

Hertfordshire Natural History Society
Herts Bird Club
Newsletter March 2012

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Herts Bird Club/BTO Conference 2012

**Rothamsted Research Conference
Centre, Harpenden AL5 2JQ.**

Saturday 24 March: 2.00 - 6.00

Our annual half day event - all welcome
An afternoon of talks by local and national experts describing the different techniques used to monitor our birds and the exciting opportunities that technology is providing.

What's next for Cuckoos and migration research? Graham Appleton, British Trust for Ornithology

Barn Owls - a conservation success story:
Peter Wilkinson

The Birds of Tring Reservoirs -a special place for special birds: John Taylor and Lynne Lambert, Tring Ringing Group

Birds of 2011 – what did you miss? Graham Knight, Herts Bird Club

Big changes in Hertfordshire's birds - first analysis of results from the Atlas: Chris Dee, Herts Bird Club

This half-day conference is your chance to meet other birdwatchers from Hertfordshire and our neighbouring counties and listen to topical talks. There will be plenty to do before the talks start at 2:00pm and during the tea interval, including displays, sales tables, a competition and a raffle.

The cost, inclusive of afternoon tea, is £8 (Reduction to £6 if you are under 18, unemployed or in full time education)

Tickets are available now:

Order and pay for your tickets online with your credit or debit card at www.hnhs.org or

By post – send a cheque (payable to HNHS) for the cost of the tickets with your name and those of any guests (as you wish them to appear on the lapel badges) with either a stamped addressed envelope or your email address for acknowledgement to Tim Hill, 5 Byron Road, Harpenden, AL5 4AD.

Refunds (less 50p administration fee) will be available up to the day prior to the Conference.

A date for your diary

Saturday 17 November

HNHS Autumn Meeting and AGM

An afternoon of topical talks on natural history from 2.15 - 5.45 at Woolmer Green Hall, Hall Lane, Woolmer Green, SG3 6AX.

Details of the programme and AGM will be posted nearer the time.

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**A warm welcome to our new Chairman
Dr Ronni Edmonds-Brown**

Ronni was elected at the AGM last November. she is an expert in freshwater ecosystems and is a Senior Lecturer at the University of Hertfordshire. Her key areas of interest include urban river systems, rearing aquatic invertebrates and the implications of a national decline in taxonomic skills. She has chaired the HNHS Recorders' Committee since 2009.

Many thanks to Trevor James who stepped down as Chairman after two years at the helm.

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HNHS 1875 Awards

Nominations for the 2012 Awards

The 1875 Awards are named after the year the Society was founded and are presented each year

- an outstanding Hertfordshire Naturalist and/or
- someone who has made an outstanding contribution to natural history in Hertfordshire. .

The Award takes the form of an engraved crystal. Last year's winners were Richard Ball and Peter Oakenfull.

Those nominated for 1875 awards are be judged against the following criteria:

- Contribution in a voluntary capacity.
- Recognised expertise in their field.
- Duration of contribution.
- Key achievements eg publications, papers.
- Training or educating others.
- Championing conservation/natural history.
- Nominees should normally be HNHS members.

The HNHS Management Committee assess nominations and make the final decision.

Please send your nominations for the 2012 Awards

together with reasons for your nomination to Tim Hill, 5 Byron Road, Harpenden, AL5 4AD or email timothy.hill@tiscali.co.uk.

Please note serving HNHS committee members are not eligible for the Award.

Calendar of Wildlife Events 2012

Compiled by the Hertfordshire Natural History Society (HNHS) on behalf of natural history organisations in Hertfordshire.

You will be very welcome at all the events listed, you do not need to be a member and the notes indicate where a charge or donation is requested.

For field meetings please wear appropriate outdoor clothing and shoes, take field guides, a hand lens and binoculars if you have them.

Children under 16 must be accompanied at all times by a parent or other appointed adult. Dogs are not permitted on any walks or field meetings (unless indicated).

HNHS cannot accept any responsibility for details of other organisations' meetings included in this list and you may wish to contact the relevant organisation beforehand in case of any last minute changes.

Friday 2 March

Danemead & Hoddesdon Park Wood.

Meet at St Martin's Green car park off Cock Lane (TL347078), at 10.00, for 2 mile walk. Morning only. Cheshunt Natural History Society, more information from June Crew. Tel.01992 465638)

Saturday 3 March

Therfield Heath, for general wildlife

Meet outside 'Fox and Duck' pub in Therfield (TL336373), at 10.00 Leader Trevor James (Tel. 01462 742684). Bring a packed lunch, field guides, binoculars and a hand lens. British Naturalists Association (Herts Branch) for more information contact the Secretary: Mrs Chris James. Tel.: 01462-742684)

Saturday 10 March

Herts Moth Group annual indoor meeting at the usual venue of the Havers Community Centre, Waytemore Road, Bishops Stortford, (OS grid reference TL 48552045) **ADMISSION FREE**. This is our only indoor event of the year and we especially invite new members and others who have never been before – your level of experience with moth-ing is of no relevance – everyone is equally welcomed. The atmosphere is deliberately informal.

There is a pub, a chippie, a sandwich shop and a Chinese take-away all less than 2 minutes walk from the meeting place and we have no problem if people wish to eat their lunch in the hall. Bring guests if you wish, but please note that children

must be supervised. Tea, coffee and biscuits will be available free throughout the day.

12.30 – 1.00: Assemble. Tea and coffee, setting up of exhibits, etc

1.00 – 1.15: Welcoming remarks. Colin Plant and Andrew Wood

1.15 – 2.00: Zoe Randle, Butterfly Conservation, Dorset. Informal presentation on the future of moth recording now that the first ever set of provisional distribution maps for all of Britain's macro moths have been published. Copies of the Atlas, as well as a few other moth-related items, will be available for purchase at the meeting.

2.00 – 2.30: Tea, coffee and biscuits (self-service) during informal questions to the speaker

2.30 – 3.15: Chloe Smith, Greenspace Information in Greater London (GiGL) Informal presentation on the role of GiGL in moth recording in Middlesex.

3.15 – 4.00: Tea, coffee and biscuits (self-service) during informal discussion session and questions to both speakers

4.00 – 5.30: Members slides and exhibits, projects for 2012 etc. Please bring along your photos etc (including stuff for ID). The centre is fully accessible to people with physical disabilities. Guide dogs are welcomed.

Organiser: Colin Plant, Herts Moth Group, Tel/fax: 01279507697. See also Herts Moth Group website www.hertsmothgroup.org.uk/

Tuesday 13 March

RSPB Friston Shore and Frampton Marsh

Coach trip organised by South East Herts RSPB group; cost £15, all welcome, to book a place More information from www.rspb.org.uk/groups/southeasthertfordshire/events

Tuesday 13 March

'Wild flowers of the Chilterns', by Dr Barbara Harold.

Meet at The Settlement, Nevells Road, Letchworth at 7.30 pm. Visitors welcome (£2) (children under 16 free). Letchworth Naturalists Society, further information from Judie Starkey (01462 632171).

Saturday 17 March, at 14.00–15.00

The Rothschilds in Tring

Join a guided walk and take in the key buildings and features of Tring from the Rothschild family heyday, the 1870s to the 1940s, with local historians Tim Amsden and Mike Bass. Then visit the new Tring Local History Museum (free admission). Further information from Natural

History Museum, Tring at www.nhm.ac.uk/tring or call 020 7942 6163.

Sunday 18 March

Batchwood, St Albans, for early spring wildlife and plants

Meet near bend in Toulmin Drive, New Greens (TL141092) at 10.00 Leader Laura Gravestock (Tel.01727 830308). Bring a packed lunch, field guides, binoculars and a hand lens. British Naturalists Association (Herts Branch) for more information contact the Secretary: Mrs Chris James. Tel.: 01462-742684)

Wednesday 21 March

Broxbourne Gardens by Cath Bannister

Meet at Goffs Oak Methodist Meeting Hall, Newgatestreet Road, Goffs Oak, EN7 5SS (TL322031), 8.00-10.00 pm (doors open 7.40). Limited car parking in meeting hall forecourt, public parking is at library car park a few minutes' walk away. Visitors welcome (£2 for non-members). Cheshunt Natural History Society, more information from June Crew. Tel.01992 465638) or website: www.cheshuntnaturalistsoc.weebly.com/.

Friday 23 March

Daffodils at Warley Place, nr Brentwood

Meet in car park for guided walk by warden. From B186 the entrance is via gate alongside the Thatchers Arms, CM13 3JF (TQ583907). Bring picnic lunch or go to pub. Cheshunt Natural History Society, more information from June Crew, 01992 465638.

Saturday 24 March

Butterfly Conservation, Herts and Middx Branch Members' day

1030 - 1200 Guided walk in Sherrardspark Wood, Welwyn Garden City.
1230 Branch AGM at Welwyn Civic Centre,
13.00 - 14.00 Lunch break
14.00 - 17.00 Afternoon of illustrated talks and photo competition at Welwyn Civic Hall, Prospect Place, Welwyn, full details at <http://www.hertsmiddx-butterflies.org.uk/index.php>.

Saturday 24 March

Herts Bird Club / BTO annual conference at Rothamstead Research, Harpenden, 2.00

Our annual get together for everyone interested in Hertfordshire's birds. Local and national experts will be telling us about the latest exciting developments. Talks include: Cuckoos and migration research, Barn Owls, Birds at Tring Reservoirs, Rare birds in 2011, Atlas results, full

details on front page, Everyone welcome - tickets are available now.

Tuesday 27 March at 6.00 pm

A study of the Black Guillemot colony at Bangor, Co. Down by Julian Greenwood

The talk will look at the history of Black Guillemots nesting in Bangor, Co. Down, and the patterns revealed by this long-term study. Meet at 6.00 pm at Tower Rooms, Section A, Sherfield Building, Imperial College, South Kensington, London, SW7 2AZ. Entrance is free. British Ornithologists Club After the talk the cash bar will open and at 7.30 there will be an optional light buffet supper costing £15 per person for those who have ordered it at least two weeks in advance. To comply with Imperial College requirements, those wishing to attend must notify Helen Baker no later than Monday 26 March on 01923 772441 or more information see: www.boc-online.org

Wednesday 28 March

'Origin, Habits and Farming of Chickens' by Helen Upton;

8.00pm at Welwyn Civic Centre, Prospect Place, Welwyn; visitors welcome, entrance £3. Refreshments served. Welwyn Natural History Society, contact Raymond Uffen, telephone. 01438 714968.

Sunday 1 April

Sheethanger and Roughdown Commons, Hemel Hempstead, for spring plants.

Meet in car park / lay-by off Box Lane (TQ035054) at 10.00 Leader Paula Shipway (Tel.01296 668939). Bring a packed lunch, field guide and hand lens. British Naturalists Association (Herts Branch) for more information contact the Secretary: Mrs Chris James. Tel.: 01462-742684)

Friday 13 April

Therfield Heath

Meet at Therfield Heath main car park (where the café is) off Baldock Road SG8 5BG (TL348405), 10.30 a.m., for 3 mile walk. Bring picnic. Cheshunt Natural History Society, more information from June Crew. Tel.01992 465638)Therfield is famous for Paque flowers

Monday 16 April

RSPB Minsmere in Suffolk

Coach trip to this top nature reserve organised by South East Herts RSPB group; cost £15, all welcome, to book a place see www.rspb.org.uk/groups/southeasthertfordshire/events

/Herts Calendar of Wildlife Events continued

Wednesday 18 April

Bird Song and Music by June Crew

Meet at Goffs Oak Methodist Meeting Hall, Newgatestreet Road, Goffs Oak, EN7 5SS (TL322031), 8.00-10.00 pm (doors open 7.40). Limited car parking in meeting hall forecourt, public parking is at library car park a few minutes' walk away. Visitors welcome (£2 for non-members). Cheshunt Natural History Society, more information from June Crew. Tel.01992 465638)or website: www.cheshuntnaturalistsoc.weebly.com/.

Friday 20 April

Balls Wood Nature Reserve - 3 mile walk

Meet at 10.00 in road alongside College Arms Pub, London Road, Hertford Heath SG13 7PW (TL351108). Bring iron rations. More information from June Crew 01992 465638.

Wednesday 25 April

Badgers in Hertfordshire by Audrey Randall;

8.00pm at Welwyn Civic Centre, Prospect Place, Welwyn; visitors welcome, entrance £3. Refreshments served. Welwyn Natural History Society, contact Raymond Uffen, telephone. 01438 714968.

Friday 8 June

Bowmans Lakes, Tyttenhanger near London

Colney. For birds and dragonflies, meet Julie at 10.30 near the cafe at Willows Farm Village, Coursers Road, AL4 0PF (TL192039), bring binoculars, organised by Cheshunt Natural History Society, more info from June Crew 01992456638.

Saturday 9 June

Visit to RSPB Hope Farm at Kneesworth;

Watch this space for details, Welwyn Natural History Society, contact Raymond Uffen, telephone.01438 714968.

Friday 15 June

Badger Watching - see badgers and other night time wildlife from a hide

Pre-book a place, £5 per person, with Cheshunt Natural History Society secretary Mrs June Crew Tel 01992 465638 who will give details of time and venue.

Sunday 17 June

Stevenage Springwatch

Wild watch 10.00-16.00 in The Town Gardens, Stevenage, displays and hands-on/educational activities including birds of prey demonstration,

children's craft activities and reptile roadshow. Organisers, Stevenage Borough Council

Wednesday 27 June & Friday 29 June

Glow Worm walks

Meet members of Cheshunt Natural History Society at 9.00 pm alongside Civic Hall car park, Hoddesdon EN11 8BE, bring red or white torch. More information from June Crew 01992465638

Friday 20 July

Danemead nature reserve for flowers and butterflies

Meet Cheshunt Natural History Society at 10.00 in St Martin's car park off Cock Lane (TL347078)

Saturday 4 August

Barclay Park and Lucerne Warren

Meet Cheshunt Natural History Society at 10.00 Broxbourne Civic Hall car park, EN11 8BE for 2 mile walk (morning only). Coffee at the secretary's house afterwards. Contact CNHS Secretary: Mrs June Crew, on 01992 465 638

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Saturday 17 November

HNHS Autumn Meeting and AGM

Woolmer Green Hall, Hall Lane, Woolmer Green, SG3 6AX. Note the date; details of the programme will be posted nearer the time.

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Hertfordshire Naturalist 2012

You all love our journal - we need articles and wildlife notes for this year's edition. Both interesting snippets or full papers are welcome. Please write something and send by 1 May to Stuart Warrington, 8 Redwoods, Welwyn Garden City, AL8 7NR, 01707 885676, email stuart.warrington@nationaltrust.org.uk

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HNHS is registered charity 218418 For more information about the Society or any items in this newsletter please contact our Secretary:

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Welwyn Garden City, AL8 7JU
Telephone 01707 330405
email: secretary@hnhs.org

More details and news stories are on our website at **www.hnhs.org**