PNNews

Conservation Group for the Prestwood Region including Great Missenden, the Hampdens, the Kingshills, North Dean and Speen.

Issue 48
January 2019

Chair's Chat

Once again another year has been and gone and it is time to let you know what your council is planning for the next year.

At the AGM we gained two new Council members, Helen and Tim, and are looking forward to getting lots of new ideas as well as keeping them occupied with helping to run Prestwood Nature.

We have been asked to consider taking on the care of Wibner Pond on Hotley Bottom Lane. Whilst this would be a brilliant new site for us to become involved with we have to be very careful about spreading our volunteers too thinly around the area. Our experience at Sheepwash has shown how labour intensive such places can become to maintain them and how quickly the community can notice our mistakes!

Our ability to protect the quality of the local environment as stated in our Constitution is very much dependent on having enough volunteers with not only enthusiasm but also the time and skills necessary to look after the local environment.

To this end we try to involve the local community in two ways. One is the local field walks which are expanding this year to seven walks from April to October – these walks are advertised both in the press and on local radio and we hope to attract members and non-members alike.

We also run three evening talks a year with expert speakers on subjects which we hope will draw in new people as well as helping to educate local residents about the wonderful area we live in. This year we have plans to hear about Red Kites and Bats with a talk on conservation at our AGM in November. Again we use local media and web sites, as well as notice boards, to advertise our events.

So we do hope that you will find something to interest you in our programme for 2019 and don't forget to read the rest of this newsletter!

Vanessa Rickett

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Upright Coral



Common Eyelash



Dead Moll's Fingers (photo George Lewis)



Yellow Brain

Even though we had rainy days this autumn the legacy of the dry summer lingered on, resulting in many fewer fungus records than usual for this time of year - in fact we abandoned our planned fungus foray in Lodge Wood because I had only found a few scattered specimens of no more than ten very common species when I looked there a few days before. Not all the regular ones appeared and when they did, there were few of them. It took a lot of searching to find just four waxcaps out of a potential of over 20 at Holy Trinity churchyard, although they included two of the less common species, Earthy waxcap *Hygrocybe fornicata* and Cedarwood waxcap *H. russocoriacea* (which has an addictive smell). Still, there were a few surprises. One was a very large patch of Upright Coral *Ramaria stricta* on pine litter at the edge of the same churchyard at the end of September, much admired by several people whom I was able to show it. The brackets of Conifer Mazegill *Gloeophyllum sepiarium* on a neighbouring pine stump were actually much rarer, but no-one was impressed, they were rather rotten! Just a short distance down Wycombe Road someone had put down new wood chippings in a garden border and in October these produced a hundred or so bodies of Sheathed Woodtuft *Kuehneromyces mutabilis*, although I doubt the gardener was as impressed as I was.

Many fungi appeared very late. It was not until 18 November that I found a number of species on the grass verge along Clarendon Road, Prestwood, under an old oak. They included Giant Funnel *Leucopaxillus giganteus*, Blushing Wood Mushroom *Agaricus silvaticus*, and enough Wood Blewit *Lepista nuda* for me to collect a whole meal while leaving plenty to drop their spores. (This tiny spot usually produces something interesting every year.) This was a prelude to several more records - the very next day **George Lewis** saw a group of the delightfully-named Dead moll's fingers *Xylaria longipes* on a rotten log in his garden. On 12 December **Val Marshall** spotted Common Eyelash *Scutellinia scutellata* on the Broomfield Estate, Great Missenden - this fungus so named because of the stiff black hairs around the edge of its red disc. The very last record of the year was on 31 December, when I found a very fresh brightly-coloured example of Yellow Brain *Tremella mesenterica* on a twig by Nairdwood Farm.

What fungi lacked in quantity and variety this year, they at least made up for with a great sequence of exotic names!



Ivy Bee

The most fascinating event this autumn, however, was provided by bees. This was the first arrival in our area of the Ivy Bee *Colletes hederae*, which only invaded this country a few years ago (2001 in Dorset) and has been gradually moving north, reaching Pembrokeshire, Shropshire and Norfolk by 2014, so its appearance here was overdue. It was first spotted by **John and Valerie Obee** on 13 September at Prestwood Picnic Site. It has the latest season of all our bees, timed to be around when ivy flowers. The first sightings of swarms milling around close to the ground were all males, which emerge a week or so before the females. They were waiting for the females to emerge from their nesting burrows in the earth (of which there must have been hundreds in one small area), competing to grab each one first and mate with them. In fact I saw that males would often invade a burrow, presumably to mate with females before they had even left. We can now expect to see these bees regularly over the next few years, either swarming around ivy flowers along with the Hornets, or in large nesting colonies, which are usually in rather bare ground on south-facing slopes.



Pale Tussock moth caterpillar (Photo Pat Haill)

Other insect records were sparse. At the beginning of September **Val Marshall** found a Lesser Stag-beetle *Dorcus parallelipipedus* along Martinsend Lane, probably from Angling Spring Wood, where its larvae feed in dead wood. On 24 September I saw many dozens of 22-spot Ladybirds *Psyllobora 22-punctata* on a single large old tree stump - it was a warm sunny day and they must have emerged from crevices in the wood they had chosen to use as a hibernarium. The mild autumn also saw some late-flying butterflies. Small Coppers were particularly abundant and the latest was seen on the **Butterfly Transect** on 24 September. The latest of all, however, was a Red Admiral on 2 November, seen in her garden by **Christine Hoskins**. I saw the caterpillar of a Lime-speck Pug Moth on a Cat's-ear flower at Prestwood Picnic Site on 13 September, while **Pat Haill** reported a colourful Pale Tussock moth caterpillar from Denner Farm on 26 September. There was also a Dark Bush-cricket at Prestwood Picnic Site on 17 September. (On the same visit I lifted a piece of wood and found a large store of opened cherry stones - the feeding-place of a Wood Mouse.) My other insect records were small flies and moths whose larvae cause leaf-mines. I found new records of uncommon ones on Bittersweet, Snowberry, Honeysuckle, Oak and in the stems of Burdock. The mines in burdock can only be found by breaking open dead stems. The fly that causes them, *Melanogromyza lappae*, is apparently rare, but this may be because it is seldom searched for. I was alerted to it by an article in a scientific journal and found the mines in the first patch of burdock I searched (at Prestwood Picnic Site).



Evergreen Oak leaf with galls



Mystery Fern Nairdwood



Ring necked Parakeet (Bing)

A new gall has also been added to our records. It is a new one in this country (caused by a mite *Aceria ilicis*), which I first noticed on George Lewis's Evergreen Oak and subsequently found on the same plant along Prestwood High Street, so it is probably now well established here on these trees.

Some late plant records were supplied, yet again, from **Jeanette Hedley**'s garden - Many-seeded Goosefoot, Red-veined Dock, and an Evening-primrose *Oenothera cambrica*. Why all these new plants seek out Jeanette's garden is a mystery. I also noticed a large clump of fern in the roadside ditch beside Lodge Wood that did not seem familiar. It appeared to key out as Hard Shield-fern, which is a notable enough sighting anyway, but this one did not look like any specimen of that plant that I had seen. I provided a sample to the Botanical Recorder for Bucks, and he was equally mystified, so we await his further investigations. Sometimes ferns mutate into a strange forms and it was an obsession for many Victorian botanists to collect these weird specimens, so much so that much of the genetic variability in our ferns was destroyed. This may be one of these forms that has occurred naturally, or it may originate in some garden-escape that could be from anywhere in the world (although I could not match it on-line).

There were a few interesting bird records in November. **Mandy Cotton** saw 12-15 Ring-necked Parakeets in a hornbeam on Nairdwood Lane, which is probably the same crowd I have heard in Little Kingshill, while **John Obee** even had one on his bird-feeder in the same village. It seems we have an established colony in that part of our area. On the same day Mandy also saw over 120 Jackdaws in the field behind Nairdwood Lane. They seem to be getting more numerous in Prestwood, whereas I once used to see them regularly only in Great Missenden. The first sign of winter was flocks of Redwing invading right at the beginning of December, groups restlessly flying between one holly-tree and another (they have plenty of berries this year) or culling haws (as far as the Blackbirds have left any) along and around Nairdwood Lane.

Lastly, I have not received many reports of Fat Dormouse *Glis glis* recently, but they are certainly still with us - perhaps most people now find them too common to mention! I regularly see them at Prestwood Picnic Site (unfortunately). **Mr Neighbour**, who has an allotment at Greenlands Lane, told me they had also invaded the brick storehouse there and caused damage to tools etc. Their depredations seem to be episodic, but when they do cause trouble they really go to town!

Tony Marshall

Obee, Wildman and Heath up before the bench

Some of you may have spotted the new bench at Boug's meadow. These three lucky chaps have.





We were Craig's first bench of the day

I'd like to say fitting the bench was all plain sailing……..well it would have been had we got the necessary fitting kit! Fortunately we did the next day, but not before we benefitted from seeing a Bear Grylls-esque demonstration by David Wildman from Chapter One of his next book -"I've been camouflaging benches in the undergrowth at Boug's all my life". I was lucky Messrs Obee, Heath and Wildman were on hand exactly when I needed them to organise a typical Prestwood Nature cover-up.



Hiding……



Hidden!

After a day or so delay the new bench was successfully manoeuvred and fixed into position. It's in a perfect vantage spot. You'll be able to see Boug's nature at its best whilst the sun sets and the Common blue butterfly roosts on the Corncockle.

Once again we've been very fortunate to benefit from the generosity of the Co-op in Great Missenden and also the craftsmanship from Craig at the UK family-owned company Nature Sign Design. We now have a superb character oak bench for you to rest on, just in time to see the River Misbourne flow. Well at least it will be comfortable whilst you wait! Thank you to John Obee, Paul Heath and David Wildman for all your invaluable help in buying and fitting the bench. Watch this space……we also have an interpretation board for Boug's on order.



Words and Pictures
Colin Tyler

Flower Portrait 21 Weaselsnout

This plant is one of the annual species that used to be widespread in arable land, the seed stimulated to germinate by winter cold in ploughed soil that prevents the growth of permanent turf (with which such annuals cannot compete). It was seen in a garden along Broombarn Lane in 1973 but has been effectively extinct in our area for over three decades. Its traditional farmland haunt is no longer suitable because of the use of chemicals to enhance crops, but there are unsprayed field margins on some farms that could provide habitat. It may even have survived in some allotment or garden vegetable patch somewhere hidden from the eyes of anyone who might identify it and not just "weed" it out. It could easily be missed - it is a short, slender, slight plant with narrow leaves and pale pink flowers. It is in the snapdragon family and looks essentially like a minimalist version of the garden plant (another name for it is Lesser Snapdragon). Even a good colony would do no harm to whatever crops were being grown around it - they live just long enough to flower and ripen seed, then die off leaving seeds in the soil for another year. It gets its name from the seed capsules, which are slender with long hairs. It is one of the endangered plants being grown at College Lake and in Prestwood Nature's Mini-Cornfield at Greenlands Lane.

Tony Marshall



PN Butterfly Transect 2018

Weather conditions were suitable for butterflies in 21 of the 26 weeks available from 1 April to 30 September. April started with very poor weather and a very hot spell just after the beginning of May soon ended, truncating spring activity. From the beginning of June, however, we had a long hot dry spell that remained unbroken until late July. Most of August was dry and warm, but by then many butterflies had finished their life-cycles and numbers declined from there on. Transect walkers were *Virginia Deradour*, *Paul Heath*, *J Horwood*, *Howard Judge, Chris Lee*, *George Lewis*, *Sue Longman, Tony Marshall*, *John Obee*, *David Page*, *Phillip Pratt*, *Sue Reynders*, *Colin Tyler,* and *MJ Webster*. One suitable week in August was not walked due to an oversight on my part, for which I apologise. If this week had been covered the total figure would have been higher by about 100.

Overall numbers

The total of individuals seen flying was 2617, the fourth highest total since we began. The number of different species was the second highest we have had. Numbers of early species were fairly low, from a combination of a late and indifferent spring and a knock-on effect from previous years. Summer species enjoyed the long spell of hot weather, but this meant that they could get through mating and egg-laying more quickly and their flight periods were truncated, lowering frequencies in August-September. They should have produced good broods for next year and the same goes for the spring species like common blue that had large second broods, despite low numbers early on.

There were very few butterflies in April, the most common being over-wintering Peacocks, but they failed to produce much of a brood and none were seen after 9 July. In May the Whites and Orange-tip (which overwinter as pupae) predominated. Both Large and Small White produced good second broods, the former slightly below average over the year, but the latter well above, the third highest total we have had for them. Both were particularly common through July.

Common blues emerged at the beginning of June in moderate numbers (after several disappointing years) but must have got very busy, as there was a large second brood from the middle of July to late August, so that overall numbers were well above average, the third highest total of our 13-year-old transect (and it would certainly have been the second highest if I had not missed my walk in August).

The first summer species, Meadow Brown and Ringlet, began emerging in earnest after the first week of June, a very early date, so that their flight seasons were over early as well (few ringlets after 19 July, meadow browns still abundant 24 July, but declining markedly in August). Marbled whites emerged after the middle of June and, like the ringlets, were not seen after 19 July. All three species achieved higher than average totals despite their early disappearance. Last to emerge were the Gatekeepers or Hedge Browns, not until 9 July and then in rather disappointing numbers, well below average, in fact our third lowest total. Unlike the other three common "browns" they were obviously not so pleased with the hot dry conditions. Like Speckled Wood, which was also slightly below average, they prefer somewhat shady conditions.

The brightly-coloured "nymphalids" - Painted Lady, Red Admiral, Small Tortosieshell and Peacock - all had a very poor year and were not reinforced by the usual numbers of immigrants. No Clouded Yellows arrived at all.

As to our rarer species, results were mixed. All the Skippers and Small Heath were down and no Hairstreaks or Dark Green Fritillaries were seen at all. On the other hand, Small Copper and Brown Argus had a better than average year, while we picked up several Silver-washed Fritillaries when we had only ever had one in all twelve previous years, and even saw our first Purple Emperor (along Stonygreen Lane).

Year	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Individuals	3191	730	1327	2020	2263	1679	1008	2353	2812	2858	1426	2004	2617
Species	25	21	22	24	24	27	20	23	25	22	22	24	25

Numbers seen on any one walk varied from 3 (15 September) to 614 (30 June), but only seven weeks yielded over 100 (second week of June to the beginning of August).

As always, the most numerous species was Meadow Brown with 881, but it was less dominating than usual, with only a third of total numbers. If one takes that species away, the total of all other species was greater this year than it has ever been! Given the number that did not do all that well, this is quite remarkable, and due to the particularly good results for small white, common blue, marbled white and ringlet.

Year	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Meadow brown % of total	54.5%	39.6%	50.1%	37.9%	30.9%	33.9%	57.6%	34.3%	39.1%	44.7%	33.1%	50.8%	33.7%
Nos. of meadow brown	1,739	289	665	766	700	570	581	808	1,099	1,277	472	1,018	881
Nos. of other species	1,452	441	662	1,254	1,563	1,109	427	1,545	1,713	1,581	954	986	**1,736**

Differences between sections of the transect

As usual Meadsgarden Field north of the Picnic Site had by far the highest total of individuals (767) and also the highest number (17) per 100m (to allow for the different lengths of transect sections). It was closely followed in the latter respect by the other chalk grassland sites - Stonygreen Bank (16) and the Picnic Site (nearly 13) - the only sections to have more than ten butterflies per 100m averaged over all the weeks. In terms of numbers of different species, most sections did better than usual this year, perhaps because the good weather encouraged them to travel more widely and even, at times, seek the shelter of wooded areas where they are rarely seen. As usual, the highest number of species was seen at the Picnic Site (20), with Stonygreen Bank not far behind at 18. The Picnic Site was the only section where Dingy Skipper was seen. It is usually the only section for Brown Argus, but this year it turned up at Stonygreen Bank and the field on Denner Hill opposite the Picnic Site as well.

Butterfly of the Year

Each year we celebrate a butterfly that has done exceptionally well in the past year, with its best showing so far. This year there was one clear stand-out winner, and probably not one that would have been predicted. 2018 saw by far the highest number of Ringlets that we have ever had - 457 against the previous maximum of 367 in 2014.



Ringlet Butterfly

Tony Marshall

New Field Walk

Due to the success of our seasonal Hedgerow Walks aimed mainly at families with children Karen van Oostrum has kindly agreed to lead a further walk in the summer around the hedges of Prestwood. This will be a bit longer than the family ones and go further into the countryside. We don't have a date yet so please keep an eye on the monthly membership emails that Helen sends out and also the PN and PVA websites where it will also be advertised.



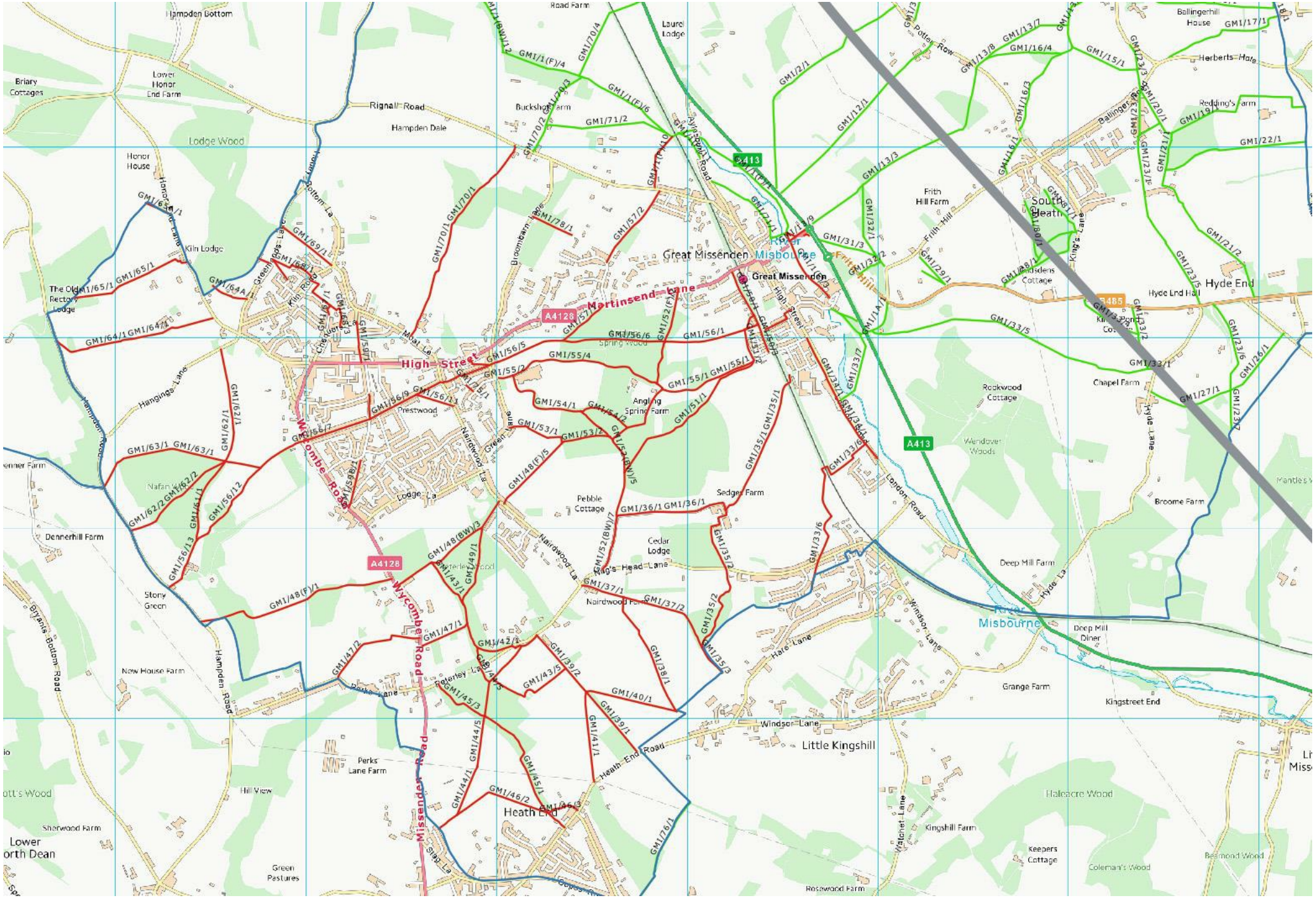
Footpaths in the Chilterns

I know that I am not the only Prestwood Nature member who takes great pleasure from walking in the local area. Not only is it beautiful with a rich diversity of flora and fauna, but there is an extensive network of public footpaths and bridleways, on the whole well maintained and signposted. Buckinghamshire is fortunate in that a footpath shown on a map is almost always easy to find - recent experiences in Yorkshire and Shropshire prove to me that it is not always so elsewhere in England.

Footpaths do not maintain themselves however, and perhaps there is a lack of general awareness of the Chiltern Society's role in this. As a Prestwood Nature representative, I have recently become the Chiltern Society path monitor for some 35 kms of footpaths as shown on the [attached] map - broadly the area west of central Great Missenden extending across to Hampden Road, north up to Rignall Road and south to the edges of Great Kingshill. If you come across any problems on these paths- such as fallen trees, broken stiles or missing signs- do please feel free to contact me by phone or (preferably) text on 07818 407670 or by email at christopherjlee@hotmail.com. I will then take a look, and ensure that the message is passed on to the proper authority.

More generally, see https://chilternsociety.org.uk/report-a-path-problem/ for how to report path problems in the Chilterns. Chiltern Society has a number of Area Secretaries - we are in Area Chiltern 3C - to whom problems can be reported. For anything more urgent, e.g. if you believe there to be a safety hazard, you can report direct to Buckinghamshire County Council at http://transportforbucks.net/report-it-prow.aspx. The attached footpath map shows the Great Missenden area, managed by the Chiltern Society.

Chris Lee


Hampden Bottom
Briary Cottages
Lower Honor End Farm
Rignall Road
Hampden Dale
Lodge Wood
Honor House
Kiln Lodge
The Old Rectory Lodge
Bottom La
Green Lodge La
Kiln Road
Broomfarm Lane
Buckshorn Farm
Road Farm
Laurel Lodge
Great Missenden
Great Missenden Misbourne
Martinsend Lane
A4128
High Street
Wycombe Road
Missenden Road
Hangings Lane
Prestwood
Nairdwood Lane
Lodge La
Pebble Cottage
Sedge Farm
Cedar Lodge
Nag's Head Lane
Nairdwood
Angling Spring Farm
Spring Wood
Dennerhill Farm
Nafan
Story Green
Butlers Bottom Road
New House Farm
Hampden Road
Peterley La
Perks Lane
Perks Lane Farm
Hill View
Sherwood Farm
Lower orth Dean
Green Pastures
Shag La
Heath End
Heath End Road
Little Kingshill
Windsor Lane
Hare Lane
Kingshill Farm
Keepers Cottage
Rosewood Farm
Halfacre Wood
Coleman's Wood
Beamond Wood
Grange Farm
Kingstreet End
Deep Mill Farm
Deep Mill Diner
Hyde La
Hyde End
Hyde End Hall
Chapel Farm
Rookwood Cottage
Wendover Woods
Broome Farm
London Road
A413
A355
Frith Hill
Frith Hill Farm
South Heath
Kings Lane
Ballingerhill House
Herberts Hate
Redding's Farm
Potter Row
Ballinger Rd
Hyde Lane
Windsor Lane
Mantles W
Li Misse
Bryants Bottom Road
Wycombe Road
Missenden Road
Hampden Road
Honor Bottom La
Hangings Lane
Nairdwood La
Green Lane
Kiln Road
Bottom La
Broomfarm Lane
Frith Hill
Kings Lane
Hyde Lane
Windsor Lane
Hare Lane
Heath End Road
Nag's Head Lane
Nairdwood La
Peterley La
Perks Lane
Lodge

On the Grid

I never realised I cared. Nature does that to you…..then Prestwood Nature gives you that chance to care for it.

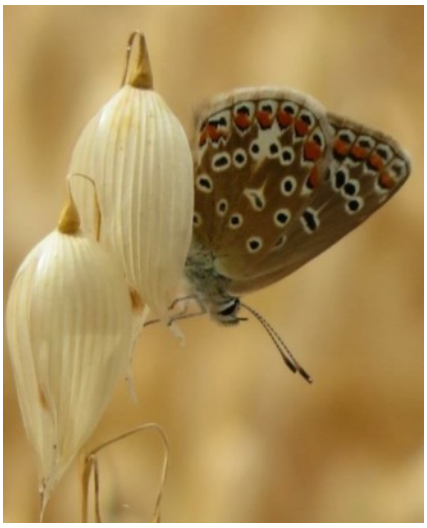
As camera technology has advanced I've found myself seeking out that unusual shot of a bee, bird or butterfly. Tony Marshall's excellent waxcap talk in 2017 also now means that I can't walk past a fungus without taking a snap. Largely of course this is to aid identification although increasingly I confess it is difficult to shake off the competitive instinct which childhood "I spy" books instil in you. This year I set myself a personal test. Could I successfully identify our British butterflies and then see a fluttering of them on our local patch? After all with only 55 or so species it couldn't be that difficult. What a novice! Well I've made a start.

Armed with faint memories of childhood, my recently purchased FSC butterfly's identification chart and a couple of UK butterfly books, I thought I had it sorted. I joined Prestwood Nature, and became a member of the Butterfly Conservation Society. I then made two offers of voluntary support. The first was to become one of Prestwood Nature's butterfly transect walkers.

Rashly, I also agreed to become a "10k square" butterfly champion for the Butterfly Conservation society. My 10-kilometre square patch is the OS grid reference "SP90", which stretches from St. Peter and St. Paul's church in Great Missenden in its lower left-hand corner to Berkhamsted in the opposite corner. Looking back on it, if I'd realised 10k is 6.25 miles squared or 24,700 acres in old money, I may well have baulked at taking on the challenge. I'm glad I persevered. The role of the 10k champion is to visit, in the butterfly season, those areas where there have been fewer than expected species recorded. My recordings help populate the UK Butterfly atlas which is produced every 5 years. Basically, my role is as a sweeper. Anyone can record butterfly sightings, and please do. If you want to help in 2019, formally or informally please let me know. Prestwood Nature's butterfly transect also makes it into the Butterfly atlas.

This year I visited 21 tetrads (2-kilometre grid squares) and recorded c.1700 butterflies. This helped raise the average species count from about 10 species per tetrad to nearer 15. It might sound impressive, but not when you consider I deliberately didn't visit the BBOWT Dancer's End nature reserve tetrad which already has 31 recorded species.

So, in preparation, last February I undertook Butterfly Conservation's excellent free one day transect walk training. Nick Bowles and his team gave me the confidence, discipline and identification skills and tips needed to view and correctly record the butterflies seen. It also reminded me how little I really knew. This training was further supplemented by Sylvia Bennet's excellent instructions which are given to all prospective PN butterfly transect walkers and of course John Obee's practical tips and insights.



Common Blue on Oats
(Section 3 of PN Butterfly Transect)





Silver-washed Fritillary in Wendover woods-top and underwing marking

So what have I learnt in my first season?

My top five tips:

The *first lesson* is that everything has its season. For butterflies it may be just a few weeks. Learn what they are.

The *second lesson* is don't back a wrong'un by wasting your time looking in the wrong places (or at the wrong time, or in the wrong weather conditions). Butterflies don't waste their time and energy, after all they have precious little of it. Windy or wet forget it.

Thirdly, bone up beforehand about what food plants particular butterflies prefer. You'll often correctly spot the plant first, then with patience, you'll be rewarded with a sight of the matching butterfly.

Fourthly look both high and low. Some butterflies love the tree canopy, rarely coming down to ground level. Some butterflies rarely get more than 2 metres off the ground.

I'm not sure what to choose for my *fifth* tip. It could be always take a camera - any camera you have is the better than none - or perhaps make sure you have a good butterfly identification chart to hand. I think the camera has it. You can always check the finer identification details later.

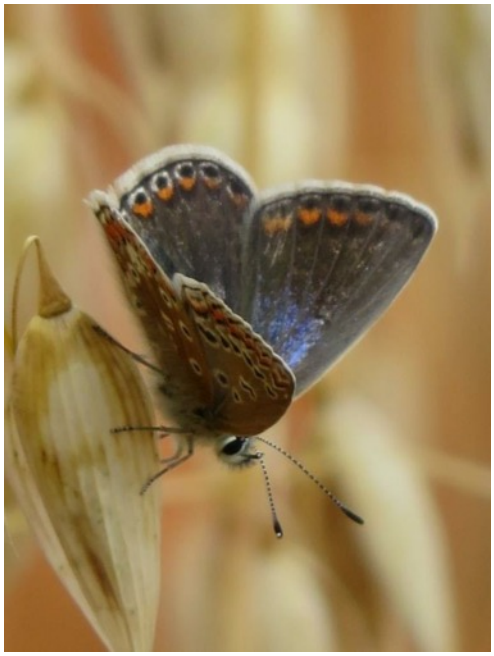
Well it was a good first year for me. I spotted my first ever Purple Hairstreak, enjoying aphid sap on oak leaves at tee box 3 at Lee Common golf club. It briefly came down from the oak into bramble, and I got the photos - poor but identifiable. It looked grey in flight.

I was also thrilled to see a dozen Silver-Washed Fritillary across three locations near the TV mast in Wendover Woods (the one near Great Missenden). Wild clematis and bramble were both in flower and loved by all. I also spotted Brown Argus (not to be confused by the female Common Blue) on the field margins throughout SP90. They are also regularly seen on the PN butterfly transect.

I've included a few of my butterfly photos from the 2018 season. (*Look out for more with i.d tips in future editions)*

Finally, I'll leave you with my second ditty of the year as a reminder if you want to see plenty of butterflies in 2019.

Bramble out,
Get out
Ramble about



Female Common blue with iridescent blue marking, not seen on the Brown Argus. In short if you see blue on the upper wing…… it's not a Brown Argus.



Green-veined White

Words and Photos
Colin Tyler



Small Skipper (brown antennae tips)



Essex Skipper (black antennae tips)

Queens Award for Voluntary Service



Sir Henry Aubrey Fletcher and John Obee 2010

It gave me enormous pleasure to present John and Valerie Obee with the award at the AGM and I thought it might be useful to explain the history of the trophy.

Way back in 2010 Prestwood Nature received the Queen's Award for Voluntary Service. The citation said that it was *for providing public education in environmental issues as well as restoring ponds, conserving grasslands and restoring cultural heritage in the Prestwood area.* We have continued to do so ever since.

As part of the award the High Sheriff of Buckinghamshire, Sir Henry Aubrey-Fletcher, presented a royally signed certificate together with a rather nice glass obelisk to our chairman John Obee.

This gave us a problem as Prestwood Nature does not have an office in which to display the award so the Council made the decision that each year we would ask a member to care for the ornament and certificate in recognition of the contribution that they had made to the society.



John and Valerie Obee with Vanessa Rickett 2018

For 2019 it was decided unanimously that John and Valerie Obee should have care of the award for their effort at Boug's Meadow transforming it from an overgrown field into a wildlife sanctuary. Work parties at the Meadow have been fuelled in their efforts by Valerie's constant supply of flapjack for which she has become well-known. John is also often seen volunteering on our other sites and Valerie is part of our skilled catering team.

Previous holders of the award are:

2010 John Obee, 2011 Tony and Val Marshall, 2012 Sue Devlin, 2013 George Lewis, 2014 David Page, 2015 Hilary and Keith Tyrrell, 2016 Frank Rickett, 2017 Tina Hillas, 2018 David Wildman.

Vanessa Rickett

From the Membership Secretary

Hello!

My name is Helen Matthews and I am your new membership secretary. I am Buckinghamshire born and bred and have lived in Prestwood for 28 years. Although I have been a member of Prestwood Nature since the beginning, I have so far not been very active, apart from sponsoring some trees in the Kiln Common Orchard. Hopefully that will change this year and I will meet more of you, though I have a busy day job as a university administrator at UCL.

A reminder that membership renewals are now due. Please complete the membership form, which you can find online at https://prestwoodnature.org/membership.html and return it to me with payment.

There are 3 easy ways to make payment:-

1. We prefer it if you can send £8 by bank transfer to the Prestwood Nature account at Lloyds, Sort Code 30-91-91, Account 00909028. Please put your full name in as the reference and let me know by emailing membership@prestwoodnature.org .
2. If this doesn't work for you, send your completed membership form with a cheque for £8 made out to Prestwood Nature to Helen Matthews, 17 Peters Close, Prestwood, Great Missenden, Bucks 1P16 9ET.
3. If all else fails, bring your form and £8 in cash to me at the above address.

Thank you in advance for your prompt renewal. It's only 2p per day for the whole family! Where else will you get this value and support nature and conservation at the same time?

Council Member Profiles Meet Colin Tyler

Like many of my generation growing up was spent largely outdoors. Climbing trees, playing football in the road, or cricket at the village club, and even running through cornfields! Nature was just there, all around you, it seemed nothing special. That all pretty much ended when I left school, went to Uni where I met my wife Hazel. Along the way I've been a milk and tuckshop monitor, a paperboy, landscape gardener and "tarmac-er", got my gliding pilot wings aged 16 (but now don't like heights), been the CCF cadet in charge, a vintage steam fair gate admissions assistant, a golf caddy, a turkey-plucker, a plastic nurdle producer, a barman, a restaurant waiter, an electrician's mate, a catering assistant, an inherited metabolic disease research assistant, an auditor, a chartered accountant, a school governor (twice), a qualified treasurer, a finance director, a football league coach and chairman (we were thrown out of the league after 3 games), a mentor, and chief executive. Finally, I help recycle wood as a volunteer with Chiltern Wood recycling in High Wycombe.



During the past year, after retiring, I've had a few firsts. I'm a novice photographer, built my first hibernaculum and scythe peening horse and I've also written and had published one poem (thanks to Prestwood Nature) and am part way through my first sculpture (thanks to Sue Hammond's classes). Ever tried mud-larking on the Thames or walking a butterfly transect with Prestwood Nature? I have - its great fun. I've also become the Butterfly conservation society's "10K" champion for the 10 kilometre grid square "SP90" stretching from Great Missenden parish church in one corner to Berkhamsted in the opposite corner and taken on the Treasurer role at Prestwood Nature. To cap it all this year I've even seen a Purple Emperor in our Prestwood garden and an Emperor Dragonfly at Boug's meadow where I occasionally help out.

I've loved it all….except the turkey plucking. My New Year's resolution for 2019 is to start to make Prestwood the most hedgehog friendly village in the Chilterns. So if you don't think you have the relevant hedgehog experience join me…..I don't either.

PN Council and Contacts 2018

Council members 2019	Phone	Email	**Project**
Chris Jolly	865017	jolly916@btinternet.com	Newsletter Distribution
Colin Tyler	NA	treasurer@prestwoodnature.org	Treasurer
Helen Matthews		membership@prestwoodnature.org	Membership Secretary
Jenny Smith	866426	admin@prestwoodnature.org	Secretary
Julie Hopton	07931575371	juliehopton421@btinternet.com	Family Activities /Talks
Ross McVean	890229	ross871@hotmail.co.uk	
Tim Pye			Events Coordinator
Val Marshall	864251	newsletter@prestwoodnature.org.	Hedges Trees/Newsletter editor
Vanessa Rickett	866516	chair@prestwoodnature.org	Chair /Kiln Common Orchard
Other contacts			
David Page	863176	pageshouse@aol.com	PNNews printer
Fiona Waller	862686	fionacwaller@gmail.com	Sheepwash pond
Karen van Oostrum	07910684339	karenjvano@outlook.com	Family walks
Philip Pratt	523869	highbeeches1@yahoo.co.uk	PN reserve/Chiltern Society
Sylvia Bennett	866302	sylvia@mrbennett.co.uk	Butterfly Transect
Tina Hillas	NA	admin@prestwoodnature.org	Pollinator Friendly Garden
Tony Marshall	864251	records@prestwoodnature.org.	Surveys/Wildlife records



Pollinator garden in Spring

Dates for your Diary

February 2019		Contact for info
24 Sunday Work party 10:00am -12 noon	Kiln Common orchard Greenlands Lane	*Chair@prestwoodnature.org*
26 Tuesday Talk 7:30-9:30pm Red kites a talk by Cathy Rose	Damien Hall, Link Rd Car Park Great Missenden HP16 9AA	*Chair@prestwoodnature.org*
April 2019		
6 Saturday Pollinator Friendly Garden 10am -12 noon	General tidying and preparation	*Contact Tina Hillas for more info at admin@prestwoodnature.org*
7 Sunday 9.30 to 11.30 Spring Bird Walk	Led by John Obee. Meet at the Crown at Little Missenden HP7 ORD	*Contact John Obee 0149 865 564*
28 Sunday Spring Hedgerow Walk 2-4.00pm	Led by Karen van Oostrum from Prestwood Village Hall Wycombe Rd. HP16 0NZ	*karenjvano@outlook.com for more info*
May		
11 Saturday Pollinator Friendly Garden 10am -12 noon	General tidying and preparation	*Contact Tina Hillas for more info at admin@prestwoodnature.org*
June		
18 Tuesday PN Talk 7:30-9:30 Bats by Bridget Parslow	Great Kingshill Village Hall, Missenden Road, Great Kingshill HP15 6DW	*Chair@prestwoodnature.org*

Further walks may be arranged in June to see Flowers (Tony Marshall) and Hedgerows (Karen van Oostrum)
Dates and venues to be arranged – watch your emails
Information: Karen van Oostrum karenjvano.outlook.com Tony Marshall ecorocker@gmail.com



Boug's Meadow December 2018