



LENS Wildlife Watch

LENS Long Eaton Natural
History Society

September 2008

Volume 2 Issue 2

New Nature Reserve for Long Eaton?

Local MP supports bid for new Community Wild Space at Midland Street

Based at the end of Midland Street and next to Toton Sidings, the proposed area is very convenient for access to the town. It has a public footpath to it which diverges and continues on both sides.

There is a sculpture placed by Sustrans at the foot of the bank. It has commanding views of Toton Sidings, Toton Water Meadows and a low level area currently 'wild' which formerly was part of the sidings.

It is next to the flood plain between the River Erewash and the Erewash Canal and could form part of a large natural area.

[Watch this space!](#)



**Common Footman *Eilema lurideola*
on ragwort**

New Scout Activity



Scouts Examine the Catch

On a weekend in late June, members Alan Heath and David Pinney ran pond dipping as a new activity at the Trent Lock Scout Activity Centre. David had researched the equipment needed and obtained it using lottery funding for the camp. There were 200 Cubs and Scouts camping plus 80 adults. 100 Beaver Scouts visited on Saturday. There was a fantastic range of activities all weekend including pond dipping which created much interest. Over 20 types of aquatic organism were found. A huge horse leech, water scorpions, young newts, common frogs and small minnows particularly fascinated the young people.

Toton Fields

Toton sidings has long been recognized as a very important habitat for wildlife and is greatly valued by residents as a recreational area. A Friends of Toton Fields Group has been set up to study, preserve, promote, enhance and protect the area of land known as Toton Fields. For further information contact Geoff Charlwood the Hon Secretary Tel 0115 9730467

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Records Wanted

- Humming Bird
Hawk moth and Painted Lady butterfly records wanted for Butterfly Conservation Migrant Watch.
- Report House Martin nests for the British Trust for Ornithology House Martin survey. Count nests and look for evidence of breeding success.

Friends of West Park

LENS member Keith Breakwell has initiated a project of re-planting of the flower beds around the bowling green possibly incorporating palm trees which now seem to survive the winter better than in the past. The project involves assessment, planning, finance and planting.

The Friends have carried out native tree planting in the Fox Covert Area.

A new display board has been placed at the Leisure Centre entrance to the park.

For information contact the Green Space Team on **0845 907 2244 Ext 3886**.

The next meeting of the Friends of West Park is on September 12 at 7.00 pm at Long Eaton Leisure Centre in the Curzon Room. All interested persons are welcome.



West Park Trees

Friends of Forbes Hole

Routine recording and work has continued. Heavy rain in the summer caused both ponds to be joined. Public tours of the reserve in June and August were publicized and well attended especially the tour as part of the Autumn Footprints, Amber Valley and Erewash Walking Festival. A display was set up at the Long Eaton School Eco Fun Day and the Council Open Space Meeting was attended.

Alan Heath is planning a publication about the reserve giving full details of its history and wildlife records.

To Join the Friends Contact Marion Horton, Groundwork Derby and Derbyshire Tel 01773 535232 or the Chairman Alan Heath 0115 9733766



Broad Bodied Chaser Female

Friends of Elvaston Park



Bank Vole

The Friends of Elvaston Park have recently begun a programme to update the records at Elvaston Castle, particularly those in the LNR, the northern part (Greatricks Field).

Derby Mammal Group in July trapped Wood Mice, Field and Bank Voles. Derbyshire Bat Group found Brown Long Eared, Soprano and Common Pipistrelle, Daubentons, Natterer's, Noctule and Whiskered bats.

If you can contribute any wildlife records they will be forwarded to the Friends Group. Any queries to

Mrs Sandra Hull, 1113 London Road, Alvaston DE24 8QD

April 14 Beeston Lock 'A two mile waterside walk with good footpaths'.
Meet Beeston Lock. **Directions** At end of Station Road off Queen's Road, signposted Beeston Marina. **Leader** Marion Bryce

Eleven members of Long Eaton Natural History Society set out on a cool clear evening to test the new circular walk around the Beeston Lock area. The tow path was taken heading along the canal, past the old barge turning point bridge up to the first foot bridge. Leaving the canal a field path was taken to the riverside which led onto a good path following the river past Clifton Hall on the opposite bank and Beeston Weir back to Beeston Lock.

On the canal side the small purple flowers of ivy leaved toadflax were tumbling and hart's tongue fern clung to the crevices. The most spectacular flower was the green hellebore (*Helleborus viridis*) flowering profusely by the turning point bridge, possibly a very attractive garden escape.

The bright red setae of *Ceratodon purpureus* coloured the edge stones of the canal. The grey cushions of *Grimmia pulvinata*, the twisting capsules of *Tortula muralis* together with the nodding capsules of *Bryum argenteum* and the golden branches of *Brachythecium rutabulum* made a colourful display of mosses.



Helleborus viridis by the Turning Point Bridge

Conditions were muddy underfoot but several flowers of the wayside were seen, chickweed, red and white dead nettle, dandelion, smooth sow thistle and daisy, groundsel, lesser trefoil, ivy leaved and common field speedwell. Blackthorn and some Western gorse were seen in the hedge and a few remaining hazel catkins. By the river a comfrey plant was checked for possible caterpillars of small tortoiseshell but none were seen. A solitary Spanish bluebell was flowering. Hundreds of seedlings of Himalayan Balsam were sprouting. In the field we saw rabbit, mole hills rising and feathers scattered, possibly by a fox.

A very attractive cutting on the side of the hill across the river beneath the hall consisted of striped layers of Mercia Mudstone (this used to be known as Keuper Marl) with skerries and possibly some satin spar (Gypsum).

Birds were crow, jackdaw, blackbird, house sparrow, wood pigeon, a very noisy pheasant, kestrel, green wood pecker – yaffling, mallard and moorhen. Nesting on the river were great crested grebe, and coot. A nearby heronry was very active. It was exciting to see a sand martin investigating a hole in the canal bridge and others skimming the canal, newly returned for the summer.

The future of the derelict former canal manager's cottage at Beeston Lock is currently under discussion and British Waterways have asked the public to write in with suggestions for their use.

April 21 Barrow on Trent 'Living with lichens.'
Meet at St Wilfred's Church **at** 6.45 pm 'Don't forget your hand lens!'
Grid Ref SK 353283 **Leader** Ivan Pedley



Bristly Millipede

It was an exciting start to the evening as Ivan Pedley re-discovered *Polyxenus lagurus* 11 years after he first found it at St Wilfrid's Church. It was 7 in the evening and freezing cold but the UK's smallest millipede was actively scouring the stone of the church. We could only see it through a hand lens!

These curious, little millipedes (rarely more than 5 mm long) differ from all other millipedes by being covered from head to tail with tufts of bristle-like hairs. Apparently it is the millipede with the fewest pairs of legs (12 pairs) and its sex life is amazing. On dry days it can be found walking around on tree trunks and rocks, but retreats into shelter when it rains (!). It appears to be rather local in distribution and much rarer in northern than in southern counties of Britain. There are not many local records for this millipede.

St Wilfrid's is a good churchyard for lichens with 50 species already recorded and potentially another 10-15 to be found now that the air quality is improving. Not many people burn coal these days and the local power station does not emit so much sulphur dioxide due to flue gas desulphurisation scrubbers in the boiler chimney. Years of acid rain has roughened the surface of the stone so the fossils are exposed and anchorage for lichens is improved. The churchyard is well kept with grass cleared from the ledger stones. 70% of the lichen species in church yards are found on limestone the other 30% are found on acid stones such as slate or granite. The British Lichen Society has produced a leaflet with colour pictures for easy identification of these species.

Lichens consist of a mutualistic association between a fungus and an alga. The lichen is named after the individual fungus as many lichens contain the same alga. There are about 15000 lichens world-wide, 2000 lichens in Britain but only 20 associated algae. Reproduction of lichens can be either sexual, with production of apothecia which look like jam tarts but are actually inverted mushrooms emitting spores. This gives variety in form but can cause a problem as the fungus spreads but the alga is left behind. Or asexual in which needle like isidia are produced which emit a constant powder of vegetative propagules which contain lichen and algal partner, these easily establish new colonies.



Lichens on limestone

April 28 Woodthorpe Revisited A one mile stroll around a Victorian Park with gentle gradients. **Meet** Woodthorpe Gardens Car park **at** 6.45 pm
Directions. about 700m up Woodthorpe drive from Mansfield road (A60).
Grid ref SK 583 435 **Leader** John Travis



Woodthorpe Park

12 members enjoyed the second half of our visit to Woodthorpe, which was a follow on visit from the Nottingham City Council Nursery and Tropical House visit last summer. The park was laid out in 1884 by master bleacher Henry Ashwell, who built Woodthorpe Grange in the same year with wonderful views.

The delicious scent of Viburnum and bird song filled the air as we climbed down the steps to the Dell with its pre-Raphaelite grotto and bridge. A small brickworks quarry which was using the local Mercia mudstone for brick making was turned into the rockery gardens. On the sandstone face of the waterfall feature grow some interesting liverworts and mosses. 100m past the Dell traces of the Nottingham Suburban railway railway were seen including the Woodthorpe drive bridge with its

spectacular sculpture and a railway cutting. The railway was planned as a commuter line from the city via Sneinton with stations at Thorneywood, Wells Road, Sherwood, (now Part of the Woodthorpe park) eventually rejoining the Northern line at Daybrook. It opened in 1889. The line also served as an important mineral line for coal to various depots for domestic distribution and industrial use in the Many brickworks in the area as well as taking the finished bricks out to the merchants.

As part of Nottingham in Bloom's Wild about Wildflowers 2006 project the City Council provided plants and packets of seeds free to residents who helped transform a large grassed area into a wild flower reserve. On our visit we saw meadow buttercup, ox-eye daisy and knapweed. At the viewpoint next to a small copse with flowering bird cherry trees (*Prunus padus*) we looked down upon the conservation area which has mature trees and is an area of natural regeneration. Cow parsley and bluebells were flowering, along with many Ramsons (wild garlic).



Mystery Plant

Passing through some herbaceous borders we could see bistort flowering, this is a wild flower which is also used as a kitchen herb. The pansy beds were colourful but no one could identify the exotic bloom (pictured) which was inter-planted. Hyacinths and tulips were at their peak in the bulb garden at the end of our stroll, and we enjoyed the pink blossom on a mature flowering cherry and the magnolia trees which were in flower.

Birds seen on the park include bluetit, coaltit, long tailed tit, great tit, dunnock, robin, song thrush, blackbird, goldfinch, greenfinch, chaffinch and green woodpecker.

May 19 Morleyhayes Wood. Bluebells. **Meet** in the White Post Inn car park, the wood is about 500 yards from the pub, SK 413426.
Leader Marion Horton - Groundwork Trust.

Proceeding across Commoners Lott to a circular route through the wood the delicate fragrance of wild bluebells greeted LENS members on a fine evening. We followed the chuck of a greater spotted woodpecker through oak, scattered birch, aspen, ash, Scots Pine and hazel to the old part of the wood. Wood anemone, wood sorrel and of course bluebell are indicator species showing the wood is at least 400 years old. There were signs of the reported sika deer, badger and fox trails. Rabbits and molehills were seen in the meadow. Red ants, woodlice, and a brown centipede were seen under logs. Banded snail, common snail and door snails were seen.

Plants growing in the slightly acidic moist soil were; cowslip, foxglove, yellow archangel and many young seedlings of Himalayan balsam. Along the track were the star-like flowers of yellow pimpernel and some three nerved sandwort. The sandwort is very similar to chickweed but has 5 entire petals where the chickweed appears to have 10. The triangular leaves of broad buckler fern were seen together with male fern. In the newer part of the wood bramble and bracken were persistent.

We walked through the woodland by kind permission of Morley Hayes Hotel who have obtained a Woodland Grant and are following a 10 year management plan with partitioned clearance of sycamore and tree thinning. Piles of dead branches and ring barked, standing dead wood encourages wildlife diversity. One of the oak trees had many oak apples caused by a gall wasp.



Bluebells and standing Dead wood at Morleyhayes

As the light faded the blue colour of the bluebell carpet was enhanced due to the Purkinje effect which results from a change in the colour sensitivity of the eye at low light levels. Songs of wren, song thrush, robin, goldcrest and blackbird melodiously filled the wood. At last we caught up with the greater spotted woodpecker in the tree tops and had a good view. A pheasant ran across Commoners Lott as we made our way home.

Birds. Crow, great tit, bluetit, chiffchaff, greater spotted woodpecker, treecreeper, green woodpecker, goldcrest, blackbird, song thrush, robin, crow, pheasant, blackcap, chaffinch, wren.

Plants, pedunculate oak, ash, sycamore, hazel, aspen, mountain ash, Scots Pine, bluebell, foxglove, chickweed, yellow pimpernel, red campion, Jack by the hedge (garlic mustard), three nerved sandwort, yellow archangel, greater stitchwort, wood speedwell.

Grass, creeping soft grass, tufted hair grass and Yorkshire Fog.

Sedge paniculate and hairy.

Rush, compact and hard.

Fern, bracken, broad buckler and male.

Centipede Lithobius forficatus

Woodlice Oniscus asellus, Porcellio scaber.

Snail, banded, common garden and door.

May 29 West Park Nurseries and Recycling Depot

Thursday Not just child's play. **Meet at** Long Eaton West Park Leisure Centre Car Park **at** 6.45pm. **Directions** Follow signs for Leisure Centre, entrance is on Wilsthorpe Road, Long Eaton **Leader** John Goodchild



John examines a plant for pests

A very wet evening was spent under shelter at the Erewash Borough Council Nurseries at West Park. In the potting shed, Mr Richard Windsor outlined the recycling scheme and invited comments and suggestions. Currently there are domestic and trade collections for general waste (Black bins), garden waste (Brown bins) in the summer months and paper, recyclable plastic and glass (green bags). The waste is hand sorted at Derby Transcycle then sold on. A recycle rate of 40% has been achieved with an ongoing series of educational workshops and district champions. This is one of the top recycling rates in Derbyshire but further improvements will depend upon supermarkets changing to recyclable packaging and re-usable carrier bags.

John Goodchild showed the different types of peat-free compost and outlined the difficulty of obtaining a suitable mix for growing plants in pots. Through persistence and many trials peat is now replaced by a mixture of coir and shredded bark in a loam based compost with a slow acting fertilizer incorporated. In the West Park nursery gardens, 150 000 plants are grown on from plugs which are used in flower beds, formal displays, floral displays and offices all over the borough, Wilsthorpe Road island alone uses 2800 plants. The plants chosen are often of the Mediterranean type which after an initial watering will grow without further intervention.



Scaevola-Fan Flower



Cryptolemus - a Ladybird

Biological control is one of the major components of an integrated pest management regime. In nature many organisms survive by feeding on other insects. Predators, parasites and diseases of pests are available in abundance, certain key groups have been identified which maintain natural balance and reduce pest incidence. Lacewings, *Encarsid* wasps, *Aphidius* and *Cryptolemus* (a ladybird) are supplied in the larval stage by **Syngenta** who monitor the greenhouse for aphids, mealy bugs and other pests and supply the biological control agent through the post so it can be introduced when needed. The contract costs £30 per month, is environmentally friendly and much cheaper than the previous scheme of regular pesticide application.

A Glow worms outing to Stanley, Thursday June 12. Meet White Hart Inn, Stanley

Twenty four members of LENS and Derby Natural History Society walked along Stanley Brook and across the fields to Morley. Rye, cocksfoot, sweet vernal and meadow foxtail were flowering. Two types of soldier beetles, were clinging to the stems. A gravid female metallic green dock leaf beetle was cutting a lacey pattern in the flat frond of a broad leafed dock. A family of foxes, two adults and two cubs were playing under the trees in the distance and rabbits were busily eating the grass. Marsh foxtail and soft rush grew in the damper fields. The brook looked clean and marsh marigolds had been flowering but not many water plants were seen except for some spiked burr reed. Nearer Morley *Conocephalus conica* and *Pellia* liverwort grew by the stream. Glistening inkcap and Artist's fungus *Ganoderma* sp were seen low down on a sycamore pollard. Hawthorn hedges with some blackthorn provided shelter for dogs mercury, cow parsley, hedge parsley and hogweed, green alkanet, lesser and greater stitchwort and red campion. Barren strawberry was also seen. Swallows skimmed the fields.

A diversion was taken to Morley Churchyard to view mistletoe growing low down on an ancient hollow apple tree. A large toad was living at the base of the hollow, two woodlice, *Porcellio scaber* and *Philoscia muscorum* and a large carabid beetle possibly *Pterostichus* spp shared the hollow. The dark shape of brown rats could be seen scuttling between the hen houses as we admired the ostrich chicks at the farm at Morley. A chiffchaff called insistently and in the distance the screeching of peacocks from Locko Park could be heard.

The glow-worms from Morley Railway cutting have moved onto private land due to degeneration of their favoured stoney habitat. So we drove to Coxbench. It was dark by ten o'clock and the gibbous moon shone weakly as we carefully ventured along the disused railway track picking our way by torchlight. Very soon a bright yellow-green glow could be seen in the trackbed. We switched our torches off.

The glow-worm is another type of soldier beetle, most members of this family are the tropical fire-flies. They are remarkable for producing soft, greenish light, brightest in the adult female but existing in both sexes at all stages. The female looks like a grey woodlouse, it resembles a large beetle larva, it does not have wings. By day they hide under stones or rubbish or in the ground. By night the males fly, using large eyes to find their mates. The females on the ground twist their abdomens round to reveal the luminous organs in the underside of the tail segments. they may climb up plant stems to show themselves better. They feed on snails, both larvae and adults inject substances into the snail's body which first paralyse it, then make it dissolve, they then suck the liquid until the shell is empty.



David Pinney Admires the Ancient Apple Tree at Morley

Altogether we counted 16 female glow-worms, no males were seen. It is hoped that the newly formed wildlife group at Stanley will be able to rehabilitate the Stanley glow-worms and they will increase in numbers from the 5 counted this year.

June 16 Ticknall Limeyards. The flora of the great white rock.
Meet Ticknall village car park **Grid ref** SK 361239
Leader Alan Heath

Ticknall is a small village, years ago it was considerably larger and noisier with lime quarries, tramways and potteries. In 1804 the tramway was conveying lime to the Ashby Canal, it formally closed in 1915. Its most prominent feature is "the Arch" built in about 1802, like a canal bridge with a horseshoe-shaped arch, while a tunnel nearby carried the tramway under Calke Park.

There is an outlier of limestone in this region and this is the site of the largest concentration of historic lime kilns in Great Britain, but now the overgrown brick and limeworks are shaded under a canopy of largely self-set trees, ash, sycamore, pedunculate oak and birch predominate. Dave Pinney identified a Turkey Oak.



Brian Gough Climbs Down to an Old Lime Kiln

The old limeyards are rich in plant life with natural calcareous grassland as well as the old lime works. It is an S.S.S.I. (Site of Special Scientific Interest), one of only six in the South Derbyshire district, it was the first nature reserve acquired by Derbyshire Wildlife Trust but now it is managed by the National Trust.

Plants such as common spotted orchid, twayblade, nettle leaved bellflower, downy plantain, milkwort and birds foot trefoil were seen. The invertebrate population is also diverse and we saw many soldier beetles and straw dot moths. Quaking grass was flowering. A heron flew off as Alan Heath sampled some of the ponds and mare's tail was still there as it has been for many years.



Common Spotted Orchid

June 30 Mapperley Park Wood 'Over the Stile' A four mile walk with uneven ground. **Meet** at Methodist Church car park, High Lane West, West Hallam (next to the Bottle Kiln). SK 432 420 **Leader** Roger Wood Shipley birdwatchers.

LENS members who climbed 'over the stile' with Roger Wood, were surprised to find ECO-WARRIORS protesting against mining in Smalley. Police helicopters and aeroplanes patrolled the air together with hundreds of azure damsel flies.



Over the Stile

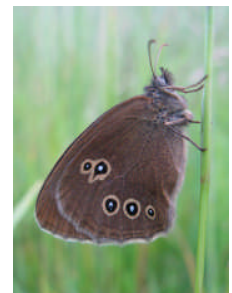
The 'Leave It In The Ground' group have strengthened doors and windows at the derelict Prospect Farm, in Bell Lane, Smalley, which they took over in June in their bid to stop UK Coal opencast mining 334 acres of land around the site. They have also strung up nets in trees where they can stay to make any eviction more difficult. UK Coal has Government clearance to mine for four-and-a-half years from this autumn, despite Derbyshire County Council previously refusing to grant planning permission. A pair of hobbies which are nesting near the site may afford more protection for the wildlife which has developed in the area since Mapperley Colliery closed. There is concern for the

future of these birds as, after the young birds fledge, the proposed clearance of the area with removal of mature oak and ash trees may destroy the nesting site.

On the old Mapperley Colliery lane a hare galloped ahead and several more were running about in the fields around Prospect Farm. Two grey partridges rattled in flight. Rooks, jackdaws and magpies festooned the outbuildings. A kestrel picked up a field vole and a green woodpecker yaffled. Tree sparrow, chaffinch and wren were heard.

In the coal setting area, a green grasshopper, ringlet butterflies and two types of soldier beetle were found. The yellow flowers of ribbed melilot, yellow-rattle and birdsfoot trefoil were outstanding.

Towards the Derbyshire Wildlife Trust nature reserve at Pewitt Carr the marshy areas supported large areas of pond sedge alive with damsel flies, beetles and moths. Many common spotted and southern marsh orchids were flowering together with some very tall hybrid orchids. Creeping thistle here was replaced by marsh thistle. Hares were replaced by rabbits.



Ringlet Butterfly

Honeysuckle and evening primrose scented our return path as a little owl stood sentry.

July 1 Golden Brook 'A three mile walk with good footpaths'.
Meet West Park Leisure Centre, Long Eaton **Leader** Marion Bryce

On a sultry evening 15 members of DNHS took the footpath to Golden Brook Derbyshire Wildlife Trust Nature Reserve. Stopping to admire the arching sprays of purple flowers on a bush of the Duke of Argyll's tea plant (*Lycium barbarum*) we proceeded past the Wilsthorpe Road allotments with brambles flowering on one side and willows weeping by the Golden Brook on the right.

Water speedwell (*Veronica anagallis-aquatica*) and water cress had replaced the marsh marigold flowering at the culvert. Along the motorway corridor sycamore, field maple, wild cherry and wild plum were fruiting. Hawthorn hedges supported not only white bryony but also a full grown passion flower. Here we were delighted to see a small tortoiseshell butterfly and a small skipper resting on the bramble, while several meadow brown butterflies fluttered low over the meadow flowers. One harlequin ladybird was seen. A banded demoiselle and a female black tailed skimmer flew among the trees. Passing under the motorway a purple stand of tufted vetch caught the photographer's eye and a yellowhammer, 'a little bit of bread and no cheese' sat on the hedge. Many 7 spot ladybirds looked like drops of blood on a field of beans while scented and scentless mayweed flowered at the margins. Bands of black hairy peacock caterpillars devoured a stand of nettles.

Golden Brook Storage Lagoon was created to protect nearby Long Eaton from flooding by receiving flood water from the Golden Brook. When the danger is over, water is gradually released from the lagoon, leaving it as a shallow water area.

The group rushed down to view the stands of southern marsh orchids (*Dactylorhiza praetermissa*), over 500 flower spikes, together with a few common spotted orchids (*Dactylorhiza fuchsii*) thrusting amongst red clover. Retracing our steps we 'walked the plank' to the centre of the lagoon, chasing a white moth which looked like a bird dropping, a clouded border moth. The lagoon looked dry. There was no sign of muntjac although one was accidentally killed on a nearby road earlier in the week. Water horsetail, common reed, fool's watercress, ragged robin and false fox sedge crowded the walkway. Under some grey willow several more orchids were flowering. A low set nest box contained 3 speckled white eggs possibly a titmouse's. We could hear reed buntings and see them flitting from stem to stem. A chiffchaff proudly sang from a tree top and a willow warbler fluted down the scales. As we opened the bird hide a large yellow underwing moth flew out. There was a little open water, grey bulrush (*Schoenoplectus tabernaemontani*) and greater reedmace (*Typha latifolia*) filled the view.

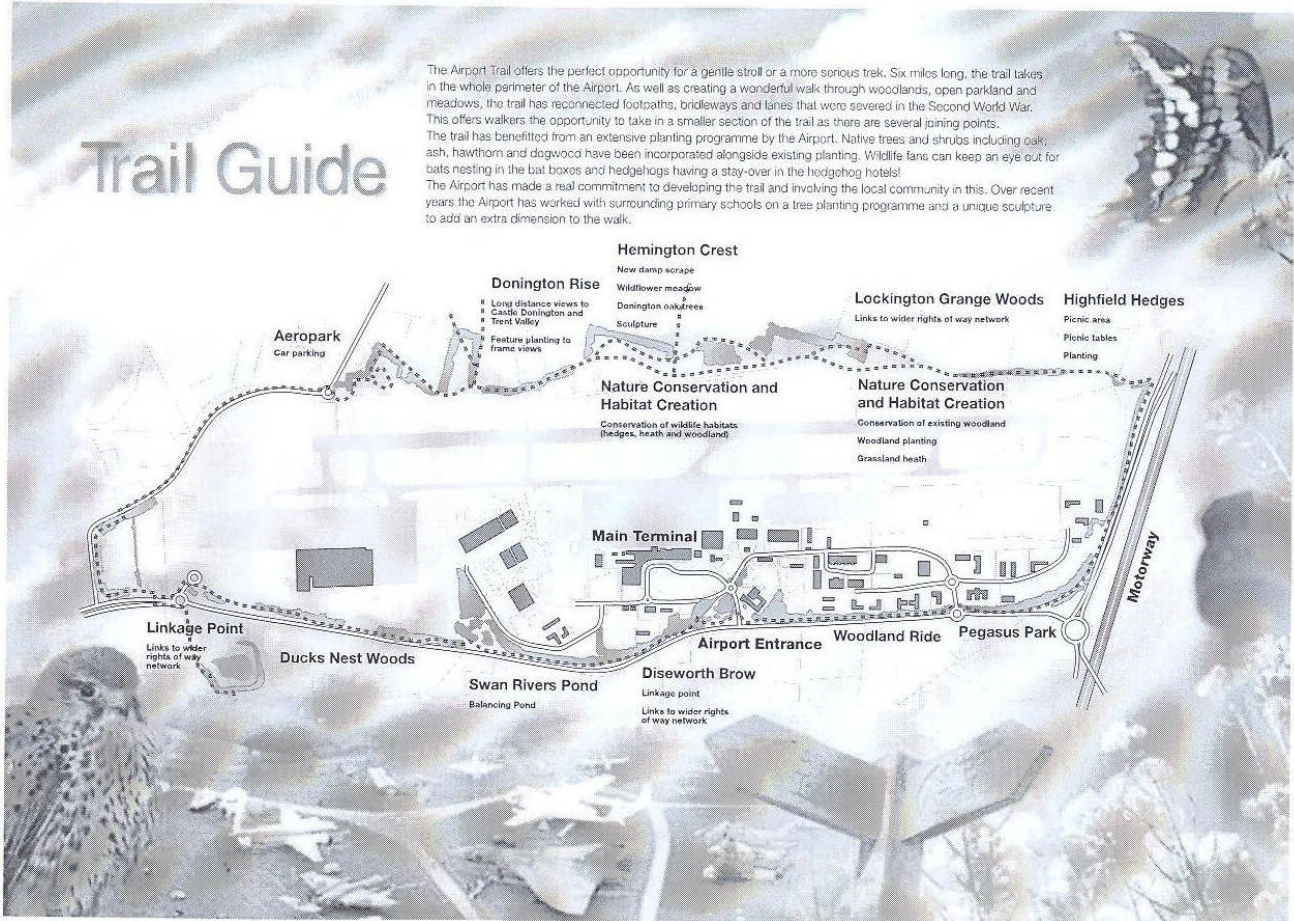


Clouded border
Lomaspilis
marginata

As we made our way out of the reserve along Harriman's Lane to the motorway bridge Alan Wilmot found a healthy colony of buckshorn (*Plantago coronopus*), our only plantain with pinnate leaves, usually found near the sea. Proceeding past the allotments to the grand entrance gates of West Park another halophyte, lesser sea spurrey, (*Spergularia marina*) was found by the road. We breathed the sweet air from the beautiful sensory gardens in the park and then retired to the Navigation at Breaston.

July 14 Nottingham East Midlands Airport

Airport or Nature Reserve? **Meet** at Diseworth Lane just past Nags Head Inn **Grid ref** SK 440 265 **Leaders** Fay and John Blackburn
Report by Alan Heath



The region was on the opposite side to the main terminal and the following plants were recorded.

Alder	Hedge Woundwort
Ash	Hogweed
Bird'sfoot Trefoil	Lesser Bindweed
Black Medick	Mayweed
Bramble	Meadow Vetchling
Broad Leaved Willowherb	Pineapple Weed
Buddleja	
Common St John's Wort	Pink Campion
Creeping Cinquefoil	Prickly Lettuce
Dogwood	Prickly Sowthistle
Elder	Red Clover
English Oak	Rosebay Willowherb
Field Maple	Selfheal
Goosegrass	Smooth Sowthistle
Hairy Tare	Spear Thistle
Hairy Willowherb	White Campion
Hazel	White Clover

Others

Soldier beetle (*Rhagonycha fulva*), Gatekeeper, Orange Tail bumblebee, Chaffinch.



Tony and Katherine at the Hemlockstone

July 28 The Hemlock Stone Sandstone puzzle **Meet** Bramcote Leisure Centre car park **at** 6.45pm. **Grid ref** SK 455381 **Leader** John Travis

It was one of those long sultry summer evenings as 18 LENS members climbed up through Bramcote Park Woods. The trees were a mixture of pedunculate oak and sycamore with a few yews and park trees including walnut. A strange scale insect was on the sycamore bark. Birch trees grew on the site of a former fire at the top of the hill. We followed a ridge of sandstone which is very hard due to barytes inclusions. The tough Sherwood sandstone was paler than the soft red Lenton sandstone underneath. An old gatepost or boundary marker was mostly hidden behind an elder bush, it sported a date of 1777, still legible after 250 years. The views of Nottingham Castle and the white sails of Greens Windmill were excellent. We had walked back in time from the Triassic via the Permian, to the Carboniferous.

As we stood on the Triassic Sherwood Sandstone at the top of the hill we looked out over the Coal Measures and the sites of former coal mines such as Wollaton, Trowell and the old bellpits on Trowell Moor. The treeless hedges of the fields in these areas indicated recent restoration from opencast coal mining. With good visibility and binoculars we could see further to the Carboniferous age, past Shaw Wood and Catstone Hill to Crich stand. A kestrel rose in front of us.

We made our way down the hill, past an old sandstone quarry, and crossed Coventry Lane to the Hemlockstone. It was huge. The bottom half was bright red Lenton sandstone which had weathered. A clear line could be seen where the Sherwood sandstone, polluted black and less weathered capped the landmark. David Bate explained that historical documents show that the Hemlockstone was left due to the protection of its hard cap of Sherwood Sandstone. There was a lot of quarrying in the area as the mottled Lenton sandstone was in demand for moulding sand at local foundries including Stanton Ironworks. The hand tools used in the 18th century would not easily move the hard capping stone so the quarrymen worked around the small outcrop which has been left as an impressive monument. The line across the Hemlockstone where the two sandstones met delineated the change in two great geological eras, from Palaeozoic at the bottom (which ended with the great Permian extinction when 95% of life on Earth perished) to the Triassic rocks of the Mesozoic Era at the top of the stone. No-one knows the exact location of an old copper mine which was in the area. The locals used to use the soil as a weed killer.

We now headed down the hill to the formal gardens of the old Bramcote Hall. Only the foundations and an ice house remain. A lesser stag beetle was on the path in the gardens. A wildflower garden has been planted as part of the Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust Blue Butterfly scheme. The garden was very beautiful with Coreopsis, evening primrose, blue cornflowers and many other flowering plants. Although no butterflies were seen there were common field grasshoppers enjoying the garden. Another small outcrop of sandstone part of the former large Bramcote sand quarry was seen and layering of pebble beds indicated turbulent deposition by a river in the past. Moor Lane is a tremendous cutting through the Lenton and Sherwood sandstone with interesting pebble beds. Southern and Common Hawker dragonflies were hunting as we made our way back to the car park.

August 2 Masson Hill

Gentians and helleborines. An approx two mile walk with steep gradients.

Directions Park on lay by Salters Lane opposite footpath to Masson Hill and Low Farm. **Grid ref** SK 283 595

Leader Margaret Beresford.



Joan Photographs the Autumn Gentians

We were very pleased to meet up with Margaret, a former LENS secretary on a sunny afternoon walk in the White Peak. We could hear the gentle chirruping of common green grasshoppers and field grasshoppers as we started the up hill path. The limestone flora, hedgerows of red campion, lesser burnet saxifrage, nettle leaved bellflower and field scabious with the grassland flora of bird's foot trefoil, knapweed, lesser quaking grass, self heal, fairy flax, eyebright and harebell was outstanding.

On the grassy slopes up to Masson Top we were entranced by meadow brown, gatekeeper, small heath and common blue butterflies dancing on the air. The delicate purple trumpets of autumn gentian (felwort) started to appear along the path. We had never seen so many. Photographs were not enough. On the rocky descent to Masson Quarry we saw red admiral and speckled wood butterflies.

Our reward, hidden under trees in the quarry floor, broad leaved helleborine, almost in flower. Some people thought we had come a week too early. Retracing our steps we moved on to Jugholes cave. Here the broad leaved helleborine had just burst into flower and Dominic spotted a huge hoverfly *Sericomyia silentis*. Before returning home we saw two heteropteran bugs, common green capsid, *Closterotomas norvegicus* and *Calocoris stysi* a very pretty bug on the gate post.



Sericomyia silentis

Aug 18 Exploring Derwentside An approx 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ mile walk on a muddy track.

Directions Meet where Station Road crosses the River Derwent at Borrowash Bridge

Grid Ref SK 415339 **Leader** Robin Bryce



Banded Demoiselle

The screaming of sand martins set us on our way along the side of the Derwent. Spiked burr reed, reed sweet grass and reed canary grass lined the river. Regular plops and plishes may have been water voles. Arrowhead and brooklime floated in the water. Pink helmets of Himalayan balsam puffed pink pollen and coloured the ghostly bees. Russian comfrey, marsh woundwort and meadow vetchling as well as the usual bramble and nettle, grew rank. The open pasture land, divided by hawthorn hedges and dotted with calling sheep, gave fine views. A yellow hammer called. High in the air,

around an ash tree, 2 common hawk dragonflies competed for a feast of gnats. A large iridescent damselfly, the banded demoiselle, posed on the reeds. The fisherman told tales of pike, chub, roach and barbel, we could see them rising to the dancing caddis but his net was empty.

Wildlife Recording

Before we can protect our wildlife we need to learn more about it. How well do you know the area you live in? What wildlife lives there? Tell us what you have seen.

Look at your garden and choose an area you visit regularly like a local park, field, or nature reserve - its up to you. Observe the wildlife, this can be plants, mammals or insects or anything which catches your interest.

Write your observations on a

wildlife recording form and send it to us so we can build a picture of your special area and see how it compares with other sites of interest and how it changes over the years. The club will build a database which will include a list of favourite wildlife sites and what has been seen there.

You could send us a report of your own special area or use the attached recording sheet to submit records. 2008 records will be summarized in the March bulletin.



Muntjac in Breaston Reported by John Haynes

Long Eaton School Environmental Fun Day

Long Eaton School has been awarded permanent International Eco School Status and to raise the profile of the sustainable agenda, they held an **Environmental Fun Day** on May 1st. The aim of the day was to broaden understanding of global warming and ensure that everyone understands that in their own way they can make a difference to the future.

Exhibition stands were put on by Nottingham Wildlife

Trust, Attenborough Nature Reserve, Groundwork Derby and Derbyshire, Sustrans, RSPB, Nottingham Organic Gardeners and Long Eaton Natural History Society amongst others.

[Long Eaton School was recently awarded £9850 from Breathing Spaces to develop a pond, native woodland, a sensory garden and wildlife corridor.](#)

[Tel 01629 580000 ext 7568 for Eco School News](#)



Alan and Local School Children at the Eco Fun Day

Alien Plants

The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 lists plants that cannot be planted or caused to grow in the wild. in England and Wales. At the moment, the act *only* includes two terrestrial species (Japanese Knotweed and Giant Hogweed) and is out of date. A ban on the sale of the nine most invasive aquatic plants and four more terrestrial plants has been recommended together with improved labelling and control.

[Curly Waterweed](#) , [False-acacia](#), [Fanwort](#), [Few-flowered Leek](#), [Floating Pennywort](#), [Giant Salvinia](#), [Hottentot Fig](#), [New Zealand Pigmyweed \(Australian Swamp Stonecrop\)](#) , [Parrot's-feather](#), [Shallon](#), [Water Fern](#), [Water Hyacinth](#) and [Water Lettuce](#) are on the list.

These are invasive plants that escape from gardens into the wild damaging our native wildlife. Swamp stonecrop has already colonised some pools in Toton Water meadows and Japanese knotweed is a problem locally at Trent Lock and Risley Glebe. If you see these plants on sale you should not buy them. [Alternative native oxygenators](#) are [spiked water milfoil](#), [rigid hornwort](#) or [common water starwort](#) .



Japanese Knotweed



LENS Long Eaton Natural History Society

CONTACTS

Chairman’s Report by Alan Heath

Members will be pleased to see the new bulletin which includes colour. It is being produced by Marion Bryce and we congratulate her on a fine effort. Previously bulletins were numbered from 1-55 ending with the Winter edition for 2007. We now have volume 2, the first of which was published in March 08. Copies are sent to the local Wildlife Trusts, Long Eaton Library and the Library of the Natural History Museum in London.

This year I met with Marion Horton of Groundwork Derby and Debbie Court of DCC for an onsite meeting at Forbes Hole to discuss work to be done on the site as well as future funding. A display was put on at a Breathing Spaces event at Draycott on 21 June. Sadly few attended due to rain and we finished early. Far more successful was a pond dipping event for adults took place at Attenborough Nature Reserve on the 5 July where Alan Heath was joined by Tom Hartman of Nottingham University.

Finally, we are pleased to say our publication ‘Natural History of Long Eaton and District’ has been updated and we extend our thanks to all those who have contributed. Local records are very important and our members play a vital role in achieving this.

Read the bulletin for news of other activities this year and see below-Ed.

Please send pictures and wildlife news to the Editor, Marion Bryce

23 Marlborough Road
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E-mail: Lensnaturalhistory@yahoo.co.uk

Thanks to all contributors and M Bryce, David Pinney and Alan Heath for photographs used in this bulletin.

Please send wildlife records to Marion Bryce

23 Marlborough Road
Long Eaton

We’re on the web.
www.geocities.com/lensnaturalhistory

Citizen of the Year

On March 6, President Clive Atkins of Long Eaton Rotary Club presented Alan Heath with the Club’s Citizen of the year award for services to Natural History in the Long Eaton area, alongside significant achievement in the field of amateur astronomy and encouragement of young people’s interest.



Alan Heath on a LENS outing.

Membership Renewal Form

I would like to be a member of Long Eaton Natural History Society

Name _____

Address _____

Postcode _____

Tel no _____

Email _____

I enclose a cheque/postal order for £8.00

The annual subscription entitles members to attend meetings at £1.00 per session.

I agree/do not agree that LENS can keep my name on a database.

Please return completed form to the Hon Treasurer, Helen Knewstubb,
9 Kingsley Crescent, Sawley Long Eaton NG10 3DA