



# LENS Wildlife Watch

LENS Long Eaton Natural  
History Society



Autumn 2010

Volume 2 Issue 6

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## VICTORY FOR THE COMMUNITY

### Forestry Commission orders Tree planting at Toton

The Forestry Commission have ruled that illegal tree felling has taken place at Toton Sidings and that reinstatement should take place. The Toton Sidings Environmental Action Group are fighting to protect the remaining greenbelt between Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire in this area. Negotiations are taking place with Broxtowe Borough Council who have earmarked the land for housing.

The Friends of Toton Park are supporting the Toton Environmental Action Group in a bid to

stop the site being used for open cast coal mining followed by development. This is a site of interest for nature conservation (SINC). Notts Wildlife Trust are concerned to maintain green space and corridors for the wildlife which includes glow worms, bats, aquatic mammals, orchids and many other Biodiversity Action Plan Species.

There was good news in July, with the Forestry Commission's announcement of the order for re-planting of 1100 trees in the area. The decision can be appealed by the owners, but is subject to the

requirement that they re-plant this autumn/winter, and protect the trees for at least the next 10 years.

This is a real victory for the community.



**Mother Shipton moth**  
*Callistege mi*  
at the old Toton Sidings



**LENS BUTTERFLY Quiz enjoyed by children and adults**

### MARKEATON PARK BIOBLITZ

Derby City Council's Wildlife Officer, Beverly Rhodes organized a successful BBC Breathing Spaces event a BIOBLITZ at Markeaton Park.

The aim was to record as many species of wildlife as possible within 24 hours.

Another aim was to show people how to identify wildlife.

At the LENS stall Gill Martin and David Pinney hosted a wildflower quiz devised by Joan Breakwell and a butterfly quiz by Marion Bryce.

The event took place over two days and over 600 species of wildlife were recorded.

### Records Wanted

- Report Mammal Records for the new Derbyshire Mammal Atlas which is being produced by Derbyshire Mammal Group December is last date for records.
- Take part in BTO British Trust for Ornithology tetrad recording survey phone D Budworth 01283 215188 for details.

## Friends of Elvaston Castle

DERBYSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL intend to grant a 150 year lease of Elvaston Castle and part of the Country Park to Highgate Sanctuary. Approximately 150 acres of land including Home Farm and the Stables area will be developed into a :Hotel with conference and leisure facilities (Castle, courtyards and immediate area); Craft type businesses (stable area); Golf course and club house extending onto surrounding land.

The lease is linked to support for a matched funding bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund for the restoration of the Gardens. The remaining 165 acres of the Country Park which remain in the Council's ownership are not affected by this proposal. The Council is considering establishing a Trust to manage the Park and Historic Gardens. A petition objecting to the planning application has been presented to Parliament.

People living near Elvaston Castle complained after about 100 trees were felled near the site. The Friends meet at the Moon Hotel, Station Road, Spondon, Check out the new u tube video on the web-site.

<http://www.friendsofelvaston.co.uk/video.htm>



**Cream wave moth at Elvaston**  
*Scopula flos lactata*

## Friends of Forbes Hole

A brown argus butterfly was a new record for Forbes Hole seen on the Wildlife Wander in August. Common blue, small copper, meadow brown, gatekeeper and comma were also seen. The Friends have had several action days to cut back scrub, clear and tidy up the reserve. Call Marion Farrell 01773 539 434 or mobile 07800 752259 to join the action.



**Clearing the scrub back at the viewing area for the big pond**

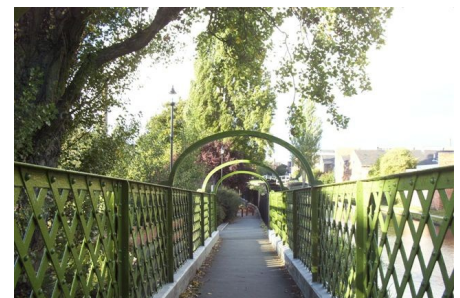


**Two Alans Painting**

## Friends of West Park

Long Eaton Horticultural Society are contributing to a 5 year plan for introducing more colour into the park. The cold winter has damaged several palm plantings in the bowling green area. Trees felled in recycling area due to a fallen branch damaging a car, have opened up the view. There will be a tree planting re-view in September as some of the

trees in the elm avenue need replacing. The judging for East Midlands in bloom was in mid July. A schools competition has been started for the design of a pair of gates at the yellow barrier entrance. A water play area is planned. A living sundial is being planted. Cards with contact numbers are available for park users. Next meeting Curzon Room West Park 7 pm November 4th



**West Park Broad Street Entrance**

## Water Quality Assessment

The **biological monitoring working party** (BMWP) is a procedure for measuring water quality using species of macroinvertebrates as biological indicators.

The method is based on the principle that different aquatic invertebrates have different tolerances to pollutants. The presence of mayflies or stoneflies for instance indicates the cleanest waterways and are given a tolerance score of 10. The lowest scoring invertebrates are worms (*Oligochaetes*) which score 1. The number of different macroinvertebrates (larger 'bugs') is also an important factor, because a better water quality is assumed to result in a higher diversity. Kick sampling, where a net is placed downstream from the sampler and the water is agitated with the foot for 3 minutes, is used. Any macroinvertebrates caught in the net are identified to the family level.

The BMWP score equals the sum of the tolerance scores of all macroinvertebrate families in the sample. A higher BMWP score means better water quality. Also the Average Score Per Taxon (ASPT) score is calculated.

The ASPT equals the average of the tolerance scores of all macroinvertebrate families found, and ranges from 0 to 10. The main difference between both indices is that ASPT does not depend on the family richness. Once BMWP and ASPT have been calculated, the Lincoln Quality Index (LQI) is used to assess the water quality.

The results below were from samples taken adjacent to the pond dipping platform at Attenborough Nature Reserve on 8 July 2010 by David Gell.

Group	Families	BMWP	Sam- pling point
Caddis or sedge flies	Leptoceridae	10	10
Caddis or sedge flies	Limnephilidae	7	7
Mussels	Unionidae	6	6
Shrimps	Gammaridae	6	6
Dragonflies	Coenagriidae	6	6
Bugs	Notonectidae	5	5
Bugs	Corixidae	5	5
Beetles	Dytiscidae	5	5
Flatworms	Planariidae	5	5
Mayflies	Baetidae	4	4
Leeches	Piscicolidae	4	4
Snails	Lymnaeidae	3	3
Snails	Planorbidae	3	3
Leeches	Erpobdellidae	3	3
Hoglouse	Asellidae	3	3
Midge	Chironomidae	2	2
Worm	Oligochaeta(whole class)	1	1
<b>BMWP score</b>			<b>78</b>
<b>ASPT</b>			<b>4.588</b>
<b>Water quality banding</b>			<b>235</b>
<b>KEY</b>			<b>Good</b>
<b>Poor &lt;25 Moderate 26-50 Good &gt;50</b>			



**Damselfly larva**



**Pond skater**

**Reference:** A key to the Major Groups of British Freshwater Invertebrates by P.S. Croft (Field Studies Council).

## LENS Summer Outings Reports

### April 26 Erewash Canal and Lock Cottage, Sandiacre

Meet at corner of Willoughby Ave and Bennett Street, Long Eaton:

Grid reference SK482350:Leader Marion Bryce

The Erewash Canal runs 11.75 miles through the Erewash Valley from the River Trent at Trent Lock to Langley Mill Basin. One of the earliest canals, built in the 18th Century, the Erewash Canal connected the now disused Cromford, Nottingham and Derby and Sandiacre Canals to the River Trent. The Erewash Valley walking and cycling trail is currently being developed which includes improved access and wildlife information panels along the canal.



**The Lock Cottage**

The Erewash Canal Preservation Society hosted our visit to the Sandiacre Lock keeper's cottage and toll booth. This was built in 1776 and has been restored and fitted with original housewares such as enamel ware, a dolly tub and a mangle with water supplied from a hand pump. There are photographs of the cottage through the years. The society is also involved with canal restoration.

On a sunny evening the club had an enjoyable walk although the natural history value was reduced due to towpath works. It is good to see hawthorn hedge management, but not in spring when the birds are nesting. The new path is very wide and with the adjacent clearance there had been virtually a total removal of herbage. This will recover but the habit of sprinkling grass seed onto the exposed soil rather than letting it regenerate naturally, is not good for local flora. In places the original gritstone canal edgestones had been replaced by concrete, this will affect the lichen flora.

Blackthorn was flowering with common dog violet and lesser celandine colourful beneath. Cuckoo flower, wavy bittercress and some thallose liverworts were seen in the canal overflow channel. Lesser pond sedge and false fox sedge lined the water's edge. A swan was nesting. Willow warbler and blackcap could be heard singing in the adjacent Toton Water Meadows whilst a green woodpecker was anting in the grass.



**Field garlic**

***Allium oleraceum***

Returning to Dockholme Lock, several members continued to look at one of the only sites for field garlic in Derbyshire. Here is an extract from Derbyshire Flora on line. 'Field Garlic is a rare native perennial of rock ledges and dry grassland generally over limestone. It still flourishes at the location in Linton's Flora, 'on the canal path between Sandiacre and Long Eaton'. This plant is in Category 2 of the local Red Data List, 2009.'

On the way home, a kingfisher screamed along the River Erewash and Daubenton's bats skimmed the surface.

#### OUT AND ABOUT (Fay and John)

Church Wilne (20 - 2 - 10)  
Gadwall ( 4 pairs ), Wigeon ( 4 pairs ), Tufted Duck ( 12 ), Canada Goose ( 12 ), Mallard ( many ), Coot ( many ), Swan ( 2 pairs ), Great Tit ( 1 pair ), Wren ( 1 ), Blue Tit ( 2 pairs ), Coal Tit ( 1 ), Chaffinch ( many ), Robin ( 4 ), Blackbird ( 1 )  
Black-headed Gull ( many )

Erewash Canal ( 6 - 4 - 10 )  
Chiff -Chaff ( 1 ) ( in vicinity of Sheet Stores )

Breaston ( 10 - 4 - 10 )  
Buzzard ( 1 ) ( Flying low over Wilsthorpe Road )

Oakwood ( Derby ) ( 20 - 6 - 10 )  
Red Kite ( 1 pair ) ( Reported by friends ) . Also five sightings reported in Long Eaton area.

## May 10 Bunny Wood – Bluebells and other woodland flowers

Bunny Wood is on the A60 between Bunny and Costock. The entrance is a double gate halfway up Bunny Hill on the left-hand side. Grid reference SK579283:Leader Chris Terrell Neild

Bunny is an ancient wood mentioned in the Domesday Book in 1086. The largely wych elm wood was taken over by Nottingham Wildlife Trust in 1985 when it had been devastated by Dutch Elm Disease which is a fungus spread by bark beetles. Pedunculate oak, field maple, ash, hawthorn, midland hawthorn and dogwood together with coppiced wych elm have now largely restored the wood which is managed on a commercial coppice rotation. The tree is cut at the base and re-grows producing many stems which can be harvested. Regular wood sales are held. Log piles encourage fungi, molluscs, ground beetles and other insects such as hornets. The oldest tree is a coppiced field maple 500 years old.

In the clearings and along the pathways are extensive swathes of deep blue bluebells with dogs mercury, red campion, wood anemone, greater stitchwort, arum lily, cow parsley, wood sedge and lesser celandine flowering. The flowers are protected from trampling by deadwood fences. The geology is of a glacial plateau with two spring lines. A layer of shale is sandwiched between boulder clay and mudstone. Some drainage has been developed and there are two small ponds either side of the path.



**Chris interprets the wood for LENS members Margaret Beresford, Joan Breakwell, Susan, Helen Knewstubb, John Haynes and Gill Martin**

Marsh marigolds were flowering and great crested newts have been found in one of the ponds.

Bunny Old Wood was originally enclosed by earth banks and ditches to keep deer and livestock out. Across the ditch and uphill gives a good view of the Nottinghamshire wolds, a series of steeply sloping hills and scarp slopes, characterised by an alternating pattern of pasture and woodland. A strong skyline of trees has been maintained. The nearby farm is under Land Stewardship. A field of rape had a wide headland against the wood and well maintained hawthorn hedges. A butterfly meadow has been created and over 15 species of butterfly including white letter hairstreak, have been recorded. Adders tongue fern grows.

Silver Seal Gypsum Mine has a ventilation outlet in the wood and this has been colonised by a large population of pipistrelle bats. On the slopes around the mine entrance is a good calcareous grassland flora and a grass snake was sighted 4 years ago. 38 steps led back to the car park on a clear cool evening.



**English bluebells**

***Hyacinthoides non scripta***  
**at Bunny Wood**

## May 24 Potwell Dyke – Grasslands

Park in Southwell on Church Street, facing the north side of the minster. Grid reference SK 701539 Leader Tony Morris

Southwell Minster lies in an attractive setting with a significant amount of open land to the south that is free from intensive development. Potwell Dyke is a dumble which is a steep sided stream and the associated water meadows have developed a hay meadow flora which is a rare sight.

The nature reserve consists mainly of three fields, one of which has been 'improved' in the recent past and does not have the attractive hay meadow flora. The best fields have cowslips, creeping and meadow buttercup, german-der speedwell, southern marsh orchid and adders tongue fern. These are followed in succession by yellow rattle and common spotted orchids. Many butterflies have been recorded, orange tip, green veined white and brimstone were seen on our visit. A cuckoo called .



**Adder's tongue fern**

***Ophioglossum vulgatum***

## Potwell Dyke – continued

This is a very wet site and ponds have been dug at various points. Marsh horsetail is common and various unusual sedges have been recorded. The flora associated with the surrounding hawthorn hedge includes hogweed, cow parsley, ground ivy and a lot of jack by the hedge. There are several mature hedgerow trees including a huge veteran field maple.

This is also an archaeological site and digs have uncovered 3 or 4 grave cuts aligned east/west indicating Christian burial. Towards Potwell Dyke there is a thick layer of white waterproof material into which were buried the remains of Roman buildings. It was thought that this could have been a quay. In Roman times the River Greet and the dyke were navigable and stone was transported by water.

The underlying geology is Mercian mudstone (now known as Keuper Marl) with some alluvial sand by the dyke. Unusually, in a nearby field where there is a large badger set, a lot of tufa (leached out calcium carbonate with plant remains) has been exposed by the digging.

The site is managed under a land stewardship grant and belongs to the Minster. Hay has to be cut at the end of the flowering period, after all the ragwort has been removed. A local farmer is contracted to cut and bale the hay which can then be sold. Other work involves strimming, removal of brambles and unwanted weeds and maintenance of fencing and kissing gates. Grazing is by the black Hebridean sheep, the flying flock of the Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust. The hedge has been relaid. Bird and bat boxes have been installed.

## June 7 Sherwood Forest – Nightjars

Park at the Sherwood Visitor Centre, Edwinstowe. It is well signed approx 1 mile north of Edwinstowe on the B6034: Grid reference SK626677: Leader Roger Wood

It was still light when we met Roger in the car park and set off on a short walk to the Sherwood Forest heathland. Two cuckoos kept up an unceasing competition of calls across the track. A greater spotted woodpecker flew, and we heard a green woodpecker call. We saw a lot of brown silver line moths flying amongst the bracken. We paused to apply insect repellent and saw a feathery legged rook. A tree pipit called and perched close by on the top of a dead tree. He turned his head 180 degrees to sweep the landscape, before gently drifting down to a bush. The many swifts flew lower and lower, screaming and gathering in hundreds. A small flock of black headed gulls flew by.



**Dot Banks challenges the nightjars in 2001**

The path, which was wet from the day's rain, was lined with froths of heath bedstraw. The cuckoo, still calling, flew closer and closer, then perched on a dead tree, flicking his tail. A tawny owl was heard calling in the distance but the long eared owls were not at home.

The oak and pine trees cleared to a large area of heathland. A double spit and a woodcock arced over the path, his long beak and short, rounded wings perfectly silhouetted against the deep blue twilight. Quickly losing the battle to stay airborne it disappeared into the heather to be

followed by several more each passing close over our heads. Small bats started to hunt for insects darting in and out of the bushes at head height.

Bubbling in the distance our first nightjar began his territorial burble, it increased in insistence and every time the call stopped in the silence we could see a black scythe glide from tree base to tree base. Nearer and nearer came the rattling challenge, back and forth across the track. David got out his white handkerchiefs, we all held our breath as the nightjar saluted our vigil.

Scotch mist turned to rain, so we returned to the car park carefully avoiding the toads on the path.

## Long Eaton School Eco Fun Day 8 June



**Fay Blackburn with a young bird watcher**

## June 19 Pleasley Pit Country Park –Orchid Walk

Directions Exit M1 at J29. Turn right onto A617 towards Mansfield. At first roundabout take exit towards Pleasley village and Teversal, go up small hill for about 50 metres, then turn right up Pit Lane. The car park is through the gateway at Pleasley Pit.

Grid reference SK501644: Leader Loz Brookes

As we approached the dramatic entrance of Pleasley Pit it looked as if the artist Christo had visited. The huge headstocks of the pit had been wrapped in plastic. The pit was closed in 1983, and demolition had started when the headstocks and associated buildings were declared a Scheduled Ancient Monument. The mine sat until 1995 when the Friends Of Pleasley Pit was formed. They are now in the process of restoring the colliery to its former glory and have covered the headstocks in plastic for renovation works.



**Pleasley Pit headstocks**

Much of the country park is on level ground with surfaced tracks for access. The park links to [Rowthorne and Pleasley trails](#) suitable for walking, cycling and horseriding and contains a wide variety of habitats including wetland, grassland, plantations and open water.

A bird hide overlooks the large pond and is available for visitors to use. Birds seen on our visit included mute swans, mallards, moorhens, coots, peewit, red shank and little ring plover. Several small ponds provide an ideal habitat for dragonflies and damselflies. A record 18 species of dragonfly has been recorded but as it was a windy day we didn't see many dragonflies on our visit.



**Giant scabious**

*Cephalaria gigantea*

On the Pit Bank the magnesian limestone grasslands support several orchid species including bee orchid and Common spotted orchid. Previously there were thousands of bee orchids but now only a few can be seen. There were magnificent displays of southern marsh and common spotted orchids. There are many other species of wildflower, the sainfoin, lucerne and other vetches were very colourful. It was our first record for giant scabious. Loz has taken on the task of recording all the wildflowers. To maintain the colourful display, trees are discouraged and the surface has to be disturbed to stop turf developing.

The wildflowers attract many insects and butterflies with large skipper and common blue recorded on our visit on a very windy day. Dingy skippers were not seen as the flight season ends in mid May but there were 27 records this year.

There are 50 pairs of skylarks on the site which provide a constant sound of summer.

## July 5 Stoney Clouds – Are there any grass snakes?

Meet at Stoney Clouds Local Nature Reserve, Church Drive, Sandiacre, beyond St Giles church. Grid reference SK479375:Leader Marion Farrell

Standing on top of the sandstone cliff at Stoney Clouds on a fine evening we had a wonderful view over the Erewash Valley to the Bramcote Hills.

We walked through rough grassland with elder, bramble and nettle and a tremendous display of rosebay willowherb. Honey bees and bumble bees were busy gathering nectar from the bramble. A few soldier beetles were busy looking for small insects to eat on the nettle but was difficult to find many insects as the weather has been very dry. The oak leaves were spotted brown and looked desiccated. We looked for grass snakes in the bracken but they were too well hidden. They been reported from Stoney Clouds in

**Stoney Clouds continued**



**A wonderful view from Stoney Clouds**

in the recent past but adders have never been found. Grass snakes are more common at Stanton Gate, another Groundwork managed reserve and Brian Hobby says you can't fail to see them on the dung heap at Woodside Farm.

Many grasses were flowering, false oat grass and cocksfoot in the long scrub and creeping bent and Yorkshire fog in the shorter turf. A common green grasshopper and a grass bug were admired in a magnifying pot. Only the male grass bugs have fully developed wings. They are quite good looking with yellow and brown stripes. There were many rabbit droppings and scrapes.

Marion found some caterpillars on the nettles but they were only shrivelled skins. The only live caterpillar was a spiky black peacock caterpillar with pink feet. Normally there are a lot of red admiral and tortoiseshell caterpillars on the nettles which are an essential foodplant for our butterflies. An angleshades moth was also found on nettle and a common footman, grey suit with flesh coloured lining was on hawthorn. A land stewardship grant has been used to enhance the area for wildlife and field maple, mountain ash, lime, hazel and other native trees have been planted. White bryony was trailing over some of the shrubs and common hemp nettle was flowering. We were told that elder is good for wine but farmers do not value it as it does not make a stock proof hedge, that is why you only see it on nature reserves. Molehills would not be tolerated by farmers as the soil spoils the hay and wrecks the farm machinery.



**Common grass bug**  
*Leptoterna dolabrata*

Marion distributed leaflets about the wildlife that could be found and about the other nature reserves managed by the Derby and Greater Derbyshire Groundwork Trust who manage nature reserves on behalf of Erewash Borough Council.



**Peacock butterfly**  
*Inachis io*  
Caterpillar

**9 July Noctilucent clouds over Long Eaton**



**Noctilucent Clouds**

These rare noctilucent clouds were photographed by Alan Heath. Noctilucent means *night shining* in Latin. They are thin, wispy clouds, glowing electric blue. Some scientists think they're seeded by ice or space dust., others suspect they're a tell tale sign of global warming. They are seen in June or July more usually in Scotland and are a relatively recent phenomenon.

**10 July 2010 Attenborough Nature Reserve**

**Pond Dipping Day with Alan Heath and Tom Hartman-Church Pond Site**

Weather - fine, sunny and warm. Morning.

Asellus, Gammarus, caddis larvae, leech, water measurer, Planorbis sp, Daphnia sp, Cyclops, water mite, water beetle, Argulus, newt eft, Corixa, mayfly larvae, *Closterium concavum*. Pondweed, *Elodea canadensis*, purple loosestrife at the pond-side. The event was attended by ten people. It was not possible to identify all the species found.



**Sorting the specimens in white trays**



## July 26 Church Wilne - Dragonflies

Meet 7pm at the St Chad's Water car park on Wilne Road opposite the church.

Grid reference S448318 Leader Joan Breakwell:Pond Report Alan Heath

After a damp day it brightened up and our group of eighteen had a dry evening at St Chad's Water. The dragonflies were elusive until as David showed us the Bhutan Pine with its huge cones, we suddenly noticed a dozen damselflies on a dead plant right in front of us. First we saw the striking blue males, then we spotted the duller females and realised there were also two different varieties. Alan's pond-dipping resulted in more aquatic creatures than we believed possible. The birdwatchers soon had their binoculars trained on the tern platforms and there were plenty of interesting trees and flowers for the botanically minded. Some of us ended the evening with a visit to the delightful St Chad's church, whilst those who stayed outside were rewarded with a magnificent sunset.

### Pond Report

Weather cloudy - Visit with LENS Water pH 7.2; dissolved oxygen 3.5 ppm

Cyclops O; Simocephalus C; Hydracharina O; Cypris R; Sida crystalina R; Cloeon nymph VR; Eloeida canadensis C; Gammarus R; Ascellus VR; caddis larva R; Diaptomus R; Potamopyrgus jenkinsii O; stonefly larva VR; Planorbis sp VR Scapheloberus VR; Polycellis nigra R.

#### Key

VR	Very rare	one only
R	Rare	2-3
O	Occasional	10-20
C	Common	21-50

Note: A special search was made for Polyphemus but none were found. This species was last recorded by LENS on 18 August 2003 and Derby Natural History Society found it in large numbers on a subsequent visit. This is the only site locally where this cladoceran has been found.



**Banded demoiselle**  
*Calopteryx splendens*

Other wildlife on the nature reserve; blue damselfly, blue tail damselfly (several seen on bush); banded demoiselle, agrimony, cinnabar caterpillar on ragwort, plume moth, green woodpecker (heard), long tailed tits, heron, common tern, great crested grebe, tufted duck, black headed gull, a beetle shredding a field maple leaf was identified as *Pyrrhalta viburnii* and a bloodvein moth was seen on the walkover the day before.



**Leaf beetle**  
*Pyrrhalta viburnii*

Plants; Himalayan balsam, great hairy willowherb, Bhutan pine, bay willow, hybrid black poplar, field maple, red oak, hazel, blackthorn, meadow sweet, woody nightshade, red campion, sorrel, yellow water lily, silver weed, pendunculate oak, goosegrass, goat willow, robin's pincushion gall, stinging nettle, red and white clover, great reedmace, hogweed, herb ben-net.

## July 31 Newstead Abbey grounds

Large private garden including lake and caves. Follow brown signs off A60 to visitor's car park. Grid reference SK523525: Leader Brian Gough, courtesy of Mr Jones.

Mad, bad and dangerous to know. A colourful descriptive history introduced Newstead Abbey and some of the characterful previous inhabitants, who included the poet Lord Byron. Originally a monastery, crows are still a protected bird on the estate as they are believed to be the embodiment of the black cloaked monks from the original monastery on the lakeside site. We walked to a smaller lake beside the beautiful garden at Broadeaves which Brian has looked after for 35 years. Bales of barley straw, rotated on a six monthly basis are used to purify the water, providing an ideal nesting site for coot, moorhen, mallard and little grebe. There are no pike in the lake which is full of perch.

## Newstead Abbey grounds continued

Purple loosestrife, sweet flag, greater tussock sedge, gipsywort, skullcap, marsh valerian, jewel weed, angelica, greater bird's foot trefoil and great water dock were flowering. Nectaring gatekeeper butterflies with a few comma, large cabbage white, green veined white, meadow brown and ringlets were seen and the water figwort was buzzing with common wasps. Figwort is often planted in a discrete garden situation in order to draw wasps away from the main recreational area. Common blue, azure and blue tailed damsel flies were egg laying amongst the white water lily leaves while a brown darter patrolled.

The colourful and exotic garden plants made a knock out display and included several varieties new to us. Low birdfeeders were packed with nuts for the bluetits. This is to discourage the sparrowhawk which we heard shrieking in the woods. A gravity feed automatic watering system has been installed fed by a single submersible pump circulating water from the lake. Glow worms, common lizard and muntjac with fawn, have been seen, earlier this year. At a semi maintained grassland area, a holly blue butterfly was nearly photographed.

Numerous small frogs scrambled for cover as we crept past the family cemetery. There is a nearby badger set. In the boggy woods, wood speedwell heralds a large area of lily of the valley which flowers with the bluebells in May. Scaley male fern, lady fern and broad buckler fern were frequent. Large leaves and spiny fruits of skunk cabbage were admired and smelt. Other exotic plants were white fluffy Aralia (Japanese angelica) and huge rhubarb like leaves of Gunnera. A jay screamed in the dark canopy of Scot's pine, sycamore, hazel and beech with pedunculate oak. The path was lined with enchanter's nightshade.



**Brian Gough and Christine Carrier with Jason at the Hermit's cave**

In the middle of the woods there is a hermit's cave eked out of the sandstone. From the late 1950's it was inhabited by a Mrs Taylor, a recluse, but it is no longer used. On the walls, especially when they are damp, an eerie green glow of goblins gold can be seen. This is caused by a moss protonema (*Schistostega pennata*) which refracts the available light.

Continuing through the wood, we saw a carpet of wood sorrel and two more lakes although these were shaded and unproductive. This area is the source of the River Lean. Returning to the garden of Broadeaves, wren, blackcap and raven were calling. Surrounded

by beautiful flowers we all breathed in the wonderful perfume of the summer flowering jasmine (*Trachospermum wilsonii*) on a perfect summer's day.

## Aug 23 West Park Tree Trail and Bio Blitz

Meet in West Park car park on Wilsthorpe Road, Long Eaton. Grid reference SK478332: Leader Jaimey Richards  
West Park was first opened in 1905, a series of land purchases created a 127 acre park reaching from the Erewash Canal in the south, to Wilsthorpe Road on the west. The last land purchase was in 1949, The Fox Covert. After a very rainy day on a cool evening ten members set out to record as many species as possible, we decided to concentrate on the trees and note any birds.

The tree trail starts at the the West Entrance with an avenue of copper beech. A sundial has been commissioned for this area with a co ordinated 'solar system' of tree planting. The borough has a total budget of £5000 for tree planting and each tree planted costs £100. Many new plantings are bought by the Friends of West Park or are memorial trees. A minimum girth of 12-14" is planted to give the tree a good start. We were pleased to see our wedding cake tree (LENS thirtieth anniversary) but the Maidenhair tree is due for replacement.

A fruiting London plane was magnificent. This tree absorbs pollution and exfoliates its bark. The horse chestnut trees are all affected by bleeding canker, there is no treatment. It is not known if they will survive. All trees with fungi are removed as they cause structural weakness. An up-reaching Atlas cedar and a leaning deodar cedar were saluted by the group. A stemmed acorn of pedunculate oak was indicative of the species.

Some of the park trees are native to North America – tulip tree, cockspur thorn and sugar maple. The false acacia is pretty spiky and pretty, not easy to prune as it produces a lot of suckers. Mature hybrid black poplars form the main avenue which is being replanted. A purple plum with low spreading stems was Jaimey's favourite.



**The beautiful evening light at West Park**

An avenue of Princeton elms (resistant to Dutch elm disease) is struggling to get established. In twilight we followed the flower strewn path of the Wilsthorpe light (trackbed of a former narrow gauge railway) back to the car park.

Birds Blue tit, great tit, green woodpecker, black headed gull (200), herring gull (2), mistle thrush, carrion crow, wood pigeon, collared dove, feral pigeon, starling, wren, robin, pied wagtail (Thanks Judy)..

Trees Caucasian lime, copper beech, Norwegian maple-purple variety, false acacia (*Robinia*), wedding cake tree, tulip tree, cockspur thorn, ash, liquidamber, Chaemocyparis, sugar maple, domestic apple, purple plum, Princeton elm, red oak, pedunculate oak, handkerchief tree, hybrid black poplar, Atlas cedar, deodar cedar, rowan.

Plants Himalayan balsam (also some jewel weed by the canal), scentless mayweed, pineapple weed and knotgrass.

Lichen Physcia and Xanthoria

Mammal fox

[http://www.erewash.gov.uk/culture\\_and\\_leisure/parks\\_recreation/west\\_park\\_friends\\_group/default.asp](http://www.erewash.gov.uk/culture_and_leisure/parks_recreation/west_park_friends_group/default.asp)

### **Barker's Pond/Our Garden (15-1-10 to 5-7-10) Fay & John Blackburn**

For the first time since commencement of our recordings for Barker's Pond, no tufted duck have been sighted. This is, undoubtedly, the result of activities by the fishing club and a consequence of past actions by its bailiffs in eliminating all the aquatic oxygenating plants causing the water to assume an opaque green hue which is possibly a deterrent to some species of duck, although there may be other factors contributing to their absence.

In fairness to the fishing fraternity, some members have attempted to atone for their misdemeanours by setting aside a small area of ground to encourage growth of wild flowers and other plants, setting up boxes for nesting birds and roosting bats and re-introducing selected planting of reeds, water iris and sedge which, given time to establish, may extend to provide sufficient cover for nesting swans. Whether or not their return would be welcomed by certain members of the rod and line brigade is highly problematical.

A pair of swans did visit the pond on 20th, 21st and 27th January and again on 5th March but on each occasion their stay was of brief duration. In the circumstances, the appearance of geosanders was an unexpected and welcome event. A lone female was present on 9th March and the following day three females and two males were observed. On 11th March 3 females and two males paid an early morning visit followed by a mid-morning arrival of two females and two males and a late afternoon appearance of two females and one male. A lone female was present on 12th March and a single male appeared on 13th, 14th and 15th March. The final sighting of these attractive birds comprised three females and three males on 16th March.

Song thrushes visited the garden on 21st and 26th January and again on 7th February and a mistle thrush was in fine voice at the top of an adjacent ash tree on 18th June. Sparrows have appeared in encouraging numbers throughout the period with highlights of eighteen observed on 29th March and twenty-one on 1st April. Long-tail tits were present in small flights of 3-4 birds on 27th January and 6th February and from 1st to 6th March.

A female reed bunting was a most unusual arrival to the bird table on 6th March and remained a daily visitor until 18th March, usually appearing several times during the course of each day. A male reed bunting crossed the garden in flight on 1st March. Other rarer visitors were a willow warbler on 6th May and a goldcrest on 1st July. A pair of bullfinch enjoyed a feast of sunflower hearts on 23rd and 30th June. A predatory male sparrow hawk ghosted through on 29th January and 10th March.

Crows have been unexpected visitors to the garden, either singly as on 20th and 21st April or as a pair between 24th and 28th April, foraging on the back lawn or drinking at the pool. The pool itself simultaneously hosted a pair of coot, a moorhen and a pair of mallard on 31st March.

The wrens successfully raised two young this year when the fledgelings were observed leaving the nest on 4th June. But the success story of the year has been that of a female mallard with her brood of thirteen ducklings, hatched in the enclosed confines of a neighbour's garden. Introduced to Barker's Pond on 20th June they quickly adapted to their new surroundings with the loss of only one duckling and under the eye of the fiercely protective female parent have survived to the verge of adulthood. They have become daily visitors to the garden and pool in the process of consuming copious quantities of mixed corn to the detriment of our finances.

Brimstone, Small Tortoiseshell, Peacock, Speckled Wood, Holly Blue, Orange Tip, Comma, Meadow Brown, Orange Underwing moth and Scarce Vapourer moth, Brown Hawker and Southern Aeshna; all garden visitors. Eight caterpillars of Mullein moth devastated verbascums in one border.

## Environment Agency Works

Work on the flood defences which form the first section of the Nottingham Left Bank Flood Alleviation Scheme section between Sawley and the River Erewash has now finished and will protect people living and working in Sawley, Trent Meadows and parts of Long Eaton from flooding. This section is the first link in a chain of flood defences along 27 kilometres of the River Trent.

Work on the section of defence at Attenborough will raise a short section of Barton Lane, build a flood wall between the River Erewash and St Mary's Close, Attenborough and build a new wall along the railway line between Attenborough and the Siemens Marconi site. **Cemex** have installed gates and flow meters at the River Erewash River Trent junction at Attenborough They moved the discharge point of the river to ensure that it would not continue to pollute the nature re-

serve. Work has caused considerable disturbance to wildlife, phone 07812 542749 if you have concerns.



**River Erewash at Attenborough showing flow meters**

## National Biodiversity Network NBN

The NBN is the UK part of the Global Biodiversity Information Facility (GBIF). The NBN is linked to GBIF, which has established a global network of biodiversity information in the public domain. All information available for the public to download through the Network is automatically fed to the GBIF portal.

The NBN Trust, which is the charity set up to oversee the work of the NBN, supports the principle that, wherever possible, environmental

information should be freely available to all. This approach benefits the environment by increasing public awareness.

Whether you want to search for wildlife information on the Gateway or to provide data, all the information you need can be found by visiting the NBN website.

LENS wildlife records are incorporated into this system through the local Biological Recording Centres and Wildlife Trusts.

Records are the currency that can

pay for green space to be maintained in our local area.



**Mint moth—*Pyrasta aurata* reported from a Long Eaton garden recently**

## Tree Pests

Climate change and the expansion of international trade are likely to increase the threat to woodland by tree pests. In response the Forestry Commission has set up a Biosecurity Programme which will consider all aspects of tree health, in both the urban and rural environment.

The top ten biggest threats are: [Phytophthora ramorum](#) - a fungus which attacks a range of

trees and shrubs.

[Acute oak decline](#) - a bacterial disease affecting oak trees in parts of Britain- . It kills horse chestnuts and up to half of Britain's trees have symptoms.

[Oak processionary moth](#) defoliates oak trees and can cause them to die. Trees are weakened and become prone to attack by other pests.

[Red band needle blight](#) - caused by the fungus *Dothistroma septosporum* It can cause mortality and loss of tim-

ber yield in pine trees. Yet to arrive are citrus longhorn beetle, 8-toothed European spruce bark beetle, pine wood nematode and ash dieback.



**Pine sawfly *Diprion similis* new to the Long Eaton area**



**LENS Long Eaton Natural History Society**

**CONTACT**

**Chairman Alan Heath 01159733766**

**Future Meetings**

- September 13** Rockies to Alaska-the Last Frontier  
Gordon Gadsby
- October 11** Water Voles  
Chris Woods
- November 8** AGM/Members' Night
- December 13** Quiz and Social
- January 10** Wildflowers  
Kieran Houston
- February 14** A Sicilian Volcanic Experience  
Dorothy Morson
- March 14** Golf Can be Fun—  
Birding Exploits of a golf widower  
Paul Bingham

Meetings start at 7.15 pm in the Social Activities Annex, Long Eaton Public Library, Broad Street , Long Eaton.

**We're on the web.**  
[www.lensweb.wordpress.com](http://www.lensweb.wordpress.com)

**Tree Planting in Kenya**

Nyacaba Primary School is a government primary school near Thika, north of Nairobi in Kenya. LENS member David Pinney has been raising money for the school buildings and tree planting for several years. Recent quiz money went towards a girls toilet block. Here is a photos of some of the pupils who are involved in the tree care project. The project is now concluded . Future fund raising will help maintain the Trent College Arboretum near West Park Long Eaton.



**Pupils at Nyacaba Primary School with their adopted tree**

[www.lensweb.wordpress.com](http://www.lensweb.wordpress.com)

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**Map butterfly -a rare immigrant- photographed in a Kirk Hallam garden**

**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 payable to Long Eaton Natural History Society

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