

# VOICE OF THE MOORS

THE MAGAZINE OF THE NORTH YORKSHIRE MOORS ASSOCIATION (NYMA)

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# MEADOWSWEET

**A**S THE WONDERFUL white froth of cow parsley or Queen Anne's lace (*Anthriscus sylvestris*) fades from our hedgerows, another species is preparing to take its place in the damper roadsides and ditches with its own creamy, fragrant, spectacular display – meadowsweet or *Filipendula ulmaria*. This is a perennial member of the *Rosaceae* family, flowering from late June to September and spreading over wide patches in sheltered, damp areas on less acidic soils such as wet meadow flushes, road and track sides and damp woods; an integral part of the English summer.

The roots are blackish red and aromatic, spreading in tangles to colonise large areas. The leaves are 5-7 pinnate with larger irregularly toothed leaflets alternating with minute ones, the terminal leaflet being three lobed. They are pale green and wrinkled at first but age to a darker green on top and grey green below, on stout red stems. The small five-petalled flowers, with conspicuous stamens, are white/cream and massed in frothy upright clusters on stiff stems and have been likened to whipped cream or candy-floss, the whole plant being about a metre tall. But it is the smell that is so attractive about the plant, the flowers having been described as having a scent of almonds, of spicy vanilla or marzipan with a hint of honey. Some people find it cloying and overpowering if in great volume but it improves on drying and bees and insects certainly love it. The leaves have a totally different smell, likened to carbolic, oil of wintergreen or pickled cucumber, a very 'green' scent.

The Latin name *Filipendula* means 'hanging by a thread', presumably for the delicate flowers, while *ulmaria* means a leaf like the elm tree, though only the early wrinkling and the jaggedness would seem appropriate. *Ulmaria* was one of the early common names for meadowsweet. Being a common, well-known and used flower it has numerous local names; meadowsweet, lady/maid/may of the meadows, meadow queen, queen of the meadows, sweet hay. But despite all the references to meadows, it is thought that these names actually derived from its use from the 15<sup>th</sup> century as flavouring for mead. The names bittersweet and 'courtship and matrimony' compare the sweet fragrance of the flowers with the sharp one of the leaves, while bridewort refers to its use in summer bridal bouquets.

In Gaelic it was known as 'the belt of Cuchulainn', as this legendary Celtic hero used it to soothe the pain of shingles round his waist and to calm his headaches, fevers and fits of rage. It was sacred to the druids and known as a treatment for malaria and other fevers rife in those times.

With its wonderful fragrance that lasts on drying, it was used as one of the main strewing herbs in the middle ages, reputed to be

Queen Elizabeth 1 favourite. It was said to delight the senses without causing headaches or tainting the food, the clean, 'antiseptic' smell of the leaves when crushed being appreciated as well as the flowers, a perfect combination. We can still utilise this scent by using it in bouquets, drying the flowers to use in muslin bags amongst linen and clothes or in potpourris to scent the home. The flowers make a soothing skin lotion or herbal bath rub while distilled flower water can be used for inflamed, tired and itchy eyes.

In the kitchen, the flowers can be substituted in any recipe using elderflowers, in jams, drinks, stewed fruit and confectionary to give an aromatic, almond flavour. As mentioned, it has long had an association with mead, and was later used for wine and beers while in Estonia an aromatic cordial 'angervaksajook' is made. The leaves can be used in soups and salads to give a fresh, 'green' flavour.

But it is its medicinal properties that give the plant its place in history. It had long been known as an antidote to agues (malaria), fevers and headaches, used by the druids and mentioned by Chaucer and in all the early herbals but the real breakthrough came in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. Both willow and meadowsweet were known pain relievers but it was research on meadowsweet that led to the identification of its salicylate salts content and the subsequent synthesis of acetylsalicylic acid by Bayer in 1899 and the patenting and manufacture of 'aspirin', the name being based on the old latin name for meadowsweet, *Spiraea ulmaria*.

However, unlike aspirin which can upset the stomach and sometimes cause heartburn and ulcers, meadowsweet is balanced with other substances that soothe and heal; tannins, flavanoids, mucilages and

essential oils, that lower acid levels, are anti-septic, anti-inflammatory and diuretic as well as relieving pain. The mild astringency of the flowers has been used to treat diarrhoea in children and to promote perspiration in fevers, while the pain relieving and anti-inflammatory properties of the whole plant treat headaches, feverish colds, and flu, the diuretic and antiseptic properties help urinary tract infections, the anti-acid, muscle soothing and healing agents aid stomach and digestive problems while the anti-acid, painkilling and anti-inflammatory actions give relief for any joint pains, gout, rheumatism arthritis etc. It is one of the most useful herbal plants due to the combination of the chemicals it contains, a true herbal aspirin but without the side effects!

What a history for one plant, sweet smelling meadowsweet, queen of the meadows, a sacred Celtic plant used to treat malaria, a favourite strewing herb of Queen Elizabeth 1 and the basis of our most commonly used drug, aspirin. What more could it give us? A plant to be cherished. ♦

*Ann Press*



Photo: Nan Sykes



**NYMA**

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### "Quotable Quote"

#### IN PRAISE OF SHEEP

"On the North York Moors, sheep comfortably outnumber every large living creature with a population of 295,633 – just over eleven sheep for every man, woman and child resident in the area in 2006. More than any other creature they have created the character and shape of the moors; their grazing ensures the wide-open views do not give way to scrub, and eventually woodland. It is sheep, in well-managed quantities, whose grazing keeps the heather low and leads to new growth that is stimulated by their saliva as they work away like hundreds of thousands of park keepers to ensure that resplendent August show of even purple spread.

The moor is scored by their incessant efforts to survive and prosper in an unpropitious habitat. The sheep tracks criss-cross the heather, mapping the moor with paths that lead nowhere, take you in circles and get you lost. They don't follow human purpose but snake off across the hillside in search of grazing, water or shelter. The sheep wear the moor bald in the lee of a hill or wall, or around the roots of a hawthorn where they gather for shelter and ruminant. Lie down to rest on a hot summer's day and it is sheep, along with the sweetness of heather and grass, that provide the distinctive combination of smells which defines the moor. It is a place where the elements are exposed: the excrement, the minerals and the sharp astringent vegetation slowly rotting to peat. This land is their habitat and the hefting – mothers introducing their lambs to a particular area of moor – ties them to a place for a lifetime. We are only ever visitors, whilst this is where the sheep live their short lives through all the variations of day and night, weather and season."

From THE PLOT A Biography of My Father's English Acre  
by Madeleine Bunting (published 2009 ISBN 978 1 84708 1445)

Front Cover: The magnificent Kingfisher (photo: Mike Nicolas)  
Back Cover: Rescue from the Moors by the Scarborough & Ryedale Mountain Rescue Team

[www.north-yorkshire-moors.org.uk](http://www.north-yorkshire-moors.org.uk)

# CHAIRMAN'S FOREWORD



## AGM TREE PLANTING

The association held the 29<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting on Saturday June 14<sup>th</sup> at the Danby Moors Centre. A walk was arranged for 11.00am to "Tilley's Ten" where a memorial tree planting was held for Derek Statham and Don Furness. Both Derek and Don had close ties with this small plantation and it was appropriate that we should plant two oak trees in this beautiful part of the moors on Oakley Walls. The planting was attended by Kelsey Statham and Janet Furness. After returning to the Moors Centre for lunch the AGM was held at 2.00pm.

## SUMMARY OF THE CHAIRMAN'S ANNUAL STATEMENT 2014

Following the death of Derek at the beginning of this year we have not yet been able to appoint a new president of the Association. I always knew it would be a difficult task and would likely take some time to find someone to take on this role. We are actively seeking a new president and I am hopeful that we will be able to appoint someone in the near future.

## NYMA COUNCIL

Phil Collier who has been on our Council for 10 years is stepping down this year because of other increased commitments. He has very kindly offered to make himself available to lead walks and has indicated that he will probably return to the Council at a future date. We have had a welcome increase of 4 new members to the Council this year bringing the total to 10. (See listing on page 3.)

## MEMBERSHIP OF THE ASSOCIATION

Membership of the Association has been stable since the beginning of the year. In February it stood at 484, in April 487 and now stands at 486. We have lost some members and we have gained some but we are nevertheless down since June 2013 by 20 members. We now have on-line payment on our website and more recent new members have used this facility. We have embarked on a new venture with our support for a new "Moors Bus" scheme and this presents us with an opportunity for recruiting new members when the new "Moors Rambler" bus service starts in

July. It will run each Sunday to the end of September and August Bank Holiday. Last year we became the recipient of a significant bequest arising from the estate of the late Frederick Charles Laughton. A decision was made by the trustees after discussions with the family to direct a percentage of the discretionary fund to NYMA. The trustees also stipulated that the monies are to be used to help facilitate walkers in the National Park. This has provided us with the opportunity to help the moors bus venture by supporting a bus service linked to guided walks, or simply by providing walkers with access to the National Park. In this case it will be an Arriva service which operates from Darlington, calling at Stockton, Middlesbrough and Guisborough. It will run from there to the Danby Moors Centre and across to Pickering before returning to Darlington. The bus will have NYMA leaflets on board and we hope this will help to recruit new members. We will be involved with some of the guided walks and the programme for this is presently being worked out.

## FINANCE

The treasurer's report for the end of the financial year shows that our financial position is sound with a substantial reserve. Our income has been strengthened by two significant bequests and by backdated gift aid receipts.

## NYMA PROJECTS

### Voice of the Moors

Voice of the Moors continues to be our main point of communication with our members. The consistency of the quality of the quarterly magazine, and its varied content, is a tribute to Albert Elliot who is responsible for collecting and putting together the content. We also express our grateful thanks to Pascal Thivillon and Basement Press in Glaisdale for the design and preparation for printing. The magazine is printed by Botton Press.

### Cornfield Flowers Project

The cornfield Flowers Project continues to be a highly successful venture with national recognition for this unique work on the

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conservation and propagation of rare plants of arable land. The project runs in its present form until April 2015.

### **Biodiversity Project**

After a missed opportunity for spring tree planting at Park Wood Castleton (because of other pressures) it is hoped to resume the planting this autumn. We hope to set up an Owl box in Park Wood encouraged by the successful breeding of Barn Owls this year in a box in Danby Dale.

### **History Tree Project**

Albert Elliot gave a short explanation regarding the History Tree engraved plate and its removal from the front of the Moors Centre, a change which has been made necessary by the unexpected rapid decline of the tree stump which formed the base. It is possible that the plate may now be set on a stone which George Winn-Darley has kindly offered to provide from his estate.

### **Conservation Award**

Last year's conservation award has resulted in the completion of a research paper by Charlotte Critchley entitled "Detecting Changes in Vegetation and Peat Depth on the North York Moors Over a Thirty Year Period". Charlotte is at Bangor University and this is her dissertation for her Honours Degree in Conservation and Forest Ecosystems.

### **President's Award**

There were no applicants for the President's Award for this year and consequently it will roll over to 2016.

### **Guided Walks**

Thanks to Beryl Turner there have been a series of 10 walks over the period from last June with the Esk Valley walks extending through to October 2014.

### **Publishing**

"Westerdale: the origins and development of a medieval settlement", by Carol Wilson was published last November by NYMA and it is planned to publish another of Carol's books before the end of this year.

### **Guest Speakers**

**Colin Speakman** who set up the Yorkshire Dales Bus service explained his involvement with the new North York Moors bus service to be introduced this year which is based on the highly successful venture he set up in the Dales. (see Colin's article in this edition of "Voice") Colin was elected to NYMA Council after being co-opted earlier in the year. This gives us a closer link with the Yorkshire Dales Society with the prospect of some future joint events or walks.

**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.

Her presentation on the Politics of National Parks was a succinct explanation of the challenges and changes in legislation over the period of the present government and looking towards future prospects for the Parks. Starting with an outline of the benefits provided by National Parks, inspiring landscape, clean air, wildlife,

Ruth moved on to what she called "Bang for your Buck" in which she explained the economic picture of National Parks; 90 million visitors spending £4 billion, 22,500 businesses employing 140,000 people, growing employment increasing by 2.7% in 2012, and all this at a cost of just £1 per person per year.

Despite their huge benefits to people, National Parks have suffered from severe budget cut-backs. By contrast the film industry has benefitted by government support of £800 million over five years. Ruth turned to the "Myths of National Parks" often quoted as being a bar to development, expensive and bureaucratic and with a democratic deficit, but with no real evidence to support any of these claims. The government looks set to bring in legislation for direct elections to National Park Authorities though details of how this will work are thin on the ground. Trials may be held in the Peak District and New Forest National Parks. Looking to the future of the designation of National Parks Ruth asked if we pass "International muster". English National Parks, unlike other National Parks in the world, are lived in and have a working population. Winning hearts and minds is key to the future of National Parks and this means broadening the appeal to young people. We may have to form new alliances and moving forward requires contemporary champions. The role for charities like the CNP and CPRE as well as National Park societies is one of independence, of developing lobbying clout and public campaigning. The future is one in which National Parks should step out of the shadows of local government, fight for long term certainty and transcend politics.

The meeting ended with questions and tea and coffee was served. ♦

*Tom Chadwick*

### **YORK POTASH LTD PLANNING APPLICATION DEFERRED**

The planning application for the proposed Mine Head at Doves Nest Farm which was to have been submitted by York Potash Ltd to the National Park Authority by the end of this month has been deferred.

In a statement made on the 7th July, Sirius Minerals Plc announced that it is now the intention to submit both the mine head application and the application for the mineral transport system at the same time at the end of September. This is not surprising because what is clear is that it would not be possible to determine the mine head application without considering the impact on the National Park of the Mineral Transport System at the same time. In fact it has always been our view that all the elements which make up this proposal should be considered at the same time, mining, mineral transport, processing and port facilities in order to test the validity of the project.

The mineral transport system consists of a tunnel driven through the Redcar Mudstone at approximately 1000ft below the surface from Doves Nest Farm to Teesside. The tunnel will require four additional access shafts (9 metres in diameter) and two of these will be in the National Park, one at Doves Nest Farm another at Lady Cross Plantation Egton and a third shaft at Lockwood Beck very close to the boundary of the National Park. Tocketts Lythe Plantation is the site of the fourth access shaft. These sites where the access shafts are located are around 50 acres and this large area is required to distribute a large amount of spoil from the shaft and tunnel excavation estimated to be around 1.4 Million cubic metres.

# HALCYON DAYS - TRIPLE TREAT

## EXCITING SIGHTING

It would appear that the stretch of Danby Beck water between Piper Bridge and Ashfield Farm at Castleton, one of the main villages within the NYMNP, offers a perfect habitat for the common kingfisher. This year during a tranquil late June afternoon's relaxation with friends on the bank-side alongside this stretch of water, proved an idyllic setting and rare opportunity to observe not just one, but a trio of kingfishers flashing past. An exciting spectacle and a rare sight indeed.

## EXOTIC BIRD

The kingfisher (*Alcedo atthis*), is considered a most beautiful and exotic bird and this is reflected in the second half of its scientific or Latin name. Atthis was a young woman of stunning beauty greatly admired by the Greek poet Sappho. The kingfisher, although a small bird, is readily distinguishable, and one would be hard pushed to mistake it for any other. If you have ever seen a common kingfisher in the wild you will no doubt agree that it is truly a stunning bird and certainly a thing of great beauty. On sighting this exotic bird you will see that it has a vivid blue-green back and an orange underbelly, however the colour of the bird's feathers which are iridescent, is actually an 'optical illusion' and the true pigment and colour of the bird is surprisingly a more prosaic dark brown. These amazing vibrant colours are created through interference of different wavelengths of light reflected from different layers of feathers (BBC, 2014). During the rare sighting mentioned above, the conditions and the iridescence reflected the bird's back feathers in a range of hues that could be described as turquoise, aqua marine and emerald - a stunning natural jewel.

## A FEATHER IN THEIR CAP

To see such colour in the wild is truly impressive and many were envious and coveted such beauty. This is why kingfisher feathers (or sometimes bizarrely the entire bird) were much sought after and used by milliners as a striking adornment to ladies hats in Victorian times, ladies who perhaps should have known better. Many kingfishers were also considered pests at one time and trapped and killed by gamekeepers as it was claimed the tiny birds ate far too many of the landowner's precious fish from rivers, becks and streams (a dubious claim?). So, how would one go about catching such a speedy and elusive avian character for this form of cruel culling and vain exploitation? In years gone by our native feathered jewels were caught and killed in vicious mechanical traps. The unarguably barbaric contraption was placed in or near the bird's bankside tunnel that lead to its nesting chamber. The trap was set to trigger when lightly stepped on. This heinous device was known as a gin trap. For the curious, there is a disturbing (although exquisitely made) example of one of these gruesome and cruel contraptions on exhibition in the Ryedale Folk Museum Harrison Collection at Hutton le Hole. Thankfully, the use of gin-traps was deemed inhuman and sensibly outlawed, although not until 1954. However, over the years since that time, there have been many prosecutions of those caught still using this particular form of illegal trap (of varying sizes) to bring about a mammal or bird's demise.

## IDEAL HABITAT

The trio of common kingfisher recently seen along Danby Beck were thankfully free from such danger and exploitation and

displayed joyous freedom in their rapid, aerial flypast reaching exceptional speeds. So, what is it about this stretch of Danby Beck that makes it such a suitable habitat for these birds? The kingfisher requires shallow streams, a vertical bank with little vegetation for nesting, and plenty of solid firm perch points overlooking water to facilitate hunting. The birds are masters at diving and catching their waterborne prey. To thrive, their diet may include mayfly nymph, minnows, stickleback, trout and salmon fry (Weston, 2013). Although I am not an expert on fish species in nearby Danby Beck, fish do appear to be plentiful and I have personally seen sizeable trout or salmon in this watercourse. This is perhaps the main reason these amazing small, shy birds have made their home along this length of water. The terrain along this stretch of the beck also provides vertical banks with little vegetation as well as an abundance of natural overhanging tree branches, firm perches strategically sited just above the shallow water of the stream: therefore, an ideal habitat for the common kingfisher to do what it does best - catch fish.

## POPULATION

So, has the population of the common kingfisher really increased? Since 2011, due to a variety of reasons, it is believed there has been a notable general increase in the kingfisher population. According to the World Wildlife Fund (2011), 60% of their participants in an online survey reported sightings nationally of the common kingfisher. The organisation suggests that its numbers may have increased due in part to less harsh winters since 2011. The kingfisher is known to be extremely susceptible to cold temperatures and particularly when watercourses freeze over and prevent the bird from catching fish. Also, the bird can easily suffer casualties, especially of its young, due to flooding of burrows as well as by predation from rats and cats.

While the last couple of winters have not been as harsh as that of 2010 - 2011, this stretch of Danby Beck has suffered severe flooding several times recently due to exceptionally heavy rainfalls. Also, there is ample opportunity for predation from an evident population of rats and neighbourhood cats, some of them feral. Despite this, kingfishers on Danby Beck appear to be not only surviving, but indeed thriving; long may it continue. It could be argued that the common kingfisher does not perhaps have greater prevalence, but the unusual sighting by the lucky onlookers on that particular June afternoon was a result of them being in the right place at the right time and perhaps showed greater diligence in terms of observation. Nonetheless, it was a truly triple treat to see the three kingfishers flashing by; definitely one of my halcyon days!

## MYTHS & LEGENDS

The expression 'Halcyon days' has come to mean those memorable, calm, and peaceful times, usually in summer - in short, the good times, usually looked on with nostalgic hindsight. However, the Halcyon is a bird of Greek legend, although the name Halcyon (*Alcedo* meaning halcyon) is now used as an alternative name for the European Kingfisher.

The ancients believed that the Halcyon made a floating nest in the Aegean Sea and the bird had the remarkable power to calm the waves during the time she was brooding and hatching her eggs. A spell of fourteen days of calm and fine weather were to be expected when the Halcyon, or kingfisher, was observed to be nesting - this



was said to be around the time of the winter solstice.

This myth spread to the English speaking world in the 14<sup>th</sup> century, when, in 1398, John Trevisa translated, into Middle English, *Bartholomew de Glanville's De proprietatibus rerum*, which contained the following in quaint ME language:

*“In the cliffe of a ponde of ocean, Alcion, a see foule, in winter maketh her neste and layeth egges in VII days and sittyth on brood . . . seuen days.”*

One early source of the belief in the kingfisher's power to calm the seas is mentioned in a myth recorded by Ovid (43 BC – c. AD 18), a Roman poet and writer of *Metamorphoses*, one of the most important sources of classical mythology. The story, or myth, goes that Aeolus, the ruler of the winds, had a daughter, Alcyone, who was married to Ceyx, the king of Thessaly. The king was tragically drowned at sea and Alcyone, in a fit of deep grief and total despair, attempted suicide by throwing herself into the turbulent waves. However, instead of drowning, she was transformed or metamorphosed into a bird and carried safely on the wind to be reunited with her husband.

By the 16<sup>th</sup> century the phrase 'halcyon days' had virtually lost its mythical association with the winter nest time of this bird and had taken on the modern usage and figurative meaning of 'calm days'. No less than Shakespeare himself used the expression with the new meaning in his play, *Henry VI*:

*Assigned am I to be the English scourge.  
This night the siege assuredly I'll raise:  
Expect Saint Martin's summer, halcyon days,  
Since I have entered into these wars.*

*Note: Saint Martin's summer is what we now know as an Indian summer*

The kingfisher bird is also associated with other mystical powers relating to weather forecasting. In mediaeval times it was thought that if the dried carcass of a kingfisher (horrible thought!) was hung up or suspended on a thread, its beak would always turn to point in the direction of the wind and act like a weather vane (please don't try this at home!). Shakespeare also refers to this bizarre belief in another of his plays, *King Lear* (1605):

*Bring oil to fire, snow to their colder moods;  
Renege, affirm, and turn the balcyon beaks  
With every gale and vary of their masters*

## GOOD LUCK!

The shy kingfisher is undeniable one of our most striking and beautiful wild birds. I hope that you too will have the opportunity and good luck to enjoy sightings of this unmistakable, fascinating and elusive creature, at least singly if not as a threesome. ♦

*Cal Moore*

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# SAVING LIVES IN WILD AND REMOTE PLACES



## RESCUE TEAM

Scarborough and Ryedale Mountain Rescue Team (SRMRT) is one of two teams who provide voluntary search and rescue services across the North York Moors National Park and beyond, the other team being our sister group based to the north of the Park, the Cleveland Mountain Rescue Team.

Our team objectives are to:

- Relieve suffering and distress amongst persons involved in or affected by accidents or natural hazards on the North York Moors, or any other place, if requested. In furtherance of this the team will:
- Provide adequate arrangements for the secure and efficient search and rescue of any person in difficulty or danger, in co-operation with the Police, other emergency services and mountain rescue teams.
- Train team members in the skills and techniques of moorland and mountain search and rescue, survival, and casualty care essential to this work.
- Assist other organisations in acquiring knowledge of safety techniques to be employed in wild country and cooperate with the National Parks Authorities in all matters of safety on the North York Moors.

In short, put another way, **'Saving lives in wild and remote places'**.

What does this really entail?

Based in Snainton on the southern edge of the National Park, our area of responsibility stretches from Sandsend in the north diagonally across the moors to Helmsley. Our 'patch' is much larger than this though, stretching across to the A19, around the west of York, south as far as the M62 and then back to the coast at Hornsea via Howden and Beverley encompassing all of the Yorkshire Wolds. This area is one of the largest of any of the fifty plus Mountain and Cave Rescue Teams operating in England and Wales.

The police service has primacy for inland search and rescue and as such we are primarily tasked by either North Yorkshire or Humberside Police. We also maintain close collaboration with the Ambulance Service, Fire and Rescue, Coastguards, RAF and Air

deploy at their request. We are on call 24 hours a day 7 days a week all year round with many of our call-outs happening when others are on holiday enjoying the beauty of the North York Moors and surrounding areas.

Established in 1965 as the Scarborough and District Search and Rescue Team, we changed our name in 2006 to Scarborough and Ryedale Mountain Rescue Team to more accurately reflect our operational area and our role within Search and Rescue in the UK.

Our team strength fluctuates around seventy people of which around forty are Operation Members with the rest being made up of Associate and Honorary Life Members. It takes around a year from the time of joining the team to become qualified and attain 'call-out' list status and then around a further six months experience to be recognised as a full team member. Our volunteers are plucked from a full range of the community we serve and represent a diverse range of trades and professions. While we have a good number of medical practitioners and people with mountain and outdoor qualifications, we generally look for people who simply have experience of the hills and who can navigate to a reasonable standard. The rest we train them to do. Demographically the Operational Membership varies in age from early twenties through to their mid sixties, mostly men but around fifteen percent of the membership are female. People join the team for a multitude of reasons, but a common thread being a desire to give something back to the community where we live.

Skills wise, we have a number of mandatory core competencies covering the likes of: navigation, basic lifesaving and immediate casualty care, radio communications, rope techniques, search techniques, find site protocol, water awareness. These are enhanced by more specialist training in casualty care, response driving, water rescue, advanced rope techniques, and search management.

We need to be out on the hill and operate for protracted periods when others are thinking of heading for shelter so personal equipment ranges from full waterproofs, four season boots, rucksacks, climbing harnesses, drysuits, helmets, various items of personal protection equipment, maps, compass, torches and radio. While much of this is provided by the team, it is not unusual for team members to be carrying or wearing £1,500 worth of their

own equipment. Even the team-provided equipment is paid for from funds that are raised by the team members.

In order to operate across the distances, terrain and weather conditions experienced on the North York Moors, we have two four-wheel drive ambulances and a control unit built into a Mercedes van, which can also be used as an ambulance. Inside these vehicles we have compressive command, control and communications systems to allow the team to operate internally and with other emergency services to effectively manage search and rescue activities. As well as a comprehensive range of medical equipment: drugs, oxygen, splints and all other equipment you would expect in an ambulance, we also carry ropes and crag rescue equipment, specialist stretchers for use during crag rescue. These stretchers can be winched into helicopters or carried by team members for protracted distances across the open moors along with other unique-to-role equipment.

Last year we had sixty callouts, which generally break down into what we would define as a 'search' or as a 'rescue'. A search is where someone has gone out on the moors, say for a walk, and failed to return. Historically the Lyke Wake Walk has provided a good deal of the custom for such searches. A rescue is where we have been advised where someone has taken ill or has been injured and needs treatment and evacuation by us. We have a number of rescue 'hotspots' around Goathland, Falling Foss and Maybecks, where we go year after year to affect such rescues. In recent years, with Dalby, The Great Yorkshire Forest, being used increasingly for recreational pursuits, we have become involved in more and more calls for assistance to injured mountain bikers.

This is only a proportion of our callouts. Frequently we are requested by the police to search for vulnerable or dependent persons, and have, for instance, been employed on river searches (recently in York). We have searched the roads over the moors in winter conditions, both on foot and in 4x4 vehicles when the roads

were closed to other forms of transport, and carried out operations in Whitby and Sandsend during the hazardous flood surge last autumn. In the early years of the team, we were deployed to Kielder Forest in Northumberland and helped in the search for wreckage and evidence from Pan Am 103 disaster. More recently we have even been involved in high-profile searches for murder victims.

We have been deployed to Scarborough Hospital in the middle of the night to look for an elderly male dementia sufferer who had walked out of the hospital into the grounds and become lost, and on New Year's Day, last year, we rescued a dog which had fallen down a cliff on the moors. Fortunately, both of these rescue events had happy endings.

We train a minimum of two evenings and at least one weekend day per month with many of the team putting in far more time to attain or maintain the more advanced fitness and qualifications we need.

As a charity, which receives no direct funding, we also need to raise in the order of £35,000 per year simply to keep the team operational, so many of the team members have secondary roles involved in maintaining a viable charity.

Should you need more information on the team or wish to contact us then we have a web site at [www.srmrt.org.uk](http://www.srmrt.org.uk) have social media presence on facebook/scarrescue and on Twitter @scarrescue.

When out on the hills, please make sure you go well prepared for the prevailing (and forecast) conditions and you are equipped with a map, compass and torch, all of which you know how to use. Take care and enjoy yourselves. If you should get into difficulty and need our assistance then ring 999 ask for Police then Mountain Rescue. We will come out to you, no matter what the conditions are.◆

*Ian Hugill, Public Relations Officer,*

## THE RETURN OF MOORSBUS

FOR MANY DECADES, the North York Moors National Park was served by MoorsBus, a superb network of weekend and summer holiday integrated bus services, radiating from major centres of catchment population, Hull, Teesside, York, Scarborough, Thirsk, into the heart of the National Park.

The reasons why the National Park Authority supported these services were three fold:

**Social** – to ensure Access for All including those many people living in both urban and rural areas without access to their own transport for reasons of income, health, age, ability to drive.

**Environmental** – to reduce congestion and pollution by providing an attractive and affordable alternative to the private car, visitor traffic proved from surveys to be a major source of nuisance to local communities

**Economic** – visitors coming by public transport also bring significant spending power to support businesses in the National Parks – shops, cafes, pubs, and overnight accommodation, with a high percentage of those without cars coming from overseas.

Thanks to brilliant marketing, MoorsBus attracted excellent support from people of all ages and backgrounds, but especially

older people not able to drive, for whom experiencing the Park by bus was their only means of doing so. Sadly recent draconian cuts by central Government to the National Park's budget made MoorsBus unaffordable to the Authority and the reluctant decision was taken to withdraw all funding. In October last year it looked as if the last ever Moorsbus had run.

But it was not quite the end of the story. A small group of committed users, who felt passionately that MoorsBus should not die, formed themselves into the Friends of MoorsBus. They received help and advice from the Yorkshire Dale Society's Dales & Bowland Community Interest Company, which had, since 2007, taken increasing responsibility for DalesBus, a similar integrated network of bus services in the Yorkshire Dales National Park. So earlier this year it was agreed to set up a MoorsBus Community Interest Company.

But with no money coming from either North Yorkshire County Council nor from the National Park Authority, how could any MoorsBus services be provided?

But help came from two sources. The Hull-based East Yorkshire Motor Services Company, who traditionally had run the popular ▶



MoorsBus services out of Hull, took the decision in 2014 to operate their **Moors Explorer** Hull-Malton Pickering-Danby Moors centre service purely commercially, at special fares, but without accepting any senior citizen passes. This service now operates every Sunday and Bank Holiday until September 28<sup>th</sup>.

But what about a services from the north of the National Park? This is where the North York Moors Association came in. By happy chance the Association had received a small legacy from a Mr Laughton, a lover of the Moors, on condition that it was spent to encourage walking in the Moors. What better idea therefore than to support a MoorsBus from Teesside which would therefore enable walkers from Darlington, Stockton, Middlesbrough and Guisborough to access the National Park for a huge range of walks?

The £3k grant was matched by fund raising efforts from the Friends of MoorsBus to put enough money on the table to operate one new service every Sunday and Bank Holiday from July 13<sup>th</sup> until September 28, a total of just 13 days. But a programme of guided walks from the bus was also arranged to specifically meet the requirement to facilitate walking.

So in partnership with NYMA, the new MoorsBus CIC has worked with former MoorsBus operators Arriva, whose drivers are experienced and enthusiastic about Moorsbus, to start the new **MoorsBus Rambler** service. This will integrate with the EYMS Hull bus to provide a reasonable degree of frequency between Danby and Pickering over Blakey Top via Hutton-le-Hole. Services will provide connections with other bus and train services, including Coastliner and the popular 128 from Scarborough and Pickering to Helmsley.

Of course this isn't the wonderful MoorsBus network we enjoyed until 2013, but it is a start. If these pilot services do well, perhaps in 2015 other parts of the network can be restored,

including services from York and Thirsk/Northaller-ton, and to Bilsdale, Sutton Bank, Rosedale and Forge Valley.

The small Moorsbus CIC team has the energy, expertise and vision, but as always everything depends on money. Whilst the support from NYMA has been crucial in making this happen, the Friends, the CIC and NYMA will need to join forces to seek more generous and sustainable funding, perhaps from regional sources such as the Local Enterprise Partnership. Working with colleagues in D&BCIC, it is hoped continued funding can be secured to continue the 2014 MoorsBus pilot, to provide more services over a longer period and to market those services to local communities and visitors alike. This is where the North York Moors Association comes in. Not only have we been able to provide the seed funding to enable MoorsBus to survive, but we can support measures to secure funding for MoorsBus, as well as DalesBus, as the core of a regional sustainable travel network – with York as a key gateway – to and through the region's two great National Parks.

But this is an opportunity for the Association also, to raise our profile as one of the key partners of MoorsBus, to recruit members either on the buses or on guided walks, to emphasise our key role in delivering our own and National Park purposes, to help safeguard the National Park environment and at the same time benefit the local economy. But also to provide public benefit by enabling access to the magnificent landscape heritage, especially on foot, with all the physical, mental and spiritual benefits that working in such a landscape can give. MoorsBus is a means to achieve this. It is therefore fundamental to what the National Park and the Association is all about. So please use our pilot service - look out for the timetable leaflet distributed locally, with details of times and fares on both EYM and Arriva North East websites or view Friends of MoorsBus on Twitter ♦

*Colin Speakman*

# TURN OF THE TIDE



The actors on the film set



Some of the Bay characters

**TURN OF THE TIDE** is a black and white film made on location in Robin Hood's Bay in 1935. It created quite a stir at the time but was soon almost forgotten. A classic of its time, it is nowadays frequently shown in Bay Village to an audience of nostalgic residents and fascinated visitors. Based on the book 'Three Fevers' by local author Leo Walmsley, who lived for a time at Bay (which Walmsley called 'Bramblewick' in his stories), it was the first British film to be made largely on location.

## J. ARTHUR RANK

Joseph Arthur Rank was born in Hull in 1888 and having failed in his own attempt to establish a flour business, he went to work for his father who had already successfully created a substantial business in the same field. This company was eventually to become one of the giants in the industry and it made Joseph into a millionaire.

## FROM FLOUR TO FILM

As a keen Methodist, Rank was critical of the American films that dominated 80% of the British market at the time so he decided to venture into the film business to redress the balance and present a more realistic view of life in Britain. *Turn of the Tide* was his first commercial production and was managed on a low budget employing little-known actors. Much of the film was shot in Robin Hood's Bay and the surrounding area and used local fishermen as 'extras'. It was this that gave the film its unique character and earned it third prize at the prestigious Venice Film Festival.

## A GOOD LOCAL STORY

The story of *Turn of the Tide* depicts the conflicting lives of two local fisher families, the Lunn and the Fosdyk, who have a long-running feud between them. They eventually have to suppress and overcome their antagonism towards each other in order to survive in an increasingly competitive fishing industry. Leo Walmsley, who lived in Robin Hood's Bay at the time, was employed as an advisor, although it seems that he saw the film purely as a documentary and demanded that every small detail of the production was accurate. Would an audience spot the difference between a real cod and one manufactured in the 'props' department for example? However, the Director, Norman Walker, had other ideas and realised the importance of making the film

attractive and entertaining to the audience if it was to be a success.

## PROBLEMS TO OVERCOME

However, making the film was only part of the difficulty that Rank encountered. He soon discovered that distribution to cinemas throughout the country was controlled almost as a 'closed shop'. In order to get around this problem he did as his father had once done in the flour business; he bought out his rivals. As a result J A Rank went on to become one of the biggest film distributors in the industry.

## A CLASSIC OF ITS TIME

The film at the time of its release, although popular as a second feature, never recovered its costs and eventually faded into obscurity. Today, however, it is rightly regarded as a classic of its kind and in the words of one film critic it made 'a significant seminal contribution to naturalism in filmmaking.'

If you cannot get to Bay Village Hall to see a showing of *Turn of the Tide*, why not watch this intriguing film on line, but remember it was made in 1935! ♦

*Alan Staniforth*



# THE YORKSHIRE DALES NATIONAL PARK

A CELEBRATION OF 60 YEARS BY COLIN SPEAKMAN

THIS IS A REMARKABLE and important book, especially for all lovers of our precious and scarce wild countryside. Ostensibly a book celebrating the existence and success for the past three-score-years of the Yorkshire Dales National Park (YDNP) – and though the book is certainly all of that – it is much, much more than just a eulogy to the area. It is a meticulously researched history and valuable social, cultural and political record of how and why this huge swathe (c. 1770 square kilometres – 680 square miles) of rural Yorkshire was destined to become the seventh National Park in England and, just as important, who were the main ‘movers and shakers’ who caused it to finally achieve designation in 1954, and who have been instrumental in its ongoing development and conservation over the past sixty years. The author gives due credit to the many visionaries, campaigners, champions and countryside enthusiasts and volunteers who worked tirelessly (and many continue to do so), some times against great odds and with many disappointing setbacks along the way, to bring about the establishment, protection and conservation of this precious and beloved National Park. Colin Speakman, the author, is himself one of these visionaries and champions, a constant campaigner and irrepressible enthusiast for the protection and advancement of the Dales: he has made an enormous and unique personal contribution to the area and its people over his lifetime. Also, during his time, he has acquired an unparalleled bank of knowledge and practical, hands-on experience and understanding of the workings of the Yorkshire Dales and the special way of life of its inhabitants. This is manifest in the pages of this informative and lucid book. Who then could be better placed to write such a celebratory book as this, which is also in its own way a tangible and fitting tribute to the author?

The book is copiously illustrated with colour and black and white photos, both vintage and contemporary, selected in collaboration with the author by the editor, David Joy. These fascinating and well-chosen images greatly enhance and support the relevant text and not only illustrate and evoke the beautiful and varied landscape to be found in the Park - much of it, thankfully, little changed over the past 60 years - but there are also interesting images, old and new, of the multitude of diverse people and characters who have lived and worked within the YDNP, as well as a roll-call of those who have so effectively championed and campaigned for its successful protection and conservation.

Although the designation of the Yorkshire Dales as a National Park was not secured until 1954 (two years after our own area, the North York Moors, achieved designation), the book covers much earlier years during crucial times when the appreciation, understanding, nascent concepts and embryonic ideas for the best use of open countryside and wilderness as a valuable national asset were born and developed. The book has ten chapters covering such topics as the early days/beginnings, the conservation of the characteristic barns, meadows, and green lanes; transport and travel within the Park; green energy generation (including the good, the bad and the ugly!); and the current forward-looking

proposals to extend the NP boundaries. There is a very interesting and informative chapter on the development and progress (or otherwise?) of farming and agriculture within the Park over the past sixty years by guest writer, Anthony Bradley, an experienced and enthusiastic Dales farmer.

But the most important and potentially influential section of the book is, perhaps, the last chapter, titled *The Future of the Yorkshire Dales*, in which Colin Speakman makes clear his personal philosophy and aspirations as to how he would wish the future of the Yorkshire Dales to be. He puts forward a powerful, moving, and balanced case, supported by telling facts and statistics, and much down-to-earth common sense based on wide practical experience, for the continuing conservation and sensitive development of National Parks for the benefit of the whole nation, not just for the rich, elite and privileged few. Although writing primarily about the Yorkshire Dales, the advice, guidance, fundamental philosophy and personal vision offered in this final chapter by the author could be used as a template for the

future and applied advantageously by all those who use and care for National Parks and the other areas of threatened countryside within our small island. A few quotes from the final text will make the point much more powerfully and succinctly than this reviewer can.

*‘ . . . we do, as a society, have choices about the future countryside we’d like to live in. It is not a matter of allowing market forces unrestricted freedom to destroy and exploit, but intervene in various ways that society chooses, to create the kind of landscape we wish to see. This is ultimately what a National Park could mean for the mid-late 21<sup>st</sup> century – the next 60 years [and beyond].’*

*‘National Parks remain as a powerful mechanism to safeguard personal freedom and choice, our human right to access and enjoy a shared inheritance, an inheritance that must at all costs be protected and defended for future generations.’*

*In essence, National Parks are about people – people who live and work in these magnificent landscapes and who benefit from their surroundings, and people whose lives are enriched, by being able to access those same landscapes for spiritual renewal, inspiration and health-giving exercise. In turn those visitors support the local economy on which the local communities [and the National Parks] depend.’*

*‘The Yorkshire Dales is part of everyone’s birthright, no matter where we were born, our ethnic origin or income. That is the true meaning of the word ‘National’ in the name of the Yorkshire Dales National Park [and in others].’*

This book is essential reading for all those who care about the future of the Yorkshire Dales, our National Parks, and the wider British countryside. ♦

THE YORKSHIRE DALES NATIONAL PARK – A Celebration of 60 Years  
by Colin Speakman. 144 page hardback Published by Great Northern Books  
(2014) [www.greatnorthernbooks.co.uk](http://www.greatnorthernbooks.co.uk) at £17.99. ISBN 978-0-9928193-0-9

Ainsley June 2014

# THE ESK VALLEY WALK – SUMMER 2014.

ELEVEN NYMA MEMBERS and friends completed the 2<sup>nd</sup> stage of the Esk Valley Walk on Saturday 28 June. This second leg of the planned six-stage walk of c. 38 miles started at the Lion Inn on Blakey Ridge and ended at Westerdale, a distance of about seven miles. From the Lion Inn the group took the old ironstone railway line (in the direction of Blowworth Crossing) taking a right hand turn off the railway track on reaching the head of the Esklets, the source of the River Esk. The route continued on down through the lovely and peaceful Esklets valley and on into the dale bottom and ended at Westerdale village. Apart from a small shower of rain, the weather was good particularly during the end stretch of the walk: a very pleasant ramble enjoyed by all.

NYMA members **Beryl Turner (Stokesley)** and **Elaine Wisdom (Loftus)** have kindly organised and devised this series of guided short walks based on the route of the official Esk Valley Walk. The walk will take place in easy stages over the summer months on the dates as below. All are welcome, but anyone planning on joining the group for the first time should first contact Beryl, the walk leader, to let her know your intentions and so you can receive confirmation of meeting places/start times etc. Beryl will request names, numbers, home addresses and emergency telephone contact details. This will also allow transport arrangements to be made: each stage of the walk is linear and therefore a 'shared car shuttle' will be organised for each stretch. Telephone numbers are also required in case of cancellations and/or in the event of something untoward happening.

Beryl looks forward to hearing from you, preferably by email, but if by telephone, please ring before 6pm. Thank you.

**Contact for Beryl Turner: Email – berylturner3@gmail.com**  
**Telephone – 01642 714479 (before 6pm)**

## THE FIVE REMAINING WALKS ARE:

### Saturday 19 July

Westerdale via Castleton to Danby Lodge Moors Centre – 7 miles

### Saturday 16 August

Danby Lodge Moors Centre to Lealholm – 5 miles

### Saturday 6 September

Lealholm via Glaisdlae & Egton Bridge to Grosmont – 6 miles

### Saturday 18 October

Grosmont to Sleights – 4 miles

### Saturday 1 November

Sleights via Ruswarp to Whitby – 4 miles

**HEALTH & SAFETY: Please note that safety of our members is of paramount importance and all walkers participating are expected to act responsibly and ensure they have appropriate outdoor clothing and footwear suitable for the prevailing (and forecast?) weather conditions and terrain. The walks involve rough moorland tracks with hilly terrain.**

**SORRY, NO DOGS ALLOWED ON THESE WALKS.**  
**ENJOY YOUR WALKING!**



The NYMA group on Cockpit Hill, Blakey.



Heading towards Westerdale from Esklets.



Hunter Stee Bridge at Westerdale.

## CROSSWORD ANSWERS

**Across:** 1 abalone 7 bugle 8 netball 9 cuckoo 11 acorn 13 ants 14 uniform 15 sham 16 groom 17 barrel 21 avocado 22 acute 23 granary  
**Down:** 2 Blencathra 3 laburnum 4 Nile 5 guru 6 flak 9 crook 10 out of order 12 final 13 American 18 rock 19 cats 20 over



# 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.

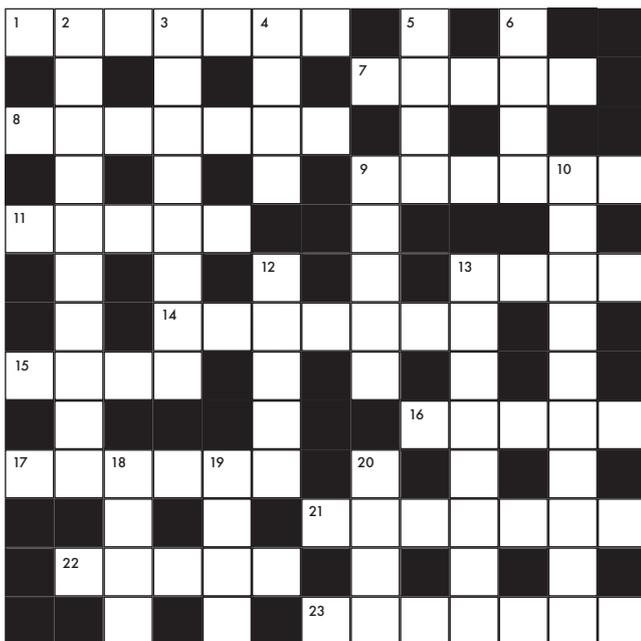
By giving gift membership you are also helping to protect this special area by supporting the ongoing work of NYMA whose aim is to ensure the moors remain a place of beauty, peace and tranquillity for all to enjoy – a very precious gift indeed!

Visit NYMA website for membership application and payment details:

[www.north-yorkshire-moors.org.uk](http://www.north-yorkshire-moors.org.uk)

## CROSSWORD

### CRYPTIC CROSSWORD No 64 BY AMANUENSIS



ANSWERS ON PAGE 13

#### ACROSS:

- 1 By oneself taking a degree in marine gastropod molluscs (7)
- 7 Horn shaped wild flower? (5)
- 8 The game is to catch sphere (7)
- 9 Crazy bird (6)
- 11 They say a forest is contained in a single one! (5)
- 13 Sociable colonists (4)
- 14 Dress all the same (7)
- 15 Quiet morning proves false (4)
- 16 Equine hairdresser? (5)
- 17 Often tapped (6)
- 21 Dull green fruit (7)
- 22 Sharp angle (5)
- 23 Go with the grain to this place (7)

#### DOWN:

- 2 High point of controversial sale in Cumbria (10)
- 3 Tree set on fire in middle of Los Angeles with little hesitation (8)
- 4 Long distance runner passes through Egypt (4)
- 5 Wise religious leader is big Uruguayan at heart (4)
- 6 Adverse criticism of antiaircraft artillery (4)
- 9 Criminal staff (5)
- 10 Not in sequence and broken down (3,2,5)
- 12 Note bent nail at the end (5)
- 13 From across the Big Pond? (8)
- 18 Sway from side to side to pop music (4)
- 19 Consumes stirred teas (4)
- 20 Ended with six perhaps? (4)



## A WALK ACROSS FEN BOG

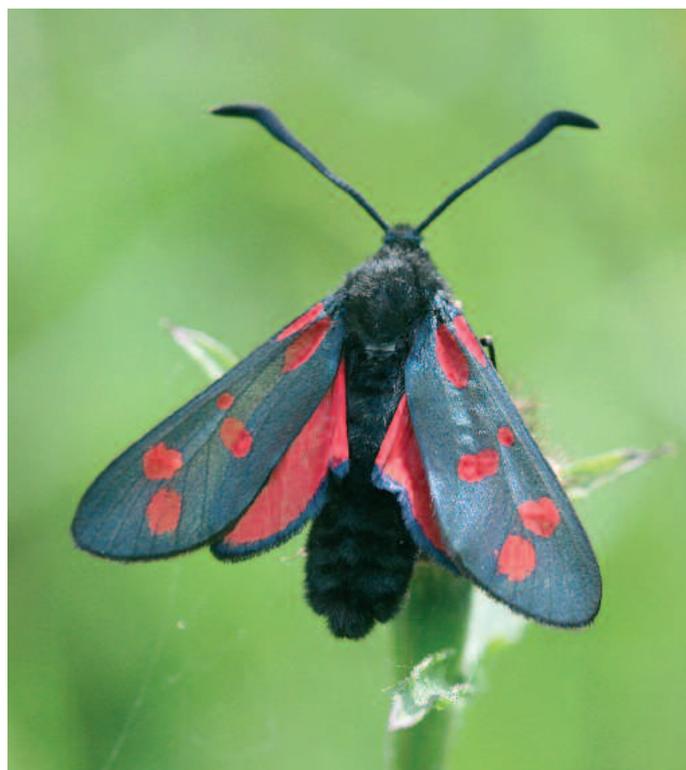
Fen Bog is a Yorkshire Wildlife Trust nature reserve that I visit most weeks in summer. It is situated near to Fylingdales Early Warning Station at Ellerbecks, in the area where the Lyke Wake Walk crosses the North Yorkshire moors steam railway line. Unusual for our area, it is an unique raised bog, with run-off water draining into the Murk Esk at its easterly end, and flowing away into Newtondale and Pickering at the opposite end.

## BUTTERFLIES & INSECTS

It is rightly famous for its abundant upland flora and fauna and in high summer is a superb site for insect life. I carry out a butterfly transect around the bog once a week, from the beginning of April to the end of September, so I am fairly familiar with the layout of the reserve and its inhabitants.

The butterfly transect entails following a designated route, recording at the same time all species and numbers of butterflies seen along the way. I also record details of the weather conditions, such as temperature, wind direction and speed, amount of sunshine etc. At the end of September the weekly records I have taken throughout the year are submitted to Butterfly Conservation headquarters where they are recorded and added to the hundreds of other such transect records gathered from around the British Isles.

Probably the rarest resident butterfly to be found on the reserve is the Large Heath (*Coenonympha tullia*), it can only be found at a few sites in Yorkshire due to the fact that its caterpillars depend on the presence of cottongrass (*Enophorum angustifolium*) for feeding. This restricts its habitat to the very wet boggy places where this plant resides. Other interesting butterflies to be found on relatively drier parts of the bog are small Pearl-bordered Fritillary (*Boloria selene*) and Dark Green Fritillary (*Argynnis aglaja*).



Burnet Moth

Photo: Tammy Andrews

## MOTHS

The nature reserve is also particularly good for moths. Two in particular, the Small Argent & Sable (*Epirrhoe tristata*) and the Small Purple Barred (*Phytometra viridaria*), have healthy populations on the Bog despite being very rare elsewhere in the county. Other uncommon day-flying moths to be found alongside the more common Six Spot Burnet moth (*Zygaena filipendula*) are the Wood Tiger (*Parasemia plantaginis*) and Burnet Companion (*Euclidia glyphica*).

## DRAGONFLIES

Not surprisingly, these masters of aerial flight, the beautiful dragonflies, can be found in good numbers in the wetter areas, with Golden Ringed usually the earliest to emerge, closely followed by the odd Four Spot Chaser, Common Darters and the rare Keeled Skimmer. Black Darters are the last to appear and can often be seen basking in the late summer sunshine on sheep tracks, sometimes hanging on into early October.

## BOG PLANTS

Botanically, the very rare species on the bog are sedges and rushes, which I'm afraid are beyond me as far as accurate identification! However there are plenty of other plants easier to identify, like Bogbean, Bog Asphodel, Cranberry, Heath Spotted Orchid and the elusive Petty Whin. In June the insectivorous Butterwort can be found in flower, with its rosette of lime green leaves and violet-like flower on a long stalk, it is easily recognisable. Later in the year the Common Sundew is quite common amongst the sphagnum moss, entrapping unsuspecting midges with its sticky leaves, to supplement its diet amongst the nutrient-poor soil that the plants grow in.

In general, Fen Bog is a fascinating upland nature reserve, well worth a visit in summer where you can enjoy its abundant flora and fauna. However, one word of warning: keep to the footpaths at all times, keep all dogs on a lead (adders are very common) and, for your own comfort, take some insect repellent. Enjoy!

Hawkmoth



Pearl-bordered Fritillary butterfly



The Scarborough & Ryedale Mountain Rescue Team in action during a 'carry-off' from the moor. (See article on page 8)