

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

Newsletter No. 152

Winter 2015/16

*Chorley and District Natural History Society is a
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EDITORIAL

Those of you who were at January's indoor meeting will have heard Chris Johnson's exciting news that the designation of West Pennine Moors as a SSSI was to be taken forward this year by Natural England, after a delay in the process during 2015. The West Pennine Moors includes all the moorland, and some adjacent in-by fields, in the Chorley area including Anglezarke, Rivington and Withnell Moors.



The following is a set of notes of the story so far, provided by Steve Martin, a CDNHS member from Belmont who has been one of the main drivers behind the application for SSSI status. Over to you Steve:-

- The idea that the West Pennine Moors may qualify as a SSSI was conceived back in 2003 following local botanical and bird Atlas work that identified the area achieved the threshold for SSSI consideration.
- In 2007, the 'Conspectus for SSSI Consideration' (*Jepson, Martin and Melling*) was drawn up and submitted to Natural England.

- The West Pennine Moors fulfils the criteria for SSSI consideration on the following main points of national importance:
 - ***The quality and extent of the blanket mires***
 - ***Its Sphagnum abundance and variety***
 - ***Its assemblage of 'upland moorland and grassland' breeding birds***
 - ***The presence of over 1% of the British breeding population of two species of bird***
 - ***Its nationally significant population of an Annex 1 breeding bird***
 - ***The presence of a colony of breeding seabirds exceeding 10,000 pairs***
- The notification was supported by the RSPB, The National Trust, The Wildlife Trust for Lancashire, Manchester and N Merseyside and The Woodland Trust.
- Additional surveys for amphibians/reptiles and waxcaps were commissioned by Natural England to see if they achieved the SSSI consideration threshold along with assessment of all local Heronries together with a full NVC and phase 1 vegetation survey.
- Many members of CDNHS have been active in the evidence gathering process, not least Chris and Tony Johnson, Joyce Riley and Neil Southworth.
- The area was considered by Natural England to be under serious threat mainly from several (extensions to and new) windfarm proposals, including one planned (but subsequently dropped) for Anglezarke Moor.
- The condition assessment of the blanket bog moorland is now considered by a Chartered Ecologist to be in 'recovering condition' over large areas not least due to a reduction in grazing and the 're-wetting' by grip-blocking of large areas under a jointly funded scheme partnered by, Natural England, RSPB and the area's major landowner, United Utilities.
- Natural England started the designation assessment process in 2012. However, repeated stalling resulted in the consideration of the West Pennine Moors by the Natural England Board being repeatedly put back in total for nearly three years.
- Following yet another delay to the process in the spring of 2014, local naturalists, stakeholders and wildlife groups, with support from the RSPB and Wildlife Trust, have been active writing to Natural England and meeting their MP's to stress the case for SSSI designation.
- Particularly active in correspondence to Natural England and lobbying their MP's were CDNHS members Chris and Tony Johnson plus Phil Kirk.
- Local MP's have been supportive of the SSSI including Chorley's MP Mr Lindsay Hoyle with Darwen and Rossendale's MP, Mr Jake Berry being

particularly active in questioning DEFRA/Natural England over the delays to the SSSI process.

- The West Pennine Moors have featured heavily in several national conservation blogs, not least Mark Avery's '*Standing Up for Nature*' and the RSPB's '*Saving Special Places*' blogs.
- Following nearly a year of a 'strategic review of SSSI's; **Natural England have just announced confirmation that the West Pennine Moors is part of an interim suite of SSSI cases that they intend to take forward this coming year.** In reality that means it being 'rubber stamped' by the NE board before a 9-month consultation period between Natural England and landowners/stakeholders before official designation hopefully later in 2016.
- This welcome news should ultimately protect the site from developments that have been in the pipeline, particularly wind-farms and also unlock further funding to landowners and tenants to continue managing the land in a sustainable and wildlife friendly fashion.
- There are still several hurdles - a promise to progress means the site still has to pass through the notification process and then make it to confirmation during the nine month notification timescale.

Thanks for that, Steve. Let's hope now that the process will be completed without any further problems. The recent flooding in West Lancashire should only serve to emphasise that it's probably a good idea to keep rainwater up on the moors for as long as possible during prolonged spells of heavy rain.

Neil Southworth



BIRD REPORT

October

The Great White Egret was last seen on Upper Rivington reservoir on the 4th. Water levels were rising and perhaps made it unsuitable for the egret. Skeins of Pink-footed Geese were noted across the area during the month, whilst flocks of 3000 were feeding on Mawdesley Moss (10th) with 2000 on Croston Moss (12th). 150 Canada Geese on Mawdesley Moss (4th) was a large flock by today's standards. Other geese included 5 Greylags near Croston sewage works (4th) and a single Barnacle at Belmont Reservoir (9th). 5 Whooper Swan were seen over Eccleston on the 14th with another 22 over Coppull on the 28th. A male Gadwall at Yarrow Valley Park on the 31st was a nice surprise. Teal numbers varied from 60 at Belmont Reservoir (9th) to 9 on Anglezarke Reservoir (10th) and a single in Yarrow Valley Park (31st). Ten Tufted Duck were on High Bullough Reservoir (10th) and 4 Mandarin were on the Yarrow at Croston (11th). Little Grebes were seen in Astley Park (25th) and Yarrow Valley Park (31st). A Water Rail was also seen in Yarrow Valley Park (3rd & 10th).



Water Rail seen at YVP

Just five species of wader were recorded but these included 3 flyover Grey Plover at Clayton Green (4th). Two Green Sandpiper were noted on the edge of a pond on Croston Finney on the 25th. Two Woodcock were at Hic Bibi (13th) and another was at Eccleston (30th). Two Snipe were at Croston Twin Lakes (1st), and singles were at Eccleston (11th) and Hic Bibi (13th). The Lapwing flock on Croston Moss built up from 50 on the 5th to 300 by the 25th. Other flocks included 200 at Withnell Fold (27th) and 200 at Belmont Reservoir (31st).

Raptor sightings were confined to resident species. Peregrine records included 2 on Croston Moss (18th) and one at White Coppice (24th). Buzzards as usual were widespread with multiple sightings including 4 at Croston sewage works (4th), 4 on Croston Moss (19th) and 2 at Withnell Fold (27th). Four Kestrels were noted at Croston Moss on the 25th. Marauding Sparrowhawks were seen on Croston Finney (25th), Great Knowley (26th), Chorley (28th) and Whittle-le-Woods (31st). Barn Owls were noted at Great Knowley (11th) and on Croston Moss (14th & 19th). A Little Owl was seen on Croston Moss on 18th & 25th, and another was at Euxton on the 10th. A Tawny Owl was also seen at Euxton on the same day, but sadly and ironically, one was found dead in Chorley cemetery on the 1st.

The Ring-necked Parakeets which had been seen regularly in the Burgh Lane area previously, turned up in the Collingwood Road area, with two in a member's garden on the 24th increasing to 5 by the 28th. Several sightings of the increasingly scarce Green Woodpecker came from White Coppice during the month, but more encouragingly, one was in a member's garden at Croston on the 19th. Kingfishers were widespread with records coming from Arley (7th), Alance Bridge (17th), Heapey Lodges (18th) and Yarrow Valley park throughout. A pair of Woodpigeon at Euxton was still feeding young in the nest on the 6th, which is perhaps an indicator of the success of this now very common species.



Ring Necked Parakeet

Not all summer visitors had left. Four swallows were seen over Lower Burgh meadow on the 6th and a further 5 over Great Knowley on the 8th. Three young House Martins fledged at Heapey on the 4th, with the last individual over Great Knowley on the 17th. Chiffchaff were singing at a minimum of 7 sites until at least the 18th. A Blackcap was in a Clayton Green garden on the 4th.

Perhaps the main avian event of the month, however, was the discovery of good numbers of Crossbills in the plantations on Anglezarke Moor. First of all a flock of 30 was seen at Holts Flat on the 10th and up to 40 there on the 11th. Smaller flocks of up to 10 birds were then seen at the top end of Lead Mines Clough on the 23rd and 25th.



Crossbills

Parties of Lesser Redpoll and Siskin were seen in the same vicinity, including on the 23rd. Siskin were very much in evidence with flocks of 30 on the edge of Lower Burgh Meadow (5th), 60 at Eccleston (17th) and another 20 in Yarrow Valley Park (18th). A dozen Lesser Redpoll were also on Healey Nab on the 25th. Flocks of Goldfinch noted during the month included 100 on Croston Moss (4th) and 40 at Eccleston (7th). Around 200 Linnets were also on Croston Moss on the 4th. A party of 6 Bullfinch was in Lead Mines Clough on the 3rd, and finally a Brambling was at Clayton on the 13th, which brings us to winter visitors.

7 Redwing were at Eccleston on the 8th, followed by 60 in Lead Mines Clough on the 16th, a continuous passage of at least 500 over Clayton on the 24th and finally 300 in three flocks over Brinscall on the 31st. Fieldfare records included 20 in Lead Mines Clough (14th), 50 at Great Knowley (17th), 60 over Eccleston (24th) and c250 in Lead Mines Clough (31st). A Ring Ouzel on Winter Hill (17th) was presumably just on passage.

Also on passage were 2 White Wagtails on Croston Moss on the 4th. 20 of their pied cousins were near Croston sewage works on the 1st. There were plenty of Goldcrest around including 2 at Euxton on the 7th, 7 ringed at Clayton by the local jeweller on the 24th, 5 on Healey Nab (25th), 2 in Astley Park on the same day and one singing in a Chorley garden on the 29th. Flocks of Long-tailed Tits included 16 at Coppull (2nd), 22 at Great Knowley (3rd), 17 at Eccleston (11th) and 12 through a Chorley garden (15th). Larger Starling flocks included 1000 on Croston Moss (22nd) and 400 at Withnell Fold (27th).

Representing the scarcer species, a Willow Tit was in Old Bagganley Lane (3rd) and another on the edge of Lower Burgh Meadow (5th). A Black Redstart was near the mast buildings on Winter Hill on 10th and 31st. Finally a party of 4 Stonechat was at White Coppice (12th).

November

There were plenty of sightings of Whooper Swan during the month, mainly of parties of birds flying over, including one over Stronstrey Bank (1st), 20 over Eccleston (6th), and 4 over Coppull (17th). However, a flock of 28 landed briefly on Lower Rivington Reservoir on the 1st, and 5 were seen feeding near the Douglas at Bretherton on the 26th. Similarly, there were regular sightings of Pink-footed Geese over the area, but there were also up to 1000 feeding on fields along Eyes Lane, Bretherton on the 8th and 9th. These fields flooded during the month, long before the Boxing Day storms which caused havoc elsewhere, and would eventually prove attractive to good numbers of waterfowl. Away from there, and in addition to Mallard, there was a good variety of ducks recorded albeit in small numbers. A couple of Wigeon were on Anglezarke Reservoir (7th), a pair of Gadwall was on Croston Twin Lakes (9th), up to 70 Teal were at Belmont Reservoir (22nd) and a single Pintail was on Adlington Reservoir (30th). Diving ducks were represented by Tufted at Croston Twin Lakes, High Bullough, Lower Healey and Yarrow Valley Park, 2 Pochard at Yarrow Valley Park (2nd) and 3 at High Bullough (4th) and the first Goldeneye of the year was on Common Bank Lodge (16th) with another at Lower Healey (29th).

Other waterfowl included Little Grebe in Astley Park (1st), Croston Twin Lakes (8th) and Yarrow Valley Park (12th). Great Crested Grebe which to a large extent move away from the area in winter were represented by 2 on Croston Twin Lakes (8th) and 3 on Lower Rivington Reservoir (22nd).



Little Egret

A Little Egret seen flying along the Yarrow between Eccleston and Croston was a good sighting on the 13th. Water Rails were in Yarrow Valley Park (22nd), the E-shaped Pond (24th) and Arley nature reserve (30th).

Just five species of wader were recorded during the month. Bretherton Eyes provided sightings of Oystercatcher (12th), 13 Snipe (24th), Black-tailed Godwit (30th) and up to 300 Lapwing (24th). A flock of 133 Lapwing was at Belmont Reservoir on the 28th. Other sightings of Snipe came from Great Knowley (8 on the 2nd), Adlington (7 on the 2nd), Eccleston (5th) E-shaped pond (4 on the 24th) and 50 on Croston Moss (28th). Two Woodcock were flushed at Eccleston (17th) and another at the E-shaped pond (24th).

A second hand report was received of a Red Kite over Belmont Reservoir on the 3rd. A Peregrine was at Croston Twin Lakes on the 9th and regularly on Morrison's chimney with two there on the 22nd. Sparrowhawks were seen with prey in Coppull and along Syd Brook on the 4th. A Little Owl was on Stronstrey Bank on the 4th, a couple of Tawny Owls were at Eccleston on the 16th and Barn Owls were noted at three sites during the month.

Ring-necked Parakeets continued to be seen in the Collingwood Road area with at least 4 noted between 12th & 14th. Birds were also seen around the cemetery on several occasions. Kingfishers were noted in Yarrow Valley Park throughout and at Common Bank Lodge (1st) and at Withnell (4th). A couple of Dipper were at Common Bank Lodge on the 15th in addition to birds seen regularly in Yarrow Valley Park.

The flooded fields at Bretherton Eyes attracted over 1000 Black-headed Gulls (12th), with small numbers of Common, Herring and Lesser Black-backed Gulls amongst them. A covey of 28 Red-legged Partridge was noted there on 16th, along with flocks of up to 400 Starling.

Three late Wheatear were on Withnell Moor on the 4th. Fieldfare flocks observed included 20 at Heskin Hall (1st), 200 at Eccleston (3rd) and 60 at White Coppice (4th). Redwing included 20 at Adlington (2nd), 50 at Eccleston (3rd) and 50 over Chorley (5th). A flock of 40 Blackbirds at Belmont on the 22nd were presumably also migrants. A pair of Stonechat was noted at the site on the same day, with singles on Croston Finney (22nd) and Bretherton Eyes (30th). Around 2000 Jackdaw were noted going to roost over Whittle on the 2nd, and around 50 Pied Wagtail were on a field at Whittle on the 15th.

Finches and Buntings were represented by 100 Chaffinch on Croston Moss (28th), flocks of 50 Goldfinch at the cemetery 22nd and 20 on Croston Moss (21st), 3 Snow Bunting over Winter Hill (21st), 12 Corn Bunting on Croston Moss (7th) and 10 Yellowhammer at the same site on the 28th.

Last but not least was a Chiffchaff still singing at Croston Twin Lakes on the 1st, with one at the site on the 24th, a Willow Tit at Great Knowley (23rd) and a Raven over Eccleston on the 3rd.

December

The flooded fields at Bretherton Eyes continued to attract plenty of birds. Numbers of Shelduck increased from a single on the 4th to 10 by the 29th. 20 Wigeon were noted on the 6th, 15 Teal on the 12th and 5 Pintail on the 29th. Lapwing numbers fluctuated throughout with the largest count being 200 on the 21st.



Pintail at Bretherton Eyes

A Golden Plover was amongst the Lapwing on the 20th. A skein of 103 Pink-footed Geese flew over on the 6th and 200 were feeding on fields across the Douglas on the 20th. 500 Black-headed Gulls were counted on the 4th and the Starling flock numbered 300 on the 6th. Up to 70 Red-legged partridge were in the area.

Elsewhere a couple of Wigeon were at Eccleston on the 11th, 18 Teal were at Belmont Reservoir on the 13th, 7 Shoveler on Anglezarke Reservoir on the 13th and a Mandarin was at Arley nature reserve on the 6th. A male Pochard was at Anglezarke Reservoir on the 4th and possibly the same bird was at Lower Healey on the 20th. The female Goldeneye was on Common Bank Lodge until at least the 13. Possibly the same bird was on Big Lodge at Birkacre on the 21st, and 2 were on Anglezarke reservoir on the 30th. Goosander turned up at several sites with best counts being 14 on Big Lodge (17th), 7 on the Douglas (20th) and 19 on Common Bank Lodge (22nd). Two Little Grebe were at the same site on the 29th. 3 Water Rail were noted at the E-shaped pond on the 22nd.

Lapwing flocks away from Bretherton included 60 at Belmont (13th), 150 at Withnell Fold (29th) and 110 at Hic Bibi also 29th. Snipe records included 5 at Eccleston (3rd), 2 at the E-shaped pond (12th) and 4 on Lower Burgh Meadow (13th). A Woodcock was at Withnell Fold nature reserve (6th), 6 were at the E-shaped pond (12th) and another was at Hic Bibi (29th).



Raptor of the month was a male Goshawk seen at Heath Charnock by an experienced birder. Otherwise it was the usual records of Peregrine from Belmont (13th), Bretherton (23rd) and Morrison's (2 on the 9th), Sparrowhawks with prey at Coppull (2nd) and Adlington (6th), and Buzzards from across the area including White Coppice (4th), Eccleston (11th) and Bretherton Eyes (23rd). Barn Owls were again noted at three locations, a Little Owl was at a regular site at Heath Charnock and Tawny Owls included 4 together at Eccleston (17th), possibly engaged in a territorial squabble, and another was at Great Knowley (19th).

A couple of Mediterranean Gulls were in the gull roost on Lower Rivington reservoir on the 27th, amongst around 3000 Black-headed Gulls. In addition to the regular Kingfisher in Yarrow Valley Park, one was also noted on the Syd Brook in Eccleston (19th). Dippers were noted at Euxton (13th) and in Astley Park (28th). A covey of 12 Grey Partridge on Croston Finney was a fairly scarce sighting of this endangered species. A flock of 20 Pied Wagtails was on a field at Eccleston (20th), but those at Belmont on the 29th contained a bonus in the form of a Water Pipit – only the second record for the area, with the previous record also coming from Belmont in 1995.

Redwing numbers included 6 at Eccleston (11th) and 60 at Heskin (20th). Fieldfare were more numerous with 50 at Withnell Fold (6th), 40 at Eccleston (11th), a small flock at Withnell (24th) and 50 at Anglezarke (29th). Starling flocks included 250 at White Coppice (4th), 1250 at Adlington (5th), 100 at Withnell (5th) and 500 at Eccleston (11th). A Mistle Thrush was in full song at Eccleston on the 3rd.

There were plenty of Siskin flocks to be found including 6 at Eccleston (3rd), 15 at High Bullough (4th), 25 at Euxton (13th), 20 in Yarrow Valley Park (21st), 14 at Great Knowley (28th) and 30 at Anglezarke (29th). Lesser Redpoll were much scarcer and were essentially garden records including 3 at Great Knowley (1st) and 3 at Adlington (28th). 30 seemed to be the ideal number for charms of Goldfinch, with flocks of that size being recorded at Croston (1st), Eccleston (11th), Coppull (14th) and Mawdesley Moss (25th). Single Bramblings were in gardens at Great Knowley (13th) and at Adlington (14th). A flock of 12 Greenfinch at Great Knowley was good by today's standards. Other flocks included 30 Tree Sparrow on Mawdesley Moss (22nd) and 30 Corn Bunting at the same site on the 29th.



Siskin

Willow Tit records came from 3 sites – 2 at Arley nature reserve (6th), one at Great Knowley on the same date and 2 in a Hartwood garden (19th). A male Blackcap was in a Chorley garden on the 27th. Two Raven at Lead Mines Clough on the 4th could have been from the 4 seen at White Coppice on the same date.

Many thanks to the following for submitting records:-

I.Ball, D.Beattie, D.Beevers, J.Cobham, B.Derbyshire, D.Downing, T.Dunn, J.Edwards, M.Fishwick, J.Frankland, M.Greenhalgh, N.Hancock, L.Harrison, P.Hodson, R.Hoyle, P.Irvine, C&T.Johnson, P.King, P.Kirk, P.Krischkiw, E.Langrish, A.Leach, G.Lilley, J.Love, A.Makin, S.Martin, M.Nightingale, L.Poxon, C.Rae, J.Riley, N.Root, L.Rose, P.Ross, P.Rowlands, I.Ryding, N.Southworth, R.Spencer, M.Stuart, J.Sutton, C.Thistlethwaite, M.Thornhill, N.&T.West, P.West, T.Westhead, P.Whittaker, I. Whittle, K.Woan.

And to Peter Krischkiw for the Crossbill image.

Please continue to send your records to the forum or the editor.

Neil Southworth

WHOOPER SWANS STIR MEMORIES

28 whooper swans came very low over the garden on 1st November 2015 and could still be heard 10 minutes later, leading us to conclude that they had come down on Lower Rivington reservoir. It was a misty afternoon and we assumed that the birds were en route to the Martin Mere area. Of course we shot round to the Millstone embankment and sure enough there were 28 whooper swans – what a treat – including 3 juveniles. They had departed by the following morning.

When Ken Green came to the Society to do his final talk on 19th November it gave a few old friends the opportunity to catch up and reminisce about birding times gone by. One of these was our experiences of watching whoopers locally before Martin Mere was established. My father's birthday was 24th October and we always said the whoopers would be back by then, and



flying low over the house to one of the Rivington reservoirs. The call is so beautifully evocative of those times, and friends recalled watching them on reservoirs and surrounding fields.

The chat moved on to other changes in the area during our bird watching lives. The loss of red squirrels once seen in our garden in Rivington, but also at Duxbury and Bank Hall. Nuthatches have arrived everywhere, with a vengeance, at one time only seen by us at Duxbury.

Sadly lesser spotted woodpeckers, which I use to see tagging along with tit flocks seem no longer to be around. A morning walk would produce 3 species of woodpecker, which would definitely be a treat now. I do not even see many great spotted woodpeckers these days.

One of my regular “duties” during the winter months was to check and record all the water fowl on the Rivington reservoirs and note the preferred “bays”. Tufted, pochard, teal, and mallard were often numerous and occupied different areas depending on weather conditions. Again we noted how things had changed over the years and very few wild fowl are noted now – is climate change the reason? High Bullough (Chorley) reservoir is the only regular spot for goldeneye and tufted on the Rivington system these days. It is now good to see goosanders on the Yarrow and sometimes elsewhere.

Our chat also touched on how little we knew in the early days, and how little material was available to aid identification, but one way and another we learned and recorded and hopefully made a difference.

Chris Johnson

SATELLITE TAGGING & MUCH MORE

Conferences can either be boring, or the opportunity to catch up with friends and learn new and interesting facts. One we attended at the end of November, arranged by the Northern England Raptor Forum, NERF, was bursting with information from a range of expert speakers from the police, BTO, NE, FC, and the RSPB.

Guy Shorrock from the RSPB spoke on “a fieldworkers guide to forensic science” emphasising the need for meticulous preservation of data and evidence in persecution cases. Remember if you come across anything suspicious whilst walking in the countryside take photos, make notes and sketches, do not disturb the site, and ring the police and RSPB.



Osprey

Nathan Fox of the Forestry Commission gave a 5 year perspective of the Cumbrian osprey project, based at Bassenthwaite, which many of us will have visited. Satellite tagging of some birds means that breeding territories and migration routes can be followed, revealing some remarkable journeys, some across the Sahara, and one young non breeding bird visiting a huge number of countries in its summer sojourn back north. The tags also pinpoint where birds are wintering.

Steven Murphy, who has worked on hen harriers for Natural England for many years, set the scene for a report that should be out in the near future, although much delayed and still with no firm release date. The hen harrier has declined in the north of England in recent decades and we all know the suspected reasons why, with numerous nest failures and disappearing adult birds. This will be a fascinating document, and again satellite tagging will be part of the report.

David Hunt from the Hen Harrier LIFE+ project discussed his work, as one of two new fulltime RSPB Assistant Investigation Officers focusing on hen harriers and the uplands. I later spoke to Bea Ayling who is the RSPB project manager for the Hen Harrier LIFE+ project. She told me that this hen harrier conservation project is 50% funded by the EU, will run from 2014 – 2019, and is a truly cross border, joint Scottish – English initiative for the species. She went on to say that the project will combine practical on the ground protection, investigation work, satellite tagging, ecological monitoring, science, policy, advocacy and community engagement.



Hen Harrier

Once more the importance of satellite tagging was emphasised. An appreciable number of these tags have been funded in an initiative with the high street cosmetics chain “Lush”. However to be successful the project needs more funding to match the 50% from EU for many items such as enhanced tracking equipment, cameras and training for satellite taggers as this is such a specialist skill. The information that will be obtained by satellite tagging will reveal where birds winter, the routes that are followed, and should the tags indicate that individuals have not moved bodies will be retrieved using specialist tracking equipment. Far more detail on the hen harrier LIFE+ project is available on the RSPB website; <http://www.rspb.org.uk/henharrierlife/>

You can also follow a small subset of the satellite tagged birds on the website.

It may be as individuals or as a group that we will be able to contribute to this project, and in this way bring closer the date when hen harriers become a breeding species in the West Pennine Moors. All in all a very successful and thought provoking conference; looking forward to next year’s event.

Many thanks to Gordon Yates for the images of Osprey and Hen Harrier which have used in this article.

Chris & Tony Johnson

SUBSCRIPTIONS

Will members please note that subscriptions were due for renewal on 1st September. Subscription rates are to remain unchanged for the current season and are now as follows:-

Grade of Membership	2015 / 2016
Adult	£10.00
Family	£15.00
Seniors.	£8.00
Senior Family	£12.00
Junior (under 18)	Free

Members who attend meetings are requested to make a donation at the door. A charge of £2.00 is made for non-members.

Members who are not able to attend meetings may send their subscription direct to the Membership Secretary:-

Mr Nigel Fairclough,
122, Brooke Street,
Chorley,
PR6 0LB

Subscriptions may also be paid by Standing Order. This reduces administration, particularly in enabling the Society, which is a registered Charity, to claim back tax on the subscription of those members who have also signed Gift Aid Declarations, and at no extra cost to the member. For further details, contact the Membership Secretary or the Treasurer. Thanks to those members who have already arranged to pay by Standing Order. Thanks also to those who have signed Gift Aid Declarations. One advantage of this over the covenant scheme is that we can claim for all subscriptions - not just those paid by Standing Order - as long as you have signed a Declaration.

DATA PROTECTION

Records of name, address, telephone numbers and type of membership of the Society's members are now stored on computer. If you object to this information about yourself being stored in this manner, please notify the Membership Secretary in writing of your objection.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Many thanks to Joan Smith for kindly allowing us the continuing use of her late husband Colin's photographs in our publications.

FIELD TRIPS

Lunt Meadows:- *Saturday 5th March*

A visit to the new Lunt Meadows Lancashire Wildlife Trust reserve, which has been excellent this winter for Barn and Short-eared Owls, plus all the wildfowl which the reserve was set up for.

There is a car park in Lunt Road, just outside Lunt village. Postcode L29 7WL. Access from Switch Island at the end of the M58 is via the A5758 towards Southport. Turn right along Brickwall Lane, then left at Sefton towards Lunt Village.

Meet on the reserve car park at 9.30 am. If anyone would like a lift, please let a member of the committee know and we will try to accommodate you.

WINTER PROGRAMME 2015/2016

<i>Feb 18</i>	Wild Flowers of Lancashire	<i>John Ball</i>
<i>Mar 17</i>	The Plight of the Humble Bee	<i>Andy Rowett</i>
<i>Apr 21</i>	50 Great British Trees	<i>Phil Kirk</i>

All the above meetings will be held at St Mary's Parish Centre, Devonshire Road, Chorley and commence at 7.30 p.m. Please note that all meetings are on a Thursday evening. Visitors are welcome at all the meetings.

For confirmation of the programme and further information about the Society, please contact:- Secretary:- Phil Kirk on Chorley (01257) 266783.

Or visit our Website: www.chorleynats.org.uk.

DEADLINES

The deadlines for receipt of articles, letters and book reviews for the forthcoming issues of the Newsletter are :-

<i>No 153</i>	Spring 2016	<i>21st April 2016</i>
<i>No 154</i>	Summer 2016	<i>21st July 2016</i>

All contributions for Newsletters should be sent to the Editor – Neil Southworth, 9, Queensgate, Chorley, PR7 2PX (01257 276065).