

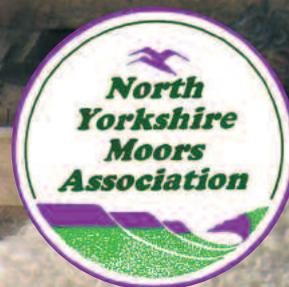
VOICE OF THE MOORS

THE MAGAZINE OF THE NORTH YORKSHIRE MOORS ASSOCIATION (NYMA)

ISSUE 115

SPRING 2014

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COLTSFOOT & BUTTERBUR

COLTSFOOT (*Tussilago farfara*) and **Butterbur** (*Petasites hybridus*) are two of our earliest spring flowers, closely related, in the family *Asteraceae*, and sharing the characteristic of their flowers appearing well before their leaves giving them the old name '*filius ante patrem*' or 'son before father'. The related winter heliotrope (*P. fragrans*), a garden escapee, though flowering at a similar time has both flowers and leaves and is sweetly scented.

COLTSFOOT

Coltsfoot is the more widespread and better known and recognised. It is perennial and is fairly common on any bare, open and sparsely vegetated ground on a variety of soils from clay to sand; on roadsides, waste places, stream banks, cliffs, woodland edges, landslips, shingle banks, dunes and railway embankments. It is a pioneer, coloniser and stabiliser with its network of long underground stems, needing the sunshine and avoiding competition.

From these underground stems many reddish scaly stems arise from February to April, topped by solitary yellow, composite, dandelion-like flowers, with strap-like spreading ray florets. These mature into downy heads of seeds with a feathery pappus, which are wind dispersed. It is only then that the leaves start appearing. These are round to heart shaped, shallowly lobed and toothed, white and woolly at first with the upper surfaces becoming smooth and a lighter green as they mature. Due to this difference in the time of appearance of flowers and leaves, it was once thought to be two separate species.



Photo: Nan Sykes

WHAT'S IN A NAME?

The name coltsfoot or horsefoot or assfoot refers to the leaf shape while the Latin *tussilago* is from *tussis* a cough and *agere* to drive away, relating to its age old use as a cough medicine. *Farfara*, meaning floury, describes the appearance of the underside of the leaf.

CULINARY & MEDICINAL USES

Although the young coltsfoot leaves and the flowers can be eaten in salads or fried in batter and have been used as an animal fodder, it is for their use in medicinal preparations that they are most useful and well known. The flowers and leaves can be made into tea, syrup, candy or rock as a remedy for all bronchial complaints, coughs, including whooping cough, asthma, sore throats, laryngitis, bronchitis etc., the true cough dispeller. It loosens and helps expel mucus from the lungs and throat while soothing, protecting and healing the mucus membranes. Surprisingly the leaves were also smoked as a cure for asthma, dry coughs and chronic bronchitis and may have had an antihistamine action. They were the main ingredient of herbal tobacco.

However, the leaves contain small traces of the same alkaloid as comfrey and it may not be wise to use the herb for long periods of time. The leaves can also be used as a poultice, usually pounded with honey, for inflammations, ulcers, rashes and swellings or as a facial lotion for boils, acne, spots and puffiness.

Scorched and dried leaves have been recommended as a salt substitute, while together with the leaves of nettle, dandelion and hops they have been used to make a beer, 'cleats'. The yellow flowers make a good early wine while the pappus of the seeds was used to stuff pillows and mattresses, goldfinches still using them to line their nests! The woolly undersides of the leaves were scraped to collect a 'felt' that was soaked in saltpetre and used in tinderboxes before the advent of matches. A truly useful plant.

BUTTERBUR

Butterbur is less commonly encountered, but where it does grow, it forms very large patches, shading out other vegetation. Like coltsfoot, it spreads by long thick underground stems and is usually found in damp places, marshy meadows and wet road and by the sides of streams. It is a perennial but unlike coltsfoot is dioecious, the male and female flowers being on separate plants, the female being much rarer. The pink to red composite flowers appear from March to May and are borne on stout, hollow stems in dense terminal spikes of around fifty individual flowers, followed by the typical 'clock' seed head on any female flowers. The huge heart shaped, toothed leaves appear after the flowers and can grow up to one metre across. They have a white felty down when young though this soon disappears but gives it its Latin name *petasites* from the

Greek '*petasos*', a sunshade or broad brimmed felt shepherds' hat. They are certainly large enough to be used as a emergency rain or sun hat and were used as a cool wrap for butter before the availability of greaseproof paper or polythene, giving the plant bits common name.

MEDICINAL USES

The butterbur has not been recorded as positively or consistently as a food or medicine as coltsfoot, but in the past the rhizome has been recommended for a wide range of complaints. It is reputed to have antispasmodic and astringent properties, is anti-inflammatory, antihistamine and pain relieving, being used as a poultice for leprosy, plague sores, deep ulcers, sprains, swollen joints and to reduce the bleeding in swollen veins. Internally it was used for menstrual and migraine pains, stomach upsets and hay fever, as a heart stimulant and diuretic for fevers and urinary problems as well as for killing intestinal worms. These varied treatments have all been mentioned in older herbals while the use of butterbur to alleviate medical conditions such as hay fever and migraine has been investigated more recently.

HARBINGERS OF SPRING

Coltsfoot and Butterbur, two plants that welcome us into spring, often overlooked except where growing in profusion on cliffs or river banks, taking the chance to catch the early sunshine to flower before their dense leaves cover the ground to prevent other plants from growing where they have colonised but at the same time providing bees with a welcome early feast. ♦

Anne Press



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**'Voice of the Moors'
Design & Production**

Basement Press
The Old Parsonage, Glaisdale,
Whitby, North Yorks YO21 2PL
Tel. 01947 897945
www.basementpress.com

Printed by

Camphill Press
www.camphillpress.co.uk

Articles appearing in Voice of the Moors convey the authors' personal views, beliefs and opinions and are not necessarily those of the North Yorkshire Moors Association.

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Notice of the
North Yorkshire Moors Association
2014
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
AGM will commence at 2pm on
Saturday 14 June, Danby Lodge Moors Centre

Guest Speaker, Ruth Chambers. Topic - Threatened Landscapes
Ruth Chambers served as Deputy Chief Executive for the Campaign for National Parks (CNP) and Public Policy Specialist with wide experience of working with public bodies and charities including Royal Society of Wildlife Trusts; RSPB; Natural England; The Ramblers Association; National Parks, England and Wales.

A short walk has been arranged, starting from the Centre at 11am to Tilley's Ten for commemorative tree-planting and returning at c. 12.30pm.
All welcome!
Lunch can be taken at the Woolly Cafe

Front Cover: New-born lambs with mother at North End Farm, Danby Head
Back Cover: The Curlew returns to the Moors

www.north-yorkshire-moors.org.uk

DEREK STATHAM, NYMA PRESIDENT

SADLY, DEREK DIED ON January 13th and we have lost a pillar of support for both our Association and the National Park. Derek's wide experience both as a planning officer and as the first North York Moors National Park Officer for almost 30 years make him irreplaceable. For a fuller account of Derek's achievements and involvement with NYMA see the tribute to Derek on page ?.

PLANNING REFORMS

In 2013 the government put forward a proposal to remove the requirement for planning permission for Barn Conversions; in other words to extend permitted development to include barn conversions for up to three residential dwellings. While barn conversions are common practice both inside and outside National Parks, planning permission has rightly been in place to ensure that such conversions are in keeping with the historic features and characteristics of traditional buildings, which are such an important part of rural heritage. This is especially the case in areas like the Yorkshire Dales where isolated field barns are such a distinctive feature of the Dales landscape. The Campaign for National Parks supported by National Park Societies including NYMA, campaigned for National Parks and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs) to be excluded from these proposed planning changes. At the beginning of March the Parliamentary under Secretary of State for Planning announced that,

"We recognise the importance to the public of safeguarding environmentally protected areas, so this change of use will not apply in Article 1(5) land, for example national parks or areas of outstanding natural beauty".

This is very good news because, as the CNP emphasised in a press release, it demonstrates that the government is standing by its commitment to protect National Parks.

YORK POTASH LTD PLANNING PROPOSALS

The saga of the polyhalite mining proposals continues into a second year. On January 10th 2014 the company formally withdrew the planning application it had submitted a year ago and at the same time reached agreement over a new Planning Performance Agreement (PPA) with the National Park. York Potash also said in February that it would be extending the boundary of a new planning application to be submitted in July 2014 to include an area outside of the National Park. This would have resulted in the application becoming a straddling application meaning that the application would also have to be submitted to the County Council (NYCC). No reasons were given for this change to include an area which was not part of the previous application.

NYMA have known for some time that York Potash was considering an alternative method of transporting the polyhalite to Teesside by an underground conveyor belt. There has always been some doubt as to the viability of transporting polyhalite as slurry in saturated brine by pipeline and we have always regarded this, in the absence of any full scale pilot scheme, as an industrial scale experiment. It was not entirely a surprise therefore when York Potash announced that it was abandoning the slurry pipeline and proposing instead an underground conveyor system as its preferred mineral transport system (MTS).

There are not many details available about this new system which seems to have been sprung on to the National Park with little prior notice. It was not included in the planning meeting update for members of the planning committee held on the 20th February, but announced at a briefing meeting for all the relevant local authorities in Leeds five days later. This was followed by a public announcement the following day. York Potash also announced that they will no longer be including an area outside of the National Park in the mine head application and this will not now be shared with the NYCC as a straddling application.

The new system will, it seems, be a conveyor belt in an underground tunnel 20ft in diameter and up to 1000ft below the surface. It will be 24 miles long. We are told it will roughly follow the line of the proposed pipeline, although there are clearly potential problems around Lingdale area where there is previous abandoned mine workings from the ironstone industry. Access will require an additional mine shaft down to 1000ft at the Doves Nest Farm mine head site. (ie in addition to the two deep 1700m shafts). Three other mine shafts will be required along the route of the conveyor including another mine shaft in the National Park somewhere around 7.5 km from the mine head site which would locate it around Selly Hill.

The company has claimed that this will reduce the environmental impact but there remain serious questions about this, given that there will be two additional mine shafts in the National Park with surface facilities and a colossal amount of spoil. At the moment the figure suggested is about 1.3 million cubic metres in addition to a similar amount from the deep shafts at the mine head site. In view of the gross underestimate of the spoil at Doves Nest Farm last time round we will have to wait to see what the final figures show. As usual there are more questions than answers at this stage. The company has said that it will submit a refurbished version of the old planning application for the minehead site in July 2014 and a separate application for the new mineral transport system in November 2014. It is difficult to see how the whole project can be properly assessed without examining the two proposals together because they are really inseparable parts of one project.◆

Tom Chadwick NYMA Chairman

DEREK STATHAM 1937-2014 NYMA PRESIDENT 2000-2014

DEREK'S DEATH on January 13th marked the end of an era for both the North York Moors National Park and for the North Yorkshire Moors Association. His involvement with the National Park spanned a period of nearly 50 years and during this time almost 30 years were spent "in the driving seat" a comment he makes in his memoir "An Eye to Perceive". Derek was appointed to the post of National Park Senior Planning Officer in 1965 before becoming the first North York Moors National Park Officer in 1974. In this role he supervised the acquisition of the National Park Headquarters at the Old Vicarage in Helmsley and the establishment of the National Park centres at Sutton Bank and at Danby Lodge. These were the formative years of the Park, which saw the transition from a department of the County Council to a largely independent National Park. Full independence was finally achieved through the 1995 Environment Act, the year after Derek retired. This story unfolds in his memoir "An Eye to Perceive" which was published by the Association in 2010.

The foreword of the book was written by Adrian Philips who was Director General of the Countryside Commission from 1981 to 1992. He has this to say about the national conscience that the Commission sought to bring to its relationship with the Parks.

"It is good to be able to recall now, nearly 20 years later, that I found Derek Statham someone who was always ready to listen to that message from the Commission. I had great respect for him then and, having read this honest and illuminating account of his time at the helm, I have even greater admiration for his achievements now"

When he retired in 1994 Derek was already connected to NYMA. This had followed an informal meeting with Don Tilley back in 1983 at the annual meeting of the Park's voluntary ranger service. In February the following year a meeting took place of the group who became known as "The Gang of Four", Don Tilley, Gerald McGuire, Peter Walker and Derek. It was as a result of that meeting that NYMA was formed but it was not until he retired that Derek was able to give his time to the Association when he became secretary of NYMA in 1995.

It was also at this time Derek made his first contribution to "Voice of the Moors" initially writing two articles about traffic management in the Park in the spring issue of 1995. Moorland Diary by Sundew appeared for the first time in the 1995 autumn edition. Derek continued to write his Moorland Diary under the name of Sundew in all but two issues of "Voice" until the autumn issue in 2013, a period of 18 years and 72 articles. Derek gathered together his Sundew articles in 2012 in a book published by the Association called "Moors Diary 1995-2012 A Time of Change".

Dame Fiona Reynolds who was Director General of the National Trust between 2001 and 2012 and Secretary of the Council for National Parks from 1980 to 1987 wrote the foreword.

"As he writes, his passion for the landscape, its people and idiosyncrasies, and for finding the right solutions in the face of extraordinary challenges, never flags. While these essays chart the story of the North York Moors National Park, we



Photo: NYM/NPA

with protecting beautiful, cultural landscapes and enabling people to enjoy them would face. These are powerful, enduring purposes – and ones that should guide us, as they have Derek's writing, for the future"

Derek was a champion for National Parks in general and the North York Moors National Park in particular for nearly 50 years and within that time he was a pillar of support and wise counsel for NYMA for over 20 years.

At the end of his memoir "An Eye to Perceive" he leaves us with this message;

"The conclusion I draw is that there is and remains a great need for those of us in the CNP and the Park societies, who love the wildness of the Parks, to make our voice heard in government both nationally and locally, and perhaps, even more importantly, in our schools and universities".

Derek will be greatly missed by all of us at NYMA and by a wider network of people associated with National Parks who share the same passion and commitment he had for our wild and beautiful landscapes. ♦

THE LIFE OF LEWIS (LOUIS) HUNTON 1814–1838

THE GEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

In 1836, the honourable members of the Geological Society gathered at their headquarters in London to hear the reading of a scientific paper submitted to the Society by a twenty-two year old man from Loftus, East Cleveland. This scientific treatise (on biostratigraphy - a term not yet then invented) had the long and rather ponderous title of:

'Remarks on a section of the Upper Lias and Marlstone of Yorkshire, showing the limited vertical range of the species of Ammonites, and other Testacea, with their value as Geological Tests.'

The author of the paper was a young man called Lewis Hunton (He was later to adopt the French spelling of Louis for his forename), the son of William Hunton, who was manager and agent of the Loftus Alum Works (also known as Lofthouse and Lingberry Alum Works). One could say alum ran in the family's blood: Lewis's grandfather, William Hunton Senior, had also worked for much of his life at the alum works. The epitaph on the gravestone of Lewis's grandfather in the churchyard at Loftus is inscribed with the words:

'Erected to the memory of William Hunton late Alum maker of Loftus Works who departed this life January 25, 1809 aged 48 years; whose example for honour and industry was wholly worthy of imitation. In gratitude to his memory his son [Lewis Hunton's father] caused this stone to be erected.'

THE ALUM INDUSTRY

The alum works was in operation for over two hundred years from the 1650s to the 1860s. Alum is a complex double salt of aluminium sulphate and ammonia or potassium sulphate. It has a chemical formula of $K, Na, Al(SO_4)_2, 12H_2O$. It is processed as large crystals and then finally crushed to a fine white powder to produce the finished product. The processing and production of alum was one of the first major industrial operations in the country. Alum was greatly valued as an effective mordant or fixative in the cloth dyeing industry and the brightly coloured and colour-fast materials that alum made possible demanded premium prices. Alum also had many other uses such as in the preservation of leather, in the paper manufacturing process, and for hardening quill pen nibs. It continues to have numerous uses today some of which are as a flocculant for water purification, in deodorants and aftershave lotions, as an ingredient in baking powder, and as a fireproofing agent for treating materials.

In the Hunton family's time, the alum works was owned by the Earl of Zetland, a rich aristocrat whose seat was at Aske Hall, Richmond in North Yorkshire. He owned extensive landed estates in East Cleveland and properties in the Redcar and Marske area, including Marske Hall (now a Leonard Cheshire Home). The oldest existing lifeboat in the world is named after Zetland and is housed at Redcar.

HUMMERSEA HOUSE, LOFTUS

Lewis Hunton was born in 1814 at Hummersea House, a stone-built property that still stands today in an exposed position high on the coastal cliff tops to the north of Loftus (the house is now the home of the folk singer and songwriter, Vin Garbutt). Hunton was

baptised on 6 August that year at St Leonard's Parish Church, Loftus. In the graveyard at the church can be found a commemorative stone to Lewis (he died in France and is buried there), along with the gravestones of other members of the Hunton family. Unfortunately the inscriptions are now almost indecipherable due to erosion from the elements.

Little is known about his childhood or his early formal education although it is known that in 1833 at the age of nineteen he was a part-time student at the King's College, London where the eminent geologist, Charles Lyell lectured. It is not known, however, whether Hunton studied under him. In 1835, he is also known to have studied comparative anatomy, fossil zoology, and natural philosophy for one year at University College, London. His tutor at UCL, Dr Robert Edmond Grant, was an early controversial advocate of natural evolution of the animal world and his teachings may have influenced the young scholar's thinking, although this is supposition.

AMMONITES & OTHER FOSSILS

It is most probable that as a young boy, Lewis Hunton would have had unrestricted access to the alum shale quarries that were under his father's control and therefore he would have the opportunity to explore the exposed strata that contained the fossils that fired his imagination and in which he became so interested. In particular, he would have discovered the various ammonites that were to become such an important feature of his scientific paper. These animals evolved quickly and consequently the shape and structure of the fossils they left behind indicate relatively rapid change through successive layers (strata) of rock thus enabling each species to be used to identify quite narrow bands of rock accurately. When describing in his paper the Upper Lias and Marlstone he had examined, Hunton drew attention to the limited vertical range of many species, and remarked:

'But of all organic remains, the Ammonites afford the most beautiful illustration of strata, for they appear to have been the least able, of all the Lias genera, to conform to change of external circumstances.'

From his meticulous close study of the various fossils deposits, and especially those of ammonites, he deduced that they could be used as a reliable indicator of each different and distinct layer of the rock strata no matter where they appeared. The technique of using fossil remains to accurately identify various strata was not Hunton's original idea, but had, in general terms, been proposed a few years earlier by the famous geologist William Smith. However, it was Lewis Hunton who brought rigour to the theory and in his scientific paper of 1836 he made two specific statements that were of crucial importance and have had a profound impact on the branch of geology that has become known as biostratigraphy. These statements were:

'... the position of no one species was fixed till after several had been extracted from . . . this section, as well as in various different localities from the Alum Hills fronting the Vale of Thirsk, to the Peak [Ravenscar] near Whitby . . . '

'... one great source of error has hitherto been the collecting of specimens from the debris of the whole

NORTH YORK MOORS HARVEST MOUSE SURVEY

WITH ASSOCIATED OBSERVATIONS

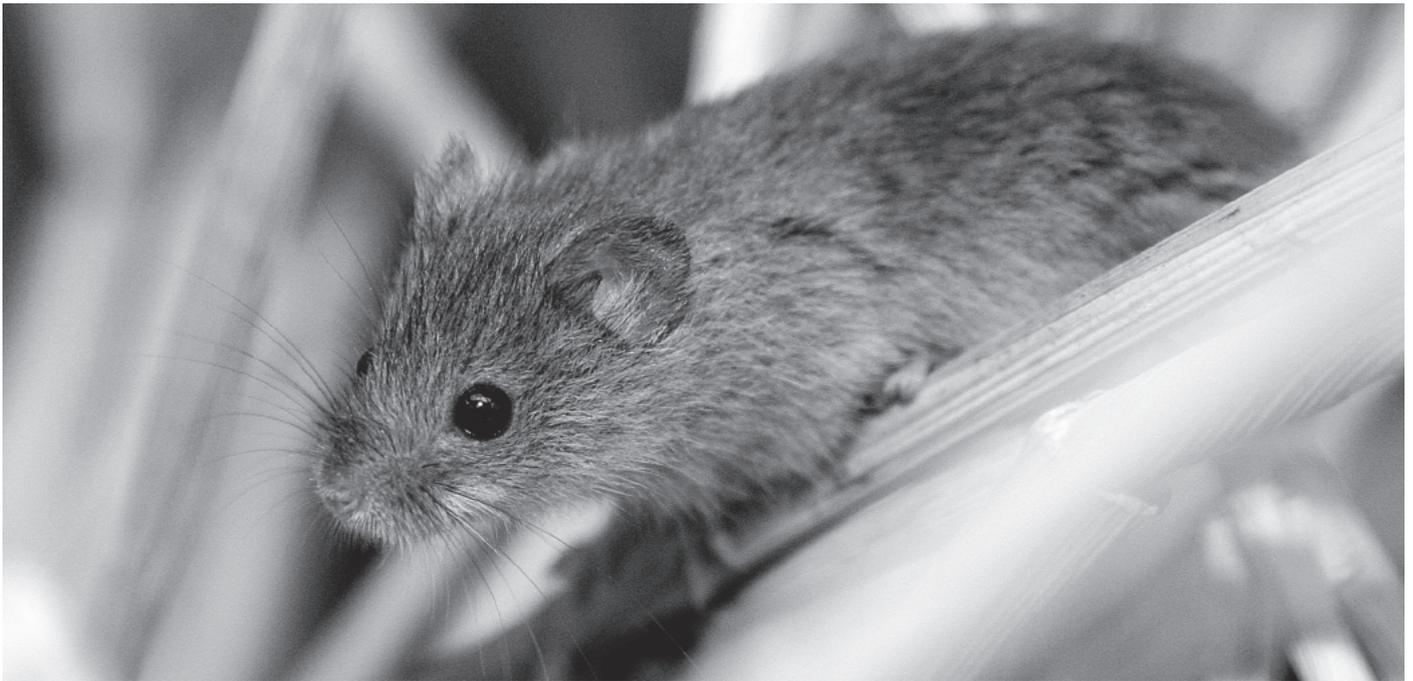


Photo: NYM/NPA

MAMMAL FORUM

At a meeting of the North York Moors Mammal Forum in February 2013, I volunteered (rather foolishly perhaps) to try and shed a little more light on the current distribution of the Harvest Mouse (*Micromys minutus*) within the North York Moors National Park. Having come across evidence of harvest mice over the years while analysing owl pellets, this seemed to me as good a method as any, because harvest mice spend a high proportion of their time above ground level and therefore they seldom turn up in Longworth traps. Anyway, these tiny creatures are not really heavy enough to trip the trap door mechanism. Furthermore, owls have far better eyesight and a lot more skill and time than I have to search for the mice or their nests in the long grass. Once the owls have consumed the mice and the prey's remains have passed through the owl's system, I can then collect the owl pellets for study and analyse them during the long winter evenings, which is marginally more exciting than watching television.

My first record of evidence of harvest mice within the National Park boundary was in 2008 at Little Ayton, although there had been several occurrences from Great Ayton and the surrounding area before then. Fortunately, I have contact with some licensed bird ringers and they have been most helpful in collecting owl pellets for analysis while going about their bird-ringing activities. Most of the pellets have been from barn owls, but others have included long-eared and short-eared owls, kestrel, hobby and buzzard.

POOR BREEDING SEASON

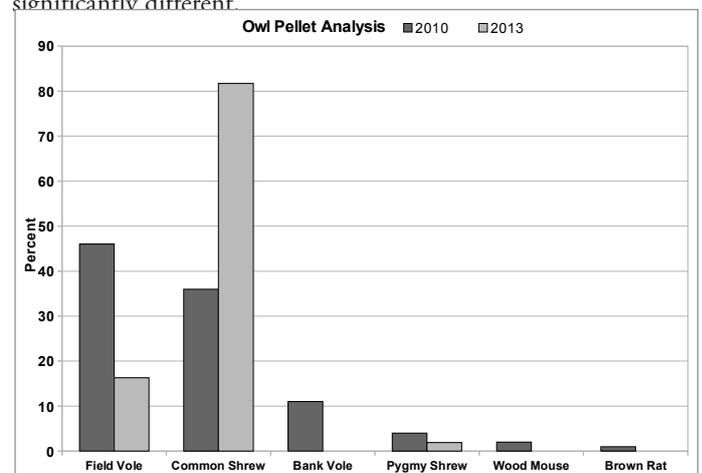
A major problem has been that many owls had a poor breeding season in 2013. At some local sites where owls have bred regularly over previous years, they have not even attempted it this year. I encountered a nest box in October in which there were 6 eggs but they were cold and there was no sign of the adult birds. Needing to prepare the box for the coming season, I sought advice from the British Trust for Ornithology on whether to remove the eggs in case their presence would be a deterrent, and if I did, would I be

committing a criminal offence? The person I spoke to told me that unfortunately this situation was fairly common this year nationally, and in fact quite a lot of owls had died due to starvation. He recommended removing the eggs and destroying them to render them un-collectable (collecting wild birds eggs is illegal). On doing so, it was clear that the eggs had been abandoned at an early stage, as there was no obvious development within the shells.

ANALYSIS OF PELLETS

I had previously analysed a sample of 25 pellets from this same box 3 years earlier (2010) and found the composition as shown in the graph.

However, when in 2013 I did an analysis of 20 pellets taken from the same box, the comparative results as seen in the graph were significantly different.



The earlier sample (2010) was not untypical, although the common shrew content was a little higher than normal. However, the more recent sample (2013) contained little more than a third

of the earlier field vole content, when 50 – 70% would normally represent the principal prey of the barn owl. The latter sample indicated a heavily depleted population of field voles and indicated a significantly impoverished diet. The substitution of increased numbers of the common shrews in the diet would provide only limited compensation because of the greater energy requirement due to the necessity for an increased number of foraging flights, not all of which would be successful.

FIELD VOLES

Field vole populations do fluctuate over time, and whether 2013 was one of these lows of the cycle is not known for certain. However, it may be recalled that 2012 was an exceptionally wet summer and many field voles and their young were likely to have perished in the waterlogged conditions. The population was probably quite low going into the winter of 2012/13. With usual winter mortality, a cold late spring and owls commencing to breed early in the year, it should not be surprising that many encountered a very difficult start to the 2013 season.

SURVEY AREAS

Geographically, the results of the harvest mouse survey to date have been largely confined to areas close to Great Ayton, the Esk Valley near Egton and Egton Bridge, Castleton, Ugthorpe and Sneaton

Low Moor. So far, batches of differing quantities of pellets (1-87) have been taken from 16 sites. Five of these sites have yielded positive signs of harvest mouse presence :- 1 at Little Ayton (2009), 3 at Chop Gate (2009), 2 at Castleton (precise date unknown, but since 2006), 1 at Egton Bridge (2013), and 5 at Sneaton Low Moor (2013).

HELP REQUIRED

You don't need to study a map to realise that I have barely scratched the surface, but it is a huge area to cover. All the south and west areas of the National Park are yet to be investigated.

To enable me to spread the survey net a little wider, I would be grateful to anyone who can provide owl (or other raptor) pellets, or information and contacts with people who have owl boxes or know of roosts, which may lead me to further pellet sources. Priority would be given to avoiding disturbance to the birds by only removing any pellets from the nest outside the breeding season. A copy of the results would be made available to donors.

Less challenging, but nevertheless obviously very welcome, would be any records of sightings of actual harvest mice in the North York Moors area.◆

Derek Capes.

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THE HARVEST MOUSE

The Field Mouse is a handsome, well-bred gallant, The Dormouse a soft, comfy, round-eyed ball; but for the dainty grace of Dresden china, give me the Harvest Mouse.

It is an unkind fate which makes him, of all our mice, the least likely to be encountered. Not that he is more nocturnal, for he loves the sunshine; not that he is inconspicuous, for he is white and orange; not that he is shy, for, like most small things, he is pushful. The secret may be summed up shortly: the Harvest Mouse is inaccessible.

Those who would see him often must either take up quarters in a corn-stack, or roam at large among the growing crops, both of which schemes are inconvenient.

From How to Know the Wild Animals by Douglas English



TRIBUTE

DR ELIZABETH COLBOURN

IT IS WITH SADNESS we report the recent death of Dr Elizabeth (Liz) Colbourn. Liz, who was a Canadian by birth, died in February, 2014. Liz lived at Great Busby near Stokesley for 25 years. She was a great lover of the moorland area lying on her doorstep. On weekends she would often take the Moorbus and spend days out walking the local moors and dales with friends. She also helped set up a walking group for Stokesley U3A (University of the Third Age) and passed on her enthusiasm and love for the moors to many other friends and colleagues. Liz was a staunch supporter and active member of NYMA for many years serving on the Council and taking on the role of Membership Secretary from 2000 to 2003.

Liz's ancestors emigrated from the East Riding of Yorkshire to Canada where she was born. After taking a degree in chemistry she



came back to England to study at Oxford where she gained her PhD. She then went on to work at ICI, Teesside, a career move that brought her to Great Busby where she made her home, eventually leaving the chemical company to start up two companies in computer software modelling. Her academic work in the world of IT and computer software was recognised internationally. She was also instrumental in setting up the first website for NYMA. However, despite her academic and business achievements, Dr Colbourn was a most modest woman and liked to be known by everyone simply as Liz. She had many interests, including stained glass, but foremost was her love of walking on the moorland areas that linked her to her family's past. She will be sadly missed.◆

REMEMBERING ALFRED WAINWRIGHT (AW) FELLWALKER EXTRAORDINAIRE

WAINWRIGHT on the transience of life and the eternal hills:

“The fleeting hour of life of those who love the hills is quickly spent, but the hills are eternal. Always there will be the lonely ridge, the dancing beck, the silent forest; always there will be the exhilaration of the summits. These are there for the seeking, and those who seek and find them while there is still time will be blessed in mind and body.”

from A Pictorial Guide to the Western Fells (book 7).

Also among his other forty or so books, and in similar style to the Lakeland fell series, is the first pocket guide to the Coast to Coast Walk, a 192-mile long-distance footpath devised, delineated and described by Wainwright in his own inimitable style. The C to C route begins at St Bees on the west coast of England and finishes at Robin Hood’s Bay on the Yorkshire coast – an overland crossing of northern England from the Irish Sea to the North Sea. The route includes a traverse, west to east, over the northern part of our own lovely area, the North York Moors National Park, from Ingleby Cross to RH’s Bay. In his preamble to this, the final easterly section of his walk, Wainwright wrote admiringly:

“The broad expanse of moorland extending for 30 miles from the Vale of Mowbray to the east coast, heather-clad, unenclosed, uninhabited, remote from industry and noise and free from traffic, is a magnificent territory for the walker: open country like the Pennines and the Cheviots yet more handsome and more colourful – and friendlier by far. It is a wilderness crossed by few roads but many ancient tracks, a plateau high above the valleys yet of sleek and rounded slopes and easy gradients, where one can wander tirelessly all day and enjoy freedom complete; an elevated desert neither arid nor sterile but abounding in interest and beauty . . .”

from A Coast To Coast Walk – A Pictorial Guide (page 123)

Alfred Wainwright MBE (1907 – 1991), affectionately known as AW to his friends and army of admirers, was a pioneering and intrepid fell walker, guidebook author, writer, artist and illustrator. His unique seven-volume Pictorial Guide to the Lakeland Fells, published over the eleven-year period 1955 – 1966, are books made up entirely of faithful facsimiles of his precise pen and ink drawings, detailed maps, and distinctive handwritten text. It has become the standard reference work for all those interested in walking the 214 fells of the English Lake District that this invaluable guide covers.

However, this series of small pocket books is much more than just a set of walking guides – it is a miniature work of art meticulously created by a man who so obviously understood and deeply loved his subject matter. It is Wainwright’s heart-felt rhapsodic homage to what he considered an accessible earthly paradise for himself and any other like-minded walkers and outdoor enthusiasts seeking beauty, peace and tranquillity; it is an area in Cumbria he continuously studied and was on intimate terms with for most of his life, a place he loved and cherished above all others. Although a relatively minor summit, Haystacks (1958 feet) at the south-eastern end of



Alfred Wainwright

“. . . for beauty, variety and interesting detail, the sheer fascination and unique individuality, the summit area of Haystacks is supreme. This in fact is the best fell-top of all.”

Praise indeed. He so loved Haystacks that he made known his wish that this spot should be his final summit. He writes in Volume 7, The Western Fells:

“All I ask for, at the end, is a last resting place by the side of Innominate Tarn on Haystacks, where the water gently laps the gravelly shore and the purple heather blooms and Pillar and Gable keep unfailing watch: a quiet place, a lonely place. I shall go to it, for the last time, and be carried there: someone who knew me in life will take me and empty me out of a little box and leave me there alone.”

He was granted his posthumous wish; his wife Betty scattered his ashes there on Haystacks, not far from the shoreline of Innominate Tarn, just as he had requested. He also added with typical gentle and whimsical Wainwright humour:

“And if you, dear reader, should get a little bit of grit in your boot as you are crossing Haystacks in years to come, please treat it with respect. It might be me.”

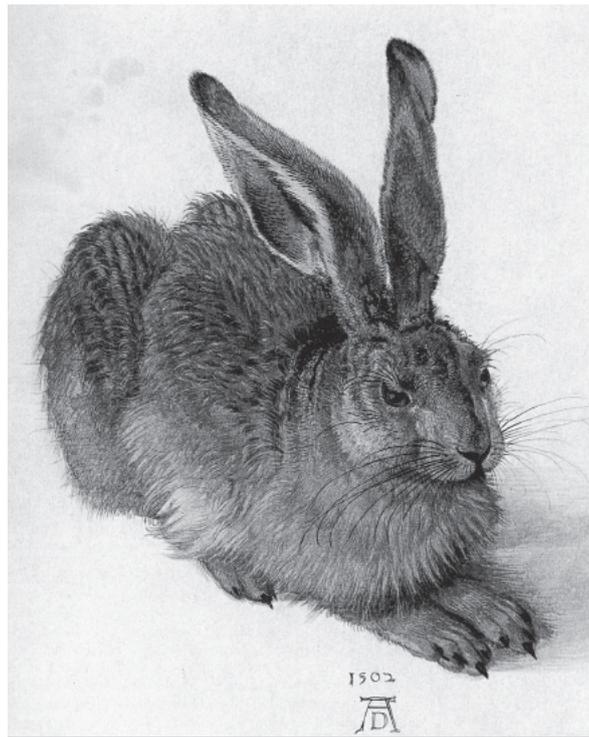
From *Memoirs of a Fellwalker* (1990)

THE HARE (*Lepus europaeus*)

THE EUROPEAN BROWN HARE, with its distinctive long and powerful hind legs, huge paws and large ears, is one of the fastest land animals in the UK. It has been recorded running at speeds of over 40 mph. Like many wild animals, hares have an acute sense of hearing and smell and are normally very shy and easily startled. They use their phenomenal fleetness of foot, and remarkable ability to suddenly change direction in a zigzag fashion when at full pelt, to escape from predators. Their speed and athleticism



Hare, pastel by Hilary Walker



Young Hare by Albrecht Dürer, 1502

enables them to out-manoeuvre and outrun predators, such as foxes or hunting dogs. Large birds of prey may also try to attack hares, particularly if they, the hares, are old, infirm or injured. Only the fastest of land animals, for example greyhounds, can equal or better the speed of hares, but the hare's acrobatic manoeuvrability gives it the edge over most of its predators.

MAD MARCH HARE

Although the brown hare is normally a very shy and timid animal, it appears to change its character and behaviour in springtime (particularly during the month of March) when it is not uncommon to see in broad daylight, the normally wary and elusive hares, frantically chasing one another around in open meadows and fields, sometimes oblivious to onlookers. The reason for this bizarre display is said to be the strategy of the male animals trying to achieve dominance and thereby gain access to more breeding females. During this spring frenzy of the mating season, hares can also be seen standing erect on their hind legs and aggressively 'boxing' in an attempt to strike other hares with its forepaws. It is most probably from this erratic behaviour that the expression 'mad as a March hare' originates. This 'display of madness' was once thought to be by the male of the species when competing with other hares in an attempt to gain dominance. However, following closer study it has been revealed that it is more often the female hares striking or 'punching' males in order to repel their advances and prevent them from mating with them. The hares' libido is legendary.

YOUNG HARES

Hares are solitary animals and do not live in social groups or construct communal burrows underground as do their close cousins, the rabbits, but make their lone nests in what is nothing more than a shallow hollow or open depression just below the surface of the land known as a 'form'. Here the young (called a

litter or kindle) are born and are therefore relatively exposed to greater danger by the openness of their situation. To compensate for this vulnerability young hares are born fully-furred and with their eyes open (precocial). Because of this the baby hares or kits are able to fend for themselves soon after birth, unlike rabbits, which are born virtually helpless and blind with no fur and eyes closed (altricial). Up to one year old, young hares are called leverets. The male and female are called buck and doe respectively. There are numerous collective nouns or nouns of assemblage for a group of hares: drove, herd, mute, down, husk, leash, flick, trip, trace, and even warren.

LORE & LEGEND

Being in many ways such a mysterious and magical animal, it is not surprising that there is a wealth of lore and legend traditionally associated with the hare. Myths and stories exist in most countries and cultures across the world. In African folk tales, the hare is portrayed as a wily trickster. During the days of slavery, black Africans forcibly transported in bondage to America carried with them these oral folk tales and some sociologists now believe that these stories, brought from the 'dark continent' to the New World, were the basis and origin of the tales of Brer Rabbit that are still extant today.

In Britain, the hare is linked with the Anglo-Saxon goddess Ēostre or Ostara. The Venerable Bede (672/673[?] – 735) mentions this female pagan deity in his writings. In her various forms she is a spring-like fertility goddess associated with dawn and is usually depicted with a hare as one of her attendant animals, a symbol of fecundity. Her pagan attributes were appropriated by the Christian tradition and transmuted into the Easter Bunny. The mystical hare is an animal that also features in many English, Scottish, Irish, and Welsh folk tales and traditional songs, such as The Bonnie Black Hare and the White Hare of Creggan, and is



The Anglo-Saxon goddess Eostre



The Symbol of the Three Hares

often associated with witches. In the case of the Bonnie Black Hare song, the lyric is used euphemistically to tell a story of sexual activity. The allusions are thinly disguised and once again the hare is chosen because of the animal's great fertility, libido, and legendary promiscuity.

THE THREE HARES

The circular symbol of the three hares chasing each others tails is an ancient motif found at sacred sites world-wide from the Middle and Far East, on historical synagogues in Europe, as well as on British churches, especially those in the south-west of England. The symbol features three running hares (or rabbits) chasing each other in a circle in a clock-wise direction. The symbol has a three-fold rotational symmetry and although in total only three ears are depicted, because of the clever design, it appears that each of the three hares has its allotted two ears, a sort of optical illusion. It has been used as a riddle in Germany where the graphic motif is described thus:

*Three hares sharing only three ears
Yet every one of them has two.*

HARES & WITCHES

The hare utters an eerie, torturous, and almost human-like distress cry, which is very disconcerting and alarming to those who hear it. As well as black cats being closely associated with witches, so is the hare. People believed that witches could by their potent magic change bodily ('skin-turn' or 'shape-shift') and metamorphose into the form of a hare. They would then scurry out at night on a mischievous rampage stealing milk or food, making cattle lame or

ill, destroying or blighting crops, and committing other evil misdemeanours. Many thought the hare an omen of bad luck and were therefore best avoided. A hare crossing in front of someone's path, especially when the person is astride a horse, was thought to be a sure portent of disaster and caused much dread and worry to those who experienced it. Though conversely, the slightly macabre custom of having a hare or rabbit's foot as a talisman on one's person was believed to bestow good fortune on the carrier. There is little consistency or logic to be found in superstitions.

There are many tales from folklore and song with the theme of a hare that is shot in the leg and wounded but still manages to flee from its assailant. The hunter and his dogs follow the wounded hare by tracking the tell-tale trail of blood. Finally the injured hare is seen limping into a cottage where it is known that a very old and reclusive woman lives. When the hunter enters the cottage the hare is nowhere to be seen but only the old woman who is groaning and nursing a fresh gunshot wound to her leg. It was also said that a hare could only be shot and killed by using a silver sixpenny bit as a bullet.

THE HARE IN THE MOON

The hare (or rabbit) has long been associated with the moon. Many people believe if you stare at a full moon you do not see the man-in-the-moon but an image of a hare. Many ancient cultures, including Chinese, Indian, Japanese, Mexican, and Native American, see a hare in the patterning of the dark patches on the surface of a full moon and hold this image as sacred. In Chinese mythology particularly, the animal is seen pounding a mortar and pestle and producing the Elixir of Life, again alluding to the great fertility of the hare.

So next time you are out and about on a clear night with a full moon, see if you can see an image of the mystical hare looking down on you from up above. ♦

WHITBY ESK ENERGY UPDATE SPRING 2014

GENERATION IN 2013

During 2013 we exported 76,000 kWh of electricity to the National Grid. This was less than the average we would expect due to waiting for a replacement part in February and the exceptionally dry summer. With all the recent rain, we have been generating nearly continuously since the start of this year.

VISITING THE SITE

We now have an interpretation board in place on site and also a new hatch so that visitors to site can see the Archimedes screw turning whilst we are generating. Thank you to North Yorkshire County Council for funding these. If you would like to arrange for a group to visit site please get in touch by email or phone 0741 0549 833.

WORKING WITH TEESSIDE UNIVERSITY

We are delighted to be working with Jessica Watson, a 3rd year undergraduate civil engineering student from Teesside University. As part of her degree she is developing a mathematical model of the turbine.

PEER MENTORING

Kate Gilmartin, of My Green Investment CIC, has successfully applied for funding from the Cabinet Office Centre for Social Action to run a peer mentoring project for community hydro groups. Esk Energy (Yorkshire) Limited has been a member of the Community Hydro Forum since it started. Kate has asked Esk Energy to help mentor other community hydro groups based on the experience we have gained from the Whitby Esk Energy project.



The funding will support the further development of the community hydro forum, the running of four sessions for community hydro groups and the sharing of the lessons learnt and knowledge gained by the Esk Energy team. ♦

EVENTS 2014

THE ESK VALLEY WALK – SUMMER 2014

A SMALL INFORMAL GROUP of NYMA members under the leadership of Beryl Turner and Elaine Wisdom are planning to hike The Esk Valley Walk route in short stages throughout the summer of 2014 and hope that other members will join them. If your friends wish to join us on these walks they are welcome, but we would suggest they join NYMA: the annual subscription is only £15 and they will receive 4 issues of the Association's magazine, Voice of the Moors, and their membership will help support the work of NYMA in protecting and enhancing the characteristic beauty and culture of our moorland areas (which includes the Esk Valley Walk route).

You can join via Paypal or by application form. Please find details of how to join on NYMA's website:

www.north-yorkshire-moors.org.uk

The EVW is a glorious walk starting at Castleton, then following the River Esk from high on Westerdale Moor to the sea at Whitby, in all about 38 miles spread over six days – see below. The NYMNP's guide book for the EVW is currently out of print but for those interested it is available as a free pdf download at:

<http://northyorkmoors.org.uk/visiting/walking/long-distance-walks>

PROPOSED WALK DATES AND STAGES:

Saturday 24 May

Castleton to Lion Inn, Blakey - 6 miles

Saturday 28 June

Lion Inn via Esklets to Westerdale - 7 miles

Saturday 19 July

Westerdale via Castleton to Danby Moors centre – 7 miles

Saturday in *August

Danby Moors Centre to Lealholm – 5 miles

Saturday in *Sept.

Lealholm via Glaisdale & Egton Bridge to Grosmont – 6 mile

Saturday in *October

Grosmont via Sleights & Ruswarp to Whitby – 7 mile

*NB Saturday dates for August, September and October to be announced later.

HEALTH & SAFETY: Please note that safety is of paramount importance and those walkers participating would be expected to act responsibly and ensure they have appropriate outdoor clothing and footwear suitable for the weather and terrain. The walk involves rough moorland tracks with hilly terrain. Sorry, no dogs allowed.

Please email Beryl Turner (Walk Leader) if you would like to join the walk and so that you can receive confirmation and further details of meeting/starting places, times, and transport arrangements etc. Beryl's contact details are:

Email: berylturner3@gmail.com – Telephone: 01642 714479

CROSSWORD ANSWERS

Across: 1 cobnut 4 Canada 9 angle 10 airport 11 exposed 13 bunk 14 bell-heather 17 Isis (name of river Thames at Oxford) 18 debated 21 bonjour 22 un-dug 24 desist 25 ushers **Down:** 1 craven 2 bog 3 users 5 acrobat (tumbler) 6 adornment 7 alto 8 band-leaders 12 pheasants 15 lessons 16 adages 19 blues 20 abed 23 Dec (Scottish river)



A GIFT OF THE MOORS

Have you friends who are lovers of the moors and dales of Northeast Yorkshire? Are you pondering what you could give them as a suitable gift for birthdays, or other special occasions?

Give them membership of the **North Yorkshire Moors Association**. Membership of **NYMA** would make an ideal gift for anyone who loves the moors and dales of Northeast Yorkshire.

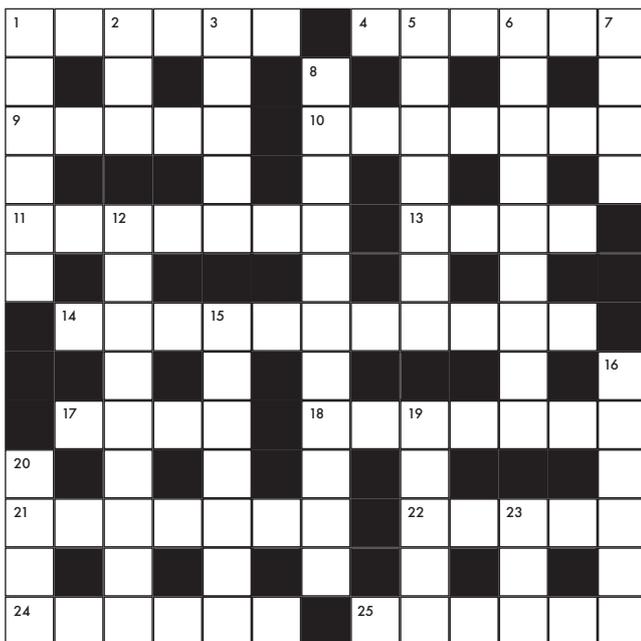
By giving gift membership you are also helping to protect this special area by supporting the ongoing work of NYMA whose aim is to ensure the moors remain a place of beauty, peace and tranquillity for all to enjoy – a very precious gift indeed!

Visit NYMA website for membership application and payment details:

www.north-yorkshire-moors.org.uk

CROSSWORD

CRYPTIC CROSSWORD No 64 BY AMANUENSIS



ANSWERS ON PAGE 13

ACROSS:

- 1 Hazel offers this to you in autumn (6)
- 4 A big country able to take her on (6)
- 9 Fallen angel measured by degrees (5)
- 10 Landing place at prior arrangement (7)
- 11 Old girlfriend sat for artist naked (7)
- 13 Rubbish place to lie on (4)
- 14 Bloomer on the moors (4-7)
- 17 This runner changes name on leaving Oxford (4)
- 18 Formally discussed posh young woman consumed by five hundred (7)
- 21 A good day in France (7)
- 22 No spadework involved perhaps? (2-3)
- 24 Stop the heart of rude sister (6)
- 25 They guide you to your place of rest (6)

DOWN:

- 1 Cowardly one hundred followed by black bird (6)
- 2 Quagmire is false without us (3)
- 3 Strange ruses of employers (5)
- 5 Can come tumbling down (7)
- 6 A thing of beauty? One would expect so (9)
- 7 Makes a lot of the highest adult male voice (4)
- 8 Musicians who could also be head of the outlaws? (4-7)
- 12 Heats pans cooking game birds (9)
- 15 They should be learned (7)
- 16 Sayings from a little publicity takes a long time (6)
- 19 The colours of sadness? (5)
- 20 Gone to rest? (4)
- 23 Flower of Scotland (3)



MOTHS & BUTTERFLIES IN WINTER

Lepidoptery, the study of moths and butterflies, is in general looked upon as a pursuit and pastime of the warmer months of the year. However, moths are very adaptable creatures and some species have evolved to be on the wing as adults in mid-winter. When you think about it, the advantages of such an evolutionary strategy are quite obvious: the adult moths have only a very short lifespan and so there is no need to feed, instead they can concentrate on breeding and reproduction. Under the cover of darkness of long nights they are less likely to be preyed upon by birds. Also bird numbers are well down compared to summer levels. Bats are also on no concern as during the winter months they are hibernating and inactive awaiting the warmer nights of spring.

ANTI-FREEZE

The obvious disadvantage of being active in the winter is the cold weather. Most moths, indeed most insects, need a minimum of 12 degrees centigrade atmospheric temperature before becoming active. However, the aptly named Winter Moth (*Operophtera brunatta*) has cleverly developed a kind of anti-freeze in its blood that enables it to combat and survive low temperatures. It is this species of moth that is often seen in car headlights despite the thermometer showing zero degrees. Not surprisingly most of these winter species inhabit woodland and thick hedges where they seek out some shelter and protection from the elements.

WINGLESS

Probably the most extraordinary evolutionary development of several of these winter moths is that the females do not have wings. Remarkably, they hatch out and then crawl up the trees, releasing

pheromones to attract a mate. The male moths are already active and flit about the trees searching for the females. If successful in their search, mating takes place and in time the females will lay their eggs nearby. The big disadvantage of this behaviour is its sedentary nature. Due to the female having no wings and therefore confined to a relatively limited area, she lays her eggs in the same vicinity as that where she herself was hatched. It has recently been discovered that to compensate, the small caterpillars crawl higher up into the branches of the trees and dangle themselves from a very fine thread of silk. Here they await a stiff breeze to blow them from the tree and carry them away 'airborne' to a different place nearby thus allowing them to colonise a new area, rather like that done by money spiders. Not surprisingly most other moth species find it far less complicated to mate and complete their life cycle during the warmer summer months.

EARLY SIGHTING

This year on the 16 February, the sun had shone for a few hours and I was delighted to have sight of a Peacock butterfly on the wing in a Glaisdale garden. This is by far the earliest I have ever recorded a butterfly. Peacock and Small Tortoiseshell butterflies are well known for over-wintering in sheltered places and emerging in warmer, sunny spells in early spring. While re-roofing a pantiled roof in Whitby in February this year, I rescued four Small Tortoiseshell butterflies that I discovered clinging to the underside of the tiles I'd removed. It makes one wonder how many hundreds, or even thousands, of other butterflies are hiding away safely in nooks and crannies all across small towns like Whitby patiently awaiting the arrival of spring and the warm days of summer so that they can take to the wing. ♦

Hawkmoth



An Early Moth



Peacock Butterfly



THE CURLEWS' CALL

Today I trudged over naked moor
And heard the curlews call.
They showered their
Archaic babble down
By ling and dry-stone wall.

I thrilled to hear their ancient cries,
A joyous, eerie sound,
Come tumbling
Like a benison,
On me, beneath, earthbound.

My spirits soared, I felt reborn,
To hear those wild birds sing.
It fevered me
With humble hope,
To live another Spring.

Of all the sounds that fill my world
There's none makes my heart stir,
As the curlews' whaup,
On wide, wild moor,
When springtime's in the air.

Ainsley