

Chichester Natural History Society



Registered Charity No 259211

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NEWSLETTER No 196 February 2020

FROM THE CHAIR

After a mild winter, the winds and rains that were brought in by Storm Ciara were quite a shock. The widespread nature of the impact, across virtually the whole country, was also unusual. Unfortunately, as the world's climate steadily changes, scientists have forecast that more extreme weather events will become more likely. So, we will all have to be better prepared. Whilst humans can obviously take precautions, the impact on our wildlife will be unmitigated. Consequently, we must do all we can to protect the habitats on which our animals and plants depend since they will be under considerable stress. In addition, it is also very useful to create and maintain a record of the climate's impact on our wildlife. I therefore hope that you are all maintaining your Phenology sheets, recording when you first see the listed species. The climate has changed significantly during the course of our Phenology recordings, 15 years now, so that some of the species are no longer good indicators e.g. the Primrose has been spotted flowering in December for several years and increasing numbers of Chiff-Chaffs are overwintering. We will review the suitability of the species for the 2021 Phenology list in the autumn.

This autumn there are two other activities for which we need members' input. I want to tell you about them now, so that you can be thinking about them during the year.

Firstly, we will again be asking members for additional projects that can be funded using our legacy funds. The range of projects that we have already been able to undertake has been very varied and interesting, so we are keen to kick off some more. As a reminder, we will be looking for projects that align with the Society's objectives and which, ideally, directly involve our members. We will provide more details on how to propose ideas and how they will be chosen later in the year, however please start mulling over ideas now and feel free to bounce them off Committee Members.

Secondly, the committee is keen to actively involve more members in our "Members Evening". This social event in December is already good fun, however we believe that it provides an ideal opportunity for our members to tell others about their wildlife activities during the year. Consequently, we will be encouraging members to prepare "board presentations" that can be put up around the room so that other members can appreciate what has been done and discuss the results e.g. I shall present our 2020 phenology results in this way.

Running the Society requires small amounts of effort from large numbers of people in order to maintain the varied set of activities that makes CNHS so successful. Can I therefore remind members that we need to appoint a new Newsletter editor at the end of this year. John Kelsall has performed this role for 8 years and needs to step back. Like all the committee roles, the amount of work required is not large and does offer the opportunity for someone to make their mark, by possibly altering the focus of the newsletter. If anyone would like to take on this role, please speak to John or any committee member.

I am looking forward to the remaining lectures in our winter season, talks on Amphibians and the Millennium seed bank, as well as attending some of the pub discussions and getting out on our field outings. I hope to see as many of you as possible at these events.

Christian Hance

chair@chichesternaturalhistorysociety.org.uk

MEMBERS

New Members

We Welcome the following new members

Dr K Tarrant

Mr J & Mrs DD D'Arcy

Dr & Mrs RG McGlone

Dr Nick Doll

2020 Photographic Competition

The normal rules apply – no main theme– just natural history photos and the entries to be in the form of 3 prints, any size. Preferably all taken in 2020. Entries should be brought along to the members' evening in December, where fellow members will judge them anonymously. The photos from 2019 were exhibited in Chichester Library and we would hope to do the same for the 2020 entries.

Sightings

Please enter any observations in the sightings book on lecture evenings or add them to the blog on the website.

Publicity

We have purchased some promotional lapel badges and some car stickers to advertise our existence. They can be obtained at lecture evenings at £1 for a badge and all members receive a free car sticker.

Book Loan Scheme

As we are accumulating a selection of books for the use of our members, it was thought that someone ought to be in charge of their care and distribution. We now have 3 copies of Collins Wildflower Guide which will be of particular use to Medmerry surveyors and a Flora of Sussex. To begin with, I will keep all the books and can bring them to the indoor meetings. However, they will mostly be needed in the spring and summer when we do not have indoor meetings. Therefore, if anyone would like to borrow a book on a 4 week loan they can contact me and arrange either to collect the book from me or to meet somewhere mutually convenient. There will be a signing out sheet so I can keep tabs on the books and make sure they are back in time for the next borrower. A full list of titles will be available once I have all the books.

I do hope members will take the opportunity to use these books and find them useful.

Philippa Arnott 01243 575345 07840 859122 philippa.arnott@uwclub.net

LECTURE PROGRAMME

All lecture evenings will be held on Wednesdays in THE PALLANT SUITE, MASONIC HALL, SOUTH PALLANT, CHICHESTER. Non-members cost £3.00. Members free. Lectures begin at 7.15pm.. Doors will open at 6.30 pm. .

Wednesday 4th March

The Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew: Plant Discovery and Conservation. Tim Pearce, Kew - Conservation Partnerships Coordinator for Africa

Tim describes Kew Gardens conservation work, particularly the Millennium Seed Bank at Wakehurst Place, Haywards Heath, West Sussex.

Wednesday 1st April

Amphibian Conservation, both locally and around the world, with a special focus on frogs and toads, and urban pond/habitat creation. CiCi Blumstein, Sussex Amphibian and Reptile Group Outreach Officer, Artist and Frog Collaborator

Wednesday 2nd September

The Rise of Northwood, Restoration of Woodland and Wooded Pasture at Northwood, Slindon National Trust. Hannah Thompson and Gabby Crisp, National Trust Rangers.

MEDMERRY

2020 - 7th Year of Surveys at Medmerry

ALL surveys (approx. 2 hours in length) will start at 13:00 PROMPT, meeting at the RSPB Earnley Car Park at Grid Ref SZ 816 968, post code PO20 7JL, and then car sharing to appropriate Survey Site. (Little walking required on any date.) See Field Outings List for more information. Sessions are open to all, no matter what your level of expertise, as guidance will be provided. We shall use the Society's equipment but hand magnifiers, binoculars and reference books will always be useful. Any questions or if help required with transport then please contact Philippa Arnott on philippa.arnott@uwclub.net or phone 01243 575345

FIELD OUTINGS

These field outings, generally led by one of the expert members of the Society, enable participants to see different aspects of wildlife and nature in the field. No meeting will be cancelled because of the weather so please wear suitable clothing and footwear. These meetings are open to members and non-members, children over 8 are welcome but should be under parental control. These outings always start promptly so please arrive in plenty of time. Any questions about these events, or if help needed re transport, please contact Gill (ghance98@gmail.com or 01243 825187). In addition, if members have any ideas for outings or can offer to lead one themselves, then please contact Gill.

In accordance with Health & Safety Requirements, Chichester Natural History Society hereby gives notice- "The Society is prepared to assist members in making arrangements to enable them to participate in activities arranged by

the Society. It cannot accept any responsibility whatsoever for any loss, injury or damage sustained by any person in consequence of their participation in any activity. Persons attending field outings do so on the understanding that they attend at their own risk”.

Tuesday 3rd March 10:00 start, BURTON MILL POND

Leader David Hart

Grid Reference SU 979 181 Post code GU28 0JR

This area offers a microcosm of different habitats – woodland, heath, bog and lakes, so always much of interest. Take A27 east from Chichester, turn left onto A285 to Petworth. A mile past Duncton, turn right sign posted Burton Mill. Park, as ‘tidily’ as you can, in the car park nearest the mill.

Wednesday 29th April 10:00 start, NORE WOOD near Slindon

Grid Ref SU 950 085.

A morning’s walk, going gently uphill to start with, to the woods where bluebells and early purple orchids should, hopefully, be putting on a show.

Directions – approx. 6 miles east of Chichester, on the A27, take the turning on the left, heading north (signposted Aldingbourne Centre). After just over a mile, turn right (signposted Slindon). Parking is on the left after half a mile (with more available further on, on the right).

Optional – after returning to our vehicles, driving a little way in order to visit the trees planted in 2018 by Chi Nats members with our Legacy Funding, as part of the NT’s Northwood Project.

Tuesday 26th May 10:00 start, THE DOWNLANDS ABOVE BIGNOR

Grid Ref SU 974 129

A morning’s walk starting from the car park near the top of Bignor Hill, south of Bignor village, at the above grid reference.

Tuesday 2nd June 10:00 start, LEVIN DOWN NATURE RESERVE near Singleton

Leader Helen Dignum

Grid Ref SU 879 114

Following on from last summer’s visit to Levin Down when members looked specifically at butterflies, we return to focus on wildflowers. Handheld magnifiers and reference books useful but not essential. Bring a picnic lunch to enjoy. There is an initial steep climb. Meet at the ‘Triangle Car Park’ on the north side of the Trundle at the above Grid Reference in order to car share to the foot of Levin Down.

Friday 5th June 13:00 start, RSPB car park at Earnley - FIRST MEDMERRY SURVEY

Grid Ref SZ 816 968 Postcode PO20 7JL See above for detailed instructions.

Plant Survey 1 (a species list) - bring wildflower books

Friday 12th June 13:00 start, RSPB car park at Earnley - SECOND MEDMERRY SURVEY

Grid Ref SZ 816 968 Postcode PO20 7JL See above for detailed instructions.

Plant Survey 2 (using quadrats for gathering more quantitative data) - bring wildflower books

Tuesday 16th June A Special Private Visit to the NEW FOREST REPTILE CENTRE Lyndhurst

Date now arranged and with precise details to come laterwatch this space and check Society’s website

Friday 19th June 13:00 (back up day for Medmerry survey if weather ‘stopped play’ on 5th or 12th June)

Friday 3rd July 13:00 start, RSPB car park at Earnley - THIRD MEDMERRY SURVEY

Grid Ref SZ 816 968 Postcode PO20 7JL See above for detailed instructions.

Dragonflies 1 (earlier-flying species) - bring binoculars and dragonfly books and/or iRecord Dragonflies app (free for Apple and Android devices) <https://www.brc.ac.uk/app/irecord-dragonflies>

Friday 10th July 13:00 (back up day for Medmerry Survey if weather ‘stopped play’ on 3rd July)

Thursday 16th July 14:00 – 16:00 WHITE STORK PROJECT at Knepp Estate, near Dial Post

Leader Lucy Groves

An opportunity to hear about this exciting Project and to see these magnificent birds for ourselves. Our visit will start with a 15 mins talk about the Project, its aims and achievements so far. (Tea/ coffee available). We will then head out for a 10 minute walk plus a further 10 mins to reach the storks' 6 acre enclosures. Plenty of time for questions before returning back to base.

The session will last about 1 and a half to two hours and the walking distance is about 1 and a half miles. We shall not be on footpaths and the terrain can be uneven, rough and slippery so as well as being fit, members must be appropriately shod and clothed!

Maximum number for this trip will be 30. It is essential to register participation with Gill Hance

(ghance98@gmail.com or 01243 825187) Members will need to car share, arriving in good time for the 14:00 start and park as per precise instructions to be given out nearer to the 16th July. The Society is grateful to be given free admission for this event, although donations towards the Project will be welcome on the day.

Monday 27th July 14:00 start, THURSLEY NATIONAL NATURE RESERVE (check out their website)

Leader John Arnott

Grid Ref SU 900416

This is one of the best places in the country to see dragonflies and other heathland species. Bring a picnic to enjoy next to the Moat Pond, prior to a 14:00 start. Limited benches available so folding chairs may be useful and please note that there are no toilets!

Meet at the Moat Car Park at the above grid reference. Simplest route is to take the A27 and then the A3 north. Approximately 1 and a half miles north of the Hindhead Tunnel, fork left, signposted Thursley. Proceed through the village and then turn right at T junction. Parking is approx. 1 mile on the right, next to the Pond.

Friday 7th August 13:00 start, RSPB car park at Earnley - FOURTH MEDMERRY SURVEY

Grid Ref SZ 816 968 Postcode PO20 7JL See above for detailed instructions.

Grasshoppers and Bush Crickets (using bat detectors and the Society's nets). Bring orthoptera books and/or iRecord Grasshoppers app (free for Apple and Android devices)

<http://naturelocator.org/irecord-grasshoppers.html>

Monday 10th August 10:30 start, KITHURST HILL near Storrington

Leader David Hart

Grid Ref TQ 071125

Chalk downland plants, birds and butterflies. Members will visit the lovely wildflower area close to the car park, hoping for butterflies, and then make their way westwards to eventually enjoy a picnic with a view (bring something to sit on!) near Rackham Hill before returning, via a slightly different route, to the car park.

One mile west of Storrington on B2139, take great care turning south into unmarked lane just to the east of Springhead Farm (look out for one of David's helpful signs). Route is easily accessible as there is excellent parking on the top of the Downs, adjacent to the South Downs Way. Although please note that there are no toilets.

Friday 14th August 13:00 (back up day for Medmerry Survey if weather 'stopped play' on 7th August)

PUB MEETINGS 2020

These are informal gatherings held at the **Bull's Head, Fishbourne**. They are led by experienced members of the society with specialist knowledge of the subject and are a chance to learn more in the company of an 'expert.' They usually last about an hour to an hour and a quarter. There is a small charge of £1 per person.

They are also social gatherings, as we have lunch first, but there is no obligation to join this. However as we do not pay the pub for hire of the room could any attendees not having lunch please purchase at least a small drink !

These small meetings are limited to **15 members who must pre-book** usually at the preceding lecture meeting. Start time is at 1:30pm – members may wish to meet for lunch beforehand at 12:30pm. New management at the pub requires that menu selection is chosen and passed to them ahead of the meeting.

Wednesday, 18 March 2020 - **'Radioactivity and Wildlife' - Jill Sutcliffe**

FIELD OUTING REPORTS (see our website for photos taken on the day)

Tuesday 24th September

Titchfield Haven

Leader Tony Wootton

Oh, the vagaries of the British weather! A succession of fronts was forecast but six Chi Nats members bravely ignored that prediction and were rewarded with an entirely dry visit! Hurrah!

Led by Tony, we set off along the eastern side of the Reserve, calling first at Suffern Hide. A flotilla (or should that be a 'cover'?) of coot were immediately noted, together with mallard, great crested grebe (including a 'humbag' youngster), little grebe and cormorant (including white fronted youngsters). A flock of lapwing went over, with teal mixed in, as we observed, for several minutes, a buzzard perched on a small tree on the far side of the water. Magpie and crow were seen and, as a finale, a very large flock of noisy canada geese passed spectacularly overhead.

We moved on to Meadow Hide, passing a fine patch of sulphur tuft fungi. To our list, were added, more cormorant, heron, peregrine (flying low from right to left) and yet more geese flew over, including a pure albino bird. Marsh harrier was one of our target sightings but no luck! Walking past a, now sunlit, hedgerow we saw speckled wood and common blue butterflies whilst cettis were clearly heard but not seen.

At Knights Bark Hide, further on, little egret, jay, stock dove and herring gull were soon written down, together with swallow passing through over the fields. As lunchtime beckoned, we returned to either the café or on to Mean Shore Hide (on the western side of the Reserve) for our picnics. On the way, we saw turnstone around the yachts as well as a lizard on a walkway and dragonflies too (a red-bodied chaser was one of those identified) the conditions were definitely warming up.

With the 'islands' labelled (A, B, C ...etc) members' sightings from Mean Shore Hide could be easily verified, as a flock of starling and lapwing continually swirled about. These sightings were redshank, another heron, moorhen, green sandpiper, teal, and a 'stand out' white-faced canada goose in addition to an emperor dragonfly which patrolled in front of the hide.

At Pumfret Hide, in addition to black tailed godwit, greater egret and a second white-headed goose, two 'puffed up' ducks were spotted (I was informed that these were merely 'in eclipse'such a lot to learn.) On our way to Spurgin Hide, a green woodpecker was heard and once we were seated, only wood pigeon and more mallard were noted in this quieter area, disturbed only by a young heron which took off from alongside the hide.

With the increased warmth (honest!), as we retraced our steps to our vehicles we enjoyed the sight of peacock, red admiral, comma and speckled wood. Titchfield Haven is a special place. A visit comes highly recommended, whatever the weather forecast! Many thanks to Tony Wootton for his able leadership and to the group for their cheerful company.

Gill Hance

Monday 14 October 2019

Snow Hill and Ellanore

Leader David Hart

Before arriving at the car park I had listened to three weather forecasts - two said "constant, heavy showers" but the third said "there could be a window of reasonable weather mid-morning". I was therefore surprised and delighted when ten hardy souls arrived. It was decided to chance going round the whole walk with our fingers crossed.

Before we left the car park, a few swallows and martins were still frantically feeding before their long journey back to Africa. I wish them well as it was quite late enough to be leaving our shores. Crows and rooks were feeding on the grassland and a solitary cormorant flew over. On the path to Snow Hill, blue and great tits were seen. Looking towards East Head, curlew, oyster catcher and lapwing were just ahead of the in-coming tide and here we saw the first of what was to be many brent geese.

The wet, marshy area at Snow Hill never fails to add to the list, black-tailed godwit prefer muddy marshland whereas bar-tailed godwits prefer sandy habitats. Redshank, wigeon, curlew, little egret, black-headed gull, mallard and magpie were on the ground. Dunnock, robin and linnet were seen amongst the bushes and a few of us were lucky enough to catch a glimpse of two snipe zig-zagging through the air. A male reed bunting was spotted by one of our group. Upon reaching the church, jackdaws were very vocal, a blackbird alarm call was heard and looking back towards the coast, small skeins of brents filled the sky. To our surprise there was one totally white bird which Christian managed to get a photograph of.

Ellanore Lane is usually good for small birds and today didn't disappoint, good numbers of house sparrows were chattering in the hedges, long-tailed tits moved through the tree-tops, chaffinch and greenfinch were clear to see, red-legged partridge were feeding amongst the newly sown winter barley. Two plump birds sitting on the telephone wire were firstly identified as collared doves but were in fact two young pigeons which had not yet developed the white marking on the neck, these youngsters are called 'squabs'.

At Ellanore Point great crested grebe, grey plover, heron, egret and ringed plover were added to the list and, thanks to Tony Nevard's scope and knowledge, he identified golden plover and a solitary greenshank. The weather was beginning to deteriorate so we hastened back to the car park adding collared dove, chiff-chaff, stonechat, pied wagtails and a fly-past of starlings to our overall total of 46 species. Many thanks to those who came, I hope they enjoyed the walk as much as I did. By the way, it rained all the way home!!!

David Hart

Friday 13 December 2019

Thornham Lane and Great Deep

Leader John Kelsall

A hardy group of CNHS members met-up at 10:00 at the car park at the top of Thornham Lane, near Emsworth and Thorney Island.

The weather was clear and sunny, but extremely windy, with a high tide on the way. The sun being SE and low on the horizon, made early observations tricky; this improved as the morning progressed as the sun went around to a more southerly direction. The group initially ventured on the higher 'sea-wall' path, but due to the high wind (30kts or 35mph), conditions were extremely uncomfortable (and the birdlife virtually non-existent), so we then opted for the lower path. For those not familiar with this location, it is to be found on the eastern shore of the Emsworth channel, with saltmarshes, creeks, reed beds, mudflats and farmland towards Thorney Island itself. So, there are plenty of different habitats and feeding opportunities for birdlife to be seen. In total we saw twenty-seven different species, which given the conditions was felt to be a positive result.

So, in the order in which we saw the birds, this is the list:

On the way down to the harbour:

Blackbird, Wren

Emsworth Harbour:

Mute Swan, Herring Gull (young)

Creeks and waterways

Mallard, Coot (lots), Little Grebe, Tufted Duck, Black Headed-Gull, Teal, Cormorant, Crow, Magpie, Starling, Brent Geese, Canada Geese, Widgeon, Grey Plover, Merganser (diving), Shelduck (lots), Kingfisher (flew past twice), Lapwing (lots), Curlew, Oyster Catcher, Herring Gull (mature), Redshank, Golden Eye, Kestrel (seen over car park at end)

Recorder – Judy Smith Report - Roger Smith

Saturday 11 January 2020

Chichester Lakes

Leader Jim Bagley

Twenty two of us set off on a grey, windy morning after Jim Bagley explained to all of us he had done a recce the day before and discovered there were not as many different types of birds as usual on the Chichester Lakes. This was probably because the birds were still finding food elsewhere since the weather had not been harsh.

However we soon saw blackbird, chaffinch and robin flitting through the trees. It was sad to see quite a number of trees have been felled recently along the banks of the various lakes. This is apparently due to fishing now proving to be a profitable enterprise. The fishermen do have competition – we saw a great crested grebe catching a big perch, turning it round in its beak and swallowing the fish head first down its long neck. John Kelsall managed to take an action photograph!

Our botanists discovered giant snowdrop (leucojeum) smooth hawksbeard, lords and ladies (arum lillies), hogweed, daisies, white deadnettle, winter heliotrope and periwinkle. Hazel and willow catkins were swaying in the breeze. Members scanned the water with their binoculars and noted shoveler, cormorant, pochard, tufted duck, coot, grey heron, canada geese, mute swan, mallard, greylag geese, dab chick, little egret, gadwall, little grebe. Also either flitting through the trees or flying over the water we also saw wood pigeon, black headed gull, herring gull, great tit, long tailed tits, magpie, dunnock, crows, stock dove, great spotted woodpecker, wren and house sparrow. Bringing our total of birds to thirty – a very respectable number.

Jim Bagley as ever entertained us by recounting various stories, pointing out birds and generally was a very good leader. Our first Field Outing of 2020, roll on the rest of the year.

Daphne Flach

Friday 14th February 2020

Chidham

Leader: John Kelsall

Fourteen members plus one guest met up in the car park on a dry cloudy morning. It was a good start to our Field Outing since a kingfisher was seen by the pond just before arriving at the car park and a robin was singing at the car park.

We first walked beside a field where unfortunately a bird scarer was going off "bang" at regular intervals. However, despite this, a green woodpecker was heard with its distinctive laughing call. Two widgeon flew overhead and a moorhen was heard from the pond hidden on the other side of the hedge. We were all careful that we did not slip as we walked down a slight decline onto a very muddy path beside a ditch filled with water. Sharp eyes noticed some large clumps of frogspawn in the ditch and primroses were out on the side of the ditch. A queen buff tailed bumblebee was seen and photographed.

The muddy path led onto a lane where a song thrush was heard singing. White prunus was flowering and hart's tongue was growing on the grass below. A great spotted woodpecker could be seen just below the top of a bare branched tree. Around this location we either saw or heard a variety of birds including buzzard, blue tit, great tit, long-tailed tit, stock dove, starling, blackbird and goldfinch to mention a few.

We crossed over a lane and walked towards the Bosham inlet. The tide was coming in and the sun started to shine intermittently. A big flock of Brent Geese was seen, also a mute swan, grey plover, shelduck, little egret flying upstream, little grebe and great crested grebe diving down and bobbing back up, merganser, redshank and curlew.

We slipped and slid along the very muddy towpath. Another bumblebee was spotted looking somewhat dazed. It was carefully picked up, warmed in the hand and then very carefully deposited onto an open dandelion flower. Our route

then turns 90 degrees to the right away from the inlet onto a footpath with a tall hedge to the left and a planted field to the right. Skylarks were singing overhead and two of them flew left low over our heads to the other side of the hedge. Two rooks were on the ground in the field.

Altogether 37 bird species were counted which was a very good number considering the first part of our walk was accompanied by the sound of the bird scarers.

It was very kind of John Kelsall to agree to be our Leader since he has been taking things at an easier pace. He didn't complete the whole circuit and we all wish him a very speedy recovery.

Bird Species List: Robin, Kingfisher (near pond just before car park), Green woodpecker, Wigeon – flying, Moorhen, Woodpigeon, Buzzard, Blue tit, Collared dove, Crow, Magpie, Song thrush, Starling, Stock dove, Blackbird, Pheasant, Goldfinch, Great tit, Long-tailed tit, Great spotted woodpecker, Chaffinch, Brent geese (reached creek), Mute swan, White doves (flock), Grey plover, Shelduck, Little egret, Little grebe, Oyster catcher, Cormorant, Redshank (sun came out), Great crested grebe, Merganser, Curlew, Skylark, Rook, Dunnock. Total 37

OTHER

Teasels, primroses, white prunus, hart's tongue

Frog spawn, queen buff tailed bumblebee, (also a bumblebee found dazed, put onto dandelion flower)

Daphne Flach

NEWS & VIEWS

One of our members, Denise Bowerman, is organising a trip to the Carmague that members may be interested in. If you wish to understand this in more detail then please contact Denise directly. Please note that this is not a Chichester Natural History Society activity

An Autumn Break in Provence - Countryside & Culture. Departing 8th October 2020 6 days, Staying in Avignon for the 5 nights and visiting Aix-en-Provence, Arles, Carrieres de Lumieres show and the Camargue - a rare habitat for flamingos, the famous White horses, Camarguais, and the magnificent black Bulls. Coach from Chichester to Gatwick and return included, and Tour Guide throughout our stay. 4 Single rooms and 3 twin/double remaining. Maximum of 20 in the Group.

I am leading the Group and as always, book through a Tour Operator so we are ABTA bonded and ATOL protected. All participants have their own Travel Insurance or can take it out through the Tour Company, Tailored Travel. It is a wonderful opportunity for a small Group of like-minded people to travel together and enjoy all this beautiful region has to offer. There is a full Itinerary as I have out-lined or with the help of our Guide in Avignon, people can explore on their own, there is ample free time.

Denise Bowerman. d.bowerman@live.co.uk 01243 576981

FROM THE EDITOR

What a wet Autumn and still mild and damp as we move through January into February 2020. Will this weather instigate even earlier Spring happenings – who will spot the first frog spawn – mine appeared on 3 February!! Earliest ever. A wet November generally means a great show of wild daffodils in West Dean Woods so put an end of March date in your diary for a visit.

Thanks for our reporters for their contributions to the Newsletter. We always welcome articles on any natural history subject for the newsletter so if you have something please send it to me for publication. It does not have to be about an exotic location – it could just be a wildlife event in your garden. All reports and articles should be sent to me at jjkelsall70@gmail.com

Deadline for articles for Newsletter 197 is 21 May 2020

Data base: Names, addresses and telephone numbers of members are stored in a computer file for the sole use of the Society according to our privacy policy (see website).