

VOICE OF THE MOORS

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THE MAGAZINE OF THE NORTH YORKSHIRE MOORS ASSOCIATION (NYMA)

- ◆ BOTANY - GOOSEGRASS AND FAMILY
- ◆ OLD ST. STEPHEN'S CHURCH, ROBIN HOOD'S BAY
- ◆ WHERE ARE THE SKYLARKS?
- ◆ KEEPING A LOOKOUT FOR THE BARN OWL
- ◆ CROSSWORD
- ◆ HAWKMOTH - NATURE NOTES



GOOSEGRASS AND FAMILY

GOOSEGRASS, or cleavers, sticky weed, sticky willy, catch weed, stickyback, cleggers, the many names for *Galium aparine* indicate its long, close association with mankind over the years; well known to us as children when we surreptitiously stuck 'tails' of the long, trailing, clinging stems to each others backs.

The names reflect this stickiness, all parts of the plant being covered by tiny curved, hook-like bristles that enable it to cling to and clamber up other vegetation to reach the light needed for growth. This also means it will cling to fur, wool and clothing, thus aiding seed distribution and the species name, *aparine*, also means to seize, and cleavers or clivers to cling. The other common name, goosegrass, refers to its use as a chicken and goose fattening food while the Latin *Galium* comes from 'milk', the rough, sticky stems being used in the past by shepherds in many countries as a sieve to remove hair and other impurities from milk.

SCOURGE OF GARDENERS

At this time of the year we see both start and finish of its annual growth cycle, the old dry, brown stems still clinging to and sometimes covering the fences and the hedges that have not been too severely slashed, giving them a wild, unruly appearance. A closer look under these, in their protected bases, reveals hundreds of little seedlings beginning to sprout, from the start of the year, if not before, almost unnoticed. They are one of the first seeds to germinate in the year and they grow rapidly amongst the other vegetation until they produce dense, tangles that can smother and drag down the surrounding plants. The long, square stems can reach 1.5 m. long and are clothed for all this length in distinct whorls of 6 to 8 elliptical, pointed leaves, although these are much rounder in the young seedlings. Tiny white-green, four-petalled flowers appear amongst the leaves in late spring and these develop into the round, green-purple fruits that dry hard and brown by the end of the year. For a seemingly rather fragilely-stemmed plant, it is very deeply and strongly rooted and re-sprouts readily if broken. It is common in hedgerows, banks and waste ground, preferring fertile soil and can be the scourge of gardeners with its large volume of seeds that rapidly germinate over winter while no one is watching, growing quickly if left unchecked into matted masses that can choke surrounding plants!

VERY USEFUL

But it is a very useful plant being high in vitamins. The early small seedlings make a palatable salad, tasting 'green' rather like pea shoots, or as a green spring vegetable, in soups and stir fries, any developing bristles disintegrating when cooked. Later it can be made into a tea or the juice extracted as a tonic. Legend has it that, although it was used to fatten geese, it makes a good slimming aid for us! With nettles, it makes a light beer and as well as using it to strain their milk, shepherds used its coagulation properties to curdle the milk to make cheeses.

It should always be used fresh and as young as possible as many of its properties change on drying. The exception to this are the seeds, which when dry, have been used, roasted, to make a good coffee substitute, perhaps not surprising as it belongs to the same family, *Rubiaceae*, as the coffee bush. The unripe seeds, however, were used to top the pins of lace-makers.

MEDICINAL

But it has also been greatly prized for its medicinal properties. It appears to promote and stimulate the lymphatic and urine flows, removing waste products and protecting and toning the systems, a diuretic and lymphatic cleanser. It is mildly laxative, astringent, anti-inflammatory and anti-oxidant, keeping the body healthy inside and out. It has been particularly used as a tea or juice for swollen lymph glands, glandular fever, tumours, nodules, adenoids, cystitis, painful urination, stomach ache and also many skin and joint problems, the latter due to its blood cleansing action. External compresses have been used on bruises, grazes and other wounds, bites, sunburn, freckles, burns, as a cream for psoriasis and the juice for earache. A medicine chest in one, but it really does need to be used freshly picked.

The tea can also be used as a deodorant, in the bath or under arms, and it makes a good anti-dandruff hair rinse, keeping the scalp healthy. And one final use, the root provides a red dye, though not as strong as that from the madder plant, another member of this family that was extensively used in the past.

OTHER FAMILY MEMBERS

Other members of the family share some of these properties. Ladies bedstraw (*G. verum*), yellow flowered and of more calcareous soils, has been used in cheese making, especially the more yellow ones, and to stem bleeding, though better known for its use as a strewing herb and to stuff pillows and mattresses due to its honey-like smell and ability to repel fleas. Sweet woodruff (*G. odoratum*), dark green with white flowers and found in old open woodland was also used for pillows and mattresses due to its sweet hay smell when dried and its sedative effect, said to dispel melancholy, in pot-pourri and in cosmetics as it 'fixes' other perfumes. Fresh sprigs were added to

white wine in Germany to make their special May-time drink. The early and overlooked crosswort (*G. cruciata* /*Cruciata laevipes*) of rough grass and hedge bottoms is a wound healer and appetite stimulant. But the heath bedstraw (*G. saxatile*), a very common carpet-forming perennial of our upper acidic grasslands, often so small to be only noticed when the pure white flowers are out, hardly gets a mention as to its possible uses, neither do the other bedstraws, hedge, marsh and fen, all occasionally found locally.

So it is the one best-known to us all, the least attractive and most disliked by growers and gardeners, goosegrass or cleavers that is by far the most useful of the whole family. ♦

Anne Press



Photos: Nan Sykes



NYMA

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Elaine Wisdom

Association Treasurer

Brian Pearce
140 Newton Road
Great Ayton
Middlesbrough TS9 6DL
brian.pearce11@btinternet.com

Hon. Secretary

Janet Cochrane
The Forge, Fangdale Beck,
North Yorkshire, TS9 7LE
janetcochrane55@gmail.com

Membership Secretary

Gerald King
5 Cleveland View, Faceby
Middlesbrough, TS9 7DE
Tel. 01642 701051

Walks Coordinator

Heather Mather
Ainthorpe
Tel. 01287 669104

'Voice of the Moors' articles to:

Albert Elliot
Piper House, 54 Church Street,
Castleton, Whitby, YO21 2EL
Tel. 01287 660137
email: elliot142@btinternet.com

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CONTENTS

PAGE 2	BOTANY GOOSEGRASS AND FAMILY
PAGE 4	CHAIRMAN'S FOREWORD PLAN FOR NATIONAL PARKS
PAGE 5	PRESIDENT'S PIECE A FEW OF MY LEAST FAVOURITE THINGS
PAGE 6	OLD ST. STEPHEN'S CHURCH, ROBIN HOOD'S BAY
PAGE 10	WHERE ARE THE SKYLARKS?
PAGE 12	KEEPING A LOOKOUT FOR THE BARN OWL
PAGE 13	EVENTS AND WALKS
PAGE 14	AMANUENSIS CRYPTIC CROSSWORD No 71
PAGE 14	NYMA PRESIDENT'S AWARDS 2016
PAGE 15	HAWKMOTH NATURE NOTES

Notice of the 2016

NYMA ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Saturday June 11th at 2.00 p.m.

To be held at Danby Moors Centre

Guest speaker NYMA President Ian Carstairs OBE

"There is always a Chance"

Thirty-five years of taking on challenges for our natural,
built and cultural heritage.

Tea and coffee will be available for members attending the meeting

A short walk will be arranged for members in the morning

Walk will start from the Centre at 11.00 a.m. returning for c. 12.30.

For those who wish it, lunch can be taken at the Woolly Sheep Café
at the Centre.

Contact for the walk is Dave & Cal Moore

Telephone 01287 669648.

Front Cover: The beautiful barn owl

Back Cover: The Flying Scotsman steaming through Newtondale

www.north-yorkshire-moors.org.uk



PLAN FOR NATIONAL PARKS

8-POINT PLAN FOR ENGLAND'S NATIONAL PARKS

We welcome the 8-Point Plan for England's National Parks, which has been announced by the government. The plan is introduced by the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs the Rt. Hon. Elizabeth Truss MP, who has this to say:

"National Parks can be inspiring landscapes for everyone. I want more young people to experience these natural wonders. My ambition is for the generation growing up now to be better connected to nature than my own".

The plan highlights the attributes of National Parks, which have long been appreciated since they were first created in the 1950's. It sets out 8 pointers with the aim of *'putting National Parks at the heart of the way we think about the environment and how we manage it for future generations'*. It goes on to say *'The special qualities that can be found in these landscapes underpin the economic activities – from traditional upland farming to tourism, food and other businesses – that thrive in our National Parks. As more and more tourists from all over the world visit our country, we want the numbers who experience the natural wonders of our National Parks to grow. People visit National Parks for recreation: to volunteer their time, to encounter history, to be outdoors in these invigorating spaces. National Parks are national assets in which everyone can share'*.

The plan is glowing with the merits of National Parks and the beautiful landscapes that characterise them. It is a plan to encourage connections between young people and the natural world, to encourage tourism, to promote locally sourced food, to get people to engage in the great outdoors and recreational activities and to encourage health and well-being in National Parks.

So where does this leave the largest industrial project in the northeast of England? The development of the largest polyhalite mine in the world in our National Park is at odds with both the spirit and direction of this 8-Point Plan. It goes to show the incongruity of the proposed mine by Sirius Minerals and makes it obvious why it should not be built in the National Park. Moreover it shows how much out of touch the members of the planning committee were who waved the planning application through last June with little regard for those special qualities and values put forward in this plan for National Parks.

The publication is available at www.gov.uk/government/publications

SIRIUS MINERALS.

The long-awaited Definitive Feasibility Study (DFS) which at the time of writing this foreword has still not been released, is supposed to be published before the end of March. This was announced in January and follows a series of delays. Sirius Minerals issued a Regulated News Statement (RNS) on 17 March, which heralded what were described as "material findings from the DFS". This was essentially a promotional exercise which was given considerable publicity but contained little detail other than a few extracts. Significant among these extracts was the information that the project's DFS capital funding requirement, previously described as \$1.7billion, had jumped up to \$3.5billion with a strong possibility it could rise still further. The extracts also suggest that production is to expand to 20 million tonnes per annum (Mtpa) although planning permission only exists for a maximum of 13 Mtpa. Our concern has always been that once given permission York Potash would push the boundaries. The RNS also states that at the end of February (with no indication of unpaid bills) York Potash had a cash balance of £25 million. The project schedule suggests that there would be a commencement of activities in

April 2016, which seems rather optimistic and well ahead of any clear indication of financing which was also described as being progressed over the next few months. A decision on the planning permission for the Tees harbour development is not expected before July 2016 at the earliest. Our understanding is that when the DFS is eventually published it will be in two versions, one for public consumption and one that will be given restricted exposure because it may contain more sensitive commercial or other detail. The announcement of the definitive feasibility study triggered a 24% drop in the share price. Meanwhile we await the publication of the feasibility study which may shed some light on how the company aims to raise \$3.5 Billion. It is difficult to see how the proposed mine development could be eligible for government support through the National Infrastructure and Projects Authority since it is essentially not an infrastructure development.

THE HISTORY TREE PROJECT

The engraved stainless steel History Tree plate at Danby Lodge has entered a new stage. It was removed from the stump of the old copper beech tree because this had decayed much faster than was anticipated. The remains of the stump of the copper beech tree has been removed and the plate has been re-set at ground level (to give better visitor viewing access, especially for wheelchair users) at the exact site of the old tree. The plate has been embedded and secured within a 5' steel containment ring and the surround filled with a resin-bonded natural gravel. Our thanks go to John Rhodes of Eco Drives, Saltburn, who kindly offered his services and material free of charge for the resin-bonding work. The steel containment ring was manufactured by Cleveland Metalworkers, a local fabrication shop at Lingdale, East Cleveland. Our thanks also go to Naomi Green, George Flanagan, and the rest of the National Park staff at Danby Lodge for their continuing help and support with the project.

The next and final stage of the NYMA History Tree Project is to prepare and publish an accompanying explanatory booklet, which will give the fascinating historical background to the people and events that are featured on the plate. The book will be sold at Danby Moors Centre as a guidebook for those visitors who have an interest in the NYMs area. The booklet is in progress. Any monies raised from this venture will go to supporting the ongoing work of NYMA. ♦

Tom Chadwick
NYMA Chairman

The History Tree has its own story to tell





A FEW OF MY LEAST FAVOURITE THINGS

In the last issue Ian highlighted the challenge to make our voices heard for the future of the Park. Here he considers some practical matters, which if unchecked, erode the quality of our environment.

WITH PRIOR APOLOGIES to Julie Andrews in the *Sound of Music*, when it comes to impacts on the landscape, 'these are a few of my least favourite things'. But, I accept that such views are subjective, and that there will be others who don't share them, or perhaps not to the same extent.

My short-list comprises relatively small issues. However, it is often the little things, which bit-by-bit insidiously erode the character and quality of the landscape, and which can be harder to contain than a major threat which fires up the emotions and brings out the warrior in each of us.

Blowing in it at number four, and leaving aside the debate about the physical structures, is an 'old chestnut' for me: the light colour of wind turbines, especially the small two-bladed variety the action of which, I find extremely annoying. They don't seem to rotate, more visually slap, as the twin-bladed bar is rhythmically foreshortened, when seen from an angle passing through the horizontal.

While turbines are not allowed in National Parks (at least for the moment if we dare believe that the policy will hold), they are to be found in surrounding areas, where their light colour impinges disproportionately on their surroundings.

The wide vista of the Vale of Pickering, south of Keldholme sports a small two-bladed design munching awkwardly on an area of higher ground. And from the south-west the massive and impressive backdrop of Roulston Scar, Sutton Bank and the White Horse has another right in the middle of the view near Husthwaite. And they always draw the eye to them.

Aesthetically, I just cannot understand why so many turbine poles and blades are not painted an overall darker colour. For example, dark grey (definitely not green), would at least render them less visible in the long view and more comfortable on the eye than the stabbing white of a sunlit turbine against the sky, distant hills or trees, which visually bites you as you survey the scene.

A few manufacturers and operators of smaller turbines, appreciating their effect, have tried to diminish the impact, either by painting them grey or camouflaging the structure with erratic blotched rectangles to break up its shape, and it certainly helps.

Research at Loughborough University has suggested that as far as wildlife is concerned the light colour is, in any event, wrong as it attracts insects which in turn attract birds and bats, which are then killed by the blades. However, the research also revealed that for wildlife, I might be wrong too, in that the blades actually should be painted purple, a colour researchers at the time found the least attractive to insects.

It's perhaps a bit late in the day but we need to keep pressure on politicians, manufacturers and owners to minimise the effects if we are to continue to build turbines in the countryside, especially if small turbines ever became popular on domestic premises. Here, they certainly shouldn't be light coloured, and the blades would ideally be incorporated into a circular outer ring which visually would render it more a rotating disk, rather than flickering individual blades.

Squaring up at number 3 is the aluminium-framed solar panel. Solar panels might be great for energy generation, but they can trash the appearance of a building and it's difficult generally to see how careful siting can really do much to mitigate the appearance of the familiar large rectangles. A challenge here must be to refine their design, but in the short term where they have black and not aluminium frames they have much less of a visual impact and that's an



Is a light colour really the right colour?



Why are the blades light coloured?

easy challenge to meet. And sometimes this can work extremely well when designed at the outset of a new build.

Spinning its way in at number 2 is the shiny rotating chimney cowl. On bright sunny days from many angles these create a strobing effect that can be seen from a considerable distance. I recall once being on the top of the moors looking down into a dale to see an intrusive winking light, like someone flashing a mirror to attract your attention. The speed of the flash depends on the wind and even when rotating quickly these cowls can create a piercing, shimmering point of light.

Close too, the effect can be awful, even to the extent of sending a flashing reflection into the rooms of neighbouring buildings.

As with the wind turbine, the eye is drawn towards the strobing flash. Yet, the solution seems simple – paint them ... or better still convince the manufacturers that the surface doesn't need to be reflective or make them all black to start with, as some very acceptable models I've seen recently are.

Blazing in at number 1: Light pollution. There are frequent and sometimes justified complaints by the rural community that urban Britain doesn't understand the countryside. Yet nothing urbanises it faster than unnecessary and poorly planned lighting installed by those who live there.

Just one, bright orange sodium light or piercing halogen spot can diminish the quality of an otherwise dark scene. To look over the Vale of Pickering now compared with 30 years ago it is 'measled' with a rash of lights. Why can we see them from such long distances? Why do we allow the quality of rural England at night to be diminished and the wonders of the night sky to be progressively denied to us, when it is simple to turn lights off, shroud them, make them less bright and point them downwards, or question whether they are needed in the first place?



Aluminium framed PV panels



Black-framed PV panels

There is a real financial issue here. Dark skies areas are a significant tourist draw in places like the Forest of Bowland, Kielder and in Exmoor, with that Park's commendable zero tolerance of light pollution. In my book, light trespass should be an enforced statutory nuisance, but sadly Government is going the opposite direction to controlling such things.

Do my least favourite things matter? Does renewable energy matter? ... of course it does ... does people feeling safe at night



A reflective cowl

matter? .. of course it does ... and ventilation of chimneys or gas fires and cooker flues .. why wouldn't you want it right for your property? The challenge is not to stop everything, but to do it rather better.

If we believe these things are important, we can put our own houses in order and encourage others to do their bit too. And that includes pressing decision-makers to take a real responsibility, to be alert and to self-start to champion the cause, not just administer a minimum set of rules. ♦

OLD ST. STEPHEN'S CHURCH, ROBIN HOOD'S BAY

THE CHURCH ON THE HILL

HIGH ON THE HILL overlooking Robin Hood's Bay is the old church of St Stephen, isolated from the community it served, save for a few nearby cottages. Why site a public building in such an isolated position? One suggestion is that the church would be equidistance between the three local communities of Fylingthorpe, Bay and Raw. The present building dates from 1821/2 but the first church on the site was probably founded in the 11th century. Little, if any, of this early building remains, but in 1895 the Norman font was discovered buried two metres underground in a nearby farmer's field! It is now housed in the new St Stephen's church in Bay. Early in the 18th century box pews were introduced together with a west gallery that was accessed by an external stone staircase. By 1816 the building was in a poor state of repair, but the arrival in the parish of a Whitby shipbuilder, Mr Barry, heralded the start of a new era in the history of the site. Mr Barry was the principal benefactor for a major rebuilding programme. The cost of building the new church was £885.18s 0d. It was opened in 1822. The massive buttresses at the corners of the

chancel were retained and it is possible that the chancel is 17th century. The present font and the bell tower probably date from the 18th century.

A FASCINATING INTERIOR

The dominant feature of the church is the massive three-decker pulpit with its sounding board above. From the top 'deck' there is a commanding view over all the box pews, the seats which are all positioned to face the pulpit rather than the altar, emphasising the dominance of 'The Word'. The lower stage of the pulpit was used by the clerk, the middle section was the officiant's reading pew, and the sermon would be read from the upper pulpit. Three-decker pulpits and box pews are uncommon but not rare.

Maidens' garlands, however, are another matter. Old St Stephens is fortunate in possessing four of these ancient relics. It was the custom that should a young, unmarried girl die her friends would construct a garland to be carried in front of her funeral procession and then later

suspended in the nave of the church. From a hoop, often made of hazel, would be suspended lengths of coloured ribbon, strips from the maiden's dresses and white gloves. This ancient custom goes back centuries and is referred to in Shakespeare's play Hamlet. One of these garlands was made for Elizabeth Harland who died age 20 in 1848, and another was for Jane Levitt who died in 1860, the last known occasion locally when a garland was carried. For conservation reasons these unusual garlands are now housed in a protected area near the font.

Another interesting feature in the church is the 'Scudamore' organ, an early example of the work of the famous organ builder Willis. It was installed in around 1946 to replace a harmonium that can now be seen at the back of the church. The harmonium had in turn replaced the original barrel organ; the three drums from which are also preserved in the church. In the early 17th century it was the custom to carry an heraldic shield before the coffin of a local deceased person of distinction. Later the shield or hatchment would be placed in the church. The colourful Farsyde Hatchment is now displayed on the wall to the left of the altar.

Also attached to the wall is the original memorial board listing the sea rescues carried out by the Robin Hood's Bay lifeboat crew between the years 1893 and 1929. A replica of this board is displayed in what was the lifeboat house down in Bay. The station closed in 1931.

Possibly the oldest memorial inside the church (to the left of the altar) is that to Captain William Farsyde:

'...who was buried in this chapel 13th October 1670. He came from Scotland in the time of King Jas:1st and was by that Monarch appointed Cowbearer and Ranger of Pickering Forest in this County. Captn. Wm was an active Officer during the reigns of Chas:1st and part of Chas:2nd and felt the effects of being a Royalist under the Commonwealth.'

A 'BUSY' CHURCHYARD

The 'busy' churchyard contains nearly 900 gravestones, many of them recording the deaths of several people from the same family. A 'Graveyard Trail' guides visitors around a few of the more interesting

stones. Over 60 of the gravestones are in memory of 168 members of the Storm family, one of the oldest local families associated with the parish. Records of this family go back at least to the Muster Rolls of 1539. Some stones however are memorials rather than actual burials as so many seamen were lost at sea in distant parts of the world.

'In memory of Thomas Cooper Master Mariner who was drowned near Boulogne June 9th 1858 aged 32 years Also Elizabeth his wife died April 23rd 1868 aged 37 years Also William their son who was drowned in the Brig (R.H.Beck) of Whitby 1st September 1872 aged 40 years Also Thomas their son who was drowned at Newport Mews, U.S.A. August 13th 1886 aged 33 years. This family of four were all dead within the space of 28 years. James Storm...second mate of the "S.S. Saxon Monarch" lost with all hands October 1881.'

Several hundred fishermen were lost during the great storm that swept the east coast in 1881. The greatest loss was at Eyemouth on the Scottish coast where over one hundred perished. Others died in the line of duty:

'In memory of William Poad Master Mariner who was drowned by the upsetting of the lifeboat while attempting to save the crew of the Brig 'Ann' of London February 4th 1843.'

In total six local men were drowned in this disaster. Four of the crew of the Ann were also lost. Early death was not uncommon in the 1800s as a memorial to Benjamin Avery's family records. Benjamin died in 1862 aged only 38 years. His three daughters all died young, Mary in the year before her father age 6, Jane only days after her father age 2 and Martha two years later age 3. The only son, Benjamin was drowned off the Holland coast in 1878. Benjamin's wife Mary outlived all her family and died in 1891 at the remarkable age of 87.

The Watson gravestone poignantly records the early deaths of all five children of:

'William and Mary. Rebecca ... died on Christmas Day 1874 only three weeks old, William died 1880, 1yr 5 months; Fanny died 1883, 1yr 7 months; Thomas - drowned from the "James & Eleanor" at





The box pews

Southwold...1895.. whilst on voyage to London and was found on the beach at Kessingland. Lowestoft, January aged 15 yrs 9 months.'

And finally, Robert died in Aden 1904 age 27. Accidents also resulted in death:

'In memory of John Ragan who was accidentally killed by falling from a cart near Cloughton October 16th 1883 aged 24. This stone records the death of JOHN STORRY of Wrelton who died December 1768 aged 25 years.'

John reputedly fell from the roof during the construction of Prospect House, now The Bay Tree, the first house to be built 'up Bay'.

THE NEW BROOM!

1858 saw the arrival in the parish of a new vicar, the Reverend Robert Jermyn Cooper, M.A. He was to remain vicar for 58 years until his death in 1916. Cooper was a man of his time and had a huge influence in the parish. He was educated in the Oxford Movement which was a revivalist movement arguing for the reinstatement of lost Christian traditions in ecclesiastical ceremony, music and architecture. Rev Cooper was an ardent supporter of this cause and therefore set about raising money to build a new church, a new church that would not only satisfy his ideals, but would be more suited to a growing population and be more convenient for his parishioners.

£6000 was raised by subscription and included a donation from Robert Barry who also gave the land. The stone was donated by Mr. George Welburn from Ness Quarry. The internationally famous architect G. E. Street was commissioned to design the building. The

The 'Scudamore' organ built by Willis



The Norman font



The maidens' garlands

consecration of the new church on 6th August 1870 attracted over 24 column inches in the Whitby Gazette:

'Opening of a new church at Fylingdales His Grace the Archbishop of York consecrated the new church at this place on Wednesday, the 3rd inst. The site of the new edifice is in Thorpe Lane near to the parsonage, but on the other side of the road and will take the place of the old church at the top of Bay Bank, which it was announced, would be henceforth closed by consent of the Archbishop. The foundation stone of the new church, which is dedicated to St Stephen, was laid on the 23rd September 1868. The situation of the new church could not well have been better for the town of Robin Hood's Bay, but the change is one very much the worse for the opposite end of the parish, and is little if any advantage to Thorpe. Nothing can be said against the style, the architect, the convenience, the general good appearance of the church except that the tower looks unfinished, and the red tiles form such a contrast to the customary blue slate that the eye of the general observer is somewhat perplexed. G E Street Esq. of London was the architect, and Mr Langdale of Whitby the builder...'

However, not everybody was happy about the closure of the old church. Only a few days after the consecration of the new church, G. J. Watson Farsyde, a prominent local landowner, posted the following notice:

The Farsyde Hatchment





TO THE INHABITANTS OF THE TOWNSHIP OF FYLINGDALES

From forty to fifty years ago you erected on the site of your Ancient Church and amidst the tombs of your forefathers, a new and commodious edifice of stone for Divine Worship. This modern and substantial structure has since the 7th day of August last been closed to you by the verbal mandate of the Archbishop of York, or his deputy, given on the occasion of the consecration of the New Church, in Thorpe Lane, on the 4th August. No written or printed notice has been given! No consent of a Parish Vestry had been asked for, or obtained! Your Prayer Books are detained in the Old Church! The doors are kept locked, and you are excluded from worshipping in an edifice, which from its associations has become dear to you! All this has been done without your approval, and on the brief notice of four days! Many of you have long been dissatisfied with the recently introduced changes into the accustomed and honoured Forms of Worship. On these subjects also your opinions and sentiments were likewise never consulted. The School, erected at your expense 40 years ago, was pulled down, (certainly without my consent), and again without formally consulting your wishes. Under these circumstances I have felt it my duty to head the movement to secure, by all legitimate means, the restoration of the Morning Service in our Old Church, and in accordance with the simple and earnest forms to which we were accustomed before the advent of the present Perpetual Curate; and also to protest against the transfer of the Revenues and Fees from our Old Church to a new and modern structure, with which so few of us have anything in common.

Last Sunday morning, the 14th inst, many of you spontaneously assembled at the Old Church to attend the customary service. The doors were found to be closed, and this assembly, frustrated in its intention, at once resolved to draw up a protest and declaration against the treatment it had received. It was then unanimously resolved, "That for

the present this assembly refuses to attend the New Church until Morning Service is restored in the old one and conducted according to ancient form." It was further resolved, "That this meeting do stand adjourned until Sunday, the 21st inst., at 10.30 a.m., when all who share these feelings are invited to assemble on the sides of the Highway near the Old Church, any public meeting in a church yard being forbidden by Law."

*Yours faithfully, G. J. Watson Farsyde.
Fylingdale, August 16th 1870*

Strong words! But nonetheless the old church remained closed apart from its occasional use as a mortuary chapel. It was not reopened until 1917, the year after Cooper's death. Although causing a storm of protest at the time we have Cooper's actions to thank for preserving this fascinating relic of local history. Instead of building a new church he could have simply ripped out the interior of the old church and redesigned it to his liking. The beauty and interest of the present building would have been lost forever. Thanks Reverend!

Rather surprisingly, perhaps, Reverend Cooper and his wife are buried at Old St Stephens churchyard within sight of the new St Stephen's. Given his apparent dislike for the old church, it remains a mystery why he had his wife buried there in 1884 when the new church had been open since 1870. With its limited use and regular maintenance requirement old St Stephen's church was eventually passed into the care of The Churches Conservation Trust. Old St. Stephen's remains a consecrated building and four services are held each year, plus the occasional wedding. Open throughout the year, this fascinating ancient building and its packed graveyard are well worth a visit (see below). ♦

Alan Staniforth

WALK AND VISIT TO THE OLD ST. STEPHEN'S CHURCH, ROBIN HOOD'S BAY.

A guided walk incorporating a visit to the ancient Church of St. Stephens at the top of Robin Hood's bay is to be organised on Saturday 25 June. The walk will also take in Alan Staniforth's 'wild' meadow area. The walk will be c. 4 miles although there will be a little climbing. Our guide for the day will be Alan Staniforth, a resident of Bay.

Meet at the Old St. Stephen's Church at 10.30. Please register your interest in this visit/walk by ringing 01287 660137

WHERE ARE THE SKYLARKS?



*Up with me! Up with me into the clouds!
For thy song, Lark, is strong;
Up with me, up with me into the clouds!
Singing, singing,
With clouds and sky about thee ringing,
Lift me, guide me till I find
That spot which seems so to thy mind!*

William Wordsworth

ONLY THE NIGHTINGALE rivals the reputation of the skylark as one of the finest songsters in the avian world. The skylark is the very voice of spring!

A once common bird usually heard rather than seen, the Skylark has greatly declined in numbers over the last 30 years leaving us with a population in some areas of only one tenth of that which we had in the 1970s, according to the British Trust for Ornithology.

The Skylark is a small brown bird, somewhat larger than a sparrow. It is streaky brown with a small crest, which the bird can raise when excited or alarmed. You may also spot a white-sided tail and a white rear edge to its wings, which is only properly visible in flight.

They are renowned for their display flight, dramatically rising vertically up into the sky. Their beautiful exuberant song seems to radiate for miles around as the bird itself hangs suspended somewhere high overhead. This aerial, territorial display can last up to five minutes, and even longer later in the mating season, as the male gradually reaches the pinnacle of its flight before slowly descending.

The male Skylark has broader wings than the female, a feature that may have evolved to make hovering more efficient as a response to the

females who prefer males that sing and hover for longer periods; perhaps as a demonstration of their overall fitness.

The Eurasian Skylark's breeding range covers all of Europe and the temperate zone of Asia with a population of many millions of pairs, but one that is under pressure in much of its extent.

Their decline in the UK has been much less apparent in upland and coastal areas than in areas where arable farming is the norm. There have been many surveys done, and the common conclusion is that the drop in numbers is mainly due to changes in farming practices. In particular, research has identified a noticeable difference in Skylarks' nesting activity in spring-sown wheat compared to that in autumn-sown wheat. In spring-sown crops they can nest for longer and raise two or three broods, but in winter crops most stop nesting in late May, raising just one brood, as the crop becomes too tall and dense for them to have easy access to the ground and move between the wheat stems to find food and nesting sites.

Almost all the land in the UK is managed in one way or another, and the presence and range of the flora and fauna we have, has clearly been driven by that land management. Given the pressure for efficient crop production and the consumers' demand for ever-cheaper food, has driven farmers to change the way in which they work the land to survive. This has had inevitable consequences for our wildlife; the extent of which we are only slowly coming to realise. As a perhaps tardy response to these changes, a wide range of measures has been and is being introduced in an attempt to rebalance matters.

One of these measures is Natural England's Environmental Stewardship Scheme, which offers farmers grants to take part in various activities specifically beneficial to wildlife. One option relevant to Skylarks is for farmers to grow spring cereals instead of winter ones,

and to leave the resultant stubble untreated over the winter.

Another more focused measure is to create suitable nesting areas for Skylarks by turning the seeding machine off (or lifting the drill) for 5 to 10 metre stretches. This is repeated in several areas within the same field to create an average of two Skylark plots per hectare. Subsequent spraying and fertilising can then be continuous over the entire field, though I suggest that some sprays may not be truly beneficial to wildlife. DEFRA also adds in some stipulations aimed at reducing predation risks, such as not having trees around the plots.

As the main crop grows the Skylark plots become areas of low vegetation where birds can easily hunt insects, and build their well-camouflaged nests on the ground. Skylarks are omnivores that eat seeds, insects and waste grain. They also eat invertebrates such as beetles, caterpillars, spiders, millipedes, earthworms, and slugs. They forage on the ground, searching for food visually.

The RSPB has reported significant increases in the number of singing birds over the skylark plots on their experimental farm in Cambridgeshire, and are encouraging more farmers to take up this option.

It is a complex situation though, and recent BTO surveys have shown that skylark numbers continue to decline. As a result of this they have launched a Farmland Bird Appeal to raise funds for some further studies to find out more about what is really happening. Gavin Siriwardena of the BTO said, "Many farmers invest a lot of time and effort into protecting wildlife on their farms; we need to ensure that the available agri-environment scheme options work for birds and are also practical for the farmers who will implement them."

Set-aside seems also to benefit Skylark numbers, particularly when the resultant habitat is a complex one with many different species of plants thriving. It is only when crops become taller than 30cms that Skylark numbers decline, and that is when they are forced to leave the winter wheat.

Norfolk Wildlife is another of the many organisations which have undertaken studies concerning skylark numbers. They concluded that in Norfolk the current factors causing loss or decline of skylarks are:

- Management of arable fields has reduced ephemeral weeds and insect prey through the use of ever more efficient pesticides (including insecticides and herbicides).
- Decreases in livestock levels.
- An increased trend towards autumn-sown cereals that have reduced the number of essential winter stubble fields, and may provide unsuitable breeding habitat in comparison with spring-sown varieties.
- Conversion of grassland to intensively-farmed arable land.
- Intensive management of grasslands.
- Replacing traditional hay making with silage and haylage, which destroys nests and exposes incubating skylarks and young to predators

Another factor affecting any birds' population is post-fledgling survival, and this is an area where far less is known. Factors thought to be contributing to the decline include increased predation of flightless chicks as well as the use of more pesticides, but the evidence is not yet available for conclusions to be drawn.

To end on a more light-hearted note, here is a selection of titbits concerning Skylarks that you may not have come across.

- The Skylark's song is fast, complex and highly variable, but (unlike the Nightingale's) is delivered within a narrow frequency range.
- There can be anything from 160 to over 460 syllables in the song.
- While the Victorians estimated the height of the male Skylark's songflight at around 600m (2,000ft), most birds sing from around 50m and few ever go beyond 200m.
- The average length of a songflight is just over two minutes, but 30-minute performances have been recorded.

- Skylarks invariably start singing before dawn, so their voice is the first to be heard in the dawn chorus.
- Song can be heard throughout the year, though it is least frequent between mid-November and late-January.
- It is likely that more poems have been written about the Skylark's song than that of any other bird.
- Despite the lark's popularity as a songbird, it has long been regarded as a delicacy on the plate, and the price of Skylarks has been recorded since the reign of Edward I. In 1695, a dozen skylarks could be bought for the same price as one Mallard, or 100 for the same figure as a Great Bustard or Crane.
- Most larks were captured for the table by dragging nets across fields at night.
- Lark shooting for sport was popular in Victorian England, the birds being decoyed by either live birds or by ingenious 'lark mirrors', the latter drawing migrating larks within range of the guns. The record bag of larks at a single mirror in one day was over 1,000 birds.
- The Victorians also liked to keep male larks as songbirds, and a good singer would fetch as much as 15 shillings.
- Skylarks have been successfully introduced to New Zealand, Australia, Canada and even Hawaii.
- The Faeroe Islands have Europe's smallest Skylark population – just 10 pairs – while Poland has the largest, an estimated 5 to 9 million pairs. Britain still has around 1 million.
- Almost all European countries have reported a decline in lark numbers in recent years.
- Skylarks remain a legal quarry species in France, and they are still shot there in large numbers.
- The skylark is one of the most widely distributed of all British birds, found from coastal dunes to the tops of the Cairngorms.
- Skylarks often migrate in flocks and large flocks can be found during severe weather. They rarely consist of more than 10 individuals and if they do, they will often break apart into smaller flocks.

Only time will tell whether we are doing enough to help our songbirds: in the meantime, enjoy the sound of the skylark wherever and whenever you can. We are lucky in that they are still common in many parts of North Yorkshire, particularly the upland areas. ♦

Mike Gray



KEEPING A LOOKOUT FOR THE BARN OWL



EXPERTISE

At the end of last year's NYMA Annual General Meeting I enjoyed a chat with the President's Award recipient, Derek Capes. If you attended the 2015 AGM or read Issue 120 of 'The Voice', you will recall that Derek has carried out extensive research into the Harvest Mouse population on the North Yorkshire Moors based on his examination of owl pellets. Derek brought some interesting specimens along to the AGM for the audience to examine under a microscope and shared his expertise on the subject. His research has contributed towards his proposed work on siting of owl boxes.

THE BOX AND ITS NECESSITY

Since last year Derek has kindly donated a barn owl box to NYMA which has been gratefully received. This is a welcome donation that will help conserve the barn owl population of the North Yorkshire Moors. Such boxes are required due to the loss of traditional roost or nest sites because of the decay or conversion of barns or similar buildings. This has also impacted on the population of barn owls over the last two hundred years and barn owls are now far less common. Other factors contributing to the decline in barn owls are modern farming practises, which have destroyed hedgerows and therefore reduced the habitat for small mammals (a major source of food for barn owls – see below).

HABITAT AND SITING THE BOX

There has been some serious deliberation as to where to site the box to encourage occupants. Firstly the general location was considered. Rough grassland is favourable with access to a rodent population. An edge of a field and woodland with a watercourse nearby is a good location. Trees and fence posts on the edge of rough grassland provide hunting perches, giving the barn owl, easy access to prey.

Further consideration was taken as to where specifically the box could be sited. Since there was no appropriate building available, the second best option was to site the box in a tree. This needed to be where there would be least disturbance and with a clear flight path for the owl towards open ground but also to avoid prevailing weather.

A suitable, mature sycamore has been chosen, with a high canopy on a woodland edge, close to rough grassland and with access to a water course. The box has been attached over 5 metres up the tree with a visible hole for an owl to see. Derek also provided some owl pellets to be left in the box to attract new owls.

DIET AND HUNTING

As Derek has proved, barn owls certainly do prey on harvest mice. Barn owls particularly enjoy voles but will hunt other rodents,

including small rats and wood mice. Barn owls are mostly nocturnal but if they are feeding young will also hunt before dusk and at dawn. Whilst rodents, such as small rats, have been seen nearby the sited box, the barn owls do not need to see them as they can locate prey through their excellent hearing.

OBSERVATION AND SIGHTINGS

Since the box was erected I have been on 'high alert' owl watch. To my surprise and extreme pleasure I have been lucky to see a barn owl on three occasions, at dusk, out hunting close to Danby Beck. This has been within two hundred yards of the recently sited box, so hopefully the owl may be attracted, find a mate, and decide to call it 'home'.

It should be highlighted that any observation of barn owls during the nesting season needs to be carried out from a distance without intrusion into nest boxes or disturbance of them. It is illegal to disturb or photograph barn owls in the nest during this time.

I will continue to be on 'high alert' owl watch, with hopefully, more barn owl news next time. ♦

Cal Moore



THE CLEVELAND WAY

MONTHLY MONDAY WALKS : APRIL – OCTOBER 2016

A Walking Programme for 2016 co-ordinated by Beryl and Margaret

Circular Walks that include sections of The Cleveland Way (CW) between Helmsley and Clay Bank. All walks are between 6 to 7 miles and are circular. Start time of all walks is 10.30am.

Walk Details	Parking and Meeting Place
Monday April 18th Helmsley to Rievaulx Bridge by CW – Rievaulx Abbey – Bow Bridge – around Ashberry Hill - return to Helmsley by CW	Roadside parking in Helmsley, or main car park. Meet by the Cleveland Way Start Stone, in the main car park (611 839)
Monday May 23rd Rievaulx to Cold Kirby by CW - Old Byland – return via Clavery Lea Lane to Rievaulx	Rievaulx Abbey car park (575 849)
Monday June 13th Sutton Bank NYM Visitor Centre to Sneck Yate (508 876) by CW – return via Cleveland Road to Sutton Bank	Sutton Bank NYM Visitor Centre (517 831)
Monday July 18th Square Corner through Nether Silton Woods to Moor Lane – Bridge Beck Lane – Nab Farm - join the Cleveland Way (at 490 920) - return to Square Corner on CW	'Square Corner' parking area (479 958)
Monday August 15th Osmotherley to Scarth Nick cattle grid (at 473 003) by CW – return via the Drove Road to Osmotherley	Roadside parking in Osmotherley, meet at the Market Cross (456 973)
Monday September 19th Faceby via Bank Lane to the Cleveland Way – CW to Lord Stones, Carlton Bank (524 030) – return via Ashtree Farm – Meeks Farm to Faceby	Roadside parking in Faceby village, meet outside pub (497 032)
Monday October 10th Carlton Bank to Clay Bank (573 033) by CW – return via Broughton Plantation, rejoining CW before Kirby Bank – CW to Carlton Bank	Lord Stones car park, or roadside parking on Carlton Bank (524 030)

Each walk includes a section of the Cleveland Way, starting at Helmsley in April and reaching Clay Bank by October, walking the route in the west-east direction. The next walk does not always pick up the route exactly where the last walk finishes – we miss some short sections of the CW. The walks are NOT recce-ed, so we may encounter unknown obstacles on the day. As all the walks are circular, we are not dependent on car sharing (though you may offer a lift to others if able to do so). It is not essential to give so much advance notice of your intention to be on a walk. However, it would be good to know if you are joining a walk – it means we know who to expect on the day, and we would wait for your arrival. If you want to know more about the walks programme, and/or would like to join it for some or all of the days, contact Margaret Kirby, email margaret.r.kirby@gmail.com; mobile 0779 297 2680, home tel. 01642 722 555.

EVENTS, VISITS & WALKS

SATURDAY 14 MAY Meet 10.30 at Pockley (GPS 4645/4855) for c. 5 mile guided walk in Riccaldale. Parking on verge at the south edge of Pockley Village. Walk route will go along eastern edge of wood to Hasty Bank Farm then cross the river at the ford to take in the bluebells. Return via opposite side. Back to Pockley.

Walkers will be guided by Colin & Heather Mather. Please contact Colin or Heather on telephone 01287 669104 to confirm.

SATURDAY 4 JUNE Meet 10.30 at Maybeck Car park (GR NZ892024 – OS map OL27) for c. 5 mile guided walk with some moderate climbing. Route starts at Maybeck going via Littlebeck (half-way lunch stop?) and on to the Hermitage and Falling Foss. Lovely tea garden at Falling Foss (although sometimes pre-booked for private weddings). Suggest bringing

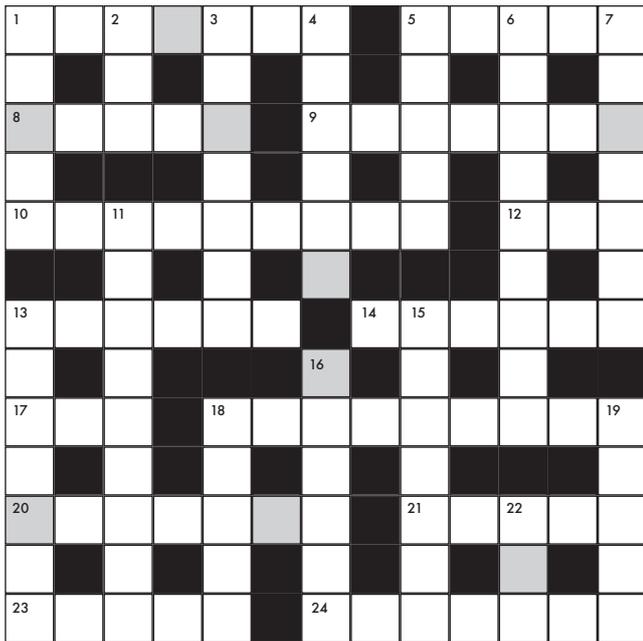
own packed lunches. Cal & Dave Moore to lead walk and they will provide back-up/end-of-walk refreshments as alternative.

Please contact either Cal or Dave on telephone 01287 669648 or via email flightbrand@gmail.com to confirm.

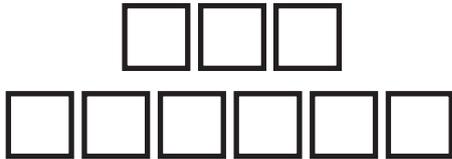
SATURDAY 2 JULY Meet at and leave from Lealholm car park at 11.00 for c. 5 mile guided walk taking in ice-age geology at Crunkly Gill, reminders of past disastrous floods in the Esk Valley, Lealholm's history over several centuries, a hearse house, a whinstone quarry, a trial ironstone drift, a concealed inscribed stone and a 'treasure hunt' for eleven carved stone heads, to be spotted during the walk.

Walk will finish back at Lealholm for afternoon refreshments in one of the tearooms. With so much to see en route walk will probably finish at c. 16.00. Our walk guide for the day will be Jane Ellis who can be contacted on: Telephone 0113 2659970 or via Mobile 07787 311913 to confirm

CRYPTIC CROSSWORD No 72 BY AMANUENSIS



Rearrange the letters in the greyed-out squares in the boxes below to find a moorland resident, *Lagopus lagopus*.



ACROSS:

- 1 The first woman to take a break on the highest mountain (7)
- 5 Company in veto of breakfast food (5)
- 8 Small person found in the garden perhaps (5)
- 9 Sailor by himself reveals shell (7)
- 10 Set to one side for the rings perhaps? (9)
- 12 Helps to make things run smoothly (3)
- 13 Wise Stu ate mixture (6)
- 14 Animal sounds coming from stable (6)
- 17 Range of Turkish lord (3)
- 18 Without any feeling or brains? (9)
- 20 Hesitates to shred it (7)
- 21 Walk to the match along here (5)
- 23 Drain swirls to lowest point (5)
- 24 Are they barely recognisable? (7)

DOWN:

- 1 High flier though well below par (5)
- 2 Self-motivation? (3)
- 3 Glen ate in a graceful way (7)
- 4 Follows paths across the moors perhaps (6)
- 5 Second class learner and quite dull (5)
- 6 You can have it in black or white if you wish (9)
- 7 Provokes sewing equipment (7)
- 11 Withdrawn putting time into going over it again (9)
- 13 Desert a group performing (7)
- 15 The way to the shelter (7)
- 16 Unions reorganise in perfect harmony (6)
- 18 Weapon for sticking into small fruit (5)
- 19 Gets rid of the wooden cabins (5)
- 22 Initially an emergency call (3)

NORTH YORKSHIRE MOORS ASSOCIATION NYMA PRESIDENT'S AWARD 2016

The Association invites applications for the 2016 NYMA President's Award from University or Sixth-Form students, from local interest groups, or from individual amateur researchers who are currently pursuing or are intending to pursue original research into the Natural History, Archaeology, Social, Cultural and Economic History, or Natural or Built Environment of the North York Moors. The results of the research should contribute towards the understanding and body of knowledge of the Moors. The 2016 Award is £500 and the closing date for entries is May 31st 2016

Applicants must include an outline of their current or proposed research project and a statement of previous experience and/or academic support. An indication of how any award would be spent is also required. Applications sent by post should be addressed to

The Secretary NYMA
The Forge,
Fangdale Beck,
Middlesbrough,
TS9 7LE

Or by e-mail to janetcochrane55@gmail.com

CROSSWORD ANSWERS

Across: 1 Everest 5 bacon 8 gnome 9 abalone 10 earmarked 12 oil 13 asure 14 beats 17 AGA/aga 18 senseless 20 dithers 21 aisle 23 nadir 24 nudists Down: 1 eagle 2 ego 3 elegant 4 tracks 5 bland 6 chocolate 7 needles 11 retreated 13 abandon 15 leeward 16 unison 18 spear 19 sheds 22 SOS Anagram Answers: Red Cruise



MOTH TALK

I recently had the pleasure of attending a lecture on “Moths of North East Yorkshire” given by Robert Woods, an expert lepidopterist and good friend of mine. However, just before commencing his talk, we were approached by someone (who wished to remain anonymous) regarding an infestation of clothes moths they had suffered. They had attempted to control these destructive “pest” moths by the use of pheromone traps. These traps work by releasing a synthetic scent that resembles real pheromone, a chemical substance that the female moth exudes in order to attract a mate. The males of the species are drawn to the source of the scent that is surrounded by a sticky substance, and acts similar to fly-paper. The moths become stuck and perish.

The theory behind this control method is that all the male moths in the vicinity are killed and consequently the population dies out due to lack of reproduction. Robert asked to see one of the old traps containing some of its victims. Two boxes were soon produced, both of which had approximately 25 dead moths inside. The moths were examined under a microscope by Robert and were all found to be males of the species, *Tineola bisselliella*, or common clothes moth. However, despite its name, this little moth is far from common, in fact this particular micro-moth had not been seen in VC62 (our Yorkshire area) since 1859 !!! So, this was quite a surprising discovery.

TRUE DILEMMA

But what a dilemma: do we let this creature live and accept that some inevitable damage to clothes will occur, or exterminate the little blighters and end up with one less of nature’s precious species. This little chap is undoubtedly rare in our corner of Yorkshire, but it is also looked upon as a damaging pest, destroying as it does not only clothes but also valuable exhibits of taxidermy. The adult clothes moth itself is harmless; it is in fact its small maggot-like larvae, or caterpillars, which feed and nibble away at natural fibres such as wool or cotton

A wool carpet damaged by clothes moths



clothing, leaving tell-tale destructive holes and also devouring animal material: feather, fur and hair. So what to do? This is after all a rare moth (or was?), but it is clearly looked upon as an unwelcome pest when found in the wrong circumstances (as it clearly was in this case).

TO KILL OR NOT TO KILL?

So, should we kill or protect and conserve? As a keen lepidopterist and conservationist my thoughts on this quandary will almost certainly be at odds to that of the majority of people. However, this aspect of conservation – to kill or not to kill? - exists in many different situations throughout nature and wildlife management. The control of pests or ‘vermin’ such as foxes, stoats, weasels, rats, mice, badgers, moles, corvids etc by gamekeepers is a controversial example (as is the killing of birds of prey to protect game-birds and the culling of seals to conserve fish stocks).

However, in the case of *Tineola bisselliella*, we are not talking about a nice fluffy mammal or beautiful bird, but of a seemingly insignificant and inconsequential insect, the small inconspicuous clothes moth. But does this make it any less precious, especially considering its scarcity? ◆

Hawkmoth



SOMETHING TO LOOK OUT FOR THIS SUMMER

The uncommon large heath butterfly (*Coenonympha tullia*) is a delight to see. It can occasionally be found amongst the wetter areas of the moorlands. Its caterpillars feed on cotton grass, so it is restricted to boggy areas where this and other suitable sources of food are available. Fen Bog, a nature reserve of the Yorkshire Wildlife Trust, is probably the best site locally where this extraordinary butterfly can be observed. It is much larger than the common small heath butterfly (*Coenonympha pamphilus*), which is found amongst much drier areas of heath and this small butterfly has notably less spots on its lower wing than the larger species.

THE FLYING SCOTSMAN

The newly renovated steam locomotive, The Flying Scotsman, Class A3 Pacific 4472, paid a visit in March to the NYMs National Park. Its arrival caused great excitement for the many train enthusiasts and steam buffs who flocked to the area from far and wide to catch a glimpse of the legendary working engine in action. And for those lucky enough to get tickets (it was a sell-out!) to ride the steam locomotive on one of its many scheduled journeys from Grosmont to Pickering on the North York Moors Railway it made it a very special and memorable day passing through scenic terrain including the spectacular glacial valley of Newtondale..

The now world-famous locomotive was built for LNER at Doncaster Works in 1923 to a design by H N Gresley (later to be Sir Nigel Gresley). It was employed as a long-distance express train on the LNER and on its successors, British Railways Eastern and North Eastern Regions, notably on the 10am London to Edinburgh Flying Scotsman Service after which the locomotive was named.

The 97 year old Flying Scotsman is a superb piece of engineering as well as being highly aesthetic: form and function at its best. The engine set two world records for steam traction, becoming the first steam locomotive to achieve a speed of 100 miles per hour (160 Km/h) on November 30 1934. Then fifty-five years later, on the 8th August 1989 while on tour in Australia, it set a record for the longest non-stop run by a steam locomotive when it ran a distance of 422 mile (679 Km).



Photo: Keith Watson



**NORTH YORKSHIRE MOORS ASSOCIATION –
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