

YOREDALE BULLETIN

2025



Yoredale Natural History Society



Leopard Slug Wanlass Park meeting 21 October 2024 (Derek Whiteley)



Park Gill (Ken Readshaw)

YOREDALE BULLETIN

Published by Yoredale Natural History Society.

Issue 44

Spring 2025

Recording the Activities during 2024 of
The Yoredale Natural History Society

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www.yoredalenaturalhistory.com

The Yoredale Natural History Society constitution was first written in 1979 with the aim of "*promoting an interest in, and an appreciation of, natural history with particular reference to Wensleydale*".

Cover: Black Grouse males lekking at Coverdale 4 April 2023
Photo by Len Shepherd

Committee 2024/25

Chairman	Anne Readshaw
Vice Chairman	Andy Baxter
Hon. Secretary	Liz Barron
Winter Programme	Gaby Baxter
Hon. Treasurer	Paul Hardill
Membership Secretary	Christine Meek
Field Secretary	Caroline Stott
Bulletin Editor	Derek Whiteley
Webmaster	Jane Graham
Committee members	Jennie White, Len Shepherd, Deborah Millward, Sheila Simms

Recorders 2024/25

Birds	Mary Atkin
Butterflies & some other insects	Jennie White
Hoverflies	Derek Whiteley
Spiders	Andy Baxter
Flowering Plants	Sue Peckitt
Fungi	Christine Whitehead
Mammals	John Drewett
Reptiles & Amphibians	Rose Connor

The 2025 annual subscription is £15 (£5 students, 50p children under16), due on 1st January, or on joining. During spring and summer we run field trips, and during the winter a program of evening lectures in Leyburn Methodist Church Hall, usually on the last Friday of the month. The annual ***Bulletin*** is published in the first quarter, reporting our activities of the previous year.

Children under 16 are welcome at all of our meetings, but to help comply with our child protection policy they must be accompanied by a parent or authorised adult.

New members and visitors are very welcome: visitors fee usually £5

CHANGE OF CONTACT DETAILS: If you've changed your email or address please keep the Membership Secretary informed.

Field Meetings in 2024

West Witton Archaeology and the “Bartle Walk” 24 February 2024

25 members and guests enjoyed an extra-curriculum field meeting early in the year led by Sarah Whiteley (Yorkshire Dales National Park, Senior Historic Environment Officer). The route took us half way up Pen Hill, along Flint Lane and back down Grass Gill. Sarah pointed out a range of features of industrial archaeology including lime kilns and their associated quarries, and evidence of coal and lead mining. We also looked at the historic landscape character of the area and how surviving field boundaries and earthworks reflect agricultural practices from the Medieval period to the present day.

Some of the Bartle mosaics were visited, telling the tale of the pursuit of Old Bartle, thought to be a sheep rustler or pig thief or general vagabond. Every August an effigy is paraded through West Witton and burned at Grassgill. The mosaics depict lines from the Bartle poem.

*At Pen Hill Crags he tore his rags.
At Hunter's Thorn he blew his horn
At Capplebank Stee he brak his knee*

*At Grassgill Beck he brak his neck
At Waddam's End he couldn't fend
At Grassgill End he met his end*



Yoredale visits Yordas 12 April 2024

Yoredale Natural History Society members began their main 2024 programme of outdoor meetings by going underground! They visited a location known to the Vikings, Yordas Cave in Kingsdale, equipped with headtorches, LED lights and wet weather clothing. After a short right turn at the cave entrance members were in complete darkness apart from their lights in a cavern approaching the size of Ripon Cathedral. Members were able to see first-hand red iron ore stains on the cave walls, stalactites forming on the cave roof about 50 feet overhead and the many shapes of the cave created by water over centuries.



Photo : Len Shepherd

Recent heavy rains meant the entire floor was covered in fast flowing water making wellingtons essential. A view of the in-slate waterfall feeding the cave with thunderous noise was possible through a small natural window in the cave walls. The fast-flowing water disappeared underground at the other end of the cave, with signs of natural rather than man-made foam indicating that a few hours earlier the water level was too high for safe access. Only one member admitted to it going over their welly tops! **Len Shepherd**

Nosterfield Nursery 3 May 2024

Members visited the Lower Ure Conservation Trust's (LUCT) wild plant nursery at Nosterfield Nature Reserve. The nursery was set up to grow wild plants, which are now very scarce, to supply restoration projects in the area. Their specialism is in fenland restoration and species which once grew in this now very rare habitat are cultivated so that newly created lowland wet sites can be planted with the appropriate species. LUCT volunteers do all the work and it was they who showed members the techniques used for cultivation and also a splendid adjacent site now restored. Contending with voles, rabbit and deer are just a few of their problems.

LUCT is also managing for English Heritage the conservation aspects of the Thornborough Henges. Just traces of the species which would once have grown on the henges have survived so LUCT are now growing on a very different suite of species to restore this site also. Initially just the henges will get the restoration treatment but it is

hoped that the wider grassland area surrounding the henges can be restored to the wildflower rich habitat which would have greeted visitors thousands of years ago. Thanks to LUCT this is now achievable. **Deborah Millward**



Interesting invertebrates included the Slender Ground-hopper *Tetrix subulata* (photo below by Ken Readshaw) a small relative of grasshoppers, on the northern edge of its British range. It has only been recorded up the Ure as far as Jervaulx. This is a wetland species able to “skate” across the surface of water. The large picture-wing crane fly *Pedicia rivosa*, also known as the Giant Triangle was another nice find. A female Smooth Newt was netted from a small pond. **Derek Whiteley**



Survey of East and West Rounton churchyards

5 May 2024

Members of the Society were invited to survey the churchyards at East and West Rounton, as part of a project to improve biodiversity, instigated by Linda Walsh (trainee Lay Reader at St Lawrence's church). We leapt at the chance to do this, knowing that churchyards very often contain interesting flora and fauna because they have not been 'improved' for agriculture like the surrounding countryside, and are not usually as manicured as people's gardens.

Our focus was on plants, and we were not disappointed. We found 91 different plant species in East Rounton churchyard and 85 at West Rounton. These included flowering plants, trees, ferns and grasses. We saw 11 species of birds and Andy, our spider expert found at least seven different sorts of spider. We also observed two butterflies, one of which (Orange-tip) was fluttering near to its larval food plant (Garlic Mustard), growing in the churchyard at East Rounton.

Parts of the churchyards are being managed according to 'No-Mow-May' principles. We were able to offer some advice about when and how to cut the grass, and how to overcome some of the community's misgivings. Our afternoon at the Rountons was most enjoyable. We were very grateful to Linda and husband Steve for the delicious food they provided, and it was great to meet Jonathan, the vicar and interested parishioners.

As we left East Rounton, a council worker was busy spraying the village footpaths and verges with herbicide, and shortly before that, we'd seen a farmer doing the same in the field surrounding the churchyard. Yet more evidence that churchyards are extremely valuable refuges for plants and wildlife, formerly widespread but now becoming increasingly squeezed.

Anne Readshaw

Scorton Lakes Nature Reserve 16 May 2024

Seventeen members of the Society met for a birdwatching walk around Scorton Lakes Nature Reserve. This site was originally an RAF base during WW2 and has since been quarried by Tarmac for its gravel deposits. Restoration began in 2008, continuing in stages alongside the gravel extraction, but was completed about two years ago. The area now comprises a number of different sized lakes, streams, pasture and woodland and has become an important site for passage waders and wildfowl.

The weather forecast hadn't been very promising but we were lucky and the rain stopped soon after we started walking. Before we had left the car park Swifts were spotted flying overhead which was a first sighting of the year for some members. Other summer migrants seen included Sand Martins flying low over the lakes; Swallows, Whitethroat, Blackcap, Chiffchaff and four different species of warbler – Garden, Willow, Sedge and Reed. We spent quite a bit of time listening to their songs and calls trying to work out the differences between them, with a little bit of help from the Merlin® app. We also had some good views of Reed Buntings sitting on the fence

posts and on the Teasel heads.

We saw a good selection of wetland birds including Lapwing, Curlew, Oystercatcher, Common Sandpiper, Little Egret, Shelduck, Goosander and over 50 Mute Swans on Scorton Lake. There was also a group of Barnacle Geese, which are normally winter visitors. However this is a species that, increasingly, can be seen at any time of the year as small numbers have become naturalised residents. Quite a few of the birds were either sitting on nests, such as the Great Crested Grebes, or already had young such as the Coots, Mallard and Greylag Geese.

Fortunately, there are a few shortcut routes on the reserve which allowed some members to leave early, due to other commitments. However a significant number of the group completed the full circuit, spotting quite a few woodland birds on the way, bringing the final total for the day to 41 different species. The botanists in the group couldn't resist stopping to look at the flowers too and also found over 40 species including Wintercress, Dovesfoot Cranesbill, Guelder Rose and Burnet Rose.

Mary Atkins and Janet Hutchinson

It was a bit cool and grey for insects but we did see plenty of Large Red Damselflies and Blue-tailed Damselflies. On Alders we had the colourful caterpillar of the Yellow-tail moth and an abundance of metallic blue Alder Leaf Beetles *Agelastica alni*. Sadly, two dead Common Toads were noted.

Derek Whiteley

Swaledale Festival Walk to Seata Quarry 26 May 2024

Waterproof gear was needed at the beginning of our walk for the Swaledale Festival, but the weather soon improved and we had a really enjoyable day.

Wandering along a minor road near Aysgarth we noted the verges brimming with Cow Parsley, White Dead-nettle, Goatsbeard and Bush Vetch. Traversing some fields we paused for Frank to describe the construction of a dry stone wall and its uses for wildlife. Everyone seemed to be adept at negotiating the numerous stone-step squeeze stiles.

Near Aysgarth Garage we noted the white flowers of the Ground Elder: a plant introduced to Britain by the Romans as a food source. Welsh Poppies and London Pride were two garden escapes which we noticed on the verges. We discussed the differences between pasture and hay meadow and Jennie told us about the Quaker management of one of these pastures, which was buttercup-rich and dotted with Pignut and Cuckooflowers. Shining Cranesbill, Wood Cranesbill, Wood Avens, Whitlowgrass and Lesser Trefoil were encountered on our way to the disused Seata Quarry.

After a lunch break we explored the quarry, a one-hectare Yorkshire Wildlife Trust Reserve, with its Early Purple Orchids, Twayblade, Pyrenean Fairy Foxgloves, Snow-in-Summer, Hay Rattle, Downy Cranesbill, Bulbous Buttercups, Rue-leaved Saxifrage

and Salad Burnet. After discussing the use of the lime kiln, we headed for an area of “wood pasture”, adorned with wonderful blossom-laden Hawthorns.

We paused at Aysgarth Rock Garden, commissioned by Frank Sayer-Graham before First World War. This amazing gem of a rock garden was actually registered as a Listed Building in 1988 to prevent it being destroyed for development. A gentle walk back through Aysgarth Village led us back to the cars via a grassy track near the Doctor’s Surgery. We ended our walk with the discovery of the hybrid between Wood Avens and Water Avens and a healthy looking clump of Comfrey.

Many thanks to Jennie, Ann, Jenny, Caroline and Frank for volunteering to help with this walk. Chris is hoping to put this walk on for all the YNHS members in 2025.

Chris Meek.



Fairy Foxglove at Seata Quarry, photo Chris Meek

Swaledale Festival walk to Aysgarth Falls and Freeholders’ Wood 28 May 2024

Starting at Aysgarth Church we visited the upper, middle and lower waterfalls, which looked suitably dramatic due to the rather wet conditions. In Freeholders’ Wood Chris explained the process of coppicing. Hazel coppice is now a comparatively rare habitat, though in the 16th century it was much more common and was the preferred method of woodland management. The Freeholders of Carperby were historically allowed the right of estovers in this woodland: they were allowed to collect wood for their own

use. Uses for hazel coppice were also discussed. The coppice plots of today are divided into 14 diamond-shaped coups on an annual rotation. The YDNPA introduced Dormice into Freeholders' Wood in 2008, since this animal had become extinct in Yorkshire, mainly due to the loss of their favoured habitat: hazel coppice. Their numbers are now monitored annually and in 2018 the Wensleydale Dormouse Project was started to enable the Dormice from Freeholders' Wood to expand into further sites in Wensleydale.

Much of the flora was similar to that found on our first walk to Seata Quarry, but flowers of note on this second walk included White Campion, Red Campion, Green Alkanet, Yellow Pimpernel, Marsh Valerian and the rare Herb Paris. Yellow Meadow Ant hills were covered in Wild Strawberries interspersed with a few stands of Bugle. We had lunch before passing Hollins House. As we doubled back across a rushy field we were treated to a Curlew and numerous Lapwings wheeling overhead. Orange-tip butterflies flitted around the rushes.

At the end of the walk we went through St Joseph's Wood and returning to Freeholders' Wood, noting the newly coppiced areas which were being protected from rabbits and deer by the use of 'Gengards.' At the Visitor Centre in Aysgarth we dispersed, many of the party sampling the teashop and other facilities.

Swaledale Festival Officials, Colin and Gavin were very pleased with this walk and proclaimed that they had received very complimentary feedback from the paying guests. Many thanks again to the YNHS volunteers for their invaluable help. (This time Tony Hutchinson joined the group in place of Frank, but all the other volunteers were the same as for the first walk.)

Chris Meek

Jervaulx Abbey 11 June 2024

17 members attended the stroll on a dry but dull day. The privately owned abbey has been in the hands of the Burdon family for a long time. In which time they have done work to not only conserve the walls but preserve the wild flowers. They have involved various people and societies to help with these projects. In 2007 YNHS were approached to help with another survey. YNHS conducted an 11 month survey which identified 202 species, which showed although doing extensive works it hadn't appeared to cause any destruction to the beauty of the abbey and its grounds. The Burdon family rely on voluntary contributions to maintain its up keep. The honesty box was introduced in 1972.

The group were able to identify over 60 species of flowers, grasses, ferns, trees and even a couple of garden flowers had crept in. I know there was more to see but as some species cause quite a bit of discussion we never get to see everything.

I had some great support from Ann Hartley when we did a recce a few days earlier. As we expected there were some changes as there was very little blossom on the Guelder Rose. But the Viper's Bugloss and one of my favourites with the stunning blue

trumpet flower and pink/purple protruding stamens were better and more of them. Also one of my favourites was the Portuguese Laurel with its architectural branches. The flowers weren't as open on the main visit but still gave off a lovely scent. When maintaining the grounds they purposely leave areas uncut to allow for the wild flowers to flourish on one patch there was evidence of many Cowslips only one in flower, a couple of Common Spotted Orchid, Common Vetch, Field Forgetmenot and Birdsfoot Trefoil. There was also Orange Hawkweed in the same patch but I know it as Fox-and-Cubs which I have one in my front hedge at home and a bank of them can be seen in Richmond this year.

We finished off by looking at a wall that had a few different ferns on so we were able to make comparisons. Those who had a bit more free time wandered further around the grounds which is also a wedding venue and is closed on those days. So if thinking of visiting check the website first if you can. It is one way to spend a peaceful few hours. Mike and Diane Grace were one of the last to leave and they saw Ian Burdon who was thrilled to hear YNHS had visited. He gave Mike and Diane a run down on the earlier work YNHS had done.

Liz Barron

Again, it was a bit cool and dull for insects. A few records included the Pond Strong-mark Foldwing cranefly *Ptychoptera contaminata* a pretty insect swept from the edge of the pond where Blue-tailed Damselflies were in large numbers, and larvae of the Larch Ladybird swept from pine branches.. The picture-wing Burdock Fly *Tephritis bardanae* was seen typically wing-waving on Burdock. **Derek Whiteley**



Hawthorn Shield Bug swept from tree foliage. Jervaulx Park 11 June 2024

Studley Royal Deer Park, Ripon 25 June 2024

On one of the hottest days of the year so far, 13 members braved the sun for a three mile walk around Studley Royal Deer Park, near Ripon. After a brief introduction to the three species of deer – Red, Fallow and Sika – which are kept here by the National Trust, and a chance to handle a number of cast antlers, we set off on the short walk into the Park. Deer have been kept here since at least 1577 but few were seen on the first part of the walk! We talked about how keeping deer used to be a status symbol and enjoyed the view down the Lime Avenue which frames Ripon Cathedral, a few miles off. We spotted a couple of single females staying apart from their herds. This is a sign of either a calf/fawn in the grass nearby or else an imminent birth. Amongst lots of ancient and veteran trees, we passed by one of the UK's oldest cherry trees, estimated to be at least 325 years old. Only one live limb remains following its trunk being snapped off in a storm about 15 years ago. Some species of tree – oak, Sweet Chestnut and Beech – produce autumn fruits which help to build up the deer's reserves for the winter.

Eventually, we found the Red stags in the cool of an Oak Avenue and spent some time admiring their antlers, newly growing and covered in 'velvet' to replace those they cast in the spring. They are able to grow a new set within three to four months, a feat which takes quite a toll on their body's resources. One showed how to reach the lower leaves by standing on its rear legs! This is a behaviour that creates a distinctive 'browse line', a neat trimming of the underside of some trees.

We learned how to distinguish one species from another and various facts about their life cycles. We inspected one of the wallows which Red Deer stags in particular use, mainly during the rut (mating season), to coat themselves in mud in order to smell stronger and look bigger and more impressive than their rivals. In the shade, at the lowest part of the Park, we found most of the herd of Sika Deer. Their rich chestnut summer coats and creamy spots make them relatively easy to identify. This species is the newest addition to the Park, having been introduced in 1973, while the Fallow Deer have been here for four or five hundred years and the Reds since the 19th century.

We came across others of all three species dotted around the edge of The Dale, a glacial outwash channel cutting through the Park. June is the main birthing month for Studley's species and we saw some young ones who were strong enough to run with the herd. Not much else stirred in the heat. We saw a soaring Buzzard, a Kestrel and the first Meadow Brown butterflies of the season. As we wended our way back up the hill to the car park and cafés, we felt more informed but wearier after a very hot morning in glorious surroundings. *Mike Gibson*

Weybecks Pasture Field Visit 5 July 2024

Yoredale NHS ventured "off-piste" into Wharfedale visiting a site surveyed 25 years ago by past Chair, Deborah Millward, then an ecologist for the YDNP, the site subsequently being purchased by Yorkshire Wildlife Trust.

At first glance this grass field looks like many others though in the first 300 yards members had identified 21 different species of grass, including rare Black Bog-rush and Blue Moor Grass that grows only on limestone in the North of England.

A babbling brook down a gentle slope had Dipper and Oystercatchers and about 30 species of wild-flower, including Meadow Cranesbill, Meadow Vetchling, Lady's Bedstraw, Water Avenas, Rough Hawkbit, Pignut, Self-heal, Butterwort, Thyme and Mouse-ear. On areas of shorter grass there were a few hundred Fragrant Orchid that smell like carnations and a few hundred Marsh Helleborine in pristine condition! Bogbean was found in wetter areas and the first leaves of Grass of Parnassus, due to flower in August, were recorded.

Species rich flower meadows are often cut very late in the season, after cutting for hay, it is important to graze the orchid-rich surrounding grassland so that a thatch of dead grass does not prevent new seed from germinating.

Len Shepherd

Bishop Middleham Quarry 13 July 2024

On the very wet Saturday afternoon of July 13th a few members of the YNHS visited the SSSI that is Bishop Middleham Quarry Nature Reserve. Abandoned in the 1930's this former Magnesian Limestone quarry is now under the care of Durham Wildlife Trust. Unusual species abound and we were fortunate to find so many special flowers. These included large numbers of Common Spotted, Fragrant, and Pyramidal Orchids, Twayblade and the magnificent Dark Red Helleborine for which the reserve is nationally renowned. Other gems seen were Agrimony, Centaury, Blue Fleabane, Autumn Gentian, Greater Knapweed, Yellow-wort and masses of Fairy Flax throughout. Despite the inclement weather we also saw a Six-spot Burnet Moth, a Narrow-bordered Five-spot Burnet Moth and a Ringlet. This reserve never disappoints even on a rainy day.

Ann Luxmoore and Caroline Stott

River Walk Askrigg, - 20 July 2024

See Flower Recorder's Report

Moth-trapping at Horsehouse 3rd August 2024

About 13 members assembled in Horsehouse Village Hall on the morning of Saturday, August 3rd. Fortunately, the weather overnight had been favourable for moth trapping, with temperatures falling no lower than 12 degrees C, after a few very warm days. Spells of drizzle and a light breeze had not affected the traps and did not seem to discourage the moths.

The traps used were of the Robinson design, with 125W Mercury Vapour bulbs. Chris Meek and I placed one at each end of School House garden, trying to find reasonably flat and sheltered places. The surrounding habitat is semi-improved grassland, with patches of native woodland, at approximately 250m above sea-level. The

forementioned garden is rather unkempt, (but therefore good for all sorts of wildlife!), with a stream and a rough lawn bordered by Snowberry bushes, as well as fruit trees, a vegetable plot - and lots of weeds.

Moth traps such as ours capture live moths, who find the wavelength of light produced by the special bulb irresistible. They fly towards it, lose their bearings, tumble inside and then hide among some carefully placed old egg boxes until we come to discover them next morning. Placing the trap on a big white sheet enhances this effect, and in fact many moths are to be found resting on the sheet, having not even made it into the innards of the trap. This makes it imperative that moth-trappers arrive to inspect the night's catch very early in the morning, before any birds have woken up. Blackbirds and Robins are very savvy indeed and soon make the connection between the moth trap set-up and a free picnic laid out on nice white table linen!

Consequently, as members enjoyed a nice cup of tea and a chat, Chris and I were downing our seventh strong coffee of the day, having been up since 3.30am. We had already unpacked one of the moth traps, transferring its inhabitants to specimen jars, which were labelled and arranged on a table for everyone to look at. The Elephant Hawk-moth, Burnished Brass, Garden Tiger and Gold Spangle were particularly popular exhibits. The second moth trap was then dismantled, with everybody getting a chance to have a go at persuading the moths into jars, identifying them and then releasing them outdoors. We were very grateful to have Mary's help with this, she and Chris being part of the moth team at Foxglove Covert. The app 'Obsidentify' was handy for checking any particularly difficult 'Little Brown Jobs' and some of the tricky Micro-moths.

All-in-all, we recorded 167 moths, of 47 different species – a pretty good haul. Members were impressed with the diversity as well as the exotic appearance of some of the moths, and their quaint Victorian names. Everyone learnt lots and it was a very enjoyable day. We have sent our data to Charlie Fletcher (VC65 Moth Recorder), to be added to the County records. **Anne Readshaw**

Mearbeck Farm, Long Preston, 17 August 2024

In his family since 1890, fifth generation farmer Anthony Bradley gave 15 of us a fascinating insight into the way he farms 90 acres of pasture land, where no plough has been used since the Second World War. His three sons provide valuable assistance but all have other employment.

He keeps cattle and sheep, buying dairy calves at two months old which are kept on the pasture until they are about 15 months, receiving little supplementary feed. The small amount of artificial fertiliser used in the past has been stopped. The fields have been partitioned by hedge planting to enable regular stock rotation thus allowing good grass growth which provides adequate nutrition. There is an increasing amount of clover which is a valuable nitrogen fixer. Because they are bought at auction, where mingling occurs, the calves receive a pneumonia vaccine on arrival plus a small amount of antibiotic to cover them until the vaccine starts to work. Regular silage

analysis identifies any shortfall in nutrient content, which would then result in appropriate feed purchase to ensure good growth and high animal welfare. Lambs are separated from their mothers at 12 weeks, giving sheep the opportunity to recover before the next cycle. The sheep receive supplementary feed for just six weeks pre and five weeks post lambing. Grazing lambs are given parasite treatment only as necessary following muck sample checks.

Inspired by the Pontbren initiative set up by neighbouring upland farmers in Wales, Anthony looks to improve the sustainability of his farm management and is introducing woodland and tree planting to bring various benefits. These include a reduction of water run-off during heavy rain, provision of shelter for the grazing livestock. The biosecurity provided by woodland strips along farm boundaries reduces the risk of contact with neighbouring herds and flocks. They also provide new wildlife habitats and landscape diversity. The woodland creation and fencing project has been completed by the Ribble Rivers Trust, with support from a number of funders, and complements the work being done by the Bradley family to work in cooperation with nature.

The newly planted trees along the becks will help to prevent erosion by stabilising the bank with their roots and to filter pollutants from the water. Slowing the rate of rainfall run-off will decrease flood peaks. The fencing protects the new trees and prevents stock access to the water. Cattle can increase erosion travelling to and from a water course, increasing sedimentation. Excluding livestock from the becks decreases faecal matter in the water, improving its quality. Piped water from accessible springs provides a water supply to each field.

Informative and interesting, as we spent a fine August day in this farmer's company as he led us through fields and uphill to admire magnificent views over the Long Preston flood plain, toward Ingleborough in one direction and Pendle Hill the other. By implementing the regenerative farming practices of hedgerow and woodland creation, together with rotational grazing, both farm and the environment benefit.

Caroline Stott

Wanlass Park 21 October 2024

Eight members enjoyed an autumn walk from West Witton to the River Ure at Wanlass Park, led by Derek Whiteley. The meeting had been postponed for 24 hours owing to gale force winds with heavy rain the previous day. It was a good day for mycology. Chris Meek identified a variety of waxcaps and other grassland fungi

Back Lane proved to be of special merit for invertebrates. Lapidary Snails in really good numbers including adults and very small juveniles in dry stone walls of some antiquity. The Tree Door Snail *Balea heydeni*, Limestone Woodlouse *Porcellio spinicornis* and a rather large Leopard Slug *Limax maximus* were other goodies along Back Lane. (see page 2).

Some dead wood in Wanlass Park was home to Rhinoceros Beetle *Sinodendron cylindricum* the Snail Killer Beetle *Silpha atrata* and best of all a colony of *Anchomenus dorsalis* a very attractive metallic green ground beetle with orangemarkings – last recorded in Wensleydale in 1977. A tiny but fully-grown earth centipede *Brachygeophilus truncorum* was found under dead wood. It was last recorded in 1987 (at Braithwaite Hall). A rather late Field Grasshopper *Chorthippus brunneus* was a nice find. I was able to point out the oak trees where Purple Hairstreaks had been flying two months before.



Returning up Flats Lane to West Witton brought the 2024 YNHS outdoor programme to a successful conclusion with an autumn walk with plenty of interest. One point of discussion was the make-up of dry stone walls. Some are made of typical limestone rocks with angular shapes whilst others are made of more rounded rocks smoothed off by erosion. Are these derived from the river or from glacial deposits (or both?)

Derek Whiteley

Indoor Meetings in 2024

White-clawed Crayfish in North Yorkshire, Vanessa Barlow

26 January 2024

Vanessa Barlow from the Yorkshire Wildlife Trust spoke to the Society about the native, freshwater, White-clawed Crayfish, a species now listed as Endangered on the IUCN Red List. Members had specifically requested an update on the local status of the this nocturnal crustacean following concern about losses in the River Ure catchment, recently regarded as the best in Yorkshire for this species.

Vanessa first described the species and its habitat requirements – either running or still, clean water with plenty of hiding crevices from its many predators. She explained the difference between the native species and the introduced Signal Crayfish which unfortunately can carry crayfish plague, a disease fatal to our native species. The Signals also out-compete the natives as they are larger.

A consortium of concerned organisations had been established; the North Yorkshire Crayfish Forum and Vanessa showed a distribution map of the two species taken from the Forum's website. Sadly this showed that in 2021 the plague had infected water above Aysgarth Falls, which had been considered a barrier to the spread of Signals. Survey work, which can only be carried out by licenced workers as it is illegal to handle crayfish, showed that the plague had now reached Thwaite Bridge. Although the Signal Crayfish had not actually come upstream of the Falls the spores of the oomycete, a water born fungus had.

An ark site in Threshfield had been established to breed Wensleydale White-clawed Crayfish ready for reintroduction once the river was considered plague free. Visit the Forum's website to learn more and always remember to clean wellington boots when moving between catchments. ***Deborah Millward***



Red Squirrel; photo Len Shepherd

Snaizeholme Woodlands, Paul Mosley

23 February 2024

Paul Mosley from the Woodland Trust spoke about the Trust's recently acquired site at Snaizeholme. This large estate covers the whole of the upper catchment of the Snaizeholme Beck and as such offers a great opportunity to monitor the changes in the environment brought about by a change in land management. A highly sophisticated, automatic weather station has been installed to monitor all aspects of the weather so that the response of the soils and hydrology to climate change, as well as to the land

management changes can be interpreted. Both Leeds and York universities have committed to a long term research project period of 25 years.

Before any changes were made, base line surveys were carried out on vegetation, birds, mammals and aquatic and soil life. This information was fed into a management plan to ensure that high conservation areas are not damaged by tree planting or new tracks. Famous for its Red Squirrels, Snaizholme does of course have a whole ecosystem which will be affected by the change to cattle grazing from sheep grazing, by protecting peat and by tree planting. The Trust does not use plastic tree guards but plants more densely to allow for inevitable losses - and yes that is being monitored too. *Deborah Millward*

Richard and Cherry Kearton Wildlife Photographers. Helen Guy

22 March 2024

Helen Guy was originally born in Swaledale and after having a few decades away returned and has taken a keen interest in the area ever since including the lead mining history of the dale. After volunteering at the Keld Resource Centre for ten years she is now the Director. She gave a passionate and informative talk on the world's earliest known pioneering wildlife photographers. Richard and Cherry Kearton were born in Thwaite in 1862 and 1871 respectively. They were educated at Muker School where there are memorial plaques for them both. Also on Corner House in Thwaite where they were born there are stone carvings of their dates of birth.

Over the years Helen has been able to acquire several of their publications, including Richard's first edition of his autobiography (according to Wikipedia they wrote 18 books and made 7 films). Richard's camera is in the Science Museum. The Natural History Museum library has a substantial archive collection of Cherry's photographs, negatives and films from the 1920s and 1930s. In the Patent Office there are patents registered by Cherry regarding film cameras, projectors and microphones from 1908 to 1914.

When Richard was seven he fell out of a tree and damaged his hip resulting in a limp and thereafter had to wear a cork shoe. They learnt a lot from their grandfather growing up in Swaledale regarding the natural world but it was mainly empirical knowledge. At one point they both worked for Cassels Publishing House in London who published many of their books. They left this employment to pursue their love of the natural world. Richard was the main writer whereas Cherry was the main photographer. They travelled extensively but again Cherry travelled more around the world. It was amazing the lengths the brothers went to get the photographs. A picture showed Cherry on Richard's shoulders with a type of tripod taking a picture of a bird's nest. They had many adventures and near misses including hanging over a cliff from a 200 foot rope made of hemp and immersed in water for days (no risk assessments or health and safety back then).

To be able to take some of the photographs they devised many types of hides with

varying degrees of success depending on the subject matter and the environment. Like making a pile of rubbish, tree trunks, wooden masks, a stuffed sheep and an artificial ox which got in the paper when they had a mishap and ended up upside down so looked as though the ox had six legs. Richard took the photograph before helping Cherry out of the ox that due to its instability fell over while Cherry was changing position inside the model. Cherry had a vast amount of patience taking six days to get a photograph of a kingfisher and taking three days to take a picture of the last osprey in Britain at that time.

Cherry had two trips with Theodore Roosevelt, first when he was invited to join him in America and then to East Africa. The brothers also had the passion and patience to get to know the local people and their traditions. David Attenborough was captivated by their film about the penguins on Dassen Island and said “The brothers virtually invented natural history”.

Liz Barron

For The Love of Caddisflies, Sharon and Peter Flint

27 September 2024

Sharon Flint delivered our first talk of the new season with much passion, enthusiasm and incredible depth of knowledge on a subject I had barely heard of. The scientific name Trichoptera means “hairy-winged”. A large order of insects with over 200 UK species they are related to Butterflies, are nectar feeders and their forewing length measures from a minute 2mm to nearly 3cm. Found in all kinds of wetlands, three-quarters of their larvae make a case in which to pupate and most complete their life-cycle within one year. The case-less females lay eggs in sheets, whereas the cased species lay eggs inside a jelly blob and the larvae make a portable case within three weeks.

Of the case-less caddis larvae there are six families with 46 species. Sharon gave several examples including Rhyacophilidae with gills along their lateral margins; she warned this species might bite. Polycentropodidae have no gills but undulate their bodies and are net-spinners in still or flowing waters. Hydropsychidae which have gills sited ventrally, are also net-spinners and found in rapid flowing waters. The Philopotamidae spin nets in the form of long tubular bags and are found in small upland streams with boulders. Psychomyiidae are gallery builders on rocks and are to be found in streams and lakes. Another group of net spinners, the Ecnomidae, are very small and found in slow-flowing rivers and canals.

The cased caddis larvae, of which there are many more, are very diverse. A selection was presented indicating their varied cases, some very strong and which can last years. They may be constructed from dead leaves, stones, sand, metals, sticks, indeed anything to be found including plastic; these were illustrated by some amazing photographs.

Juvenile caddis exhibit a fascinating diversity of pattern and structure, including spots,

stripes, bands, spinules and spikes. These are all used for the process of identification along with various characteristics e.g. those which crawl out of their case, those with gills and whether they are single, double or in threes, if there is a protuberance, perhaps collapsed and, if there are long legs, “claws”, the angle of the claw.

Habitats are many: tarns ponds and lakes, wet flushes, ditches and woodland trickles and, within bank side roots wood and stones, at the edges of both large and small rivers. To find larval caddis, methods such as kick sampling, hand searching and pond netting are used along with a white tray, hand lens and a camera.

Sharon went on to enthuse about the caddis adults, in the past regarded as somewhat dull. Keen to dispel this, she described the striking markings and incredibly long antennae of these insects whose wings are held at the side of their body. They can be caught with a pooter, sweep net or light trap and are identified by the pattern, shape, markings and venation on their wings, the presence of spurs or spines on their legs and by their genitalia.

Sharon’s love of pond life goes back many years and has developed with university study, teaching and involvement with the YNU. Her marriage to Peter another entomologist and fresh water consultant has cemented her interest. Recently both have been involved with Ian Wallace to co-write a Practical Field Guide. With some trepidation, in view of her respect for them, I asked what preys on caddis - they provide an important food source for all kinds of predator, fish such as Brown Trout, birds including the Dipper and bats. **Caroline Stott**



***Chaetopteryx villosa* the Flying Gooseberry is a very hairy caddisfly. Swept from calcareous flush at Thornton Rust Moor on 26 October 2024 by Derek Whiteley.**

Peatlands, Joseph Haywood, the Peat Project Officer for Yorkshire Wildlife Trust and Yorkshire Peat Partnership. 25 October 2024

Joseph Haywood gave us an excellent talk on peatlands and blanket bog in the North of England. He identified the features of a healthy blanket bog and described how efforts are being made to map degraded blanket bogs and restore them to a healthy state.

Healthy peatlands and blanket bogs are natural controllers of water flow. They store water in the sphagnum moss and peat, which trickles out slowly into natural watercourses and can therefore prevent flash flooding in areas downstream. Peatlands cover only 3% of the world's surface, but store over 30% of the carbon captured in our soil. They are also areas of biodiversity with plants such as sundew and many different species of sphagnum moss. They are home to many bird species, including Short-eared Owl, Curlew and Snipe and also reptiles, invertebrates and amphibians, including dragonflies and Adders.

Degraded peat bogs however cannot work properly, so the YPP, in partnership with other organisations, undertake to map and restore these upland areas of blanket bogs, so that they can work efficiently. Over 7,000 kilometres of drainage channels, known as grips, were installed after the Second World War, in an attempt to provide more land for food production. We now know that this needs to be largely reversed, in order to prevent flooding events downstream. There are also over 2,500 kilometres of eroding gullies which need attention. When the peat dries out it is susceptible to wild fires, so many measures are being used to make sure the peat remains wet. Gullies can be partially blocked with rocks (often transported by helicopter), timber or coir logs. Sometimes a peat dam can be successfully installed to slow the water flow.

Bare, flat areas of peat can be restored with plug plants such as cotton grass, sphagnum moss or re-seeded with heather brash. Gullies can be re-profiled using diggers. A new technique known as hydro-seeding is being employed on Fleet Moss, which may prove to be more successful than using heather brash. This can be sprayed onto the side of peat hags or re-profiled areas. The Yorkshire Peat Partnership also has to report back to its funders on the efficacy of their work, in addition to its initial mapping and restoration work. Therefore the YPP monitors areas that have been treated to see if the various efforts to restore the peatland are being successful in raising the water table. Monitoring in this way allows them to assess the best methods to use in different situations.

The YPP is also keen to educate the public, where possible, about the measures they are undertaking. For example, many sorts of peat free compost have been introduced to allow gardeners a feasible alternative to peat-based products. The extraction of peat for use on gardens is now being much more widely discouraged. Perhaps in a small way we can all make choices which will improve the state of our upland areas. Peat grows at a rate of only 1mm per year, so there are definitely better ways of fertilising our gardens. Many thanks to Joseph for such an in-depth, interesting presentation.

Chris Meek

Getting to Know our Millipedes, Centipedes and Woodlice.

Derek Whiteley, 28 November 2024

The focus of the talk was on identification and “easy hit” species that can be identified with a hand lens by checking two or three key characters. These three groups can be found, studied and recorded during the winter months when entomological activity is low. Indeed some species are at their best and most active from October to April.

Synanthropic (associated with humans) habitats produce the most interest and greatest diversity, and the opportunity to find exciting species. Gardens, allotments, churchyards, railway cuttings, roadside laybys, Victorian walled gardens, municipal parks and waste ground are all good places to look.

Millipedes have two pairs of legs per segment

Centipedes have one pair of legs per segment. Many species (*Lithobius* species) have 15 pairs but the long wiry soil centipedes have up to 83 pairs.

Woodlice have 7 pairs of legs.

Tribute was paid to the late Douglas Richardson of Skipton (1919-2013) a great activist promoting these invertebrates. He wrote keys which were photocopied and distributed. He ran identification workshops and he organised recording schemes for Yorkshire and also ran the national scheme for millipedes for several years. He was a popular stalwart of the YNU and attended many meetings.

Most woodlice that we are likely to see will be one of the “Famous 4”.

Common Shiny Woodlouse *Oniscus asellus*

Common Rough Woodlouse *Porcellio scaber*

Common Soil Woodlouse *Trichoniscus pusillus*

Common Striped Woodlouse (Fast Woodlouse) *Philoscia muscorum*

There are many other species but they are very small, or rare, or difficult to find. A fifth species, the Limestone Woodlouse *Porcellio spinicornis* is the exception. Nationally rather localised, it is quite common in Wensleydale particularly in limestone walls.

A few others to look for include:-

Rosy Woodlouse -easy to identify. See article in this issue.

Purple Woodlouse -found in dung heaps. Known from Swinithwaite

Common Pill Woodlouse –only three local records.

Nosey Pill Woodlouse – synanthropic, yet to be recorded here, but likely.

Limestone Pill Woodlouse –limestone scree, exposures, quarries. Uncommon

Picture Pill Woodlouse – very rare nationally. Stainforth is our nearest record.

Pygmy Woodlouse -so tiny it is rarely recorded but probably common.

Haplophthalmus mengii a tiny creamy white woodlouse. Few records.

Haplophthalmus danicus another tiny creamy-white species not yet recorded but almost certainly overlooked.

Christmas Social and Quiz. 13 December 2024

Ken Readshaw presented a review of the year featuring a selection of his best photos, including YNHS field trips and his own studies at Park Gill to the north of Kettlewell. (see page 2) Anne Readshaw organised a seasonal quiz that challenged our identification skills. Members prepared a sumptuous buffet of Christmas fayre. It was a merry way to complete another successful YNHS year.



Anne Readshaw's edible meringue mushrooms, a feature of the Christmas buffet

Flower Recorder's Report 2024

Sue Peckitt

Nosterfield, 3 May 2024

Trip to see the ongoing introduction of wetland plants - Bog Sedge, Slender Tufted Sedge, rare Great Fen Sedge. Also trays of newly emerged Quaking Grass, Rockrose and Dyer's Greenweed. All plants of calcareous grassland.

Castle Bolton, Redmire - 9 May 2024

Red Campion, Comfrey, Bluebells, Water Avens, Silverweed, Germander Speedwell, Thyme-leaved Speedwell, White Dead-nettle, Herb Robert, Forgetmenot, Garlic Mustard, Gorse, Garlic, Greater Stitchwort, Dog's Mercury, Bugle, Celandine, Shining Cranesbill, Cowslip, Primrose, Cuckoo Pint, Crosswort, Ground Ivy, Dog Violet, Barren Strawberry, Lady's Smock, Mouse-ear Chickweed, Ivy-leaved Toadflax, Periwinkle, Rue-leaved Saxifrage, Dog Daisy, Yellow Corydalis, Pellitory of the Wall, Sweet Cicely, Vetch, Bulbous Buttercup.

Flowering Trees – Bird Cherry, Crab, Elm,

Scorton Lakes, 16 May 2024

Black Medick, Bluebells, Bramble, Bristly Oxtongue, Brooklime, Burnet Rose, Bush Vetch, Cleavers, Crosswort, Cuckoo Pint, Cut-leaved Cranesbill, Dovesfoot Cranesbill, Germander Speedwell, Gorse, Ground Elder, Groundsel, Guelder Rose, Hawthorn, Hedgerow Cranesbill, Herb Bennet, Hop Trefoil, Lesser Trefoil, Meadow Buttercup, Red Clover, Ribwort Plantain, Sticky Mouse-ear, Teasel, Thyme-leaved Speedwell, Watercress, White Dead-nettle, Wild Rose, Wild Strawberry, Wintercress, Yellow Flag Iris, Zigzag Clover

Grasses, rushes, sedges – Common Spike Rush, Hard Rush, Jointed Rush, Quaking Grass.



Bristly Oxtongue; photo Ken Readshaw

Jervaulx Abbey – 11 June 2024

Herb Robert, Woundwort, Speedwell, Daisy, Buttercup, Crosswort, Sow Thistle, Marjoram, Shining Cranesbill, Couch Grass, Wood Avens, Dog Rose, Ivy Leaved Toadflax, Garlic Mustard, Vipers Bugloss, Bramble, Hop Trefoil, Kidney Vetch, Meadow Vetchling, Wild Strawberry, Bush Vetch, Great Lettuce, Dog Daisy, Hairy Tare, Red Campion, Feverfew, Black Medic, Red Clover, Mouse-Ear Hawkbit, Cow Parsley, Wall Lettuce, Mouse-Ear Chickweed, Birdsfoot Trefoil, Ground Ivy, Fox and Cubs, Common Spotted Orchid, Forget-me-Not, Common Vetch, Bulbous Buttercup, Perforated St John's Wort, Greater Burnet, White Dead-nettle, Hawkweed, Pellitory-of-the-Wall, Cowslip Bistort, Hogweed, Yorkshire Fog, Red Fescue, False Oat Grass, Cocksfoot, Quaking Grass, Guelder Rose, Portuguese Laurel, Hart's Tongue Fern, Male Fern, Brittle Bladder Fern, Maidenhair Spleenwort, Aubretia, Wallflower.

Weybeck Pasture – 5 July 2024

Timothy, Meadow Foxtail, False Oat, Cocksfoot, Rough Stalked Meadow Grass, Yorkshire Fog, Common Bent, Red Fescue, Crested Dogstail, Quaking Grass, Blue Moor-grass, Sweet Vernal Grass, Hairy Oat, Jointed Rush, Hard Rush, Black Bog-rush, Tawny Sedge, Broadleaved Cotton-grass, Crested Hair-grass.

Meadow Vetchling, Silverweed, Meadow Cranesbill, Meadowsweet, Greater Burnet, Lady's Bedstraw, Zigzag Clover, Hogweed, Knapweed, Rough Hawkbit, Water Avens, Fairy Flax, White Clover, Mouse-ear, Birdsfoot Trefoil, Pignut, Salad Burnet, Thyme, Eyebright, Selfheal, Mouse-ear Hawkweed, Small Scabious, Butterwort, Hay Rattle, Lesser Stitchwort, Fragrant Orchid, Birdseye Primrose, Cowslip, Northern Marsh Orchid, Rockrose, Common Spotted Orchid, Early Marsh Orchid, Heath Spotted Orchid, Early Purple Orchid, Grass of Parnassus, Bogbean, Lady's Mantle.

Bishop Middleham Quarry – 13 July 2024

Agrimony, Harebell, Mouse-ear Hawkweed, Rock Rose, Yellow-wort, Small Scabious, Field Scabious, Red Clover, Zigzag Clover, White Clover, Lady's Bedstraw, Thyme, Blue Fleabane, St John's Wort, Ragwort, Meadow Cranesbill, Bladder Campion, Rosebay Willowherb, Self-Heal, Rough Hawkbit, Herb Robert, Herb Bennet, Fragrant Orchid, Pyramidal Orchid, Common Spotted Orchid, Twayblade, Fairy Flax, Restharrow, Birdsfoot Trefoil, Meadow Vetchling, Common Hogweed, Dark Red Helleborine, Centaury, Tufted Vetch, Autumn Gentian, Eyebright, Black Medick, Greater Knapweed, Milkwort, Hoary Plantain, Yellow Rattle, Woundwort, Carline Thistle, Bush Vetch, Quaking Grass, Wild Parsnip, Black Horehound, Hop Trefoil.

River Walk Askrigg, - 20 July 2024

Ox-Eye Daisy, Feverfew, Herb Robert, Herb Bennet, Green Alkanet, Foxglove, Yarrow, Red Clover, White Clover, Meadow Cranesbill, Bush Vetch, Crosswort, Knapweed, Maretail, Mouse-Ear, Jack-by-the-Hedge, White Dead-nettle, Ribwort Plantain, Greater Plantain, Germander Speedwell, Cleavers, Maidenhair Spleenwort, Common Knotgrass, Nipplewort, Wall Lettuce, Creeping Cinquefoil, Goatsbeard, Meadow Vetchling, Hedge Woundwort, Hedge Parsley, Red Campion, Shining Cranesbill, Creeping Thistle, Greater Willowherb, Watercress, Brooklime, Lesser Stitchwort, Tutsan, Common Valerian, White Mallow, Welsh Poppy, Marsh Thistle, Yellow Stonecrop, Lesser Trefoil, Thyme Leaved Speedwell, Himalayan Balsam, Harebell, Tormantil, Pineapple Weed, *Mimulus*, Greater Burnet, Silverweed, Dog Rose.

[Vernacular plant names follow Blamey, Fitter and Fitter *Wild Flowers of Britain and Ireland* (2003). These names seem to avoid a lot of apostrophes, hyphens and word breaks, which I hope, makes the text more readable. **Editor**]

Butterfly Report 2024

Jennie White

As most of you will know I am one of thousands of people monitoring over 3,000 sites for the United Kingdom Butterfly Monitoring Scheme; one of the longest running insect monitoring schemes in the world, begun in 1976. Butterflies are good indicators of the state of the environment and useful when assessing the impact of climate change and government policies. I was pleased this year to have a new recorder, Stella Swan, to share monitoring the Glebe Field with Mike Gibson stepping in when needed. Previously I had shared the work with John Smith for a number of years.



Common Blue male; photo by Jennie White

We record on 26 weeks from 1st April until the end of September. April this year was cold, wet and windy with frosts until the end of the month. Only a couple of brave Peacocks and an Orange Tip were seen until May and June when whites, Green veined, Large and Small appeared alongside the Peacocks and Orange Tips. Overall numbers were low with between 10 and 20 throughout May and June. It wasn't until July that numbers peaked with a high of 62 overall with the appearance of Meadow Browns and Ringlets. Difficult to spot the difference between them at first, until you get the eye in! We did have a few skippers, Common Blue, Speckled Wood, Small Heath, Small Copper.

Numbers dropped again to around 12 to 20 in August as Meadow Brown and Ringlets disappeared. The hay in the Glebe Field was cut at the end of July, so no butterflies recorded, except on the control transect by the river. I did see 20 Peacocks there on Devil's-bit Scabious at the end of August. They could have been from the larvae I saw earlier, see below. A very disappointing year.

General butterfly spotting started with Deborah recording a Red Admiral in West Burton in early April. I had a Green-veined White and Orange Tip in Wensley in early

May. In early July I found a pristine male Common Blue and a huge tangle of Peacock larvae on nettles on our River Ure transect. Late July, a Gatekeeper in long grass on Leyburn Playing field. Derek has reported on sightings of Purple Hairstreaks in a separate article. I had a Humming-bird Hawk Moth in Leyburn. Deborah book-ended the year with four Red Admirals on Sedum in Thornton Rust in October. Thank you to all for sending in records and, apologies if I have missed any out.

Hoverfly Recorder's Report for 2024 *Derek Whiteley*

Another successful year recording our local hoverflies. Over 1000 records have been added to the database. Some very interesting species have been recorded in our area. Some of these are from previous years where a voucher specimen has only recently been identified.

***Pocota personata* The Bumblefly.** Seen again at Wensley Park investigating rot holes in veteran Sycamores. New record from Back Lane Swinithwaite investigating a veteran Ash tree.

Pipiza noctiluca is one of the “little black jobs” that are quite difficult to identify without a voucher specimen. Middle Moor, Foxglove Covert 28 June 2023 is a third VC65 record. Previously found at Deepdale near Startforth in 2021 and Dent in 2019.

Chrysotoxum arcuatum is a stunning little wasp mimic with bold markings. It breeds in the nests of black ants and has a north-westerly distribution in Britain. On 25 September 2024 two were feeding on Ivy blossom at Capple Bank. In 2022 it was recorded from Deep Dale near Richmond, Haw Bank and Scar Wood at East Scafton (Chris Bradshaw).

Eristalis abusiva is a small dronefly of coastal grasslands, but is also occasionally found inland in the flood plains of large rivers. One was netted on the banks of the River Ure on the Bolton Estate on 22 May 2023. It has previously been found in the Ure valley up to Jervaulx, and at a few sites in the Yorkshire Dales

Platycheirus nielseni is a narrow-bodied hoverfly known mainly from upland locations. A male specimen from Locker Tarn on 19 June 2024 appears to be a new record for Wensleydale.

Other Interesting Diptera Records

***Tipula cheethami* Cheetham's Cranefly.** My study of this species, which started in 2023 (Yoredale Bulletin 2024) has made good progress with additional records of adults from mossy waterfalls at Buckden Beck, Hell Gill, Kidstones Gill, Water Ling at Carpley Green, Cotter Force (a female egg-pricking into wet moss) Horse Head in Upper Wharfedale and Walden Head. These are all new records, all in the first half of June 2024. I also found immature stages, mainly empty puparia cases, sticking out of wet moss by waterfalls.

***Ctenophora pectinicornis* Orange-sided Combhorn.** A very elegant and colourful crane fly associated with large rotting trees or rotten boughs. Beech, Sycamore and Horse Chestnut are favoured trees. Females in Pass Wood 2 June 2024 and Wensley Park on 17 May 2024 (photo).



***Nephrotoma analis* Dark-tipped Tiger Cranefly.** Preston Scar 17 June 2022 previous record for Wensleydale in 1973.(Appersett) A species of moist sandy soil often near rivers.

***Orimarga virgo* Reddish Narrow-wing.** A rare crane fly with a north and western distribution in Britain. Stainforth Beck 22 June 2024 swept from a calcareous seepage. There are very few records for the Yorkshire Dales.

***Dicranomyia aperta* Grass of Parnassus Cranefly.** Specimens taken on 6 August 2022 from Thornton Rust calcareous seepages. Appears to be a new record for VC65.

***Dicranomyia quadra* Stream Cranefly.** An uncommon species of upland streams. Swept from a waterfall near Scar Top just below Addleborough on 8 June 2024. This record is new for VC65 and the Yorkshire Dales, and possibly a first for Yorkshire.

***Renocera striata* Stripe-fronted Mussel-killer.** A rare Sciomyzid fly that preys on freshwater pea mussels in upland fens. A specimen taken at a wet flush in Bardale on 8 August 2022 is only the second record for VC65 and is new for the Yorkshire Dales.

***Sicus ferrugineus* the Ferruginous Bee-grabber** is a Conopid fly that preys on a

variety of bumblebees and occasionally other bees. Stang Forest 15 June 2022 is a first record for VC65, followed by records for Masham and Foxglove Covert in 2023. It is not a rare species but the national maps show a huge blank area along the Pennines where it is assumed to be uncommon.

***Ornithomya chloropus* Nordic Flat Fly.** A parasite of birds including Red Grouse. Swept from Heather at Apedale 29 June 2023. A nice record, but not new to VC65. Another swept from Heather at Wygill Beck near Tan Hill on 24 June 2024.

***Oxycera nigricornis* Delicate Soldierfly.** Many swept from an upland spring-fed wet flush on 28 June 2023 at Foxglove Covert Appears to be new to VC65.

***Hybomitra montana* Slender-horned Horsefly.** One of our larger horseflies, and a species of upland bogs. A female was attracted to my hot car at Tanhill Moss on 24 June 2024. This appears to be only a second record for VC65 with a previous record from Teesdale in 2013. On the same day I crossed the border into Westmoreland and found more at Wygill Beck, Molds Hill, Lingy Rigg and Potterside. Again, most of these were females attracted to a hot car, or swept from upland bogs where they breed.

Cordilura ciliata is a shiny black Scatophagid Fly that breeds in *Carex* beds. Middle Moor, Foxglove Covert 9 July 2023. One previous record for VC65 at Nosterfield.

***Trupanea stellata* Stellate Picturewing Fly.** A stunning little fly with green eyes and a starburst wing pattern. Foxglove Covert orchard 18 May 2023. It is new for VC65 and nationally is mainly southern, being rare to the north of the Midlands. It forms a gall-like distortion on the flowers of ragworts.

Beetle Report 2024

Derek Whiteley

I have set up a new database of local beetle records. Bob Marsh (YNU Beetle Recorder) kindly extracted records from the YNU database for our area, and I have added records from local sources including Foxglove Covert. Combined they now exceed 22,000 records. Some interesting records for the past three years are reviewed here. I will be pleased to add further records of beetles to the database.

***Lagria hirta* Darkling Beetle.** There are surprisingly few local records of this familiar beetle. On 9 July 2023 I found several in different locations at Foxglove Covert, where it had previously been recorded coming to light by moth-trapper Charlie Fletcher in 2016 and 2021. No records as yet for the Yorkshire Dales NP.

***Thanasimus formicarius* Ant Beetle.** A colourful red, black and grey beetle that mimics a wood ant. Known from Foxglove Covert in 2012 (Brian Slater det. Roger Key). I found it in Oxque Park Swaledale on the trunk of dead tree on 4 June 2023. They appear to be the first and second records for VC65. It is a predator of bark beetles.

***Ischnomera sanguinicollis* Red-necked Flower Beetle**



A rare species of southern Britain previously with very few Yorkshire records. Known from Far Spring Wood in 1993 and 2006 (Roy Crossley and Mike Denton) and nearby Downholme Park Wood in 2015 (Jill Cunningham). I found it on the YNHS meeting to Redmire Scar on 17 June 2022, and then in Wensley Park, Bolton Estate on 15 May 2023 (photo) and 17 May 2024 associated with veteran Sycamores with rotten boughs and rot holes. It breeds in dead wood and feeds on pollen. Yoredale seems to be an important stronghold.

***Stenocorus meridianus* Variable Longhorn**

A large conspicuous longhorn beetle that breeds in rotten trees. This one was photographed in Oxque Park, Swaledale on 3 June 2023, found on a veteran Ash tree. A mating pair was recorded on a mature hedgerow Ash tree in Wanlass Park on 2 June 2024. Previous VC65 records from Freeholders Wood (1919) Tanfield (1969) High Batts (2019) and Richmond (2021). We are near the northern edge of its British distribution.



Spider Report 2024

Andy Baxter

2024 has been an interesting year. I've found many of the old common favourites, particularly large male specimens of *Eratigena*, Large House Spiders guarding females with whom they have mated; *Textrix denticulata*, Colourful Laceweb Spider; *Araneus*, both *diadematus* and *quadratus* Garden Spiders; *Amaurobius* Laceweb Spiders, as well as *Pisaura mirabilis*, Nursery Web Spider.



***Amaurobius* sp. Laceweb spider**

My main interest this last year has been on researching papers on work being undertaken by specialists in the field of “Spider Eco Systems”. We are all familiar with and value the contribution that bees and other invertebrate pollinators provide to critical ecosystem services, but the contribution of spiders and the fascinating range of projects and discoveries being made in this area potentially far exceed that of pollinators: some of which I will share below, but suffice to say spiders, and their contribution not only to the natural world we all share, but in helping us understand and develop benefits for us too, are exciting.

Provisioning Services is just one area which benefits us: Spider silk, spider venom and spiders’ engineering prowess are contributing benefits to us in areas such as structural materials, engineering solutions, bio-friendly insecticides, medicine, food security and locomotion. In the area of medicine for example, the venom of just one single spider contains between 100 and 1,000 different components! Add in the staggering global species diversity of spiders and we have a library of millions upon millions of combinational biochemicals. Spider venom has properties that lend their use to therapeutic applications. Research is already underway in the application of these neurotoxins to treat neurodegenerative diseases, pain, skeletal muscle diseases, skin disorders, metabolic disorders, cancer, vascular disorders, microbial infections, and malaria, to name just a few.

Pest control in agriculture is another exciting area with studies showing that allowing spiders to colonise crops instead of using insecticide sprays has shown a high success rate in combating the aphids carrying Barley Yellow Dwarf Virus (BYDV). So gentle reader, I implore you that instead of fearing spiders, be fascinated by them.

Sources: Saez & Herzig, Herzing & King, Hickman, Chassagnon, amongst many others etc.

Reptile and Amphibian Report 2024

Rose Connor

2024 seems to have been a poor year for amphibians and reptiles. I am grateful to Gaynor James and Liz Barron for their sightings of frogs and toads and to Deborah Millward who heard croaking on Thornton Rust Moor on 20 February 2024.

Frog activity started in my garden pond on 18/2/24 and ceased 1/11/24 with higher numbers than previous years, a maximum of 8 on 1/6/24. The weather being so changeable this year has I think confused frogs and toads as to when to mate as September and October saw frogs croaking and numbers squashed on the road.

Newts 30 March 2024 Jennie White counted 35 newts in her pond.

Toads 14 March 2024 Liz counted 26 squashed on Quarry Lane, Harmby.

18 March 2024 Gaynor reported hundreds of toads pairing up in Brick Kiln pond, Spennithorne.

Hornby Castle. Once archaeology restarted at the end of March sightings of toads and the occasional frog were noted, the last sighting was on 27 October 2024 when a torpid frog and toad were uncovered whilst pulling weeds. Kiplin Hall 3 August 2024 masses of froglets near the lake banks heading into undergrowth.

Mammal Report 2024

John Drewett

Firstly, I would like to thank all those members who have sent in records over the past year. As usual, everything received has been added to the database irrespective of the location of the observed animal(s), though only those records from vice county 65 and to the west of the A1 have been included in this analysis.

Apart from squirrels, rodents tend to be a poorly recorded group of mammals. This is, of course, because they are mostly small, secretive and nocturnal and so require particular attention, particularly live trapping. In the absence of such trapping, some records can be obtained from bird pellet analysis; an example of this was Field Vole bones found in a pellet at Beezy Hill above Askrigg in November. This species was also observed live at Sorrelsykes in June and predated at West Witton in October. Wood Mouse was reported from West Witton.

Five sightings of Grey Squirrel were reported this year, mainly in the first part of the year; all were in the lower parts of the Dales except for one at Skelton (Marske) on 3rd February. No Red Squirrel records were received in 2024. Sixteen records of Rabbit were received from our recording area during the year. This is almost certainly evidence of under-recording even after taking account of the general decline of this

species in recent times. There are still instances of larger numbers such as hundreds active in winter sunshine on Beldshaw Hill above Woodhall in January. Reports of myxomatosis have been fewer in recent times. Some black individuals continue to be evident in Wensleydale colonies.

Brown Hare reports far exceed those of Rabbits this year. Mostly these are of small numbers, but they do include sightings from both lowland and upland areas. Numbers remain high in the lowland parts of our area between the A1 and Constable Burton; I watched eleven at Hornby Park in February and even higher numbers at a private site south of Catterick.

Among the insectivores, records are dominated by Hedgehogs and Moles. Sadly, most Hedgehog records relate to dead animals seen on the roads so it is good to report live animals from my garden in Arrathorne recorded by the use of trail cameras. Thanks to their obvious hills, Moles dominate the records received, though live animals are rarely seen. Occasionally, dead Moles are found on the surface (three instances reported this year), but there seem to be fewer 'gallows' of dead animals hanging from fences than there used to be. Nevertheless, I did spot 38 dead Moles on a fence at Eelmire in May.

Since retiring as an ecological consultant I have been concentrating my efforts on non-bat related natural history. As a consequence there are few bats to report this year other than Common Pipistrelle, Soprano Pipistrelle, Noctule and *Myotis* species bats in flight in May at Grinton.

Among the mustelids, Badger records have seen an increase this year though the majority of these are of dead animals on our roads. However, evidence of Badger activity has been reported from four locations. The only Otter reported during the year was of a road casualty just outside Leyburn in January. Sightings of Stoats and Weasels are largely a matter of chance as an animal dashes across a country lane. However, this year's records included a Stoat in full ermine in March, reported from just outside her house in Bishopdale by Diana Martin and regular sightings of Stoats at Swinithwaite by Sarah Whiteley, including them chasing Brown Rats. Only two reports of Polecat this year; one dead on the Bedale bypass in November and one seen in the headlights crossing Conyers Lane, Constable Burton on the last day of the year.

Roe Deer continue to be reported from across our area including from Wensleydale, Swaledale and Coverdale. Usually these are ones or twos (Roe Deer live in family groups, not herds), but five were disturbed from a wood on the Bolton Estate in March. Roe Deer kids were reported from Downholme and Marfield. The Fallow Deer reported in last year's report near Constable Burton were last reported in March. Where have they gone and where did they come from?

Thanks to Val Kirk, Diana Martin, Sheila Simms, Jenny Walker, Derek Whiteley and Sarah Whiteley for their records during 2024. Apologies to anyone that I have inadvertently missed.

Birding Year 2024 *Mary Atkins and Janet Hutchinson*

Many thanks to the YNHS members and Leyburn U3A Bird Group who have sent in bird records this year bringing the total number of different species recorded to 120. A number of members have been using the Nature Alert WhatsApp group to share their sightings, which is great and we hope that this will continue, but, as bird recorders, we would be really grateful if you could also email them to us, either at the time or at the end of the year.

We have had more raptor sightings this year with four owl species recorded - Barn Owl, Little Owl, Short-eared Owl and Tawny Owl. The Ospreys were back at Wensley again and Red Kites are now regularly seen in Wensleydale along with the more common species of Buzzard, Kestrel and Sparrowhawk. A few members were also lucky enough to report sightings of Hen Harrier, Hobby and Merlin.

Waders have been well reported both in their upland breeding territories and at some of the lower wetland sites such as Nosterfield, Marfield and Scorton Lakes. These include Avocet, Curlew, Lapwing, Redshank, Common Sandpiper, Snipe, Oystercatcher, Golden Plover and Ruff. Also recorded up on the moors were Raven, Meadow Pipit, Skylark, Linnet, Ring Ouzel, Wheatear and Stonechat.

Common wildfowl species seen were Mallard, Teal, Tufted Duck, Shoveler, Pochard, Gadwall, Goldeneye, Wigeon, Shelduck, Coot, Moorhen, Cormorant, Grey Heron, Little Egret, Great Crested Grebe, Little Grebe and Mute Swan. In addition, Mandarin Duck was spotted by a couple of members on the River Ure and at West Witton and a Green-winged Teal was seen on farmland near Wensley. Sightings of Great White Egret are also now not unusual along the River Ure. Greylag and Canada Geese can be found in a variety of locations as can the four gull species – Common, Black-headed, Greater and Lesser Black-backed. Dipper and Kingfisher were mostly seen on the River Ure as were Pied and Grey Wagtail, Goosander and Red-breasted Merganser.

Woodcock were spotted in a few locations in Wensleydale and Arkengarthdale and Black Grouse were recorded up at Whaw along with Grey Partridge. The arrival of a Golden Pheasant in Thornton Rust caused a bit of a stir in October and took up residence in one member's garden for a few days!

The first summer migrant to arrive was a Swallow seen on 5 March which was particularly early. Sand Martin followed in April and House Martin and Swift in May. Chiffchaff was recorded from late March, Willow Warbler in April and Garden Warbler in June. Sedge Warbler, Reed Warbler, Blackcap and Whitethroat were also recorded on the walk at Scorton Lakes in May. Other summer visitors included Cuckoo, Redstart, Wheatear, Ring Ouzel, Spotted Flycatcher and Nightjar. Fieldfare and Redwing were seen both early and late in the year and other winter visitors included Pink-footed Goose, Whooper Swan and Waxwing.

There was a good selection of woodland and farmland birds reported including Yellowhammer, Lesser Redpoll, Bullfinch, Mistle Thrush, Siskin, Treecreeper, Marsh Tit, Tree Sparrow, Goldcrest, Green and Great Spotted Woodpeckers, Jay and Crossbill. And finally, we should not forget the tits, thrushes, sparrows and finches who are regular visitors to members' gardens.



Redpoll photo by Len Shepherd

Janet retired as a Recorder at the end of 2024 and we thank her for her work. Mary will continue as the Bird Recorder (Ed.)

Purple Hairstreaks in Wensleydale

Derek Whiteley

In 2022 and 2023 I found Purple Hairstreaks in an oak tree in Wanlass Park. After seeing them again on 11 August 2024 in two different trees, I extended the search. On 16 August 2024 I found them further upstream in an oak near Redmire Force, then in an oak on the Swinithwaite Estate and finally in an oak at the bottom end of Patterham Lane. My search then turned to the Bolton Estate where there are some fine old oaks. After two blank searches I struck lucky in the late afternoon sunshine of 18th August 2024 with a single in oaks near Bolton Hall and at least seven displaying around some smaller oaks in Wensley Park. They like to twirl in pairs in the late afternoon sunshine in the higher branches of mature oak trees. An absolute delight to watch and I look forward to extending the search in 2025.

The Rosy Woodlouse *Androniscus dentiger* in the Yorkshire Dales

Derek Whiteley

In late 2024 I spent some time looking for the Rosy Woodlouse in our area. Previous records were rather sparse. A search of *iRecord* and the NBN Atlas revealed records for Downholme Park (1987), Marske Hall (1981) Reeth (1976) Fremington Edge (1976) all in Swaledale. In Wensleydale only known from Braithwaite Hall (1987). In Upper Nidderdale from two locations in 1980. In Upper Wharfedale from Kettlewell Bridge (1975).



Rosy Woodlouse photo by Paul Richards

My records are as follows, mainly synanthropic habitats.
Ribblehead Quarry, 25 August 2016 in disused limestone quarry
Mastiles Lane, Kilnsey, 25 April 2024 under discarded breeze blocks
Wensleydale Garden Centre, Leyburn 30 November 2024 at base of wall
Downholme Bridge, Swaledale, 2 December 2024 in loose stone chippings in roadside layby.
Marske village 2 December 2024 in loose mortar at base of wall.
Richmond Station car park, 26 December 2024 in leaf litter next to a building.

It seems likely that this species is more frequent than previous records indicate and it would be nice to get more records of this colourful woodlouse. It is only 6mm long but easily recognised by its bright pink colour and a central black stripe flanked by yellow.

The “Two-tone” Millipede *Leptoiulus belgicus* in Yoredale

Derek Whiteley

Twenty years ago *Leptoiulus belgicus* was thought to be a species of south-west Britain. Since then it has been found sparingly in other English and Welsh counties, mainly in the southern half of Britain. It is known from seven locations in Yorkshire. The first record was in Sheffield in 2013. It seems to be fond of synanthropic sites.



On 2 December 2024 I was sampling ground invertebrates in Coronation Park, Catterick Garrison (next to Aldi) and potted two live millipedes for further study. They proved to be *Leptoiulus belgicus*, identified by their “two-tone” colouration, dark on top, pale below. They also have a pale dorsal line running down the centre of the body and a relatively long pointed telson or tail. Coronation Park is an urban park, partly wooded and surrounded by buildings. The millipedes were found in leaf litter on the fringe of the park. Two days later I released the specimens, and found more living under a well-decayed discarded umbrella.

This is a first record for our area and by far the furthest north in Yorkshire and appears to be new for VC65.

Stop press. I found another in Lythe Wood just south of Grassington on 29 January 2025. This appears to be new for VC64 and the Yorkshire Dales.

Globeflower *Trollius europeaus*

Deborah Millward

As a child growing up in Lincolnshire, Globeflower was an exotic flower we once saw on holiday in the Alps, so when as an adult I moved to Derbyshire I was delighted to find our new garden had lots of Globeflowers. It was only later I realised they had probably all been taken from the wild along with the rare Jacob's Ladder that was also abundant. I did get to see Globeflower in the wild in Derbyshire, I was shown it by a local ecologist, but I never found any on my local limestone. I loved my Globeflower and brought a clump to my dales garden where it is still flowering over forty years later.



Here in Wensleydale Globeflower can be prolific as at Marsett and in 1888 when John Percival published his list of Wensleydale plants in *The Naturalist*, it was clearly so common he did not bother to mention any particular site. Sadly over the forty years I have lived here many sites have been lost, not to thieving gardeners but to spring grazing. Globeflower simply cannot cope with defoliation of those early spring leaves and it gradually dwindles away. So it tends to be confined to woodland, rocky ledges, grykes in limestone pavement and the occasional railway bank. It is still abundant at Ashes Pasture and Colt Park in Ribblesdale where late grazing with cattle, as at Marsett, seems to suit it. At the eponymous Globeflower Wood nature reserve near Malham it thrives under willows.

Unlike most of the Ranunculaceae family, and it is a huge family which includes Buttercups, Aconites, Hellebores, Anemones and Clematis, the Globeflower keeps its pollen bearing stamens well out of sight. The flowers never open up, those delightful primrose coloured petals stay firmly wrapped over the genetic material. So how does it get fertilised? The answer is by a tiny beetle which squeezes between the petals, and roams around traipsing pollen about as it goes. It then lays its eggs on the developing seed pods which the larvae eat. The Globeflower sacrifices a few seed pods for services rendered. **Photo; Ken Readshaw**

Yoredale Natural History Society					
Provisional Accounts End of 2024, 2023					
INCOME (£s)				2024	2023
Subscriptions				1295.00	1125.00
Donations				- 60.00	
Swaledale Festival & gifts				100.00	82.00
Total Income for the year				1455.00	1207.00
EXPENDITURE (£s)				2024	2023
Bank Charges	inc act charges			68.00	69.40
Rent Methodist Hall				200.00	200.00
Speakers fees(inc. charity don.) + summer visits don.				325.00	240.00
Bulletin Printing			.	435.00	280.80
Website fee +new website develop				47.40	212.80
Committee Members' Expenses				100.11	60.00
Yorkshire Nats Union sub				30.00	30.00
British Wildlife subscription				44.00	44.00
Winter Prog. Card Printing				61.00	50.00
Insurance				287.00	203.34
Additional Premium Insurance					69.92
Refund annual fee					20.00
Total Spent This Year				1597.51	1480.26
Deficit for Year				142.51	273.26
Bank Balance at Year Start				2700.45	2973.71
Minus Year's Deficit				142.51	273.26
Bank Balance at Year End				2557.94	2700.45
Petty cash at year start				34.50	11.50
Petty cash at year end				24.70	34.50

Minutes of the 45th Annual General Meeting of the Yoredale Natural History Society

Held in Leyburn Methodist Church Hall Friday 26th April 2024 at 7 30pm.

Apologies; Jenny Walker, Jo Scorrer, Terry O'Neill, Jennie White, Mike Swan, Stella Swan, Jane Graham and Paul Graham.

Present; 31 members

The only matter arising from the last minutes. Liz pointed out she had spelt Ann Luxmore's name incorrectly. Otherwise minutes accepted as a true record.

Chair's Report. Anne used many appropriate superlatives to say a huge thank you to the Committee. Derek for being Vice Chair and his excellent job with the Bulletin, Liz for the minutes and emails much appreciated. Paul for all his hard work as Treasurer, Chris for her very efficient work regarding our expanding membership. Thank you to Jane for her perseverance with the website and Len's guidance and photographic input. Caroline's comprehensive summer programme, Deborah and Gaby's varied and interesting speakers for the winter programme. Not forgetting all the Recorders and other committee for their continued support and hard work. Not only Anne but all of us appreciated Len, Deborah and Robert's hard work and commitment within the Society but last year accepted they were stepping aside from being officers. After the pandemic we seem to have had a renewed interest in the natural environment. We now have 124 members which is a record. We regularly have 20 -30 attending the summer programme. On an occasion we had over 60 at a winter meeting.

Recently we have broadened our horizons and had field trips to the seaside, and an archaeological walk and most recently visiting a cave. Anne developed new policies for data management, risk management, health and safety, and risk assessment procedure prior to field trips. We have improved our technology thanks to Gaby and Andy who did some fund-raising to acquire a speaker and microphone. We have now got a **WhatsApp** group.

There are many things going on behind the scenes. We have more involvement with the YNU since Derek became President-elect of that Society. Helping with Swaledale Festival walks. Jennie White represents us on the Catterick Training Area Conservation Group; she is also involved with the Green Leyburn Project. Ken represents us on the Yorkshire Dales Biodiversity Forum. We've had inputs into North Yorkshire Council's Local Nature Recovery Strategy. Three members did a talk about our Society at Leyburn Probus Society. We are helping with biodiversity campaigns in Middleham, Masham and E & W Rounton churchyards. Our aim is to promote an interest in and an appreciation of natural history while having fun at the same time.

Secretary's Report. I am just going to re iterate what Anne has said and a huge thank you to everyone. In particular helping out with preparing the hall and refreshments. It has been really encouraging to see such large numbers at our events.

Treasurer's Report. A very good year but costs have increased tremendously with inflation. Committee previously discussed at length membership subscriptions and they will increase to £15 for 2025. All members have been notified of the increase and a further reminder will go out later in the year. Our main fixed expenditure is printing and insurance. There was a small deficit last year of approximately £300 this year it is likely to be approximately £500. With the forthcoming increase to fees we should be in profit next year. (a spontaneous round of applause was given). We need to have a reserve for unforeseen events e.g. replacing equipment. Paul had just received our audited accounts from Ken Readshaw for which he thanked him for. Our balance is approximately £2500 at time of AGM. Some members voiced that our Society fees are very reasonable for what we have to offer and even with the increase it is good value for the money.

Membership Secretary's Report. We now have a new record of 124 members and they have all paid this year's subscription. Chris keeps the Committee up to date with any relevant changes.

Election of Officers; Derek is stepping down as Vice Chair and Deborah is handing over the reins for the winter programme to Gaby. The rest of the Officers are willing to continue. Gaby proposed Andy Baxter as **Vice Chair** seconded by Pauline Hardill. All other Officers were proposed by Deborah and seconded by Robert Hall. They are as follows;

Chair - Anne Readshaw

Secretary - Liz Barron

Treasurer - Paul Hardill

Membership Secretary - Chris Meek

Field Secretary - Caroline Stott

Winter programme - Gaby Baxter

Editor of Bulletin - Derek Whiteley

Web master - Jane Graham.

Committee members - Jennie White, Len Shepherd, Deborah Millward.

Members present were asked if anyone was interested in any roles, Sheila Simms would like to join the committee and she was accepted.

Recorders remain the same.

Birds; Mary Atkins and Janet Hutchinson

Butterflies and some other insects; Jennie White

Hoverflies; Derek Whiteley

Spiders; Andy Baxter

Flowering plants; Sue Peckitt

Fungi; Christine Whitehead

Mammals; John Drewett

Reptiles and Amphibians; Rose Connor.

After some discussion it is important that the Recorders send their data to various and

relevant organisations as their data can sometimes implement and or change policies.

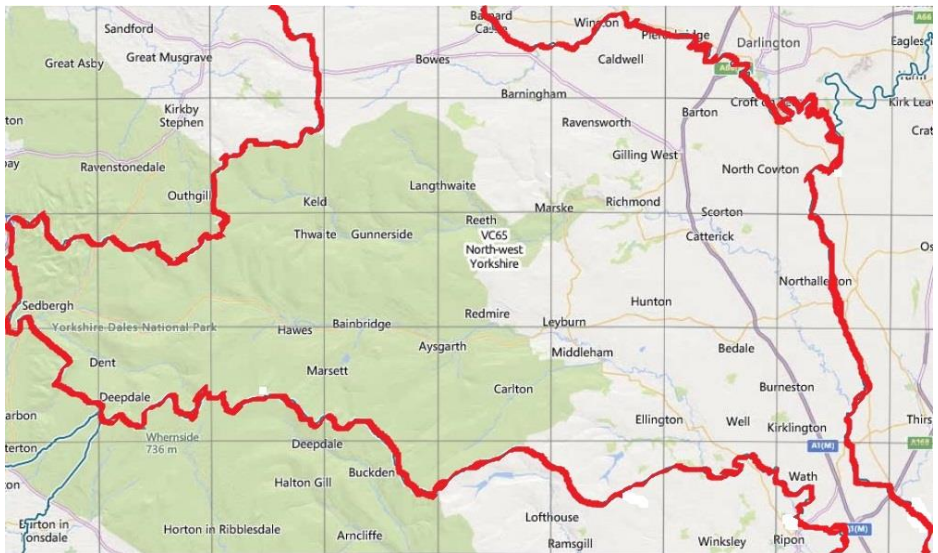
A.O.B. Again a lot of discussion regarding visitors' fees. It had already been agreed adult visitors should now pay £5 unless they wish to join. It was voted on and agreed that student and children visitors pay £2.

Anne would like to propose that Deborah Millward, Len Shepherd, Robert and Marge Hall become Honorary Life members to acknowledge their long term membership and their vast contribution to the Society. Len was more than happy to remain a paying member. This was proposed by Anne and seconded by Andy. Some discussion followed on what is in our Constitution but it says we can have 5% of our membership so the proposal can go forward.

Pauline Hardill firstly would like to say a huge thank you to all those involved with the Bulletin as we know there is a lot of information for us all. Charles Helm recently gave her some back copies which mentioned an archive. If we have one where is it? If it can't be found Pauline is interested in setting one up. Liz has some back copies.

No further business so meeting closed. A photographic presentation followed by Len Shepherd.

Liz Barron (Secretary)



Yoredale Natural History Society records species in VC65 North-west Yorkshire, with a special focus on Wensleydale (Yoredale), Swaledale and their catchment areas. Members are encouraged to send records to the Society's Recorders.



Bog Sedge, *Carex limosa* – one of the many species being cultivated at Nosterfield Reserve nursery. 3 May 2024. Photo by Ken Readshaw.