



Beccles Wildlife Group

Formerly Beccles Bird Society

Formed in 1973

OFFICERS: Nina Roffey (Chair) 01502 393956
Charles Fortt (Secretary) 01502 471094
Mervyn Aldis (Treasurer) 01502 715615



Spring 2022

Introduction

Nina Roffey

HELLO everyone, as I write this there's no sound of wind, long may it last! I sincerely hope you all escaped power cuts or serious damage from the last storms. It seems we are very lucky hereabouts in general compared to much of the country. It's nice that March and a proper spring is just round the corner.

It was with some sadness that I read in the local paper of the passing of Jim Lumsden. What a character he was. I met him as my dentist a great many years ago and he was a man to make his opinions known. He was a member of our group for many years too and made contributions when he thought it was necessary. His thoughts were always relevant.

Sad also to here that Richard Ling also passed. He and his wife Rona were a very sweet couple. I loved sitting with them at meetings and they both cared for the group and were supportive of the natural world.

From early January I have heard the song of at least one mistle thrush from my garden as well as the drumming of the great spotted woodpecker. The robin, dunnock also sang and started to be a bit flirty.

My father, a country man told me, Valentine's Day was the "dickybirds wedding day" and it appears to be true for initial

pairing up moves. The blackbirds seem to be playing around and eyeing up partners less noisily as the rooks down the road.

I hope some of you will join me later in March on an outing to Carlton Marshes where the possibility of a larger bird list than my garden will be found. We are lucky to have such a big reserve locally and the cafe is nice too!

Take care until then and enjoy the nodding snowdrops, the sunshine yellow of the daffodils until then, and keep safe.



One of North Cove's bank voles.

[Mel Darkins]

Events Diary



Tuesday 22nd March

Carlton Marshes

Meet in the car park at 10am.

Leader: Nina Roffey, tel: 01502 393956

Thursday 28th April

Sculthorpe Moor

Meet at the reserve, NR21 9GN, 10am

Suggested £4 entry fee.

Leader: John Trew, 01502 471731

Tuesday, May 17th

Westleton Heath

Meet in the main car park, 10am

Leader: Tony Butler, Tel: 01502 712649

Friday 17th June

Upton Broad and Marshes

Meet in the car park (NR13 6EW) 10am

Leader: Chris Adams, Tel: 01508 548708

Tuesday 12th July

Broadland Country Park, Horsford,

Chris to arrange a guide

Meet in the car park, NR10 4DF

Leader: Chris Adams, 01508 548708

*In case of inclement weather, please advise the
outing contact if you intend to come along
plus some venues require advance
warning of group visits.*

Minsmere

John Trew

TEN members attended the December trip to Minsmere and, happily, we chose the best day of the week for the weather, it being mild, sunny at times and certainly less windy than it had been of late.

Tony suggested we begin at the Island Mere hide, as there was a chance the goosanders might still be there, it turned out they weren't – it seems they come into Minsmere to roost and then go back out to sea during the day.

On the way there Daphne spotted two female red deer which we were able to watch for a good few minutes. Further on we had nice views of male bullfinch and a great spotted woodpecker which provided some interest. A buzzard flew along the woodland edge.

Arriving at the mere, the whoopers were still present and as the morning progressed, they swam more into view which was good. The lone goldeneye was a female which stayed pretty well in one corner. Curiously, one time it flew up across the mere but then swam back to where it began – it should have stayed where it was and saved its energy!

Other than that, there was the usual fare on the mere. No bearded tits showed while we were there though one or two had flown across just before – typical.

We then wandered back to the Bitten Hide where I just missed something small and dark disappearing into the reeds – thus the jury is out as to whether it was a moorhen or water rail. No bitterns obliged sadly.

Our party thus split up with some diverting to the centre for lunch. Charles and I went to the first hide on the scrape but quickly moved on as everything was quite distant. So it was in the south hide that we had lunch and viewed what was about. There were a few avocets, lapwing, lots of shoveler, wigeon and few gadwall, but nothing unusual. Up to five dunlin were on the muddy edges.

Moving on "fully lunched", we spied a song thrush in the gorse bushes along the beach which were looking good in flower and a female stonechat on the fence line.



*One of the red deer we spotted on the way to the Island Mere.
[Garry Nicolaou]*

We did spend a short time looking out to sea but with the breeze in the wrong direction, weren't optimistic and thus not too disappointed. I did see what might have been a single gannet but it remained a "might". We briefly popped into the open hide but saw nothing different, not staying long as the setting sun didn't help matters.

It looked as though they were planning to extend the main hide on the beach with newly laid concrete foundations alongside the existing construction. That'll be good later on as that hide is always very busy and it will not be ideal if we're all still under covid restrictions.

And with that, we had another brief sea watch and strolled back to the car park and headed home.

A pleasant enough day with a couple of new-year ticks for Charles and me and Daphne tells me that on returning to Island Mere later in the day, one of the goosanders appeared.

Ringling

David Fox

SINCE the December newsletter the weather has been very much against carrying out much ringing, with only a few sessions possible.

We had one session at a farm in Wrentham with a total of ten birds captured including three re-traps. The next session was back at the normal patch at Kessingland, which was more successful with 52 birds captured including 18 re-traps.

We had several of the various Tits, four Pied Wagtails and the highlight of the day a Siberian Chiffchaff.

The next session was also held in Wrentham in Pat's private garden where we captured a total of 15 birds which included House Sparrows and Goldfinches and one Starling, with no re-traps.

On January 17th 2022 we had a notification of a recovery of a female Blackcap, which had been identified by photographs by a ringer on several days from 25th December 2021 to the 10th January 2022 and subsequently captured on 11th January 2022.

The ringer added additional coloured rings as there is a national survey being carried out by the BTO on this species, making identification easier by photographs. This bird was ringed

by myself at Kessingland on 23rd October 2021, the bird had travelled to Chilbolton in Hampshire, a distance of 161 miles in 65 days.

This same bird was identified by photographs on several more occasions from the 12th to 17th January 2022 by the same ringer. Hopefully this bird can stay safe and possibly be recaptured elsewhere to give valuable information on its movements.



*This jay was one of
David's captures.*

Reserve Report

Chris Adams

WE HAVE finished cutting back overhanging trees from the east side the Summerhouse Ride. Now more light can reach the meadow whilst still retaining shelter from easterly winds.

Croming has been completed, for this year, along main dyke up to and beyond the woodland hide plus the dyke along the path to the Summerhouse Ride hide.

We are still waiting for funds to de-silt the reserve dykes and decoy. Alder saplings have been dug out from the edges of the dykes and have been transplanted to clearings within the carr. Previous Alder transplants have begun to establish and in time will replace trees that have been blown over by the increased number of storms we are experiencing.

Following the advice from Natural England, another of our winter tasks has been to cut back trees over shading the north end of the main dyke. This has let more light into the dyke and will stimulate plant growth. Also, we have installed duckweed "exclosure" booms. This will help light penetrate to the bottom of the dyke to stimulate submerged plant growth. It is intended to sample this new "exclosure" and our existing "exclosures" for plants and invertebrates. This will give us baseline data to compare with future monitoring.

The paths have been kept in good order. Our stock of hay for laying on the paths has depleted at the required rate and should last until the growing season is well under way.

The dead hedge screens at either end of the decoy have been replaced so the that decoy can be approached without disturbing the wildlife. The material to construct these dead hedges came from the trees we cut down by the dyke. The remainder of the brash has been used to make a barrier against deer browsing off tree seedlings.

Other on-going and completed tasks are replacement of old wooden nest boxes with more

durable and easy to maintain woodcrete nest boxes. Our thanks to all those who have sponsored these nest boxes.

The brush-cutter is being used to cut back vigorous rushes that have continued to grow over the winter. Storm damage adjacent to the paths has been cleared and paths repaired. On-going removal of duckweed from the "exclosures" will help maintain some stretches of open water for invertebrates and plants.

Survey teams are being established for water voles, butterflies and dragonflies.



Informal posts erected to keep visitors on the "straight and narrow" - and to stop the path becoming wider.

The new screen by the Decoy.

Below: Frequent visitor to North Cove, Mel Darkins, caught this infrequent visitor, stoat, at the pond near the woodland hide



Summer Memories

John Trew

ONE OF my regular walks with Meg is from North Cove church, up and across the fields towards the kart track. Then going down across the old airfield, out to Hulver Road, back up to the airfield entrance and down to North Cove again.

Towards the end of June last year, I was down by the kart track when I spotted a single common orchid showing bright pinky-red. It was only when I bent down to look I discovered alongside, were a group of bee orchids nearby.

On further investigation I found there were a great many bee orchids spread over quite a large area - I'm guessing around 200-250 plants.

So, after a arrived back home, it was a quick coffee, grab the camera and Doris and I went back for another look.

I then informed the wildlife trust as, whilst the footpath where the orchids were was quiet, there was considerable activity going on nearby as contractors were beginning to develop the old airfield site.



Tales of the Riverbank

John Trew

THE orange wing-tagged harrier was over Castle early in December and two other males were noted on the fourth of the month. The day after was a really super morning, bright and sunny -- a water rail squealed and two great spotted woodpeckers flew into the same tree on the Norfolk bank.

Some 30 siskins were in the riverside alders on the 11th, I did try to pick out redpolls but without success. The day after it was a cosy 12 degrees and a green woodpecker called -- perhaps it thought it was spring.

A little grebe was on the river on the 16th, a rarity in the summer but not that unusual for this time of year. A snipe flew up on the 21st, evidently there are not many about on Castle at this time due, I guess, to the lack of really cold weather. Two mistle thrushes flew over from Norfolk.

Christmas Eve started bright with super blue skies but just as I started to enjoy this unexpected bonus, a look behind me revealed a bank of cloud which soon descended along with the mist. A great spotted 'pecker flew along the Norfolk bank and a stonechat frequented the barbed wire fence on Castle. Shooting was prevalent across the river, the first I'd heard for some time -- all down to covid I guess. Six stock doves flew out of Castle



A small section of a large group of black-tailed godwits.



Siskin - one of our regulars in winter.

[Photo: Mel Darkins]

Mill on the 27th, it must be getting crowded in there - let's hope there's room for the owls. The new year kicked off well at Barsham with a kingfisher flying off from near the pumphouse. Walking up the drain, just as I reached the track, something turned over in the water almost under the bridge. At first I thought it was turbulence but then a second turn over and then a third revealed an otter -- an all-to-brief view but welcome nevertheless.

Back on my river wall on the fifth, what a gorgeous morning. Cold and frosty (thus a bit less muddy!), no birds but hey, one can't have everything. On the 10th, my first snipe of the year flew up and a single fieldfare flew over. A greater spot drummed, so spring is coming! A little grebe was on the river.

The day after was grey, damp and breezy so I reverted back to Barsham and walking past the pumphouse something caught my eye in the river just under the far bank. There was no sign of it re-appearing but the bubbles kept me looking and just as I was about to give up, a ripple under the near bank caught my attention. Then the cause of it, came swimming down this side - a really good view of an otter only 12ft away. I had my camera at the ready but decided to just enjoy the sighting. Wonderful, two sightings within a week!

Again at Barsham a week later two little grebes were on the river and two great spotted woodpeckers flew over. I didn't see an otter this time but I did find evidence, some spraint near the pumphouse so I guess the worn track nearby was a regular route. A male bullfinch near the rowing club was nice to see bright in the sunshine.

Some 40 lapwing flew over Castle on the 21st and three snipe flew up. Two goosanders and a spoonbill were reported along and over the river as recent sightings, but sadly not by me!

My first Cetti's of the year called on the 23rd. On the 28th, a big flock of lapwing were over in Aldeby, I'm guessing a good couple of hundred birds but despite much looking, I couldn't see anything else in amongst them. On the 30th, I caught the big tide just before it's peak the river spreading over the staithe right up to the notice board.

It's frustrating that unless the guy who lives across the river at Aldeby fishes (which he hasn't done much of) and thus flattens a few yards of reed, it's very difficult to see what's on there. I did spot a big flock of black tailed godwits on February 8th - I'm guessing around 30 but there could have been more. I made the mistake of thinking "I'll try and more accurate count on the way back" only to find them gone. Three snipe flew over and there were a good number of lapwing still present.

A week or so later, there was a very big flock of lapwing over there, certainly a couple of hundred birds with more flying in as I progressed down the river wall. A single fieldfare flew near Castle Mill and my first Cetti's of the year called.

Back at Barsham on the 23rd was less than interesting and very windy to boot. On the way back, however, there was something in the owl box and a closer view revealed a barn owl sitting just inside. I shinned down the bank for a better look, but it disappeared out of sight. Oh well, my first owl of the year.

Finally, after a few days of local walks - the recent high winds keeping me off the river wall - I made it back and was glad to note it was slowly drying out (at last!). Just before reaching the footpath down to the village, I caught sight of an otter swimming across the river. Unfortunately, it disappeared into the reeds on the near bank and, I guessed, curled up for a rest as I didn't see it again. After last year's blank for otter sightings, it's good to have clocked up three already.

Into March tomorrow so we'll be looking out for the first chiffchaff - a sign that spring is really just around the corner - I wonder what birding goodies will delight us this year. At least with covid easing (we hope!), we might get out and about a tad more.

A good summer to one and all.

Birding Round-up

Tony Butler

MY report will cover the bird highlights seen for the three month period December to February. As usual, my main focus will be on the area comprising a five-mile radius of Beccles but will also conclude with the main highlights seen a bit further afield.

At the beginning of December, John Trew had around 80 golden plover viewed from Church Lane, Ellough and the ten grey partridges again in the field besides Ellough hill. Steve Piotrowski reported 16 Bewick's flying west over Bungay and, on the 11th, I had 32 fieldfare flying west over Beccles and a sizeable flock of pink-footed geese over Black Boy Meadow calling in the fog on the 18th.

Hawfinches started to make an appearance at Sotterley Park with 11 being reported on the 20th. Two red kites were seen over Shadingfield church, 30 redwings flew west over the bull field, Ringsfield Road. Daphne had a tawny owl over her Gosford Road garden early morning. Two Russian white-fronted geese were at the Earsham Wetland Centre and Ian Barthorpe had 100+ fieldfare off Ellough Hill.

Finally for the month, John Trew had around 100 lapwing and two sparrowhawks in Cucumber Lane and five bullfinches by the Ellough new road.

Into January with reports of red kites - Toft Monks, Geldeston, Beccles and North Cove. Up to 18 hawfinches were at Sotterley. Also, early in the month, John T enjoyed two snipe on Ellough Moor and three bullfinches along Ellough old road. He also enjoyed two otter sightings at Barsham Drain and on the river.

The 15th of the month saw seven Bewick's swans NE corner of Gillingham marshes viewed from the by-pass and 19 Russian white-fronts over. I had a large flock of fieldfare west over Toft Monks and two brambling in a mixed flock along hedgerow south of Ellough church.

Paul and Helga reported a tawny owl calling regularly on the Leman school playing field, three song thrush, including one in their Ringsfield Road garden and a small flock of fieldfare feeding near the hall.

February saw much of the same with 100 fieldfares and 20 redwings in maize stubble near Worlingham sewage works, good numbers of fieldfare and lapwing in a stubble field between Brampton and Shadingfield and 40 redwing feeding on a meadow near Beccles Marsh Trail fishing lakes. I also enjoyed three nuthatch, song thrush, siskins, treecreeper and a woodcock at Sotterley Park where John T also had a woodcock.

Dick Walden reported 70 pink-footed geese flying west over Beccles and John T had two grey wagtails at Worlingham STW and around 40 yellowhammers, just off Church Lane, Ellough. I had a red kite just east of the A145 at Weston. John T also reported five red kites in the air near Clinks Care Farm.

Highlights further afield but in Suffolk have included grey phalarope, Aldeburgh; ravens, various locations; 3 cattle egrets, Sudbourne and Little Cornard; black-necked grebe, Waldringfield; Slavonian grebe, Covehithe; 9 twite, Dunwich and Kessingland; Lapland bunting, Kessingland; 3 jack snipe, Kessingland and Minsmere; 7 shorelark, Kessingland, Warberswick and Hollesley.

Eight Tundra bean geese, Trimley and Hollesley; 7 Bewick's swan, Westleton and Minsmere; Hume's leaf warber, North Warren; 14 whooper swans, Minsmere; 3 Siberian chiffchaffs, Leathes Ham and Carlton SWT; glaucous gull, Blyth estuary; curlew sandpiper, Hazelwood; 2 great northern divers' Oulton Broad and Aldeburgh; 16 Mandarin, Ipswich.

Three ring-necked parakeets, Ipswich; Iceland gull, Lowestoft; red-necked grebe, Alton Water; black-throated diver, Freston; 3 shag, Mutford Locks; 2 glossy ibis, Walberswick and Carlton SWT; lesser yellow legs, Minsmere.

White-tailed eagle, various locations; 2 smew, Minsmere; waxwing, Bucklesham; 35 brambling and 30 tree sparrow, Tuddenham St Mary; ring necked duck, Aldringham; goshawk, Carlton SWT; garganey, Carlton SWT, 3 spoonbills, North Warren.

Suffolk Bird Report

John Trew

ARRIVING just before Christmas (my thanks to Peter Norfolk), the 2020 Suffolk Bird Report gives me something to dip in and out of during the festivities.

It can be slightly depressing, however, when you read what was on your doorstep and/or local patch and you've missed it. Another year walking around with one's eyes closed, though at least with Covid I have more of an excuse this time.

However, there are many interesting tidbits (no pun intended!) in the report.

One such report was of a mute swan caught and killed by an otter on Minsmere's Island Mere. Evidently, it held the swan by its head which was submerged and dragged it the full length of the mere, the swan only making a few feeble flaps.

A single mandarin duck was reported from Barsham marshes and a pair were found nesting in a garden barn owl box. Migrating common scoter were heard flying over "gardens in Beccles" – must remember to sit in my back garden on November evenings!

Four common cranes flew over Beccles on August 1st (must remember to look up!). Some 60 whimbrel were recorded on Beccles marsh on April 24th.

During the quieter times of the lockdown, a pair of oystercatchers took advantage by nesting on the roof of Ipswich

railway station's canopy roof and, staying in Ipswich, Covid seemed to make a difference to a pair of black redstarts as they took up residence at Ipswich Town football club, taking advantage of the "close season".

In July, 59 little egrets were recorded on Carlton Marshes, an amazing number – who'd have thought that years ago?

Up to an amazing 26 red-crested pochards were recorded at Flixton gravel pits -- they may be *plastic* but its still impressive. Autumn Osprey were recorded at Blyth estuary up to 23 days from August through to early October.

Sadly at Minsmere, while there were 276 common tern present not a single chick fledged due, I guess, to predation. Also at Minsmere some 36 marsh harriers were reported at the roost.

The declining number of marsh tits was noted with a maximum of four noted at North Cove -- can anyone from BWG do better at our reserve? If so, let me know.

A pair of little ringed plover were seen in a puddle at Alderton in late March and three birds were present on a flood pool at a housing development site in Bury St Edmunds.

Thus ends my round-up of extracts from the 2020 report and reminders to myself: must get out more; pay more attention; make more notes.

Haddiscoe Island Walk

Charles Fortt

WHEN John T and I last did this walk we can't recall, I guessed at least three years ago, and he doubted if readers would want to have another account of the same walk so soon. But if ever I needed reminding of the fallibility of memory, trying and failing to find that account demonstrated that fact in spades.

I still recall that first walk: it was windy, cold and sleeting, at least towards the end of the 11-mile perimeter river wall of the island. It felt a heroic thing to do but now I have no memory of what we saw. We picked a better day for it this time, with a mild and almost windless day, overcast but with occasional breaks in the cloud to allow warm sunshine to peep through.

Parking under the A143 Haddiscoe Dam Bridge, in front of the house that used to be a pub, we set off with the ambition, for John, of seeing hen harrier and short-eared owl. It wasn't long before we had seen four raptors: buzzard, marsh harrier, kestrel and sparrowhawk. In the reeds that border the Yare we strained our eyes for bearded tit, which showed itself to John but eluded me, and reed bunting flitted between the grass on the river wall and the reeds.

Little egret were easy to find, however, and several grey heron gracefully glided over the marsh at various points, while mute swan held their positions on the ditches that cross it. Chinese water deer were much in evidence, often bolting from the reeds as if startled by our approach. On the marsh, great flocks of pink-footed geese dominated large swathes, and for no apparent reason took off to wheel about the sky in a cloud of thousands before returning almost to the same territory.

On the river, cormorant occupied navigational poles like sentries, and the unmistakable calls of curlew could be heard though not seen until we reached the confluence of the Yare and Waveney at Breydon Water.

Taking lunch while looking across the river towards Burgh Castle, on the mudflat in the middle of the channel, we saw many

greylag, large numbers of black-tailed godwit, avocet, oystercatcher, curlew, lapwing, and teal, while great crested grebe dived and bobbed on the Waveney.

Out on the river wall, on a wintry walk that would take nearly six hours, it can feel like the weather dominates the experience, turning the light sky into dark brooding clouds in moments. Fortunately, we were lucky as advancing light rain merely touched us in passing before settling moodily on the Norfolk horizon.

In such a remote area it would be easy to spend the day without seeing anyone except the occasional passing pleasure boat. We were a little surprised, then, to come across a

couple of reed cutters working by the road to Seven Mile House. A cheery 'hello' prompted enquiry as to what we had seen in the way of wildlife. The old reed cutter's accent seemed fitting for his trade as he recalled with regret the animals he doesn't see anymore, reflecting that there are too many harriers and buzzards.

We didn't want to engage in argument about whether there was too much of the wrong sort of wildlife, so we waved goodbye and completed the last couple of miles regretting only that we had not seen the hen harrier or short-eared owl.



Lunchstop - Six Mile mill.

Castle Surveys

Peter Norfolk

AT our editor's request, here is an update on the various Wildlife Trust (SWT) surveys I am involved with on Castle.

The past two years have, of course, been disrupted by the pandemic, but some surveys continued on Castle. This was possible partly because, as a non-public access site, social distancing was relatively easy to observe. Perhaps the biggest obstacle was the loss of years of experience and expertise with the passing of John Morgan and the "retirement" of George and Lindy – all three greatly missed.

Bird surveys take place in two phases – a spring Breeding Birds survey (BBS) and a winter Wetland Bird survey (WeBS), each with their own routine. In 2021 the BBS was led by the SWT warden from Lound Lakes, joined by one of the volunteers from his own patch. Richard Chilvers and I took part as added 'boots on the ground' and to pass on our local knowledge.

Between us we managed to complete the required pattern of visits, and map the various breeding territories. No major surprises, just a continuing sad lack of lapwing and redshank. Highlights for me were the bubbling calls of a female cuckoo, and watching a grasshopper warbler carrying food to a presumed nesting area.

This winter's WeBS has been more disjointed. It has fallen to Richard and me to do the surveys, which we only started in late autumn, so not every month covered. With only two of us doing what was previously done by four we had to simplify the route a bit, so maybe not covering quite as much as before.

Nevertheless, our surveys do give SWT some form of continuity for the site. So far, the amazingly mild winter means the numbers and variety of birds have been low, with only Snipe recorded in reasonable numbers. Most of the ducks and geese seem to prefer the other side of the river where, presumably, they are being fed and watered.....if they only knew the risk they might be running!

The other survey on Castle is on Dragonflies and Damselflies, which I have been doing for several years. This is a monthly set route I do from May to September, and I managed it in both 2020 and 2021 (my daily exercise in lock-down!).

The ditches and drains really are full of activity on a sunny day and during 2021 I recorded 19 species (10 dragonflies and 9 damselflies). Castle is awash with Variable damselflies, Norfolk hawkers, four-spotted chasers and Common darters in their various flight seasons. Of note is the spread of Willow emerald and Small red-eyed damselflies as they continue their colonisation of the country.

Castle does not change much year-on-year, continuing to be used for cattle grazing in the drier months. Perhaps that is its charm, a quiet backwater in contrast to the dynamic changes downstream at Carlton Marshes. The resident wildlife may not have star quality, but what there is thrives in the undisturbed surroundings. Now, where are my wellies – there must be another survey due soon!

Minutes of Annual General Meeting

Thursday 13th January 2022, At Friends Meeting House, Beccles. Nine members attended.

1. No apologies for absence received.
2. Minutes of the last meeting on 13th February 2020 were circulated in the AGM newsletter and adopted as read.
There were no Matters Arising
3. Reports of the Officers
Chairwoman – Nina Roffey; Secretary – Charles Fortt
Treasurer – Mervyn Aldis; Bird Recorder – Tony Butler
Reserve Representative – Chris Adams
4. All reports were circulated with the AGM newsletter. Richard Chilvers asked Chris Adams to speak to his reserve report, specifically on plans for the coming year. Chris outlined the need to decide with Ben Blower whether machinery can be acquired to mow the meadows.
Richard also asked about the proposed woodland route to relieve pressure on the Summerhouse Ride footpath in winter. Chris said there had been objections to this route and how best to protect the footpath is still being considered, but for now corduroy covered with hay has been used and this will be removed when the path dries.
5. Subscription rate – Committee recommends no subscription charged for 2022. This was proposed and agreed.
6. Election of officers
Chair - Nina Roffey was re-elected unopposed.

Vice Chair - No nominations were received and the role remains vacant.

Secretary - Charles Fortt was re-elected unopposed.

Treasurer - Mervyn Aldis was re-elected unopposed.

Bird recorder - Tony Butler was re-elected unopposed.

Committee members - Daphne Hayward was re-elected. No other nominations were received.

7. Any other business

a. Charles reviewed the field trips planned for 2022 and confirmed the choices made by the committee last November. John Trew will decide the date of the trip to Breydon Water when he has reviewed the tide table for February.

b. Charles related to the meeting the first aid training that Mervyn, John and he had undergone had brought home the importance of having an AED (automated external defibrillator) quickly available in case of cardiac arrest.

A time trial conducted by John Trew indicated that there could be a 15-minute delay in getting the AED located at Fortrey Heap Hall to the casualty, and so he proposed buying one for the reserve volunteers to be kept at the reserve.

The proposal was seconded by John, supported by Mervyn and Nina and debated with opposing argument being heard. A vote taken by the meeting carried the proposal unanimously.

Charles will look into raising funds through Facebook and other sources to reduce the impact on the reserve fund.

The meeting closed at 8:45pm.

Thank you

John Trew



NOT long into the New Year, David, Toby and I spent a couple of hours on North Cove replacing another seven of the wooden tit boxes with new woodcrete boxes. They were mainly blue tit boxes but two were great tit-sized holes.

Beforehand, I spend some time figuring out where to site them as I was careful not to have, say, two great tit boxes near to each other. I managed to achieve what I was after and with David's very efficient DIY skills and Toby's help (he only popped in for a look round and get some fresh air!), it only took a relatively short time to remove the old boxes and site and erect the new ones.

We have now replaced all the blue/great tit boxes on the reserve bar three and we have spare wooden ones when required. Let's hope the birds appreciate everyone's efforts!

Thank you to those who have donated funds for the new woodcrete boxes.

Yours truly securing a box. [David Fox]

Burgh Castle

Paul Leman

OUR group walk commenced at Burgh Castle on Friday 11th February. Thirteen members attended which was a good turn out.

It was good to see members we had not seen since the beginning of the covid pandemic. We met at the Burgh Castle car park which was still free of charge.

It was a bright sunny morning with a bit of a breeze, as we set off to the right of the church and took the path down to what is the south side of Breydon Water.

We were all well wrapped up as we were expecting it to be cold, but the wind dropped and in the sun it was quite pleasant. We enjoyed good clear views across the water to the Berney Arms pub, and Cantley Sugar Beet Factory on the horizon.

Across the marshes to our right we could clearly see vehicles on the Acle Straight road. We walked in a northeasterly direction

towards Gt Yarmouth for about three quarters of a mile; we retraced our steps at about midday though several stayed on.

We had a good total of forty-three birds species spotted, which I list as follows:

Skylark, widgeon, kestrel, black-tailed godwit, crow, starling, greenfinch, mute swan, blackbird, magpie, robin, pinkfoot geese, wood pigeon, curlew, avocet, teal, greylag, little grebe, redshank, little egret, cormorant, herring gull, gadwall, marsh harrier, green sandpiper, black headed gulls, common snipe, lapwing, kingfisher, common buzzard, water pipit, shelduck, great white egret, grey heron, bearded tit, water rail - heard only, white fronted geese, oystercatcher, pied wagtail, dunlin, sparrow hawk, shoveler, red kite.

Mothing at North Cove

IN August last year, Antony Wren hosted a moth morning at North Cove nature reserve. Seven of us attended and viewed with great interest what Antony's traps had acquired overnight.

Some 43 species were trapped and identified and from the speed that Antony named each one convinced us he was well versed in "mothing".

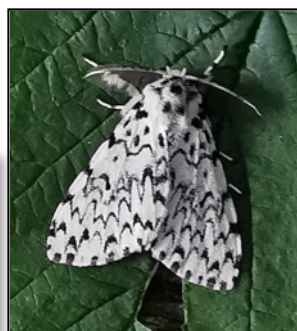
Because it was, evidently, later in the season, many of the moths were quite small but some were of a less challenging size with a couple of larger species.

Antony's mothing tales were also fascinating - he certainly knows what he's doing when it comes to moths. I gather his wife, sometimes somewhat grudgingly, gives way to his enthusiasm.

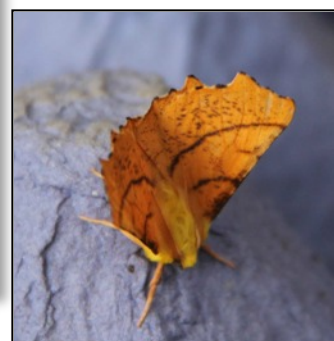


Black arches

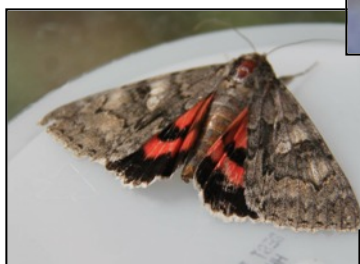
Black arches



Sharp-angled Peacock



Canary-shouldered thorn



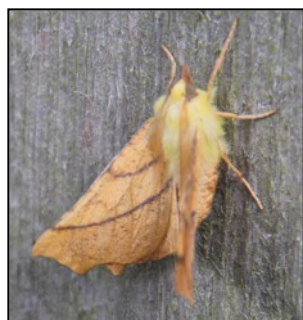
Red underwing.



Coronet



Light Emerald



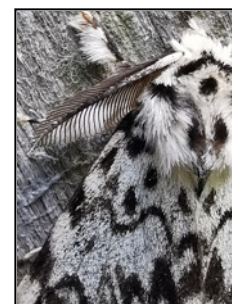
Canary-shouldered Thorn



Dingy Footman



Iron Prominent



Black Arches close-up.[CA]



Red Underwing



Black Arches

*Canary-shouldered Thorn.
[CA]*

