



Hertfordshire Natural History Society – Herts Bird Club

We do hope you enjoy your copy of the *Hertfordshire Bird Report 2017* that accompanies this newsletter. Thanks, again, go to **Clifford Smout** and his team for producing the journal within 12 months of the year it reports on.

Star role for slugs at the Autumn Meeting

Around 80 members and friends attended our successful Autumn conference on 3 November, which featured one of the country's leading enthusiasts for slugs. Amateur limacologist **Chris de Feu** not only spoke passionately in defence of the much-maligned gastropods, but also held a workshop to identify slugs brought to the meeting by members. A spreadsheet with information about the 49 specimens and 15 species he identified, including the locations where they were collected, is available on the website.

Matt Dodds, Planning and Diversity Manager of the Herts and Middlesex Wildlife Trust was our other keynote speaker, explaining his important role vetting planning applications and responding to those where wildlife habitats are in need of protection and improvement. He emphasised the importance of influencing the planning policies adopted by local authorities, since they set the criteria on which proposals are accepted or refused.

We are, as ever, grateful to **Alister Leggatt** and Affinity Water for hosting the meeting at their offices in Hatfield.

1875 Award winners announced

Congratulations to this year's winners of the Society's prestigious 1875 Awards. The award for 'an outstanding Hertfordshire naturalist' was presented at the Autumn Meeting to internationally-renowned fungus (and micro-fungus) expert **Kerry Robinson**. **Graham White** was given the award for 'an outstanding contribution to Hertfordshire natural history', recognising his impressive commitment to wildlife education and conservation in our county over many years. You can read more about both recipients on the website.

MARA survey approaches final year

With little more than a year until the scheduled end of the Herts. mammals, amphibians and reptiles atlas (MARA) survey, it is time to seek out species in tetrads that have the fewest records to date. Contact the survey team on mammal-atlas@hnhs.org for information about suitable walking routes through these under-recorded locations. And keep submitting records wherever you find them in the county!

Trevor James to give 2018 Salisbury Lecture

We hope to see as many members as possible at this year's Gerald Salisbury Memorial Lecture at 8pm on Wednesday 28 November in Welwyn (village) Civic Centre. The speaker on 'What do beetles tell us about our world?' is county recorder **Trevor James**, whose *Beetles of Hertfordshire* was published by the Society this summer. His ground-breaking book has garnered high praise from reviewers and is proving to be a best-seller, selling out its initial print run within the first three months. We also congratulate Trevor on being short-listed for this year's UK Awards for Biological Recording and Information sharing.

2019 membership renewals – please read!

In January it will be time to renew your membership of the Society and/or the Herts Bird Club for another year. This year we have had to send out several reminders and – reluctantly – remove names of non-payers from the circulation list for the new *Bird Report*. Please pay as early as you can in the New Year and check that your subscription (including standing orders) is reaching us. The good news is that rates for 2019 are, again, unchanged

£18: individual membership plus *Hertfordshire Naturalist* and *Herts Bird Report*

£12: individual membership plus *Herts Bird Report*

£22: family membership plus *Hertfordshire Naturalist* and *Herts Bird Report*

You can pay by:

- Standing order or bank transfer: our Lloyds Bank account number is 02994402, sort code 30-94-08
- Credit/debit card using the Virgin Money Giving link our website www.hnhs.org
- Cheque - payable to 'Hertfordshire Natural History Society' and mailed to **Geoff Hill, Membership Secretary, 84 Park Avenue, Bushey, Herts. WD23 2BB.**

Gift aid will increase the value of your subscription to the Society by 25%, if you are a UK taxpayer. For more information you can e-mail Geoff at membership@hnhs.org.

New committee members

Following the Annual General Meeting we welcome two new members to the HNHS management committee: Ian Denholm and Jenny Sherwen

For further news about HNHS and the Bird Club, including recent wildlife records, events and recording opportunities visit, www.hnhs.org and www.hnhs.org/herts-bird-club/home