



Erewash Tree Wardens

Inside this issue:

Erewash Tree Wardens/Toton sightings 1

Derbyshire biodiversity/Attenborough Nature Reserve/ARG UK-Derbyshire 2

Forbes Hole/BNA success 3

Stanton butterflies 4

Attenborough birds 5

Elvaston plants 6

Summer outing reports 7-15

Pond dipping at Stapleford Community Allotment 15

Tree bees/Halophytes/60 best 16

Future events Contact details 17

Records Wanted

Report wildlife records to LENS recorder

Wildlife emergency number call 08456 058058

Join in conservation activities phone Groundwork Derby and Derbys 01773 535232



Erewash Tree Wardens

Jon Stokes of the Tree Council relaunched the Erewash Tree Wardens network in May. Tree Wardens are a national force of local tree champions and are involved in information gathering, local liaison, practical projects and protecting trees. They attend training days as well as open meetings. There are now 27 Erewash Tree Wardens. The next meeting is on tree identification. Also see P16.

For further information on the Tree Warden Scheme contact jaimiey.richards@erewash.gov.uk or 0845 9072244 <http://www.treecouncil.org.uk/>

Toton Sightings

It has long been rumoured the marbled white butterfly (*Melanargia galathea*) has been seen locally and this year it was photographed at the old Toton railway sidings. It has a south westerly UK distribution, with just a few isolated colonies further east and north and is found in unimproved grassland where the grass may grow up to 0.5m tall. The old limestone trackbeds have recently been disturbed by tree felling and there was a superb array of colourful flowers all summer. This type of site is 'brownfield' and the mosaic habitat is recognised as a biodiversity habitat of great importance for insects and wild flowers. In a short visit over 150 species of flowers were recorded. A tawny longhorn beetle (*Paracorymbia fulva*) was seen feeding on wild carrot. This is the first year it has been found in our local area. It is usually found near to the south coast and is uncommon nationally. The larvae of this species have never been found although longhorn larvae usually are wood borers. The adult is usually found in broad-leaved woodland. A wolf spider (*Alopecosa barbipes*) (identified by experts) was also photographed. It is found on heathlands and old and unimproved grasslands, especially where there are areas of sparsely vegetated ground, short turf and lichen heath. The species is rare in the agricultural lowlands of England and very rare in most of the north of Britain.



Marbled white on rosebay willow herb



Tawny longhorn



Alopecosa barbipes

Derbyshire Biodiversity

In March we enjoyed a programme of talks, and a local site visit to look at the contributions made to local biodiversity targets by the mineral industry 'Nature after minerals'. Derbyshire's unique geology makes up 17% of England's limestone aggregate. Sand and Gravel is the second most important aggregate, predominantly along the Trent Valley. The mineral industry represents a great opportunity for habitat creation. With planning, large areas of land can be secured for a future nature conservation use. Mineral restoration schemes can include opportunities for habitat creation, as well as providing valuable

corridors between adjacent sites.

Witches Oak Water is a recently created, but now maturing wetland site within the Trent Valley. The main features of the site consist of a number of lakes with fringing reedbeds, immediately adjacent to the River Trent. With 12 hectares of reedbed, it has one of the largest areas of reedbed in Derbyshire, which it is hoped one day will attract booming bitterns!

<http://www.derbyshirebiodiversity.org.uk/>



Safety first at Witches Oak Water

Attenborough Nature Reserve

The Environment Agency have started the next part of the flood wall in Attenborough Village. You will see a large amount of work in the Corbett's Meadow area of the reserve as the brook is to be diverted to make way for the wall construction. The entrance to the reserve from the village will be closed here for approximately 6 months.

Barton Lane will be closed from 7am on Monday 19th September until 8pm on Friday 23rd September. This will allow the road to be raised to the level of the flood wall. **The Nature Centre will remain OPEN** during this time but there will be no access for vehicles to our car park for those 5 days. Pedestrian access will be maintained throughout the work.

A short-winged conehead found on the Erewash Field, became the latest addition to Attenborough Nature Reserve's list of invertebrates on the 10th August when it was spotted along with a number of long-winged coneheads, and speckled and Roesel's bush crickets. On the 11th a short-winged conehead was spotted on the Nottinghamshire side of the Reserve – becoming a first for the County! On the 15th August a small heath butterfly was noted on Erewash Field.

<http://www.attenboroughnaturecentre.co.uk>



Short winged conehead
(*Conocephalus dorsalis*)

ARG UK-Derbyshire

From ARG news (LENS records in brackets). The first grass snake was seen basking on Thursday 24th February, surprisingly it was up on the moors not in a nice sheltered river valley (15th May Matlock garden) . A hibernating slow-worm was found in Cromford on Tuesday 22nd February. (May a slow worm was found in a Matlock garden). (There are now 2 red eared terrapins in the Nottingham Canal area). The first reports of frogspawn were in the last week of February in Derbyshire. (8 March at Stapleford Community Allotment).

Toad movement started at some Derbyshire sites in the last week of March. With rain right at the end of the month toads started moving in large numbers. (Toad spawn at Forbes Hole 27/03/11).
<http://www.derbyshirearg.co.uk/>



Toadspawn

The Great Easter Newt Hunt took place between 22nd April and 2nd May and the data provided will be used for newt conservation. The project aimed to find out about our most widespread newts – the smooth and palmate newts – and see how much they use Britain's garden ponds as habitat.

(All of the newts reported in our local area were smooth or common newts)
<http://www.newthunt.org/>

DAVE GELL: Forbes Hole Records 15-07-2011

A list of sightings made at Forbes Hole with Marion Farrell, David Pinney and the Friends of Forbes Hole. The group looked mainly at plants and butterflies on the meadow area and did not have time to look at the pond flora, although Alan Heath did his normal pond sampling.

Below is the list of butterflies found today at Forbes Hole meadow area;

Large White
Small White
Red Admiral
Small Skipper
Meadow Brown (female)
Dark Green Fritillary
Brown Angus
Comma
Gate Keeper
Essex Skipper
Small Tortoiseshell

There were also a couple of Cinnabar moths, and quite a few caterpillars on the Common Ragwort.

Dragonflies/Damselflies;

Common Blue damselfly (male)
Common Darter dragonfly (female)
Brown Hawker dragonfly

Flora (meadow area)

Rosebay willowherb (seeds blowing everywhere)
Birds foot Trefoil
Red and White Clover
Field Bindweed
Meadow Foxtail
Ryegrass
Cocksfoot
Black Knapweed
Common Ragwort
Tufted Vetch
Wild Carrot
Burnet Saxifrage
St. John's Wort (perforate)
Ox Eye Daisy
Cinquefoil
Tansy
Black Medic
Dovesfoot Cranesbill
Soapwort
Yarrow



**Dark green fritillary
(*Mesoacidalia aglaja*)**

Alan Heath: My Attenborough Moment

LENS Chairman, Alan Heath was one of the winners of the Attenborough book 'First Life' competition run by the British Naturalist's Association. Here is the winning entry.

I was 14 or 15 when I had my first microscope. After looking at all sorts of inanimate small objects, nothing could prepare me for my first sight of life in a drop of pond water. It was beauty in simplicity to see the beating heart of a daphnia, amoeba and the cilia of paramecium as well as rotifers and many varieties of diatoms.

It was perhaps a year later when I saw for the first time microscopic pond life by dark ground illumination which was an inspiration. I was privileged and filled with awe to see a world so few of us ever see and I was truly hooked.

Pond life became my first interest for the next 50 plus years, the results of which have been communicated to the local Wildlife Trust Records. I have the honour to be chairman of the Friends of Forbes Hole Local Nature Reserve and have provided a record of the pond there for half a century. My late colleague N W Adcock and I were instrumental in saving this site from developers and its subsequent status of Local Nature Reserve in 1993.

As chairman of Long Eaton Natural History Society I have shared my interest with others including public pond dipping events.

Reflecting on this life long interest, I am reminded of the intrepid explorers in Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's 'The Lost World' who said that their eyes had seen great wonders. Mine most certainly have.

<http://www.bna-naturalists.org>

Jim Steele: Stanton Ironworks' Butterflies

BUTTERFLY RECORDS - STANTON IRONWORKS (Grid Ref SK 47/39)

Recorders	(JS)	(K & P O)	(RR)	(NB/KP)	(K & P O)	(JS)
Date of Visit	<u>27th April</u>	<u>1st May</u>	<u>9th May</u>	<u>21st May</u>	<u>24th July</u>	<u>24th Aug</u>
<u>SPECIES</u>						
Small Skipper					2	
Essex Skipper						
Large Skipper						
Dingy Skipper (BAP)	4	30	3	1		
Brimstone		1	2			
Large White	3	8			6	2
Small White	3	4			4	
Green Veined White		2		1	2	
Orange Tip		2				
Small Copper		1		1	1	
Brown Argus	1		8		3	6
Common Blue			12	30	14	7
Holly Blue		1				
Red Admiral						
Small Tortoiseshell						
Peacock				2	4	1
Comma						
Speckled Wood		4				
Gatekeeper					20	1
Meadow Brown					15	2
Ringlet						2
Small Heath (BAP)		4	2			19

Recorders Reference

Ken & Pat Orpe	(K & P O)
Nick Brown/Kath Patrick	(NB/KP)
Richard Rogers	(RR)
Jim Steele	(JS)

Spreadsheet for Stanton Ironworks

The information establishes the importance of the site for butterflies within the local area, particularly given thriving populations of the two BAP Species, Dingy Skipper and Small Heath.

Jim Steele
Ilkeston.



Dingy skipper *Erynnis tages*

Despite its name, a freshly-emerged Dingy Skipper reveals a subtle pattern of browns and greys that is quite beautiful. However, this butterfly does live up to its name as scales are lost over time, resulting in a lacklustre and drab appearance. This is our most widely-distributed skipper, despite its decline due to changes in farming practice. This butterfly's strongholds, however, are in central and southern England. This butterfly lives in discrete colonies with little interchange between them.

<http://www.ukbutterflies.co.uk>

John and Judy Langford: Attenborough Birds

<u>22/03/2011</u>	<u>John Langford</u>	<u>Attenborough Nature Reserve</u>
Sand martin	2	Over station
Cetti's warbler	2	At least 2 heard, one from scrub and reedbeds below Keith Corbett hide, and one to east near Trent towpath
Chiff chaff	2	at least 2 heard
Tree sparrow		Kingfisher hide
Mallard		Robin
Tufted duck		Wren
Ruddy duck	2	Bluetit
Shelduck		Great tit
Teal	Male	Long tailed tit
Gadwall	2 pairs	
Goldeneye	male	Cormorant
Pochard		Black headed gull
Red crested pochard	Red crested pochard	
Lapwing		
Oystercatcher		
Redshank		
Heron	nesting on the small islands	nesting on the small islands

<u>23/05/2011</u>	<u>John and Judy Langford</u>	<u>Attenborough Nature Reserve</u>
House sparrow		Oystercatcher
Duncock		Reed bunting
Blackbird		Green sandpiper
Chaffinch		Little ringed plover
Bluetit		Lapwing
Great tit		Mallard
Long tailed tit		Gadwall
Wren		Garganey
Chiff chaff		Goldeneye
Blackcap		Tufted duck
Whitethroat		Red crested pochard
Grasshopper warbler		Shelduck
Cetti's warbler		Wood pigeon
Reed warbler		Grey heron
Sedge warbler		Cormorant
Carrion crow		Great crested grebe
Jackdaw		Sandwich tern
House martin		Common tern
Sandmartin		Egyptian geese
Swift		Greylag goose
Starling		Canada goose
Greenwood-pecker		Coot
Pied wagtail		Moorhen
Pheasant		No Willow warbler
Robin		No Swallow
Herring gull		
Black headed gull		
		49 species

02/05/2011 **John and Judy Langford**

5 lesser whitethroats heard on walk from Trent Lock to Thrumpton Ferry and Meadow Lane
 1 by railway bridge, 2 more alongside Cranfleet Cut, and 2 more east of Cranfleet Lock
 A fine but cold easterly had just sent them our way⁵

LEAD U3A Plant Study Group Visit to Elvaston Castle Nature Reserve
(Approx central Grid Ref: SK406333 Date: 27/04/2011)
Spring plants incl. wild flowers (compiled by David P from various sources)

Common name	Scientific name	If seen	Comments
Bluebell	<i>Hyacinthoides non-scripta</i>		Racemes pendent at apex; perianth tubular for most of length, anthers cream, tepals usually blue; inflorescence one-sided
Ramsons	<i>Allium ursinum</i>		Family Liliaceae; Smells strongly of onions; grows in damp places and woods;
Yellow Iris or Yellow Flag	<i>Iris pseudacorus</i>		Yellow flowers; Spear-shaped lvs; Look for Damselflies.
Common Nettle	<i>Urtica dioica</i>		Native perennial; lower lvs longer than petioles; cordate leaves with stinging hairs; terminal leaf tooth longer than adjacent laterals;
Cleavers or Goose Grass	<i>Galium aparine</i>		Native annual; straggling, climbing plant; strongly recurved 'prickles' on stems;
Lesser Celandine	<i>Ranunculus ficaria</i>		Native; perennial; forms mats; bulbous roots;
Cowslip	<i>Primulus veris</i>		Flowers in umbels; orange spots at base of petals; calyx all green;
Cow Parsley	<i>Anthriscus sylvestris</i>		Native biennial; most common early flowering umbellifer;
Hogweed	<i>Heracleum sphondylium</i>		Lvs simply pinnate, roughly hairy on both surfaces, leaflets lobed; petals deeply notched; cf Giant Hogweed – causes dermatitis in sun
Garlic Mustard	<i>Alliaria petiolata</i>		Roots and leaves smell of garlic when crushed; stem leaves stalked;
Lady's Smock	<i>Cardamine pratensis</i>		Terminal leaflet larger than laterals; anthers yellow;
Hairy Bitter-cress	<i>Cardamine impatiens</i>		Common annual in Family Brassicaceae (Cruciferae); flowers with 4 stamens;
Wavy Bitter-cress	<i>Cardamine flexuosa</i>		Common annual in Family Brassicaceae (Cruciferae); flowers with 6 stamens;
Red Campion	<i>Silene dioica</i>		Red flowers; pink-flowered hybrids do occur with White Campion.
Ground Ivy	<i>Glechoma hederacea</i>		Trailing stoloniferous perennial in Family Labiatae; long-stalked lvs with kidney-shaped leaf blades; flowers blue
White Deadnettle	<i>Lamium album;</i>		Family Labiatae; Perennial; white corolla;
Herb-Robert	<i>Geranium robertianum</i>		Stems often red; distinctive unpleasant smell; sepals erect, petals 9-14mm, anthers orange or purple;
Hop	<i>Humulus lupulus</i>		Evergreen climber; opposite, 3-5 lobed, toothed lvs;
Dandelion	<i>Taraxacum officinale</i>		Native perennial; over 230 spp.
Daisy	<i>Bellis perennis</i>		Perennial
Marsh-marigold	<i>Caltha palustris</i>		Flowers yellow 15-50mm diam; 5-8 petal-like sepals; in Family Ranunculaceae;
Hawthorn	<i>Crataegus monogyna</i>		Each flower has one style; leaf lobes longer than broad; can form hybrids with Midland Hawthorn that has 2 styles;
Sloe or Blackthorn	<i>Prunus spinosa</i>		Native shrub; white blossom; petals 5-8mm appear before leaves; short lateral shoots thorny;
Raspberry	<i>Rubus idaeus</i>		Leaves pinnate, white beneath;
Blackberry	<i>Rubus 'fruticosus'</i>		Leaves palmate;
Red Currant	<i>Ribes rubrum</i>		Leaves without glands on underside, not smelling when crushed;
Goat Willow	<i>Salix caprea</i>		Twigs pubescent when young; lvs broadly ovate-ovate, dark green above, densely hairy beneath with prominent reticulate veins;
Crack Willow	<i>Salix fragilis</i>		Leaves lanceolate, paler green beneath, margins coarsely toothed;
Silver Birch	<i>Betula pendula</i>		Native tree; look for catkins;
Rhododendron	<i>Rhododendron ponticum</i>		Evergreen glabrous shrub with campanulate flowers approx 50mm across; 10 stamens; (name often mispronounced)
Lesser Pond Sedge	<i>Carex acutiformis</i>		All sedges have solid, 3-angled stems. This species has acute ligules 5-15mm long.
Reed Sweet Grass	<i>Glyceria maxima</i>		Tall, robust, rhizomatous, patch-forming perennial; large 15-45cm much-branched, compact inflorescences;
Reedmace	<i>Typha latifolia</i>		Inflorescences 18-30mm wide with male and female parts contiguous
Male-fern	<i>Dryopteris filix-mas</i>		Teeth acute pointing forwards towards tip of pinnule
Broad Buckler Fern	<i>Dryopteris dilatata</i>		Leaf scales dark brown in centre, paler on edges;

All of the above species were seen on 27/04/2011

LENS SUMMER OUTING REPORTS

April 18 Country Walk & Mackworth Church

Park at Markeaton Park main car park, off A52 roundabout. (£1.80 parking fee.)
Grid reference SK333373

Joan and Christine led the walk through the beautiful orangery gardens. Pausing at the fish pond to admire the large carp we passed Home Farm with its garden centre and tearooms, gingerly crossed the busy Markeaton Lane onto the old Roman Road to Rocester which leads straight past All Saints, Mackworth.

Garlic mustard and dandelions lined the route with a few umbellifers about to burst into flower. The green lane had a hawthorn hedge on one side which looked as if it dated from the enclosures of the 1860s but the hedge on the other side was very interesting and invoking Hooper's Rule would have possibly shown that it was an ancient boundary line. A huge spiny old pear tree was covered with blossom.



LENS at the Orangery Gardens

All Saints Church has very ancient origins, it was mentioned in the Domesday Book. It was built in the decorated style but this was soon converted to perpendicular. It underwent a major restoration in 1850 by which time the Mundays had taken over from the Touchets with whom there is still a family connection through the Clerk Maxwells.

Listed grade 1 by English Heritage the church has four unique features

- The building is totally defensive, the tower can be barricaded off and has crossbow loopholes on three sides although the battlements have been removed.
- Four medieval compass heads carved at the top of the tower beneath the golden cock weathervane.
- A tomb image carved in coloured local alabaster has its eyes open.
- The geological specimens.



Spas and minerals at All Saints Mackworth

The Mundays had a great interest in geology and the carvings and decorations inside the church are breathtakingly beautiful. Many Derbyshire spas and minerals were used.

The Lomas lectern is carved out of the largest piece of Chellaston white alabaster known. There are also two sublime angel candle holders on turned pillars. There is a Connemara green marble cross. Two angels supporting a column have smug and hard done by facial expressions that cross the years. The 4 evangelists echo the Da Vinci code. The Chellaston alabaster pulpit has red and green marble pillars and panels. The alabaster alter rail is studded with over 40 orbs of mineral spas. Blue John sections gleam and outshine the stained glass windows. The duke's red marble and Ashford black marble with other local spas are a delight. To be in Mackworth Church is like being inside a miner's spa box and you don't want to get out.

However, it was dark and we had to go home so we reluctantly left the church thanking Betty Bond, the church warden, and Norman Standish, a local historian of repute. SOME PEOPLE HAD BROUGHT A TORCH! We carefully wended our way back along the road to the car park at Markeaton. Disregarding the church interlude it had been a bit of a dull evening but Alan was ecstatic as he had brought his bat detector and we were not disappointed as several pipistrelles were chirruping high over the trees.

May 9 Wilwell Farm Cutting – Green Winged Orchids

Entrance off B680, Wilford to Ruddington Road.

After passing under the ring road bridge take first track on right. Grid Ref SK568352

Leader Gordon Dyne



Gordon leads the way to the orchids

The reserve is a wide artificial valley approximately half a mile long. It was dug in 1895 through Mercia Mudstones as part of the construction of the Great Central Railway. Habitats include neutral grassland, limestone track bed, acid fen and scrub woodland. There are a wide variety of grasses, sedges and rushes (60+ recorded). Star sedge was flowering and quaking grass was just peeping through.

The reserve is one of the best wildflower sites in Nottinghamshire with more than 230 species so far recorded. Grassland plants include large numbers of meadow saxifrage, green winged orchid, cypress spurge, great burnet and wild carrot (all are rare in the county). Also found were cowslips, perforate St John's wort, ox-eye daisy, yellow rattle, hardheads, great burnet and field forget-me-not. Yellow ant hills on the meadow areas hosted island plant communities.

Scrub encroachment on the wetland areas is discouraged by two Dexter cattle and also regular working parties. A newly cleared meadow area had patches of hedge woundwort, garlic mustard, ground ivy and bugle..

The green-winged orchid *Anacamptis morio* is one of a group of threatened plants dependent on infertile or nutrient poor grasslands. Morio means "fool" or "jester" as the hooded appearance of the flower resembles a jester's hat. They have a very short flowering period and the timing was just right. The flowers were generally deep blue purple, the green veins only being seen at close quarters. Some of the flowers were half purple and half white. One pure pink and one albino flowering spike showed off the green veins very well and were quite unusual. A flurry of photography ensued at this stage.

Gordon counts the orchids every year and the numbers of orchids vary widely between 50 and 2000. He also counts the cowslips and these have increased every year with a count of 1900 this year. Populations of southern marsh orchids flourish near and in the woodland walk, as does hemp agrimony and water figwort, despite the decline in water levels. Open water is only found in winter months. It was quite dark as we walked up the track through the silver birch, willow and ash woodland. It was unusual not to see any sycamores although there were saplings of Norwegian maple. We breathed the magic air of enchanter's nightshade and sweet violet.



Green winged orchid varieties at Wilwell

May 16 Bretby - Bluebell Walk

Park at the Green, Bretby, near Repton. Walk hilly and ground uneven in places.
Grid Ref SK 295 232 Leader Steve Ford



Steve Ford with LENS members

On a gloomy evening we met under two beech trees which were hiding the village pump. Steve was keen to start and marched us across the a series of pronounced ridges and ditches in Castle Field. This was Bretby Castle, built in the 13th Century, a large fortified manor house surrounded by a moat. It was demolished in the reign of James the 1st when permission was granted for Bretby Hall to be built in a newly enclosed park of 600 acres. Stone built and castellated, Bretby Hall was purchased in 1926 by the Derbyshire County Council for use as a hospital and remained an orthopaedic hospital till the 1990's, the hall and grounds then being sold to developers to provide private residential units.

Keeping to public footpaths throughout we passed the old stable block, a blackbird was singing and a tawny owl hooted but we had missed the bright pink double flowers of the old cherry trees. Swallow and cormorant flew overhead and an attractive grove of Scot's pine led down to the lake. This is one of a stepped series of 7 fishing lakes which are privately owned. We missed the heron standing by the edge and the cuckoos (heard Wednesday) were silent.



Brain Hobby with huge tree stump

Brightly coloured pheasants popped up everywhere and we also saw a red legged partridge. The local farmer has a gamekeeper who breeds birds for regular 'shoots'. Clay pigeons were scattered on the hillside There were molehills and good views of hares in the fields and along the gallop. The gallop was constructed so the Earl could see his racehorses being exercised, from the comfort of his fireside. We had a clear view of Willington power station.

The track was severely rutted due to erosion of the clay and movement of the gravel beneath after severe storms. In the woods there were strange brambles and raspberry canes and an old damson tree underneath pedunculate oak, beech, silver birch and goat willow. A late frost had burnt out the oak flowers. There was a huge yew tree stump, possibly 1000 years old, with two trees sprouting from the root. We saw holly and hornbeam, and eggs for sale.

At Noah's ark we admired the many logpiles in a cleared section of the wood, but resisted the steps to the marsh marigolds. Over the track, into a meadow, past the lonely lamb we saw the old badger set. We walked through the glorious bluebell woods, Enchanters nightshade and dogs mercury in profusion, lesser celandine and many bluebells lying flat, yes, it was an early spring this year. Mossy clay banks, yellow archangel, bluebell and red campion painted the scene.

The bat detector came out as two common pipistrelles patrolled the edge of the wood. Brian valiantly lined up a violet ground beetle for the last photograph of the evening. We didn't get back until 10.30pm.



Carabus violaceus

June 4 Lathkilldale – Jacob’s Ladder

Meet in car park 800m east of Monyash village on B5055, Bakewell to Monyash Road.

Grid Ref SK156 664

Leader Marion Bryce

From the ancient lead mining village of Monyash the top of the Lathkill ravine can easily be reached. Lathkilldale may look untouched, but for many centuries it was mined for lead. The shafts, drainage channels and spoil heaps have been absorbed into the natural landscape to such an extent that they enhance its natural beauty. Much of the valley is part of the Derbyshire Dales National Nature Reserve managed by Natural England.

The valley is dry where it crosses the Monyash to Bakewell road, just below Monyash, and it continues dry for about a kilometre between towering walls of limestone and part-filled with spoil from Ricklow Quarry on the north side. The quarry was worked for a stone called 'Derbyshire marble' and was abandoned in the mid 19th century. The pathway is littered with rocks shattered by winter frosts. It leads down into a narrow gully, then opens out a little at Lathkill Head. Here, underground water re-surges from Lathkill House Cave, under the cliff - or at least it does when the weather is wet. - in times of drought there may be no water in the stream for another kilometre and we found it was dry.

Plenty of early purple orchids, some of immense stature were seen, they were just past their best. Peregrines were spotted on a fly past although not sitting at their favourite cragside perch. Buzzards were circling.



A sunny day at Lathkilldale

Jacob’s ladder flowers streaked the valley purple. We were there just at the right time. According to Derbyshire Flora on line, Jacob's-ladder *Polemonium caeruleum* is a rare, native perennial where it is one of the most characteristic and showy plants of the white peak. Nationally it is categorised as Near Threatened and is in Category 2 of the local Red Data List, 2009. It appeared on the cover of the last Flora of Derbyshire (Clapham 1969), and a plant collected from Bentley Brook was illustrated in the Concise British Flora in Colour (Keble Martin 1965). In 2004 it was voted as Derbyshire's "county plant" in a nationwide survey run by Plantlife. It was difficult to decide if the petals are blue or purple and the complementary orange anthers were an admirable contrast. A playful breeze frustrated the photographers in their passion.

Satiated by the purple frenzy the party returned along the rock strewn path way but then took a sharp uphill track up a stone stairway. We lost Dave Pinney who had become somewhat distracted by an amazing black and green lepidopteran. It was a green carpet moth in its finest glory.

Someone counted the steps, there were a lot. We paused to admire the magnificent valley view. Three willow warblers were descanting and one displayed to the satisfaction of all as we gazed downwards to a solitary tree by the path.

Don't look down, but this is the best way to see the calcareous limestone flora, the rock rose and rose root, milkwort, rue leaved saxifrage and burnet saxifrage – photography at eye level. We spotted the fossils in the crinoidal limestone which was once used for fireplaces and floor tiles in the great stately homes of Derbyshire. As the path wound along the valley edge, the huge ant hills showed acidic flora such as tormentil and harebell.



Jacob’s ladder

Returning down a gentle slope to the valley floor we gazed into the cobble edged dewpond which is almost invisible from the path; to see good numbers of smooth newts and tadpoles. We were surprised to see circles of rain on the pool surface and that meant it was time to go home.

June 13 Breaston Storage Lagoon – 2 Mile Walk with Orchids

Meet at West Park car park on Wilsthorpe Road, Long Eaton. Grid ref SK478 333.

Leader Marion Bryce

On a lovely sunny evening we set out on our walk. Before crossing Wilsthorpe Road we looked for the halophytes which had been flowering earlier in the year but we could not see any (see page 16).

Walking along the hawthorn hedge by the award winning allotments we were pleased to see the trailing fronds of the Duke of Argyll's teaplant *Lycium barbarum* with its exquisite purple and yellow flowers. It is a newly established spiny shrub which was originally planted to form hedges, it can spread by suckers or bird-sown seed to more natural settings. The berries are known as goji berries. This plant occurs rarely throughout the county.

Walking down the bramble lined footpath by the Golden Brook we were disappointed not to see any butterflies as this is usually a good site. We paused at the bridge to admire the pink water speedwell *Veronica catenata*, which is a rare native annual of the muddy margins of water bodies with little or no water movement. It is relatively common in the Trent Valley. We also saw watercress and various other water plants.

Stretching our legs along the motorway corridor we were pleased to see that a good crop of sugar plums was set for the autumn. A stand of hemlock was admired. Under the motorway bridge the signed colourful graffiti was impressive. Along the farm footpath a crop of wheat was ripening and elder was flowering in the hedge. We were now walking along the outside of the nature reserve and paused to admire a huge old white willow.



Helen and Ainsley admire the orchids from the footpath



Southern Marsh Orchid at Breaston

Golden Brook Storage Lagoon was created to protect 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.

Since it was created, the lagoon has been colonised by a variety of plants and this year there were spectacular displays of ragged robin and southern marsh orchid. There is a wooden walkway which leads through the dense reed beds to a wooden platform in the middle of the marsh. The marsh was dry but we could see marsh horse-tail forming a primeval landscape beneath the 'bulrush'.



Duke of Argyll's teaplant

The bird hide was in good condition with a lot of open water, more interesting in winter when teal, gadwall and shoveler find refuge here.

It was a very dry walk back, the other side of the motorway embankment, tree leaves were shrivelling. Dominic spotted a vapourer moth larva. We continued past the allotments and crossed Wilsthorpe Road to admire the wonderful gates of West Park which were originally from Aston Hall, continuing past the start of the West Park Tree trail we were glad to see that the LENS wedding cake tree was putting on a good display. A colourful display of summer bedding led us back to our cars.



Vapourer moth larva

June 20 Around Ticknall

Meet at Ticknall Village Hall, Ingleby Lane, DE73 7JQ.

Can be muddy after heavy rain.

Grid reference SK353241 Leader Dot Morson



Dot Morson with LENS members

I'll take you to parts of Calke that you probably haven't seen before promised Dot as she showed off a very large crab apple tree and new oaks and ashes protectively planted. A large hornbeam, seeds on the ground, bat boxes in the tree. Poachers leys with crested dogstail grass, tolerant of drought conditions.

A wetland wildlife conservation area. Two new dug ponds which take natural drainage, marsh valerian, St John's wort, marsh thistle, common figwort, soft and compact rush. In the water, native crayfish, bullhead and stone loach, curled pond weed and lesser pondweed.

Crossing an ancient track where huge parasol mushrooms grow in summer. Heath bedstraw coated the grit-stone based soil. We hugged a 550 year old oak which was part of the original wild wood. A fenced off square showed the vigorous and dense growth of trees when herbivores are excluded. Over Old Man Track we reached the huge meadow at the back of the HOUSE. Cowslips and yellow meadow oat, signs of a fox, grasshoppers leaping.

Through undisturbed woodland with dog's mercury, bluebells wild garlic and primrose to see yellow water lily on the lake. On past the weirs to two settling lagoons where the carp have been removed. These are high up the water catchment well away from the alien crayfish an ark for native white clawed. This is a national nature reserve. Sweet chestnuts well past maturity and an old field maple just before the steps. This was a veteran tree outing. A slither down the slope to hug a huge small leaved lime, never setting fertile seed, spreading by layering. Reaching back to the middle ages, 24' circumference measured in 1870s.

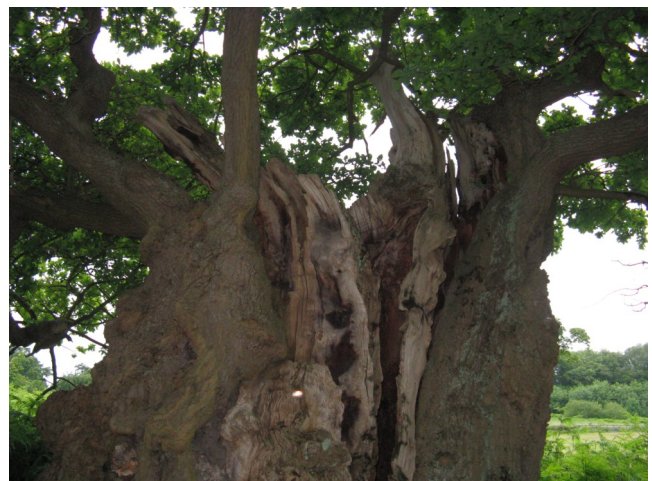
A wonderful view of the estate to the skyline and the Piston Hills – a Triassic sandstone landscape. Onwards through rain to greet the Old Man of Calke a pollarded ancient oak which is more than a thousand years old, predating the priory. Sweet chestnuts from the eighteenth century forming the park landscape. Volunteers planted their own tree and can admire the living memory on the silver anniversary of the day. Longhorn cattle brought in to combat bracken and brambles on developing heathland. Jackdaws nest in old tree holes.

Turning towards Ticknall through Serpentine Wood with beech trees, leaning sweet chestnuts and standing dead wood for long horn beetles and fungi. No sycamore allowed so as to let the light in and preserve the limestone grassland a wonderful legacy with the old lime kilns. A breathtaking display of common spotted orchids, quaking grass, nettle leaved bellflower and other meadow flowers.

Benjamin Outram built Ticknall Parkway and now many glow worms can be seen on the disused track at night. Two tree tunnels cross the fields to the footpath. These were the route to work for the servants who worked at Calke Abbey. Searching for twayblade along the line of the old tramway through a long dark tunnel, up some slippery ancient steps to home.



Measuring a veteran oak



The Old Man of Calke

July 9 Manifold Valley – Walk with fantastic scenery

Meet at Wetton Mill tearooms car park for a short walk on a good path
Grid reference SK095561 Leader David Gibbons

Have a cup of tea and gaze at the river. Children paddling and playing in the water. A fleeting dipper. Meet the group. A foaming sea of hogweed but few insects. The keystone phylum of arthropods in our ecosystem depends on a healthy population of insects. Wheatfields with no wild flowers on which insects thrive. Ash and elder, shaggy with grey and yellow lichen a sign of good air quality and less SO₂ from fossil fuels.



David Gibbons with orchid

Along the line of the former Leek and Manifold light railway are small white and yellow flowers of crosswort and lesser stitchwort, meadow vetchling and bush vetch thrive in the bottom of the Manifold Valley. Ox eye daisy finishing and knapweed with it's very hard buds just coming out. Mountain currant then a mono-culture of dog's mercury spreading vegetatively. Nipplewort, taller than usual, looking good. Seas of marsh valerian, it looks like an umbellifer. Sweet cicely fruiting heads, aniseed leaves chopped on salad. Red campion flowers first and last, right through the year. Wasps pollinating water figwort, self pollination prevented by the stigma drooping after the insect visit. Meadow browns, flutter by. False oat, yarrow, common spotted orchid, the largest flower spike ever!. Photographic frenzy. Harebells nod blue. Lesser burnet saxifrage an unfamiliar umbellifer, ribbed stems and green leaves of greater burnet saxifrage wall side. Miniature pansies (*Viola tricolor*) a primrose bank in Spring time. White field rose blooms, herb Robert beneath. Tufted hairgrass, (*Deschampsia*) likes damp hollows in neutral alkaline soils, named for Msr Deschamps, Mr Some fields. Hairy leaves and yellow flowers of hairy St John's Wort, goldcrests flitting. Agrimony with crosswort. Steep slopes remnant of ancient woodland ash here in the limestone preceded by rowan and silver birch. Sessile oak in the gritstone areas preceded by hawthorn. Hedge woundwort, a thrush singing, a blackcap on display.

Level bedding planes in a small brook running even in drought, brooklime (*Veronica beccabunga*). Gooseberries to eat. Remnant leaves of wood anemone and a shower of rain. Yellow archangel leaves and mossy shade

Purple thornless thistles, the melancholy thistle, claret heads of greater burnet, grasshoppers chirring. A flowery meadow with clover, birdsfoot trefoil, field scabious and many flowery delights. Chimney sweepers and small tortoiseshell butterflies visiting marsh thistle. A buzzard hovers like a kestrel.

Grey wagtails fish for insects in Warslow brook, we turn onto the old Warslow to Hulme End Road heading for Wetton. Wych elm and Greater astrantia. Empty bird feeders. A geotrail by the Manifold River with sinclines and anticlines leading to old copper mines at Ecton which funded great treasures at Chatsworth. Thyme, rockrose and limestone bedstraw, long stalked speedwell (*Geranium columbinum*) in conglifractate scree. Coppiced hazels and a huge anastomosing ash tree. No competition for ash as our climate is too cold for beech. Wild strawberry fruits. More butterflies, small heath, small tortoiseshell, large white and meadow brown.

Mugs of tea at Wetton Mill then up Nan Tor. A view of Thor's cave. Native succulents, biting stonecrop and rose root or orpine, splashes of purple thyme and a ruby tailed wasp. Into the special cave surprise! It is a light filled arena, a swallow hole from an ancient sea. Manifold meaning many folds, the thunder, captured, echos around the valley like the thunder god Thor in rampage.



Staphylinid beetle



Mountain currant
Ribes alpinum



Ruby tailed wasp
Chrysis ignita

July 25 Shipley Park - Birdwatching Walk

Meet 7pm at Mapperley Reservoir car park

Grid Ref SK 434 437

Leader Roger Wood



LENS at Shipley Park

On a sultry evening 10 of us set out to investigate Shipley Park where exciting things have been happening. Derbyshire County Council own a large nature reserve site and now Derbyshire Wildlife Trust have purchased land adjoining, including woods, meadows and part of the old Shipley Canal known as Paul's arm.

The walk went through Mapperley wood, through meadows of false oat grass and timothy, past the old Grove Farm and Pauls arm. We looked through the fence to the old American Adventure and the lake then walked up through Shipley Wood with its magnificent beech trees, back to the reservoir car park.

Birds seen included, grasshopper warbler close by in the hawthorn bushes, chaffinch, jackdaw and crow, reed bunting, house martins and swallows. Also there were two buzzards.

The flowers were mostly over although we did see a lot of red bartsia and upright hedge parsley which seems to be flowering everywhere this year. Thousands of yellow rattle seed heads were strewn across the meadow. Greater stitchwort had finished flowering but lesser stitchwort stars spangled the meadow and we resolved to repeat the walk in May.

In the damper areas there was a lot of tufted hair grass, some magnificent reedmace and purple loosestrife although we didn't go close for a detailed look. Seven spot ladybirds and an orange ladybird was seen eating the mildew on a sycamore leaf.

On the walk we met Clive Hayley a former LENS member and warden at Shipley Park so we were updated on the history of the site. We were sad to hear that his hedgehog Stookie had died, aged 8, but was buried on the park in very good company.

At Shipley wood a pipistrelle bat came out and danced, swooping and curling after insects, soon to be joined by another.

We looked down at the Smalley open cast which showed a small heap of coal with a massive heap of overburden, a mine which is nearing the end of its active life. An application has been put in for an extension site. The hobby which used to nest on one of the trees of the site has been seen regularly and it is hoped that it will nest in the nature reserve next year.

A strange red light bathed the town of Ilkeston as the sun set at the end of our walk. There was a green glow from the copper spire of the United Reformed Church and the luminous clockface eyes of St Mary's shone from the hilltop site.

The Friends of Shipley Park have regular meetings and activities including tree walks and craft days for children. Phone 01773 719961 for details.



A huge beech tree felled at Shipley Park

How do I tell the difference between frog, toad and newt tadpoles?

Frogspawn is laid in clumps in shallower water (usually the earliest to be laid). Tadpoles are black and will stick together in a writhing mass when they first hatch.

As tadpoles develop, they become mottled/brown and do not shoal. Tadpoles grow back legs first.

Toadspawn is laid in long strings, usually wrapped around vegetation in slightly deeper water.

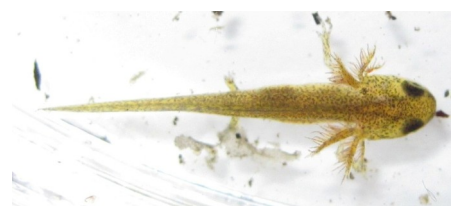
Tadpoles are jet black (and remain so) and they often form shoals.

Tadpoles grow back legs first.

Newt eggs are laid individually and are wrapped in submerged plant leaves.

Larvae have a frill of gills behind the head.

Larvae develop front legs first. <http://www.froglife.org>



Newt tadpole

Aug 8 Pioneer Meadows - Flower Walk

Meet Pioneer Meadows car park off Wirksworth Road, Kirk Hallam
Grid Ref SK 455 396

The pond was originally dug as an ironstone pit by Stanton Industries. After many years of tenure by the Pioneer Fishing Club it was described as a filthy fishing spot in the evening post in 1979. Erewash Borough Council, are now the owners and have managed the site as a nature reserve since 1988.



Brian with large ash tree

Trees and shrubs included in the amenity plantation are ash, alder buckthorn, spindle, guelder rose, hazel, red oak and white poplar. We didn't see any purple hairstreaks on the oak trees although they have been seen on this site. Brian ambled around the meadows and they were looking lovely, there were a lot more flowers than there used to be. We saw lady's bedstraw, hemp nettle and common knapweed. In the woodland was dog's mercury and hedge woundwort with its unpleasant and astringent smell. It was used to treat wounds in World War 1. The striking red berries of cuckoopint are the result of pollination by owl midges.

Stripey orange and black caterpillars of the cinnabar moth were eating ragwort. Jumping everywhere were hundreds of meadow grasshoppers. Moths flying included brown china mark (the larva lives in water) and straw dot. It was not the brightest evening and the only butterflies were meadow browns. Around the pond was sharp rush *Juncus acutiflorus* as well as some more common species. Rushes used to be dipped in oil to make rush tapers to light fires. The leaves of amphibious bistort were floating on the water. Cornmint *Mentha arvensis* and brooklime *Veronica beccabunga* were flowering. The delightful name beccabunga could be derived from a propensity to 'bung up becks' or possibly because the lovely blue flowered plant with shiney leaves grows on mud in streams and has a pungent taste.

There were a lot of wooden chippings around the edge of the lake. This corresponded with a lack of waterside vegetation. We couldn't find the sneezewort *Achillea ptarmica*, that used to grow there. Hoverflies, craneflies, beetles and amphibians will be adversely affected by the chippings. They prefer exposed mud. The exposed mud banks used to give a good contrast to the habitat on the other side of the lake.

There was an oak tree with a hollow trunk by the further side of the lake which looked as if it might be dying. It is hoped this can be left for standing dead wood as the tree is an interesting feature by the lake and provides a good habitat for all sorts of insects, especially longhorn beetles, and fungi.

Thanks to Brian at the end of the evening 120 species of flowering plants had been recorded.



A shaft of sunlight

Pond Dipping Event 17th August 2011 Dig In Community Allotment Pond, Stapleford, NG9 8HZ Pond Freshwater Invertebrates Survey

Chaoborus larva	Arthropoda
Notonecta	Insecta
Spirostomum	Ciliate Protozoa
Branchionus sp.	Rotifera
Loxophyllum	Ciliate Infusoria
Gerris	Hemiptera
Ascellus	Malacostraca
Corixa	Hemioptera
Cyclops	Copepoda
Vorticella	Ciliate Infusoria
Chydorus	Cladocera
Cloeon nymph	Mayfly - Baetidae
Simocephalus	Cladocera
Peridinium	Mastigophora
Spirogyra	Chlorophyceae
Chaetonotus	Gastrotrica
Coleps	Infusoria
Scapheloberus	Cladocera
Hydra oligactis	Hydrozoa



David Gell with pond dipping display and equipment

A total of 19 species found in this qualitative sample pH 7.8 Dissolved Oxygen 3.2 ppm

No real attempt was made to assess numbers but the following were of note - Branchionus sp. Occasional; Peridinium Common; Loxophyllum Occasional

NOTE : At the time of sampling, there were fish in the pond which are to be removed.

A further sample in say a year or so may reveal more species.

The event was attended by several children and parents and all appeared to enjoy it.

Alan Heath

Tree bee *Bombus hypnorum*

A new bumble bee has been seen in the area. The first few were seen in May, feeding on bramble flowers by the railway line in Long Eaton and also at Hopwell Cottage Farm. Dave Pinney was surprised to find not blue tits but bumble bees in a nest box in his Sandacre garden. They lived there all summer but vacated the box in August. The European tree bee is the newest addition to the UK bee population in 150 years it has a brown thorax, black abdomen and a white tail. They have a tendency to nest in holes in trees (which gave rise to their common name). This is welcome news to apiarists, as although there are 27

others are seriously declining. Having braved the squalls of the English Channel, the European tree bumblebee was first spotted in the New Forest in 2001 by the director of the Bumblebee Conservation Trust. It is thought that the European tree bumblebee is not a threat to native species, as it relies on different plants and flowers. Bees have been in decline internationally due to use of chemicals, habitat loss and a mysterious disease known as colony collapse disorder. They are important pollinators of flowers and fruit trees and crops.



Tree bee (*Bombus hypnorum*)

Halophytes—salt loving plants

Drivers will notice Danish Scurvy Grass (*Cochlearia danica*) in bloom throughout the spring as a 'white ribbon' of flowers adorning road verges. This plant mostly grows on coastal areas and cliffs but started spreading inland in the 1980s. "No one quite knows exactly where it started its inland spread but once it gained a foothold on motorways it easily moved along the road network.

It's spread is closely-linked with road salting in the UK and can be seen on the A52 and other local roads. Under the motorway bridge by the Oxbow at Sawley there is a carpet of lesser sea spurrey. (*Spergularia media*) This also grows by West Park and Eaton Farm. Another recent Derbyshire colonist is, buck's horn plantain (*Plantago coronopus*), found by the plant recorder for Derbyshire Alan Wilmot.



Lesser sea spurrey (*Spergularia media*)

60 Best Trees competition

Erewash Borough Council has launched a competition to find the 60 Favourite Trees in Erewash in honour of the Queen's Diamond Jubilee in 2012. Local people can take a photo and nominate their favourite tree or trees on either public or private in the borough before the 31st December deadline. Cash prizes are on offer for the top three entries. The tree may be particularly old or big for its species or it may support wildlife or be an

outstanding landmark. It could have been the centre of great events or linked to a famous person. It could even be rare. It does not have to be a native tree, it could be an exotic tree or even a fruit or hedgerow tree or just a tree that is special. Application forms are available now (closing date December 6) and can be downloaded at www.erewash.gov.uk/pride or can be picked up at Long Eaton and Ilkeston Town Halls.



The Witch's Oak at Shardlow



LENS Long Eaton Natural History Society

CONTACTS

Future Meetings

- 12 Sept Hang out all night and sleep all day
Joe Kirkwood
- 10 October Conservation of Amphibians and Reptiles
in Derbyshire Chris Monk
- 14 November AGM/Members night
- 12 December Quiz and social
- 9th January Bird Migration Nigel Slater
- 13th February Life in a Cold Climate Steve Lonsdale
- 12th March Wild Flowers of Derbyshire
Kieran Houston

Indoor meetings start at 7.15pm in the Social Activities Annex, Long Eaton Public Library, Broad Street, Long Eaton. Cost £1 for members, £2 for visitors. All welcome.

CONTACT: Alan Heath 0115 9733766

See website www.lensweb.wordpress.com for further details of activities.

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

23 Marlborough Road
Long Eaton
Nottingham
NG10 2BS
E-mail: Lensnaturalhistory@yahoo.co.uk

Thanks to all contributors and J Breakwell, M Bryce, D and H Gell and A Heath for photographs used in this bulletin.



Orange tip butterfly at Elvaston Nature Reserve

Eco Fun Day



Dominic and Marion Bryce with the tree quiz at Long Eaton School's Eco Fun Day held in March

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