

# VOICE OF THE MOORS



THE MAGAZINE OF  
THE NORTH YORKSHIRE  
MOORS ASSOCIATION  
(NYMA)

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Cover photo: Farndale daffodils – © Mike Nicholas-NYMNPA

### NYMA MEMBERSHIP

#### Annual membership:

- Individual £18
- Joint £25 (living at same address)

#### 10 Year membership:

- Individual £120
- Joint £150 (living at same address)

#### Life membership:

- Individual £300
- Joint £400 (living at same address)

#### Business membership:

- Small businesses (up to 10 employees): £30
- Large businesses (more than 10 employees): £100

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# CHAIRMAN'S FOREWORD



Sirius Minerals development at Doves Nest Farm in the National Park

### NYMA VICE-PRESIDENTS

At the beginning of the year our two vice-presidents died within the first three weeks of the New Year. Ron Foster MBE died on the 5<sup>th</sup> of January and Professor J. Allan Patmore on the 21<sup>st</sup>. Ron was elected to NYMA Council at the inaugural meeting of the Association in 1985 and had three terms as chairman before becoming a vice-president in 2002. Allan was president of the Association from 1993 to 2000 when he stepped down to become a vice-president. They both had a long association with NYMA and the North Yorkshire Moors and will be sadly missed. We include a tribute to Ron in this issue of *Voice* to be followed by a full tribute to Allan in the next edition in July.

### SOUTH MOOR FARM AIRFIELD PLANNING APPLICATION

Following another refusal of planning permission in 2017 by the national park authority, the applicant appealed the decision and subsequently an appeal hearing was held to determine this fourth application on the 31<sup>st</sup> January. There have been three previous proposals all of which were considered on appeal and all of which were dismissed.

The inspector upheld the views of the previous hearing in considering the presence of protected birds in the vicinity of the proposed airfield. Both the nightjar and turtle dove are protected species, while the goshawk and honey buzzard have added protection. The inspector concluded that the proposed development would have a harmful impact on these protected birds. The inspector also disagreed with the



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previous judgement in relation to the impact on landscape character. His conclusion was that the multiple comings and goings of the aircraft would be “bound to affect the tranquillity of the area”. In addition, the inspector also confirmed that where there is a conflict between the first and second purpose of the National Park, the Sandford principle requires that the first purpose, namely, that of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the National Park takes precedence over the second purpose (enjoyment and recreation). For these reasons, the appeal by the applicant was dismissed. This was a victory for clear thinking and common sense and a victory for the residents in the area who had presented very strong objections to the scheme.

### SIRIUS MINERALS MINE DEVELOPMENT

The mine head site at Doves Nest Farm now covers such a large area that the scale of this industrial development can only be fully appreciated from above the site. (See Google Earth Image). At ground level, the cranes associated with foreshaft construction are visible from as far away as the car park at the top of Skelder on the A171 Whitby – Guisborough road. The site is already a prominent feature in the landscape seen from the A171 Scarborough road near Robin Hoods Bay Lane, especially at night. The tunnel access site at Lockwood Beck has transformed the former agricultural land into an industrial site with a large flat platform awaiting the arrival of the massive engineering equipment required

for shaft sinking. Presently there is further seismic surveying activity near Littlebeck and also near Robin Hood’s Butts on the Danby road. Both of these locations are in line with the route of the tunnel. It is likely that there will be an intensifying of the construction work on both sites by the end of this year.

### DATA PROTECTION

On May 25<sup>th</sup> this year a new regulation called the EU General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) comes into force. It requires us to have a clear policy on how we use the stored data which you, as members of the Association, provide for us. So that you understand that we are complying with this new regulation a separate sheet is enclosed with this issue of *Voice* spelling out our policy with respect to data security.

### A NEW LOOK “VOICE OF THE MOORS”

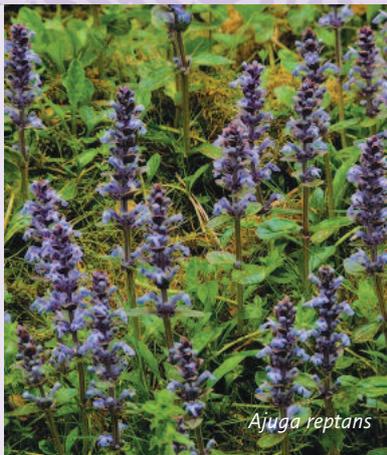
Under the new editorship of Sharon Artley, we have changed the appearance of the magazine in terms of the layout and presentation. The text size is increased to help those of our members who on some occasions have found the smaller text size difficult to read. The paper and printing have been changed to give a matt finish which we feel is more in keeping with the present style of magazines of this kind. We hope you will like the new format of the magazine. It is only the third time *Voice* has been modified since 1985.

**TOM CHADWICK**

# THREE PURPLES



*Glechoma*



*Ajuga reptans*



*Prunella vulgaris*

Photos: Nan Sykes

**G**ROUND IVY (*Glechoma hederacea*), bugle (*Ajuga reptans*) and selfheal (*Prunella vulgaris*) are all members of the *Lamiaceae* or mint family. They can easily be confused as they have similar flowers, growth forms and habitat requirements. All are perennial and occur commonly in our area but they flower at different times of the year, one after the other: ground ivy March to May, bugle May to July and selfheal July to September.

Ground ivy is one of the earliest blooming spring flowers, often unnoticed in damp undisturbed hedge banks, fields and woods. It is a trailing plant, the long square stems creeping along the ground sending out roots from its leaf nodes. These aromatic leaves are stalked, scalloped and heart shaped with the pale purple flowers in loose terminal whorls in the axels of leaf-like bracts. The flowers are typical lamiate with a long corolla tube, a lower flat heart shaped lobed lip and a smaller flat upper one.

It is no relation to ivy, *glechoma* meaning mint and *hederacea* ivy-like. Country names of 'ale hoof' or 'tun hoof' relate to its use since ancient times in brewing, as a bitter agent which clarified, flavoured and preserved beer, later replaced by hops. Other names include the word 'gill' from its use to make the bitter but pleasant gill tea, a therapeutic medicinal drink employed from early times as a cure all. One of the first I learned to make!

Bugle prefers damp undisturbed ground in open woods, fields and waste places. Again, a creeping plant - *reptans*

means creeping - sending out short, rooting runners that produce the new flowering stems. The leaves are opposite, long-oval, stalked at the base but stalkless on the stems. The flowers are blue-purple in close whorls with dull purple bracts forming terminal spikes. They have a very short upper lip and a flat three lobed lower one, the central lobe being long giving it an almost orchid-like appearance.

The name bugle may come from its Latin name of *Ajuga*, but it has been said to refer to the flowers' similarity in shape and colour to the 'bugles' or blue-purple glass beads once adorning ladies' dresses!

Selfheal, although also liking damp waysides and pastures, is more sun loving and will grow in paths and lawns being able to survive cutting and trampling. Similar in growth to bugle, it has smaller, more rounded, oval leaves and the flower whorls are concentrated into short compact heads which persist in a brown dried state into the winter. The flowers are deep purple - or white - with a larger, slightly hooded upper lip.

The name *Prunella* could come from the German for 'brown' from the dried flower heads, or for 'quinsy' which it was reputed to heal.

All three plants have a long history of medicinal use. Ground ivy or gill tea was said to cleanse and tone all body systems but was particularly useful for bronchial complaints, asthma, coughs, ulcerated lungs and to clear the head of persistent mucus after a cold, so easing the symptoms of sinusitis, tinnitus, hay-fever and migraines. It was also used to treat internal bleeding and as a healing, soothing poultice for sores, boils, bruises and tumours and to ease the pain of sciatica and gout.

Bugle and selfheal were generally used for the same medical conditions, both containing astringent tannins, bitters and are antioxidant and antibiotic. Particularly useful when applied to staunch blood, knit together wounds and prevent infection, they healed cuts, ulcers, sores and bruises as well as mouth, throat and lung infections, including tuberculosis, the quinsy and consumption of old. Both have also been used to normalise hormone levels in thyroid conditions and for heart weakness and strokes, especially calming palpitations and normalising circulation. Bugle is said to be a mild narcotic, while selfheal was recommended as an antidepressant.

Three very similar plants that cheer us by brightening our meadows and hedge rows and all have been used extensively since early times in home medicine. Could they also heal us in the future as we begin to learn more about the complex array of chemicals produced by our humblest of plants?

ANNE PRESS

# GROUSE SHOOTING

Photo: Sharon Artley



**In a change from his usual *Lepidoptera* articles, here Hawkmoth may ruffle a few feathers!**

**A FEW MONTHS AGO**, a petition to ban “Driven grouse shooting” was launched online by Chris Packham and other well-known anti-shooting celebrities. If they could manage 100,000 signatures their cause could possibly be debated in Parliament.

I wondered if the shooting fraternity would simply bury their heads in the sand and hope the antis would go away. But no, to my surprise and delight a counter petition to “Don’t ban grouse shooting” was launched and I gladly signed it.

In mid-January I received an e mail from DEFRA which read:

“Grouse shooting is a legitimate activity that provides economic benefits, jobs and investment in some of our most remote areas and can offer important benefits for wildlife and habitat conservation.

The Government appreciates that many people have strongly held views on grouse shooting. The Government also recognises that shooting activities bring many benefits to the rural economy and the environment, in particular wildlife and habitat conservation. The Government therefore continues to support shooting, recognising it is vital that wildlife and habitats are respected and protected and we ensure a sustainable, mutually beneficial relationship between shooting and conservation.

The Government recognises the international importance of the UK uplands. The UK has 75 percent of the world’s remaining heather moorland and about 13 percent of the world’s blanket bog (rain-fed peat bog that ‘blankets’ the

landscape). Seventy percent of the UK’s drinking water is provided from upland catchments and tourism brings in an estimated £1.78 billion to England’s upland national parks.

With regard to grouse moorland management, grouse shooting is one of the main land uses in the uplands along with grazing and forestry. The Government recognises that healthy, active peat provides good habitat for grouse as well as numerous environmental benefits and ecosystem services. Natural England is working with landowners of grouse moors within Special Areas of Conservation to develop voluntary agreements, which include vegetation management principles for the various habitats on grouse moors. The Government encourages land managers to work closely with Natural England to put voluntary agreements in place for all the benefits they bring to moor owners and to the environment.

The Government is also working with moor owners and stakeholders to further improve management practices and peat condition, such as through the Blanket Bog Restoration Strategy.

With regard to birds of prey, like all wild birds they are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. The current legislation and guidance balances competing social, economic and environmental interests, while protecting the conservation status and welfare of the relevant bird of prey species. Some species of birds of prey need specific protection because their low numbers indicate that their populations are struggling.”

**HAWKMOTH**

# CARELESS TALK AND SABOTAGE

**In these two articles, contributors Pat Duggan and Alan Staniforth describe how sites within the North York Moors National Park were used for decoy or possible sabotage.**

*In this first article, Pat Duggan provides an account of what remains of a decoy airfield at Osmotherley, how it was used and a rather unusual court martial!*

**WHAT IT IS:** Scheduled National Monument No. 34824 Osmotherley Starfish WW2 Decoy Airfield.

*Where it is:* Situated in a field at 272m above sea level on the East side of the track, locally known as “the Drover’s Road” from the long-established cattle and goose trail (avoiding tolls, of course?) between the lowlands of Scotland and the eastern English Market towns. NGR: SE4737597910

All that remains now are: a brick blast wall to west sheltering a small once-buried, bomb-proof, brick cabin, measuring N to S 3.75m and E to W 3.10m; height 2m approx; with lookout; small chimney for corner fire and two wide gauge ventilation pipes at internal floor level. Entrance passage 3m; generator building, only a concrete plinth and a few broken iron drainpipes remaining. The toilet, I’m told, was a bucket with a wooden toilet seat(!).

*What it was used for:* An historically interesting set-up, built and manned by RAF Thornaby. When operational during the Second World War, it had telephone links to Bomber Command. It had an out-field, mimicking an airfield, dotted with baskets of creosote-soaked logs ready to be electronically fired should German planes be sighted. The intention of this being to draw enemy planes off course to investigate when they were en route to drop their bombs on Teesside Steel Works and the other vital industrial sites relocated there from London. Any time between sighting the planes edging their way north along the coast and them reaching their target was vital and sirens sounded and defending planes were quickly sent to deal with the threat.

The baskets were set on fire on one occasion, although my informant wasn’t sure if it had been for practice, or actually by accident. Apparently, the locals had fire ‘truck’ practice along the Drover’s Road and they were all young lads.

*My interest:* I think it was the court martial story that captured my attention. I must have walked past this site many times before without a second glance. It is in an amazingly good spot for astronomy and I applied to the owner of the land, a Mr Andrew Shelley of the Thimbleby Estate who very kindly gave me permission to use it if I could make it waterproof. The elderly lady, who told me about it was Miss Elisabeth Oswald and she described how the RAF personnel were billeted in their home at Cote Ghyll Mill. The local pub was a favourite off duty haunt of the men and, I’m told, one of them “was a bit of a ladies’ man” who would talk with a very “loose tongue” about this airfield being only a decoy! Clearly, this “careless talk” had to be stopped. I’m not certain if the local bobby had a hand in it, but, it was taken very seriously by senior RAF Officers who heard about it. An investigation proceeded with the arrival of a pretty young woman out for a drink in the pub one night. It seems she was a plain-clothed member of the WAAF sent to catch the offender in the act of spilling state secrets. And so that was how I heard that a full court martial was held in Elisabeth Oswald’s kitchen!

*Further reading: Fields of Deception available from Filey Library*

**PAT DUGGAN**

## CROSSWORD ANSWERS (see page 15)

**Across:** 1 dell! 4 rabbit 7 nye 9 buff 10 tracking 11 eve/Eve 12 over 13 red cedar 16 accommodation 19 streamer 23 boil 24 hol 25 polygamy 26 eats 27 Mia 28 statue 20 unco **Down:** 2 Equivocation 3 inferno 4 refer 5 brand 6 Inkle 8 antagonist 14 evoke 15 lea 17 moa 18 tableau 20 Egypt 21 meant 22 rhyme **Anagram:** THE BLUEBELLS OF RIGCALDALE



Hayburn Wyke

Photo: North York Moors National Park Authority

*Here, Alan Staniforth explains how recently released Ministry of Defence documents reveal unknown secrets on our coastline.*

**H**AYBURN, one of many 'wykes' or narrow inlets along our coast, is backed by a beautiful wooded valley through which tumbles Hayburn Beck, terminating as an attractive waterfall which cascades onto the cobbled beach below. Sheltered by headlands on each side, the nearest coastal settlement to the north is Robin Hood's Bay, while that to the south is Scarborough. Owned and managed by the National Trust, the Wyke can only be reached either from the Cleveland Way or by a walk down through the woods from the Hayburn Wyke Hotel. It is indeed a stunning location, on a sunny day reminiscent of some far off tropical cove. So why 'sabotage'? The Germans and Russians it seems had their eyes on this quiet bay as a place

to land saboteurs in 1917 and, more recently, during the years of the Cold War.

Following the release of previously secret documents by the Ministry of Defence, an authorised history of MI5 was published in 2009. Buried within this tome of a thousand pages is a reproduction of a map, still held by MI5, of part of the north Yorkshire coast highlighting Hayburn Wyke. There was great concern in Government circles during the 1960s about the large number of Russians who were in this country on 'official business' but who were suspected of spying. When a member of a Soviet trade delegation, Oleg Lyalin defected in 1971, this instigated Operation FOOT leading to over a hundred Soviet officials being expelled and leading to a major

diplomatic incident. In debriefing, Lyalin admitted that his role was to identify suitable sites for landing Soviet sabotage groups and also to establish groups of local sympathisers.

A not dissimilar plan some fifty years earlier had been instigated by the Germans. Although records are somewhat vague, we do know that in July 1917 a submarine, the UB21 under the command of Franz Walther, landed two men at Hayburn Wyke. After this the story is unclear. The men were supposed to return to the UB21 but were apparently captured. After three days cruising off-shore, Walther abandoned the mission.

So, 'If you go down to the Wyke today, you could have a big surprise!'

**ALAN STANIFORTH**

# HIDDEN TREASURES

**In January, the Campaign for National Parks in partnership with National Parks UK, invited submissions for a photographic competition with the theme of Hidden Treasures. Entries had to be submitted using social media with the hashtags #hiddentreasures and #npukpictures.**

*There were no specific criteria, so entrants were free to be inspired. The winning entry was a photograph taken in the Pembrokeshire National Park, but of the five runners-up, two photographs were taken by local photographers within the North York Moors National Park.*

*Glenn Kilpatrick submitted a photograph of The Seated Man, while Steven Icteton entered a misty sunset of Staithes.*

**Voice** invited Steve and Glenn to give a little insight into their photographs.

*Here, Steve provides a nostalgic perspective on what draws him to return to Staithes and how it inspires his photography.*

**T**HE FISHING VILLAGE of Staithes nestled among the North Yorkshire sea cliffs is a place close to many people's hearts, as well as my own. It is many things to many people. For me, it reminds me of my childhood days running through the winding cobbled streets, hunting for fossils under the cliffs and fishing for crabs in the rock pools with the

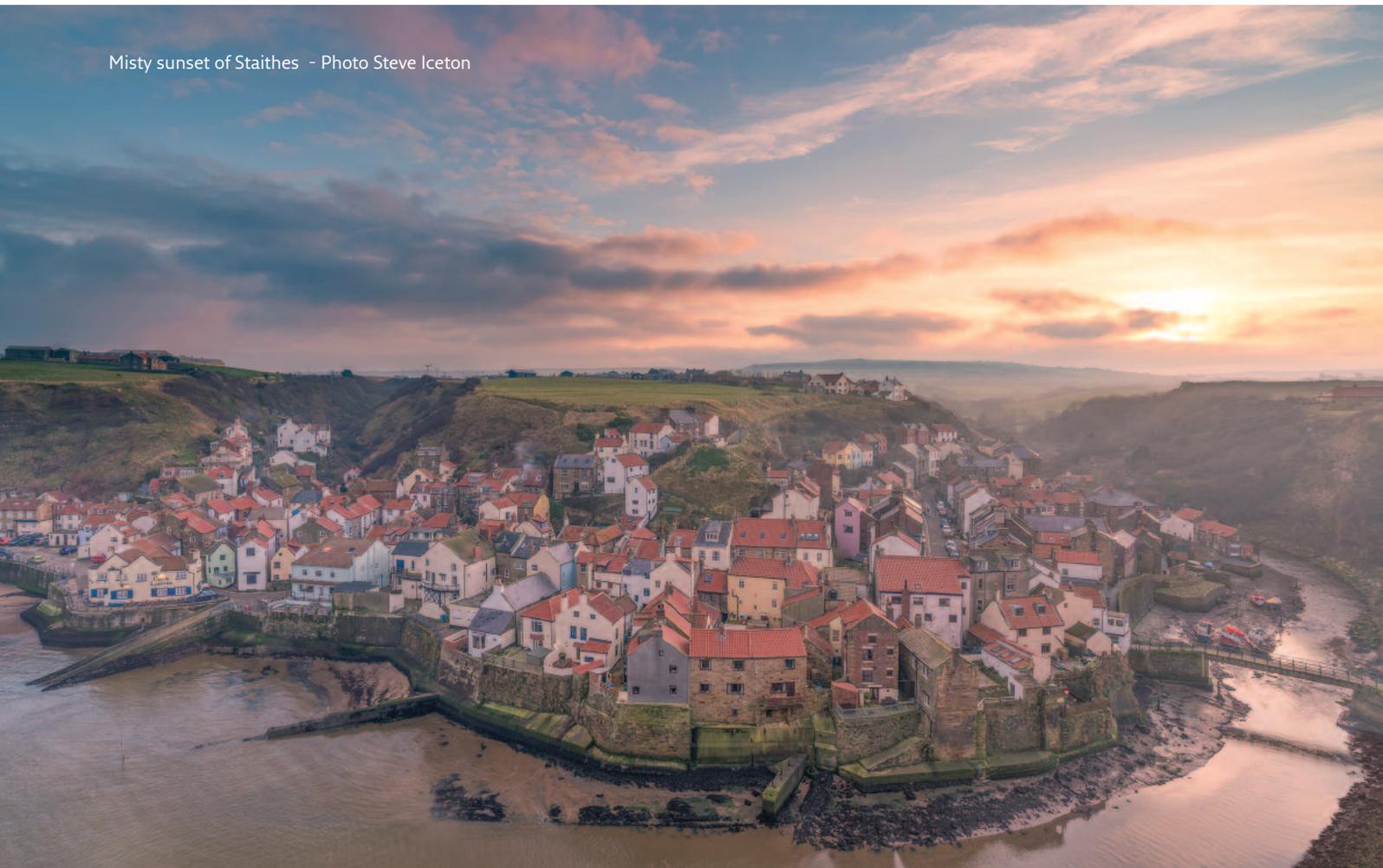
smell of coal smoke hanging in the air and the sound of seagulls wheeling overhead. Even before the modern era of mobile phones and always-on internet, it was a place to escape day to day life.

Having recently become a first-time father to my son Oliver, I have found myself reflecting on my own childhood, the places and memories that stood out and what I would like my son to remember about his. I want him to see the same Staithes that I did all those years ago, but, with the ever-changing world we live in, who is to say it will be the same?

One of the charming things about Staithes is that time seems to stand still. All of the fragments of my childhood memories remain and in time as my son grows, I will take my time to show to him and to re-live these small wonders through his eyes.

Working in a largely office-based job, I relish my time spent in the outdoors. Nothing refuels my soul like exploring the local national parks with the wind in my face and the sun in my eyes amongst the open spaces and beautiful scenery. Photography is a personal challenge to find special places and moments in

Misty sunset of Staithes - Photo Steve Icteton





time and to preserve and tell their story to others. If only one person is inspired to visit Staithes for the first time as a result of my photograph, then it will be a job well done for me.

Staithes is a renowned destination for photographers and artists and it is easy to see why, as it continues to inspire people with its history, atmosphere and ever-changing views through the seasons. I recently had the privilege to capture the supermoon rising over the sea and bathing the village in moonlight at dusk. With the lights of the village, it illuminated the whole scene in colour. A privilege to witness and one that I enjoyed sharing with others.

Staithes will remain a place I will return to regularly and I hope my children's children do too. A true hidden treasure in the North York Moors.

*In the autumn issue of **Voice**, there was discussion about The Seated Man. Here, Glenn provides a photographer's perspective:*

Often a man of strong opinions, I have to admit I really did not like the idea of a sculpture on the moor top above Castleton. It is a long-held belief of mine that a National Park should, where possible, remain untouched by the hand of man (or woman). I have always believed that landscapes should be left pretty much as nature intended them to be. What is the point of having National Park status if we abuse that and start changing things willy-nilly? I guess we all know that The Seated Man is a very controversial figure. I really did not like the thought of him being there, but as a professional photographer, I also knew that at some point, I had to capture a record of his existence. I had seen the numerous images of the seated man appearing on social media and not many provoked any real emotion within me. He looked every bit as dull and

boring as I expected him to be. I knew my attempt had to be different to the rest, and with that in mind, my thoughts turned to how I could capture the image in a way that would make it so. The sculpture is always going to be the same, so the only things that change are the weather, the light and the surrounding flora or fauna. I had thought about capturing him at night with perhaps the Milky Way or some other dark sky phenomenon. I may still return to do that at some point.

However, with the winter weather on the moors, I decided on grabbing a few shots of the figure in the snow. Having looked at the positioning of the sculpture, I came to understand that the best time to get him would be late afternoon around sunset with the fading light allowing me to pick out the details of the sculpture itself, and to cut a long story short, this is what I did. The image is perhaps not my best. I know for certain I have much better pictures from within our National Park. But I also know this is well taken and if you ever get the chance to see the image in print at a decent size, then I'm sure you will come to understand just how much detail there is in this photograph.

Only when you see the sculpture 'in the flesh' and with late afternoon or evening light, can you come to understand just what an amazing work of art the seated man actually is. Yes, you read that correctly, I now really like the sculpture. Going there and seeing it in all its glory was quite a shock to me. It is a phenomenal work of art. Perhaps it doesn't belong on our moors. Perhaps it does. Who am I to say? But one thing I do know is that as a work of art, it is outstanding

*Perhaps you too might now be inspired to seek out and record some hidden treasures of our North York Moors landscape, flora or fauna?*

# GARDEN BIRD HEALTH



Photo: Mike Gray

**P**EOPLE OFTEN ASK what should be done about garden birds seen to be in distress. There is rarely a good answer. It's not the happiest of subjects and thus probably doesn't get as much publicity as it should.

A collaborative project to monitor the health of British wildlife, called Garden Wildlife Health, has been running for several years now; it is organised by the Zoological Society of London, the BTO, Froglife and the RSPB.

It focuses on garden birds, amphibians, reptiles and hedgehogs, and relies on the public reporting sick or dead wildlife and sending in carcasses for analysis when asked. Every report submitted contributes to a national database, and all are archived into one of the world's largest wildlife databanks.

The project started in 1989 when wildlife volunteers were asked to report the deaths of newly released red kites. It was soon expanded to include other species being released for conservation purposes. Perhaps its most important early discovery was that the decline of red squirrels is mainly caused by a deadly squirrelpox virus carried benignly by the introduced grey squirrel.

If you see any wildlife in your garden that seems to be ill, or has died with no obvious cause, you can contact the GWH who can offer advice, but not treatment. (<https://www.gardenwildlifehealth.org>).

They say that if you find a sick or injured wild animal which can avoid threats from domestic animals or human beings, it may be in its best interests to be left alone. If it is incapable of fending for itself, you can contact your local vet or animal rescue organisation. However, remember that most wildlife has unique requirements for survival after treatment, and is

intolerant of prolonged captivity (even for veterinary care). The British Wildlife Rehabilitation Council has a list of rescue organisations.

If you find dead wild waterfowl or gulls, or 5 or more dead wild birds in the same location, you should report them to the Defra helpline (03459 33 55 77). If you want to find out more on the subject, the GWH website is a good starting point.

There are many diseases that can affect garden birds, but these are two which you are perhaps more likely to see.

**Avian pox** comprises a range of viruses that can attack several species of garden birds including tits and especially great tits. It has been increasingly reported in the UK over the last ten years and often affects several birds in a flock. Birds with avian pox develop warty or tumour-like growths on the head (particularly next to the eye or beak), legs, wings, or other body parts. Affected birds appear to feed and move around normally, though the growths can become very large and may then impede the bird. It is not invariably fatal, and recovery can occur.

**Trichomonosis** is caused by a single-celled protozoan parasite. It is endemic in pigeons and doves and is thought to have been transferred to finches at shared feeding sites. Greenfinches have been the most gravely affected, with their numbers falling by two-thirds over the last ten years, though other finches have also been affected. Transmission frequently occurs when sick birds regurgitate food which is consumed by others.

*Trichomonas gallinae* typically causes lesions at the back of the throat and in the gullet, meaning that the bird cannot feed properly. The disease takes several days to kill, with infected birds becoming emaciated and having matted plumage around the head. Should you spot more than just the odd poorly finch, stop putting out food and leave your birdbath empty for 3 or 4 weeks, to allow the affected birds to disperse. The parasite is vulnerable to desiccation and cannot survive for long periods outside the host. If on restarting feeding you see more sick birds, stop immediately. Feeders, and areas around feeders and birdbaths, need regular cleaning and occasionally disinfecting, even if you don't see sick birds. It is also a good idea to move them around from time to time.

*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](http://www.bto.org/gbw)). If you know of an organisation not a million miles from York which would like a talk on garden birds call: **Mike Gray 07596 366342** or [gbwmike@gmail.com](mailto:gbwmike@gmail.com).*

# WINTER TIME - HOVELS AND HOLLOWAYS



Holloways above Ewe Bank beck

Photo: John Pinkney

**16<sup>TH</sup> FEBRUARY** saw the first sighting of a pair of lapwings on my daily walk in our top fields. These are a sure sign of the approach of spring, when they return to their breeding grounds. Little did they know what was coming a few days later! This winter has been colder and wetter than most recently, and now also the snowiest for several years. Sightings have been largely limited to geese, grouse, and the common garden birds, plus owls, hawks, woodpeckers and gulls. Living in the shelter of hedges and shrubs and constantly darting out to the bird tables and squabbling amongst themselves, small birds adjust well to the cold weather. Wrens and robins have been especially active and noisy.

Going on walks has often been difficult, as the ground has been so wet and attention needs to be given to placing of feet! This winter's weather has really beaten down the bracken and has enabled landscape features like ancient holloways, tracks, bases of walls, evidence of rigg and furrow, etc. to become much more clearly seen.

Landscape historians say that most of what one sees is much older than one realises. A good example comes from field names. My farm has two intakes fields, one named 'old intake', the other 'new intake'. Intakes were areas taken in from the moor, cleared and walled around. Intakes tend to date from later than the original land recovery, and are usually on the edge of the moorland, higher up, often in walled off 'islands'. My earliest deeds - from the 1656 Danby Estate sale, show these intakes, and still refer to them as 'old' and 'new'! Thus 'new' refers to a time still regarded as new in 1656 - probably from the period

1550-1600 when it is known there was an increase in intaking activity. Conversely, 'old' probably refers to the period 1250 - 1350 which followed the main period of land recovery in the Esk Valley in the early 13th century.

Climbing out of Ewe Crag beck there are good views of holloways. These occur generally on sloping ground, where tracks descend to a river or stream crossing point, then climb back up the other side. These became very muddy in winter and other wet times, so it is easy to imagine how parallel tracks developed radiating out from the crossing point. Once an existing track became too rutted and muddy, an alternative one would be created, and so on. With erosion caused by wagon wheels, animals and rains washing loose material down, tracks eroded deep into the ground to form hollows. Over time, whole series of deeply rutted tracks, holloways, occurred on many old tracks across areas of sloping ground.

Holloways mark the routes of ancient tracks, generally mediaeval, or earlier. Many remain visible today, where subsequent agricultural or other activity has not obliterated them. They are seen where the ground has not been disturbed

on moorland, common land, or ancient pasture. If they appear adjacent to later obliterations, they predate whatever caused those obliterations, for example, enclosure of land. Most holloways are ancient and covered in vegetation. They show up best where a low winter sun throws shadows that accentuate them, or when filled with snow. They can be seen all around the Yorkshire Moors.

Another feature on my walk is the remains of an intake cottage. There were many cottages, really hovels of only one or two rooms, located right on the edge of the moors. The 6" 1st edition Ordnance Survey maps show that in the 1850's many such cottages existed. Reverend Atkinson referred to such hovels in his 'Forty years in a Moorland Parish' Today, most have disappeared or are ruined, with only a small number surviving as cottages or a few farms. They were built soon after the estate sale of 1656, which formally constrained any further encroachment on the commons. Instead, many of the new freeholders created by the sale were able to exercise their freedoms and erect cottages on their intake fields and hence create new holdings for sale or rent.

However, these tiny isolated cottages, without good access tracks, gradually fell into disuse. It is believed that the cottage shown here remained more or less intact until about 1900 or later, with one record suggesting it was still inhabited in 1907.

The upper wall of this intake seems to be frequented by cuckoos in later spring and early summer - I look forward to seeing them and maybe to talking about them in the next edition.

**JOHN PINKNEY**



Remains of intake cottage. East wall stands ~ 6ft high

Photo: John Pinkney

# EVERY YEAR IS DIFFERENT...

**L**ATER THAN USUAL last year, I led my regular foray at a nearby Natural England location. As always, the host representative gives a short introduction to the day's expectations. The foray went well, but unseasonal finds caused puzzlement... more for me than for the excited forayers. I took a few pictures and samples back home but to my shame forgot about them until early January, when I found the shrivelled remains in my sandwich box, so was prompted to take some time looking for unlikely finds locally. Now, there are no hard and fast rules governing the appearance of the "macro" fungi. There are always nooks and crannies where micro-eco-systems can stir the fungi into action, but it is best to be aware of what weather and happenstance can do. Mystery finds today can, if left for a while in situ, become much easier to identify tomorrow.

Walking over the top of Danby Rigg, you will find some burnt gorse. Once or twice previously, on icy December days, I had spotted day-glo orange "dots" on some of the blackened, gnarled wood but dismissed them as being "too young" to identify and destined to death as winter progressed. On this mild but breezy January day, however, things had changed. Clustered on the dead, woody stems were the bright and beautiful curled fronds of *Tremella mesenterica* or witches' butter. Though not unusual late in autumn, the weather had fooled this species in to an unlikely spurt of growth. Three days later, it had all gone... crisp, shrivelled and dirty-brown, almost invisible.



I went to the woodland below the winding-shaft towers of Boulby Potash mine, accessed from Ridge Lane, just

through Dalehouse. Should you go down to the woods today, you will find a very interesting geological and bio-diverse expanse of mixed trees, rocky outcrops and grassland. In the darkest recesses of what is already a very sheltered environment, I came across some pulled teeth...well, not exactly. The sliced through sections do look remarkably like extractions, but left to develop they very quickly take on the adult form. Though these cup fungi grow happily in snow and below freezing conditions, I did not return to the woods but have a fine picture taken by David Smith, an excellent photographer and mycologist. They are called scarlet elf cups or *Sarcocypha austriaca*.



For sheer audacity, the bracket fungi take some beating. They are invariably parasitic, causing widespread rot in a whole host of different trees and they are quite often big ...they do not hide their presence or intent. Though there are both perennial and annual species, the structure of some of the larger species, mostly the "woody" varieties, means that the "body" of the fungus can remain identifiable a long time after the growing season is over. Of greater significance, though, is the choice of host. Trees are excellent because they offer nutrients, water and protection even when weather conditions are unfavourable...and get no thanks. So, when a readily identifiable fungus grows out of season, in a tree, and with arrested growth, I get pictures sent to me. Late in November a picture of a find by a householder in Lealholm arrived by email. Though I had a good idea of

what this was, I was still in investigative mode, and went to see it. Jump forward to early January. I returned to see if the weather had been kind enough to permit the thing to grow on. It had. This is *Polyporus squamosus*, or dryad's saddle. Though the winter appearance of this specimen is unusual, it is a late summer fungus, it seems that fortune favours the brave. Normally, this specimen would grow to full size in a couple of weeks then fall prey to maggots and rot away. In this case, the growth cycle seems to have been slowed down considerably and in the absence of flies, no maggots.



Finally, a find of my own. The snows curtailed my foraging but at the first opportunity I took an off-season chance and ventured into the woodlands of The Warren, near Grinkle where I found a great little fungus in the snow beside a pile of stone: the late oyster mushroom - *Panellus serotinus*.



There are never two years the same in the fungus world and this one is no different!

**TOM KIRBY**

Photos: Tom Kirby

# IN PRAISE OF STARRY NIGHTS



Light pollution from Danby Beacon



Danby stars

Photos: Ian Carstairs

**A**T THE ENTRANCE to the National Park's Moors Centre, in the Esk Valley, a notice proclaims it to be a Dark Skies site. This made me wonder: just how dark is it here and how does it compare with where I live in South Norfolk. I would come back one night to find out.

Star-gazing events held at the Centre over the years have been hugely popular with visitors. Fostered by television programmes and images from space exploration, these increasingly open a huge window on the stellar canopy above our heads. They bring into sharp focus the rarity and value of such places, as the constant attrition of light pollution robs us all of this most spectacular part of our heritage.

When I was young, I was terrified of the dark. Now I am obsessed with the world after the sun has set. But it is a bittersweet passion. Where once in treasured places the nights would have been inky black, with each new badly-aimed light I feel a sadness at the insidious creep of light pollution constantly diminishing the experience.

I simply cannot understand why planning authorities and manufacturers and users of lights don't collectively strive to solve this problem. It's as if it's so out of hand that no-one thinks that their individual effort will make much difference. That's a recipe for ever increasing loss.

Spurred on by that sign at the Moors Centre, I made firm plans for a few nocturnal excursions to experiment with a camera, not only to photograph the stars, but to see how much light pollution there actually is in remote moorland places.

With the advent of quality digital cameras, photographing the night sky has become increasing popular. Mostly however, it doesn't just stop with making the picture, but involves varying degrees of processing gymnastics on a computer.

Quickly, you learn that the images we see published bear little relationship to that which the human eye perceives, though that doesn't mean that the first-hand experience of a wide star-filled sky is anything other than truly spectacular.

I planned my trip to coincide with a moonless night and kept my fingers crossed that there would be ideal conditions.

When it came to it, on a cold snowy and icy evening, forcing myself out of a chair at eight o'clock for the half hour drive up into the moors, took some determination.

Gingerly I worked my way slowly up towards Ralph's Cross. Having taken a few photographs, I promptly fell over on the ice and with a biting wind cutting across the tops, decided that the conditions were too extreme to stay here on my own for too long.

Next, I drove over to Danby Beacon. Here the wind cut even more fiercely and standing behind the car couldn't really shelter me from the wild blast. However, using the vehicle as a shield as best I could, I set up the camera and photographed out over Scaling Dam towards the coast.

Dropping down into Danby itself, the night seemed still. It was brilliantly clear above and a good place to try to photograph the stars over the Centre.

Strikingly, the long exposure photographs revealed a surprising amount of light pollution, catching a layer of thin cloud as it spilled over the hills from Teesside.

But, looking southwards, to the human eye the stars seemed unobscured: how very precious this darkness is, I thought.

Dark skies tourism is growing in popularity, bringing real economic benefits to rural communities which recognise the value of minimising the impacts of exterior lighting.

On my way home, I stopped at the Millennium Stone to take a few more photographs. Turning onto the Rosedale road I saw three other people with their cameras and tripods. There had been a possible aurora alert. It didn't materialise, but it was somehow comforting that others were up there braving the conditions for similar reasons to me.

Perhaps now, with a groundswell of public interest, it would be a good time to strengthen policies and with persuasion, encourage working together to use light carefully, especially in the Esk Valley to ensure that the dark skies above the Moors Centre and beyond remain that way.

There is a job to be done wherever we live, not just in the national park. Every little gesture really does help.

IAN CARSTAIRS

# SUCCESS BUILDS ON SUCCESS



Photo: Friends of the Moorsbus

**M**OOBSBUS, the iconic network of integrated bus services to and around the North York Moors National Park, enjoyed an excellent summer in 2017, facilitating over 10,000 passenger journeys over the five months of operation between May and the end of September.

Feedback from passengers through detailed passenger surveys was also very encouraging. Around 65% of bus users were using the bus to go walking, thus amply justifying the use of the Laughton Bequest money which was specifically given to NYMA to encourage walking in the National Park. This has helped support Moorsbus at a critically important time in the revival of the network over the last three years. It now goes from strength to strength.

Surveys also indicate around 40% of Moorsbus users had a car available to

reach the National Park, 28% could have used their car on the day of survey, so proof that Moorsbus is reducing the number of cars in the National Park, but even more importantly, an impressive 60% of people surveyed had no other way of getting there. Moorsbus is truly delivering access for all. And Moorsbus users also spend on average £26.21 per head, on fares, food and other purchases, making a worthwhile contribution the local economy in the National Park.

Thanks to immense hard work by the Moorsbus CIC volunteers and the Friends of Moorsbus who tirelessly raise funds from many different sources, Moorsbus 2018 looks like being better than ever. Services will start again on May 6th, and all the Sunday services that operated in 2017 will operate again, including direct Sunday services from Darlington, Stockton, Middlesbrough, Redcar,

Saltburn, Stokesley, Thirsk, Northallerton and Malton with connections from York, Scarborough and Whitby.

What is new for 2018 is that MoorsPlus, the direct bus service between York Station, Malton, Pickering, Blakey Top and Danby Lodge will operate this year on Fridays and Saturdays not Mondays. Subject to funding, there are also plans to operate on Saturdays as well as Sundays into Rosedale and a circular service from Guisborough to Helmsley.

Moorsbus is planned and managed by walkers for walkers. Fares are kept deliberately low to encourage people on low incomes or to persuade people to give their cars a rest and take the bus.

As a NYMA member, if you can use Moorsbus, perhaps for a linear walk, you will be helping to support and sustain this remarkable National Park bus network. In order to demonstrate what a superb way this is to truly enjoy the Moors, on Friday July 20th I will be leading a NYMA guided walk using the new Friday M8/M6/M3 service from York, Malton or Pickering to the Lion Inn, Blakey Top for a 7 mile moderate walk along the old Rosedale railway line to Bank Top, over Hutton Moor to Hutton-le-Hole with perhaps time to enjoy the outstanding Ryedale Folk Museum before the return bus. Full details of departure times and all other MoorsBus services log onto [www.moorsbus.org](http://www.moorsbus.org).

**COLIN SPEAKMAN**

## NYMA WALKS

### **Saturday 14 April** **SINNINGTON AND SEVEN VALLEY**

Walk leader: Albert Elliot:  
[elliott142@btinternet.com](mailto:elliott142@btinternet.com)  
Phone: 01287 660137

Please contact Albert if you would like to join the walk. Meet at 10.30, village green at Sinnington (GR SE744859) for c. 5.5 mile/9 km circular walk following close by the course of the river Seven passing by Appleton-le-Moors and on to Cropton (the birthplace of Captain Willam Scoresby Senior, the Whitby whaler) before returning to Sinnington (c. 3 hours). Car parking on roadside at Sinnington village. All are welcome.

### **Saturday 12 May** **CLEVELAND WAY TO BOGGLE HOLE**

Walk leader: Margaret Kirby  
[margaret.r.kirby@gmail.com](mailto:margaret.r.kirby@gmail.com)  
Phone: 07792 972680

Meet 10.30am at Ravenscar outside the National Trust information centre (roadside parking nearby) for 5 mile coastal walk. Cleveland Way to Boggle Hole, return via Coast Railway path.

### **Saturday 23 June** **WHITBY TO BRIGGSWATH**

Walk leaders:  
Jane Ellis: [janerway@gmail.com](mailto:janerway@gmail.com)  
and George Featherston:  
[george.featherston@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:george.featherston@yahoo.co.uk)

Whitby to Briggswath, 5 miles with lunch at the Victoria Farm Garden Centre cafe which has panoramic views over Whitby. Visiting the site of a Heinkel crash landing, the first aircraft to be shot down on English soil in World War II, on February 3rd 1940. We will hear a graphic account of the incident and view the commemorative plaque. Also passing Ewe Cote, the home of renowned photographer Frank Meadow Sutcliffe, and walking down the 12th century paved trod Featherbed Lane, "the narrowest King's Highway in England". 11.00 start from Whitby railway station, returning to Whitby by bus from Briggswath. Strong footwear with good grip essential.



# RON FOSTER MBE – 1931-2018

## A PERSONAL TRIBUTE



**W**ITH THE PASSING of Ron Foster, MBE, a Vice-President of the North Yorkshire Moors Association, the countryside and the Moors lost an irreplaceable ally. As President of the Association, it is an honour to pay this personal tribute to a true countryman and wise and loyal friend.

No-one ever completely knows someone else. But however long or deep a friendship or acquaintance, it is no bad thing in life simply to take a person as we find them.

I first knew Ron 35 years ago and what I found was a deeply genuine, cheerful, wise and thoughtful man, with a fundamental understanding of country ways and farming, sensitivity for conservation and a rare perspicacity to see them both in the 'bigger picture'.

While from very different backgrounds, as a conservationist, I also found someone with whom I almost always saw eye to eye on complicated matters to do with the environment and looking after it for the future.

Whether in personal conversation, or in Board meetings when Ron spoke in his inimitable style, everyone listened. Debating an issue, he would hesitate for a moment then very slowly work through the point he wished to make, before speeding up as he delivered the conclusion.

From our backgrounds it might have seemed we would be poles apart. But his open-mindedness for the right thing to do to truly look after countryside, was a lesson to everyone who owns or works the land, or who seeks to convince them of a wiser way to do things.

One of my fondest memories took place at Ryedale Folk Museum. Ron had a display of his prized rare breed chickens and bantams. Carrying one under his arm, he proudly held it out to show me. If only I had had a camera. This was the epitome of innocent values. The sheer look on his face of at-oneness with himself is indelibly etched on my mind.

The coming together of Ron's and my world couldn't have been more important than when, as colleagues on the Board of the North York Moors National Park we engineered with the staff to ensure that addressing the plight of rare arable plants be included in the independent National Park Plan. A few years later when an opportunity arose to address the problem, Ron's 'small-p' political skill proved crucial.

With significant free funds available to the National Park Committee for a special project, the debate swung around whether they should be used to refurbish the toilets in Staithes or go towards helping rare arable plants. It was 'Bogs or Botany' and in a once only opportunity, Ron swung it for the plants.

A substantial grant helped CCT, a local conservation charity to buy a field to 'do something about the problem', and the remarkably successful Cornfield Flowers Project which saw rare plants pulled back from the brink of extinction, was born.<sup>1</sup>

Many others have played crucial parts, but at the outset, dozens of rare plants and society owe Ron a massive debt.

Well Ron, I only wish, as a conservationist, that the skills and wisdom you exhibited as a farmer could be repeated everywhere and that others might learn from a gentler way of living life. It might be tempting for some to say that you were from an era that is long gone ... but I don't see it that way. For me, you belong to a time that has yet to come ... and might never come, where decency and harmony and generosity of spirit bring together those things on which the future of our countryside, wildlife and farming culture will ultimately depend; though on that note I am not holding my breath.

Finally, I once heard it said, though have no idea if it was true, that a person's worth in Stuart England was judged by their ability to show their emotions.

At my first NYMA AGM as President, I found another side to Ron, as we stood by the History Tree Plate. He held and shook my hand with both hands in the way that conveys a deeper meaning, and with a hint of a tear in his eye explained that my being President was a great day for him. In that moment, with a lump in my throat. I learned something more and personal about Ron Foster MBE. We would have got on well in Stuart England.

Ron: we are unlikely to see your kind again. You made a difference.

IAN CARSTAIRS

<sup>1</sup> You can find out more about this from the North York Moors website and search for Cornfield Flowers Project.



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Please make use of the Moorsbus whenever possible.

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