

OXFORD WILDLIFE

NUMBER 116 **NEWS** SPRING 2018



A young buck Roe Deer by Iffley Lock

Photo by Anthony Cheke



NEWS FROM BOUNDARY BROOK NATURE PARK

The hedge around the Nature Park between us and the allotment area had grown a lot during the last year and was encroaching on the allotment site. The allotment holders understandably were not happy about this and were prepared to get a professional group to do the work. This would have been very expensive for us and nobody volunteered to help with the clearance. Very nobly Alan Hart, the Warden, made a start on this great task and made tremendous progress. Then the snow came. Alan could not even get into Oxford let alone cut the hedge! He has now done more but there is still a lot to be done if anyone feels willing to help, please contact him. His phone numbers are on the back page of this newsletter.

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PAST EVENTS

Sadly, the January day we chose for our winter walk in University Parks to the river was literally a “wash-out”!

On the day, in case the rain decided to stop, I turned up at the meeting place at the time we’d chosen but as I suspected nobody had turned out and the rain didn’t stop. Maybe we could schedule it again. It would be useful if you could let me know if you would have come if the sun had been shining. If not are there any other places in the Oxford area you’d like to explore. Please let me know if so. My contact details are at the bottom of page 12 (the back cover).

In February our walks around Boundary Brook and Treasure hunt had a bigger turnout than we expected, as it was a cold day with a possibility of rain but in fact it stayed dry and 36 people visited the Park. Many of them walked around the park and also visited the pond where Chris Lewis supervised the pond dipping. It was too early for the tadpoles but snails and small pond animals were caught and examined before returning them to the pond. Some children came with relatives but they were nearly all too young to take part in the Treasure Hunt so we’ll keep that for next time.

Our March Open Day was on a dry day and we had 24 visitors and the children were able to do pond dipping and saw the frogspawn which had appeared in the wildlife garden pond.

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FUTURE EVENTS. . . More details on page 12.

If you have any ideas of local places you’d like to visit for the wildlife interest, or events you’d like us to hold, do please let me know by phone Oxford 820522 or email keene@ouwg.org.uk or post (see page 12).

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This year’s Fritillary Survey

We are planning to have another survey of the fritillaries in Osney Mead. The provisional date and time for this is Saturday 14 April, Hinksey Meadow, 10.30 am – 12noon. The date will depend on the weather between now and then. After the cold spell I am expecting it to be delayed by a week or two. Best wishes, **Tim King**

If you would like to join this interesting fritillary survey and want to check if it has been delayed - I will send out an email to people on our list but if you don’t hear please ring Tim King on 01865 515453 or me Janet Keene 01865 820522 and leave a message if I’m out or away and I’ll contact you on my return.

Meet on the south side of Botley Road (at SP 492063) by the traffic lights at the entrance to the Seacourt Park & Ride at 10.30 am. As the dates of flowering may be delayed by flooding or cold weather contact Tim King (01865 515453) or Janet Keene 01865 820522 (keene@ouwg.org.uk) to confirm date. If you are late, just walk through the nature park (the gate behind you leads to the site) and join us on Osney Mead.

Best wishes, Janet Keene.

Hedgehog numbers halved since millennium

It was estimated that there were over 30 million hedgehogs in the UK in the 1950s. But recent estimates suggest there are less than a million left. Reports from the People's Trust for Endangered Species and the British Hedgehog Preservation Society states that Britain has lost half its hedgehogs in the last 20 years. The main causes are habitat loss and lack of landscape-scale connectivity. The hedgehog, *Erinaceus europaeus*, lives on the edge of woodland edge so hedgerows in the country and around our gardens in the town as well as the countryside make suitable habitats.

Woodland edge and hedgerow destruction and poor management are major contributing factors in hedgehog decline, causing habitat loss and reducing macroinvertebrates available for food. The use of pesticides on farmland and garden plots can have detrimental impacts on hedgehogs and their food supply. In urban areas the use of impermeable fencing, loss of compost heaps and increasing development are other major issues.

How can we encourage and maintain the hedgehog population in our gardens?

Compost heaps are a favourite home for hedgehogs and providing holes or gaps in fences and hedges will allow them access to your land. If you look on the RSPCA website you'll find a range of hedgehog products, including hedgehog houses that offer shelter for our prickly guests. You can also provide food in your garden, but not bread and milk as they are bad for their stomachs. A constant supply of drinking water is essential, especially during times of frost and drought, while hedgehog food, dog food, minced meat or cat biscuits are ideal.

Making an artificial home can be as simple as placing a piece of board against a wall. Or buy a purpose-built hedgehog house. You can see a hedgehog house next time you visit Boundary Brook Nature Park.

Read more at <https://www.rspb.org.uk/get-involved/activities/give-nature-a-home-in-your-garden/garden-activities/giveahogahome/#XrFtKABblO7KXIxr.99>

<https://www.rspca.org.uk/adviceandwelfare/wildlife/inthewild/gardenhedgehogs>

Leave areas of the garden 'wild', with piles of leaf litter and logs. These are an attractive nest as well as a home for the invertebrates (slugs, beetles) that hedgehogs like to eat.

Food and fresh water will encourage hedgehogs to return. Leave out foods like minced meat, tinned dog or cat food (not fish-based), crushed cat biscuits, or chopped boiled eggs. Specialist hedgehog food can also be bought from wild bird food suppliers.

Never feed hedgehogs milk as it can cause diarrhoea; instead provide plain, fresh water in a shallow bowl.

Hedgehog-friendly gardening

Cover drains and holes and place bricks at the side of ponds to give hedgehogs an easy route out. Cover swimming pools overnight and when not in use.

1. Check for hedgehogs before using strimmers or mowers, particularly under hedges where animals may rest. Check compost heaps for nesting hogs before forking over.
2. Build bonfires as close to time of lighting as possible and check them thoroughly before lighting.
3. Remove sports or fruit netting when not in use to prevent hedgehogs becoming entangled and getting injured.
4. Slug pellets can poison hedgehogs and should only be used as a last resort. Instead try using one of many "natural" alternatives, like sprinkling crushed eggshells or coffee grounds around the plants you need to protect. If you have to use pellets, place them under a slate which is inaccessible to hedgehogs.

Hedgehog hibernation Hedgehogs usually hibernate between November and mid-March and animals must have enough fat reserves to survive hibernation. Making hedgehog homes in the garden and providing food will help hedgehogs. As many as 10 different hedgehogs may visit a garden over several nights, might mean 'your hedgehog' could be a number of different individuals visiting at different times.

Badgers - numbers, gardens and public attitudes in Iffley Fields

Some 10 years ago badgers began to colonise Aston's Eyot, the former council tip (c.1900-1950) by the Thames down Jackdaw Lane in East Oxford. As the numbers built up, around 5 years ago they started to be seen in gardens in the neighbouring housing area west of the Iffley Road known as Iffley Fields, and this has subsequently become regular. At the 2017 AGM of the Iffley Fields Residents Association (IFRA) some members complained vociferously about damage being done to their gardens and bins being raided by badgers. This prompted local resident and university geography lecturer Dr Paul Jepson to initiate a survey of public views on the presence of badgers in streets and gardens. After discussion with Friends of Aston's Eyot (FoAE) to fine-tune the questions and make them value-neutral (as far as possible), fliers were distributed to all households between Bannister Close and Donnington Bridge Road in early October 2017, asking residents to go online to do the questionnaire: 210 responses (out of a possible 522) were received. Paul Jepson gave a presentation on the results at a special joint meeting of IFRA and FoAE on 20 February at Greyfriars Hall, Iffley Road.

While 119 responders had experienced some sort of problem, 91 had not, opening food bins being the most frequently mentioned issue – badgers (and also probably foxes) have learnt to open council food bins. Damaging fences for access, leaving latrines, and eating bulbs were the other main 'offences', though a few had had pets attacked (guinea pigs, chickens) and some complained of setts being dug, though in fact only one unlucky person has a sett burrow actually in their garden. While a small majority approved of badgers and other wildlife in their gardens (or were not bothered), only a few of those who find them a nuisance had tried various deterrents, mostly without success – as badgers are adept at going through fences and ignore sonic repellants.

Following Paul Jepson, ecological consultant Peter Newbold discussed the legal position of badgers – essentially that preventing access to one's garden with dug-in or electric fencing is perfectly legal, but blocking up a sett is not, unless you get an Environment Agency licence – which is not readily handed out. However if, like the one person with a burrow, you have a single entrance to a multi-hole sett (the rest is in Fairacres Convent grounds), and the animals are messing up your garden badly, there would be a good case for a permit to block that hole.

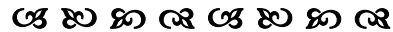
Anthony Cheke gave some background to the local badgers. A hole count by FoAE about 10 days earlier had found 115 in Aston's Eyot, the Kidneys and Meadow Lane, only one more than last year, so the numbers may be stabilising after several years of increase – though the 6 entrances in Fairacres Convent are extra. The largest sett has around 40 active entrances, varying a bit from year to year, but it is impossible to know exactly how many animals are present. Camera trapping by Sue Rowe of FoAE had shown that in October, during the survey, at least 8 badgers regularly emerged over Kidneys Bridge each night, and another 2-4 at Jackdaw Lane (plus several foxes at each end, with a few cats going the other way). We knew we had two pure white badgers, revealed by mating seen on camera to be males, but discussion after the talks revealed there is or was also a white female (photo showing teats) and one person had seen this female with a white cub (and some normal ones) in company of a normal male.



White badger caught on infra-red camera trap, 13 November 2017

Also people reported white animals in several disparate streets, indicating that individuals range widely in the built up area. So far badgers have kept to one side of the busy Iffley road, though one resident reported a sighting in Aston Street. Another person had seen one in Bartlemas Road, but that probably came from the sett in Oriel Wood, north of the Cowley Road.

Anthony Cheke, co-chair, Friends of Aston's Eyot



Exposure to Nature

Time spent in gardens, parks and countryside and amongst wildlife itself can help most people's mental wellbeing, according to new research.

Research carried out by King's College London, J&L Gibbons who are landscape architects and art foundation Nomad Projects claims if we experience an interaction with nature it will improve a person's mental wellbeing.

The research found "significant immediate" benefits associated with trees, the sky and birdsong. It's claimed the benefits lasted for several hours.

Businesses and companies are starting to improve staff wellbeing via access to outdoor spaces and interactions with nature.

The research maybe suggests that nature could be especially beneficial to those individuals who are at risk of poor mental health. It's a low-cost activity and if aimed at in urban populations it could make quite some impact I feel.

This study shows the value of academic and non-academic researchers coming together to make tangible real-world benefits."

The paper, entitled Urban Mind: Using Smartphone Technologies to Investigate the impact of Nature on Mental Wellbeing in Real Time has been published in the journal BioScience.

I'm sure we could have all told them stepping out into our own gardens or local park has measurable and immeasurable benefits, but at least they are now listening.

Don't underestimate the impact on our minds and bodies from time we spend out there in the wildlife garden. Wildlife gardens give us so much in return for our care and time.

Happy Gardening, Stuart Mabbutt, Wildlife Gardening Specialist

www.wildmaninspires.co.uk

01865 747243



'Always look on the bright side of life.'

You already know the bad news about plastic pollution. If I repeat the grim numbers of bottles produced, the predictions of eco-breakdown or the damage to wildlife, you'll suffer gloom fatigue. Let's look at the good side of running a voluntary group devoted to cleaning up the mess on Cumbrian beaches far from Oxford. 'Always look on the bright side of life.' Firstly, the to be walking on the shore at the time.

Firstly, the people. I started Fix the Firth in August last year with just one volunteer called Malcolm. I already knew him from work-parties with Cumbria Wildlife Trust, so I could rely on him to turn up. On the beach at Bowness on Solway at 10am, I was afraid that nobody else would appear. In fact we got twelve people, including four tourists from Canada who happened to be walking on the shore at the time. We had twenty-two volunteers for a recent morning on that same beach - our highest turn-out, as it happens.

Secondly, what we collect. Storm Eleanor in January threw a lot of new rubbish onto our coast and unburied old rubbish which had been under the sand for years. Shortly after, we filled a record total of sixty-six black bags at Allonby beach in two hours on a frosty Tuesday morning. My favourite part of a beach clean is the 'harvest' at the end when I count the

bags. After fourteen events, our average result is twenty-seven bags filled by exactly twelve-and-a-half volunteers.



The numbers alone mean nothing, but the work is very special. I always tell the volunteers that nobody else would pick up the rubbish if they didn't. Agreed: some people pick up a few bottles and cans, put them in a bin and go home. That's good but it's not enough. It takes concentration and stubborn grit to get everything from small shreds of polythene to heavy truck tyres off a beach in all weathers. Volunteers have also dragged away wet carpets, broken lobster pots, nets from trawlers, half a sailing dinghy, two fridges and a burnt-out motorbike. I didn't ask - they just did it.

A winter beach clean on the Solway coast

Where does it go? There's a mechanical biological treatment plant near Carlisle run by a company that was called Shanks but is now called Renewi. They claim to recycle 85% of rubbish which they receive. That sounds like a great local success, but in fact it feeds a global trade in recyclable materials. Plastic goes to China and fuel pellets made from scrap wood are

shipped to Portugal for example. We need to take care of our country's own dirty washing in future, I think, and Oxford could take the lead in the scientific research which will allow that to happen.

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Volunteers are priceless people in that they have no rate of pay and they bring their own sandwiches. Sooner or later however, group needs to raise money for equipment, for public liability insurance, for training or for things such as this newsletter. To be credible, there should be an independent bank account, a written constitution, a committee of at least three people who are not related to each other receipts, yearly accounts and so it goes... Life is

complicated and ideals are not enough. I'll have to deal with these demands in future but just for now the group is beautifully simple.

When people ask me why I want to organise beach cleans, I first of all think 'None of your business' because what we do speaks for itself. I'm not on social media. I don't respect the trend for 'virtue signalling' - donating to charity and telling everybody what you've done. My dog is one reason: he needs one or two hours' walking every day and I trust him to follow me during a two-hour event. The Solway coast is another reason: I love being there and I always sleep well after a few hours of sea air. After many years of living in land-locked Oxford, it feels like a privilege to be close to an unspoilt coast. Beach-combing is fun too.

My garden Log store



Porpoise skull from the Solway coast

I've tried 'Is the Solway fit for porpoise?'

If you envied Robinson Crusoe in your childhood, you'll know the thrill of finding shells, vintage glass bottles, strange pebbles but most of all driftwood. My wood-burning stove is blazing now with logs which came from beaches. I have a roof-rack on my little car, an electric mitre saw at home and a DIY log-store in my garden for drying the wood. My mantelpiece is a small Pitt Rivers Museum of odd finds. I like writing articles like this when local papers ask me. Motivation is complex and never entirely selfless, so I won't claim to be a saint and martyr. The beach cleans are going very well now: after 13 events, the average turn-out is 12 people and the average 'harvest' is 27 bags of rubbish.

We've got one beach clean per week now because of good numbers and also because Storm Eleanor dumped a lot of new rubbish on the shores. Finally, I like sneaking jokes into places which don't normally have them. Some editors cut them out but the man who compiles the What's On list of events for Cumbria Wildlife Trust puts them onto cumbriawildlifetrust.org.uk.

'Don't be shellfish', 'No experience with beach rubbish needed - you're sure to pick it up as you go along' and other puns. Now I've found out that there are species of the Solway sea-bed called the piddock (a clam), the sea squirt, the breadcrumb sponge and the blue mussel which sound funny to me without any comment - but that won't stop me.

John Gorrill, Current Events Correspondent.

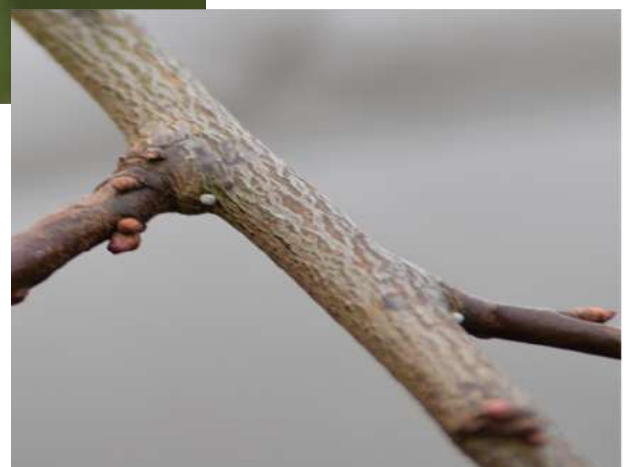
A RECENT DISCOVERY AT THE TRAP GROUNDS

Brown Hairstreak Butterfly laying eggs on Blackthorn twig.



The Brown Hairstreak butterfly is in severe decline in the British Isles, partly due to the flailing of hedgerows containing the overwintering eggs, but according to the UK Butterflies website www.ukbutterflies.co.uk/ Oxfordshire is one of its remaining strongholds. It is an elusive species, since it spends much of its time basking high up in tall shrubs and trees. The female is particularly beautiful, with large orange patches on her forewings. She lays her eggs singly on the bark of young Blackthorn, the foodplant, typically at a fork in a branch. She prefers sheltered areas exposed to the sun.

Eggs are laid at low density over large areas, but two or three eggs are found together on occasion. On the Trap Grounds Local Wildlife Site in north Oxford years ago, and in August 2017 Nicola Devine photographed a Brown Hairstreak laying eggs on one of them. In December 2017 we found half a dozen of the eggs, which are so tiny they are barely visible to the naked eye. This has encouraged us to plant more Blackthorns in the coming year, in the hope of establishing a permanent colony of this lovely butterfly. Best wishes, **Catherine Robinson.**



Tuesday 1st May. MAY MORNING BIRDSONG WALK, Trap Grounds Local Wildlife Site. Meet at 7 am on the canal bridge at Aristotle Lane for a one-hour guided walk round the Trap Grounds with ornithologist Tom Evans.

Sunday 20 May. SPRINGWATCH AFTERNOON: Trap Grounds Local Wildlife Site, 2 pm to 4 pm. An afternoon of activities for all ages: a wildlife quest, pond dipping, guided walks, story telling, creative writing, etc.

Sunday 6 June. WORK PARTY, Trap Grounds Local Wildlife Site, 10 am to 4 pm. Oxford Conservation Volunteers will be repairing the bird-hide, installing benches, dredging ponds, etc. Extra volunteers welcome. Tools provided; please wear boots and old clothes. Bring sandwiches for the lunch break. Tel. 078879 488785 for more details.

[.www.trap-grounds.org.uk](http://www.trap-grounds.org.uk)

<https://www.facebook.com/trapgroundswilderness>

Catherine Robinson Secretary, The Friends of the Trap Grounds 01865 511307 / 07879 488785

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What was the "dot"?



Around the middle of March, after my window had been cleaned on the outside of my ground floor room, I was aware of a "dot" 4mm in diameter that hadn't been cleaned off, nor did it come off when I cleaned the window a few weeks later. The "dot" was creamy coloured with a darker spot in the middle. There it remained until early September. On September the 9th I noticed that the "dot" had become bigger: it was nearly a centimetre in diameter, a translucent pale yellow with a pale brown area on one side. Next day this pale brown area had risen to the top. I went outside to look at it and clearly it was now a snail. I touched it gently and it fell off on to a shingle path and I couldn't find it!

There is a net curtain on the inside of the window which I draw back daily. How did the "dot" get there? There were no snail tracks as far as I remember but this window does catch the wind so it is likely that it was blown against it, perhaps when it was already wet.

photos were taken before it fell off.

All good wishes, Sister Helen Mary. All Saints Convent, Oxford OX4 1RW

EVENTS FOR OTHER ORGANISATIONS (For contacts see page 11 unless otherwise listed)

Sat, April 21st, 10.30am – 12.30pm, Keith Kirby – A walk through Wytham, its history and possible futures. Wytham Woods are a product of their history and in particular the influence of a few key individuals. We will explore the spring flora and current management of the woods, but also the way that what we see reflects the actions of the Fifth Earl of Abingdon (early 19th C), Colonel Raymond ffennell (early 20th C) and Professor Charles Elton (mid-20th C). Ash dieback has now been confirmed in the Woods so they are on the brink of another major change, whose long-term effects we can only start to speculate on. Meet at Wytham Sawmills car park (SP468085, nearest postcode OX2 8QQ). Please note that dogs are not allowed in Wytham Woods. (ANHSO)

Wednesday April 11th Black-Tailed Godwit Recovery Project by Hannah Ward. Oxford Ornithological Society Exeter Hall Kidlington

Saturday 14 April, Fritillary Survey led by Tim King. Hinksey Meadow, 10.30 - 1200.

After the cold spell I am expecting it to be delayed by a week or two, but that depends on the weather between now and then.

Saturday 28th April Wolvercote Naturefest. It is being held on at Wolvercote Primary School, organised by the school PTA to raise funds for the school, but also open to the community and widely promoted locally. It will be a celebration of gardening, wildlife and the countryside, with plant stalls, craft sellers, local produce and activities and talks from nature experts and organisations

UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD – Department for Continuing Education

Many of the Day and Weekend classes get booked up in advance. There are many more courses so look on the website. Some are online courses Look in good time to see what is coming up that might interest you.

There are many excellent courses coming up. For more details. Tel 01865 - 270380

or by email: pp@conted.ox.ac.uk Website: www.conted.ox.ac.uk



Oxford Ornithological Society indoor meetings meet at Exeter Hall, Kidlington at 7.45pm prompt.

11/04/2018 Black-tailed Godwit Recovery Project By: Hannah Ward.

22/04/2018 Field Trip to Frensham Common and Ponds, Surrey.

06/05/2018 Field Trip to Hook with Warsash, Hants.

09/05/2018 AGM and Members Talks.

Oxford Ornithological Society Field Trips led by Steve Alley Tel.no. 07905112401.

17/06/2018 (Sun) Field Trip to Newport Wetlands, Gwent.



NEXT NEWSLETTER Please send your copy for the next newsletter (for July, August, September 2018) as soon as possible to: Janet Keene, 7 Norwood Avenue, Southmoor, Abingdon, OX13 5AD or if possible email: keene@ouwg.org.uk. The final deadline is by the end of May.

OXFORD URBAN WILDLIFE GROUP

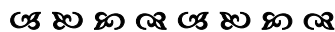
Website: www.ouwg.org.uk

Don't forget that we are here to help. Please contact any member of the committee for help or advice on wildlife matters and we will attempt to help or to put you in touch with someone who can answer.

Alan Hart (Warden) of Nature Park 07979 608 013 or 07901 120 308 alanouwg@gmail.com

Janet Keene: Newsletter 01865 820522

keene@ouwg.org.uk



CONTACTS FOR OTHER ORGANISATIONS

- | | |
|---|---|
| Ashmolean Natural History Society of Oxfordshire (ANHSO):
xford 863660 | Local Wildlife Trust (BBOWT):
Oxford 775476
Jo 07887 928115 |
| Barracks Lane Community Garden (BLCG) 07729 655 543 | Oxford Ornithological Soc. (OOS): Barry Hudson
07833 350288 |
| Botanic Garden: BGO Oxford 286690 | Oxford Preservation Trust (OPT) Rachel Sanderson
01865 242918 |
| British Trust for Conservation Volunteers 01296 330033 | Oxfordshire Amphibian and Reptile Group Rod d'Ayala,
01235 511 861 |
| Butterfly Conservation: David Redhead Oxford 772520 | Oxfordshire Badger Group: Julia Hammett Oxford 864107 |
| Campaign for the Protection of Rural England (CPRE)
Sietske Boeles Oxford 728153 | Oxfordshire Bat Group: David Endacott 01235 764832 |
| City's Countryside Sites or Biodiversity in Parks Oxford 252240
email: parks@oxford.gov.uk | Oxfordshire Flora Group (OFG) Sue Helm 07774205972 |
| Friends of Aston's Eyot (FAE) Ruth Ashcroft 01865 248344 | Oxfordshire Mammal Group (OxMG) Judith Hartley
Oxford 775476 ext. 211 |
| Friends of CS Lewis Reserve (FoCSL) Oxford 775476 | Oxfordshire Nature Conservation Forum now Wild Oxfordshire |
| Friends of Lye Valley (FoLV) Judy Webb 01865 377487 | Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB):
Peter Wilkinson Oxford 452579 |
| Friends of the Earth (Oxford): Fiona Tavner 07954390933 | Science Oxford Live (SOL): Oxford 810000 |
| Friends of Milham Ford Nature Park (FoMFNP)
Judy Webb 01865 377487 | Shotover Wildlife (SW): Chair: Ivan Wright Oxford 874423SS
Mary & John Churchyard Group, Ruth Conway 018865
723085Thames Valley Environmental Records Centre (TVERC)
Hannah Boylan Oxford 815418 |
| Friends of the Trap Grounds (FoTG)
Catherine Robinson Oxford 511307 | Wild Oxfordshire (Formerly ONCF): Oxford 407034 |
| Friends of Warneford Meadow (FoWM)
Sietske Boeles Oxford 728153 | |
| Fungus Survey of Oxfordshire (FSO)
Molly Dewey Oxford 735525 | |
| Oxford Conservation Volunteers www.ocv.org.uk (OCV): | |

OUWG EVENTS www.ouwg.org.uk

NOTICE: *The OUWG AGM is on May 2nd at 7.30 pm* in Florence Park Community Hall, Cornwallis Road, OX4 4NH. This will be an important meeting and all members are invited to attend. Closer to the time a poster will be displayed on the Boundary Brook Notice Board, including a map. If in doubt or you want more information then ring 01865 820522, or email keene@ouwg.org.uk

APRIL

Saturday 14 April 2018: Snake's-head Fritillary Survey in Hinksey Meadow (Osney Mead), North Hinksey 10.30-12.00pm. Meet on the south side of Botley Road (at SP 492063) by the traffic lights at the entrance to the Seacourt Park & Ride at **10.30 am**. As the dates of flowering may be delayed by flooding or cold weather contact the organiser, Tim King (01865 515453) or Janet Keene 01865 820522 (keene@ouwg.org.uk) to confirm date. If you are late, walk through the nature park (the gate behind you leads to the site) and join us on Hinksey Meadow, near the Willow Walk entrance at North Hinksey.

MAY Saturday 12 May 2018: Open Day at Boundary Brook Nature Park 2-4pm.

Stroll round the reserve and perhaps try pond-dipping as well. Children under 14 to be accompanied by an adult.

JUNE Saturday 2 June: Wild Fair: We plan to have a stall at this interesting event at the Oxford University Museum of Natural History. We would love some help in setting up the stall in the morning, helping on the stall during the day until it closes at about 4pm. The details haven't been published yet on the BBOWT website but I've contacted them and they will have the details soon.

Saturday 17 June: Wolvercote and Wytham Midsummer Festival –1.30-5pm. We will have a stall at this friendly event. The place is Goose Green, Wolvercote. It is on the right hand side of the road as you come down Godstow Road from the roundabout. It is opposite the Village Hall on the other side of the road behind trees - not easily seen from the road. The bus stop is right by the village hall so very easy for anyone coming by bus.

WORK PARTIES at Boundary Brook Nature Park: Sundays between 10am and 1pm. Refreshments provided. Ring 07979 608 013 or 07901 120 308 on day to ensure park will be open.

BOUNDARY BROOK NATURE PARK. Come and help us to manage the Nature Park. You can choose your task from a variety of jobs. A warm welcome guaranteed. You need not come for the whole time. Please ring on the day of the work party to ensure it has not been cancelled through bad weather etc.

Contact: Alan Hart **07901 120 308**. There is often someone working at

Boundary Brook so, if you want to come at other times, find out who will be there and when by ringing Alan Hart but check before setting out to make sure it is still on. Bus route: Route 3.

OXFORD URBAN WILDLIFE GROUP If you would like to contribute to the Newsletter, contact the editor: Janet Keene, 7 Norwood Ave, Southmoor, Abingdon OX13 5AD. **Tel: Oxford 820522.** E-mail keene@OUWG.org.uk

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