



### **Indoor Meetings**

These are held in the Lyttelton Rooms adjacent to Malvern Priory starting at 7.30pm. £3 per person, cash only.

#### **Thursday April 2nd**

*What to look for in spring*

The Trust's Wendy Carter takes a closer look at wildlife to look for and record.

#### **Thursday May 7th**

*Bats of Worcestershire*

Presented by Matthew Terry, Chair of Worcestershire Bat Group and trustee of the Bat Conservation Trust.

### **Walks**

Places are limited. Booking is essential and details of where to park etc will be given when you book: [malverngroup@live.co.uk](mailto:malverngroup@live.co.uk)

#### **Wednesday 27th May**

*The Christopher Cadbury Wetland Reserve at Upton Warren*

Due to the limited space in the hides, there will be two walks, 10am and 2pm, each lasting c2.5hours. Led by the Trust's Ion Riley.

#### **Wednesday 3rd June**

*Hollybed Farm Meadows*

10am start, led by Andrew Forecast (WWT)

#### **Thursday 25th June**

Visit a flower-rich hay meadow in the village of Coddington. Led by Rory Johnson from Herefordshire Meadows.

#### **July/August, date to be confirmed**

*The Knapp and Papermill nature reserve*

We also run a programme of ambles, walks and trips throughout the year. All are welcome. For more information, please see [www.malverngroupwwt.org.uk](http://www.malverngroupwwt.org.uk)

### **Trips**

Many thanks to Lyndon Knott for organising many minibus trips for your group.

Trips all start from the Splash car park, Priory Road, Malvern WR14 3DS.

#### **Wednesday 8th April**

Savernake Forest. 7.30am start. £18

#### **Saturday 16th May**

Rough Bank and Rodborough Common, Glos, particularly good for butterflies. 8am, £17.

#### **Thursday 28th May**

White Horse Hill and three nearby Wildlife Trust reserves: Seven Barrows, Watts Bank and Letcombe Valley. 7.30am, £18.

#### **Saturday 13 June**

Wren's Nest, Dudley, formerly a quarry and mining site. This is now most well-known for its geology but is also home to more than 200 species of wildflowers. 8am, £17.

#### **Saturday 4th July**

Whixhall Moss National Nature Reserve (NNR) and Prees Heath Common. Two reserves near Whitchurch where we hope to see large heath and silver studded blue butterflies. 7am, £20.

#### **Saturday 5 September**

Formby Point (red squirrels) and adjacent Ainsdale and Ainsdale Hills nature reserves. 7am, £20 + entry for non-NT members.

#### **November 22-25**

The pupping seals of Donna Nook and the wintering birds of the Lincolnshire coast. Full details available later but to reserve a place or ask questions, please phone Lyndon ASAP on 01905 455222

#### **Saturday 5th December**

Otmoor nature reserve for wintering birds, not far from Oxford. 8.00am, £18.

Members of your group are also involved in conservation working parties on local Trust nature reserves every Thursday and on the third Sunday of each month. Please contact Brian Iles on 07483 231427 if you are interested in joining in.

Get added to our email list by emailing [malvern@live.co.uk](mailto:malvern@live.co.uk). You can unsubscribe at any time; send us an email to let us know.

## Group visit to Marshside and Martin Mere

The weather had closed in by the time we got up the M6 to Lancashire and it was starting to rain as we parked in the layby for the Marshside RSPB reserve - a flat, open part of the coast. A single large hide close to the road overlooks a large pool with mudbanks. Lapwings were the most numerous wader, along with a few redshanks, curlews and several black-tailed godwits. The geese were all Canada and greylag but some pink-footed flew by, in the area in large numbers. There were lots of teal, shelduck and wigeon with some tufted ducks, shovelers and gadwalls.

Our next stop, Martin Mere, has a range of hides including the Discovery Hide, large and comfortable,



fronting onto the main lake. The birds on the water were close in with whooper swans being the most obvious, lots of the elegant pintail ducks dabbling whilst pochard and tufted ducks were diving busily. The diving ducks included a rare ring-necked duck.

We braved intermittent rain to visit the far reaches of the reserve and, from the top of a hide, we caught sight of a barn owl that got up and drifted along, hunting. Two roe deer browsed along a fence while a glossy ibis flew up and landed out of sight. Two marsh harriers were there; one drifting by and one sat on a distant post.

Finally, home, back down the motorway in the dark and the far from ideal weather that, amazingly, had not detracted from a really good day!

*Peter Butler*

## Group trip to Gilbert White's house

Orange sunrise skies and low-lying mist in the fields set the perfect scene for our journey to Gilbert White's house in Selborne, Hampshire. The Natural History of Selborne, compiled from letters of his observations to other naturalists, published in 1789, and never out of print since, has earned him the title The Father of Ecology.

The house is now a museum that celebrates the legacy of this extraordinary man. Looking out over the extensive garden towards the russet and golden tints of the sloping beechwood, The Hanger, you get a real sense of how this place became a source of constant wonder and joy for Gilbert, at a time when there was still so much to discover about the natural world.

My favourite room had to be Gilbert's study full of papers and specimens, as if Gilbert had just popped out for a walk. The magnificent Bell's Library contains the museum's greatest treasure - the original manuscript of The Natural History of Selborne. I was amused to see the extensive family tree on the wall in the Great Parlour. Although Gilbert never married, on his death in 1793 he had 62 nieces and nephews!

The museum also houses The Oates Collections, including the Antarctic Gallery, and the tragic tale of Scott's 1911 expedition to the South Pole. It was Captain Lawrence Oates who uttered those immortal words "I am just going outside and may be some time."

Time now to explore the garden's rich bounty of seasonal herbs, fruit trees and vegetables. In the meadow is a reproduction of Gilbert's revolving wine pipe seat, which Sheila gave a whirl! Climbing Gilbert's zig-zag path to Selborne Common I heard a nuthatch and wondered if it could be a descendant of those described by Gilbert.



My observation of this wonderful day? Everything is connected.

*Sandra Young*