



Hertfordshire  
Natural History  
Society

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## HERTFORDSHIRE NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY AND BIRD CLUB NEWS

### Getting back into our stride!

This newsletter accompanies the new issue of the *Hertfordshire Naturalist*. Inside its covers you will find encouraging evidence that the HNHS has been getting back into its stride after two years of Covid restrictions on meetings and outdoor activities. Congratulations, once more, go to Judy England and her editorial team and to the design and production talents of Jack Fearnside. Sadly, Judy is moving away from Herts making this her last issue as editor. We wish her well for the future, while also thanking Stuart Warrington who has kindly agreed to return to his former role as HN editor.

#### Engaging landholders in wildlife protection

One sign of returning normality was the Society's first 'face-to-face' Autumn Meeting and AGM since 2019. Held on 1 October at Affinity Water's offices in Hatfield, it featured two presentations exemplifying action taken in Herts and beyond to engage landholders in conservation. Howard Craft, manager of Berkhamsted Golf Club, and Tim Hill, Conservation Manager at the Herts & Middlesex Wildlife Trust, described practical ways that courses are being improved for golfers and wildlife alike. And North Herts farmer Edward Darling, founder of the Redlist Revival campaign, talked about his work encouraging landowners to assess their impact on biodiversity using data maps derived from biological records. More than 40 members attended the meeting – a similar number to our online AGM a year ago – but we hope to secure a better attendance at future conferences. Our thanks go to Affinity Water for hosting.

\* Given current concerns for the future of plans intended to link farming subsidies to environmental land management members may be interested in the 'Defend Nature' campaign launched by the Wildlife Trusts, including a template letter to contact MPs. Visit: [www.hertswildlifetrust.org.uk/defend-nature](http://www.hertswildlifetrust.org.uk/defend-nature).

#### Flying start for new dragonfly survey

Thank you everyone who helped get the new Hertfordshire survey of dragonflies and damselflies off to a good start. As county recorder Roy Woodward told the Autumn Meeting, some 70 observers have submitted more than 2,500 records in its first season, now drawing to an end. The highlight so far has been the discovery of Scarce Blue-tailed Damselflies at Kings Mead in August, with evidence of possible breeding. The species was last found in Herts in 1948. Altogether 30 species were reported of which 29 possibly bred. Roy is keen to receive many more records in the next four years, not least from under-reported areas in the West and North of the county.

#### Awards honour outstanding achievements

We warmly congratulate the winners of this year's HNHS Awards. The Trevor James Award for an outstanding Hertfordshire naturalist goes to Dr Jenny Jones, the county's recorder for mammals, amphibians and reptiles for the past 20 years, whose expertise and conservation work with bats, Badgers and Water Voles has been especially important. The 1875 Award for an outstanding contribution to natural history in Hertfordshire goes to flora expert Dr Brenda Harold who has helped numerous enthusiasts to become 'serious botanists' and devised the Identiplant training programme that has been nationally endorsed and adopted. Unfortunately, Brenda was unable to attend the awards ceremony at the Autumn Meeting having tested positive for Covid. We wish her a speedy recovery.

#### New Treasurer needed

We are sorry that our Treasurer, Dan Fletcher, will soon be moving to Gloucestershire. He has kindly agreed to continue minding the Society's finances during the coming months, but the committee would be like to hear from any member interested in taking over the role. Contact [secretary@hnhs.org](mailto:secretary@hnhs.org).