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WE ALL MEET AGAIN AT LENS!



LENS visit the Cromford Canal at Codnor 24 May 2021

Photo Credit Marion Bryce

The Summer of 2021 was special!

Joan Breakwell organized a popular series of summer walks which were especially enjoyed after a long period of isolation in lockdown.

Happy 90th Birthday Alan



Birthday Greetings to Alan Heath, Long Eaton's Weatherman. For a birthday surprise Joan Breakwell and Marion Bryce planted primroses and cowslips on the grassy floodbund at the back of his garden near Manor Farm Local Nature Reserve. It was hard work cutting through the turf and Alan came out to see what was going on so we had a good chat about meteorites and asteroids. Alan was Chairman of Long Eaton Natural History Society Wildlife Group for 29 years and still attends meetings.

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Join

Erewash Tree Wardens

Contact Jaimey Richards
Tree Officer Erewash Borough
Council
JaimeyRichards@erewash.gov.uk

LENS New Meeting Room

On the 29th March the lockdown rules for groups outside were relaxed so that groups of six could meet outside with social distancing. This meant that LENS was able to go ahead with a full summer programme. We enjoyed a varied programme of summer walks organised by Joan Breakwell.

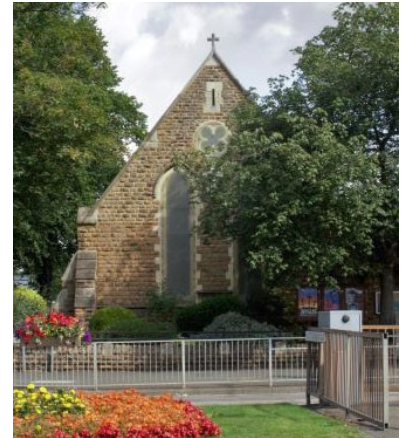
After the first summer outing the rules were further relaxed so that groups of 30 were able to meet, still with a certain amount of social distancing and optional face masks.

All social distancing and wearing of face masks became optional indoors in August and so we felt able to arrange a full programme of winter talks but first we had to find a new meeting room as

Long Eaton School were no longer able to host our meetings. As church halls opened up, one by one, we had a choice of new meeting rooms. Erewash CVS offered us a start up grant to cover the cost of the room for the first year.

The hall at the United Reformed Church met most of our requirements as it was so conveniently close to the centre of Long Eaton by a bus stop, it was the right size, the right price and the tea making facilities were excellent.

The committee decided to continue with evening talks but the meeting day changed to the last Wednesday of the month and the first meeting took place in September. This was a great success and we look forward to seeing you all at future meetings.



**LENS New Meeting Room
20 August 2021**

Photo credit Marion Bryce

Forbes Hole LNR

The Swans nested successfully for the first time. All through lockdown the Friends of Forbes Hole kept the paths open as members of the public came down to feed the swans. Money was raised for a memorial plaque for Stuart Gilder to be placed on the new bench which Erewash Borough Council will place at the site.

Sadly the wildlife site next door was lost to development, a new industrial estate is planned. As work started two weasels were seen at Forbes Hole, then for two consecutive days an otter spent time in the pond which was filled to overflowing early in the year.

The feeder stream for Forbes Hole will be left open at the new site but it disappears into the main sewer at Forbes Hole unless there is a lot of rain.

Several large trees toppled due to prolonged dry conditions 4 species of longhorn beetle were recorded including the Tawny Longhorn for the first time, as well as Wasp and 4-banded and the huge Musk Beetle. When the tansy flowered later in August the brown argus butterflies appeared in good numbers, making up for last years absence!



Swans at Forbes Hole 21 June 2021

Photo credit Marion Bryce

Pigeon Rescue

I have been fortunate to share my life with lots of animals over the last 45 years. These have included 8 rescue dogs and a variety of abandoned rabbits and guinea pigs. I kept chickens for over 30 years including ex battery hens and a beautiful cockerel called Sidney who lived for more than 10 years. The geriatric doves and pigeons include a number of waifs and strays and injured birds. About six months ago I received a call from my local veterinary surgery to ask if I could accommodate a pink pigeon. The vet was reluctant to release the seemingly healthy bird as he felt that she was bred and spray painted to become a wedding accessory or to

mark some other special occasion. Pinkie settled in really quickly. She trotted into the aviary confidently and proceeded to inspect her new surroundings. Pinkie has gradually moulted and she is now a pretty white bird with feathered feet and a rosette crown. Although a youngster compared with her nine superannuated companions (all at least ten years old), she appears healthy and content. Even Tesco the 'grumpy blue pigeon rescued from the supermarket car park, has accepted her. Roe Langford



Pinkie at home in the aviary

Photo credit Roe Langford

RH Hall of Long Eaton-a True Naturalist



LENS at Ticknall 12 June 1982

Joyce Smith, Anon, RH Hall and Max Bryce

Photo Credit Alan Heath

Robert H Hall a former teacher at Brooklands School taught many local naturalists how to identify plants and mosses at his popular WEA classes. He was a named author in KC Edwards' 1962 book, 'The Peak District', Collins New Naturalist Series contributing chapters on Plant Associations and Flowerless Plants. The book also includes some of his photographs.

Can you remember his precise erudition and enthusiasm for everything botanical?

In that case you may be interested to read this letter I received in response to a Blog Article on the [LENS Website](#). To receive Blog articles enter your email as directed on the front page of the website. Marion Bryce.

Dear Marion,

I was very interested to read your article 'My Favourite Place, Trent Lane Long Eaton 5th July 2020' which I found on the internet. I am a collector of the Collins New Naturalist series of books, especially copies signed by the author(s). I was trying to find out more about Mr. R. H. Hall as information about him seems rather scarce and little mention of him in Peter Marren's New Naturalists (NN82) other than to say he was a tutor at Nottingham University extra mural department, and brought in by K. C. Edwards to write the botanical section of NN44 The Peak District 1962

Reading more on the LENS website and looking at your old bulletins I found further mention of 'Bert' Hall leading botanical walks in the 80's, confirming orchid identifications, and giving slide shows and talks. The last mention I found was in Bulletin No.21 'Bert Hall brought his wife along and showed slides of Mediterranean flowers (13/11/89) but nothing after that. I thought there might have been an obituary in the LENS Bulletins but did not find one. Neither did I find any pictures of him, unfortunately.



Sanderson Rgular quarter plate camera (31/4 x 41/4 inches.

Photo Credit Richard Donovan

By coincidence, at the very time I found your article, towards the end of August, I saw that some of his collection of botanical slides was sold at auction. Described as 'an interesting collection of Victorian and early 20th century slides from the collection of R H Hall, Buxton, mainly botanical' at Unique Auctions of Lincoln. Pictures attached for your interest.

I also found, on the internet the "Digital Photography DP Review". A question posed to the forum members "who is the most famous photographer you have met?", and an Andrew Skinner replied: "I learned a lot from a chap called R H Hall. Botanical photographer who contributed images to a lot of books in the 1970s. Although he was still snapping slides with a Pentax Spotmatic II the book market of the day was for B&W so most of what he sold was on quarter plate glass negatives taken by him and his father". And on the same forum....in Sept 2018, again Andrew Skinner's answer to the question: "What is the largest format camera that you have ever seen?"....."I had the honour to know someone who sold (up into the late 1960s) images taken on a Sanderson Quarter Plate with glass negatives, I did see the setup once. His plant images were in early Collins New Naturalist books. R H Hall".

This prompted me to check botanical titles in my New Naturalist collection and I found his photographs in NN5 Wild Flowers 1954, and especially NN16 Wild Flowers of Chalk & Limestone 1950, where he is credited in the author's acknowledgments, and mentioned on three occasions in the text, for example the botanical trips he and Ted Lousley made together in 'Via Gellia' a "favourite walk" from Matlock.

I have a first edition on NN44 The Peak District signed by K. C. Edwards (picture attached), but alas not signed by H. H. Swinnerton or indeed Mr. R. H. 'Bert' Hall. I hope you asked Bert Hall to sign your copy J I wonder if anyone has a triple signed copy?!

Anyway, sorry for the long rambling e-mail, it was just to say that I found your article very interesting and I hope you may find my little research interesting too. Did you know that one of the next New Naturalists due for release (in October this year?) will be 'The Peak District' by Penny Anderson.

If you know of anyone who has a copy of Bert Hall's signature, ideally on the title page of an NN44 Peak District, I would pay handsomely for it!

Best Regards,
Richard Donovan
Cheam, Surrey

We All Meet Again—LENS at Coombes Valley

Mon Apr 26 Coombes Valley RSPB Reserve

Meet 10.30am in reserve car park, (ST13 7EU) for morning walk, target species redstart & pied flycatcher.



LENS at RSPB Coombes Valley 26 April 2021

Photo Credit Marion Bryce

RSPB Coombes Valley, on the southern edge of the Staffordshire Moorlands, is the oldest RSPB reserve in the Midlands. The nature reserve covers 100 hectares of mixed broadleaved woodland and grassland in a steep sided valley draining into the upper Trent. It opened in 1962 when it was home to the last breeding pair of sparrowhawks in Staffordshire.

Due to social distancing we all had to travel separately so we were glad the reserve had a large car park. This costs £4 but is free to RSPB members. How delighted were we to all meet again after such a long hiatus due to the pandemic. Paul Burton, the RSPB warden introduced us to the reserve, its history and aims. The first warden was Maurice Skevington (?) and he devoted a lot of time to identifying arboreal beetles which is why the reserve is known to be one of the best RSPB reserves in the country for biodiversity.



Paul Burton Warden at RSPB Coombes Valley 26 April 2021

Photo Credit Marion Bryce

Paul had just returned from a 2 year sabbatical assessing the status of the willow tit in the Midlands (a stronghold for the species) and so this was only the second guided walk he had led. Splitting us into two groups of six, one group walked ahead and the other group followed after a short interval. Our progress was slow through the steep sided valley, so that Paul was able to dart back and forth from one group to the other and no-one missed out.

Paul is attuned to bird song and always has one ear listening so that he can interpret the woodland vibe. Every month he gets up at 4am to write down what birds he can hear at 10 fixed point listening posts.

We saw a pair of redstarts first, fly catching quite low down from a bush, the sun shone through and lit up the bright orange tail. The redstart seemed to start singing well but seemed to lack confidence and stopped mid-song to say 'oh really' and then forgot what it was saying!.



Pied Flycatcher at RSPB Coombes Valley 26 April 2021

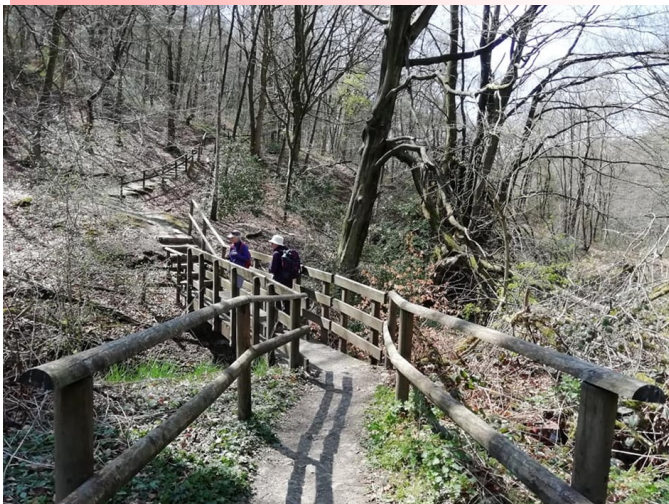
Photo Credit Nigel Downes

As we turned off the easy path to some steps uphill through oak, birch and holly woodland Paul explained how his twice weekly work party had battled with the holly scrub to make horizontal flight lines. The birds had appreciated this and now there were six nest boxes occupied by pied flycatchers. As a group we paused and listened to the birds as Paul urged us to 'tune in'. Pied flycatchers are one of the easier birds to spot looking a bit like miniature flying penguins. A male posed on a nearby branch, 'chee chee chee'.

As we slowly meandered through the semi-ancient woodland with its scarred oak trees and understorey of recumbent boughs with holly fighting back, woodpeckers were drumming and the black white and red of a great spotted woodpecker is a splendid sight. It sometimes seemed that there was a chiffchaff or a willow warbler singing from the top of every tree.

After Paul left the group for other duties, we sat by the pond and had a picnic in the sun, small tortoiseshell, peacock, orange-tip and green-veined white butterflies chased each other over the heath. Ashy mining bees emerged from the ground as we slowly wandered back, past the old lodge house, over the Coombe Brook, pausing to admire the pretty pink purslane, lesser celandine

Coombes Valley contd



LENS at RSPB Coombes Valley 26 April 2021

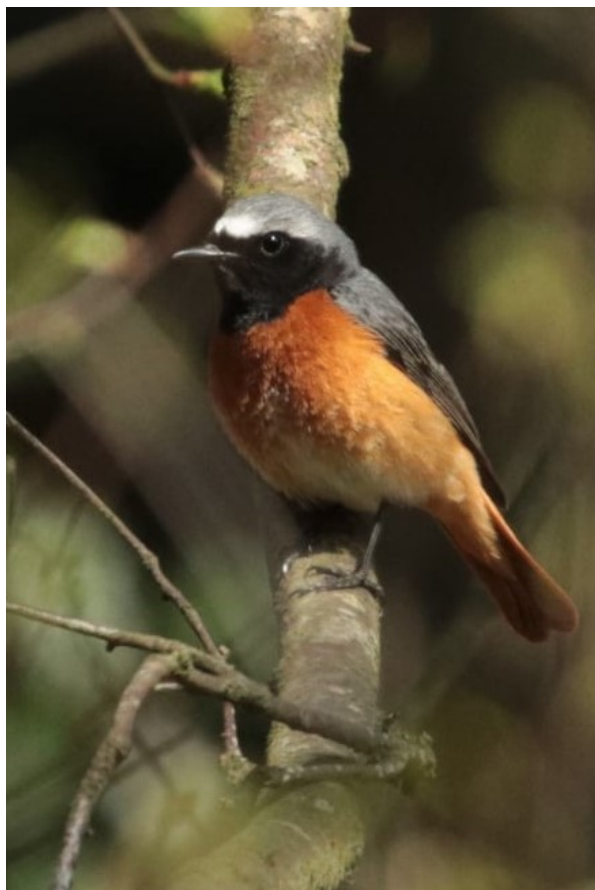
Photo Credit Marion Bryce

and opposite leaved yellow saxifrage. We looked in vain for the resident dipper which had absconded to a nearby pool.

There are five star species to tick off on a visit to Coombes Valley RSPB Nature Reserve, Dipper, Pied Flycatcher, Redstart, Great Spotted Woodpecker and Wood Warbler. As we had only ticked off three of these, we will have to return soon, to sit on one of those handy benches and tick off the last two.

Marion Bryce 26 April 2021

Thanks to Joan Breakwell for organising this outing and to Nigel Downes who photographed the birds.



Redstart

Photo Credit Nigel Downes

Flowers in the Rain at Rose End Meadows

Sat May 8 Rose End Meadows, Bluebells & spring flowers.

Meet 10.30 in Cromford market place (DE4 3QE) to walk up the hill to this lovely reserve with uneven ground and a couple of stiles.

Leader David Gibbons

On Wednesday, 5 May 2021, 09:46:56 BST, joan breakwell wrote:

Hi Marion

The weather is looking awful on Saturday. High percentage of heavy rain all day. I think I'll have to contact David. Perhaps we could change it to the following Saturday if he's free? Still some rain forecast, but a lot less likely and sunny intervals too (although I know forecasts that long in advance can be wildly inaccurate.)

What do you think?

Joan

Marion 'Let the walk leader decide.'

On Wednesday, 5 May 2021 18:56:25 BST, david gibbons wrote:

Hi – Joan – yes I am intending to come as weather is variable. If it is too bad when we meet it would be easier to abandon it with everyone there and they can go on to somewhere else.

Hoping for a dry morning,

David.

Armed with umbrellas and Wellington boots, 6 LENS stalwarts met at the market place and set off up Cromford Hill in driving rain. A green footpath sign directed us to the meadows where we were transported back in time, to how Derbyshire's limestone farmland would have looked a hundred years ago.

Rose End Meadows, a Derbyshire Wildlife Trust Nature Reserve, is made up of 16 small fields of varying soil quality and depth enclosed by wobbly limestone walls. Each meadow is different and none have ever been treated with artificial fertiliser or herbicide, making them extremely special.

Colours of yellow, pink white and blue, were made vivid by the rain. At the entrance, proud Spanish bluebells spreading from the cottage gardens challenged the sorry

Flowers in the Rain at Rose End Meadows



Spoilheap at Rose-end Meadows 26 April 2021

Photo Credit Marion Bryce

drooping natives. Foamy white flowers of Hogweed and Cow Parsley, with Mauve Comfrey, gave way to Cowslips, Bugle and Meadow Saxifrage.

English Bluebells normally flourish in the woodland and larger meadow in the north east part of the reserve, but this year, they had been dwarfed by the driest April ever recorded and many Bluebells were spreadeagled like stranded starfish, the green leaf spears burnt umber by the action of sun on frost. A smooth silver skin of a slow-worm, a legless lizard, hid beneath the sorry leaves.



Bluebells at Rose-end Meadows 26 April 2021

Photo Credit Marion Bryce

'Did you know if you pick a white dead nettle and place it in ink, it will draw up the blue liquid and make the flowers blue?' asked David. 'It is a good demonstration for children because if you then cut the square stem across, you can see four dark blue circles in the corner which shows them the pipes which plants use to transport fluids.'

Xylem and phloem what poetry! Echoes of a biology lesson: Plants have tissues to transport water, nutrients and minerals. Xylem transports water and mineral salts from the roots

up to other parts of the plant, while phloem transports sucrose and amino acids between the leaves and other parts of the plant.

David was now searching a low spoil heap of lead-deads, looking for Yellow Mountain Pansy, but we were too early. Among the blue-green pointy leaves of Lady's Bedstraw, succulent Bitter Stonecrop and Salad Burnet, was a small white cress with large heart-shaped fruits, we had found the very rare Alpine Pennycress!



Alpine Pennycress at Rose-end Meadows 26 April 2021

Photo

Credit Marion Bryce



Spring Sedge at Rose-end Meadows 26 April 2021

Photo Credit Marion Bryce

Following the track through the Van Gogh yellow and blue fields of wild flowers, all was still except the pitter patter raindrops. Ground Ivy and Cuckoo Pint were flowering in the shade by the Willow, Hawthorn and Hazel scrub. Working our way down the hillside, we could see the stone houses of the village below, we found another spoil heap. What a prize, it was covered with exquisite spring sedge. All too soon, it was time for a parting of the ways and as we stood dripping in the rain, we thanked our walk leader for a unique walk in beautiful surroundings. David smiled and said,

'Joan when you get home you can delete that email I sent this morning cancelling the walk!'

Marion Bryce 8 May 2021

www.lensweb.wordpress.com

Have you ever seen a Water Vole?

Monday May 24 Short summer walk starting at Codnor Park Reservoir, possibility of seeing Water Voles Leader Dr Nigel Downes

Meeting at Codnor Park Reservoir car park **Grid ref** SK 433 515

Time 10.00 am PROMPT START!

Directions

Codnor Park Reservoir car park is sign posted – sharp turn off Coach Road. Nearest postcode, NG16 5NH may be a few hundred yards beyond entrance if using satnav and approaching from Codnor. If you miss turning, continue along Coach Road, turning around at cross roads, entrance to car park easier to turn into from that direction.



Have you ever seen a water vole? This was the question we asked as fourteen of us met at Codnor Reservoir car park. After a brief introduction from our walk leader, we walked at pace across an angular metal bridge, past a stone arch spanning a dry runnel (the Pinxton branch?) to the towpath of the Cromford Canal.

Rushing us past the colourful wildflowers, it was apparent that this was a man on a mission; Nigel had recce'd and researched this outing meticulously with four scoping visits; talking with locals and using the internet he had collated an in depth knowledge of the industrial archaeology of the area which he was then able to bring alive for us.

The construction of the Cromford Canal by William Jessop and Benjamin Outram, partners in the Butterley company, was completed in 1794. It is 14.5 miles (23.3 kilometres) long and joined Cromford with the Erewash Canal at Langley Mill with a branch to Pinxton. The Cromford Canal was last used as a working waterway in 1944.

We paused to look at the Education Foundation building which was built to educate the working class and combat alcoholism. The building has been converted into apartments and so gives a bird's eye view of the canal 'That's where Maggie Campbell lives'. Maggie is a member of the Friends of Codnor Reservoir and Cromford Canal and regularly posts photographs on their excellent facebook site. Yesterday, she photographed a Roe Deer Buck from her bedroom window as it walked along the bridle path!

Passing under a railway bridge (between Jacksdale and Ironville) Nigel pointed out the pride of craftsmanship shown in the ornate brickwork and pointed to the calcitites (new word), of solidified calcium carbonate, dripping from the blue brick arch.

Like the white rabbit in Alice in Wonderland, Nigel was checking his watch again, mustn't be late he muttered, the timing for the Water Vole Show was critical.

The old locks were fascinating, due to recent rainy weather there was a good flow of water through, and some weirs made small waterfalls sparkling in the sunshine. A tiny wren was flying back and forth collecting insects to feed her young, Nigel had posted some photographs on LENS facebook the previous day, but now we were able to make her actual acquaintance. Despite these distractions we soon reached the designated spot and spread out to look for signs of the water voles.

We all peered down into the deep dark depths of the lock. The canal which had been totally cleared in 2017 was full of reed sweetgrass and great willowherb, how could we ever see a vole? Nigel said that since his first visit 5 years ago, he had seen 9 water voles, and two of them were yesterday! Look out for signs he said. Oval holes? Cut reed stems? Latrines? No, there was not a breath of wind, so any leaf movements could be due to a water vole. We held our collective breath as a group of green spears flickered and silently parted, but it was a moorhen peeping out, an unwelcome intrusion. We could breathe again, but how long could we keep focus?



Water Vole Cromford Canal 24 May 2021

Photo Credit Nigel Downes

After scattering some emergency apples, Nigel read us some science from his phone, the water vole has chestnut-brown fur, a blunt, rounded nose, small ears, and a furry tail. It is much bigger than other vole species, it only lives for a year... his voice faltered sadly. Just then a water vole popped up under Nigel's nose it was so quick he didn't get a photograph, he was mortified that the group hadn't seen it. But we kept focus, Nigel got out his camera and a very big lens and soon the rotund brown furry beast popped up again. Our water vole hopped out of the water and preened on a slab before disappearing into the reeds and moving upstream to entertain the tail end of our party. According to Nigel's local source there is only one family of water voles but this pair have had four young this year. We were delighted when one of the babies popped up, seemingly out of nowhere, it practiced open water swimming for a stretch and then scampered along the entire length of the lock giving really good views for us all. Well, top that! Nigel could take off his hat, bow and take the applause. We were all delighted with the water vole show!

Mindfulness at Sinfin Moor Park

Sinfin Moor Local Nature Reserve

Meet 6pm in car park inside entrance to Sinfin Moor Park (DE24 9HW) for easy 2.5 mile walk with butterfly bank, meadows etc. Learn about the conservation work taking place there.

Leader Jean Lung



Jean Lung at Sinfin Moor 7 June 2021

Photo Credit Marion Bryce

Standing in sunshine on a flat expanse of closely mown turf, it was easy to imagine the thunder of horses hooves as the horses from the Calke Abbey Stables competed for high society stakes in the eighteenth century. The carefully crafted coiffures, elegant ruffled pastel shaded gowns of gathered voile, white kid gloves lacy parasols shading white lead faces from the harmful sun's rays murmured from the past.

We were standing on a raised plateau at Sinfin Moor Park, the close mown turf now covers all sorts of rubble from a massive slum clearance in the 1960s when houses were taken down around the Derby Royal infirmary and Abbey Street area. We could look down to the street below at the base level.

What a wonderful warm welcome from the Friends of Sinfin Moor as they introduced themselves and talked about the activities in which they were involved, a drop in café, a forest school and an annual Children's Fun Day which is free for all. And of course, not the least of these activities is to look after the Sinfin Moor Park Nature Reserve according to the James Frith Management Plan. Cowslips were introduced after landscaping to create the park in the 1970s and they now thrive, this is reflected in the embroidered flower badge sported by the Friends, they are also very proud of the huge green flag flying to show excellence in green space management. Recently 3 coloured routes around the Park have been marked and we were each given a colourful leaflet with a map.

Sinfin Moor Park is 38 Ha and a large part of this huge site is a Local Nature Reserve which consists of a mosaic of habitats: grassland including tall herb fen, wildflower-seeded grassland, improved agricultural meadows, semi-improved grassland, amenity grassland and scrub-invaded grassland. There are mature hedges, small areas of planted trees and shrubs, small drains, a stream and a number of small ponds. It is bounded mostly by arable agricultural land to the south and east, a municipal golf course and some housing to the north and housing and a school to the west. Historically it is a slightly acidic wetland area subject to flooding due to underlying clay geology which led to the name of 'Sinfin Moor'.

Meadow vetchling and ragged robin were in flower as we were led to the first of a series of ponds, 3 natural and 6 dug out by volunteers, to recreate traditional floodplain meadow habitat. For memory ease the ponds have been named after cakes so we started at Mississippi Mud to view 3 delicate spikes of Common Spotted Orchid, then to the String of Pearls (an outlier), past Pancake Pond to Doughnut where we could see tadpoles swimming. Most of these ponds are ephemeral and do not hold open water but support wetland species such as rushes and Reed Canary Grass, Great Willowherb, Silverweed and Purple Loosestrife providing wildflower interest.

We stopped at a wildflower meadow resplendent with golden yellow Buttercups, Common Knapweed in bud and fine leaved grass kept in check by the parasitic properties of Yellow Rattle. Small moths and soldier beetles were making hay. This is re-seeded farmland and is winter grazed by 12 Jacob Sheep providing a great attraction for the public. Another bank was naturally seeded with Teasel, Ladies' Mantle and Salad Burnet. We then squeezed past the huge metal cattle crush to look across the balancing pond meadow which is a huge scooped out bowl. This is grazed by two highland cattle from Derbyshire Wildlife Trust's Shipley Park Reserve and the grazing provides an income for on site improvements. Even so there is a lot of scrub intrusion, particularly by hawthorn with curious pink flowers, and Derby Parks Volunteers have to work continually to keep the grassland clear, not only for the wonderful wildflowers, but also so that the site can hold back flood water in times of heavy rainfall to protect the city.



We had been treated like royalty by our friends from Sinfin Park and at the end of the warm summer evening we were led in train through an avenue of Ladies Lace to Dingley Dell for silent communion with nature as the blackbird, song thrush and robin sang out the evening chorus.

Marion Bryce 7 June 2021

Witches Oak Water

Marion Bryce 7 June 2021

Mon Jun 21 Witches Oak Water, STW & DWT Nature Reserve

Grid ref SK 433 295. Access via the quarry slip road on the westbound lane of the A50 just west of the Donington roundabout. At T-junction turn left, go under A50, parking area straight ahead. Access off westbound carriageway only.

Leader Simon Lowe, Derbyshire Wildlife Trust



LENS at Witches Oak Water 7 June 2021

Photo Credit Marion Bryce

The waters of the River Trent have historically been among the most polluted but by 2004 water quality had improved significantly such that Severn Trent acquired old gravel pits at Aston on Trent and adapted them for water storage to give a connected series of 12 ponds to the River Trent. The sand and gravel quarry opened in 1989 and lies between the River Trent and the main A50, it covers around 120 hectares. One of the conditions of use was that, afterwards the site should undergo habitat creation as a nature reserve for the local community and maintain the Trent Valley wildlife corridor. The 80Ha site was called Witches Oak Water after the veteran oak tree which had been preserved on site. One of the largest reed beds in Derbyshire was planted and the bird reports published by Derbyshire Ornithological Society and otter sightings marked the success of the 'Nature after minerals' project in 2011. Aston on Trent Parish Council tried to get public access after Phase 2 was complete but Hanson's quarry, which had been mothballed, reopened in 2015 for Phase 3, making access hazardous, so the reserve has remained closed to the public, which is why each visit is a special privilege.

What was it like last night? After a rainy day 14 of us braved the gloom of an overcast sky. We were met by Simon who had been asked to lead the walk although he did not know the site. Expecting rain, we decided to have another look at Phase 1 rather than risk uncharted territory. After parking, we walked along the service to a locked gate, fortunately Simon had the key. We followed a path along grassy rides between rampant willow and hawthorn. We put up three green woodpeckers which were anting in the grass, the anthills were quite large probably because all of the grass is cut by hand and so they don't get flattened by heavy machinery. The colour palette was yellow and purple as bird's foot trefoil, yellow melilot, tufted vetch and hairy

tare competed with tall cocksfoot grass. There are not many insects around this year, we blame the frosty nights in May, but there were a few bumble bees on red and white clover and bountiful blue damselflies clutching the grass stems, shut up for the night. Everything has grown very fast this year and at times the grass was as high as our shoulders.

We peeped at the platform with the water control valves which Richard Spowage had rediscovered just before our last visit. These valves open and close sluice gates which connect the 12 gravel pits and need to be closed to maintain the water height, but opened in times of flood. The ponds are steep sided and very deep, but completely natural. They are not stocked with fish and there is no fishing allowed so amphibians and invertebrates are abundant.

Many different species of bird, butterfly and dragonfly have been recorded. by Vic Bevan, the first emperor dragonfly was recorded in 2018, but most of the birds seem to be recorded on the new workings. Otter and mink are probably present but have not been recorded since Richard Spowage recorded footage on his night-time wildlife camera 10 years ago. Many nature reserves are close to busy roads but by the time we had walked to Pond No 2 we could look out over the water towards the cleared mound topped by the Witches Oak, listen to the birds and be at one with Nature. A family of great crested grebes and a pair of swans swam on the pond but there was not even one swallow over the water.

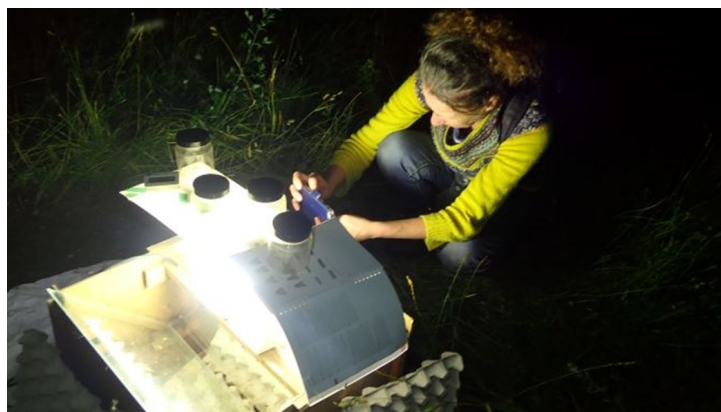
The reed beds are managed to create a scallop shape, woodland has wavy edges and meandering hedges were planted to increase biodiversity in this large, custom built, nature reserve. Simon stopped at some willows on the edge of the steep bank and bemoaned the tardy coppice management due to constraints on working in this year of the pandemic This has created problems for the future as less than 15m height is needed to maintain the habitat for warblers and these willows were reaching for the sky.

Simon's daytime role is as the Development officer for the Trent Valley, 'Transforming Lives', and he is an expert on nature conservation. He likes blackthorn which flowers very early, even before the leaves have broken out, he explained how the pliable stems are a pleasure to work with when hedging although the thorns are wicked. We were listening to a reed warbler, heard not seen, and looking at the sand martin bank, which like many others, is an abject failure. The party split here, although there was no obvious footpath Simon climbed the bank of poppies and pushed on through the Elysian fields. Less able walkers made their way back the way we came.

Derbyshire Wildlife Trust now manage the site for Severn-Trent Water, this is not easy as grazing by animals is not allowed. The quarry restoration was based on replicating the pre-industrial pastoral floodplain landscape. Flood meadow grassland enclosed by restored hedgerows with trees, connecting with field-corner woodlands and riparian tree cover. Benefiting woodland mammals, invertebrates and birds, alongside species attracted to the recreated traditional enclosed farmland. The water storage reservoirs have been complemented with shallow pools. We were impressed that the variety of habitats in this designer nature reserve had been maintained. A working party lead by Vic Bevan takes place once a month and Derbyshire Wildlife Trust are keen to recruit more volunteers, watch this space!

Marion Bryce 21 June 2021

National Moth Night 2021 at Forbes Hole LNR



Jules Records a Moth 9 July 2021

Photo Credit Marion Bryce

Moth Night is an annual celebration of moth recording throughout Britain and Ireland. Each year a theme is chosen, which for 9 July 2021 was Reedbeds and Wetlands which gave us a good excuse to go moth trapping at Forbes Hole Local Nature Reserve an Erewash Borough Council site close to Long Eaton town centre.

Around 21.30 the moth traps were set up and soon the generator was purring and lighting up the MV lamps. No moths appeared, so we had a look at some which we'd caught the night before to give an idea of what we might see, macromoths such as geometers and noctuids and micromoths which we decided to ignore unless they were well marked and easy to identify. The macromoths were compared with the illustrations by Richard Lewington in 'Townsend and Waring's Concise Guide to the Moths of Great Britain and Ireland which is a very useful book for identification.

Then we went for a walk around the reserve to see what bats were around, using the Echometer Mark II recording device. Although we didn't see many, the summary of bat passes for the evening gave Barbastelle 5, Leislers 4, Noctule 14, Common Pipistrelle 41, Soprano Pipistrelle 12. The Barbastelle, Leislers' and Noctule flying around the path near the railway.

Meanwhile, despite earlier heavy rain, it turned out to be a fine evening, maintaining a good temperature of 16C. A vivid green V-pug started the ball rolling, followed by bright yellow knapweed conch and then the moths came thick and fast and we were choking on caddis flies. Around midnight a bright pink elephant hawkmoth crashed in, this meant we had leave to go home but we wanted to stay and were rewarded with the beautiful hook tip, white satin, phoenix and cream-bordered green pea.

It really was time to start packing up but a poplar hawkmoth arrived, peach blossom and common emerald. By now there were so many elephant hawkmoths that we thought we were in a china shop.

Reluctantly, one by one we turned the lights off, reeled in the extension leads, dusted down the traps, flapped the moths off our cardboard egg tray liners and emptied all of the pots. We trailed back to the car park carting the heavy generator, and other accoutrements of the moth trappers trade. Just as we were leaving Nigel discovered an eyed hawkmoth which had followed us back to the car. 167 moths of 59 species, only 1 reedbed species which was a pale water veneer, could it be they don't like rain?

List of moths follows:

Marion Bryce 9 July 2021

Species	Latin name	No
Ash Bud Moth	<i>Prays fraxinella</i>	1
Barred Fruit-tree Tortrix	<i>Pandemis cerasana</i>	2
Beautiful Hook-tip	<i>Laspeyria flexula</i>	1
Beautiful Plume	<i>Amblyptilia acanthadactyla</i>	1
Bramble Shoot Moth	<i>Notocelia uddmanniana</i>	1
Bright-line Brown-eye	<i>Lacanobia oleracea</i>	1
Brimstone Moth	<i>Opisthagraptis luteolata</i>	5
Brown-line Bright-eye	<i>Mythimna conigera</i>	3
Buff Arches	<i>Habrosyne pyritoides</i>	10
Buff Ermine	<i>Spilosoma lutea</i>	1
Clouded Border	<i>Lomaspilis marginata</i>	1
Codling Moth	<i>Cydia pomonella</i>	1
Common Emerald	<i>Hemithea aestivaria</i>	1
Common Grass Veneer	<i>Chrysoteuchia culmella</i>	10
Common Marble	<i>Celypha lacunana</i>	1
Common Marbled Carpet	<i>Dysstroma truncata</i>	1
Coronet	<i>Craniophora ligustri</i>	4
Cream-bordered Green Pea	<i>Earias clorana</i>	1
Currant Pug	<i>Eupithecia assimilata</i>	1
Dark Arches	<i>Apamea monoglypha</i>	3
Pale Water Veneer	<i>Donacula forficella</i>	1
Double-square Spot	<i>Xestia triangulum</i>	1
Dun-bar	<i>Cosmia trapezina</i>	3
Elder Pearl	<i>Anania coronata</i>	1
Elephant Hawk-moth	<i>Deilephila elpenor</i>	20
White Foot Bell	<i>Epiblema foenella</i>	1
Little Grey	<i>Eudonia lacustrata</i>	3
Eyed Hawk-moth	<i>Smerinthus ocellata</i>	1
Flame	<i>Axylia putris</i>	2
Garden Carpet	<i>Xanthorhoe fluctuata</i>	3
Green Pug	<i>Pasiphila rectangulata</i>	1
Heart & Dart	<i>Agrotis exclamationis</i>	1
Iron Prominent	<i>Notodonta dromedarius</i>	2
July Highflyer	<i>Hydriomena furcata</i>	2
Knapweed Conch	<i>Agapeta zoegana</i>	10
Knotgrass	<i>Acronicta rumicis</i>	3
Light Emerald	<i>Campaea margaritaria</i>	2
Marbled Minor	<i>Oligia strigilis</i>	1
Middle-barred Minor	<i>Oligia fasciuncula</i>	1
Miller	<i>Acronicta leporina</i>	3
Mother of Pearl	<i>Pleuroptya ruralis</i>	2
Peach Blossom	<i>Thyatira batis</i>	2
Peppered Moth	<i>Biston betularia</i>	1
Phoenix	<i>Eulithis prunata</i>	2
Poplar Hawk-moth	<i>Laothoe populi</i>	3
Privet Hawk-moth	<i>Sphinx ligustri</i>	1
Riband Wave	<i>Idaea aversata</i>	10
Scarce Footman	<i>Eilema complana</i>	4
Short-cloaked Moth	<i>Nola cucullatella</i>	1
Shuttle-shaped Dart	<i>Agrotis puta</i>	3
Single-dotted Wave	<i>Idaea dimidiata</i>	1
Small Fan-footed Wave	<i>Idaea biselata</i>	2
Smoky Wainscot	<i>Mythimna impura</i>	3
Spectacle	<i>Abrostola tripartita</i>	3
Swallow-tailed Moth	<i>Ourapteryx sambucaria</i>	5
Tawny Shears	<i>Hadena perplexa</i>	1
Triple-spotted Clay	<i>Xestia ditrapezium</i>	3
V-pug	<i>Chloroclystis v-ata</i>	4
White Satin	<i>Leucoma salicis</i>	2
Willow Beauty	<i>Peribatodes rhomboidaria</i>	2
10 Yellow Shell	<i>Campptogramma bilineata</i>	1

LENS Ticknall Limeyards Walk

Mon 5 Jul 2021 Ticknall Limeyards

Meet 2pm Ticknall Village Hall, Ingleby Lane, Ticknall DE7JW, Grid ref SK353242. 3 mile walk .

Leader Marion Bryce

The ancient village of Tichenhalle is mentioned in the Domesday Book. It developed as independent farmers with seasonal sidelines, up to the 1539 dissolution of the monasteries and subsequent land enclosures led to dependence on Calke Abbey and the villagers became estate workers in a hive of industry, peaking in the late 18th century, when the limeyards, brickmaking and pottery industries were operating at maximum capacity. As a quirk of geology, Ticknall had all of the raw materials on hand but by the twentieth century industry had largely ceased, and the village became a desirable commuter village in an attractive rural setting



Ticknall Limeyards 5 July 2021

Photo Credit Marion Bryce

In the early 1960s a group of concerned people gathered together to oppose plans to tip fly ash at Ticknall Limeyards (the long hand of Norman Lewis MBE) and decided to form a local charitable organisation. Derbyshire Naturalists' Trust (now called Derbyshire Wildlife Trust) was officially launched in 1962 and Ticknall Limeyards became its first nature reserve. In 1984 the abbey changed from private occupation by the reclusive Harpur-Crewe family to administration by the National Trust who took over management of the limeyards.

LENS met between rain showers in the car park of the village hall, it is definitely the rainy season in Derbyshire. We walked alongside locally quarried limestone walls, past bright green water pumps, under the Tramway Bridge, where the yellow flowered strawberries grow, to the limeyards. The eccentric estate workers cottages were overflowing with floral delight, bright pink cranesbill *Geranium oxonianum* is one of the fastest spreading weeds in the county but everyone loves it!

At the entrance to the Calke estate bumble bees were buzzing around the purple and pink tubular flowers of Russian Comfrey and Old Man's Beard was just getting out of bed. It was dark and ferny in the wood with Harts Tongue, Hard Shield and Scaly Male fern creating a pre-historic landscape.

A deft left turn took us to claypits full of opalescent blue water and old brick tunnels. The ponds are a delight of fringed water lily, where grey herons, coots and great crested grebes find food and sheltered. A small flurry of flowers gave us Wood Sanicle, Dog's Mercury, Hairy St John's Wort and our first Common Spotted Orchids.

Returning to the main drag we continued until we were lured into an ancient quarry site which is a favourite for butterfly enthusiasts, no Silver Washed Fritillary for LENS today, but, Orchid Delight! Common Spotted, Twayblade and Fragrant Orchids in profusion. Growing on chalky soil this must be the Common Fragrant Orchid, we stooped to take in the delicious fragrance. Amongst a large breakfast of egg and bacon (*Lotus corniculatus*) was another plant we don't often see; Eyebright a low growing herb with spiky leaves and small white, purple streaked flowers that feature a splash of yellow near the centre. This was Common Eyebright (*Euphrasia nemorosa*), although it is not so common these days.

This pond is particularly picturesque with Brooklime, Water Forget-me-not, Common Bedstraw and Yellow Flag. The egg yolk flowers of Lesser Spearwort, which spangled marshy areas, look very like buttercups until you see the spear-shaped leaves. We looked in vain for the kingfisher but bright blue Emperor and Hairy Dragonflies were hunting. Deep green ferny spikes of Mare's tail were poking out of the water, alongside the pastel green solid stems of water horsetail. There is a lot of confusion with the names of these two water plants so it was good to see them side by side.

A large earth mound by the quarry entrance was covered with fruiting wild strawberry planted to sustain Grizzled Skippers which were introduced in 2018. You can read about the reintroduction, which is a collaborative project between the National Trust and Butterfly Conservation.

The weather continued fine and so we wended our way to the site of the old lime kilns which were abandoned to nature in the 1940s. In the sheltered dip of land at last we found some insects, a Red Admiral, a Large Skipper and a spectacular yellow and black banded Ichneumon wasp. Moving on, the path took us over fern-filled pot kilns and then through Oak, Ash and Sycamore woodland, recently thinned, magically full of Enchanter's Nightshade.

We paused in front of the entrance to the 128 metre long tramway tunnel, which passes under the drive to Calke Abbey. It was built in 1802 to connect the brickyards and limeyards to the Ashby Canal at Willesley Basin, restored in the 1990s for foot passage. 'Have you got a torch?' Joan asked nervously, the sunshine usually lights the tunnel through a series of iron-grilled skylights, but today it was very dark. Then John overcame with delight at the walk, suggested a group hug to help us be brave. Everyone was horrified and quickly plunged into the tunnel!

Marion Bryce 5 July 2021



LENS at Calke 5 July 2021

Photo Credit Marion Bryce

LENS Visit to Spring Lakes

Mon Jul 20 Spring Lakes Water Sports and Leisure
Meet 4.30 in car park on Pasture Lane, postcode NG10 2FZ to see how wildlife and water sports coexist at Spring Lakes. Leader Joan Breakwell



Spring Lakes 5 July 2021

Photo Credit Tony Maggs

A visit to Long Eaton's Spring Lakes this evening with 14 other members of LENS.

A stifling hot evening with large black clouds looming. An interesting walk once we had left the popular cafe and beach area full of water sporty people having a go at paddle boarding, zip wire, swimming around the lake and canoeing etc.

A great evening for butterflies, damselflies, dragonflies and bird spotting. Ants were out in force this evening on the sandy banking with flying ants at the ready too.



Flowers seen included Great Willowherb Fleabane and Common Centaury (spotted by Helen).

The water was an unusual turquoise blue colour at the southern end, the strange colour in the water, contrasting oddly with natural greens of the Willows and Reed beds.

The area is very popular but spoiled by the amount of litter and the risk of fire, by the evidence of fires and barbecues left behind.

Fleabane at Spring Lakes 5 July 2021

Photo Credit Tony Maggs

Tony Maggs July 2021

Clive Prescott commented there is a facebook group

called Spring Lakes Wildlife and Fauna Group

Long Eaton Community Garden

Mon Aug 2 Long Eaton Community Garden
Meet 7pm at car park off Norfolk Road. Just past corner shop turn left signed Norfolk Road Park. Post code NG10 2BB. Leader Lesley Padley

A visit to the Long Eaton Community Garden this evening was enjoyed by the 16 members that came along. Some didn't even know it was there.

It's a great little asset to Long Eaton with a strong but small number of regular volunteers and used and appreciated by many other groups and people.



Pond at Long Eaton Community Garden 2 August 2021

Photo Credit Tony Maggs



Recycled Everything at Long Eaton Community Garden

2 August 2021

Photo Credit Tony Maggs

Community Garden update: There were plans for invites to new Saturday sessions and volunteer spaces available during the week. Also plans for an outdoor introduction to woodwork course were mixed into the brew. But sadly we are once again closing our gates until December as we along with everyone else in our community settle back into staying in to help the fight against the corona virus.

Erewash CVS Book-keeping Course

On February 4th 2020 I attended a Basic Book Keeping Course presented by Margaret Mowles from the Derbyshire Community Accountancy Service. It took place at the Granville Centre, a really welcoming and comfortable venue.

The audience consisted of approximately a dozen treasurers from local societies. The majority of the people seemed to be dealing with much larger amounts of money than I do, but the focus was firmly on manual recording so it was very relevant for me.

The first session was devoted to clarifying the role of the treasurer. We discussed recording systems and individual experiences with

banks. Useful handouts included a dos and don'ts list, a suggested format for a banking summary and an audit checklist.

The second session involved a practical activity recording a bank reconciliation. This involved completing income and expenditure sheets and checking these with a bank statement.

At the end of the two and a half hour session we were given a 170 page booklet entitled 'The World of Charity Accounting'. It looks quite user-friendly, but I haven't tackled it yet.

Roe Langford



Balancing the Books

Photo credit Roe Langford

Toad Rescue 2021

Mike and Susie Gent of Derbyshire Amphibian and Reptile Group organized this year's Toad Patrol at Church Wilne. The season started all of a sudden when 86 toads, frogs and one common newt were rescued. A rota was organized and Marion Bryce and Joan Breakwell of LENS took part.

Due to works at the reservoir, Wilne Lane was closed throughout but some cars still gained access. Seven weeks of anticipated migration were lost due to dry weather and more significantly

cold evenings and nights. This resulted in the migration pretty much coming to an early end.

The official patrol for 2021 ended on May 10. We were fortunate to only lose 17 toads during our collective patrolling and saved a very heart warming 377 (plus a few frogs and newts).

The results were sent to the Derbyshire and Reptile Amphibian Group for their records. If you wish to take part in next year's toad patrol contact:

Derbyshirearg.toads@gmail.com



Church Wilne
16 March 2021
Marion Bryce

Toads at Church Wilne 16 March 2021

Photo credit Marion Bryce

New Dragonflies Fly In

A County Dragonfly Recorder (CDR) is a skilled volunteer who oversees the collation, validation and verification of records for their chosen area or Vice-County. Any records entered online are sent automatically to the appropriate CDR for checking.

Chris Bradbury is the Dragonfly Recorder for Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire. He has sent information about three new species of dragonfly that have entered the county.

30 June 2020: Considering that I used to go to Cambridgeshire to see them, this is big news. Scarce Chasers

on the River Soar at Kegworth. They have appeared on even years 16-18 and now 2020. Looking across the river with binoculars I saw up to 10 males under the trees. This is the first documented record in Notts, but I am sure they have occurred in previous years.

14 July 2020: Variable Damselflies. 7 records in 2020 and 9 records this year, from Grebe Pond, Skylarks. I have a photograph report of Willow Emeralds at Compton Acres/Wilford Claypit, by the jetty - Multiple males seen. Mail@chrisbradbury.com



Scarce Chaser

Photo credit Chris Bradbury

LENS Events 2021 Wednesdays

22 September	Ken Balkow	Wildflowers of Jersey
27 October	AGM	Members Presentations and Displays
24 November	Roger Freestone	The Garden Moth Scheme
22 December	Fay Blackburn	Christmas Quiz and Social
26 Jan 2022	Tony Slater	Wildlife Photography
23 Feb 2022	Kate Lemon	Local DWT Nature Reserves
23 March 2022	Gerald Price	The Woodland Trust

Meetings start at 7.00 pm in the United Reformed Church, 26 Midland Street, Long Eaton, NG10 1HQ. Parking is across the road in the Town Hall Car Park.

Full disabled access.

Cost £1.50 for members, £2.50 for visitors. All welcome.

Committee Meeting 13 September 2021, 19 Jan 2022 at 7.00 pm

Agenda items invited.

LENS is affiliated to the North-west Naturalists Union and the British Naturalist's Association

Contact LENS

Email

Lensnaturalhistory@gmail.com

Phone

0115 8497941/07754851290

Website

<https://lensweb.wordpress.com/>

Facebook

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/lensnaturalhistory/>

Safeguarding Contact Roe Gardiner or Marion Bryce
07754851290



Longstanding LENS member Dot Banks passed away at her Sandiacre Care Home in August 2021. Dot was 94 - would have been 95 next month. She was an active member of Long Eaton Rambling club for many years, and was also a member of Sawley Historical society and a Friend of St Chads. She had a wide circle of friends, and seemed to know half Long Eaton! Very kind, caring and welcoming, and keen to support local events. She was a fan of Long Eaton Silver Prize band, and attended their concerts whenever she could.

We will all miss her.

Helen Knewstubb 5 October 2021

Membership Renewal Form

I would like to be a member of LENS Wildlife Group

Name _____

Address _____

Postcode _____

Tel no _____

Email _____

I enclose a cheque/postal order for £10.00

The annual subscription entitles members to attend meetings at £1.50 per session.

I agree/that LENS can keep my name on a database.

Please return completed form to the Hon Treasurer, Roe Langford
136 Breedon Street, Long Eaton