

VOICE OF THE MOORS ISSUE 117

THE MAGAZINE OF THE NORTH YORKSHIRE MOORS ASSOCIATION (NYMA)

AUTUMN 2014

Robin Hood & Little John



- ◆ BOTANY - HEDGEROW FRUITS
- ◆ NATIONAL PARK FACING SERIOUS CHALLENGES
- ◆ THE BIRDS IN YOUR GARDEN: THE MAGPIE
- ◆ TRIBUTE TO JIM BULL
- ◆ CORNFIELD FLOWERS PROJECT
- ◆ A BAY BUILDING OF NOTE
- ◆ LEWIS HUNTON (1814-1838)
- ◆ CROSSWORD
- ◆ HAWKMOTH - NATURE NOTES

HEDGEROW FRUITS

I HAVE WRITTEN ABOUT some of our wild fruits, including blackberries, in previous Voice articles, but there are many others that we often do not notice as much. Some are not as common while others are surprisingly so but grow hidden in hedges or waste places that are overlooked or viciously cut-back so early or frequently that the plants have no time to blossom let alone fruit.

GOOSEBERRY

One that is very common near where I live is the gooseberry, *Ribes uva-crispa*, a member of the *Grossulariaceae* family. Like its more often encountered relative, the cultivated gooseberry, it is a small, spiny, deciduous bush with many branches. The leaves are small, lobed and blunt-toothed. The red tinged green flowers mature to small fruits, turning yellow, green or red when ripe. It is surprisingly frequent and widespread in older woods and hedgerows, often rather inconspicuous except when it bursts into light green leaf about two weeks before other hedgerow shrubs. The fruits can be surprisingly sweet, even when green, and can be eaten raw or cooked. In the past, a decoction of the leaves was used to reduce swellings and inflammations, or internally for bladder and kidney disorders as well as the ripe raw fruit used for curing stomach ache.

RED CURRANT

Another member of this family is the red currant, *Ribes rubrum*, which is frequently found in damp ancient deciduous woodland, usually by streams where willow and alder thrive, in sheltered, undisturbed valleys. Again, like its garden counterpart it is a deciduous, perennial bush about one metre tall with lobed, blunt-toothed leaves and clusters of purple to green flowers which form the small round white to red fruits. Although acidic, these are cool and refreshing, quenching thirst and were once used to soothe fevers and sharpen the appetite as well as an effective laxative and treatment for jaundice.

RASPBERRY

Similarly often overlooked though quite common is the wild raspberry, *Rubus idaeus*, in the *Roseaceae* family. It also grows on old woodland edges, by riversides, waste places and wayside verges but on damp, lighter and well-drained soils. It is a perennial with suckering biennial stems or canes up to two metres tall that die back after fruiting. It has small tender prickles and bright green, lobed, toothed leaves that are white felted on the under surfaces. The clustered flowers are small and white-petalled producing red, many seeded fruits. These fruits are mentioned in early Irish legends as the wild fruit of warriors and they are certainly very juicy and intense in flavour, best eaten 'in situ' rather than collected. But they can be used to make jams, jellies, pies, ices etc. as well as wines and vinegars.

However, those old warriors were wise, as the fruits are packed with readily assimilated minerals, especially iron, making them a good tonic and nerve for extra energy. They also contain an anti-cancer agent, but the use of this and many other medicinal properties of wild raspberries, seem to have been lost in the process of cultivation. Once considered one of the most potent herbs, although it was the leaves and not the fruits that were used. These contain 'fragrine' which has a strengthening, toning and stimulating effect on the female reproductive system aiding all aspects of birth and menstruation. The leaves are astringent and have been used also as a tonic for the digestive system, for diarrhoea, as a gargle for sore throats and for coughs, for soothing fevers and reducing aches and pains; toning all tissues. The leaves make a good tea substitute if wrapped fresh in a wet towel and allowed to ferment for a day or two before drying while the

berries soaked in vinegar make it wonderful as a salad dressing or to soothe winter sore, phlegmy throats.

CRAB APPLE

The next fruit, the crab apple, *Malus sylvestris*, is also in the *Rosaceae* family and though if left naturally is a tree, it is often little more than a bush in hedges and very much overlooked as here it rarely has chance to flower or set fruit. The true wild crab apple is a small deciduous tree with a dense and rounded crown, rough, scaly or spiny bark and twigs that are reddish and spiny bearing short stalked, oval, pointed, toothed, smooth, shiny leaves. The flowers are white to pink, in clusters and are followed by small green to yellow fruits, sometimes flushed with red, that remain on the tree well into winter and it is these, still on the trees or on the ground nearby, that are often the only indication that the trees are there.

It is a tree of old woodland, hedges, old path-sides, green lanes and field boundaries, and can be a conspicuous landscape feature when fully grown. It likes well-drained soils with little competition, is usually solitary but can form groups if it suckers or self seeds in ancient woodland glades. In more recent hedges there are often 'wilding' apples grown from the pips of discarded cultivated ones.

The crab apple has been used since early times, found in Bronze Age burial tombs and Celtic stories where the apple is identified with love and fertility. It is mentioned in Anglo-Saxon poems as one of the herbs given to the world as a healing plant by the god Woden.

Although crab apples vary in their taste, they are usually dry and sour (crabby = bitter) and in the past the fruits were used only after the first frost and either roasted or dried to intensify any natural sugars, or fermented as 'verjuice'. Roasted they were used to accompany game or in hot 'punches', as in Shakespeare's '*crabs hiss in the bowl*'. They do not have high levels of vitamins but are very high in pectin, malic and citric acids, potassium, magnesium, phosphorous, iron, sulphur and manganese. The high pectin content makes them ideal for jams, jellies, 'cheeses' and 'leathers', on their own or with other fruits, as well as for pressing and making cider. As a bonus, the pectin also lowers blood cholesterol levels and helps prevent heart and arterial diseases and it is a general tonic and body cleansing agent as it 'soaks up' toxins.

The fresh juice is high in antibacterial properties and the raw fruit is astringent for diarrhoea and dysentery, as a skin cleanser and refresher or as a poultice for inflammations and sore eyes. The baked fruit is soothing for the stomach and sore throats and cooling for fevers. So even the crab apple may keep the doctor away!

These are just four more of our native fruits and what a wonderful, healthy bounty we could harvest from our hedgerows, waste places and undisturbed woodland edges if only they were left uncut, untidy and unimproved for longer. Already the hedges are being cut into dreary brown blocks and rough edges tidied for winter. How sad and depressing to lose the wild autumn harvest and the flaming autumn colours, leaving swathes of just dull brown for over half the year until spring comes again. Depressing for us, but cruelly devastating for our native wildlife, insects, birds and small mammals. These fruits are all in areas of ancient woodland, hedges or pathways, they are part of our heritage as much as our old buildings and a hugely important gene-pool that we may have to call upon one day. Lets hope they can survive a little longer. This winter look out for those golden crab apples still clinging to the trees and in the spring mark where the gooseberry bushes first break into leaf so that they can be found later and the wild fruit enjoyed as an August treat.

Anne Press





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CONTENTS

PAGE 2	BOTANY HEDGEROW FRUITS
PAGE 4	CHAIRMAN'S FOREWORD
PAGE 5	NATIONAL PARK FACING SERIOUS CHALLENGES
PAGE 6	THE BIRDS IN YOUR GARDEN THE MAGPIE
PAGE 7	TRIBUTE TO JIM BULL A LOYAL WORK COLLEAGUE AND FRIEND
PAGE 8	CORNFIELD FLOWERS PROJECT SAVING RARE ARABLE FLORA FROM EXTINCTION
PAGE 9	HERITAGE - BAY MUSEUM A BAY BUILDING OF NOTE
PAGE 11	GEOLOGY LEWIS HUNTON (1814-1838)
PAGE 12	WHITBY ESK ENERGY AUTUMN UPDATE
PAGE 13	EVENTS THE ESK VALLEY WALK - SUMMER 2014
PAGE 14	AMANUENSIS CRYPTIC CROSSWORD No 66
PAGE 15	HAWKMOTH NATURE NOTES

NORTH YORKSHIRE MOORS ASSOCIATION (NYMA)

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 Christmas, 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

Front Cover: The Robin Hood banner in Bay Museum (see page 9)
Back Cover: Poppies growing in the Yorkshire Wolds

www.north-yorkshire-moors.org.uk

CHAIRMAN'S FOREWORD

ESCAPE TO THE COUNTRY

What does the name "Doves Nest Farm" conjure up in the mind? A quiet rural dwelling, rustling leaves in the trees, birdsong. Doves Nest Farm is a traditional North Yorkshire farm located in the beautiful landscape of the North York Moors National Park. It is surrounded by pleasing views of farmland and woodland with distant views of the sea, it lies on the edge of moorland designated a special area of conservation, a haven for wildlife. The farm is situated within easy walking distance of beauty spots like Maybeck and Falling Foss. It is just over half a mile from the last part of Wainwright's Coast to Coast walk and just four and a half miles, from Robin Hoods Bay on the magnificent North York Moors Heritage coast. The historic seaside town of Whitby is just a ten minute drive.

Anyone could be forgiven for questioning whether Doves Nest Farm is the best place to build the largest polyhalite mine in the world.

NEW PLANNING APPLICATION

A planning application for the mine head site was submitted to the North York Moors National Park Authority by York Potash Ltd in July 2013 and then deferred at the request of the company before finally being withdrawn in February of this year. The intention in 2013 was to transport the polyhalite to Teesside by means of a slurry pipeline and that would have required a separate planning application to National Infrastructure Planning, a department of the Planning Inspectorate. The company has now submitted a new planning application to the North York Moors National Park Authority. The application is for the mine head site situated at Doves Nest Farm along with a mineral transport system (MTS) consisting of an underground conveyor extending from the farm, south of Whitby, to Teesside. The tunnel for the underground conveyor is about 23 miles long and will require four access shafts two of which will be located within the National Park at Doves Nest Farm and Lady Cross Plantation at Egton. The others are at Lockwood Beck (near the junction with the moor road to Castleton and just outside the National Park) and Tockets Lythe Plantation. The access route for all the mining activity and construction traffic is along the A171 Moor Road running through Whitby, towards Scarborough.

A public consultation has been held over the summer consisting of a number of publications outlining the project and a touring exhibition. York Potash representatives were present at the exhibition to answer questions but on balance this has been a promotional exercise with many questions left unanswered. Some of these questions will only be answered by a close examination of the full planning application and we will be examining the details of this over the next few weeks and will submit our response to the National Park when this has been done.

A NEW LEGAL STRUCTURE

In 2012 a new Charities Act came into force which replaced previous Charities Acts and this allowed for a range of new structures. NYMA may benefit from moving to one of the new structures so a discussion paper has been prepared for Council by Janet Cochrane to debate at the next Council meeting in November with a view to looking at what advantages there may be in changing from our present structure.

NYMA was registered as a charity under the Charities Act of 1985 and is presently an Unincorporated Association. There are

four possible options for a future legal structure and these are, to continue as an Unincorporated Association, form a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO), form a Charitable Company, or form a Community Interest Company (CIC).

The most appropriate of these options appears to be a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) a structure that was introduced in 2012. If the outcome of our deliberations at the next Council meeting is to recommend to our members a change of structure then we will look into the procedures that are necessary to make this happen. Our members will be fully informed at all times of any changes we decide to make which will of course be in the interest of the future of NYMA.



THE MOORS RAMBLER

This bus service, which NYMA has sponsored and which is operated by Arriva, has been running between Darlington and Pickering for a trial period of twelve weeks from July 13th to the end of September. There will now be an opportunity to look at passenger numbers and how people have used the Moors Rambler, how many have taken advantage of the guided walks and where people have joined the bus. Having met the bus on two or three occasions at the Danby Moors Centre it has been a pleasure to see how many people have used this public transport to get to the National Park and highlighted how difficult it can be to travel to the national Park from some areas if you do not own a car. The next stage, as to how this service moves forward may be determined by a conference to be held at the end of October which is arranged to discuss the funding of both the Moors Bus and Dales Bus which provide a service to the North York Moors and Yorkshire Dales National Parks. ♦

*Tom Chadwick
NYMA Chairman*

NATIONAL PARK FACING SERIOUS CHALLENGES

“The National Parks of England and Wales have inspired millions of people, giving them healthier, happier and fuller lives. They matter to us out of all proportion to the modest investment of public funds that they represent”

Adrian Philips, Director General of the Countryside Commission 1981-1992

IN 2010 when Adrian Philips penned these lines in his foreword to Derek Statham's book "An Eye to Perceive" he was probably unaware of the extent of the swingeing cuts to the National Park Grant that the North York Moors National Park would be facing along with other National Parks. Over the period of the present government as it continued its programme of public spending cuts, the North York Moors National Park has had its funding support reduced by about 40% in real terms. As Ruth Chambers pointed out in her presentation to our AGM last June, this "fuller and happier life" which Adrian Philips refers to, costs the population less than £1 per head a year for all of the National Parks in England and Wales. In a recent survey conducted by the Association of National Park Authorities, 48% of people thought the amount of £1 was about right and 49% thought more money should be spent on National Parks.

As well as the 40% cut in the Defra grant, the National Park has also had to deal with the cost of the York Potash planning application for mining polyhalite. This has imposed a hugely increased amount of work for the planning department and made it necessary to employ expert consultants to examine the technicalities of the application as well as taking on additional legal advice. The cost to the Park has been in excess of £600,000 for a planning application that the company withdrew in February of this year. The National Park will have to find additional funds to deal with a fresh York Potash planning application when it is submitted at the end of September 2014.

Struggling with the reduced budget and the cost of the York Potash planning application the North York Moors National Park has had to cut back on numerous services. Over the last year or two the educational work has been seriously curtailed and this has had the effect of bringing to a halt the highly successful and educationally

beneficial work with the Juniper re-generation project which involved NYMA working closely with the National Park and schools for over ten years.

Last April the Moors bus service supported by the National Park was ended. By a lucky coincidence NYMA received a bequest which has enabled us to support a new Moors Rambler bus service which has been running from Darlington to Pickering on Sundays for a limited period from July 2014 to the end of September. This service has offered the additional provision of a guided walk each Sunday linked to the bus route through the Park. People without cars find it difficult to travel in to the National Park and the loss of the Moors Bus service has been a serious setback for many, especially elderly people and those on low incomes.

Significantly, in a report produced for 'National Parks England' in May 2013 "Valuing England's National Parks" it had this to say; "A further reduction in the National Park Grant for 2014-15 or beyond will reduce the ability of the National Park Authorities to deliver their core functions and services and also reduce the capacity of National Park Authorities to attract matched or levered funding for projects. All National Parks have been through a significant prioritisation process and have dropped areas of work to manage the reduced income." Recent announcements by the National Park show that front line services like the Ranger Service are now affected by the cuts. As well as voluntary redundancies, there will be compulsory redundancies

made necessary by the existing cuts in the National Park grant as well as budget uncertainties for the future. When areas such as recreation and access become targets of reductions over the coming year then the whole issue of the National Park being able to fulfil its statutory purposes are called into question. It is worth reminding ourselves that encapsulated in the 1949 National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act, National Parks are charged with two main responsibilities. The statutory purposes, which are (a) conserving and enhancing the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the areas; and (b) providing opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of those areas by the public.◆

Tom Chadwick

FOR THOSE INTERESTED...

THE ELGEE MEMORIAL LECTURE 2014

Saturday 6 December, 10.30,

Dorman Museum, Middlesbrough

Speaker: Dr Rick Smith

Topic: The proposed York Potash Project (polyhalite mine)
at Doves Nest Farm, Sneaton, Whitby.

The Elgee Memorial Lecture takes place annually to honour and mark the outstanding contribution made in the 1920s and 30s by Frank Elgee, archaeologist, naturalist, and former curator of the Dorman Museum, Middlesbrough. Elgee, who once lived with his wife Harriet at Commondale, was a great lover of the moors and carried out pioneering work and wrote important books about the area.

This year's lecture is jointly organised by Teesside Local History Society, Cleveland Industrial Archaeology Society, and the Dorman Museum.

The meeting is open to members of the public. Please check with the Museum nearer the time that the arrangements as above still hold.

THE MAGPIE



Jill Pakenham



John Harding

OUR LOVE AFFAIR with garden birds has created heroes and villains, and few species generate the same level of animosity from garden birdwatchers as do Magpies. Perceived as a major enemy of smaller birds, they have been heavily persecuted in the past. They hop and cackle around our towns and cities like the garden bird mafia. Importantly, however, BTO (British Trust for Ornithology) research demonstrates that Magpies are not a cause of declines in songbirds at a national scale.

A member of the Corvid or Crow family, the Magpie is a bold and conspicuous garden visitor. The striking, apparently black and white plumage, together with the harsh chattering 'chacha-chacha' call, is familiar to most of us. They are intelligent and highly adaptive birds enabling them to overcome the challenges presented by the growth of urban areas, but the image of a Magpie hoarding jewellery or other shiny objects in the nest (or elsewhere) is something of a myth and there is no evidence whatsoever that wild Magpies hoard anything other than food!

There is no doubt that Magpies have become more abundant in gardens in recent decades. This increase in urban and suburban populations ties in with a general increase across most habitats, following a decline in the amount of persecution taking place within the wider countryside. Magpies obviously find the urban environment an ideal one in which to live. The abundance of food, together with lower levels of persecution, has resulted in breeding densities higher than those seen in farmland habitats. The benefits of living in association with Man can be seen by the establishment of Magpie populations in the middle of the treeless tundra regions of Russia, where the birds nest on the ground or on buildings, alongside newly established human settlements.

Magpies are sedentary in nature, rarely making long-distance movements and seemingly reluctant to cross large stretches of water.

Seen from a distance, the Magpie appears to be a simple two-tone, black and white bird. However, the black plumage is more subtle in colour than it first appears, with a blue-green iridescent sheen evident at close range. In the open it flies, rising awkwardly, with quick flaps and glides - like a ragged kite. Among trees the species moves confidently, reflecting its agility. On the ground the tail is often held high as the bird 'kangaroo-hops' along. The raucous, cackling, call is given frequently, reflecting the intensely competitive and social nature of this species. Young Magpies have a washed-out appearance and short, stubby tails.

For many people the Magpie is a villain, responsible for the widespread decline of songbirds. Research examining the question of whether Magpies have been responsible for songbird decline has failed to find any evidence to support the notion that they are to blame.

The perceived 'problem' of Magpie predation on songbirds has its roots in the fact that, while Magpie populations have been recovering from former levels of persecution, the populations of songbirds have declined. Alongside this, instances of Magpie predation of eggs and chicks have tended to elicit a strong emotional response from observers. Such a response to nature 'red in tooth and claw' is understandable, but suggestions that Magpie predation is the cause of widespread population declines are unsupported by scientific evidence.

At a local level, Magpies can sometimes be a problem for nesting birds; in fact in many gardens they are probably the second most important predator after the domestic cat. Mind you, in the absence of wild mammals like the Weasel, most garden birds probably still experience lower levels of nest predation than they would in woodlands and farmland hedgerows.

Much of the success of the Magpie comes from the catholic diet and the adaptability that they share with other Corvids. Various invertebrates, especially insects, form the bulk of the diet, but fruit, grain, berries, carrion and small mammals are also taken. The eggs and young of other birds form part of the diet during the breeding season. One of the most interesting aspects of Magpie feeding behaviour is that of food hoarding, a habit shared with other species like Coal Tit, Jay and Nuthatch. In the case of the Magpie, the caching of food items is of a more short-term nature, with perishable items often recovered and eaten within a few days of being stored. Items are typically deposited in a hole in the ground, dug using the bill, and into which food is regurgitated from a small pouch under the tongue.

Like other members of the Crow family, Magpies can be very interesting to watch. They are social birds with a degree of intelligence that has enabled them to adapt to a changing environment. You only need look at the number of Magpie nests alongside many of our new road networks to see how they have learned to exploit the carcasses of animals killed by road traffic. Immature birds gather in non-territory-holding flocks, giving rise to one of the most interesting aspects of Magpie social behaviour, known as ceremonial gatherings. These begin when small groups

of immature birds target the territory of an established pair. Such incursions elicit a noisy response from the territory owners who chase and attack the intruders, rapidly attracting onlookers in the form of neighbouring pairs and other individuals. These intrusions usually last for a few minutes but they can last for much longer before the birds move on to try their luck elsewhere. Since there is a dominance hierarchy within these groups, it seems likely that it will be the dominant male and his mate that seize the annexed ground if the incursion is successful.

The nest is loose and bulky and is made of twigs, with older birds usually extending it to form a dome, it is lined with mud and then with a layer of fine material. They are usually built high in a tree and building can often be seen starting in February though the eggs are not generally laid until April. Nesting is a noisy affair with both birds of the pair chattering away. Incubation starts before laying has finished giving asynchronous hatching (the eggs hatch one at a time) so that the stronger chicks will survive if there is a food shortage.

The number of fledglings per breeding attempt increased strongly until the 1990s but then stabilised, a pattern mirroring the population index, which suggests that changing breeding success has been an important driver of population change. There is little published evidence about the ecological drivers of change. Changes in control of Magpies could have played a role, but their generalist ecology means that they are able to prosper in suburban and intensively farmed landscapes, which is likely to have allowed populations to reach a historically high equilibrium level. ♦

Mike Gray

If you find the lives of our garden birds to be of interest, and would like to join in and count the feathered occupants of your garden, please contact me or visit the BTO Garden BirdWatch website (www.bto.org/gbw). If you know of a local organisation who would like a talk on garden birds call: **Mike Gray 07596 366342** or mikegbw@btinternet.com.

TRIBUTE TO JIM BULL

A LOYAL WORK COLLEAGUE AND FRIEND

JIM WORKED FOR the Council (later Campaign) for National Parks for over 26 years. He was a diligent, loyal work colleague and an essential part of the close CNP team while we worked there. Jim looked after the Friends of National Parks scheme, was the office manager, organised meetings of the Council (and the Park Societies conferences in earlier years), looked after the accounts, acted as the organisation's grammar guru and generally sorted out anything that needed sorting, including the computers. If you asked Jim to help out with something he was always quick to get on the task and when we were out and about with our busy and stressful jobs, he was always the person back in the office you could rely on.

Jim was keen to find ways to save CNP money so that hard won donations could be spent on important campaigns. A good example is when he found a group of muscly South African moving men who carried box after box of the precious CNP archives up and down stairs during the office move – they were a lot cheaper than conventional movers!

Working with Jim was good fun. We used to take it in turns to buy chocolate and biscuits to keep us going through office hours and Jim liked nothing better than to go out for a mid-morning pasty run to the local Greggs.

Outside work Jim was an enthusiastic volunteer for the British Trust for Conservation Volunteers – often driving the minibus or leading weekend long conservation tasks.

With his academic background (PhD) and intelligence he could have had a very different career but chose National Parks because he loved their open spaces and believed in them. We will always remember him for his integrity, compassion and commitment to a cause in which we all believed.

He lived in Clapham Junction close to the CNP office and working there played a huge part in his life. We knew that Jim was often depressed and we did our best to support him, including during the very difficult time when he was made redundant from CNP in 2012. Tragically, Jim took his own life in September 2014. He was in his mid-50s when he died.



Through all the challenges it was Jim that kept the charity ticking – the most consistent person as others came and went. If he hadn't performed that job as he did for such a long time the family of National Parks would have been so much the poorer for not having him there. We are all very grateful to Jim for the work that he did. ♦

Ruth Chambers and Vicki Elcoate (who worked with Jim for much of his time at CNP between 1992 and 2012)

SAVING RARE ARABLE FLORA FROM EXTINCTION IN NORTH-EAST YORKSHIRE



Volunteer grown Prickly poppy (*Papaver argemone*)

AS WE DRAW slowly to a close on another year and the wildflowers have faded, the seeds from one particular group of plants in the North York Moors are eagerly awaited by the Cornfield Flowers Project – those of our native arable wildflowers, which are some of the rarest and most struggling species in North-east Yorkshire.

The plight of these cornfield specialists is stark - of the UK's rarest wildflowers that have suffered the greatest declines in the last 50 years, 60% are arable plants. Seven have become extinct during this period, and a further 54 are considered at risk. Since its creation in 1999, our Project has had the single aim of reversing this decline in the North-east Yorkshire area. 15-years on, and the results are encouraging.

Working closely with arable farmers and volunteers from within the National Park and beyond, the painstaking task of tracking down these rare plants and collecting seed has progressed well, and we have now managed to find, and conserve, the majority of plants originally identified as being at risk in Nan Sykes' survey work of the 80's and 90's. Through the creation of protected headlands in the arable fields of our volunteer farmers, safe-havens have been provided for these plants to be reintroduced. With the help of local naturalists and gardeners, we've been able to increase seed stocks of some of our rarest species from just a handful to many thousands, allowing us to sow these plants at a greater scale (and increasing their likelihood of survival) than was ever imaginable in the early days.

We directly conserve and reintroduce nearly 50 different arable plant species, from the endearing but fleeting Prickly poppy (*Papaver argemone*) that drops its petals by midday; the iconic Cornflower (*Centaurea cyanus*) – much used in commercial wildflower seed mixes but the true native plant is now very rare; Shepherd's-needle (*Scandix pecten-veneris*) with its elongated seed-pods that resemble needles; and the tiny but charming Venus's-looking-glass (*Legousia hybrida*), smallest member of the bellflower family that only opens its petals on sunny days.

One of the greatest successes however has been the 'Critically Endangered' Corn buttercup (*Ranunculus arvensis*) an annual arable specialist of the common buttercup family. In 1999, the last known plant was found in a local field (we have never recorded it in the wild since), and 32 seeds were recovered from it. The following year, our volunteers had managed to cultivate nine



Native Cornflower (*Centaurea cyanus*)

from this seed and it was introduced to our nursery bed at the Ryedale Folk Museum, where the lengthy process of bulking up plant stock began in earnest. 15 years later, Corn buttercup has now been introduced to over a dozen farms, and this year our sites at Silpho and Terrington have been an amazing success, producing tens-of-thousands of plants, bearing hundreds-of-thousands of seeds. Without this nurturing and careful reintroduction, Corn buttercup would certainly have been lost from the landscape of the North York Moors.

Within the wider boundaries of the Project we continue to make significant discoveries, including the Critically Endangered Shepherd's-needle found growing on our volunteer farm at Hunmanby – only the third time we have recorded this species in the wild in 15 years; Purple ramping-fumitory (*Fumaria purpurea*) re-found in North-east Yorkshire after 95 years; and just this summer a hugely significant record of Small-flowered catchfly (*Silene gallica*) on another volunteer farm in East Yorkshire, last seen over 70 years ago and declared regionally extinct – happily no longer.

We can never afford to be complacent though, and sadly the



Nan Sykes with original Corn buttercup, 1999



Corn buttercup plants by the thousand, Silpho, 2014

survival of cornfield flowers perpetually hangs in the balance. As annual species that only grow in very dynamic and fragile

environments, entire communities can so easily be lost in one year from a simple change in the arable crop management, not to disregard the natural challenges these plants already face. As we look to the longer term future of these species, and that of the Project, our hope is that we've managed to enthuse enough local communities to adopt the fight for these plants, and passed on sufficient knowledge to allow them to successfully care for these sometimes under-appreciated, but always deeply enchanting, true rarities.◆

*Tom Normandale
Project Officer, Cornfield Flowers Project*

For more information on the Cornfield Flowers Project:
www.northyorkmoors.org.uk/looking-after/our-projects/cornfield-flowers-project

HERITAGE - BAY MUSEUM

A BAY BUILDING OF NOTE

TUCKED AWAY in the heart of Baytown is a small building like no other in the village. Faced in stone and with mullioned, lead paned windows, the words carved in stone above the door reveal that this is, or once was, the Coroner's Room. To the left of the stout oak door is a second, identical door, above which is carved a stone cross. This was once the village mortuary.

At a time when shipwrecks and death at sea were all too common, drowned sailors washed ashore in the bay were often taken to the vicarage to await the visit of the Coroner. Perhaps for this reason the Reverend R. Jermyn Cooper, Vicar of Fylingdales Parish from 1859 to 1916, purchased a small cottage in the old village in 1891 on a 1000 year lease. At his own expense he had the downstairs room converted into a Coroner's Room, and a mortuary built against its east wall. Unfortunately there are no Coroner's records for this period so we cannot be sure whether a Coroner's Court was ever held. There is however good reason to believe that the mortuary was used on occasion. Elderly locals still recall running fast past the mortuary when they were children!

With a gradual reduction in deaths at sea the building became redundant and in 1900 the Reverend Cooper suggested that the Coroner's Room should be used rent-free as a Reading Room for the people of Bay, on the understanding that it would always be available for its original purpose. A Reading Room Committee

was formed and newspapers and periodicals were provided. A partition between the two upper rooms was removed and in 1902 a billiard table was purchased and installed in the upper room.

Some years later the "Reading Room" became the "Library and Reading Room" with a Committee and appointed Trustees. It remained rent-free and Reverend Cooper undertook to provide book-cases. They were sturdy and well-made - some remain in the upper room. A Mr. Wade Wilton gave 100 books and the Congregational Church Committee gave 200. It was arranged that W.H. Smith and Sons, London, at a charge of £10.0s.0d. per annum, would supply "30 of the newest books, to be frequently changed". The Reading Room and Library was officially opened on 5th June 1909.

In August 1916, the Reverend Cooper died and his eldest daughter, Margaret, endorsed all that her father had said in 1909. The premises remained rent-free. Records show that Oddfellows Lodge meetings, Conversational French classes, Lectures and Ambulance classes were held in the building. The Mortuary was offered to, and accepted by, Fylingdales Parish Council. Some years later, occupants of a nearby cottage used it as a store-room.

The Reading Room and Library flourished. Members on duty sat at their table, recording borrowers' names and the names of the books they borrowed, receiving subscriptions from members, ►



visiting and local, pointing out what books were in what bookcase and indicating whether the books chosen were, or were not, entirely suitable to the borrower! They talked to visitors and answered questions about Bay and Fylingdales. They also walked considerable distances to take books to local members who were physically unable to walk down to Bay and up again. The Library was, and remained, an independent subscription library throughout its existence.

Funds were raised through an Annual Visitors' Concert and flag whist drives were held in the Parish Hall, organised and run by the Committee and members. They were very popular, both with visitors and with residents. In July 1926, Miss Cooper assigned to the Trustees "the Reading Room and Library and the land on which it stands" and at the Visitors' concert in the Parish Hall the following month she presented the Deed of Assignment to the Trustees.

It was perhaps the coming of the Mobile Library Van from Whitby, which was able to reach remote as well as central parts of Fylingdales with its good selection of books, combined with the arrival of television in the home, that produced a sad decline in use and membership in the 1960s and 1970s. The last meeting recorded in the Minute Book was that of the Trustees in March 1977.

In 1980 a newly formed Museum Trust organised its first exhibition in the Coroner's Room and continues to flourish.

Displays describe the old days of sail, fishing, shipwrecks, lifeboats, smuggling, coast erosion and much more local history.

The two prize processions in the collection are also the largest and the smallest! The huge colourful banner of the Robin Hood and Little John Friendly Society hangs on the stairway. One of five friendly societies in the village during the 19th and early 20th centuries, the Robin Hood and Little John Society held an annual church service and dinner preceded by a parade around the village at which the banner took pride of place.

The smallest treasure is a tiny, heart shaped coin or token minted in 1669 and issued by Roger Dickinson, landlord of the Robin Hood and Little John public house. This token was one of a number issued by landlords and shopkeepers throughout the country in the reign of Charles II when small coinage was at a premium. The tokens only had a limited life as in 1672 Charles issued his own copper coinage and it became an offence to deal in tokens.

It is perhaps appropriate that a Bay building with such a long and interesting history should now house memorabilia of the parish in which it is situated.

Bay Museum is run entirely by volunteers and is open during school holidays. Further information is available on the web site at museum.rhbay.co.uk or email museum@rhbay.co.uk ♦

Alan Staniforth

LEWIS HUNTON (1814-1838)



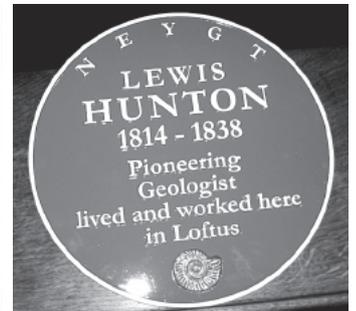
ON SUNDAY 14 SEPTEMBER, the North East Yorkshire Geology Trust organised a bicentennial memorial day celebrating the life of pioneering geologist Lewis Hunton as part of its 'A Life Worth Celebrating' project (funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund).

Early in the nineteenth century, at a time when most scientists were battling to reconcile their faith with controversial new evidence found in rocks and fossils, Lewis Hunton from Loftus in East Cleveland was boldly scouring the high sea cliffs of Hummersea and writing a ground-breaking scientific paper at the remarkable young age of just 21!

In and around Loftus where he grew up, the insatiably curious Lewis discovered from his meticulous investigations that ammonite fossils could be used as indicators to accurately distinguish and identify differing layers of rock strata of varying ages, no matter where they appeared in the world – his logical thinking and leap of imagination gave birth to the crucial scientific discipline that was to become known as bio-stratigraphy and laid one of the foundation stones of the then burgeoning science of geology.

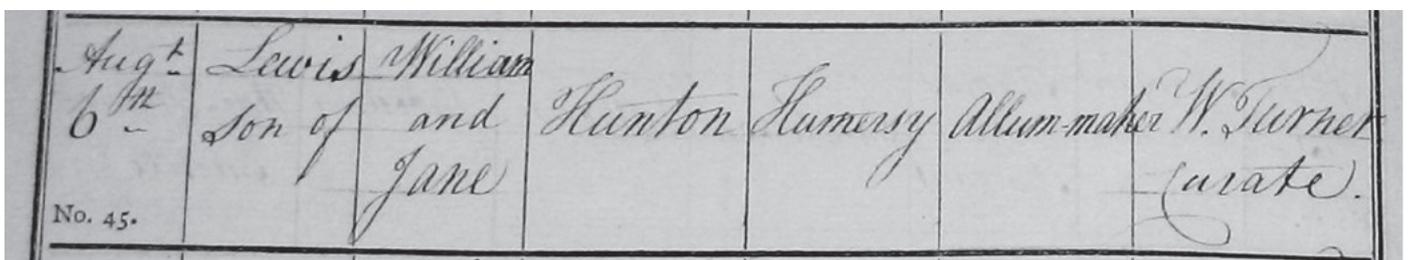
The celebratory event was held at Loftus Town Hall. Hugh Torrens (Emeritus Professor of History of Science and Technology, Keele University), co-author of the only academic paper on the work of Lewis Hunton, declared the day a most fitting tribute to a notable scientist who was probably the youngest man ever to be featured in the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*. Torrens stressed the importance of Hunton's work and how the young scientist was inspired to carry out his scientific investigations on a stretch of coastline that fully merits World Heritage Site status for its outstanding geological significance.

An exhibition prepared for the event displayed the geology of the coastal area that Lewis Hunton would have so keenly observed at the workings of his father's alum quarries, including an impressive collection of plant fossils from Yorkshire's Jurassic Coast and Marske Quarry. Two of the Trust's enthusiastic Geonaut-Interns



Jake Noble, who is soon to read Geology at Durham University, and John Dickinson, currently studying at Prior Purslove College, Guisborough, were tireless in explaining to interested visitors the exhibits of local geology, as well as describing their involvement in the Trust's work.

The event saw the launch of a fascinating exhibition designed by the geo-conservation group, Tees Valley RIGS (Regionally



Important Geological Site), which will tour round local schools, libraries, museums and other venues. The group have published a guided walk visiting the main sites of interest associated with Lewis Hunton's life and work.

At 3 o'clock, Revd Adam Gaunt led a Service of Thanksgiving, which took place in St Leonard's Church where the Lewis Hunton had been baptised 200 years ago. A few more surprises awaited the members of the congregation. Revd Adam had invited the Bishop of Whitby, Paul Ferguson, to officiate and deliver the sermon on this special occasion. The Baptism Register featuring the baptismal entry of 1814 for Lewis was on display, as well as a separate Death Register containing the entry (1827) for his mother's death when Lewis was just thirteen years of age. In his eulogy, Professor Hugh Torrens recalled the remarkable life and achievements of Lewis Hunton, the young man from Loftus who died aged only 23, in Nîmes in France.

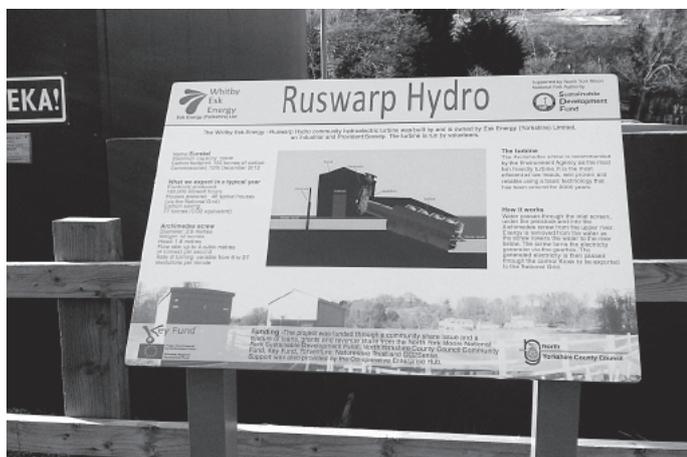
GREEN PLAQUES

As part of the broader Hunton project, two green plaques, commissioned and designed by the NE Yorkshire Geology Trust and cast in alloy by local firm, Robinson Engineering, Steel Foundry of Liverton Mines, were on display in the church. These commemorative plaques are to be sited permanently, one in Loftus Town and the other near the house at Hummersea (old spelling Humersy) where Lewis Hunton lived and completed his pioneering work nearly two centuries ago.

Director of NE Yorkshire Geology Trust Mike Windle was delighted at the success of the day's event and thanked everyone who had been involved.

The Lewis Hunton Project 'A Life Worth Celebrating' will continue into 2015 with many more events planned. Anyone interested in helping and supporting the project should contact Mike Windle: contact@neyorksgologytrust.com website: www.neyorksgologytrust.com

WHITBY ESK ENERGY AUTUMN 2014 UPDATE



THE WHITBY ESK ENERGY SCHEME is now into its second full year of operation. In addition to running the community hydroelectric scheme the Esk Energy team has been busy showing people round the site, working with several universities to provide opportunities for students to experience a real engineering project and supporting other community hydro groups through a peer mentoring scheme.

Between April 2013 and March 2014 we exported 107,000 kWh of electricity to the National Grid. This was less than the average we would expect due to the exceptionally dry summer in 2013 and the head losses which have still not been eliminated from the inlet screen. A new inlet screen is due to be installed in early October.

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.

During 2013-14, we worked with Jessica Watson, a 3rd year undergraduate civil engineering student from Teesside University. As part of her degree she developed a mathematical model of the turbine. We are now also working with Leeds University to explore how their students can make links with our project.

Through funding from the Cabinet Office Centre for Social Action, Esk Energy is helping to mentor other community hydro

groups based on the experience we have gained from the Whitby Esk Energy project. The funding is supporting the further development of a 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.

The Esk Energy team is delighted that Mike Ford, one of our Directors, has been voted Green Energy Champion 2014 at the Community Energy Awards ceremony in Oxford on 4th September. Esk Energy (Yorkshire) Limited, in conjunction with the Esk Valley Community Energy Group, nominated Mike for the award. As a founding member of the EVCEG, Mike has given talks, hosted visits to his house and visited other people's homes when requested. Not only has he undertaken much of the renovation work in his Victorian property himself, to incorporate many carbon reducing features, but he has also measured the difference these have made. This information was used, by his wife Debbie, to write a series of articles for a local magazine and fed into a case study for a Green Open Homes event. Without Mike's knowledge and expertise (much of it gained through researching issues as they arose) and unwillingness to give up in the face of many barriers, our community hydro would not now be generating green electricity.

If you would like to be kept up-to-date with the Whitby Esk Energy project then visit our website www.whitbyeskenenergy.org.uk and sign up to receive our newsletter.◆

Caryn Loftus

THE ESK VALLEY WALK – SUMMER 2014.

SO FAR, SO GOOD (BUT NOT THE RAILWAY – SEE BELOW!)

On Saturday 6th September a group of NYMA members and friends completed their 5th leg of the Esk Valley Walk. Disappointingly, the walk started off rather wet, which frustratingly followed a week of very pleasant September sunshine. Although the conditions were a little damp and dull, it proved to be a most beautiful route and the weather did not quash the walkers' enthusiasm or put them off their stride.

Leaving Lealholm at the start of the 6 mile leg, the group walked along the broad path running adjacent to the placid River Esk, arriving at Rake Farm where the walkers paused to admire the beautiful old stone buildings and learn a little about its history.

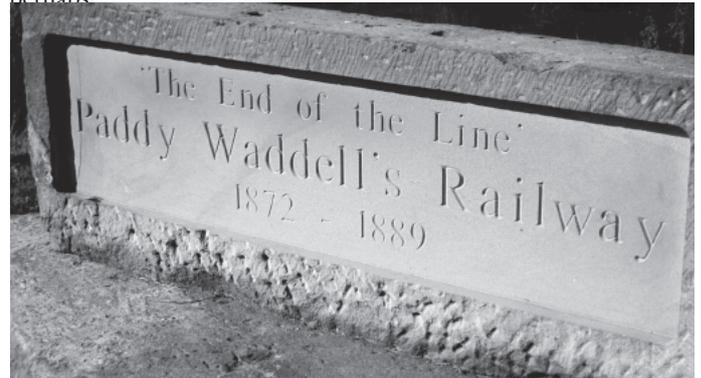
They also learned about the infamous Paddy Waddell's Railway. The route of this link-line was intended to transport ironstone from the extensive deposits to be found on the northern edge of the North York Moors and would have run close by the walkers' route and join with the North Eastern Railway near Glaisdale. However, funds dried up and after two years hard work the venture was finally officially stopped and abandoned by act of Parliament in 1899. Alas, the best laid plans . . .

Interestingly, John Waddell was in fact not Irish, but a Scotsman, a Victorian civil engineer and contractor from Edinburgh. He had worked on a wide range of contracts including Putney Road Bridge (with Joseph Bazalgette as chief engineer, no less!) to schools in Scotland and also on the construction of a number of successful local railways such as the Loftus – Whitby – Scarborough lines. However, ironically, it is the failed Cleveland Extension Mineral Line CEML that was never completed that bears his name, or at least half of it. Waddell employed an Irish foreman called Gallagher to oversee the building of the ill-fated railway and it was from this association that the composite name Paddy Waddell originated.

Continuing across fields and through beautiful mature woodland, always with the Esk salmon river close by, the walkers stopped at Glaisdale Station near Beggars' Bridge to take lunch in the waiting room (sheltered from the rain!). After lunch the route

climbed up through Glaisdale Woods following an ancient trod that ran almost all the way to Egton. Here the path went through Egton Estate, past the old toll cottage with its quaint sign, and on to the end of this section of the walk at the railway village of Grosmont, the headquarters of the highly successful North Yorkshire Moors Steam Railway NYMR with its picturesque 15 mile long line passing through Goathland Station (of Harry Potter fame), the dramatic glacial Newtondale, and on to the small Market town of Pickering lying at the south side of the NYM National Park.

An interesting and lovely ramble through superb countryside: very enjoyable, whatever the weather. See you on the next walk perhaps?



LAST NYMA WALK OF THE YEAR!

Saturday 6 December, meet at Danby Moors Centre for 10.30 start

Valerie Cunningham, NYMA member, has kindly offered to lead a walk from Danby Moors Centre for those members and friends who are interested. Walk will be along Ainthorpe Rigg, returning via Little Fryup and Forester's Lodge, passing the Holly Wood (7 miles). Alternative shorter route may be decided as weather conditions dictate. Just turn up at Danby Moors Centre for walk starting at 10.30. Café (coffee and mince pies?), moors display, book, card and gift shop, and art gallery - if bad weather prevents walk!

Would any NYMA member like to lead a short walk in February 2015?

CROSSWORD ANSWERS

Clues across: 1 privet 5 excise 8 Klondike 9 oink 10 thea 11 sinister 13 crematorium 15 herbent 17 Eden 19 pine 20 athletic 21 dexter 22 cognac
Clues down: 2 & 6 Ralph Cross (Young and Old) 3 vintage 4 Tirdale 5 Eve 7 sunbeam 12 neolithic 13 crevice 14 iceberg 16 incept 18 Erica 20 air
Anagram Answer: Urra Moor (at 454 metres)

"QUOTABLE QUOTES"

A Visit to a remote moorland wayside inn in the 1930s

And now, almost within smelling distance of the lonely inn, I put on a final spurt down Blakey Rigg. It seemed a long two miles and the rain lashed me all the way, but at last the stone building loomed out of the distance, and I hurried within.

If you have ever fought your way for five hours over the moors, through stinging rain and dense mist, you will understand how grateful I was for the warmth of a fire and the shelter of a roof – but not otherwise.

The little Lion Inn at Blakey is not a luxurious house, it is simply a primitive roadside cottage with an ale licence; but the innkeeper and his lady bestirred themselves to provide me with a good turf fire and a room to change in. I was drenched to the skin and had to strip accordingly: even the contents of my rucksack were soaked, so I had to make shift with borrowed plumes while my own dried. Meanwhile there was ham and eggs and Lion ale, that soon put me to rights again. While I fed, my host told me how he spent his life working on the roads around (he had been rained off that day!) or cutting turf or peat on the moors. Turf (I suppose everyone knows) is the top surface heather and undergrowth: whereas peat is won painfully from the bog. How old the inn is I cannot say, but Mr Johnson said it once had a Roman sign swinging outside. But this I do know: that if I were the brewer-in-charge I would convert it into a real noble tavern, as an inn standing at such a breezy altitude deserves to be*. At present there is no spare accommodation at all, and as soon as my garments had stopped dripping I had to get into some of them again and push on to Farndale.

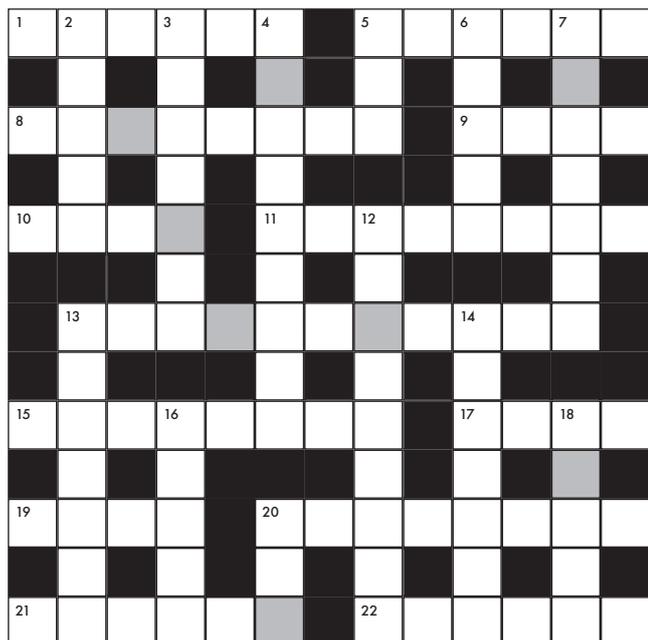
As I stepped out on to the Rigg road (half nude like a footballer) the wind roared at me like ten lions and the fiendish mist fully justified the innkeeper's remark that *"It was roking up rarely again."* Actually it was driving past the door like the smoke of battle and I could only catch an occasional glimpse of the road before me.

Author's footnote *The lion inn is now in the hands of Mr and Mrs Ashby who have made improvements and do afternoon tea. But there is still no accommodation for visitors. (Editor's note: How things have changed!)

Extract taken from *Striding Through Yorkshire* (1938) by A J Brown.

CROSSWORD

CRYPTIC CROSSWORD No 66 BY AMANUENSIS



Use each letter from the squares highlighted in grey to solve the anagram. Use the boxes below for your answer.

Clue: Highest point of the North Yorkshire Moors (4,4)

ACROSS:

- 1 Private on manoeuvre removes a hedge (6)
- 5 Tax exercise without hesitation (6)
- 8 People were in a great rush to go there (8)
- 9 Animal sound heard when nothing found in pen (4)
- 10 Hear about a bird that never gets off the ground (4)
- 11 Left mysteriously treacherous (8)
- 13 Where some people choose to make their final exits (11)
- 15 Perhaps you can get a double dose of this disease? (8)
- 17 5 down once lived here (4)
- 19 Yearn for a tree (4)
- 20 On track to be fit and strong? (8)
- 21 On the right side (6)
- 22 Spirit in a bottle (6)

DOWN:

- 2&6 Yes, but which one - Young or Old? (5,5)
- 3 Five in time to long period of special year (7)
- 4 The most likely NYMs valley to fall down in, perhaps? (9)
- 5 She was expelled from 17 across (3)
- 6 see 2 down
- 7 Shining light from afar? (7)
- 12 These people worked with stone many, many years ago (9)
- 13 Crack Indian tribe captures little Victor (7)
- 14 Hazard to vessels is mostly below the surface (7)
- 16 Clumsy pet in turmoil (5)
- 18 She grows up on the moors, perhaps (5)
- 20 Atmospheric tune? (3)

ANSWERS ON PAGE 13

TRAPPING MOTHS & OTHER INSECTS

Running a moth trap in my Esk valley back garden on a regular basis gives me an insight into the moth species and their abundance in my area. However the light trap also attracts other species of insects. Beetles can often be found hiding at the bottom of the trap, big black ones that exude a pungent substance from their rear end when disturbed are rather unwelcome, but the large brown Cockchafer which dive-bombs the light trap with a kamikaze effort seem harmless enough. It always surprises me to discover small black water beetles too; we tend to forget that they can fly as well as swim. I was even more surprised to find a giant water-beetle scurrying about, causing havoc with the caught moths. After being rescued I placed it in my small garden pond and it seemed quite contented and at home, being very visible there for several weeks.

DAMSELFLIES & DRAGONFLIES

On two occasions I have noticed damselflies that have been attracted by the trap light, both in this case Emerald damselflies. These beautiful creatures can be found amongst tall vegetation on moorland ponds and must evidently travel some distance on an evening, having managed to fly to and find my low lying garden in the valley. Only once have I seen a true dragonfly at the light and that was a lovely common hawkler.

WASPS & HONEY BEES

Parasitic wasps (*Ichneumon*) are regular visitors and they look rather menacing with their skinny ant-like bodies and sting-like ovipositors. These odd-looking creatures are very understudied in Yorkshire, but Bill Ely is making a determined effort to rectify the situation by studying and identifying as many as he can lay his hands on (carefully I add!). Quite a few specimens that I have collected and passed onto him have ended up in the collections of local museums.

Honey bees and wasps find their way into the moth trap too, so care must be taken whilst emptying the contents so as to avoid

unwelcome stings, sedges arrive as numerous as moths and I have even had a very rare house cricket as a visitor. Being a keen naturalist, it is always fascinating to me to find in my moth trap rare insects that inhabit our surrounding area. Alongside a myriad of my targeted moths, these additional visitors are fascinating and an added bonus.

SNAKES & ADDERS

It was very pleasing during this warm summer to see quite a few adders whilst studying the butterflies and moths on the moors. Although they fascinate me, adders still make the hairs stand up on the back of my neck. Despite disturbing them on a regular basis, I have never had one attempt a strike on me or anyone else; they hiss and expand their bodies but won't waste their venom and energy unless they perceive their life is threatened. How on earth someone claimed to have been bitten three times by one adder is quite implausible to me! Adders, unlike grass snakes, give birth to live young. This enables them to survive in our cooler climate. Grass snakes are a rarity this far North and I've personally never seen one, most reported cases of grass snakes being seen locally turn out in fact to be slowworms. I often wonder how numerous adders are on the moors. I recently went for a run along Oakley walls and noticed three dead adders on the road, between Poverty Hill and Lealholm Bank top, all reasonably fresh. A shame that they should die in this way.

LEAVE WELL ALONE!

If you are fortunate enough to come across the beautiful adder whilst out and about, enjoy it but please just leave well alone. It will not try harm you unless you pick it up or provoke it. And always remember that adders are not poisonous, as it is often erroneously claimed. They are in fact venomous (it is the venom that is poisonous!). After all if you were to eat an Adder it would probably not make you ill, therefore it is in itself not poisonous! A little pedantic perhaps, but worth clearing up this point.

Hawkmoth



Adder



Dragonfly bee

Photo: Dave Moore

In Flanders Fields

In Flanders fields the poppies grow
Between the crosses, row on row
That mark our place, and in the sky
The larks, still bravely singing, fly
Scarce heard amid the guns below

We are the dead, short days ago
We lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow
Loved and were loved, and now we lie
In Flanders fields

Take up our quarrel with the foe:
To you from failing hands we throw
The torch; be yours to hold it high.
If you break faith with us who die
We shall not sleep, though poppies grow
In Flanders fields.

John McCrae

This short poem was written in 1915 by John McCrae, a Canadian physician serving on the front. He wrote it following the death in action of a close friend and fellow soldier, Alex Helmer, at the second battle of Ypres. It was first published in Punch Magazine (1915) having previously been rejected by The Spectator. Since that time the poem has gone on to become one of the most popular and most quoted war poems of the Great War. The poem's references to the red poppies that grew over the graves of fallen soldiers resulted in the remembrance poppy becoming one of the World's most recognised memorial symbols for servicemen who have died in conflict.

