Web Site

Simon wants to spend more time redesigning the web site, this includes making it more accessible with links to Facebook, twitter etc. At the present time the Facebook page has 62 followers and Twitter 88 likes. A You tube channel has been set up so members can send video's of interesting behaviour. Also a Flickr Group could be set up with links to the 3 recorders for the latest news.

Bill thanked Simon for all his work on the Newsletter.

Election of Officers

In accordance with the branch rules, the three longest serving members stood down and offered themselves for re-election. These were Jane Broomhead as Sales & Display Officer, Christine Maughan, as Membership Secretary, and Ken Orpe as the Recorder for Derbyshire.

Richard Rogers as the new Recorder for Nottinghamshire

Richard Penson as the Conservation Officer for the Branch

Simon Jenkins Resign as Newsletter Officer to stay as Web Site Officer

All of the above was proposed by Richard Jeffery and seconded by John Green.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

A question was asked if records were sent to the recorders by phone or tablet would these be duplicated?

Ken replied that he would rather get the record twice than not at all.

Richard Jeffery asked Adrian (Leicestershire Recorder) if he would like records drip fed throughout the season or in 'one go' at the end of the season. Adrian would prefer at the end of the season but anything unusual should be sent through straight away.

Ken did three teachings on transect walks in 2014. He does not mind how many times a transect is walked. He will be looking for help in 2015 as he will have to cover the whole of the Derwent Valley.

There being no further business the meeting finished at 11.30am. After a refreshment Break there were two talks Conservation at Aston Brickyards by Ken Orpe and Grizzled Skipper Projects by Bill Bacon.

After lunch and Members photographs there was a Guided Walk around the Attenborough Nature Reserve.

After the meeting Eliot Taylor agreed to become the new Newsletter Editor.