

Hertfordshire Natural History Society

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Saturday 24 October 2009 at Haileybury College, Hertford Heath

Dear HNHS Member

You are cordially invited to the 134th Annual General Meeting of the Society, which will be held at about 3.30pm as part of the HNHS Autumn Meeting from 2.00 –5.00 pm on Saturday 24th October in the Attlee Room at Haileybury College, Hertford Heath. See attached newsletter for directions and map. PLEASE NOTE THE NEW VENUE.

If you would like to nominate someone for election to the Management Committee please let me have details by 10 October (14 days before the meeting). If you would like to propose an issue for discussion under any other business please notify me prior to the start of the meeting.

We do hope you will be able to join us.

Yours sincerely

Linda Smith, Secretary HNHS

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HNHS – Annual General Meeting 2009

Agenda

1. Welcome by HNHS Chairman, Peter Delaloye
2. Apologies for absence
3. Minutes of 133rd AGM held on 15 November 2008 (attached)
4. Matters arising
5. Chairman's Address and Report of the Management Committee for 2008/9 (attached)
6. Treasurer's report and accounts for 2008/9 (attached)
7. Election of officers and members of the Management Committee
8. Any other business (notified in advance to the Secretary)

HNHS was established in 1875 and is Registered Charity Number 216418

HNHS AGM 2009 Item 3

Minutes of the 133rd HNHS Annual General Meeting in 2008 held at 3.00pm on Saturday 15 November 2008 at Rothamsted Research

Present: Peter Delaloye (Chairman) and 75 members of the Society.

Item 1: The Chairman welcomed everyone to the AGM, the first to be held in the autumn after the change to the constitution agreed in 2007

Item 2: Apologies: Simon Wightman, Tom Gladwin.

Item 3: Minutes of the 132nd AGM held on 24 March 2007 were agreed as a correct record.

Proposers: John Moss and Michael Clark, Agreed: Unanimously

Item 4: Matters Arising: There were none.

Item 5: Report of the Management Committee for 2007/8

The Chairman introduced the report (previously circulated) and thanked all those who had contributed to the work of the Society throughout the year. He highlighted the publication of the two new HNHS books on Dragonflies and Moths as major achievements for the Society.

Item 6: Annual Accounts for 2007/8

The Chairman presented the summary accounts and thanked the Treasurer, Ken Pearman and the independent examiner, Shirley Bell, for preparing them. The accounts were agreed.

Proposers: David Anderson and Raymond Uffen, Agreed: Unanimously

Item 7: Election of Officers and members of the Management Committee

The Chairman said that it had been a pleasure to Chair the Society through an interesting period where a lot had been achieved. The Chairman confirmed that all officers and members of the management committee were willing to continue. No other nominations had been received, so the officers and members were elected unopposed: Chairman, Peter Delaloye; Secretary, Linda Smith; Treasurer, Ken Pearman; Members: Jane Clark, Ronni Edmonds-Brown, Ted Fletcher, Alan Gardiner, Tim Hill, Trevor James, Ken Smith, Stuart Warrington and Simon Wightman.

Proposers: David Gompertz and Neale Holmes Smith, Agreed: Unanimously.

Item 8: Presentation of honorary life membership to Michael Clark The Chairman presented Michael Clark, former HNHS Chairman and well known local naturalist and author with a certificate conferring honorary life membership in recognition of his longstanding commitment and contribution to the Society.

Other business – there was none

Date of Next Meeting - to be arranged (24 October 2009)

Minutes of the HNHS AGM held November 2008

Linda Smith, Secretary to Hertfordshire Natural History Society

HNHS AGM 2009 Item 5**Management Committee Report for the year April 2008-March 2009**

The Natural History Society's major achievement this year was the publication of two important books, both based on systematic countywide surveys carried out by volunteers over several years.

Dragonflies and Damselflies of Hertfordshire by Alan Reynolds, Revd Tom Gladwin and County Recorder, Christine Shepperson was published by HNHS in April 2008. The book was very well received and is selling steadily. It covers the 19 species breeding in the county, with distribution maps and flight charts based on the results of a six-year countywide survey, all rare migrants recorded since 1975 and a history of all species recorded in Hertfordshire from 1835-2006. Later sections give details of sites with 14 or more breeding species, the 'Top Ten' sites to visit in Herts and a gazetteer of all sites surveyed.

The Moths of Hertfordshire, the history, status, distribution and phenology of the micro- and macro-lepidoptera of a south eastern English county was published by HNHS in July 2008. The impressive 544 page volume compiled and edited by County Moth Recorder, Colin Plant is the first comprehensive assessment of the status and distribution of all 1548 macro- and micro-moths ever recorded in the county, from the earliest record in 1710 to the end of 2006. The species accounts summarise current knowledge, including first and last years, number of records, conservation status and caterpillar food plants. A distribution map is presented for all species ever recorded as resident, showing historical changes as well as modern day distribution based on ten years of survey work from 1995-2005. For 595 species there are standard week flight charts for adults, specific to Hertfordshire. Introductory sections discuss the influence of geology, habitat, climate and man's activities and a contributed chapter on the long-term moth studies at Rothamsted by Ian Woiwod and Phil Gould. Final chapters give an overview of Hertfordshire's moth fauna, assess conservation management needs and present a *Red List* of Hertfordshire moths. From this, formal recommendations are made for species to be included in the county's biodiversity action plan process.

The HNHS Management Committee hosted an event to launch the moth book on 3 July at the delightful Place House Hall in Ware. Over 70 contributors, sponsors and guests had an enjoyable

evening and were able to collect their pre-ordered copies of the Moth book. The event was self financing from the savings in book distribution costs.

We would like to thank the authors of the books and members of the Herts Dragonfly Group and Herts Moth Group for their dedication and hard work throughout the two projects. We are also grateful to Linda Smith who organised the fundraising, production, publication, marketing and distribution of both books. In the best traditions of British natural history, both books were produced on a voluntary and non-profit basis. This was possible due to the generosity of our donors and sponsors, their funding permitted us to reduce the price of the book to a more affordable level. At the end of the year we had sold over half the available copies of each book. The income from future sales will be used to rebuild the publications fund.

Future HNHS books

Trevor James, county recorder for vascular plants has been co-ordinating a comprehensive survey of the flora of Hertfordshire for over 20 years. In the last few years he has been analysing the results and preparing the text for publication. We estimate that the book and associated marketing and distribution would cost over £30,000. At our meeting in February we decided to go ahead with publication by the Society provided at least £15,000 sponsorship funding could be raised to underpin the costs of production. Linda Smith agreed to take responsibility for managing the finance, publicity, production and distribution of the book on behalf of the Society.

The Hertfordshire Geology Society (HGS) has approached us with a view to collaborating on publication of a book on Hertfordshire's geology. In the early days of HNHS, geology and related topics were a big feature of the Society's work and papers published in the Transactions. In 1960 geologist members of HNHS set up a book publication fund with £200 bequeathed to the Society by H Fordham. HGS was formed in 1974 as part of HNHS but with a separate membership and subscription. They started to write their book in 1974. From 1960 until 1996 the Geology Book fund appeared in the HNHS accounts and stood at £3150 in 1996. In that year all the various separate funds were merged into the current three funds, general (for running costs) and publication funds A and B. The geology book fund was merged into fund A for 'publications not expected to give a commercial return'. We have agreed to publish the book and contribute to the costs, provided sufficient external funds can be secured by HGS to underpin the costs of production and marketing

HNHS 1875 Award

In September the Management Committee decided to instigate an annual award to recognise: an outstanding Hertfordshire naturalist and/or someone who has made an outstanding contribution to natural history in Hertfordshire. The name of the award commemorates the founding of the Society in 1875. Those nominated for awards will 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 members of HNHS.

The HNHS Management Committee will assess nominations and make the final decision. Up to two Awards will be presented each year at the HNHS AGM and Autumn meeting. The award takes the form of an engraved glass crystal block.

We decided that the Society's inaugural 1875 Award should go to Colin Plant for his outstanding contribution to natural history in Hertfordshire. Colin, who has been our County Recorder for Moths for over ten years, is also the author of the impressive HNHS book: '*The Moths of Hertfordshire*'. In future years we will seek nominations for the awards from members of the Society.

HNHS AGM and other meetings

2008 was the first year in which the Annual General Meeting was held as part of the Society's Autumn Conference. Over seventy people attended on 15 November at Rothamstead Research, Harpenden. The afternoon featured *Bats, Butterflies and Crayfish* with three illustrated talks, by

county experts, highlighting the surveying, monitoring and recording of Hertfordshire's biodiversity: *the Impact of Riparian Habitat Quality on Bat Foraging and Commuting Activity* by Sarah Jane Scott of the Herts and Middlesex Bat Group; *The White Clawed Crayfish – are breeding programmes the way forward?* by Ronni Edmonds-Brown, senior lecturer in Environmental Science at the University of Hertfordshire and Chair of Hertfordshire Recorders' Committee and *Monitoring and Managing Butterfly and Insect Populations in Hertfordshire* by Dr John Murray, butterfly recorder for the HNHS .

HNHS Chairman, Peter Delaloye, presented a review of the year and guided us through the formalities of the AGM. Treasurer, Ken Pearman presented the accounts for 2007/8. At 31 March 2008 our assets stood at £45,925. This is a decrease from the previous year, due to a fall in the value of our investments and the expenditure on publication of the two books. However we still have a healthy balance sufficient for our needs. He thanked our independent examiner, Shirley Bell, for checking and approving the accounts. The existing members of the Management Committee all offered to stand again and were re-elected for another year.

Herts Bird Club Conference 2009

Birds of Towns and Cities were the theme of the Herts Bird Club / BTO conference at Rothamsted Research on 30 March. Over a hundred people attended this afternoon meeting, with five illustrated talks highlighting how birds and birders are adapting to our increasingly urban environment. Ken Smith, Chairman of the Herts Bird Club chaired the meeting. First off was John Tayleur of the BTO on *Parakeets in Great Britain - Potential Impacts of Colourful Invaders*, Two species of parakeet are already establishing populations in Hertfordshire – should we be pleased or concerned? Then Chris Orsman of the RSPB's London House Sparrow Project discussed *The Decline of the Urban House Sparrow - causes and potential conservation measures*; this has become a major issue with the 'Independent' newspaper even offering a substantial prize for the first person to identify the cause.

Joan Thompson highlighted the fantastic birds you saw or missed in Hertfordshire in 2008 and Chris Dee, BTO Regional Representative for Hertfordshire reviewed progress with the Herts Bird Atlas one year into the project. The finale was *The Urban Birder* - David Lindo, who gave a personal account of his amazement at the variety of birds to be found in urban environments. A broadcaster and writer, David appeared on Springwatch in 2006 where he took viewers around his 'garden', Wormwood Scrubs, in west London.

We would like to record our thanks to Tim Hill for organising both events and to Society members for their support.

Transactions of the Hertfordshire Natural History Society 2008 Volume 40

The Society's Transactions, which have now been published continuously for 130 years, make available information from monitoring and other recording work in the county.

The Hertfordshire Naturalist 2008 (edited by Stuart Warrington) was distributed in October. The Purple Emperor (*Apatura iris*) featured on the cover and a substantial paper reported status and conservation of this elusive woodland butterfly based on the results of a three year survey by Liz Goodyear and Andrew Middleton. (HNHS contributed to the project funding). Other papers included an historical perspective of botanical recording and vegetation change in the chalk grasslands of the Aldbury Nowers and Pitstone area of the Chilterns near Tring; a review of records of aquatic invertebrates from both standing and running-water sites in the River Rib catchment (1964-2006); an aquatic invertebrate survey of Hilfield Park Reservoir and an appreciation of Alfred Russel Wallace (1823-1913) as well as the County Recorders' reports.

The Hertfordshire Bird Report 2006 (edited by Ted Fletcher) was published in November. The Red-backed Shrike seen at Croxley Moor features on the cover and the papers included a review of first and last dates of migrant birds in Hertfordshire, part 1; the results of the Herts Bird Club survey of breeding Sand Martins (*riparia riparia*) in addition to the systematic list, ringing report, and breeding bird survey results.

We also continued to publish our six-monthly newsletter, *Field Notes* (edited by Trevor James). The bimonthly Bird Bulletin (edited by Alan Gardiner) was discontinued in September 2008 will be

replaced by monthly summaries published on the website. We are grateful to Alan for his work in producing and distributing the Bulletin.

Survey and Recording work

The network of *County Recorders* continued to co-ordinate the collection and archiving of records of mammals, birds, reptiles, amphibians, insects, flora, fungi and other groups. None of this would be possible without the dedicated hard work by those collating the data and preparing the publications and information on individual species submitted by members.

HNHS Website

Following the decision last year to revamp our websites, we asked Ken Smith, Chris Dee and Jack Fearnside to oversee the work. On their advice we commissioned a specialist company, Digital Routes to redevelop our websites to designs by Jack Fearnside. The new sites will give the Society a higher and more attractive profile and permit effective on line data capture for submission of records.

Membership

We are pleased that membership of the Society has increased over the year, probably as a result of the publicity to promote our books, and at 31 March 2009 stood at 380. In December we registered the Society for GiftAid. Under this scheme the government contribute 28p for every £1 donated, increasing the value of any donation by 28%. The majority of members have agreed that their subscriptions and donations be treated as GiftAid.

During the year *the Management Committee* met four times.

HNHS Management Committee – June 2009

HNHS AGM 2009 Item 7

Election of Officers and Members of the Management Committee

Nominations from the Management Committee:

Role	Current 2008/9	Nominations 2009/10
Chairman	Peter Delaloye	Trevor James
Treasurer	Ken Pearman	Ken Pearman
Secretary and Registrar	Linda Smith	Linda Smith
Chair Herts Bird Club	Ken Smith	Ken Smith
Chair Recorders' Committee	Ronni Edmonds Brown	Ronni Edmonds Brown
Editor Herts Bird Report	Ted Fletcher	Ted Fletcher
Editor Hertfordshire Naturalist	Stuart Warrington	Stuart Warrington
Special Projects (recording)	Jane Clark	
Special Projects (events)	Tim Hill	Tim Hill
Special Projects (Webmaster)	Alan Gardiner	Alan Gardiner
Special Projects (Field Notes)	Trevor James	
External Liaison	Simon Wightman	

Peter Delaloye, Jane Clark and Simon Wightman are stepping down this year leaving three vacancies on the committee. Would you like to join us? Please volunteer yourself or send nominations for new members to Linda Smith by 10 October.

Notes to accounts 31/03/2009

1. Investment Funds	Charifund	War Loan	Realised	Totals
Opening balance 31/03/08	46194.71	3009.2		49203.91
Closing balance	28890.74	2789.55	2789.55	28890.74

Decrease in capital	Loss	17303.97	219.65	2789.55	20313.17
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The holding in war Stock was realised on the 26/1/09 and the sum of 2789.55 net of expenses was received.

Total Decrease in Investment Capital					20313.17
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2. Building Society Capilised Interest

	1422.89	10.37	1433.26
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The Building Society Account was closed 16/06/08

3. Donations for Book publishing.

Herts CC for Moths & Dragonflies	£2,500
Flora	£2,500
Total.	£5,000

4. Bird Club.

During 2008/9 the accounts of the Bird Club were consolidated on the understanding the funds remained designated for the Bird Club **£1,118**

5. Printing and Distribution

Bulletins	106
Bird Reports	1000
Field Notes	444
Herts	
Naturalist	881
Dragonflies and Damselflies	4997
Moth Book	41592
	<u>49020</u>
Less Provisioned 2008	36995
Total	<u>12025</u>

6. Subscriptions paid :

Mammal Society	20
HMWT	35
CPRE	32
NFBR	40
	<u>127</u>

7. Grants and Funds

	Bal Mar 08	Spent 08/9	Bal Mar 09
Tree Sparrow Project	215.74	56.00	159.82
Purple Emperor Project Elizabeth			
Goodyear		500.00	0.00
		<u>£556</u>	<u>159.82</u>

8. Creditors

The Society has entered in to a contract for the redesign of the Web site, Payment is conditional of acceptable delivery. The total project cost is estimated at £9000 A part payment of £1175 was made on 24 September 2008

9. Unrecovered Costs of Printing Moth and Dragonflies-Damselflies Books 31/03/09

The Moth Book is presently showing unrecovered costs £12,769.00

The Dragonflies and Damselflies recovered its costs and shows a profit £306.00
Resulting in a net excess cost charged to the Society of £12,463
A charge has been made against the Non Commercial Publication Fund to partial off set this cost.

10. Stock of Books. In accordance with Society's policy all stocks of books are valued at NIL for Balance Sheet purposes.

Actual stocks of unsold books at 31/3/09 are 454 Moths and 413 Dragonflies and Damselflies

Movement of Funds

Investment income is added proportionately to three funds.

	General	Des A Non-com	Des B Com	Totals
Value at 31/03/09	17073	18606	10030	45709
Income General	8071			8071
Sales of Moths- Dragonflies		5919		5919
Donations Moths Dragonflies		2500		2500
Donations Flora		2500		2500
Investment Income -realisation		2789		2789
Investment Income	1079	1179	633	2891
	<u>26223</u>	<u>33493</u>	<u>10663</u>	<u>70379</u>
Less Expenditure	7062	7973	0	15035
Less Loss	6009	10773	3531	20313
Free Reserves	<u>13152</u>	<u>14747</u>	<u>7132</u>	35031
Plus Tree Sparrow Grant	160			160
Bird Club	1118			1118
TOTAL ASSETS				<u>36309</u>